

ORISSA SOCIETY OF AMERICAS

Newsletter ----> Vol 2,1983

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EDITOR'S NOTE

JULY 4TH. AT THE NATION'S CAPITAL

In its 14-year history, OSA members had never seen such a convention. It was the most attended and the most elaborate convention ever! The final outcome was a grand success - due to the thoughtful planning and hard work on the part of the Washingtonians. An important message came out: the convention is the most significant event annually and it is getting very popular amongst the OSA membership.

Let us recount what happened at Washington. Never before have so many Oriyas from so many different cities congregated in one place for two days. Here is a sample: Jatindra Kanungo and family from Labrador City, New Foundland (800 miles north east of Montreal); Jogeswar Rath and family from Safford, Arizona; me and my family from San Jose, California; Dilip Satpathy and family from Los Angeles; Pramod Senapati from Hollywood; Sanjib Behera from San Diego; Sitikantha Dash from Minneapolis; Kiran Senapati and family from Pensacola, Florida; various people from Toronto, Alabama, Nashville, Knoxville, Louisville, Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, Virginia, New York/New Jersey area, Buffalo, Vermont, and Pennsylvania. The total headcount reached close to 500.

The July sun was harsh! Given the added dose of humidity, the situation brought back nostalgic feelings of Orissa's July days. As we arrived on Saturday (July 2nd.) at the Tower residence of Bowie College, the parking lot was getting full. The trip from the parking lot to the registration desk was brisk due to the sudden encounters with so many friends! There was excitement all over. The whole campus was in turmoil! It resembled a wedding atmosphere from back home - relatives from long distances arriving, local hosts rushing by with no time to stop, kids running away with newly discovered friends, youngsters ganging up to plan immediate

activities. Some early arrivals sat cross-legged on the lawn, engrossed in card games - albeit oblivious to the pandemonium surrounding them.

The registration process was well structured. A package was handed out to every registrant containing a souvenir (excellent!), general instructions regarding the convention and a map-guide to Washington. The souvenir contained messages (see elsewhere), agenda of convention activities and the new OSA directory. Almost 100 families had registered by Saturday night. Then followed dinner. Afterwards the crowd was entertained at an open-air 'mehfil'.

Sunday was full of activities. Besides business discussions, there were children games program, an elaborate stage performance of songs, dances, skits, and one-act play. The Sunday dinner was excellent (thanks to Jagannath Rath and friends). By Monday noon, everyone had left. Just like the aftermath of a festive occasion back home, people were saying unenthusiastic good-buys. Requests to visit each other continued between departing parties - so also the persistent reminders to call each other periodically.

With this, our Washingtonian friends have set a very high standard towards the scope and grandeur of the annual convention. Our congratulations, especially to Pratap Das, chairman of the organizing committee, for making a project of this magnitude so successful and memorable!

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

Many things. Sikandar Alam, the noted singer from Orissa is visiting the USA and Canada. He has given performances in New York, Huntsville, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington, Toronto and Boston. This was possible by some enthusiastic friends from the New York area. Local chapters played a key role in making individual programs possible.

Two Oriya films have arrived in the USA, thanks to Pratap Das of Washington D.C.. They are: Akhi Trutiya and Srikrushna Rasa Lila. The movies are being circulated to various chapters for local viewing. Again, this is the first time Oriya movies have come to the USA. It is our goal to make it a recurring event, preferably through video cassettes (these two are 16mm copies).

SENDING NEWS TO ORISSA.

On many occasions in the past, various people have taken the liberty of sending news items pertaining to OSA activities, to newspapers in Orissa. We have heard complaints from many friends that such coverage is erratic and at times not balanced.

Newspapers in Orissa have been communicated recently to discard, from now on, any news items sent by individuals other than the OSA executives (president, vice-president, secretary/treasurer and editor - no one else). These four are the only authorized people to send news to Orissa regarding OSA activities such as the convention. Anyone else can send news regarding personal matters; however for OSA activities individuals should go through the OSA executives for any suggested news items.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

- Jayadev Misra has joined Stanford University, Palo Alto for one year as visiting professor in the computer science department. His wife Mamata joined IBM's San Jose research group for the year. They are residents of Austin, Texas.
- Prabeen Misra joined Cornell University, Ithaca for Ph.D. in veterinary sciences after completing his Master's work at University of Saskatchewan, Canada. His younger brother Abinash Misra is attending University of Saskatchewan in the department of Political Sciences.
- Srikanta Mishra will start his Ph.D. in Mining engineering at Stanford University this fall. He finished his Master's program at University of Texas at Austin.
- Subhransu Mishra will start his M.B.A. at Alabama A & M University at Huntsville this fall. He is the younger brother of Surya Mishra of Chicago.
- Jayant Mohanty has joined University of Texas at Arlington for post graduate studies in Electronics Engineering. He is graduate of R.E.C., Rourkela from the class of 1982.
- Sapan Panigrahi has joined University of Texas at Arlington for post graduate studies in Chemical Engineering. He is graduate of R.E.C., Rourkela from the class of 1982.
- Sudhakar Rath has completed his Ph.D. in Psychology at Queens University, Kingston and will be leaving for Orissa soon. He teaches Psychology at Utkal University, Vani Vihar.
- Shaibal Roy from Cuttack has joined Stanford University in the department of Computer Science. He graduated from IIT, Kharagpur in 1983. His predecessor from the 1982 batch is Devika Subramanian (PGM holder), who is doing her Ph.D. in Computer Science at Stanford. Devika is a resident of Rourkela and is the daughter of Prof T. N. Subramanian of Regional Eng. College, Rourkela.
- Sunil Sarangi and family have arrived in New Mexico for two years from I.I.T. Kharagpur. Sunil used to live in Stonybrook and Pasadena prior to returning to India in 1976.
- Dilip Satpathy and family moved to Topeka, Kansas from Los Angeles on a new assignment with Bechtel's
- Hrushikesh Acharya and family have been living in Jamaica for last year. He is on assignment with ALCAN on behalf of Indian Aluminum, Hirkud. His son Kamal Acharya has completed his Masters in Computer Science from Florida Inst. of Technology, Melbourne, Florida.
- Rabi Kanungo is spending his sabbatical year in India, mostly at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. Another Oriya who teaches industrial psychology at IIM is Sashi Mishra, who got his Ph.D. from Univ of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).
- Sanjay Mal has joined Princeton University, New Jersey for post graduate studies in Chemical Engineering. He completed his B.Tech at I.I.T. Kharagpur(1980) and M.Tech at I.I.T. Kanpur.
- Debendra Mallick has joined Intel Corporation at Santa Clara after finishing his Master's in Mechanical Engineering at University of IOWA, Ames. He is a graduate of I.I.T.(Kharagpur), class of 1980.

power division.

- Kiron Senapati has moved from Alabama to Pensacola, Florida on a new job.

15TH. ANNUAL CONVENTION OF OSA - 1984 JULY

Next year, the New York chapter has taken the responsibility to hold the annual convention. Probably, a panoramic site in the garden state New Jersey will be selected. The expected attendance will be very high due to the proximity to so many groups of Oriya friends. Get your plans ready for next year. Details of the convention will be mailed sufficiently in advance to help your planning process. In the mean time, you can contact Mana Ranjan Pattanayak (215-493-8770), president of OSA NY chapter for any questions or suggestions.

ORISSA NEWS

- Manmath Nath Das, noted scholar and professor of History, has been selected as the Vice Chancellor of Utkal University, Vani Vihar. He replaces Mahendra K. Rout (Chemistry) who retired.
- Prafulla K. Pati, formerly professor of English at Ravenshaw College, has been nominated as the Vice Chancellor of Sambalpur University, Jyoti Vihar.
- The law and order situation in Orissa has deteriorated to a new low! Recently Lakhman Mohapatra, a former MP from Berhampur, was murdered in broad daylight in front of hundreds of people on a main street in Berhampur. Police arrested a couple of individuals in distant places within Orissa. Personal vendetta seems to have motivated such a ghastly act!
- Many friends who recently got back from Orissa said one thing: corruption is at an all time high. Everyone talks about 'percentage' for any routine transaction, meaning a portion of the money-on-flight to be given as bribe to the responsible officer. Such demands have become the institutionalized norms and everyone talks about such things freely. How unfortunate for a state that is still considered as one of the most backward states within India.

- On the industrial front, Orissa keeps alluring a lot of entrepreneurs from within and outside the state. There is Orissa Export Promotion Council besides the established IPICOL. A free trade export promotion zone (a la SEEPZ, Santa Cruz) is proposed for Orissa in Paradip. This is the 3rd. such outfit in India. At the annual convention, officers from India Trade development group (New York) provided information on this free trade zone in Paradeep. Many interested people attended the session and got various handouts containing important info.

LETTER TO EDITOR

From Guelph, Ontario

Dear Editor:

I must agree completely with Pepi's (Manasinha) letter in the last OSA newsletter (Vol. 1/83). I look forward to reading each newsletter. I wish I could contribute something to the OSA. I guess I'll get my chance in a few years.

As for conventions and picnics, there hasn't been one that I haven't enjoyed. I've been to every "annual picnic" ever held for the Oriyas up here since 1971 (the first one!). I've been to two in the States. Washington area in 1978 and Detroit in 1980. I enjoyed both of them thoroughly and I look forward to attending as many as I can.

Unfortunately, the apathy as of late has been disheartening. I sometimes feel that I'm one of the few that enjoy these gatherings. I hope that this is not true. I certainly do not want to lose hold of my heritage. I regret the fact that I cannot write or speak Oriya well.

At any rate, I hope there are other Oriyas who feel the way I do and will try to keep the OSA going.

Yours Sincerely,

Raj Kumar Dash (Bapi - 21)
31 Argyle Drive
Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1G 2P3

Note: Bapi is the son of Arta and Basanti Dash of Guelph, Ontario. He is studying Computer Science at the University of Waterloo.

MESSAGES TO THE 14TH. ANNUAL CON-
VENTION

Following messages were received on the eve of the annual convention.

President Ronald Reagan, The White House, June 29, 1983.

I am pleased to extend greetings to all those gathered for the Convention of the Orissa Society of Americas.

Since its founding, the Society has worked to preserve the culture and traditions of your homeland while promoting the active participation of its members in American life.

All Americans can take great pride in the contributions of Americans of Indian heritage to our nation. A major part of the success of our nation stems from the vast diversity of our people and all our citizens have done to enrich their communities throughout our history. You play a valuable role in furthering the pluralistic development of America.

You have my every wish for a most enjoyable and rewarding meeting.

Prime minister Indira Gandhi, New Delhi, April 16, 1983

I have your letter of April the 5th, informing of your 14th. Annual Convention.

Thank you for inviting me. I wish I could come but I am sorry this is not possible. I hope the functions will go off well.

A.N.D.Haksar, Charge d'Affaires of India, Embassy of India, 6/23/83

I am glad to greet the Orissa Society of Americas on the occasion of its 14th. Annual Convention on July 2 and 3. Such conventions serve an important cultural and social purpose. I hope that the present occasion will provide yet another opportunity for the joint remembrance of our cultural heritage.

Orissa is a significant and beautiful part of the Indian panorama, and its contributions to our composite cultural traditions go back to historical times. It abounds also in "temples" to our modern development and progress.

I am confident that the convention will help the people from India in general and Orissa in particular, now living in the USA, to show to their fellow citizens in this country some of the riches of Orissa's heritage and thus help to strengthen further the understanding of India. I wish the convention every success.

Orissa Society of Americas

Radha Nath Rath, editor 'SAMAJ' & President, Servants of People Society, New Delhi. June 2, 1983

...I am supremely happy that you are organizing the 14th Annual Convention of the OSA at Washington in the first week of July. We are proud of our Oriya friends who have been serving in different parts of the world including the most developed countries and have earned reputation for their integrity, efficiency, devotion and high standard of character and intellectual attainments. In the last devastating cyclone and floods followed by a spell of serious drought in Orissa, we had to organize emergency relief as also to execute rehabilitation program under great difficulties. The financial assistance and the deep sympathies and cooperation extended by our Oriya friends from abroad, particularly from the USA and Canada, not only gave us substantial support in redressing the miseries of the distressed people, but also enabled us to approach the most needy and suffering people in the distant interior of our state. Until now more than Rs. 50,000 has been received from our Oriya friends in USA and the same has been utilized both for emergency relief and rehabilitation programs. We are going to publish a full report of our activities giving details of the assistance we have received from our friends in the country and abroad both in cash and kinds. You have been a pillar of strength to us in executing sustained relief operations and we are glad to say that your kind assistance and deep sympathies have been greatly appreciated by the suffering poverty-stricken people as well as by the intelligentsia of our country.

I wish I could visit the U.S.A. so that I could come in direct contact with you friends and apprise you about the present situation and the intense suffering and terrible loss the people have suffered and the present state of affairs which make us greatly disappointed and apprehensive about the future. The weather is behaving in a very erratic manner and the spell of draught still continues. There is scarcity of drinking water and food grains. There are certain areas where starvation deaths have already occurred. Unless both Governmental and public efforts are made to augment our resources in cash and kind in order to meet the minimum need of the suffering people, 1983 may prove to be a year of disaster as the agriculture may further suffer. There have been localized tornadoes and unseasonal rains resulting in destruction of buildings and houses and loss of 'rabi' crops.

Kindly convey our most grateful thanks to all our Oriya friends in U.S.A. and Canada for all that they have done and we look forward for their further

assistance. May God help you all to do better in the professions and to be in a position to serve your poor countrymen as far as they lie within their power and resources.

Wishing your Convention all success and with best wishes.

A POEM

My Dog

BY

Devjani Mishra
New York

If I had a dog, I would call it Army.

If Army had a puppy,
I would call it Navy.

If Navy had a puppy,
I would call it Air Force.

If Air Force had a puppy,
I would call it Marines.

If Marines had a puppy,
I would call it weapons.

If Weapons had a puppy,
I would call it Russia.

If Russia had a puppy,
I would call it U.S.A.

If U.S.A. had a puppy,
I would call it...
NUCLEAR WAR!!!!

Note: Devjani is 9 years old. She is the daughter of Uma Shankar and Shanti Mishra of Dobbs Ferry, New York.

EVENTS AND DISCUSSIONS AT THE 1983 ANNUAL CONVENTION.

Following was the agenda at the annual convention.

Saturday, July 2

- 5 P.M. - Registration
- 7 P.M. - Dinner
- 9 P.M. - Mehfil

Sunday, July 3

- 8 A.M. - Breakfast
- 9 A.M. - OSA Executive Committee Meeting

- Youth Corner

- 11 AM - OSA General Body Meeting
- Clown & Magic Show
- 1 P.M. - Lunch
- 2 P.M. - Business Investment Seminar
- 3 P.M. - Cultural Show
- 8 P.M. - Dinner

Monday, July 4: Breakfast and official closing of the Convention by noon.

A few topics were discussed with the following highlights:

- It was decided that nominations for OSA executives during the election year will be solicited via the newsletter. The election committee will conduct the electioneering process and results should be announced at the annual convention, where the official handover of responsibility will take place.
- The membership dues will cover from July 1 of current year until June 30 of next year. Attendees of the annual convention will pay the membership at registration time. Others should take the initiative of mailing the membership dues to the secretary treasurer (see last page for address).
- In future, a student member will be included in the OSA executive committee. The OSA president will do the selection.
- There was a lot of discussions about last years convention at Minneapolis and opinions were divided regarding the validity of OSA paying for the losses. A committee will resolve this issue in future.
- Samar Bhuyan (New Jersey) suggested certain ways to make OSA a dynamic organization. He asked for creating stimulating environment for children and creating environment for visibility within the Indian community. He suggested OSA to participate in the India day parade in New York. He deplored the poor financial health of OSA and urged everyone to be little more sincere in sending membership dues.
- Duryodhan Mangaraj (Ohio) suggested that the president and the executive committee should provide goals and objectives to be reached during their office and give an

account of what they have achieved each year at the convention or via the newsletter.

- Subhas Mohapatra (North Carolina) talked about issuing a membership card with expiration date (or life membership) to each member of OSA with Social Security Numbers printed on top right.
- Birendra Nath Sahu (New York) suggested OSA's participation in the India day parade in New York city.
- Rasik Tripathy (Maryland) talked about current election in OSA to be conducted in an open manner rather than hand picked.
- Much discussion took place regarding the election process. Mana Ranjan Pattanayak, who conducted the last election, explained the procedure he followed. He expressed repeatedly his dismay at the extremely poor response from members (is it the lack of general interest or plain apathy?) in sending nominations, etc. He compiled the results from whatever responses came back to him.

Due to our geographical diversity, mail ballot is the only practical approach, the success of which depends greatly on active participation of each and everyone.

- Pritidhara (Jini) Mohanty (Dundas, Ontario) suggested that OSA should pass a resolution asking the US Government to ban all nuclear weapons.
- Jayashree (Ranu) Mohanty (East Lansing) pointed out the lack of women members in the OSA executive body. While women share a lot of responsibilities in group activities such as the convention, they are conveniently ignored in general discussions. Even they are not given simple recognitions! Everyone should be more sensitive.
- Ladu Patnaik looked at the previous years in retrospect and gave an account of the various achievements such as making the OSA a tax-deductible organization, sending relief for flood victims.
- Satyabrata Shaw presented the financial report of OSA. Total revenue for the period ending June 30th, 1983 was \$5903.69 and total expenses for the same period was \$5462.58, a major portion going towards the flood relief. Fund balance as of June 30, 1983 is \$2066.80.

- The handover of OSA financial accounts should happen immediately between the past treasurer (Satyabrata Shaw) and the new treasurer (Pratap Das).

REGIONAL NEWS

CALIFORNIA

The annual picnic was held during the July 4th. weekend at Wawona park, near Yosemite. About 50 people attended, coming from the Bay area as well as the Los Angeles area. Besides elaborate eating, there were sightseeing trips to Yosemite park, various games and informal 'mehfil' programs. This years conveners were Sarat Misro (Cupertino) and Kirttan Behera (Torrance). For next year, Prasanna Samantray (San Jose) and Purna Patnaik (San Diego) assumed the responsibility.

NEW YORK

Friends in the New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania states had a two-day outing over the labor day weekend. The rendezvous was the Bell Plain National Park, a very panoramic site on a lake front. A building was reserved for accommodating everyone. Activities for the youngsters were emphasized throughout the program. There were games with prizes for the participants. There was volleyball match between teams consisting of fathers on one side and their sons on the other side. Samar Bhuyan tried his best to be the impartial umpire.

Sikandar Alam was there providing music via a CASIO synthesizer (he plays it soooo well!). The two Oriya movies were screened. Almost 170 people participated in the event. Some friends from the Washington area attended also.

Uma Mishra and family hosted the catered dinner on Saturday. Mana Ranjan Pattanayak organized this outing.

VISITORS TO USA AND CANADA

- Sikandar Alam, the noted singer from Orissa, is visiting the USA and Canada. He lives in Bhubaneswar and works for the Government of Orissa.
- Jaya Krushna Baral is visiting the USA (Washington). He is from New Delhi.

- Saubhagya Misra is visiting USA (Cedar Rapids, IOWA) to attend an international writers conference. He teaches English at Ravenshaw college. He is a writer (Oriya and Indo-anglican) with many publications.
- Om Prakash Mohapatra and family visited the USA and Canada from Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. They used to live in Toronto before.
- Laxmidhar Nayak and wife, parents of Binod Nayak of Washington D.C. are visiting the USA since June. Mr. Nayak is a prolific writer (books include 'Singhbhum-ra Gopabandhu') and he is the first Oriya to produce an album of Poetry recital (abruti), himself being the author and the reciter.
- Bansi Dhar Panda and family visited the USA during May. Their oldest son Bunu studies engineering in northern Michigan. Mr. Panda is the founder-chairman of the IMFA (Indian Metals and Ferro Alloys) group of industries.
- D. R. (Lulu) Patnaik visited his brother Mana Ranjan Pattanayak. He lives in Finland. His younger brother Krushna C. Mohanty, who lives in Bergisch Gladbach (near Cologne), West Germany visited the USA and Canada.
- Mr. Ramesh Satpathy and wife are visiting their son Dilip Satpathy and family at Topeka, Kansas.
- Mr. and Mrs. Ramaswami Senapati, parents of Nag Bhusan Senapati of Ohio are visiting the USA. Immediately upon arrival, they attended the 14th annual convention at Washington D.C.

TRAVELOG: CINCINNATI AND TOPEKA

They told me that Cincinnati means 'The seven hills'. I saw hills but did not count. Upon arrival at the airport you are reminded that you are in the state of Kentucky. Then the highway, the bridge over the Ohio river. Then you are in downtown, rather sparse on a Sunday evening. Let us meet the Oriya friends. Ranjit Rath is a doctor and

has lived here for many years. His sister Itishree and husband Sukanta Panda live north of downtown in a nice residential area surrounded by rolling landscape, old trees, but new houses. Then you can meet Harlal Chowdhury and family. They are active in making the Ohio chapter of OSA more dynamic. Another Oriya friend in this area is Rabi Rout, an aeronautical engineer, with family. Everyone will tell you that you can meet northern Ohio Oriyas by driving only 100 miles north, or meet Kentucky friends 100 miles south.

It so happened that I had to go to Topeka from Cincinnati, before heading west. Reaching the Kansas City airport on a hot August afternoon, one instantly notices the flat landscape of Kansas. This is the city of the famous football club and everyone talks of football. Topeka is 100 miles west of K. City. The drive is tedious being affected by the sleepy mid-American landscape that seems so quiet! Then you reach Topeka and it does not take long to get used to the town. Again, it is awfully quiet at 7 pm. But with a Oriya friend in this town, life gets much more exciting! Dilip Satpathy and family just moved in from Los Angeles (where they stayed briefly after 3 years in Spain). A suburban Topeka house reverberates with loud conversations in Oriya amidst dinner. Everyone gets excited: everyone includes Dilip and Chhabi Satpathy, their daughters Sujata, Sarita and son Suraj, and this editor. Soon it is 1 in the morning and time to get back to the hotel. Every good thing must come to an end!

MEMBERSHIP DUES: were collected from all attendees of the annual convention. Those who did not make it should send their dues to the following address. Membership due covers the period between July 1st. of current year upto June 30th. of next year.

OSA membership dues are: Family - \$15, Single - \$10, Students - \$5.

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