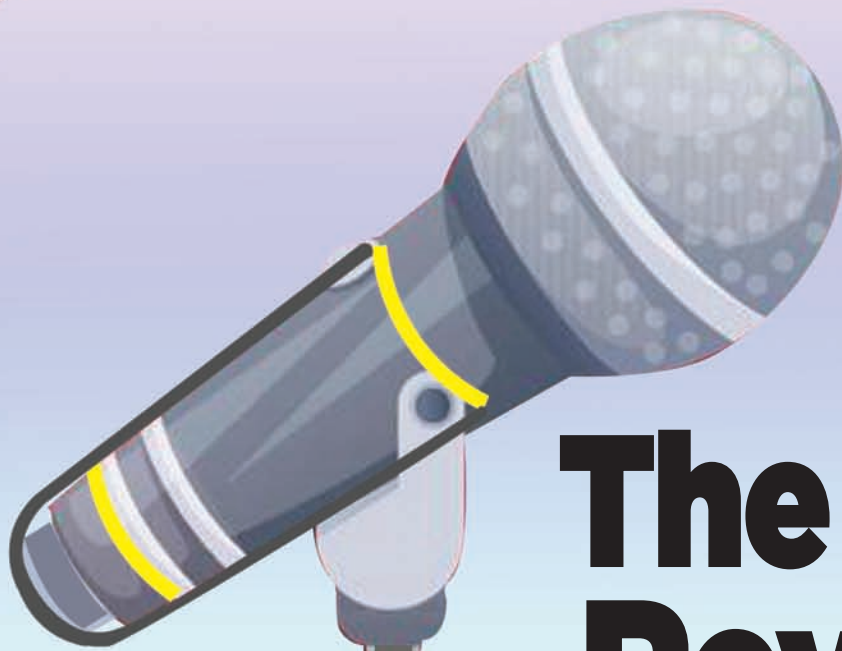


AUGUST 20-26, 2023

# SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



# The Chuckle Revolution

P 3,4

COVER  
STORY





POET AND RAPPER PRATEEK MOHAPATRA, BETTER KNOWN BY HIS STAGE NAME PHOENIX, HAS EARNED A SPECIAL PLACE IN THE HEARTS OF HIS ADMIRERS FOR MASTERFULLY BLENDING HINDI AND ODISIA IN HIS WORKS. HE FINDS SOLACE IN SPENDING QUALITY TIME WITH HIS FAMILY, SAYS PRATEEK WHO ROSE TO FAME BELTING NUMBERS LIKE AREA BHONSOR, BHABANA, PRATIDIN AND ODISIA PILA



### No days off

Like soldiers, I have no days off. Being in the IT industry, I have a 9 to 5 job. Then I spend six hours rapping, an hour practicing vocals, and of course a mandatory six-hour sleep. Saturdays and Sundays are kept aside for shows and recording sessions.

### Biryani lover

Biryani always remains my top choice in food for which I can go on my knees. Among the deserts, I love both Rasagola and Gulab Jamun.

### Poetry session

Every day, I spend an hour discussing poetry and other literary works with my grandfather and Sundays are no exception. Dad also writes poems in English. So, when we have free time, we frequently share ideas on a range of topics with mom giving us company as a spectator.

### Passionate musician

I have a passion for composing songs and creating melodies. I'm skilled at both playing the guitar and the ukulele which consumes much of my leisure hours.



MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

## WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

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

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Q: What did one ocean say to the other ocean?
- A: Nothing, they just waved.
- I applied for a job hanging mirrors. It's something I can see myself doing.
- What do you call Watson when Sherlock isn't around? Holmeless.
- My IQ test results just came in and I'm really relieved. Thank God it's negative.



## VANISHING 'KINGS'

Sir, Lion's symbolic title as the King of the Jungle evokes images of power and grandeur, and World Lion Day emphasises the significance of conservation for both wildlife and ecosystems. Tragically, the formidable Barbary lion, once prominent in North Africa, vanished due to human activities like trophy hunting and entertainment in Roman arenas. Reintroduction efforts face challenges, requiring careful planning, prey restoration, and community support. Therefore, it is heartening to learn about Belfast Zoo's advanced enclosure, which offers the Barbarys hope for their protection and revival through an international breeding programme. Sordid Saga of Barbary Lions, an article published in last week's Sunday POST really narrated the tragic tale of the strongest lion in the world. Their extinction not only highlights the impact of human actions on some rare species, it also underscores the responsibility to safeguard Earth's magnificent creatures.

SIKHA ROY, KOLKATA

## 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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B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948



THE LIVE COMEDY SCENE IN BHUBANESWAR IS PRIMED FOR TREMENDOUS GROWTH IN THE COMING YEARS, OWING MOSTLY TO RAPID GROWTH OF IT AND CORPORATE SECTORS, SAYS ACE STANDUP COMIC SATYAVRAT MOHAPATRA

# The Chuckle Revolution

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

Laughter, they say, is the best medicine for the soul, and in Bhubaneswar, this medicine has found a unique platform to be administered - live comedy concerts. As the city evolves and diversifies, its entertainment environment has seen a remarkable transition with the rise of comedy performances tailored for the public by local performers who are no less than their national level rivals.

But, until recently, the scene was entirely different.

To give the people of Bhubaneswar a taste of national humour, top performers such as Harsh Benniwal, Zakir Khan, and Anubhav Singh Bassi had to be enlisted. However, things changed rapidly.

This reversal can be attributed to a handful of young Odisha performers.

Coming from various backgrounds, this new crop of comics has been enchanting the audience with their amusing performances. Not only is their fan base growing as a result of their wit, but the number of aspiring stand-up comedians on the circuit is also growing.

A few stand-up comics spoke with **Sunday POST** about Bhubaneswar's evolving comic scene and how they won audiences' hearts.

### 'Comedy scene in city set for an expansion'

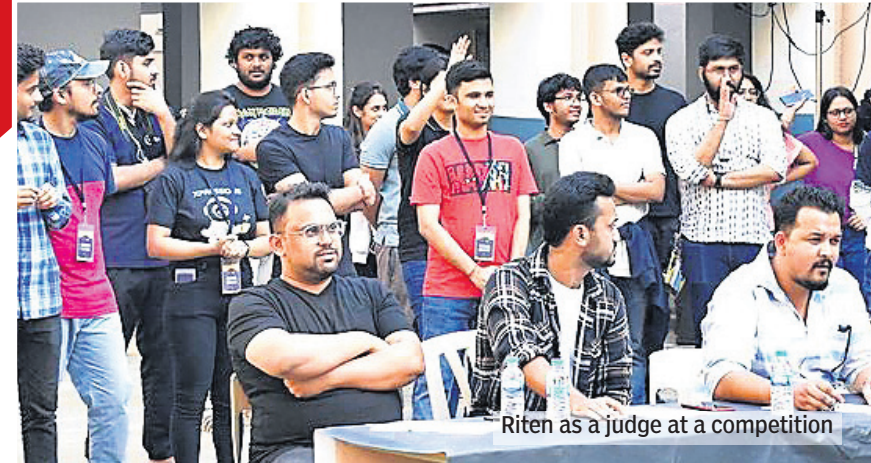
Ace standup **Satyavrat Mohapatra**, the founder of Comedy Highway, has seven years of experience behind him. Sharing his perspectives on the rise of live comedy shows in urban areas, he says, "I believe that the extensive utilisation of social media has contributed to the increased awareness and hosting of comedy events. While there was a limited presence of comedy shows prior to the pandemic, our popularity expanded significantly afterwards. Despite belonging to Odisha, a state not much known for entertainment, our presence has grown due to the dissemination of videos on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and other social media outlets. This growth has been registered smoothly and without any disruptive ef-



fects." Asked how it all started, Mohapatra, one of the key initiators of comedy culture in Odisha, adds, "At the beginning, I used to hang out a lot with my friends at Cha Khattis where we would chat and gossip. During those times, I used to make comedic remarks that made my friends laugh. This made me consider pursuing stand-up comedy. After attending a few open mic events, I began performing my comedy routines. Encouraged by some of my close friends, I formed Comedy Highway."

According to him, Odia humour is becoming

to polish their talents. Rather than starting with explicit jokes, focusing on generating laughter through wholesome humour will likely yield better results" Satyavrat adds.



Riten as a judge at a competition

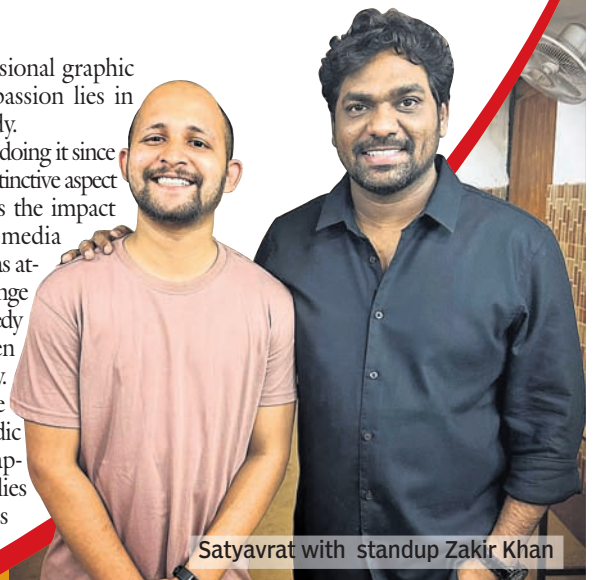
and most importantly, the preferences and aversions of the audience." Riten, when quizzed why he gravitated into corporate humour, adds, "Corporate shows serve as a reliable income source for comedians, contributing to the broadening landscape of stand-up comedy culture."

### 'City's comedy culture has been a gradual process'

Debarchan Mishra, who has been doing stand-up comedy for four years, says, "The comedy scene in Bhubaneswar is expanding. People are beginning to recognise humour as an art form worthy of respect. Comedians can now create their own identities."

### 'Corporate shows bring stability into profession'

Riten Pattnaik is a professional graphic designer but his passion lies in stand-up comedy. "I have been doing it since 2017-18. A distinctive aspect of my work is the impact of the social media boom, which has attracted a diverse range of individuals to the comedy scene," says Riten who is often seen doing corporate comedy. Speaking about this genre, he says, "When it comes to comedic style, we prioritize a natural approach. However, the focus lies in aligning with the company's profile, background, target age group, event type,



Satyavrat with standup Zakir Khan





Satyavrat posing with the audience

Debarchan, like Riten, sees huge potential for comics in corporate shows.

“The comedians are set their dues in future because of the steady growth of the corporate sector in Bhubaneswar. Many more companies are going to open offices which will undoubtedly benefit standups.”

On the emergence of corporate comedy, Debarchan points out, “The evolution of corporate comedy culture in Bhubaneswar has been a gradual progress. As the local comedy scene flourished, the corporate comedy culture also saw growth. The surge in popularity of corporate comedy shows directly correlates with the rise of local comedians’ fame. Professionals from the corporate sector attend our public shows across the city. They invite us to perform at their office events after witnessing our success.”

He is for cracking inclusive jokes at corporate shows. Justifying its need, he says, “I recall a performance for a company where the audience spanned ages 25 to 65, posing a challenge in tailoring jokes.

Some resonated with the youth, while others amused the older crowd. Therefore, it is important to craft inclusive jokes for successful corporate shows.”

On how public shows are different from the corporate ones, Debarchan explains, “Public shows involve ticket-holding attendees who appreciate humour’s merit. Here,

jokes are evaluated on their comedic value rather than the subject matter. Corporate gigs, however, demand a narrower approach. Political and slang-infused content is off-limits; careful communication is essential to build up a rapport. Maintaining composure is crucial. Respectful dialogue is imperative, steering clear of offence. Prudent topic selection is paramount. I often opt for family or marital humour for corporate gigs to ensure prudence. The allure of substantial pay drives comedians towards corporate performances, motivating refined, challenging, and city-benefit-enhancing comedy.”

He says that the standup comedians should focus on writing jokes involving less slang and hitting as many open mics as possible. “Everything apart, if you are in the scene, do not stop writing jokes. They should be included as a part of your daily routine. Comedy is just like any other art form. The more you practice, the more you shine,” Debarchan signs off.

**‘It’s incredible how they turn everyday situations into hilarious anecdotes’**

Ananya Pradhan, who attends live comedy shows at Bhubaneswar, comments, “I have been to several live comedies hosted by stand-up comedians in the city. Attending live comedy shows in Bhubaneswar has been an absolute blast! The energy in the room is infectious, and the comedians know how to connect with the audience and keep us rolling with laughter throughout the night. The local comedians often sprinkle in relatable jokes about

Bhubaneswar and its quirks, which resonate with the audience. It’s incredible how they

turn regular occurrences into entertaining anecdotes that have everyone in stitches.”

She adds, “The atmosphere is always so vibrant and lively. There’s something about being part of a live audience that just can’t

crowd, cracking jokes about our city and its people, makes the experience feel personal and special. Of course, there’s also the thrill of the unexpected. Comedians often engage with the audience, pulling people into their



Debarchan with Biswa Kalyan Rath

be replicated on a screen. The way the comedians interact with the

routines and improvising based on the reactions they get. It’s all in good fun and adds an element of unpredictability that keeps us on our toes.”

“Bhubaneswar’s comedy scene has really grown over the years, and it’s awesome to see local talents getting their moment in the spotlight. From open mic nights to established comedy clubs, there’s always something happening. If you’re ever in Bhubaneswar, don’t miss out on the chance to catch a live comedy show – you’ll leave with aching cheeks from laughing so much,” suggests Pradhan.



Odia stand-up comedians



# The hilltop beauty

Beautifully located atop a hill, the Jhansi Fort allows visitors to stroll through its history during the day and enjoy a light and sound show narrating Rani Laxmibai's saga of valour at sundown

enemy, many false doors were used in its construction. One tale may be told in many different ways, and this is true of this hilltop beauty, which exudes two distinct moods during the day and at night. Although the serenity over here never departs, which is what makes it stand out and speak to the people in many ways. For instance, as calm as it looks during the day, it is equally fierce at night. Even though this enormous fort, which is spread out over a huge area and appears to be very frightening, is very inviting to everyone who visits it at any time and always waits each day to tell those who inquire about it about legend Rani Laxmibai.

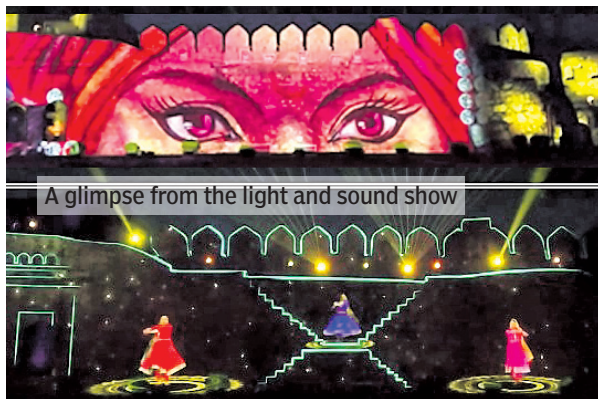
location without having to pay for a tour.

Visitors can also explore two temples that are located inside the fort. Lord Ganesh's shrine is the first one near the entrance while Bhairav temple is the second one, close to the fort's main garden. A short distance separates the Bhairav temple from the fort's jumping platform, from which Rani Laxmibai leaped while

mounted on her horse and carrying her young son in her back. The fort radiates so many good vibes that it may instill a sense of patriotism in anyone. Anybody can be moved by her touching story. The loss of her first child soon after delivery and the upheaval the British forces caused in the fort forced the queen to relocate to Orchha. Since there is no heir, they declared that they would take possession of the fort. For a brief period, Laxmibai resided at her palace, the Rani Mahal at Orchha. She soon made a comeback, though, to defend her kingdom and subjects.

The fort was masterfully designed and constructed, as evidenced by the fact that it is still standing as solidly as it did under Laxmibai's reign. To trick the

lous execution of her plan. One can very plainly observe the fort's grandeur and wealth throughout. The fort has been built in such a fashion that one can see Jhansi, the city, and the surrounding areas all the way to the horizon from any

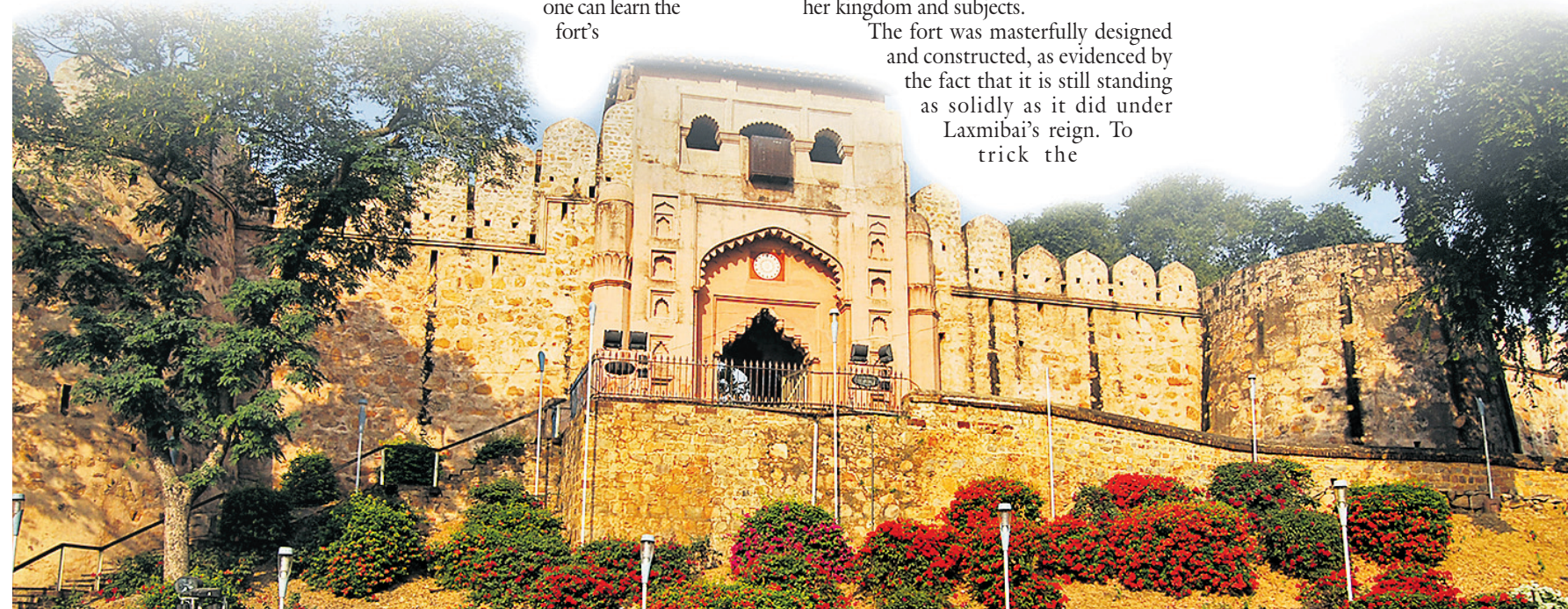


A glimpse from the light and sound show

point on the fort. By initially viewing the light and sound show in the evening before visiting the fort during the day, one can learn the fort's

## Facts you may not know

- In the year 1613, the Bundela ruler Birsingh Judeo of Orchha constructed world famous Jhansi Fort.
- One of India's largest and tallest forts, this one is situated on hills that rise to a height of roughly 285 metres.
- This fort is 312 metres long and 225 metres broad, and it is spread out across an area of around 15 acres.
- This fort's exterior defence wall is 16 to 20 feet thick and made completely of granite, which provides it strength.
- Rani Laxmibai paid the British Rs 60,000 in the year 1854 AD to depart the palace and the fort.



SHRISTI SRINIDHI

The Jhansi Fort, also known as the Jhansi Qila, at Jhansi of Uttar Pradesh, is a location with a history unlike any other and was also the residence of Manikarnika Tambe, popularly known as Rani Laxmibai, the beloved queen. The fort is filled with tales of the fearless queen who stood up for her realm until the end, treated everyone with dignity, and empowered the women of her kingdom. Beautifully constructed atop a hill, the fort allows visitors to stroll through its history during the day and enjoy a light and sound show at the evening that narrates the Rani's saga of valour.

The show is presented in both Hindi and English, and it takes place in the fort's main garden.

Any person can easily be transported back in time by the show's ambience and representation. Here, one may witness everything from the British forces' invasion to the queen's meticu-



## Sonam takes jibe at Rana

Actress Sonam Kapoor is one celebrity who never shies away from expressing her views on anything. On to the series of new events, Rana Daggubati recently apologised to Sonam for allegedly calling her 'Big Hindi Heroine' while talking about his friend Dulquer Salmaan and the actress has now indirectly reacted to his statement on her Instagram stories.

The *Baahubali* actor wrote on his Twitter account, "I am genuinely troubled by the negativity that has been aimed at Sonam due to my comments. As friends, we often exchange playful banter, and I deeply regret that my words have been misinterpreted. I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt apologies to Sonam and Dulquer, both of whom I hold in great esteem. I hope this clarification puts an end to any speculation and misunderstanding."

Now, Sonam has reacted to it on her Instagram story with an Eleanor Roosevelt quote that read, "Small minds discuss people, average minds discuss event, great minds discuss ideas." She shared it with a caption that read, "Just a little something I'd like some people to know. Especially when discussing things about people that are made up (sic)."

AGENCIES



## 'Ranbir's my happy place'

Actress Alia Bhatt, amid backlash for the lipstick remark, said her husband and actor Ranbir Kapoor is her happy place, as she can be her truest, most authentic self with him.

Alia conducted an Ask Me Anything session on Instagram, wherein she spoke about her daughter Raha, how she is handling work and mom duties, dealing with toxicity and criticism, her favourite thing during shoot breaks, and Ranbir.

This response arrived shortly after the mixed reaction of many to Alia's recent makeup routine video. In the tutorial, Alia explained why she likes to wipe the lipstick off her lips because she wants the faded look. She also explains, "Because one thing my husband...when he wasn't my husband but when he was my boyfriend as well... he would be like 'wipe that off, wipe that off' because he loves the natural colour of my lips." The bit went viral on social media where many people called his behaviour a 'red flag.'

Ranbir and Alia got married April 14, 2022 in a traditional Hindu ceremony at their residence in Mumbai. In November 2022, she gave birth to their daughter Raha.

IAN S



## Preity on choosing good roles

Actress Preity Zinta

who was last seen in 2018 film *Bhaiji Superhit* has opened up on the roles that she has portrayed on the screen, saying that though she never went to an acting school and she just wanted to get things right on set.

The *Salaam Namaste* actress told IANS, "There was a definitive understanding for me, even though I never went to an acting school, I just wanted to get things right on set. Whichever director gave me a script that made sense to me and the character aligned with my beliefs, I gave it my all. Even doing songs is very difficult, but you have to do them. I have always wanted to do different roles, something that challenged me or showed women in a positive light, different and progressive manner as opposed to just as an object of desire."

The 48-year-old actress further said, "I also had a very strict family back home, so I did not take up any work that would get me in any trouble at home."

IAN S



## Kay Kay laments absence of good cinema

Actor Kay Kay Menon, who is known for his fabulous acting and impressive roles, feel that there is a lack of good cinema on the big screen and because of OTT audiences have been able to see good content.

The actor, who has been entertaining us for decades, now will soon be seen in the film through which the game badminton will be shown for the first time on the big screen.

Talking about his film *Love All*, the ABCD actor said, "If you love cinema, I feel our film is for you. There is a lack of good cinema on the silver screen. Because of many OTT channels, audiences are able to watch good content now. It is for the first time that badminton as a sport is showcased in a film. Badminton is the star of our film. This film is a must for the kids and I feel adults will also learn a lot from it."

*Love All* is a sports drama that focuses on the importance of sports in the lives of children which features Kay Kay Menon, Swastika Mukherjee, Shriswara and Robin Das and is all set to hit the cinemas August 25.

IAN S







# A new ancestor

Pic: CC0PHOTOS

**RESEARCHERS TRACED AN ANCIENT SKULL THAT BELONGED TO A CHILD WHO LIVED UP TO 300,000 YEARS AGO TO FIND A NEW SPECIES OF HUMAN**

OP DESK

While it has long been believed that humans appeared on the planet for the first time hundreds of thousands of years ago, with the earliest known remains in Africa, before eventually spreading to other parts of the globe, a recent study raises the possibility that this is not the case.

Researchers traced an ancient skull that belonged to a child who lived up to 300,000 years ago to find a new species of human. The findings were published in the *Journal of Human Evolution*, which offers the highest quality papers covering all aspects of human evolution.

A jaw, a cranium, and leg bones were among the fossilised remains that were found in Hualongdong, China, in 2019.

As humans were still in Africa at the time, this would imply that human-like traits had to have appeared in China long before any of them arrived in the country.

Experts were puzzled, however, because the person's facial traits did not resemble either the Neanderthal or Denisovan branch of the human family tree, raising the possibility that we may be missing a branch.

It's interesting to note that researchers claim the species 'did not

possess a real chin'.

This would make it more resembling the extinct Denisovan species of ancient humans, who diverged from Neanderthals more than 400,000 years ago and lived in Asia.

## Earlier findings

In the past, genomes of as many as 357 prehistoric Europeans who lived between 5,000 and 35,000 years ago were examined by researchers. Later, additional people were included in this data collection. The researchers discovered eight new tribal communities that moved to Europe by analysing the data. Some of the tribes had advanced enough societies to have endured the Ice Age.

The jaw, limbs, and skull cap of the boy, who was probably 12 or 13, all appeared to reflect more primitive traits, according to specialists at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The remainder of the child's face, however, exhibited features that were more reminiscent of those of current people. The research team came to the conclusion that they had discovered a brand-new lineage of hominins, a hybrid between the branch that produced modern humans and the one that produced Denisovans or Denisova hominins, an extinct species or subspecies of archaic humans that roamed Asia during the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic in the region.

This would imply that there was a third link in the hominin family tree in Asia that was 'phylogenetically close' to us, in addition to the Denisovan branch and the *Homo erectus* lineage that gave rise to modern *Homo sapiens*.

The discovery is also noteworthy in light of previous research on Neanderthal bones discovered in Europe and western Asia, which revealed a fourth lineage of hominins that lived in the Middle to Late Pleistocene.

This unnamed group has never been formally located in the fossil record, nevertheless.

*Homo sapiens* just first appeared in

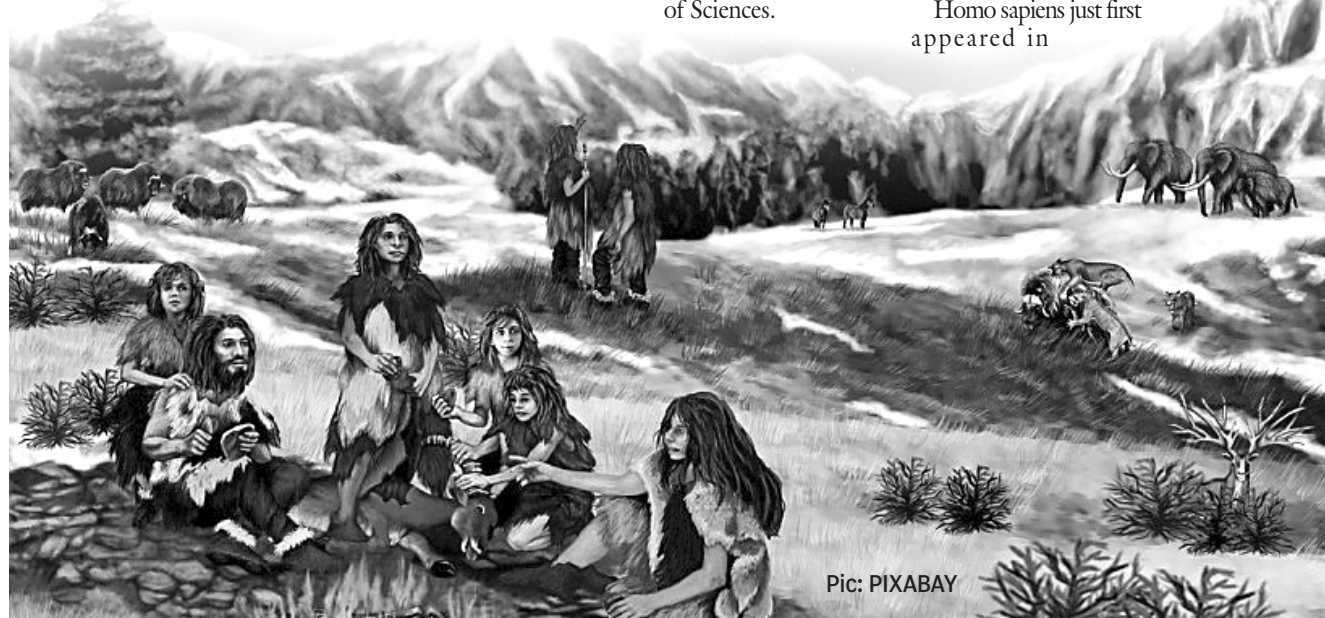
China roughly 120,000 years ago.

But according to this new study, the 'modern-day' characteristics we have now have been present in East Asia for a lot longer.

The last common ancestor of modern humans and neanderthals is thought to have originated in southwest Asia before dispersing to other continents, according to researchers.

## Timeline of human evolution

- Earliest ancestors of primates - **55 million years ago**
- The progenitors of the gibbon evolved into the Hominidae family of great apes - **15 million years ago**
- Evolution of first gorillas - **7 million years ago**
- Early 'proto-human' shares traits with chimps and gorillas - **5.5 million years ago**
- Australopithecines, ape like early humans, appeared - **4 million years ago**
- *Paranthropus*, lived in forests and had massive jaws for chewing - **2.7 million years ago**
- When hand axes became the first major technological innovation - **2.6 million years ago**
- First 'modern' hand emerges - **1.85 million years ago**
- Early humans control fire and create hearths - **800,000 years ago**
- Neanderthals first begin to appear - **400,000 years ago**
- *Homo sapiens* or modern humans appeared in Africa - **200,000 years ago**
- Arrival of modern humans in Europe - **54,000 to 40,000 years ago**



Pic: PIXABAY



# Anwasha



**PHOTO: KAMAL PHOTOGRAPHY**