DIGITAL WARRIORS

MY SUNDAY

While many of his contemporaries gravitate towards singing playback or modern songs, Balasore-born Sourav Bharadwaj charts a different path. His soulful devotional songs resonate deeply with Bhajan enthusiasts. Since launching his singing career in 2017, he has collaborated with prominent composers such as Abhijeet Tripathy and Prem Anand, lending his voice to several popular tracks. Songs like 'Hey Jaga' and 'Mo Jaga Kalia' showcase his ability to convey profound spiritual emotions. In his free time, Sourav enjoys spending Sundays with his family and friends

Family first

Whether it's Sunday or any other day, whenever I have some free time, I always prefer to visit my hometown. There's nothing quite like spending quality time with my family.

Hanging out with friends

After my family, my friends are my second family. I love spending my entire holiday with them. We often go on outings and create wonderful memories together.

Cricket lover

In my leisure time, I enjoy playing cricket with my friends. It's a great way to relax and unwind.

Home-cooked comfort

Living in Bhubaneswar, I often miss the comforting taste of home-cooked food. Whenever I'm back home, I make it a point to enjoy meals with my family.

● ● ● ANISHA KHATUN, 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

■ Why did the scarecrow win an award? Because he was outstanding in his field!

■ I told my wife she was drawing her eyebrows too high. She looked surprised.

■ Why don't some couples go to the gym? Because some relationships don't work out!

■ I told my friend he should become an umbrella salesman. He was really good at opening up to people.

Wounded pride

Sir, , I am truly disappointed to learn that the tableau from Odisha failed to appear on Kartavya Path, New Delhi, this Republic Day. The tableaux are a vibrant display of India's rich cultural diversity. Each state and union territory presents a tableau that showcases its unique traditions, festivals, art forms, and heritage. These tableaux provide a glimpse into the varied cultural tapestry of the country, highlighting the unity in diversity that India stands for. I remember during the 1980s, one of the tableaux constructed on the theme of Baliyatra, or the voyage of Odia sailors to the island of Bali in ancient times, was so attractive that it was not dismantled for over a year as it continued to draw attention. I hope the authorities concerned will take Odisha's failure this year at Republic Day seriously and ensure that future models are presented that would make it to the show.
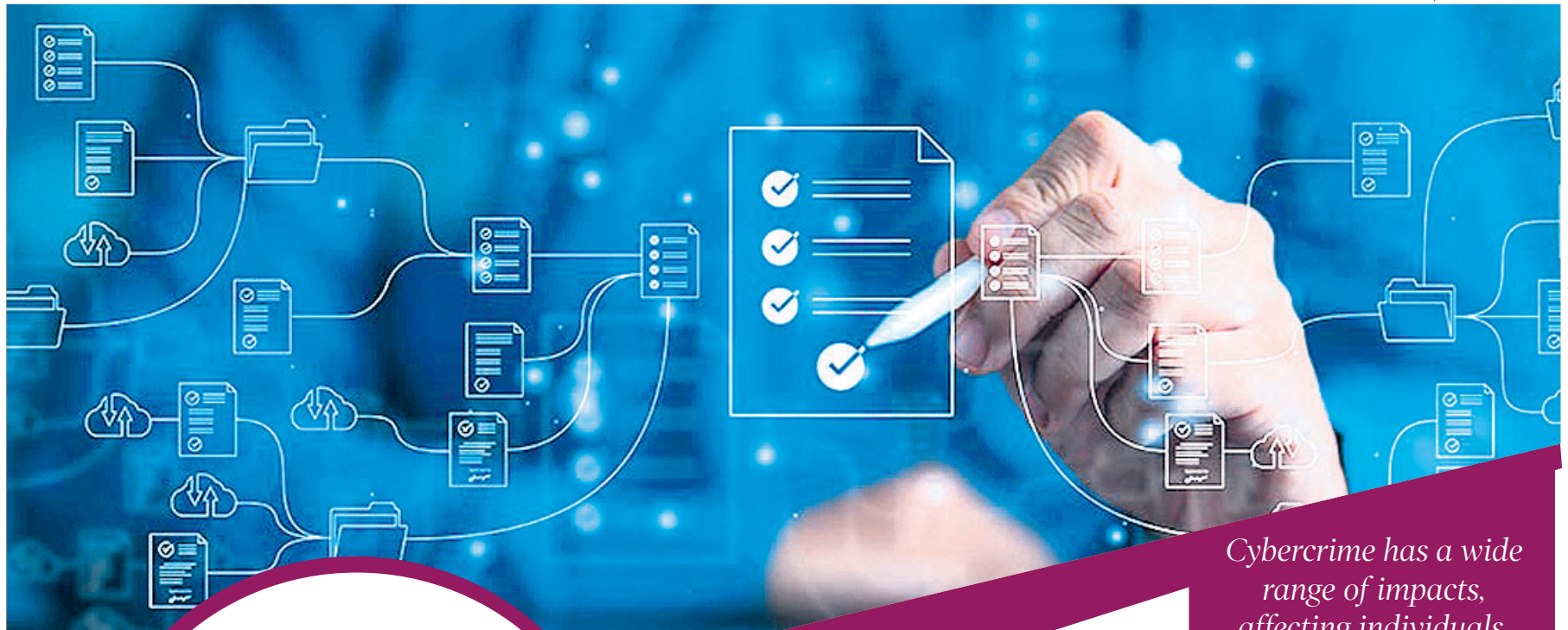
SOUBHAGINI SAMANTRAI, PURI

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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DIGITAL WARRIORS

In a world where technology promises to connect us like never before, these same digital advances are making people more vulnerable than ever. They often find their bank accounts drained, identities stolen, and privacy breached in ways beyond imagination. For many, it's not just about the money or the data; it's the feeling of being completely violated. Victims of cybercrime often describe a deep sense of vulnerability and helplessness, as if their lives were taken over by an unseen force. No longer can we simply enjoy the comfort of knowing our information is safe online. Each time we log in, we wonder, "Am I next?" The sense of safety many once felt is slipping away, replaced by a constant fear of being targeted.

At the same time, fake news is spreading like wildfire, and the emotional toll is just as significant. Fake news doesn't just confuse; it divides us as well. It fuels anger, spreads hate, and even damages relationships. Every time a lie is shared, it's not just an attack on the truth; it's an attack on people's beliefs, their sense of reality, and their emotional well-being.

The emotional impact of these growing threats is real, and people are left to wonder how to protect themselves. As these dangers continue to grow, we must face the uncomfortable truth that if we don't take action, we risk losing not just our security, but the trust that keeps our world together.

While most internet users feel helpless in addressing such issues, there are people who spearhead relentless campaigns on social media to sensitize potential victims.

A few of these digital warriors share their recommendations to overcome these unseen dangers with Sunday POST.

'Sensitisation can curb the rate of cybercrimes'

Prashant Sahu, CEO of Suryanandan.net and a renowned cyber expert, emphasizes the importance of awareness in combating the rapidly evolving landscape of cybercrime.

He says, "The only solution to cybercrime is sensitization. People's awareness can curb the rate of cybercrimes. In a world where the online space and methods of cybercrime are evolving constantly, knowledge is crucial. People lose huge amounts of money due to these scams. Now, scammers use a new term called 'digital arrest,' but people should know that no such term exists; no one can arrest you digitally. When receiving a call from an online scammer, people often panic and share their credentials, even when they know they shouldn't. I urge them not to panic and to use their common sense. For instance, if someone claims to be from TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) and threatens SIM blockage, remember that TRAI is only a regulatory body. It does not have the authority to make such calls. Similarly, the CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) never makes calls and does not have a uniform, so how can someone claiming to be from the CBI be in a police uniform? These are clear red flags people must recognize to avoid falling victim to scams."

To raise awareness, Sahu actively uses social media platforms to educate the public about various online scams.

"Everyone says that you should be aware of cybercrime, but where can you gain awareness? The government should conduct regular campaigns and workshops to educate people. I try to inform people about the ways they can be scammed through social media platforms. These scammers steal your money by luring you with tempting schemes like lotteries, quick loans, or credit card offers. They are trained in such a way that they repeatedly mention the prize amount, which creates a sense of greed or losing something very precious. They take our money and use it against us in the form of anti-social activities," quips Sahu, urging everyone to remain cautious and informed in the digital space.

"For individuals, WhatsApp two-step verification is very necessary. If using Facebook (Meta), they should hide their friend list. If they have a bank account, they should not keep large amounts of money in a savings account but rather invest in a fixed deposit. People should never share OTPs. Before taking any action, they should think wisely. In my opinion, cybercrime can be eliminated if the government makes KYC mandatory for SIM purchases because everything starts with the illegal .purchase of SIM cards," he suggests.

> *Cybercrime has a wide range of impacts, affecting individuals, businesses, and society as a whole in various ways. A multi-prong approach that combines technology, education, and legal measures can significantly curb the risk of virtual attacks and create a more secure digital environment*

'Adopt a culture of cyber hygiene to mitigate risks'

Chandra Sekhar Biswal, Director of Defigo Solutions 4u Pvt Ltd, Bhubaneswar, says, "In this digital era, the rapid growth and dependency of human beings on computers and technology have brought unparalleled convenience, but on the other hand, this is very alarming due to the rise in cyber-attacks. Attackers use very sophisticated and modern techniques for targeting individuals as well as organizations through social engineering, malware injection, phishing attacks, investment fraud, fake bank account apps, digital arrest, etc."

Biswal goes on to add, "Cybercriminals primarily target individuals by exploiting two major psychological aspects: fear and greed. Under the guise of fear, they often frighten victims by making fraudulent phone calls impersonating law enforcement authorities such as the police, income tax department, excise department, or immigration officials. These criminals manipulate people by claiming that an immediate relative is in danger or has committed a crime, threatening digital arrest to extort money. In some cases, they resort to 'nude calls,' where they record inappropriate video content and use it for sextortion. On the other hand, through greed, they lure victims by offering attractive schemes such as high-interest rates on investments, fake offers on e-commerce platforms, or lucrative lottery prizes. These scams usually culminate in convincing the victim to install a fake application, granting the attackers access to sensitive information, including banking details and OTPs, leading to financial fraud."

Asked about the ways to check cyber attacks, Biswal explains, "Cybercriminals exploit weak passwords, insufficient verification mechanisms, and an overall lack of security awareness. As a cybersecurity professional, I emphasize the adoption of proactive technical measures and a culture of cyber hygiene to mitigate these risks."

Elaborating further, he continues: "For individuals, multi-factor authentication (MFA) is non-negotiable. It adds a critical second layer of defense, ensuring that even if credentials are compromised, unauthorized access is prevented. Password managers should be adopted to create and store complex, unique passwords for each account. Regular software updates and patch management are also essential to address known vulnerabilities that attackers often exploit. Data encryption—both at rest and in transit—is vital for protecting sensitive information. Backup systems should follow the 3-2-1 rule: maintain three copies of your data, stored on two different types of media, with one copy stored offsite."

Signing off, he shared his thoughts on how to protect organizations.

"Businesses must also conduct regular penetration testing and vulnerability assessments to identify weaknesses before attackers do. Despite these technical defenses, education remains critical. Phishing simulations and regular training help employees and individuals recognize and respond to suspicious activity," he concluded.

'Stay Informed, stay cautious, and contribute to a safer online community'

Binayak Sahoo, HOD of the CSE department at MITM Bhubaneswar and a research scholar in the CSE department at NIT Jamshedpur, is a cybersecurity expert.

According to him, "In today's world, cyber fraudsters and scammers steal information and money through deceitful means like phishing emails, fake websites, and social engineering. To protect themselves, citizens need to be cautious in terms of source verification before clicking on links, avoid sharing sensitive data, and downloading unverified anything from suspicious contacts. Avoid nancial emails, urgent believ- requests, and unable offers. Regularly updating passwords, not sharing PINs, passwords, and OTPs, and staying informed about the latest scams can help prevent cyber fraud. Read the SMS carefully before sharing any OTP and never use your UPI PIN to receive money. Awareness and caution are key—think before you click and always report suspicious activity to authorities. Protection from cybercrime and misinformation requires great care in this digital era. To safeguard oneself against cybercrime, strong, unique passwords (don't use common passwords like 123456789, etc.) and two-factor authentication should be activated for secure account management. Constant software updates and prevention of phishing attempts are important practices through the avoidance of dubious links."

He goes on to add, "To protect against fake news, the source must be authenticated first. Cross-checking with reliable news outlets and websites can help differentiate truth from falsehood. Additionally, critical thinking and educating others about verifying information before sharing can collectively enhance our defense against these digital threats. Stay informed, stay cautious, and contribute to a safer online community. Tech-savvy individuals must help other netizens to be aware of the activities of scammers to protect themselves."

Talking about the ripple effects of digital attacks, he shares, "Cybercrime impacts deeply into our lives on personal, professional, and social levels. This includes possible economic exploitation, theft of identity, and psychological trauma to individuals. For larger structures, businesses suffer major economic loss and confidential data loss, with a loss of consumer confidence. Government systems suffer at the national security level, which can halt some public services as well. This, therefore, sends ripple effects of undermining the digital infrastructure that modern society relies on. This shows an urgent need for robust cybersecurity measures and awareness to fight this ever-evolving threat."

"Proactive defense strategies and strong cybersecurity awareness are required as cyber threats evolve to mitigate risks in this increasingly digital world," concluded Sahoo.

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

'*Tees* suggests history is often cyclical'

Known for influencing modern Indian cinema with his unique storytelling techniques and groundbreaking movies, filmmaker Dibakar Banerjee needs no introduction. His films often address social and political issues, adding depth to mainstream movies. Banerjee is also known for introducing the concept of anthology films in Indian cinema with *Love Sex Aur Dhokha.*

The *Khosla Ka Ghosla!* helmer was recently in Bhubaneswar to attend the 14th India Film Festival of Bhubaneswar (IFFB), organised by the Film Society of Bhubaneswar (FSB), and present his unreleased film *Tees.*

Talking about the movie, it delves into themes of time, generational change, and social transformation, particularly through the lens of Kashmir. The Manisha Koirala-starrer speaks about the challenges faced by a society caught between tradition and progress, and how the narrative spans three key time periods: 1989, 2019, and 2042.

On the sidelines of the event, Banerjee engaged in a conversation with FSB president **Subrata Beura** following the screening of his new movie.

Excerpts:

▶ **SB: Dibakar, could you explain the significance of the 30-year span in the narrative, specifically 1989, 2019, and 2042?**

▶ **DB:** The 30-year span, particularly between 1989 and 2019, reflects a generational shift. While people experience life at different times, they are all connected by the same time continuum. The idea is that adults were once children, and children will one day be adults. This structure plays with the notion of continuity, creating a parallel universe that explores how time shapes different generations and their understanding of the world.

▶ **SB: Could you elaborate on the setting of Kashmir in 1989 and why it's so significant in the context of the story?**

▶ **DB:** Kashmir in 1989 is a critical setting, as it reflects a time of social and economic transformation. During the late 1970s and 1980s, land redistribution policies implemented by Sheikh Abdullah's government helped create a growing middle class. This period marked a transition from a more traditional society to a more modern one, with significant mobility within social classes. However, this economic shift was abruptly interrupted by militancy, which dramatically changed the landscape of Kashmir. The film uses this period to highlight the fragility of social change in the face of political unrest.

▶ **SB: Why did you choose to depict a powerful woman, visibly pregnant, in a leadership role in 2042?**

▶ **DB:** The depiction of a powerful woman in a leadership role is a symbolic representation of shifting power dynamics and the breaking of traditional gender norms. The choice to show her visibly pregnant adds another layer of meaning, suggesting that societal progress and personal life can coexist. By placing a woman in a position of power, especially in a society that is undergoing significant change, the film emphasizes a future where gender roles are no longer rigid, and women can lead in ways that were once unimaginable.

▶ **SB: How does the narrative address the concept of time and how things evolve?**

▶ **DB:** The narrative underscores that time is not uniform—different aspects of life evolve at different rates. Some elements of society, like chaiwalas, remain constant, while others, such as political power dynamics and societal roles, evolve rapidly. This contrast highlights the complexity of time, showing that while some things change dramatically, others remain unchanged, suggesting that progress is not linear and that history is often cyclical.

▶ **SB: Ayesha's character (Manisha as Ayesha in the film) is tied to a complex web of personal and familial struggles. Could you explain how her character evolves throughout the film?**

▶ **DB:** Ayesha's character is deeply connected to broader societal issues, especially the ways in which women navigate patriarchal structures while trying to find autonomy within those confines. She represents a generation of women who, despite societal limitations, have created spaces for themselves. Ayesha's evolution throughout the film mirrors how individuals, especially older generations, respond to changing social dynamics in terms of family and identity. The personal struggles of her daughter, dealing with issues like sexuality and identity, contrast with her more traditional worldview. Yet, her acceptance of these struggles—like inviting a Hindu guest for dinner during the migration crisis—symbolizes a quiet resilience and adaptability. Her journey reflects the tension between generational shifts and the complexities of family life.

▶ **SB: The film features a unique blend of reality and virtual spaces, especially in scenes like Anhad Draboo's (played by Shashank Arora) virtual interview and the subway. How do these virtual elements reflect the film's themes of control and escape?**

▶ **DB:** The virtual elements in the film are used to emphasize the divide between reality and the constructed digital spaces that people are forced into. The virtual interview scene was initially meant to be an in-person meeting, but COVID made it a reflection of how human interactions in the future might be mediated by avatars and technology. The subway, initially envisioned for a different purpose, became an escape space in the film, where characters could briefly experience freedom and release within the confined reality of their world. These virtual elements highlight themes of control, as the characters are constrained by the physical and social systems around them, but they also seek moments of personal liberation or expression within those boundaries. The juxtaposition of physical and virtual spaces underscores the tension between individual agency and the overarching forces that shape the characters' lives.

OP DESK

A poster of Hindi flim *Tees*

STILL A LONG WAY TO GO: POOJA

With the perfect blend of acting talent and beauty, Pooja Hegde has worked with some of the finest filmmakers and biggest stars. However, the sought-after actress feels that while she has come a long way, she still has a long way to go.

Pooja started her acting journey in 2012 with the Tamil film *Mugamoodi* directed by Mysskin. She made her Bollywood debut opposite Hrithik Roshan in the 2016 film *Mohenjo Daro*.

Ever since then she has worked with big names such as Allu Arjun, Mahesh Babu, Prabhas, Hrithik Roshan, Salman Khan, Ram Charan and Ranveer Singh. She was last seen in *Deva* starring Shahid Kapoor.

Asked with a filmography filled with great directors and co-stars, does she feel she has made it?

Pooja told this agency: "I mean, I've made it far, quite far, but a long way to go in my mind. I don't think I want to put that pressure in my mind of making it or not. But yes, I have been here and still standing going strong."

The 34-year-old actress said that she never thought she would be an actress.

IANS

Actress Mrunal Thakur has recently shared her newfound passion for thread work.

The actress took to social media to reveal her latest hobby, showing fans a glimpse of her artistic side. Taking to her Instagram stories, the Jersey actress posted a picture on Instagram showcasing her intricate threadwork, accompanied by a heartfelt caption that expressed how she has found peace and creativity in this craft.

Alongside the image, Thakur wrote, "Hello, new hobby." The *Super 30* star had previously dropped her "golden hour" memories. Prior to that, she had posted her image of doing pilates pistol squats. In the first clip, Thakur demonstrated her Pilates skills, using a reformer to enhance her flexibility and balance. She exuded calm and confidence as she effortlessly pulled the resistance bands and arched her body backward with precision, showcasing her expertise.

On the professional front, Mrunal has been confirmed for a prominent role in the much-anticipated sequel *Son of Sardaar 2*. In this action-comedy, she will be sharing the screen with none other than Ajay Devgn.

IANS

Mrunal's newfound passion

'Misunderstanding led to Hrithik, Sussanne's divorce'

Hrithik Roshan and Sussanne Khan ended their 14-year marriage in 2014 but continue to share a strong bond. In a recent interview, Hrithik's father, filmmaker Rakesh Roshan, spoke about their relationship, emphasising that Sussanne remains a part of their family. He stated, "Whatever happened was between the couple. For me, Sussanne is still Sussanne. They were in love, they had a misunderstanding—that is for them to resolve. As for us, she came into our house as family, and she still remains a member of the family." The former couple has never publicly discussed the reasons for their divorce.

Hrithik and Sussanne, who married in 2000 after four years of dating, share two sons, Hrehaan and Hridaan. Despite their separation, they maintain a friendly co-parenting relationship. Both have moved on—Sussanne is dating Arslan Goni, while Hrithik is in a relationship with Saba Azad.

The two couples often spend time together and even vacationed in Dubai for New Year's. Sussanne shared a picture from the trip featuring Hrithik, Hridaan, Arslan, Uday Chopra, Nargis Fakhri, and her rumoured boyfriend, Tony Beig, highlighting their amicable bond.

AGENCIES

Regina on relevance of south actors in Mumbai

Earlier, the distinction between South and North Indian films was very clear, but in recent years, Hindi film industry has increasingly embraced South Indian actors. With several South films achieving immense success, their stars have gained recognition in Bollywood, leading to greater collaboration between the two industries.

However, South Indian actor Regina Cassandra revealed that this acceptance wasn't always the norm. In an interview, she spoke about the earlier perception of South actors in Hindi film industry. When asked how welcoming the industry is today, she remarked, "Now, they don't have a choice. Before.. pretty snooty. If they knew you were from the South… I don't know if it was because of the language barrier. But for me, it never was. And I don't look South Indian, so maybe that worked in my favor." She added that after the pandemic, Bollywood actively sought South actors to appeal to a wider audience.

Her statement highlights filmdom's growing reliance on South Indian talent to stay relevant. Regina, who has worked extensively in Tamil and Telugu cinema, will next be seen in the action thriller *Vidaamuyarchi*, set to release February 6. She first appeared in Kanda *Naal Mudhal* and gained fame with *Siva Manasulo Sruthi*.

AGENCIES

Turn of wheel

From oversized flannel shirts to chunky sneakers to head-to-toe Denim and high-waisted pants, the fashion trends of the 1990s have made a significant comeback in 2025. This revival is driven by a mix of celebrity influence, designer reinterpretations, digital culture, and a reflection of current value

L ife is a cycle of ends and starts. The end of one journey is the beginning of next. The same is often applied to fashion trends too. For instance, The 90s were a time of bold fashion statements, a mix of experimental streetwear, casual chic and glamorous aesthetics. From oversized jackets to denim-on-denim combos, the decade was a playground for unique styles. Now, decades later, 90s fashion trends have made a major comeback. Celebrities are bringing back the nostalgic vibe with modern twists, making it clear that some trends are timeless.

Let's dive into some of the iconic 90s fashion trends that are being revived on big and small screens.

Baggy jeans

In the 90s, baggy jeans were a staple for both men and women. Paired with oversized tops, these denim styles gave off a relaxed, laid-back vibe. The trend is back in full force, as seen on many actresses who are often spotted in high-waisted baggy jeans, balancing comfort with chic.

Chunky sneakers

Remember the chunky, colorful sneakers everyone was sporting in the 90s? Fast forward to today, and these sneakers have made their way back into the fashion scene. Celebrities are often seen pairing their casual outfits with large, statement-making sneakers.

It's a nod to the sporty yet stylish era of the 90s.

Flannel shirts

The 90s grunge era wasn't complete without a good flannel shirt. Worn loosely over graphic tees or tied around the waist, it became the epitome of casual cool. In filmdom, stars have been seen embracing the flannel shirt look, adding a bit of edge to their casual outfits.

Bandanas and Scrunchies

Accessories from the 90s were bold and fun and nothing says that more than bandanas and scrunchies. These hair accessories, once the go-to for everyone from schoolgirls to superstars, are back in full force. Stars are often seen sporting bandanas in their hair, keeping the trend alive with a fresh twist.

Crop tops and high-waisted pants

One of the biggest fashion trends of the 90s was the crop top paired with high-waisted pants. It was the perfect balance of casual and chic, and it's making a comeback in a big way. Many film industry divas are often seen flaunting this combination, mixing comfort with elegance for both day and night looks.

Denim-on-Denim

Denim-on-denim was once a bold, controversial look, but in the 90s, it became a signature style. Whether it was a denim jacket with jeans or a full-on denim jumpsuit, the trend dominated. Many tinsel town stars have been seen rocking this look, proving that denim-on-denim is back and better than ever.
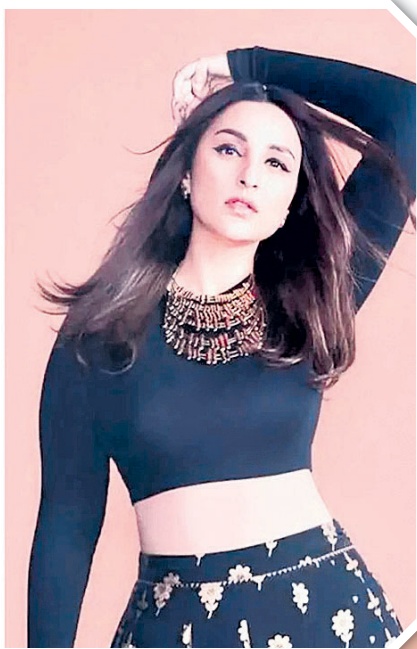
Neon and bright colours

The 90s were all about neon and bright colours think hot pink, lime green and electric blue. These bold hues have made a comeback in fashion, often seen on showbiz celebrities, who embrace these vibrant colors for a modern yet nostalgic look.

Oversized jackets and blazers

A hallmark of 90s fashion, oversized jackets and blazers were the epitome of cool, especially when paired with casual attire. In the modern day scene, many actresses are bringing back the oversized blazer look, balancing high-fashion with street-style swagger.

The 90s were undeniably a decade of experimentation and boldness in fashion, and Bollywood is not shy about bringing those iconic trends back. With a mix of retro-inspired clothing, vibrant colors and playful accessories, today's stars are breathing new life into the looks we loved decades ago.

SWETASALONI