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SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



CRISIS IN SHOWBIZ

Storm in teacup

COVER STORY

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Monika Karan made her foray into the entertainment industry through music video 'Agaru Prema Re Kebe Padinathili.' However, a bouquet of TV series like 'Sanja Sakala', 'Toh Aganara Tulasi Mu', 'Sindura ra Adhikar' and a few others that deserve mention made the Kendrapara girl a household name. The actress goes on a shopping spree when she gets a break



On a set



With co-artistes

Self-care

After a hectic shooting schedule, when I finally have a day off, I like to dedicate it to self-care and indulge in experimenting with new recipes.

Honing skills

I have a passion for watching movies, web series, and reality shows because, as an actor, I need to study fresh characters and narratives for a deeper analysis.

Retail therapy

I'm a family person. I dedicate my time to the loved ones when I'm free. I enjoy going shopping with them and occasionally exploring nearby destinations.

Workplace camaraderie

I enjoy playing video games on my mobile device and watching films, as well as spending time with my fellow artistes during breaks.

Perfect night out

Whenever my friends and I get together, we head to the cinema and enjoy delicious meals at restaurants to make the most of our leisure.

MADHUSMITA SAHU, 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 happened to the egg when he was tickled too much? He cracked up.
Why was six scared of seven? Because seven 'ate' nine.
What do you call a snake that's exactly 3.14 meters long? A πthon.
What do you get from a pampered cow? Spoiled milk.



GOING VEGAN

Sir, Last week's cover story Embracing Compassion on vegan lifestyle was truly inspiring. For some, shunning dairy, meat and other animal products may seem like an extreme sacrifice. But for others, the personal and societal benefits associated with a vegan diet make the choice a no-brainer. For instance, many people care deeply about the welfare of animals. The potential health benefits alone inspire many to switch. This apart, adopting this lifestyle also helps the environment too. The production of plant-based foods requires less land, fewer resources, and produces vastly fewer greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, research shows that the carbon footprint of a vegan diet can be as much as 60% smaller than a meat-based one, and 24% smaller than a vegetarian diet. No wonder, the need for a shift to more plant-based diets is widely recognised by bodies such as the International Panel on Climate Change and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation.

SHAMBHUNATH PRADHAN, ROURKELA

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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CRISIS IN SHOWBIZ

Storm in teacup



While the Odia film industry is poised for a revival of fortunes following some content-driven movies, things like stopping the screening of movies or banning actors are not going to help the cause, warns film critic Dilip Hali

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

Steady decline in number of movie theatres, awful distribution system, rise in 'copy-paste' culture, emergence of streaming platforms, death of stalwarts like Bijoy Mohanty, Mihir Das, Ajit Das, and Raimohan Parida in quick successions, and above all, audience preference for films in other languages—as if these were not enough reasons for the worried lovers of Odia cinema, yet another issue has been added to the list, sparking a huge row across the state.

So much so that MLA and senior Congress leader Narasingha Mishra from Bolangir came out with the statement that it could divide Odisha, the first Indian state to be formed about 90 years ago, on a language basis.

It all started with the release of three Odia films: *Mindgame*, headlined by NSDian Manoj Mishra; *RAM*, with Aarindam Roy in the lead; and *Malyagiri*, led by Babushaan Mohanty during the last Dussehra.

Aarindam and Babushaan are among the top Odia actors, while Manoj, a native of western Odisha, has to his credit a few pan-Indian films. After a couple of days into their releases, it was alleged that Manoj's supporters stopped the screenings of *RAM* in western Odisha centres. Reason: Actor Jitu Mangaraj, who once made some 'derogatory' remarks against Manoj on social media, is part of the cast.

Soon, the Utkal Cine Chambers of Commerce, a body of film producers, handed Manoj a two-year ban, restricting him from acting in the movies made by the producers.

The move snowballed into a major controversy, dividing the film fraternity. Some people supported the decision, while others opposed it. For instance, the Odisha Film Producers & Distributors Guild, another group of producers, came out in support of Manoj Mishra, stating that they would continue to work with the actor.

Meanwhile, MLA Mishra jumped on the bandwagon warning that the issue will lead to division of Odisha unless the ban is withdrawn.

Responding to Mishra's statement, Odisha Film Development Corporation (OFDC) Chairman and senior actor Kuna Tripathy says it's an internal matter of the Odia film industry, which he will sort out in a couple of days, and the politicians should stay away from it.

However, the issue, with vibrant social media in place, is turning ugly by the day with bitter remarks made by the supporters of both groups. Till the filing of this report, the heated exchanges were on with an 'Odisha bandh' on the card. At the same time,

many eminent people from the industry were on the lookout to prevent the situation from escalating.

On the other hand, be it Manoj Mishra, Aarindam Roy, or other stakeholders, they were found airing their views on social media instead of making any sincere effort to resolve the matter.

With the issue gradually slipping out of hand, **Sunday POST** spoke to a few filmmakers and critics to get their perspectives.

'FOCUS ON THE LARGER PICTURE'

Eminent film critic and analyst Dilip Hali said, "For me, this is an unnecessary issue. There are several other matters in the industry that are not focused on. The number of cinema halls in the state is limited to 60, but here we are fighting for a trivial matter."

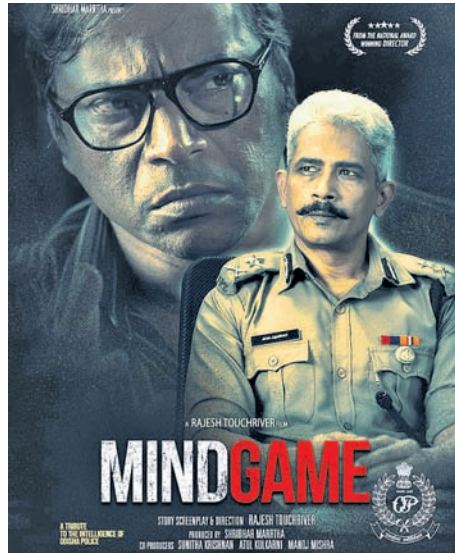
The hall owners are reluctant to screen Odia cinemas due to the popularity of Hindi, Telugu, or Tamil cinemas, but a few are concerned about it, he adds.

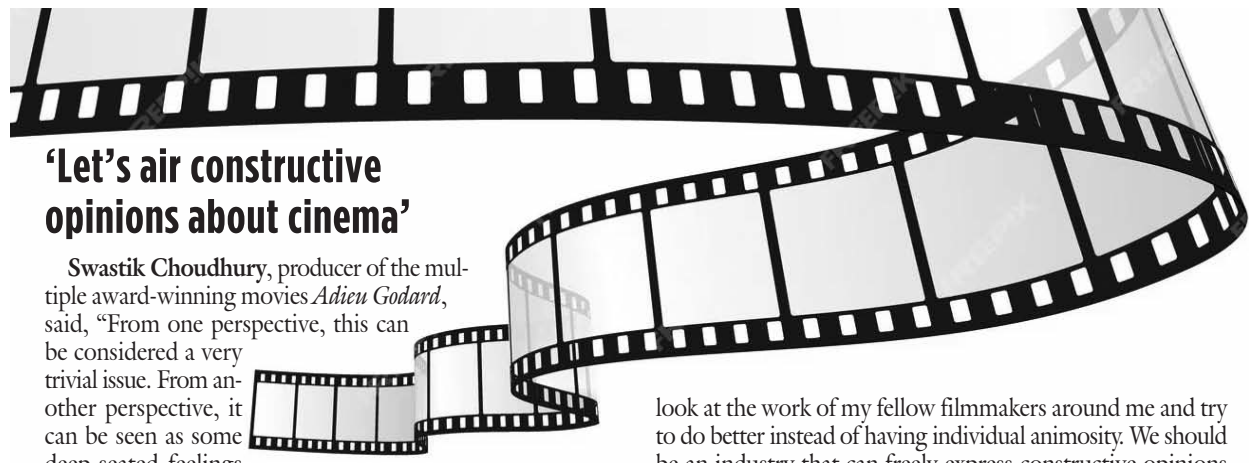
Recalling the 'Golden Era' of Odia cinema, he continues: "In the 1970s and 1980s, the industry was at its peak, but the situation is depressing at the moment. The 'copy-paste' culture has prompted viewers to watch movies on OTT platforms. Audiences have become discerning, capable of distinguishing between original and copied films."



Hali says it's evident from the recent success of movies like *Pushkara*, *DaMAN*, *Pratikhya*, and *Adieu Godard* that people still love to watch Odia films if the contents are good. So, while the industry is struggling for a revival, issues like stopping the screening of movies or banning artists by the producers will only worsen the matter, he warns. Hali says he was quite amused at the development, but at the same time he felt let down by the attitude of some of the

people in the industry who claim to call the shots. "The producers' association has fragmented into multiple factions: one faction has imposed a ban on the actor, while others are against it, which is amusing. This is the first time ever in Odisha that an actor is facing a ban. It has left viewers perplexed and disheartened. Many artistes often refer to the Odia film industry as a family, but here, these so-called artistes seem to be tearing it apart," he observes.





'Let's air constructive opinions about cinema'

Swastik Choudhury, producer of the multiple award-winning movies *Adieu Godard*, said, "From one perspective, this can be considered a very trivial issue. From another perspective, it can be seen as some deep-seated feelings that are being stoked, perhaps by some vested interest. I am someone who is from southern Odisha on the paternal side and from western Odisha on the maternal side. I grew up in Rourkela, and I imagine Odia cinema going global. Personally, if you ask me, I believe in doing the right thing and letting the work speak more about an individual. Because perceptions about individuals can be made, influenced, or misconstrued, but an individual's work mirrors their own image. Unfortunately, at times we do not try to make informed decisions or judgments. The current issues are perhaps an outcome of that."

He adds, "I feel it can be easily resolved if the people involved come forward for dialogues. Make a call, meet somewhere, speak your heart out; whatever is there, blurt it out and move on. It may also drag if we let every other person enter the commotion and add more fuel to it. The longer we stay within closed walls, the more we will overthink, and it generally leads to more distance, and the bridge might take longer to cross. I can only say that if every party acts in the best interest of Odia cinema and is constantly in pursuit of quality, they will automatically know what has to be done."

Swastik further says, "From the first day of this issue, I have been hearing people calling this Odia industry a family and that this is an internal matter; unfortunately, the actions on display are contradictory to all of it. I would say, let's cut the clutter. This is an industry and the first and foremost thing we need to do is to drive things professionally, just like in any other industry. All the brotherhood, family bonding, etc can come later. There is no point throwing a smile or making pleasantries when you meet someone upfront and then abuse the same people behind them. When professionalism takes the front seat, one will be compelled to give priority only to the work they are doing rather than giving space to frivolous matters. And the same goes for the media industry. They need to be instrumental in cinema discussion, criticism, and evolution. No media here tries to dive deep to question why this year no Odia feature film is in Indian Panorama. There is no regular conversation about world cinema that can influence people to get different exposure. The general awareness in public today is more about these gossips."

"All I will say is that one individual may or may not like my work. I would rather

look at the work of my fellow filmmakers around me and try to do better instead of having individual animosity. We should be an industry that can freely express constructive opinions related to cinema while at the same time acknowledging and welcoming any good work, which will go a long way in creating a better ecosystem," he concludes.

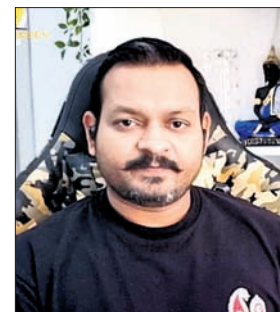
'Sooner the drama ends, the better for all of us'

Commenting on the issue, Sakti Jagdev, the producer of critically acclaimed *Phalguni Chaitra*, said, "It's simply a misuse of energy, unnecessary bravado, and inefficient communication through the wrong channels. While we do acknowledge problems with distribution, I believe that the current approach to solving them is misguided. The true problem lies in the unprofessional distribution and exhibition model that's ingrained in our system."

Sharing what he has gone through, Sakti continues: "I experience a sense of disappointment when a movie falls short of meeting our anticipated success. I've personally faced such challenges after the results of *Phalguni Chaitra*, which is why I can relate to this. Our primary objective should be to address this issue by delving into two key aspects: 1) evaluating the distribution model; and 2) conducting a precise analysis of the audience preferences in our region's theaters. We still have a significant journey ahead of us."

Asked what the approach should be to address the issue, he suggests, "In the grand scheme of things, we all have a bit of the cinematic flair in us, and it's only fitting that we end this after the intense drama we've collectively endured. What I want to emphasise is the significant issue we face in our distribution and exhibition channels – it lacks professionalism, and I hold the belief that a succession of successful films can help address these underlying problems."

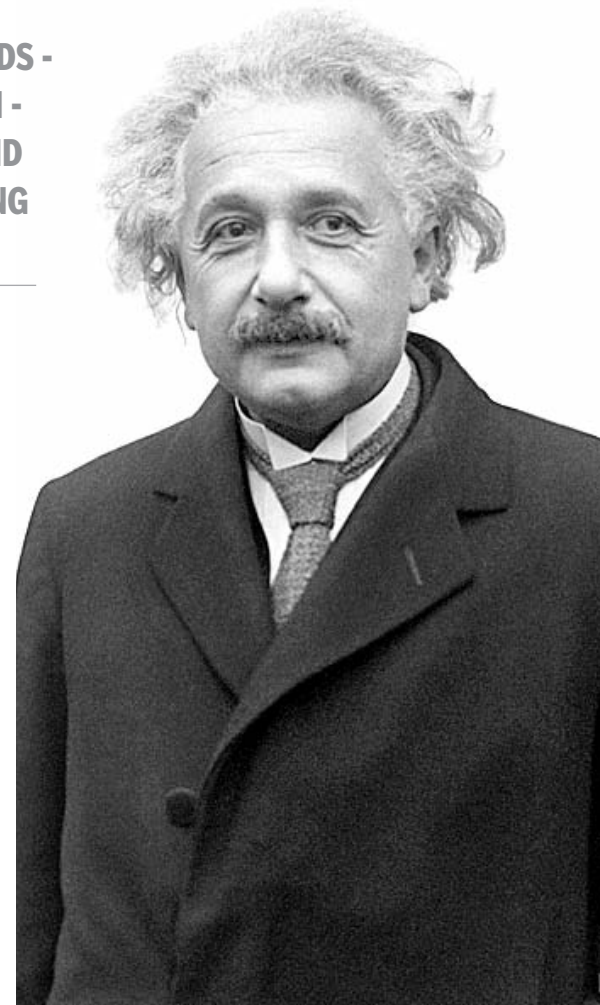
By the time this report was filed, a meeting at the OFDC office with all stakeholders had failed to produce results since actor Manoj Mishra gave it a miss. The same evening, he took to his social media account and urged prominent actors and others not to 'torture' him by making false accusations. He also appealed them to work together to propel Odia cinema to new heights.





A comic, a genius & the camaraderie

THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN TWO LEGENDS - CHARLIE CHAPLIN AND ALBERT EINSTEIN - TOOK PLACE AT UNIVERSAL STUDIOS, AND THEY HIT IT OFF STRAIGHT AWAY, SHARING QUICK WITS AND CURIOUS MINDS



The first time the brilliant scientist and the comic star met was at Universal Studios, where they enjoyed a tour and shared lunch. They clicked right away, sharing quick wits and inquisitive minds. In his memoirs, Chaplin described his first impressions of Einstein as “A typical Alpine German in the nicest sense, jovial and friendly. And, despite his calm and polite demeanour, I had the impression that it veiled a very emotional temperament, from which he derived his amazing intellectual energy.”

During the tour, Einstein’s wife Elsa approached Chaplin, drew him aside, and invited herself and her husband to Chaplin’s home, according to the memoirs of the great comic. Chaplin was more than willing to help. He planned a private meal at which Elsa regaled him with the narrative of Einstein’s world-changing hypothesis, which he developed somewhere around 1915. She said that when she asked Einstein why he hadn’t touched his breakfast one morning, he answered, “Darling, I have a wonderful idea.”

The scientist then sat down and played the piano, pausing sometimes to take notes. Elsa couldn’t take the suspense any longer and requested her husband to tell everything, but he replied he needed to think about it a little more and that it would be revealed shortly. Einstein spent two weeks in his room, eating his meals there, until he emerged, pale and fatigued, with his theory of general relativity written on two sheets of paper. He handed them to Elsa and said, “That’s it.”

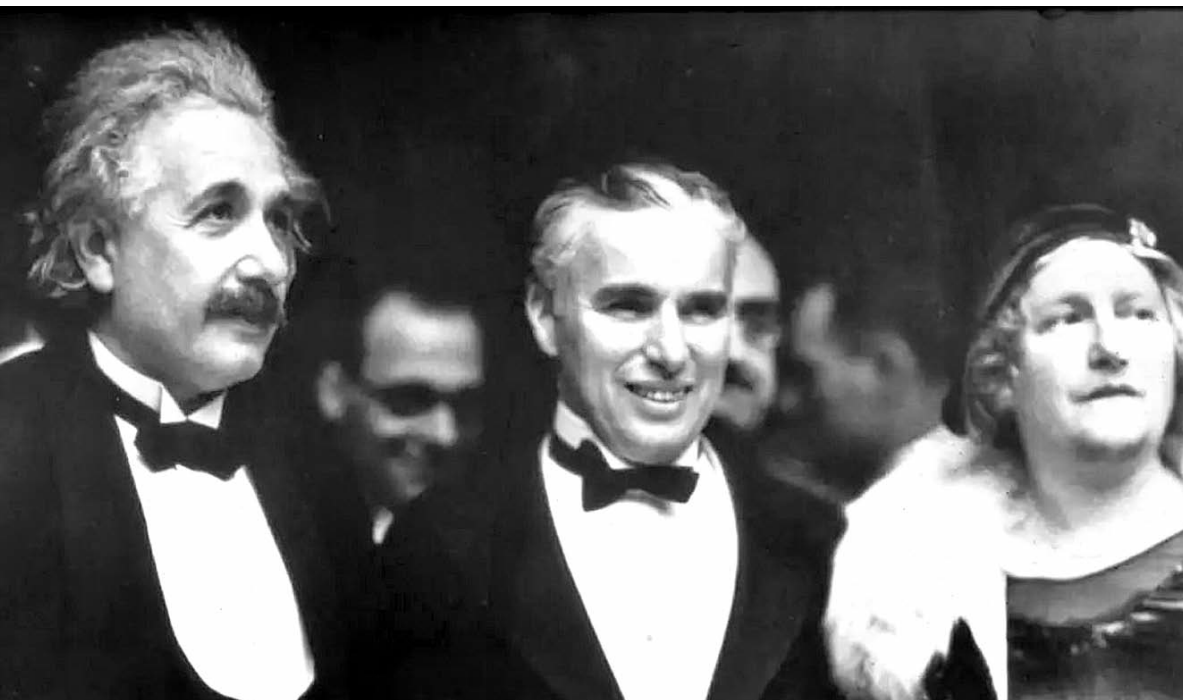
After their initial meeting, Chaplin and Einstein remained in touch. The actor invited Einstein to be his special guest

at his next premiere, for the film *City Lights* (1931). The press and the crowds went wild as the tramp and the genius appeared together, both dressed in black tie. According to folklore, when the spectators applauded the pair, Einstein looked perplexed, and Chaplin clarified, “They’re cheering us both. You because nobody understands you, and me because everybody understands me.” (According to Chaplin’s 1933-34 travelogue *A Comedian Sees the World*, the line was actually stated by one of Einstein’s sons while Chaplin was visiting Einstein in Germany approximately a month after the premiere: “You are popular (because) you are understood by the masses. On the other hand, the professor’s popularity with the masses is because he is not understood.”)

When Einstein returned to California in the winter of 1932-33, Chaplin decided to celebrate it with a dinner party. With high aspirations of dazzling discourse and witty repartee, the comedian planned to present him to the legendary media mogul William Randolph Hearst. Unfortunately, Einstein was not in the mood to discuss his complex theory to a non-academic audience, so Hearst went to messing with his dessert instead. The uneasy pause was finally broken when Hearst’s mistress, comic actress Marion Davies, intertwined her fingers in Einstein’s famously unruly mop and remarked, “Why don’t you get your hair cut?”

It’s unclear whether the friendship endured the terrible supper in the years that followed. In 1933, Einstein surrendered his German citizenship and relocated to Princeton, New Jersey, where his social circle grew significantly. However, stories of their early interactions suggest that the two men shared, albeit briefly, a profound awareness of one another—and their very distinct types of brilliance.

OP DESK



Charlie Chaplin (m) with Albert Einstein and wife Elsa Einstein

Mrunal ready to do comic genre

Actress Mrunal Thakur, who has mostly starred in dramatic roles in movies such as *Love Sonia*, *Super 30*, *Batla House*, and *Sita Ramam*, says she is looking forward to featuring in more comedies after her director praised her comic timing in the upcoming film.

"It's my first comedy film in my career. The best compliment I have got from Umesh sir is that my (comic) timing is good and I should consider more comedy films, which I am. I really want to entertain my audience and make them laugh because not many comedy films are being made that we can watch with our families," Thakur told *PTI*.

"Working with Paresh ji, known for his impeccable timing in films such as *Hera Pheri*, *Malamaal Weekly*, and *Andaz Apna Apna*, was like going to comedy school. Every scene there was a learning process. Every day, Abhimanyu and I were learning something because we were new to this genre," added Thakur.

"I don't like comedies where people insult each other based on their physical appearance. I prefer light comedy," she further said. **PTI**



Babushaan, Ashok Pati reunite for their next



Babushaan Mohanty and director Ashok Pati, who had earlier worked in movies such as *Love Station*, *Sister Sridevi*, *Tu Je Sei*, and *Ajab Sanjura Gajab Love*, are ready to work again for their next.

The mahurat for the untitled movie was held recently. Apart from the lead actor and director, Babushaan's wife and mother, Aparajita Mohanty, were present on the occasion. The makers aim to release the film during the Raja Festival next year. The shooting will commence once other members

of the cast are finalised, it was learned.

Produced under the Raindrop Pictures banner in association with Tathya Production and Babushaan Films, the shooting will commence once other members of the cast are finalised, it was learnt.

Rinku Rinu Jena and Niranjan Nayak are the other producers of the movie.

Babushaan's *Malyagiri* and Pati's *RAM*, both released during Durga Puja, have been well received by the viewers. **PNN**

Why Sushmita took a break from acting

Actor Sushmita Sen starred in a series of hit films in her career spanning 30 years including *Bivi No 1*, *Main Hoon Na* and many others. However, in 2015, after starring in *Nirbaak*, Sushmita took a long break from films. It was only in 2020 that she made a return to acting with Ram Madhvani's action-drama series *Aarya*.

In a conversation during an event, Sushmita spoke about the reason she took such a long break from acting.

"The reason I left films was because I was tired of doing the same 201 expression to 2010. That was all I had to do. There was one good song and so on. I was looking for more. As I was getting older, I was not happy with that. I wanted more, I wanted to be student again," she said.

Sushmita then attended acting workshops and was a diligent student. "I want them to teach me and tell me you suck at this job, let me teach you how it is really done. That's what *Aarya* did for me. I would have a 14-hour workshop, other actors would come and go and I would be the permanent fixture, just hungry to learn. I would go back home very late at night every day, for 21 days. And I loved it, loved that I was finally learning how to do my job," she said.

AGENCIES



Ram Charan joins Actors Branch of the Academy

Ram Charan has joined his *RRR* co-star NTR Jr. into the Oscars, as the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) recently announced his induction into its prestigious Actors Branch.

The Academy, the institution that overlooks the Oscars announcing his induction took to their Instagram and posted their roster of the recent inductees.

They wrote: "Through their nuanced portrayal and dedication to authenticity, these actors gift us with characters that leave a lasting impression on our hearts and minds.

"Their mastery of their art form transforms ordinary moments into extraordinary cinematic experiences, enriching our appreciation for the depth and complexity of human emotions." Announcing the roster, they added: "We're thrilled to welcome these accomplished performers to the Actors Branch of the Academy: Lashana Lynch, Ram Charan, Vicky Krieps, Louis Koo Tin-Lok, Keke Palmer, Chang Chen, Sakura Ando, Robert Davi and more."

The announcement not only celebrates Ram Charan's induction but also highlights the significance of his involvement in shaping the future of the motion picture industry.

On the work front, Ram Charan will be seen next in *Game Changer*. **IAN S**





Garlic's Healing Power



an additional option, blend and strain 5 garlic cloves and 2 onions to extract their juice. Massage this juice into the scalp, leaving it on for 15 minutes before washing your hair with a mild shampoo as usual.

Another way of using garlic:

First is to make a paste of garlic and fry it in oil. Once it turns brownish, cool the oil and remove the garlic. The oil can be applied on the hair.

Take 10 cloves of garlic and add a few drops of olive oil to a cup of water. Boil the mix. Apply directly to your roots for thick hair. Wash the hair with fresh water after half an hour for lustrous hair.

Take 6 tbsp of garlic oil, 2 tbsp each of castor oil and coconut oil and one tsp of rosemary oil. Mix them all and keep in a jar. Take three tbsp of this blended oil and massage your hair and scalp. Allow it to dry in natural environment approximately for one hour and wash it off with fresh normal water.

Add a clove of garlic and some honey in your shampoo or conditioner and use it to remove harmful toxins from the scalp, enhance hair texture and also treat dandruff and itchy scalp.

Indeed, kitchen remedies are well within your easy reach for enhancing the beauty of your hair.

The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India.

combined with chopped garlic and massaged into the scalp 30 minutes before shampooing. A garlic and aloe vera paste can also be applied to the hair for 20-30 minutes before washing. For

You may be fond of including garlic in your meals, but have you ever considered using garlic to enhance your appearance?

While garlic is commonly recognised for its ability to elevate the taste and fragrance of dishes, this aromatic herb, frequently employed in various global cuisines, can work wonders for your skin and hair.

Garlic, despite its strong odour, possesses antibacterial, anti-aging, and skin-smoothing properties that can help maintain a clear and flawless complexion. This unassuming little ingredient is recommended by experts to be a part of your daily diet due to its abundance of benefits for your hair, in addition to its numerous significant health advantages. Garlic not only serves as a remedy for various ailments but can also offer you beauty benefits, such as blemish-free skin and luxuriously healthy hair.

Garlic, a common kitchen ingredient, possesses healing qualities due to its abundance of nutrients like vitamins B-6 and C, manganese, and selenium, which encourage hair growth. Scientific studies confirm that garlic can effectively combat hair loss and stimulate hair regrowth, particularly when applied topically, thanks to its selenium and sulfur content. Fresh garlic juice further enhances hair growth by improving blood circulation.

Selenium boosts blood circulation

Actually, the hair is fed by the nutrients in the blood stream. Therefore, selenium boosts blood circulation, which helps to transport nutrients to the hair follicles. This nourishes the hair and helps hair growth. Garlic is rich in Vitamin C, which boosts the health of the hair. Garlic has anti-microbial properties and fights bacterial and fungus infections of the scalp. In fact, it helps to cleanse and unclog the pores of the scalp, thus helping to treat problems like hair loss and dandruff and also soothes the scalp.

Here are simple and useful ways in which you can put garlic to use for long & luscious locks:

To create a hair mask for enhanced hair health, combine approximately 10 garlic cloves with 2 tablespoons of honey. Apply this mixture to your hair, allowing it to naturally dry for around 30 minutes before rinsing with clean water. This regimen can be repeated twice weekly to achieve long, lustrous hair.

Honey's moisturizing properties nourish and condition the hair, while garlic provides essential Vitamin E, safeguarding against hair loss and breakage while stimulating growth. When using garlic, always mix it with other ingredients to avoid irritation.

Another option is preparing garlic-infused oil at home by chopping garlic cloves and infusing them into pure coconut or olive oil, storing this blend for 7-10 days. This oil can be applied to gain garlic's benefits. Alternatively, warm coconut oil can be



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Simran



PHOTO: KAMAL PHOTOGRAPHY