

JAN-FEB, VOL. 24, ISSUE 1



AZEEM ENGLISH MAGAZINE

MONTHLY

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PKR 400 | AED 14 | USD 6



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the Jan-Feb edition of Azeem English Magazine! In this issue, we present a diverse range of articles designed to inspire and enlighten in the year 2k24. From "Living Every Moment: My Resolution for the New Year" to "The Happiness Trap," we explore themes of mindfulness, happiness, and personal growth. Our magazine also delves into societal issues with pieces like "Challenging Stereotypes and celebrates cultural heritage. Additionally, we pay tribute to inspirational women and delve into topics such as exam anxiety, Self confidence, Catharsis and Quantum Physics. Each article is a testament to the richness and diversity of human experience. Join us on a journey of discovery and reflection as we navigate through the thought-provoking narratives and insightful reflections in this edition.

Happy Reading!

Muhammad Ali Farooqi
Editor-in-Chief



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LIVING EVERY MOMENT:

MY RESOLUTION FOR THE NEW YEAR



Maham Mansha
Writer

04 MINUTES READ

From waking up because of nightmares
 To waking up midnight to pray
 From a whispered “why me?”
 To a shouted “try me”
 From being silent to make peace
 To saying NO without hesitation
 From trying hard to be everyone’s favorite
 To being my own favorite
 From suppressing my emotions
 To now being aware of them
 From being awkward with the silence
 to falling in love with it
 From settling for the bare minimum
 to demanding everything I deserve
 From wanting to be perfect to
 thriving in mess
 I CHANGED

This year was a rollercoaster. We faced tough tests that made us feel like we were carrying the weight of the world. We stumbled, fell, got back up, and found our way again. It wasn’t easy, but guess what? We’re still here, unbroken.

Life hit hard. We lost things, felt down, had good laughs, and learned a bunch. But you know what’s incredible? We didn’t let it all crush us. When things got tough, we found something inside us. It was like a superhero power—resilience. It helped us bounce back, even when we thought we couldn’t. We lost, we failed, we cried, but we also won, laughed, and learned. Each time we fell, we picked ourselves up.

Think about the times when everything felt like it was slipping away. It was scary, right? But hey, we’re survivors. We turned those tough moments into lessons. We

IMAGE SOURCE: Invajy.com

learned stuff we never thought we would. Sure, there were moments when we wanted to give up. Tears flowed, and it felt like the world was against us. But you know what? Those tears didn't stop us. They showed that we're brave enough to feel things deeply. We found joy in unexpected places. Even in the middle of chaos, we laughed. We laughed even when there were tears in our eyes. Those moments reminded us that happiness can find its way to us, no matter what.

Learning was our secret weapon. Every challenge was a chance to grow smarter. We learned about ourselves, about life, and about how strong we really are. It was like going to a school where life was the teacher. Love was our anchor. It kept us steady when things got crazy. It was in the people we cared about, the friends who stood by us, and the kindness we shared. Love showed us that we're not alone.

As this year winds down, let's remember—we didn't just survive, we rocked it! We showed the world that we're unbeatable. Yeah, life threw its curveballs, but we caught them all. We stood tall when it tried to knock us down. In this big, wild journey called life, we're the heroes of our own stories. We've proven that we're unbreakable. So, here's to us—for rising strong, for being unstoppable, and for showing the world that no matter what, we've got what it takes!

The New Year isn't just a date on the calendar; it's a chance for a fresh

start, a clean slate. It's an opportunity to take everything we've experienced and turn it into fuel for our dreams. Every stumble, every tear, every laugh—they've all shaped us into who we are today, and they'll guide us as we step into the unknown of tomorrow.

Sure, there might be twists and turns ahead, but we're not just passengers in this journey called life—we're the captains of our ships. We'll navigate through the waves, celebrate the victories, and learn from the challenges. With each passing day, we'll write our own story—one filled with courage, growth, and boundless hope.

You know what my resolution for this year is? It's really simple—I want to live. Not just exist, but really, truly live every moment that comes my way. Living means feeling the warmth of the

sun on my face and taking a moment to appreciate its gentle touch. It's about giggling until my stomach hurts, dancing like nobody's watching, and being kind to everyone. So, as this new year begins, I'm making a promise—to myself—to live. To live with my whole heart, to cherish each day, and to make memories that'll make me smile when I look back.

So here's to us—for embracing the unknown with open arms, for believing in our strength, and for being ready for whatever this new chapter brings. Let's go crush it together. Because this year? This year, we're ready for anything.



IMAGE SOURCE: Lupa Run

THE HAPPINESS TRAP



Armughan Munir
Podcast Host, Writer

08 MINUTES READ

Aristotle famously said, "*Happiness is the meaning and purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence*". According to him, the purpose of life is to reach a state he called eudaimonia. The widespread translation of the word eudaimonia in English is 'a happy indwelling spirit'.

A few thinkers argue that eudaimonia doesn't mean happiness in the literal sense. When Aristotle defined Happiness to be the whole aim of life. It doesn't translate to the 'blissful feeling' you get every now & then. If the purpose of life was to get into that blissful feeling. You could call drug addicts the peak of humankind. Everytime you come down - you can pop a few pills and get back into a happy state again.

Yet on a larger scale, we're all addicted to happiness. Places where the drug addicts get excited about getting the next ecstasy drug, we get excited about getting the next job opportunity. If, for some reason, a drug addict can't get the daily dose he

requires to function properly. He will lose his normal sense of functioning. Similarly, if for some reason, we aren't able to get the job we desire so much. We start to feel like a failure, trapped in guilt.

The drug addict and you both have one thing in common: You're chasing the next big thing because you think it'll give your life a sense of meaning.

... but isn't it good to strive for better living conditions?

... isn't it humane to strive for excellence in life?

The problem is not with reaching for the horizon. Nor is the problem Icarian. The problem is the eluding feeling of happiness. The problem is, no matter what you do, no matter what you achieve, it always slips right between your fingers like sand.

Every person around you is trying to achieve that state of happiness. A state of well-being and feeling good. As we've discussed before, there are two paths to that state. Both of which, as we will

see, are a clever trap. Both of which are about chasing the emotion of happiness.

IMAGE SOURCE: freepik.com/

The Hedonistic Trap

There are two ways to happiness: The easy way & the hard way.

From the outer view, they look like two completely different lifestyles. They don't correlate. Infact, if you put Fat Lee - who loves the easy way, and Smart Ned - who prefers the hard route. There is a good chance they might end up fighting each other. Yet, both Fat Lee and Smart Ned meet at the same destination (that is after sometime). The only difference is, Fat Lee gets there much quicker, unefficiently.

Fat Lee's way to achieve eudaimonia is to stuff hamburgers with coke as his breakfast, take a starbucks with extra sugar as he drives to his office, eat a few more hamburgers and a dessert in his lunch, and pop a few cans of beers when he gets back home. Hey, he might even have a joint or two on weekends. Just to celebrate life, you know.

From the time he wakes up to the time he slams his head back to bed. Fat Lee wants one thing: Pleasure. According to him, this is his eudaimonia. Our Fat Lee is stuck in what we would call, The Hedonistic Trap. Everytime he pops out of the elusive state of happiness, he arranges his route back.

It is worth mentioning that every day Fat Lee needs more of his "normal" dosage to get back into wonderland. Everyday, he adapts a little.

If we plot his state of happiness on a graph. We would see that it declines over time reaching a critical zero. In other words, Fat Lee is doomed to marry misery.

Smart Ned, however, is a much civilized guy.

The Achievement Trap

Smart Ned is a person with hopeful dreams, ambitions, and goals. He wants to become the best in his field. He is always pursuing the next big thing in his life. If you talk to him, he is always pursuing something great. He wants to fly high. He wants to soar new heights and explore unknown lands.

The thing with Smart Ned is that he is never late. He has never missed a deadline. He is also the next line for promotion at the company he works for. The boss think he can make a great CEO one day... one day. The day Smart Ned has been anxiously waiting for.

The day when all of his problems will be solved. The day when he will finally be enough. The day he will attain eudaimonia.

The problem with Smart Ned is that he keeps postponing the day for tomorrow. He sacrifices everyday for someday. But hey, there are good days in Smart Ned's life too. Once in a year, he reaches that state of happiness too.

If we plot his state of happiness on a graph. We would see that it's an all-time low with a spike here and there. Ultimately, he faces the same fate as Fat Ned: doomed to marry misery.

I, myself, was a Smart Ned.

Modern Variations of Smart Neds

In the 21st century, most societies (socially) reward Smart Neds. They rank higher on the social scale than Fat Lees.

However, there are a few variations of Smart Neds that we've observed during this time. A few of which fall into the Well-Being Trap. Being in the self-development space for a long time, I've seen these smart needs there.

These are people who have realized that they won't settle for the once-a-year spike in Happiness. As a result, they start focusing on themselves more. They go for their bliss. They engage in well-being practices focused around the self. All for good reasons.

Another variation of well-being smart neds is the Spiritual Smart Neds. They are people who have also realized that a once-a-year spike is not enough. As a result, they start to dive into their inner world searching for enlightenment. In the process, they reject any other thing

which doesn't support their 'spiritual journey'. In a moment, we'll discuss the mistake these variations of Smart Neds make.

Fat Lee, Smart Ned, and their modern variations all chase happiness. It's as if they're trying to catch the horizon, fly too close to the sun, or trying to look at the sun directly.

If flying too close to the sun can make you fall. The answer is not to

bound yourself to earth. It is to come up with a better way to withstand the heat. Icarus was not stupidly ambitious, he was ambitiously stupid. He might not have even gotten to the mesosphere before radiation from the sun burned his wings. Now, we can send satellites and astronauts beyond that with ease.

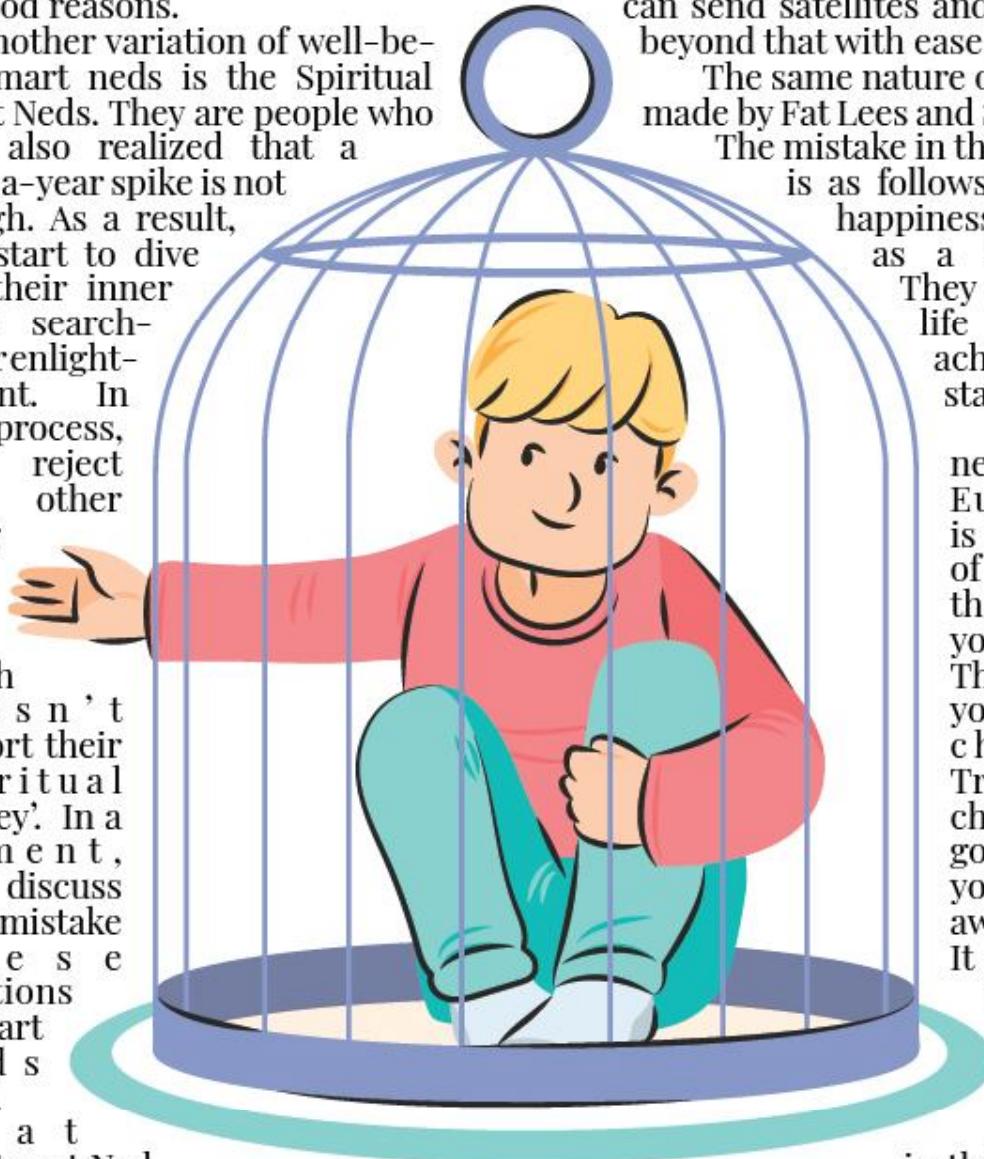
The same nature of mistake is made by Fat Lees and Smart Neds.

The mistake in their thinking is as follows: They take happiness as a goal, as a destination. They spend their life trying to achieve the state.

Happiness, or Eudaimonia, is not a state of being. It is the result of your actions. The sum of your moral character. Trying to chase it as a goal only gets you farther away from it. It makes you more miserable. (A study published in the Journal of

Experimental Psychology suggested that chasing happiness takes you away from it)

In addition to this, chasing happiness makes you weak. Take the example of Fat Lee. He chases happiness all through his day. He is



doing his best to avoid suffering of any sort. He is too fragile to endure any form of suffering. As time passes, his fragility grows.

The Problem with being a Smart Ned

As we have seen earlier, Smart Ned suffers from the One Day Fallacy. He is always trading everyday for someday. However, when he gets into well-being or spiritual practices. He is able to see beyond the fallacy to realize his mistake.

This is a step ahead but not very useful because he falls into another trap. The modern-day obsession with well-being and spiritual practices undermines the real importance of both.

The purpose of well-being and spiritual practices is not to make you happy, but you realize the more important in life (compassion, strength, morality, character). This, in turn, is what makes you happy.

Both Well-being and Spiritual Smart Neds become narrow cused on themselves. They fall into the trap of self.

Another common mistake spiritual enthusiasts tend to make is they equate enlightenment to feeling good. Although it might be the case that enlight-

is a state of never-ending bliss. We can certainly say that the path to Enlightenment is not.

The story of Adam's Fall to Garden narrates that in order for Adam and Eve to be accepted back into the garden. They have to pass through the gate. The same gate which is guarded by a Cherubim holding a flashing sword. In the metaphorical sense, The path back to the garden is through the dark part of yourself.

The path to true well-being and enlightenment is rarely a smooth road. You have to be able to face your deepest fears, come face to face with them, look them in eye and conquer them. This is not what most Smart Neds are doing.

Chase Virtue

There are much better virtues in life to aim for than happiness. Virtues like strength, morality, service to those around you, art, beauty, love, and good. If chasing happiness makes you fragile, stop the chase, to become antifragile instead.



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CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES: BREAKING THE SHACKLES OF PATRIARCHY



Moiz Bajwa

MBBS Student, Writer

04 MINUTES READ

In the intricate tapestry of our society, a subtle yet pervasive issue often goes unnoticed – the reinforcement of patriarchal norms through seemingly innocuous phrases. Phrases like “*Wo bhi kisi ki behen hogi*” (She is someone’s sister too) and “*Kisi ki maa, behen, beti ki izzat karo, lout tumhari maa, behen, or beti ki bhi izzat karenge*” (Respect someone’s mother, sister, daughter, and people will also respect your mother, sister, and daughter) echo through normal conversations in our society, often used to teach young males to respect women. While these sentences may sound harmless, they wield a profound impact on the naive subconscious minds of our youth as they intensify the patriarchal norms in our society.

A patriarchal system is a societal structure where men wield control over every aspect, extending from politics to morals, economics, and even the actions of women. For centuries, the patriarchy has determined what is right and what is wrong, what can be done

and what can't be done, where women go, how they act, and how much control they can have (which, in a patriarchal society, is very little.) Men, in this type of society, are the ultimate authority and power and the society in general is male-centered. Within this framework, women are often confined to predetermined roles, limiting their ability to break free from these societal molds and choose paths that align with their true desires and potentials.

The idea behind using the above mentioned phrases is quite acceptable, as they aim to instill respect for women in young males, much like they would want their sisters to be respected. However, it's disheartening to witness the perpetuation of this narrative, where women are confined to predefined roles as mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters, as if their worth and respect hinge solely on these relationships with men. People use these kinds of sentences

to make males of the society understand the simplest of things without hurting their patriarchal and misogynistic egos, fostering an understanding of an unknown woman's existence and discouraging the perception of her as an alien.

The

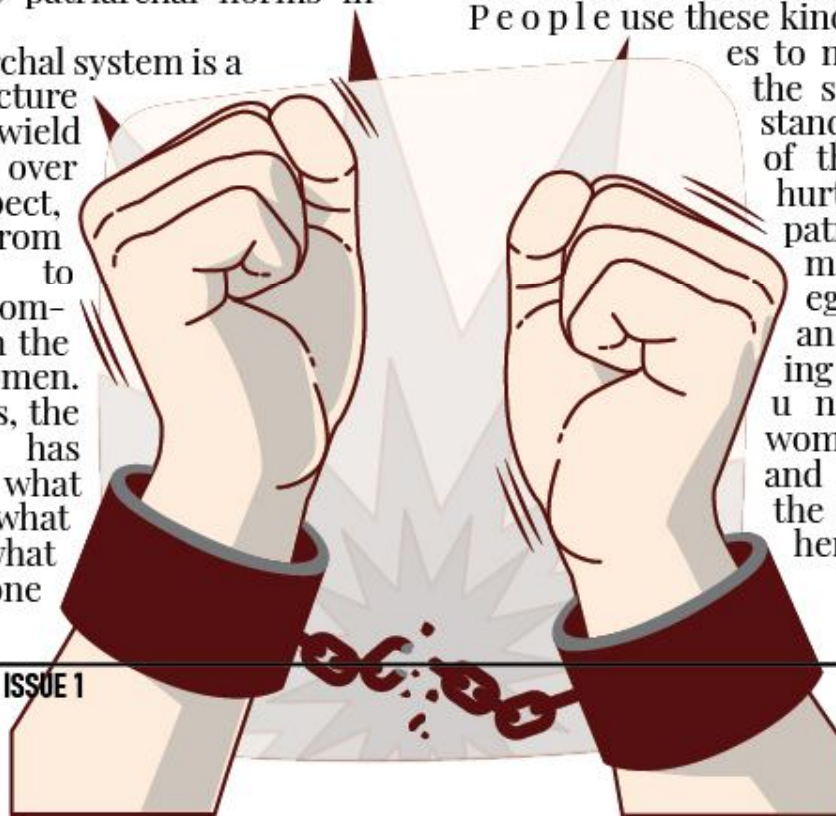


Illustration Source: Freepik

problem with this perspective is that it not only masks the individuality of women under a relation with a man but also implies that their existence is validated only in these predefined roles by the society. What's even more alarming is that this notion relegates women to a subservient position, implying that powerful men hold the reins, deciding when and how women deserve respect. All of these are the basic characteristics in any patriarchal society. Such a mindset fosters an environment where women are deemed weak and dependent, perpetuating a cycle of control that needs to be dismantled. It is crucial to nip the patriarchal evil in the bud, a scent of which can be discerned in these phrases.

The root cause of this issue lies in the unnecessary segregation of genders within our society. By compartmentalizing roles and expectations based on gender, we inadvertently contribute to the reinforcement of these stereotypes. The outcome of this kind of behavior resulting from this mentality is that if a woman doesn't fit the said criteria, people may call her characterless, amoral, mock her upbringing and unintentionally consider it a legal

license from this immoral society to hurl insults. This just perpetuates the cycle of judgment and negativity.

It's time to acknowledge that these ingrained perceptions are detrimental to the progress of our society. The arbitrary criteria for respect and dignity based on gender roles need to be dismantled to foster a more inclusive and equitable environment. The solution lies in education and the reduction of gender segregation.

In conclusion, it's imperative that we confront and challenge these deeply rooted stereotypes. By advocating for the education that actively challenges cultural stereotypes and questions conventional beliefs, and by breaking down gender barriers, we can cultivate a society that values individuals for who they are, not for the roles society has assigned to them, and not for their relation with a specific gender. In such a society, individuals would not be judged for not fitting the said criteria. It's time to liberate ourselves from the shackles of patriarchy and embrace a future where equality and respect are not dictated by gender, but rather are inherent principles that shape a diverse and inclusive society.

IMAGE SOURCE: LinkedIn





Unveiling the Mysteries of **QUANTUM PHYSICS** PART III



Saad Rashid
9th Grade Student

04 MINUTES READ

Quantum Physics and Life

Biology is not just an isolated branch of science but it uses numerous laws and theories of Chemistry and Physics to explain the mysterious phenomena taking place in living organisms. With the recent surge in Quantum physics some questions and inquiries such as "How does Quantum Physics impact life?" or "Do Quantum Laws govern living organisms?" have emerged

to the surface. Researchers are now delving into the depths of life sciences through the lens of Quantum physics leading to the emergence of some astonishing theories and phenomena taking place in the unimaginable human body.

This intersection of Quantum physics and Biology has led to the birth of a new type of science known as "Quantum Biology". This field discovers the behavior of particles at the smallest level, operating in a realm of microorganisms where classical physics fails to provide an answer.

Even though mother nature only adopts classical physics in our small observatory world, we have no idea what it is doing behind our backs.

Let's kick things off with a process that's universally known. It serves as the backbone of the existence of all life. And you guessed it right, it's photosynthesis. But photosynthesis is not a mysterious phenomenon, plants just use sunlight and water to produce oxygen and glucose. There are no interruptions from quantum here right? Well, it's not as simple as that. Within the chlorophyll molecules of plants, light energy is converted into chemical energy with astonishing efficiency. This is something which has troubled scientists for decades.

But recent studies suggest that this is because quantum coherence—where particles exist in multiple states simultaneously—plays a major role in enhancing the efficiency of energy transfer during photosynthesis. To understand it more swiftly, imagine a group of friends holding hands and walking together in sync. This represents quantum coherence. If they walk together in perfect sync, they might travel faster and more efficiently. In the quantum world,

IMAGE SOURCE Weizmann Institute of Science

particles can act similarly, staying coordinated (coherent) to accomplish tasks more effectively, like efficiently transferring energy during photosynthesis.

This process is considered to take place in the first photosynthetic organisms on the planet and still exists in plants till date. This is also a reason why scientists have failed to build a completely artificial plant or any device with greater efficiency.

Moving onto cells, specifically human cells, enzymes are termed as one of the most mysterious things in our body. And according to recent studies, enzymes even apply a major quantum phenomenon known as "quantum tunneling" to facilitate chemical reactions. But before that, let's understand what quantum tunneling is.

Quantum tunneling is a process in which particles can pass through energy barriers despite lacking the required energy to do so according to classical physics. Essentially, it allows particles to 'tunnel' through obstacles that would seem impossible in the classical world. This extraordinary behavior arises due to the wave-like nature of particles at the quantum level, enabling them to appear on the other side of a barrier without physically crossing it.

To understand its vast concept, let us take a look at an example. Imagine a marble rolling toward a hill, representing a barrier. In classical physics, if the marble lacks enough energy, it won't climb the hill. However, in quantum tunneling, the marble magically appears on the other side of the hill without climbing it—it "tunnels" through the barrier, defying the classical rules. Enzymes apply this process of quantum tunneling to ensure that the chemical reaction

takes place quickly and with a high efficiency.

Another groundbreaking discovery of this decade is that the navigation abilities of some birds rely on quantum physics as well. But how is that possible? According to researchers, birds like the European robin and other migratory birds rely on the process of quantum entanglement for their mind blowing navigation skills. Quantum entanglement is a process in which two particles are inter-connected regardless of the distance or obstacles between them. It defies classical physics, but it is possible in the strange world of quantum physics.

To explain it further, visualize a scenario where you possess a set of headphones, and your friend possesses an identical pair, so when you play a song, your friend's headphones start playing the same song too even if your friend is present in another galaxy. They are connected with each other no matter the distance. This phenomenon is known as Quantum Entanglement. So, how does this relate with the navigation skills of migratory birds? Well, scientists think that these birds contain a built-in "compass" which is against the Earth's magnetic field. This allows these birds to navigate through this wild and vast world of ours.

Quantum Biology challenges our perceptions of the boundary between the microscopic quantum world and the complex realm of living organisms. By peeking into the quantum realm within biology, researchers are uncovering the magnificent and mind-blowing effects of quantum physics hidden behind the curtain of life, offering insights that could revolutionize our understanding of both quantum physics and the complexities of living systems.

THINK IT: SUCCESS FORMULA



Saeed Babar
Management Consultant,
FCMA, MS(Fin.)

04 MINUTES READ

Everyone desires success in his endeavours. Yet few achieve it. Is there any formula that can bring success? If there is one then one must put it into use and achieve success. Let us start a journey to discover a "Success Formula".

First of all we need to define success so that we can pursue it and discover it. Literal meaning of "success" is

1. the favourable or prosperous termination of attempts or endeavours; the accomplishment of one's goals.
2. the attainment of wealth, position, honours, or the like.

According to Wikipedia, it is the state or condition of meeting a defined range of expectations. It may be viewed as the opposite of failure.

We can settle on the definition that success is the achievement of desired outcome in any situation.

Here, we are mostly concerned with business success but once the formula is discovered, it can be applied in any situation according to the definition of success - the achievement of desired outcome.

Many have
tried to discov-
e r
t h e

success formula by studying the successful persons and businesses. Tom Peters & Robert H. Waterman in their famous book "In Search of Excellence" pointed to seven principles that can bring success. Three of these are time tested and these are:

1. **A bias for Action** - actively making decisions whether right or wrong otherwise someone else is making decisions on your behalf to your detriment
2. **Close to the Customer** - talk to your customers and learn what they want
3. **Stick to the Knitting** - don't start a business unless you know it's tricks of the trade

James C. Collins also tried to unmask the success formula. First in his book "Built to Last" with his co-author Jerry I. Porras and then in "Good to Great". In "Built to Last" the key components of the formula are:

1. **Big Hairy Audacious Goal** - willingness to take big risks i-e think big, aim high
2. **Experiment a Lot** - try different ideas simultaneously and keep what works as many of the best moves come from experimentation, trial and error, opportunism and accident.
3. **Never Good Enough** - Continuous improvement is a way of life, don't settle for good enough.

In "Good to Great", he argues that the key to greatness is leadership. He defines the different levels of leadership and concludes that Level 5 leader-

ILLUSTRATION SOURCE: Freepik



ship is what is needed for greatness. Level 5 leaders display a powerful mixture of

1. Humility - They are humble and have indomitable will.

2. Ambition - They're incredibly ambitious, but their ambition is first and foremost for the cause, for the organisation and its purpose, not themselves.

3. Shyness - They are often self-effacing, quiet, reserved, and even shy.

Malcolm Gladwell in his book "Outliers" also laid down his discovery of the success formula. He says that "the biggest misconception about success is that it is solely on our smarts, ambition, hustle and hard work. There are a lot more variables involved in an individual's success. He lays out that family, culture, and friendship each play a role in an individual's success. He also says that the key to achieving world-class expertise in any skill, is, to a large extent, a matter of practising the correct way, for a total of around 10,000 hours. So, in his formula the key components are:

1. Practising the correct way - 10,000 hours rule

2. Family background - opportunities coming from family relationships

3. Cultural Background - opportunities coming from environment to which individual belongs

4. Network of Friends - Opportunities coming from friends

According to Daniel Goleman "Focus" is a hidden driver of excellence. He says that

high achievers master three types of focus:

1. Inner - Self-awareness

2. Other - Empathy

3. Outer - Awareness of our environ-

ment.

In a world of unstoppable distractions, now more than ever we need to sharpen our focus. It is "Focus" that distinguishes experts from amateurs and stars from average performers.

Let us turn to the successful personalities and listen to what they say about success formula.

Thomas Edison - the most prolific inventor says

1. Intellect - "Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration" meaning success is 99 percent hard work and one percent all other variables.

2. Favourable Circumstances - "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Warren Buffet - the famous investor says there are three rules of success in life:

1. Time 2. Discipline 3. Patience

Jeff Bezos - the founder of Amazon Inc. - success formula is:

1. Customer obsession

2. Extreme innovation

3. Long-term management

He says "If you double the number of experiments you do per year, you're going to double your inventiveness."

Jack Ma - the founder of Ali Baba - says

1. Never give up

2. The very important thing you should have is patience.

All of the above can be summed up is a simple maths formula:

Success = Hard Work + Focus + Patience

FROM CARP TO JEWELS:

The Million-Dollar Evolution of Nishikigoi

GREAT BIG STORY

04 MINUTES READ

In the serene landscapes of Hiroshima, Japan, a meticulous process unfolds, turning the ancient practice of breeding carp into a competitive art form. Kentaro Sakai is the maestro behind a fish farm that specializes in the exquisite Nishikigoi, commonly known as koi fish. In the realm of living jewels, where vibrant colors and graceful movements define perfection, Sakai's dedication and expertise shine. Let's dive into the world of Nishikigoi breeding, a passion that has turned ordinary carp into million-dollar marvels.

Once bred solely for sustenance, Nishikigoi fish underwent a transformation over time, evolving into

mesmerizing living jewels. Their dynamic colors earned them the title of "Living Jewels," and they became coveted collector's items, some fetching astonishing price tags of up to \$1,000,000. In Hiroshima, Sakai stands at the forefront of this evolutionary journey, continuing a legacy passed down through generations.

Kentaro Sakai proudly owns a fish farm in Hiroshima, where he breeds and sells Nishikigoi carp. Inheriting the carp-breeding business from his ancestors, Sakai's journey began with his father teaching him the intricate art of Nishikigoi breeding. Today, his expertise has made him a central figure in this competitive and revered industry.

IMAGE SOURCE: Kodama Koi Farm

Sakai focuses on two main types of Nishikigoi: Koh-Haku, a red and white carp, and Taisho Sanshoku, a striking red, white, and black variation. These carp, with a lifespan of 20 to 30 years, reach the pinnacle of their beauty at around 10 years old. The key to their allure lies in Sakai's careful breeding practices, ensuring the carps' shapes are impeccable, and their scales remain glossy and vibrant.

Breeding the perfect-looking koi is akin to a competitive sport in Japan.

The fish undergo a meticulous care regimen involving the finest food and pristine water. Water quality and a

nutritious diet are essential components of Nishikigoi breeding. With a sophisticated sense of taste, these fish discern the quality of their meals, contributing to the creation of award-winning specimens.

A culmination of this artistry is witnessed at the All Japan Event, where over 2000 fish are submitted each year. The competition is fierce, with judges scrutinizing the shape, color, texture, and glossiness of the Nishikigoi. Sakai's prowess has earned him 11 championships since

his first win in 2000, establishing him as a true master in the field.

Following the competition, these exquisite koi fish are auctioned off and find homes with collectors in Japan and around the world. The prices they command are staggering; Sakai's carp named "S Legend" set a world record, selling for a jaw-dropping 203 million JPY (19 million USD). Beyond the monetary value, Sakai emphasizes the joy he derives from knowing his customers are delighted with his Nishikigoi.



For Kentaro Sakai, Nishikigoi are more than just fish; they are his children. Witnessing them grow and blossom

into beautiful specimens brings him unparalleled pleasure. In the heart of Hiroshima, Sakai's passion and precision have elevated Nishikigoi breeding to an art form, where ordinary carp become extraordinary living jewels, enchanting the world with their vibrant colors and graceful presence.

IMAGE SOURCE: The Japan News

AEMAGAZINE.PK



Nature's Whispers: How Kingfishers Inspired the Evolution of Bullet Trains?

Interesting Engineering

04 MINUTES READ

In the vast landscape of innovative engineering, the Japanese bullet trains stand as marvels of modern transportation. However, the tale of their evolution involves more than just mechanical prowess; it is a story of nature's subtle influence, particularly that of the agile kingfisher.

The Tokaido Shinkansen, one of the world's busiest high-speed rail lines, initially faced a significant predicament—tunnel sonic booms. As the trains sped through tunnels, atmospheric pressure waves built up, causing disruptive sonic booms upon exit. The disturbances, audible up to 1300 feet away, troubled thousands of nearby residents.

In 1997, Eiji Nakatsu, the director of technical development for bullet trains, embarked on a mission to address this issue without compromising speed or increasing energy

consumption. Inspired by his dual role as an engineer and avid birdwatcher, Nakatsu turned to nature for a solution.

Observing kingfishers, Nakatsu marveled at their ability to dive from the air into water at high speeds without making a splash. He attributed this feat to the streamlined shape of their pointed, wedge-shaped beaks. Intrigued, Nakatsu and his team conducted tests to measure pressure waves, discovering that the ideal shape for the Shinkansen's head closely mirrored that of a kingfisher's beak.

This revelation marked a turning point. The redesigned Shinkansen not only minimized the noise of tunnel sonic booms but also operated at higher speeds while maintaining standard noise levels. Beyond noise reduction, the new Shinkansen 500 series exhibited improved energy efficiency, consuming 30% less

IMAGE SOURCE: BBC

energy due to decreased air resistance.

The impact of this innovation extended beyond noise reduction and energy efficiency. The Shinkansen 500 series achieved speeds of up to 187 miles per hour, reducing travel time between Shin-Osaka and Hakata by a significant 15 minutes.

Nature, it seems, held the key to a challenge that had perplexed engineers for years. The kingfisher-inspired design not only improved the daily lives of thousands but also showcased the potential synergy between human engineering and the natural world. This story serves as a

reminder that solutions to our complex problems may already exist, awaiting our recognition and understanding in the world around us. The

whispers of nature have the power to reshape our technological landscapes for a more harmonious future.

The evolution of the Shinkansen 500 series stands as a testament to the untapped wealth of solutions that nature provides for our man-made challenges. Beyond the technical achievements, Nakatsu's story underscores the importance of interdisciplinary inspiration—how a birdwatcher's observations of a kingfisher could revolutionize high-speed rail travel.

The transformative impact of nature-inspired engineering reached far beyond Japan's borders. It became

a beacon for environmentally conscious design, influencing discussions on sustainable transportation globally. As we gaze into the future of innovation, Nakatsu's story prompts us to consider the vast potential of our natural surroundings as a source of inspiration and problem-solving.

In the intricate dance between technology and the environment, we find that solutions may not always demand elaborate complexity. Sometimes, the elegant simplicity of nature's designs holds the key to unlocking new frontiers in human achievement. Nakatsu's journey invites us to embrace the wisdom of



the natural world and invites reflection on how many more challenges might find resolution in the delicate yet powerful balance that nature offers.

The kingfisher's contribution to the evolution of bullet trains is a captivating chapter in the ongoing dialogue between human ingenuity and the world we inhabit. As we continue to advance, let us remain open to the whispers of nature, for within them may lie the solutions to our most pressing challenges, waiting to be discovered and embraced. The story of the kingfisher and the Shinkansen is a reminder that our journey toward progress is intertwined with the ecosystems that surround us, offering lessons that stretch beyond the realm of engineering and into the very heart of sustainable innovation.

IMAGE SOURCE: Interesting Engineering



A Bulletproof Origami That Saves Lives

Interesting Engineering

04 MINUTES READ

In the realm of cutting-edge technology, where innovation meets necessity, a unique solution has emerged to protect those who protect us. Imagine a deployable ballistic shield that not only stops bullets but seems to absorb them, a shield inspired by the intricate art of origami. This is not a scene from a futuristic movie but a reality crafted by researchers at Brigham Young University.

This groundbreaking ballistic shield draws inspiration from the Yoshimura pattern, a mesmerizing origami design. When the shield deploys, it forms angles that effectively absorb small-caliber bullets, providing a life-saving barrier for those shielded behind it. The shield compris-

es 12 layers of Kevlar, a highly protective fiber, with an aluminum core in the middle. The magic number here is twelve, the optimal layer count for robust protection.

During rigorous testing, the shield demonstrated its ability to stop 9-millimeter, .357, and .44 Magnum pistol bullets – common calibers encountered by police officers in high-stakes situations. The unique origami-inspired design not only proved effective in preventing injuries but showcased the potential to save lives.

Origami, a traditional Japanese art form, has transcended its aesthetic roots to become a source of inspiration for scientific breakthroughs. Long before the origami shield, this ancient art played a crucial role in space exploration. From car airbags to

IMAGE SOURCE: Fast Company

stents, the applications are vast, but it's the space industry that has embraced origami with open arms.

Space exploration often requires launching large structures into space, posing a logistical challenge due to the limited diameter of rockets. The solution? Origami, the art of folding and unfolding, offers a transformative answer. NASA, at the forefront of utilizing origami, has incorporated its principles into various projects.

For instance, solar arrays on the International Space Station will soon adopt a roll-out pattern inspired by origami. The Mars Phoenix lander employs a fan-folded solar array known as Ultra Flex for planet exploration. The elegance of origami lies in its ability to facilitate the deployment of

complex structures in the confined spaces of rockets,



making it an invaluable tool for space engineers.

A remarkable project in the pipeline is the Starshade, a colossal sunblocker designed to address a prevalent issue in space imaging. Attempting to capture images of exoplanets is akin to taking a photo in harsh sunlight – details get washed out, and the picture loses clarity. The Starshade unfolds to block the intense light, enabling scientists to capture clearer images of distant planets.

While the concept seems straight-

forward, the execution is anything but. The Starshade needs to be approximately the size of a baseball stadium, and fitting it into a rocket poses a logistical puzzle. However, origami steps in once again as the unexpected solution to this complex problem.

As we marvel at the convergence of art and science in these groundbreaking projects, it's a reminder that sometimes the most genuine and effective solutions to complex problems are right in front of us. In our day-to-day lives, seemingly ordinary challenges can find unexpected resolutions through creative thinking and simplicity.

Origami, an age-old art form, has transcended cultural boundaries to become a driving force behind techno-

logical innovations. From protecting law enforcement with deployable

shields to aiding space exploration with intricate folding structures, the influence of origami extends far beyond its traditional roots.

In our pursuit of progress, let us draw inspiration from the simplicity of origami – a reminder that profound solutions can arise from the most unexpected places. As we unfold the layers of innovation, we may discover that the answers to our most challenging problems are elegantly hidden in plain sight.

IMAGE SOURCE: BYU ScholarsArchive

READY FOR A BIGGER CHALLENGE?



Duaa Iftikhar
NUMS Graduate

04 MINUTES READ

The bigger challenge we are going to discuss here should be absorbed and addressed to its fullest. The reason is, it is a matter of our children and actually you!

Either you are a parent, a teacher, a college student, a tiktoker or anyone else. Otherwise, your life will be in danger of having no purpose. But, why is it dangerous? Let us see after the challenge.

The emerging technology has introduced such high level and dark psychological games which can kill your spirituality, can make you lose emotions and empathy; the very assets of human beings. I see the metaverse as one of the most disturbing among them. It is a virtual world, where you can do anything you want in the form of an avatar.

You can buy lands, have parties, and make any sort of friends in the

privacy of your room. The only difference between this world and meta (beyond)-verse (universe) is that there is zero reality in the metaverse.

Now, apparently, its introduction seems glorious. Like, you can justify that it is a great fun to move anywhere in an artificial world or relish innovative things. But wait, it's not fun anymore. Or suppose if it could be, then no sooner that fun may convert into addiction and trauma. Metaverse_ a space where the lines between virtual world and reality are blurred, there, a high possibility of suffering from unwanted contacts lies. Research says that virtual abuse leads to significant mental health issues and trauma. Guo Freeman et al. (2022) reported that virtual reality focuses on creating a simulated immersive experience due to which harassing behaviors are felt more realistic and potentially more traumatic. Nina Patel, a London based

researcher shared her experience of verbal and sexual harassment within 60 seconds of joining. The

statistics of 'dangers of



ILLUSTRATION SOURCE: Freepik

metaverse worldwide 2021', published in July 2022 showed that out of 60% , addiction to the virtual world was found as the biggest threat (47%), followed by mental health and privacy issues (41%), from the metaverse.

Now, these are the issues that are visible to the world. What about our inner peace, which is only there when we stay, connected to the Almighty? What about our purpose of life; the ultimate vision, for which we were

this world and libertarian thinking patterns always cause distress and dissatisfaction. The reasons are staying away from nature, not working on ourselves and avoiding the main purpose of life. Keep it in mind that, greater the purpose of life, greater the worth of man.

So, it is my request to all the parents and children to stay as much away from the trap of metaverse, no matter how much tempting it is. It is

IMAGE SOURCE: Google Images



sent as the ambassadors of Allah Almighty? You know what, every individual, no matter what sort of family he is born in, he is born as an ambassador of Allah Almighty. But what are we doing? We are running behind materialism apart from our children. These are the dangers! And there is no doubt, these things like the metaverse, involving too much into

the huge responsibility of parents to be equipped with true knowledge of Islam so that they can save their child's most precious faith because, in the end, all these worldly items would not even matter.





HOW EJECTOR SEATS FOR JETS HAVE EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS?

Fossbytes

04 MINUTES READ

Pilot ejection seat technology has undergone remarkable evolution over the years, transforming what was once a perilous situation into a controlled escape mechanism. In the fast-paced world of aviation, where emergencies can arise unexpectedly, the development of ejector seats has played a crucial role in ensuring the safety of pilots. Let's delve into the fascinating journey of how these seats have evolved, making emergency ejections a calculated and life-saving maneuver.

In the 20th century, pilots faced a daunting challenge when it came to emergency situations. The conven-

tional method of parachuting from fixed-wing aircraft, once a common practice, became increasingly perilous with advancements in aircraft design. The limited size of the cockpit made it difficult for pilots to bail out successfully, leading to a rising number of casualties.

The need for a safer and more effective escape method prompted scientists and engineers to pioneer ejection seat technology. Among the early contributors to this groundbreaking development was the British Aerospace Company, Martin Baker. Their commitment to creating reliable and efficient ejector seats marked the beginning of a new era in aviation safety.

IMAGE SOURCE: Machinery Market

The initial trials of ejection seats were undoubtedly challenging, with engineers working tirelessly to perfect this life-saving mechanism. Martin Baker, in particular, faced numerous obstacles during the development of their first ejection seat. However, these challenges spurred innovation, leading to the creation of seats equipped with advanced harnesses and seat belts.

One of the key breakthroughs in ejection seat technology was the integration of rocket motors beneath the seats. Upon activation, these rockets swiftly thrust the chair out of

the aircraft in a backward direction. This powerful propulsion mechanism ensures a rapid and controlled separation

of the pilot from the stricken aircraft. The automatic deployment of the parachute system follows, allowing for a carefully orchestrated descent and a safe landing.

Martin Baker has been at the forefront of ejection seat innovation, continually refining and enhancing their designs. The company's dedication to safety is evident in the meticulous engineering of their seats, which have saved countless lives over the years. The partnership of rocket propulsion and parachute deployment has become a standard feature in modern ejection seat designs,

reflecting the culmination of decades of research and development.

The evolution of pilot ejection seats stands as a testament to human ingenuity and determination to overcome challenges. In emergency situations, where seconds can make the difference between life and death, these seats provide pilots with a reliable means of escape. The controlled ejection and parachute-assisted descent ensure that pilots not only survive but also have the opportunity to continue their invaluable contributions to aviation.

Pilot ejection seat technology has



evolved from a rudimentary concept to a sophisticated and dependable system. The collaboration of engineer-

ing brilliance and unwavering commitment to safety has turned what was once a perilous escape into a routine and life-saving maneuver. Thanks to pioneers like Martin Baker and advancements in rocket propulsion, pilots facing emergencies can now eject from their aircraft with confidence, knowing that the evolution of ejector seats has their safety firmly in mind. As we look towards the future of aviation, the continued refinement of ejection seat technology remains paramount in preserving the lives of those who soar through the skies.

IMAGE SOURCE: Flight Global

SITAR

A TIMELESS INSTRUMENT OF BEAUTY AND EXPRESSION



04 MINUTES READ

Aqdas Ali Hashmi
Lecturer, PhD Scholar, Researcher
Ghazal and Sufi Vocalist,

Along with music and ragas in the subcontinent, many fine instruments also catered the tastes of the audience. Instruments are those which after the invention proved to be more fascinating and enjoyable with the innovation of expert makers in different periods. Sitar is an instrument that every classical music lover is familiar with, but when was it invented, by what name was it known in the subcontinent and is the sitar a form of any other instrument? Once it was known as "SehTar" which later came to be called Sitar. Sitar is actually a simple form of an old Hindi instrument, the Veena. In the world of classical music in the subcontinent and among its fans, this instrument is now known as sitar. Until a few decades ago it was listened to with great passion and interest and even today sitar is a must in music concerts.

This instrument was invented by Amir Khusraw, but it is also said that Amir Khusraw himself did not mention this instrument in his writings. A group of experts has also written after their discovery that this instrument was originally popular in

Persia or Caucasia and came to India from there, but in reliable and authentic sources, the inventor of this instrument was articulated to Amir Khusraw. From the Mughal period to the present era, this instrument received many accomplished artists. Ustad Wilayat Khan was one of the founders of Indian classical music and was one of the first sitar players to take Indian music abroad. Wilayat Khan was born in Bangladesh, his father Ustad Inayat Khan was also a famous sitar player. He performed for the first time at the age of six and made his first recording two years later. A special style of playing sitar known as Wilayat Khani became known from him. His sons Shujaat Khan and Hidayat Khan are also sitar players. In addition to his sons, the prominent students of Wilayat Khan Sahib are Kalyani Rai, Kashinath Makarji and Arvind Parekh. In an interview, he says:

"Though I was orphaned at the age of ten, my father, Ustad Inayat Hussain Khan, who himself was a legend in sitar playing, gave me basic sitar lessons. It started with finger balance, position and release, holding and playing the sitar from different angles. And above all, not by hours or days, but all the time; all these things were taught to me by my father at an early age." Ustad Ravi Shankar was a

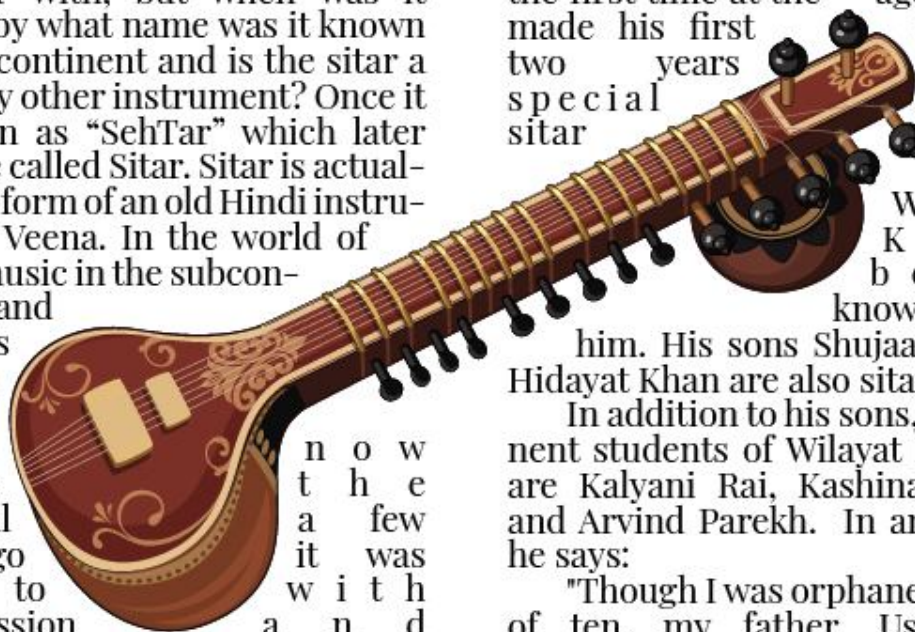


Illustration Source: Freepik

renowned Indian classical musician known for his mastery of stringed instruments, especially the Sahatar and Sarangi. He was born in 1920 in Delhi, India. His father, Ustad Ram Shankar, was a famous Sahatar player, and his mother, Ustad Ram Lal was a famous sarangi player. Ravi Shankar learned music from his father and mother. After his death, his daughter Anushka Shankar is representing this art all over the world.

After the partition of India, there were many great sitar players in Pakistan, among them Ustad Sharif Khan, Ustad Kabir Khan and Ustad Fateh Khan are particularly noteworthy. After these teachers, their descendants and their students worked very hard to keep this art alive and promote it despite the difficult conditions and kept the art of their ancestors close to their chests.

The name of Ustad Rais Khan is a self-introduction in the context of sitar playing in the subcontinent. Ustad Rais Khan was born in Indore, India in 1939 in a family of musicians where he received his early music education from his maternal grandfather Ustad Inayat Ali Khan. Ustad Rais Khan, who belonged to the Mewati family established during the Mughal era, got the title of 'Ustad' at the age of 15 and in 1955 he represented India at the age of 16 at the International Youth Festival. In an interview given to Dawn newspaper in 2012, he said that in 1972, he played sitar for 18 hours continuously with three tabla players and set a new record. Ustad Raees Khan performed in two songs in the seventh season of the popular music show Coke Studio, out of which the song 'Main Sufi Hoon' with Abida Parveen became very popular. One of

his sons, Farhan Raees Khan, also followed in his father's footsteps and became a sitar Nawaz.

In the words of classical music connoisseurs and musicians, you will know that the gourd of the sitar is called Tunba, while its long hollow wood is called Daand. On the roof of the Tunba there are two bridges of bone called Jawarian, over which the wires pass. The shafts are made of iron or brass arcs which are called pardy or sundriyan. One end of the wire is tied to a nail behind the pole and the other is tied to pegs in the daand. In modern times, the number of strings of the sitar is not fixed, but mostly it has four strings, two chikaris and thirteen trumpets.

Nowadays, there are many sitar players in India and Pakistan who are keeping this art alive among them, Rupa Panesar, Niladri Kumar, Pandit Buddhatiya Mukherjee, Ustad Shahid Pervez, Dr. Anhindta Mitra, Anupama Bhagwat, Shabbi Sen and Vijih Nizami are important names. The sitar is undoubtedly a fascinating and unique instrument that has been presenting the distinctive romanticism of the subcontinent in its own unique style for centuries. It is not easy to learn it either, but the given lines of Iqbal gives us direction in this regard.

ہیں ساز یہ موقوف نوا ہائے جگر سوز
ڈھیلے ہوں اگر تار تو بے کار ہے مضراب

YOU NEED TO KNOW

Success is peace of mind, which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to become the best of which you are capable.

John Wooden

TO OUR ERICAS AND NAMIRAS: A TRIBUTE TO INSPIRATIONAL PAKISTAN WOMEN OF 2023



Ayesha Mustafa Malik
Writer, Researcher

04 MINUTES READ

Women around the world are a perfect assemblage of beauty, elegance, stability, fortitude and resilience. This strength of character is by no means in scarcity in the Land of the Pure. Benazir Bhutto was the first woman to lead a democratic government in a Muslim majority country. Asma Jahangir, a well-known human rights lawyer, established the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. Muniba Mazari, a motivational speaker and artist, is the National Ambassador for UN Women Pakistan. Other famous personalities include Atiya Khan, a sustainable development architect, and Samina Baig, the first Pakistani woman to summit Mount Everest. These women exemplify endurance, leadership, and competence in diverse spheres of life, making major strides towards greatness in Pakistan and beyond. But what about the feminine pioneers in Pakistan of today's day and age?

Most of you may have heard of these stoic personalities sandwiched between the headlines of great distress within the country, so here I am reminding you all of their

existence.

Narrowing it down to three-standout women of this year, let us begin the tribute with Pakistani's debutante to the Miss Universe; Miss Erica Robins. Born in Karachi, Erica Robin bore the torch of Pakistani pride in the Miss Universe competition, in 2023. Not only did she place among the top 20 competitors from 80 competing nations, but she also created a stir with her culturally significant ensembles. While her spectacular voyage drew enormous accolades, it also sparked a heated and polarizing discussion about whether she should carry the mantle of being the nation's spokesperson on the global arena. Erica exuded elegance with her one-of-a-kind decision, wearing a muted pink burkini during the swimsuit



round, a first in the competition's 72-year history. Her representation not only emphasized the contribution of a minority population within Pakistan, but also the undeniable cultural distinctiveness of this land.

Another commendable individual that deserves our undeniable gratitude is Pakistan's first female astronaut, Namira Salim. Salim has a reputation for being a daring adventurer all through her life. Salim is one of 100 space travellers who boarded

Image Source: Geo.tv

Virgin Galactic's first commercial space trips, which were set to begin operations in 2009.

From conquering the Poles, to skydiving from the heights of Mount Everest; her aptitude to do the unthinkable has been an inspiration for Pakistani and Muslim women all around the globe. Her philanthropic contributions as a diplomat and humanitarian benefactor cannot be overlooked, while acknowledging her talent for daring feats. She was appointed as an honorary consul of Pakistan to Monaco, on the recommendation of the Pakistani government in 2011. Moreover, the Power 100 Trailblazer Award by Pakistan Power 100 had been previously bestowed upon her in 2013 for her unequivocal achievements as an ambassador of peace. Namira Salim's endeavours represent the convergence of science, art, and diplomacy, encouraging others to reach for the stars while securing international admiration for Pakistani women.

The next trailblazer in our list of empowered women is a personality who has seen this country come to life. An honourary mention, as her recent passing has created a significant void in the journalism within Pakistan. Shahida Kazi is predominantly recognized as Pakistan's first female correspondent who has a career that spans over decades in both print and television journalism. At a time when journalism was considered unsuitable for women, she had applied for a degree in the field in the

year 1963. Her first assignment involved the visit of foreign diplomats in Pakistan, which was given a front-page review. According to her, her most memorable journalistic achievement was covering the occasion of Fatimah Jinnah's death. Donning the nickname "Meena Bazaar Reporter", she shattered all glass ceilings in her pathway to put an end to gender discrimination within her field in Pakistan. Later in life, she took on the role of being an academic mentor and writer, facilitating the dreams of promising journalists in Pakistan. Her autobiography "Sweet, Sour, and Bitter: A Life Well Lived" is a worthwhile read as a testament to the bravery and perseverance of a Pakistani woman in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Lastly, let us honour a group of extraordinary ladies in this renowned lineup of strong Pakistani women who had contributed to the rich

tapestry of resilience and empowerment. Naila Kayani, the first Pakistani mountaineer to conquer 6 peaks worldwide. Yasmeen Lari, the visionary who is revolutionizing Pakistan's rural architecture to combat climate change. Muneeba Ali, the first Pakistani female cricketer to complete a T20I century in 2023. Iman Vellani who is our very own Miss Marvel, gaining widespread praise for her portrayal as a South Asian superhero. Last but not the least, Afroze-Numa and Neha Mankani clearly deserve our immense gratitude as a part of BBC's 100 inspiring women of 2023.



IMAGE SOURCE: Social Nation

Sufi Musical Gathering and Sufi Musical Instruments in Chitral



Saif Uddin
Folk Singer, Culture Critic

04 MINUTES READ

Sufis consider music as a tool to reach God and its sound plays a very important role in the life of a Sufi. It is a process of dissolving the physical realm into the spiritual one by polishing the heart and enhancing the spiritual aspect of life over the physical aspect. These days there are spiritual gatherings in Upper Chitral and out of Chitral where Shia Ismailia Muslims perform spiritual music to transcend the physical realm into spiritual one. In old days Pir Nasir Khusraw is credited to introduce spiritual music in Chitral. He was a Sufi and Muslim religious preacher from Arabia. The Muslim rulers over these centuries were also great patrons of music. The patronage also extended to families of musicians who were looked after and promoted by the King and the musicians were called Ustazan (music gurus). The royal court, as well as the courts in the provinces, states or rajwaras, offered their patronage. This was shaped up as a pyramid with the Sultan or Badshah (king) surveying all from its pinnacle. The Mehtar (ruler) was responsible for patronage of the court musicians. Dilawar of Drosh is a recent example who performed for more than a decade in the court of prince Hisam ul Mulk, the governor of Drosh.

The Sufis have been accused by the orthodoxy of many transgressions. One of those was offering patronage to music. There must have been a tussle between the two orders of representation of Islam and the

Muslim way of life in the subcontinent. It appears that it tended to be not only polemical, but also violent. But certain Sufi silsilas (orders) continued to promote and protect musicians and the musical expression throughout this period. Pir Nasir Khesraw promoted Islam by reciting ginnans in Chitral. Ginnans are the sacred literature of the Shia Ismaili Muslims. The topics of ginnans are mostly for divine love, cosmology, rituals, eschatology, ethical behavior and meditation. Ginnans are attributed to the pir, who were second to the Imams in the Ismaili hierarchy.

One can refer to the diversity of sufi music from its main land: the sun of Africa, the shore of Atlantic ocean to the mountains of Pakistan, and the diversity of sufi music is enriched by all its cultures it crosses in Egypt, Palestine, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and India. But in India, Amir Khusro is seen to be the representative figure of the Indo-Muslim culture. Everything has been attributed to him in poetry and music. He is seen to be a lone ranger responsible for offering a larger and a more humanistic expression of religious sensibility. He was aware of various strands coming together and forming a new cultural matrix that was unique to this land and not a replication of a prototype.

There must have been greater investigation into the augmented role of music and its immense qualities as has been done in other systems and orders. Its great value addition would not let it remain just a means, but must have sprung forward at times to become an end in itself. All this must not have been lost on somebody as perceptive and wise as Pir Nasir Khesraw who instituted what remains

a living tradition, was also responsible to promote Islam by using daf, flute and garba as musical instruments by reciting ginnans. Here is a short description about garba, daf and flute which are being used by Shia Ismailia Muslims in their spiritual gathering in Chitral.

Garba: It is a short necked lute with five strings made of sheep intestine due to which the sound is bum (flat) and one resonant string. The strings are tuned in C -C -C -C -F -F. Plectrum is used to play and the instrument is close to rubab. The wood used to make garba is mulberry. In upper Chitral and northern areas among Ismaili communities it is played with spiritual music. It is played by their spiritual leader only. The Persian poems of Nasir Khusraw, Mullana Rumi and Shamstabrizi etc, are played on the instruments. The melody is monotonous and similar, and on Garba it is not repeated fully as on the Chitrali Sitar. It only keeps the rhythm but nowadays the whole tune is played with it. Garba was not played on festive occasions but nowadays it is also played on marriage Ceremonies other fairs. The famous garba players in Chitral are Muhammad Amin, Aftab Alam and Ahsan Ali and his son Iqtidar Ali.

Daf: It is an Arabic word and is known as dap in middle Persian. It reached Chitral from Central Asia. It is a frame drum with metal bangles and ringlets attached while the membrane is usually of goat skin. It has a 6-7 inches deep hollow cylinder of wood about 32-46 inches in diameters. Daf is played on different occasions, either marriage or spiritual music. It is mostly used with garba and considered as instruments with religious connotation.

Most of the people say that when

Nasir Khesrow came to Chitral he brought garba flute and daf and sang spiritual songs on these instruments. Tuning of the daf is done by heating the membrane of it and balances it with the reference note of the other instrument garba. The left thumb is put into the hole of daf while all the nine fingers used to play, the beat is counted as seven. It is used to bring about a repetitive sound which often takes the listener into a trance. Sufi music uses recurring sounds combined with rhythmic tones. It sounds like a melody following the rhythm of the "life pulse" in all its different stages or it seems like the movement of the ocean under all kinds of weather. Just like our world it forms unity in diversity.

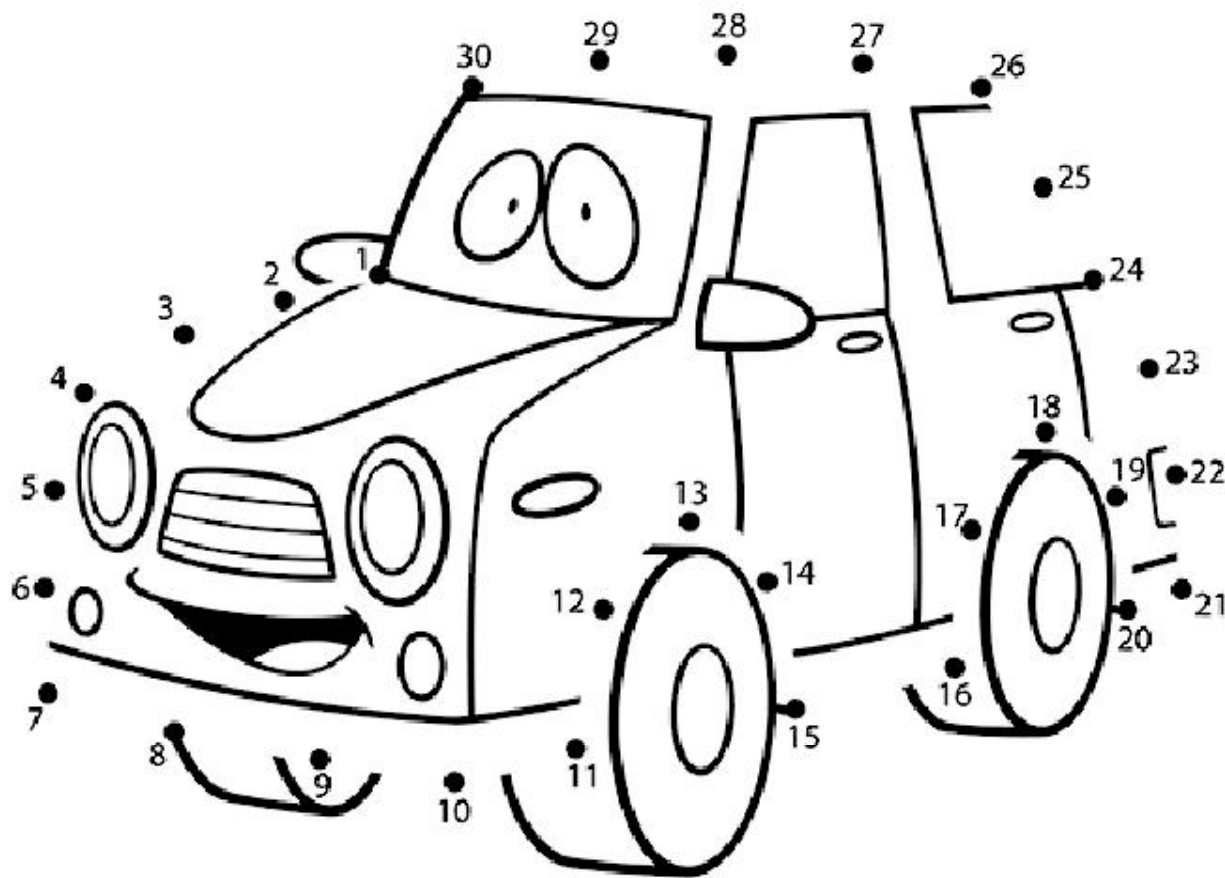
Belu (flute): It is also made in the same pattern as Surnai (clarinet) but its sound is less in volume than Surnai. The wood of apricot or bark is used to make it. There are eight holes on which the notes are produced by placing the fingers. The instrument is mostly connected with shepherds and in the past there were many women in Chitral who played Belu. It is also played by the Kalash. There are different sizes of the flutes; most of the people prefer to play a middle sized flute. Nowadays flute is also used in the sufi music gathering in Upper Chitral. It has a symbol of the human soul that has to be totally void so that it can resonate. It has a deep meaning of its emptiness. Human soul must be empty and clear to connect with divine power.

The essence of Sufism and its connection with music is poignantly expressed in the opening words of the "Mathwani" the "spiritual couplets" written over seven hundred years ago by the famous poet Jalal Al Din Al Rumi.

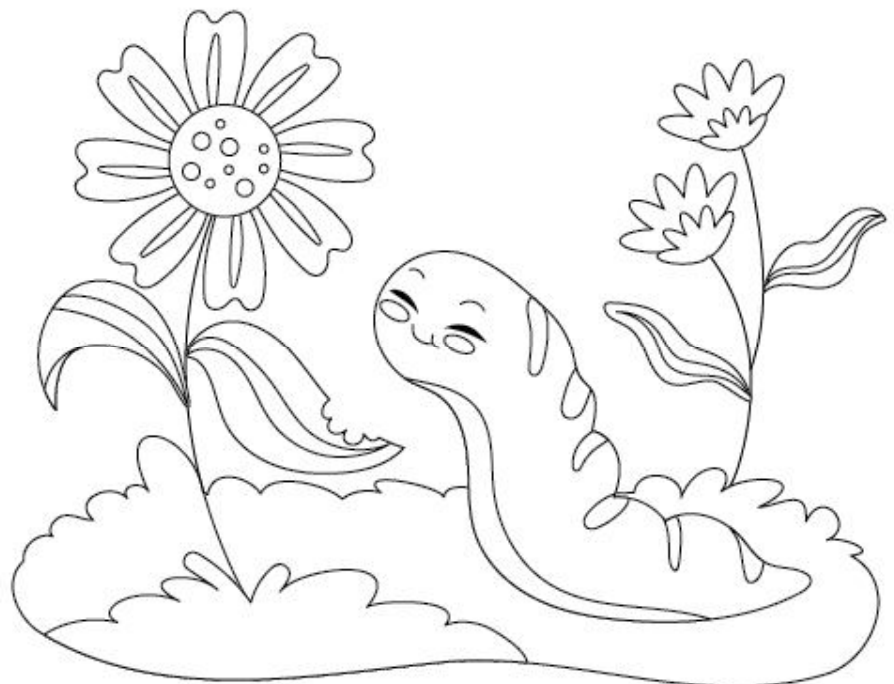




CONNECT THE DOTS



TRACE & COLOR



Understanding & Overcoming Exam Anxiety

Defne Cetintav

Westminster Secondary School Student

02 MINUTES READ

What Is Exam Anxiety?

It is defined as intense anxiety that prevents the information learned before being used effectively during the exam and leads to a drop in success. Students experiencing exam anxiety may experience sweating, tremors, rapid heartbeat, dry mouth or nausea. Physical symptoms may include headache, shortness of breath, and a change in appetite due to stress.

Why Exam Anxiety Occurs?

Failure to meet physiological, such as inadequate nutrition, sleep disorders, smoking, alcohol consumption and negative thoughts about the exam, cause exam anxiety and subsequent failure.

How To Overcome Exam Anxiety?

The most important step in dealing with exam anxiety is to question and re-evaluate these thoughts and beliefs. In addition to these, breathing exercises, thought stopping or focusing attention techniques are also effective methods for dealing with exam anxiety.

Peer Support: What You Should Do For Your Children?

Parents should be consistent in their relationship with their children during the exam

period. Since overly harsh behavior or overly sensitive behavior will increase the child's anxiety, such actions, behavior and verbal communication should be avoided. The child's achievements and experiences should not be compared with his peers. Care should be taken when forming sentences, especially sentences containing comparisons should not be made. The child should be told that exams are not a measure of personality and character evaluation, that winning and losing are part of life and that failure in the exam is not the end of life.

Do Not Try To Eliminate Anxiety

The goal is not to eliminate anxiety completely. Do not succumb to anxiety and keep the anxiety at a certain level. A certain level of anxiety helps to feel desire, decision-making and production of energy in line with the decisions taken and to increase performance by using this energy. Therefore, while helping students cope with anxiety, it is necessary to help them reduce anxiety to a certain level rather than removing it completely.

To Overcome Anxiety, Take Psychological Support

If your anxiety experience harms you both physically and psychologically and if your anxiety exercises don't help it's good for you to take help from a professional person's



ILLUSTRATION SOURCE: Freepik

A man with a long white beard, wearing a white robe and a white cap with a black band, is sitting in a meditative posture on a red rug. He is positioned in the center of the frame, between two large, ornate blue columns. The room has blue walls with intricate carvings and a large window in the background. The lighting is soft, creating a serene atmosphere.

**The Energy Point of Hidden Subtlety
(*Latifa e Khafi*)- I**



Dr. Muhammad Azeem Farooqi
Religious scholar, Academician,
Researcher

04 MINUTES READ

The Realm, Color, and Qualities of the *Latifa e Khafi* (Hidden Subtlety):

The Station of Hidden Subtlety (*Latifa e Khafi*) and Annihilation

In the world of divine command, there are five energy points, amongst these ones the hidden subtlety is at the fourth level. Imam Rabbani, Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Thani, said that the station of hidden subtlety (*Latifa e Khafi*) is located approximately an inch to the right of the chest's center. He explains that its annihilation manifests qualities of negation and purification. In other words, the remembrance of Allah has started in it, and it is turning towards its original station. It is being enriched by the sweetness of Allah's remembrance, the effects of divine blessings, special infusions, revelations, and spiritual observations. He states that its annihilation reveals the qualities of purification.

The Station of Purification

The meaning of purification is to clean and become pure. This is a divine attribute of purity. Allah, the Lord of all worlds, is beyond and exempt from any physical or spiritual association, and He is pure.

In the words of the Imam Rabbani,
"Allah is pure from what they attribute to Him."

(*Quran, As-Saffat: 180*)

Further, it is stated in the Holy Quran:

"There is nothing like unto Him."

(*Ash-Shura: 11*)

The Attributes of Creation and the Creator

Regarding this matter, there are two groups. One group asserts that all the entities visible in the universe are manifestations of nature, the unity of

creation, including humans, are the appearances of the divine attributes of Allah. They can be understood by attributing entities to Allah or by likening His Attributes to them. The other group maintains that Allah, the Lord of Honor, is beyond and exempt from resembling the created and from associating anything with Him.

As an example, consider this verse by Allama Iqbal:

*"Zahari o Ghaffari o Quddusi o Jabbari,
Ye char anasir hon to banta hai
Musalman."*

(The persecution, the forgiveness, the purification, the accountant, these four entities constitute a true/ ideal muslim.)

The diverse attributes of Allah found among His creations, or the manifestation of those attributes through created beings, can be used as a foundation. Understanding and seeking those attributes or reaching them by contemplating them and understanding them through the guidance of a spiritual mentor.

The Creator is beyond human comprehension

The second group of Sufis asserts that whatever exists within the grasp of creation is exempted from Allah; Beyond and beyond, and beyond, He is. Therefore, the manifestation of purification is absorbed by this fourth *Latifa-Khafi*. Then, realize that Allah, the Lord of all worlds, has numerous attributes, and among them is the attribute of purification. Contemplating and understanding these attributes through a mentor, one can comprehend the limitless attributes of Allah. The Lord possesses countless attributes and attributes such as "The Best of creators, the lord of lords, the Sustainer of all benefactors, the Judge of judges and so on. But man's peaks of knowledge and understanding can fail to undertake Allah's real perception and recognition.

Difference between *Moshabeh* (Resem-

blance) and *Moshabe Bih* (Likeness)

For instance, if someone says, "This individual is as intelligent as Shakespeare," they are comparing the intelligence of a person to that of Shakespeare, implying a resemblance. Similarly, if it is said that someone possesses as much knowledge as Galen, or, as in the case of Mir Taqi Mir, being titled "the divine poet," it involves likening the individual to the mentioned figures. In other words, to reach a certain level of excellence, a person is compared to a foundation, such as saying, "Just as Shakespeare was like this, Galen was like this, or Mir Taqi Mir was like this." While this conveys a sense of similarity and resemblance, comprehending the attributes and perfections of Allah, the Lord of all worlds, requires human effort. No matter how high one soars, it remains limited because their ascent is governed by their own flight capability. Allah, the Lord of all worlds, is free from these limitations and resemblances.

Strength of the Bird's Offspring

The tiny offspring of a bird was telling its mother that where it sits in a tree, the branch determines its youth and strength. The mother, upon hearing this, responded, "Son, right now you must be sitting in a small twig because, considering your age, you are either perched on a maize plant, a barley stalk, or a blade of grass near the river where plants grow. Thus, you are sitting higher than lower." The bird's offspring was boasting about its strength and courage, saying, "I have become so young and strong that when I sit in a tree branch, it bends." Just like this, a man is like the bird's offspring in relation to the Attributes and Status of Allah.

Epistles of Imam Rabbani and Holy Prophet (PBUH)

Hazrat Imam Rabbani Mujaddid, Alif Thani's caliph, once dreamt of meeting the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He inquired about the well-being of his master, Hazrat Mujaddid Alif Thani. The

Prophet (PBUH) responded by asking him to recite any portion from the sacred epistles of Hazrat Mujaddid, and if something stood out, he would listen. The reciter excerpts from the sacred letters in which Hazrat Mujaddid discussed the Attributes of Allah Almighty and the stages of elevation.

Note that the phrase "Verily, Allah is beyond and beyond, and beyond, and beyond of our thinking." It is derived from the sacred letters. (Letters of Imam Rabbani)

Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) said,
"Read on."

The caliph replied, "I continued reading the entire night, Hazrat Prophet (PBUH) listened, and the day dawned." The jewels of Imam Rabbani's sacred letters were recited and heard, and were verified by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Attributes of Allah, particularly the attribute of purification, the superb one. The blessing of the attribute of purification fall upon a believer or a faqir, and the place where it descends is called *Latifa e Khafi*. Another term used is *Salbiyah*.

Allah Almighty said,

"Verily, Allah seizes (takes back) the heavens and the earth lest they sway from their places." (Al-Baqarah 2:255)

Treatment of Human Maladies

It highlights this fact that the blessings and benefits that come from *Latifah e Khafi* are attributes of peace. Their influence cures deadly diseases like envy, malice, hatred, and backbiting. These are such destructive diseases that whoever falls victim to them, these diseases destroy him.

Just as the Prophet (PBUH) guided us about envy:

"Beware of envy, as envy devours good deeds just as fire devours wood." (Abu Dawood)

(Protect yourself from envy because envy eats away good deeds just as fire consumes firewood.)

To be Continued...



EASIER SAID THAN DONE: The Art of *Sabr* (Patience) with People



04 MINUTES READ

Hafsa Shahzada

Trainee Clinical Psychologist,
Writer, Social Activist

Yazid ibn Asad reported: The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said to me: *“Oh Yazid, love for people what you love for yourself.”*

In another narration, the Messenger (S.A.W.) stated, *“Do not treat people but in the way you would love to be treated by them.”* (*Sahih, Musnad Ahmad, 16220*).

Teaching of Patience/Sabr in Islam

Patience in Islam literally translates to endurance. It corresponds to two parts of faith (Imaan). One to perseverance and/or persistence, and the other to gratitude/thankfulness (Shukar). Sabr is a commendable personality quality that goes a long way in deepening our connection

with the Almighty Creator, Allah (SWT), pushes us to speak and act upon the truth, and to bear with strength through challenges. The significance of sabr is further exemplified with how it is a recurring theme in the Holy Quran, and the term “sabr” appearing alongside *eraaz* (Arabic translation to avoidance), more than 100 times in the scriptures.

Patience is categorized into three core types:

- Interpersonal patience
- Life hardship patience
- Daily hassles patience

For those struggling in interpersonal relations, this article will address some salient points in “Interpersonal patience”, and how one can effectively build patience and deal with other people.

Scenario 1: It is them. The external state of our surroundings. In

IMAGE SOURCE: Columbian Metropolitan Magazine

layman terms trending nowadays, the individual we are corresponding with is "toxic" and struggles to maintain positive social relations on a whole, with you or others. Shared ahead are some psychology-based tools to cope with difficult people.

Possible Solutions:

- **Develop listening skills and empathy:** This refers to us lending a ready ear and openness of mind to what the other person has to say, even if you do not agree with it. It is important to demonstrate acceptance, though not necessarily agreement, by simply nodding or injecting phrases such as "I understand" or "I see." Try to get a sense of the feelings that the speaker is expressing, and stay mindful of the emotional content being delivered as well as the literal meaning behind it.

- **Physical factors:** Many people become impatient due to physical factors such as hunger, dehydration, or fatigue. Bear this in mind the next time you start to feel impatient with others. A simple remedy might be a snack and a glass of water for the next party.

- **Calmly confront the person in private:** There's a chance that this person truly doesn't know their words or actions are leaving a sour taste on you. Give them the benefit of the doubt, and address the problem privately. Explain what's bothering you from their words or actions, and what you'd like them to do about it. Don't go on the attack. Tell them what it feels like, from your perspective, to be on the receiving end of this type of behavior. Use "I" statements, such as, "When you criticize me in front of our class peers, I feel humiliated and upset."

Scenario 2: It is you: Your own internal state leaves you drained out

and impatient with others.

Possible Solutions:

- **Identify impatience triggers:** These could be specific people, words, or situations. Try to draft a list of things that cause you to become impatient. If you're having trouble identifying your triggers, stop and think about the last time you felt this way. What caused it? If you're uncertain, ask your social circle (friends, family, or co-workers) about your impatience. Chances are, they know what gets you "wound up" and stuck.

- **Self-awareness:** It comprises the ability to look inward in order to accurately assess your behavior—and the thoughts and feelings that influence it. This internal state helps us understand our strengths and limitations and is a key factor as a leader in both personal and professional life to work with people.

- **Journaling:** Try keeping a journal to record when you start to feel impatient. Write down the details of the situation, and why you are experiencing frustration. This can help you examine your actions and understand why you respond in this way.

In summary, both scenarios require us to have patience/sabr. You won't always be able to avoid the triggers that make you impatient. But you can learn to manage your reactions to them. The reward of sabr is huge and infinite, and Allah (SWT) is with those who are patient. Yes, we could flee from difficult people who we do not get along with, but how then can we be rewarded for Sabr if we do not have the opportunity to demonstrate it? One must be ready for all of life's colors and tastes, the sweet and bitter ones.

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ENSURING FOOD SAFETY: A GLOBAL IMPERATIVE



04 MINUTES READ

Mahnoor Iqtidar Mir
M.Phil Food Safety
& Quality Management

Food is a basic necessity of life. It provides us with the energy and nutrients that we need to carry out our daily tasks effectively. On the contrary, if the food and water are unsafe or contaminated, they are ideal vectors for the spread of diseases. Thousands of people die each year as a result of these food-borne illnesses, which impact millions of people worldwide. Despite advancements in science and technology, unsafe food remains the biggest health challenge globally. By implementing strict policies, methods, and procedures, developed countries have addressed this issue which has lowered the overall intensity of disease. Pakistan, on the other hand, is far behind.

Political instability, rising inflation, lack of awareness, weak health infrastructure, weather changes, and poor hygiene have aggravated this issue. Tons of people in Pakistan,

especially children and elderly, get infected with foodborne diseases daily. If proper treatment is not given, these illnesses can be life-threatening too. This problem can be reduced or even prevented if we start practicing food safety at all levels of the food chain. From the farm(producer) to the fork(consumer). As a consumer we cannot ensure safe food at the upper levels of the food chain but we can carry out various steps at our homes that can eliminate the risk of food borne diseases. For this we need to understand the term 'food safety' which deals with the efficient handling, preparation, and storage of food that prevents foodborne diseases.

Although maintaining food safety is a complex task, there are five basic steps that we can carry out at home to ensure that the food we consume is safe and free from microbes.

1. Clean: The basic yet most important step is cleanliness. Anyone working or cooking in the kitchen should wear clean clothes, especially aprons. The nails should be cut and

Image Source: Google Images

hair should be tied. Avoid wearing rings while kneading flour. Your hands contain multiple microbes that can spread diseases. The key is to properly wash your hands before and after cooking or preparing anything in the kitchen. Next, the kitchen or workplace should be clean. The floors, stoves, worktops, cutting boards, utensils, etc. should be properly washed and scrubbed. The kitchen should be free from any insects (flies) or rodents (mice) since they can spread diseases.

2. Separate: The biggest mistake that we usually make in the kitchen is not separating food items properly. Raw meat and poultry should be washed, prepped, and stored separately in bags or containers far from vegetables or fruits. The knives and cutting boards used for meat, vegetables, and fruits should be different. The juices in the meat are high in bacteria and can cause various illnesses if they drip over fruits and veggies. Moreover, the raw food should always be kept and stored away from the cooked food.

3. Cook: It is vital that the food, especially meat, poultry, and eggs, are cooked properly to kill bacteria. In the case of meat, it is essential that the meat is evenly cooked, especially from the inside. Raw meat can spread various diseases. For soups or curries, it is important to boil the mixture properly. When reheating food, it is essential to warm the food

properly before consuming it. Food shouldn't be reheated again and again.

4. Maintain Safe Temperature: Cooked food should not be kept outside at room temperature for more than 2 hours. The bacteria can multiply and contaminate the food. Foods, especially cooked, should be refrigerated properly below 5 degrees since refrigeration slows down the growth of microbes. Food shouldn't be stored for too long in the fridge and it shouldn't be microwaved again

and again. Microwaved food shouldn't be refrigerated or frozen. This leads to the risk of bacterial growth.

5. Use safe raw materials. It is important to use clean water for washing and cooking food. If you are unsure about the water, it is better to boil it before use. Try to select fresh produce (fruits and vegetables). They have low levels of microbes. Another mistake that we usually make is to use products beyond their expiration date. Products beyond their expiration date are harmful for your health. If we start incorporating these small steps into our life, it can drastically reduce the number of microorganisms that cause disease. The number of deaths from these diseases will also decrease. There will be no need for hectic hospital visits or expensive medicines. People will have a sustained life with good well-being that will promote a healthy, happy community.



Image Source: Google Images

Congo Virus; Current Wave and its History in Pakistan



Muhammad Shoaib Khan
Life Sciences Reseacher, Writer

04 MINUTES READ

Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF), more popularly known as Congo Virus, is a new emerging threat to the health care system in Pakistan. It is a widespread disease caused by *Nairovirus* (from the Bunyaviridae family), which is present in ticks, mostly associated with cattle such as goats and sheep. The ticks are the major vectors and reservoirs of this Virus. The CCHF has been reported and documented to be endemic in Africa, the Middle East, the Balkan States, and Asian countries.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention USA (CDC) says that multiple wild and domestic animals serve the role of amplifying hosts of this virus in which it multiplies and increases its number. It can be transmitted to humans by the bite of infected ticks (especially of the genus *Hyalomma*) or if a person comes in contact with the infected animal's blood or any other body fluid. Similarly, CCHF can also be transmitted from one infected human to another by the contact of blood and body fluids. Contamination of medical supplies, improper sterilization of medical equipment, and reuse of injection needles are

also reported to be the cause of transmission of CCHF.

The incubation period of the virus varies depending on the mode of transmission, ranging from 1 to 6 days. Symptoms include fever, weakness, muscle ache, headache, nausea, vomiting, and abdominal pain, progressing to mood swings, confusion, lethargy, and depression. Complications may include liver enlargement, kidney deterioration, and multi-organ failure, with mortality rates ranging from 10% to 40%. Recovery typically occurs around the 9th or 10th day of illness.

In Pakistan, it was first time reported in 1976 in Rawalpindi, in its General Hospital, and emerged as a high-risk nosocomial (originating in a hospital) infection, as 11 secondary cases were reported right after among whom 3 patients had died. After this, it spread to the other provinces of the country i-e Balochistan and Sindh.

Between the years 2014-2020, there were 365 cases of CCHF reported in Pakistan with a fatality rate of 25%, according to the statistics of the National Institute of Health (NIH). 6 deaths from the 14 confirmed cases were reported in Balochistan in 2021. In 2022, there were 11 cases reported in KPK and Balochistan. Until 3rd June of the current year, 6 deaths had been reported and from

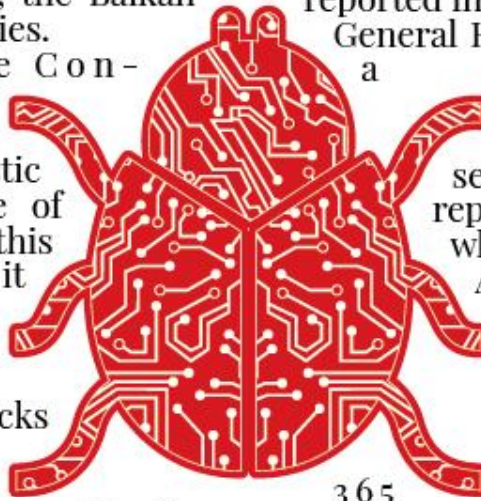


ILLUSTRATION SOURCE: freepik.com

August to the middle of October 41 cases were reported in Quetta, Balochistan among which 15 of them were fatal. In November 2023, an outbreak of Congo Fever was reported at a Hospital in Quetta (capital of Balochistan) due to its poor infection control measures. 16 patients, most of whom were health care providers, were shifted to Karachi and admitted to Agha Khan University Hospital. 3 of them died including a doctor and the rest of them recovered. In Karachi, 3 local cases have also been reported from which one patient could not survive. Another case has also been reported in Dawn today (25th November), as I write this article to raise the concern.

The steps should be taken to check the spread of the disease for the wider public interest, to save valuable human lives, and to mitigate yet another emerging challenge to the already vulnerable healthcare system and the economy of the country. The prevention and control of CCHF in animals and ticks are difficult but the use of acaricides (chemicals used to kill ticks and mites) will prove effective in the areas, industries, or livestock-containing sites. Quarantining animals in tick-free sites for 14 days before slaughtering also reduces the risk of animals getting infected and prevents human infection if one comes in contact with its fluids. Awareness regarding the risk factors



of CCHF should be raised and people should be educated on the measures they can take to prevent getting the disease. WHO recommended precautions can be accessed by this link: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/crimean-congo-haemorrhagic-fever>

The Sindh Government has advised implementing SOPs before the Eid-ul-Adha in the province each year (as a mass slaughter of cattle happens in the province like other provinces of the country and other Muslim countries as a religious duty). One of the SOPs includes wearing the gloves during sacrificial process to avoid coming in contact with animal's blood and fluids. The KPK Govt. has also started taking measures to establish checkpoints for seasonal border crossing of animals and spraying the animals with anti-tick sprays.

These steps should be appreciated but equal implementation should be done in all the areas and provinces of the country, especially in the currently threatened province i-e Balochistan. The practice of quarantining the animals and the use of vaccines against CCHF should be introduced beforehand. The rural areas should be targeted for vector control measures as they are the site of most of the cattle breeding and the majority of the cases emerge from these areas.

IMAGE SOURCE: Google image



BOYS WILL BE BOYS



Fatima Altaf
Psychologist, Painter, Humanist

04 MINUTES READ

Boys will be boys because they cannot be girls. Boys do what they see, most of the time they do so to be accepted and to maintain the social image of the very concept of masculinity associated with being a boy. Now the question arises in mind from where the child learns to be a boy?

Babies are born neutral, they learn to be a 'boy' with time and from its first institution we call 'Family' starting from there to school, society and so one becomes a boy or a girl. It implies that there's one way to be a boy, and one way to be a girl. Later on, it implies that there's one way to be a man, one way to be a woman, and no overlap in between.

A male child's first example is set

by his father or the elder male figures in the house. In our patriarchal society, I don't really think I need to explain how the majority of authoritarian households work. How the role of man and woman are defined by the society, men till date in majority households are considered to be sole authority even if they are wrong and we women we have to follow because GOOD women do not argue or question and even if any of us do, all we get is a 'HAW HAYE' or death stare which is usually enough to never question again. Coming back to the point, now in a household where on the basis of sex or I would say the presence of chromosome "Y" a child is preferred over a girl child.

Since his childhood a boy is taught to be tough, and the criteria of toughness is no less than making your child an indifferent and insensitive being. Have you ever thought about the

IMAGE SOURCE: Everyday Feminism

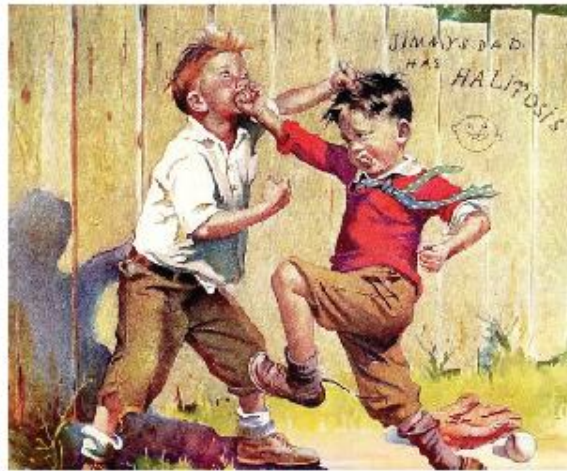
impact of harsh statements like “Mard ban” or “Boys don’t cry” leaves on a developing brain? Being Insensitive and expressionless is the very definition of being a boy specifically if I talk of brown households. Flawed parenting, unfortunately couples in our society do not know how to be private more appropriately and how to solve matters privately without leaving a disturbing impression on the child. By being loud and abusive about petty issues, with verbal and physical abuse (the forms of abuse which are not really considered abuse and is a routine for couples). Being raised in a house where you have seen women being subjugated and men being the oppressors and to align with the traditional gender roles, there’s hardly an option to be anything other than a defined “boy” by the family and the society.

After learning from the family comes the peer group, where to feel inclusive and belonging even if a boy wants to or does not, he has to play Gangsta. Aggression is accepted and appreciated. The more a boy displays a show of his testosterone, the more he is considered a man. They want to be the authority even with their intimate partners and girls initially accept that authority confusing it with love, but later it becomes hard to breathe when that false exhibition of love turns into possession, and most of the times we women accept it because acceptance and compromise is what we are taught since our childhood, yet many brave women

stood up and still are struggling to not let this domination, dominate.

This disparity is not limited to just a country or state, it's a widespread misconduct which till date is not getting even close to a smooth path. All the gender based crimes are conducted to save the honor of the male members of the family, the one committing these crimes are the males of the family sacrificing their women to save their fragile manly ego to which they label as honor. I will not get into this debate but rape, honor killing, domestic violence, acid victims are everywhere around us,

simply because this is a way of displaying the power of being a male/boy and above all they are not shown any other way of living, they have forgotten to be a human in order to be a boy. Our world is filled with horrible examples of boys being boys and getting away with their crimes because



boys will be boys.

Empathetic men are not appreciated at some point even if women/girls would not want to be their partners considering them feminine, because the idea of a male is confused with toxic masculinity even for the girls as Morally Grey Men are the new type of the girls/women, thanks to our media. The media has played a huge part in promoting toxic masculinity and creating a very false idea of toxic men being one woman man. Now living in a society, one desires to be accepted and to be wanted, who would want to be a sympathetic, loving man?

IMAGE SOURCE: Pinterest



CATHARSIS - A HIJAMA TO THE SOUL



Nabila Bakht
An IT Mom

04 MINUTES READ

Catharsis -- a Greek term coined for the purification of emotions especially pity and fear, via art.

Why is it needed? Because the heart is so suppressed due to the brain. One's brain has taken so much of thyself that it dominates them. Catharsis is needed to unburden the heart, throw off the suppressions, to make the heart open. Once the heart becomes light and unburdened, the center of conscience is pushed so that it comes to the navel. The navel is the source of vitality.

-- Extract from Osho - An Active Meditation

I usually think about what happens when we are emotionally burdened; nothing makes us happy,

and our inner peace is lost. No matter how much everyone tries to comfort you, it doesn't work. Then suddenly, you kneel before the Lord of seven heavens and tears begin to flow, reliving the burdened soul. The process is catharsis, the flow of feelings to bring the heart back to peace.

Catharsis tends to reincarnate the soul if it turns out to be successful with the application of optimism and keen perspective learning. The psychoanalytic theory believes this emotional release is connected to consoling the dwindling unconscious conflicts.

When the heart is too burdened with fear, anger, frustration, and other such feelings, it seems as if it is going to burst, lest it has been channeled. Various mediums to let it out are music, painting, physical activity, and above all being Muslim is

IMAGE SOURCE: The Curious Reader

prostration.

Referring to it as a Hijama to the soul won't be wrong. As the Hijama purifies the body, likewise, catharsis cleanses the soul. It has both components, i.e. emotional and cognitive. While one senses and manifests the intense feelings, the latter opens new horizons to the person.

Therapeutic Uses of Catharsis

It was first used to treat hysteria by Josef Breuer, a colleague of Sigmund Freud. The treatment involves patients recalling the distressful experience in a hypnosis state and lets them express suppressed emotions. Once it is out, they are at peace. Freud was also convinced that catharsis is vital in relieving the symptoms of stress.

Nowadays, catharsis is a buzzword which people refer to in their day-to-day lives. The feeling could be a deep thought regarding a matter of grave concern or an occurrence from the past. When a person is going through darker times, and a beacon of light suddenly appears, healing the lousy patch, developing a sense of peace in life is merely a cathartic moment.

Other moments of experiencing this loss of inner peace are major stressful events like losing dear ones, an accident, relationship issue or a health crisis. Cumulatively, this term is commonly coined as the emotional moment that brings positive change in a person's life; however, it is different in psychoanalysis.

Catharsis is an emotion that can be induced during therapy, but it can happen at any point in any step. Some examples to induce catharsis are:

Music: Music rejuvenates the soul and hence can be motivational. It resolves the soul, making it restored

and lively again.

Discussion: A sound discussion with a friend can highlight any past event, which can become a beacon of hope to resolve the present issue.

Art: Playing with colors and transferring emotions to the canvas in the form of various colors can surely bring relief to the soul and allow us to think about the situation from another perspective.

Exercise: One way to release negative or depressing emotions is physical exercise. This leaves you relieved, energetic, and active towards the new positive phase of life.

Journaling: Penning down thoughts always turns out to be the best mental health tool. Expressive writing involves writing about stressful events, which can also provide you with some profound insights to resolve the problem.

Prayers: Prostration is the best way to remove negative emotions and lighten the burdened soul. Hence, regular prayers can regulate the attitude towards the problem.

In exploring challenging emotions, sound medical assistance is sometimes required if these issues have roots in abuse or trauma. Do not hesitate to consult a trained mental health professional to gain your inner peace.

Just like the Hijama cleanses the body, the proper catharsis can cleanse the soul. Beware of the energies around you. This helps strengthen the soul, which would, in turn strengthen the body

Quote You Need to Know:

"Be the change you wish to see in the world."

- Mahatma Gandhi



CONTENTMENT IN A MATERIALISTIC WORLD



Nahin Sani

MBBS student at Shifa College of Medicine

04 MINUTES READ

Our current world contains many advantages and disadvantages. Nonetheless, there is a grappling tendency of material commodities that cling to us, spin us around like a hammer throw in the Olympics, making us revolve around them.

“We think that the things we buy and have, that we are their masters. We don’t become their masters but actually we become their slaves. They become our masters. Their lives don’t revolve around us, our lives start revolving around them” –Alif by Umera Ahmed

Although items like money, food, clothes, furniture, gadgets, etc. are items of necessity, it’s important that they remain just to fulfill one’s needs,

not become the means of attempting to give fulfillment to nourish one’s soul. If we vigorously pursue a materialistic life, we will be stuck in a non-stop rat race trying to claim more or be better than the next person because that’s what we think true peace and happiness looks like.

“Woe unto him who amasses wealth and counts it a safeguard, thinking that his wealth will make him live forever! – Surah Al-Humazah(104:2-3)

We’d be agitated, restless, anxious, and living with other negative feelings because one could achieve everything in this world, yet lust for more. Agitation and restlessness can lead to a volatile temper; anxiety can lead to severe panic attacks. Relationships become torn apart as objects are loved more than people. The need to satiate one’s mind and body can lead to one indulg-

IMAGE SOURCE: Freepik

ing in crimes as severe as theft, murder or rape.

Materialism spreads like a virus; no one is safe. The constant need for satisfaction will gradually destroy one's self esteem; therefore questions like 'What's the purpose of life?' emerge.

What's the solution to living in a materialistic world you're dependent on to satisfy your needs? Take what you need, be content with what you have and don't have. You have a mind and body, but also a soul. You can feed and clothe your body, bombard your mind with music, but your soul will be screaming for nourishment. By not listening to your soul, you'll let it suffocate and pull you into an endless void. Once you feed the soul, you flower the seed of contentment which takes root, grows and spreads to your mind and body, providing you ease.

Contentment is 'What I have is enough, but what I have should nourish my soul':

Evaluate your life. What are you doing now? What are your priorities and goals? What does most of your time and effort revolve around? Does it provide you comfort or anxiety? How much of your time do you spend doing/buying things because others are doing it? How strong is your moral compass?

Dedicate your time and effort to what you're passionate about and

what you're good at, being a hobby or a profession. When you do what you love, you'll feel content.

Choose not to let others' comments, criticisms, gossips, and slander hurt you. Don't worry about what people will say, worry about what Allah will say to you. You'll be content as you focus on serving one God as compared to multiple gods, each with their unique mindset.

Escape the rat race of life and accept that contentment is a state of mind, not an array of valuable items so you stop searching every corner for peace and simply find it within your soul.

Reconnect with Allah; the One Who can soften even the hearts of stone. Don't ever think that you can never change. When you will change, Allah will make it 'Be'.

Don't show your back when things go south. There is always a Plan for everything,

designed especially to your favor. Simply be patient and see for yourself.

By re-orienting your priorities, your soul will shine so bright, it will inspire others. You will have all you need to face any obstacle in the demanding materialistic world and you will cherish each moment of joy and sorrow.

"This life is nothing but a sport and play. As for the next abode, that most surely is life; did they but know." Surah Al - Ankabut(29:64)



IMAGE SOURCE: The Wildezine



The Real Maldives

DISCOVER WITH JOE HATTAB

04 MINUTES READ

The Maldives, often associated with pristine beaches and luxurious resorts, is a nation that goes beyond its idyllic façade. While it's true that the Maldives is a tourist paradise with its 1200 atolls, crystal-clear waters, and abundant marine life, delving into the heart of this island nation reveals a rich culture, a unique history, and a vibrant local life that coexists with its booming tourism industry.

Situated in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives is a picturesque archipelago formed by a succession of atolls, totaling 26 islands. With the equator passing just to its south, the Maldives spans an area of 300 square kilometers and has a population of approximately 55,000. The capital, Male, is renowned for being the most densely

populated island globally, prompting the construction of Hulhumale Island to alleviate congestion.

The Maldives boasts a population that is 100% Muslim, and its Islamic roots trace back to the 12th century when Abou Al Barakat Al Barbari arrived from Morocco, imparting the teachings of the Qur'an to the Maldivian people. The Juba Mosque, also known as the coral stone mosque, stands as a testament to this heritage. Classified as a World Heritage site, it was built 350 years ago during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar. The mosque, constructed predominantly from coral stone, remains a sacred space where people continue to gather for prayers.

The Maldivian economy revolves around tourism and fishing, with 28% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) derived from the tourism sector.

IMAGE SOURCE: thearrival-mv

Visitor-friendly islands, adorned with luxurious resorts, cater to tourists seeking an escape to paradise. However, the real charm lies in understanding the local way of life. While staying at a five-star hotel, visitors are treated to local produce sourced from bustling markets, where 95% of the products are fresh and locally produced.

Fishing, the second-largest contributor to the GDP, is a vital part of Maldivian life. Renowned for their tuna expertise, the Maldives competes with Japan in the international fish market. A visit to the fish market reveals a vibrant scene where locals showcase their freshly caught fish, particularly tuna. The culinary scene is dominated by local delicacies such as "short eats," a popular snack that combines grated coconut, spices, and dough with delicious tuna.

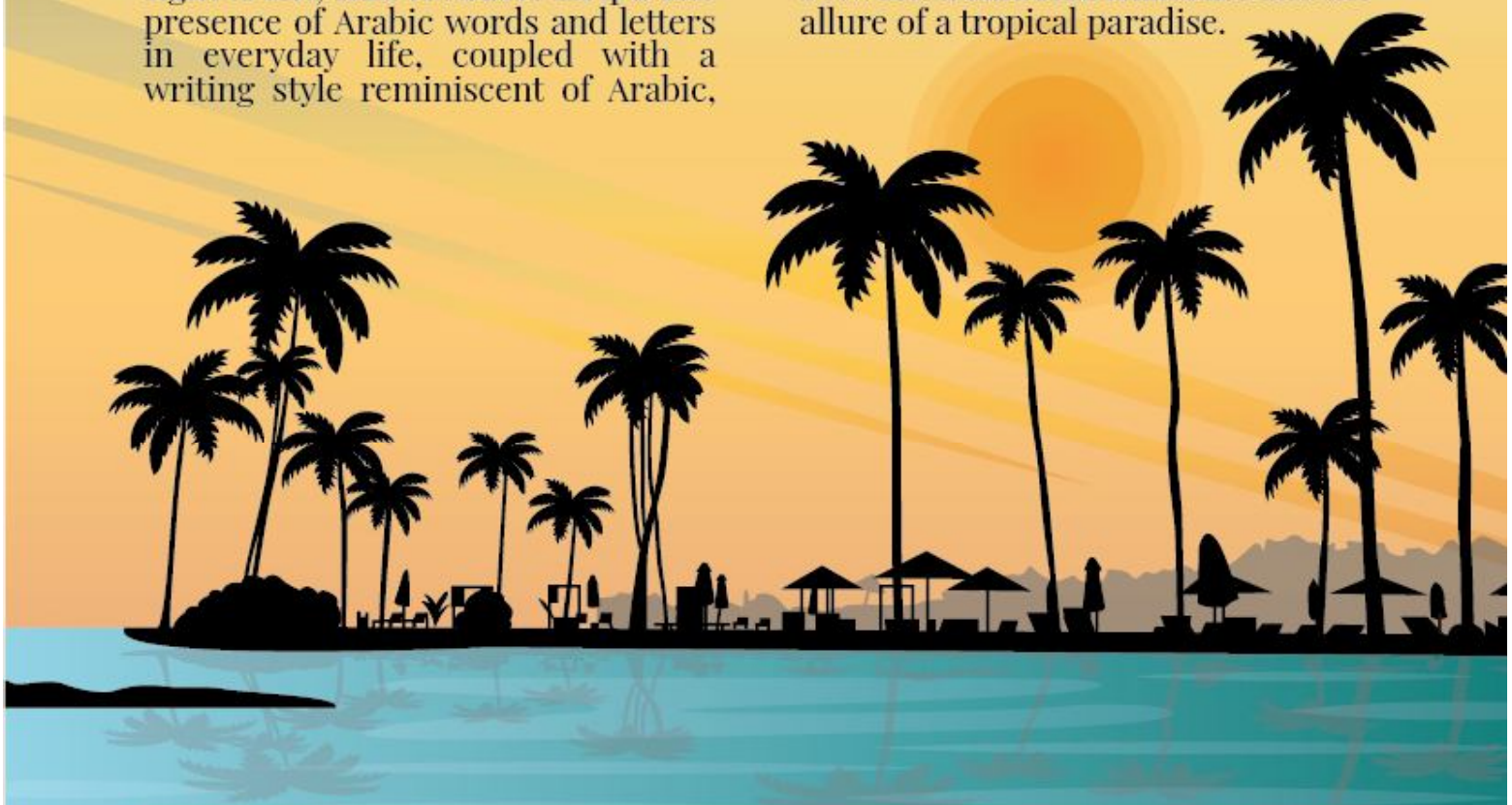
The Maldivian language, influenced by Arabic, is written from right to left, akin to Arabic script. The presence of Arabic words and letters in everyday life, coupled with a writing style reminiscent of Arabic,

reflects the historical ties and cultural fusion between the Maldives and the Arab world.

To accommodate its growing population, Male saw the creation of Hulhumale Island, connected by a bridge built by China. This expansion showcases stunning architecture, including a golden mosque and vibrant playgrounds. Boats that ferry visitors to five-star islands dot the harbors, providing a glimpse into the coexistence of local life and the booming tourist industry.

In essence, the real Maldives goes beyond the postcard-perfect images of overwater bungalows and pristine beaches. It is a nation rooted in a rich Islamic heritage, sustained by its economic pillars of tourism and fishing, and characterized by a unique blend of cultural influences. Exploring the real Maldives offers travelers an opportunity to appreciate the symbiotic relationship between traditional island life and the allure of a tropical paradise.

ILLUSTRATION SOURCE: Freepik.com





SELF CONFIDENCE: BEING YOUR TRUE SELF



Shehram Javed
Clinical Psychologist

04 MINUTES READ

“Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit.”

Self-confidence is an attitude about your abilities and skills. It means accepting and trusting yourself, your abilities, your strengths, your skills, etc. You know your strengths and positive image of yourself. You set small, realistic, and achievable goals. You know your weaknesses well and can handle criticism without getting offended.

If you have low self-confidence, it might make you more passive, submissive, self-doubt, and not trusting others. On the other hand, if you have confidence in yourself, and in your

strengths you are more optimistic, more confident and trust others. Self-confidence affects every smaller aspect of our daily lives as well as having a significant influence on many various aspects of a person's existence.

- Confidence Can:
- Decrease Anxiety
- Increase self-esteem
- Improved relationships
- Bring peace and happiness
- Increase motivation
- Raise positive self-worth

As long as we believe these positive things ourselves, when people compliment us or acknowledge our qualities and skills, it can increase our confidence. The inverse of confidence is when you've ever questioned the positive things people say about you. You must genuinely believe you are capable in order to feel completely confident. Utilizing your abilities via learning and practic-

IMAGE SOURCE: Forbes

ing is the best method to develop that belief.

Our ability to uncover and develop our potential is aided by our confidence. Our confidence grows even more when we realize our potential and are proud of our accomplishments.

Ten Tips for Building Self-Confidence

1. Accept yourself
2. Avoid Comparing yourself
3. Eat a healthy and balanced diet
4. Take risks and get out of your comfort zone
5. Help others
6. Be positive and practice positive affirmations
7. Be kind to you
8. Set small goals
9. Engage in positive self-talk
10. Admit that you need help and learn something new

How to Increase Self-Confidence?

- Recognize your strengths and play to them. Praise and reward yourself for your efforts and advancement.
- Be gentle and compassionate to yourself when you encounter a challenge.
- Avoid wallowing in failure.
- Set attainable and realistic objectives.
- Expecting perfection is unrealistic since no one can ever achieve perfection in all facets of life. When experiencing strong emotions, take

a moment to calm down and consider the matter logically.

- Avoid forming assumptions about yourself, other people, or circumstances.
- Recognize that your future is not determined by your past, unfavorable events.
- Directly and politely state your demands, opinions, and feelings.
- Saying no irrational requests.

Difference between self-confidence and over-confidence

Overconfidence and self-confidence are frequently misunderstood. As was already mentioned, having confidence in one's talents is different from having overconfidence, which is overestimating one's actual capabilities. One fundamental distinction between the two is that someone who is overconfident completely believes in himself without even considering the possibility of anything going wrong.

Contrarily, having confidence involves having faith in one's talents while still allowing room for error. In conclusion, it is acceptable to believe that successful people have understood the importance of self confidence and have made use of it. It doesn't matter how big or small the task is; to perform it successfully and beautifully, you must have faith in the individual.



ILLUSTRATION SOURCE: Freepik

HOW TO MESMERIZE THE YOUNG MINDS



Uzma Sabeen
Writer, Artist, Director

04 MINUTES READ

Directing a theatre play for children is a unique and rewarding endeavor. It needs a special blend of creativity, patience and a childlike imagination to appeal to the young minds. It is a very tricky business when you are directing adults to create something for kids. One has to keep the inner child alive. I always encourage my actors to act like kids because the story should always look fresh and innovative. We use elements like gibberish, action comedy and music to charm our young and old audience. Yes, my plays are as entertaining as for adults because they go in their childhood memories and relate to the stories.

The first step is to select the right script for the target audience i.e. children. The script should be rich in imagination, age appropriate and heavy with action and music. The director has to have a keen eye for the scripts because the script is the foundation for a captivating theatrical

experience not only for that particular age but to be a part of their childhood memories. This theatrical experience will stay with them as a lifetime experience so it should be grand, sweet and unforgettable. It offers an exclusive opportunity to blend entertainment with education. We can incorporate elements that stimulate learning, such as the basic theatrical concepts, moral lessons, historical themes in a playful fashion.



As a director, I always go for an interactive performance between the actors and the children. As you know that audience is an important element for a theatre performance and theater performance is not complete without its audience. So I always keep it interactive and it provides a collaborative and encouraging environment for kids where the story would progress on their response. It is interesting to see their reaction when the kids are fully engaged in the story and they respond what is good or bad for the protagonist. They stand from their seats to



protect the protagonist from compelling the wrong act in his innocence. Kids love to be a part of the story and when the actors do what they would like see then they become more involved and more attentive towards the play. This creates a dynamic and immersive theatre experience.

The real magic of directing theatre plays for kids lies in the lasting impact it can have on young minds. Most of the children who



come on our shows memories the songs and dialogues and reenact the scenes from the play at home. They would like to show their parents and siblings what fun they had in the theatre that day. Kids easily copy the simple dance steps which we kept on purpose. Music enhances the mood and effect of every scene. You can arouse fear, sadness, happiness or joy through music.

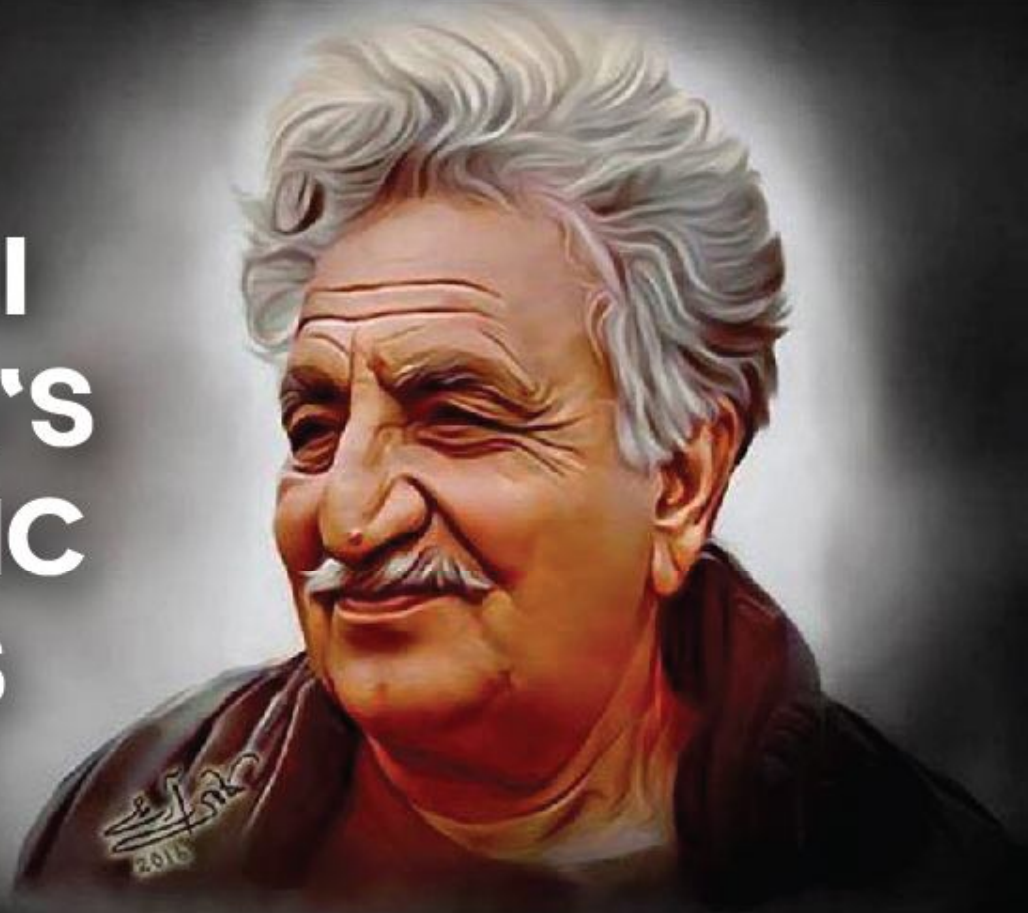
Directing plays for kids is very challenging because you have to keep in mind that the kids are often captivated by the visual elements. I always try to incorporate visual effects such as lightning, smoke, experiment with puppetry by adding characters or a whimsical set transformation just to add a touch of magic to the production. Costume is another important element in the children's

play. Costumes should be very colourful and decorative. Costumes always help in creating unusual characters on stage to excite the imagination of kids. I mostly place my stories in a vibrant cultural background.

In conclusion, directing theatre plays for kids is a delightful journey into the realm of boundless imagination. It requires a blend of creativity, patience, and a genuine love for nurturing young talent. Through careful planning, playful exploration, and a commitment to creating a positive and collaborative environment, directors have the power to weave magical experiences that leave a lasting impression on the hearts of both performers and their audiences. The energy added by our little audience is matchless; their enthusiasm in the morning when they are running towards the theatre door from their school buses. I love their bright faces and newly pressed uniforms and always ready to dive into the world of surprises. Their response is impartial and pure. In the world of children's theatre, the stage becomes a canvas for dreams to come alive, and the director, a guiding hand in the creation of enchanting memories that will be cherished for a lifetime.



GHANI KHAN'S POETIC OASIS



A Tribute to a Pushto Philosopher



Rizwanullah

Student, BS Zoology,
UMT Lahore

04 MINUTES READ

Khan Abdul Ghani Khan was a Pakhtoon philosopher and Pashto poet, artist (painter and sculptor). He was the son of great influence and leader of Pakhtoons Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan also known as Bacha Khan (The founder of nonviolent revolution “Khudai Khidmatgar” “servants of God”) and brother of Khan Abdul Wali Khan. Ghani Khan was born in January 1914 in Hasht-

nagar NWFP (North-West Frontier Province of British India) It was then a reasonably sized village, now a largely populated town and is known as “Utmanzai” which is located in District Charsadda KPK (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

As I begin my translation, I would like to honour Ghani Khan’s poetic creativity. Motivated by his elegant poems, I want to convey similar feelings with my own narrative, a true tribute to the profound meaning of his poetry.

IMAGE SOURCE: Global Village Space

A Poppy Flower

*In a desert, once, on a hunt did I find,
With a radiant smile, a flower so fair;
Sadly, I approached and sighed, "Ah!
Of my kind
Are you too – a hapless flower from a
beloved's hair.
Frail fingers wouldn't take you to a
soft face so close,
Nor would you be kissed by lips
delicate and rose."*

Ghani Khan, wandering through a big, dry desert. Suddenly, he spots a beautiful flower with a happy smile, like a lovely surprise in a tough place. But here's the thing, Ghani Khan, feeling a bit sad, thinks the flower is a bit like him, kind of out of place in the desert when it should be somewhere, like in someone's hair.

Ghani Khan now hopes he could bring the flower somewhere more pleasant, perhaps near his soft face for soft kisses. Oh no, the flower is stuck in the desert and isn't getting any of that beautiful warmth. These lines narrate a charming tale of Ghani Khan discovering something exceptional in an unexpected place, feeling a little depressed about it, and hoping the beautiful blossom would find a more cheerful, more romantic home.

*With a silent smile the flower replied,
"Don't lose heart!
This desert I wouldn't give up for the
gardens of Iran,
A solitary I am here while legions are
there,
Amidst this cursed soil I stand apart.*

How lovely the flower's response was! It gives Ghani Khan a silent smile and says, "Keep your spirits up! The Persian gardens are far more beautiful than this desert. I stand isolated in this cursed soil, even if there are

countless others in those gardens where I am alone." These phrases convey a feeling of pride and resiliency because, in spite of any difficulties, the flower finds significance and distinctiveness in its lonely life in the desert.

*In this gray desert, a flamboyant flame
of divine light am I,
Beauty's silent song, a miracle from
the sky.
In your garden, there are thousands of
flowers like me –
A nameless droplet in a nameless sea.
You too, in your desert, don't feel
forlorn,
To behold you at last shall come a sore
Ghani Khan.*

Ghani Khan draws a comparison between himself and a bright, distinct light—a divine blaze of beauty in an otherwise monotonous world—in a wide and apparently dull desert. He believes that his presence is unique and special, like a single drop in a huge sea, even though there may be others in more enjoyable areas.

Ghani Khan turns to face a person going through difficult times, maybe a romantic interest, and gives consolation and assurance. He tells them not to give up in a kind and caring manner. He assures them that a kind and perceptive version of himself will soon appear, appreciating their beauty and providing comfort.

To put it briefly, these lines convey a romantic and empathetic message. Ghani Khan sees his own uniqueness in the world, and in a heartfelt manner, he reaches out to comfort and reassure someone facing difficulties, promising understanding and acknowledgment of their inner beauty.



Unraveling the Neanderthal Myth: FROM RIDICULED CLUB SWINGER TO STONE AGE SUPERSTAR

BEST DOCUMENTARY

04 MINUTES READ

The image we hold of our closest relatives, the Neanderthals, has undergone a profound transformation since their discovery. Scientists worldwide seek answers about who they were, how they lived, and their relevance to us. These ancient beings, often misunderstood, moved swiftly and upright through their surroundings. Their survival demanded alertness, intelligence, the use of fire, clothing, and language, portraying them as highly intelligent ice age hunters akin to modern-day Inuit.

Neanderthals were not primitive; they were social beings, our mirror image, surviving harsh environments as skilled hunters. Initiation into

hunting was a crucial Neanderthal lesson, highlighting their physical prowess exceeding that of modern humans. The fascination with Neanderthals extends globally, with proponents like American Erik Trinkaus proposing the intriguing notion of intermingling with them.

Scientists contemplate the intricate processes involved in Neanderthal-modern human evolution, exploring messy dynamics of populations and gene flow. Erik Trinkaus, a leading Neanderthal expert, has uncovered skeletons worldwide, hinting at a mixed-race heritage. Despite lacking genetic evidence due to technology constraints, the proximity of Neanderthals to us remains a captivating

IMAGE SOURCE: Jerusalem Post

mystery, making them almost us but not quite.

Neanderthals demonstrated refined techniques, obtaining colors from stones, crafting spears comparable to modern instruments, and creating fire from tree fungus. Their survival in a dangerous landscape with limited technology for hundreds of thousands of years commands respect. While often considered primitive, Neanderthals deserve acknowledgment for enduring challenging conditions.

In our tendency to perceive Neanderthals as primitive and unintelligent, we overlook their resilience and capabilities. Placing ourselves in their society, we might find survival challenging, underscoring the remarkable journey of these stone age superstars. The Neanderthal myth, once synonymous with ridicule, now stands as a testament to their intelligence, resilience, and intricate connection to our own evolutionary story.

Conclusion:

The Neanderthal myth, once confined to stereotypes of club-swinging primitives, now emerges as a story of resilience, intelligence, and an intricate connection to our own evolutionary journey. Scientists worldwide strive to uncover the mysteries of these stone age superstars, realizing that Neanderthals were not merely surviving but thriving as highly intelligent ice age hunters.

The image of Neanderthals as our mirror image challenges preconceptions, emphasizing their social nature and mastery in the art of hunting. The fascination with Neanderthals goes beyond their physical prowess; it delves into the complex dynamics of their interactions with modern humans. Erik Trinkaus's discoveries hint at a shared heritage, raising questions about the extent of our mingling with these ancient relatives.

Despite the absence of genetic evidence, the Neanderthals' proximity to us remains an enigma, making them almost us but not quite. Their refined techniques, from craftings sophisticated tools to creating fire, showcase a level of cultural elaboration that demands respect. Neanderthals survived in a dangerous landscape with technology far less advanced than ours, leaving an indelible mark on our understanding of human

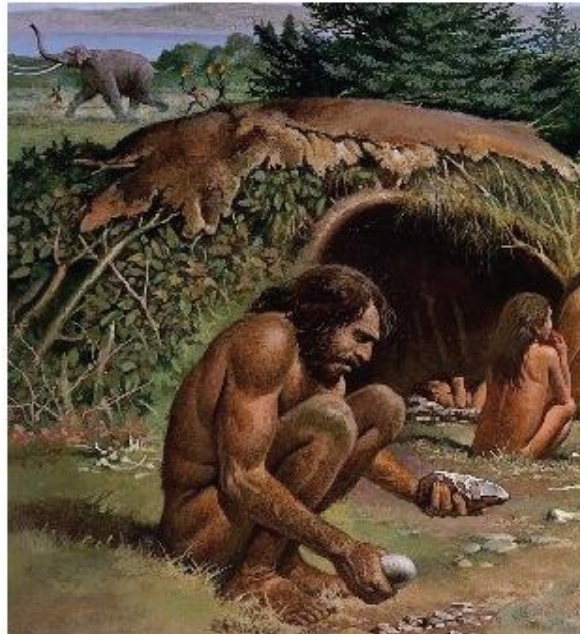
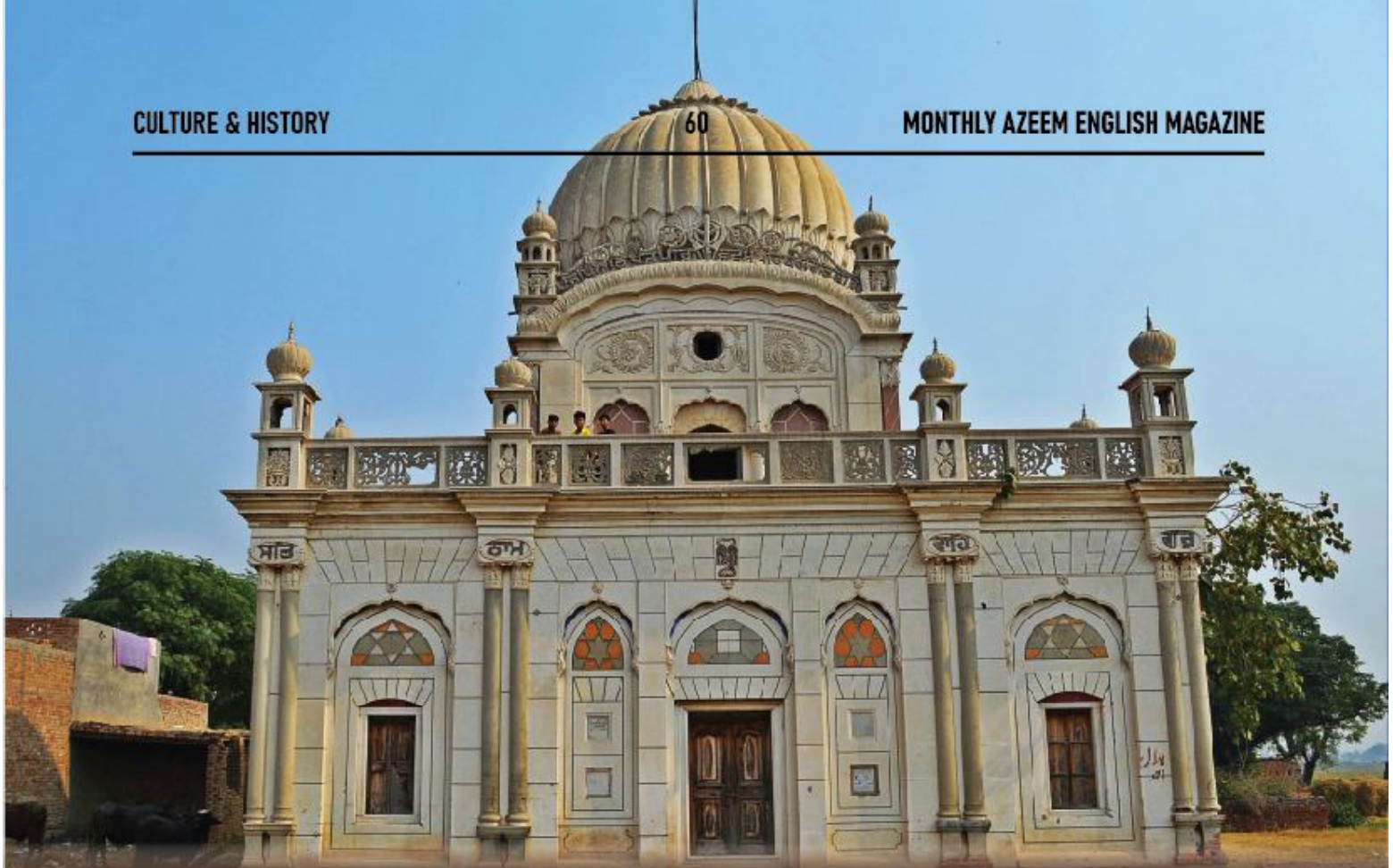


IMAGE SOURCE: Museum Wales

evolution.

As we reconsider Neanderthals, it becomes clear that our tendency to perceive them as primitive overlooks their enduring legacy. Placed in their society, the challenges we would face underscore the remarkable journey of these stone age superstars. The Neanderthal myth transforms from a narrative of ridicule to one of admiration, reflecting their intelligence, resilience, and profound impact on the tapestry of human history.



Waris Shah: The Shakespeare of Punjab



Imran Khan
Teacher, Writer, Actor/Playwrite,
Poet, Program Host, Historian

04 MINUTES READ

In the rich drapery of Punjabi literature, the name Waris Shah stands as a luminous thread, weaving together tales of love, sacrifice, and societal critique. Often hailed as the Shakespeare of Punjab, Waris Shah's literary prowess transcends time, echoing the sentiments of an era marked by cultural richness and societal challenges.

Born in the early 18th century in the village of Jandiala Sher Khan in present-day Pakistan, Waris Shah was nurtured in an environment steeped in Sufi traditions and the mystical teachings of the great Sufi saints. The Punjab region, with its diverse cultural influences and the confluence of

Hindu and Muslim traditions, provided Waris Shah with a melting pot of inspiration.

Waris Shah's magnum opus, the epic poem *Heer Ranjha*, catapulted him to literary eminence. Drawing inspiration from traditional Punjabi folk stories, the epic weaves a tale of profound love, tragic separation, and societal upheaval. Yet, beyond the enchanting verses lies a poet who donned the mantle of a social critic, using his literary prowess to confront the prevalent social evils of his time.

In the tradition of great poets who transcend mere artistic expression to become the voice of their society, Waris Shah stands tall. He utilized the medium of poetry not just for aesthetic pleasure but as a powerful tool to raise his voice against the prevalent social injustices and malpractices.

One of the prominent themes in

IMAGE SOURCE: Dawnn.com

Waris Shah's work is the condemnation of the rigid caste system. He vehemently spoke against the discrimination and oppression faced by the lower castes, urging society to abandon these archaic practices. His verses resonate with a plea for equality, envisioning a society where merit, not birth, determines one's worth.

Waris Shah, akin to Shakespeare, had an acute understanding of the human condition. He delved into the complexities of societal norms and human relationships, using his verses to challenge prevailing customs. In *Heer Ranjha*, the character of Heer becomes a symbolic representation of societal resistance against oppressive traditions, echoing the struggles of individuals against the constraints imposed by society.

The poet also directed his lyrical gaze towards the treatment of women in society. In a time when the voices of women were often stifled, Waris Shah dared to advocate for their rights and recognition. Through the tragic tale of Heer, he shed light on the plight of women, urging society to reconsider its treatment of the fairer gender.

Waris Shah, like Shakespeare, achieved a remarkable synthesis of the cultural influences around him. In the complex social fabric of Punjab, he found inspiration not only from Sufi mysticism but also from the rich folk traditions of the region. His verses resonate with the vibrancy of Punjabi folklore, creating a literary masterpiece that captures the essence of the land and its people.

The legacy of Waris Shah endures through generations, echoing in the hearts and minds of those who appreciate the transformative power of poetry. His poetic expressions served as a catalyst for societal introspection, paving the way for conversations that

challenged the status quo. The Shakespeare of Punjab not only left behind a literary masterpiece but also an indelible mark on the socio-cultural landscape of the region.

Waris Shah's impact stretches far beyond the borders of his time, resonating in the contemporary landscape. His verses, although penned centuries ago, continue to serve as a mirror reflecting the societal challenges of today. The Shakespearean ability to capture the essence of human nature is mirrored in Waris Shah's poetic narratives, offering timeless insights into the human experience.

In a world grappling with social inequality, Waris Shah's advocacy for a just and egalitarian society remains relevant. His verses on caste discrimination echo in the corridors of time, urging present generations to confront and dismantle oppressive systems. The poet's call for gender equality finds echoes in the ongoing global conversations around women's rights and empowerment.

Moreover, Waris Shah's skillful use of symbolism and allegory adds layers of complexity to his work, inviting readers to delve beyond the surface narrative. Much like Shakespeare's nuanced exploration of power dynamics and human flaws, Waris Shah's poetry unfolds as a multi-faceted commentary on societal intricacies.

The enduring resonance of *Heer Ranjha* lies in its ability to traverse temporal and cultural boundaries. Translations and adaptations have allowed Waris Shah's words to reach audiences far beyond the confines of the Punjabi-speaking world. His narrative on love, loss, and societal transformation finds universal appeal, making him a literary giant with a global footprint.

The Cultural Brew: Exploring the Rise of Quetta Cafes in Rawalpindi and Islamabad

Pakistan Institute of Development Economics

04 MINUTES READ

The dry and tough lands of Balochistan have faced many tough times due to droughts, affecting not only the land but also how people live. One interesting thing that has happened is the rise of Quetta Cafes (QCs) in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, and it's connected to the history of droughts in Balochistan. This shows us how environmental problems can bring about changes in society.

Balochistan has a history of facing droughts, with 18 recorded between 1950 and 2010. The worst one lasted for ten years from 1945 to 1955. The latest dry period from 1997 to 2003 caused inflation, lack of food, and many people moving from rural areas to cities, especially Karachi. This migration laid the foundation for Quetta Cafes.

At first, people moving from Balochistan to Karachi started Quetta hotels, which then spread across the city. But conflicts between different communities in Karachi, like the Mohajirs and Pashtuns, made many Pashtun traders leave their businesses and find new homes in other cities. This big move led Quetta Cafes to grow in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, becoming important places for the public.

Cafes, like those described by Habermas, play a crucial role in encouraging public conversations. In

today's world, they've become places to socialize and connect—a third space between home and work/study. In South Asia, especially in Quetta Cafes in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, tea has become a social staple, bringing people together.

Tea is more than just a beverage in Pakistani culture; it symbolizes hospitality and friendship. Quetta Cafes, with their unique red decor and Boss company chairs, play a significant role in the tea culture of these twin cities. Affordable and



welcoming, tea has become an essential part of social gatherings, highlighting the importance of Quetta Cafes as public meeting spots.

If we take a closer look at Quetta Cafes, exploring how they provide employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. Their distinctive economic model, with single-shop setups and shared kitchens, reflects simplicity and efficiency. The recognizable red decor and uniform utensils contribute to their success, creating a unique brand identity.

Quetta Cafes play a vital role in the social fabric, they face transaction costs triggered by regulatory bodies. Pakistan Institute of Development Economics study sheds light on the challenges these cafes encounter in navigating regulatory frameworks. Understanding and addressing these transaction costs are crucial for the

IMAGE SOURCE: fb.com/Quetta Karachi cafe Appara

sustainable growth of Quetta Cafes in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The economic impact of Quetta Cafes extends beyond their role as public spaces. These cafes have become pillars of local economies, providing employment opportunities to a significant number of individuals. Owners, managers, and workers contribute collectively to the success of these establishments, adding a layer of economic resilience to the communities they serve. The cafes' simplicity in operation and focus on a single product, tea, allows for a streamlined business model that facilitates local economic growth.

Quetta Cafes play a crucial role in preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich tea culture. These cafes serve not only as spaces for refreshment but also as guardians of cultural practices, acting as contemporary custodians of a time-honored tradition.

As spaces for public discourse, Quetta Cafes hold immense significance in shaping public opinion. The relaxed atmosphere and affordability of these cafes make them accessible to people from various walks of life. Students, business professionals, and tea enthusiasts converge in these spaces, fostering a diverse and inclusive environment where conversations flow freely. In an era dominated by digital communication, these physical spaces remain invaluable for face-to-face interactions and the exchange of ideas.

Despite their cultural and economic contributions, Quetta Cafes

face challenges, particularly in dealing with transaction costs imposed by regulatory bodies. Navigating through bureaucratic hurdles can pose a threat to their sustainability. However, the resilience displayed by these cafes in the face of adversities mirrors the resilience of the communities they represent. Efforts to address these challenges are vital to ensuring the continued success and growth of Quetta Cafes as integral components of the social fabric.

Looking ahead, the future prospects of Quetta Cafes are intertwined with community integration and continued adaptation to evolving circumstances. These cafes have evolved from being mere tea spots to becoming cultural landmarks, and their sustainability hinges on their ability to stay connected with the communities they serve. Initiatives

that foster community engagement, support entrepreneurship, and address regulatory challenges will play a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of Quetta Cafes in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

As symbols of Pakistan's tea culture, Quetta Cafes have transcended their role as mere refreshment spots to become integral elements of societal interaction, economic vitality, and cultural heritage. In sipping a cup of tea at a Quetta Cafe, one partakes in a tradition that has weathered the tests of time, a tradition that brews not just tea but a shared sense of belonging and identity.



IMAGE SOURCE: Google Image

HISTORY OF JEWS IN PAKISTAN



Wajid Bhatti
Ph.D Scholar

04 MINUTES READ

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is located in South Asia and is the sixth most populous nation. The historic Jewish community in Pakistan likely arrived from India, but today there are less than 200 Jews. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the largest city, Karachi, had about 2,500 Jews engaged as tradesmen, artisans, and civil servants. Their mother tongue was Marachi, indicating their Bene Israel origin. In 1893, the Jews of Karachi built the Magain Shalome Synagogue. In 1936, one of the leaders of the Jewish community, Abraham Reuben, became the first Jewish councilor on the city corporation.

Under British jurisdiction, the Jews in the area became Pakistani and known as nationals and were treated with tolerance. In the early twentieth century, a variety of associations existed to serve the Jewish community: the Young Men's Jewish Association, founded in 1903, whose aim was to encourage sports as well as religious and social activities of the Bene Israel in Karachi; the Karachi Bene Israel Relief Fund, established to support poor Jews in Karachi; and the Karachi Jewish syndicate, formed in 1918, to provide homes to poor Jews

at reasonable rents.

The Jews lived primarily in Karachi, but a small community served by two synagogues lived in Peshawar in the northwest frontier province. The foundation of an Islamic state immediately before the State of Israel was established. It created a rising feeling of insecurity within the Pakistani Jewish community.

After Israel declared independence in 1948, the small Jewish community, which numbered approximately 3,000 Bene

Israel Jews, became targets of violence. The synagogue in Karachi was set alight, and Jews were attacked. The plight of Jews became more precarious following disturbances and demonstrations

directed against the Jews during the Arab-Israeli wars in 1948, 1956, and 1967. The persecution of Jews resulted in large-scale emigration, mainly to India, but also to Israel and the United Kingdom. The small community in Peshawar ceased to exist, and the synagogues were closed. Some Jews converted to Islam, such as the deputy head of Pakistan's mission to the UN in the 1950s, Mohammad Assad. Others kept a low profile. By 1968, the number of Jews in Pakistan had decreased to 250, almost all of whom were concentrated in Karachi, where there was one synagogue, a welfare organization, and a recreational organization.



IMAGE SOURCE: The News International



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ISO 9001 : 2008



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JAN-FEB, VOL. 24, ISSUE 1

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ISSN 2708-4822

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