Community
As you shop, keep your eyes open for ColourMax, the most exciting new viola series in years.

Community
The Kindergarten Section of Birla Public School marks its Annual Day ‘Natureza’19.

Unleashed
As climate change melts Alaska’s permafrost, roads sink, bridges tilt and greenhouse gases release. P4-5

Bollywood
Meghna Gulzar: Stop treating acid-attack survivor as ‘bechari’.

Page 14

Hollywood
Ed Sheeran to take another break from music.

Page 15
**PRAYER TIME**

- Fajr: 4.54am
- Shorooq (sunrise): 6.18am
- Zuhr (noon): 11.35am
- Asr (afternoon): 2.32pm
- Maghreb (sunset): 4.52pm
- Isha (night): 6.22pm

**USEFUL NUMBERS**

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**QUOTE UNQUOTE**

“If opportunity doesn’t knock, build a door.”
- Milton Berle

**Community Editor**
Kamran Rehmat
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**Into The Ashes**
**DIRECTOR:** Aaron Harvey  
**CAST:** Marguerite Moreau, Frank Grillo, James Badge Dale  
**SYNOPSIS:** With an honest job and a loving wife, Nick Brenner believed he had safely escaped his violent, criminal history. But his old crew hasn’t forgotten about him or the money he stole, and when they take what Nick now values the most – his wife – he has nothing left to lose. Confronted by the town sheriff, who is also his father-in-law, Nick must decide if he will stay on his new path or indulge in his need for revenge and force his enemies to pay for what they have done.

**THEATRES:** The Mall

**Mamangam**
**DIRECTOR:** M Padmakumar  
**CAST:** Mammootty, Neeraj Madhav, Anu Sithara  
**SYNOPSIS:** During the Mamankam festival held at the banks of Bharathapuzha in Tirunavaya, warriors from different parts of India display their skills.

**THEATRES:** Landmark

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For movie timings and further details please scan the QR code above with your mobile phone camera or visit qatarcinemas.com.
The Colour Run 2020
WHERE: QNCC
WHEN: January 25
TIME: 7am – 10pm
Your Health First is a five-kilometre, untimed event. At each kilometre mark, Colour Runners are doused from head to toe in a different coloured powder. Participants wear white at the starting line and finish the race plastered in colour. Once the 5k is over, the fun continues at the Finish Festival, a larger-than-life party equipped with music, dancing, photo ops, activity booths, vendors, and more massive colour throws, which create millions of vivid colour combinations.

Jewels from Royal Indian Courts showcases jewellery from India. Set in Stone: Gems and Jewels Exhibition presents a look at magnificent gems and more than 100 pieces from across Qatar Museums’ (QM) collections, including many masterpieces that have never been displayed before.

Gems and Jewels Exhibition
WHERE: Museum of Islamic Art
WHEN: Ongoing till January 18
TIME: 9am onwards
The exhibition comes in celebration of the Qatar-India 2019 Year of Culture and presents a look at magnificent gems and jewellery from India. Set in Stone: Gems and Jewels from Royal Indian Courts showcases more than 100 pieces from across Qatar Museums’ (QM) collections, including many masterpieces that have never been displayed before.

The Colour Run 2020 is back to show us their fast rowing skills. Dragon boating is a canoe-sport and was originally a traditional festival game dating back 2,000 years throughout Southern China. It has now become a popular sport with competitions held around the world.

Winter Dragon Boat Festival 2020
WHERE: Museum of Islamic Art
WHEN: January 24
Row, paddle, hurry up! Qatar’s largest water sports, Winter Dragon Boat Festival is back to show us their fast rowing skills. Dragon boating is a canoe-sport and was originally a traditional festival game dating back 2,000 years throughout Southern China. It has now become a popular sport with competitions held around the world.

Al Wakalat Car Market 2019
WHERE: Parking opposite to Khalifa International Stadium
WHEN: Ongoing till December 28
TIME: 4pm – 11:30pm
Al Wakalat Car Market aims to congregate car enthusiasts, prospective buyers, and automotive retailers with the best deals of the year in a single location. Al Wakalat Car Market will enable visitors to have access to cars at their best offers of the year, which ensure to clear out stocks of approved cars.

After School Activities
WHERE: Atelier
WHEN: Ongoing
Music and arts activities for students taking place after they finish their day in school includes Group Music lessons, Hip-hop, Ballet, Drawing and Painting, Drama Theatre & Taekwondo. Ages between 5 and 10 years old after school hours.

Winter School for Grade IX-XII
WHERE: Inspire Training Academy, Najma St.
WHEN: Ongoing till December 29
TIME: 8:30am – 1:30pm
Developing the leader within every teen today — for a better world tomorrow. Each student deserves to discover their potential and acquire the skills, confidence and motivation to make things happen and bring about change. The five-day leadership and innovation programme is an exciting series of interactive workshops, energetic activities and fun-filled challenges specifically designed to inspire and enable each and every student to uncover their unique abilities, develop greater confidence and master strategies for success in the classroom and beyond. Programme leader, Dr Ram B. Ramchandran is Vice Dean and Professor of Strategy and Planning at the O.P. Jindal Global School, India. The event is organised by Right Track Consultants. For registration details, contact 55448835.

Public Speaking Classes for Adults
WHERE: Shang Capital, C Ring Road
WHEN: January 15 – July 1
TIME: 6:30pm – 9pm
Get trained by experts to be a good speaker. Smedley Toastmasters is conducting a six-month speech-craft programme that teaches new members to speak confidently and develop leadership skills. For more information, 66053485, 33232490 or visit www.SmedleyToastmasters.org

Ballet Lessons
WHERE: Music and Arts Atelier
WHEN: Ongoing
TIME: 4pm – 8pm
For more info e-mail at registration@atelierr Qatar.com or call on 33003839.

Hobby Classes
WHERE: Mamangam Performing Art Centre
WHEN: Saturday – Friday
Mamangam is an art and performance centre started with a vision of spreading our knowledge, interests and experience in various disciplines in arts across different countries for children and adults. Mamangam has become the favourite centre for learning. We offer regular classes in the following disciplines like traditional classical and folk dance forms, art and craft, drawing and painting, personality development and public speaking, Bollywood dance, contemporary, hip hop styles, music both vocals and instrumentals. To develop health consciousness, we train them karate, yoga with special sessions for kids and adults. Mamangam has also come up with chess and robotics in regular batches in an attempt to give a better learning experience, as they sharpen their minds and brains too.

For those who wish to register for more details, visit www.mamangamqatar.in

Compiled by Nausheen Shaikh. E-mail: gtlisting@gmail.com, Events and timings subject to change.
Disruption ahead

Alaska’s permafrost is under assault from a warming climate, and it’s happening a lot faster than anticipated. Hillside slopes have liquefied, unleashing slides that end up as muddy deltas in salmon streams, writes Hal Bernton.

A n unpaved highway runs north out of Nome, carving through more than 70 lonely miles of tundra before dead-ending at this Inupiaq village. Maintenance crews keep the route open during the summer months. The work has become increasingly costly as a layer of ice and frozen dirt under the road softens into soggy muck, and stretches of road bed crack and collapse.

“There is so much melting. We just keep having to haul in gravel,” said Calvin Schaeffer, of the Alaska state Department of Transportation.

Alaska’s permafrost is under assault from a warming climate, and it’s happening a lot faster than anticipated. Hillside slopes have liquefied, unleashing slides that end up as muddy deltas in salmon streams. The ground under the Nome airport runway — key to linking the community to the outside world — has thawed, requiring costly patches. And during the hottest July on record, a sinkhole 14 feet deep opened along a main roadway in the city.

For a region where climate change also is bringing profound changes offshore, these are disruptive developments. As the northern Bering Sea warms, bird and marine mammal die-offs are on the rise, enabling storms to gain strength over open water and slam into coastal communities like Teller.

The accelerating melt is a global concern: Permafrost, which mostly lies in the northern reaches of the planet, is a vast carbon storehouse of frozen plants and animals that release greenhouse gases as they warm and decompose.

Fossil fuel combustion still is the main source of greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change. But the world’s permafrost now releases 1.2 to 2.2 million metric tonnes each year — at the upper end, nearly equal to Japan’s greenhouse gas emissions, according to a report this month by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Later this century, these emissions are expected to exceed those of the United States.

Scientists who study permafrost already are noticing some striking changes in Alaska’s landscape. Canadian scientist Merritt Turetsky monitors tracts of interior Alaska permafrost that a decade ago were covered by spruce forest. That land is now covered with lakes.

“It can happen super quickly, even in a matter of months. … This has been a wake-up call to the climate-science community. What has been happening at some of our field sites is a whole different ballgame.”

— Merritt Turetsky, Canadian scientist

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— Merritt Turetsky, Canadian scientist

In Alaska, the permafrost melt requires a fundamental rethinking of the fate of things built on top of it.

Oil pipelines, drilling pads and other structures will need to be shored up as ice-rich permafrost melts and the ground sags. In towns such as Nome, the changes in permafrost already pose a headache for homeowners, who must level house foundations that tilt as the climate warms.

And how much will it cost to maintain Alaska’s roads, bridges and airports — and how long will they last? Some, if built on permafrost that is mostly ice, could suffer catastrophic failures.

“The big thing to me is the life span of these projects,” said Jeff Currey, a state transportation department materials engineer.

“The permafrost reality, in some places where you have massive ice, the roads … disappear. And that’s
something that we have a hard
time grasping.”

Some permafrost is largely
gravel, so there’s not much
movement when it melts. Some
is a mix of ice and soil, a kind of
frostbite and unstable, thin and
rapidly drifting ice, a big change
in Northwest Alaska

Three to five years as the ground
continues to settle.

A number of gravel-filled oil drums and
two men began their odyssey. They
reached 85 degrees North, and the
cold temperature made it
propitious to attempt a bold new trek.

This year, Horn and Ousland
planned for the Pangaea to
push hundreds of miles north
on a route made possible by diminished
Arctic ice. The two men would exit
the boat to ski to the North Pole,
then head toward to the Norwegian
island of Spitsbergen, where they
would reunite in Nome, taking on
the role of maintenance supervisor.

Dunlevy believes “there is no
question” Alaska is warming, and
that “carbon dioxide emissions
may hold a key,” according to a
statement to The Seattle Times.

climate—change costs mounting,
there is plenty of support for such
an industry expansion in a state
that has long been a Republican
stronghold. But more Alaskans now
acknowledge the impacts of fossil
fuel development.

“Maybe Al Gore was right about
climate change,” said Darrin Olton,
manager of the Nome Airport.

“And we’ve got to get Donald
Trump to make a trip up here,”
responded Schafer, the road-
maintenance supervisor.

Mike Dunlevy, a former school
administrator from Northwest
Alaska, has slashed state budgets and
decided to dip into a more
than $64 billion oil—wealth savings
account — known as the Permanent
Fund — that kicks out dividends to
every Alaska resident.

The scope of Dunlevy’s cuts has
stirred a fierce political backlash,
including a recall petition now the
focal point of a court battle.

Over the long term, Dunlevy, a
staunch ally of President Donald
Trump, is hoping for major new oil
finds in North Slope areas such as
the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
that Congress in 2017 opened
for oil exploration. Even with

Some permafrost consists of nearly
pure ice wedges that leave behind
big depressions when they turn into
water.

Charlie Lean, a retired fishery
biologist raised in Nome, says the
changes can be startling.

On a moose hunt, he found a
river that once flowed clear and
running cloudy because of glacial
silt picked up by meltwater from the
permafrost. In places once
dominated by shrubs, cottonwoods
— which die if their roots freeze
— have found enough continually
thawed soil to sometimes grow into
6-foot trees.

Just walking across some
stratches of ground can be a
different experience from his youth.
“Get lots of hummocks and little rivulets, and it’s much
rougher,” Lean said.

Vladimir Romanovsky,
geophysicist at the University of
Alaska Fairbanks, says the pace of
the thawing in Northwest Alaska
appears to have quickened during
the past half—decade, which has
included intense summer rains that
can soften the ground, as well as
a dry spell this summer that included
tundra fires.

In some places, shallow layers of
permafrost have disappeared.
In others, the ground could continue
to sink for decades, continually
destabilising whatever is built up
top.

“It’s a long process, and a painful
process,” Romanovsky said.

Over the summer, the Alaska
state Department of Transportation spent
$4.5 million repairing the
Nome runway, which was built
in a hurry during World War II
on permafrost terrain that is now
settling in a process aggravated by
groundwater seeping from a nearby
river. The fix is expected to last
three to five years as the ground
continues to settle.

Coastal villages face a triple
threat: rising sea levels, a loss of
winter ice that once helped protect
them from storms, and thawing
permafrost.

“Teller is one of 31 Alaska
villages listed in a Government
Accountability Office report as
“imminently threatened by
flooding and erosion.”

Some of these village are in
more dire straits. There is keen
competition for federal funds, and
Alaska is having new money
troubles. State government
is largely funded by taxes and
royalties on oil production, which
has been in long—term decline. Oil
production in 2018 was down 79% from
a 1988 peak.

To cope with financial
shortfalls, Republican Governor
Mike Dunlevy, a staunch ally of President Donald
Trump, is hoping for major new oil
finds in North Slope areas such as
the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
that Congress in 2017 opened
for oil exploration. Even with

climate—change costs mounting,
there is plenty of support for such
an industry expansion in a state
that has long been a Republican
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winter ice that once helped protect
them from storms, and thawing
permafrost.

“The tundra where we have been
picking (berries) for the past 20
years — the ground just caved and
my leg sank in,” said Denise Topkok,
a council member in Teller.

The village, born more than a century
ago as a gold—rush boom town, is
now a Native community of about
235 people.

The sea is eroding a protective
coastal bluff of softening soil,
threatening a cemetery where
the grave markers already lean at sharp
angles due to the warming ground.

In the low—lying area, the sea is
held at bay by a makeshift wall
of gravel—filled oil drums and
an assortment of rusting engine
blocks, truck axles and other
equipment. But it’s not sufficient.

Teller has suffered repeated
flooding.

Through the years, more than 10
houses have been built on higher

ground, and more families would
like to relocate there.

Teller is one of 31 Alaska
villages in an area of Alaska
that runs through Arctic waters off
Russia to Europe, or the Northwest
Passage that runs through
Canadian waters to the Atlantic.

In August, a berth inside the
breakwater was claimed by the
Pangaea, a slender 105—foot
sailboat with a hull fortified to push
through ice.

The boat is owned by Mike Horn,
who has made marathon expeditions all
over the globe, including a 2006 ski
journey from Russia to the North Pole
in the company of Norwegian
Børge Ousland.

This year, Horn and Ousland
resumed a plan to hike on
supplies and some fresh young
crew and making repairs as they prepared to
attempt a bold new trek.

They planned for the Pangaea to
push hundreds of miles north
on a route made possible by diminished
Arctic ice. The two men would exit
the boat to ski to the North Pole,
then head toward to the Norwegian
island of Spitsbergen, where they
would reunite in Nome, taking on
the role of maintenance supervisor.

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question” Alaska is warming, and
that “carbon dioxide emissions
may hold a key,” according to a
statement to The Seattle Times.
The November Polar Express put a lot of good gardening folks in a funk. Consider, many of us had virtually had no frost, then the front swooped down dropping temperatures to a bone-chilling 22 degrees in West Georgia. So, if you are in a funk or simply found yourself behind in cool-season colour then reach for a flat or two of ColourMax violas. I promise this will be a pick me up that no doctor could prescribe. I had a Facebook message the other day asking if we could still plant pansies and violas now and the answer is, ‘absolutely.' If you typically plant in the fall in your region then do it this week. One of my favourite growers in Savannah posted a video recently, that showed a greenhouse full of dazzling one-gallon ColourMax violas just perfect for planting. There is a good probability the growers and retailers in your area still have plenty of cool-season colours too. ColourMax is still so new, many of you may be unaware of this series coming to us from Sakata Seed. They come in 10 colours and 4 mixes and are perfectly named. They are large-flowered violas that perform long into the spring giving landscape colour to the max. By long into the spring I’m talking April and even late May. Now, your dilemma is choosing when to switch to warm-season colour. This is a great problem to have, but the fact is, if you plant now in the south you’ll enjoy 4- to -5 months of sensational colour.

I am the ultimate pansy and viola lover, almost to the point of saying that I have never seen one I didn’t like. I love clear ones, those with blotches, those with whiskers, and I relish their fragrance. To me, there is nothing not to love about pansies and violas. While ColourMax flowers are larger than many other viola selections, the quantity of blossoms is also amazing. As you might expect, the plants reach 6 to 8 inches tall with a spread of about 10 inches. They are very cold-tolerant and transplant to the garden with ease.

To grow yours, select a site in full sun or partial shade with organically-rich soil. If organic, rich and fertile doesn’t sound like your soil, don’t fret. Over the last 20 years, most gardeners I have talked to are plagued with a tight clay or heavy soil. Clay particles are the smallest of all soils. Because of their small size, they are easier to compact, keeping out not only water but also air. So, we have choices, such as going with a landscape mix like the commercial landscaper does or simply working in organic matter. Your flower success starts at ground level. By incorporating organic matter like humus, compost or peat into the native soil, good things start to happen. Organic matter helps to loosen the soil for better water penetration and aeration, leading to good root development. Know also that pansies and violas are heavy feeders so even though it might be cold don’t mistake this as a sign they aren’t hungry.

The Garden Guy is growing ColourMax Clear Yellow and ColourMax Icy Blue in partnership with Goldilocks lysimachia and Rockin’ Red dianthus and I couldn’t be happier. They are all so appealing, ColourMax Berry Pie and the new mix, so aptly named, Lemonberry Pie will dazzle for months in the landscape. No matter where you live, there is a season for planting pansies and violas. In the South, we can still plant with great success. As you shop, keep your eyes open for ColourMax, the most exciting new viola series in years. – TNS

**COMBINATION:** ColourMax Icy Blue and Clear Yellow combine in a dreamy complementary partnership.

**COLOUR PUNCH:** ColourMax Lemonberry Pie Mix offers dazzling colours.

**APPEALING:** ColourMax Berry Pie offers a rare burgundy flower with a yellow blotch.
Behind Jim Allison’s quest to cure cancer

A new documentary profiles the Nobel-winning, harmonica-slinging scientist behind one of the biggest modern breakthroughs in cancer treatment

Jim Allison doesn’t quite fit the archetype of the studious, buttoned-up scientist: with a full beard and long hair, he’s the most gravelly of the studious, buttoned-up scientist: with a full beard and long hair, he’s the most gravelly

Washington, out of the science laboratories around the country and around the world, some extraordinarily beautiful things are happening,” he said.

Haney’s film, narrated by Texas native Woody Harrelson (who, according to Haney, “could’ve been more generous or supportive or fun”), retreats Allison’s journey from his childhood in Alice, Texas, where his mother died of cancer when he was 11, to years of research on the immune system that tested the boundaries of medical knowledge. His determination to look into the immune system’s potential to fight cancer – an idea, according to the film, often dismissed as fanciful or failed – often drew scepticism.

“For years, people said, this will never work,” Allison told the Guardian. “And if it doesn’t work, you’re wasting your time.”

Haney’s film depicts how, luckily, Allison and his team at labs in Berkeley, California, and Sloan Kettering in New York and now MD Anderson in Houston were not wasting their time. Treading against the weights of established treatment pathways and the heavy investment of time and money required for ground-breaking research, Allison and his team, from researchers to altruistic pharmaceutical executives, devote nearly 20 years to mainstreaming their first immunotherapy drug, ipilimumab (“ipi”), for late-stage melanoma patients.

Before ipilimumab, late-stage melanoma was basically a death sentence; at the time Allison started developing the drug in the mid-’00s, the median survival time after diagnosis was seven months. Sharon Belvin, featured in the film as first-person testimony to Allison’s achievements, was diagnosed with metastatic melanoma at 23; her wedding was held days after her first chemo treatment. Faced with a terminal diagnosis and failed chemo rounds, Belvin was put on the first clinical trial of ipilimumab; over a decade later, now long to two kids, she’s still cancer free. Her gratitude to Allison is ineffable, she says in the film. “There’s no thank you for this.”

Haney interweaves Belvin’s survival story, one of extreme time sensitivity, with the much longer arc of Allison’s dedication to developing affordable, personal costs and all. In one particularly moving sequence, home video shows Allison’s son growing from a toddler to a precocious child with the passage of years; during that same time, almost no progress was made on building a specific antibody critical to the idea underlying ipil in Allison’s lab. There are “things that came across in the film as personal sacrifices,” Allison said, “but to me at the time, it was what I thought needed to be done. But looking back on it I do realise that there was a cost.”

The timeline of medical research can feel glacial; as one commentator remarks in the film, we’re still just in the first few chapters of immuno-oncology treatments. Still, the film argues, if the entry revolved around the questions: is this possible, could this work? Then we have resolved the introduction: ipilimumab and its successor immuno-oncology drugs have, according to the film, treated millions of cancer patients worldwide – including Allison himself, who has faced cancer three times (his older brother died of cancer, another family trauma which the film posits as motivation behind Allison’s relentless research drive). At this point, “ipi” is no longer an experimental drug, meaning it can be prescribed by doctors around the world and is covered by insurance. The next chapter, then, asks how can we make this work better, with higher rates of effectiveness for different types of cancer.

Haney attributes the success of the first chapter, and the subject of Breakthrough, to Allison’s “iconoclastically creative point of view”, as well as his “relentless, resilient spirit.” But the larger import of Allison’s story, he said is “how you solve big problems. It’s a reminder in a world that is negative about solving climate change or income inequality or immigration problems that man has always had difficult challenges and we’ve solved them the same ways we’ve pulled together to our common purpose with good leadership.”

“Ultimately hope people are inspired by Jim and by his personal example, by the notion that we can solve the most challenging possible problems if we just go about it together in the right way and by the life of joy and creativity that living in the world of sciences can be,” Haney said.

Allison is, characteristically, a bit more prosaic: “I hope people see it and say, yeah that’s something that I’d like to do,” he said on his science career balanced with a healthy dose of fun. “You can enjoy doing science and help make the world a better place at the same time.”

—from “The Guardian

**PERSONAL: Jim Allison in Breakthrough**
Actors of substance who ruled

By Muhammad Asad Ullah

In the plethora of drama serials on air every year, it's quite strenuous to get your work noticed. Sometimes the anger roars. Other times it seethes. It can be silent or eloquent, mighty or impotent, righteous or nasty. Or almost invisible. Whatever goes into a performance—talent, grit, wit, strength, inspiration, exhaustion, luck—was part of actors' performance that was seen and appreciated by masses this year. Much great acting takes place in drama serials that actually aren't all that good, in terms of budget I mean. Over the period of time Pakistan entertainment industry has realized that it's not the star power that brings the good rating and fame to any serial but the substantial content and characters.

Where unconventional characters and storylines are gaining popularity for their relativeness with the audiences, there is so much feeling that needs a story right now, when all kinds of people are mad—in real life and in the movies—for all kinds of reasons. Some of those people are played by the 8 actors selected for this year's Ruling the Television Audience—especially by the women. When we finished with our list, we noticed that women outnumbered men. We thought about adjusting the balance but decided not to. Female anger is a potent political, social and creative force nowadays. The portrayal of a strong lead female character rather than any damsel in distress is carving out a frame for actors to showcase more of their versatility, and perhaps our critical antennas picked up on that.

Pakistan entertainment industry is well on its way and there's quite a reason to expect progress in the years to come: Hira Mani, one of five women to make our top 8, was relatively less known just last year. It's time to show some love for the scads of performances that you'll be sorry to have had missed, if you have. Here's a selection of the very best.

**Imran Ashraf in Ranjha Ranjha Kardi**

Imran Ashraf really is defining acting prowess with unconventional roles in the real sense of the world. His character Bhola in Ranjha Ranjha Kardi hit home for many, and created awareness about mental health. Imran has raised awareness around disorders like ASD, ADHD and Asperger’s Syndrome via Bhola.

Normally, when Imran’s character loses it, it’s because he’s right in a world that’s wrong, and the anger is meant to identify and then destroy the injustice. Imran is at his critical best when the serial needs his face to do what a screenplay can’t. His expression—a rictus of embarrassment, confusion and guilt—belongs in a gallery. It’s a masterpiece of comedy and psychological terror.

**Ahad Raza Mir in Ehd-e-Wafa and Yeh Dil Mera**

Ahad is a very fine addition to the entertainment fraternity. We’ve seen him put his acting skills well to use and make audiences sway with him. If you feel like you’ve been seeing a lot of Ahad Raza Mir lately, you’re not wrong: The pro actor released his two drama serials in three months—Ehd-e-Wafa and Yeh Dil Mera. Ahad is wonderfully terrifying in Yeh Dil Mera—a boy-next-door with quite nothing to lose attitude, his unrelenting pursuit of the leading lady as the actor is slowly but surely is unravelling his character’s motivations. Ahad plays it close to the vest throughout, making his reveal and scenes all the more powerful one after another.

**Sajal Aly in Alif and Yeh Dil Mera**

The truth of the matter is that Sajal Aly could make the list of great performers in just about any year, for just about any role. She is always interesting, never not surprising and consistently unerring, even if the serial falls short—and that’s a big “if” because that’s a rarity. For the previous at least half a decade, except a movie she did in 2016, Zindagi Ki Toh Nahi Haseen Hai, there’s no project of hers that have gone unnoticed by the viewers and masses at large. In 2018, her most-heralded work on television was O Romzan where she played a blithe girl full of life. The zone where normalcy collides with extremity—where high comedy and psychological terror keep company—is her sweet spot.

What makes her work this year in Alif and Yeh Dil Mera, both on-air simultaneously, even more astonishing is that she brought that sweet spot with her, infusing those drama serials with an element of vitality they would otherwise have lacked. Both of them are hothouse blossoms, exercises in sensibility for directors with very particular agendas. Both characters are driven by the element of innocence at some point, and that’s how Sajal takes the wheel with her big shot eyes.
Sana plays a girl who despite being helpless does not submit to her family's pressure and stands her ground. She is a victim of harassment who is first betrayed by her father and then her fiancé but she goes on to stand her ground. It's the sort of bound-for-tragedy part that barely needs an actor. It practically performs itself. And yet, many actors have given it and had many a statuette thrown at them for doing so. But as the story becomes about a woman's dignity, Javed inhabits the horror of unsought valour. She makes the physical challenges appear to struggle with anything. The character struggles with pain and unceasing pity. The actor doesn't appear to struggle with anything. She plays the shock of attention, the suffocating embarrassment of pity, and rage at how the harassment forces Sameera to take greater responsibility for her choices.

Ayeza Khan in Meray Paas Tum Ho

What to do with an actor in a type of role you dislike that's the centrepiece of a drama you really care for? Well, if the acting works, you just ignore everything else. And Ayeza Khan's acting in Meray Paas Tum Ho really works. You dislike the character so much that you want other characters in the serial to do well in terms of storyline. Ayeza Khan not only deserves an applause and appreciation but some awards as well for signing on to a role like Mehwish in Meray Paas Tum Ho. The actress who is usually seen either as a damsel in distress in dramas or the manipulative kind have shattered all our pre-conceived notions by playing this character. Ayeza paid meticulous attention to detail by nailing each and every expression and dialogue, making us hate Mehwish for her ruthlessness. If that's not extraordinary then what is?

Sanam Baloch in Khaas

Part of the force in her performance in Khaas has to do with our long relationship with this star. We don’t know Sanam Baloch, but we do know ‘Sanam Baloch.’ And here she is in a new mode: a victim of emotional abuse but she is not the damsel in distress the masses adore. She is a strong, educated woman with resources, who is willing to compromise but has enough self-esteem to resist her narcissist husband’s attempts at manipulating and belittling her. Baloch uses her stardom some — that smile of hers is forced into the mounting desperation of her character.

Affan Waheed in Do Bol

It has been apparent for more than half a decade — let’s say since Daastan which you may have forgotten had anyone else in it — that Affan Waheed can do anything. Even as a supporting actor, he clearly possessed lead-level discipline and versatility and also the kind of relentless, fearless, unshowy honesty most often associated with great actors like Waheed Murad. In Do Bol, Waheed proves he can do anything by doing something that may sound easy: playing an ordinary Pakistani middle-class man. ‘Ordinary’ is hardly fair, though. Badar in Do Bol is typical only by virtue of the circumstances over which he has no control. Affan is in no way exceptional and in every way unique — a marvellous impossibility that has rarely been captured with such a romance.

Hira Mani in Do Bol

The shot from Do Bol that probably pops into your head first — it was in the trailers and will no doubt feature in every award reel — is of Hira Mani in close-up, shrugging off Affan Waheed at a train station, her eyes squinted with disappointment and overflowing with tears. It’s a pivotal moment, for sure, both in the plot and in Hira’s performance: the big reveal and the first big emotional payoff. But it’s also a confirmation of the importance of those eyes to the structure and meaning of the film. They are perhaps its only reliable barometers of emotion, instruments of empathy and windows on the truth. Hira Mani practices a kind of naturalistic, Karachi mode of performance in Do Bol. It’s acting that’s more like being: She makes her way through the drama serial as she might go about her actual day. But rising above it is her performance, the garrulous, whirring, sweet-and-sour energy steals all her scenes. Hira has never seemed so relaxed and radiant on-screen — she takes a nothing role and gives it flesh and blood.
Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday that celebrates family, community and culture. Celebrated from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1, its origins are in the first harvest celebrations of Africa from which it takes its name.

Kwanzaa was created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, professor of Africana Studies at California State University, Long Beach, an author and scholar-activist who stressed the indispensable need to preserve, continually revitalize and promote African

The seven core principles of Kwanzaa

❤️ Umoja: Unity - To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.

❤️ Kujichagulia: Self-Determination - To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.

❤️ Ujima: Collective Work and Responsibility - To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers’ and sisters’ problems our problems and solve them together.

❤️ Ujamaa: Cooperative Economics - To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.

❤️ Nia: Purpose - To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

❤️ Kuumba: Creativity - To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

❤️ Imani: Faith - To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Source: officialkwanzaawebsite.org, interexchange.org
Graphic: Staff, TNS
People with restricted diets more likely to feel lonely

Holiday celebrations often revolve around eating, but people with restricted diets are more likely to feel lonely when they can’t share in what others are eating, researchers have found.

Across seven studies and controlled experiments, the findings, published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, found that food restrictions predicted loneliness among both children and adults. “Despite being physically present with others, having a food restriction leaves people feeling left out because they are not able to take part in bonding over the meal,” said study lead author Kautilia Woolley, Assistant Professor at Cornell University in the US.

For example, in one experiment, assigning unrestricted individuals to experience a food restriction increased reported feelings of loneliness. That suggests such feelings are not driven by non-food issues or limited to picky eaters.

“We can strip that away and show that assigning someone to a restriction or not can have implications for their feeling of inclusion in the group meal,” she said.

Yet, within their own similarly restricted group, they felt a stronger bond. But when restricted from sharing in the meal, people suffer “food worries,” said the researcher.

They fret about what they can eat and how others might judge them for not fitting in. Those worries generated a degree of loneliness comparable to that reported by unmarried or low-income adults, and stronger than that experienced by school children who were not native English speakers, according to the research.

Compared with non-restricted individuals, having a restriction increased reported loneliness by 19 per cent. People felt lonelier regardless of how severe their restriction was, or whether their restriction was imposed or voluntary.

To date, Woolley said, children have been the primary focus of research on the effects of food restrictions. A nationally representative survey she analysed from the Centers for Disease Control did not track the issue among adults.

But increasingly, Woolley said, food restrictions are being carried into adulthood, or adults are choosing restricted diets such as gluten-free, vegetarian and vegan for health or ethical reasons.

-- IANS

COMMUNITY
LIFESTYLE/HOROSCOPE

ARIES
March 21 – April 19
Be careful about letting your imagination run away with your emotions. Grand scenarios you work up in your head may send your heart crashing when they end unfulfilled or crushed. There’s a realistic tone to the day asking you to be serious and practical, especially when it comes to your feelings.

CANCER
June 21 – July 22
Here’s a day when some long-awaited attention or recognition comes your way. You’re finished with the hassles you experienced during the past month and have entered a calmer period. Those who could recently only criticize can’t find enough words to praise you. Take the compliments at face value. There’s nothing wrong with being happy with yourself.

LIBRA
September 23 – October 22
Go out and see a movie that you’ve wanted to see for weeks. You’ll be happiest in a reality that isn’t necessarily yours. Fantasy and imaginative scenarios are what tickle your fancy now. Be careful of being weighed down by heavy emotional issues that don’t have anything to do with you.

CAPRICORN
December 22 – January 19
Your heart’s in the right place today, but somehow you find it hard to execute the things you want to do. Art and music projects are especially difficult for you now. They require a more cerebral approach than you’d like to admit. Perhaps you’re drawn to the spiritual nature of things more than you’re opposed to the rational nature of things.

TAURUS
April 20 – May 20
You may experience some raw emotions today, which you should use as your ally instead of your enemy. Your heart may feel rather abused, so do what you can to gently care for it. Be careful of letting others get too close if they simply don’t know how to act around something so fragile and pure. Protect yourself.

LEO
July 23 – August 22
You may experience some push and pull today. One minute you feel like you should sit back and wait for things to go your way, and the next you feel a stick poking you to get moving. Life is a delicate balance of incorporating these two modes of operation. Neither way is more correct, so recognise and honour both.

SCORPIO
October 23 – November 21
You may be faced with a choice between two different realities. Friends and family are choosing sides while you remain on the fence. You’re able to understand both sides of the issue, making it difficult to put your energy in only one camp. Perhaps you wish to serve as a bridge between the two camps. Things don’t have to be as black and white as others see them.

GEMINI
May 21 – June 20
The annoying restlessness that you experience today is simply a reminder that it’s important to start engaging in art projects or musical endeavours that make you happy. Learn from people who aren’t afraid to follow their dreams. Don’t be so concerned with what others think of your work. Now it’s important to do these things for yourself.

VIRGO
August 23 – September 22
You should feel emotionally stable today, but you may feel a bit unsure of yourself when it comes to data. Someone is challenging your way of thinking and demanding that you take a step farther out on the fragile limb. You’re happy on the part of the branch that’s much thicker and more stable. Feel free to stay there if you don’t feel comfortable taking a chance now.

SAGITTARIUS
November 22 – December 21
Be careful about letting your imagination run away with your emotions. Grand scenarios you work up in your head may send your heart crashing when they end unfulfilled or crushed. There’s a realistic tone to the day asking you to be serious and practical, especially when it comes to your feelings.

AQUARIUS
January 20 – February 18
If you experience resistance or frustration in a certain area, you should take this as a sign that you should follow a new route. Things should flow smoothly and easily. This is one of those days in which reality is going to conflict harshly with fantasy, especially if you don’t have them well separated in your mind. Enjoy your imaginary world, but deal with the practical world, too.

PISCES
February 19 – March 20
Sometimes friends become your real family. Your friendships are deeper and more enduring than you realize. Many people are eager to give their help, so why are you reluctant to receive it? Haven’t you been the one promoting the benefits of warm, sincere friendships? Today makes you aware of your talents and reinforces how important friendships are.
**Wordsearch**

**Codeword**

Every letter of the alphabet is used at least once. Squares with the same number have the same letter in. Work out which number represents which letter.

**Sudoku**

Sudoku is a puzzle based on a 9x9 grid. The puzzle is divided into nine (3x3) boxes. You are given a selection of values and to complete the puzzle, you must fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains all the digits from 1 to 9. No column may contain duplicate digits.

**Garfield**

** Bound And Gagged**
Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1 Drug for a fool (4)
3 Soldier, perhaps, that carries sailors? (3-2-3)
9 Quickly put into words (7)
10 Fed up with being drilled (5)
11 This foreign bread is mine, thank you (6)
12 Cad making rude retort? (6)
14 Setting for a cello composition (6)
16 Ales and wine put before the queen (6)
19 Material from West Coast state taken by one company (6)
21 Plant some privet, perhaps, or some wretched geraniums (5)
24 Some real gold star (5)
25 One sort of shirt or vest (7)
26 Heaven is in March (8)
27 Exploited American editor (4)

Down
1 Action by head required to change a name (4,4)
2 Spot Italian bird (5)
4 Take in sailor’s sphere (6)
5 The way of the world? (5)
6 Most circumspect, using ears and wit (7)
7 Theme park attraction - for some, a horrid experience! (4)
8 Happen to exist before autumn (6)
13 Wild deer and rats may be stopped (8)
15 One who makes you pay for a horse (7)
17 Where palm is available (2,4)
18 Sounds made by hooters about one (6)
20 I had been at the front - and took it easy! (5)
22 Playthings for Guy’s companions (5)
23 Keep on and on at an instrument? (4)

Answers

Wordsearch

Codeword
Meghna Gulzar: Stop treating acid-attack survivor as ‘bechari’

By Arundhuti Banerjee

Filmmaker Meghna Gulzar’s upcoming film Chhapaak is based on the true story of acid attack survivor Lakshmi Agarwal, and features Deepika Padukone in the protagonist’s role. Meghna says we should stop looking at an acid attack victim as a ‘bechari’ and celebrate her spirit and positive attitude towards life despite the horrific experience.

‘Contrary to the popular belief and perception that the story of an acid-attack survivor would be very depressing, heavy and graphical, Malti is a character who smiles into her face, not my spirit. That is why all those acid-attack survivors say that ‘we are happy’ the way we are, we are not ‘bechari’! Of course, that does not diminish the trauma they have gone past from their reflection in the mirror and have recovered. Their spirit has not been distorted, just their face. That is why you see Malti (Deepika’s character in the film) says that they changed my face, not my spirit. That is why all those acid-attack survivors say that ‘we are happy’ the way we are, we are not ‘bechari’! Of course, that does not diminish the trauma they have gone through, but it is about overcoming and living a spirited life!’ said Meghna.

Apart from Deepika, the film features Vikrant Massey and Rohit Saraf as characters and features Janhvi Kapoor as an acid attack survivor. Janhvi says she got used to the attention.

‘#NoFilterNeha Season 4’

Dr Agarwals. So, it’s kind of weird but I think the weirdest part of it is that I have kind of gotta used to it now,” Janhvi said.

“‘As much as people might crib about it, at the end of the day, you are getting attention and how phony does it sound to be like ‘Oh my god, I am getting so much attention’ she added.

‘The Bhosle star says she struggled with being papped.

‘Honestly, I have my days and I’ve had a long phase where I really struggled with it, when I was very bothered by it I don’t know I felt like it was taking away my credibility. It was like a weird deviation and just an interference and people commenting and me reading that and I was getting too caught up. But, then I think the past 7-8 months, touchwood, the work has been so back-to-back, I have realised that it doesn’t matter,’ she said.

Janhvi says she is getting used to the attention.

‘As much as people might crib about it, at the end of the day, you are getting attention and how phony does it sound to be like ‘Oh my god, I am getting so much attention’ she added.

‘The Bhosle star says she struggled with being papped.

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Janhvi was speaking for a podcast of JioSaavn’s ‘#NoFilterNeha Season 4’. She continued: “Like, if people are going to cry about me wearing shorts to the gym; I don’t care anymore. Because if I wear pants I slip on the reformer so I am going to wear shorts. I mean, there are days when I still get bothered by the comments, I have actually reached a place where I am amused by some of the not-so-cute ones.” Asked if she is single, she said: “Yes.”

Opening up about her relationship status with her “crush” Vijay Deverakonda, Janhvi said: “The status is non-existent, unfortunately. I feel like I have put out a lot of feelers but there is no response. No, but I am kidding. It’s just admiration. I am comfortable with the admiration which I guess is one-side. It’s only on interviews and public platforms and on NoFilterNeha shows. You know my phases are actually very seasonal. He’s been quite consistent though. Like my fondness has been quite consistent. No, but there have been a couple of phases after.” – IANS
Ed Sheeran to take another break from music

Ramsey-winning singer Ed Sheeran has announced that he is taking a break from music after working “non-stop” since 2017.

The 28-year-old took to Instagram to share the news. This is the second break he has taken from music as he went silent on social media and stopped performing for most of 2018, reports mirror.co.uk.

He wrote: “Hello all. Gonna go on another break again. The Divide era and tour changed my life in so many ways, but now it’s all over it’s time to go out and see some more of the world.”

Sheeran said he wanted to travel so he could find some more things to write about in his lyrics. He continued: “I’ve been a bit non-stop since 2017 so I’m just gonna take a breather to travel, write and read. I’ll be off all social media until it’s time to come back. To my family and friends, see ya when I see ya – and to my fans, thank you for always being amazing.

“I promise to be back with some new music when the time is right and I’ve lived a little more to actually have something to write about.”

He signed off the message: “Lots of love x.”

Joker director: I understand Scorsese criticism of comicbook films

Joker filmmaker Todd Phillips has given legendary Hollywood filmmaker Martin Scorsese a pass on what he said about comic book movie blockbusters, saying he understood what he was trying to say. Scorsese recently took a jibe at Marvel movies, saying these efforts were “not cinema”.

Phillips accepted his fellow filmmaker was making a fair point, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Joining Scorsese for The Hollywood Reporter’s directors roundtable chat, Phillips said: “Marty got a lot of heat for that (what he said), but I understand it fully. We were struggling to get Joker made, which sounds funny because it exists in the superhero world, but it’s really not one of those movies.”

“We spent a year at Warner Bros., and I saw e-mails back and forth, literally, where they said, ‘Does he realise we sell Joker pyjamas at Target?’ I go, ‘Didn’t movies come first and pyjamas come second? Are the pyjamas dictating the movies?’ Theme park rides. Pyjamas. Slurpee cups. Whatever it is that you are selling off the back of movies, you can’t make your decisions based on that.”

Scorsese added: “I remember when Disneyland was built... and one of the aspirations of the studios was to become as important to American culture as Disneyland. And the first studio to really do that was Universal with the (studio) tour. And then you add the blockbuster on top of that – and why not? People go to the movie. Enjoy it. That sort of thing.”

“So the sense of a theme park has always been there. It’s not bad. We used to love to go to amusement parks. But now in an amusement park, you have the film.” – IANS

Mariah Carey sued by former nanny

Pop superstar Mariah Carey was sued recently by a former nanny Maria Burgues.

Maria Burgues filed a suit in the Los Angeles Superior Court, claiming that she was fired in April 2018 after complaining about her pay and working conditions, reports variety.com.

Burgues says she was paid $25 an hour to babysit Carey’s children. She was obliged to travel with Carey and the children when Carey went on tour, but says she was not paid for her travel time.

She was supported by his wife

The singer admitted that his weight was the reason he didn’t have six-packs and I was the same three or four videos. I was the same weight as the One Direction boys and Justin Bieber and all these people who had six-packs and I was kind of like, ‘Oh should I look like this?’” – IANS

Looking for inspiration: Ed Sheeran said he wants to travel so he could find some more things to write about in his lyrics.

He began his Divide tour in March 2017 and played his last performance in August this year. Earlier in an interview, Sheeran says being branded as ‘fat’ by online trolls made him lose weight.

In Behind The Medal podcast, the Shape of you singer added that he was called “chunky” and “fat” by trolls, and that left him wanting to lose weight, thesun.co.uk.

“I never had insecurities and people pointed them out – you start thinking about them. It all stems from other people’s insecurities. So many people have things they’re insecure about so it makes them feel better to point out someone else’s. Because half the people that would point out that I’m fat are probably fat themselves,” he said.

He is also fighting a lawsuit by Lianna Shakhnazaryan, a former assistant who claims Carey’s ex-manager, Stella Bulochnikov, treated her abusively. Carey has accused Shakhnazaryan of secretly recording her and trying to extort her out of $8 million.

In a ruling on Monday, Judge Richard J. Burdge, Jr., barred Shakhnazaryan from obtaining Carey’s medical records in the dispute. Shakhnazaryan’s attorneys had claimed the records would be relevant in assessing Carey’s emotional distress or ability to consent to being recorded. Burdge rejected both arguments, finding the records to be irrelevant.

In November, Maria Salazar, a former housekeeper of Carey, also filed a lawsuit claiming she was not adequately paid. – IANS
Kindergarten Section of BPS marks Annual Day

The Kindergarten Section of Birla Public School (BPS) recently marked its Annual Day ‘Natureza’19’. The event featured various cultural performances. The event was attended by notable personalities, including Lukose K Chacko, Chairman of BPS; Gope Shahani, Vice Chairman; Dr Mohan Thomas and C V Rappai, Directors; and A P Sharma, Principal of BPS. Principal of BPS welcomed the gathering.

Speaking on the occasion, the principal detailed on how to prepare the students for a competitive and self-sustainable future, which was followed by an annual report of Kindergarten Section by Josephine Carlos, Co-ordinator at Kindergarten Section. Addressing the gathering, C V Rappai said that effective verbal communication nurtures the process of socialisation by facilitating new friendships and in turn aiding the learning process.

Dr Mohan Thomas emphasised on teachers playing a very significant, lifelong impact on the students. “This impact involves not only the teaching of particular academic skills, but also the fostering of student’s personal, social and emotional skills,” he said. Marziya Fazal, Academic Supervisor of Kindergarten I and Vincy John, Academic Supervisors of Kindergarten II, proposed a vote of thanks.

PISQ organises third edition of Quaid-e-Azam U-12 Inter-School Football Tournament

Pakistan International School Qatar (PISQ) recently organised its third edition of Quaid-e-Azam U-12 Inter-School Football Tournament. Eight teams from various schools across Doha divided into two categories, including Doha Turkish School, German School, TNG School and PISQ (Green), Pool A, and Stafford Sri Lankan School, Gulf English School, PISQ (Blue), Pool B, participated in the tournament.

Raja Nasir Mehmood, Vice Principal of Boys Wing at PISQ; along with Muhammet Kilicsallayan, Vice Principal Turkish School; and Mubaraka, HM of KG Wing; and Jameel, Administration Officer at PISQ, attended the opening ceremony of the tournament. Hassan Elahi took the oath from the players, which was followed by the national anthem of Qatar and Pakistan.

The opening match was played between PISQ Green and German International School. PISQ Green won the match. The second match between Gulf English School and Stafford Sri Lankan School was won by Gulf English School. Third match was played between Doha Turkish School and TNG School Wakra. Doha Turkish School defeated TNG School by 3:1. The fourth match was played between Gulf English School and PISQ Blue. Gulf English School won the match 5:3 at penalty kicks. Gulf English School qualified for the finals. The fifth match was played between PISQ Green and Doha Turkish School. PISQ Green defeated its opponent with a margin of 5:0 and also qualified for the finals. PISQ Green bagged the Quaid-e-Azam U-12 Inter-School Football Tournament title by winning the final match of the tournament.

The referees of the tournament included M Mustaf Samulebbe, from Stafford Sri Lankan School, and Noor Hussain, Taaj Hameed. PISQ, Junior Wing, was the officiating field jury. The coaches of PISQ team, included Majid Khan and Adnan Ashraf; Sharzodo Blutto and Javaid Hussain were the commentators of the tournament.

The ‘Player of the Tournament’ was Muneeb Ahmed, from PISQ Green Team; and Abdulla Al-Motawaa from Gulf English School, the Best Goal Keeper. Nargis Raza Otho, Principal of PISQ, felicitated the players and coaches on the occasion.