

INDIA PERSPECTIVES

Volume 32 ■ Issue 1 ■ January-March 2018

ASEAN-India Commemorative SUMMIT 2018

Celebrating 25 years of cooperation



REPUBLIC DAY 2018:
ASEAN COMES TO INDIA

NALANDA, BIHAR
A TRYST WITH HISTORY

THE FESTIVAL OF COLOURS
HOLI IN ITS MANY HUES

IN MEMORIAM
ACTOR SHASHI KAPOOR

POTPOURRI

UPCOMING EVENTS ACROSS INDIA



BAISAKHI

For the large farming community in the state of Punjab, Baisakhi marks the time of harvesting rabi crops. On the occasion, they sing folk songs and perform the folk dances of *bhangra* and *gidda*.

WHEN: April 14, 2018

WHERE: Punjab



RONGALI BIHU

The biggest festival in the state of Assam, Rongali Bihu marks the Assamese new year and celebrates peace and prosperity. *Bihu*, the state's most popular folk dance form, is performed as part of the celebration.

WHEN: April 13 to 15, 2018

WHERE: Assam

BUDDHA PURNIMA

This festival marks the birth of Siddhartha Gautama, the man who would eventually be known as Gautama Buddha, and is observed by devotees across the country.

WHEN: April 30, 2018

WHERE: Across the country



MOATSU FESTIVAL

The Ao tribe of Nagaland celebrates Moatsu after the sowing of crops has been completed. Folk dancing, feasting and singing songs are integral to the celebration.

WHEN: May 2, 2018

WHERE: Mokokchung, Nagaland



RAMADAN

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, is a time of fasting, introspection and prayer for the Muslim community.

WHEN: May 17 onwards, 2018

WHERE: Across the world



GANGA DUSSEHRA

Celebrating the legend of the descent of River Ganges from heaven to earth, this festival is marked by devotees taking a ritual bath in the river and making offerings of fruits to it.

WHEN: May 24, 2018

WHERE: Uttar Pradesh

FOREWORD

The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, held for the first time in India on January 25, 2018, marked a historic milestone on India's diplomatic journey with ASEAN. The 10 heads of state of ASEAN nations arrived to a warm welcome in New Delhi, and even as the summit itself brought to light an array of issues of mutual interest, their presence as guests of honour at the 69th Republic Day celebrations at Rajpath reaffirmed the strength and spirit of this enduring partnership. In this issue of *India Perspectives*, get a glimpse of the successful proceedings of the summit as well as the grand Republic Day celebrations.

India's diplomatic calendar has been fairly packed over the last few months, with several significant bilateral and multilateral engagements having been lined up. Read about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's successful state visits to Jordan, Palestine, the UAE and Oman, cementing India's engagement with its maritime neighbours. This issue also gives you insight into some of the prominent state visits made by leaders of other nations to India - Israel, Iran and Canada.

In our travel section, we take you to the ancient monastery of Nalanda in Bihar, its ruins harking back to its glory as the world's first residential education hub that attracted students and scholars across South East Asia for centuries.

In our photo feature section, behold the vibrant festival of Holi like you've never seen it before. From Hola Mohalla in Punjab and Latthmaar Holi in Uttar Pradesh to Dol Jatra in West Bengal and Manjal Kuli in Kerala - the vast landscape of India is home to numerous iterations of the festival of colours.

From coloured faces to fabric, young fashion designer Ruchika Sachdeva recounts her journey towards becoming the first Indian woman to win the prestigious International Woolmark Prize in the womenswear category. As you read about her commitment to the environment and her roots, find echoes of a similar sentiment in the musical journey of Assamese singer Kalpana Patowary, who will be singing at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, Gold Coast to be held in Queensland, Australia from April 4-15, 2018.

Finally, we pay tribute to late actor Shashi Kapoor, who made his way into millions of hearts, both within India and beyond its borders.



Raveesh Kumar



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CONTENTS



28



76



50

PARTNERSHIP

United by principles.....	06
Building bridges.....	10
Taking a step forward.....	14
25 years of friendship.....	16
Extending our neighbourhood.....	20
Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2018	24
The economics of cooperation	26
The art of collaboration.....	28

SPORTS

The new state of play.....	30
----------------------------	----

SUCCESS

In tune with the world	34
------------------------------	----

ART

An artistic homecoming.....	38
-----------------------------	----

SNAPSHOT

The many hues of Holi.....	42
----------------------------	----

TRAVEL

Inheritance of peace	50
----------------------------	----

MUSIC

Classical therapy.....	56
------------------------	----

DANCE

Drama and devotion	60
--------------------------	----

THEATRE

On a new note.....	66
--------------------	----

FASHION

Ode to sustainability.....	70
----------------------------	----

CINEMA

An actor and a gentleman.....	76
-------------------------------	----

CUISINE

Home-grown goodness	82
---------------------------	----

PROGRESS

Track to the future.....	88
--------------------------	----



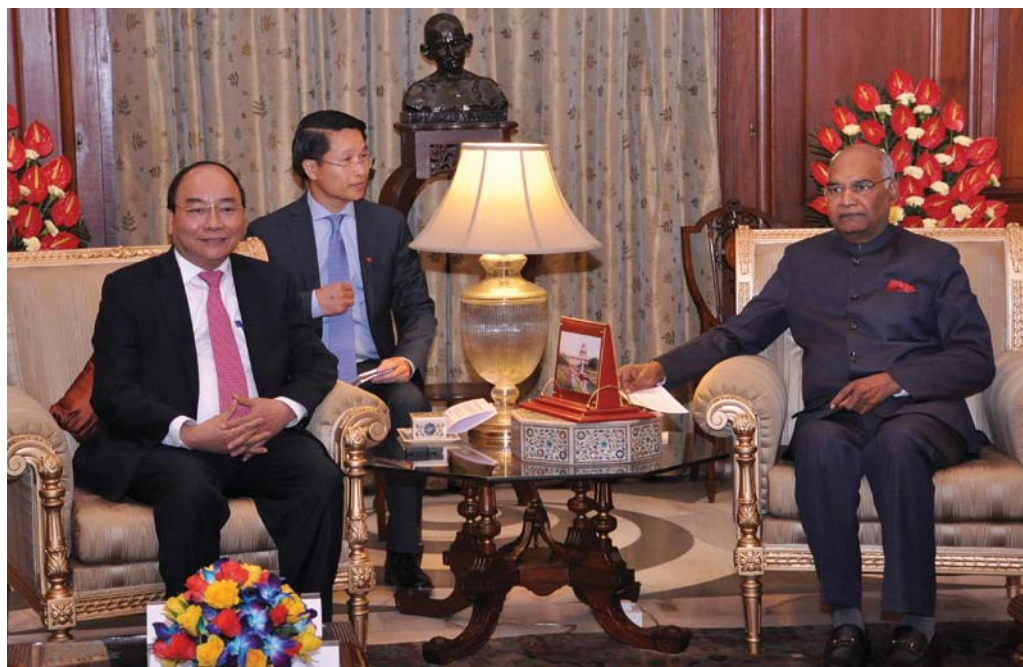
UNITED BY PRINCIPLES

The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, held on January 25, 2018, marked a significant milestone in the enduring cooperation between India and ASEAN



Above: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the 10 ASEAN leaders pose for a group photograph at Rashtrapati Bhavan

Above right: Indian President Ram Nath Kovind meets Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc



When the leaders of the 10 ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) countries arrived in New Delhi in January this year, the air was rife with a sense of the historic. This was only the second instance of the South East Asian grouping holding a second special summit with a non-member country. The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, held on January 25, 2018, was a diplomatic victory for both sides as they marked 25 years of ASEAN's dialogue partnership with India and looked ahead to greater cooperation and growth. The leaders had arrived in India not only to be a part of the commemorative summit, but were also the guests of honour at the celebration of India's 69th Republic Day.

STRATEGY AND POTENTIAL

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened the commemorative summit with a speech at the Plenary Session. "Your collective presence here has touched the hearts of my 1.25 billion fellow Indians. It highlights the importance of our Strategic Partnership, placing ASEAN at the centre of India's Act East Policy," he said, adding: "This summit is the grand finale of our joint year-long commemorative activities, organised in India and in ASEAN countries, which provides us a valuable opportunity to review our journey so far and chart our future path."

The 10 ASEAN leaders, in turn, extended their appreciation for India's rapid economic growth as well as its role in maintaining peace, prosperity and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Bilateral diaries

- On the eve of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, PM Modi held a series of bilateral meetings with leaders of individual ASEAN countries
- During his meeting with Myanmar's state counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi, discussions were held on several issues of mutual interest
- PM Modi also held a meeting with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc
- In his meeting with Philippines' President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, emphasis was laid on enhancing cooperation in the field of infrastructure



Above: PM Modi, President Kovind and vice president M Venkaiah Naidu pose for a photograph with the ASEAN heads of state

Left: The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit being held in New Delhi



THE SUMMIT

The theme of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit this year was “Shared Values, Common Destiny” and a vast range of subjects were addressed by the leaders relating to three pillars - political security, economic security and socio-cultural cooperation. Some of the issues discussed included maritime cooperation in relation to traditional and non-traditional security challenges, humanitarian disaster relief, security cooperation and the freedom of navigation. A collective effort to counter extremism, radicalisation and terrorism was also discussed.

As part of the celebration, PM Modi announced special Padma awards to be given to 10 eminent people - one from each ASEAN nation - who have made significant contributions towards connecting their

The 10 ASEAN leaders and PM Modi pledged their commitment to strengthening ASEAN-India’s Dialogue Relations

respective country with India, or made seminal contributions to their respective fields of expertise. He also went on to announce six new initiatives as a result of discussions held under the headers of commerce, culture and connectivity.

THE DELHI DECLARATION

The 10 ASEAN heads of state and PM Modi marked the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit with a joint declaration. Under the same, they pledged their commitment towards strengthening ASEAN-India’s Dialogue Relations, all the while being guided by “the principles, purposes, shared values and norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations, and the Vision Statement adopted at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit to mark the 20th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations on December 20, 2012”. Acknowledging the cultural and civilisational linkages that exist between the two regions, the leaders noted with satisfaction “the progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2016-2020) and the List of Priorities for 2016-2018 to Implement the ASEAN-India Plan of Action”.

Reaffirming the significance of regular political, economic and socio-cultural exchanges between the two regions, the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit served as a significant milestone in the enduring partnership between India and ASEAN.



BUILDING BRIDGES

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's eight-day state visit to India, from February 18 to 24, 2018, has further strengthened strategic, economic and humanitarian cooperation between the two nations

India and Canada have shared for several years a strategic partnership based on the shared values of democracy, pluralism, equality and rule of law. In a move to further strengthen the bilateral ties between the two countries, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made a state visit to India from February 18 to 24, 2018, on

the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The two leaders met in New Delhi on February 23, and according to the joint statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, "reaffirmed their commitment to the ongoing diversification and growth of the strategic partnership".

They also emphasised the importance of “protecting and advancing human rights at home and abroad, promoting gender equality” and of “civil society groups as a mainstay of democratic societies”, agreeing to keep working on enhancing cooperation between India and Canada in key areas of mutual interest.

GROWING TOGETHER

During the visit, a number of significant agreements and MoUs were signed between the two countries, focussing on areas including education, information technology, audio-visual co-production, civil nuclear science and technology, sports, and intellectual property. The two leaders also discussed the possibilities of expanding and diversifying bilateral commercial and economic relations. Taking forward negotiations

to finalise a Bilateral Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, and a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement was also emphasised by both sides. The signing of commercial agreements that would benefit citizens of both countries by way of generating employment and creating new economic opportunities was welcomed by the two heads of state.

PEACE AND SECURITY

Denouncing terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism as threats to global peace,

The two leaders discussed the possibilities of expanding and diversifying bilateral commercial and economic relations



Above (left to right): Indian President Ram Nath Kovind with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau; PM Trudeau meets Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj

Facing page: PM Trudeau and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi giving the press statements at Hyderabad House in New Delhi



The two leaders welcomed a bilateral Framework for Cooperation on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Energy efficiency

Among the many issues of mutual interest discussed during the visit, emphasis was laid on a global transition to “affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern” sources of energy. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, both leaders acknowledged that “renewable energy is a pathway to a low-carbon and more sustainable energy system”. An MoU titled ‘Terms of Reference for the India-Canada Ministerial Energy Dialogue Between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of the Republic of India and The Department of Natural Resources of Canada’ was also signed.

Above (left to right): PM Trudeau arrives with his family in Agra, on February 18; PM Modi receives PM Trudeau at Rashtrapati Bhavan

Facing page: The Canadian Prime Minister and his family arrive in Ahmedabad on February 19

prosperity and stability, PM Modi and PM Trudeau agreed to expand security cooperation between India and Canada. Resolving to do this through the institutionalisation of NSA-level Dialogue and regular convening of Foreign Minister-level Strategic Dialogue, they also welcomed the agreement on a bilateral Framework for Cooperation on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism. The prevailing crises in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives and Myanmar were also discussed. As per the joint statement, the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to cooperation on peacekeeping, “to provide an effective response to global challenges”.

NATURE AND CULTURE

Addressing the issue of climate change, both sides affirmed their support for the Paris Agreement and emphasised the importance of an International Solar Alliance to promote renewable energy. Encouraging research



PM Trudeau and PM Modi laid tremendous emphasis on the importance of people-to-people ties between India and Canada

institutions in both countries to collaborate for greater engagement with solar energy and technology, they also discussed the expansion of the scope of the Canada-India Ministerial Energy Dialogue to incorporate electricity, energy efficiency and renewable energy. Moving from nature to society, the two prime ministers also laid emphasis on the empowerment of women and acknowledged the importance of sexual and reproductive health as well as human rights for women and girls across all spheres of life.

PEOPLE MATTER

PM Trudeau and PM Modi laid tremendous emphasis on the importance of people-to-people ties between India and Canada. Welcoming the renewal of the MoU on higher education, they recognised the growing number of Indian students in Canada and also acknowledged the 50th anniversary of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute which - with support from both governments - has been promoting understanding between the two countries through academic activities. The joint statement says that the two leaders also resolved to “facilitate the movement of highly skilled persons from India to Canada under the Global Skills Strategy”.

During the course of his visit, the Canadian Prime Minister extended an invitation to PM Modi to visit Canada at an early date, and the latter has accepted the same.



TAKING A STEP FORWARD

Iranian President, Dr Hassan Rouhani's three-day state visit to India from February 15 to 17, 2018, marked significant progress in the bilateral cooperation between the two nations

The President of Iran, Dr Hassan Rouhani, made a state visit to India from February 15-17, 2018 on invitation from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Arriving in Hyderabad, he made his way to New Delhi and was accorded a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan the next morning.

He was received by Indian President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan, and was later called on by Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj. PM Modi also hosted a special lunch for the Iranian

President. During the course of the state visit, a number of agreements were signed between the two countries, including four agreements between the trade bodies from either side.

The previous visit by an Iranian head of state having occurred a decade ago, this visit proved fruitful also for the assessment of the progress made in the bilateral relations between the two nations over the intervening period, which also includes PM Modi's state visit to Iran in 2016. During the meeting between President Rouhani and PM Modi, the issues that were touched upon



Above and right: Dr Hassan Rouhani, President of Iran, lays a wreath at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in New Delhi; President Rouhani with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan

Facing page (left to right): President Rouhani with PM Modi and Indian President Ram Nath Kovind; Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj calls on President Rouhani

included connectivity, energy, trade and investment cooperation, people-to-people civilisational relations and the promotion of friendly exchanges between India and Iran. The question of terrorism and other issues of regional and international mutual interest were also discussed at length over a two-hour meeting that extended into lunch.

There was also an attempt from both sides to extend bilateral cooperation in new areas, and several MoUs were signed related to the spheres of agriculture, traditional medicine, health and communications. Cooperation was also welcomed by both sides, as per mutual

interest and agreement, in the areas of higher education, science and technology.

The joint statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs states that in order to promote friendly exchanges between India and Iran, it was agreed that the former would facilitate an e-visa facility for Iranian nationals, and that Iran would do the same for Indian nationals. The joint statement says that India and Iran also reiterated “the importance of addressing humanitarian issues concerning the nationals of the two countries.”

While giving his statement to the press during the visit, PM Modi summed up the essence of the bilateral partnership between India and Iran thus: “As a neighbour and friend, the relationship between India and Iran has continued to further enhance the existence of each other for hundreds of years... [we aspire for] prosperity in both countries and hope for peace and stability in both our regions [as well as] the world.”

The question of terrorism and other issues of regional and international mutual interest were also discussed during the visit

25 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

Marking the silver jubilee of diplomatic relations between India and Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu paid a state visit to India from January 14 to 19, 2018

BY S VENKAT NARAYAN



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to India (January 14-19, 2018), preceded by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first state visit to Israel (July 4-6, 2017), marked the celebration of 25 years of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

The visit has served to strengthen the bond between the governments of

India and Israel, and has consolidated the foundation for the Strategic Partnership between the two countries. Affirming the Israeli leader's commitment to this growing partnership, it has also upheld the vision he shares with PM Modi of raising bilateral cooperation between India and Israel in diverse sectors to a new qualitative level over the next 25 years.



Above (left and right) and facing page: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, accompanied by his wife Sara Netanyahu and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at the renamed Teen Murti Haifa Memorial, New Delhi

When PM Netanyahu arrived in New Delhi on January 14, PM Modi set aside protocol to receive him personally, with a warm hug. “Welcome to India, my friend Netanyahu! Your visit to India is historic and special. It will further cement the close friendship between our nations,” PM Modi went on to tweet in English and Hebrew.

Before embarking on the flight to India, PM Netanyahu had said: “This visit is an opportunity to enhance cooperation with a global economic, security, technology and tourism power. Modi is a close friend of Israel and of mine and I appreciate the fact that he will accompany me on extensive parts of my visit. Strengthening the relationship between Israel and this important world power... helps us with security, the economy, trade, tourism and many other aspects”.

The two nations are working together on a five-year joint plan for strategic cooperation in the areas of agriculture and water. They have also agreed to deepen cooperation

When PM Netanyahu arrived in New Delhi on January 14, PM Modi set aside protocol to receive him personally, with a warm hug

in the spheres of innovation, business and trade, space, homeland and cyber security, higher education and research, science and technology, tourism and culture.

Twenty-eight Centres of Excellence are being jointly established in different states of India, and seven Centres of Excellence have become operational in the last six months. During his visit, PM Netanyahu, accompanied by PM Modi, visited the Centre of Excellence in Vadrad, Gujarat and inaugurated the Centre of Excellence in Bhuj, also in Gujarat.

The Israeli leader welcomed India’s initiative to establish the International Solar Alliance to promote renewable energy for sustainable

PARTNERSHIP



development in the context of climate change, and declared Israel's willingness to become a partner country.

Both prime ministers urged the private sector to actively explore investment opportunities in both countries, including through India's flagship programmes such as Make In India, Start-Up India and Digital India. The India-Israel CEO Forum, established in July 2017 during PM Modi's visit to Israel, held its second meeting in India during PM Netanyahu's visit here.

Israeli companies have expressed their willingness to embark on joint ventures with Indian companies in the defence sector, under the Make In India initiative. The Defence Ministries of both nations will hold discussions in 2018 in this regard, with active involvement of the public and



Left: PM Netanyahu and PM Modi posing for the group photograph at the 2nd Meeting of India-Israel CEOs Forum in New Delhi; **Above:** PM Netanyahu calls on Indian President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan; **Facing page:** Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj calls on PM Netanyahu

During the visit, India and Israel signed nine MoUs to further enhance bilateral relations in various areas

private sectors to create the basis for viable, sustainable and long-term cooperation in the defence industry.

The two leaders declared that there can be no justification for acts of terror. They also discussed the Israel-Palestine Peace Process, and reaffirmed their support for the early resumption of peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians for arriving at a comprehensive negotiated solution on all outstanding issues.

During the visit, India and Israel signed

nine MoUs to further enhance bilateral relations in various areas such as cyber security cooperation, cooperation in the oil and gas sector, space technology, aviation links and film co-production.

New Delhi's Teen Murti Chowk has now been renamed Teen Murti-Haifa Chowk, after the Israeli city of Haifa. A large number of Indian soldiers were martyred while defending Haifa during World War I. PM Netanyahu visited the war memorial and said that he felt "an expression of gratitude" because it was Indian soldiers who had laid down their lives for Israel. Along with his wife, Sara Netanyahu, he went on to visit Agra to see the Taj Mahal, participated in the Raisina Dialogue, visited Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat, attended a business seminar in Mumbai and reached out to Bollywood personalities at an event aimed at exploring business opportunities for Indian filmmakers in Israel.

EXTENDING OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

With an aim to strengthen India's relations with its maritime neighbours, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Jordan, Palestine, the UAE and Oman from February 9 to 12, 2018

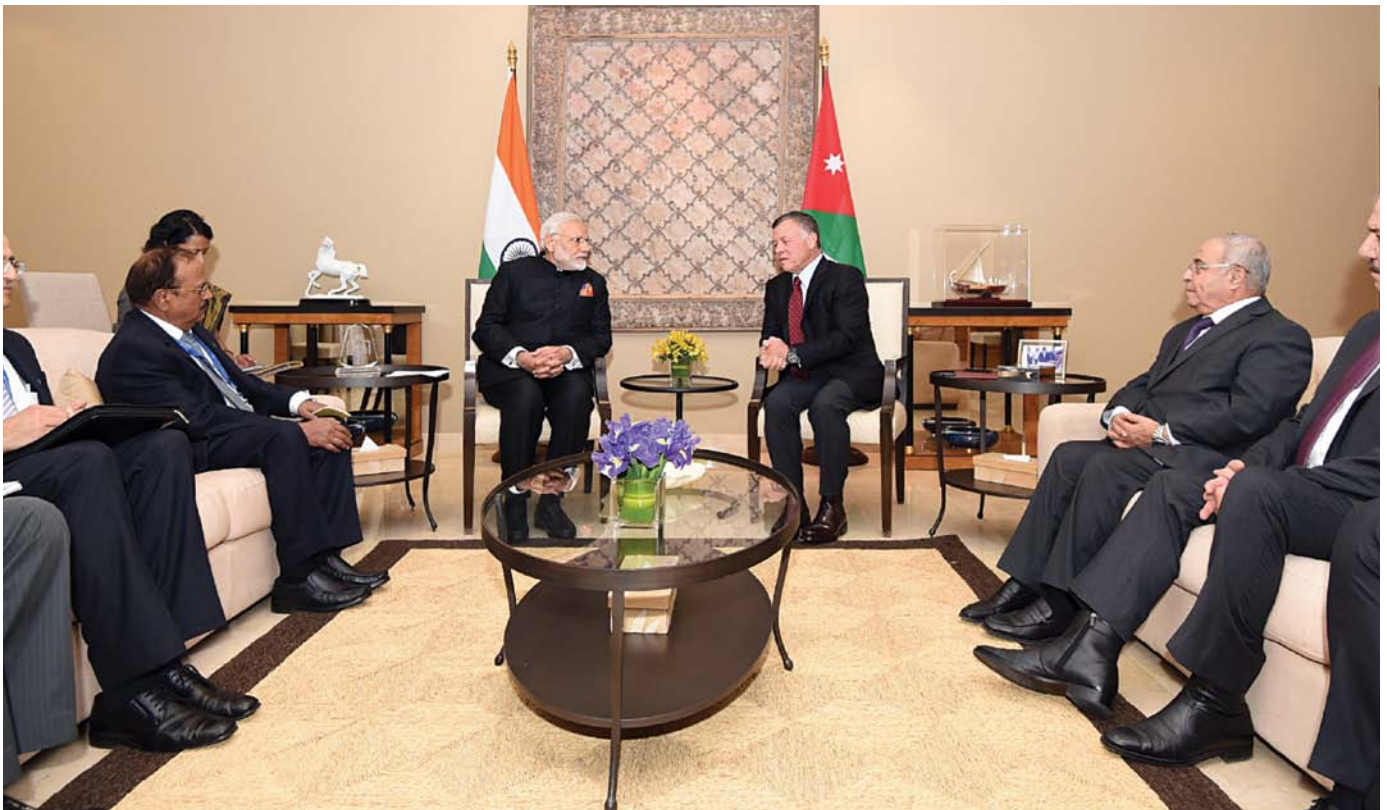


The 69th Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi, welcoming leaders from the 10 ASEAN nations as chief guests, marked a milestone within India's hectic diplomatic calendar in 2018. It also served, in many ways, as a signifier of a larger movement on the part of the Indian government - to consolidate and redefine the nation's neighbourhood, thinking not only from the perspective of land, but also keeping in mind maritime dimensions. As an extension of this, and as part of India's larger diplomatic agenda, Prime Minister Narendra Modi undertook a series of state visits to the Middle East. Beginning in Jordan, he visited Palestine, the UAE and Oman from February 9 to 12, 2018. The Gulf countries are particularly significant as India's maritime neighbours.

JORDAN

After arriving in Jordan, PM Modi was welcomed by King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein of Jordan at the latter's residence. Officially, the king is meant to receive prime ministers at his office, but an exception was made for the Indian Prime Minister. PM Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to have made a state visit to Jordan. According to a statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, King Abdullah described the visit as "the beginning of a new chapter" for India and Jordan.

PM Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to have made a state visit to Jordan



Above: Prime Minister Narendra Modi calls on Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, king of Jordan, in Amman

PALESTINE

PM Modi marked a historic milestone by becoming the first Indian Prime Minister to make a state visit to Palestine. Received with warmth by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who had made an official visit to India in May 2017, PM Modi went on to pay his respects at the memorial of the Mausoleum

of late Palestinian president Yasser Arafat. This was followed by a round of discussions between the two leaders, as well as the signing of six important MoUs. PM Modi was also conferred with Palestine's highest civilian honour, the Grand Collar of the State of Palestine.

During his discussion with President Abbas, PM Modi reaffirmed India's support for the peace process, and reassured him that India will provide every form of assistance possible in the development of Palestine. The Palestinian government also thanked India for ongoing collaborative projects such as the technology park that is currently in the process of being built, and also for the support India provided in the construction of a diplomatic academy. Some of the new projects underway include a 100-bed speciality hospital as well as a centre for empowering women, both to be built in Palestine.

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President



Left (top to bottom):

PM Modi with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at Ramallah, Palestine; PM Modi meets Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, crown prince of Abu Dhabi, in the UAE

Facing page:

PM Modi is received on arrival in Muscat by Oman's deputy prime minister, Fahd bin Mahmood Al Said



PM Modi marked a historic milestone by becoming the first Indian Prime Minister to make a state visit to Palestine

of the United Arab Emirates and crown prince of Abu Dhabi, along with members of the royal family, received PM Modi at the airport in Abu Dhabi. The Indian Prime Minister is the first head of state to have been received at the new Presidential Palace. President Nahyan spoke of PM Modi as a “friend” , and went on to point out how every citizen of Abu Dhabi is particularly conscious and appreciative of the contribution of Indians in building the nation. PM Modi, appreciating the acknowledgement, reaffirmed that India would continue to support the UAE and Indians would continue helping to build it. Productive discussions between the two leaders followed,

as did the signing of several MoUs. The most significant among the latter was signed between a consortium of Indian companies led by ONGC Videsh Limited including Indian Oil Corporation and Bharat PetroResources Limited, and the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company.

OMAN

After his arrival in Oman on February 11, a special dinner was hosted in honour of PM Modi and his accompanying delegation by the king of Oman, Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said. In their discussions, the two leaders exchanged views on several significant regional, global and bilateral issues of mutual interest. The joint statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, said that both sides reaffirmed the importance of “regular bilateral dialogue through exchange of visits, at the level of senior officials” and also touched upon the security situation in West Asia, the Middle East and South Asia.

MAKING A CONNECTION

The ASEAN India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2018 marked a significant step towards the strengthening of India's ties with ASEAN, and upheld the former's Act East Policy

The ASEAN India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) 2018 was held in Singapore on January 6 and 7 this year, marking the first time the annual event has been organised outside India. The theme of this year's edition was "Ancient Route, New Journey: Diaspora in the Dynamic ASEAN-India Partnership."

Speaking at the Gala Dinner, Indian External Affairs Minister (EAM) Sushma Swaraj focussed on the growing ties between India and ASEAN. She affirmed that the strong Indian diasporic presence in ASEAN nations has provided an ideal platform for strengthening India's relations with them.

"We are here to reaffirm our commitment and to share the course of our journey ahead to the future of India and ASEAN in the world," she said, addressing approximately 3,000 delegates. She went on to point out that with the rapid growth of the Indian economy, the country's trade and investment ties with

ASEAN are likely to expand significantly. India's Act East Policy is also focussed on the region, and is a significant part of the nation's diplomatic agenda. "India's engagement with the ASEAN region lies in the clarity of the principles that we share. We believe that when all nations adhere to international rules and norms and when we conduct on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual respect, our nations feel secure and our economies prosper," she affirmed.

The EAM also referred to India's plans to establish connections between its Northeastern states and South East Asia. These states may become India's bridge with the region and also create greater prosperity for themselves in the process, she pointed out.

Referring to the common challenges confronting the region – including creating skilled manpower for the digital age, generating employment opportunities, protecting biodiversity and making energy



Above (left to right): Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj at the ASEAN-India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2018; EAM Swaraj with members of the Indian diaspora at the event in Singapore

The ASEAN India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas marked the first time that the annual PBD was held outside India

sources cleaner – she asserted that the world is now shifting from the industrial age to the age of information.

Referring to the trilateral highway project from India to Thailand, the EAM told the gathering that it would be extended to link other ASEAN nations as well. “Today, 16 Indian cities are connected to Singapore, a trilateral highway project from India to Thailand is progressing fast and we plan to extend this further to connect India with other ASEAN countries,” she shared.

The minister was in Singapore for the event on the last leg of her five-day tour of Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore, a part of India’s move to deepen ties with ASEAN.

Singapore’s deputy prime minister, Teo Chee Hean, spoke at the closing ceremony

of the two-day PBD, and made a strong pitch to Indian businesses, focussing on the enormous opportunities in Singapore, especially in sectors such as civil aviation, trade and finance. “As a civil aviation, trading and financial hub, we are a good base for Indian companies to work from in order to expand to South East Asia and beyond,” he said.

According to him, there are more than 8,000 Indian companies in Singapore – double the number in 2009 – making them, together, the largest contingent of foreign companies in the country. He announced to the PBD gathering that by 2025, India’s consumer market is likely to become the fifth-largest in the world, while South East Asia is likely to see middle-class households double in number, to more than 160 million.

The PBD at Singapore covered a wide range of issues including investment, economics, tourism, culture, connectivity and start-ups, and attracted prominent overseas Indians, PIO delegations from the ASEAN countries, eminent ministers and prominent business as well as political leaders.



THE ECONOMICS OF COOPERATION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Davos-Klosters, Switzerland to speak at the plenary session of the World Economic Forum (January 22-23, 2018) marked a recognition of India's significance on the global front

P rime Minister Narendra Modi visited Davos-Klosters, Switzerland from January 22 to 23 in order to deliver the keynote speech at the plenary session of the World Economic Forum (WEF) held there. His speech was preceded by a bilateral meeting with the President of the Swiss Confederation, Alain Berset, on January 22, 2018.

During the latter, President Berset described the relations between India and Switzerland as "very special" and spoke of diversity and democracy as the two seminal values binding the two nations together. The two leaders exchanged views on how to expand trade and economic cooperation, and discussed the way forward in the negotiation of the Trade and Economic Partnership



Left: Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with top global CEOs at the International Business Council event in Davos on January 23, 2018; **Above:** PM Modi with the President of the Swiss Confederation, Alain Berset and the chairman of the World Economic Forum, Professor Klaus Schwab, at the plenary session of the World Economic Forum

Agreement (TEPA). PM Modi also expressed his satisfaction at the automatic exchange of information between the two countries that will commence in January 2019, and affirmed that India is “committed to international tax transparency”. The Paris Climate Change Accord was also discussed and the Indian Prime Minister outlined his renewable energy plans. During his visit, PM Modi also interacted with 64 CEOs from across the world, 24 among them from India and 40 from other countries, over dinner. The total market capitalisation of these companies was \$3.6 trillion.

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THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

The theme for this year’s WEF was “Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World.” The plenary session of the same was moderated by Professor Klaus Schwab, the founder and executive chairman of WEF. Delivering the keynote speech at the event, PM Modi laid emphasis on the fact that India has always played a positive role in promoting peace, security, environmental conservation, sustainable development and conflict resolution through dialogue. He also pointed out that an open economy has now been created in India, providing good opportunities for investments, facilitating ease of doing business and presenting many new opportunities to international businesses by virtue of its growth. He welcomed everyone to visit India, consider doing business in the country and benefit from what it has to offer in health, wellness and wealth-creation.

PM Modi’s speech at the WEF was the first ever address by an Indian Prime Minister at the plenary session of WEF.

THE ART OF COLLABORATION

Aside from the cultural diversity and military might of the nation, what stood out at India's 69th Republic Day celebrations was the presence of 10 ASEAN leaders as chief guests

BY GAURAV NAGPAL



Sixty-eight years ago, the Constitution of India came into effect, replacing the Government of India Act (1935) as the governing document of India and completing India's transition to becoming an independent republic. Fast forward to this year, as India celebrated its 69th Republic Day at Rajpath in New Delhi, with its cultural diversity and significant achievements of its

different states and government departments duly represented by numerous tableaux, a regular highlight of Republic Day celebrations. A significant difference, though, was the presence of 10 chief guests - the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders - this year.

A DAY OF FIRSTS

The celebrations began with Prime Minister



Above (left to right): Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeting President Ram Nath Kovind; PM Modi paying his respects at Amar Jawan Jyoti
Facing page: PM Modi and President Kovind with the ASEAN leaders at the 69th Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi

Narendra Modi laying a wreath at Amar Jawan Jyoti, in the presence of defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman and the three service chiefs. After this, the Prime Minister reached Rajpath and received and greeted President Ram Nath Kovind and the ASEAN leaders.

The chief guests were the 10 heads of state of ASEAN: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The leaders were Brunei's Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Lao PDR's Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, Myanmar's State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, Philippines President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, Singaporean Premier Lee Hsien Loong, Thailand's Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc. They were in India also for the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, marking 25 years of the India-ASEAN partnership.

This year, two tableaux conceptualised by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government

of India, showcased India's historical, educational, religious and cultural linkages with the ASEAN member nations. While one tableau featured the Nalanda university, the other displayed the religious linkages between India and ASEAN countries.

India's defence might was on display in all its glory. The Navy showcased Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC) *Vikrant*, to be commissioned in 2020; the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) exhibited the Nirbhay missile and Ashwini radar system. As part of the event, the Ashok Chakra, India's highest peacetime gallantry award, was conferred (posthumously) on Jyoti Prakash Nirala, an IAF commando who laid down his life for the nation while gunning down two terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir. This was the third Ashok Chakra awarded to the IAF and the first for ground combat.

Another first-time presence was that of the new BSF women daredevils' squad, named Seema Bhavani. The 27-member group performed some daring stunts and acrobatics on their motorcycles, wowing the audience with their impressive skills.



THE NEW STATE OF PLAY

The Khelo India School Games, an annual initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeks to nurture India's sporting talent and reclaim sports from the margins of a restricted mindset

BY N B RAO



Minister of state for sports and youth affairs, Colonel Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore poses with participating athletes at the inaugural edition of Khelo India School Games

Former athlete Ashwini Nachappa was awestruck by the remarkable performances at the Khelo India School Games (KISG), an initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 31, 2018. “The sheer magnitude of talent that exists in the country is unfathomable, and, hence, a great source of hope for a sporting revolution,” she wrote in a magazine.

A part of the revamped national programme for the development of sports (Khelo India), KISG is aimed at strengthening the sporting ecosystem in the country by promoting the twin objectives of excellence in sports and mass participation. The inaugural edition of the event, held in New Delhi, attracted more than 100 million television viewers.

Minister of state for youth affairs and sports, Colonel Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said on the occasion, “I am delighted with the kind of response KISG has evoked in sports fans all over India. The quality of broadcast and the viewership we have garnered for the inaugural edition is proof [of] the kind

of potential we see in sports to shape India’s future champions.”

KISG will be an annual sports competitions feature, held in collaboration with the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) and the National Sports Federations (NSFs). The two bodies will draw up and conduct an annual calendar of competitions at the lower level, in the run-up to KISG at the national level.

After launching the initiative at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, PM Modi exhorted youngsters to devote time to sports within their busy schedules, affirming that India abounds in sporting talent. “We are a youthful nation and we can do even better in sports,” he said, adding, “Those who love sports play for passion, not for monetary rewards.

KISG will be held in collaboration with the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) and the National Sports Federations (NSFs)



Sports should occupy a central place in the lives of our youth. It is an important means of personality development

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

”



I am delighted with the kind of response Khelo India School Games has evoked in sports fans all over India

Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore
Minister of state for sports and youth affairs

”

When an Indian sportsperson wins and when he or she gets to hold the Tricolour, it is an extremely special feeling and it energises the entire nation.”

The Prime Minister also underlined that Khelo India is not only about winning accolades, but is also an effort to give strength to a mass movement encouraging an engagement with sports. “We want to focus on every aspect that would make sports more popular across the nation,” he said.

The Khelo India programme seeks to revive sports culture at the grassroots by building a strong framework for all sports played in the country, and is geared towards changing the mindset that sports are a distraction from the mainstream curriculum. In PM Modi’s own words, “Sports should occupy a central place

Below (top to bottom): Youngsters participating at the Khelo India School Games Carnival, held in Connaught Place, New Delhi; The inaugural edition of KISG at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi

Facing page: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with different sportspersons at the inaugural edition of Khelo India School Games in New Delhi





Khelo India is geared towards changing the mindset that sports are a distraction from the mainstream curriculum

in the lives of our youth. It is an important means of personality development.”

The inaugural edition of KISG was held from January 31 to February 8 in New Delhi and under-17 athletes had been invited to participate across 16 disciplines – archery, athletics, badminton, basketball, boxing, football, gymnastics, hockey, judo, kabaddi, kho-kho, shooting, swimming, volleyball, weightlifting and wrestling. More than 3,700 athletes competed for the 199 gold medals that were on offer at the event.

The states that emerged as top winners included Maharashtra (with 110 medals including 36 gold, 32 silver and 42 bronze), Haryana (with 102 medals including 38 gold medals, 26 silver and 38 bronze), and Delhi (with 94 medals including 25 gold, 29 silver

and 40 bronze). Other big winners included Uttar Pradesh (10 gold, 24 silver and 27 bronze), Punjab (10 gold, 24 silver and 20 bronze), Karnataka (16 gold, 11 silver and 15 bronze) and Manipur (13 gold, 13 silver and eight bronze).

Talented players identified in priority sports disciplines at various levels by a high-powered committee will get annual financial assistance of ₹5,00,000 for eight years.

The Khelo India programme comprises 12 verticals, including community coaching development, state-level Khelo India centres, utilisation and creation/upgradation of sports infrastructure, sports for women, promotion of sports amongst people with disabilities and promotion of rural and indigenous games.

The ultimate objective of hosting KISG is to enable the dismissal of the widely accepted notion that sports are not a viable professional option, and serve more as a deviation from a child's education than as an important aspect of it. The slogan of KISG foregrounds this objective loud and clear: '*Kheloge, kudoge, toh banoge lajawab!*' (playing games and sports can make you outstanding!)



IN TUNE WITH THE WORLD

From Assamese folk sensation to Bhojpuri playback singer, Kalpana Patowary's inspiring journey in music has now led her to the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games as a performer!

BY SHILLPI A SINGH

Kalpana Patowary, a renowned Indian vocalist who hails from a small village in Assam and sings in 30 Indian languages, has added another feather to her already illustrious cap. She has been invited to perform at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games in Queensland, Australia, to be held from April 4 to 15. The versatile singer will perform as part of a musical piece titled *Ecstatic: Music of the Subcontinent*, curated by producers Jude Gun and Kate Ben-Tovim, in the closing ceremony of the prestigious international sporting event.

Overjoyed at the honour bestowed upon her by the Australian government,

the songstress recalls having been “shocked” at being chosen to represent India in the melodic spectacle. “The details of the performance have been kept under wraps, but I thank everyone for supporting, loving and blessing me throughout my musical journey. My inclusion in this global event is a matter of great pride and has truly humbled me. I am looking forward to the experience,” she shares. “This collaborative crossover will give the audience an emotional high and take them into the very depth of the melody,” she quips.

The eldest among four children, Patowary inherited her love for music from her father, folk singer Bipin Patowary. One among the many talented

Vocalist
Kalpana
Patowary

TRIVIA

Musical welcome

Patowary performed *Gangasnan* by Bhikhari Thakur at a reception hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Varanasi, in 2015

Singing history

She reenacted Mahatma Gandhi's arrival at Motihari at a celebration marking 100 years of the Champaran Satyagraha of 1917, giving the movement a musical tribute

Social activism

She founded Shakti Manifest, an organisation that seeks to generate awareness about women's rights and educate rural women in music as a tool for empowerment

Hall of fame

She has collaborated with some of the finest musicians across the globe, including Trilok Gurtu, Roland Cabezas, Phil Drummy, Carlo Cantini, Johan Berby, Jan Garbarek and Louiz Banks

jewels scattered across India's vast landscape, he trained her in folk music when she was only four years old. "I used to accompany him as he toured the state, and eventually began doing stage shows," she reminisces. Armed with an undergraduate degree in English from Cotton College in Guwahati, Assam, and a degree in music from the Bhatkhande Music Institute in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, the singer moved to Mumbai in 2001, after marrying her high school classmate, Parvez Khan. Dismissed for not having a "soft" and feminine enough voice as a child, she proved all her naysayers wrong as she found recognition across musical genres and sang in multiple languages across the country.

Remembering her initial years in Mumbai, Patowary says, "They were fraught with struggle. I wanted to be heard and noticed by those who mattered, and went on to explore playback singing in the Bhojpuri music industry not by choice, but chance." The gamble paid off, and her songs were loved by

Below and facing page (clockwise from below): Patowary at an event organised by her NGO, Shakti Manifest; She serenades an elderly lady at the event; A physically challenged girl sings for Patowary; The songstress sings with underprivileged children at the event





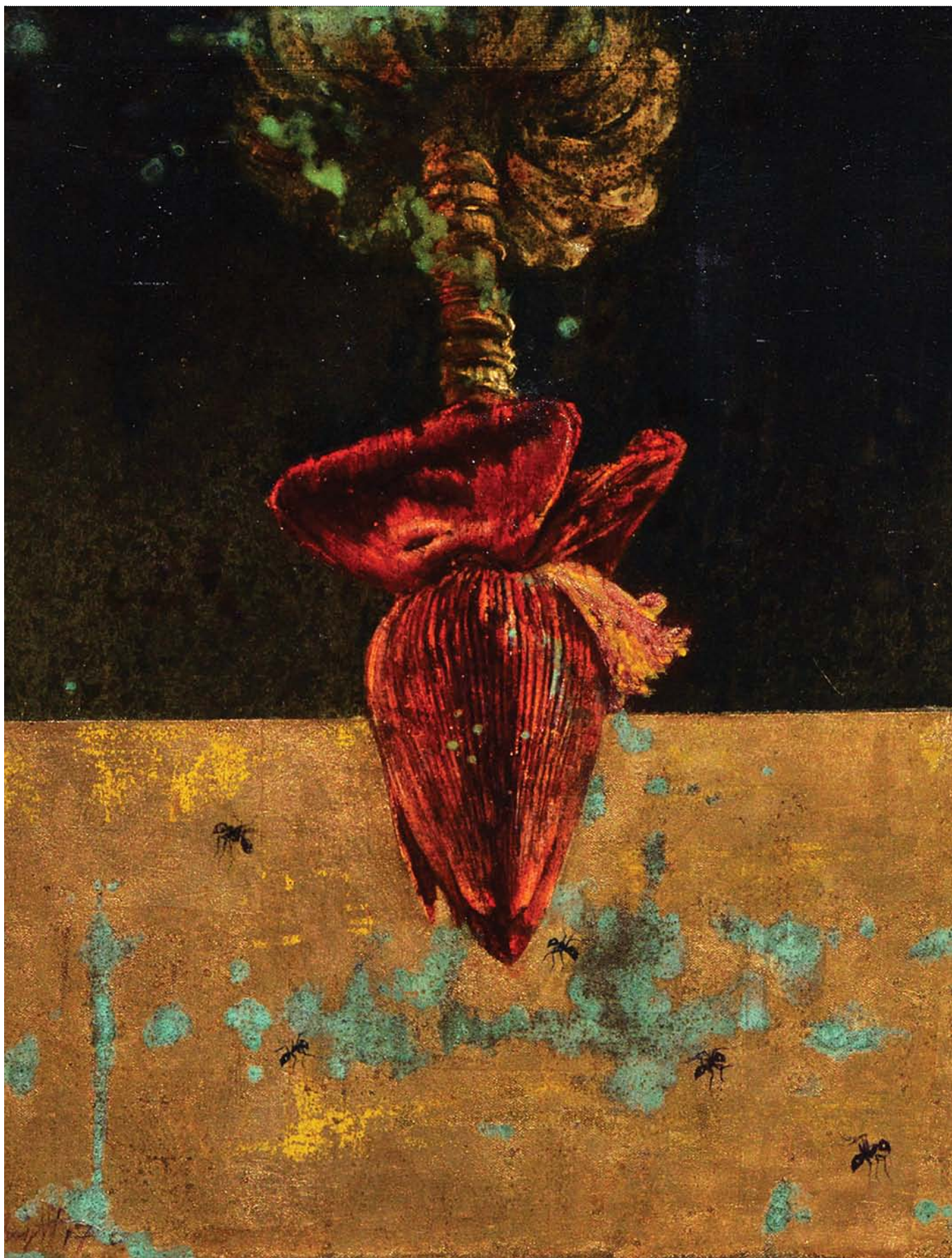
Through the years, Patowary has also contributed towards the preservation of several indigenous musical instruments

the masses in Bihar. She was now ruling the charts in a state she was entirely new to, singing in a language she could barely understand. “The first Bhojpuri number that really catapulted me from oblivion to stardom was a devotional song, *Na humse bhangwa pisai ae Ganes ke papa*. A series of devotional numbers and foot-tapping chartbusters followed, and I began falling in love with the language. Bhojpuri gave me an identity, and my modest contribution towards popularising Bhojpuri folk music continues to gladden my heart,” she shares.

A disciple of Padma Vibhushan Ghulam Mustafa Khan, Patowary then went on to be signed by British recording company Virgin

EMI Records, which launched her debut album - a musical tribute to noted Bhojpuri playwright, actor, folk singer and social activist Bhikhari Thakur.

The 38-year-old vocalist’s repertoire now enables the younger generation to understand, appreciate and respect India’s rich tradition of folk music. She has, over the years, performed in folk forms from across India, ranging from *birha* and *nautanki* in the north to *bihu* and *borgeet* in the Northeast. In the process, she has also contributed towards the preservation of several indigenous folk musical instruments such as *dotora* (a stringed instrument from the eastern part of India), *kartal* (a wooden percussion instrument), *goalpariya dhol* (an Assamese percussion instrument), and more. She has also been credited with taking Bhojpuri and Assamese tribal music to a larger audience, after putting in several years of research into understanding the ethos of folk music in different parts of the country.



AN ARTISTIC HOMECOMING

India Art Fair 2018 witnessed a strong representation of Indian artists whose work, celebrated abroad, is now garnering greater attention in their home country

BY POONAM GOEL

Kolkata-based artist Avijit Dutta is not new to international fame. Over the last decade, this renowned watercolourist has exhibited at various international art fairs and galleries, including Art Basel Miami, Shun Art Gallery in Shanghai, and in New Zealand, Greece and Cambodia. But it was at New Delhi's annual art soiree, India Art Fair (IAF) in February this year, that Dutta made the home crowd sit up and take notice of his artistic excellence. The reason was evident: there was a strong representation of leading

Indian artists at this edition of IAF, several of them showcasing their work to Indian art connoisseurs for the first time.

"We had showcased a totally new body of work by Dutta at the fair," says Gallerie Ganesha director Shobha Bhatia, "and this has indeed given him some well-deserved attention in India. His work has a universal language - while being rooted in an Indian ethos, the execution of his works is global and contemporary." Priced between ₹2 to 12 lakh, Dutta's delicate watercolour masterpieces poignantly portray the relationship between man and nature.



Left: A work titled *Index* by Tanya Goel

Facing page: A work titled *Ensoul 10* by Avijit Dutta

Jayashree Chakravarty is another artist whose work received great adulation this year. Recognised as an important name internationally - having previously shown at venues like the Musée National des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nice and in countries like the US, the UK, Singapore and Germany - Chakravarty's art practice expresses her deep concerns about ecology and environmental catastrophe. At IAF - at the Akar Prakar as well as Emami Art booths - her canvases, textured with medicinal plants like tulsi, sported red dots almost as

soon as the fair opened. "The disappearance of water bodies and flora, and depleting oxygen levels are universal concerns. My work speaks of these issues aesthetically," the artist says.

"This year, India Art Fair had a set of new members in the audience, including museums and collectors from international institutions," says Reena Lath, director, Akar Prakar. Ranjana Steinruecke, Director, Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke, agrees and adds, "There were many more serious buyers this time, and much greater acceptance for newer names and conceptual, contemporary art."

Steinruecke is referring to the Indian audience's growing interest in young home-grown talent, such as that of Tanya Goel, a Yale School of Art graduate, who has had successful art showings in New York, Miami and Italy in the past. Goel's work is also part of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Union Bank of Switzerland. In March, Goel will be part

Artist Lubna Chowdhary creates handmade architectural models and colourful, waterjet-cut and hand-glazed tableaux works



Right: An artwork titled *Metropolis* by Lubna Chowdhary

Facing page: An untitled artwork by Jayashree Chakravarty



of the 21st Sydney Biennale and her work will then be shown at the Frieze Art Fair, New York in May. The 32-year-old Delhi-based artist is already becoming a smart investment for art lovers, her abstract canvases and drawings playing on the concepts of time, language, architecture and technology. Created using architectural material such as limestone, glass, lead, charcoal, aluminum, concrete and mica, Goel's artworks are already fetching prices in the range of ₹10 to 15 lakh.

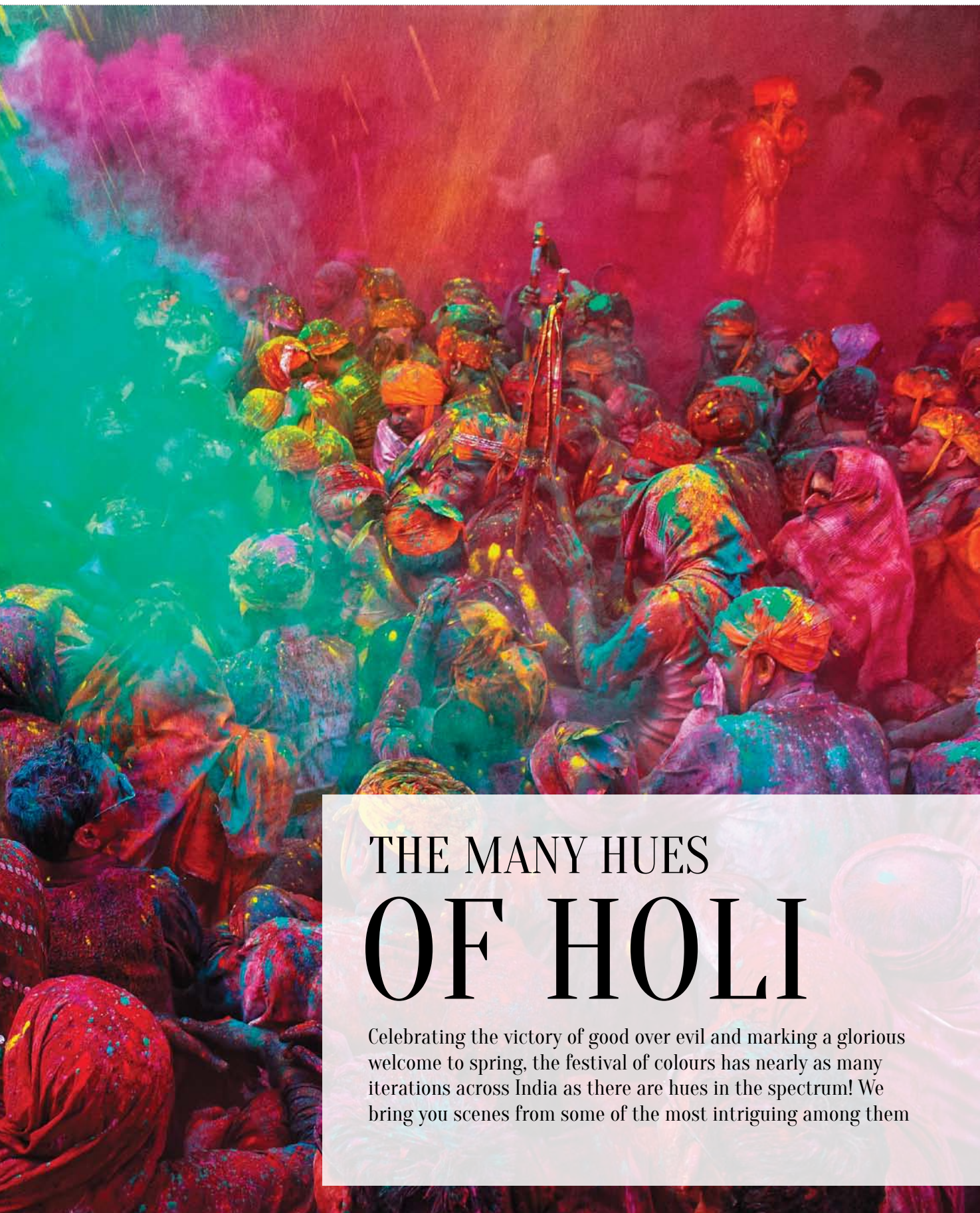
London-based artist Lubna Chowdhary, who recently showcased at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, turned heads too, even though it was her debut at IAF. Her handmade architectural models and bold, colourful, waterjet-cut and hand-glazed tableaux works at the Jhaveri Contemporary gallery were a treat for young collectors in particular. "As a diasporic Indian, it is important to show my work in India. And showing at this platform frees me up to create work as an artist without the usual compartmentalisation that occurs in the West."

Jayashree Chakravarty's art practice expresses her deep concerns about ecology and environmental catastrophe

Dutta observes, "I feel that the perspective of Indian art lovers towards conceptual art has undergone a positive change." Chowdhary adds, "There is a long tradition of abstraction and conceptual thought in religious art and religious symbolism in India. In many ways, modern Indian conceptual art is a continuation of that tradition."

This edition of IAF also showcased works by veteran Indian artists who rarely showcase in India. Octogenarian Ganesh Haloi's work, for instance – shown at the Berlin Biennale in 2014 and the prestigious Documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel in 2017 – was a remarkable addition to the exhibits.





THE MANY HUES OF HOLI

Celebrating the victory of good over evil and marking a glorious welcome to spring, the festival of colours has nearly as many iterations across India as there are hues in the spectrum! We bring you scenes from some of the most intriguing among them





Hola Mohalla (facing page bottom): Hola Mohalla is celebrated a day after Holi in Anandpur Sahib, Punjab. Begun by Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Sikh Guru, as a gathering of Sikhs for military exercises and mock battles, it is an energetic martial iteration of the festival.

Dol Jatra (facing page top): Dol Jatra (or Dol Purnima) is how West Bengal celebrates Holi. Women, adorning themselves with garlands, sing and dance to the accompaniment of musical instruments like *ektara*, *dubri* and *veena*, and people smear coloured powder, or *abir*, on each other.

Mewar ki Holi (above): In Rajasthan, the royal families residing in the state celebrate the festival of colours in a grand manner, with music and dance performances. Attired in traditional Rajasthani ensembles, the royal family of Udaipur is seen here during the ritual of *holika dehen*.



Yaosang (above): Manipur celebrates Yaosang for five days, beginning on the full moon day of the month of *phalguna* in the Hindu calendar. The *thabal chongba*, a Manipuri folk dance, is performed as part of the festivities.

Vrindavan ki Holi (facing page): The historic Gopinath temple in Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh, has, for six years now, opened its doors to widows in the region for the celebration of Holi with flowers and *gulaal* (colour).



In the South Indian state of Kerala, Holi is known as Manjal Kuli, and commemorates the legend of Kamadeva (Bodhan), who was burnt to ashes by Lord Shiva



Latthmaar Holi (right and facing page top): Among the most entertaining iterations of the festival in India, Latthmaar Holi, celebrated in Barsana, Uttar Pradesh, involves women hitting men with sticks. This is a symbolic reenactment of a myth where the women of Barsana chased away Lord Krishna for teasing his beloved, Radha, and her friends on this day.

Manjal Kuli (facing page bottom): In the South Indian state of Kerala, Holi is known as Manjal Kuli, and commemorates the legend of Kamadeva (Bodhan), who was burnt to ashes by Lord Shiva. A dry straw effigy representing him is paraded through the streets and burned near temple grounds.



INHERITANCE OF

With Rajgir in Bihar having hosted the 4th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference this year, we explore the region's Buddhist roots and the significance of its twin city, Nalanda

BY P RITU



PEACE

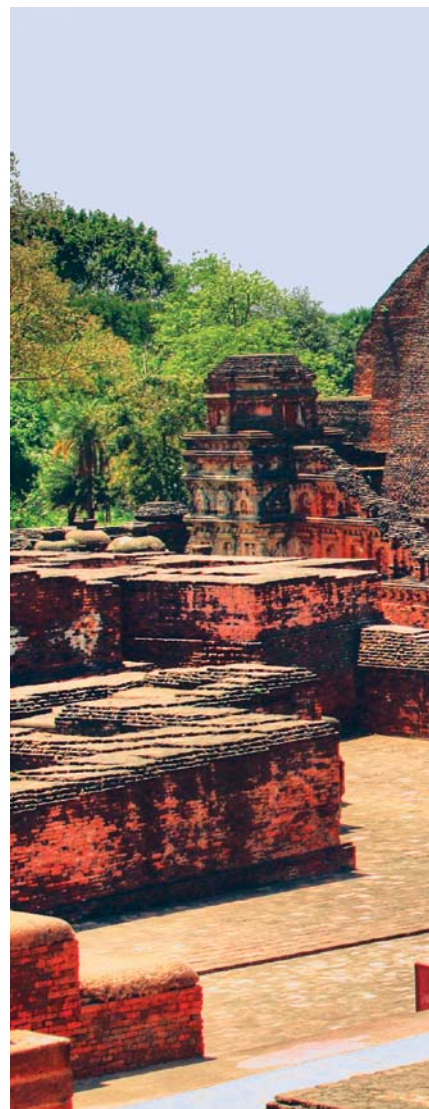


On January 11, 2018, Indian President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 4th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference at the Rajgir International Convention Centre in Bihar. Held in collaboration with the India Foundation, Ministry of External Affairs and the Vietnam Buddhist University, the three-day conference emphasised the promotion of peace and human values by bringing together minds from East Asia and Central Asia on one platform of knowledge. The dialogue generated at the event encompassed principles that embody the foundation of one of the world's most ancient seats of knowledge - Nalanda, a university whose ruins are located at a distance of 12 km from Rajgir.

Tibetan or Mahayana Buddhism, especially that which the Dalai Lama calls the 'Nalanda Tradition', is a living record of the legacy of Nalanda. The latter was set



Left and above: The ruins of ancient Nalanda, including exquisite carvings of the Buddha on some of its walls



Left: In its prime, the monastery nurtured the wisdom of Buddhist, Jain and Vedic philosophies

Above: Only a small part of Nalanda is said to have been rediscovered so far



Nalanda flourished primarily over the 5th to 12th centuries, under Gupta rulers

up in the 5th century in Rajagriha (the abode of kings), the capital of the ancient Magadha kingdom, by Gupta ruler Shakra-ditya or Kumaragupta I (415 – 455 AD) as a Buddhist monastery. Nalanda Mahavihara gradually gained recognition as the world's first residential education hub that attracted students and scholars from across South

East Asia for almost 700 years. It flourished primarily over the 5th to 12th centuries, during the reigns of Gupta rulers including Buddhagupta, Baladitya, Tathagatagupta and Vajra. Emperor Ashoka, Harshavardhan and the Pala dynasty later added more temples and monasteries to the complex. The admission process was rigorous at the time, with just two out of every 10 aspirants making it to the hallowed campus.

But Nalanda's historic fame is a recent discovery. The great university remained largely unexplored until 1811–1812, when locals drew the attention of British surveyor

HOW TO GET THERE

By road: Nalanda is well-connected by road with Rajgir (12 km), Bodhgaya (110 km), Gaya (95 km) and Patna (89 km)

By air: The nearest airport is at Patna

By rail: Rajgir is the nearest railway station, while the nearest major railhead is Gaya

Take the bus to Biharsharif from Rajgir. Get off at Nalanda and hire a shared tonga for a 10-minute ride to the university gates. Shared jeeps are also available from Rajgir. A taxi to and back from Nalanda costs approximately ₹2,000

Best time to visit: The first and last quarters of the year

Site timings: 7 am to 5.30 pm from April to September; and 7.30 am to 5 pm from October to March

Nalanda university is closed on Fridays

Guides: Highly recommended. Available at ₹200 for two hours

Attractions nearby: Surya temple lake at Surajpur Baragaon is a pilgrimage destination during the festival of Chhath Puja in Bihar. Also visit the Hiuen Tsang Memorial Hall. Taxis are not allowed here. You will need to hire a tonga

Francis Buchanan-Hamilton to a vast complex of ruins in the area. Buchanan-Hamilton surveyed the site, but it wasn't until 1847 that the mounds of earth and debris were linked to Nalanda by Major Markham Kittoe. In 1861-1862, Alexander Cunningham and the newly formed Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) conducted an official survey, and a systematic excavation of the ruins by the ASI was conducted in 1915, ending in 1937. It was after these excavations that Cunningham pieced together the history of the Mahavihara using the accounts of Chinese travellers Hiuen Tsang and Yijing, who had both been students there.

Though no significant excavation has taken place since 1984, what has been revealed of the university is only a small portion of the grand Mahavihara. Historical accounts state that Nalanda - with 10,000 students and 2,000 teachers in several residential monasteries - may have stretched over a few hundred acres. Today, we can see

Below (left to right):

A memorial at Nalanda that commemorates the visit of Chinese scholar Hiuen Tsang; A bell at the ancient monastery

Facing page: Tibetan Buddhist monks explore what remains of the yard at Nalanda university





Historical accounts state that Nalanda was home to 10,000 students, 2,000 teachers and several residential monasteries

the ruins of monasteries, brick temples and lecture halls, their red brick buildings divided by a central walkway and an impressive drainage system. Monasteries for resident students are east of this path and the temple is to the west.

The university had multiple monastic buildings and a number of *viharas* that served as single or shared rooms. Each monastic building had its own temple, personal locker system, kitchen and dining area with a granary. Nalanda is also said to have housed

a multi-storey library called *Dharmaganja* (piety mart), its three floors - *ratnaranjaka* (jewel-adorned), *ratnodadhi* (sea of jewels) and *ratnasagara* (ocean of jewels) - housing religious manuscripts and texts on medicine, astronomy, astrology and literature among other subjects. Most structures show evidence of multiple constructions over the centuries, with new buildings having been built atop the ruins of old ones.

Nalanda has been recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the excavated remains - Buddhist and Hindu sculptures, coins, seals, inscriptions as well as two huge jars from the first century and samples of burnt rice - are preserved at the Nalanda Archaeological Museum nearby. Given its significance among the Buddhist and Jain communities, the university witnesses thousands of tourists every year from South East Asia in particular.

CLASSICAL THERAPY

Studies have shown that Indian ragas may be connected to neurological, psychological and physical processes of healing

BY SHAILAJA KHANNA

A splitting headache is among the worst experiences that can follow a long day at work. And if an aspirin is not at hand, you are inclined to feel as though all is lost. You will find, however, that switching on an instrumental rendition of raga *kalyani* (known as *aiman* or *yaman* in Hindustani nomenclature) can be surprisingly soothing, and might even make the pain ebb away! Studies hold that this raga, played softly at a low octave for 30-40 minutes, can help alleviate headaches and even increase lowered blood pressure. Similarly, for high blood pressure, certain Indian ragas, played in a faster tempo, can be gradually slowed down to have a lowering effect.

As an aural experience, music can soothe or excite. Whether you are working, exercising, studying, driving or meditating, listening to particular kinds of music can have a relaxing effect on your mind as well as

your body. While it is often said that music can also heal the body and mind, studies of Indian classical music have shown that ragas may be connected to actual neurological, psychological and physical processes of healing. The effect of the 72 *melakarta* ragas (those from which all other ragas evolve) in the Carnatic system on the 72 nerve centres, for instance, has often been talked about, although there is not enough proven evidence of the same.

In the Hindustani classical repertoire, the six primordial ragas are *bhairav*, *hindol*, *deepak*, *shree*, *megh* and *malkaus*, from

It is said that listening to raga *hindol* can help cure arthritis, while raga *shree* can help reduce stress and induce calm



Image is for representational purposes only

RAGAS THAT HEAL



Hindol

An ancient raga associated with the season of spring, *hindol* is pentatonic and lies within the north Indian tradition



Shree

Traditionally associated with Lord Shiva, *shree* appears in the Hindustani classical tradition



Malkaus

Meant to be sung late at night, *malkaus* is also a pentatonic raga and is one of the oldest in the Indian classical repertoire

which all other ragas emerge. It is said that listening to *hindol* can help cure arthritis; *shree* can help reduce stress and induce calm; and *malkaus* can help in dealing with fever and certain stomach ailments. Therapy through music is well known across the world, and is often put to use in a medical environment, or even just to relax a subject's mind to aid in building greater well-being. Children with mental disorders, cancer patients, elderly patients with brain disorders such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's, patients with nerve-related issues and heart patients are among those who are said to benefit tremendously from music therapy. Ragas have, in fact, also been associated with the alleviation of pain.

Several Carnatic and Hindustani classical musicians have experimented with the healing effects of music. Noted Hindustani classical violinist Kala Ramnath regularly interacts with children suffering from cancer in the US, plays to them and also sends to them recordings of her pieces. Their caretakers have confirmed that listening to these recordings reduces the pain of chemotherapy and puts the children to sleep. Hitham Trust, set up a few years ago by

Below: Carnatic vocalist Bombay Jayashri

Facing page (clockwise from top left): Listening to Indian instruments such as tabla; harmonium; sarod; and santoor is believed to be therapeutic





Carnatic practitioner TS Sathyavati has found that some ragas help alleviate headaches and lower blood pressure

renowned Carnatic vocalist Bombay Jayashri, has been documenting the effects of music on children with autism. Its researchers have affirmed that the effects are noteworthy, manifesting over a period of time. Focusing on music is said to have helped the children physically as well. Jayashri shares, “Every special child that I have interacted with approaches music as an end in itself, which is extraordinary.”

Professor TS Sathyavati, another noted Carnatic practitioner, has experimented with the therapeutic capabilities of ragas and confirms that some of them help listeners

with headaches and blood pressure regulation. The ragas that can help alleviate high blood pressure, according to her experiments, include *sama*, *shankharabaranam*, *asaveri* and *neelambari*. She clarifies, however, that these are not clinically proven experiments. She also cautions against the use of music therapy in isolation of medicines, advising consultation with a physician regardless of any healing effects experienced.

Dr Kirthana Kunikullaya, another reputed Carnatic vocalist, says, “There are thousands of articles available on the Internet that talk about the therapeutic power of music. When one is studying the effects of music on the human body and mind, there are several factors to be considered. The notes, pitch, tempo and timing, for instance, as also one’s changing tastes – what appealed to one as a child might not appeal to one now and, therefore, have a different effect as a form of therapy.”



Left and facing page: A pair of koodiyattam performers

DRAMA AND DEVOTION

With stylised storytelling and layered complexity, the ancient performing art of koodiyattam is an intense experience for the audience and performers alike

BY ANJANA RAJAN

Characters from beyond our time and space; sounds and sights we do not behold everyday; and a spectacle that defies description. That is koodiyattam (sometimes spelt kutiyattam), an ancient Sanskrit form of theatre from Kerala that has been listed by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. The word *koodiyattam* translates literally into ‘acting together’, but the performing art’s simple name belies its complex layers. With dramatic makeup, extraordinary headgear and costumes, and unique percussion accompaniments, each performer is a messenger narrating stories from a time when humans, gods and demons met and mingled.

Koodiyattam’s hallmark is its *abhinaya*, or stylised acting technique, which employs a large lexicon of hand gestures, a range of postures and movements, facial and eye expressions, and breathing practices. The drummers, although placed behind the actors, are able to anticipate every finger movement and every flicker of their eyes, and create a





Left: Koodiyattam exponent Kapila Venu performs on stage

Facing page: A koodiyattam artiste does his makeup before a performance

A koodiyattam performance is intertwined with devotion. An oil lamp at the front of the stage is indispensable

dramatic soundscape. Elaborate depictions of nature, along with character delineations suggestive of careful psychological study, make a koodiyattam performance an intense experience for the audience and artistes alike.

The themes of the plays by celebrated Sanskrit playwrights are largely drawn from ancient Indian epics. Incidentally, this living dance form was also responsible for a delightful event in literary history - in the early 1900's, 13 plays ascribed to Bhasa, considered one of the earliest Sanskrit playwrights, were discovered in the koodiyattam tradition. Till then, the works of this dramatist had been

assumed lost. While these plays remain in the koodiyattam repertoire, they are now also produced by contemporary theatre groups.

Originally presented only in *koothambalams* (dance halls in the temples of Kerala), a koodiyattam performance is intertwined with devotion. An oil lamp at the front of the stage is indispensable. The opening rituals include the lighting of the lamp, purification of the stage by sprinkling water, and spoken and sung introductions to the play as well as the principal character. Some movements are executed by an actor behind a handheld curtain. The fact that some rituals are thus hidden from the audience foregrounds the art's sacred connotations.

A unique feature of the performance is the *nirvahana*, the introductory section preceding the play. A performer recalls, as in a flashback, past actions and circumstances in the character's life and leads up to the point where the play begins. The actor is free to





Left: Koodiyattam's stylised acting technique incorporates a range of facial and eye expressions

Below: Margi Madhu Chakyar as Ravana in a performance

Facing page: A koodiyattam artiste performs as Ravana, the drummers playing behind him



Image credit: Margi Madhu Chakyar

improvise within the technique, borrowing from other texts to embellish the portrayal.

The main instrument accompanying koodiyattam is the *mizhavu*, a copper drum shaped like a spherical vessel. Two *mizhavu* players strike their drums with both hands to produce a range of drum syllables, volume levels and patterns. Other accompanying instruments include the *edakka*, an hourglass-shaped drum played with a small stick, and small metal cymbals. The vocal technique of koodiyattam involves a highly stylised, rhythmic recitation of the verses, drawing out the long syllables.

While it is believed that the tradition of koodiyattam dates back to nearly 2,000 years ago, the sources and literature available provide concrete evidence for the past 1,000 years. Kulasekhara Varman, a king of the Chera dynasty believed to have ruled during the 9th century, is credited with giving koodiyattam a new lease of life, introducing elements such as the *vidushaka* or jester, who spoke in Malayalam, made fun of powerful patrons and



pointed out society's flaws. The introduction of satire, social comment and the local language added new layers to the art form.

Yet, by the early 20th century, koodiyattam was little known to the common public. Masters under whom it thrived during this period include the late Mani Madhava Chakyar, Ammanur Madhava Chakyar and Painkulam Rama Chakyar. Through their work, the dance form came out of the temple confines and even crossed international borders.

Koodiyattam was traditionally presented over several nights - a single act of a play could take more than a month. This was

because of the high degree of elaboration in the mime, which depended on the improvisational abilities of the actors. Today, enactments have been shortened, artists often perform extracts and necessity has led to new developments. For instance, *nangiar koothu* - a portion danced by Nambiar women - is an important constituent of a koodiyattam performance. Its primary purpose is to provide the *nirvahana*. However, from the late 20th century onwards, *nangiar koothu* is frequently performed as a standalone presentation, and artistes have developed performances on strong women characters such as Draupadi, Sita and Parvati. Well known *nangiar koothu* artists include Usha Nangiar, Indu G and Kapila Venu. What makes the future of koodiyattam promising is that it is one of the few Indian performing art forms to have been recognised by UNESCO.

The main instrument accompanying koodiyattam is the *mizhavu*, a copper drum

ON A NEW NOTE

Dance, drama, digital innovations, and styles drawn from India as well as across the world – the modern Indian musical has a promising road ahead

BY SHRABASTI MALLIK

For a few moments, the auditorium was enveloped in total darkness, and I assumed the props were being rearranged. I was ready to play along and explore whichever part of Mughal emperor Akbar's palace the art director wanted me to see. The lights came back on, and I was spellbound. I beheld the fabled *shish mahal*, recreated as part of a modern Indian musical. Then, Anarkali appeared from behind the wings and rendered, with pitch perfect precision, the iconic Hindi song *Jab pyar kiya toh darna kya*. I listened with rapture as the actor not only hit all the right notes but also expressed a range of emotions through dance. It was thus that director Feroz Abbas Khan recreated on stage the magic of Indian filmmaker K Asif's magnum opus, *Mughal-E-Azam* (1960).

"Not many would know that the film's story was originally written as a play. So, the events that unfold in the narrative are extremely theatrical," says Khan, who is among the pioneers of the musical in India, an art form that has been acquiring ever more novel and innovative dimensions in recent years. From familiar narratives and immersive storytelling to new tropes and digital innovations, the Indian musical has come a long way.





Clockwise from top: *Jhumroo*, a musical based on the life of iconic Indian playback singer, Kishore Kumar; Disney India's *Beauty and the Beast*; *Gandhi - The Musical* based on the Mahatma's life; *Zangoora* utilised hydraulics on stage



Above: A scene from *Gandhi - The Musical*

Left: A scene from *Mughal-E-Azam*



It is no longer associated only with larger-than-life plots involving a predictable concoction of drama, romance and revelry, for instance. Danesh Khambata's *Gandhi – The Musical* draws upon the life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, choosing to focus on the lesser-known aspects of the man's life. "We seldom think of Gandhiji as a young, well-suited practicing barrister in South Africa. I wanted to portray the human side of the Mahatma and his real struggle for self-discovery, and the musical was the perfect medium for it," he shares.

While Khan and Khambata concur on the importance of extraordinary music, the latter used an eclectic combination of jazz, traditional Indian *bhajans* (devotional songs), Gujarati folk music and dubstep! This marks

another movement in Indian musical theatre – the coming together of classical, folk and international forms of music and dance. "Each genre is meant to emphasise the emotion of a particular scene. When Gandhiji appears as a barrister in a South African court and is reprimanded by the judge for refusing to take off his turban, all the characters on stage break into a jazz routine. Similarly, a hard-hitting dubstep number depicts the Asiatic Registration Act, that required all Indians in South Africa to register their names with the British government," Khambata explains.

Elements from international forms of musical theatre are also finding echoes in Indian productions. Wizcraft's *Zangoora*, staged at Kingdom of Dreams in Gurugram, Haryana, was one of the first Indian musicals to incorporate a taste of Broadway. Produced by Wizcraft, this Bollywood-inspired production also includes the use of hydraulics and LED screens to bring the locations and action to life on stage. Viraf Sarkari, Wizcraft's co-founder, conceived the idea after he watched a Broadway show in New York more than a decade ago.

And then there are the stories. While *Mughal-E-Azam* and *Gandhi – The Musical* draw on familiar narratives rooted in India, popular international narratives that transcend barriers of language and cultural background are also finding new renditions. Over the last two years, Disney has brought to the Indian stage Broadway musical versions of *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*. While both stories are from beyond the country's shores, they have been recreated for its audience by Indian actors, choreographers and musicians. "Theatre is one of the strongest forms of performing art in India. As a musical, *Mughal-E-Azam* brought even the non-theatre-going crowd to the auditorium, perhaps because of the iconic storyline. *Zangoora* and *Jhumroo*, on the other hand, captivated an audience seeking novelty. And this is just the beginning," concludes Khambata, hopeful that Indian musicals will capture many more hearts in the years to come.

ODE TO SUSTAINABILITY

Bringing together Indian artisans and Australian Merino wool, Ruchika Sachdeva became the first Indian woman to win the International Woolmark Prize in 2017. She gives you a glimpse into her design philosophy

BY RUCHIKA SACHDEVA

When I first read the brief for the International Woolmark Prize, I recalled the *kantha* quilts my grandmother would make for me as a baby, sewing together several layers of old sarees with precise running stitches.

It was this cherished memory that inspired my use of upcycled Merino wool to make *kantha* yarn, using a state-of-the-art recycling facility in Mumbai, India. By adding this yarn to my silhouettes, I connected the urgency of addressing consumer waste in fashion with traditional techniques of recycling, as well as cultural beliefs in the spiritual power of cloth and its effect on our

well-being. Artisanal craft embodies the principles of slow fashion, and for this reason, I worked with weavers in the Himalayan foothills and central India. I encouraged them to take an unorthodox approach to traditional techniques. While I have been fascinated by soft tailoring as the basis for functional, wearable clothing on the one hand, I have also been inspired by the comfort and versatility integral to traditional dressing in India, especially in draped garments such as the saree and dhoti. My label, Bodice, attempts to bridge the gap between the stitched and the unstitched, creating clean silhouettes with intriguing elements.

For my International Woolmark Prize collection, among the starting points

Ruchika Sachdeva poses with the International Woolmark Prize 2017-18 trophy, accompanied by two models wearing her winning designs



were the colours used by Indian expressionist Tyeb Mehta (1925–2009). He developed a visual language to reflect the spirit of newly Independent India. Fascinated by the emotional response colour could evoke, Mehta used blocks of pure colour to represent the human condition. In my collection, colours form vibrant planes of energy, given form and

I connected the urgency of addressing consumer waste in fashion with traditional techniques of recycling

texture through strong lines and thoughtful treatments of the Merino wool.

For the silhouettes, inspiration came from the swirling costumes of the nautch dancers of India (professional dancers who perform traditional dance forms) - in particular, the fit-and-flare form of tunics over trousers and skirts. The sensual grace, femininity and strength of the nautch are translated using the Bodice design signature to speak a powerful language of female identity. These women wore gold and silver jewellery which reflected light as they danced, enhancing their beautiful and mystical aura. In my collection, gold and silver threads were woven into





Merino wool by an Italian mill, to give the garments structure and a subtle, light-refracting sheen.

Line and geometry are enduring preoccupations in my design process. For this collection, I also drew inspiration from Indian artist Nasreen Mohamedi (1937-1990), whose line-based drawings, highly rhythmic in their grid-like patterns, have been described as 'poetry within structure'. Disciplined, even austere, Mohamedi's work simultaneously releases the energy and movement of natural phenomena through line. In my garments, this energy is interpreted in three ways. Firstly, through sharply structured yet fluid detailing, such as pleating and geometric colour blocking.

Above and facing page: A model showcasing designs from Sachdeva's designer label, Bodice



From the ingredients and dyes used to the application and everything in between, [Sachdeva's] collection really represents a modern woman

Phillip Lim
US-based fashion designer

”



Bodice scored high on adaptability, commercial viability and creativity... we are keen to see how these designs will be received in the global market

Manish Malhotra
Indian fashion designer

”



A model showcasing a design by Sachdeva

In my collection, colours form vibrant planes of energy, given form and texture through lines

Secondly, the potential for a line to give expression to the energy exchange between time, space, human life and nature is explored through traditional *kantha* embroidery. And finally, the relationship between human beings, the environment and the metaphysical line also provided an inflection point for thinking about the dynamic between artisanal craft and contemporary design. In the Himalayan town of Kullu, I collaborated with weavers who usually replicate a pattern from a graph. Abandoning graphs, I drew on the traditional technique of extra weft, where yarns are added by hand between the warp and weft to create a pattern. This allowed for a far more collaborative and satisfying process of designing. The lines, here, became points of energy wherein the dynamic between mechanical perfection and handcrafted excellence was given a fresh perspective, relevant to questions of sustainable livelihoods and artisanal integrity.

For the colours, I worked with BioDye, a manufacturer and supplier of natural dyes based in Sawantwadi, Maharashtra. Natural dye sources often figure as ingredients in Ayurveda, involve no toxic particles and are safe for the skin. The waste sludge is composted and used as manure, and waste water for crop irrigation. I travelled to the facility of the Raymond Group, one of India's largest fabric manufacturers and retailers, and keeping my philosophy



Sachdeva's winning collection displayed at the International Woolmark Prize 2017-18

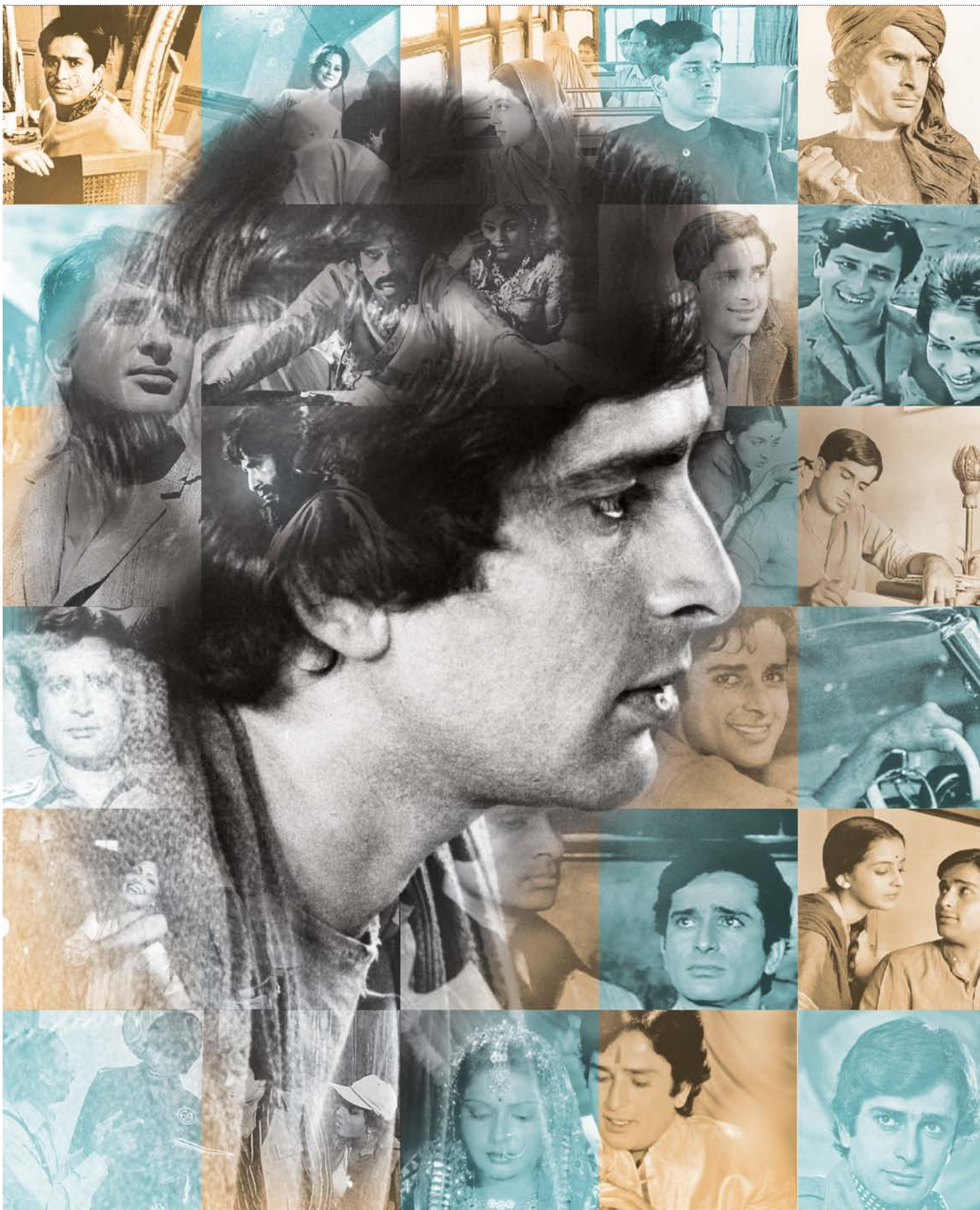
My philosophy is to support artisanal livelihoods even as I embrace cutting-edge technology

of longevity and utility in mind, treated the Merino wool fabric I was to use with an innovative antimicrobial finish utilising *neem*, an anti-bacterial remedy in Ayurveda. This made the fabric perfect for travel in humid climates too, bringing out its trans-seasonal nature, and meant that it needed less laundering overall.

At Bodice, our holistic approach meant that even our buttons were sourced from renewable sources like coconut shells, seashells and wood. We are committed to

aesthetics as well as ethics, in this regard. Rather than using polyester and energy-intensive heat processes, we use binding to create structured pleats that are easy to maintain. Consumer durability is also vital, and so many Bodice garments have adjustable fastenings to allow for natural changes in the human body.

As a fashion designer, my philosophy is to support artisanal livelihoods even as I embrace cutting-edge technology and explore innovative design solutions for environmentally sustainable fashion. It was with this in mind that I designed for the International Woolmark Prize, a collection honouring Australian Merino wool and the artisans of India. And my victory continues to honour both.





AN ACTOR AND A GENTLEMAN

From a stage hand in his father's theatre company to one of India's finest performers and producers, Shashi Kapoor lived by his passion for his craft, experimented with alternative cinema and has left behind a magnificent legacy

BY NANDINI D TRIPATHY

Mere paas Ma hai." Few phrases in Indian films have been as loaded, and as iconic, as the four simple words that silenced a towering Amitabh Bachchan and became a piece of Indian cinematic history. They were uttered by Shashi Kapoor, of the twinkling eyes, hearty laugh and histrionic genius, in *Deewar* (1975). The youngest of the three Kapoor brothers, he passed away in December 2017 and is survived by a glorious legacy not only in the universe of cinema, but also in the realm of what was arguably his first love: theatre.

SETTING THE STAGE

"He joined Prithvi Theatres, his father's theatre company, as a stage hand and had to work his way up, learning on the job," shares Sanjna Kapoor, the late actor's daughter. He went on to become a production manager, costume and light designer and finally, actor. Thus it was

Shashi Kapoor acted in over a hundred films – Indian, American as well as British – through the course of his illustrious career

that theatre became a part of his life, and a part of the man he was. Film critic and author Deepa Gahlot, who co-authored the book *Prithviwallahs* with the actor, writes in a tribute to him, “The Prithvi Theatres team travelled third class, and ate simple meals. Prithviraj Kapoor told his sons that they were *mazdoors* [labourers], not *jagirdars* [landlords].” She attributes Kapoor’s mild temperament, discipline and compassion to this part of his growing years.

Kapoor established a production house called Filmvalas, which looked to lend a voice to alternative and independent cinema

It was also during his apprenticeship at Prithvi Theatres that the actor met his future wife, British actress Jennifer Kendal. Her father, Geoffrey Kendal, ran the Shakespeareana Theatre Company, which was Kapoor’s next stop. “By the 1960s, my parents had travelled across the country with Shakespeareana, taking the bard’s plays with them. My father once wrote in his diary about how difficult it was for him to wrap his tongue around Shakespeare’s language and how, during his first performance with the company, his tongue had seemed to turn to leather and refuse to move!” Sanjna shares and adds, “For the longest time, I used to think that setting up Prithvi Theatre in Mumbai was my mother’s idea, and there are many who still





Above: The actor with two of his three children, Sanjna (left) and Kunal (right)

Facing page: Shashi Kapoor was honoured with the Dada Saheb Phalke Award at Prithvi Theatre in 2015. He is here accompanied by veteran actresses (from left to right) Nafisa Ali, Waheeda Rehman, Asha Parekh, Zeenat Aman, Shabana Azmi, Rekha, Neetu Kapoor and Supriya Pathak

think so. However, my aunt Felicity wrote in her memoirs of a letter she had received from her sister, saying that my father had lost his mind and wanted to build a theatre! I think he would have loved to carry on doing theatre for the rest of his life – he absolutely loved it. But it wasn't financially viable. He wanted a family, and would have had to support it. That was when he decided to concentrate on films."

THE SCREEN AND BEYOND

Born into the 'first family' of Hindi cinema, Shashi Kapoor was all of six years old when he made his big screen debut as a child artiste, going on to appear in films such as *Aag* (1948) and *Awaara* (1956). As an adult, the world was introduced to him by another piece of cinematic history – Yash Chopra's *Dharmputra* (1961), which was one of the first Indian films to address the Partition. Four years later, he would work with Chopra again in *Waqt* (1965),



The people he helped, his concern for the well being of those who worked with him and his generosity were aspects of his personality [that] he kept hidden from public view

Shabana Azmi
Indian Actor

”



When he spoke, there was a mischievous, almost inaudible, delicate yodel in his voice – most endearing and comforting

Amitabh Bachchan
Indian Actor

”

MEMORY LANE



The Householder (1963)

The story of a young Indian man and his wife, this was a piece of social satire that garnered Kapoor a lot of critical acclaim



Shakespeare Wallah (1965)

Based on the life and travels of Geoffrey and Felicity Kendal, this film showcased the changing face of India in the 50s and 60s



Deewar (1975)

Arguably one of Bollywood's most iconic films, this had Shashi Kapoor and Amitabh Bachchan playing brothers



Junoon (1978)

Based on a short story titled *A Flight of Pigeons* by Ruskin Bond, this went on to win the National Award for Best Feature Film

one of Bollywood's first multi-starrers. As an actor, Kapoor is fondly remembered for his performances in iconic films such as *Deewar* (1975), *Kabhi Kabhie* (1976), *Jab Jab Phool Khile* (1965), *Haseena Maan Jayegi* (1969), *Trishul* (1978) and *Do Aur Do Paanch* (1980). Many of these projects saw him sharing the screen with Amitabh Bachchan, who was among the first to reach the Kapoor residence when news of the actor's demise broke. In a moving tribute on his blog, Bachchan reminisces, "Shashi Kapoor!" was what one heard as he extended a warm soft hand out to you in introduction; that devastating smile complementing the twinkle in his eyes. He needn't have done so. Everyone knew him. But this was his infectious humble self."

Kapoor went on to establish a production house called Filmvalas which, unlike his brother Raj Kapoor's RK Films, looked to lend a voice to alternative and independent cinema. Far ahead of his time, he backed several

Below: The actor receiving the Padma Bhushan from former Indian President Pratibha Patil in 2011

Facing page: The Kapoor family at a prayer meeting following Shashi Kapoor's demise, at Prithvi Theatre





exceptional films including *Juno* (1979) and *Kalyug* (1981) directed by Shyam Benegal, Aparna Sen's *36 Chowringhee Lane* (1981) which also starred his wife, Govind Nihalani's *Vijeta* (1982) and Girish Karnad's *Utsav* (1984).

ON INTERNATIONAL SHORES

Long before the likes of Om Puri, Anupam Kher and Priyanka Chopra made successful 'crossovers' to international cinema, Shashi Kapoor was working with filmmakers Ismail Merchant and James Ivory on several critically acclaimed English films such as *The Householder* (1963), *Shakespeare Wallah* (1965), *Heat and Dust* (1983) and *In Custody* (1994), and with American director Conrad Rooks in *Siddhartha* (1972). Dabbling in British as well as American cinema, he built for himself a varied repertoire that allowed him to

explore nuanced characters and stories, and to continually grow as a performer.

Today, Prithvi Theatre stands tall in Mumbai as a symbol of Prithviraj Kapoor's dream and the Kapoor family's invaluable contribution to theatre in India. Shashi Kapoor, who had envisioned the structure and taken everything it stood for to great heights while his wife and he were at its helm, would buy tickets to watch plays there till his health no longer permitted him to make the trip. Two of his children, Sanjna and Kunal, who have been keeping Prithvi's spirit alive for the last three decades, are carrying on his legacy with a passion for theatre they have inherited from him, as also their mother. As for fans of his cinematic prowess, the actor has left behind more than a hundred films to remember him by, some of them markers of the most exceptional cinema of their time.





Amaranth is a great addition to your breakfast as part of a porridge, and makes a good combination with *anjeer* (figs) and almonds

HOME-GROWN GOODNESS

They've been around for centuries and are still as important for good health as they were many moons ago. We delve into four native Indian superfoods that are an essential addition to your shelf this season

BY MADHULIKA DASH

What do *makhana* (lotus seeds), *kamrak* (carambola/star fruit), *bael* (wood apple) and amaranth have in common? Besides their common ancestry, all of them date back to ancient times – their popularity, especially in the Indian context, stemming from the fact that they are all also part of the *vrat ka khana* (food for fasting) during festivals such as the two Navratras, one of which is celebrated during this time of the year, in March. As the season changes, not only does the weather undergo a transformation but the human body is often rendered vulnerable to illnesses. The *Charak Samhita*, an ancient Sanskrit text that talks about traditional Ayurvedic medicine, mentions each of these foods as a source not only of nourishment for the body, but also of protection against any harmful eventualities – in this case, diseases. What works even more in their favour is the fact that they are available



throughout the year in one form or another, even as some of their greatest benefits can be enjoyed during the season currently underway.

BAEL (WOOD APPLE)

When it comes to gut-friendly foods, nothing beats *bael*. It is said that Maurya emperor Ashoka discovered the wondrous side of the fruit while on one of his conquests, when a farmer offered him its juice instead of water. The monarch went on to incorporate *bael*

***Bael* is a well-known home remedy for diarrhoea, dysentery and peptic ulcers, and is also a mild laxative**

juice as an essential summer drink in his court. Although the fruit's benefits are best suited to warmer months, its vitamin, mineral and antioxidant-enriched composition makes it a must-have all-season food item. Be it as a concentrate, a flavouring agent in desserts or as a *murabba* (in candied form), the fruit is renowned not only for its medicinal value – protecting you against various diseases – but also for its virtue as a natural coolant.

Benefits: Indigenous to Indian cuisine for thousands of years, *bael* is also a well-known home remedy for diarrhoea, dysentery and peptic ulcers, and is a mild laxative. It is also a fantastic source of many important minerals, including calcium.



Above: Sliced and candied, *bael* can also be eaten as a quick snack

Right: *Bael* tea

Facing page: Amaranth porridge with blueberries and walnuts



AMARANTH

Before it was hailed as a superfood in the modern world, amaranth – and its 60-odd varieties – was akin to a magic potion that kept the vagaries of ageing at bay. Also known as *rajgira* or *ram dana*, Ayurveda considers it an important addition to the diet and recommends it to those suffering from anaemia. In terms of culinary usage, it remains a prized crop not only as fresh produce – its leaves being a delicious addition to salads – but also as a dried grain to create, in effect, a suitable iteration of instant

Rich in iron, zinc, calcium, phosphorus and fibre, amaranth scores higher than quinoa in terms of nutritional value

breakfast cereal. Roasted, popped and ground amaranth are still breakfast staples in many parts of India.

Benefits: Rich in iron, zinc, calcium, phosphorus and fibre, amaranth scores higher than quinoa in terms of nutritional value.

MAKHANA (LOTUS SEEDS)

When and how it was discovered that lotus seeds might be the best vegetarian source of protein and starch is hard to say, but if ancient Indian texts are anything to go by, then *makhana* – also known as fox nuts – have been harvested in India for several centuries now. Blooming around the beginning of winter, these little white globes are the earliest known puff snack and were collected and consumed for the same reason during ancient times as they are today: satiation and nourishment. The fact that they are low in sodium and saturated fats



Left: A bowl of roasted *makhana* (lotus seeds)

Below: A bunch of lotus seed pods and flowers

Facing page: A serving of *kamrak* tiramisu



makes them a guilt-free snack, and they also make a delicious ingredient in Indian cooking, combining well with potatoes and curry.

Benefits: They are naturally superior to almonds, walnuts and cashews in terms of sugar, protein, ascorbic acid and phenol content, and are good sources of antioxidants and fibre.

KAMRAK (CARAMBOLA)

Apart from its star-like shape, the golden-yellow *kamrak* is another versatile treat that works wonderfully during the seasonal transition towards summer. It can be enjoyed raw or ripe, made into a chutney, turned into a delicious beverage,

***Kamrak* is a great source of antioxidants, Vitamin C, Vitamin B, potassium, copper and fibre, and is low in sugar and acids**



rolled into little candy treats and savoured with rock salt, and more. In contemporary kitchens, it is also used as a flavouring agent in desserts. When it comes to traditional Indian cuisine, a variety of rasams in South India are based on its interesting flavour profile. Deriving its name from the Sanskrit word *karmaranga*, meaning appetiser, carambola is also a natural palate cleanser.

Benefits: Besides taste, the fruit is harvested for its medicinal and nutritional value – it is a great source of antioxidants, Vitamin C, Vitamin B, potassium, copper and fibre, and is low in sugar and acids. It remains one of the best home remedies for several ailments, especially those related to skin.



MUSAMBI, AAM AUR KAMRAK KA PANNA

As spring gives way to summer, this wholesome and cooling drink is a must-try:

Ingredients: 1 *kamrak*; 2 raw mangoes; 1/2 musambi; 3 tbsp sugar; 1/4 tsp cumin seeds, roasted and ground; 1/2 tsp black salt; 3 fresh mint leaves, one extra for garnishing; a pinch of salt.

Method: Peel, boil and mash the two raw mangoes and set aside. Thinly slice the *kamrak* and set a quarter of the portion aside for garnishing. Seed and juice the musambi. Grind/blend the mashed raw mango, sliced *kamrak* and musambi juice together, adding the sugar, roasted and powdered cumin seeds, black salt, mint leaves, regular salt and water as required. Garnish with the mint leaf and slices of *kamrak*, and serve chilled.



TRACK TO THE FUTURE

India's first high-speed bullet train, connecting Mumbai to Ahmedabad, promises to usher in an array of benefits and opportunities. The Managing Director of the National High Speed Rail Corporation gives you some insights

BY ACHAL KHARE



The stations connected via HSR will attract more individuals, businesses and industries due to increased accessibility

the government embarked last year on a new project - India's first high-speed bullet train that connects Mumbai and Ahmedabad. The foundation stone for this ambitious project was laid on September 14, 2017 at Sabarmati by the Prime Ministers of India and Japan, Narendra Modi and Shinzo Abe respectively. The project has managed to generate a lot of excitement.

First and foremost, it is important to clarify the misconception that this bullet train is for the high-paying class of passengers. While there is no doubt that it will serve efficiently as an alternative mode of travel for those who already have the option of making the trip by air, it will also be tremendously beneficial for people of more modest means in smaller towns like Virar, Boisar, Vapi, Valsad, Bilimora, Anand, Bharuch, etc. Studies of Japan's High Speed Railway (HSR) show that the impact of HSR on economic productivity is higher in the regions that have HSR stations, particularly those located far from the big cities and metropolises. Passengers travelling from such places will, therefore, not only receive the direct benefit of reduced travel time but will also attract new activities and aid in the market expansion of these small towns. The stations connected via HSR will attract more individuals, businesses and industries due to increased accessibility, leading to increased land and property values. While these positive effects of HSR are likely to be truly appreciated once the project is operational, the positive impact of HSR on Japan's overall development cannot be denied. We expect and aspire to replicate the same in India.

Transportation is one of the most important factors that determine a country's progress. And it is not without reason that it is often referred to as the 'lifeline' of a nation. India, the world's sixth largest economy, has now established itself as the fastest growing region in the world. In order to sustain this growth rate, its government has invested heavily in building its infrastructure and transportation. Over the last two decades, many initiatives - including the ambitious golden quadrilateral National Highway project, Dedicated Rail Freight Corridor and numerous Metro Rail projects - have been taken up by the government in the transport sector in particular. As a part of this ongoing process,



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the bullet train in Ahmedabad last year

At the micro level, the bullet train will have a significant impact on the land and property market

Cost analysis is a subject where a lot of deliberation has already been carried out, and India's acquisition of a loan of ₹88,000 crore at 0.1 per cent interest from Japan has been widely lauded. The spillover effect of HSR on the local economy is likely to be immense. The project requires a vast pool of skilled and semi-skilled workers, and will, therefore, generate employment during the construction phase. Post this, when the operation begins, the direct benefit of reduced travel time will result in increased output and productivity at the macro level. At the micro level, the bullet train will have a significant impact on the land and property market, as well as on the

tourism industry. Another issue that has been deliberated upon is that of land acquisition. National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL) acknowledges that land is the most significant natural resource and continues to have enormous social, economic and symbolic relevance in India. In the earlier stages of the project, the requirement of land was reduced by making the railway track predominantly elevated. Out of the 508 km of track - the distance between Ahmedabad and Mumbai - 92 per cent of the track (467 km) is elevated. The remaining 21 km covers Mumbai and its suburbs, and has been consciously designed underground. The land requirement, therefore, has been drastically reduced. We have also brought the width requirement down to 17.5 metres, as against the 35-40 metres utilised by conventional railway lines.

Having taken into consideration the well-being of all Indian citizens, this project is likely to be immensely beneficial once operational.



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02 Step

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03 Step

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04 Step

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