

# NEWSREEL WORLD

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**ALANNA LESLIE:**

Hi, I'm Alanna Leslie and welcome to Newsreel World.

Today we're talking about Kenya, Australia and Tanzania, but first...

Residents in the Himalayan town of Joshimath are still struggling to return to a normal life – a year after cracks suddenly appeared in hundreds of their buildings.

The land on which the town is built has been weakened by decades of heavy construction work and now climate change. Many houses are collapsing and some roads have become impassable because of massive cracks.

Ayushi Shah has more.

**AYUSHI SHAH:** The quiet town of Joshimath is nestled in the Himalayan foothills. Gorgeous snow-capped mountains overlook the region and the sound of birds chirping is what most locals wake up to.

But the tranquillity that once defined this scenic destination has been replaced by the unsettling visuals of creaking homes and crumbling structures.

For decades, the government ignored expert warnings against blasting, building and digging in this geographically sensitive region.

Then, in January last year, the sleepy town of Joshimath was suddenly all over news headlines.

**Newsreader:** Cracks on roads, houses collapsed

**AYUSHI SHAH:** This was happening because of a phenomenon called land subsidence, where the land starts literally sinking.

In simple terms, land subsidence occurs when too much water is pumped out from under the ground. The soil loses support, causing the land surface to gradually sink.

In 2003, local activists who'd been observing the impact of construction on the town for decades founded the Save Joshimath NGO.



Atul Sati was born and raised in Joshimath. Today, he is one of the leaders of this NGO. A year later, he tells me more about what the scene is like on the ground.

**Atul Sati:** Houses still have cracks and some buildings were demolished by the government because they were deemed dangerous. Areas that were full of life are now quiet. There are entire neighbourhoods where everyone has left.

**AYUSHI SHAH:** Rehabilitation talks are underway but with no major success.

**Atul Sati:** The government's recent proposal, marking 60-70% of residential areas as 'danger zones,' has not resonated well with the locals. The suggested rehabilitation land, over 100 kms away, is remote and threatens livelihoods without offering viable solutions. So the locals are very upset.

**AYUSHI:** His own house has developed cracks and is in the danger zone. This is a big deal for Atul. For him and his family, Joshimath has been home for more than 12 generations. He was born here and he has a big family here as well.

**Atul Sati:** Leaving Joshimath is unimaginable for me. It's not merely a home or a piece of land; it's woven into the fabric of our faith, our tradition, and our very identity. The thought of leaving is out of the question; after all, our family's connection with Joshimath has been for about 300 years.

**AYUSHI SHAH:** He has a question for the government.

**Atul Sati:** On one side the government is spending so heavily on stabilisation projects and on the other they are asking us to rehabilitate. How are both possible? If they are hopeful about stabilisation, then why should we have to leave?

**AYUSHI SHAH:** The Indian government recently approved a plan of more than 170 million dollars for the recovery and reconstruction in Joshimath. The aim of the three-year plan is to make Joshimath an example of ecological sustainability.

Joshimath's saga mirrors that of other Himalayan towns, where poorly planned construction converges with climate change, leaving homes unsafe and families in distress.

This is Ayushi Shah reporting for Newsreel World from Mumbai, India.

**ALANNA:**

Thanks Ayushi.



**Sting**

**Music bed**

**ALANNA:**

Australian scientists have discovered the brightest known object in the universe, known as a quasar.

Scientists have known about quasars since the 1950s. They're found at the centre of galaxies and have supermassive black holes at their cores. As matter gets pulled into the black hole, a vast amount of energy is produced making quasars extremely hot and bright.

This latest quasar is 500 trillion times brighter than our sun and is so powerful that it's vacuuming up the equivalent of a sun a day.

**Students:** Three, two, one...

**ALANNA:**

That's the moment students in Kenya celebrated their teacher Rose Tata Wekesa setting a world record for the longest ever science lesson.

Rose's teaching marathon lasted 62 hours 33 minutes and 34 seconds, and she trained for it by staying awake for 44 hours at a time in the days leading up to the event.

Speaking to the news website Citizen Digital, Rose said she wanted "to motivate young ones in school who want to become teachers by showing a teacher can achieve greater things beyond the classroom."

**Music: Missy by Packs**



**ALANNA:**

That was a short clip of Missy by the Toronto-based indie band Packs.

While recording their second album last year the band stayed in a cabin in rural Quebec and used a sauna as a makeshift recording booth.

**ALANNA:**

Like much of Africa, Tanzania has been badly hit by climate change. Many areas have suffered years of drought and in December 68 people died in floods and landslides caused by unseasonal rains

There's now a growing youth movement in the country raising awareness of the issue. One of the movement's leading lights is thirteen year old Sharon Ringo.

And on top of her campaigning Sharon has been appointed Tanzania's youngest ever tourist ambassador.

Charles Kombe is in Dar es Salaam to speak to Sharon.

**Sharon Ringo:** An elephant has a very good memory

**Ringo Wowo:** A big memory like you!

**CHARLES KOMBE:** It all started when Sharon was three. Her dad used to take her and her brothers on road trips to tourist destinations. As she grew up, her family realised that she loved nature, wildlife and tourism.

**Sharon Ringo:** Welcome to Tanzania, the wonderland of the world!

**CHARLES KOMBE:** Today, Sharon is not only the Trade and Tourism Ambassador for the East African Community but also a global climate activist and the founder of the Sharon Ringo Foundation.



**Sharon Ringo:** In my foundation we have a goal to plant 10 million trees in the next five years and so far we have already planted over 49 thousand trees. I don't see my role as an opportunity but as a responsibility to inspire children, youth and adults within our region by showcasing the importance of sustainable tourism and the environment.

**CHARLES KOMBE:** Her organisation inspires young people to love and protect the environment by offering tours to various destinations such as Kazimzumbwi Nature Forest Reserve and the national museum.

**Sharon Ringo:** We usually offer the Sharon Ringo Dar tour, where we take many various children, youths and adults, we give them a tour of our tourism and environment to see how Tanzania's been going and, you know, like that. And it's been a success in these past two years, and we are going to do another Sharon Ringo Dar tour this year, around July to August and we're hoping many kids join us.

**CHARLES KOMBE:** Thanks to the support from her family, Sharon has become a positive influence. Ringo Wowo is her father.

**Ringo Wowo:** Sharon being the Trade and Tourism ambassador for the East African Community and a climate activist has changed the dynamics of our thinking, particularly myself. I'd say I was not so fond on environment, trees. One of those people who used to buy plots and cut all the trees to clear the bushes and everything. But now after getting involved with Sharon I got to learn a lot of stuff and realise the significance of trees, nature and environment.

**CHARLES KOMBE:** Meanwhile, Sharon is actively leading her organisation, advocating for tourism, and striving to make the world a better place for all. She's becoming a role model for many young people in East Africa.

Charles Kombe, Newsreel World, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

**ALANNA:** Thanks Charles. That's all from me today. See you soon!

Bye!