

# The NUSTIAN

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## Editorial

I feel privileged to present to the readers the fresh and overall 6th issue of The *Nustian*, the annual bilingual literary magazine of the University. Despite the fiercely competitive academic environment, our students were able to squeeze some time from their busy schedules and contribute their essays, short stories, and poems for the magazine. Their ideas are fresh, illuminating, candid and positive. There is energy, exuberance and hope in their writings. One will find in this issue something about everything, i.e., ethics, humour and stray thoughts on a variety of topics. As a pleasant surprise, our prospective engineers, scientists, and corporate sector have written short stories and composed verses as well. The *Nustians* have manifested the potential that they can do it well even when it comes to writing.

The present issue of The *Nustian* is a happy mix of contributions from veterans and novices. It is heartening to note that the students' contributions account for as much as 80% of the content. Veterans like Mr. Aslam Bazmi led from the front and contributed both in English and Urdu sections. There are significant contributions of students and faculty from H-12 campus. I urge upon the other NUST institutions also to send their contributions for the upcoming editions of The *Nustian*. All these endeavours are intended to make The *Nustian* a representative magazine of the University.

I owe my profound gratitude to the writers, poets and student editors who helped me a great deal in preparing the draft. Student Editors Maryam Dhody and Ramsha Khuram did a fine job by meticulously proof reading the content. They have made their mark as responsible students and sound editors. I am also indebted to our diligent composers, Ahmad Raza and Muhammad Sajjad, for their assistance and a job well done. The title page and separators have been designed by Mr Kareem Muhammad, who deserves a pat and thanks for his job done very well. Many thanks to Mr. Mumtaz Iqbal Malik, for his final proofreading.

Editorial Board gratefully welcomes back former Student Editors Usman Akhtar and Asad Tariq who have joined NUST as MS students. We hope that they stay in touch, and keep contributing to the Magazine with the same zeal. I lean on the enthusiastic support of the students and faculty of all NUST campuses in future too, and hope they keep sharing with our readership their creative thoughts, views and reflections on various themes and issues. Your feedback for improvement of the Magazine is highly appreciated.

*Editor*

## Academic Institutions

College of Aeronautical Engineering, Risalpur – (CAE)

College of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Rawalpindi – (C of E&ME)

Military College of Signals, Rawalpindi – (MCS)

Military College of Engineering, Risalpur – (MCE)

NUST Institute of Peace & Conflict Studies, Rawalpindi – (NIPCONS)

Pakistan Navy Engineering College, Karachi – (PNEC)

Atta-ur-Rahman School of Applied Biosciences, Islamabad – (ASAB)

U.S Pakistan Center For Advanced Studies In Energy – (USPCAS-E)

NUST Business School, Islamabad – (NBS)

Research Center for Modelling & Simulation, Islamabad – (RCMS)

School of Chemical & Materials Engineering, Islamabad – (SCME)

School of Civil & Environmental Engineering, Islamabad – (SCEE)

School of Natural Sciences, Islamabad – (SNS)

School of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, Islamabad – (SEECSS)

School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering, Islamabad – (SMME)

School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Islamabad – (S<sup>3</sup>H)

School of Art, Design & Architecture, Islamabad – (SADA)

## Most Blissful Moment at NUST

Zoya Siddique, ASAB

NUST, for me, is like a magical, enigmatic and picturesque place which is filled with lot of surprises and griefs. My time at NUST has been a ride full of ups and downs. I admire the place not only because of its ambience but also because of how it evolved me. I have loved the jolts as much as the good things the journey at NUST held for me in it.

Talking about the most blissful moment at NUST is the day I entered NUST. Yes, I as much cliché as it may sound, I have never been happier in my entire life than my first day as a freshman here. As I crossed the heavy iron gates and set my eyes on the majestic, huge and amber colored buildings, I knew I was going to love this place. Filled with awe and thanking Allah for making NUST a part of my life, I approached my department's building. I still recall my first thoughts when I got an admission approval from NUST. Filled with joy and with eyes welled with tears of disbelief and happiness, I jumped in euphoria. My exuberance knew no bounds. After experiencing the institution on my first day, I was even more elated to have an honor to study in it.

The campus environment thrilled me. I sniffed an air of freedom and chuckled. Walking past the building of CIPS, I felt like a character from J.K Rowling's book "Harry Potter" approaching Hogwarts. I can still remember the trance I was in when I explored NUST. The wide and spacious roads, the dimly lit long roads in evening, the perfect hues of sunsets I got to experience everyday... This was all that made the grind of NUST

entry test look worth it.

After exploring the institution and seeing the eye catching greenery amidst remarkable, steadfast and stout buildings, I was convinced that I could not be more blessed. Looking up at the blue sky and sighing as if I was thanking Allah, I smiled at Him. My regret of not being able to become a doctor and inability to fulfill the dreams of my parents had been washed away now. All the hard work had paid off now. Burning the midnight oil for preparing for NUST entry test and bearing the torture and torment of memorizing the abhorred chemical formulas had finally paid off.

As I walked past different buildings of the unending campus, my zeal and zest was at its peak. I felt 'chosen'. Out of thousands of students, "I" was chosen to be a part of NUST and Allah could not have been more generous and benevolent to me. Now I could look back at all the worries and tiresome routine of past and smile to myself. Now I could say hello to the new journey which had so much to offer to me. Now I could hold my head up high and look forward to completing my goal of becoming the future bio-scientist of Pakistan. My first day at NUST was definitely the day I felt blessed. I cannot say anything has changed in these three years. I still love the place and will definitely be filled with gloom and melancholy if I have to leave this place. Let us hope the nostalgia only brings me smile and makes me feel lucky. I hope my experience at NUST only motivates me to achieve higher peaks of success and triumph.

## Three Hours of Community Service

Syed Zulqarnain Mushtaq, C of E&ME

Last week, I went to H-12 campus of NUST to attend a seminar. The seminar was on “Role of Universities in Community Development and Empowerment”. Organizing this seminar was a good effort that showed goodwill towards the cause. I arrived at the seminar 20 minutes late. At first, I didn’t want to attend the seminar but then I learned that the attendance would be marked. So, the driving force which, for me, has been the reason for the last 4 years to get out of my bed and attend the boring lectures came into action yet again. Honorable Rector NUST was one of the speakers along with the Chairman HEC and VCs from other prominent universities of the country. Talking about the topic, the speakers were very proud of having introduced a 2 credit hour course of “Community Service” in universities at UG level. They disclosed a plan to make it a 3 credit hours course. They seemed satisfied with the outcome of the course. This course consists of a few lectures regarding community service and two credit hours, on ground, community service projects. Students form groups and collect donations from various sources to fund their projects. As far as these two activities are concerned, there is nothing new because now-a-days various societies of University and University itself actively organize the seminars on a variety of topics and fund raising activities for community service. Community service activities included in this course were already there before this course was introduced. So, the observations that I made as a student, about this course, are not very satisfactory. The value of this 2 credit hour course of “Community Ser-

vice”, in our four years of engineering which is mainly based on “self-service”, is not much. In this system the course will not have desired impact on our personality. Not even for a short span of time. During our four years of University life we study around 40 professional and non-professional courses. They are well organized and they prepare the students well for practical application of the said courses. But they are not playing any part in furthering the cause of community service. So, we are doing nothing satisfactory in the majority part of our courses and trying to get the desired outcome solely from a 2 credit hour course. If the universities want to play an important role in community development, as they should they need to change the focus of students towards community service. One course won’t provide us with the desired results. Four years of community service will definitely leave a great impact on our personality that we can carry for whole life. Only then can we achieve our goal of community development in its true sense. And pay back to our community as intellectually and morally developed citizens.

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.

— Dalai Lama

## Lost

M. Faizan Iqbal Masood, C of E&ME

Crackling sounds of twigs under his feet put a strange smile over his face. The harsh howling wind pushed him backwards and simultaneously brushing his hairs like a caring mother gave him a feeling of comfort, and the rugged, uneven pavement delighted him in a peculiar manner.

Only in his early twenties, he was more mentally mature than other people of his age. He wanted the world to hear his voice but he was too scared of what people would think of him; he knew it was not the right time for him. While boys of his age spent time chasing girls and girls bragged about how handsome and caring their boyfriends were, he sought refuge in the philosophy of Iqbal; he read what Plato said about love that love is a serious mental disease. He found Ghazali to be his friend who told him how to find himself. He found the concept of Super Man in the writings of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche.

Furthermore, these were not the only ways of his grooming. He was taught and guided by the storms

of life, which turned him more than invincible. No matter how much he longed for a stagnant life, he knew that it would be despised by him the moment he entered it. With the passage of time he noticed that he loved gambling over his own life. He used to enter a dark abyss and came out victorious holding a torch in his hand, which drove him? He knew one thing that, the wheel of time was ruthless for everyone, those who try to stand in front of it get crushed like a dirt ball. Those who were kings once, were sometimes thrown to those depths that they held a begging bowl and those who once held it were crowned, but he knew that the wise never stood in front of that wheel. They guided it, they were not guided by it. That was his philosophy of life. These were the things which he wanted to speak about in front of the world but he knew he wasn't allowed to. Suddenly, walking, he saw a couple walk past him saying "This guy is lost."

He turned around, smirked and replied, "Lost are those who don't think."

## We live in a World of Worlds

Raza Sohail, C of E&ME

When I was a little child my world was my teddy bear. As I grew, my interest shifted to Pokemon cards. I grew once more. My world became Facebook, WWE and Engineering. In high school, I lived in a world of competition. It was a world in which we had to obtain maximum marks so we

could get on merit into the prestigious colleges of the country. At the time of my entry test, I saw a new world, a world of pressure and prayers.

Right now in my college life I see a world of race. People are trying their best to have more

GPA than their classmates. Since my college is in my city, I go from my home. In the morning at about 6:30 when I leave my home, it is usually cold these days. I see a world of unwilling school going children crying “Mummy! I don’t want to go to school today”. And their eager mummies persuade them, pack their lunch-boxes and drop them in school vans. As I walk, I often see a cab driver, with windows closed. With a deep look, he must be in his own world, thinking about how to get a good fare during the day and feed his family. That’s his world.

As I cross a bridge over a railway track, I see in the far east, sun playing hide and seek over the peaks of Himalayas, I say to myself “that’s another world.

I go further ahead and see my colony’s famous shop which serves “*halwa poori*” as breakfast. I see the helpers of the shop frying fresh *pooris* and spreading aroma of that delicacy hoping to attract early customers. That’s another world.

Then I get onto the bus. O hey, welcome to the world of diversity. I see some dudes absorbed in their thoughts, ear phones plugged in, while some are absorbed in their own dimensions, cramming for an early quiz. Some are joking about everyday life and some are debating over the philosophy of life. I see a world inside worlds when I reach the college.

I see the cream of the nation busy day and night in studies, and trying to prove themselves to the world. Welcome to the nerd world. When I see the

fairies dreaming soft dreams about them. When I go to a hotel to attend a marriage, I see a world of awaiting eyes, anxious relatives, waiters bringing tasty food on the trays. The bride and the groom try to stay calm of course. Prettier girls are dressed really nicely to make others notice of their presence. That’s another world.

Inside the hospital, I see a world of sincere prayers, ailing people with wailing health, waiting for the doctor and miracles. When I see a dead body going to a graveyard, I see a world of sorrow, grief and a grim reality. When I go over to a cinema or a park, I see a world of people, fatigued from 5 days’ work and just want to relax and get chilled in that time. I switch over to the news and see a world of politicians defaming others in a world of ego and superiority.

I open up my Facebook and see everyone absorbed in his/her own world. I see besties taking selfies in their own world. Sometimes I wonder, how would the world be, up above the snowy Tibet peaks where the Dalai Lamas live? How would the pressurized life be of Silicon Valley, where all the technology is formed? How would the life be inside the famous PlayBoy Mansion, the Casinos of Las Vegas? The deep African Jungles, where the people like Tarzan live, like the Amazulu tribes in the novel “King Solomon’s Mines”. The life inside the igloos of the Antarctic of the scientists studying weather and penguins.

And with these questions, I pen down this food for thought for all readers.

## A Walk in the Rain

Saad Khushnood, C of E&ME

In our busy life, there comes a time when we feel overwhelmed. This feeling does not necessarily mean that we are overworked or have taken too much stress upon ourselves; it merely means that we have spent so much time in the fast lane that we have this innate feeling of slowing down. Instead of speeding up to catch up with life, we subconsciously feel the need to stop for a while and enjoy the race.

Everybody has his own ways of unwinding in such cases. Some people cuddle up to a warm fireplace with a good book. Others find true relaxation in spending time with their loved ones. I, on the other hand, am the introvert type and find myself uneasy with people. My serenity comes from walking in the rain.

Oh, the slight touch of the droplets as they fall from the heavens feels like it washes away my worries as it flows down. The slight rumble in the sky, as monstrous as it may sound, feels like the roar of a lioness protecting its cub. The dark clouds up above seem like gloom to so many. I only see an auspicious emblem of fortune, ushering in the possibility of rain. And during the rain, it feels like the symbol of continuity, for as long they exist it shall rain.

However, these are not the real reasons I feel at

peace. Why I feel such bliss in the rain is beyond me. Even today, I walked in the rain in winter. Nothing good comes from it to me afterwards except that my mind clears and my heart feels at ease. This gives both the reason to explore the other, letting me think beyond what I feel are my limits of creativity. Like a third eye opening up to the world, adding another dimension of beauty to it. Yes, even a pessimist like me becomes an optimist. It convinces me that the longer the rain continues right now, the longer the gloom of now will last. As a result, the greater the chances that tomorrow, the day shall be brighter to even it out. To add another dimension to this, allow me to confess that I am more of a man of science rather than a man of faith. Spiritual healings have no place in my life and the concept of emotions, for me, is only linked to chemicals in the brain. Yet the moment I step outside into the rain, I feel close to God. I feel like He smiled down on me and is giving me a reason to believe in Him. As if He wants me to be happy, after all. He gains nothing from making me happy. At that particular moment, I do not feel happy or elevated, mind you. I feel something better. I feel contented with the world. And that, my friends, is a feeling even happiness can not match.

## Children of the Lake

Shehroz Ahmed Khan, C of E&ME

O! Children of the lake. Why these long faces? What barricades these shackles of your soul from floating out like leaves in the air? And why do you furrow your brow that way? Is it not your fragile temperament stopping you this time? From what you ask? From everything you can be, I say.

Is it not time to break into your old temples and smash the idols of hollow, manly concerns? These gold plated little men with beady eyes stare back at you with judgement. These fat little pot-bellied men of your creation. These ugly, sculpted molds of bile whom you so grievously pray, with one eye narrowed in suspicion. They aren't even made of real gold. For who would then want to afford it?

The hour has arrived to abolish all creations. To say 'No' to all self-proclaimed truths. To look away from this vulgarity dressed so modestly in plain clothes. Look upwards, and see this chaos in constant conflict within. There are forces at work here. Overcoming one another, like sandstorms swallowing dust. And you traverse through these cosmic battles.

Oh, children of the lake! Look around once again. There is so much to see in destruction. Let it be your morning song. Let dissolution be the hollow hunger in your stomach. Let it consume you away from inside. For there is no art greater than letting chaos paint your face for you.

## Media - A Friend or Foe

Muqet Tahir Malik, MCE

Media, a word that evolves an imaginary television in our brain though it encompasses multifarious forms like audio, social media, and video. Have you ever pondered over the concept of free media in Pakistan? Can media be called a friendly fourth pillar of democracy? How far has media been a player in non-kinetic warfare? How has it widened the citizen-government consanguinity through rat's nest policy? How media ownership issues have severe implications? Media is more instrumental, in world affairs than ever before. Nowadays, it plays a dominant role in shaping

public opinions, promulgating agendas on important issues. However, media had a negative role after it was granted independence from government control, and is assessed below.

Firstly, we always tend to hear that our culture is vulnerable to western lifestyle. There exists a plethora of cultures living in this land of the pure "Pakistan" but electronic media has never advocated for them. Diaspora cultures like Kalash, Saraiki have existed for thousands of years. However, media acts as a catalyst in shaping our

fashions, and supports western trends. Our channels are in a race for maximum profit, and as such, base their ratings on western metres. Pakistan was found on the fundamentals of two nation theory (separate state for Muslims).

Albeit, our new generation has lost its roots owing to our media portrayal of western values like in food, hair styling, language etc. It can be related to the apolias ( Indian plays) being telecast as they violate the Islamic System based on morality. These dramas portray concepts opposed to Islam, especially, wedding rituals. Highlighting these rituals would make people become accustomed to them like *basant*, *dholkis*, shopaholic, and revelatory. Today, our children know about Shahrukh Khan, Katrina Kaif, Gandhi but they don't know much about Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, and other national heroes. Urdu, as a language with rich literature is considered inferior to English language as a complex has overshadowed us. In our primary to high school system, English is a status symbol, and read with great peculiarity and care.

On the other hand, on news channels, English words are spoken, defying the sanctity of our national language. Media does not advocate for research in Urdu, as all major programs of Urdu involve English mostly. An English word "Emergency" is pronounced as "Eemergenci" therefore, fiddling with Urdu words by electronic media. It's like two cultures amalgamated with each other on channels, and people are not groomed to live with equal status. Children can easily acquire English language from cartoons, movies, and books while Urdu is taught by coercion. Urdu is considered as

a language spoken by the illiterate in comparison with English. Unfortunately, parents too galvanize their children to speak English even at home. To make Urdu fascinating, work should be done on translating cartoons or at least producing new dramas for kids, such as, *Burqa* avengers, a success indeed. Urdu is the binding force of Pakistan, so it is vital to play a part in its development. A major setback to our e-media is abridgment of correct approach. For example, in dresses our national dress is sherwani with turban but, today, it has become rare. Social interaction has been the epitome of Pakistani society. Media is burgeoning, regardless of it; social or electronic media are inducing some implications for our identity, and daily life. These banes are on smorgasbord but the most vital include weakening of bondage. Our hallmark was the Joint family system which is fading away like the termite eats clothes. A major part of it constituted of dining culture which has changed. It was a place where people of all age groups enjoyed eating. Nowadays, dinner time is the prime time for media thus, people eat in their own rooms. Rather than mingling with elders, they end up cooped up in rooms watching television.

Confusing talk-shows are telecast from 8 to 9 p.m while news bulletins afterwards. Consequently, it enlarges the gap between our younger, and older generation leading to incompetent leadership. We can seek assistance of experienced elders for formulating budget as Pakistan at the beginning had sustainable planning in all sectors. We often hear people saying that life has become too busy. Albeit, life is perplexed due to the people considering television programs as the last breath. People

also include their favourite shows in their routine commitments. Hence, we are psychologically more pressurized in managing time, and tend to remain oblivious of communal bonding. Similarly, social media has wrecked havoc as we are not aware of the conditions of people in our streets. However, you are aware of living conditions of people thousands of miles away from you but to no avail.

Secondly, issue of media ownership is imperative in formulating any uniform editorial policy. About 70 to 120 million Pakistanis are viewers of private news channels. Therefore, we have to contemplate into the dilemma of these channels. Owners are the harbingers of media as they promulgate their political, economic, and social agendas. I was bewildered to know that Pakistani businessmen who own channels have invested in multi sectors. Now, there must have been recurring profits that enabled them to expand.

On the contrary, Pakistan Television, 60 years old, still did not spew as much as the former media group. Albeit, PTV is state sponsored television. The Media Commission report of the Supreme Court, categorically stated that media did sensational news reporting creating an atmosphere of excitement (negative mostly) thereby translating into increased Television Reporting Points. A more perplexing dimension is that commercialization is becoming a major factor impeding in sustainable media growth, and encompasses several factors. However, we will only analyze the core issue.

Commercialization is fundamentally the huge

influx of advertisements, and exhibition of short dramas (safeguards) shown on television. Now, looked upon as a rebellious tool, Pakistani media has evolved into a threatening giant. And the major constituent of damage owes to so called “economic boom” directed towards the investments in media. Whoever has sustainable financial position to run a channel has the potentiality to run head over heels in making more money following “commercialization” phenomenon. Unfortunately, these advertisements depict us as western lifestyle people. Women are shown in clothes which are derogatory to our own image (without dupattas). For this purpose, companies like Q-mobile hire bollywood artistes for acting in mobile exhibitions. The objective is to vociferously rally calls to showcase Pakistani nation as pseudo-liberals which can only be done by such foes. In contrast to this, Pakistani actors are more revered in Indian industry as well as Hollywood. Some of them like Mikhaal Zulfiqar have denounced offers from Hollywood because of love for Pakistani soil. Such, actors deserve applause.

Our food culture is transforming too; now people are inclined towards western food due to the hotel advertisements and demonstrations on channels. People resort to hotelling at expensive food points instead of eating at home. Contraceptive ads are openly played without any permission from authorities leading to damage of culture as well as family planning projects. Such advertisements have no right to be shown at family prime times of watching television. Furthermore, this provides a chance to the extremist elements to flare up, and annihilate people in the lure of religion. Have you ever pondered over the morning

talk shows? They are imbibed into our society as cultural reforms. Every morning, a new topic, and beauty tip is shown. In our culture, housewives used to work, and obey their inlaws but in media revolution, the tables are turned upside down. Now, housewives sit, and relax without working or even assisting in house chores. Thus, divorce rate has increased.

Thirdly, media is like a myriad giant setting trends for public, and trying to cajole them for personal gains. Public are like cords attached to television owners being directed by them in all affairs, and labyrinth for them to discern truth. Along with this, a loss of 342 billion rupees, and depreciation of investor confidence by 64 percent according to state bank report.

Tendency on the part of some sections of media to conduct criticism of civil and military institutions in terms that are remarkably similar to criticism of the same institution by sections of overseas media thereby adversely impacts internal national cohesion and solidarity during a time when the country faces harsh internal as well as external threats. These objectives could have been successful if there were some yardsticks established for composite dialogue. Ironical that, the government of India is moving opposite to the desire of tranquillity in this fragile region. How can you campaign for peace for those who do not value others' festivals, and begin blatant firing.

The trend of sensationalism through breaking news is reprehensible. Hype is the addiction to excitement, and thrill in news. Hype or sensationalism is the aggravation of news to excite

people resulting in faster rating meters. As sensationalism dominates over, the media can heedlessly and inherently, end up transmitting radical conspiracies and perspectives with prejudice that foster political interests leaving no or little room for objectivity. Likewise, evolving a hype of news can lead to long lasting psychological impacts, such as showing blood stained images of people or dead bodies has become a norm for media. September 11 attacks in the United States led to CNN showing such images. Consequently, according to New York medical research, it led to 20 percent appreciation in Post-Traumatic victims. Afterwards, a proper censorship code was devised. We can acquire such laws for our channels as well in order to reduce stress, panic, and apprehension.

In the recent past, the blood covered pictures of APS school attack were hard to see. Children were afraid of going to schools after the APS attack. Furthermore, reporting is related to economic instability. As soon as a news channel evolves a new hype, such as giving alerts on bomb blast or target killing, stock market crashes. Index points earned on that day are lost in minutes as investors' confidence is shattered. Investments are held as they are insecure about the safety of their money along with developmental projects like Gawadar port offshore drilling. Prominent anchors on political talk shows on TV-channels often end up being political stakeholders spilling up beans that are not rooted in facts rather than providing insight of politico-socio-economic affairs, especially, foreign affairs. This leads us towards disgrace. Economics suffers as a result; insecurity prevails among foreign businessmen who perceive Paki-

stan, as a country with no life value.

Media can portray Ajmal Qasab as Pakistani but certain groups do not blame Mullah Fazullulah as Indian agent. Involvement of RAW in Pakistani areas has the relationship with the media reporting. You must be wondering that how can media be aiding extremists but I will expound upon it. Media, particularly electronic media, has anchors who are not professionally sound in Islam but become anchors in Islamic shows. As they discuss issues, they often provide their own views which can be wrong. One negative influence can trigger another negative effect and this can cause a chain reaction leading to destruction of relationships in society. Extremists on the other side like TTP flare up, and in the lure of Islam start blaming systems. However, they themselves are wrong but our media anchors are unable to stand in contrivance to their views, and hence, such views are propagated. Obviously, illiterate people turn towards media or maulvis for knowledge.

Pakistani Media is advocating false values in its programmes. The projection of top notch lifestyle, romantic stories depicted in dramas, are not a part of our grassroot society. They are based on certain misconceived notions, and humour is more of a drama. For example, the dramas like *Dugduggee*, *Annie ki ayi gi barat*. No doubt they provide us with entertainment but are acclivitous towards the upper class. Punjabi dramas are not being promoted though 48 percent people communicate in it. Media lacks compact programmes to educate Pakistani society. Fourthly, media has begun plethora of programs for various religious occasions like *Ramadan*, *Eid ul Fitr*, *Shabe*

*Barat*, etc. However, in case of Ramadan, transmissions are extravagant, and time consuming. Every channel has its own *sehr-o-iftar* show, and people are oblivious of essence of Islam.

In olden times, people used to recite Quraan or deliver lectures but now everyone is dependent on television. Even more detrimental is the inculcation of religion into it. The name of religion is ruthlessly used to exploit people's need, painting it as greed instead. Surprisingly, every channel has its own unique religious figure, and a peculiar topic every day. It can rightly be called a war in Ramadan between channels for money minting through entertainment. Most of the hosts of Ramadan programs wear Designer clothes, merchandise and capitalize their program as an advertising platform. Since the Ramadan transmission is exhibited in an appealing and glamorous way that is to attract more viewership, models, news anchors, actors, singers all have jumped up on the hosting bandwagon. They are laden with branded clothes, jewellery and makeup and for the women to host a Ramadan image, a dupatta on their heads is must. It is detrimental to our young children; they must be made to recite the Holy Quraan rather than watching such diverting shows. Accordingly, the ratings have ranked ARY group at the apex as Fahad Mustafa leading Aamir Liaquat. Such system of ranking shall be abolished as competition for religion shall always be kept aside of worldly affairs. At *Eid-ul-fitr*, people usually exchanged eid cards, visited each other but nowadays, television has captivated everyone. People spend three days of eid watching television films rather than to mingle up. Moreover, money dilapidated for these festivals

could be used to fill the 50 percent poor-rich gap. It could be invested in development sectors like Education, health, and other projects.

Where we have pointed out the negative facets, it is my responsibility to highlight the positive side of media, particularly, greater scope in non-kinetic Warfare. You must have always questioned yourself, 'How to counter terrorism through non-violent means? A simple answer is Electronic media. Today, we as a nation are determined to fight against militancy as media has united us. Now, there is no tussle between the anchors of Operation *ZarbeAzb*. Moreover, it also brought to lime-light, efforts of Pakistani soldiers, and martyrs to garner support for Army. Non-kinetic warfare tactics are followed in several countries like India. Every terrorist attack that takes place in India: Pakistan is blamed in all cases. Obviously, Pakistan does not bend to the mounting pressures but many countries like Bangladesh are submissive. Probably, this became the basis of Sun-tzu quotation "To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."

Lastly, we need to focus on the elucidation of this media dilemma. PEMRA and Private media groups relationship has to be rock solid. This means that cross media ownership encouraged, diversification of media ownership, and specified censorship through mutual consent. All of the aforementioned recommendations can only be fruitful if PEMRA stops becoming a carefree giant. By this, I mean that, PEMRA censorship board should constitute of media experts from both government and private sectors. This will

act as trust building mechanism, and would be able to terminate license of those channels which violate conduct. Likewise, private media groups have also to abide by article 18 of the constitution of Pakistan, which guarantees the right to privacy, and fair trial. Media sometimes tries to dominate over judicial process. It is like a pre trial judgment given by media, though it should not exacerbate the issue. Moreover, media should not pursue single issue news like flogging a dead horse. For instance, if a blast takes place, media should keep on updating the public with the whole inquiry, and conclusion report. In our state, media evolves a hype for a few days, and then that news is neglected. We have examples like the Air blue and Bhoja Airways crash. In this perspective, Western news channels are much better than us. They are still pursuing the Malaysian Aircraft A 320 crash. In this way, media can become the fourth pillar of Democracy. New shared accounts should be opened up to facilitate the sending of funds from abroad but under governmental supervision. In this way, the influx of money can be monitored, and utilized for the betterment of country rather than propaganda campaigns. This is a fact highlighted in Media Commission report too.

Media personnels should be trained in academies like Information Services Academy, and briefed about the law of Pakistan like the Article 4,18 and 21. Under this umbrella, they must be taught to become the teachers of people in education, social awareness, but not in state affairs. Our economy on several political instances has suffered. There was a loss of 64 percent investor confidence from August to December 2014. Furthermore, the solution to this problem lies in the reality that our

media should telecast news under a set of rules & regulations. Only those channels which abide by the law, and follow state's directions should have freedom to air facility. All channels being shown in Pakistan must be registered with the Pakistan Electronic Broadcast as excessive consumption orientation makes monitoring difficult. How can one perceive which channel is following the code of conduct in such a media traffic congestion? There is dire need of reducing the number of channels free to air in Pakistan.

In a nutshell, media is not a friend outside the prescribed limits while within the jurisdiction, it can be called a friend. A panoramic epilogue view of

Pakistani media reveals that its role has always remained anti-government hence, it can be called a foe as economic diminution occurs such as in the six month long sit in. The core dispute of trusteeship on both the sides, media, and government has to be resolved or else it would be Buckley's hope of fruitful media. I would like to end at the quotation;

“Media is the most powerful subsistence on Earth. It has the dynamism to turn the good to evil, and the guilty to innocent. It controls the minds, hearts, and appearances of the people.”

— Malcom X

## Negative Effects of Over Usage of Social Media

Hamza Ahmed Sial, RCMS

The trend of socializing has tremendously increased in the past few years with the increasing availability of different platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Google +, Instagram, etc. Today social media has become the part and parcel of everyone's life. It's likely not very outlandish of a presumption that one of the main things our young generation does after waking up in the morning is to connect themselves back to social media to know what happened during their sleep time. And this does not end in the morning but the whole day is wasted on different social media sites in the craze to remain updated and keep others informed about their minute to minute activity. According to the social media usage statistics for 2016, there are 3.17 billion internet

users out of which 2.3 billion are active social media users while the world's total population is 7.3 billion. This shows that people are desperately using the social media to socialize without stopping to think that what effects does it have on their life and what are its long term consequences. Like everything else in the world, social media has its positive as well as negative effects on its users. Some of the negative effects of social media are discussed in this article to highlight the importance of correct usage of social media. The first and foremost negative impact of social media is that people use internet and social media throughout the day and this has led to their increased frustration and depression as they do not get time for real life experiences and face to face interactions

because they remain indulged in the fantasy world of social media most of the time of their day. Even the members of the same family sitting together at one place are mentally involved in some social networking site and don't interact much with their family members. This is the reason of the cold blooded relationships nowadays.

Cornell University's Steven Strogatz, indicated in a study that real life relationships debilitate because of the temporary connections made through social networking. Most of the time activity is wasted on these casual connections of the virtual social networking world which leads to affecting the relationships of the real world. Addictive behavior and other emotional distress like depression, anxiety, and loneliness, personality disorders like poor social skills, need for instant gratification, and narcissistic tendencies, etc., are all the consequences of extensive online engagement. Lack of privacy, vulnerability to crimes, social and moral detriments and misinformation, etc., are also the outcomes of being extraordinarily active social media user. When two German universities united to examine person to person communication, analysts found that one in three individuals reviewed felt more terrible ("forlorn, baffled or irate") in the wake of investing energy in Facebook, often due to perceived inadequacies when contrasting themselves with companions.

Students are the ones being most pathetically victimized by the negative effects of social media as they suffer falling grades and rejection to college admissions which ultimately lead to a darker future. For every 93 minutes spent on Facebook daily, college students' grades dropped by 12

points. Another study showed that students who went online while studying scored 20% lower on tests. Students start social media initially for their studies but social media is a total waste of time as according to a report for an average user, returning to their original task takes around 20 to 25 minutes when alerted to a new post or tweet. For some users it may take upto two hours. Students today have started to depend on the availability of data that is accessible on the online social media sites particularly and the web all in all so as to get answers. This implies there is a diminished focus on learning and on holding data.

The prominence of social networking, and the rate at which data is distributed, has made a careless state of mind towards appropriate spelling and sentence structure. This reduces a student's capacity to adequately compose without depending on a PC's spell check features. Thus the increasing overuse of social media has negative effects on all its users including the teenagers and the adults. But this does not mean that we should abandon all our social media activity for good. Social media also has innumerable positive benefits for its users but it is possible only if we overcome the negative effects. Reducing our time of social media usage and restricting ourselves to the positive activities can help us enjoy a range of benefits by social media. It can be your guide to broaden your perspective and learn new skills. It can keep you updated about latest trends and traditions around the globe. Even it can be your business partner to market your brand and stand out as the most successful entrepreneur in the business industry. It all depends on how well you utilize this facility and take the maximum benefit out of it.

## Ethical Dilemma

Mustafa Kamal Pasha, RCMS

We do engage ourselves in dilemmas intentionally or unintentionally. It's an inevitable situation most of the time. Among several issues there exists an ethical dilemma. The said subject is more of a moral value perplexity. It is a complex situation that often involves an apparent mental conflict between moral imperatives, in which to obey one would result in transgressing another. I must quote a few examples to shed some light.

**Teacher:** If you are a teacher and you've a student who is from single parent. Student has to work for his/her tuitions fee for college. Though, the tough routine has been forbidding him to have complete focus on either of them and because of this he/she has not been able to turn in for several assignments and homework. From all his performances in the class you have decided a "D" for the student while the counselor tells you that student needs 'C' to qualify for his next semester or scholarship. What do you do?

**Computers:** If we talk about work, you have spare time at your work. A few of us are focused and they enjoy doing their work. For instance, there is an employee who develops an algorithm or software which is novel and it is even more powerful than existing tools. He shares it with his colleague at work who always encouraged him to market his skills in a better way. He has an attractive option to sell and profit himself from it and start his own thing, yet he has developed it using company's equipment during his stay at work. What should he do? Let's take another example

from work. You have a newspaper agency and it publishes a report stating that bottled water has virtually no prominent health advantages over tap water. It includes comments from distributors and scientists. It was concluded to share such information with the masses. Meanwhile, you have a client from an XYZ company who makes purified bottled water and the agency gets a lot of revenue just from that solo advertisement. The company has threatened you to compensate the news with another survey based study for the usage of bottled water otherwise it is going to pull off its stakes. What do you do?

There are hundreds of other examples in our daily life where we have to choose rationally. A choice has to be made in such dilemmas between two options, neither of which resolves the situation in an ethically acceptable fashion. In such cases, societal and personal ethical guidelines can provide no satisfactory outcome for the chooser. It is assumed that chooser will abide by the norms of society and codes of religious teachings in some regions to make the choice ethically a solution of its kind.

**Branches of Ethics:** You can study ethics from both a religious and a philosophical point of view. I have come to know about four branches so far.

**a. Normative Ethics.** It is thought to be the largest branch which deals with how individuals can figure out the correct moral action that

they should take. Socrates and John Stuart Mill are included in this branch. Then there is Meta-Ethics which seeks to understand the nature of ethical properties and judgments such as if true values can be found and the theory behind moral principles. We have then,

**b. Applied Ethics.** This is the study of applying theories of philosophers regarding ethics in everyday life. For example, this area of ethics asks questions such as “Is it right to have an abortion?” and “Should you turn in your friend at your workplace for taking home office supplies?”

**c. Moral Ethics.** This includes ethical dilemmas. This branch questions how individuals

develop their morality. Why certain aspects of morality differ between cultures and why certain aspects of morality are generally universal. Finally we have,

**d. Descriptive Ethics.** This branch is more specific and scientific in its approach and focuses on how human beings actually operate in the real world, rather than attempt to theorize about how they should operate.

It is never easy to know how best to resolve the situation which is moral and ethical dilemma in one way or another. Especially when any of the choices one violates the societal and ethical standards by which we have been taught to govern our lives.

## Kashmir

Usama Saeed, SEecs

Note: This is both in reference to the recently celebrated Defence Day, and the stirring of the independence movement in occupied Kashmir this summer.

According to the terms of partition laid out at the time of independence, the numerous princely states of the subcontinent had the option to join either of the two newly formed states – India or Pakistan. The partition was (in most cases) done on the basis of religious majority, and by this reasoning Pakistan claims Kashmir, being a Muslim majority area, as a part of its territory. Contrary

to the trend however, the ruler of Kashmir at the time opted to be a part of India, which is the basis of India’s claim on the area. The war of 1948 followed in which both sides succeeded in seizing control of parts of the disputed area and after the UNO prescribed ceasefire, a ceasefire line (later renamed the Line of Control in 1971) was formed which serves as the de facto border to this day. Both countries believe that Kashmir is a rightful part of their territory and the other has occupied its lands per force. The area has thus been a bone of contention between the two states since 1947.

Although the Kashmir issue can be seen as a local dispute between two countries, but it holds international significance. Both parties in the dispute are nuclear powers and the threat of war between them is a catastrophe looming over not just the South Asian region, but the international community at large. If these two countries go to war, it will not only destabilise the region, but rather the fallout will have long lasting effects permeating beyond the borders of the subcontinent, if grievances escalate to the point that nuclear capabilities are brought to bear. Coupled with this are the human rights violations in occupied Kashmir. The UNO has recently voiced its concerns regarding this following the killing of Kashmiri freedom fighter Burhan Wani, with the UN Secretary General also issuing a statement in this regard. The same sentiment has been expressed collectively by the OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference). The global community is becoming vested in putting an end to the disappearances, torture and extrajudicial killings in the region.

Thus far the US has had minimal involvement in the IndoPak Kashmir dispute. During the Bush presidency, crisis management, rather than conflict resolution was the chief goal of US diplomacy in this regard. America's political will was to prevent escalation of hostilities in the region, but nothing of substance was done in the way of arbitrating peace talks. The Obama regime has also not shown interest in the issue, with the view that it already has a lot on its plate of foreign policy problems. It is evident that finding a solution to the Kashmir issue has never been US priority.

One of the main hurdles to compromise on the matter of Kashmir is the fact that the dispute is an ideological one. Both sides are adamant that they are in the right and neither would be willing to come to a solution based on compromise. This is why there is little probability of the Kashmir dispute being settled through dialogues between India and Pakistan, even if this dialogue was mediated by a third powerful country such as USA. Rather, it has to be solved through self-determination on the part of the Kashmiri population.

The US is looked up to in this case to arbitrate a settlement because it is a global superpower that has close connections with both the countries and can be expected to be impartial. Washington has trade interests in India, which is one of the largest emerging economies of the world, and it also has deep security concerns, along with strategic interests vested in Pakistan. Further, the US wants to counter Chinese influence in Pakistan with its own. These factors put America in a place where it cannot take the side of one country over the other, lest it sabotages its interest in one of the two states. Due to this delicate diplomatic balance, the US cannot preside over any settlement without running the risk of undermining its interests in the area.

Even if it is considered that the US can bring India and Pakistan to initiate talks, there can be no guarantee that a solution will be reached. Although Washington holds a lot of sway in both the countries, but no third power can dictate the solution to this issue. If it is to be solved through negotiations, then it may only be solved when the will is present in both Indian and Pakistani poli-

tics. This is a far cry from the reality however, since any government that would cede Kashmir to the opposing country would immediately lose its credibility once and for all. With the pressure of the respective populations and two major wars in the backdrop, neither country's leadership can afford to lose Kashmir, and so any talks with or without US backing would eventually be fruitless.

Due to the aforementioned reasons, the US appears helpless in solving the Kashmir issue because of the lack of will in India and Pakistan.

The ground realities of both states are such that dialogue cannot solve this issue. Hope should therefore be placed in the Kashmiri people deciding to join Pakistan of their own volition, as with a UNO sanctioned plebiscite. The US can play its part in bringing both countries to stand by this solution. As it stands, there exists a strong pro-Pakistani sentiment in the hearts of the Kashmiri population. Therefore Pakistan should work towards such a solution, coordinating with the world powers to put pressure on India to agree with this peaceful resolution of a longstanding issue.

## All are Equal

Mueed Ur Rehman, SEECS

Today the teacher was late for his class. All the children were making a mess and sitting unarranged. The teacher's son was sitting with his friend who was not allowed to sit with, because his friend was the son of the peon of school. Teacher came in 20 minutes late, explained his reason for coming late. He was stuck in a traffic jam because of protocol for a politician. He was very angry at the police and the government for not treating them fairly. He said that he and those politicians were equal, then why should they wait for them while they pass?" Having said that, he turned over to the book and started reading the chapter 'Manners' while he read a line 'Don't tell your children what to do, show them instead', his eyes came in contact with his son who was sitting with his poor friend. He

was furious to see that. He shouted at his son to get up and sit somewhere else. Silence spread all over in the class as the children saw inequality while hearing the opposite from their teacher.

Teachers don't practice themselves, what they teach to their pupils. Politicians don't fulfil the promises, they make with the public in their election campaigns. Our young men and women see a lot of difference between the professed values and practiced values in the society. It confuses them. They don't have the correct role models in front of them to follow. Teachers, doctors, engineers, politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen suffer from this problem. Their words and deeds are different. That's why all are equal but some are more equal than the others.

## My Hero since Childhood

Aslam Bazmi, SEecs

I was in 6th class when the 1965 Indo-Pak war broke out. Like every house in those days, we had a newly dug trench in our home. Whenever air raid sirens blared out, our parents took no time to drive us to the trench for a safe cover. Boys of my age, however, did manage to sneak out in the hope to watch some dogfight in the sky. TV had not entered our lives. Not every home had a radio either. People would throng around radio-sets installed at some shops to listen to the war news bulletin. Shakil Ahmad and Mustafa Hamdani rose to instant fame as news broadcasters for their singular zest for airing war news. Shakil Ahmad was simply a class in himself by virtue of his high pitch resonant voice. At the outset of hostilities, President Ayub Khan's thundering speech had already electrified the nation to the highest pitch of patriotic passion. We returned home with great excitement and patriotic fervour after hearing the news of devastating strikes of PAF warplanes on Pathankot, Halwara, Adampur, Amritsar, Jam Nagar, Jaisal Mir, etc. Whenever our Sabres zoomed into the sky, we heard our elders shout excitedly: "Look! Asghar Khan's "hawks" are in the air to take on the "Indian ducks" (This was how they looked upon PAF fighter pilots, their aircraft and the enemy fighter planes and their 'duck-hearted' pilots respectively. Poets composed national songs supercharged with patriotic zeal to raise the morale of our valiant defenders and the nation at large. The enchanting voice of Melody Queen Noor Jahan was a new phenomenon to charm the soldiers, sailors, airmen and people of all ages alike. Such

was the vibrant euphoric spirit of our times. In sublime ignorance, we thought Asghar Khan was the top man in the air force with pilots and planes under his command to fight the invading enemy aircraft. We were overwhelmed by his awe and aura of heroism. He was our unquestioned hero. It dawned on us much later that Air Marshal Nur Khan was the victorious air leader of the 1965 Indo-Pak War. History today tells us that while Air Marshal Asghar Khan accomplished the feat of building Pakistan Air Force into a hard-hitting air force, it was Air Marshal Nur Khan who surprised the world by employing this finely tuned air force most tellingly to neutralize the enemy air power decisively. It was indeed this deep respect for these two legends that eventually inspired this writer's choice, 11 years later, to join Pakistan Air Force as an education officer in 1976. Today, like many of his admirers in Pakistan, he continues to adore Asghar Khan as a leader and commander, par excellence—sadly, a hero not celebrated enough for political biases in our myopic society.

The decade-old RPAF helmsmanship, with four British commanders-in-chief in succession—Air Vice Marshals A L A Perry Keene, R L R Atcherley, L W Cannon and A W B McDonald—came to its close in 1957. On 23 July, 1957, Air Marshal M Asghar Khan assumed command as the first Pakistani Chief of the PAF. This was a momentous occasion and a watershed in PAF history, reflecting confidence in the ability and maturity of native air force leadership. Despite

being third in seniority, Air Marshal Asghar Khan was the obvious choice on pure merit, and his selection for the office of Air Chief was widely hailed in Pakistan Air Force. Becoming commander-in-chief at the youthful age of 36, he was destined to guide, lead, nurture and develop this fine institution for the next 8 years—the longest tenure of command in the history of PAF. This was perfectly in order considering the unusually expanding needs of the service to become a truly combat-ready instrument of national defence.

To give the reader a quick overview of the career of Air Marshal Asghar Khan, *The Story of The Pakistan Air Force (1988)* provides following resume:

Born in 1921, Asghar Khan completed the last phase of his education at Aitcheson College, Lahore and entered the Royal Indian Military College, Dehra Dun as first step towards joining the Indian Army. He would have dearly loved to become a fighter pilot but at that the size of the Indian Air Force still remained frozen and no new entries were contemplated. As soon as the gates of the IAF were opened after the outbreak of WWII, Asghar Khan obtained transfer to the air force in which he was commissioned in December 1940.

His services in the IAF included command of No.9 squadron for a little over a year followed by a tenure that ended at partition, as chief flying instructor in the operational training unit (OTU) flying spitfires at Ambala. His prominent assignments before becoming the C-in-C at the young age of 36, included the first command of what is

now the PAF Academy, tenure as Group Commander at Peshawar and separate tours at Air Headquarters as head of the operation branch and of the admin branch. In between he gained a joint services staff college qualification as well as one at the Imperial Defence College, London.

Prominent among the major units he established during his tenure were the fighter Leaders School, The PAF Staff College and the College of Aeronautical engineering. He also instituted the Inspectorate and initiated the tradition of regular air staff presentations.

Fortunately, Asghar Khan started his career with a sure foothold in his stride, with the largess of expensive American hardware entering PAF's critical war inventories. His tenure of command saw tremendous modernization in terms of advanced equipment and expansion of operational facilities. With the generous US support, PAF was able to raise five new fighter squadrons, thus bringing the total to 9. Of these, as many as 8 were equipped with state-of-the art Sabre fighter bombers, the ace air warrior of the 1965 War. To add to this impressive tally, one squadron was equipped with 'terror-in-the skies' starfighter F-104. The American aid package also provided two squadrons of B-57 bombers, one squadron of C-130 transport aircraft and a complete fleet of T-37 and T-33 trainers. Thanks to this monumental American windfall, PAF was also able to build new jet runways at Mauripur, Peshawar and Samungli, and an entirely new base at Sargodha, besides setting up two major radar stations at Sakesar and Badin.

This unprecedented influx of equipment and infrastructure expansion essentially entailed on the part of PAF leadership massive efforts and energies around the clock to mesh the impressive array of hi-tech weapons and infrastructure development into a potent war machine. Providence had already placed rightly cut out man at the helm in the person of Air Marshal Asghar Khan; a lesser person would have wilted under such overwhelming pressures. That Asghar Khan notably proved himself equal to this gigantic task was resoundingly demonstrated in PAF's superb performance in the war of September 65, only weeks after his relinquishing the charge—leaving ungrudgingly the crown of victory for his able successor, Air Marshal M Nur Khan, to wear and bask in its glory forever.

Air Marshal M Asghar was a God-send leader for an air force that was transitioning exponentially to jet era in the sub-continent. By virtue of the close mentorship of four distinguished British air chiefs, his own sound experience of instructional, command, operational and administrative matters, together with his personal gifts of head and heart, he was an ideal person dating with destiny. A hard taskmaster with resolute will, indefatigable stamina, unimpeachable integrity and unflinching courage, he served Pakistan most outstandingly and retired almost an unsung hero. He was known for his staunch commitment to merit, fairness, justice, accountability and austerity. Once he made a decision, after due consultation and thorough deliberation, there was no going back on it. This, nonetheless, was not palatable to some of his critics. He was an epitome of what all leadership is about in such

sublime words of John C Maxwell: “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.”

There were no lavish spendings, in his time, on official dinners and functions. He would never brook inefficiency, dishonesty, violation of merit and corruption of any kind—the sterling traits which are fast diminishing in our society as a whole. The likes of him, though a rare scarcity, are true torchbearers, and those seeking the path of genuine success, honour and glory must draw strength and inspiration from their irreproachable character.

A well-poised octogenarian of strong nerve with staunch faith in the will of Allah, in his dotage, he coped with rare courage and resilience the tragic death of his brilliant son, Omar Asghar, in June 2002. Omar Asghar was an eminent economist and social and political scientist who served as a professor of Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the Punjab University & later on at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Although not a considerable success in national politics, Air Marshal (R) Asghar Khan commands rare respect as a man of dignity and unimpeachable integrity, a tribute very few people in our society plagued with moral degeneration so richly deserve. To me, Air Marshal Asghar Khan was, and is still much taller than life, and I hold him for all the good reasons in high esteem as one of my ace heroes. May Allah shower on this living legend His mercy, peace and serenity, and may we be worthy of the legacy of this towering figure in our history!

## Voyage to the Snow Crown

Saad Khushnood, C of E&ME

A trip with the entire family is always tough to plan. Managing it is a completely different monster. But when the family consists of twice the number of children than the adults, it becomes a near impossibility. We didn't care; the allure of a winter wonderland a mere six hours away and filled with snow got our travel senses tingling. It was no time as I found myself clad in four sweaters, standing outside a bright white van, loading countless bags for my family for the tiresome trip from Lahore to Murree.

I shall not bore you with the details of travel, however recollections of the climb are ones I truly wish to share. The climb up till Ghora Gali was mostly uninteresting (other than the usual wail of a little tike wanting its mommy), but the moment the chair lifts came, the rain suddenly changed. It slowly shifted from small, persistent globules of liquid into slightly larger crystals of slush. The change was so dawdling that we did not notice this at first. Eventually we started noticing the windshield getting pelted with slush instead of water, and that there were intricate crystals in the slush. It didn't take very long for everybody to put two and two together. We had driven into snowfall.

Now, the van was slipping and the landscape started to turn white. However, the falling precipitation was still slush. We could not reach the Mall as the road ahead was blocked by snow (so we were told), so we decided to turn back. That is when it hit us. Our winter snowy wonderland turned into a snowstorm. Had it been snow alone,

it probably would not have been so unpleasant. But now that the wind had picked up and it was raining as well, it was beginning to become tough to manage. With the medley of little kids crying and wailing for release into the snow, it had become unbearable.

The stay at the lodges was also very eventful. The lodgings were clean and sufficient enough for housing us all. The problem lay in the fact that there had been no electricity the entire day, with no hope of it returning any time soon. This was truly problematic because all the heating equipment present was electric, with the exception of a fireplace in one room. We spent the entire night around that fireplace sharing stories, drinking tea and coffee, playing cards, etc. All this had to be done, though, after the kids had fallen asleep of course.

The next day, we woke up nearly frozen. We were told the temperature had fallen to minus five, which we survived without heaters and decided to go uphill. Our attempts were futile as most of the roads were snowcovered. Having spotted an open hill covered with untampered snow, we pulled over and decided to enjoy. Snowmen, snow fights and frostbitten fingers ensued. My uncle lost his phone during immense snow fight between families. (Luckily, the phone was found later entrapped in a slushy footprint, still in working order). We left as soon as we saw the signs of a snowfall revisit. We got to Islamabad just in time, as reports hit of a major snowfall in Murree.

Overall, the trip was truly memorable; being the easy target in a snowball fight; climbing a snow clad hill of clay with no gloves; fighting rain and snow in search for a usable toilet; searching in

snow for an iPhone. The medley of memoirs we acquired from this trip will ensure that it will be remembered for the good things.

## The Crime of being Poor

Umer Sohail, C of E&ME

A boy knocked at the window of a shining car, feverishly and desperately. The tinted back window rolled down and a degrading look fell upon a boy of age not more than 8, in rags with a scruffy face and frowzy hair. Molested and abused at the hands of life – even at this tender age – he spurted out a well-rehearsed and oft heard lines “*Allah k naam pay day day baba, Maula khush rakhay*” (Please give me something in the name of Allah, may Allah bless you). Sadly, an even more mechanized reaction came his way, the all too familiar look of disgust and apathy. After all, the person in the car was too busy to be even giving attention to the petty scums like him; let alone help him.

The signal turned green and the car scurried away, leaving the poor boy amidst a cloud of dust and disdain. Head bowed, stomach grumbling, he scanned the roadside for any sign of his father. His little heart jumped in fear as he saw his father staring at him like the death itself. He knew the drill from there on; go over, have abuses hurled into his not so innocent ears, endure slaps and punches on his face already embellished with scars and bruises from the last time, and get manhandled and molested in every conceivable way by his

own father just because he failed to “cash” that car on the red signal. And nothing was different this time around.

Eating his stale *roti* with a glass of water – the meal one gets at the slums when one does not fetch enough money at the end of the day – he wondered, what wrong had he done to deserve this? Was it his fault that he was born in a beggar family? Was it his choice that he opened his eyes in a house with barely enough food to keep him and his large family of 16 alive? He always wondered what amazing lives the men in black shining cars lived, flaunting about their vehicles, with their flashy clothes and smug faces. He wondered what great struggles they had gone through and tall mountains they had bested in order to earn this life of luxury. Deep in these thoughts he felt a sharp pain at the back of his neck. It was his mother, instructing him to finish his food and go to sleep, as he had to wake up before dawn the next day.

It was the end of August; it seemed as though the heavy rain overnight had washed everything away minus the exiguity of his existence. Luckily for

the boy, he woke up in time to take a bath in the rain – one he needed for quite some time now. But the reason he was made to wake up so early was because today schools and colleges were re-opening from the summer holidays. For him that meant only one thing, more traffic on the roads, hence more money to beg for. Standing on the road side he envied the children sitting in vans, buses and cars, wearing their neat uniforms and going to school. He looked at his unkempt dirty tatters and wished he wore the same white uniform. He wished he would also carry the bag of books and stationery rather than the heavy pile of sticks he carried every day back home. Every time he saw the school going kids with their wide smiles and cheerful crackles, his heart yearned to join them, to be one of them. But the chains of poverty tangled his feet, and the rope of helplessness and illiteracy wound around his neck ever so tight.

He had heard that to be successful you needed to go to a school; alas he was just the son of a beggar,

cursed to remain one for as long as he lived. Who was to blame for his misfortune? His parents never cared about anything other than how much money he brought? Or the men in shining cars who never spared more than some unneeded coins for him despite their grandiose and profligate outlook? Or maybe it was God Himself Deep in his thoughts, he never realized that he had wandered off onto the road. The piercing horn of a car brought him back, and that was the last thing he ever saw as it ran right over him, mutilating his little body one last time. The last thing he ever saw was the blinding shine of a graceful car; the one he envied and desired to sit in throughout his little life. And just like that, the insignificant, paltry life of the son of a beggar ended, probably in a better fashion than the life of many around him. And with him died his impossible little dream of breaking the shackles of poverty and even standing a chance of being happy like the people in shining cars.

## Blue Bayou

Usama Saeed, SEecs

Water lapped against Samson's boat as it moved up-stream, leaving a trail of phosphorescence behind it. Its wake made him think of ghostly willow-wisps under the mist, parting to let him through. The entire swamp had been blanketed by the mist soon after sunset.

He worked the single oar, slowly churning the water again and again in an endless cycle. He couldn't see where he was going. Didn't even

know his destination. What he did know was that the swamp had called to him today. Like it used to call him in his childhood. Back then, when the bayou called, he would run away from town and try to listen to it, but his mother would grab his wrist, slap his cheeks red and drag him back kicking and screaming.

His grandfather died in the swamp, she would tell him. She'd waded into the water, her skirt float-

ing on the murk, leaving his mother in the arms of aunt Maya. Both of them watching from the shore.

“Do you want to leave and never come back?” She pleaded with him. But the problem was that he did want to go, and never come back. And his mother wouldn’t understand and he knew it, so he hung his head and listened to her wordlessly.

He was pulled back from his thoughts by a thud something had hit his boat. He looked over the edge into the murk, but he couldn’t see anything. He clung to the edge in wait for whatever it was that had hit his boat to reveal itself. Something broke through the water a few feet from him. A piece of driftwood. Oh, but it wasn’t! He watched as a family of alligators frolicked in the water at just a little distance from him. The mother gator was close enough for him to touch. He started rowing again with bated breath. It was a sign - he was sure of it. A sign to show him the way. He knew he was going in the right direction.

His mother had died of cholera that day. He’d buried her. His sisters had watched. And now it was time for the swamp, a place he did not know but a place he trusted to know him, to take him. He followed the family of gators up a fork in the creek. They knew where to go. The mother was leading her litter of two, and the litter was leading him, the youngest member of the family. He followed them, watching their tails curve as they swam just beneath the surface.

After they had swum for some time, he spied something in the distance. Beyond a cluster of trees, he could make out a shape through the mist.

As he rowed closer and closer, the shape became more and more distinct until it became apparent that he’d come to a cabin raised on piles above the swamp. He stopped his boat against the trunk of a tree to observe it. That was where he was supposed to go. He broke off from the tree.

As his boat bumped a waterlogged staircase, he noticed that the family of gators gone. They had dived down into the murk, to where Samson couldn’t see them anymore. Their job was done. He found rope lying just outside the house. He tied up his boat, and started towards the door with trepidation. His hand extended to the doorknob. The old wooden door creaked open to reveal an old woman humming to herself, alone in the darkness.

Saving nickels, saving dimes  
Working ‘til the sun don’t shine  
Looking forward to happier times  
On Blue Bayou

“Well, come on in, Samson,” she finally said with a smile, as he closed the door behind him.

Note: The lyrics at the end are from ‘Blue Bayou’ by Roy Orbison. Supposedly he wrote the song in loving remembrance of his departed wife.

We are what we remember. If we lose our memory, we lose our identity; our identity is the accumulation of our experiences.

— Erik Pererhagie

## Yin Yang'

Mirza Sikandar Baig, C of E&ME

She looked in the mirror. A wave of disgust washed across her face; a terrible nose, disproportionate jaw, and just to make it even more loathsome, her acne and masculine structure reflected from the mirror she viewed herself from, she had a pituitary gland disorder. She turned towards the dying old man who had once sown the seed that grew into her. Her father lying on the mattress that she had put on the floor. May be he had something to say after all these years of his misery. He was her origin after all, she thought. Her father was paralyzed and could only mumble for five years. "Father" she whispered into the ear of the dying old man, caring only if she would get a satisfactory answer or not.

"I hate myself! why was I born this way? Left to fight with myself while others got out of life which I never did!" "Oh rose!" the old man spoke feebly, "I am but a dying man and now I understand that

no matter what we do, we live till we die with the memories of the gained and of the lost, the wished and that which we have got. I always wondered what one could make out of a life that is not perfect. What should we perceive from its imperfections? And just why do we want everything from it? Life was granted to us unasked. We are souls behind these eyes; like ghosts given shapes, like the dead made to feel. My dear child! Someone is speaking to me, now that I am leaving this body, telling me that it wasn't perfect but the beautiful cute flaws. Flaws, that like a mother loves her small weak child for staggering, can make us love life. We need to learn how to do it and balter at the notion that no matter what happens, no trace of it, now shall remain," he mumbled his last words. Odd that just when he had decided to never to speak again, did she realize how queer her problems were.

## Water under the Bridge

Usama Saeed, SEECs

He staggered away from a crowd of people standing around a grave, watching a body being lowered in. It was a funeral he had too much stake in. Someone very dear to him had passed away, and he was just realising how dear that someone had been. He took shelter under the shade of a tree, collapsing down into his thoughts. He wiped away the tears boiling up in his eyes and glanced

back at the herd of the bereaved.

The mother of the deceased stood by as they began pushing earth over the hole. She cried into her dupatta, already drenched as it was. He felt for her. So much so that his own loss began to feel less present.

Soon he couldn't bear to look at her anymore and turned to the grave instead. It was almost full now. The characteristic mound was beginning to form over a corpse that was nothing more than a reminder of the finality of it.

**Of death.** Again he tore his eyes away and this time turned to the barred gate leading into the cemetery. A few cars were parked outside. He could see their roofs sticking out over the low red-brick wall. Some of his friends lingered outside, standing around languidly with cigarettes in their hands, leaning on their cars.

The one who had died was his friend too, in a way. But while his death meant a wrenching feeling of loss for everyone huddled around the grave and the stragglers outside, a feeling easier to make peace with, it was an incomparably harsher, stranger fact for himself to swallow. It was a wound time would not heal. He was assaulted by a band of realisations that he could not make peace with, if he ever found peace at all.

"So young ..." his mother began, trying to dam the stream of tears with a handkerchief. His father held her in his arms with no words to console her. "Just like his baby brother!" She buried her face in her husband's chest. The old couple held each other for a long time, quietly grieving.

Sitting at a distance under the tree, Wallace watched them. He wanted to go over and comfort her. He wanted to drape his arms around his mother's hunched shoulders and cry. He should be there with her, weeping like he wanted to, but he couldn't get up even though he wanted to. He couldn't get up for all the good it would do.

"My baby!" Martha suddenly shrieked.

He spun his head around, but she wasn't looking at him. She'd fallen down beside the grave. His father was helping her up.

"Just like his brother..." she sat there, refusing to take her husband's hand. "Just like his brother. So young!"

His brother's death had been a huge shock for his parents. And now this...

"God, take me, let my baby back!" Mother wailed. "Get hold of yourself," his father said as he helped her to her feet. He finally got up and walked back to his parents. He mock-wiped his mother's tears away, but his hand passed through her cheeks like it had the first time he had tried to hold her after climbing out of the grave. He had tried to talk to her, tried to make her realise that her son was still alive and standing before her! But her son was dead. Rather, both her sons were dead. Both the twins. He was only an apparition that had clung to his brother's conscience like a parasite.

He wiped irrational guilt from his mind and straddled the grave, digging his face inside. His own face stared back at him through closed eyes. As if just as surprised to see him as he had been. Just as surprised as him when he'd woken up staring at his own corpse, only to find that his brother was dead.

Note: Sometimes it so happens that a twin or multiple disappears in the uterus during pregnancy due to miscarriage. The foetal tissue in some cases is absorbed by the remaining twin or multiple. This is known as vanishing twin syndrome. In the story, one twin seems to spring from the cadaver of the other as it is being buried.

## Hyperloop

Umar Mukhtar

### Elon Musk's Hyperloop

Elon Musk's Hyperloop is a transportation network that shoots the passengers at nearly the speed of sound through a pneumatic vacuum tube using magnetic levitation technology.

### Who is Elon Musk?

Elon Musk a great entrepreneur and billionaire who is also the founder of Tesla motors and Space X. He proposed the idea of a futuristic traveling system known as "Hyperloop"

### What was Elon Musk's motivation?

Musk was actually looking for something that would be better than flying and driving. Moreover, he was not happy with the expensive high-speed rail transportation project in California. He was looking for an even better option.

### What is Hyperloop?

According to Musk, Hyperloop is a network of Pneumatic pressurized tubes in which capsules will be propelled on an air cushion driven by high-speed fans and linear induction motors.

The second idea was to propel the capsules in vacuum tubes through electromagnetic suspension at near the speed of sound. One main problem in the second idea was to maintain a vacuum because a minute leak in the system can shut the whole system down. This can be overcome by some pumping solutions. The power will be provided by the solar panels which cover the tube's top. He supported the second idea.

### How is it beneficial?

The Hyperloop can be cheaper than conventional modes of transportation. The tube will cost about 16 billion dollars which Musk described as being low as compared to the California rail project which will cost about 12.7 billion dollars. Additionally, Hyperloop will be built on pylons (tower like structure).

Moreover \$12.7 billion sounds expensive for the train but \$16 billion seems cheap for the fastest mode of transportation in the world. As the system is to build on pylons you can rarely feel the earthquake.

The Hyperloop reduces the time taken to travel long distances. Hyperloop may be cited as the fifth mode of transportation. This mode of transportation does not face from noise problems that are found in other modes. Moreover, it is less accessible to natural disasters and weather conditions.

Hyperloop's passenger capsule can carry 28 passengers. Hyperloop's cargo capsule is 70 feet long. It is big enough to carry heavy container cargoes. According to Musk, the route will connect San Francisco and Los Angeles. So, we can travel in less time. The analysis shows that the expected journey time is 35 minutes. It means you can travel at an average speed of 600 mph.

### Hyperloop Technologies Startup

They are working on a short test track at Industrial park in Las Vegas with the objective of accelerating a passenger's car which will travel about 335

miles per hour in a time span of just two seconds. The track will be about 5 miles long and it will be able to carry passengers. This will be a great test for the technology and a dream come true for Elon Musk.

The Hyperloop might be ready some time near 2025 and the passengers might be moving with the speed three times faster than the high-speed rail.

## The Story of a Boy and his Subconscious

Mueed Ur Rehman, SEECS

He never really had any girlfriend because the concept of a girl friend never made any sense to him. He always thought and hated this thought of being in a relationship with any girl and one day sitting at a Hillside or on a peak of mountain, him admiring and lost in the wilderness of that place but her head stuck in the world, having her foolish girlish thoughts. Even the thought of it would make him go crazy. So he'd go to such places alone instead of with someone who wouldn't appreciate the holiness of that place. Sitting there peacefully he would sometimes think about the girl of her dreams and how he will bring her here and then it will all be complete.

**Subconscious.** But what if she agrees to marry you eventually and you bring her here but she turns out to be the same as others? Wind of fear flew right through him and shrugging off his subconscious he stopped thinking about it.

Sometimes when he was angry with his family members, slamming doors and sitting in his room quietly thinking about how his life will be good if she comes in his life, he would never fight with

her, their life will be one of a kind, peaceful, loving..

**Subconscious.** Are you sure? Because your parents want you as badly as you want this girl, they had gone to *mazaars*, doctors and God knows where to have you, thinking about their joyful life when they would have a son. But what is happening now, you are sitting in a room alone while they sit in other room, thinking God knows what.

He wanted a new camera, the latest one in the market. He asked his parents to buy him one, but with a look of disappointment in their eyes they refused because they hadn't had enough money. Listening to this, he rushed through the door leaving traces of anger behind for his parents to clean. Walking down a road quietly, thinking about how he would go to his full extent to fulfill every wish of hers if she ever agrees to be his.

**Subconscious.** But what about the time your uncle was telling you the story that, when he was six and demanded a bicycle but his parents couldn't afford it so my father worked over shifts to make

up the money. But today they refused me my new camera, I wanted it so badly.

**Subconscious.** So are you sure you would be able to fulfill her every wish too? It's not about having everything, but to have it with your loved ones.

Once he wanted to go to his friend's party but his parents insisted if he could stay with them for it was their anniversary. He was furious over the thought that how selfish they are? They won't even let me go to my friend's party, my friends will think I am still a baby. On his way to his friend's party, he thought and smiled how she would always understand if he had to go somewhere, she would never hesitate.

**Subconscious.** When was the last time your father

went to any of his friend's gathering? Long time ago he remembered, why? Because he never had time, working in the morning, giving his family time in the evening, he didn't have any of his own life left except him and his mother.

This time he couldn't shrug his sub-conscious off because he realized that his eyes were wet and he was sobbing by the time he reached his friend's house. He had realized his mistake, thinking too much about the girl and her qualities, who he wasn't sure even if knew him. He stopped there, then he started running towards his home, he ran and ran...

This time his sub-conscious rested as he hugged his parents and apologized.

## Ideas

Our world is endangered by the absence of good ideas. Our world is in crises because of the absence of consciousness.

— Tererce McKenna

If your mind carries a heavy burden of past, you will experience more of the same. The past perpetuates itself through lack of the present. The quality of your consciousness at this moment is what shapes the future.

— Eckhart Tolle

When a man is penalized for honesty he learns to lie.

— Criss Jami

“There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light but by making the darkness conscious.”

— CG Jung

## Who Killed Him?

Batool Fatima, SADA

My very first and exciting memory is one I shared with my neighbor and first friend, Anna Kalmer. It is about a man, a stranger, a man I never could know, a man who died in the park, a man who Anna and I found.

Let's start with the story of that day, not of how it dawned and started and all that, but from where the day started out for me. It was Thursday afternoon, a golden afternoon, with the green leaves shining like emeralds, on tall trees, reaching for the sky twinkling like an aquamarine. Everything was shining, to me, in my eyes, everything was shining. After school, Anna and I would go cycling around the neighborhood, racing along the long and wide roads, dodging the occasional car that came along. And the wind would laugh as we would, and echo with the eternal words that Anna would shout out like an army general leading his soldiers to conquer the world.

"Move faster Dashiel Martello, we are ten after-all."

And Dashiel Martello, that's me, ten years old, would pedal as fast as my feet would allow and chase after Anna Kalmer, also ten years old, who was always faster and ahead of me no matter how fast I pushed forward. So, one day, Thursday, we cycled and cycled till as far as the Spring Park. It was called the Spring Park because of the water stream, also called a spring, flowed along the left edge of the park. By the water, under a tree, on a bed of grass and leaves, we found the single most terrifying (for me), and amazing (for Anna) mys-

tery of our time.

"Hey, Dash, look, the man sleeping under the tree," said Anna, cycling past the tree, I followed after, slowly, my head turned around.

"Daaaaaash," Anna called, she liked doing that, dragging on my name like that, "Are you tired? Wanna nap under a tree too?"

"No, no, I'll nap at home thank you," I answered, and began to pedal faster, must get away from here.

"Oh wait," Anna excitedly leapt from her bike and dumped it on the ground, "Let's push that man into the water."

"What?" I exclaimed, here she goes again on one of her wild tricks, really, she should know no one else sees the humor in her jokes besides me, "Anna wait, don't do that," but not today.

"Oh come on scared cat," she taunted, getting ever closer to the man, she stuck her tongue out at me. I realized I was still sitting on the bike, and when she turned around and froze, my hands gripped the handlebars even tighter.

"Anna?"

"Dash, come here."

"Why?"

"Because I think this guy is dead."

The man, dressed in a black suit, white shirt and red tie, was slumped against the tree, head rolling over one shoulder, arms loosely fallen by his sides.

"Dash, hey."

"No Anna."

"Well, at least I wont be pushing him in the water anymore, this is way more exciting," she gaped at

me, “You still haven’t gotten off your bike either!”  
“Anna, let’s not do this, let’s just go, okay?”  
“I will, I will, in due time,” her eyes were wide, feverish almost, sparkling, “But only if you get up, come over here and touch his arm.”  
She grinned at me, as if announcing I had just been granted superpowers, “You’re joking.”  
“I’m gonna, but it’s better if you do it too because if you wont...”  
“You what?”

She laughed, I can’t believe she actually laughed when standing next to a dead guy, “Oh let’s find out who he is, maybe he has a card on him or something.” She turned back to the man and slowly began inching closer.

“Okaaaayy,” I protested, standing up abruptly from the bike so it clattered to the ground loudly. Anna was ecstatic, my heart thundered in my ears and my eyes were trapped on the man, on how the water reflected light over his brown hair, of the limpness of his shoulders, of the neatness of his suit. Maybe, it was because he looked so ordinary, that I was confused, doubting if he even was dead. Or maybe, because he was so ordinary, no one even noticed he was dead. Yes, that made sense.  
“That’s it, just a little further.”

When had my hand risen, why was I -----  
“Oye kids, get back from there,” a shout echoed out sent a shockwave through me, like electricity. Anna was already on her feet, as the grownup marched towards where we stood. “what’s going on over here? who is that man?” he asked.  
I looked once at the dead man then at the alive one, “He’s sick, I think he needs your help,” I said

abruptly.  
“What? Really?” said the man.  
“Yes, and we were just leaving too, it’s time for supper,” I went on, caught Anna by the hand and dragged her to the bikes. She didn’t protest, just glared at me. We got on our bikes and were cycling out of the park when the shout echoed out, “Hey, this guy here is dead, someone call the police.”  
“What was all that about, you idiot, why did you chicken out like that?”  
“I’m not gonna tell you.”  
“Why?”  
“You’ll laugh.”  
“Well, only if it’s stupid.”  
“Anna!”  
“Alright, alright, what is it?”  
“If we had stayed around like that, those guys would have thought that we were the ones who killed that man.”  
“Chill out Dashiel Martelo, we are ten after all.”  
And just as I had known, Anna burst out laughing, and she went laughing all the way home, while I could only shout at her to shut up. I think, I can’t be sure, but I was actually ahead of her this one while.

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That night, after supper of boiled potato salad with and a small scoop of fried macaroni, a visitor came to our home. At first, only Dad went in to the sitting room and met with the guest, then Mom followed him in a bit later. I watched TV, for what watching TV was worth. There were no siblings for me to play with, just a younger sister who was still too young to leave the baby cot. Then Mom came back, “Dash sweetie, would you come to the

sitting room for a bit?” she said softly, I looked at her, she sounds worried.

“Ok.” I slid off the couch and followed after her, there was conversation going on in the sitting room so I assumed everything was alright. But when I actually stepped into the room, I saw the guest was actually, a police officer.

“This is my son Dashiel,” Dad said, “Dash, say hello to Officer Murdock.”

“Hello Dash,” said Officer Murdock, smiling gently at me. I realized I had frozen and not greeted him as Dad said, “A-are you a detective?” I asked. Officer Murdock laughed, “Well since I am still in uniform I am not a detective yet, but I hope to be one day,” he replied, “And that is something I need your help with, you see, If I want to become a detective one day, I need to solve this puzzle. Now, will you help me?”

I could, but only, nod. I mean, what was I supposed to do? The man was in a uniform, He could very well have a gun on him, what if he arrested me? But Officer Murdock, the way he asked me if I was there at the park where the dead man was found, it sounded like he didn’t know much of what I was doing there.

“Did you see anything out of the ordinary? Was there anyone there when you got there? Anything at all you can remember.”

“He was dead when we got there, my friend thought he might be sleeping. And then that man came and told us to get back, and then he called the police, and we left,” I said in one breath. I can

definitely not tell him about the prank.

“Your friend, is Anna Kalmer, from next door?” I nodded, “Hmm, I will talk to her too, check in on her.”

Wait, what has Anna told him something I didn’t, he would know I had been hiding something, but I don’t think she would tell him about the prank she was about to play. What should I do?

“Well, if that is all that happened then I guess I’ve gotten all I could from here, but if you remember anything at all, do let me know, okay Dash?” Officer Murdock looked me right in the eye.

“Sure thing, “ I think I even tried to grin back, what am I showing all this false confidence for? Officer Murdock patted my head and got up to leave. Dad and Mom both went with him to the door. I waited, I have to know what he knows, so I can know if he suspects me or not. Would he suspect Anna too?

Slowly, slowly I followed after, and peeked around the half-open door while they adults stood at the gate and talked:

“It’s so horrible, and he died so young too, what about his family?”

“Actually we don’t know who he is yet, you see, he had no identification on him when we found him and we have yet been unable to locate any documentation regarding who he was and where he worked.”

“That is so sad, he died such a sad death, and no one even knows his name.”

“It looks like a suicide.”

“Well, it is still early in the investigation, we hope you solve this mystery as soon as possible.”

The next day dawned just as exciting as the previous, after all, what was going to happen today was all because of the day was like yesterday. But today, is going to be much, much more fun than yesterday ever was.

“Um, Anna, you have that look on your face,” said Dash in his soft, murmuring voice.

“Huh, what look?” I instantly looked at him with wide innocent eyes.

Dash regarded me with a look of suspicion, he knows I’m planning something, “That weird look on your face, I know what you’re up to.”

“Oh come on, this is just so exciting!,” ever since last night all people could talk about was the dead man that Dash and I had found in the park. That Dash and I had found. “You know what, I heard the lady from across the street say that he was killed because he got involved with the wrong people. I think she’s wrong. I think he was working undercover to find out who the wrong people were, and he found a secret, a deadly secret, and to protect that secret he had to give his life.”

“He died because of suicide,” said Dash, sitting on the bench reading a book. I froze, and stared at him, he continued to ignore me.

“You’re joking.”

“Officer Murdock said that, when he came to visit last night, didn’t he come to your house too?” He had, but Dad hadn’t allowed me to talk to him.

“Y-yes, he did.”

“Well, then you would know,” Dash replied, turned a page of the book, and the matter was settled.

But it wasn’t, how could it have been settled?

Just because Officer Murdock said so? And why should I take his word for it anyways? It’s not supposed to end this way. When I saw that man under the tree, I never thought .....

“Come on Dash, we’re going,” I announced, marching towards the bikes.

“But where?” Dash protested, “I have to finish this.”

“You can finish it later.”

“Is it about that dead guy again?”

I paused, turned around and stared him in the eyes, “We were the ones who found him, so we will be the ones to solve this mystery, got it?” I declared.

“How will you do that?”

“Let’s go back to the park, you know, as all great detectives say, it all starts with the crime scene,” I swung around and with my arms held open and wide by my side like wings of a bird, I raced down the slope, running faster than the wind.

-----

There was a big crowd by the tree, a yellow rope had been tied around the area to keep people out and away from the place where the man had been lying.

“Don’t tell me you are going to ask these people?” said Dash, aghast.

“Dad said there were going to be a lot of reporters in the park today,” and that I should stay away from the park, but I wasn’t going to tell Dash that, “And reporters are the only people with information who would tell others anything, and so that’s what we are going to do.”

“But why do you think anyone would tell us anything?” Dash asked.

“Well, obviously, Dashiell Martello, we’re ten after all.”

And with that we walked closer to the group of people around the tree. I peeked through the crowd, across the many elbows and arms, to try and catch a glimpse of the man. But he had moved from there. If only these adults hadn't gotten involved, this would have remained my own secret mystery, Dash and mine.

"Oh hey kid, watch out," a woman abruptly drew back as I collided with her, I looked up at her, she had curly blonde hair and wore a red skirt, all dressed up. I smiled back, "It's okay."

"What are you doing here?" she asked, curiously. "We play here," I replied, "But my friend Dash, that's him," I pointed at Dash who was standing well away from the crowd, "Dash said that a man died here but I didn't believe him, so I came here to check it out for myself."

"Well, your friend is right, and it would be better if you go back and play, and let the grownups handle this okay?" The woman smiled at me. So she wasn't going to tell me anything and treat me like a kid, maybe Dash was right. She nodded at me, and my eye caught the corner of a piece of paper sticking out of her pocket. I nodded and pretended to trip, she caught and steadied me and I took the paper out of her pocket. I watched Dash as he waited with a worried expression while I ran over to him, filled with excitement at having cheated an adult.

"What is it? What are you doing?" Dash asked. "Let's go, run," I pulled at him and dragged him along, as we ran out of the park. I showed him the piece of paper, it had an address written on it, "What's that?" Dash asked.

"I found it, it's a clue."

"A clue to what?"

"The only way we can find that out is by going to this place and see for ourselves," I answered, grinning broadly.

"Are you crazy? We can't do that!"

"Yes we can Dashiell Martello, we are ten after-all."

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The address that was written on the paper led us to a place in the part of town with many houses built close together along narrow streets. There were many shops and a lot of people, not enough to be a crowd, moving about a lot along the long streets. The place looked darker and smaller compared to where we live, these houses are small, they must have only three rooms, with no lawns or driveways.

"Anna, let's go back, this is dangerous," said Dash in a low voice for the hundredth time now, it had started to annoy me.

"Just a bit longer Dash," I replied. Sometimes I wished Dash wouldn't be such a coward, it's not like I wanted someone else to be part of my adventure. He was my friend and I wanted him to be there with me, but he was always a scared cat.

"There!" I pointed to the sign above one of the shops, a café, that was also written on the paper, and ran towards the shop, Dash close beside me. A huge man stood outside the shop, he stood up when we got near; he must be the bodyguard.

"Oye, what are you kids doing here in this part of town?" he demanded.

“We’re here looking for a person, he may have lived here,” I answered.

“Run along now,” he waved his gigantic arms at us, Dash hurriedly drew back, his hand on my arm, “This ain’t no place for kids, run along.”

“But, you have to listen to us,” I protested.

Dash began to back off, pulling me along, “Let me go Dash,” I pushed him back, yanking my arm free, when all of a sudden a motorcycle came out of nowhere and almost hit Dash. But the huge man ran in front of the motorcycle and it veered to the side. I stood, and watched, frozen, unable to move, the houses suddenly seemed a lot closer and the streets even narrower. When the sound of barking came from behind me, I turned around slowly and watched as a black dog stood glaring at me, barking loudly. It sprang towards me but I still couldn’t move. And then, Dash ran up, he caught me by the arm and pulled me behind him as he ran into the street and away from the dog and the huge man and the motorcycle.

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The next day, the sky was covered with clouds, and I wanted to do nothing more than watch the clouds from my window. When Mom came into the room and said, “Dash, get ready, we’re going to the funeral of Edward Stone, remember, the man you and Anna found in the park.” I sat up with a start, of course I remember him. But after that scare from yesterday, I don’t know how I am supposed to go to his funeral today. But if I told her now that I didn’t want to go I had no excuse to give her as to why I didn’t want to go. So I had no choice but to go, and so I got dressed.

The funeral was being held in the park where he

had been found, after this, I think it’s going to be hard to come back here and play. The place wasn’t that crowded, only twenty or so--- no, twenty two people who had come, all dressed in black. It was sunny and then it was cloudy, but the trees blocked most of the sky, while the stream ran noisily by the side, and people sat in silence listening to the priest. Just when it was about time to go, and everyone stood up, a hand caught me by the arm and pulled me out of the crowd and towards the trees. “come on hurry Dash.”

I stopped, “Anna, what are you doing here?”

“The same thing as you,” she turned to face me, in a neat black frock, “Now, while we stil have time, let’s solve this mystery.”

“But it already has been solved.”

“Oh come on Dash, we don’t have much time.”

There you go again, flying off into your world, without me, “No, not now Anna.”

Maybe I was too harsh, because she stared at me in surprise, “But why not, Dash?”

“Because a man has died, don’t you see there’s nothing we can do about it, it is too late to help him and by solving the mystery, we’re just having fun,” I cried out, “I’m sorry, but I can’t do this anymore.”

I turned around and left, racing between the trees, until I tripped and fell to the floor. I slowly stood up and saw I was back at the ceremony site; The adults were slowly drifting away to where their cars were. And I was left all alone. No, not alone, there was still the grave. I turned to look at it, and I stared at the smooth grey stone. What should I do? What if anyone saw me?

“I am sorry, Mister,” I said slowly, “I realize we

shouldn't have made such a silly game out of this, I mean your d-death, but that is just how Anna is, I guess. And I argued with her too, it might make you feel sad because of that." I paused, "But I guess what Anna did wasn't all that bad, because, I mean, now that you're dead, no one would remember you and you would be all alone. Must feel terrible to be left alone and not being able to do anything about it. But don't worry, because of Anna I would never forget you, this mystery, I mean, I may forget who you were or how you died, but I will never forget what it was I felt because I found you one day in the park."

I hadn't realized, as I talked, when Anna came over and stood behind me, but I sure was scared when she said, "That was nice," she walked over

and stood next to me, "I didn't really think like that, you really are an odd cookie Dash."

I was too ashamed to say anything back, "I guess not all mysteries in this world are meant to be solved," she said, and took my hand, "But then, if all mysteries could be solved what would be the point of them being mysteries anyways," she winked at me.

"Come on, let's go and get our bikes, maybe we'll get lucky and find another dead body," Anna declared happily, running out of the park.

"Are you crazy or something Anna?"

"No, Dashiell Martello, we're just ten anyways."

And God forbid the mysteries inside the head of a ten year old.

## Truth

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

— Mark Twain

A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.

— Charles Spurgeon

## Fiction

Fiction is a lie through which we tell the truth.

— Albert Camus

Fiction reveals truth, which reality obscures.

— Jenamyn West

One always has a better book in one's mind than one can manage.

— A good book isn't written; it's rewritten.

## Education is the Antidote to Poverty

Muhammad Haseeb Hayat, SEECS

It is commonly perceived that education is the most powerful weapon in alleviating poverty, elevating economic growth, producing skilled human resource, creating a healthy and enlightened social environment and making self-sufficient nations. Poverty and education are paradoxically related to each other: if one is increased, the other is decreased.

In a socially, economically, religiously and culturally diverse state like Pakistan, higher education institutions and universities, imparting education and conducting cutting edge research, are the central mechanisms that can raise the declining social and economic infrastructure of the country.

Pakistan, despite rapid growth in the education sector during the past decade, suffers from severe challenges in its educational development. These challenges include lack of access to higher education for the majority of its youth, result oriented standards of pedagogical techniques, braindrain of qualified human resource and lack of adaptability to changing paradigms of academic research.

Out of a population of 190 million, only five percent of them have access to university level education. It is worth mentioning that, by the end of 2022, Pakistan needs 36 million new jobs if the economy grows up to six percent annually. Therefore, it is the premier duty of all national universities to produce graduates who fulfill the criteria of the national, social and economic needs of the country. Terrorism and incompetent leaders had thrown the country in the pit of darkness and uncertainties.

Government must set aside 4% of GDP for education. It is the minimum recommended allocation for education by the UNESCO. Only then the Govt can claim that it is serious about educational uplift of Pakistan. At present the Govt is spending about 2.8% of GDP on Education in Pakistan. This amount is mainly spent on salaries of the teachers and support staff. Very little amount is left behind for infrastructure development and research. That's why the status quo prevails in the field of education.

## Introspection

Imad ud Din Zawar, SMME

“Yesterday, after quite some time, I had the chance to entertain my long awaited client, my innerself. He had been waiting at the door since long but unfortunately I couldn't find any time from my busy

routine. Finally I opened the door and allowed him to come inside. He refused like always, but unlike other times where we would keep staring at each other till one of us left, my innerself seemed eager

to ask me something and thus came the question:

Inner Self : Describe yourself briefly.

Me (A bit surprised by the nature of question) “Well to begin with I am an aspiring professional and intellectual.” Here I was interrupted, knowing myself, the meaning of this interruption was that a taunt was coming my way.

Inner Self: Aah! intellectual and professional you say. Your generation, the 21st century generation, just doesn't seem to realize that somewhere in between when you grow up you want to become an army officer, doctor, engineer and back home. You don't live in the present; you always live in the future. You work day and night to make your future and ignore your 'present' altogether. You have lost the ingredient to live life. You have let go of the spirit of life, somewhere in between dancing and singing with joy on the night before *Eid*,

having sleepless night in the joy of *eid*, waiting to meet your relatives on the auspicious day, sleeping and avoiding to meet your loved ones on *eid* day, finding it hard to get up early for *eid namaz*, texting stereotyped messages to all your contacts.

Your generation has lost the vigor and zeal of life, rather the life itself. What I see moving around are socially connected yet visibly distracted and lonely beings who in their pathetic effort to evade this moral dilemma have surrounded themselves with virtual friends and socializing applications. Saying this, my innerself turned away and as it faded into darkness, I could feel my heart sinking.

I needed to make some quick amends, perhaps it was my last chance to save myself from this quagmire of social connectivity, but wait, how about posting this essay on Facebook and getting some likes... Alas.

## Redefining Future: A Pakistani Perspective

Syed Mazhar Abbas Naqvi

As the word suggests, the meaning of it might be self-evident but the concept goes way beyond than what meets the eye. One may simply put it to a better definition of a concept but that is not it. It means change. The conceptualization of a new era or as I put it, change for the better.

I express myself here as an observer. As a nation,

we have extremely diverse and poorly defined priorities. We have boarded on a ship not having the capacity to take us anywhere but it lingers on and on. This is a testimony to the ability of a few good men without whom this cripple of a system might not survive. We are in dire need of redefining our characters, morals, principles, visions, responsibilities and notions for one cannot sur-

vive merely at the mercy of good fortune and the phrase “Inshaa Allaah”. He has given us abilities and the time is ripe to put those abilities to good use.

Catharsis or reflection is the first step along the way to redefinition. There is a serious need to find the cause of the problem. The problem that has come up in recent times is that we do not eradicate the root of the problem. We start the solution without understanding the problem. Our actions do not satisfy the underlying issues. A vision is required to take this ship ashore, to take Pakistan to its destined glory. Running like headless chickens is doing us more harm than good as is clear from the situation prevailing in Pakistan. Almost everything is grinding to a halt that is ominous for our very sovereignty and survival.

Let’s start by shedding some light on the education system suffering from poor management and lack of vision. The most important aspect of human civilization apparently is no priority for the officials in Pakistan. It really pains me to see the educated rotting in Pakistan and those responsible shall be held accountable. Education means enlightening the mind rather than training the mind. This stark contrast is evident from the ground reality that education in our country does not yield capability which is a major cause of concern. Education is reformation. Transforming education into a burden is a crime, one which is very common in our country. I understand the need to educate the masses but fulfilling a mere formality does not conform to the real principles of education. The problems are boundless but no one stands up to the system that does not toler-

ate devotion and sincerity. Priority has become a formality and a select few who do promote quality in this sector have formed a sort of an industry where you do not have the right to education unless you pay the bills. A vision is required in redefining what education really means and how big of an asset it can prove to be in the long run. We need to identify the deficiencies of the system as our current education system is extremely one-dimensional depriving us of all-round talent. Producing numerous degree-holder youth, possessing unpolished talent will render us useless collectively as a nation not to mention the social unrest that it will cost.

The problems do not just end there. Our economic system needs no introduction. It is in a state of fix. Our financial institutions are incapable of running the wheels of the nation. Loans have become a serious burden. There is nothing to blame but the fact that we lack vision and wisdom in formulating policies. The system thrives on baseless decisions and even more baseless opposition to a half decent approach. Shying away from responsibilities has become a norm. Offices have become a breeding ground for “exploitation of people”. A serious restructuring is needed, an effort to redefine the vision has become the need of the hour otherwise there may be no hope.

The list is exhausting. There are these water problems which include the inaccessibility to fresh water in various parts of the country; improper storage facilities leading to droughts and so on. Our international security is at an all-time low. Security has never been a more engaging issue. In simple words we have hit rock bottom and now

there is only one way, to go up, and that is only possible when we are ready to redefine ourselves and our motives. We followed an ideology to great Pakistan, now we need one to make it.

As things stand, we are destined for nothing but doom and gloom. We are battling problems on all fronts. Unless we change, only more devastation awaits us. We must look into ourselves and then it will not be difficult to see what's wrong. We lack in national character. We must unite for a cause because strength lies in unity and diversity. We must redefine ourselves and break the shackles

that hold us back from soaring up high in the sky. For a glorious future, we need to honor the past and put right the wrongs of present. Redefinition is that spark which will ignite our passion and potential en-route to progress and prosperity.

“We can learn the art of fierce compassion-redefining strength, deconstructing isolation and renewing a sense of community, practicing letting go of rigid us vs. them thinking, while cultivating power and clarity in response to difficult situations.” Sharon Salzberg

## More or Less

Dua Anjum, SEecs

Have you ever come across the following line by Aristotle (in *MetaPhysica*) , “ The whole is greater than the sum of its parts” ? I found out who said it just now although I've used it numerous times, thought of it numerous times and counted it among one of the most beautiful words ever said and yet, only now do I realize exactly how beautiful they are.

When first I heard those words ring through my ears, 'twas from Juli Baker's father Mr. Baker of *Flipped* (2010), the fact that the entire motion picture was an analysis of those words is something I figured out after watching endless reruns of that movie. Some might find it quite tedious, I realized as I made my

little brother and sister watch it with me. To me, it is the best accumulation of all things I hold so dear.

“A painting is more than the sum of its parts,” he would tell me, and then go on to explain how the cow by itself is just a cow, and the meadow by itself is just grass and flowers, and the sun peeking through the trees is just a beam of light, but put them all together and you've got magic,” says Julie (he being Mr. Baker) explaining the concept

for the first time. I bet when Aristotle jotted it down first he could not have foreseen the immense effect that it would have on generations of people to come nor the many ways it would be interpreted. For me, Julie's interpretation seems best.

For weeks I wondered, as she had, about the people around me, about whether they were more or less, as Chet had explained how with people the sum could sometimes be less than the sum of their parts. It seemed like such a Wordsworthian conception and so enticed me even more. I would look at my parents and in essence of Scout Finch's relentless faith that parents could never do any wrong, immediately deem them to be more. I would observe best friends and find their qualities, the good and the bad, to come together to be more. I would be observing and deciding and a lot of the time going by intuition.

Yes, some people, with their courageous hearts and sound minds, with their gorgeous eyes and dependable personalities, with their creative hands and their wild souls, with their flaws and faults all put together, are more than the sum of all these things. They are more and you just know it, you cannot decide why or how but that tiny voice inside your head tells you they are and you got naught to do but believe it. And some with porcelain skin and flawless bodies, with perfect accents and a resume full to the brim with experience, with picture perfect faces and righteousness galore, are just less.

When one goes on about it for a while, it starts to seem as if the characterization might be quite unjust and biased and based purely on each person's own perspective and yet I have not only found myself unconsciously doing the same thing but many others as well

albeit in a different manner. For myself, I'd say it rarely ever paints any human in a darker light but always finds the best of them and creates a rather vibrant whole.

Yet here I contradict myself (keeping intact my fascination for the quote) and say that sometimes it is unfair to people to always keep considering them as something more. Often, something that they are not, something that garners expectation of the highest standards and can prove to be problematic. Just like Jean Louise's dilemma in *Go Set A Watchman* in thinking of her father as her conscience, considering him not man but god, in the way that she would think of him as flawless and unable to do wrong.

We sometimes don't see people as people anymore. And well, we are, in essence, all the same, all human, all capable of terrifying words said and acts committed, all just as able to do wrong as right. So, then I tried to see people as exactly what they are and not more or less. It has proven impossibly difficult to do such a thing.

In Conclusion, yes a third person perspective can prove to be quite enlightening and quite limited at the same time. We could never really know a person so as to deem 'exactly what they are', you could know someone for years and they could end up surprising you in the strangest of ways. You could know someone for a week and think to yourself, "Your heart and my heart seem to be old friends."

## Impress Mr. Employer! Strategic Tips

M. Raheem, HR Dte

Unemployment is hovering day by day. On the one hand companies are grousing that they can't find skilled and talented workers; it takes a lot of time to filling a job. But on the other hand universities are producing abundance of graduates every year in the emerging fields of science and technology. However, employers are simply blaming institutions that they are not equipping the graduates with the right types of skills and training.

### **Making a difference**

You should be clear that you are important and you can create the difference. In order to impress the employer you have to think out of the box. Before presenting yourself, you should have a firm belief in yourself that you are The Best. Keep in mind that the resume you are presenting is totally different and amazing. You may think that someone else is also presenting his/her CV in the same format but it's you that can astound and present yourself to others that will get you hired. Don't expect employers to hand you a job without putting effort on your part. You have to prove that you have prodigious talent so that people will hire you.

We get hundreds of resume for a single job. I am surprised how people think that their resume is going to be the best among the rest, but in reality they think the same. Think outside the box before you post your resume to an employer for a job so that you will not embarrass yourself. Come up with something smart and meaningful to say, specifically about your education and work experience.

Let me share my experience with you, before applying for any job and writing your resume/CV for a specific post or company, please take time and see how you can impress Mr. Employer and how creative you are in expressing yourself. What difference you can make once you are hired.

Don't get me wrong. We do need information to be educated. But we need to know the true meaning of education and social networking. It is always difficult to get a job on the first go but the best candidate never gives up and does whatever it takes to be at the right place and at the right time. They do appear in as many interviews as possible. It is of immense importance that they will have to pace through a lot of interviews and face a lot of "nos" before getting their dream job.

Connectivity is opportunity! Strong social network presence. Social media happens to be more powerful in connecting people, friends and co-workers. It is always good to be present at different platforms, human resource forums. Besides these social networks now a days, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are the most popular social networking websites which can be used to burden your job searching process.

Being a Human Resource Professional and a member of different Human Resource Forums where the top brains of the country come and share their views and knowledge, I speak from experience. While talking of an HR platform on Recruitment and Selection an audience upturned and asked a question, "how can a fresh graduate get a job?"

They were complaining that most of the time employers don't get a call for interview? Why is their resume not considered by the employer?" Before I went into the details and responded to the concerned question, I just replied through a question to the audience present at the hall. May I know how many students/fresh graduates are present at this forum? I was astonished to see that there was only one hand raised in the audience. See this is the problem! If the fresh graduates do not participate in such free of cost forums, how will they get to know why their CV/Resume is not being considered? Or why is he/she not called for interview. Most of the time they just apply for the job which is either totally irrelevant or they do not fulfill the job criteria. The candidate before posting his/her resume must see the post pertains to their field of interest and requires a skill set that they already possess. They apply for marketing job when their specialization is in HR; sometimes they ignore the age limit, etc. Universities must educate their students to attend such forums. I think the real culprits are the job seekers themselves.

Another bigger hurdle and challenge that most of our fresh graduates face in getting a job is due to their concern about their studies. Everyone thinks that he will start job once he is done with his education. We can't blame universities/institutes in this regard. It is the sole responsibility of the students to be social and have strong networking skills yet think differently. Thus we need to focus and compete for knowledge and wisdom, and not for grades.

Sometimes people make blunder of excluding information they think might be irrelevant; who

knows it might be the most important thing which your employer is looking forward to. The employer/HR manager can judge very easily whatever you have put in your resume. So be specific to mention all that in your resume which could convey the message easily. Avoid a handwritten resume as they are not as neat and clean as the typed ones. Be concise and never pepper your resume with big words. Look at the time gaps between your education and employment. The manager can easily find out the gaps between your education and the time you have been unemployed or it might be because of some other reason. It is better not to hide anything and be upfront.

Now when you go to write your CV/resume to impress Mr. Employer, keep these things in mind and always search for good resume on Google, and consult with those who know how to write a great resume. Go to seminars, workshops and forums. Ask them questions, don't be embarrassed as it's the time to learn. Impressing Mr. Employer is not easy but it is not impossible. Just be specific in whatever you are presenting.

To get your dream career it is always good to learn the interview process and understand what your employer is looking for. There is no need to include high school information if you have already done graduation or post-graduation. Be specific and put only that information which is being asked. For example there is no need to write your grade point average (GPA), if you are not specially asked; for Low GPA won't help you. Dress nicely even if it is not required; be positive and confident to show employer that you are the right person for the position.

## **Tips to impress your interviewer**

If you are in the market and looking for new opportunity make sure, you know and polish all these interview skills.

**Well Written Resume:** Prepare a Professional resume and know your resume well.

**Be on time:** Try to reach 15 minutes before the interview time; it always makes a good impression.

**Inappropriate Interview Attire:** Choose formal dress, color, don't wear inappropriate attire.

Do ample research on the company. Do internet research on the company, position, and interviewer and get to know about the culture and environment.

**Keep a Smile:** It's always good to smile when required. Don't be nervous sit up straight in your chair, speak clearly. Just be confident that you are the best.

**Thank you note:** It's always good to send thank you note

### Job

Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.

— Confucious

Whatever your life work is, do it well, A man should do his job so well that the living, the dead, and the unborn could do it no better.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

Whatever your life work is, do it well. A man should do his job so well that the living, the dead, and the unborn could do it no better.

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### Change

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

— Barrck Obama

If you are walking down the path and you are willing to keep walking, eventually you will make progress.

— Barrck Obama

No party has a monopoly on wisdom. No democracy works without compromise.

— Barrck Obam

## A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever

Muhammad Sajid, SEecs

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever” is an attractive, enchanting and captivating quote by John Keats and it’s a nice sentiment as well. In this quote “thing of beauty” refers to beautiful natural aspects that we mostly see for example dusk time, when it’s raining, when sea and earth are joined without any joint, when sun rising on horizon, when birds are dancing and singing songs with stylish symphony or any snow covered peak with its mammoth size, etc. There is a beauty hidden in every tool in this awesome world. This beauty is visible to all those who are blessed with captivating beauty in eyes. This world is composed of beautiful symphony of nature but we people mostly ignore it because of our daily tough routine work. Here John Keats is emphasizing on these wonderful scenes which provide him comfort in his daily life. Keats was extremely fond of watching this lovely world just like a dreamland. All worldly affairs are away from beauty. Beauty is a name of physical attractiveness and is a name of a comfort whenever one is sad and has nothing to do.

We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. This world is just as it’s a paradise. Here we may find diversity in everything. Diversity in flowers, diversity in animals, diversity in fruits and vegetables, diversity in birds; in short there is diversity in every thing from tiny object to giant one. All these varieties have different beauties hidden in those. Everything in this world dances the symphony of beauty. Beauty impacts great pleasure and joy to everyone—If

anyone just recognises the beauty of something then it will give him great pleasure. Variegation is the base of beauty.

Beauty is just like a candle that blooms light in one’s heart. It’s just charm, beauty and fairness that can repair a dead heart. It gives pleasure as long as one watches that allurements. Suppose some one visited a mountain side and passed his time watching lovely lakes, flowers blooming around lakes, people skating on snow, sky kissing curvaceous mountains with glittering snow on it with cool breeze blowing there because of trees. Everyone has God-gifted power of appreciating this environment. All this is a source of refinement that provides great amusement, comfort, gratification and cheers. Now he has certain image of fairness of that mountainside in his mind. Whenever he is alone, sad and has nothing to do, he can simply flash that elegance in his mind. This can make him laugh and can boost his mood. This charm and beauty will remain for him as a joy and wonder till his death.

This world is composed of tough and hard accounts to handle in every day life. Today one is selfish. One doesn’t have time to watch and enjoy nature. He just wants to have wealth that seems to be solution of all problems. Now-a-days this charm is going invisible day by day. Freak minds constructing sky touching hotels on lovely mountain side. Soon these ravishing scenes will no more be there. According to modern man these sceneries are useless to watch. It’s just wastage of

time. In fact modern man doesn't have essence of nature in his heart. Modern man doesn't have even a single second to watch these refreshing commotions. Me and you even all in today's world find this beauty useless to watch because of our selfishness and love for money. According to many people all beautiful natural stuff is nothing except time wastage. The fact is we are selfish. Our heads are filled with useless and unnecessary stuff. We all just work for wealth and enjoy counting wealth despite the fact that watching charm of nature is better than this useless stuff that doesn't provide us comfort. It is just beauty and elegance that can free us from all these tough and tiring works.

There is no end to fascination and glamour in this

world of ours. Beauty is a light of human heart, mind and soul. It provides him comfort whenever he is alone. People should not forget the fact that beauty can be everlasting and all worldly angers and problems can be triumphed by watching a single admirable and superb view of our paradise where we are living. Beauty of this world occurs naturally, it can't be fabricated. One must go outside to the fields to watch sunshine; flowers that dance, etc., and capture our spirit. Never lose an opportunity of watching anything that is beautiful; for beauty is God's handwriting. Welcome it in every fair creature, in every fair sky, in every fair flower, and thank God for it as a cup of blessing.

## **Burnt Shadows**

Book Reviewed by

Waleed Bin Khalid

The morbid nature of the novel is revealed early on via the prologue when we are introduced to a man caged in a torture cell. Without revealing the identity of the tortured, the novel moves on to the first of its four sections. Nagasaki, Japan.

The story starts amidst the Second World War. Our protagonist, Hiroko Tanaka is the daughter of a rebellious artist father who vehemently opposes the Japanese Empire and its kamikaze militarism. Hiroko is a German language teacher at a local school and through that link is introduced to Konrad Weiss, a German. They share a lot of things including the love for languages and by the end of the first section of the story the two profess their affection for each other and plan on getting married secretly lest the prevalent xenophobia might harm them. Their dreams however are obliterated along with the city of Nagasaki when US President Truman decides to drop a second atomic bomb. Hiroko is branded with scars where her body goes numb. Shamsi has used many metaphors in her writing and these black marks devoid of sensing contact show how apathetic and brutal humans can be, dark and numb like the scars Hiroko is branded with; thanks to the bomb. Konrad unfortunately does not survive this mini apocalypse and feeling the urge to seek a new beginning to free herself from the ghosts of Konrad's memories, Hiroko travels to India.

As the second section unfolds, Shamsi paints a beautiful picture of Delhi. The air is tense with

the unpredictability of what the impending partition of the great Hindustan would bring for both the locals and the British. In this city of great poets, Hiroko arrives at Ilse Burton's house. Ilse is Konrad's sister who is married to the Englishman James Burton. Ilse warmly accepts Hiroko into her household and finds a friend in her. Hiroko reveals an urge to learn the local language and is appointed a tutor, a handsome Muslim named Sajjad Ashraf. In the course of time they find comfort in each other's company and despite the forebodings from their hosts, they get married. This clash of culture persists throughout the novel. Shamsi shows us how love covers the rational eye and forces the couple to take a leap of faith. A contrast has now developed between the apathy and empathy in humans. Shamsi wonderfully retains this distinction to show how complex we humans can be when it comes to matters regarding love and hatred. This leap of faith brings Hiroko and Sajjad to, Karachi, Pakistan.

We move ahead in time to the era of General Zia ul Haq and the Afghan war. Hiroko now has a settled life with Sajjad and a son named Raza, who like his mother has a penchant for languages. We witness the adolescent struggles that young Raza goes through. Their family is regularly visited by Harry Burton, the son of James and Ilse Burton, who has alliances with his adoptive home, the United States and has joined the CIA. Our characters often intermingle but as Raza's frustrations with life grow; he whimsically goes on a wild ad-

venture with an Afghan boy Abdullah. The journey along with the thrill of seeing war also brings huge losses to the family.

The story fast forwards again and this time we are in New York City just after the disastrous 9/11. Hiroko reveals that she has travelled this far to escape from the escalating nuclear tensions between the two Asian rivals, Pakistan and India. She now lives with her former host, Ilse and Ilse's granddaughter Kim. Raza, thanks mostly to his grasp on languages has also joined a private secret service agency and works alongside Harry Burton in Afghanistan. Raza repeatedly tries to shove his guilt for the vices he committed in life aside but ultimately is overcome by them and tries to do the right thing, bring an old friend home. Whether he is able to find salvation, I leave for the reader to find.

The story looks at how pain is universal and equally damaging to people from all parts of the world but at the very same time how it is so easy not to feel the pain of others. Hiroko tells us that the only thing you need to wipe out a people is to "put them in a little corner of the big picture."

This idea resonates throughout the story. What are mere 75,000 Japanese more when 60 million had already died in the war? What is the life of just one man when so many before him have perished the same way? This utilitarian argument keeps coming up to justify the killings of others. We have yet to realize that killing people only gives birth to more hate.

Another important theme I discerned in the novel

was the difference of perception of people from across the world and how this eventually leads us to see other humans as strange. Where first world problems such as the death of a pet may leave a person in the developed world to plunge into depression, terrible atrocities occur to people in the third world and yet life goes on. It tells us a lot about how unfair this world is; how justice is almost nonexistent apart from what we have tried to amateurishly carve out of our arbitrary sense of morality. When Abdullah describes how during a road trip they drove over toy bunnies, Kim sees this revelation as a certificate of existence of evil in him. Critics have described this scene as 'excess' but I feel that there is a subtle point in this scene. It shows how the way we are brought up and the experiences we go through shape us, make our hearts hard or soft and ultimately force us to perceive anyone who thinks otherwise as alien. These misconceptions are what then conceive xenophobia and what we need to fight against.

These messages are important especially in context with the events of the current global arena. In these cruel times of aimless killing and suffering, with countries flooded with refugees and the sky raining bombs, we must realize what Kamila Shamsi has tried to explain; that the shoving away of the sacredness of human life for the sake of some greater good is in itself the biggest evil. That life is unfair and devoid of justice and the only justice that can be found is the one that springs from the kindness of one's heart. I feel that the melancholic tone of this novel was a reflection of the indifference that prevails across the hearts of people in contemporary times.

## **Jinnah often came to our house**

Book Reviewed by

Dr Tughral Yamin PhD

Jinnah often came to our house (JOCTOH) is a novel written by Kiran Doshi. It is blend of a fiction and history, more fiction and less history. Although to be fair this is the exact purpose of the book. In fact the author at the very end of his magnum opus makes his purpose clear by citing Francis Bacon: "Truth is hard to tell, it sometimes needs fiction to make it plausible."

When you create a plausible work of fiction peppered with historical facts and figures, it sells and it soon becomes the popular narrative. Hollywood and Bollywood two greatest propaganda machineries that the world has ever seen do it all the time. The pulp fiction that they churn out mutate into myths that become so ingrained in public memory that it becomes very difficult to separate fact from fiction. The plethora of clichés and stereotypes soon replaces the truth.

In his novel Doshi has painstakingly caricatured and demonized Muhammad Ali Jinnah, his sister Fatima, the first prime minister of Pakistan Liaquat Ali Khan and the state of Pakistan. The narrative is so powerfully and convincingly built that a gullible person will fall hook, line and sinker for it. In a period spanning 1903 to 1948, Jinnah is convincingly cast as a person, whom you would end up hating.

Endeared by the Bombay high class, for his handsome demeanor, exquisite dress sense and elegant manner, Jinnah is also depicted to be popular with

the Muslim masses brilliantly arguing and winning their cases in the court from British judges, who hate Jinnah from the core of their hearts but can do little to decide against him. His facility to treat them with disdain and derision is a facility that is completely alien to the natives.

From his very secular look and nationalist identity and friendship with the nationalist like Tilak, a change in personality is visible as Gandhi arrives on the scene and replaces him from his pedestal as the uncrowned king of Bombay. Gandhi demolishes his credentials as a politician and dims his chances to shine bright on the firmament of Indian political scene as a nationalist leader. Jinnah after having failed to win any support in the ranks of the Indian National Congress initially goes into denial but subsequently picks up the cause of the Muslims with a vengeance. He instigates the Muslims to opt for partition of India that causes unimaginable mayhem and bloodshed. Jinnah's vengeance is because he has been jilted in matters of love and denied what he considered his rightful place in the Indian politics (sic). For this he exacts a terrible price for which everybody has to pay for. In the bargain he creates a nation that is barbaric and bloodthirsty. Fatima Jinnah is depicted as a dominating shrew, hovering over his brother and quarrelling with his young wife. Liaquat Ali Khan is shown as weak and vulnerable person, who can have his potential

which everybody has to pay for. In the bargain he creates a nation that is barbaric and bloodthirsty. Fatima Jinnah is depicted as a dominating shrew, hovering over his brother and quarrelling with his young wife. Liaquat Ali Khan is shown as a weak and vulnerable person, who can have his potential rival eliminated through any means.

Set in Bombay before partition, JOCTOH is a story set against the travails of the trials and vicissitudes of the Kowaishi family. This Muslim family is rich and powerful and the elder Kowaishi is a property tycoon, who has multiplied his wealth manifold. His son the England returned Sultan has made a name as lawyer of repute. He is married to Rehana, the main protagonist of the story. Rehana is not only well read and educated, she is extremely talented. Wedded to the cause of female education, Rehana establishes a school for

Muslim girls in Bombay with the money she receives as endowment from Sultan's aunt, the *Bari Phupho*. On Jinnah's advice she opens up her school for girls of other faith. Jinnah is smitten by the talented Rehana and would like to go back to her after his fragile marriage with Ruttie collapses. Rehana despite being attracted towards spurns his advance because she has come to believe in the Gandhian cause and would not compromise on her principles. It is a long tale of love and deception. It has been told effectively and emotively but at the end of the day is meant to create hateful images that become jarring on the nerves. One would advise the reader not to draw any hasty conclusions.

\*The reviewer is the Associate Dean Centre for International Peace & Stability (CIPS), National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST) Islamabad.

## **All the Light We Cannot See by Doerr**

Book Reviewed by

Dua Anjum

Ere I say anything else, I must say that All The Light We Cannot See left me breathless and astounded. It is a novel written by Anthony Doerr published by Scribner on May 6, 2014. It won the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the Andrew Carnegie Medal in category Excellence in Fiction for the year 2015. It focuses on a blind French girl and a German boy, set during World War II, in occupied France.

MarieLaure LeBlanc is the daughter of a widowed master locksmith at the Museum of Natural His-

tory in Paris. The museum is shown to house an exquisite blue diamond of incomputable value. According to legend, however, it is cursed: whoever is the keeper of the "Sea of Flames" cannot die but their loved ones will be stricken with incessant catastrophe. While in Germany, 8 year old Werner Pfennig is an orphan in the coalmining town of Zollverein. His passion for science and his gift for radio mechanics earn him a place at a training school for the Nazi military.

This story, to me, felt rather like an asynchronous

pendulum that takes some getting used to. Essentially, a reader may have to spend time trying to get the hang of the back and forth with the timeline. We start with glimpses into the future which reminded me of Markus Zusak's style in his well acclaimed "The Book Thief" where Death (our storyteller) makes certain predictions about the future. Instead of how you'd expect this knowledge of what's coming to put you off, it actually does quite the opposite by creating the greatest kind of suspense possible.

There are no sentences more perfectly crafted nor dialogue more daunting and haunting at the same time. This one review by author J.R. Moehringer says, "Doerr sees the world as a scientist, but feels it like a poet." There could be no description more apt and it rings so perfectly with the kind of writer that I someday aspire to be that I cannot help but quote. Doerr's perception of the world is so completely filled with years of accumulated knowledge about anything and everything and yet the way he puts it to paper has all the airs of perfect poetry.

Sherlock's theory on the mind being able to reach maximum capacity and hence the need for only gathering the data needed for one's profession leads me to think that despite this being true, a writer must know all and as much as possible, in order to successfully provide readers with worlds anew. It can get a bit tedious to the weakwilled reader and it took me thrice as long to finish reading as it does normally a book of this size but I suppose that is because the number of pages are no measure of the immensity of the story. I often read a single paragraph more than four times not

because I could not comprehend the true meaning but because I had to read it just that many times over for the meaning to sink in.

Often we find ourselves immersed into a story where it seems like reality is but a dream and this is the real thing. This made up world is the real one. That only happens with certain spectacular pieces of writing and not all books I pick up to read. So, after a very long time this book gave me that feeling of being transported.

The characters are all so enriched with history that it will not just be the protagonists that you find yourself empathizing with and walking through their lives beside them but almost all persons involved have this quality that completely blows your mind. A German Sergeant doing his job is in the right. A French network of spies doing their job to aid the American army is in the right. A 19 year old expert and creator of radio transmission detection equipment, Pfennig, when rooting out Russians and Frenchmen working against the Fuhrer is in the right. A blind girl, MarieLaure, working with encrypted codes and her Great Uncle, Etienne, transmitting these codes are in the right. In certain parts we find such utter and total unbiased writing that I get chills wondering how it could have come to be.

However, what I truly admired was the innate sense of right and wrong that it was imbued with. Through it all, we know that the horrifying deeds committed are in fact so without being explicitly stated that way. Finally, I highly recommend this for a read and if you do pick it up please be patient and prepare yourself to be overwhelmed.

## Storm and Silence

Book Reviewed by

Zahra Waheed

Winner of the People's Choice Awards

First of all, guys, don't be deterred by that fact that this is a historical fiction where boy meets girl, boy treats her badly, she is naïve and a "damsel in distress", boy slowly falls for girl and finally they get married happily ever after. No! Just stop, right there, right now.

In this book, expect a girl with an opinion that was so unlike the 1839 Victorian England women; expect a man as cold and hard as an ice block; expect an aunt with only one goal in mind, to marry off said girl to the richest suitor; expect said girl to put up a fight of the century against it; expect said man as the stingiest boss ever; expect secret enemies behind the societal scenes; expect blazing state-of-the-art weaponry; expect adventure and a whole lot of witty banter.

Lilly Linton is tired of being away from the spotlight that is always bright and hot on all the men of England. Well what about the women? Why can't they ever get jobs, marry whenever they want, make laws, and most importantly, vote? If the Queen could do it, why couldn't they? Lilly Linton, with her three best friends, is on a mission. Armed with her quick wit, perseverance, and an unconscious backing from an anonymous

financial magnate, is out to get justice and equality for women.

But, she just couldn't forget her "good" manners that her aunt had instilled in her.

She soon finds out that dressing up as a man, was the key to achieving all her dreams and more. Her world is opened to new opportunities, an adventure, and...a job? How?! Find out how Lilly,

"That's exactly what I intend! Votes, ladies and gentlemen, votes for women!"

Negotiates with her friends and a new boss who only believes in,

"Knowledge is power' time is money"

To get exactly what she wants. If you're a true feminist, a suffragette on the inside, and like humor,

"So we have one more thing on our to-do list. Achieve women's suffrage and get the inventor of solid chocolate bars knighted for his achievements."

The first chapter will get you hooked instantly.

"Manliness, manliness...give me some manliness!"

If that isn't enough, the book will keep the readers on the edge of their seats till the end that entices them to make a mad dash for the second book!

## **Khamosh Falahkaar**

Book Reviewed by

Ikram Azam

### **Introductory:**

The Urdu book under review is the spell-binding sacrificial success story of Pakistan's exemplary altruist, philanthropist, silent icon of humanitarianism and role model, late Mahmud-ul-Haq Alvi. Its author is my precious friend, Air Commodore (R) Aslam Bazmi, Prof. of English and Ethics, an outstanding researcher, writer and educator in his own right. Before retirement from the PAF, he was head of the PAF's education branch. Prof. Aslam Bazmi is a bilingual writer, with sound command of and fluency both in English and Urdu.

Like Alvi Sahib, he, too, is a devout Muslim and a patriotic Pakistani, committed to Pakistan and its ideology

### **Two Role Models:**

For the Muslims, the holistic Sole-Supreme Moral-Spiritual-Secular Role Model is the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Apart from religious, prophetic, saintly and historical role models, every generation needs living exemplars to follow: peers, parents, siblings, teachers and educators, as well as the collective leadership in all avenues of life. They are the altruistic "Khuddam" of society and humanity, sincere social servants and community workers.

The book introduces two such exemplars: its cen-

tral silent protagonist, late Mahmud-ul-Haq Alvi, and its unassumingly reticent author.

### **The Book:**

Now to the un-priced book per se, published by Ali Trust, Pakistan in 2016 it is a 358-page hard-bound volume, dedicated to "*Insan Dosti*" - Human Fraternalism - for promoting peaceful humanity on earth. The book has following five main sections, and about 110 sub-sectional entries (divisible in fewer related chapters):

1. Introductory
2. HAKAS-Himalayan Successes
3. Ali Trust Pakistan
4. Character, Par Excellence
5. Reminiscences and Impressions

Ali Trust Pakistan is a luminous chapter of altruistic services to society and humanity. The Trust covers and caters to 20 community welfare projects and institutions, which are:

- (i) Ali Trust Eye Hospital, Okara
- (ii) Ali Trust College, Islamabad
- (iii) Ali Trust Girls School, Okara
- (iv) Ali Trust Industrial School, Okara
- (v) Ali Trust 'Taleem-ul Quraan' (for Girls) Okara
- (vi) Ali Trust High School for Boys, Pakpattan
- (vii) Ali Trust High School for Girls, Pakpattan

- tan
- (viii) Ali Trust T.B. Clinic, Pakpattan
  - (ix) Ali Trust Taleem-ul Quraan' (for Boys), Pakpattan
  - (x) Ali Trust Taleem-ul Quraan' (for Girls), Pakpattan
  - (xi) Ali Trust (Stitchcraft) School, Pakpattan
  - (xii) Ali Trust Girls Higher Secondary School, Rawalpindi
  - (xiii) Ali Trust "Dastkari" (stitchcraft) School, Rawalpindi
  - (xiv) Ali Trust Model High School, Islamabad.
  - (xv) Ali Trust Secondary School, G-14, Islamabad
  - (xvi) Ali Trust Free Dispensary, Khanna
  - (xvii) Ali Trust Mobile Dispensary, Islamabad
  - (xviii) Ali Trust Junior School, Chakwal
  - (xix) Free Transport/Free Provision of Water
  - (xx) Financial Aid and Assistance

Mahmud-ul Haq Alvi: The energetic author, Prof. Aslam Bazmi, has worked most diligently to research, write and compile this labour of love. The interviews and invited contributions reflect extensive field of research: Family, friends, admirers, teachers and students— all imbued with respect, reverence and affection for late Mahmud-ul Haq Alvi. He was born in 1937 in a village Khambra, seven miles from Jalandhar, in the British Indian Punjab at that time. Alvi Sahib hailed from a respectable "Awan" family. This tribe traditionally

traces its ancestry to the fourth caliph of Islam, Hazrat Ali (RA). The family opted for and migrated to Pakistan on Independence, where it grew up, got educated and prospered peacefully. Mahmud-ul Haq Alvi married twice, leaving behind two widows and their progeny. He died on 21st October 2014, at Islamabad, after leading a fabulously fulfilling life.

"Inna Lillahe wa inna illahe rajayoon"!

True Tribute:

The book about, him by Prof. Aslam Bazmi is a befitting tribute to Mahmud-ul Haq Alvi. It is a colourful well-crafted portrayal with glimpses of his life with family and friends. His picture on the book cover shows a genial smile radiating on the face of a genuine person, with Pakistan's national flag prominently visible in the background. The book will help to introduce Alvi Sahib to the present and future generations of Pakistan. The credit for preserving his memory is shared both by his legendary life-work and the highly effective and moving narrative his life-long friend, Prof. Aslam Bazmi. Their friendship dates back to 1975, after the lean author's completion of MA (English) programme from Government College Lahore. Their family friendship continues, as a loving legacy of altruistic fraternalism.

### **Iqbal's Dream**

Zammad Idrees, C of E&ME

I welcome you to a land made in the name of peace  
The result of countless sacrifices, measures extreme  
This country was a gift from Allah, the Supreme  
What we did to it the world has seen  
The ever growing braindrain, snatching our cream  
Our youth is astray, exploited in the name of 'deen'  
What went wrong here, why red replaced our green  
Life nowadays takes so less time to cease  
This was not what we wanted, this was not our theme  
Where every other day we are surrounded by the sufferers' scream  
I do not see many smiles around, too long it has been  
My question remains, is it still Iqbal's dream?

### **Prayer of a Pakistani**

Zammad Idrees, C of E&ME

I can't take the daily bloodshed anymore  
Our families are crying and our hearts are sore  
My families are crying so is my soul  
Innocent lives taken all the time  
Many dreams shattered with increase in crime  
Pleading to You on behalf of my nation to grant us peace  
We are Your creation suffering from disease  
Forgive us for our evils and misdeeds  
Because undoubtedly O Allah, You are the forgiver Supreme

## The Carnival of Rust

Sikandar Mirza, C of E&ME

If only you knew him like I do  
And had felt it what he chose to sue  
If only you had the eyes that could see  
That trivial dribble to you, which he knew, was sea  
If only you knew why he did what he did  
And realized that he exists,  
Which too, shall cease  
And if he could have been like them usual people  
And had found a trifling piece of peace  
You might have witnessed what he was  
You might have savvied the 'inner He'  
Watching from a corner he realizes  
And smiles at those sitting close  
He too could have had what they did  
They could have been me and you  
If a holy book could explain the ailments he had  
And what he did was not to rack  
You might have killed it, all your rancor  
Stopped merely staring, been able to 'see'  
A grey sizzle inside his soul screams  
That could have been us, you and me...  
He stares in the mirror, wondering, baffled  
His sight would now miss him  
He only sees me!  
I am him, now he is me  
He wakes up to the light of every morning  
Looks you up in a million faces  
He dives for the pearl he lost in sea  
But now a days the sizzle would cease  
Now is when a vision speaks  
This all shall pass, it'll all soon go  
Life's a trifling fly in a gusty flow

## Oh My Lord! Monday Again

Tabinda Ashraf, C of E&ME

You will certainly agree with my view  
It has been a trend there's nothing new  
How difficult is bearing the outrage and pain  
When by burdens we, the students get in chain  
Oh My Lord! Its Monday again...  
A chaos ahead and relaxation is banished  
Naivety wilts and calmness gets vanished  
From enjoyment when compelled to refrain  
It then becomes harder for the charms to sustain  
Oh My Lord! Its Monday again...  
Being forced to submit the bidden assignments  
A deep sigh for having no more chance of deferments  
Why couldn't one keep the comforts restrain  
A regret over why didn't we the time maintain?  
Oh My Lord! It's Monday again...  
It's not possible to the bliss of joy?  
To save from turmoil we can't even try  
How to crush down the hustle for a gain?  
And bring ourselves out of this drain  
Oh My Lord! Its Monday again...

## **A Place among the Stars**

Qazi Umer Jamil, C of E&ME

I once heard  
That I'm too young to float  
Above the rumors of this little world  
So one night I flew so high  
That all my memories got blurred  
And I forgot who I was  
There I saw the constellation of stars  
And in those adverse alignments of stars  
I witnessed the beauty of God  
And I thought of stars  
As the most beautiful thing  
That God has ever created  
But the stars smiled down  
And said to me  
Fly high to your own world  
We're not the most honored creation  
We just hold the God's heavens  
And we are made of dust and fire  
It is in you the soul lives  
It is in you the thoughts come into existence  
It is in you the beauty of God hides  
It is in you your own world exists  
And you will never know your greatness  
Without looking into your own eyes  
Right there between the heavens and the earth  
I was told the very far thing since my creation  
The God was trying to tell me.

### **The Crow's Calling**

Muhammad Fahad Sohail, C of E&ME

I dance along symphonies I barely comprehend  
I devour promises that lead to no end  
I look for sunshine in the shadows of the dark  
I feel ecstatic by uneven gusts of the wind  
I believe in the moments to live, the words they speak  
I breathe in the fumes of my own demise  
I hold on to the wounds of the past  
I refuse to forgo the fantasies I conceived  
I hope against hope, I've yet to give up on my dream  
I run around in circles, I tend to lose the track of time  
I'm trying to make sense of what I actually became  
I stare blandly at the twinkling candle flame  
I hope you know, once, I cared

### **When you can barely see**

Hussain Zaka, C of E&ME

When you can barely see  
You get addicted to the haze  
Running after a degree  
We stuck in a maze  
Victims to slaves  
Such a system still prevails  
Memory with graves  
Intelligence somehow fails  
'Tis not the usual story  
but 'tis our demand for liberation  
Our cry for salvation  
Justice for the victim  
Freedom to the slave

## The Thousand Imaginations

Qazi Umer Jamil, C of E&ME

I am neither 19 nor 20  
I am thousand imagination years old,  
I always wanted to set my journey to the shining  
stars  
And throw myself away from the path  
But you wanted to swim with sharks  
Now I see thousand stars  
In each of my scar.  
I depart with thousand regrets in my heart  
With thoughts in my mind  
That I am not some broken thing  
It is just that  
My mind is restless  
My thoughts are wild  
My bones are of steel  
And I love to stand against everything  
Love is not a burning thing  
Neither it is blind  
It is you, swimming with sharks  
And, tonight, my wish to be among stars is just a  
dream  
And here I am, to the place  
To which I do not belong  
Counting my scars  
But remember that  
My dream is not a broken dream  
You just have disfigured me  
Tell me, why you do not want to be among the  
stars?

And why you always choose my scars?  
And always forecast my journey?  
May be the scars are all I have got  
But remember that  
I am not some broken thing  
It is just that, my mind is restless,  
My thoughts are wild  
My bones are of steel  
And I love to stand against everything.  
See, I am not here  
'Cause I do not belong here  
I will stand there  
You will see me struggling  
Through my mind  
To stand against everything  
It was all that I was born to a place  
To which I do not belong  
It is just that  
My mind is restless  
My thoughts are wild  
My bones are of steel  
And I love to stand against everything.

## **Pain**

Ishaq Ibrahim

The hands had passed thirteen on the clock  
When there came on the door a resounding knock  
As she moved forward and opened the door  
There stood a figure, with red skin and eyes sore  
He stepped inside and looked around  
Noticing the many notorious sounds  
Of the water flowing from the loosened tap  
Of the dirty fan, creaking on the chair's lap  
He fixed on the woman his swallowing eyes  
And slapped the air fiercely, getting rid of flies  
“Look at the walls, so full of cracks  
No better is this house, from all the other shacks  
Look at the table, so weak and broken  
Much like yourself, so bleak and shaken  
What is this life, lived inside a ruin?  
Get up and leave, out you should be going!”  
“Leave I will not, for now I know my flaws  
This house I will fix, I don't follow your laws  
It belongs to me, I am its soul  
You wait and watch, I will make it a whole!  
But thank you I must, for I could not have gained  
Without you all this wisdom, O new friend pain!”

## Ring of Hope

Amnah Khan, SEECS

I clenched it in my hand,  
    It was tiny as a grain of sand  
With all the fear inside,  
    How could it be more wide?  
It's the only thing a wretch can hold  
    To cross the darkness of endless world  
But the 'Wall of Exemption' is so high  
    On a mountain that I can never climb  
While waiting for it to disappear,  
    Last few words that I could hear;  
"How couldn't you ever see?  
    So much better all this could be  
If instead of sob and crawl,  
    You would have tried to break the wall  
Even now a spark of light,  
    Is enough to make me bright  
For the sake of a last sight,  
    Have a glance at the height  
And cross the rocks with bare feet  
    It's for your soul, let them bleed"  
With an anguished heart I raised my head,  
    To save a soul that's already dead.  
But I saw a gleam through the crack  
    Now there should be no holding back  
Can't stay here and let it die,  
    So until the end, I shall try  
Someday I may reach the top  
    To light up my grain of hope

## A Poison Tree

Athar Minallah Khan, SEECS

I was angry with my friend  
I told my friends, my wrath did end  
I was angry with my foe  
I told it not, my wrath did grow

And I watered it in fears  
Night & morning with my tears  
And I sunned it with smiles  
And with soft deceitful wiles

And it grew both day and night  
Till it bore an apple bright  
And my foe beheld it shine  
And he knew that I was mine

And into my garden stole  
When night had veiled the pole  
In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree

## The Best Gift by God

Maryam Suhail, SEecs

Time is flying away  
I want it to stop  
The clock hands are moving fast  
I want them locked  
I can't even take control  
Cuz I don't, but God knows  
He is the one  
Who made this universe  
With everything  
Under control  
Time is so precious  
More than gold  
It can convert  
The young into old  
Hence time is  
A beautiful gift of God  
And the one who cares  
Will be successful a lot

### **Pakistani Soldiers**

Usama Shaukat, SEECS

We are Pakistani soldiers born to march and fight  
Wrap us in our country's flag and don't you cry  
Ghazi or shaheed our future is bright  
We are your protectors, we are your pride  
My country will prosper, my country will stride  
Listen enemies, you can not make our country fall  
Why wait then? Come and try, we will destroy you all  
You think being large in numbers is 'being tough  
Let me tell you dear, its nothing but just a bluff  
You can not imagine our power when we unite  
You have no other option but to fright  
East or west do not compare us with the rest  
Because we already know that we are the best

## **Tomorrow begins today**

Hira Shah, SEECS

Tomorrow seems uncertain, but you know Allah has a plan  
If a purpose to accomplish. if you believe, you can  
Today begins your future, don't let it slip away  
You will have tomorrow, what you believe today!

Some will say "You're dreaming. it can never be."  
Stay strong and be encouraged! One day you will see  
Your words about tomorrow, helped prepare the way.  
You will reap tomorrow, what you sow today!

Find a hurt and heal it. Today help will fill a need  
The things you do for others, grow like a planted seed  
Harvest time is certain and you will get your pay  
You will reap tomorrow, what you sow today!

Today you feel rejected. Tomorrow you're a hit.  
As long as there's tomorrow, tough people never quit.  
If your strength is failing, take time to rest and pray.  
You will be tomorrow, what you prepare today!

## Dusk Poet

Farrukh Aqil, PNEC

A cluster of hopes had fallen apart  
With tears and sorrows dwelling in heart  
He whined and wept and hollered in rain  
Darkness and despondence took over again  
You took her away, you left me alone  
She fathomed my thoughts, and helped me to hone  
A jewel, a gem - my diamond, my gold  
Unlike my father  
So heartless and cold, I cry, I bust  
I stumble and fall, in retrospect  
I remember an affectionate call  
“Welcome home, son. How was your day?”  
” Some think I have gone crazy, others think I may  
A lock without a key  
A terrible catastrophe  
I sound a little wild, I know  
Let my grief melt, let my sorrows flow  
For I have been through, what you have not  
I am bound in chains, to rumble and rot  
The lands are barren  
And skies so dark  
And we always think that this life is a lark  
The sun has set and so has my hope  
My heart is gloomy, but I am trying to cope  
It’s a season of misery, a season of pain  
The dusk of my life, so sullen, so plain  
The dusk of my life, so sullen, so plain

**Astray**

Muhammad Asim, NICE

Is it lust that drives you?  
Or just a wayward thought?  
Of a broken man, smothered in pain  
Who dreams of gold, yet works for nought

This song began, the day you dreamt  
Of a world asleep, a starry night  
Of nobles and warlords, their halls of stone  
With axes and dragons, and kingdoms of might

A world as this, is a glorious dream,  
Few can hold, its charm in doubt  
Yet choose you did, this folly of yours  
To remain within, and expect without

To those with sight, as clear as day  
This riddle seems, or so it should  
Worth nothing, is a work of art  
If a gaze seeks rather, what it would

Arise, depart, begin thy task  
Hold not, delusions of thy past  
Dawn till dusk, should labor thy mind  
If hope it does, for sanity to last

An idle mind, corrupts and burns  
And taints what is, for years to come  
The ink is dry, the song is sung  
The words are yours, to heed or shun

## **Father**

Arun Asif, ASAB

You brought me up with the best you got  
Your ideas and thoughts always won my heart

Sometimes I behaved childishly  
Crying for the things I wanted  
You fulfilled my every whim and desire  
But still taught me the value of patience and fortitude

To my every problem, you had a ready solution  
Which gave me strength to follow my resolution

Now I have grown up  
Learnt how to survive  
With your blessings  
I will definitely thrive

I am grateful to you for all those times  
To enable me to express my feelings, now I am out of  
rhymes

## Lamentations of a Moth

Batool Fatima, SADA

Wings that are paper  
Body is thin and small  
Up in the air, but not any deeper  
Flight unsteady, yet there's no fall  
Day is the only night  
When it's dark and quiet and cold  
But if there were a single light  
Fly to it, is what I'm told  
I draw closer and closer  
Circle up and down and about  
There's a boundary I can't cross over  
But I stay, there's no way out  
Darkness is sleep, light is a dream  
There's no floor below, no sky up high  
The closer I get, farther it seems  
So it is, for I am no butterfly  
There is dark and there is me  
The candle remains lit, I'm close by  
In my world I am free  
Moth, am I?

## Cries of a Caged Bird

Zeba Lodhi, NBS

Feathers worn... wings torn  
Sits in the windowsill of her cage  
A forlorn bird with legs chained  
Wondering what's it with the world?  
Why my cries won't shake the earth?  
Why my laments go unheard?  
Why it's getting hard to breathe?  
Why can't I ever be freed?  
Am I meant to die in here?  
With my dreams burnt in death's flare?  
What do they get from chaining a bird?  
Who's born to fly above the Earth  
Snatching me from my rightful fate  
Putting me into this piteous state  
Do they think they are right on this?  
The ones who deprived me of bliss?  
My heart is so full with regret  
There's no room left to store hatred  
I can feel the time running out

It won't be long when lights go out  
It's not me I'm trying to save  
It's my dreams that I crave  
They are the reason I'm still alive  
They keep me strong enough to fight  
There hasn't been a second in a day  
When I haven't tried to get away  
All day long I keep tugging at my feet  
Blood trickles down as I weep  
Even when pain threatens to blind  
"Don't stop trying" I say in my mind  
When it gets hard enough to breathe  
I close my eyes and drift to sleep  
This is how I spent days all this time  
Hoping someday freedom will be mine  
Slowly blood and tears made shackles rot  
I kept tugging with all strength I got  
Finally they crumbled so I broke free  
And after all these years to home I flee

## **Mother**

Zahra Waheed , NBS

Death is a nonstop river in our life  
Even if it comes to our fair mother  
Still worries when we get hurt by a knife  
While she should be young and not a bother'd

Our joys and fears; she is the one to share  
But children cannot perceive her thinking  
What is love and motherhood? They don't care  
We should ask them whose mothers are dying

When we have big complicated disputes  
Dreams show our deceased mother calming us  
Our bad decisions she always refutes  
Her carefree days with us were fabulous

Her hardworking days cannot be repaid  
When she dies, still gives us a long life prayed

## Fool's Paradise

Safdar Ali, SCME

The proverb, "Fool's paradise", is often used sarcastically. One day, I thought of finding fools' paradise to live in comfort. To achieve my objective, therefore, I went out to find a fool and asked him as to what he did to get in heavens and how he was doing there. It was a very hectic task as nobody accepted that he was a fool though many wise people behaved insipidly but acceptance of this was beyond their guts. Even people heading nations and professors researchers duly verified from HEC (in Pakistan) as custodians of wisdom and claimants of the "heavens" conducted themselves miserably.

Professor Einstein, father of atomic theory was once questioned regarding the weapons likely to be used in the third world war. He replied very simply. "I have no idea, as to what weapons will be used in third world war, however, I can say with certainty that in the fourth world war, people will be throwing stones at each other."

Now, if we compare the wisdom of this legendary scientist, his theory and consequential destruction caused on the mother planet, no angel would allow his entry to wise men's paradise. However, by no means I am suggesting that he can be a welcome guest in fool's paradise. Fortunately, I myself am unaware of the pangs of wisdom and intend asking the originator of this adage, as to why he allocated a brand name to paradise without the existence of such a category therein. But I am sure he will call me in, as well, that I can guarantee.

Finally I went to a 'normal' who could neither be dubbed as wise nor fool and sought clarification from him on this account. His reply stunned me. He said, "If your wisdom and work bring happiness in other's lives without harming or causing miseries to others, you are wise and if your work and wisdom become instruments of discomfort for the humanity then obviously you will fall in the category of fools. Now, there arises a big question. If we go by the definition narrated by 'the normal', then why paradise be branded for the fools, i.e., "Fool Paradise".

Paradoxically, paradise is the state in which one tends to stay in comfort. For example, there are people who feel happy by sacrificing their comfort to make others comfortable or may laugh at themselves even to make others smile. Like a Punjabi adage, "what goes of mine" "*saano ki*". This washes away the worries like my friend *Chaudhary Sahib*, who is very tender at heart and could brush aside scolding of his wife by just saying, "she has tolerated me for a long time with all my weaknesses, so let her enjoy; what goes of mine."

Inadvertently, *Chaudary Sahib* gave me a key to fool's paradise. Thank you, Chaudhary Sahib

If pirates molest ravines  
What goes of mine  
If cows love swines  
What goes of mine  
If fools live in paradise  
What goes of mine

## The Rape of non - mother tongues

Aslam Bazmi, SEecs

Languages spoken around the globe present an interesting kaleidoscope of human expression. At times, quite embarrassing and funny situations arise when people not proficient in a certain foreign language try or have to interact with its native speaker. Such dabbles into foreign languages account for a lot of hilarity and humour in human existence. Here is a brief anthology of such hilarious episodes and anecdotes. The writer bears solemn witness to some of these tickling scenes.

### Conceive me, please!

During his master's studies in UK at the University of Essex, way back in 1995, the author found in Mr Leong (a naïve Chinese student) an interesting classmate. Both of them were greatly fond of Professor Judith, an elderly English language teacher, and seldom missed her lectures. One day in class discussion, Mr Leong raised a point in his sloppy English which made little sense to the learned professor. Leong tried in vain several times to put across his point. Finally in sheer frustration, he pleaded with the professor in such atrocious words:

“Professor, conceive me, please!”

This sent the whole class to hysterical laughter. The poor soul thought “conceive” was synonymous with the verb “understand.”

To stoke the laughter after a long amused pause, the gracious lady calmly answered:

“No, my dear, never. I am already past the age of conceiving!”

The whole class burst into another chorus of deaf-

ening laughter.

### A ‘dangerous’ man

In 1978, the writer was assigned to teach English to a batch of newly arrived junior Libyan Air Defence Officers at PAF Base, Lower Topa. Their proficiency in English was simply pathetic. The massacre of English language at their hands was a recurring affair. He became their instant favourite because of his great liking for this wonderful stock of students.

On a bright sunny day, the writer was hosting at the Officers Mess, a good old friend. One of the trainee officers, who was basking in the mess lawn, rushed to greet him excitedly. In sublime ignorance and great exuberance, he described the writer to his visiting friend as “dangerous man.” The author was devastated to hear such provocative remark in front of a friend. He was luckily spared further consternation, when the young officer eulogized the writer as a great teacher, saying, “He knows by heart all English words. He is very bright, hardworking and helpful. Wallah! He is very ‘dangerous’. We love him as our best teacher.” It transpired from the later conversation that the gentleman naively believed “dangerous” to be the superlative degree of “talented and capable”!

### Son of a cow on the runway

A young air traffic controller was all eyes and ears as his officer commanding was flying in the circuit. As the aircraft turned on finals to land, a calf appeared on the runway from the opposite

direction. Unaware of what was the young of a cow called in English, the controller came on R/T: “Sir, you are cleared to land. Please watch out for the son of a cow backtracking on the runway”. He became instantly entitled to undergo an intensive course in English language

### **Not yet forty**

Not happy with the performance of his provost force, the newly posted Air Officer Commanding (AOC), a strict disciplinarian, personally started snap checks of breaches of the speed limit (40 KM per hour) within the premises of PAF Academy. On a good day early in the morning, a 35-year old officer drove past the prowling AOC at a speed well over 50. After a short hot chase, the AOC nabbed him. The ensuing conversation between the two went like this:

Son, you are well over 40. I think you must be preparing to take part in some car rally?”

“No Sir, I am not yet 40 and I am not interested in car rallies”, came back the naïve reply.

“Well, I bet that you were well above 40”, snarled the 2-star General.

### **A peek into Mr Yesbut’s English class**

The class is abuzz with remedial English activity. The twenty odd pupils are a group of people in their thirties. The teacher, Mr Yesbut, is about to enter the classroom. The class rises, singing in a cacophonous chorus, “Good morning, Sir!” After shyly retuning their greeting, Mr Yesbut proceeds to start the activity: “Well, gentlemen and ladies, today we shall do some practical work on the previous lecture on the voice”.

“But there is no lady in the classroom. At least, I don’t look like one”, a gender-conscious student

raised the point of order.

“Yes, but, sometime in the future, we may have some lady. Maybe, you old nuts have a lady teacher in my place or there may be some ladies in your place. You have already covered the future tense”, the teacher tried to cover up the slip of tongue.

“But it does not make sense. Isn’t it like saying that we may, including you, may become all of a sudden children or eunuchs tomorrow?” an old lout philosophized.

“You see possibilities are possibilities. We can’t stop them. Let’s leave this stupid discussion. Don’t beat about the bush. Well, the first sentence of the exercise is ‘Who broke the chair?’ You have to change its voice.”

“But where is the bush and who is beating it? Let’s sort him out first”, an old lanky character chipped in, trying to secure a point.

“Now stop this nonsense. We must focus on the task”, the teacher mimicked a sort of sternness. I repeat the sentence, ‘Who broke the chair?’ Waving his both hands frantically, one of the backbenchers shot back, “No, I never broke the chair.”

“Whose chair is broken?” flew another bright answer. “The chair has broken whom”, mumbled the shyest student in the class. “Why has the chair broken”, boomed a snoring clown. Mr Yesbut nodded habitually on each answer, and showered great praise on Bubloo when he answered, “The chair is broken by someone.” “Well done, excellent!” the teacher and the class clapped gleefully.

**Nargis and Deedahwar**

An MA Economics student, Majeed, alias Moji, was the writer's immediate neighbour at New Hostel, Government College Lahore. He was a very carefree sort of person, with no interest in art or literature. His only passion was wrestling, and he cared two hoots for anything purely academic. Kalim, a literary scholar in his own right, lived only a block away. He was very fond of Iqbal. One day, within Moji's hearing, he tried to enlighten the writer with the true essence of Iqbal's famous couplet, *Hazaron saal Nargis apni bey nuri peh roti hey; Bari mushkil sey hota hey cha-man mein didahwar peda*. In sublime ignorance.

Moji took it to be a pitiable tale of some lady, Nargis, in distress. With compassion bursting at his seams, he could not help offering his services: *Badshaho, Madam Nargis da Masala ki eh. Jay Akho tey hunay hi Didahwar noon lamba pa denay aan* (What is the problem of madam Nargis? If you allow I can sort out Mr Deedahwar right now). "No, Moji, Nargis and Deedahwar always take thousands of years to meet each other. Nobody, even a wrestler like you, can help in this matter", I urged him to cool down. "You mean it is all fiction", Moji queried, and I nodded with a smile to allay his concern.

### **Meaningless fluff**

Despite his repeated boastful claims of being an Aitchesonian, no one trusted Ruffi's proficiency in English. He was all praise for English songs which people of the ilk of the writer in 70's found difficult to understand. Everyone wondered how Ruffi could be so good to face no difficulty in comprehending the accent and content of English songs. One day, a friend of the writer tried to ca-

jole Ruffi into helping a fellow student in translating into Urdu some of his favourite songs. After some bewilderment, Ruffi suggested in feigned scholarly tone, "Why do you have to pursue the absurd idea of translating English songs? Just focus on the music; the rest is all meaningless fluff!"

### **Atlases on the menu**

As young trainee officers, we were surprised to see cutlasses served in the lunch for the first time. Everyone was delighted except Ajmal who always posed as if he hailed from an elite class. With a badly grimaced face, he hastened to dampen our spirits with such sarcastic remarks: "What makes you simpletons so excited about these "atlases". I had them in plenty in my schooldays, and, to tell you the truth, I never liked them". This triggered a monstrous guffaw, and "Atlas" stayed with his name for quite some time.

### **Romantic love**

Good old memories often serve as an exhilarating interlude in the humbug of life. Bilal, a clever soul known for his tongue in the cheek remarks, and Luqman, a simpleton of the highest order, were knit in a strange friendship during their stay at New Hostel, Government College Lahore. The former would not let go off any opportunity to make fun of his naïve friend. One day, he asked Luqman if he ever had a love affair. Plainly innocent in such matters, he replied, "I love my mother above everything else." "No, fool! I mean romantic love", fumed Bilal. "Well I have been in deep love with the German shephard we have at home in our village", Luqman tried to answer precisely. It took Bilal an eternity to explain to his simple friend the meaning and context of roman-

tic love. Luqman confessed he had set his mind on a hunchbacked lady in the class but he was not sure whether she was aware of it or not.” Bilal burst into a long giggle. “In love, it is the heart that commands; leave the poor mind to take care of other things”, he mentored Luqman.

### **The costly courtesy**

It was a social evening at the Base. Farhad, nicknamed Fidvi, was most conspicuous in showering his best compliments on the commander. “Sir, you are looking very “gorgeous” and “romantic”. You are “stinking” fabulous tonight. Despite Base Commander’s several implicit mercy appeals, Fidvi continued fawning on him with his choice vocabulary of praise. Next morning, Fidvi was the first to be summoned to the Base commander’s office for a good dose of rebuke, followed by the immediate posting orders.

### **The Pseudo-Polyglot**

A longtime friend, Chaudhry Russell, hated to be called by his birth name, Allah Dad. He boastfully claimed his command of several foreign languages. Once he was the chief guest, at a local school, on the Independence Day of Pakistan. The writer also happened to attend the ceremony. Towards the close of the ceremony, Chaudhry Russell rose in the midst of a thunderclap to deliver his learned address. During his speech he boomed more than once: “Pakistan was ‘found’ by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a man of great vision and strong will. It is now our duty to ‘aggravate’ the image of this Muslim country.”

With no lesser claim of mastery of Arabic, one day he waylaid an Arabic youth at the airport, ac-

costing him:

Kaifa ante ya Sheikh? Ana alam-o-kabeer min-al Bakistan. Hal anta “gumshud” min watni ka lissayyah?

The dialogue could be loosely translated as:

How are you, Sheikh? I am a great scholar from Pakistan. Are you here from your country on a pleasure trip? The poor Arab looked confounded and then, leaving his mother tongue at Chaudhry’s mercy, he hastened towards a cab.

The writer also had the opportunity of accompanying Chaudhry Russell to the place of an Iranian councillor. It was the national day of Iran. Although the councillor spoke good Urdu, Chaudhry chose to converse in Persian, and spoke for quite some time in a language not much intelligible to the host till high tea was brought in. Using the Persian stock phrase, Agha befarmai, the host invited Russell to initiate eating. Chaudhry took it to be a suggestion to say something more, eulogized in his telegraphic Persian the Pak-Iran friendship. The host again invited him with the courtesy phrase “Agha befarmaid” and Chaudhry started again his lopsided discourse in Persian. Had the host not sensed at this point Russell’s ignorance of the stock Persian phrase, the latter would have continued his monologue, to our utter discomfort.

These stray stories of the rapes of foreign languages show how blissful ignorance is from our perspective, and what kind of funny and interesting situations one is treated to as a result of forays into non-mother tongues by people like Chaudhry Russell and Fidvi. We certainly owe them generous appreciation for entertaining us from time to time.