



'BAG FULL OF TRAGEDIES'

Mourning And Desperation Grip Families In Grief

Nazir Ganaie

Srinagar: The boat tragedy in Gandbal, Soteng area of capital Srinagar has unveiled a bag full of tragedies and miseries as families desperately search for their loved ones.

Parents, overcome with grief, frantically search bags, hoping for any sign of their missing children. The ongoing search is a grim reminder of

the devastating impact such tragedies can have on families and communities.

The tragic incident along the banks of the river Jhelum, where a boat capsized, has left the entire area in mourning. Six lives have been lost, and the search continues for at least three missing persons, including a father-son duo. Later the administration issued a detailed list of victims and also

those who were rescued. The number stands at 19, where the locals quoted different figures.

"Why are you coming now to shoot all this? Do you want this to go to deaf ears? We have been sobbing, waiting for this bridge to get completed. Nothing happened till our area became a graveyard of dreams and aspirations," Ateeka Bano, a wailing woman at the site, says. Another woman in her late

50's, Shahida Begum, adds, "I was preparing tea. I live just nearby, just opposite the bridge. I overheard a big scream. I thought this nearby army camp had been attacked. I went out running and shouting. I saw people gathering at the river banks and then this tragedy struck us," she says, adding "The river's cruelty knows no bounds, submerging us in sorrow and consuming

our loved ones with its relentless force. This water has been too cruel for us. Sometimes it submerged us. Sometimes it consumes our dear ones."

"Our hearts weigh heavy with sorrow and uncertainty. The atmosphere among us is somber, shrouded in a cloud of apprehension as we await any news," says Muhammad Ilyas, a local. One of the boatmen, Shakeel Ahamd, who [More on P6](#)

LG Grieved By Loss Of Lives

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor, J&K, Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that he was grieved by the boat capsizing, which claimed the lives of its occupants.

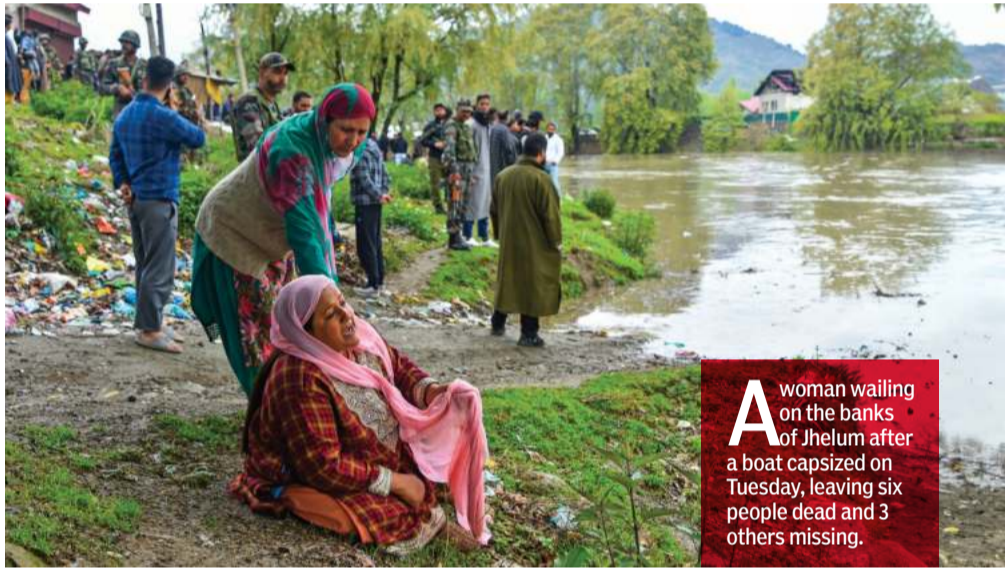
LG Sinha in a post on X (formerly Twitter) said, "I am deeply grieved by the loss of lives due to a boat accident in Srinagar. My thoughts are with the bereaved families & I pray to the Almighty to give them strength to withstand this immense loss. Team of SDRF, Army & [More on P6](#)

Boat Tragedy: Rescue Ops Continue Through Night To Locate 3 Missing

Residents Bid Tearful Adieu To Five Dead

Srinagar: Entire Kashmir plunged into deep shock and grief after a boat ferrying school kids, locals and a few non-J&K residents capsized at Gandabal-Soteng area of Batwara in Srinagar on Tuesday resulting in the death of six persons including a mother, her two children and the boatman.

The incident occurred at 8:15 am when a boat with at least 15 persons on board, including two women, four school kids and locals was trying to cross from Gandabal to Batwara. The two school kids, accompanied by their mother, were heading for



A woman wailing on the banks of Jhelum after a boat capsized on Tuesday, leaving six people dead and 3 others missing.

KO Photo | Abid Bhat

'Limited Schools In Locality'

In Gandbal locality, only one government primary school is functional with locals saying that the 'inadequate and poor infrastructure' prompts them to send their wards to other places and cross-river to pursue education.

An official source said that the government primary school in Gandbal was established in year 2011 and since then have been demanding an upgradation of the school. "In a recent Back to Village (B2V) program, [More on P6](#)

Bridge Of Broken Promises



Auqib Javed

Srinagar: For years, the Gandbal bridge had been the collective groan of the morning commute, a rusty skeletal frame to perpetually unfulfilled promises. As they bobbed along in boats across the Jhelum River, conversations inevitably turned to the bridge. While construction began

years ago, progress seemed to crawl. Residents might jokingly nudge each other and say, "Maybe next year," with a hint of longing in their voices.

Yesterday, however, the familiar grumbling morphed into a different kind of murmur - one laced with shock and grief. A boat carrying mostly school children capsized in the [More on P6](#)

Twin Boys Lost, Dreams Drowned

Agencies

Born with a single heartbeat echoing in two chests, Tahir Fayaz and Mudasir Fayaz were not just twins, but kindred spirits. Their infectious laughter and playful banter painted every ordinary day with vibrant hues of joy. Alongside their mother, they formed an inseparable trio. However, fate dealt a [More on P6](#)

Political Parties Suspend Poll Campaign

Various political parties in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday suspended campaigning for the parliamentary elections in the wake of the boat capsizing tragedy that left six people dead. National Conference (NC) candidate for the Srinagar [More on P6](#)

Congress, NC, PDP Responsible For Fake Encounters: Amit Shah

Says 'Lotus' Will Bloom On Its Own In Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Union minister Amit Shah on Tuesday slammed the Congress, National Conference and PDP, alleging that most fake encounters and incidents of firing on youths in Jammu and Kashmir occurred during their rule.

Rejecting rival parties' charge the BJP was more interested in Kashmir's land than the welfare of its people, he said the BJP is in no haste and believes in winning the hearts of people as it will ultimately lead to the 'lotus', the party's poll



symbol, blooming across the Valley.

Addressing an election rally here, Shah also said that assembly polls in J&K will be held according to the dateline

set by the Supreme Court (September 30). "Nobody should have any doubt on this," the minister said.

Shah alleged that the Congress, National Conference [More on P6](#)

'No Discrimination With Muslims Under Modi'

Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Tuesday said that there was no discrimination with the Muslim community in the country under Prime Minister Narendra Modi led government which focused on "service, good governance and well-being of the poor" after coming to power in 2014. The information and broadcasting minister accused the Congress of dividing people on [More on P6](#)

HC Comes To Bilquis Mir's Rescue

Directs Govt To Permit Her To Travel To Japan

M AHMAD

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has directed the government to grant permission to Bilquis Mir, International athlete and Coach in the Sport of Canoeing and Kayaking, for travelling abroad. Bilquis has been selected as Chief Finish Line Judge in the Asian Canoe Sprint Olympic Qualifier to be held in Japan from April 14 to 21. She has also been selected as a Judge (ITO) for the Paralympic Games to be held in Paris, France, from August 28 to September 8 this year, and is nominated from Asia for 2024 Paralympic [More on P6](#)



(Bilquis) to travel abroad for the event scheduled in Japan in the first Instance," a bench of Justice Sindhu Sharma said while hearing a petition filed by Bilquis Mir.

In her plea, Bilquis said that she has been selected by the Asian Canoe Confederation as a Chief Finish Line Judge in the Asian Canoe Sprint Olympic Qualifier to be held in Japan from April 14 to 21. She has also been selected as a Judge (ITO) for the Paralympic Games to be held in Paris, France, from August 28 to September 8 this year, and is nominated from Asia for 2024 Paralympic [More on P6](#)

WATER TRANSPORT REGULATION Committee Formed To Frame Policy

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Authorities here on Tuesday set up a committee to frame a policy for the regulation of water transport in the wake of a boat capsized in the Jhelum river, claiming six lives.

"Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today called an urgent meeting of officers of various departments to frame a strategy to avoid unfortunate incidents of boat capsizing in future and save precious lives," an official said.

Bidhuri, while stressing on the safety measures for water transportation, issued an advisory mandating life-saving jackets for all onboard passengers, he said.

The divisional commissioner constituted a committee to frame a policy for the regulation of water transport. This team headed by Kashmir Additional Mourning And [More on P6](#)



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
Election Commission of India



चुनाव का पर्व
DESH KA GARV
LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024

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Will AI Help Or Hinder Trust In Science?

360info

In the past year, generative artificial intelligence tools — such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and OpenAI's video generation tool Sora — have captured the public's imagination.

All that is needed to start experimenting with AI is an internet connection and a web browser. You can interact with AI like you would with a human assistant: by talking to it, writing to it, showing it images or videos, or all of the above.

While this capability marks entirely new terrain for the general public, scientists have used AI as a tool for many years.

But with greater public knowledge of AI will come greater public scrutiny of how it's being used by scientists.

AI is already revolutionising science — six per cent of all scientific work leverages AI, not just in computer science, but in chemistry, physics, psychology and environmental science.

Nature, one of the world's most prestigious scientific journals, included ChatGPT on its 2023 Nature's 10 list of the world's most influential and, until then, exclusively human scientists.

The use of AI in science is twofold.

At one level, AI can make scientists more productive.

When Google DeepMind



released an AI-generated dataset of more than 380,000 novel material compounds, Lawrence Berkeley Lab used AI to run compound synthesis experiments at a scale orders of magnitude larger than what could be accomplished by humans.

But AI has even greater potential: to enable scientists to make discoveries that otherwise would not be possible at all.

It was an AI algorithm that for the first time found signal patterns in brain-activity data that pointed to the onset of epileptic seizures, a feat that not even the most experienced human neurologist can repeat.

Early success stories of the use of AI in science have led some

to imagine a future in which scientists will collaborate with AI scientific assistants as part of their daily work.

That future is already here. CSIRO researchers are experimenting with AI science agents and have developed robots that can follow spoken language instructions to carry out scientific tasks during fieldwork.

While modern AI systems are impressively powerful — especially so-called artificial general intelligence tools such as ChatGPT and Gemini — they also have drawbacks.

Generative AI systems are susceptible to "hallucinations" where they make up facts.

Or they can be biased.

Google's Gemini depicting America's Founding Fathers as a diverse group is an interesting case of over-correcting for bias.

There is a very real danger of AI fabricating results and this has already happened. It's relatively easy to get a generative AI tool to cite publications that don't exist.

Furthermore, many AI systems cannot explain why they produce the output they produce.

This is not always a problem. If AI generates a new hypothesis that is then tested by the usual scientific methods, there is no harm done.

However, for some applications a lack of explanation can be a problem.

Replication of results is a basic tenet in science, but if the steps that AI took to reach a conclusion remain opaque, replication and validation become difficult, if not impossible.

And that could harm people's trust in the science produced.

A distinction should be made here between general and narrow AI.

Narrow AI is AI trained to carry out a specific task.

Narrow AI has already made great strides. Google DeepMind's AlphaFold model has revolutionised how scientists predict protein structures.

But there are many other, less well publicised, successes too — such as AI being used at CSIRO to

discover new galaxies in the night sky, IBM Research developing AI that rediscovered Kepler's third law of planetary motion, or Samsung AI building AI that was able to reproduce Nobel prize winning scientific breakthroughs.

When it comes to narrow AI applied to science, trust remains high.

AI systems — especially those based on machine learning methods — rarely achieve 100 per cent accuracy on a given task. (In fact, machine learning systems outperform humans on some tasks, and humans outperform AI systems on many tasks.)

Humans using AI systems generally outperform humans working alone and they also outperform AI working alone. There is a large scientific evidence base for this fact, including this study.) AI working alongside an expert scientist, who confirms and interprets the results, is a perfectly legitimate way of working, and is widely seen as yielding better performance than human scientists or AI systems working alone.

On the other hand, general AI systems are trained to carry out a wide range of tasks, not specific to any domain or use case. ChatGPT, for example, can create a Shakespearean sonnet, suggest a recipe for dinner, summarise a body of academic literature, or generate a scientific hypothesis.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written on my Electricity Bill bearing C.ID No: 0235010004122 as Assadullah Rather S/o Qasim Rather while my correct name is per Aadhaar is Mohd Asadullah Rather S/o Mohd Qasim Rather which needs to be corrected.

Mohd Asadullah Rather
S/o Mohd Qasim Rather
R/o Rather Mohalla Sarai Dangerpora

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Ali Mohammad Bhat Father of Moizim Ali want to Inform General Public through this Notice that the actual Date of Birth of my son is 15-03-2015 which is wrongly recorded in school records as 30-04-2015.

Moizim Ali
Correct DOB 15-03-2015
Contact No: 7006508228

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to information of general public that I have lost my Mobile Phone Realme 11x5G having two Sims bearing No.7889585685 & 9419564970 While I was travelling at Batamalo area Srinagar on 16/04/2024 after that I approached to the Station Police Officer, Batamalo, Srinagar and submitted a application regarding missing report of the same if anyone found it may kindly return back on the given below mentioned address otherwise, I am applying duplicate of the same from the concerned authorities if anybody having any objection in this regard may file the same to the concerned authorities within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained after expiry of the stipulated period.

Gulshan Ara
W/o Nisar Hussain Mir
R/O Bahama, Srinagar
Contact No. 9906613508

'Will To Resist Temptations, Achieve Goals More Trustworthy Than Using Apps'

Press Trust Of India

People relying on willpower to resist temptations and achieve goals are perceived as more trustworthy compared to those resorting to "commitment strategies" such as using apps, a new research has shown.

In one experiment, participants were found to judge hypothetical users of commitment strategies as less trustworthy despite recognising that sometimes these strategies are more effective than willpower alone, researchers said.

Approaches involving commitment strategies have been shown to be successful for a varied range of goals such as quitting smoking, weight loss, academic achievement and saving money, according to Ariella Kristal of the Columbia University, US, and lead author of the study

published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

Commitment strategies can also include having to pay a fine upon engaging in unwanted behaviour or relying on apps that help people avoid websites like Facebook and Instagram.

However, the researchers believe that resorting to commitment strategies could possibly signal a weakness in an individual's character, or a past failure, because of which they are having to rely on external incentives, rather than overcoming self control problems on their own.

"Past failures of self control can be seen by others as moral failures. Because morality is an important component of integrity in particular, and trustworthiness more broadly, people who rely on commitment strategies may be viewed as less trustworthy than those who

simply use willpower," Kristal said.

Through online experiments, the researchers involved more than 2,800 participants in the US for their study.

The participants were asked to rate the integrity of individuals in hypothetical situations who attempted to achieve a certain goal either through willpower or through a commitment strategy.

In one such situation, the participants were asked to judge people relying on willpower to avoid eating junk food or drinking alcohol, while in another people either displayed self control or depended on an app to avoid using Facebook or Instagram.

Generally, the researchers found that individuals described as depending on commitment strategies to achieve goals were judged to be less trustworthy than those relying on willpower alone.

The Jammu and Kashmir State Board Of School Education
New Campus Bemina Srinagar
Notice for General Public

The applicant/ candidate whose photograph is published in this notice and claiming to have lost her qualification certificate/s issued under as per below mentioned details:-

Roll No: 2608217
Class 10th
Year & Session Annual Regular 2015
Registration: N14460090111
Name: Basit Ali
Father's Name: Ali Mohamad Parray
Mother's Name: Shaheena Begum
Date of Birth:- 16-03-2001
Residence- Dachigam Bandipora



According to the candidate concerned has approach to this office for issuance of Duplicate Qualification /Marks Certificate/s, so before the same is processed and provided to the candidate, under rules, anybody having any objection in this regard, shall bring into the notice of Assistant Secretary of Certificate as well as Assistant Secretary Examination Unit I & III KD within the period of 10 & 7 days respectively, from the date of publication of this notice.

(Besides the above referred "Qualification / Marks Certificate/s" bearing No: 15 ARKAM 2004457 be treated as "CANCELLED")
No: F(Cer is-I-DQC)/B(KD)/24
Dated 15-04-2024

Assistant Secretary
Certificates, KD.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my card pouch containing PAN card, work ID, and Credit and Debit cards On April 13, 2024, around 6:20 PM during an unfortunate incident where I bumped into a car (Alto) near Munawarabad. Thankfully, both parties involved mutually resolved the matter. However, in the midst of the commotion, I inadvertently left my card pouch with the other party. If by any chance someone has come across a misplaced card pouch, I kindly request him to reach out to me at 6005334141. Otherwise I have to apply for the duplicate of the above lost documents. In that case if anybody has any objection he/she may contact concerned offices within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Aamil Javeed
Cell: 6005334141

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Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Office Of The Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Qazigund
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
Fresh NIT No.05 OF R&B/Qazigund/2024-25 /E-TENDERING/290-305 DATED:16-04-2024
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders (In Single Cover) are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

KASHMIR OBSERVERTM

Wednesday | 17-04-2024

An Avoidable Tragedy

The boat capsizing tragedy at Gandbal area stands as a stark reminder of the consequences of neglect and unfulfilled promises by successive governments, especially by the administrations over the past seven years. The avoidable catastrophe, resulting in the loss of innocent lives, demands urgent introspection and accountability.

First and foremost, the absence of a bridge in the locality despite promises made reflects government negligence and failure to prioritize essential infrastructure. The lack of a safe means of crossing the river compelled locals to resort to risky alternatives, such as using boats, endangering lives, especially of school children. The tragedy highlights the urgent need for the timely completion of crucial infrastructure projects, particularly in areas where public safety is at stake.

The delayed response of rescue teams exacerbates the gravity of the situation. Every minute counts in such emergencies, and the failure of authorities to promptly mobilize adequate rescue efforts undoubtedly contributed to the loss of lives. It is unacceptable that precious human lives were sacrificed due to administrative inefficiency and sluggish emergency response mechanisms.

The accountability of authorities cannot be overlooked in this grim scenario. The administration must conduct a thorough investigation to determine the lapses that led to this tragedy and hold those responsible accountable. Additionally, there must be a reassessment of disaster preparedness protocols to ensure swift and effective responses to similar emergencies in the future.

Moreover, the anguish and sorrow of the affected families must not be underestimated. Their cries for justice and accountability resonate throughout Valley. The government must provide comprehensive support and assistance to the bereaved families, including financial compensation and access to medical and psychological care.

The tragedy should serve as a wake-up call for both the government and the public. It should lead to prioritisation of public safety and ensuring that essential infrastructure projects are completed in a timely manner. It also emphasizes the need for robust emergency response mechanisms and proactive measures to prevent such calamities from occurring again.

As a society, we must collectively demand accountability from our elected representatives and hold them responsible for fulfilling their obligations to safeguard the lives and well-being of citizens. Let us turn this tragedy into a catalyst for positive change, ensuring that such avoidable catastrophes never recur in our communities.

The boat capsizing tragedy in Srinagar is not just a natural disaster but a man-made failure rooted in negligence and complacency. It is incumbent upon all stakeholders to learn from this tragedy, take corrective measures, and prioritize public safety above all else. Only then can we honour the memory of the lives lost and prevent similar tragedies from haunting our future.

We Can't Demand Good Governance and Stay Away from Elections

Let us send good people to Lok Sabha who can represent our aspirations & ensure sustainable development



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

“ We need leaders who can debate and differentiate between infrastructural development and sustainable development. We need leaders who are courageous and have the ability to communicate effectively. We don't need leaders who are visionless

Over the past few years, the health of democracy has declined significantly in many nations. The concept of electoral democracy, also called representative democracy, continues to thrive. In most of the democratic nations, especially India, people elect their representatives after every 5 years and they represent them in various forums like national assemblies, parliament, state or provincial assemblies or even at local level like Urban Local Bodies and Panchayati Raj Institutions PRIs. The enthusiasm for electoral democracy has slipped in many nations and people feel good people are not going to parliament or state assemblies.

I personally believe that the fault lies within the citizens themselves, especially in Jammu & Kashmir who don't participate in the electoral process actively. On the other hand, we want better services from the Government like good roads, robust health-care, 24 x 7 electricity supply and better education and corruption free services etc. How is all this possible when we don't elect better leaders?

Irony is that even in Municipal elections people don't vote for good people nor educated and public spirited people come forward to participate in the electoral process? Let us analyse the Srinagar Municipal Corporation elections in the last 10 to 15 years. Did we ever elect good people who could represent our aspirations?

The Smart City Srinagar plan was trusted on people which otherwise should have been put forward by the SMC corporators. The work was taken up haphazardly and these corporators didn't even utter a word. The reason was that they were not elected by the vast majority of people. They didn't represent the aspirations of the people. Some were elected with mere 50 to 60 votes and many didn't even get 300 votes.

I know some councillors and corporators who got elected by their own family votes (1 to 4 votes only). Same is the case with the last Panchayat elections and a vast majority of Sarpanches were selected and not elected at all. Many of these Sarpanches and Panches looted public funds and became contractors rather than representing their own people.

Lok Sabha election 2014 and 2019

For many decades now, people of J&K have been boycotting elections especially in Srinagar city. There were many well known political reasons for that.

The election boycott helped many people rule J&K but I believe this Lok Sabha election is the right time to send our true representatives to Parliament. It is shocking to know that the last two Lok Sabha elections (2014 and 2019) saw less than 50% participation of people in J&K. When it comes to Srinagar, Anantnag and Baramulla Lok Sabha segments,

the participation of people was not very less.

In 2014 Lok Sabha elections, a mere 25% people voted in Srinagar parliamentary seat, 39% votes were polled in Baramulla and 28% voters cast their votes in Anantnag parliamentary constituency. On the contrary, 71% votes were polled in Ladakh, Udhampur recorded 70.95% turnout and in Jammu Lok Sabha 68% voters cast their votes.

In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the polling percentage further came down as mere 9% voters cast their votes in Anantnag Lok Sabha segment, Srinagar recorded mere 15% votes and Baramulla was a bit higher with around 38% polling. On the contrary, Jammu Lok Sabha Segment saw 80% plus voting, Udhampur 79.7% and the voting turnout in Ladakh was 79%.

Sustainable Development

At a time when every political party or leader talks of development, we haven't heard any MP from J&K raise the issue of sustainable development in J&K in the Lok Sabha. We have seen disasters happening in J&K and other Himalayan states in the last 10 to 15 years but how many MPs have raised these issues in Lok Sabha?

Under the garb of tourism and development, our forests, wetlands, mountains and valleys have been plundered but how many Lok Sabha MPs raised this issue? Our apple orchards were axed and land acquired by NHA for the Srinagar Ring Road project but Lok Sabha MP Dr Farooq Abdullah never raised this issue in Parliament. 7000 kanals of land was acquired for peanuts in Srinagar, Budgam area and central land acquisition law applicable to J&K post article 370 was not applied at all. This law otherwise guarantees 3 to 4 times higher compensation but the Lok Sabha MP from Srinagar didn't even issue a statement nor did his party protest over it.

The poor farmers had to seek judicial intervention and the case is now pending before the Supreme Court of India. When forest dwellers like Gujjars, Bakerwals and Chopans were being evicted in 2020 by the Forest Department, no MP from J&K highlighted this issue in Lok Sabha. This author wrote a series of articles in many national and local newspapers on the issue plus made several video reports and held protests as well, but our MPs didn't even bother to meet the Union Minister of Tribal Affairs. It was only after constant protests by activists and media highlighting this issue the Govt decided to roll out the Forest Rights Act in J&K.

More than 90% of farmers in all the Himalayan states are marginal farmers as per official figures. The size of small agricultural landholdings in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, J&K and adjoining areas was estimated to be less than a hectare. This figure

came further down in the 2015-16 Agriculture Census. In the Kashmir valley, where most farmers own less than half acre of land, any government policy related to land acquisition, especially for "development projects", needs to take into account the fragile mountainous environment and climatic conditions as well.

Better land compensation in Hill states

The Govt is supposed to pay more compensation for land acquired in Himalayan states like J&K, Himachal, Uttarakhand and Ladakh and the Right to Fair Compensation Act 2013 must be amended to incorporate these provisions as people in these regions have small landholdings and are considered to be below marginal farmers. On the contrary, our land is being acquired and repealed land acquisition law is applied for the same. Did MPs from Himalayan states especially J&K ever raise this issue in Parliament?

The land from below marginal farmers in Srinagar, Pulwama and Budgam was taken away for peanuts by National Highways Authority of India -NHA in 2020-2021 and the issue was not even raised in Lok Sabha. Our apple trees were axed and provision of tree transplanting was also not given to farmers but this issue wasn't raised in Lok Sabha.

For the last decade, I have been saying that snow clearance works should be taken up under the MG NREGA in rural areas of Himachal, Uttarakhand and J&K but no MP ever raised this issue in Lok Sabha. Srinagar is choking with trash and our landfill site at Achan is stinking. How many meetings our MP held with the Union Urban Affairs Minister in the last 5 years. Was this issue ever raised in Lok Sabha?

Conclusion

Participation of people in elections is the need of the hour as we cannot only complain and not be a part of the solution. Without our participation in the electoral process we cannot expect delivery of good governance. By electing good people we not only help ourselves but this helps strengthen our democratic institutions as well.

Let us elect educated and energetic leaders who can represent our aspirations in the Parliament. We need leaders who can debate and differentiate between infrastructural development and sustainable development. We need leaders who are courageous and have the ability to communicate effectively. We don't need leaders who are visionless. Let us all effectively participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections with full enthusiasm. Famous author Nanette L Avery says, "Talk is cheap, voting is free; take it to the polls."

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

OTHER OPINION

Risky premise

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Thursday raised its forecast for India's GDP growth in the current fiscal year ending on March 31, 2025, to 7%, from 6.7% earlier, citing robust public and private investment as well as expectations of a gradual improvement in consumer demand as the rural economy recovers. The regional multilateral lender also projected that India's economy would expand by 7.2% in fiscal 2025-26. The ADB's latest growth forecast for India's GDP is, however, still slower than the 7.6% pace that India's National Statistical Office has estimated for the 12 months that ended on March 31. Last year's expansion too was driven by strong investment while consumption remained muted. The ADB, however, cautioned that its forecast could be proven wrong by global risks including a sharp rise in oil prices or prolonged high interest rates in the West to tackle inflation. It estimated that India would likely be the economy most affected in Asia by the high interest rates due to the greater sensitivity of the rupee to western interest rates. It also noted that while the Centre's capital expenditure spending had been strong and was projected to grow with rising budgetary allocation, project completions in the private sector had failed to match rising project announcements. Most conspicuously missing from the ADB's report, however, was the absence of any comment on the controversies surrounding the integrity of India's national income data or concerns raised about the heavy influence of government tax receipts on final GDP.

The lender also failed to make any mention of the absence of significant structural reforms in India, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the reasons the strong growth numbers reported by the government have been questioned is that they have come at a time when economic reforms have taken a back seat. The ADB's assumption of a likely rebound in consumer spending to support its 2024-25 growth projection is also at risk of being undermined. Global country risk research firm BMI recently flagged the risk to consumption spending from stretched household savings which are near all-time lows. In any case, the Centre would do well to listen to the ADB's suggestion to create large-scale special economic zones with an easier policy environment to boost exports. Given the challenges flagged by the lender to global merchandise trade, including the extremely volatile situation in West Asia and the disruptions to the normal east-west shipping route through the Red Sea, India must heed the ADB's recommendations to integrate better with global supply chains and improve its logistics infrastructure post haste.

The Hindu



Revolutionizing Oilseed Farming in J&K

SKUAST-Kashmir's Innovations and Impact

N.R.Sofi*
Ashaq Hussain
Abid H Lone

India is one of the leading global producers of oilseeds, annually yielding over 38 million metric tons. However, it faces a substantial challenge as the primary importer of vegetable oils, indicating a widening gap between production and consumption. For instance, in 2013-14, India imported 11.6 million tonnes of edible oils valued at Rs 60,750 crore. By 2022-23, these figures rose to 16.5 million tonnes worth Rs 138,424 crore, emphasizing a critical reliance on imports to meet domestic demands. In Jammu & Kashmir, this disparity is particularly stark, as local production significantly lags behind regional demand due to factors like population growth and changing dietary preferences. The region's requirement for edible oils is 14.20 lakh quintals, whereas local production is only 3.36 lakh quintals, showcasing a 76% dependency on imports.

Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) has played a pivotal role in addressing the oilseed production challenge in the region. Since the early 1980s, SKUAST-K has undertaken extensive research and development efforts focused on improving oilseed varieties suitable for the agro-climatic conditions of Jammu & Kashmir. Under the All India Coordinated Research Project on Rapeseed-Mustard, SKUAST-K has developed many high-yielding, stress-tolerant varieties tailored to the specific needs of the region. Based on our analysis of govern-

ment data regarding the oilseed cultivation area and production, it is estimated that SKUAST-K-developed varieties contribute approximately 850 crore INR annually.

Over the decades, SKUAST-K's breeding programs have yielded notable successes. The journey began with the release of KOS-1 in 1994, followed by KOS-101 (Gulchin) in 1996, which represented early milestones in improving brown sarson crop yields in the valley. The breakthrough came with the introduction of the Shalimar series—Shalimar Sarson-1 (SS-1), Shalimar Sarson-2 (SS-2), and Shalimar Sarson-3 (SS-3). These varieties exhibited significant yield potential, ranging from 16 to 17 quintals per hectare, representing a marked improvement over earlier releases. Brown sarson (*Brassica rapa*) has two distinct ecotypes: 'lotni' (self-incompatible) and 'tora' (self-compatible), with the former being predominantly cultivated in Kashmir due to its cold tolerant character. Additionally, SKUAST-K has made significant strides in promoting Gobhi sarson (*Brassica napus*) as a promising alternative for oilseed production in Kashmir. The recent release of Shalimar Gobhi sarson-1 in 2022 showcases the university's commitment to diversify crop options and improve oilseed productivity.

One significant challenge faced by farmers in Jammu & Kashmir is the poor performance of oilseed varieties imported from Punjab and Rajasthan. These varieties often fail to adapt to the cold temperate conditions of the valley, leading to suboptimal yields and disappointing results for local farmers. The lack of win-



ter hardiness and delayed maturity of these varieties underscore the importance of developing region-specific varieties through research initiatives like those undertaken by SKUAST-K.

SKUAST-K, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, plays a crucial role in maintaining the seed production chain from breeder to foundation to certified seed. This ensures the availability of high-quality seeds for scaling up production and distribution to farmers across the valley. However, challenges associated with the cross-pollinated nature of brown sarson pose limitations on seed purity and uniformity. Due to the cross-pollinated nature of brown sarson, achieving Seed Replacement Rate (SRR) of 50% is essential to sustain seed purity. Further, SKUAST-K is continuously engaged in developing new oilseed varieties to enhance

production and productivity, aiming to improve the Varietal Replacement Rate (VRR) for sustained agricultural progress.

Under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) project "Promotion of Oilseeds", SKUAST-K has conducted 17 demonstrations across the valley to showcase the performance of newly developed high-yielding oilseed varieties and promote best agronomic practices. Starting from the rabi season 2022-23, there has been a growing demand for Shalimar Sarson-2 (SS-2) from the University due to its exceptional yield potential of 15 quintals per hectare, coupled with its tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses, making it highly suitable for rice-based cropping systems. Collaborative efforts with Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVVKs) have been instrumental in dis-

seminating knowledge and technology to farmers, facilitating capacity-building programs, and enhancing oilseed production through hundreds of CFLDs on SS2 supervised by KVVKs.

Looking ahead, SKUAST-K remains committed to advancing oilseed farming in J&K by focusing not only on increasing yield but also on enhancing oilseed quality. The university's research agenda includes developing varieties with higher productivity potential, aiming for yields nearing 20 quintals per hectare, while also improving oilseed quality through targeted breeding and agronomic practices. Integrated crop management technologies, including optimized nutrient management, appropriate sowing dates, and pest management strategies, will continue to be pivotal in unlocking the full genetic potential of new varieties and addressing agroecological constraints.

In conclusion, SKUAST-K's dedicated efforts have not only contributed to boosting local oilseed production but also empowered farmers with resilient, high-yielding crop varieties. As Jammu & Kashmir endeavours to enhance its self-sufficiency in oilseed production, ongoing research and collaborative initiatives underscore a promising trajectory towards agricultural self-reliance and sustainability. The university's commitment to innovation and knowledge dissemination remains essential in achieving long-term food security and economic prosperity for the region.

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As Jammu & Kashmir endeavours to enhance its self-sufficiency in oilseed production, ongoing research and collaborative initiatives underscore a promising trajectory towards agricultural self-reliance and sustainability

Facing Difficulties, Literally and Figuratively

Sandra Wartski

Facing hard things is, well, hard. Sometimes we are forced to simply shift, such as with a loss or a pandemic; however, much of the time, we may be aware of the difficulties lurking underneath that might need attention but feel too overwhelming to contemplate. And humans are masters of avoidance and denial. The difficulty might be a behavior pattern or habit we know is no longer serving us well, a relationship that is unsatisfying or unsafe, even a memory or conflict that burdens but has been ignored for far too long.

The decision to make a change or a pivot in one's life is a complicated process. Even if the change is more internal rather than an externally visible change, it can still be challenging. There are various metaphors one might use to consider the avoidance of change, and the three highlighted here involve mice, weeds, and wires. By contemplating your possible way out of your hesitation, you can then plan your way forward.

METAPHOR 1: RELEASING MICE UNDER THE RUG

Some individuals seem to attempt to fool themselves into thinking that there really is not a problem and everything is just fine. They are often not deceiving others around them but are scared, worried, or unsure of how to make changes in their life. I sometimes reference this as being like someone working actively to hold active mice under a rug by continuously holding down the edges of the moving rug. We all see the bumps and the movements under the rug, but the individual is nervous to let go. When called out by others who see creatures lurking underneath, the person may just smile, argue or deny that there is anything going on. Pulling back the rug and letting the mice out so that they can be dealt with openly and effectively is what is needed, despite the fact this can be intimidating or even terrifying. Once the mice are released, there may be other complications of how to cope with getting them out of the house; however, they cannot be faced if they are not first recognized.



METAPHOR 2: PULLING THE ROOT OF THE WEEDS

Some individuals find themselves facing the same problems again and again but struggle to get to the root

of the problem. The parent whose child misbehaves repeatedly when out in public, the teen who gets panicky in social situations, or the worker who keeps getting fired from

jobs. Avoiding or leaving the situation may seem like it has fixed the problem, but this really hasn't gotten to the root of the problem. Rather than repeatedly weed whacking,

getting down on the ground and actually pulling the root of the weed is often much more effective in the long run. Some weed roots are deep and ingrained, others are shallower and simpler. The process of facing our fears, worries or issues is the process of getting to the roots so new beginnings can bloom. Quick fixes might provide relief in the short term but often not in the long term. The work might feel messy to start, but the overall benefits allow flourishing.

METAPHOR 3: UNTANGLING WIRES

Making changes in one's life is hard and complicated. It can sometimes look like a balled-up mess of wires of all types that are difficult to untangle. But pulling hard at only one wire actually tightens the knot rather than loosens it. In order to untangle the wires, we often have to take a closer, calmer look at the different parts and slowly pull apart each of the wires one at a time. We don't need (and often can't) expect the wires to loosen or untangle themselves. They are there and part of the tangle; however, once they have been

freed from the cluster, they can then sometimes be separated, organized, put aside, and used as needed. Individuals with difficult childhoods, traumas, long-standing behavioral habits or mental health challenges often have very tangled wires. Other well-meaning family, friends or even the individual themselves may see a loose wire and think that simply pulling this one wire will be the solution to all problems. Sadly, the difficulty often worsens when we approach it with anger, contempt, or impulsivity. Instead, we need to slowly and carefully sort through the mess with more direct compassion in order to make better sense of the mess.

Considering figurative methods of facing difficulties doesn't necessarily lessen the impact of actually addressing the issues but can assist in expanding our perspective, increasing our optimism, and inspiring the decision to finally face changes.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

IPL 2024: Gujarat Titans, Delhi Capitals Search For Consistency

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: Gujarat Titans will be striving for much-needed consistency when they meet Delhi Capitals in an Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday. Unlike the past two editions, the Titans have not been able to play like a well-oiled machine though they still have time to fix the flaws.

A last-ball win over table leaders Rajasthan Royals on April 10 was just the kind of result the Titans needed to infuse fresh life into their campaign. They have only managed only two wins from their first six games but with another eight matches remaining, the Shubman Gill-led team has enough time to turn things around.

The absence of Mohammad Shami has hurt them but they must best use the available resources. Umesh Yadav has taken seven wickets but has leaked more than 10 runs per over.



His new ball partner Spencer Johnson and the seasoned Mohit Sharma too can improve on their economy rate. Star spinner Rashid Khan has been at his frugal best but

would like to have more wickets in his kitty. Delhi Capitals, on the other hand, have struggled to assemble their playing eleven due to form and fitness issues.

After four losses in five games, they got a much-needed boost with the win against Lucknow Super Giants but they still have a lot to sort out if they are to push themselves for a place

in the playoffs.

The presence of a fit again Kuldeep Yadav made a huge difference as he broke the backbone of the opposition with three timely strikes in Lucknow.

In Jack Fraser-McGurk, the Capitals seem to have found an able number three and will be hoping that the Australian builds on the success of his maiden IPL game. Anrich Nortje, who has been taken by the cleaners by the batters so far in the IPL, did not play the last game.

Mukesh Kumar has conceded 10 runs per over in the five games and was also expensive in his comeback game against LSG.

Thin on Indian batting talent, the Capitals rely heavily on the likes of David Warner, who would itching to make an impact after not contributing much in the last three games. Match starts 7.30pm IST.

RCB's Maxwell Takes 'Mental & Physical' Break From IPL



Press Trust of India

BENGALURU: Royal Challengers Bengaluru all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has decided to take an indefinite "mental and physical" break from the Indian Premier League, blaming his wretched batting form for the decision.

Maxwell's absence from RCB's match against Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Monday was initially attributed to a finger injury he suffered during the previous match against Mumbai Indians. But he later admitted to dropping himself from the squad.

"It was a pretty easy decision. I went to Faf and the coaches after the last game (vs Mumbai Indians) and said it was probably time we tried someone else (in his place)," Maxwell said in the post-match press meet.

"It's actually a good time to give myself a bit of a mental and physical break, get my body right. If I'm required to get in during the tournament, I can, hopefully, get back

into a solid mental and physical space where I can make an impact," he added.

This is the second time in his career that Maxwell has opted out of competitive cricket in order to gather himself.

He had taken a similar break in October 2019, stating that he felt mentally and physically ruined at that time. The 35-year-old made his comeback a couple of months later.

In the ongoing IPL, Maxwell has been quite underwhelming with the bat in the six matches he has played this season, contributing just 32 runs at an average of 5.33 and a strike-rate of 94.

Twenty eight of those 32 runs came against Kolkata Knight Riders alone, helped to a great degree by two dropped catches.

"I have been in this situation in the past where you can keep playing and get yourself deeper into a hole. We have had a pretty big deficiency after the power play, which has been my area of strength over the last couple of seasons.

'Would Have Pant In Indian Team Every Day Of Week': Ponting

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: In Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting's Indian team for the upcoming T20 World Cup, Rishabh Pant will feature "every day of the week" despite some established keeper-batters staking claim with their exploits in the ongoing IPL.

Ponting was not sure whether Pant would be able to play again after the horrific car accident in December, 2022.

But having seen the manner in which Pant has been making an impact since returning to action on the back of his remarkable resilience, the DC head coach is left with no doubt about who should board the plane to New York at the end of the IPL.

"Do I believe whether Rishabh should be there in the World Cup squad? Absolutely I do. He deserves to be in that WT20 squad by the end of the IPL," Ponting told PTI in an exclusive interview.

"I think we have seen Rishabh play the way we have seen him play in last five or six years in IPL, and now back playing for India," added the Australian batting great.

While he acknowledged that there are lots of options for Indian selectors as far as choosing a keeper-batter goes, Pant remains the No.1 choice for him.

"One thing we certainly know that there is lot of depth around Indian cricket. With



keeper-batters, I feel some guys are in really good form at the moment. (Ishan) Kishan is playing well, (Sanju) Samson is playing well and KL Rahul is playing well.

"There are a lot of options but if I was picking a team, I would have Rishabh Pant in it every day of the week," the 'Punter' made his call.

Since his entry as DC coach, Ponting has shared a special bond with Pant and he is a touch emotional seeing him in full flow once again.

"Rishabh's comeback to international cricket is nothing short of remarkable. I spent a lot of time with him during last IPL and a lot of us

were actually sceptical that whether he will actually play the game again, such a horrific accident and I had spoken to him about it, I wasn't sure whether he will play again."

But like with all champions, Pant refused to throw in the towel.

"There was never any doubt in his mind that he will be back playing again. As each game goes by, we are starting to see a better and better version of Rishabh Pant, his batting has had more impact in last couple of games compared to start of the tournament, he is starting to move well behind the stumps," the coach sounded ecstatic.

Short TAKES

Narine's Ton Powers KKR To 223/6 Against RR



Sunil Narine smashed a whirlwind century to single-handedly power Kolkata Knight Riders to a mammoth 223 for six against Rajasthan Royals in an Indian Premier League match here on Tuesday.

Sent into bat, Narine smashed 109 off just 56 balls with the help of 13 boundaries and six hits over the fence to guide KKR to the score. Besides Narine, Angkrish Raghuvanshi made 30 off 18 balls for KKR. Towards the end, Rinku Singh remained unbeaten on 9-ball 20.

DC Unsure Of David Warner's Availability Against GT

Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting on Tuesday revealed an X-ray performed on David Warner's swollen finger showed no major injury but a call on his participation in the IPL game against Gujarat Titans will be taken only after he is put through a fitness test before the match.

The Capitals are taking on Gujarat Titans in an away match here on Wednesday with Warner's fitness under observation. The top-order batter Warner sustained a finger injury while batting in the match against Lucknow Super Giants.

Pat Cummins, Nat Sciver-Brunt Named Wisden Leading Cricketers

Australian skipper Pat Cummins and England all-rounder Nat Sciver-Brunt have been named as the Wisden Leading Cricketers in the World in the 2024 edition of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, published on Tuesday.

The Australian pace spearhead and skipper in Tests and ODI formats, led his side to the front as they overcame a tough challenge from India to win their maiden ICC World Test Championship in June and later their sixth ICC Cricket World Cup title in Ahmedabad in November.

Pakistan's Mushtaq Ahmed Becomes Bangla Spin Bowling Coach

Former Pakistan cricketer and legend Mushtaq Ahmed joined the Bangladesh men's team on Tuesday as their new spin bowling coach ahead of the T20I series against Zimbabwe. Earlier, the 53-year-old was the spin bowling coach for England, West Indies, and Pakistan.

The addition of Mushtaq to the Bangladesh squad will help them prepare for the upcoming T20 World Cup, looking at the conditions in the USA and West Indies.

Werder Bremen Suspend Naby Keita For Rest Of The Season

Werder Bremen have suspended midfielder Naby Keita until the end of the season and fined the Guinean after he did not travel with the team for their Bundesliga match against Bayer Leverkusen upon learning that he would not be in the starting line-up.

Bremen, who suffered a 5-0 defeat by Leverkusen on Sunday, said the 29-year-old will no longer train with the team or be in the dressing room.

Man City Boss Guardiola Warns It Is Too Soon To Dream About Double Treble

Agencies

MANCHESTER: While Manchester City midfielder Bernardo Silva said he and his team mates are motivated by the possibility of winning their second consecutive treble, manager Pep Guardiola cautioned against dreaming too far ahead.

City host Real Madrid in the second leg of their Champions League quarter-final tie on Wednesday at the Etihad having overcome them in the semi-finals last season on their way to winning the competition for the first time.

They also lead the Premier League standings and are in the final four of the FA Cup.

"I am not going to say 'don't feel this' to my players, but I have a different opinion. We are far away from those hypothetical dreams," Guardiola told reporters on Tuesday.

"When we are in the final of the FA Cup and two or three games (remaining) in the Premier League and in the final of the Champions League I will start to think about that.

"I started to think of the treble last season only when we beat Manchester United in the FA Cup final," he added.

Guardiola's team can book their spot in this year's FA Cup final with a win over Chelsea in Saturday's semi-final at Wembley. They also have a two-point lead over Arsenal and Liverpool in the Premier League with six games remaining.

City captured the treble — Champions League, FA Cup and Premier League — for the first time last season to match Manchester United's treble win in 1998-99. No team has won it in consecutive seasons and no English side has won it twice.

Silva said being on the brink of history can drive the squad for the rest of the season.

"Obviously, it is an inspiration and motivation," he said. "We want to create the legacy. We want four Premier Leagues in a row. We want the Champions League twice in a row and two trebles in a row.

"In one week we could be out of all the competitions. But we are fighting."

Real Madrid and City slugged out a thrilling 3-3 draw in the first leg last week to leave the tie wide open.

City will have midfielder Kevin De Bruyne back after he sat out the match at the Bernabeu with an illness.

"When Kevin is present, everything is different because he is one of the best players of our generation," Silva said. "When he is on a good day it's difficult to stop him."

Defender Kyle Walker is also available after returning to the bench for City's 5-1 league thrashing of Luton Town on Saturday.

Former Barcelona player and manager Guardiola said he relished once again facing old rivals Madrid, who have an eight-point lead at the top of the LaLiga standings.

"Always has been and always will be (a big game)," he said. "It's Real Madrid and in this competition it is always a big game. It's special for me. Of course it is." (Reuters)

