

Baasi Khabar: Breaking, Consuming, Forgetting, and Remembering the News

Fahad Naveed

'Aaj ki taaza khabar, aaj ki taaza khabar' (Today's fresh news, today's fresh news).

I can almost hear the newspaper hawkers as I recreate the scene in my mind. A notorious Karachi traffic jam. A captive audience, trapped without the handy distraction of cellphones. And newspaper hawkers moving quickly from one potential customer to the next, repeating aloud the most *taaza*¹ news updates, often with added sensationalism and commentary for impact.

This was a common scenario when I was growing up in the 1990s, but more than two decades later it feels like a distant memory. There are fewer and fewer newspaper hawkers at traffic signals. Newspaper circulations continue to plummet, as do advertising revenues. Newsrooms are getting smaller, while the journalists working in these shrinking newsrooms face censorship, self-censorship, targeted attacks, pay cuts, layoffs, and little room for career growth. Despite these conditions, print journalists continue to report but their work reaches fewer and fewer eyeballs. News is often broken on television, news websites, and social media before it appears in print the following day. By the time a newspaper reaches the precious few who still have subscriptions, most of the news items it carries are not exactly *taaza*. The medium that once brought us the freshest news has gone stale itself.

What purpose does the newspaper serve now? And what purpose can it serve? I have been exploring these questions in *Taaza Naan, Baasi Khabar* (Fresh Naan, Stale News), an ongoing series since 2019 in which I work with found newspaper scraps. These old newspaper fragments, which came to me repurposed as wrappers for food items such as *naans*, *samosas*, and *parathas*, serve as entry points into thinking about how news is broken, consumed, remembered, and forgotten. They also allow me to reflect on the value of newspapers and the limitations of print news coverage in Pakistan.

Like most found objects, the recontextualised fragments of paper I work with have a history. These objects have outlived their initial utility and crossed their sell-by dates. They are now living a second life and hold many different stories in addition to the ones originally printed on them.

¹ *Taaza* literally means fresh but in this context it suggests 'latest'



Image 1. Fahad Naveed, 2022, Photograph of Found Newspaper, Karachi.



Image 2. Screenshot: Translation of the Korean newspaper scrap provided by Google Lens

Lost in Translation: Language, Consumption, Access, and the Written Word

I was given this Korean newspaper scrap (Image 1) by a food vendor in Karachi as a small paper bag holding my order of *bhutta*[¶]. The story originally published on the paper is likely an advertorial about a company that produces water purifiers. I say likely because this is mostly guesswork on my part. I cannot read the news story, and the little I can understand is thanks to a simple Google Lens search and translation (Image 2).

I am not the intended audience for this newspaper. No one in Karachi is. Here the news item originally printed on the newspaper becomes completely irrelevant. That story is lost in translation but the object takes on a new life and meaning. I wonder what journeys the newspaper must have embarked upon before ending up in the hands of a street food vendor in Karachi and, finally, coming to me. As Igor Kopytoff argues, the biographies of things can be very revealing and may make the obscure salient.¹ Looking at an object in the present can only tell us so much—its history, journey, utilities, and travels must also be considered.

While thinking about object biographies, consumption, and meaning in the context of newspaper scraps found in Karachi, language becomes a salient issue. It must be acknowledged here that, at least to some of the street food vendors who have handed me these newspaper scraps, the English language newspapers may be as inaccessible as the Korean ones. And written Urdu may still pose similar challenges for others. The written word limits the potential audience, making newspapers difficult to access for many. At small roadside hotels one often sees televisions blasting the news, while newspaper scraps are quickly wrapped around naans and handed off to customers. In this context, the television is a news source while the newspaper has a completely different utility.

This also brings up a limitation of the methodology I use for *Taaza Naan, Baasi Khabar*. I work with newspaper scraps that come to me by chance. The initial idea was that, much like a subscriber receives a newspaper with *taaza* news every morning, I would receive a newspaper scrap carrying *baasi* news with my naan every night. My newspaper collection process has evolved over time, but still, I rarely go out seeking newspaper scraps for this project. Initially, as my collection of old newspapers started growing, it became very clear that a vast majority of these were from English language newspapers, mostly *Dawn*² and sometimes the *Express Tribune*. This is not to suggest that Urdu newspapers are never reused or recirculated as food wrappers but that I have not received them.

¶ Corn on the cob.

A few years ago, I collaborated with Dhaka-based filmmaker Rezwan Shahriar Sumit for *Baasi News* (Stale News), an online publication of forgotten news, which remained live till January 2023. Sumit collected many Bengali language newspaper scraps in Dhaka, but most of my collection remained restricted to English. When I asked a *naan* vendor why this is, he told me that he did not want to use Urdu newspapers as they often had 'Allah *ka naam* (Allah's name)' on them. He did not want to be disrespectful or cause offence.

Since this conversation, I have been mindful of this fact and have rarely spotted Allah's name in the newspaper scraps I have received. The only exceptions are advertisements which sometimes say *InshaAllah* and *MashAllah*. Advertisements are exceptions in other ways too. English newspapers, for example, also carry Urdu advertisements. On multiple occasions, I have gotten excited thinking I have received an Urdu newspaper with my naan, only to discover that it is an Urdu advertisement printed in an English newspaper.

Regardless of the reason, looking primarily at English language newspapers limits the kind of stories featured in this project. These are stories originally written for a specific readership and people have particular perceptions of who these might be. In a page from *Dawn* that is full of matrimonial advertisements (Image 3), one from the matchmaker Mrs. Masood stands out. Her clients include graduates from MIT, Cardiff, and LUMS; multiple PhDs from Canada; and at least one 'elite family' based in the US. Presumably, what would be a better space to advertise than Pakistan's English language newspaper of choice when looking for *rishtas*[¶] for these premium candidates? While not everyone who reads the paper actually belongs to this social strata, the advertisements do indicate that the English language is widely associated with the 'elite' in Pakistan.

English newspaper readership in Pakistan has always been comparatively small. Lately, Urdu newspapers have also been struggling. According to one survey conducted in 2019, only 19 percent of Pakistanis said that they read newspapers.³ As per a November 2022 poll, when asked if they had read a newspaper in the past few days, 90 percent of respondents replied in the negative.⁴ While all forms of journalism, including digital and electronic, are plagued with concerns about freedom, fairness, and independence, print journalism is in an overall state of decline. Soon newspapers as physical objects that one can hold and store may not be around. The value of newspapers as public records remains unmatched, particularly in Pakistan where television archives are few and inaccessible, and news websites routinely lose old articles when their design is updated. I have experienced this myself. Multiple stories that I have worked on over the years are no longer available online or have broken links. But their print versions are stored safely.

¶ Matrimonial matches

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UPCLOSE & PERSONAL

GETTING MARRIED



MARRIAGE BUREAU

CONTINUED

ISLAMABAD

WE CAN HELP YOU IN FINDING GOOD PROPOSALS FOR YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS. CONTACT: SAHER ASSOCIATES, 051-2211100, 0321-2211100. (37434108240)

20 years of trusted matrimonial services of MRS. KHAWAJA. We guarantee satisfaction as we match better. DEFENCE Islamabad. Viber, WhatsApp 0315-5185705, 0336-0518518, 051-5856438 facebook/pakmatch@gmail.com (37514507970)

A matrimonial service for Pakistanis. WWW.MARRYMAX.COM, find matches from all over the world and communicate with dignity and privacy. For personalized service, call us: 051-8445467, 051-8311862. (37394107250)

BOY 26, Capt, beautiful, Kayani family. Son 29, Chartered Accountant, handsome, educated family. Son 31, CSS officer, Deputy Commissioner. Son 28, Petroleum Engineer, residence Saudi. Parents of professional girls from decent families may contact. MRS. COL ATHAR: 051-9270134, 0300-9544554. (37264108324)

BOY 27, doctor Eye Specialist, settled in UK, father busi-

DAUGHTER 22, BBA Mughal, Army family. Daughter 23, Graduate, Rajput, USA Citizen. Daughter 27, Jat, USA Citizen. MRS. KHAWAJA: 0315-5185705, 051-5856437. (37514107974)

DAUGHTER 22, BDS, Rajput, Army family. Lady doctor 27, Rajput, Lady doctor 25, Jat, Canadian Citizen. MRS. KHAWAJA: 0336-0518518, 051-5856437. (37514107971)

DAUGHTER 23, MBA Mughal, father Federal, Secretary. Daughter 33, CSS, Section Officer. Daughter 23, BS (FAST). MRS. KHAWAJA: 0336-0518518, 051-5856437. (37514107975)

DAUGHTER 26, 5'8", MBBS BMC, UK Citizen. Daughter 25, 5'7", BDS. MRS SARDAR: 051-2306003, 0301-5713980. (37164105977)

DAUGHTER, USA national, Masters in Accounting from University of Michigan in GPA 4. Currently pursuing for CPA. 27 years old, height 5.6. Seeking proposals from well educated decent families from USA. Contact: Raja Sakhawat 0300-6913786. (25733347585)

DOCTOR 28, Rajput, residency USA. Son, BDS, handsome, Rajput, USA Citizen. Doctor 28, Jat, residency USA. MRS. KHAWAJA: 0336-0518518, 051-5856437. (37514107979)

GIRL 24, doctor, tall, very pretty, pursuing house job, father IG. Girl 25, Telecom Engineer MUST, tall, pretty, Pathan family, father Army officer. MRS. COL ATHAR: 051-9270134, 0300-9544554. (37264108321)

GIRL 26, Chartered Accountant, tall, decent, father Director General, mother doctor, settled in posh sector Islamabad. Girl 22, LUMS graduate, settled in Karachi, father advocate. MRS. COL ATHAR: 051-9270134, 0300-9544554. (37264108323)

GIRL 26, Master degree, American national, father civil servant. Girl 25, Master, pretty, LUMS MS from Sussex University, American national, father businessman. MRS. COL ATHAR: 051-9270134, 0300-9544554. (37264108320)

Girl, 30, BDS doctor, MSc from MOU in University, tall, pretty, working there, father senior officer, family settled in Karachi. MRS. COL ATHAR: 051-9270134, 0300-9544554. (37264108322)

LADY 38, 5'7", beautiful, Master, settled in USA Citizen. Daughter

26 years, male, CA, 5 feet, 36 years boy, 5'10", PFD from Canada, working on executive post. Male, CA, 24 years in England required girl should be British national. Bro in Army, 25 years, 6 feet. Boy Kashmir, 30 years, Masters from LUMS, working in Multinational. Boy, 30 years, 5'11", Telecom Engineer. Boy, Electrical Engineer, 28 years, 5'10", Bureaucrat family. Boy, 27 years, 5'8", Electrical Engineer from Cardiff University (UK). Boy Doctor, Kashmir, 28 years, in America. Boy, 28 years, 5'11", Doctor, Jutt, required Girl should be Doctor. Boy, Doctor, tall, Jutt, required Doctor Girl. Male, 25 years, Sheikh, 5'7", Businessman. Boy 27 years, 6 feet, electrical engineer, Master from London. Boy (in America), 28 years, 6 feet, MBA from America top university. Male 34 years, elite family (in America), MBA from England. Male doctor, 24 years, 5'10" in America. Male 30, 5'6", MBA from Indiana University (business family). Male 31, 6'2", Master from MIT University from America. Boy 28, 5'8", graduation from America (business family). Boy 28 years, 6 feet, MBA from LUMS working in multinational. Boy 29, 5'11", CA working in multinational in Dubai. Boy 27, 6 feet, Rajput, electrical engineer, Assistant Director CSS qualified. Male 28 years, 6'2", CA, Male 26 years, engineer. Male 30 years, 5'11" (America), Master and PhD from Canada (on good job). Male 32 years, 5'8" doctor in (Australia). Male 27 years doctor in (England). Male 28 years, 5'10" in (America). Contact: MRS. MASOOD 0345-4479974. (25723348910)

IDEAL matches for your sons/daughters. Parents contact only from Lahore. Mrs. Major Saeem Tareen, 3-M, Phase-8, DHA 042-35690760, 35690761, 0333-4632362. (25773219042)

MALE 28 years, Electrical Engineer on executive post in multinational bank (senior manager), and father on executive post. Contact: MRS. MASOOD 0345-4479974. (25723348910)

REQUIRED foreign qualified boys / girls, all kind of proposals and also late 5 second marriage Mrs. Sajid, 0332-4267707, 0333-463347557

A lot of excellent proposals available with professionally discreet and experienced handling. Life cases also considered: MRS. IMRAN 0300-4342523. (25773219041)

BOY 29 years, CIA Levels from Aitchison College, medical from Agha University, residency from America (MBBS). Contact: MRS. MASOOD 0345-4479974. (25723348912)

GIRL, Doctor Agha Khan Medical College, age 23 years, 5'4", Girl, 25 years, Syed, in England, Graduate from LUMS. Girl, 27 years, 5'5", Masters in Computer Sciences from LUMS. Girl, 24 years, Rajput, BSc Honors from FAST (well known business family), Kashmiri Girl, Doctor, 30 in America, boy should be Doctor. Dr. Rajput, 29 years, 5'8", Kashmiri, 25 years, 5'8", Doctor, required boy Doctor or Engineer. Girl 22 years, 5'8", (architect) Girl 30 years, 5'6", very pretty girl, MBA from LSE. Girl 25 year 5'6" (ACCA). Girl doctor, age 32, 5'6", very pretty, from elite family. Girl Kashmiri, 25 years, 5'8", father (Businessman). Girl 32 year, 5'4", graduate, very pretty. Girl 35 year, 5'6", in (Saudi Arabia). Girl 24 years, 5'6", very pretty, CA. Contact: MRS. MASOOD 0345-4479974. (25723348911)

LOOKING for a Compatible Match for our Highly Qualified Son UK National with an Executive Position Job from Urdu, Speaking Sunni Family's Daughter of 25-28 Years. Preferably MBA / BDS upto 5.3 Height. Son visiting Karachi next week. Kindly contact with Latest Photos for son: 3081@gmail.com (1005428991)

LOOKING for Educated Match (Single / Khuliyata Doctor) for our younger brother, Sunni, Sheikh, MBA, Executive Job Regional Head brother owned residence (posh), Age 43 (Never Married) Fit N Smart, Parents died, sarveen2016@outlook.com (10973280083)

PARENTS looking forward to proposal for their son of 24 years having Graduate in BCS (Bachelors of Computer Science). We are Urdu speaking and looking for a girl who should be US citizen or Canadian acceptable. Email: mshid.khan1958@gmail.com (11112340900)

SON 30 years, tall, handsome, employed as PPE Engineer in USA, Sunni, Urdu speaking, looking for girl upto 25 years, smart, pretty, fit, tall, should be educated family, MBBS, BDS, Engineer, ACCA from reputable university institution. Contact: mavia.saitan.kazi@gmail.com (10482439807)

SMALL

SMALL EDUCATED WELL OFF BUSINESS FAMILY RESIDING IN DEFENCE KARACHI IS LOOKING FOR IDEAL GIRL FOR THEIR ONLY SON. BOY IS HIGHLY EDUCATED, SLIM, SMART AND FAIR HAVING EXTREMELY GOOD NATURE, HABITS, AND EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND. GIRL SHOULD BE VERY FAIR VERY SLIM AND HAVING MINIMUM BACHELOR DEGREE RESIDING IN DEFENCE / CLIFTON AREAS ONLY. EMAIL: PRECIOUSRELATION2017@gmail.com (1053407339)

LOOKING a Compatible Match for our Highly Qualified Son UK National with an Executive Position Job from Urdu, Speaking Sunni Family's Daughter of 25-28 Years. Preferably MBA / BDS upto 5.3 Height. Son visiting Karachi next week. Kindly contact with Latest Photos for son: 3081@gmail.com (1005428991)

LOOKING for Educated Match (Single / Khuliyata Doctor) for our younger brother, Sunni, Sheikh, MBA, Executive Job Regional Head brother owned residence (posh), Age 43 (Never Married) Fit N Smart, Parents died, sarveen2016@outlook.com (10973280083)

PARENTS looking forward to proposal for their son of 24 years having Graduate in BCS (Bachelors of Computer Science). We are Urdu speaking and looking for a girl who should be US citizen or Canadian acceptable. Email: mshid.khan1958@gmail.com (11112340900)

SON 30 years, tall, handsome, employed as PPE Engineer in USA, Sunni, Urdu speaking, looking for girl upto 25 years, smart, pretty, fit, tall, should be educated family, MBBS, BDS, Engineer, ACCA from reputable university institution. Contact: mavia.saitan.kazi@gmail.com (10482439807)

SON 34 MBA working Saudi, divorced first wife, no child, required under 30 educated, religious girl, Doabandi, preferable mra | 5 6 | h | m | a | i | l | . c | o | m (11102423957)

SON 36, 5'7", visiting Pakistan, second marriage, well settled US citizen, slim and smart, decent mannered, moderate practicing Muslim, Masters Electrical Engineering Austin and MBA Berkeley USA after A-Level from Pakistan, well established, belongs to well educated Urdu speaking Sunni family. Parents of moderate practicing Muslimah, 5'2" to 5'6" not over 31 years, slim, smart and intelligent, of decent manners, good looking with Masters level education in professional discipline, educated family may contact at: nassem3140@yahoo.com. (3704106256)

SON 38, Sunni Muslim, Graduate own business, Defence resident job from Urdu, Speaking Sunni Family's Daughter of 25-28 Years. Preferably MBA / BDS upto 5.3 Height. Son visiting Karachi next week. Kindly contact with Latest Photos for son: 3081@gmail.com (1005428991)

SON MBBS fair 5'10", 29 years, UP, Urdu, looking very fair, beautiful, unmarried, upto 23 years girl, parent of middle class, educated family. Please contact kshamsu@hotmail.com (10302429837)

ISLAMABAD

DAUGHTER 29, 5'2", unmarried, pretty and well mannered, MBA, Sunni, parents retired federal government officers, well educated and settled family, looking for compatible match from Karachi/Islamabad. Contact: arehadiata@gmail.com (37684025082)

DAUGHTER 30, FGPS Doctor, looking for a suitable match, educated, having a job, between 35-49 years, interested persons (preferable parags) may contact: fordcto187526@gmail.com (37424108042)

Kaybees Dining Out. NOW DELIVERING ALL OVER KARACHI. 111-529-2333

Kaybees GULSHAN & ROSEHILL ISLAMABAD. DEDICATED HALL. 0300-9544554

PERSONAL ANNOUNCEMENT. SHAIKH SHEPPING CENTRE BLOCK #17, GULSHAN JAHAN. Phone: 34219431, 34219432. Email: shai.kha.aberham2010@gmail.com

AUTHORISED BOOKING AGENTS

- BAHADURABAD: MARI ADVERTISERS, New York Restaurant, Char May Restaurant, Muz Shikhandad, Phone: 021-5414411, Call: 031-626625. CIVIL LINES: MACPAC, Uno Arena, Prof No. A1, 0, 3 adjacent to Harbort House, Ch. Lines, 3, Gauder Ahmed Road, Karachi - 74200. Tel: 3301382, 3561350, 3613365. Fax: 3301382, 3561350, 3613365. Email: mari@hotmial.com. CLIFTON: KITECH COMMUNICATIONS, Min 19, Junj, Clifton, Phone: 3580074, 3542084, Fax: 3580074, Email: kite@hotmial.com. KIN COMMUNICATIONS, Suite # 7, 1, Seel Ahsan Main Office Road, Phone: 021-5875509, 26875175, 3564478, 3544007, Fax: 35866589, Email: kustenburg@hotmail.com. DEFENCE: REFENCE ADVERTISERS, New York Hotel, Masjid Phase I, Phone: 3336128, 32391943, Fax: 3336128. RISAL ADVERTISERS, 12 Conventual Street Phase-4, Est, Phone: 35861154, 35861108, Fax: 35861108, Email: risal_advertiser@live.com. IDEAL ADVERTISING SERVICES, Sameer Lane No-6, Phase-4, Est, Phone: 3336128, 3587147, Fax: 35861108, Email: idealadvertising@hotmail.com. PRICE ADVERTISING, 179-Turkwal Commercial Street, Phase V, Near Vasa Bakery, Phone: 35870250, 353024910, Fax: 35374747, Email: price_advertising@hotmail.com. GULSHAN-E-JAHAN: AULSHA ADVERTISERS, Shaikh Shepping Centre Block #17, Gulshan Jahan, Phone: 34219431, 34219432, Email: aulsha.aberham2010@gmail.com. GULSHAN-E-JOBAL: PEARLE COMMUNICATION, Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi Road, Scheme 33, Phone: 021-3940402, Mobile: 3300-215981, 3334-364115, Email: pearlecommunication@gmail.com

BOOKS & READING Celebrating Jane Austen. The year 2017 marks the 200th death anniversary of the much beloved British author Jane Austen, whose popularity has not waned with time. The bicentenary of her death has been marked by several events and tributes, because she passed away at the age of 41. Each object brings to life a different aspect of her life and works they include her desk where which she wrote Emma, Mansfield Park and Persuasion (which also turned 200 this year), and possibly revised drafts of Northanger Abbey and...

Television news archives are in an even worse shape than news websites. The sheer volume of data produced by news channels that run 24/7 is immense, and it requires a considerable amount of memory and resources to store it. As a result, many news channel archives in Pakistan are neglected. And so, we turn to newspapers. For the most part, newspapers are no longer the first ones to break the news. But they are still the most reliable way to store, archive, and remember the news, whether that news is good or bad. Newspaper archives have an undeniable transportive quality. I often find myself revisiting, reliving, and remembering the past through *baasi* news.

Newspapers as Public Records and National Memory

I clearly remember the day it happened. I was in my office at Haroon House. Between editing stories, I called the canteen extension and ordered *chai* and a *samosa*, which I ate while mostly looking at my computer. After finishing editing, I picked up the oil-soaked newspaper on which I had been served the *samosa*. I was horrified to see a photograph of a memorial for the children who had been killed in the 2014 Peshawar school massacre (Image 4).

As I held the newspaper, many questions rushed through my mind. How did this newspaper scrap exchange multiple sets of hands without someone noticing the photographs of these smiling children, one with the word *shaheed*[¶] written on it? How did the newspaper travel back to the *Dawn* office? Or did it never leave?

The newspaper scrap was from *Dawn's* December 17, 2018 front page with a special report published on the anniversary of the massacre. The country was shaken when the school was first attacked. Nearly a decade has passed, but every year there is news coverage to mark the anniversaries. The families will always carry this loss with them and it is important that we as a people also continue to remember this incident. Through repetition and remembrances in the public domain, newspapers remind us of what was lost. To see coverage of this tragedy reduced to a *samosa* wrapper was jarring.

Newspapers of record[⊙] that report, contextualise, and archive major developments are important. These leaves of history are not always looking back at national tragedies. They also

[¶] Martyr

[⊙] The term, first used by the *New York Times*, is used to describe reputable, major national newspapers.



Image 4. Fahad Naveed, 2019, *Photograph of Found Newspaper*, Karachi.

report achievements and reasons to celebrate. When a young sportsperson breaks a record, the previous reporting helps contextualise that milestone. When a film makes history at a prestigious film festival, bringing that information to local audiences ensures that this achievement will be remembered in the years to come. And when an article (Image 5) celebrates a 'remarkable treatise on 150 years' of the Urdu novel,⁵ it also reminds us of the importance of documenting the country's cultural history.

While newspapers remind us of what happened before, their silences must also be taken into consideration. Even with newspapers of record, the coverage is not without omissions, censorship, and bias. These records only hold what was considered newsworthy by some and, in the process, other stories must have been deemed not worth sharing and recording.

Breaking the News: Newsworthiness and the News Cycle

Much has been said about the insensitivity of breaking news reporting in Pakistan. Unfortunately, deciding the newsworthiness of stories often comes down to ranking tragedies and assigning value to them. With *Taaza Naan, Baasi Khabar*, I attempt to unsettle these hierarchies. This was part of the intention from the project's inception. When I framed and placed old newspaper scraps in a gallery space, it was an invitation for visitors to interact with discarded, often forgotten, stories that were no longer newsworthy. It was an invitation to experience an alternative archive and record of history.

Accompanying the framed newspaper scraps was *Taaza Naan, Baasi Khabar-1*, a video I displayed at the aforementioned show. In the video, I am sitting on a chair, holding printouts of my previous news stories. A cup of chai is on a table next to me, along with a *naan* placed on a newspaper scrap. I read the news stories out loud from the printouts, as if I am reading a news bulletin. While reading, I drink *chai* and eat *naan* off the old newspaper (Image 6).

When I recently revisited the video, I spotted the beginnings of many of the arguments I have made in this essay. The news read out loud in English seemed stilted and out of place. I was reminded of the English news bulletins on *Dawn News*, which started out as Pakistan's first English-language news channel before pivoting to full-time Urdu news programming. Questions of language and access have always been of importance to *Taaza Naan, Baasi Khabar*. The video also offers a sharp contrast to the sensationalist way breaking news is typically delivered. I read the news deliberately slowly, and by the end of the 14-minute video, I am visibly tired and fumbling my lines.



Image 5. Fahad Naveed, 2020, *Photograph of Found Newspaper*, Karachi.

'You're not tired, are you?' I ask my friend who is off-screen, filming the video with a handheld camera. The question is also directed at the viewers. 'I am,' she responds. I tell her that she can stop filming. In the next shot, I am no longer in the frame. The pretend news bulletin has ended. All that remains is the crumpled newspaper scrap, with crumbs of *naan* and *baasi* news.

It all comes back to the physical presence of the newspaper. The fact that you can hold it, that you can store it. Even after being discarded as *raddi* paper, newspapers continue to resurface. And even after this *baasi* news has lost its newsworthiness, it makes its way back to our homes and into our hands, refusing to be forgotten or letting us forget.



Image 6. Fahad Naveed, 2019, *Taaza Naan, Baasi Khabar-1*, Single Channel Video, Karachi.

Scrap

Notes

1. Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," 67.
2. Disclosure: I was an editorial staffer at *Dawn* when the project *Taaza Naan, Baasi Khabar* started.
3. Gallup and Gilani Pakistan, "Despite Rise in Literacy in Pakistan, Only 1 in 5 (19%) Pakistanis Claim They Read Newspaper."
4. Gallup and Gilani Pakistan, "90% of People Did Not Spend Any Time Reading the Newspaper in the Past Few Days."
5. Rauf Parekh, "Literary Notes: A Remarkable Treatise on 150 Years of Urdu Novel," *Dawn*, July 21, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1570194>.

Gallup and Gilani Pakistan. "Despite Rise in Literacy in Pakistan, Only 1 in 5 (19%) Pakistanis Claim They Read Newspaper."
Gallup Pakistan, December 9, 2019.

<https://gallup.com.pk/post/27921>.

Gallup and Gilani Pakistan. "90% of People Did Not Spend Any Time Reading the Newspaper in the Past Few Days."
Gallup Pakistan, November 24, 2022.

<https://gallup.com.pk/post/33848>.

Kopytoff, Igor. "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process." In *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai, 64–92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
doi:10.1017/CBO9780511819582.004.

Parekh, Rauf. "Literary Notes: A Remarkable Treatise on 150 Years of Urdu Novel." *Dawn*, July 21, 2020.
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1570194>.