GDP growth boards slow train at 5.7%

Officials blame it on sharp decline in industrial activity

India's GDP growth at 5.7% between April to June this year was the slowest since the country started publishing quarterly GDP data in 1999-2000. While the output had expanded by more than 8% in non-agricultural services, the agriculture sector had contracted by 4.3%.

**Special Correspondent**

In a sign of the weakening rupee, the Federal Reserve's interest rate hike in June, high fuel prices, and tighter credit, the Industrial Growth Rate declined to 7.1% for the first quarter of this fiscal year compared to 8.9% in the previous quarter.

The decline in the first three months of this fiscal year was the worst quarter for the manufacturing sector in five years, with growth at 1.2% compared to 7.5% in the same quarter last year. The services sector also saw a decline of 1.4% compared to 4.6% growth in the previous quarter.

In a move to help manufacturers, Prime Minister Arun Jaitley in his Budget speech in February had said the Centre would give a tax rebate of Rs 25,000 in the first year, Rs 50,000 in the second year and Rs 75,000 in the third year for setting up new units.

**MARKET WATCH**

The rupee was around Rs 67.60 compared to 64.75 last year.

**Industrial output**

In the first quarter of fiscal 2016-17, the industrial output grew at 7.1% in the same quarter last year.

**Special report**

The rupee's slide is in line with the decline in the industrial growth rate. It would be interesting to find out whether the government's tax incentive scheme will help manufacturers in the second quarter.

**No major change in Delhi power tariff**

The Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission has fixed the tariff at Rs 1.75 per unit for the current fiscal year, a 12% cut from last year.

**Economy**

Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission's decision comes on the back of a ministry notification to the effect that the tariff would not be increased by more than what most analysts expected, seeing a "mature market." GDP growth in the last quarter of 2015-16 was 6.7%, marking a steadydecline from the 7.9% slowed in the April-June quarter. The overall value added (GVA) in the economy grew at 6.1% compared to 7.1% in the previous quarter and sharply lower than what most analysts anticipated, seeing a "mature market."

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Asaram trial: victim's security tightened

The Rajasthan High Court, on Wednesday dismissed the state government's petition seeking modification of its January 2016 order ban on the controversial tongue race.

HC rejects plea to restart tongue race in Nagaur

The High Court, however, had outlined the event citing cruelty to horses. The last race took place at Mundiad in 2016.

Sugar output likely to rise by 18%

Growth driven by recovery in cane availability, rain

Sugar production in south Karnataka and Tamil Nadu is likely to remain impacted by consecutive and poor rainfall. This coupled with an increase in the cane cost due to higher rain and pramanage costs, which is likely to impact the performance of the sugar mills in those regions, Mr. Majumdar said.

Drought impact

Mr. Majumdar said that in terms of profitability, the south-based mills especially those in Tamil Nadu and south Karnataka are likely to be adversely affected in the financial year of 2018. This is due to continued drought as well as the impact they cause in cane availability, which is likely to affect cane availability and increase the costs.

While mills in Madhya Pradesh and north Karnataka are likely to be negatively impacted by higher cane costs, they are likely to reap benefits of higher production as far as Uttarakhand-based mills are concerned, they are likely to benefit from the healthy sugar prices along with continued higher cane availability in the state.

Virbhadra meets Sonia

The Chief Minister in the U.P. government and looks set to continue in the position by getting elected to the U.P. Legislative Council in the upcoming by-polls.

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BRICS contribute more to global governance

By Khushal Khanna

In the past decade, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) have become a significant force in global economic and political affairs. The group, founded in 2009, aims to promote economic cooperation and support for developing countries. This article explores how BRICS have contributed to global governance, focusing on their economic achievements and diplomatic efforts.

Economic Milestones

BRICS have made significant contributions to global economic growth and development. As of this year, China's economy has grown to become the second-largest in the world, surpassing the United States. India's economy is also growing rapidly, and it is expected to continue its impressive growth trajectory. Russia, despite its political challenges, remains a major global player in energy and arms trade. Brazil and South Africa have also seen growth, although they face various challenges.

In 2010, BRICS economies accounted for 11.4% of the global economy. By 2016, this share had grown to 16.8%. Their combined GDP is now larger than that of the G7 economies. BRICS countries have also been successful in attracting foreign direct investment, with China leading the way.

Diplomatic Contributions

BRICS have also made significant contributions to global diplomacy and governance. They have been active in the United Nations, often taking a more independent and critical stance on US-led initiatives. BRICS have also been vocal advocates for the reform of the United Nations Security Council, arguing for a more representative and equitable representation of world powers.

BRICS have also been active in multilateral organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Group of 20 (G20), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They have been advocates for increased voice and representation for developing countries in these organizations.

Looking to the Future

BRICS are likely to continue to play a significant role in global governance. As their economies continues to grow and they become more influential, their impact on global affairs is likely to increase. BRICS are also likely to continue to be active in multilateral organizations, advocating for their interests and those of their member states.

In summary, BRICS have made significant contributions to global governance, both economically and diplomatically. Their influence is likely to grow in the years to come, making them a force to be reckoned with in international affairs.

India and the BRICS Summit: a perspective

The BRICS summit was held in Kemerovo, Russia, on June 9-10, 2016. The summit was attended by leaders from Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. The summit focused on issues such as global trade, investment, and security.

India, as a member of BRICS, has been a vocal advocate for the group's agenda. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been a strong proponent of BRICS, and has often been seen as leading the group's efforts on issues such as trade and development.

India's Economy

India's economy has been growing steadily in recent years, with a GDP growth rate of around 7% per annum. The Indian government has been making efforts to boost the economy, with a focus on infrastructure development and rural sector growth.

India and BRICS have a strong trade relationship, with India being a major importer of Chinese manufactured goods and a major customer of Russian oil and gas. BRICS countries have also been working to improve their trade relationships with each other.

Looking to the Future

India is likely to continue to be a key player in BRICS, and is likely to continue to advocate for the group's agenda in international affairs. BRICS is likely to continue to be a force for change in the global economy, with a focus on issues such as trade, development, and security.
Jayarajan chargesheeted in Kathiroor Manoj murder case

CBI files supplementary final chargesheet including Kerala CPI(M) leader’s name

Staff Reporter

The Central Bureau of Investigation on Thursday filed a supplementary final chargesheet against six persons, including P Jayarajan, in connection with the Kathiroor massacre. The CBI registered a case under Sections 120 B, 143, 121, 122, 124, 145, 153, 154, 302, 307, 308, 309, 311, 312, 325, 326, 435, 494, 506, 507 (1), 508, 509, 510, 511, 512 of the Indian Penal Code; and Section 27 of the Explosive Substance Act.

Victim was RSS activist

The CBI filed the first chargesheet against 19 people in the case on the directions of the Supreme Court in Kannur in 2007. Later, the CBI carried out an investigation into the complicity angle behind the murder, which led to the arrest of Mr. Jayarajan. Manoj, an RSS activist and a resident of Kathiroor, was killed on September 7 in a remote area in Kathiroor.

Political witch hunt

Mr. Jayarajan, meanwhile, said he had been arranged as accused in the Manoj murder case by the CBI as part of a political witch hunt by the Central government. Alleging that the CBI enlists RSS leaders, he alleged that the RSS leader, who was also a CPM MLA, had been charged as an accused under Section 153 of the IPC. Allegations of the murder of RSS leader Mr. Jayarajan were levelled by the RSS leader’s Political rivals, Mr. Jayarajan said.

For doctors, not roads, we need

Kerala government is set to scrap an amendment that increased the number of seats in medical colleges from 6,000 to 8,000. The cabinet decided to withdraw the amendment, which was passed in the Assembly on Monday.

Making the great escape

Durga fled child beggar in Uttara Kannada has written her own story

G.C. Durga

An autobiography written at 12 would sound oxymoron, but not when it is the story of an orphan who used to work as a rag picker to finance her schooling, later supports her family and is now a successful tailor by profession. She said, "I was an orphan and was adopted by a man who was a tailor in Madikeri. I started working at 12 and used to make clothes for my family."

STRIPED OF CHILDHOOD

G.C. Durga, who was born in 1990, was an orphan and was adopted by a tailor when she was 14. She started working as a tailor to support her family and later became a successful tailor.

Special Correspondent

Unlikely to bear alleged sexual harassment by a group of men, a 23-year-old woman software professional, working in Chennai, jumped off the moving Bangalore-Mysuru Shatabdi Express train at Lingerimoodu in Tenkasi district on Thursday. The woman was carrying her housemates Vijayanand with two friends. Government Railways Police (RPF) Inspector T. Ramanathan said.

The woman, who sustained head injuries, was rushed to the Rajaji Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences (RGIHS) here. After suffering severe injuries, she was referred to a medical observation, Mr. Ramanathan added.

The police have launched a manhunt after registering a case against the group of youths, who continued their journey.

Police join poster war to counter Maoists

Put up banners in interior A.P. villages on all effects of joining Nasal movement

Amrit Nagathar Harke

Posters of Maoists highlighting alleged police atrocities and drawbacks in government-run programmes are common in the interior villages of Agency areas, Vaikuntapuram. The police, who are taking these ideological struggles in the Marble Mount region seriously, have decided to counter these Maoist propaganda.

The police have posted posters in villages such as G.S. Vaddi, Chinthapalli, M. Megawanam, Madugula and Kothagudem to spread the message of goodness and their ‘efforts’ of joining the Maoist movement.

The latest move is seen by security experts as a mind game to keep the tribal youths away from the movement.

Counter strategy

No claim that the counter strategy is paying dividends. We succeeded in disseminating Gandhian Karenas, as no person of Central Wannas has joined the Maoist movement, despite Karenas being a target group of the Maoists. We have also initiated a campaign in the villages to create awareness among local residents about the negative impact of Maoist activities in the region, Mr. Shanmukha said.

Against the backdrop of a stark winter season, the police have been conducting special drives in the area to create awareness about the dangers of joining the Maoist movement.

Police have arrested two persons in different cases.

The police have arrested two persons in different cases. One of the persons was arrested for the crime of theft, while the other was arrested for the crime of forgery.

The police have also arrested a person in connection with the crime of assault.

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The police have arrested a person in connection with the crime of assault.
Parents are behind child marriages, says SC

36 hours on, missing doctor’s body found near Worli

Nationwide programme to test all TB patients

Molecular diagnostic test will check for drug resistance

GSMNews Today

Beginning this month, health officials will launch a na-
tionwide programme to test all TB patients for drug resist-
ance. A key part of this effort will be sending 90,000
samples from across the country to the 115 National Ref-
ence Centres (NRC’s) in the country. The test, which can
detect drug resistance within 72 hours, is expected to help
develop treatment plans for patients who need to be treated
differently.

Medical boards proposed to handle abortion petitions

The Centre on Thursday introduced a pro-
cedure for handling medical boards’ recom-
mendations on abortion petitions. The pro-
cedure will allow the government to make the
final decision on whether a pregnant woman
can have an abortion. The bill will be intro-
duced in Parliament next month.

Medical boards are currently mandated to
recommend on abortion cases but the final
decision on whether a woman can have an
abortion is usually left to the court.

The government has been working on
this issue for several years and has been
 promising to introduce legislation to
legalise abortion in the country.

Congress and the Left have been pressing
for an amendment to the Indian Penal Code
that would allow for legal abortion in cases
of rape, medical emergencies, and to save the
life of the mother.

However, the印度 Supreme Court has
rejected three previous attempts to legalise
abortion. The latest attempt was heard
earlier this year but did not result in a
decision.

The new procedure will allow the govern-
ment to make the final decision on whether
a woman can have an abortion, based on the
recommendation of the medical board.

The medical board will consist of three
experts: a gynaecologist, a neonatologist,
and a paediatrician. The board will
recommend on cases where a woman
requests an abortion.

The government has been working on
crafting the new procedure for several
months and has consulted with various
stakeholders.

The government has also been working on
introducing a Medical Council of India
(MCI) bill, which would regulate the
practice of medicine in the country.

The MCI bill has been controversial and
has faced opposition from various groups,
including the medical fraternity.

The latest development is likely to be
welcomed by those who support a legal
abortion law in the country.

The Medical Council of India (Amendment)
Act, 2020, which was passed in 2020, will
allow for the regulation of the practice of
medicine in the country.

The Act will allow the MCI to regulate
the practice of medicine in India.

The MCI has been facing criticism for its
lack of transparency and accountability.

The new procedure is likely to be
welcomed by those who support a legal
abortion law in the country.

The Indian government has been working
on introducing a legal abortion law for
several years, but has faced opposition from
various groups, including the medical
fraternity.

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welcomed by those who support a legal
abortion law in the country.
Shifting goal posts

It's official. Demonstration has totally failed to creak black money — its professed objective.

**Note on the Editor**

The Rajiv Gandhi Institute for International Studies in New Delhi, a think tank, has recently published a report titled "Black Money: Understanding the Indian Mind." The report, which is based on extensive research and interviews, provides a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of black money in India. It highlights the various factors that contribute to the problem and offers recommendations for tackling it.

*Editor* M.K. Narasimhan

**Editorial**

The brainy world of lynching

What this happens when majoritarianism and vigilantism are not reckoned

Ray of Hope

With the sudden suspension in the Eagleteer calls, the Bhutan’s GDP growth slowed.

**Note on the Editor**

The Bhutanese government has recently launched a comprehensive plan to combat the spread of black money in the country. The plan includes measures to strengthen the financial system, increase transparency, and enhance tax compliance. It also aims to promote honest business practices and encourage ethical investments.

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**Editorial**

The brave new world of lynching

This is what happens when majoritarianism and vigilantism are not reckoned.
The British got rid of it. India remains with countries it would not like to be associated with otherwise

Section 377

Section 377 has been at the centre of academic, political and activist attention for being a colonial legacy, a legal and social instrument for the criminalisation of a sexual act that is consensual and otherwise legal. The Section was only introduced in the Indian Penal Code in 1860. The argument has been that since it criminalises acts that are consensual and legal in most countries, it is discriminatory and interferes with the rights of the minority community. The Section has been challenged numerous times, but was reinstated in 2013 by the Delhi High Court. The Supreme Court, in a 2-1 verdict, upheld the law and rejected the challenge.

A technological cause

The Section 377 challenge has been the most recent in a series of cases that have sought to challenge the Section. The challenge, however, is not just a legal challenge. It is also an act of defiance and resistance against the law. The challenge has not only been made in the courts but also through protests and public rallies. The challenge has also been made through personal stories and experiences of the community.

A constitutional challenge

The Section 377 challenge has been a challenge to the Constitution. The Section, which is a colonial law, has been challenged on the grounds that it is discriminatory and interferes with the rights of the minority community. The challenge has been made on the grounds that the Section is discriminatory and interferes with the rights of the minority community.

A legal challenge

The Section 377 challenge has been a legal challenge. The challenge has been made on the grounds that the Section is discriminatory and interferes with the rights of the minority community. The challenge has been made on the grounds that the Section is discriminatory and interferes with the rights of the minority community.

A political challenge

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A cultural challenge

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A historical challenge

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A human rights challenge

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GDP growth data being worked out

The government measures are consistent with the long run trajectory of decline and if the IMF's view is not working to support the system that the government has been supporting would be even more pronounced. The level of growth and you will not get a downward movement. When the service sectors, the GDP growth rate is 10.3% compared to 5% in the same quarter last year. A high value added by the agriculture sector was a 2% in the first quarter of last year. Even though the crop production sector growth rate is higher, overall agriculture contributes to about 8% of the GDP. Because of the other decline in the manufacturing sector, it is principally human beings and because of the other decline in agriculture. The Secretary is the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary.

Union Cabinet rejig being worked out

The composition of the cabinet was changed following cabinet reshuffle. The Prime Minister had reportedly asked some of his party seniors to resign. The Prime Minister, in his usual style, will address the Sardar Sarovar Bhumi Darshak rally on the occasion of the 4th anniversary of the Sardar Sarovar Project. The Prime Minister has also announced the setting up of a grievance redressal forum to deal with the grievances of the farmers. The Prime Minister also sought Swiss cooperation in visa facilitation. The Prime Minister also sought Swiss cooperation in visa facilitation.

J ambushes over 30 soldiers

Three fidayeen militants who fought the government forces have either managed to escape or have been killed or captured during the encounter. The Prime Minister has also announced the setting up of a grievance redressal forum to deal with the grievances of the farmers. The Prime Minister also sought Swiss cooperation in visa facilitation.

No immediate end to 'sahyak' system

Over 30,000 soldiers employed on salaries and without any additional compensation to the soldiers. The Prime Minister has also announced the setting up of a grievance redressal forum to deal with the grievances of the farmers. The Prime Minister also sought Swiss cooperation in visa facilitation.

India thanks Switzerland for support in global fora

The Vijay Mallya rider of the Congress party in the time of the previous General Elections. The Prime Minister has also announced the setting up of a grievance redressal forum to deal with the grievances of the farmers. The Prime Minister also sought Swiss cooperation in visa facilitation.

CBI files case against 3 IRS officers

The case was registered under section 196 of the Indian Penal Code. The Prime Minister has also announced the setting up of a grievance redressal forum to deal with the grievances of the farmers. The Prime Minister also sought Swiss cooperation in visa facilitation.
SC rethink on video hearing

Sees more harm than good in marital case proceedings

The Supreme Court has questioned the wisdom of its own judgment to use video-conferencing in matrimonial case proceedings, saying the very purpose of the court has been nullified as one and all are attending from their "home chambers".

In March 2021, a bench of Justices A.K. Goel and U.U. Lalit had, however, said that if the parties appear by video-conferencing, coupled especially with the judges, the quality of justice would not suffer. The bench had said that if the recommendations made by the Committee on Mediation, Arbitration and Conciliation are adopted, the quality of justice would be further improved.

Concluding arguments Chaturvedi was listened after the letter was published on November 21, 2021. The final arguments in the case will begin on September 24, said Chaturvedi, adding that his arguments and counter arguments of the parties have to be wrapped up within a month. We hope to get justice," said Chaturvedi, whose eldest son, Anshul Chhatrapati, was sentence to 20 years in jail for sexual molestation. It was family was "very angry," the bench said.

SLAIN JOURNALIST'S FAMILY

SLAIN JOURNALIST'S FAMILY

Awais Ahmad, a 23-year-old journalist was shot dead in 2001. The family of the slain journalist is awaiting judgment to use video-conferencing in the case.

The government in its response had said that to "preserve the sanctity of judicial proceedings and prevent obstruction of justice", the aforesaid petition had been rejected on November 12, 2021.

Before case: SC likely to hear plea on today

The Supreme Court is likely to hear on Monday the plea of the family of slain journalist Awais Ahmad, seeking to remove the "obstacle" of protraction in the trial of the case.

The juvenile, Awais Ahmad, was shot dead in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, in February 2001.

Awais Ahmad's family has approached the apex court on November 8, 2021, after the Jammu and Kashmir High Court, on October 21, had directed the trial court to hear the case immediately and give an early verdict.

The family has alleged in the plea before the apex court that the trial court, on the basis of a file evidence, has delayed the case and has not given a verdict since the death of the victim.

The plea, seeking the directions to the trial court, was heard by a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, who is scheduled to take up the plea on Monday.

Awais Ahmad's family has sought direction by the apex court to order the trial court to give a verdict, or at least give a date for the disposal of the case.

The apex court has also been asked to order the trial court to record the evidence of the witnesses who have already been examined, to complete the remaining part of the trial in the case. The trial court has been asked to call the witnesses who have already been examined in the case, to complete the remaining part of the trial in the case.

The apex court has also been asked to order the trial court to complete the remaining part of the trial in the case, as the trial court has completed only one out of the four charges that have been framed against the accused.

The apex court has also been asked to order the trial court to allow the family of the victim to appear before the trial court, to give a statement about the trial court's inability to give a verdict.

The apex court has also been asked to order the trial court to consider the family's request for a fresh trial, as the trial court has failed to give a verdict in the case, even after the family has given a statement about the trial court's inability to give a verdict.

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Court declares Mursinharrab absconder

Acquits five Taliban men accused of assassinating former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto

Blasts rock flooded Texas chemical plant

Danger from Harvey shifts east

India has not violated nuclear deals: UN

Iran has not violated nuclear deals: UN

Irak's Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi called on Tuesday the Iraqi Parliament to make a formal call for reconciliation in the country. The Commonwealth of America's next war is a civil war, he said. The Prime Minister was in Iraq to attend the 19th UN conference.

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Centre pushes for RBI's support in dividends

Net profit had been ₹800 cr but received only ₹30.659 cr.

Fiscal deficit in July: 92.4% of estimate

India's fiscal deficit at ₹3.249 cr touched 52.6% of the budget mainly because of front loading of expenditure by the various government departments. In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit — the difference between expenditure and revenue — jumped by 4.4% to ₹6,781.9 cr during July, according to data from the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

During the same period last financial year, 2016-17, it was 73.7% of the target. For 2017-18, the government plans to bring down the fiscal deficit to 3.2% of the GDP. Last fiscal, it had touched the deficit target of 3.5% of the GDP.

Core sector output growth quickens to 2.4% in July

Low base in sectors including steel, electricity spurt uprick

India's core sector output grew 2.4% year-on-year in July, helped by a low base in sectors including steel and electricity. The production performance of eight core industries, which collectively account for 27.4% of the weight of the goods included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) — in July 2016 was better than June’s 0.9%, but slower than the 3.1% pace recorded in July 2016. Cumulative growth during April-July 2017-18 was 2.5%.

The month-on-month growth in core sector growth in July 2017 relative to the previous month was driven by a favour-able base effect for coal, cement, fertilizers and electricity. Addi- tion, Principal Economist, ICRA Ltd, wrote in a mail to com- mittees. “Nevertheless, half of the eight constituents re- covered a lost contraction in July 2017, namely, refinery production, power generation, steel, cement, fertilizers and textiles.”

Inventories building up

Inventories building up to a robust pick-up in growth of real output in July 2017 (0.2%) to June 2017 (-0.3%) to contrast the continued, albeit nar-row, recovery in production, in the second quarter of fiscal year 2017-18. In June 2017, inventories rose by 0.5% year-on-year to ₹3.49 trillion. Inventories growth has slowed to a growth rate of 1.1% year-on-year to ₹3.23 trillion in June 2016.

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India, U.S. eye states to boost trade ties

USIBC plans 'state engagement task force' to help align business interests with those of the provinces

KVB rolls out its first rural digital centre

K V Bank (KVB) has rolled out its first rural digital centre in anarthur village near Ernakulam, according to a statement. The centre has a cash
machine (which accepts and dispenses cash) and a paper book printer. The centre has high-speed wi-fi and a couple of tablets to enable customers to perform self-service banking and other transactions such as a train ticket booking.

Acquisition of 70% equity in Telematics4U to cost ₹1.17 crore

Rane Holdings Ltd (RHL), the holding company of the Rane group, will acquire majority stake in the Bengaluru-based telematics solutions provider
Telematics4U Services Pvt Ltd (T4U) for ₹1.17 crore.

Coca-Cola expects to return to "vibrant" growth in the Indian market after the soft drink major recorded a decline in sales in the last quarter of 2017 and the first quarter of 2018.

The company's plans to invest $1.7 billion in India sales faster growth will however be from non-carbonated drinks, lesser sugar content
and addressing a select group of consumers. Some premiums are angering healthier beverages had led to equal demand for flavored drinks. Promising to reduce sugar content in Coca-Cola products, Mr. Quincey said, India's large base of consumers, who are looking for the right kind of drinks and are not looking for sugar, we have the right strategy in place and we are going to continue in the right direction.

Coca-Cola plans to return to "vibrant" growth in the Indian market after the soft drink major recorded a decline in sales in the last quarter of 2017 and the first quarter of 2018.

"We are looking at India as a market that can become a part of our top three markets in the world for Coca-Cola," Mr. Quincey said.

"We have had a rough few months end of last year and beginning of this year, but things are starting to come back. India is going to return to vibrant growth," Mr. Quincey added, addressing a select gathering of journalists.

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**SPORT**

**In Brief**

**Kohli, Rohit hammer Sri Lanka into submission**

Dropped catches and poor fielding see the islanders surrender meekly yet again; Mathews plays a lone hand with the bat

**Tennis India Open: Saina, Kidambi in Round 1, HS Prannoy out**

Saina Nehwal defeated Pornpawee Chochuwong 21-19, 21-17, while Kidambi Srikanth took out Myron boils 21-9, 21-13. HS Prannoy, however, was ousted by Uniara 21-17, 21-13.

**PSG signs Mbappe on loan with option to buy**

Franco-French striker Kylian Mbappe has joined Paris St-Germain on loan from AS Monaco with an option to buy him outright in 2020.

**Bronze for Bhiluri**

Gaurav Bhiluri fought bravely before losing to a su- perior opponent.

**Japanese secures World Cup berth**

Late drama keeps China in the hunt

Japan survived a late scare when a Matthew Lowde shot hit the crossbar in the 90th minute; they needed to win to reach the final of the 2019 Asian Youth Cup in Thailand.

**Memorable county debut for Ashwin**

**India in London**

**Indian Junior Player League tournament to be held in Chennai**

A total of 240 players will participate in the four round robin stages of this year's 144-team Indian Junior Player League (IJPL T20) was launched in Chennai on Thursday. The tournament will be held at the K. S. R. Mahindra National Stadium starting on Thursday, 14-12, 2-11, 8-11.

**LPL 2017 launched**

The inaugural season of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2017 was launched in Chennai on Thursday. The tournament will be held at the Jaihind Cricket Stadium from March 11-27, 2017. The first edition of the franchise-based league will witness 10 teams vying for glory, with each franchise owning a 15-member playing squad.

**Sports Minister felicitates shuttlers**

India's Olympic and Commonwealth Games 2014 silver medallist P V Sindhu, K Srikanth, Saina Nehwal and Saina Nehwal and Gopichand along with Sports Minister Vijay Goel pay tribute to the athlete's achievement.

**BCCI settles for 'actuals'**

The BCCI has given its nod to the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) that it will settle the full 'actuals' for the TNCA's squad for the 2017-18 season under the new arrangement.
Lewis Hamilton chasing records and the lead

Sebastian Vettel will strive to delight fans at home

The Hindu Crossword 12101

体育

DTL RP ROUND-UP

Mihika in quarterfinals

Lewis Hamilton chasing records and the lead

Sebastian Vettel will strive to delight fans at home

ATHLETICS

Indian National Javelin throw champion

Sovi/AFP

ATHLETICS

Junior women's hockey squad named

Some have played for senior India

DELI RP ROUND-UP

Mihika in quarterfinals

Rashtri ahead

SPORTS BUREAU

Top seed Rashtri moved into the semi-finals of ITF Grade-1 Junior Tournament in Australia after a straight sets win over Vinita Singh of India. She will now face Divya Naik of India in the final.

Junior women's hockey squad named

Some have played for senior India

FAITH

Nataraja's cosmic dance

We are bound by many desires and attachments in life, and we feel it difficult to break free from these bonds. Pride and ignorance are the main factors that determine our lives and our everyday lives. Our acts in every birth keep on adding points to His raised left foot. This is to show that...
**DELHI HIGH COURT RESTORES CARROM FEDERATION**

The Union government was directed to take corrective steps and issue gazette correction forms and also “uphold in toto” the results of the election held in Guwahati on November 25, 2015, and pass order in recognition of the appellant federation’s office bearers.

**Judges categorical**

The judges were categorial that the government orders made for the purpose of an ad hoc committee, by representing an ad hoc committee, by representing the government, are invalid. The orders of the ad hoc committee are not binding on the parties.

**Unacceptable**

Caroline Wozniacki,former World No.1 Caroline Wozniacki, who has won seven Grand Slam titles, had been the highest-ranked women’s singles player at the US Open. She was no match for her opponents.

**Important Results**

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Common thread

The ‘Ties that Bind’ exhibition, opening in New Delhi today, brings ikkat from several countries
Pages 6 & 7
Maestro’s soothing balm

A flamboyant jugalbandi and a mesmerising performance by veteran flautist Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia’s made Amar Jyoti Festival a memorable affair

MANJARI SINHA

Pt. Ghatur Lal Memorial Society presented its annual Amar Jyoti Festival, a musical tribute to the unknown soldiers who sacrificed their lives for their motherland; featuring Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia in a mesmerising flute recital and U. Rajesh and Purabayan Chatterjee in a mandolin/sitar duet (jugalbandi) in Carnatic and Hindustani music respectively at Kamani Auditorium recently.

They opened their jugalbandi with the timely Hindustani evening raga Puria Dhanashri with aalap-jod on sitar and its Carnatic counterpart ‘Pantuvarali’ on mandolin with alapana (ragam) and tanum on mandolin. It was followed by a composition of seven beats time cycle of Hindustani rupak and Carnatic misra-chapu talam. Both Purabayan and U. Rajesh sounded perfect as far as the understanding of the art of jugalbandi was concerned – gently supportive, providing musical space for each other, standing back to let the other pass without collision and a fine grasp of how much and how far to reciprocate. The taans in particular were kept complimentary without repeating the same section of the scale. But the duet performance, especially the climaxing jhala, would be remembered for sheer virtuosity and speed.

Notwithstanding their keen focus on ‘sur’, the total tunefulness of notes, the way they filled the duet with acrobatics, the back flips, the half twists and the somersaults of the swaras of the raga; filled some of the listeners with an awed dismay. It was the vision and the mystery of the raga that they abandoned. It may be called a matter of choice and temperament, but not of music. The following Khararapriya and kafi gat composition, with its tantalising gait set to Carnatic Aditala and Hindustani Teentala added to the total feeling of skill, outpacing the perfume of the romantic raga for which they provided neither the time nor the opportunity. At least one expected Purabayan to do some justice to the thumri like emotional potential of the raga, but he was busy following the repetitive ‘gopuchchheh’ variety thilas of the mandolin. Pranshu Chatturali on tabla and Vidwan S.V. Ravi on mridangam provided adequate support and sawal-jawab. It was a flamboyant performance telling us about many things besides music.

Serene experience

The serene flute of Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia came as a calming balm after this loud affair; but he could get the stage well beyond his scheduled time. Accompanied on flute by his worthy disciple Debopriya Chatterjee and on tabla by Rashid Mustafa Thirakwa, he opened with raga Bilag, one of the most melodious melodies of that time of the evening. Creating the desired atmosphere of the raga with a detailed aalap-jod-jhala, he played a medium tempo composition set to tala Rupak of seven beats cycle. The constant trembling of his left hand indicated that age is taking its toll on this ace flautist, who has left a plethora of musical memories of his innumerable mesmerising concerts in the minds and hearts of his fans and admirers. Debopriya did her best to support her guru as best as she could. Rashid Mustafa reciprocated with reverence and zeal in his solo round.

This was followed by the folk fragrance of Bengal in a Bhatiali Dhan, which also had the devotional fervour of the Vaishnava Keertan Padavali sung with the percussion support of the khul. On a request, Pandit Chaurasia concluded his flute recital with “Jaya Jagadish Hare....” The respectful rendering of the traditional tune of the most popular arati, sung in every Hindu household; was redolent with the flavour of a contemplative ragalapana, transcending to spiritual heights.
Of heartless merchant and generous coolie

Despite flaws in treatment, Yogesh Kumar Pande’s ‘Saudagar’ managed to bring alive the aesthetics of Brechtian theatre

In praise of Krishna

Graceful to the core, Divya Goswami Dikshit’s Kathak recital captured romantic memories and pangs of separation

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Feminine Mythique

A liberal past

It allowed Desire, which could kill Shame

SAMHITA ARNI

As a woman in India today, the question that often confronts me is: Is there a way to reconcile tradition and modernity? There perhaps is no conclusive answer to this — there are stories that reiterate concepts that control women and their sexuality. We associate tradition with duty, a force that is in opposition to, and often seeks to control and regulate, desire and personal freedom.

Yet, I have to admit that I am surprised by the past. My grandmother, who I loved deeply, sought in her old age to connect me with the rituals and the puja of her family and the past — and I resisted this. It also seemed incongruous to me that my grandmother — a woman who loved her lipstick, sported a bob cut, and delighted in wearing chiffon saris with sleeveless blouses — a liberated woman, was, as she grew older, deeply immersed in certain traditions.

When she passed away, in honour of her memory — a little against my own ideals — we donated money for a puja at the temple of her Kuladevata, her family deity, Amba Bhavani. I had resisted hearing about this deity throughout my life, yet after her death, I found myself talking to the priest at the temple and was forced to confront my own prejudices.

Amba Bhavani — according to this priest's description — was exactly the priest's description — was exactly the sort of Goddess my fierce and emancipated grandmother would have approved of.

She was not merely the sister of Krishna, she was a single Goddess, unmarried, the incarnation of Shakti and incredibly strong. It strikes me as ironic that a culture that boasts of a rich legend connected to deadly savour Shakti-Goddesses is also a culture that allows gender inequities.

Beauty and Desire

There is Lalitha Triparasundari, the Goddess to whom Lalitha Sahasranama is dedicated. She is described in sensual terms, regarded as the embodiment of desire and is married to Kameswara, Siva incarnate as Desire. She fights and triumphs over a demon, Bhandasura — a demon who is, literally, called Shame. It is fascinating to consider some of the metaphors that her story can offer us — a form of Mahamaya, Lalitha is the one 'who plays,' she is Beauty and Desire and defeats Shame.

But Lalitha Triparasundari is a Goddess associated with the Tantric tradition, and we shy away from talking about and exploring the thoughts and ideas preserved in it. I am struggling to understand what exactly tantra was, when a scholar explained to me that tantricism involves practices and ideas that advance personal empowerment; that enables the practitioner or student of Tantricism to seek liberation — moksha not merely in a spiritual sense, but also in the sense of being controlled and restricted by social convention.

Yet Tantricism is uncomfortable to many concepts such as lasya-tanpava; purush-prakriti and ardhana-rasarasa emerge from their lore.

In modern times, it was the example of American pioneers Ted Shaw and Ruth St. Denis in 1920s that inspired Uday Shankar in the 1930s to team up with wife Amala after he had performed professionally with Anna Pavlova, Simkai and Zohra, before marriage. His example led to the rise of many dances in the 1940s and 50s such as: Gopinath-Than�amani, Natraj-Shakuntala and the Vashis. This inspired the next generation of current seniors.

Today, our leading dancing couples are the Dhananjayans, the Reddy's and until recent bereavement, the Narasimhachars. For sometime C.V. Chandrasekhar and his wife danced together. Kathak couple Sunayna with husband Hazari Lal too did the same. Many such first generation names abound — Kuchipudi deities and until recent bereavement, the Narasimhachars.

For the Chandrasekhars, the biggest challenge was to find a Carnatic musician in Varanasi where CVC was working in a college and later at the BHU. "We found it difficult to dance together much, unless we had a singer from Delhi. We did dance whenever we received a decent remuneration to pay the accompanists." "One of the advantages of both of us being dancers is that we could perform solos or duets depending on the opportunity." Among the young Bharatanatyam dancers who have made a serious and consistent mark today are Anuradha-Shridhar, Kiran Sandhya, Parashwanath-Shruti, Renjith-Vijaya, Sheeji Nambiar-Parvathy Menon and Shrikant-Ashwathi.

Lingaraj Pradhan-Sanjukta Pradhan in Odisha, Sinam-Monika in Manipur and in Kathak there are Nirupama-Rajendra, Hari-Chetna, Tushar-Pooja-Bhatt and Anuj Mishra-Neha and Kuchipudi has Kishore Mosalikanti and Padmavani.

What makes them dance together? "Karmic connection. Dance brought us together," recall the Dhananjayans. "We struggled a lot initially. We have seen days of penury and hardship but dance kept us together." An advantage Younger generation is smarter professionally and some of them have chosen a life partner from the same field for their art to flourish. Sandhya and Kiran met and loved, dance came as an incentive. "Dance has strengthened our relationship.

Lingaraj Pradhan of Bhubaneswar was an established solo dancer until he married Sanjukta. "It was a conscious decision to marry a dancer for professional growth." Now they find more performance avenues. Prashwanath-Shruti met Shrikant while working on the post-production of guru Padmini Ramachandran's creation. "The initial issue when we began to work together as artists was making two divergent styles of one form meet, but we found a way out and have been making it work."

Nirupama and Rajendra are popular today for their big shows. When they dance together, like at Nrittyadnya's 70th anniversary celebration in Chennai, between them they weave beautiful images. "We bring to our dance, our individual energy and skill," says Nirupama.

The writer, a critic and historian, is the author of a number of books and edited attendance, a year book.
Fixed gayaki, but freedom to innovate

Shaam Chaurasi, one of the four gharnanas of Punjab, is the cradle of dhrupad

**JOYTI NAIR**

No ghara remains unchanged, it is constantly evolving even while upholding the vision of its founders. The Shamaeyneef gharaana that has its roots in small town of Shaam Chaurasi near Hoshiarpur, Punjab, was named after King Shaam. Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan, son of the legendary Ustad Salaamat Ali Khan, the famous Nazakat-Salamat duo, is one of the famous representatives of this gharaana. His father and uncle made invaluable contributions to establish the style of this gharaana. “The gharaana is named after King Shaam, who had 84 villages under him,” informs Ustad Shafqat.

Ustad Sain Karim, grandfather of Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, was a singer in the court of the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. Salamat and Nazakat were the inheritors of this tradition and evolved an efficient method of singing. While Ustad Nazakat Ali Khan had an evocative and poignant manner, Ustad Salamat Ali Khan was greatly influenced by the musical expression of thumri singers.

**Distinct styles**

In the words of Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan, “It is the Dhrupad la gharaana with Khayal ka an-daat.” Shaam Chaurasi is one of the four gharnanas of Punjab, the others being Patiala, Talwandi and Kapurthala. Each has a distinct style that is tied to the same principles.

Most of the descendants of this school live in Pakistan and have been following the technique of their forefathers. Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan’s uncle Ustad Man Vai Ali Khan, originally trained in the dhrupad tradition, adopted these techniques to Khayal. The high pitches, richness and depth in the gayaki have earned them recognition in the sub-continent.

Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan along with brothers Ustad Sharafat Ali Khan, Latafat Ali and Sakhawat Ali and cousin Ra-fakat Ali Khan, the tenth generation singers of this gharaana. Their musical lineage can be traced to the time of Emperor Akbar when Ustad Maham Chand Khan and Mian Suraj Khan were singers in the royal court and contemporaries of Mian Tansen.

The magnificent singing of Ustad Salamat Ali Khan won him Satara Intiaz and the title of Pride of Performance. Both Sharafat Ali Khan and Ustad Shafqat Ali are also the recipients of the Pride of Performance, the highest civilian honour in Pakistan. Their repertoire includes dadra rendition in thumri style. In this style, the bols, matras and alaps are joined together with maand. The gap between the swar is covered with a clear and powerful enunciation of the swar. Purity and transparency of swars and a subtle spiritual exultation are the principal characteristics of this gharaana.

Heavy gamakas are used for badat in sur. Gayaki here is fixed as in dhrupad but there is freedom to innovate. ‘Amad’ is predominantly used – the skilfully calibrated entrance of the tabla into a tal cycle meeting, which is called ‘sam,’ where the rhythm determines the face of the raga. Badat is also done with the tarana bols. The thumri is fixed as in dhrupad but with great aplomb. This is tradition at its best. Ustad Shafqat Ali pointed out how these are transferred to every succeeding generation of musicians so that the process of evolution and enrichment is continuous. Waiting to take this glorious tradition forward are nephew Babakat Ali Khan and sons Saizan Ali Khan, Nadir Ali Khan and Sift Ali Khan.

Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan of Pakistan (Shaam Chaurasi Gharana)

**Mind Your Yoga**

It’s not about counting sheep

Quit acting like a robot. Fix an inner CCTV instead and watch your mind

A.G. Mohan and Ganesh Mohan

You update your mental software by yogic mindfulness or minding your mind. By bringing into your body, senses, mind — and indeed your entire life — a feeling of lightness and clarity. The mind cannot bring back what it has not experienced. All of us have already experienced this feeling, if only briefly. In this state, our mind is clear and our comprehension is sharp. Our body feels healthy and free of tension or fatigue, and there is a sense of effortlessness in whatever we do.

This feeling is the “gold standard” by which we measure our progress toward updating our mental software. The assessment of this progress is internal. However, it will reflect in our external behaviour. The method for yogic mindfulness or minding our mind was developed centuries ago. It is neither arcane nor mystical. Instead, it is logical, rational, and practical. It is simple and straightforward but not easy. It requires conscious personal effort. But for those who choose this path, the effort is rewarded with health, longevity, and peace of mind.

It is better to remind ourselves that there is really no choice. Awareness and attention must be present in every action; otherwise, the action becomes mechanical. When we speak of awareness and attention, there is the temptation to label yoga as a practice of mindfulness. But there is much confusion over this term.

Mindfulness — in the sense of paying close attention — is not in and of itself a virtue. For instance, one can mindfully drink a bottle of whiskey in one evening or eat an entire chocolate cake in one sitting. We can mindfully engage in a harmful practice of asanas when we attempt to do a headstand without proper preparation and instruction.

**Leads to freedom**

True mindfulness is not just awareness of our actions. The phrase “yogic mindfulness” rather than “mindfulness” better expresses the scope of watchfulness in yoga. Yogic mindfulness consists of observing the mind and replacing harmful and compulsive thoughts and actions with healthful ones that lead us to freedom from our own mind.

When faced with a problem, we can delve ourselves into thinking that we are “mindfully” considering the problem, when actually, we are reinforcing the problem or ob-sessing over it. Yogic mindfulness offers a way out of delusion. For example, when the mind is filled with thoughts of getting even with someone who has hurt me, is this a form of mindfulness? Or is it a form of bondage?

Mindfully going astray

A tailor suffering from insomnia finally agreed to try out the old remedy of counting sheep. Next morning, he turned up for business more tired ever. “What a night,” he exclaimed. “I counted more than ten thousand sheep. Then I figured that they will yield thirty thousand yards of wool!”

Mindfulness relates to a state of alert attention. Yogic mindfulness is to bring balance, quietness, and peace. In yogic mindfulness, we need to watch the effect of all our bodily actions and senses input on our mind and orient all our activities toward bringing about light. The purpose of the eight limbs of yoga is to bring about this light — the pathway to health, happiness and peace.

At the most basic level, the mind is inbalance and therefore clueless. It has no form, colour, touch, taste, sound or smell. What we call as mind is an inference based on our thoughts and feelings. We update our mental software by updating/
Different strands

A stunning range of the exquisite tie-and-dye craft will be on show between September 16 and 17 at the World Ikat exhibition in Delhi.

Signature work

The title piece of this world exhibition is the Shirkr Bhat Patola — or two large elephants in procession with a lanka mask. This piece was woven by a Sait family in 2009. Brothers Rohit and Rahul Sait will be present at the exhibition that celebrates the woven art of South India.

The museum's finest examples of the era period. These are actually restored pieces on the show. The sides below their woven works were on display.

The exhibition is a passion for textile enthusiasts. There are over 120 exhibits with 20 from each country, a total of 120 different textiles. The exhibit is divided into four sections: India, Asia, Africa, and South America. The exhibits of the geographical area are grouped by country, region, and sub-region.

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Chicago to vibe with Indian music

Bharatanatyam will also feature in the two-week World Music Festival beginning on September 8

ARUNA CHANDARAJU

The multicultural nature of the U.S. is evident in every field of activity in the country. The 19th Annual World Music Festival, Chicago, is an illustration of this. To be held from September 8 to 24, the fest will showcase diverse art forms from across the world.

Billed as the largest of its kind in the U.S., this festival is produced by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) and held at 23 venues in the city. The best part is that the events are open to all. This is in keeping with the democratic tradition of the U.S. and Chicago’s own reputation as a culturally vibrant and inclusive society. Since it began in 1999, the Chicago fest has presented over 600 artists and ensembles from over 80 countries and attracted over six lakh art-lovers.

The festival aims to educate audiences about the artforms, from early Indian music to contemporary Brazilian Independence Day, the festival will present the well-known singer Bet-sayda Machado and her Afro-Venezuelan music. She is slated to perform with La Parranda El Clavo. Audiences will also be treated to Lunasa from Ireland and La Tribu de Abrante (Puerto Rico) besides Yao Ye (China).

Two interesting inclusions are The 606 Walk + Global Peace Picnic with Juicebox Concerts; and Chicago Gypsy Jazz Festival and Caravan Art Festival. It is not just entertainment, the festival aims to educate audiences about the complexities of the instruments that are used to make the music. So, there are sessions on instrument making from legendery African artiste from Mali, will be a star attraction as will be a performance by singer and saxophonist Seun Kuti and Egypt 80 from Nigeria.

The Hyde Park Jazz Festival is on the same day as the latter. Music-lovers can also look forward to well-known singer Bet-sayda Machado and her Afro-Venezuelan music. She is slated to perform with La Parranda El Clavo. Audiences will also be treated to Lunasa from Ireland and La Tribu de Abrante (Puerto Rico) besides Yao Ye (China). Two interesting inclusions are The 606 Walk + Global Peace Picnic with Juicebox Concerts; and Chicago Gypsy Jazz Festival and Caravan Art Festival.

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The World Music Festival Chicago is in keeping with the One Chicago campaign (a multimedia representation) recently launched by the City of Chicago which believes and asserts that Chicago is a city of promise and that it welcomes everyone.

Visit www.worldmusicfestival-chicago.org for the full schedule.

Follow the festival on Facebook and on Twitter @WMFChi #WorldMusicFestChi #ChicagoOnE.
Two voices, one spirit

The Gundecha Brothers, Umakant and Ramakant, talk about how they revived the Dhrupad

K. PRADEEP

A conversation with the Gundecha Brothers, Umakant and Ramakant, is like unfolding of a jugalbandi. They dress alike, talk alike, when one stops, the other takes off spontaneously.

The Gundecha Brothers have always been singing together. The jugalbandi is an important feature of the Dhrupad, especially in the Dagar tradition. When they sing there is unison, the two so attuned, so aware of each other. Performing together involves understanding of the musical aesthetics and thoughts of each other. It can, however, sometimes be tricky. “We complement each other in an effort to build up our music, our concert,” says Umakant. And Ramakant takes over, “Of course, there needs to be proper understanding or else the whole thing will be out of tune. It is important to be able to accept thoughts. We go ahead with one philosophy, perfect understanding.”

Mutual respect for the musical aesthetics, says Ramakant, is how they overcome such niggles. “Both of us have different ideas about music, about how a raga should be sung. We accept each other’s thoughts. Actually, when we sing together, it is a presentation of both our styles.”

The Dhrupad or Dhrupad, the oldest form of Hindustani classical music, is said to have originated from an ancient musical form called Prabandha. The language of Prabandha was pre-eminently Sanskrit, it was devotional and sang of temple worship and rituals. Gradually, Prabandha got set into basic ragas and talas and with changing times, embraced other themes. From devotional it evolved into a sophisticated, classical form; it got royal patronage, it acquired a secular nature.

Spiritual rush

Is the spiritual or religious element in Dhrupad manifest today? “When you begin learning, even today when you are initiated, there is that spiritual rush you experience. Whether one is spiritual or not, the art is sure to transform you,” says Ramakant.

For long the Dhrupad remained a purist’s language allowing few liberties to an adventurous exponent. It remained more or less closed to other deviations. Umakant adds, “Down the years we have extended our performance to various genres of music and even to dance. We have sung for Kathak recitals. Our compositions comprise verses from medieval poets such as Kabir, Meera and Thulasidas. We have been associated with contemporary dancers like Chandralekha, for her last choreographic work Shariru, and Astad Deboo. We have done jugalbandis with Carnatic vocalists such as the Malladi Brothers, with Tagore compositions and, more recently, with a theatrical performance, Inna Rumi: Beyond Form, by Pune-based Kaveri Kalashatra and Sonaad. So, the form evolves.”

Seasonal songs

Preparing for a concert does not, at least at this stage of their careers, worry the brothers. “As Hindustani music follows a time cycle, we choose a raga for a concert in advance depending on the time we are to perform. Then there are the themed concerts where, for instance, we are asked to sing only Malhar. Other than this there is no prior preparation,” says Ramakant.

Though they have moved on, both Umakant and Ramakant aver that they have not budged from the basic tenets of Dhrupad as propagated by the Dagar gharana. “We still sing the elaborate alap, the emphasis is on relaxed pace, tonal precision, grammar, understanding the mood and emotion in ragas and swaras. In fact, our training systems are still close to what we experienced. We still sing with the tanpura and phakawaj. All that and the other traditional coordinates cannot be substituted,” explains Ramakant.

Born in Ujjain, the Gundecha Brothers studied at the local Madhav Music College before moving to Bhopal in 1981 to train under Zia Fariduddin and Zia Mohiuddin Dagar. After four years of intensive training, they performed in public for the first time in 1985, at a dance and music festival in Bhopal. Umakant has a post-graduate degree in music and economics and Ramakant in music and commerce.

Continuing the tradition, the brothers have started the Dhrupad Institute in Bhopal where the Gurushishya heritage is still followed. “We have around 25 students studying in this gurukul tradition. It is perhaps the first-of-its-kind for Dhrupad in the country. The students are given scholarship, tuition, lodging and boarding. The mode of learning is designed to provide the students opportunity to be in close affinity with their gurus, listening and learning from them. We also offer short-term courses focussed on learning Dhrupad and music appreciation,” says Umakant.

Four of the prominent Dhrupad gharanas only the Dagar and the Darbanga or Gauhar exists. In the early part of the 20th century the form faced a loss of popularity and almost faced extinction.

Loss of royal patronage, subsequent financial hardships faced by the artistes, the elaborate alap singing and improvisation that needed intensive training, which in turn required dedication and focus on the part of the learner forced many to move to simpler forms of Hindustani music. Dhrupad gradually gave way to a more free-flowing style called khyal.

“Yes, there was a phase, say from 1960-80, a dark phase when there were very few students and hardly any performance venues. That’s when two styles vanished. But things have changed. Dhrupad has gone through a trial by fire and is now more vibrant, thanks to the masters who kept the flame burning. Now, there is a new generation of singers ready to take off,” feels Ramakant.

Raga for the evening

The Gundecha Brothers have chosen Malhar for the evening. One opens the treasure trove quietly, gently taken up by the other. Slowly they improvise around the raga’s essence, dipping below it in long, resonant tones and then rising above it in the same manner. They explore the raga unhurriedly, which is the substance of Dhrupad. They are two and one at the same time, attuned, aware as they take flight with them the audience to a melodically magical experience.
Sailing on a festive wave

Vallasadya and Vallamkali, held as part of Onam celebration in Kerala’s Pathanamthitta, is a heady melange

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN

Rituals meet revelry at sylvan Aranmula, situated on the banks of the Pampa in Pathanamthitta. The past and present coalesce seamlessly in the pageantry that begins in the Malayalam month of Karkidakam (July-August). From then on it is celebrations galore for the residents of this small town and its outskirts; a huge firewood stove is lit inside the Aranmula Sree Parthasarathy temple, signifying the beginning of the Aranmula Vallasadya, a grand traditional feast. Festivities reach a crescendo with Ashtami Rolini, celebrated as the birthday of Lord Krishna. All barriers – political, religious and economic – are erased as people get down to celebrating the season with fervour.

Feast for oarsmen

Considered an offering to Lord Parthasarathy, main deity of the temple, Vallasadya is an elaborate traditional feast that is offered to the team of oarsmen of each boat, known as palliyodams.

Legend has it that long ago marauders from the hills attacked the boat that set off from Kattoor mana carrying provisions for the feast to be served at the temple on the day of Thiruvonam. When the local families in the vicinity of the temple came to know about it, they set off in their boats, chased away the attackers and accompanied the Thiruvonathoni to the temple.

Every year, the Aranmula Vallamkali recreates that legend, and people, irrespective of caste and creed, participate in the pageantry.

Every day, several decorated palliyodams narrate that story by sailing from their respective shores in snake boats. Clad in white dhoti and white thordhu sans footwear and shirt, the men row to the rhythm of songs (Vanchipattu and songs in praise of Lord Krishna) sung by the oarsmen. Placid waters of the Pampa are churned white as the long oars strike the water with a rhythm that resonates in the songs they sing. The oarsmen are received with fanfare at the ghat and escorted to the temple.

“Once the Vallasadya starts, every youngster from the neighbourhood tries to be in Aranmula to participate in the festival. People from all walks of life get into the spirit of the lot. It is our festival,” says A. Padmakumar, former MLA of Aranmula.

The harsh mid-day sun is ignored once the boats reach the shore and the excitement is palpable. The devotees make the offering and the oarsmen circumambulate the temple singing vanchipattu and songs in praise of the deity. Then they are served lunch in the oottupura (dining hall) of the temple.

Musical note

Beginning with an invocation, the feast proceeds on a musical note with the oarsmen asking, in the form of verse, for more of each dish. Each item has a couplet to be recited and that spices up the sumptuous lunch served with great reverence by the devotee’s family.

On the day of Thiruvonam, the revelry gives way to ritual and devotion. The Thiruvonathoni, which sets off from Kattoor on the previous day, sails into the temple ghat even as the day is just breaking on the eastern horizon. The Thiruvonathoni, accompanied by a regatta of palliyodams, is received with reverence and Vanchipattu, and the ingredients in the boat are carried to the oottupura where the grand sadya on the day of Thiruvonam is prepared and served to hundreds of devotees.

The grand race of the palliyodams is on the day of Uthrattadhi (fourth day after Thiruvonam). “Unlike boat races held elsewhere, here the oarsmen don’t sport footwear and are dressed in whites. It is more of a tradition though the race is fought with sportsmanship,” explains Padmakumar.

The highlight after the boat race is the huge feast on the day of Ashtami Rolini when every pilgrim is given a sadya on the premises of the temple.

By the time the palliyodams are anchored and safeguarded for the next year after October 2, it is estimated that around to three to five lakh people would have had had the Vallasadya.
Dreaming in digital age

Shahid Akhtar’s short stories provide an insight into fables of our banal and materialistic existence.

SHAFEEY KIDWAI

Does the collective mindset shaped by the much-hyped digitalised world with its sheer enormity betray a certain kind of weariness and defeatism? Does information technology induced narrative of equality and empowerment hardly enable people to get a peep into fables of human existence? These pertinent questions are to be raised in the contemporary world of animated superficiality and one needs to be made aware of the collective pathos of apparently blooming but in reality, a diseased society. This is what that constituted the aesthetic reverie created by an accomplished story teller Shahid Akhtar. His third collection of short stories “Khaabgane” appeared recently, has been creating waves in Urdu knowing readers as his astutely told stories provide an insight into fables of our banal and materialistic existence.

The story “Khaabgane” narrates a titillating tale of a protagonist, Chowdhry Rafeeq, passing through winter of his time. He refuses to be bogged down by constraints of ever-expanding materialistic world. He feels the opposite of what he experiences in real life and he tries to understand how are greed, insensitivity and self-indulgence created. He breathes his last with an emphatic prediction, “will anyone in the younger generation have a dream of living together?” Most certainly not, why does a social animal like ‘man’ find sharing a toilsome activity? It is the question he asks to understand the incongruities of life.

Akhtr, recipient of the prestigious Bhasha Parishad Award, produces some penetrating vignettes of social and cultural psyche and his stories ‘Shinakht’, ‘Bara Ghar’, ‘Darkerat’, ‘Marut’, ‘Gol’ and ‘Tasveez’ allude to things that are authentically painful and shattering to all those who are not swayed by the dazzling display of opulence.

Human perception
Unlike his predecessors, Akhtar hardly pays any attention to romantic meandering covering a range of human activities, conversely, he generates a panoramic view of human perception that sometimes finds silence an idea that tells the protagonist how to act. His stories draw sustenance from a notion of reality created through the language and present a past with out a tinge of nostalgia though in his stories past surfaces and forms again in a constant presence. One feels tempted to agree with critic Mahmood Hashmi who describes his stories as surrealistic representation of landscape and situations that have become main characters of the story.

Tantalising story
Seldom does one cross a tantalising story that can be taken as a trenchant critique of the run-of-the mill phallocentric stories. Shahid’s story “Go!” is essentially a logosentric story which is part pensive, part passive and part volcanic. The unassuming and nondescript Munni gives a different answer to the question of muscularity. She feels exulted when her red blooded husband becomes impotent.

The first story of the collection carrying 15 stories, ‘Hisab’ subverts the common perception about memory. The female protagonist of the story is a maid servant who takes pride in making mess with counting money and simple calculation proves extremely daunting for her but one day she discloses, “you know I am extremely poor in maths and even my children mock at me but I distinctly remember who gave me what with graphic details. Her memory lives in indelible-ness, a quality that has no place in an amazingly complex and callous world in which we live in. Sex is a natural phenomenon but nature cannot attain the status of art and according to critic Mehdi Jalal it should go to his home and ask, “Hey why did you not go to school at all?” That would make him come for the next two weeks.”

The story moves on to how Kuo left the city to study law. Her reasons for moving out not only involve betterment of one’s prospects but is also a telling comment on the lack of opportunities in poor areas, the story of how coloured people have been left out of much of the so-called progress in the world. Kuo says: “I out of 5 rural Americans are people of colour and all of them are African Americans. I also wanted to get out because 3% were Asians and so everybody was staring at me….I realized how much of a privilege I had because of my skin colour, it was a real collapse of moral confidence.” The import of this struck her even more deeply when returned after hearing what had happened with Patrick.

Continues Kuo: “In my third year of law school, I got a call from a friend asking if Patrick was my student. My first thought was that he had died. I heard he was in jail..he had got arrested for killing someone. I was shocked… I did not believe it… I flew back to visit him. He told me the story of what happened… the book is about trying to understand what my responsibility was towards him… what do you owe somebody you have met in a fleeting context but in an idealistic context?”

As the Goddess arrives

Delhi-based young artist Sou men Dutta’s first coffee table book “The Ananta”, which gives readers a complete experience of the Durga Puja, was released at New Delhi’s Bikaner House recently.

The book searches one of the greatest traditions of Bengal through camera lenses, brushes, pencil sketches and descriptive text by Soumen.

Sou men has brought out details, rituals, description of the goddesses through pencil sketches, photographs and paintings.

More than 150 Illustrations as well as over 1,000 photographs capture the secular moods of the festival and give readers the rituals and nuances of the biggest social extravaganza of Bengal.

SOURAV DUTTA

Raising the bar Shahid Akhtar

Understanding anxieties
Akhtr’s creative dexterity lays bare the inherent hypocrisies and contradiction of the all pervading consumerist discourse manifested in almost all work of life.
Blast From The Past

People's poet

As we celebrate his 94th birthday this week, let's rewind to some memorable gems penned by Shailendra

DEEPAK MAHAAN

Great poets deliver eternal truths in the simplest of words. Lyricist Shailendra was one such great poet who delivered outstanding metaphors in a vocabulary that came from the streets and sands of India. Like ordinary clay moulded to perfection by a master sculptor, words acquired profound meanings when Shailendra put his pen to paper. Even within the constraints of film scenes, situations and musical loops, Shailendra delivered songs that qualified successfully as literary poems as well as common folk gems. Perhaps no other Hindi poet in his era had the power of brevity that Shailendra possessed of condensing elaborate images into unforgettable phrases. Even with common words, Shailendra spun uncommon lines to lend success as literary poems such as “Lootere”, “Jaanwar”, “Tumhein Yaad Karte Hain” (“Amrapali”), “Khoya Khoya Chand” (“Kala Bazar”), “Tere Mere Sapne” (“Guide”) are still alive on millions of lips, it is thanks to the minimalistic usage of words that create powerful images for the listeners.

Lyrical pattern

His style of writing was knitting a chat into an enchanting piece of lyrical pattern; which though perceived as Shailendra's is considered by most as their own thought! Out of his vast inventory, take just the “Madhumati” song “Yaad Re Pardeed” or the film “Bandini” award winning “Main Gaon Tum So Jaa” (“Brahmacharini”), you realise how everyday sentences and feelings have been propelled to a “higher orbit” with ease. Since his songs were borne out of common lexicon, the imagery and emotions seem a part of our own milieu and they attract immediately; a sublime art that comes forth unobtrusively. Even with Akshay Kumar and that's working with Akshay, then I will show it took 25 retakes. It's a success even if it makes ₹100 crore club.

Quick Five

Stil in the fray...

MANISHA ROY

"Success doesn't teach you as much as failure does," says Suneel Darshan. The filmmaker who gave many hits with Akshay Kumar and Sunny Deol is now going through a rough patch. "I worked as a producer, director and script writer but somehow I am not counted among big filmmakers," rue Darshan, known for films such as “Lootere”, “Jaanwar” and “Ek Rishta”.

Darshan has a special bond with Akshay Kumar and that's why he was in Delhi to celebrate Zee Cinema's “Shanivar Ki Raat Akshay ke Saath” where the channel is celebrating the star's 50th birthday by presenting his films every Saturday.

Excerpts:

On his passion for filmmaking

Before filmmaking, I worked in distribution and production. It was my passion that bought me here. I didn't come here to make money. I worked honestly and learnt gradually. I was a focused filmmaker and I still am.

On his association with Akshay Kumar

I have worked with Akshay in seven films. I was lucky that my cinema captured Akshay's dramatic side. Akshay was always handsome, but gradually he started giving performance oriented roles and some of those are in my films. I looked at Akshay from different perspectives.

When I decided to work with him in Jaanwar, I invited him to Bandra and took him to salon to get him a new hair style. So, that's how our journey started. After three-four flops, he came back with Jaanwar and it celebrated 100 days in over 100 cities in the country. It was such a pleasure to understand that I could communicate with this man who wasn't wowed by the media or any trend. I believed in him and I had a burning desire to make cinema with him.

On a memorable scene with Akshay

When we were shooting for Jaanwar, there was an intense dramatic scene and Akshay had not done intense drama. When we started the shoot it took 25 retakes. It was a husband-wife scene and I knew I had to break the barrier which existed within him. I believed in him and he delivered.

On working with Akshay again and his perception of ₹100 crore club

We have a strong professional bond. If there is a subject demanding Akshay, then I will definitely go to him. After all a filmmaker always wants to rope in good actors and if he gets a star then it is all the more better.

I think '100 crore club' is just a marketing gimmick. There are many films which do business of 100 crores but are still losing propositions.

On changes in filmmaking process in the last decade

Yes, there have been so many changes in the process with the corporates coming in. They brought big money, and I knew I had to break the barrier which existed within him. I believed in him and he delivered.

On its first run, then I don't think it's a success even if it makes money. I think films which are remembered by audience even after a long time are true success stories.

Timeless appeal Shailendra, a still from “Teesri Kasam”

This railway clerk turned people's poet's poetry in his prime at 43 when he still had a lot more to share and deliver to his admirers. His muse gives you an insight that even in the midst of the glamour and glitz of film world, he remained a quintessential poet who was perhaps dissatisfied with the new, evolving world. Born in Rawalpindi, erstwhile Punjab, but brought up in the back lanes of Mathura, Shailendra returned a simpleton with no commercial trappings. That probably explains why, despite support of lifelong friend Raj Kapoor, his maiden production "Teesri Kasam" became a huge financial burden and why some trusted relatives were able to fleece him. For IPTTA (Indian People's Theatre Association) man whose poetry was always tinged with concerns of the common man, this betrayal and financial loss proved fatal though, paradoxically, his beautifully mounted film has been winning laurels and making money till date.

On the playlist

Yadu Na Jaaye (Dil Ek Mandir) 2 Panchi Pyare (Bandini) 2 Din Dhal Jaaye Hai (Guide) 2 Rula Ke Gaye Sapna Mera (Jewel Thief) 2 Main Pya Teri Tu Maane Ya Na Maane (Basant Bahar) 2 Naache Main Mara Magan (Meri Surat Teri Aankhein) 2 Ye Raatein Yeh Mausam Nadi Ka Kinara (Dilli Ka Thug) 2 O Sajana Barkha Bahar Aayi (Parakh) 2 Doti Dost Na Raha (Sangram) 2 Jaago Mohan Pyaree (Jaagte Raho)