

JULY 18-24, 2021

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



**From
Riverbed
To Olympics
Track**



With mother and brother



Top Ollywood actress Bhoomika Dash, who last week had launched her official YouTube channel to build deeper connections with fans, loves to make crafts from waste materials at her leisure.

Late Bird

Sunday is a chill day for me and needless to say that I don't leave bed before 9 am. However, I start the day with Sanskrit prayer 'Karagre Vasate Lakshmi' to begin it on a positive note.

Visual Artist

For many, the best way to express emotion is through canvas and I am no exception. I make time to put my feelings and imaginations on canvas and showcase them all over the place.

DIY Expert

I always find time for the things that I am passionate about. I indulge in craft making at my leisure on Sundays. I mostly use glass pieces, bottles, unused pots and other waste materials to make decorative pieces for my sweet home.

Fan of Korean Movies

Not Hindi films, watching Korean dramas is my favourite pastime. Also, I frequently watch old Odia movies with my family on Sundays.

Tea Party

My papa dons the chef's apron and treats us with a special lunch on Sundays. But the tea party in the evening remains the main attraction of the day where we discuss everything and have fun.



A poster of her upcoming movie

RASHMI REKHA DAS, 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

- It's always the wrong person who teaches you the right things in life.
- Every weekend I do what I love most, absolutely nothing!
- I am not single, I'm just Romantically Challenged.
- When I die, I want my grave to offer free WiFi so people will visit more often.

HIGHLY ENJOYABLE

Dear Sir, It's heartening to note that 'Mixed Bag' features upcoming as well as reputed names in diverse fields of culture. Its variegated shades and the catchy captions make it an enjoyable read on a Sunday. The tete-a-tete with budding child artists, singer of Sambalpuri ballads and folklore, promising actor-director, dancing prodigies etc. from time to time, provide a meaningful glimpse of the rich cultural heritage of Odisha.

AMIT BANERJEE, NEW DELHI

DIVINE ACT

Dear Sir, Lord Jagannath, for millions of devotees, is not just a deity but a feeling. So, it is very difficult for mortals like us to understand his 'leelas' or divine acts. People who featured in the cover story 'Beyond Belief' are truly blessed to have felt the presence of Lord in their life.

AKHIL PRADHAN, DHENKANAL

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

From Riverbed to Olympics track

She has participated in numerous international events, so, there is no pressure, says current national champion Dutee Chand, adding, she has been practicing hard and is hopeful of winning a medal for India in Tokyo

DEBI MOHANTY

Monsoon has set in for well over a fortnight. However, the Brahmani-one of the principal lifelines of Odisha's agricultural and industrial economy- is almost dry in Chaka Gopalpur village under Prathamakhandi panchayat of Rasulpur block in Odisha's coastal Jajpur district. Along the narrow, concrete road that runs through the village, the majority of the families are busy with tussar silk. Many of them are weaving sarees, some extracting the silk yarn. "Seventy five percent of the families of the village are weavers, with an average-by village standard- financial condition," informs a resident, Bharat Das, 38.

However, Bharat says, like him, the entire roughly 600 residents are proud and excited, today. For, their very own, ace sprinter Dutee Chand is all set to compete at the Tokyo Olympics.

The significance of Dutee's qualification for the Tokyo event is huge for India, for another sprinter, Hima Das failed to make it. Dutee's new national record in the 100m race at the Indian Grand Prix IV gives high hopes for the country. Despite setting a new record by clocking 11.17 seconds to finish the race, she had failed to qualify for the games by just 0.02 seconds, as per the Olympics qualification parameters.

However, Dutee clinched qualification for the 100m and 200m races via the World Rankings quota. She is currently ranked world number 44 in 100m and 51 in 200m categories.

Already delayed by a year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the multi event sporting extravaganza will kick off Friday and continue till August 8. It will be Dutee's second tryst with the best in the world.

Not only her villagers are excited, even the Brahmani's long, sun bathed, golden sand bed, which served as the first ground for practice for Dutee wears an attractive look. With a bit of aid of luck, one of her daughters, Dutee, may bring glory for India.

"Besides Rio (2016) games, I have participated in numerous international events,

so, there is no pressure. I enjoy running and will give my 100 per cent. I have been practicing hard and I am hopeful to win a medal for my country," Dutee tells **Sunday POST**.

Acknowledging the contributions of her family as well as many others, she thinks, without them it wouldn't have been possible for her to reach where she is today. "My family has sacrificed a lot, coaches have worked very hard while Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Achyuta Samanta -founder of Kalinga Institute of social sciences (KISS) and KIIT University- and Union Sports Minister (Independent charge) Kiren Rijiju-have supported and encouraged me immensely. I will always remain grateful to all of them," she says.

Apart from other support and cash assistance, Naveen had handed over a cash award of Rs 3 crore for her double silver medals (in the 100m and 200m) in the 2018 Asian Games. She was also given out of turn promotion in the state-run Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) for her sporting achievement.

Incidentally, it was Dutee's eldest sister Saraswati, also a sprinter, who baptised her into sports. Born to Chakradhar Chand and mother, Akhuji, Dutee is one among the seven children: six daughters and a son. According to Prathamakhandi sarpanch, Chintamani Sur, the Chand family has seen the worst of times. Akhuji concedes that those days her family benefited hugely from the monthly subsidised ration and pucca house meant for BPL category.

Interestingly, Akhuji intones that for Saraswati, sport was never an automatic career option, rather a borrowed idea, which her daughter religiously followed out of compulsion. She says, the family's acute condition forced Saraswati to search for a job post her school education, some two decades ago. Her only goal was to get a job and help her parents run the family kitchen uninterrupted, so that the younger siblings had something in their stomach before they went to bed.

However, the road ahead was not easy. Having failed in her attempts, one day she sought guidance from one Nigamananda Mohanty of Kuakhia, a nearby village.

"Mohanty sir advised me to run and excel," reminisces Saraswati. "That was the turning point," asserts Akhuji. With hope in eyes and a commitment in mind, Saraswati began running, rigorously. Her efforts paid off as she won local level events and in the process represented the state and did well. She got a job in Odisha Police.





MOMENTS OF GLORY

HIGH HOPES

When I met her first in 2013, I was stunned by her hunger to strive hard to do something in life. I knew then, she would go a long way, bring laurels for the state and country. She just did that. Hopefully, she will repeat the same in Tokyo, too.

PROF. DR. ACHYUTA SAMANTA | MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND FOUNDER OF KIIT GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS

During the lockdown period, Dutee's practice and core exercises haven't stopped even for a day. She is a fighter, will never give up easily. Her mental toughness to withstand pressure is amazing.

SIBA MISHRA | DUTEE'S COACH SINCE 2012, ON HER CHANCE OF WINNING A MEDAL IN TOKYO OLYMPICS

Without her, this village wouldn't have come to limelight

CHINTAMANI SUR | VILLAGE SARPANCH

According to Bharat, in the absence of a playground, one, willing to practice running has to choose between the uneven village road and the Chennai-Kolkata National Highway-16, barely a kilometer away. While it's literally not possible to even jog casually on the village road, the highway is unsafe. However, if one tried, on either of them, not success, but an accident, is assured.

"So, Saraswati and later Dutee found the riverbed as their best bet. They ran barefoot, everyday, for hours together," says Bharat as fellow villager and retired jute mill employee, Bishnu Charan Swain, 62, nods in agreement. Sur recalls that though many mocked at them, the sisters paid no heed.

From the riverbed to the Olympic tracks, Dutee has run a long distance. To say it's been an incredible journey would be an understatement.

Narrating Dutee's early days, Sur says, on a very cold December morning he spotted Dutee stepping out of the riverbed. Surprised, he advised her to avoid running in the cold, otherwise she would fall sick. However, what astonished him even more was the budding champion's reply: "Once I start running, I don't feel the chill. I am trying to keep my body warm by running in the morning. It also helps me to remain fit and focused."

Sur believes, Dutee has made her own luck by sheer hard work. "Without her, this village wouldn't have come to limelight," he says in between asking Dutee (in Patiala, Punjab) over phone about her well being and last minute preparations.

The Arjuna award recipient and India's fastest woman, Dutee is eyeing on the 100m as she didn't get enough time to prepare for the 200m. "My focus will be on 100m," she says. Siba Mishra, who coached her from 2012, informs that the sprinter had made all preparations to fly to Germany for practice, early last year. But the coronavirus pandemic played spoilsport. "During the lockdown period, her practice and core exercises haven't stopped even for a day," claims Mishra. Ask him about Dutee's chances of winning a medal at Tokyo and pat comes the reply, "She is a fighter, will never give up easily. Her mental toughness to withstand pressure is amazing."

Incidentally, a few years back, controversy regarding her gender identity had abruptly interrupted Dutee's dreams. In 2014, she was pulled out from India's Commonwealth Games squad due to the Hyperandrogenism regulations of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF). However, she fought it in the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne, which later set aside the IAAF Regulations and allowed her to compete in international events.

In 2018, after the Supreme Court struck down Section 377 and decriminalised homosexuality, Dutee became the first Indian sportsperson to openly acknowledge being in a same-sex relationship. For which, she had to endure a lot of criticism. However, her focus never slipped off the running tracks.

"When I met her first in 2013, I was stunned by her hunger to strive hard to do something in life. Despite adversity and struggles, Dutee was bubbling with confidence. It was indeed astonishing. I knew then, she would go a long way, bring laurels for the state and country. She just did that. Hopefully, she will repeat the same in Tokyo, too," puts, Member of Parliament, Prof. Dr. Achyuta Samanta, who has stood behind her like a rock.

"Dutee is a true athlete. She takes success and failure equally in her stride. Whenever there's been a bad patch, she hasn't resigned, rather come back stronger," he beams.

Samanta has reasons to be happy as three of his KIIT (Deemed to be university) students, including Dutee-the



A road leading to Dutee's home

other two being fencer Bhavani Devi and javelin thrower Shivpal Singh-are in the Indian contingent for the Olympic Games. He says he has big surprises in store for the trio, which they will receive upon their return from Tokyo.

Incidentally, KIIT is the only varsity in India to send three athletes and one official, a doctor, to the Tokyo Olympics.

Meanwhile, many in her village still cherish the Khudurukuni Osha (mainly observed in coastal Odisha) during the month of Bhadraba (Aug-Sept) on Sundays, which Dutee used to organise in a grand way. During this festival Goddess Mangala



Village sarpanch Chintamani Sur (R) with others

is worshipped by young girls primarily for the safety, prosperity and good health of their brothers. "I do it to encourage the girls," Dutee says and hopes to join the festival when free in future.

Sur informs that his panchayat and all the six villages under it will felicitate Dutee after her return from Tokyo. As he says, "It will be a moment for celebration. She has the blessings of all." Which includes that of the Brahmani, whose contribution is unmissable, at least, to the growth of the village, and also, the early career of India's sprint queen, Dutee.

The dry riverbed of Brahmani in Chaka Gopalpur has a message for the youngsters- to excel even on the face of adversity. It also reminds all of the immense potential, if basic infrastructure like a play ground can be provided in schools.



A view of River Brahmani that played a significant role in Dutee's career

Woman of substance

THE STUNNING SUCCESS OF DR MAMATA TRIPATHI AS AN ACTOR, AUTHOR, SINGER, DANCER AND A COMPETENT ORGANISER IN HER LATE 40s PROVES IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO FOLLOW THE DREAMS AND MAKE A MARK

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Many women believe that they can't have both – it is either their career or the family. Approach like this often makes them give up on their flourishing careers and their ambitions. But there are a select few who not only ace their goal of having a successful career, but nail their roles as ideal mothers. Dr Mamata Tripathi is certainly one of them.

She is a woman of many parts — actor, author, anchor, researcher, singer, classical dancer and many others. Though, Mamata, unlike others, found success a little late in life, for her, it was never too late to follow the dreams and make a mark. At the age of 50, she never ceases to amaze those around her with her energy and a passion to learn.

Sunday POST takes a close look at Mamata's steady rise from a homemaker to an extremely successful artiste.

Even as she used to take keen interest in acting, music and dance during her school days, she couldn't make further progress due to her father's transferable job. However, Mamata was trained in Hindustani Classical Music for two years, and attended a few Odissi dance classes at Kala Bikash Kendra in Cuttack for some time. But her focus mostly remained on studies.

No wonder, she did her PhDs in Sanskrit (with fellowship from UGC) and Odia

and went on to teach at different schools in Delhi and Coimbatore for more than 12 years.

It was only after her return to Odisha and her kids grew up, Mamata thought of exploring her inherent creative skills.

Quoting Brazilian lyricist Paulo Coelho, she says, "*When you want something, the entire universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.*" That was exactly what happened in her case and she tasted success whatever she attempted in, thanks to her perseverance, passion and hard work.

"Apart from resuming training in Hindustani Classical under the tutelage of Pandit Dr Chittaranjan Pani and Pandit Damodar Hota, I joined some theatre workshops. Then there was no looking back. I have already lent my voice to some cover songs and performed in quite a few famous plays like *Kanyadaan*, *Chup! Court Chalichi* and *Aadhe Adhoore* after joining Jeevan Rekha theatre troupe," says Mamata who has been working with Doordarshan as a local

and national anchor for over three decades.

She has also been conducting literature festivals under the banner of Vagdevi Literature Trust for the last couple of years to promote Odia literature in the state. In between she has also authored a poem anthology Chhunna Chhunna Jochhana.

On her tryst with literature, Mamata says, "Apart from being a bureaucrat, my father Niranjana Padhi has also authored as many as 64 books on various subjects. Besides, my father-in-law Binod Kanungo was a renowned Odia author, freedom fighter, Gandhian, educationist, social reformer and the creator of Jnanamandal, the greatest encyclopaedia in the Odia language. I believe that some of their qualities have rubbed off on me which draws me towards literature. Inspired by my father-in-law, we have formed Vagdevi Literature Trust to promote Odishan art, culture and literature."

At the moment, she is writing textbooks for the Board of Secondary Education, Odisha for vocational courses of Class IX to XII and a recipe book for diabetics as she is the diet consultant to Kanungo Institute of Diabetes Specialties (KIDS) Hospital, owned by her husband Dr Alok Kanungo whom she owes much of her success.

On his support, Mamata says, "Whatever little I have achieved in life, it is because of him. Thanks to his unwavering support, I could play the roles of a successful wife, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, mother and now a creative person. Before that, I had to face many challenges to get my love as my co-pilot in life. We had an inter-caste marriage as I belonged to a Brahmin family while he was a Karan. Both families were against the marriage but we managed to earn the blessings of all with our determination and love for each other."

Mamata also gives much of the credit to Alok for inspiring her to follow her passion.

"Alok is not just a caring husband; he is my best friend forever also. He understands me and takes every care to fulfill my wishes before I bring them on my lips. I couldn't explore much of my creative skills till my early 40s due to various obligations. It was him, who motivated me to chase my passions and see how it made all the difference," signs off Mamata.



Kriti opens up about weight gain

Kriti Sanon says she chose a realistic approach while portraying the various stages of pregnancy in the upcoming film *Mimi*.

"Being blessed with a great metabolism, I've always been able to eat whatever I want. Owing to this, it wasn't easy for me to put on the kilos. From devouring the oiliest possible breakfast, to gorging on the sugariest of sweets, I had to stuff myself with way more food than normal," Kriti recalled.

The actress added: "Every two hours, I needed to snack on something even when I was not hungry. After a while, this whole buffet of junk food got nauseating. I also wasn't allowed to do any kind of workout including yoga, which led me to feel really unfit."

Director Laxman Utekar said: "There is a difference between playing a character and becoming the character. Kriti has taken a deep dive into this role and it literally shows."

Mimi also stars Pankaj Tripathi, Sai Tamhankar, Supriya Pathak and Manoj Pahwa.

IAN S



Taapsee dons producer's hat

Actress Taapsee Pannu will be seen in the upcoming film *Blurr*, which will be bankrolled by her newly-announced production company Outsider Films.

The film will be helmed by director Ajay Bahl, best known for his 2019 release, *Section 375*.

Blurr is jointly written by Pawan Sony and Ajay Bahl.

Taapsee said: "*Blurr* is the just kind of script I was waiting for. I'm delighted to be finally turning a producer with this film and with the support of co-producers and team, I am sure it's going to be an enriching journey."

She added: "Collaborating with Ajay is as exciting as it gets as I've seen his work.

He is the best to bring the gripping story of *Blurr* on-screen."

Bahl said *Blurr* is a thought-provoking and intriguing story. "With the massive scale it promises and the narrative it brings along, I believe

Blurr will not only be a power-packed entertainer, but it will stay with the audience too," he added.

IAN S



Ayushmann joins Doctor G unit



Actor Ayushmann Khurrana has started shooting for his upcoming film *Doctor G*. He says this is the third film he will be shooting amidst the pandemic.

Ayushmann posted a monochrome picture on Instagram, wearing a white T-shirt that reads: "Always late but worth the wait." He completed his look with round reading glasses and a black mask which has *Doctor G* written on it.

For the caption, Ayushmann wrote: "Day 1 #DoctorG: This is the third film I'll be shooting in the pandemic. But summers will be tough. One of the best scripts I've ever read."

Ayushmann's *Doctor G* co-star Rakul Preet Singh commented on the picture. She wrote: "Yay yay yay!! It's my third too let's kill it and can't wait to join you all."

The film is directed by Anubhuti Kashyap, filmmaker Anurag Kashyap's sister.

IAN S

'Awards are a mark of approval'



She made noise as she began a career in B-town with her debut film *Jawaani Jaaneman*. The movie starring Saif Ali Khan showcased Alaya F as this effervescent, blunt woman, something she confesses she is like in real life too. The actress, who's the daughter of Pooja Bedi was lauded at award shows and also walked away with a black lady at the Filmfare Awards.

Ask her, what awards mean to her, and she says, "I feel awards are a wonderful mark of approval. It's like an official mark of something that people think you are worthy of."

The actress who has proudly displayed this "mark of approval" at her home, further adds, "A debutant award is something you can get only once in your career. It celebrates your first film and so you don't get another shot at it. So, this is something I wanted for so long. It's very gratifying. It is just irreplaceable. I look at my trophy every day. I hope it is the first of many!"

AGENCIES



Tryst With Divinity

A male child, after 21 days of his birth, can become a Daitapati if he enters the Anasara room, says Devi Subhadra's Badagrahi and Daitapati servitor Ramchandra Das Mohapatra

become a Daitapati if he enters the Anasara room. This practice has been followed since time immemorial."

Daitapati Nutan Das Mohapatra says, "We are blessed to officially get our male child inducted into traditional service by having darshan and prasad of the deities. My son became a Daitapati last year while my brother Amit Das Mohapatra has recently offered his six-month-old baby Srianga in Lord Jagannath's service during the last Anasara rituals as part of the age-old tradition."

Elaborating more on the rituals he adds: "After Daitapati sevayats apply the special herbal oil on the bodies of the ailing Trinity as part of secret rituals during Anasara period, my nephew was taken to the Anasara room. He too applied oil on the bodies of Trinity and had the opportunity to have Lord's 'prasad'. As per our tradition, Srianga visited the temple wearing Khandua Pata and offered a silver coin to the deities. With this, Srianga became one of the youngest Daitapatis of Lord Jagannath."

Daitapati servitor Ramananda Das Mohapatra, father of twin sons Jaga and Balia, says "My sons Rohit Nanda Das Mohapatra and Ronit Nanda Das Mohapatra, aka Jaga and Balia, have been inducted as servitors during Anasara period. It's a matter of pride for us. With this induction they are



Daitapati Amit Das Mohapatra with his son

now a part of the Daitapati Nijog at the age of three and half months. Being toddlers, they were made to apply oil on the 'srianga' of Trinity. I got goosebumps when they entered the temple for the first time."

Servitor **Sanjay Das Mohapatra** who had the privilege of offering his son Akshay in the divine service says, "My son was blessed to have got the darshan of Lord Jagannath during Anasara on 29th day of his birth. With this, he has become the youngest servitor of the Trinity. It is a matter of pride to be born in a Daitapati family and get the opportunity to have a darshan of the Lords at an early age and touch the divine limbs."

Sanctity and Purity

As everyone in a Daitapati family engages themselves in the service of deities to conduct secret rituals inside Anasara room from Snana Purnima to Niladri Bije, they maintain sanctity and purity during the period. They consume Habisanna during the period which is cooked on traditional hearth by women of 'Daitapati' families wearing patta saree. They cook 'anna' and 'dalma' in the line of the procedure followed in Jagannath temple. Family members, including children, have this food before sunset and they are entitled to take food once a day. They neither take food nor water at any places other than their houses. All the Daitapati families strictly follow the rules. Married daughters are instructed not to visit their families during this period. These families also don't welcome friends and relatives as guests. They never give alms during this period. And as the deities never use beds during Anasara, the Daitapati family members never use cots, beds and pillows. They abstain from all sorts of luxuries, to be precise. They abstain from wearing gold ornaments during this period.



Daitapatis holding twin brothers Jaga and Kalia before taking them to the temple



Nutan with his son

Sanjay and his son

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Known as the family members of Lord Jagannath, Daitapati servitors are integral parts of Srimandir traditions. They are also believed to be the descendants of Sabara chief Bishwabasu, the first worshipper of Lord Jagannath. Perhaps, these are a few reasons, they play crucial roles during Brahma Parivartan (soul transfer) of the Trinity during Nabakalebara. They are also the ones who bury the old idols and observe post-death rituals. This apart, these servitors are involved in a number of other rituals of Srimandir.

But not too many people know how newborns in servitors' families get inducted into Lord's various services. So much so, that a 21-day-old male baby from a Daitapati servitor's family can offer his services during Anasara rituals of the Trinity.

Ahead of Bahuda Yatra, the return journey of the siblings, some servitors reveal about the roles of the kid servitors.

Devi Subhadra's Badagrahi and Daitapati servitor **Ramchandra Das Mohapatra** says, "A male child, after 21 days of his birth, can



Samata

PHOTO: KUMAR SHARAT, OP