

MARKET WATCH		
	14-11-2019	% CHANGE
Sensex	40,286	0.42
US Dollar	71.96	0.18
Gold	38,995	0.03
Brent oil	63.02	1.04

NIFTY 50		
	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	369.10	-1.70
Asian Paints	1771.85	1.40
Axis Bank	715.90	-4.70
Bajaj Auto	3233.30	27.30
Bajaj Finserv	9061.85	83.50
Bajaj Finance	4210.55	66.00
Bharti Airtel	362.50	-6.10
BPCL	514.65	4.55
Britannia Ind	3230.80	-38.95
Cipla	451.40	3.50
Coal India	202.35	-4.90
Dr Reddys Lab	2734.05	-29.10
Eicher Motors	21558.15	205.95
GAIL (India)	121.80	-2.05
Grasim Ind	733.95	-5.60
HCL Tech	1147.80	9.20
HDFC	2226.80	19.35
HDFC Bank	1273.90	16.35
Hero MotoCorp	2591.65	2.55
Hindalco	188.50	-4.65
Hind Unilever	2069.05	-21.95
ICICI Bank	498.65	12.90
Indus Ind Bank	235.10	-39.10
Bharti Infratel	208.65	-9.55
Infosys	705.30	13.95
Indian Oil Corp	136.85	3.00
ITC	253.90	0.05
JSW Steel	245.75	-3.00
Kotak Bank	1597.60	-8.20
L&T	1380.45	-12.55
M&M	578.45	3.75
Maruti Suzuki	7247.15	92.55
Nestle India Ltd.	14231.35	-1.90
NTPC	118.55	0.25
ONGC	136.20	-2.00
PowerGrid Corp	188.00	-1.25
Reliance Ind	1462.75	-9.55
State Bank	306.00	-0.80
Sun Pharma	410.20	-1.80
Tata Motors	167.05	-3.55
Tata Steel	391.95	-5.95
TCS	2196.90	1.30
Tech Mahindra	758.35	1.30
Titan	1169.10	10.05
Ultra Tech Cement	4003.40	-112.20
UPL	535.55	-5.75
Vedanta	144.00	-4.40
Wipro	252.75	-0.35
YES Bank	68.75	0.55
Zee Entertainment	282.00	-8.55

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on November 14		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.77	72.09
Euro	78.93	79.28
British Pound	92.20	92.62
Japanese Yen (100)	66.08	66.37
Chinese Yuan	10.22	10.27
Swiss Franc	72.59	72.92
Singapore Dollar	52.66	52.90
Canadian Dollar	54.11	54.36
Malaysian Ringgit	17.26	17.35

BULLION RATES CHENNAI		
November 14 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses		
Retail Silver (1g)	48.4	(48)
22 ct gold (1 g)	3663	(3644)

Aurobindo shares tank on USFDA observations

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

Drugmaker Aurobindo Pharma shares declined 8.73% on Thursday after the company's general injectable formulation manufacturing facility in Pashamylaram here received 14 observations from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA).

The ₹395.55 at which the scrip closed the day was a semblance of recovery as during intra-day the share had touched a 52-week low of ₹389.70.

The fall came after the company, on Wednesday, said the USFDA, on conclusion of an inspection of the Unit IV general injectable formulation manufacturing facility from November 4-13 had issued a Form 483 with 14 observations.

"We believe that none of these observations is related to data integrity issues. The company will respond to the USFDA within the stipulated timeline," Aurobindo Pharma said in a filing. But that seems to have made little difference with the share opening the day at ₹414 each as compared to the previous close of ₹433.40.

According to Emkay Global Financial Services, the facility is the company's key injectable formulations plant and has around 47 pending filings or about 30% of the overall filings.

"The sheer number [of observations] is on the higher side and likely to keep investors nervous until details emerge," Emkay said.

According to its assessment, the Unit IV accounted for 9-10% of US sales and 8-9% of overall EBITDA in FY19. It accounts for 50-60% of total injectable sales (\$213mn in FY19), with the rest being from Unit XII, Eugia and Auro-next facilities.

Telecom majors feel sting of top court's verdict on AGR

Airtel posts ₹22,830 crore loss in Q2

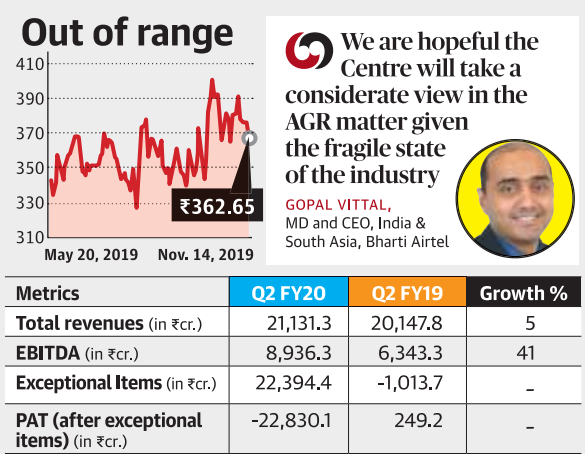
Firm recognised exceptional items of ₹22,394 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel posted a massive net loss of ₹22,830.1 crore for the quarter ended September 30 due to the 'significant financial implication' following the recent Supreme Court ruling in favour of the Department of Telecom's interpretation of adjusted gross revenues (AGR).

For the quarter, the company, which had posted net profit of ₹249.2 crore in Q2 of last year, recognised exceptional items of ₹22,394.4 crore (net of tax). It provided for an additional amount of ₹28,450 crore for licence fee as estimated based on the apex court judgment and spectrum usage charges as estimated based on the definition of AGR.

"These provisions have been made without prejudice to the company's right to contest DoT's demands on facts as well as on rights available in law," it said, adding it was hopeful of relief. The Supreme Court, in its or-



der on October 24, ruled in favour of DoT, while directing telecom operators to pay their statutory dues within three months. The firm's consolidated revenue was ₹21,131 crore, up 5%. Following the provisions, it said the liabilities/provisions as at September 30, 2019, were ₹34,260 crore. This comprises principal of ₹8,747 crore, interest of ₹15,446 crore, penalty of ₹3,760 crore and interest on penalty of ₹6,307

crore. "On the AGR verdict of the Supreme Court, we continue to engage with the government and are evaluating various options available to us. We are hopeful that the government will take a considerate view in this matter given the fragile state of the industry," Gopal Vittal, MD and CEO, India & South Asia, said. "The management is reviewing its options and remedies available, including filing petitions be-

fore the Supreme Court and also seeking other reliefs, with others affected in the industry, from the government," the company said.

In a regulatory filing, it said the group would need significant additional financing to discharge its obligations under the court judgment. "The group has an established track record of accessing diversified sources of finance across markets and currencies. However, there can be no assurance of the success of management's plans to access additional sources of finance to the extent required, on terms acceptable to the Group, and to raise these amounts in a timely manner."

"This represents a material uncertainty whereby, it may be unable to realise its assets and discharge its liabilities in the normal course of business, and accordingly may cast significant doubt on the Group's ability to continue as a going concern," it added.

Moody's cuts India's growth forecast to 5.6%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Moody's Investors Service on Thursday slashed India's economic growth forecast to 5.6% for 2019, saying government measures do not address the widespread weakness in consumption demand.

"We have revised down our growth forecast for India. We now forecast slower real GDP growth of 5.6% in 2019, from 7.4% in 2018," it said. "India's economic slowdown is lasting longer than previously expected."

Moody's had, on October 10, slashed India's economic growth forecast for 2019-20 fiscal to 5.8% from an earlier estimate of 6.2%. Last week, it downgraded India's outlook to negative from stable. Moody's said the RBI had aggressively cut rates this year, and more rate cuts are likely.

Vodafone Idea loss at ₹50,922 cr.

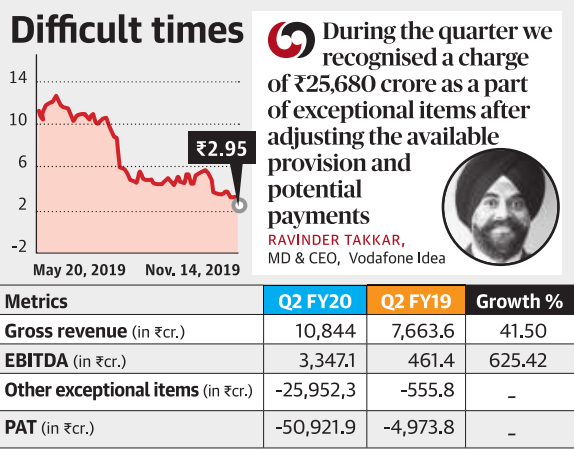
Humongous loss came despite 41.5% increase in revenue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Vodafone Idea, India's second largest telco by number of subscribers, reported a record net loss of ₹50,922 crore, the largest in Indian corporate history, due to a one-time provision of ₹30,774.5 crore made post the Supreme Court's ruling.

"Consequent to the recent judgment by the Supreme Court, we have accounted for the estimated liability of ₹27,610 crore related to license fee and ₹16,540 crore related to spectrum usage charges up to September 30, 2019 including the interest, penalty and interest thereon of ₹33,010 crore," Vodafone Idea said in a statement.

This estimate was based on demands received from DoT till date, an estimation for the period for which demands had not been raised, together with interest and penalty adjusting for certain computation corrections, it added.



The loss was reported in spite of a 41.5% increase in revenue to ₹10,844 crore during the quarter. Company's EBITDA during the quarter stood at ₹3,347 crore.

"Whilst the Company has provided for SUC, considering that no spectrum is used for generating non-telecom income, the Company is evaluating the levy of SUC on such income. Accordingly, during the quarter we re-

cognised a charge of ₹25,680 crore as a part of exceptional item after adjusting the available provision and potential payments, on satisfaction of contractual conditions, under amechanism with Vodafone Group," the statement added.

Ravinder Taikkar, MD & CEO, said "We are in active discussions with the government seeking financial relief following the recent Hon'ble Supreme Court ruling."

IndiGo to go non-stop to London with widebody planes, offer business class

We will go everywhere in the world, except U.S., says CEO

JAGRITI CHANDRA NEW DELHI

The country's biggest low-cost carrier, IndiGo, has decided to make a major strategic shift as it plans to connect far-flung international destinations. Operating a single-aisle fleet until now, the airline will venture into widebody operations to provide non-stop connectivity to London. The airline will also be offering a business class option.

IndiGo was earlier exploring connecting London with a one-stop with its A320 NEO planes, but it now seems to have some definite answers.

"If you want to do Mumbai-London we have to do widebodies and we need a business class – that's one decision we have made. If we go all-economy, we can't make the numbers work.



The answer is a small business class and a dense economy. How big the business class should be – we have sized it, we have the answer to that," CEO Ronjoy Dutta told *The Hindu* in an interview.

London launch

Asked about the London launch, Mr. Dutta said, "London is not far off, it is not five years [down the line], it is coming. But we don't want to jump the gun."

"The airline is looking at three key airports near London- Heathrow, Stansted

and Gatwick. IndiGo could be leasing five to six widebody planes, which would be used to provide daily connectivity each from Mumbai and New Delhi. With the left-over aircraft, IndiGo could look at connecting Singapore or Istanbul.

But the airline is yet to decide on how big it would go with widebodies in its fleet. It is going to test the lease arrangement, and if that works, it may order 30 widebodies or be prepared to cut back. The airline has 245 planes, including A320s and ATRs, in its fleet.

While IndiGo considers U.S. unviable because of the amount of fuel burn, Australia is a market it is interested in, though it is not on the radar right now.

"We will eventually be everywhere, except the U.S.," Mr. Dutta added.

Union Bank posts ₹1,194 crore loss in Q2

Provision for NPA divergence, a reason

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

State-run lender Union Bank of India posted ₹1,194 crore loss in the second quarter of the current financial year due to higher provisioning for divergence in non-performing assets. The bank posted ₹139 crore profit during the same period of the previous year.

"We had to make ₹1,587 crore provision for the divergence, which is the main reason for the loss," Rajkiran Rai G, MD & CEO, Union Bank, said. Divergence occurs when Reserve Bank of India (RBI) inspection classifies loans that are ought to be classified as NPA which the bank did not classify during finalising the results of a particular quarter. The total provision for non-performing assets during the quarter was ₹3,328 crore as compared to ₹1,710 crore during the same period of



Rajkiran Rai

the previous financial year.

Total slippages to non-performing assets were ₹4,219 crore during the quarter, of which ₹2,080 crore slipped from corporate loan book. Eight corporate accounts accounted for ₹1,700 crore slippages, Mr. Rai said. Mr. Rai said the bank would return to profitability in the Oct.-Dec. quarter. Operating profit of July-September 2019 increased by 22.3% to ₹2,240 crore aided by a 16.5% increase in net interest income to ₹2,906 crore.

Slowdown in auto sector may continue: Honda

'BS-VI shift may spur 2-wheeler prices'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India (HMSI) expects the slowdown in the automobile sector to continue for now, mainly due to the current macro economic factors along with the upcoming switch to BS-VI norms that will lead to a 10-15% increase in two-wheeler prices.

"It is our strong wish that the worst is over. Unfortunately, the market forces are not in our control. All the economic indicators so far do not look very positive for quick revival of the auto industry. We are very cautious and closely watching," HMSI senior vice president, Sales and Marketing, Yadvinder Singh Guleria, said on Thursday.

The company, which on Thursday launched SP 125, a BS-VI-compliant bike starting at ₹72,900 (ex-show-

room Delhi), also sees some impact on demand due to 10-15% increase in two-wheeler prices following the shift to new emission norms.

"From the customer point of view, it is a big jump in price. However, the intention of the industry and government are clear... we want this country to be more green and eco-friendly... In near future, we foresee that there may be a slowdown because a similar thing was observed when insurance premium was increased," Mr. Guleria said.

"But over time, demand attributes are still strong for the two-wheeler industry in the country," he added.

For SP 125, which will replace the company's 125cc model CB Shine SP, the price increase is about ₹7,000 or 11%. The company claims it will also have 16% better fuel efficiency.

Apollo Hospitals Q2 net rises 15% on volumes

Healthcare services posted 15% growth in revenue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI

Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd. (AHEL) has posted 15% rise in its standalone net profit for the second quarter ended September 2019 to ₹90.60 crore.

During the period under review, revenue increased 18% to ₹2,464 crore. Health-

care services reported 15% revenue growth aided by 12% growth at mature hospitals and 17% growth in new hospitals. Standalone pharmacies registered 22% growth to ₹2,230 crore in revenue.

On healthcare services, Apollo Hospitals delivered a strong performance in the second quarter of the year,

with continued growth of volumes, revenues and margins, it said in a statement.

The revenue of existing hospitals grew 13%, while that of new hospitals grew by 19% to ₹536.6 crore. Revenue in the Tamil Nadu cluster grew by 14%. Overall occupancy in the cluster was 1,255 beds (57% occupancy)

against 1,211 beds (57% occupancy) in the previous year.

In Telangana region, revenue grew by 11%. Occupancy in the cluster was 877 beds (65% occupancy) compared to 852 beds (63% occupancy) in the previous year. The occupancy in Karnataka cluster was 572 beds (74% occupancy).

VANGMAYI PARAKALA

Three years ago, Delhi-based artist Seema Kohli made a 12-foot-tall sculpture of Goddess Kali. Attempts to bring her out have so far failed. “Shows said that she wasn’t contemporary enough,” says the 59-year-old artist of the work. Now, the Kali, among 64 sandstone sculptures and five bronzes, will be shown for three months starting this Saturday at the open-air Sunder Nursery premises.

This is perhaps Kohli’s more forceful foray into taking art out of the gallery and into public spaces. She’s been doing so already with commissioned pieces at the Delhi and Mumbai airports, at the Manipal University, and hotels like the Leela Palace. In the first quarter of next year, she will unveil a 20-foot-tall installation at the Supreme Court premises, inspired by The Tree of Life.

This is also Kohli’s return to showing in her home city after nearly a decade. The artist will open this collaboration with Gallery Ragini with a narrative performance of her own on Saturday. The entire effort, titled *A Circle of Our Own*, will speak of how her practice has expanded, she says, and will specifically take a deep dive into the idea of the Yogini, a carrier of feminine energy.

A glance into the artist’s over three-decade-long practice shows her deep engagement with the concept of cosmic and spiritual histories: “There was a time I was talking about the amalgamation of both [male and female] energies. Then, I spoke of only the womb, the idea of which then evolved into Shakti. But now, I’m more about the fragments that comprise and complete the idea of Shakti – how she operates, what are the means of operation.”

As she sits at her long, wooden, paint-splattered desk in her Rajinder Nagar home, the artist talks about how the exploration of energies must be looked at as a contemporary concern, and how people are quick to slot and label her work. Edited excerpts.

This is the first time you will do a narrative performance in Delhi. Where else have you performed?

I first moved to narrative performance in 2002. That video has still not been shown. But I’ve done [oth-



The energies of us

City-based artist Seema Kohli is showing in Delhi after a decade — and this time she’s taking her art out of the gallery

er] performances in six universities in the U.S., at the NGMA Bengaluru, Kolkata Creativity Centre, Royal Opera House, Kochi Biennale, Venice Biennale. The earlier performance was called Unending Dance of Light, also based on the idea of feminine energy, but not in this specific form of the Yogini, which the current performance deals with. In this one, I’ll be talking about how the Yoginis came into existence, what the concept even is.

How long did it take for you to write and formulate this narrative? And what were your references?

These are fragments I have consolidated over about two years. I’ve referred to the Kal Bhairav Tantra, the Kali Kaula Tantra, Sapta Matrika by Shivaji Panikkar, and till the time I was talking about Shakti, the works of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and of course [religious historian] Madhu Khanna.

Is it tough to translate these scriptural and academic references into your paintings and sculptures?

While I do take a lot of scriptural reference, I have also gone through a complete personal involvement with this subject over the years. A lot of these ideas are our traditions that developed into our culture. It was important for me to contemporise it. It’s really all about the responses to the energies that are around us. I have also been travelling to many dead sites across India to understand this.

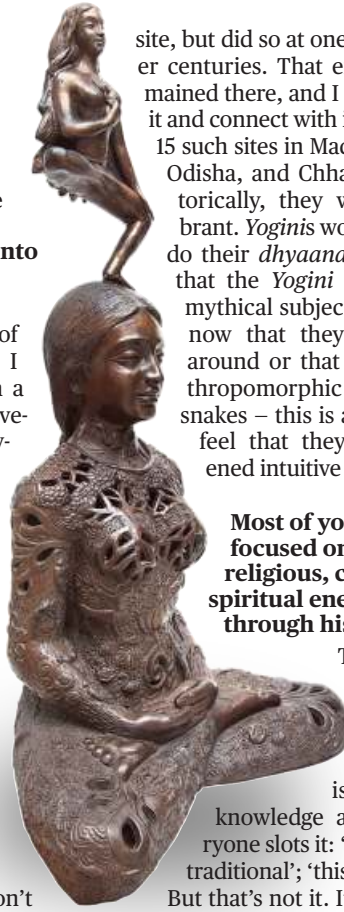
What are dead sites exactly?

I mean temples that don’t currently do any rituals on

site, but did so at one time – for over centuries. That energy has remained there, and I could still feel it and connect with it. I’ve been to 15 such sites in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh. Historically, they were very vibrant. Yoginis would stay here, do their *dhyana*. My point is that the *Yogini* wasn’t just a mythical subject. We are told now that they used to fly around or that they had anthropomorphic heads like snakes – this is all very silly. I feel that they had heightened intuitive powers.

Most of your work has focused on the religious, cosmic and spiritual energy through history...

This is such an elaborate subject. And because there is not much knowledge about it, everyone slots it: ‘oh this is very traditional’; ‘this is Hindu art’. But that’s not it. It’s time for us to be more fluid. I am talking about



RAHUL VERMA

Last week, I had a doctor’s appointment. Once I was done, I wanted to have a good meal somewhere. I had heard about this restaurant called Article 21 in central Delhi, and thought a detour via Rafi Marg would do me some good. And it sure did.

Article 21 is a new restaurant in Delhi’s Constitution Club. It’s an area that’s close to my heart, as I lived in the apartment block abutting the club for many years. The club has been done up in recent years and is now quite a plush place, unlike the somewhat seedy complex that it was when I lived in the neighbourhood.

Some months ago, I heard that a restaurant had opened up there. Then, last week, someone said that the place had expanded and introduced a new menu.

The food was very good and the prices were low. That piqued my interest. It’s quite a big establishment and looks rather like the usual government-run restaurants.

But the menu surprised me. It in-

cluded various kinds of cuisines – from north Indian, south Indian and Anglo-Indian to Italian, Burmese, Chinese and African. I was, for instance, surprised to see on it a South African dish called the bunny chow (₹99). This hollowed out bread stuffed with spicy curry is one of Durban’s most popular street foods.

The restaurant opens at 8 a.m., and you can have your breakfast there: eggs to order (poached, omelette, fried, scrambled and so on), stuffed parathas, aloo puri and aloo bhaji (each ₹75).

Any dish with the word Railways in it interests me. So we asked for the cutlets and in the meantime went through the other pages of the menu card.

It had Amritsari Machchi (₹295), Martaban Murgh (₹299), Omelette Curry (₹149), Vegetable Khao Suey (₹249), Dhaba Mutton Curry (₹349), Prawn Moilee (₹399), Mutton Biryani (₹289), Chicken Biryani (₹219) and El Fungi (pasta with a mix of mushrooms in béchamel sauce for ₹179). And a host of other dishes.

I decided I wanted the Nasi Goreng (with chicken, ₹229). And we asked for an Italian Green Chick Piz-za – with pesto, roast chicken, cherry tomato and mozzarella (₹249).

Each dish was superb. The cutlet had been browned just right, and the chicken filling, thick and creamy, was almost like a paste. It en-

light without being bland, and I en-

The world on my plate

Article 21 in the Constitution Club holds great promise with food that satiates the heart, at prices that soothe the soul



joyed it immensely. The pizza was delicious too. The crust was thin, almost like a roti, and the pesto-toma-



to topping was delightfully tart.

Best of all was my Nasi Goreng, an Indonesian rice dish that I am very fond of. The rice was fragrant, and had been lightly fried and browned with various kinds of spices. There were little minced chicken balls in the rice, and two chicken satays with a peanut sauce and some prawn crackers on the side.

The rice came topped with an

This part of the world Nasi Goreng; (left) Railway Chicken Cutlet •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

oozy fried egg. The egg went to my co-diner (I like my yolk well fried) and I happily dug into the rice. It was out of this world. I have had this dish in many places, including at luxury hotels, but this matched – rather, outdid – the best. I am going to keep coming back to Article 21. The world will be on my platter.

The writer is a seasoned food critic

PLACES

Bar buzz

India Cocktail Week is on in the city, and will culminate with a Cocktail Village



The first India Cocktail Week (November 8 to 17) is seeing 6 liquor brands, 38 Delhi watering holes, and five international bars come together to offer discounts on their cocktail menus and do special experiences. For instance, today, Havana Social from Bangkok will do a pop-up at Ek Bar, while The Pontiac from Hong Kong will do the same at Public Affair.

“India is ready, and we wanted to help grow the F&B scene,” says Rakshay Dhariwal, the Managing Director of Pass Code Hospitality (that owns PCO, ATM, Pings, PDA, Jamun and La Latina). He adds that it’s the overall landscape that indicates this – Michelin star chefs have come to the country, he himself has launched a bar a year from 2014 onward, and restaurants look to create bar menus that are as strong as their food offerings. Besides, people today are open to visiting some of the top bars while travelling abroad, and they’re asking for cocktails when they come back home.

The spirit of the hour will soon be tequila, though gin is still the highest demanded amongst the 25- to 40-year age group, he says. With sustainability entering kitchens, “say we are using oranges in a dish, we save the shavings to use them in infusions,” says Rakshay. “It helps the environment and it brings down costing.”

The Cocktail Village, a culmination of the week, is a host of experiences across a 20,000 square foot area. There’s be 24 participating brands that will set up stalls for alcohol-related experiences, some of which are Greater Than, Hendricks, JW Gold, Kahlua, Kettle One, Monkey 47, Simba. In addition, there’ll be music to with the Peter Cat Recording Co., Boxout Soundsystem, DJ Kan-land more.

The Cocktail Village, 1AQ, Mehrauli; November 16, 17; 2 p.m. to 10 p.m.; ₹499; book at Insider.in

PRODUCTS

Hemp wear



B Label has launched their capsule collection, called Ignite – Dawn Of Green, inspired by the thought of spotting signs of environmental degradation in order to ignite an awakening, “where the future is sunnier, greener, and happier”, as the brand puts it. There are black, white and grey clothes with bursts of green, all made from 100% hemp fabric. For men, there’s a mix of casual day wear and evening wear. For women, silhouettes include details like puffy and balloon sleeves, double breasted jackets and colour coordinated sets with button detailing.

Available at Blabel.in, upward of ₹2,290

Contact us at delhimetro@thehindu.co.in

5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



PERFORMANCE

Sitar and tabla

Kirana Gharana Music Academy presents Sabras Music and Dance Festival 2019, a two-day annual event. This evening’s event will see a sitar recital by Mehtab Ali Niazi accompanied by Saptak Sharma on the tabla. This will be followed by a solo tabla performance by Ustad Rafiuddin Sabri, and a vocal recital by Naresh Malhotra.

VENUE: LTG Auditorium, Copernicus Marg
TIME: 5 p.m. onwards



FOOD

Thai special

The Spice Route celebrates Loi Krathong, a Siamese festival with a Thai menu featuring a range of appetizers, main course options and desserts, curated by chef Veena Arora. On till 22nd November, there’s Thord Mun Pla (Thai fish cake), Yum Som-O (Thai pomelo salad), Phad Phed Kung (Fried prawns), and more.

VENUE: The Imperial, Janpath
TIME: 12:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.; 7 p.m. - 11:45 p.m.



MUSIC

Eastern melodies

Boustan, an ensemble of musicians featuring Shailendra Wakhlu (guitar), Rahul Sharma (tabla), Delphine Moulet (flute) and Ejaz Hussain (sarangi) will perform this evening. They will present musical compositions based on Indian ragas, with the strains of a guitar and middle eastern melodies.

VENUE: Amaltas Hall, India Habitat Centre
TIME: 7 p.m.



CUISINE

Sushi special

Asian cuisine Oishii Wok has introduced a new Sushi menu in in both vegetarian and non-vegetarian variants. The veg menu has signature rolls such as Maki, Edamame, Avacado, Uramaki and Tempura. The non-veg menu offers Tuna Maki Roll, Salman Maki Roll, Coast of Cali, Katsu Chicken, Tokyo Chicken and Philly Rainbow Rolls.

VENUE: DLF Phase 4, Gurugram
TIME: 12 noon - 11 p.m.



FILM

Italian film

Italian Embassy Cultural Centre will screen *Cronofobia*, an Italian film this evening. Directed by Francesco Rizzi, this psychological film talks about a relationship between two different kinds of self-imposed strangers, a lonely man and a rebel woman, who find a way to communicate and figure out what they can do to feel better.

VENUE: 50-E, Chandragupta Marg, Chanakyapuri
TIME: 7 p.m.

The many faces of Nawazuddin Siddiqui

KARISHMA UPADHYAY

In just this calendar year, we've seen Nawazuddin Siddiqui showcase his range as an actor that would take others a lifetime. Regardless of the politics of *Thackeray*, there's no denying that the actor capturing the magnetism of the late Balasaheb Thackeray, slipping effortlessly into the late politician's skin. In Ritesh Batra's utterly charming *Photograph*, Siddiqui played Rafi, a shy, struggling street photographer. This summer we saw him reprise his role as the much feared Ganesh Gaitonde in the second season of *Sacred Games* and, more recently, as the exorcist Ramsey Baba, complete with a garland of skull, in a cameo in *Housefull 4*. In Tannishtha Chatterjee's directorial debut *Roam Rome Mein* that's currently on the round of film festivals circuit, he plays a self-righteous, old-fashioned chauvinist hunting for his sister in a foreign land.

Family fun

This week's release *Motichoor Chaknachoor* is Siddiqui's last theatrical outing for the year. He describes this romcom about a middle-aged man looking for a bride as 'a fun, family film' and that also sums for his reasons for wanting to be a part of this film. "Most of my films have gotten the A-certificate. I think families started thinking that my films would be very intense or violent. I decided that I want to do some

films that can be watched by every one. My daughter who is eight-and-a-half has barely seen any films of mine. I shot for this film, almost immediately after finishing *Sacred Games* Season 2. I felt the need to do a light film. I had done too many intense films back-to-back. So, now I am doing three of these light films. These were just so much easier to shoot. They didn't require a lot of prep. All I had to do was land up on set and deliver dialogues," he admits.

Romance his way

Motichoor Chaknachoor, which also stars Athiya Shetty, is a rare romantic comedy in Siddiqui's filmography. It's not for the lack of wanting to make romances. The problem, though, has been the wide gap between Siddiqui's and Bollywood's idea of romance. "The way I see romance is very different from the typical Bollywood love story. For the last 60 years, we've been seeing a good looking boy, wearing great clothes, woo a beautiful girl and they sing songs. These days, these love stories have a social issue and that's called 'content-driven cinema'. My idea of romance is very different...it might or might not work at the box office but it is what it is. People might have thought *Photograph* was too slow but that's the kind of romantic films I want to make. I have seen love stories like that in real life." Siddiqui's journey from the fields of Budhana, in Ut-

The actor talks about love stories, what gets him high and Molière's influence on his cameo in *Housefull 4*

Versatile actor This week's release *Motichoor Chaknachoor* is Siddiqui's last theatrical outing for the year
*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

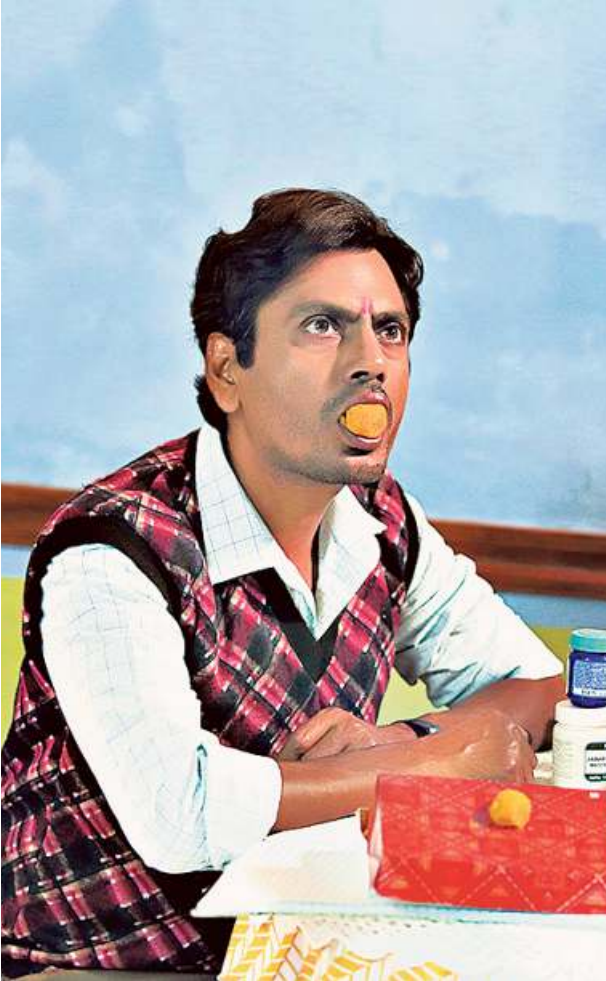


tar Pradesh to the arc lights of Bollywood is a well-documented one. His years of struggle in Bollywood ended with Anusha Rizvi's *Peepli Live* (2010) where he played a journalist. It's been almost a decade since and a lot has changed in the 45-year-old's life. What hasn't, though, are

his reasons for picking a film, he insists. "I start from a place of not believing that I can't play a certain kind of character but when I am offered film where I am required to play that character, then I take it up as a challenge. Every time I sign a film, I find myself exploring

how much I can push myself as an actor. This is why I love being in front of the camera," says Siddiqui.

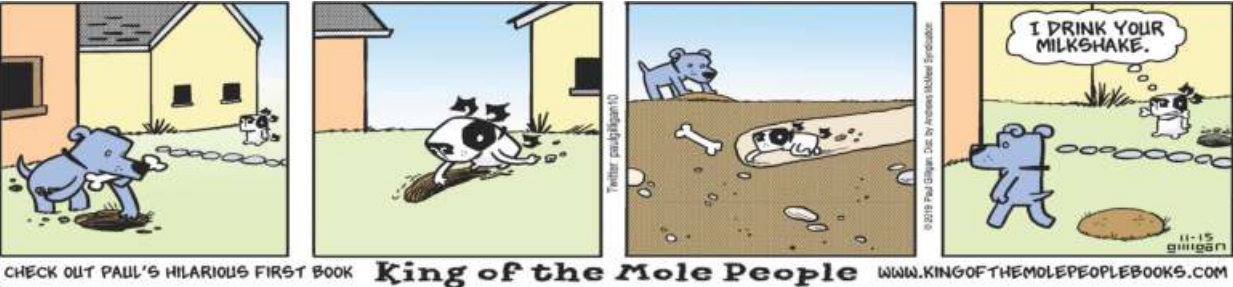
Dramatic connections Seated in a non-descript banquet room at the Sun n' Sand Hotel, Juhu, there's an unmistakable glint in Siddi-



qui's eyes as he talks about his process. "Before I start shooting, the character is just in my mind; it's an abstract. It's while I am on the set that the character starts to take shape and that process is so fascinating. Some times 'he' becomes who I had imagined and some times I fail. That sense of satisfaction when I manage to create the character exactly how I had imagined him to be, is the biggest high for me."

How, then, one wonders, does dancing to "The Bhoot Song" in *Housefull 4*, challenge him as an actor? "In theatre, there are many different forms. In Parsi theatre, everything is larger than life; body language is exaggerated, much like Molière's (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin) plays. Even if you don't understand French, the body language and actions of the actors are so over the top that the audience had no difficulty understanding what is going on. For me, this role in *Housefull 4* meant exploring this form that I hadn't since my theatre days," he explains.

POOCH CAFE



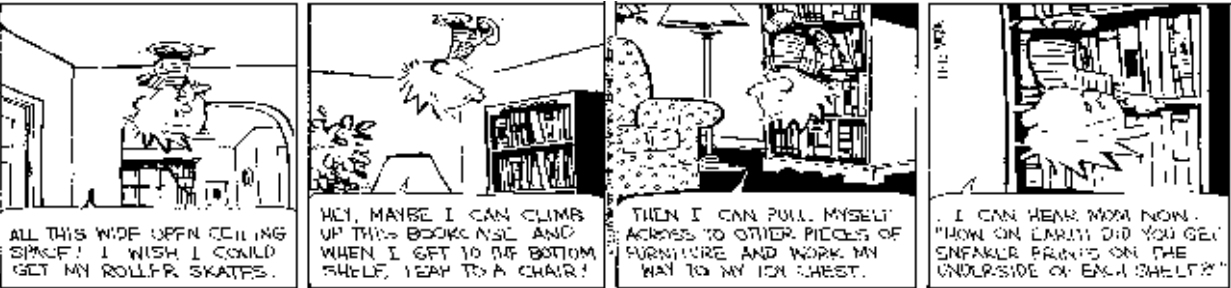
PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



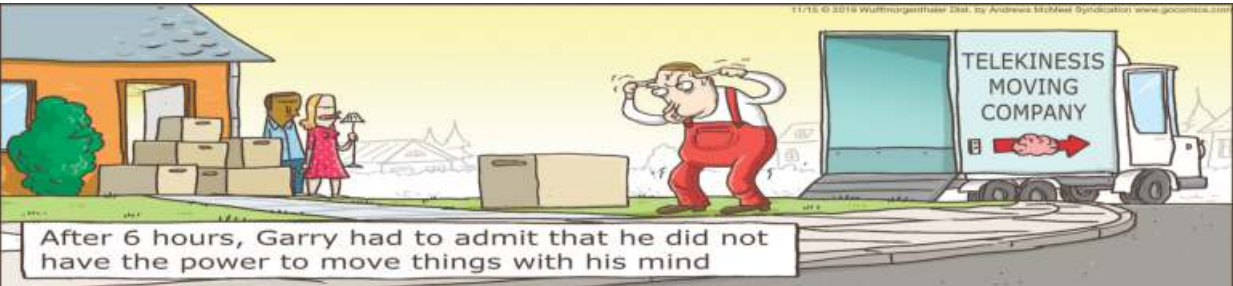
CALVIN AND HOBBS



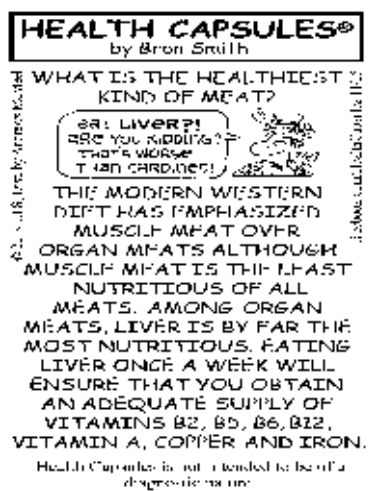
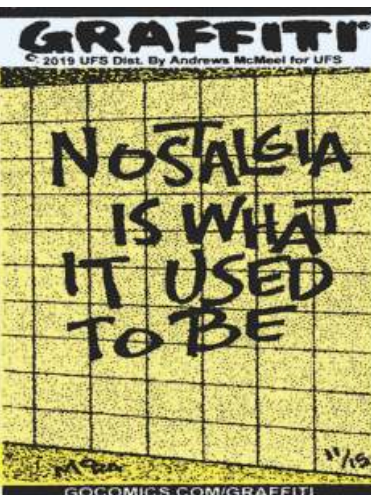
TIGER



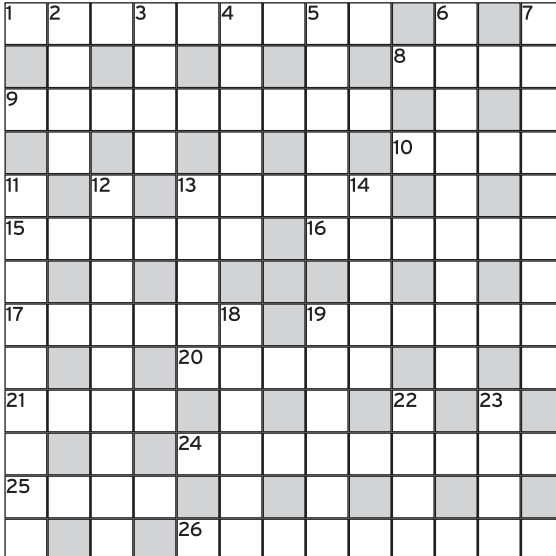
WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

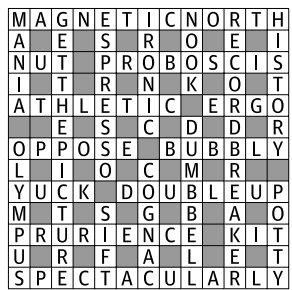


THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13225



- Across
- 1 Agricultural workers (9)
- 8 List of dishes (4)
- 9 Roast lamb condiment (4,5)
- 10 Courage and determination (4)
- 13 Evil presence (5)
- 15 What truants play? (6)
- 16 Black grape variety (6)
- 17 Illegal soft-nosed bullet (6)
- 19 Noun formed from a verb - nudger (anag) (6)
- 20 Eye's centre (5)
- 21 Something made with 16? (4)
- 24 Tenerife's main city (5,4)
- 25 Stretched circle? (4)
- 26 Soft toy (5,4)
- Down
- 2 1936 alliance between Germany and Italy (4)
- 3 Nocturnal insect (4)
- 4 Lack of enthusiasm (6)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated November 16, 2019.
Solution No. 13224



Indian bowlers put the team in the driver’s seat

Bangladesh’s decision to bat first backfires; Shami, Ishant, Umesh and Ashwin do the damage

AMOL KARHADKAR
INDORE

Mohammed Shami was stunning with his trademark seam position. Ishant Sharma was inspiring up front. Umesh Yadav was unstoppable with his fierce pace. And R. Ashwin was exceptional, as always.

No wonder then that Bangladesh’s brave decision to bat first on a hard deck boomeranged as India took firm control of the opening day of the first Test.

With the pace triumvirate and the lead off-spinner in prime form, Ravindra Jadeja’s accurate left-arm spin was hardly required as India bundled Bangladesh out for 150 in a little over two sessions at the Holkar Stadium.

Rohit goes early

Despite losing Rohit Sharma early, Mayank Agarwal and Cheteshwar Pujara’s unbroken 72-run partnership steadied the ship as India reached 86 for one at stumps.

With more faith in its batting order than an inexperienced bowling unit, Bangladesh chose to bat after Virat Kohli lost a rare toss. But with Ishant and Umesh on the ball right from the word go, the left-handed openers Shadman Islam and Imrul Kayes struggled to put bat on the ball.



Deceived: Mahmudullah’s attempted heave off R. Ashwin proved fatal. ■R.V. MOORTHY

A breakthrough was inevitable all through the opening spell and the relentless pressure from the pace duo finally paid off with Kayes offering Ajinkya Rahane a regulation catch in the cordon off Umesh.

Six balls later, Ishant snared Shadman, with a fuller one that took the edge to wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha. Mohammad Mithun looked shaky right through

his short stint before being trapped in front by Shami.

Useful partnership

It was followed by Bangladesh’s only positive session of the day, with captain Mominul Haque and the experienced Mushfiqur Rahim coming up with a 68-run partnership. Both had their share of luck, with Mushfiqur seeing catches being dropped in the cordon, but

the duo did give a glimpse of their skills.

The tiny Mushfiqur, immediately after surviving a second chance in the slips, danced down the wicket to send Ashwin into the sight-screen and followed it up with a delightful square cut off the next ball.

However, Ashwin finally broke the partnership when Mominul shouldered arms to a delivery that held its line.

STAT SPHERE



For the first time, four Test-playing nations competed in two different formats in the same country. While India took on Bangladesh in the first Test at Indore, Afghanistan met West Indies in the first T20I at Lucknow

Ashwin became the joint-fastest to 250 Test wickets at home alongside Muttiah Muralitharan. He

achieved the feat in 42 matches. Anil Kumble is the second-fastest (43 Tests)

Number of 5-fors taken by the entire Bangladesh playing 11. Ashwin alone has 27 five-wicket hauls

22.83

Ashwin’s bowling average in Tests at home (after the Bangladesh innings). His average away from home is 31.39 (108 wickets in 27 Tests)

Number of times India has restricted opponents to sub-200 totals in the last two years in 46 Test innings. South Africa is second with 14 in 34 innings and West Indies third with 10 in 29 innings

Wickets taken by the entire Bangladesh playing 11 (including Rohit’s dismissal on Day 1) in Tests. Ashwin has 359 scalps, with 251 of them at home

Shami then bowled a fiery spell to rattle the Bangladesh lower order.

He used the crease well to jag one back in to Mushfiqur and knock down his stumps

and then trapped Mehidy Hasan with a fuller one the next ball to leave Bangladesh reeling at 140 for seven at tea and Shami’s wait for a hat-trick was prolonged, though he

didn’t get it. Ishant started the last session by scalping Liton Das off the first ball. Jadeja then made his only notable contribution of the day with a throw on target from the boundary line to send back Taijul Islam. Umesh then wound the innings up with a full ball shaping away that was too good for last man Ebadat Hossain.

Despite India picking up the last five wickets for just 10 runs, the innings could well have been even shorter had India held on to its catches.

Regulation catches

Captain Kohli gave Mushfiqur a reprieve at third slip off Ashwin before Rahane grassed three catches at first slip off Ashwin. While the first of the three, a cut by lefty Mominul was a difficult chance, the other two – one each off Mushfiqur and Mahmudullah – were regulation catches by Rahane’s high standards.

Even Bangladesh took a cue from it as Kayes dropped a sitter at first slip off Abu Jayed when Mayank was on 32.

While none of the Bangladesh batsmen could capitalise on the chances, Mayank would be hoping to seal the fate of the game with yet another big first-innings hundred.

SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH – 1ST INNINGS
Shadman Islam c Saha b Ishant 6 (24b, 1x4), Imrul Kayes c Rahane b Umesh 6 (18b, 1x4), Mominul Haque b Ashwin 37 (80b, 6x4), Mohammad Mithun lbw b Shami 13 (36b, 1x4), Mushfiqur Rahim b Shami 43 (105b, 4x4, 1x6), Mahmudullah b Ashwin 10 (30b, 1x4), Liton Das c Kohli b Ishant 21 (31b, 4x4), Mehidy Hasan lbw b Shami 0 (1b), Taijul Islam run out 1 (7b), Abu Jayed (not out) 7 (14b), Ebadat Hossain b Umesh 2 (5b); Extras (lb-3, w-1): 4; Total (in 58.3 overs): 150.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-12 (Kayes, 5.6 overs), 2-12 (Shadman, 6.6), 3-31 (Mithun, 17.6), 4-99 (Mominul, 37.1), 5-115 (Mahmudullah, 45.1), 6-140 (Mushfiqur, 53.5), 7-140 (Mehidy, 53.6), 8-140 (Liton, 54.1), 9-148 (Taijul, 56.4).

INDIA BOWLING
Ishant 12-6-20-2, Umesh 14-3-3-47-2, Shami 13-5-27-3, Ashwin 16-1-43-2, Jadeja 3-0-10-0.

INDIA – 1ST INNINGS
Mayank Agarwal (batting) 37 (81b, 6x4), Rohit Sharma c Liton b Jayed 6 (14b, 1x4), Cheteshwar Pujara (batting) 43 (61b, 7x4); Total (for one wk. in 26 overs): 86.

FALL OF WICKET
1-14 (Rohit, 7.2 overs).

BANGLADESH BOWLING
Ebadat 11-2-32-0, Jayed 8-0-21-1, Taijul 7-0-33-0.
Toss: Bangladesh.

Ashwin echoes Kohli’s views on Test venues

Off-spinner reveals that the players are ‘wary and excited’ about day-night game

AMOL KARHADKAR
INDORE

A day after Virat Kohli reiterated his preference for restricting Test cricket in India to five centres, R. Ashwin echoed his captain’s sentiment.

“Every other nation has a certain pattern of playing Test cricket. They do know how the venue behaves, how the pitch behaves, how the games pan out. That’s perennially how Test cricket works in most parts of the world,” Ashwin said.

“Even in India, it was no exception. But, of late, with a lot of cricketers coming from different parts of the country, the sport has grown and gone to every nook and corner which is a great sign. Hence we are playing Tests in various venues.



Told you, skip! Mohammed Shami is delighted after nailing Mushfiqur Rahim. ■R.V. MOORTHY

“The understanding of a particular venue and keeping it that way will help the players. Whether or not that’s the right thing to do is

something that the decision-makers will have take.”

About the day-night Test, Ashwin admitted that the Indian players, due to lack of

game-time with the pink ball, were “wary and excited” about their maiden Test under lights.

“The pink ball Test is a welcome sign. As a Test-playing country, it was necessary for us to play a day-night Test. The office-going crowd which couldn’t catch the action can now do so,” said Ashwin.

A challenge

“Obviously, it’s a challenge to play with the pink ball. Hopefully, the Test match will be a historic moment and be the start of many more to come.

“I haven’t even bowled a single ball with the pink ball. Obviously I just saw it. Sometimes I don’t understand if its orange or pink, still coming to terms with that.”

The pitch wasn’t unplayable: Mominul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
INDORE

Mominul Haque was in the line of fire on Thursday, on and off the field. Despite a forgettable debut as Test captain, he tried his best to put on a brave front during the post-match media interaction.

He owned up to the decision to bat first on a peppy Holkar Stadium pitch against the odds, then took the blame for being dismissed at an inopportune time and even urged the Bangladeshi media contingent to “not ask too many negative questions”.

Credits India’s attack

In the midst of all this, he gave credit to India’s unrelenting bowling attack, that proved to be too good for the visitors.

“The wicket wasn’t un-



Doing his bit: Mominul Haque, leading Bangladesh for the first time, did the repair job in the company of Mushfiqur Rahim. ■R.V. MOORTHY

playable at all or else Mushfiq and I wouldn’t have scored the runs. The problem is that when we are playing the World’s No. 1 Test team, we have to be mentally more stronger,” Mominul said.

When pressed about electing to bat that surprised even the Indian camp, Mominul said: “If we had started well, the question wouldn’t have been asked in the first place... Whether we win or lose, I take the blame.

“Mushfiq and I had a good partnership. Liton also got into the rhythm. I think I should take the blame for getting out at the wrong time. If I would have stayed on, it could have been different.”

QUICK SINGLES

Lanka to tour Pakistan for Tests

LAHORE
Test cricket will return to Pakistan after more than a decade with Sri Lanka on Thursday agreeing to a two-match series in December, which will be a part of the traditional format’s ongoing World championship. The upcoming series’ first Test will be played in Rawalpindi from December 11-15, while the second Test will be held in Karachi from December 19-23. PTI



Rahane moves to Capitals

NEW DELHI
Rajasthan Royals on Thursday traded its most-capped player Ajinkya Rahane to Delhi Capitals in exchange for leg-spinner Mayank Markande and bowling all-rounder Rahul Tewatia. Rahane, who captained Royals in 24 of his 100 IPL games between 2011 and 2019, is also their top run-getter with 2810 runs at an average of 34.26 and strike rate of 122.65. The arrival of Rahane means an addition to the Indian stars in the Capitals squad which already has Shikhar Dhawan, Rishabh Pant and Shreyas Iyer. Meanwhile, Dhawal Kulkarni returned to Mumbai Indians with whom he spent the first six seasons before turning out for Rajasthan Royals, Gujarat Lions and Royals again.

BCCI ethics officer dismisses David’s Col case

NEW DELHI
BCCI ethics officer D.K. Jain on Thursday dismissed the conflict of interest complaint against Rahul Dravid, saying it was “bereft of any merit.” “I have rejected the complaint. Rahul Dravid doesn’t have conflict of interest,” said Jain. Jain had conducted a second round of hearing on Tuesday when Dravid was represented by his lawyer. The 46-year-old former India captain had earlier explained his case in a personal hearing held in Mumbai on September 26. PTI



West Indies wins first T20I against Afghanistan

LUCKNOW
West Indies beat Afghanistan by 30 runs in the first T20 International here on Thursday. Put in to bat, West Indies rode on Evin Lewis’ attacking 68 (41b, 4x4, 6x6) to post 164 for five in 20 overs. The Asian side was rocked early on its chase and never got going against the Kieron Pollard-led side. **The scores:** West Indies 164/5 in 20 overs (Lewis 68, Pollard 32 n.o., Naib 2/24) bt Afghanistan 134/9 in 20 overs (Najibullah 27, Asghar 25, Williams 3/17, Walsh 2/34, Pollard 2/17). **Toss:** Afghanistan. **Player-of-the match:** Pollard.

Injury-time goal saves India



Rescue act: Substitute Seiminlen Doungel provided India with a lifeline, outjumping his markers to head one into the far post. ■AIFF

WC QUALIFIERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUSHANBE (TAJIKISTAN)
India escaped with a 1-1 draw after an injury-time goal saved it the blushes against lower-ranked Afghanistan in their FIFA World Cup Qualifier match here on Thursday.

The result meant 106-ranked India remained winless in its qualifying campaign so far.

When the visitor seemed headed for its second defeat, substitute Seiminlen Doungel (90+3) provided India with a lifeline, outjumping his markers to head one into the far post.

Afghanistan had taken the lead through Zelfagar Nazary’s strike (45+1), putting India on the backfoot.

India remained at the fourth position in Group E with three points from four matches, while Afghanistan

continued to be third with four points.

Starting the away game, being played in extremely cold conditions at the Central Republican Stadium, on a bright note, India conceded a goal in the first half injury time (45+1).

Afghanistan lead came after a fine move saw David Najem play a square ball to Zelfagar Nazary at the centre of the box, and the mid-fielder’s attempt breached the Indian defence before finding the back of the net.

It wasn’t really a home match for Afghanistan either, but wins here against Cambodia and Bangladesh, followed by draws with Tajikistan and Jordan had given it some much-needed confidence ahead of the clash against Igor Stimac’s India.

And the 149-ranked Afghanistan carried that confidence into the game on a chilly evening when the tem-

perature dropped to nine degree Celsius.

India looked to take on the opposition but it could not create any clear chances, and the couple of half chances in the opening minutes failed to test the Afghan custodian.

There was a change straight-away for India after the break as Stimac substituted Mandar with Farukh Choudhary.

The visitor showed urgency and looked desperate for an equaliser. It had a chance in the 58th minute but skipper Sunil Chhetri’s header off a cross from right back Pritam Kotal was saved by Azizi. At the other end, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu made a diving save.

While he will be disappointed that the match ended in a stalemate, Stimac’s decision to bring in Doungel in place of Kotal paid dividends.

Tsitsipas seals last-four spot

Thrashes defending champion Zverev in straight sets

ATP FINALS

REUTERS
LONDON

Debutant Stefanos Tsitsipas crushed defending champion Alexander Zverev 6-3, 6-2 on Wednesday to book his place in the last four of the ATP Finals with a match to spare.

The 21-year-old, the first Greek player to qualify for the elite eight-man season-ender, backed up his opening win over Daniil Medvedev with a virtuoso performance at the O2 Arena.

His straight-set victory secured a top-two place in the group and left Zverev, World No.1 Rafael Nadal and Medvedev scrapping to join him in Saturday’s semifinals.

Hit with the crowd

Tsitsipas’ swashbuckling all-court game, with a booming serve, aggressive groundstrokes, deft volleys and silky movement have made him an instant crowd favourite.

All those weapons were on display against Zverev in what was the youngest, in terms of combined age, match at the ATP Finals since Andy Murray played Juan Martin del Potro in 2009.

Zverev defeated 19-times Grand Slam champion Nadal in his opening match on Monday, having beaten Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic back-to-back to win last year’s title, but he had no answer to the all-court

game of Tsitsipas.

The Greek broke in the eighth game when Zverev opted to serve and volley on a second serve but made a mess of a low volley and from that point on it was one-way traffic. Zverev’s level tailed off alarmingly in

the second set and Tsitsipas wrapped things up with an ace.

The results:
Group Bjorn Borg: Matteo Berrettini bt Dominic Thiem 7-6 (3), 6-3.

Group Andre Agassi: Stefanos Tsitsipas bt Alexander Zverev 6-3, 6-2.



Classy display: Stefanos Tsitsipas put on a sparkling show to get the better of Alexander Zverev. ■GETTY IMAGES

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m.
India vs Bangladesh: First Test, day two, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.
Hong Kong Open badminton: Star Sports 3, 9.30 a.m.
Syed Mushtaq Ali T20: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.45 a.m. & 1.30 p.m.
T10 League: Sony Six & Sony Ten 3 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m., 8.30 p.m. & 10.30 p.m.
ATP Finals: Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Saturday)
Euro 2020 Qualifiers: Sony Ten 1, Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 10.30 p.m & 1.30 a.m. (Saturday)

IN BRIEF



Bryan brothers to retire at end of 2020 season
LOS ANGELES
US men's doubles duo Bob Bryan (*left in pic*) and Mike Bryan said on Wednesday they will retire at the end of the 2020 season, bringing the curtain down on one of the most successful pairings in tennis history. Bob Bryan said the duo had opted to end their 2019 season after the US Open in order to remain fresh for next year. AFP



Harden erupts as Rockets down Clippers
LOS ANGELES
James Harden erupted for a fourth quarter scoring spree as Houston Rockets defeated Los Angeles Clippers 102-93 on Wednesday. Harden led the scoring with 47 points, including seven three-pointers, while the former NBA MVP also added six rebounds and seven assists.
The results: Memphis Grizzlies 119 bt Charlotte Hornets 117; Orlando Magic 112 bt Philadelphia 76ers 97; Boston Celtics 140 bt Washington Wizards 133; Houston Rockets 102 bt Los Angeles Clippers 93; Minnesota Timberwolves 129 bt San Antonio Spurs 114; Los Angeles Lakers 120 bt Golden State Warriors 94; Toronto Raptors 114 bt Portland Trail Blazers 106. AGENCIES



Ibrahimovic confirms LA Galaxy exit
LOS ANGELES
Swedish star Zlatan Ibrahimovic confirmed his departure from Los Angeles Galaxy, but gave no clue over his future plans. The 38-year-old striker's departure from Galaxy had been widely expected following the club's elimination from the Major League Soccer play-offs last month. AFP

Diksha Dagar takes a 3-shot lead
KOLKATA
Diksha Dagar pulled away from the rest of the field with two birdies in the last three holes in the 15th and final Leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour here on Thursday. Diksha is now in sole lead. She carded her second straight one-under 71 to get to two-under 142 and open up a three-shot lead over overnight co-leader Ridhima Dilawari (74). PTI



Injured Salah to miss Cup of Nations qualifiers
JOHANNESBURG
African superstar Mohamed Salah will not play for Egypt against Kenya on Thursday in 2021 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying because of a lingering ankle injury. The 27-year-old forward was hurt against Leicester City last month and despite making several subsequent appearances for Liverpool, is suffering from slight discomfort in his left ankle. AFP

Buranatanyarat in the van

Smog hits play, first round to be completed on Friday

PANASONIC OPEN

RAKESH RAO GURUGRAM
For a few weeks now, the National capital and the adjoining regions have been in the news for persistent smog leading to low visibility and rising pollution levels. On Thursday, the thick blanket of haze played havoc with the opening day's proceedings of the \$400,000 Panasonic Open at the Classic Golf and Country Club here.
In the words of the Asian Tour, "owing to poor visibility and the prevailing weather conditions" the first tee-off scheduled at 6.50 a.m. could only take place at 11 a.m. It was decided to have a rare, four-tee start – from the first, sixth, 10th and 15th holes. Only 60 of the 126 golfers could tee-up and complete their rounds. The remaining golfers will open their campaign on Friday. Those who played on Thursday get a day's rest.
Although there is no official word from the Asian Tour, the event is heading for a 54-hole finish. The forecast for the weekend indicates slight improvement in visibility.
On the course, little-known Thai Ittipat Buranatanyarat took the clubhouse lead at eight-under 64. Following a birdie-birdie start after teeing off from the sixth hole, Buranatanyarat fired five successive birdies starting from the 13th hole.
He owes his two-stroke lead over Indonesia's Danny Masrin to his 'eagle' on the third hole. Masrin, too, began from the sixth hole and fired six birdies in his bogey-free round. Creditably, he



Overcoming adversity: Ittipat Buranatanyarat came out on top on the opening day that was badly affected by the smog smothering the Capital now. ■ AFP

birdied three of the four par-5 holes.
Shiv Kapur in third spot
This was in contrast with what Shiv Kapur could manage in his card of 67. Returning to this course after a decade and starting from the 15th hole, Kapur could birdie just once on the par-5s. He made up with some consistent putting to share the third spot.
The trio of Arjun Atwal (69), Jeev Milkha Singh (70) and Jyoti Randhawa (72) had mixed luck. Jyothi, who cut a

cake to mark his 300 appearance since 1994 on the Asian Tour, was eager to return to the course make up for the lost opportunities.
The scores: 64: Ittipat Buranatanyarat (Tha); **66:** Danny Masrin (Ina); **67:** Arjun Prasad, Shiv Kapur, M. Dharma, Hung Chien-Yao (Tpe) and Shankar Das; **68:** Ben Geyer (USA), Anura Rohana (Sri) and Jesse Yap (Sgp). **Other Indians with sub-par scores: 69:** Viraj Madappa, Aadil Bedi and Arjun Atwal; **70:** Om Prakash Chouhan, Gaurav Pratap Singh, Jeev Milkha Singh; **71:** Yashas Chandra and Himmat Rai.

Paes and Bopanna in team

Five-member squad named; three others on stand-by

DAVIS CUP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
There is a good chance for Leander Paes and Rohan Bopanna to extend their winning partnership as both have been named in the Davis Cup squad for the Asia-Oceania Group 1 tie against Pakistan, to be staged at a venue yet to be announced, on November 29 and 30.
At the selection committee meeting here on Thursday, under the chairmanship of Balram Singh, it was decided to choose three reserves apart from the five players.
Sumit Nagal, Ramkumar Ramanathan and Saketh Myneni are the other three, apart from doubles specialists Paes and Bopanna.
Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan, Sasi Kumar Mukund and Sidharth Rawat have been announced as reserves. The final team will be



Back on duty: Leander Paes has been picked for the Davis Cup tie against Pakistan. ■ GETTY IMAGES

communicated to the International Tennis Federation (ITF) after it announces the venue of the tie on November 18.
Rohit Rajpal would be the captain for the tie, and hence opted to skip the selection committee meeting.
The committee put on record its appreciation of all the players who had confirmed their unconditional availability for the tie to be

played in Islamabad. However, with the aim to field the best possible side, it was stated that some of the committed players like Sriram Ballaji, Arjun Kadhe and Manish Sureshkumar could not be accommodated.

The team: Sumit Nagal, Ramkumar Ramanathan, Saketh Myneni, Rohan Bopanna, Leander Paes. **Reserves:** Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan, Sasi Kumar Mukund and Sidharth Rawat.

India assured of four more medals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ULAANBAATAR
India's assured tally of medals at the Asian youth boxing championships swelled to 12 after four more pugilists advanced to the semifinals on Wednesday.
The results (quarterfinals): Men: 49kg: Selay Soy bt Tzu-Chen (Tpe); **64kg:** Darkhan Duissebay (Kaz) bt Akshay Kumar; **69kg:** Rustambek Uulu Nuradin (Kg2) bt Vijaydeep; **81kg:** Shokhjakhon Abdulliev (Uzb) bt Lakshya Chahar; **91kg:** Satender Singh bt Haneul Jung (Kor).
Women: 54kg: Poonam bt Caranagan Kaye (Phi); **69kg:** Arundhati Choudhary bt Pin-Ju Chen (Tpe) Rajni **48kg:** Sinchara Hikaru (Jpn) bt Rajini.

Women: 54kg: Poonam bt Caranagan Kaye (Phi); **69kg:** Arundhati Choudhary bt Pin-Ju Chen (Tpe) Rajni **48kg:** Sinchara Hikaru (Jpn) bt Rajini.

Bancroft and Burns recalled

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE SYDNEY
Cameron Bancroft and Joe Burns got the nod on Thursday for Australia's Test squad to face Pakistan, with Usman Khawaja and Marcus Harris axed after flopping during the recent Ashes series.
The squad:
Tim Paine (Capt.), Cameron Bancroft, Joe Burns, Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Michael Neser, James Pattinson, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Matthew Wade and David Warner.



Big scalp: Tim Van Rijthoven put paid to Prajnesh's hopes with a three-set win ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sowjanya sails into quarterfinals

ITF TENNIS

SPORTS BUREAU GWALIOR
Reigning national champion Sowjanya Bavisetti rode on her new-found confidence and a sharp game to outwit second seed Diana Marcinkevica of Latvia 6-4, 6-3 in the second round of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at the City Centre Tennis Complex on Thursday.
In the quarterfinals, Sowjanya will play qualifier Maria Timofeeva of Russia, who subdued Sathwika Sama in straight sets.
Karman Kaur Thandi sailed past Gergana Topalova of Bulgaria for the loss of six games. She will play eighth seed Berfu Cengiz of Turkey in the quarterfinals.
The results: Second round: Jia-Jing Lu (Chn) bt Vlada Katic

Group A: Services 190/6 in 20 overs (Lakhan Singh 81, Ravi Chauhan 61, Malliksab Sirur 5/33) bt Goa 169 in 19.5 overs (Malliksab Sirur 26, Snehal Kauthankar 44 n.o., Mohit Kumar 3/33).
Uttarakhand 129/8 in 20 overs (Tanmay Srivastava 57 n.o.) lost to Andhra 130/6 in 18.5 overs (Srikar Bharat 47, Akash Mandwaal 3/29).
Bihar 124/7 in 20 overs (Kunal Dabas 45, Rajesh Singh 31, Lukman Meriwala 3/16) lost to Baroda 125/0 in 12.3 overs (Kedar Devdhar 64 n.o., -Aditya Waghmode 55 n.o.).
Group B: Kerala 162/7 in 20 overs (Sachin Baby 39, Robin Uthappa 69 n.o., Darshan Nalkande 3/34) bt Vidarbha 136/7 in 20 overs (Akshay Wadkar 29, Akshay Karnewar 28 n.o., Sandeep Warrier 3/29).
Uttar Pradesh 164/9 in 20 overs (Saurabh Kumar 33, Rinku Singh 50, Deepak Chahar 3/46, Khaleel Ahmed 3/34) lost to Rajasthan 166/5 in 17.2 overs (Rajesh Bisnoi 87 n.o.).
Manipur 55 in 18.4 overs (T. Natarajan 3/7, M. Ashwin 3/8) lost to Tamil Nadu 58/1 in 4.1 overs (M. Vijay 33).
Group C: Chhattisgarh 161/6 in 20 overs (Harpreet Singh 44, Vishal Singh 60 n.o., Sarandeep Singh 3/31) lost to Chandigarh 164/4 in 19 overs (Manan Vohra 33, Shivam Bhambri 28, Bipul Sharma 62 n.o.).
Railways 167/8 in 20 overs (Mrunal Devdhar 37, Pratham Singh 25, Vikrant Rajput 33, Mo-

ammed Ahmed 32, Siddarth Kaul 4/19) bt Punjab 162/7 in 20 overs (Anmolpreet Singh 84, Gurkeerat Singh Mann 30, Karthikey Raman 3/40).
Arunachal Pradesh 118/6 in 20 overs (Rahul Dalal 62, Pankaj Jaiswal 4/18) lost to Himachal 119/4 in 14.2 overs (Abhimanyu Rana 41, Ekant Sen 51 n.o.).
Hyderabad 163/6 in 20 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 28, Himalay Agarwal 34, B. Sandeep 55 n.o.) lost to Maharashtra 164/4 in 19.5 overs (Rahul Tripathi 25, Kedar Jadhav 68, Naushad Shaikh 34, Mohammed Siraj 3/37).
Group D: Pondicherry 114 in 20 overs (Harshal Patel 3/14, Ashish Hooda 3/22) lost to Haryana 115/4 in 15.1 overs (Chaitanya Bishnoi 33, Guntashveer Singh 37).
Bengal 153/4 in 20 overs (Shreevats Goswami 43, Vivek Singh 56, Shahbaz Ahmed 26 n.o., Shubham Ranjane 3/17) lost to Mumbai 154/7 in 20 overs (Jay Bista 48, Aditya Tare 37, Shubham Ranjane 30 n.o.).
Mizoram 66 in 17.1 overs (Tarunwar Kohli 25, Abu Nechim 3/3) lost to Assam 70/1 in 6 overs (Pallavkumar Das 37, Swarupam Purkayastha 27 n.o.).
Madhya Pradesh 244/4 in 20 overs (Naman Ojha 56, Ashutosh Sharma 60, Rajat Patidar 68 n.o., Venkatesh Iyer 26) bt Meghalaya 159/9 in 20 overs (Puneet Bisht 44, Dwaraka Ravi Teja 25, Sanjay Yadav 27, Sarsan Jain 3/43).
Group E: Delhi 165/7 in 20 ov-

ers (Hiten Dalal 35, Anuj Rawat 34, Nitish Rana 55) lost to Jammu & Kashmir 166/2 in 15.5 overs (Shubham Khajuria 49, Jatin Wadhwan 48 n.o., Manzoor Dar 58).
Sikkim 49 in 19.2 overs (Piyush Chawla 3/4) lost to Gujarat 50/1 in 4.2 overs (Urvil Patel 26).
Nagaland 145/6 in 20 overs (Shrikant Mundhe 74, Stuart Binny 52, Varun Aaron 3/17) lost to Jharkhand 149/3 in 17.5 overs (Anand Singh 81 n.o., Ishan Kishan 48).
Odisha 163/5 in 20 overs (Govinda Poddar 57, Biplob Samantray 60 n.o.) bt Saurashtra 114 in 19.3 overs (Harvik Desai 26, Govinda Poddar 3/7).
Friday's matches
Group A: Andhra v Goa; Baroda v Services; Bihar v Karnataka.
Group B: Kerala v Rajasthan; Manipur v Uttar Pradesh; Tamil Nadu v Tripura.
Group C: Arunachal Pradesh v Hyderabad; Chhattisgarh v Punjab; Railways v Chandigarh; Himachal v Maharashtra.
Group D: Bengal v Madhya Pradesh; Mizoram v Haryana; Assam v Pondicherry; Meghalaya v Mumbai.
Group E: Delhi v Jharkhand; Jammu & Kashmir v Nagaland; Gujarat v Odisha; Saurashtra v Sikkim.



Powering through: Sowjanya Bavisetti rode on her new-found confidence to outwit second seed Diana Marcinkevica. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Knotty Ash may score an encore

BENGALURU: Knotty Ash, who is in fine fettle, may score an encore in the Rajyotsava Trophy (1,400m), the chief event of the opening day's races to be held here on Friday (Nov 15). False rails (width about 6m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position.
Jockey for Turf Magic (4th race) will be declared later.
1. NOVEMBER PLATE (1,200m), rated 15 to 35, 2.15 p.m.: 1. Tonys Pet (2) Vaibhav 60, 2. Songkran (7) T.S. Jodha 59, 3. Aceros (12) Srinath 58.5, 4. Country's Jewel (3) A. Ramu 55.5, 5. Eco Friendly (4) Sai Kiran 55, 6. Will To Win (10) Suraj 55, 7. Glorious Days (5) Irvan 54.5, 8. Sea Of Cortez (9) Chetan G 54.5, 9. Areca Angel (1) Rajesh K 54, 10. Daring Sweetheart (11) Chetan K 54, 11. Sir Piggot (8) Kiran Rai 53.5 and 12. Naayaab (6) Arshad 53.
1. WILL TO WIN,
2. TONYS PET, 3. SEA OF CORTEZ
2. INAUGURATION PLATE (1,400m), rated 0 to 20, 2.45: 1. She's Stylish (1) Naveen K 60, 2. Only Prince (4) Chetan G 59, 3. Bazinga (9) K. Raghu 58.5, 4. Fir-

ing Line (12) Md. Akram 58.5, 5. Good Word (11) S. Shareef 57.5, 6. El Matador (7) Chandrashekar 56, 7. Tequila Tornado (10) Md. Aliyar 55.5, 8. Emerald Green (2) Tousif Khan 55, 9. Purity (3) Ankit Yadav 55, 10. South Bell (8) Shreyas S 55, 11. Phoenix Reached (5) Md. Asif Khan 54.5 and 12. Turf Prospector (6) J.H. Arul 52.
1. SHE'S STYLISH,
2. PHOENIX REACHED, 3. BAZINGA
3. BANGARAPET PLATE (Div. D), (1,200m), rated 30 to 50, 3.15: 1. Decisive (4) Arshad 60, 2. Kimera (10) J.H. Arul 60, 3. Mega Ikon (1) A. Imran 59, 4. Call Me Maybe (2) Md. Akram 58.5, 5. Ultimate Speed (3) Darshan 58.5, 6. Land Of Liberty (5) Rajesh K 57.5, 7. Slice Of Heaven (11) Kiran Rai 57, 8. Varcasva (6) S. Shareef 57, 9. Winall (7) Suraj 57, 10. Jersey Legend (12) I. Chisty 56, 11. Alexandre Dumas (8) Akshay Kumar 55 and 12. Propine (9) Rayan 53.5.
1. SLICE OF HEAVEN,
2. WINALL, 3. MEGA IKON
4. VIDHANA SOUTHA CUP (1,200m), rated 60 & above, 3.45: 1. Haedi's Folly (9) Rayan 60, 2. Louisiana (3) Srinath 58, 3. Life

Awaits (2) Md. Aliyar 56.5, 4. Turf Magic (7) (-) 56.5, 5. Blue Blazer (10) Kiran Rai 56, 6. Side Winder (8) Arvind K 56, 7. Snowdon (5) Sandesh 56, 8. Fire Glow (11) Arshad 55.5, 9. Angelino (4) Akshay Kumar 53.5, 10. Star Appearance (6) Suraj 53.5, 11. Miniver Rose (-) (-) 52.5 and 12. Sahara (1) S. Shareef 52.5.
1. HAEDI'S FOLLY,
2. STAR APPEARANCE,
3. LOUISIANA
5. RAJYOTSAVA TROPHY (1,400m), 3-y-o & over, (Terms), 4.15: 1. Knotty Ash (4) S. John 61, 2. Mauritania (2) Sandesh 60.5, 3. Aeolus (3) Zervan 56, 4. Areca Legend (1) I. Chisty 56, 5. Ashwa Raftar (7) V. Vishw 56, 6. Merlot (5) Suraj 54.5 and 7. Sakura (6) Akshay Kumar 54.5.
1. KNOTTY ASH,
2. ARECA LEGEND, 3. AEOLUS
6. KENTUCKY PLATE (1,200m), maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms), 4.45: 1. Asgardia (1) Suraj 57, 2. Bahurupah (3) S.K. Paswan 57, 3. Bombix (2) Kiran Rai 57, 4. Caesars Palace (9) Mark 57, 5. Cavaliere (10) Srinath 57, 6. Knotty Oak (8) Antony 57, 7. Star

Citizen (7) A. Imran 57, 8. Heavenly Angel (4) Darshan 55.5, 9. High Priestess (5) Sandesh 55.5 and 10. Queen Of Sands (6) Arshad 55.5.
1. ASGARDIA,
2. CAVALIERE,
3. KNOTTY OAK
7. BANGARAPET PLATE (Div. II), (1,200m), rated 30 to 50, 5.15: 1. Emidio (10) Naveen K 60, 2. Karadeniz (2) A. Imran 60, 3. Big Boon (3) R. Anand 59, 4. Stari Grad (12) A. Vishwanath 59, 5. The Corporal (8) Zervan 59, 6. Donna Bella (1) Vaibhav 56.5, 7. Fictioneer (6) B. Harish 56.5, 8. Look Out (9) S. Shiva K 56.5, 9. Mohican (11) Nazrul 56.5, 10. Princeazeem (4) Arvind K 56.5, 11. Schafenberg (5) Srinath 56.5 and 12. Red Galileo (7) Arshad 55.5.
1. SCHAFENBERG,
2. THE CORPORAL,
3. KARADENIZ
Day's best: KNOTTY ASH
Double: SLICE OF HEAVEN - ASGARDIA
Jkt: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; Tr (i): 2, 3 and 4; (ii): 5, 6 and 7.

Srikanth keeps Indian hopes alive

HONG KONG OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA HONG KONG
World champion P.V. Sindhu exited the \$400,000 Hong Kong Open in the pre-quarterfinals but K. Srikanth made the quarters for the first time in seven months after claiming a thrilling win in men's singles here on Thursday. It was also curtains for

H.S. Prannoy and P. Kashyap after they suffered contrasting losses in the second round.
World No. 6 Sindhu went down 21-18, 11-21, 21-16 to World No. 18 Busanan Ongbamrungphan of Thailand in 69 minutes to continue her recent dismal run in international circuit.
Former World No.1 Srikanth emerged as the only



On course: K. Srikanth put out compatriot Sourabh Verma to make the quarterfinals. ■FILE PHOTO

Nishad secures quota

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DUBAI
Indian para athlete Nishad Kumar recorded a personal best of 2 metres to claim the bronze medal in men's high jump T47 final at the Dubai World Para Athletics Championships and also secure his place in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games.

Rijiju felicitates wushu medallists

Says government plans to create better infrastructure

ANANT KAUR
NEW DELHI
Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday felicitated the team that came up with one of India's best performances at a World wushu championships.

In Shanghai last month, India finished 10th with four medals in the sanda event, including Praveen Kumar's gold in men's 48kg, silvers by Y. Sanathoi Devi in women's 52kg and Poonam in 75kg and a bronze by Vikrant Baliyan in men's 60kg. The government is looking for more participation in the sport and plans to create better infrastructure," said Rijiju.

Praveen Kumar, of the Assam Regiment Centre (Shillong) who became the first man from India to clinch a gold at the World championships, told *The Hindu*: "After I won silver at the 2016 Asian championships in Chinese Taipei, I worked with the aim of winning a gold at the Worlds. "The bouts were really tough, especially the



Commendable show: Poonam, Y. Sanathoi Devi, Praveen Kumar and Vikrant Baliyan who did India proud at the recent World wushu championships. ■ ANANT KAUR

final against Russel Diaz of the Philippines." Coach Kuldeep Handoo was delighted with the performance and urged support from the government. "We won the second gold for India, after Pooja Kadian

(75kg) in 2017. Wushu is popular in Kashmir, the north-east, Haryana and Rajasthan. The government should lend support to further popularise the sport," Handoo said. Sanathoi Devi, four-time

silver medallist at the World championships, called for round-the-year camps to prepare for major competitions. Sanathoi will participate in the South Asian Games to be held in Nepal from Dec. 1.

Natl. shotgun championship from Nov. 17

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The 63rd National shotgun championship will start with women's and junior women's trap at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad, from November 17. The official pre-event training will be held on Saturday. The finals of both the events are scheduled for Nov. 18. It will be followed by men's and junior men's trap, which will be spread over three days from Nov. 20 to 22. The mixed trap team event will be held on Nov. 23. The double trap is scheduled to be held on Nov. 25, for men, women and juniors.

The skeet competition for men, women and juniors will be held from Nov.27 to 29, with all the four finals slated to be staged on the third day. The championship will close with the mixed skeet team competition on Nov. 30.

Commonwealth Games Federation shooting: IOA remains optimistic

Interaction with officials end on positive note

VIJAY LOKAPALLY
NEW DELHI

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and visiting officials of the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) presented an "amiable" front even as issues related to India's participation in the 2022 Commonwealth Games remained unresolved. At the end of a series of meetings involving the IOA, CGF and the Union Sports Ministry here on Thursday, it became clear that the contentious question related to shooting being part of the Games hung in the balance.

Hope

The IOA held out hope even as CGF was equally firm in explaining its stand on the issue. CGF CEO David Grevemberg emphasised, "Shooting was an optional

sport in the Commonwealth Games. Shooting must own this problem. Not just for 2022, but beyond. We have come to listen and learn, show respect (to IOA). Do we have a solution? No. We won't make false promises."

CGF president Louise Martin was forthcoming too. "We were impressed by the legacy of the 2010 CWG.

India can host many championships (at the Indira Gandhi Sports Complex). It is disappointing that some nations have raised the issue related to shooting not being part of the 2022 Games. The CGF has to keep evolving." The decision to exclude shooting was taken in 2015.

IOA president N.K. Batra clarified, "I was wrong to suggest India would boycott the Games. Boycott is not the word. It should have

been withdraw from the Games. We are not far from finding the solution. Our stand persists. We haven't taken any decision yet on India's participation in 2022 if shooting is excluded from the Games."

IOA secretary-general Rajeev Mehta insisted, "Everything is not lost. We are happy with our discussions. Also, we are going to bid for the 2026 CWG. I have the government's assurance in this regard." The interaction ended on a positive note. Martin said, "We are all still smiling." For Grevemberg, it was a platform that reflected, "peace, sustainability and prosperity of the Games. We have become more inclusive. We have evolved as a movement."

For Batra, the chapter was not "closed."

Overage issue: Secretaries face action

STAN RAYAN
KOCHI

The secretaries of nine State associations face suspension for fielding overage athletes at the recent National junior in Guntur. Nearly 100 athletes were found to be overage in the five-day meet.

At its AGM in Agra in July, the AFI had decided to suspend secretaries of State associations which had more than two overage athletes in National meets in a year.

"They will be suspended... the letter has already gone out," AFI president Adille Sumariwalla told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

Supplements needed for recovery, says Sreejesh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

"Supplements are necessary for recovery, strength and stamina specially in high intensity sports with often back-to-back games that give little time to regroup," observed India hockey goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh on Thursday.

The use of health and food supplements in elite sports is no longer an option but with contaminated supplements being a major contributor to the increasingly widespread doping menace in sports, the need for safe, tested and approved alternatives has become important.

"While we get them

through official channels only during camps, we are allowed to use personal stuff outside. But they need to be clean, reputed and permitted by NADA. That responsibility is solely ours," said Sreejesh.

While the onus lay on the athletes to ensure what they injected, it was equally important to ensure availability of the same. Trying to fill in the demand, leading Australian performance nutrition brand Musashi has launched its products in India.

Indian hockey stars Rupinder Pal Singh and Harmanpreet Singh, wrestler Amit Dhankar and cricketer Rahul Sharma were also present.

Aizawl-Bagan opener on November 30

I-LEAGUE

SPORTS BUREAU
NEW DELHI

The 13th edition of the I-League will kick off on November 30 with Aizawl FC taking on Mohun Bagan in the opening match.

The 2019-20 season of the I-League will be the first time that it will not be the top league in the country.

Defending champion Chennai City FC will begin its campaign at home against TRAU FC on Dec. 1.

The latter earned promotion through the I-League second division while Shil-

long Lajong was relegated.

Kolkata derby

The first Kolkata derby will be a home game for Bagan against East Bengal on December 22.

The reverse fixture is scheduled for March 15 next year.

The new season will also see the return of 7 p.m. kick-offs. Punjab FC, formerly Minerva Punjab FC, will play nine of its 10 home matches at 2 p.m.

All matches will be shown live on Dsport after the AIFF signed a three-year deal with Lex Sportel Vision Pvt. Ltd.

Coach Namita exudes confidence

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

Coach Namita Bal was pleased that Indian juniors Manas Dhamne and Shruti Ahlawat finished No. 1 and 2 in the boys' and girls' sections, in qualifying from the Asia-Oceania play-off for the Les Petits under-14 tennis tournament to be staged in January in France.

In the recently tournament held in Bali, Manas clinched the boys' title by winning seven matches, including three in the league phase. Shruti lost to Japanese Ena Koike in the girls' final, after winning three of her earlier six matches in three sets.

Namita was confident that the players will be at their best in France. "Manas is smart and has terrific ball sense. He has a lot of maturity for his age, in the way he puts the point together and in find-



Pleased as punch: Namita Bal, centre, is happy with Manas Dhamne's and Shruti Ahlawat's showing. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ing a way to win. He was disciplined and focused through the week in Bali," said Namita.

"He likes to hit the ball early. It will help him in France on medium-fast indoor hard courts. He will be better if he moves into the ball quicker. He can be better with strength work and strength endurance training," she said.

Namita said that Shruti was easily the "most versatile" player in her age group in the country. "Shruti is able to do anything with the ball. That makes it easy for the coach to strategise against different opponents. She knows what to do when she stays calm.

"To do well in France, they need to work on the physical and mental aspects."

FRIDAY REVIEW

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Dance of Freedom

Narthaki Nataraj
recounts her
path-breaking
journey
Pages 4 & 5

INSIDE

Dhrupad loses
its star



Pandit Ramakant Gundecha paved the way for broadening the horizon of dhrupad by bringing in rich literary oeuvres of Hindi **P3**

The chosen one



Veena exponent Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh on receiving the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's "Sangeet Shikhar Samman" **P5**

Festival on the
promenade

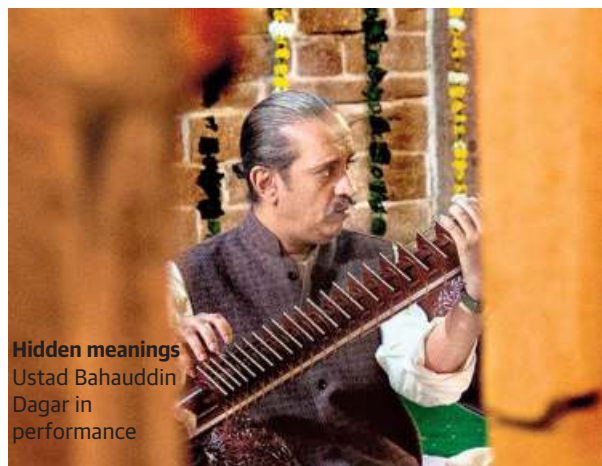


Guwahati is the destination as the Brahmaputra Pushkaram beckons the tourist and the devout alike **P6**

Gandhi, the
husband



In "Baa", novelist Giriraj Kishore describes the most unregenerate part of the life of the Father of the Nation **P7**



Hidden meanings
Ustad Bahauddin
Dagar in
performance

Nebulous experience

Ustad Bahauddin Dagar treated audience to a meditative recital at the tomb of Sufi Hazrat Inayat Khan in Delhi

SHAILAJA KHANNA

Ustad Bahauddin Dagar gives *haazri* every three months at the tomb of Sufi Hazrat Inayat Khan at Nizamuddin, on the date of birth of the saint. The Sufi was not only a great musician (he played the veena, and was a grandson of the famous Ustad Maula Baksh of the Baroda court) but also a spiritually enlightened saint. Bahauddin's connection with him is visible in the quality of his musical offering at his tomb.

As usual, recently, he played with muted amplification which is so much nicer. One has got too used to very loud classical music which verges on the dissonant. For this musical offering, Bahauddin did not play with a percussion accompanist, allowing his spirit to muse between notes, create connections between them, exploring different avenues of the raga.

Bahauddin played raga Puriya Kalyan, his hour-long aalap jor jhala, creating an ambience of total absorption in the largely young audience. His style is of course as per the dhrupad tradition of the Dagar family of which he is the 19th generation descendant. Creating a framework of connections between the notes, exploring all three octaves in turn was methodical as always, but clearly, on this occasion, he was moved by the ambience, which was of course transmitted to the audience. "Asar" is a nebulous word; it can only be experienced and felt. In the jhala, he added some lovely "gamaks", the coordination between his left and right hand was pleasing.

Testing himself

Stringing the "baaj" of the veena more prominently than he usually does, Bahauddin explored the raga beautifully. There was never an attempt to impress, his playing was devotional, meditative and inspired. After that magnificent Puriya Kalyan, Bahauddin bravely explored raga Malgunji, which, he said, was not part of his gharana's repertoire and was playing it for the first time. In the past too, he played raga Purvi for the first time at the same spot, clearly he looks for blessings from the musician Saint.

As usual, Bahauddin did not play with "mizrabs", using only his nails to pluck the wires. The tonal quality thus achieved has no metallic twang of wire hitting wire. As he said, as per their tradition, "naakh mukh veena baaje" (the veena is played with the nails). However, the double stroke (Da Ga), particular to the veena, and one of its basic playing techniques cannot really be played properly without mizrabs on both fingers, though, amazingly, he managed a few times, using only his nails.

Continued on page 8

Ahead of the International Kuchipudi Dance Festival, Arunima Kumar talks about taking the traditional art form to the world

RANEE KUMAR

For a total alien to south India and its dance forms, it is not easy to assimilate, excel and propel the art into the global galaxy. Well, for Arunima Kumar, it was a passion, a challenge that culminated into a success story. On the eve of her International Kuchipudi Dance Festival in London, the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Bismillah Khan Yuva Puruskar awardee talks about her journey into the world of performing arts and Kuchipudi dance form in particular.

What made you take up Kuchipudi dance form?

Dance or rather rhythm was inborn or so my grandparents would always say though at that age I had no clue. My mother, an artist herself, was keen that I should learn dance. Being a north Indian and Delhi-based one at that, it was natural that I went to learn Kathak. But then, my mother shifted me to Guru Swapna Sundari who taught Kuchipudi those days. Why my mother chose Kuchipudi and not Bharatanatyam which is a more popular south Indian dance form, I didn't quite know then. But whatever she chose, the vibrancy of the dance appealed to my young mind. At the age of seven, thanks to my guru, I was on stage with a small role in her ballet "Amrapali". The adulation, the audience, the lights - everything fascinated me. I trained with Swapna Sundari for a small time only. Later, gurus Jayarama Rao and Vanashree trained me into a full-fledged artiste.

How was your performance as a pupil?

It wasn't easy but both my parents being art-oriented, I was able to love what I was learning. And that's half the job done. The rest was to try and understand the content of what was being taught. Being fiercely independent by nature, I would at times not follow the group in emulating a particular emotion and would do it my way. Initially, my guru used to be upset over it; but again he let me do what I felt like. That, in a

Scaling the SKIES



In the right context Arunima Kumar ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

way, set my mind thinking. Abhinaya (expressive dance) itself is lost in the text unless it is explored. Now as a teacher I realise this much more. If you don't get the pupils to learn the context that say, Satyabhama (the protagonist) in "Bhama Kalapam", is lost in the song.

When did you realise dance was your calling?

Actually, I graduated in Economics from St. Stephen's College. And I did work for a pretty long time in the corporate sector. But my dance never took a backseat. When I got a seat in London School of Economics, my mother was rather distraught that I will give up on dance. But by then my passion for dance was strong. I knew I can never give it up totally. I moved to London a decade ago and worked in the marketing sector. I was trying to balance a home, my dance and my career. Somewhere down the line, I had this uneasiness that I would never be able to give my full to dance if I continue in this manner.

As a trial run, I took a sabbatical for a year. My boss was aghast. To him, dance was like going to a gym and that could be done even while working full time. But when he saw me dance in Buckingham Palace, he was convinced of my passion. One can balance a profession and passion for a long time, provided the former is not as taxing. At one point, I told myself, "it's time to leave."

Dance is a sadhana, it needs 100 per cent of you.

Kuchipudi dwells on exaggerated abhinaya and aharya. Did you refine it to suit the foreign audience?

I'm very dedicated to the formatted, formal Kuchipudi traditional repertoire. My guru handed over a refined form to me. So the grotesque never really occurred in my dance life for me to judge. But now at this stage of maturity as an artiste, I should say, I have played a lot with the repertoire, that is, at places of performance like the Royal Commonwealth Society, Trafalgar Square, I have to use the form judiciously. I worked on contemporary themes like in my work on prison, "Bandini". I tried to bring this (translated version) to Chennai dance season but met with disapproval from the organisers. But I had to really stoop to conquer and I walked away with laurels. Certainly, it depends on audience to whom you are performing, however, in the same breath I can say if you are bold enough to create something valuable and artistically worthy, it will be approved and appreciated. We are fed on this 'pure' and 'impure' labels of classical dance and are scared to think out of the box.

Tell us about your upcoming international dance festival. Does foreign platform restrict your Kuchipudi repertoire?

My dance company is associated with Bhavan's and Infosys, the latter being financially supportive. The Arts Council of England gives us a grant. I'm organising this international fest in a big way - a three-hour programme. My team and me would be doing the Dasavataram with Latin dancers in wheelchairs. Nothing can restrict my complex and strong Kuchipudi repertoire. My innovations are within my framework. My innovative approach for instance in the Dasavataram is that at the tenth avatar can be anybody from a physically-challenged to normal and I leave it at that. This is what I meant about my own individual creativity. Similarly, my "Stree" spoke of Rati, Sita and Sati - three aspects of woman where I wrapped up with the Simhanandini - which I term as foot-painting. Mine is a simple version where I drew the figure of a woman with my feet on a cardboard box. Some of my newer works are on sonnets of Shakespeare with Carnatic vocal.

My 'Stree Vesham' video is about the original Kuchipudi repertoire where males impersonated as females and danced. It was an enriching experience teaching to a man as I had earlier learnt from a man! I have refined my ahaarya (costume) to suit my content. But for these minor changes, I'm a traditionalist who worships my Kuchipudi.

Dhrupad loses its star

Pandit Ramakant Gundecha paved the way for broadening the horizon of dhrupad by bringing in rich literary oeuvres of Hindi

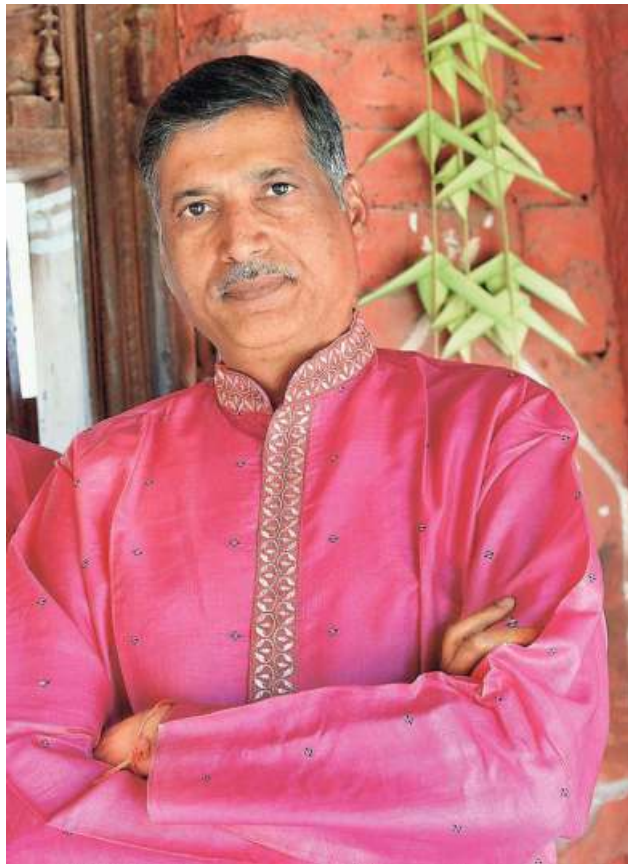
MEENA BANERJEE

The news came like a bolt from the blue! It was impossible to believe that a young, apparently fighting fit and dynamic person like Pandit Ramakant Gundecha, the younger of the world-renowned dhrupad maestros Gundecha Brothers, would close the flow of melody so abruptly while at the peak of creativity. "Unfortunately, this is true. I have just returned from Bhopal after attending the last rites," said Pandit Uday Bhawalkar over the phone.

Once again, it is proved that life is stranger than fiction - so is death. Rabindranath Tagore, under the pseudonym 'Bhanu Singha Thakur' - wrote in Maithili, 'Maran re! tuhun mama Shyam samaan' (O Death! You are like my Shyam); nobody knows when His hypnotic flute would lure one out of this mortal life and lead to the eternal one!

The lure this once caused massive cardiac arrest for a 56-year-old Ramakant, who, with his co-musician brothers were waiting for a Pune-bound train at Habibganj Station on Friday, the 8th November to be able to participate in a prestigious dhrupad concert on coming Sunday before heading for several other events - so meticulously planned by him for a hectic winter season.

The entire music fraternity knows that out of all the five



Meticulous approach Pandit Ramakant Gundecha (1962-2019)

Gundecha siblings, he was the most friendly, outgoing, articulate and meticulous planner - who zestfully handled all the correspondences and dialogues with organisations, listeners, members of the music fraternity and even social media. Umakant, the elder of this famous duo, openly and blindly relied on his younger brother's managerial acumen. The trust paid its dividends and they rose to be the leading propagators of dhrupad.

But it took a lot of struggling years to carve out a niche in the world of music where dhrupad was already on the decline; moreover, because they hailed from the family of a lawyer - based in Ujjain.

As a student of commerce in Madhav College, Ramakant, like his elder brother Umakant, was drawn towards music. Their father noticed the latent talent of his boys and encouraged them to pursue their passion and complete the degree course from the Madhav Sangeet Mahavidyalaya as well. Quite plausibly, this had initiated them to khayal.

"In those days, we were stationed in Ujjain," reminisced Bhawalkar, "my elder sister, who inspired and initiated me to music, was the classmate of Umakant-bhai.

When the Dhrupad Kendra in Bhopal was about to start, we chanced upon the advertisement. All three of us applied for the scholarship, sailed through the tests and joined the Kendra together in November 1981. Ours was the first batch of students. None of us hailed from any gharanadar musicians' family. Under the strict mentorship of our Chhote Ustad, Fariduddin Dagar, we were trying our best to undo what we had learnt so far and also enthusiastically learnt the new lessons to imbibe the nuances of Dagar Gharana."

Bhawalkar shared a very fond memory. "In 1982, during our holidays we were back home in Ujjain. One morning Ramakant-bhai came to our house brimming with a bright idea. He said, 'As you know, our city has temples dedicated to each of the navagrahas - related to Som, Mangal, etc. Why don't we go in the temple of Budh on Wednesdays, Guru on Thursdays and offer our music in each one of the temples every morning!' We all jumped at the idea. Each day, around four in the morning, the three of us would mount a moped along with our tanpura, go to a temple and sing till the daybreak," Bhawalkar took a deep breath. "That gratifying feeling has stayed with me, al-

ways," he added softly.

Pandit Ritwik Sanyal, a much senior guru-bhai of Gundechas and Bhawalkar, saw them grow since their entry in Dhrupad Kendra. According to him, all the three youngsters were very sincerely dedicated to this demanding genre. "It was Ustad-ji who suggested jugalbandi for the Gundechas because they had a very strong familial bond. Umakant always relied heavily on Ramakant who was sharper and more confident. Their youngest brother Akhilesh came down to Benares to learn Pakhawaj from Pandit Shrikant Mishra. This further strengthened their team. Later Sangeeta, one of their two sisters, also pitched in handling the organisational works," added Sanyal.

However, nothing comes from nothing. The ladder of worldwide success took its own price. After the five-year-long intense training at the Kendra, the brothers first got noticed at the Uttaradhihar Dance and Music Festival, Bhopal. They won the National Fellowship for the period of 1987-89. The Madhya Pradesh Government also extended their helping hands by absorbing them at the archival centre of the prestigious Bharat Bhavan.

Ramakant, who loved to interact with artists of all disciplines, actually paved the way for broadening the horizon of dhrupad by bringing in rich literary oeuvres of Hindi, penned by modern poets.

As a singing duo and also as Gurus, they tried out newer vistas and succeeded in evolving a typical Gundecha style with a different perception and colour - widely accepted by listeners. In 2004, they established their own Dhrupad Gurukul in the outskirts of Bhopal. Among their disciples, many are rearing to come up now - including a Pakistani exponent and Ramakant's only son Anand Gundecha.

With the flow of felicitations and awards from different parts of India, they also received the Padmashri in 2012 and a heavy load of responsibilities as busy performers, gurus and institution heads. Frankly, the latter was Ramakant's forte. Albeit cool and capable of handling the tensions involved, he fell prey to the silent killer that snatched him away - untimely, ruthlessly.

IN BRIEF



Dr Sonal Mansingh

Honour for the dance guru

Internationally renowned classical dance exponent Dr. Sonal Mansingh will be honoured with the Sumitra Charat Ram Award for Lifetime Achievement (2019) by Kathak maestro Pandit Birju Maharaj at Kamani Auditorium, Copernicus Marg, this Sunday.

To make the event memorable, the award ceremony will be followed by dance presentation by Dr. Sonal Mansingh, who is a master performer, teacher, choreographer and scholar.

Blessed with deep knowledge of cultural heritage and trained in Bharatanatyam, Odissi and Chhau, she can articulate her thoughts on the Indian culture and also create several new choreographic works. She has spread awareness about social issues through her solo dance theatre 'Naaty-Katha'.

The Kendra Management initiated this award in the name of Sumitra Charat Ram, founder of Shriram Bhartiya Kala Kendra.

Musical theatre

Ramayana is the story of the Prince of Ayodhya, an incarnation of Maha Vishnu. His life is seen as a spiritual message for all of mankind. Ramayana is equally popular for its flair of depicting various incidents and characters elaborately. Each of these characters portray one of the nine emotions - "navarasas", distinctly.

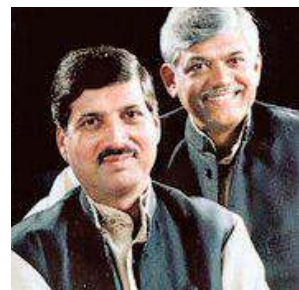
To revisit this favourite mythological story of all, Bhavanis Prasannalaya is holding "Navarasa Ramayana", a musical theatre. on November 16, 6.20 p.m., Karthikeyini Auditorium, Mayur Vihar, Phase I, New Delhi. It is curated by noted performer, choreographer and teacher Bhavani Anantharaman.



Submergence & Emergence

Linearity appears as a myth, when one studies, the origin of life, the cosmos and the labyrinthine maze through which nature unfolds and regenerates. It is a complex and a magnificent narrative, which continues in cycles, a motion 'unorientables'. In dialogue with such non-linearity of organic expansion, numerous vantage points that construct human reality because of cultural orientations and social alignments, merge, overlap and occasionally blur out in the paintings of Dr Suryasnata Mohanty.

The exhibition is on till November 15, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Convention Centre Foyer, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi



According to Pt. Ritwik Sanyal, it was Ustad-ji who suggested jugalbandi for the Gundechas because they had a very strong familial bond. "Umakant always relied heavily on Ramakant who was sharper and more confident."

SHRINKHLA SAHAI

Surviving a childhood marred with rejection, it was a deep dive into dance that restored a sense of faith and direction for Bharatanatyam artiste, Narthaki Nataraj. As the first transgender Indian classical dancer to be awarded the Padma Shri earlier this year, she believes in boldly questioning socio-cultural stereotypes and exploring multiple identities through dance.

“It is important to accept our similarities and differences - man, woman or third gender, we are all searching for a glimpse of divinity in everyday life,” reflects Nataraj. Performing at Kamani auditorium in Delhi on the first day of the 11th Sangeet Samaroh of the Delhi chapter of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, she delved deeper into this metaphysical longing for the divine, through the Surdas Bhajan, “Re mann Krishna naam”. Playfully interpreting the composition as a conversation between two friends, she briskly changed roles to inquire whether one needs to have eyes to actually ‘see’ the supreme being.

The highlight of the evening was the varnam, “Thiruvel! Thirumagale! Thaaye!” in Ragamalika set to Aadi taalam. Composed by the dancer herself, the varnam was a rare one that poked conventional gender equations by focusing on the female, rather than the male deity.

Balanced with a flourish of footwork, the eight forms of Mahalakshmi were depicted with ease, thematically exploring absolute devotion or bhakti and the emotional



Beyond brackets Narthaki Nataraj in performance at the BVB festival in New Delhi ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

‘The soul is neither male nor female’

Bharatanatyam exponent Narthaki Nataraj believes in boldly questioning socio-cultural stereotypes and exploring multiple identities through dance

us throughout our lives.”

The first step

Nataraj’s early foray into dance, began with another emotional search - the pursuit of happiness. “My only happy memories of childhood are of dancing secretly to songs from cinema,” recounts Nataraj. “Me and my friend, Sakthi (Bhaskar), have been together since we were five years old. She was my only trusted confidante and our companionship has been the support system for

Without any support from the family, and constantly heckled by the village community, the two friends set out to find a dance guru as teenagers. “I was rejected by my family and through my teenage days I struggled to make a living to survive and complete my schooling. I felt that no one wanted to listen to us, support us, or understand our struggles.” Punctuating each poignant sentence with a breezy chuckle, Nataraj chooses to forgive

am.”

the days of insult and isolation with graceful ease now. Dance was a safe haven for the duo, though they had not received any formal training till then. “I didn’t know the grammar of Bharatanatyam, or the aesthetics of the classical framework. Yet, while dancing I could feel my *atman* talking to me, I could express my feelings, my experiences, my identity.”

Amid social ridicule and identity crisis, at the age of 15, Nataraj and Bhaskar approached K P Kittappa Pillai -

the doyen of the Thanjavur Bani, requesting him to teach them. At the outset, he refused. “We were so used to rejection by then that we took it in our stride. I had a huge inferiority complex and I assumed that we were again being rejected because of not fitting into the ‘normal’ gender identities. I realised much later that this was not the case, his reasons were different. He was testing whether we had any real passion for dance or it was a fleeting whim.”

For the entire year, the duo followed him around, going for all his performances. “Finally, he started noticing our dedication. When he would ask why we were at the concert, we would humbly touch his feet and say we came for his blessings.”

After a year, the guru accepted Nataraj and Bhaskar as disciples. For more than 14 years the duo trained with their guru, “We just concentrated on learning, without any thoughts of fame or name. A very rigorous teacher, my guru was like ‘Siddha-purusha’ in my eyes. He was relentless during practice and later taught us the rare repertoire of Thanjavur quartet compositions.”

Fielding a volley of insults in social life, Nataraj maintained a stoical approach, finding solace in dance. “Looking back today, I also find our determination for dance hard to understand. For most transgender people, their entire lives, thoughts and emotions revolve around this identity and the struggles it brings. We had those struggles too, but somehow our focus on dance never faltered.”

A path of one’s own

Nataraj’s interest in Tamil literature blossomed during the years of her dance training. This curiosity was fanned by questions about self and society that she found herself grappling with, in everyday life. “I remember that I used to think of myself as an animal, not a human being. Even though I belonged to a well-to-do family, they never accepted me. In fact, in the 1980s and 90s, it was a taboo to even discuss

this with anyone. Everything operated on the ‘what will people say’ principle. My own relatives and community avoided talking to us in public, they would pretend not to know us, and we would feel absolutely alone and isolated.”

Turning to ancient Tamil literature to resolve the perplexing existential dilemma, Nataraj came across texts like “Silappathikaram” that she found extremely fascinating. “My basic question was, who am I? The ancient texts speculate on several approaches to this question. In literature, and in dance, this is an open question unlike fixed gender stereotypes that form our social norms.”

Deeper philosophical inquiries led her to explore and expand on the concept of ‘Nayaki Bhava’. Merging spiritual pursuits with artistic expression, Nataraj reflects, “The Nayaki Bhava is a divine transgender state. The soul is neither male nor female, and travels through infinity. While watching me dance, the audience mistakes me to be a beautiful woman. While I may be playing a nayika or heroine, I am not only that. Being the third gender is also a spiritual identity. The concept of the



I am not sure whether I dreamt of dancing like the heroines, but I do remember that only when I danced did I feel free, beyond any limitations, and accepted myself as who I am

supreme power can be explored by shedding our social selves.”

Entering the world of dance as a performing artist had its own set of challenges. “In my initial days in the dance world I got rejection and insults from the community. I realised the only way to overcome that is through stage success and I was determined to prove my merit as a dancer.” Many decades and accolades later, Nataraj smiles at the harsh memories that fuelled her rise to fame.

An empowering future

“The younger generation are much more accepting and empathetic towards the third gender,” says Nataraj. “While we were shunned and rejected by our community, today, we have attempted to create our own community around the world to support people who are going through this struggle.”

Nataraj and Bhaskar established the Velliyambalam School of Dance, Chennai, with this objective in mind. “After my very long journey, my conclusion is that the third gender has been created specially for society and humanity. We don’t have any bond in this world since we cannot have progeny. In a way we are ‘swayambho’- self generated. And we constantly need to keep self-generating and self-sustaining our life, our self, our identity. My only appeal to the world is, we lost our childhood to pain and rejection, we have built our lives from scratch and held our victories, now we trust the world to keep us safe, and give us love and support.”

The chosen one

Veena exponent Dr. Jayanthi Kumaresh on receiving the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan’s “Sangeet Shikhar Samman”

VENKATESAN SRIKANTH

Jayanthi Kumaresh started learning the art of playing Saraswati veena at a tender age of three. Her musical journey spans over three-and-half decades. She is not only an artiste of repute but also a collaborator, composer, researcher, creator, pioneer, and educator. Jayanthi is a recipient of many awards including the “Sangeetha Choodamani”, “Kalaimamani”, “Vishwa Kala Ratna”, “Veena Naada Mani”, “Kala Ratna”, “Sathyashree”, and “Gaana Varidhi”. The recent Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan’s prestigious “Sangeet Shikhar Samman” is yet another feather in her cap. “I only felt that I was receiving this award on behalf of the Saraswati veena and felt privileged to be the person receiving it on her behalf,” says an elated Jayanthi. Jayanthi who has dedicated her life to the art form was in the Capital last week.

Jayanthi comes from the illustrious “Lalgudi” family with a rich lineage of music spanning six generations. Her early music education was under her mother Lalgudi R. Rajalakshmi and then she continued her training under Padmavathy Ananthagopalan in the Gurukula system for 22 years.

Besides, she got the opportunity to be guided by the veena maestro Dr. S. Balachander. Jayanthi owes her success in the field to her parents, gurus Padmavathy Ananthagopalan and Dr. S. Balachander, her mentor the legendary violin maestro Lalgudi G. Jayaraman, family members, and the audience.

Was it not difficult for her to



Another feather in the cap Jayanthi Kumaresh ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

amalgamate the violin influence of her mentor and guru’s veena styles? Jayanthi clarifies that style is only a mode of expression and that she focusses entirely on what to express, the contents, rather than how to express them. A grateful Jayanthi adds that she got an invaluable treasure from her gurus and mentor and that she has used the ecosystem in which she grew up to express them in her own style.

Mother’s decision

One is always curious to know why Jayanthi chose the instrument of veena and not violin? Jayanthi explains that it was the choice of her mother who had initiated her into veena when she was three years old and she does not think that she would have had the capacity to make a choice at that age. “We cannot choose music; music has to choose us. I feel I have been destined to spread the message of music through the Saraswati veena to the world,” avers Jayanthi.

Academically inclined, Jayanthi has a doctorate degree. She has researched on different *banis* and playing techniques of Saraswati Veena.

Coming from a family of re-

nowned musicians, was there a constant pressure on Jayanthi to perform well and if so, how did she manage the pressure? Jayanthi admits that there is a certain amount of expectation when someone comes from a renowned family of musicians. She further adds that she never felt the pressure but felt blessed to be born in such a musically-oriented family.

Recollecting her experiences of performing under the aegis of various organisations at different venues in the Capital, Jayanthi says that the cosmopolitan audience there are open to the music from the south, receptive and appreciative.

Her advice to young students of music is that they should not be in a hurry to present; rather they should take their time to learn, enjoy learning, assimilate, allow it to soak in and mature before they start presenting. If they are in a hurry to present, they will soon run out of stock.

“Becoming a musician is a long journey. Enjoy the journey. The destination is beautiful, but the journey is even more beautiful,” signs off Jayanthi.

Delineating hidden rhythms and uncommon ragas

Vidushi Aruna Sairam and Pts. Rajan and Sajan Mishra made personal statements of immeasurable value at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan’s Sangeet Samaroh in New Delhi

MANJARI SINHA

The three-day festival showcased two star performers each evening from the field of classical vocal, instrumental, and dance. The two major peaks to the overall festival perhaps were the Carnatic and Hindustani vocal concerts by Vidushi Aruna Sairam and Pt. Rajan and Pt. Sajan Mishra making personal statements of immeasurable value, styles, voices, and techniques on the opening and the concluding evenings respectively.

The festival opened with an appealing performance by the Padma Shri awardee, ‘Sangeeta Kalanidhi’, Aruna Sairam. Initiated into classical music at a tender age by her mother Rajalakshmi Sethuraman and further

groomed under the legendary T. Brinda, Aruna has absorbed the finer nuances of Western, Hindustani and even film music to beautify her performances but ultimately it is her own aesthetic sense that makes all the difference.

Opening with the all-time favourite Thyagaraja composition ‘Samaja vara gamana...’ in Hindolam which is an equally popular Hindustani raga Malkauns, she took the Hindustani music listeners along from the very beginning.

The ‘Ardhanareeswaram...’ composed in Sanskrit by Muthuswami Dikshitar in raga Kumudakriya was aptly prefaced with the Ardhanareeswara sloka of Adi Shankaracharya. Purandara Dasa Kriti ‘Venkataramanane

Baro...’ in raga Saveri brought her to the central piece, a detailed Ragam Tanam Pallavi in Kharaharapriya, again equivalent to Hindustani Kafi, where each of her mesmerising statements during the Ragam sequence enthralled the discerning Hindustani music lovers too.

The hidden rhythms of tanam reached the pallavi in Thyagaraja Kriti ‘Chakkani Raja...’, followed by the elaborate sargams and enthusiastic thani avartanam by the two percussionists J. Vaidyanathan on mridangam and Shri Ramani on ghatam, whose earthen instrument echoed the twinkling taar shadja with precise purity.

Reminiscing about her childhood chanting of the Lalitha Sahasranama,

Aruna transported the listeners to a divine, spiritual realm where the woes of the day could be forgotten and the elevating joy of the blissful music experienced by both connoisseurs and lay listeners alike.

The Sanskrit shlokas from Lalitha Sahasranama and the Mahishasurmardini Stotra, with the beauty of its metrical elegance and the power and resonance of its literary eloquence; brought out the throbbing interiors of the vocalist’s inner world of devotion and bhakti.

Celebrating the Prakash Parv of Gurus Nanak, Aruna concluded her mesmerising recital with the Nanak Shabad, “Thakur tum Sharnayi aya...” in raga Brindavani Sarang as indicated in Gurbani. The melodious violin of Vit-

thal Ramamurthy followed her like a shadow.

Deft conception

Pt. Rajan Mishra and Pt. Sajan Mishra, accompanied on tabla by Ram Kumar Mishra and harmonium by Zakir Dhaulpuri, opened with the uncommon and sombre evening raga Purvi, belonging to the Purvi Thaata having the Rishabh and Dhavat Komal with both the madhyams and delineated it with deft conception and brilliant execution. This was followed by a couple of compositions in the contrasting raga Jog, before they concluded with a bhajan. Their superb rendition of carefully balanced phrases in the jugalbandi format reflected each other as though in mirrors.



Complete devotion Vidushi Aruna Sairam in performance ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

Earlier the fiercely gifted sitar, Purabayan Chatterjee played a superb Shankara with Alap-Jod-Jhala and a composition based on a traditional bandish set to Rupak tala followed by Charukeshi. His dramatic demeanour of leaving the ‘Sam’ after reaching it

with electrifying taans, lost its sense of wonder due to the predictable repetitions. The concluding Kajri was melodious but for the unnecessary singing. Admirable tabla accompaniment by young Zohab Ahmed got him intermittent applause.



A Kanyakumari ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Intelligently-structured concert

On the second day of the BVB festival, seasoned violinist A. Kanyakumari enthralled the music lovers with her music prowess. The time at the disposal of Kanyakumari was short (around an hour-and-half). Nevertheless, the artiste who has decades of experience in this art form, intelligently structured her concert in such a way that one did get a full-fledged concert experience even in her short recital.

Kanyakumari took up two compositions of Tyagaraja for detailed presentations, namely “Bagayenayya” in Chandrajyoti and “Kaligiyunte” in Keeravani. While Chandrajyoti is a vivadi raga, Kiravani is a melakarta raga (21st in the 72 melakarta raga system of Carnatic music). The manner in which she delineated these ragas and brought out the nuances of these ragas were a treat to the music lovers. And so was the manner in which she played these compositions and the svaraprastharas for the later composition.

Veteran mridangam artist K.V. Prasad who too has decades of experience in the field, along with Anirudh Athreya on the Kanjira, provided solid percussion support to Kanyakumari.

Kanyakumari is also a renowned Guru and many of her disciples are already very popular artists. She makes it a point to have a disciple on the stage to provide violin support during her recital. This time, it was young and talented Sayee Rakshith, who provided excellent support during the entire recital. Kanyakumari’s concluding session too was enthralling in which she played a scintillating Thiruppugazh of Arunagirinadar. On the whole, an enjoyable evening of Carnatic music.

Venkatesan Srikanth

Festival on the promenade

Guwahati is the destination as the Brahmaputra Pushkaram beckons the tourist and the devout alike

GEETHA VENKATARAMANAN

The clayey soil gives way under your feet dragging you deeper as you try harder to stand firm. "Come for Pushkar? Be careful when you enter the water," the words of the friendly cab driver on way from the airport ring in the ears. Taking a dip in the Brahmaputra is a different ball game, surely. Slippery as an oiled ceramic floor underneath, the river on its surface looks deceptively calm. Its shore is the venue for the Brahmaputra Pushkaram, a festival now in progress to mark the transit of the planet Jupiter. The Assam Government has made extensive arrangements for the pilgrims visiting Guwahati and has a lot to offer for the tourist.

Apart from its spiritual significance, the Pushkaram stands out for national unity and integration – an aspect the Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and others



Highlights (clockwise from above) An image of Brahma; aarti in progress, the urns in which water was carried; the Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on the inaugural day; the river front ■ PHOTOS: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

stressed during the inauguration of the 12-day festival. "The Brahmaputra has been the life line of this region for centuries but today we thank the river for turning the nation's attention towards the North-East," said Mr. Sonowal. "This event should go to Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and so on. It will open a window to this part of the country, which has remained isolated for

long," he said, a loud applause from the audience expressing solidarity. It was indeed a unique congregation as people from different States had gathered on the river front to bathe and perform rituals. Some of the pilgrims were staying for a few days to watch the programmes and pujas.

Brass urns

The Pushkaram has given an opportunity for many to travel North-East for the first time. Two groups – Mahalakshmi Charitable Trust of Chennai and Purva Tirupathi Sri Balaji Seva Samithi, Guwahati – have organised the affair with the cooperation of the Assam Government. On November 5, water from 121 rivers, collected in small brass urns, were carried to the river and amidst the chanting of Veda mantras poured into the Brahmaputra at the appointed hour of 5.17 a.m. Hundreds stepped into the water, picking their way carefully on the wet bamboo poles and sand bags laid on the walkway to the barricaded river front.

The annual Pushkaram has been gaining ground, thanks to the efforts of the 70th pontiff of the Kanchi Kamakoti Pitam Sri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati. The idea



The Assam State Government is positive in its approach, with the Chief Minister evincing keen interest

is to revive in people reverence for Nature and environment, especially water bodies. With the various Adheenams dotting Tamil Nadu participating wholeheartedly, the Cauvery and the Tami-raparani festivals happened with great fanfare in 2017 and 2018 respectively. Sind is the designated river for this year's transition of Jupiter. But because of the difficult terrain, Brahmaputra, also connected to Dhanur Rasi (Sagittarius), was chosen.

"My initial reaction was disbelief," says Mahalakshmi Subramaniam of the Trust, who spearheaded the earlier two festivals. "Assam was unknown to me and the language was an issue. But the Acharya encouraged me to

proceed. With his blessings, we are conducting the festival and it has given me great fulfilment," she adds. She had to organise the travel of over 100 people. Along with a team of priests, vaidikas and cooks, she landed in Guwahati on November 4 to coordinate the arrangements.

On the home front, Purva Tirupathi Sri Balaji Seva Samithi and the Kanchi Math took charge of the event. K. Muthuswamy of the Math's Guwahati unit and working president of the Working Committee, acted as the vital link by coordinating with the Government machinery. "We, in Assam, have rediscovered the Brahmaputra," he says. According to him, the people have not seen anything like this. In a land not much used to idol worship, educating the local population on the Pushkaram concept was the primary task. The State Government was positive in its approach, with the Chief Minister evincing keen interest. Creating a bathing ghat was a challenge, the water playing catch-me-if-you-can. "One day it retreated and the next was back to the brim. The day before the inauguration it retreated at least 30 feet. As many as 10,000 sand bags were placed for pilgrims to make it safely to the water.

The Government departments aligned themselves with us. A bridge is going to be built right where the ghat is situated. Machinery had arrived and work was about to start. Hearing of the Pushkaram, the contractor said, 'We'll start work after the festival. Let this be a puja to the river.' But for the blessings of the Kanchi Acharyas this would be impossible," he says.

With the help of donors, the organising committee has arranged food daily for 4,000 people, ISKCON's Akshayapatra pitching in. Every evening, river Aarati takes place, a song composed for the occasion sung *a la* the Ganga Aarati. Pilgrims are treated to cultural programmes. The morning sessions devoted to homams and other pujas conducted by a group of pandits, including Tyagappa Dikshitar and Sivarama Diskhitar of the Chidambaram Sabanayakar temple. The Tourism department's hop-on-hop-off battery bus services take people to places of interest. Also stalls have been put up to showcase Assam's enchanting craft and textiles. To sum up, Guwahati, which is playing host in style, is witnessing a historic confluence in the Brahmaputra Pushkaram festival, which ends on November 16.



05.11.

Going Native

Gandhi, the husband

In "Baa", novelist Giriraj Kishore describes the most unregenerate part of the life of the Father of the Nation

SHAFAY KIDWAI

Can one string together the exceptions, guilt-ridden confessions, moments of introspection, derivations and caveats to produce a poignant tale of an exasperated but uncomplaining wife and a repentant husband to dent the accepted narrative? This pertinent question crops up in one's mind when one goes through the latest novel of veteran Hindi novelist Giriraj Kishore that goes around the married life of Gandhiji and Kasturba Gandhi.

The peppy text, drawing heavily from the autobiography and letters of Gandhi to focus on the blissful married life describes this period as the most unregenerate part of the Father of the Nation one could ever imagine.

The novel, "Baa", published by the Rajkamal Prakashan, brings out the undetected but multi-layered life story of Kasturba Gandhi. Kasturba lives on the margins, and the author takes pains to supplement what has been missing.

Focus on behaviour

Giriraj Kishore, who won the Sahitya Akademi award on his brilliantly conceived and well-crafted novel "Pehla Girmitiya" on Gandhiji's struggle in South Africa, delves into little known, complex and inconsiderate behaviour of Gandhi that led to wedded estrangement. Many instances related to early marital life and couple's stay in Bombay and South Africa are lumped together to demonstrate that Kasturba was a dedicated but not a submissive wife.

Her beclouded but equally, radiant personality buttressed the life of one who in Orwellian phrase "enriched the world simply by being alive."

Kasturba's centrality to Gandhiji's life and her independent character is sensitively discussed in two highly readable books. The fifth grandson of Gandhiji, Arun and his wife, Sunanda wrote a



nuanced biography "The Forgotten woman: The Untold Story of Kasturwife of Gandhi" and recently celebrated author Neelima Dalima Adhar brought forth an absorbing fictional account "The Forgotten Tale of Kasturba: The Secret Diaries of Kasturba".

Employing multiple focalisations through personal and private life, these texts provide an insightful understanding of Kasturba without running down Gandhi as a votary of patriarchy and self-righteousness. At the outset, the novelist claim that it is an authentic fictional presentation of Kasturba that carries the fruits of extensive research and the assertion does have a point. Kishore mentions several Gujarati, English and Hindi books and of course, the writings of Gandhiji and the anecdotal pieces of evidence which he gathered from Ahmedabad, Rajkot and Porbandar in his novel, spreading over 275 pages. He tries to scrutinise the role of Bapu as a husband and a father with a sense of derision. Almost every event included in the novel manifests strong sympathy with Baa and the author makes a sincere effort to figure out her life punctuated with many questions that no illiterate women could stomach in

an era when ignorance and lack of education were considered bliss for women.

The novel elegantly begins with a scene where Baa and Gandhiji were imprisoned in Aga Khan Palace and it was the place where Baa and Mahadev Bhai breathed last. The first chapter evocatively acquaints the reader with the tantalising details of how Gandhi and Kasturba grew up. Here too, Gandhi's arrogance and rigidity look forbidding.

Ceremonial correctness

Verbal altercations between Gandhi and Kasturba, mostly in a lighter vein, foreshadow that the ceremonial correctness of Mohan Das would only grow in the coming years. The author has given a graphic account of the marriage and the birth of the first child. Kasturba did not hesitate for a moment when she realised her jewellery needed to pay for the travel and other expenses of Mohan Das who was headed for England to obtain a law degree.

Giriraj Kishore does narrate the return of Gandhi and her brief stay at Porbandar and Bombay vividly, but again instances of the close affinity between husband and

wife escaped the attention of the author, The authoritarian, overbearing and capricious husband surfaces time and again and the retelling of an event that happened in South Africa, when Gandhiji asked Kasturba to leave the house at night as she refused to clean the urine pot of a visitor, evokes a strong sense of aversion towards Gandhiji.

It is not that the author does not narrate the cathartic moments, as he impeccably describes how Gandhiji without the lady doctor or midwife single-handedly helped Kasturba in child delivery.

However, the woes of Kasturba seem to be disproportionate to her triumphal moments. Throughout the novel, Kasturba looked a personality filled with a ragging discontent, but the last page introduces us to a contrite Gandhi in whose lap she breathed her last, and Kishore reproduces the monologue of Gandhiji. "This is the final parting, the end of 62 years of shared life. Let me here stay till the cremation is over!" and in the evening prayer Bapu remarked, "I cannot imagine life without Baa". Gandhiji went on to say, "She helped me to keep wide awake and true to my vows, she stood by me in all my political fights. She never hesitated to take the plunge, In the current sense of the world, she was uneducated, but to my mind, she was a model of true education. She had obliterated all feelings of caste from her mind."

Contrarily, the novel tells a different story and manifests Gandhi's ambivalent and inconsiderate attitude to her wife and family. The author mistakenly takes the artistic license to use the confessions of the Gandhiji as the charge sheet to prove that Gandhiji was afflicted with maniacal righteousness, rigidity and the feeling of inferiority. In a nutshell, it is a narrative that fulfills the cultural and historical aspiration of the power that-be.



Mohammad Ali Baig's "Kasturba" brings alive the strong character and independent mindset of the woman who kept pace with her illustrious husband

DIWAN SINGH BAJELI

In the wake of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary celebrations, we have been able to watch several productions on Gandhi and his times. Recently, we have seen one more play titled "Kasturba" that was presented by Qadir Ali Baig Theatre Foundation, Hyderabad, at India Habitat Centre. It explores in depth the interaction between Kasturba, Gandhi, Mahadev Desai and Doctor Sushila Nayar, while in captivity in Aga Khan Palace, Pune. Remarkable for its realism and seamless flow of dramatic action, the finely tuned production is a significant contribution to Hindi plays on Gandhi.

Written by R. K Paliwal, the play is directed by multifaceted artist Mohammad Ali Baig whose productions have been critically acclaimed in India as well as abroad. The play under review with its focused narrative becomes an intimate study of Kasturba and her relationship with Gandhi. The dramatic action centred on one space - the interior part of Aga Khan Palace against the backdrop of Quit India Movement of 1942. As the title suggests, the action moves around Kasturba. Through the interactions with other dramatist personae, Kasturba emerges as the woman of great substance, compassion, inner strength, not afraid to speak her mind.

Baig's artistic ingenuity lies in his realistic style of presentation, precision in design and exquisitely expressive off stage music which enables his performers to internalise the conflict of their characters. In "Kasturba", in the down stage a bed is placed. The properties are sparse and elegantly placed. There is nothing superfluous.

The play opens with Gandhi dictating a letter to his secretary Mahadev Desai. To their surprise, they see Kasturba Gandhi accompanied by Dr Sushila Nayar and Manu Ben who reveal that they are prisoners. The jail official assures the new prisoners, Kasturba and the two young ladies of making necessary arrangements for their stay.

Severe blow

Undeterred, Gandhi continues to do his routine work like morning walk. One day while talking to Kasturba, Mahadev Desai falls down on the floor and he is declared dead. It's a severe blow to Kasturba who has had great affection for him. Confined to the palace as a prisoner, Kasturba's health continues to deteriorate. While in critical state, she expresses her wish that her last rites be performed near the samadhi of Mahadev Desai whom she treated as her own son. In one of the sequence, Dr Sushila Nayar recommends that Kasturba should be given penicillin injection.

In professor Sharma's production of "Pehla Satyagrahi", produced by the repertory of National School of Drama, Gandhi vehemently objects to the injection of penicillin. In the production under review, Gandhi initially objects to Susheela's course of treatment with penicillin but leaves it to the wishes of Kasturba. When asked, Kasturba refuses to be injected.

As the inmates of prison, Kasturba and Gandhi occasionally engaged in polemics; Gandhi tends to be persuasive. The dialogues between Dr Sushila and Kasturba are marked by laconic wit which enlivens the gloomy atmosphere of the prison. As a mother, Kasturba is deeply disturbed and worried about her son Harilal who has indulged in open defiance of his father and started to lead a lifestyle which is anathema to Gandhi's moral universe. The members of the cast follow the restraint style of acting, imparting a touch of sobriety to their portrayals. Rashmi Seth as Kasturba paints a subtle portrait that leaves a deep emotional impact. Vijay Prasad's Gandhi appears to be mellow and mostly in reflective mood. He remains throughout near the site of cremation where Kasturba's mortal remains are created near the samadhi of Mahadev Desai.

Celebrating classics



The 4th edition of Navrasa Duende World Movie Festival to celebrate 100 years of World Cinema (1920-2019) begins this weekend at the Siri Fort Auditorium.

The inaugural screening will take place on November 16 and 17. Screenings will be held every quarter, covering six films in a span of two days. The line-up for the first leg includes classics such as “Apocalypse Now”, “Tokyo Story”, “The Marriage of Maria Braun”, “Charulata”, “The Passion of Joan of Arc”, and “Pulp Fiction”.

Dinesh B Singh, Festival Director and Founder, Navrasa Duende says, “The primary idea behind this year’s selection is to provide the Indian audience with a glimpse into the global cinematic journey of the last 100 years of world cinema. As such, we handpicked works by the greats of the World Cinema across generations and movements. Some of the stalwarts whose works will be featured at the 4th World Movie Festival include Ashgar Farahadi, Bertolucci, Coppola, Carl Theodor Ingmar Bergman, Eisenstein, Fassbinder, Gean-Luc Godard, Satyajit Ray, Michael Haneke, Wong Kar Wai, Stanley Kubrick, Yasujiro Ozu, Darren Aronofsky, Jean Luc Godard, Pedro Almodovar, Wonkarwai, Tarantino and Krzysztof, among others.”

...Nebulous experience

Continued from page 2

Structurally, Bahauddin’s rudra veena is like the veena of an earlier time, with its 24 frets and four main wires, but pursits frown on his hold which is as per the tradition adopted in South India, around 250 years ago, on the Saraswati veena.

The veena is an unwieldy heavy instrument; it is played mainly on the fourth wire. So, plucking a meend is much more difficult as is moving up and down its stem. Yet, truly, it is the mother of all instruments and anyone who once masters it, does not want to go back to playing an easier instrument, (Bahauddin himself trained initially on the sitar before graduating to the rudra veena) nor can an avid listener enjoy any other instrument as much. This recital proved it.

Back on the road

After a break, Lucky Ali starts his musical journey with Israeli rock musician Eliezer Botzer

MURTAZA ALI KHAN

Noted singer-songwriter Lucky Ali is back from hiatus with a collaborative album titled ‘Lemalla’ with Jewish-Israeli rock musician Eliezer Botzer. The first song of the EliAli Project titled ‘On My Way’ was released earlier this week in Delhi. The unique collaboration between the two singers happened by chance when they found each other in 2017. “Our collaboration was more like a discovery. They came with their musicians and then our musicians were there and so there was a new discovery in that. The challenge was to incorporate that into a small structure. We had the idea about the songs but the rest was all about improvisation. For example, Eliezer would sing a part in Hebrew and he would leave my expression to me. Then I would sing what I felt when I was hearing that piece of music. Often I would get a feeling as if I was moving somewhere. And then I would question who I am in this journey. The answer is that I am basically a stranger who is travelling though this whole thing that’s called the world,” reveals Ali.

For Botzer, the collaboration with Ali is all about exploration. “The strongest connect between the two of us is our deep love for India. Our collaboration is a result of three years of musical journey that we have had together. During this time we had numerous jamming sessions, both here in India as well as in Tel Aviv. I consider myself really fortunate to have developed a strong bond of friendship with Lucky through our collaborative work. The fact that we sang and wrote together allowed us to glide through the different rooms of life together. We got to explore different subjects during our collaboration. As humans, it doesn’t matter what culture or land that we come from as there is so much that needs to be discovered together,” opines Botzer.

In Brief

SaMaPa music festival

SaMaPa (Sopori Academy of Music And Performing Arts), the well known music academy and music organisation by Pandit Bhajan Sopori and Abhay Rustum Sopori, is organising the 15th annual SaMaPa Sangeet Sammelan on 19th and 20th November at India Habitat Centre and 22nd, 23rd and 24th November at Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi.

The five-day festival will feature some of the eminent musicians of Indian classical music.

In the awards, this year, ‘SaMaPa Vitasta Samman’ is being conferred upon the veteran vocalist



Talking melodies Lucky Ali and Eliezer Botzer ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

who likes to describe himself as “a troubadour who lives what he writes and writes what he lives”.

Ali’s songs are often about beautiful journeys. But for Ali, the journeys are not physical in nature. “Everybody asks me what my journey is. I feel all my songs are about journeys. And those journeys are how I feel from within. My journey could be anything. It doesn’t necessarily have to be on the road or going to a place. It could just be two people talking and that’s a journey in itself. Say you are coming from far away with so much history and then I am also telling you so many things about this world. So you go on those journeys and that becomes a song as music and words begin to take shape,” explains Ali whose debut album ‘Sunoh’ was released back in 1996. The album went on to win him many accolades and established Ali as one of the popular names on the Indian pop scene.

“India is blessed with so many presents such as its rich musical tradition. Even though I have been coming to India for the last 15 years, my collaboration with Lucky has opened a whole new window for me to look at this beautiful country. It has become my second home now. In fact, the song ‘On My Way’ is dedicated to the idea of home. It’s first of the eight songs from the album. The home is the place of the heart and any place we could connect with our heart, it gives us the feeling of home. Also, the name ‘Lemalla’ in Hebrew means the higher thought that comes from inside. It’s not higher compared to someone else. It’s basically about going deeper within oneself and rising higher from inside,” explains

Botzer.

The cross-cultural collaboration between Ali and Botzer transcends the boundaries of language through the power of music. “India is everywhere. People from other parts of the world have been coming here for thousands of years. Even we have been travelling. But when the music comes that’s what you are interested in. What you are saying something musically, it should make sense to you. You see when it comes to music it’s not the language, it’s the sound, the vibrations, and the energy that allow us to communicate with each other. If the communication is fair to my heart, I would reciprocate in the same way. Same way, if I communicate something and it tugs at your heart then you will communicate it back to me,” sums up Ali.

ferred upon the veteran vocalist Pandit Ajay Pohankar (Mumbai) for his lifetime contribution to Hindustani Classical music, ‘SaMaPa Kala Vardhan Samman’ is being conferred upon Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra (Delhi) and presented to Shobha Deepak Singh, for contribution to Indian music.

‘SaMaPa Nund Rishi Samman’ is being conferred upon the renowned vocalist Malini Awasthi (Uttar Pradesh) for her remarkable contribution to Indian light classical and folk music.

Talking about the festival, Pt.

Bhajan Sopori said, “SaMaPa believes in bring something new for Delhi music connoisseurs. There are many such first times are there. Pt. Vishwambhar Nath Mishra (pakhawaj), who is also the ‘Mahant’ of Sankat Mochan Mandir Varanasi, shall be presenting his first concert in Delhi. Waseem Ahmad Bhat, a young upcoming singer from Sopore, Kashmir is being introduced as an upcoming vocalist of the country. I will be presenting some rarely heard ragas this year and will highlight some of new additions and innovations on santoor.”



Rich repertoire Pandit Bhajan Sopori