

JULY 10-16, 2022

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



World Youth Skills Day - July 15

Walking the extra mile

P 3,4
COVER
STORY



After appearing in multiple web series, Mumbai-based model-cum-actress Somya Singh, an alumnus of KIIT University, looks forward to make her debut in Hindi films with senior actor Jimmy Shergill

Me time

On Sundays, I take time off to reboot my brain. I do it by practicing meditation and Yoga. I also vent out my bottled up emotions of last week by writing diaries. The practice helps me understand myself better and guides me to plan my future course of action.

Voice practice

Reading something loud is a good way of voice practice. So, I read at least two pages of Bhagavad Gita every Sunday and try to understand the meaning of the verses. Then I practice voice modulation and read scripts of my upcoming projects.

Health conscious

I eat a heavy breakfast on Sunday as I believe the first meal of the day is the most important meal of the day. I prefer stuff such as boiled sprouts and fresh fruit juice in my breakfast and avoid oily food.

Cheat meal

Though I am quite conscious about my health, I do have a cheat meal on Sundays. For that, my favourites are Chicken Popcorn, Tandoori Chicken and Pizzas. But when I am with my mom, I eat Matar ka Paratha to satisfy my taste buds.

Not a gymrat

I am not at all a gym person like several of my colleagues in the industry. I find it difficult to balance between regular exercising and shooting schedule. Moreover, I prefer to run for a kilometer in the evening.



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP



With family

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

- 1 in 4 people is crazy. Look at your 3 closest friends, if they seem OK, you're the one!
- The human brain functions 24 hours a day from the time we were born, and only stops when we take exams.
- Facebook is the only place where you can talk to the wall.
- STUPID = Smart Talented Unique Person In Demand.



LUCID WRITE-UP

Sir, Compliments to Satabhisa Nayak for her excellent review of the noted author Jagadish Mohanty's literary masterpiece 'Battles of Our Own'(June 26).Her superb narrative style, interspersed with select passages from the novel, holds the reader's interest till the very end. The review rightly dwells upon the author's craft in weaving the inner trials and tribulations of the three main protagonists -- Pradyumna, the outsider in quest of a job, Deshmukh, the colliery officer and Harishankar, the union leader. Their angst and alienation, the existential crises in their lives, the myriad facets of family, union and identity politics, the intertwining of different kinds of politics and power imbalances and the perennial conflict between the coal mine administration and the trade unions in a remote industrial setting have been beautifully unravelled by Nayak in her write-up.

AMIT BANERJEE, NEW DELHI

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

World Youth Skills Day - July 15



Walking the extra mile

Man's pursuit for well-being and indomitable desire to upgrade the natural skills are what separate him from the rest

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

Every living being on this planet needs a certain skill set for its survival. But human beings, considered the best creation of nature, are different from others. They never get satisfied with what they have got naturally. Their pursuit for well-being and never ending desire to upgrade the natural skills are what separate them from the remainder. They can think out of the box which other species can't.

In order to celebrate this human spirit and to equip young minds with skills for entrepreneurship, the United Nations has designated July 15 as World Youth Skills Day.

Ahead of this day, Sunday POST takes a look at a few amazing applications designed and developed by some Bhubaneswar-based techies who have stepped out of their comfort zones to make every day life a bit easier.

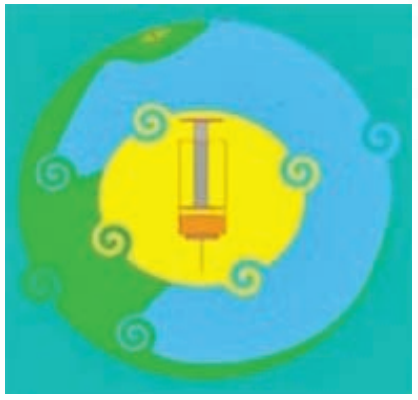
Project AntiVenom

Snakes are important because they play an important role in balancing the ecosystem by regulating the population of their prey like rodents and other small insects. Snake venom is also used for medicines to treat brain injuries, cancer, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's and several other diseases. However, people get shivers down their spines at the sight of a snake and out of fear they kill it without having any second thoughts.

So, a group of students of Gita Autonomous College has managed to develop this application named Project AntiVenom to create awareness on snakebite and

its management which will largely be applicable in remote areas. It comes handy when one comes across an unidentified snake.

"People usually panic after spotting a snake and they kill it. But here's an application which is sensitising those who are ignorant about snakes. This application is built in a way where just with a picture of a snake we can know if the snake is venomous or not and the options are also available to contact the team who would catch the snakes rather than killing them. Then, if someone is bitten by a snake, there is an option to call the ambulance helpline of Odisha. If the snake is still around, the user can identify the snake and inform the hospital to get the required anti-venom ready immediately," says 2nd year B-tech student Aparna Singh from Bihar, a co-developer of the app.



The user interface of the app has been kept as minimalistic as possible so that it can work smoothly on even low-end smartphones. The app doesn't even require any internet connection to use hence can be used in rural areas where there is low network

coverage or no internet connectivity, she claims.

Sharing her experience while making the application, she adds, "There were a lot of hurdles while making this application. While it was tough to get approval from the college authorities, some of the mates mocked at our attempts. Other technical issues were there in generating features and AI functioning also. But our team focused and dealt with all the issues and overcame them eventually."

This app is free and available in English and Odia languages. Users can download the AntiVenom App from Google Play Store.



Members of Project AntiVenom

Hands Behind The Project



Abhinav Prakash
Project lead, cloud + ml



Akash Prasad
code, UI



Prasun Singh
UI/UX

TED SMRZR

A TED talk is a recorded public-speaking presentation that was originally given at the main TED (technology, entertainment and design) annual event in the US or one of its many satellite events around the world.

But it's not an easy task to find the best TED talk online and people often get confused due to a series of similar talks available on the web. A lot of time is wasted in search of what you are looking for.

To address this issue, a bunch of college kids led by Abhinav Prakash has created a platform called TED SMRZR where one can compare similar Ted/TED talks by reading their summaries.

TED ideas are so powerful that they can change lives. But unfortunately most of the talks are in English. People who are not conversant with the language can't understand the talks. To overcome this shortcoming, Abhinav's team added another feature to the application that can translate the talks into other languages.

"The motto behind TED/TEDx talks is 'The idea worth sharing'. But most of the talks are in only English language making it inaccessible to every person in the world. Therefore, we have designed such an application which can support translation in more than



70 languages and summarise the entire talk without changing the actual meaning," says Prakash.

Asked what made him work on this project he says, "Growing up I have always wanted to become a software engineer and join a firm where I could write scalable, maintainable and production grade code. So, TED SMRZR, the first of its kind in the category, is a baby step in that direction."

Prakash along with his associates Prasun Singh and Akash Prasad completed the project in about six months. This AI-powered platform is free and no sign-up is required to access.

NYABAZAR

With so many e-portals out there, we are really spoiled for choice. A little too spoiled, perhaps. But that doesn't stop companies from putting out more e-portals, does it? In comes Nyabazar.com, 'Naye India ka Nya Bazar' (New India's New Bazar), as their tagline goes. In Bhubaneswar, this portal compares and contrasts several courses available on the World Wide Web and based on a rating system, ranks them so that making the right choice becomes easier for the job aspirants. They have onboard many people tasked with the job of helping candidates fine-tune their résumés and sometimes, even put one together from scratch. But their USP is the mentors they offer.

"This is the 21st century, we can't just depend on skills and we also need softer skills like conflict and stress management, leadership skills and so on. Mentors will help the individual develop these skills," says Deepesh, one of the founders.

"When we Google for courses online, we usually end up opting for the first or the second option. But what we do is consolidate all the data regarding the courses, like the price and so on, from all the platforms onto our website and it becomes easy for a user. And just like Amazon and Flipkart, we also have a rating system which makes the decision-making process easier for students. Soon, we will start the comment section too. At

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Debiprasad Samal, Shivam Giri, Dipesh Gaurav

Visit : www.nyabazar.com

present, they have partnered with six e-learning portals including Udemy, Unacademy, Udacity and a few others," he reveals.



Team Nyabazar



BHOOMIPUTRA, A TRIBUTE TO BIJU PATNAIK

Former Odisha Chief Minister and freedom fighter Biju Patnaik was a legend in his lifetime. Adjectives often seem inadequate to describe the bravery of Patnaik who was conferred Bhoomiputra Samman, the highest civilian honour of Indonesia which is rarely granted to a foreigner, for rescuing former Prime Minister Sultan Sjahrir amid Dutch attack.

Based on this theme, Deepesh Gaurav, another student of the college has created a game which is trending at the moment.

The game has three levels: Jakarta Calling, Baliyatra, and the ultimate Bhoomiputra. All levels offer distinct obstacles and goals, and players must complete all missions successfully to advance to the next level. While playing, the player is constantly reminded of nationalism and Biju Babu's commitment to the battle, which makes them proud.

Deepesh, on his creation, says, "I was always passionate about creating games. I developed a computer game for the first time when I was in Class XI. I prefer working alone on

short term projects. But executing a big project requires a dedicated team. Since our objective was to do something which would highlight the culture and tradition of Odisha, nothing can be more appealing than to showcase the life and works of Biju Patnaik, the icon. I did my research and then I created a network of volunteers to develop the game Bhoomiputra."

He went on to add, "We have developed this application with the sole purpose of creating awareness among the youth about the contribution made by Biju Patnaik in the Indonesian freedom struggle. Besides, we also want to shatter the myths that Indians can't create games and lead the gaming market. We did face a lot of difficulties relating to technical and financial aspects. In fact we still battle the fund crunch to hold our game in the market."



'Never give up on your dreams'

ROURKELA GIRL SHREYA LENKA, BEATING OVER 4,000 APPLICANTS ACROSS THE WORLD, HAS BECOME THE FIRST K-POP STAR FROM INDIA TO JOIN AS THE FIFTH MEMBER OF SOUTH KOREAN GIRL BAND BLACKSWAN

unique style of singing and dancing together. I learnt that this genre is called K-pop and the stars are called idols. After that I wanted to be part of the K-pop world.

Please share with us about your journey so far and the challenges you have faced.

After my arrival in South Korea, we had to undergo extensive workout, practice and study sessions. So, we didn't get much time to interact. We could only greet each other. But things have changed now as we get some time to spend and learn the culture of each other. The seniors are nice and kind

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Of late, South Korean pop music or K-pop in short has become a world phenomenon thanks to its distinct melodies, unique choreography, high production values, and the captivating performance by the artistes of several famous groups.

One such group is girl band *Blackswan* which has created a huge fan base across the globe over the years. A few months back, following the exit of one of its members, global auditions were held to fill in the positions.

Beating over 4,000 applicants, dark horse Shreya Lenka, an 18-year-old girl from Odisha's Rourkela, was recently selected as the fifth member of the band becoming the first K-pop star from India. She will now be known by her stage name Sriya and join the original members of the girl group - Youngheun, Fatou, Judy and Leia -- along with Gabriela Dalcin (Gabi) from Brazil as the sixth member.

The wonder girl was recently at Bhubaneswar and given a rousing welcome by her fans and the state government.

In an email chat with Sunday POST, she shared her journey and revealed how it feels to be the first K-pop idol from India.

What attracted you towards K-pop music?

I have been a dancer since I was 12. I always wanted to be a performer. A few years ago, my friend showed me a K-pop music video. First, I was drawn towards the slick choreography in the video but when I learnt that the people performing were actually singers, I got hooked onto it and there was no looking back. What appealed to me is their



With Philip YJ Yoon and Tourism Director Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav



Other members of girl band *Blackswan*

to me. They have helped me and Gabi learn the nuances of pop singing and performance. And let me tell you that Blackswan is a group bonded not by nationality, age or skin colour but by talent. In my entire training period, I stayed with Gabi in a dorm and a bond was created between us. As we both were away from our family and at a place where everything was different, we felt an instant connection with each other. I think I am lucky to have found a friend in Gabi or else the entire training process would have been extremely difficult to complete. Now that we get time to interact with all members, it feels like we are one family. I learned Hindustani classical music to improve my vocals on my grandmother's advice. Nevertheless, the journey was challenging due to COVID-19.

How does it feel to become the first Indian to be selected for a K-pop group?

This means a lot to me. It still feels like a dream. I was in Korea when it was announced by DR Music that I would be joining Blackswan. I received a lot of congratulatory messages from the fans and continue to get them even now. When Indian media started reaching out to our company for interviews, then I realised that finally my dream has been fulfilled.

What, according to you, have made groups such as BTS and Blackpink a global phenomenon?

It is their hard work and dedication towards their passion. Every time they try to bring something new and good music with strong choreography. And the stage presence, performance are always top notch.

Any message you want to share with young musicians?

Never give up on your dreams. You are going to fail more than 100 times but you will succeed one day if you are determined to prove yourself. Try to show the best side of you. Your uniqueness is what sets you apart from others. You are unique and beautiful just the way you are.

Sanya shares how she handles difficult shots

Actress Sanya Malhotra, who will be seen playing the role of a forensic lady in the upcoming film *Hit: The First Case*, has talked about the challenging scenes she dealt with in the film, which also stars Rajkumar Rao.

Talking about the difficulties during the shoot, Sanya shared: "To be honest, when you're working with actors like Rajkumar Rao, it becomes more collaborative. You just have to follow their lead and react to what they're doing beautifully."

"So, I never felt anything was too challenging or difficult for me and also the credit has to go to Rajkumar Rao because he is not only a good actor but a

brilliant co-actor too. So, it never felt like I'm in a scene reciting my dialogues or anything and it never felt that way because it all felt so natural and all felt conversational to me as an actor."

Gulshan Kumar and T-Series present in association with Dil Raju Productions *Hit: The First Case*.

Directed by Dr Sailesh Kolanu, the film is produced by Bhushan Kumar, Dil Raju, Krishan Kumar, and Kuldeep Rathore. It will hit the theatres July 15, 2022.

IAN S



OTT has space for all content: Nisha

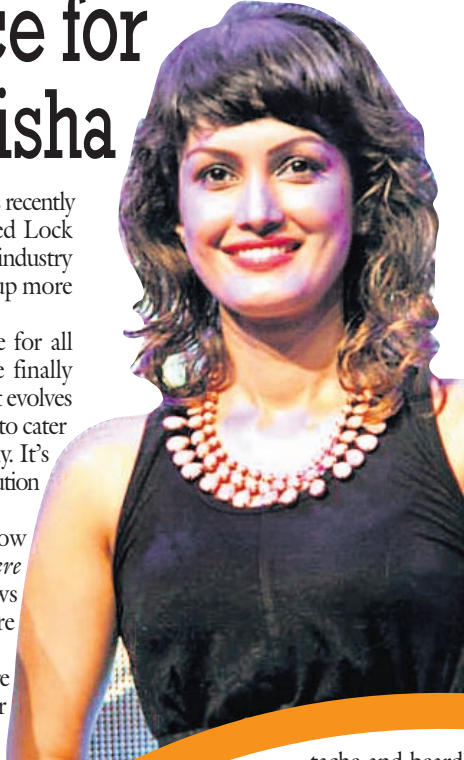
Popular TV actress Nisha Rawal, who was recently seen on actress Kangana Ranaut hosted *Lock Upp*, opens up about the boom in the OTT industry and how she is looking forward to taking up more OTT projects.

Nisha says: "Now there is a place for all content and all audiences. It's like finally the jigsaw fits and it's evolving. As it evolves more masterminds come together to cater to an intelligent audience of today. It's amazing to be witnessing such evolution in the OTT sector."

On asking about her web show choice, the *Main Lakshmi Tere Aangan Ki* actress adds: "Shows that would be diverse in genre for me as an actor."

Now Nisha is looking for more challenging roles and making her mark in the digital medium.

"I have enjoyed my advertising career for so long that my potential as an actor hasn't been tapped at all. I could definitely carve my niche in this oceanic world of OTT," she concludes.



IAN S

Prabhu Deva removes moustache to reach out to kids

tache and beard from a very young age and I have cited several reasons to avoid removing them on other occasions.

"However, while I was shooting for *My Dear Bootham*, the director came to me and said that I would have to remove my moustache. I was stunned and asked him why. He replied, "You will have to remove it for five seconds." I again asked him, "Why?" and he replied saying that only then will the film have a better reach among kids."

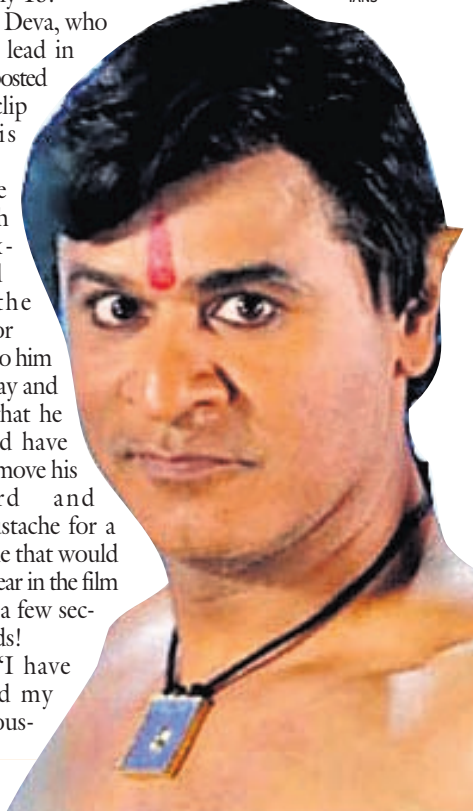
Going on to state that somehow, the director convinced him to remove his moustache and beard for the film, the actor went on to show a series of photographs in which he was clean shaven.

IAN S

Actor, director and dance choreographer Prabhu Deva has disclosed how director N Ragavan convinced him to shave off his moustache and beard for their upcoming film *My Dear Bootham*, which is scheduled to hit the screens July 15.

Prabhu Deva, who plays the lead in the film, posted a video clip on his Twitter timeline in which he explained how the director came to him one day and said that he would have to remove his beard and moustache for a scene that would appear in the film for a few seconds!

"I have had my mous-



Urfi calls Rakhi a 'legend'

Bigg Boss OTT fame Urfi Javed was recently compared to Rakhi Sawant by netizens on social media. While responding to them, she in fact called Rakhi a 'legend'.

In her Instagram story, she shared the screenshot of the comment written by a user, saying: "Totally agree with you! She's like the next Rakhi."

Urfi, who is often known for her style statement gave a befitting reply by mentioning: "Just because you know a few international brands, just cause you add vintage filter to your photos, you think you're way above me that you can insult me."

Later calling Rakhi, a 'legend', she comments: "Also Rakhi is a legend, the way you guys insult her for being herself and then talk about feminism. The fact that you think being com-



pared to her will be an insult shows a lot about your character and the way you think! Putting other women down unnecessarily only makes you a mega loser! Xx."

Urfi recently had also slammed those circulating her fake suicide pictures, wishing death upon her in the comments.

Urfi is known for playing the role of Avni in *Bade Bhaiyya Ki Dulhania*. She was also seen as Aarti in *Meri Durga*, Bella in *Bepannaah* and Mira in *Puncch Beat* and many more.

IAN S



MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN TODAY

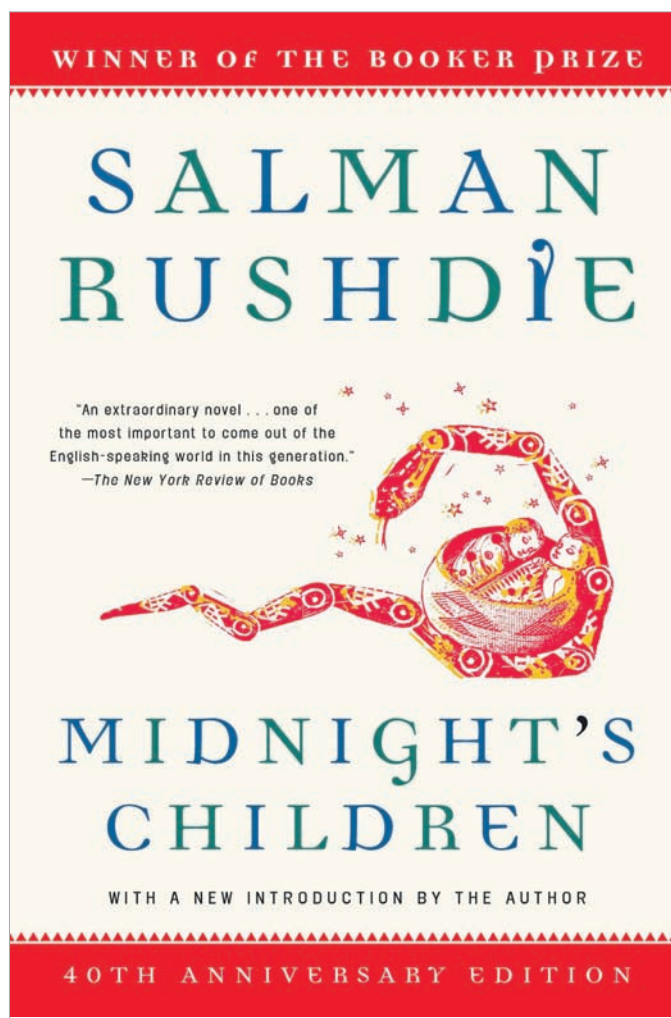


SUDHA DEVI NAYAK

Midnight's Children by Salman Rushdie is an epic saga in the tradition of "The Tin Drum" by Gunter Grass and "One hundred years of Solitude" by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. A winner of the Booker award, 1981 and adjudged the best British novel of the past quarter century, best among 25 years of winners of the Booker Prize, 2008, Rushdie is on the Platinum Jubilee Honours list of Queen Elizabeth the second for his services to Literature. The classic revisits the history of post independence of India from the British Empire through the eyes of a child born at the hour of midnight when the country awakens to freedom. One of a group of children extraordinarily gifted with telepathic powers and fates intertwined with the fate of a country with momentous happenings, forever "mysteriously handcuffed to history". Saleem Sinai, the loveable snout nosed cucumber nosed child of midnight is the narrator whose tortured coming of age is a parable of India's journey. Told with myth and metaphor, image and magic, fantasy and the real, mixing contemporary history and politics it is magic realism where the lines between the real and imaginary are routinely blurred. Heightened language combines with elements of the surreal that seeks to describe calamitous events that exceed the grasp of normal description. "Midnight's Children" creates a heterogeneous diverse history with stories, images and ideas—a multifarious hybrid history, speaking for the suppressed voices of history". It is the portrayal of Saleem an individual in relation to the larger historical and social forces that condition his life, significant events like the partition of Pakistan, Bangladesh war and the excesses of the Emergency go along with the happenings of his own life.

Saleem was born on August 15th, midnight his birth coinciding with the birth of a nation. He says "From the moment of my conception it seems I have been public property". Nehru sends him a letter of congratulations, his photograph appears in newspapers and he is seen as a mirror of the new nation. The narrator's memoir is thirty years after his birth and fearing the imminence of his death he tells his story to his lover and loyal companion. His birth itself is dramatic where there is a switch of babies at the hospital and he is placed in a life of privilege and the other baby is consigned to a life of poverty. Overwhelmed by expectations laid on him he hides in a washing chest and hears a babble of voices in his head and realises that he has the power of telepathy that enables him to enter everybody's thoughts. He begins to hear the thoughts of the 1001 midnight's children born during the first hour of India's independence. He holds midnight conferences with these children and discovers their magical powers, and grapples with their challenges and problems. He discovers Shiva with whom he is switched who becomes his lifelong enemy.

It is accidentally discovered that he is not the biological son of his parents and briefly consigned to a life of exile at his uncle's place. He comes back to important events in his life. India goes to war with China and after their military loss to China the family shifts to Pakistan. Meanwhile Saleem undergoes an operation for his perpetually congested nose and loses his telepathic powers but gains an incredible sense



of smell that can detect emotions. His sister Jamila Singer becomes famous in Pakistan as a singer for whom he has feelings of incestuous love. In the war between India and Pakistan he loses his entire family in a bombing incident with the exception of his sister and himself. He is hit by a silver spittoon of his grandfather and loses his memory. Relieved of memory Saleem becomes animalistic, because of his olfactory powers becomes an excellent tracker and finds himself conscripted into military service and participates in the Bangladesh war. After witnessing the atrocities of the war he escapes to the Sunderbans and regains his memory except his name. After leaving the jungle he meets one of the midnight's children, Parvati who reminds him of his name and helps him to escape to India. There he lives in a magician's ghetto, marries Parvati who is pregnant by Shiva, the baby he was switched with. After the birth of the baby Parvati dies when the government destroys the ghetto. Shiva captures Saleem and he is taken to a forced sterilisation camp where he reveals the names of other midnight's children and all of them are sterilised destroying the powers that threaten Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Later Indira Gandhi loses the election and the midnight's children are set free. Saleem brings his son to him and decides to marry his long time loyal companion and his willing audience on the 31st anniversary of India's Independence. He prophesies that he will die on that day disintegrating into millions of specks of dust.

But the Midnight child's narrative does not die. It endures. On the fortieth anniversary of the book, 2021 Rushdie says in an article to the Guardian "I wanted to write a novel of vaulting ambition, a high wire act with no safety net, an all or nothing effort." He did that and more. Rushdie did

wonderful things with language, in his scintillating and capacious style where words run like water from a fountain with all its dazzle and sparkle. It is speckled with Bambayya, the polyglot street slang of Bombay, because Rushdie feels writing in classical English is to misrepresent the rich linguistic environment. The flexibility of the English Language has allowed it to be naturalised in many countries and Indian English is its own thing now. Rushdie also acknowledges his debt to the "Indian" novelists Jane Austen and Charles Dickens- Austen for her portraits of brilliant women hemmed in by social convention and Dickens for his great rotting Bombay like city, his larger than life characters and surrealist imagery, hyper realistic background out of which comic and fantastic elements grow organically, becoming intensifications of and not escapes from the real world.

Of the books setting in the fabulist tradition of Mahabharata, Panchatantra, Arabian Nights, Kashmiri Sanskrit compendium – Katha Sarit Sagar and the oral narratives of India with all their digressions' it is a novel deeply rooted in history. It is a relationship between society and individual, macrocosm and the microcosm. Do we make history or does it make and unmake us? Are we masters or victims of our times? "It is the curse and privilege of midnight's children to be both masters and victims of their times to forsake privacy and be sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes and to be unable to live or die in peace". Saleem Sinai thinks everything happens because of him, that history is his fault. Later the gulf between his life and the reality of his life grows wider, a victim, not one who acts but acted upon. History is of our choices, our fault and so the responsibility, even moral responsibility is ours. Saleem took too much of responsibility. We all share the burden.

Rushdie says "When I wrote *Midnight's Children* I had in mind an arc of history moving from the hope- the bloodied hope, but still the hope- of independence to the betrayal of that hope in the so called Emergency followed by the birth of a new hope. India today has entered an even darker phase than the Emergency years. The horrifying escalation of assaults on women, the increasingly authoritarian character of the state, the unjustifiable arrests of people who dared to stand against that authoritarianism, the religious fanaticism, the rewriting of history to fit the narrative of those who want to transform India into a Hindu nationalist majoritarian state and the popularity of the regime in spite of it all or worse because of it all- these things encourage a kind of despair."

Yet he harbours the hope that India's secular state will return through the resistance of her women and college students to sectarianism that will dismiss the darkness. "Right now it is midnight again."

Apart from the prizes the book received and his position as an emissary of magic realism in Indian English literature, the book endures as an account of history of a particular time told in an authentic voice without pomposity or artifice. "Like all novels, *Midnight's Children*, is a product of its moment in history, touched and shaped by its time in ways its author cannot wholly know". Transcending its topicality it speaks to us today. In his own words on the fortieth anniversary of his novel Rushdie says "Longevity is the real prize for which writers strive and it isn't awarded by any jury. For a book to stand the test of time, to pass successfully down the generations is uncommon enough to be worth a small celebration." Elsewhere Rushdie says "Books choose their authors; the act of creation is not entirely a rational and conscious one". *Midnight's Children* certainly chose well.

Swati

