

## J&K Assembly's 1st Session In 6 Years: Chaos, Controversy, Confusion

### Rahim Rathar Is J&K Assembly Speaker



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Veteran National Conference leader and seven-time MLA from Charare-Sharief Abdul Rahim Rathar was on Monday elected the first speaker of the legislative assembly of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Leader of the House and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said Rathar (80) was a "natural choice" for the post due to his vast experience. He said Rathar has earlier raised the dignity of the House in various capacities, and as the custodian of the House now, "we expect you to do justice with all members".

Rathar was elected the speaker with a voice vote after the | [More on P6](#)



The first session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly kicked off on Monday. KO Photo | Abid Bhat

### Geelani Back In Assembly

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani figures among the deceased legislators who will be remembered in the Legislative Assembly during the obituary reference scheduled on Tuesday.

According to the list of businesses, the Speaker would make reference to the demise of ex-lawmakers including Syed Ali Shah Geelani.

Geelani, who passed away in 2021, has represented Sopore assembly segment thrice in J&K Assembly. He won assembly elections in 1972, 1977 and 1987.

Some other names in the list are Pranab Mukherjee, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Somnath Chatterjee, Jagmohan Malhotra, Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta, P Namgyal, Abdul Rashid Dar, Mian Bashir Ahmad, Madan Lal Sharma, Mohammad Sharif Niaz, Syed Mushtaq Ahmed Bukhari, Thakur Randhir Singh, Abdul Gani Mir, Govind Ram, Puran Singh, Sardar Rafiq Hussain Khan, Togdan Rimpoche, Devender Singh Rana, Qazi Mohammad Afzal etc.

Notably, the first session of J&K Assembly commenced on Monday. The newly-elected Jammu and Kashmir Assembly faced chaos on the first day after opposition member Waheed Parra of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) moved a resolution against the scrapping of Article 370.

Soon after Parra | [More on P6](#)

### NC MLA's Disrespectful Gesture Draws Ire Of Netizens



Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The first legislative session of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir quickly turned contentious, with heated exchanges between political leaders that culminated in a viral controversy involving an MLA's alleged disrespectful gesture.

The incident occurred after MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra, representing Pulwama assembly segment, proposed a resolution to reverse the abrogation of Article 370. The debate became increasingly tense, and voices rose as legislators confronted each other over this divisive topic. However, a particular gesture made by Altaf Kaloo, MLA from Pahalgam, during the session has drawn

intense backlash online.

Netizens, frustrated and offended by Kaloo's behavior, took to the social media platform "X" (formerly known as Twitter) to voice their disapproval.

Many users condemned the gesture, considering it an affront to the expectations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. People's Conference General Secretary Imran Reza Ansari posted a photograph of Kaloo's gesture on X, questioning the integrity of his party.

"Is this what people of Jammu and Kashmir get when we remind the National Conference of their promise to reverse the undemocratic events of August 2019? Honorable MLA Pahalgam showing the future to People | [More on P6](#)

## Para Steals The Show, Moves Resolution On Art 370

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Peoples Democratic Party MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Para on Monday moved a resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly opposing the abrogation of Article 370 and calling for the restoration of special status to the erstwhile state, leading to noisy scenes in the House.

The Pulwama MLA moved the resolution immediately after veteran National Conference leader and seven-time MLA Abdul Rahim Rathar was elected as the first speaker of the legislative assembly of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Keeping the sentiments of the people of J&K in mind, this House opposes the revocation of the special status (of Jammu



and Kashmir)," Para said as he moved the resolution.

This drew protests from BJP MLAs, all 28 of whom stood up to oppose the move.

BJP MLA Sham Lal Sharma

demanding Para's suspension for bringing the resolution in violation of assembly rules.

Rathar repeatedly requested the protesting members to take their seats | [More on P6](#)

### Assembly Has No Powers To Discuss Art 370: LoP



The Leader of Opposition in J&K Assembly and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, Sunil Sharma on Monday said that the assembly doesn't have powers to challenge the removal of Article 370 by the parliament. | [More on P6](#)

### Is NC Sending Mixed Signals On Art 370 Restoration?

Farzana Nisar

Srinagar: The commencement of Jammu and Kashmir's Assembly, with its first sitting in six years, saw high drama as PDP MLA Waheed Para introduced a resolution demanding the restoration of Article 370.

Bharatiya Janata Party lawmakers resisted Parra's resolution and demanded his suspension, even as Speaker Rahim Rathar of the ruling National Conference said he had not yet admitted any motion.

While the restoration of Article 370 was among the National Conference's 12 guarantees announced in its manifesto for the polls, the response from the ruling party has raised eyebrows.

NC on Monday criticised PDP MLA Waheed Para for bringing a resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on the abrogation of Article 370, while other valley-based political parties expressed their support.

The NC said the move by the PDP MLA from Pulwama was aimed at circumventing the Jammu and Kashmir government's resolution on the issue.

"It was too clever by half an attempt by a PDP MLA, clearly aimed at circumventing a government move to introduce resolution," the NC said in a post on X.

The ruling party said it expected all the MLAs to support the resolution when the treasury benches table it later in the session.

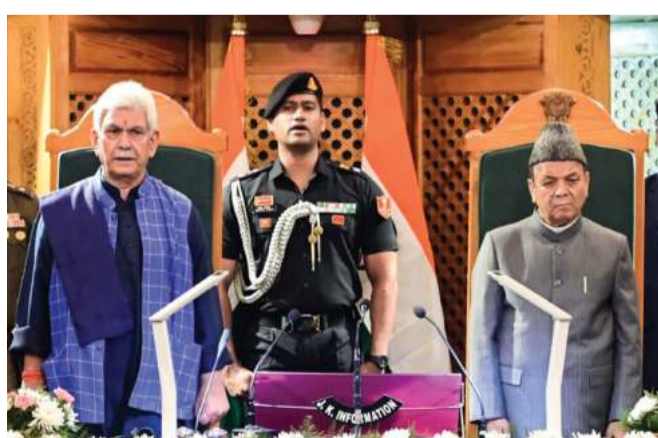
"We expect everyone to support the resolution rather than playing to the gallery and weakening the collective resolve of those who sincerely want reclaiming of our constitutional rights, protection of dignity and identity," the party said.

"This resolution is for restoration of the NC founder Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah's legacy," Parra told reporters.

"Presenting the resolution was not for any political purpose, but it demands the restoration of the legacy of our strong leader Sheikh Abdullah and the princely state created by the Hindu king from Jammu (Maharaja Hari Singh). I don't think anyone should have opposed it. People have elected the government in this Aiwan (House) on these foundations," | [More on P6](#)

## Statehood Takes Center Stage In LG's Address Promises Free 200 Units Of Electricity For Deserving Families

- » Commitment to Connectivity
- » Return of Kashmiri Pandits
- » Job Creation Initiatives
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- » Industrial Growth
- » Healthcare Advancements
- » Combating Drug Abuse
- » Education Transformation
- » Agricultural Development
- » Urban Planning
- » Environmental Protection
- » Sports Promotion



Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday said that his government will make all efforts for the restoration of Statehood and the constitutional guarantees to J&K. The LG also said that he was hopeful to work with the new government and members of the Legislative Assembly as "One Team."

Addressing the Legislative

Assembly in Srinagar, the LG said that he is looking forward towards full support from all the members of the House so that all work as "One Team."

The LG said that the aspiration for a return to the Statehood remains strong. "The Prime Minister, on several occasions, has already expressed his commitment to restoring statehood, which has been a source of rekindled hope and reassurance for the people," he

said. "The Council of Ministers of Jammu and Kashmir has recently passed a unanimous resolution calling for the immediate restoration of statehood. This resolution reflects the collective will of the elected representatives, echoing the aspirations of the people for the reinstatement of full democratic governance. My Government will make all efforts for restoration of full Statehood and Constitutional Guarantees available to the State."

The LG said that it would be a befitting reciprocation of the faith reposed by the people of Jammu and Kashmir in "our democratic institutions."

Sinha announced 200 units of free electricity for the deserving families stating that the modalities are being finalised in this regard.

Addressing the Assembly, the LG said that his government is working out the modalities to provide 200 units of free electricity to deserving families. "We have | [More on P6](#)

## J&K People Have Not Endorsed August 5 Move: CM

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today congratulated Advocate Abdul Rahim Rathar on his election as Speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

In his speech before the assembly, the Chief Minister highlighted Rathar's extensive legislative experience and the unanimous support he has received from the members.

"On behalf of myself and the entire house, I extend my congratulations on your election as Speaker," said Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. "You were the natural choice for this esteemed position, and today's voice vote affirmed this, as there was not a single dissenting voice. Your extensive experience and your long standing commitment to this assembly were clearly recognized by all members."

Reflecting on the history of the Legislative Assembly, Omar Abdullah lauded Rathar's contributions and his service



towards the people of Jammu and Kashmir, both in government and in opposition, emphasizing his steadfast dedication. "From the time of Sher-i-Kashmir Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah to the present, you have been an integral part of this assembly, serving the people through various capacities," he noted.

In his address, the Chief Minister expressed confidence

in Rathar's role as the assembly's custodian, underlining the Speaker's responsibility to uphold the interests of all members and guide them in fulfilling their duties. "We are hopeful that you will protect interests of all members, maintaining a watchful eye not only on the opposition but also on those who may deviate from their responsibilities, offering them necessary | [More on P6](#)





## KASHMIR OBSERVER®

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# Urgent Need for Dental Healthcare Reform in J&K



Zeenat Rehmani

## KO VIE W Time to act is now

Whatever happened at the J&K Assembly on the first day of its session appears beside the point when compared with the fact that the Assembly has convened after a six-year hiatus. Since 2018 when the PDP-BJP coalition government fell after the BJP withdrew power, J&K not only had no democracy but was also divested of its special constitutional status and downgraded into two union territories - J&K and Ladakh. So, the recent Assembly elections and now the opening of the Assembly session is a momentous occasion for the now union territory of J&K.

It is only natural that the session will reflect what happened over the past six years. The day was marked by discord and noisy scenes after the PDP MLA Waheed Parra moved a resolution for the restoration of Article 370. The resolution was opposed by the BJP leaders. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said the move lacked genuine intent and was only aimed at political point-scoring. He said the resolution needed prior collaborative talks among the parties. However, the People's Conference leader Sajad Lone supported the move. Later talking to the media, Lone said he will always back any future resolution on the restoration of Article 370 in the house.

That said, the Assembly's mandate is to be more than an arena for ideological sparring. It is to serve as a legislative body that addresses the multifaceted challenges on the governance front facing Jammu and Kashmir. The new government needs to urgently focus on the economic development, infrastructure needs, education, healthcare, and job creation. The ongoing Assembly session thus offers a historic chance to direct legislative energy toward addressing these issues.

Unemployment rates, particularly among the youth, remain alarmingly high. Over the past six years, fewer government vacancies have been filled. As a result, there are lakhs of educated youth, both in Kashmir Valley and Jammu division, who are without jobs. A skewed reservation policy that has reduced the quota for open merit candidates to just 30 percent has further added to frustration among youth.

The issues need to be addressed on a priority basis. These concerns cannot be postponed or overshadowed by symbolic political maneuvers that yield little more than temporary public attention. After years of instability and political uncertainty, people are looking to their elected officials for real, tangible improvements in their quality of life. It is incumbent upon every member of the Assembly to set aside partisanship and focus on constructive, cooperative policymaking.

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This lack of opportunity affects not only these professionals but the entire state, particularly rural communities. Residents in these areas face severe challenges in accessing affordable dental care and are often left with no choice but to seek services from unqualified practitioners, placing their health at risk

It is often said that "positivity is a choice," shaping our journey through life. Our dreams and resilience are reflected in this appeal, one rooted in hope and goodwill, a call for progress. Across history, guidance and wisdom have been revered as a guiding force for both individuals and societies. In Islam, "admonition" is valued as an act of integrity—a means to guide, inspire, and uplift. In this spirit, we present this plea, hoping it will resonate with your commitment to advancing the healthcare landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, especially for those awaiting support in dental healthcare.

### Current State of Dental Health and Job Opportunities

The dental field in Jammu and Kashmir faces a critical and disheartening situation. Since 2008, the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (PSC) has not filled a single position for dental surgeons, and employment opportunities within schemes like the National Health Mission have been nonexistent. This absence of career prospects has created deep frustration and anxiety among dental graduates, who have dedicated years to rigorous study and training only to find limited pathways to serve the community.

This lack of opportunity affects not only these professionals but the entire state, particularly rural communities. Residents in these areas face severe challenges in accessing affordable dental care and are often left with no choice but to seek services from unqualified practitioners, placing their health at risk. Health guidelines recommend that every Sub-District Hospital should have at least two dentists and each Primary Health Centre should have one dental surgeon along with an assistant. However, this goal remains unfulfilled, leaving many communities without essential oral healthcare. The profession, too, has seen declining interest among students who fear a bleak future without job security, while current graduates find themselves protesting in despair. Their cries for employment were unheard, even after a prolonged hunger strike in 2014, leaving many to watch

their professional dreams fade away.

### The Emotional and Mental Toll on Dental Graduates

The lack of employment opportunities has inflicted a profound emotional toll on young dental professionals, leading to mental health struggles. Many, after years of education and training, now face unending uncertainty. The constant disappointment, despite protests, hunger strikes, and repeated petitions, has led to a mental health crisis among these professionals, who deserve not only meaningful employment but the opportunity to serve and make a difference in their communities. This ongoing neglect has driven many to seek opportunities outside the state, resulting in a brain drain, while underserved populations here continue to suffer without adequate dental care.

The heartbreak of seeing professional aspirations diminish is profound. The growing disillusionment and mental strain among dental graduates serves as a powerful reminder of the need for urgent and thoughtful reforms. Let us not lose hope but rather turn this moment into one of transformation.

### Hopes and the Way Forward

With trust in your leadership, we remain hopeful that these challenges can be met with meaningful action. Our vision is bold, but our hopes are grounded in the following steps:

### Implementation of a National Oral Health Policy

By adopting and enforcing a comprehensive oral health policy, we can improve access to dental care for all, particularly in underserved communities. This step would create essential roles for dental professionals, reducing dependence on unqualified practitioners and ensuring that every citizen has access to safe, professional dental care.

### Revitalization of Job Allocation for Dental Professionals

We request immediate action to revive recruitment efforts for dental surgeons, which could include the re-introduction of positions within the government sector and the creation of roles in initiatives like the National

Health Mission. Restoring these posts would bring hope and relief to countless graduates eager to contribute to public health.

### Strengthening of Public Dental Services

It is vital to align public health centers with national standards by staffing each Sub-District Hospital and Primary Health Centre with the recommended number of dental professionals. This step would not only provide much-needed care in underrepresented areas but also give graduates the opportunity to serve their communities and apply their training.

### Enhanced Employment Strategies

We urge the development of sustainable employment strategies that support both new graduates and experienced professionals within the healthcare sector. A fair and transparent system for job placement would boost morale and attract more students to pursue careers in dental healthcare.

### Mental Health Support

Recognize the profound emotional and psychological impact that prolonged unemployment has on our graduates. By offering mental health resources and support systems, we can alleviate some of the distress that these young professionals face and help them maintain resilience in challenging times.

### A Call for Hope and Action

The healthcare community, including dental professionals, holds unwavering hope in the new government's promise to listen to every voice and respond to the needs of your people. We are heartened as we see recruitment notifications in other sectors and hold on to the belief that dental healthcare will soon see the same support. This renewed commitment to our cause would signal a new era of health, hope, and opportunity for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

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

Dr. Zeenat Rehmani Shah is a BDS and has also completed a PGDHHM



## Did you know?

## Empowering Our Elders: The Importance of Financial Independence Through Saving and Investing

Irshad Mushtaq

It's essential to educate our elders about saving and investing to ensure their financial independence. With proper financial planning, they can maintain autonomy and make their own spending decisions. Traditionally, we focus on the financial needs of children, often overlooking our aging parents who also require financial security.

Parents play a pivotal role in nurturing children and helping them reach maturity. As they age, it becomes the children's responsibility to ensure their elders are financially independent. This transition fosters a sense of authority and independence for the elders, empowering them to make their own decisions and encouraging self-reliance.

Elders should feel empowered, not dependent. Therefore, a community effort is needed to educate them on the benefits of saving and investing. Simple investments, like mutual funds, can offer continuous returns, ensuring financial stability. With the right guidance, elders can effectively convert retirement funds into financial assets, similar to gold or land.

Financial literacy is crucial in reducing stress, a significant factor often leading to health issues in older age. Educating elderly on income options, savings, and investments can mitigate insecurity and promote peace of mind. Less financial stress leads to fewer health problems.

Financial education for older adults, encompassing an understanding of mutual funds as viable assets, planning for income generation post-retirement, and safeguarding against financial distress, can significantly enhance their quality of life. Ultimately, financial literacy empowers elders, ensuring they retain their autonomy and continue positively contributing to their communities, all while maintaining an enriched bond with their families.

Let's prioritize our elders' financial needs—they are blessings in our lives.

**Conclusion**  
Empowering our elders through financial independence isn't just a responsibility; it's a privilege. By educating them on saving and investing, we help them maintain autonomy and reduce stress. Let's prioritize their financial literacy and ensure they feel empowered, not dependent. Together, we can enrich their lives! Let's create an income for them.

Learn from the insights of @Irshad Mushtaq,  
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## Confidence And Willpower

Confidence and willpower are the keys to personal improvement and accomplishment. A person needs confidence and willpower to succeed in any sphere of life. Confidence means belief in yourself and determination in support. Willpower is the strong desire to achieve one's goals through any adversity. Neither of these qualities are innate, but can be developed with hard work and consistent practice.

To build self-confidence, you first need to recognize your abilities and limitations. Only when you understand yourself well will you develop confidence in your abilities. Building confidence in your strengths and interests can help you move forward with confidence in any situation.

It is best to set small goals at the beginning to build confidence. When you accomplish these small goals, the feeling of accomplishment bolsters your confidence. This approach helps to move towards a bigger goal.

One of the most important ways to build self-confidence is to learn from failure. Failure is not a big deal. Failure happens at some point. Learn new lessons from failure. Not being afraid of mistakes, correcting them and moving forward increases self-confidence many times over.

Thorough preparation and investment of time in any task boosts confidence. When you are well prepared for any task, the results lead to success and this boosts your confidence.

Helping and encouraging others in-

creases your self-confidence. When you play a distinct role in the lives of others, your confidence grows.

The first step in building willpower is setting goals. When you know where you want to go, you will develop the will to move in that direction. When the goal is not clear, the willpower is weakened.

Continuity is very important for building willpower. Like making a habit of doing anything regularly. The practice of moving forward little by little every day strengthens one's willpower and increases the scope of work.

Morals should be developed to increase willpower. When you face difficult situations, you can change them by developing morale.

An important part of increasing willpower is self-control and patience. Willpower is strengthened by exercising self-control and persevering in the right direction even when circumstances are not favorable.

Good physical and mental health is a factor in increasing willpower. Proper diet, adequate sleep, and physical exercise also strengthen the willpower.

Self-confidence and willpower are two very important assets in a person's life. Developing both of these qualities requires patience, perseverance, and regular practice. When you set goals with confidence and move consistently towards them with willpower, you will surely succeed.

Satyabrat Bora

# Walls vs Bridges

NARAYANAN KIZHUMUNDAYUR

The statement "We build walls, not bridges" highlights a deep and often troubling aspect of human behaviour, especially when it comes to relationships, societies, and politics. It reflects how, instead of reaching out to connect, understand, and collaborate with others, individuals and groups often choose to isolate themselves. They construct emotional, social, and physical barriers that separate them from others, rather than building the bridges needed to foster unity, communication, and cooperation. By exploring this metaphor in emotional, societal, and global contexts, we can better understand how this tendency to "build walls" affects us and why choosing to "build bridges" is essential.

## Emotional Walls: Isolation in Relationships

In our personal lives, "building walls" refers to the emotional barriers we put up to protect ourselves from hurt. When people experience pain, betrayal, or rejection, they often respond by withdrawing emotionally. They avoid deep conversations, keep others at a distance, or even shut down emotionally to shield themselves from vulnerability. While these emotional walls may offer a temporary sense of safety, they ultimately prevent people from forming meaningful, trusting relationships. Over time, these barriers can lead to loneliness, disconnection, and emotional isolation.

On the other hand, building bridges in relationships means being open, communicating honestly, and building trust with others. It requires emotional vulnerability, which can be difficult, especially after past hurts. Building bridges is about making the effort to understand the other person's perspective, resolve conflicts, and cultivate empathy. Many people, however, choose to stay behind their emotional walls out of fear of being hurt again. Unfortunately, this leaves them feeling disconnected and prevents them from experiencing the deep connections that come with emotional openness.

Emotional resilience—the ability to bounce back after experiencing emotional pain—comes from the willingness to dismantle those walls and work towards building bridges. By doing so, people open themselves to the possibility of genuine connection, personal growth, and healing. In contrast, staying behind emotional walls



may feel safer, but it leads to a life of isolation and missed opportunities for true connection with others.

## Societal Walls: Segregation and Division

On a broader level, the metaphor of "building walls" applies to how societies divide themselves based on race, religion, social class, or political beliefs. These walls manifest both literally and figuratively. In some cases, societies build physical walls, such as gated communities or barriers that keep people of different backgrounds apart. In other cases, figurative walls, such as discriminatory laws, biased practices, or even the way social media platforms create echo chambers, keep people separated by reinforcing their existing beliefs and biases. These walls foster division, fear, and prejudice.

When societies choose to build walls, they become fragmented, with different groups

living in isolation from one another. This kind of segregation fuels misunderstanding, hatred, and hostility toward those who are perceived as "other." As a result, societies face persistent issues like racism, economic inequality, and cultural conflict, all of which are difficult to resolve without open dialogue.

Building bridges in society means promoting inclusion, diversity, and understanding. It requires making an effort to bridge the gaps between different social groups, to foster dialogue, and to create opportunities for collaboration and shared growth. A society that values connection over division recognizes that diversity is its strength and that by working together across differences, it can overcome challenges and achieve greater progress. Societies that build bridges, instead of walls, are more innovative, cohesive, and resilient in the face of challenges.

## Geopolitical Walls: Nationalism and Isolationism

On a global scale, the metaphor of "building walls" takes on political and international significance. Many nations today are erecting both literal and figurative walls, driven by nationalism, fear of outsiders, and a desire to protect their national interests. We see this in the construction of physical barriers at borders, strict immigration policies, and trade restrictions. Politicians often justify these actions as necessary for national security or economic protection, but in reality, they foster isolationism and hinder global cooperation.

A well-known example of a physical wall was the Berlin Wall, which divided East and West Germany during the Cold War. It symbolized the deep ideological divide between the two sides, both of which viewed the other with suspicion and hostility. The fall

of the Berlin Wall in 1989 symbolized the triumph of bridge-building over division, leading to the reunification of Germany and a more peaceful Europe.

Today, although the Berlin Wall is gone, many other physical and ideological walls remain. Fear of immigration, economic protectionism, and nationalistic policies continue to separate nations, making it difficult to cooperate on global issues like climate change, terrorism, and economic inequality. These challenges cannot be solved by isolation; they require international collaboration and shared responsibility.

Building bridges in global politics means fostering diplomacy, engaging in multilateralism, and working together to achieve common goals. The interconnected nature of today's world means that the challenges of the 21st century—such as pandemics, climate change, and cyber security threats—cannot be addressed by any one nation alone. It is only by working together, building partnerships across borders and cultures, that nations can find sustainable solutions to these global problems.

## Choosing Bridges over Walls: The Way Forward

The metaphor of building walls versus building bridges invites us to reflect on the kind of world we want to create. In every aspect of life—whether personal, societal, or global—building walls may provide a sense of safety or protection, but it comes at a cost. These walls limit connection, understanding, and cooperation. Building bridges, while more challenging, leads to stronger relationships, more inclusive societies, and a more peaceful and cooperative world.

Building bridges requires courage, effort, and a willingness to be vulnerable. It means stepping outside of our comfort zones, challenging our own biases, and making the effort to engage with others meaningfully. Though building walls may seem like the easier path, it is through the act of building bridges that we discover resilience and the strength to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

In today's polarized and divided world, choosing to build bridges instead of walls is not only a moral choice but also a practical one. Humanity's future depends on our ability to overcome division, work together, and build a more united and connected world.

The author is an Accountant and a freelance writer in English and Malayalam

# Minimalism: Are We Done with Modernity?

Azher Ahmad Dar

"I wish everyone could become rich and famous so they realise it's not the answer." These lines were told by Jim Carrey. It is quite perplexing, in the sense that conventional wisdom has otherwise always been tilted toward amassing material resources as much as possible, thereby increasing the quotient of happiness or utility. It has always been perpetuated in everyday life that happiness is directly proportional to consumption. Is that so?

With the triumph of market fundamentalism and capitalism, this notion is said to have gotten stronger, with the capitalists speaking in pejorative terms of the totalitarian life of those living in the Soviet Union, with a total crack-down on what people eat, what they wear, etc. One positive thing, though, is that the whole world has ushered in the freedom associated with everyday life in terms of choosing whatever one wants. But is that freedom?

We will have to adopt the lenses of Emmanuel Kant and political philosophy in general. With the Industrial Revolution, we saw a tremendous increase in the production of goods and services, which directly improved the standard of living of people and their consumption of commodities. Saying that conspicuous consumption is the answer to satisfaction implies the intrusion of markets into everyday life. While markets have various moral limits, it seems that those limits have been violated in the guise of maximising consumer satisfaction.

Now, with postmodernism, we see an everyday contest happening between minimalism and maximalism. While maximalism has been an all-famous trend, it points to a positive relationship between conspicuous consumption and satisfaction. On the other hand, we see the rise of a new ideology or an alternative way of life, for that matter, which is minimalism, which means being satisfied with the little stuff instead of amassing too many material things. While it is not wrong that people consume, it is wrong that humans consume for the sake of consumption or because they are supposed to do so. One problem with humans is that they keep buying more and more stuff and are not satisfied with an assortment of their desired items.

The reason for this, according to various psychologists, is that they do not know where and how they will be satisfied. Ryan Nicodemus, an American and the co-author of 'Everything that Remains', with Joshua Fields Millburn,

had a fancy corporate job. Despite drawing a handsome salary, something was missing in him, in the sense that he was not happy in the usual sense of the word. His solution to fill the void was to purchase as many goods as possible and find a solution in conspicuous consumption. However, to his surprise, it did not fill the void that he had in his life, despite having everything that the social world puts a premium on. His friend, on the other hand, whose name was Joshua Fields Millburn, also had a good corporate job. However there was a difference between them. It was that he was comparatively happy and satisfied with whatever he had had.

During a conversation, Ryan Nicodemus asked his friend why he was happier. The answer that came to his surprise was the pursuit of minimalism. For many months, he had been living a meaningful life with as few things as possible, in that he did not have to worry about what to wear or what to eat. They are now popularly known as minimalists, who have been popular in the West for their advocacy of the philosophy of minimalism. One particular problem, which is difficult for an ordinary person to understand, is human nature, which has always been shown in Hobbesian terms as selfish, nasty, nasty, brutish and restless.

While it is true that human nature is so, common sense is somehow wrong, and this ideology will likely linger forever. On the other hand, we had John Locke, who described the man in hunky dory terms, in the sense that everything is fine with man; he is not selfish, nasty, nasty etc., as has been perceived by conventional wisdom. Those calling human nature coherent and doggedly chasing tangible goods may be called those who believe in standard preferences, in the sense that preferences do not change.

However, all of these are partially wrong, as has been put forward by leftists, environmentalists, etc. Human nature can essentially be tweaked, either in a good direction or a bad direction. With the reigning of liberalism and the free market, we have seen that human nature has been painted with negative connotations, and efforts have been made by the marketing industry to change consumer behaviour toward conspicuous consumption. One answer to why human nature is not stable and can be changed is the role of the advertising industry in changing the consumer patterns of a person, be it toward good things or bad, for that matter. What this marketing industry has done is show what an ideal life looks like,

which triggers cravings in those who can't afford to get them, leading to an unscrupulous life. The shift towards consumerism now, is all because of it.

Now that we are living in a modern age, it is an age where, because of all of this, the ends justify the means. Saying this points to the intrusive role of money in everyday life, which has become so pervasive that there is no second thought beyond money. That is exactly the reason why the modern age has a moral deficit. We see various people saying "Had I had the information about the earning potential of social media, I would not have studied further", which is dangerous when we are talking of living a right life. The problem with it is that education is important; leaving education in the middle would make him a beast who would doggedly chase money, since money, in this case, money has no substantive instrumental value, which will ultimately lead him to do something, including unscrupulous things, to make as many as possible.

This is a grave peril of the so-called liberal order, which has made everyone a slave of his desire, to put it in Kantian terms. We have CB Macpherson saying that liberalism has described individuals as possessive, who could do anything to get their wishes fulfilled, which has negatively impacted the real freedom of other people, specifically the lower middle class. He talks of two kinds of power: one is extractive power, which is gaining satisfaction by extracting a part of the capacities of another person and making him work for his desires. This, according to him, characterises the liberal world order, where the poor, or the have-nots, to put it in Marxist terms, do not have the opportunity to fully develop their power because their power is used and exploited by the big capitalists. A surprising ramification of the same, according to him, is the dehyphenation of the words liberal and democratic, because real democracy is based on the development of a kind of power, where everyone has equal chances of satisfying his desires', not implying sameness, so to speak.

An important example of the same would be the decolonial school, which exposed the Cartesian lenses of the West about environmental protection. In South America and the Oriental world at large, we have examples of people holding nature in high esteem, such as in Africa, where the natives considered the Earth an integral living part of their lives and protected it. What we saw after the colonial exploitation and the recent modernization, in

general, is the brazen exploitation of natural resources because of the internationalisation of capitalism, to put it in Lenin's terms or the neo-imperialist project of the global North. Now the West has woken up from slumber, and it is strongly the case that they should pay reparations to third-world countries for their contribution to environmental degradation.

Ironically, the US has not even ratified the Kyoto Protocol or the Convention on the Rights of Children. All of this is because of consumerism. There is one argument, that often surfaces, related to modernity, which is that with time, humans ought to change, which is doomed to deceive people by adopting immoral modern means to fulfil the ends, which will either put humanity in danger or the whole of modernity project will crash down. It seems likely that the project of modernity is falling because of a paradigm shift to decolonization, in the sense that people have moved away from the project, which has all in all destroyed the fuel of morality and religion in third-world countries.

The growing number of conflicts is a testament to it, especially in the West, in the form of wars like the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Palestine war. One important drawback of modernity is the crisis of morality. People have become so blinded by the lure of luxury and money that it does not matter whether trying to sell bad things to children is scrupulous or otherwise. In the early 20th century, advertisements for children worked by appealing to parents to buy things. With technology and modernity, now children are directly approached and tricked into buying bad things, which is so dangerous and immoral of liberalism.

One important reason for this is reigning in deontological logic, which says that it is wrong to judge a person, implying maximum good is always right, which has been adopted by the liberals. On the other hand, we have teleological logic, which judges people for their good, implying that the maximum good is not always right. Not putting a moralistic premium on things is what has plunged the current order into crisis. While there may be divergences on the substantive matter of moral principles, there are some basic moral values, which are absolute and universal, that should guide human nature and have been missing throughout the modernity crisis. We have Emmanuel Kant defining freedom as autonomy, in that it implies that just consuming goods and desires is not freedom; it is being a slave to the desires beyond which people can't think. As per him, humans have given themselves a higher order,

and acting on its path is what is called freedom.

Deep down, humans should think that it is wrong to expect happiness with the amount of money in hand. People talk of humans as people who are not satisfied with time, but they are partially wrong. I will talk about myself. I am happy with whatever little I have, but my happiness is only relative. I also see others who have been tweaked by the advertising industry to envy the ideal life, which has put them into a restless mode with the result that they do not have mental peace, and this hurts their growth and productivity.

Minimalism is being deliberate with the choices—not getting lured by fancy fast fashion—doing things that you feel like doing. A grave consequence of maximalism is ending up doing that job, which, although pays well, is not satisfying. This has lately been one of the grave regrets of every person who has gotten into the wrong vocation. It is highly pressing that the human brain needs a permanent resignation from modernity and to be happy with whatever it has; that is what would be satisfying. Now we have political philosophers like Habermas saying that modernization has led to a crisis of legitimacy, a crisis of rationality, a crisis of motivation, and a crisis of economy. In his opinion, modernity, especially the technological revolution, has led to a technical consciousness, and humans do not know what rational choices are. This is how the market has led people to put a monetary value on everything, even those that are non-marketable. Michael Sandel, in his book "The Moral Limits of Markets", says that everything has now become transactional. On the other hand, AG Cohen draws on the analogy of a camping trip to establish the efficiency of the common pursuit of goals instead of being possessive, which is exactly what the capitalist world order has done. There has been a valorization and patronization of self-interest and consent, so much so that now the relationship of parents with their children has become highly consensual, which has repeatedly been criticised by even supporters of the liberal world order like Francis Fukuyama. The growing premium put on the word consent is because of the decline of trust among people today and a rise in murder, crimes, crimes and the abandonment of old parents, which has been most stark in the West, the so-called propagator of flawed capitalism and liberalism.

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## 'Didn't Expect Clean Sweep Even In Our Wildest Dreams'

Press Trust of India

Former captain Daniel Vettori termed New Zealand's 3-0 Test series win on Indian soil as his country's greatest achievement while ex-batter Ross Taylor said he did not think of a clean sweep even "in our wildest dreams".

India suffered a humiliating series whitewash after losing the third match by 25 runs to New Zealand in Mumbai on Sunday, the first time in their Test history, which goes back to 1933.

New Zealand had come to India after being thrashed 0-2 by a Sri Lankan team that is in transition. The Black Caps were also without their biggest batting star, Kane Williamson, thanks to injury.

"The expectation for any touring team that goes to India on these types of wickets is that it's going to be incredibly difficult. We understand the challenge and in a lot of ways it's just how are you going to compete against them."

"... given the history with two Test match wins in almost 80 years and a lot of trying. You have to go back to the great Sir Richard Hadlee's era, and he could only get one win," Vettori, a spin great, was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"So for this team to come here and get that first one and then to win a series is probably New Zealand cricket's greatest."

Taylor, a former batting star, is in awe of the New Zealand team after the historic Test series sweep in India.

"I think the way they played throughout the whole series ... I think we hoped more than thought we were going to win. But a clean sweep - think it still hasn't quite sunk in among the New Zealand public, probably for the players as well."

"After winning the first Test (in Bengaluru), it gave the team as well as the public some be-

lief, but I don't think even in our wildest dreams we imagined a clean sweep and such a convincing performance from Tom (Latham), Gary and the boys."

"This has to be the greatest New Zealand series win in Test cricket. No one has done it. South Africa have won a two-match series 2-0, but 3-0 in India, I don't think anyone could see this at the start. So this surpasses the 2-1 Test victory in the '80s against Australia."

Asked how New Zealand pulled off the amazing feat, Taylor said, "Obviously, you come to India after being completely outplayed in Sri Lanka, probably only the players in that dressing room and the support staff gave themselves a chance ... But a New Zealand team that's got their backs against the wall is a pretty dangerous side."

"You need a little bit of luck as well. Bengaluru was a good toss to lose. And then winning the toss in the next two Tests (in Pune and Mumbai) after New Zealand knew they are likely to play on turners after India went down in the first Test was significant."

For former express pacer Shane Bond too, it was not difficult to acknowledge it as the best result ever result for New Zealand in Test cricket.

"No other team has come and done what New Zealand have. When you talk to all the teams about touring India, it almost seems like mission impossible. Even the great Australian team came there and couldn't win."

"So for NZ to have won 3-0, I know they've made World Cup finals and would have loved to have won an ODI World Cup, but I think in terms of red-ball cricket, alongside the WTC (title win), this is far and away the best series result ever."

"I don't think anyone, anywhere, especially at home, thought we could win this series, let alone a 3-0 sweep."

## Australia Is Going To Be A Different Ball Game: Rohit

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: After India's batting frailties were brutally exposed in a 3-0 home series defeat by New Zealand, captain Rohit Sharma said it is important that his players get in the right frame of mind for what promises to be a challenging tour of Australia.

New Zealand became the first team to whitewash India at home in a series featuring three or more tests after the hosts faltered while chasing 147 in Mumbai on Sunday.

After being dismissed for 46 and 156 in Bengaluru and Pune, the latest capitulation left Indian great Sachin Tendulkar wondering whether it was just poor shot selection that let them down or if they lacked preparation and match practice.

India's batters must now prepare for the switch from the turning tracks on home soil to the pace and bounce of Australian pitches, with the opening Test in Perth looming on November 22.

"We do talk a lot about the game but sitting with every individual and telling them what needs to be done or how they need to get their mindset right is going to be challenging," Rohit told reporters.

"They come with a certain mindset, certain thinking about



their own games. It has given them success in the past. But we all understand Australia is going to be a different ball game."

The 37-year-old added that it would be crucial to create the right atmosphere for those players who have not yet experienced the intensity of a test in Australia.

"For the young players who haven't been there before, it'll be important to create an environment where they are comfortable and aren't intimidated by who they're playing against," he said.

"It's important that from our side, we keep telling them that it's another place to play cricket." India will prepare for the se-

ries with three days of match simulations after scrapping a practice game.

"We'll be training at WACA, which is close to Optus (Perth Stadium) where you have that bounce and carry," added Rohit, who said he is still unsure about playing the first match due to personal reasons.

"Hopefully, we can use the three days perfectly and maximise how much ever we can from our point of view."

India, who beat Australia away in 2018-19 and 2020-21, play five matches Down Under this time around and need to win four of them to reach a third successive World Test Championship final next year.

## DPS Srinagar Clinches Inter-School Basketball Trophy

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Delhi Public School Srinagar has won the prestigious Second BML Champions Annual Welfare Trust Silver Rolling Inter-School Basketball Trophy, hosted by Birla Open Minds International School, Pampore. The school made a clean sweep, winning both the boys' and girls' categories, defeating Birla School in the thrilling final matches.

The tournament brought together the top eight school teams from the valley, showcasing exceptional talent and sportsmanship. In the boys' category, Mohammad Nisar earned the title of the highest scorer of the

tournament, and Muqtida Rehman was honoured as the player of the final match. Noorain was recognized as the best shooter of the tournament, and Anika was named player of the tournament for her outstanding performance.

The boys' team secured their victory over Birla Open Minds International School, Pampore, with a close score of 45-39, while the girls' team celebrated their win with a score of 29-20 against Life School Charar-i-Sharief.

This commendable achievement highlights the dedication and skills of the students of DPS Srinagar, Shafaq Afshan, the Principal complimented the students and said.



## Wednesday Promises Exciting Matchups In Srinagar Premier League

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Downtown Heroes FC and Real Kashmir FC will both be in action on Wednesday at TRC Stadium. The two teams will play their respective league games of 2024 Srinagar Premier League on the day, District Football Association Srinagar announced Monday.

Downtown will take on Jhelum FC in the first game of the

day, which will kick off at 2:00 PM. The second game will see Real Kashmir (Reserves) take on Sports Council Football Academy. The contest will kick off at 4:30 PM, as per a DFA Srinagar schedule.

In their previous game, Downtown Heroes defeated Northall United 5-0. Musharaf and Aadiya Mahajann scored two goals while Mehran Dar scored one.

## J&K Carrom Association Announces Federation Cup Trials

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Carrom Association on Sunday announced selection trials for the upcoming 29th All India Federation Cup Carrom Tournament for the 2024-25, scheduled from January 5 to January 8, 2025, at Nellore Club, Dargamitta, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh. The national-level ranking tournament is organised by the All India Carrom Federation and hosted by the Andhra State Carrom Association

in collaboration with the Nellore District Carrom Association.

"All interested players (men and women), as well as schools, colleges and institutions, are invited to register at Carrom Hall, Srinagar Sports Club (SKISC Srinagar) to undergo the selection and screening process for participation in this 29th Federation Cup. This is an excellent opportunity to represent Jammu and Kashmir and showcase our region's finest carrom talents on a national platform,"

the association said in a press release.

"To ensure a smooth registration process, please submit entries via email jkcarrom@gmail.com by November 12, 2024, with the following details: Name, Parentage, Date of Birth, School, Address, District, and Contact Number. All participants are also advised to carry valid original ID proof."

"For more information, please contact us at 9906767529 or 9070000093," it added.

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