

INDIA PERSPECTIVES

Volume 31 ■ Issue 5 & 6 ■ October-December 2017

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP



asean india
PROGRESS & PROSPERITY

Commemorative Summit 2018

**INDIA-PHILIPPINES:
STRONGER TIES**

**MADHYA PRADESH
PERFECT WINTER GETAWAY**

**MC MARY KOM
MAKING HISTORY, AGAIN**

**IN MEMORIAM
ACTOR VINOD KHANNA**

POTPOURRI

UPCOMING EVENTS ACROSS INDIA



PONGAL/SANKRANTI

Dedicated to the sun god, this harvest festival is celebrated across South India. Pongal is made in colourful earthen pots using new rice from the harvest, milk and jaggery. The delicacy is feasted upon as part of the festivities.

WHEN: January 13/14, 2018

WHERE: South India



BIKANER CAMEL FAIR

An annual festival dedicated to the ship of the desert - the camel - the Bikaner Camel Fair features camel races, camel acrobatics and even camel beauty pageants! Other highlights include skirt-swirling folk dancers, fire dancers and a spectacular fireworks show.

WHEN: January 13 to 14, 2018

WHERE: Bikaner, Rajasthan

MUKTESWAR DANCE FESTIVAL

Organised every year at the historic Mukteswar Temple, this festival is a celebration of the Indian classical dance form of Odissi and features solo, duet and group performances by professional Odissi dancers.

WHEN: January 14 to 16, 2018

WHERE: Mukteswar, Odisha

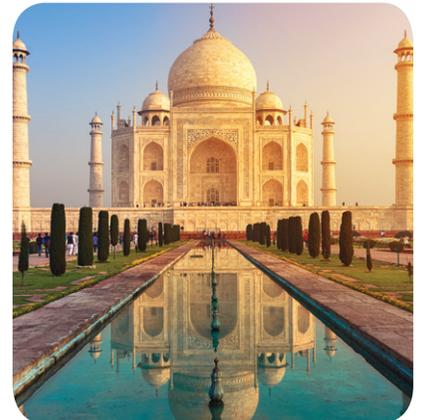


SURAJKUND INTERNATIONAL CRAFTS MELA

A vibrant amalgamation of culture, music and joie de vivre, this fair is an annual celebration of Indian folk traditions and cultural heritage, featuring dance performances, handicraft displays and more.

WHEN: February 2 to 18, 2018

WHERE: Faridabad, Haryana



TAJ MAHOTSAV

Held at Shilpgram, near the eastern gate of the Taj Mahal, the Taj Mahotsav is a 10-day carnival that showcases India's rich artistic, cultural and culinary heritage.

WHEN: February 18 to 27, 2018

WHERE: Agra, Uttar Pradesh



FOREWORD

India's diplomatic calendar has been very busy over the past few months, with a number of important, high-profile engagements, both bilateral and multilateral. In this special issue of *India Perspectives*, we look ahead at an upcoming engagement - the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, to be held for the first time in India, in January 2018. Marking the significance of India's relations with ASEAN, the main event is preceded by a series of events that promise to cement India's ties with all ASEAN member nations.

This issue of the magazine also covers Prime Minister Narendra Modi's highly successful visit to the Philippines in November 2017, the first by an Indian leader in 36 years. A number of agreements were signed in areas such as defence, industry and humanitarian assistance. The visits of the Italian Prime Minister and the Afghan President to India also figure in this issue. India also hosted three royal visits in 2017, where leaders from the two sides exchanged views on bilateral cooperation and several other issues of mutual interest.

In our travel section, we take you on a journey through the beautiful landscape of Madhya Pradesh, a state with fascinating topographies that have something to offer for every kind of traveller. From the Bhimbetka rock shelters, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to a trio of picturesque tiger reserves and pilgrimage centres, naturalists, spirituality buffs, leisure seekers and more will find something to satiate their wanderlust.

The annual Rann Utsav celebrates the culture of Gujarat and its centuries-old traditions. We take a look at the people, culture and spirit of the region, including its intricate embroidery and exquisite handicrafts. We also give you an insight into the dynamic fashion industry of Northeast India and the role of traditional techniques and materials therein.

Indian boxer MC Mary Kom has once again created history by winning her fifth gold medal at the Asian Confederation Women's Boxing Championships. We examine the glorious moments of her stellar career and the challenges she overcame along her journey.

Finally, we pay tribute to late actor Vinod Khanna, who touched many lives with his talent as well as his generosity and faith, leaving behind a fine legacy.



Raveesh Kumar



Cover map not to scale

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Editor: Raveesh Kumar

Assistant Editor: MLK Raja

Ministry of External Affairs

Room No. 152, 'A' Wing, Shastri Bhavan,
New Delhi - 110001, India

Tel.: +91.11.23388949, 23381719

Fax.: +91.11.23384663

Web: www.indiaperspectives.in

For feedback: osdpd2@mea.gov.in

Maxposure Media Group India Pvt Ltd

CEO & Managing Director: Prakash Johari

Director: Vikas Johari

Editorial Director: Jayita Bandyopadhyay

Head Office

Maxposure Media Group India Pvt Ltd
#TheAddress, Plot No 62, Okhla Phase-3,
New Delhi-110020, India

Tel: +91.11.43011111, Fax: +91.11.43011199

CIN No: U22229DL2006PTC152087

For inquiries:

indiaperspectives@maxposuremedia.com

 FOR INQUIRIES | MMGIPL
Tel: +91.11.43011111
FAX: +91.11.43011199
www.maxposuremedia.com

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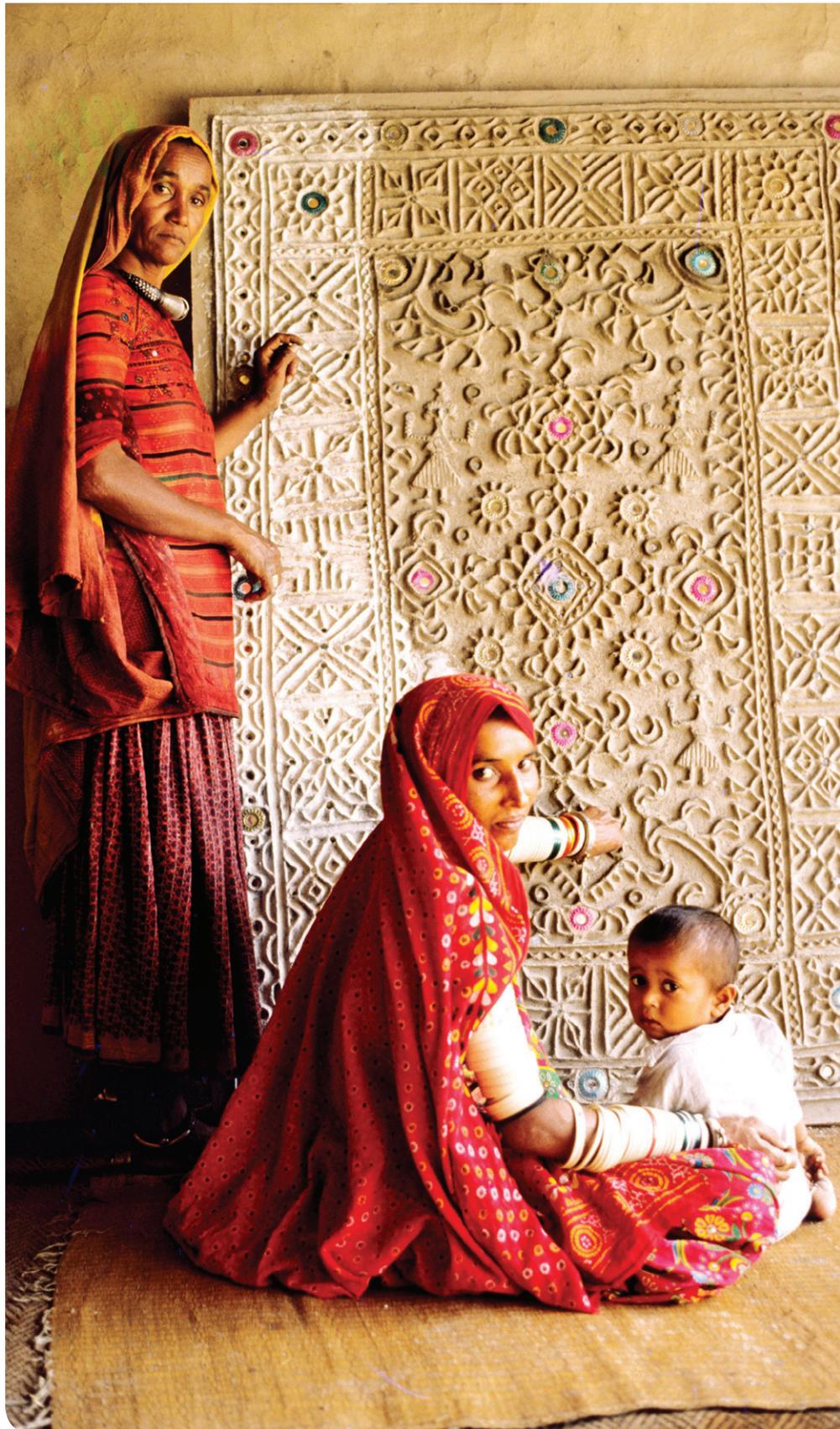
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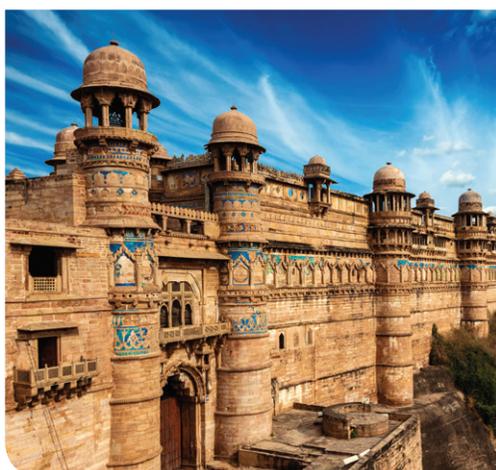
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A SUMMIT FOR CELEBRATION

The upcoming ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit, to be held on January 25, 2018 in New Delhi, will mark a significant step forward in enhancing relations between India and the 10 ASEAN member nations

BY MANISH CHAND

Around 200 young men and women from India and the 10 ASEAN countries came together in August 2017 in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, to talk, connect and brainstorm to uphold a collective vision of the India-ASEAN partnership. In September 2017, in the picturesque city of Udaipur in Rajasthan, artists from India and ASEAN nations gathered at the first ASEAN-India art camp to create 20 paintings on the theme, “Ocean of Opportunity.” In October, musicians from all ASEAN countries performed against the backdrop of the magnificent Purana Quila in New Delhi, paying homage to the cultural connections that bind India and ASEAN.

From music concerts and art shows to textile exhibitions and seminars on diverse themes, a vast array of events has been

celebrating the intertwined dreams and aspirations of over 1.8 billion people in India and the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations, set to culminate in the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit on January 25, 2018 in New Delhi.

India and ASEAN are conjoined by “Shared Values, Common Destiny” – the theme of the upcoming summit. Animated by the soaring vision of an Asian Century

The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit will have a substantive and multi-layered agenda, undergirded by three Cs - Commerce, Connectivity and Culture



Left: The Telecom India Expo (Special session on ASEAN) was held in February 2017 in New Delhi, India

Facing page: The 2nd International Conference on ASEAN-India Cultural & Civilisational Links was held in January 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia



and mutual resurgence, the event will toast the 25th anniversary of India and ASEAN's Dialogue Partnership, 15 years of summit-level interaction and five years of Strategic Partnership.

In a memorable moment, the leaders of all 10 ASEAN countries will not only attend the commemorative summit, but will also be Guests of Honour at India's Republic Day parade on January 26, 2018.

The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit will be an eloquent testimony to India's ascending stature in ASEAN's diplomatic agenda, as this is only the second time the 10-nation grouping will hold a second special summit with another country. In 2012, ASEAN and India had celebrated 20 years of Dialogue



Left (top to bottom): The ASEAN-India Biz Tech Conference was held in May 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Delhi Dialogue IX was held in July 2017 in New Delhi, India

Facing page: The India-ASEAN Youth Summit was held in August 2017 in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India



Partnership and 10 years of summit-level interaction with a commemorative summit in New Delhi that elevated India-ASEAN ties to the level of a Strategic Partnership.

INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit will have a substantive and multi-layered agenda, undergirded by three Cs - Commerce, Connectivity and Culture. The intellectual architecture of the India-ASEAN engagement was reinforced at the Delhi Dialogue IX, held in July 2017, bringing together eminent thinkers and experts in a dialogue to chart the future trajectory of this vital partnership.

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

A series of business-related events held

Business-related events held in the last few months of 2017 have provided an added impetus to the ASEAN-India economic relationship

in the last few months of 2017 have provided an added impetus to the India-ASEAN economic relationship, including the ASEAN-India Trade Fair in Bangkok, the Act East Expo in Shillong, the ASEAN-India Biz Conference in Kuala Lumpur and the ASEAN component at the Textile India show in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

This growing economic relationship will be crystallised at the largest gatherings of business leaders from the region - the Business & Investment Meet and Expo (January 22-23, 2018), Business

Conclave and ASEAN-India Business Council Meeting (January 23, 2018), to be held in New Delhi. Announcing the Business & Investment Meet and Expo in Manila in November, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said: "It will be the biggest ASEAN-focused business event India has ever organised. India wishes to participate in your growth story and we invite all of ASEAN to participate in ours." Textile trade will be in focus at the ASEAN-India Textile Event, to be held on January 23, 2018 in New Delhi.

ON CONNECTIVITY

The ASEAN-India Connectivity Summit, held

in New Delhi on December 11-12, 2017, with the theme, "Powering Digital and Physical Linkages for Asia in the 21st Century," has charted an ambitious blueprint spanning land, seas, skies and space. India has become the third dialogue partner of ASEAN after China and Japan to initiate an ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee-India Meeting, which seeks to link India more closely to the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC).

Many defining connectivity projects, including the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP),





Above: The ASEAN-India Conference on Blue Economy was held in November 2017 in Nha Trang, Vietnam
Facing page: The ASEAN-India Music Festival was organised in October 2017 in New Delhi, India

are making rapid progress. The Trilateral Highway is expected to be operational by 2019 and will have a force multiplier effect on scaling up trade and people-to-people contact between India and ASEAN.

NEW DREAMS, NEW HORIZONS

In this shared journey of mutual resurgence and empowerment, the youth are set to play a critical role. The India-ASEAN Youth Festival held in Bhopal in August 2017 sought to harness the youth's power to drive this crucial relationship to greater heights. Speaking at the event, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj hailed the ASEAN-India Youth Declaration and underlined that "it will allow us to factor in the voices of our leaders of tomorrow in the agenda of our leaderships today."

The ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit will be a fitting finale to a wide array of activities held over the last few months

Bound by convergent interests and growing synergies, the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit will be a fitting finale to a wide array of activities held over the last few months, encapsulating India's strengthening relations with ASEAN. The summit will usher in a new chapter of accelerated across-the-board engagement and bring the two sides closer to realising their common destiny, deepening their connect on shared values of social justice, inclusive growth, freedom of navigation and shaping a peaceful and inclusive regional order.



TOWARDS GREATER COOPERATION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his maiden state visit to the Philippines in November 2017, marking a significant step forward for the bilateral relations between the two South Asian nations

BY S VENKAT NARAYAN

P rime Minister Narendra Modi's first bilateral visit to the Philippines (November 12-14, 2017) was also the first by an Indian leader in 36 years.

This state visit has provided a much-needed boost to India's relations with the third largest economy in South East

Asia. In Manila, PM Modi met Philippines' President Rodrigo Duterte. Even though they had met briefly last year in Laos, on the margins of the ASEAN Summit, this year's visit became their first opportunity for an in-depth interaction. Officials said it was "an excellent meeting in a very warm and cordial atmosphere." The Indian Prime



Left: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits the Mahaveer Philippine Foundation

Facing page: PM Modi meeting the President of Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte, in Manila

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the Philippines in 2017 was the first by an Indian leader in 36 years

Minister congratulated President Duterte for the successful organisation of this year's ASEAN Summit. He also invited him to attend a commemorative summit to be held in New Delhi, in January 2018. President Duterte has accepted the invitation, as have other ASEAN leaders.

Welcoming PM Modi, President Duterte said that he wishes to have very good relations with India and wants to move forward. Both

leaders agreed that there is great potential in the economic, trade and investment relations between the two nations, and that they could walk along the path to progress together. President Duterte also expressed interest towards cooperation in the field of renewable energy, and accepted PM Modi's invitation to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

President Duterte is committed to improving the health system in the Philippines and spoke about greater Indian investments in the pharmaceutical sector being desirable, so that people in the South East Asian nation have access to the affordable good quality drugs that India is renowned for. He also expressed a keenness to improve the Philippines' infrastructure as



Left: PM Modi visits the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Banos

Facing page: PM Modi being welcomed on his arrival in Manila to attend the ASEAN-India and East Asia summits



part of his 'Build, Build, Build' programme. This is an area wherein Indian infrastructure companies can participate effectively.

During the Indian Prime Minister's visit, both leaders signed four agreements: on defence cooperation and logistics, a field of immense potential; humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reductions (HDR); collaboration in micro, small and medium enterprises; and cooperation between the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) and the Philippines Foreign Services Institute. Besides this, an Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) chair is going to be instituted at the University of the Philippines. PM Modi also visited the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Banos, an urban locality 65 km from

Manila, and interacted with a large number of Indian scientists working there. IRRI has developed flood-tolerant rice varieties, which can withstand 14-18 days of submergence. The Indian Prime Minister presented two Indian rice varieties to IRRI's gene bank, and inaugurated the Shri Narendra Modi Resilient Rice Field Laboratory. The objective of this facility is to double farmer income in flood-prone areas. In July this year, the Indian government approved an IRRI proposal to set up its South Asia Regional Centre in Varanasi. This will be its first research centre outside its headquarters.

As part of his agenda, PM Modi also visited the Mahaveer Philippine Foundation, which is an associate centre of Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti based

PARTNERSHIP



Left: PM Modi at IRRRI
Below: PM Modi at the reception for the 'Indian Community in Philippines' in Manila
Facing page: PM Modi at the Mahaveer Philippine Foundation



in Jaipur. It is a non-profit philanthropic organisation, set up by eminent Philippine nationals and members of the Indian expat community in the nation. Since its establishment in 1989, the organisation has rehabilitated nearly 15,000 amputees in the Philippines by providing them with the Jaipur Foot, a rubber-based prosthetic leg.

If one considers the history of cultural relations between the two nations, India's cultural influence in the Philippines is best understood in terms of the developments in the intervening regions of the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian archipelago, that witnessed intensified Indian cultural influence from the second through the late 14th centuries. Artefacts of Indian orientation have been found on several islands in the Philippines, Sanskrit words can still be found in various Philippine languages, and the introduction of Sanskrit



Welcoming PM Modi, President Duterte said that he wishes to have very good relations with India and wants to move forward

literature to the nation can be traced back to the 10th and 12th centuries.

During the various Anglo-Spanish wars (1762-1764), 600 Indian troops had arrived in the Philippines as part of the military expedition of the East India Company. When the British troops withdrew, many of the Indian soldiers mutinied and refused to leave. They settled in what is now Cainta and Rizal. The region in and around Cainta is still home

to many of their descendants. During the 18th century, there was robust trade between Manila and the Coromandel Coast of Bengal, involving Philippine exports of tobacco, silk, cotton, indigo, sugar cane and coffee.

Economic relations between India and the Philippines experienced a significant boost in 1976, when Aditya Birla met the then President of Philippines Ferdinand Marcos to explore possibilities of setting up joint ventures in the South East Asian nation. This resulted in the establishment of the Indo-Philippine Textile Mills, Inc (Indo-Phil), the largest Indian investment in the country at the time. Indo-Phil currently employs 2,000 workers from the Philippines and supplies 40 per cent of the domestic demand for yarn in the country.



PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS 2018: SINGAPORE CALLING!

The ASEAN India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2018, to be held outside India for the first time, promises to be a platform for effective engagement with the Indian diaspora. We give you a glimpse of what to expect

BY NB RAO

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) has been celebrated in India every year since 2003. The event is celebrated on January 9, the day Mahatma Gandhi, 'the greatest *pravasi*,' returned to India from South Africa in 1915 to lead the country's freedom struggle.

The upcoming ASEAN India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be organised on January 6

and 7, 2018, at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore - the first edition of PBD to be held beyond Indian shores. The choice of Singapore is a strategic nod towards India's Act East policy, emphasising the importance of South East Asia in the nation's foreign policy initiatives. The event hopes to generate outcomes that deepen the Indian diaspora's relations with India and play a key role in promoting closer ties between



Above: Former President of India, Pranab Mukherjee conferring Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards at Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2017

Above right: The lighting of the lamp ceremony at PBD 2017



India and ASEAN. The Indian community is an important part of South East Asia's diversity and is also a strong bridge between India and ASEAN. The Singapore event will include 15 sessions (plenary and parallel), which will be addressed by government officials, business leaders and academicians on topics covering key sectors including infrastructure, finance, education, technology and media.

The plenary sessions will include:

- ASEAN-India economic partnership
- ASEAN-India in the digital world
- Northeast India as ASEAN's gateway to India
- ASEAN-India partnership in the new world order

The Indian government revised the PBD format in 2015 and re-energised its engagement with the Indian diaspora to enable sustained and more substantive interaction. Following the review, it was decided that the PBD Convention will be held once in two years in a city outside New Delhi. In the intervening year, smaller outcome-based PBD Conferences will be organised in New Delhi on issues of concern to the Indian diaspora. It was decided that Indian missions and consulates will also celebrate PBD every year. Through the first series of PBD Conferences, which began in February 2016, the government is proactively engaging with Indians overseas in an issue-based dialogue. The events provide a platform to the overseas Indian community to interact with the government and communities in India for mutually beneficial activities. Individuals of exceptional merit are also honoured with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award, to appreciate their role in India's growth. The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India also organises Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (RPBD) in other countries, to enable the participation of Indians overseas who are unable to attend PBD in India. In the past, RPBDs have been held in Singapore, New York, the Hague, Durban, Toronto, Mauritius, Sydney and Los Angeles.



A RENEWED FRIENDSHIP

Marking 70 years of diplomatic ties between India and Italy, Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni made his maiden state visit to India on October 30, 2017, becoming the first Italian Prime Minister to do so in a decade

Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni along with his wife, Emanuela Mauro Gentiloni paid a state visit to India on October 30, 2017. This marked the first visit by an Italian Prime Minister to India in a decade, the last one having taken place in February 2007. Aimed at enhancing political and economic ties between the two nations, the visit came as a welcome step forward in

re-establishing a cordial bilateral relationship between them.

The Italian Prime Minister met Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi and the two leaders discussed several issues of mutual importance. During the course of their discussions, emphasis was laid on renewing and revitalising Indo-Italian cooperation across several sectors, and moving ahead after

having overcome a rough phase in the recent past. In his remarks after the meeting, PM Modi stated that both leaders had agreed to “take bilateral relations to new heights”. PM Gentiloni, on his part, stated in his remarks that “relaunching relations without any obstacles” created several new avenues for greater cooperation between India and Italy, in a vast array of areas including renewable energy development and agriculture.

In a joint statement released at the end of the Italian Prime Minister’s state visit, the two heads of state highlighted the importance of frequent high-level contact and exchange between the two nations to enhance bilateral cooperation and mutual understanding. It stated that the two leaders agreed on “the need for a closer partnership between India and Italy based on shared principles and values of democracy, freedom, rule of law

and respect for human rights and territorial integrity of States.” The leaders also upheld their shared commitment towards supporting a “rules-based international system” that abides by international norms and encourages sustainable growth and development.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

As a part of their discussions, the two Prime Ministers appreciated the economic ties between India and Italy and agreed to work in a mutually-beneficial manner towards enhancing the same. While PM Modi expressed his desire for Italy to explore business opportunities in India, in the fields of food processing, infrastructure, renewable energy and high-tech manufacturing, PM Gentiloni called upon India to consider business opportunities in his nation, in sectors such as automotive, textile, leather, machinery

Below (left to right): Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni meets Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj. PM Gentiloni with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Facing page: PM Modi greets PM Gentiloni and his wife, Emanuela Mauro Gentiloni





PM Modi and PM Gentiloni resolved to fight against violent extremism and terrorism in every manifestation

COUNTERING TERRORISM

Resolving to fight against violent extremism and terrorism in their every manifestation, the two leaders strongly condemned the recent terror attacks in Europe, India and elsewhere, highlighting the need for immediate action and concerted efforts by the global community to address the menace.

The joint statement says that PM Modi and PM Gentiloni “expressed satisfaction on the first India-Italy Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism held in Rome on 10 November, 2016 and agreed to further strengthen the consultation mechanism through regular exchange of assessments and information, training and capacity building programme etc...in the sphere of counter terrorism.”

and chemicals. Italy is India’s fifth largest trading partner in the European Union, with bilateral trade at \$8.79 billion in 2016-17. India’s exports to Italy stand at \$4.90 billion, and imports at \$3.89 billion, resulting in a trade balance of \$1 billion in India’s favour. Within the first four months of fiscal year 2017-18, bilateral trade between India and Italy had managed to reach \$3.22 billion.



Left: PM Gentiloni meets Indian Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu

Facing page (top to bottom): PM Gentiloni inspects the Guard of Honour during his ceremonial reception in New Delhi. PM Gentiloni meets Indian President Ram Nath Kovind

CLIMATE AND ENERGY

The two heads of state reaffirmed their commitment towards abiding by the Paris Agreement and being guided by its principle of “equity and common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities in the light of different national circumstances.” They also welcomed the MoU between the Ministry for the Environment of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of the Republic of India, acknowledging the progress both nations have made towards replacing traditional sources of energy with renewable ones, as effective means to combat climate change.

The two heads of state reaffirmed their commitment towards abiding by the Paris Agreement and being guided by its principles

CULTURAL CONTACT

Emphasising a people-to-people connect, PM Gentiloni highlighted the presence of Indian diaspora in Italy and appreciated their contribution to the Italian economy. PM Modi, on his part, appreciated the efforts of the Italian government to enable Indians settled in Italy to successfully integrate with Italian society. The two leaders also highlighted the importance of “valuing the archaeological and cultural heritage” and welcomed the exchange of effective practices and scientific techniques for the conservation of the same.

PM Gentiloni, congratulating PM Modi for the success of the International Day of Yoga 2017, spoke about possibilities of Italy incorporating yoga in the physical education curriculum of schools.

Marking 70 years of diplomatic ties between Italy and India, this state visit has served as the harbinger of stronger bilateral relations between the two nations.

TRYSTS WITH ROYALTY

November 2017 saw India playing gracious host to three royal visits: the king, queen and prince of Bhutan, the prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall, and the king and queen of Belgium

A warm and cordial atmosphere pervaded the three royal state visits India was witness to in 2017. King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck and their son, Prince Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck arrived to a warm reception at the airport and, during the course of their stay, expressed tremendous satisfaction at the excellent state of bilateral relations between the two neighbouring nations. King Wangchuk went on to reaffirm Bhutan's commitment towards further deepening these exemplary relations across various

sectors of cooperation. King Philippe and Queen Mathilde of Belgium expressed similar sentiments as they toured India for seven days, exploring its vast and varied landscape, and held discussions with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on wide-ranging bilateral and multilateral subjects such as the fight against terrorism, trade and investment, India-EU relations, the fight against climate change and more. Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla, when they arrived, were hosted by PM Modi for a special dinner in their honour, and discussed with him issues such as climate change, sustainable development and economic cooperation.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi with King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck of Bhutan

THE KING AND QUEEN OF BHUTAN

The king of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck along with his wife, the queen, Jetsun Pema Wangchuck and their son, Prince Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck, paid a four-day visit to India from October 31 to November 3, 2017. Indian President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted a dinner in their honour, while External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and several senior ministers called on King Wangchuck during the royal family's stay.

Through the course of their interactions, the leaders exchanged views on bilateral cooperation and several other issues of mutual interest. Both sides agreed to celebrate the golden jubilee of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries in the year 2018. The President of India extended an invitation to the king and queen of Bhutan to pay a state visit to India during the golden jubilee year too. King Wangchuck has graciously accepted the invitation.

THE PRINCE OF WALES

Charles Philip Arthur George, the Prince of Wales, along with his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall, was in India for a two-day visit from November 8 to 10, 2017, as part of their four-nation tour to Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and India. This was the prince's ninth visit to the country since 1975.

Aimed at enhancing and strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two nations, the state visit saw Prince Charles meeting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss a vast array of issues, including the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to be held in April 2018, in the UK. The two sides have agreed to consider the potential of India playing a larger role in the Commonwealth.

Prince Charles, while addressing guests at the British High Commission during the

course of the visit, hailed the bonds between Britain and India and urged the populace to respect and cherish the "sheer diversity" of the Commonwealth. "This diversity is to be celebrated and cherished not only because it is so central to our identities and our sense of belonging, but also, if I may say so, because it offers us the best hope of addressing the most pressing challenges of our time," he affirmed.

Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla were in New Delhi for the only night they spent in India this time, and made it a point to visit India Gate, observing a moment of silence at the Delhi Memorial. They also attended events involving schoolchildren, interacted with business leaders as well as a company of women taxi drivers, and attended a special dinner hosted by Prime Minister Modi in their honour.



PM Modi with Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla



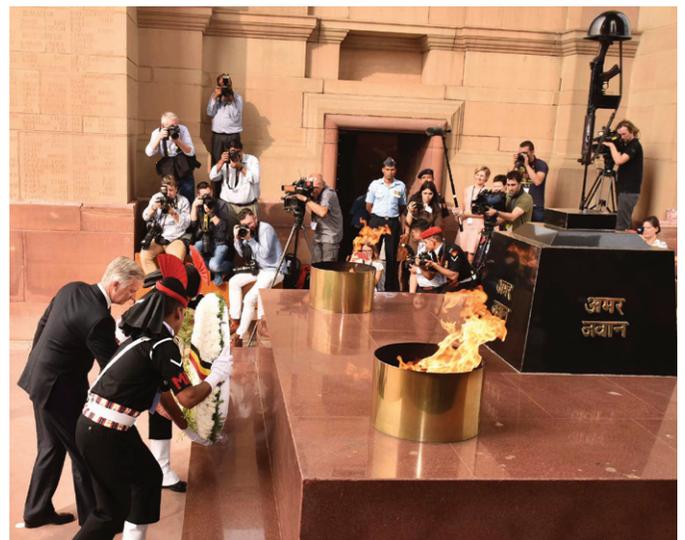
Left: King Philippe and Queen Mathilde of Belgium during their ceremonial reception in New Delhi

Below: King Philippe laying a wreath at the Amar Jawan Jyoti, India Gate, New Delhi

THE KING AND QUEEN OF BELGIUM

King Philippe and Queen Mathilde of Belgium, on the invitation of the President of India Ram Nath Kovind, made a seven-day state visit to India from November 5 to 11, 2017. They were accompanied by six ministers and a business delegation comprising CEOs of approximately 90 Belgian companies, 13 heads of academic institutions and a 30-member media delegation. Given that 2017 marks 70 years of diplomatic ties between the two nations, the visit was aimed at further enhancing political and economic cooperation between India and Belgium.

The royal couple's tour of India began with a visit to Agra, and an official forecourt ceremony was organised in honour of the king at Rashtrapati Bhawan on November 7. Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu called on the king and queen during their stay in the capital, and a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra



Modi at Hyderabad House was organised, along with a banquet in their honour, hosted by President Ram Nath Kovind. During their interaction with PM Modi, King Philippe commended the Indian government's flagship initiatives and expressed the interest of Belgian companies to participate in programmes such as Make in India and Clean India.



COMMITTED TO SUPPORT

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi further cemented the enduring bilateral cooperation between the two nations during the former's day-long working visit to India on October 24, 2017

BY LT GEN KAMAL DAVAR

Afghanistan has effectively maintained close and cordial bilateral links with India through the ages. Over the past few decades, the nation has been beset with a phase of difficulties at several levels and, as a friend to Afghanistan, India has been committed to providing assistance

in every way possible. After the launch of 'Operation Enduring Freedom' by the US and the International Security Forces (ISAF) to rid Afghanistan of terrorists, India has scrupulously maintained a policy of genuine non-interference towards the nation. That these friendly ties between the two nations have withstood the roller-coaster geopolitics

of the region portends encouraging signs for mutual benefit and peace in the region. President Ghani has paid four visits to India in the last three years, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he have had 12 personal interactions on the sidelines of various international gatherings, and PM Modi has visited Afghanistan twice so far. This clearly displays the significance both nations attach to the enduring bilateral cooperation between them.

DEVELOPING STRATEGY

To further strengthen India-Afghanistan relations, Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani paid a day-long visit to New Delhi in October 2017. During the working visit, detailed discussions were held between President Ghani and PM Modi in a one-on-one format. The two leaders reaffirmed

During the state visit, detailed discussions were held between President Ghani and PM Modi in a one-on-one format

their commitment to a strategic partnership between the two nations, and reviewed the outcomes of recent high-level bilateral exchanges, including the visits of Afghan chief executive Dr Abdullah Abdullah and foreign minister Rabbani to India in September 2017, and that of the national security adviser of India to Afghanistan in October 2017.

The two heads of state agreed that the New Development Partnership, launched at the Strategic Partnership Council meeting in September 2017, is a significant step towards further enhancing cooperation between



Left: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani meets Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj

Facing page: President Ghani with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Both leaders emphasised that the renunciation of violence and terror are essential to facilitate progress and enduring peace

India and Afghanistan in the development sector. Several India-assisted projects across varied fields, including agriculture, health, education, drinking water, renewable energy, infrastructure, skill-development and capacity-building, are likely to contribute to economic development and effective governance in Afghanistan.

STAND AGAINST TERRORISM

Giving a speech in New Delhi, President Ghani advised India's western neighbour, in no uncertain terms, to end its support for terrorist groups such as the Taliban, and make a choice between abandoning state-

sponsorship of terrorist activities or bearing the consequences of the extremist violence. The Afghan president also addressed the issue of connectivity, declining to be a part of the CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) if Pakistan refused to permit connectivity between India and Afghanistan.

Addressing the subject of peace and political reconciliation in Afghanistan, President Ghani added, "Our approach to internal peace is to own it through Afghan government-led processes." The Indian leadership extended full support to the statement and its implications, reaffirming its alignment with a negotiated political reconciliation in the country that is Afghan-owned, Afghan-controlled and Afghan-led. Both leaders emphasised that the closure of state-sponsored safe havens as well as the renunciation of violence and terror in general, are essential to facilitate any significant progress and enduring peace.



Left and facing page: Afghan President Ghani arrives in New Delhi on his one-day working visit to India



ON CONNECTIVITY

Discussing issues of connectivity, PM Modi and President Ghani acknowledged the establishment of an air freight corridor between the two nations as an important means of providing Afghan farmers with convenient and direct access to the Indian market. A statement released by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India states that efforts for the early operationalisation of the Chahbahar Port, including shipments of wheat to Afghanistan through the same, were appreciated as an important step towards shaping “new trade and transit opportunities” for Afghanistan. The Indian government “reiterated the readiness of its Integrated Check Post at Attari for receiving Afghan trucks carrying goods to and from India.”

CONTINUED COOPERATION

PM Modi had, in September, stated that India considers its ties with Afghanistan of the highest priority and promised continuing support to its government as well as its people, including “through humanitarian and development assistance”, a PMO release had stated. During the course of President Ghani’s working visit, PM Modi reiterated his commitment to the earlier statement and both leaders agreed to “work closely with the regional and international partners; and consult, coordinate and cooperate in various international fora, with the view to further the objective of seeing Afghanistan emerge as a stable, peaceful, united, progressive, prosperous and pluralistic nation,” the MEA statement said.





AROUND THE WORLD IN 165 DAYS

The Navika Sagar Parikrama is the first-ever attempt
by a six-member all-woman Indian Navy crew to
circumnavigate the globe

BY N B RAO

“**S**o here we are again sailing the second leg of our journey another leap of faith another step into the unknown and wilderness...back to where we belong...”

So blogged Aishwarya Boddapati, a lieutenant in the Indian Navy, and part of the Navika Sagar Parikrama, the first-ever attempt by an all-woman Indian crew to circumnavigate the globe. Nirmala Sitharaman, the Minister of Defence, Government of India, flagged off *INSV* (Indian Navy Sailing Vessel) *Tarini* from Goa on September 10, 2017.

The naval officer wrote a moving account of the crew's adventure in her blog on November 10, a fortnight before *INSV Tarini* was to berth at Lyttelton Port near Christchurch in New Zealand. “We are always asked this question: how does it feel to be at sea for so long?” she wrote. “Believe me...nothing brings more calm and peace to me than seeing water all around...seeing the sun rise and set into the horizon between the sky and sea... frankly, we have grown our sea legs to become amphibians over the past two years...and we like

The *INSV Tarini*

FACT FILE

This is the first ever Indian circumnavigation of the globe by an all-woman crew.

The expedition aims at harnessing energy to optimise the livelihood of the women on-board.

The voyage also aims to showcase the 'Make in India' initiative by sailing on-board the indigenously built *INSV Tarini*.

Interaction with local PIOs: Since the expedition aims to promote ocean sailing and the spirit of adventure, the crew interacts extensively with local PIOs at the various port halts.

Follow updates on the expedition at: parikrama123.blogspot.in



going back to the sea - in fact, we surrender ourselves to the sea with *Tarini* as our saviour.”

“Globally, our women are going to stand out for something which most navies of the world would not have even thought of,” Seetharaman remarked after flagging off the vessel. “I appreciate the Indian Navy and the mentors for inspiring, motivating and training these brave and courageous women.”

The journey comprises five legs with stopovers at four ports – Fremantle, Australia; Lyttelton, New Zealand; Port Stanley, the Falklands; and Cape Town, South Africa. The crew is expected to return to Goa in April 2018, approximately 165 days after they set off from

the same port. The *INSV Tarini* is skippered by Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi, and the crew comprises Lieutenant Commanders Pratibha Jamwal and P Swathi, and Lieutenants S Vijaya Devi, B Aishwarya and Payal Gupta.

Besides undertaking the adventurous journey, the crew has also been collating and updating meteorological, ocean and wave data for accurate weather forecast by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

They have also been monitoring marine pollution on the high seas and interacting with locals during port halts to promote ocean sailing.

According to government sources, the Navika Sagar Parikrama is in consonance with the national policy to empower women to attain their full potential. It also aims to showcase 'nari shakti' (woman power) on the world platform and help revolutionise societal attitudes towards women in India.

The *INSV Tarini* is the Indian Navy's second

Navika Sagar Parikrama is in consonance with the national policy to empower women to attain their full potential



Clockwise from top left: Skipped by Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi, Team Tarini comprises Lieutenant Commanders Pratibha Jamwal and P Swathi, and Lieutenants S Vijaya Devi, B Aishwarya and Payal Gupta.

Team Tarini at Lyttelton, New Zealand

Facing page: Defence Minister Nirmala Setharaman flags off Navika Sagar Parikrama

ocean-going sailboat and was built at Divar in Goa. The vessel is almost identical to its illustrious predecessor, the iconic *Mhadei*, built more than eight years ago. The latter's pathbreaking voyages have included the first Indian solo circumnavigation undertaken by Captain Dilip Donde (retd) in 2009 and the first solo, non-stop and unassisted circumnavigation by Cdr Abhilash Tomy in 2013. The indigenously-built, 56-foot *INSV Tarini* was inducted by the Indian Navy in early 2017 and was showcased as part of the Make in India initiative. The Indian Navy

operates four sailing vessels capable of open ocean deployments. They include *Tarangini*, *Sudarshini*, *Mhadei* and *Tarini*, all four of which were built at shipyards in Goa. The Navy is also attempting to revitalise open ocean sailing and will also be inducting four 40-foot, state-of-the-art open ocean racing sail boats.

Lt Aishwarya Boddapati summed it up beautifully in her blog: "So here we go ready on our toes for any battle the ocean sends our way...we are all the time on vigil...with low-lying dark clouds covering the sky like a blanket at a distance, saying watch out!"



THE NIKE FROM THE NORTHEAST

Letting the force of her will guide her along the road to glorious victory, Indian boxer MC Mary Kom has made history again by winning her fifth gold medal at the Asian Confederation Women's Boxing Championships 2017

BY PRIYANSH

Few sportspersons in the world have achieved what Indian boxer MC Mary Kom has achieved, and continues to achieve, defying all odds. It takes tremendous mental and physical strength to sustain such an outstanding performance record, and Kom continues to make history. In November 2017, the boxer won

an unprecedented fifth gold medal at the Asian Confederation Women's Boxing Championships. Her next target is the gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia, and then at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

A five-time world champion, Kom is the only woman boxer in the world to have earned a medal in all six world championships and the only



Left: MC Mary Kom punches Pamela Paola Benavidez of Argentina at the Olympic boxing test event in London, 2011

Facing page: Kom during a practice session



Congratulations
Mary Kom for
clinching the gold
at the ASBC Asian
Confederation
Women's Boxing
Championships.
India is
elated at your
accomplishment

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

”



A boxer has to be
smart. A boxer has
to be strong. But
the main thing
is will power

MC Mary Kom
Indian boxer

”

Indian female boxer to have won an Olympics medal. It is her determination to keep outdoing herself that sets her apart. “A boxer has to be smart. A boxer has to be strong. But the main thing is will power,” she says in an interview to *1843* magazine. With the power of her will as strong and unshakeable as ever, she defeated North Korea’s Kim Hyang Mi 5-0 in the recently concluded 48 kg Asian Confederation Women’s Boxing Championships held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated her on behalf of the nation, saying: “Congratulations Mary Kom for clinching the gold at the ASBC Asian Confederation Women’s Boxing Championships. India is elated at your accomplishment.”

The boxer dedicated her victory to those who have stood by her even when many were doubting her credentials and capabilities. She said, “As long as I am training hard and my body is fit, I can beat anyone. Bring it on.” Her family has continued to support her through the years.

“When I first started boxing, it was very difficult and I had to struggle quite a bit. For

Facing page: Mary Kom with Zhaina Shekerbekova of Kazakhstan, Le Thi Bang of Vietnam and Nandintsetget Myagmardulam of Mongolia during the medal ceremony at the 2014 Asian Games in Incheon, South Korea

Below: Kom receiving the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna from former President of India, Pratibha Patil in 2009





Besides her medals, Kom has won several other honours: she is a Padma Bhushan awardee and has also received the Arjuna Award

five years, I fought without a good diet in place – no eggs, no supplements and no breakfast. I would just have lunch and dinner, which would comprise plain rice and vegetables,” she shares. Despite the hardships, the boxer was always mindful of the opportunity she had received. And she was not going to waste it. “Don’t worry. I will never trouble you. I will work hard. When other girls are spending 10 rupees, I will spend one rupee,” she would tell her father, Tonpa Kom. It was this dedication that drove her to glory. All naysayers were won over by her grit, hard work and skill. Kom even convinced her father that

being a boxer was a goal worth pursuing for women. She has familial sporting links too - her father was a wrestler in his younger days, while her husband, Onler, was a footballer.

In addition to her medals, the spirited boxer has won several other honours too. She is a Padma Bhushan awardee and has also been a recipient of the Arjuna Award. She was also awarded the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna in 2009.

Today, Kom wants her legacy to reap rich rewards for Indian boxers. At the National Games Village in Langol, Manipur, the Mary Kom Regional Boxing Foundation runs an academy with the support of the Sports Authority of India (SAI). The boxer’s eponymous foundation was established by her, along with her husband, to promote boxing in the Northeast and support underprivileged pugilists. The young players who come to the academy do not have to look farther for inspiration than the woman who put India on the world boxing map – MC Mary Kom!

THE HERO REMADE DEVIDAS

As Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's iconic novella turned 100, we look at how its reiterations reflect the journey of a changing India

BY NANDINI D TRIPATHY



A poster of
PC Barua's
Devdas (1935)

When Bengali novelist Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay introduced his readers to Devdas in 1917, he may not have foreseen what lay ahead for his tragic hero, beyond the pages of the novella wherefore he had emerged into the collective imagination. Turning a century old in 2017, the story has witnessed a number of iterations through the years, and each new rendition has been reflective of a changing India. Its adaptation into over 17 cinematic versions stands fitting testimony to its enduring appeal within popular culture, and the most significant among them paint the portrait of an evolving nation, accepting and rejecting notions of masculinity, femininity and heroism while being driven along the winds of social change.

Chattopadhyay's novella introduces Devdas to the reader as 'Devdas of the Mukherjee household,' and the value-system the latter represents, determines the hero's trajectory. He remains, throughout the narrative, 'of

the Mukherjee household' that rejects inter-caste and inter-class alliances, unable to forge a legitimate bond with Paro or Chandramukhi, both of whom are separated from him by social divides. As he enters adulthood, the conflict between his social conditioning and his desire for Paro paves the way for his tragic end. In a famous episode, Paro visits Devdas in the dead of night and asks him to marry her. He responds with apprehension: 'Shame on you. How will you face everyone tomorrow?' A few hours later, he offers to accompany her back home in one of the only two instances in the narrative that see him attempting to challenge the norms of 'honour' he is bound by. 'If someone sees us and there's a scandal, there may be a way out for us just yet,' he says, and filmmaker Bimal Roy's cinematic adaptation of the story in 1955 echoes verbatim. The movie depicts, in a series of consecutive shots, the negative responses of family members as Devdas, played by Dilip Kumar, stands before them in silence. The novella, on the other hand, has him listening to his father's refusal 'sitting there, silent and

The tragic strain of Roy's 1955 narrative has often led to a reading of Devdas as the Indian modernist hero, his tragedy rooted in his inability to reconcile tradition and modernity

The Devdas of the 21st century is both similar to, and different from, his predecessors

sheepish.’ The impulse to challenge is entirely undermined in the novella, in keeping with the moral fabric of its times. Devdas then escapes to erstwhile Calcutta, leaving Paro behind, and meets Chandramukhi.

The tragic strain of Roy’s 1955 narrative has often led to a reading of Devdas as the Indian modernist hero, his tragedy rooted in his inability to reconcile tradition and modernity. This Devdas, too, is caught between the value-system ‘of the Mukherjee household’ and his urge to defy it, abetted by his exposure to a modern education and cityscape. Author Ranjani Mazumdar, in her book *Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City*, argues in the particular context of Indian cinema in the 1950s, that ‘the opposition between the city and the countryside [was] the most common form of dislocation’ India’s self-image as a nation faced at the time, manifesting in ‘a sense of trauma that [prevented] the characters from engaging with the present.’ Film scholar Pooja Rangan echoes this argument in her reading of Devdas’s alcoholism as ‘a form of anaesthesia against perception of the ‘modern’ real, whether it be the jostling anarchy of the city or the stagnant conventions of the village.’

Over the next few decades, the gentle hero of the 1950s that Dilip Kumar’s Devdas had immortalised, gave way to the ‘brawny’ romantic hero a la Shammi Kapoor, passed through Amitabh Bachchan’s ‘angry young man’ and the Khan triumvirate (Aamir, Shah Rukh and Salman), to come to a point where the hero came in all shapes and sizes, could be man or woman, and no one configuration of him – or her – was privileged over others. It is within this context that Anurag Kashyap’s



Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay’s novella, *Devdas*, was first published in 1917. Since then, it has been re-presented as well as reinterpreted by a series of filmmakers, including PC Barua (*Devdas*, 1935), Bimal Roy (*Devdas*, 1955), Sanjay Leela Bhansali (*Devdas*, 2002) and Anurag Kashyap (*Dev D*, 2009)



rendition of Devdas, *Dev D* (2009) lies. It relocates the 20th-century narrative in the 21st century urban cityscape, and subjects it to a drastic reinterpretation. Kashyap's Devdas is a spoilt, rich, aimless young man who inhabits an India very different from that of his predecessors. The erosion of patriarchy, a revision of gender roles and an altered outlook towards the world is evident, departing significantly from the value-system 'of the Mukherjee household'. This Dev, too, is caught between contradictory impulses. More than being bound by social mores, however, his gaze is turned inward, foregrounding a consideration of the meaning of an individual's life within a globalised world.

Kashyap's Paro and Chandramukhi also reflect a changed delineation of womanhood. Unlike her predecessors, Paro doesn't mourn the loss of her love, choosing to settle happily into a new family instead. There is a complete dislocation of the older hero archetype and his 'masculine' identity. Paro and Chanda, in fact, display attributes that were relegated to the masculine space in the earlier versions: they are as capable of aggression and rage as Dev is, are as vulnerable, and are more self-restrained and significantly more reasonable than him, despite his international education.

The Devdas of the 21st century is both similar to, and different from, his predecessors: he is identified with inaction and yet he isn't the morally superior tragic hero, navigating a new social framework. It is finally a close brush with death, and a look at his own face in that of a stranger, which pushes him to alter his path. His predecessors are characterised by a sense of fatalism, of succumbing to forces beyond their control (the novella says of men like Devdas that 'if luck doesn't favour them, they can be found in the deepest dregs of misery... [unable to] rise above their circumstances...') but *Dev D's* Dev is ultimately optimistic in his thoroughly non-tragic ending. This Devdas lives to see another day.



FACES OF THE RANN

Rann Utsav, an annual cultural festival held in Kutch, Gujarat, animates the white sands of the Rann of Kutch every winter with vibrance and festive energy. This year, we bring you glimpses of the people, culture and spirit of the region, which abounds in rich aesthetic traditions such as embroidery and mud work, and salutes the bounty of nature by providing a home to migratory birds and other wildlife



Right: A woman in the village of Hodka in Kutch

Facing page: 60-year-old Kamshi Rabari lives in a village near Bhuj in Kutch



Kutch is renowned the world over for its intricate mirrored embroideries, traditionally stitched by women



Left: Kutch embroidery is an evolving expression of the craft and textile traditions of the Rabaris, the most nomadic of Gujarat's tribes, whose members constantly migrate in search for better grazing ground for their camels and sheep. The patterns are usually built around geometric shapes

Below: The tattooed hands of a woman belonging to the Rabari tribe. The Little Rann of Kutch is home to many Rabari groups, as well as members of the Banjara tribe







Above: The colourful roof of a hut in the Rann of Kutch. While the landscape remains pristine white through the year, the homes and attire of those who live on the Rann punctuate it with many hues

Facing page: Women engaged in mud work in a village in Kutch. Clay craft is an important part of Gujarat's ancient traditions and exquisite wall pieces with small mirrors are made in Kutch and Kheda districts





Above: Border Security Force (BSF) *jawans* astride vibrantly decorated camels during Rann Utsav

Facing page: A flock of American Flamingos foraging for food in the Little Rann of Kutch. The Rann is the only nesting ground for large flamingos in India





Rann Utsav combines centuries old traditions with joyous celebration through colourful fairs, camel safaris, folk dancing and more. This edition began in November 2017 and is on till March 4, 2018. For more information, visit: www.gujarattourism.com/fairs-festivals/cultural-festivals/rann-utsav

Settlements in the village of Hodka in Kutch. The traditional village dwellings are known as *bhungas*. During Rann Utsav, special tents are arranged as dwellings for tourists in Dhordo, and can be booked at www.rannutsav.com/package-tour.php





EXPLORING INDIA'S HEART

From the historic Bhimbetka rock shelters to the breathtaking Dhuandhar waterfall - a trip to Madhya Pradesh is an ideal winter escapade for those seeking scenic beauty, lip-smacking food, a tryst with spirituality and more!

BY SHASHI PRIYA

As winter descends on the hinterland, bright, sunny mornings make it clear that the season must not be wasted in idle slumber. Perhaps it's time to look beyond the usual suspects of the season and turn your gaze towards the fascinating topographies of Madhya Pradesh, which have something for every kind of traveller - the history buff, the naturalist, the spiritual seeker, the leisure lover... whatever your thirst, find something to satiate it in this magnificent centrepiece of India.

PAST PERFECT

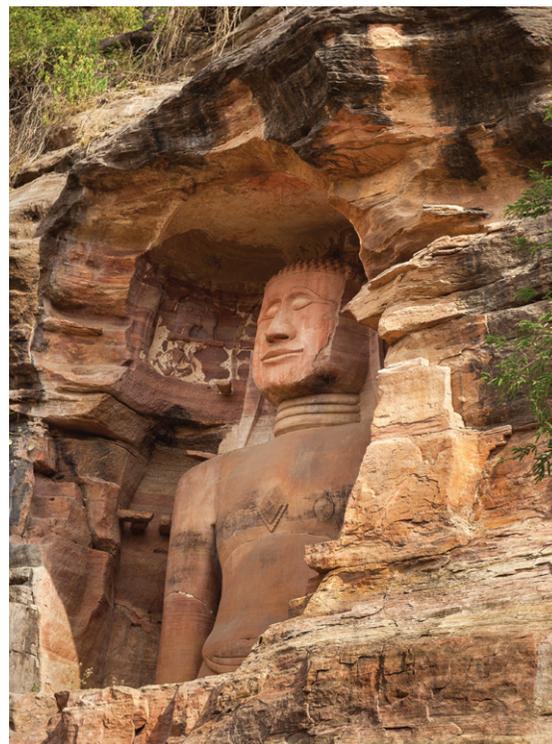
Madhya Pradesh has the ability to take you back in time - all the way back to the Palaeolithic period! A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the rock shelters of Bhimbetka are an open forest gallery of rock art that

The majestic
Gwalior Fort



is approximately 30,000 years old! The paintings found here have a striking resemblance to the ones discovered in Kakadu National Park in Australia, the cave paintings of Bushmen in the Kalahari Desert and Upper Palaeolithic Lascaux cave paintings in France. Follow this up with a walk around Pachmarhi's natural caves and Vidisha's Udaygiri caves, the latter famous for their Gupta-era inscriptions.

And then there is Khajuraho, with its ancient temples depicting some of the finest art in the world, best experienced in the crimson and golden hues of sunrise and sunset. The temples abound in exquisite sculptures and are a wordless yet powerful depiction of themes such as meditation, spirituality, kinship, wrestling,



Facing page (top to bottom): The Bhimbetka rock shelters. The Stupas of Sanchi; **Above (left to right):** A Gond house in Bhopal. Sculptures of Jain *tirthankaras*, or saviours, near Gwalior Fort

royalty and most significantly, erotic art.

Embrace renunciation next, at the pristine and tranquil Stupas of Sanchi. If you're in Bhopal, the state capital, make sure you visit Bhojpur nearby, for its unfinished masterpieces. The incomplete Bhojeshwar temple houses one of the largest *Shivlings* (18 feet in height and 7.5 feet in circumference) carved out of a single stone! The state's architectural wonders also include the historic cities of Gwalior and Orchha, where every nook bristles with medieval palaces, forts and temples.

NATURE'S BOUNTY

Rewa in Madhya Pradesh was once home to Mohan, the world-renowned white tiger. Today, Kanha, Pench and Bandhavgarh - all just a few hours from each other by road - are among India's finest tiger reserves and abound in diverse flora and fauna. Full of sal and bamboo trees, rare species of leopard, sloth bears, deer, reptiles and birds, the state is home to the original Kipling country so fondly written

about in *The Jungle Book*. Winter being safari season, this trio is highly sought-after by naturalists and wildlife enthusiasts. You can begin with Bandhavgarh, one of India's most picturesque national parks, dating back 2,000 years. It is a place of great mythological and legendary significance, and is home to several man-made caves and rock paintings. Head next to Kanha, where tigers aren't the only sought-after sighting - the forest is also home to the barasingha, a black and golden deer with velvet antlers. In Pench, astrophotography is a major pull for those seeking the stars that city skies can often hide. The biosphere also offers opportunities to mingle with the Gond tribe

Bandhavgarh is one of India's most picturesque national parks and is a place of great mythological and legendary significance

FOUR-DAY ITINERARY: GWALIOR TO BANDHAVGARH

DAY 1

Arrive in the historic city of Gwalior. Rest for a few hours and head out for a heritage walk through the hilltop Gwalior Fort, Jai Vilas Palace and Sarod Ghar, the musical museum set up in the honour of Ustad Hafiz Khan. Between December and January, Gwalior also hosts the Tansen Music Festival.

DAY 2

Shivpuri, the serene erstwhile summer capital of the royal family of Scindia from Gwalior, is most well-known for its *chhatris* (royal cenotaphs). Reach Orchha by dusk to spend the evening by the banks of River Betwa. Orchha also offers activities such as river rafting, kayaking, cycling and forest stays.

DAY 3

Leave early for Khajuraho to catch sunrise by the temples. For extensive information about their architecture, history and sculptures, rent an audio guide from the tourism kiosk beside the ticket counter.

DAY 4

Spend the day by the gushing white waters of Dhuandhar at Bhedaghat. In the evening, head towards Bandhavgarh for a tryst with the state's wildlife.

For more information visit: mptourism.com



Above: A tiger at Kanha National Park

Facing page (left to right): *Sabudana* khichri. Shivani Dhar, a handicrafts expert, shows the movements of a handloom at an emporium run by the government of Madhya Pradesh

and admire their traditional art. With walls and doors as their canvas, Gond artists use yellow and black clay to create signature patterns. Once you've had your fill of the forest and tribal culture, get drenched and wash off all fatigue at the natural water wonders Madhya Pradesh boasts. Merely 25 km from the city of Jabalpur lies a majestic horseshoe-shaped cascade that is often termed India's Niagara Falls. Dhuandhar, a word that literally refers to mist emanating from a stream, at Bhedaghat has been the preferred setting for many a dreamy Bollywood sequence!

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Beyond antiquity and adventure, the state has ample scope for deep soul-searching and spiritual rejuvenation. Amarkantak, the meeting



point of the Vindhya and Satpura mountain ranges located at an altitude of 1,000 m, is an ancient Hindu pilgrim centre popularly known as ‘*teerthra*’ (the king of pilgrimages). It is also the point of origin of three rivers - Narmada, Sone and Johila. For a truly minimalistic experience, stay in tents at the MPTDC resort and find time to catch up with yourself by the riverside, surrounded by thick sal forests. The banks of the Narmada also hold one of the 12 holy Jyotirlinga shrines in India - Omkareshwar. Both Amarkantak and Omkareshwar have a verdant, leafy feel. Along the banks of River Shipra lies Ujjain, one of Hinduism’s seven sacred cities. Dating back to 600 BC, it is also the site of the Kumbha Mela, the world’s largest religious gathering, that takes place once every 12 years.

LEISURE LOVE

That pursuits of the leisurely kind also require

For a foodie, a day spent in the city of Indore is best begun with a plateful of *poha-jalebi*

patience and devotion, is best explained in Maheshwar and Chanderi. The historic towns are today renowned for their handwoven sarees - Maheshwari and Chanderi, respectively. While shopping to your heart’s content is the best way to experience both towns - besides taking a tour of their architectural gems - watching the process of hand-weaving, dyeing and working the handloom are must-dos. Not too far away from here lies Indore, a city known for its smorgasbord of delicacies. For a foodie, a day spent here is best begun with a plateful of *poha-jalebi*, carried on with a vast variety of namkeens and *gajak*, finally culminating at the city’s famous food market, the Sarafa Bazaar. The list of delicacies is unending - *bhutte ka kees*, coconut-corn patties, fried *garadu*, *papad ki sabzi*, milk *shikanji*, *sabudana khichri*... there is no better way to conclude a Madhya Pradesh sojourn than with a hearty meal!

WHEN TRADITION REIGNS

SUPREME

Marking the season of classical music festivals in India, we give you a glimpse of four among them that are vibrant annual celebrations of the nation's musical heritage

BY SHILLPI A SINGH

Celebrating India's musical richness, classical music festivals are held across the country every year, some coinciding with festive occasions and others held entirely for the art's sake. From Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala to Jalandhar in Punjab and from Ahmedabad in Gujarat to Kolkata in Bengal, the nation's every region pays homage to the rich legacy of Indian classical music by bringing together renowned exponents as well as upcoming talent for stimulating evenings of unchained melody. Poignant, vibrant and traditional, these music festivals commemorate legendary musicians, salute ancient traditions and carry forward India's performing arts

legacy. Marking the season of music festivals in India, here's a rundown of four of the most popular among them.

DELHI CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL, NEW DELHI

The eighth edition of the Delhi Classical Music Festival, held at Kamani Auditorium in October, played host to some of India's most prolific vocalists and instrumentalists, as well as noteworthy young artistes. This year, the five-day event was jointly organised by the Sahitya Kala Parishad and the Department of Art, Culture and Languages, Government of Delhi. A moment of silence in remembrance of veteran classical vocalist Girija Devi was observed on the opening day, followed by





Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan is believed to be the oldest classical music festival in India

Padma Shri Parveen Sultana's musical homage to Appaji, as Girija Devi was fondly known, and a series of riveting vocal and instrumental performances by the likes of Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty, flautist Ajay Prasanna and santoor maestros Abhay Sopori and Bhajan Sopori.

THE SACRED, PUSHKAR, RAJASTHAN

The Sacred, Pushkar is held in December every year. Conceived by Teamwork Arts, the festival is a perfect getaway for music enthusiasts, promising a rejuvenating experience of vocal performances, yoga workshops, guided meditation, curated heritage walks in the city and much more. Every year, the festival brings

together some of the most powerful and diverse national and international performers from various musical traditions - sufi, gospel, a capella, folk and classical - to a city imbued with a deep sense of history and spirituality. In 2017, the festival featured the likes of Grammy award-winning percussionist Vikku Vinayakram and singers Rashmi Agarwal and Kavita Seth. Laboratorium Pieśni, a group of female a capella singers from Poland known for traditional and polyphonic singing, and Singhini Research Centre, a Nepalese organisation dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the music and dance of the Himalayas, were also among those who enthralled the audience. Performances are open to everyone, while prior registration is required for heritage walks.

HARIVALLABH SANGEET SAMMELAN

Believed to be the oldest classical music



festival in India, it was begun in 1875 by Baba Harivallabh, a saint and exponent of Hindustani classical music, in the memory of his guru, Swami Tulja Giri. The 142nd edition of the festival, held in Jalandhar, Punjab this year, was dedicated to the memories of Girija Devi and Kishori Amonkar. Every year, thousands of music lovers from across the country and beyond its borders converge at the festival to savour live performances by prominent artistes. To encourage and appreciate upcoming artistes, the Shree Baba Harivallabh Sangeet Pratiyogita is organised as part of the festival. The winners of the competition get a chance to perform on the main stage at the festival's next edition.

Clockwise from top:
A performance at Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan. A classical music concert at the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. Nagada workshop at The Sacred, Pushkar. A performance at Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan

Facing page (left to right): A baul performance at The Sacred, Pushkar. The festival also offers a heritage walk

SAPTAK MUSIC FESTIVAL, GUJARAT

Ahmedabad played host to the 38th Saptak Annual Music Festival 2018 from January 1 to 13, 2018. The first edition of the musical event was inaugurated by sitar maestro Pandit Ravi Shankar in 1980. Organised by a public charitable trust, the recently concluded edition featured more than 50 sessions with nearly 200 artistes and 40 students, covering the entire spectrum of Indian classical music from forms like *dhrupad* and *khayal* to *thumri*, representing various gharanas and styles.

THE DRAMA OF ENCHANTMENT

Among the numerous performing arts that are indigenous to Kerala is mohiniyattam, a classical dance form that brings together grace, drama and thematic depth

BY ANJANA RAJAN

Kerala, a state in the southwest corner of India, may appear small, its narrow shape hugging the coastline, but its appearance belies the teeming number of art forms it is home to. Among the numerous performing arts that are indigenous to Kerala is mohiniyattam, whose name is commonly translated as 'the dance of the enchantress'. The performer's graceful body movements, her cream and gold costume, her face made up to recall the celestial *apsaras*, her hair in a bun perched on one side of her head, ringed by white flowers, and the evocative music that accompanies all this, add up to a unique experience of visual and aural aesthetics.

The characteristic swaying movements of the torso in mohiniyattam conjure up images we associate with Kerala: the

tall coconut palms swaying beneath the cloud-laden sky, their slim trunks as supple as their feathery fronds; the rising and falling waves of the Arabian Sea; or the undulating hills, green with groves of fruit trees, tapioca or rubber. Whatever gracefully dipping and rising image one chooses to associate with Kerala, it matches the deep sideways bends and rotation of the dancer's waist, the elegance and symmetry of her postures, and the gentle arm and leg extensions that seem to flow from one position to the next.

But mohiniyattam is not merely about beauty and grace. Like the other classical dance forms of India, it is also a highly dramatic art of storytelling and a medium of exploring human emotions. The dancer uses the entire movement vocabulary, including facial expressions, a complex lexicon of hand gestures as

Facing page:
Mohiniyattam is traditionally danced by women





well as postures and footwork, to convey the lyrics of the songs that are sung by the accompanying vocalist.

The music of mohiniyattam adds immensely to its appeal and effect. A mohiniyattam orchestra typically consists of a singer and several melodic and percussion instruments. Rhythm accompaniment is provided by a *mridangam* or a *maddalam*. Cymbals or *talam* are also used to mark the rhythm. Melodic accompaniment comes from a flute or veena, or both. An important

accompanying instrument is the *edakka*, an hourglass-shaped drum played with a stick.

Kerala's classical music is known as *sopana sangeetam*. 'Sopanam' refers to the steps leading up to a shrine. The philosophy behind this devotional form of singing uses the metaphor of a devotee climbing the steps of the shrine to represent the rising ecstasy of an aspirant reaching, step by step, nearer to the divine goal. Mohiniyattam is often accompanied by *sopana sangeetam*, although dancers also perform to popular compositions of Carnatic music.

Like the other classical dance and theatre forms of India, mohiniyattam can trace its roots to the *Natya Shastra*, the great Sanskrit compendium of theatre arts dated between the 2nd century BC and the 2nd century AD.

KM Abu is the first male exponent to have received a doctorate in mohiniyattam



Above: Mohiniyattam dancers in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

Right (top to bottom): Mohiniyattam exponent Pallavi Krishnan. Mohiniyattam exponent Jayaprabha Menon performing with a kathakali dancer

DANCE



Left: Students practice at the Kerala Kalamandalam in Thrissur, Kerala

Below and facing page: Facial expressions are a significant aspect of mohiniyattam



In this treatise, when we read of the different movement styles to convey different moods, it is easy to recognise the style under which mohiniyattam would be classified — gentle, graceful and delicate, used to represent concepts of romance and beauty. In the first chapter of the *Natya Shastra*, Bharata, the legendary author of the text, states that he specifically asked for female dancers to execute this type of movement, as it could not be accomplished by male bodies. Today, this view might indeed be disputed, as training the body to be graceful is not dependent on the gender of the dancer. Thus, although for several centuries mohiniyattam was conventionally danced by women, today a few male dancers have challenged this stereotype. Notable among them is KM Abu — reportedly, he is not only the first male exponent of mohiniyattam to have received a doctorate in the discipline (in 2015), but is also the first Muslim scholar to have done so.

Mohiniyattam has a complicated history, and there is no clear consensus on its origins. While the earliest textual reference to this art



Today, mohiniyattam dancers select themes not just from the stories of gods and goddesses but also social dilemmas

by name is found in a 16th century work, it is agreed that mohiniyattam received a fillip during the 18th and 19th centuries. Maharaja Swati Tirunal (1813–1846), ruler of a princely state known as Travancore in British India, was a composer, poet and multifaceted artist in whose reign mohiniyattam flourished.

The poet Vallathol Narayana Menon, a nationalist and reformer who lived from 1878 to 1958, contributed greatly to the resuscitation and popularisation of several of Kerala's art forms including the dance drama

form of kathakali, but he also worked for the propagation of mohiniyattam and founded the Kerala Kalamandalam in Thrissur, Kerala, as a centre for the arts. One of Kalamandalam's senior alumni, Kalamandalam Kalyanikutty Amma, was a legendary name in the field of mohiniyattam revival, performance and teaching during the 20th century.

Today, mohiniyattam is not merely a 'dance of the enchantress'. Its practitioners select themes not just from the conventional stories of gods and goddesses but also social dilemmas like the ageing process, the rights of women and perennial questions of war and peace. Among the well-known dancers and teachers of mohiniyattam are Bharati Shivaji, Deepti Omchery Bhalla, Jayaprabha Menon, Kanak Rele, Pallavi Krishnan, Gopika Varma and Methil Devika to name but a handful.

STAGING CULTURE

The many forms of folk theatre across India together weave a fascinating tapestry of the nation's performance art heritage, with each region contributing a distinct flavour of its own

BY SHRABASTI MALLIK

It was a late December night many years ago, on my maiden trip to my native village in the interiors of Paschim Medinipur in Bengal, that I first watched a *jatra pala* performance. Back then, all I knew of it was that it was meant to be an open-air theatre performance with loud music and actors in garish costumes. As I sat perched on my father's shoulders, my city-bred mind could not comprehend what all the excitement was about. The din of the audience died down when a man dressed as a king stepped on to

the stage, and the rest of the show left an impression on me that has remained etched in my memories to this day.

Just as India's vast landscape is home to innumerable variations in food, language and cultural practices, the folk theatre forms across the country weave a vibrant tapestry of performance art traditions that vary from one region to another. While some enact episodes from mythological epics, others depict scenes from everyday village life. Here are four among them that you must experience.



JATRA

Jatra is a folk theatre form of Bengal that dates back to the 16th century. The plays, called *jatra pala*, use songs, instrumental music, dialogues and monologues to narrate stories drawn from Indian mythology, history or social issues of contemporary relevance. The Bengali word 'jatra' translates to journey, and while *jatra* was originally performed as a kind of musical theatre, the form has now evolved to include prose, improvised dialogues and comic interludes.



YAKSHAGANA

A popular dance-drama performed in Karnataka, *yakshagana* is also prevalent in Kasaragod, the northernmost district of Kerala. Performed over the years as a form of temple art in the latter, it is still an integral part of cultural programmes during temple festivals in the region.

Traditionally, *yakshagana* performers don elaborate facial make-up, large headgear and vibrant costumes and ornaments that are meant to create a larger-than-life aura around the characters. Like many other Indian folk theatre forms, the themes for the plots are drawn from mythological epics – specifically, the Ramayana and Mahabharata.

The orchestra accompanying a *yakshagana* performance includes instruments such as *chengila* (cymbals) and *elathalam* (small cymbals).

MORE FORMS



Nautanki

With its homeland in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, *nautanki* includes a complex music system with its own metres such as *doha* (couplet), *chaubola* (quatrain) and more. Its highlights are dramatic dialogues and energetic dance numbers.

Bhand pather

The traditional folk theatre form in Jammu and Kashmir, *bhand pather* comprises not only dance but also dialogues and plays to captivate the audience. The plots draw upon the regular lives and traditions of locals, and contemporary issues.

Karyala

Hailing from Himachal Pradesh, *karyala* is performed across the state with many local variants. A *karyala* performance is prefaced by drumming and often incorporates comedy and dance, with minimal props and costumes.

MORE FORMS



Koodiyattam

A folk theatre form of Kerala, *koodiyattam* is the only extant stylised Sanskrit theatre with a tradition of 2,000 years. One of India's oldest living theatrical traditions, it was recognised by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Ramman

Another member of UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the festival of *ramman* and its ritual theatre are held in the twin villages of Saloor-Dungra in Uttarakhand as a multiform cultural event.

Ramlila

Perhaps among the most well-known forms of folk theatre in India, *Ramlila* is performed in various states across the country. Traditionally, a Ramlila comprises the dramatised enactment of the Ramayana during the festival of *navratri*.

ANKIYA BHAONA

A traditional theatrical form of Assam, *ankiya bhaona* traces its roots to Vaishnavite monasteries or *satras* in the state and comprises a dance-drama involving songs and dialogues. Created by spiritual guru and social reformer Sankaradeva (1449-1568), it preserves remnants of the Sanskrit theatrical tradition. Resplendent costumes in multiple colours, the rendition of songs in deep and beautiful voices, uplifting rhythms and melodies using drums, cymbals and flutes, and the seamless flow of dramatic action are the distinct characteristics of this form of folk theatre.





TAMASHA

A folk art form of Maharashtra, *tamasha* is believed to be over 300 years old. This entertaining musical art form involves a lot of singing and dancing. An authentic, traditional *tamasha* performance is a combination of several traditional art forms such as *batavani* (questions and answers in a musical format), *gana havanana* (mythological stories recited through music) *vaga* (theatre) and *lavani* (dance). A *tamasha* troupe usually comprises around 100 members that include artistes, labourers, caterers, drivers and other staff, and travels for as long as seven to eight months in a year, organising performances across the state. A *tamasha* performance itself spans six to eight hours, including separate segments for different categories of spectators – women, the elderly, the youth, etc. – and the flavours and forms vary from region to region.



Left: Creations from designer Anupamaa Dayal's Northeast-inspired 'Fight & Feast' collection

Facing page: Creations by designer Yana Ngoba showcased at the North East India Fashion Week (NEIFW) 2017

SISTERHOOD BY DESIGN

Held aloft by a group of young, dynamic designers, the fashion industry of Northeast India is bringing to the fore the region's aesthetic and cultural identity

BY SHARMI ADHIKARY

In a vignette from her travels to Nagaland last year, fashion designer Anupamaa Dayal tells us how she matched steps with the chieftain of the Yimchungrü tribe to the beats of the log drum. As she narrates her experiences across the state, you begin to see how she translated the imagery captured in her mind onto her collection, 'Fight & Feast', showcased at the Amazon India Fashion Week 2017. The checked pattern of the chieftain's shawl had found itself reinterpreted on a six-yard saree, for instance. With its

cultural diversity, rich heritage and stunning landscape, Northeast India is a cauldron of inspiration for many designers based across the country, and also boasts rising stars of its own – a set of dynamic young designers who are taking the aesthetic vocabulary of their home states to the world.

The third edition of North East India Fashion Week (NEIFW), recently held in Itanagar, presented the best of the region through a display of collections by designers who call it their home. Vibrant colours and intricate





In Nagaland, artisans use colours like dark blue, red and yellow, and utilise natural dyes. The designs are linear and geometric

Anupamaa Dayal
Indian fashion designer



I work with village weavers and utilise their traditional weaves. With fine patterns and murals, their creativity and expertise are truly unmatched

Yana Ngoba
Indian fashion designer



techniques coming together to create sartorial brilliance, the showcase brought the Northeast to life on the ramp. Even a cursory glance at the resplendent creations revealed myriad narratives from the region - how each tribe of Nagaland, for instance, has a different textile, a distinctive colour palette, typical motifs and unique styles of draping. Informs Dayal, “The way of dyeing in Nagaland is a quintessential part of textile-making there. They use colours like dark blue, red and yellow, and stick to natural dyes. The designs are typically linear and fairly geometric. Draping may vary from just taking the fabric like a shawl to wearing it as a skirt or converting it into a full outfit.”

In Arunachal Pradesh, women practice traditional methods of weaving with great dexterity – a skill that is also a means of expressing and preserving their tribal identity. Yana Ngoba, a designer hailing from the state who showcased her creations at NEIFW, creates garments steeped in the traditions of her homeland, giving them a modern, trendy spin. Colourful and fun, her designs incorporate

Facing page (left and right): Creations by designer Yana Ngoba

Below (left to right): An ensemble for men by designer Jenjum Gadi. An ensemble for women by designer Dhiraj Deka





accessories and fabric sourced from different parts of the state. “I have always worked with village weavers and create garments using the traditional weaves they are skilled in. With fine patterns and murals, their creativity and expertise are truly unmatched.”

In a similar movement, designer Jenjum Gadi’s body of work blends traditional ideas with contemporary styles. His cuts are sharp and clean, and his creations find resonance with the urban youth. Born in the village of Tirbin in Arunachal Pradesh, Gadi draws upon tribal art, motifs, colours and personal experiences he has accumulated since he was a little boy, watching his mother weave her own attire using the traditional loom. “The craftsmanship and creativity required to create the whimsical needlepoint patterns, featuring flora and fauna, can never be replicated by machines,” he shares.

The state of Assam, famous for its rich silks, also finds itself represented in the work of many designers. While an

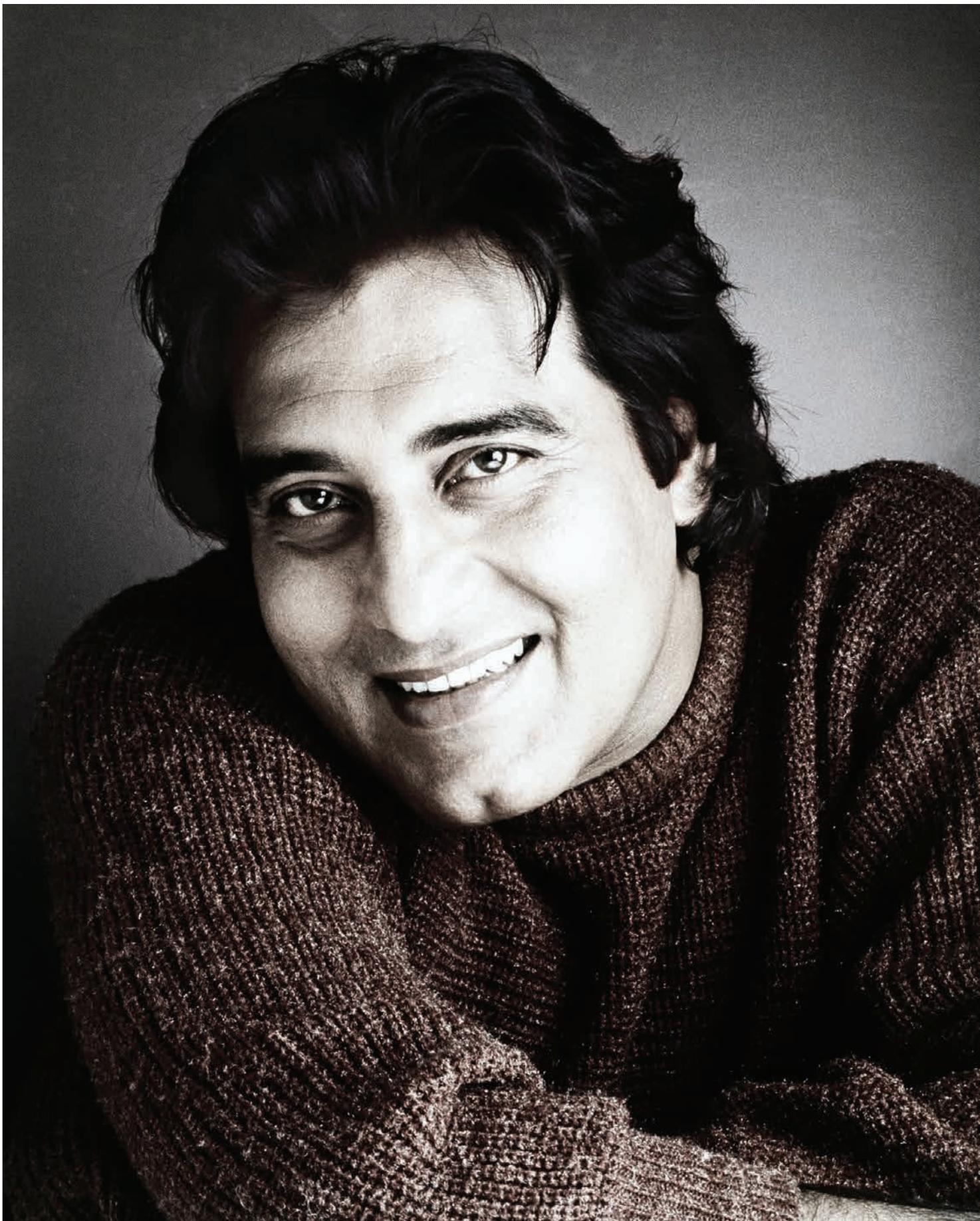
Assam silk is a coveted collectible for any saree connoisseur, designers like Dhiraj Deka and Meghna Rai Medhi are paying homage to the traditional handloom in their own distinct ways. Hailing from Tihu, a small town in Assam, Deka uses Assamese handloom in all his creations. While the designer has been travelling to the interiors of the state to carry out research on its many varieties of silk, he loves working with *muga*, *eri* and *pat* in particular. Medhi, on her part, says that in Assam, the handloom industry abounds in exotic weaves and threads that can be crafted into beautiful creations depicting many of the region’s facets. Like most of her contemporaries, she works only with local artisans, specialising in *eri*, *muga* and Bodo handloom. “While intricate handwoven *mekhla chadors* depict the wildlife in Kaziranga National Park, other garments incorporate the traditional *jaapi* (bamboo sunshade) motif, with modish patterns and innovations. My attempt is to retain the charm of simplicity that defines the Northeast,” she says.



The craftsmanship required to create whimsical needlepoint patterns using a traditional loom can never be replicated by machines

Jenjum Gadi
Indian fashion designer





SPIRIT AND STARDOM

Introduced as a villain, accepted as a star and remembered as an icon who charmed millions of hearts, Vinod Khanna traversed a one-of-a-kind path in Bollywood and has left behind a fine cinematic legacy

BY GURSIMRAN KAUR

From the very beginning, Vinod Khanna was unconventional. After all, how many villains in the 1970s could have made you fall in love with them? But he did, in films such as *Mera Gaon Mera Desh* (1971) and *Patthar Aur Payal* (1974). There was unique style and distinct screen presence in his every gesture and charm in his every glance. He was introduced to the Indian film industry as a villain, went on to be established as a star, then became a full-fledged ascetic (known as Swami Vinod Bharti, a gardener at an ashram in the US) and even a politician!

Born into a Punjabi business family in Peshawar, Khanna moved to Mumbai in 1947. After completing his graduation in commerce, he finally embarked on his celluloid journey – a dream he had been cherishing since the time he first watched K Asif's magnum opus *Mughal-e-Azam* at boarding school.

Director Mahesh Bhatt, to whom Khanna was a dear friend, remembers their first meeting thus: "My earliest memory of Vinod is from the sets of Raj Khosla's *Mera Gaon Mera Desh*, where I was the third assistant and he was playing the villain, Jabbar Singh. Entrusted to attend to the actor's needs,

Actor Vinod
Khanna

MEMORY LANE

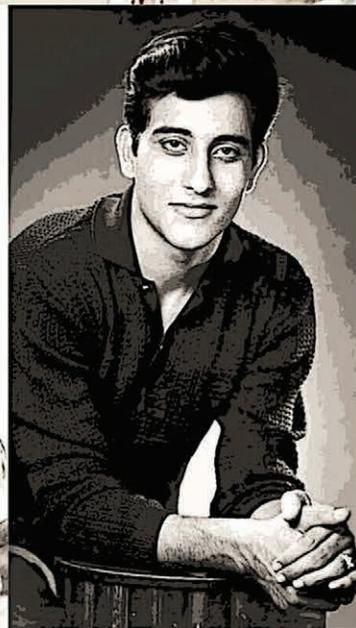
Aan Milo Sajna (1970)

Rajesh Khanna may have been ruling Bollywood when this film released, but Vinod Khanna as the main villain attracted a fair bit of attention and acclaim



Mere Apne (1971)

When Gulzar cast Khanna in his directorial debut, he brought together brute force and vulnerability, enabling the actor to deliver a nuanced performance



Achanak (1973)

This Gulzar film saw Khanna as an army officer who kills his wife and then turns himself in. His mature, understated performance was widely acclaimed

Imtihan (1974)

Considered one of Khanna's most moving performances, his portrayal of an idealistic professor who sets out to reform a group of rowdy students is a memorable one

I grew close to him from the very beginning – even though he was a rising star and I was only a struggler.” Bhatt agrees that Khanna’s debut in Bollywood – as the main villain in *Man Ka Meet* (1968) – was unusual for any mainstream actor of his times. “Vinod was the first modern Bollywood hero who started out by playing negative characters. And his brand of villainy left quite an impression on the audience, because it was a lethal combination of good looks and an edgy appeal,” he affirms.

It was, perhaps, this combination that established Khanna as the only actor

Khanna’s journey in Indian cinema saw him take up a vast variety of roles, from gritty and dark to witty and romantic



Khanna was the first mainstream Bollywood hero to have begun his career with negative characters

who could challenge the supremacy of Dharmendra or Amitabh Bachchan at the box office. “He was seen as the only one capable of giving stiff competition to Dharmendra’s macho male star image and Amitabh Bachchan’s ‘angry young man’ in Hindi films. Khanna was in a league of his

own. Even the swashbuckling Feroz Khan could not beat his aura and style,” asserts actor Rishi Kapoor, who starred alongside Khanna in several films such as *Amar Akbar Anthony* and *Chandni*. Dharmendra, Khanna’s co-star in *Mera Gaon Mera Desh*, reveals that the actor shed actual blood as part of the film’s shooting, to infuse realism into his performance. “He always wanted to do his own stunts and refused body doubles. For *Mera Gaon Mera Desh*, a doctor was permanently around on location,” he recalls.



He is someone who touched my life when I was an aspiring filmmaker. It was his faith in my talent that took me all the way

Mahesh Bhatt
Filmmaker

”



He was a magnificent, generous man, and I will always remember him as he was in his prime – handsome, warm and considerate

Shabana Azmi
Actor

”



Above and facing page (left to right):

Khanna with his wife, Kavita Khanna, at the Golden Temple in Amritsar. The actor with Arjan Bajwa, Dharmendra and Shah Rukh Khan at the music launch of a movie. Khanna accompanied by his wife and son Rahul Khanna at an event

After Khanna’s memorable performances in supporting roles in films such as *Purab Aur Paschim* and *Aan Milo Sajna*, lyricist and director Gulzar noticed his potential and decided to meld brute force with emotional vulnerability when he cast him in leading roles in *Mere Apne* (1971) and *Achanak* (1973). Gulzar *sahab* shares, “*Mere Apne* was his first movie as a full-fledged hero, and we became good friends while filming it. He took up the role of Jeetendra’s friend in *Parichay* (1972) just so we could be together on set. During the shooting of *Achanak*, we started calling each other ‘MD’, short for ‘my dear’! And that is how we continued to address each other for good. Even at airports or public events, when I heard someone call out ‘MD’ from behind me, I always knew it was Vinod.”

Achanak (1973), a rare Bollywood movie for its times in that it was sans any songs, was inspired by the Nanavati murder case, and Khanna received rave reviews for his performance. He went on to receive even more critical acclaim as he attempted risky, offbeat roles such as in Aruna-Vikas’ *Shaque*



Lyricist-director Gulzar noticed Khanna's potential and cast him in leading roles in *Mere Apne* (1971) and *Achanak* (1973)

(1976), where he delivered a mature, complex performance as a murder suspect. His co-star from the film, Shabana Azmi, recalls, "I did a whole gamut of films with Vinod, from *Shaque* to *Khoon Ki Pukar* (1978), and particularly enjoyed doing *Parvarish* (1977)." Between 1971 and 1982, Khanna starred in 47 multi-hero films including *Ek Aur Ek Gyarah*, *Hera Pheri*, *Zameer* and *Muqaddar Ka Sikandar*.

Actress Hema Malini, who has worked with Khanna in films such as *Meera* (1979) and *Patthar Aur Payal*, reveals that while the actor revelled in his macho image, behind the mask, he was a gentle, vulnerable human being. "I remember, when we were shooting for *Meera*, Vinod, Gulzar *sahab* and I would



sit and talk about spirituality. I recall him saying to me once: 'I wish I could play Meera, because I can identify with her,'" she reminisces.

Bhatt, who directed Khanna in *Lahu Ke Do Rang* (1979) adds that he is "grateful for the presence of Vinod Khanna" in his life. "He is someone who touched my life when I was an aspiring filmmaker. It was his faith in my talent that took me all the way." To many in the Indian film fraternity, Khanna will always be more than just a dazzling star. Shabana Azmi sums it up beautifully thus: "He was a magnificent, generous man, and I will always remember him as he was in his prime - handsome, warm and considerate."

A DELICIOUS INDIAN WINTER

From the iconic *sarson da saag* and *makki di roti* in north India to *paunk* in west India and *haleem* across all its regions, dig into some of the signature winter delicacies the country has to offer

BY SANJEEV KAPOOR

Although India experiences winter in varied forms across its vast landscape, it is nevertheless a season where you might want nothing more than to curl up on a cosy couch with a plateful of piping hot food. And there is no dearth of delicious culinary delights across the country that will help you keep warm through the season - from north to south and from east to west, you'll find an array of traditional Indian dishes that can warm you up. Here are some of my favourites:

SARSON DA SAAG AND MAKKI DI ROTI

This dish is the pride of Punjab. My childhood memories dwell on the steaming hot bowls of *sarson da saag* with their pats of butter struggling hard not to melt. Fresh mustard greens tossed well with different spices, accompanied by *makki di roti* topped with

A steaming bowl of wholesome *sarson da saag*, accompanied by *makki di roti*







a dash of ghee and a salad of ivory-white crunchy radish... this meal is hearty and satisfying. The leafy greens are as fresh as they get and besides the delightful taste, the dish is also extremely nutritious. The ghee does add some calories, but a whole lot of goodness and health benefits are guaranteed.

PAYA SOUP

This delicious winter breakfast dish is prepared by cooking lamb trotters with select spices and ghee till the fat from the meat is completely melted and lends its brilliant flavour to the *paya* soup. While the recipe differs from region to region, the core flavour and warmth of this bone broth carries everywhere the mark of a classic Indian winter delicacy. A traditional *paya* soup is loaded with calcium, vitamins and minerals, and is meant to warm the body naturally. The best *paya*

A traditional Hyderabadi *haleem* is a delicious mix of minced meat, usually mutton, broken wheat, lentils, select spices and plenty of ghee

soups are served early in the morning along the narrow bylanes of *khao galis* (food streets) across the country.

PAUNK

This winter specialty from Gujarat is nothing but young tender jowar or sorghum grains separated from their stalks much before the crop is ready for harvesting. The stalks are roasted over charcoal and then beaten till the grains fall off the soft shell. These tender



Right: *Haleem*
Facing page (top to bottom): *Paunk*,
Paya soup

jade-coloured kernels burst between your teeth with their subtle sweet flavour when eaten fresh, but are mostly accompanied with spicy pepper, garlic or lemon sev. Paunk as an ingredient has plenty of heat and is followed up with glasses of thin *chaas* (buttermilk) to counter its warming effect on your body!

NOLEN GUR

Sweet, earthy and like liquid gold – that just about sums up Kolkata's *nolen gur*, or date palm jaggery. It may not sound like a novelty

Sweet, earthy and like liquid gold, that just about sums up Kolkata's *nolen gur*, or date palm jaggery

item, but the way the sweet makers of Bengal have used it over the years has certainly made it one in India. Enclosed between *sandesh*, *roshogulla* and other Bengali sweets or drizzled over ice cream, *nolen gur* is a matter of pride for several Bengali food fanatics. The process of making it is a tedious one, and is carried out only during winter. By the onset of the season, clean earthen pots are tied to date palm trees to collect the sap, which is then boiled in metal pots to create *nolen gur*. These days, however, it is not difficult to find this delicious winter dish in packaged bottles and tubes all round the year!

HALEEM

This one-pot meal is the perfect warm and fuzzy dish to savour on a chilly day. A



Nolen gur is often used to make *sandesh*, a Bengali sweet



Left: A bowl of *gond* laddoos

Below: India has a variety of *mithais*, or sweets, that are best savoured during winter



traditional Hyderabadi *haleem* is a delicious mix of minced meat (usually mutton), broken wheat, lentils, select spices and plenty of ghee. The mixture is slow cooked for hours till all the flavours of the ingredients come together to create an unforgettable mouthful. Garnished with fried onions and lemon wedges, *haleem* is served piping hot.

MITHAI MAGIC

When I'm in Delhi during winter, I always head to a particular sweet shop which has the best *dodha*, a heavy nut-based and spice-laced milk sweet that is a seasonal delight. It looks as rich as chocolate and is chewy and enjoyable. The other winter *mithai* that travels a lot out of Delhi and Punjab is the *pinni*. This, too, is a fortifying dal-based sweet with gum resin and nuts – very warming during cold months. In Maharashtra, *gond* or edible gum crystal laddoos are popular winter foods as they're extremely beneficial for the bones. Deep-fried edible gum crystals are combined with roasted wheat flour, powdered sugar and cardamom powder, set aside to cool and shaped into delectable laddoos!

MEETING OF MINDS

The Global Entrepreneurship Summit 2017, held in Hyderabad and attended by Ivanka Trump, promised innovators across India support and encouragement from the Indian government for their endeavours

The Government of India has always been committed to supporting new ideas and innovations in every field, be it infrastructure, healthcare, automotives or otherwise. At the recently concluded Global Entrepreneurship Summit 2017, held in Hyderabad, Telangana, many new ideas came to the forefront from brilliant Indian minds. Here are three of them that captured a fair bit of attention, and for good reason.

THE AMBUPOD

Conceived by a Pune-based former Indian Air Force medical officer, the AmbuPod is a solar-powered three-wheeled micro-ambulance. This low-cost vehicle is equipped with provisions for basic critical care and can accommodate one patient at a time. Weatherproof and also equipped with a tent kit in case of an emergency delivery, the AmbuPod can also be attached to a car or motorbike to navigate particularly crowded roads.

SMART SCOOTER

Developed by Bengaluru-based techie Tarun Mehta, co-founder of Ather Energy, India's first electric smart scooter will hit the market sometime around the middle of 2018.

Powered by a lithium-ion battery pack design, it features a touchscreen dashboard, inbuilt GPS and a maximum speed of 72 km/hr.

THE ETHEREAL HALO

Conceptualised and designed by Bengaluru-based Ethereal Machines, this is the world's first consumer-oriented 5-axis 3D printer and 5-axis CNC router. In simpler terms, it comprises five distinct axes along which the printer head moves, allowing for the printing of more complex structures than in an average 3D printer, while also enabling stronger construction. With the ability to equip a user with quick prototyping and manufacturing capabilities, this affordable contraption comes with an advanced nozzle design that prevents clogging and ensures smooth filament deposition. Its other features include multiple material support, multiple tool support and a high-accuracy drive mechanism achieved through calibrated ball screws and linear guide rails.



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Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India





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