

OCTOBER 2-7, 2022

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



9 Nights, Forms

P 3,4
COVER
STORY



After making her acting debut as a child artiste, actress Ananya Mishra has carved a special place in the Odia film industry with her breathtaking performances in some big-ticket movies like 'God Father', 'Charitra' and 'Gupchup'. Ananya loves to binge watch movies with her mom Manisha Mishra when she gets a break

Dancing her way to fitness

My fitness goal centres on dance as I don't follow a gym routine. But now I look forward to burning calories in gym to tone myself as I am set to perform some high octane action sequences in my next movie.

Nature lover

I plan a getaway every two months despite my hectic work schedule. I make sure the bucket list ticks off all the mountains and hills. The exploration is real with mountains and solace.



Art aficionado

I capture anything that looks appealing to eyes, I am passionate about photography. I have also tried my hands at Mandala Art.

Loving the voiceless

I am a crazy animal lover! With three dogs and four rabbits, my home is no less than a mini sanctuary. They make me happy and help relieve stress.

Movie maniac

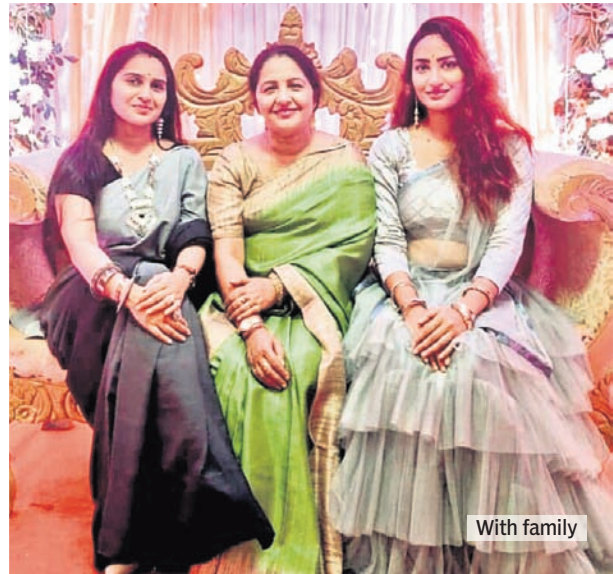
I wake up early to hit the theatres for the first day first show. I love the thriller genre. Someday I happen to binge watch 2-3 films with none other than mom being my partner.

Spiritual bent of mind

An ardent follower of Brahmakumari, I look forward to learning the basic life principles from it. It keeps me awakened.

Family time

There is not a day dedicated to spending time with family. But fortunately, my mother and I belong to the same industry. So, somehow we happen to travel together for some project giving a window for family time.



With family

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, 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

- Give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day.
- To see a man's true face, look to the photos he hasn't posted.
- Our child has a great deal of willpower—and even more won't power.
- What do you get when you cross a polar bear with a seal? A polar bear.

DEMENTIA CARE

Sir, Time to act (Sept 18) has rightly harped upon the need for creating necessary awareness on Alzheimer's. Ever since it was first diagnosed by the German psychiatrist and pathologist Alois Alzheimer in 1906, this neurodegenerative disorder has eluded any possible cure. This highly progressive disease with the attendant symptoms of cognitive impairment, loss of motivation, mood swings, behavioural disorientation, self-neglect and eventually the inability to perform even basic tasks casts an onerous burden on the caregivers and immediate family members, who find it physically and emotionally very challenging. As a society, we need to fight against the stigma associated with this gradually debilitating ailment. Besides being patient and compassionate, the caregiver must reassure the afflicted person verbally and physically with arm touches, connecting with their senses and hand-holding with visual and audio cues. Gail Weatherill, the renowned Alzheimer's educator has aptly summed it up: "Dementia care—It's not rocket science, it's heart science."

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

9 Nights, Forms

Goddess Durga is worshipped in her most terrifying form Kaalratri who brings an end or death to anything that is associated with evil or darkness. She is shown as black, naked, with angry red sunken eyes, wearing skulls around her neck as jewellery and limbs around her waist

AGENCIES

The festival of Navratri is celebrated to cherish the victory of goodness over evil. These nine days are associated with the battle that was fought between goddess Durga and demon king Mahishasura. Throughout these nine days, the nine avatars of the goddess known as Nava Durga are worshipped. Each day is dedicated to one incarnation.

Sunday POST takes a look at the legends behind each avatar.

Shailaputri

Shailaputri means the 'daughter of mountains' was born to the king of mountains Himavan. She is also commonly known as Parvati and is the first of the nine Navadurga. She is depicted having two hands holding a trident in her right hand and lotus on her left. Being the wife of Lord Shiva, she rides on her bull named Nandi. In her previous birth, the goddess was born as Sati, daughter of Prajapati Daksh to eventually marry Shiva and fulfill her role as Universal Mother to nourish all beings. Despite her father's disapproval, she went ahead to marry Shiva. When Daksh organised a Yajna (sacrificial ceremony), he invited all gods except Shiva and Parvati. Parvati, unaware of her father's arrogance and hateful motives, reached there without an invitation upon which Daksh started insulting Shiva. Sati, being a devoted wife, couldn't tolerate this and sacrificed herself to the Yajna fire. To fulfill the superior motive of universal welfare, Shakti had to take birth again in the form of Parvati or Shailaputri, to marry Shiva again and bring him out of his ascetic's life into the life of Grihastha (family man).

Brahmcharini

In the second avatar, holding a rosary in her right hand, and a Kamandal in her left hand, Brahmcharini signifies meditation and sacrifice

(Tapasya). After the death of Sati, Shiva abstained from all material desires and went into a state of meditation that lasted for millions of years. When Parvati grew up, sage Narada told her that the only way for her to attain Shiva is severe penance that would exceed her husband's. Determined to marry Shiva in this birth as well, she began her Tapasya giving up on her food, water and air. Her penance lasted for thousands of years. In the end, Brahma appeared before Parvati and said that no one had ever observed Tapa the way she did. Following this, Parvati came to be known as Maa Brahmcharini. Later, Shiva accepted her as his wife. This avatar of goddess Durga teaches penance, devotion, restraint and solitude.

Chandraghanta

Upon seeing Parvati's strong resolve to attain him, Shiva gives in and accepts to marry Parvati. On the day of the wedding Shiva reaches king Himavan's palace in the most terrorizing form. His body was smeared in ash with snakes all over his body and in the matted locks of his unkempt hair. He brought with himself the strangest wedding

procession known as barrat consisting of ghosts, aghoris, sages, ascetics and every being unimaginable. Upon seeing this sight, Parvati's mother and relatives were left in shock, mostly out of terror. To avoid any embarrassment to her family or to Shiva, Parvati transformed herself into a terrifying form Chandraghanta. In this form, her complexion is golden. She came riding a lion and possessed 10 arms. Nine of her arms carried weapons while 10th hand rose to bless her devotees. She married Shiva in this form and the day of their marriage is celebrated as Mahashivaratri.

Kushmanda

Maa Kushmanda is worshipped on the fourth day of Navratri. It is believed that Kushmanda is the ultimate source of life. When the universe was not existent and darkness was everywhere, she created the universe with her smile. The universe then was filled with light and she began to live in the core of the sun. The god she created then went on to create other universes and living beings. Kushmanda possesses eight arms and rides a lion that evokes fearlessness in her devotees. She bestows all pleasures and her worship brings prosperity, power and salvation.

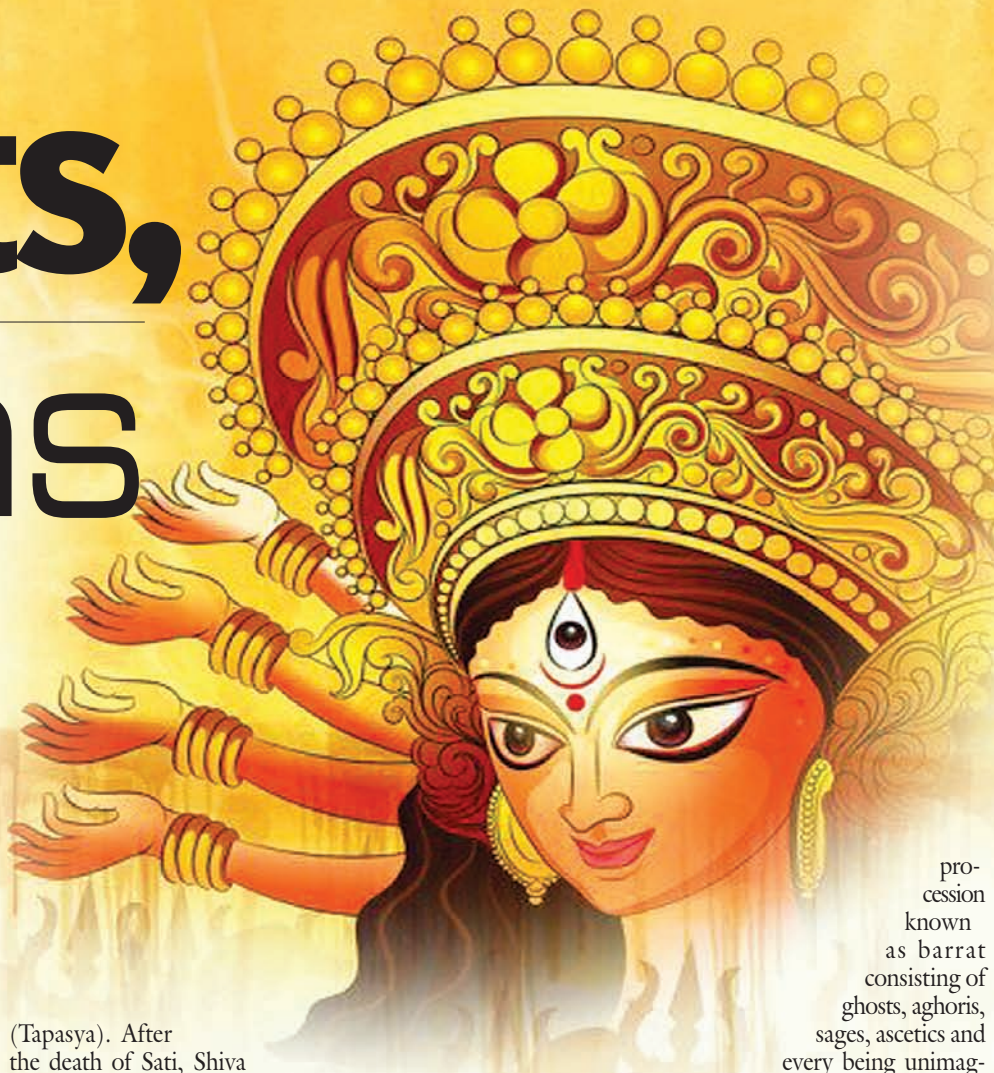


PHOTO CREDIT: WIKIPEDIA



SKANDAMATA

The fifth avatar, Skandamata literally means the mother of Skand. Skanda is another name of Lord Kartikeya, often known as Murugan in the south. She rides a lion and has four arms. Two of her arms carry lotus, one is raised in blessing while the fourth holds her son Kartikeya. When Shiva became detached from the worldly affairs, upon the death of Sati demon Tarkasur had wreaked havoc on the gods. The demon had a boon that only the son of Shiva could kill him. Fearing that Shiva may never have a child, the gods rushed to Vishnu for help. Vishnu assured Parvati is destined to be the wife of Shiva. Upon the severe penance of Parvati, when Shiva agrees to marry her, they combine their energy to produce fiery seed. Agni, the god of fire was given the responsibility to carry the seed to Saravana lake. But Agni couldn't bear the heat of the seed. Durga, taking the form of water, carries the seed to the lake in the Saravana forest. Later, the six-faced Kartikeya takes birth and grows up to be the commander-in-chief of the army of gods killing Tarakasur in the battle.



KATYAYANI

Being one of the most worshiped forms of Durga, Maa Katyayani is worshipped on the sixth day of Navaratri. This is the form

that is often referred to as Maa Durga. She took birth as the daughter of sage Katyayan, and hence came to be known as Katyayani. When the demon Mahishasur was creating trouble for the gods, the Trinity – Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva – along with the other gods combined their powers and weapons and summoned Katyayani. Thus, the armed Katyayani proceeded towards the Vindya mountains where Mahishasura lived and killed him. She is also known as Mahishasuramardini, the one who killed Mahishasura.



KAALRATRI

Kaal refers to death and ratri means night. Hence, Maa Kaalratri is the one who brings an end or death to anything that is associated with evil or darkness. She is more commonly referred as Kali and is worshipped on the seventh day. Kaalratri is the most terrorizing form of Durga. The most common form often shows Kaali as black, naked, with angry red sunken eyes, wearing skulls around her neck as jewellery and limbs around her waist. Raktabij was a demon or asura who had been given a boon by Lord Brahma that everytime a drop of his blood fell on the ground, a new version of his own would be created. Having received this boon, he made the life of people and gods miserable. Hence, the god reached out to goddess Durga or Shakti for help. Armed with all the weapons, the goddess charged as the demon. But as soon as she wounded him with her sword and his blood fell on the earth, the demon multiplied. With more attempts at killing Raktabij, the demon kept on multiplying. Huge armies of Raktabij were formed by the drops of blood which fell on earth. Enraged by this, Devi took the infuriating form of Kaali. She went on to slay each demon with the sword in her hand and collected their blood in her bowl and drank it immediately. Soon she finished the whole army of Raktabij and only the real Raktabij was left. Then she slayed him down and drank his blood till he fell down lifeless. It is said just a century ago Shree Ramkrishna Paramahansa was blessed to see the real form of Kali.

MAHAGOURI

Worshipped on the eighth day, the story of Mahagouri has many versions. Maha means great and Gouri means white or fair. In the first version, upon killing Raktabij, Parvati was left with skin as dark as night that lasted



a long time. Parvati went through penance to attain her old form of feminine beauty and was advised by Brahma to take bath in the Mansarovar river in the Himalayas. When she did so, she shed her dark skin and this skin took up a female form named Kaushaki that went on killing the demons Shumbha and Nishumbha. Parvati regained her beauty, this time with a complexion so fair that led to everyone referring to her as Mahagouri. In the second version, as a result of Parvati's severe penance of over thousands of years that led to Shiva marrying her. Her body was covered with dirt, mud, insects and she was down to being a skeleton with no flesh. Pleased by her devotion, Shiva bathes her in the holiest Ganga that flew from the locks of his matted hair that nourished her body. She emerged as Mahagouri, as white as the jasmine flower.



SIDDHIDATRI

Siddhidatri, worshipped on the last day, is the adi shakti avatar of Durga. She existed as pure energy and had no physical form. Lord Rudra worshipped her for creating the universe and she appeared from the left half of Shiva. That is why, she and Shiva represent the duality of the universe in the form of masculine and feminine energy. They unite to form Ardhanarishwara. Devi Siddhidatri sits on a lotus and rides a lion.

PHOTO CREDIT : WIKIPEDIA

..and the 10 weapons

Durga is depicted with three eyes to signify sun, moon and fire besides the past, present and future, portraying to be the ruler of the world's to be eternal. The deity's 10 hands hold 10 different weapons given to her by the gods to kill Mahishasura, the demon king.

CHAKRA: Sudarshan Chakra spins on the index finger symbolizing righteousness and that she is at the centre of creation and the universe revolves around her.

TRIDENT: Trishul or trident on the fourth left hand symbolizes satwa (purity), rajas (desires) and tamas (inactivity).

SWORD: On her second right lower hand it portrays knowledge and keen intellect.

THUNDERBOLT: Thunderbolt symbolizing furnace of spirit.

LOTUS: It stands for awakening of spiritual consciousness in a soul to attain moksha or liberation.

CONCH: Positioned on the first upper left hand, it is the symbol of primordial sound "Aum", believed to be the source of creation.

SPEAR: This weapon helps destroy the negative and evil forces and grants auspiciousness.

BOW AND ARROW: Holding in her second left hand to destroy difficulties. This represents energy

SNAKE: It portrays the upward movement of the intellect.

FLAME: Signifies wisdom and knowledge that one requires to balance worldly attainments





SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

When goddess is the daughter

For the rest of the world it is probably just a Puja, a reason to celebrate, but for us it is our daughter's homecoming who we marry off every year, says Debashis Roy Choudhury of Nua Rausapatana in Cuttack

"I remember, we spent about 600 INR when we started off which has now run into several lakhs with caterers and instrumentalists specially being hired from Kolkata for the occasion," he further says.

Shedding light on how it all began, Debashis's younger brother Rahul (57) says, "Our ancestors were zamindars at Ponabalia, a small village of present day Bangladesh. During the 1942 riots, we moved to Baghmari, Kolkata. A couple of years later, a well wisher from south India advised us to move to Holy City Puri for overall well being. My father's elder brother Debabrata RC, being a devotee of Lord Jagannath, didn't think twice before moving with the family to Puri. But on the way, I don't know, he changed his mind and got down in Cuttack's Peyton Sahi and the rest as they say is history."

In 1952, Debabrata, with an idol of 'Kala Chaand', their Griha Devata, came to Cuttack and started living in a hut. The Roy Chowdhurys struggled to meet ends at that time. However, the fortune started smiling on them after they managed to open a tea shop (dust) in the Tinkonia Bagicha area. Subsequently, one more tea shop and a medicine store came up and that did the turnaround.

Later, they shifted to Nua Rausa Patna, Cuttack in 1968 and began the family puja in 1970. The scale of celebration has only grown over the years, says Rahul's wife Milina.

"Every year more than 300 locals join us for four days in our feast. We also organise musical programmes. Cooks and musicians come all the way from Kolkata for the Puja," explaining the scale of celebration, she adds.

Debashis' wife Debajani says the family always feels protected by goddess Durga, who they consider their beloved daughter. Because of her blessings, the event has not been cancelled in the last 53 years.

"Cuttack town is known for its poor infrastructure and life is often thrown out of gear for causes like flash floods triggered by heavy showers and cyclones. It has happened during Puja on several occasions but we have managed to continue with our tradition in most difficult times," she says.

The Roy Chowdhurys haven't broken the tradition even during deaths in the house.

"Every household goes through financial issues and we are



no different. At times, it seems we may fail to get enough money to carry out puja, but by the grace of goddess and 'Kala Chaand', so far, it has not been stopped," says Soma, wife of Debjyoti, another brother of Debashis.

"For the rest of the world it is probably just a Puja, a reason to celebrate, but for us it is our daughter's homecoming who we marry off every year. And there can't be a greater joy than getting the company of our daughter every year for four days. It is a practice with many puja committees to auction the clothes of goddess Durga during immersion but we never remove them from the idol and send her off with her clothes," concludes Debashis.



Durga Puja, Durgotsav, Sharadotsav, Vijaya Dashami and the list goes on and on. This festival to revere goddess Durga is popular in different names depending upon the regions of the Indian subcontinent. Needless to say, it is one of the most significant events of our cultural calendar. So much so, that Durga puja in Kolkata has been inscribed on the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list of UNESCO in 2021.

While Durga Puja in Kolkata is all about glitz, glamour and global recognition, Cuttack, the cultural nerve centre of Odisha, comes next in eastern India where the festival is celebrated in the grandest way possible.

Even as the history of the festival dates back to a time as ancient as 300 BCE, it is widely believed that Durga Puja became a part of mass celebration only during the reign of Prataparudra Dev in the 16th Century. Since then the annual earthly sojourn of the goddess has traversed a long journey – from getting royal patronage to becoming a mass festival, in the Silver City where nearly 200 pandals are created, all decked up with incredible decoration.

Most of these pandals are part of community puja committees and people worship the deity for their wellbeing. For them, she is Durgatinashini, the one who eliminates all the sufferings. Along with these community pujas, there is a tradition in Cuttack, much like in Kolkata where a large number of pujas are organised exclusively by aristocratic families. For these families, Durga is not just a goddess, she is part of the family, their beloved daughter who comes on a four-day yearly break with her progeny.

Ahead of Vijaya Dashami, Sunday POST caught up with one such family of Cuttack for whom there is more to Durga Puja than a mere annual festival.

Durga Puja, for them, is no way less than marrying off a daughter, says 67-year-old Debashis Roy Choudhury of Nua Rausapatana whose family is geared up to welcome their favourite daughter, for the 53rd year in a row.

"Since 1970 we've been arranging this annual Durga Puja and this is the 53rd year. Following the advice of our grandma we have never discontinued this tradition, come what may," claims Debashis.

No matter how tough the challenges they face, Durga Puja remains a glittering affair in Roy Chowdhury household. Interestingly, no one in the family keeps accounts of the expenditure of the event.

Haven't got the right opportunities: Mrunal

Mrunal Thakur's latest film *Sita Ramam* has fetched her some great reviews, and done well at the box office. And when the Hindi version was released, that too connected with the viewers.

"I don't think I have ever been presented like this," exclaims the actor. Has her talent been tapped the same way in Hindi films too till now? Thakur denies, "I haven't got an opportunity like this, I will be very honest. I have been really trying hard to convince filmmakers that I have potential to do better, but I just have not got the opportunities. I have been very happy with whatever I have got, but now it's like I have to ask for it 'sir please koi achhi film hai toh de do na'.

Mrunal says there are some filmmakers who are placing their faith in her. "They are trying to work hard on me, and I too want to work hard on characters. Too many years have gone down the lane, just to convince them 'yes, I deserve this,'" she laments.



Zee Sarthak's mega serial Saathire from October 3



Bhubaneswar: Odia entertainment channel Zee Sarthak is bringing another new mega serial for the audience. Titled *Saathire*, the serial will be aired from October 3 on week days at 8.00 pm.

Directed by Saroj Kumar Das and produced by Bijay Kandoi, the plot of the serial showcases romance between the lead characters - Ambar and Dhara.

Dhara is shown as a funny character who always tries to face life's difficulties wearing a smile and never cries. On the other hand, Ambar is a successful businessman who thinks that a woman is a hurdle on the path to success. Actress Ananya Das is playing Dhara while Abhijit plays Ambar's character.

The serial also stars Swastika, Sudhashree, Sriya, Sara and Seli in other important roles.

WOMEN'S PROTEST IN IRAN

Angelina stands in solidarity

Hollywood star Angelina Jolie wants the world to divert its attention to what's happening in Iran currently.

The middle-eastern country is currently gripped by protests from women following the death of a 22-year-old woman named Mahsa Amini, reports People magazine.

Amini died September 16 in Iran after being detained by the country's Morality Police for allegedly wearing a Hijab too loosely.

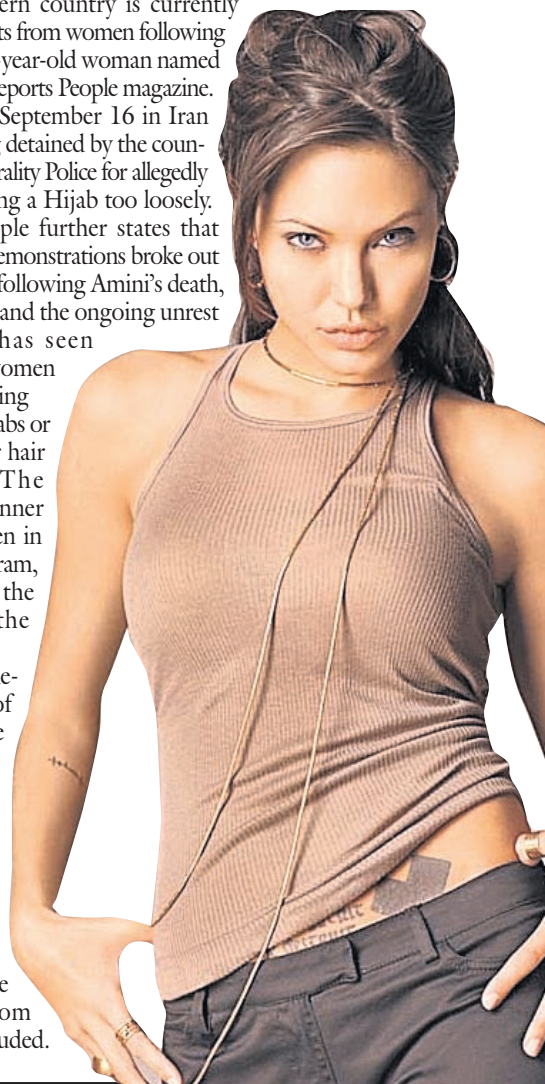
People further states that demonstrations broke out following Amini's death, and the ongoing unrest has seen women

burning their Hijabs or cutting their hair in protest. The

Academy Award winner shared several images taken in the streets of Iran to Instagram, raising awareness about the ongoing situation in the Middle East.

"Respect to the brave, defiant, fearless women of Iran," Jolie wrote in the caption of her post.

"Women don't need their morals policed, their minds re-educated, or their bodies controlled. They need freedom to live and breathe without violence or threats," Jolie, 47, continued. "To the women of Iran, we see you #WomanLifeFreedom #MahsaAmini," she concluded.



Ranveer seeks 'reunion' with Deepika

Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone are two of the most celebrated stars in Hindi film industry. As a couple, they often set couple goals and never fail in making the hearts of their fans melt with their mushy posts and love for each other. The 83 star often goes overboard in expressing his love for his beautiful wife and he did that yet again when he could not stop praising Deepika and opened up about their relationship.

Ranveer Singh made an appearance at an event last week and went gaga over his Om Shanti Om actress. Asked about his relationship with Deepika, the Gunday actor quipped, "Touchwood, we met and started dating in 2012, so 2022 is ten years of me and Deepika." He further added that he desires to share the screen once again with his wife. "The last time I performed with Deepika in depth, was in 2014-2015. She and I have both had a personal evolution since then in our individual capacities as people and as actors. I think it would be really interesting to explore the co-actor dynamic with her. I hope we get an opportunity," added Ranveer.





Festive delicacies



It is that time of the year again when idols of goddess Durga are decorated with kumkum, bangles, flowers, and jeweled attires. The aroma of desi ghee delicacies fills up the space. As the exuberance of the festivity can be felt everywhere, the fervour engulfs the soul with hope of happiness and prosperity. With preparations for the biggest festival in full swing, the celebration is incomplete without mentioning some indulgent delicacies that have been a quintessential part of our culinary culture



BHOGER THALI

Embrace the joy of the festival with the best of our satvik recipes. From old favourites to newer ones, indulge in a lot more than just the usual fare. In this bhog Thali you're seeing the best of two sister states cuisine

- Mitha Khechudi
- Dahi aloo
- Dhokar Dalna
- Dahi Baingan
- Kakara Pitha
- Rasagola
- Papad

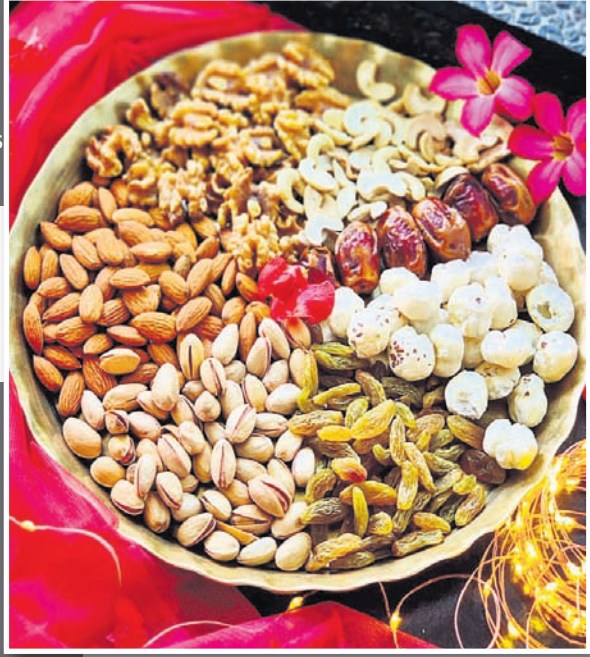
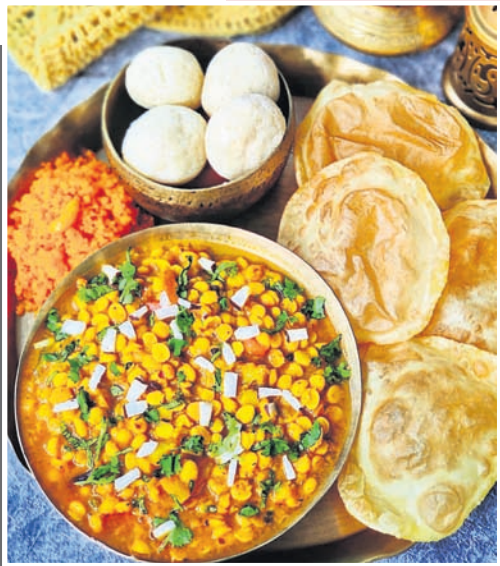


CHHANAR PAYESH

Presenting Chhanar Payesh in which chhena (soft cottage cheese or paneer) is cooked in thick milk with sugar or condensed milk. It is an easy sweet dish which you would love to relish as your after meal dessert. For making Chhanar Payesh, milk is boiled in a heavy bottom pan until it is reduced to almost half of its quantity. Once the milk is reduced, it becomes thick and creamy. Sugar or Condensed milk is added to the milk for sweetness. Finally, chhena is added to the thick milk and boiled for a few minutes before switching off the flame. It is best served chilled.

CHOLAR DAL

One traditional and festive Durga puja speciality is Bengali Cholar Dal with Coconut (Narkel diye cholar dal). No puja according to me is complete without 'cholar dal' and 'luchi'. Chana dal is boiled and tempered with ghee and fragrant spices like cardamoms, cloves, cinnamon and hing. And the best part for me is the fried coconut slices. It simply amps up the 'cholar dal' to the next level. Bengali 'cholar dal' is on a slightly sweeter side which goes perfectly with luchi, rice or roti.



DRYFRUITS

Dry fruits and nuts are packed with proteins, vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre, all of which are good for health, that's why this is the best healthy option to give a lovely gift on any special occasion to your friends and family.

Sarmili



PHOTO: ODISHA FASHION VILLA