

NOVEMBER 17, 23, 2024

SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



Bali Yatra

P 3,4
COVER
STORY

Then & Now

MY SUNDAY

Actor Sudhansu Narayan Dash, aka Saanu, is also a singer and storyteller. In a career spanning over a decade, he has acted in several mainstream Odia movies, web series, and music videos. Susant Mani's 'Hello-in-Love' and Odisha's maiden web series, 'Rabana Podi', are among his notable works. Born and raised in Puri, Saanu has now made Bhubaneswar his home, where he aspires to realise his dreams

Sleep matters

On Sundays, I usually prefer a few more hours of sleep; otherwise, my morning routine remains the same throughout the year, which includes getting up early and having a wholesome breakfast.

Donning chef's apron

As a non-vegetarian lover, Sundays are reserved for non-vegetarian cuisine. I usually try to cook something new by watching YouTube. Sometimes they turn good, and at times they are awful, to say the least.



With Wife

Home sick

The best Sundays are those when there is a cricket match or I get to spend time with my family. I badly miss the family as I stay away from them.

Rejuvenation routes

In my free time, I like to write short stories, play cricket, and watch movies to recharge myself for the hectic week ahead.

Time with pals

Evenings are mostly for friends. We usually roam around the city or dine at a good city restaurant.



During the launch of Odia movie Rudrabhishek

ANISHA KHATUN, OP

WhatsApp This Week

Only on **Sunday POST!**

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

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.
- I didn't fight my way to the top of the food chain to be a vegetarian.
- Your family tree must be a cactus because everybody on it is a prick.
- Never tell your problems to anyone...20% don't care and the other 80% are glad you have them...

Sensible move

Sir, It is a positive step that the government has decided to enact legislation to prevent obscenity on stage. Although it's late, it's not too late. In its current form, Jatra is simply damaging culture and heritage, even if its primary goal as a performing art was to spread education via entertainment. In the past, people would enjoy Jatras with their families, but these days, it is unimaginable. Jatra has turned into a pornographic show because of certain young, overly passionate young girls who are allegedly being coerced by the organisers into stripping on stage for amusement. Even worse, they are competing with one another to see who can bare the most. Real performers don't use such cheesy tactics to get popularity; instead, they display their talents. The sooner the government acts on it, the better for the culture of the state.

SOUMENDRA SAHOO, BHUBANESWAR

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

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Bali Yatra

Then



Now

From the times when it was hosted sans electricity to today's eye-popping extravaganza, the largest open air trade fair of Asia has undergone massive transformation over the years. However, despite the infusion of glamour and glitz, the old charm of Bali Yatra is still present, assert a few elderly residents of the Millennium City

*"Aa Ka Ma Boi, Pana Gua Thoi
Pana Gua Tora,
Masaka Dharama Mora"*

This signature phrase of famous Boita Bandana festival, an occasion to pay homage to ancient merchants of erstwhile Kalinga who made voyage during historic era of maritime trade, makes all Odias relive the glorious past.

Therefore, Bali Yatra, translates to A voyage to island Bali, in Millenium City Cuttack is not just a festival; it's heritage in motion for residents of Odisha. It celebrates the day when Sadhabas, or Odia mariners, used to set sail for distant lands such as Bali, Java, Sumatra, and Borneo in Indonesia and Sri Lanka for trade, commemorating the glorious maritime history and adventurous spirit of the Odia people.

Being an Odia, you cannot resist the vibrancy and charm of Bali Yatra. But, like everything that changes with time, Bali Yatra has also evolved a lot over the years. In a first, the fair this year is likely to have ambassadors of at least 12 countries in attendance, while cultural troupes from six countries like Thailand, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Slovakia, and

Bhutan have agreed to perform at the event to promote the annual extravaganza globally.

The Bali Yatra we see now is very different from what our predecessors witnessed in their times. As the grand fair has already begun this year along the banks of the Mahanadi River, a few senior citizens took a trip down memory lane and shared with **Sunday POST** their Bali Yatra memories when they were younger.

'A plate of Dahibara Aloodum was available at 25 paise.'

Surendra Kumar Nayak, 71, book store owner, Cuttack, says, "The Bali Yatra you see today is very different from the one we used to visit. In our time, Bali Yatra was held only in the upper ground; the lower ground didn't exist because the Mahanadi water used to touch Gadagadia temple's boundary. Parking arrangements were made in front of the Horse Gate, which was full of bicycles. Choices in food were also less; only Dahibara Aloodum, Thunka Puri, and groundnuts were available at that time. We didn't have so many options in joy rides; only the Giant Wheel was there."

Nayak further shares,

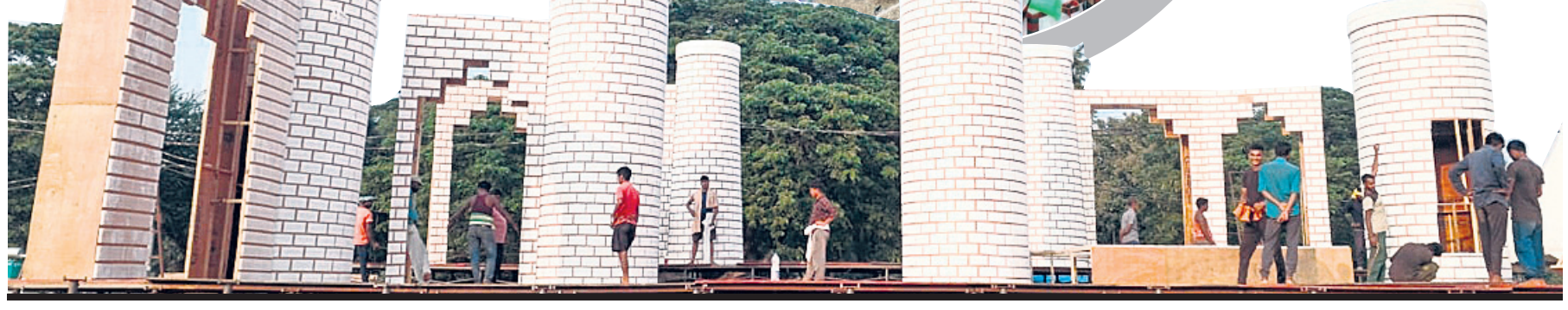


"At that time also a lot of stuff was available, like household items, wooden items, colourful bangles, stone utensils, dry fish, etc. You can find these things today also, but apart from these, there are many other things to buy. The number of stalls was less

then; now there are thousands of shops to buy from."

"You will be amazed," said Nayak when asked about the prices of commodities during his time. "We used to enjoy a full plate of Dahibara Aloodum for just 25 paise and the Bali Yatra famous Thunka Puri with Chhenna Tarkari for 50 paise. At that time everything was pure; there was no adulteration, and the taste was so soul-satisfying. Nowadays, you won't find that taste because of adulteration. I think this is the reason for which the Thunka Puri business is falling every year."

Uma Mani Mohanty, 73, from Raja Bagicha, Cuttack, says, "Few decades ago, Bali Yatra was a more local, low-key affair with a traditional charm. The fair was smaller and primarily served as a cultural gathering for locals. The festival was steeped in rituals, focusing more on the cultural and spiritual aspects, with performances of traditional Odia music, dance, and plays that depicted stories of ancient maritime expeditions."



'Have stopped visiting the fair for pollution'

When asked to share a childhood memory, Uma remembers, "As a child, I used to be very excited for Bali Yatra. It was that time when I would get a chance to enjoy this megafair with my cousins; in fact, I used to visit twice, or maybe three. For Katakias, Bali Yatra is their pride. Everything was so cheap that time as compared to today's price, but for us they were still expensive then. I remember we all used to buy a packet of groundnuts while strolling around; I don't remember the exact price, but maybe for one or two paise."

She further adds, "In our time, household items, women accessories, a Giant Wheel, and plastic toys from Kolkata were the main attractions in the fair. Crowd was very limited, as was the rush. A few items that are still a part of Bali Yatra are woodwork products, stonework items, and dry fish; you can find a variety of dry fish in this fair. For a few years, I have refrained myself from visiting Bali Yatra because of my age and pollution."



'Cycle stands have been replaced by bike and car parking places'

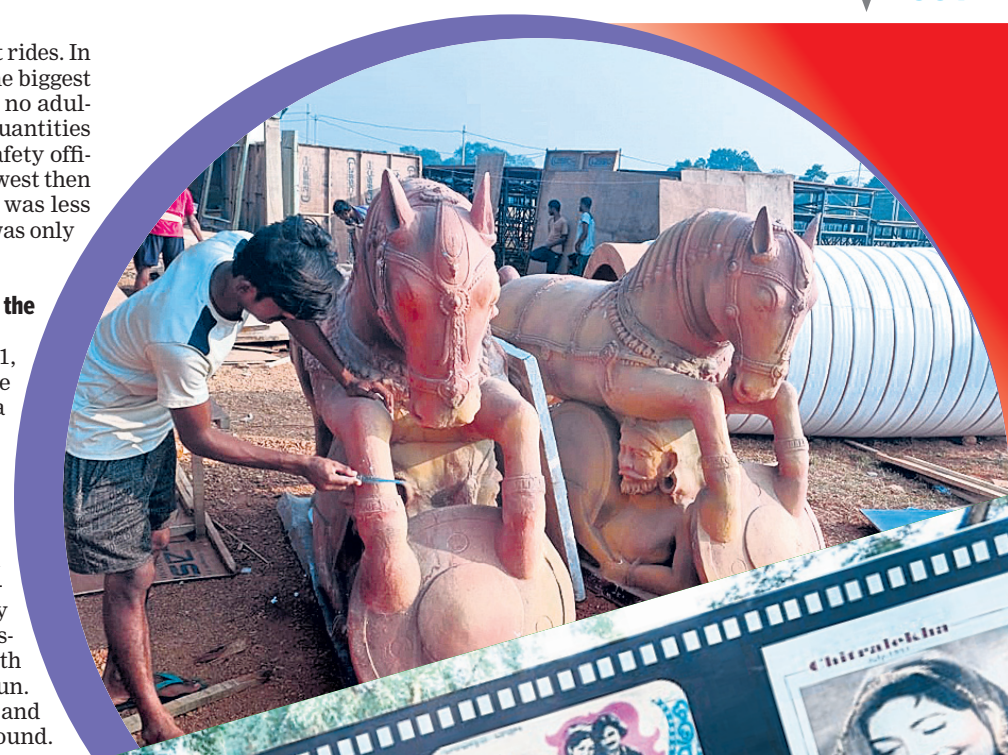
Ajay Jena, 86, retired government teacher from Cuttack, shares, "Born and brought up here, I have been a regular visitor to Bali Yatra since my childhood, but obviously I



and zones for several amusement rides. In today's time, hygiene remains the biggest concern. In our time there was no adulteration in food, but now huge quantities of food are seized by the food safety officials. Pollution level was also lowest then because the number of visitors was less and the mode of transportation was only bicycles and hand rickshaws."

'Charm of the megafair remains the same after decades'

Basanti Mohanty, 71, Cuttack, says, "Since childhood, Bali Yatra holds a special place in my heart. We used to stay in Kendrapara, as my father was involved in a business there. Every year during Bali Yatra, we used to visit our maternal grandmother's house, as my mother was a great fan of the festival. I used to visit Bali Yatra with my relatives, and it was really fun. The huge fair was not that huge and was limited to only upper ground. There were several stalls with a variety of things to



Posters showcasing the movies shot in Cuttack

buy, but colourful bangles and multi-coloured ribbons were my first preference in Bali Yatra. I remember having a large collection of these bangles and ribbons back then. My younger brothers and sisters were crazy about the plastic toys available there. The number of giant wheels was very few, maybe one or two, but enjoying the ride with cousins was a beautiful experience. I remember my mother used to buy a lot of household things from the fair."

Basanti further recalls, "Unlike today, we didn't have many options in food, but Thunka Puri and Chaat were my favorites. The Thunka Puri you savour today is the miniature version of the Puri we used to have then. At that time we had fewer options in food, but the quality was top notch. For the last few years, I haven't visited Bali Yatra, but my grandchildren do, and they still bring Thunka Puri for me. I must say one thing: Bali Yatra has changed a lot, but the charm of this fair remains the same."

don't remember those days. The first Bali Yatra that I remember is when I was in Class IX or maybe X. Visiting Bali Yatra was a daily affair then, as our house was near Cambridge School. At that time, the parking lot was full of bicycles, which is rare in today's scenario. Wooden giant wheels were the only options available in the name of joyride."

Jena went on to add, "The colourful lights that you see today were not there in our time; in fact, there was no electricity. The number of shops was very limited, maybe 100; stalls from other states were not available at that time; it was more local. Dahibara Aloodum, Thunka Puri with Chhena Tarkari, and Chaat (freshly introduced) were the only food items to savour in the grand fair. Fast food items were alien to us. At that time, we used to wear woollen clothes while strolling around the fair, but now you hardly experience any cold."

He further explains, "Now days, Bali Yatra has grown into one of Asia's largest open trade fairs, attracting national and international visitors. Multiple stages are set; you get unlimited varieties of food, numbers of exhibitions,



What's new for 2024

surface of Mahanadi river.

Infinity World
Like the underwater fish tunnel last year, this year, Bali Yatra has come up with 'Infinity World' or Ananta Duniya. The infinity world, touted to be the first-of-its-kind in India is 80-foot-long and 60-foot-wide. Installed between the Cuttack in Cuttack pavilion and ORMAS this fictional world has turned out to be a major crowd-puller.

Cuttack in Cuttack
This year the Cuttack in Cuttack enclosure showcases the Odia pride through Odia cinema. The pavilion displays Cuttack's role in the evolution of Odia cinema, highlighting key milestones, films, directors and actors that have shaped the industry with interactive screens, audio-visuals and digital timelines.

Breastfeeding Center
A 'breast feeding center' has been installed for the convenience of newborns and their mothers. The breastfeeding center has been opened in the lower Bali Yatra ground inside the Palishree Mela or the Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) enclosure.

Beauty Salon
This year a beauty salon has also found its place in Bali Yatra. Six women from Kantapada block operate this centre and facilities like mehndi, nail arts, facial etc are available here. At least 20 people can get these services at a time. It is 16 ft. long and 256 ft width and is situated near the office house in ORMAS.

While Bali Yatra of yore was about a few shops selling household stuff, the festival has undergone sea changes in present times attracting more footfall. It has been evolving with time. Here're a few additions for this edition of Bali Yatra.

Going Global
In a first, the fair this year is likely to have ambassadors of at least 12 countries in attendance, while cultural troupes from six countries like Thailand, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Slovakia, Indonesia and Bhutan have agreed to perform at the event to promote the annual extravaganza globally.

Bollywood Night
Eminent singers and celebrities like Sonu Nigam, Suresh Wadkar and Piyush Mishra are ready to grace the stage and enthrall the audience in a 'Bollywood Night' programme this year. Equal importance is given to Ganakabi Baishnab Pani Mancha and Akshaya Mohanty Mancha also. Last year, Bollywood singer Sachin-Jigar and famous singer and music director Anu Mallik mesmerized the audience with their scintillating performances.

Drone Show
For the first time in the history of Bali Yatra, drone shows have been organised to spellbind the visitors. The show, with 500 drones, showcases a historical timeline, displaying key dates and events of Bali Yatra. Apart from this, LED lights illuminate the iconic images from the early years of the fair with a retro-themed soundtrack. Visitors can also witness the laser light show across the

Trumpets



SRIVIDYA

The other day, at four o'clock in the evening, my cell phone rang. It was my wife. She asked me to come early from the office.

"Why?" I asked.

"Surprise," she answered and hung up the phone.

I thought her parents might have come to visit us, or she might have planned a movie. After a day of hectic work, I generally do not want to go to the movies, and she knows it well.

After an hour or so, I logged off my computer, called my secretary, and informed her that I was leaving early and left for home.

Surprisingly, my house was well decorated with balloons, coloured ribbons, and illuminated with lights; there was a big and beautiful cake on a table. A few of my wife's friends and my friends were already there having some soft drinks. Everyone was happy and greeting each other. My wife is joyfully serving snacks and sweets to the guests. She bought a new shirt for me.

Generally, I forget my wife's birthday; I check it on my phone. No, it is not her birthday today, and Diwali is over.

"But why this celebration?" I asked myself.

After a sumptuous dinner, everyone left.

I went to my wife and asked her the reason for the party.

"Don't you know, Mr. Donald Trump Ji won the American presidential election with a thumping majority. Our beloved Prime Minister Modiji's beloved friend won! We are celebrating his victory." She cried with overwhelming happiness. "Don't you know Modiji's ties with Trump Ji? Did you forget 'Ab ki baar Trump Sarkar and How di Modi? Now ab ki bar Trump Sarkar.' She grinned and said, "Modi Ji kuch karte sab soch ke karte hai naa?"

"So what? Why do we celebrate it? Why are you so happy? What will we get?" I asked.

"You are ignorant of everything. You deliberately ignore all the great things happening around you. You live in a cocoon. You spoil everything. You spoil every little happiness." She accused me.

"... .." I didn't say anything.

"Trump Ji will kick out all the immigrants from America. He will drive away the bloody Mexicans out of his country. Our neighbor Ragini's son Rahul will also be sent back to India. She is very proud of her son studying in Chicago. And now she will know what Trump Ji is. Everyone should learn a lesson. Is it not so?" She concluded.

"He said he would send back illegal migrants, not all the immigrants. And our students won't get study and job VISAs hereafter." I tried to explain it to her, but she was not in the mood to listen.

"Whatever, listen carefully; Mr. Trump Ji is not an ordinary president like others. He is a superman; he is great; Trump Ji will bring back America's pride and glory. That Biden destroyed everything. He is useless. Trump Ji did the wrong thing last time. He should not have vacated the

"And you know, Trump will increase duties on Indian goods. Last time, in his first tenure, he did the same thing to us." I murmured.

"I know that. Why should we sell our goods to America? Like a small vendor, going door to door selling vegetables. These exports are the main cause of the spike in prices in our country. If they don't sell outside, the supply of goods will increase here. And prices will come down. The poor man will be benefited." She started teaching me the supply and demand theory in her way.

"Do you know, last time he stopped most of the US aid to Pakistan and other small countries? How can you support it?" I argued.

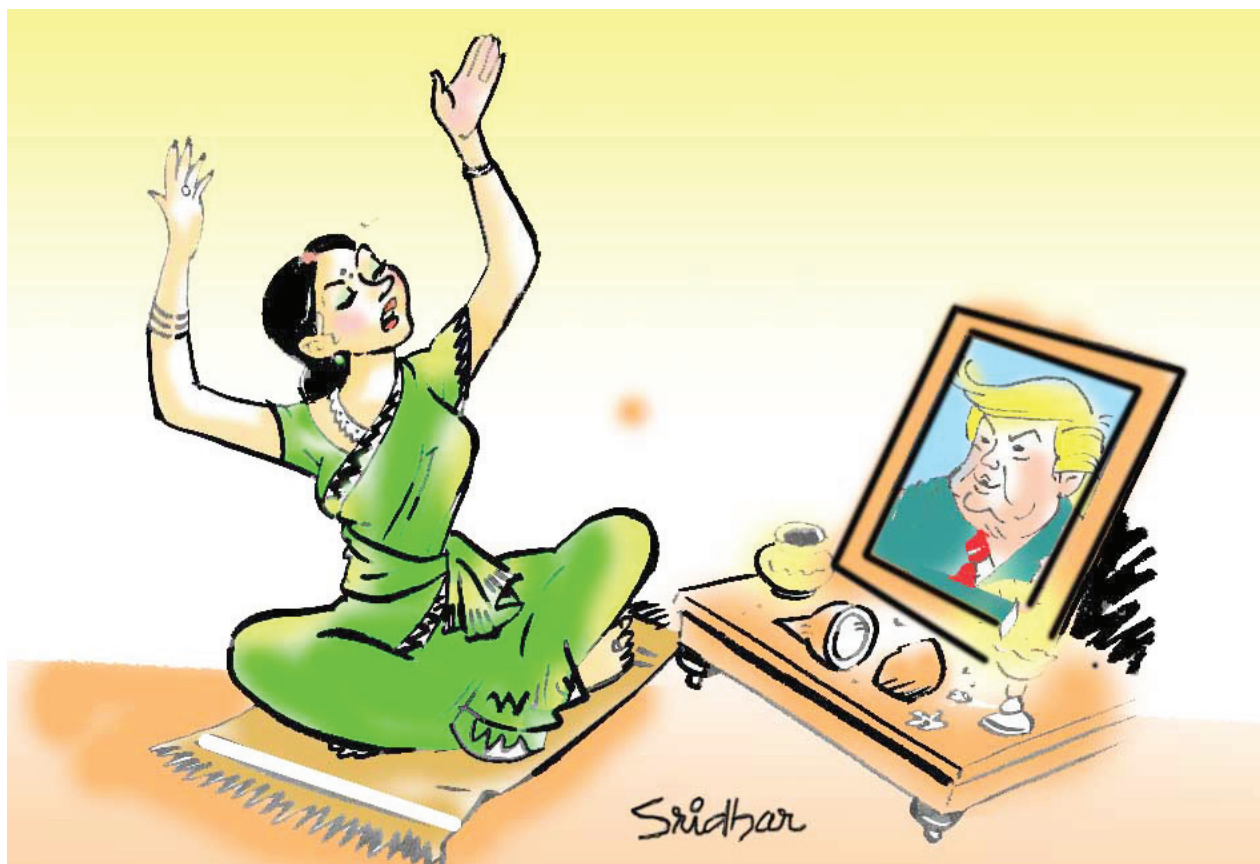
"It is simply a great thing. Pakistan deserves it. Why should it bow and beg at the doors of America, the IMF, the World Bank, or any other country? Why don't they develop on their own? When do they learn? Alms, alms, and

My wife's phone rang. "It's my brother, Ravi from Texas," she screamed and grabbed the phone, and without any delay she congratulated him for Trump's victory. After a few seconds, her happiness was gone as her brother and his wife were coming down to India after losing their jobs

friend. He is the guardian of the world. He will stop the Ukraine war and will teach a lesson to Lebanon and Iran."

I noticed a big, golden-framed photo of Donald Trump and a photo of Prime Minister Modi hugging Trump hanging on the wall. Two halves of a coconut, some flowers, and two silver lamps were there in the pooja room, too.

My wife's phone rang. "It's my brother, Ravi from Texas," she screamed and grabbed the phone, and without any delay she congratulated him for Trump's victory. After a few seconds,



White House. He should have continued; those donkeys (Democrats), immigrants, and Biden spoiled everything. And lastly, why should our students go there? PM Modi Ji promised to build more universities and give more jobs. If they won't get jobs here, they can join 'Agni Veer' and serve the nation." She said strongly.

"America is always the number one country. It never lost its glory." I continued.

alms. They want to live in poverty. They don't want to stand on their own two feet." She replied.

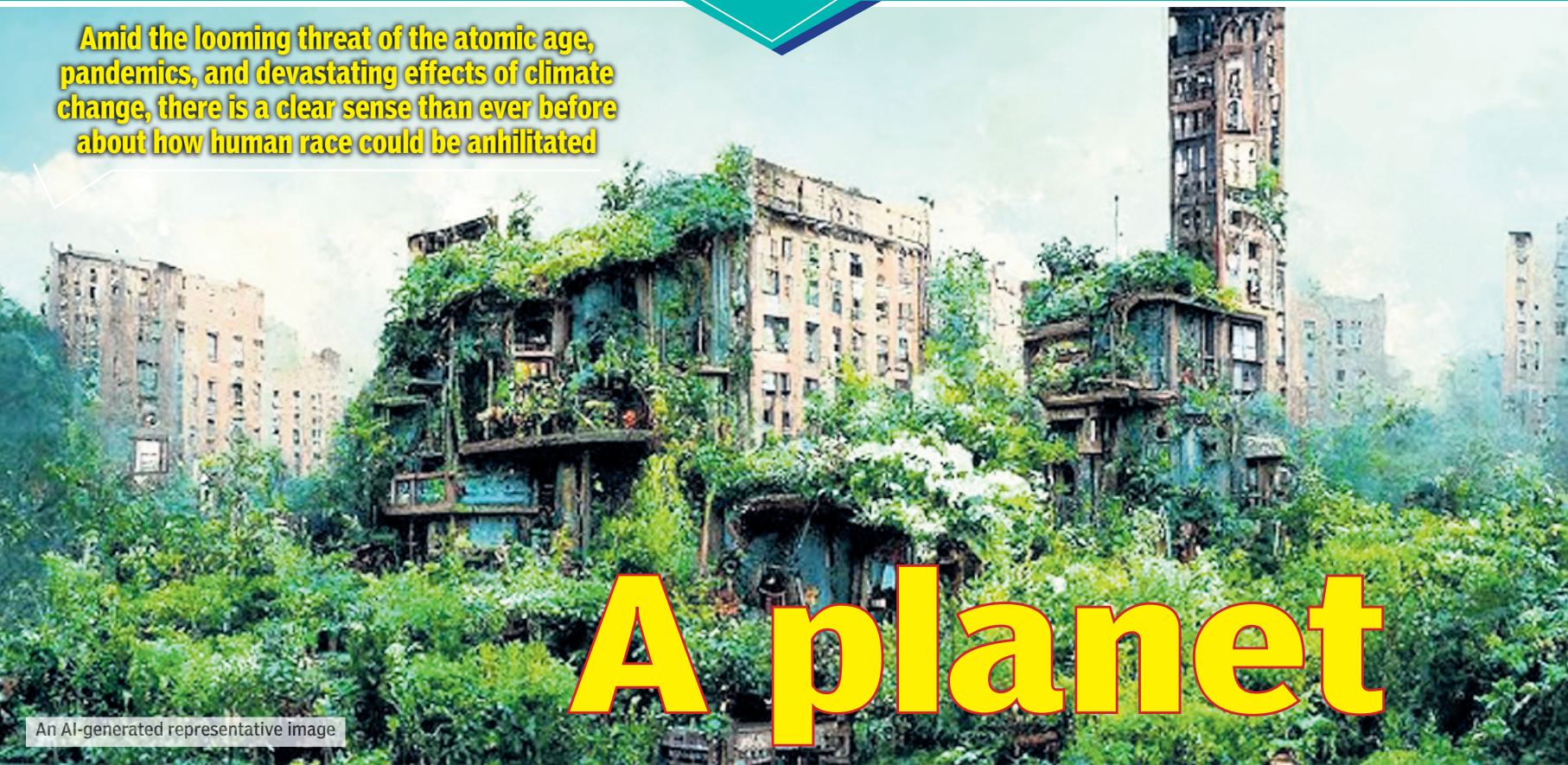
"Sweetheart..." I wanted to explain something to her, but she was not ready to listen.

She started again. "Trump Ji will help Modi Ji to drive away 'Those unwanted people from our country too. Trump Ji is great; Trump Ji is our true

her happiness was gone. She said to me, "My brother and his wife have lost their jobs and are coming down to India." She silently sat down in a chair.

The writer is ex-sr. cartoon editor, Eenadu.

Amid the looming threat of the atomic age, pandemics, and devastating effects of climate change, there is a clear sense than ever before about how human race could be annihilated



An AI-generated representative image

A planet without humans

LAUREN LEFFER

We don't know how or why it happened—perhaps a particularly deadly, Homo sapien-specific virus. Or maybe it was a more drawn-out decline brought on by unfettered climate change, escalating conflict, and collapsing food supplies. Regardless of the circumstances, imagine that people have gone extinct. Suddenly the geologically brief moment of human dominance on Earth is over. So, what happens next?

We only have speculation. There's no single correct answer, nor certainty. Yet people have considered versions of this apocalyptic thought experiment for centuries, if not millenia, says Carlton Basmajian, an associate professor of community planning at Iowa State University who studies cities. Ideas of human extinction and societal dissolution are rampant in religious texts and myths of ancient cultures.

In recent decades our environmental footprint has become more intense and well-understood and so, perhaps, has awareness of our own fragility. Through the threat of the atomic age, pandemics, and climate change, we have a clearer sense than ever before about how we could be eliminated or eliminate ourselves. "Perhaps people are even more cognizant now of the limits to human survival," says Basmajian.

And, perhaps by considering Earth after us, we can get a realistic understanding of all the ways we've shaped and changed the planet, says Alan Weisman, an environmental journalist and author of multiple books including the 2007's *The World Without Us*. For him, writing on the idea was a way to reach those who might otherwise be turned off by environmental literature, and get a broader swath of readers to consider the reality of our species-level legacy. "If we all just suddenly vanished, everything left would be the sum total of our environmental impact."

Infrastructure degrades

Without people around to keep things running, water and electricity would quickly stop flowing through pipes and wires, says Basmajian. Gas and coal power plants require a steady diet of fuel and water pumps need both human operators and power. The subway and traffic tunnels underneath major cities would flood, says Weisman, without the functioning pumping systems that keep them dry now.

In humid environments, interior dry-wall would mold. Fallen trees would crush roofs in storms. Fires would go unextinguished. In seismically active zones, earthquakes would wear down and eventually topple structures.

Vining

plants would cover walls and push apart bricks and siding. And wooden structures, including the vast majority of residential buildings framed with wood beams, would rot. Even creosote-soaked telephone poles wouldn't last more than 20 years, estimates Basmajian. "Anything wood, especially in a wet climate, is going to degrade pretty quickly," he says. Newer construction buildings, built from the 1980's onwards, are made from lighter wood and lower quality materials and would fall apart especially fast, he adds.

Mid-century steel and glass skyscrapers would last longer, Basmajian imagines, but not forever—especially considering those flooded tunnels, which could easily collapse streets and lead to inundated foundations. The Empire State Building is anchored to bedrock, but if water were to seep into its lower levels from the subterranean train tracks beneath West 33rd Street, perhaps its supports would corrode and fall away.

Sturdy stone buildings would remain standing the longest, predict both Basmajian and Weisman. But over the course of a few centuries, most every municipal-

ity would fall into visible ruin—resembling the abandoned monuments and cities of the fallen Roman Empire, the Ancient Egyptians, or the Incas. Even now, there are parts of some American cities that have been effectively abandoned, which show how quickly these processes of decay take hold, Basmajian notes. "Houses are caved in, streets are cracked, trees grow through structures," all in a matter of a decade or two.

Of all surface-level human infrastructure, Basmajian says roads would be the most persistent signs of civilization. Major highways through dry, non-seismic areas would be especially prone to lingering. Yes, they'd crack as the planet shifts beneath them, but "they're so big and so over-engineered that they would persist for a long time," he says.

If buildings, roads, and ruins were buried by sediment—perhaps in flood events or through land subsidence—they'd be more likely to last, says Jan Zalasiewicz, an author and emeritus professor of paleobiology at the University of Leicester in the U.K., who penned the 2008 book *The Earth After Us*.



A view of a damaged building surrounding the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine

PIC: GIAN MARCO BEREDETTO/ANADOLU



Still though, we're only talking on the order of thousands of years. With more time, less than a million years—"surface evidence of humans would be gone or difficult to recognize," estimates Zalasiewicz. Some artifacts, like Bronze sculptures, ceramic pots and mugs, and gold ingots will hang on, buried by time, says Weisman. And still other signs will remain sub-surface. There will be so-called technofossils, made up of durable metals and plastics, Zalasiewicz explains, as well as fossil evidence of the mass extinction, climate change, and sea level rise that humans have precipitated.

Nuclear elephant in the room

You might be wondering about nuclear power plants. Assuming they're online at the time of the human extinction, many of the 440 active nuclear plants on Earth would eventually melt down without maintenance. Water would evaporate from their cooling systems, and the rising heat would lead to nuclear explosions. Would that be enough to vaporize or irreparably mutate everything on the planet, extinguishing life? Maybe, says Weisman, "that's a wild card."

But maybe not. The worst meltdown ever to occur was the Chernobyl explosion, which released about 400 times as much radioactive material as the bomb that the U.S. dropped on Hiroshima. Radioactive fallout from Chernobyl contaminated about 58,000 square miles of land. The most acutely impacted zone, known as the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone, is about 1,000 square miles.

Yet Earth is 197 million square miles big. "The damage here will be relatively minor and local," says Zalasiewicz. There are caves, deep oceans, and large expanses of land and water very far away from any nuclear plant. It's probable that lots of life would survive 440 Chernobyls. After all, atomic weapons tests following WWII released about 100 to 1,000 times as much radioactivity compared to Chernobyl, according to estimates from the International Atomic Energy Agency, and we're still here.

"We've had meltdowns. They char an area, but not the entire planet. It's a big disastrous fire and a wave of radiation, but it doesn't go on forever," says Basmajian. And even in the most irradiated parts of Chernobyl, nature has made a big comeback. In many ways, the Zone is now something of a wildlife refuge, with lingering radiation protecting plants and animals from people. "When humans fled, nature flooded in," says Weisman.

Life finds a way

A short list of species would be doomed to die with us, including co-evolved

pests like head lice and bed bugs, as well as human-specific microbes, says Weisman. Then, there are the domestic breeds of animals people have created, which would quickly be outcompeted by their wild peers, cows and dogs wouldn't last long on their own, he says. Housecats, in contrast, would likely be fine—continuing to live on as feral mesopredators—eating birds and rodents and being eaten by coyotes, wolves, bears, and bigger cats.

A handful of endangered species are currently supported through human breeding programs and hands-on interventions. The fate of animals like giant pandas, vaquita porpoises, and Panamanian golden frogs would depend on the conditions that exist for these animals in our absence, says Weisman. Most of their difficulties, like habitat loss or poaching, are human-caused. Yet critically small populations and established animal diseases wouldn't necessarily magically resolve once we disappear.

For everything else, life would continue on. Humans have shaped evolution in innumerable ways. Some of our influence would linger on in our absence. Climate change will re-

main a factor for millennia. Though temperatures will stop increasing after a few decades without more human emissions, the global average won't fall back to what it was before the industrial revolution for thousands of years. Carbon feedback loops that have already been triggered, including wetland methane release and permafrost thaw could extend this timeline, says Weisman.

On a local level, heavy metal and chemical pollution from unmaintained factories and infrastructure will exert pressures on the organisms trying to survive nearby, along with the radiation from those aforementioned meltdowns. Though with enough time, all of this contamination will be diluted until the effects are negligible.

Despite these difficulties, and despite the mass extinction we've already caused, we won't be leaving behind a barren Earth. In the worst past extinction, the Permian-Triassic, 80-90% of all marine species and 70% of all terrestrial vertebrates died off. Then, life rebounded, as it always seems to do. "After every extinction event, this place is devastated, but life is so resilient it comes back," says Weisman.

It's impossible to know what exact species might succeed us to dominate the planet, if anything—perhaps things settle to a different sort of equilibrium. But "as in past

extinctions, the survivors are usually the generalists—small, tough, adaptable," says Zalasiewicz. Rats may no longer have human structures and food to rely on, but maybe they'd find new resources to take advantage of in their large social colonies, he posits.

The universal long-haul

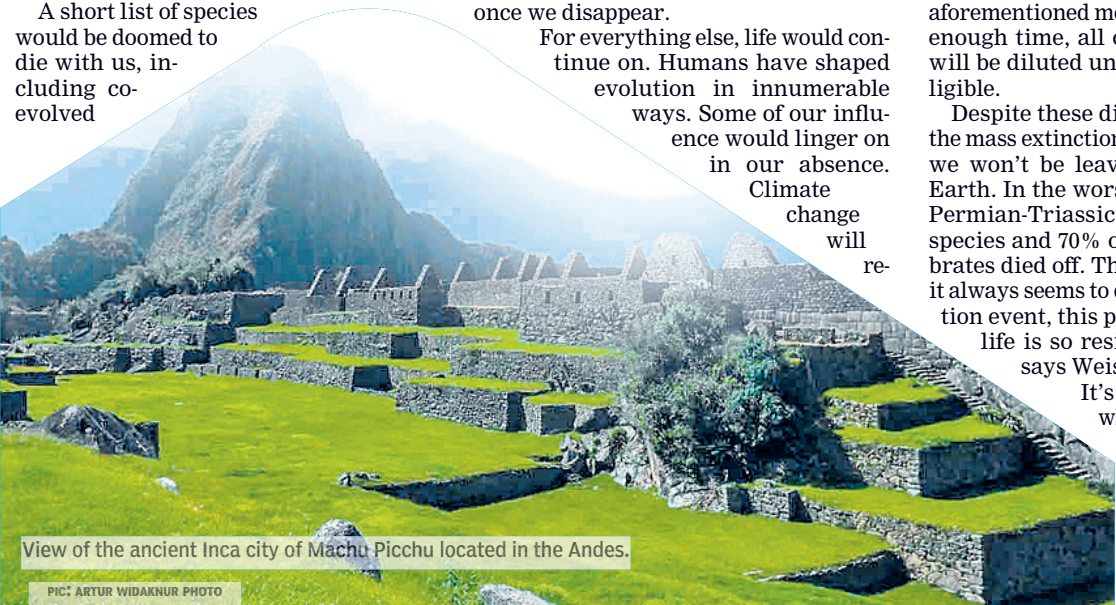
In our absence, Earth would continue on. Our planet does not 'need' us. Life would last at least until our sun grows too hot to support it. Even if some organisms manage to survive boiled oceans, when our star begins its final death knell and expands into a red giant, billions of years from now, "all the inner-ring planets will probably turn into cinders," says Weisman.

But while rocks retain their layers in this heating process, our impacts on the planet will remain visible. "As long as the Earth persists and has recognizable strata, the signs of humans will persist," says Zalasiewicz.

And maybe, deep in space, some signs will last even longer. The voyager spacecrafts that have left our solar system were built to persist and carry evidence (in the form of a golden record) of human civilization to possible distant alien worlds. Barring a collision or a black hole, they'll keep going. "If I had to place a bet—and it's a safe bet because no one will ever be able to collect on it—I would say those are going to be the longest lived human artifacts out there," says Weisman.



Ruins and poppy flowers in the archaeological site of Pompeii, an ancient city destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 ad.



View of the ancient Inca city of Machu Picchu located in the Andes.

PIC: ARTUR WIDAKNUR PHOTO

Puina



WANT TO BECOME A MODEL?
Send us your photographs at
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