

FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 5, 2022

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



WORLD WILDLIFE DAY - MARCH 3

Hunter in trouble

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COVER STORY



With over 500 songs and 2000 live concerts to her credit, classical singer Nazia Alam, daughter of legendary singer Sikandar Alam, has carved a special place in the heart of music lovers. The winner of Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Prativa Puraskar loves to take care of her furry companions when she is free.



No day off **Day to rejuvenate**

Who says Sunday is a rest day? For me, it is one of the busiest days of the week. I am swamped with work as I need to take several classes in my music school.

At times, I manage to take a break from my hectic schedule and spend time at my uncle's lovely farmhouse at Chandaka, on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar. This, for me, is not just a source of relaxation, it lifts my spirit as well.

Sibling bonding

My sister Sophia pampers me as if I am her child. Little wonder then that she loves to don the chef's apron to treat me with biryani and her special cake. We also move to restaurants to please our palate and soul



With renowned singer Prafulla Kar



With sister Sophia

Road-tripper

I am very fond of driving a car. No wonder, I enjoy going on a long road trip but all alone. It is my favourite pastime and a source of de-stressing.

Avid gardener

I have grown a small garden at my place with varieties of seasonal flowers. Taking care of the plants is a priority in my to-do list.

Canine love

Kaira and Whiskey, the pets, are like my kids. I take a few hours off on Sundays to take them to a salon for a SPA and visit a veterinarian for a health checkup.

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

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

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- I was born to be a pessimist. My blood type is B Negative.
- Whenever I have a problem, I just sing. Then I realise my voice is worse than my problem.
- The man is the head, but the woman is the neck. And she can turn the head any way she wants.
- I don't go looking for trouble. Trouble usually finds me.

LAUDABLE EFFORT

Dear Sir, Sir, I loved the profiles of stand-up comedians in last week's cover story 'Redeeming their humour quotient'. Stand-up comedy in Odisha is relatively new but the performers featured in the article are not leaving any stone unturned to make the form popular in the state. After going through the write-up, I watched some of Satyabrat Mohapatra's open mic shows and needless to say, I became a fan of his sense of humour. Though stand-up comedy has a few practitioners in Odisha, I realised one thing after watching a show of *Comedy Highway* that these guys are set to take the comedy scene by storm soon. Thanks to youths like Satyabrat, Debarchan and Alokesh, this art form is gaining momentum in our state and being appreciated by all and sundry. They also invite renowned comedians to perform in Odisha. Their attempts to make the genre popular among denizens here is really laudable.

SASWAT SWAYAMPFRAGYAN, JHARSUGUDA

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. Please send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to features.orissapost@gmail.com B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948

With Odisha government designating fishing cat as the ambassador of Chilika Lake and launching conservation project for the species, wildlife activists are now hopeful that the state may witness a spike in their numbers



Denver Zoo

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY - MARCH 3

Hunter in trouble

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Be it mountains, rainforests or animals, due to human activities, thousands of species have either become extinct or endangered over the past century. Needless to say, the loss of one species often triggers the loss of others affecting the balance of our planet's ecosystem.

The latest addition to the list is fishing cat, a feline species, mostly seen in South Asian countries of which Odisha is a part.

They are now considered an endangered species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. With the Odisha government declaring a fishing cat as the ambassador of Chilika Lake and launching a conservation project for the species, wildlife activists are now hopeful that the state may witness a rise in their numbers. Ahead of World Wildlife Day March 3, Sunday POST talks to a few wildlife activists to ascertain the reasons behind fishing cats' disappearance from wetlands and what measures should be adopted for their conservation.

RETALIATION KILLINGS CONTRIBUTE TO DWINDLING POPULATION

Wildlife biologist and IUCN-CEM-Wetland Ecosystem Specialist Member Prakash Mardaraj, says "Fishing cat is a medium-sized cat seen in South and Southeast Asia. It is the apex predator of its ecosystem. Odisha Forest & Environment depart-

ment has launched a few projects in the state for its conservation. Despite management efforts taken by the state the population is on the decline. Though it enjoys the status of state animal in West Bengal, retaliation killings of fishing cats is frequent."



Explaining the reasons behind their dropping number, he adds, "Habitat loss and fragmentation for the sake of developmental activities such as encroachment and urbanisation, industrialisation, agriculture and aquaculture (prawn and shrimp farms) are among the chief reasons behind the dwindling population of fishing cats. Other common reasons include poisoning, trapping and clubbing and being caught in fishing nets."

Another threat to the fishing cat is depletion of its main prey-fish due to unsustainable fishing practices by the local fisherman community, points out Mardaraj.

About measures being taken to conserve the felines, the animal lover says, "Survey for its population growth needs to be done in the state. Besides, restoration of their habitats which include wetlands and mangroves with complete restriction of any human interference in the cat territory is the need of the hour. Government should sensitise people who share common resources with the smaller cats about their role in our ecosystem."



A fishing cat at Bhitarkanika National Park



A representational image

Source: AMNH, Cliff, flickr

Habitat destruction a concern

Akash Ranjan Rath, former honorary wildlife warden of Puri, says, "Entire coastal wetlands including Chilika, Bhitarkanika (Ramsar sites) and some of its peripheral regions are ideal habitats of fishing cats."

As an indicator, a fishing cat plays an important role in the wetland diversity. Very little is known about the ecology and behaviour of this species. In the last couple of years its mortality rate is rising due to poaching, retribution killing and habitat destruction."



"Fishing cats love to spend time in water bodies and marshland having tall beds forming graminoid species like Reed, Swamps, and cultivated tall grasses. Reduction of food and daytime resting areas are a great threat to this species", Akash adds.

Poaching not a threat

Rajnagar Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) JD Pati says, "Bhitarkanika, country's second-largest mangrove forest, is not just the home to salt-water crocodiles, it is also inhabited by fishing cats. Earlier census through direct sighting was carried out to know the exact number of fishing cats. But after the fishing cat was declared ambassador of Chilika lagoon, the state



A camera was installed inside Bhitarkanika National Park to track the movements of fishing cats

government initiated projects for the conservation of the felines. We have installed 40 camera traps in the park in order to monitor the movements of animals and density of the animals. Besides, the aim behind installing camera is to ascertain whether there is conflict between human and animals. We install cameras for almost 25 days in a block and then shift them to another block. The video recordings are being stored in the memory of the cameras for up to one month."

He further adds: "We were only

using the camera traps in tiger reserve and tiger corridors during the year from 2006-2018. We were not focusing on Bhitarkanika like Sundarban due to the absence of tigers. However, after a discussion with the National Tiger Authority (NTA), it was decided to install the camera traps in 2022 in order to keep an eye on our ecosystem. Exact number of fishing cats, known as an indicator of a healthy ecosystem, will be known in April, 2022. So far, 40 fishing cats have been spotted."

He further says that one camera was installed in every two square kilometers (1 grid) for the intensive camera trapping. Apart from fishing cats, the camera also caught the leopard cats, monitor lizards in the region.

He attributes wetland loss owing to hydrological changes and encroachment are the main reasons behind the declining number of the felines. "Fishing cats are not poached. Populations of the felines are largely threatened by destruction of wetlands and the number has come down drastically over the last decade", signs off Pati.

It may be noted that the state government designated the fishing cat as the ambassador of the Chilika to mark

YOU MAY NOT KNOW

A fishing cat is more than twice the size of domestic cats. Its body length varies from 57 to 78 centimetres, and its tail is about 20 to 30 centimetres long. Despite being a small cat, it stands at around 16 inches tall and weighs five to 16 kilograms.

The fishing cat's striped head looks rather like that of a very large tabby cat, while the spotted body is more reminiscent of a leopard's body.

A fishing cat has a light-grey or brown attractive coat and is decorated with dark stripes and blotches.

They spend most of their time travelling beside watercourses, especially those that are slow moving. They are seen in marshes, reed beds, sluggish rivers, streams, lakes, tidal creeks, and mangrove swamps.

A fishing cat is generally a solitary animal and maintains a territory.

The unique coat structure of a fishing cat, whose life span is approximately 15 years, makes it an exceptional species among cats and is a valuable asset in both the wild and in captivity.



Source: FunART.pro

'Wildlife Week' in 2020 and installed about 100 camera traps on the lake shore and some nearby areas to monitor their movements.

Counterview

Biswajit Mohanty, an animal activist and the Secretary of Wild Life Society of Odisha, says, "I don't think there is a decline in the number of fishing cats because no surveys have been conducted in the past for the felines. All coastal districts right from Ganjam to Puri have a healthy population of fishing cats. Poaching of fishing cats is also very low in Odisha. There is no targeted poaching. Puri district registered poaching of a fishing cat around six years back. Shrinking wetlands has forced the fishing cats to stray into human settlements and prey on fish in ponds and livestock. But I must say that the felines are well protected."



Source: Wildlife Conservation Network

SEYCHELLES A Perfect Paradise

THE EAST AFRICAN ISLAND NATION IS KNOWN FOR SOME OF THE MOST AMAZING NATURE WALKS AND TRAILS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN



The trees that cover the granitic islands and the 1,500 species of flowering plants contain some of the rarest specimens on the planet, many of which are found nowhere else on the planet.

Seychelles has become known for some of the most amazing nature walks and trails in the Indian Ocean, with over 15 trails to choose from. For nature lovers, each network of walks and trails crisscrossing the islands of Mahe, Praslin, and La Digue is unique and reflects the islands' richness and wealth.

Here are some of the best nature trails to visit on a vacation:

Copolia Lodge Trail, Mahe

Copolia Trail, located in Morne Seychellois National Park, is one of Seychelles' most popular hiking trails. The view is simply breathtaking, spanning the east coast of the main island all the way to the country's international airport. The trail is hidden beneath the lush growth of the forest, which contains many endemic palms; higher up, the area is covered in boulders.

Anse Major Trail, Mahe

The Anse Major trail will not disappoint if you are looking for a relaxing beach day at the end of a hike. The isolated beach of Anse Major is reached via a relatively easy walk through giant boulders. The walk to the beach and back takes about three hours, but the clear blue sea and lagoon are ideal for a picnic.

Fond Ferdinand, Praslin

Even though the Vallee de Mai is unquestionably Praslin's main draw, the alternative Fond Ferdinand Nature Reserve is also well worth a visit. This 122-hectare park is six times the size of Vallee de Mai and contains more endemic plant and animal species to discover. From the elevated lookout point, enjoy endless views of Praslin, as well as several other Inner Seychelles Islands, including Curieuse, La Digue and Coco Island.



Nid d'Aigle, La Digue

If you're looking for an once-in-a-lifetime adventure, consider climbing to the Nid d'Aigle while in La Digue. This 333-metre 'mountain' (1092 ft) is La Digue's highest peak and is also known as the Eagle's Nest. The trail meanders through soft forest floors, granite boulders, and red earth. The highest point provides a breathtaking view of Praslin, Felicite, and Marianne Island.



Vallee de Mai, Praslin

Seychelles has two UNESCO World Heritage sites, including the legendary Vallee de Mai, one of the world's smallest natural UNESCO World Heritage Sites, where millions of years of isolation have resulted in the evolution of many unique species found nowhere else on the planet. The Vallee de Mai, a living remnant of ancient palm forests, is the green heart of Praslin Island and home to Seychelles' largest intact forest of the endemic coco de mer palm. If you're lucky, you might even see the rare Seychelles Black Parrot.



'I'm already married to Ranbir'

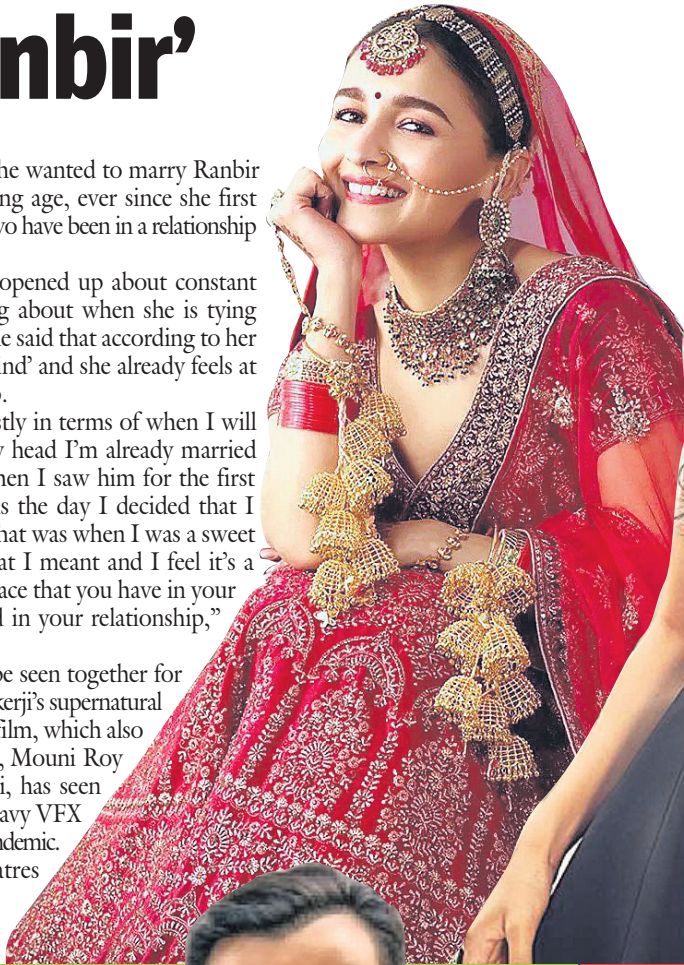
Alia Bhatt said that she wanted to marry Ranbir Kapoor from a young age, ever since she first saw him on screen. The two have been in a relationship since 2017.

In an interview, Alia opened up about constant news reports speculating about when she is tying the knot with Ranbir. She said that according to her marriage is a 'state of mind' and she already feels at peace in her relationship.

"If you ask me honestly in terms of when I will get married, well, in my head I'm already married to him. Forget that! When I saw him for the first time on screen, that was the day I decided that I wanted to marry him. That was when I was a sweet little girl. But that's what I meant and I feel it's a state of mind. It's the peace that you have in your mind, in your heart and in your relationship," she added.

Ranbir and Alia will be seen together for the first time in Ayan Mukerji's supernatural drama *Brahmastra*. The film, which also stars Amitabh Bachchan, Mouni Roy and Nagarjuna Akkineni, has seen multiple delays due to heavy VFX work and the Covid-19 pandemic. It is set to hit the theatres September 9.

AGENCIES



Kiara to romance Deverakonda in her next

Latest reports suggest Vijay Deverakonda's possible collaboration with popular actress Kiara Advani.

The *Geetha Govindam* actor is in talks with *Nimmu Kori* fame Shiva Nirvana, for which actress Kiara Advani is considered to play the female lead. The details regarding the movie, which is tentatively titled *VD 12* are kept under the wraps currently.

VD 12 will mark Kiara's third movie in Telugu, as she had appeared in *Bharat Ane Nenu* and *Vinaya Vidheya Rama* alongside Mahesh Babu and Ram Charan, respectively.

It is reported that the producers have decided to launch the movie by the end of 2022.

On the other hand, Deverakonda will appear in a movie under Pushpa fame Sukumar's direction for his next, tentatively titled *VD 11*.

His upcoming movie *Liger* marks his debut as a pan-India actor, and will hit the screens August 25.

AGENCIES



VIKRAM VEDHA

Saif's tough cop avatar out

The makers of the upcoming neo-noir thriller film *Vikram Vedha* last week treated fans with the first look of actor Saif Ali Khan, who will be seen playing a tough cop.

Saif's *Vikram Vedha* co-actor Hrithik Roshan introduced his character on social media. He shared a picture of the actor from the sets of the film and wrote: "Vikram".

In the image, Saif looks dapper in a classic combination of a plain white T-Shirt with blue jeans. Saif's macho and buff avatar as police officer Vikram in the film has fans swooning over the actor.

The film stars Hrithik and Saif Ali Khan in lead roles, with Radhika Apte also playing an important character. Pushkar and Gayatri, the original writers and directors, are donning the director's hats for the Hindi remake as well.

Hrithik and Saif are acting together in a film after 20 years, their last joint appearance being in *Naa Tum Jaano Naa Hum* (2002). This original Tamil blockbuster starred R. Madhavan and Vijay Sethupathi.

Vikram Vedha will hit the big screens globally September 30.

IANIS



Kartik spends time with 'strong souls'

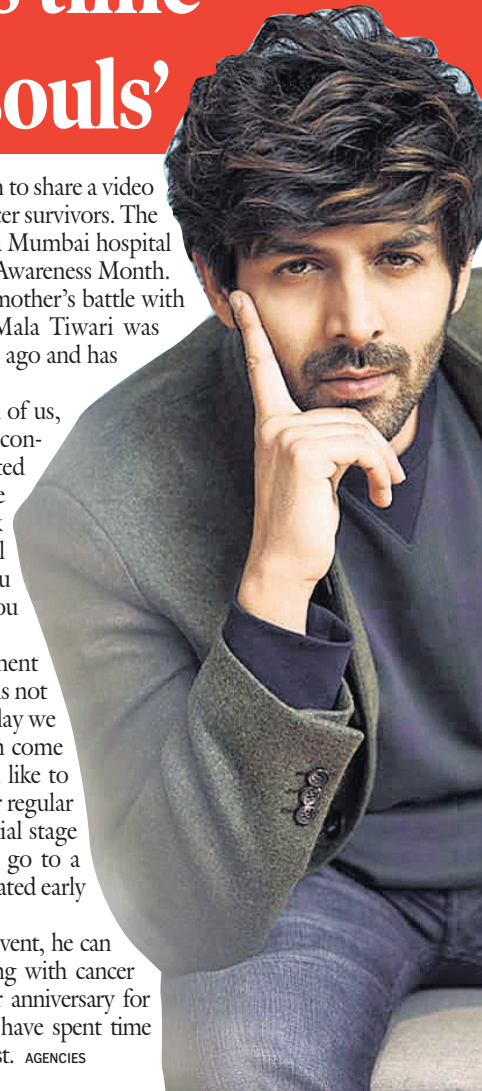
Actor Kartik Aaryan took to Instagram to share a video of him spending some time with cancer survivors. The occasion was an event organised at a Mumbai hospital as part of the ongoing National Cancer Awareness Month.

At the event, Kartik spoke about his mother's battle with the disease as well. Kartik's mother Mala Tiwari was diagnosed with breast cancer four years ago and has since been cured successfully.

"It was a very emotional time for all of us, but I am so proud of my mom that she conquered this disease," Kartik was quoted as saying at an event. Addressing the cancer survivors in attendance, Kartik added, "I stand here in respect for all those who couldn't make it, and all of you guys (the survivors) who conquered it. You all are real heroes."

Further talking about cancer and its treatment from his personal experience, Kartik said, "It is not a disease that we should be very afraid of. Today we have many facilities because of which we can come to know about it much in advance. I would like to share how important it is for all of us to go for regular health check-ups, so one can know at an initial stage if they have cancer, and they don't have to go to a stage where it becomes scary. One can get treated early on."

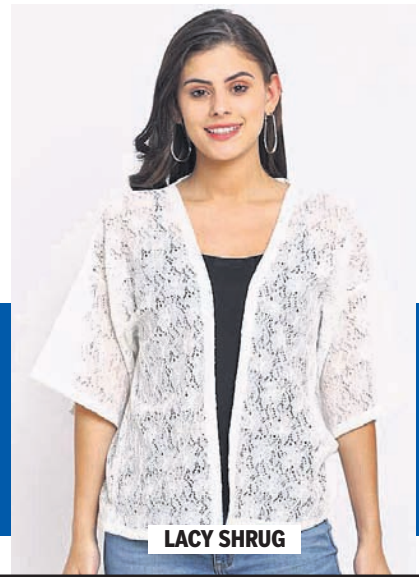
In the video that Kartik shared from the event, he can be seen sharing the stage and dancing along with cancer survivors. "Couldn't ask for a better 4 year anniversary for #SonuKeTituKiSweetie. Overwhelmed to have spent time with these strong souls," he captioned the post.



AGENCIES

Shrugs to have in wardrobe

THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SHRUGS LIKE LONG, SHORT, SLEEVELESS, ONES WITH SLEEVES AND THOSE WITH STYLISH SLEEVES. AND THESE ARE ABSOLUTELY PERFECT FOR WINTERS, SUMMERS, FORMAL OCCASIONS, CASUAL OUTINGS AND MORE



LACY SHRUG



CROPPED SHRUG

A shrug is a women's jacket or a cover up that can be worn additionally over an outfit. Shrugs come in various lengths and styles. There are different types of shrugs like long shrug designs and short shrugs, sleeveless shrugs, ones with sleeves and those with stylish sleeves, the styles are countless. And these shrugs are absolutely perfect for winters, summers, formal occasions, casual outings and more. These shrugs also are total thumbs up in terms of the style quotient.

One may get confused while choosing the perfect one to flaunt this summer. When it comes to fabrics, try to choose fabrics that are breathable and light. Don't go for knitted fabrics or heavier ones. Though velvet is trending majorly this season, please don't go for velvet fabric. For this scorching heat, sleeveless shrugs might be your best bet. Apart from florals, you can try opting for minimal graphic prints, typography shrug style, and tropical prints. The above mentioned are very much in trend these days so do buy them if you see them or wear them if you have them in your wardrobe already.

HOW TO WEAR LONG SHRUGS

Long shrug designs are anything that comes goes beyond your waist. They're long and can come till your knees, ankles or hips. These long shrug outfits look amazing for a music festival or for a casual day out for a breezy vibe. Long shrugs with jeans or shorts could work if you want to go for a breezy, chic outfit for a day out or anything. They go well with tank tops, spaghetti tops when paired with jeans.

Now, how to wear a shrug with jeans? If you like to dress up in a feminine way, try pairing these with a pair of skinny jeans or a ripped straight fit jeans. These can be your go-to piece from the wardrobe whenever you're in a hurry or on a lazy day when you don't wish to dress up too much.

HOW TO WEAR CROPPED SHRUGS

A cropped shrug design is a mini version of a shrug. They are short, cute and very stylish. These shrugs often have a length till above the waist or even smaller. Styling a cropped shrug is very simple, basic and easy. It's also very chic and a stylish way to add glamour and fun to



LONG SHRUG

your summer dresses. If you're wearing a printed dress, or a shrug for summer dresses full of colors, choose a solid colored shrug. If you're opting for a printed shrug with dress, then try opting for a solid coloured dress. Not to mention, if you're the one who's ready to experiment with their looks, go for print clashing. Print clashing is one of the major trends that are ruling this season on the runway and everywhere else. Cropped shrugs style are one of the best ways to flaunt the best parts of the body.

HOW TO WEAR LACY SHRUGS

Lacy shrugs are those types of shrugs which are made up of beautiful yarns weaved into a fabric. It is weaved into various styles. Florals, leafy patterns are some of the styles that they have. These lacy shrugs look really magical over a tank top and shorts attire. Tops with shrugs are clearly a winning option, especially when the shrug has been made from delicate lace. One piece dress with shrugs blend very well with each other. These beautiful shrugs for summer dresses can be a hit with jumpsuits too. To give full justice to your lovely delicate shrug, you can team it up with a solid colored jumpsuit, with a wide leg. Flared jumpsuits, short jumpsuits, and straight fit jumpsuits go very well with these shrug styles.

HOW TO WEAR FLORAL SHRUGS

Floral shrugs are a summer-perfect piece that you can add to your wardrobe to look fresh, and trendy. Among shrug designs, floral shrugs are probably the most vibrant. An all-over floral print would certainly compliment a solid colored tee or tank top. Pick a vibrant shrug when you're trying to rock the top with shrug combo.

STYLING TIPS FOR VARIOUS TOPS WITH SHRUGS

While looking into long shrugs designs, it's important to note that fringed shrug styles are sizzling this summer, they can be a bit tricky to carry off. They do not really go well with all the tops and T-shirts that you might have. Fringed shrugs give you a very retro

and a boho look. In terms of bottoms, you need to know how to wear a shrug with jeans and shorts. When it comes to top with shrugs and tees, you can pair them up with basic T-shirts or basic and minimal tops and blouses. Don't go overboard with loud colors and loud prints. Since the fringes on the shrugs are already screaming for the right kind of attention, opting for loud colors and styles in terms of tops can make you look too much! So keep it simple.

AGENCIES



LONG SHRUG



FLORAL SHRUG



Sunita