

Climate displacement

A recent report on the socio-economic consequences of climate change argues that the Paris climate agreement could make millions of forest dwellers in Liberia and Democratic Republic of Congo homeless and without amenities of life. This raises the important question of environmental justice and indigenous rights. Climate change is relatively a new policy initiative; the nature of global climate governance is evolving every year and at present has become state-centred and involves grassroots/bottom-up perspectives. Many developing countries are trying to achieve their carbon targets by setting aside forested lands as reserves and protected areas. But environmental experts are concerned that designating natural spaces as reserves often entails removing the people who depend on those lands. Designating forest areas as environmentally protected could displace as many as 1.3 million in Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo alone. Liberia has the largest forest area amongst West African nations due to persistent efforts of its indigenous communities. Developing nations as a group must ensure that developed nations live up to their commitments and do not escape their promise of action based on historic responsibility. The increasingly fragmentary nature of national climate action leaves it open to influences, monetary and technical, as observed in the case of Liberia and DRC. International donors must ensure that they do not violate the principles of environmental justice and follow legal guidelines on indigenous rights. Environmental justice necessarily includes a distributive conception of justice but also embraces concepts/ideas of justice based on recognition, capabilities and participation. Any action that has the potential to displace millions without rehabilitation should refocus attention on human rights of indigenous people. International financing of environmental projects in Africa, Latin America or Asia must bear in mind that poor and marginalized communities are more prone to hazardous exposure from environmental pollution; and historically indigenous communities have been denied the opportunity to participate in decisions that directly affect their lives and livelihood. Thus to the greatest extent that is permitted by law and practice, indigenous people should be given an opportunity to present their views before an environmental project/plan is initiated. The need for substantive climate action should not be diminished/lessened after the Paris climate deal; suitable climate actions are required to reduce carbon emissions and the earth's rising temperature. New initiatives need more investments in green technology, carbon markets and ambitious commitments from the governments and the private sector. In the case of India, the NDA government must ensure that its next steps are decisive, follow a comprehensive framework of action developed by environmental experts, and engage non-state actors and sub-national stakeholders. A genuine climate action should reduce emissions and make the communities most vulnerable to climate change more adaptive.

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Temples show the way for water conservation

PARVEEN ARORA

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, FEBRUARY 10

Aiming at conserving water poured on 'Shivlings', two temples of the city have shown the way how a religious practice can be turned into a scientific method to maintain the water table.

The managements of Lord Shiva temple in NDRI and Sri Ram Mandir in Sector 8 have adopted this unique method to save water in 2009 and 2012, respectively. Earli-

er, the water used to virtually go down the drain.

The managements of both the temples have drilled a bore of more than 100 feet just near the 'Shivling' and the water offered by the devotees goes down into the bore. Due to this practice, not only does the temple remain clean, but also the vicinity is also not muddied. Experts working in the field of water conservation claimed it to be a unique step.

The initiative

The managements of Lord Shiva temple in NDRI and Sri Ram Mandir in Sector 8 have drilled a bore of more than 100 ft just near the 'Shivling'. The water offered by the devotees goes down into the bore.

Dr SK Kamra, Principal Scientist, Central Soil Salinity Research Institute (CSSRI), said that millions of litres water can be saved

through this method. He urged others to do adopt this method. This needs to be done all over the country, not just in Karnal, he said.

During the construction of the temple, the scientists had taken the initiative to save water which would be offered to Lord Shiva as they noticed the water offered by devotees in temples is completely wasted as it goes into the drain, said Dr. AK Srivastava, Director NDRI.

Moderate snowfall in high-altitude areas



Frozen Chandra river at Spiti valley. PHOTO: JAI KUMAR

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, FEBRUARY 10

The high-altitude tribal areas in Himachal had another spell of moderate snowfall, causing sharp fall in minimum temperatures in mid and higher hills even as weather remained dry in other parts of the state.

The region had a clear day in the morning but strong velocity winds swept the mid and higher hills and sky was overcast in the afternoon. The minimum temperatures dropped to minus 6.3 degree in Key-long, minus 3.4 degree in Kalpa and minus 1.2 degree in Manali while Shimla and Solan recorded a low of 3.3 degree and 3.4 degree, respectively, followed by Bhuntar 4.0 degree, Palampur 5.0 degree, Sundernagar 5.1 degree, Una and Dharamsala 6.7 degree and

Nahan 9.5 degree C.

The maximum temperatures rose by a few notches in lower hills. Una was the warmest in the region with a high of 25.6 degree, four degree above normal while Solan, Sundernagar and Bhuntar recorded the maximum temperatures at 22.5 degree, 21.4 degree and 21.2 degree, followed by Dharamsala 16.8 degree, Shimla 15.3 degree, Manali 13.6 degree and Kalpa 10.0 degree C.

The rain deficit from January 1 to February 10 has increased to 71 per cent. The region received an average rainfall of 34.9 mm against the normal rainfall of 120.4 mm which does not augur well for winter crops.

The local MeT office has predicted rains or snow over the next three days in higher hills and on February 11 and 12 in mid and lower hills.



■ Construction work going on at the Yamuna floodplains with DDA's permission for the event that will be held from February 11 to February 13.

BURHAAN KINU/HT PHOTO

Event hosting 35L on Yamuna floodplains angers green brigade

CONCERNS Art of Living Foundation barricades 1,000 acres, environmentalists say event will pollute fragile ecosystem

Vinod Rajput

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NOIDA: A mega spiritual event on the Yamuna flood plains that is expected to draw a crowd of 35 lakh people has drawn the ire of environmentalists. The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has given permission for the three-day event organised by The Art of Living Foundation near the Delhi-Noida-Delhi (DND) Flyway from Thursday.

The foundation has since last week set up a big stage, put up tents and barricaded 1,000 acres of floodplains earmarked for this global event that aims to initiate a dialogue on global peace and leadership with music and meditation. This event will begin on February 11 evening and culminate on February 13 night.

A bench headed by National Green Tribunal chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar had in January 2015 banned any new construction of any type (permanent or temporary) on the floodplains under the Maili Se

THE DDA SAID IT GAVE THE PERMISSION ON THE CONDITION THAT IT SHOULDN'T CREATE ANY POLLUTION OR DAMAGE THE FLOODPLAINS

Nirmal Yamuna Revitalisation plan 2017.

Environmentalists said hundreds of truckloads of waste that are expected to be generated will end up polluting the ecologically fragile ecosystem of the Yamuna.

"We do not have any estimate of waste to be generated but it will damage flora and fauna and violate NGT directions. I had written to the DDA, L-G, the Delhi chief minister and the irrigation department but nobody stopped this event. I had filed a petition in NGT on February 8 to stop this event. The NGT will hear it on February 11," said Manoj Misra of Yamuna Jiye Abhiyan.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to address the

inaugural event scheduled at 5pm on February 11, the organisers said.

The DDA said it had given permission on the condition that it should not create any kind of pollution or damage the floodplains.

"In the permission letter, we had made it clear that it is subject to compliance of requisite directions issued by the NGT in past. The event will not pollute the river. It has activities that will help in reducing pollution," said JP Aggarwal principal secretary (land disposals), DDA.

The foundation said it had to organise this event there because Delhi does not have a big ground to organise an event of this magnitude.

"We will put up portable restrooms with chemical mechanism to clean trash. Volunteers will not send any waste to the river. We will pour enzymes generated from raw vegetables to help clean the Yamuna water. We want to work for cleaning the Yamuna and so cannot pollute it," said Gautam Vig spokesperson of this event.

₹5,000 cr sought to tackle drought: Govt to SC

NREGA IMPLEMENTATION The court had earlier asked govt to inform what it had done to tackle the distress situation in affected states

Satya Prakash

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NEW DELHI: The rural development ministry has sought for an additional ₹5,000 crore from the finance ministry for NREGA implementation, especially in drought-hit states, the Centre told the Supreme Court on Wednesday.

The court had earlier asked the NDA government to inform it what it had done to tackle a rural distress following back-to-back droughts. The Centre, in its response said, the fresh amount had been sought in view of the government's decision to provide additional 50 days' employment NREGA.

The court is hearing a petition by the Yogendra Yadav-led Swaraj Abhiyan, which alleged that large sections of the rural population were still in pitiable

conditions due to the impact of last summer's drought. The NGO sought a direction to states to distribute food grains not just to families below the poverty line but to all those living in states facing severe rural crises.

However, in an affidavit filed in the court, the ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare said pulses and edible oil were not part of targeted public distribution system (TPDS) of the Centre.

Maintaining that food subsidy requirement under National Food Security Act (₹1.31 lakh crore per annum) was 26% higher than the erstwhile TPDS, the Centre said it put an additional burden of ₹27,300 crore on it.

The Act mandates the state administration to provide 5 kg rice/wheat per member every month to all families below the poverty line (BPL).

"There are fiscal constraints



■ The drought-hit states are Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and Chhattisgarh.

HT FILE PHOTO

on stretching the food subsidy bill further," it said, adding "State governments are free to distribute additional items out of their own resources."

The drought-ridden states included Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and Chhattisgarh.

The SC — which had asked the Centre to provide details of the scheme's implementation — is likely to take up the matter for further hearing on February 15.

On February 1, a bench headed by justice MB Lokur had come down heavily on the BJP government in Gujarat for failing to implement the National Food Security Act.

"It is an Act passed by

FUND SHORTAGE

■ The Centre, in its response said, the fresh amount had been sought in view of the government's decision to provide additional 50 days' employment NREGA

■ The court is hearing a plea by Swaraj Abhiyan, which alleged that large sections of the rural population were still in pitiable conditions due to the impact of last summer's drought

Parliament. Do you (Gujarat) want to break away from the Union of India? Tomorrow, Bihar will say we are not implementing it because Gujarat is not implementing it," the bench had said, expressing shock at the scant regard shown by the state for Parliament.

On Wednesday, the Centre informed the SC that Gujarat was likely to implement the Act from April 2016.

मेधा सुनाती रहीं, दो घंटे खड़े रहे कलेक्टर

नर्मदा बचाओ
आंदोलनकारियों ने किया
कलेक्टोरेट का घेराव

बड़वानी @ पत्रिका 11-2-16

नर्मदा बचाव आंदोलन की मेधा पाटकर के नेतृत्व में बड़वानी कलेक्टोरेट कार्यालय के घेराव के दौरान कलेक्टर अजयसिंह गंगवार दो घंटे तक खड़े होकर समस्याएं सुनते रहे। सरदार सरोवर बांध के



डूब गांवों के लिए बने पुनर्वास स्थलों पर एनवीडीए द्वारा हजारों करोड़ खर्च करने के बाद भी हालात जस के तस हैं। कलेक्टर ने पुनर्वास स्थलों को पंचायतों के अधीन करने की घोषणा की थी। पुनर्वास स्थलों की लड़ाई लड़ रहे नर्मदा बचाओ आंदोलन और डूब प्रभावित इससे आहत थे। आदेश वापस नहीं लिए जाने पर नर्मदा बचाओ आंदोलन कार्यकर्ताओं और सैकड़ों डूब प्रभावितों ने कलेक्टोरेट का घेराव कर कार्यालय परिसर में जा डटे।

शाम 4.05 बजे कलेक्टर गंगवार ने अपने निर्णय को वापस लेने की घोषणा की।

डेढ़ हजार करोड़ का भ्रष्टाचार

नर्मदा बचाओ आंदोलन की मेधा पाटकर ने बताया कि पुनर्वास स्थलों में मूलभूत सुविधाएं जुटाने का जिम्मा नर्मदा घाटी विकास प्राधिकरण का है। डेढ़ हजार करोड़ रुपए खर्च करने के बाद भी पुनर्वास स्थलों की स्थिति बदतर है।

नर्मदा नदी में पानी की कमी ♦ नदी किनारे मछुआरों की बोट का जमावड़ा

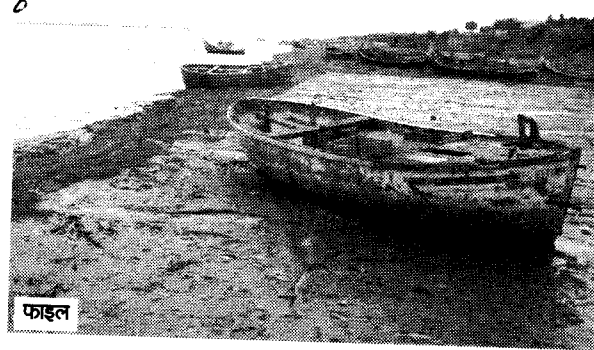
मछुआरों के सामने रोजगार का संकट

भरुच @ पत्रिका — 11-2-18

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गुजरात की जीवन रेखा माने जाने वाली नर्मदा नदी अब खुद जीवन के लिए तरस रही है। नदी में सरदार सरोवर बांध से पानी नहीं छोड़े जाने से इनोर से भाड़भूत तक के इलाके में रहने वाले पंद्रह हजार से ज्यादा मछुआरों के सामने रोजगार का खतरा उत्पन्न हो गया है।

इनोर से भाड़भूत तक के पचास किमी से ज्यादा के इलाके में पंद्रह हजार से ज्यादा मछुआरे मछली का व्यवसाय करते हैं। ये मछुआरे बरसात के समय हिल्सा मछली पकड़कर पूरे साल की कमाई कर लेते हैं। इस साल नर्मदा बांध में से नदी में



पानी नहीं छोड़े जाने से उनकी बोटों का नदी किनारे जमावड़ा लगने लगा है।

अरब सागर के खारे पानी से हिल्सा मछली नर्मदा नदी के मीठे

पानी में प्रजनन के लिए आती है। इस हिल्सा मछली पर पंद्रह हजार से ज्यादा मछुआरों का रोजगार निर्भर है। इस साल बरसात के बाद बांध से पानी नहीं छोड़े जाने से नदी सूखने

विदेशों में है हिल्सा मछली का बोलबाला

पूरे भारत में सिर्फ भरुच की नर्मदा नदी से मिलने वाली हिल्सा मछली विदेशों तक प्रसिद्ध है। भाड़भूत गांव से हिल्सा मछलियों का करोड़ों रुपए का कारोबार होता है। भाड़भूत गांव से आगे नर्मदा नदी अरब सागर में जाकर मिलती है। अरब सागर का खारा पानी

इनोर तक पहुंच जाने से मछली मारने के व्यवसाय पर इसका गहरा असर पड़ रहा है। नदी में क्षारीयता बढ़ने से समुद्र से प्रजनन के लिए मीठे पानी में आने वाली हिल्सा मछली की संख्या तेजी से घट रही है। इस कारण मछुआरों में चिंता बढ़ रही है।

लगी है। कई स्थानों पर नदी में टापू दिखने लगा है। फरवरी तथा मार्च में आने वाली मछली मारने का सीजन विफल होने की संभावना दिख रही है। बांध से पानी नहीं छोड़ने पर मछुआरों को करोड़ों रुपए का नुकसान हो सकता है। बरसात में

हिल्सा मछली नर्मदा नदी के मीठे पानी में आकर लाखों की संख्या में अंडा देती है। फरवरी व मार्च में अंडे विकसित होकर मछली बन जाते हैं। नदी से दरिया में वापस जाने वाली मछलियों को पकड़कर मछुआरे जीवन निर्वाह करते हैं।

नदी जोड़ो परियोजना पर जल्द होगी बैठक

मुंबई। नदी जोड़ने के लिए नर-
पार-तापी-नर्मदा परियोजना के
सामने आ रही समस्याओं पर चर्चा
करने के लिए जल्द एक बैठक की
जाएगी। महाराष्ट्र के जल संसाधन
मंत्री गिरीश महाजन ने बुधवार को
यह जानकारी दी।

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11-9-16

आज हो सकती है हल्की बारिश

सुबह के वक्त कुछ इलाकों में छा सकता है कोहरा

■ नगर संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

आज दिल्ली में कुछ जगहों पर हल्की बारिश होने की उम्मीद है। मौसम विभाग ने कहा है कि गुरुवार को बादल छाए रह सकते हैं। शाम और रात के वक्त बारिश होने की संभावना है। मैक्सिमम टेंपरेचर 25 डिग्री और मिनिमम टेंपरेचर 11 डिग्री रहने का अनुमान है। सुबह के वक्त सामान्य कोहरा भी छा सकता है।

मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने कहा कि दिल्ली और आसपास के इलाकों में अगले दो से तीन दिनों तक मौसम सामान्य रहने की संभावना है। बीते दो से तीन दिनों से जो अच्छी धूप निकल रही है। उसके निकलने की उम्मीद गुरुवार को कम रह सकती है। साथ ही दिन भर तेज हवाएं चलने की उम्मीद है। बुधवार को दिन भर मौसम सामान्य रहा। मैक्सिमम टेंपरेचर नॉर्मल से तीन डिग्री ज्यादा के साथ 26.2 डिग्री दर्ज हुआ। मिनिमम टेंपरेचर नॉर्मल से दो डिग्री कम के साथ 8.6 डिग्री दर्ज हुआ। हवा में मैक्सिमम ह्यूमिडिटी 97 पर्सेंट दर्ज हुई।

मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने कहा कि दिल्ली और आसपास के इलाकों में नए वेस्टर्न डिस्टर्बेंस के इफेक्ट मौसम में बदलाव होने की उम्मीद है।



स्काइमेट के मौसम वैज्ञानिक महेश पलावत ने कहा कि दिल्ली में इस हफ्ते मौसम सामान्य रहने का अनुमान है। मौजूदा मॉडल्स से जानकारी मिली है। गुरुवार को हल्की बारिश हो सकती है। साथ ही 12 फरवरी के दिन भी बूदाबूदी होने की संभावना है।

ढाई गुना बढ़ा पल्यूशन लेवल

■ स, नई दिल्ली : दिल्ली में बुधवार को पल्यूशन लेवल नॉर्मल से ढाई गुना ज्यादा दर्ज हुआ। मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने कहा कि यह प्रदूषित कणों के लेवल से ज्यादा रहा, लेकिन यह खतरनाक कैटेगरी तक नहीं पहुंचा है। लेकिन मंगलवार की तुलना में पल्यूशन लेवल बढ़ा है। पल्यूशन बढ़ने की वजह है कि बुधवार को दिल्ली में कम रफ्तार से हवाएं चलीं। मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ अर्थ साइंसेस के प्रोजेक्ट सफर में एवरेज पीएम 2.5 का लेवल 155.3 माइक्रो ग्राम क्यूबिक मीटर (एमजीसीएम) दर्ज हुआ।

जं-11-2-16

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Time Wetland Rules are implemented by states

By Neha Sinha, Feb 10, 2016,

On February 2, the world celebrated the International Wetlands Day. This is fitting particularly for India, where wetlands have always been celebrated and used in some form. We rejoice when it rains, have built our cities next to rivers, and have created acres and acres of paddy fields, all joining up into a living, ethnographic entity.

It is also fitting then that it took years of hard work to create a legislation for the diverse array of wetlands that India possesses, but tragically, this is mostly on paper. Taking note of this, the National Green Tribunal recently sent a notice to the states asking for action taken to protect wetlands.

Our legislation maps out the various corporeal forms of wetlands, and importantly, also the natural forms in which they do not resemble wetlands. The Wetland Rules, 2010, say that wetlands are an area of marsh, fen, peatland or water, natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water (with depth of six metres or less), which includes all inland waters such as lakes, reservoirs, tanks, backwaters, lagoons, creeks, estuaries and man-made wetlands along with the wetlands' zone of influence.

Thus, wetlands are waterbodies endowed by nature, or made by us; many wetlands are ecologically water bodies even if they are seasonally dry.

Further, the Wetland Rules set down governance which mandate that wetlands fulfilling ecological parameters need appropriate protection. Yet, despite this legislative definition which considers both ecological and social dimensions, the Wetland Rules have not been implemented.

Consider this: the Wetland Rules mandated the creation of a Central Wetlands Regulatory Authority (CWRA) which will oversee issues related to wetlands identified for protection. Not only have most states not fully identified wetlands for protection, but the CWRA has been defunct since 2012.

At the primary level, this creates a huge gap in the protection matrix for wetlands. Wetlands, as habitats for biodiversity and repositories of ecosystem services, do not get adequate protection unless they are already in protected areas. At the secondary level, this creates conflict in land uses. The Wetland Atlas says there are 1,88,470 natural and manmade wetlands in India. But several times, they are seen as 'land' rather than 'wet' and annexed for terrestrial purposes.

There is a lot of finger-pointing on the 2015 Chennai floods. But there is a consensus that the floods were exacerbated (if not caused) by building over wetlands and swamps. The fact that wetlands are not considered in planning exercises has led to losses in billions of dollars, and psychological trauma for all those who were flood-affected. 'Zones of influence' of wetlands were not protected in Chennai: notably the catchments and water sheds of the Adyar river. While wetlands comprise waterbodies, the zone of influence of the wetland includes run-offs, areas which are swampy (thus turning dry in non-monsoon or summer season), sources of water bodies, drainage outlets et cetera.

If the zone of influence of the wetland is encroached, then the wetland often ceases to exist. With rapid real estate development in National Capital Region, Bhadkal, Damdam and Surajkund, lakes have had their zones of influence gobbled up. A result today is that these lakes have shrivelled up, and for all purposes behave more like land than wetlands. This is likely to further impact the rather desertified, dry Aravali stretch and Haryana's low water table.

Given the Chennai and the Srinagar floods, are we going to break down the roads, houses and flyovers that we have built over canals, swamps and drainage streams to stop the floods of tomorrow? While the past cannot be undone, surely the future



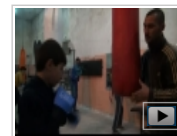
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can be better.

If you look at satellite maps of the Great Northern Plains of India, you will see strings of wetlands and wetland complexes, like beads on a necklace. This is the North Plain, where much of our food is produced. Attracted to wetlands, and wetland complexes, each year, tens of thousands of water birds, ducks, cranes and others sweep down on them.

'Barren land' for housing

Look at the same bodies in peak summer, and these wetlands are dismissed as "barren land" or wasteland. These are then earmarked for quick housing all over the country (the Commonwealth Games village complex on Delhi's Yamuna river bed, and Bengaluru's numerous lake-sides) for compensatory afforestation schemes, and for non-wetland purposes.

Wetland governance needs to involve the community, because of the very manner in which wetlands are being used today. In Srinagar's Dal Lake — which incidentally, has been built over, shrinking from over 75 square km to about 18 sq km, important stakeholders are traditional horticulturalists and vegetable growers.

In a meeting and site visit there last year, I was told that 'organic' flowers and produce — cultivated over generations with no fertiliser or chemical input — are no longer so organic. This is because the lake is so choked with sewage that the bounty is no longer clean. Much of the wetland's zone of influence is encroached, even as sewage is continuously going in.

Both the Wetland Rules and the International Ramsar Convention say that wetlands which are 'of outstanding natural beauty' are to be protected. Unfortunately, many would have us believe that this is a whimsical condition divorced from reality.

Wetlands are not lands waiting to be colonised. Perhaps, real estate and 'development' plans would prefer it more if wetlands could float in the sky like rainclouds, thus giving a clear field for colonisation of 'land'.

We do not need more floods to recognise the ecological and ecosystem services that wetlands provide. What we do need is zonation that clearly sets aside drainage systems and zones of influence in town and city planning. In the case of wetlands, the cost of policy inaction would create a thirst that no engineering would be able to replace.

(The writer is with the Bombay Natural History Society)

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