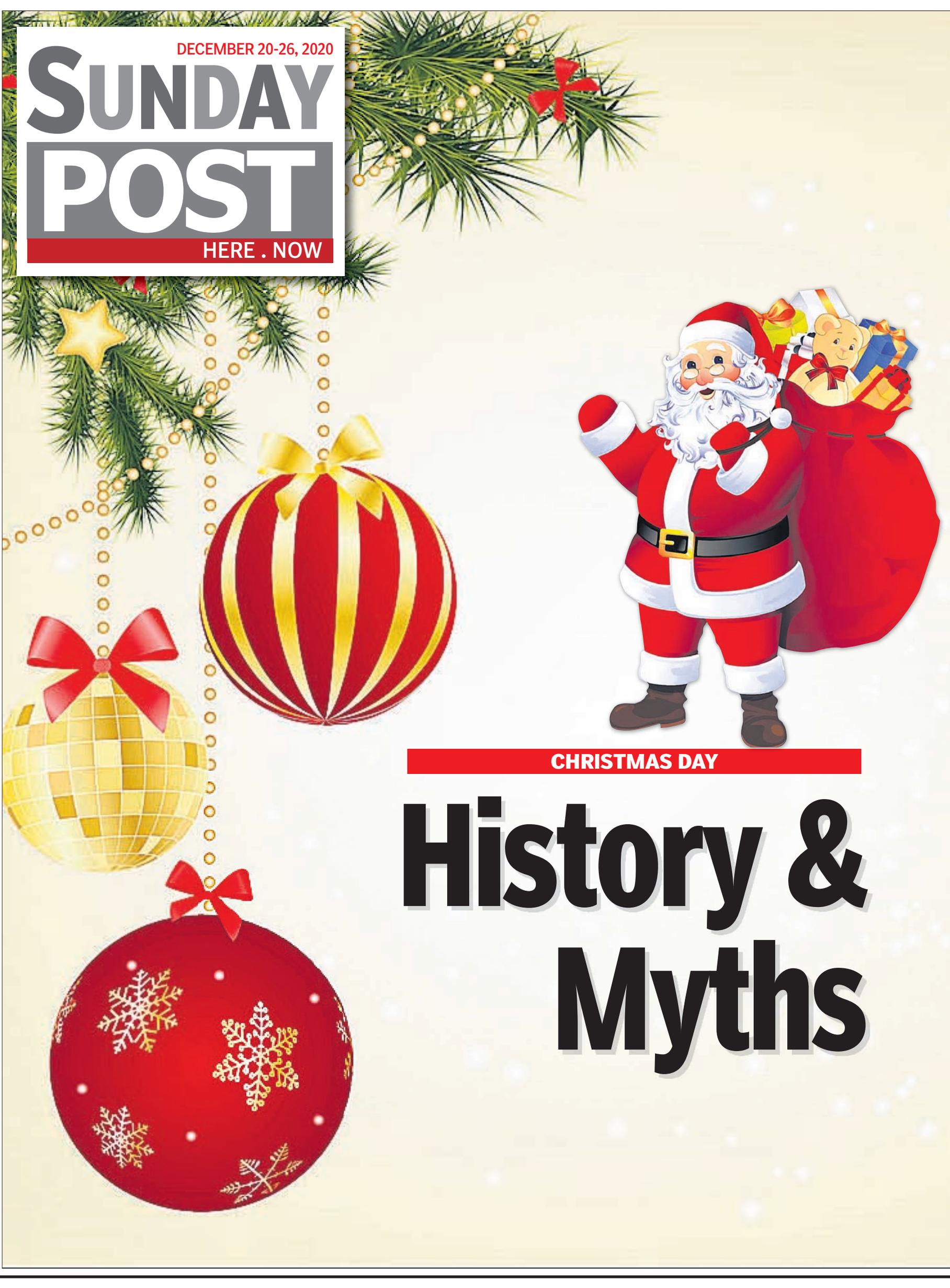


DECEMBER 20-26, 2020

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



CHRISTMAS DAY

History & Myths

MY SUNDAY

Singer and music composer Abhiram Sahoo, who rose to fame for his songs like Rupa Aaina, Rista and Mana Mayuri, loves to spend time with his co-artistes and dine out with them.

Yoga lover

I always prefer to do yoga, instead of hitting a gym, to remain in good shape since I believe that the practice of yoga improves the functioning of our nervous system.



Abhiram with singers Swayam Padhi (L) and Asima Panda

Home decorator

Decorating home and keeping things organised is my favourite pastime. So, I prefer to give a facelift to my interiors on some select Sundays.

Bibliophile

I love reading literature. On Sundays, I spend a few hours reading my favourite authors like Bibhuti Patnaik, Manoj Patnaik and Prativa Ray.

Avid gardener

A Sunday without taking care of my favourite plants sounds dull for me. I also make it a point to do my bit for the cause of environment.

Outing with pals

I go for outings with my friends on Sundays. We do lots of fun and enjoy the day to the fullest before eating together.



With friends

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP



WhatsApp This Week

Only on **Sunday POST!**

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HERE ARE A FEW SAMPLES:

- When one door closes and another door opens, you are probably in prison.
- To me, 'drink responsibly' means don't spill it.
- Age 60 might be the new 40, but 9:00 pm is the new midnight.
- It's the start of a brand new day, and I'm off like a herd of turtles.
- I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.



BOON FOR MANKIND

Sir, I found last week's cover story on Deep Ocean Mission is quite amazing. It was interesting to learn that 75 per cent of earth's surface is covered by water but research into the prospect of marine organisms is limited, and most of it still remains unexplored in Odisha. Odisha no doubt would be benefitted by this project. It will certainly help the locals understand the science in their surroundings.

SOURAJIT MOHAPATRA, SAMBALPUR

UNDER-UTILISED TALENT

Sir, I am a big fan of actress Nilu who played a cop in daily soap Sindura Bindu. Her powerful performance made me watch every single episode of that serial. I believe that the show was quite popular among the TV viewers because of Nilu. But later I got disappointed because after appearing in the serial, she was not seen in too many shows.

SAMAR MUDULI, RAIRANGPUR

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

CHRISTMAS DAY

HISTORY & MYTHS

It is believed by many Muslims that Jesus or 'Isa' in Arabic was a prophet of God who will return to Earth before the Day of Judgment to restore justice

BUDDHADEV NANDI

Though the actual birthday and year of birth of Jesus Christ, have not yet been established, the 25th December leaving much room of controversy, is observed annually as the birth of the 'Son of God'. Besides date and year, the birth of Jesus Christ is all shrouded in mystery and charms. As per theological doctrine, Jesus had no human father. It is believed that Old Testament prophecies proved true with the birth of Jesus attended by miracles. Therefore, Nativity or Virgin Birth is celebrated at Christmas.

The Origin

The word 'Christmas' is the abbreviation derived from 'Christ's mass'. The use of the expression Christenmas though considered now-a-days as archaic can be discerned in history books. Another popular nomenclature of Christmas is Xmas. The 'X' is derived from the Greek letter 'Chi', the first of the Greek word 'Christos' that became Christ in English. The 'mas' comes from the Old English word for 'mass' denoting a church service in the Roman Catholic Church including a celebration of the

symbol of Christ called a 'Christogram'. When parchment papers were very pricy, the abbreviation XPmas further contracted into Xmas for space constraints.

Legends surrounding birth of Jesus

The theme of Christmas story commences with the prophecy of nascence of an exceptional baby Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Gabriel, the chief messenger angel, selected Joseph and Mary out of three nominated couples. He appeared before Virgin Mary, a teenage girl between 14 and 16 years of age, and delivered the message that she had been selected to be the earth mother of the bestowal. Gabriel was sent from God to Nazareth of Lower Galilee in Northern Israel; to virgin Marie pledged to be married to Joseph. According to one of the four Marian dogmas of the Catholic Church, Mary was a virgin ante partum, in partu, et post partum – before, during and after the birth of Christ.

According to the Gospel of Matthew, Joseph, the human father of Jesus, was a carpenter and contractor by profession. Joseph's lineage is traced through King David. But Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus' Davidic lineage claimed by Matthew is a paradoxical genealogy. When Joseph, a righteous person, became aware of the conception of his betrothed wife Mary without mating between them, he did not want to expose her to public grace. When he was hesitant about his decision to divorce Mary, an angel of the Lord instructed him in his dream not to be afraid of taking Mary

be named as Jesus, the saviour of humanity from sins. As per the command of the Lord's angel Joseph took Mary home but did not solemnize their marriage until she gave birth to a son who was called Immanuel i.e. 'God with us'.

But the Gospel of Luke does not entirely match with Matthew's version. According to Luke's genealogy, Joseph's lineage goes back to Adam, the first man on the earth. During Mary's pregnancy as a virgin, Joseph was living in Nazareth. Mary after spending several months at the house of Zechariah, the husband of her cousin Elizabeth, returned to Joseph who was not anguished seeing his betrothed wife pregnant. When Joseph went to Bethlehem, the city of David, to comply with a census order of Caesar Augustus, Jesus was born in a manger. Jesus was circumcised on the 8th day and then Joseph returned to Nazareth with his family.

According to the Gospel of Luke and in the Acts of the Apostles, John the Baptist is described as the forerunner and as inaugurator of the time of fulfilment of the prophecy. Even in his mother Elizabeth's womb John when Jesus was also in Mary's womb, leapt with joy as he recognized Jesus, the Prince of Peace.



home as his wife for the child in her womb was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The angel also prophesied that Mary would give birth to a son. The child would

Eucharist. A stylized version of Greek 'chi' (X) and 'rho' (P) is ; a



He realised that Christ had come to bring the good news for the humanity. Six months after her cousin Elizabeth giving birth to John the Baptist, the angel appeared once again and said to her, "Greetings, favoured one. The Lord is with you". According to the gospels of Matthew and Luke in the New Testament and the Quran, Mary is a virgin who is betrothed to Joseph.

New Testament

Herod or Herod the Great (73 BC – 4 BC), Roman-appointed King of Judaea has been portrayed as a tyrant and cruel in the New Testament. During his reign Jesus of Nazareth was born between 6 BC and 4 BC. When he heard of the magi, he feared that he would be dethroned from his kingdom.

He sent for the wise men that came to Jerusalem to pay homage to baby Jesus. He urged the wise men, "Tell me when you find this child so that I can honour him too!"

But Herod had an evil intention to kill the child. However, God warned them in their dreams and divulged Herod's secret plan. Therefore, they set out their return journey through another route to avoid Herod.

Besides, one night Joseph also saw an angel in his dream. The angel advised him, "Hurry to Egypt and save the child!"

Herod wants to kill the child and the Lord

needs to be saved." Joseph and Mary complied with the angel's instruction left for Egypt. After the de-



mise of Herod, the angel again appeared in Joseph's dream and said, "It is now safe to go back to Bethlehem with Jesus." And Jesus grew up there.

Santa - The Principal attraction

There are many legendary stories surrounding Santa Clause, one of the prominent figures of Christmas celebrations. He can actually be traced back as a monk named St. Nicholas. He was born at Patara, a flourishing maritime and commercial city on the south-west coast of Lycia on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey around 270 A.D to 280 A.D. He spent a large part of his life in the nearby town of Myra. St. Nicholas, who earned much admiration for his piousness and kindness, gave away all his inherited wealth to help the poor and the sick. He is particularly the saviour of the children and the sailors. It is believed by many that he lives with his wife at the North Pole making toys for children with the help of his elves throughout the year. On Christmas Eve he riding on his sleigh loaded with toys and drawn by eight reindeer, slides down the chimney and leaves the gifts for children. He refreshes himself with the milk and cookies left for him by the children. According English legend Father Christmas visits homes on Christmas Eve and fills children's stockings with holiday treats.

Jesus in Islam

Jesus is an important figure in Islam, too. Though many Muslims do not celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday, Jesus, Mary and the angel Gabriel are all prominent figures in the Quran. It is believed by many Muslims that Jesus or 'Isa' in Arabic was a prophet of God and was born to a virgin. They consider that Jesus will return to Earth before the Day of Judgment to restore justice and vanquish 'the false messiah' known as the Antichrist.

Christmas in summer

When a white Christmas in winter is enjoyed by most parts of the world, in countries like

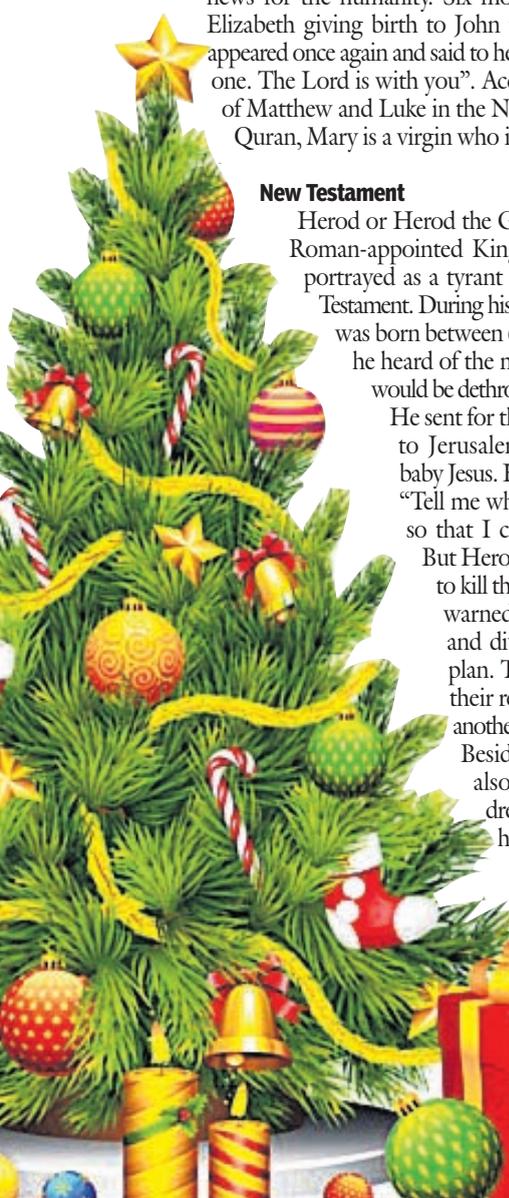
Australia, New Zealand, Bolivia, South Africa etc that are in Southern hemisphere, are compelled to celebrate the festival in the summer. During December the weather in Northern hemisphere is mid-winter, whereas, Southern hemisphere passes through mid-summer. Therefore, to enjoy Christmas in cold weather 'Christmas in July' also known as Yulefest or Yuletide is celebrated in Australia. Yulefest in cold wintry July with the Blue Mountains wearing mist offering traditional Christmas style celebration extends festive cheer. When cold wind blows with occasional snowfalls, spicy mulled wine, roast dinners, log fire, singalongs, Christmas fare and Santa turn the Blue Mountains into 'Winter Wonderland'.

When Christmas was banned

The Puritans banned Christmas. They sailed from England to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in pursuit of a utopian goal to found New World. Surprisingly, a group of devout Christians had much antipathy towards Christmas. As a mark of their aversion to Christmas, they would keep their shops and schools open, whereas, churches would remain closed. After the dethronement of King Charles, the monarch's head was chopped off and Christmas was banned. Parliament decreed that December 25 should be observed as a day of 'fasting and humiliation' for Englishmen to account their sin. Even the celebration of the day was declared as criminal offence by the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1659.

Christmas during pandemic

Christmas-2020 is going to face a different challenge in the pandemic situation. Scientists and governments all over the world are mulling over how to maintain family get together during holidays in the milieu of lockdowns and social distancing in the present pandemic situation caused by COVID – 19. They are in a dilemma. There is every reason of further spikes in coronavirus provided relaxing of the rules. On the other hand, it is admitted by many that allowing family get together will boost morale of the people. Therefore, countries like England, Scotland have allowed a Christmas bubble but not people to swap. Restrictions have been drawn on visiting pubs or restaurants together. Dr. Hans Kluge, regional director of WHO's Europe office enkindles hope: "It will be a different Christmas, but that does not mean that it cannot be a merry one."



Growing culture of virtual dating in India



WITH INCREASING ACCEPTANCE OF THE ONLINE DATING CULTURE AND WITH THE CONTINUITY OF SOCIAL DISTANCING NORMS MORE WOMEN ARE EXPECTED TO GET COMFORTABLE WITH ONLINE DATING, SAYS A DATING APP FOUNDER

The COVID-19 pandemic has redefined the rules for online dating in the country. With the enforced lockdown restrictions and social distancing norms in place, virtual dating has slowly become the new 'favourite' among Indian singles.

The effect can be very well witnessed across dating platforms as they experienced a vast surge in new user signups from all over the country. Dating app QuackQuack saw a whopping 300 percent increase in signups from smaller cities and towns and that took their current user base to 11 million. The platform added the last million users in just 115 days and in the past one year they added around 3.40 million new users.

"2020 has been the year when virtual dating was accepted by masses among the desi singles. We witnessed participation from people of all age groups and geographies. What's pleasing to see was the huge growth in participation of users from small towns & cities and in the near future we are expecting the number to shoot up even further," says Ravi Mittal, Founder of

QuackQuack on the growing culture of Online Dating in India.

"With the COVID danger still hanging in the backdrop and social distancing norms still in place, we are expecting the coming year to continue to reap good results for online dating as users are much more comfortable in interacting virtually. If 2020 was the starter, 2021 will be the main course for daters!," he adds.

To analyze this growing trend of online dating, QuackQuack closely monitored 50,000 of their users for 3 months straight and they have come up with the dating trends that will be followed in the industry in the coming year.

Online Dating to prosper in Tier II & III cities

Prolonged isolation period and social distancing have compelled the users from smaller cities to come online in search of their love interest. The app on-boarded 70 percent of their new users from such cities and the trend is expected to grow further as more and more people start adopting the culture of Virtual Dating.

Era of commitment is back

There has been a welcome surge in people who are looking for meaningful relationships. With more time in hand, users are willing to go to extra-mile in order to know their counter-part and are engaging with the profile of their interest for hours. It was revealed that the average time users spend on their app is 11 minutes.

Average users' age is expected to drop

The current average age of users on QuackQuack is 25 years that has dropped from 29 just a few years back. The average age is expected to drop even further as more and more youngsters adopt the culture of Online Dating.

Active women participation

The app witnessed a 12 percent increase in women signups during the lockdown. With the increasing acceptance of the online dating culture and with the continuity of social distancing norms more women are expected to get comfortable with online dating. It also revealed that female users open the app 48 times a day while male users tend to use the app 24 times during the day.

New WhatsApp for couples

The user chats on the app have increased from 350k to 500k per day, a clear sign of things to come with social distancing in place. They also witnessed a 25 percent surge in profile views this year. With low confidence in stepping out, we can expect people to spend more time on dating apps browsing matches & interacting with their love interests.

Most preferred option for singles

During the lockdown, video calling was one of the most used features by couples on dating platforms. This trend is only expected to grow as users are interacting with profiles that are quite far off from their current location and it gives them a sense of connectivity & closeness. QuackQuack is also coming up with a video calling feature on their app soon.

IANS



I feel lucky, privileged: SARA

GenNext star Sara Ali Khan is happy with the way her career is going. Ever since her debut in the 2018 release *Kedarnath*, she has worked with bigwigs such as Abhishek Kapoor, Rohit Shetty and Imtiaz Ali, and she is all set to end the year 2020 with the David Dhawan directorial *Coolie No. 1* opposite Varun Dhawan. The film is a remake of 1995 hit of the same name starring Govinda and Karisma Kapoor.

"I feel lucky and privileged. I think films are a director's medium and you are as good as your director, and I have luckily had the opportunity to work with extremely versatile and amazing directors," said Sara, daughter of actors Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh.

The 25-year-old actress added: "I will only say that I am thankful and grateful. I hope I keep getting opportunities to work with creative people like I have."

Coming up after *Coolie*

No. 1 is Aanand L. Rai's

Atrangi Re. Sara stars with Akshay Kumar and Dhanush.

IAN S



Alia goes back in black

Actress Alia Bhatt has shared a picture in an all black ensemble. In the Instagram image, Alia wears a black slip. She poses with her back to the camera and has her hands on her long black hair.

Alongside the image, she wrote: "Casually flexing."

Alia was last seen in the OTT-released dud *Sadak 2*, and is now gearing up for the shoot of her upcoming multilingual multistarrer *RRR*, directed by Bahubali helmer SS Rajamouli. In the film, Alia will play a character called Sita. The film has

Telugu stars Ram Charan and Jr NTR in central roles. Actor Ajay Devgn is also a part of the cast.

Alia will also be seen in Ayan Mukerji's action fantasy drama *Brahmastra*, co-starring Ranbir Kapoor, Mouni Roy, Amitabh Bachchan and Telugu superstar Nagarjuna.

IAN S



Ayushmann misses people screaming at his gigs

Actor Ayushmann Khurrana misses performing live, and says he also misses touching the hands of fans at gigs. The actor has posted a picture from one of his past gigs on Instagram to share how much he misses performing live.

"I miss the stage. I miss people screaming at my gigs. I miss touching the hands of the crowd. I miss being part of the crowd of a local artiste's gig somewhere in Eastern Europe. I miss being missed when I get late for my concert," he wrote

with the image. Ayushmann's friends and fans loved the post, and started commenting.

Actor Rajkumar Rao dropped a heart emoji, while actress Maanvi Gargroo wrote: "What a pic AK."

The actor is currently busy shooting Abhishek Kapoor's *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui* in Chandigarh. The film also stars Vaani Kapoor. In the romantic movie, Ayushmann will play a cross-functional athlete. The film is expected to release next year.

IAN S

Anushka shares pregnancy woes in funny post

Actress Anushka Sharma has shared her pregnancy woes in her new social media post, with a touch of humour.

Anushka posted a pre-pregnancy picture on Instagram. In the image, she is seen sitting all curled up on a chair and holding a bowl of food.

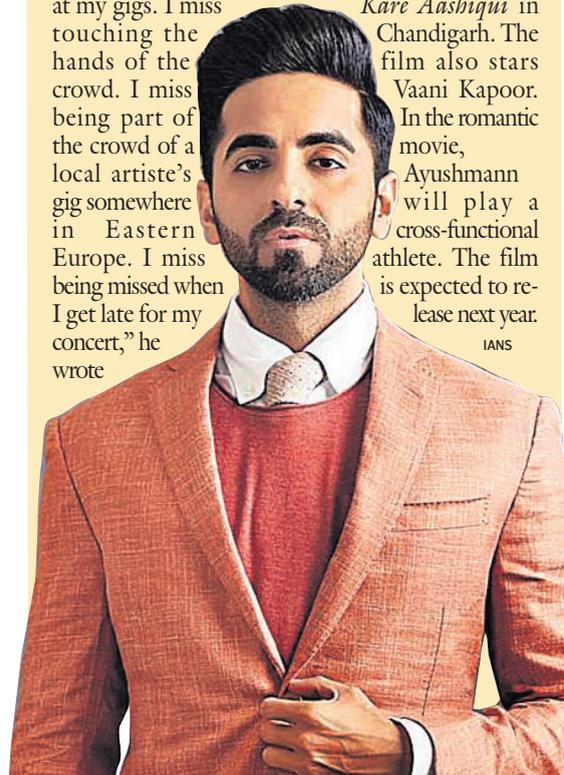
"Throwback to when I could sit like this and eat. Now I can't sit like this but I can EAT," Anushka wrote, alongside the image.

Virat and Anushka tied the knot December 11, 2017.

The couple had a hush-hush destination wedding in Italy.

Anushka is expected to deliver her child in January next year. The couple had shared the happy news in August on social media, writing: "And then, we were three! Arriving Jan 2021."

IAN S



TANGY Yogurt Dishes



DAHI KADHI

Ingredients

- Yogurt (curd): Two cups
- Gram flour (besan): 1 cup
- Curry leaves: 5
- Asafoetida: 1 pinch
- Mustard seeds: 1 tsp
- Salt as required
- Refined oil: 1/2 tsp
- Turmeric: 1/4 tsp
- Cumin seeds: 1 tsp
- Red chili: 1 tsp
- Ginger: 1 inch
- Green chili: 2
- Sugar: 1/2 tsp

Procedure

To make this delicious recipe, put curd, gram flour, turmeric and red chili powder in a bowl. Mix it well. Then gradually add the required amount of water and mix it all together. Now, take a kadhai over medium flame and pour the besan mixture to it. Stir it for a while and let it boil. Once it starts boiling, add green chili and salt. Simmer it for 20 minutes. Meanwhile for tempering, heat oil in a non-stick pan and add cumin seeds, curry leaves, green chili, asafoetida, ginger, dry red chili, mustard seeds and saute till they splutter. Finally, pour the tempering over the Kadhi. Transfer it to a serving bowl and garnish with coriander leaves. Serve hot.



DAHI BOONDI

Ingredients

- Yogurt: 1 cup
- Boondi: 2 tbsp
- Red chili powder
- Roasted cumin powder
- Black salt
- Salt to taste
- Coriander and mint leaves

Procedure

Soak the boondi in water for 10 minutes. Whisk the yogurt and add 1/4 cup water. Add salt and black salt. Squeeze the water from the boondi and add to the whisked yogurt. Mix well. Sprinkle chili powder, roasted cumin powder. Garnish with coriander and mint leaves.





Madhubhree

PHOTO: KUMAR SHARAT, OP
LOCATION COURTESY: CAFE SUNDOWNER, BHUBANESWAR