

IN BRIEF



Rajnath, Esper discuss West Asia situation

NEW DELHI  
In the backdrop of the recent developments in West Asia, India on Thursday conveyed its concerns to the U.S. at a telephone conversation between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his U.S. counterpart Mark T. Esper. “We expressed firm resolve to strengthen the bilateral defence cooperation. He also briefed me about the recent developments in the Gulf region. I shared India’s concerns and interests,” Mr. Singh said on Twitter.

NPF suspends Rajya Sabha member

GUWAHATI  
The Naga People’s Front (NPF) has suspended Rajya Sabha member K.G. Kenye from the primary membership, almost a month after he voted in favour of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA). The NPF is no longer a friend of the BJP in Nagaland, but is part of the BJP-headed coalition government in Manipur.

SBI to sell electoral bonds from January 13

NEW DELHI  
The State Bank of India (SBI) has been authorised to sell and encash electoral bonds, the 13th such sale since the scheme started in 2018, from January 13 to 22, a Finance Ministry statement said on Thursday. The bonds will be sold through 29 authorised SBI branches and the parties can encash them through an account with the SBI.

‘We must retain strategic heights of Siachen’

NEW DELHI  
India needs to retain control of the strategic heights of the Siachen Glacier as they are vital to the country’s defences in Ladakh, and Jammu and Kashmir, Army chief General Manoj Naravane said on Thursday. Gen. Naravane made these remarks on his maiden visit to the glacier after assuming charge as the Chief of the Army Staff.

# Non-violence is the answer, says Pawar

NCP chief says Central government has left representatives of Independent India disappointed

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar has called for opposing the Central government’s dictatorial policies with Mahatma Gandhi’s way of non-violence.

“What happened at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is being condemned across the country. The government’s dictatorship needs to be answered with Gandhiji’s way of non-violence,” Mr. Pawar said on Thursday, adding the violence at JNU has hurt sentiments of the students’ community.

He was speaking after flagging off the ‘Gandhi Shanti Yatra’ started by former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the National Register of Citizens (NRC), and the JNU violence, at the Gateway of India.



NCP chief Sharad Pawar flagging off the ‘Gandhi Shanti Yatra’ undertaken by Yashwant Sinha at the Gateway of India on Thursday. Former CM Prithviraj Chavan is also seen. • EMMANUAL YOGINI

teway of India. The programme was attended by Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) leader Prakash Ambedkar, who is known for his

anti-NCP stand. Mr. Pawar, referring to the anti-CAA protests, said a big section of society is feeling disappointed with the go-

vernment. “Some steps taken by the Centre have given a jolt to the country’s unity. Members of some sections of society feel their interests

are not being protected.” The NCP chief said there are members of several sections, including the minorities, who cannot tell where they came from and where they would live. “They will be forced to live in camps. The government has left representatives of the Independent India and shareholders of the country disappointed,” he said.

‘The right path’ The government needs to be shown the right path of Gandhi’s non-violent way, which only can help save the Constitution, Mr. Pawar said. Mr. Sinha said, “We will protect the Constitution drafted by Ambedkarji. We will not let the country be partitioned again. We will not let Gandhi be murdered again. We are all one and will remain one.”

## Amid anti-CAA protests, Assam announces more sops

They will benefit children, teachers and health workers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Sops continue to rain in Assam amid the ongoing agitation against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The BJP-led government of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Thursday announced a set of sops for children, teachers, health workers and the differently abled. This follows a one-time grant for artistes and technicians and land settlement deeds for landless indigenous people.

Finance and Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said a one-time financial assistance of ₹1 lakh each would be given to the wards of 700 employees of two dead paper mills, who are pursuing studies in medical or engineering colleges, or a



At the forefront: Singer Zubeen Garg, centre, and other artistes at a protest in Guwahati on Thursday. • RITU RAJ KONWAR

similar course. The Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited used to run these mills.

“Likewise, ₹75,000 each would be given to those pursuing post-graduate studies or doing Ph.D. ₹50,000 each

to those pursuing graduation in colleges or diploma in polytechnics, ₹25,000 to those studying in Standard XI and XII and ₹10,000 to those studying from nursery to Class 10,” he told journalists.

## Was brutally thrashed by police, says Deepak Kabir

He spent 3 weeks in police custody in Lucknow

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

Theatre actor and cultural activist Deepak Kabir on Thursday alleged that the police not only brutally thrashed and abused him in custody but also labelled him an “urban naxal”.

Mr. Kabir, 44, was released from the Lucknow district jail after a court granted him bail in the case of violence in Lucknow during a protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) on December 19 last. He was arrested on December 20 when he reportedly went to the Hazratganj police station to inquire about the whereabouts of his activist friends who were picked up following the protests.

He told *The Hindu* that the Hazratganj SHO first



Actor Deepak Kabir

snatched his phone, threw off his cap and dubbed him a “mastermind” of the violence. “He said, ‘you are a krantikari [revolutionary], right...’” Mr. Kabir recalled.

He said his submission that he had come to the police station to look for his friends fell on deaf ears. Following this, 12-15 policemen escorted him to a hall and took turns to beat him up and he was kicked for at least 10 minutes, he alleged. “The SHO told them to tie

## Violence is sponsored goondaism: Congress

‘HRD and Home Ministers involved’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday demanded the resignation of Jawaharlal Nehru University Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadeh Kumar and alleged that the perpetrators of Sunday’s violence had not been arrested as it was “sanctioned” by Home Minister Amit Shah and Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal.

At a press conference here, senior leader Jairam Ramesh described the violence as “officially sponsored goondaism”. “It didn’t not happen suddenly but was done at the behest of some people. We know who these people are. I am making a direct allegation that the HRD Minister and the Home Minister were involved. This was state-sponsored goondaism,” he said. “It has been 72 hours

since the attack and the Delhi police have information on who indulged in violence and vandalism. There has been a very casual and irresponsible approach. We demand that those responsible for the violence be arrested immediately,” he added.

Mr. Ramesh said, “It is clear that as long as Mr. Jagadeh Kumar continues as the Vice-Chancellor, normalcy won’t return to the campus.”

“It is essential for the government to take his resignation for peace to return. A few months ago, there was a compromise [over a proposed fee hike] that was worked out by the HRD Secretary between the students and the Vice-Chancellor. It is strange that the HRD Secretary was transferred, while the Vice-Chancellor continued in his post,” he said.

## M.M. Joshi wants V-C removed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

BJP leader and former Human Resource Development Minister Murli Manohar Joshi on Thursday sought the removal of JNU Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadeh Kumar for failing to implement the Ministry’s proposal to settle the fee increase issue.

“There are reports that the Ministry had twice advised the Vice-Chancellor to implement certain reasonable and working formula for resolving the issue of enhanced fees... He was also advised to reach out to the teachers and students. It is shocking that the Vice-Chancellor was adamant in not implementing the proposal. This attitude is deplorable and... such a Vice-Chancellor should not be allowed to continue,” he wrote on Twitter.

## 250 international academics demand JNU V-C’s resignation

‘Campus violence violated every norm of democracy’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Over 250 senior academics and university administrators from various countries have called for the immediate resignation of Jawaharlal Nehru University Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadeh Kumar over the January 5 violence on the campus.

The signatories are from universities in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Germany, Norway, France, Italy, Denmark, Australia, South Africa, Ireland, Chile, Mexico, Argentina, Taiwan, Greece, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain,

Brazil, Portugal and New Zealand.

They include the former Archbishop of Canterbury and current Master of Magdalen College, Cambridge, Dr. Rowan Williams; president of the American Anthropological Association, Professor Akhil Gupta; president, Association for Asian Studies, U.S., Prof. Prasenjit Duara; and professors Dame Caroline Humphries and Sir Christopher Clark, Cambridge.

The signatories said the incident, “which took place when an armed and politi-

cally motivated mob was allowed to enter the campus”, violated every norm of democracy. It violated the norms of academic freedom, of the protection of universities from arbitrary state power and of the duty of university administrators to protect their students and faculty, they said.

As for the failure to call in the police “as well as the university authorities’ criminalising of peaceful student protest”, they said the JNU administration, and especially the Vice-Chancellor, had lost all credibility.

## 106 ex-officials demand repeal of CAA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

As many as 106 former top officials on Thursday expressed “grave reservations” about the validity of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, and said there was no need for it, the NPR and the NRIC.

In a letter to fellow citizens, they demanded the repeal of sections of the Act pertaining to the issue of national identity cards and the Citizenship Rules, 2003. The signatories include Shivshankar Menon, Najeeb Jung, K.M. Chandrasekhar and Wajahat Habibullah.



ELSEWHERE



**Lebanon issues travel ban for Carlos Ghosn**  
BEIRUT  
Lebanese prosecutors issued a travel ban for fugitive ex-Nissan chief Carlos Ghosn and asked him to hand in his French passport on Thursday, following an Interpol-issued red notice against him. The ban comes after Mr. Ghosn was interrogated by prosecutors about the charges he faces in Japan over financial misconduct. **AP**

**Five left-wing Ministers to serve in Spain govt.**  
MADRID  
Spain's new coalition government says that it will include five members from the left-wing, anti-austerity United We Can party. The Socialist Party of PM Pedro Sánchez has partnered with United We Can to give Spain its first coalition government since the restoration of democracy in 1978. **AP**

**18 UN troops, 2 civilians injured in Mali attack**  
BAMAKO  
Eighteen UN troops and two civilians were wounded on Thursday in a mortar attack on a military base in northern Mali, a UN official said, in fresh violence in the war-torn West African country. Mali has been struggling to contain an Islamist insurgency that erupted in the north in 2012, and which has claimed thousands of military and civilian lives since. **AFP**

**U.S. strike kills Taliban splinter group leader**  
HERAT  
U.S. airstrike killed a Taliban splinter-group commander and several other fighters in the western Afghan province of Herat, sources said on Thursday. Mullah Nangyalay split from the main branch of the Taliban after the 2013 death of founder Mullah Omar. **AFP**

# Iran plane crash: Ukraine to probe possible missile strike

‘A terrorist act, a drone collision and an engine blast are the other possibilities’

ANTON TROIANOVSKI  
KIEV  
Investigators will look into the possibility that a missile shot down the Ukrainian passenger jet that crashed in Iran, a senior Ukrainian official said on Thursday, but he did not rule out a range of other possibilities for the disaster that killed at least 176 people.  
The official, Oleksiy Danilov, Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, said investigators were following up on unconfirmed reports that fragments of a Russian-made Tor surface-to-air missile – a system used by Iran – had been found near where the plane came down.  
Ukraine was negotiating with Iran to allow the investigators to search the crash site near Tehran for possible rocket fragments, he told Censor.net, a Ukrainian news outlet.  
The possibilities of a terrorist act, a collision with an airborne object such as a drone, and an engine explosion were also being examined as potential causes of the crash, Mr. Danilov said on his Facebook page.  
Ukraine brings unique experience to bear on the case: In 2014, after Russian-backed separatists took control of parts of eastern Ukraine, an anti-aircraft missile that international investigators later said was Russian-made, shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 there, killing all 298 people aboard.  
The Ukrainian airliner that went down on Wednesday morning had turned back toward the Tehran airport before it crashed in a huge explosion minutes after takeoff, according to an in-



**Heavy loss:** Relatives of the crew members of the Ukrainian plane that crashed in Iran mourn at a memorial service at the Boryspil International airport outside Kiev on Thursday. **REUTERS**

## ‘Iran may have downed plane’

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON  
The Ukraine airliner that crashed in Iran was most likely brought down accidentally by Iranian anti-aircraft missiles, U.S. officials said on Thursday.  
According to satellite data, one U.S. official said, the Ukrainian International Airlines Boeing 737-800

bound for Kiev was airborne for two minutes after departing Tehran when the heat signatures of two surface-to-air missiles were detected. That was quickly followed by an explosion in the vicinity of the plane, the official said. Heat signature data then showed the plane on fire as it went down.  
Two U.S. officials said

Washington believed the downing of the plane, which occurred at a time of rising tensions between Iran and the U.S., was accidental.  
U.S. President Donald Trump said the deadly crash could have been a mistake.  
Iran ruled out a missile strike as the cause of crash, saying such a scenario made “no sense”.

ital Iranian report released on Thursday. It said that the plane, a Boeing 737-800 bound for Kiev, was in flames before it hit the ground but did not send a distress signal.

**Damaged black box**  
A security camera captured the impact – first the pre-dawn darkness, then a series of blinding bursts of light in the distance, followed by a

storm of burning debris in the foreground.  
The plane’s “black box” flight data recorders were damaged by the fire, the Iranian report said. That raised the possibility that some of the information stored in them had been destroyed, but in other aviation disasters, investigators have been able to retrieve data even from damaged recorders. However, Iran has said that,

contrary to usual practice, the black boxes would not be sent to Boeing or the U.S.  
The priority “is to find out the causes of the tragedy,” President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine said.  
A team of 45 Ukrainian investigators landed in Tehran on Thursday. Mr. Zelenskyy urged Canada – which lost 63 of its citizens in the crash – to participate in the investigation. **NY TIMES**

# EU Council chief defends Iran deal after Trump call to quit it

Council President says EU has its own interests and vision

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BRUSSELS  
The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, defended the crumbling Iran nuclear deal on Thursday after U.S. President Donald Trump urged Europe to quit it, but warned Tehran against “irreversible acts” that would sink the accord.  
The President of the European Council used a call with Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani to call for a de-escalation of tensions after Tehran carried out missile strikes on U.S. military bases in Iraq in retaliation for the assassination of one of its



Charles Michel  
top Generals.  
On Wednesday, Mr. Trump calmed fears of all-out war, but demanded that other parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal follow his lead and withdraw from the pact.  
The European parties –

Britain, France and Germany – have led efforts to save the deal, which has been crumbling since Mr. Trump pulled out in 2018 and reimposed sanctions, and Mr. Michel insisted that it remained vital.  
“The JCPOA agreement was an important achievement after 10 years of negotiations and remains an important tool for regional stability,” Mr. Michel’s office said in its readout of his call with Mr. Rouhani, adding that Mr. Michel had insisted that “the EU has its own interests and its vision” – implicitly distancing EU capitals from Washington.

# MPs approve Brexit Bill, U.K. set for Jan. 31 exit

It will now go to the House of Lords

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON  
Britain passed a major milestone on the road to Brexit when the House of Commons on Thursday approved a Bill authorising the country’s departure from the European Union at the end of the month.  
Lawmakers voted by 330-231 to pass the Withdrawal Agreement Bill, which sets the terms of Britain’s departure from the 28-nation bloc. The comfortable majority won by Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Conservatives in an election last month secured the Bill’s passage despite the opposition of smaller parties.  
The Bill was approved af-

ter three days of debate that brought none of the frayed tempers, late-night sessions and knife-edge votes that marked previous rounds of Brexit wrangling over the past year.  
After passing through Parliament’s unelected House of Lords – which can delay but not overturn the result in the Commons – the Bill should become law in time for the U.K. to leave the EU on the scheduled date of January 31 and become the first nation to quit the bloc.  
Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay said he welcomed the “constructive scrutiny” of the Lords but hoped the Upper House would not try to delay the Bill.

# British royals feel hurt by the way Harry and Meghan quit

No consultation before stepping back from their senior role

REUTERS  
LONDON  
Britain’s royal family is hurt and disappointed by Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle’s surprise announcement that they will step back from their senior roles and spend more time in North America, a royal source said.  
Prince Harry and Ms. Markle’s decision to step away from royal duties sent shock waves through the royal family as neither Queen Elizabeth nor Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, had been consulted on the announcement, made on Instagram.  
The Queen, who has devoted her life to the public duty of monarchy since she became queen in 1952, and other senior members of the family felt hurt and disappointed by the move, a royal source said. “We have chosen to make a transition this year in starting to carve out a progressive new role within this institution,” the royal couple said in their statement. “We intend to step back as senior members of the Royal Family, and work to become financially independent.”



**Part-time royals:** A file photo of Prince Harry and wife Meghan Markle in west London. **AFP**

commented on the decision. British tabloids said the announcement had left senior royals such as Prince Charles and Harry’s brother, Prince William, incandescent with rage. The Queen and senior royals have called on aides to find a “workable solution” to the future of Prince Harry and his wife in the royal family within “days, not weeks”, U.K. media reported on Thursday.

**‘Queen is furious’**  
“MEGXIT” read *The Sun’s* front page headline. The *Daily Mail* said Queen Elizabeth was furious about the move. While the manner in which they have tried to exit the spotlight cast on the world’s most famous family drew criticism, Prince Charles has long sought a slimmer and leaner royal family.  
The haste of their decision, though, raises questions for a family which had in Queen Elizabeth’s words a “quite bumpy” year that included her son Prince Andrew’s decision to step down due to his relationship with disgraced U.S. financier Jeffrey Epstein.  
Royal commentators drew parallels with the abdication crisis of Edward VIII who gave up the throne in 1936 to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson and lived out his life in France.

**Use of public money**  
Opponents of the monarchy were scathing and even supporters questioned how one could be a part-time royal. “This really is wanting to have your cake and eat it,” said Graham Smith, head of Republic which wants to abolish the monarchy.  
“They have said they will dip in and out of royal duties as it suits them but won’t stop taking public money until they find other sources of income.”  
Ms. Markle, known for her role in the TV drama *Suits*, could return to acting in the U.S. though it is unclear how that would be viewed by the Palace. “Perhaps she’d have to be careful about what roles she’d do because she is a member of the royal family, so she couldn’t do too many racy sex scenes for instance,” said royal biographer Penny Junor.  
Prince Harry and Ms. Markle, an American divorcee, met on a blind date but fell in love in Botswana and married in May 2018.

# Trump ‘statue of liberty’ burned in Slovenian town

The wooden structure was built to criticise populist politics

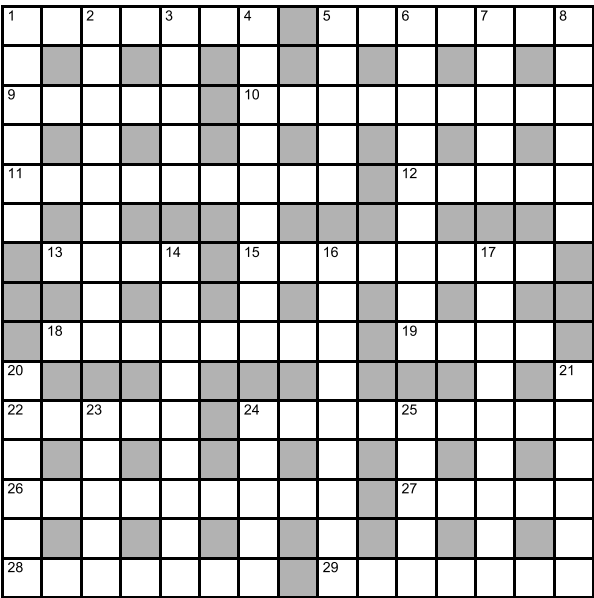
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LJUBLJANA  
Suspected vandals on Thursday burned a wooden statue of U.S. President Donald Trump built last year by a group of villagers to criticise populist politics, local authorities said.  
The statue of Mr. Trump, complete with his trademark mane, blue suit, white shirt and red tie was built last August. The statue was moved in December to Moravce, where vandals damaged it by drawing a moustache on its face in a clear reference to Hitler. On Thursday, unidentified vandals set the statue on fire.



The wooden sculpture resembling U.S. President Trump on fire in Moravce, Slovenia, on Thursday. **AP**

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12829

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



- (set by Arden)
- 12 Sick? Get the hell out, get relieved (5)
  - 13 Game not hard, may be kind of taxing (4)
  - 15 A point on line is criminal conversation (8)
  - 18 Check if able to get inside bottle (8)
  - 19 Crown paste? (4)
  - 22 Duplicating a hit (5)
  - 24 The entire workforce has to return by end of August to get a share (9)
  - 26 Harry enraged at the dog (5,4)
  - 27 Cowboys did it, only to follow the game (5)
  - 28 Regret over some writing, perhaps (7)
  - 29 Bar public transport, Arden’s left (7)

- 4 Psycho turned insect into a crawler (9)
- 5 Cap before pouring into empty bucket (5)
- 6 Military moves like bird on flight (5,4)
- 7 Bloodsuckers pierce from top to bottom (5)
- 8 End of photography – winding slide returns (6)
- 14 Endless mirth leads to massacre (9)
- 16 Extremely difficult to control unit, rules are broken (9)
- 17 Spooner’s issue with a horny one in port (9)
- 20 Harry offers token resistance (6)
- 21 Idle time in school calendar (6)
- 23 Multipurpose use, support with guts (5)
- 24 A day time motto... (5)
- 25 Water rationing – gained some ground (5)

- ACROSS
- 1 Odd/even accepted by iron lady (7)
  - 5 Huge effort to suppress – nothing but intolerance (7)
  - 9 Follow writers, as outstanding leaders leave (5)
  - 10 Mind getting feel of the architectural design? (9)
  - 11 Seed covering in part of Chennai (9)
- DOWN
- 1 As simple as every hidden delight (6)
  - 2 Golfer’s curse heard in another place (9)
  - 3 Irrigation – measures taken by American (5)

## SUDOKU

	3	6	1	9		4	8	
				4				7
	5					6		
					8	2	4	
		3		6		1		
	4	8	2					
		9					7	
3					8			
	8	1		7	9	5	6	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12828	Solution to yesterday’s Sudoku
C O N T E M P T S A M P A N H O B M L G M A E A L G E B R A A N A G R A M N G A S W S M A C R I E R T U M E S C E N T E N G I A S O S M E S A I N E C O W D F U N D I N G E N R I C A V N E U R A L G I A E E R I E A M R E T R M R R O E D E E R I D A H O A I N N Y O L U A O S T E A L I N T E G R A L	6 7 5 2 3 1 4 9 8 8 4 2 7 9 6 5 3 1 3 1 9 4 5 8 2 7 6 9 6 4 8 7 2 1 5 3 1 8 7 3 4 5 9 6 2 2 5 3 1 6 9 8 4 7 7 9 8 5 1 3 6 2 4 4 2 6 9 8 7 3 1 5 5 3 1 6 2 4 7 8 9

## FAITH

### Humility, an ennobling trait

The Tiruppavai celebrates the glory of the Supreme Lord as much as that of a true devotee. Its emphasis is on the eternal quality of the relationship between them which, when internalised by the latter, equips him with absolute humility, pointed out Sri Rajahamsam Swami in a discourse. The Gopis in Ayarpadi are all soaked in thoughts of Krishna. They never tire of recalling His feats and His master plans by which He outwits Kamsa’s wily attempts to murder Him.  
Andal shows that along with this devotion, it is important to realise that no one is infallible and that all are liable to faults. So, in one verse, when one Gopi accepts that she is at fault, and accepts this truth graciously and honestly, it generates the ennobling trait of humility. When one is humble, one finds that shortcomings and failures are inherent in human nature and one does not succumb to the sense of ego and pride. The true devotee knows his limitations and is also aware that this bhakti bhava in him is owing to the compassion of the Lord. In his inner self he is honest about it. One who is endowed with the bhava of humility is indeed the most fortunate person. For in him devotion and virtue can grow and thrive.  
One who lacks humility loses all and is lost in the cycle of birth. In this context, Bharata exemplifies the virtue of absolute humility that is rooted in his faultless integrity. When Rama is exiled and Dasaratha dies, he is driven to a situation when though guiltless, he faces blame and censure from all. But such is his mental maturity that springs from his spontaneous love for Rama that he deals with this plight with tremendous dignity. He invokes on himself all kinds of punishment if he is guilty. But finally instead of blaming others, he blames himself for all this.





MARKET WATCH		
	09-01-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	41,452	-1.55
US Dollar	71.21	0.67
Gold	40,634	-1.85
Brent oil	65.19	-2.92

NIFTY 50		
	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	391.80	6.15
Asian Paints	1772.55	43.75
Axis Bank	742.85	18.35
Bajaj Auto	3085.70	26.45
Bajaj Finserv	9395.25	249.75
Bajaj Finance	4124.20	74.25
Bharti Airtel	460.10	1.25
BPL	470.55	10.65
Britannia Ind	3001.10	-22.50
Cipla	470.10	5.35
Coal India	198.00	-2.20
Dr Reddys Lab	2920.50	23.25
Eicher Motors	20328.90	436.70
GAIL (India)	123.70	-0.20
Grasim Ind	757.30	14.65
HCL Tech	580.30	-5.45
HDFC	2457.40	51.25
HDFC Bank	1271.40	14.10
Hero MotoCorp	2354.55	37.00
Hindalco	210.75	3.35
Hind Unilever	1935.05	5.70
ICICI Bank	546.30	20.35
IndusInd Bank	1507.65	49.05
Bharti Infratel	250.60	14.30
Infosys	727.55	9.35
Indian OilCorp	124.50	2.65
ITC	235.80	1.60
JSW Steel	278.10	15.60
Kotak Bank	1665.05	10.20
L&T	1316.15	24.60
M&M	541.25	16.60
Maruti Suzuki	7227.90	192.70
Nestle India Ltd.	14643.45	252.20
NTPC	119.35	-0.60
ONGC	123.70	0.25
PowerGrid Corp	192.95	2.40
Reliance Ind	1548.00	34.85
State Bank	330.20	10.40
Sun Pharma	439.85	-0.25
Tata Motors	192.00	9.45
Tata Steel	483.15	7.90
TCS	2214.35	-40.90
Tech Mahindra	773.65	3.85
Titan	1163.45	20.15
Ultra Tech Cement	4388.00	69.05
UPL	604.55	3.70
Vedanta	158.15	0.80
Wipro	253.65	-1.15
YES Bank	47.30	1.25
Zee Entertainment	272.05	7.60

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on January 09		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	71.01	71.33
Euro	78.93	79.29
British Pound	92.59	93.01
Japanese Yen (100)	64.94	65.23
Chinese Yuan	10.24	10.29
Swiss Franc	73.00	73.33
Singapore Dollar	52.53	52.78
Canadian Dollar	54.40	54.67
Malaysian Ringgit	17.36	17.44

Source: Indian Bank

BULLION RATES CHENNAI		
January 09 rates in rupees with previous rates in parentheses		
Retail Silver (1g)	50.4	(52.1)
22 ct gold (1 g)	3805	(3897)



**RBI allows video-based customer identification**

MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to permit video-based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP) as a consent-based alternate method of establishing the customer's identity, for customer onboarding. For video-based customer authentication, PAN number and Aadhaar number will be mandatory.

**Tiger Global invests \$200 million in Byju's**

NEW DELHI

Ed-tech major Byju's on Thursday said it has raised an undisclosed amount of funding from Tiger Global Management. While Byju's did not disclose the quantum of investment, sources said Tiger had pumped in \$200 million into the company. "We are happy to partner with a strong investor like Tiger Global Management. This partnership will advance our long-term vision of creating an impact by changing the way students learn," Byju's founder-CEO Byju Raveendran said. PTI

**Commercial sector credit supply slows**

MUMBAI

Amid a slowdown in economic activity, state-owned Sidbi on Thursday said credit supply growth to the commercial sector had slowed to a multi-year low of 8.1% for the 12 months ended September 2019. The data, put together in association with credit information company TransUnion Cibil, comes at a time when economic growth for the country is estimated to slow to a decadal low of 5% for 2019-20 and overall credit growth has slipped to 7.1% for 2019. PTI

# 60 listed firms disclose ₹75,000 cr. default

SEBI had asked companies to disclose loan defaults at the end of every quarter

ASHISH RUKHAIYAR  
MUMBAI

A directive by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for companies to disclose loan defaults at the end of every quarter has led to almost 60 listed entities defaulting a cumulative default amount of almost ₹75,000 crore as on December 31.

More importantly, there are nine companies that have defaulted on loans worth more than ₹1,000 crore each even as bulk of the overall default amount pertains to companies belonging to the Anil Ambani Group.

As per stock exchange disclosures, Anil Ambani Group companies such as Reliance Communications, Reliance Naval & Engineering, Reliance Infrastructure and Reliance Power have defaulted on loans totalling a little more than ₹43,800 crore as

Defaulters at the top	
COMPANY	DEFAULT AMOUNT (₹ CR.)
Reliance Communications	32,575.00
Reliance Naval & Engineering	9,491.96
Suzlon Energy	7,256.38
Jaypee Infratech	6,721.00
ISMT	3,237.81
JVL Agro	2,027.91
National Steel & Agro Industries	1,128.92
Tilaknagar Industries	1,116.25
Reliance Infrastructure	1,048.70

DEFAULT AMOUNT INCLUDES BANK LOANS & UNLISTED DEBT SECURITIES

on December 31, 2019.

Within the group, Reliance Communications accounts for a chunk of the portion at ₹32,575 crore.

The default amount includes both loans from banks and financial institutions along with unlisted debt securities such as non-convertible debentures (NCDs) and non-convertible

redeemable preference shares (NCRPS).

**Other names**

Apart from these entities, well-known names like Suzlon Energy, Jaypee Infratech, Ansai Housing, Aban Offshore, ISMT, Religare Enterprises, Bedmutha Industries, Hindustan Construction and Bombay Rayon

Fashions also feature in the first list of such defaulters.

"The information itself is not as startling as one should make it out to be as these are names of companies which have been down under for quite some time and many of them would already be under various stages either in IBC or NCLT," said Arun Kejriwal of Kejriwal Research & Investment Services.

"Going forward, when this list appears every quarter, it would be interesting to observe any new entrants during the quarter, which should raise the alarm bells," he added. In November 2019, the capital market regulator mandated companies to disclose any default in the case of loans from banks and financial institutions wherein the default continued beyond 30 days.

Further, such disclosures have to be made within seven

days from the end of every quarter.

Interestingly, experts are of the view that since such disclosures will be made every quarter, exchanges should endeavour to present a consolidated list of such defaulters for the benefit of the investor community.

"Default is a price-sensitive information and what has been disclosed is not some temporary default and hence, investors need to be informed so that they can take better informed decision in terms of investing," said J. N. Gupta, founder, Stakeholder Empowerment Services, a proxy advisory firm.

"However, since this information will be disseminated after every quarter, exchanges should compile a list and present a consolidated report of all defaulters on their website for all investors to access," added Mr. Gupta.

## NCLT to consider only govt. probe on CG Power

Tribunal posts hearing to January 23

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), which is hearing a matter related to restatement of accounts of CG Power, has said that only a probe by a government body would be considered by the tribunal while deciding on the matter that stems from alleged siphoning of funds by the company's former chairman Gautam Thapar.

This assumes significance since the allegations against Mr. Thapar and a few senior officials of the company – who were barred from accessing the securities market by the Securities and Exchange Board of India in September 2019 – are based on the report prepared by law firm Vaish Associates that was mandated by the

company and hence does not qualify as "independent".

Only a probe by the government or any government body can be considered, the Mumbai NCLT bench said on Thursday, while posting the matter for January 23.

The capital markets regulator, however, has also ordered a forensic audit – which will qualify as independent – to verify allegations of manipulation and misrepresentation in the books of accounts of the company.

Interestingly, the appeal at the NCLT for restatement of accounts has been filed by the government even though the dispute is between a listed entity and its former chairman and senior officials.

## Banks plan to sell DHFL's assets in three lots

Loans to homebuyers, firms and those for slum rehabilitation projects to be split

MANOJIT SAHA  
MUMBAI

Lenders to the troubled mortgage financier Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL) are planning to sell the assets in three parts for which separate bids will be invited.



In a recent interaction with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)-appointed administrators of DHFL, bankers suggested that the assets should be sold in three lots – retail home loans, non-retail loans and slum rehabilitation project loans.

Typically housing finance companies extend retail loans (loans to individual home buyers) and non-retail loans (which are loans to companies and developers).

DHFL has also extended loans for slum rehabilitation

**Slum rehabilitation project loans may see huge haircuts while retail loans are likely to get good value**

"Someone may be interested in retail loans and some other bidder, in developer loans," said the chief executive of a bank on the proposal to sell loans in three parts.

"This is the best possible solution," the person said.

The RBI had initiated the process of resolution of DHFL under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and the case had been admitted in the Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

"Now, the committee of

creditors (CoC) will take a call on whether to sell the assets in three lots," said a senior official from a public sector bank.

If CoC approves the plan, three separate expressions of interest will be floated for sale of the assets.

After DHFL started to default on banks loans, the RBI, on November 20, superseded the board of DHFL and appointed an administrator. Subsequently, the banking regulator filed an application for initiation of corporate insolvency resolution process against the mortgage financier on November 29, 2019.

Banks' exposure to the troubled mortgage financier is almost ₹40,000 crore while DHFL's total debt is about ₹80,000 crore.

## Tata Motors sees demand recovery in FY21

Automaker geared up for BS-VI roll-out with new product offerings

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Tata Motors has announced plans to introduce an all-new BS-VI range of products with passenger vehicles starting from January 2020.

A grand showcase comprising four global unveilings, and 14 commercial and 12 passenger vehicle displays will made at the upcoming Auto Expo 2020, at Greater Noida.

The company, which entered its 75th year in 2020, said it was building a sustainable future by providing aspirational and innovative mobility solutions for a Connected India.



**Stepping on the gas:** The carmaker had hired 500 engineers for the BS-VI transition and invested ₹1,200 cr. in FY19. ■AP

**Second half, next fiscal**

Stating that the demand for automobiles would start increasing from the second half of the next financial year, Guenter Butschek, CEO and MD, Tata Motors said, "We are ready to roll and we will showcase a strong pro-

duct offering at the forthcoming Auto Expo. We are focussing on Connected, Electric, Shared and Safe mobility."

He said the company was geared up for the BS-VI roll-out and 3,500 engineers had worked on this project and come out with new indigenous products. The company hired an additional 500

engineers for this transition and invested ₹1,200 crore in FY19. He said the company upgraded over 20 engine platforms and had come out with 100 lead vehicles with 1,000 variant upgrades.

Tata Motors is building a common Connected Vehicle Architecture, which will serve the entire portfolio across commercial, passen-

ger and electric vehicles, to enable the 'extended digital ecosystem' of its customers.

The electric vehicles would support the government's e-vision of promoting a clean and green India, he said.

To leverage the shared mobility ecosystem, Tata Motors would be providing 'innovative solutions' in people and goods transport.

In addition to product showcases, the Tata Motors pavilion at Auto Expo 2020 had been conceptualised and designed to provide visitors an interactive experience. As part of its sustainability mission, the company has also taken steps such as going paperless and increasing the green cover at the pavilion.

Keeping the growing start-up culture in mind, Tata Motors would use this platform to also crowdsource and engage with the start-up communities, he added.

## 'Allow exit for Sterling and Wilson investors'

Use of funds not as per prospectus

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Proxy advisory firm InGovern has said that the capital market regulator should force Sterling and Wilson Solar, which listed on the bourses in August 2019, to give an exit option to its investors for allegedly using the public issue proceeds in a manner that was not stated in the prospectus.

According to InGovern, while the objective of the issue was to enable the promoters – belonging to the Shapoorji Pallonji Group – repay loans amounting to ₹2,563 crore taken from the company, only ₹1,000 crore had been paid till December 31, 2019.

The initial public offer (IPO) was an offer for sale by the promoters who got ₹2,850 crore through the offering.

"This is tantamount to

change of objects of the IPO from what was stated in the prospectus. This has resulted in aggrieved minority public shareholders. SEBI (ICDR) Regulations, 2018 allow for the dissenting shareholders to be provided an exit offer by the promoters, in cases where there is a change in objects of the issue/ offer in the IPO prospectus," stated the InGovern report.

The company, however, has denied making any misleading statements in its prospectus.

"The report contains factually incorrect, misleading and unverified statements. The author of the report has acted irresponsibly as he has neither found it appropriate to ascertain the facts nor provide us with a draft of the report for our response," said the company in a statement.

## Economy can bounce back, says PM Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the Indian economy had the capacity to bounce back due to strong fundamentals and called upon everyone to work together and 'start to think like a nation'.

Mr. Modi was speaking at a meeting with various senior economists, venture capitalists and business leaders, ahead of the Union Budget 2020-21.

Home Minister Amit Shah, Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari, Railways and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar were present at the meeting along with secretaries from various Ministries, Nití Aayog Vice-Chairman Raviv Kumar and CEO Amitabh Kant. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was not present.

## Ashok Leyland, ABB arm ink pact on electric buses

Quick-charging TOSA to power vehicles

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Commercial vehicle manufacturer Ashok Leyland and ABB Power Products and Systems India Ltd. have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to develop electric buses using the latter's flash charge technology 'TOSA.'

According to ABB Power Products, TOSA (Trolleybus Optimisation Systeme Alimentation) is the fastest flash-charging connection technology that does the topping (charging) in seconds even as passengers get on and off the buses. Besides, it reduces the environmental pollution of the transit systems without af-

fecting passenger capacity or the journey time, said ABB Power Products and Systems India Ltd. (ABB Power Grids' business in India) in a statement.

When connected to charging infrastructure, the batteries can be charged with a 600-kilowatt power boost in 15 seconds. An additional few minutes of charge at the final terminal would result in full recharge without interrupting the bus schedule.

TOSA can prevent 1,000 tons of carbon dioxide emission on a line covering six lakh km per year. It also offers operating cost savings of 30% compared to an equivalent diesel transit system.

## Mahindra to unveil e-KUV in Q1 2020

Working with States, operators to make e-mobility viable: MD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Mahindra & Mahindra plans to introduce the electric version of its mini SUV – KUV100 – in the April-June 2020 quarter, with a likely price tag of less than ₹9 lakh, a senior company official said on Thursday.

"We have the e-KUV that will come up in the first quarter of next year... we are focussed on how to make it affordable and pricing it at less than ₹9 lakh," Mahindra & Mahindra managing director Pawan Goenka said.

He added that the company was also focussing on shared mobility in line with the government policy, and was working with State governments and fleet operators to make electric mobility



**Pricey possession:** We are focussed on how to make the e-KUV affordable, says Mr. Goenka. ■PAUL NORONHA

ty viable. The company, which has electric vehicle models such as e-Verito and e20 in its portfolio, has till now sold about 30,000 such vehicles. "We have the Atom (quadricycle), which was displayed in the last Auto Expo... it will be launched perhaps in the third quarter of

next current financial year. And that would probably fully redefine last-mile connectivity," Mr. Goenka said.

M&M said that about 1,000 Mahindra e-vehicles are part of Lithium Urban Technologies' fleet, a zero-emission employee transportation service provider.

## R-Infra gets nod to sell Delhi-Agra road project

Deal with CUBE III valued at ₹3,600 cr.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Reliance Infrastructure has received in-principle approval from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to sell the 180-km six-lane Delhi-Agra (DA) Toll Road Project to Cube Highways and Infrastructure III Pte. Ltd. (CUBE III) for an enterprise value (EV) of ₹3,600 crore.

CUBE III, which is owned by a Singapore-based global infrastructure fund, I Squared Capital, and a wholly owned subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, will acquire ₹1,900 crore debt of Reliance Infrastructure and pay ₹1,700 crore to the com-

pany for the equity part.

The deal, to be closed by the end of this month, is likely to make the Reliance Infrastructure account regular for lenders as the firm had defaulted on a payment of ₹1,050 crore.

According to the company, the entire proceeds from the deal will be used by Reliance Infrastructure to pay lenders and reduce the debt of the company.

Meanwhile, IDBI Trusteeship Services on Thursday invoked pledge of 55 lakh equity of Reliance Infrastructure, representing 2.09% of the company's share capital, according to a regulatory filing.

(With PTI inputs)





An in-depth look  
Madhumathy conducts  
research on historical  
shipwrecks  
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

# Pirate OF THE PACIFIC

From investigating shipwrecks to swimming alongside gigantic turtles, Madhumathy Chandrasekaran, a maritime archaeologist from India, narrates her underwater experiences

REJI VARGHESE

When Madhumathy Chandrasekaran first started swimming lessons at the age of four, little did she realise that her love for water would lead her onto a path-breaking career: she says she is India's first female maritime archaeologist. Currently a scuba diving instructor at Bond Water Sports in Kovalam, Kerala, 24-year-old Madhumathy has also dived in the waters of Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Cambodia and Australia among others.

She tells us about her life, career, and future plans.

**Tell us about your early influences and love for the sea.**

● I was born and raised in Chennai.

I started taking swimming lessons when I was very young and my parents always told me how difficult it was to get me to come out of the water. Being an absolute water baby, it was not surprising that I was mesmerised by large bodies of water.

**How did you embark on this little-known career?**

● I have always been fascinated by history, which, combined with my love for the sea, made maritime archaeology a great career choice for me. I joined a Masters programme in maritime archaeology at Flinders University, Australia. The faculty was amazing and I was hooked from day one.

**What exactly is maritime archaeology?**

● Maritime archaeology or 'MARCH' is basically conducting archaeology underwater or on anything marine related. Take lighthouses for example: even though they are not submerged, conducting research on them is considered part of maritime archaeology. My field of interest is nautical archaeology, within which I conduct research on historical shipwrecks.

**What was it like being part of the team that discovered South Australia's oldest shipwreck?**

● I was amongst three Masters MARCH students from Flinders

**SEA TRUTHS**

Maritime archaeology is a discipline within archaeology that specifically studies human interaction with the sea, lakes and rivers through the study of associated physical remains, be they vessels, shore-side facilities, port-related structures, cargoes, human remains or submerged landscapes.

Madhumathy is currently a Master Scuba Diving Instructor. She was awarded the Elite Instructor award by PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) in 2017.

She is the first recipient of the MaP fund, Australia, which is dedicated to the advancement of maritime and underwater archaeology and the protection and investigation of underwater cultural heritage in the Asia and Pacific regions, in particular in Australia and the ASEAN countries.

She has done Maritime archaeology field work in Sri Lanka, Australia and Vietnam and an internship at the Naval History and Heritage Command, Washington D.C.



who were chosen as volunteers for the search for South Australia's oldest shipwreck. It was a privilege to work with the team which consisted of some veteran maritime archaeologists and divers.

Initially, it was difficult to find the shipwreck because of bad weather conditions. But luckily, on the fifth day, one of the team members encountered a hard metal object which when brought to the surface, turned out to be a copper bolt that was used to attach wooden planks together for the ship. It was hard work and we were diving in cold water with strong currents. It was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had.

**What are your future plans ?**

● My goal is to pursue MARCH in India. I want to focus my research here because there is so much to be explored in this country. Since I am also a scuba instructor, I would like to reach out to archaeologists in Indian universities and get them to train in scuba diving, which would enable them to do archaeological projects underwater.

**Tell us about your love for scuba diving.**

● I first came to know about it from S. B. Aravind, who started Temple Adventures, a dive centre in Puducherry. Right from my first dive, I realised that this was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I went on to complete my first professional diving course, Divemaster, in 2014 when I was 19. In 2015, I got a job in the Cook Islands, near Fiji, where I also did my instructor course. At that time, I was India's youngest female scuba instructor.

**Do you have any interesting underwater incidents to share?**

● I was diving in the Cook Islands when I spotted a big, gorgeous sea turtle, and he was very shy in the beginning. He started to warm up to me and during my last dive, made eye contact with me for a long time and we were happily swimming side by side. I was in love.

## FOOD SPOT



RAHUL VERMA

Nostalgia is best served hot, with onion rings on the side. I thought that some days ago when a friend from Singapore came home. Since he misses Dilli-wallah food, we'd ordered some mutton *korma* for him. But, while we chatted, I realised that what he missed the most was the food of Gulati, a restaurant on Pandara Road that he and his friends often went to.

If I had known then that Gulati delivers food to areas even 15 km away (via Zomato and Swiggy), I would have ordered some butter chicken for him from there. But I only got to know this when I went there for lunch a couple of days ago. I was told by the young man in charge of the restaurant that they deliver food to aficionados through the day.

I was a bit surprised when I received an invite from Gulati. After all, the restaurant has been there since 1959, and has quite a few hard-core fans. But Namit Gulati has plans: For one, he has expanded the delivery system, and wants to expand the buffet. The old favourites – such as butter chicken, brain curry, *dal makhni* – are all there, of



# Nostalgia in the air

The famous Gulati restaurant on Pandara Road has more than just its Butter Chicken to offer, these days

course, but he has been adding to the menu keeping diner demands in mind.

Right now, Gulati has on the menu select Punjabi, Mughlai and Hyderabad dishes, but he hopes to expand that as well. Sometime in the near future, there may be new Gulatis in other parts of the town. "But not franchises," he says firmly.

As I bit into a firm yet juicy Fish

Tikka Lajawaab, I remembered the time when Delhi was a hick town, and the Pandara Road Market was one of the few places where you could go late at night for a rich meal. There was even a Chinese restaurant there called, of all things, Shahi Andaz! When Gulati was first set up, it was just a *dhaba*. But over the years, the eateries (Gulati, Pindi, Havemore) smar-

**New offerings** (Left) Hyderabad Chicken Biryani; Gulati Butter Chicken  
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tened up. Then the market itself changed, with a cobbled front courtyard and a fountain welcoming visitors. Gulati is the biggest there, with 140 covers, I was told.

In the olden days, we used to go Havemore for its brain curry, and to Gulati for the butter chicken. The butter chicken is still its most popular dish, Namit tells me. But I had the Hyderabad cuisine – Hyderabad Chicken Biryani and the Hyderabad Handi Gosht – and found them both delicious. The fine-grained biryani was not over-spiced, and the chicken had been cooked just right, with just the right masalas. The mutton in the Handi Gosht was nice and tender, and the gravy was deliciously rich.

We started with the Gulati Mutton Burrah Akbari. The *burrah* was superb: The meat was tender, and had soaked in all the spices. The Murgh Malai Tikka, again, was deliciously creamy.



The writer is a seasoned food critic

## PEOPLE

### A leaf from the rough book

Shamji Vishram, a National award winning weaver, tells us his story of making desi wool fashionable and of his workshop in Delhi



On Republic Day 2001, when Shamji Vishram and his community of weavers were preparing to celebrate with song and dance, an earthquake struck, destroying Bhujodi village in Bhuj, Gujarat. With it, his home and loom disappeared, as did that of his neighbours; he was shattered. "Two hundred and fifty looms existed before the quake. After the devastation, only 70 survived," says Shamji. Weaving, once a flourishing way of life, almost came to a standstill.

It pushed those who remained in the trade to begin using synthetic wool to bring down the cost of their products. Shamji worked hard at changing this, after travelling across Kutch to identify traditional products and their uses. New products were recreated for urban centres. In 2005 he received the National Award from then President Pratibha Patil.

This week, the 45-year-old weaver will be in Delhi, conducting a spinning and embroidery workshop at a four day long exhibition Desi Oon, organised by Khamir, an organisation that came up after the earthquake rocked Gujarat with a mission to preserve the crafts, heritage, and culture of the Kutch region. Excerpts from a conversation.

#### What is the tradition of using indigenous wool?

The Rabari, a pastoral community that also lives in the jungles, wore clothes made from indigenous wool. They wore all white - shawls, dhoti, turban, blankets. Women wore black outfits - ghagras with mirrorwork and blouses that were heavily embroidered. Now only a few members of this community wear traditional clothes. These outfits kept them warm in chilly weather. Similarly the Ahirs, farmers who walk long distances with their cows and buffaloes, wore multi coloured blankets.

**How have you used this wool for an urban audience?**

I have worked with desiwool from the Kutchi sheep that has coarse hair not found anywhere else. With this, I made carpets, bedcovers, jackets and stoles. Since Dilliwalas prefer softer shawls, I blended cotton and silk with desiwool. For the jackets, 40% is cotton, while 60% is wool. The Kutchi sheep wool is bought from the Maldhari community. Products have been designed on the basis of my understanding of the Delhi market. I also experimented with hand-stitched garments by engaging women into the process. So, kurtas and kaftans were made by mixing cotton and wool.

At Bikaner House, January 10th - 13th, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. are timing of the workshop conducted by the master weaver

MADHUR TANKHA

## PRODUCTS

### Clothing with a cause

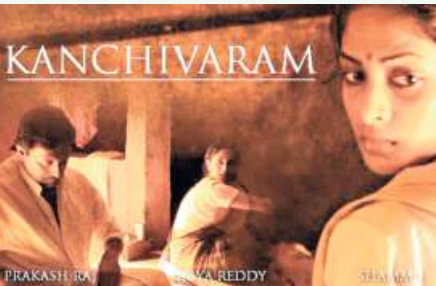


Just launched clothing brand PECKD says it's sustainable because every part of the garment decomposes – the fabric, thread, and buttons too. The first collection, Delta & Dawn, is named after a mother-daughter pair of humpback whales that were injured at sea and swam upstream into the Sacramento River, before they were rescued. The packaging and product tags are also made from biodegradable seeds paper.

Available at Peckd.co, upwards of ₹10,999

Contact us at [delhimetro@thehindu.co.in](mailto:delhimetro@thehindu.co.in)

## 5 EVENTS WORTH YOUR WHILE



### MOVIE

**Tamil drama**

IHC Film Club will screen *Kanchivaram*, a Tamil film directed by Priyadarshan. The film depicts the struggles of silk weavers in the town of Kanchipuram, as they live a perpetual hand-mouth existence. It comments on the need for organised cooperative initiatives to safeguard the interests of workers.

**VENUE:** Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre  
**TIME:** 7 p.m.



### PERFORMANCE

**Sitar and vocal recital**

The IIC Double Bill Concert will feature two performances this evening. The first is a solo sitar recital by Debojyoti Mukherjee from Delhi, a disciple of Pandit Barun Kumar Pal. This will be followed by a Hindustani vocal recital by Purnendu Bains from Chandigarh, a disciple of Pandit Madhup Mudgal.

**VENUE:** C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium, IIC  
**TIME:** 6 p.m.



### F&B

**Barbeque**

Elan, a restaurant in The Lodhi has unveiled a menu Barbeque Unlimited, available every Thursday to Saturday through winter. It offers an unlimited selection of live barbeque dishes paired with two rounds of house whiskey. On offer are Seekh Kabab, Lamb Chops, Chicken Shawarma, Paneer Tikka, and Malai Broccoli.

**VENUE:** Elan Courtyard, The Lodhi  
**TIME:** 7 p.m. - 11 p.m.



### GIG

**Techno**

Raasta, in association with Nightvibe presents the Dutch Techno/House icon Eelke Kleijn live tonight. Eelke owns the label Days like Nights and is also signed onto prestigious labels such as Suara, Toolroom Records. Known for his electronic dance music, Eelke will perform his label songs, with support from DJ R/EDL.

**VENUE:** Raasta, Green Park  
**TIME:** 9 p.m. onwards



### FILM

**Documentary**

Alliance Française de Delhi will screen a multilingual documentary titled *Earth Witness: Reflections on the Times and The Timeless*. Directed by award winning film-maker Akanksha Joshi, the film reflects on climate change through the lives of four people from four different parts of India.

**VENUE:** M.L. Bhartia Auditorium, Lodhi Road  
**TIME:** 6 p.m.





**B Gangadharamurthy**  
**Manager, Grameena Angadi, which markets rural artisans' work in Karnataka**

We call the time during Sankranti *suggi kala*. Harvest is a time of happiness for farmers, after many months of hard work of planting and growing the crops. In the villages of Karnataka, the celebrations begin in the morning. New clothes are worn, the cow is cleaned, fed (till its stomach is full!), decorated and a special puja is done. Games are played, such as the one which involves making the cow jump over fire. A *torana* made of rice grains still in their husks is hung at the doorways of houses and even the rangoli drawn in front of houses has elements of what has been harvested. Of course, it is compulsory that *yellu bella* (a mix of sesame seeds, jaggery, dry coconut or *copra*, groundnuts and fried gram) is made, for neighbours to give and receive from each other. There is a saying, “*yellu bella kottu olle mathadu*”. It refers to the good wishes and blessings people give each other on this day, along with the *yellu bella* and sugarcane. This is a time of *sowhara* (harmony). *Yellu bella* has many health benefits and after so many months of hard work, the farmers need the energy they get by eating it. It is something made only during Sankranti, by all families.

*As told to Aparna Narraim*

All over the country, the harvest festival is a celebration of abundance and a time to thank Mother Earth. We ask our food providers in the hinterlands about how they mark the day

# A toast to the sun

THE FEATURES TEAM



**M Malar Mannan**  
**Farmer, jallikattu champion, and bull-rearer from Alanganallur village in Tamil Nadu**

In rural Tamil Nadu, you know it is Pongal time when you see a fresh coat of limewash on the walls of houses. We limewash our homes, use *kaavi* (a red pigment) highlights wherever necessary, a couple of days leading up to the festival. The night before, a small bunch of bright yellow *aavaram* flowers (*Senna auriculata*) and white *koorai* flowers (*Aerva lanata*) are suspended at the doorway. The heroes of the big day are farm animals; cows and bulls, especially. They play a key role in agriculture and toil in our fields all through the year. On Pongal day, we pay them our obeisance. They are like our children. We bathe the animals, apply turmeric paste on their bodies, decorate their faces with *kumkum pottu*, garland them. We tie flowers



around the feet of cows and *salangai* (brass bells) for bulls. Members of the household, bedecked in new clothes, gather around a makeshift stove made of stacked bricks or stones at dawn. This time of the year is when farmers have money on them, and hence, they spend it on clothes and good food. On the stove, set up outdoors in front of the doorway, sits a clay pot that bubbles with a heady concoction of milk, just-harvested rice, *toor dal*, jaggery, and ghee. This dish, the star of the season, is first offered on a banana leaf to the sun. We worship the sun and hence offer him the dish made from the first harvest of the season. The cows and bulls are fed next, followed by the children and then adults. We then distribute the *pongal* among our neighbours. Festivities last for three days. The best part is, farm animals are untied and allowed to graze freely, as much as they please. They meet their friends, run about. Everyone is happy.

*As told to Akila Kannadasan*

**Time to celebrate** (Clockwise from centre) Kite-flying is a common component of the festival; a plateful from a Bihu feast; cows being bedecked for Pongal in Tamil Nadu; Assamese youngsters prepare for Bhogali Bihu; Yellu bella prepared for Suggi Kala in Karnataka

■ IRIN KASHYAP, P GOUTHAM, RITU RAJ KONWAR AND GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



**Bikash Pratim Buragohain**  
**Farmer from Barpathar in Upper Assam**

In Assam, the day before *bhogali bihu* or *magh bihu* is called *Uruka* – community feasting by a bonfire. Families get together and contribute to the meal that is to be cooked: not by way of money, but meat, fish, rice, vegetables or anything grown and bred by us. That night, the men cook out in the open, while the women and children sit by the fire and sing songs, play games or engage in marathon *pitha*-making sessions. Assamese *pithas* like *til pitha* (made of sticky rice), *gheela pitha* (made with jaggery and rice flour), *narikolor laru* (coconut laddoo) and *poka laru* (laddoos made with rice flour and jaggery

and hard as stone). It is a night of revelry, as we get together to celebrate our harvest and take stock of what could have gone better. With every farmer's barn full, we do not hesitate to feed as many people as possible. Once the food is prepared, we dine inside a *bhela ghor* (a temporary house made of leftover dried straws and banana leaves). Those who do not make the *bhela ghor* prepare the *meji* by arranging logs of fire wood. The following day is called *magh bihu*. Before sunrise, everyone in our household takes a bath, our houses are cleansed and doors and windows are opened for 'goodness' to flow in. The *sutal* or the front yard gets a fresh coating of cow dung and mud and then we offer our respect to the *bhela ghor* by lighting an earthen lamp inside it, before setting it on fire with offerings of til, rice and *dubori bon* to show our

gratitude to the field and the sky for the good year that went by and for the year to come. Following this, we sit for another round of feasting or *jolpan* – Assamese breakfast of homemade cereal made of rice like *muri*, *akhoi*, *hurum*, *xandoh*, or *sira*. These are best enjoyed with curd and *juliya gur* (a runny form of jaggery which is almost like caramel). We set the curd in earthen pots. Our main breakfast is followed with homemade snacks and *pithas*. Two must-haves are tubers like *kaath alu* (air potato) and *kosu pura* (roasted colocasia). The rest of the day goes in visiting friends and family, or taking part in the village games. This festival also marks the beginning of our planning for the coming ploughing season, saving and exchanging seeds.

*As told to Prabalika M Borah*

## POOCH CAFE



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



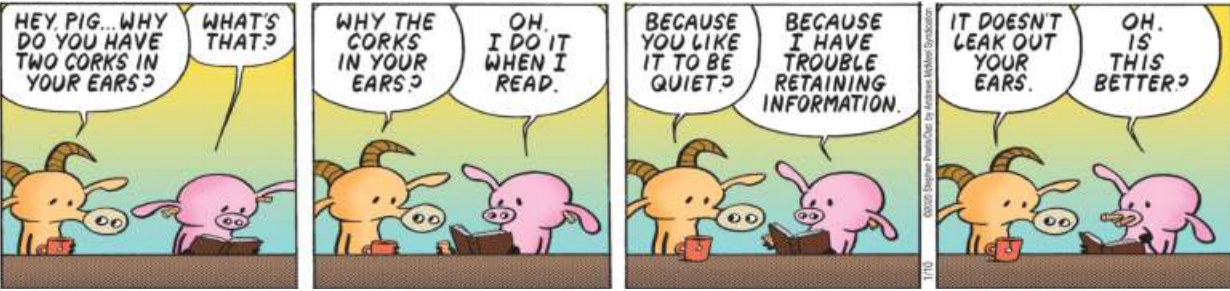
## TIGER



## WUMO



## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS



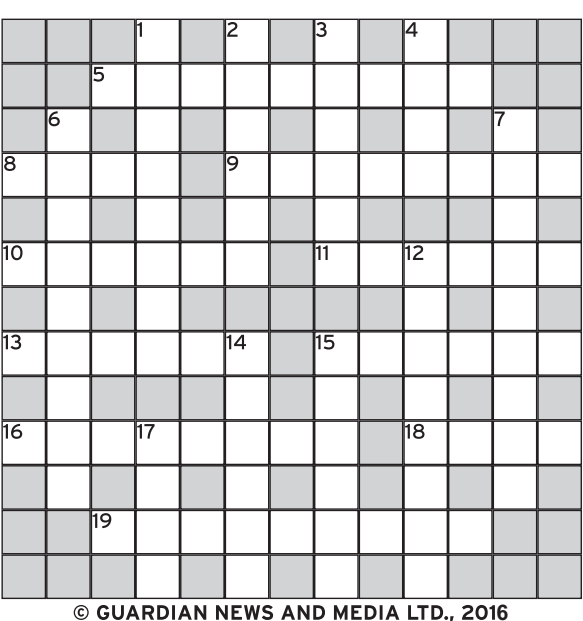
## GRAFFITI



## HEALTH CAPSULES

WHAT I CAN I DO TO IMPROVE MY CHOLESTEROL?  
BERGAMOT is the flavor behind Earl Grey tea. BERGAMOT IS A YELLOW TO ORANGE CITRUS FRUIT THAT IS NATIVE TO CALABRIA, ITALY. RESEMBLING AN ORANGE, BERGAMOT POSSESSES POWERFUL POLYPHENOLS THAT HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO REDUCE LDL CHOLESTEROL AND IMPROVE BRAIN FUNCTION. AVAILABLE IN CAPSULE FORM.

## THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13273

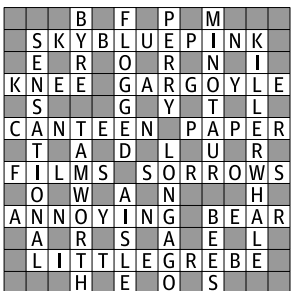


To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code.

- joint (9)
- 12 Bear in mind (8)
- 14 Arctic plain (6)
- 15 Prickly plants (6)
- 17 Longer of the two forearm bones (4)

The solution will appear on January 11, 2020.  
Solution No. 13272

- Across
- 5 Edge – border (9)
- 8 Infantry – unit of linear measure (4)
- 9 Ambridge (anag) – eg grouse (4,4)
- 10 Small rounded stone (6)
- 11 Punched (6)
- 13 Shade of blue (6)
- 15 Fall (6)
- 16 Insinuation (8)
- 18 Culinary herb (4)
- 19 Captivated (9)
- Down
- 1 Segment of the spine (8)
- 2 Silly laugh (6)
- 3 River at Henley (6)
- 4 Worm-like larva of an insect (4)
- 6 Regain consciousness (4,5)
- 7 Crisp skin of a pork









TV PICKS

**NBA:** Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 5.30 a.m. & 8 a.m.  
**Khelo India Youth Games:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.  
**Senior Women's T20:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 10.45 a.m.  
**Big Bash League:** Sony Six (SD & HD), 1.40 p.m.  
**India vs Sri Lanka:** 3rd T20I, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.  
**ISL:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.  
**Premier League:** SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Saturday).

IN BRIEF



**Nuggets see off Mavericks**  
LOS ANGELES  
Nikola Jokic (*in pic*) made a clutch go-ahead lay-up with eight seconds left and finished with 33 points as Denver Nuggets out-duelled Luka Doncic's Dallas Mavericks 107-106 on Wednesday.  
**The results:** San Antonio Spurs 129 bt Boston Celtics 114; Toronto Raptors 112 bt Charlotte Hornets 110 (OT); Miami Heat 122 bt Indiana Pacers 108; Orlando Magic 123 bt Washington Wizards 87; Houston Rockets 122 bt Atlanta Hawks 115; Denver Nuggets 107 bt Dallas Mavericks 106; New Orleans Pelicans 123 bt Chicago Bulls 108; Utah Jazz 128 bt New York Knicks 104; Milwaukee Bucks 107 bt Golden State Warriors 98. AGENCIES

**Ridhima Dilawari in sole lead**  
PUNE  
Ridhima Dilawari moved into sole lead after the second round of the first leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour 2020 at the Poona Club Golf Course here on Thursday. Ridhima, who shared the first-round lead with amateur Pranavi Urs (70, 73), shot 71 to aggregate one-under 141. Ridhima is now two shots clear of Pranavi and Amandeep Drall, whose second round 70 was the only sub-par round of the day. Vani Kapoor moved up with one-over 72 and at 147 for two rounds, is now tied fourth alongside Afshan Fatima (73, 74). Diksha Dagar (72, 77) and Saaniya Sharma (73, 76) are tied-sixth. PTI

# Saina, Sindhu in quarterfinals

Sameer and Prannoy shown the door

MALAYSIA MASTERS

IAN S KUALA LUMPUR  
India's P.V. Sindhu and Saina Nehwal came out with a spectacular performance on Thursday, winning their respective second-round matches in the Malaysia Masters badminton and entered the quarterfinals.  
However, it was curtains for both Sameer Verma and H.S. Prannoy.  
Saina defeated eighth seed South Korea's An Se Young 25-23, 21-12 in 39 minutes.

**Made to sweat**  
In the first game, Saina was made to work hard by the 17-year-old as both the shuttlers kept going at each other. But the Indian had the last laugh and ultimately won 25-23.  
Saina, however, didn't have to sweat too much in the second game as she won 21-12.  
She will now face Rio Olympic gold medallist Caro-



**Great going:** Saina Nehwal needed 39 minutes to down eighth seed South Korea's An Se Young. • RAJEEV BHATT/THE HINDU

lina Marin of Spain.  
Sindhu easily put it across Japan's Aya Ohori 21-10, 21-15 in just 34 minutes. After a one-sided contest in the first game, the Japanese showed

some improvement but it wasn't enough to stop Sindhu.  
In the men's section, Sameer went down in a hard-fought battle against Malay-

sia's Lee Zii Jia. The Malaysian won 21-19, 21-20 in 52 minutes. Prannoy too, bowed out after going down 14-21,16-21 to Japan's Kento Momota in 45 minutes.

## Unfortunate



A 12-year-old girl is given medical attention after being hit by a stray arrow during a practice session ahead of the Khelo India Youth Games in Dibrugarh on Thursday. She was to be flown to AIIMS, New Delhi, for further treatment. • ANI

## Ankita overcomes Irina Falconi

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU BENDIGO (AUSTRALIA)  
Ankita Raina battled past former World No. 63 Irina Falconi of the United States 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 in the pre-quarterfinals of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament on Thursday.  
In the \$15,000 ITF women's event in Tunisia, Zeel Desai outplayed Olympempe Lancelot of France 6-0, 6-2 after a bye in the first round.

**The results: \$25,000 ITF women, Bendigo, Australia: Singles (pre-quarterfinals):** Ankita Raina bt Irina Falconi (US) 2-6, 6-4 6-4.  
**\$15,000 ITF women, Monastir, Tunisia: Singles (pre-quarterfinals):** Zeel Desai bt Olymppe Lancelot (Fra) 6-0, 6-2.  
**\$15,000 ITF men, Antalya, Turkey: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Gianni Mina (Fra) & Johan Nikles (Sui) bt Luca Gelhardt (Ger) & Aryan Goveas 6-4, 6-2; Osmancan Soyler & Mert Naci Turker (Tur) bt Valentin Vanta (Rou) & Nitin Kumar Sinha 6-1, 6-3.

## Ishaque to meet Armaan in the final

SPORTS BUREAU RAIPUR  
Ishaque Eqbal fought his way past Suraj Prabodh 2-6, 6-2, 6-3 to set up a title clash against Armaan Bhatia in the ₹250,000 Gondwana Cup AITA men's ranking tennis tournament at the VIPs Club on Thursday.

**The results (semifinals): Singles:** Ishaque Eqbal bt Suraj Prabodh 2-6, 6-2, 6-3; Armaan Bhatia bt Ganta Sai Karthik Reddy 6-3, 7-5.  
**Doubles:** Faisal Qamar & Fardeen Qamar bt Suraj Prabodh & B.R. Nikshep 7-5, 6-3; Armaan Bhatia & Ishaque Eqbal bt Ominder Baishya & Ankit Chopra 6-2, 6-3.

## Reshma beats Sarah

SPORTS BUREAU CHANDIGARH  
Reshma Maruri beat compatriot Sarah Dev 4-1, 4-0 to make the girls' quarterfinals of the ITF grade-3 junior tennis tournament at the CLTA Complex on Thursday.  
**The results (pre-quarterfinals): Boys:** Jean Marc Malkowski (Sui) bt Nishant Dabas 4-3(4), 4-0; Orel Kimhi (Isr) bt Chirag Duhan 3-4(4), 4-3(1), 4-2; Haoyuan Huang (Chn) bt Denim Yadav 4-1, 4-2.  
Martin Katz (Bel) bt Yamato Sueoka (Jpn) 4-3(4), 4-3(2); Bohua Dong (Chn) bt Sushant Dabas 4-1, 4-3(1); Raphael Collignon (Bel) bt Samer Al Tori

(Issr) 4-1, 4-3(3); Leo Raquin (Fra) bt Arnav Pathange 4-3(1), 4-2; Han Chih Lin (Tpe) bt Uddayvir Singh 4-0, 4-0.  
**Girls:** Juliette Bovy (Bel) bt Yu Yun Li (Tpe) 4-1, 4-2; Yaroslava Bartashevich (Rus) bt Xinyue Hu (Chn) 4-3(3), 4-2; Jasmine Conway (GBR) bt Suhitha Maruri 4-3(1), 4-1.  
Mika Dagan Fruchtmann (Isr) bt Teja Tirunelveli (US) 1-4, 4-1, 4-1; Jiaqi Huang (Chn) bt Lakshanya Vishwanath 4-1, 4-0; Reshma Maruri bt Sarah Dev 4-1, 4-0.  
Amelia Waligora (Bel) bt Dana Issabayeva (Kaz) 4-2, 4-0; Sabrina Kalandarov (Isr) bt Alessandra Simone (Ita) 0-4, 4-2, 4-1.

## Bengaluru may not host PBL matches

Unavailability of venue cited as reason; Hyderabad may benefit

ASHWIN ACHAL BENGALURU  
Bengaluru is unlikely to host Premier Badminton League (PBL) matches, due to the unavailability of the Sree Kanteerava Indoor Stadium. Hyderabad has emerged as the frontrunner in the search for a replacement venue.  
In the original schedule, Bengaluru was set to host two league stage matches, followed by the semifinals and final (February 5 to 9).  
"Bengaluru is unlikely to host matches this season. We are looking to shift the matches to Hyderabad," Atul Pande, managing director, Sportzlive, the official licence holder of PBL told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

**Organisers disappointed**  
PBL organisers are disappointed that government

authorities did not grant permission to use the Sree Kanteerava Indoor Stadium. The Mini Olympics, a multi-sports event organised by the Karnataka Olympic Association, is scheduled to be held at the stadium in the same week.  
"The league commences in just about 10 days, so we cannot wait for much longer."  
"It is a pity, because the people of Bengaluru have been denied the chance to see big stars like P.V. Sindhu and Tai Tzu in action," Pande said.  
The PBL commences on January 20 at Chennai, before moving to Lucknow on January 25.  
The Hyderabad leg starts on January 29, and if the city is chosen as the replacement venue, the league will stay on there until its conclusion.

## Bagan downs Arrows

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA KOLKATA  
Mohun Bagan posted its fourth consecutive win in the I-League, beating Indian Arrows 1-0 here on Thursday.  
Daniel Cyrus scored off a spectacular volley in the first quarter giving Bagan full points and the right to stay on top of the standings with 13 points from six matches.  
Bagan dominated proceedings from the start employing a consistent flow of attacks through the flanks. V.P. Suhair was excellent in keeping up a steady supply into the Arrows box.  
The goal came in the 18th minute. Nongdamba Naorem's attempt at goal rebounded off Arrows defender Bikash Yumman and Cyrus was on hand to fire in a rasping volley from the top of the box.  
**Other result: At Kozhikode:** Gokulam FC 2 (Shibil 81, 90) lost to Chennai City FC 3 (Araujo 44, Raju 54, Sri Ram 76).

## Joshi gains from Harsha's blunder

CHESS

RAKESH RAO NEW DELHI  
Grandmasters and International Masters had a mixed day with some of them being stretched more than expected by far lesser-rated first-round rivals. Overall, a few surprises were thrown in as the Delhi International Open Grandmasters chess tournament got off on a chilly afternoon here on Thursday.  
After Iran's Pouya Idani missed his flight from Tehran and brought down the number of Grandmasters to 37, not all of these could win as expected.  
The decision to adopt 'accelerated pairings' to the first three rounds also meant higher-ranked players faced higher rated players than what they would have played under normal pairings.



**Wrong move:** Harsha Bharathakoti, left, was the only GM to lose on the day after missing a trick against G.B. Joshi. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

GM Nodirbek Yakubboev, rated 2597, in 48 moves. In fact, it was Dhananjay who pressed for victory after advancing a protected-pawn to the sixth rank but Yakubboev defended accurately.

**Peace offering**  
Chilean GM Rodrigo Vasquez Schroeder (2487) sensed that his rival Aashna Makhija (2068) was unwell and chose to offer a draw in a dominating position after 45 moves.  
Former Commonwealth champion P. Karthikeyan was another GM who could only get a draw, after facing Sidhant Gaikwad.  
Atul Dahale (2025) stunned Tajikistan's IM Muhammad Husenkhajev, rated 2420.

**Leading first-round results (Indians unless stated):** Anish Gandhi lost to Farrukh Amonatov (Tjk), Pavel Ponkratov (Rus) bt Manish Kumar; Vinayakulkarni lost to M. Karthikeyan; Jose Eduardo Martinez Alcantara (Per) bt Harshal Shahi; Karthik Thirsh lost to Abhijeet Gupta; Levan Pantsulaia (Geo) bt Soham Datar; Kiran Manisha Mohanty lost to Aleksey Gogonov (Rus); Rodrigo Vasquez Schroeder (Chi) drew with Aashna Makhija.  
Nguyen Van Huy (Vie) drew with Vedant Pimpalkhare; Atul Dahale bt Muhammad Khunsenkhajev (Tjk); P. Karthikeyan drew with Siddhant Gaikwad; Sammed Shete drew with Akila Kavinda (Sri); Mohed Ameir (Egy) drew with Bhagyashree Patil; Ketan Khaire bt Akash Thakur; Niladri Bhattacharya drew with N. Sudhakar Babu.

## Catching the boundary-line rule right

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE SYDNEY  
A two-man catch to dismiss Hobart skipper Matthew Wade in a T20 Big Bash match in Brisbane has led to confusion over the laws with even Lord's weighing in.  
Hobart batted first and had limped to 98 for five off 14.4 overs, largely thanks to a captain's knock by Wade. On 61, he launched the ball high to the long-on boundary.  
Brisbane's Matt Renshaw, fielding just inside the ropes, leapt and parried the ball into the air

as he fell backwards.  
He landed off the field and then jumped to slap the falling ball back over the ropes to Tom Banton, running round from deep mid-wicket, who caught the pass. After a long video review, the third umpire decided that Wade, who had already walked off, was given out.  
"I had no idea of the rule really – once he hit outside the field of play I didn't know if he was allowed to touch the ball or not," Wade told match broadcaster Channel 7.  
"Umpires said he was,

and once they told me he was allowed to (go) outside the field of play and tap it back in, I knew I was out."  
The 2017 update to the laws included a provision for boundaries and "airborne fielders".  
Lord's, home of the MCC who act as cricket's rule makers, tweeted that "Under Law 19.5, the catch is deemed lawful."  
The law says: "A boundary will also be given if a fielder in contact with the ball makes contact with any object grounded beyond the boundary, including another fielder."

## Bengaluru FC proves too good for Jamshedpur

ISL

SHREEDUTTA CHIDANANDA BENGALURU  
Bengaluru FC climbed to the second spot on the ISL table with a dominant 2-0 victory over Jamshedpur FC here on Thursday.  
Erik Paartalu headed the home side in front on eight minutes before the indefatigable Sunil Chhetri scored another in the second half. The loss was Jamshedpur's third in succession, with the side winless in its last six games.

**Early goal**  
BFC took an early lead, the goal scored from what is now a familiar set-piece routine. A corner was won after a sustained spell of pressure, and Dimas Delgado delivered a fine ball for Paartalu at the near post. The Australian



**Hero!** Erik Paartalu is the toast of his teammates after putting BFC ahead in the eighth minute. • K. MURALI KUMAR.

rose high to head home.  
Ashique Kuruniyan made an early impression on the game, surging into the box

repeatedly from the right flank. Narender Gahlot, who was stationed at left-back, did not get a moment's

quiet. Kuruniyan had an opportunity to double the home side's advantage, but his powerful volley saved by

Subrata Paul.  
Jamshedpur did little of note in the first half, failing to trouble Gurpreet Singh Sandhu in the BFC goal. David Grande, the team's new signing, put in a good cross for Farukh Choudhary but the India international's shot was blocked by a determined Kuruniyan.  
**Three man defence**  
Jamshedpur switched to a three-man defence at half-time, replacing right-back Jitendra Singh with Bikash Jai-ru.  
Not long after, BFC brought on Udanta Singh – who was benched after an ineffective display against FC Goa – to a rousing reception from the home crowd.  
A little past the hour mark, BFC scored a second. The goal was a product of two excellent pieces of ac-

tion at opposite ends of the pitch. First, with Gourav Mukhi racing towards the BFC goal, Juanan put in a perfectly-timed sliding tackle. With possession recovered, Paartalu clipped a long, aerial pass for Chhetri. Gahlot was caught ball-watching as Chhetri slipped past him before rounding the goalkeeper to score from an acute angle.  
Jamshedpur fought back but simply could not break through. Grande was through on goal with only Gurpreet Singh Sandhu to beat but the BFC custodian pulled off a stunning save with his outstretched right hand. The goalkeeper was in top form on the night, as was the rest of the side; Jamshedpur was simply second-best.  
**The result:** Bengaluru FC 2 (Erik Paartalu 8, Sunil Chhetri 63) bt Jamshedpur FC 0.



# Sturdy beds for hard battlers

In an Olympics first, Athletes Village to have beds made of cardboard

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
TOKYO  
Tokyo Olympic athletes beware – particularly larger ones. The bed frames in the Athletes Village at this year's Olympics will be made of cardboard. Sturdy cardboard.  
“Those beds can stand up to 200kg,” explained Takashi Kitajima, the general manager of the Athletes Village, speaking through an interpreter. Surely no Olympic athlete weighs that much.

**Stronger than wood**  
“They are stronger than wooden beds,” Kitajima added. He also took into account the possibility of a wild room celebration after, say, a gold-medal victory. “Of course, wood and cardboard would each break if you jumped on them,” he said.  
The single-bed frames will be recycled into paper products after the Games. The mattress components – the mattresses are not made of cardboard – will be recycled into plastic products.  
The mattress is broken up into three distinct sections,



**Recyclable:** A cardboard bed that is to be used in the Athletes Village on display. ■AP

and the firmness of each can be adjusted. The idea was to use materials that could be remade after the Olympics and Paralympics. But the cardboard frames and supports should give the rooms a spartan look.  
Organisers showed off the beds and a few other furnishings on Thursday at their

headquarters. The entire Athletes Village complex will be completed in June. The Olympics opens on July 24 followed by the Paralympics on August 25.  
“The organising committee was thinking about recyclable items, and the bed was one of the ideas,” Kitajima explained, crediting local

Olympic sponsor Airweave Inc. for the execution.  
Organisers say this is the first time that beds and bedding in the Athletes Village have been made of renewable materials.  
The Athletes Village, being built alongside Tokyo Bay, will need 18,000 beds in 21 apartment towers.

## More tennis stars join exhibition game

Proceeds from ticket sales to be donated towards bushfire relief

### GENERAL

ANI  
ATLANTA  
Top tennis stars like Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams will be playing an exhibition match to raise funds for Australia's bushfire relief.  
Apart from these three, Naomi Osaka, Nick Kyrgios and Stefanos Tsitsipas have also confirmed their availability for the match, CNN reported.  
The match will be played

on January 15 at Melbourne's Rod Laver Arena. The Australian Open Rally for Relief will be donating the proceedings from ticket sales to the bushfire relief efforts.  
Tennis star Maria Sharapova had also announced on Wednesday that she had left 10 signed pairs of her tennis shoes in her Brisbane hotel that members of the public could buy with a donation to the Australian Red Cross.  
“Brisbane, I have signed ten pairs of my tennis shoes, left them at the @BrisbaneTennisdesk at the Westin Ho-

tel, alongside a donation envelope for fire rescue efforts. They're yours to keep, we just ask you to donate AUD 300 a pair. All money going directly to Red Cross,” Sharapova tweeted.  
Sharapova and Novak Djokovic have decided to donate \$25,000 each for Australia's bushfire relief fund.  
**Warne's gesture**  
Earlier, former Australian spinner Shane Warne on Monday had announced to auction his Baggy Green cap to raise funds for victims of

devastating bushfires in Australia.  
Taking to Twitter, Warne made the announcement and posted a statement.  
“The horrific bushfires in Australia have left us all in disbelief. The impact these devastating fires are having on so many people is unthinkable and has touched us all. Lives have been lost, homes have been destroyed and over 500 million animals have died too,” Warne wrote.  
Wildfires have been raging across Australia for months.



# FRIDAYREVIEW

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SHRINKHLA SAHAJ

In times marked by political turbulence, artists are exploring urgent and fresh ways to raise critical questions and respond to social impulses through art making. Scouring a wide range of creative expression like floor paintings, graffiti, invisible theatre, dance walks, slam poetry and protest songs, art is integrating with political action to stage synchrony of radical articulation. The recent past has witnessed artistic outpouring on the streets and social media alongside speeches and sloganeering, signalling a strong return of protest art.

## We the people

In the women's march in the capital on January 3, theatre artiste Maya Rao made a performance that involved draping the sari while reciting the Preamble to the Constitution accompanied by music. The aesthetic is derived from the urgency of the moment. Rao says, "Every time one can approach the Preamble from a different lens. In the context of the women's march, I wanted to create devices that speak to women, and can be read with ease. The sari is not just a garment, it is layered socially and culturally. Many women wear the sari from girlhood till the day they die, and for an Indian woman, it is often a layering of her own skin."

Street performances challenging gender norms are a massive part of Rao's oeuvre. In the 1980s, the anti-dowry campaign found an artistic ally in street theatre. Part of much acclaimed street plays like 'Om Swaha', Rao feels that the genre is still as politically potent yet its prime objective has shifted with time. "In the traditional ways of making street theatre, it was important to provide the material, to inform people. Now, with television and media, that is already happening much faster. So, for street theatre, it is not about peeling apart an issue as it was earlier, but how to take it further and examine it through interesting artistic devices."

Sudhanva Deshpande, theatre artist, Jana Natya Manch, reflects, "Street theatre is a live art that combines so many different things from music and text to



The sari is not just a garment, it is layered socially and culturally... for an Indian woman, it is often a layering of her own skin  
Maya Rao

**Making a point** (Clockwise from below) Maya Rao in performance; young artists working on a graffiti; a cartoon by Rachita Taneja

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



## All in the moment

Artist Rachita Taneja recently conducted sessions on protest posters with the students at Jamia. Her comic series, "Sanitary Panels", started five years ago, has generated much enthusiasm on social media. An activist invested in human rights and environment issues, Taneja started the comic as a response to the arrest of students for posting their opinions online. "I named the comic so because I wanted it to be representative of what it would talk about - all that is controversial, taboo. Some of the images from my comics that have gone viral have also been used at protests where people have drawn it themselves. Writing the text is the more challenging part of the idea. My style keeps switching, sometimes I draw on the phone as ideas emerge, sometimes I write first. It is all in the moment and responses from people range from trolling and threats to appreciation."

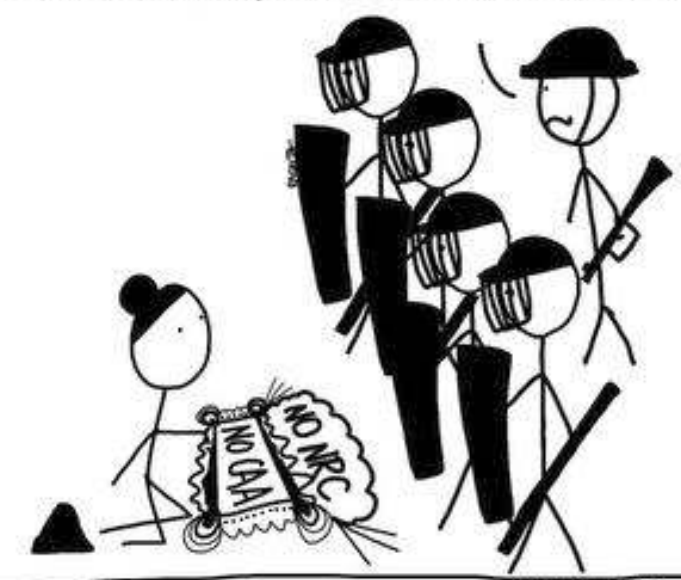
yesteryears like the fist and flag. Others capture the contemporary movement as images of Shaheen Bagh women make their way into the floor paintings. One of the works brings together a portrait of Gandhi alongside the text - "There are many causes I would die for, not a single cause I would kill for."

A student (name withheld on request) pursuing her Masters in Visual Effects and Animation, AJK, MCRC, says, "It is a silent, creative protest. Being students of art and media, we wanted to express ourselves in a relatable visual way where people can understand what is happening, what we want to say, and how it affects the entire nation."

Faculty member, Anugyan Nag, agrees that the art works have generated impactful responses and go a long way in rebuilding the spirits of the students. "This art movement has emerged spontaneously from the students. They have experienced fear, violence and trauma in the same spaces a few weeks back, and it is important for them to reclaim the space as a site of resurrection, resistance and love through these art works."

While visual political art, from posters to comics, has been a radical form of dissent traditionally, the medium has taken on a new life with art works and images going viral speedily on social media. Much of the art is work in progress, yet artists are closely imagining ways of bringing communities together through collaborative actions. As new mediums of socially engaged art swoop through protest sites, public places and social media, artists are rising up to the challenge of creating safe spaces of expression at the intersection of politics and aesthetics.

LOOK AT HOW DANGEROUS THESE PROTESTERS ARE



Using everyday movements as choreography, Raikhy devised a symbolic gesture where people gathered around the writing and went down on their knees in a gesture of prayer. The participants were free to interpret it as 'sajda' or 'maatha tekna' or just bowing in reverence

powerful action to sync well with the people and enable everyone to join." As more people gathered around the protest sites, there were also attempts at erasing a part of the writing. The threat of censorship follows any kind of protest art. Roy points out that though they want to do radical critical comments as artists, it is important not to hurt sentiments. Dancer-choreographer Mandeep Raikhy adds, "Even a simple, peaceful, creative act like inscribing words on the road was not ea-

sy and we were interrupted, challenged and threatened for doing this."

Using everyday movements as choreography, Raikhy devised a symbolic gesture where people gathered around the writing and went down on their knees in a gesture of prayer. The participants were free to interpret it as 'sajda' or 'maatha tekna' or just bowing in reverence. While some seemed hesitant about joining in this choreography, unsure of whether this was performance or actual prayer, there were others who followed with curiosity.

## On ground and online

While artists are attempting to bring aesthetics to the streets, af-

ter the recent campus attacks, university spaces like Jamia Millia Islamia and Aligarh Muslim University resemble a visual art gallery. Here students have found their expression in graffiti and floor paintings, covering the university walls and roads with a daily exhibition. Painting in groups of 3-4 people, the students use spray cans, emulsion paints and acrylic to translate their ideas into images. Some works display only text like 'peace' written across the road, much like the chalk inscriptions in central Delhi. There are others in the format of a protest poster where text and visuals merge to create a statement. The visuals cite common symbols from political posters of

# Stepping back, stepping ahead

The five-day Natya Kala Conference 'Nirikshana' took a closer look at tradition and contemporary aspects of Bharatanatyam

ABHIRAMI RAO

Only a year away from its 40th edition, this year's Natya Kala Conference convened by senior dancer-choreographer Rama Vaidyanathan, was held at the Krishna Gana Sabha in Chennai from December 26 to 30. Titled 'Nirikshana: Bharatanatyam under the magnifying glass', the conference set out to explore the dance form and address some of the issues.

Here are snippets of selected sessions over the five days of the conference:

Day one witnessed visible excitement over the first session, hosting Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, Sudharani Raghupathy and Chitra Visweswaran, titled 'Dance Buddies: Re-visiting the Kura-vani Story.' The film began with a shot of Sudharani Raghupathy. As it played out, the audience relived a slice of 1987 with Doordarshan's (DD) recording of Virallimalai Kuruvani, an abridged version. The success of the episode took them to the Festival of India in the USSR and Middle East. This was followed by re-creation of the piece by the trio that met with rousing applause and loud cheers. Although the hooting audience was a new addition to the Chennai dance scene, the session was an eye-opener in how improvisation in perfor-

mance comes with experience.

## Alarippu patterns

'Alarippu Adventures' with Christopher Gurusamy, Harinie Jeevitha, Radhe Jaggi and Preethi Ramprasad explored different interpretations of alarippu. The navarasa, temple structures, garuda and the joy of playing games were all uniquely woven into khanda tripata, khanda ata, misra jhampa and chatusra dhrupa talams, composed by Ramamoorthy Sriganesh. At the end, a demonstration in group dynamics to a chatusra alarippu explored interesting formations and convergence of styles.

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This experiment in choreography and creativity, represented a celebration of the new dimensions the upcoming generation of dancers bring to the table.

The possibilities of building tension in a room are aplenty. There was enough to debate and deliberate upon in 'Arangetram: A Boon or a Bane'. It is to be noted that none of the gurus were opposed to the concept of the arangetram itself. A genuine concern among young dancers, with respect to opportunities and the economics of performance, were reflected in this session. Moderated by Chitra Visweswaran, this session delved into how arangetrams are being used as a social status showcase, the rising exclusivity through expensive arangetrams and navigating the Guru-Sishya parampara over these issues. Some in the panel reflected upon involvement and commitment students exhibit for the arangetram. "(Children) rise to the occasion. They must, they have no choice but to," quipped Leela Samson. "However, one does question its purpose if it is only a one-off performance-based involvement. If dancers are not motivated by the love for dance, what is really the point?"

Another concern with arangetrams is the presentation of a detailed repertoire without the theoretical knowledge or



Kuravani Trio Sudharani, Padma and Chitra ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

movement vocabulary. While traditionally teachers are expected to decide if the student is ready for an arangetram, the litmus test in honesty and parents' insistence are an open secret. Sheela Unnikrishnan mentioned that it is up to the student's family to choose how lavishly to conduct the event. Samson said, in particular to the young dancers, "What is the choice you're making to spend this amount of money?" Whether the takeaway from this ses-

sion would lead to more temple performances, crowd-funded arangetrams or a conscious economic cap for arangetrams need to be seen.

## Evolution of the art

'Of Bharatanatyam Then & Now: Tracing changes in its content and performance' by Rajika Puri on the Third Day was an insightful presentation with visuals, studied observations and wit. A crash course or a refresher depending

on your acquaintance with the dance form, Rajika also put forth questions to ruminate upon. An interesting point she made was that until the 90s, students largely learnt from male teachers. While students copied their movements, they did not copy their style. "Today, there's the danger that students might become clones of their gurus, who are themselves performers and have their own styles," she said. Focusing on stylistic changes, influence of learned proponents of other dance forms, changes in the margam and reworking the pieces, she drew a comprehensive picture of Bharatanatyam's evolution over a century.

The discussion on emerging trends in new-age training explored learning over Skype, workshops in regions with less access to culture, masterclasses in abhinaya, classes for students unfamiliar with the framework of the art form and gurukul-based workshops for a specific period of time. Important takeaways from this session were the emphasis on artistic expressions of different schools, the exposure to diversity that masterclasses and workshops offer a dancer and creating platforms to share knowledge among the dance community.

The 39th Natya Kala Conference was overall a confluence of knowledge, performances and some of dance community's legends. Over the course of five days, the sessions covered a variety of topics, however, one wonders if popularity tended to cloud relevance. Nonetheless, Nirikshana laid the foundation of what it set out to address.

## READ INSIDE

Vijay Kichlu and Ajoy Chakrabarty on the Gharana system **P2**

A tribute to Akbar Padamsee **P3**

Ajay Devgn on the message of "Tanhaji" **P4**



# What’s in a gharana?

Ahead of a seminar in Mumbai, Vijay Kichlu and Ajoy Chakrabarty talk about the nomenclature of gharanas and their relevance in the contemporary world

MEENA BANERJEE

Several delightfully different Khayal schools emerged out of many insignificant towns of North India. These schools are popularly known as gharanas, a word deriving out of ghar or house. Intriguingly, each gharana is associated with a particular town; and not the master of the house.

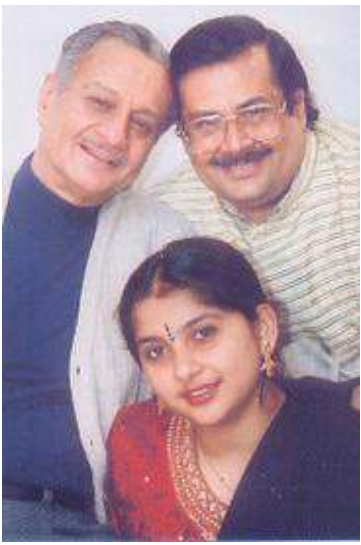
Pandits Vijay Kichlu and Ajoy Chakrabarty, who will be participating in ‘Khayal and Gharanas’ a seminar at the National Centre for Performing Arts at Mumbai on January 18-19, try to put the conundrum in perspective.

Edited excerpts:

### Why are Khayal gharanas named after cities?

**VK:** Because the ‘ghar’ belonged to the States where musicians lived and the real masters were the rulers of the States. As patrons of music, they offered salary, housed their chosen musician and looked after their needs. Apart from being court musicians these erudite musicians groomed the inmates of their homes that also included a few dedicated disciples. That is how the word ‘gharana’ (pertaining to house) got associated with the ‘music of the State’; the preceptors chose to remain incognito behind Rampur, Maihar, Agra, Gwalior, etc.

### The Qawwal Bacche hailed from Lucknow; then why do we accept Gwalior as Khayal’s Pitri (parent)



For initial foundation, one does need the support of a Gharana; just like the stamp of a renowned institution; but today children are spoilt for choice Ajoy Chakrabarty



**Custodians of a specialised musical style** (Clockwise from top) Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty; Pandit Vijay Kichlu, the duo with Kaushiki Chakrabarty ■ NARENDRA DANGIYA, THE HINDU ARCHIVES, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

### gharana?

**VK:** Qawwal Bacche shifted base to Gwalior because their music was greatly appreciated in Gwalior State. Makkhan Khan’s son Natthan Pir Baksh nurtured this new trend of music. His son was Kadir Baksh whose sons Haddu and Hassu Khan took this gayaki to greater heights. Unfortunately Haddu Khan died young; Hassu Khan preferred to groom numerous Brahmins of the region such as Vasudev Joshi, Balkrishnabuwa Ichalkaranjekar and several others. His logic was simple. He wished to be remembered as the Ustad of this new style which was scoffed at by other well-established Ustads of dhrupad. Legend has it that Hassu Khan’s debut khayal recital was a flop in Bengal. He had to woo his listeners back with dhrupad, the popular genre of that era ruled by Vishnupur Gharana.

### How did Gharanas evolve?

**AC:** In their comfortable cocoons, almost cut off from the rest of the world, the unique ideas of gifted musicians took shape and crystallised as individualistic styles. Each style, termed as gharana, boasts of

one hugely gifted musician. His sons, relatives and other followers adopted his style to the extent of copying him; sometimes at the cost of their most precious gift - voice. We are aware of so many instances wherein Ustad Faiyaz Khan’s followers tried to emulate his robust voice-throw and in the process ruined their voices. There are some who copy the mannerisms of their idols more than their music. Conversely, there are a few like Rashid (Khan) who made their gurus proud by scaling the peaks of music in their own way. Moreover, the soil, air and water of a region play a vital role in texturing voice and tonality; so do the food habits and family traditions.

### Is the concept of gharana relevant now?

A vehement ‘no’ came from both Kichlu, the founder director of ITC Sangeet Research Academy who revived the Guru Shishya Parampara and nurtured almost all Khayal gharanas during

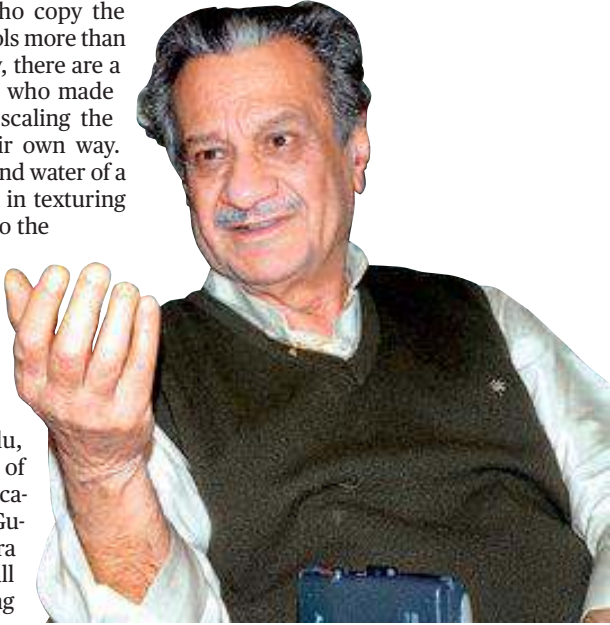
his twenty-two years tenure and strived to maintain their originality; and AC, one of the finest products of VK’s vision! According to both, a gharana actually represents an artiste’s individuality, devotedly followed by his progenies.

**VK:** I don’t believe in gharana system because each gharana has produced artistes who are diversely different from their brethren. Look at the legends like Krishnarao Shankar Pandit, Omkarnath Thakur, Kumar Gandharva and a host of others belonging to Gwalior Gharana. There is no similarity even in their voice-throw, what to say of their stylistic preferences.

**AC:** For initial foundation, one does need the support of a Gharana; just like the stamp of a renowned institution; but today children are spoilt for choice. The olden rigidity does not work now; neither the concept of closed-door sadhana or riyaz. Under the circumstances one must be able to pick and choose the best suited ornaments available across Gharanas; but under the guidance of the guru. I try to preserve the uniqueness of all my disciples by allowing them to explore according to their preferences.

### As the name suggests - Khayal gave freedom from the clutches of structured music of yore; yet Khayal gharanas were restrictive too and maybe that is why they are falling apart. Under the circumstances what will be the guiding factors?

**AC:** I plan to delve on that in details during the seminar. There are four major factors that define Khayal; and they are: voice-throw; embellishments; elaborations and compositions. Lyrics play a vital role in music making. With guided ‘vision’ of sur (tunefulness) and swara (notes), every talent can embark on his musical journey with confidence.



### Hindi Belt

## A glorious tradition

So long as people remain suppressed and oppressed, poets like Faiz Ahmed ‘Faiz’ will continue to take their side

Faiz Ahmed ‘Faiz’, a communist who all his life fought the tyranny of Pakistani rulers and lived for decades in political exile, must be turning in his grave as the Hindutva forces have discovered a Muslim Faiz, thirty-six years after his death. Faiz was despised by the Islamists in Pakistan because he successfully used Islamic symbols to oppose the tyranny of both Islamic clergy and military dictators like Zia-ul-Haq who used Islam to further political goals. Every poet uses the symbols from his tradition to convey his poetry to his audience that is familiar with that tradition. But, we have reached a situation in our country where a government school headmaster in Uttar Pradesh can be suspended because children in his school sing a beautiful poem of Allama Iqbal titled “Bachche ki Dua” (A child’s prayer) and accused of turning a government school into a madarsa.

In the same manner, a teacher in IIT-Kanpur recently complained against

those who were protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act and singing Faiz’s celebrated poem “Hum Dekhenge” (We shall see). Why? Because it used the word “Allah” and not “Ram” and because Faiz was a Pakistani. Another charge was later added that the poem was anti-Hindu as it spoke of the removal of idols from Kaaba. The absurdity of these charges is obvious. Even a child knows that “Bhagwan”, “Ishwar”, “God” and “Allah” are synonyms. Poetry, especially resistance poetry, is universal and inspires people across continents. Faiz, who was a close friend of revolutionary poets such as Nazim Hikmat, Pablo Neruda, Ernesto Cardenal and Mahmood Darvesh, continues to inspire to this day all those who rise in opposition to tyranny. And he belongs to a glorious tradition of such poets in Urdu itself.

### Virtual ban

Let’s first take a look at the history of this particular poem. Reciting Faiz’s works was not allowed in Zia regime that had also imposed a virtual ban on women wearing sari, as it was considered to be Indian and Hindu. When Faiz’s first death anniversary was observed in Lahore, famous singer Iqbal Bano wore a black sari and sang “Ham Dekhenge”.

It electrified the atmosphere as the poem contained lines that spoke of the

coming days when the illegitimate rule of the tyrant will come to an end and people will become the arbiter of their destiny. No wonder that this poem came to acquire an iconic status and continues to inspire all those who rise to oppose injustice or abuse of power anywhere in the world.

“Jab arz-e-khuda ke ka’abe se, sab but-uthwae jaayenge / Hum ahl-e-safa mardood-e-haram, masnad pe bithaaye jaayenge / Sab taaj uchwale jaayenge, sab takht giraaye jaayenge/ Bas naam rahga Allah ka... (From the abode of God, when the idols will be removed/ When we, the faithful, who have been barred from sacred places, will be seated on a high pedestal/ When crowns will be tossed, when thrones will be brought down, only Allah’s name will remain.) Only those who do not understand religion would not know that in every religion, God or Allah or Ishwar is equated with Truth.

Sufi mystic Mansur was hanged (ac-

cording to some sources beheaded) for declaring “Anal-haq” (I am the Truth). This poem of Faiz also speaks of the slogan of Anahaq and of a future when “raaj ka-regi khalk-e-khuda, jo main bhi hoon aur tum bhi ho” (people of God who are you as well as me will rule). Opposing idol worship is certainly not against the Hindus. If that were so, why don’t the Hindutva forces demand a ban on Satyarth Prakash, written by

Swami Dayanand Saraswati who was a fierce opponent of idol worship.

The fact is that poets like Faiz are people and anti-democratic forces everywhere despise such poets. Pakistani poet Habib Jalib spent many years in jail as he had the courage to tell the rulers of his day that their predecessors too had similarly believed that they had become God. Iqbal too exhorted people to burn a field if it failed to provide grain to the poor. Our own Majaz spoke of the need to demolish the edifice of the present-day exploitative society.

So long as people remain suppressed and oppressed, poets like Faiz will continue to take their side and rise in revolt against the illegitimacy of the established authority.



**KULDEEP KUMAR** is a senior literary critic

# A stirring musical dialogue

Paying a moving tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, the Lakshminarayana Global Music Festival saw an interesting amalgamation of Indian and Western strands of music

MANJARI SINHA

**Meaningful exchange** (From right) Dr. L Subramaniam and Kavita Krishnamurthy with the Castile and Leon Orchestra ; Sharada Mushti

The 29th edition of the Lakshminarayana Global Music Festival (LGMPF), presented as a ‘Tribute to the Mahatma’, featured Dr. L Subramaniam and Kavita Krishnamurthy along with the Castile and Leon Symphony Orchestra from Spain, at the Siri Fort auditorium. The evening opened with two superb solo performances by the orchestra, comprising woods-winds such as flute, oboe, clarinet and



strings like violin, viola, and cello.

It felt like an breeze of talent, gift and presence, energising the whole ambience with their opening piece ‘J. Turina’, followed by the “Spring Rhapsody”, composed by Dr. L. Subramaniam. Later, they accompanied Subramaniam and Kavita Krishnamurthy, presenting ‘Raghupati Raghav....’, the favourite Ram-dhun of Bapu that created the most serene atmosphere.

Kavita also sang the Narsi Mehta Bhajan ‘Vaishnav jana toh...’, another favourite of the Mahatma. This was surprisingly not in the popular Khamaj based tune but in Kirwani to suit the splendid Orchestra accompanying her. She concluded with a self composed Meera Bhajan “Jo tum todo...”, arranged for the Orchestra by Dr. Subramaniam, that added the sumptuous ‘bharaav’, a pliant resilience, to the bhajan.

“Spring Rhapsody” was a classical contemporary composition where the raga-based Western classical Harmony with complex rhythmic structures, sounded like a perfect blend, creating global musical exchange and dialogue.

The Western harmony based on Indian ragas like Shiva-Ranjani and Kirwani with the changing rhythm in time signature 5/4 changing to 4/4, 3/4, etc, sounded like varied rhythmic cycles of Indian tala system. This composition was written in three movements - Rubato, Rubato Es-



pressivo and Allegro. Starting with a solo flute section, it had trade-offs between different Orchestral instruments ending with a rhythmic motif repeated three times, like a Tihai.

The evening reached its climax with ‘Nada Priya’, composed by Dr L. Subramaniam for violin solo, Indian percussions (mridangam by Mahesh Krishnamurthy, kanjira by Ganamurthy, morsing by Sayasai and tabla by Tanmay Bose), woodwinds and strings.

Here again the raga-harmony was based on ragas like Kanakangi and rhythmically interesting time signa-

tures of 7,8 alternating 3,4 changing to 6,8 and 12,8; that truly inspired the Indian percussionists.

The viola section was based on raga Vakulabharanam where the improvisation was further developed by the violin soloist and joined by the entire orchestra towards the end. The third and concluding movement was based on raga Shuddha Saveri, with quick changes in time signatures creating an awe-some rhythmic cadence.

**The IIC Winter Festival**  
The India International Centre show-

cases young talents with remarkable potential during their annual Winter Festival, but they deserve extra credit to open the festival this year with a Rudra veena recital by a young and upcoming artiste who has dared to opt for this rare and fast disappearing ancient Indian instrument that belongs to the endangered species of Indian string instruments nowadays. The IIC featured Sharada Mushti on Rudra Veena and Hindustani vocalist Adarsh Saxena from Dehradun, at the C.D. Deshmukh auditorium.

Sharada Mushti, one amongst just a handful practitioners of Rudra Vee-

na today, is a talented disciple of Pt. Arvind Parikh, the doyen of Imdadkhanani Gharana. Guided in dhrupad style under Shri Rajiv Janardan, Sharada chose the melodious evening Raga Yaman and displayed admirable restraint in her unhurried rendering of the Alap-Jod-Jhala before she played a medium tempo dhrupad composition set to Chautala.

### Meditative meend

The very first stroke, a meditative meend of just one swara from nishad to shadja, captured the attention of discerning audience. Elaborating the raga in mandra and ati-mandra octaves, she proceeded towards the madhya and taar saptak, weaving anticipatory web around each progressive swara. The magic of meend continued in jod and jhala too.

Seemingly not so sure of rhythm, Sharada was ably accompanied on pakhawaj by Sukhad Munde, who mirrored her rhythmic patterns in a variety of *chandas* in chaatala.

Adarsh Saxena is a post graduate in music from Indira Kala Vishwa-Vidyalyaya, groomed as the ITC-SRA scholar, under Pt. Arun Bhaduri in Kolkata.

Opening with raga Bihag, he presented the bada Khayal “Kaise sukh sove...”, set to vilambit Ek-tala, elaborating the raga with barhat, behelawa and a variety of sargam and akar taans.

The rhythmically fascinating chhota khayal had its mukhda starting from the 5th beat of Teental. Adarsh also presented a Jhaptala and Teental composition of Pt. Arun Bhaduri and Pt. Jnanprakash Ghosh in raga Jog before concluding his vocal recital with a Bhairavi Bhajan.



## Tribute

# The Sanskrit scholar among the Progressives

Striking a balance between modern art and Indian philosophy, Akbar Padamsee strived to bring the conscious and the unconscious on the same plane

UMA NAIR

Akbar Padamsee's passing away invited an elegiac silence in the contemporary art world. India has lost the Sanskrit scholar among the Progressives. Padamsee, as an artist, led us into a space of refined aesthetic, balancing between the hieratic and the human.

In the best of two centuries, Padamsee nourished himself as the fountainhead of regional and ancestral traditions to translate an epoch of modernism in his sensibility and language. Born in Mumbai on April 12, 1928, into a Khoja Muslim family with intellectual leanings, Padamsee joined Sir J.J. School of Art in 1948, with considerable support from his family and the blessings of Aga Khan.

## Sanskrit scholar

Padamsee drew from Kalidasa's "Abhijnanasakuntalam" extensively. The principle "Ye dve kaal vigattah (These two controllers of time)" indicate the simultaneous presence of the sun and the moon. In the same way, each aspect of his paintings was elemental: "Sarva bija prakruti (That which is responsible for the growth of all seeds). This duality, at once spiritual and aesthetic, and the core of much of Indian and Chinese philosophy, defined Padamsee's art.

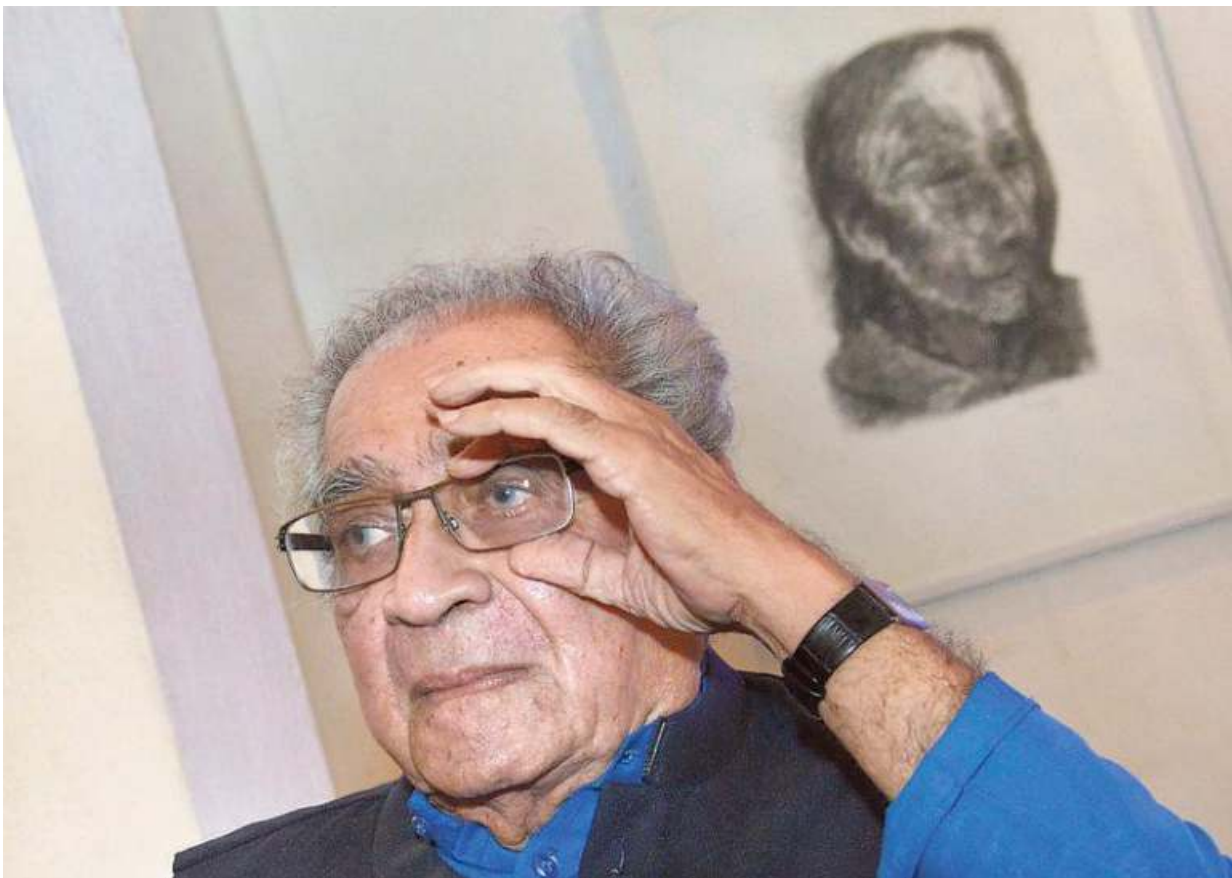
Post Partition, it was Sayed Haider Raza's moving to Paris that prompted Padamsee to move to the French city to study and peruse painting. Raza, Souza, and Padamsee became the trio who whose canvas was fermented by French avant-garde sensibilities.

His first show was held with Raza and Souza at Galerie Saint Placide in 1952 and a two-person show with Raza, Indian Painters in Paris, in 1953. His first solo in India was held at the Jehangir Art Gallery in 1954. By then, there were influences of Picasso, Braque, and Modigliani that had formed their own impressions on his palette.



Akbar could open up enormous horizons, whether on colour field abstraction, mathematics, language, yoga, or Shaiva philosophy

Ranjit Hoskote



Gaze of a visionary Akbar Padamsee (1928-2020) ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

## 'Grey Period'

The Jehangir solo saw him execute four paintings. They belonged to his 'grey period'. Greek Landscape, Reclining Nude, Juhu and Cityscape were arguably among the finest of Padamsee's oeuvre. His figurative works and cityscapes were preludes to the panoramic paintings - they had no linear narrative nor definite beginning and end, dense landscapes were almost entirely filled by block-like architectural forms, abutting each other on what looked like a gentle hillside.

Another salient solo was his 1960 solo exhibition, in which he decided he would not paint indoors, but out in the open and only at night. Spreading a huge canvas on the floor of the lighted court, he would start to work, confining himself to the use of two colours: black and white.

Reflecting on this change, Padamsee said, "Painting in my Juhu flat I started working on it for three or four nights because the sunlight was too much in my open courtyard, I had to work at night. And a dog used to come and sit next to

me. He was so wonderful and really became a friend of mine. He didn't budge, he would just sit in his own place looking at me. Not barking or anything, all night as I worked."

## Portraiture as a pretext

Among his greatest works were his early portraits. Padamsee treated portraiture as a pretext, approaching it only to leave it behind. At the Saffronart's September sale (2018) his Untitled portrait had an elusiveness and aura of exclusivity. The English scholar and critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha wrote, "...this illusive, enigmatic look is what gives the work its presence... the look here, is not the kind that makes the spectator feel immediately identified. It invites and at the same time elides his look, so it is more like a gaze."

It was in the late 1950s that Akbar Padamsee first turned from figuration to the landscape as the primary mode of his artistic expression. The period coincided with frequent travels between Mumbai and Paris. These two cities inspired monumental grey landscapes and architectonic views of city roofs res-

## Best friend

Choosy about his friendships, like Tyeb (Mehta), Akbar barely suffered fools. Often, the two were interchangeable. They were the best of friends, perhaps because they had a similar intellectual prowess. He had his wits about him always!

Apart from a great artist, Akbar was also a smart administrator of his wealth.

## Shireen Gandhi, gallerist

pectively. Subsequently, in the mid-1960s, he travelled to North America on a John D. Rockefeller III fellowship where his landscapes took on a more experimental character, laying the foundation for a major transformation in his practice in the 1970s.

Colours for him were soft and suffused. He would say, "It's far more exciting for me as a painter, to work in grey or sepia. The brush can move freely from figure to ground, and this interaction offers me immense formal possibilities."

Landscapes for Padamsee represented experimentation and expression. In

later years, he favoured a perceptual and atmospheric style. His cubist architectonic forms gave way to warm earthy hues translating into an experiential and sensory semblance. Deliberately nebulous, Padamsee perfected the terrain between representation and abstraction.

## Metascapes and Shakuntalam

Padamsee's works were born out of literary reflections and in-depth philosophy. He chanted shlokas/verses with a gentle eloquence. When one asked him about the idea of using the sun and moon in his metascapes, he said, "This originated when I was reading the introductory stanza to 'Abhijnanasakuntalam'. Here Kalidasa speaks of the eight visible forms of the Lord without mentioning them by name, the sun and the moon as the two controllers of time, water as the origin of all life, fire as the link between man and god, and the earth as the source of all seed. I was exploring adding poetic meaning to create new forms from nature."

In 2005, at his studio in Mumbai, in front of a magnificent Metascape, he explained. "It talks about all the senses and the eight elements. I use the sun and moon and water. Earth and water and fire I use. It is actually Shiva's Metascape. Shiva, as an element, is fire. But I don't use the word Shiva, I call it Metascapes," he explained to the writer. "Expression must contain its dialectical opposite, the conscious and the unconscious on the same physic plane. I have two eyes, two retinas, but the mind compounds the two images into one."

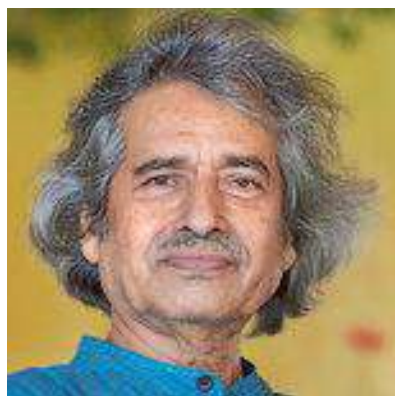
## Dynamism of movement

Padamsee spent a lifetime probing the subtleties of human existence through his work. The critic who offered in-depth insights into Padamsee's works is Ranjit Hoskote. "With Akbar's passing, I lose another early mentor - one who offered me his generous guidance both in aesthetic and practical matters. Among the shared interests that brought us together was our com-

## Aesthetics and mathematics

Akbar was a friend from whom I learnt about art and life. I understood what the scientist Dr Homi Bhabha had said, that 'art is a science' after knowing Akbar. His art emerged from a deep understanding of aesthetics and mathematics to create visuals that could not happen by accident.

## Dadiba Pundole, gallerist



## Spiritual and truly transcendental quality

Among the Progressives, Akbar was one of my favourites. He was gentle, thoughtful, deeply philosophical and truly committed to his work. He stood apart because he had a rare understanding and immense knowledge of Indian history and ancient literature. Remember he was not born into a Hindu family but he was so well read, so informed about Kalidasa and great works of Indian poets including ancient texts. In today's world he sets a great example for other artists to follow. The beauty is that he successfully implemented all that he knew and felt into his metascapes. They had a spiritual and truly transcendental quality. We have lost a great artist and thinker who had invented his own language in his works over more than six decades.

## Jogen Chowdhury, artist

mon preoccupation with Sanskrit and rasa aesthetics. I was 20 when I first met him, at which point he had long ago mastered both the language and the theory, and I was studying both formally. Akbar could open up enormous horizons, whether on colour field abstraction, mathematics, language, yoga, or Shaiva philosophy. Over the years, I wrote about various bodies of work that he produced, ranging from his metascapes through his series of heads to his experiments with computer graphics. He, for his part, always responded with intensity and generosity to my writing across genres. 'People will always be asking for your writing on art,' he would tell me. 'But never forget that you are a poet.'

Akbar was a great inspiration. His affinity for the most essential forms and colours came from early childhood impressions, and his work, despite being quite abstract at times, can be very emotional. I find this stuff more inspiring, more future-looking than anything going on today in the art or film world.

"Sawaneh-e- Sir Syed: Ek Baazdeed", a biographical account of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, throws new light on the life and times of the reformer and educationist

MOHAMMAD ASIM SIDDIQUI

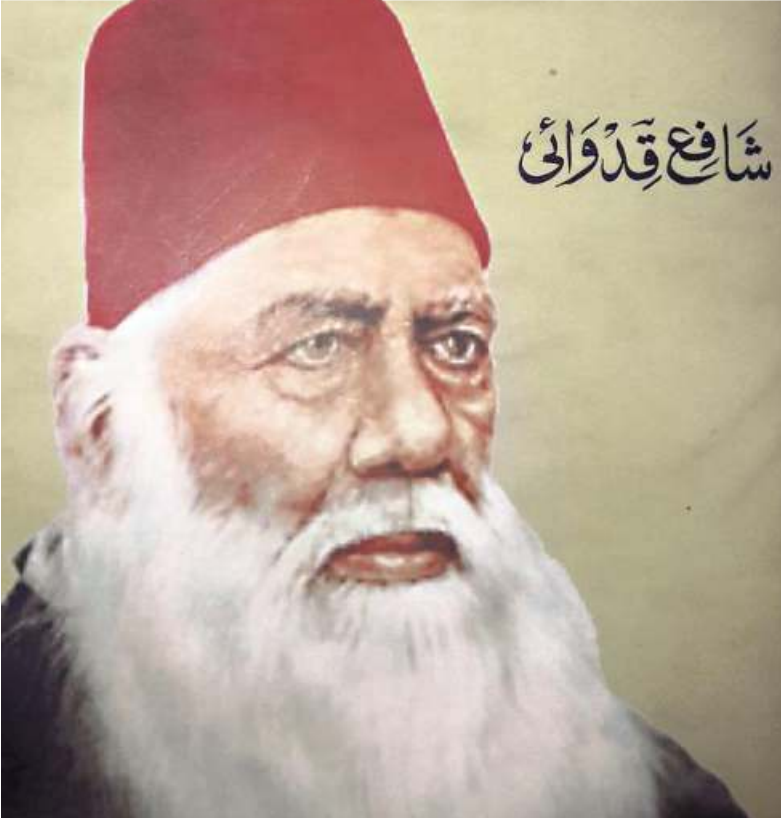
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's book "India Wins Freedom" is one of the most widely read books on the events and happenings leading to the partition of India. In response to this book Rajmohan Gandhi wrote "India Wins Errors: A Scrutiny of Maulana Azad's India Wins Freedom" (2006) which, as its self-explanatory title suggests, tried to point to some inaccuracies and errors in the Maulana's book.

Shafey Kidwai, the winner of 2019 Sahitya Akademi Award in Urdu for his book "Sawaneh-e- Sir Syed: Ek Baazdeed", a biographical account of Sir Syed (1817-1898) which covers some, though not all, important aspects of his life (Brown Publications, 2017), performs a similar task when he subjects another iconic book, Altaf Husain Hali's (1837-1914) biography of Sir Syed "Hayat-e-Javed" (1901) to a thorough scrutiny.

## Source text

"Hayat-e-Javed" has generally been used as a basic source text for scores of books, both in Urdu and English, on Sir Syed. It is only appropriate that Kidwai's book gets important notice in the bicentenary year of Sir Syed's birth when not only the vast literature available on him is being looked at afresh but also a number of programmes on the great thinker and educationist are underway in different parts of the world, thanks to the vast network of AMU alumni.

A very respected name in Urdu literary criticism and journalism, Shafey Kidwai, interestingly, has never studied Urdu formally. The grandson of celebrated Islamic scholar Abdul Majid Daryabadi (1892-1977) has been a student of social sciences and has mostly mastered the intricacies of Urdu language at home in a literary environ-



# Correcting the errors

ment. He brings the rigours of social sciences to his investigation of various facts in Hali's book, cross checking and correcting them. A believer in C.P. Snow's dictum 'comment is free, but facts are sacred', one of the methods used in his study is the critical cross checking of some opinions and facts about Sir Syed's life in the works of his other biographers, in particular, G.F.I. Graham's "The Life and Works of Sir Saiyyed" (1885) and Iftikhar Alam Khan's "Sir Syed: Duroone Khana" (2006).

For him the primary source is the writings of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, especially Sir Syed's biography of his maternal grandfather "Sirat-e- Faridiya", "Life of Mohammed", his letters and the periodical "Risala Khair Khwahan" which Sir Syed started. Thus, Kidwai

discovers that Sir Syed's father's and his sister's names are not mentioned correctly by Hali and Graham. His father's name was neither Mir Mohammad Muttaqi, nor Syed Mohammad Taqi, but Syed Mohammad Muttaqi whereas his sister's name, as written by Sir Syed, was Ijbitun Nisan and not Safiatun Nisan as recorded by Hali. He also puts on record the fact that Sir Syed's ancestors came to India during the period of Akbar, and not Shahjahan as recorded by Hali.

## Excellent command

Kidwai also disagrees with Hali's view that Sir Syed read only half-seriously the elementary books of Arabic and Persian. Syed's writings, Kidwai argues, prove his serious reading and excellent command of the two languages.

**Beyond the obvious** A portrait of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan on the cover

es. Similarly, three different dates have been given of the beginning of Sir Syed's employment by Hali, Graham, and Alam. Kidwai casts his dice in favour of Alam who considers 1838 as the year when Syed started his official career.

Sir Syed is usually discussed as a reformer and educationist by all commentators. Kidwai throws important light on his role as the member of Vice-roy's Legislative Council. Sir Syed was deeply concerned that a lot of children died of small pox and ironically this was accepted as the curse of God. A rationalist to the core, he prepared and introduced the draft of the bill to eradicate small pox. In his second term as the member of the Council, he threw his weight behind the proposal of raising the age of civil services aspirants for Indians and conducting the examination in India as well as in England.

Of Sir Syed's two sons, a lot has been written about his younger son Syed Mahmood (1850-1903) who was the first Indian jurist to be appointed to Allahabad High Court. Kidwai importantly dwells on the redeeming qualities of his other son Syed Hamid who was given to drinking and who had to quit his job. Kidwai also presents some interesting anecdotes from Sir Syed's life to bring out his sense of humour, his truthfulness, and his affable nature.

Baffled by Hali's errors, Kidwai looks at the sources of Hali's book and discovers that Hali relied a great deal on one unpublished biography of Sir Syed written by Munshi Sirajuddin. Sirajuddin's text, considered too hagiographic and also lacking proper style, was not approved by Sir Syed and was later handed over to Hali when he found time to write "Hayat-e-Javed". Kidwai is scathing in his criticism of Hali's inaccuracies which he considers unpardonable because Hali could access both Sirajuddin's draft as well as Graham's which had come out by then.

At the end Sir Syed's own words on the genre of biography reveal his modesty and his care for an honest scholarship: "Biography is not hagiography. It should be such that it should be a specimen of the good and bad aspects of the subject....Writing about me that 'he is very learned and perfect', how wrong is this."

## IN SHORTS

# Remembering Bapu

On the 12th death anniversary of renowned choreographer, Narendra Sharma, Naren Jayan Studio presents Teen Adhyaya, an evening of solos dance and choreographed by Bharat Sharma at its premises near Nirman Vihar Metro Station Pillar No. 75 on January 14.

"Dandi" is a new solo choreographed as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary with reference to his seminal Dandi March (Salt Satyagraha). It also refers to the solo



cohesive performance of approximately 60-minute duration.

## Bridging the gap



The Udaipur World Music Festival 2020, a city-wide, multi venue music festival featuring over 150 global artists and collaborations with participation from over 20 countries, will be held in Udaipur next month.

The festival - to be held at Amet Haveli, Ambrai Ghat, Fateh sagar Paal and Gandhi Ground from 7th to 9th February - seeks to bring the world together on one platform, bridging diversities and binding diverse people through music, joy and multiculturalism.

This year, the festival seeks to celebrate the concept 'We are the World: Unity in diversity'. Through planned curations, on-ground events and artist interaction, the festival promises to be a microcosm to a diverse yet one world.

The upcoming edition will feature a range of artists that include Sudha Raghuraman, Carnatic vocalist, Ginni Mahi and Habib Koite, a prominent singer from Mali.



# “Tanhaji” can serve as a strong inspiration for the youth’

Ahead of the release of “Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior”, Ajay Devgn underlines the importance of freedom and need for dialogue in a democracy

MURTAZA ALI KHAN

Om Raut’s “Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior” is based on the life of the 17th century Maratha warrior Tanhaji Malusare who led an army that successfully captured the Kondhana fort from a Rajput fort keeper named Udaybhan Singh Rathore. Said to be fought during the night of February 4, 1670, the Battle of Sinhagad brought Tahnaji, a warrior in Shivaji’s army against Rathore, who was working under the command of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. Noted actor Ajay Devgn, who plays the film’s eponymous character, is also one of the film’s producers.

“When we make films we look for subjects that can engage the audience. When I heard Tanhaji’s story it made me realise that such big sacrifices have been made by people which we can’t think of. He fought bravely against the might of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. But, the people in the north don’t know much about him,” says Devgn, committed to making more films about unsung regional Indian heroes as part of the ‘unsung warriors’ series.

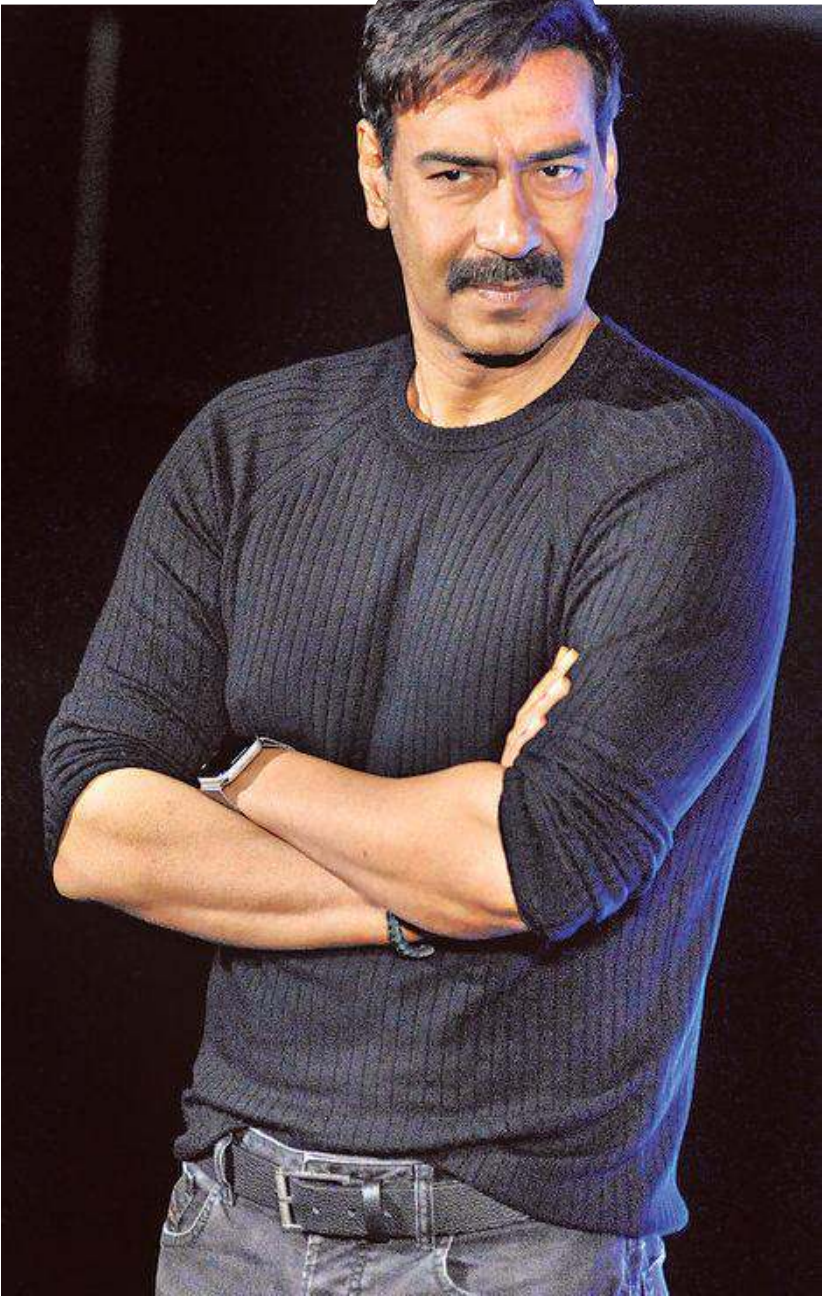
**Story of sacrifice**

Devgn believes that the sacrifice made by Tanhaji can serve as a strong inspiration for the youth. “Tanhaji sacrificed himself for the freedom of his people. But we often take freedom for granted. The story of Tanhaji is a reminder that we owe it to our country and our society. If everyone starts caring a little, it can make a huge difference,” avers Devgn, expressing concern on the ongoing student protests in the country.

“Frankly, it’s not a great situation to be in for the country. I think in a democ-

We paid great attention to the type of cannons employed, the various varieties of spears, and the different kinds of swords wielded by the different warriors at the time. A foot soldier’s sword is very different from that of a horse rider who needs a much longer sword

Om Raut



**Regional flavour** Ajay Devgn says the film will be released in Marathi as well ■ PTI

lavish period films.”

**Director’s take**

The basis of Tanhaji is the strong research done by director Om Raut and his team of writers. “I was in the US when Zack Snyder’s ‘300’ came out. When I watched the film, I was blown away by the bravery of King Leonidas in the war field. I got out of the theatre in New York and I said to myself that there are so many amazing stories that we have in our motherland that we need to showcase to the world. And the first name that came to mind was Subedar Tanhaji Malusare because I have been hearing about his bravery from my grandparents and parents since when I was a child,” reveals Raut who started his research on Tanhaji back in 2015, following the release of his first film “Lokmanya Ek Yugpurush”.

The first step for Raut was to get the script right. “It was important to get the core foundation right. So it was about reading books, meeting with historians, visiting the actual places, going through the paintings of the time, etc. Once the script was ready, the next challenge was to actually create the world of Tanhaji. Unfortunately, the forts are completely in ruins. So, we took pictures of the ruins in many different ways. We did aerial photography and also brought some scanners to do the architectural scan of the location. We brought all that data back into our office and tried to create a vision on top of it. So that’s how we succeeded in recreating the Kondhana fort,” recalls Raut.

The extensive research allowed Raut and the team to pay attention to the minutest of the details. “We paid great attention to the type of cannons employed, the various varieties of spears, and the different kinds of swords wielded by the different warriors at the time. A foot soldier’s sword is very different from that of a horse rider who needs a much longer sword. Also, the Marathas were not very tall and so their swords were bent to match their speeds as opposed to the tall Mughals who used a long sword with a thicker blade. We don’t have funny weapons like the ones we have seen in some films. The weapons that we have used in Tanhaji are all real and they were actually there. So, it’s no fiction,” sums up Raut.

racy things should be sorted out through dialogue. The establishment has the right to take its decisions and the people have the right to protest peacefully. So, the only solution is to sit together and discuss it out so that it can be settled amicably,” opines Devgn.

Seen as a supporter of the present dispensation, Devgn says he doesn’t like to be seen as a supporter of any political party. “I have no links to any political party. Also, I have no plans of joining

politics in life. When I feel that some good work is happening, I support it. If I don’t like something, I share my opinion. And when I am not too sure, I usually keep quiet,” explains Devgn.

After “Shivaay”, he has once again spent heavily on special effects. Fond of trying new things, Devgn reminds that he has been doing it since “Pyaar To Hona Hi Tha”. “I feel access to bigger budgets and better technology has made it possible for Indian filmmakers to make

## Telling Voices

# Between fiction and non fiction

Giving his personal account, noted French writer Emmanuel Carrere explains the rationale for switching writing from first person to third person

SUDHAMAHIRREGUNATHAN



To get the right title for a book is perhaps a greater challenge than writing the book itself. Emmanuel Carrere calls his latest collection of essays, “97196 Words”. Now if you wonder what it contains, is it fiction or non-fiction etc., you are quintessentially asking for Carrere’s profile.

Carrere answers, “I don’t care very much about genres...I did write novels for more than ten years. Now what I write is not fiction, you can call it non-fiction. I try to write it as a novel, the difference being that the characters have not come from my imagination. But I craft the story like a novel. I hope it gives the pleasure and excitement that one expects from a novel.”

He continues, “I was writing about Jean Claude Romand who was the worst type of criminal...It was very difficult for me to write as non fiction about how he had cold bloodedly planned all the murders. I began writing this in 1993 but the book The Adversary was published only in 2000...I had it in the back of my mind all these seven years. It was some kind of a psychological ordeal to do that terrible story...I met him in jail, I attended his trial...there was a moment when it came to me that I had to write it like fiction, not fiction, but with true facts. I had a legal responsibility because if I got any fact wrong I could be sued...it was also around the

same time that I switched writing from first person to third person...I think both these changes are linked very closely...when it is fiction the writer knows everything about the characters. But if you have to write something about Romand whose mind is a black box to which you have no access...it is immoral and complicated to say Romand thinks like this or feels like that. The only way to manage that is to say,” I guess...I think...I suspect...he was thinking like this. So third person becomes essential.”

Carrere redefines the idea of non fiction saying, “When you are writing non fiction you cannot be claiming to be writing the truth. You can at best say it is your truth...it could be a very narrow truth. You have to be aware of that and so too your readers. Another reason why I made this change and now I can not imagine any other way of writing. This is how I feel more honest with myself, with my readers and the characters in the book.”

Carrere also writes in Russian. His mother was of Russian origin and a well known expert on Russia in France. “We, my sisters and I grew up very French, but some memories of Russia still give me a comfort and warmth. So I learnt Russian and am able to write some things in Russian which I may not be able to do in French. Russian is both familiar and unfamiliar...”

Carrere redefines the idea of non fiction saying, “When you are writing non fiction you cannot be claiming to be writing the truth. You can at best say it is your truth...it could be a very narrow truth.

# A delight for the senses

In Shunya – A Journey”, artist Rita Jhunjhunwala and photographer Shreekant Somany collaborated to create a tapestry of the five elements through paintings and photographs

ANURADHA VELLAT

Spirituality in Indian arts has been a common theme for centuries. But to string it seamlessly across different mediums requires an eye for detail. At a recent exhibition titled “Shunya – A Journey”, artist Rita Jhunjhunwala and photographer Shreekant Somany collaborated to create a tapestry of the five elements or panchatatvas through paintings and photographs. The show included more than 60 works showcasing Jhunjhunwala’s mixed media works on paper inspired by Benaras and Somany’s photographs shot in across the Himalayas, including Kazakhstan, Ladakh, Spiti and Kashmir.

Says Jhunjhunwala, “What keeps me going back to Benares is the vibrancy, the energy, the visuals; these things attracted me initially. Over time, I have also gotten used to it. But every time there is a new aspect. I see more depth and spirituality behind it, which is why we have called it Shunya. It is the merging of five elements, which composes the entire world. I have also ma-



**Interpreting fire** (from left) Works of Rita Jhunjhunwal and Shreekant Somany



tured, I could see the ethereal beauty of it, rather than mere physical.”

For her paintings, Jhunjhunwala used different kinds of paper – handmade, acrylic, butter and even newspaper along with acrylic colours, watercolours, charcoal. “Even for a tourist, the city is a delight for the senses. And as an artist, I have never ceased to be amazed at how it makes me think about the cycle of birth and death every time. The philosophy of Benaras appeals to me because it compels me to think of us as part of the much bigger cosmos and how minuscule we are in its comparison,” she adds. Her painting called “Water” is a beautiful depiction of the Ganges on the ghats of Benares, with pilgrims praying alongside. The painting was displayed next to Shreekant So-

many’s take on water, captured on the shores on Mansarovar Lake.

Shreekant Somany, primarily an industrialist, has been obsessed with the mountains from early on. “I have trekked in various places, gone up to 19000ft. The mountains are a part of nature which make you realise where you stand. Unless you are able to relate to yourself as a part of that nature, you can never relate to your self,” says Somany.

The photograph titled “Air” caught everyone’s eye. It turns out, on the way from Darchen to Ali in Tibet, Somany saw the majestic peak through the eye of a brewing storm. “It was a phenomenon worth stopping for and capturing,” says Somany. Jhunjhunwala depicts the same in her painting through “a sky brimming with the chatter of seagulls

hovering around crowded boats and the floating scent of fresh marigolds and jasmines.” Similarly, the photograph titled Fire was shot on a winter morning flight to Leh. It depicted the hues of dawn, with the sun peeping from behind Nanda Devi. “Fire”, for Jhunjhunwala, is depicted through the consecrated flames of the huge oil lamps that circle around the priests in a holy dance amidst ringing of bells and chanting of mantras.

The theme of the five elements was both conscious and unconscious. “It would have been very boring to just put the pictures next to the paintings. But these pictures were depicting something and to my mind it came, why not elements, which was instantly agreed upon. Then, I started collecting my round pictures and matching them with the straight

ones, to see how we could depict the elements. The biggest challenge was to find exact photographs that would depict the elements. Fire and water are easy. How do you depict ether and air? It was sheer luck,” adds Somany.

Another interesting display was “Weathered Wisdom” that showcased two sets of portrait photographs and their replicas in painting, of elderly people from Kohima. “I have always found that people from the mountains have wisdom engraved on their faces. They have weathered the storm of life. None of the people even knew I was taking their pictures. They are absolutely candid,” says Somany. To which, Jhunjhunwala adds, “I have tried to recreate the photographs but show their experiences through my paintings. There is wisdom but they are not bitter about it.”

## CATCH UP

Lillette Dubey weekend



The Primetime Theatre Co will stage three popular award winning plays directed by Lillette Dubey at **Kamani Auditorium, Mandi House**. This Saturday, **11th January** will feature Heather Raffo’s **9 Parts of Desire**, a passionate portrayal of love and survival; Mahesh Dattani’s **Dance like a Man**, a comic drama. Sunday will witness Kishwar Desai’s, **Devika Rani – Goddess of the Silver Screen**, a biographical drama.

A 100 years of Guayasamin

An exhibition of lithographic prints by the celebrated master painter and sculptor from Ecuador, Oswaldo Guayasamin is on view at Annexe Art Gallery, India International Centre. The works represents three periods of Maestro Guayasamin’s artistic trajectory: The Trail of Tears; the Age of Rage; and The Tenderness.



Battle of wrong and right



Bela Theater Karwaan presents **Ramkali**, a Hindi play written by Amitabh Shrivastava, on **11th January at Shri Ram Centre for Performing Arts, Mandi House**. Directed by Arvind Gaur, Ramkali is the adaptation of Bertolt Brecht’s play, The Good Person of Szechwan. It raises core issues facing today’s world, of greed versus common good, and of the value of right and wrong.

NT Live Broadcast



National Theatre will broadcast Noël Coward’s 1943 comedy **Present Laughter**, this Sunday, **12th January at The Stein Auditorium, India International Centre**. Directed by Matthew Warchus, starring Andrew Scott, the plot depicts a few days in the life of the successful and self-obsessed light comedy actor Garry Essendine as he prepares to travel for a touring commitment in Africa.