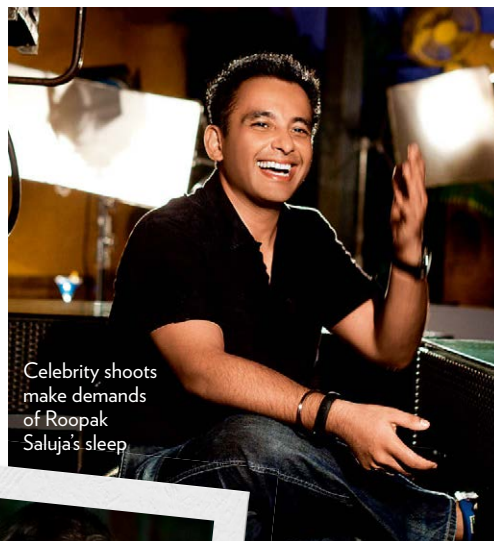


Midnight's children

They bustle about their jobs as the city turns in. BHAIRAVI JHAVERI meets the people who begin their day when the sun sets



Kini Rao feeds off the energy of the crowd during her late-night sets



Celebrity shoots make demands of Roopak Saluja's sleep



Megha Sood has never turned down an assignment because it was "too late"

The DJ

KINI RAO, 28
House and techno DJ
Kini Rao, who has been a disc jockey for the past five years, lives out an enviable schedule full of travel. A few times every month, usually in Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai or Hyderabad, she sets off at 10pm. Typically, she'll work the console till 1.30am (sometimes even later) dishing out her brand of soulful house and techno that includes tracks by artists such as Quarion, D'julz, dOP, Heidi, Phil Weeks, Justin Martin and Kink.

A bit of a night owl, Rao finds herself working late even on evenings she spends at home, preparing a final selection of music in the days leading up to a gig. "I love what I do—even the erratic late nights are worth it—but sometimes, when working weekends and on special occasions like New Year's Eve, I miss hanging out with my friends," she says. **Golden hour:** "I love the energy on the dance floor when I am playing at 3am at an overseas warehouse-type venue that's grooving for 48 hours straight."

The reporter

MEGHA SOOD, 29
Principal correspondent, The Indian Express
"I had to take shelter in a police van when I was caught between a rioting mob in Chembur in 2008," recalls Megha Sood, who talks of her many narrow escapes with a buoyancy that

suggests she really does enjoy her job. In charge of all crime stories that break between the Mumbai suburbs of Bandra and Virar, Sood has, in her eight years as a crime journalist, clocked many late nights at crime scenes such as the Alistair Pereira hit-and-run case. **Golden hour:** "When the sub-editor checks my copy around 11pm and tells me that all the facts are in place—it means I can go home."

The film-maker

ROOPAK SALUJA, 37
Founder/CEO, The 120 Media Collective, Bang Bang Films and Jack In The Box
Roopak Saluja straddles different time zones to liaise with his clients. As an ad film-maker (for brands such as Volkswagen and Pepsi), his schedule is rife with late-night conference calls and inconveniently-timed celebrity shoots. On a good day, these could wind up at 3am. He recuperates with family lunch hour, a massage, a nap and two whiskeys. **Golden hour:** "The adrenaline kicks in at 2am. I top it off with a little caffeine and it keeps me peaking for a few hours until dawn." >