Mahira Khan, Pakistani actress, talks what she dreams about now that she’s hit the pinnacle of stardom, her upcoming film and more. P4-6
FAST AND FURIOUS PRESENTS: HOBBS AND SHAW

DIRECTION: David Leitch
CAST: Dwayne Johnson, Jason Statham, Idris Elba
SYNOPSIS: Ever since balding lawmaker Hobbs, a loyal agent of America’s Diplomatic Security Service, and lawless outcast Shaw, a former British military elite operative, first faced off in 2015’s Furious 7, the duo have swapped smack talk and body blows as they’ve tried to take each other down. But when cyber-genetically enhanced anarchist Brixton (Idris Elba) gains control of an insidious bio-threat that could alter humanity forever — and bests a brilliant and fearless rogue MI6 agent (The Crown’s Vanessa Kirby), who just happens to be Shaw’s sister — these two sworn enemies will have to partner up to bring down the only guy who might be badder than themselves.

THEATRES: The Mall, Landmark, Royal Plaza

PAREY HUT LOVE

DIRECTION: Asim Raza
SYNOPSIS: The story of a guy who is carefree and afraid of commitments when it comes to relationships. His life takes a twist when he meets a strong-willed, gorgeous girl and falls in love with her.

THEATRES: The Mall, Landmark, Royal Plaza

Quote Unquote
“Choosing to be positive and having a grateful attitude is going to determine how you’re going to live your life.” — Joel Osteen

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**EVENTS**

**The Comedy of Tango**  
**WHERE:** Katara – the Cultural Village  
**WHEN:** August 28  
**TIME:** 8pm – 9pm  
With the support of Katara – the Cultural Village and embassy of Argentina in Doha, Tango Pasión Doha presents Los Guardiola – “The Comedy of Tango” on August 28. A show consisting of seven scenes is inspired by famous tangos. Dancers, mimes and actors, Marcelo Guardiola and Giorgia Marchiori, known artistically as Los Guardiola, will project the audience into the fantastic world of their danced pantomime where comedy and tragedy merge into the rhythm of tango.

**Yoga Class**  
**WHERE:** Lululemon, Mall of Qatar  
**WHEN:** Every Saturday  
**TIME:** 8:30am – 9:30am  
Join the complimentary in-store yoga classes. No registration or mat is required. The class runs on first come first served basis.

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

**Career Guidance**  
**WHERE:** Right Track Consultants, Al Sadd  
**WHEN:** Sunday – Thursday  
**TIME:** 6pm – 8pm  
Career guidance for course, country, college and entrance for students of Grade IX-XII, of all curriculum. Career assessments administered for stream preference, career test, branch preference, personality, multiple intelligence and learning styles and productivity. For more information, 55448835.

**Artistic Gymnastic Classes**  
**WHERE:** Qatar Academy Msheireb  
**WHEN:** Ongoing  
**TIME:** 3:15pm – 4:15pm  
The olympic sport using horizontal bar, rings and floor exercises on mats for the children from age 4 till 16.

**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. Summertime camp at Mamangam has become the children’s favourite centre for learning art and craft, drawing, and learning spoken English. The kids also enjoy Bollywood dance, contemporary and hip hop music. To develop health consciousness, we teach them kids yoga, karate etc. Mamangam has also come up with chess and robotics in the regular batches in an attempt to give a better learning experience.

The first batch of the summer camp began on June 26 continuing until July 25 from Sundays to Thursdays. The second batch will commence on July 28 ending on August 25. Registrations are open to kids between 5 to 16 years. For those who wish to register for more details, visit www.mamangamqatar.in

**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.

**Arabic Calligraphy Workshop**  
**WHEN:** Saturday – Wednesday  
**TIME:** 6pm  
Arabic Calligraphy workshop is back. Come and learn the artistic practice of Arabic handwriting and calligraphy at Music and Arts Atelier. The lessons will take place every Saturday, Monday and Wednesday at 6pm. For more information, contact registration@atelierqatar.com

**Dance and Instrument Classes**  
**WHERE:** TCA Campus, Behind Gulf Times Building  
**WHEN:** Wednesday – Monday  
Learn the movements of dance styles in Bollywood, Hip Hop and also the musical instruments such as Piano, Guitar, Keyboard for adults as well kids and move in the world of music. For details, contact 66523871/31326349.
“We’re all affected by politics. I am too. But I try to stay away”

— Mahira Khan, Pakistani actress

NOTES FOR A DIVA

So much has changed over the years in Pakistan entertainment industry. First and foremost: social media! Everything is out there. Other thing that has changed, look at where the films are. Look at how many options we have. Whether it’s the television or film industry, you are no more looking at five people, but in double or triple digits of talented people.
“I think Noorie is a lot like me. She has a lot of faith; unbothered and unfettered by anything around her. It’s her and what she wants to do but she also wants to be morally correct and wants to do the right thing. Noorie experiences love along the way. Well, I’ve experienced better love than Noorie!”

Since turning out as the charming Ayla, Mahira Khan has come a long way, courting her way through a list of serials, from Sarmad Khoosat’s Humssafir (2012) to Rukhsana in Sudsay Tumbale (2014), and silver screen prominence from Bol to 7 Din Mohabbat In (2018). It also won’t be erroneous to say that Mahira is indeed one of the most fashion savvy actresses Pakistan industry has ever seen. An actress that can never go wrong with how she steps forward on the red carpet; and that image was pretty much backed up when she had made her debut on the stairs of Cannes Film Festival in 2018 in an Alberta Ferretti number and Chopard jewels.

Although Mahira made a successful Bollywood debut, but with the eruption of tensions between Pakistan and India, Mahira and other fellow actors such as Fawad Khan and Ali Zafar, had to abandon future projects in India. Community recently sat down with Mahira to know how she felt when her Bollywood debut film, Raees, got stuck at the censors and she wasn’t able to be a part of the then ongoing promotions of the film and what she dreams about now that she’s hit the pinnacle of stardom.

From a girl next door – to a diva walking the red carpet of Cannes. Was there any specific moment when you actually realised that you’ve just made it as the superstar of Pakistan entertainment industry?

I don’t know. I’ve never actually thought about it. But you know I was watching the Hollywood Round Table and whenever they ask such a question in that show, that when was that specific moment when you felt you had made it, it’s so hard to answer. It’s so hard to think what was that specific moment. You know, ever body has a dream, right. We work towards that. When I was little, my dream was to work with Shahrukh Khan. That’s it! I didn’t want to work, I just wanted to be in the same frame. And it was an unbelievable dream; something people thought was unachievable. But that’s what dream are. I think when I saw Zaalima or I stood there in front of him, I was like yes it’s done! You know honestly after that, since I had no other dream in life, something else then had to naturally and organically come. And that’s very hard. After sharing screen space with Shahrukh Khan, now Superstar is that next dream.

Along with Superstar, you have quite a prominent cameo in Puree Hut Love as well, both releasing simultaneously on Eid at-Adha. What kind of pressure you’re going through?

A lot of pressure! My cameo in Puree Hut Love is super special to me. One, because it’s Asim Raza (director of Puree Hut Love). Asim for me is somebody very special. We connect on a very soul level. There are very few people I speak to so much in the industry, and Asim is one of them. He’s been my guiding force although I’m a rebel! He’ll like it more if I listen to him.

Morre Saiyan in PHL is a song that we both wanted to do and I would say it’s an ode to our friendship.

How much can you relate to your character of Noorie in Superstar?

I think Noorie is a lot like me. She has a lot of faith; unbothered and unfettered by anything around her. It’s her and what she wants to do but she also wants to be morally correct and wants to do the right thing. Does she do the right thing? But, sometimes in your journey you get hurt and then you try to prove to the world then to prove yourself; you start off with the dreams that are yours but suddenly you’re doing things you never wanted to do. That way, Noorie is like me. And Noorie experiences love along the way. Well, I’ve experienced better love than Noorie!

You share the screen space with Bilal Ashraf this time, who is relatively quite a new comer, so what kind of bond did you both really share? Did he look up to you since you’re a much-experienced actress?

You need to ask him for that! I used to look up to him because he was much taller though, which is great. I felt like I don’t want to cram someone’s space, even if I’m more experienced or I’ve done more films. So what! That doesn’t matter. I have to allow him to be him and he has to enjoy his time. I think that’s what important and we both really enjoyed it. We were strangers. Last time I worked with someone I did not know was Shahrukh and before that was Fawad. Other than that, I’ve worked with people that I’ve known or hung out with. Bilal and me were strangers, put in a closed space. I’m shy, so I give a little space. But I felt comfortable with him. If he had to hold my hand or come close to me, I never felt awkward. Which is very important. Even when I did feel awkward, it worked for the film — the initial love. But he has done a very good job!

You hit a career peak with Raees. Do you think the artiste ban in India stole your best years on the big screen?

No, not at all! Let’s say I had done another film. And I had been offered many films. But you know my dream was to share the screen...
with Shahrukh Khan and that was done, and that's it! I didn't want anything else. So, I'm very lucky and grateful. Did I feel bad because of the ban? Yes, of course.

Politics is a reality in today's world of art. Do you think artists should take a stand on it? If so, do you feel disappointed that the biggest names in Bollywood shy away from doing the responsible thing? You couldn't, after all, be even a part of the promos of a film headed by SRK?

I can't speak for Bollywood because it's not my industry. I don't think I have right to speak for that industry. I can speak for mine. It would be wrong for me to comment on something which is about them. But when it's about our industry or our country, I do try to speak out through different mediums.

Talking of politics, are you a regular Pakistani who cannot escape political drama that is a part and parcel of our lives, or do you manage to stay sane?

We're all affected by politics. I am too. But I try to stay away, I don't watch TV. I watch a few shows, say once in a while, on Netflix or Amazon and that's why I feel I'm very much out of the loop of what's happening even. Because I'm just in my own little bubble. When I want to know about politics, I know who to call: Hamna Ali Abbasi.

Did you vote last year? Would you tell us which party, if so?

How can you ask me this? I did not vote last year. Because of HUM Awards. I was very upset actually for not voting because last time I had voted. And I'm a big supporter of Imran Khan. But when I think things are not going well, I also say it. I don't think you should have blind support. So, for me to not have been here was huge and I think me and two other people really fought this case. But because I was one of the people who were performing, so we had to be there. We fought and delayed as much as we could. It's unfortunate.

How different is today's Pakistan Entertainment Industry from the time you started out in showbiz?

So much. First and foremost: social media! Everything is out there. Because I think I came at a time when it was just beginning, that's when I came and I remember, right beforeRod released, I deleted myself off Facebook. That's the only thing I had. Then for years, I was not on any social media platform. Finally, Hassan, my brother, convinced and requested me to join Instagram. Oh no! I joined Twitter first. And Instagram was just a joke, like a dare. And now I can't get off. I try to keep it as authentic as possible though. What I don't want, I don't post – what I want to, I post. I think that has changed a lot. Other thing that has changed, look at where the films are. Look at how many options we have. Whether it's the television industry or film industry, you are no more looking at five people, but in double or triple digits of talented people. Be it filmmakers or actors or any other kind of technicians, so I think that's huge!

On the personal side, tell us what is the most satisfying part of being a single parent and what the most challenging?

Most challenging is time. I wish there were more hours in a day. That's the most challenging part. You know, I was at the dubbing of the film, I don't know for how many hours, it was four-five in the morning and Azlan (my son) kept on calling. He was like "Mama Mama". First, he called at midnight, then he called at 1, then he called at 3 – finally when he called at 4 because I had told him I'll be home by 3, he started crying. And I couldn't hear him cry. I was like I'm coming and coming. I put the phone down and started dubbing the climax scene. And while I was dubbing, I howled. And I knew I was howling because my child is waiting. The feeling you know that I want to go home, I don't want to be doing this right now, that's my big challenge. The most satisfying thing is when I hear Azlan talk to other people or see film have conversations with other people or interactions. I can just sit back and say, me, my mother, my father, my ex-husband – all of us collectively have done a good job.

What are your personal life goals? What do you think makes life whole?

I think what makes life whole is... is... that's a good question! I think if you can sort of strike a balance which is very hard, I don't think I can. It's very very hard for me. But you know the moment you strike a balance that I've done my work, I'm satisfied with my work and I have a personal life and I've tried my best in all of that – if you can find a moment to feel okay with everything and feel peaceful, happy and satisfied with it, that is feeling whole. It doesn't need to be perfect, but it needs to be a little bit of contentment.

Artists are often asked if there's any particular role they would like to essay. What about you: have you ever tried to pursue one?

Superstar is the one! If there has been a dream, it has been Superstar. I've waited for it too long. I'm sure actors have faith in things, I have had insane faith in Superstar. I've given up everything for Noorie.

Who is your favourite Pakistani film and TV artiste, and why?

I've lots of favourites! But Sajal is just outstanding. I like all these new faces: I like Imran Ashraf and Iqra Aziz. And in my time, I like Fawad Khan and Humayun Saeed. I want to work with Nauman Ijaz.

“My most satisfying thing is when I hear Azlan talk to other people or see him have conversations with other people or interactions. I can just sit back and say, me, my mother, my father, my ex-husband – all of us collectively have done a good job.”

FAMILY FIRST: Mahira Khan with her son Azlan.

RAPID FIRE:

1. Your all-time favourite film?

Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge.

2. One all-time favourite line from a movie?

Rehne Deejye (Leave it). Can’t say it.

3. What are you reading right now?

Nothing

4. One secret no one knows about you?

Why should I tell you my secret?

5. If you wouldn't have been an actor, which career would you've opted for?

I would've been a junior artiste. Standing in the back doing something, in the hopes that I'll get spotted.

6. Best advice for your 20-year old self?

My 20-year old self didn't need advice. Now I do!

7. Your go to favourite designer?

I love Feeka Jamsheed, Zara Shahjahan, Elan and Umar Sayeed. I like classic designers!

8. One fashion trend you love pulling off effortlessly?

I love wearing pyaamas and a T-shirt and white Shalwar Kameez.

9. Mahira Khan in three adjectives

I don't know. I think I'm passionate, hardworking and ... Selfless (Mahira's manager adds).

10. What's the most important relationship advice you can give?

Be honest and be open.

11. Any message for the readers?

Superstar is an ode to my fans, if anything. It's my favourite genre, it's romance. Even when I get scripts, I love reading romance, seeing romantic movies and doing romance. Haha! It has these emotions. I'm playing an actress, and I have danced and done theatre pieces in it.

MEGA DEBUT: Mahira Khan made her Bollywood debut alongside SRK with Raees, whooping a total of INR2.725 billion on the Box Office.
A beguiling reunion of college friends

In his ninth novel, *Chances Are* ..., Russo returns to many of the past themes he has written about with such skill and grace: friendships and family ties, class differences and romantic relationships, writes Colette Bancroft.

Id white guys are not trending these days, but they get some affection in Richard Russo’s irresistible new novel, *Chances Are* ...

In his ninth novel, Russo (winner of the Pulitzer Prize for *Empire Falls*) returns to many of the past themes he has written about with such skill and grace: friendships and family ties, class differences and romantic relationships.

This time the story is built around the long-time friendship of three men, college pals in the late 1960s and early 70s, who reunite 44 years after graduation on Martha’s yard.

They gather at a house that Lincoln Moser, a commercial real estate broker in Nevada, inherited from his mother. Teddy Novak runs a small academic press in Syracuse, NY; Mickey Girardi lives in Cape Cod and, age 66 be damned, still makes his living as a rock musician. Lincoln is solidly married to his college sweetheart, Mickey has a couple of divorces under his belt and Teddy has always lived alone.

Lincoln is thinking of selling the house and wants to mark a long-ago weekend the trio spent there just after college graduation with another classmate, a young woman named Jacy Calloway. All three of them were in love with her, but none of them had the nerve to say so. They spend a nostalgic night under the stars, warbling the song that gives the book its title, a lushly romantic 1957 hit by Johnny Mathis that, to a bunch of counterculture kids in 1971, would have seemed gloriously corny.

The next morning, the men found a note from Jacy that could be summarised as “I hate goodbyes, so goodbye.” They never saw her again, and neither did her family.

But it was the wild and woolly 70s, when finding yourself sometimes meant not finding anyone else, and her three friends seem to have accepted her absence (despite their broken hearts).

None of them really expected Jacy to pick her. She was a beautiful, adventurous child of privilege, born and raised in posh Greenwich, Conn. They all meet at fictional Minerva College, a safety school for kids from wealthy families who can’t muster the grades to get into the Ivies. Lincoln, Teddy and Mickey were not from money. Teddy’s parents were high school teachers so wrapped up in their careers and each other that their only son grew up as an afterthought. Mickey was the eighth child of a construction worker and a secretary, an underachieving brawler until his SATs revealed startling academic aptitude. Straight- arrow Lincoln came from a tiny town in Arizona, where his father was part-owner of a little copper mine, making the family small-town rich, which wasn’t very. (Lincoln’s parents, lonesome Trudy and W.A., known as Dub-Yay, a shrinky guy with a reedy voice and an oversized ego, are so fascinating I found myself wishing Russo would write a novel about them, too.)

The three boys end up at Minerva because they’re academic standouts, but they need jobs. (It was a time when a kid could actually work his way through college.) They meet when they’re hired as “haschers” crew in the kitchen and dining room at the sorority Jacy belongs to.

That memorable Memorial Day weekend in 1971 was overshadowed by an earlier event: the first military draft lottery in December 1969. Then, like millions of other young men, the three had gathered around a television to watch their futures be shaped. The lottery randomly assigned a number to each day of the year, so that a man’s birthday determined the likelihood he would be drafted to serve during the Vietnam War. For guys without access to rich-boy deferments, a low draft number was life changing, and potentially life ending. Mickey’s birthday turns into something else entirely.

Lincoln invites Teddy and Mickey to the island for what he intends to be a nostalgic farewell to the house, but it turns into something else entirely. To the surprise of all three friends, the visit becomes an intense effort to determine what happened to Jacy. Mason Troyer, a next-door neighbour whom none of them could stand back in the day, still lives within sight of Lincoln’s house and is still a jerk.

After Lincoln talks to a retired police officer on the island, they begin to wonder if Jacy met a more dire fate than they imagined. On that weekend in 1971, Troyer groped her, and Mickey flattened him with a punch. Was Troyer just a lecher or something worse? As Lincoln says, “Basically I wanted him to be a murderer because he’s a bad person, and it doesn’t work that way.”

If it doesn’t work that way, it sure is rich with humour. Russo’s novels always wrestle with the complexities of human relationships, from first love to parenthood to ageing, and they’re always rich with humour.
Life’s important milestones: how setting goals will help you prepare

Taking time to set goals, thinking about what your priorities are, and putting in place a savings scheme for the future are all essential elements in good financial planning, writes Marianne Curphey

Any money you put into Pension contributions and sticking it away, often in return for a better return, is not a quick fix. Taking a lot of risk with your hard-earned cash in the hope of securing a short-term gain could be counter-productive.

Instead, you should think of managing your money as a lifelong strategy and the key to future freedom, which can change and adapt as your personal circumstances change. When you are younger, you might take a little more risk and perhaps consider investing as a way of protecting your savings against inflation. In retirement you might need to think about how to protect your funds against sudden falls in value.

Whatever age you are, the best way to start is to put away a bit of money at a time and allow interest to accumulate and investments to grow. If you save or invest into an individual savings account (Isa), then everything you earn will be free of income and capital gains tax – giving your savings plan a boost.

If you think of managing your money as the key to freedom, rather than a chore, you gain a new perspective on your finances. There are three key elements to planning for the big events in your life: setting goals, making it a habit, and reviewing your progress.

Setting goals
What do you want to achieve with your savings and investments? Identifying a tangible goal – such as saving up a deposit for a home, being able to afford a wonderful honeymoon, or taking time off work after the birth of a baby – can be more motivational than having a vague idea of saving for some undefined future event. It’s important to have a rainy day fund first, for those unexpected events, so you won’t need to dip into your goal pots in troubled times.

Now build in a timeframe when will you need the money? What will you need to do in order to start saving? How much can you start with and could you make savings in your monthly spending in order to free up some spare cash? Small changes can make a big difference over the long term. For instance, if you have one less takeaway coffee at £3 a day, this equates to £105 a week, which over a year will amount to more than £700.

If you have multiple goals, split your saving priorities into pots of money – short term, medium term and long term. Short term might be money for a fantastic honeymoon or overseas trip in a year or two; medium term might be wanting to save for a house deposit over five or six years; and long term will be your retirement planning.

When you are clear about your goals and your timeframe, then you can start to think about the best home for your money.

For funds you want to access within the next five years, you might consider a deposit account. You can make small incremental payments into a savings account or cash Isa. Moving money from your current account to a savings account on the day you get paid, or setting up a standing order, will mean you’re not tempted to spend it. However, as many of these are instant access, you’ll need to be disciplined about not touching it. If you think you might be tempted, consider a fixed rate savings product that locks your money away, often in return for a better interest rate.

If your goal is five years or more away, you could consider investing in a variety of ways, at different levels of risk. Although these carry a higher risk than cash savings, they can also protect your money from the effect of inflation if your investments outperform the rate of interest offered by savings accounts. As you start this journey, it might be wise not to chase big wins or follow fashion – but instead to opt for a slower but safer approach, perhaps choosing funds that invest in a broad range of shares rather than trying to pick individual companies. There are many sources of information about market trends, and it’s always good to become familiar with these.

Any money you put into Pension savings has the benefit of being boosted by tax relief, but you can’t access the fund until you’re at least 55 and it’s best to wait until you retire. You should join a scheme at work if they have one, or save into your own private pension.

Make it a habit
It’s easy to start off with good intentions, and then forget to continue because of a lack of time or motivation.

The key to successful money management is automating your financial commitments. Set up a regular amount to leave your bank account and be paid directly into your Isa or savings account. That way, the money has moved before you spend it, and you never have to set a reminder.

Playing the long game can work in your favour, because the interest you build up in a deposit account will accumulate naturally. If you are investing for the long-term in the stock market, you’ll be less concerned with the short-term ups and downs of share prices.

Review your progress
Sometimes people approach saving and investment in an emotional, rather than a rational way. It’s easy to buy shares when the stock market is doing well, and then panic after they have fallen. Try to take a long-term view, and check how your strategy is working for the long term, rather than from month to month.
How to save for the big moments

to month. Remember: investments should be viewed as a five-year commitment, so make sure you think of these as a long-term strategy.

Checklist for successful financial planning

1. Start small, but make it regular.
2. Set goals that excite you, rather than seeing financial management as a chore.
3. Use budgeting tools, such as apps, to help you identify areas where you could reduce unnecessary spending and free up money to invest.
4. Make the most of technology – banking apps and investment platforms enable you to choose your own investments and view your assets 24/7, meaning it can fit around your busy schedule.
5. Choose the investments that fit your lifestyle and your timescales – and your view of risk.
6. Find the right financial adviser for you and get help to start planning.
7. Automate your savings and investments, so that you never miss a month of contributions.

Investments can carry a higher risk than cash savings and you may not always get back what you put in. Remember, the value of any tax benefits described depends on your individual circumstances, and tax rules may change in the future.

MOTIVATION: What do you want to achieve with your savings and investments? Identifying a tangible goal – such as saving up a deposit for a home, being able to afford a wonderful honeymoon, or taking time off work after the birth of a baby – can be motivational.

PLANNING: How you manage your money is best considered as part of a long-term life plan.

MAKING DIFFERENCE: Keep the change: making small, incremental payments into a savings account can make a difference in the long run.
THE TOP 5 BEST HOUSE PLANTS FOR APARTMENT LIVING

Give your apartment a pop of colour and breath of fresh air with any of these five indoor house plants.

**SPIDER PLANT**
Chlorophytum Comosum
These light and airy plants do well when their roots are crowded and they can live happily in low light.

**ZZ PLANT**
Zamioculcas zamiifolia
The ZZ plant thrives in low light and low water, perfect if you’re a forgetful plant-owner. They can live off only 3 waterings a month!

**SNAKE PLANT**
Sansevieria Trifasciata
Snake plants are survivors. Not only can they brighten up any room, they can also live without much light or water for a surprisingly long time.

**CACTI**
Cactaceae
Cacti come in so many adorable shapes and sizes. All they ask for is a sunny window, a tiny bit of water and they’re good to go!

**PEACE LILY**
Spathiphyllum Wallisii
These elegant plants are one of the few low-light plants that flower!
Computer can now reveal your fake facial expressions

Real and fake smiles can be tricky to distinguish, but researchers have now developed a computer software that can spot false facial expressions.

By analysing the movement of the smile across a person’s face, the software can determine whether or not the expression is genuine, said the study published in Journal of Advanced Engineering Informatics.

The most significant movements detected by the software are around the eyes, supporting popular theories that a spontaneous, genuine smile is one that can be seen in a person’s eyes.

“Techniques for analysing human facial expressions have advanced dramatically in recent years, but distinguishing between genuine and posed smiles remains a challenge because humans are not good at picking up the relevant cues,” said study lead author Hassan Ugail, Professor at University of Bradford in the UK.

The software works by first mapping a person’s face from within a video recording, and identifying the mouth, cheeks and eyes of the subject. It then measures how these facial features move through the progress of the smile and calculates the differences in movement between the video clips showing real and fake smiles.

Researchers tested the programme using two different datasets, one containing smiles. Researchers tested the programme using two different datasets, one containing smiles.

An objective way of analysing whether or not a smile is genuine could help us develop improved interactions between computers and humans — for example in biometric identification,” he added. – IANS

Images of people expressing genuine smiles, and another in which the images portrayed posed smiles.

They found significant differences in the way the subjects’ mouths and cheeks moved when comparing the real and the fake expressions. The movements around the subjects’ eyes, however, showed the most striking variation, with genuine smiles generating at least 10 per cent more movement in these muscles.

“We use two main sets of muscles when we smile — the zygomaticus major, which is responsible for the curling upwards of the mouth, and the orbicularis oculi, which causes wrinkling around our eyes,” Ugail said.

According to the researchers, in fake smiles it is often only the mouth muscles which move but, as humans, we often don’t spot the lack of movement around the eyes. The computer software can spot this much more reliably.

“An objective way of analysing whether or not a smile is genuine could help us develop improved interactions between computers and humans — for example in biometric identification,” he added. – IANS
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GOLD FLINT MARBLE

Codeword

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

Sudoku

Sudoku is a puzzle based on a 9 x 9 grid. The grid is divided into nine (3 x 3) boxes. You are given a selection of values and you must fill the grid so that every column, every one is repeated.

Bound And Gagged

Mary Poppins goes into business.
Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1 Tree feller may be civic dignitary (8)
5 Be conscious of payment that’s left behind (4)
8 Foreign currency found in a remote part (5)
9 Dutch capital and part of London doing business (7)
11 Glass for the acrobat (7)
12 Start using some paint rollers (5)
13 Fools start to suspect judge (6)
15 Persian king holding power in island (6)
18 Wide awake right after drink (5)
20 Cut out tax before the start of December (7)
23 Animals after stolen food (3,4)
24 Country seen when one’s left Indonesia (5)
25 Bogarde’s knife (4)
26 Freedom of speech is blessing in disguise (8)

Down
1 Examination of car taking little time (5)
2 Monday’s awkward for current suppliers (7)
3 Rustic part of the lower Urals (5)
4 Poisonous snakes, they reckon (6)
6 Order used in the dictionary (5)
7 Sloe gin is bad for lots of soldiers (7)
10 Friendship? Girl embraces it (5)
13 Embarrassed sailor with a place for tools? (7)
14 Fight with animals turning up right away (3-2)
16 Rest cut short? One expected rest (7)
17 Popper with stand? (6)
19 Carpenter is to go in without fish (5)
21 Go up and get caught on branch of tree (5)
22 Churchmen carried away in sedan? (5)

Answers

Solution

Wordsearch

Codeword
An unvarnished picture of rock star David Crosby

By Jon Bream

Maybe being a rock star isn’t as exciting as it sounds, after all.

In the captivating, insightful documentary of a hipster icon, David Crosby: Remember My Name, the rock star with the droopy mustache gushes without a filter about having a lot of pleasure, taking too many drugs and making harmony-filled rock ‘n’ roll.

He also confesses without reservation to being a complete jerk to his lovers and band-mates. He admits that none of the friends he’s especially efffective as a slow-talking dad, or that image. – Chicago Tribune/TNS

Barack Obama visibly wincing at the disharmony.

But most crucial – and devastating – was the 1969 traffic death of his girlfriend Christine Hinton. Nash posits that Crosby has never been the same since.

The saving grace through all of these ups and downs is Crosby’s voice. It’s still quite pretty. He’s a natural harmoniser, making music with two newer groups that he leads.

The documentary features footage of current-day Crosby leaving for another tour as Jan, his wife of 32 years, wonders whether he’ll return.

One scene from 2017 finds Crosby, all by himself, doing a sound check with his voice and acoustic guitar at Ames Center in Burnsville.

The Twin Cities figures in another scene. Crosby is reminiscing with famed rock photographer Henry Diltz about a classic shot of the star in his heyday, smoking a joint while holding a pistol, decorated like an American flag, to his head.

Diltz says the photo was taken in Minneapolis. Crosby counters, “I’ve never been to Minneapolis!”

Ah, always the contrarian.

But he’s still selling T-shirts emblazoned with that priceless photo at his shows.

If you see the outstanding

Remember My Name, you won’t forget Crosby – or that image. – Star Tribune (Minneapolis)/TNS
Bit of nervousness important before gigs: Amaal

By Natalia Ningthoujam

Y oung composer-singer Amaal Mallik is slightly jittery ahead of his performance with the popular Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in the Australian city. He says a bit of nervousness is important because that’s what makes an artiste perform better.

“There is excitement and a little bit of nervousness. Every time an artiste goes on stage, he thinks ‘I hope today goes well and I hope I give my best’. That is important – that little bit of nervousness or tension is what makes you perform better,” Amaal said.

Amaal is happy to be the youngest Indian to achieve this feat. “No one my age has performed at this level and represented India. These facts are there on my mind, but I don’t let them affect me. It makes me happy that I am doing something like this,” said the musician, who is in his late twenties.

As the official performer at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) Awards night, scheduled to take place on August 8, Amaal will perform a medley of his popular compositions at the iconic Palais Theatre along with the prestigious orchestra that has in the past collaborated with the likes of Elton John and AR Rahman.

Asked about his playlist, he shared: “There will be some of my most loved songs like ‘Tum hi ho’, ‘Main hoon hero tera’ and ‘Bol do na zardo’. It’s a medley of about 15 minutes. The arrangement is different from the original. All my songs – film and non-film – (will be reimagined) in an orchestral format. It will be a mix of Indian and western music.”

Amaal said there is a difference between collaborating with an Australian orchestra and an Indian one. “They (musicians) are all involved in what they do. In India, when you work with an orchestra like Chennai and Mumbai, they are great improvisers. They improvise an entire section of music, staying true to the song but giving their own edge to it. Musicians outside follow what the composer wants. Exactly what I need, is what they play,” he explained.

After Rahman, Amaal is the second Indian composer to work with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Does he feel the pressure?

“I think it is more about being (part of) a prestigious (event). The pressure will be there only for 10 minutes before I go on stage. I think that’s always there. Also, they are a respected orchestra. It makes me feel responsible that I am representing my country, my country’s music.” – IANS

I was a zombie: Parineeti’s depression admission goes viral

Parineeti Chopra’s confessions of her depression phase in life have gone viral. The actress recently described the phase as the “worst time of her life”, and said she went into a shell. “The end of 2014 and all of 2015 – those one-and-a-half years were truly the worst time in my life. Two of my films Daawat-e-Ishq and Kill Dil did not work. That was my first setback. They released back-to-back and didn’t work,” she said.

“Then, I went through a big heartbreak in life. Literally, all the departments in my life were down. (there was) Nothing positive to look forward to,” she said, in an interview while promoting her new film, Jabariya Jodi, adding: “I went into a shell. I stopped eating, I stopped sleeping well. I did not have any friends at that time. I never used to meet people. The people I was in touch with, I cut off from everyone, including my family. I would talk to them once in two weeks. I was gone... finished!”

Parineeti was asked about her battle with depression during a Twitter segment, in which pre-recorded messages and questions from fans are played to celebrities.

She recalled the phase as one when she “had no money”, and described herself as a “typical filmi depressed girl”.

“I would just be in my room, watching TV, sleeping, staring all day... I was a zombie. I was like that typical filmi depressed girl... I would cry maybe 10 times a day. I was always upset and crying. I had this chest pain that would not go away,” she said.

Her jabardasth co-star Sidharth Malhotra then asked her how she overcame the phase.

Parineeti replied that her brother Sahaj helped her. “I started working on myself. I became fitter. I just took life into my own hands because I thought if I go into this pit, I will never come out again,” Parineeti said. – IANS
Tech expert lays stress on need for mentoring young entrepreneurs

By Mudassir Raja

This is the time for young people to study and work to create jobs and not only seek jobs. To encourage the young university graduates around the world, the successful people need to mentor and support the people who aim build startups.

This was the crux of a presentation given by Hassan Syed, a US-based Pakistani idea sharer and IT expert, to a select gathering of Qatar-based Pakistani business community recently.

Hassan, the founder of Bir Ventures, developing innovative products from concept to launch, during his presentation and friendly conversation with the community shared his experience and plans about what his company is going to do.

Pakistan Professionals Forum, a community group, invited the idea sharer who was recently in Pakistan where his company is collaborating with the government in its ‘Kamyab Jawan’ (successful youth) Programme. During his presentation, the knowledge-based businesses expert elaborated on how his company is going to support the fresh university graduates in Pakistan in starting their own business.

He said that his company will support the youth in developing the business model, arranging finances and having successful launch of business ideas.

Hassan who has been working on emerging technologies for last 20 years said: “Some 65 percent of Pakistan’s population is below 30 years. Their needs for the jobs are very high. The process of creating new jobs in Pakistan is very slow. More or less, all university graduates get a degree to have a job.

We want to have a kind of cultural change. We want the young students to be job givers and not only job seekers. This is our fundamental aim. For this, we plan to provide basic entrepreneurship education to 1 million young graduates in Pakistan. Our model is based on one percent success ratio that means we will launch 10,000 startups for imillion young graduates.”

About his collaboration with the Pakistani government, he said: “It is going to be a collaboration on a larger scale. The government has committed Rs100 billion under its successful youth programme to finance the small enterprises. The government has also been working to have collaboration with other friendly countries – including Qatar – that are doing well in knowledge-based economy to create opportunities for the young people.

“My company has taken on board many universities. We have completed our training module.”

Talking to Community, Hassan said: “We offer the most advanced digital platform that can actually make it [starting a business] happen. Our ‘Ideal Gist’ platform is the largest platform in the world. Our users are based in 195 countries around the world.”

Hassan urged the professionals and successful businessmen to help and mentor young people.

“We need to share our success stories with the youth. The successful people need to tell the young people that how they started and how they struggle to go up the ladder of success. “The Overseas Pakistanis have a role to play in supporting the startups in their country. We have also started a programme ‘Empower Pakistan’. Under this programme we have started setting up 100 chapters of Overseas Pakistania. We have established our first chapter in Qatar.

“The Pakistanis who have been working as professionals in other countries, they should share their experience with the university students. It will help the students polish their ideas. There is very big Pakistani community in Qatar and they can help the youth a lot.”

The expert sees the investment of Qatar in human capital remarkable. “This is my third visit to Qatar. The country has developed very fast. I have learnt that the government of Qatar has also been paying a lot of attention on the startups. This is very good thing here. Though, I am not in contact with any government depart in Qatar, I have gathered the impression that they have been reaching out their youth and helping them out in starting up new businesses.

“I see there is a huge potential in that both Qatar and Pakistan can collaborate with each other in helping their young educated population.”