

DECEMBER 25-31, 2022

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



P
3,4 COVER STORY

Christmas Day Special

standing in for Santa Claus





Busy Sundays

My Sundays usually are busy days. If I get a day off on Sunday I try to sleep in. I stay in and binge-watch on the missed out on Netflix. I like lazing around on the bed.

I am a true adventurer. My curiosity makes me adventurous. I have never felt fear of not being able to do anything. I have done solo rides on a bike to Ooty, Bangalore, Goa, and Gangtok. Now, I am planning on covering the entire India.

Inquisitive at heart

Apart from cooking, I am a professional classical dancer. I can sing and play violin. I love riding bikes and traveling. I also try my hands at painting.

Donning many hats

I would not term it as my go-to cuisine, rather I would call it as my 'go-to-go-to-go-to' cuisine i.e. Pakhala. I love to eat pakhala with mutton bhaja or my mom's handmade mutton curry and I do love Kolkata-style Biryani.

Desi-foodie



Smrutisree with family

Love for furry buddy

I am an animal lover, an absolute hooman. I had a Labrador, but couldn't keep it due to my dad's health. I have had a dog family since my childhood; I had 4-5 of them.

FROM BEING THE FINALIST OF MASTERCHEF INDIA SEASON 6 TO OPENING HER CLOUD KITCHEN DESIII BY SMRUTISREE IN ANGUL AND BHUBANESWAR, FOR CHEF SMRUTISREE SINGH, AFTER FINISHING A COURSE IN FOOD CRAFTSMANSHIP AT THE AGE OF 18, THERE WAS NO LOOKING BACK. HER DREAM AS A CHEF IS TO GET RECOGNITION FOR ODIA CUISINES ACROSS THE GLOBE



With her pet



With her bike

MADHUSMITA SAHU, 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 changed my password to 'incorrect'. So whenever I forget what it is the computer will say 'Your password is incorrect'.
- I saw an ad for burial plots, and thought to myself this is the last thing I need.
- Did you hear about the guy who got hit in the head with a can of soda? He was lucky it was a soft drink.
- Intelligence is like an underwear. It is important that you have it, but not necessary that you show it off.



ADOPT A STRAY DOG

Sir, Last week's cover story 'Underdog tales' was an absolutely heart wrenching write-up. A story as sensitive as this has only added to my fondness for the stray dogs; pretty unattended and neglected is this breed, the 'Kalinga Hounds' as the writer has rightly pointed out. This cover has been able to successfully highlight the ability of strays to be able to compete with the foreign breeds if taken care of and get trained in time. Lesser accepted but parents do fall in love with their pets once they're adopted, Gaurav sets an example for every other kid who has not been able to adopt a four legged fearing their parents. A line in the read, "Be a dog lover, not a breed lover" is self explanatory. Concluding the article with the reasons to adopt Indie-dogs is a satisfaction as I too got an opportunity to spend time with a furry companion in my primitive years. And yes, the breed was a 'Kalinga Hound'.

SUBHASHMITA MISHRA, Bhubaneswar

LETTERS



A WORD FOR READERS

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



Standing in for Santa Claus

A white bearded man wearing a red coat and carrying a bag full of gifts with an arc of smile on his face is the proverbial Santa Clause who brings happiness. But these days, health is happiness and life is a gift and people who save lives and bring health & happiness are the real Santas at this time

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

Santa Claus, the legendary patron of Christmas globally, is largely considered as a symbol of hope, goodwill, joy and magic. Children look forward to his arrival on Christmas Eve because he is supposed to bring gifts like toys and candy to well-behaved children whereas the naughty ones get charcoal or nothing from him.

Known by different names in different regions such as Father Christmas, Saint Nicholas, Kris Kringle and others, Santa is said to live at the North Pole with his wife, where he spends the year making toys with the help of his elves. There he receives letters from children asking for Christmas gifts. On Christmas Eve he loads his sleigh with toys and flies around the world, drawn by

eight reindeer, stopping at each child's house he slides down the chimney and leaves the gifts, refreshing himself with the milk and cookies left for him by the household's children. This apart, Santa also has a reputation for generosity and kindness which gave rise to legends of miracles he performed for the poor and unhappy. For instance, he is believed to have given marriage dowries of gold to three girls whom poverty would otherwise have forced into lives of prostitution and to have restored to life three children who had been chopped up by a butcher.

Though these tales are now part of legends and folklore, even the kids are now quite aware of the fact that Santa is not real, thanks to the wider reach of the Internet. Whether he is a real or fictitious character, there is no denying that Santa is a

thought which represents all those who work in the interest of society and humanity.

On the Christmas Day, Sunday POST talks to a few such living Santas who have the best to offer to mankind.

This 'Santa' donates platelets to save lives

Blood donation is undoubtedly a great treat to the needy group of patients and with the development of blood banks and the rising numbers of donors, the availability of required blood groups has comparatively become easier. But the situation of platelet availability

is still awful. The voluntary platelet donors are negligible in number because the awareness among the people is less.

This is the reason that turned a 31-year-old Gouri Prasad Dash from Bhubaneswar an avid platelet donor. Gouri says, "It hit me when I observed the number of deaths all over the country and state because the patients were running low on platelets. I have donated platelets 107 times, 20-24 times in a year".

Gouri has enrolled his name into blood donation centres and is hence always available anytime the need arises. He has been into this sacred cause since he was 1 . It is not just about his dedication but also the numbers that have been influenced by his act. He continues: "There is a trio that is influenced and wholeheartedly eager to donate platelets. Needless to say, they were inspired by my act. But the doctors didn't entertain them as there is a list of specifications for the platelet donors. So, to make themselves eligible, they are already working on the requirements like building stronger veins, maintaining an ideal weight of 55kg , a hemoglobin level of 12.5 among others. Satyam Mohanty, Aditya Pallei and Priyanshu Mishra have been working on their stats to be able to donate platelets. They aim at donating more than I do, and have joined gyms to meet the criteria.





CHRISTMAS

A 'Santa' who campaigns for body scanning at door steps

Experts say most of the deaths that happen due to cardiovascular diseases could be prevented if the victims were aware about their heart health and were treated at the right time. The need for ECG (electrocardiogram) arises when you wish to keep a tab on your heart's health. ECG tests are done before a major surgery or if a heart complication is suspected. However a lot of people don't even consider undergoing ECG tests due to their ignorance about the signs and symptoms of heart diseases. Realising the importance of ECG, **Dr. Abhijit Upadhyaya**, an alumnus of Institute of Medical Sciences & SUM Hospital (SOA University) has launched a start-up Cytopot to get ECGs done on those belonging to poor financial back-

grounds. His core team comprises Udit Varshney, an alumnus of IIM(Lucknow), Dr. Santanu Chattopadhyay, PGIMER-Chandigarh and MRCP (London) MBA (INSEAD, France), Dr. Bhupendra Kumar Rana, an International Consultant of WHO and Manoj Patra who worked at Google as Principal Development Manager and a Team Leader at Siemens.

"I always wanted to launch a startup to provide better healthcare services. Upon deciding to create a digital healthcare ecosystem, our team has initiated at different cities and made sure that remote areas get the technical access. In case of a female patient, we send a female technician to record the ECG. We are aiming at covering areas where getting healthcare services is a distant dream and helping heart patients with portable ECG machines."

Asked about his dream, Abhijit said, "Our dream is to safeguard millions from future health problems by deploying accessible and convenient preventive healthcare ecosystems through the digital medium."

He wants to make body scanning as convenient as normal and as popular like pathology screening by creating a digital medium through which people can book body scanning at their doorsteps, added Abhijit.

A 'Santa' who parents elderly people

Not many youths in their early 30s are

expected to serve and take care of strangers like their parents. But 32-year-old **Alok Samartha**, a Civil Engineering graduate, thinks differently.

A member of Lingaraj Temple Sevayat community, Alok nourished a dream of taking care of old people who are often considered a spent force and left uncared-for in their twilight years.

When youths of his age dream and qualifications dream to bag cushy jobs in multinational companies with fat salaries, Alok, who is currently pursuing a course in Journalism and doing his Masters in Law, has taken up an unconventional job as his career.

He has recently set up Ashara Alok Pitru Matru Bhawan, a charitable shelter centre for the elderly persons sending a positive message to the society.

"The aging inmates of Ashara

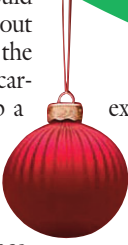
I cook for them, spend quality time with them and try to fulfill their needs as much as possible. They have endured so much in life and it is time they need to be taken care of, which is our sole motto," says Alok, a physical fitness trainer.

Recalling how it all started, he continues: "While my friends celebrate their birthdays by cutting cakes or throwing parties, I have

been doing it in a different way. I prefer to spend time at a hospital or with the inmates of orphanages to celebrate my birthday. On one

such occasion, I had been to the Capital Hospital with Deepak Sahu, a senior acquaintance. There I was shocked to see the plight of some leprosy patients. They were put up at the backyard of the hospital and none of their kin visited them. After talking to

a few of them, I realized how lonely they were. The incident changed the course of my



life and I decided to set up a facility for those who are considered a liability in society in future." On being asked how he meets the expenses of Ashara Alok, he says, "We believe in the old saying of 'where there's a will, there's a way'. Though I am in the forefront of this initiative, we are a group of friends who have collaborated for this venture. My friends, their relatives and neighbors come together to pool money to meet the expenses of the old age home. Besides, we approach our contacts for crowd funding to run the organisation." Alok has certainly set an example for those who think landing a fat-salaried job is the ultimate success in life.



Christmas, its myriad hues

While Christmas may have started as a Christian holiday, and is often still celebrated as such, people from all over the world have embraced the festive season and added their own traditions along the way.

Manger scenes, Santa Claus, and smiley snowmen still reign supreme, but if you look hard enough you'll discover some very different takes on December's most famous day. Here are some of the most unusual Christmas traditions around the world.

Bad Santa | Austria

British kids are well acquainted with Father Christmas, Santa Claus or Saint Nick, but will find something a little more sinister lurking around Austria. That's because it's here that a ghoulish creature called 'Krampus', the evil accomplice of St Nicholas, is said to wander the streets in search of badly behaved children.



During the month of December, you can expect to see terrifying masked figures out and about scaring kids and adults alike with ghastly pranks. If this holiday tradition sounds like your kind of thing, be sure to check out the annual Krampus parade in Vienna.

A Cobweb Christmas | Ukraine



One of Ukraine's favourite festive traditions is not one for those with a fear of creepy crawlies! Where we would have baubles, tinsel and stars, Ukrainians use decorations that mimic the natural formation of spiders' webs shimmering with dew.

The tradition goes back to a folktale about a poor widow who could not afford to decorate a tree for her children. Legend has it that spiders in the house took pity on the family, and spun beautiful webs all over the tree, which the children awoke to find on Christmas morning. Spiders' webs are also considered to be lucky in Ukrainian culture.

Pickle in the Tree | Germany

The Christmas tree tradition embraced around the world today is believed to have started in Germany back in the 16th Century, so it comes as no surprise that our continental cousins still have some unique customs relating to the festive conifers. One of these is to hide a pickle somewhere within the branches of the tree, and give a gift to whichever child in the household finds it.



Some claim that the tradition may not be German after all. One legend says that the Christmas pickle originated in Spain, when two young boys were held as prisoners inside a pickle barrel. The heroic Saint Nicholas rescued the boys and brought them back to life. Either way, a pickle on the Christmas tree is a tradition we can totally get behind.

Belfana the Witch | Italy

Forget Santa and 25th December when in Italy, as all the action takes place on the eve of 5th January.



According to folklore, an old woman named Belfana visits all the children of Italy to fill their stockings with candy and leave them presents if they've been good. Just like Father Christmas, Belfana enters through the chimney and is left treats by the children who live there - typically wine and local delicacies.

The Yule Cat | Iceland

One of the more unique festive traditions we've heard of comes from Iceland, where a giant cat is said to roam the snowy countryside at Christmas time. Traditionally, farmers would use the Yule Cat as an incentive for their workers - those who worked hard would receive a new set of clothes, but those who didn't



would be devoured by the gigantic cat-like beast.

Today it is customary for everyone in Iceland to get new clothing for Christmas to avoid an unsavoury demise.

Fried Caterpillars | South Africa

When you think of Christmas food, mince pies and turkey are often high on the list. In South Africa, however, it's the creepy crawlies that local children look forward to.



Festive fried caterpillars may seem like one of the more unusual Christmas traditions, but these caterpillars aren't just the run-of-the-mill variety you find in the garden. The Pine Tree Emperor Moth, or Christmas caterpillar, is covered in very festive hues - giving all who swallow a little extra luck in the coming year.

The Yule Goat | Sweden

Last but not least, we have one more Christmas tradition from Sweden - which may just be the oldest tradition still celebrated on the list. The Yule Goat dates back to at least the 11th century, where there are mentions of a man-sized goat figure, led by Saint Nicholas, who had the power to control the devil.

The Yule Goat, as you can imagine, has changed quite a bit throughout history. In the 17th century, it was popular for young men to dress as the goat creature and run around pulling pranks and demanding gifts. By the 19th century, the goat became the good guy - a giver of gifts. Instead of Father Christmas, men in the family would dress up as the goat and give gifts to the entire family.

Today, the man-goat is no longer and the Yule Goat has taken its place in modern history as a traditional Christmas ornament on trees throughout Sweden. In larger cities, giant versions of these goat ornaments are created out of straw and red ribbons.



3 Idiots made my journey easier: Kiara

Kiara Advani has revealed that it was filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani's film *3 Idiots* that convinced her parents to let her join Hindi cinema. In the Govinda Naam Mera special episode of *The Kapil Sharma Show*, she shares, "It is very natural for parents to worry about their children who want to try their luck in the film industry. Considering they are not from the industry, they were scared for me and were worried about my safety."

"They wanted me to try something other than this profession. But they always knew that acting is something I really wanted to do in my life. I remember I was in school when papa and I went to watch *3 Idiots* and you know it is said that films are not just a medium of entertainment but the message they impart can touch the lives of people." The actress added, "And *3 Idiots* worked like magic on my father and he agreed to support me in this journey. I would really like to thank Raju sir for making such an amazing film." IANS



First look of Anubhav's comeback movie dropped

The first look of actor Anubhav Mohanty and debutant Swapna Priyadarsini starrer *Love in London* was released recently. Produced by Naveen Bhandari, and J Barkha and directed by Tapas Sargharia, who is also the story writer, the movie is presented by JB Films and TV and Amara Studio.

This will be Anubhav's first movie after a gap of four years.

Anubhav, who plays Prem in the film, recently shared a few photos and videos from the location in London. Swapna essays the role of Sofie in the film.

Talking about 20-year-old Swapna, who hails from Dhenkanal, bagged the second runner-up title in MTV's Supermodel of the Year Season 2, held at Mumbai in 2021.

While *Love in London* is not a run-of-the-mill love story, several modern techniques have been utilized in the film to woo the viewers, sources close to the production house said. The movie will hit the big screens in 2023. PNN



Divya hails Zoya, Farah for breaking stereotype

Actor Divya Dutta in an interview talked about her upcoming films, working with female directors, shared an anecdote with Gulzar and exploring Shimla undercover.

Talking about working with Tahira, Divya dubbed their work as a 'sweet film.' "Tahira is someone who is full of life. When she is on the set, everyone becomes happy, it's like a picnic. But once she says 'action' it's a metamorphosis. She just wants the job done. Her positivity gets on to you very much," added the actor who calls her director 'a beautiful influence.'

Ask her about how it feels to work on a project with a female perspective, and she explains, "It's a good director and a bad director. Of course, with a female director, there's a female sensibility and it depends on what subject you are dealing with. Pehle kaha jata tha female directors sirf art films banati hain. Now it has changed. It cannot be categorised. I feel gradually this has broken with Farah Khan, Zoya Akhtar and now Tahira coming in. So many young people are now coming up who understand the audience. It's delightful."



Kate Winslet opens up on body shaming

Actress Kate Winslet 47, slammed the "bullying" she received from some viewers who said she was "too fat" while she battled feeling "deeply insecure".

In one of the final scenes, she and Leo's character Jack are seen in the water as her character Rose climbs onto floating debris after the boat sank.

Speaking of the comments made from movie buffs about that pivotal, she said, "Apparently I was too fat." "Why were they so mean to me? They were so mean. I wasn't even f****g fat," she explained.

She explained how she wishes she had replied to the horrible comments at the time, adding, "I would have responded. I would have said, 'Don't you dare treat me like this. I'm a young woman, my body is changing, I'm figuring it out, I'm deeply insecure, I'm terrified, don't make this any harder' ". "That's bullying, you know, and actually borderline abusive", I would say." Winslet has openly discussed body shaming in the past as she revealed she was cruelly told to settle for "fat girl" roles during her time at acting school. IANS

Cakes, Candles & Celebrations



PRITISHA DAS

Red

Velvet Cake

Without cake Christmas is not Christmas and this time classic red velvet cake is something we all adore during this holiday season. It's easy to make and the only thing is that ingredients matter a lot to bake a perfect classic red velvet cake. With little patience and some smart work one can easily bake this cake at home. So this Christmas, try this delicious decadent creamy cake and get all the praises and appreciations from your loved ones.

Christmas brings joy, lifts the spirits with cheer and hope. With a tough year coming to a close there's certainly plenty to celebrate. Even as many houses are decked up with stars, bells and other decorations, the celebrations are incomplete sans the customary cakes and other scrumptious desserts. But the rising cost of basic ingredients required to make these delicacies, much to the disappointment of many, has led to an increase in prices of cakes this year. So, Sunday POST lists a couple of easy-to-make desserts to jazz up the Christmas Day



Fruit Cream

We all crave sweets during Christmas and making fancy desserts takes a lot of time and effort. There are days when I am all energetic to bake some delicious desserts in my kitchen, but then there are also some days when I just want them to be easy-peasy. And those are the days, this Fruit Cream comes to my rescue. I have always been a fan of fruity flavours when it comes to my desserts, as they are refreshing and light. Thus, this dessert is the best to satisfy anyone's sweet tooth with some nutritional value. It neither has a lot of sweetness nor less to satisfy your sweet tooth which makes it the perfect dessert for any occasion or a potluck party. Fruit Cream is an easy, no-cook dessert which only requires 10 minutes to prepare. Just whip some Fresh Cream and mix it with the fruits of your choice. You can also make a Shahi Fruit Cream, by adding saffron, cardamom powder, rose water and rose petals in the cream along with fruits and nuts.

Hot Chocolate

There's just nothing quite as comforting as having a hot cocoa on a cold cozy winter day and it's even better when enjoyed with your friends and family. This recipe is a classic creamy version of Hot Chocolate which is rich and luxurious. Real chocolate and not cocoa powder makes this Hot Chocolate creamy, rich and delicious. I make this homemade Hot Chocolate when I feel like having something luxurious to uplift my moods and spirit. I always have a block of baking (cooking) chocolate bars in the fridge and most of the time these bars get used up in making this decadent homemade Hot Chocolate. You can serve some marshmallows along with Hot Chocolate for some extra sweet experiences.



The writer is a well known food blogger of Odisha



Sushmita

PHOTO: ODISHA FASHION VILLA