

JULY 11-17, 2021

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



Beyond Belief

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COVER STORY





With husband

Weekly schedule

My music teacher Guru Ratan Kumar Pujhari visits me every Sunday so that we can compose and rehearse new Sambalpuri songs.

Nature lover

I am fond of gardening and needless to say that my garden is my paradise. Since I don't get much time on other days of the week, I take care of my paradise on Sundays.

Folk singer Padmini Dora is a household name in Western Odisha for her Sambalpuri songs like 'Kanhu dakidesi nisha rati, 'Chutkuchuta, Mayura chulia' and 'E murali'. Dora, often referred to as the "Teejan Bai of Odisha", loves to cook traditional mutton curry for her family.



Teamwork

I team up with my husband Mohit Kumar Swain, an acclaimed artiste, to discuss strategies for the revival of Sambalpuri music.

Home de-cluttering

A tidy and organised home always radiates positive energy. Being a homemaker, I ensure to keep my house clean all the time.



Padmini being felicitated

Expert cook

Sunday sounds boring if I don't cook traditional mutton curry. Everyone in my family loves the dish. The only exception is my son who loves paneer Do Pyaza.

RASHMI REKHA DAS, 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

- Have you heard about the new restaurant called 'Karma?' There's no menu—you get what you deserve.
- The man is the head, but the woman is the neck. And she can turn the head any way she wants.
- Love may be blind, but marriage is a real eye-opener.
- I really want to work so hard. But being lazy is so much fun.



VISUAL DELIGHT

Dear Sir, 'The Monsoon Chasers'(July 5) was a sheer delight. The collage of monsoon photographs capturing the myriad hues of the rainy season provided the much-needed soothing touch amidst the prevailing heatwave in the national capital. The breathtaking images of the landscape and avifauna will always remain etched in memory. The three avid shutterbugs featured in the article deserve fulsome praise for their marvellous photographic creations. Monsoon images have an impressionistic quality of their own and have inspired writers, poets, singers and artists through the ages. The requisite inputs and technical knowhow for the safe upkeep of cameras and other accessories will also prove handy for amateurs as well as professionals in this field.

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

Beyond Belief

Lord Jagannath, for many, is not just a deity but someone who is part and parcel of their day-to-day lives and bails them out whenever they are in trouble



RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Taking fruits from a social outcast like Dasia Bauri to waiting for seven long days near the hut of ardent Muslim devotee Salabega to give him darshan, there is no end to the legends surrounding Lord Jagannath. For millions, he is not just a deity but someone who is part and parcel of their day-to-day lives and bails them out whenever they are in trouble.

With just a day to go before the world famous annual sojourn Rath Yatra, a few eminent people share with **Sunday POST** their experience of having the divine presence of Lord Jagannath in their lives.

'Selection into Rath Yatra commentary panel sans experience was a miracle'

Social activist **Namrata Chadha**, a strong advocate of women's rights and empowerment, says her bonding with the Lord can't be expressed in words.

Recalling a memorable incident in her life that still gives goosebumps, she says, "Last year I was diagnosed with Sarcoidosis, a rare lung disorder. I went to All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) for treatment. Initially doctors couldn't identify the disease but a CT scan, X-ray and other examinations confirmed the condition. That time, I was all alone. My husband was away, my son was in Kolkata, and my daughter in Hyderabad. I was not sure if I would recover from that condition and felt quite helpless. Left with no choice, I tried to recall a live darshan of Lord Jagannath I had when I was doing commentary during a Rath Yatra and closed my eyes. Soon after, tears rolled down my eyes and I prayed, 'Let me live a healthy life or allow me to go'. It seemed he listened to the appeal of his ardent devotee and I started recovering fast."



Namrata Chadha, Former member of State Commission for Women

Similarly, Doordarshan authorities didn't allow her to do commentary when she approached them at the beginning.

Neither she was an anchor nor a professor of Hindi language, they argued.

However, after a long discussion among themselves, they took her in the panel.

"It was not less than a miracle for me. I believe it was Lord Jagannath who wanted me to tell the world about his festival through TV commentary," says Bihar-born Chadha.

The former member of State Commission for Women is all set to release her Hindi book *Jay Jagannath* on Lord's daily rituals, ceremonies, festivals and some astonishing facts about Jagannath and Sri Mandir.

This book is an attempt to reach out to devotees across the globe, she says.

'Got unexpected offer for stage show'

Popular actor **Pragyan Ranjan Khatua**, who has carved a special place in Odia film and TV industries for his comic skills, admits that his attraction towards Lord Jagannath and his siblings makes him steal the idols on several occasions.

"Yes I do that. The expression on his face is such that it becomes difficult to curb my greed. I had picked up the idols from the Odissi Vocal department when I was studying in Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalay. I did it on a few more occasions also but I don't regret for that," recalls Pragyan.



Pragyan Ranjan Khatua, Film actor

On his unflinching faith in Lord Jagannath, he continues: "After completing my studies, I was struggling to make a mark in the television industry and quite uncertain about my future. One night Lord Jagannath came in my dream. He took me in his lap and assured me not to worry. Since that day, I surrendered before him unconditionally. I always feel his presence in my life and believe

that he is the one who stands by me whenever I am in trouble."

A native of Sahanajpur under Mahanga block in Cuttack district, Pragyan has installed the idols of the Trinity on the premises of his village club.

Narrating a miraculous incident regarding making of idols, he recalls, "Unbelievable as it may sound, once I found myself dancing before Lord Jagannath. However, that was in my dream. When I shared this with my father, he said, earlier it was decided to set up a temple there where the club room has been constructed. This could be the reason Lord Jagannath came in my dream. After learning this, we decided to install the idols of the Trinity on the club premises. I got in touch with Bishnu Nana of Atharanala near Puri through my friend Gyana Ranjan Mohanty. The former promised to hand over the idols in the next eight days. But unfortunately, a day before receiving the idols, I had not a single rupee in my account. You may call it coincidence or Lord's miracle, I got an offer for a stage show. I asked the organisers to pay in advance if they wanted me in their event. They not only agreed, but paid me instantly. I believed that it was Lord Jagannath who came to my rescue. I left for Atharanala and my eyes were moist when I got a glimpse of the Trinity. The sculptor had constructed the idols the way I had seen them in my dream. While carrying the idols to our village it was raining cats and dogs. When we reached Nischinta Koili Square a big owl flew down and sat in front of my car. We came across as many as five King Kobras on our way before reaching the village. As we didn't have a Jagannath temple in nearby areas, people thronged our village to have a darshan. After consecration of the idols, I was flooded with offers and now construction of a temple is in full flow to offer a permanent abode to the idols."



'Lord Jagannath made me reach home safely'

Singer **Bishnu Mohan Kabi** who has more than a hundred soulful bhajans to his credit and is all set to release nine more during Rath Yatra, says he has experienced Lord Jagannath's presence on several occasions. Recalling one such incident, he narrates, "At that time I was working in the troupe of



Bishnu Mohan Kabi, Playback singer

eminent singer Subash Das. I used to travel to Cuttack and return to my native place Balasore almost every day. My payment was Rs 600 a show. On one such occasion, due to exhaustion, I fell asleep at Cuttack rail

station while waiting to board a train. When I woke up, I found my wallet stolen. I kept my ticket, voter ID card, Aadhar card and some cash in it. Left with no choice, I entered a bogey without a ticket. The fear of being caught for illegal travel was in the back of my mind. Meanwhile, a TTE came and sat near me. Needless to say, I started trembling fearing the worst. Before he could ask for ticket, I narrated how I got robbed off everything at the station. Instead of getting angry, he said 'I know you. You are a singer. Your rendition of *Aabe Nila Saila* left me speechless during a function that I had attended'. I can't express how relieving those words were for me. He not only gave me some food, but continued to give me company till Balasore so that I was not harassed by any other official. I still believe that he was not the TTE but Lord Jagannath Himself who saved me and made me reach my hometown safely."

'Gave best performance in the USA despite high fever'

One-legged Odissi exponent **Nityananda Das** says "I feel his presence, every time I set my foot on stage. For instance, my dance partner Bijay Das and I were scheduled to perform 'Priya Sakha' at the Jagannath temple in the USA in the presence of litterateur and spiritual thinker Chandrabhanu Satpathy.

But unfortunately, both of us fell sick. Bijay was portraying the character of the God while I was His devotee. Despite suffering from high fever, I asked Bijay to get ready and put on make-up. He was literally trembling and reluctant to perform. I advised him to put on the Odissi attire and leave everything to Him. The sickness and exhaustion disappeared the moment we wore the costume. The show was one of the biggest hits of that tour. It was nothing but His miracle only. It occurred to many in the past and we experienced it that day."

He also credits Lord Jagannath for his return to the stage after losing one of his legs in a mishap. Nityananda recalls: "I returned to the stage at Rabindra Mandap May 29, 2005 after a gap of five years and mesmerised the audience with my terpsichorean skills in 'Pangum langhayate giri' (The lame



Nityananda Das, Odissi exponent

scale mountains) which was specially written for me by Guru Naba Mishra. Before the show, people laughed at my effort to start afresh. Had it not been His divine grace, I wouldn't have returned to the stage after losing a limb."

'Suffered for not acknowledging his presence in my life'

Theatre actor and director **Prasanta Mohapatra** has a very fascinating story to tell about his 'encounter' with the Lord.

"Frankly speaking, earlier I had neither any feeling nor special attraction towards Lord Jagannath or Srimandir. But somehow, I happened to visit the temple on an occasion. The feeling was all the same even after having



Prasanta Mohapatra, Theatre director

a proper darshan of the Lord on his Ratna Simhasan. But everything changed after that. After coming out of the main temple, I lost my way. The temple premises were chock-a-block with devotees. I made several attempts to come out of the temple but in vain. Despite my repeated attempts, I failed to find the exit route. Exhausted, I again got into the main temple and stood near the Garuda Stambha for 10 minutes. Then, I had no choice but to surrender before Him. Admitting my mistake, I pleaded Him to help me go out. Bowing before Him once again, I came out of the temple to make yet another attempt to find the exit way. It was then that someone spotted me searching for something desperately. He was a servitor with a dark complexion. He asked me if I needed any help. When I narrated about my problem, he guided me up to the Aruna Stambha in front of the temple and disappeared. But prior to that he told me that he was popular as 'Kalia Nana' and every one in the temple knew him well," narrated Mohapatra.

A few months to the incident, Mohapatra came to Puri again for a shoot. Due to his previous experience, he couldn't have missed the darshan and an opportunity to meet Kalia Nana.

"I had a smooth darshan that day. But what happened next was quite unusual. I tried to trace the Kalia Nana and checked with many servitors. But they said they never new anyone named Kalia Nana inside the temple. That's all about my close brush with Lord Jagannath," signed off Mohapatra with a twinkle in his eyes.



A tale of changing identities

Life is a conglomeration of relationships, in fact our lives are defined by our relationships. No familial relationship is without its flaws or without its moments of transcendence, be it parental, spousal or sibling. Though human relationships are a mixed bag there are some that are full of pain and hostility while living through them or during moments of recall. No human relationship can be idealised as all relationships are based on the self and the person is seen through ourselves, our own egos and emotions, not fully understanding the other. Without exaggeration, there could be many of us caught in a like relationship, full of contradictions of love and hate, joy and sorrow, gratitude and indignation.

In her debut novel by Avni Doshi written over a period of seven years, shortlisted for the Booker 2020 is the study of an unconventional relationship between a mother and daughter swinging between *schadenfreude* and sadness. It is full of hurt and anger and remembered hurt at vulnerable moments of a child's life. In her spare, linear prose, words glancing off a sword, shorn of all artifice, is the story of a mother who treats her daughter cruelly and a daughter who is obliged to deal with her deteriorating health and dementia in her declining years. In the words of the Booker Prize judges the book is "utterly compelling, complex, unflinching realism –sometimes emotionally wrenching but also cathartic, written with poignancy and memorability".

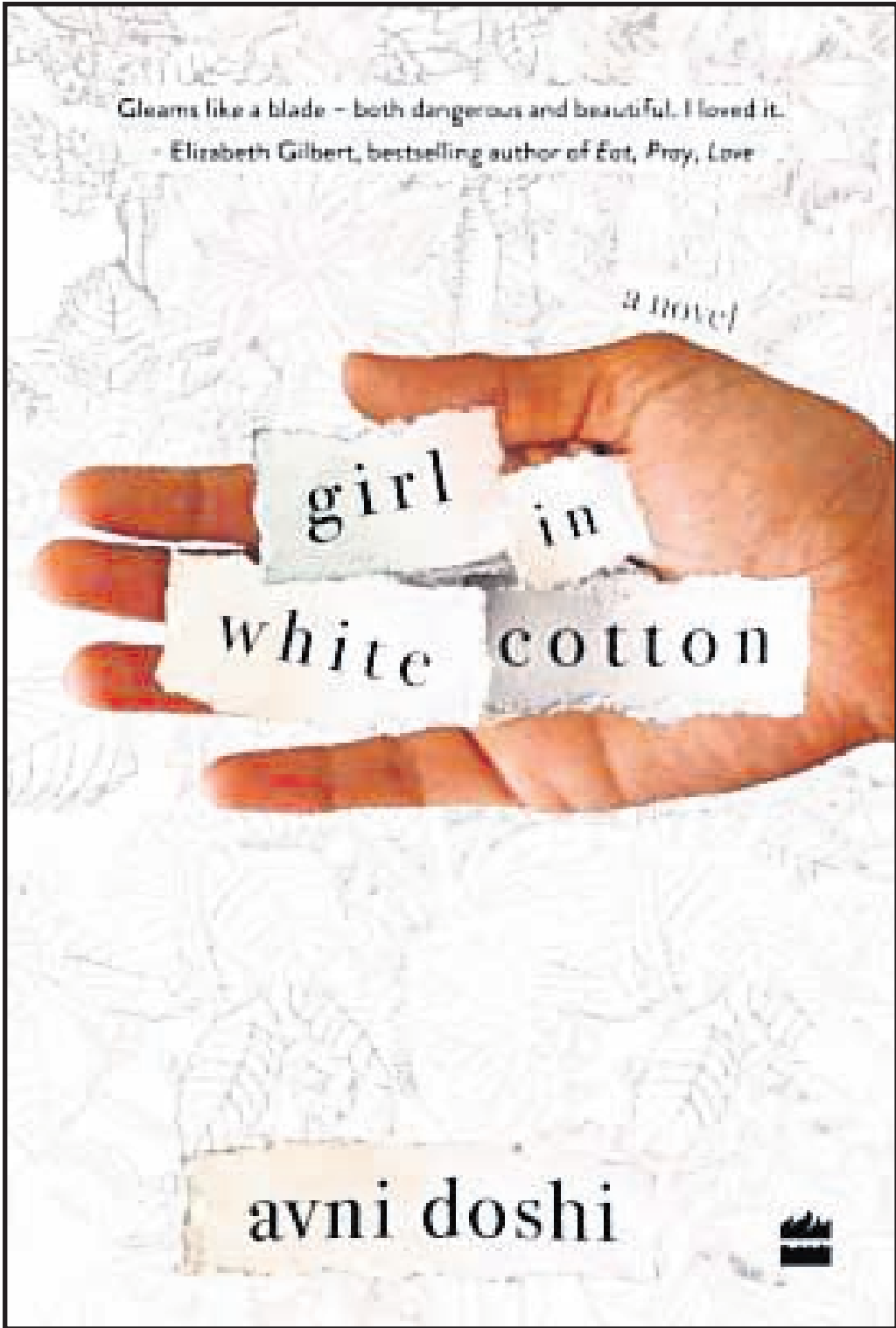
The first line itself tells us of the rancour Antara harbours towards her mother –"I would be lying if I said my mother's misery has never given me pleasure". It is a toxic redemption and satisfaction for all that she has endured at her mother's hands. But she is dealing with a mother who is fighting a losing battle with her memory. There is a touch of sadness as she watches her mother slipping, losing control of her life. She is the mother who has abandoned

Title – Girl In White Cotton
 Author – Avni Doshi
 Page count – 288
 Price – ₹390

family and marriage, against all societal norms and went in search of truth to a Guru in an ashram with her three year old. The estrangement and alienation the child of three years, experiences in an ashram where women in white dance in ecstasy, mesmerised in the presence of the Guru, is complete. Antara's mother is the consort of the guru after a symbolic marriage and Antara is befriended by strangers after her cruel neglect by her mother. Seven years later they are out of the ashram begging for a living and then picked up by Antara's grandparents. Antara's father marries again and Antara grows up with unhappy interludes at school and her father's house

Antara pursues an artist's career and mother and daughter experience skirmishes rising out of an embittered past and her mother starts to live with Reza, a photo journalist till he leaves her one day, heartbroken. Later Antara herself falls for the attractions of Reza and he finally leaves her too. In a series of forwards and backwards Antara tells us the story of her fraught relationship, visits to the doctor, shifting her mother to her place for brief visits when she nearly burns her studio down. It is seen that the narrator's voice is the lone voice we hear. There are no alternate voices. We see her mother and their relationship, through her eyes alone. Her husband is a bit player in the novel, appearing to commiserate with his mother in law and sometimes not happy with her brief visits that cause an upheaval in the household. Yet there runs through the novel a deep concern and pity for her mother in spite of all the resentment she holds towards her and a spontaneous filial loyalty she cannot deny as when her family does not allow her mother to hold her baby "I hate that no one lets Ma hold her, that my blood should be prohibited from caring for her "Then again there is a rush of love," I love her, my mother. I love her to death. I don't know where I would be without her. I don't know who I would be." Though she did not want to need her, being without her was misery

Her mother in her deeper and deeper descent into dementia imagines her granddaughter to be her daughter and Antara's husband, her husband and clings to both of them in the presence of family and relatives. Everybody cheers and play on and Antara is left alone, no one acknowledging her or her presence. Antara's alienation is complete. This novel is a journey into shifting memories and changing identities, complex familial relationships, is a dark and disturbing, yet courageous and compelling read.



SUDHA DEVI NAYAK

PULKIT'S HEARTFELT NOTE FOR KRITI



Pulkit Samrat and Kriti Kharbanda are going stronger than ever. The couple often shares their pictures on Instagram and seem more in love than ever before. Recently, when Kriti shared a post of completing 12 years in the industry, Pulkit was among the first to congratulate her and in a heartfelt note on Instagram, wrote, "I am grateful for a lot of things in life, and one of them is getting to know Kriti Kharbanda. Her journey as an actor is an inspiration, but even more so, her journey as a person is remarkable. Right from the time I got to know her as a co-star to where we are today, she has been an absolute joy to be with. Her way of looking at life has taught me new perspectives."

He added, "There is so much beneath all the glamour and all the jazz. A compassionate human who finds joy in the littlest of things, a pragmatic head who knows how to be an adult while still keeping the inner child alive. It has been an absolute privilege getting to know you KK. Congratulations on your 12 years in the industry and here's to several more of such 12 to come! # 12yearsofkritikharbanda."

Pulkit and Kriti have worked together in films like *Veere Ki Wedding*, *Taish* and *Pagalpanti*. Pulkit is currently busy with *Fukrey 3*, which will also star Ali Fazal, Richa Chadha, Varun Sharma, Manjot Singh, and Pankaj Tripathi.

AGENCIES

Tara is back to filming *Ek Villain 2*



Actress Tara Sutaria has resumed work and is back to filming *Ek Villain 2*.

Tara posted a picture on Instagram Story, where she shared a glimpse of a mic. On the image she wrote: "Days spent behind this are days well spent! Back to filming *Villain 2* and the villainy has only just begun."

The film, which is a sequel to the 2014 film *Ek Villain* is co-produced by Ekta Kapoor and Bhushan Kumar.

The sequel features John Abraham, Disha Patani, Tara Sutaria and Arjun Kapoor in pivotal roles. The film is slated to release February 11 next year.

IANS

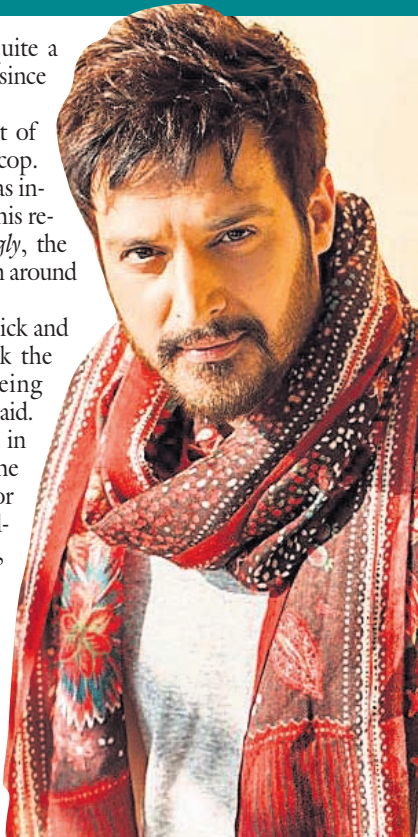
'I'm offered a lot of cop roles, I pick the ones I really like'

Actor Jimmy Sheirgill has had quite a journey in Hindi film industry, since his first film *Maachis* in 1996. A thread that binds together most of his popular films is his avatar as a cop. Right from his powerful demeanour as inspector Arif Khan in *A Wednesday* to his remarkable roles in *Special 26* and *Fugly*, the actor has delivered notable cop roles in around 10 films.

"I am offered a lot of cop roles. I pick and choose the ones I really like. I pick the character that has the scope of being portrayed in a different light," Jimmy said.

The actor is back with a cop role in his latest film *Collar Bomb*. He plays the character of a high-ranking Inspector Manoj Hesi. Directed by the award-winning filmmaker Dnyanesh Zoting, the film is about a hill-town school where the kids are held hostage by a human bomb. The key to solving the mystery to save the kids lies in Manoj Hesi's unpleasant past.

Collar Bomb features Jimmy with Asha Negi, Rajshri Deshpande, and Sparsh Shrivastav in key roles. IANS



Amy calls Aishwarya her 'forever favourite'



Actress Amy Jackson has shared a priceless throwback picture of the very gorgeous Aishwarya Rai Bachchan. She reposted the picture of Aishwarya which was taken soon after she won Miss World in 1994.



In the picture, Aishwarya can be seen sporting a maroon saree along with a skin coloured blouse. She is seen sitting on the floor with her mother, Vrinda Rai. The mother-daughter duo can be seen enjoying a meal while Aishwarya's Miss World crown on her head.

Amy took to her Instagram story and wrote, "The Queen" and "Forever Favourite" followed by a heart emoji.

Amy was crowned Miss Teen World in 2019. She was also seen competing for the Miss England title in 2010 and was crowned the runner-up.

Amy was last seen in *2.0* alongside Rajinikanth and Akshay Kumar. Earlier, Aishwarya featured in *Robot* with Rajinikanth.

AGENCIES

FESTIVE DELICACIES



RASABALI

Ingredients

- Full cream milk: 1 litre
- Lemon juice / vinegar: 2 tbsp
- Cardamom , crushed: 3-4 pods
- Wheat flour: 1 tsp
- Semolina: 1 tsp
- Sugar: 3-4 tbsp
- Pinch of baking soda
- Oil for deep frying
- Sliced almonds and pistachio: 1 tbsp
- Dried rose petals and fresh basil leaves (holy tulsi) for garnishing (optional)
- Few Saffron strands

Procedure

Bring half a litre of milk to boil. Once the milk boils, put off the flame. After 5-7 minutes add lemon juice or vinegar to the milk. The milk will curdle immediately. Now drain the curdled milk in a sieve lined with clean kitchen cotton towel. Gather the sides of the cloth together and drain all the whey from the chhena. Run the chhena under fresh water to remove the traces of lemon juice / vinegar from it. Press the cloth to remove the whey. Hang the cloth to get rid of excess water from chhena. This may take around 10-15 minutes. Meanwhile, heat remaining 1/2 liter milk in another broad bottom pan. Remove 1 tablespoon of warm milk and transfer it to a small bowl. Add saffron strands to it and keep aside until use. Allow the remaining milk to reduce until half of its original volume. Reserve 1 tablespoon of sugar (powder it and keep aside) and add the rest in the milk followed by addition of 1/4 teaspoon crushed cardamom. Once the milk has reduced to half, add the saffron milk to it and simmer. Once the chhena is free of all water, remove it in a plate and mash it with the help of your palms in an upward movement to make it smooth. Add whole wheat flour, semolina, remaining crushed cardamom, pinch of baking powder and the powdered sugar (reserved in step 3) to the

mashed chhena. Mix all the ingredients and knead the chhena well into smooth dough. Pinch out equal portion and make balls out of them. Flatten each ball on your palm into a circular tikki shape. Heat oil in a deep wok and deep fry the flattened cheese balls until they turn golden brown from all sides. Take care not to burn them. Drain the fried chhena balls and put them in warm thickened milk. Allow them to cook for 5 minutes on low flame and put off the heat. The rasabalis will absorb milk and become soft and spongy. The dish is ready. Garnish with almond and pistachio slices, dried rose petals and tulsi.

KHAJA

Procedure

Combine flour and ghee and knead soft dough with water. Once done, grease the dough with some oil and cover it. Keep it aside. Divide the dough into equal parts. Roll one to make a thin roti. Roll another dough ball to make second roti. Place one roti over another and roll them together to make a single roll. Cut the roll into small pieces (about 1 inch size). Likewise, make other round rolls with the rest of the dough and cut them all into layered pieces. Keep dusting flour to prevent the rotis from sticking to each other. Boil sugar with cardamom powder in water till you get thick stringy syrup. Deep fry the layered dough pieces in ghee or oil and dip immediately in warm sugar syrup. Serve when the khajas cool down. You can store them in an air-tight container and enjoy the mouth-watering Odisha-special delight for up to a month.

Ingredients

- All-purpose flour (maida): 2 cups
- Ghee: Half cup
- Sugar: 1 cup
- Water: Half cup
- Oil/ghee for frying
- A pinch of green cardamom powder



khusboo



PHOTO CREDIT : AKHIL RANJAN