

APRIL 20-26, 2025

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW

EARTH DAY – APRIL 22

Healing our home

COVER STORY

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In a world where talent knows no bounds, Ankita Mohanty is a shining example of what it means to be a true artiste. The rising star from Bhadrak is making waves as an actress, anchor, and entrepreneur. Ankita's breakthrough came with the role of Sandhya in the first season of Odia web series 'Gangs of Puri' and after that there was no looking back for her. Beyond acting, Ankita has hosted over 3500 stage shows, including corporate and government events, showcasing her versatility and dedication. Her journey is just beginning, and the possibilities are endless



Day of detox

I kick off with a glass of lukewarm jeera water. Then, I roll out my yoga mat for a refreshing session. Wrap it all up with a hearty breakfast, and I'm good to go!

Magical Sunday

I'm all about giving my space a fresh vibe, spending hours in soulful puja, and pampering my little green buddies—my plants, of course! There's something magical about the peace and stillness of a lazy Sunday.

Leisure time

I cherish every moment alone, reflecting, dreaming, setting goals, and having deep, heartfelt chats with myself. It's my "me time," and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Household chores Green thumbs and more

Yeah, I get those done on Sunday too. Weekdays are hectic, so I make sure to catch up on everything that's pending.

I'm a tree hugger at heart, so my home is filled with indoor and outdoor plants. I also love belting out tunes, creating content that means something, and diving into a good book.



With husband



With a co-actor



With parents

In a nutshell

Sundays are my time to recharge, reflect, and do what I love. It's the perfect way to prep for the week ahead and make sure I'm living my best life.



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

- Any room is a panic room if you've lost your phone in it.
- The elevator to success is out of order. You'll have to use the stairs... one step at a time.
- You are so old, when you were a kid rainbows were black and white.
- What does a liar do after he dies? He lies still.



Blend of ancient and modern

Sir, Last week's cover story 'Where heritage meets horizon' in **Sunday POST** aptly narrates the legacy of Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha. It is a city steeped in history and rich cultural heritage. It has been a significant center of art, architecture, and spirituality for centuries. The city is home to over 700 ancient temples, earning it the nickname 'The Temple City of India.' The Lingaraj Temple, built in the 11th century, is a masterpiece of Kalinga architecture, showcasing intricate carvings and grandeur. The Mukteswara Temple, with its exquisite torana (gateway), is another architectural marvel. Bhubaneswar's heritage is not just confined to its temples; it also has a vibrant tradition of dance, music, and handicrafts. The city's ancient ruins, such as the Khandagiri and Udayagiri caves, offer a glimpse into the lives of Jain monks and the region's rich history. Bhubaneswar's blend of ancient and modern makes it a living testament to India's cultural legacy..

Samir Samantray, KHURDA

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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EARTH DAY – APRIL 22

Healing our home

With the Earth now standing on the brink of an environmental catastrophe, it's time to undertake collective action towards sustainability, conservation, and the responsible use of natural resources- an effort that can foster a global movement to protect the planet for future generations

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

April 22nd is more than just another day on the calendar—it's a global rallying cry for change. As we stand on the brink of environmental catastrophe, the urgency to act has never been more palpable. From rising temperatures and polluted skies to the rapid disappearance of forests and the slow death of our oceans, the signs are clear: our planet is in crisis.

Yet, amidst the gloom, there is a glimmer of hope. The sun that rises each morning, the wind that whispers through trees, the rivers that never stop flowing—they all offer us a start afresh. Renewable energy is not just a solution; it's a promise- a promise of cleaner air, thriving ecosystems, and a future that respects nature instead of exploiting it.

But the responsibility isn't only global—it's deeply personal. Change begins not in conferences, but in our hearts and homes. Every time we switch to energy-efficient appliances, reduce waste, support sustainable brands, or plant a tree, we're casting a vote for the Earth. We're telling future generations that we cared enough to act.

This planet has given us everything—life, beauty, shelter, memories. It's time we give back. It's time we become the guardians Earth needs. Because the future is not something we inherit. It's something we create—with every choice, every voice, and every act of love for our planet.

As Earth Day approaches, the

Sunday POST spoke to several experts who shared their insights on how we can face these pressing challenges.

'The first step must be to prevent loss of water'

Lala Aswini Kumar Singh, Vice President of the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) says, "As we approach Earth Day 2025, the theme of 'Our Power, Our Planet' calls on all of us to unite for the cause of renewable energy.



The former Senior Research Officer (Wildlife), and Member of the IUCN continues, "Aside from this, reducing electricity consumption in our homes and communities can have an immediate and lasting positive impact on the environment. It is essential that we raise our voices against coal-powered electricity generation, as this remains one of the most significant contributors to climate change and environmental degradation."

Lala further emphasises hydroelectricity generation for sustainability. "We must adopt a more sustainable and locally focused approach in Odisha. A critical issue we face is the ongoing draining of valuable water resources into the sea, which could otherwise be used for both agricultural and energy production purposes. The first step must be to prevent this loss of water. One



solution to this would be the development of a series of check dams and reservoirs, which would help store water for agricultural use. The primary focus should always be on enhancing water availability for farming, as agriculture is the backbone of our local economy. If power can be generated from these water resources before they are used for irrigation, it would be an ideal scenario, allowing for a balanced approach to meeting both agricultural and energy needs," he says.

The OES vice-president also urged industries to rethink their water usage practices.

"Industries must adopt more sustainable approaches by collecting and cleaning used water from both rural and urban areas for industrial use. Our rivers should not be treated as direct sources for industrial water, as this puts additional strain on already scarce resources. By adopting water recycling methods and reducing their demand for fresh river water, industries can play a pivotal role in ensuring the long-term health of our natural resources. It is time for all sectors of society—individuals, communities, and industries—to unite in the fight for a sustainable future, where renewable energy and responsible water usage are at the forefront of our efforts."

Signing off, he adds, “I believe that conservation and sustainable resource management must be integral to our strategies. The path forward demands that we act with foresight and responsibility, ensuring that future generations inherit a planet that is both livable and flourishing.”

‘Solar energy adoption at household level important’

Renowned expert on water and climate change in India, **Ranjan Panda** is popularly known as the Water Man of Odisha. With more than three decades of experience in leading environmental conservation and human rights initiatives at the state, national, and South Asian levels, Panda is a prominent voice in India’s environmental landscape.

Emphasising the urgency of expediting the shift to green energy, he says, “The focus on green energy has to be accelerated. While individual responsibilities are important, collectively we need to find real solutions. The talks about energy transition in the nation are happening, but the progress is frustratingly slow. My concern is that these discussions are limited to elitist circles, with industries and some government officials involved, but without a real commitment to transition to a green economy.”

In the context of Odisha, Panda states, “In the coal-fields of our state, we found that people don’t believe a change from the coal-based economy will happen anytime soon, with some saying it won’t happen for another hundred years. This lack of optimism is a worrying sign for the future. Despite various geopolitical tensions that emerged after Trump’s election, the world is moving toward green energy. India must take this transition seriously. Earth Day should not simply become another occasion filled with meetings and lofty speeches, only for us to get caught up in preparing for the next one. This cycle of superficial discussions is not helping us tackle climate change, restore biodiversity, or ensure sustainable livelihoods for our communities.”

On the steps individuals can take toward a sustainable future, Panda stresses the importance of pushing for solar energy adoption at the household level. By developing local skill pools for solar panel repair and maintenance, local employment can be generated, empowering communities while simultaneously promoting clean energy. However, he insists that policymakers must play a more active role. “Unless we make the transition from coal super-fast and unless policy measures support affordable and solid solar energy systems, things may not improve much,”

he says. Without these



essential steps, Panda warns, the action is unlikely to improve significantly.

‘Nature and humanity should thrive together’

Priyaranjan Das, Director of **Bandhu Renewable Private Limited**, a start-up dedicated to promoting responsible energy conservation and environmental sustainability, says, “In a world that often measures progress by speed and volume, the quiet power of living in harmony with nature is frequently overlooked. This year’s Earth Day theme resonates deeply with the core philosophy our company has upheld since its inception — that true power lies not in relentless accumulation, but in responsible utilisation and restoration. We believe the well-being of the earth is directly tied to how communities perceive and engage with the energy and food systems around them.”

Das goes on to explain, “Energy isn’t just what powers our machines; it’s the flow of life in a stream, the shade offered by a tree, the hope in a farmer’s eyes as they plant their crops. Renewable energy, in its truest form, isn’t just about harnessing resources — it’s about restoring nature’s balance while fulfilling



human needs. Our approach isn’t just about advocating for solar rooftops or biogas units; it’s about fostering a culture where every household, farm, and pond becomes an energy- and food-producing microcosm. For us, sustainable living isn’t a luxury — it’s a necessity. The planet doesn’t need grand speeches or sweeping promises — it needs a thousand small, responsible actions carried out consistently by ordinary people. Our true power lies in the choices



we make every day, from the food we consume to the water we conserve and the

waste we repurpose.” He continues, “In every fish fed with hostel food waste, in every sapling watered with treated pond water, and in every youth trained in rural aquatech, we envision a future where self-reliant, locally sustained communities can thrive without burdening nature. This Earth Day, we must remind ourselves that true power isn’t measured by the volume of resources one holds, but by the wisdom in how we use them. When energy flows in cycles, when food systems are locally rooted and regenerative, and when communities act as stewards rather than consumers, the planet begins to heal.”

Das concludes, “Our journey is a humble testament to this truth — that small interventions, when rooted in a genuine love for land and life, can quietly create a ripple effect that one day grows into a wave. And within that wave lies the promise of a resilient, harmonious planet where balance is restored, and nature and humanity thrive together.”



Sonakshi hits back at troll

In June last year, Bollywood's much-rumoured couple Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer Iqbal finally confirmed their relationship by tying the knot in a beautiful civil ceremony under the Special Marriage Act. After dating secretly for seven years, the duo shared their wedding pictures on Instagram, much to the delight of fans. While their love-filled moments won hearts, the couple had turned off comments on their posts to avoid online negativity.

However, Sonakshi recently took a troll head-on in a way that's now winning the internet. A fan-made reel of Sonakshi and Zaheer's sweet moments went viral with the caption, "Don't get married if your man is not this obsessed with you." While fans flooded the post with love, one troll wrote, "Ur divorce is too close to u." Instead of ignoring the comment, Sonakshi clapped back with sass: "@dark123707 pehle teri

mummy papa karenge phir hum... promise!"

Fans praised her witty response, calling it the perfect comeback. Comments poured in like, "Karwa li apni bezzati," and "Sona & Zaheer look the happiest."

On the work front, Zaheer was last seen in *Ruslaan* (2024), while Sonakshi is gearing up for her next project,

Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Heeramandi 2*.

AGENCIES



Urvashi's latest claim

Bollywood actor Urvashi Rautela has once again stirred the internet with her latest claim. In a conversation with Siddharth Kannan, she revealed that a temple dedicated to her exists in Uttarakhand, right next to the famous Badrinath temple. She shared, "There is a temple in my name in Uttarakhand. If you visit Badrinath, you'll find the 'Urvashi Temple' right next to it."

When asked if people visit the temple to seek blessings, Urvashi laughed, saying, "It's a temple, so they'll do that". She also mentioned that students from Delhi University pray to her and offer garlands to her pictures, calling her 'Damdamamai'.

Urvashi, who is actively working across different regional film industries, expressed her desire to have a similar temple dedicated to her in South India. She emphasised that her claim is true, supported by news articles, and encouraged listeners to check them out.

On the work front, Urvashi was recently seen in the dance number *Sorry Bol* in the film *Jaat*, starring Sunny Deol and Randeep Hooda. While the song received mixed reactions, it contributed to the film's decent box office performance. A sequel has already been announced.

AGENCIES



Dia's traumatic experience

Dia Mirza's 2019 web series *Kaafir*, co-starring Mohit Raina, has now been released as a film, reigniting conversations around its powerful narrative. The story follows Kainaaz Akhtar, a Pakistani woman who mistakenly crosses the LOC and is imprisoned in India, where she gives birth to her daughter behind bars. Based on the real-life story of Shehnaaz Parveen, *Kaafir* is a heart-wrenching tale of injustice, identity, and resilience.

In a recent interview, Dia opened up about one of the most intense moments in the film—a rape scene that left her physically and emotionally shaken. "I was trembling after we finished filming. I remember throwing up. That's how deeply it affected me," she shared, describing the toll the scene took on her.

Dia, 43, emphasised the importance of empathy in acting, saying that truly connecting with the character brings authenticity to a performance. "Playing Kainaaz made me a mother before I became one in real life," she reflected, speaking about the deep emotional bond she developed with her character.

The film also stars Mohit Raina as a journalist fighting for Kainaaz's justice. Together, they bring to life a deeply moving story about humanity, injustice, and hope.

AGENCIES

tive beauty trends and the emotional toll they take, particularly on women. In her caption, she wrote, "Decided to recite some of my older poems because maybe it's more impactful that way??? Also I thought this one was relevant since skinny is back in and we're all being encouraged to hate and torture ourselves again."

Kaveri on beauty, self-worth

In a world where self-worth is often tied to likes, comments, and the number on a scale, Kaveri Kapur is choosing a different path—one rooted in reflection and honesty. The singer, songwriter, and actor recently shared a spoken word video on social media, reciting an older poem that challenges beauty ideals and societal pressures to conform. In the piece, she asks, "Who are we really? Numbers aside..."—urging her audience to look beyond appearances and question how much of their identity has been shaped by external expectations.

Kaveri's words critique the resurgence of restric-

More than a critique, the poem is an invitation—to be kind to ourselves, to reject harmful standards, and to reconnect with who we truly are. Known for her emotional honesty, Kaveri brings that same vulnerability to her work, including her acting debut in *Rishi Aur Bobby Ki Love Story*, and her upcoming role in *Masoom 2*.

AGENCIES





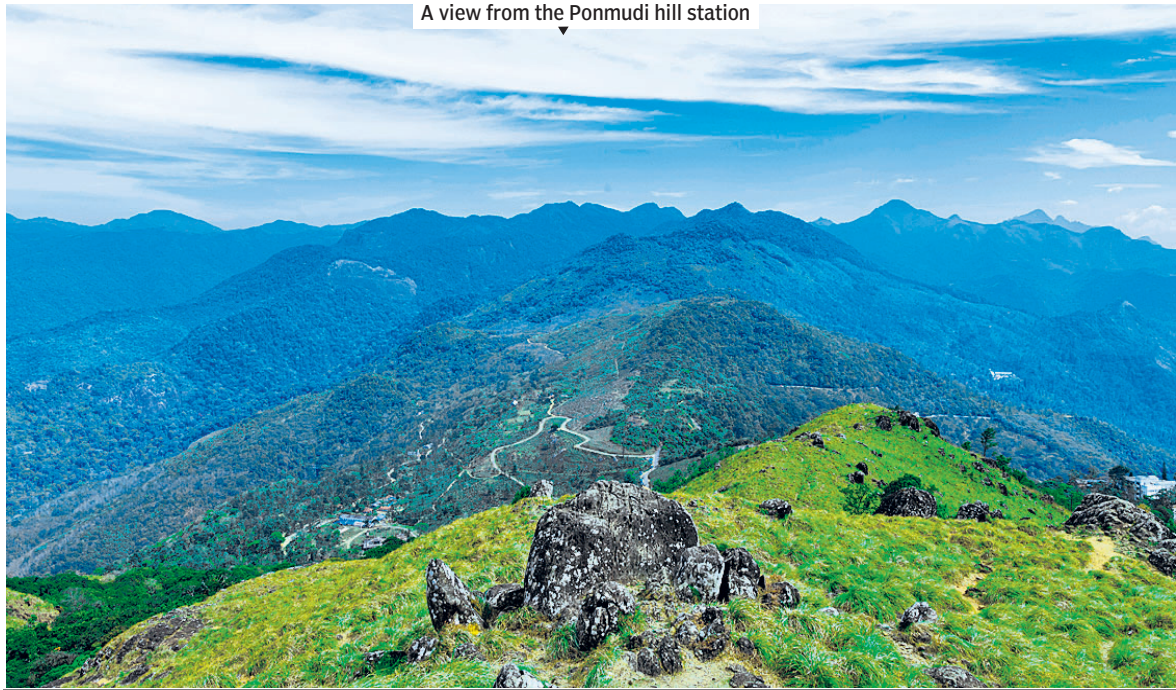
Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple

KUMAR GOUTAM DAS, OP

Kerala, often referred to as ‘God’s Own Country,’ is a tropical paradise located on India’s southwestern coast. Renowned for its stunning natural beauty, the state boasts lush greenery, golden beaches, scenic hills, and tranquil backwaters. It is a place where nature thrives, culture flourishes, and traditions endure, making it a favorite among travelers of all hues. Here are some must-visit destinations in this enchanting state.

Thiruvananthapuram: Tagged as the ‘Evergreen city of India’ by none other than Mahatma Gandhi, the state capital has evolved into a vibrant IT hub over the years. At the heart of the city lies the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, one of India’s most revered and enigmatic shrines. This temple, dedicated to Lord Vishnu, features a distinctive depiction of the deity reclining on the serpent Anantha, symbolising eternal cosmic balance. Merging Dravidian and Kerala architectural styles, the temple—considered the richest in the world—stands as a stunning testament to devotion and artistry. Its soaring gopuram (gateway tower) and elaborate stone carvings showcase centuries of craftsmanship and cultural heritage. The temple is overseen by the Travancore royal family, who have regarded themselves as humble servants of Lord Padmanabha for generations. Access is limited to Hindus, and a strict dress code is enforced to maintain the sanctity of this temple.

A view from the Ponnudi hill station



Kerala’s enchanting escapes

Breathtaking natural beauty, diverse landscapes coupled with unique experiences like backwater cruises make Kerala one of the best tourist destinations of the country. The warm hospitality of the locals further enhances the overall travel experience

Another notable attraction in Thiruvananthapuram is the Sree Chitra Art Gallery. This remarkable venue houses an extensive collection of artworks, featuring an impressive array of paintings by the legendary Raja Ravi Varma, one of India’s most celebrated classical painters, known for his unique fusion of Indian traditions and European realism.

Nestled in the tranquil coastal town of Kovalam, just a short drive from Thiruvananthapuram, the Kerala Arts and Crafts Village stands as a vibrant homage to the state’s rich artistic heritage. This village is dedicated to preserving, promoting, and celebrating the state’s traditional arts and crafts, offering a unique and immersive experience for art aficionados, tourists, and culture lovers alike. Set amidst lush greenery, the village features 32 studios, artisan workshops, galleries, and interactive spaces where visitors can observe skilled artisans at work—carving wood, weaving mats, painting murals, crafting pottery, and more. Each item, from the intricate Nettipattam (elephant caparisons) and coir products to Kathakali masks, bronze sculptures, and traditional handloom fabrics, narrates a story of the state’s profound cultural legacy.



The 58-ft high statue of Lord Shiva in Gangadhar form

Located about 20 km from Thiruvananthapuram in Vizhinjam, the renowned Aazhimala Shiva Temple is a remarkable spiritual and scenic destination. Set atop cliffs that overlook the Arabian Sea, the temple features a striking 58-ft statue of Lord Shiva in His Gangadhar form, framed by the sea in the background. Crafted by 23-year-old sculptor PS Devdathan during the COVID-19 pandemic, this statue has a soothing effect that can instantly calm your senses.

Ponnudi: Tucked away about 61 km northeast of Thiruvananthapuram, Ponnudi is a tranquil hill station. Known as ‘Golden Peak’ in Malayalam, the hill station is situated at an elevation of around 1,100 meters above sea level, offering a refreshing retreat from the coastal heat. Nestled within the Western Ghats, Ponnudi is surrounded by lush greenery, rolling hills, and invigorating mountain air. The journey to this hill station is adorned with picturesque views of tea plantations that blanket the hills, accompanied by a gentle, inviting fragrance. Ponnudi boasts several stunning waterfalls, with Meenmatty Falls being particularly notable for its crystal-clear waters cascading over rocky terrain. The area also serves as a wildlife sanctuary, with Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary providing a chance to observe the natural habitats of deer, various bird species, and the occasional leopard. Mornings in Ponnudi are often shrouded in mist, creating a magical ambiance as the landscape gradually reveals itself with the rising sun. For overnight visitors, the hill station provides a variety of cozy accommodations, from guesthouses to resorts, ensuring a comfortable place to unwind after a hectic day of adventure.



The backwaters of Munroe Island

Varkala: This tranquil coastal town along the Arabian Sea uniquely combines spiritual significance, breathtaking natural beauty, and a laid-back beach ambience. Unlike many of India's bustling seaside locations, Varkala is distinguished for its striking red laterite cliffs that rise above golden sands and turquoise waters. These cliffs, adorned with swaying palm trees, charming cafés, yoga retreats, and eclectic shops, create an ideal setting for enjoying some of the region's most stunning sunsets. At the center of Varkala lies Papanasam Beach, a sacred site believed to cleanse sins through a dip in its waters. Just a short stroll away is the ancient Janardanaswamy Temple, a significant Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu in his Janardhana form, which has been a revered pilgrimage destination for over 2,000 years. The present-day temple, renowned for its 12th-century architecture, is a key part of Kerala's sacred temple circuit. Varkala is also a popular destination for wellness enthusiasts, featuring Ayurvedic therapies, meditation centers, and surf schools for those seeking harmony between body and spirit. Whether one wants to unwind beneath a palm tree with a coconut, ride the waves, or embark on a spiritual journey, Varkala offers a soothing and unforgettable experience.

Jatayupara: Also known as Jatayu Earth's Center, it is a breathtaking hilltop tourist destination in Chadayamangalam, Kollam district. Its allure goes beyond stunning views and exciting adventures; it is deeply rooted in a powerful mythological story that gives this site its name and significance. According to the Ramayana, this is the site where Jatayu, the noble vulture, fell after a courageous battle with the demon king Ravana, who was abducting Goddess Sita. Despite his age, Jatayu fought valiantly to save Sita but was severely injured and crashed onto this rocky landscape. Before he passed away, he informed

Lord Rama about Sita's abduction, making him not just a character in the epic, but a symbol of loyalty, bravery, and sacrifice. Today, the site features the

world's largest bird sculpture, an impressive representation of Jatayu that measures 200 ft in length, 150 ft in width, and 70 ft in height, gracefully positioned on a rocky hill. This is more than just a statue; it's an immersive experience. Visitors can enjoy a cable car ride, which provides a scenic lift to the top with breathtaking panoramic views. Jatayupara is not merely a tourist attraction; it combines mythology, art, and eco-tourism. It pays tribute to a forgotten hero, promotes sustainable travel, and offers a perfect balance of adventure and tranquility.

Munroe Island: When considering the backwaters of Kerala, Alleppey often comes to mind. However, for a more authentic and less crowded experience, Munroe Island is the ideal choice. This tranquil destination provides a serene atmosphere, fostering a deeper connection with nature and a more intimate glimpse into local village life. Located at the confluence of Ashtamudi Lake and the Kallada River in Kollam district, Munroe Island is named after Colonel John Munroe, a British resident of the former princely state of Travancore. Renowned for its picturesque backwaters, lush landscapes, and rich cultural heritage, this cluster of eight islands offers travelers a unique and immersive opportunity to explore the peaceful beauty of Kerala's backwaters.



A beach in Varkala



The Jatayu sculpture at Jatayupara



GUNJAN

WANT TO BECOME A MODEL?
Send us your photographs at
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