

NOVEMBER 23-29, 2025

# SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



P  
3,4

COVER STORY

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF  
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN- NOVEMBER 25

## DIGITAL SHADOWS





Young filmmaker Abhishek Swain is a known name among movie aficionados with most of his works, especially the shorts, garnering rave reviews and winning awards at film festivals across the globe. ‘A Daughter’s Letter’, ‘Through the Eyes of an Artist’, ‘Blind’, and ‘Life Drop’ are among his notable ventures. Swain’s anthology film ‘Four’, featuring four psycho-thriller stories, showcased his versatility and earned him awards for Best Director and Best Screenplay Writer at the Indian Telly Streaming Awards. His ‘Jajabara 2.0’ also struck a chord with the audience. Swain aims to introduce Odia culture to global viewers with his upcoming project, ‘Bindusagara’

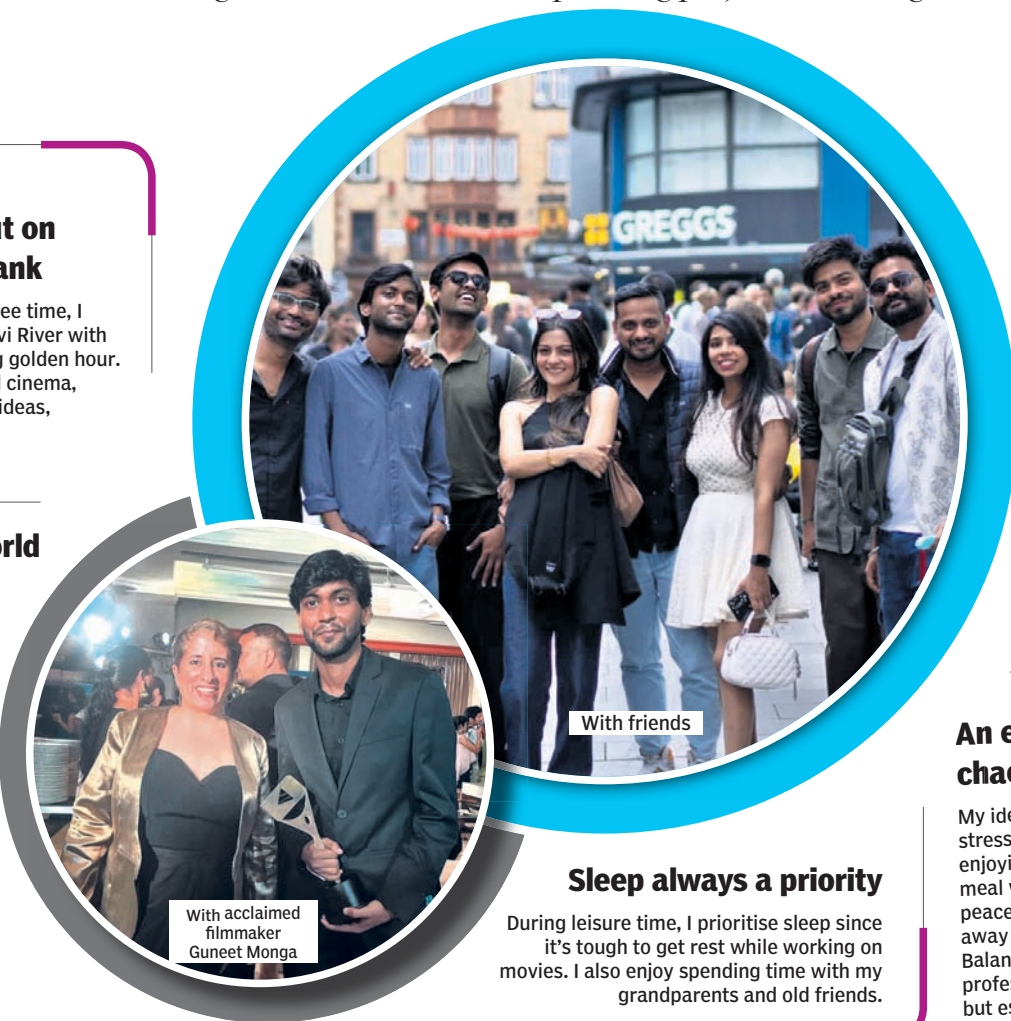


### Hanging out on Bhargavi bank

Whenever I get free time, I sit by the Bhargavi River with colleagues during golden hour. We discuss world cinema, filmmaking, new ideas, music, and more.

### Love for world cinema

I love watching world cinema from different regions, writing occasionally, and exploring various music genres, trying to decode their unique elements and meanings.



With friends

With acclaimed filmmaker Guneet Monga

### Sleep always a priority

During leisure time, I prioritise sleep since it’s tough to get rest while working on movies. I also enjoy spending time with my grandparents and old friends.

### Holiday? No way

A Sunday, for me, is like any other working day. I often work—whether it’s writing, shooting, or post-production—depending on the stage of a film.

### An escape from the chaos of the city

My ideal Sunday would be stress-free, with no calls, enjoying a delicious mutton meal with friends, or taking a peaceful trip to the mountains, away from the city’s chaos. Balancing personal and professional life is challenging but essential for peace.

ANISHA KHATUN, OP



## WhatsApp This Week

Only on **Sunday POST!**

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

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Work hard and save your money and when you are old you will be able to buy the things only the young can enjoy.
- The farther away the future is, the better it looks.
- I always give 100 %... which is why I lost my job as an exam marker!
- Why is “abbreviation” such a long word?



## TV erases time

Sir, This refers to last week’s cover story ‘Tube turns timeless’ ahead of World Television Day. Once a clunky box flickering in the corner, television has slipped the leash of time. Black-and-white ghosts became Technicolor dreams, then HD galaxies in a flat rectangle so thin it hangs like a painting. Rabbit-ear antennas gave way to fibre optics; schedules dissolved into streams that travel in pockets and on wrists. Live lunar leaps, World Cup screams, royal weddings and cartoon mice—all now rest in the same endless library, ready to restart at a thumb-press. Yesterday’s episode waits beside a 1950s classic, both equal citizens of the eternal now. Screens multiply, shrink, curve and float, yet their glow feels ageless, a campfire we never truly leave. Television no longer tells time; it erases it, folding decades into a single luminous moment that follows us everywhere, always on, always ours. From communal hearth to private cosmos, it whispers futures, replays pasts, and stitches generations together in one shimmering, timeless ribbon of light.

LOPAMUDRA ROUT, 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

[Features.orissapost@gmail.com](mailto:Features.orissapost@gmail.com)  
B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa.  
Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948





INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN- NOVEMBER 25

# DIGITAL SHADOWS

*From whispered screenshots to viral deepfakes, one upload now brands women forever. Every ping now feels like a threat. The web, once a promise, now predicts pain as the perpetrators of digital violence hide in plain usernames, laughing in encrypted shadows*

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

In a world that thrives on connectivity, women and girls are increasingly finding themselves vulnerable to a new and alarming form of violence; digital violence. The very platforms that were meant to unite us have, instead, become spaces where women are routinely harassed, exploited, and manipulated. Cyberbullying, revenge porn, deepfake videos, and identity theft are just a few of the malicious tactics used to silence, shame, and harm. What's even more disturbing is that these acts often go unnoticed or unpunished, leaving victims feeling helpless.

Digital violence is not just an issue of privacy; it is a grave violation of human rights. As the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women approaches, several gender experts share with Sunday POST their perspectives to combat the menace.

**'Fear of societal judgment often silences victims'**

According to noted author and gender specialist **Hiranmayee Mishra**, current policies in place fail to ensure proper implementation of laws in digital violence against women, with the real issue being a lack of accountability for



perpetrators. She emphasises that "Perpetrators of violence against women should be given exemplary punishment." This, she believes, is crucial for enforcing the seriousness of such crimes and deterring future offenses.

Mishra points out that one of the most significant barriers preventing women from seeking justice or support is deeply ingrained in social attitudes. She explains, "The most important barrier in our social system for women is the question of 'what they will think.' This single thought restricts hundreds of women from reporting violence at the first instance. Compromising with violence leads to more violence only." The fear of societal judgment often silences victims, creating a culture where abuse is tolerated rather than challenged.

When discussing the evolution of gender-based violence in recent years, especially with the rise of digital abuse, Mishra underscores the vulnerability women face both in the real world and online. She asserts, "In virtual or real, women still are the soft targets of abusers. Technology has even made women and girls more vulnerable. The soci-

etal rules are often contradictory to our municipal law. That gap creates a space for gender-based violence." The digital landscape has further complicated the fight against gender-based violence, offering new avenues for abuse while legal systems struggle to keep pace.

Regarding interventions, Mishra is skeptical of the effectiveness of any singular approach to curbing violence against women, especially with the advent of new technologies that have allowed abuse to take on different forms. However, she believes that a collective societal effort is essential. "The family has to play an important role," she states. "Interventions by NGOs, by families, and by society as a whole to change the mindset of both men and women may be more successful." She advocates for the empowerment of women, particularly through education and financial independence, urging that "each and every girl should come out of their homes to become independent in real sense."

**'Avoid posting every detail of your life'**

Discussing the rising of digital violence against women, **Prashant Sahu**, CEO of Suryanandan.net and an IT expert, flagged the most common forms

such as cyberbullying, photo morphing, deepfake videos, and revenge porn and the challenges involved to detect the perpetrators. He said, "Revenge porn involves posting sexually explicit images or videos of someone online without their consent, typically by a former partner, with the intent to cause distress or embarrassment. These cases are hard to detect because perpetrators often hide their identities using fake names, addresses, and proxy servers, making it difficult to trace them. Women are frequently soft targets, easily exploited in these situations."

Sahu also pointed out that women often unknowingly make mistakes online that increase their vulnerability to digital abuse. "The more you expose yourself on social media, the higher the chances of being targeted. Sharing excessive updates, accepting unknown requests to increase followers and likes, and interacting with strangers on social media all increase the risk of your photos and videos being misused. Social media exposure has become a significant factor in the rise of cybercrime today. The more we use technology, the more prone we become to digital violence," he said.

To protect themselves, Sahu advised women to take a more cautious approach to social media: "Limit your updates on social media, avoid posting every detail of your life, and don't accept unknown requests just to boost followers. Accept requests only from people you know or those with mutual contacts. Additionally, avoid engaging with strangers on these platforms."

Sahu emphasised the need for accountability from social media platforms to reduce online abuse. "If stricter regulations were implemented on social media platforms, cyber violence could be curbed. Platforms should make identity verification mandatory, such as requiring documents or video KYC for account creation. This would eliminate fake or multiple accounts, reducing the risk of digital violence," he concluded.







FORMS OF DIGITAL VIOLENCE

- Online and technology-facilitated abuse:** This includes sexual harassment, stalking, doxxing (publishing private information), hacked/deepfake videos, and sextortion.
- Hate speech and defamation:** Spreading misogynistic or gendered hateful content, misinformation, or false information online.
- Cyberbullying and harassment:** Persistent, aggressive, and threatening communication via email, social media, or other platforms.
- Online grooming:** Using digital platforms to manipulate and groom individuals for sexual assault.
- Zoom bombing:** Disrupting video calls with inappropriate content, often with sexual themes.

IMPACT & CONSEQUENCES

- Harmful effects:** Digital violence can cause significant harm to women's mental and physical health, leading to anxiety, fear, and paranoia.
- Social and political impact:** It can silence women and discourage their participation in public life, including politics.
- Economic and social costs:** The overall impact includes economic and social consequences, though specific data is still being developed.



'There needs to be broader support from society'

Highlighting the growing concern of cyber harassment and revenge porn **Padmalaya Mohapatra**, the Joint Secretary of the Orissa High Court Bar Association, said "Cyber harassment can be simply described as harassment carried out using mobile phones, social media, and digital technologies, while revenge porn refers to the non-consensual exposure or morphing of private pictures."

Several crucial sections such as 73, 74, 75, 77, 52, and C26 of BNS under IPC, address offenses related to blackmailing, cyber stalking, harassment, and the violation of privacy. Additionally, the Information Technology (IT) Act of 2000 includes provisions to tackle cybercrimes as its Section 66E deals with the violation of privacy, specifically regarding the un-



authorised capturing of images and videos. Section 67 criminalises the publishing or transmission of obscene material online, while Section 66D addresses deepfake videos, a growing concern in the digital age. For working women,

the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act provides a legal avenue for filing complaints against workplace harassment. However, there are not many who are aware of such legal provisions. Mohapatra emphasises the importance of sensitisation, stating, "People are not very familiar with cybercrime or the steps to follow when they become victims. Women, in particular, often feel insecure about reporting these incidents. To eradicate this mindset, there needs to be broader support from society."

She advocates for awareness drives in every district and the promotion of these laws on social media platforms. "By educating people about their rights and the legal avenues available, we can make a significant difference in tackling these issues," Mohapatra asserts. Raising awareness and encouraging women to report such crimes can play a key role in ensuring justice and protecting their rights in the digital world.



CELEBS AT RECEIVING END

PRIYANKA CHOPRA

In 2013, Priyanka Chopra faced significant online backlash when her song "In My City" was chosen as the NFL Network's Thursday Night Football theme. Some online comments questioned her South Asian roots and her place on American TV. The reaction highlighted the challenges faced by people of color in mainstream Western media, as Chopra was criticized for being an outsider despite her global fame.



SHRUTI HAASAN

Shruti Haasan filed a police complaint against a stalker, a Karnataka-based doctor, KG Guruprasad, who had been sending her abusive and derogatory messages on Twitter. The stalker allegedly threatened to kill her, even claiming he would stab her if he got close.



ANUSHKA SHARMA

Amid breakup rumors, Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli were subjected to online harassment, with a morphed image circulating that showed Virat Kohli kicking Anushka Sharma. The photoshopped picture, which showed Virat sitting on a chair with his leg on Anushka's rear while she crouched, quickly went viral.



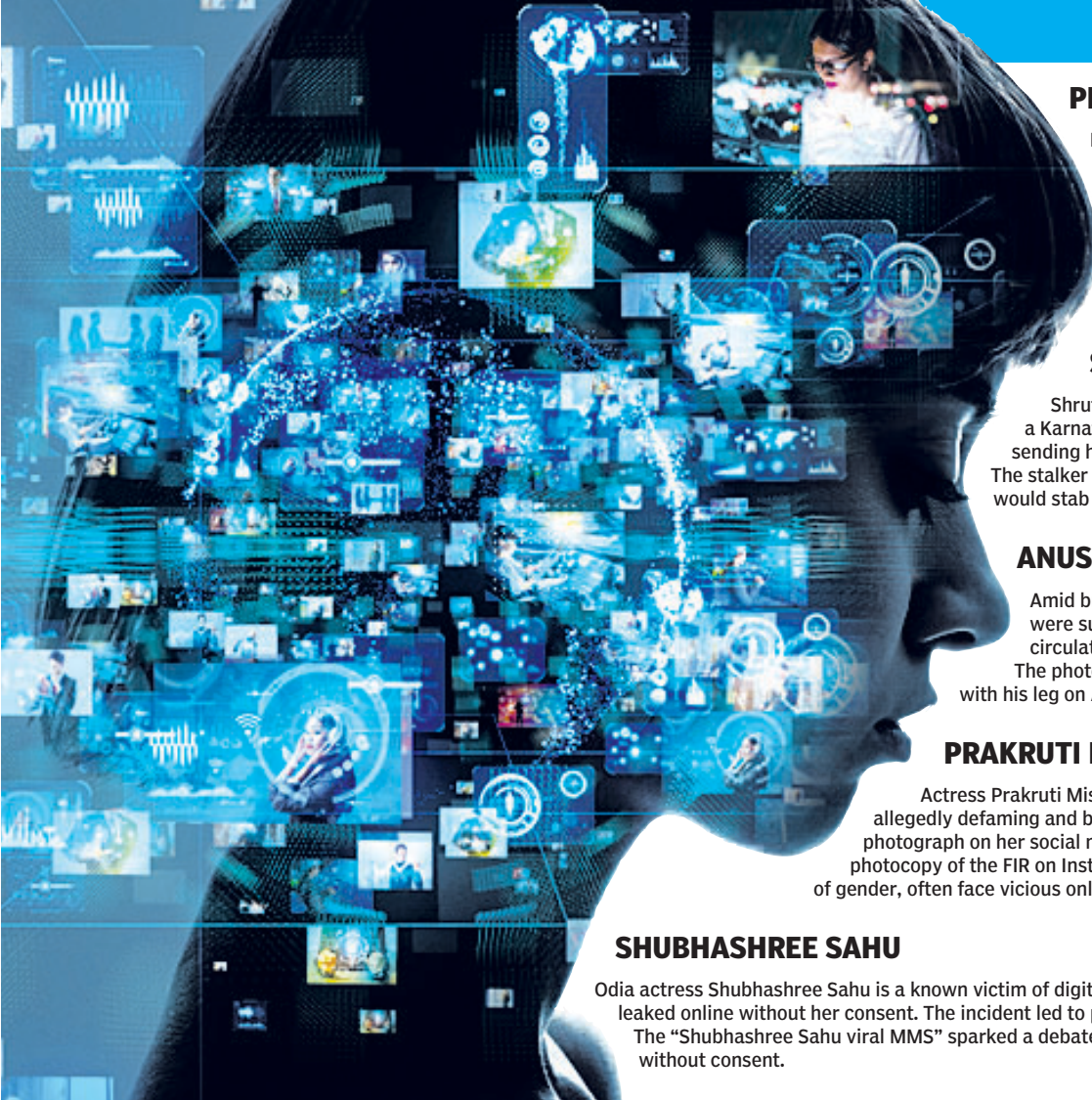
PRAKRUTI MISHRA

Actress Prakruti Mishra filed a police complaint against a web portal for allegedly defaming and bullying her online. After posting a brand endorsement photograph on her social media, she became a victim of cyberbullying. Sharing a photocopy of the FIR on Instagram, Prakruti expressed how celebrities, regardless of gender, often face vicious online attacks, which sometimes extend to their families.



SHUBHASHREE SAHU

Odia actress Shubhashree Sahu is a known victim of digital violence after a private video of hers was allegedly leaked online without her consent. The incident led to public ridicule, humiliation, and even death threats. The "Shubhashree Sahu viral MMS" sparked a debate about privacy and the ethics of sharing such content without consent.







# Muscle, myth & heart-health truth

*Big muscles look strong, yet they make the heart work harder. Sometimes the people who seem the healthiest on the outside are hiding real problems inside*

On 24 July 2025, Terry ‘Hulk Hogan’ Bollea died at 71 from an acute myocardial infarction. Beneath the 24-inch pythons lay chronic lymphocytic leukemia and years of atrial fibrillation—conditions that turn oversized muscle into a cardiac liability. Twenty-five surgeries in ten years, including a May neck procedure, had already stressed his system; the final blow was a clot forming in fibrillating atria, triggering the fatal coronary blockage. Hogan’s passing shatters the illusion that extreme hypertrophy equals health and forces fans to ask what “fit” really means.

**Fitness beats BMI**

The American Heart Association now lists ‘fitness’ as an additional vital sign that should be considered when determining a patient’s overall health and risk of heart disease, cancer and death. To ensure ‘fitness’ the gold-standard measurement is VO max—peak oxygen uptake—via a 10-minute cardiopulmonary exercise test available at most clinics. Cleveland Clinic data on 122,000 patients show low VO max predicts death more strongly than smoking, diabetes, or kidney failure. Every 1 ml/kg/min increase slashes mortality 10–25 %. Lifespan and “health-span” (disease-free years) rise in direct proportion to cardio-respiratory capacity, making exercise the cheapest, most reliable life-extension drug we have.

**Move to remember, move to prevent**

Sedentary time is now quantified like calories. Four hours of daily TV raises stroke odds 35 %; each added hour of sitting increases dementia risk 1.4-fold. Conversely, 150 min/week of brisk walking cuts stroke 21 % and dementia 20 %, while doubling Alzheimer’s protection versus the least-active group. Exercise boosts cerebral blood flow 15 %, elevates BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor) 30 %, and lowers inflammatory IL-6 levels—all within six weeks. Cancer risk drops too: 13 obesity-linked cancers retreat as insulin, estrogen, and chronic inflammation fall. Colon, breast, and endometrial tumors show the clearest exercise-dose response.

**The 7 K-step rules**

Global guidelines converge on 150 min moderate or 75 min vigorous activity weekly; “weekend warriors” gain the same 20 % mortality reduction as daily movers. The Lancet’s meta-analysis of 48,000 adults followed 30 years reveals 7,000 steps/day delivers optimal bene-

WORK OUT BENEFITS

- It is one of the most effective interventions to prolong life and reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases throughout life
- It helps to keep certain hormones – such as insulin and sex hormones – within a normal range. When these hormone levels get too high, they may increase cancer cell growth
- It also helps to boost the immune system by improving the body’s ability to fight off pathogens and cancer cells.

fit: 47 % lower all-cause death, 38 % less dementia, 37 % fewer cancer fatalities—no extra advantage at 10,000. A simple talk-test keeps effort honest: moderate = conversational; vigorous = gasping. Even previously sedentary 53-year-olds reversed cardiac stiffness after two years of regular walking or cycling. Three-quarters of heart, brain, and metabolic protection is achieved without gym memberships, spandex, or protein



Terry ‘Hulk Hogan’ Bollea

shakes—just consistent, moderate movement started today, not someday. do not have to look like a body builder or fitness guru in order to reap the benefits of exercise.

**Last words**  
It is important to remember that you

OP DESK





# Keerthy raises alarm on women safety

The pre-release event of Revolver Rita was held recently, ahead of its November 28 release, where Keerthy Suresh shared a troubling experience with AI technology. The actress revealed she was shocked when she saw a fake AI-generated photo of herself circulating online without her permission. "It's very disturbing to see images of my face in clothes and environments that are not mine," she said, highlighting the dangers posed by such technology. Keerthy recounted a specific incident where a fabricated image appeared to show her with her husband, so realistic that it made her doubt its authenticity. She expressed concern about the potential dangers of AI, warning that if misused, it could confuse people about what information is real or fake.

Keerthy also voiced her deep concerns about women's safety in India, noting that despite advancements in technology, women continue to face defamation and attacks. "The misuse of women's faces through AI is very painful," she stressed. However, she acknowledged the increasing importance of women in cinema compared to previous years.

Reflecting on changes in Tamil cinema after the pandemic, Keerthy noted a decline in comedy films and shifting audience tastes. She called for better regulation of AI, urging the government and tech companies to address these issues seriously to prevent further harm.



AGENCIES

Actress Huma Qureshi, whose latest release is *Maharani 4*, has said that she has learnt to shut out the noise around her and focus on what really matters to her as an artiste.

Asked how she handles the pressure of external expectations versus her per-the pressure of other "I think my job is to my own life and charac- That's really their Directed by Puneet ed by Subhash Kapoor, Vipin Sharma, Amit Pramod Pathak.

Maharani 4 will She was also by Tanuj fali Shah, Jaya Aro-



## Huma's take on handling pressure

sonal vision, Huma told this news agency: "I don't. I don't take people's thoughts and ideas." fulfill my own future, my own destiny and to work towards ters. I don't take the pressure of other people's expectations. problem," she added.

Prakash, produced by Kangra Talkies Pvt. Ltd., and creat- Maharani 4, stars Huma Qureshi, Shweta Basu Prasad, Sial, Vineet Kumar, Shardul Bhardwaj, Kani Kusruti, and stream from November 7 on Sony LIV.

seen in the third season of *Delhi Crime*, which is directed Chopra. Huma stars alongside names such as She- Rasika Dugal, Rajesh Tailang, Bhattacharya, and Anuraag ra. The cast also includes Sayani Gupta, Mita Vasisht, Kelly Dorji, and Anshumaan Pushkar.

Huma will next be seen in *Toxic: A Fairy Tale* for Grown-Ups, a period gangster film, directed by Geetu Mohan- das. IANS

## Rakta Golapa first look unveiled

**Bhubaneswar:** The first look of the upcoming Odia film *Rakta Golapa* has officially been unveiled, setting off excitement among cine lovers and industry insiders alike. The film, directed by the acclaimed creative duo Sisir Kumar Sahu & Peenakee Singh, promises an intense narrative woven with love, sacrifice and edge-of-the-seat suspense.

Known for their distinct visual style and critically praised films like *Charitra* (2020), *Daalcheeni* (2022) and *Phalgun Chaitra* (2023), the director duo once again appears poised to deliver a compelling cinematic experience.

*Rakta Golapa* follows a woman's courageous journey as she battles societal expectations and personal turmoil to protect her loved ones. Blending drama with a message of justice, the film positions itself as both an emotional entertainer and a thought-provoking social commentary.

The film stars Elina Samantaray, Choudhury Jayaprakash Das, Abhisek Giri, Samaresh Routray, Hara Rath and Udit Guru, in key roles. Produced by Ashrujeet Mahapatra and Shovan Das, *RaktaGolapa* is expected to spark conversations and leave a lasting impact when it hits theatres.



PNN

## New release date for Ladhei



**Bhubaneswar:** Odia movie *Ladhei*, after missing its earlier October 17 release due to delays in CBFC certification, now has a new release date. The film starring debutant Lohitakshya Pattnaik and directed by Ashok Pati is scheduled to hit cinema halls across the state December 31, 2025.

The film follows the story of Leo, a young man caught in a fierce struggle for both love and survival. With its mix of high-octane action and deep emotional moments, the film has already generated significant buzz among Odia cinema enthusiasts. Produced by Debashis Pattnaik and presented by DRS Enterprises, the film is written by Bharadwaj Panda. The movie also stars Abhilipsa in the lead role. The supporting cast includes Pritiranjana, KK, Smita Choudhury, Manoj Dandapat, and Rajlaxmi Dakua, adding depth and energy to the ensemble. With its potent combination of action, drama, and emotion, *Ladhei* promises to be a festive season treat for Odia movie lovers.

PNN

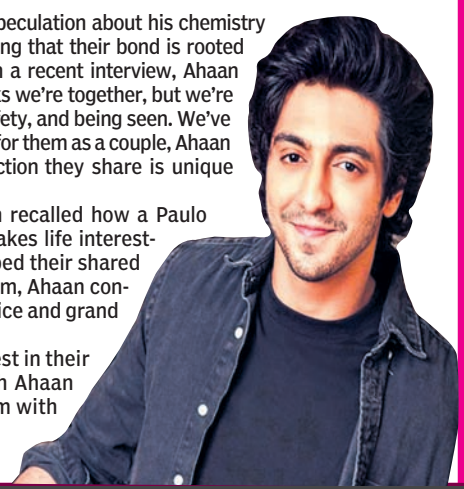
## Ahaan spills beans on his relationship status

Ahaan Panday has addressed the ongoing speculation about his chemistry with *Saiyaara* co-star Aneet Padda, clarifying that their bond is rooted in deep friendship rather than romance. In a recent interview, Ahaan shared, "Aneet is my best friend. The whole internet thinks we're together, but we're not. Chemistry isn't always romantic; it's about comfort, safety, and being seen. We've both made each other feel that." While fans have been rooting for them as a couple, Ahaan emphasised that although Aneet isn't his girlfriend, the connection they share is unique and irreplaceable.

Reflecting on their journey during *Saiyaara*'s filming, Ahaan recalled how a Paulo Coelho quote, "It's the possibility of a dream coming true that makes life interesting," resonated with them long before the film's release. He described their shared dream as something truly special. Despite the closeness between them, Ahaan confirmed that he is single and expressed his love language as acts of service and grand gestures.

The success of *Saiyaara*, a global blockbuster, has further fueled interest in their off-screen dynamic. With the film earning over 500cr worldwide, both Ahaan and Aneet have emerged as rising stars. Ahaan's next project is a YRF film with Sharvari, while Aneet joins Maddock's horror-comedy universe.

AGENCIES





# Ambedkar

## through a daughter's eyes



SUDHA DEVI NAYAK

**T**he book *Growing up with Dr. Ambedkar. Kamal & NG Uke* talks about the travails of growing up in a small village

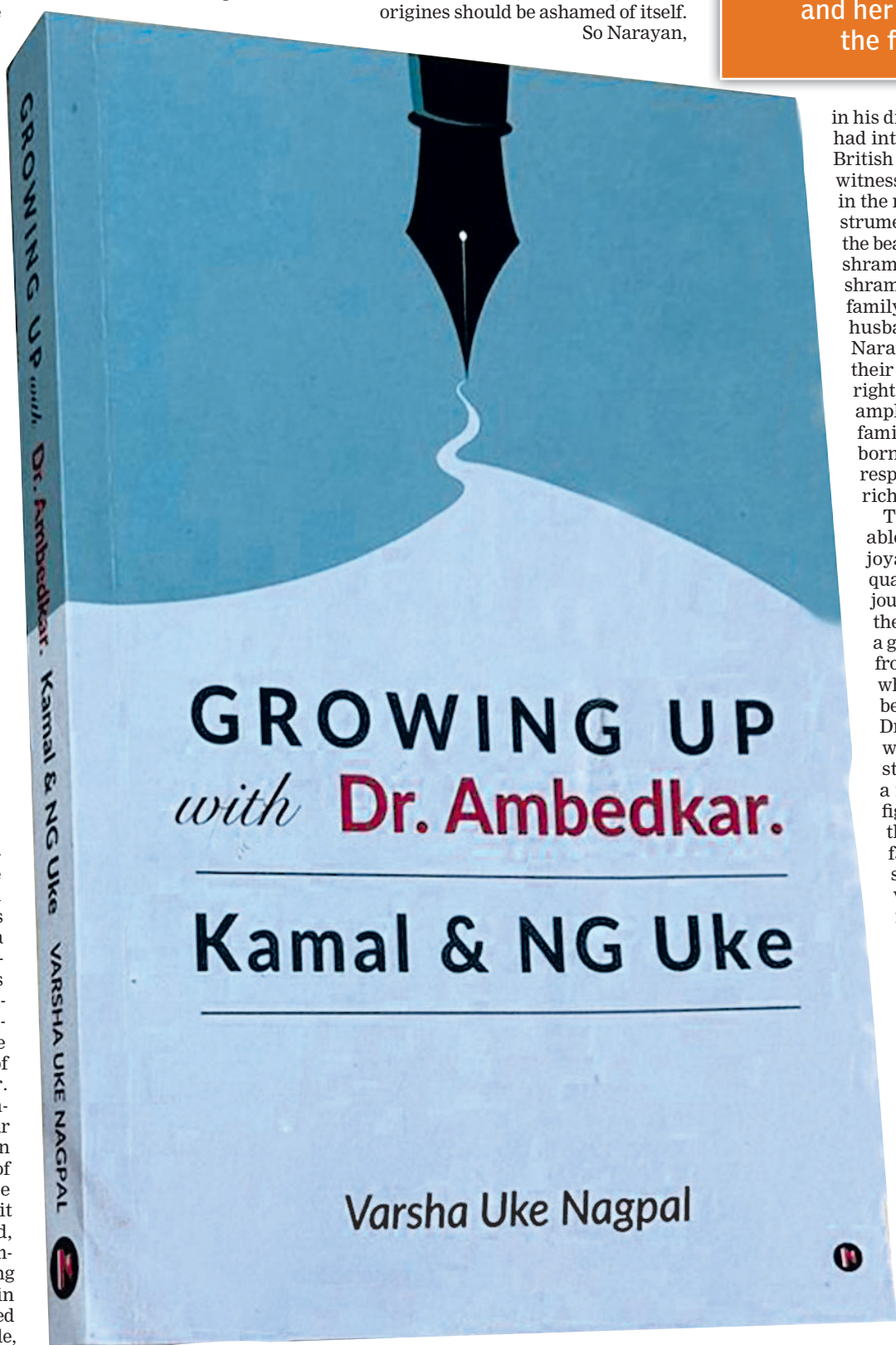
in Maharashtra with its social inhibitions. The author, Varsha Uke Nagpal, a retired banker, travels to her village of Kurud to trace her story and that of her father, Narayan, who grew up in the village and went on to become a successful engineer and individual. She talks about her humble ancestors who travelled all the way from another village to settle in Kurud, with its wild scenic surroundings along the river Wainganga. Her grandfather, Gomaji, a social activist and visionary, understood the value of education and encouraged his young son Narayan to study and acquire all the benefits of learning.

A large part of the story involves Narayan, who was an excellent student and made his way to London on a British Government scholarship. One of the highlights of the book is the diary maintained by Narayan, recording not only his feelings and mundane facts of his everyday life in London but also reflections on his long journey by sea and his impressions of the great city and the ordinary people and historic figures he met there. His visit to Hampstead, the birthplace of the English poet Keats, Madame Tussaud's waxworks in London, and his trip to the Lake District are memorable.

Narayan believed all life is transient and that all friendships and attachments, however, leave lasting impressions. He learned the precious lesson in London that all human beings are equal, regardless of gender, religion, and class—a concept that was alien to the culture of India at the time. During his stay in London, he attended meetings of official delegations and important political leaders who came from India. He had the privilege of meeting Nehru, Jinnah, and Dr. Ambedkar, who in particular impressed him greatly. Dr. Ambedkar talked about books, the acquisition of knowledge, and the usefulness of the English language. Reading, he said, should be developed as a habit for the enlightenment of the mind, and one should express himself emphatically, even if it means offending others in some way. He believed in the empowerment of women. He lived an "examined" life, was incorruptible, and earned the appreciation of his Eu-

ropean bosses. He was not in favour of partition—India should not be divided. He talked about minority issues and ways of changing people's ideas and thoughts through education. He felt there were no safeguards for Hindus like him and thought of changing his religion to Buddhism. He admired Jinnah and did not appear to be totally impressed by Gandhi. A civilisation that discriminates against what it terms untouchables, tribesmen, and aborigines should be ashamed of itself. So Narayan,

The book is more about the author's father, who comes through as a fascinating figure who carried himself graciously through the various vicissitudes of life, and her mother, who kept the family together



in his discussions with Dr. Ambedkar, who had interactions with various Indian and British political leaders and statesmen, was witness to glimpses of the history of India in the making. Dr. Ambedkar was also instrumental in getting Narayan married to the beautiful and accomplished Kamal Meshram, daughter of his good friend G. Meshram. Kamal came from a distinguished family and could adjust with grace to her husband's family of humbler origins. Narayan and Kamal raised a family of their own, each noteworthy in their own right. The author's parents are a great example of one who came from a humble family, overcoming odds, and the other born to privilege, shouldering familial responsibilities—together they made a rich and fulfilled life.

The book, written in an easy, readable, and evocative style, is an enjoyable experience. There is a lyrical quality in the prose as she describes her journey to Kurud: "The sky turned pink, then a shade of orange, and then with a golden glow, suddenly a ball emerged from the horizon and announced to the whole world that another day had just begun." While we are brought close to Dr. Ambedkar, a historical figure who was the architect of the Indian Constitution, we feel we could have had a more detailed account of the great figure. The book is more about the author's father, who comes through as a fascinating figure who carried himself graciously through the various vicissitudes of life, and that of her mother, who kept the family together. The book is also peppered with several names from both sides of the family as well as those they had met, but they do not carry much importance as we do not hear of them later or not in any meaningful fashion. As a biography of her parents and the glimpses we are offered of Dr. Ambedkar, it is a great read.

<b>Title:</b>	Growing up with Dr. Ambedkar. Kamal & NG Uke
<b>Author:</b>	Varsha Uke Nagpal
<b>Pages:</b>	348
<b>Publisher:</b>	Notion Press
<b>Price in INR</b>	: 499



# When Napoleon met his furry Waterloo

### A victory picnic gone wrong

Fresh from signing the Treaty of Schönbrunn, Napoleon wanted a celebration that combined imperial splendor with rustic charm. His chief of staff, General Berthier—ever eager to please—organized a rabbit hunt on the royal estate at Montreuil. Hundreds of rabbits were purchased from local merchants and delivered to the grounds. A ceremonial luncheon was laid out, and court ladies just dressed in their green hunting coats, arrived with their usual confident stride.

Berthier, however, committed a

*History remembers Napoleon Bonaparte as the strategic genius who could break armies and redraw continents—until one sunny afternoon in July 1809. Several years before Napoleon's ill-fated battle at Waterloo, he suffered another humiliating defeat. This time at the hands (or paws) of little, furry rabbits, an event known as the most adorable defeat in military records*

blunder worthy of a rookie supply clerk. Instead of trapping wild rabbits, he bought farm-raised stock—plump, docile creatures that associated humans with feeding time, not fear. The cages were opened, the Emperor raised his shotgun, and... nothing. The rabbits sat, twitching noses expectantly.

### Charge of the Lagomorph Brigade

Then came the turning point. One enterprising buck hopped toward Napoleon. A second followed. Within seconds, the entire warren—estimates range from 200 to 3,000—bounded straight at the startled Emperor. "They advanced in a solid phalanx, eyes bright, ears flat, a tide of fur," laughed Madame de Rémusat, a lady-in-waiting who later recorded the scene.

### Imperial retreat

Napoleon, nonplussed, tried to swat them away with his riding crop. His generals stamped and kicked. The Imperial Guard flailed like panicked schoolchildren. Finally, the Emperor—greatest military mind of his age—did the only sensible thing: he fled to his carriage, rabbits in hot pursuit. According to legend, several bold bunnies leapt inside with him, compelling coachmen to whip the horses and retreat across the field.

**Aftermath: Ribbons, not medals**  
Courtiers burst

into laughter; ladies applauded the spectacle. Berthier stood crimson-faced amid the chaos, perhaps realizing he had achieved the impossible—making the Conqueror of Europe look ridiculous. No one was hurt, save imperial dignity. The rabbits, having claimed victory, dispersed into hedgerows, their fluffy tails flicking like victory banners.

### Why the story matters

The episode, once dismissed as court gossip, appears in multiple memoirs—Rémusat, Bourrienne, even a wry mention in the Paris police archives. Modern historians cite it as a rare glimpse of unscripted Napoleon: the man who could laugh at himself (eventually) and the propaganda machine that could not quite spin a bunny ambush into heroic narrative.

### Science weighs in

Dr. Emily Carter, animal-behavior expert at the University of Lyon, explains: "Domestic rabbits are conditioned to approach humans for food. When released as a group, they follow the leader; if one mistakes Napoleon's boots for a caretaker's, the rest cascade after. It's not aggression—it's a feeding frenzy of mistaken identity."

### Legacy in art and satire

Within weeks, Parisian cartoonists engraved images of "Napoleon the Carrot-Bearer," while English papers crowed that even French rabbits preferred monarchy. Toy-makers sold porcelain tableaux of the rout; one, surviving in the Louvre's storage, shows a tiny emperor shielding himself with a tricorne.

Today, the field is a quiet park. Locals call it "Le Champ des Lapins" and celebrate July 24 as "Rabbit Victory Day," complete with petting zoos and carrot-cake bake-offs. A discreet plaque reads: "Here, 1809, humanity learned that nature, too, can stage a coup."

### Closing curtain

Napoleon never again staged a rabbit hunt. Instead, he turned to botanical walks and chess—activities less vulnerable to livestock logistics. Perhaps he recalled the day when sunlit meadows, elegant ladies, and a horde of fluffy insurgents reminded him that not every battle can be won by cannons and cuirasses. Sometimes the softest adversary delivers the hardest lesson: even emperors must bow to the chaos of carrot-driven courage.

OP DESK

Nepoleon's Chief of staff  
Louis - Alexandre Berthier  
(Berti) who arranged farm  
rabbits for hunting

Napoleon

