

AUGUST 6-12, 2023

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



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COVER STORY
3,4

Fan-tastic



With friends

BORN IN DHENKANAL, AND SETTLED IN BHUBANESWAR, SANDEEP PANDA IS MULTI-SKILLED. THOUGH HE HAS A DEGREE IN ENGINEERING, SANDEEP HAS CARVED A SPACE IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY AS A VOCALIST, COMPOSER, AND LYRICIST. HE ALSO HAS A POETRY ANTHOLOGY, *DUI PADA KABITA*, TO HIS CREDIT. WHEN HE GETS A BREAK, THE FORMER MEMBER OF THE MUSICAL BAND *NAWAZISH* (PUNE) TRAVELS TO HIS HOMETOWN TO SPEND TIME WITH HIS PARENTS



With Rolex

Symphony of work & music

For me, weekdays are for work as a software engineer, while weekends are reserved for music. I also indulge in writing on days off, which provides a joyful escape from the daily grind.

Welcome break

Going on thrilling night rides with a small group of pals helps me break up the monotony of my work-days and lift my mood. I find immense joy and a sense of freedom in driving, exploring the city lights, and creating unforgettable memories together.

Seafood lover

I love exploring the diverse flavours of Odia cuisine, especially seafood dishes like Chingudi Jhola. Dalma, the signature dish of Odisha, is also one of my go-to cuisines.

Simple pleasures

I don't feel the need to pay for experiences such as paragliding and scuba diving that invoke fear or push limits to extremes. Instead, I find joy in simpler pleasures such as spending time with loved ones, hiking, and eating good food.

Heart at home

I miss my home more often. My family is close-knit, so every weekend, my brother and I travel to Cuttack to visit them. We cherish our time together very much.

Happy parent

I'm a proud pet parent. If you don't get to meet Rolex, your visit to my studio isn't complete. It goes without saying that this adorable furry child charms everyone he encounters with his distinctive antics.



With family



MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes at: features.orissapost@gmail.com And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- My girlfriend isn't talking to me. She said I ruined her birthday. I'm not sure how. I didn't even know it was her birthday.
- I am a nobody, nobody is perfect, therefore I am perfect.
- Everywhere is walking distance if you have the time.
- If anything is possible, is it possible for something to be impossible?



IN SYNC WITH NATURE

Sir, The Easter Island's 'Walking' Statues featured in the last edition of Sunday POST provide a rich window into the intricacies of nature. Despite the fact that man may have conquered space, nature ultimately holds the power to determine whether or not humanity will survive. Such masterpieces are not just found in places like Bolivia, Turkey, or Chile; we also have amazing places like the Natural Arch at Hemgir in the Sundargarh district and the pillow of lava in Nomira in the Keonjhar district right here in Odisha. They are magnificent wonders that never cease to confound geologists and other specialists. Man may work for his own selfish gain, but nature has a purpose for these creations. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs but not every man's greed". This needs to be pondered over by one and all.

SUMAN PATNAIK, CUTTACK

LETTERS



A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Feel free to send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to

features.orissapost@gmail.com
B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948



MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

Fan-tastic

In the dazzling world of sports and entertainment, celebrity fan clubs have long been synonymous with passion, excitement, and unbridled devotion. These devoted communities come together to celebrate their favourite stars, organising exhilarating trips to concerts, engaging in spirited discussions online, and even going to great lengths to demonstrate their unwavering support.

A few months back on this space, **Sunday POST** highlighted how fan obsessions often lead to ugly spats, and the die-hard supporters of Messi, Neymar, and Ronaldo put up large cutouts of their idols to show their 'gods' as the Greatest Of All Times (GOAT).

However, beneath the surface of this euphoric fandom lies a lesser-known, heart-warming aspect that is increasingly taking center stage – the philanthropic initiatives of celebrity fan clubs.

In a remarkable departure from merely revelling in the fame of their beloved idols, fan clubs have begun channelling their collective energy towards making a positive impact on society. From aiding the underprivileged to supporting vital causes, these enthusiastic fan bases are proving to be a powerful force for good.

Celebrities themselves are recognising the immense potential of their fan clubs as a force for positive change. Some stars actively encourage their fans to take part in charitable activities, initiating campaigns and fundraisers for a diverse range of causes. From education and healthcare to environmental conservation and disaster relief, these philanthropic fan clubs are determined to leave a profound and meaningful impact on the lives of those in need.

This week, **Sunday POST** took a look at some

Odisha-based fan clubs' inspiring stories that go beyond idol-worship and blind obsessions.

'We promote social causes that SRK advocates for'

Sukhangsu Sekhar Jena, a member of SRK Universe-Balasore, says, "Being an ardent admirer of Shah Rukh Khan, I was captivated by his extraordinary talent, magnetic personality, and the profound impact of his iconic performances on the big screen. His charm, dedication, and versatility as an actor serve as great inspiration for me to relentlessly pursue my passions and dreams in life. But it's not only the glitz and glam around him; his charity efforts inspire us to make a constructive contribution to society."

"Among his on-screen portrayals, my favourite SRK performance was in the film *Swadesh*. His Mohan Bhargav was extremely unusual, as it deviated from his typical romantic image. He filled the character with depth and honesty, highlighting the hardships and metamorphosis of an NRI reconnecting with his origins and fighting to uplift his community, creating a genuinely memorable and impactful performance," adds Sukhangsu, who works as a planning engineer at an infra project at Dhenkanal.

Recalling the time he spent with his idol, "In 2017, I had the honour of meeting Shah Rukh Khan in person during a fan meet for his 52nd birthday. There, I interacted with other members of the SRK fan club, which

develops fan camaraderie and allows us to bond over our mutual enthusiasm for the actor. I also keep in touch with other fans through online communities like WhatsApp and social media groups, where our fan club is known as SRK Universe Balasore." Sukhangsu ex-

plained that as a member of the fan club, they have specific requirements, such as spreading positivity, respecting others, and supporting social causes, in addition to applauding the on-screen performance. They also do charity activities on SRK's birthdays and film anniversaries.

He went on to add, "Some of Shah Rukh Khan's qualities and attributes that I admire and aspire to emulate include his versatility, charisma, humility, passion, commitment to his work, and strong family values that have a global impact. I make an effort to provide factual and confirmed facts when questioned about specific topics concerning him.

Finally, becoming a member of the fan club is about supporting SRK's work and advocating social causes that he supports."

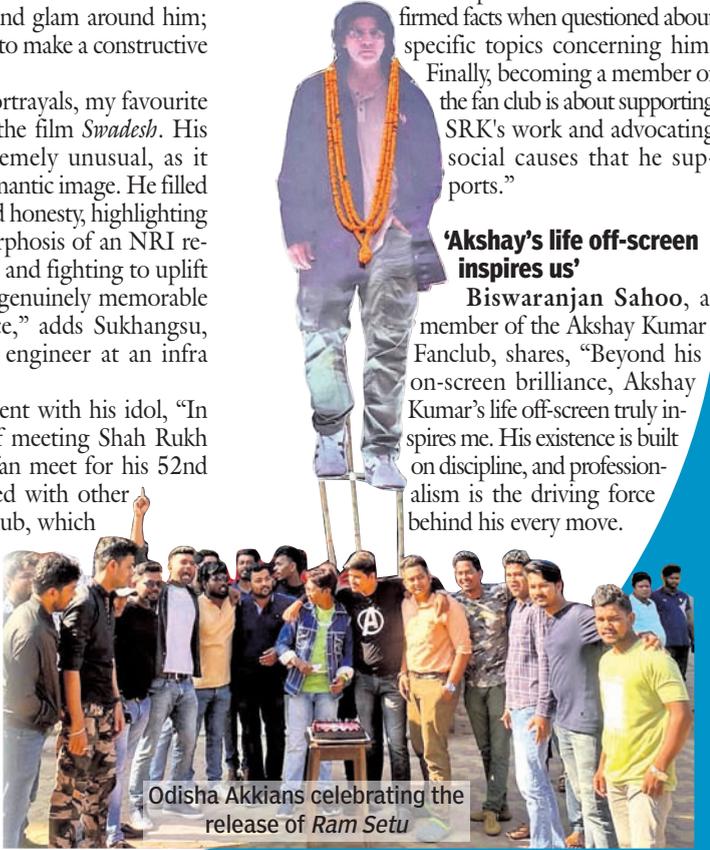
'Akshay's life off-screen inspires us'

Biswaranjan Sahoo, a member of the Akshay Kumar Fanclub, shares, "Beyond his on-screen brilliance, Akshay Kumar's life off-screen truly inspires me. His existence is built on discipline, and professionalism is the driving force behind his every move.

In a marked departure from merely revelling in the fame of their beloved idols, fan clubs have begun channelling their collective energy towards making a positive impact on society



Sukhangsu Jena



Odisha Akkians celebrating the release of Ram Setu



MAO cycle troupe at Ratha Jatra

These characteristics, combined with his unwavering dedication, serve as a guiding light for me as I navigate life's ups and downs. Though I am yet to get an opportunity to meet him in person, I hold out hope that one day I may have the honour of standing before him and expressing my admiration."

According to Biswaranjan, one of the most noteworthy qualities of Akshay Kumar's personality that drew him to the Khiladi star is his unreserved attention towards his fans. Unlike some celebrities who remove themselves from their fans, Akshay's affection for his fans is genuine. Such affection is uncommon in the world of celebrity, and it is what distinguishes him and makes him a beloved symbol in the hearts of millions around the world.

Narrating what they do for the good of society, he explained, "In keeping with my idol's generosity, I and my other fellow members have launched several initiatives to make a positive difference in society. We seek to mirror Akshay Kumar's humane side by organising blood donation camps, offering food, books, clothes, and education to impoverished children, and ac-



A blood donation camp organised by SRK fans

tively participating in campaigns to promote women's rights."

Signing off Biswaranjan said, "The love we have for Akshay Kumar is unselfish and unconditional. It extends beyond celebrity and adoration, into a profound sense of connection with his ideals and principles. With each passing day, we look forward to the day when fate will allow us to meet our beloved role model, turning a long-held desire into a pleasant reality."

'We want to spread the positivity of Dhonism'

It's not just the fans of matinee idols, followers of sports personalities are also doing good for society. MSDians' Association of Odisha (MAO), a fan club of famous cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni, aka MSD, is a case in point.

MAO founder Milan Manoranjan Panda, says, "As an admirer of my idol, MS Dhoni, one of the most charismatic cricketers the country has ever produced, I strive to emulate him. I wish to work with the MAO team to achieve positive changes in society. And as members of society, we have some responsibilities to it."

The association, which was founded with the goal of carrying on Dhoni's humanitarian attitude, focuses on various social welfare programmes throughout Odisha.

Recognising the power of unity and social responsibility, Milan stated, "The MAO seeks to make a positive impact on society through its departments that cater to health, education, agriculture, sports, the environment, webinars, and more."

Talking about the activities, he continued: "Every year on July 7, we hold a charity event to commemorate Dhoni's birthday. However, we organise frequent welfare activities in different parts of Odisha throughout the year, including sports, culture, and social work events. To ensure that the programmes run well, we have different branches in our club. It will be an accomplishment for us if we



Biswaranjan with fellow member



Eye check up camp organised by MAO

They organise health camps to provide free medical check-ups and essential treatment to underprivileged communities, conduct eye screening tests, and promote environmental initiatives, including cycling rallies for a greener future. The association also provides free computer education to needy children, added Milan.

MAO, which collaborates with other social organisations to promote education and healthcare, has an upcoming health camp at Mallikpur village in Cuttack district.

Members of the club, which received a bat with MS Dhoni's autograph, are planning to meet their idol to apprise him of the activities they have undertaken.

can have a small good impact on society."

The MAO is a fan club that takes immense pride in its contributions to social welfare through selfless dedication and financial support from its members, without relying on external assistance, said Milan.

"We want to send a message that MAO works beyond idol worship and contributes to greater causes, making their idol, MS Dhoni, proud. Dhoni has always stood for noble causes, and they are committed to spreading 'Dhonism' to the best of their ability," concludes Milan.



Bovine Welfare Program organised by MSDians

Saiyami on being physically judged

Actress Saiyami Kher opens up about facing toxic beauty standards while entering the entertainment industry.

The *Choked* actress recently took to Instagram to share a video, and says, "When I was starting out, there were a lot of people who said I should get a lip job and even a nose job done, which I think is a very wrong advice to give to 18-year-old. It's like the society you're living in is co-operating and accepting the way you are, but you don't fit the norms set by the industry."

Having faced the



harsh reality of being 'physically judged', the 31-year-old, who would be next seen in *Ghoomer* alongside Abhishek Bachchan, says, "These norms really didn't bother me, but I hope they completely disappear from our industry. We need to accept diversity in showbiz."

Terming commercial films as those that resonate with masses, she adds, "I have always hoped that my work would reach out to more people. I have always wanted such roles to come my way, as all the work you do, you want it to reach out to a mass number of people. Every actor wants their movie to do well."

AGENCIES

Acting in Hollywood was weird: Alia

Actress Alia Bhatt who made her transition from Bollywood to Hollywood with her new spy-thriller-action film *Heart of Stone* said that suddenly doing a movie in full English language was a bit weird for her, but overall it was a great experience for her.

Speaking on the transition, the *Kalank* actress said, "You know it was a bit awkward for me speaking in English all time, because I'm so used to speaking in Hindi even though I use English half the time, suddenly acting in English was a bit weird."

When asked what goes into playing a good villain, she said, "Belief...in your purpose. Because I think there are two sides to a story right and sometimes you are on the right side, sometimes you are on the wrong side or sometimes you are just on opposite sides. So as long as you deeply believe that your side is truly the right one, you know the other side is the villain, you are not the villain."

Heart of Stone is a Netflix film and will begin streaming August 11, 2023.

AIANS



'Making people laugh is the toughest job'

Ayushmann Khurrana, who is all set to reprise his role of Pooja in *Dream Girl 2*, agrees to the fact that it was a huge risk to play someone who dresses up as a girl and causes confusion.

Talking about the same the *Vicky Donor* actor shared, "*Dream Girl* was a blockbuster. So, the sequel had to match the expectations of the first film. I'm thrilled that people are finding *Dream Girl 2*'s trailer to be a laugh riot. I'm happy that it is making people feel that they will be supremely entertained when they see the film on the big screen."

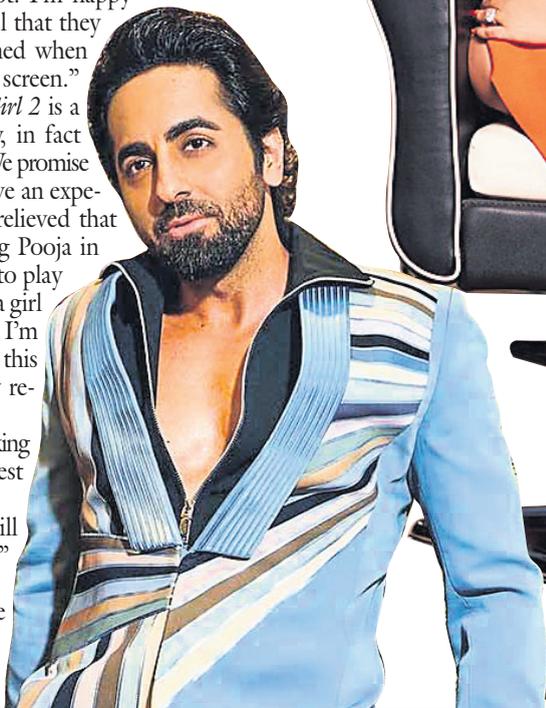
He continued, "*Dream Girl 2* is a film for everyone to enjoy, in fact laugh and fall off your seats. We promise that people are going to have an experience that is unique. I'm relieved that people like how I'm playing Pooja in the film! It was a huge risk to play someone who dresses up as a girl and cause all the confusion. I'm really happy that people love this avatar of mine. It is hugely rewarding."

Ayushman believes that making someone laugh is the toughest job.

"But I am sure this film will leave the audience in splits," he added.

Dream Girl 2 will release August 25.

AIANS



Rani to conduct masterclass at Melbourne fest

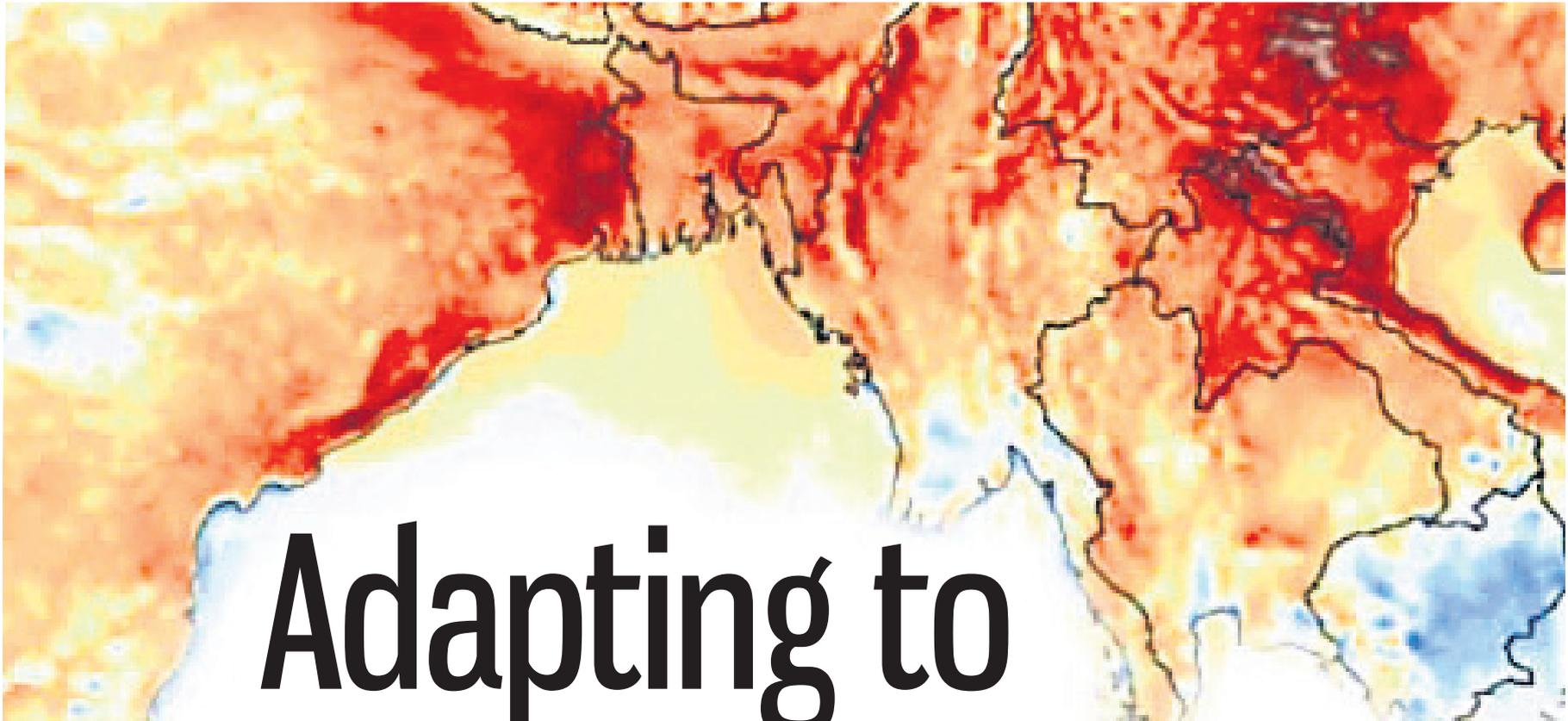
Actress Rani Mukerji will be conducting an exclusive masterclass on her illustrious journey in cinema at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM).

In a statement she said, "I'm honoured to have been invited to the 14th IFFM. As an actor, I have been fortunate enough to receive incredible love from people in Australia and I'm looking forward to sharing my journey in Indian cinema through a masterclass that I have been invited to conduct."

"I think it will be a beautiful experience to connect with my fans and cinephiles during this event. I'm ready to delve into some of the most memorable characters from my filmography and try to peel off layers of emotions and nostalgia attached to those characters and scenes," she added.

Over the years, Rani has made an incredible impact on the Indian film industry and has emerged as one of the most revered and beloved actors of modern-day cinema.

AIANS



Adapting to

HEATWAVES

EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT THE INCREASING FREQUENCY AND INTENSITY OF EXTREME WEATHER IS AN INDICATION OF GLOBAL, HUMAN-INDUCED CLIMATE CHANGE. SUCH SCENARIOS WERE UNFATHOMABLE JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, BUT THEY SAY IT'S SOMETHING PEOPLE WILL NOW HAVE TO GET USED TO

OP DESK

South Korea raises heat alert to highest for first time in 4 years, read a Reuter headline last week.

The blistering heat is reported to have claimed 23 lives across the country, more than tripling the previous year's total of seven.

Singapore, another Asian country where people now check for heat alerts as part of their morning routine before coming to work, is not faring any better.

"With climate change, many countries in the world, including Singapore, are seeing rising temperatures. It is therefore important for people to adapt," country's Sustainability Ministry and National Environment Agency warned in a recent joint statement.

On the other side, devastating floods recently swept through northern India, while China's Xinjiang province sweltered in temperatures of 52.2 degrees Celsius, exceeding

the previous record of 50.1 set in 2017.

Experts believe that the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather is an indication of global, human-caused climate change.

Such scenarios were unfathomable just a few years ago, but they say it's something people will have to accustom to.

With a major portion of the world in searing heat, **Sunday POST** examines the causes of rising global temperatures, their consequences, and what minimal remedies can be taken.

Possible explanations

El Nino, a weather phenomenon that changes rainfall patterns every few years, is partially to blame for the harsh weather. According to a study, temperatures in Asia tend to rise during El Nino years, resulting in warmer air.

However, other scientists are of the view that such weather will become more prevalent as a result of the continued use of fossil fuels.

"As long as we keep burning fossil fuels, we will see more and more of these extremes," said Friederike Otto, a senior lecturer in climate science at the

London School of Economics and Political Science.

"Even if we stop burning fossil fuels now, temperatures will not go down," she warned while adding "The heatwaves we are seeing now, we definitely have to live with that."

The vulnerable section

The heat is causing great distress for those living in marginalised communities with little access to public health services, which affects tens of millions of people throughout Asia.

According to Marina Romanello, executive director of the United Nations Countdown on Climate Change and Health, which analyses the links between the two, heat-related mortality has grown by nearly 70 percent globally since the early 2000s.

The consequences have been enormous, with hot temperatures severely limiting the ability of those like

farmers to work up to 12 hours a day in their fields, as they've been doing for generations.

According to Romanello, soaring temperatures caused around 470 billion work hours to be lost globally in 2021, resulting in a financial loss of almost US\$700 billion.

Nearly 450 million small or marginal farmers live in the Asia-Pacific region. According to scientists, the poorest countries, such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Myanmar, face the burden of climate change.

The time it takes to reconstruct low-income communities impacted by natural disasters, a lack of social welfare safety nets, and geographical issues such as being in vulnerable coastal locations are also a few reasons.

Loss of forests

Other dangers posed by rising temperatures include disastrous forest fires. Last week, Indonesian authorities reported that due to the dry weather, the number of regions vulnerable to wildfires had increased between July 17 and 23, serving as a gloomy reminder of a deadly 2015 inferno that engulfed Southeast Asia for five months. A subsequent research conducted in the United States linked that year's haze to more than 100,000 premature deaths in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

"Although not all hotspots will turn into fire spots, we must remain vigilant due to the significant increase," said a spokesman for Indonesia's BNPB disaster mitigation agency.





Health hazards

Hot and humid conditions have also brought worries of more mosquito-borne diseases like dengue and malaria, said Aravindan Srinivasan, director of thematic collaborations at the non-profit Asian Centre Philanthropy Network, which works to mitigate climate stress. Such diseases were already endemic to Southeast Asia, South America and sub-Saharan Africa, but have now started breaking out in uncharted territory like Europe. However, densely-populated Asia remains the most at risk. Five of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change – India, China, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia – are located in the region, Srinivasan pointed out.

Adaptation and mitigation

Mitigation and adaptation

tation are becoming increasingly critical as extreme weather increases demand for electricity to operate equipment like AC and fans, generating even more emissions. Power consumption records have recently been broken in various Chinese cities, with Shanghai apparently burning loads of coal every hour to keep the temperature in the city under control, while citizens in other countries, such as Vietnam, have had to deal with blackouts. Climate campaigners are now looking forward to the UN climate meet in Dubai at the end of the year, hoping for agreements to phase out fossil fuels and increase renewable energy. However, they argue that nations must prioritise the environment. Maintaining a balance between energy needs and decreasing emissions, according to Julie Arrighi, director of the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre in The Hague, Netherlands, is critical to prevent more frequent and violent heatwaves.

Experts say Asian countries are often enticed to use coal-

fired power since the fuel is relatively inexpensive in this part of the world, but this strategy is laden with concerns in the face of a changing climate.

Thermal power plants, that use energy generated by a steam boiler, which is generally powered by coal or gas, do not run as efficiently in extremely hot weather, according to Grant Hauber, strategic energy finance adviser at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

He observed that when it is really hot, such facilities frequently experience capacity reductions. According to the energy research tank Ember, in 2021, fossil fuels will provide approximately 2 of global electricity.

According to the International Energy Agency, worldwide coal consumption reached a new all-time high in 2022 and will remain near that level this year, as strong growth in power generation and industrial applications in Asia outpaces decreases in the United States and Europe.

Coal consumption increased by 3.3 last year to 8.3 billion tonnes, according to the report.

Asian demand has remained high in recent weeks as China ramps up coal-fired power capacity, according to AN bank.

However, as renewable energy prices fall, analysts predict that demand in Asia will shift significantly towards green

sources in the long run. "Increasingly, it may actually be renewables that step in to fill the gap," Hauber said, while adding that solar power saved the day last month during heat-related disruptions at gas-fired plants in the US state of Texas.

The bright side

Srinivasan's Singapore-based network, which includes philanthropists and huge corporations, is eager to fund mitigation and renewable energy efforts in Asia. It has been operating in India for the past six months and wants to expand into China and Southeast Asia soon.

His non-profit network collaborates with grass-roots organisations and different groups that work alongside governments to identify problem-solving projects for local communities, such as painting rooftops to reduce heat, but these initiatives are frequently financially strapped, according to Srinivasan.

"We have to look at both sides of the coin - mitigation and adaptation," he says.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Soaring temperatures caused around 470 billion work hours to be lost globally in 2021, resulting in a financial loss of almost US\$700 billion.

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Vaishali



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