



www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

The menace of terrorism

The recent terror attacks in Jammu have underscored the persistent security challenges faced by the country

The recent terror attacks in Jammu once again highlight the fact that terrorism is far from over. They may be down but not out for sure. Indeed, Jammu serial attacks are a wake-up call for the Modi administration which is settling for the third time in office. Jammu, a region perennially at the forefront of geopolitical tensions and security concerns, has recently become the focal point of a series of terror attacks that have jolted the local populace and security apparatus alike. Over the past few weeks, a surge in terrorist activities, including targeted attacks on both civilians and security forces, has painted a grim picture of the region's fragile peace. The most recent and severe incident involved an assault on an Indian Air Force convoy in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. One airman was killed and four injured. These violent episodes have not only led to the tragic loss of life but also sowed seeds of fear and uncertainty among the residents. The attacks underscore the persistent and evolving threat posed by terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, necessitating urgent and comprehensive security measures.



In the wake of these escalating threats, Union Home Minister Amit Shah convened a high-level security review meeting in New Delhi. Shah's review underscored the gravity of the situation and highlighted the need for a multi-faceted and proactive approach to counter the burgeoning terror threat.

Let us face it, something is lacking on our part that emboldens the terrorists and gives them daring to carry out such operations. One of the biggest loopholes in combating terrorism is that there is little intelligence sharing among different security agencies. Effective

coordination between local police forces, the Indian Army and intelligence agencies is deemed vital for timely intervention and the prevention of further attacks. Besides local communities must be taken into confidence to take on the menace of terrorism as residents are often the first to notice unusual activities and their cooperation is essential for pre-emptive actions against potential threats. Besides, there is a need to address the root causes of terrorism, such as the radicalisation of vulnerable sections on the lower rung of the socioeconomic ladder. These factors are often exploited by terrorist organizations to recruit individuals and perpetuate violence. However, it is a welcome step to induct more troops in the Jammu sector so that the local population can feel safe and secure. Within Jammu, troops will be deployed in both urban centres and rural areas to ensure a comprehensive and pervasive security presence. However, these security enhancements come with their own set of challenges. There is a need to ensure that the increased military presence does not exacerbate tensions or alienate the local populace. The Government must strike a delicate balance between maintaining robust security and fostering trust and cooperation with the communities affected by these security measures.

PICTALK



People take part in a yoga session at Juhu, in Mumbai

Unleashing AI for social justice

By prioritising ethical deployment, AI stands poised to become a powerful tool for driving meaningful social change



SANJAY SARMA



The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become ubiquitous, permeating various facets of our lives. While AI has made crucial inroads into fields such as medical science, space exploration, financial inclusion, cyber security, manufacturing and transportation, its true potential lies in addressing complex everyday societal challenges and easing human struggles at the grassroots level.

In simple terms, we need AI to uplift the marginalised, improve social equity and bring about meaningful and measurable change in society. Not drive our cars, switch on our air conditioners, write our essays, or enhance our art. Therefore, while navigating our technological landscape and priorities, it is essential to reimagine AI's role, directing its capabilities towards issues that uphold human dignity and promote social progress.

In the realm of primary education, AI can play a crucial role in overcoming fundamental barriers faced by children of migrant labourers and displaced civilians, thereby breaking the cycle of disadvantage

and bridging gaps. Lack of access, resources, language, quality of instruction and personalised support are barriers that can be effectively addressed through AI. Adaptive learning platforms and customised educational content can cater to individual needs, enabling children to seamlessly integrate into the mainstream education system at a later date. This gives equitable access to educational opportunities for all, regardless of their background or circumstances and ensures that no one lags behind.

Another pressing issue that demands AI intervention is the eradication of manual scavenging in countries like India. Despite legislative bans, manual scavenging persists, subjecting individuals to hazardous conditions and robbing them of their basic dignity. AI-powered sanitation systems and robotics deployed on a rapid scale can offer a viable solution, automating waste management processes and eliminating the need for manual intervention.

Access to justice is another



BY HARNESSING AI FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES, ONE CAN ALSO STRIVE TO COMBAT SYSTEMIC BIASES AND PROMOTE INCLUSIVITY BY ANALYSING LARGE DATASETS AND IDENTIFYING PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION IN VARIOUS DOMAINS

area where AI intervention can make a significant difference and lead to faster resolutions and improved outcomes. From managing databases to providing legal assistance, support services and information resources to underserved communities, AI can assist individuals in navigating the legal system, understanding their rights and accessing legal representation, particularly in cases of war crimes, civil rights violations, discrimination, or social injustice.

By harnessing AI for social justice initiatives, one can also strive to combat systemic biases and promote inclusivity by analysing large datasets and identifying patterns of discrimination in various domains - from education to criminal justice. AI-driven decision-making can help mitigate biases in hiring processes and law enforcement, fostering fair and equitable treatment for all. These are just a few of the many areas where AI intervention can be transformative. It is important to prioritise a ground-up approach rather than a top-

down one. Safeguards, however, must be in place to prevent biases in algorithms and mitigate the risks of misuse or manipulation. This makes it crucial for interdisciplinary collaboration to exist between technologists and policymakers in order to navigate the ethical complexities inherent to AI development and implementation.

Let's remember that AI is a tool, not a solution. We can only deem AI transformational if it is deployed to eradicate dehumanising practices, build social equity and improve the lives of grassroots communities. So let us harness it as a force for positive change, ensuring that it remains a tool for empowerment and progress. Let us direct its capabilities towards endeavours that empower humanity and promote social progress. Everything else can be temporarily set aside.

(The writer is the Founding Partner at Civic Spectrum LLP and also the Founder at SSARMA Consults. Views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CLOSER CONNECTIVITY FOR KASHMIR

Madam — Apropos the news story "World's highest steel arch rail bridge nears completion in J&K," published on June 17, this is my response. The world's highest steel arch rail bridge over the Chenab River is set to transform connectivity to the Kashmir Valley. At 1,315 metres long and taller than the Eiffel Tower, this engineering marvel is part of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL). The 46-km Sangaldan-Reasi section, expected to open by month's end, marks a significant milestone. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is slated to be the first passenger on this route, emphasising its national importance.

This bridge, alongside India's first cable-stayed rail bridge at Anji Khad, highlights remarkable engineering feats. The project has been progressively commissioned, with the final phase between Reasi and Katra anticipated by year-end. The community eagerly awaits the inaugural train on June 30, a historic moment reflecting India's infrastructural prowess and enhancing the valley's integration with the rest of the country. This development signifies not just improved transportation but also a symbol of national pride and unity.

Khiraabdi | Noida

LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP SUCCESS

Madam — Apropos the news story "Reimagining Success in Long-Term Relationships," published on June 17, this is my response. Fairytales and romantic comedies paint idyllic pictures of love, but real-life relationships are far more dynamic and challenging. The notion of "happily ever after" is often impractical; instead, we should aim for a realistic understanding of success and fulfillment in lasting partnerships. Healthy relationships are dynamic ecosystems, thriving on personal growth and strong communication. Openness, acceptance and a shared sense of purpose are crucial for a deep bond.



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

India champions inclusive use of technology

Modi's recent visit to Italy for the G7 summit marked a significant step in India's diplomatic engagements and technological ambitions

On June 14, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni met in Italy for their fifth meeting. This encounter followed their previous meetings at the G20 India Summit and COP28 in Dubai, making it a significant continuation of their diplomatic engagements. Expressing his satisfaction, PM Modi highlighted that this visit to Italy was his first foreign trip in his third consecutive term as Prime Minister.



He also shared a photo with PM Trudeau, reinforcing the friendly relations between the two leaders.

PM Modi emphasized that India is committed to representing the priorities of the Global South, highlighting two upcoming Global South summits in Delhi in 2023. PM Modi also stressed the importance of collaboration with G7 countries to address global challenges.

Discussing the role of artificial intelligence (AI), a key theme of the G7 outreach session led by Prime Minister Meloni, PM Modi stressed the need for technology to be used constructively. He underscored India's emphasis on international governance of AI during the G20 summit, advocating for AI to be transparent, fair, safe, accessible and responsible. French

President Emmanuel Macron praised PM Modi's initiatives on AI and digital public infrastructure as significant contributions during India's G20 presidency.

Reflecting on the magnitude of India's Lok Sabha elections, PM Modi drew comparisons with upcoming elections in Europe and the US, emphasizing the unique scale and swift results of Indian elections. He described them as the largest celebration of democracy and highlighted India's ancient values as the "mother of democracy." PM Modi articulated India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047, stressing the importance of inclusive development that leaves no segment of society behind. He reiterated India's commitment to addressing the concerns of Global South countries, which are disproportionately affected by global uncertainties.

Addressing technology's transformative role, PM Modi noted that it touches all aspects of human life, from space exploration to cyber security challenges. He emphasized the collective responsibility to ensure that

technological benefits reach all societal segments, eliminate inequalities and empower individuals. He advocated for transforming technological monopolies into widespread use, promoting a human-centric approach that enhances human potential. PM Modi highlighted India's proactive approach to AI, launching the AI Mission this year under the mantra "AI for All" and leading the Global Partnership for AI to foster international cooperation. On the energy front, another focal point of the outreach session, PM Modi outlined India's four principles: availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability. He highlighted India's leadership in fulfilling COP commitments ahead of schedule and its efforts to achieve net zero emissions by 2070.

He acknowledged the dual nature of technology as both an enabler of human achievement and a source of challenges like cyber security, advocating for its benefits to be shared equitably across society. (The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)

Raging row over NEET



Apropos the news story "NEET row: Sibal demands probe by SC-appointed officials," published on June 16, this is my response. As a regular newspaper reader, I find the controversy surrounding the NEET exam deeply troubling. Former HRD Minister Kapil Sibal's call for a Supreme Court-appointed probe into alleged irregularities is crucial. Sibal criticises Prime

Minister Modi's silence on the issue, highlighting the gravity of corruption in the testing system.

The allegations of paper leaks and rigging, particularly in states like Gujarat, point to a broader problem within the National Testing Agency (NTA). Sibal's concerns about NEET's favouritism towards CBSE students and his call for a consensus-driven approach to medical admissions reflect the complexity of India's educational landscape. Sibal's emphasis on a thorough, independent inquiry, ideally by the CBI under Supreme Court supervision, is vital for restoring trust. His urge for political parties to address this in Parliament underscores the need for accountability and reform in an exam that affects millions of aspiring medical students. The Government's response will be pivotal in shaping the future integrity of NEET.

Abhinay Delhi

Maintaining intimacy requires effort, focusing on quality time and physical affection while resisting social media pressures for perfection. Couples must prioritise self-love and may seek professional support when needed. The key to a successful relationship is not about perpetual bliss but embracing the journey's twists and turns. By valuing communication, shared goals and individual interests, partners can build a resilient connection. Real love supports each other through challenges and celebrates joy, making the journey deeply enriching.

Pankaj Jain | Faridabad

PRIORITISE BREAKS FOR PRODUCTIVITY

Madam — Apropos the news story "Importance of Breaks in Work Life," published on June 17, this is my response. Are you someone who makes yourself available 24/7? Or the one who prefers clearing all work emails over a family get-together? If yes, then it might be time to set healthy boundaries at work. Pausing amidst busy days allows the mind and body to recharge and refocus. Studies

suggest that the most productive employees work for 52 minutes, followed by a 17-minute break. Our minds aren't designed for nonstop work, making regular breaks essential for sustaining high performance and avoiding mental fatigue.

Regardless of your job profile, taking regular breaks enhances your overall work performance and well-being. Continuous work without breaks can lead to burnout, which is characterised by exhaustion and decreased productivity. By integrating breaks into your work routine, you can maintain high productivity, reduce stress and improve your physical and mental health. Prioritising breaks is an investment in your long-term career success and personal happiness, fostering creativity and innovation. In a post-COVID-19 world where work-life boundaries are blurred, taking breaks is more crucial than ever.

Sakshi Sharma | Meerut

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com