

JANUARY 14-20, 2024

# SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW

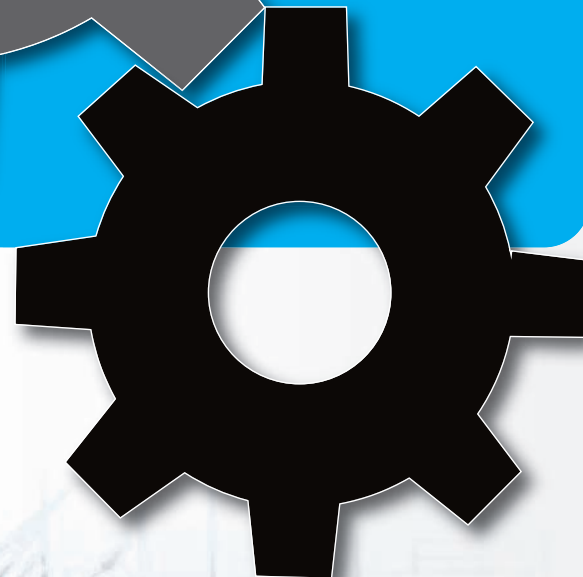


NATIONAL STARTUP DAY - JANUARY 16

# Igniting Innovation

COVER STORY

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### Relaxing at home

A cosy Sunday at home is my ideal way to unwind. My morning starts at 10 am with a cup of tea followed by a scrumptious breakfast. Whether it's reading, watching movies, or just enjoying quiet moments, home is where the relaxation is.

### Easy eats

Cooking isn't my thing. Understandably, I prefer to enjoy a day off without the hassle of trying out new recipes. However, I have a penchant for Aloo Paratha and simple Indian meals



Harshit Nashikkar, aka RJ Harshit from Gwalior, is still fondly remembered by fans in Odisha for his memorable stint at Red FM-Bhubaneswar. The Raju Srivastava fanboy, who continues to cast his spell at Big FM-Bareilly, prefers to browse YouTube channels to hone his skills and add value to his craft



At the studio

### Select circles of comfort

When in Bhubaneswar, my office colleagues were my close friends, and I enjoyed spending time with them. It's the same in Bareilly too. While I have many friends, there are a select few with whom I feel most at ease.

### Home sick

While people working in radio broadcasting spend their breaks in a number of ways, I make the most of my holidays with family.



With family

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

## WhatsApp This Week

### Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes at: [features.orissapost@gmail.com](mailto:features.orissapost@gmail.com) And we will publish the best ones

#### THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- What is a skeleton? Skeleton is a person who starts dieting but forgot to stop it...
- Q: What did the nurse say to John Cena? A: ICU.
- What do you get when you cross a snoman and a vampire? Frost bite.
- Where did the IT guy go? He probably ransomware.

## EXPLORING GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

Sir, I express my gratitude for including the Malabar region in the travel section of last week's Sunday POST. Kerala, famously known as God's own country, draws huge footfall thanks to its natural splendour. The North Malabar region, including Calicut, Kannur, Wayanad, and Kasargod, which offer pristine beaches, forts, hills, and serene backwaters, is certainly a tourist's paradise. The serene setting caters to families, adventure lovers, and honeymoon couples, providing an enchanting journey through the Tejaswini River's backwaters and Valiyaparamba landscapes. Adding more thrills to the trips, a day-time cruise ride showcases rural life, local cuisine, and captivating sunset views, ensuring an unforgettable experience. The travel expenses also appear to be appropriate. I believe, like me, most of the readers with wanderlust will find the article helpful.

RUCHIKA SINGH, CHENNAI

## 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. Feel free to send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to [features.orissapost@gmail.com](mailto:features.orissapost@gmail.com) B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948

NATIONAL STARTUP DAY - JANUARY 16

# Igniting Innovation

*Though start-ups are riskier than legacy enterprises, they are important because they frequently generate new job opportunities. Furthermore, they have the potential to fetch better returns, serving as a national economic growth engine*

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

National Start-up Day is not merely a date marked on the calendar; it is a celebration of the daring minds that refuse to conform to the status quo, a tribute to the risk-takers who embark on the unpredictable journey of entrepreneurship.

Back home, be it for the food courts, the entry of global brands into the city, or the growth in work culture, Bhubaneswar has been a destination for the young residing in Odisha and neighbouring states. This is also a city that takes pride in preserving its archaeological monuments and heritage sites and welcoming modern architecture with its corporate buildings, malls, and restaurants. No wonder bustling Bhubaneswar is a haven for emerging entrepreneurs.

With a day to go before National Startup Day, a few of them share with **Sunday POST** the secrets behind becoming successful start-up leaders.

### 'Leadership is not something one is born with; it can be learned'

Partha Sarathi Dash and Subham Acharya explore the magic of unmanned aerial vehicles

(UAVs). They are the directors of FxUAV Technologies Pvt. Ltd.

Sharing their journey, Subham recalls, "During our sophomore year at Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla, my co-founder and I participated in the 'Rebuild Odisha Hackathon' post-Fani cyclone. We saw UAVs' potential in disaster response, prompting us to engage with stakeholders for insights. Amid the COVID lockdown, we honed our skills in composite manufacturing and drone software. Incubated at STPI, Bhubaneswar, and succeeding in the 5G Hackathon, the project eventually took off as we worked full-time post-graduation."

Recently, the project achieved incubation at IIT (ISM), Dhanbad, marking another milestone in their journey, says an elated Subham.

Elucidating more on his UAV, he continues: "Our start-up specialises in developing unmanned aerial systems and payloads for diverse

civil applications. Notably, we've implemented a pilot project at Sonepur Bazari Mines, ECL, utilising our 5G-enabled drone for efficient monitoring operations within the mining environment. We are India's first company to test our 5G drone on both private and public networks. We also have our 3-in-1 disaster management drone, which could extinguish fire and save a drowning person all in one system through

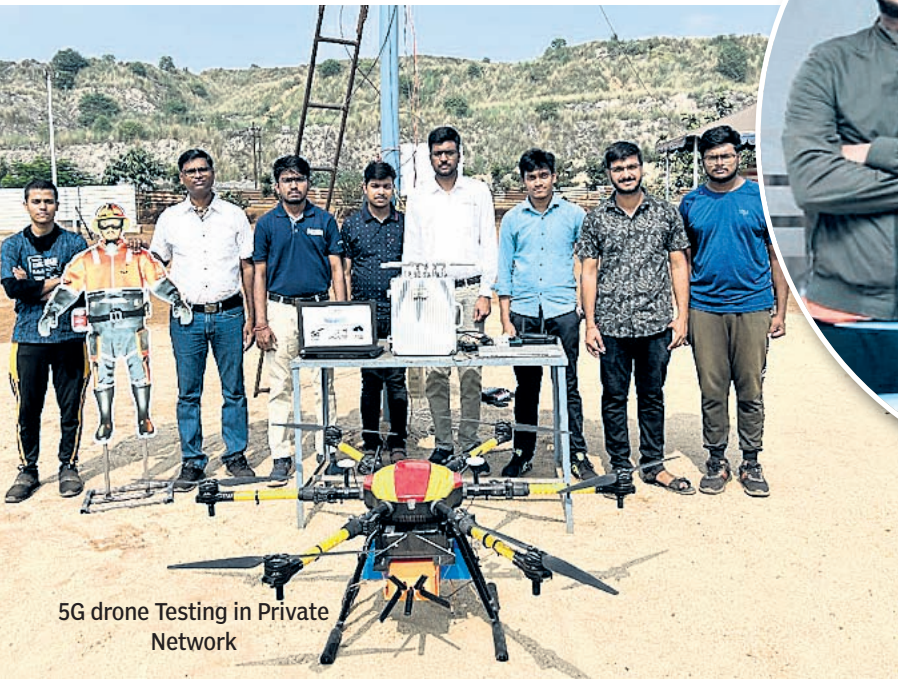
offers unique capabilities, including fire mitigation using CO2, foam, and MAP payloads, setting us apart in the market."

Talking about the company's vision, Partha says: "Over the next few years, we envision our company making its presence felt in the industrial drone segment, converting pilots into projects, scaling our operations, and expanding our product offerings to meet the diverse industrial needs. We want to establish the 5G base for drones upon which all other industries would start their 5G drone use cases or solutions."

On the challenges faced by them in the past, he adds: "Probably starting off a start-up, right off graduation, is a challenge. It's similar to jumping into a river with a vague idea of how to swim. But we've been fortunate to have mentors, be it at Electropreneur Park, ISM Dhanbad, or even our university alumni (VSSUT Burla), who have guided us through different phases and continue to do so."

Subham says, "This year's theme, 'Founders of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow,' resonates with the dynamic and transformative nature of entrepreneurship."

Signing off, he opines: "Leadership isn't something you're necessarily born with, but something that, with enough effort, can be learned. A leader deals with the overall vision, and a manager oversees the miniscule details of its execution. A founder has to do both. Entrepreneurship is a character-building experience, and it cultivates leadership in people who pursue it."



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Punyasloka with co-founders and team flaunting the NUDE t-shirts

**'We aim to introduce a ground-breaking concept in fashion'**

Punyasloka Panda, along with two of his friends, Adarsh Agrawal and Rushil Nilesh Zalavadia launched NUDE, a famous clothing brand.

Sharing his start-up jour-

ney, Panda says, "It all began as a collaboration with a friend from NIT in 2020. Our initial focus was on creating a genderless fashion concept to challenge traditional norms. We questioned why we should categorise a t-shirt as specifically for a boy or a girl. As time passed, we observed that genderless fashion had gained popularity. This prompted us to reassess our direction. Subsequently, I enlisted two friends from my postgraduate programme, and together, we delved into exploring the concept of nudity, contemplating how to extend our exploration and integrate it with other elements. One notable trend that caught our attention was Web3, a decentralised technology utilising blockchain, which is currently making waves worldwide."

to form Scomm—a start-up community established in 2019. Scomm became a platform where we could collectively address the challenges faced by start-ups, sharing insights and experiences for the benefit of all members."

On the company's key activities, Sourav explains, "Scomm consistently organises casual gatherings as the inception points for numerous start-ups. The unique environment at Scomm fosters informal interactions, resembling friendly gatherings where individuals feel free to express their thoughts without hesitation. For instance, one of our flagship initiatives, Entrepreneurs Day Out (EOD), gathers a diverse group of entrepreneurs for an entire day and night, facilitating meaningful connections."

He further shares, "While our

breaking concept within NUDE, advocating slow fashion as opposed to the prevalent trend of fast fashion. This initiative seeks to make the t-shirt production process highly efficient, ensuring a minimal carbon footprint for NUDE customers."

Panda says NUDE is committed to catalysing a monumental transformation within the industry over the coming quarters, emphasising a comprehensive approach to fashion and lifestyle. The integration of Web3 technology has given NUDE a new identity: neutral, underrated, decentralised, and equal, he adds.

Reflecting on NUDE's future, he shares, "We see ourselves in every part

meetings maintain a relaxed atmosphere, they are purposeful, aiming to cultivate strong bonds among founders. The underlying agenda is to encourage founders to share their networks, support each other, and potentially engage in mutually beneficial business collaborations. The essence of Scomm is encapsulated in our tagline: Together We Can, and Together We Did. This philosophy is at the core of our activities, leading to numerous success stories and witnessing the remarkable growth of start-ups within our informal yet impactful community."

Asked how a successful entrepreneur does things differently from an average individual, he clarifies, "Founders of Today, Leaders for Tomorrow. The theme of this year's National Startup Day encapsulates various aspects, especially when examining the founders of companies like Apple or Amazon. These visionaries began their journeys from humble beginnings,

working with minimal resources. Initially, they were mere founders working on certain ideas. The key lies in executing these ideas in a unique and expansive manner. When people recognise the potential of such a business model, it often involves taking a commonplace product, transforming it into a brand, and introducing it to markets where it wasn't previously available."

He ends by saying, "Over time, an individual evolves from a mere founder into a leader, gaining unparalleled knowledge about the industry. Starting is the crucial first step, followed by a continual process of learning. Through this learning curve, one ultimately emerges as a leader who possesses a profound understanding of the industry—a journey marked by trials, errors, and accumulated wisdom."



Punyasloka Panda



Punyasloka Panda, Adarsh Agrawal and Rushil Nilesh Zalavadia

**'Together we can; together we did'**

Sourabh Khandelwal joined hands with six of his friends to form Scomm India in Bhubaneswar.

The company is committed to collaborate with start-ups to identify and address the challenges they encounter, he says, adding, "Our events are designed to empower young entrepreneurs, fostering business transformation through problem-solving, team building, and critical thinking."

The names of other founders include Nihar Panda, Prahlad Mittal, Rakesh Kumar Gupta, Nirmal Mohapatra and Siddharth Bhattar.

Sourav recounts, "Our journey began in 2019 when we participated in a two-month accelerator programme facilitated by IOB, Inc. This programme aimed to impart valuable knowledge to 15 start-ups from Odisha. During this intensive course, I and other founders had the opportunity to interact with each other for the first time."

Continuing further, he says, "While we recognised the value of the lessons, we also realised that, as start-up founders, the time spent in the programme posed a challenge as it took us away from the day-to-day operations crucial for our start-ups' survival. This realisation prompted us to ponder how we could mutually support each other. Subsequently, a group of six individuals, including myself, came together



Sourabh Khandelwal



Scomm's Entrepreneurs Day Out

# Pongal: More than a festival



The tradition of cooking the newly harvested rice in clay pots over an open fire during the festivity symbolises people's connection with nature

In the vibrant southern state of Tamil Nadu, where a rich agricultural legacy intertwines with a lively culture, the atmosphere resonates with the delightful fragrance of freshly harvested crops during the festive season of Pongal. This auspicious event not only signifies the arrival of the harvest season but also serves as a symbolic expression of gratitude towards nature for the abundant blessings bestowed upon the land. As families unite in celebration, the traditional spirit of Pongal fills the air, fostering a profound sense of togetherness and merriment.

With every Tamil household gearing up to observe Pongal with grandeur, **Sunday POST** caught up with a couple of Tamilians to know the intricacies of the celebration.

**Viknesh Kumar T**, from Theni, belongs to a weaving community, and the family has been living in the region for over 150 years.

Narrating the scale of festivity, he shares, "Pongal, marking the harvesting season, is celebrated for four days across Tamil Nadu. We call it *Thai Pongal* (Thai is the name of a month in Tamil for harvesting). The first day is *Bhogi*, where we burn the waste and buy new things for home. Day 2 is Pongal,

during which people usually worship the Sun God. They also cook new rice in a pot and distribute it among friends, neighbours, and relatives. Some people follow the practice at their place of work to thank God for the business throughout the year. The third day is *Mattu* (referred to as cow)

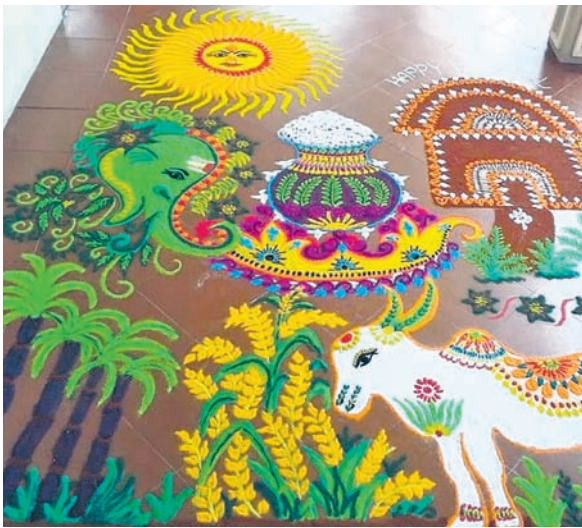
*Pongal*, which is a day dedicated to farm animals that help bring wealth to the family, and this is most prominently celebrated in agricultural families. The last day, which is *Kanum* (to see) *Pongal*, is when people visit the nearby tourist attractions and spend the entire day around the place and enjoy themselves."

Speaking about the ambience at home, Viknesh adds, "Everyone in the family is dressed up in traditional attire, which is a dhoti and shirt for men and a saree for women. Apart from that, keeping a stick of sugarcane at the entrance of the house is a mandatory ritual. Not just that, for the next 10-15 days, people keep sugarcane at home and eat it at regular intervals. In whichever part of the country we are, we have the tradition of assembling on these festivals, meeting each other, and getting back to our traditions."

He also shares his thoughts on how celebrations have evolved over the years. He said, "Though the tradition at our home hasn't changed much in the last 20 years, it is quite different from the way my grandparents used to celebrate at their times. Earlier, Pongal used to be the only festival of the year. But now so many other festivals have been added to the list." Viknesh says if he can't make it to his hometown this Pongal, he will make sure to celebrate the festival on a smaller scale with friends and neighbours.

**Gobeshwar** from Erode says, "Pongal is more than just a festival; it's a time when we express our gratitude to the earth for providing us with bountiful harvests. The tradition of cooking the newly harvested rice in clay pots over an open fire symbolises our connection with nature and the simplicity of rural life."

He goes on to share, "On Pongal, we consume sugarcane and prepare dishes like *sweet Pongal*, *white Pongal*,



*mixed vegetable sambar*, and *mint chutney* to savour the festival. Every house is adorned with rangoli based on Pongal. It may differ from person to person, but commonly, everyone makes a rangoli of a Pongal pot along with sugarcane. In rural areas, this function looks awesome. They celebrate this as their only annual festival. They decorate the whole village using coloured papers, place speakers in every nook and cranny of the locality, and conduct indigenous games."

Elaborating more on the cultural activities during Pongal, Gobeshwar adds, "This time is very special for the cultural events. In most of the areas, people enjoy *Jallikattu*, the traditional game involving bulls. Another popular game that is played during this festival is "break the pot." It is one of the traditional cultural events conducted during Pongal. A pot is made to hang in the air with the help of a rope. Competitors are made to close their eyes with the help of a cloth. They will come one by one and will try to break the pot. It seems to be very interesting to watch." Gobeshwar is also planning to move to his hometown to celebrate Pongal with family and friends.



# Yami looks back to the time of *URI*

As the blockbuster film *URI: The Surgical Strike* completes five years of its release last week, actress Yami Gautam said that she got to do something different in the film that had been longing to do as an actor.

The *OMG 2* actress expressed: "It's been five years of *URI*, and I must say it's undeniably a very special film for me. *URI* was our modern-day cinematic version of the living legend, our Indian Army. Everyone who was associated with this film, we all look back to the time of its release and cherish the thunderous response we received

from every corner of the world. To be part of *URI*, a story that celebrates the bravery of our Indian army and the nation's spirit, was an honour for me. It was a film where I got to do something different which I'd been longing to do as an actor."

Yami, who portrayed the character of Pallavi Sharma in the film, added: "The film was the result of the hard work of every department, which worked day and night to deliver a one-of-a-kind cinematic experience to the audiences. *URI* is and will always hold a special place in my heart."

IAN S



## Gulshan: I don't cave into pressure of red carpets

Actor Gulshan Devesh does not cave into the pressure of red carpets and does not mind repeating his clothes. "I don't cave into the pressure of red carpets. I love my own sense of style, and with a background in fashion education, I tend to style myself on most occasions," said Gulshan.

Unlike many celebrities who feel the weight of always presenting a unique look at every event, the *Foot Fairy* actor takes a refreshing approach. "A lot of backend work and money go into getting the perfect red carpet look. I understand the nuances, but I don't believe in succumbing to

that pressure," he added. As a fashion graduate, he appreciates the artistry of clothing and believes that style is not about constant reinvention but about expressing oneself authentically. "I don't mind wearing repeated clothes. I do my own styling, and I believe that's what makes it stand out," he asserts.

Gulshan will be seen sharing screen space with Rasika Dugal in *Little Thomas* and Janhvi Kapoor in *Ulajb*.

IAN S



## Madhuri bats for Marathi actresses

Actress Madhuri Dixit recently spoke to a newspaper Agency about backing Marathi films, and the challenges heroines face while choosing the kind of movies they want to do. She said, "Every generation faces new challenges. When we were working, our challenges were very different, today the generation is facing a different challenge with social media and the noise that happens. So I think we should have respect for every generation. They are working hard to establish themselves and once they establish themselves, they can pick and choose your roles. Sometimes, when you are new, you have to do whatever comes your way. Once you establish yourself you can put your foot down and say 'no'. When they get to that point, they can also dictate what they want to do and we've seen that happening."

She then discussed how it has become more and more challenging to find filmmakers and producers to back films on out-of-the-box topics, the kind of films she'd like to feature in.

"There are a lot of expectations around the kind of films we should be doing especially as actresses. People expect that you'll do something different, but it's hard to come across this sort of subjects and for makers to put their money. They are confident enough to invest their money and make a film on it. So, all these factors count," the 56-year-old concluded.

AGENCIES

## Taapsee shares her surreal experience

Taapsee Pannu, known for her impactful roles in films like *Pink* and *Thappad*, recently starred alongside Shah Rukh Khan in Rajkumar Hirani's *Dunki*. In an interview, Pannu expressed her disbelief at securing a role in a film directed by Rajkumar Hirani.

Talking to *Bollywood Hungama*, Taapsee recalled that everybody isn't like Rajkumar Hirani. He doesn't necessarily need that comfort zone. He texted her out of the blue after watching *Manmarziyaan*. After watching a lot of her films, purely on merit, he reached out to her for *Dunki*. It was too good to be true which is why she didn't believe it till the first schedule of the film got over.

The actress added that one-and-a-half years before the film went on floors, people were telling her that Raju might be looking at some other actors, nothing came from Raju, though he was sure about her. So, it was difficult for her to settle down and accept that she was doing this film. It was a surreal experience, admitted Taapsee.

AGENCIES



# Glorious tales of India's economic reform

The book splendidly maps India's financial sector reforms in the most critical juncture, like the global financial crisis and the COVID pandemic. The insights are powerful, and people with a deep interest in India's financial sector reform should be proud owners of this book

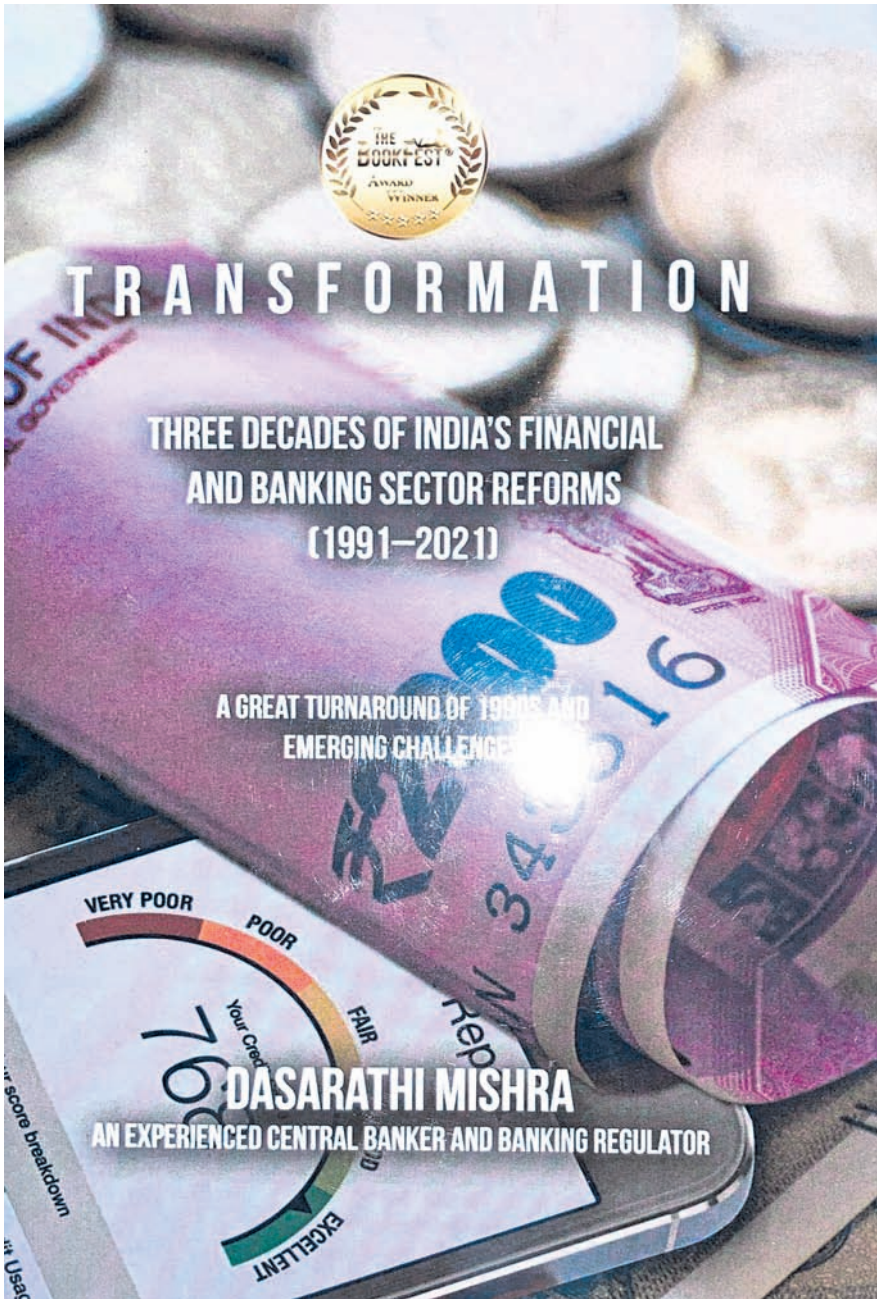
SURESH CHANDRA SARANGI

I stumbled upon the book Transformation: Three Decades of India's Financial and Banking Reforms (1991–2021), an enlarged and extended version of the earlier book with additional chapters that has triggered a discussion on the quality and content of a compelling book. Written by Dasarathi Mishra, ex-Chief General Manager of RBI, who is also heading the Trust: Abhyutthana Foundation, recognised by SEBI as the Investor Association, and spreading financial literacy in urban as well as rural hinterland. This is an exciting book that is a beautiful narrative of the great turnaround of 1990, the emerging challenges, and how well India has tackled these challenges with great nerve.

Napoleon Bonaparte, a great soldier, once said, If you want to make a nation great, give the people books that will transform a state. This book on transformation is, in fact, one such great book that can set forth unprecedented change. The book is a fascinating story of change taking place before your eyes, which you not only read but also feel. An engrossing read, a who's who of financial sector reforms that catapulted India into the next orbit with impeccable speed and change.

The themes of change bordering on important and bold reforms speak about the real transformation that shook the dormant Indian landscape into a powerful economic system. The fascinating story of the anatomy of financial sector reforms towards competitive efficiency is really interesting. Chapters dwelling on aspects like banking sector reforms, the entry of new private banks, differential banking in India, and the presence of new foreign banks give the banking space a structure that remains vibrant witness to the kaleidoscopic change of India's banks. Chapters like banking regulation, ownership and governance issues, and the story of supervision from rule-based to risk-based are fascinating stories of a journey that has triggered a revolution worth millions of mutinies.

No financial sector is complete without a peep into the external sector, and there Mishra has performed a yeoman's job. Layers of experience as a central banker



put Mishra in a position to take a ringside view of our external sectors' meaningful journey into stardom in world trade. NPA, an offshoot of restricting that became important due to stress on the financial sector, is well portrayed in the book. When the newfound glory of a financially performing nation was getting lost under the burden of the NPA, the role of the Reserve Bank of India in restoring faith and confidence was well analysed and argued. The role of credit monitoring in keeping financial assets in shape in the face of mounting pressure from the built-up NPA in the financial system has been more intrinsically captured by Mishra in his magnum opus, Transformation.

Consolidation is key, and the author unapologetically storms into the area of consolidation. The importance of a narrative is the successful handing of in-

formation with a penchant for a balance between promise and performance, and that balance glitters like gold in the pages of the book transformation. He has remained thoroughly candid, capturing the robustness of our financial system more elegantly. More importantly, it superbly catches the pace of change, adaptation, and mitigation that is so central to our financial freedom. India, being the world's oyster in carving out the fastest-growing economy, is readable as well as enjoyable.

If a 21st-century story is ever

written, then it would be the story of technology that has steered clear of the vicissitudes of manual systems. Mishra is well aware of the role of technology in navigating the financial landscape through his reportage on payment and settlement systems, the Fintech Revolution, etc. In a developing economy, the role of non-banking finance companies cannot be underrated, and Mishra's clear thinking comes into sharper focus in these areas. Microfinance, a new model of change in the financial landscape, has been well captured in his book. A new thinking of financial inclusion and inclusive growth, which are foster children of reform and walk an extra mile to take banking into the hinterland of India, is Mishra's forte, and he has very brilliantly captured the same.

Mishra's erudite scholarship in the areas of infrastructure, capital account convertibility, and gold policy has been portrayed so beautifully. Mishra is very specific and categorical in his description while he turns the lens of his camera on areas like India's external debt and the crypto system. Adaptation is the key, and Mishra focuses on swift change and adapting to financial sector reforms. Most pertinently, India's banking system's resilience takes India's sizzling economy into the arena of the world's largest economy. This book is indeed a glorious one that maps India's financial sector reforms in the most critical situations, like the global Financial crisis and the COVID pandemic. Mishra has delved into the depths of systems, institutions, policies, adaptation, and integration in his inimitable style. The insights are powerful, and people with a deep interest in India's financial sector reform should be proud owners of this book. More pertinently, this book should find a place on the shelves of research scholars and students appearing in civil services, banking, and other competitive examinations.

(The author is a former General Manager of a public sector bank.)





Meera

KAMAL PHOTOGRAPHY