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3 Bahadur becomes highest grossing animated film ever in Pakistan



Pakistan's first full-length animated feature 3 Bahadur has become the highest grossing animated-film ever to release in Pakistan. It is truly an exciting time for Pakistani cinema. Over the course of the last year and a half, Pakistani filmmakers have treaded into new and untested waters and unsurprisingly all of them have managed to wow the audience.

First there was Bilal Lashari's action-thriller Waar, then Nabeel Qureshi's game-changing comedy Na Maloom Afraad and last but not the least Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy's animated movie 3

Bahadur. Billed as Pakistan's first animated feature film, the movie is in the midst of a stellar run at the box office and has now become the highest-grossing animated movie in the history of Pakistani cinema. Previously the record was held by Blue Sky Studio's Rio 2 which grossed an estimated Rs 4.5 crore but 3 Bahadur has comfortably managed to outdo the Hollywood movie after only three weeks with a box office collection of Rs 4.7 crore up till now.

According to the executive producer of 3 Bahadur Jerjees Seja, alumnus of Greenwich University, the success of the film underlined the fact that Pakistani audiences want to 'watch their own films'. "It is really great that a first ever Pakistani animated film has managed to outdo a major Hollywood franchise like Rio 2 in terms of box office," said Jerjees.

Released in over 35 cinemas the movie has managed to perform well at cinemas in both Punjab and Sindh, with each running in cinemas and is doing remarkable business," he added.

Box office results and critical response aside the movie has managed to woo audiences of all ages; which according to various stakeholders of the film industry was one of the key factors that have led to the film becoming such a success. "With other movies, like Mad Max: Fury Road, a person would usually go and watch the movie with a friend or two but with 3 Bahadur you have whole families coming in and watching the movies," remarked Khurram Gultasab. A few days ago, at the press conference for Moor, Nadeem Mandviwalla had noted how Pakistani cinema had managed to outdo Bollywood with just their first release. "India has made six

animated features to-date but none of them have been successful and our first film has become a big hit." The success of 3 Bahadur comes as a welcome sign for a number of animation studios which have emerged within the country and shown an interest in animated feature films.

Musician, Haroon who heads the animation company Unicorn Black, which has produced the TV show Burka Avenger, said that as a person belonging to the same industry it was heartening for him to see that such content was being made in the country and was hopeful more people would follow suit. "The stuff that Waadi Animations has done is high-quality and I am sure that we would be making world-class content in the near future."

Jerjees Seja seconded Haroon's notion saying that the first step is always the hardest and considering that it has yielded great results other people would also start showing an interest in this genre of filmmaking. With 3 Bahadur only going from strength to strength the makers of the film have already provided themselves with a cushion given that they intend to release a sequel by December next year. Who knows they may end up creating one of Pakistan's first-ever animated franchises?

Revitalising trade: Quetta-Zahedan goods train back on track



Balochistan Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch inaugurated the Quetta-Zahedan goods train on Monday and expressed optimism that it would prove lucrative for the business

community of the province doing business with Iran. The inauguration ceremony took place at Quetta Railway Station where Dr. Baloch cut the inauguration ribbon. Provincial Information Minister Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal, Advisor to CM on Education Sardar Raza Muhammad Barrech and Divisional Superintendent Railways, Quetta, Faiz Muhammad Bugti, were also present. "The revival of goods train would be lucrative for the business community of Balochistan and it would increase resources to enhance business with Iran," Baloch said.

Applauding the Federal Minister for Railways, Khuwaja Saad Rafique, CM Balochistan said that in recent history the Railway department had nearly collapsed. However, Saad Rafique and his team were taking all measures to revive Railways. "I request him to make Quetta-Zahedan track the fastest one of the country and run more passenger trains from Quetta," he said.

Dr. Baloch urged the federal government to take immediate measures to start the Sibi-Harnai train section. "Following the proposal of Provincial Government Pakistan Railways should expand the Quetta-Zahedan track from 40km to 150km speed per hour," the CM added.

Addressing the ceremony Parveen Agha, Chairperson of Pakistan Railway, said that resuming the goods train from Quetta division is a good sign for Balochistan. "One train in a week will depart for Iran and if the business community and traders required then the service between Quetta-Zahedan could increase, she added.

Courtesy The Express Tribune

Gwadar to be declared duty-free port: Nawaz



Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced that Gwadar would be declared a duty-free port.

"Gwadar should be a gift for the entire region," he said, while addressing the National Assembly.

The premier went on to say that although he has not formally approached any party for the change in status for Gwadar, he does intend on doing it.

"I request all parties to sit with us and give Gwadar the status of a free port and make a new administrative system for it," he said. Regarding his recent visit to Tajikistan, Prime Minister Nawaz said, "In my recent meetings with leaders of Tajikistan, they expressed their desire to increase connectivity between the two countries and pave a way to Central Asia through Gwadar."

"Over Rs30 billion have already been allocated for western route under Pakistan-China economic corridor," the premier told lawmakers. Responding to criticism from the opposition, the premier said, "Our government made a coastal highway in Gwadar and it was us who started work there."

He went on to assure motorways would be built in Sindh, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. "Motorways are being constructed across the country."

Further, the premier said two new projects are being started in Thar, which will each produce 650MW of electricity.

Courtesy Express Tribune

Faizan Keeryo
BS28 2217

Raaf Hassan
BS413697

Film festival ends on a high note



The week which saw a lot of patronage for arts ended on a promising note as I am Karachi Film Festival concluded with better prospects for aspiring film-makers.

Divided over three events, I am Karachi Film Festival wrapped up its last installment on Sunday at Expo Centre. Starting off on May 31, the first event held at the Arts Council saw amateur film-makers showcase their work for the audience to be followed by a second screening of different films at the Seaview Park. Taimur Suri, who took the initiative of giving a platform to young film-makers, said that although the first event did not see many people, about 500 attended the second screening, probably because the venue was an open space.

The event, divided into two sections namely fiction and non-fiction films, was followed by panel discussions where the guests shared their views about the screened films. The fiction ones varying from a minute to 41 minutes included This is not a true story by Salman Abedin and Irfan Kheiri, Baazgasht by Raza Abbas, Balcony Stories by Alynna Farooqui, Nazar by Shujauddin and Shehenshah by M. Ziad Azad. The panel discussion hosting retired bureaucrat Kaleemullah Lashari, film-maker Nameera Ahmed, lecturer Nauman Baig and Rausheen had the guests talk about the portrayal of intangible realities in films with respect to fiction work by the younger lot.

Three entries by Traveling Films South Asia (TFSA), No 62 Pansodan Street by Cho Phyuone, The story of one by Kannan Arusalam and No burqas behind bars by Nima Savestani were also selected by the jury, and were chosen to highlight the similarities which made them relatable to Karachi. The chosen films were about Burma (Myanmar), Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. They portrayed issues such as poverty, female suppression and the plight of those who go missing. Moderated by Taimur, the second panel discussion, which had actors Rubina Ashraf and Misbah Khalid, and Prof Dr Markus Heidingsfelder as panelists, the talk centred on the future prospects of the film-makers, whose efforts were deemed commendable by the three guests.

Courtesy Dawn

Sehar Nadeem
BS413607

Harmony through food: Pakistan-India cookbook wins at Gourmand Awards 2015



If there is one thing that brings all of us together, it's food—and this was proven at the 2015. Gourmand Awards when a Pakistani-Indian cookbook Zaiqay Frontier Kay— Dera Ismail Khan Kay Bulay Bisray Pakwan won the World Cookbook award in 'Cookbook For Peace: India-Pakistan' category.

Held at Yantai, the food capital of Shandong province in China, the annual award ceremony was attended by the son, grand daughter and other family members of the late author, Pushpa Kumari Bagai. Kiran Aman, CEO of Markings, which has published the book, was also present at the ceremony which was held from June 8 to June 9.

The book, which is a collection of Pushpa's recipes dating back to the times when Hindus and Muslims lived together in Dera Ismail Khan, is a step to preserve the cuisine. It has also been translated into English as 'Flavours of the Frontier— Forgotten Recipes from Dera Ismail Khan'.

The Gourmand Cookbook awards were founded in 1995 by Edouard Cointreau to honour those who 'cook with words' and are now considered the Oscars of the cookbook awards by international journalists. Speaking about the book's recognition internationally, Aman said:

"This cookbook is no way a mere collection of recipes but rather a tribute to the shared cultural heritage of Pakistan and India, a forgotten history and is in essence an emblem of peace. It has been recognized by the prestigious Gourmand Awards body as significant a cross-border collaboration, an initiative that proves that disparate nations, cultures and peoples can connect with each other through unifying commonalities such as through cuisine."

Zaiqay Frontier Kay is priced at Rs 1500.

Courtesy Dawn

Breaking monopoly: Volkswagen to plant its feet in Pakistan?



The incumbent government has gotten a rare opportunity to break the decades' old monopoly of local car assemblers as world-renowned auto manufacturer, Volkswagen, is keen to introduce its brands in Pakistan.

Germany's biggest and the world's second largest automobile manufacturer in terms of market share, Volkswagen, wants to do business in Pakistan, said an official of the Board of Investment (BoI). A 14-member business delegation of Germany businessmen is visiting Pakistan including representatives of automobile company, Volkswagen, said Dr Cyril Nunn, German Ambassador to Pakistan on Tuesday. He was addressing a press conference to share details of what he described as a "highly important" visit. According to Pakistani officials, Volkswagen was keen to do business and the government also wanted at least one European brand to set up a plant in the country to break the monopoly of local car assemblers. They said the three local assemblers have colluded and resultantly, on average, a locally-assembled car is roughly Rs500,000 expensive.

In allowing the new manufacturer to set up plants, the government has to amend its existing automobile policy, said Pakistani officials. They added that the government has decided, in principle, to amend the automobile policy and will add medium-knocked down (MKD) units in the definition. The German officials had requested the government to accommodate semi-knocked down and MKD units in the automobile category. The Volkswagen is said to be engaged in negotiations with prospective local partners, said Pakistani officials. In the next two years, the government will try to introduce at least one European brand – German or Italian – said Miftah Ismail, BoI chairman, while talking to The Express Tribune. Ismail welcomed the German delegation, hoping that it will help strengthen bilateral economic ties. "To get such a delegation into Pakistan, you have to persuade them and once they are in Pakistan they realise it's a huge country," said Dr Nunn.

Courtesy The Express Tribune

With love from Pakistan: 'Sindhri mangoes' now available in Chicago



Pakistan grows hundreds of varieties of mangoes and exports many of them. This year the country aims to generate at least \$60 million in revenue from the export of mangoes, as it wishes to reach 100,000-ton export mark.

This year, farmers are eyeing production of near 1.8 million metric tonnes of mangoes, despite huge losses due to climatic hazards in upper Punjab. The climatic changes in rain patterns, thunderstorms and a prolonged winter season have adversely affected crop production in Punjab and may cause a 30 to 35% decline in mango production in the province against its share of 64% in the country.

Mango production in Rahim Yar Khan, Muzaffargarh and Multan is expected to face reduction by 25%, 50% and 60%, respectively this year. However, the crop in Sindh is comparatively safe where only a 10% reduction is expected in its share of 35% of the country's total mango production.

Courtesy Express Tribune

Dobara Phir Se: Noori's comeback celebrations begin!



As a kick-off to their comeback celebrations, Noori performed a gig at Farhad Humayun's Riot Studios in Lahore last night, where they unveiled the music video for their new song, 'Aik Tha Badsha'.

This new music video has piqued a lot of interest with imagery that reminded many of Game of Thrones. At the Lahore gig, Noori evoked noughties' nostalgia with a set-list of their popular tracks back in the day, and even played some unheard numbers from their upcoming album.

The Lahore gig will be followed up by one in Karachi on Sunday, after which the video will be released online.

Courtesy Dawn

Pakistani women look beautiful, no matter what they wear: Vidya Balan

Ever since, the actor has only strengthened her position, churning out one commendable performance after another. From Silk Smitha in *The Dirty Picture* (2011) to Bobby from *Bobby* (2014), Balan is known for her unmatched conviction towards roles that emphasize a realistic portrayal of the female being. For instance, her work as Vidya Venkatesan Bagchi, a pregnant woman searching for her missing husband in Sujoy Ghosh's *Kahaani* (2012), won Balan her first Filmfare Award for Best Actress. This year, she will be completing a whole decade in the industry with Mohit Suri's upcoming venture *Humari Adhori Kahaani*.

As an avid fan of Pakistani art, Balan believes local artists have always made a substantial contribution to the success of Bollywood films over the years. "We all love soulful, melodious music and Pakistanis are known for that," she said. "Personally, I love Rahat and have listened to many episodes of Coke Studio Pakistan as well. I absolutely loved Arieab Azhar's *Na Raindee Hai* and got to meet Abida Parveen a few years ago too."

"My God, she has a powerful voice!" During her visit to Karachi in 2006, Balan also had the opportunity to attend a performance by the Sabri brothers that she enjoyed immensely. Unfortunately, her busy schedule makes it difficult for her to keep up with Pakistani serials. "I don't get to follow any of the shows as I always miss the timings, but I catch them in bits and pieces. I grew up watching Umer Shareef's *Bakra Qiston Pe* as a child, although no one in our house spoke Hindi and Urdu was totally out of the question, we used to watch and enjoy it."

Balan claims she is open to Pakistani scripts and is nothing but praise for the actors of the local production *Bol* (2011). "I would be happy to be a part of such lovely Pakistani stories. *Bol* was an extremely powerful film and as an actor, I felt that Manzar Sehbaï and Zaib Rehman — who played the protagonist's parents — did a wonderful job!" Interestingly, it isn't just Pakistani arts and crafts that Balan likes — she is just as enthralled by women of the country. "Genuinely speaking, Pakistani women are beautiful! They look great, no matter what they wear, be it traditional saris or something else."

Courtesy Express Tribune



Pakistan wins first JF-17 order at Paris Air Show: PAF

After high expectations for a deal to pull through, Pakistan was successful in securing its first ever export order for its JF-17 Thunder fighter on Monday at the first day of the International Paris Air Show.

With a total of 150 aircraft, including Block III, it is a proud moment for Pakistan. Updating the guests and media on Pakistan's induction of the type, it was claimed that a total of 54 examples of JF-17 have been delivered till date. Out of which the first 50 were delivered in a Block I configuration and an update of these to a Block II standard is underway. The Block II configuration features improved avionics and better software, and adds a fixed air-to-air refuelling probe. The JF-17 is powered by a single Klimov RD-93 engine. An addition of Block III configuration with 50 aircraft and 46 aircraft delivered in the Block II configuration is expected to push Pakistan's fleet to 150 examples, aiming to be delivered by the end of 2018.

"Though the aircraft's developers are still working out the specifications of the Block III aircraft, upgrades are likely to include an active electronically scanned array (AESA) or Passive electronically scanned array (PESA) radar", Mahmood said. Further, the configuration could also include an infrared search and track (IRST) sensor, stations under the forward fuselage for various pods, and expanded precision weapons capabilities. With the aim to serve mainly as a trainer, a two-seat variant is also planned by the developers. Pakistan produces 58% of the airframe and China 42%.

Pakistan was eager to secure its first-ever order for the JF-17 at the international event as Canada's Bombardier is particularly hungry for sales, after its new C Series aircraft struggled through development delays and difficult market conditions. Airbus has also confirmed it will display its A400M military transport plane for the first time since a fatal crash in Spain last month caused by a massive engine failure. With air passenger numbers set to double to six billion annually by 2030, the world's premier air show in Paris will next week focus on green issues even as the aircraft sales war remains centre stage.

The Paris Air Show brings together some 315,000 visitors and 2,260 exhibitors from 47 countries, with much of the attention focused on which big manufacturers, particularly Airbus and Boeing, will land the most orders. Pakistan's large and well-funded military has long been a major importer of defence equipment, particularly from China. The Paris Air show runs from June 15 to 21, with the final three days open to the public.



Pakistani troops cross border, rescue Afghan soldier



In an unprecedented cross-border rescue operation, Pakistani troops crossed into Afghanistan on Tuesday to evacuate an Afghan soldier, who had been critically wounded in an exchange with the Taliban. "This afternoon an Afghan soldier was severely injured in an exchange of fire with terrorists 600 metres inside Afghan territory. Afghan authorities sought help for evacuation of the soldier and Pakistani forces stationed at a nearby post responded quickly and brought the wounded soldier to Pakistani side of the border," a military spokesman said.

The injured soldier was deployed at Afghan Army's Shaheen Post, which is some 15 km west of Bajaur's Nawapass area. The soldier is now being treated at a military hospital in Khar, the political headquarters of Bajaur Agency.

The rescue operation carried out by Pakistan Army on the Afghan request was unthinkable a few months ago. It is the same region in which, till a year ago, hordes of Kunar-based militants would attack Pakistani border posts and troops would then respond with artillery fire, then leaving the two countries to trade allegations.

Kunar for years hosted sanctuaries of Pakistani militants, who had fled operations in Swat and Bajaur. It was after the Army Public School carnage in December last year that Afghan security forces launched an operation against the militants, who had taken refuge there. Pakistan Army's rescue operation, however, manifested a new phase in ties.

The two countries have lately taken a number of steps to bridge the gulf of distrust and turn the acrimonious past into a harmonious relationship. Besides, the intelligence cooperation MoU, the two have worked on improving border coordination.

According to an international law expert, the issue of consent to such operations by the concerned state (Afghanistan in this case) was the most delicate and politically sensitive part. Since the operation in question took place on Afghan request, there was apparently no issue with it, he added.

Courtesy Dawn

Ujala Nadeem
BS47 5275

Smart phone app for public transport



The Lahore Transport Company (LTC) has been assigned the task to enforce, plan and regulate the public transport system in the provincial metropolis with a view to provide safe, affordable, efficient and environment-friendly transport facilities of international standard to the public.

LTC Chairman Khwaja Ahmad Hassan said this on Tuesday while presiding over the launching ceremony of a user-friendly smart phone application "Bus Da Pata" about the buses plying on various city routes, in collaboration with Pakistan Trakker Limited.

According to a press release, Mr Hassan said the application would provide necessary information about a bus to the passengers on a single click.

The application could be downloaded free of cost from the internet on smart phones.

Its features include next bus arrival time, trip planner, live bus locator, fare and route information that will help save commuters' time.

"The urban public transport has never been profitable but it is a social service and our private transport operators are contributing to the system," he said.

He said a modern public transport facility was among top priorities in the federal budget

Courtesy Dawn

Raaf Hassan
BS413697

Tu Chahiye: Salman Khan picks Atif Aslam for Bajranghi Bhaijaan ballad



If he had once taken a backseat in Bollywood, we can no longer say that that's true. Atif Aslam is set to lend his vocals to a love song titled "Tu Chahiye" in Salman Khan's next, Bajranghi Bhaijaan — at the behest of the actor himself!

Atif Aslam has sung for films like Akshay Kumar's It's Entertainment, Shahid Kapoor's Phata Poster Nikla Hero, Saif- and Deepika-starrer Race 2 and most recently Varun Dhawan's Badlapur, but this is the first time that he'll be singing for a Salman Khan film.

Bajranghi Bhaijaan co-producer Amar Butala confirmed the news: "The song 'Tu Chahiye' shot on Salman and Kareena is a beautiful love song shot by Ahmed Khan extensively in old Delhi capturing the romance of the old city. When Salman heard the scratch of the song, he suggested we record with Atif Aslam. This will be the first time Atif will sing for Salman, and the song in Atif's voice sounds incredible," Indian Express reports him as saying.

Choreographer Ahmed Khan's previous credits include Rangeela, Taal, Ghajini and Kick. The song's music has been done by popular composer Pritam. Bajranghi Bhaijaan's first trailer will be out on June 18 and the film is slated to release on Eid.

Courtesy Dawn

Laraib Rajput
BS38 3345

Karachi re-imagined: How the City of Lights Festival brings civic pride back



Karachi's walls got a resplendent makeover.

Instead of political slogans and commercials for cockroach killing concoctions, the walls were adorned with beautiful artwork. It's a welcome change, and has one wonder how else art can create an impact. I Am Karachi has answered the question in more ways than one, most recently at the just concluded City of Lights Festival. A consortium of artists, writers and thinkers, I Am Karachi aims to promote harmony and unity in the city through the arts. Citizens Archive of Pakistan (CAP)'s Karachi City of Lights festival thus also aimed to provide reminders of the city's glorious yesteryears through a taste of the visual and performing arts. The festival took place at the Fomma Trust-Art Centre at Zamzama Park from June 5 to 7.

Lighting it up

Although Day One of the festival kicked off at around 5pm, the park came alive after the sun had set and the temperature went down. With more than 10 art installations placed at different points in the park, the arrangement of lights imparted a beautiful glow to the event's ambience.

Time travelling: Mobile museums and oral histories

The festival served as a good reminder that the country's financial capital is also rich in culture. Karachi is home to architecture that dates back to the British Raj, and festival attendees were able to learn about the history of some of these famous landmarks from CAP's mobile museums. With information written both in English and Urdu, the museums aimed to attract children with a jigsaw puzzle, a peek into a miniature version of a building and boxes with fun facts about the legacy of another. While we were disappointed to see that the mobile museums placed at Karachi Zoo last month were quite worn out, the museums at this weekend's festival were in mint condition. These mobile museums can be visited according to the buildings they represent namely, Mohatta Palace, Karachi Port Trust, Safari Park, Karachi Zoo, and Frere Hall where they had been placed in May. One of the most needed activities was CAP's oral history project, which is preserving tales of the partition. It was a popular installment that allowed listeners to hear all about the days when Waheed Murad visited Radio Pakistan or when Karachi boasted many bookstores and cinema halls.

Portraying Karachi: Historical, chaotic and ultimately beautiful

The art installations, including audio and pictorial stories, moving images from old Karachi as well as projects showing unique aspects of Karachi, gave an insight to how the city is perceived by different artists. The most gripping installation was '12 seconds' by artist/architect Marvi Mazhar, who had dedicated her work to a friend lost in that duration of time. Another fascinating aspect of the festival was the live painting of old Karachi by painter Faiz Rahi, who once painted cinema billboards. "I decided to recreate these images because they can't be found anymore. This is Paradise Point and it used to be one of the most important landmarks in Karachi," shared Rahi as his fingers worked swiftly on the canvas.

Of music and laughter

While people looked around at the artwork, around 80 attendees crowded into a small room where musicians Yousaf Kerai and Shehroze Hussain gave a tabla and sitar workshop. Starting with a short performance of 'O Laal Meri', 'Ankhiyan Udeekdiyan' and others, the duo then discussed major and minor notes in music upon which all harmonies depend. The crowd including children responded to Kerai and clapped to the music with almost everyone in awe of the 17-year-old prodigy Hussain. This was followed by a performance 'Two Views of a Bridge' by improvisational troupe Platoon, which poked fun at the city's conditions and relationships. The crowd thoroughly enjoyed the work presented in both English and Urdu. Swaleha Alam Shahzada, executive director of CAP, shared that the aim of the festival was to give room to tolerant activities through the arts: "Our aim is to see a Karachi, which was once tolerant and peaceful, but then very quickly it all changed. I saw Karachi go from a very lovely and peaceful city to curfews, riots, political parties, etc. I lived through that era and the '80s changed the city completely, economically, politically, socially and most importantly, morally. The purpose of this exhibition is not only to promote a more forbearing Karachi but to encourage the youth that it is up to them to take its ownership."

Courtesy Dawn

Karachi's photographers unite to reveal the city's secret stories



Despite protests and heavily jammed roads on the evening of June 12, people in large numbers managed to visit the I Am Karachi Museum set up at the Alliance Française de Karachi.

The two-day event, held under the consortium of IAM KARACHI and The School of Writing (TSW), was an audio-visual exhibition of photographs taken by amateur and professional photographers from all six districts of the metropolis namely Korangi, Malir, East, West, Central and South.

"It's not just a photography exhibition. We have collected 70,000 photos, creating Karachi's largest archive to date," said Mohsin Tejani, the founder of TSW.

Prior to the exhibition, the photographers had travelled around the city's busy streets, bazaars and colonies, shrines, churches, temples and mosques in their endeavour to capture the true essence of Karachi.

Clicking the not-so-quintessential Karachi:

Visiting unfrequented places like Ranchor Line, Chowkandi Tombs, Essa Nagri and Shanti Nagar was quite a challenge, one of the participants told Dawn. But anyone could witness the distinct aesthetics of the stories through their lens. You could gaze at a picture for minutes and not get bored by the striking composition, colours and expressions of the subject.

If only more attention would be paid towards the nurturing of the artistic side of our young citizens instead of the forceful culture of bandwagon studies, we could surely embark on another golden era of the city.

Courtesy Dawn

Faizan Keeryo
BS28 2217

A photowalk through historic Hyderabad



Hyderabad, one of Pakistan's most historic cities, has sadly not received the recognition it deserves. The history of this land on the Ganju Takkar hillock can be traced back to the Mauryan era (322-185 BC). The heritage and culture has been overlooked to an extent where even the city's own residents, in general, are not aware of its significance.

To connect the people of the city, and especially its youth, with its history and culture, the 'Hyderabad Photo-Walk' was organised on May 30, 2015. I was a part of the initiative, which was backed by Pakistan-US Alumni Network and Lahooti Live Sessions, and led by Sana Khoja, a Hyderabad-based youth activist. Our team comprised of Ahsan Abro, Asif Ansari, Omar Qureshi, Muazam Memon and Furqan Buriro.

The main event was preceded by a photography talk a few weeks before, by renowned Pakistani photographer Danial Shah. Danial guided the participants and shared his experiences with them, along with photography tips and tricks. On the day of the main event, over 100 participants gathered, along with the team of the photo-walk. The participants belonged mainly to Hyderabad, while a few were from places such as Nawabshah, Karachi, etc.

The participants were taken to different spots of historic, cultural and social significance, facing the scorching sun throughout the course of the event. The first spot was the set of the Kalhora tombs, including the tomb of Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhora, who laid the foundation of modern-day Hyderabad in the late 1760s, and gave the city the name it has today. He built it over the ruins of an old fishing village called Neroon or Neroonkot.

The participants were then taken to Hirabad, one of the oldest parts of the city. Hirabad is filled with buildings built during British Raj by Sindhi Hindus. Participants photographed the old buildings, including a Shiv temple which was first built in 1895 and then rebuilt in 1945. Next up was Rani Bagh, a botanical and zoological garden in Hyderabad where we all had lunch. Then came Niaz Stadium, a historic stadium where the first ever hat-trick in One Day Internationals happened in 1982. The bowler was Pakistani right-arm seamer Jalal-ud-Din, and the opposition was Australia. Pakistan has never lost a Test or ODI on this ground.

Halar Khoso, one of the participants, said, In such a congested society, where people are fighting for their basic rights and everyone has the fear of going out on streets, an initiative like Hyderabad Photo-walk is a breath of much needed fresh air for youngsters who love history and want to explore it through photography. Another participant, Ali Raza Soomro said, "It (Hyderabad Photo-walk) provided a platform for newcomers like me, and I felt like writing a story while capturing the photos. I never knew Hyderabad had so much to tell."

The Hyderabad Photo-walk team were also made a cake by Hira Brohi, one of the participants who also happens to own a small baking company. It was quite admirable that the enthusiasm of participants showed no signs of letting up even in the face of intense heat during the photo-walk. By all accounts, the walk was a success and ended up as the grandest event of its kind in the city's history. Most of all, it succeeded in its prime motive: Connecting youth with the history and culture of this glorious city.

Sehar Nadeem
BS413607

Courtesy Dawn



Bushra Ansari's fab website is a much-needed tribute to Pakistani TV's history

Sehar Nadeem
BS413607



'Golden period.' It's an easy, catch-all turn of phrase. It's also a concise alternate for 'the good old days of the PTV', a neater way to say 'the Waheed Murad era of cinema' and a quick acknowledgement of the greats that preceded today's stars, even though we may not be terribly familiar with all their past achievements.

So we blanket our ignorance with the necessary nod to times gone by, and move on. Isn't it a pity that we aren't better acquainted with our history? Our experience of the 'golden period', for those of us who have actively sought it out, is formed by slow buffering Youtube videos, the occasional screening of a classic, or the one-off exhibition of film buff Guddu Khan's vast collection of memorabilia. We hurray at these scattered opportunities, hail them as 'much-needed' (which they undoubtedly are), but they're no substitute for a proper cultural archive — a concrete, cohesive, comprehensive collection of records that document our history and make it readily available to the public.

That's what Nariman Ansari, a 35-year-old photographer and visual artist based in Toronto and the elder daughter of iconic actor-comedian-writer Bushra Ansari, set about to create. Rescuing the contents of a cardboard box that held photographs, articles and other records of her mother's life on and off screen — documents once endangered by their proximity to the sea in Bushra's former residence — and scouring the internet for everything else she could find, Nariman decided to put it all together and make public an archive of her mother's life and work. Two and a half years later, the result is bushraansari.com.

We lack a centralized archive devoted to Pakistani TV and cinema's glory days. Isn't it a pity we aren't better acquainted with our history?

Rich in content, this is a website that also looks beautiful, and one can't say the same about many other celebrity websites in Pakistan. Since it's a first, the star in question was a tad skeptical about her daughter's labour of love, but ultimately agrees that it was a good project to undertake. "It'll make it easy for me introduce myself to other people," the household name Bushra Ansari had said to Dawn.com, in all seriousness. Bushraansari.com lets fans get to know her a little more intimately. For instance, you can view photographs of her time as a young star on *Kaliyon Ki Mala*, catch a glimpse of her wedding shoot and admire her magazine covers on the site's timeline. You can also watch now-obscure video clips of her earlier comedy sketches and listen to recordings of her songs in the Archives section. It is the latter feature of the website that is Bushra's favourite. "The collection of old songs on the website revived a lot of old memories. I joined PTV as a singer, I never rated myself as a proper singer, but they're so many songs that aren't with me anymore, so I'm glad some were preserved."

"This sort of thing is new for our kind of people," Bushra told Dawn.com of her contemporaries, "We never promoted ourselves, always underestimated what we did, I still don't think I've done anything outstanding. But the new generation is different. They realise the value of things. Moin (Akhtar) was a much bigger star, as are people like Anwar Maqsood and Uzma Gillani. An initiative like this should happen for them too."

In a chat with Nariman, the site's creator revealed what how she stumbled upon the idea to create this archive.



Nariman Ansari: It was Moin Akhtar's death that inspired me to act on my frustration at the lack of interest shown to artists and Pakistani art history by institutions. I realized as I saw footage of his brilliant work from the '80s being shown on television during the coverage of his death, how children born after the 'satellite invasion' probably knew him only as the guy on *Loose Talk*. So many of them may be seeing that footage of his amazing work in the '80s as *Rozy* and *Showtime* for the very first time. It made me realize how the same generations would know very little of the amazing work done by artists like *Roohi Bano*, *Anwar Maqsood*, *Talat Hussain*, *Shafie Muhammad*, and even my mother, who is known more nowadays for her work as *Saima Chaudhry*. Would these people know of *Aangan Terha*? Or her famous parodies of *Salma Agha*, *Noor Jahan*?

I was privileged to be born into a home where I saw these people around me, and witnessed their work up close. But how unfair it is that Pakistanis don't have serious documentation of their cultural history. And it made me confront the fact that I was in a position to start with the artist in my own home. I knew my mother had been saving photos and news clippings in a giant cardboard carton. Having a design background made me realize how interesting it could be to display those things. Having seen some amazing exhibits on movie stars on our visits abroad and beautifully designed biographies, I knew these things help to define the story of culture. So I spoke to my mother about it, and I realized that even though a book would be lovely, it would not offer the level of accessibility that a website would.

"I wanted to build something that would be like an expansive archive of her [Bushra Ansari's] life," says Nariman. "Maybe students of media could find it useful. Her story is also the story of television in Pakistan in a way."

Courtesy Dawn

Positive Post is published to project positivity all around Pakistan amongst our youth and the entire nation. Our efforts are to inculcate patriotism and a sense of ownership in them. It is a compilation of news extracted by the students of Mass Communications and Media Studies of Greenwich University. Patron: Ms. Seema Mughal, (Vice Chancellor); Editor: Abdullah Sheikh (Student), Sub Editor: Fareeha Jabbir (Student); Graphics & Layout: Cozil Altaf, (Media Lab Coordinator)