

APRIL 28 - MAY 4, 2024

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



INTERNATIONAL DANCE DAY – APRIL 29

Beats, breaks and beyond

P 3,4

COVER
STORY



Unusual breakfast

If I don't have a shoot, I start my day a little later. Leftover chapatis and chai are my favorite breakfasts.

Rooted in tradition

On Sundays or any other holidays, I prefer taking signature Odia dishes. My comfort foods include Koshala Saga Bhaja (a leaf vegetable fry), Badi Chura (crushed sundried lentil dumplings), roasted potato-tomato-brinjal, and local fish fry served with Pakhala (watered rice).

Love for cookery

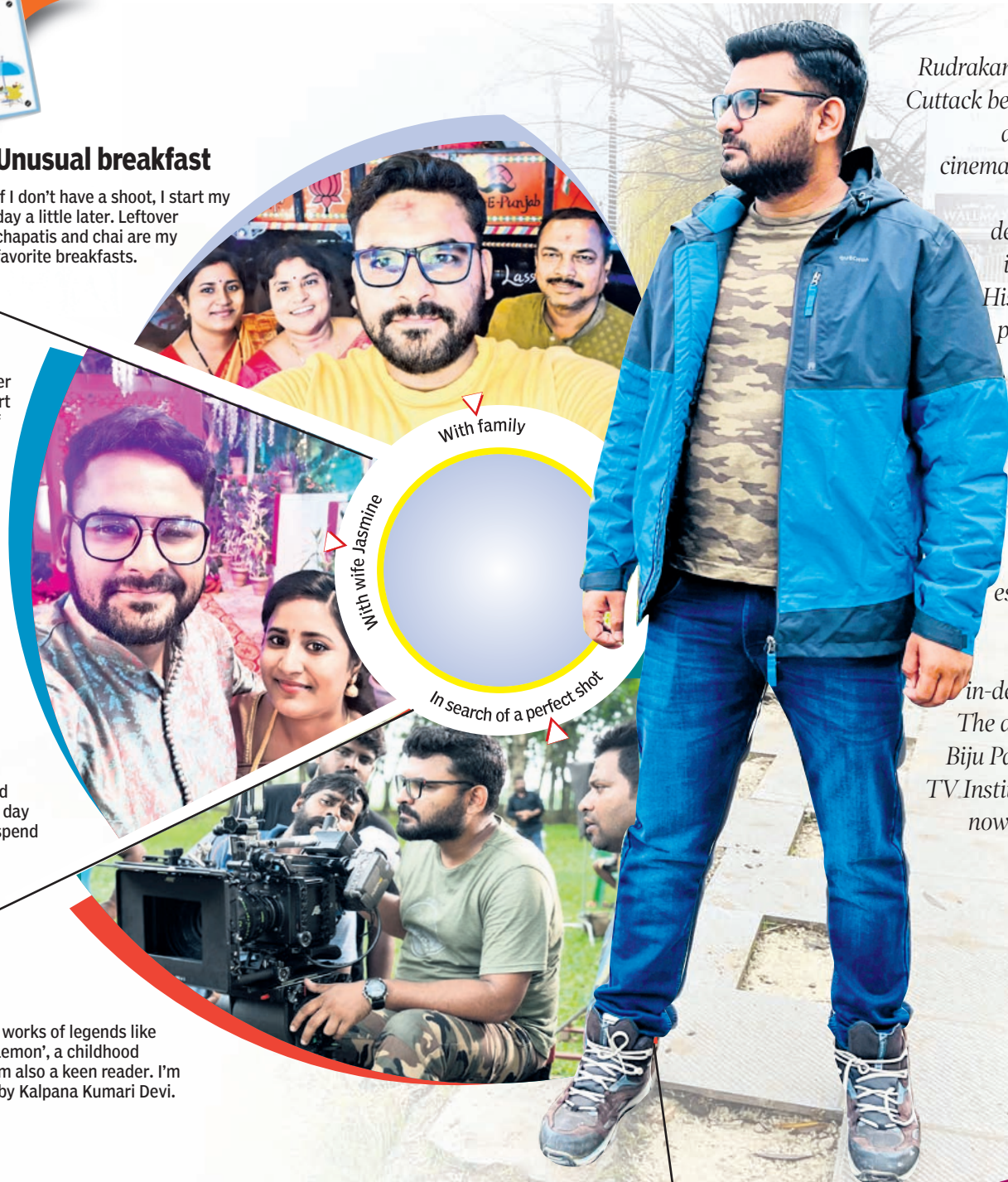
Nothing makes me happier than preparing chicken dum biryani and treating to family with this Hyderabad delicacy. I'm also good at making milk ginger tea, which is my wife's favourite.

Family comes first

Juggling my business responsibilities and family commitments, I look forward to a day off, no matter what day of the week, to spend with my family. I enjoy having deep conversations with my father, watching films, and travelling to new places.

Watching cult classics

On holidays, I usually prefer to see the works of legends like Akira Kurosawa and Satyajit Ray. 'Doraemon', a childhood favourite, is also something I enjoy. I am also a keen reader. I'm currently reading *Achinha Basabhumi* by Kalpana Kumari Devi.



Rudrakanta Singh from Cuttack began his career as an assistant cinematographer, but soon after he decided to work independently. His breathtaking photography in movies like 'Phalguna Chaitra', 'My Sweet Housewife', 'Bhai', and 'Malyagiri' established him as one of the industry's in-demand names. The alumnus of the Biju Pattnaik Film & TV Institute of Odisha now aims to make his presence felt on global platforms

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes at: features.orissapost@gmail.com And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- What did the little mountain say to the big mountain? Hi Cliff!
- Q: What happens to the man who lost his whole left side of his body?
A: He is all right now.
- What do you call your sister if she has only one leg? Eileen.
- Where do you find a birthday present for a cat? In a cat-alogue!



FUTURE OF BOOKS

Sir, In today's technology-driven era, the fate of books hangs in the balance amid a digital revolution reshaping how we access information. Yet, rather than heralding the demise of books, digital innovation offers fresh avenues and transforms literary landscapes profoundly. In this dialogue between tradition and innovation, the consensus emerges that while digital technology expands literary horizons, printed books retain an irreplaceable charm and resilience. As the literary landscape evolves, the convergence of digital innovation and traditional books holds vast potential to enrich the reading experience globally. Yet it's crucial to address societal inequalities and support authors amidst these transformations.

RUKMINI NAYAK, BHADRAK

LETTERS



A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Feel free to send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to

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International Dance Day - April 29

Despite challenges like limited resources and societal biases, Odisha's hip-hop scene remains vibrant, propelled by the passion and resilience of its ardent followers



Beats, breaks and more

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

While classical Odissi dance and folk traditions have long been the pride of Odisha, a new wave of artistic expression is taking the centre stage. The emergence of hip-hop culture has added a modern twist to the state's vibrant artistic landscape.

Originating from the streets of New York City in the 1970s, the culture has transcended geographical boundaries to become a global phenomenon. With its fusion of dance, music, fashion, and art, hip-hop has found resonance among youth worldwide and Odisha is no different.

The hip-hop dance community in Odisha exudes vitality, innovation, and inclusiveness. Emerging talents from diverse backgrounds converge to express themselves through a medley of hip-hop styles like breaking, popping, and locking. Often forming crews, they tirelessly refine their craft, crafting mesmerising performances that captivate audiences.

Social media platforms play a pivotal role in connecting dancers and amplifying hip-hop culture in the region. Despite challenges like limited resources and societal biases, Odisha's hip-hop scene remains vibrant, propelled by the passion and resilience of its passionate followers. Their relentless creativity not only expands artistic boundaries but also challenges stereotypes, fostering cultural exchange and growth.

On the eve of International Dance Day celebration, a few Hip-hop dancers,

who are making their presence felt at national level, shared their insights and more on the dance with **Sunday POST**

'I envision a global presence for Odisha in the hip-hop scene'

In the realm of modern dance, where the human spirit finds its voice through movement, **Adarsh Mishra** stands as a virtuoso. Known by the nickname Addyction, this youthful talent from Puri has elevated contemporary dance to unprecedented heights with his fusion of styles.

"Modern and classical dance are twin facets of a singular art," remarks Adarsh, a luminary who has represented Odisha and India on global platforms. A master of freestyle hip-hop, Adarsh's journey into dance was serendipitous.

"It all began when my friends showed me videos of Korean B-boy dancers in 2007, which was inhumane, and I was astonished to see the movements they made by rotating their heads on the ground. I was very fascinated by the dance form and made up my mind to learn these," shared the exponent.

Addyction also said, "In essence, hip-hop culture has profoundly impacted me beyond just dance. My style of dance is hip-hop, specifically freestyling. We don't follow choreographies in a structured manner. This approach reflects on my life decisions as well. I tackle situations freestyle, which brings balance and spontaneity. Hip-hop, to me, is like a personal

creed, devoid of a traditional deity. It's about finding oneself, dedicating hard work, and cultivating identity, all while enjoying immense freedom of expression."

Speaking about hip-hop scene in Odisha, he continued: "Over time, the scene in Odisha blossomed, with more people embracing hip-hop and actively participating in jams and battles. This grassroots movement sparked a cultural shift, with colleges and communities across the state now immersed in hip-hop. Looking ahead, my aspirations extend beyond personal achievements. I envision a global presence for Odisha in the hip-hop scene, with dancers from the state making waves internationally. My goal is not just to win titles but to continuously represent and elevate the hip-hop community on a global scale."

On the challenges, he shared, "Throughout my journey, I've achieved several milestones, such as representing India in international dance competitions and collaborating with renowned choreographers like those who worked with Michael Jackson. These experiences have shaped my perspective and fueled my passion for hip-hop. However, the path hasn't been without challenges. Breaking new grounds in Odisha, where hip-hop culture was virtually non-existent, required relentless effort. Despite facing scepticism and financial hurdles, my dedication to fostering the hip-hop community persevered. Organising events, conducting workshops, and nurturing local talent became my mission."

On a parting note, he said, "My journey revolves around community contribution, empowering budding dancers across India through teaching and event organisation in the hip-hop realm. While progress is evident, there's more to achieve. I'm dedicated to pushing boundaries, nurturing talent, and establishing Odisha as a hip-hop hub. Witnessing Odisha's thriving hip-hop scene is my ultimate reward, fueled by dedication and authenticity, aiming for lasting impact."



Adarsh Mishra

'The dance form is the secret behind my resilience and self-expression'

Smruti Swarup Patra, otherwise known as NEXTION, had no relationship with hip-hop dance in his early days. Hailing from Bhubaneswar, Swarup found his inspiration for dance from watching Addyction perform at the Kalinga Stadium and there was no looking back.

He said, "I became interested in hip-hop after witnessing Addyction Bhai's captivating show. Curious about the dance form, I embarked on a journey of discovery. Researching and closely following Addyction, I transitioned from tricking to immersing myself in B-boying to deepen my understanding and skill set."

Nextion, who competed in the 2024 Red Bull Dance Your Style India Finals, also said, "Hip-hop culture extends far beyond dance for me. The dance form is the secret behind my resilience and self-expression that shapes my identity and worldview.

Its fashion fuels my style, reflecting individuality and authenticity. It's not just about dance; it's a medium for expressing emotions, connecting globally with like-minded souls, and defying stereotypes.

types. In essence, hip-hop is my heartbeat, pulsating with vitality and guiding my journey of self-discovery."

On what made him take interest in the dance form, he said, "Starting without financial considerations, I pursued hip-hop out of passion.

NEXTION has a goal to represent Odisha internationally as soon as possible. He also aspires to mentor the next generation for artistic and financial success.

Describing the hip-hop scene in Odisha, he said, "Though the hip-hop is in its infancy in Odisha, it is vibrant, characterised by quality over quantity. Individuals like jRm and Anirban Pal have already made waves nationally, showcasing the presence of talents in the state. The energy within the Odisha hip-hop community is palpable, with graffiti artists, DJs, emcees, and dancers, contributing to its growth. It's like a family, united under the banner of Odisha Hood."

When asked about the sources he draws inspiration from, the dancer shared, "I owe a lot to my mentors for their unwavering support and for elevating the hip-hop culture in Odisha. Once I started focusing on practice, doors started opening, and there was no looking back."

With the influx of new talent and the community's passion, Odisha is poised to become a major hub for hip-hop in the years to come, he signed off.

'Freedom of expression reigns supreme in hip-hop'

Hip-hop dance unveils a world of expression and culture, shaping identity and fostering community, as Koustav Mohanty, a hip-hop dancer and athlete, shares.

"Exploring the realm of hip-hop dance opened up a whole new world for me. I delved into its rich culture, where freedom of expression reigns supreme, from the way you dress to the way you move. It's not just about the steps; it's about embodying a lifestyle and a mindset that reflect in every aspect of your being. The essence of freedom permeates through hip hop, shaping not just how you dance but also how you present yourself to the world. Witnessing seasoned dancers, whether seniors or from diverse cultures, I realised the importance of style and presentation.

Hip hop empowers individuals to express themselves authentically, break-

ing free from societal norms and expectations," said the young dancer, who is also a kickboxer.

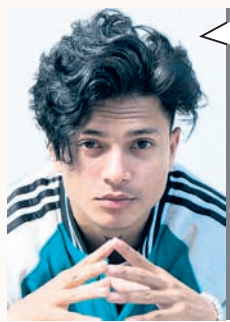
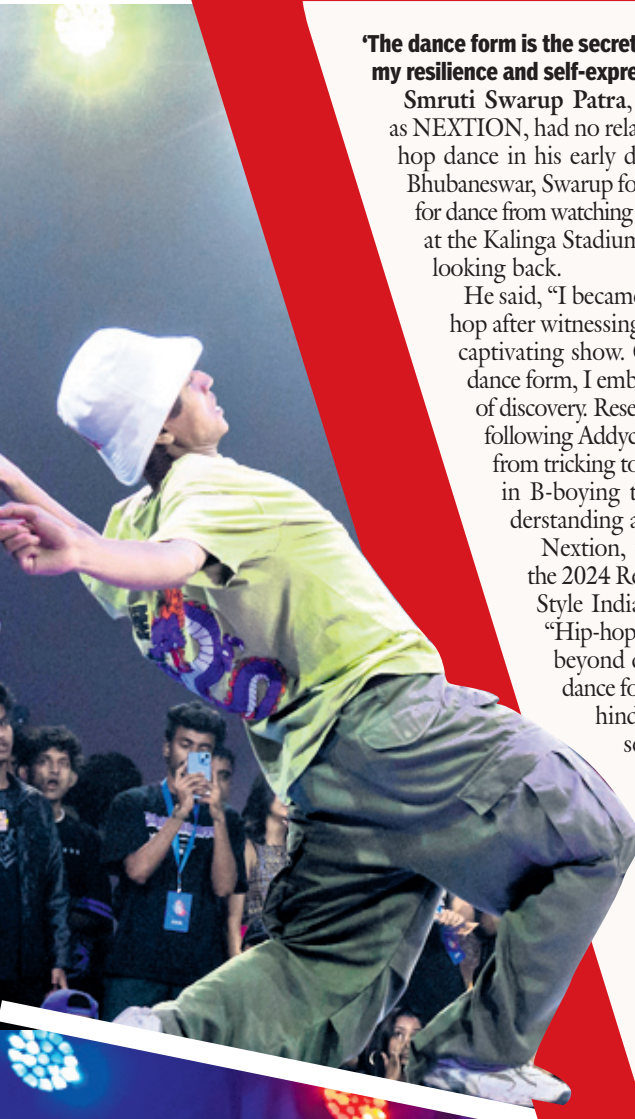
"In my journey, I encountered pivotal figures like Nextion, a mentor who played a significant role in shaping my understanding of hip-hop. Through his guidance and teachings, I not only learned the moves but also imbibed the spirit of the culture. As hip-hop gained traction in my community, I observed a shift in perspectives. What was once dominated by traditional dance forms like Odissi, classical, or Bollywood gradually gave way to an appreciation for hip hop. People began to recognise its significance and its cultural relevance, paving the way for its growth and acceptance," said Koustav, whose stage name goes TONY.

He added, "Looking ahead, my aspiration is to nurture a generation of genuine dancers, those who embody the true essence of hip-hop. In a world where fleeting trends and viral sensations overshadow genuine talent, I aim to cultivate a community of dedicated

artistes committed to their craft. My vision extends beyond personal growth; I aspire to contribute to the hip-hop community at large, both locally and nationally."

TONY hopes to leave a lasting impact on the cultural landscape by fostering authentic connections and promoting meaningful expression.

"As hip hop continues to evolve, I envision a future filled with growth and opportunity. From music videos to competitive battles like the Red Bull Cypher, the hip-hop scene is poised for expansion. These platforms not only showcase talent but also foster a sense of camaraderie and connection among artistes worldwide. Ultimately, hip-hop transcends mere entertainment; it's a lifestyle, a means of communication, and a form of self-expression. As an artiste, I see limitless potential in harnessing the power of freedom to connect with others, to share experiences, and to inspire change," concluded Tony.



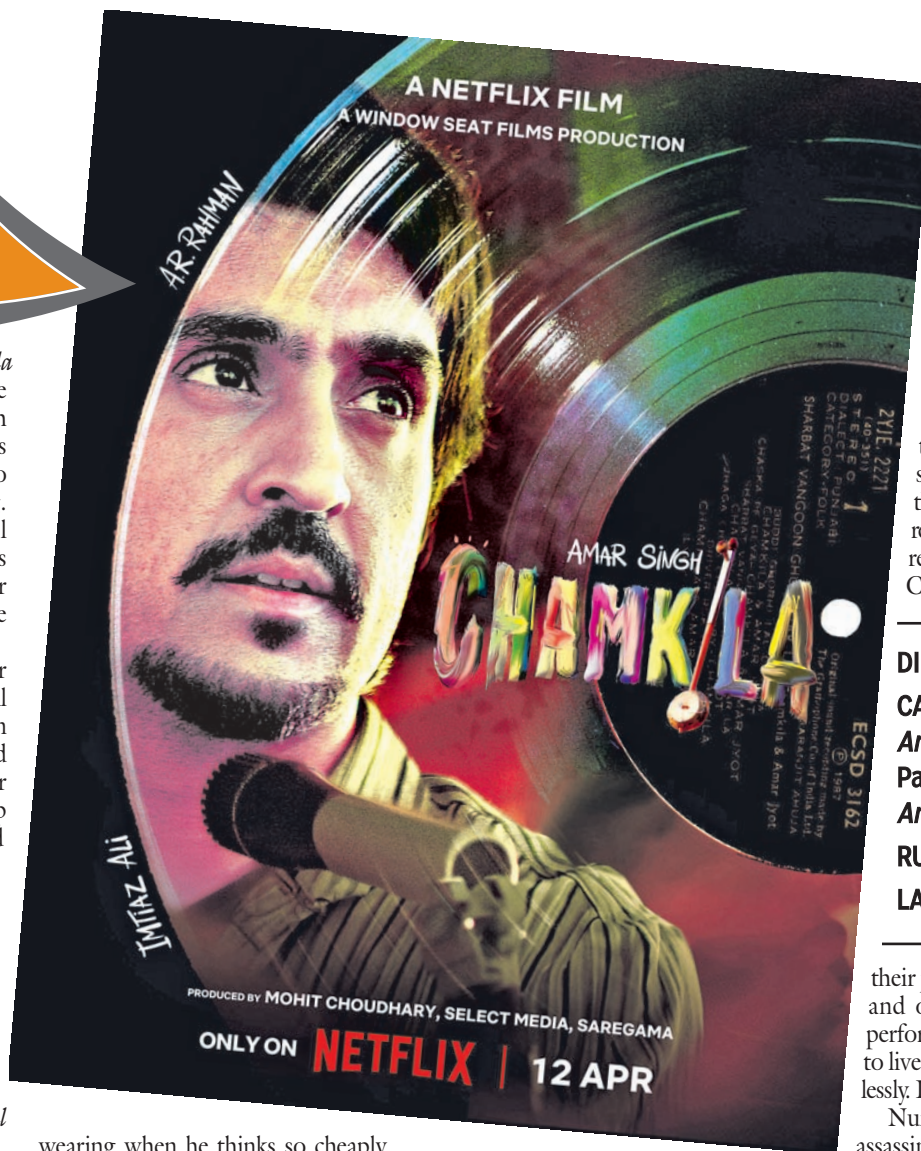
Smruti Swarup Patra



Koustav Mohanty

CHAMAK BEHIND CHAMKILA'S LEGACY

Despite the controversy, Amar Singh Chamkila and Amarjot Kaur's music transcended boundaries, leaving an indelible mark on Punjabi pop culture



tried to perform devotional tracks in the akhadas, people started forcing them to go back to the past lyrics. In some instances, Chamkila started paying some people to keep quiet and not be suggestive about his lyrics, but in the end, he stopped that exercise and became vocal and more fierce. Before they were gunned down, there is an intense scene where Chamkila asks his wife to leave him as the future appears gloomy and she might be killed anytime by the militants, but she vehemently refuses to leave him alone. Having read that confidence on her face, Chamkila says, "They are shooters,

DIRECTION: Imtiaz Ali
CAST: Diljit Dosanjh as Amar Singh Chamkila and Parineeti Chopra as Amarjot Kaur
RUNTIME: 2.5 hours
LANGUAGE: Hindi

Imtiaz Ali's recent OTT release, *Amar Singh Chamkila* is receiving astounding responses from cinephiles. The movie narrates the story of singer duo Amar Singh Chamkila and his second wife, Amarjot Kaur, superstars in their own rights in Punjab in the 1980s. They travelled to various places across the globe and created a cult following. People might have a dozen negative and controversial narratives about Amar Singh, but his popularity as the 'Elvis Presley of Punjab,' the superstar of Punjabi folk music, or the highest record-selling artist of his time would not have been possible without Amarjot Kaur.

Before Amarjot, Chamkila used to perform with Surinder Sonia, but they had to part ways because of a professional disagreement. It was veteran singer Kuldeep Manak (known for his rare Punjabi music genre Kali) who introduced Amarjot to Chamkila when he was desperately searching for a singing partner. Since Amarjot had worked with Kuldeep for a considerable period, he vouched for her talent, and subsequently, she was inducted into Chamkila's band.

By then, the locals of Punjab were already crazy about Chamkila's singing. But Amarjot added extra flavour to the singing pattern, and the duo created a groundbreaking record of having booked 366 live shows in 365 days. The movie also shows that, it was only Amarjot who could match up with Chamkila's singing scale. The duo became a super-hit pair, receiving huge applause from the locals for their chartbuster tracks like *HikkUtte So JaVe*, *Bhool Gayi Maim GhundKadna*, *Jija Lak Minle*, *Pahle Lal Kare Nal Main*, *BapuSada Gum Ho Gya*, and the list continues.

With time, Chamkila and Amarjot's chemistry started flourishing both on stage and off stage. They fell in love and married under disputed circumstances. Even Amarjot was not aware of Chamkila's first wife and his two daughters. He only used to support his first wife financially but has never stayed much with his family. Knowing the fact that Chamkila came from the Chamar community and already had a family, Amarjot decided to stay with Chamkila. The movie depicts some instances of Chamkila getting embarrassed by his caste identity, but he was quite focused professionally, having high self-esteem.

A songwriter and a close friend of Chamkila, in an interview, revealed that Amarjot was from an upper caste and well-educated background. Since their performances grabbed the attention of the Punjabi Diaspora in no time, they were suggested to get married to continue with the pace of popularity. They both found themselves suitable for each other, so they decided to elope. The challenges during that time might have been quite tough for a girl like Amarjot, coming from a different background, but she accepted the reality with utmost courage and commitment.

Eventually, the songs of the duo were labelled as obscene, vulgar, and objectionable, but people kept their list at the top of their playlists. In one scene, when a reporter invited Chamkila to record an interview, he started gawking at the attire of the reporter. Out of embarrassment, the reporter asked Chamkila why he had an issue with what she was

wearing when he thinks so cheaply about women and keeps objectifying them in the lyrics. To which Chamkila replied that it is indeed easy for people to talk about ethics, but no one understands where it is coming from. One needs to be in the shoes of a struggling person to fathom what a real struggle is. When a person has to fight every single day to bring food to the table, then ethics automatically vanishes. Apparently, Amarjot was educated enough to understand the real nature of the downtrodden family where Chamkila belonged and stood with him till her last breath.

In the entire movie, starting from Amarjot's introduction to Chamkila to the place where both of them were assassinated, she never ceases to carry a book along. As the marriage was an inter-caste one made against the family, Amarjot's family was nowhere to be seen in the movie. In the early 80s, women like Amarjot, hailing from rural Punjab with such an orthodox background, decided to break all the shackles of a highly misogynistic society and could stand and perform before massive gatherings with unmatched confidence. It is also observed that nobody from her family came to claim her body after her death; rather, they rushed to an adjacent room and started collecting the cash and valuable materials earned during her performances.

It should be noted here that Chamkila's rise to fame and the assassination of the duo took place during Khalistani militancy in Punjab. They used to get threatened from time to time to stop performing, but at the same time, when they

their job is to shoot. We are singers, and our job is to sing. We shall perform till our last breath. Better to live on after death than to live lifelessly. Let's embrace the light of love."

Numerous theories surround the assassination, and the film delves into uncovering the possible reasons behind the untimely deaths of both Amar Singh and his wife, Amarjot. Notably, Amarjot was not only his life partner but also his stage companion, sharing the spotlight during their performances.

The movie opens with a violent death, marking the end of a music career and the birth of an undying legendary duo. Chamkila's lyrics often objectified women, but they were always delivered in the unique form of male-female duets, and it may be because of Amarjot. Despite the controversy, their music transcended boundaries, leaving an indelible mark on Punjabi pop culture. This biopic serves as a poignant reminder that success often comes with a price. Despite their soaring popularity, there were constant plots against them. The real *Chamak* (glitter) of Chamkila shines forever because of the indomitable spirit of an artist like Amarjot, who challenged the norms of family and society and left an indelible mark on Punjabi music and culture.

In the symphony of love, music and determination, Amarjot Kaur will always be remembered as the unsung hero behind Amar Singh Chamkila's enduring legacy.



BIJAYANI MISHRA

Ileana on her secret marriage

In April 2023, Ileana D'Cruz shared her pregnancy news on Instagram. Months later, she announced the birth of her first child, son Koa Phoenix Dolan, in August. Speculation about her marriage to US-based Michael Dolan have been doing the rounds for quite some time now.

Now, in an interview with *India Today*, she addressed the rumours. During the interview, although Ileana D'Cruz didn't openly discuss Dolan, she became emotional when questioned about his support.

She expressed admiration for their married life, describing it as beautiful. Reflecting on what she loves most about him, she noted the ever-changing reasons that continually impress her.

Elaborating further, she added that Michael has been there for her during both her lowest and highest moments. From the beginning, he has provided unwavering support and love, remaining consistent throughout. She likened their relationship to a dialogue from *Do Aur Do Pyaar*, where he shows up every day without fail.

Ileana's return to the silver screen after years comes with the release of *Do Aur Do Pyaar* April 19, 2024.

Directed by Shirsha Guha Thakurta, the film also stars

Vidya Balan, Pratik Gandhi, and Sendhil Ramamurthy, exploring themes of extra-marital relationships.

AGENCIES



Lara hails OTT as game-changer

Actress Lara Dutta made her streaming debut in 2020 with the action-comedy series *Hundred*. Four years later, the actress has another show, *Ranneeti: Balakot & Beyond*, streaming on OTT. Having spent close to half a decade in the streaming medium, the actress shared insights regarding OTT.

The actress said that the streaming medium today is growing tremendously, with many platforms coming into the picture. With numerous platforms available, there are

greater avenues to explore different characters. Lara emphasised that OTT inspires a greater representation of characters, particularly bringing 'real' characters to the forefront.

Elaborating on this, the actress told *IAN S*: "The wonderful thing about OTT is that because there are so many platforms, you are addressing different segments of an audience. You have to create content that speaks to all of them."

"It has resulted in not just greater depiction of characters from different walks of life but also ones that are real. OTT is a complete game-changer and has tremendous growth in the future," she said.

Ranneeti: Balakot & Beyond streams on JioCinema.

IAN S

KJo: No one can change society with one film

Filmmaker Karan Johar, who graced AIMA's (All India Management Association) 9th National Leadership Conclave, addressed the role of cinema in society and said that over time, cinema does bring about change.

Karan said, "I believe (as filmmakers), we have tremendous power, and therefore, with tremendous power comes tremendous responsibility. We have to consider what we project and what we say with some sensitivity because people take the spoken word very seriously. Of course, no one can change the fabric of society with one feature film. It takes a lot of work and a lot of cinema if you want to drive home a point today. I believe so many films that talk about women's empowerment are finally hitting home today. Nothing happens overnight."

Talking about how he blends sensitive issues into mainstream cinema, Karan said, "There are

two things: there are some cerebral filmmakers who will be very true to their communication and do it in a way that is perhaps not understandable to a large section of society."

The filmmaker concluded that there are second kinds of filmmakers like him who try to make the message more accessible, but which critics call dumbing down of content.

AGENCIES



Actress Sonakshi Sinha, known for her diverse roles, embraced her first villainous portrayal in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's OTT debut, *Heeramandi - The Diamond Bazaar*.

Inspired by her father's early career, she expressed her excitement for the dark character, fulfilling a long-standing aspiration.

In an exclusive interview, when the actress was reminded about her father's performance from *Kaala Pathar*, she jumped with excitement and said, "I always wanted to play villain, like a dark character because that is how father began his career with and it has been on my bucket list. I'm so happy and so excited about the role."

She went on to add, "I just want to play good characters and different roles and that has been a consistent effort from my side. For the last few years, I have been choosing different

Sonakshi's enduring aspiration fulfilled

roles to play on screen-like strong female roles and that is what I want to be remembered

for and *Heeramandi* is a huge stamp of approval, thanks to Sanjay sir."

AGENCIES



Age of innovations

We live in an era marked by remarkable innovation and technological advancements, accompanied by an array of enticing gadgets. From AI-infused smart devices to portable marvels, the tech landscape offers an abundance of previously unimaginable inventions.

Navigating through the vast sea of gadgets and technology can be daunting, but fear not.

Sunday POST this week has curated a list of the finest offerings to make the task easier



MECHEN M3 touchscreen MP3 player

This touchscreen-equipped MP3 player offers a sleek design, stellar audio performance, great battery life, expandable storage, and convenient controls, all at a fantastic under-Rs 4,200 price point. The M3 portable audio player has a 2.4-inch touchscreen, 32GB of storage, a microSD card slot, and Bluetooth 5.0 wireless connectivity. Other noteworthy features include a built-in speaker, FM radio, and a voice recorder.

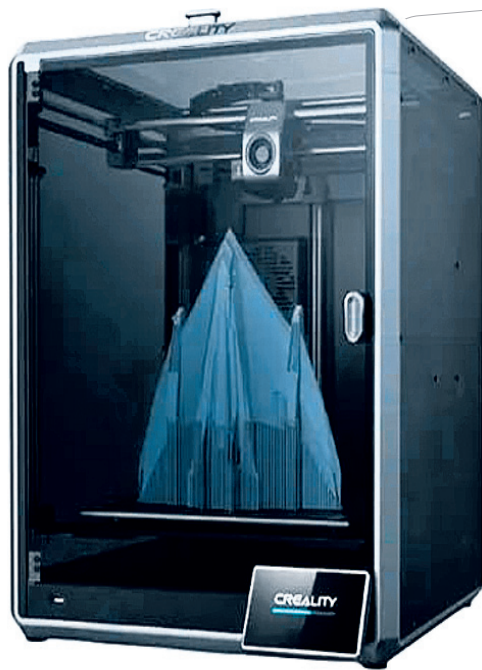


Petcube Bites 2 Pet Camera with treat dispenser

This is, by far, the coolest gadget out there for pet owners. The sleek Petcube Bites 2 camera allows you to keep an eye on your pet while you're not home through Wi-Fi connectivity and can even deploy a treat for them right from your smartphone.

Other key features include two-way audio connectivity, compatibility with Amazon Alexa voice commands, as well as the ability to send sound and motion alerts.

We also like that there's an option to use the product to connect to a veterinarian.



K1 Max AI Fast 3D Printer

If you're looking to invest in a 3D printer, the K1 Max AI Fast Printer is a pretty impressive option.

Boasting a 600mm/s printing speed and an impressive 300x300x300mm large build volume, its technology is cutting-edge.

Powered by AI-assisted printing, this model incorporates AI LiDAR and AI camera technology to monitor and prevent potential failures, ensuring your creations come to life seamlessly. It works effortlessly in high temperatures, with a rapid heating time of 200 in just 40 seconds and a robust extrusion force delivering up to 32mm³/s flow. You can also take control of your printing remotely by connecting to a LAN or the Internet, as well as enjoy a fresh and healthy work environment with the built-in integrated air purifier.

Electric shiatsu massage chair

If you're looking for a gadget to improve your sense of relaxation, you might want to check out this electric shiatsu massage chair. This chair boasts eight auto modes, six massage techniques, and three intensity adjustments, so you can programme your massage experience for optimal relaxation. It also has a built-in SL track that follows the body's natural curve, delivering a full-body massage from neck to hip. The chair's body scanning function automatically adjusts the massage roller to accommodate different users.

Beyond its massage capabilities, this chair offers versatility with a 3-level zero gravity position and a reclining feature that allows for a 180° lie-down position. The reversible footrest, equipped with calf airbags, serves multiple purposes—acting as a footstand for leg rest or providing a soothing calf massage.





Subhadarshini

WANT TO BECOME A MODEL?
Send us your photographs at
features.orissapost@gmail.com

PHOTO: KUMAR SHARAT, OP