

FEBRUARY 08-14 2026

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



Valentine's Day special

Beyond the roses

COVER STORY

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SUNDAY



With co actor Manaswini Pati

A Sunil's acting career took off in 2011, when he accidentally discovered his natural talent for making people laugh. With determination and youthful enthusiasm, he entered the humour world through village drama shows, spending three hardworking and joyful years performing on local stages. His dedication earned him a major break in the film 'Hero No. 1' alongside Babushan Mohanty. Successful films like 'Tokata Fasigala' and 'Apana Mane Khusi Ta' followed, helping him carve his own space. Later, he found greater success on YouTube, where his creative, relatable, and entertaining content earned massive appreciation and loyal fans. The Ganjam born actor now waits for his upcoming Odia short comedy film 'Babula Conductor 2'

Cherishing family time

My Sundays feel incomplete without quality time with my family, especially in the evenings, when we relax, share stories & laughter, and create beautiful memories together.

Lazy days, no agenda

Sundays are my proud "do-nothing" days, free from alarms and deadlines, when I relax, even as my playful mind keeps cracking jokes nonstop.

Moments that spark creativity

In my leisure time, I enjoy dancing, listening to music, and revisiting classic comedy clips that inspire and refresh me creatively.



With family



Staying simple

An ideal Sunday begins with a calm morning, good tea, and some quiet time. I prefer keeping the day simple; light work, casual conversations, and moments that bring peace.

Cinema, people, endless lessons

I love casual trips with friends, observing people's emotions, watching films, and learning from diverse acting styles.



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

- Spider-man has been unmasked in all his last 4 films. If I was him, I wouldn't even bother dressing up.
- Kids, don't grow up... it's a trap!
- Crime doesn't pay... does that mean that my job is a crime?
- If at first you don't succeed, destroy all evidence that you tried.



Unsuitable for India

Sir, This refers to the Grey zones of nuptials - the cover story of last week's Sunday POST – on parallel marriage. I sincerely think that the system is unsuitable for Indian society due to cultural, social, and moral factors. In India, marriage is traditionally viewed as a deep emotional bond that involves shared responsibilities, mutual support, and active participation in each other's lives. It is not limited to two individuals but connects families, communities, and social networks. Parallel marriages undermine the expectation of emotional intimacy and companionship that forms the foundation of Indian marital life. Such arrangements can weaken trust, reduce emotional security, and create confusion about roles and responsibilities within the family. Children raised in emotionally disconnected households may experience instability and lack the nurturing environment considered essential in Indian culture. Moreover, Indian society places strong emphasis on togetherness, shared decision making, and collective family values. Living separate lives within marriage conflicts with these norms and may lead to social misunderstanding and stigma. Rather than promoting harmony, parallel marriages risk emotional isolation and social imbalance. In the Indian context, marriages based on emotional commitment, cooperation, and shared life goals remain more compatible with societal values and long term family stability.

SATYAJIT SAMANTRAY, 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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In an era of situationships, ghosting, benching, or orbiting, some hearts still hold on to the subtle magic of enduring love. For them, Valentine's Day isn't just about roses and ribbons—it's a quiet ode to togetherness, whispered prayers, and promises that need no words



Love is not finding someone to live with; it's finding someone you can't live without
RAFAEL ORTIZ | PUERTO RICAN ARTIST

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

Valentine's Day special

Beyond the roses

Definition of love and emotion is changing faster than ever. With every passing day, new terms like situationship, ghosting, benching, orbiting and many more enter our lives, reshaping how hearts connect and quietly drift apart. What was once a sacred bond now sometimes feels fragile, hidden behind unanswered messages and uncertain intentions.

Still, within this delicate maze of modern relationships, a few rare souls continue to believe in the quiet magic of lasting love. They hold on to warmth over convenience, depth over display, and sincerity over shortcuts. For them, love is a living promise, nurtured through patience, trust, and shared dreams, growing stronger with every passing season.

For such hearts, Valentine's Day is more than a date adorned with roses and ribbons. It is a celebration of togetherness, silent prayers, and unspoken promises. Wrapped in tenderness and timeless devotion, their love glows gently yet remains unbreakable, like a constellation that never fades. They believe love has many shades, and each one is equally beautiful.

To explore these different shades of love, Sunday POST spoke to a few couples and invited them to share their personal meanings of love.

'It's a lifelong learning process'

Versatile actor and singer **Babushaan Mohanty** believes that love is not something that happens overnight, but a beautiful journey shaped by time, patience, and understanding. Recalling his long relationship with his wife and producer, **Trupti Satapathy**, Babushaan shares that their love story began when he first noticed her in Class 6. Their bond grew stronger during their school years, especially when they entered a relationship in Class 10. As they moved on to college, they found ways to spend time together, even if it meant occasionally bunking classes just to meet.



With time, they gathered the courage to inform their families about their relationship and eventually tied the knot. Like every real-life partnership, their journey was not without challenges. They faced ups and downs, misunderstandings, and difficult phases, but chose to work through them together. "We have seen each other's worst sides, yet we are still standing strong," Babushaan says, reflecting on the strength of their bond.

According to him, relationships today have become fragile, often breaking under pressure. He believes that love needs continuous effort and emotional maturity. For Babushaan, Valentine's Day should not be limited to one special date on the calendar. "Love should be celebrated every day," he says. He emphasises the importance of resolving conflicts before going to sleep, encouraging

couples to reconcile after arguments and end each day with a smile. "No matter how many times you fight, you should always choose peace at night and wish your partner a 'Happy Valentine's Day' every day," he adds.

For Babushaan, love is a lifelong learning process. As people grow older, they gain new perspectives, learn from mistakes, and become better partners. He believes that true love evolves with age and experience, making the journey even more meaningful.

Sharing her perspective, Trupti describes love as a habit rooted in care, responsibility, and togetherness.

"For me, love means family," she



says. She feels that love is not just

about romance, but about standing by each other through every phase of life. According to her, the meaning of love changes with time and maturity, revealing many beautiful shades. From a mother's unconditional love to the bond between best friends, she believes love exists in many forms. Together, Babushaan and Trupti's story reflects that real love is built on trust, patience, and shared growth, an ever-evolving journey that becomes stronger with every passing day.

'Love has been reduced to a market-driven concept'

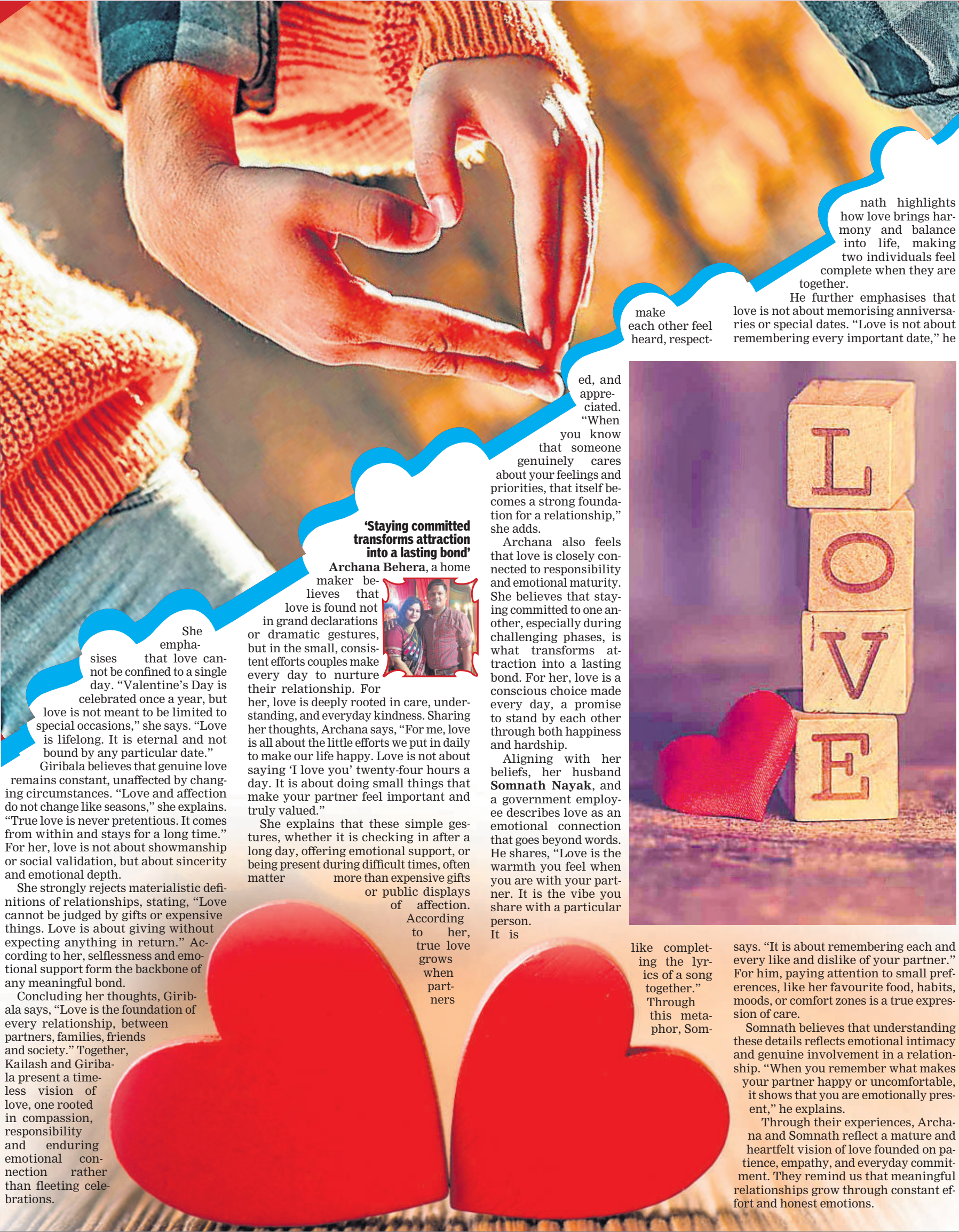
Renowned Odia writer, academic, and critic **Kailash Pattanaik**, who serves as a Professor of Odia Language and Literature at Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, offers a thoughtful and socially grounded perspective on love and Valentine's Day. Known for his rich contributions to short stories, folklore, and literary criticism, he believes that the true meaning of love has gradually been diluted in modern times.

Sharing his views, Kailash says, "February 14, celebrated as the day of love, is now being used in a very narrow sense and is creating unnecessary controversies. Many commercial organizations have turned this special day into a means of promoting their businesses, especially targeting young people." According to him, love has been reduced to a market-driven concept, often measured through gifts, cards, and grand gestures rather than genuine emotions.

He further adds, "If this day of love were celebrated for pets, plants, senior citizens, parents, and other neglected sections of society, it would become far more meaningful and beneficial." For Kailash, love should be inclusive, compassionate, and socially responsible. He believes that expressing care for nature, elders, and vulnerable beings reflects the true spirit of affection and humanity. Echoing similar sentiments, his wife, **Giribala Mohanty**, an acclaimed Odia poet, academician and critic



known for her sensitive portrayal of women's issues, shares a deeply emotional and philosophical understanding of love.



nath highlights how love brings harmony and balance into life, making two individuals feel complete when they are together.

He further emphasises that love is not about memorising anniversaries or special dates. "Love is not about remembering every important date," he

make each other feel heard, respect-

ed, and appreciated. "When you know that someone genuinely cares about your feelings and priorities, that itself becomes a strong foundation for a relationship," she adds.

Archana also feels that love is closely connected to responsibility and emotional maturity. She believes that staying committed to one another, especially during challenging phases, is what transforms attraction into a lasting bond. For her, love is a conscious choice made every day, a promise to stand by each other through both happiness and hardship.

Aligning with her beliefs, her husband **Somnath Nayak**, and a government employee describes love as an emotional connection that goes beyond words. He shares, "Love is the warmth you feel when you are with your partner. It is the vibe you share with a particular person. It is

like completing the lyrics of a song together." Through this metaphor, Som-

says. "It is about remembering each and every like and dislike of your partner." For him, paying attention to small preferences, like her favourite food, habits, moods, or comfort zones is a true expression of care.

Somnath believes that understanding these details reflects emotional intimacy and genuine involvement in a relationship. "When you remember what makes your partner happy or uncomfortable, it shows that you are emotionally present," he explains.

Through their experiences, Archana and Somnath reflect a mature and heartfelt vision of love founded on patience, empathy, and everyday commitment. They remind us that meaningful relationships grow through constant effort and honest emotions.

'Staying committed transforms attraction into a lasting bond'

Archana Behera, a home

maker believes that

love is found not in grand declarations or dramatic gestures, but in the small, consistent efforts couples make every day to nurture their relationship. For her, love is deeply rooted in care, understanding, and everyday kindness. Sharing her thoughts, Archana says, "For me, love is all about the little efforts we put in daily to make our life happy. Love is not about saying 'I love you' twenty-four hours a day. It is about doing small things that make your partner feel important and truly valued."

She explains that these simple gestures, whether it is checking in after a long day, offering emotional support, or being present during difficult times, often

more than expensive gifts or public displays of affection. According to her, true love grows when partners



DREAMY DATE IDEAS

Valentine's Day is the perfect excuse to slow down, celebrate love and create an experience that feels thoughtful and intimate. A romantic setup doesn't need to be extravagant or expensive; it simply needs to reflect effort, emotion and a personal touch. Whether you're planning a cozy night or a surprise date, the right setup can turn the evening into a cherished memory. Here are five perfect romantic setups for a V-Day date that blend ambience, creativity and heart



ROOFTOP OR BALCONY UNDER-THE-STARS DATE

If you have access to a rooftop or balcony, use it to create a magical under-the-stars experience. String fairy lights overhead, place lanterns around the space, and add floor seating with cushions and blankets. A small table for drinks or dessert keeps things intimate. This setup feels especially romantic with soft music, a gentle breeze and meaningful conversations under the night sky. Even a small outdoor space can feel enchanting with the right decor.

CANDLELIGHT DINNER AT HOME

A classic candlelight dinner never goes out of style. Transform your dining space with soft lighting, candles of varying heights and a simple floral centerpiece. Use warm-toned tableware, cloth napkins and elegant glassware to elevate the setting. Playing soft music in the background adds to the mood. Cooking a favorite meal or ordering something special shows care and intention, making this setup ideal for couples who value meaningful conversation and quality time.



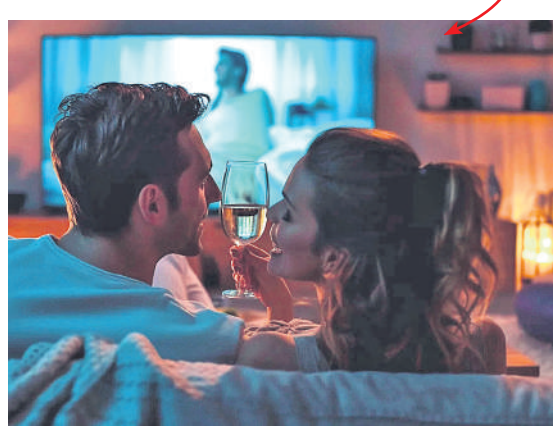
BEDROOM SURPRISE WITH ROSES AND LIGHTS

For a deeply romantic and intimate setting, a bedroom surprise works beautifully. Scatter rose petals on the bed or floor, arrange candles safely around the room and use warm fairy lights to create a soft glow. Adding scented candles or fresh flowers enhances the sensory experience. You can place handwritten notes or small gifts on the bed to make the moment more personal. This setup is perfect for couples who appreciate emotional closeness and private moments together.



COZY MOVIE NIGHT WITH A ROMANTIC TWIST

Turn a regular movie night into a Valentine's Day retreat by focusing on comfort and warmth. Layer the space with plush cushions, throws and fairy lights. Arrange snacks in decorative bowls and include heart-shaped treats or homemade desserts for a festive touch. Choose a romantic film or one that holds shared memories for both of you. Dim the lights and let the glow of candles or string lights create a dreamy atmosphere that feels relaxed yet special.



THEMED VALENTINE'S DAY EXPERIENCE

A themed setup adds creativity and excitement to your date. You could recreate a Parisian cafe with soft lighting, candles, French music and a small bistro-style table. A spa-themed date might include scented candles, calming music, plush robes and homemade spa treatments. Even a picnic-themed setup indoors with blankets, baskets and fairy lights can feel charming. Once you choose a theme, match the decor, music and food to create a fully immersive experience.



The most romantic Valentine's Day setups are those that feel intentional and heartfelt. It's not about perfection but about creating a space where love, comfort and connection come naturally. With thoughtful decor, the right ambience and personal touches, any setting can become the perfect backdrop for a date to remember.

Sanya all praise for women athletes

Actress Sanya Malhotra delivered a powerful performance mid-innings during the Women's Premier League Eliminator.

Being surrounded by so many female athletes also made her reflect on the importance of fitness and the immense discipline it requires.

Looking back at the experience, Sanya revealed how deeply personal the moment was for her.

She shared, "Performing at the WPL was incredibly special. The energy of the crowd was unreal, and it felt amazing to be part of a space that celebrates women in sport."

Sanya added that training like an athlete for her movie changed her outlook on discipline and fitness.

She called our women athletes "superheroes".

"I feel grateful to have a platform where I can be inspired by them and hopefully inspire others to be unapologetically themselves and believe that nothing is impossible," the Mrs actress added.

Sanya further expressed,

"This was the first time I felt so

good performing. I came out feeling like this was really good. The crowd was amazing and it feels incredible to have performed in a stadium this amazing."

Reflecting on her personal journey as an actor when she trained for *Dangal*, she shared, "I have trained like an athlete for a year for a movie. It completely changed my mind towards fitness, towards discipline. I still somewhere try and match that life."



IAN S

Mannara opens up about mental battles

Actress Mannara Chopra has spoken about resilience, self-respect and the unseen struggles behind her journey.

Reflecting on how her life is often perceived as comfortable, the actress said people rarely notice the mental battles she fights every day. Taking to Instagram, Mannara shared a video of herself performing chakrasan and core workouts. For the caption, Mannara wrote: "People think my life is all comfort and ease. What they don't see is the mental battles I fight every single day. Staying decent in a world full of politics, choosing dignity when others choose shortcuts, staying silent when I could scream."

Emphasising her independent path, the actress hard added that she believes in working with honesty.

"I don't run in groups. I don't play games. I just work hard...." Mannara maintained.

IAN S



No two people in this world are the same: Manoj Pahwa

Popular Hindi film actor Manoj Pahwa, known for his work in movies and series such as 'Reddy', 'Main Tera Hero', 'Dhamaal' and most recently 'Ba***ds of Bollywood', was just in Bhubaneswar for the promotion of his upcoming film 'Assi', a courtroom drama over a rape case starring top actress Taapsee Pannu. On the sidelines of the event, **Sunday POST** had a breezy chat with the actor. Excerpts:

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

■ What was your experience like in Bhubaneswar?

■ This is my maiden trip to this Temple City. I've really enjoyed the Odia cuisine, especially fish and *dahi pakhala*.

■ What led the makers to begin the promotion from Bhubaneswar?

■ We don't often get the chance to visit cities like Bhubaneswar because films like *Assi* don't always reach smaller cities, which is unfortunate. That's why we decided to start our promotions here.

■ Tell us about the movie and your character.

■ As you've seen in the trailer, I play the role of a father whose son is accused of rape. My character, like any parent, tries to protect his child, believing that his son may have

made a mistake but doesn't deserve severe punishment. It reflects a universal parental instinct—seeing your child as fundamentally good, even when they've erred.

■ You've worked with director Anubhav Sinha multiple times. How has that experience been?

■ I am very grateful to him for giving me such substantial roles, which few others have offered. For many years, people mostly cast me in comic roles, which I'm fine with because they suit me. But Anubhav sees something different in me. He gives me serious and meaningful roles, and that brings a huge sense of responsibility. I value the faith he has shown in me.

■ What's it like working closely with your wife Seema Pahwa and in-law Pankaj Kapur?

■ Seema and I have been together for fifty years. We started in theatre, worked as co-actors, and eventually our per-

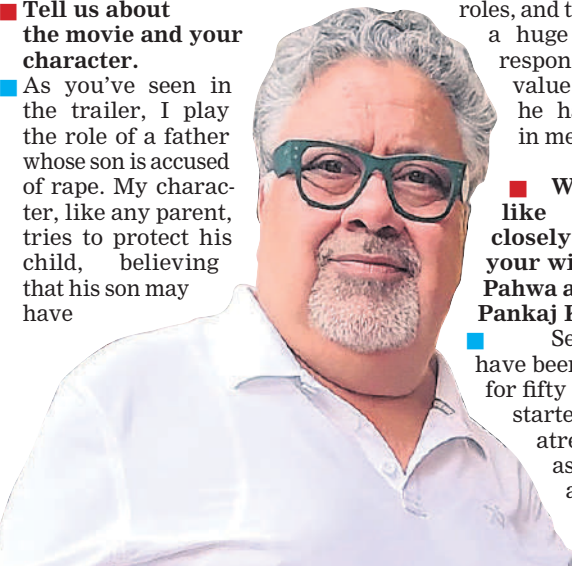
sonal relationship grew from there. We often discuss our roles and have healthy creative conversations. As for Pankaj, I grew up watching his films, and I've had the opportunity to work with him, which has been a wonderful experience.

■ What are your future plans, and how do you approach roles that are similar?

■ As an actor, you receive different offers, and sometimes roles may seem similar. I try to choose roles that allow me to explore different aspects of a character. One thing I've learned as an actor is that no two people in this world are the same, so even if a character seems similar on paper, it can always be portrayed differently. The challenge is to bring something fresh each time.

■ Do you think streaming platforms have changed the scope for an actor like you?

■ Yes, absolutely. Streaming platforms have increased the work and opportunity. They give scope for different kinds of stories and allow series and shows to be seen by a wider audience which was not possible earlier, which is a very positive development.



Aswin's next titled *Kangula*

Bhubaneswar: Odia filmmaker Aswin Tripathy unveiled his next cinematic venture, *Kangula: Dandakali Ra Danda Nacha*. Promising a spiritually resonant narrative rooted in Odisha's rich heritage, the film draws inspiration from true events and the ancient folk tradition of Danda Naacha.

Produced by Sambheet Acharya and Suvendra Kumar Malla (Litu), with Tripathy directing, *Kangula* seeks to bring this seldom-seen tradition to the big screen, merging devotion, history, and human endurance. The second part of the title, "Dandakali Ra Danda Nacha," reflects the film's focus on goddess-centric rituals and the transformative journey of its participants.

While cast details and release timelines remain under wraps, anticipation is growing. With this announcement, Tripathy reaffirms his commitment to celebrating Odisha's cultural identity, offering audiences a cinematic passage into a living tradition.



PNN

Tula's biopic shoot begins

Bhubaneswar: The launching ceremony of Artmas Screens Pvt. Ltd.'s second Odia film, *Tula*, was held recently, marking the official beginning of a project inspired by the remarkable life of Tula Behera, a philanthropic beggar from Odisha.

Produced by Ajay Kumar Raut and directed by Jitendra Jena, *Tula* tells the inspiring story of service, struggle, and dignity, portraying Tula Behera—affectionately known as Tula Mausi in her community. The film features Sheetal Patra in the titular role, alongside Siddhant Mohapatra, Abhishek Giri, Samaresh Routray, and Bidushmita Dash.

"This is a performance-driven journey that begins with honesty, gratitude, and purpose seeking love, support, and blessings," said Sheetal.



State Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy, Tula Behera herself were among the guests present.

Seventy-year-old Tula, a resident of Phulbani in Kandhamal district, gained national attention after donating her life savings of Rs 1 lakh to a Jagannath temple. Prime Minister Narendra Modi felicitated her during his 2024 visit, with a photograph of the meeting later featured in the 2025 Indian Railways calendar.

Tula aims to celebrate generosity, moral courage, and the quiet power of giving, showing that true philanthropy lies in intent, not wealth.

PNN



PRISM sensor assembly

Pics: Digantara Industries

US-India “Dual Horizons” challenge winner Digantara is strengthening space security with a satellite tracking system that eliminates “blind spots” in the Indo-Pacific

Tracking the unseen in Low Earth Orbit

In the silent, vacuum-packed expanse of Low Earth Orbit (LEO), a high-stakes game of hide-and-seek is unfolding. Today, more than 24,000 objects, ranging from multibillion-dollar satellites to jagged shards of space junk, hurtle through the void. Within five years, that number is expected to reach 70,000. For countries, the challenge is no longer just managing congestion and collision risk, but ensuring their assets are protected from intentional interference by hostile or rogue actors.

In a contested environment, it is essential not only to see an object on radar but to understand its intent. When a satellite does not want to be found, or when it performs an unpredicted maneuver, traditional ground-based tracking often fails. To bridge this gap, the US Department of War’s Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), in partnership with the US Space Forces-Indo-Pacific and the Space Domain Awareness Tools, Applications, & Processing Lab, with support from India’s Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), launched the “Dual Horizons: US-India Satellite Tracking Challenge”—a bilateral effort to advance the next generation of space-domain awareness.

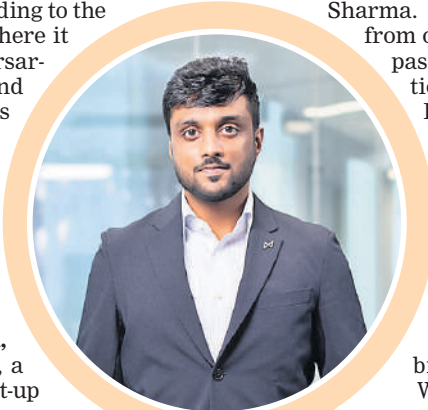
Solving the congestion crisis

To understand the problem, imagine operating a self-driving vehicle in a desert with no cameras or GPS. The only way

to verify its location is to wait for it to pass a specific, static checkpoint. Now, add thousands of other vehicles moving at 17,000 miles per hour. If one vehicle swerves unexpectedly, it is effectively “lost” to the system.

This is the reality of traditional space situational awareness. Standard methods rely on predictable orbital math; if a satellite moves according to the “script,” we know where it is. But modern adversaries use camouflage and deceptive maneuvers to vanish. Once a satellite deviates from its predicted path, reacquiring it can take hours or days, leaving critical infrastructure vulnerable.

Anirudh Sharma, founder of Digantara, a Bengaluru-based start-up and one of the winners of the Dual Horizons challenge, points to a massive geographic vulnerability. Currently, the United States maintains primary sensors in Australia and South Africa. “In between, there’s a huge gap,” Sharma notes, adding that Digantara is working with US agencies to track satellite activity in this region.



Digantara founder Anirudh Sharma

Digantara’s winning solution, SPECTRE (Surveillance and Persistent Evaluation for Characterising and Tracking), aims to light up these blind spots. By shifting the perspective from the ground to the sky, SPECTRE tracks space objects from orbit.

“Traditionally, systems are ground-based—radars or telescopes,” explains Sharma. “Our solution tracks from orbit, meaning we bypass atmospheric distortions and range issues.”

By utilizing a moving platform in space, Digantara achieves a persistent “visual” on assets, allowing for more frequent data collection and a much higher degree of accuracy.

Strengthening the bilateral shield

While most commercial firms rely on the US Department of War “catalog” to know what is in the sky, Digantara is building its own independent repository. Its sensors can detect objects as small as a softball, providing a unique layer of intelligence.

This independence has not made the

start-up a competitor but a vital partner. Digantara currently operates under a data-sharing agreement with the United States, effectively merging its unique blind-spot data with the existing US military catalog.

Interoperability is the “plug-and-play” secret to its success. SPECTRE is designed to integrate seamlessly into existing mission networks, allowing commanders to access real-time data without needing to rebuild their software from scratch. With offices now in the United States and deep ties across the Indo-Pacific, Digantara is positioned as a systems integrator.

The new frontier: Beyond tracking

The success of Digantara is a case study in US-India synergy. Sharma’s path was forged through US Department of State programs like the International Visitor Leadership Program, which helped him build connections to embed his team within the American defense ecosystem.

“We plan to invest further in our US office as part of our expansion into the US market. We are building a dedicated team and facility that will focus on satellite and payload assembly, as well as missile defense applications,” says Sharma. “Our recent selection for a US-based program has given us the confidence and foundation to make that investment and launch this initiative.”

Pineapples & prestige

In 18th century Europe, the pineapple wasn't just a tropical fruit; it was a powerful status symbol. Imported from the Caribbean at great expense, pineapples were rare and costly, often sold for what would be thousands of pounds in today's currency. Wealthy people would even rent a pineapple to carry around for an evening, showing off their supposed affluence

In today's world, pineapple is a common sight in smoothies, on pizzas and at tropical fruit stands, but in 18th-century England, this exotic fruit held a very different meaning. It wasn't just a delicacy; it was a status symbol that signified immense wealth, aristocratic prestige, global reach and cultural cachet. The era's fascination with pineapples went far beyond mere culinary interest; it permeated fashion, architecture, art, entertainment and even everyday social rituals.

From the tropics to the British elite
Pineapples were unknown in Europe until Christopher Columbus's explorations in the late 15th century, when he encountered them in the Caribbean. Europeans named the fruit for its resemblance to a pine cone. But the fruit's exotic origins, coupled with the difficulty of transporting it over thousands of miles without refrigeration, meant that for centuries it remained a rare and prized luxury. Only the very affluent could hope to possess one.
By the 17th century, the pineapple had reached the English court. King Charles II is often credited with enhancing its symbolic status when he was portrayed receiving a pineapple from his royal gardener, a highly unusual and expensive gift at the time. The event was immortalised in a painting and helped cement the fruit's association with monarchy, power, and global influence.

Why a fruit became a symbol of wealth
Several factors contributed to the pineapple's status as a marker of wealth in 18th-century England:
Rarity and cost: Pineapples were incredibly difficult to obtain or cultivate in Britain's cool climate. While colonial trade

gradually increased supplies, imported pineapples were still rare and extraordinarily expensive, equivalent to about £5,000 in today's money for a single fruit.
Cultivation challenges: Growing pineapples in England required special heated greenhouses called pineries, where decomposing manure and constant attention provided enough warmth. These structures were expensive to build and maintain, and only the wealthiest estates could afford them. As such, successfully producing pineapple fruit became a badge of affluence and horticultural prestige.
Social display: Wealthy hosts often used pineapples as showpieces at dinner parties, not as food. Because slicing the fruit was considered wasteful and almost "gauche," guests instead admired the pineapple on display, sometimes passing it around the dining room as a conversation piece before letting it rot. This practice underscored its luxurious and ornamental value.



Two Britons with their 'prized possessions' (top); Margaret Thatcher holding a fruit

The cultural mania
The fascination with pineapples was so intense that historians refer to it as pineapple mania, a broader cultural craze that influenced everything from



Dunmore Pineapple, a folly in Dunmore Park in Scotland



YOU MAY NOT KNOW

- Pineapple theft was so notorious that cases involving stolen pineapples could result in severe penalties.
- Entrepreneurs even opened pineapple rental shops, where those who couldn't afford to buy a real pineapple could rent one for a dinner or social event.
- Wealthy hosts often used pineapples as showpieces at dinner parties, not as food.
- Imported pineapples were rare and extraordinarily expensive, equivalent to about £5,000 in today's money for a single fruit.

tableware to architecture. Artisans and manufacturers responded to demand by incorporating pineapple motifs into objects for the elite. Tableware, ceramics, textiles, and silver often featured pineapple designs, allowing the wealthy to signal their taste and sophistication through subtle details in their homes.
Outside the home, pineapples appeared in public spaces and grand estates. One of the most striking examples is the Dunmore Pineapple, a monumental stone folly built in Scotland in the 1760s, topped by an enormous pineapple sculpture that serves as a testament to the fruit's symbolic power.

Economic and social impact
The pineapple's status wasn't merely

decorative. Its rarity and desirability influenced economic and social behavior. Pineapple theft was so notorious that cases involving stolen pineapples could result in severe penalties. Meanwhile, entrepreneurs even opened pineapple rental shops, where those who couldn't afford to buy a real pineapple could rent one for a dinner or social event, a quirky but telling example of how status symbols can drive commerce.
The craze was especially pronounced in England compared to other European nations. French interest in pineapples declined after the French Revolution, and countries like Spain and Portugal never embraced the trend with the same intensity. The English elite's obsession with the fruit, therefore, became a uniquely British cultural phenomenon of the Georgian era.

Decline in craze
By the 19th century, the pineapple's status began to wane. Improvements in transportation, especially the advent of steamships, made it easier and cheaper to import tropical fruits from the Caribbean and later Hawaii. As pineapples became more accessible to broader segments of society, their exclusivity diminished. What was once a marker of aristocratic wealth gradually transformed into a symbol of hospitality and welcome, visible on architectural motifs and even preserved in traditions like the pineapple ornament on the Wimbledon tennis trophy.

Legacy of a fruit
Although the pineapple no longer functions as a high-society status symbol in the modern sense, its legacy endures. Across Britain and beyond, pineapple shapes on gateposts, furnishings, and decorative arts remind us of a time when the allure of the exotic and the display of wealth were intricately intertwined. What began as a rare imported fruit became, for a fleeting moment in history, the epitome of aristocratic privilege.

OP DESK