

MARCH 31 - APRIL 6, 2024

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



ODIA MUSIC VIDEOS ▼

BACK IN SPOTLIGHT

COVER STORY

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At a location

By profession Smrutiranjana Mohanty is a systems engineer at Odia daily Dharitri. However, his passion lies elsewhere. And that insatiable interest in performing art has made Smruti a household name in the state as a voiceover artist. He is the driving force behind Utkal Cartoon World's immensely popular animation series 'Natia Comedy'. Apart from his voice work, Smruti has appeared in several short films and made his acting debut in Odia movie 'Apana Mane Khushi Ta'. The Jatni-born artiste, who considers his father Artatrana Mohanty as inspiration, reads mythological stories and watch thrillers when he gets a break from work



Productive Sundays

Since I have interests in multiple professions, for me, free-time is few and far between. However, I use the opportunities productively; whether by assisting my wife with household chores or writing scripts for my shows.

Kitchen stint

Most Odias have a fondness for traditional cuisine and I'm no different. So, when I get an opportunity, I try my hand at preparing my favourite dishes- Pakhala (watered rice), Chuna Machha Bhaja (small fish fry), Kolatha Dali (horse gram) and Ambula (dried mango).



With family

Sports enthusiast

I enjoy playing cricket matches with friends. Besides, I take keen interest in chess, carom, and card games to relax nerves.

Fostering family ties

Ours is a joint family and there is no greater joy than spending time with the members. I enjoy engaging with everyone in family and gossiping over evening tea and snacks while watching television.

Spiritual pursuits

Occasionally, my wife and I pay a visit to nearby shrines. However, I never miss out on a darshan of Lord Jagannath in Puri. This is the only place where I find inner peace.

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

WhatsApp This Week

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 And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Why did the duck go to rehab? Because he was a quack addict!
- Lite: the new way to spell 'Light,' now with 20% fewer letters!
- Where does a fish go to borrow money? The loan shark!
- What is an alien's favourite candy? A Mars bar!

SAFE AND VIBRANT HOLI

sir, Last week's cover story 'Colours and camaraderie' has rightly provided insights into Holi celebrations in Odisha's twin cities, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. Events, parties with DJs, rain dances, and artificial pools help loved ones gather under one roof and enjoy Holi. Using organic colours to manage waste at eco-friendly events adds to the beauty of the festival. Such enthusiastic, energetic festive events not only help people enjoy themselves in versatile ways but also contribute to a sustainable, safe environment. Eco-friendly events should be encouraged to curb the menace of non-biodegradable waste and embrace the happiness of festivals in a cool and calm way.

ABHILASHA GUPTA, MOHALI

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 features.orissapost@gmail.com
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ODIA MUSIC VIDEOS ▶ BACK IN SPOTLIGHT



Music videos made in Sambalpuri, Kosali, Santali, and Desia languages are becoming increasingly popular on a global scale, and they are on par with Punjabi and Bhojpuri songs in terms of appeal, according to music enthusiasts

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, album songs were extremely popular, with Odisha leading the way in non-filmy song production in India.

According to a report, over 30 cassette companies in Odisha had sold a record-breaking 5,00,000 cassettes and CDs during the period, with albums like *Sholati Phaguna*, *Akbi Palakare*, *Janhare Tate*, *Emiti Ranga*, and *Batare Chalu Chalu* topping the charts.

The album industry also produced some of the biggest names in the Odia film industry in Anubhav, Sabyasachi, Akash, Naina, Lipi and several others.

However, the industry's shine faded over time with the advent of other forms of entertainment and widespread internet accessibility. People preferred watching movies on streaming platforms and YouTube channels to albums on television.

a report by Odisha Round the Clock (ORC), these songs are on par with Punjabi and Bhojpuri songs in terms of popularity. Numbers like *Bijli Rani*, *Rasia*, *Jhunka*, *Mori Bela 2.0*, *Rasa Jamudali*, *Sedinu Mu Hunu Hunu*, and *JhalaMal* are now on everyone's lips.

So, what precisely are the reasons that have brought Odia's music video back into the spotlight? **Sunday POST** seeks answers from key figures in Odisha's music industry for insights.

'Digital age has made all the difference'

Bijay Anand Sahu, a renowned Sambalpuri singer and composer known for songs like *Alta Makhi*, *Dulhan Banami*, and *Rani Guri*, credits digital platforms and cultural collaborations for global recognition of traditional Odia album songs.

"As a Sambalpuri music composer deeply entrenched in the cultural tapestry of Odisha, I believe several factors have sparked the revival of traditional Odia album

ancient customs but also promote cultural interchange, enhancing the worldwide music scene. For instance, my joint effort on the song *Dulhan Banami* with Assamese singer and actor Achurjya Borpatra garnered acclaim locally and internationally."

"As a Sambalpuri music composer, I see how the internet and social media have transformed the exposure and appeal of Odia album songs. These platforms provide a potent means to present our music globally, overcoming geographical constraints. Utilising platforms such as Instagram reels, Facebook, and streaming services, our Sambalpuri tunes can cross boundaries, captivating audiences worldwide. This digital age has made music accessible to all, allowing us to engage directly with supporters, garner global acclaim, and safeguard our cultural legacy for future generations," said Sahu.

Carrying on in the same breath, he said, "In the present era, there's a preference for modern fusions, especially those with a Southern flavour, crafted in a contemporary Western style. Currently, we're blending regional music with modern elements, garnering appreciation from listeners who even create reels of our music, gaining recognition globally."



ଢେଉଁଢି ମୋ' ବାଁ ଆଖି

Singer : ... Lyric : Nizam Music : Santiraj Khosla

However, it appears that the good old days are back again but under a different name: music videos

There are notable changes in its presentation and mediums too. It is social media networks like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube that have played a significant role in the resurgence of music videos. Apart from Odia songs, videos made in Sambalpuri, Kosali, Santali, and Koraputia languages are becoming increasingly popular on a global scale.

According to

songs, propelling them into the global spotlight. Firstly, I am thankful for the digital technology and social media that has democratised the music industry, providing a platform for artists to showcase their talent globally. Platforms like Instagram reels, YouTube, Spotify, and SoundCloud have enabled us to share our music effortlessly, reaching listeners far beyond the confines of geographical boundaries," stated the singer.

Sahu went on to add, "Partnerships among Odia musicians and artists from diverse genres have intensified the revival of Sambalpuri, Santali, and Desia tunes.

These partnerships not only rejuvenate

"Lastly, the pride and passion of Odia artists and enthusiasts for their cultural heritage have been instrumental in driving this revival. As ambassadors of Odia culture, we are committed to preserving our traditions through music, ensuring that the legacy of regional and Adivasi album songs continues to thrive for generations to come," concluded Sahu.





Traditional music instruments



Kili Paul and his sister Neema Paul from Tanzania popularised several Odia songs at global platforms

'There's a greater appreciation for independent music'

Barnali Hota, a singer who recently sang a fusion of folk songs of Odisha at India's First Folk Singing Reality Show, *Bharat Ka Amrit Kalash*, was of the view that the resurgence on international platforms showcases how contemporary music values independence over movie playback.

She said, "In today's music landscape, there's a greater appreciation for independent music. As time progresses, playback singing may shift towards independent genres. Consequently, contemporary music might receive less attention. Even with new singers emerging, audiences seem disinterested in remakes, preferring to explore folk music such as Sambalpuri, Desia, Koraputia, and other regional genres."



The singer continued: "I believe that the internet and social media have transformed the popularity of Odia songs, both locally and globally. These online platforms offer a worldwide platform for traditional music to excel, bridging geographical gaps and connecting with diverse audiences. As Odias have dispersed globally, the reception of our music depends on its reach and how it resonates across various mediums. For instance, during a recent performance at *Bharat Ka Amrit Kalash*, where I presented a fusion of Sambalpuri and Koraputia music, the audience extended beyond borders. Those from Koraput, living abroad, appreciated the fusion and commended the song," said Hota.

Barnali concluded by saying, "In my view, I anticipate a bright future for the worldwide growth and acknowledgment of Odia album songs. The rise of digital platforms and social media presents significant chances to

exhibit our cultural richness globally. The internet's accessibility has widened the reach of our music, enabling us to introduce the captivating tunes of Odisha to audiences worldwide."

'Odisha's musical heritage will continue to thrive'

Music supervisor Saugato Roy Choudhury said, "Let's be honest, as a species, we humans love our dance and music. The hunter-gatherer DNA in all of us since millennia still finds its relaxation (both body and soul) in soul-stirring melodies. We Odias are no different, we love our music, and until recently, we swore by our renditions, be it movie songs, classical and/or modern hits."

Regarding the resurgence, he said, "Music and love have no language. A couple of years ago, we were all vibing to *Despacito*; no one even knew the meaning of the song, yet everybody loved it because of the music, which was a catchy one that caught the attention of the listeners, and the same with PSY's *Gangnam style*. In

Odisha, be it normal Odia songs or songs in Sambalpuri or Adivasi languages, the tunes are captivating, which makes us groove to the song without knowing the meaning, and as they use organic instruments, the sound is very raw but good. It captivates the listeners beyond borders."



Roy said, "As a music supervisor, I take immense pride in witnessing the burgeoning popularity of our regional music, extending beyond Punjabi genres to captivate audiences across India. Each day, I am delighted to witness the rise of new songs from various regional scenes. While the global recognition of Rangabati marked a significant milestone, there remains a journey ahead for further acknowledgment. Our artists serve as cultural ambassadors, with Odia album songs enchanting audiences worldwide, signalling that their trajectory is far from complete. With their diverse array of melodies, rhythms, and narratives, Sambalpuri, Santali, and Desia music are poised to make a lasting impact on the global music landscape. Through collaborative efforts, innovation, and unwavering commitment, Odisha's musical heritage will continue to thrive, forging connections between cultures and resonating with audiences worldwide."

He signed off by stating, "Thanks to audio streaming applications, Instagram reels, YouTube shorts, and various

other platforms, songs have gained exposure on a global scale. Social media has proven to be a valuable asset for artists, enabling them to gain recognition and book more performances."



A still from *Alta Makhi* song



A poster of *Rasia*



A poster of *Dulhan Banami* song



Saswat Joshi and his French associates performed in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris

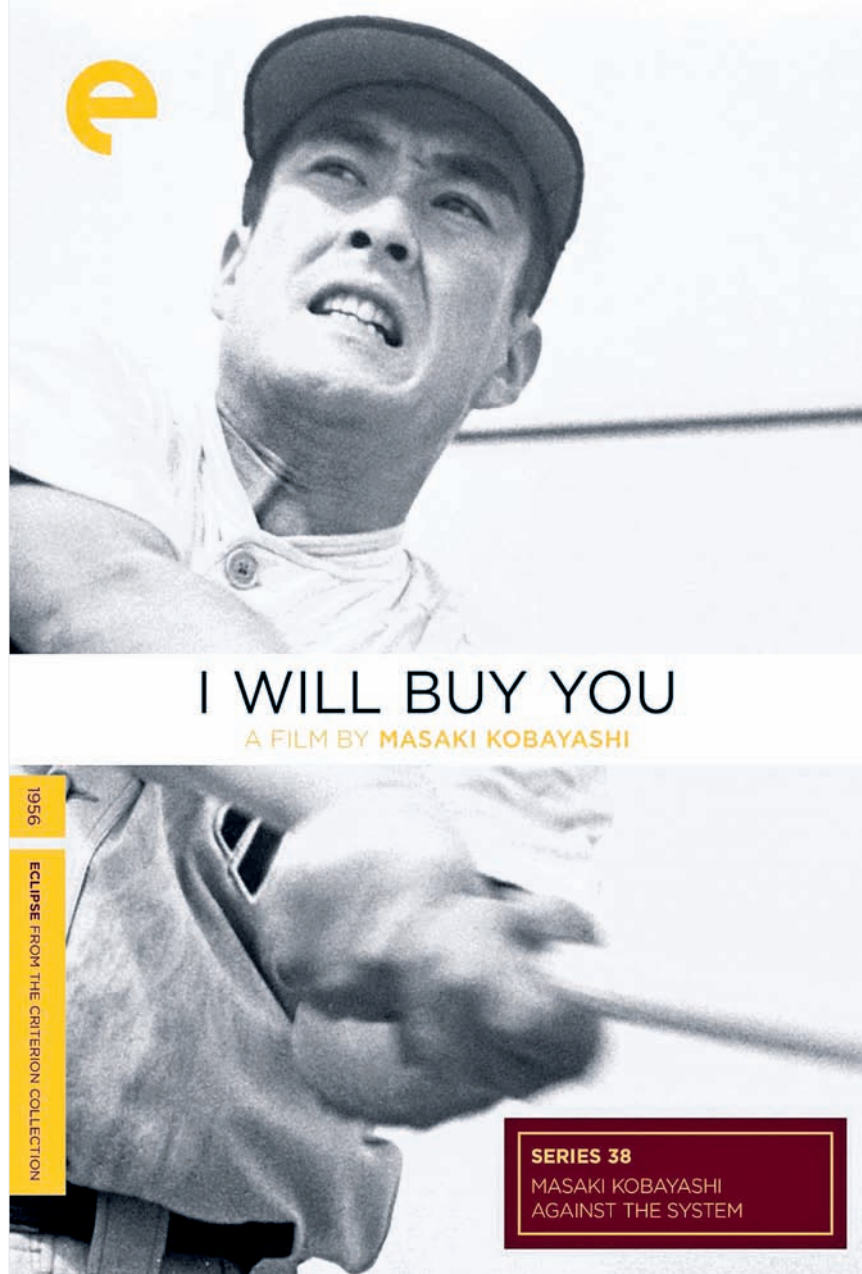
A SPORTS MOVIE WITH A DIFFERENCE

The film *I Will Buy You* (*Anata Kaimasu*) is set in contemporary time in the world of baseball. We see the actions unfold from the view of Kishimoto (Keiji Sada) a talent scout for Toyo Flowers in pursuit of a talented batter Goro Kurita (Minoru Ooki). Goro has a mentor Kyuki (Yunosuke Ito) who has paid for his college and looks after his wellbeing. Kyuki is married but lives with his mistress, has a flashy lifestyle, indulges in horse betting and enjoys the good life. Kishimoto is trying to get Goro to sign for the professional league, enlists the support of Kyuki and Goro's family in his ancestral village. Goro's lover Fueko does not trust Kyuki, she restrains Goro from going professional.

The film does not follow the sports' film tropes of gradual build-up of chase and a release, of massive hits and homeruns, we rarely see any on field action, most of it is in off field negotiations of talent scouts, managers and family members. In the film we see Fueko marking 'you indulge in socially accepted human trafficking' to Kishimoto. The other question is the past of Kyuki and his wartime life in China, as evident during the restaurant scene with the Chinese businessman. Did Kyuki rape Chinese girls or did he spy for the Japanese? The bar scene with theatrical masks when Kyuki and Kishimoto conference, evokes the role playing that shadows any trust, a world that is deceptive, motives and desires are concealed and all the characters are trying to fend for themselves.

The camera is locked down with stationary perspectives. The scenes move quickly with a pace closer to Hollywood films, a fast-paced feeling emerges due to the economy of scene construction. The scene composition, particularly the shots of groups of characters where the presence of group dynamics and social roles, gives the viewer multiple points of interest to watch, and all that is achieved in the standard 1.33:1 aspect ratio. In lighting, the design plays up shadows and dimly lit interiors, the visual quality of the nocturnal world resembles American film noir (with its secular approach to corruption), but Kobayashi brings his variation with his search for redemption, as evident in his treatment of Kyuki.

1950s post-war Japan, during the US occupation (1945-52), the concept of individualism and other western values became official state policy, while Kobayashi critiques a certain kind of individualism, not aiming to venerate old imperial traditions. Individualism when severed from social obligations and connections becomes pathological, a pathology that we see in the character of Goro. As it emerges Goro is the biggest shark of them all in driving the biggest bargain for his signing. The film's critique focuses on market and social forces that work to dissolve human relationships by subjecting



them to the laws of exchange. The film's closing image, a dissolve connects the cloth covered face of Kyuki's corpse with Goro's debut for the Osaka Socks. His future is bright, it is built on the rejection of all the values that Kyuki strove for. The focus is on the question of what it means to live like a human being according to values and the right way.

The focus on exchange value, we see, very near home in Indian cricket from the Reliance world cup in 1987 onwards to the Outlook magazine expose of match fixing in 1997 summer, to the launch of IPL, the pursuing of IPL during the pandemic and the saturation of print and electronic media of player auctions - resonate with the issues explored in *Anata Kaimasu*.

Sochiku studio is one of the big four film studios established in 1902 and in 1920 it got into film production. By the 1930s it

had adopted nationalist credo in its output supporting the imperial militarist ideology. Under its president Kido Shiro, the studio became one of the most innovative groups of its time. After the war, Kido was tried as a war criminal, reinstated in the 50s at the studio. Kido managed to draw outstanding directors including Ozu Yasujiro, Naruse Mikio and among the younger lot Kobayashi and Nagisa Oshima. The studio helmed masterpieces like *Tokyo Story* (Ozu), *Ballad of Narayama* (Kinoshita), *Cruel Story of Youth* (Oshima) and *Harakiri* (Kobayashi).



SUBRAT BEURA
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DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Born in northern island of Hokkaido, Masaki Kobayashi spent his childhood near the mountains, he studied ancient oriental arts and philosophy in Waseda University, Tokyo. After Graduating in 1941, he was drafted into the Army and sent to Manchuria, taken a prisoner of war during the last phase of the war and released in 1946. Being a pacifist at heart, his experience in the Army, marked him for life, we see that experience in his *Human Condition* a testament to the degradation of war. Kobayashi made 22 films in his career spanning four decades starting work with Sochiku. Prolific in the 50s and 60s he made 15 films in this period, starting from family dramas, to examining the stresses of post war occupied Japan - corruption, exploitation and denial of war crimes, to period dramas where he explored the suffocating social structures. His works reflected on the Japanese nation - its culture, traditions and stood with the individual against the oppressive structures of society. His last film was *The Tokyo Trial* (1985) that examined through the Tokyo trials of war crimes perpetrated by the entrenched powers of the world - of Japan and the United States.

Language - Japanese (B&W)
 Duration - 112 minutes
 Year of release - 1956
 Direction: Masaki Kobayashi
 Producer: Masharu Kokaji
 Based on the Novel: *Minoru Ono*
 Screenplay: Zenzo Matsuyama
 Cinematography: Yuharu Atsuta
 Editing: Yoshiyasu Hamamura
 Production Design: Shukei Hirataka
 Music: Chuji Kinoshita
 Cast: Kishimoto (Keiji Sada), Goro Kurita (Minoru Ooki), Fueko (Keiko Kishi), Kyuki (Yunosuke Ito)



Sara not afraid of criticisms

Actress Sara Ali Khan, who has carved a niche for herself in the film industry, saw two major releases in two weeks on two different streaming platforms. The actress received mixed reviews for both her films Netflix's *Murder Mubarak* and Prime Video's *Ae Watan Mere Watan*. Before the release of AWMW, she talked candidly about how she handles social media feedback and how with time her attitude towards it changed.

During an interview, the *Simmba* actress was asked about how she deals with the feedback – both positive and negative. She said, “You read the good, you read the bad. You celebrate the good. You keep the bad in your

memory. I am not afraid of criticisms. There is no problem. I am not afraid of noise. I always pray and hope to have the awareness of knowing that this is noise and I need to filter it.”

She also recalled, “I was like this during *Kedarnath* and then I changed. Now, I am getting back to that. There was a voice in me that felt like I am not being honest to myself anymore. My gut had stopped reacting to me the amount it should. That should not happen.”

AGENCIES



Fatima: Making it into industry isn't easy

Actress Fatima Sana Shaikh has been a part of Hindi cinema for eight years, and she is having a dream run. She said she was fortunate to get an opportunity in the industry, as it is not very easy for a lot of people to make it.

When asked about how she sees her journey, the *Ludo* actress told *IAN S*, “I feel very blessed. It's not very easy for a lot of people to make it into the industry, and I feel fortunate and blessed that I got that opportunity because I was a newcomer. I auditioned, and I got the films because of my hard work.”

Be it Geeta Phogat from *Dangal* or her *Dhak Dhak* role of Shashi Kumar Yadav and former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in *Sam Bahadur*, the actress has always portrayed women of substance on screen. “Those are the roles that excite me, so I want to experiment and explore, but if I am not excited about a role, a character, or the graph, then I don't spend a lot of time on it,” she said. *IAN S*



Ali, Richa to support local artisans

Showbiz couple Ali Fazal and Richa Chadha are set to launch their own fashion label that places a spotlight on local artisans.

With their label, the couple aims to breathe new life into one of the oldest forms of art deeply embedded in Indian culture and to rejuvenate

the community of local artisans from Lucknow.

Richa said, “We have both always strived to work at a grassroots level with whatever we do. We have always wanted to support local communities, our social endeavours too always are something we strive to do from grassroots level. So when the idea struck us to want to do something for the artisans, especially those in Lucknow who have years and years of art they have been practising, we wanted the label to be a reflection of that.”

She revealed that she and her husband have always been in awe of the skill of local artisans, particularly those involved in crafting exquisite intricate work in textiles. *IAN S*

Alia's charity event in London

Actress Alia Bhatt, who will be seen next in *Jigra*, hosted her debut charity gala, the Hope Gala, in London last week.

According to a source close to her team, the actress hosted the charity event March 28 in collaboration with the Mandarin Oriental hotel group at the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London.

The gala was graced by prominent industrialists and philanthropists from both India and London. The event was in support of Alia's chosen charity, Salaam Bombay which is dedicated

to empowering Mumbai's most vulnerable 'at-risk' children.

Salaam Bombay achieves this through in-school programmes focusing on leadership and advocacy as well as after-school academies aimed at skill-building. These initiatives are designed to enhance the confidence and self-esteem of the children while encouraging them to remain committed to their education. *AGENCIES*



A CITY THAT EMERGED FROM MUCK



Apart from water-resistant timber, such as larch and oak, brick was commonly used in the construction of buildings in Venice. Then, the solid limestone was utilised to protect the brick walls from the lagoon's saline water

sanctuary in previously unoccupied marshy lagoons near the coast, with the exception of a few fisherman.

There are no surviving papers from the time the Republic of Venice was established. Those moist houses and muddy alleys are not friendly to anything as fleeting as parchment. But the city is supposed to have been officially formed March 25, 421 AD. By the seventh century, the Imperial District of Venetia governed over a huge area of land that included the northernmost parts of the Adriatic Sea.

This marshes had been inhabited for generations by the time the twelve founding families elected their first doge, the formal leader of Venice, in 697.

Ancient engineering

Early inhabitants lived in basic dwellings built of wood, reeds, and clay. There was some dry land in the swamp.

The fishermen and refugees who resided there in Roman times erected humble homes along the sandy coastline and on the little islands that dot the wetlands. As the population increased, they had to figure out how to build where there was no dry land at all.

They began by driving big wooden stakes straight into the muck beneath the sea. They used water-resistant timber, such as larch and oak.

Countless wooden poles were employed throughout the building. The majority of this timber came from the forests of Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and northern Italy. It was transferred to Venice via water.

Caranto, or firm clay, lies beneath the soft mud. This dense material can be found two metres beneath the surface in certain regions and up to ten metres in others.

The wooden posts were put out in a spiral pattern, starting in the centre and moving out to the foundation's perimeter. More poles were positioned closer together beneath the outer walls to support the enormous weight.

These posts were capped with two layers of horizontal boards, followed with stone, which was almost invariably an impermeable limestone quarried in Istria, Croatia. Finally, the building was built.

Brick was commonly used in the construction of Venetian buildings. Then, the solid limestone known as Istrian stone was utilised to protect the brick walls from the lagoon's saline water. As structures grew taller and heavier, the wooden poles were spaced closer together to withstand more weight. They were usually five or six metres long and could not always reach the solid layer of clay beneath the softer mud.

If the Caranto was too deep to reach, the poles were arranged so closely together that there was almost no room between them. If any spaces remained, they were filled with stones and gravel. When weight was applied to these supports, the mud beneath became so compressed that it became as stable as the Caranto.

The majority of Venice's surviving man-made terrain was built in the 15th and 16th centuries, but some dates back far earlier.

St. Mark's Bell Tower

St. Mark's Bell Tower collapsed in 1902, allowing people to examine what lay beneath.

The foundation was built in the 10th century, and the poles used were around four metres long. The boards were set on top of these poles, and the stone added three and a half metres to the foundation's height.

The wooden piles have remained mainly intact, thanks to the mud. The wood had calcified, becoming nearly as hard as stone. The lack of oxygen and high mineral concentration in the silty waters accelerated the process, providing Venice a solid foundation.

A city of water

Venice was a major commerce nexus between Europe and the near East, gaining enormous wealth over the centuries from the sale of salt, spices, and luxury items.

The city eventually became a major force in the region, commanding a large navy. Its underwater setting shielded it from enemies. When Charlemagne's son Pepin attempted to invade, he failed to reach the city.

Venice reached its peak in the fifteenth century. Afterwards, it gradually fell and was conquered by Napoleon in 1797.

OP DESK

Italian city Venice is one of Europe's most breathtaking destinations, known as the 'City of Love' for its canals and distinctive aesthetics.

Rising from the ocean, it's a city of extremes- a charming place with bridges and canals, as well as crumbling houses that have been sustained by mud for centuries.

But why was this incredible metropolis created in the middle of a desolate marsh? And how did they complete this seemingly difficult task so many centuries ago?

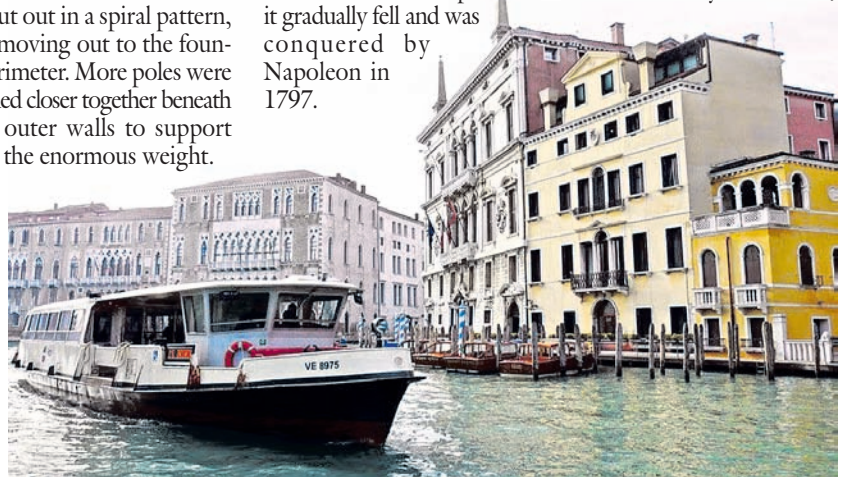
Creation of the beauty

Venice's early history is shrouded in mystery, as befits a city that emerged from the muck.

Long before the city was constructed, the country beyond the northernmost limits of the Adriatic Sea was inhabited by the Veneti, who gave the region its name.

They formed an alliance with Rome in 182 BC, and their civilization gradually became Romanized. Venice began with a population of refugees. People left northern Italy's cities and countryside when the Roman Empire crumbled.

The region was repeatedly assaulted by the Huns and other Germanic peoples, who destroyed several Roman cities. Roman inhabitants sought





PIHU



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