

NOVEMBER 13-19, 2022

# SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



# Teen crusaders

War to end child marriage

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**MY SUNDAY**

**DEBARCHAN MISHRA HAS BEEN ENTERTAINING THE MASSES, YOUTHS IN PARTICULAR, OF TOP CITIES OF ODISHA LIKE BHUBANESWAR, CUTTACK, ROURKELA AND BERHAMPUR FOR YEARS. THE 24-YEAR-OLD, WHO IS PURSUING HIS M.TECH IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, WANTS TO MAKE THE LESS EXPLORED DESTINATIONS OF ODISHA POPULAR AMONG THE NETIZENS**



**Terrible cook**

**Adventure lover**

I have done parasailing, scuba diving, and I often go on treks. Recently I have been to Kedarnath. But still there are things left in my bucket list like bungee jumping, skydiving and a few others.

I love Dahibara Aloodum and Biryani, the two dishes without which I can't live. But I'm a terrible cook. My parents often taunt me for my poor cooking skills. I hope I will overcome my limitations soon.



**Avid traveler**

I have already travelled to 26 districts of Odisha and the rest will be covered soon. I keep trying to explore the less explored destination of Odisha and want my people to know how beautiful our state is.

**Busy weekends**

Mostly I remain occupied with shows on weekends and on my free days I like to spend time with friends or watch movies.

**On moving on to greener pastures**

If any day, I don't find standup interesting anymore, I might change my profession and would love to start a business as it has been second best career choice.



SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

**WhatsApp This Week**

**Only on Sunday POST!**

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**THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE**

- I was wondering why the frisbee kept getting bigger and bigger, but then it hit me.
- I failed math so many times at school, I can't even count.
- I know they say that money talks, but all mine says is 'Goodbye.'
- I used to think I was indecisive. But now I'm not so sure.

**KALINGA DIARY**

Sir, Sir, Last week's cover story 'Heritage in motion' (Nov 6) made for an interesting read. As Baliyatra, touted to be the biggest open-air trade fair of Asia, got off to a colourful start after a two-year Covid hiatus, the writer went on to shed light on the history and legends associated with the annual festival that commemorates the rich maritime past of erstwhile Kalinga (Odisha). Apart from meticulously highlighting how the sailors of Kalinga helped in the growth of the kingdom and spread the rich culture as well as tradition across southeast Asia, the piece has many interesting mentions like the derivation of 'Sadhaba' from two words—'Sadhu' and 'Byabasayee', decoding the Aa-Ka-Ma-Bai and how Tamralipti port, which was then a part of Kalingan empire and now in West Bengal, witnessed the transformation of warmonger Ashoka into an ambassador of peace. The writer's painstaking efforts to highlight all possible aspects of Baliyatra were really praiseworthy.

**SIMRAN MOHANTY, Cuttack**

**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](mailto:features.orissapost@gmail.com) B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948



# Teen Crusaders

War to end child marriage

Social activist and an ex-member of State Women's Commission, Odisha, Namrata Chadha says that it is the communities that play a major role in influencing the parents and facilitating most child marriages. The least one can do is to discourage them by not attending the marriages, adds Chadha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Though it has been over six years since *Balika Vadhu*, one of the longest running soap operas on Indian television, aired its 2,248th and last episode, the show is still very fresh in viewers' memory and often discussed in many drawing rooms.

Set in rural Rajasthan, the show's plot revolves around the life of child bride Anandi (played by Avika Gor) who struggles to cope with the traditions despite being married to an affluent and educated family. Finally, she overcomes multiple personal struggles to emerge as an example not just for the rural, but for the urban women also.

Anandi was fortunate to have the back of her parents-in-law (played by Anup Soni and Smita Bansal) to fight the system and come out victorious. Even as Anandi's was a child marriage neither had she lost her childhood, not dealt with negative influences associated with it.

But not too many girls in Odisha are that fortunate. Though official record claims that child marriage rate in Odisha is lower than the national average, it is alleged that many cases don't get reported which is why the stats look so healthy on paper.



Last week, 20 teenage girls from different districts, who managed to escape child marriage, came down to Bhubaneswar and had interaction with a team of representatives from several countries on their journey as champions of *End Child Marriage* campaign in Odisha.

They shared with the experts their stories of courage and determination on how they successfully resisted pressure from their

families to get married at an early age. **Sunday POST** sat with a few of them to learn their experience and examined what the experts have to say on the issue.

## Bride at 15

Despite the tall claim of government agencies on lower child marriage rate and how thousands of villages have been made free of child marriage, Nabarangpur district with 39.4 per cent has logged the highest child marriage incidents in Odisha.

No wonder, the story of **Malati Pujari**, from the district only corroborates the statistics. Her parents almost married her off to a much older person at the age of 15. But her presence of mind helped her escape from the situation.

Households in rural pockets marry off girls below 18 years of age for several reasons like 'perceived burden', 'survival mechanism', 'poverty' and 'lure of paying lesser amount in dowry'.

Though Malati didn't divulge the details behind her early marriage, she, however, recalls, "My parents wanted me to get married when I was 15-years-old. I was scared of the consequences if I refused and almost gave in".

She managed to contact the local Anganwadi Worker who got in touch with other officials to prevent the marriage.

"I reached out to Anganwadi didi and together with district administrative officials; they met my parents and explained how an early marriage can ruin my future.

After much persuasion, my parents agreed not to go ahead with the marriage," described Malati.

"They helped me to enroll in an Industrial Training Institute where I learnt tailoring. Today I earn Rs 8,000 a month and proudly support my family", she added.



Malati Pujari

## Kandhamal girls 'no' to early marriage

The role of Anganwadi workers is not just limited to primary health check-up of pregnant women, immunisation and supplementary nutrition. They often play a rescuer's role in the life of adolescent girls.



Teenaged girls from different districts, who resisted child marriage, posed with a team of representatives from several countries on their journey as champions of *End Child Marriage* campaign in Odisha

Suprava Subhadarshini Behera, 16, is a case in point. Her parents too wanted to get her married at an early age. Her marriage was fixed with an elderly man and it was to be solemnised in July this year.

Suprava wanted to study further and become self-reliant. But she knew that once the marriage is over, she will have no control over life. She never wanted to settle down so early in life but was helpless before her parents' wish. With little choice left, she reached out to a local Anganwadi worker as a last resort. It worked and the Anganwadi Didi, marshalling her resources, managed to stop the marriage.

Suprava is now being trained as an electrician and has her sky full of dreams. Like many others in the state, she has been benefitting from the Advika initiative that teaches life skills to adolescents through weekly meetings at the Anganwadi centers. Needless to say, her parents are more than happy to see their daughter shaping her own future.

16, an age to tie the knot?

Nineteen-year-old Mili Gadnaik from Kaliapal village of Barkote block in Deogarh district is yet another girl who managed to prevent her marriage, when she was 16, against the will of her family members.

Though it was a daunting task for a girl but all 16 to go against the wishes of her family members, Mili, fortunately,

could contact the members of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), a flagship programme of Government of India for early childhood care and development. She also talked to the Child Development Project Officer of ICDS and with the local Anganwadi Worker to come to her rescue. The district administration recognised the brave step of Mili and awarded her on 8th March 2022 on the occasion of International Women's Day.

Mili always wanted to concentrate on her studies. After her rescue by the officials, she is



now happy to get her wings to chase her other dreams.

Numbers of similar cases were witnessed in Deogarh district where the family members wanted to marry off their daughters before the legal age 18.

Mili said, "I was fortunate to contact the ICDS officials and the CDPO who came to my rescue. But not many girls of my age get that chance and are left to spend the rest of their life sans education. There is a need to bring stricter legislation to prevent child marriage in India, Odisha in particular".

Expert views

Though teens like Malati, Suprava and Mili showed courage and determination to fight child marriage, the workforce involved in rescuing them also deserves applauds.

Talking about their modus operandi to track the child marriages, Prakash Barik, the district coordinator of ActionAid in Mayurbhanj district says, "The first phase of

identification begins in every Anganwadi, which is facilitated by their workers. The workers have a list of adolescent boys and girls.

They choose their leader and report such incidents



to the district administrator.

Talking about the recent international coverage, Barik adds, "We call them champions because some among them have stood up for themselves and the society as well. One such name is Deepika. She has conducted rallies and facilitated campaigns for mass awareness in and around her village. Along with a group she conducts skit plays, spreads strong messages written on placards and the most important of all are she communicates on personal level with the parents".

The girls also asked questions to the team on gender inequality in western countries and if the value of education is the only path to success and about the minimum age of marriage in other countries.

In Odisha UNICEF and UNFPA, through support from Global Programme to End Child Marriage, work across all 30 districts to promote life skills for adolescents, improve overall well-being including sexual and reproductive health and build more capacity within the government systems to prevent child marriage and build linkages to skilling and livelihood opportunities.

The programme also promotes positive behavioural changes and social norms to empower girls and provide equal opportunities to girls and boys.

Social activist Namrata Chadha says, "The slogan 'STOP CHILD MARRIAGES' looks great when preached around but it isn't happening in India. Save for the Parsi and the Buddhist communities

the entire population is involved in early marriage. And as much as 50% of Indian population comes under Economic Weaker Section (EWS) and most of them

think of their daughter as a burden, and because of less economic opportunity, the parents do not allow them to pursue higher studies. Otherwise most of the communities, both EWS and tribal communities believe that girls should marry early if they are getting the right candidate".

The government should develop a system of mandatory registration of marriage irrespective of their communities and religions. Marriage certificates should be made essential and of equal importance as birth and death certificates. Because then, no official would sign legal papers of the underage children. Hence compulsory registration of marriages if implemented as soon as possible will reflect the growth in future, suggests Chadha.

"A girl, who is being forced to get married, could send messages to the respective officials who could come and save her from the eventual crisis that she was being forced into. It will prevent human trafficking. It will stop polygamy. And it will stop forced marriages," she further says.



A representative image of a minor with her newborn



# DAMaN,

## a spark in the dark

**ACTOR BABUSHAAN, WHO EARLY IN HIS CAREER GOT PIGEONHOLED INTO PLAYING THE CUTE AND FUNNY BOY IN LOVE, WINS HEARTS THIS TIME DEMONSTRATING HIS VARIABILITY MOSTLY THROUGH FACIAL EXPRESSIONS**

ATRI PRASAD ROUT, OP

In RK Narayan's *The Doctor's Word*, Dr Raman, the titular doctor of the story, finds himself in a dilemma. Gopal, his dear friend of many decades, is sick and bedridden. After visiting Gopal, Raman, who has a reputation for always being truthful, concludes that his friend is counting his last breaths, and if he lets him know the true diagnosis, the man will lose whatever hope he has left. The doctor, for once in his life, decides to lie. He tells Gopal that he has a long life ahead of him. In the coming days, unexpectedly, Gopal recovers, and survives, leaving Raman in awe of the unknown power his words hold.

Babushaan's Siddharth, a physician, in recently released Odia film *DAMaN*, also comes to terms with this power, the power of his words. Securing a medical degree from a city college, he has no intention of serving in the countryside. But fate has

other plans. He is posted at a primary health centre (Janbai) of Malkangiri, a collection of some 151 human settlements that is known as the cut-off area, because water separated it from the mainland.

Siddharth, used to the glitz of city life, 24X7 power supply and running water, is out of his comfort zone. In the new place, after spending only a night in the company of buzzing mosquitoes, he is ready with his bags packed, to return to the city.

But again, fate intervenes. As his boat is about to



leave, a man begs for help with his shivering daughter in arms. Siddharth, hesitantly, turns back, examines the patient, as his boat leaves. Finding that she is down with malaria, he administers her treatment, and scolds the father for being so late in coming to the hospital. There, Rabi Muduli, the pharmacist, played by a charming Dipanwit Dasmohapatra, tells Siddharth, that the people here believe in ghosts, and when they get fever, they go to the 'dishari' (exorcist), which, predictably, leads many to their graves.

But there is a chance; they might listen to his words, because, after all, he is a doctor, says the pharmacist. Ravi's optimism cou-



**Producer:** Deependra Samal  
**Directors:** Vishal Mourya & Debiprasad Lenka  
**Cast -** Babushaan Mohanty, Dipanwit Dasmohapatra and others  
**Duration:** 2 hrs and 01 minutes

in love, demonstrates here his acting range with subtlety.

Moreover, there is something to admire about the simplicity of the plot. The film is basically about the success of a public welfare scheme, which seems quite a boring premise for a film. But the directors, Vishal Mourya and Debi Prasad Lenka, turn it interesting by using the tool of the character arc. It becomes a 'rite-of-passage story' for a young doctor, who undergoes a character transformation and learns to accept his social responsibilities.

Also noteworthy is the discipline of the filmmakers. Walking into the film I half expected the lead character, an outsider in a new place, the pardesi babu, to fall in love with a local girl and go on to fight the naxalites and build dams and cry to the tunes of yeh jo desh hai



A screengrab from the movie

pled with a few slogans written on hospital walls propels Siddharth to begin a new journey.

The plot aside, *DAMaN* works remarkably well as a film. It's a splash of rain in the desert of originality that is Odia cinema. All the elements of filmmaking come together nicely.

Pratap Rout's cinematography helps set the proper atmosphere. The clouds over the mountains, the green valleys and the forests, evoke the present promise of an adventure. The landscape shots remind one of Denis Villeneuve's *Sicario* (2015), that feeling of immersion in the geography of a film.

The sound design by Gaurav Anand complements the narrative. The use of traditional folk instruments amplifies the atmospheric dimension of the film. The lyrics to the songs reflect the state of mind of the lead character, his predicament, at times, his doubts, helplessness, and resolve.

The actors, many of them local stage artistes, bring an aura of authenticity with their presence. Babushaan, who early in his career got pigeonholed into playing the cute and funny boy

tera... But the directors, to their credit, abstain from doing any of that, from making it another *Swades* (2004).

However, *Daman's* strengths could also be seen as its weaknesses. There are no other plotlines except for the central one, that's why the latter half feels less dramatic. And by telling the story as the journey of a single character the film risks becoming a story of a saviour, of an educated outsider putting an end to the suffering of an underprivileged group.

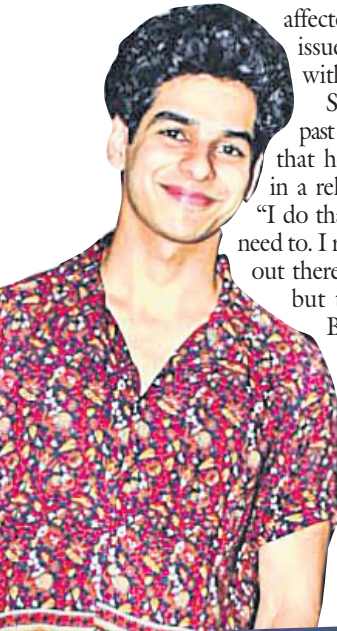
Whatever may be its limitations, they seem small in comparison to the acceptance it has received. Till the writing of this report, the movie was running to packed houses in most centres of Odisha and arrangement was in place for screening in other cities like Kolkata, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Raipur and Ahmedabad. The success of *DAMaN*, and those of TV shows like *Panchayat* and films like *Kantara* (2022), only proves that the next batch of good stories is going to come from filmmakers who go to the ground, listen to the people, the folktales and mine the collective memory.



Ishaan talks about his past relationship

Celebrities and their relationships have never been hidden from their fans. The fans have always been interested in knowing about their personal lives. Well, Ishaan Khatter is one of the finest actors from the current generation who is currently basking in the success of his recently released movie, *Phone Bhoot*. The film also stars Katrina Kaif and Siddhant Chaturvedi in pivotal roles. Ishaan has been on a promotional spree and during a recent media interaction, he opened up about his past relationship with Ananya Panday.

The *Phone Bhoot* actor revealed that it taught him to be more accepting and loving. He also revealed that he wasn't sure if the change was because of the relationship or him growing up. He also said that he doesn't like to get too personally affected by other people's growth and issues and things that they are dealing with.



Speaking about regrets from his past relationship, Ishaan Khatter quipped that he regrets over-extending himself in a relationship. Ishaan further added, "I do that sometimes, even when I don't need to. I really spend myself and put myself out there. I wear my heart on my sleeve, but that last part I don't regret. Because that last part makes me who I am. But sometimes balance is important." AGENCIES

Pathaan to showcase Deepika's hottest self

*Pathaan* director Siddharth Anand says the film will present Deepika Padukone at her hottest and coolest best and that she will mesmerise everyone with her sizzling screen presence like never before.

Siddharth says, "Deepika Padukone is up there with the biggest of superstars in the history of Hindi cinema. And we knew we had written a role for her in *Pathaan* that is not only breathtaking, but one that also justifies her superstardom. *Pathaan* will showcase her in probably her hottest and at the same time, the coolest self."

SRK and Deepika are one of the biggest on-screen pairings in the history of Indian cinema given their epic blockbusters like *Om Shanti Om*, *Chennai Express* and *Happy New Year*.

SRK and Deepika recently sizzled in Spain as leaked photos from the sets. The glamorous duo shot a song in Mallorca as SRK was papped flaunting an eight-pack and Deepika her perfect bikini bod. They then headed to Cadiz and Jerez in Spain where they wrapped the schedule. *Pathaan* is set to release on January 25, 2023 in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

IANAS



Have a bigger dream every day: Priyanka

Actor, producer and entrepreneur Priyanka Chopra Jonas says she has a bigger dream every day, refusing to be daunted as she climbs the ladder of success step by step.

Priyanka, who grew up in the Uttar Pradesh town of Bareilly and has made a global name for herself, said her quest for excellence began when she won the Miss World title at the age of 18.

"It has to be a bigger dream every day. And you should not be overwhelmed as then it can be daunting.

It should be like, when you climb a ladder-

der, you have to step on each rung, you can't go from bottom to the top," the 40-year-old said.

The actor, who lives in Los Angeles and was in India this week for the first time since the pandemic, said establishing herself as a global star was not one of her childhood dreams. Fame just happened.

She joined the Hindi film industry after her Miss World win. She started her acting career with the 2002 Tamil film *Thamizhan* and made her Hindi film debut the following year with the Sunny Deol-led spy thriller *The Hero*.

PTI

'I'm polar opposite of my role in Monica..'

Actress Radhika Apte is back to Netflix with her upcoming streaming movie *Monica O My Darling*. What's novel in that - one may ask. Well, it's her character of a 'corrupt cop' that she is essaying for the first time.

While she played a cop in Netflix original *Sacred Games*, there the moral compass of her character was intact but in *Monica O My Darling*, it's pretty unpredictably messed up to say the least.

Elaborating on the same, she said, "This character was very out of my comfort zone, I've never done comedy before and it was very interesting to play the corrupt cop, quite unashamed and unabashed about her values in life, could be probably most opposite of whatever I am." The film also stars Rajkummar Rao, Huma Qureshi in prominent roles. The trailer has been getting a lot of positive acclaim, Radhika's character looks very interesting and is getting a lot of love from the audiences.

IANAS





# Kick out stress with your diet



Even a chronic lifestyle condition can be prevented from soaring, provided one knows what kinds of food to consume

**A**ncient science knew something that mainstream science is rediscovering; many illnesses can be treated by optimising our food habits. Diet is the most overlooked part of the stress-fighting regime but is equally equipped to manage stress as the other factors. Yes, even a chronic lifestyle condition can be prevented from soaring, provided you know what kinds of food to consume.

### What is stress?

Stress is our reaction to feeling threatened by any stimuli when we find ourselves in an unpleasant or dangerous situation. The effect of chronic stress on our bodies is harmful. In the long-term, over-exposure to stress can disrupt almost all body processes and put one at an increased risk of several health and lifestyle issues such as chronic headaches and migraine, anxiety and depression, digestive & sleep problems, heart diseases, high blood pressure, weight gain, etc. Given that chronic stress is a part and parcel of our lives, we cannot stop it but we can manage it by eating healthily.

Certain nutrients in food can keep stress at bay. Among the multiple ways of stress management, eating certain nutrients in food is the best. According to studies, just by being stressed, your bodily requirements for certain nutrients such as vitamins B & C, selenium, magnesium, etc. increase. Just

studies showing that quality nutrients taken for a long-term can have a positive impact on your body.

Research has also proved a relevant, decisive link between gut micro-organisms,



which live in our intestine, what we eat and how we ultimately feel. No wonder gut health is integral to mood, emotions, and psychological health management. So, managing stress with food is a great tactic for overall health. A well-balanced, nutritious diet is the single most important element for good health. Next time you feel stressed, observe your

### Dark chocolate

It is rich in antioxidants and helps lower stress hormone levels in the body when enjoyed in moderation, as traditionally bereft of any unnecessary surplus sugar.

### Warm milk

It is known to induce a good sleep-in night and aids stress management when sipped right before retiring to bed. Warm milk has a relaxing effect. Rich in calcium and vitamin D, it helps to maintain the bone and is also known as a muscle relaxant and mood stabiliser.

### Nuts & seeds

Nuts and seeds are teeming with magnesium, healthy fats, and nutrients; act as a stress-busting snack when consumed in mod-

flower seeds, and walnuts are great options to choose from.

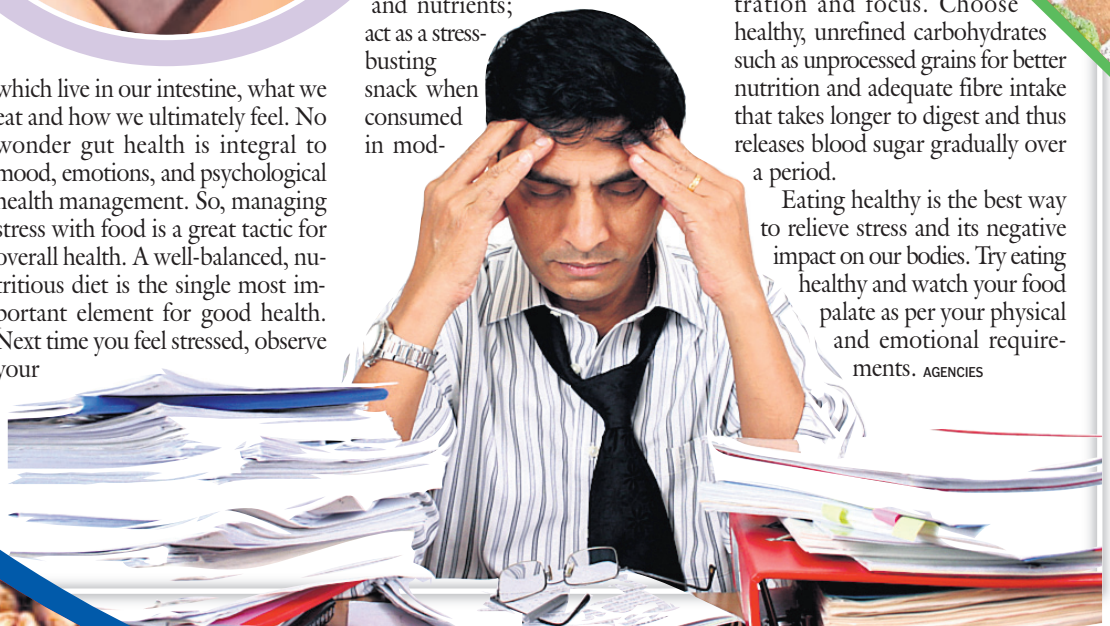
### Foods high in fibre

They are hailed as gut-friendly and may lower stress, anxiety and depression. To add more fibre to your diet, eat adequate amounts of fresh fruits, leafy vegetables, nuts & seeds, and many more. You may also opt for whole-grain-based foods such as whole-grain breakfast cereals.

### Whole unprocessed grains

They are known to provide a mood-stabilising effect by spiking serotonin (a boosting-mood hormone that decreases stress) levels thus, resulting in better concentration and focus. Choose healthy, unrefined carbohydrates such as unprocessed grains for better nutrition and adequate fibre intake that takes longer to digest and thus releases blood sugar gradually over a period.

Eating healthy is the best way to relieve stress and its negative impact on our bodies. Try eating healthy and watch your food palate as per your physical and emotional requirements. AGENCIES



**Kevval**

