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SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



Sans Siblings

COVER STORY

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ODIA ACTRESS DHARITRI KHANDUAL, WHO HAS APPEARED IN OVER 400 DRAMAS, 50 TV SHOWS, 20 MOVIES, AND RECEIVED MORE THAN 30 STATE-LEVEL AWARDS, NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION. THE ACCLAIMED ARTISTE CURATES YOUTUBE CONTENT AND TAKES A PLUNGE INTO SCRIPTURES DURING BREAKS FROM HER HECTIC SCHEDULE

An artiste is never off duty

I can't recall the last time I had a Sunday holiday. As a professional artiste, I don't have such days off. When others enjoy Sundays, I attend a rehearsal session for plays or filming for a TV show or movie.

Late riser

Since I'm involved in all mediums of entertainment, I often suffer from fatigue due to overwork and late-night sleep. So, when I have a break, I prefer to sleep for an extra hour or two to recharge myself.

Working on DIY ideas

I get bored with the interior decoration of my dwelling place. So, I try to give a new look to the rooms by changing the decor on a regular basis. Once in a while, my holidays are used to carry out DIY home decor ideas. Dusting and cleaning are also part of this project.



With son



With co-artistes

Reading literature to change perspective

I believe that reading spiritual texts alters one's perspective. So I spent some time reading these, along with biographies and autobiographies of well-known Indian figures.

Outing and dinner

I reserve the evenings for my husband and son. We watch movies in theatres or dramas in auditoriums. After that, we love to indulge in a scrumptious dinner at a restaurant.



BIJAY MANDAL, OP



WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

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

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- What do you call a boat full of polite football players? A good sportsman ship.
- What do prisoners use to call each other? Cell phones.
- I asked the bus driver "How long will the next bus be?" He replied "Same length as this one."
- Q: What did one ocean say to the other ocean? A: Nothing, they just waved.



COMMENDABLE MEASURES

Sir, In India, education holds a paramount status comparable to other sectors, placing significant pressure on students. Particularly in Kota, Rajasthan, where students undergo rigorous preparation for exams such as JEE and NEET has witnessed a concerning rise in suicide rates. This surge is attributed to the intense peer pressure imposed by parents and coaching centres, leading students into states of depression and anxiety, often resulting in self-harm. After a prolonged period, the Education Ministry has taken commendable measures to address this issue. One significant step involves prohibiting students below the age of 16 from enrolling in coaching institutes. Additionally, guidelines have been established to prevent coaching centres from making false promises to parents. I believe these recent interventions by the Ministry are crucial in addressing the challenges faced by students in this high-pressure environment. I appreciate the Sunday POST team for conceiving a cover story on the issue.

BHAGBAN MISHRA, KEONJHAR

LETTERS



A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Feel free to send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to

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Sans Siblings

While having a single child often helps parents take good care of their offspring, on the flip side, such children suffer from loneliness and lack of sensibility. More often than not, they turn selfish and attention-seekers, a trend which is becoming apparent these days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rupa Roshan Mishra, a mother of a 13-month-old from Puri who now resides in Amsterdam, recently asked her community on social media if it was appropriate to start planning for a second child.

Here're a few responses: "Oh, yes dear, the kids will have someone to talk to as they grow older, and they'll become more sorted individuals," said a friend. Another wrote, "Sure, plz go ahead; you'll never regret it. "Children with siblings have many life skills that parents often fail to teach," added the third one.

Now, rewind to 1952. India became the world's first country to launch a nationwide family planning programme. The tagline *Hum Do, Hamare Do* (We two, Ours two) started gaining traction. Given the dire economic situation the country in, the scheme was a national requirement.

However, several couples eventually altered the phrase to *Hum Do, Hamare Ek* (We two, Ours one). The advent of modernity, a family's economic situation, combined with a steady rise in the cost of schooling, has compelled urban couples to have only one kid. According to India's National Family Health Survey-4 (2018), just 24% of married women (aged 15 to 49) and 2% of men want a

second child. While the single-child policy undoubtedly helps many families take good care of their children, its negative consequences are rapidly becoming apparent, as evidenced by responses to Rupa's social media query.

'Single kids bear the burden of parental expectations'

More often than not, parents have some expectations from their children. It's not unusual either. But a single child suffers from it like no other, shares **Satyajit Swain** (name changed), an event manager from Bhubaneswar.

"It's commonly believed that single children are overly affectionate and well-pampered. To some extent, it's true. But not many people realise the burden they carry in their growing up years," says Swain.

"Being a single child, I used to get all the attention and care of my parents. But like all average Indian parents, my dad and mom also looked up to me to realise their unfulfilled goals in their lives, which put me under pressure during my formative years. I spent the most precious time of my life meeting the expectations of my parents and couldn't make a career of my choice," he adds.

He also couldn't leave for greener pastures, abandoning his parents, said Swain, who wished that had he been a sibling, things would certainly have been different for him.

'My friends perceived me as selfish and unfriendly'

The brutal truth about being an only child, especially if you are in a nuclear family, is that you will be left completely alone at some point in life, with no parents, no relatives, uncles, aunts, or cousins to talk openly with, says **Soumyadeep Patra** (name changed on request), a PG student of psychology at Berhampur University.

"There are high chances that you are not good at making friendships. When you're a child, you

can't play outside until late in the evening because parents are overprotective about only kids. At home, you are locked in a room with your toys; there is no one to play with, affecting your physical development. Similarly, while you're young, no late-night movies if you are not living in a hostel or your own room," shares Soumyadeep.

"At times, you wish for someone near your age to discuss your school and college experiences, and that's a sibling that you don't have. Your friends (most of them have siblings) will perceive you as a selfish, boring, and unfriendly person," he adds, listing a few disadvantages of having a single child.

'I'm afraid my daughter could develop issues like stress and disinterest in studies'

Mother of a 19-year-old, homemaker and tuition teacher **Madhusmsita Satapathy** is a single child parent too. She believes that an only child faces distinctive challenges.

"In the case of my daughter, I often feel that she lacks the companionship of a sibling to share her concerns. She seems to experience feelings of isolation, leading her to seek friendships externally

or through social media. I'm afraid this could increase her vulnerability, putting her at risk of developing issues like stress and disinterest in studies," says Satapathy.

Asked what she does to help her daughter Ananya overcome her loneliness, the doting mother adds, "I make a conscious effort to ensure she doesn't feel too lonely, adjusting my schedule to spend quality time with her. In my opinion, it's crucial for parents to be aware of these challenges, foster open communication, and provide emotional support to help their only child navigate potential difficulties."





EXPERT COMMENTS

With reports of single children facing both physical and psychological ailments, **Sunday POST** caught up with some experts seeking solutions to the issue. Here's what they have to say:

Choice for a single child can lead to 'empty nest syndrome'

DR AMRIT PATTOJOSHI, PSYCHIATRIST

Sharing his insights on the issue, well-known psychiatrist Dr. Amrit Pattojoshi says, "Parents who consciously choose a single child often experience focused parenting, dedicating more time and resources to their child, which fosters a deeper emotional bond within the family. But they may face challenges in balancing their relationship with parenting demands. Long-term, this choice can lead to financial stability but also a pronounced 'empty nest syndrome' as the child grows independent."

Asked what the parents of a single child should do in such a scenario, Pattojoshi continued: "In a single-child family, the child often benefits from undivided parental attention and resources, fostering strong emotional support and potentially better educational opportunities. However, they may face challenges like loneliness due



to the absence of siblings and heightened parental expectations. To navigate these, parents should encourage social interactions with peers to develop social skills. Balancing expectations and avoiding overprotection are crucial for the child's independence and self-esteem. Psychologically, it's important for parents to recognise and address any feelings of isolation or pressure the child might experience, ensuring they grow up feeling confident, well-rounded, and socially adept."

He concludes, "Couples with a single child often face societal judgement, impacting mental health with stress and guilt. To cope, open communication, affirming choices, and seeking support are key.

Establishing a supportive community is crucial, emphasising positive aspects and reinforcing family dynamics. Professional counselling helps manage societal pressures by guiding healthy communication, providing balanced parenting, and addressing the child's potential isolation. Psychologists aid in fostering independence, resilience, and navigating emotional challenges for parents, ensuring a nurturing family environment."

Parents need to understand their children's problems and needs

DR SAMRAT KAR, PSYCHIATRIST

Sharing his perspective on the issue of single-child parenting, Dr. Samrat Kar, psychiatrist and founder and trustee of The Brain Foundation, says, "Only children face challenges in sharing their concerns due to the absence of siblings. Consequently, they tend to internalise their issues, seeking companionship either beyond their immediate surroundings or through online platforms. However, when forming social connections, these children find it difficult to express their true emotions, creating a facade as they interact with friends. This mask prevents them from revealing their feelings and makes it challenging for others to discern if they are experiencing stress or other problems. Over time, this emotional suppression can lead to the development of depression, loneliness, and a decline in academic focus. Some cases even involve children grappling with anxiety disorders, hindering their ability to engage with relatives."



A proposed solution is for parents to adopt a friendly approach, mentally preparing

them to understand their children's problems and needs, he says. At times, parents as well as single children may need some counselling at some point in their lives.

"Psychologists play a crucial role in enhancing parent-child relationships within single-child families. By addressing potential issues such as over-involvement or excessive expectations, psychologists help parents navigate the delicate balance of fostering independence while maintaining emotional connection. Recognising the unique dynamics, psychologists tailor interventions to the individual needs of the family, promoting a harmonious and emotionally secure environment for the single child to thrive," according to Kar.

"Opting for a single child can deepen parental bonds and foster family harmony, but embracing multiple children also enhances family dynamics, promoting social skills and emotional resilience. Siblings offer a unique support system, teaching valuable lessons in sharing and conflict resolution. The intricate interplay within a larger sibling group cultivates a robust foundation for emotional intelligence and empathy. While single-child families can thrive, having multiple children can be advantageous in dual-career households, providing a built-in support system," the psychiatrist, on a parting note, adds.



Ethics in porn

WHILE THE PORN INDUSTRY IS LARGELY VIEWED BY MANY AS A SHAMEFUL CORNER OF THE INTERNET, BARCELONA-BASED SWEDISH EROTIC FILM PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR ERIKA LUST HAS INITIATED A MOVEMENT THAT REDEFINES HOW WOMEN SHOULD BE DEPICTED IN ADULT CONTENT

OP DESK

Either sex or Shah Rukh Khan sells in India, said actress Neha Dhupia in 2004. “20 years on, my statement rings true even today,” reiterated the *Julie* actress in a recent interview following three back-to-back blockbusters delivered by SRK in 2023.

However, one day, maybe after a decade or so, SRK will be replaced by someone else. But the demand for sex or porn is not likely to follow suit anytime soon, with the industry growing at an exponential rate.

According to a study, about 4 per cent of all websites globally are porn sites, with millions directly or indirectly operating in this type of business.

Making porn movies and uploading them for online consumption is gaining traction like never before. However, the performers and production crews of such videos reportedly work under unfair and potentially traumatic conditions. Not to mention the numerous stories of people finding their sex tapes on the site, which are uploaded without their knowledge.

While not many mainstream pornography sites or directors are willing to stem the ride, Swedish film director, screenwriter, and producer Erika Lust is an aberration. Since the debut of her first indie erotic film, *The*

Good Girl, in 2004, Lust has been cited as one of the current leading participants in the feminist pornography movement.

Lust has founded an ethical porn company also named Erika Lust, which has bagged various awards, including the Feminist Porn Award for Movie of the Year. Her team even refers to their platform as ‘the Netflix of porn.’

Lust believes the central way to make porn ethical is to pay for it. In order to ensure actors, production, and all behind-the-scenes crews get paid for their work, it also allows production companies to provide safe environments and support for actors.

“The porn industry has been an industry for many years, but companies were not thinking that much about performers and their needs,” shares Erika.

“When it comes to performers, many people think they come from poor back-

grounds and have been forced into doing pornography. It’s viewed as a horrible job,” Erika says. “But the reality is pretty different. We believe it’s important to communicate to ensure that when performers are having sex, they feel in control and aren’t doing anything they don’t want to do.”

She goes on to add, “Before the shooting of a film, we have a meeting with all performers and our intimacy coordinator, where we are going through all the paperwork that performers have to fill in, so they have a chance to read through things,” Erika explained.

A behind-the-scenes clip from one of Erika Lust’s films, *Dirty Martini Sex Party*, shows performers sharing their preferences. This involved each performer saying what they enjoy and what parts of their body are off limits, as well as talking about what brings them to orgasm. Although it was only a video, one could see how laid-back and comfortable the environment is.

Anarella Martinez-Madrid, an intimacy coordinator for Erika Lust, says, “My role is to curate a safe space for the cast and crew. They need to be happy and make sure they understand everything we are doing. Before any production, we talk with every performer. We ask them what their desires are, what they are feeling, what their boundaries are, and if the performers like each other.”

Erika, explaining the process when someone new to the industry is cast, says, “We need to be extra careful. We have to make sure that they really understand this line of work and how it will affect their lives.”

She explains, “If you are in a film or in an explicit picture online, everybody will find out. So we ask performers questions in the beginning, such as ‘how’s your mom going to feel?’ We want them to be aware that even if they think that this is a secret they’re going to have on the side, it’s not going to stay a secret.”

She continues: “We also have to be aware from a mental health perspective, because having sex obviously can be something wonderful and great, but it can also bring up other memories that you might have of traumas in the past.

“While shooting, you may feel as though everything is fine, but a few days later, things might start coming back to you. Which is why we have a network of psychologists we can connect performers with in case they want extra support.”

True, the performers are people who have their own pasts and feelings to deal with. It’s refreshing to learn that the support doesn’t stop after the film is shot.

One look at the Erika Lust website, and one can find countless testimonials from previous performers about their experience.

“I think Erika occupies a really special place in the world right now in changing the culture around sexuality and sex work,” wrote performer Mona Wales.

The porn industry is largely viewed by many as a shameful corner of the internet, but the problem is that society and institutions lack the education to be able to differentiate Erika Lust from something like *Pornhub*.





When Anil left Hopkins surprised

It was almost 15 years ago that Anil Kapoor traveled the world for Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire*. The film, which ended up winning eight Oscars at the 81st Academy Awards, won big at many other international film awards as well and in one such award ceremony, the team was honoured by international actor Anthony Hopkins. Anil recently recalled his interaction with the Silence of the Lambs star while he was on stage.

Talking to Indiewire, Anil said that as the team of *Slumdog Millionaire* won the award for the Best Ensemble at the SAG Awards, Anil got up on stage and touched Anthony's feet.

In India, touching another person's feet is a mark of showing them respect but Anthony had no clue about this custom so he was a little taken aback. Anil shared, "We received Best Ensemble, and your peers all over the world have given you this award, so it is a great moment. I land up on the stage and there is Anthony Hopkins, and so I just went and touched his feet. He said, 'What are you doing?' I said that's how Indians are; I respect you, you're elder to me, you're senior to me, and it was wonderful to be on a stage and receive that award."



Sush feels Aarya's pain as her own

Actress Sushmita Sen, who is gearing up for *Aarya Antim Vaar*, has said that the pain of her titular character, Aarya Sareen, feels very personal to her.

Elaborating on the same, Sen said, "Just like I always say, playing Aarya for three seasons makes me feel her pain as if it's my own. When we filmed the scenes where all her kids—Veer and Aaru—turned against her, it broke my heart. There is a point in the series where she feels totally alone against the odds, she even feels short of a family."

She further mentioned, "I think that truly got to me. I felt gratitude towards my own family and was inspired by how Aarya handled it so well. She is like one of us, working hard every day to protect her family. I was really emotional, and it felt like every part of me was sharing Aarya Sareen's feelings, but again, she fought through them, and you'll know the how and why in *Aarya Antim Vaar*." *Aarya Antim Vaar* is set to stream on Disney+ Hotstar on February 9. IANS



Pari's plan for a dual career

Actress Parineeti Chopra, known for her acting career, is venturing into professional singing, expressing her desire to perform on global stages. She also plans to release singles, write songs, and embrace a dual career in acting and music.

The actress recently performed at the Mumbai Festival and shared her entire journey of preparing for the performance.

Speaking to an entertainment site, the Hasee Toh Phasee actress shared that she wants to sing on every stage in the world. She added that no other female actor has ever done what she is doing, pointing out that there are only two actor-singers in the industry right now who do live shows, and they are Farhan Akhtar and Ayushmann Khurrana.

She also highlighted that in Hollywood there are a lot of examples of actresses who sing and act, whereas in India we have playbacks, but very rarely an actress becomes a musician. She also stated that we have just one life, and we should do everything.

The *Kesari* actress also spoke about how she will be cutting singles and music albums as part of her music career. She also revealed that she will be writing songs too, as there are many things that she wants to say.

AGENCIES

Rasha shines on Mumbai Billboards

Actress Raveena Tandon's daughter, Rasha Tandon, who is gearing up for her debut with Ajay Devgn's nephew, Aaman Devgn, recently appeared on Mumbai Billboards and has become the face of prominent brands.

The billboards showcase Raveena's web series and Rasha's brand endorsements, capturing the uncanny resemblance between the mother and daughter.

Raveena, who is basking in the glow of both personal and professional successes as she celebrates the release of her latest web series, *Karmma Calling*, posted a heartwarming video on her Instagram profile, capturing the striking billboards featuring both her daughter and herself. What adds a unique touch to this proud moment is the simultaneous promotion of Raveena's web series alongside Rasha's brand endorsements.

The video shared by Raveena garnered attention and admiration from fans and fellow celebrities alike. Actress Bhagyashree, referring to Rasha as Raveena's 'carbon copy,' and other users expressing confusion about who the mother and daughter are, showcased the uncanny resemblance between the two. AGENCIES



CANCER SOMETIMES APPEARS TO RUN IN FAMILIES AS A STUDY SUGGESTS THAT UP TO 10 PER CENT OF ALL CANCERS MAY BE CAUSED BY INHERITED GENETIC CHANGES



World Cancer Day Today

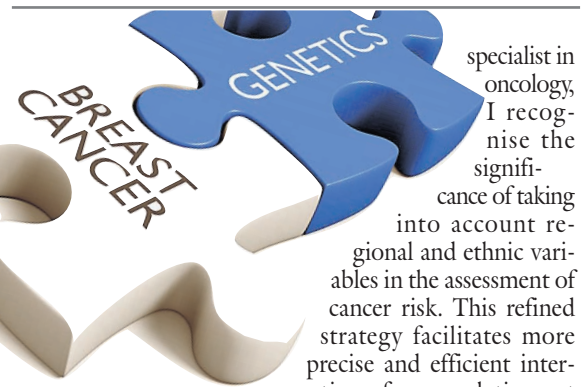
Matter of genes

Dispelling Myths

Most people have heard about genetic testing when it comes to cancer risk, but there is a lot of misinformation doing the rounds. Here're a few.

- Most cancers are genetic
- Everyone should get genetic testing for cancer
- Only women need genetic testing
- Genetic testing is not accurate
- One doesn't need a genetic counselor and can order his/her own genetic test online
- Genetic testing is expensive
- If a person's results show a gene mutation, s/he will be uninsurable
- Genetic testing and genomic testing are the same thing

SOURCE: ARIZONAONCOLOGY.COM



specialist in oncology, I recognise the significance of taking

into account regional and ethnic variables in the assessment of cancer risk. This refined strategy facilitates more precise and efficient interventions for populations at

risk. Progress in cancer research has given rise to precision medicine, a discipline that customizes treatment strategies according to an individual's genetic makeup."

The oncologist also underscores the transformative impact of targeted therapies, especially in cases where specific genetic mutations drive cancer progression. The ability to identify and target these mutations opens new avenues for more effective and less invasive treatment options.

Dr Biswas also highlighted the challenges and ethical considerations surrounding genetic testing. "Concerns related to privacy, potential psychological effects, and the necessity for comprehensive laws to shield people from genetic discrimination are a few matters that require careful consideration. It is essential to endorse a well-balanced approach that maximises the advantages of genetic information while ensuring the welfare of patients," he concluded.

developing cancer, primarily through familial inheritance patterns. Some types of cancer exhibit a hereditary component, indicating a tendency to be present in family lines. Those with a family background of particular cancers may possess genetic mutations that raise their vulnerability to the illness. It is advisable to proactively assess familial medical histories to pinpoint potential genetic connections and take appropriate precautions."

Shedding light on the well-known BRCA (Breast Cancer) gene mutations, particularly in the context of breast cancer, he says, "Mutations passed down in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes greatly increase the likelihood of developing breast and ovarian cancers.

Therefore, it is crucial to undergo genetic testing, particularly for those with a family history of these cancers. Identifying BRCA mutations early provides individuals and their healthcare professionals with the knowledge to apply specific prevention and screening measures."

Genetic counseling, as advocated by Dr. Biswas, plays a pivotal role in cancer risk assessment. He emphasises the significance of individuals with a family history of cancer seeking guidance from genetic counselors. These professionals can assess the likelihood of genetic predisposition, explain the implications of identified mutations, and help individuals make informed decisions about preventive measures.

He also stressed the need to recognise the role of ethnicity in cancer genetics. Different populations may exhibit varying genetic susceptibilities to specific types of cancer. "As a

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

No matter the big advancements in the field of medicine, cancer still remains one of the most feared diseases in the world, as one in three people reportedly develops cancer during their lifetime.

Though research has led to significant improvements in both detecting and treating cancer in developed nations, in developing countries, the disease is still considered a death sentence.

Not just for cancer being a leading cause of death worldwide, it is feared because the treatment process is painful and its aftereffects significantly reduce the quality of life.

Today is World Cancer Day, which serves as a global initiative to raise awareness about cancer, encourage its prevention, detection, and treatment, and stand in solidarity with those affected by this fearsome disease. Cancer, a formidable adversary, continues to challenge the medical community and individuals alike. While environmental factors have long been associated with cancer development, the intricate role of genetics in cancer risk cannot be overlooked.

Here's what oncologist **Dr Ghanashyam Biswas** of Sparsh Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, had to share with **Sunday POST** on the profound influence of genetics in shaping one's susceptibility to cancer.

Emphasising the role that genetics plays in determining an individual's predisposition to cancer, he said that while lifestyle choices, environmental exposures, and other external factors undoubtedly contribute to cancer risk, understanding the genetic underpinnings can provide invaluable insights into prevention, early detection, and personalised treatment strategies.

He notes, "Genetic factors significantly influence the likelihood of





Jyoshna



PHOTO: KUMAR SHARAT, OP