

MOVING AHEAD...TOGETHER

mycitylinks

FLASH BACK

THE YEAR IN WHICH THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC HELD
THE WORLD IN A DEADLY GRIP
HAS ALSO LEFT BEHIND SOME
MEMORIES TO CHERISH





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As 2021 Beckons, Some Positive Takeaways From A Year That One Would Want To Forget

AS one looks back at 2020, nothing defines the year better than what made headlines more often than not - the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, there were moments, including several even as the pandemic raged on, that make one believe that the year was not entirely about doom and gloom. In our Cover Story, we look at some of these moments which made Odisha and its people proud.

Like many other sectors, the Odia entertainment industry also bore the brunt of the pandemic's fallout - only three feature films were released during the year. There were, however, significant achievements in the digital entertainment industry - from videos to shows to short films. Read more about this in our Cover Story package.

Pandemics and diseases that claimed a large number of lives have found a way into works of literature over many centuries. From incidents in early Greek history to the Black Death in Europe and the Spanish Flu in the last century, there have been many books on these outbreaks. As a year completely dominated and controlled by COVID-19 comes to an end, this edition takes a look at some of these literary works.

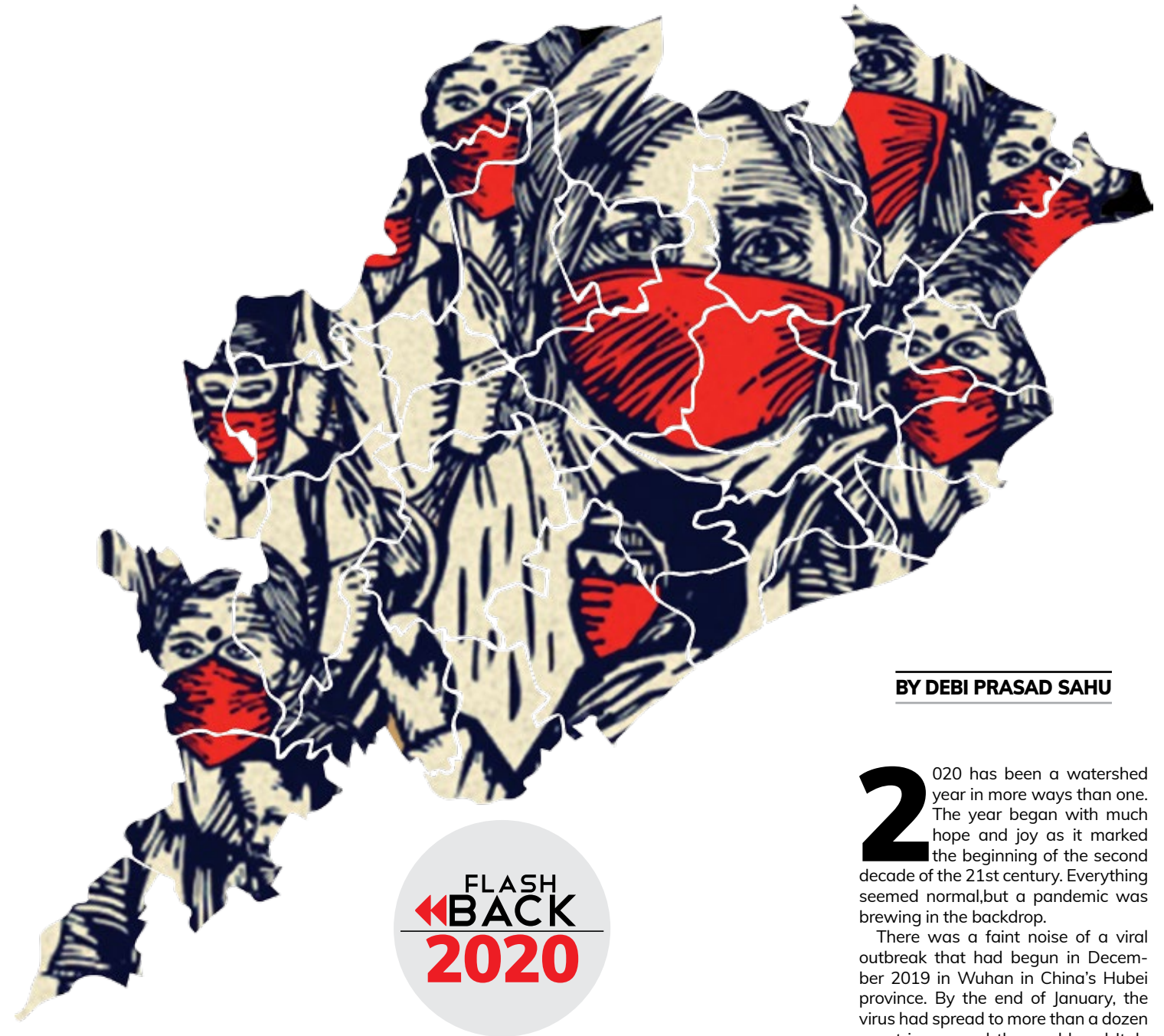
Swasti Singh has been pedaling her way to glory since she burst onto the cycling scene in 2015. From making a mark at the state level to winning her first national title in 2018, her early years in the sport laid the foundation for what would soon turn into an impressive career. The 17-year-old sensation is our Sportsperson of the Month.

The Kalinga Stadium Sports Complex has been giving a sense of purpose and direction to sportspersons for some time now. Read about the Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Centre, in City Sports.

With people beginning to move out of the safe confines of their house, we thought this was a good time to take a close look at the fashion trends this winter. From classic and chic to bohemian and sporty, our Fashion section brings you the lowdown on everything that's hot this winter. Elsewhere in this edition, we also bring you some handy tips for a healthy winter.

Ranjeet Rajwada's musical journey began at the age of five and he has now reached a stage where he is referred to as the 'Prince of Ghazal'. There have been awards and accolades aplenty along the way, and he tells us all about it in a free-wheeling conversation.

BY RAKESH KUMAR ROUL



BY DEBI PRASAD SAHU

2020 has been a watershed year in more ways than one. The year began with much hope and joy as it marked the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century. Everything seemed normal, but a pandemic was brewing in the backdrop.

There was a faint noise of a viral outbreak that had begun in December 2019 in Wuhan in China's Hubei province. By the end of January, the virus had spread to more than a dozen countries around the world and Italy was bearing the brunt of the deadly virus which is now known as SARS-CoV2.

The novel coronavirus was first detected in India on January 30, 2020 and it reached Odisha on March 16. The atmosphere in Bhubaneswar was electrified as people watched the developments unfold on their television screens and digital devices.

On March 23 Odisha entered an unprecedented lockdown that would last till the end of May. Life came to a standstill as Odisha worked rapidly on building COVID infrastructure.

PHEW! WHAT A YEAR IT WAS

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As the lockdown came to an end there was a rapid influx of migrants from all over the country and from across the world and the number of COVID positive cases spiralled out of control.

Masks, hand hygiene and physical distancing became the new norm. Since then life has been slowly limping back to normalcy, but 2020 has been a year of years. Whether the virus infected someone or not but it touched and affected everyone's life in one way or the other.

However 2020 was not only about the pandemic. This year has given us some bittersweet memories to remember and has made us realise the importance of little things in life that we took for granted. My City Links takes a look at some of the moments; the good, the bad and the ugly that brought us to where we are now.

From the first dedicated COVID hospital in the country to the dalgona coffee, from a last moment Rath Yatra in Puri to the death of the legend Bijay Mohanty, from Nijigarh Tapang to money heist. Odias and Odisha went through the entire spectrum of emotions in 2020. Here are some of the highlights.

ODISHA RECOGNISED FOR HAVING THE CLEANEST COASTLINE

According to a report released by the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Odisha has the least polluted coastline while Puri beach was adjudged the second cleanest beach in the country.

SPORT IT 2020

India's first sports and innovation festival 'SPORT IT 2020' was organised at the Kalinga Stadium in the sports capital of India, Bhubaneswar. It was organised by XAVIER EMLYON Business School (XEBS) and Sports and Youth Services Department, Government of Odisha. At the event, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urged start-ups and entrepreneurs to invest in the sports sector of the State.

DAHIBARA-ALOODUM OF CUTTACK WINS BIG AT NATIONAL STREET FOOD FEST

The king of Odia street food, Dahibara-Aloodum, was crowned the best street food in the country at the 11th National Street Food Festival in New Delhi. This festival



Sona Mohapatra and Ram Sampath at EAT Fest



Dahibara Aloodum was crowned the best street food in the country at the 11th National Street Food Festival

is organized by the group Culinary Culture. The title on the certificate read Cuttack's Dahibara-Aloodum is 'Top East-Zone Street Food Stall'. The man of the moment and the proud owner of this Dahibara-Aloodum cart at Shelter Chaka is Cuttack-based Babula.

FIRST WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

PANEL SET UP IN ODISHA

For the first time in the country, the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) set up an Indian Women's Entrepreneurship Committee (IWEC) to motivate women entrepreneurs in Odisha. As part of the launch, the first mega 'Women's Leadership Summit' was organised in Bhubaneswar.

BHUBANESWAR HOSTS DEBUT EDITION OF CORPORATE ICON AWARDS

The beacons of the corporate world and some stunning creations by the best fashion designers in Odisha were feted at the 1st edition of the Corporate Icon Awards and 3rd Bhubaneswar Runway Week hosted by My City Links at Mayfair Convention in Bhubaneswar. The Corporate Icon Awards 2020 honoured industry leaders and path-breakers in the world of business in Odisha. These leaders were felicitated by Chief Secretary Asit Kumar Tripathy, who appreciated them for their dedication to excellence, innovation and commitment to take Odisha ahead in the corporate world.

BHUBANESWAR WITNESSES FIRST PARK UTSAV

After the success of Patha Utsav, denizens of Bhubaneswar witnessed the first Park Utsav hosted by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) at two city parks. More than 3,000 people gathered at Indira Gandhi Park and Madhusudan Das Park and participated in various info-tainment activities. To motivate people to be a part of the 'No to Plastic' campaign, BMC distributed more than 1200 cotton bags.

ODISHA INTRODUCES CLIMATE CHANGE BUDGET

In a first for the country, Odisha which has set new precedents in disaster preparedness and has tackled numerous natural calamities with minimal losses to life presented a separate climate budget during State Budget 2020-21 in February. The climate budget was aimed at keeping a track of all the government expenditures made for climate change or to support mitigation and adaptation actions to address climate change. This year, the Odisha government introduced a paperless budget and presented the budget on iPads.

CREATIVE COMMUNITIES OF TWIN CITIES COME TOGETHER AT EAT FEST

The denizens of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack had a sumptuous time at the EAT Fest held on February 22 and 23 when they got to taste an envious spread of amazing food



while also experiencing art at its best at the curated festival. More than 27 restaurants, 19 organic produce vendors, three fashion designers along with ghost kitchens, artists, beat boxers, dance troupes, & rappers participated in the event.

AJAY KUMAR PATNAIK GETS SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARD FOR TRANSLATION

Writer Ajay Kumar Patnaik received the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award for the year 2019. He was selected for the award for his book 'Shrestha Hindi Galpa', a compilation of Hindi stories translated into Odia language. The book contains 25 short stories of some of the most prominent Hindi writers like Yashpal, Bhisham Sahni, Jaishankar Prasad, Prem Chand, Bhagwati Charan Verma, Mohan Rakesh, and Mannu Bhandari among others.

TARANG PLUS BREAKS STEREOTYPES

This year, Tarang Plus became the first Odia entertainment OTT platform to break prejudices on gender stereotypes and sexual orientation. The web series 'Chumbak', which starred Tamanna Vyas and Divyadisha Mohanty in lead roles and was directed by Susant Mani, told the story of love between two people of the same gender.

BIJU BABU-THE SUPERHERO IN COMICS

A comic book on the legendary

Odia leader and hero Biju Patnaik titled 'The Adventures of The Daredevil Democrat' was released by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on March 6 during a function in Bhubaneswar. A Delhi-based publisher, 'The Creative Workshop', has published the comic. The book is available in both English and Odia languages. With excellent illustrated comic artwork, the book narrates the various adventures of Biju Babu.

CULTURAL HERITAGE HONOURS

Odisha's Manabasa Gurubara, Chhau Dance and Ravana Chhaya were included in the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India on April 22. The traditional ritual of Manabasa Gurubara and the two



Cyclone Amphan

performing arts of Chhau Dance and Ravana Chhaya represent the rich cultural heritage and diversity of Odisha. While Manabasa Gurubara was included in the practices, rituals and festive events category, the other two traditions were included in the performing arts category. This came as positive news while the state was grappling with the lockdown.

HUMANITARIAN GESTURE

Former Indian cricketer and MP, Gautam Gambhir cremated the body of Saraswati Patra in April, who had been taking care of his family. Gautam addressed Saraswati as family in a tweet. She hailed from Kusunpur village of Jajpur and was undergoing treatment for pre-existing conditions at

Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi. Saraswati's family could not reach Delhi to receive her mortal remains as the country was at the height of a strict lockdown.

SUM HOSPITAL CONDUCTS FIRST LIVE LIVER TRANSPLANT

In a first for Odisha, the Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS) and SUM Hospital in Bhubaneswar successfully conducted a liver transplantation from a living donor. The path-breaking surgery was conducted on 55-year-old Jayanta Biswal, who was suffering from cryptogenic cirrhosis of the liver. The donor was Biswal's son Saumya Ranjan. The marathon surgery of nine hours and the doctors at IMS and SUM Hospital were helped by experts from Hyderabad-based Yashoda Hospital to conduct the surgery.

OLIVE RIDLEY HATCHING RECORD

For the first time in seven years, mass nesting of Olive Ridley turtles was witnessed during daytime on the beaches of Rushikulya, Gahirmatha and Padampetta in the last week of March. This year, around 7 lakh turtles visited Odisha's coast for mass and sporadic nesting. Around 4.7 lakh Olive Ridley turtles had laid eggs at Gahirmatha, Agarnasi island, Pentha, Satabhaya beach, Barunei river mouth and Babubali island. At Rushikulya rookery, the



Record Olive Ridley mass nesting witnessed this year



number was around 3,23,063.

CYCLONE AMPHAN BRUSHES BY

Amphan was the first super cyclonic storm in the Bay of Bengal since 1999 and it brought back the memories of 2019's Fani. People were scared to have a storm in the middle of a pandemic, but it only brushed through Odisha coast to make landfall in neighbouring West Bengal on May 20. Although it did not cause much damage in Odisha, it did so in West Bengal and Bangladesh.

ZOMATO STIRS A ROW

Zomato, the go-to food delivery app of the twin cities committed blasphemy by stating Dahibara Aloodum as a South Indian dish! Though the mistake was rectified, it did create a stir on social media.

CHEERS TO HOME DELIVERY OF LIQUOR

The Government of Odisha decided to restart the sale of liquor from May 24. This news delighted the citizens of the capital city who had been eagerly waiting to have a sip of their favourite beverage since the lockdown began in March. The sale of liquor was permitted through online orders and home delivery services which made it easier for cus-



Zomato introduced period leaves



Naveen was declared as one of the most powerful person in the country

tomers as they didn't have to visit a crowded liquor shop or stand in long queues amid the corona scare.

SPECIAL POSTAL COVER ON COVID-19

A special cover on 'COVID 19 Global Pandemic' and a pack of 10 picture postcards on great personalities of Odisha were released by Governor Ganeshi Lal. The cover is designed based on the works of Apindra Swain, a Pattachitra artist from the heritage village of Raghurajpur. The paintings depict the everyday activities of people at home using masks.

ODISHA CM AMONG TOP 10 INFLUENTIAL INDIANS

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was ranked 10th in the list of '50 Influential Indians Of 2020', as per the survey conducted by Fame India magazine and Asia Post.

KIIT INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SHINES IN GLOBAL COMPETITION

Saatwik Panigrahi of KIIT International School has become one of the top three winners of an online competition called 'Beyond The Classroom Webinar Series' organised by Queen Mary University of London. The competition was about 'mergers as a survival/ growth strategy

and their implications in daily life.

SAMARITAN FOR MIGRANTS

Bollywood actor Sonu Sood delivered happiness to Odisha as he got 117 Odia girls airlifted from Kerala. The girls were stuck in Kerala due to the nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus.

'BANDE UTKAL JANANI' GETS STATE ANTHEM STATUS

'Bande Utkal Janani' was officially accorded the status of the state anthem of Odisha on June 7. A proposal in this regard was passed at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. The patriotic song was penned in 1912 by Kanthakabi Laxmikanta Mohapatra in Sanskrit. It was the opening song of 'Utkal Sammilani' during the struggle for the formation of a separate Odia province.

TIC-TAC-TOE BETWEEN HOCKEY INDIA AND ODISHA SPORTS

As people traded their way cautiously through unlock 1.0, gloominess had not yet been able to break their spirits. While people were still at home out of fear and concern, Hockey India and Odisha Sports had a couple of fun rounds of light-hearted tic-tac-toe on their official twitter handles. The two-match challenge was put forward by Hockey India to Odisha Sports which they accepted wholeheartedly and had a go. Their game not only drove away dullness for a while, but many followers were reminded of their childhood when they used to play this game with pen and paper or chalk and slate.

CAPTAIN MADHUSMITA PATNAIK BRINGS ODIAS HOME FROM UAE

"Jai Jagannath! I wish you all a Happy Raja. I, Captain Madhusmita Patnaik, invite you onboard this special Air Arabia flight. It is my pleasure to fly you back home to your loved ones on this auspicious day of Pahili Raja," came the announcement in Odia over the PA system as the 215 Odias onboard Air Arabia flight G9 645 cheered and clapped with joy before it took off from Sharjah to Bhubaneswar on June 14.

RATH YATRA GETS A GO AHEAD

The Supreme Court on June 22



Ratha Yatra 2020, sans devotees



'BANDE UTKAL JANANI' WAS OFFICIALLY ACCORDED THE STATUS OF THE STATE ANTHEM OF ODISHA ON JUNE 7. A PROPOSAL IN THIS REGARD WAS PASSED AT A CABINET MEETING CHAIRED BY CM NAVEEN PATNAIK

modified its June 18 order where it had put a stay on Rath Yatra due to the COVID-19 pandemic and allowed the Chariot Festival to be held on June 23, without allowing congregation of devotees. The devotees were worried that if Lord Jagannath would not come out on Rath Yatra, he cannot come out for 12 years as per traditions. Reviewing the petitions filed by various organisations to allow the Rath Yatra, a bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde stated that the Jagannath Temple management committee and state government can conduct the Rath Yatra in accordance with the guidelines. The court directed the authorities to conduct the Rath Yatra in a very restricted manner without allowing the congregation of devotees.



Captain Madhusmita brought back stranded Odias from the Middle East

RATH YATRA 2020 – A FESTIVAL SANS DEVOTEES

For the first time in history of Rath Yatra, the grand event was held without the participation of any

devotees as servitors pulled the chariots of the Trinity on Bada Danda (Grand Road). Following a Supreme Court nod, the excitement among millions of devotees across the globe knew no bounds. Glued to their TV screens to get a glimpse of the Trinity, many devotees could not control their tears of joy as the three chariots rolled out on the Grand Road. Held during extraordinary times, this year's Rath Yatra will be etched in history books forever.

KANDHAMAL GIRL BECOMES FIRST FLYING OFFICER FROM DISTRICT

Sushree Sai Pranita Mohanty of Kendupadar village of Kandhamal district became the first Odia girl from the district to be appointed as a flying officer in the Indian Air Force. She has been commissioned to the meteorological branch. Her inclination for a career in the defence services began during her PhD and she quit it halfway to join the defence services.



STADIUMS TURN COVID CARE CENTRES

Back in July, Odisha was in the middle of a COVID storm and it seemed relentless. With the number of positive cases rising fast, the government decided to convert Barabati Stadium and Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium into COVID care facilities.

TRIBAL TEEN RESCUES 6,000 LABOURERS

Manasi Bariha, a 19-year-old tribal girl from Odisha's Balangir district, helped rescue more than 6,000 labourers trapped in different brick kilns of Tamil Nadu during the COVID-19 pandemic. The teenager managed to do so after she mustered courage and alerted her relatives about the kiln owner's brutal attack on the workers wanting to return home during the lockdown.



19 year old Manasi Bariha rescued 6000 labourers

FIRST TSUNAMI READY VILLAGES IN COUNTRY

Odisha became the first state to have two tsunami-ready villages in August. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO recognised Venkatraipur (Boxipalli) village of Rangeilunda block in Ganjam district and Noliassahi village of Erasama block in Jagatsinghpur district for greater preparedness to face a tsunami disaster.



The series became a hit because of its production quality, visuals and narrative

employees, whereby they can apply for 10 such days off a year. The Indian restaurant aggregator and food delivery start-up announced this on August 8.

BOU KAHUTHILE – A FRESH INSIGHT INTO ODIA CUISINE

Two Odia siblings; Shilpi and Raj Sampad, breathed fresh air into the way we see and feel Odia food through their video series 'Bou Kahuthile'. 'Bou' means mother and 'Kahuthile' means used to say. This series is a celebration of the food that their grandmother loved to cook. Together, the duo hatched

the idea of doing this video series because of their shared interest in food and inspiration — Nihar Desai's food series 'Aav re Varsaad'. The series became a rage because of its production quality, visuals and narrative.

ODISHA MLA SETS EXAMPLE FOR NATION'S YOUTH

The video of the Dabugaon legislator, Manohar Randhari from Odisha's Nabarangpur district ploughing his fields in ankle-deep water went viral, winning praises from all quarters for his dedication to his first profession of farm-

ing. Randhari, who has around 23 acres of farming land, ploughs the fields with the help of his bulls and plants paddy saplings along with his co-workers.

MARITIME GALLERY, A NEW ADDITION TO STATE MUSEUM

The new gallery has been added in association with Odisha Institute of Maritime and South-East Asian Studies (OIMSEAS). Each of the 12 sections describes the maritime history of Odisha. While one section showcases the roots of maritime in the state, the others showcase the export and import scenario during those days.

ODIA TECHIE BISWATMA'S 'CHINGARI' APP MAKES HAY

Developed in 2018 by a young Odia programmer from Cuttack, Biswatma Nayak and his partner Siddharth Gautam, both of whom are now based in Bengaluru, Chingari is being hailed as India's alternative to TikTok and the young founders are now excited to bring in more success and glory for this home-grown app.

SOA STUDENTS SHINE IN ROBOTICS CHALLENGE

Five students Jivitesh Debata, Arun Kumar Mohanty, Manosini Dash, Mohammed Azmal and Anshuman Pandia from the Department of Engineering and Technology of SOA Deemed to be University came up with a remarkable performance to qualify for Level-2 in the Flipkart GRiD 2.0 Robotics Challenge as the only team from Odisha other than IIT and NIT.

BHUBANESWAR PHOTOGRAPHER DATES COMET NEOWISE

After watching and waiting for 10 days, Bhubaneswar-based photo-journalist Rakesh Kumar Roul was finally rewarded with a clear shot of Comet NEOWISE in the sky. He captured the rare sight with his Nikon 200-500 mm lens while standing at Jhumka Dam on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar.

NEW SPECIES OF GECKO DISCOVERED IN ODISHA

The new species of gecko is just over 6 cm in length and it was discovered by a team of researchers near a sacred grove near the village of Humma in Rambha tehsil of Ganjam district. The new species



Krushi Bhawan



Comet NEOWISE



Dutee Chand



Biswatma Nayak

of the genus Hemiphyllodactylus is named Hemiphyllodactylus minimus and it is the smallest member in the genus.

DUTEE CHAND WINS ARJUNA AWARD

Ace sprinter and the pride of Odi-

sha, Dutee Chand was conferred with the prestigious Arjuna Award for the year 2020 on August 29. She received the award from President Ram Nath Kovind via a video conferencing programme on the occasion of National Sports Day.

ODISHA BY ROAD CAMPAIGN

The tourism industry in Odisha was shut since March this year due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The business of hotels, restaurants, tours and travels dealers and other tourism associated sectors were severely affected during the lockdown. After remaining shut for almost seven months, the Odisha Tourism Department launched the 'Odisha By Road Campaign' to boost the industry.

ODIA PROFESSOR HONOURED WITH SCIENCE AWARD

Professor Jyotirmayee Dash was awarded the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award 2020 in Chemical Sciences. It is the highest award in India in the field of Science and Technology. Dash is the first Odia woman to get the honour. Currently, she is working at the School of Chemical Sciences, Indian Association for the Cultivation of Sciences in Kolkata.

KRUSHI BHAWAN WINS BIG AT AZ AWARDS

Krushi Bhawan in Bhubaneswar has been wowing and inspiring architects and designers ever since its inception. Now, the architectural marvel has added another feather to its cap by winning the People's Choice Award in the Social Good category at the 2020 AZ Awards.

SUMITRA NAYAK REPRESENTS INDIA AT ASIA RUGBY

UNSTOPPABLE CAMPAIGN

Odia rugby star Sumitra Nayak has been selected to represent India at the Asia Rugby Unstoppable campaign. Besides Sumitra, Sandhya Rai of West Bengal and Vahbiz Bharucha of Maharashtra were also part of the Indian contingent at the event.

TIPO MORRIS HONOURS ODIA COVID HERO NILACHALA PARIDA

South African cricketer and Royal Challengers Bangalore star Chris 'Tippo' Morris paid tribute to Bhubaneswar's COVID hero Nilachala Parida by wearing his name on his jersey during the match against Sunrisers Hyderabad on Monday.

INSPIRATIONAL CULINARY LEGACY OF CHEF RAHIM

Much before the food scene of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack started buzzing with young chefs and pâtissiers, Chef Abdul Rahim fondly known as Chef Rahim, had created a legacy that is unparalleled and unmatched in stature. In the world of food he created a unique identity for himself and has his own fan following. He was the earliest Executive Chef of Odisha. Chef Rahim was not trained in any culinary school or did not do a hotel management course but his hands created magic in the kitchen.

BLUE FLAG TAG FOR PURI'S GOLDEN BEACH

In an honour that is going to boost the tourism potential of Odisha, the Golden Beach in Puri received the coveted 'Blue Flag' tag on October 11. The certification was awarded by the Denmark-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) for the stringent environmental norms and world class sustainable tourist amenities at the beach. This important eco-label will aid in the process of making Puri a World Heritage City and a world-class tourist destination.

PURI SRIMANDIR OPENS ON DECEMBER 23

The long wait of devotees of Lord Jagannath came to an end after months of longing to witness their favourite God. The district administration of Puri took the decision to open the 12th century temple for devotees from 23 December, albeit with restrictions. The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration



Blue Flag Beach in Puri



Eco Retreat 2020



Eco Retreat 2019

had already given a go-ahead for opening the 12th-century shrine a few days ago, but it had sent recommendation for final decision to the Government of Odisha.

IN MEMORIAM - PEOPLE WE LOST THIS YEAR

- **Prabir Kumar Pradhan**, senior crime reporter succumbed to COVID-19 infection on November 5.
- **Priyabrata Patnaik**, retired IAS

officer, passed away at a Mumbai hospital on July 21. He was 67.

- **Sushila Devi**, Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal's wife and the First Lady of the state (74) died on November 22.
- **Dr. Sushama Panigrahi**, first woman scientist of ISRO from Odisha passed away this year in Ahmedabad at the age of 67. She died of cancer.
- **Dr. Sanatan Rath**, eminent neu-

rosurgeon and professor, passed away at his residence in Cuttack on July 9. He died of cancer and at the age of 86.

- **Nadiya Bihari Mohanty**, Odia children literature's favourite 'Bada Bhai' died due to COVID 19 in September. He was 90.
- **Minati Mishra**, Odissi dancer passed away on January 6, at Switzerland. She was 91.
- **Prafulla Chandra Ratho**, former Director-General of Odisha Police, IPS, breathed his last at the age of 85 on February 11.
- **Rabindranath Pratihari**, senior sevayat of Jagannath temple of Puri, passed away at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar on September 16. He was 79.
- **Pradeep Maharathy**, former Odisha minister and veteran Biju Janata Dal MLA passed away on October 4, weeks after he tested positive for COVID-19. He was 66.
- **Rudra Prasad**, brilliant video editor and a well-known name in the Odisha Media Industry, died of cardiac arrest at the age of 43. He was found to be positive of COVID-19.
- This year, the PNV family also lost a star of its digital team, **Kamal Mishra**, in a road crash. He was one of the most valued and loved member of our family.■

(With inputs by
Debamitra Mishra)

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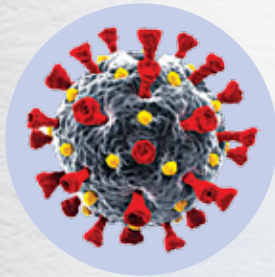


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WORDS THAT ENTERED OUR LEXICON IN 2020

The year 2020 taught us a lot of things as we got used to the idea of staying indoors and away from our loved ones. As the coronavirus spread its tentacles around the world, many words became a part of our lexicon as we learned to use them in our everyday lives. Some were apt while others needed to be updated or modified like 'social distancing'. Even though we continued to stay physically apart from our near and dear ones, we certainly came socially closer through digital devices and the internet. My City Links has assembled a list of the words that became part of our daily usage in 2020



This is an acronym for the disease that is caused by the new coronavirus and it stands for 'Coronavirus Disease 2019'. Although scientists around the world have identified some common symptoms, it is very difficult to identify as in many cases the infected person remains asymptomatic. In cases of people who have a compromised immune system, their health deteriorates fast and it becomes challenging for doctors and healthcare workers to save lives.

Although the word is fairly common and almost everyone has heard or read it somewhere or the other, it became part of our everyday discourse in 2020. The word took on urgent specificity this year after the coronavirus epidemic was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on March 11. Pandemics have happened many times throughout human history, but the current one is unprecedented in nature in terms of scale and impact. The coronavirus pandemic has reached almost every single nation on the planet.

Another commonly used term during the COVID-19 pandemic is 'containment zone'. It is used to describe a geographical area with limited access in or out to contain an outbreak. With the rising number of COVID-19 cases, governments around the world took several measures to put a break on the spread of the virus and demarcation of areas as red, orange, green or containment zone based on the severity of the spread. These containment zones were identified by the Rapid Response Teams (RRT) and created to map the local transmission of the disease and prevent the contagion.

'Quarantine' was one of the most searched words this year. It means something similar to isolation but with stricter protocols. Unlike isolation, quarantine involves separating and restricting the movements of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. Quarantine was imposed on someone who was exposed to COVID-19 to avoid the spread of the disease to others if they get sick. Many countries including India have put in place quarantine facilities to monitor entrants into their territories.

A personal protective equipment (PPE), is a specialised clothing item used as a safeguard against health hazards including exposure to infectious diseases through physical contact or airborne particles. PPEs are designed to protect parts of the body that are typically exposed in normal attire like the face, hands and feet. The World Health Organization (WHO) listed gloves, medical masks, goggles, face shields, gowns, respirators and aprons as parts of PPE.

This mode of remote working became the new norm as offices around the world shut down while nobody had a clue about how to go ahead. This was not a new concept but the COVID 19 pandemic made it universal. This was welcomed by many employees and soon companies started weighing in the option of allowing them to permanently work from home. This became beneficial for both the employers as they could cut down logistical costs and for the employees because they saved a lot of commute time and could spend more time with family. WFH during the pandemic proved without doubt that employees can indeed be trusted to still be productive, even when far.



In the scientific and medical communities, the virus that causes the COVID-19 disease is known as 'Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 or SARS-CoV 2. This virus belongs to the family of coronaviruses (CoV), with this particular strain being novel in nature and previously not identified in humans. On 30 January 2020, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) — WHO's highest level of alarm. At that time there were 98 cases and no deaths in 18 countries outside China.

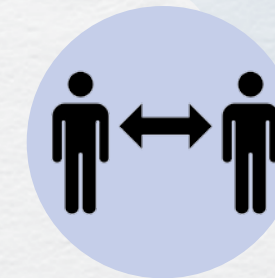
Before 2020, lockdowns were generally initiated in circumstances of violence or terrorism and they happened rarely. This year it came to mean something less intense and much bigger. Entire cities and countries went into lockdown for weeks and months. Just like social distancing, the term had different nuances at different places and at different times. In most of the cases it was an order for people to stay indoors except stepping out to get essential goods and services.

Getting through 2020 required a humongous and heroic effort on the part of many whom we learned to call and respect as essential workers or frontline warriors. These are the ones who kept the world running as we cooped up in our homes through the lockdowns and shutdowns. Healthcare workers, cleaning staff, grocery store employees, transportation workers, postal workers, police and media personnel and many others rose to the occasion and worked tirelessly for the benefit of all.

Sanitizers are used to reduce or eliminate germs. This term started to trend after the WHO guidelines on coronavirus mentioned that washing of hands and regularly using hand sanitizer are important steps for preventing COVID 19. The public was advised to wash their hands with soap for about 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand rub or sanitizer. Today, everyone carries a bottle of sanitizer in their pockets.

This is yet another important term that became part of everyday usage this year. This is also the most wrongly used term this year. It was supposed to mean physical distancing as we continued to be socially as active as ever. As per advisory by the government, social distancing is a non-pharmaceutical infection prevention and control intervention implemented to avoid or decrease contact between those who are infected and those who are not, to stop or slow down the rate and extent of disease transmission in a community. Maintaining physical distance was possible due to the advancement of digital technology and communication over the internet.

Undoubtedly the Zoom app was the most successful business of the year. It came out of obscurity and became the trend of the year. Prior to March, hardly anyone had ever heard of Zoom. Since then, we have all been Zooming for work or for hanging out with friends and family. For those who turn the video facility on, there's an opportunity to entertain yourself by examining your colleagues' taste in interior design.



And The Year That Was

Like many sectors, Odia entertainment industry too bore the brunt of coronavirus. Usually, around 40 Odia films are made in a year but in 2020, only three movies - 'Babu Bhaijan', 'Paradesi Chadhei' and 'Queen' - made it to the theatres

BY JYOTI PRAKASH SAHOO

2020 was an unforgettable year. The Covid-19 pandemic ravaged every sphere of life and posed various hardships that none of us could have ever predicted. It seriously im-

pacted the economy, destroying livelihoods of people across Odisha. Like many sectors, Odia entertainment industry too bore the brunt of coronavirus. Usually, around 40 Odia films are made in a year but in 2020, only three movies - 'Babu Bhaijan', 'Paradesi Chadhei' and 'Queen' - made it to the theatres. 'Babu Bhaijan' starring Arindam and Sivani in lead roles was the first film released this year. In 'Paradesi Chadhei', Ardhendu and Anubha were paired opposite each other while 'Queen' had Varsha Priyadar-sini and Jayjeet sharing the screen space for the first time. Superstar Babusan's film 'Bidyan', which was all set to release on Raja festival this year, was postponed due to the pandemic. Similarly, the release of 'Dil Mora Manena' starring Swaraj Barik and Sivani was cancelled amid the Covid-19 crisis. On the other hand, the pandemic propelled Odia digital entertainment industry into the limelight giving a platform to many budding young talents. While music videos on YouTube are leading the bandwagon, web-series and short films have also started gaining attention. As we move into 2021, here is the recap of



the best and worst of Odia entertainment industry this year.

ACHIEVEMENTS

On December 19, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar announced 23 feature and 20 non-feature films to be showcased in the Indian Panorama section of the 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI). Only one Odia film, 'Kalira Atita' (Yesterday's Past) was selected in the feature film category. The movie, directed by national award winning filmmaker Nila Madhab Panda, is inspired by prophecies of Achyutananda Das, a 16th century saint from Odisha. He had written about the doomsday in his famous book titled 'Achutananda Malika'.

Odia producer Akshay Kumar Parija's 'Paika Bidroha' (Paika Rebellion) won the Special Jury Award at 9th Mumbai International Short Film Festival this year. The film is based on the Paika rebellion which took place in Odisha in 1817. It was an armed rebellion led by Paika leader Buxi Jagabandhu against the then British East India Company's rule.

'Human O.A.K', a 15-minute short film produced during the peak of Covid-19 outbreak, was jointly produced by Odisha-born internationally acclaimed producer Jitendra Mishra and renowned Italian filmmaker Ulisse Lendaro. It premiered at the prestigious Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People, Greece in the competition section.

'Abhilash', an Odia short film based on the Covid-19 lockdown, was screened at Cannes International Film Festival in France. The film, which is helmed by Director of Nrutya Kala Gabesana Kendra Guru Krishna Chandra Sahu, entered the final round of selection by the juries of nine countries.

Odia cinematographer Subhranshu Das won applause for his outstanding work in the recently released web film 'Ram Singh Charlie'. The film, starring Divya Dutta and Kumud Mishra in lead roles, is currently streaming on SonyLiv.

Odia filmmaker Susant Misra's Hindi film titled 'Josef - Born in Grace' won silver Remi award in the Christian Feature Film category at the 53rd WorldFest in Houston. The movie also bagged the Best Set Design award



ODIA PRODUCER AKSHAY KUMAR PARIJA'S 'PAIKA BIDROHA' (PAIKA REBELLION) WON THE SPECIAL JURY AWARD AT 9TH MUMBAI INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL THIS YEAR. THE FILM IS BASED ON THE PAIKA REBELLION WHICH TOOK PLACE IN ODISHA IN 1817

at Madrid International Film Festival, 2020. The set for the film was designed by Odisha-born celebrated Bollywood art director Sukant Panigrahi.

Ram Gopal Varma's 'Thriller' featured two actors from Odisha - Apsara Rani and Rock Kacchi in lead roles. On July 10, RGV intro-



duced his new heroine Apsara through a series of tweets claiming that he had never thought of Odisha as a talent hub for the film industry. He changed Anketa Maharana's name to Apsara Rani for this movie.

Released on Disney+ Hotstar on June 19, 'Aarya' was not only a web series debut for Sushmita Sen but also for two-time national award winning sound designer Subhash Sahoo from Odisha. The series got huge appreciation from the audience.

Singer Sona Mohapatra's

documentary 'Shut Up Sona' was screened at the world's biggest documentary film festival 'Hot Docs Festival' on May 28 in Toronto. In view of the coronavirus pandemic, the festival authorities decided to celebrate the spirit of movie-making and filmmakers through multi-platform 'festival-at-home'.

Bollywood singer and Odia girl Lisa Mishra's song 'Sajna Ve' featured in Lady Gaga's charitable show 'One World: Together at Home' to raise funds for relief operations for coronavirus. Marking Odisha's contribution to the noble cause, Lisa's song was telecast for around 1 hour 35 minutes at the virtual concert. The 'Taarefan' singer shot this song at her grandparent's house in Bhubaneswar where she was residing during the nationwide lockdown.

Odisha-born Nihar Ranjan Sarmal added another feather in his cap by winning the Filmfare Award in Best Sound Design category for the movie 'Uri: The Surgical



Strike'. While 65th Amazon Filmfare Awards 2020 is slated to be held in Guwahati (Assam) on February 15 next year, the results of technical and short film awards for this year were declared on February 2. Nihar has earlier worked as a sound designer for Bollywood hits 'Padmavat', 'Bajirao Mastani', 'PK', 'Pink', 'Three Idiots' and 'Tanu Weds Manu Returns'. He had also won the National Award for Best Audiography for on-location sound recording for 'Madras Cafe' (2013) at the 61st National Film Awards.

It was a twin delight for Odisha as two movies by filmmakers of the State made it to the 344 eligible feature films list for the 2019 awards announced by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Besides 'Josef - Born in Grace' by Susant Misra, 'The Last Color' produced by Titlagarh-born Jitendra Mishra made it to the race for Oscars in the best picture category. 'The Last Color' starring Nee-na Gupta is the directorial debut of celebrity chef Vikas Khanna and is based on his bestselling book. The first look of the film was launched during the Cannes Film Festival in 2018.



The year 2020 was cruel to the entire world, especially Ollywood. The Odia film industry lost some of its stalwarts this year.

Legendary lyricist, playwright and screenwriter Bijay Mishra passed away on April 26. He was 83. Mishra was the recipient of several awards including Jaydev Award, State Sahitya Academy Award (1968, 1988), Konark Samman (1994), Kendra Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the Odisha Sahitya Akademi Award.

Veteran Ollywood Actor Bijay Mohanty passed away at the age of 70 in a private hospital on July 20. He was suffering from a heart ailment. Mohanty had acted in a number of Odia films including 'Naga Phasa', 'Samay Bada Balaban', 'Danda Balunga', 'Sahari Bagha', 'Chaka Bhaunri' and 'Chaka Akhi Sabu Dekhuchi'. He had joined the drama department of the Utkal Sangeet Ma-

ANUBHAV MOHANTY'S POST PLEADING SALMAN KHAN TO LIKE HIS PICTURE DIDN'T GO DOWN WELL WITH THE NETIZENS WHO TROLLED THE ACTOR-CUM-POLITICIAN. HE ALSO COURTED CONTROVERSY WHEN HIS WIFE BARSHA FILED A CASE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST HIM AT THE SDJM COURT IN CUTTACK.

against Ollywood actor Pintu Nanda and two of his associates for allegedly demanding sexual favours from a woman in return for being cast in films. The FIR was registered after the woman lodged a complaint with Nayapalli Police. Pintu rubbished the allegations as baseless and fabricated.

Anubhav Mohanty's post pleading Salman Khan to like his picture didn't go down well with the netizens who trolled the actor-cum-politician.

Anubhav also courted controversy when his wife Barsha Priyadarshini filed a case of domestic violence against him at the SDJM court in Cuttack. Anubhav had earlier filed a divorce petition in a family court in Delhi. The matter doesn't seem like settling down any time soon as both of them are bringing fresh allegations against each other though their cases are pending in various courts in Delhi and Cuttack.

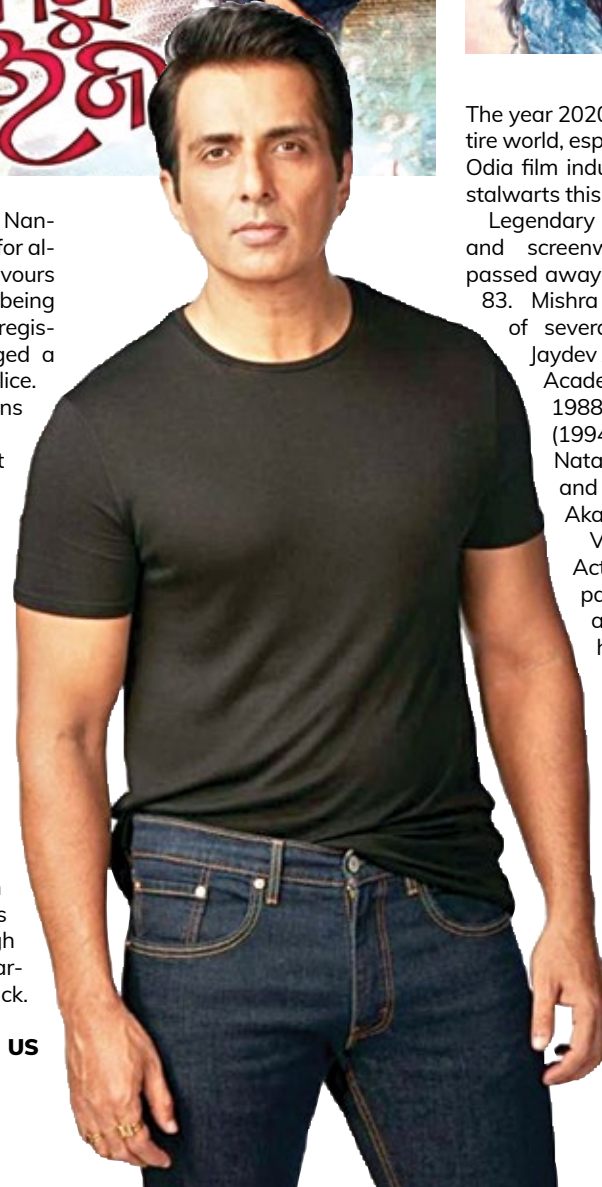
CELEBRITIES WHO BID US GOODBYE IN 2020

Two Odias Abhishek Tripathy and Priyabrata Panigrahi were praised for doing the sync sound recording for one of the most talked-about web series 'Mirzapur'.

CONTROVERSIES

Ram Gopal Varma was trolled on Twitter for his ignorance about Odisha which did not go down well with the Odias. Besides, his film 'Thriller' landed him in trouble on the day of its release as Hindu Ekta Bahini lodged a complaint with Narayangpur Police alleging that the trailer of the movie hurt religious sentiments.

Police lodged a complaint



havidyalaya and had retired as a professor from the institute.

Another stalwart of Odia film industry Ajit Das breathed his last on September 13. He was 71. A former head of department of drama at Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, Das was admitted to hospital after testing positive for Covid-19. An alumnus of National School of Drama (NSD), Das acted in over 60 Odia films and produced many plays. His first film as a protagonist was 'Megha Mukti'. His major films include 'Sankha Mahuri', 'Tunda Baaida', 'Balidan', 'Golamgiri', 'Ama Ghara', 'Maa', 'Suna Chadhei', 'Mu Sapanara Saudagara', 'Nandini I Love You', 'Dhana re Rakhibu Sapatha Mora', 'Jaga Hatara Pagha', 'Luchakali' and 'Mukhya Mantri'. He also received critical acclaim for 'Hakim Babu' in the early 80s.

Deepa Sahoo aka the album queen who was much loved by Odias across the State, passed away on July 27 at the age of 37. She was battling with cancer. Some of her hit album tracks include 'Mast Mast', 'Tana Tana Akhi', 'Hai Hai To Mali Phula Gajara', 'Krushna Chuda Ranga Ra Nali Odhani' and 'Tora Lamba Beni'. The actress has also acted in a number of serials. She made her debut in Ollywood in the film 'Nari Akhi Re Nian'.

Famous Jatra (opera) artiste Mahendra Das, popularly known as Viku Seth, passed away at his residence in Choudwar on September 12. He was 55. The Jollywood actor, who played negative characters throughout his career, ruled the stage for over 30 years. He shot to fame with his dialogue 'Na Ta Tahale Mina, Bhala Nachila' in the super hit play 'Saguna Basichi Dena Malei'. He had also essayed a negative character in Odia film 'Jashoda'.

Veteran stage artist and Ollywood comedian Jimuta Patnaik passed away at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar on November 22. He was 62. A renowned television artist, Patnaik was recently seen in tv serial 'Mahadevi'. This apart, he also acted in several teleserials like 'Katha Kahuthila Saribani', 'Maa', 'Sindura' and 'Laxmi Purana'. His role as Narada in 'Laxmi Purana' was highly appreciated.

STARS WHO WALKED DOWN THE AISLE THIS YEAR

Ollywood actress Jhilik Bhattacha-

rjee tied the knot with Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MLA Pritiranjana Gharai on March 11. The marriage ceremony was attended by the couple's close relatives only.

Popular stand-up comedian and content creator Biswa Kalyan Rath got married to television and film actor Sulagna Panigrahi on December 9.

Ollywood singer Diptirekha Padhi got married to Soumya Ranjan Satapathy of Khurda in a low key affair on December 12.

REAL LIFE HEROES

In real life, actors often get to play the roles of messiah who rescue people in distress. But Ollywood actor Sabyasachi Mishra and Bollywood star Sonu Sood turned out to be heroes in real life by turning Good Samaritans for thousands of people stranded due to the

Covid-19 lockdown.

Sonu Sood also launched an initiative to help people rendered jobless during the Covid-19 pandemic. Under the initiative 'Khud Kamaao Ghar Chalao', the actor gifted e-rickshaws to jobless people. Earlier, he had launched the 'Pravasi Rojgar' app, a platform which provided 50,000 job opportunities to the unemployed.

During the nationwide lockdown, both the actors had arranged transportation to ferry stranded migrant workers home. They also distributed food packets and other essential items among the needy.

Veteran Odia filmmaker Manmohan Mohapatra died at a hospital in Bhubaneswar on January 13 following prolonged illness. He was 69. Winner of several National Awards, Mohapatra was undergo-

ing treatment at a private hospital where he breathed his last. Born in 1951, Mohapatra studied filmmaking at FTII in Pune and made his first short film, 'Anti-Memoirs', in 1975. His first film 'Sita Rati' as a director in 1976 won him the National Film Award for the Best Feature Film in Odia. Mohapatra won eight consecutive National Awards for his films 'Nisiddha Swapna', 'Majhi Pahacha', 'Klanta Aparanaha', 'Niraba Jhada', 'Sita Rati' and 'Bhinnna Samaya'. 'Niraba Jhada' has also won a National Award.

Mohapatra has also directed a few Hindi films, including 'Bits and Pieces' starring Nandita Das, Rahul Bose and Dia Mirza. He received the Best Director Award for Odia film 'Bhija Matira Swarga'. The veteran filmmaker had also directed documentaries — Voices of Silence and Konrak: The Sun Temple. ■

Carving A Niche For Herself In The Digital Landscape



My City Links catches up with Vrushali Pradhan, founder of Bizydale Technology, based out of Bengaluru, to know more about her journey. Married to an Odia, Vrushali plans to open an office branch in Odisha soon

BY SHEELA PATTANAYAK

ONCE less trodden, the long road to women empowerment now has more travellers. Women have made incredible advances in various fields and disrupted the status quo with hard work, strong determination and innovative ideas. One such woman is entrepreneur Vrushali Pradhan, founder of Bizydale Technology, that operates in the field of digital transformation.

Married to an Odia, Vrushali, despite facing several challenges, has moved ahead towards her goal and created her own identity with unbridled enthusiasm. Although her company headquarters is based out of Bengaluru, she is planning to have a branch in Odisha very soon.

My City Links catches up with the young entrepreneur to know about her successful journey.

How and where did it all start?

I was born in a small town of Maharashtra called Teosa. I completed my schooling there and for intermediate and graduation, I went to Amaravati. I was always a self-determined, passionate and open-minded person. I wanted to do things that were considered difficult for girls hailing from small towns. I was average in studies but adept in striking conversations and convincing people. This led me to pursue my career as a sales professional.

From sales professional to an entrepreneur, how did the shift happen?

I started my career as an automotive sales professional. I had more than a decade of experience in service, sales and customer support when the



Being a woman in a male-dominated sector, I had to make a breakthrough in order to establish a brand name and thrive in the technology industry. Besides, I faced financial and time management issues

VRUSHALI PRADHAN
FOUNDER, BIZYDALE TECHNOLOGY

change happened. I was working for Mercedes Benz when I met my husband Satyajit Pradhan who was all set to start a new venture in product, technology and operation. I shared my ideas with him which he instantly liked. Then we both joined hands to start the project and I got a chance to nurture my entrepreneurial dream.

Tell us something about your product and how it is different from others?

Bizydale Nets is a new-age tech powerhouse and the best reach for digital transformation. Our products in augmented reality, virtual reality with a blend of artificial intelligence (AI) are designed to make businesses stand unique and have a deeper penetration in the market.

Being a successful female entrepreneur, what is your vision for other women in the field?

If you see our company, the ratio of men to women stands at 60:40. Being a woman, I personally give pri-



ority to girls and feel they are very sincere in their work. But we never discriminate on the basis of gender; we give equal opportunity to both. In future, we are going to establish a branch office here in Odisha and there are plans to create more opportunities for Odia girls.

What are the major challenges you faced during your journey as an entrepreneur?

Being a woman in a male-dominated sector, I had to make a breakthrough in order to establish a brand name and thrive in the technology industry. Besides, I faced financial and time management issues as I and my husband Satyajit left our lucrative jobs to establish the start-up. However, we managed to overcome the challenges and reach our goal.

What are the keys to success?

I believe in the 3P formula, that is persistence, perseverance and patience. These three elements can



Vrushali Pradhan and Satyajit Pradhan



help us to march towards success. I also believe in self-confidence, dedication and passion towards your job and work.

What is your message to aspiring women entrepreneurs?

A woman should believe in her strength and power in order to achieve excellence. In most cases, women do not have any idea about their true abilities and hence lack self-confidence. This holds them back both in their professional and personal life. So women should first believe in themselves.

Apart from being an entrepreneur, you are also a successful wife and daughter-in-law. How do you manage both?

It is actually a tough job to juggle between both. But in my case, I was able to manage it due to the support of my husband, in-laws and my professional team. This apart, since I am focused towards my work, I make a work schedule every day and to manage time. I always try to finish the work on the same day and do not keep it pending for the next day. This is how I manage my daily routine. ■

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products that will keep our bond stronger.

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During this time of the pandemic, we must stay together for everyone and not lose faith.

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RUCHI is always by your side to enhance your taste. RUCHI wishes you a happy and healthy festive season. Happy New Year from our family to yours!



Have A Healthy Winter, Here's How

In winter, not only the skin, but our entire body requires extra nourishment and care. And drinking lots of water, regular workouts and proper diet are the three simple mantras to keep our health system up and running during the cold days

BY DEBAMITRA MISHRA

IT'S a misconception that profuse sweating leads to more fat loss and fitness. This stops many people from working out in winters.

"This mindset needs to be changed. Sweating is not an indicator of a good workout or fat loss," asserts Bhubaneswar-based fitness enthusiast and coach, Priyanka Singhdeo.

"Sweat is a physiological reaction of our body to keep the temperature at an optimum level of 98.6°C. It's just water with some minerals; there is no fat in the chemical composition," she clarifies.

At the same time, Priyanka adds, it's vital to keep our body hydrated by drinking plenty of water. "And since it is winter, we can also try sipping something lukewarm, it could be green tea, soup or just some water with a little lemon in it. This is vital to maintain a fluid balance in our body," she adds.

Explaining the science behind it, she says, "Our kidneys function in a reverse osmosis process where they have to be consistently wetter than that of the blood. Otherwise, they won't do any filtration job and our blood will be left impure, leading to a lot of health issues. So just imagine how much important water is in our life."

She advises that a daily intake of 4-5 litres is the recommended amount. "At times though, it's difficult to maintain this cycle. But if we start consciously having water, our body will adjust in a week or two. It could then become a habit from there," she adds.

Stay In Shape

Talking about habits, we can't deny that regular workout feels like a painful task in winter and lazily curled up under a warm blanket or quilt is so much more preferable.

But that is exactly one must not give indulgence to, warns Priyanka. "As the winter cold sets in, you might find your workout routine disrupted by chilly winds or icy conditions. Though it's more tempting to stay home and curl up under a blanket, you need to keep moving all winter long," she says, adding, "It will help you stay in shape and be better prepared for the forthcoming spring."

And there are health benefits too. "Regular workouts can help fend off cold and flu, burn off that holiday weight and keep you happy and upbeat even when you miss the sunshine."

For the more enthusiastic who miss out on going to gyms due to the cold weather, she recommends full body workout at home like climbing stairs, jumping jacks,





Eat small portions. Use a smaller plate, weigh portions on a scale, or check then nutrition facts label for details about serving sizes

PRIYANKA SINGHDEO
FITNESS COACH/ENTHUSIAST

mountain climbers, burpees, jumping rope, high knees, inch worms, push-ups, pull-ups, planks, squats, chair dips, lunges, calf raises and even Yoga.

For others, she prescribes gardening, going for regular walks, playing a game, starting a dance club with friends, or even walking to the grocery store or work or just playing around with kids. "The important thing is try to hit at least 10,000 steps daily," she says.

MIND YOUR FOOD

Exercise is alright, but what about the craving for junk food during winter? And the sugary delights during the festive season to boot.

Priyanka admits that eating habits become irregular during winter. "During this season, people often crave for sugary and fatty foods. All those crisp 'pakodas' along with hot cups of tea become a daily affair. And winter being a festive season and time for celebration, we often keep pushing our goals to eat healthy."

After all, she quips, people hardly realize that staying fit isn't just a goal, but a lifestyle. "So it becomes even more important for us to be extra conscious of not hogging upon anything that comes in front of us, but rather try to make healthy choices."

And what are the healthy



food choices? Priyanka replies, "Opt for some less oily stuff. In fact, half of your plate should be made of fruits and veggies. Winter is a season of vegetables and fruits, so we must take an advantage of that. Besides, try to reach out to more protein rich food as Indian diets are mostly carb dominant. So we always have to make an extra effort to get a good protein sources."

"Eat small portions. Use a smaller plate, weigh portions on a scale, or check then nutrition facts label for details about serving sizes," she adds.

The fitness enthusiast says that are many ways to experiment with food, but it's equally important to be conscious of what we are putting in our mouth. "Every little thing



Priyanka Singhdeo (Fitness coach/enthusiast)

matters, be it a cookie or a bite of anything. They all add up to the calories that we consume and the entire fat loss or weight loss process is based upon just one formula: calorie in lesser than calorie out."

REST & SLEEP

Priyanka rounds off by advising

that good rest is an essential addition to these healthy habits. "Sleep well for at least 7-8 hours. If, however, you are unable to get in that much of sleep due to your work schedule, try to catch some power naps. This is because feeling rested and de-stressed help a lot in maintaining a good healthy life." ■

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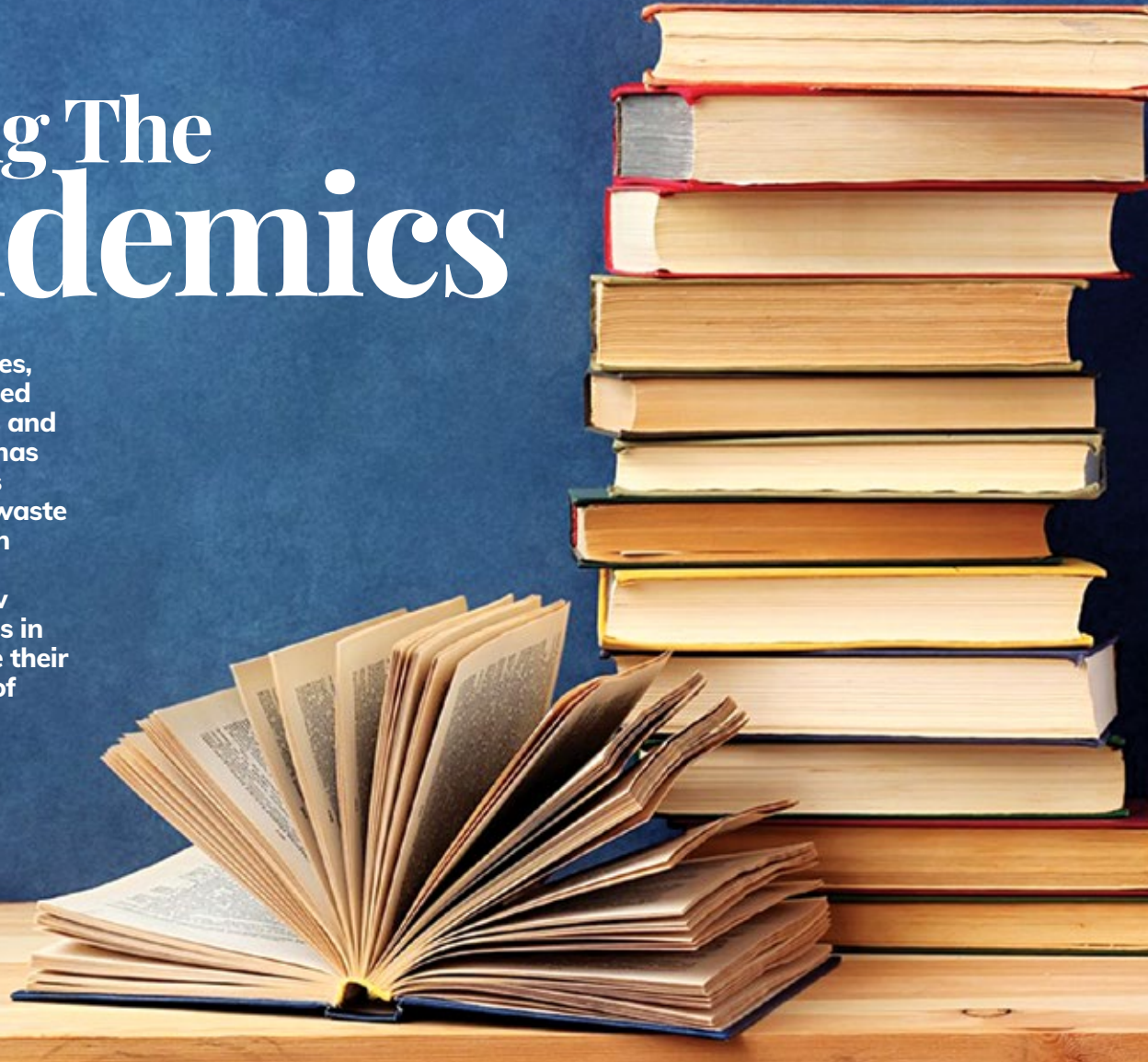


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Penning The Pandemics

Since prehistoric times, man has been afflicted by diseases, plagues and pestilences. History has witnessed numerous outbreaks that laid waste to many a civilization and great empires. Here's a peep at how these darkest periods in human history made their way into the pages of literature



BY SAKTI SEKHAR DASH

TIME and again, history has witnessed devastating outbreaks that have claimed millions of lives and changed the course of human civilisations.

In classical antiquity, the common belief prevailed that diseases and pestilences were caused by the wrath of the gods. In Greece, the causes were ascribed to Apollo, who shot arrows or darts among the people to cause the illness.

In Homer's The Iliad, Apollo sends a pestilence among the Greek host fighting against Troy by shooting arrows carrying the plague. It's described as first affecting animals

and then assumes the characteristics of an epidemic, when it starts claiming the lives of humans.

Sophocles is another notable literary figure who narrated an outbreak in his works. In Oedipus Rex, the city of Thebes is sorely afflicted by a plague. In this Greek tragedy, the king of Thebes, Oedipus, is made the scapegoat. The plague is ascribed to his sinful conduct and he is exiled from the land to supplicate the gods.

In Indian myths and religion, the God Rudra has been described in the Atharva Veda as causing plagues and pestilences in a manner similar to that of the Greek Apollo. The Atharva Veda contains the invocations, which describes the manner in which the God Rudra causes plagues among men and

animals.

Likewise, the Book of Psalms also narrates the causation of plagues and pestilences by the arrows or darts sent by God. The 91st Psalm composed by Moses, describes the manner in which the Lord sends the plagues among the people. It is eerily similar to the Homeric and Vedic descriptions.

On the other hand, Athenian general and historian Thucydides took a critical and objective approach in his first-hand documentation of the plague that broke out in Athens sometime around 411 BC.

His work, History of the Peloponnesian War strives to provide a realistic portrayal of the situation and circumstances prevailing in Athens, when the plague broke out. Despite belonging to a period when religion

played an integral role in the lives of the Athenians, Thucydides' work is unaffected by religious overtones. He tries to provide a rational and logical description of the Athenian plague, without letting religious and superstitious beliefs affect his better judgement.

Perhaps, no disaster or calamity has affected human society, art and literature as much as the Black Death. It had a traumatic effect on Europe, and this was reflected in the works of Bocaccio, Petrarch and Chaucer, the foremost literary figures of the day.

Bocaccio's The Decameron revolves consists of 100 stories narrated by seven young ladies and three young men. They have taken refuge in a secluded villa in the countryside, in a bid to escape the

plague that was raging in the city of Florence. Despite being a fictional work, Bocaccio dwells on the havoc wrought by the Black Death in Florence and the neighbouring regions and the chaotic scenes that emerged.

Bocaccio's narrative is shocking, as he goes to great lengths to describe the apathy and callousness of the people during the outbreak. At the same time, the outbreak is moving in its description of the sufferings of the people. The nature of the personal losses suffered by Petrarch was reflected in his writings.

Daniel Defoe was also profoundly affected by the Great Plague of London that broke out in the year 1665 AD. Defoe's A Journal of the Plague Year is a semi-fictional work that describes the experiences of a man who had witnessed the Great Plague of London. Defoe goes into great details to describe the events in a chronological and accurate manner. Likewise, Samuel Pepys also witnessed the Great Plague of London, and he recorded the disaster in his diary.

In 20th century, the world wit-

nessed one of the worst pandemics to affect mankind. Dubbed as the Spanish influenza, it claimed over 20 million lives, and infected more than 500 million people across the world.

The Spanish flu has been the subject of Katherine Anne Porter's work. Pale Horse, Pale Rider is apocalyptic in its vision as Katherine Anne Porter narrates the nature of human relationships during the time of pandemic. The story revolves around Miranda, a newspaper woman who falls in love with a soldier, Adam. As the story progresses, Miranda is taken ill with the Spanish Flu. Fortunately, she recovers, but is distraught to find that Adam has died of the disease. Porter's novella documents the extreme sense of anxiety and uncertainty that accompanied the outbreaks.

She writes, "No more war, no more plague, only the dazed silence that follows the ceasing of the heavy guns; noiseless houses with shades drawn, empty streets, the dead cold light of tomorrow. Now there would be time for everything."

The novella Pale Horse, Pale

IN INDIAN MYTHS AND RELIGION, THE GOD RUDRA HAS BEEN DESCRIBED IN THE ATHARVA VEDA AS CAUSING PLAGUES AND PESTILENCES IN A MANNER SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE GREEK APOLLO

Rider doesn't just end on a note of despair and anguish, it ends on a note of sheer hopelessness, where the entire humanity is confronted by a world on the verge of the apocalypse.

What Porter has envisioned, Emily St. John Mandel has taken it further in her novel, Station Eleven. She presents a post-apocalyptic world, ravaged and destroyed by "Georgia Flu". She addresses some of the key issues that emerged in the society during the outbreaks. She does not shy away from representing the religious cults and fanaticism that societies witnessed. Mandel presents a terrifying post-apocalyptic world, in which the fabric of human civilization has disintegrated. It is a chaotic world, where the trappings

of a civilized human society have fallen apart.

In Spanish Lady, George Kohn narrates, "It (the Spanish flu) struck military bases throughout Europe, putting tens of thousands of British, French, German, and other soldiers out of action. The British called it 'Flanders grippe', and the Germans named it 'Blitz Katarrh'. In Paris and in French seaports like Brest, death rates from the sickness began to mount ominously in 1918, and at the same time acute respiratory infections suddenly began to be noticed at military installations in the United States. By October 1918, some U.S. Army camps were reporting a death every hour, and Britain then was counting 2,000 deaths per week, with London at about 300 deaths per week. Country after country felt the ravages of the disease..." ■



Sakti Sekhar Dash, Research Scholar at Dept. Of English, Ravenshaw University

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BY DEBAMITRA MISHRA

Ghazal Is Eternal As Love, Says Ranjeet Rajwada

In an exclusive conversation with My City Links, the 'Prince of Ghazal' spoke about his musical sojourn and beyond

GHAZAL will continue to win hearts as long as poetry and love exist, feels Ranjeet Rajwada. For Ranjeet, a renowned Ghazal singer, this form of poetic expression is eternal as love. In an exclusive interview with My City Links during his recent visit to Odisha, the 'Prince of Ghazal' speaks about his tryst with this ancient form of poetry and his musical journey.

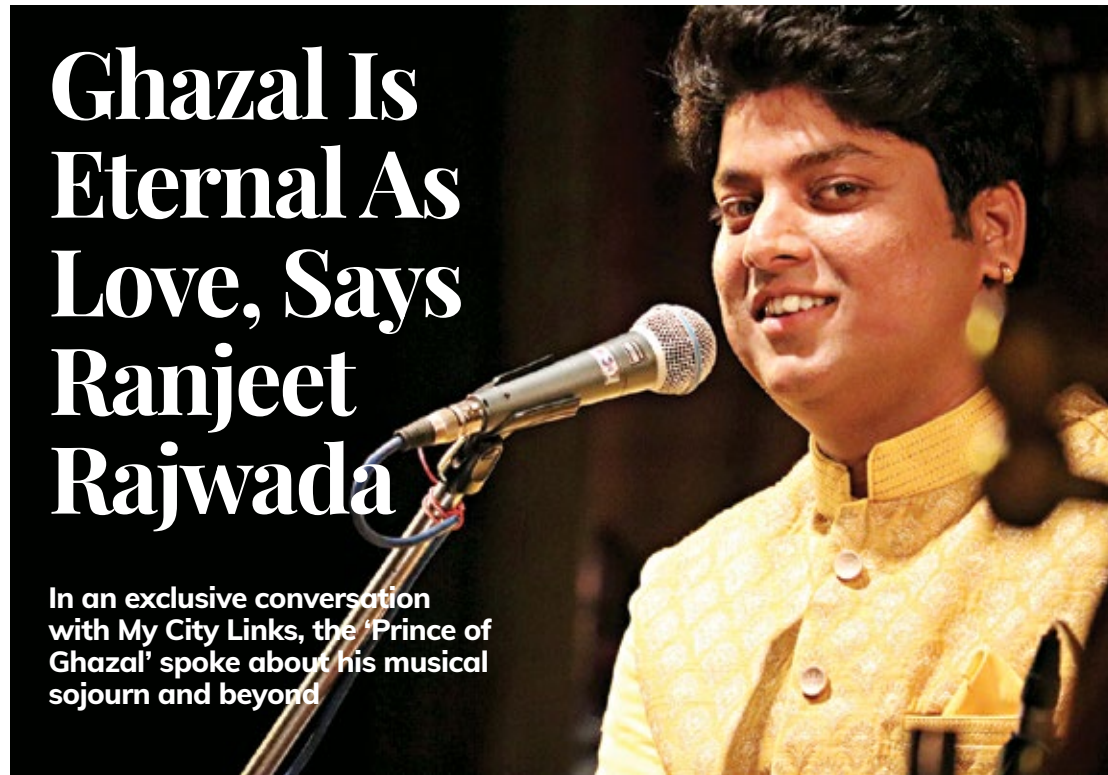
Ranjeet's musical sojourn began at the age of 5. He received his initial training from his father Mahesh Rajwada who is also a Ghazal singer. "My father is my first Guru. His teachings and principles have made me what I am today. He polished me like a goldsmith. Mine is a family of artists. The environment in which I grew up has always worshipped music, especially Ghazal. Since I was familiar with the stage and live performances from my childhood, I never felt nervous while singing in front of a crowd. Most importantly, I got the opportunity to listen to beautiful

renditions of Ghazal when I was a kid and this probably reflected in my singing when I grew up," said Ranjeet, a recipient of President Award in 2005.

The young Ghazal maestro has also won the best singer award from none other than the legendary musician AR Rahman. Besides, he has received radio's best award

from Pt Ajay Chakravarty.

Ranjeet shot into fame through singing reality show 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa'. "After 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa', people started to identify me and my



My father is my first Guru. His teachings and principles have made me what I am today. He polished me like a goldsmith

RANJEET RAJWADA
GHAZAL SINGER

talent. I feel fortunate that I was able to contribute to promotion of Ghazal at the global level," he said.

Shedding light about reality shows, Ranjeet said, "It depends on which reality show an artiste is participating in. There are many shows that have given recognition to some great talents. Every show has a different format. 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa' became the first reality show to support Ghazal on a live platform that featured me. I was skeptical about the response until I performed 'Chupke Chupke'. This performance brought me a worldwide recognition. Social media was not that popular then and I was getting wishes only through mails. My love for Ghazals was genuine and when I was given the title 'Prince of Ghazal', I was overwhelmed and

felt that a nomad like me finally got a destination."

"When I appeared in 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa', people started to find an interest in Ghazals. But there were not many singers who dabbled in this genre. People wanted to listen to more Ghazal singers. This genre had a particular kind of audience and hence, I was appreciated," he informed.

In 2016, Forbes India featured Ranjeet in '30 under 30'. "I was aloof of the fact that Forbes was such a huge brand until the day it featured me. When I researched about it, I realised that it was a great achievement. I later came to know that one of the judges in 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa', Durga Jasraj had recommended my name to Forbes India," Ranjeet informed.

Speaking about his musical tours and

fanbase, the singer said, "I mostly travel to USA for music tours. What pleases me the most is the love of the audience towards Ghazal and their understanding of the music? I believe music is one universal language. It binds all including the Indian audience though it has a different attachment because of patriotism."

Ranjeet further informs that one and a half years back, he was on a tour to Poland. "Everyone in my audience was from Poland and none from India. To my surprise, all of them were listening to my songs so keenly. This impressed me very much," he said.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought a

digital shift and Ghazal is no exception. "Social media is playing a crucial role when it comes to globalising the art form and getting connected with fans. Earlier, it was a difficult task, but now it's just a click away. You get to explore a lot on virtual platform. Personally, social media has empowered me a lot and YouTube has been a great blessing. I am using this platform to bring quality singing to the audience. The evolution from CDs to YouTube has been a long way. I think this pandemic has been a blessing in disguise for singers like me," Ranjeet opined.

In the era of remakes and remixes, the worth of original creations is disappearing. The singer said, "Fusion is where we bring 3-4 things together to create something new and beautiful without losing the originality. But it's pointless if the output is not than what is expected."

About criticism, Ranjeet believes that an artiste should always pick up good things from criticism to learn something new. "Negativity is everywhere, so an artiste should not get into it," he signed off. ■



mycitylinks

MOVING AHEAD...TOGETHER

FLASH BACK 2020

THE YEAR IN WHICH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HELD THE WORLD IN A GRABBY GRIP HAS ALSO LEFT BEHIND SOME MEMORIES TO CHERISH

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Casual



Bohemian



Casual



Casual

Now that you're getting out of your house and pyjamas after so long, you will want to wear outfits that make you look like you and help you combat the chilly days at the same time

BY PRIYANKA
PRIYADARSHINI

WINTER is around the corner, and so is the time to re-embrace the fashionista in you. We have arrived at that time of 2020, where we are adjusting to the 'new normal' and meeting our colleagues, friends, and family outside the virtual space. And now that you're getting out of your house and pyjamas after so long, you will want to wear outfits that make you look like you and help you combat the chilly days at the same time.

Nothing can make you feel more like you than an outfit that speaks

The Trendiest Winter Outfit Ideas To Experiment With!



Classic



Punk



Classic

volumes of your choice of style. My City Links has listed the trendiest clothing pieces to experiment with this winter. All for a fashionable winter!

CASUAL
Keeping it free and easy.
If you are going for a laid back or casual look this winter, pick a denim jacket or a puffer jacket and pair it up with leggings, and cling on to your comfortable hi-top sneakers. Over-sized pullovers tucked in jeans are another way to go and are so in trend. Finally, add the right beanie to complete the outfit.
Lopamudra Beuria, a Bhu-

baneswar-based fashion designer, says that in the wintry season, everyone should wear something that makes them feel cosy and trendy at the same time. She gives us two outfit ideas to pull off this winter - "pullovers over mini-skirt with stockings and sneakers for footwear and formal pants with crop tops, paired with a denim jacket and boots."

CLASSIC
Keeping it prime and perfect
If you are looking for something more classic, pull out any turtleneck top or sweater from your wardrobe and wear a coat or a double-breasted blazer over it. For the pants, choose skinny warmers, and for the shoes, pick block heel loafers or heeled boots. Wrap a classic plain scarf to complement the outfit.

STREET STYLE
Keeping it contemporary and comfy
Streetstyle is the best to pick if you are opting for a 'regular' look. So, if you are into streetwear, which is a combination of both chic and casual elements, you can select from multiple options. Pair up, front open sweaters or oversized cable-knit cropped sweaters with cropped frayed jeans and heeled boots if you prefer street casual. Or, you can go for the classic long duster or a coat and layer it up underneath, with



Bohemian

plain shirts and crop tops. Finally, put on a straight pant and ankle-high boots or shoes.

Jaya Jaysudha, an undergraduate student from Bhubaneswar, says, "I have always loved to wear something that's comfortable and stylish, and I like to experiment with my clothes before going anywhere. During winters, I try to use my old jackets and sweaters to build an outfit. I have tried pairing my old front open knit sweater on a plain shirt. I buttoned it at the end and let the shirt's collar out and cuffs loose. I paired it up with old jeans and boots, and surprisingly it all came together."



Street

PUNK STYLE
Keeping it bold and beautiful
If your style is more punk or grunge, a leather jacket is a forever trend for you. You can go for oversized bombers too. Tights of different types under ripped jeans, shorts, and skirts are a rage right now when it comes to punk style. Now add a crop top and high and heavy boots to the mix, and there, you got an outfit.



Punk



Chic



Sporty



Vintage



Chic



Sporty

CHIC
Keeping it spiffy and sharp

If you want to beat the cold, looking effortlessly chic and debonair, animal, or check print cardigans over a crop or tank top paired with skinny jeans and boots is the look for you. This outfit is just the right amount of style and comfy put together. If you want to make a statement with your attire that sets perfectly for the entire day, jackets paired with high waist leather pants is the trend for you. Throw in some accessories and pick sock boots or high heeled booties to go with it.

Swoyamprava Puhan, a fashion design student from Bhubaneswar, says, "Check print coats and over-sized knit sweaters in the shade of nude are here to stay. You can try different looks with winter wear. If your style

on a coat and a pair of heels."

VINTAGE
Keeping it alluring and ageless

If you love vintage fashion, grab a pleated skirt or a gored skirt, pair it up with a full sleeve body fit sweater and throw in a statement belt or a fitted blazer to complete the look. If you want to keep it simple this winter, pair a bishop sleeve crop knit sweater with straight jeans and put on sneakers.

BOHEMIAN
Keeping it hip and happening

Capes and artsy ponchos are the trends to follow if your style is all

about being boho. Add them to your outfit made out of straight denim and a plain top or knitted sweater. You can also achieve the bohemian look with an over-sized waist-length boho printed jacket on your favourite tent dress. Add a statement purse and boots to the outfit.

SPORTY
Keeping it jaunty and trendy

Finally, if athleisure outfits work best for you, then pick a short-cropped bomber jacket or a puffer or a ski jacket, and add it to your sports outdoor and close the deal with running sneakers.

Winter need not be more about saving yourself from cold than dressing up for the season. There's a lot to choose from if you are into fashionable winter outfits. Lopamudra Beuria says that one can put modish pieces together to create a look that fits, and people who are into winter fashion should experiment with colours, both deep and neutral shades. She says that one can also take up shawls or stoles and add them in a creative way to their outfit.

Pick something that saves you from the bleak weather, but also make sure that you don't get smothered by too many layers. Pick from the trendiest pieces of the season and flaunt your style. But make sure you take precautions when you walk out the door this winter, and no matter what you wear, don't leave your mask behind. ■



LOS JOVENES CLINILOGIC AND THE MAGIC OF ADVANCED DERMACEUTICALS

When it comes to the art of living a healthy life, Los Jovenes Clinilogic Pvt. Ltd. is one of the pioneers and beacons in the domain of healthy skin, hair and wellness. The clinic was founded by Dr Lita Mohapatra on December 2, 2018 and the company was formed in June 2019. Los Jovenes Clinilogic draws expertise of doctors and experts which includes Aesthetic/Cosmetic Dermatologists, Endocrinologists, General Medicine Practitioners, Pediatricians and many more to cater to all your health and wellness needs.

Dr Lita Mohapatra is a fellow in Aesthetic Medicine and Cosmetic Dermatology who has made her presence felt in the skin and hair treatment space with a meteoric rise in a short span of time. She has honed her skills through medical practice in India and Australia after graduating from Maharaja Krishna Chandra Gajapati Medical College (MKCG). She is a double Masters holder in medicine from the University of Sydney, Australia and a recipient of the Full Bright Scholarship from the University of Newcastle, Australia.

Los Jovenes Clinilogic is the result of Dr Lita's dream of having a multi-clinilogic centre that can solve all your skin and hair needs



through novel technologies and pioneering research work. The Los Jovenes Therapeutica skin, hair and body care treatments include Platelet Rich Plasma Therapy (PRP), Mesotherapy, Melanin Knockout Therapy, Hydratherapy, Vitamin Enriched Therapy, Radio Frequency Therapy, Dermal Rejuvenation Therapy, Oxygen Rich Therapy, Skin Serum Cocktail Therapy, Stem Cell Therapy for skin and hair and many more such treatments that will make you look and feel better and give a new boost of confidence to your personality.

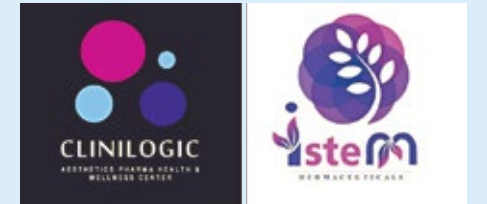
Los Jovenes Clini-

DR. LITA MOHAPATRA
Founder of Los Jovenes Clinilogic Pvt. Ltd.

logic is recognised by the Government of Odisha as a start-up involved in health-care and aesthetic medicines, research and development and manufacturing of related products. It already has two patents and is on the verge of having a few more. With an eye on innovation, Los Jovenes Clinilogic strongly believes in developing advanced niche skin and home care products. In October 2020 they launched their first Vitamin C/ hyaluronic acid based skin serum called iSTEM.

Dr Lita foresees a future where skincare products that are effective with minimal side effects and are technologically driven are available to everyone. At Los Jovenes Clinilogic, they are working on intelligent technology driven phyto dermaceuticals for skincare. This innovative start-up uses nanotechnology and focuses on exploring exotic plant sources to produce innovative and niche skincare products.

Los Jovenes Clinilogic Pvt. Ltd. is supported and funded by BIRAC's Biotechnology Ignition Grant and is incubating at KIIT-TBI to develop an iconic product for skin hyperpigmentation treatment. This ignition grant



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is helping them to refine their proof-of-concept studies and future product development. The work done at Los Jovenes is a breakthrough in the field of Aesthetic Medicine and treatment which is based on stem-cell dermaceutical and therapeutic medicines. Dr Lita was awarded the 'Times Health Icon Award' in July 2019, 'Excellence as Doctor in Aesthetic Medicine Award' in December 2019 and 'Top Inspiring Women Entrepreneur Award' in 2019 among others.

With its unique range of products and services Los Jovenes is poised to expand into the south east Asian market in the next few years. With a product range that is effective, pocket friendly and superior in quality, Dr Lita's venture is about to steer the wellness industry on a path that is focussed on the well being of its customers. They are looking to strengthen their product portfolio with a plethora of new products that will provide them access to global markets.



see a 'before' and 'after' for their physical parameters, giving her/him an accurate understanding of progress. In addition, the technology also provides real-time visual feedback during training through which correct form and movement is registered faster by the body. Through this, athletes receive physical self-awareness, allowing them to be more receptive to training, avoid injuries better and leverage their technique/ skills consistently. Coach empowerment sessions are also conducted regularly at the ABTP centre to ensure that the larger ecosystem is also aware of the impact that sport science can have on athletes.

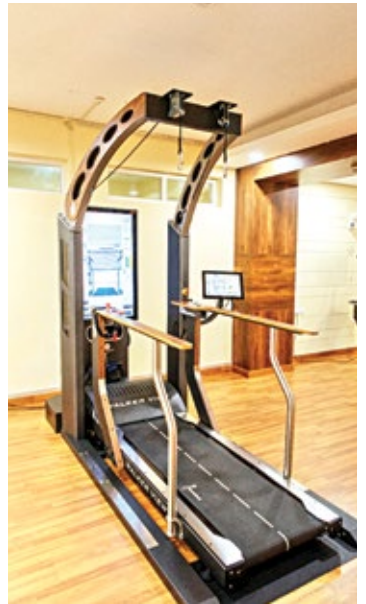
Since its inauguration, several budding athletes from Odisha like Hari Behera, AnshikaRoutray, Aakash Mishra and Rutuparna Panda have trained at the ABTP centre. Hari was looking to recover as soon as possible after a surgery for a labral tear. With proper rehabilitation protocols and technology intervention, he won gold in Shot Put at the Reliance Foundation Tournament earlier this year.

Similarly, Anshika, daughter of former Odia track and field athlete Anuradha Biswal, has been regularly training at the ABTP centre. To improve her stability, regular training has been done on the ProKin. Her parameters have dramatically improved and she has been able to perform at a consistently high level. She recently won gold at the national meet in Raipur.

Emerging young footballer Aakash is a part of the U-19 Indian football team that won the recent SAFF U-18 Championships. In just under two months (25 Sessions) at ABTP centre, he was able to recover from an ankle ligament injury.

Rutuparna is one of the most promising athletes from the Odisha ecosystem, who has regularly trained at the centre, working on strength/conditioning and her overall endurance. This has significantly helped her improve her training. Recently, she was felicitated as 'Young Achiever of the Year' by Indian Sport Honour Awards.

One of the latest technologies that the ABTP has introduced to the sporting fraternity in the State is cryotherapy which can be delivered to just one area of the body. Besides, one can opt for a whole-body cryotherapy. Localised cryotherapy can be administered in a



Where Sport Meets Science

Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Centre provides state-of-the-art facilities for athletes of all disciplines to improve their performance. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the centre on February 18, 2019

BY DEBI PRASAD SAHU

In the last few years, Odisha has increasingly made its presence felt in the world of sports by investing not only in grooming new talents but also developing infrastructure of international standards that will give athletes a technological boost. The Kalinga Stadium Sports Complex has been revamped into a multipurpose facility and has become the hub of all sporting activities in the State.

One of the unique features of the facility is the Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance (ABTP) Centre. The ABTP Centre provides state-of-the-art facilities for athletes of all disciplines to improve their performance. Chief Minister Naveen

Patnaik inaugurated the centre on February 18, 2019 and since then, it has helped enhance the abilities and improve performances of many athletes of national and international repute not only in Odisha but also the country. The centre is a joint collaboration of Rungta Mines and Abhinav Futuristic and is equipped to provide testing and training facilities in sports physiology, biomechanics and recovery and rehabilitation.

The ABTP centre has gone a long way in creating a conducive sporting environment in Bhubaneswar with its highly qualified team of sports scientists and physios. It is only the fifth of its kind in the country after Pune, Mohali, Delhi and Bengaluru. My City Links takes a look inside the centre and how it is shaping the present and future

athletes.

Sports science is an umbrella term used for a multi-disciplinary approach towards understanding sports and sportspersons. It includes topics that study how the body and mind of an athlete or a sportsperson works during events and training. Talking about the facility's role in improving an athlete's performance, Centre Head of ABTP Bhubaneswar Dr Pradeep Pillay said, "Based on rigorous research protocols, sports science helps in achieving high performance goals of individual athletes and teams. The study of sports science traditionally incorporates areas of Exercise Physiology, Sport Psychology, Nutrition and other facets to understand how an athlete can perform efficiently. This is precisely where ABTP comes into play."

ABTP provides various services and facilities that an athlete can use to enhance their performance or fasten their recovery. These services are for high performance physical training and include Performance Enhancement, Injury Management/Prevention and Recovery using technology that has never been used in India before. Each of these services can be performed by a team of expert physiotherapists, sports scientists and strength/conditioning coaches in an accountable and data-driven fashion, Dr Pillay informed.

These same technologies have been used by global powerhouse soccer clubs such as AC Milan, Juventus, Real Madrid and other sporting bodies across the world. The assessment-training-assessment format allows an athlete to

ONE OF THE LATEST TECHNOLOGIES THAT THE ABTP HAS INTRODUCED TO THE SPORTING FRATERNITY IN THE STATE IS CRYOTHERAPY WHICH CAN BE DELIVERED TO JUST ONE AREA OF THE BODY. BESIDES, ONE CAN OPT FOR A WHOLE-BODY CRYOTHERAPY

tween -200 and -300°F. The athlete will have to stay in the ultra-low temperature air for between two and four minutes.

Sporting bodies such as Norwich City FC and Miami FC, as well as famous athletes like Cristiano Ronaldo and LeBron James have used cryotherapy with successful effect over time. One can get benefits from just one session of cryotherapy, but it's most effective when used regularly. Some of the benefits are reduction in inflammation, enhancement in recovery from injuries, reduction of exercise-induced soreness and improvement of mood as well as reduction of anxiety.

The ABTP centre was set up specifically to cater to the athletes of the State. However, in order to remain sustainable, services have been opened to the larger public at a subsidised price. The services include physiotherapy with access to same technology, specialisation in pain management and ortho-

paedic rehabilitation. The centre's physiotherapists can also help identify the root cause of pain and help correct it permanently.

Recently, the team at ABTP was delighted to welcome Indian javelin thrower and Asian Games gold medalist Neeraj Chopra and acquaint him with the globally accredited training and performance enhancement technology at the centre. Neeraj was delighted about the facilities available at ABTP and said, "I am glad to undergo my training sessions at the Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Facility in Odisha. This was the first time I experienced cryotherapy and found it exceptionally relaxing."

Neeraj further said he would like to thank Odisha government and the ABTP team for instilling such high-tech training and rehab solutions in the Indian sporting ecosystem. He hoped that this will help him and his team excel at the Tokyo Olympics. ■

SPORTSPERSON OF THE MONTH

SWASTI SINGH: Cycling Sensation OF ODISHA

BY DEBI PRASAD SAHU

1 9 year old Swasti Singh from Rourkela has emerged as a cycling sensation and is on the cusp of achieving great things in the near future. After winning several laurels for Odisha, she has gone on to make India proud with her feats on the velodrome. Since 2015, when Swasti burst into the cycling scene, she has been grabbing everyone's attention with her superb technique and buzzer beater timings. Currently Swasti is training at the Indira Gandhi Stadium Complex (IGSC) in New Delhi and honing her skills as a cyclist of international calibre.

Talking about her current training in the National Capital Region, she said, "We were asked to join the training programme at the national camp around the second week of October this year. Once we reached here we had to stay in quarantine for seven days. Then we had a COVID test and the ones who tested negative started practice. To participate in the national camp is every athlete's dream. I have been here earlier. Right now I am the only girl cyclist from Odisha. The practice is going well. Since there was a long gap because of COVID 19, we are starting from the basics."

Swasti started cycling in November 2015 when she was in class 7.

There was a circular in her school from Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) saying that there is going to be a track cycling state meet in Cuttack. Students were invited for trails and Swasti went to give it a try along with two other girls. The rest were all boys. She got selected and then she practiced for a few weeks before participating in the state meet where she won four gold medals. This was a big break for her.

Remembering her introduction to the world of cycling, Swasti said, "I was not much aware about cycling back in 2015. Since the cycles were very different from regular ones, I

Since 2015, when Swasti burst into the cycling scene, she has been grabbing everyone's attention with her superb technique and buzzer beater timings. Currently Swasti is training at the Indira Gandhi Stadium Complex (IGSC) in New Delhi



was a bit scared in the beginning. But our coach helped me gain confidence and soon I overcame my fears. He said that even if we fall from the cycle it won't hurt much.

We may have some scratches or bruises but they will heal soon. And once we gain balance there are very few chances of actually falling off the cycle. So we should focus on the techniques and give our best."

Coach Susil Kumar Das was impressed by Swasti's performance from the beginning and said, "I met Swasti in 2015 at Rourkela during a cycling trial by RSP. Her timing was very good and she was a good rider of the fixie even without any prior practice and knowledge of it. Within a day she was able to grasp how the fixie works which was impressive. I knew that she would do well when provided

with the right coaching, practice and opportunity."

Impressed with her initial success, coach Susil Kumar Das insisted that she should try for the nationals and in 2018 she went on to win her first national medal in the 15 kilometer individual time trial event at the 23rd National Road Cycling Championship at Kurukshetra and she won a bronze. "This win boosted my confidence and soon in June 2018, I got selected for India camp. Everyone was happy with my win because for the first time I was featured in a newspaper. My parents were over the moon and felt like I had the potential to be an athlete and their support increased," said an elated Swasti.

At the National Road Cycling Championship at Kurukshetra Swasti participated in the individual pursuit event in the under-16 category and the scratch race in the under 18 category. She was absolutely confident about the scratch race and she wanted to participate even though it was of a higher age category. Initially coach Susil was not sure about it but he agreed and let her give it a



Winning at 23rd National Road Cycling Championship at Kurukshetra boosted my confidence and soon in June 2018, I got selected for India camp. Everyone was happy with my win because for the first time I was featured in a newspaper

SWASTI SINGH
CYCLIST

shot. She not only participated but also won the first medal which was a bronze at a national level event and made everyone proud.

"I was really happy because nobody expected anyone from Odisha to win a medal. I fell down from the cycle once during the race but still went on and made it to the podium. My coach was the happiest person to see me win the medal. Then my confidence grew and I wondered why can't Odias win medals. Since then I have won a few more medals," said a confident

and poised Swasti.

In 2018, Swasti won her first international gold medal at the age of 17 in the junior women's 2 kilometer individual pursuit event of the 5th Asian Cup Track Cycling held at Talkatora Velodrome in New Delhi. In 2019 she created a new national record of 2:35:161 seconds by beating her own previous record of 2:37:00 seconds to win a bronze medal in the 2 kilometer individual pursuit event of the Track Asia Cup Cycling Championships. She followed this with a silver win at the women's individual road race event at the 13th South Asian Games in Kathmandu. At the 3rd Khelo India Youth Games Swasti bagged two gold and one silver medals in the U-21 girls category.

Even before Swasti started cycling, she had seen the sport on television and thought that the cyclists riding their bikes with rounded handles and the helmet and the colourful glasses looked cool. Her father Amar Singh works at the Oxygen Plant of Rourkela Steel Plant and her mother is a homemaker. Swasti's elder brother is also a cyclist. She studied at



Kendriya Vidyalaya, Rourkela and now she is studying in class 12 in arts stream at National Institute of Open Schooling. Swasti has her eyes set on the Asian Championships and the Asian Games. She also wants to complete my Bachelors in Arts while she continues to follow her calling in cycling.

Swasti discussed how her life has changed since she began cycling and said, "The journey so far has been amazing and exciting. There has been a lot of difference between 2015 when I began cycling and today. Back then I had to juggle multiple things together. I had to attend school, tuitions, dance classes and cycling. Now I am focussing only on cycling and life is much more disciplined. Cycling uses up a lot of energy and discipline is very important. After coming to the national camp, I am able to fully focus on cycling."

"Now everyone in Rourkela recognises me. I feel very good and my parents feel very proud of me. People visit my house regularly and enquire about me and how my cycling is going on. I feel happy that I could make my parents happy. Cycling has opened up a new world of opportunities and experiences for me which I never imagined in my wildest dreams. Coming from a small city like Rourkela and representing India on the world stage is something only a

chosen few get to experience and I am happy to have got this opportunity. I am trying to do my best and hope to make my state and country proud many more times in the future," added Swasti.

Swasti said that her coach Sushil Kumar Das is her inspiration. MMA fighter Ritu Phogat has also been her inspiration as an athlete.



Swasti Singh

Despite winning gold in the Commonwealth Wrestling Championship she started playing MMA because of her interest, which is something Swasti finds inspiring. She says, "We should do what makes us happy and that which our heart loves. I Ritu's attitude and her fighting style." Apart from cycling, Swasti loves line drawing and gardening. She loves to plant kitchen plants and herbs in her garden.

Susil Kumar Das, Joint Secretary and Chairman of Technical Committee, Odisha Cycling Association and SAIL Coach has been mentoring Swasti since 2015. Talking about what makes Swasti stand out from the rest, he said, "Her endurance capacity is great. She is obedient and very determined to give her best always. She is a gentle soul which gives her an advantage over others as she is capable of keeping her calm in adverse situations which is very much

necessary in any competitive sport.

"She always maintains her training schedule and never skips any sessions. With only three months of training she bagged four gold medals at the 38th Odisha State Track & Road Cycling Championship in 2015. She managed it because along with her natural skills, she is also very obedient which is why she does whatever we say to improve her skills. She is a fast learner and understands how the technicalities of cycling work better than others. She is always inquisitive to learn more and always goes up to the coaches to find answers to her questions. She is always ready to discuss new possibilities that may improve her performance," he further added.

Susil feels that Swasti is very competitive but does not feel jealous of other's success because she is very grounded. She has a lot of power. "We as coaches are trying to channel it by improving her techniques which have shown results in the last few years. Swasti is not only an ace cyclist but also a very good student. In school she used to score around 98-99 % of marks. Because of her performance and her dedication to her sport Khelo India has decided to give Swasti a high end racing cycle. I am proud of her and I know that she has a bright future ahead," concluded Susil. ■

Odishaaah!



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