

SEPTEMBER 5-11, 2021

SUNDAY POST

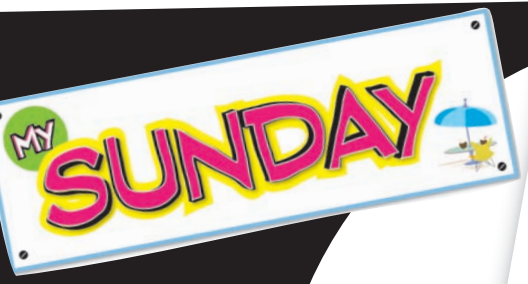
HERE . NOW

TEACHERS' DAY SPECIAL

Role models

P
3,4 COVER STORY





POPULAR ANCHOR, SINGER, AUTHOR AND RESEARCHER MAMATA TRIPATHI LOVES TO TAKE SUNBATH AND COOK MEXICAN, JAPANESE AND THAI FOOD FOR HER HUSBAND AND CHILDREN ON SUNDAYS



With writer Manoj Das



With husband



RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP



A still from her play Kanyadana

Nature Enthusiast

Spending some time in nature's lap is a must for me Sundays. Sipping tea, sunbathing on the terrace with my husband and enjoying the chirping sounds of birds are my favourite pastimes.

Love for Music

Be it Sunday or Monday, I start my day with riyaz. I religiously do it in the morning to condition my voice and get better.

Culinary Adventures

Sundays, I try my hand at cooking Mexican, Thai and Japanese food but not Indian cuisines. That does not mean we don't eat Indian dishes. We do but not on Sundays just for a change.

Family Time

Sunday means family time for me. Away from phone calls and social media, everyone spends the day with each other. Exploring nature, camping, parasailing, bird-watching, trekking, wildlife spotting, fishing and boating are what we get involved in. We love watching cinema in the theatre also.

With Kids

Being a busy bee, I don't get enough time to spend time with my kids. Sunday mornings, I love to wake up my children with good morning kisses and hugs. They pour their heart out at that moment and we plan for the entire day.

WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting Whatsapp messages and memes received to: features.orissapost@gmail.com And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Relax, it's the weekend, just don't blink or it will be all over.
Sometimes I wish I were an octopus, so I could slap eight people at once.
If someone hates you for no reason give them a reason.
The quickest way to double your money is to fold it in half and put it in your back pocket.



OUT OF BOX THINKING

Dear Sir, Last week's cover article 'Shining Sensations' made for an interesting read. It offers an insight to the work style of YouTubers who have made a mark for themselves in the digital space with their engaging content. It is quite fascinating to learn that one can earn such astronomical amount of money in quick time working on some interesting ideas. Among all the influencers featured in the article, tribal youth Isak Munda stands out. Even as he has studied only up to Class VII, he could earn about Rs 5 lakhs in just three months. Until a few years ago, did anyone ever think of monetising the daily life of a tribal youth? It is certainly the benefits of modern technology that we enjoy today.

SUPRITI BISWAL, BHUBANESWAR

LETTERS



A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Please send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to features.orissapost@gmail.com B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948



TEACHERS' DAY SPECIAL

Role models

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Since ages, teachers have been the custodians and architects of the future of the students. This Guru Diwas, a few celebrities recall how gurus made all the difference in their lives

It is not necessary that the teachers have to stand at the head of a classroom. They can do something that no one else can do. At times, the teachers change the students' views of the world and make them into something better than they were before. On the occasion of Teachers' Day, a few celebrities tell Sunday Post how the gurus dramatically transformed their lives for the better and became their role models.

Satyabrata Rout

Author, theatre director and scenographer

Odisha-born Satyabrata Rout, an author, director and scenographer who now teaches theatre in the University of Hyderabad, is one of the pioneers of visual theatre in India. Rout says had he not been mentored by late actor Ajit Das, he would be just another face in the crowd.

"It all happened in 1977 when I came to

Bhubaneswar to study Medicine in a Homeopathic Medical College. Along with that, I was searching for an opportunity in theatre. One of my senior doctor friends introduced me to Ajit Das, the famous villain in one Odia movie Sindura Bindu, which I had seen recently. I was too scared to meet him. On the contrary, he was so adorable! After knowing my interest in Drama (The term 'Theatre' was not familiar to me by that time), he advised me to join the drama department at Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya(USM) which was offering a two year's diploma programme in dramatic arts. I learnt from him that he recently joined as a lecturer in the department along with Bijay Mohanty and both were from National School of Drama (NSD). My short interaction with him, germinated the idea of joining NSD as a student. Finally, I took admission in the USM."

The Kendra Sahitya Akademi awardee continues: "In the beginning I tried to manage both the courses- Medicine and Drama. But my growing interest in theatre made me compromise with my major study. My father came to know about it. Angry, he stopped sending me money. I was completely demoralised and compelled to leave theatre to continue my major study. At this juncture, Ajit sir came to my rescue. He advised me to stay with him and pursue the drama course. His words poured honey in my ears. I immediately packed bags, left the hostel and came with him to stay as a family member. From that day till I joined NSD, he was my mentor, my guardian. I not only stayed with him, I shared his kitchen also. Ajit sir took care of everything since I was not getting any financial help from my father. For those two

years (78-80) I learnt the principles of acting and stagecraft from him and prepared for the NSD entrance examination. Then there was no looking back."



Actor Pragyan with Guru Nabin Kumar Parida

Pragyan Ranjan Khatua

Movie star and social media influencer

Accommed comedian, YouTube and theatre personality Pragyan Ranjan owes his success to Nabin Kumar Parida, retired principal of Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalay(USM), also a senior theatre personality.

"I came in contact with sir when I took admission in USM. I believe that his spiritual discourses helped me become a better human being. He always reminded me of the Sanskrit verses - Karmanye vadhika raste, Ma phaleshu kadachana, Ma karma phala he tur bhuh, ma te sangotsva karmanye which means you have a right to 'Karma' (actions) but never to any fruits thereof.' It helps me remain grounded always," says Pragyan.

Recalling his teacher's mentorship, the Rock Star actor continues: "While studying in USM, I used to struggle to get square meals a day. It was Nabin sir who always brought food for me from his home. Sir used to pick me from Samantarapur to the college after he came to know that I walked more than 10 km a day to attend the classes. I have not forgotten those days when he would wait after his office hours to drop me at my place. If I am today at the zenith of success it is mostly because of him."



Guru Ajit Das

Satyabrata Rout

Inputs from BIJAY MANDAL, OP

Prabir Das
Eminent rights activist

Justice VR Krishna Iyer, one of the pioneers of judicial activism in India, is like Dronacharya for rights defender Prabir Das of Odisha.

"I pursued LLB and became an activist because of him. As an activist lawyer, he served jail terms for the cause of his poor and underprivileged clients. I read his judgments, books and contacted him. It was he who inspired me to work in the field of human rights, legal aid and public litigation. I even wrote a letter to him saying 'Sir you are my idol. I worship you as my Dronacharya. I know I cannot become your Arjun but I aspire to be your Ekalavya. Your uplifting words have intellectually, linguistically, and morally infected me to such an extent that I cannot but get solace for fighting for the cause'. In his response, he gifted me his autobiography signed by him. I used to make a telephone call and seek his blessing on every Teachers' Day till he was alive."



Prabir Das Justice VR Krishna Iyer

Md Jafar Iqbal
Member, visually impaired national cricket team

Md Jafar Iqbal has been representing Odisha in visually impaired cricket since 2003. Also, he has been a part of all major tournaments that India have won, from two T20 World Cups in 2012 and 2017, two ODI World Cups in 2014 and 2018 to Asia Cup in 2016.

He says, "Whenever I think of a great mentor, I can't go beyond Odisha team coach Chandrasekhar Patnaik, under whom I got the opportunity to play for the Odisha team and became the captain. In 1998, blind cricket started in India. Odisha team didn't win a single tournament from 1998 to 2010. In 2010, I was selected as the captain of the team based on my experience."



Iqbal (R) with his coach Chandrasekhar

In 2011, Odisha won the east zone tournament without losing a single match. Under his guidance, Odisha went on to win six consecutive zonal tournaments. When Odisha won the tourney for the first time, sir hugged me and broke down like a kid for making the state proud by winning the trophy. Since then, Odisha blind team have been making great strides. In 2016 and 2019, Odisha team became national champion under his mentorship."

He continues: "When I made it to the Indian team, it was Chandrasekhar Sir who broke the news to me. I could sense his joy and excitement over the telephone. I have great regard for him not because he is my mentor but his contribution for visually-impaired cricket is immense. He has been guiding Odisha blind team since 2003 on honorary basis. Patnaik sir gave a new identity to blind cricket at a time when people are not aware about it. He is certainly a role model and inspiration for many."



Panchanan Samal Rabindra Kumar Pradhan



Basant Mohapatra Chhanda Mishra

Chhanda Mishra
Writer, columnist and singer

Popular writer, columnist and singer Chhanda Mishra says, "Meritorious students from below poverty line used to get stipend in the form of scholarship during our school days. Though I belonged to a well-to-do family, I applied for a scholarship after being pursued by a friend. I submitted an application citing low family income and seeking monetary help for my education. I was studying in Class VII then. In the evening our headmaster Basant Mohapatra came to our house and sought to know the reason behind my applying for a scholarship. He did not shout at me but explained that my stipend would deprive the students who really needed them badly. I not only realised my mistake that day, I remained indebted to him for teaching me the greatest lesson in life. He will always be my idol in life."

Panchanan Samal
Secretary, Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi

Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi Secretary Panchanan Samal attributes his success to his school headmaster Rabindra Kumar Pradhan. He says, "When I was in Class VI, Rabindra sir asked the students to make Saraswati idol on their own on the occasion of Basant Panchami. He asked interested students to raise their hands but none did it except me. So he assigned me the task. I managed to make a 5-ft idol. After seeing the idol, he advised my father to admit me to an art college after my Class X examinations. He even gifted me a pair of clothes to encourage me. It was he who spotted an artist in me when people were reluctant to make a career in this field. He instilled the confidence in me to take up art as a career instead of seeking a future in Science or Commerce stream."



Honesty can't be replaced by money, patronage or vanity- Anant Mahapatra

BIJAY MANDAL, OP

Age is just a number for him. At a time when people much younger to him prefer to enjoy retirement 'bliss', Anant Mahapatra, a living legend of Odia theatre, at the age of 85, refuses to call it a day. Active in theatre, films, radio and television for nearly 60 years, he is only getting younger with time and has become a true inspiration for the new age artistes. Mahapatra, who was recently feted with Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja Samman for the year 2019, took

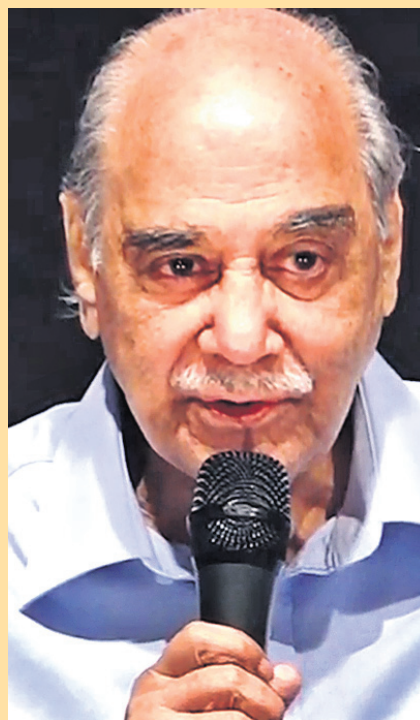
some time off from his busy schedule to speak to **Sunday POST**.

Congratulations for being honoured with the highest award of Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi. How motivated are you now?

Ans: I am as motivated as I was yesterday, last month, last year, last decade and decades before that. It is like breathing to live.

You made a valiant effort to nurse professional theatre back to life by forming Utkal Rangamancha Trust (URT). With the auditoriums being opened for plays, what is the immediate plan for URT?

Ans: To revive professional Theatre I need a permanent auditorium and that's how we



(UtkalRangmanch Trust) could put up plays thrice every week and for 3-4 months with 30/40 shows of each play. Audience needs to identify the auditorium and know how often/regularly plays are staged. Unless it is performed regularly we can't bring back the 'old' professional attitude for theatre. I

had taken the lease of Nari Seva Sangha Sadan to

stage a regular weekly show of my theatre troupe SRUJANI (at Cuttack) twice every week. Putting up a play for one/two evenings will not bring the flavor of professional theatre because it has to be clear that I had to crack civil services for that. I worked hard and managed to clear the examination and make my dream of performing in Russia come true. For the last 50 years I have been worshipping Odissi and will continue to do so till my last breath.

Any regrets?

Odissi Research Centre (Presently known as Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre -GKC-MORC) got recognition at national level because of my efforts. I could have contributed more for the growth of Odissi had I not been made to retire at the age of 58. In an autonomous body one is allowed to work as long as he/she is capable of delivering. I was supposed to retire at 60 as per the Central government rule. So, an early retirement left many of my dreams unfulfilled. Though named after him, GKCMORC has nothing to do with the styles of the maestro. The name was changed as a mark of respect to the Guru

have a permanent set/light design and actors have to be tuned to perform for long tenure. If the state government agrees to lease on a long term basis a small auditorium I am prepared to start all over again and the actors and technicians will be happy to join the drive. I still distinguish between group theatre and professional theatre.

What is your favourite play and the reason thereof?

Ans: It is *Sagar Manthan*, the first play of SRUJANI staged July 12, 1964 at Annapurna Theatre and then at Nari Seva Sangha Sadan, Cuttack and again at Bhanja Kala Mandap in 2001 by Utkal Rangamanch Trust for 30 evenings. Though it was adapted from JB Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*, we had set it at Cuttack in a rich business man's family which had its own standards. It is my favourite because it has set up quite a few milestones. Earlier, plays were staged with the help of backdrop screens. For the first time, flat sets were used in *Sagar Manthan*. I also displayed sequences like fire on the stage and house catching fire. Besides, I used a landline telephone using battery.

People much younger to you either prefer to lead a retired life or lose interest in theatre. But you, at 85, seem to be getting younger by the day and adapting to new technology to inspire young artistes. What is the secret of your longevity?

Ans: For your Long question, my very short answer - "No Negative thoughts" and I always think of innovation like the present YouTube uploading and improvising story reading, making telefilms and working on projects with One Actor One Act format. These are challenging but also give me the opportunity to innovate new formats and concepts. For instance, I have recorded Fakir Mohan Senapati's *Chha Mana Atha Guntha* for 7 long hours which has been uploaded in Amazon Prime channel's 'story tell' segment.

Being a living legend of Odia art and culture, what is your advice to the young theatre practitioners to keep the flames burning during such difficult times?

Ans: I hate to give advice. On the contrary, I am always ready to receive advice and suggestions from people of all ages. But my observation is that one learns only from his/her mistakes and everyone has to assess his/her potential and seek divine guidance. One must have a positive attitude and need to observe nature how it changes and influences individual life, living & attitude. Sincerely, honesty, devotion can't be replaced by money, patronage and vanity.

who had devoted his entire life to popularise Odissi across the globe. But the originality of Odissi dance is missing these days.

'Odissi has lost its essence'

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Widely known for her flawless 'abhinaya', Odissi exponent Padma Shri Kumkum Mohanty has performed in all major dance festivals and music conferences in India and other countries. The retired civil servant was conferred with Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja Samman-2020 last week for her lifetime contributions to Odissi. The Kendra Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee, in a candid conversation with **Sunday POST**, bares her heart out.

Excerpts:

How do you feel after being conferred with the highest honour of OSNA?

Ans: For me work is worship. Therefore, getting awards doesn't make any difference to me. I never expect them in return for whatever I have done in my life.

You got Bhanja Samman 15 years after being honoured with Padma Shri. Do you think the government is late in its consideration?

Ans: As said earlier, I never expect awards for my work. So, it is never late. At the age of 74, I take dance classes and can dance for one and half an hour at a stretch. Besides, I am still young at heart.

What is the secret of your fitness?

Ans: I always prefer to do something useful instead of idling away my time. Apart

from taking the classes, I do all the household chores alone. Yoga and regular workout are two secrets behind my fitness. Besides, I stopped taking rice about 50 years ago which also helps in remaining in good shape.

What do you say about the present scenario of Odissi?

I have decided to keep mum. But only one thing I can say is that Odissi has lost its essence and originality as not too many people now follow the steps and styles of Kelu Sir. These days, the dance has become a source of making money. Incompetent dancers are adding new things to Odissi which only distorts the form.

Tell us about your tryst with Odissi and bonding with Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra.

When in Class VII I had sung 40 songs at a stretch as my father asked me to sing. Surprised by my singing skills, he admitted me to Kala Vikash Kendra for both Odissi music and Odissi dance under the tutelage of Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra and Guru Balakrushna Das. However, I had to discontinue the dance classes after the Class X board examination so that I could concentrate more on studies. I used to be Kelu Sir's favourite student as I could memorise all his compositions effortlessly. When my father stopped my dance classes, Kelu Sir came to our house with famous musicians Rakhil Mohanty, Bhubaneswar Mishra to teach me at home. Often I would study the whole night to practice dance during the day time. Once, I got an offer for a show in Russia. But my father



Kumkum Mohanty

Kiara is all praise of rumoured BF

Unlike other rumoured couples in B'Town, Siddharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani rarely indulge in social media PDA through comments. However this time, actress Kiara Advani was all praise of her rumoured beau Siddharth, as his latest picture was accompanied by a noteworthy caption.

Siddharth shared a picture of himself dressed in smart casuals from one of his latest photoshoots. The picture was accompanied by a thought-provoking quote which read, 'I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it. -Thomas Jefferson'. While the post received a lot of love and appreciation from fans and well wishers, actress Kiara Advani too acknowledged the post by writing 'Caption'.

Meanwhile on the work front, Siddharth and Kiara are currently basking in the success of *SherShaah*. Helmed by Vishnu Varadhan, the movie is inspired by the life of Captain Vikram Batra (PVC) and stars which also stars Shiv Panditt, Raj Arjun, Pranay Pachauri, Himanshu Ashok Malhotra, Nikitin Dheer, Anil Charanjeet, Sahil Vaid, Shataf Figar and Pawan Chopra in pivotal roles. The film had an OTT release. AGENCIES



Sonam hits gym in style

Sonam Kapoor Ahuja, who recently returned to Mumbai, posted a new video on social media. She took to her Instagram story and shared her video from the gym.

The diva was seen flashing her washboard abs while shooting the mirror selfie video. Even her stylish ath-leisure is simply unmissable!

She has donned a brown cord set along with a dainty chain on

her waist. Most recently, the actress has shut the pregnancy rumours like a boss. After Sonam returned from London, the rumours of her pregnancy started doing the rounds. But she was quick to shut down the rumours by sharing an update on her period on Instagram.

Sonam was earlier in London with her husband Anand Ahuja. She recently came back to Mumbai to attend her sister Rhea Kapoor's wedding.

AGENCIES



'Not just Madhubala, would love to play Meena Kumari in her biopic'

Kriti Sanon isn't resting on the laurels of playing a surrogate mother in *Mimi*. The actress is also keen on doing biopics of Hindi film personalities, too.

In a brief conversation with a portal, the actress mentioned that she is keen about playing Madhubala's role in her biopic. Speaking about her favourite actresses, she revealed, "There are certain personalities in our film industry who have been iconic and whose lives I feel people don't really know much about. But people should know about them. And apart from Madhubalaji, I would love to play Meena Kumari in her biopic. Both were iconic heroines of their time and I personally too would love to learn more about them."

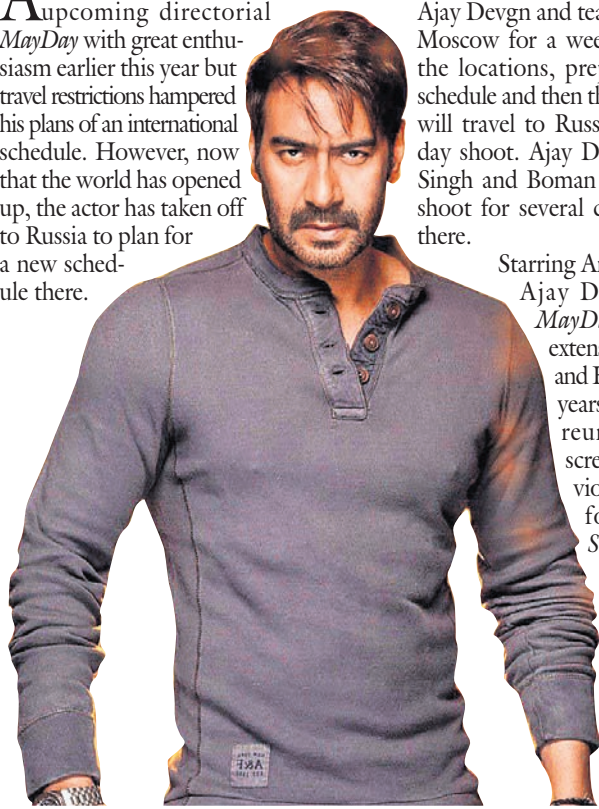
Incidentally, there has been a lot of interest within the film industry around the biopic of Madhubala. The late actress' sister Madhur Bhushan is keen on producing a film on the life and career of Madhubala. Not just that, there were reports that director Tigmanshu Dhulia wanted to make a biopic on Meena Kumari which was supposed to have Vidya Balan, who opted out of the project. Latest reports suggest that a web series is being planned on Meena Kumari's dramatic life now.

AGENCIES



Ajay heads to Russia for *MayDay*

Ajay Devgn had started work on his upcoming directorial *MayDay* with great enthusiasm earlier this year but travel restrictions hampered his plans of an international schedule. However, now that the world has opened up, the actor has taken off to Russia to plan for a new schedule there.



According to a news portal, Ajay Devgn and team will stay in Moscow for a week and finalise the locations, prep for a new schedule and then the lead team will travel to Russia for an eight-day shoot. Ajay Devgn, Rakul Preet Singh and Boman Irani will reportedly shoot for several crucial airport scenes there.

Starring Amitabh Bachchan and Ajay Devgn as the leads, *MayDay* had already been extensively shot in Mumbai and Hyderabad. After seven years, Big B and Ajay have reunited for the silver screen. The duo has previously shared the frame for films like *Major Sahab*, *Khakee* and *Satyagraha*. *MayDay* is an aviation thriller with Ajay and Rakul essaying the role of pilots. *MayDay* is scheduled to hit the screens April 29, 2022.

AGENCIES

The Beauty of Ageing



Every life has to go through the stages of growth and evolution, let it be trees, animals or humans. But why is it that when it comes to humans we have difficulty accepting and embracing the changes that come along with age?

In the journey of life, every age and every stage has its advantages, take for example a fruit when it is raw it has a different taste, smell & purpose and when it becomes a fruit everything about it changes but it becomes better and sweet.

Likewise, when one is young, energetic & enthusiastic, it is time to create goals for development and to channel the energy in the right direction and accomplish wonders. And as we age, there will be many changes in our mental state and physical state that we have to embrace and use for our evolution, instead of trying to ignore or regret it.

Our experiences in life should help us evolve mentally and should help us to change positively. Many people find it hard to accept and

embrace the age factor for one reason and that is the fear of death. As we age, fear of death comes to mind. Change in the colour of the hair, eyesight deterioration, loss of memory, health conditions, every change, small or big throws us into a zone of fear.

But if we do some introspection, we get an answer. When are you and at which age are you free from the fear of death? We see all around us everyday people of all ages leaving their body because of various reasons, in the journey of life what you have is just the moment you are living, next, no one knows, so who is an exception for death and what age is an exception for death?

But if we choose to see the other side of the coin, there are many advantages we have, the wisdom, knowledge and experience that life has taught. We can use that to give direction and guidance to those who need it, but knowing "when, where and how". Instead of trying to focus on outer beauty and trying to look young, we

should focus on inner evolution and development, while taking care of the body in the right way.

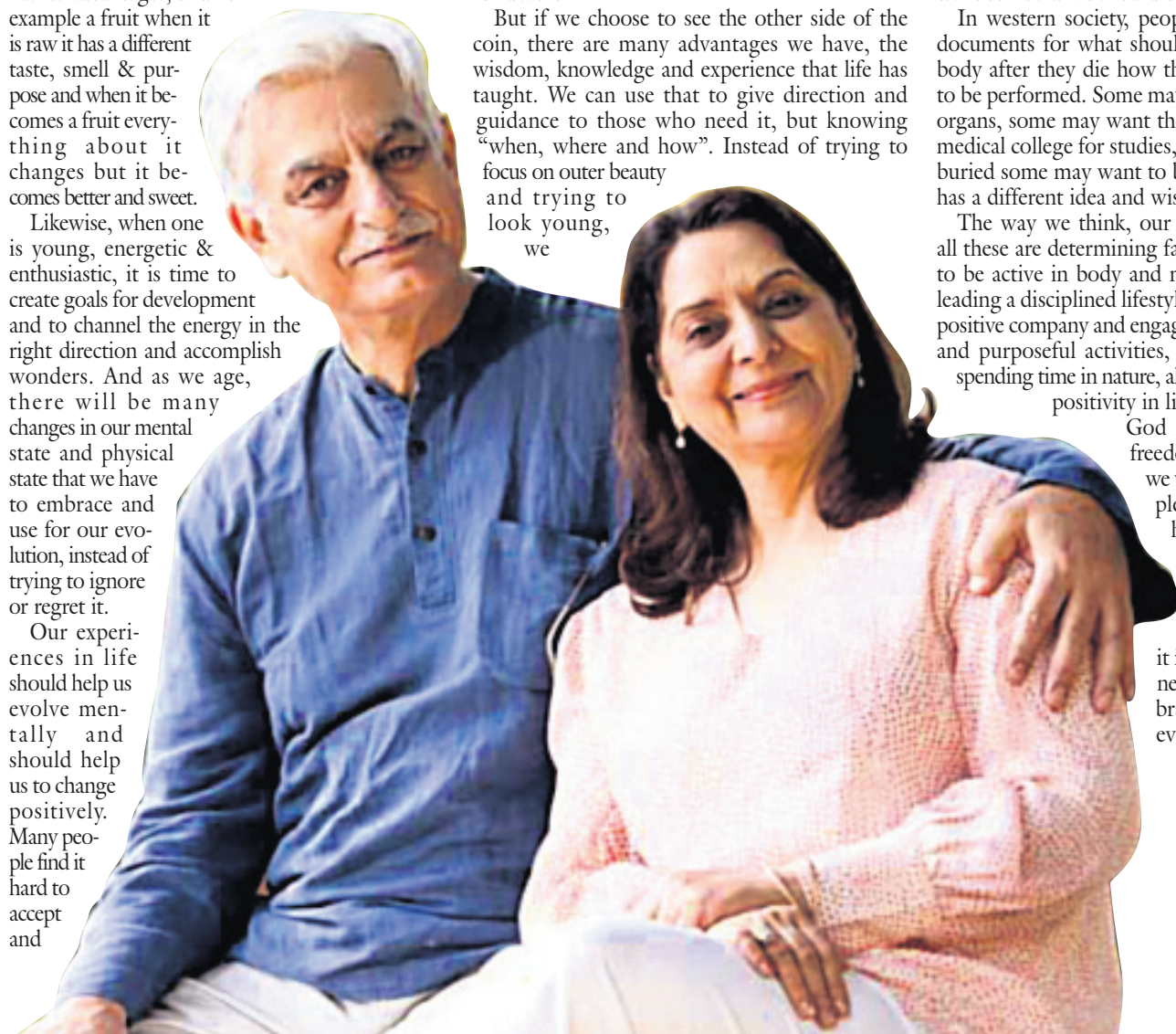
We should prepare ourselves for the next phase of our life. Retirement from a job is not an end to life. If there is will there are many things you can do. You can contribute to the environmental cause if you are a nature lover, if you are service-oriented you can give voluntary services, if you are spiritually inclined you can progress in that direction.

You can contribute in any way you can, you can share wealth, knowledge, wisdom, give guidance, do physical work to whatever extent you can. As we have a set of goals to achieve at a young age, we also need to have a vision for old age, how we want to live what should be our priorities? Etc.

In western society, people even have written documents for what should be done with their body after they die how they want the last rites to be performed. Some may want to donate their organs, some may want their body to be sent to medical college for studies, some may want to be buried some may want to be cremated, each one has a different idea and wish.

The way we think, our attitude towards life—all these are determining factors. One should try to be active in body and mind as age increases, leading a disciplined lifestyle, keeping a good and positive company and engaging ourselves in useful and purposeful activities, reading good books, spending time in nature, all these help in bringing positivity in life.

God has given us enough freedom to choose the way we want to live. Many people all around the world have accomplished great things in life starting their journey in the later years of life. Ageing is not a curse, it is a part of life, and we need to accept it and embrace it with grace, and evolve.



PARITI. GAYATHRI

IN WESTERN SOCIETY, PEOPLE EVEN HAVE WRITTEN DOCUMENTS FOR WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH THEIR BODY AFTER THEY DIE AND HOW THEY WANT THE LAST RITES TO BE PERFORMED



Abhipsa