

Sunday Health Care

Why obese women have uncontrollable urge to eat, study reveals

Women with severe obesity often report an underlying drive to eat continually because their brain's reward centres continue to respond to food cues even after they have eaten and are no longer hungry, a study says.

The findings showed that obese study participants maintained activation in the midbrain, one of the body's most potent reward centres.

The activity in the prefrontal cortex and posterior cingulate cortex significantly changed in the lean group, after eating, but not in the obese group.

However, this brain activity dropped among lean participants while continuing in their obese counterparts.

"Before or after the meal, they're just as excited about eating. It seems they have an instinctive drive to keep eating," said Nancy Puzifferri, Assistant Professor at the University of Texas Southwestern, in the US.

Further, while the appeal of pictured food dropped by 15 per cent for lean women after they ate, the severely obese women showed only a 4 per cent decline.

"Lean women when full will either stop eating or just sample a food they crave. It's just not a level playing field — it's harder for some people to maintain a healthy weight than others,"



Puzifferri explained.

For the study, published recently in the journal *Obesity*, the team compared attitudes and the brain activity of 15 severely obese women (those with a body mass index greater than 35) and 15 lean women (those with a BMI under 25).

Their brain activity was measured using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). After fasting for nine hours, they were asked to rate their level of hunger or fullness, and then given a brain scan as they viewed pictures of food.

Again, after eating, the participants went through another battery of hunger/fullness ratings and fMRI scans while being exposed to pictures of food.

The obese women showed sustained "hungry" brain activation, even though they reported the same increase in satiation as their lean counterparts, the researchers concluded.

Short Story

A Strange Visitor at Night

By : Charles Dickens

One night, while I was alone in bed in my room, I heard footsteps come up. I took my lamp to the door. A grey-haired man of about sixty years and strong built stood beaming at me. He hardly asked to be allowed in and walked in looking at the furniture and carpet.

He said, "It's nice to know that my dear boy has finally come up in the world. Are you living alone?" He asked.

I was filled with rage and said, "How dare you walk in without my permission and ask me personal questions!"

"Now calm down! Calm down! Young man," he said. "I suppose you get a good allowance. I can make out from hundred pounds, I suppose?"

I was taken aback. "And the man who handled your money till now, was someone whose name begins with 'J'?"

"I fell back on to the sofa. Come on dear boy, don't say you've forgotten your old

friend from the marshes?" It dawned on me; it was the convict of my childhood! "Who are you now?" I asked.

"I was a farmer in New South Wales in Australia. I made it rich there and became famous. All the money I earned, I put away for you. I could never get over my memories of the boy who helped me on those cold, dreary marshes. You brought me bread and brandy. Now, I asked Jagers to take care of all my money for you. Now I'm happy, you are doing well."

He moved forward to embrace me, but I held him back. He was a criminal after all.

"Now where can I sleep? You know how the police are after me."

I quickly shut all the windows and drew the curtains. I showed him to Herbert's bed.

So, my dreams of marrying Estella all went up in flames. Miss Havisham had not arranged for my education. Estella was only using me and would leave me soon.

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National & International News

Delhi govt for online delivery of transport services

PTI New Delhi, July 24: In order to make issuance of permits, fitness certificates and other services hassle-free, the Delhi government has directed its transport department to introduce online system for its various services. The government's move is intended to ensure transparency in the functioning of Regional Transport Offices and help thousands of people, who have to stand in long

queues at RTOs every day, for getting their work done.

Transport Minister Satyendar Jain has directed the department to prepare a blueprint of the project so that various services including permits, fitness certificates, registration of new vehicles, among others, could be issued online.

"The Minister has asked the transport department to bring all services being provided by the

RTOs under online system to ensure transparency. After introduction of online service, applicants will not be required to stand in long queues at RTO," said a senior government official.

"Applicants can apply for auto, taxi, bus permits using computers once the new online system is in place. Officials of the department have started working on the project and its blueprint will soon be presented before the transport minister,"

official said. Earlier this month, the government had announced that all 12 RTOs in the city would remain open seven days a week in order to handle the rising number of applications for driving licences, permits and fitness certificates.

The transport department of Delhi government has also extended the working hours of the RTOs which now remain open from 7 am to 7 pm instead of 10 am to 5.30 pm.

225 killed or missing in China rains; 2.5 lakh people trapped

PTI Beijing, July 24: As many as 225 people have been killed or missing in heavy torrential rains and floods that have wreaked havoc in China with about 2.5 lakh people still trapped in the central Hubei Province.

More than 6.80 lakh people were affected and 10 townships swamped following continuous heavy rainfall from July 18 to 20, Tianmen city government in the Hubei Province said.

Over 500 soldiers, 1,000 people and 62 speedboats have been sent for rescue work while more than 10,000 people have been sent to ensure the safety of river banks, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

At least 114 people have been killed and 111 others missing in Hubei province. Local authorities have evacuated nearly 3.10 lakh people. Flooding and rain-triggered landslides have caused the collapse of 52,900 houses and damage to 155,000.

Over 700,000 hectares of crops have also been destroyed, leading to direct economic losses of over 16 billion yuan (USD 2.4 billion). The worst-hit Daxian Village of Xingtai City was almost empty after a flash flood swamped it early Wednesday. At least 8 villagers were killed and one missing.

"I heard people yelling 'flood' at about 2:30 AM. I woke up my wife and children and rushed out of door immediately. In no time the water level was above my waist," said Zhang Erqiang, a local villager.

"My wife and I panicked and we climbed to a tree, and stayed there for several hours until rescuers arrived in the morning," Zhang said. "But our daughter and son were washed away and their bodies were just found," he said.

Only a dozen villagers stayed to watch over the village, while the rest of the residents had left to take shelter with their relatives elsewhere.

The news of heavy casualties in Xingtai, just 400km south of Beijing, only began emerging over the past 24 hours when thousands of local residents took to the street to protest against the alleged belated disaster warning and ineffective rescue efforts, the Hong-Kong based South China Morning Post reported.

Flood waters burst river banks and submerged at least 12 villages. Daxian village is one of the worst-hit, where at least nine people, including five school kids, are dead or missing, media reports said.

Jingxing County, located in the west of the province, saw an average precipitation of 545.4 mm in the 19 hours between 1 PM Tuesday and 8 AM on Wednesday, surpassing the amount received by the county in the whole of 2015.

There have been power outages, disruptions to communication and other infrastructure and road closures across Jingxing.

Bomb threat at New Zealand's Queenstown Airport

New Zealand, July 24: On Sunday afternoon local time, Queenstown Airport was evacuated and shut down after an airport employee found a note that said there is a bomb on the plane that he was cleaning.

After getting all the people out of the airport, police searched the Qantas plane but didn't find any explosives.

"Queenstown Airport is currently working with NZ Police to respond to a security alert," the airport said on its website, adding that the airport terminal was evacuated at 3:15 p.m. as a "precaution."

The airport has since re-opened and normal operations are expected to soon resume.

Curfew continues in five districts of Kashmir

PTI Srinagar, July 24: Curfew remained in force in five districts of Kashmir and some parts of the summer capital as a precautionary measure as an uneasy calm prevailed in the Valley where normal life was paralysed for the 16th consecutive day today.

"Curfew is in force in four South Kashmir districts — Anantnag, Kulgam, Kupwara, Pulwama and Shopian and eight police station areas of Srinagar city as a precautionary measure," a police official said.

He said while curfew has already been lifted from four districts — Bandipora, Baramulla, Budgam and Ganderbal, restrictions continue in these areas on the assembly of four or more persons.

The situation across the Valley is peaceful so far, he said.

Life in Kashmir has been paralysed since July 9, a day after Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani was killed in an encounter with security forces.

Separatist camp has been spearheading an agitation over the civilian killings and have called for a march to Anantnag town tomorrow.

The security grid has geared itself to ensure that the march does not take place, the police official said.

He said police and CRPF personnel, who have already been deployed in strength at vulnerable spots across the Valley, have been directed to implement the curfew and restriction in letter and spirit.

As many as 45 persons have been killed and over 3400 others injured in the violent clashes between protestors and security forces following Wani's killing.

Contd. from yesterday issue

Rising Attacks to Silence Journalists

Urges in Protests to Protect Journalism

Freedom of speech is guaranteed in the Constitution. A question that today every journalist is asking the government and country too is: "What kind of democracy is this where its fourth pillar, the media itself, is continuously being threatened?" Journalists are facing heavy counterattacks for their reporting. They are compelled to come out on the roads to protest and join dharnas so as to re-claim their right to report.

In February 2016, journalists in Mumbai protested against the ongoing violent threats and attacks on them for questioning the policies or the wisdom of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.3

In the same month, hundreds of journalists marched from Press Club of India to the Supreme Court. They were protesting against the violence against mediapersons at the Patiala House Courts during the bail hearing of JNUSU President Kanhaiya Kumar.

The civil rights groups and media groups across India have come out in support of the journalists, Santosh Yadav and Somaru Nag, of *Dainik Navbharat* and *Dainik Chhattisgarh*, who are arrested since September 2015, by the Chhattisgarh Police on false allegations of having links with Naxals in Bastar. They are organising protests and dharnas in order to get them released.

Measures Needed to Protect Journalists

Our country's fourth estate, the media and media personnel, must be protected at any cost. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure their safety and protect them in order to enable them to carry out their role without fear. The poor law and order situation is reflected by the increase in the frequency of brutal attacks on journalists.

In India, the violence against media personnel generally goes unpunished. India has a very bad record and rate of prosecution of those who kill or attack journalists. As per the report of the Committee

to Protect Journalists, there have been no convictions in any of the cases for the killing of journalists in which nearly all have covered politics, corruption or crime.4 Nintysix per cent of the cases of killing of journalists have not been taken to the logical conclusion and in some cases, investigation reached a dead-end, as reported by a committee of the Press Council of India. The latest Amnesty International report states that "Human rights defenders, journalists and protesters continued to face arbitrary arrests and detentions. Over 3200 people were being held in January 2015 under administrative detention on executive orders without charge or trial."5 PCI Chairman Chandramouli Kumar Prasad cited two murder cases of mediapersons—Akhilesh Pratap Singh of Jharkhand and Rajdeo Ranjan of Bihar—and said: "It is a matter of grave concern that three journalists were killed in the country in the last four months and another died in a tragic accident while on the line of duty. I urge upon the government of India to enact a special law for protection of journalists and speedy trial of cases of attacks and assaults on them in special fast track courts as recommended by the sub-committee for safety of journalists appointed by the Press Council. The killing of nine journalists last year and three journalists this year so far, does not bode well for the freedom of media and safety of journalists in the country. It is sad that such incidents happen in the largest democracy in the world."

A number of steps could be taken in order to address the rising challenges to the safety of journalists and to promote press freedom. Some of these are mentioned here.

The government should introduce new laws to give stringent punishment to those who are behind the attacks on journalists. This is required because investigations without any arrests or strong prison sentences for the

attackers and killers convey the wrong message that "the messenger can be easily targeted, attacked and even killed". Fast-track courts should be used for speedy justice for the victim journalists.

A network of working groups should be established with help from the government, states, media, civil society groups and common people to develop awareness and raise campaigns against the attacks and co-ordinate among themselves to ensure the best implementation of safety measures for the journalists.

The reality at the prosecution stage of any attack on a journalist is miserable. A case gets registered after a journalist gets killed or attacked. One or two persons are arrested or interrogated. But the question that remains unanswered is: "Is this enough?" Is there nothing more the government can do? And if not, then why is there a need to have a government?

Concluding Remarks

The media, the fourth pillar of our democracy, empowers the citizens of the country by aiding dialogue and participation in our democracy. It informs and empowers them to enhance the democratic values. Therefore, any assault on the media's representatives is an assault on our democracy. Hence in order to protect our democracy, a free and safe environment for journalists should be created with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and development in the country.

It is very disheartening and worrying to see that in recent times, the State and Central governments are giving ample amount of space to allow the enemies of the freedom of the media to flourish. They are constantly ignoring the current ambience of violence against journalists. As a result, journalists reporting on politics, corruption and crime are increasingly being murdered, attacked and harassed by groups associated with politics and criminals. (Concluded)

Courtesy: The Mainstream