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- Books
- Culture
- Style
- Play
- Slideshows
- Insider
- Parenting
- Livemint Home
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Mint Reports
- Blogs
- Webcast Archive
- Partners
- Wall Street Journal
- Tools
- Mint Mobile
- RSS Feeds
- mint e-paper
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Culture

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Carnal comic

An exclusive chat with one of the makers of the controversial and cult online pornographic comic series 'Savita Bhabhi'

Sidin Vadukut



Savita Bhabhi is an attractive, long-haired, married Indian woman with a voracious sexual appetite. And her promiscuous travails are the central theme of a series of online comics that have now developed a committed following. According to online traffic measurement company Alexa Internet Inc., www.savitabhabhi.com is the 45th most popular website in India, ranking ahead of less racy sites such as eBay India, LinkedIn and even Shaadi.com. [Tweet](#)



Obscenarios: Savita Bhabhi tries to capture Indian male fantasies.

Faced with sporadic threats from moral policemen and cyber crime officials, the creators of the comic have kept a low profile, identifying themselves only by screen names. We recently spoke to "Deshmukh" of the Savita Bhabhi (SB)

team about the origin of the comic strip and his perspectives on Indian sexuality. Edited excerpts:

Tell us about the genesis of Savita Bhabhi.

It just came out of the blue. We were a group of friends sitting together on a weekend having a few drinks and talking. One of our non-Indian friends remarked that while Indian women were considered among the most sensuous in the world, we did not have a single high-profile Indian porn star.

That stirred up our discussion and we decided the next best thing to a real woman would be a cartoon porn star. One of my friends is an amateur artist and he came up with the first draft of SB.

Initially, there was a toss up between SB being a young Gujarati woman or a south Indian aunty. We went ahead and posted some threads on a forum asking people which one they preferred. Savita, the young, newly-wed woman, won.

Why do you think SB works when there is already so much pornographic content on the Internet?

It is curiosity that brings the first-time reader to SB. Thanks to the coverage we have received in the press, a lot of people have been introduced to our sultry *bhabhi* (sister-in-law). And of course, once they meet her—they become instant, dedicated fans! We do have 200,000 visitors coming daily to our site. So I'm guessing there is a factor of dedication.

Do you have a formal process to come up with storylines, plots and

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characters?

It begins with the idea for a story. After discussion over a few story choices, we decide on one and then start writing the script for that story. While the script is being written, it is simultaneously given to the artists to draw. The artwork goes back and forth a bit till we have the page just right.

Then the dialogue is added and the page is sent to various translators who give us the different flavours of Savita by translating her adventures into different Indian languages. SB is the only Indian site that is available in over 10 Indian languages.

Many think SB is a reflection of sexuality in Indian culture. It highlights common Indian male fantasies. What's your perspective on this?

I have to agree that SB has given Indian males an outlet to vent their sexual frustrations. A lot of "keepers of moralities" say that SB is destroying the culture of India. I beg to differ. I feel by giving an outlet for the Indian male we are actually helping broaden the horizon and his thinking.

SB also shows the Indian man that his wife or girlfriend has sexual needs too, and it is about time someone recognized it.

Government officials and the moral police have often said they want to take action and close SB. Give us an idea of how tough it is to operate in this environment.

We don't really get much hate mail. Rather, the fan mail sometimes gets too much to cope with. I would like to take this opportunity to apologize to the hundreds of fans who write in daily—we would love to reply to each one of your mails personally but it's just not possible.

I believe that the cyber branch has much more important work on their plate rather than waste time on a cartoon site! I'm sure they would rather spend their time tracking down the criminals, fraudsters and terrorists who misuse the Net than run after a slightly promiscuous *bhabhi*.

It was very surprising to see a discussion on the appropriate display of the national flag on an SB forum. Is this a common occurrence? Do your forum members discuss things besides sex?

Yes, they do. We've got 56,000 fan club members—the website gets six million visits a month. I felt it would be wrong for SB to not make use of such an opportunity to highlight some social issues that we believe in. In that direction we started a series called *Savita Says* of which the national flag issue was one such topic.

Savita Says is a bit like the Amul girl. Don't be surprised if *bhabhi* becomes an icon in a few years!

Finally, what keeps you guys going? The profit potential? The statement?

It's the rush we get from creating something that we know tons of people read and love. It is a dream for many to have their concept become so famous and get talked about around the world. We have managed to realize this dream and it is the passion to keep it going and growing that keeps us enthused.

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