

JANUARY 22-28, 2023

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW

Odisha goes unrepresented again at R-Day parade

Wounded Pride



P 3,4

COVER
STORY

MY SUNDAY

FROM TRAVELLING ALONE ACROSS THE GLOBE TO PERFORMING AND POPULARISING ODISSI DANCE AT A YOUNG AGE TO CONDUCTING WORKSHOPS ALL OVER THE WORLD, PIONEERING DANCE EXPONENT KASTURI PATNAIK HAS DONE IT ALL. HER NEW CONCEPTS, THEMES, AND TECHNIQUES HELPED ODISSI TO DEVELOP FROM ITS FORMER MAHARI, GOTIPIUA TO ITS CURRENT FORM. THE TEACHER, TRAINER, CHOREOGRAPHER AND MUSIC COMPOSER LOVES TO READ INDIAN EPICS AND OLD CLASSICS WHEN SHE HAS SOME FREE TIME

Busy Sundays

Sunday is my busiest professional day. Every Sunday, I have the most extensive morning and evening courses for both my Indian and international students. I have yet to locate a chance or even consider taking a day off from my professional career.

Love for classics

I sing songs ranging from old golden classical to contemporary compositions and love reading Indian great epics and old classics reference books when I have some free time.



with students

Music composer

Apart from dancing, I also compose Odissi music for my dance choreographies. Other hobbies include attending various cultural programmes, meeting people from the youngest to the not-so-young, seniors and contemporaries.

Donning chef's apron

I love to prepare a variety of dishes, maybe authentic Indian dishes both in non-veg and veg, Italian and Chinese. All my Indian and foreign students and friends admire my food preparation methods. I cook all the items liked by my son, husband, students, and friends.



with family

Professional adventurer

I have been adventurous since my childhood. Defying my family pressure, I became a dancer, though I got their whole hearted support later in life. I travelled to erstwhile USSR, Hong Kong, as a teen/young dancer and choreographed dance items on difficult concepts, ideas, themes, grammars and techniques. My adventures are fully professional.

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

- Isn't it great to live in the 21st century? Where deleting history has become more important than making it.
- Team work is important; it helps to put the blame on someone else.
- You know you're ugly when it comes to a group picture and they hand you the camera.
- The road to success is always under construction.



EMULATE ODISHA

Sir, 'Tales of Unsung heroes'(Jan 15) is a befitting tribute to the persevering hard work and consistent endeavour of the unheralded coaches and sports academy heads in unearthing raw talent and grooming them into successful hockey stars. They certainly deserve their place in the hall of fame. In this context, the pioneering efforts of Peter Tirkey, coach, Sail Hockey Academy, Rourkela and David John, Director of Hockey, Odisha merit special mention for pioneering a hockey revolution by nurturing potential at the sub-junior and junior levels. The decision of the state government to bankroll the Indian hockey team from 2017 till 2032, the setting up of 'High Performance Centres' and the giant strides made in the creation of state-of-the-art hockey infrastructure and world-class facilities have given a new lease of life to this dying game and helped in rekindling interest in this popular sport. Odisha's experience in promoting the cause of hockey has been quite instructive for the rest of the country. India could very soon be scripting a new story on the global sporting arena, if other states emulate Odisha in adopting a particular sport.

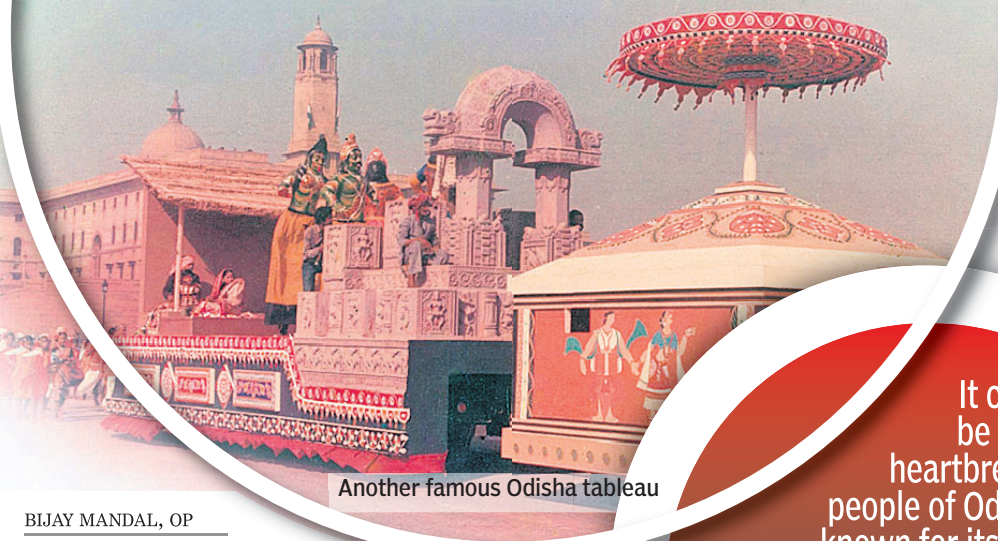
AMIT BANERJEE, New Delhi

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



Another famous Odisha tableau

ODISHA GOES UNREPRESENTED AGAIN AT R-DAY PARADE

Wounded Pride

It can't be more heartbreaking for people of Odisha, a state known for its immortal architecture and rich artistic heritage, as the state's tableau is unlikely to roll on the heart of the national capital for the third successive year during the upcoming Republic Day parade

BIJAY MANDAL, OP

Republic Day parade is a great occasion to showcase India's unity in diversity. This is that day of the year when every state of the Indian union gets an opportunity to represent its distinct heritage, culture and development programme through tableaux recommended by the Ministry of Defence.

The tableaux of various states, accompanied by dance and music, when in motion at Rajpath, are a treat for the eyes. The colourful presentations make many nostalgic even as they live thousands of miles away from their home state. It's little wonder then that people of Odisha suffered heartbreaks yet again when the state's tableau design for Republic Day parade was rejected by the authorities. This is the third time in a row that it will not be seen on Rajpath.

Here's what a few experts have to say on the issue ahead of the event.

Need to find our faults instead of beating around the bushes

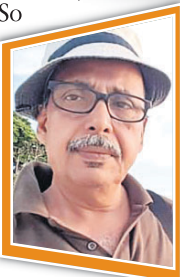
RAMAHARI JENA | EMINENT ARTIST

Isn't it ironic that a state, known for its immortal architecture and rich artistic heritage, has failed to make it to the prestigious event as big as Republic Day?

"Yes, it is an irony and

disappointing too," says eminent painter Ramahari Jena, a former Visiting Fellow of The Glasgow School of Art, Scotland. "There was a time when Odisha's tableau was a permanent feature of every Republic Day parade. So much so, that one of the tableaux designed and executed by eminent artist Asim Basu was not dismantled and preserved for public viewing even after the event. Stalwarts like Dinanath Pathy, DN Rao and many others used to visualise, design and execute the tableau work at that time," recalls Jena.

Though disappointed, Jena was not quite surprised at the development. "I have no idea about how and at which stage Odisha was excluded from the event. However, my personal observation is that we are getting repetitive over the years and our



designs lack novelty.

Therefore, there is a need to work on this aspect."

Elaborating more he continues:

"As you said, Odisha is known for its art, culture, architecture and artistic heritage. So, we need to include more creative people in the selection process. Not just for the execution of tableau work, tenders should also be invited from young designers to present their model and they should be scrutinized by a committee composed of experts from various art fields instead of government officials."

"There is also a tendency to blame others for our failure. But this is time, we need to introspect and find our own faults and rectify them instead of beating around the bush. We should analyze what the other states did better than us to get selected," concludes Jena.

Rejection this year was quite baffling

GAJENDRA PRASAD SAHU | ARTIST & DESIGNER

It was the Republic Day parade of 2020 when people last saw an Odisha tableau roll on Rajpath. The theme that year was on Lingaraj Temple and Rukuna Rath.

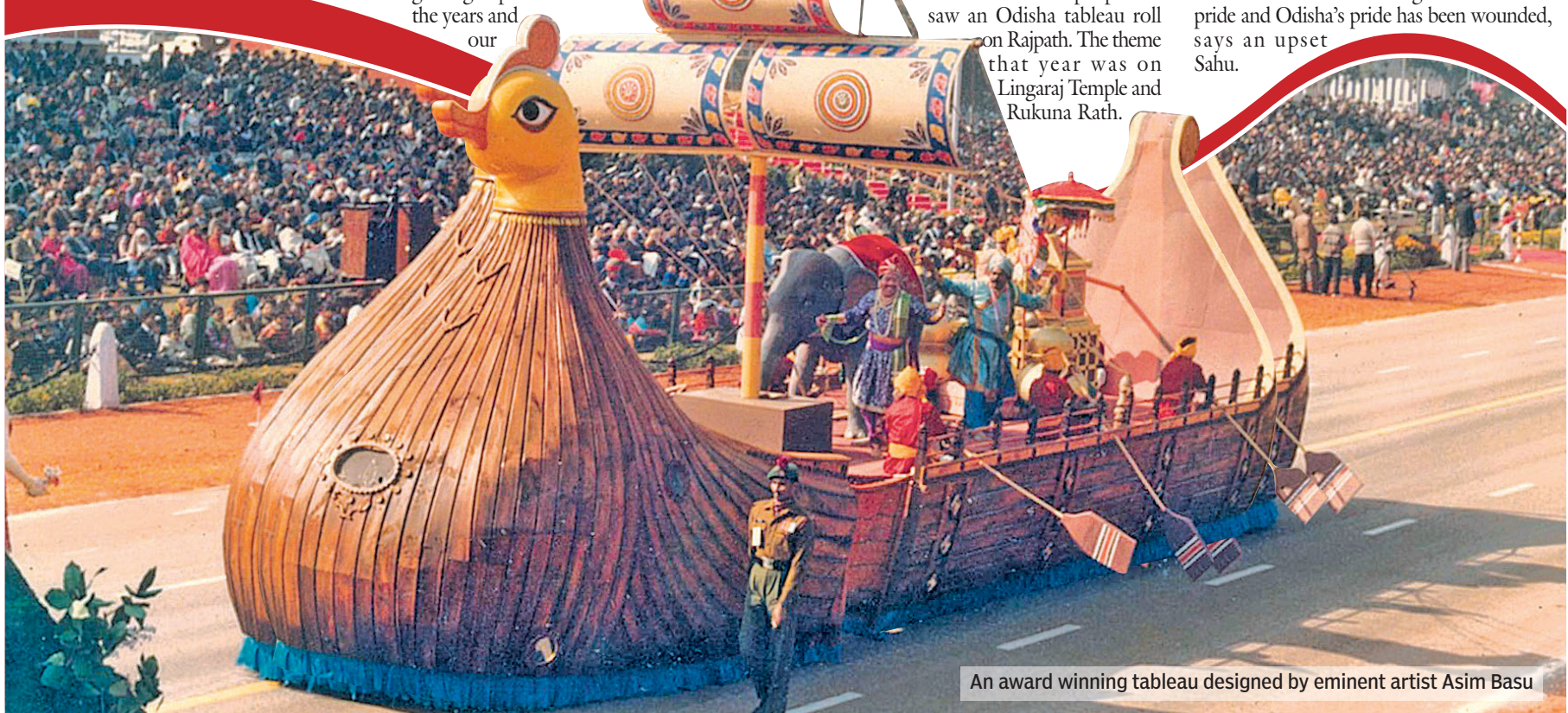
Gajendra Prasad Sahu, a well known artist and former secretary of Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi had designed and executed the project.



Sahu, who was also the designer for the year 2023, says he never expected that this year's design featuring Mukteswar Temple, Mahari & Ghumura dance forms would be rejected as the proposed model was appreciated in all stages of the selection process.

"It's really baffling. I want to know on which grounds they (officials of the Defence Ministry) have rejected our design," he says.

"Last year we presented our model on Buxi Jagabandhu and it was rejected. Later, it was learnt that there was a debate in Parliament around that time over whether the Paika Rebellion led by Buxi in 1817 can be considered the first war of India's freedom struggle. As there was dispute on the issue, our tableau featuring Buxi was perhaps not considered for the Republic Day parade. But this year there was no controversy as such and we were even suggested a few changes in the music in the last meeting. But later we were not invited further. Four more designs from other states, which were rejected earlier, have been recalled again, I came to know," adds Sahu. Showcasing a state's culture and heritage is a matter of pride and Odisha's pride has been wounded, says an upset Sahu.



An award winning tableau designed by eminent artist Asim Basu



Biranchi Prasad Sahu's tableau featuring Jaydeva's Gitagovinda at Rajpath

He has knocked at all the doors and approached all who matter to make Odisha tableau roll on Rajpath in 2023 but to no avail, says Sahu who has designed and executed the work on four occasions and won a few awards also.

Let's not compromise with state's pride

BIRANCHI PRASAD SAHU | ARTIST & DESIGNER

"Don't we consult a good architect while planning to construct a house and pay his charges," asks young designer **Biranchi Prasad Sahu** who has showcased state's art and culture at Republic Day Parade on five occasions – 2003, 2006, 2007, 2011 & 2013 when enquired what could be the reasons that Odisha remained unrepresented at R-Day parade for third successive year.



"We're getting rejected because our designs are not up to the mark as we are not hiring quality designers for the job," he adds.

"Let's not make compromises with the state's pride when the matter is about the art and culture of Odisha," he further says.

Elaborating more, Sahu continues: "I think the most important part of tableau

making is its design. We need to have experts in the selection panel, instead of government officials, to zero in on a good design. People who have experience in the field should be roped in and more designers should be encouraged to participate which is not happening at the moment. As I said earlier a good designer should get his dues also. Here, the budget of the project is also an issue. A good design can't be executed within a shoestring budget. In a bid to bag the project, the bidders are quoting less price and the designs are selected accordingly. When the matter is about show-

casing state's pride on a national platform, we shouldn't compromise with it and spend generously."

This apart, Centre also plays an important role in the tableau selection process which often goes against Odisha. The states with the same ruling party have an edge over the states ruled by the opposition parties. However, it always becomes difficult for the authorities to reject a design if it is exceptionally good, says Sahu who won the first prize for best tableau along with two other best prizes at the R-Day parade of 2007.

Jury comprising experts is need of the hour

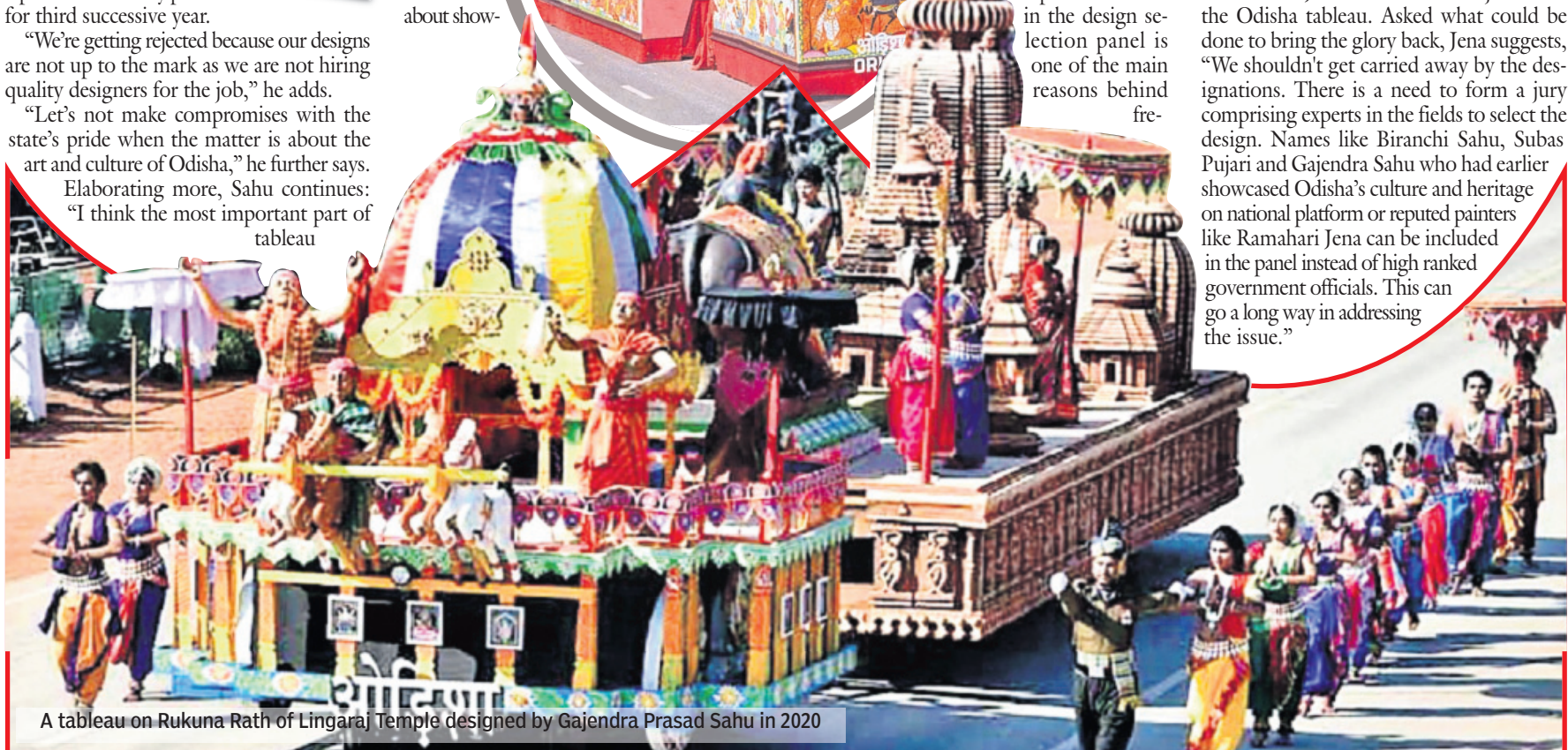
NANAS RANJAN JENA | ARTIST AND FORMER SECRETARY OF ODISHA LALIT KALA AKADEMI



Not keeping the experienced artists in the design selection panel is one of the main reasons behind fre-

quent absence of Odisha tableau at Republic Day parade, says eminent painter and former secretary of Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi **Manas Ranjan Jena**.

"The designer of the tableau should be technically well equipped. Eminent painter and legendary theatre personality Asim Basu was best among the designers I have ever worked with. He along with famous artists Dinanath Pathy and DN Rao had a formidable team and it was becoming difficult for any selection panel to reject their designs. But now we are lagging behind in this aspect which is why our designs are often not acceptable to the technical committee of the Defence Ministry," reasons out Jena for the recent rejection of the Odisha tableau. Asked what could be done to bring the glory back, Jena suggests, "We shouldn't get carried away by the designations. There is a need to form a jury comprising experts in the fields to select the design. Names like Biranchi Sahu, Subas Pujari and Gajendra Sahu who had earlier showcased Odisha's culture and heritage on national platform or reputed painters like Ramahari Jena can be included in the panel instead of high ranked government officials. This can go a long way in addressing the issue."



A tableau on Rukuna Rath of Lingaraj Temple designed by Gajendra Prasad Sahu in 2020

Authentic Odia cuisines don't get their dues: Avinash

Though prepared in almost all Odia households and an essential part of most of the celebrations, 'Pitha' is often undervalued in the state, shares the celebrity food blogger

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

After breaking into the top five of national level cooking show MasterChef India, Avinash Patnaik is no longer a stranger to the readers. He has been on a mission to showcase the rich culinary heritage of the state on a broader platform and Gaintha Pitha is a prime example of that, says Avinash.

The Bhubaneswar boy, who became the first contestant to get a direct entry into the MasterChef India, was recently in the city when he had a breezy chat with **Sunday POST**.

Here are the excerpts:

■ Congratulations on your well-deserved success. What was going on in your mind when the judges tried your cuisine and then picked you among the top five?

■ It was a surreal experience. I was trying to fit in and was relieved to have been chosen for the show. To say I was overwhelmed will be an understatement.

■ How did you come up with the idea to serve Gaintha Pitha with 'Aparajita' flower being one of its ingredients?

■ If you look at the culture and festivals of Odisha, you'll notice that 'pitha' (a kind of dessert) is an essential part of most of the celebrations. But the delicacy is often underestimated in Odisha even as it is prepared in almost all households. Therefore, I had earlier decided that I would popularise 'pitha' if I get an opportunity on a national platform. I had something else in my mind but Gaintha Pitha struck my mind on the day of the audition only. Since it is a plain dish, I considered merging my expertise in floriculture and landscape gardening into it by adding blue pea flower, commonly known as Aparajita. I intended to add its colour, and medicinal value to the Gaintha which is not known to many. I hope people will now stop viewing flowers as an object of decoration and start thinking of them as components of the food chain. I also wanted to send a message that fresh flowers instead of artificial colours can be used more often in the kitchen.

■ What was the reaction of the jury when you entered their room with your cuisine during your audition?

■ Clad in clothes made from handloom fabrics of Odisha, I proudly presented an Odia cuisine. I am sure they could feel the joy and confidence in my eyes and love for my culture. I was a little anxious even though I was sure of myself. There is always a fine line between confidence and arrogance, and I had confidence in my food. I went expecting them to like the cuisine and that's exactly what happened.

■ Will there be more fusion-styled Odia food in the show?

■ The goal was to showcase the reflection of my roots and the region I belong to. The cuisine of my first audition was highly appreciated, but my second dish was a lesser-known item and was dedicated to my maternal grandmother Tatini. I named it The Flavors of Tatini after her. This meal is specifically known as Khatta Meetha Macha, a fish-based North Odisha dish. I utilised lotus stem, radish, arrowroot, and flavours from the hibiscus plant. If I have the time and ingredients in the kitchen pantry, I'll try to do more experiments on food from Odisha.

■ How was your vibes with other contestants?

■ All were cordial to me. Baa and I are really close since she reminds me of my maternal grandmother. As the competition progresses, I hope I will get along well with every participant.

■ Did you face any trouble when presented with challenges from the chefs?

■ I'm best at making local dishes. So, I found it difficult to handle global recipes. Although I am familiar with its flavours, it was challenging to prepare them using components available in India. I gave it my best effort and failed twice. But I managed to pull off gracefully on my third attempt in line with the challenge. At the end of the day, I am proud of myself for creating the dish.

■ You have been presenting Odia cuisine and culture in the show. Do you think they will get a global audience and change their perspective about Odisha?

■ Until and unless we love our own culture, take pride in our roots, and are secure in what we are doing, it is difficult to change the mindset of others. I felt really privileged to represent my state. That was the basic intent behind the alteration, and since Bengali food and other dishes from the North Eastern region dominate, signature Odia food often fail to get their dues. I want people to know that, even if the ingredients could be identical, the methods utilised to produce various cuisines are really different.

■ You are often seen experimenting with rare ingredients like flowers and leaves such as Kadamba fruits and flowers. Where do you get the idea of using those ingredients?

■ It's not about food or its ingredients. There is much more to it. There is science, biology and physiology of the plants involved. When it comes to plants, I think people need to educate themselves with the local ingredients instead of getting attracted towards the exotic and foreign products. There are many edible plants such as katha champa, gulmohar, krushna chuda, sunari, bahonia, kanchan, many wild flowers

like gilir phula, tukei kundei which can be used in preparation of food. By using local ingredients like flowers with medicinal properties, I believe I have inspired some food lovers.

■ Who do you believe will be your rival in the next episodes?

■ Everyone on the show, in my opinion, has something special to offer. Everyone is giving their all, and if I have a specialty in working with plants, there are others who are good with deserts, etc. So, it's too early for me to identify my competition because everyone is best at what they do.

■ You started off alone but eventually formed a team of four to complete a challenge. Did you face any problem in coordinating with others?

■ The team shared my talent and had people from all around the country. It was a lot of fun working together, and we had to be aware

of the temperaments of four different people for that project. Priya is wonderfully organised, Dyuti is the untidy one but also very understanding, and Deepa ji is very calm and controlled. I got there and started working as peacefully as if I were at home. I was preparing a dish based on the notion of travelling the Silk Road through Odisha and showcasing the historical connections between Odisha and Bali, popularly known as the Bali Yatra. I decided to make Chingudi Nadia Rasa as I was in charge of preparing the main meal.

■ What message would you like to convey to the future contenders for the forthcoming season?

■ I would advise them to put their all into whatever they choose to accomplish. It takes a lot of perseverance and hard effort to be there. Future competitors must sharpen their skills and get ready for the best if they get the chance to represent themselves on a stage like this and demonstrate their talent.





Rashi's Farzi character to resonate with women

Actress Rashi Khanna, who will be seen essaying the role of a government official in the upcoming Vijay Sethupathi and Shahid Kapoor-starrer web series *Farzi*, feels that a lot of women will relate to her character and the challenges that she faces everyday in her professional and personal life.

Shedding light on her character, Rashi said, "My character of Megha is that of a modern girl in a patriarchal set-up. We talk about equality and feminism but still, a woman has to struggle a lot in her professional and personal space. She struggles in her personal space with her mother in the series."

She further mentioned that the audience is bound to empathise with her and her relentless fight to get what she seeks: "You empathise with her because she is very relentless, if she sets her mind to it, she accomplishes it at any cost and that manifests itself in her way of dealing with her job and her seniors."

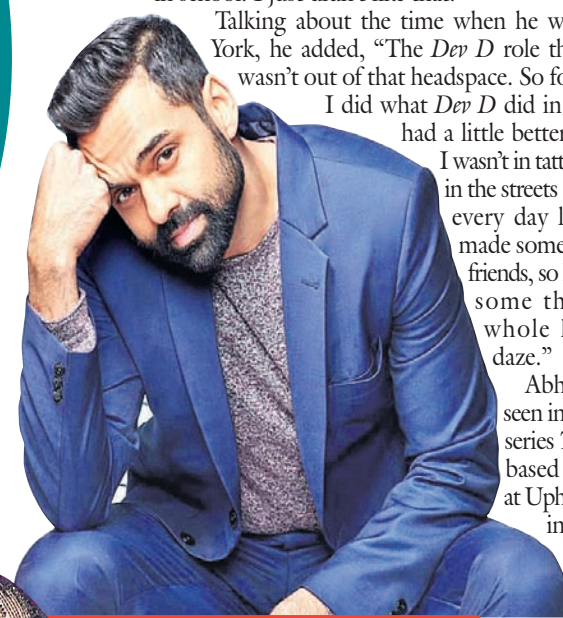
Given women's fight against the patriarchy that still dictates the functioning of the modern world, the actress feels that the character will deeply resonate with women across the board.

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Abhay Deol used to hate fame, media

Actor Abhay Deol talked about how he hated fame while growing up as he was questioned about his family members.

In a recent interview with a news portal, Abhay said, "Because I grew up in a filmy family, I saw fame up close as a child. I didn't like it because your privacy goes away. A lot is written about you. I used to literally hate fame and the media. Because growing up I saw a lot written about family, being questioned as a kid, 'Is it true, is that true?' It used to make me angry. 'Your father works in films, your uncle is a big star'. Obviously, whatever was written about them, I was asked in school. I just didn't like that."



Talking about the time when he was in New York, he added, "The *Dev D* role that I did, I wasn't out of that headspace. So for one year, I did what *Dev D* did in the film. I had a little better than Dev. I wasn't in tattered clothes in the streets and I drank every day like a fool, made some very good friends, so I remember some things. My whole life was a daze."

Abhay was last seen in the limited series *Trial By Fire* based on the fire at Uphaar Cinema in 1997.

AGENCIES

Tatum to reprise Swayze's role in *Ghost* remake

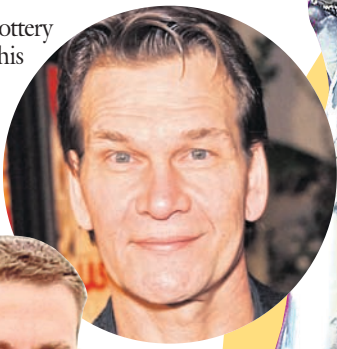
Actor Channing Tatum is ready to get into pottery making after stripping off onstage for his next movie.

The actor, who is set to reprise his role as the titular character in *Magic Mike's Last Dance*, is keen on stepping into the shoes of the late Patrick Swayze in a *Ghost* remake.

The 42-year-old hunk revealed that he's developing a reboot of the 1990 romantic film during an interview with *Vanity Fair*.

In an interview with ace showbiz, Channing commented, "Now I know why they put this in *Ghost*." He later added, "This whole process is very, very sexual." During the chat he revealed that his production company Free Association, formally known as 33&Out has the rights to *Ghost*.

Giving insight into his idea for the upcoming project, he said that it will be a modern take on the original film, with him potentially in the male lead role, "But we're going to do something different," he revealed. IANS



Harnaaz's tribute to Sushmita, Lara

Harnaaz Sandhu, who was crowned Miss Universe in 2021, is only the third Indian woman to do so after Sushmita Sen and Lara Dutta were crowned winners in Miss Universe 1994 and Miss Universe 2000, respectively.

Harnaaz took to Instagram to share her photos from the recent Miss Universe 2022 pageant, where she crowned the new Miss Universe, R'Bonney Gabriel. Harnaaz grabbed attention with her black gown, which featured photos of the winning moments of the only other Miss Universe crown holders from India - Sushmita Sen and Lara Dutta.

Giving a better look at her special outfit from Miss Universe 2022, Harnaaz wrote an emotional note as she recalled her Miss Universe journey and paid a tribute to the two 'incredible women' from India, who inspired her 'dream gown' at the event. In her Instagram caption, she wrote, "It's my purest honour and gratitude to represent my incredible country at Miss Universe. A huge tribute to these two incredible women from India you have been making our country proud since becoming Miss Universe. Sushmita Sen and Lara Dutta, I truly adore you both a lot...this one is for you and India."

Appreciating her gesture, Lara commented on Harnaaz's post, "May you always shine bright like the diamond you are!! Stay your humble, amazing, strong self sista!!! Here's looking at you kid!!!! Good luck for all that's yet to come!"

AGENCIES

A rereading of Panchatantra

The *Panchatantra* is a spool of stories within stories. Like the whorls of a flower set into each other, the stories by different narrators, is a guide to living right, to live wisely and well in this world. The oral tradition of storytelling that is so much a part of Indian folklore passed down by generations, changing voices, adding, subtracting, inventing, revising, interpolating till it is adapted to different times and places, is at the heart of this great work. As contemporary today as it must have been when it was written 1500 years ago, it talks to our times in as authentic voice. The work is ascribed to Vishnu Sharma, a shadowy, mythical figure whose antecedents or credentials have never been established and in fact his name appears only in the preamble by an anonymous narrator. He is an octogenarian sage who is tasked with the onerous duty of educating three young princes, when their father the king laments that his scions are dull witted and averse to all learning. The sage takes it as a challenge and sets upon their education with the tales of *Panchatantra* patterned on the animal world, in a mix of prose and verse, for their edification and entertainment. With tales drawn out of lived experience he teaches the princes not what to think but how to think. "With mere book learning men remain fools; the man who acts using his knowledge, he is wise". *Panchatantra* has travelled the world in translations, transcreations, and adaptations and influenced world literature. The introduction to *Panchatantra* as translated by Arthur C Ryder in 1935 says

*"One Vishnuvarman, shrewdly gleaned
All worldly wisdom's inner meaning
In these five books the charm compresses
Of all such books the world possesses"*

Chandra Rajan, a Sanskrit scholar and translator of a modern version of *Panchatantra* in her exquisite style of ease and grace has once again put before us a work of literature that has stood the test of time and is the forerunner of *The Arabian Nights*, *Boccaccio's Decameron*, *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, *The Fables of La Fontaine*, and the *Brer Rabbit stories of America*. La Fontaine when publishing his first volume of fables states "I must acknowledge that I owe the greatest debt to "Pilpay", an Indian sage", perhaps a corruption of the Indian name for "The Learned One". Coming to modern times, Salman Rushdie says he was influenced by the animal tales of *Panchatantra* and their magnifications and distortions to reflect on human nature with all its flaws and quirks.

Panchatantra was part of the repertoire of stories of Pehlavi redaction by Burzoe, Chief Minister to the King of Persia who comes to India in search of a legendary herb that was the elixir of life that could resurrect the dead. After a futile search through the

Himalayas and visits to holy men, he comes across a philosopher who told him that the elixir was a book. As Rajan says "The high mountains were the wise and learned men of lofty intellect; the trees and herbs their various writings and the wisdom extracted from these writings the Elixir of Life that revived the dead intelligence and buried thoughts of the ignorant and unlearned"

The stories of *Panchatantra* peopled with animals of all hues, lions, monkeys, jackals, birds reptiles, have been narrated repeatedly "In the quadrangles and pillared corridors of temples, in the palaces of princes and mansions of wealthy merchants, in fairgrounds and market squares under makeshift awnings and under the spreading banyan tree in villages, wherever skilled and celebrated storytellers gathered a group of eager listeners around them."

Panchatantra is a *Niti Shastra* and defines an attitude, a conduct, obligations and duties, familial, social, political and exercise of practical wisdom in all affairs, not the wisdom of saints but the ordinary wisdom that must govern the thinking and conduct of men of the world. *Panchatantra* exemplifies the three aims that form the basis of human existence-*Dharma* {righteousness}, *Artha* {material resources}, and *Kama* {Desire and Will}. The fourth, *Moksha* {salvation} though not an aim in daily life is the ultimate goal with freedom from desire and earthly concerns.

In Rajan's translation the book is divided under the five titles, *Estrangement of Friends*, *Winning of Friends*, *Of Crows and Owls*, *Loss of Gains*, *Rash Deeds*. The two jackals Wily and Wary, one deceitful and manipulative and the other sounding a cautionary note, full of wisdom, the stars of the first story, the well intentioned but weak Tawny the lion and Lively the noble bull who finally pays the price of goodness and simplicity tells us how friendships are destroyed when the mind retreats before the persuasive speech of others. The story has lessons in statecraft, avoidance of personal greed and recognition of nobility in others. In *Winning of Friends* the crow and the mole, the deer and the tortoise come to one another in times of need and danger and thrive in the end in mutual friendship and affection. The third story is of *Crows and Owls* where the king crow has to defend his kingdom against the owls. It is the *Dharma* of a king to protect his subjects but when the adversary is too strong he can resort to underhand means because dharma is relative and depends

on the situation. Our epics abound with such instances. While the loyal minister restores his king to peaceful sovereignty after the destruction of the owls he tells him he should not be carried away by his glory nor betrays the integrity of his character. He has these sage words for his king "the splendours of monarchs are passing. The goddess Royal Glory is hard to climb like a bamboo stem. She is prone to fall precipitately. A million efforts are required to possess her securely; still she is hard to hold fast to; worship her

a rash deed committed in a fit of passion. *Panchatantra* says no deed should be executed without forethought as it leads to remorse, guilt and punishment. However through all these stories there is an element of misogyny where women are castigated held up for severe criticism. This is in the spirit of the age where women were recognised only as lesser human beings. "This whirlpool of suspicion, this mansion of immodesty, this city of audacity, this sanctuary of errors, this home of a hundred deceits, this casket entire of tricks- Who created this contraption called Woman...To set Virtue and Law at naught?" Nor does the *Panchatantra* suffer gladly fools and rogues

Stories tumble out everywhere giving us strategies to survive to lead a fruitful life and also be generous and good. The *Panchatantra* is not a morality play with a series of do and don'ts nor does it have a final word on the uncertainties and risks of living. There are no happy endings, there are no judgements. With opposing sets of opinions and arguments it is open to questions and provokes serious thought. It advises caution, moderation and restraint in desire. Amassing of wealth is not recommended nor does it extol poverty or asceticism. Money has no value but to be earned with integrity, spent wisely and then given away. "You may have only a morsel yourself; why not give half of it to a supplicant?" Nor does it play down desire because without desire there can be no achievement or fulfilment. Nature is a metaphor with its different species of animals for human life- human beings with their flaws, their virtues and vices their traits of nobility and brutality. Relating animal behaviour to the human condition, it addresses itself to society, to the prince and the peasant, the rich and the common, to the noble and the little minded.

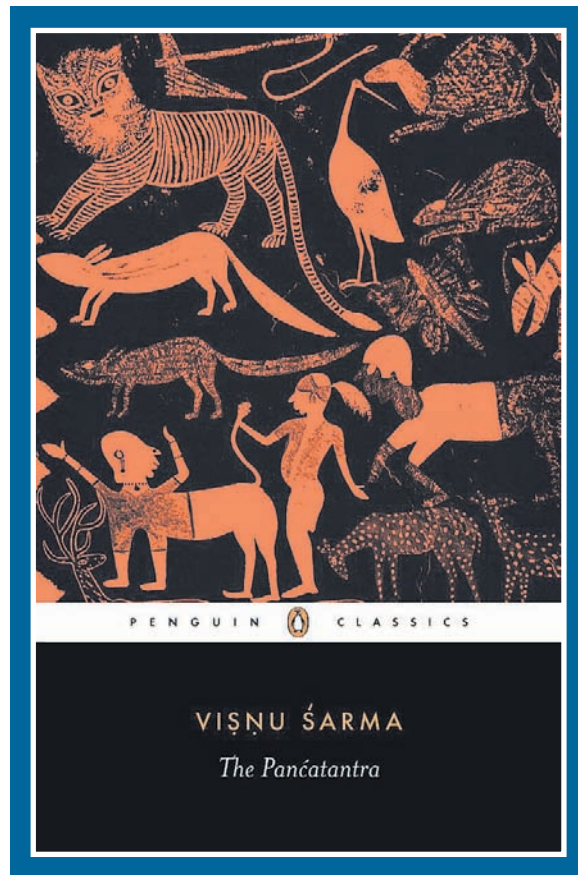
Enduring and profound, *The Panchatantra* resonates with all of us across time, geographies and generations. Through its wild world of animals, its world, red in tooth and claw, its forests, caves and mountains it stirs our imagination and teaches us to live life and survive its realities. "That is big magic, stronger than any elixir, deathless as any herb promising resurrection and eternal life." There is no more fitting finale to this great book as stated in The Preamble-

Whoever always reads this work?

Whoever listens to it told?

He will never face defeat, no,

Not even from the Lord of Gods, Himself



SUDHA DEVI NAYAK

Avilipsa



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