

MARCH 14-20, 2021

# SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW

# Paradise In Flames

**P**  
3,4 COVER STORY





Popular actor and painter Chintamani Biswal, whose painting 'Indian Mona Lisa' was bought by former President of India Pratibha Patil, loves to express human emotions and current affairs on canvas.

## Chill Day

I am a fitness enthusiast. But I prefer to take a break and relax on Sundays. However, I never fail to express my imaginations on canvas on these days. This I do to inspire my daughter Tanisha.

## Occasional Poet

I devote my afternoons for writing poems. At times, I express my inner feelings or some important events of life in poems.

## Always A Learner

I have a collection of old Tamil, Odia and Bengali art house movies. On non-working Sundays, I make sure to watch them to better my acting skills.



## Nature Lover

Trees provide a multitude of benefits, both long and short term. Therefore, I do my bit for making this environment green by planting trees.

## Catching Up With Good Old Buddies

I make time to talk to my old but close friends. As meeting them in person is not possible always, we chat on mobile and have great time.

## A 'Chhutidina' fan

Reading 'Chhutidina', a tabloid of Dharitri is a must in my to-do lists of Sunday. The day sounds boring if I miss it



Chintamani with his daughter

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](mailto:features.orissapost@gmail.com) And we will publish the best ones

#### THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation toward the local swimming pool. I gave him a glass of water.
- 'Doctor, there's a patient on line one that says he's invisible. Well, tell him I can't see him right now.'
- I don't suffer from insanity—I enjoy every minute of it.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down.

## POIGNANT TALES

Sir, I found the cover article 'Never Say Never' very heartrending. I would like to salute the self-confidence of the acid attack survivors. I appreciate them for the way they have overcome the horrifying incidents in their life. The pain and trauma they had gone through need to be heard. Being a sensible woman, I would like to urge the state government to create job opportunities for the acid-attack survivors.

SNEHA SENAPTI, JHARSUGUDA

## ROLE MODELS

Sir, Pramodini Roul, an acid attack survivor, is certainly a role model for other victims. From being a bedridden girl for five years to a woman who chased the culprit and put him behind bars, Pramodini has travelled a long way. While hers is a heart-wrenching story, I also appreciate Saroj Sahu who loved her unconditionally and showed exemplary courage to marry her. Other youths should also come forward to follow his example.

SHEZNAJ HUSSAIN, BHADRAK

## 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](mailto:features.orissapost@gmail.com) B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948





# PARADISE IN FLAMES

A survey reveals that it was not just Asia's second-largest biosphere reserve Similipal, more than 5,000 forested areas in Odisha were burning about a fortnight ago

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Similipal is up in flames; Wild animals enter human areas after loss of habitat; Forest fire rages for over 10 days; One-third of Similipal National Park gutted.

These are a few recent headlines from the front page of some prominent national dailies and popular web portals, thanks to a strongly worded tweet by Mayurbhanj princess Akshita M Bhanj Deo.

Had the disturbing picture not been tweeted by her, many wouldn't have come to know about the devastating fire in Similipal.

Similipal, Asia's second-largest biosphere reserve covering an area of 2,750 sq. km, in Mayurbhanj district was up in flames for the past several days. But it was not just Similipal, the Forest Survey of India (FSI) reveals that over 5,000 forested areas were under fire in Odisha between February 22 and March 1, 2021 – the highest in the country for the same period.

Though fire services personnel and forest department officials are giving their best to douse the flame with the help of locals at various pockets, they are yet to contain the fire fully. Every day fresh cases of forest fire are being reported in the state.

At a time when the officials struggle to contain the fire in forests across the state, some wildlife experts, naturalists share their concern with **Sunday POST** and tell what could be done to prevent such calamity.

**Biswajit Mohanty**, secretary of Wildlife Society of Odisha, attributing rampant poaching is one of the main reasons behind devastating

fire in Similipal for last few weeks, says "Situation has turned so grim that we cannot douse the fire now. We can only wait till an unseasonal showers like the one that lashed the reserve area last week or the arrival of monsoon to contain fires. Though we are very much concerned about the well-being of flora and fauna, we are helpless.

It has already spread into a large area. We can only wait patiently till it is extinguished on its own or by the rains. Forest department had to remain prepared to deal with the situation as forest fire has become an annual event in recent years. Besides, the department was supposed to involve locals and the community so that it can be extinguished before it spread into large areas."

**Giri Rao**, a Community Forest Rights activist, who works for the rights of forest dwellers, says "Similipal holds 90 per cent chances of catching fire every year and between the months of February and April. So, the government should chalk out an action plan well in advance contain the fire rage as part of its preparedness. Secondly, forests are an

important natural resource and render a variety of ecological services. Therefore, it is our duty to prevent the irreversible damage. The Government of India had introduced a well-

defined Act, known as CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority) to compensate the loss of forest area and to maintain the sustainability. Unfortunately, the state government is not using fund sanctioned under CAMPA for the conservation of forests. The state government has received an allocation of Rs 90,000 crore under CAMPA. But the government is not using it. Young activists of Biju Bahini and SHGs can play a big role in saving the forests.

He further says tribal communities living in forest areas often work together to protect the forest. However, the forest department personnel should take them into confidence and involve them for the cause.

"The local folks should be made accountable. Penal provisions should also be there if they fail to control fire in time. It is certainly not possible to prevent forest fire entirely, but it can be minimized by taking timely precautions," adds Rao.

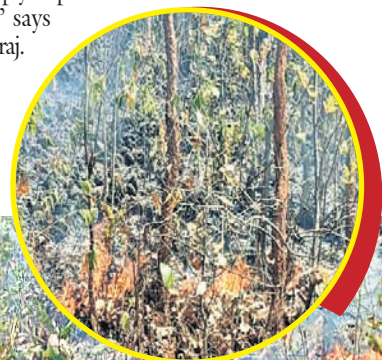
**Prakash Mardaraj**, IUCN, Species Survival Commission Member, is of the opinion that the authorities concerned have to focus on just stopping the spread, rather than putting



the fire out. The spread can, for instance, be contained by digging trenches around the fire. The priority should be to save lives.

He is concerned about insects and invertebrates.

"Insects and invertebrates are the first to die due to heat and smoke. Also eggs, which were laid in trees, are destroyed. Forest fires increase carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, contributing to the greenhouse effect and climate change. The danger continues even after the fire: the soil, without plants, turns susceptible to erosion by rainwater, especially on steeply sloped areas," says Mardaraj.







A firefighter douses fire at Similipal

## POSSIBLE CAUSES OF FOREST FIRE

Many forest fires start from natural causes like lightning which set trees on fire. However, rain extinguishes such fires without causing much damage.

Fire is also caused when a source of fire like naked flame, cigarette or bidi, electric spark or any source of ignition comes into contact with inflammable material.

During Akhand Shikar or mass hunting excursion the tribals clear the ground bushes and dry grasses by setting them on fire to enhance their visibility in the forest.

The Adivasis, to safely collect minor forest produce, set the ground on fire to help them see animals, especially carnivores such as tigers, to thwart any possible attack on them.

He continues: "Rigorous punishment for people illegally entering into forest areas is the need of the hour. Culprits are manipulating WPA1972 Forest Act. The forest officials should be equipped with modern facilities and technologies to check fire incidents, poaching and illegal activities inside PAs."

Seconding Giri, former chief wildlife warden of Odisha Saroj Kumar Patnaik says "Similipal is burning and reducing many medicinal plants to ashes. Many species, including the endangered and scarce ones, have perished in the wildfire. I am bleeding inside watching homeless wild animals helplessly."

Before the commencement of fire seasons, fire lines should be created to prevent fire spreading to other pockets, he suggests. In



many cases, People living in the fringe areas of the forest collect Mahua flowers to make country liquor. Mahua flowers are collected from the forest ground in March-April when the flowers shed on their

own. They set the dry leaves and bushes on fire to keep the ground clean to collect flowers. So, they are the ones who mostly responsible for such fires, the ex-wildlife warden points out.

Asked on how the forest fire can be minimised, he says, "The forest dwellers can't be checked from entering the forest but can be

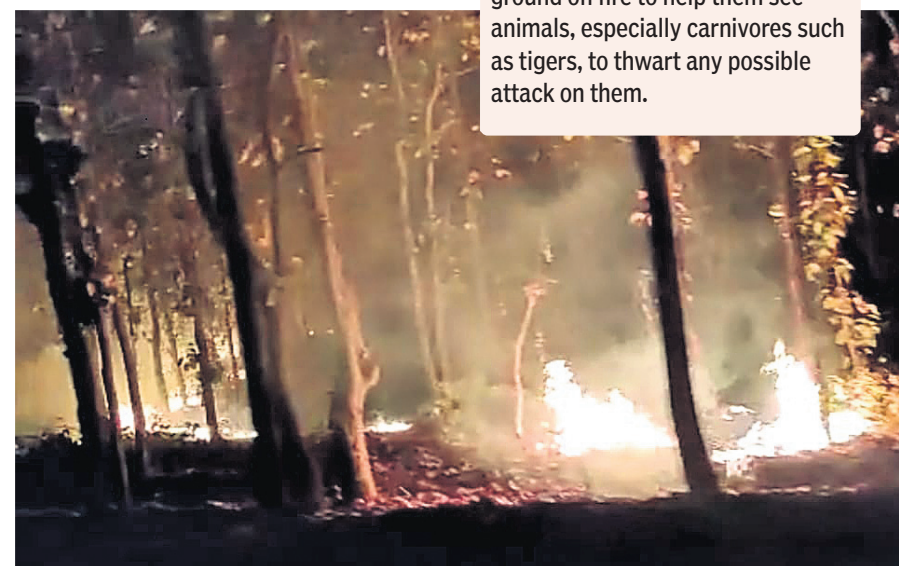
given warning not to cause harm to the forest. Besides, the forest officials should be provided with firefighting equipment and awareness drives should be launched among the fringe villagers to save the flora and fauna."

Rights activist Ghasiram Panda says,



"Forest fire is nothing new and people were used to it. When I saw glowing flames in forest during my childhood, the seniors would explain that monkeys were illuminating the forest for their marriage ceremony. Then the villagers used to play an important role to extinguish fire. However, things have changed and locals are no longer involved in it. Making matters worse, forest department does not have the required logistics to put out the fire. They now have to seek the help from local communities in this regard."

Besides, the administration, with the advent of fresh technologies, is now able to learn the status of forest fire on a daily basis. However due to apathetic attitude, the officials have not been able to ensure people participation in controlling forest fire. The Panchayat Raj Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act and Forest Rights Act (FRA) have created enough scope for this. Hopefully the task force recently formed will take this aspect into consideration, he adds.





**Akshita M. Bhanj Deo** @TheGreatAs... · 6d  
Mayurbhanj had devastating forest fires this past week, a week ago close to 50kg of ivory was found, a few months ago local youth reported on sand/timber mafias in Similipal. Apart from a few state media, NO national media is covering Asia's 2nd largest biosphere burning #similipal  
106 1,667 3,119



**Akshita M. Bhanj Deo** @TheGreatAshB  
If you are a journalist/media/ photographer/naturalist and would be interested to covering stories from Mayurbhanj. We will host you @BelgadiaPalace covering your stay and meals. Mayurbhanj needs national/global media attention now #savesimilipal  
11:27 PM · 01 Mar 21 · Twitter for iPhone  
249 Retweets 19 Quote Tweets 598 Likes

A screenshot of the tweets made by Mayurbhanj Princess Akshita M Bhanja Deo inviting global attention towards Similipal fires

COUNTERVIEW



### Forest fire, a necessity

Forest fires are one of the natural and necessary parts of the ecosystem. And, when fire rages through dry underbrush, it clears thick growth so sunlight can reach the forest floor and encourage the growth of native species. Controlled forest fires have been essential for forest growth, but uncontrolled forest fire can cause devastation by engulfing and destroying healthy, thick forest cover in no time





# 'BGU will focus on its social responsibilities'

*Birla Global University, set up with an objective to be the best destination for aspiring new-gen professionals, is committed to redefine 'quality' in education with state-of-the-art facilities, best of infrastructure and finest faculty.*

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The Vice-Chancellor (VC) of a university is the soul of the academia. His stature is built on the belief that he cannot be bent by influence nor broken by power. VCs ensure that academic and administrative goals are met, and help the University maintain a positive image. This is exactly what Professor PP Mathur, the VC of Bhubaneswar-based Birla Global University (BGU), has been doing since he joined the institution about six months back.

Professor Mathur, during a breezy chat with **Sunday POST**, reveals about his plans to take the varsity to the next level of excellence.

■ **Tell us about BGU. How do you plan to build on its current success?**

■ Though launched about five years ago, the varsity is now a leading light in the field education by offering relevant courses in Management, Law, Humanities & Social Sciences, and Communication. The modules are getting modernised regularly by dedicated teams of faculties. For instance, courses in Business Management are benchmarked against the best available in the country and specialisations like Business Analytics and Banking Technology are being added from this academic session. The university

has a beautiful and picturesque campus with modern recreational facilities. The School of Communication has the best of laboratory facilities. Inspired by the philosophy of its founders late BK Birla and late Sarala Devi Birla, BGU strives for excellence in teaching and research and encourage diversity and inclusiveness. I plan to take the quality of education to the next level of excellence.

■ **With years of experience behind, how do you see the changes that have taken place in Indian education system over the years?**

■ The higher education system is at the threshold of transformations. The focus has now shifted to skill development and in-built flexibility following the unveiling of the National Education Policy-2020. If the new policy is implemented in its totality, the system would become more student-centric and create a pool of skilled man power having willingness to upgrade themselves through lifelong learning.

■ **What will be your approach of governance as a VC?**

■ My vision for BGU is to make it a multi-disciplinary varsity having a large number of courses. I also want to produce students who will be constant learners and can compete on global platforms. The University would create an conducive environment for simultaneous growth of industry and academics. The BGU would also endeavour to become translational hub and provide incubation facility for budding entrepreneurs.

■ **What opportunities do you see for BGU at national and global stages?**

■ The BGU has successfully launched Management, Communication, Humanities & Social Sciences, Commerce and Law courses. I would strengthen the existing

programmes and introduce fresh ones to make our students compete at the top level. Through choice-based credit system the students will be allowed to take courses being offered in other schools depending on their interest. I will make sure that the NEP-2020 is followed in letter and spirit here. BGU, being a private state university, can collaborate with various national/ international institutions and can offer programmes which would be unique and useful for various segments of the society. The university will focus on its social responsibilities towards the global society. Besides, we will offer 'Study in India' to induct students from other countries.

■ **Please tell us about your journey from being a researcher to the VC of so many varsities.**

■ My journey from Pondicherry University to Birla Global University has been extremely exciting and rewarding. After finishing my education from Banaras Hindu University, I began my career in Kurukshetra University and then received Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to visit the Population Council, The Rockefeller University, New York. On my return in 1988, I joined Pondicherry University when it was in a formative stage, and I could translate my ideas there which gave me and the institution a very big visibility all over the country. I also received Rockefeller Foundation Biotechnology Career Award and INSA-German Academy Fellowship which enabled me to broaden my research horizon. We started very innovative teaching and research programmes there which are still very successful ones and attract students from all over the country. Centre of Excellence in Bioinformatics is one of them. I had launched a study in India programme which also attracted students from all over the world. When I joined KIIT in 2012 it was in a rapid growth phase. I could contribute quite significantly



## A brief profile

Professor PP Mathur is a researcher of great stature in the academic community. He was a Professor and Head, Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and Dean, School of Life Sciences, Pondicherry University (PU). Earlier, he served as the VC of KIIT University. He is also a Fellow of National Academy of Medical Sciences (India), National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI) and Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA). He served as General Secretary (Scientific Activities) of the ISCA (2016-19). He is Vice-President, Asian Association of Andrology and was on various committees of the Society for the Study of Reproduction, USA. Besides, he is a member of Court of the Central University of Karnataka and had served as member of Court, Executive Council and Academic Council of PU.

in their academic programmes which paid off. Now the University has become an institution of eminence. I have taken over as the Vice-Chancellor of BGU around six months ago. I hope that I would be able to make some innovative changes to make the varsity gain national visibility.







# Kim Kardashian remembers 16-year-old self

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian went down memory lane and remembered her teenage days in a throwback picture on social media. In the Instagram image, a young Kim is seen sunbathing. “16 year old KK,” she wrote as caption with the picture, which currently has over three million likes on the photo-sharing website. Kim and her sisters, Kourtney and Khloe, along with their mother Kris Jenner, are getting into the greeting cards business. They have decided to name their brand Kardashian Kards. In her personal space, Kim’s divorce proceedings with rapper Kanye West are on.



# ‘Kagana is fake, Urmila has substance’

Actress Malvi Malhotra, who hit the headlines last year after a producer stabbed her thrice for rejecting his proposal, says what followed taught her that Kagnana Ranaut was a fake person while Urmila Matondakar was a woman of substance. Talking about Kangana, she said: “I approached her as we belong to the same town, and there was a relation between us. I have met her two to three times, and I thought she is powerful in industry and she can help me out. She said a lot of things on Twitter, claiming she would help me, she would come to rescue me but she backed out from whatever she claimed,” said Malvi. Actor-politician Urmila Matondakar then took up the case, Malvi recalled. “At the same time, Urmila Matondkar came up, her team approached me and helped me out. Urmila personally came to meet me and is still in touch with me. She messaged me inquiring whether I need something or some help,” said Malvi.



# Tume Mo Sankha Tume Mo Sindura first Odia release post-lockdown

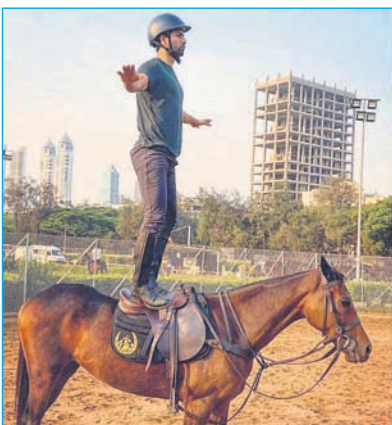
POST NEWS NETWORK

**BHUBANESWAR:** Odia film *Tume Mo Sankha Tume Mo Sindura* is set to become the first Odia movie to be released on big screen after the lockdown. Made under the banner of Forest Golden Television Pvt Limited and directed by Ranjit Barik, the film will have a

theatrical release April 1, announced producer Badrinath Patnaik at a function attended by lead actors Abhishek Rath, Ankita, Mahima and Shakti Baral. The music is scored by Abhijit Majumdar while singers like Abhijit Majumdar, well-known singers like Human Sagar, Swayam Padhi, Ira Mohanty, Rosalyn, Rinki and Neha have lend their voices to the songs in the film. Niharika has penned the lyrics for the film. Slated to release in 25 theatres, the film is packed with elements to attract viewers from all categories, production house sources said.



Abhishek and Ankita in Tume Mo Sankha Tume Mo Sindura



# Vicky stands on horseback, gets trolled

A stunt performed by actor Vicky Kaushal on horseback has not gone down well with a section of netizens, who feel he could have been kinder to the animal. Vicky shared a photo of his stunt on Instagram last week. In the image, Vicky standing straight on a horse’s back, striking balance with both hands stretched. The actor claimed that he has recreated Anil Kapoor’s painting in the film Welcome, where Kapoor’s character Majnu bhai had painted a donkey standing on the

back of a horse. Sharing a photo of the stunt on Instagram, Vicky tagged Anil Kapoor and wrote: “Got a little too inspired by Majnu bhai’s painting this morning. @anilskapoor.” A section of netizens didn’t find the actor’s stunt very kind towards the animal. “Can we for once think about to the animal,” commented a user. “Is that horse ok?” asked another user. “I am pretty sure this is bad for the horse’s back. Vicky you can do better than this,” suggested another user.



# Deliciously Cheesy



## VEG HAKKA NOODLES

### Ingredients

- Shredded cabbage: 1 cup
- Red bell pepper, julienned: 1 cup
- Green bell pepper, julienned: 1 cup
- Carrots, shredded: 1/2 cup
- Scallions: 3
- Chili sauce: 2 tsp
- Soy sauce: 3 tbsp
- Minced garlic: 2 tbsp
- Ginger, minced: 2 tsp (preferably grated on microplane)
- Rice wine vinegar or regular vinegar: 1.5 tsp
- Green chillis: 2-3 (minced or julienned)
- Ching's Secret Veg Hakka Noodles (2 Bundles of dry noodles)
- White pepper: 1/4 tsp
- Salt according to taste
- Optional: Chili Oil

### Procedure

**B**oil the hakka noodles according to package directions. Be sure to rinse noodles under cold water after they are boiled. To keep noodles from sticking to one another drizzle 1-2 tbsp of oil, and use your hands to gently separate the noodles from one another. Set Aside. Heat a large wok or wide bottom pot to medium temperature and add 2 tbsp oil. Once the oil is hot, add the green chillis and let them splutter for a few seconds and then add the white and pale green parts of the scallion. Cook for about 1-2 minutes and next, add the sliced bell peppers. Cook the peppers until they just barely begin to soften. Next, add the ginger, garlic stir until the raw smell of garlic has disappeared, but garlic has not browned. Once the garlic and ginger are fragrant, add the cabbage, carrots, and salt. Stir for about a minute. Reduce the heat to low and toss the noodles into your pot. On top of the noodles add soy sauce, chili sauce, vinegar, and white pepper. Use tongs or two mixing spoons to toss everything together very well. If necessary- use scissors to cut the noodles. Lastly, garnish the noodles with the remaining green parts of the scallions, give the noodles a quick toss and serve hot! Taste for salt and adjust as needed. Additionally, a drizzle of chili oil, or crushed red chili flakes can be added for more spice!



## MASALA PASTA

### Ingredients

- Pasta: 1 cup
- Small sized tomatoes chopped roughly: Two
- Chopped onion: 1/4 cup
- Chopped capsicum: 1/4 cup
- Chopped carrot: 1/4 cup
- Crushed garlic: 2 tsp
- Jeera: 1/2 tsp
- Red chilli paste: 1 tsp
- Garam masala powder: 3/4 tsp
- Coriander powder: 1/2 tsp
- Chopped coriander leaves: 2 tsp

### Procedure

**P**uree chopped tomatoes. Set aside. In a pan boil water. Add pasta, required salt and a 1/2 tsp of oil. Cook pasta until soft yet slightly crunchy enough to bite. Rinse it in running water then drain and set aside. In a pan heat oil, add jeera let it crackle then add crushed garlic and onion. Saute till it becomes transparent. Add carrot and saute for 2 minutes. Add tomato puree, red chilli paste mix well and cook for a minute. Then add garam masala powder, coriander powder and required salt. Cook until raw smell of tomatoes leave. Add capsicum and cook for 2 more minutes until the mixture becomes saucy and thick. Add cooked pasta and toss well until the masalas coat the pasta well. Garnish with coriander leaves and serve hot.





Janklin

PHOTO CREDIT : AKHIL