

APRIL 23-29, 2023

# SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



INTERNATIONAL DANCE DAY - APRIL 29

# Springs in their steps



COVER STORY

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Saugato Roy Choudhury, after starting off as a radio jockey, has so far hosted over a hundred musical shows at regional and national levels. He has curated songs for labels like T-Series, Saregama and Times while collaborating with celebs such as Sunidhi Chauhan, Mohit Chauhan and several others. Known as the first music supervisor from Odisha, Saugato has also conducted shows comprising top artistes like Salim Merchant, Tanishk Bagchi, Benny Dayal, Leslie Lewis and many more. The current host of 'In Conversation with' on Instagram Live, a show which promotes regional talents, loves to play cricket when he gets a break

Sunday everyday

If you are in a creative profession every day is a day off as well as a working day at the same time. So, 'My Sunday' has hardly been a day-off for me. I get to do what I love the most i.e., create digital content with artists from industry.

Cricket crazy

When I find some time off from working, I take to cricket, my second passion. If not for music, I would one day get into sports broadcasting or host a mainstream cricket match on television at least once in my lifetime.

Occasional adventurer

I am not an adventurous person literally but I don't miss out on such occasions if they are planned with my favourite people.

Weekend-ing with buddies

Chilling and hanging out with friends and loved ones is a must for me when I get breaks. Luckily most of them are also associated with music.

With furry friend

When I am not out with friends, you will find me with Mango, my four-legged furry companion. He's the angel of my life and an inseparable part of our family.



SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

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

- I am not a vegetarian because I love animals. I am a vegetarian because I hate plants.
I've started telling everyone about the benefits of eating dried grapes. It's all about raisin awareness.
I am on a seafood diet. Every time I see food, I eat it.
Time may be a great healer but it's also a lousy beautician.



GROWTH OF LOCALS

Sir, Last week's cover story Catalysts of change (April 16-22), which highlighted entrepreneurs from Odisha who have grown and catalysed their work by joining hands with the locals and working with the tribal population, was a revelation. The story was all about the entrepreneurs embracing the local culture for benefiting the locals and keeping the flag of our traditional heritage up high. I always knew naming a business was equally important as working for it; Craftpotli, GalangGabaan and the KalaKart are wonderful naming done by the founders, very aesthetic. The write-up featured the founders and the artisans beautifully, that is one way how you bring out their hard work in front and make it a source of happiness and motivation to function better. It's heartening to learn that Kavya Saxena, one of the young entrepreneurs, aims to make Adivasi women financially independent for which she is staying away from factory-produced material.

PRAKASH K BEHERA, KENDRAPARA

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

INTERNATIONAL DANCE DAY - APRIL 29

# Springs in their steps

Creativity knows no bounds and it can be seen through the arrays of dance forms around the world. On this International Dance Day, let's celebrate the impact it has on an individual as well as the society

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

*Dancing is like dreaming with your feet. - Constanze Mozart*



As dreams are one's birthright, the same goes for the dance. Anyone with the willingness to express emotions can fathom and solidify it through synchronised physical movement called as dance, regardless of their age, gender, physical ability, or prior experience. Dance has been an important part of ceremonies, rituals, celebrations and entertainment since before the birth of the earliest human civilisations. Even though there is diversity in dance forms throughout the cultures of the world, the central ideology remains the same: to express. With that in mind, this year's theme for International Dance Day is to celebrate the versatility and popularity of dance as an art form. In order to discuss the same on the eve of International Dance Day, **Sunday POST** sat down with a few prominent dancers and dance enthusiasts and here is what they had to say:

**'Dancing is appreciating the power of creativity'**

Debasish Sahoo, a former corporate professional and founder of Dance Ka Keeda Studios in Bhubaneswar, has actively pursued his passion for dance to reach the place he is today. Sharing his inspiration, he says, "I didn't have much exposure to dance growing up, but I was always passionate about art, music, and physical activity. I first got introduced to it through dance societies in college. I discovered that dance was the perfect way to bring together my love for art, music, and movement. Dance resonated with me from the soul. As my skills developed, I found it essential to have in my life, and so the dancer in me was born."



Debasish Sahoo

He further adds, "I have been dancing for over nine years and explored an array of dance styles. Although I have attempted approximately 150 different dance forms, I have a particular fondness for hip-hop and Bollywood. However, I am also actively involved in other styles such as lyrical, folk (including Bhangra and Sambalpuri), afro, freestyle, jazz, and salsa."

Narrating the impact of dance on his personal and professional life, he says, "The moment I began to learn and perform dance, I found an appreciation for

the power of creativity and crafting something originally beautiful from the scratch and sharing it with others. It had a profound impact on all aspects of my life. Throughout this journey, my involvement with dance has grown into a significant and passionate commitment, helping me to become more focused and dedicated in my life. In fact, my passion for dance even prompted me to transition from a corporate position at an MNC to starting my dance studio in Bhubaneswar, so that I could build a life around it."

"The theme for this year is centred around acknowledging the significance of dance and its cultural value on a global scale. Dance can be defined as the act of using artistic movement to experience joy within oneself, which makes it accessible to all cultures and nationalities. As various cultures express themselves uniquely through dance, new forms of dance emerge. Dance allows different cultures to learn about themselves and each other, fostering love, empathy, and a sense of belonging," Debasish concludes.

**'Odissi is my true calling in life'**

Lucky Prajna Pratisthita Mohanty, disciple of Padma Shri awardee Guru Kumkum Mohanty, a skilled artiste and connoisseur with several accolades, says, "Watching Odissi dance performances on Doordarshan as a child inspired me to pursue a career in Odissi. I was mesmerized by the intricate footwork, fluid movements, and emotive expressions of the dancers."



Debasish with his students

I attribute much of my success to the channels's inspiration and encouragement."

Elaborating his journey, he says, "My specialisation is in Odissi dance, which is a classical dance form originating from Odisha. I reside in Cuttack, where there is an institution called Kala Vikas Kendra. My father enrolled me in this institution, and it was there that I received formal training in Odissi dance. I was initially introduced to it because of its accessibility in my hometown, but my interest grew after watching performances on television. I further pursued my passion and completed my Masters in Odissi dance from Sambalpur University."



Lucky Prajna

Sharing the significance of Odissi dance in his life, Lucky comments, "It is impossible for me to envision a life without Odissi as it is an integral part of my being. I strongly believe that it is my calling in life and I cannot fathom doing anything else. I feel as though it is a divine plan for me to become an Odissi dancer. Whether it is in my personal or professional life, I am content and fulfilled with whatever comes my way, as long as I am able to continue practicing and performing."

"For me, the true measure of success in my pursuit of dance is not fame or fortune, but rather achieving God's grace and emulating the artistry of my Guru. I aspire to convey this through my performances and artistic expression, as it is the ultimate fulfilment of my passion. To become a successful dancer, one must possess qualities such as sincerity, passion, practice, and humbleness. Sincerity allows you to perform with genuine emotion; passion drives your dedication; practice hones your skills; and humbleness keeps you open to learning and growing as a dancer. My Guru imparted the skill of 'Abhinaya', and I followed her instructions meticulously. Ultimately 'Abhinaya' became my signature style, bringing me greater fame as a dancer. I attribute my success in dance entirely to my Guru's teachings," he adds.

"Teaching and performing Odissi keep me motivated every day. As a teacher, I am driven by my students' progress, and receiving dance programme invitations pushes me to practice more. Dancing in front of my guru gives me immense motivation. I suggest having backup options since the dance field is highly competitive. If dance is your passion, pursue it wholeheartedly", signs off Lucky.

Lucky performing Odissi



Subhajit with his group

**'Enjoying the dance is crucial'**

Subhajit Dash, a native of Cuttack, is an IT engineer and content creator who dances for fun and has been dancing since his school days. Sharing his journey, Subhajit says, "My source of inspiration is my mother, who is an excellent Odissi dancer and won multiple awards during her college days. Her love and



Subhajit

passion for dance have inspired me to follow in her footsteps. Additionally, Rahul Naik, a friend of mine, is a professional dancer who juggles his passion for dance with a corporate job. He taught me the true essence of dance and further fueled my passion. Being a huge admirer of Bollywood,

I used to limit myself to that genre. But, my experience changed when I was enrolled in ITER and got exposed to various other dance forms such as tutting, hip hop, isolation, lyrical, and others. This allowed me to broaden my knowledge and skills in dancing beyond the confines of Bollywood and opened up new possibilities for me to explore and experiment."

"Dancing has had a significant impact on my life, both personally and professionally. It brings me immense joy and adds a sense of fulfilment to my life. Whenever I am feeling down or happy, I turn to music and dance, which instantly

uplifts my mood. In fact, I often find myself spontaneously dancing to any music that I hear. Unfortunately, due to a ligament injury, there was a time when I was unable to dance, but I have partially recovered and can now resume," he later adds.

In his opinion, three things are essential to becoming a great dancer: First, one must possess a deep understanding of music, which enables them to identify and dance to every beat and rhythm of a song. Secondly, enjoying the dance is crucial, as it brings enthusiasm and heart to the performance, resulting in flawless body movements and style. Thirdly, daily practice is necessary to improve skills and learn new dance styles. Pursuing a career in dance requires dedication and focus, sticking to a particular style and avoiding distractions.

**'Dancing has been a tremendous aid, both personally and professionally'**

Ananya Anupama

Sharma, who is currently pursuing a BBA at the DAV School of Business Management, shares her inspiration behind her journey and says, "Ever since I was a child, I've had a deep passion for dancing. Whenever I heard music, my legs would start moving automatically. As I grew older, my interest in dance only continued to grow. I can attribute much of my inspiration and motivation to my mother, who encouraged and supported me along the way. Dancing has become an integral part of who I am, and I feel grateful to have discovered this passion at such a young age."

Elaborating on several forms of dance Ananya continues: "My area of expertise lies in different styles of dance, including Odissi, folk, contemporary, and freestyle. Odissi is a traditional form that originated in Odisha, while folk dance refers to the traditional dances of a particular region or community. Contemporary dance is a modern dance form that incorporates elements of different dance styles, and freestyle is an improvised dance style that

allows for creativity and self-expression." Asked how dance has played a decisive role in her life, she adds, "Personally, dancing



Ananya

has been a tremendous aid in combating feelings of loneliness and boosting my self-confidence. Whenever I'm feeling down, I find that dancing in a joyful manner helps me overcome obstacles. Professionally, dancing has also helped me build confidence and overcome stage fright. In summary, dancing has had a positive impact on both my personal and professional life by providing a means of communication, bolstering my confidence, and helping me cope with negative emotions."

To stay passionate about dancing, Ananya likes to explore various dance styles and watch diverse dance performances. Setting new dance goals is another way she keeps things fresh and challenging in my dance practice, says Ananya.





WORLD VETERINARY DAY- APRIL 29

# Fostering companionship

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

**The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated - Mahatma Gandhi**

Ours is a great nation and it is certainly on the path of progress. But do we treat our animals with empathy and inclusiveness as the theme of this year's World Veterinary Day suggests.

"No, certainly not," thunders Subhashree Subhashmita Mishra, a firebrand poet of the Capital City known for her compositions on feminism.

Her resentment is not without a reason. She recently approached quite a few animal-focused organisations, which claim to offer shelters to stray animals, pleading to rescue an aging and diseased Dobermann but to no avail. The hapless animal was abandoned on a busy National Highway by its 'parents' to be crushed under the wheels of speeding vehicles as it was of no use for them.

Finally she managed to get a home for the animal with the help of one of her friends, thanks to social media.

So, the slogans and themes publicised on such an occasion often sound good only on pen and paper, laments Mishra.

On this backdrop and ahead of World Veterinary Day, **Sunday POST** caught up with a few veterinarians to learn what they have to share.

**Dr. Radhamohan Narendra**, an Assistant Professor of Veterinary Medicine at the Institute of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry under SOADU, says, "This day is an opportunity to honour and appreciate pets and the veterinary professionals who care for them. But the day is more about motivating young people to participate in veterinary science. This



apart, society should also take care of the living standards of animals, especially those who are not properly taken care of and left abandoned at public places."

Explaining the inception of veterinary science, he narrates "According to Indian tradition, Shali Hotra is known as the founder of veterinary science and is considered the first veterinary surgeon for horses. The symbol for the veterinary profession is a caduceus, which typically features a veterinary technician and two snakes intertwined with the letters V and T, and is associated with Hermes and Aesculapius, the Greek God of medicine."

He goes on to add that it is not just the services to the animals, the veterinarians worldwide should also be recognised for their excellent work on this occasion. Society should observe this day as an occasion when humans, animals, and the environment as a whole become happy, concludes Narendra.

**Bawrun Mohanty**, a fourth year veterinary student from College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology,



"The importance of this day lies in the value that this service provides to society. It is celebrated to make people aware of the importance of all the animals living in our ecosystem and our duty towards them. This day urges people to feed stray animals when they are hungry, provide timely water in summer, give them medicines when they are sick, give them shelter and most of all - Not to be cruel towards them. They should be treated with love and care. This day also appreciates and salutes to all the veterinarians throughout the world for their selfless service and tireless efforts."

The students should be involved in veterinary activities throughout the year and not just on this day as it is their duty and responsibility

to promote animal welfare and management, opines Bawrun.

Besides, the role of veterinarians isn't anymore restricted to treating the animals. It has now reached many other sectors as well. Veterinarians are now a part of the dairy industry, agricultural research, defence, sports, food safety and many others, he adds.

On their plans this year, he shares, "We are going to conduct a free vaccination campaign from morning 10 am till afternoon. Free vaccines will be given to any breed of dogs, cats or cattle. We have planned ambulatory programmes where we could treat the animals in their shed. We will also use social media platforms and the internet to sensitise people about animal welfare."

World Veterinary Day provides the opportunity to demonstrate the duties and responsibilities the vets play at local, national and international level as well as the challenges they face in day-to-day life, says **Linkan Mahapatra**, a final year student of the same varsity.

He reckons that a true veterinarian needs to first acknowledge the value of diversity, equity and inclusion in improving the veterinary dispensary culture and practice.

On changes that have taken place in the last few decades, he says, "The biggest and most obvious growth has been in 'companion animal sector'. People have become fond of pets more than they used to in the past. This apart, the proportion of female vet graduates has spiked tremendously.

Technology has also advanced remarkably. About three decades ago, the only veterinary equipment for diagnosis was X-ray. We now have digital x-ray, ultrasound, MRI, advanced laboratory testing, endoscopy and many more, he adds further.

And about challenges, he adds, "Vets should be well acquainted with the use of new equipment efficiently. Now we focus not only on treatment but also on the animal husbandry extension as it forms an



integral part of the Indian economy alongside agriculture. One of the most crucial challenges has to be wildlife conservation with the emerging threats of extinction."

On being asked how one can add novelty to the profession, Mahapatra shares, "Being vets, we can involve ourselves in veterinary webinars and seminars related to the theme of this year. The Internet can also play a huge role in promoting and raising awareness on animal welfare."

"We all can spend some quality time with our pets and can adopt any stray animals as companions and provide them food, shelter and good health facilities and posting pictures with them on social media platforms. We can also arrange health checkup camps in different villages", he signs off.



**DISCO DANCER TRIVIA**

# When the producer put money on Mithun's 'legs'

Even after over 40 years, director Babbar Subhash's musical hit *Disco Dancer* continues to remain iconic. The Mithun Chakraborty starrer was a song and dance movie that was also high on emotions. A musical show based on the film titled *Disco Dancer - The Musical* was played in Mumbai till April 23. The show had premiered last year in London.

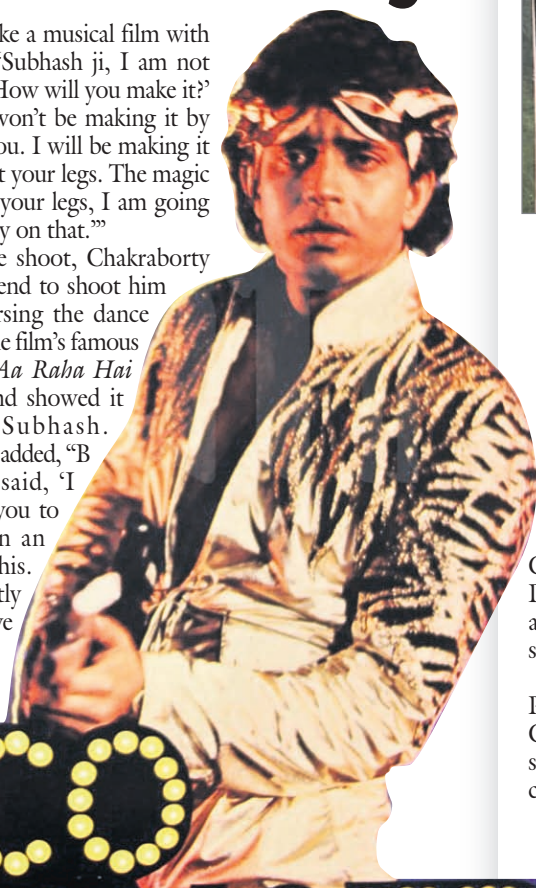
Its first performance in Mumbai happened a few days back. It was graced by Mithun Chakraborty himself. The veteran actor went nostalgic thinking about how he was cast in the film by Babbar Subhash despite the fact that he wasn't a star at that time.

Recalling how B Subhash offered him the film, Chakraborty said, "I was shooting *Tagdeer Ka Badshah* with Babbar *sahab*. I was sitting outside the studio in Worli in between shots. He came towards me and said that he

wants to make a musical film with me. I said, 'Subhash ji, I am not even a star. How will you make it?' He said, 'I won't be making it by looking at you. I will be making it by looking at your legs. The magic you have in your legs, I am going to put money on that.'"

Before the shoot, Chakraborty asked his friend to shoot him while rehearsing the dance steps from the film's famous song *Yaad Aa Raha Hai Tera Pyar* and showed it to B Subhash. Chakraborty added, "B Subhash *ji* said, 'I don't want you to change even an inch from this. Just do exactly what you have done here.'"

AGENCIES



## Odia musical play *Devdas* on April 27

In a first, the theatre lovers of Bhubaneswar will get a taste of a musical play at Rabindra Mandap, April 27. Titled *Devdas*, the play is written by eminent poet Devdas Chhotray and adapted for the stage by Dev Meher. Auromira Entertainment and Mitu's Music have joined hands to stage the production.

Starring Rano Joy as Devdas, Sheetal Patra as Paro, and BM Baisali as Chandramukhi, this timeless classic is sure to leave the audience mesmerised, claim the makers. The play comprises 10 songs composed by Om Prakash

Mohanty and rendered by Susmita Das, Arvind Dutta and Debasmita Mishra.

Responding to the development, writer Chhotray said, "*Devdas* has been created for the big screen multiple times, yet several aspects of the classic have remained unexplored which is why it still evokes so much curiosity even now."

Director Meher commented, "The epic love story has been drawing viewers and makers for the last 100 years. I'm sure the show, with its gripping storytelling, imposing set and a stellar cast, will keep the audience engaged till the end."

Tickets for the play are available on the BookMyShow online platform. PMW



## 'I'm thankful to have found an audience'

Yami Gautam is on a roll with four back-to-back successes on streaming platforms, but the actor says she never signs a film thinking whether it is for OTT or theatre. The actress is currently receiving praise for her performance in *Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga*. The suspense thriller became the most viewed Indian film on Netflix within two weeks of its March 24 premiere.

While this is her fourth consecutive release on a streaming platform after *A Thursday*, *Dasvi*, and *Lost*, Gautam said she isn't someone who discriminates between audiences or mediums.

She said in an interview, "For me, an audience is an audience. I come from a background where whatever you do; you get labeled by some bracket. I don't want to be under any kind of label. I'm just very thankful to have found an audience."

"I'm an actor; when I sign a film, I don't think in my head if this is for OTT or theatre. A film is a film. Our job is to entertain and engage the audience, and we will continue doing that," Yami concluded.

AGENCIES



## Samantha feels lucky featuring in *Citadel*

*Shaakuntalam* actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu says she was 'truly humbled' to attend the world premiere of *Citadel* recently in London, where she mingled with 'some of the world's best'. Samantha is set to reunite with her *The Family Man* directors Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK for the Indian chapter of the international series, a globe-trotting spy drama. She also gave her co-star Varun

Dhawan a shoutout as she shared their photos Thursday from the show's London premiere.

Samantha, who was dressed in black for the event, wrote in her Instagram caption, "Truly humbled to be amongst some of the worlds best at the global premiere of the film in London. The camaraderie, the creativity, the talent, the love, the shared vision, and the dream of the people in that room were so inspiring and invigorating that I felt truly lucky and blessed to be part of this team and the *Citadel* Universe."

Samantha is working alongside Varun Dhawan on the Indian original series within the *Citadel* franchise, whose flagship show, featuring Priyanka Chopra and Richard Madden, starts streaming on Prime Video April 28.

AGENCIES

## 175TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF UTKAL GOURAV

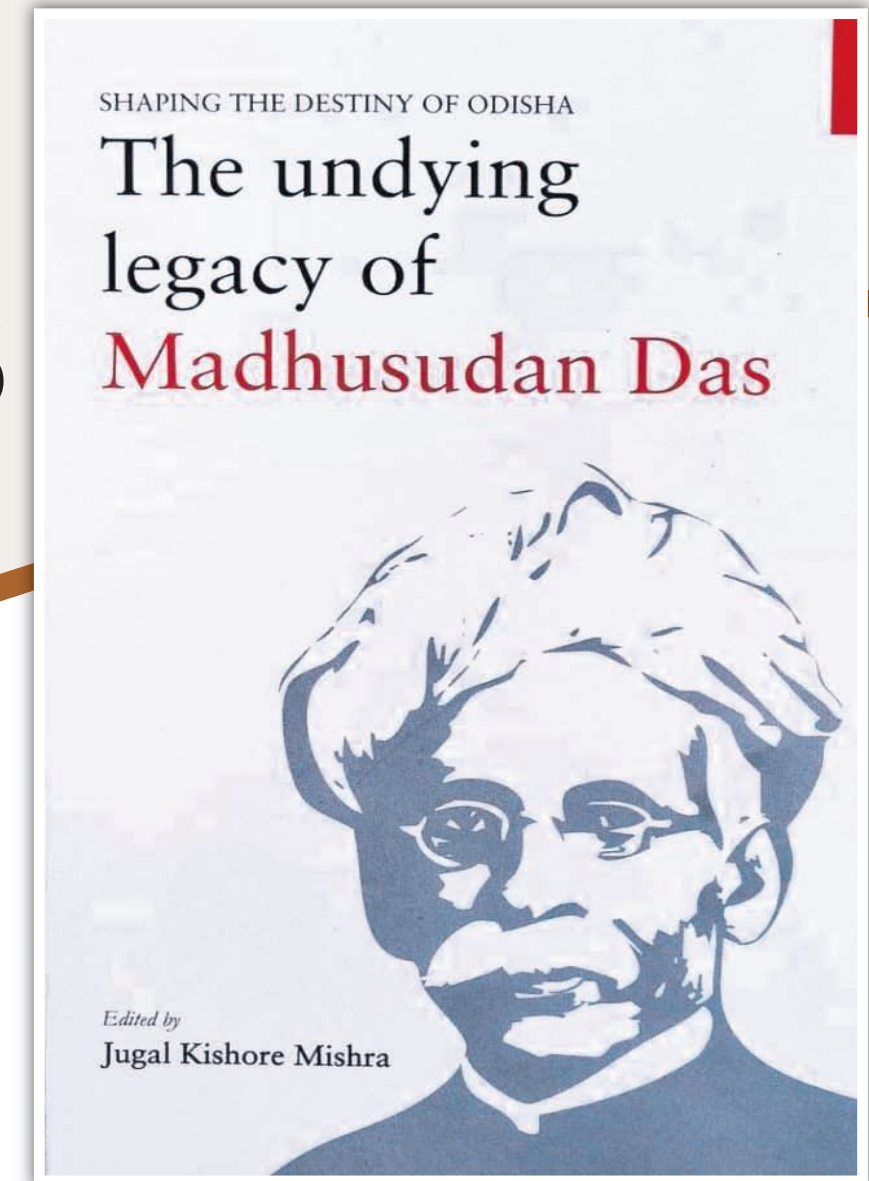
# potpourri of facts, anecdotes and nostalgia

formal training so that they can upgrade their traditional skills and get good income by manufacturing and selling them indigenously & also exporting them. The echo of the Drain Theory of Dadabhai Naoroji (1871) could be clearly discerned.

He went to Germany to see the leather work there and brought back a German expert to help him run the tannery. Apart from cow and sheep hide, the tannery used the hides of lizards, snakes, and crocodiles to make fine leather products. The goods made of lizard skins were so soft and smooth that they became very popular and found their way to foreign markets in England, Europe & Japan, fetching high prices. Within the country, many products were supplied to the Police, Post and Telegraph & Telegraph departments of Government of India. Madhusudan never compromised with the quality of the products and cared for the tannery as if it was his own.

The success story of the tannery spread far and wide. National leaders like Gandhi and Ambedkar praised Madhusudan on two counts, for generating jobs and employment for Dalits and for striking at the root of untouchability. When Gandhi came to Odisha in 1925, he visited Utkal Tannery and noticed how upper caste Brahmins, Karanas and Dalits worked together without caste aversion, a unique template in social unity. He also liked how the employees worked with their hands. He wrote: "Without the use of our hands and legs, our brains would be atrophied. Tolstoy taught the same lessons through many of his tales." Like Gandhi, Ambedkar held him in high esteem. Like Madhusudan, Ambedkar was a rationalist and praised him for his industrial enterprise. Caste as a stigma to be removed was the common thread between them. In March 1916, Madhusudan moved a resolution in the Council Hall where he emphasized how the caste stigma was responsible for the plight of depressed classes in India. For him untouchability as a boundary line between man and man should be removed.

Utkal Tannery did very well for about twenty years in terms of production and distribution. Even before the Swadeshi movement of Bengal, this idea of pioneering a new industry could be conceived and successfully practiced by a highly educated man, a busy



lawyer; in a stinking trade which from time immemorial belonged to the 'chamars' in India. It is unfortunate that around 1925, the Utkal tannery started incurring heavy losses. Firstly because of his multifarious engagements, he could not supervise the work properly. Most importantly it was his unwavering commitment to quality that led to setting fire to thousands of pairs of shoes if he found defects in one or two. He used to say; 'If a bad pair of shoes falls into the hands of a foreigner, he will say that the Oriyas are cheats. For him, Orissa's craftsmanship was more important than profits. He was declared insolvent and his house was auctioned off.

The engagement of Dalits in the tannery in the early part of the 20th century was certainly a revolutionary step. It gave them not only a regular source of income but self-respect at a time when even the shadows of Dalits were considered polluting. The tannery became the nursery of social unity and brotherhood. It is interesting to note that forty-five years before Indian Independence, Madhusudan and Jyotirao Phule, an anti-caste intellectual, had argued that caste in India is a form of slavery and must be abolished. Madhusudan demonstrated similar concern for the depressed classes. Phule established the first-ever girls' school in India in 1848. Madhu Babu established the first girls' school in 1905 and the first women's college in 1913. Both be-

lieved: Without education, wisdom was lost, without morals development was lost.

Jugal Kishore Mishra, a distinguished Professor, has brought out a unique compendium of articles on Madhu Babu titled *The Undying Legacy of Madhusudan Das* on his 175th birth anniversary. It has articles by bureaucrat par excellence Vivek Pattanayak who has brought out Madu Babu's unique contribution as a legislator. Rudra Prasad Kar brings out the famous cases he fought as a redoubtable lawyer. Ramesh Mishra brings out the backdrop in which he converted to Christianity. Raj Kumar writes a lovely piece as to how he addressed the Dalit question by setting up the Utkal Tannery. Prithish Acharya compares the role of the two tallest sons of Odisha, Madhu Babu and Gopabandhu Dash in the national movement. The book is a rare potpourri of facts, anecdotes, and nostalgia. Madhu Babu was a rare renaissance man who continues to inspire and be a beacon light, how to place principle above opportunism, pride over chicanery, and most importantly what one needs to be a man of much splendor timber.



SATYA NARAYAN MISHRA

Madhusudan Das also known as Madhu Babu for every proud Odia whose 175th birthday falls this month, is credited with several firsts; the first postgraduate including graduation in law, the first lawyer, and the first minister who played a pivotal role in bolstering Odia's identity at the turn of the 20th century. But his pioneering role as an entrepreneur, who cared for reputation and quality over profit is not adequately known. The way he gave voice to the local artisans by setting up Orissa Art Wares in 1898 and improving the self-esteem and livelihood of Dalits by setting up Utkal Tannery in 1905 is without parallel. He could be controversial when he embraced Christianity, impressed by the Brahmo movement and pioneering work done by the missionaries. When he passed away Gandhi paid him a fulsome tribute by observing: 'Though he professed Christianity, he had the same regard for Hinduism that he entertained for his own faith. He taught the youth dignity of labour and gave practical proof of his teaching by establishing at great personal sacrifice a tannery in Cuttack'.

Madhu Babu set up the Utkal tannery at Cuttack in 1905, with two objectives- to ameliorate the acute economic plight of the Dalits, who were engaged in the business of animal hides, and harness the excellent opportunity by producing leather goods and shoes and exporting them. He was truly global in vision when he observed: "In India, we are engaged in the Council on how to stop cow slaughter, while German factories are turning out valuable leather goods from the hides of dead cattle." Germany made 48 million Army boots during WWI. He observed that raw hides were being exported to cater to the industrial needs of England and other European countries at cheap rates (Rs 9 crores annually) and imported leather products at high prices. Since shoe making was the traditional occupation of some Dalit communities in Odisha, he took a decision to give them

**Priyanshi**



PHOTO: KAMAL PHOTOGRAPHY