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BOOK APPOINTMENT

Why Youth Of Kashmir Are Dying Of Heart Attacks? Experts Weigh In

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: Leading cardiologists in Kashmir have sounded an alarm over the increasing prevalence of heart attacks among the youth, linking it to smoking and tobacco consumption.

In a concerning revelation, leading cardiologists in Kashmir have highlighted the growing risk of heart attacks among young smokers. Speaking to Kashmir Observer, they emphasized the critical connection between smoking and cardiac

health, urging youth to take proactive steps to quit smoking.

Dr. Hilal Rather, Head of the Department of Cardiology at Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), stated that both active and passive smokers are at risk.

"Even someone who smokes very little is still a smoker. They may be active or passive, but a smoker is a smoker," he said.

He acknowledged that while minimal smoking might pose a relatively lower risk of heart attacks, the associated health



SOME DECADES AGO, HEART ATTACKS WERE PRIMARILY seen in older individuals. Now, we are witnessing an increased intensity of heart attacks among the youth, and our findings point to smoking as a leading cause"

dangers cannot be ignored.

Highlighting the environmental factors in Kashmir, Dr. Rather said, "In winter, environmental

smoke tends to linger at lower levels instead of dispersing into the atmosphere, increasing the risk of lung infections. This

exacerbates the health risks for smokers and nonsmokers alike."

Sharing insights from clinical observations, Dr. Rather said,

"We have seen many patients who have suffered heart attacks, and those who smoke show a higher prevalence of this condition. However, it is not a one-to-one relationship—while not all smokers experience heart attacks, a significant number of young patients who do have been smokers."

Studies also show that smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease and increases the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease (CVD). According to a research published | [More on P6](#)

Landslide In Budgam Claims 2 Lives

Budgam: A landslide incident occurred in the Ichgam area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district on Monday, resulting in the loss of two lives and leaving one critically injured.

The victims, identified as Bachan Lal Paswan and Kasturi Lal Paswan, were migrant laborers from Bihar who were working on a road construction project in the Lingbal area when the landslide struck.

According to eyewitnesses, the trio was trapped underneath the debris, and despite swift rescue efforts, two of the laborers succumbed to their injuries. The injured laborer, Satinder Paswan, was rushed to the District Hospital Budgam and later shifted to the Bone and Joint Hospital Barzulla, Srinagar, for further treatment.

The Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Budgam confirmed the incident, stating that two laborers were brought in dead, while the third was referred to a specialized hospital for treatment.

An official overseeing the road construction project explained that the victims were working on the road when they suddenly came underneath a landslide, and despite retrieval efforts, two died in the incident, and one is injured and receiving treatment at a Srinagar hospital.

Police have taken cognizance of the incident and registered a case under relevant sections of law. (CNS)

Dry Weather In Kashmir Hydropower Generation Hits All-Time Low



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Hydroelectric power generation in Kashmir has plunged to a record low, as reduced river flows during winter have severely impacted

electricity production.

This has left residents grappling with erratic power supply amid freezing temperatures. Hydroelectric projects, which account for over 90% of Kashmir's | [More on P6](#)

Air Quality, Economy & Water Resources Suffer

Agencies

Kashmir's persistent dry weather is taking a toll on its air quality, water resources, and economy, leaving residents and environmental experts deeply concerned. December 2024 has witnessed a staggering 79 percent precipitation deficit, with no snow | [More on P6](#)

Dry Air, Low Temps Fuel Respiratory Infections

As winter sets in, cases of common cold and upper respiratory tract infections (URTI) are on the rise, posing | [More on P6](#)

Dry Weather Till Dec 12: MeT

The fresh spell of light snowfall was reported in the higher reaches of Kashmir on Monday while as the weatherman here has predicted no major activity till December 12. | [More on P6](#)

REDUCED OUTPUT HAS COINCIDED with soaring demand, which peaks at around 2,800 MW to 3000 MWs in winter, while local supply dwindles to less than 1,000 MW."

J&K Cabinet Expansion Unlikely Soon

Agencies

Srinagar: The much-awaited cabinet expansion of Omar Abdullah-led Government is unlikely to take place soon as the sources have ruled out any talks in this regard while the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) Chief, Tariq Hameed Karra also dismissed any talks at the state level.

Reliable sources said that no discussion has taken place vis-à-vis cabinet expansion so far in the Jammu and Kashmir government, but added that the expansion would unlikely take place soon.

They added that the decision in this regard can be taken by the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah himself | [More on P6](#)

J&K Secures 750-Seat Private Hajj Quota For 2025

Observer News Service

Srinagar: For the first time, Jammu and Kashmir has been allocated a private Hajj quota of 750 seats for 2025.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs conducted the registration and allocation process under its policy for Hajj Group Organizers (HGO), as per circulars No. HAJ-15/6/2024-HAJ-MoMA dated 07-09-2024 and 04-10-2024.

A total of 914 applications were received across five categories: 26 for Category 1 Lead Applicants, 28 for Category 1 Non-Lead Applicants, 223 for Category 1 Experienced Applicants, 523 for Category 2 Experienced Applicants, and 114 for Category 2 New



Applicants. After scrutiny, 841 applicants were found eligible. In Jammu and Kashmir, 14 companies have been granted Hajj quotas. Labaika Haj & Umrah Services, under

Category I, received 100 seats. Nine companies under Category II, including Al Hayat Hajj and Omrah, Universe Travel Corporation, Behreen Travels, | [More on P6](#)

Kashmir Sees Daily Damage To 50 Transformers

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With the early arrival of bone chilling winters and mammoth consumption of electricity all together, on an average at least 50 Distribution Transformers (DTs) of different load capacity are getting damaged every day in Kashmir valley.

A top official of Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) said that from the past more than a month, a huge number of DTs were damaged with some getting repaired immediately while others were taken to the workshops. "On an average, at least 50 DTs are getting damaged every day. The main reason for the damage to DTs is overloading and using crude heating gadgets," the official said.

He said, "Most of the DTs were getting damaged in rural areas wherein most of the consumers are unmetered."

About the damage cost of DTs, the official said, "On an average, the majority of the damaged DTs cost from Rs 2 Lakh to Rs 2.5 Lakh."

In the meantime, KPDCL in a statement said that in the month of November at least 1043 DTs were damaged and 1035 were restored simultaneously.

Chief Engineer (Distribution) of KPDCL, Aaqub Waheed Deva in a statement advised the consumers to adjust their heating | [More on P6](#)

Court Seeks Police Report On 'Private Detentions'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Srinagar Court has directed the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police, Kashmir, to file a detailed report addressing allegations of misconduct and lawlessness involving private individuals who claim to be authorized Traffic Police in Srinagar.

The Court of Special Magistrate 13 FC, Srinagar, issued directions in response to a complaint filed by advocate Sarfaraz Wani, who accused the authorities of permitting private individuals to unlawfully detain citizens and misuse their | [More on P6](#)

IAF Officer Rape Case HC Orders Continuation Of SIT investigation

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has ordered Special Investigation Team (SIT) of police to continue its investigation against Wing Commander of the Indian Air Force (IAF) who has been accused of rape by a woman Flying Officer.

A bench of Justice Javed Iqbal Wani also held that the IAF can invoke Section 124 of Air Force Act, 1950 to try the



officer in a Court Martial only after the investigation was completed.

The court also quashed two orders passed by the Chief Judicial Magistrate Budgam dated 10th October 2024 and another

passed a week later. By virtue of the October 10 order the CJM had directed the Incharge Police station Budgam to stop investigation in the matter and handover all the case papers to the Competent Authority or his duly authorized representative under the Air Force Act.

Later the CJM upon an application filed by the Assistant Public Prosecutor vide an order on October 16 directed the police | [More on P6](#)

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Amandeep BR Medicity Hospital & IFAW Organize Free Medical Camp

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In an attempt to offer essential healthcare services to the community, Amandeep BR Medicity Hospital in collaboration with Idara Falah-e-Aam Waqf (IFAW), Alamgari Bazar organised a free health checkup camp at Iqbal Khomeini Hall, Mohalla Syed Afzal Alamgari Bazar, Srinagar on Monday, IFAW spokesperson said.

Khan, Marketing of Amandeep BR Medicity Hospital and the Chairman of Idara Falah-e-Aam Waqf Abrar Hussain Munshi in the presence of other dignitaries from both the Idara and the Hospital.

Dr. Rouf Hussain Tak, Senior Consultant Internal Medicine Rheumatology, Dr. Munaza Shora, Consultant Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dr. Burhan Nazir, Consultant Orthopedics Surgeon, and Dr Ifrah Muzamil, Consultant



health check-up camp. The camp was inaugurated by Mubashir Hussain

Physiotherapy treated the patients and provided free medicines.

Erratic Power Cuts Irk Rawalpura Housing Colony Residents

Agencies

Srinagar: The inhabitants of Rawalpura, Housing Colony here have expressed resentment over the unscheduled power cuts which according to them are affecting their daily lives.

over these cuts. We are often left without power for hours beyond the stated limits," said Imran Ahmed, a resident of Rawalpura.

Another resident, Owais Ahmad, added, "This situation is especially difficult for households with children and elderly people. The lack of power has disrupted our daily routines and is causing unnecessary stress. It's high time the authorities address this issue."

Notably, the curtailment schedule issued by the departments reads that metered areas are supposed to witness power cuts of 4.5 hours, while non-metered areas will experience cuts of over 6 hours. The locals claim that they are facing disruptions far beyond the scheduled times.

"We were promised a set schedule, but it seems like the authorities have no control

They said that despite repeated appeals, the locals allege that there has been no response to the ongoing problem.

Meanwhile, despite repeated attempts, the Chief Engineer KPDCI could not be contacted for the comments—(KNO)



In A First, Uber India Introduces Water Transport Services

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a first of its kind innovation for India, Uber India has introduced a water transport service, enabling users to book rides on Srinagar's beautiful Shikaras through its app.

This feature, known as "Uber Shikara," brings a touch of modern convenience to the traditional charm of Dal Lake, starting from today.

Uber India has introduced the tie-up with Kashmir's iconic Shikara, with a service that allows customers to book their Shikara rides up to 15 days in advance.

This step by Uber's instruction to Kashmir's Shikara has taken social media by storm, with Uber India sharing the news on their X handle: "Introducing Uber Shikara in Srinagar, the perfect blend of tradition and tech."

"Introducing Uber Shikara in Srinagar! The perfect blend of tradition and tech! Now you can book your serene Shikara ride up to 15 days in advance. With just a tap on the Uber app, you are ready to set sail. Experience Dal Lake like never before. #Uber-Shikara." Uber India wrote on X.

With just a tap on the Uber app, the visitors can now embark on their Dal Lake adventure, enjoying the beauty of one of Kashmir's beautiful Shikaras.

Wali Mohammad, President of the Shikara Association in Kashmir,

LG Lauds Launch Of Uber Shikara

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Monday commended Uber for launching the Uber Shikara in Srinagar, saying that it is a testament to creative ways technology can enhance our cultural heritage.

"Launch of Uber Shikara in Srinagar is a testament to creative ways technology can enhance our cultural heritage. This offering in the upcoming tourist season will provide visitors a seamless way to experience the timeless charm of Shikara rides, a hallmark of J&K's beauty," Office of LG J&K wrote.

He also invited the people across the globe to enjoy the magical winter season in paradise. "I commend Uber for their futuristic vision, enabling convenient access to serene experiences while boosting local tourism. Together, we are showcasing the splendor of the crown of India to the world. Winter is upon us, & people of J&K invite you all to enjoy this magical season in paradise," the post reads.

said it is a good initiative and will boost the tourism sector of the valley. "This is a step forward for the Shikara community. It not only promotes our traditional livelihood but also connects us with a larger audience through technology," he said.

"Uber Shikara can now be booked online, and as of now, 10 Shikaras are available to be booked through Uber. The Uber Shikara can be accessed from Dal Lake Ghat number 16, and Uber's online Shikara booking has kicked off from today," he said, adding that up to four people can ride the Shikara and enjoy the view of the scenic, beautiful Dal Lake.

"As of now, 10 Shikaras have collaborated with Uber India, and more will join as the peak season arrives. The Uber Shikara will be a boost for Shikaras in the valley," he said. Pertinently, Uber Shikara is seen as a perfect blend of tradition and modernity, enhancing the tourism experience while supporting the local economy. "This is a great step and a step towards modernizing the traditional Shikara. It feels like traditions are being seen in a whole new light, bringing hope for the future," said Siram from Delhi.

Emergency services: TRAFFIC POLICE: 9419993745, 01998-266686. FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: 2479488,245222,2452155. Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS: SHEIK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311. RAILWAYS: SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259. HIGHWAY STATUS: Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open) Mughal Road - (Open) Srinagar-Leh - (Open)

PRAYERS: FAJR 5: 53, ZUHR 12: 20, ASR 3: 45, Magrib 5: 25, ISHA 6: 49. HIJRI CALENDAR: 27 Jumada al-Awwal 1446

This Day In History

- 1639- 1st annulment by court decree passes. 1676- Battle of Lund (Scanian War): Swedish army of 8,000 defeats much larger joint Danish/Dutch force of 13,000. 1835 - First US mutual fire insurance company issues first policy (Rhode Island).

SAD DEMISE. With profound grief and sorrow we inform the demise of Khatija Begum wife of Late Haji Ghulam Ahmad Malla Residence Of Zalidar Mohalla saida kadal who passed away on 1/12/24 after Brief illness.

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited. POSSESSION NOTICE. Notice under Section 13(4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8(1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules ,2002. Whereas, Asaf Rasool Kanue, as the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002...

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice. DEN/HQ/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date 19.12.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs.

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of Kashmir Observer LLP
Printed at: K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industrial Estate, Rangreth-Budgam
Published from: 5-Boulevard Srinagar J&K
Editor: Sajjad Haider
News Editor: Farzana Nisar
Opinion Editor: Tooba Towfiq
Online Editor: Syed Hamid
Head Layout & Design: Muntazir Yaseen,
Distribution & Advertising: Firdos Ali
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
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Unmet Promises: Stalled Infra Projects of J&K



KO VIEW

Endemic Winter Power Woes

Kashmir is facing severe unscheduled power cuts despite government assurances of improved supply, with outages exceeding the declared 4.5 hours in metered areas and 6 hours in non-metered zones. People are complaining of unpredictable cuts that disrupt daily life, leaving households struggling in the biting cold. Officials attribute the crisis to a mismatch between supply (1500 MW) and winter demand (2200 MW), exacerbated by power theft, inefficient heating devices, and overloading. Over the last week, the temperature in the Valley has drastically dived, with night temperature dropping below freezing point.

The problem with the winters in Jammu and Kashmir is that the power supply generally goes down, due to the reduced discharge in the rivers. As has always been the case, the freezing cold in winter is reinforced by the severe power shortage which happens to be nobody's concern, either in the government or in the opposition. This only shows how much this seasonal power crisis has become a naturalized part of our lives. So much so that the people have now grudgingly resigned themselves to the state of affairs and the government doesn't feel unduly worried about the situation either. And to top it, we also have the drastic power curtailment schedule imposed through matter-of-fact government orders with unscheduled power cuts to boot, making the matters worse. What is more, the curtailment schedule is unfair and discriminatory in its implementation across the different regions of the UT.

One hopes that the situation improves going forward. The real challenge lies ahead. The severity of the winter will only increase as Chillai Kalan rolls in on December 21. And the people will expect the government to be prepared for the next snowfall. One also expects that unlike many times in the past, Power Development Department will be better prepared to deal with the situation. The utility has usually been the target of public vitriol, both on street and online for its inability to immediately restore electricity after the Valley is snowed in.

Compared to past winters, nothing has changed for the better on the ground. In fact, in some aspects, the situation is only worse off. The power supply has been reduced to a trickle in parts of the Valley, with long unscheduled power cuts the order of the day - albeit, in some urban areas, the situation on the power front has been relatively better. Both metered as well as unmetered areas have already been slapped with a load-shedding schedule. Now that with each passing day, the Valley is heading deeper into winter, the government can be hoped to prepare for the tough times ahead. Snowfalls could soon become the order of the day.

Peerzada Mohsin Shafi

“As the focus has shifted, many of the projects that were once seen as crucial to the region's growth have been put on hold, leaving residents and stakeholders in a state of uncertainty”

India's vision to become a \$26 trillion economy has spurred an array of infrastructure projects aimed at improving the quality of life and driving economic growth. From Smart Cities to major upgrades in roads, railways, airports, and hydropower, infrastructure development plays a crucial role in transforming the nation. Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), as part of this ambitious agenda, is seeing a range of transformative projects, including the construction of tunnels, hospitals, and roads, all of which are expected to enhance the region's connectivity and economic prospects.

Some of the key projects that were approved years ago and are currently underway include the construction of AIIMS in Awantipora, which will boost the region's healthcare sector and ease the burden on SKIMS Institute in Srinagar. The Ring Roads in both the summer and winter capitals of the UT are poised to improve connectivity and reduce traffic congestion. Tunnel projects are also spreading across the region, such as the Ring Road Tunnel in Jammu, Khellani Tunnel in Doda, and other major tunnels on NH-44, including those from Marog to Digidol and Panthal to Magarkote. Additionally, elevated highways on the Ramsoo stretch of NH-44, the Banihal Bypass, Z-Morh Tunnel in Sonamarg, and the Zojila Tunnel, along with hydroelectric power projects in Kishtwar, such as Kiru, Kwar, and Drabshala, are all set to make a significant impact on the region's development.

However, several critical infrastructure projects that were anticipated to begin by early 2024 have been delayed or come to a standstill. The much-hyped Vailoo-Singhpura Tunnel (10.3 km) and Sudhmahadev Dranga

Tunnel (5 km) on NH-244, both of which were expected to enhance connectivity, now appear to be indefinitely stalled. After the cancellation of tenders for these projects, it has been over six months with little progress or clarity on their future. The issue was raised recently by MLA Inderwal in the legislative assembly, highlighting the growing concern over the lack of movement on these important projects.

Similarly, the widening of the Khanabal-Pahalgam road, which was expected to begin soon, has also faced delays. The tender for this project was cancelled for reasons that remain unclear, further adding to the uncertainty surrounding the region's infrastructure upgrades. The Kashmir University Biotech Park, announced back in 2011, was another high-profile project aimed at fostering innovation and technology in the region. However, due to shifting political priorities and administrative challenges, the project has been shelved, depriving the region of a potential hub for scientific and industrial growth.

The Shahr-e-Khas Urban Development Project, launched in 2010 with the aim of revitalizing Srinagar's historic areas, has also been cancelled after the 2018 change in government, with new priorities redirecting focus elsewhere. Other ambitious projects such as the Srinagar Skyway, Jammu Solar Power Park, Kashmir Arts and Crafts Park, and the Srinagar-Delhi Expressway, which were expected to significantly boost tourism, energy, and connectivity in the region, have either been delayed or cancelled altogether. These projects were seen as key to J&K's economic development, but their future remains uncertain.

The setbacks can largely be

attributed to political and administrative hurdles. The change in governance, particularly the shift from the previous administration to the new rule, has resulted in the reassessment of priorities, leading to the shelving or cancellation of several planned initiatives. As the focus has shifted, many of the projects that were once seen as crucial to the region's growth have been put on hold, leaving residents and stakeholders in a state of uncertainty.

The impact of these delays is far-reaching. Many of the stalled or cancelled projects were expected to play a pivotal role in improving infrastructure, boosting tourism, and driving economic growth in the region. The Vailoo-Singhpura Tunnel, for example, was set to significantly reduce travel time and improve accessibility in a region by bypassing the tough Sinthan route. The Biotech Park could have created a regional hub for innovation, contributing to both the economy and the advancement of science. The cancellation of these initiatives poses a serious setback to the region's overall development.

While some important projects, such as AIIMS Awantipora and the Zojila Tunnel, continue to make progress, the stalling or cancellation of other key projects raises questions about the long-term vision for J&K's infrastructure. As the region looks forward, it is hoped that these setbacks will be addressed and that momentum will return to stalled initiatives, helping J&K achieve its developmental goals. For now, residents and business owners alike continue to await clarity on when—or if—these vital projects will move forward.

The author is a Researcher, Planning and Contracts



Did you know?

Understanding Nifty, Nifty Futures, and Options in Indian Stock Market

Irshad Mushtaq

The Nifty, short for the National Stock Exchange Fifty, is a benchmark stock market index representing the weighted average of 50 of the largest Indian companies listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE). The index serves as a barometer for the performance of the Indian stock market, providing investors with a snapshot of its health without needing to check each stock individually.

Components of Nifty

These 50 companies come from various sectors, including finance, automotive, cement, and more. Examples include Tata Motors, TCS, Infosys, and SBI. The index is weighted according to market capitalization, with companies like Reliance Industries having a substantial weightage.

How Does Nifty Reflect Market Performance?

The Nifty index reflects overall market trends. When the majority of its component stocks rise, the Nifty moves up, and vice versa. The daily performance can also be understood through the advance-decline ratio, which compares the number of stocks advancing versus declining.

Investing in Nifty

Nifty Bees and ETFs
Nifty Bees is an exchange-traded fund (ETF) that mirrors the Nifty index. Investors can buy Nifty Bees to gain exposure to all 50 Nifty stocks in one purchase. There are several ETFs, such as Kotak Nifty ETF and Mirae Nifty 50 ETF, allowing investors to buy into the top 50 companies by market capitalization.

Trading Nifty Derivatives

For trading and speculative purposes, Nifty derivatives like futures and options are available. These financial instruments allow traders to speculate on Nifty's movements without owning the underlying stocks. Here's a look into these offerings:

- Nifty Futures: Contracts that allow speculation on Nifty's future value. They have monthly expiries and are popular for short-term trading or hedging.
- Nifty Options: Include call and put options, providing the right but not the obligation to buy or sell. These options come in handy for hedging positions.

Conclusion

For regular investors looking for a straightforward investment route, Nifty Bees and ETFs are ideal. However, trading in derivatives requires a deeper understanding of market mechanics, as they involve more risks and require understanding of concepts like margin and technical analysis. Nifty serves as a critical tool for understanding the broader Indian market trends and making informed investment decisions.

Learn from the insights of @Irshad Mushtaq, Writer, Investor, Entrepreneur & Founder of M I Securities! Connect for valuable financial advice at misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com



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Addressing Obesity

It is well known that a large population of the country is battling obesity, the root of all diseases, due to which diseases like diabetes, thyroid, and high blood pressure have increased not only among adults, but also in adolescents and children. The good thing is that like the epidemic, now the government has also become alert about the increasing obesity. NITI Aayog, the country's policy-making body, has recommended to identify the major factors of its growth such as sugar, salt and fat-rich foods and increase the excise duty on these foods to make citizens free from obesity. In this episode, it has been said to take steps like 'front of the pack labeling' on products, so that people can be warned about the danger of obesity. The purpose is that people should be careful while choosing food items and they should know what is dangerous for their health. The report of the Research Institute of NITI Aayog for the

year 2021-2022 warns that the problem of overweight and obesity among children, adolescents and women is increasing continuously in the country. NITI Aayog is taking steps in this direction in collaboration with the country's Institute of Economic Development and the Public Health Organization of India. In fact, Indian food has traditionally been a trend of namkeen, chips, bhujia, etc., but in recent years, in the name of snacks, there has been an increase in the popularity of such foods which are injurious to health. It should be a matter of our concern that according to the National Family Health Survey, the number of women suffering from obesity in the country has gone up to 24 percent, while the figure for men is 22.9%. In such a situation, the need of the hour should be said that the government should take steps in this direction. Undoubtedly, obesity is the root of all diseases and the Indian medical system feels the pressure

due to the diseases caused by it. Buy vitamins and supplements

Actually, due to change in urban lifestyle and eating habits, the problem of obesity has become worrying. Talks continued about this problem, but no serious initiative was seen in this direction. Due to the market gimmicks, the use of junk food and packaged food items increased in the country. In this, the producers searched the market but did not care about the health of the common man. The irony was also that there was mention of factors that increase obesity, but serious efforts were not seen to stop them. The steps taken to stop them were only symbolic. The market is full of such foods which are tempting in taste, but are heavy on health. They have a long-term harmful effect on health, due to which obesity increases and under its guise serious diseases ranging from diabetes to heart disease start growing. Which over time takes a frightening form

due to neglect. Undoubtedly, the need of the hour is to strictly regulate the factors causing obesity. People should know that what they are consuming affects their health. In fact, due to the change in eating habits, the problem of obesity in developed countries has started spreading rapidly in India too. In India, such a problem assumes a formidable form because people are not conscious in time. We have failed to create awareness among the general public about obesity. We do not care when the factors that increase obesity have become a part of our daily life. Also which foods are really fattening. When the body becomes a home of deadly diseases due to such carelessness, the person does not even realize it. But while taxing such food items, keep in mind that the lives of common and poor people are not affected. Along with this, there is also a need to run an awareness campaign against obesity in the country.

Vijay Garg

Health and Equality

Interconnected Foundations of a Just Society

NARAYANAN KIZHUMUNDAYUR

Health and equality are intrinsically linked, forming the bedrock of a prosperous, harmonious, and just society. The interplay between these two elements is vital for individual well-being, economic progress, and social stability. A deeper understanding of their relationship reveals that equality not only promotes better health outcomes but that a healthy society also lays the foundation for equitable opportunities.

The Concept of Health and Equality

Health is a multidimensional state of physical, mental, and social well-being, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO). It is not merely the absence of disease but an essential resource for living a fulfilling life. Conversely, equality signifies a state where individuals or groups have the same access to resources, opportunities, and rights, irrespective of their socioeconomic, racial, gender, or cultural backgrounds.

How Equality Influences Health

Inequality is one of the greatest barriers to achieving optimal health outcomes. Disparities in income, education, and social status often translate directly into unequal access to healthcare, nutrition, and safe living environments.

- **Access to Healthcare:** Socioeconomic disparities significantly influence access to quality healthcare. Wealthier individuals often have access to private healthcare facilities, while marginalized groups may struggle with inadequate or inaccessible public health systems. This unequal access exacerbates health disparities.
- **Education and Awareness:** Education is a cornerstone of health. People with higher levels of education are generally more aware of preventive health measures, leading to lower rates of chronic diseases and better health outcomes. Inequality in education perpetuates cycles of poor health among disadvantaged groups.



Health and equality are mutually reinforcing elements essential for societal progress. A society that ensures equitable access to health services not only promotes individual well-being but also fosters economic growth, social cohesion, and long-term sustainability

- **Living Conditions:** Inequality often forces marginalized populations into unsafe living environments, where exposure to pollutants, unsanitary conditions, and lack of safe drinking water becomes a daily reality, increasing the risk of diseases.

How Health Influences Equality

Conversely, poor health perpetuates inequality. When unwell, they are less likely to contribute effectively to the economy or access opportunities for advancement. This is particularly evident in cases where preventable diseases disable entire communities or where the economic burden of healthcare drives families into poverty.

- **Economic Impacts:** Ill health reduces workforce productivity and increases healthcare costs, which disproportionately affect

those with lower incomes. This deepens existing inequalities by draining financial resources that could otherwise be invested in education or skill development.

- **Generational Impacts:** Poor health in one generation often leads to reduced opportunities for the next. For example, children from families burdened by medical expenses are less likely to access quality education, perpetuating cycles of inequality.

Global Evidence of the Health-Equality Nexus

Several global studies and initiatives underscore the interconnectedness of health and equality:

- **Nordic Countries:** Nations like Sweden and Norway, which prioritize equitable distribution of resources and universal healthcare, consistently report higher

levels of health and well-being.

- **Developing Nations:** In contrast, countries with stark income inequality often grapple with health crises, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, where marginalized groups faced disproportionately higher mortality rates due to limited access to healthcare and preventive measures.

Solutions to Strengthen Health and Equality

To address these intertwined issues, comprehensive and collaborative approaches are essential:

- **Universal Healthcare Systems:** Ensuring universal access to quality healthcare services is a critical step toward reducing health disparities. This includes subsidized or free healthcare for vulnerable populations.

- **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** Governments and NGOs must prioritize health education to empower individuals with the knowledge to make informed choices about their well-being.
- **Social Safety Nets:** Policies like affordable housing, access to nutritious food, and income support can address the root causes of health inequalities.
- **Equitable Policies:** Laws and frameworks that target systemic discrimination—whether based on gender, race, or class—can significantly enhance equality and health outcomes.
- **Community Health Programs:** Involving local communities in health planning and implementation ensures that interventions are culturally appropriate and accessible.

The Role of International Collaboration

Health and equality are global concerns that transcend national boundaries. Initiatives like the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) explicitly highlight the need for equitable access to health (Goal 3) and the reduction of inequalities (Goal 10). The global community can tackle health and equality challenges more effectively by pooling resources and expertise.

Conclusion

Health and equality are mutually reinforcing elements essential for societal progress. A society that ensures equitable access to health services not only promotes individual well-being but also fosters economic growth, social cohesion, and long-term sustainability. Addressing the structural and systemic barriers to equality will pave the way for healthier communities while promoting health will ensure that equality is both achievable and sustainable. Governments, organizations, and individuals must work together to bridge the gap, for a just society begins with equal access to the basic right of health.

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Toxic Mentorship: Mentor or Tormentor?

Ruth Gotian

I watched a brilliant presentation that had me hooked on every PowerPoint slide. The work was brilliant. There was only one problem. The work being presented was not that of the speaker. He was presenting his mentee's work, without any attribution to her. This is not how mentorship is supposed to work.

When we think of mentorship, we often picture a trusted guide—someone who shares their hard-earned wisdom to help us grow personally and professionally. Mentors are supposed to inspire confidence, offer support, and illuminate the path to success. But not all mentorships live up to this ideal. In fact, some can take a sharp turn into toxicity, transforming the mentor into a tormentor.

This darker side of mentorship isn't just an inconvenience—it can derail careers, shatter confidence, and leave lasting scars on personal and professional growth.

Drs. Vineet Chopra, Dana Edelson, and Sanjay Saint have a term for this phenomenon: "mentorship malpractice." They classify toxic mentors into three active failure types:

Hijackers: Those who take credit for their mentee's ideas and achievements.

Exploiters: Mentors who use mentees for self-serving tasks, offering little in return.

Possessors: Individuals who prevent mentees from seeking advice or opportunities elsewhere.

These behaviors don't just undermine trust—they stifle creativity, block career progression, and create toxic environments. Imagine the frustration of watching your ideas stolen by a hijacker or the burnout caused by an exploiter who views you as free labor.

But not all toxic mentorship is loud and obvious. Passive mentorship failures are equally damaging:

Bottlenecks: Mentors who fail to provide timely feedback or support, leaving mentees stuck in limbo.

Country Clubbers: Mentors who avoid difficult but necessary conversations, prioritizing comfort over candor.

World Travelers: Mentors so consumed by their own schedules that their mentees are an afterthought.

The harm caused by these passive failures often flies under the radar but can be just as career-stalling. A bottleneck mentor, for instance, can stunt growth by delaying decisions or feedback, while a country club mentor risks leaving mentees ill-prepared for challenges.



The Ripple Effects of Toxic Mentorship

The consequences of men-

torship malpractice extend far beyond the mentee-mentor relationship. Toxic men-

torship can lead to decreased job satisfaction, heightened burnout, and a severe loss of

confidence. Mentees subjected to exploitation or neglect may lose faith in their own abilities—or worse, in the very concept of mentorship.

This puts them at a severe disadvantage as those with mentors outearn and outperform those who are not. Toxic experiences can make mentees hesitant to seek out future mentors, robbing them of the long-term benefits of supportive guidance.

Navigating the Treacherous Waters of Mentorship

So, what's the solution? It begins with awareness.

Recognizing the warning signs. If you're constantly feeling undervalued, manipulated, or neglected, it is worth reassessing the mentorship relationship. Understanding that such experiences are not isolated but common can be liberating and can move you to take action.

Next, build a supportive and diverse mentoring network. Relying on a single mentor is risky and an outdated concept. Having multiple mentors, often referred to as a mentoring team, personal board of directors or mentoring constellation, allows for varied perspectives and reduces the dependency on a single mentor, thereby mitigating the risks associated with mentorship malpractice. It's akin to

diversifying an investment portfolio; the broader the array of mentors, the lesser the impact of any single negative experience.

Equally important is the ability to establish boundaries and advocate for your needs. If a mentoring relationship starts veering towards exploitation or neglect, clear and assertive communication can potentially rectify, or at least redirect, the situation. And if not, remember that exiting a toxic mentorship is not a failure but a step towards self-preservation and growth.

Mentorship Done Right

Mentorship, when done right, is transformational. It's about balance, respect, and mutual benefit. Toxic mentors are the exception, not the rule, but their impact can be profound. By staying vigilant, proactive, and intentional, you can sidestep the pitfalls of mentorship malpractice and focus on cultivating relationships that truly elevate your career and life.

The bottom line: great mentorship is out there. And it's worth seeking—even after encountering a few bumps along the way.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

