

JULY 06-12, 2025

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



RECOGNISE RED FLAGS

COVER STORY

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MY SUNDAY

Keonjhar boy Vivash Rout began his acting career in 2013 with small roles in commercials and performances in stage plays. He honed his skills at Anupam Kher's acting school and later made a name in modeling. Though his first movie We Are in Love didn't see the light of the day, he managed to hog limelight with his first Odia release Manara Manasi. Recently, his role in Ghamaghot earned him acclaim, and with upcoming projects like Ladhei and Jai Hind, Vivash is sure a star to watch



During promotion of Ghamaghot

Movies & gatherings

On Sundays, we either head to the theatre for a movie or host a cozy get-together at home. Enjoying delicious food and quality time, these moments are pure joy.



With actress Elina Samantray

Precious break

When work commitments ease, I cherish the moments spent with my family. It's a rare break from our busy schedules, making these days truly special.

Family business: A labour of love

When I'm not on set, I dive into the family business. It's my way of balancing work and family, making the most of my downtime.

Balancing fitness and passion

Despite a hectic schedule, I always find time to hit the gym and stay active. I also love dancing and performing in theatre plays, making every day a vibrant adventure.

ANISHA KHATUN, 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

- The first 5 days after the weekend are the hardest.
- If tomatoes are technically a fruit, is ketchup technically a smoothie?
- Loneliness is when a person always knows where all of his things are.
- Treat each day as your last, one day you will be right.



Beyond call of duty

Sir, This refers to 'Messiah in white coats', the cover story in last week's Sunday POST. Indeed, they are the real heroes who go out of their way to serve the poor patients. We should appreciate the doctors who treat patients free of cost. In a world where healthcare costs can be a significant burden, these doctors stand out as beacons of compassion and altruism. They selflessly dedicate their time, skills, and resources to help those in need, often going beyond the call of duty. Their actions not only alleviate physical suffering but also provide hope and dignity to patients who might otherwise be unable to afford medical care. These doctors remind us of the true essence of the medical profession - to heal and serve humanity. Their generosity and commitment inspire us all to be more caring and empathetic. Let us honor and support these unsung heroes who make a tangible difference in the lives of so many.

SAMARESH SAHOO, SUNABEDA

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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Recognise red flags

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

IN A WORLD WHERE RESILIENCE, EMPATHY, AND COMMUNICATION ARE BECOMING AS ESSENTIAL AS TECHNICAL SKILLS, TEACHING GEN-Z HOW TO HANDLE THEIR EMOTIONS MIGHT JUST BE ONE OF THE MOST RELEVANT AND EMPOWERING STEPS FORWARD

As emotional struggles become more visible in classrooms, campuses, and social lives, the question arises—do Gen-Z need formal education in handling emotions? Raised in a fast-paced digital world dominated by social media, virtual validation, and shifting relationship dynamics, Gen-Z often finds themselves overwhelmed by the pressures of connection and self-expression. While they are more open about mental health than any generation before, many still lack the tools to navigate complex emotions, heartbreak, peer pressure, and toxic relationships.

Recognising this growing need, Delhi University recently has introduced an elective course titled 'Negotiating Intimate Relationships'. The course aims to help students understand and manage their emotional lives better—offering guidance on building healthy friendships and romantic relationships, coping with breakups, improving emotional bonding, and identifying red flags. It reflects a progressive step toward addressing emotional literacy through structured learning.

Such academic initiatives suggest a larger shift in how we view education—not just as a means to intellectual growth but also emotional maturity. In a world where resilience, empathy, and communication are becoming as essential as technical skills, teaching Gen-Z how to handle their emotions might just be one of the most relevant and empowering steps forward. But the question remains—do they really need such a course, or should emotional growth be left to personal experience?

To find the answer, Sunday POST caught up with a few experts and members of Gen Z com-

munity for their insights.

'Emotional resilience is being tested like never before'

Soumyakanta Mahapatra, advocate and counselor at the Orissa High Court, shares a deeply reflective perspective on the emotional challenges faced by Gen Z in today's hyper-digital world. He emphasises that the emotional resilience of this generation is being tested like never before, and the outcomes are often heart-breaking. "The question of how equipped Gen Z is to handle emotional grief and anxiety can, in many ways, be answered by the recent events that have unfolded," he says. Highlighting a disturbing trend, he points to tragic student suicides across educational institutions, many linked to unresolved issues such as ignored sexual harassment complaints. These events, he notes, "underscore the inability of many Gen Z individuals to process emotional distress and hardship, often resorting to what is tragically known as the 'ultimate step'."



Mahapatra stresses that this problem extends beyond campuses. Even homes, traditionally seen as safe havens, are failing to provide the emotional grounding today's youth so desperately need. He argues that while education can be a powerful tool in addressing emotional vulnerabilities, it must be supported by structure and sensitivity. "The key lies in creating a well-guided structure where meaningful exchange can happen in a safe, non-judgmental environ-

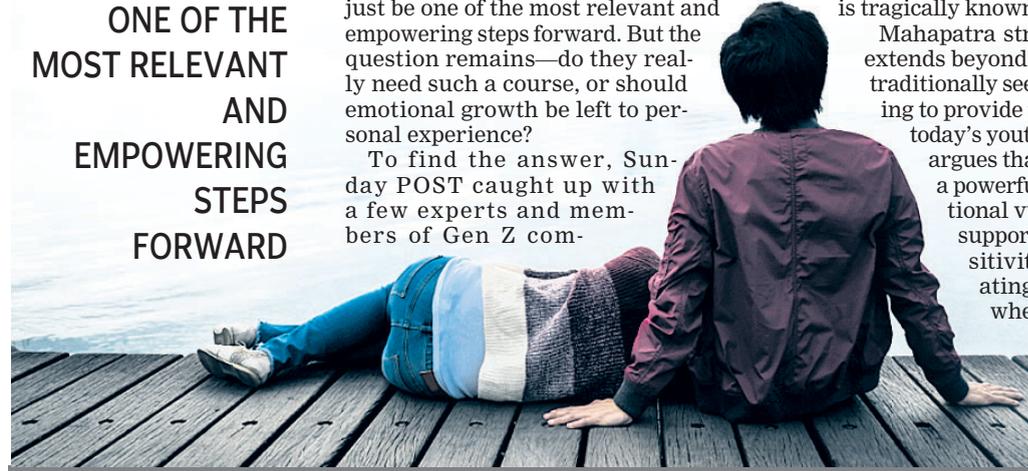
ment," he explains. According to him, Gen Z doesn't necessarily seek solutions—they seek understanding. "At the heart of it, they just want to be understood," he adds.

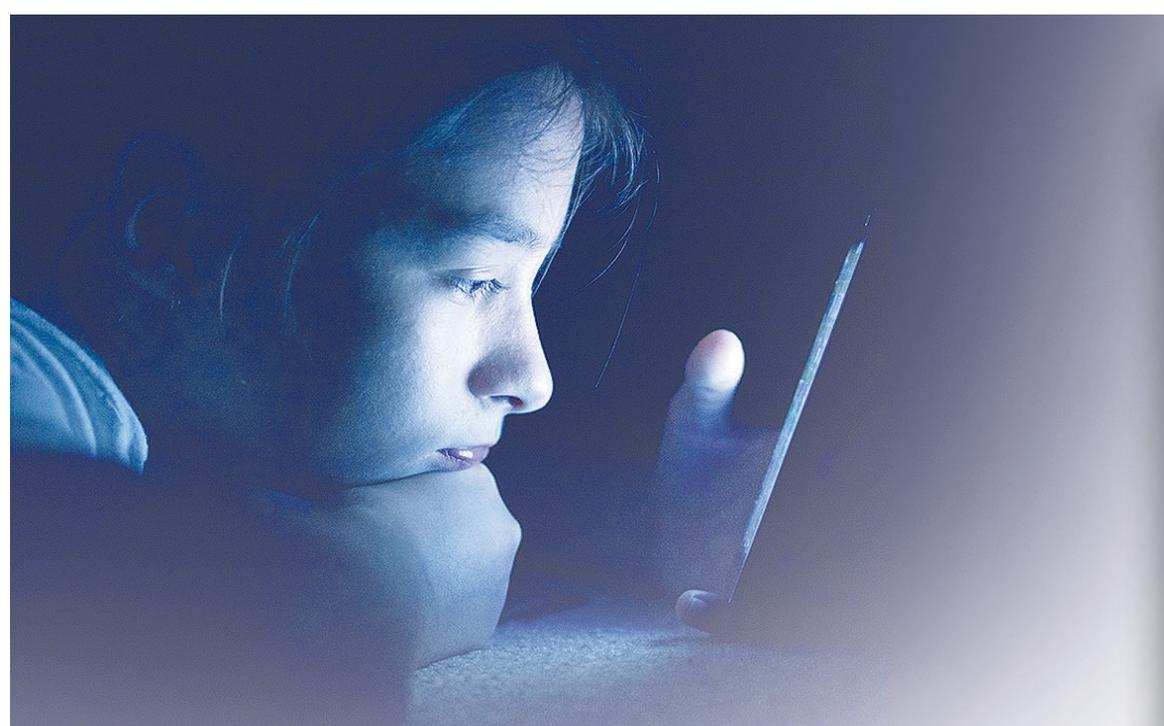
While formal education on emotional intelligence is a step in the right direction, Mahapatra believes it must go hand-in-hand with a broader cultural shift. Referencing Delhi University's initiative to introduce relationship-centered coursework, he says, "It would certainly help if the curriculum allowed space for students' emotional well-being. With proper and skilled mentoring or counselling, they would be better equipped to navigate emotionally challenging situations."

However, he also cautions against turning emotional literacy into another academic burden. "Balancing academics with students' emotional well-being is no easy task, but it is the need of the hour," he notes. Rather than making emotional wellness a credit-based subject, Mahapatra advocates for structured emotional support within institutions. "The priority must be listening—offering a safe space where students feel heard and understood. Relationship coaches or counsellors should serve as supportive allies, helping them navigate their struggles, if not always providing a definitive way out."

'We mess up a lot because nobody shows us how to handle conflict'

Anjali Dei, 18 years, graduation student, Puri, says, "Honestly, I think this course is such a relief for so many of us. We spend years studying calculus, history, economics — everything under the sun — but no one ever teaches us how to handle heartbreak, set healthy boundaries, or even understand what a respectful relationship should look like. Our generation talks a lot about mental health, but most of us still don't really know how to process our feelings in a healthy way. It's even harder because of social media, where everyone is constantly trying to look perfect, and relationships are shown as either all drama or all fairy-tale. That puts crazy pressure on people my age to act like we have it all figured out, even when we're falling apart inside."





Expert view

Amrith Pattojoshi, Head of the Department of Psychiatry at Hi-Tech Medical College and Hospital, highlights how digital overload and instant gratification have added to the psychosocial stress faced by Gen Z. “Studies show that FOMO, or fear of missing out, is prevalent among 72% of the Gen Z population,” he explains. “Similarly, body image concerns affect 62%, comparison with peers is seen in 81%, and sleep disturbances impact 68%. This digital overload has significantly affected real-life, face-to-face interactions and crippled Gen Z’s ability to process complex emotions like grief, anxiety, and rejection.”

Dr. Pattojoshi emphasises that formal education in emotional literacy can play a pivotal role in bridging gaps created by fragmented family structures and relationships that exist largely online. “As families become increasingly diverse and digital interactions become more prevalent, fostering emotional literacy can enhance communication, empathy, and resilience in both family dynamics and virtual connections,” he says. Citing research from Xi’an Jiaotong University, he adds that family



functioning deeply influences students’ emotional intelligence and social support networks, which in turn affect levels of loneliness and depressive symptoms. “High levels of family functioning were associated with better emotional intelligence and stronger social support, which acted as protective factors against depression. Conversely, students with poor family functioning were more likely to experience loneliness and depressive symptoms. Since there is a temporal relationship between a person’s emotional intelligence and their ability to adapt to psychosocial stressors, formal education in emotional intelligence can help mitigate these challenges.”

Dr. Pattojoshi points to evidence from Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs to further support the idea. “A meta-analysis by Durlak et al. in 2011, which involved more than 270,000 students, showed classroom behavior and academic achievement improved significantly through SEL programs,” he notes. “Similarly, Jennings and Greenberg in 2009 identified that supportive classroom climates fostered by SEL decrease burnout and stress among teachers by enhancing student-teacher relationships and creating more cooperative classrooms.”

He believes systemic reform is needed to balance academic rigor with student well-being. “Teacher training courses must espouse pedagogical competence in emotion alongside subject matter competence,” he stresses. Citing the RULER framework from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, he concludes, “Emotional intelligence is not a replacement for academic skills — it is where they flourish.”

friendships just feels fake to me, like you’re trying to control something that’s supposed to be deeply personal.

I mean, no professor can tell you exactly what to do when your best friend betrays you, or how it feels to be dumped after years together. That stuff is raw and messy, and the lessons you learn come from surviving it, not from a PowerPoint presentation. I get that people want to prevent heartbreak or unhealthy patterns, but you can’t bubble-wrap life. It’s a risk, and you become stronger by going through it, not by studying it like a syllabus.”

Sahoo further shares, “Also, let’s be real — we’re here to build careers, to study, to get jobs. We have so much pressure already to perform academically, to get placements, to handle our families’ expectations. I just think if you give us another course, even as an elective, it’s adding to the burden. Instead of a class about breakups, why not give us more practical life skills — financial literacy, career planning, stress management? Those things matter too, and they’re actually useful in a professional setting.”

“Sometimes I feel these emotional education courses make us look soft, like we can’t handle life’s normal ups and downs on our own. That’s not true. Our generation is way stronger than people think, and we know how to talk to friends or get help if we really need it. We don’t need a formal class to tell us how to love or how to deal with pain. It’s part of figuring out who we are. So for me, I’d rather struggle and learn on my own terms than have someone teach me how to feel. That’s just too personal to standardize in a university lecture hall,” Sahoo signs off.



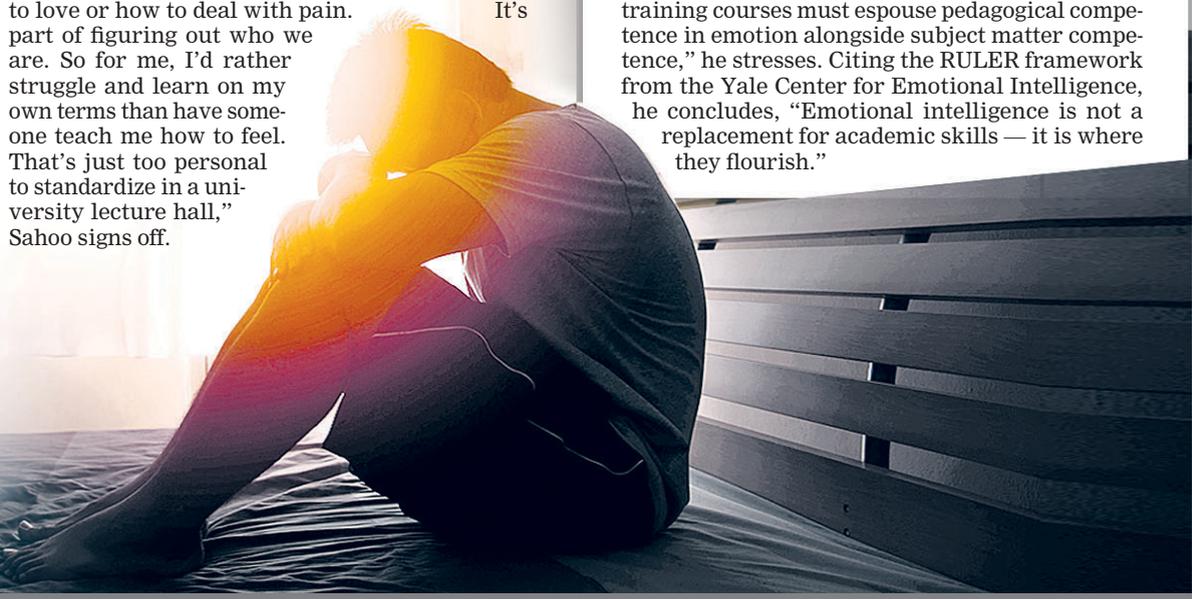
Dei further adds, “The truth is we mess up a lot because nobody shows us how to handle conflict, or how to communicate without hurting the other person or ourselves. I see so many of my friends stay in toxic friendships or relationships just because they don’t know any better, or they’re scared of being alone. It breaks my heart because I know I’ve done the same. We think we should just learn this stuff by ourselves, but it’s not that simple. So when I heard about this ‘Negotiating Intimate Relationships’ course, I actually felt hopeful. It means someone is acknowledging that these skills matter, that our emotions deserve attention in the same way our grades do.”

“If I’d had a class like this in school or even earlier in college, maybe I wouldn’t have wasted so much time trying to please people who didn’t respect me, or blaming myself for every argument. Maybe I would have known how to spot red flags and leave sooner, instead of staying in unhealthy situations just because I thought that was normal. Learning about empathy, respect, dealing with heartbreak — these are life skills. They’re not optional, they’re essential. We’re expected to succeed in our careers, but no one asks if we can cope with breakups, or if we know how to say no when someone crosses a line. This course gives us a chance to learn those things, and I think that’s incredibly powerful. I wish every university would do the same, because it shows our feelings matter, and that’s something our generation really needs to hear,” she concludes.



‘Relationships can’t be taught, you have to experience them’

Dillip Sahoo, 20, UG final year student, Christ College, Cuttack, says, “I know everyone’s saying this course is progressive and needed, but honestly, I don’t buy it. I feel like emotions and relationships can’t be taught the way you teach math or science. You have to experience them. You have to mess up, feel the pain, and learn from it. That’s how you actually grow. Sitting in a classroom and talking about heartbreak or toxic



GENDERLESS FASHION

Breaking boundaries



In the realm of fashion, gender-neutral styles are breaking free from tradition. From high-end runways to urban streets, this trend empowers individuals to express themselves freely, unbound by traditional norms. It's more than just clothing; it's a movement that celebrates authenticity and personal choice

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

For decades, fashion has neatly divided clothing into “his” and “hers” sections. But today, those rigid labels are being dismantled, giving rise to a new era of unisex, gender-fluid style. Influenced by the growing visibility of non-binary and gender-diverse communities, designers are reimagining silhouettes, fabrics, and colors to break away from traditional gender codes. Oversized shirts, tailored trousers, flowy skirts, and chunky boots are finding space in wardrobes regardless of gender identity.

While a few high-end labels have championed gender-neutral collections, mainstream brands are following suit, launching lines meant for anyone and everyone. This shift is about more than just aesthetics — it reflects a broader social movement toward acceptance and self-expression, where people can dress in a way that feels true to who they are.

Fashion, after all, reflects so-

ciety. As conversations around gender identity grow more open and inclusive, clothing is evolving to match these values, giving individuals the freedom to explore and express themselves beyond restrictive binaries. The genderless wardrobe is no longer just a trend — it's a cultural statement reshaping the fashion world for good. To understand this shift better, Sunday POST spoke with a few designers about their perspectives on this inclusive movement.

Ankita Satpathy, fashion designer and owner of a boutique in Cuttack says, “Unisex fashion isn't just a passing trend — it's a reflection of how today's generation views identity, comfort, and self-expression. At my boutique, I've seen a clear shift in what customers are looking for. They want clothes that break away from traditional labels of 'men's wear' or 'women's wear.' People are choosing pieces that feel authentic to who they are, not what society expects them to wear. Oversized shirts, relaxed trousers, fluid silhouettes — these aren't just design choices; they're statements of freedom.”

Satpathy further highlights how unisex fashion encourages sustainability, saying, “When clothing isn't bound by gender, it becomes more versatile and long-lasting. A single blazer or kurta can be styled differently across genders, which means people buy less and wear more creatively. That's powerful in an age of fast fashion.”

When asked about

the difficulties designers face in designing unisex clothes, Ankita shares, “Running a boutique that focuses on unisex styles means constantly rethinking fit, fabric and form. It's not about designing something neutral or bland — it's about creating pieces that speak to individuality while being inclusive. I see unisex fashion as the future because it embraces diversity, fluidity and personal choice. And honestly, that's what fashion should be about: empowering people to be themselves without limits or labels.”

Hrudayanath Tarei, a student of fashion designing from Bhubaneswar, says, “Honestly, unisex fashion is more than just a cool trend — it's a mindset shift. As a fashion student, I see it as a way to break down old rules about what men or women should wear. Our generation is rejecting those boxes. People want clothes that feel true to their identity, not something decided by society decades ago. They're drawn to boxy jackets, co-ord sets, and relaxed draped layers — styles that help them move freely and feel genuinely themselves. That's what fashion should do: let you be yourself.”

Tarei further shares, “What really excites me is how unisex design supports sustainability. If you create clothes that anyone can wear, it instant-

ly becomes more versatile. One well-made blazer can be styled by different people, in different ways, again and again. That means fewer purchases, less waste, and a longer life for each garment, which is so important right now.”

Designing for unisex isn't simple, though, he says. “You have to think harder about proportions, construction, and details, because you're not working with a fixed gender pattern. But I think that's a good challenge. It pushes us to innovate. For me, unisex fashion is about celebrating individuality while staying inclusive. It says there's no one way to be masculine or feminine, or even to define those words. That's powerful. If I can design something that makes someone feel seen and comfortable in their own skin, no matter how they identify, then I think I'm doing my job as a future designer,” he concludes.



Sara's weight loss mantra

Sara Ali Khan's remarkable transformation from 96 kg to a healthy 47 kg has inspired many, showing that her weight loss was about far more than just looking slim on screen. Sara has openly discussed how she broke free from unhealthy habits during her college days. In a recent chat, she recalled thinking, "I wasn't overweight; I broke the weighing scale... Once you're 85 kg, then 96 doesn't feel different, which is the worst way to be."

Beyond appearances, Sara recognised that her weight was seriously harming her health, affecting her hormones and confidence. "I was huge, man. It was not healthy on any level," she admitted. Even now, she stays vigilant. "Every time I overeat or touch 60 kg, I can feel I'm not okay. I really have to be extremely mindful of what I'm eating," she ex-

plained. The turning point came when filmmaker Karan Johar suggested she lose "half of her" for a film role, motivating her to commit to change. Sara urges others to understand that weight affects much more than looks. "It impacts your hormonal balance, and that is extremely important," she said. On the work front, Sara will next appear in *Metro... In Dino*. AGENCIES



Delivery Boy 2 first look unveiled

The much-anticipated first look of *Delivery Boy 2*, featuring top actress Archita Sahu, was officially revealed last week, sending waves of excitement across Bollywood.

Archita is seen donning the uniform of a delivery girl in the newly released poster. She plays the role of Pallavi, a strong and determined character who brings a new edge to the story.

Sharing the poster on social media, the makers wrote, "The wait is over. This time, not one, but TWO delivery persons are here. Saileendra & Archita (as Pallavi) are ready to deliver surprises."

Directed by Aswin Tripathy and produced by Rojalin Mohanty, *Delivery Boy 2* is presented by Infyson Entertainment. The film is a sequel to the 2023 hit *Delivery Boy*, which struck a chord with audiences through its emotionally charged narrative.

While the original followed the struggles of a young male delivery worker, the sequel expands the universe with Archita's character, promising a fresh, layered, and emotionally resonant storyline.

With filming completed and the release date expected to be announced soon, fans are eagerly waiting to see how this new chapter unfolds.

PNN

Tara's journey as an industry outsider

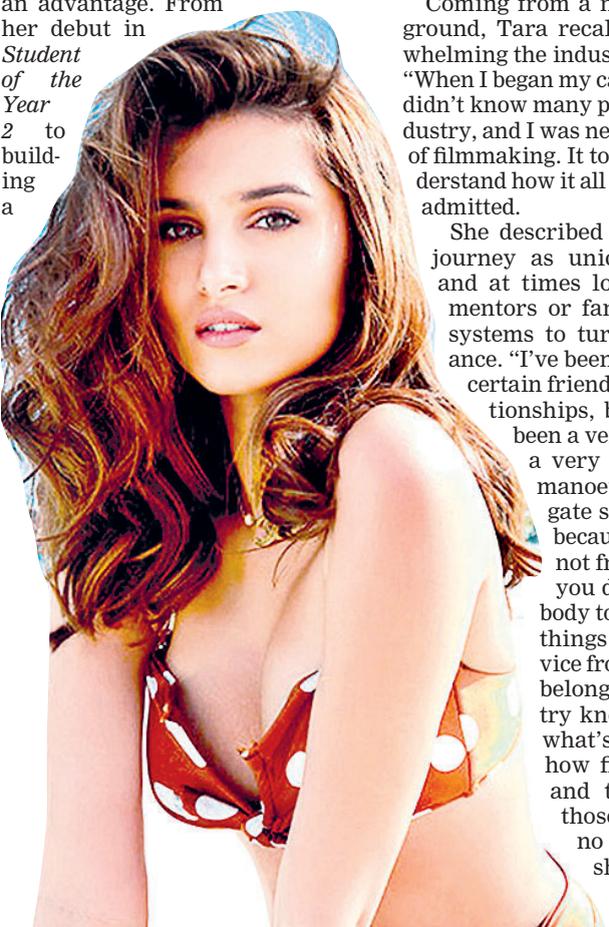
In a recent interview, Tara Sutaria opened up about her eight-year journey in Bollywood, reflecting on the challenges of breaking into an industry where insiders often hold an advantage. From her debut in *Student of the Year 2* to building a

reputation as a versatile actor and singer, Tara shared how she has grown to trust her instincts and prioritize quality over quantity in her career.

Coming from a non-filmi background, Tara recalled how overwhelming the industry felt at first. "When I began my career in films, I didn't know many people in the industry, and I was new to this world of filmmaking. It took years to understand how it all functions," she admitted.

She described the outsider's journey as uniquely difficult and at times lonely, with no mentors or familiar support systems to turn to for guidance. "I've been lucky to build certain friendships and relationships, but it has also been a very difficult and a very lonely task to manoeuvre and navigate so many things because when you're not from the inside, you don't have anybody to really discuss things with, seek advice from. People who belong to the industry know a lot about what's happening, how films get made and tracked — all those details I had no idea about," she explained.

AGENCIES



Ram talks about financial discipline

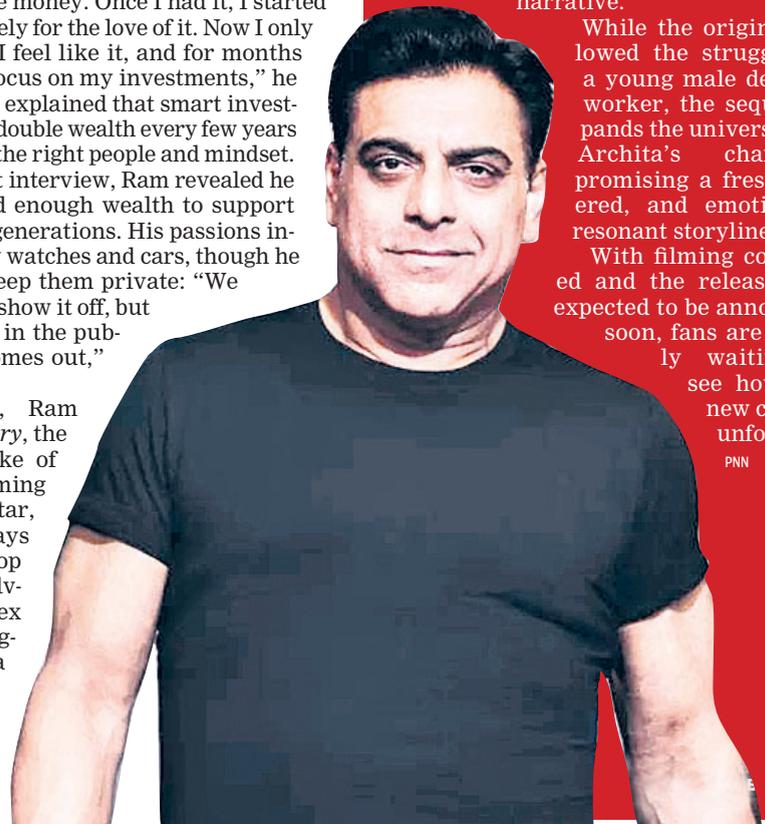
Actor Ram Kapoor recently opened up about his investments and personal philosophy around money while speaking on a podcast. He credited his father, Anil 'Billy' Kapoor, a well-known name in advertising, as an inspiration. Ram stressed the importance of financial planning, calling banked money "dead money," and revealed he invests in properties, including in Dubai, and holds a luxury car collection.

"At the beginning of my career, I worked hard to make money. Once I had it, I started working purely for the love of it. Now I only work when I feel like it, and for months at a time, I focus on my investments," he shared. Ram explained that smart investments could double wealth every few years if guided by the right people and mindset.

In a recent interview, Ram revealed he has amassed enough wealth to support four future generations. His passions include luxury watches and cars, though he prefers to keep them private: "We don't like to show it off, but because I'm in the public eye, it comes out," he said.

Currently, Ram stars in *Mistry*, the Hindi remake of *Monk*, streaming on JioHotstar, where he plays a former cop with OCD solving complex crimes alongside Mona Singh's ACP Sehmat Siddiqui.

AGENCIES



Monsoon hair SOS

The monsoon season brings much-needed relief from the scorching summer heat, but it also introduces a host of hair problems. Excessive humidity, rainwater pollutants, and scalp infections can trigger significant hair fall during this season. Thankfully, you don't have to rush to expensive salons or rely solely on chemical-based treatments. A few simple home remedies can go a long way in controlling hair fall naturally during the rainy months.



Neem water rinse

Neem leaves have powerful antibacterial and antifungal properties that help keep the scalp clean and infection-free during the rainy season. Boil a handful of neem leaves in two cups of water for 10-15 minutes, then let the water cool. Use this as a final rinse after shampooing your hair. It helps keep scalp infections at bay and strengthens the roots, reducing hair fall.

Onion juice therapy

Onion juice may sound strong, but its sulfur content boosts collagen production, improving hair strength and growth. Grate or blend one onion, strain the juice, and apply it directly to your scalp with a cotton ball. Leave it on for 30 minutes before washing with a mild shampoo. Applying onion juice once a week can help rejuvenate your hair naturally.



Aloe vera gel

Aloe vera is a time-tested natural remedy known for its soothing and healing properties. Applying fresh aloe vera gel directly to your scalp helps balance pH levels, reduce dandruff, and strengthen hair roots. Aloe vera's enzymes promote healthy hair growth while its moisturizing properties prevent dryness, a common issue during monsoon humidity. Simply extract fresh gel from an aloe vera leaf, apply it to your scalp, and leave it on for 30 minutes before rinsing with a mild shampoo.



Coconut oil massage

There's a reason coconut oil has been a staple in Indian households for generations. During the monsoon, a warm coconut oil massage helps nourish the scalp, improve blood circulation, and strengthen hair shafts from within. It also creates a protective barrier against fungal infections that thrive in humid weather. For best results, gently massage warm coconut oil into your scalp once or twice a week, leave it overnight, and wash it off the next morning.

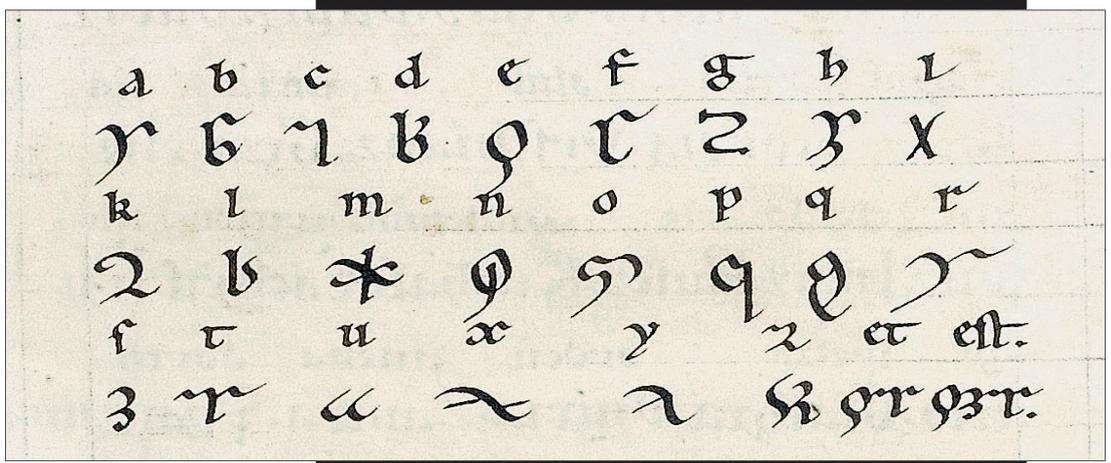
Fenugreek hair mask



Fenugreek seeds are rich in protein and nicotinic acid, which are essential for healthy hair growth. They help repair damaged hair follicles and control excessive shedding. Soak two tablespoons of fenugreek seeds overnight, grind them into a smooth paste the next morning, and apply this mask to your scalp. Let it sit for about 30-40 minutes, then wash with a mild shampoo. Regular use can reduce dandruff and improve overall hair health.

Along with these remedies, remember to eat a balanced diet rich in protein, iron, and vitamins, and avoid tying wet hair tightly to prevent breakage. With a consistent hair care routine and these simple home remedies, you can keep your tresses healthy and strong throughout the monsoon season.

Hildegard of Bingen's contributions to the Middle Ages extend beyond her visionary writings and musical compositions. Her creation of the unknown language and unknown letters remains a fascinating mystery that continues to intrigue scholars and historians



THE UNKNOWN LETTERS

Hildegard's mysterious language & letters

In the mid-12th century, a German nun named Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) penned a letter to Pope Anastasius IV (1073-1154). Her words were sharp and critical. She accused the pope of being too lenient with corrupt individuals and urged him to address the moral decay within the medieval church. Amidst her many complaints, Hildegard included a reference to one of the greatest mysteries of her life: she had witnessed a miracle that led her to create the Unknown Letters and speak an Unknown Language (lingua ignota and litterae ignotae in Latin). These mysterious creations remain little understood today, and scholars continue to debate their purpose.

Visions of Hildegard

Hildegard of Bingen was one of the greatest thinkers of the Middle Ages, best known for her beautiful musical compositions and visionary writings. Born in 1098, she was sent to become a religious recluse at the age of 14. At 42, she saw a great light descend from the sky, enabling her to better understand the Bible and the writings of saints. A voice told her to write down everything she had seen and heard in her visions, leading to the creation of her masterpiece, *Scivias*, which took her ten years to complete. Her work caught the attention of Pope Eugene III, who gave her papal approval to continue writing.

Creation of unknown language and letters

Between 1150 and 1158, Hildegard developed her Unknown Language and Unknown Letters. The Unknown



Cover of Hildegard of Bingen's *Riesencodex*

Language, or *lingua ignota*, consists of 1,011 nouns arranged from the most divine to everything below, covering a wide range of topics -- from parts of the human body, skin diseases, and the months of the year, to church architecture, plants, and insects. God, as the most important being in the cosmic hierarchy, is listed first, under the word 'Aigonz', while the devil is 'Diuueliz'. Bees are 'Sapiduz'; garlic is 'Clarischil'; and there is even a word for beer mug: 'Gunguliz'. A foot is 'Fuscal', and an arm is 'Branizel'. Despite the extensive nature of this list, it appears to be only a selection of Hildegard's created words. The only known example of her using her Unknown Language in daily life is in her song, *O Orzchis Ecclesia*, which was perhaps performed at the consecration of a church, and includes words that are absent from her surviving word lists. The unknown letters consist of 23 symbols representing letters of the alphabet, with additional symbols for 'et' and 'est.' Hildegard's inspirations for these creations likely came from *summaria*, dictionary-like works that provided thematic word lists. Medieval scribes also enjoyed experimenting with different alphabets, often to write their names in manuscripts.

The purpose

Scholars debate why Hildegard created her Unknown Language and Unknown Letters. Some suggest it was the language spoken by virgins in heaven or the original language of creation. Others believe it was a form of secret communication between Hildegard and her nuns or an 'ornamentation' for her poetry. Despite the mystery surrounding their purpose, it is clear that these creations were not a secret. Hildegard mentioned them in her letter to Pope Anastasius and in the preface to her work *Liber vitae meritorum* in 1163.

Survival of Hildegard's writings

Around 1170, the monk Volmar lamented that the



Illustration of Hildegard of Bingen from *Scivias*

knowledge of Hildegard's Unknown Language would vanish with her death. However, scribes included copies of the Unknown Language and Unknown Letters in three compilations of her writings, improving their chances of survival. One of these manuscripts ended up in the Austrian National Library in Vienna but vanished between 1800 and 1830. Another manuscript, dated to 1220, passed through multiple hands, including Kaiser Wilhelm II, and entered the Berlin State Library collection in 1912.

Perhaps the most impressive manuscript preserving the Unknown Letters and Unknown Language is the *Riesencodex*, or 'Giant Codex,' a massive compilation of Hildegard's writings. It survived the destruction of Rupertsberg Monastery during the Thirty Years' War and the bombing of Dresden in World War II. Since 1949, it has been kept safely in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Hildegard of Bingen's contributions to the Middle Ages extend beyond her visionary writings and musical compositions. Her creation of the unknown language and unknown letters remains a fascinating mystery that continues to intrigue scholars and historians.

OP DESK