

Eid Prayers Likely At Eidgah After 3 Yrs

There Is A Good Atmosphere In Kashmir Now: Waqf Chairperson

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The congregational Eid prayers are likely to be offered at the historic Eidgah here for the first time in three years, the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board said on Tuesday.

Talking to reporters at the Eidgah after conducting a review of the preparations for the congregational prayers that are offered after the culmination of the holy month of Ramazan, Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson Darakhshan Andrabi said if the weather permits, the prayers would be offered at the Eidgah this year.

"This year, the Eid namaz will be offered at the Eidgah... There is a good atmosphere in Kashmir now and it is the administration's endeavour to have the Eid namaz at the Eidgah," she said.

Andrabi said all arrangements will be put in place so that the prayer is offered smoothly.

"Today, Kashmir wants peace, development and prosperity. Let us not think about the past," she added.

The Waqf board chairperson said the Eidgah is the face of the city and it will be developed and made better with proper facilities.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Muhammad Aijaz Asad told reporters that the Waqf Board had raised several issues like drainage, encroachment, lighting and other things.

"A proper demarcation will be done to identify the encroached land of Waqf Board. A few works regarding the lighting, drainage and beautification of Eidgah will be started to restore all the utilities of the Eidgah," he said.

Pertinently, the Eid prayers have not been allowed at Eidgah since the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir on August 05, 2019 as authorities were apprehensive of law-and-order problems.



A MESMERIZING VIEW of snow capped Zabarwan mountain range captured by KO photojournalist Abid Bhat on Tuesday.

Rains Drench J&K, More Likely Till April 6

Agencies

Srinagar: A spell of light to moderate rain drenched Jammu and Kashmir since Monday evening even as the weather department on Tuesday predicted intermittent precipitation and thunderstorm to continue at most places of Kashmir and at isolated places of Jammu.

A meteorological department official said that in last 24 hours till 0830 hours today, Srinagar received 5.2mm of rain, Qazigund 4.8mm, Pahalgam 6.5mm, Kupwara 19.5mm, Kokernag 5.0mm, Gulmarg 10.8mm, Jammu 29.0mm, Baniha 24.8mm, Batote 18.8mm, Katra 15.0mm, Bhaderwah 11.8mm and Kathua 9.2 mm.

Regarding the forecast, he said, intermittent rain and thunderstorm may continue at most places of Kashmir and at isolated places of Jammu.

On April 5-6, he said, there was **More on P6**

China Renames 11 Places In Arunachal, India Fumes

Attempts To Assign Invented Names Will Not Alter Reality: MEA

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- India on Tuesday outrightly rejected China renaming some places in Arunachal Pradesh, asserting that the state is an integral part of India and assigning "invented" names does not alter this reality.

India's reaction came in response to Beijing announcing Chinese names for 11 more places in Arunachal Pradesh which the neighbouring country claims as southern part Tibet.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said India outrightly rejected China's renaming of the places in Arunachal Pradesh.

"We have seen such



reports. This is not the first time China has made such an attempt. We reject this outright," Bagchi said.

"Arunachal Pradesh is, has been, and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. Attempts to assign

invented names will not alter this reality," he said.

It was the third batch of standardised geographical names for Arunachal Pradesh issued by China's civil affairs ministry.

The first batch of the standardised names **More on P6**

THE OFFICIAL NAMES OF THE 11 PLACES WERE RELEASED on Sunday by China's ministry of civil affairs. It also gave precise coordinates, including two land areas, two residential areas, five mountain peaks and two rivers and listed the category of places' names and their subordinate administrative districts."

Banihal Highway To Remain Closed On Apr 7

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Jammu-Srinagar national highway will remain closed on April 7 for carrying out repairs in landslide-hit areas of Ramban district, officials said Tuesday.

The 270-km-long highway, which is the only all-weather road link between Kashmir and the rest of the country, was blocked several times due to landslides and shooting stones in the past few months and was in need of repairs.

"Based on the direction passed for undertaking important repairs and maintenance works on the highway, April 7 has been declared as a traffic dry day between Nashri to Navyuga tunnel", Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Ramban, Mohita Sharma said.

She said only emergency vehicles will be allowed to ply on the highway to and fro in Ramban section from 6 AM on April 7 to 6 AM on April 8.

Mughal road still closed
Meanwhile people from Poonch-Rajouri and Shopian are demanding re-opening of the historic Mughal road for vehicular traffic

The road connecting Kashmir via Shopian with Pir Panchal region in Jammu remains shut in winters because of snow.

Closure of the road has badly hit businesses and other activities of residents of Shopian, Hirpora, Dubjan, Pir-Ki-Gali and Buffliaz, Thanamadi and other villages. Many people from Shopian are married in Poonch or Rajouri and vice-versa.

But the closure of the road is affecting people traveling to their relatives on both sides.

Besides, it has also affected students from Kashmir studying at Baba Gulam Shah University in Rajouri.

Despite getting national highway status in 2016, the proposed tunnel to **More on P6**

Avalanche Blocks Leh Highway

Srinagar-Leh highway was on Tuesday closed for traffic after an avalanche hit near Zojila Pass in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Quoting an official, news agency KNO reported that avalanches hit near Panimatha and Kal-Pathri on Zojila Pass following fresh **More on P6**



THIS YEAR, THE EID NAMAZ WILL BE offered at the Eidgah... There is a good atmosphere in Kashmir now and it is the administration's endeavour to have the Eid namaz at the Eidgah."

Gujarat Police Likely To Get Conman's Custody Trial Against The Accused To Run Concurrently

Majid Nabi

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir police is likely to hand over custody of conman Kiran Jagdish Bhai Patel to a two member team of Gujarat police who have been camping in this capital city since March 23.

Patel, a resident of the Ghodasar area of Ahmedabad, was arrested by the Jammu and Kashmir police last month from a five-star hotel in Srinagar for posing as a top official of the Prime Minister Office (PMO) and availing requisite perks, including a bulletproof car and scores of security personnel.

Purported videos of Patel surveying the snow slopes



of Gulmarg with a posse of armed security personnel around him and of a convoy of vehicles accompanying him weaving through a Valley town have been circulated widely across social media platforms.

He had even visited the last post at Uri in north Kashmir, posing for pictures **More on P6**

CONNECTING KASHMIR PoK Probes Resolution Seeking Kartarpur-Type Corridor

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) government has initiated an investigation to ascertain the facts regarding the adoption of a resolution in the region's Legislative Assembly seeking an opening of a Kartarpur-type corridor connecting both sides of Kashmir.

PcK "Prime Minister" Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan shared this plan in his speech at a dinner hosted by him in honour of Hurrayat leaders, the Express Tribune newspaper reported on Tuesday.

Khan expressed his serious concern over the resolution presented in the Legislative Assembly and said



a fact-finding inquiry was underway and added it would soon be made public.

Inaugurated in 2019, the Kartarpur corridor links

Representation Photo

Early Polls In J&K Very Much Important: Azad

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Former chief minister and veteran politician Ghulam Nabi Azad has favoured early polls in Jammu and Kashmir saying the exercise is "very much" important not only for democracy but also for resolving issues of the common people of the region.

He also rejected that his newly-created political party will have a pre-poll alliance before polls are held in the Union Territory.

"We are very keen, rather we are getting very late because we have almost completed nine years - after two or three months we will be entering the 10th year after the elections.

"Elections are very much important for not only democracy but also for issues which the

people of the state are confronted with," he said.

He said while restoration of statehood is an important thing but this is not up to the assembly. "I am happy and thankful to the Prime Minister, home minister that after our repeated speeches in the parliament both of them assured on the floor of the house, that the statehood would be restored," he said.

When the prime minister called the all-party meeting, there the home minister also repeated commitment of restoration of statehood but made it clear that it would be done after the elections are held.

Azad, who has been campaigning in Jammu and Kashmir, ruled out any tie ups before the elections. "I don't think I would have **More on P6**

SIA Raids Six Spots In Kashmir

The State Investigation Agency (SIA) Kashmir on Tuesday carried out raids at six different locations in Central and North Kashmir as part of its investigation of a militancy funding case. The sleuths of the investigating agency with the assistance of the local police and the CRPF carried out raids at six locations in the districts of Srinagar, Baramulla and Kupwara, reports said. The searches were carried out in a militancy funding registered case under FIR no 22/2022 of police station CIK/SIA Kashmir.

IAF Sergeant Killed In Car Crash

An Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel died after his car skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, officials said. The accident took place at Maroog along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway when Sergeant, Directorate of Mechanical Transport (DMT) at Air Headquarters, Sarafraz Ahmad Bhat, was heading for Kashmir. A rescue operation was launched soon after the **More on P6**

Kupwara Put On Avalanche Alert

The Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) on Tuesday issued an avalanche warning in North Kashmir's Kupwara district for the next 24 hours. The avalanche warning comes amid a heavy downpour in the Valley over the last few days. "LOW Danger Level Avalanche is likely to occur above 2800 metres above sea level over KUPWARA districts in next 24 hours," JKDMA said. The advisory urged people to take precautions and **More on P6**

J&K Logs 31 New Covid Cases

Jammu and Kashmir Tuesday reported 31 fresh cases of Covid-19, taking the number of active cases to 156, while no death was reported in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. Among 31 new cases, 29 have been reported from Kashmir division and two from Jammu division, an official said. He said that the total number of positive cases in Kashmir have reached to 305,679 including 303,125 recoveries and 2,433 deaths while total number of positive cases in Jammu division have **More on P6**

Teenager Falls From Minibus, Dies

A teenage boy died on Tuesday after falling from a moving minibus in Kotranka sub division of Rajouri district. 18-year-old Rashid Hussain was standing at the door of the minibus when he lost control and fell on the ground, reports said. Hussain, who was on his way to Larkuti from Kotranka, sustained serious injuries in the fall and was rushed to the Community Health Center (CHC) Kandi for treatment. However, after first aid, the doctors there referred **More on P6**

7 Tourists Killed In Sikkim Avalanche

Seven tourists were killed as a massive avalanche hit Sikkim's Nathu La area on Tuesday morning, burying their vehicles under the snow, officials said. The avalanche hit the arterial Jawaharlal Nehru Marg, which connects Gangtok to Nathu La at the China border, around 11.30 am, trapping five-six vehicles with around 30 people under the snow, the Army said in a statement. Till 4 pm, seven bodies were brought out of the snow and 23 people were rescued alive, including six tourists **More on P6**

SHORT TAKES

Google Starts Testing Generative AI Features In Gmail, Doc

After announcing the upcoming generative artificial intelligence (AI) features to Workspace apps two weeks ago, Google has now started public testing them in Gmail and Docs.

The current trusted test programme includes consumer, enterprise and education users (over 18 years) in the US, reports Google.

This "small group" is invited by the tech giant to join and they must sign up and opt-in.

The testers can also leave the programme at any time. Users in the programme can use generative AI in Gmail to draft everything from a birthday invitation to a job cover letter.

On the other hand, AI in Google Docs will make the text more detailed or rewrite it.

Also, it will help users to draft blog posts or even write song lyrics. Participants in the test programme will be able to send feedback through Gmail and Docs.

The company will expand the availability of the generative AI features "over time", the report said.

AI Tool Helps Remove Atmospheric 'Blur' From Cosmos Images: Study

Press Trust Of India

Scientists have adapted a well-known computer-vision algorithm, which works faster and produces more realistic images, and applied it to astronomical images from ground-based telescopes.

This innovation of the researchers of Northwestern University, US, and Tsinghua University in Beijing, China, could help remove errors and solve the "blur" in astronomical images, they said.

The research is published in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

"Astronomical images are used for science. By cleaning up images in the right way, we can get more accurate data. The algorithm removes the atmosphere computationally, enabling physicists to obtain better scientific measurements.

"At the end of the day, the images do look better as well," said Northwestern's Emma Alexander, the study's senior author. The blur, caused by the Earth's atmosphere through which the light coming from distant objects passes, becomes an issue when astrophysicists analyze images to extract cosmological data.

Studying the apparent shapes of galaxies helps astronomers in detecting large-scale cosmological structures' gravitational effects.

However, the atmospheric blur smears the image in a way that can distort the shapes of galaxies and make them appear rounder or more stretched than they are. Removing the blur enables scientists to collect accurate shape data.



"If you look at an image from a ground-based telescope, a shape might be warped. It's hard to know if that's because of a gravitational effect or the atmosphere," said Alexander. To tackle this challenge, Alexander's team combined an optimization algorithm with a deep-learning network trained on astronomical images, that included simulated data matching

Verca C. Rubin Observatory's (currently under construction in Chile) expected imaging parameters.

The resulting tool produced images with 38.6 per cent less error compared to classic methods for removing blur

and 7.4 per cent less error compared to modern methods.

"Now we pass off this tool, putting it into the hands of astronomy experts," Alexander said. "We think this could be a valuable resource for sky surveys to obtain the most realistic data possible." For astronomers interested in using the tool, the open-source, user-friendly code and accompanying tutorials are available online.

PUBLIC NOTICE I have applied for the issuance of "D Class" contractor card. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the R&B Deptt Baramulla within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Suhail Ahmad Dar S/o Gh Mohammad Dar fko R/o Pathallan Ghat

Janki Ram Public School Dhanmasta managing committee of Janki Ram Public School Dhanmasta Tehsil Pogal Paristan District Ramban for year 2022-23. Table with columns: Name & parentage, Residence, Qual., Occupation, Desig.

Public Notice I have lost the RC of my vehicle bearing Regd NO: jk01ae 3413. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Ashiq Ahmad Mir S/o Ab Rashid Mir R/o Bakshi Pora Noorbagh Srinagar fk

از عدالت چیف جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ سبج سرینگر با اجلاس راجا محمد سلیم محمد شعیب عدول احدا رسا کد عدل قویدہ رجزار برتس اینڈ ڈھنس یادیل سرینگر (سائل) بنام درخواست برادر اندران کرنے تاریخ فونگی آزاد 13-11-2005 عبدال اعدار تاریخ فونگی 13-11-2005 اشتہار برادر کاگی برخاص و عام معاملہ مندی عنوان الصد میں سائل اسلئے عدالت ہذا میں ایک درخواست بشمول طغی بغرض اندراج کرنے تاریخ فونگی دائری ہے۔ لہذا احوام الناس کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست سائل اسلئے منظور ہونے کوئی نظریا اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں عدالت میں آکر مورخہ 04-04-2023 تک پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی نظریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ 04-04-2023 تحریر الصد nj

Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mechanical Irrigation Division Anantnag HQ Awantipora GIST For E-NIT S. No. 01/MIDA of 2023-24 For & on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir e-tenders in single cover system are invited from reputed and experienced Registered Electrical/Mechanical contractors/ Workshop holders /Firms whose registration are valid in terms of standing rules with sufficient experience and financial resources dealing with

PUBLIC NOTICE I have applied for the issuance of "D Class" contractor card. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the R&B Deptt Baramulla within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Manzoor Ahmad Tantray S/o Asadulla Tantray R/o Pathallan Pattan fko

DEATH ANNIVERSARY 14 Ramzaan 1444. 1st Anniversary "A Year has passed but the mark my father left on this world will never fade. Today we mark the anniversary of his passing and we celebrate the love and memories he gave us. May Allah S.W.T Grant him highest place in jannah (Ameen) Sons: Imtiaz Ahmad Khan, Reyaz Ahmad Khan Khurshed Ahmad Khan

از عدالت سبج میونسپل مجسٹریٹ سرینگر با اجلاس مہرین مشتاق Mohd Altaf Churgam سائل اسلئے درخواست بجز اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات نام: Fazil Bin Altaf تاریخ پیدائش: 12-07-2018 معاملہ مندی عنوان الصد میں سائل اسلئے عدالت ہذا میں ایک درخواست بشمول طغی بغرض اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات R/o Gulshanabad Bagh-wanpora Noorbagh Sgr مورخہ 08-03-2023 پیش کی ہے۔ لہذا احوام الناس کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست کوئی نظریا اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں اپنے عدالت اشاعت اشتہار کے اندر ہی عدالت میں آ کر پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی نظریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تاریخ آئندہ عدالت ہذا میں 10-04-2023 کو مقرر ہے۔ سبج میونسپل مجسٹریٹ سرینگر nj

از عدالت سبج میونسپل مجسٹریٹ سرینگر با اجلاس مہرین مشتاق Shakeela سائل اسلئے درخواست بجز اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات نام: Numaan Bilal Khan تاریخ پیدائش: 29-08-2004 معاملہ مندی عنوان الصد میں سائل اسلئے عدالت ہذا میں ایک درخواست بشمول طغی بغرض اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات R/o Bilal Ahmad Khan مورخہ 31-03-2023 پیش کی ہے۔ لہذا احوام الناس کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست کوئی نظریا اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں اپنے عدالت اشاعت اشتہار کے اندر ہی عدالت میں آ کر پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی نظریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تاریخ آئندہ عدالت ہذا میں 08-04-2023 کو مقرر ہے۔ سبج میونسپل مجسٹریٹ سرینگر nj

Office Of The Zonal Education Office Anantnag Tentative Selection List OF AAYAS To Be Engaged In The Nominated Schools framed by the committee Members designated by this office vide No ZEO/A/3487-90/23 Dated 17.03.2023 NOTIFICATION Proposed Tentative Seniority List of Candidates for Hlrng/Enggcmnt of AAYA/Helper In 16 nominated Schools under Samagra Shiksha framed by the Committee members designated by this office vide No:ZEO/A/3487-90/23 Dated 17.03.2023 In accordance with the norms in vogue Is notified for Information or objections. If any, along with documentary evidence to be deposited in the office of the Zonal Education Officer Anantnag up to 10.04.2023. Objections filed beyond the stipulated time will not be entertained and such objections shall be deleted without any further Notice.

FATEH KHAWANI With sorrow this is informed that Waheeda Jabeen Wife of Late Akhtar Hussain Shah Resident of MIG Colony Bemina Srinagar left for heavenly abode two days 3rd April 2023. Congregational Fatiha prayers (Fatiha Khwani) will be observed On 5 April 2023 at Maqbara Braykujan Habbakadal Srinagar opposite Batamaloo Aastan at Sharp 11 am. From: Manzoor Ahmad Bhat Farooq Ahmad Bhat jml 9796597100

NOTICE I want to register my travel agency namely "Wilderness Tour and Travels" at Old airport road Rangreth Srinagar. If anybody has any objection regarding the same he/she may file the same in Office of the Dy. Director J&K Tourism Department Srinagar within 7 days of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be entertained. Name: Mohd Iqbal R/o: Old airport Rangreth Srinagar

از عدالت سبج میونسپل مجسٹریٹ سرینگر با اجلاس مہرین مشتاق Mohammad Amin Sheikh سائل اسلئے درخواست بجز اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات نام: Younis Amin تاریخ پیدائش: 03-03-2004 معاملہ مندی عنوان الصد میں سائل اسلئے عدالت ہذا میں ایک درخواست بشمول طغی بغرض اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات R/o Rainawari Srinagar مورخہ 01-04-2023 پیش کی ہے۔ لہذا احوام الناس کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست کوئی نظریا اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں اپنے عدالت اشاعت اشتہار کے اندر ہی عدالت میں آ کر پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی نظریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تاریخ آئندہ عدالت ہذا میں 06-04-2023 کو مقرر ہے۔ سبج میونسپل مجسٹریٹ سرینگر nj

KASHMIR OBSERVERTM

Wednesday | 05-04-2023

Modest Covid Surge

India is witnessing a fresh spike in the Covid-19 infections. In the last twenty four hours around 3600 new cases were reported, almost the same number recorded a day before. This has forced India Inc to enforce stricter measures to combat the surge. Most large entities already have elaborate Covid protocols in place, and those are expected to continue. Measures that are being enforced include work-from-home protocols, regular testing at work sites, regular temperature checks and mask mandates. The new spike is fuelled by a latest subvariant of Omicron virus. Health experts have warned about the subvariant and its potential to trigger serious outbreaks. But so far, they haven't seen a major change in severity in individuals or in populations. But what has emerged as more concerning is the potential of the virus to become more transmissible and severe.

The World Health Organization has said it is keeping a close eye on COVID subvariant, which is driving a rise in COVID cases in India. WHO's COVID-19 technical lead and infectious diseases specialist said that one of the big uncertainties about the virus is that it hasn't settled into a predictable pattern but continues to evolve. The global health body has also recommended booster vaccination for the elderly and other vulnerable groups. Globally, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, UAE and Qatar have reported the biggest increases in Covid cases over the last 28 days. Indonesia too has reported a modest rise.

That said, India has witnessed a drastic decline in the number of COVID cases. This is despite the fact that China was recently overrun by a major COVID-19 outbreak leading to the deaths of reportedly thousands of people. The sudden surge in infections followed after the country ended its zero-COVID strategy and lifted the sweeping lockdowns following public protests.

That the infections didn't spread to India in large numbers showed that the country has developed a certain herd immunity. One of the reasons could be that India experienced a nationwide explosion of infections during the virulent Delta wave in the beginning of 2021. Thousands perished as a result. This, together with a successful vaccination programme, may have gone some way to build mass immunity among the people.

However, this is no reason to let our guard down. The virus is now a part of our lives and it has already become endemic. Besides, the new variants of the virus keep triggering fresh outbreaks. So, we can't afford to abandon precautions altogether.

OTHER OPINION

The New Virus

Marburg virus, which causes infection as deadly as Ebola, has been spreading like a wildfire in Africa. Now the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has urged all travellers going to Guinea and Tanzania to take prevention to avoid catching the fatal virus. Furthermore, the health body is also sending personnel to help halt the spread of the virus.

The Marburg virus is an infectious illness with a high mortality rate and epidemic potential, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). The National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases will be sent by the CDC to respond to the outbreaks in Tanzania and Guinea, the organisation said.

Equatorial Guinea first reported the virus in February and since then the WHO has recorded nine confirmed cases and 20 additional probable cases, all of which have died. According to WHO, Marburg virus disease is a highly virulent disease that causes haemorrhagic fever, with a fatality ratio of up to 88 per cent. It is part of the filovirus family that also includes the Ebola virus, which has caused havoc in several previous outbreaks in Africa. The natural host of the Marburg virus is the African fruit bat, which carries the virus but does not fall sick from it.

Bats and other infected animals can transmit the Marburg virus. High fever, bleeding both internally and externally, and excruciating headaches are some of the symptoms of the viral illness.

After being infected, the Marburg virus can spread to another person by coming into direct contact (through cuts in the skin or ruptured mucous membranes) with the blood, secretions, organs, or other bodily fluids of an infected person, as well as by coming into contact with contaminated surfaces and materials (like bedding and clothing).

Marburg has no known cure or vaccine, but according to the WHO, early candidate vaccines as well as blood products, immune therapies and drug therapies are being studied as possible treatments.

NDTV

Game Of Thrones



Mehmal Sarfraz

This sort of thinking amongst political stakeholders is dangerous. If nobody follows the rules of the game, the resultant political chaos will be uncontrollable and the damage to the country will be immense

Pakistani politics is getting messier with each passing day. From alleged audio leaks of senior judges to alleged (non)interviews of a former army chief to a war of words between the Pakistan Democratic Movement government and Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the political chaos in the country continues to grow. Moreover, there are visible cracks in the superior judiciary even as differences between the government and the judiciary continue to increase. Things have come to such a pass that there is bound to be a collision that may not end well.

Amidst all this, it seems that the elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will not be taking place till the general elections in October this year. Earlier this month, the Supreme Court's larger bench ruled — in a 3-2 split verdict — that the elections should be held within 90 days in both provinces. It directed the Election Commission of Pakistan to propose a date for the holding of the polls that deviates to the "barest minimum" from the 90-day deadline. Finally, polls in Punjab were announced for April 30. But a week ago, the ECP announced the postponement of the upcoming elections in Punjab citing security reasons and said that the elections will now take place on October 8. The polls for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that were set to take place on May 28 have also been delayed to October 8 by the governor. The PTI condemned this move and has taken the matter to court. The delay in polls in these two provinces has led to another constitutional crisis as the Supreme Court is hearing a petition by the PTI challenging the ECP's decision on the Punjab elections. The PDM government had already made it clear that it is in no mood to allow elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while a population census is ongoing. However, legal experts say that the decision by the ECP is weak and flawed. On the other hand, the government's justification to delay the polls was only to be expected.

The political polarisation in the country has grown to such an extent that political parties don't even pretend to care for the law of the land. There were clashes between the police and PTI workers/supporters as Imran Khan continued

to evade appearing in court in the Toshakhana case. The scenes that played out on our television screens and on social media were surreal, to say the least. When Imran Khan finally decided to appear before the court, the judicial complex almost turned into a war zone. He, therefore, signed his appearance papers from his car. That someone was accorded this leniency by the courts for so many months may seem bizarre to many but somehow, the judiciary is not bothered about accusations of institutional partisanship to one party. The top court in the country has come under fire for its judgments that allegedly favour the PTI. Now, there are voices within the superior judiciary that are lamenting the Chief Justice of Pakistan's discretionary powers to form benches and take suo motu cognisance. In a recent, detailed ruling, two judges of the Supreme Court wrote: "We find it essential to underline that in order to strengthen our institution and to ensure public trust and public confidence in our Court, it is high time that we revisit the power of 'one-man show' enjoyed by the office of the Chief Justice of Pakistan." A day later, the government tabled a bill in the National Assembly to shift the powers of taking suo motu notice from the Chief Justice to a three-member committee comprising three senior judges so that the power does not remain with one officeholder. This will surely lead to a clash between the executive and the judiciary, something that we remember vividly during the Pakistan People's Party's tenure from 2008-13 when Iftikhar Chaudhry was the Chief Justice. The courts had dismissed the then prime minister, Yusuf Raza Gilani, and made it quite difficult for the PPP to rule.

Political observers have pointed out that leaders of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) are also saying that if rules do not apply to Imran Khan, then they, too, will not follow the principles and rules that political stakeholders are expected to follow. Insiders say that the PML-N insists that if Imran Khan's popularity rose after the PTI used Article 5 to get rid of the vote of no-confidence — a move that was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court last year — then delaying polls

in two provinces would not harm the PDM government either. They also say that it is clear that the false foreign conspiracy narrative, is now trying to mend relations with the United States of America. So other political parties feel that they no longer have to play by the rules.

This sort of thinking amongst political stakeholders is dangerous. If nobody follows the rules of the game, the resultant political chaos will be uncontrollable and the damage to the country will be immense. The PML-N leadership has made it abundantly clear that it is fighting a war of survival. Ever since the PDM and its allies ousted Imran Khan as the prime minister through a vote of no-confidence in April 2022, the PML-N has become considerably unpopular due to rising inflation and the economic crisis confronting Pakistan. The PML-N blames Imran Khan's government for the crisis because it did not honour the commitments made to the International Monetary Fund during its tenure. As a result, the IMF is giving Pakistan a tough time. But it is no secret that the PML-N has not been able to manage the economy either. Buying time will not help the economy if there is political uncertainty in the country. Dialogue is the way forward.

Imran Khan has — finally — agreed to sit with his political opponents to resolve the crisis. This, after he had continuously refused to sit with his rivals when he was in government. But now the prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, who extended an olive branch to Imran Khan on several occasions, has said that talks will be held with him only after he apologises to the nation for his wrongdoings. In this game of thrones, the PML-N wants to stick to power come what may and the PTI wants to be back in power. Unfortunately, democracy may turn out to be casualty in this political gimmickry.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by Telegraph India



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Just As Dangerous

THIS is with reference to the write-up, "WHO thwarts our perception of e-cigarettes" in Kashmir Observer, dated February 28, 2023. Smokers have a wrong perception that e-cigarettes are the right alternate means for them to quit cigarette smoking. On the contrary, test results have shown that they could

cause potential health problems, including cancer, as they contain chemicals and toxins that are addictive. When you stop using them, you go into withdrawal and feel depressed, and incorrigibly tetchy. Researches have proved that use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) have not been shown to be effective in curbing and stop-

ping cigarette smoking. Tobacco related toxins have also been found in the aerosol vapor of ENDS products. Tiny metal particles that are most likely from the casings and heating elements have been found in the aerosols created from this device. There is increasing evidence that inhaled nicotine from ENDS damages lung tissues and lowers

the body's natural resistance to infections and to cancers. It is a matter for concern that youngsters who use e-cigarettes are most likely to develop brain impairment.

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The Lure of Dishonesty and Rewards of Ethics

Wajahat Qazi

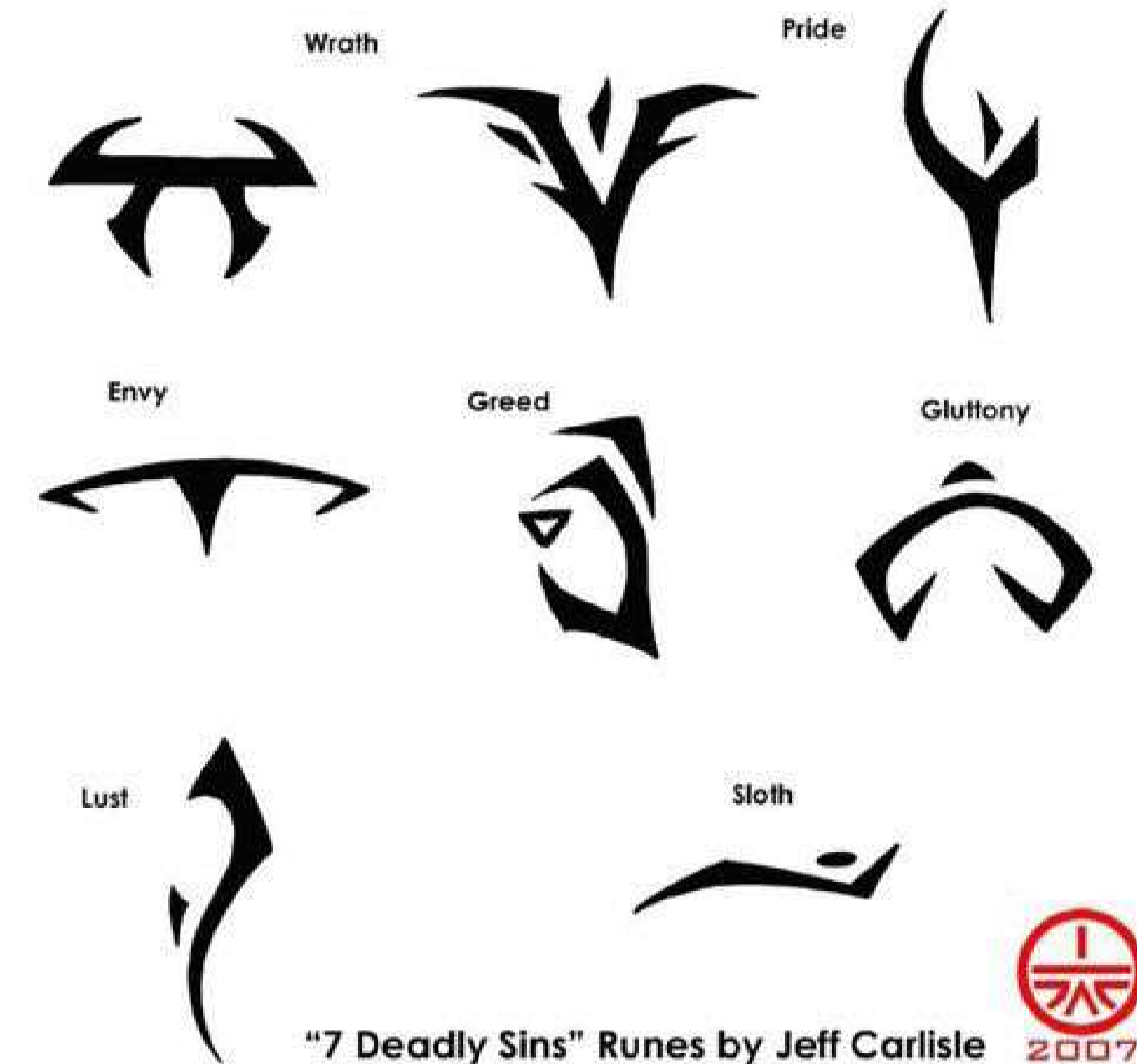
Each one of us faces a moral or an ethical dilemma or dilemmas at any given point in time. This is perhaps because we are human, defined as we are by foibles, weaknesses, temptations and so on. There is also a structural factor that overlays our human (ness); context and a given situation can present us with challenges that have a moral or an ethical flavour or ingress. For example, conditions of extreme poverty, say, an exigent need to feed one's hungry children, can make a perfectly ethical and moral person



For one, for all the glitter and wealth effects of unethical behaviour, there are invariably opportunity costs—compromises have been made, prices (at times even in terms of life) are paid, or, in other words, a lot is mortgaged in return for unethical behaviour

commit theft or even worse. In this circumstance, the element of moral choice is overridden; it actually does not exist. (You either feed your children or they die of hunger). But these are extreme circumstances (with the caveat that for many deprived and underprivileged of the world, these are unfortunately the normal).

However, generally, and usually we all have a choice, if our mental faculties and the ability to reason are intact. Here the dilem-



ma is that of the prevalent mores in society. Say, if corruption is widespread and acceptable in it, what does the ethical or the moral person do? Be part of the game, so to speak and move on or be an outlier seen as an oddball by the rest? Or, say, if there are moral and ethical issues in society that are brushed under the carpet (as in hushed up), does one

stand up to and expose these or close one's eyes as well or even, at another extreme, to employ the jargon of economists, earn rents off these?

Practically, there's no easy answers or solutions to these dilemmas. But if one is ethical and moral, one may become a cynic if by omission or commission unethical behaviour

is prevalent in society. What then can a person do to remain wedded to a moral compass against the backdrop of unethical situations that present themselves?

For me, the answer is pretty simple and straightforward. As a Muslim, I am a believer. The corollary here is that an ethical path is laid out for me by my religion. This does not

then present nuanced moral and ethical ambiguity for me. (I say this in a very non-judgmental manner. I do not judge others for their ethical laxity, perceived or real). Each situation is unique, there is context, there are permutations and combinations, and each one of us is answerable for his or her own acts of omission and commission. Who am I to judge?

But, as a society, whatever and wherever one's given society might be, there are and must be ethical standards, that are usually universal, that must not be breached. For instance, a crime like murder is bad. There is universal consensus on this. Exploiting someone or abusing a person's vulnerability is immoral and unethical. The list goes on. How can these crimes and unethical behaviours be checked?

One answer is by the instrument of law and the state. While law and the state argument and recourse is a sound one but, in the final analysis, a good and ethical society is one where both there is minimal intervention by either. The well springs or ethics and morality must emerge from people. I am not aiming or alluding here to a moral utopia but merely suggesting that a 'good' society is one that is populated by good people, that is, moral and ethical people. This level and nature of morality and ethics can perhaps be arrived at by multi-pronged efforts: one, economic conditions and conditions that give short shrift to crime (this will not prevent crimes of a psycho-pathological behaviour). Two, persons in a given society must be morally and ethically aware and be constantly reviewing and sharpening their moral and ethical compass. Third, morality and ethics can be made chic.

But this leaves the question of 'returns from either moral and ethical behaviour or returns from unethical and immoral behaviour unaddressed. With respect to the latter, sometimes, it may seem that unethical behaviour yields returns such as economic and financial payoffs, and other forms of glitter. Is then, given the finiteness of life, unethical behaviour worth it?

No. Not at all. For one, for all the glitter and wealth effects of unethical behaviour, there are invariably opportunity costs—compromises have been made, prices (at times even in terms of life) are paid, or, in other words, a lot is mortgaged in return for unethical behaviour. There are then clear tangible benefits to be had from an ethical and moral orientation. But the most effective, important and long lasting benefit to be had from either is intangible: peace of mind, contentment and even happiness. Let us then strive to strengthen our moral and ethical compasses and live honest, happy and contented lives.

Rethinking AI and Assessment

Sam Illingworth

ChatGPT is a powerful language model developed by OpenAI that has the ability to generate human-like text, making it capable of engaging in natural language conversations. This technology has the potential to revolutionise the way we interact with computers, and it has already begun to be integrated into various industries.

However, the implementation of ChatGPT in the field of higher education in the UK poses a number of challenges that must be carefully considered. If ChatGPT is used to grade assignments or exams, there is the possibility that it could be biased against certain groups of students.

For example, ChatGPT may be more likely to give higher grades to students who write in a style that it is more familiar with, potentially leading to unfair grading practices. Additionally, if ChatGPT is used to replace human instructors, it could perpetuate existing inequalities in the education system, such as the under-representation of certain demographics in certain fields of study.

There is also the potential for ChatGPT to be used to cheat on exams or assignments. Since it is able to generate human-like text, ChatGPT could be used to write entire assignments or essays, making it difficult for educators to detect cheating.

For example, ChatGPT (meaning "generative pre-trained transformer") could be asked to "write an essay about the challenges that ChatGPT poses higher education in the UK". In fact, the first four paragraphs of this article were written by ChatGPT, in response to this exact request.

ChatGPT's response (and this is your human author writing now) actually amounted to more than four paragraphs, as it went on to ar-



ticulate its inability to fully replicate the expertise and real-world experience that human teachers bring to the classroom. This particular line of enquiry made me both appreciative of its concern for my job security, and somewhat cynical of its Machiavellian designs to win me over.

In my research and teaching, I am involved in developing assessment and feedback processes that enrich the student experience, while also equipping them with the skills they need upon graduation.

The truth is, if I was looking at 200 pieces of work submitted by first-

year undergraduate students on this topic, I would probably give ChatGPT's efforts a pass. But far from being worried about the challenges this AI programme might pose, I see this instead as an opportunity to improve the way we assess learning in higher education.

FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

For me, the major challenge that ChatGPT presents is one I should be considering anyway: how can I make my assessments more authentic – meaning, useful and relevant. Authentic assessments are designed

to measure students' knowledge and skills in a way that is particularly tailored to their own lives and future careers.

These assessments often involve tasks or activities that closely mirror the challenges students may encounter in real life, requiring them to apply knowledge and skills in a practical or problem-solving context. Specific examples might include asking a group of engineering students to collaborate on a community issue as part of the Engineers without Borders challenge, or inviting environmental science stu-

dents to curate an art exhibition in a local gallery that explores the local impact of the climate crisis.

While there will always be a need for essays and written assignments – especially in the humanities, where they are essential to help students develop a critical voice – do we really need all students to be writing the same essays and responding to the same questions? Could we instead give them autonomy and agency and in doing so, help to make their assessments more interesting, inclusive and ultimately authentic? As educators, we can even use

ChatGPT directly to help us develop such assessments. So, rather than posing the question that generated the start of this article, I could instead present students with ChatGPT's response alongside some marking instructions, and ask them to provide a critique on what grade the automated response deserves and why.

Such an assessment would be much more difficult to plagiarise. It would also invite the students to develop their critical thinking and feedback skills, both of which are essential when they graduate into the workforce, no matter what their profession. Alternatively, ChatGPT could be used to generate scenario-based tasks that require students to analyse and solve problems they may encounter in their future careers.

This feels like a Pandora's box moment for assessment in higher education. Whether we decide to embrace ChatGPT in our pursuit of authentic assessment or passively acknowledge the ethical dilemmas it might present to academic integrity, there is a real opportunity here. This could help us reflect on how we assess our students and why this might need to change. Or, in the AI's own words:

ChatGPT could be a useful tool for creating authentic assessments, but it would still be up to the instructor to design and implement the assessment in a way that is meaningful and relevant for their students.

The sophistication and capability of AI technologies are accelerating. Rather than reacting with trepidation, we must find and embrace the positives. Doing so will help us think about how we can specifically tailor the assessment of students, and provide better and more creative support for their learning.

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