

DECEMBER 8-14, 2024

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



Human Rights Day – December 10

COVER STORY

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Digital **danger**

MY SUNDAY

Doting dad

My day begins with a cup of black coffee followed by a daily workout. Then I head to drop my son off at school, if it's not a holiday.

Health-conscious

A high-protein breakfast or anything prepared at home is what I like to eat. Junk food doesn't really appeal to me.

Film enthusiast

As a dedicated moviegoer, I love watching movies of different genres, but mostly I prefer watching classic Hindi or Odia films. I enjoy watching Iranian movies as well.

Family man

I spend much of my time with family because I have a very small friend circle. I love playing with my son and watching TV. At times, I visit my parents and in-laws and spend some time with them.

Profession priority

Preproduction work, music sittings, and script discussions occupy a lot of my free time and I enjoy being a part of these activities.



In the Odia film industry, not many can match up to him when it comes to living a character on screen. Having acted in over 50 mainstream movies in a career spanning nearly two decades, with two State Film Awards-- 'Prema Adhei Akhyara' (2010) and 'DAMaN' (2022)-- and several blockbusters to his name, Babushaan Mohanty is showbiz's reigning Superstar. Easygoing off-screen, Babushaan elevates his acting to a different level once the camera starts rolling. Many say this talent was passed down from his parents, Aparajita and Uttam Mohanty, two of the industry's biggest icons.

Here's how the top star spends his Sundays



With parents



With wife and son

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

- When you have two choices and you take one away, you have zero choices.
- I don't think you are stupid. You just have a bad luck when thinking.
- Is your name Wi-Fi? Because I'm feeling a connection.
- I was going to give him a nasty look, but he already had one.



War on HIV

Sir, Last week's cover story on HIV survivors was quite inspiring. It's true that HIV was once known as a death sentence. Thanks to a massive awareness campaign, the spread of the deadly virus could be brought under control. It's quite remarkable that from an estimated 18.6 million people with HIV globally in 1995 at its peak, the number was reduced to 1.3 million in 2023. I would like to recall that DD-Bhubaneswar used to air a health magazine titled Kalyani. In one of its episodes, the then top actress Mama Mishra, who worked as an anchor, didn't hesitate to take food from the plate of an HIV-infected person. The incident not only made media headlines in Odisha; it garnered appreciation at the international level also. I believe, because of such dedication of countless workers, that the number of HIV-affected persons is declining.

SAMITA SENAPATI, PARADIP

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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While technology can be an effective instrument for promoting and defending human rights, such as online campaigns and crowdfunding for right causes, algorithmic bias and automated decision-making systems can limit and violate them

Human Rights Day – December 10

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

Digital danger

In an era where technology is evolving every now and then, safeguarding one's individual freedom has become a crucial topic around the globe. In today's digital age, there is a growing interconnection between human rights and technology. While technology can be a powerful tool for promoting and protecting human rights, like online campaigns and crowdfunding, it also raises important challenges and risks, like AI, online censorship, and surveillance laws. Every day, we come across news of how digital technologies play a crucial role in violating human rights.

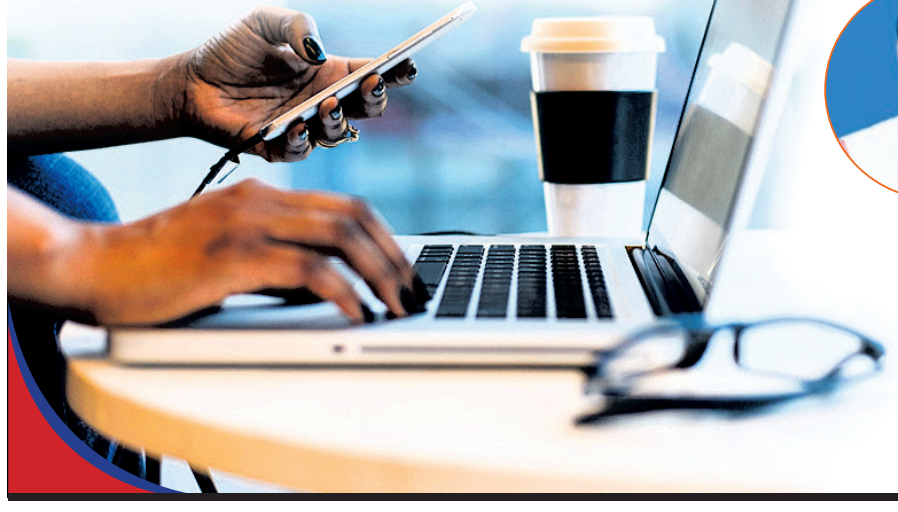
Odisha Foundation, Bhubaneswar, says, "Technology helps victims report complaints and seek justice, particularly in cases of harassment and domestic abuse. Technology helps them to file petitions with respective authorities. There are many organisations that offer online grievance redressal systems that allow victims to lodge complaints without revealing their identity. Blockchain solutions ensure that the evidence uploaded by victims remains tamper-proof, maintaining its credibility in legal proceedings. How can we forget social media? Here, online platforms like Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and Instagram have helped a lot of people in getting justice. These platforms are being used widely for raising awareness and filing reports."

Technology plays a dual role in relation to human rights, acting as both an enabler and a destroyer. The Internet provides a huge opportunity for individuals to exercise the right to freedom of expression through communication and exchange of ideas, yet the government suppresses dissent through advanced surveillance technologies or disconnecting internet services.

Chhotaray further states, "Earlier, people were ignorant about human rights violations; even some people were unaware of the Human Rights Commission. The Internet has helped them in gaining unprecedented knowledge; now they know about their individual rights and freedom. Media has also played a vital role in delivering justice; at times, NGOs take suo motu cognisance

Ahead of World Human Rights Day, **Sunday POST** sat down with a few experts to examine how technologies are impacting human rights.

'I'm concerned about misuse of technology'
Sudarshan Chhotaray, Director of Focus



of media reports and file complaints." While sharing countless benefits of technology, Chhotaray didn't undermine its adverse impact. "I'm quite concerned about the misuse of digital technology. Instances of fake reports are very common these days; people level false allegations to take revenge, violating the human rights of individuals. I just want to say that allegations should be cross-checked before filing complaints so that no innocent person is punished. ."

'Cyberbullying, a threat to human rights'



Human rights activist **Manoj Jena** says, "Rising cases of cybercrime are a great threat to human rights. The right to live with human dignity is one of the fundamental rights guaranteed under Article 21 in the Indian Constitution, but social media, at times, puts the right under threat. Cyberbullying is rapidly increasing these days. Victims of online harassment face relentless insults and threats, leading to a feeling of worthlessness and shame, which instigates individuals to consider or commit suicide. In recent years, a new trend has started that glamorises self-harm contents or suicide. These types of content are very dangerous and can influence vulnerable individuals."

Citing Indian laws, Jena continues: "As

per the court provision, you cannot reveal the identity of a rape survivor. But the mindless disclosure of a rape survivor's identity on social media platforms is a serious violation of privacy and can have devastating consequences

quences for the survivor. Public exposure can re-traumatise survivors, making them suffer from anxiety. Sometimes, it can also compromise ongoing investigations or trials, as survivors may hesitate to face the public. There are laws to protect the identity of sexual assault survivors, but on social media, these rules go for a toss."





'Abuse of social media is part of human rights violation'

Umi Daniel, Director, Migration & Education, Aide et Action International, says, "The Internet provides information on a whole lot of things. But on the other hand, it also allows people to misuse information. For instance, technology has significantly improved banking services, improving efficiency, accessibility, and convenience. At the same time, it has also opened doors for banking fraud."



Daniel further explains, "Cybercrime has rapidly increased in recent years. These fraudsters use fake emails, SMS, or websites to trick users into revealing sensitive information like login credentials and PINs. Cybercriminals use malicious software to infect devices, enabling unauthorised access. Devices installed on ATMs or point-of-sale terminals capture card information and PINs. These are kinds of violations of human rights."

Highlighting the abuse of social media, which, more often than not, breaches human rights, he says, "In recent years, the use, rather I would say misuse, of social media has been on the rise. False and misleading information is deliberately spread to deceive or manipulate public opinion. Nowadays, content goes viral within no time, thanks to these social media platforms. Users scroll through their social media feed and share things without even verifying their accuracy. At times, social

'Overbroad laws are used to target human rights defenders'

Himansu Sekhar Nayak, human rights defender, says, "Technology is very much essential for getting the sustainable development goals back on track. However, significant human rights risks have already emerged. Hate speech and disinformation on social media are significant challenges in today's world and can have far-reaching social, political, and psychological consequences. These types of news spread with unprecedented speed because of these social media platforms like Facebook, X, and Instagram. Inconsistency or weak moderation policies allow such misinformation to proliferate."



Underlining the issue of data breaching, he continues: "The availability of huge amounts of personal data on various platforms threatens the right to privacy of a person. With the widespread collection of personal data, there are growing concerns about how data is used and who has access to it. Improper data handling can lead to identity theft,

discrimination, or persecution amounting to infringement of human rights. Social media platforms, being rich sources of personal data, are frequent targets for such incidents. Sometimes, mass surveillance systems, facial recognition technology, and data mining can infringe on our right to privacy. Millions of us are sharing our personal data without even knowing."

He further states, "Overbroad laws on the online environment are used to target human rights defenders, journalists, and critics and even individuals, compromising one's right to freedom of expression. Authoritarian regimes exploit technology to control narratives, block access to information, and silence dissenting voices. In an era when everything is going digital, it is our responsibility to use these tools wisely."

'Cybersecurity breaches have become a pervasive threat to human rights'

Deepak Kumar Nath, CEO & MD, Threatsys Technologies Pvt Ltd, says, "In the modern era, technology stands as a formidable force, empowering humanity while simultaneously posing threats to fundamental and human rights. The interplay between innovation and ethics has become a defining challenge, particularly in realms like cybersecurity and cybercrime. On one hand, technology empowers individuals by fostering expression, access to information, and enabling social media platforms and digital communication and on the other hand, it poses risks to privacy and security. As we transition into a digital future, it is crucial to strike a balance where technology upholds human rights without compromising safety. By prioritising cybersecurity and combating cybercrime, we can pave the way for a digital landscape that respects and protects human dignity."



have given marginalised voices a space to be heard, driving social movements and holding governments accountable. Technologies such as blockchain ensure transparency in governance, while artificial intelligence aids in delivering healthcare and education in remote areas, enhancing equality and human dignity. However, the darker side of technology cannot be ignored. Cybersecurity breaches have become a pervasive threat, often targeting sensitive personal data. Cyberattacks, ranging from ransomware to phishing schemes, jeopardise financial security and privacy, striking at the very core of an individual's right to security. In India alone, incidents of data theft and identity fraud are rising alarmingly, leaving citizens vulnerable to exploitation."

Nath further states, "The surge in cybercrime, such as child exploitation, online harassment, and misinformation campaigns, highlights the misuse of technology. Digital surveillance programmes, while often justified in the name of national security, sometimes infringe on the right to privacy and freedom of expression. This is evident in cases of unauthorised monitoring of activists and journalists."

On being asked how to cope with this issue, Nath explains, "The rapid adoption of digital platforms has made cybersecurity not just a technical necessity but a fundamental enabler of trust in governance. A breach in such systems could compromise sensitive citizen data, undermining confidence in digital initiatives. We must address vulnerabilities by embedding strong cybersecurity compliance mechanisms. Adopting global standards such as ISO 27001, DPDP, GDPR, and CERT-In guidelines can enhance the resilience of digital systems and protect sensitive data. By enforcing regular audits, vulnerability assessments, and data protection policies, we can minimise the risks posed by cyber threats. These measures ensure that organisations handling citizen data operate with accountability and transparency, safeguarding privacy and promoting trust. As we are transitioning into a digital future, it is crucial to strike a balance where technology upholds human rights without compromising safety. By prioritising cybersecurity and combating cybercrime, we can pave the way for a digital landscape that respects and protects human dignity."





According to astrophysics, every human body, with its blood, bones and muscles, consists of atoms that were created inside stars some billion years ago

Stars die, so we live

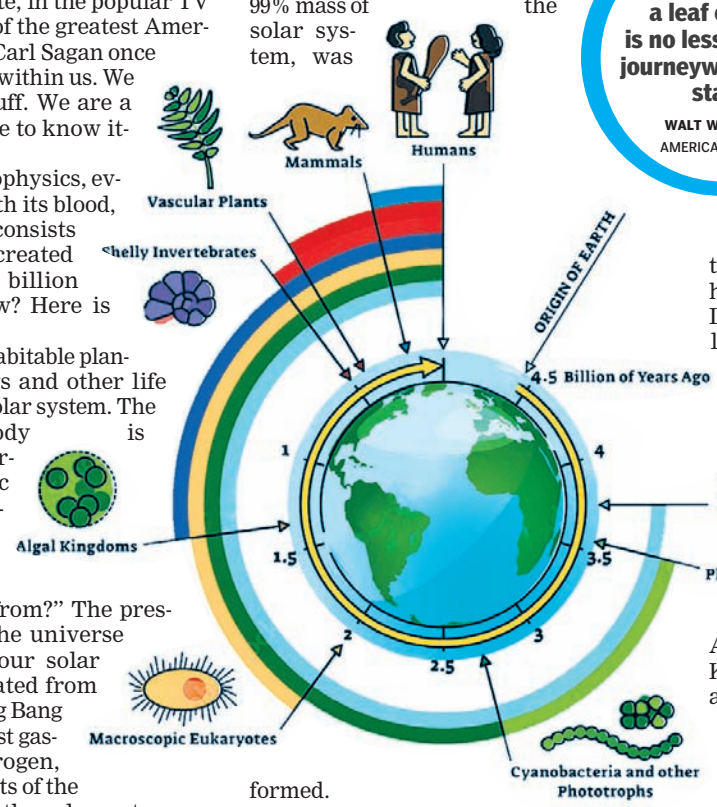
SATYABRATA PANIGRAHY

We are born out of Stardust. Yes, there is an immense contribution of these shimmering stars of night sky in the evolution of life forms on earth. On that note, in the popular TV series Cosmos, one of the greatest American astrophysicist Carl Sagan once said, "The cosmos is within us. We are made of star stuff. We are a way for the universe to know itself."

According to astrophysics, every human body, with its blood, bones and muscles, consists of atoms that were created inside stars some billion years ago. But, how? Here is the answer.

Earth is the only habitable planet for human beings and other life forms in the entire solar system. The complex human body is made of various organic and inorganic elements. Question arises here, "Where do these elements that make up our body come from?" The present notion is that the universe we see, including our solar system, was originated from the Big-Bang. The Big Bang created a lot of lightest gases -helium and hydrogen, but no heavy elements of the periodic table. All other elements were produced inside the stars during a supernovae explosion. A supernova occurs when a giant star, one much bigger than our Sun, collapses during its last stage of life and explodes releasing huge amount of energy. It is one of the most energetic events in the universe. Supernova events generate heavier elements that are scattered throughout the surrounding inter-

stellar medium. If a star explodes, it liberates that huge amount energy required to fuse heavier elements, and this process is known as stellar nucleosynthesis. Some 4.6 billion years ago one Supernova explosion ejected these heavier elements into the cosmos to form gaseous clouds, out of which our Sun, which constitute nearly 99% mass of the solar system, was



formed. From the remaining floating materials, larger and larger clumps were formed and eventually the clumps grew larger to create planets like earth. Then life emerged on earth and the elements like carbon and oxygen, which comprise around 84% of our body, have their origin from a supernova. But everything comes with a price. So, to create heavier elements of which the earth

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journeywork of the stars.
WALT WHITMAN | AMERICAN AUTHOR

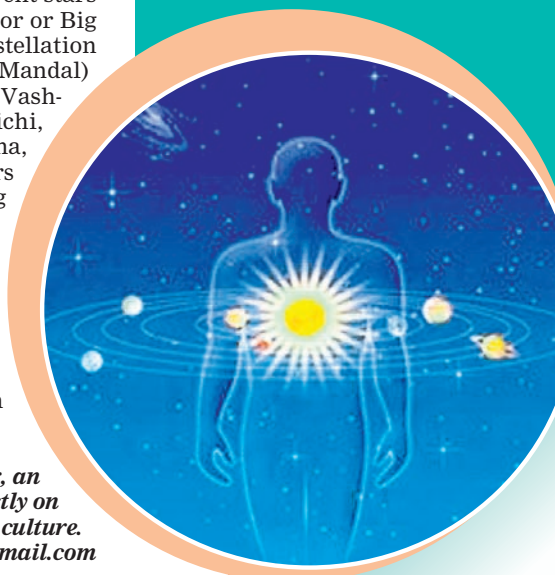
is made of, behind there is somebody's sacrifice. Here in this case, death is the price. It is the first generation of stars who sacrifices themselves during supernova explosion to create this solar system. If the star had not died, then all these basic elements of earth would not have been created.

Probably our ancestors had understood the importance of stars in their lives. We have an interesting story here in India. Indian mythologies describe mankind's lineage of two types- Solar dynasty and Lunar dynasty. King Ikshwaku, the grandson of Sun god, is known as the progenitor of the Solar dynasty.

In India, some of the Gotras or the genetic lineage of families are assigned to different stars of the Ursa Major or Big dipper constellation (Saptarishi Mandal) namely Vashistha, Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu. These myths around stars and humans suggest something deeper about our origin in relation to stars. In the words of famous physicist and populariser of science Prof. Brian Edward Cox, "When we look out into space, we are looking into our own origins, because we are truly children of the stars."

Fact File

- Some 4.6 billion years ago one Supernova explosion ejected some heavier elements into the cosmos to form gaseous clouds, out of which Sun, which constitute nearly 99% mass of the solar system, was formed.
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Hrithik turns cheerleader for ladylove

Actor Hrithik Roshan has once again shown his unwavering support for his girlfriend, Saba Azad, proving that he's her biggest cheerleader. The *War* actor recently took to his Instagram handle to cheer on Saba by sharing a video of her latest singing performance. Along with the video, Hrithik wrote in the caption, "Killing It!" and added a red heart emoji. In the clip, the actress could be seen singing and dancing during her live performance.

This is not the first time Hrithik has cheered for his ladylove. He often



gives her sweet shout-outs on social media. Last month, the *Fighter* actor penned a heartfelt birthday message for Saba. He dropped a collection of their joyful photos from their travels. One image captured the couple cycling along a scenic trail, while another showed them enjoying a delicious croissant together.

Hrithik and Saba's love story began to bloom in 2022. According to reports, the couple first connected on Twitter when the actor liked and shared a video featuring Saba and a rapper. Saba responded with a thank-you message, which sparked a conversation between the two, eventually leading to their blossoming relationship.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Hrithik will next be seen in the forthcoming action-drama *War 2*, directed by Ayan Mukherji.

IAN S

Mrunal's post grabs attention

Mrunal Thakur shares a post related to her "jeevan saathi" on social media that has caught the attention of her fans. The actress posted a photo of a delicious plate of poha, a popular Indian breakfast dish, with the caption "Jeevan Saathi" (life partner).

The *Jersey* actress had earlier given her fans a peek into her culinary adventures. She shared a picture of a plated dish of Turkish eggs with bread. The dish, which originates from Turkey, featured poached eggs served over a bed of creamy yogurt and topped with a drizzle of spiced melted butter, often garnished with herbs like dill or parsley. Alongside the picture, Thakur wrote, "Turkish eggs kinda day."

On the professional front, Mrunal began her acting career in 2012 with the television series *Mujhse Kuchh Kehti... Yeh Khamoshiyaan*, marking her entry into the entertainment world. She gained widespread recognition for her portrayal of Bulbul Arora in Ekta Kapoor's popular daily soap *Kumkum Bhagya*.

Her transition to films was equally remarkable. Mrunal showcased her acting prowess in critically acclaimed movies such as *Super 30* opposite Hrithik Roshan, *Batla House*, and the action-packed thriller *Dhamaka*. She received praise for her performance in the wide-drama *Sita Ramam*. She also featured in the sci-fi *Kalki 2898 AD*.

IAN S



Nimrat finds 'new companion'

Actress Nimrat Kaur has found a new tea-time companion.

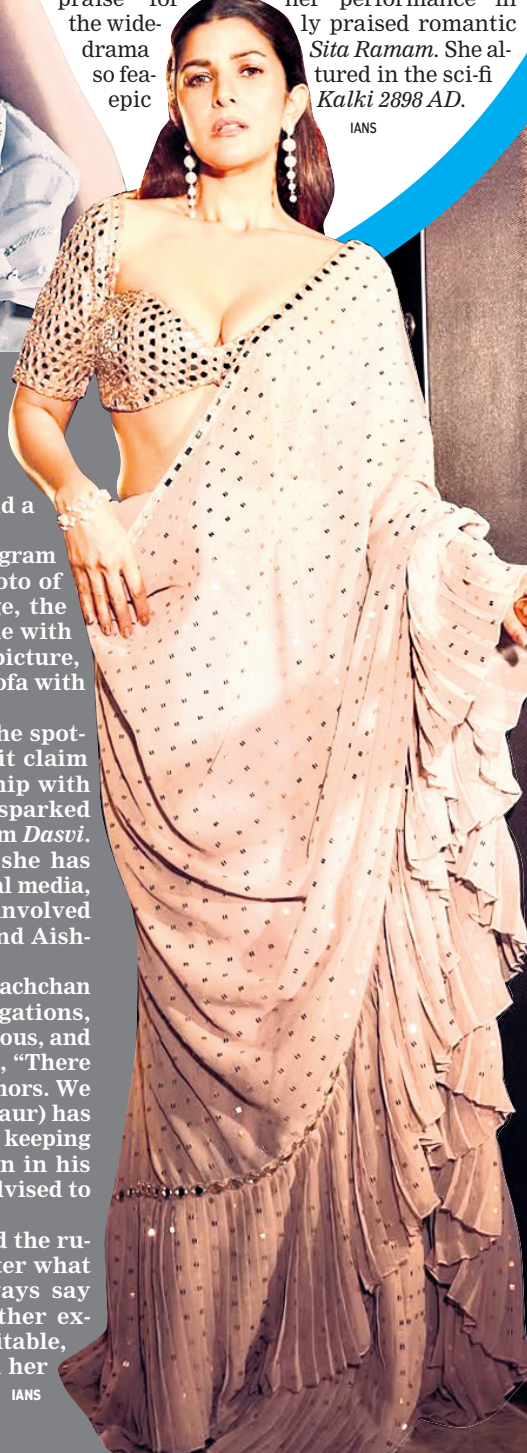
Last week, she took to her Instagram stories to share an adorable photo of her pet cat. Alongside the image, the *Airlift* actress wrote, "Back home with my tea-time companion." In the picture, Nimrat's cat is seen sitting on a sofa with her.

Nimrat has recently been in the spotlight due to an unverified Reddit claim suggesting she is in a relationship with Abhishek Bachchan, allegedly sparked during the filming of their 2022 film *Dasvi*.

Since the rumours surfaced, she has faced significant backlash on social media, with some accusing her of being involved in the breakdown of Abhishek and Aishwarya Rai's marriage.

However, a source close to the Bachchan family has dismissed these allegations, calling them "mischievous, malicious, and utter rubbish." The source stated, "There is not an iota of truth to these rumors. We wonder why the lady (Nimrat Kaur) has not issued a denial. Abhishek is keeping silent as he has a lot going on in his life right now and has been advised to avoid any controversies."

Nimrat had also addressed the rumours, stating that no matter what she does, people will always say what they want. She further explained that gossip is inevitable, so she chooses to focus on her work instead.



IAN S

Saiyami's motivation

Actress Saiyami Kher, who is gearing up for her upcoming streaming movie *Agni*, has shared the inspiration behind her role in the film.

Agni, directed by Rahul Dholakia, tells the story of firefighters and the challenges that they face in a densely populated country like India.

The actress shared that she drew immense inspiration from Harshini Kanhekar, India's first woman firefighter, to portray the strength, courage, and resilience required for this groundbreaking character. In the film, Saiyami stars alongside Pratik Gandhi and Divyendu Sharma.

Reflecting on her preparation for the role, the actress said, "Portraying a firefighter is a role I feel incredibly proud and privileged to take on, I was extremely ashamed of myself because I didn't know about the female representation of women in the fire department. Harshini Kanhekar was the first female firefighter and her story is both humbling and motivating. It's very disappointing that not many people don't know that there are female firefighters." She further mentioned, "Harshini's story of determination, grit, and breaking barriers served as a guiding light for many to follow."

IAN S





Randy Newman's

satire never more relevant

The seven-time Grammy Award-winning writer, pianist, and composer has written more about America's problems and cultural shortcomings than any other songwriter in the last 60 years. In between weird and wonderful stories, his typically clear-cut observations on institutional racism, bigotry and class discrimination play out loud

tional racism, bigotry and class discrimination play out loud, track after track. *Guilty* hears the inner world of an addict. In *Kingfish* and *Louisiana 1927*, which tells the story of the Great Mississippi Flood, in which more than 200,000 Black Americans were displaced from their homes, Newman laments that "They're tryin' to wash us away", documenting the widespread political apathy and abandonment of Black communities in the aftermath of the deadly disaster.

Musically, *Good Old Boys* is quintessentially Newman – cinematic, orchestral, emotional, anchored by Americana blues and his signature Southern-accented vocals – but it's not always easy to listen to. Hearing the n-word, which is repeated eight times, is excruciating. As Hilburn says, this was Newman taking aim and pulling the trigger: the voice that Newman inhabits to narrate the album's lead track, *Rednecks*, is not his own, but that of a casually racist Southerner.

Newman isn't in the habit of talking about his songs, or his successes, Hilburn says. In fact, he's always described himself as quite shy, and introverted. Born to non-observant Jewish parents, he grew up between LA and New Orleans, occasionally experiencing anti-semitism but mostly questioning why he should be comfortable in his own skin while others couldn't.

Nowadays he spends most of his time in his "den" at the family home in LA, "where he watches a lot of TV", Hilburn says. It's where most of their interviews took place. It took a long time for Hilburn to convince Newman that the biography was a good idea – he was initially uncomfortable talking about family, or his personal life. "In fact, as I tried to probe a little deeper, he got angry a couple of times," he explains.

"I found everything that Randy didn't tell me, about the insecurities, the depressions, the difficulties in his life – the joys in his life, but mainly the struggles.

"He's not a real happy person," he says.

"Most of the time, psychologically, he tried to stay in the middle ground – not really happy, but not unhappy either. Which is probably why he spends so much time watching television, rather than going out in the world." It's been seven years since Newman last released an album, *Dark Matter*, which was ranked the sixth-best album of the 2010s by veteran music critic Robert Christgau. True to form, it's a polemic, showcasing Newman's views on the future of the planet, ageing, and loss, and is packed with as much humour as dense discourse.

AGENCIES

Long before Randall Stuart Newman, aka Randy Newman, 81, won global acclaim for his unforgettable score on the original 1995 *Toy Story* movie, his unconventional, intellectual – and darkly comic – writing presented a remarkable commentary on the state of America. Over almost 60 years, the seven-time Grammy Award-winning writer, pianist, composer, and arranger has established himself as one of the most revered songwriters in history. In a recently released book, *A Few Words in Defense of Our Country: The Biography of Randy Newman*, pop critic Robert Hilburn bares it all.

Hilburn first met Newman in 1970, when he attended his debut at the iconic Troubadour club in West Hollywood, a venue that was instrumental in launching the careers of countless Sixties and Seventies stars including Elton John, The Byrds, Carole King, Bonnie Raitt and Tom Waits. The pair would go on to form a connection that has spanned decades. But Hilburn wasn't immediately blown away. "Here was this guy," he says, "there was no guitar, there's no band. There's just him at the piano, and he sings in this weird Fats Domino voice. I thought, well, where does this person fit into the pop scene? Who is he trying to follow?"

"I reviewed him and I didn't say he was going to be a big star," Hilburn admits. "I said he was going to be a creative master."

Among his peers, he is the star. Bob Dylan, who was captivated by Newman's *I Think It's Going to Rain Today*, gives testimony to the "sadness and cynicism" of Newman's rendition in Hilburn's biography.

And yet – despite covers of songs such as *You Can Leave Your Hat On* and *Mama Told Me Not to Come* becoming classic pop – Newman never really found commercial success to the same degree as his peers.

What did interest him was getting under people's skin. Newman's sharp eye and palpable wit made him an accomplished satirist, and, says Hilburn, "he knew where to

Randy's Top 10

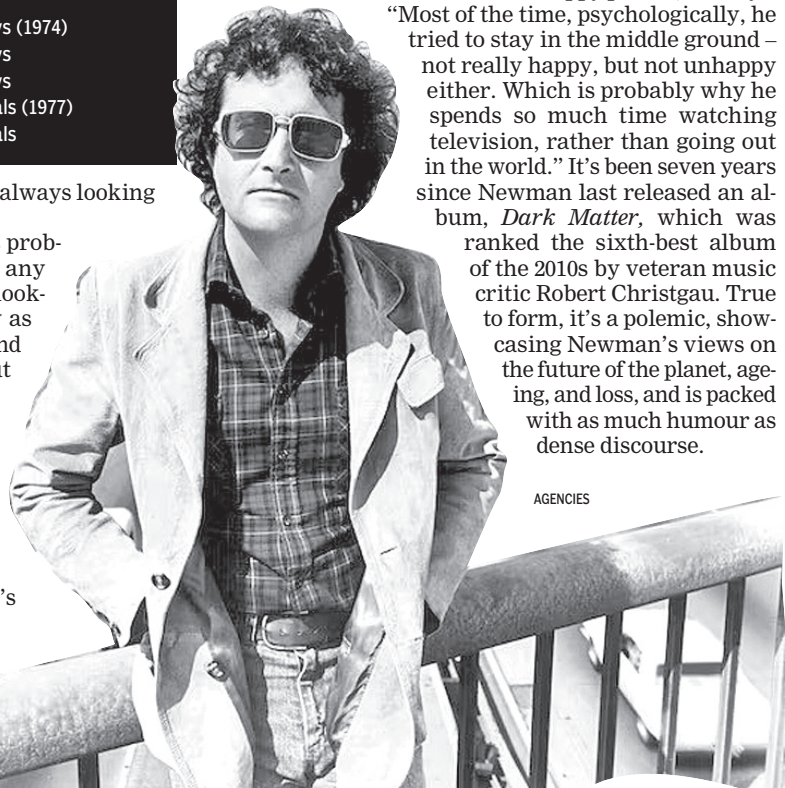
TITLE	ALBUM
Mama Told Me Not to Come"	12 Songs (1970)
You Can Leave Your Hat On	Sail Away (1972)
I Think It's Going to Rain Today	Randy Newman (1968)
Sail Away	Sail Away
Political Science	Sail Away
Rednecks	Good Old Boys (1974)
Marie	Good Old Boys
Louisiana 1927	Good Old Boys
Short People	Little Criminals (1977)
Little Criminals	Little Criminals

point the camera and take aim. He was always looking to write about the underdog."

"He's written more about America's problems and cultural shortcomings than any other songwriter. Even now, no one is looking at these problems as significantly as Randy. He's been doing it for 50 years. And much of what he saw is still playing out today," the biographer says.

In his vast back-catalogue, he comes alive writing biting satire that is cleverly confronting. Cutting, and cuttingly humorous observations on sociopolitical chasms – between the rich and the poor, in power and discrimination – are not just a commentary, but an invitation to consider the roots of people's beliefs and prejudices.

In between weird and wonderful stories, his typically clear-cut observations on institu-





Simran

WANT TO BECOME A MODEL?
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