

DECEMBER 7-13, 2025

# SUNDAY POST

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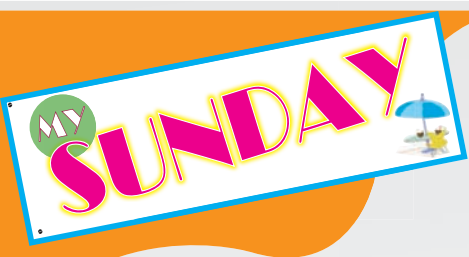


## Digital solace: Boon or bane?

COVER STORY

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Balasore-born actor **Manmay Dey** launched his career in 2019 by winning a reality show—an early success that initially made him believe his path was secure. However, despite the victory, he struggled to land roles. Rather than getting discouraged, he explored alternative avenues, launching a YouTube channel focused on short films. The move earned him significant recognition and a steadily growing fanbase. His perseverance eventually led him to mainstream cinema. Known for his impactful performances in 'Karma' and the popular web series 'Gangs of Puri,' Manmay is now eagerly looking forward to the release of his upcoming project, 'Mantra Muugdha'



With Mantra Muugdha team

### Focus on YouTube, shorts

On Sundays, I focus on my YouTube channel, brainstorming story ideas with associates and writing scripts for my short films.

### Overcoming sleep deprivation

Whenever I find time, I complete my sleep cycle, as I'm usually occupied with shoots and other work on the other days.

### Big no to travelling

I'm not a big fan of traveling and get travel sick, so I prefer to spend my leisure time organising get-togethers at home.

### Part-time chef

I'm not a great cook, but sometimes I indulge in cooking and can make some delicious non-veg starters.



## 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

- If you keep your feet firmly on the ground, you'll have trouble putting on your pants.
- Only dead fish go with the flow.
- What's the difference between a jeweler and a jailer? One sells watches and one watches cells.
- Diplomacy is the art of sending someone to hell in the way that they are looking forward to it.



## Action on AIDS

Sir, This refers to last week's article, "Rethink, Rebuild, and Rise", published ahead of World AIDS Day in Sunday POST. There was a time when People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWH) were treated as outcasts. Fortunately, societal attitudes have evolved significantly. Today, many PLWH are living with their families, getting married, and raising children. However, the causes of HIV—particularly unprotected sexual activity—remain a major concern. With the increasing trend of young people engaging in relationships with multiple partners, there is an urgent need to raise awareness in educational institutions. Additionally, sex workers must be supported and guided to prevent the further spread of the virus. It is also crucial to promote HIV testing before marriage to protect future generations and prevent transmission to unborn children. A healthy, open, and informed mindset is essential to combat the stigma and spread of HIV. This includes taking appropriate precautions and encouraging regular testing. The government must expand access to HIV testing services in hospitals, healthcare centers, and dispensaries. Making these services widely available and accessible will encourage more people to seek help and take preventive measures.

ABHILASHA GUPTA, MOHALI

## 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





# Digital solace: Boon or bane?

*Frayed by betrayal and noise, hearts slide into glowing screens. Algorithms listen without interrupting, reply without judging and remember without blinking. Yet, beneath this convenience lies a quiet unease. As AI steps into spaces once reserved for confidants and companions, it raises a profound question. Are we quietly surrendering the very essence of connection that makes us human?*

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

In an era where human connections feel increasingly fragile, hearts are seeking refuge in the glow of screens rather than the warmth of another's presence. Reason: The world outside has grown complicated, filled with broken promises, deceit, and silent heartbreaks, leaving trust a rare and delicate treasure. Amid this turbulence, people are turning to AI; tireless, ever-listening, and judgment-free to share the whispers of their souls, their fears, and even the simplest of daily questions.

There is a strange comfort in confiding in a machine that never judges, never misunderstands, never falters. Its calm, calculated responses can soothe a restless mind and offer guidance when the human world seems unkind or unreliable. Yet, beneath this convenience lies a quiet unease. The laughter, empathy, and subtle warmth of real human connection cannot be coded or replicated. By seeking solace in algorithms, we may be trading the raw, imperfect beauty of human intimacy for polished, predictable reassurance.

As AI steps into spaces once reserved for confidants and companions, it raises a profound question in our quest for safety from betrayal and hurt, are we quietly surrendering the very essence of connection that makes us human?

What can be the implications of getting too cozy with machines?

Here's what the experts and users have to share with Sunday POST on the matters.

## 'AI helped me handle emotional pain better'

**Srinitya Roy**, a post graduate student from Jeypore, says, "Well, honestly, I feel like talking to AI has become really normal for me, and I don't see anything wrong with it. These days, people just can't trust everyone. Friends, classmates, even family sometimes you can't always share everything without feeling judged or worried that it'll get back to someone else. But with AI, I can just type or talk about whatever I'm feeling without worrying. It doesn't judge me, it doesn't gossip, and I don't have to explain myself or filter my thoughts."

Roy, talking about more positives, adds "I use AI for all kinds of things, whether it's solving small daily problems, managing stress about exams, or dealing with personal issues that I feel embarrassed to share with anyone."

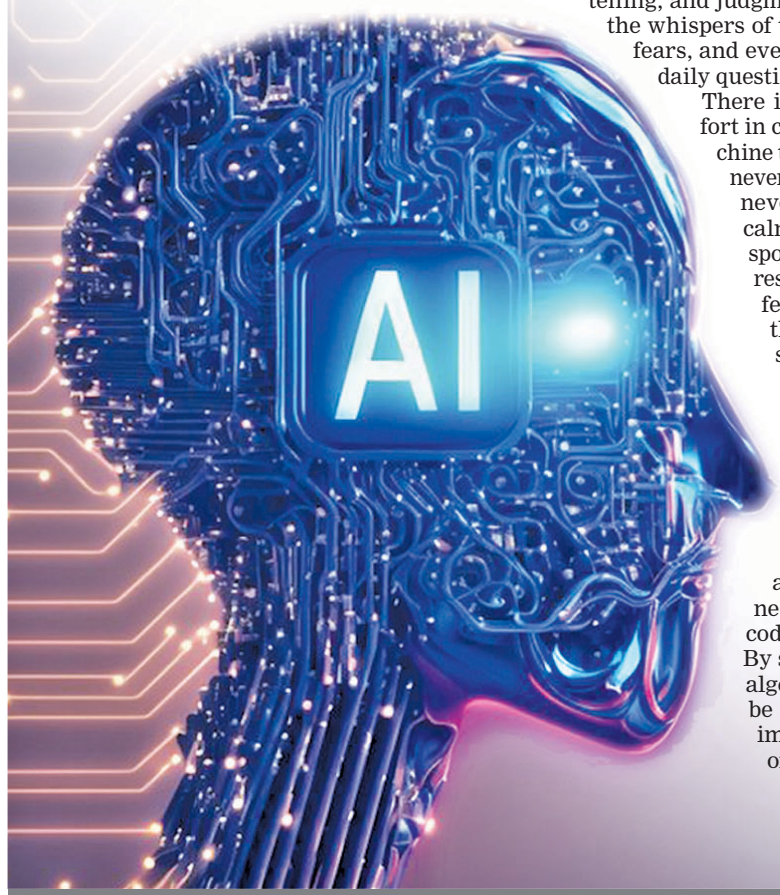
Elaborating more, she continues: "Breakups are one of the hardest things to deal with emotionally, and honestly, it can take a huge toll. When you're heartbroken, sometimes it feels like no one around you truly understands or has the patience to listen. Talking to AI in those moments actually helps. It's patient, it listens, and it gives responses that make sense.

I can ask the same question again, or explain something differently, and it never gets annoyed. With real people, sometimes you feel rushed or like you're burdening them, but AI is always there when I need it. The convenience is another thing. I can talk to it late at night, or when I'm stuck at home, or just in a quick break between classes. I don't have to worry if someone is busy or in the mood to listen. It's always available and gives me suggestions or helps me organise my thoughts. Sometimes just typing things out and seeing responses make me feel lighter and more confident about what to do next."

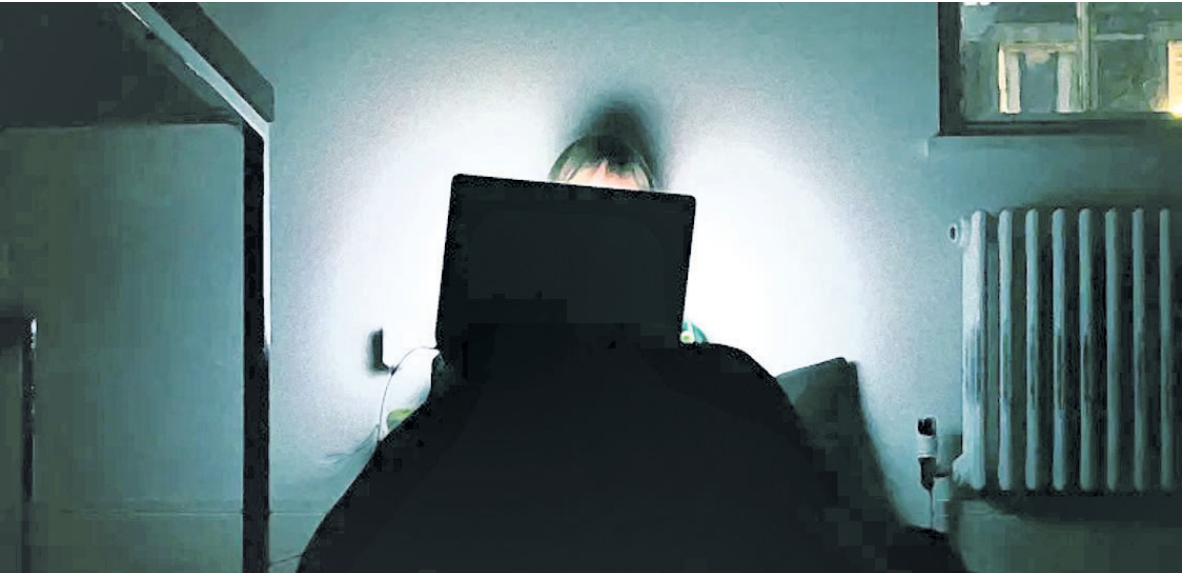


Despite her comfort level, machines can't be equated with humans. What she has to say on this?

"Of course, I know AI isn't a real person and can't replace genuine human connection. But for me, it's not about replacing anyone it's about having a safe space. A place where I can be honest, process heartbreak and not feel judged. In a world where trust is so fragile and people get hurt or cheated, having AI as an outlet feels really reassuring. It's helped me handle stress and emotional pain better, especially after breakups, and just feel like someone, even if it's a chatbot, is actually listening to me," she concludes.







**'AI should assist, not manipulate'**

As AI chatbots increasingly become emotional companions, people are confiding in them more than ever. **Chandra Sekhar Biswal**, Director of Defigo Solutions 4u Pvt Ltd, a leading name in IT and cyber security firm that mainly deals with AI, warns that this convenience comes with hidden risks. He says, "Well, people are having conversations with Generative AI-enabled chatbots very often and asking for solutions to personal problems. In most cases, they are getting relatively accurate answers as per their described scenarios. But they often forget that all the questions and prompts asked to AI engines are being stored in their systems for further training and strengthening of the machine. In the worst case, the company can use the user's interests for ad targeting. Personal photos and videos can be further processed for generating AI images. Some AI companies have also mentioned this in their terms of use, but people often ignore these points. Hence, users must be aware that every interaction with AI is not entirely private it's a data exchange, and caution is the first step toward digital safety."

Biswal acknowledges that AI can play a positive role, especially in emotional support, but stresses the importance of personal boundaries. "Digital platforms are not so bad, as they are helping humans in many ways, even in emotional trauma through AI-enabled dating platforms or psychological counselling bots. But the user should always set a boundary on what to share and what not to share. Too much of a public life, like sharing every personal footprint over social media or revealing too many personal details online, may put you in danger in some cases. Social media posts these days are also being crawled by AI engines, which can later be used to build digital profiles or predict user behavior. Digital empathy is fine, but digital privacy should always come first."

He also warns about illegitimate AI platforms that misuse data. "The legitimate AI providers seem very fair in nature; they access only that information of the users which they have already mentioned in their policy and terms of use. The real threat comes from illegitimate companies that collect user data in unnatural ways and sell it on the dark web. Chatbots that frequently ask for personal identifiers, push conversations off-platform, or hide their company details and privacy policies are major red flags. AI should assist, not manipulate. As users, we must balance convenience with caution and as a society, push for ethical AI governance and stronger data protection frameworks to ensure that our digital confessions remain private."

He concludes with a crucial reminder: "Every digital conversation leaves a footprint. Being mindful of what you share, understanding platform policies, and questioning the intent behind requests for personal information are essential steps in staying secure while using AI technologies."



**'I see chatbots as shallow replacement for real interaction'**

**Subhashree Ray**, a physiotherapist from Cuttack says, "I just don't understand why so many people are turning to AI chatbots for emotional support. To me, it feels like we're giving our most personal feelings and thoughts to a machine that can never truly understand us. Sure, it might respond instantly and give advice based on patterns, but a chatbot doesn't feel, it doesn't empathise, and it certainly cannot replace human connection. Real relationships, with all their ups and downs, teach us patience, trust, and emotional resilience, things a machine simply cannot provide."

Stressing further on the potential risks related to this trend, Ray continues: "What really concerns me is privacy. Every conversation we have with AI is stored, analysed, and sometimes even used for ad targeting or research. How can we be sure that our deepest fears, secrets, and personal experiences remain safe? With people, even if we get hurt or betrayed, there is a sense of accountability. With AI, there's none. It feels like handing over your emotions to an entity that can manipulate, misuse, or misinterpret them without consequence."

On the adverse side, she says, "I also feel that depending on chatbots prevents us from learning real-life social skills. Navigating relationships, dealing with conflicts, and learning to trust or forgive are essential parts of growing as a person. If we keep relying on machines for these experiences, we risk becoming emotionally



disconnected and socially isolated. AI might give temporary comfort, but it doesn't help us develop empathy, resilience, or genuine understanding. Even though many argue that chatbots are non-judgmental and always available, I see that as a shallow replacement for real interaction. Human support allows for mistakes, misunderstandings, and growth, experiences that a machine cannot simulate."

"For me, AI should be a tool for practical purposes like learning, organising, or research. Emotional well-being and personal growth belong in the hands of real people. Relying on AI for these aspects might seem convenient, but it's ultimately superficial and potentially harmful. True connection comes from trust, empathy, and understanding, things only humans can offer, and we shouldn't forget that," she signs off.

**'Over-reliance on AI can lead to increased isolation'**

**Amrit Patojoshi**, Head of the Department of Psychiatry at Hi-Tech Medical College and Hospital, believes that many people feel more comfortable sharing their emotions with AI than with real people because of the absence of judgment and consequences. This comfort level, Patojoshi says, is something people wish they could experience in their relationships with those they love. But trust remains an issue these days, acknowledges the psychiatrist.

Patojoshi stresses the importance of accepting that healing takes time. He says, "Rebuilding trust after betrayal starts with honestly accepting that you were hurt and that your heart needs time. You don't have to forgive quickly or trust blindly again. Instead, you can rebuild slowly, share a little, watch whether words and actions match, and protect your boundaries. Remind yourself that one person's betrayal doesn't mean everyone is unsafe; there are people who can be steady and kind. Trust is not an on-off switch rather it's a small plant that grows back gradually with consistency, honesty and respect for your pain."

He also acknowledges the potential long-term impact of relying on AI for emotional support, both positive and negative. While AI can provide a safe space to vent and organise thoughts, he warns that over-reliance on AI can lead to increased isolation. "If AI becomes the main or only source of emotional connection, it can quietly increase isolation thereby avoiding difficult but necessary conversations with real people. It can also delay seeking real help from a therapist or doctor when you truly need professional care," he adds.





He was the man who saw magic in a rejected manuscript. Barry Cunningham, the British publisher, famously signed JK Rowling after eight others rejected 'Harry Potter' and changed children's literature forever. Founding Chicken House in 2000, he champions debut voices, turning manuscripts like 'The Girl Who Speaks Bear' and 'The Boy at the Back of the Class' into global bestsellers

One of the world's leading children's publishers Barry Cunningham didn't grow up surrounded by books — but he grew up hugging them. A sickly child in post-war London, he found solace in stories, escaping into the worlds of Becky Sharp from *Vanity Fair* and Long John Silver from *Treasure Island*. Though best known as the original publisher of *Harry Potter* and the *Philosopher's Stone*, Cunningham's influence stretches far beyond Hogwarts. Since founding Chicken House in 2000, he has championed countless stories that treat children as discerning readers with rich emotional lives.

The 72-year-old reflects on what drew him to children's books, the legacy of *Harry Potter*, and what's next for him as he prepares for retirement at the end of the year.

**■ What books shaped you as a child?**

When I was in school, I won a prize for effort. That's basically the award they give to the kid who doesn't win anything else but works really hard. As a prize for effort, I got a book token.

I went to the shop and picked out a book that caught my eye, *The Hobbit*. I absolutely adored it. Like many children, I must have read it 25 times. I loved it because it was a fantasy story, wildly imaginative, and also funny.

**■ What do you remember about the moment you first read *Harry Potter*? How did it change things for you?**

We had just started *Bloomsbury Children's Books* in 1994 and Nigel Newton, the head of the publishing house, took a huge risk putting me in charge. I had never edited a children's book before, though I'd marketed plenty. So when

# I'm proud of championing new writers: Barry Cunningham



the manuscript for *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* landed on my desk, it wasn't pristine. It had clearly been passed around. I wasn't the first to see it, and I had no idea I was JK Rowling's last chance.

I read it that night. The beginning reminded me a bit of Roald Dahl, but what really struck me was the strength of the friendships and Harry's need to stand up for himself and for others. That was

powerful. The manuscript was long, the title was strange, but I didn't hesitate. I made an offer the next day: just over 2,000 pounds (\$3,000 in 1994) — probably the best money anyone's ever spent in publishing.

*Harry Potter* changed my life profoundly. It gave me the freedom to start Chicken House, a publishing house devoted entirely to children's books.

**■ You've announced that you're retiring on December 31. What's next for you?**

Ironically, I am looking forward to reading more widely. I have just spent years reading books, and now I'm looking forward to reading — terrible, isn't it?

I also hope to still work with young writers. And I want to spend more time with my family, who haven't seen much of me.

**■ What do you think makes a good publisher?**

I don't think it's my job to tell authors what to write, but I do think it's my job to tell them what's not working. My form of editing is to ask, "Are you sure this is what you want to say?" or "Are you sure you're telling this from the right perspective?"

In children's books, perspective is a really powerful tool. Sometimes you've got a story and I'll say, "Why don't you try telling it from the mouse's point of view in the corner, rather than these boring human characters?" What happens then? So, it's my job to ask the questions that push their creativity to new heights. But it's not my job to tell them what to write.

**■ What moments in your career are you the proudest of?**

You'd expect me to say *Harry Potter*, and it was — it was transforming. I loved how it made reading cool again. But I'm also proud of championing new writers. Not all of them are widely successful and global superstars, but I'm glad I was able to recognise the talent. Often a book that is read by a relatively low number (of people) still means a lot and can still build a market. Books can have a long life.

**■ What drew you to children's books, and what does it mean to you to represent children?**

When I worked on adult books at Penguin, I did not find that connection between readers and writers that so entrances me in children's books. It seems unique that authors in children's books work with publishers to make the connection with their readers, the children, work — it's a team thing. Whereas with adult authors, you don't really have that connection with the readership.

Representing children is about finding voices that will resonate with them. The big difference between when I started and now is that we treat children more respectfully and with much less condescension.

**■ What role do children's books play in shaping society and young minds, and what do you think the future holds for children's literature?**

We're the last responsible media. We're the last ones who take our position responsibly with children. As an editor, I don't allow children's books through me that will do, in my view, damage to their growing up. We deal with hope, generally speaking.

I do believe that the future of children's literature is pretty bright. Children will continue to discover.





## Dia questions long-standing casting norms

Dia Mirza has once again highlighted gender inequality in the film industry, particularly focusing on the double standards regarding aging. Known for her advocacy on environmental issues and her choice of a female priest for her wedding, Dia spoke out about how women are often sidelined as they grow older in films. She pointed out the industry's tendency to cast women opposite much older male co-stars, with romantic pairings often including actors in their 50s, 60s, or even 70s.

Dia reflected on the absurdity of this casting pattern, emphasising the industry's discomfort with older women as romantic leads. She noted that it's difficult to imagine a 60- or 70-year-old woman paired with a younger male co-star in a romantic role, even though the reverse is common. Her concern isn't about men aging, but how women are pushed aside and denied meaningful roles as they grow older.

Her message was clear: women should have the right to age with visibility, dignity, and complexity. Dia ended her reflection with a powerful statement, asserting that women over 40 know their own hearts and minds, and no one should decide when a woman's story ends, she decides that for herself.

Recently, she was seen in *Nadaaniyan* (2025), playing a supporting role alongside Ibrahim Ali Khan and Khushi Kapoor.

AGENCIES

## Triptii's 'energy booster'

Actress Triptii Dimri offered a picture of her simple "energy booster", a cup of hot chai teamed with a handful of biscuits.

Triptii took to her Instagram stories, where she shared a video. The clip features a hot cup of tea and some biscuits placed on a rugged worktable. The actress is seen dipping the biscuit in the tea and having it.

For the caption, she wrote: "Energy booster nobody talks about."

The actress has kickstarted shooting for Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Spirit* with Prabhas.

It was November 23, when Reddy Vanga's *Spirit* went on floors with a grand pooja ceremony. Reddy Vanga's production house Bhadrakali Pictures took to its X timeline to share pictures of the launch event.

The tweet read: "India's biggest superstar #Prabhas's *SPIRIT* has been launched with Megastar @KChiruTweets garu as the special guest."

The film has already triggered huge expectations among fans and film buffs. Apart from Prabhas and Triptii Dimri, it will also feature Prakash Raj and Vivek Oberoi

in pivotal roles.

Produced jointly by Bhushan Kumar, Sandeep Reddy Vanga, and Pranay Reddy Vanga, *Spirit* will have music by Harshavardhan Rameshwar.

Stunts for the film are to be choreographed by renowned stunt master Supreme Sundar, while production design will be handled by Suresh Selvarajan.

IAN S



## Secret behind Shahid's success

Actor Shahid Kapoor opened up about how his instinct has been a driving force both in his personal and professional life.

Speaking during a session of IFP 15, Shahid was asked how an artist like him protects his instinct. Reacting to this, Shahid revealed that instinct is something that comes from inside and cannot be put into words.

He added that there are times when the commercial aspect of things or the monetary aspect, or the practical or the realistic or the sensible aspect of things starts to dictate the narrative, and that is when a rebellion comes from inside saying 'no'.

Shahid revealed that he has always been a person who believes in carving his own path.

"I feel that I've always been the kind of person who would, if everybody's going right, I'll say, let's just go left. And many times it's not good. Sometimes it's like, I should have gone right."

The *Kaminey* actor added that even in his career, whenever he has attempted to play it safe, he has not received the desired results.

"Whenever I've played safe, it's somehow not given me the result that when I have been experimental has, it might not necessarily just be about numbers," he explained.

IAN S

## Mahhi talks about karma

Mahhi Vij, who has reportedly parted ways with actor-TV host Jay Bhanushali, shared that she had been praying for the show *Seher Hone Ko Hai* and that she prayed for the chance to step out again to work, to meet new people and show her true potential. The actress also said that she believes in karma.

Mahhi took to Instagram, where she shared some glimpses of herself from the show and wrote: "I prayed for this show. I prayed for the chance to step out again — to work, to meet new people, to show my art, my talent, and my true potential."

The actress further said, "I've always believed in karma, in doing good, in lifting others so life lifts you too. I believe in goodness, in humanity, and in creating a life my children will be proud of. One day, I want my kids to look back and say, I'm proud of you, Mama".

Mahhi is known for playing the role of Nakusha in *Laagi Tujhse Lagan* and Nandini in *Balika Vadhu*. She and Jay Bhanushali won the dance reality show *Nach Baliye 5* in 2013. She was also a contestant on *Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 4* and *Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 7*.

IAN S







THE ROLLABLE LAPTOP

Until recently, the idea of a rollable laptop seemed impossible. But in 2025, Lenovo's rollable laptop prototypes turned heads by introducing a display that starts as a standard 14-inch screen and then rolls upward to expand into a larger, taller display. With a motorised mechanism and flexible OLED technology, the device literally stretches its screen when more workspace is needed. A concept that many dismissed as fantasy is now a functional product, proving just how far flexible-display technology has come.

# Weird innovations of 2025

Technology in recent years has taken a turn towards the bizarre — in the best possible way. Gadgets once imagined only in sci-fi films are now entering real homes, offices, and even kitchens. From rollable laptops to AI-powered spice stations, here are five of the latest weird and fascinating gadgets that people once believed could never exist — but now do



THE AI SPICE DISPENSER

One of the most surprisingly futuristic kitchen gadgets of the year is the AI Spice Dispenser, a device that automatically measures, blends, and dispenses spices based on the recipe you're preparing. Equipped with built-in sensors, multiple spice chambers, and an AI engine trained on thousands of recipes, the device adjusts flavour levels, prevents overspicing, and even suggests new combinations. People once joked about robots taking over the kitchen — but with this smart spice system, the future of automated cooking is already here. It's weird, advanced, and incredibly useful for home cooks who want perfect seasoning every time.



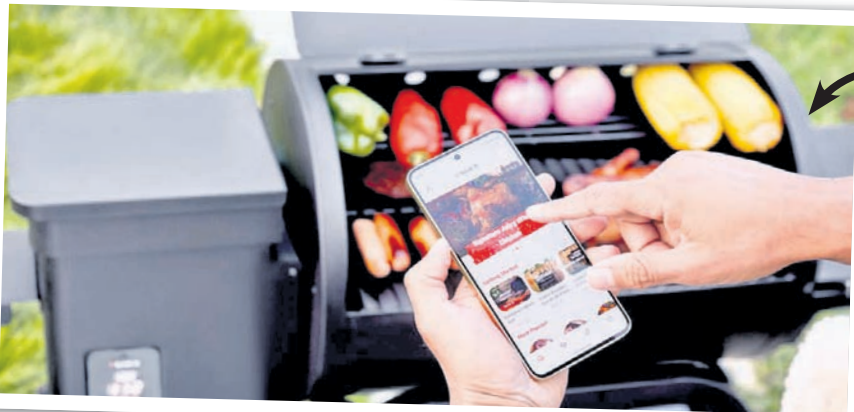
THE LIFESPAN AMPERA OFFICE BIKE

Office work and exercise rarely go hand in hand — until the LifeSpan Ampera office bike changed the game. It functions both as a compact treadmill-style workstation and as a cycle that you can pedal while working at a desk. With adjustable resistance, built-in sensors, and a design that fits beneath most standing desks, the Ampera turns sedentary desk time into active time. For many, the idea of cycling quietly while typing emails or attending virtual meetings seemed far-fetched. But this hybrid of fitness equipment and office furniture is now real —

giving busy professionals a chance to stay active without leaving their desks.

THE ECOFLOW POWER HAT

A hat... that charges your devices? EcoFlow, known for its power banks and portable stations, introduced one of the oddest and most innovative wearables ever: a hat embedded with solar panels and a mini battery pack. This bizarre yet brilliant gadget lets you charge your phone, earbuds, smartwatch, or camera simply by walking in the sun. What sounded like a novelty or a meme at first has quickly gained interest among hikers, travelers, and outdoor photographers. It's light, foldable, and surprisingly effective — proof that wearables are evolving far beyond fitness trackers.



THE BRISK IT ZELOS 450 SMART GRILL

Smart grills have existed for a few years, but the Brisk It Zelos 450 pushes things into futuristic territory with AI that learns your cooking behaviour. This grill doesn't just control temperature — it studies how you cook, adjusts based on your habits, and even predicts when food will reach perfect doneness. You can tell it what you're grilling — brisket, paneer, chicken wings, vegetables — and it automatically selects the best heating profile. A grill that adapts to your personal style? Until recently, many thought such technology belonged in science fiction. Today, it's a real backyard marvel.





The landscape of Atlantis

# Sunken utopia: Atlantis

The Lost City of Atlantis is one of the most captivating and enduring myths of ancient history. Often depicted as an advanced civilisation that sank beneath the waves, Atlantis has intrigued people for centuries. The legend, introduced by the philosopher Plato over 2,000 years ago, remains a source of fascination and mystery.

## A tale of power, downfall

Plato's story of Atlantis first appears in his dialogues *Timaeus* and *Critias*. The myth tells of a powerful civilisation that existed 9,000 years before Plato's time, on a series of islands in the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlanteans, a race of half-gods, lived in a utopia filled with wealth and technological advances. However, their greed and arrogance led them to attack other civilisations, including Athens. In response, the gods punished them, causing the entire city to sink beneath the waves in a cataclysmic event.

## Plato's warning against hubris

While many later believed the story to be historical fact, Plato's intention was not to recount real events but to deliver a moral lesson. The story of Atlantis was a cautionary tale about

the dangers of excess and arrogance. Plato used the fall of Atlantis as an allegory to warn the Athenians—his contemporary audience—about the consequences of a society that allows greed and pride to dominate. The destruction of Atlantis was meant to remind them of the fragility of civilisation when rulers forget their responsibility to the gods.

## Atlantis as a real civilisation

Over the centuries, writers, adventurers, and theorists began to speculate that Atlantis was not just a legend, but a real, ancient civilisation. In the 19th century, the idea of Atlantis gained further traction with writers like Ignatius Donnelly, who argued in his book *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World* that Atlantis was the source of all major civilisation.

tions. According to Donnelly, survivors of Atlantis spread throughout Europe, Africa, and the Americas, bringing advanced knowledge and culture with them.

## The Nazi obsession

In the 20th century, Atlantis became entangled in dangerous pseudoscientific theories, most notably by the Nazis. Heinrich Himmler and other high-ranking Nazi officials were convinced that Atlantis was the origin of the Aryan race. They believed that Atlanteans had settled in Tibet, and in 1938, Himmler sent an expedition to the region to study the inhabitants' physical characteristics. This obsession with Atlantis served the Nazis' racist ideology and reflected their warped beliefs about racial purity.

## The ongoing search

The search for Atlantis has never stopped. From the Caribbean to Antarctica, people have attempted to locate the lost city, but no conclusive evidence has ever been found. Some believe that Atlantis may have been inspired by the Minoan civilisation, an ancient maritime power in the Aegean. The Minoans suffered a catastrophic volcanic eruption on the island of Santorini, which caused widespread devastation. This event, which occurred centuries before Plato, may have influenced the Atlantis myth.

While no evidence exists to suggest that Plato's Atlantis was real, some scholars argue that the Minoans could have been the inspiration for the myth. The Minoans, like Atlantis, were a powerful seafaring civilisation that thrived on a series of islands. They were also destroyed by a natural disaster—a volcanic eruption. The similarities between the fall of the Minoans and the story of Atlantis have led some historians to speculate that Plato may have used the Minoan collapse as the basis for his allegory.

## Power of myth

Whether Atlantis was real or purely a creation of Plato's imagination, the story continues to captivate people around the world. It serves as a powerful symbol of the dangers of human arrogance and excess, and the quest to find it has inspired countless theories and expeditions. The myth of Atlantis endures, reminding us of the fragility of civilisation and the timeless appeal of a lost world waiting to be rediscovered.

OP DESK

Legend has it that a great city called Atlantis stood on a series of islands somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean. The civilisation was made up of half-human, half-god inhabitants. Then, in one day and one night, the sea swallowed it whole as they dishonoured the gods. Now sailors and scientists still search the ocean, hoping to find its quiet, sunken streets



An AI-imagined image of Atlantis