



MUNJYA



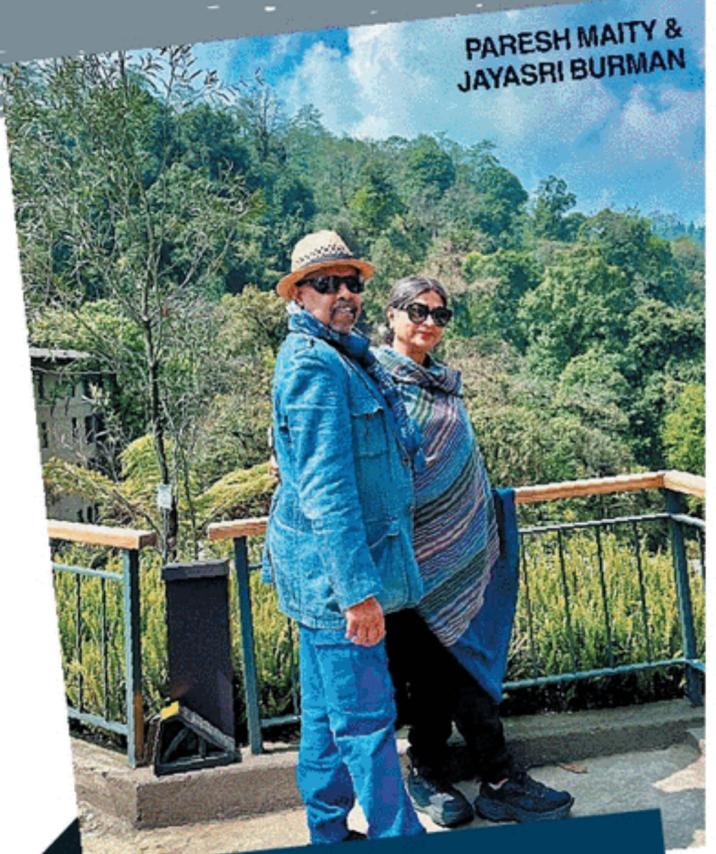
PASSION PLAY **P8**

NEEL BHATTACHARYA & TRINA SAHA
PICTURE: PABITRA DAS

BREAKING BARRIERS

P11

- B'DAY, WATCHIT 2
- TECH, WHATSUP
4,5,6,14
- BEATLES BASH,
MONSOON MUNCH
7,9
- PETS, MUSIC
15,16
- NOM NOM, BOOKS
17,19
- BEAUTY, YOUR
KALKI PICKS 19,20



PARESH MAITY & JAYASRI BURMAN

PICTURE PERFECT **P10**



ALSO: GRAHAM GOOCH

DANIEL RADCLIFFE, WOODY HARRELSON, HIMESH RESHAMMIYA

This year take a step back and evaluate your options with a grounded perspective. Do not lose yourself in a maze of illusions and distractions. Do temper your judgments with compassion and empathy. Before the year ends you will see personal contentment and emotional well-being, where dreams and aspirations have materialized into reality.

— Nita Chhotalal

TODAY'S TIPS by Nita Chhotalal



ARIES

DO be resilient and find the strength to overcome adversity
DONT get trapped in a state of lack and despair
EXPECT to reach out to mentors who can offer guidance during the difficult times that you are facing



TAURUS

DO let go of attachments and follow your intuition towards emotional growth and spiritual fulfillment
DONT cling to your comfort zone
EXPECT to walk away from chaos and towards better things



GEMINI

DO revisit your roots, reconnect with long-lost friends or loved ones, and recapture the delights of your youth
DONT allow the nostalgic sentiments to hold you back
EXPECT to embrace childlike wonder and find joy in the small moments of life



CANCER

DO stay focused, disciplined and determined in pursuing your passions and aspirations
DONT lose out on opportunities
EXPECT to have a clear vision of what you want to accomplish



LEO

DO watch for the signs of success and know that your dreams are on their way
DONT forget to look ahead and plan for your future
EXPECT to believe that you will overcome any obstacle that comes in your way



VIRGO

DO take a moment to recognise the progress you have made and the abundance that flows into your life
DONT let joyful and supportive connections among loved ones be strained or marred by conflicts and misunderstandings
EXPECT to share your joy with others



LIBRA

DO start working towards your goals and expand your network
DONT be reluctant to make sacrifices
EXPECT to expand your horizons, break free from limitations, and step out of your comfort zone



SCORPIO

DO stay in the present moment to make the most of it
DONT be in a hurry; take your time
EXPECT to be introspective and consider all your options very carefully



SAGITTARIUS

DO embrace the lessons and experiences that come your way bringing new opportunities, challenges and growth
DONT get disturbed by life's challenges
EXPECT to enjoy and make the most of your financial stability



CAPRICORN

DO multi-task and maintain steady equilibrium in order to navigate the ever-changing circumstances
DONT shy away from the challenges that come your way
EXPECT to allocate your time and resources wisely and trust your ability to find balance



AQUARIUS

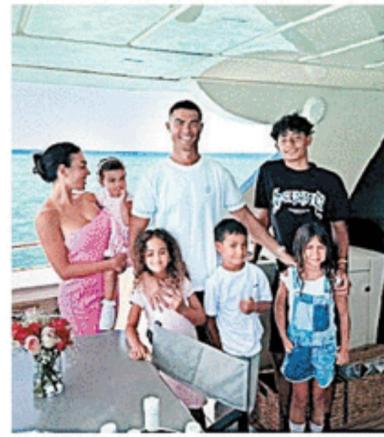
DO find the answers you seek by sitting in silence and following your intuition
DONT be impatient
EXPECT to dive into the depths of your intuition and listen to the whispers of your inner voice



PISCES

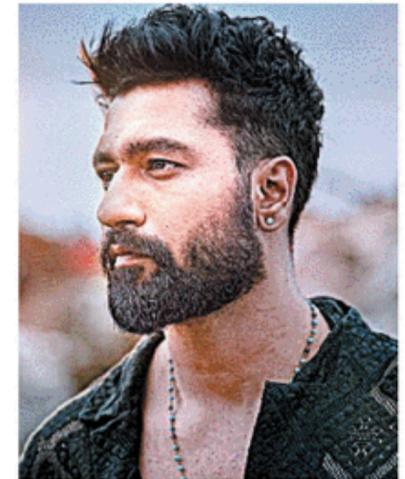
DO invest in yourself and take calculated risks that could yield great rewards
DONT get dejected if work is slow
EXPECT to lay a solid foundation for long-term prosperity

Nita Chhotalal is on [f](#) @Divine Grace - Nita Chhotalal [i](#) @mysticalguidancebynita



FAM SPECIAL:
My life. Uploaded by @cristiano
(Cristiano Ronaldo)

SUPER HOT:



Haule Haule. Uploaded by @vickykaushal09 (Vicky Kaushal)



RESTING TIME:
Snooze mode - ON. Uploaded by @fatimasanashaikh (Fatima Sana Shaikh)



Duniya mein sabse best LAAL cheez kaunsi hai ??? Uploaded by @shraddhakapoor (Shraddha Kapoor)

WATCHIT!



Undercover drug enforcement agent Robert Trench (Denzel Washington) and covert naval intelligence officer Michael Stigman (Mark Wahlberg) unintentionally investigate each other after they both steal money from the mob. **2 Guns**, &flix, 9pm

Radha Mohan: Zee TV, 8pm
Mishri: Colors, 8.30pm

BENGALI

MOVIES OF THE DAY

Putra Badhu: Zee Bangla Cinema, noon
Paglu 2: Jalsha Movies, 1pm
Prem Kahini: Colors Bangla Cinema, 1pm
Takkar: Zee Bangla Cinema, 2.25pm
Jay Jayanti: Aakash Aath, 3.05pm
Madam Geeta Rani: Jalsha Movies, 4pm
Agnipariksha: Colors Bangla Cinema, 4pm
Mejo Bou: Zee Bangla Cinema, 5.10pm
Miss Call: Jalsha Movies, 6.30pm
Bidrho: Colors Bangla Cinema, 7pm
Pooja: Zee Bangla Cinema, 7.25pm
Rosogolla: Jalsha Movies, 9.35pm
Criminal: Colors Bangla Cinema, 10pm

SPORT

UP Kabaddi League, Noida Ninjas vs Brij Stars - live: Sony TEN 3, 5pm
UP Kabaddi League, Sangam Challengers vs Yamuna Yodhas - live: Sony TEN 3, 6pm
UP Kabaddi League, Lucknow Lions vs Ganga Kings of Mirzapur - live: Sony TEN 3, 7pm
Tamil Nadu Premier League, Siechem Madurai Panthers vs Lyca Koval Kings - live: STAR Sports 1 & 1 HD, 7.10pm
The Hundred Women's - Oval Invincibles vs Birmingham Phoenix - live: Sony TEN 5 & 5 HD, 7.15pm
UP Kabaddi League, Awadh Ramdoot vs Kashi Kings - live: Sony TEN 3, 8pm
The Hundred Men's - Oval Invincibles vs Birmingham Phoenix - live: Sony TEN 5 & 5 HD, 11pm
WWE NXT - live: Sony TEN 1 & 1 HD, 5.30am
Major League Cricket, Texas Super Kings vs Seattle Orcas - live: Sony TEN 5 & 5 HD, 6am

The Office: Comedy Central, 7pm
Extraordinary You: Zee Cafe, 7pm
Brooklyn Nine-Nine: Comedy Central, 8pm
Shark Tank: Zee Cafe, 8pm
Game of Thrones: Colors Infinity, 9pm
Parks and Recreation: Comedy Central, 9pm
Preacher: Zee Cafe, 9pm
Nathan For You: Comedy Central, 10pm
House of Cards: Zee Cafe, 10pm
His Dark Materials: Colors Infinity, 11pm

HINDI

SHOWSTOPPERS

Suhaagan: Colors, 6.30pm
Krishna Mohini: Colors, 7pm
Maati Se Bandhi Dor: STAR Plus, 7.30pm
Kavya - Ek Jazbaa Ek Junoon: Sony, 7.30pm
Main Hoon Saath Tere: Zee TV, 7.30pm
Jubilee Talkies - Shohrat.Shiddat.
Mohabbat: Sony, 8pm

ENGLISH

MOVIES OF THE DAY

Uncharted: Sony Pix, 1.15pm
A Dog's Way Home: &flix, 2.25pm
65: Sony Pix, 3.10pm
Lake Placid, The Final Chapter: &flix, 3.55pm
Saving Silverman: &Prime HD, 4.20pm
Gran Turismo: Sony Pix, 4.45pm
Gemini: &flix, 5.25pm
Zoom: &Prime HD, 5.45pm
Rampage: Sony Pix, 7.05pm
Monster House: &flix, 7.15pm
The Tourist: &Prime HD, 9pm
2 Guns: &flix, 9pm
No Good Deed: &flix, 11pm
White House Down: Sony Pix, 11.40pm
SHOWSTOPPERS
Community: Zee Cafe, 6pm
Pretty Little Liars, Original Sin: Colors Infinity, 7pm

BIG SCREEN

ENGLISH

DESPICABLE ME 4 3D (U): Inox South City (1.45)
IMMACULATE (A): PVR Mani Square (2.25)
INSIDE OUT 2 3D (U): Inox South City (11.25am)
LONGLEGS (A): Inox South City (8.20pm)
TWISTERS (U/A): Inox Quest (9.05*, 11.55*, 2.45*, 5.35*, 8.25*, 11.15*), Inox South City (10.40*, 12.40, 5.15*, 8.05*, 10.55*), Inox Salt Lake (9, 11.50, 2.40, 7.50, 10.40), Inox Rajarhat (11, 7.55, 10.45), Inox Metro (7.45pm), Inox Hind (9.35, 4.10, 10.45), Inox Hiland (2, 9.45), Inox Swabhumi (12.20, 9.35), PVR Avani (7.55pm), PVR Mani Square (9, 4.40, 7.30, 10.20), PVR Diamond Plaza (12.20, 8.15, 11), PVR Uniworld Downtown (3.05), RDB Cinemas (10.30, 4.30, 10.30)
JAPANESE
SPY X FAMILY: CODE WHITE (U/A): Inox South City (10.40, 3.35), Inox Salt Lake (2.05), PVR Avani (5.20), PVR Mani Square (11.50am), PVR Diamond Plaza (3.05)

HINDI

BAD NEWZ (U/A): Inox Quest (10.30*, 1.35*, 4.40*, 7.45*, 10.50*), Inox South City (9.30*, 10.25*, 12.35*, 3.40*, 4.45*, 6.45*, 7.50*, 9.50*, 10.55*), Inox Forum (9.30, 12.35, 3.40, 6.45, 9.50), Inox Salt Lake (9.30, 11, 12.35, 3.40, 6.45, 7.45, 9.50, 11), Inox Rajarhat (9.30, 11.35, 12.35, 2.40, 3.40, 6.45, 9.50, 11.10), Inox Metro (10.25, 1.30, 4.35, 7.40, 10.45), Inox Hind (9.25, 1.30, 3.35, 6.40, 9.45), Inox Hiland (9.30, 10.55, 12.35, 3.40, 6.45, 7.45, 9.50, 10.50), Inox Swabhumi (9.20, 10.10, 1.15, 4.20, 6.25, 7.25, 9.30, 10.30), PVR Avani (9, 10.30, 12.05, 1.35, 4.40, 7.45, 9.30, 10.50), PVR Mani Square (9, 10, 1.05, 3.55, 6.40, 9.45, 10.50), PVR Diamond Plaza (9, 10.25, 12.05, 1.30, 4.35, 6.30, 7.40, 9.35, 10.45), PVR Uniworld Downtown (9.10, 10.10, 1.15, 4.20, 5.55, 7.25, 10.30)
HINDUSTANI 2 (U/A): RDB Cinemas (3.15)
KALKI 2898 AD 3D (U/A): Inox South City

(9, 3.25, 7.05, 10.45), Inox Salt Lake (10, 4.05, 10.45), Inox Rajarhat (10.15, 1.55, 5.35, 9.15), Inox Metro (9.25, 4, 10.35), Inox Hind (12.25, 7), Inox Hiland (10.20, 1, 7, 10.40), Inox Swabhumi (10.15, 2, 5.45, 9.30), PVR Avani (10.30, 2.20, 6.10, 10), PVR Mani Square (9.15, 12.05, 7, 10.15), PVR Diamond Plaza (11, 2.45, 6.30, 10.15), PVR Uniworld Downtown (11.45, 6.9.45), RDB Cinemas (10.15, 3.50, 10)

KALKI 2898 AD (U/A): Inox South City (1.30*), RDB Cinemas (1, 7), Nazrulirtha (8pm)
KILL (A): Inox South City (1.10, 9.45), Inox Salt Lake (1.40), Inox Rajarhat (9.10am, 8.40pm), Inox Hiland (4.40), Inox Swabhumi (4.20), PVR Avani (noon), PVR Mani Square (4.10), PVR Diamond Plaza (noon, 2.25), PVR Uniworld Downtown (3.30), RDB Cinemas (1.40, 7.20)

SARFIRA (U): Inox Quest (1.30*, 10.45), Inox Salt Lake (7.40pm), Inox Rajarhat (4.35), Inox Swabhumi (3.05), PVR Avani (3.10), PVR Mani Square (6.55), PVR Diamond Plaza (3.10, 10.45), RDB Cinemas (9.15, 12.15, 6.40, 9.45)

TWISTERS (U/A): Inox Rajarhat (1.45), Inox Metro (1.10), Inox Hiland (10.10, 7), Inox Swabhumi (10.30, 6.50), PVR Avani (9.10, 2.30, 10.45), PVR Mani Square (1.05), PVR Diamond Plaza (9.35, 5.35), PVR Uniworld Downtown (12.15, 9), Nazrulirtha (3, 5.20, 7.45)

BENGALI

AJOGYA (U/A): Inox South City (4pm), Inox Hiland (2pm), PVR Diamond Plaza (7.50pm), Nazrulirtha (5.40)

MANIKBABUR MEGH (U): Inox South City (6.05), Inox Salt Lake (5.30), Inox Hiland (4.45), Nazrulirtha (2pm)

ROBIN'S KITCHEN (U/A): Nazrulirtha (4pm)

SURJO (U/A): Inox South City (6.45), Inox Salt Lake (4.35), Inox Rajarhat (5.40), Inox Hiland (4.45), PVR Avani (6.30), PVR Mani Square (3.55), PVR Diamond Plaza (4.50), Nazrulirtha (6, 8.40)

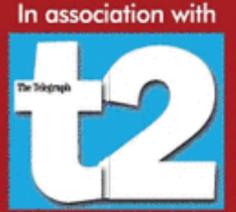


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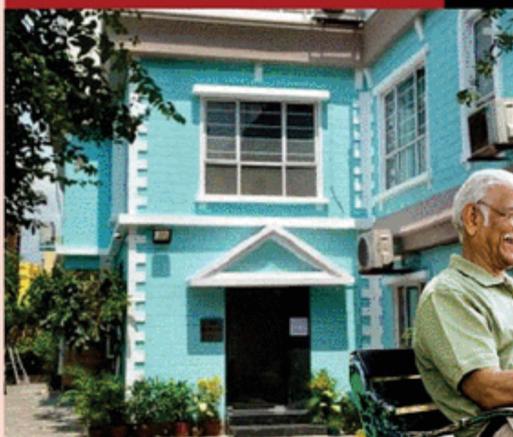
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Xiaomi has launched the Redmi 13 5G with several upgrades, which include a new 108MP camera, 33W fast-charging and a smoother 120 Hz refresh rate screen. But is that enough to help Redmi remain the king of budget phones?

The phone comes with a good design for the price point and that means... bezels can be overlooked. What is striking is the glass back, which is something refreshing for the category. Holding the phone, it's a bigish device but that's what most people are looking for. The company has thrown in Corning Gorilla Glass 3 and also a 3.5mm headphone jack. But at 205g, it's on the heavier side.

The 6.79-inch FHD+ IPS LCD display comes with 120Hz refresh rate and 550nits brightness. Yes, the level of brightness could have been on the higher side, especially when you are out in the sun. On Redmi 12 5G the refresh rate topped at 90Hz. Despite being



A sample shot taken using the Redmi 13 5G

an IPS display, it has good viewing angles and the same goes for colour reproduction.

Despite the price point, there is IP53 protection; some water shouldn't damage the phone. In the price segment, Redmi will face competition from the likes of Samsung Galaxy M34 and CMF Phone 1, especially the AMOLED display from Samsung.

The display on the Redmi phone is worth noticing because it's perfect for streaming video content. The bottom-firing speaker gets loud enough if you are not using a headphone but I wish Redmi had

REDMI 13 5G IS A COMPELLING BUY FOR ANYONE ON A BUDGET



Redmi 13 5G comes with an appealing design, the latest Android OS, 108MP main camera sensor and a nimble processor. Pictures: The Telegraph

with the quality of the photos. You get sharp and detailed images while the colours are not overpowering. Besides good dynamic range, night photography is better than ever before. The 108MP sensor can

gather more light, so shots taken under uneven lighting appear bright.

The macro lens? All brands should do away with this useless sensor. Videos are restricted to 1080p@30fps but it's nothing extraordinary.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

Keeping the show running is the Snapdragon 4 Gen 2 (accelerated edition) chipset. Last year, it was the same processor without the words "accelerated edition". Still, you get better benchmark results and in everyday usage, apps work well and switching between apps doesn't pose a struggle. The phone is meant to help you power through social media apps and YouTube. For casual gamers, it's not a bad show.

It's good to see Redmi going with Xiaomi Hyper OS and Android 14. Plus, there are two OS upgrades and three years of security updates. The HyperOS experience is smooth and that makes a difference in the budget category. I am not surprised to see the high degree of bloatware on the phone but you can delete all of it.

The phone does a fantastic job in the battery department. The 5030mAh battery easily lasts a day and a half. Charging the phone doesn't take much time (around 75 minutes for a full charge), thanks to the 33W charger.

The appeal of Redmi has always been pricing. If you add a few thousand bucks, you can fetch something like a Samsung phone with an AMOLED screen.

Is this phone for you? If you only want to stream films, scan social media and use the camera now and then, it surely does a good job. Redmi 13 5G offers an impressive price-to-features ratio and it will help the brand dominate the budget category.

Mathures Paul

gone with a stereo speaker.

BIGGER SENSOR

In the camera department, there are two lenses — 108MP and 2MP macro. The primary camera has improved drastically over that of last year, offering bright photos and there is hardly any lag. Even while zooming in beyond 3x, I was happy



The display is large and colour accurate but there is a fair amount of bloatware

AT A GLANCE

Device: Redmi 13 5G
Price: Upwards of ₹13,999

HIGH NOTES

- ▶ Impressive processor for the pricing
- ▶ Good choice of camera sensor
- ▶ Excellent battery life and charging speed

MUFFLED NOTES

- ▶ Bezels are on the thicker side
- ▶ Phone is very slippery

ALSO LOOK AT...

- ▶ Samsung Galaxy M34 and CMF Phone 1



The primary rear camera has a 108MP sensor, which is an upgrade over the 50MP lens seen in its predecessor

EA SPORTS RELEASES FIRST COLLEGE FOOTBALL VIDEO GAME IN 11 YEARS

Returning after 11 years, the long-awaited franchise revival with EA Sports College Football 25 has already gained attention from celebrities like LeBron James and Tim Tebow, who recently streamed it on Twitch. Hang on, this is American football? Yes, but it has takers beyond the US.

Available on PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X and S, the game is the successor to NCAA Football 14, which released in the summer of 2013. Electronic Arts stopped releasing college football video



Emmy-winning composer Kris Bowers was hired to produce an original song for EA Sports College Football 25

games because of legal issues surrounding name, image and likeness deals with players. The latest version was announced in February 2021.

The game has been updated to reflect the times we live in. To recruit good players, scrawl the social media of a high schooler and

send that person a direct message. You will have to make the high schooler interested enough in you to accept your offer to book them a visit.

Running the ball can be fun and the graphics have been drastically updated. For long-time players of the game, passing the ball requires

an adjustment. The metre over a pass catcher's head impacts how good your throw is. But the option to switch to classic passing mode is in the game's settings. "Placement" and "placement & accuracy" passing modes are also available. When it comes to kicking, there is a two-part metre requiring players to press for kick accuracy and hold for power.

Your experience of the game depends on the difficulty level. The second-lowest setting ("varsity") offers enough exciting games that go down to the wire. The highest setting — "Heisman" — is, of course, not for everyone.

There is also a "Dynasty Mode" to allow players to take control of recruiting and on-field performance of a college football programme while "Road to Glory" is a role-playing mode in which you create a custom college athlete. And there are over 20 new touchdown celebrations to choose from.

Mathures Paul

X IS WORKING ON A WAY TO DISABLE LINKS IN REPLIES



If X disables links in replies it will stop people from promoting their websites in other people's posts. Picture: The Telegraph

Degrading the experience of posting on X (formerly Twitter) are links automatically posted in replies, which encourages spam. The platform is working on an option to disable links in replies, according to independent app researcher Nima Owji.

According to Owji, users will be able to tick a box for the option if they don't want people to be able to respond with a link to their posts. Confirming the development is Christopher Stanley, senior director for security engineering at X, who posted: "My team built this."

The feature will help keep spam bots away and also stop people from promoting their websites in other people's posts. But it also means users may not be able to post links to legitimate sources when they're trying to debunk false information or prevent fake news from spreading further.

Owji has earlier pointed out other features that have come to the social network over the past year. So it appears that we may also see a "Disable Links in Replies" button soon. He previously found that X was experimenting with an in-app currency to help creators earn money from the platform. He also spotted that X was working on new ID verification features, besides discovering that the company was looking to compete with LinkedIn by offering job listings to verified organisations.

Earlier this month, there were reports of X testing a "dislike" button for replies.

Mathures Paul

WHATSUP

THE LAUNCH OF RUPKATHA'S SNAPSCAPE, WITH t2, WAS A START OF A COLOURFUL ADVENTURE



Rupkatha Rudra posed with some of her favourite photographs from the street photography section.

The portrait and still life photography section captured the attention of many visitors



Rupkatha savoured papad and jilipi, along with Pallab Sarkar, a visitor, merging Rath Yatra celebrations with the inauguration of her gallery.



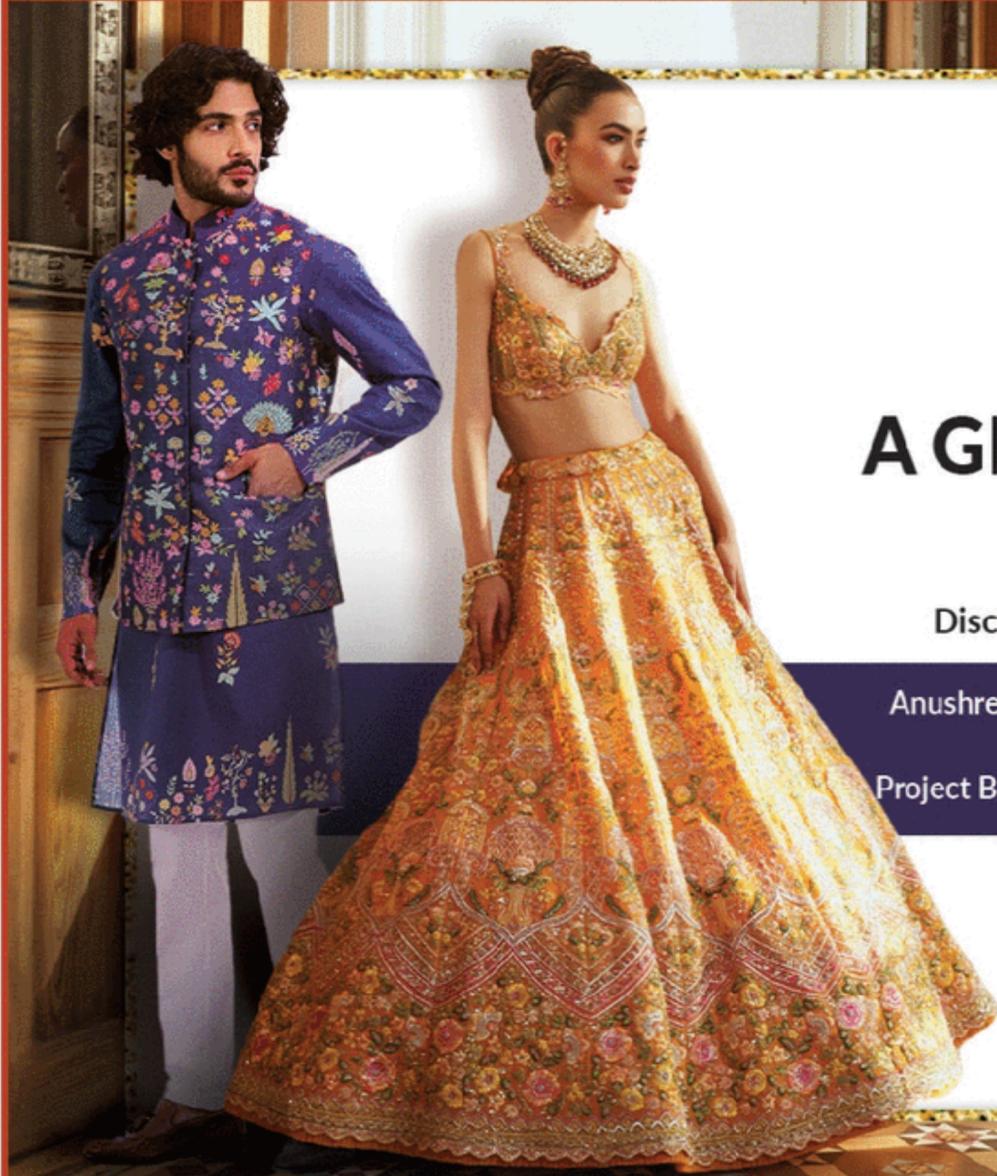
Mala Chakraborty was one of the many guests who shared her experiences on the feedback board that sought visitors' insights on the photo tour.

On July 7, as the city celebrated Rath Yatra, a new artistic venture added even more colour to the occasion. Amidst the joyous festivities, 21-year-old photography enthusiast Rupkatha Rudra inaugurated her gallery, Rupkatha's Snapscape. The event was held in association with t2. Located at 5/3A/4, Raja Manindra Road, this charming space opened its doors to welcome art enthusiasts and curious passersby. Visitors were treated to a visual feast, with over a 100 photographs on display, showcasing Rupkatha's versatility

across various genres. The exhibition featured an array of photographic styles. Street photography captured the raw energy and unexpected moments of urban life, while nature shots revealed the serene beauty of landscapes and wildlife. Visitors admired striking portraits that tell silent stories, and still-life compositions that transformed everyday objects into art. For those with an eye for detail, there were examples of macro photography, bringing tiny worlds into focus. Rupkatha's journey began at the tender age of five or six.

"I never learned photography professionally," she said. "I just played around and gradually got the hang of it - how the lights and angles worked." In February, Rupkatha presented her first solo exhibition, "The Photographic Odyssey of Rupkatha", which met with success. The inauguration of her gallery was her next big step. Snapscape isn't just about Rupkatha's work, though. The space aims to become a hub for visual arts in the community, welcoming other artists to exhibit their creations. There's even room

for boutique owners to set up shop, adding to the gallery's eclectic charm. The launch coinciding with Rath Yatra added to the festive atmosphere. Visitors immersed themselves in the spirit of the day, participating in Rath Yatra activities in the gallery. There were treats like crispy papad bhajas and syrupy jilipis to munch on while perusing the artwork. Glimpses from the inauguration. **Bornonaa Barik** (t2 intern) Pictures: Koushik Saha



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WEDNESDAY, 24TH JULY

— ONWARDS —

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in association with



What: ICFAI Business School, Calcutta, presents Deluge 2024, in association with t2

Where: Tangerine Royale Banquets

When: July 23, 4.30pm onwards (by invitation only)

Expect: ICFAI Business School, Calcutta, is all set to welcome its batch of 2026 with a grand freshers' welcome. The event will be attended by 148 students. The theme this year is 'Moonlight'. There will be fun activities organised by the seven clubs of the ICFAI Business School, Calcutta, to begin with. It will be followed by the crowning of Mr and Miss IBS, following customs. The winners from the various activities will be recognised for their talent at a prize distribution ceremony later in the evening, followed by a special badge presentation to council members. The DJ performance will give attendees a chance to let their hair down and enjoy the electrifying ambience while grooving to latest mixes. The fun event will be a brief introduction for students to campus life.

Organiser speak: "We emphasise on holistic learning of the students at IBS. A typical IBS student at Calcutta not only goes through the rigors of management education but also develops a well-rounded personality. There are opportunities for games, extracurricular activities and social work. We believe that the batch of 2026 has the potential to bring all the brilliance of the mystique moon and radiate her luminescence. We welcome each student of the 2026 batch to become an integral part of IBS Calcutta family," said Ajay Pathak, senior director of ICFAI Business School, Calcutta.



A glimpse of *Bhuto*

What: *Bhuto* by Kabyakala Manan and Debantara Arts

Where: Girish Mancha; 78, KMC Quarters, 1, Baghbazar

When: July 23, 7pm onwards

Expect: Kabyakala Manan and Debantara Arts, that has been staging plays for the past five to six years, will stage another unique play based on literature. This time it is Satyajit Ray's popular horror story *Bhuto*. The staging of the story will be done using the special art of ventriloquism. Dramatised by Antara Chatterjee and directed by Sumit Kumar Roy, the performance will be done by ventriloquists Palash Adhikari as Nabin Munshi and Abhijit Ghosh as Ankur Chowdhury. A talking doll will be the central character of the play. The story will revolve around the conflict between a newcomer and veteran ventriloquist. *Bhuto* is the third adapted stage play by the group after their adaptations of popular stories like Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* and *The Last Supper* based on Roald Dahl's *Lamb to the Slaughter*.

Organiser speak: "This 100-minute act based on Satyajit Ray's horror story *Bhuto* will showcase the unique art of ventriloquism. The newcomer wants to learn but the veteran refuses to teach. However, through the surface conflict of the play we have tried to capture the underlying conflict between the natural and the supernatural. The play will explore who the real puppet is. The play can be enjoyed by all age groups due to its unique presentation of using ventriloquism," said Antara Chatterjee, who has dramatised the story. **For tickets:** Call 8017460232/ book on Thirdbell



What: Chetana presents 50th birthday celebration of Sujan Mukherjee

Where: Madhusudan Mancha (Gariahat Road, South, beside Dakshinapan Shopping Complex)

On till: July 28

Expect: Theatre group Chetana to celebrate actor Sujan Mukherjee's 50th birthday (July 22) with a theatre festival spanning a week. The festival that started on July 22 will end on July 28. Nine plays will be staged at Madhusudan Mancha. Theatre lovers of Calcutta will get to witness a time span of 50 years of theatre in Calcutta through the selected plays, starting with the staging of *Mareech Sangbad*, followed by the 50th show of *Binodini Opera* on July 23, *Jagganath* on July 24, *Don* on July 25, *Mahatma Gandhi* on July 26, *Brain* on July 27, *Khasaram Kotoyal* on July 27, *Haraner Nath Jamai* and *Hibijibi Bahini* on July 28.

Organiser speak: "Like we celebrated Chetana's birth anniversary in 2022 with a festival, our main aim was to celebrate Calcutta's theatre in the last 50 years through this festival. In the schedule, we kept a mix of old plays like *Mareech Sangbad* (first performed in 1973) and *Jagganath* to contemporary popular ones like *Binodini Opera* and an experimental play in the format of Grips-theatre by Chetana, where we will have children and adults together in a play.



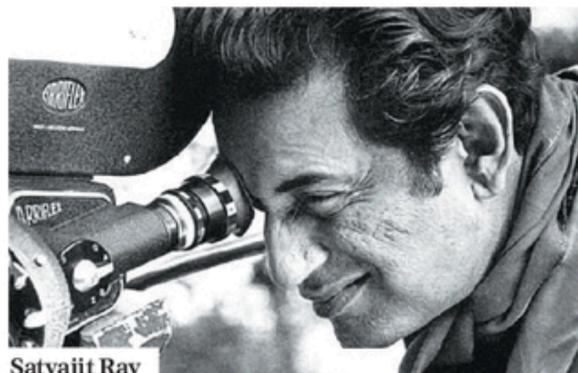
We also have musicals and reimagined old plays. It is beyond a personal celebration as I am not bigger than theatre, but like people like to do what they love on their birthday, my group Chetana and I decided to dedicate my birthday to theatre out of my love for theatre. We are producing it all by ourselves but have many housefull show bookings already. Our only aim is to provide enjoyment to theatre's audience in Calcutta," said Sujan Mukherjee. **For tickets:** Call 9007000141/ book on Thirdbell

WHATSUP

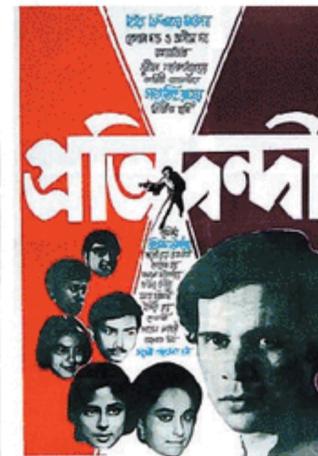
GLIMPSES FROM A TRIBUTE TO SATYAJIT RAY



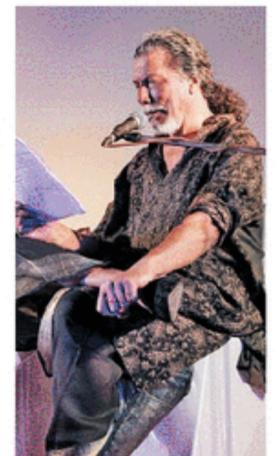
(L-R) Hiya, Rupankar Bagchi, Raya Bhattacharya



Satyajit Ray



Poster of *Pratidwandi*



Arijit Dutta

Priya Entertainments recently hosted '103 Not Out Ray' at Priya Cinema, a cultural evening to remember Satyajit Ray on his birthday (May 2). Dance and music was complemented

with Arijit Dutta and Raya Bhattacharya's narration. Anindyo Mukhopadhyay, who scripted and directed the evening, also incorporated songs from Ray's films. Rupankar Bagchi sang songs from films like *Goopy Gyne Bagha*

Byne among others. The dance performances were presented by Sukalyn Bhattacharjee and his group Sukalyann D Entourage, Avirup Sengupta and Drabin Chattopadhyay. Hiya performed devotional songs.

Ray's film *Pratidwandi* was also screened. "We have been thinking

of doing a tribute event for Satyajit Ray for a long time and we wanted to do something to celebrate Satyajit Ray's birth anniversary. We could finally present the first edition of this tribute performance this year and plan to grow it on a larger scale next year. We were also

fortunate to be the second in the world after the Cannes Film Festival to screen the restored print of Ray's film *Pratidwandi*. Our company was the producer of this movie..." said Arijit Dutta, managing director of Priya Entertainments.

A WAVE OF NOSTALGIA HIT CALCUTTA CLUB WITH THE TUNES OF THE BEATLES

The Beatles came back to life in Calcutta Club at The Beatles Night, in association with t2, in The Pavillion. An indispensable part of

the childhood of many in the audience, The Beatles was celebrated by Calcutta Club members and organisers who paid homage to their favourite band, grooving to their famous

tunes. The drummer for the evening was Nondon Bagchi, who has been the backbone of the rock music scene in Calcutta for decades now. Bagchi played with his incredible band, 1972.

Tipplles and snacks along with a question-answer session kept the evening alive. Dr Ramaditya Roy, chairman of social and culture of Calcutta Club, said:

“Calcutta Club is indeed delighted to present this evening of pure nostalgia. Those of us who grew up to The Beatles’s tunes are certainly going to rock, and with this certain idea, we have the band 1972 along with the renowned Nondon Bagchi. I dedicate this event to The Beatles’s fans.”



1972 played a string of famous tunes like *Let It Be*, *Jealous Guy* and *Imagine* by Lennon, *Something* — the Greatest Love Song as suggested by Frank Sinatra, *Ob La Di Ob La Da*, *Strawberry Fields Forever*, *Come Together*, *Don’t Let Me Down*, *Day Tripper*, *I Saw Her Standing There* and *Everybody’s Trying To Be My Baby* among many others.



The crowd danced to the tunes from their childhood days.



Organisers of the event, Biswajit Dasgupta (left) and Babi Mitra, said: “The reason for doing The Beatles Night is because Beatles cuts across all age groups and fits in with the profile of Calcutta Club members. Even after 60 years, it is still the most popular band so why not pay tribute to them? We also took this opportunity to celebrate and thank Nondon Bagchi.”



“I think The Beatles are evergreen, never to be lost, they become immortal. Calcutta Club has brought people who are 14 to 80 together to enjoy the evening. And Nondon Bagchi is truly a legend. We may need a bigger hall next time!” said Fuljhari Basu.



“I think it’s a great program, I love the balloons and the set-up. My friends are playing today, I always see them play live shows, but it is a treat to watch them play at Calcutta Club,” said Anushka Bhattacharya.



“From a person of my generation, The Beatles has been a fascinating aspect of music and bands. Having been formed in the 1960s in Liverpool, The Beatles created a wave all over the world which still exists. One of the most amazing things about them is that they are never forgotten. Calcutta Club is an elite organisation where people from all walks of life come; Beatles and international music have been a part of the culture. It is going to be a wonderful night,” said Calcutta Club president Dr Abhijit Ghosh (left) with Nondon Bagchi.

Mehek Gupta (t2 intern) Pictures: B Halder

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On a rainy Sunday afternoon actors and directors from Tollywood got together for a friendly match between Milkshake Murders XI and Spydres XI as part of KLIKK Championship Cricket. Team Milkshake Murders had Neel Bhattacharya, aka writer Bhaskar Mitra, and 'Mr Shadow' Saurav Das as the two successive match captains. Ayush Das, who plays Topshe in the Feluda films, led Spydres XI.

The match saw stellar performances by several actors like Saurav Das, Joey Debroj, Rezwan, Suman Banerjee, Judhajit Sarkar, Ananda Choudhury, Arunava Dey and directors like Riingo, Angshuman Pratyush, Soumojeet Adak. Esha Nandi and Moubani put up a great fight. The Championship was won by Spydres XI.

The series *Milkshake Murders*, which is now streaming on KLIKK, follows a failed author who lives in Pattaya, Thailand. He travels to Phi Phi Islands and meets a very unimpressive person who claims to have struck a big deal with an internationally acclaimed publishing house for a novel whose manuscripts are yet to be delivered. Intriguing incidents happen, and in the course of the next 24 hours, the failed author is in possession of the manuscript while the real owner lies dead under the coral sea of Phi Phi. The author now conveniently takes the identity of the dead man and soon becomes the best-selling writer of his time.

"Getting the film industry together in a united effort to promote a series on a rare Sunday afternoon was truly a unique endeavour. Even though



Neel and Trina

GLIMPSES FROM A FRIENDLY CRICKET MATCH



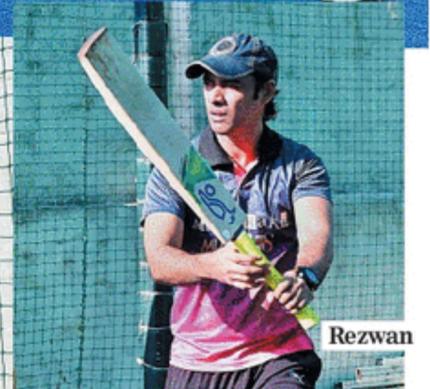
Joey



Saurav



Darshana



Rezwan

I didn't play the match, I enjoyed myself thoroughly cheering for my *Milkshake Murders* team from the gallery. This was like a big family match, with so many friends like Saurav, Joey and my co-actors playing on the turf. It was so much fun to witness all the leg-pulling, friendly banter and even the occasional heated exchanges between those who took the match very seriously as a competitive sport," said Trina.

"I was really excited about the match, as this was a rather unique promotion for our web series, which is close to our hearts. Some of us like Saurav, Joey, and I are very passionate about cricket and play regularly. Incidentally, no one took the friendly match lightly. Everyone gave their hundred per cent. It was equally enjoyable for both players as well as spectators. We might even think of curating a Milkshake Murders Celebration Cup in the future. This kind of initiative is really a very laudable effort," said Neel.

"Right from my childhood, I'm perpetually excited about playing cricket, and thus, the weekend tournament was one that had me very enthused. This was a super initiative, and not always does one get to indulge in one's passion while promoting one's show. The competitive spirit we all witnessed on-field will be truly cherished. My wife Darshana and several of our friends were there too, to cheer us on for this friendly

encounter. It's no mean feat to pull off such a tournament, and kudos to KLIKK and our producers for living up to this big ask. There is a lot of expectation that is hinged on the series and on my character. This makes me feel lucky as well as tense in equal measure. I'm grateful that filmmakers chose to cast me in these challenging roles," said Saurav.

"The gallery went berserk every time the ball crossed the boundary — the cheer was for any player who crossed the rope," said Riingo.

"Even though it was a friendly exhibition match, the fierce competitiveness was quite visible. The most entertaining was the friendly banter amongst our industry colleagues.

The loud cheers from those who weren't playing were a testimony

to the fun-filled afternoon that we had," said Joey.

"We have always strived to foray into innovations for every project of ours. With every new series, the effort has been to sincerely raise the bar in every functional attribute, be it with storytelling narratives, production values, marketing, promotions, or outreach. It took meticulous planning to mount such a scale of a cricket tournament, a domain to which we were relatively new from the experience perspective.

"But with the wholehearted support of our actors who are regular players of the sport, we could pull this off with a roaring success. We are indeed overwhelmed and grateful for the enthusiasm with which the film industry members supported us on their much-deserved rest day from work. The matches were played with a keen sense of sincerity and sharp competitiveness. The bonhomie I witnessed on the turf was truly remarkable. The spontaneous response and applause encourage us to create more avenues of honouring the efforts and bonding amongst the entire fraternity of performing arts," said Niraj Tantiya, director, KLIKK.

FOOD

CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF THE MONSOON WITH COMFORT FOOD AT SAPTAPADI'S BARSHA MONGOL FOOD FESTIVAL

The Saptapadi chain of restaurants, renowned for authentic Bengali cuisine, has launched a new menu to pay homage to the monsoon. The Saptapadi Barsha Mongol festival is

a culinary celebration that brings together the nostalgia and romance of the rains with the rich flavours of traditional Bengali food. The new menu is delicately curated to include typical Bengali monsoon favourites.

From *khichuri* and pulao combos to fish fry and *peyaji*, each dish is designed to bring the joy and essence of the rainy season straight to your plate! t2 checked the new spread out. Here are some of our top picks:



This Beer Batter Loitha is enough to make you re-evaluate all you know about fried fish! *Lote maach* (Bombay Duck) is marinated with ginger-garlic paste, enhanced with fruit beer, *ajwain*, salt and pepper, and then deep-fried to create a tender, juicy fish stick.



We've had plenty of prawn cutlets before, but have you ever tried chicken and prawn in a cutlet at the same time? This Murgi Chingri Morich Cutlet contains both *chingri* and *murgi*, added to cheese and green chilli. Dip in a sauce of your choice!



"The people of Calcutta always love food that reminds them of home. That is what we have tried to create with this new menu: give them familiarity, but with innovation. Summer can be cruel in India, but the rain always brings peace and new hope. That is why we say *borsha mongol niye ashe* and we have named the fest after this spirit," said Saptapadi founder, chef Ranjan Biswas.

What: Saptapadi Barsha Mongol festival
Where: All Saptapadi outlets
On till: August 12
Timings: Noon to 4pm (lunch); 6pm to 10pm (dinner)
Pocket Pinch: ₹600-plus for two



Bhola Puronpur comes with a deboned *bhola maach*, stuffed with a mixture of prawn and *bhetki*, which is then grilled and shallow-fried. The overall smoky texture greatly complements the flavourful blend of the fish.



This *kochuri* combo contains two decadent Maangsher Kochuris and Keema Mete Chochhori. *Luchi* and *mangsho* have been a hot Bong favourite for ages, and this is an upgrade to that delish fusion.



Have you ever tried fish *tikka masala*? Get ready to depart from traditional *tikka masala* dishes with this Chitol Chingri Pulao and Bhetki Tikka Masala spread. The pulao, which also has hints of mint and green chilli, is made with boneless *chitol maachh* and *kucho chingri*. As for the *bhetki*, you've got to try it to know what it's all about!



We all love a good helping of *pulao* with *kosha mangsho*, and this Morog Pulao and Mutton Bhuna combo takes this delicacy to the next level. The pulao is made of *gobindobhog* rice to which *dum*-cooked chicken drumsticks are added.



Rainy days are incomplete without *khichuri*, which is a classic Bangali staple. This *khichuri* combo comes with everything the quintessential Bengali loves: *ilish bhaja*, *begun bhaja*, *aloo dum*, *papad* and chutney!



You can't have end-of-summer desserts minus mangoes, and this Paka Aam er Payesh serves as the perfect wrap-up to your meal.



The sweet goodness of this Atar Kheer made the dish our instant favourite! The *kheer* is made of custard apple pulp, which is then reduced with milk to create a *raabri*-like finish. We love!

Subhalakshmi Dey
 Pictures: Biswajit Kundu

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POWER COUPLE PARESH MAITY AND JAYASRI BURMAN TALK LOVE, MARRIAGE AND RESPECT WITH t2



Paresh Maity and Jayasri Burman at Taj Guras Kutir Resort & Spa in Gangtok

They both talk unhurriedly and with a sense of poise. The summary of what they say is one of wisdom and experience.

Artists Paresh Maity and Jayasri Burman. t2 caught up with the lovely couple during a retreat at Taj Guras Kutir Resort & Spa in Gangtok. Excerpts.

How many years has it been? What has the journey been like?

Paresh Maity: Nearly 39 years!

Jayasri Burman: The years have gone by like a wind. I was telling him just the other day that 'aami bujhai parim na etogulo bocchor ki bhabe ure gelo'. I still can't believe that we, *ei bhabe*, spent these many years together. I sometimes feel why time has to rush past like this.

Do you feel though that the journey has just begun?

Maity: A lot of people talk about my achievements in painting, but I say I haven't started yet. So, this relationship is also like that. It's just started. It's very new.

Burman: I think in every moment there is a journey, just

like the temperature fluctuates depending on the time of the day. And, because we both are artists, that journey is very intense.

How did you meet?

Maity: In my life, everything started very spontaneously. I never realised how it happened.

Burman: We met through our parents and relatives. My father, brothers and uncles knew Paresh better than me. They were terribly fond of him. In fact, my father was so fond of him that when I was younger, I would get jealous. He would tell me this guy is very promising.

He would be so effusive that I would feel *aamra ki kaj kormo kori na?! (Laughs)*

Did you ever tell Pareshda that you were jealous of him?

Burman: Honestly, that I could never be! (Laughs)

Was there a formal proposal?

Maity: It was very spontaneous. Even when I start with a painting today, I don't know how it'll pan out. I have been in Delhi for 34 years, but I don't know how I landed up there.

What was your first impression of Jayasri?

Maity: I felt she was very mature. I am not mature at all and I feel I am just like a kid.

Burman: He is unbelievably intelligent, focused and wise, but at the same time, he has a child-like character. That's why he is Paresh Maity. When he smiles, there is so much innocence. There is no guile and I think

Picasso said that even at the age of 90, he wanted to be a child. My best friends are always the children because they don't come with preconceived ideas and I believe I create like a child without any preconceived ideas and thoughts. I don't think where I would exhibit this. I just paint like a child. I really enjoy. In art, you must enjoy yourself first — Paresh Maity

that's what I was attracted to. There is no pretension in that laugh. He's always had that.

Maity: Picasso said that even at the age of 90, he wanted to be a child. My best friends are always the children because they don't come with preconceived ideas and I believe I create like a child without any preconceived ideas and thoughts. I don't think where I would exhibit this. I just paint like a child. I really enjoy. In art, you must enjoy yourself first. Picasso, till the last day of his life, was painting and changing and the change was very spontaneous. I don't think any artist in the world had such quality.

How has the marriage evolved over the years?

Maity: The journey has been very nice. It's been cooperative...

Are you both always on the same page?

Burman: I have learnt from my parents that you have to respect someone who is trying to do something on their own and

with a lot of passion and feeling. My mother always respected my father. There are a lot of things that I want to discuss with him, but when I see him so passionate about his work, it's a sacrifice for my love for him. I am telling you the truth. When I look at him as an artist, *pagole'r moto chhobi aankhhe*, I might have so much to talk about, but I don't. I maintain this with everyone in my life. I don't interfere and I am not inquisitive, but that doesn't mean I am not intelligent.

Secondly, because I am an artist, I understand space. If I quarrel, it all becomes extremely negative. You are intelligent if you keep your calm and strive for a happy family. That is my mantra. There is no point tarnishing what we worship, our art. For me, it is a kind of meditation and it helps me a lot. We all go through a lot. Life is not easy. We all have to deal with multiple things, but I don't believe in burdening someone else with it. I would love to find a solution and that gives me a lot of happiness. I love my own space and I respect his space. I love what he loves.

Pareshda, how have you seen Jayasri grow as an artist?

Maity: She has grown in her own way. If you notice our paintings, it is like the South Pole and North Pole. We have absolutely different styles. She has grown with her own imagination and created her own language and world. It is very important for any creative person to create a new language. Then your identity gets established.

What have you learned from each other?

Maity: She is very family-oriented.

Burman: I have learned to focus and cut off all that is happening around when painting. It's all about practice. I often jot things to remember on a piece of paper while painting, but my focus is fully on the canvas, but I think we (women) have the extra power to juggle things too... It's not easy for everyone to handle. You might be a world-renowned artist, but if your family is not a happy unit, there's bound to be grief and sorrow. I don't want that. I take care of my family, but I am very focused on my work.

We have a good understanding and we respect each other a lot. Often logic doesn't work. If you love someone but try to employ logic all the time, it might rot. It's preferable that you don't do that. Prioritise love.

Saione Chakraborty

DIRECTOR ADITYA SARPOTDAR DECODES THE SUCCESS OF MUNJYA, WHICH IS NOW SITTING PRETTY IN THE RS 100-CRORE CLUB

Munjya, made on a budget of ₹30 crore, has hit a worldwide box-office haul of ₹130 crore, and is a bona fide sleeper hit in a year which has seen some huge Bollywood films tanking miserably. With the film, starring Sharvari and Abhay Verma in the lead, still running in theatres, a sequel in store and a potential appearance of Munjya — the monster derived from Maharashtrian culture around which the film's primary action is built — in *Stree 2* next month, t2 chatted with director Aditya Sarpotdar.

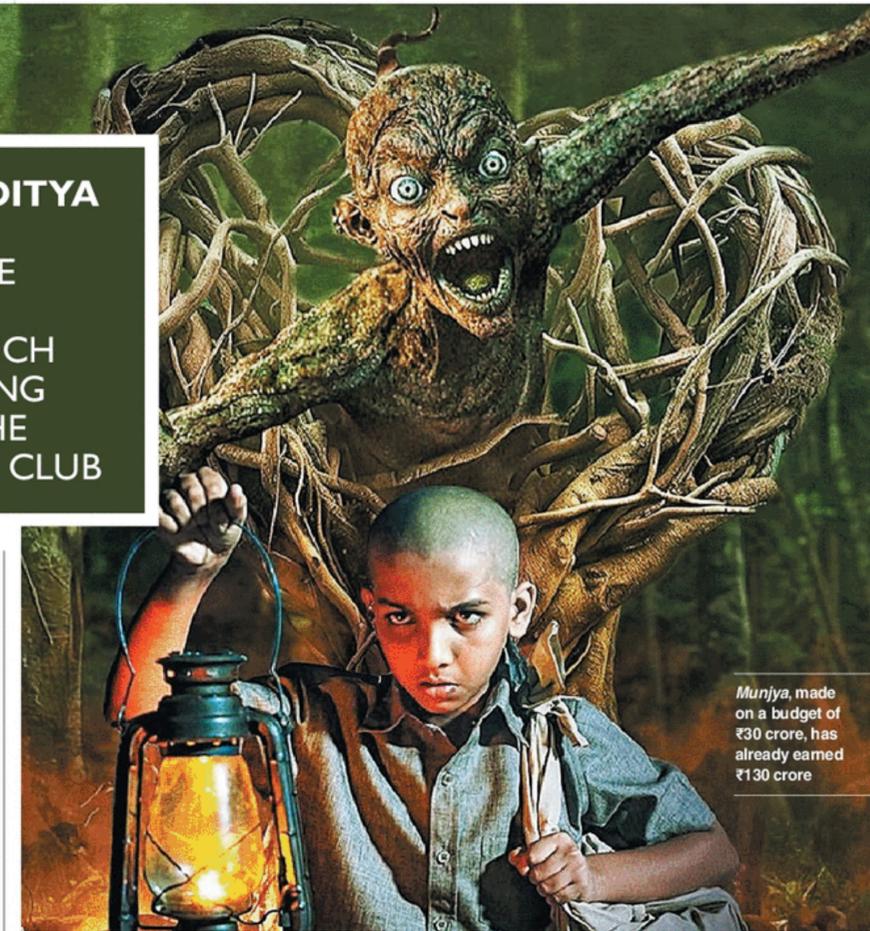
Munjya is in the Rs 100-crore club, only the fourth so far this year and the most modest in terms of budget. What are the primary emotions like as we speak?

It is the audience that has truly been the flag bearer of this film. Before its release, we hardly promoted *Munjya* for two-and-a-half weeks. When you have such a short promotional campaign, you really hope that the merit of the film speaks for itself and that the audience that watches the film spreads the word. The word-of-mouth promotion has been the biggest reason the film has done well. It has made us realise that a film's promotional campaign can get you the first weekend audience, but post that, you have to have a script that has the power to pull in audiences.

For *Munjya*, the audience that came into the theatres in the first weekend in big numbers went out there and spoke so highly of it that it got the film bigger numbers. I can't be more grateful that the audience truly made this film its own.

The success of Munjya is a big relief for the Hindi film industry. What does it mean to you personally?

A lot of young filmmakers have reached out and told me that the huge success of *Munjya* gives them more confidence to make films because they have good scripts but not big actors. I am so glad that *Munjya*, in its own way, has been able to empower so many



Munjya, made on a budget of ₹30 crore, has already earned ₹130 crore



Aditya Sarpotdar

filmmakers to take that mental leap.

I was also very overwhelmed when I got a lot of phone calls from single-screen theatre owners in small towns — the B and C centres, so to speak — saying that they were

And this in a year when so many big-budget films with big names have bitten the dust...

This year, we have mid-budget films that took off initially at the box office, but unlike *Munjya*, they weren't able to sustain the momentum. For example, *Madgaon Express* (directed by actor Kunal Kemmu) was an interesting film that was loved by the audience but somehow it could not make it beyond the Rs 50-crore mark.

For us, that was the benchmark. When we put *Munjya* out there, we felt that even if it does as much as *Madgaon Express*, it will be more than enough. But what our film has done has been exceptional and phenomenal.

The takeaway is that people

The horror-comedy genre lends itself only to the theatrical viewing space. We enjoy those films where a packed audience collectively gasps at a scare or collectively laughs at a joke. We look forward to such collective viewing experiences, whether it is a film, an event or a sport

barely surviving earlier, but that *Munjya* has got them the footholds that will now enable them to sustain. That this film has allowed so many theatres to revive themselves after a big slump is huge. It makes me happy and proud.

are not looking at cinema as big film or small film. People are not looking at films in terms of their budget or their star power. People want to watch good films, they want to have fun and they want to enjoy a clean film with the entire family. In my visits to theatres, I

People are not looking at films in terms of their budget or their star power. People want to watch good films, they want to have fun and they want to enjoy a clean film with the entire family. In my visits to theatres, I have consistently seen big numbers coming from family units. Groups of four, eight or 12 and huge extended families are coming in because they all believe that Munjya is a film that everyone can watch together

have consistently seen big numbers coming from family units. Groups of four, eight or 12 and huge extended families are coming in because they all believe that this is a film that everyone can watch together. Nowadays, very rarely do you have films that an entire family — from a young boy to the grandparents — can enjoy together.

Munjya worked because it had the nostalgic pull of the *Stree* horror-comedy universe and also had the ability to pull in audiences as a standalone film.

Would you agree?

This question reminds me of an incident when I was on my way to the first day of shoot for *Munjya*. My producer Dinesh Vijan (of Maddock Films) called me and said: 'I trust that you have a film on paper that has the capacity to do the (box office) numbers that *Stree* did, that has the capacity to surprise the audience the way *Stree* did. So give it your best shot and let's see if this happens.'

Munjya has now been running for a month in theatres and what he told me, I see that happening every day. It all comes down to the fact that a film that is made with all heart, with a lot of confidence and with a really strong script will work. And if the producer and the director together believe in their film from the first moment till the end, they will invariably have a winner.

When a standalone film like *Munjya* built in a huge horror-comedy universe like this does well, then it makes that universe bigger. When I stood in the audience during a show of *Munjya* and saw people screaming, hooting and clapping in the end-credits scene when Varun Dhawan comes in as 'Bhediya' (which is also part of the same universe), it gave me so much joy.

Munjya has set up the right ambience for *Stree 2* (releasing on August 15) and *Stree 2*, in turn, will set up the right ambience for the next film in this horror-comedy universe to follow. It is very exciting.

What do you think makes this genre such a favourite right now?

I think this genre lends itself only to the theatrical viewing space. We enjoy those films where a packed audience collectively gasps at a scare or collectively laughs at a joke. We look forward to such collective viewing experiences, whether it is a film, an event or a sport.

Also, horror-comedies like *Munjya* that are derived from folklore have huge potential and I am surprised we haven't made many of them yet. Such stories are local, regional and relatable and yet have a hyperreal quality to them.

This genre, in my opinion, also works because you can surprise the audience — you can set them up for a scare and then suddenly switch to a laugh. It is tricky but if you can pull it off, there is nothing like it.

What is the future of Munjya and what is the future for you apart from Munjya?

The future of *Munjya* would definitely be a sequel. The character could make an appearance in the next film in the franchise (*Stree 2*) and that is something very exciting to look forward to.

I have just had a release with another horror-comedy called *Kakuda* (playing on Zee5). There is a film called *Vampires of Vijayanagar* (starring Ayushmann Khurrana and Rashmika Mandanna) which has just been announced, and which I am directing. It is in the same horror-comedy universe as *Stree*, *Bhediya* and *Munjya*.

Priyanka Roy

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Do you feel though that the journey has just begun?

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Burman: I think in every moment there is a journey, just

like the temperature fluctuates depending on the time of the day. And, because we both are artists, that journey is very intense.

How did you meet?

Maity: In my life, everything started very spontaneously. I never realised how it happened.

Burman: We met through our parents and relatives. My father, brothers and uncles knew Paresh better than me. They were terribly fond of him. In fact, my father was so fond of him that when I was younger, I would get jealous. He would tell me this guy is very promising.

He would be so effusive that I would feel *aamra ki kaj kormo kori na?!* (Laughs)

Did you ever tell Pareshda that you were jealous of him?

Burman: Honestly, that I could never be! (Laughs)

Was there a formal proposal?
Maity: It was very spontaneous. Even when I start with a painting today, I don't know how it'll pan out. I have been in Delhi for 34 years, but I don't know how I landed up there.

What was your first impression of Jayasri?

Maity: I felt she was very mature. I am not mature at all and I feel I am just like a kid.

Burman: He is unbelievably intelligent, focused and wise, but at the same time, he has a child-like character. That's why he is Paresh Maity. When he smiles, there is so much innocence. There is no guile and I think

Picasso said that even at the age of 90, he wanted to be a child. My best friends are always the children because they don't come with preconceived ideas and I believe I create like a child without any preconceived ideas and thoughts. I don't think where I would exhibit this. I just paint like a child. I really enjoy. In art, you must enjoy yourself first — Paresh Maity

that's what I was attracted to. There is no pretension in that laugh. He's always had that.

Maity: Picasso said that even at the age of 90, he wanted to be a child. My best friends are always the children because they don't come with preconceived ideas and I believe I create like a child without any preconceived ideas and thoughts. I don't think where I would exhibit this. I just paint like a child. I really enjoy. In art, you must enjoy yourself first. Picasso, till the last day of his life, was painting and changing and the change was very spontaneous. I don't think any artist in the world had such quality.

How has the marriage evolved over the years?

Maity: The journey has been very nice. It's been cooperative...

Are you both always on the same page?

Burman: I have learnt from my parents that you have to respect someone who is trying to do something on their own and

with a lot of passion and feeling. My mother always respected my father. There are a lot of things that I want to discuss with him, but when I see him so passionate about his work, it's a sacrifice for my love for him. I am telling you the truth. When I look at him as an artist, *pagole'r moto chhobi aankhhe*, I might have so much to talk about, but I don't. I maintain this with everyone in my life. I don't interfere and I am not inquisitive, but that doesn't mean I am not intelligent.

Secondly, because I am an artist, I understand space. If I quarrel, it all becomes extremely negative. You are intelligent if you keep your calm and strive for a happy family. That is my mantra. There is no point tarnishing what we worship, our art. For me, it is a kind of meditation and it helps me a lot. We all go through a lot. Life is not easy. We all have to deal with multiple things, but I don't believe in burdening someone else with it. I would love to find a solution and that gives me a lot of happiness. I love my own space and I respect his space. I love what he loves.

Pareshda, how have you seen Jayasri grow as an artist?

Maity: She has grown in her own way. If you notice our paintings, it is like the South Pole and North Pole. We have absolutely different styles. She has grown with her own imagination and created her own language and world. It is very important for any creative person to create a new language. Then your identity gets established.

What have you learned from each other?

Maity: She is very family-oriented.

Burman: I have learned to focus and cut off all that is happening around when painting. It's all about practice. I often jot things to remember on a piece of paper while painting, but my focus is fully on the canvas, but I think we (women) have the extra power to juggle things too... It's not easy for everyone to handle. You might be a world-renowned artist, but if your family is not a happy unit, there's bound to be grief and sorrow. I don't want that. I take care of my family, but I am very focused on my work.

We have a good understanding and we respect each other a lot. Often logic doesn't work. If you love someone but try to employ logic all the time, it might rot. It's preferable that you don't do that. Prioritise love.

Saione Chakraborty

DIRECTOR ADITYA SARPOTDAR DECODES THE SUCCESS OF MUNJYA, WHICH IS NOW SITTING PRETTY IN THE RS 100-CRORE CLUB

Munjya, made on a budget of ₹30 crore, has hit a worldwide box-office haul of ₹130 crore, and is a bona fide sleeper hit in a year which has seen some huge Bollywood films tanking miserably. With the film, starring Sharvari and Abhay Verma in the lead, still running in theatres, a sequel in store and a potential appearance of Munjya — the monster derived from Maharashtrian culture around which the film's primary action is built — in *Stree 2* next month, t2 chatted with director Aditya Sarpotdar.

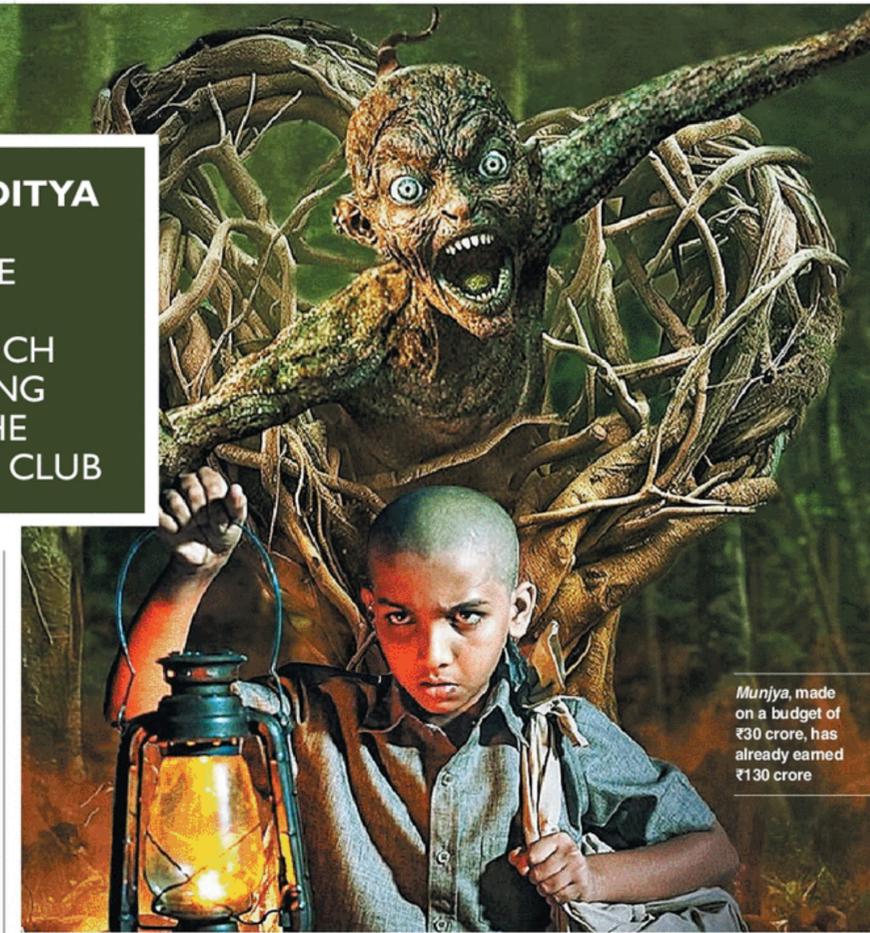
Munjya is in the Rs 100-crore club, only the fourth so far this year and the most modest in terms of budget. What are the primary emotions like as we speak?

It is the audience that has truly been the flag bearer of this film. Before its release, we hardly promoted *Munjya* for two-and-a-half weeks. When you have such a short promotional campaign, you really hope that the merit of the film speaks for itself and that the audience that watches the film spreads the word. The word-of-mouth promotion has been the biggest reason the film has done well. It has made us realise that a film's promotional campaign can get you the first weekend audience, but post that, you have to have a script that has the power to pull in audiences.

For *Munjya*, the audience that came into the theatres in the first weekend in big numbers went out there and spoke so highly of it that it got the film bigger numbers. I can't be more grateful that the audience truly made this film its own.

The success of Munjya is a big relief for the Hindi film industry. What does it mean to you personally?

A lot of young filmmakers have reached out and told me that the huge success of *Munjya* gives them more confidence to make films because they have good scripts but not big actors. I am so glad that *Munjya*, in its own way, has been able to empower so many



Munjya, made on a budget of ₹30 crore, has already earned ₹130 crore



Aditya Sarpotdar

filmmakers to take that mental leap.

I was also very overwhelmed when I got a lot of phone calls from single-screen theatre owners in small towns — the B and C centres, so to speak — saying that they were

And this in a year when so many big-budget films with big names have bitten the dust...

This year, we have mid-budget films that took off initially at the box office, but unlike *Munjya*, they weren't able to sustain the momentum. For example, *Madgaon Express* (directed by actor Kunal Kemmu) was an interesting film that was loved by the audience but somehow it could not make it beyond the Rs 50-crore mark.

For us, that was the benchmark. When we put *Munjya* out there, we felt that even if it does as much as *Madgaon Express*, it will be more than enough. But what our film has done has been exceptional and phenomenal.

The takeaway is that people

The horror-comedy genre lends itself only to the theatrical viewing space. We enjoy those films where a packed audience collectively gasps at a scare or collectively laughs at a joke. We look forward to such collective viewing experiences, whether it is a film, an event or a sport

barely surviving earlier, but that *Munjya* has got them the footholds that will now enable them to sustain. That this film has allowed so many theatres to revive themselves after a big slump is huge. It makes me happy and proud.

are not looking at cinema as big film or small film. People are not looking at films in terms of their budget or their star power. People want to watch good films, they want to have fun and they want to enjoy a clean film with the entire family. In my visits to theatres, I

Would you agree?

This question reminds me of an incident when I was on my way to the first day of shoot for *Munjya*. My producer Dinesh Vijan (of Maddock Films) called me and said: 'I trust that you have a film on paper that has the capacity to do the (box office) numbers that *Stree* did, that has the capacity to surprise the audience the way *Stree* did. So give it your best shot and let's see if this happens.'

Munjya has now been running for a month in theatres and what he told me, I see that happening every day. It all comes down to the fact that a film that is made with all heart, with a lot of confidence and with a really strong script will work. And if the producer and the director together believe in their film from the first moment till the end, they will invariably have a winner.

When a standalone film like *Munjya* built in a huge horror-comedy universe like this does well, then it makes that universe bigger. When I stood in the audience during a show of *Munjya* and saw people screaming, hooting and clapping in the end-credits scene when Varun Dhawan comes in as 'Bhediya' (which is also part of the same universe), it gave me so much joy.

Munjya has set up the right ambience for *Stree 2* (releasing on August 15) and *Stree 2*, in turn, will set up the right ambience for the next film in this horror-comedy universe to follow. It is very exciting.

What do you think makes this genre such a favourite right now?

I think this genre lends itself only to the theatrical viewing space. We enjoy those films where a packed audience collectively gasps at a scare or collectively laughs at a joke. We look forward to such collective viewing experiences, whether it is a film, an event or a sport.

Also, horror-comedies like *Munjya* that are derived from folklore have huge potential and I am surprised we haven't made many of them yet. Such stories are local, regional and relatable and yet have a hyperreal quality to them.

This genre, in my opinion, also works because you can surprise the audience — you can set them up for a scare and then suddenly switch to a laugh. It is tricky but if you can pull it off, there is nothing like it.

What is the future of Munjya and what is the future for you apart from Munjya?

The future of *Munjya* would definitely be a sequel. The character could make an appearance in the next film in the franchise (*Stree 2*) and that is something very exciting to look forward to.

I have just had a release with another horror-comedy called *Kakuda* (playing on Zee5). There is a film called *Vampires of Vijayanagar* (starring Ayushmann Khurrana and Rashmika Mandanna) which has just been announced, and which I am directing. It is in the same horror-comedy universe as *Stree*, *Bhediya* and *Munjya*.

Priyanka Roy

I have learned to focus and cut off all that is happening around when painting. It's all about practice. I often jot things to remember on a piece of paper while painting, but my focus is fully on the canvas, but I think we (women) have the extra power to juggle things too.... It's not easy for everyone to handle. You might be a world-renowned artist, but if your family is not a happy unit, there's bound to be grief and sorrow — Jayasri Burman

B.C. by Johny Hart



Luann by Greg Evans



Peanuts by Charles Schulz



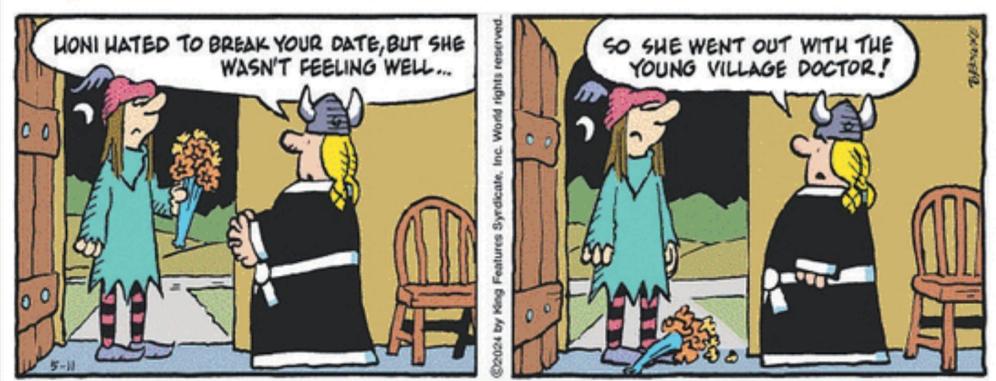
The Wizard of Id by Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



Flash Gordon by Dan Schkade



Hagar the Horrible by Chris Browne



Blondie by Dean Young



Dennis the Menace



Doonesbury Classics by Garry Trudeau



11082

SUDOKU MODERATE

			9					
2		8	6					
	4		2	8	6			
	6						4	
5			4		9	6		
7				2				
9	1		8	4				
		2	1	8				
6		7						

Fill in the 9x9 square grid with the numbers one to nine. The numbers should be arranged in such a way that each row, column and mini-grid contains one of each number. Solution to Sudoku 11080 is on the right

8	5	2	9	6	3	7	1	4
1	7	9	4	5	8	3	6	2
3	6	4	2	1	7	9	8	5
4	1	3	5	7	2	6	9	8
7	2	8	6	4	9	1	5	3
5	9	6	8	3	1	2	4	7
6	8	7	1	2	4	5	3	9
2	4	1	3	9	5	8	7	6
9	3	5	7	8	6	4	2	1

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11083

SUDOKU TOUGH

9			6			3		
	1					2		
			5	4				
	8	7				6		
			5	7	1			2
		2				4	5	
		4	3	2				
	9							
7			4					8

Fill in the 9x9 square grid with the numbers one to nine. The numbers should be arranged in such a way that each row, column and mini-grid contains one of each number. Solution to Sudoku 11081 is on the right

4	2	3	9	1	7	8	6	5
6	1	7	5	8	3	9	2	4
5	8	9	2	4	6	1	7	3
9	3	6	4	7	8	2	5	1
1	5	4	3	9	2	6	8	7
2	7	8	6	5	1	3	4	9
7	9	1	8	2	4	5	3	6
8	6	5	7	3	9	4	1	2
3	4	2	1	6	5	7	9	8

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14398

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9					10		
11				12			
			13				
14	15		16		17	18	
19		20	21	22	23		
			24				
25				26		27	
28			29				
30							

ACROSS

1 Maybe Leo and Zoe's faith in God somehow constant? (4,2,3,6)
 9 Firm handle (5,4)
 10 Trouble over sauce (5)
 11 Matthau stereotyped, somewhat unsmiling (7)
 12 Run through both sides of item with China news chief (7)
 13 No end of sheep in spring meadow (3)
 14 Engineer iciness cuts into (7)
 17 California kid joins you, heading off for deer (7)
 19 Partners wearing nothing from the waist up all the time?(3-4)
 22 Last third of September initially sent Queen and King crazy (7)
 24 Paddle boat edging away, meeting little resistance (3)
 25 Essentially fear getting trapped in open gorge (7)
 26 Busy one taking time with husband ahead of leave (2,3,2)

DOWN

28 Now and then, jelly is the best (5)
 29 Coming back, spots entertaining artist with hot food (9)
 30 Next to Wimpy Bar, reportedly cycled in Dorothy's way (6,5,4)

1 Studio may notice struggling TV show (9,6)
 2 Spurs game held up by commercials (5)
 3 Odd person bored by Edrich at first, and batsmen like Boycott? (7)
 4 Belts and backpacks? (7)
 5 Mournful English member going over first clue? (7)
 6 Remarkable person tackling intrusive photographer in writing (2,5)
 7 Sand in water is so unlike this clue! (9)
 8 Unwanted visitor to arrive after Mass in state of daft optimism (5-6-4)
 15 Pleasant canoeing around lake (9)
 16 I for one must sit on top of omnibus (3)
 18 Brilliant diamond? (3)
 20 Incorrectly, three and two wife omitted in addition (7)
 21 Fuss with black mint, perhaps (3,4)
 22 Working with Greek character to support British Airways (7)
 23 Ponder again on lean rump of pork (7)
 27 She inspires scoundrel hiding in central León? (5)

By arrangement with The Daily Telegraph

Jumble
 David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SSH LA
 ME OT P
 NC CH UR
 LE O VE V

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

THE HUNGRY GOLFERS FINISHED THE 18TH HOLE AND HEADED TO THE CLUBHOUSE FOR A ---

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Yesterdays' Jumbles: HOARD PRICE MATURE LAPTOP
 Answer: The man who knew he'd found his true love after their first kiss was — A LIP READER

14050

QUICK CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		8				
9				10		
			12			
11						
13	14			15	16	
			17			
18		19		20	21	22
23			24			
25		26			27	

ACROSS

1 Breathe out (4)
 3 Abbot, e.g. (4)
 6 Nocturnal bird (3)
 9 Joy (7)
 10 Adores (5)
 11 Fashion (5)
 12 Strengthen (7)
 13 Small mammal; search (6)
 15 Predicament (6)

DOWN

18 Attained (7)
 20 Footwear (5)
 23 Expertise (5)
 24 Whirlwind (7)
 25 Shake (3)
 26 Conservative (4)
 27 Badger burrow (4)

ACROSS

6 Apparent (7)
 7 Reduces (7)
 8 Centre (6)
 13 Predicted (7)
 14 Nomadic (7)
 16 Holiday centre (6)
 17 Journalist (6)
 19 English composer (5)
 21 Fad (5)
 22 Brief (5)

Yesterdays' solution

Across: 1 Rug; 3 Bee; 5 Teems; 8 Grabs; 9 Delight; 10 Task; 11 Princess; 13 Easier; 14 Melody; 17 Enormous; 19 Stem; 22 Intense; 23 Among; 24 Sings; 25 Yet; 26 Eat.
 Down: 1 Right; 2 Glasses; 3 Busy; 4 Endure; 5 Talented; 6 Eagle; 7 Satisfy; 12 Segments; 13 Enemies; 15 Outcome; 16 Surely; 18 Often; 20 Might; 21 Cast.

By arrangement with The Daily Telegraph

DECIPHERING 'TAUBA': FIVE TRACKS THAT STAND OUT.

Scan the QR to know more

A SPECIAL SCREENING OF MANIKBABUR MEGH WAS ARRANGED FOR RETIRED TEACHERS OF SOUTH POINT SCHOOL BY THE FILM'S EX-POINTER PRODUCER. A t2 EXCLUSIVE



Chandan Sen in *Manikbabur Megh*



(L-R) Director Abhinandan Banerjee, Chandan Sen, Baudhayan Mukherji, his daughter Aarsha and his wife and co-producer Monalisa Mukherji at the *Manikbabur Megh* screening for retired teachers of South Point School at PVR-INOX (South City)



Producer Baudhayan Mukherji interacts with his former teachers



Director Abhinandan Banerjee touches the feet of some of the retired teachers

A piece of cloud rained as a shower of blessings for Baudhayan Mukherji and his crew on Thursday evening. The former student of South Point School had arranged a screening of the film *Manikbabur Megh*, produced by his company Little Lamb Films, for retired teachers of his school.

Shepherded by members of the Care wing of Aspexs, the school alumni association, 55 senior citizens reached PVR-INOX (South City) for the 6pm show.

"It must be over 10 years when I had last watched a film in a theatre," said Shukla Karmakar, who taught in the kindergarten section and came from neighbouring Jodhpur Park. Aruna Gupta, a Sanskrit teacher who retired in 2006, also was "coming to a hall after ages".

Baudhayan, from the class of 1990, introduced the teachers to his wife and the film's co-producer Monalisa Mukherji and the director Abhinandan Banerjee.

The 96-minute cinematic ode to Manikbabu's solitary life that is mundane to the point of insignificance kept the audience riveted as the middle-aged pen pusher, who dozes in office amid a pile of unopened files and goes to sleep with a tattered copy of *Abol Tabol* by his pillow, who accepts every unfavourable turn of event

with silent stoicism, finally takes a leap of fantasy that is construed by people around him as nonsense.

When the film ends, it is a release — not into despair but into wish fulfillment, of an existential kind.

The lights came on and the credits rolled with a lilting song playing in the background penned by the director himself, the lyrics of which give voice to the laconic Manikbabu addressing his beloved cloud — the Manikbabu, who through the film communicates so little with people around him. Spotting the makers standing under the screen, there was applause but it was muted. The audience still seemed to be in a trance.

"*Ei chhobi ar amader nei, e ekhon apnader* (This film is not ours any more; it is yours now). Our means are limited. And we have spent it all on the film itself. So nothing is left to spend on publicity," Baudhayan addressed the audience emotionally.

Once the viewers trooped out of the semi-lit hall in silence and reached the foyer, they found their voice. "*Anabadya! E dhoroner chhobi dekhini* (Flawless! Haven't seen a film like this)," gushed Chandra Gupta, 76. "*Bolbar kono bhasha nei eto bhalo legechhe!* (No language to describe how much I liked it)," added retired mathematics teacher Sripurna

Chowdhury, 81.

Rama Basu, 82, who had retired in 2000, loved the scene where Manikbabu lay amid his plants on the rooftop. "I love gardening. I still tend to plants at my Narendrapur home," she said. She also had a special word for the soundscape. "You can almost feel the cloud approaching," said the daughter of yesteryear sound recordist Shyamsundar Ghosh. "My father used to work at New Theatres and had recorded songs with Hemanta Mukherjee and Sandhya Mukherjee."

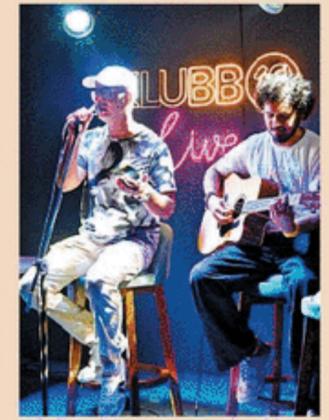
Bengali teacher Jayati Bhattacharya was even more eloquent. "The idea is so beautiful. And the acting is of such a high calibre — minimalistic. His expressions make up for the lack of words. It is not a film that you see and forget. The film showed us reality in a new light like *Pather Panchali* had done," she said.

The comparison with Ray's masterpiece (which was his debut too) made the 32-year-old debutant filmmaker blush in distinct discomfort. "*Ami parley matitey mishey jai* (If I could, I would sink to the ground)," he confided in t2, escaping soon after from the shower of adulation to a corner. "All I did was make a simple film. I have no pretensions to esoteric movie-making. People are writing reams on social media, clicking pictures of clouds, drawing sketches.... This response is overwhelming," said the bearded Birati boy, now settled in Mumbai, who conceived the film when he was 23 and made it at 26.

By then, Baudhayan had logged into a booking website and announced that even the next day's show at Nandan was houseful. "Eight days in a row. Even the weekend seats are almost gone," said the elated co-producer.

Taking his eyes off the mobile screen, and on spotting biology teacher Anuradha Goswami, he walked up to her. "It is a matter of pride for us that our student has produced such a film," the lady told him.

"I had this belief that our retired teachers would be able to relate to Manikbabu and his existence which is uniquely unremarkable. This film needs a kind of life experience and wisdom to be appreciated. When we were in school, we



Anirban Bhattacharya performs the promotional song of *Manikbabur Megh* at the music launch. (Pabitra Das)

MELODY PLUS

The soulful voice of Anirban Bhattacharya rent the evening air with a poignance and melody befitting the film.

The launch of the promotional song of *Manikbabur Megh* took place in end-June, ahead of the film's release, at a Gariahat rooftop cafe.

Tomar Amar Gojpo Hoto Jodi was penned by director Abhinandan Banerjee while he was shooting the film and was later set to tune by Subhajit Mukherjee. "I am not a professional singer. I sing only those songs that suit my limited vocal range. This is one of my favourite songs. I went to Bombay to record it, my first song recording there," said Anirban, who has also presented the film.

would look for validation from our teachers. Today, I again felt like being a student seeking validation," he told t2, as the teachers praised his bravery in backing such an offbeat film.

Chandan "Manikbabu" Sen, meanwhile, was obliging requests for photographs. "*Atmaprachar korte lojja kore*. (Self-publicity embarrasses me) I can't change at 62. I am taking these encounters like getting audience feedback after a play," said the stage veteran, who has been seen more in TV serials than in films in recent years. "*Apnar onek purashkar pawa uchit*," more than one retired teacher told him. He did not tell them that he had already bagged a Best Actor award in the Pacific Meridian Film Festival in Moscow, or that the film had won the Netpac award for the Best Asian Film at the Kolkata International Film Festival in 2022.

"This is the first time that an ex-student of ours has sponsored a film show for our retired teachers. They were floored by the brilliance of the film and touched by Baudhayan's sincerity — how he stood at the gate with his wife and daughter and handed over tickets to each of us and then stayed back to interact with us," said Sharmila Ray, a senior mentor of Care who had passed out of South Point in 1974 and retired as a mathematics teacher in 2020.

Sudeshna Banerjee

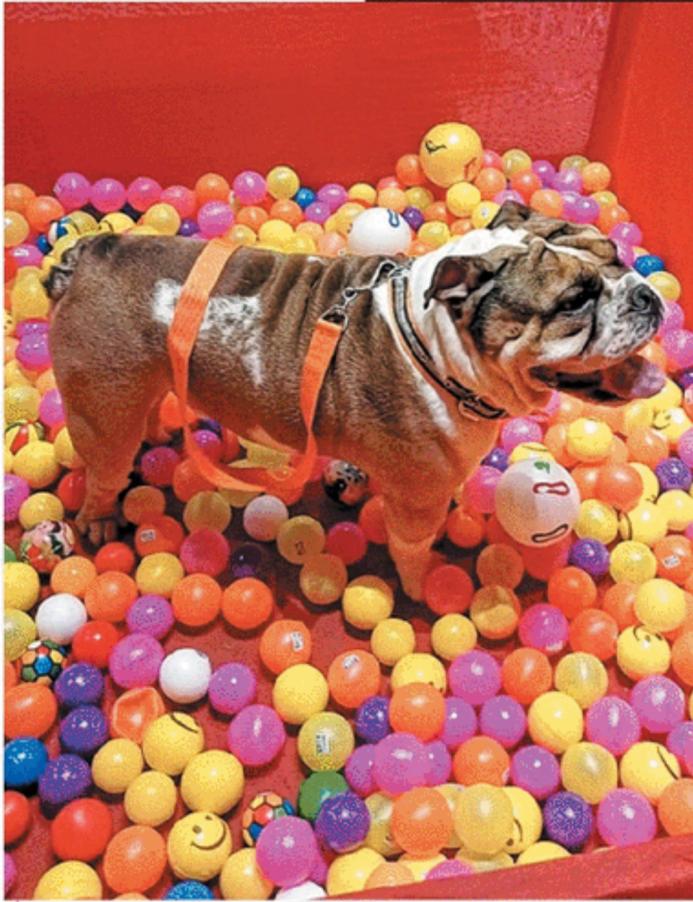
Pictures: B Halder



Producer Baudhayan Mukherji hands over tickets to the Aspexs Care wing volunteers before the screening as his wife and co-producer Monalisa (right) looks on

Chandan Sen being congratulated by the retired teachers after the screening

I liked/ did not like Manikbabur Megh because... Tell t2@abp.in



WOOFSTOCK KOLKATA SAW HAPPY FURRY FACES. t2 JOINED IN THE FUN

Thankful Animals, a non-profit welfare group, organised their debut pet event, Woofstock Kolkata, at Bishnu Bijoli Gardens (near Ruby Hospital) on the first weekend of July. What made the event special is that we saw a lot of indie pet parents come in with their furry friends and it helped spread awareness about adopting indies and strays. With the alarming number of animal abuse and abandonment cases, it's become the need of the hour to give them homes. The event had free entry for the indies and people loved it. At the event which had Heads up for Tails as the gifting partner and Pawsh Purrfect as the grooming partner — the pets loved the delish treats, goodies to play with, their new blue tail and fur, the ball pit and put their best paws forward at the fashion show. The four-legged pooches had a day to remember!

"It was great to see so many pets and their parents come and enjoy themselves to the fullest! We are hoping to raise awareness for indie adoption and other Thankful Animals welfare initiatives among the pet community. Also looking forward to more volunteers joining our group, especially in the rescues and fosterings along with other initiatives," said Sreyashi Kar, founder of Thankful Animals. Snapshots from the pawsome event.

Sramana Ray
Pictures: Biswajit Kundu



Mousumi Palit with Reeo stole the show. "I've been to a lot of dog shows but this kind of an event was a first for Reeo and he loved socialising," said pet mom Mousumi.



Jia Roychowdhury and Oggy the Shih Tzu dropped by. "Oggy loved the treats, the ball pit and the cool outfits," said Jia.



Bidisha Roy, the owner of Bishnu Bijoli Gardens, with Jerry. "This was the first time we hosted a pet event like this and I loved it. I loved the way it was organised and how the pet parents were engaged with their pets and they socialised. I'm hoping to host more such pet events at our venue," she shared with t2.



"He was very excited and happy to make new friends. He loved socialising and walking the ramp. I was happy to see that people are adopting so many indies," said Risheeka Arnab Dass who came with Tuffy.



Chhotu the Rottweiler and Oslo the Siberian Husky were spotted having some fun



Juno and mum Jayati Biswas loved the event! "I was skeptical about whether Juno will enjoy socialising but it was a pleasant surprise to see her love it! My younger daughter rescued her from a litter found in Camac Street. Indies are great, they are cute, smart, intelligent and healthy and I think they bring in so much positivity. People should adopt them. Juno loved going around seeing other dogs, was on leash but looked around and loved the stalls that had dresses," said Jayati.



This furry buddy looked dapper for the fashion show



Sucharita Dey with her adopted Meow got a lot of love from dog parents too!

Sreyashi's adopted bulldog Gugul had some fun in the ball pit



Sreyashee Bhaumik of Pawsh Purrfect turned some fur blue at the event!

Pet Mama's treats were all gobbled up



Some pawsome outfits spotted at the event!



Sara's Biryani at the HUFT stall had lip-smacking meals for the pets



Fur baby Coco with mom Dolpy Goswami

THE ORIENT EXPRESS HAS SOMETHING NEW IN STORE. WE HAVE THE DEETS

Umma Through the Woods of Afternoon, a song about a child exploring the woods in the afternoon, composed by guitar virtuosi Amyt Datta and the late Monojit Datta, and *Khubsurat haqiqat*, composed and written by Mainak Nag Chowdhury (featuring Ivy Banerjee on vocals and Matt Keegan on baritone, soprano and tenor saxophone) are the latest projects by Calcutta-based band The Orient Express, who will soon release six more tracks within a few months.

"We wanted to pay tribute to our guitar gurus Monojit Datta and Amyt Datta, reviving the Latin music scene in the city. A few of the songs are based on their compositions and some of our own. However, each has a story to tell, with the motive to revive the roots of Latin music, which in itself has been revolutionary in terms of soundscape," said Mainak.

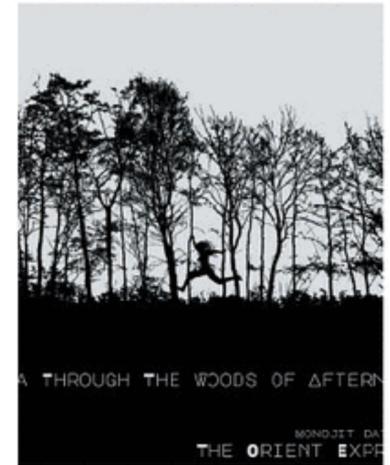
Monojit Datta's The Orient Express has as members Dwaipayan Saha on vocals, djembe, congas, bongos, triangle and timbale; Debopratim Baksi on congas, bata drum and timbale; Vishal Iyer on electric and acoustic guitars; Bodhisattwa Ghosh on electric guitar; and Mainak Nag Chowdhury on the electric 5 string and 6 string bass, nylon



The Orient Express performing *Umma Through The Woods of Afternoon* at Little Bit Sober. Picture: Instagram (@theorientexpress)



Matt Keegan



Cover of *Umma Through the Woods of Afternoon*

string and acoustic steel string guitars (he is also the lyricist). "We've realised that people's attention span has shortened and to ensure that music doesn't die out, we've tried to express ourselves through a couple of singles that'll keep them hooked. Nothing could have been better than paying tribute to our gurus," said Mainak.

The historical aspect of the singles: They were recorded at HMV Studio, once a buzzing spot for music aficionados. "It was memorable. We almost stayed in the studio for days to record the music and we felt deeply connected to the music scene of Bengal," Mainak told t2.

While *Umma Through the*

Woods of Afternoon explores a beautiful story, *Khubsurat haqiqat*, the band's latest release, features Ivy Banerjee on vocals and it blends qawwali, Sufi and Indian classical with Latin-based music. The lyrics have touched our hearts and made us eager for their upcoming single — *Zaherili hai tu*, which will be released mid-September. "I wanted this particular vocal texture that no one but Ivy has. Maybe

the song wouldn't be as full of life and bittersweet pain if it weren't for her and, of course, Matt's contributions," said Mainak.

Sramana Ray

Pictures: The Orient Express



Cover of *Khubsurat Haqiqat*



(L-R) Mainak Nag Chowdhury, Ivy Banerjee, Sourav Chatterjee, Debabrata Majumder (sound engineer at HMV) and Debopratim Baksi at HMV Studio while recording *Khubsurat haqiqat*

Indie artistes Iqlipse Nova and Anubha Bajaj have released a track titled *Savera* (Sony Music India). Apart from making strides in the indie pop music scene, they've gifted the audience with a soul-soothing number with heartwarming lyrics. *Savera* is about that one person you share your good times with. A t2 chat with Iqlipse and Anubha.

How was your experience collaborating with each other?

Anubha: I've had a great time working with Iqlipse; it was a balanced collaboration.

Iqlipse: I discovered Anubha on Instagram and I've always loved her work. One day she went "live" and I joined in. I asked if she was up for a collaboration and she said she'd love to jam with me and see if something good comes up. We sat with each other for three hours, and nothing came up... the moment I was about to leave, she came up with a melody that made it to the final song.

What's the concept of the song?

Iqlipse: Whenever there's something happening in our lives, especially something good, we call up this one person who is very special. It can be your mother, father, friend or partner. One cannot imagine life without this person. That became the hook of the song, where this individual is like sunlight in your life.

How would you define your journey as indie artistes?

INDIE ARTISTES IQLIPSE NOVA AND ANUBHA BAJAJ TALK ABOUT THEIR SOUL-SOOTHING NUMBER — SAVERA



Iqlipse Nova



Anubha Bajaj

Iqlipse: I started in college, which dates back to 2017. I wasn't good at all and faced a lot of criticism. Then I trained and released a song called *Mera safar*, which went viral on Instagram. I think things change when you focus on yourself and your craft. If you do it well, things fall into place.

Anubha: I've always loved music since I was a kid. I've been curious about how to play a bunch of instruments. I was just 12 years old when I started to learn how to play the guitar. I used to watch a lot of YouTube tutorials to find out how things work. I never had a clear idea

about how I'd build my career in music, but I always knew it was my passion. Eventually, I started taking formal training in both guitar and piano and fell in love with production as well. Then I started to sing, and one thing led to another and I got into songwriting.

What about individual projects?

Anubha: I'm working on a bunch of projects. *Savera* has been a pretty good motivation. Whenever a song does well, you feel motivated to make more music, as you become more confident about your work and art. **Iqlipse:** I'm working on a lot of

songs and a lot of them are collabs with artistes people love listening to. People I have admired my entire life, so I'm looking forward to these. There are some solo projects as well — I will release three or four songs before the year ends.

What about live music?

Anubha: I've not done too many live acts because I suffer from stage fright. I'm working on it and it has become a bit better than before. There are a few shows that I've played and my favourite one has to be in Ludhiana. It was the Sneak N Street Fest and that was the first

time I felt the high of a musician standing on stage and everybody was repeating the words of *Lamhe* (one of Anubha's biggest hits) back to me.

Iqlipse: In the last six months, I've performed in more than 35 live shows. I love performing in small towns and cities because in places like these, people are more welcoming and encouraging. In my case, one memorable show was when I performed in Assam, and I was wondering if people knew me there, but when I reached, they greeted me with so much love.

What kind of music do you like listening to?

Anubha: I listen to indie pop, hip-hop and English pop, but one thing I'm very happy about is whatever I create is similar to what I listen to. There's this one artiste who is my inspiration — Zaedon's *Genesis*. From songwriting perspective — Anuv Jain has to be my songwriting hero. Currently, I've fallen in love with *Suniyan suniyan* by Juss (and MixSingh). **Iqlipse:** I like variety; at times rap, at times very old songs by Mohammed Rafi and then indie, like Anuv Jain.

Sramana Ray

THAI, MEXICAN, MUGHLAI AND EVEN MIDDLE EASTERN, THE CULT'S NEW MENU TRAVERSES MANY CUISINES. t2 CHECKS IT OUT

One of Sector V's busiest destinations, The Cult has come up with a fun new menu that has a range of new cocktails along with fusion food that brings to life cuisines from all over the world. New seafood-based dishes have also been a prime focus of the new menu owing to the growing demand from customers.

"The new menu launch is another gastronomic experience waiting to be explored by our customers. As a culture of The Bikers Cafe and The Cult to regularly bring in new experiences, keeping our all-time favourites intact, we have added more seafood and vegetarian delicacies and given an innovative twist," said Sanjay Yadav, director.



Roasted Prawns with Pineapple Salsa: India meets Mexico in this fun appetiser that has prawns slathered in flavourful Indian spices, and roasted in the tandoor. This is then served with a fruity and tangy pineapple salsa topping that balances the flavours well.



Thai-Style Roasted Fish: Your regular fish tikka gets a Thai upgrade in this dish that combines lemongrass, galangal, basil and kaffir lime leaves to deliver an aromatic and juicy fish preparation.



Chicken Shish Tawook: A Lebanese preparation, here the chicken chunks are marinated in a paste that comprises tahini, paprika, mixed herbs along with some lemon juice to create a mild and juicy kebab where the chicken chunks are alternated with bell peppers and prawns on a stick and then charred. This is served with some hummus and freshly-made pita.



Chocolate Olive Mousse: The viral olive oil chocolate cake finds its way in this plate in the form of a thick and lush mousse. For added texture, it also has chopped black olives and some cream.



Mutton Dak Bungalow: A quintessential Bengali preparation, this dish has mutton slow-cooked in an onion, ginger-garlic gravy along with potatoes, and served with a boiled egg on top. Tastes great with fresh and crisp garlic naan.



Dream Queen: Bourbon meets beetroot in this dense cocktail that also has a tinge of saffron along with basil, lime juice and sugar with some egg whites. It is generously garnished with basil leaves and plenty of saffron.

Zeba Akhtar Ali
Pictures: Pabitra Das

CAFE KATHMANDU ROLLS OUT AUTHENTIC NEPALESE THAKALI CUISINE AND SOME SEASONAL DELIGHTS

The Thak Khola valley is tucked cosily in Nepal's North-Central Mustang district. Thakalis, who are inhabitants of this cold region, have a distinctive way of preparing food with authentic mountain spices and vegetables. Interestingly, in the older days, the Thak Khola region would be a convenient travel route for trade which was important to the natives. Thus, they could get vegetables and spices from upper regions as well and cooked them mostly in the dried versions, considering the extreme temperatures.

Cafe Kathmandu, on Lake Avenue, is known for its healthy and authentic food, curated coffees and an ambience that transports you to the mountains. They have now introduced a new Thakali cuisine with recipes from the heart of the Thak Khola region. The cafe has also rolled out some seasonal delights to meet the sweet cravings. If you are a big group wanting to try the Thakali cuisine, informing the cafe earlier is suggested. t2 dropped by last week to enjoy the dishes and we had a delicious time!

What: New Thakali Cuisine
Where: Cafe Kathmandu, 33A Lake Avenue, Lake Range, Kalighat
When: 11.30am to 9pm, closed on Mondays
Pocket pinch: ₹800-plus for two
For bookings: 82403 53721



The non-vegetarian Thakali Thali includes (l-r) Chicken Masu (chicken curry), Daal Kalo Mas (lentils preparation), dahi served with (clockwise) Aloo Tareko (fried potatoes), Saag Jhaneko (stirred spinach), Aloo Kauli Bhuteko (a potato and cauliflower preparation), papad, Moola ke Achar (radish pickle), Gundruk Sadeko (a typical Nepalese leafy vegetable marinated in spices), Timmur ko Achar (Sichuan pepper pickle), Karela Tareko (bitter gourd stir-fry) served with steaming rice. Price: ₹550 for non-vegetarian and ₹525 for vegetarian.



Piro Aloo is almost like a spicy version of the Aloo Sandeko or a cousin of Dum Aloo. However, the spices are different and since 'piro' in Nepalese means chillies, the dish is a powerhouse of flavours.



The Chicken Jhol Momos at Cafe Kathmandu are not like the others you find around the city. Topped off with sesame seeds with a flavour of peanuts, the momos will linger on your taste buds long after you are done eating.



'Sandeko' in Nepalese means marinate. The Aloo Sandeko comprises potatoes marinated with authentic Nepalese spices and herbs and tempered with hot mustard oil and added tomatoes and chillies.



SWEET CRAVINGS
As a seasonal delight, the Mango Gateaux is a delicious dessert to dig in after you have enjoyed your authentic Thakali Thali.



OWNER SPEAK
(L-R) Raju Singh, Vinesh Manchanda and Varsha Singh, owners of Cafe Kathmandu, said: "We invite you to experience our newly-launched Thakali menu. Enjoy the authentic flavours of Nepal, lovingly crafted for a true culinary adventure, alongside our 100 per cent organic Arabica brews. Savour the tradition and taste the essence of Nepal with us."

Sanjali Brahma
Pictures: Rashbehari Das

THE ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA (ZSI) MARKED ITS 109TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A SPECIAL FELICITATION CEREMONY AT TAJ BENGAL

In a unique blend of science and culture, the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) marked its 109th anniversary with a special felicitation ceremony at Taj Bengal. The event, part of the three-day Animal Taxonomic Summit, saw the venerable institution stepping beyond its scientific roots to recognise six diverse personalities from Bengal for their contributions to society and environmental awareness. Dhriti Banerjee, ZSI's first female director in its 107-year history, presided over the ceremony, presenting awards to a constellation of Bengali luminaries.

Among the honorees was danseuse Alokanda Roy, whose work with underprivileged children and prison inmates through dance has touched countless lives. Manabi Bandopadhyay, India's first transgender college principal, was recognised for her achievements in education. The world of arts was well-represented, with versatile actress Gargee Roy Chowdhury and

acclaimed filmmaker Srijit Mukherji (represented by his mother) receiving accolades. Percussionist Bickram Ghosh, known for his contributions to classical, fusion, and film music, was also honoured for his artistic excellence. While pop legend Usha Uthup couldn't attend in person, her video message brought her characteristic energy to the proceedings.

A special honour was bestowed upon Shiladitya Chaudhury, wildlife photographer and conservationist, for his tireless efforts in environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. Chaudhury's work, particularly in mangrove restoration in the Sundarbans, exemplifies the bridge between art and science that the event sought to highlight.

As the institution moves into its 110th year, it seems poised to embrace a more holistic approach to its mission, one that celebrates the interconnectedness of all aspects of society in protecting our natural world.

Bomona Barik
(t2 intern)

Pictures: Rashbehari Das



"We usually celebrate ZSI Day on July 1 by presenting our discoveries to the environment minister. Today, we're honouring Bengal's luminaries for their contributions to biodiversity and nature conservation. These celebrities play a crucial role. When they spread a message, it reaches and impacts the general public much more effectively than we scientists can. Their influence can positively shape public attitudes towards nature conservation in ways that complement our scientific efforts," said Dhriti Banerjee, director of ZSI.



"I'm humbled to receive this special award on ZSI's 109th foundation day. As an actor, I strive to choose characters that contribute positively to society, often focusing on women's empowerment. But the key is entertainment — through it, we can convey so much. Personally, I'm an ardent plant lover and tiger enthusiast. These majestic creatures are the real heroes, with their movements and appearance holding deep significance. The 50th year of Project Tiger makes this honour even more special. My heartfelt thanks to ZSI for this recognition," said Gargee Roy Chowdhury.

"I'm deeply honoured that ZSI released my book celebrating 50 years of Project Tiger in India. A big shout-out to all ZSI scientists for their crucial role in creating and expanding tiger habitats, leading to India's significant increase in tiger population, now contributing about 70 per cent of the world's tigers. This achievement is possible only because of ZSI scientists' dedicated work. As we move forward, urbanisation in our country must go hand-in-hand with tenfold forestation efforts to maintain this delicate balance," said Shiladitya Chaudhury, wildlife photographer and conservationist.



"Society sees transgender people like zoo exhibits. I challenge that view. My openness can lead to acceptance, benefitting all. Just as city dwellers struggle to connect with nature, society struggles to understand transgender people. By being open, we can bridge that gap," said Manabi Bandopadhyay, principal of Dhola Mahavidyalaya.



"I'm deeply honoured by ZSI's recognition. Nature, both plants and animals, holds a special place in my heart. I believe there's a strong connection between all living things. Just as animals respond to love, I've found that plants and trees do too. It's not just about preservation; it's about genuine care. We all need love, and without it, our world would suffer. Every part of nature depends on the others, so I firmly believe in the principle of 'live and let live'. Our role isn't just to protect nature, but to nurture it with love," said Alokanda Roy.

BOOKS

GLIMPSES FROM THE LAUNCH OF ANJANA DUTT'S BOOK MY FAMILY, LEOPARDS AND MY LITCHI TREE

The fairly intimate launch of Anjana Dutt's memoir, *My Family, Leopards and My Litchi Tree* rekindled memories, making the evening at The Saturday Club nostalgic and celebratory. The multi-hyphenate Dutt's launch was attended by yesteryear diva Moon Moon Sen and thespian Sumit Lai Roy who were equally enamoured by Dutt's documentation of events from her life in chapters that conjured vivid memories of their childhood as well. It reminded Sen of her time spent with her family in Santiniketan and made her drift to 'her Calcutta' which has changed so much.

"Her earlier books were different and more serious and this is more comfortable and it did take me back to the occasion when my grandparents came to Calcutta from Bangladesh and settled in a *maatir bari* in



(L-R) Author Anjana Dutt, Moon Moon Sen and Sumit Lai Roy during the launch of Dutt's book at The Saturday Club.

Santiniketan. They were a big family... I remember holes in the wall from where snakes would come out and *dida* would just go

about her business undistributed, cooking... All those flavours and memories of *maachher* chutney, *dadu* going for walks... came



rushing to me when I started reading her book," said a nostalgic Sen draped in a lovely blue *bandhej* sari.

While Anjana's generation revisited their past, the younger generation surely got a taste of their parents' and grandparents' idyllic childhood which is now taken over by smartphones and other new technology. "So when I started writing the stories and published a few on Facebook, to my pleasure and surprise, I found a lot of people on my list resonated with it. I spoke about a life that does not exist any longer. The old people relived their childhood while the younger children wondered at the simple pleasures that we enjoyed," said Dutt, who is a poet, writer, filmmaker, graphic designer, and photographer, filling the venue with more stories that paint the picture of a carefree, relaxed and much-desired life.

Farah Khatoon
Pictures: B Halder

◀ Moon Moon Sen poses with Anjana Dutt's book *My Family, Leopards and My Litchi Tree*

GLIMPSES FROM A GLAM SOIREE HOSTED BY DAVINA THACKER AND MAC COSMETICS. ONLY t2 WAS THERE

MOODS AND MOMENTS



It was a retail therapy weekend for guests at the SS Beauty Store in Quest Mall on July 19. The event was held to promote the launch of MAC Studio Fix Fluid SPF 15, the brand's newest range of foundations that are available in over 50 shades to cater to varied skin tones and textures. The product is smooth with a matte finish and yet keeps the skin breathable and hydrated. Snapshots...

Host for the evening, Davina Thacker donned MAC colour — black! "MAC Cosmetics I can totally relate to because it's cheerful, funky and bold. From their eyeshadows to their lipsticks. But today I was promoting their new launch, Studio Fix Foundation, which has almost 59 shades with a pump and also gives a soft matte foundation," said the fashionista.



MAC MAGIC



"I love makeup. I picked three products — Studio Fix new foundation, the Studio Fix spray and MAC Locked Kiss Ink," said entrepreneur Irum Asif.



"It's so difficult to find the right foundation shade for myself but MAC has me covered. MAC Studio Fix pen in shade NC 42 is something I cannot do without. Plus Ruby Woo will always be a classic piece in my vanity," said Prathna Mahtani Jain (right) with Muskaan Mahtani.



"The new foundation has got better with the pump and has a matte finish," said designer Deepika Agarwal.



"For over 10 years, MAC has been my go-to makeup brand. Their foundations provide amazing coverage with a beautiful, dewy finish that I love. The classic shades of lipsticks are to die for, especially my favourites, Mehr, Chili and Whirl. Whether you're creating a flawless everyday look or a show-stopping glam for a special occasion, MAC offers high-quality products you can always trust," said actor Adolina Ganguly.



What does restaurateur Sonika Dey swear by? "For me, it has to be the range for lips. Even right now I have MAC lip liner and lipstick on me," said the new mommy.

"MAC liquid 24-hours waterproof liner is a favourite as I am a liner person and apply almost daily. That aside, Mac Studio Fix powder plus foundation and lipstick 923 Stay Curious Powder Kiss Lipstick are always with me," said Nikita Agarwal.



Koneenica Banerjee did an exclusive monsoon makeup look for t2. From a no make-up look to getting glammed up for an evening with a dewy and fresh make-up with a hint of shimmer on her eyes, Koneenica looked beautiful



Uzma Firoz and Shraddha posed with their customised make-up pouches that were a part of giveaways

Niti Shah Karnani indulged in some make-up retail therapy



Newlyweds Mariam Zaki Mehta and Kushal Mehta cut a cute picture. While Mariam swears by lip shades Whirl and Mehr, she ensured Kushal tries out a shade of lipstick too! He obliged and pulled it off too!



Restaurateur Jyoti Agarwal tried out the perfect shade of blush for her



Vineeta Banerjee checked out some new lipstick shades

Preeti Singh, in a utility jumpsuit in khakee, had our attention



Designer Jyotee Khaitan dropped by



Designer Pinki Sinha



We spotted little Aavya, accompanying her mommy Aakriti Arora, playing with makeup brushes! #CutenessOverload



Misha Chakraborty dropped by



Restaurateur Vanita Bajoria



Pranita Ghosh

I liked the rollercoaster ride *Kalki 2898 AD* took me on. Especially in the first half. The start was brisk, with references to *The Mahabharata*. The animation and the conversations between Ashwatthama and Krishna were attention-grabbing.

Then they went on with some light-hearted sequences. Set in a modern dystopian era, I did not find the writing amusing at all. Especially Prabhas' character felt too laidback. His dialogues were falling flat compared to Amitabh Sir's. Maybe the dubbing is to blame. Some jokes landed but others completely misfired.

Production design and technology is something to marvel at, never seen before in Indian cinema, and executed with utmost precision. Though Prabhas' character Bhairava had a funky tone, for me it hindered the flow of the film. The sequences inside the 'complex' seemed too lengthy and far-fetched to me.

The second half is outstanding. The VFX was tremendous, even better than *Brahmastra: Part One — Shiva*. The background music was brilliant, mostly. As the film progressed towards the climax things, got heated up. As *The Mahabharata* references unfolded, things got even more interesting. The way they finished was the cherry on top. Some of the revelations were jaw-dropping.

This is not so much a Prabhas film as it is an Amitabh Bachchan film. It is amazing how good his performance was. That legendary voice is something else. Nag Ashwin has utilised it quite outstandingly. Watch out for the monologue song sung by the legend in the beginning... it will give you goosebumps. The film belongs to its director Nag Ashwin. Who said India cannot create sci-fi? Yes we can, especially by referencing our mythology. They have used *The Mahabharata* well, and I am waiting for the next part in the hope that it will be even better. (*I liked/didn't like Kalki 2898 AD because... June 28*)

Rajarshi Das

Borrowing lines from Kishore Kumar's immortal song to summarise the film: "Yeh kya hua,



A moment from *Kalki 2898 AD*

kaise hua, kyun hua...", the film, very honestly, was a complete *bheja fry* for me. Pathetic kindergarten-type dialogues, horrible music and background score. The overrated film might be great on the visual and technical front, but fails miserably to entertain the audience. I could not understand the purpose for making such a film about an apocalyptic period. Sad to say, but stalwarts like Kamal Haasan, (Amitabh) Bachchan Sir, Dulquer Salmaan, Ram Gopal Varma and Prabhas... all looked like robotic props. Deepika

Padukone was wondering till the end — "Main kahan hoon?". Utterly disappointed with the storyline and execution.

Saurav Gupta

Kalki 2898 AD is a trailblazer in Bollywood, merging mythology and science fiction in a way rarely seen before. Directed with grand ambition, this film truly belongs to the visual effects team, whose work makes it a cinematic experience best enjoyed on the big screen. The screenplay ingeniously connects the mythological tale

t2
TALK

WHAT YOU THOUGHT OF KALKI 2898 AD

of Ashwatthama from *The Mahabharata* with an imagined dystopian world, creating a narrative that spans from the past to the future.

The film's storyline, particularly its great epic connection, is commendable. It brings a fresh perspective by imagining both the past and future worlds. The plot revolves around the birth of the avatar Kalki, with Ashwatthama's flashbacks and moments from the Kurukshetra war adding a poignant touch and tying the narrative together.

However, the movie takes time to find its rhythm. The first half is largely inconsequential, with a story-building process that feels somewhat unconvincing. The war scene between Shambala, a sanctuary for those who aspire for a better future, and Commander Manas, who represents a 'complex' that holds all the world's best in a future era, is visually enjoyable. The director skillfully blends past and future warfare tactics in this scene, creating a unique and visually arresting battle. Amitabh Bachchan's portrayal of Ashwatthama is flawless, adding depth and gravitas to the character. Saswata Chatterjee delivers a solid performance, though there's a sense that his role could have been explored further for greater impact. *Kalki 2898 AD* is essentially an introduction, laying the groundwork for what promises to be an even more engaging sequel.

Sarbani Banerjee

The 180 minutes of *Kalki 2898 AD* never had a dull moment. It drowned audiences in the stunning telling of a mythology-based well-knit story presented by an extraordinary director, Nag Ashwin. Normally, a movie based on a mythological theme may not appeal to all sections of the audience, but the style of presentation of this movie makes it deserve our appreciation.

The director chose the classiest combination of stars from Bollywood and the south Indian film industries and made sure, through his magic wand, that each star had their own orbit. We are tempted to praise veteran superstar Amitabh Bachchan who delivered

another splendid performance, the super show of fitness of Bollywood queen Deepika Padukone and the stunning, near-impossible stunts of Prabhas.

Bhola Nath Das

Except for a few sloppy scenes, that can easily be ignored, the film has made great use of its ₹600-crore budget. It is the end-product of a combination of an epic with a story of a dystopian future. I loved the scenes from *The Mahabharata* and would like to know how a movie on it would turn out on the big screen. The music, though, is extremely poor and it fails to leave a mark. *Kalki 2898 AD* marks the beginning of a new and exciting cinematic universe. It is a must-watch for sci-fi lovers.

Soham Sarkar

Kalki 2898 AD is an exquisite slice of sci-fi drama handcrafted with an intriguing storyline, stunning cinematography and ground-breaking performances, keeping the audience on the edge of their seats. Starring a seasoned ensemble cast, this epic extravaganza embarked on an electrifying journey to a dystopian world, intertwining the themes of science fiction and Hindu mythology, offering an unparalleled cinematic experience.

Helmed by a skilful director, the film got off to a tardy start but accelerated in the middle phases. Each frame explored a vibrant spectrum of emotions, heightening the purpose of every character convincingly. Veteran actors Amitabh Bachchan and Kamal Haasan illuminated the screens with their unmatched calibre, the fresh pairing of Deepika Padukone and Prabhas delivered whistle-worthy performances. Their outstanding, cohesive efforts not only covered up certain blemishes but also infused a dash of novelty into this genre. In a nutshell, I was captivated by this film which successfully explored the capability of Indian filmmakers to experiment with latest trends with a thrilling twist.

Aayman Anwar Ali

Kalki 2898 AD possesses a handsome number of cameos, with some big names appearing in small but important roles. I liked Dulquer Salmaan, who plays the role of Captain, Bhairava's guardian and guide, the most. He teaches Bhairava life lessons and survival tactics in an improper world, using tricks of the mind. Krishnakumar plays an important role as Lord Krishna, with a shadowy but significant appearance. Ram Gopal Varma, as Chintoo, a street food vendor, adds humour with his brief appearance. (*Which were your three favourite cameos in Kalki 2898 AD and why... July 12*)

Sarbani Banerjee

Along with its innovative storytelling

and stellar performances from its lead actors, Nag Ashwin's post-apocalyptic action thriller added more spark to the viewing experience with its line-up of surprise performances. Among the star-studded short appearances, I believe the cameos of Mrunal Thakur, S.S. Rajmouli and Ram Gopal Varma were most delightful. Their characters were creatively sketched, illuminating the film with profundity and purpose. Their screen presence was magnetic, enchanting us with their brief but

YOUR TOP KALKI 2898 AD CAMEOS



Dulquer Salmaan as Captain in *Kalki 2898 AD*

impactful performances. It was exceptionally inventive of the director to bring such prominent personalities on board, enhancing the visual and entertainment value of his film.

Aayman Anwar Ali

My three favourite cameos in Nag Ashwin's directorial *Kalki 2898 AD* were of Dulquer Salmaan, Vijay Deverakonda and Mrunal Thakur. They played the roles of Captain, Arjuna and Divya respectively. All three actors delivered fantastic performances. It added star power to the film and made it a more thrilling and exciting watch.

Sourish Misra