



AARATRIKA

Moscow Durga Puja 2017



ХИМАНИ



Боро Плюс –
мой секрет в
решении
проблем с
кожей!



From the Editor's Desk...



Debasmitta Moulick Nair

*"Remember to celebrate milestones
as you prepare for the road ahead."*

— Nelson Mandela

On 13 April 2017, India and Russia celebrated 70 years of diplomatic relations. The bilateral relationship through the past seven decades has grown into a special and privileged partnership. Looking back allows for introspection and reflection, to forge new possibilities for stable development of bilateral relations.

It's important to celebrate special occasions, creating memories and memorabilia that can be fondly recollected to re-live the pleasant experiences in future. Exactly 30 years ago during the Festival of India in Moscow, the spectacular inaugural show with eight decorated 80 feet long barges with Indian dancers sailing along Moskva river, spectators lined up along the river embankment swaying to the Indian rhythms was so impactful, that even the prime time news Vremiya was shifted to accommodate the live telecast of the festival from Luzniki stadium, then known as Lenin Stadium. Russians who had witnessed the grand show refer to it as an experience of a lifetime!

To mark the 70th anniversary, India and Russia have jointly planned various programmes of meaningful celebration. The year has been dotted with festivals like Namaste Russia, India Day celebration, concerts, seminars, conferences, film festivals and many other activities. The yearlong cultural festival of Namaste Russia spanning across regions of Russia, began with the wonderful inaugural concert of sitar maestro Ustad Shujaat Khan. Much to the delight of music lovers, Ustad Aashish Khan also visited Moscow this summer. The vibrant and remarkable India Day celebration on 12-13 August at Sokolniki Park evoked unbridled response, with little less than half a million people attending the event! For two

days the central arena of the park turned into little India, with the sights, sounds and aroma of all things Indian! Yoga, meditation, dance, music, dholak (drums), rath-yatra, chess competition for children, fashion shows, even Indian wedding show and mango kiosks were organized. The India Day celebrations were broad casted live on Russia-1, the TV channel with the second largest audience in Russian television. History repeated proving once again the mass outreach of the cultural ties. Aaratrika has been tracking the anniversary activities, which is compiled in the section Digest 2017 – Friends for 70 Years. The political diplomacy is incomplete without cultural ties.

While celebrating this milestone, Aaratrika would like to acknowledge the tremendous contribution and achievement of Russian Orientalists and Indologists. Their strategic insights and recommendations have been instrumental for the development of this bilateral relationship. We also want to make a special mention of those Russians who have immersed their lives in studying, learning and researching Indian history, philosophy, culture and languages.

Aaratrika's cover this year has the traditional *ekchala* Maa Durga, painted by Sri Sudhi Ranjan Mukherjee. The painting reflects yet another story of pride and parampara of Kala Bhavana in Shantiniketan. The story in the section Passage to India, is of the life-changing magic of practicing yoga. The Anandamela or the food festival painstakingly organized by our members was a special highlight this year. Our photo gallery shows how observant, intuitive and incredibly innovative children are! In travel, we explore the pristine and spectacularly picturesque Tuva Republic of Russia.

This year we celebrate the 28th Durga Puja in Moscow. Over the years, Aaratrika has strived to deepen the bond of amity and goodwill between our countries focussing on stories of cooperation and cultural exchange, where both sides have made major strides in nurturing the cherished relationship.

Last year a young geologist visited our puja traveling all the way from Perm, a city in the Urals. He was with his wife and four children, the youngest barely one year old. They visited us with fresh flowers every day, sat through the entire rituals, prayed, gave pushpanjali and then accepted prasad. Before leaving, he gave me 3 small stones, which he had gathered in one of his expeditions, now decorating my desk. They remind me of India Russia friendship; rock solid having stood the test of time.

What we will leave behind is the parampara, which binds us all.

Happy Pujas!

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचित्
न अयं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजः नित्यः शाश्वतः अयं पुराणः
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

*"Na jayate mriyate va kadachit
na ayam bhutva bhavita va na bhuyah
Ajah nityah shashvatah ayam puranah
na hanyate hanyamane sharire"*

*The soul is neither born nor does it die;
it does not come into being, nor does it cease to be.
Unborn, eternal, constant and ancient;
the soul is not killed when the body is slain.*

— Bhagavad Gita



Image Credit: Sudhi Ranjan Mukherjee

The Love of 70 Years – A Glimpse...

Helping Strengthen Each Other

Jointly produced Brahmos missiles, Fifth Generation Fighter Aircrafts, Multi Transport Aircrafts; Licensed production in India of SU-30 aircraft, T-90 tanks....



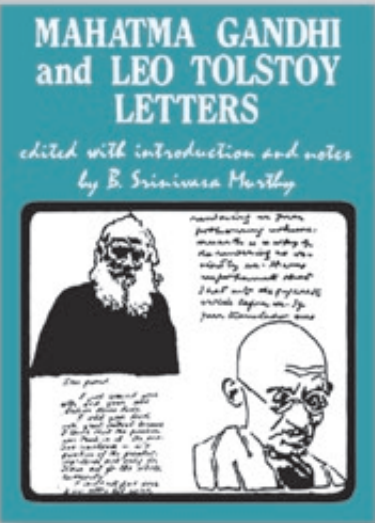
Nuclear 'Fusion'

Jointly set up Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP), the single largest nuclear power station in India – Units 1 and 2 operational...



Cultural Absorption

Love for Bollywood; courses in Hindi, other regional and historic languages offered at Russian Universities; popularity of Indian dance, music, yoga and ayurveda...



Exchange of Ideas

Legendary intellectual exchanges between Mahatma Gandhi and author-sage Leo Tolstoy...

Shared Love for Literature

Admirers across generations of Rabindranath Tagore in Russia; Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Pushkin read with fervour in India...



A relationship truly 'Special and 'Privileged'...

Strategic Partnership elevated in December 2010 to the level of "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership"; St Petersburg Declaration signed in 2017, titled 'A vision for the 21st century' ...

Sources: Ministry of External Affairs, RBTH, The Wire

SHAKTI INCARNATED



इत्थं यदा यदा बाधा दानवोत्था भविष्यति ।
तदा तदाऽवतीर्याहं करिष्याम्यरिसंक्षयम् ॥

- श्रीश्रीचण्डी 11/54-55

*(Thus whenever trouble arises
due to the advent of dānavas,
I shall incarnate and destroy the enemies.)*
- Sri Sri Chandi 11/54-55

Mother Durga, the symbol of the Universal Energy promised in the *Devi Māhātmyam (Sri Sri Chandi)* that whenever troubles arise in the world from the demons I incarnate in the divine and mundane spheres and destroy the enemies to bring peace and joy for all. Avatars always come to the world from that Universal Energy, the pure Consciousness Absolute in Its highest state. This time the world is under the most miserable condition with fear and devastation everywhere. Sheer material view of life has given birth to unrestrained lust and uncontrolled greed for wealth. They are the demons of our time. Many thinkers of the world are worried and wanted to put a stop to the present trend of life. Only spiritual outlook of life can bring a change in our way of life by balancing our mind towards conquering both the external and the internal nature. Our religious life has become too much externalized and thereby superficial. Therefore, it has lost the power to stop the materialistic trend of life. So, where is the force that can change the present trend of life? As promised by the Divine Mother, She has brought among us out of Her infinite compassion, a great spiritual force in the form of a poor Brahmin of Dakshineswar of West Bengal, India, whose power is already being felt in all parts of the world.

Sir Arnold J. Toynbee, the great historian of our time remarked¹ that only the path shown by Sri Ramakrishna and Mahatma Gandhi can save the modern world from its devastating predicament. Sri Ramakrishna told, when a flower blooms, bees come from all directions uninvited for sucking the honey. In his case, the message of Peace and Joy is also spreading more and more for the good of the world. Therefore, in our time, the Universal Mother Durga, in the form of Kali, sitting in the heart of Sri Ramakrishna, is bestowing Her blessings to the mankind.

This is the seventieth year of friendship between India and Russia. May the Divine Mother make this amity deeper and deeper for the good of the world is my prayer to Her.

Swami Jyotirupananda

SRI SRI DURGA MAHAPUJA SCHEDULE 2017

26th September 2017	Shashti, Tuesday
18:30	PUJA STARTS (Sthapana day)
27th September 2017	Shaptami, Wednesday
09:00	PUJA STARTS
11:30	PUSHPANJALI
11:50	BHOG & ARATI
18:30	EVENING ARATI
19:30	CULTURAL PROGRAMME STARTS
28th September 2017	Mahaastami, Thursday
09:00	PUJA STARTS
11:30	PUSHPANJALI
11:50	BHOG & ARATI
18:00	EVENING ARATI
19:30	CULTURAL PROGRAMME STARTS
21:13-22:01	SANDHI PUJA
29th September 2017	Mahanavami, Friday
09:00	PUJA STARTS
11:30	PUSHPANJALI
11:50	BHOG & ARATI
18:30	EVENING ARATI
19:30	CULTURAL PROGRAMME STARTS
30th September 2017	Mahadashami, Saturday
10:00	PUJA SINDUR KHELA IMMERSION SHANTI JAL

SRI SRI LAKSHMI MAHAPUJA 2017

5th October 2017	Thursday
18:00-21:00	LAKSHMI PUJA

¹ At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is an Indian way. The Emperor Ashoka's and the Mahatma Gandhi's principle of nonviolence and Sri Ramakrishna's testimony to the harmony of religions ; here we have the attitude and the spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together into a single family—and, in the Atomic Age, this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves.

"— Great Thinkers on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda."

Rendezvous with the Ambassador, His Excellency Pankaj Saran...



Aa: *Last year, the focus of our conversation was on Bangladesh, for we had featured eminent Bangladeshi cultural icons on the magazine, and you were fresh from your stint there. Now you're well over a year into your stay in Russia, and of course you have spent time here in the past as well, and also learnt the language. Would therefore ask you to look back at instances from your experience, where Russians and their knowledge of and love for Indian culture really struck you and has stayed with you? Please narrate some for us...*

Ambassador: In the immediate past year, the one event that struck me was the celebration of Yoga Day at Gorky Park, where we saw quite a few thousand Russians participating. I was highly impressed by their skill, knowledge and enthusiasm towards Yoga. More significantly, most of the participants were young men and women, which is proof that the message of the importance of Yoga has reached out to the current generation. This is akin to the impact Hindi films had on people in the 60s! I also remember another event, where a lady came up to me and asked me if I was a Sai Baba devotee, and said she had visited the ashram many times; she in turn had another friend who visits Haridwar and Rishikesh every year to visit some of the other ashrams. It was quite a revelation for me, seeing just how many Russians visit India on their quest for spirituality, finding solace, peace, or just a completely new experience. I have had so many experiences like these. Seeing how enthusiastically Russians learn our singing, dance forms, etc., is also heartening. Russians have great interest in general towards understanding Indian civilization, history, tradition, etc – so often, I find Russians visiting India to study and research these topics, and devoting so many years of their life to it. One of the recent manifestations I have come across is the many common links we share in Buddhism – the PM too had a discussion on the same with the governors on his last visit, and we paid a high level visit from the Embassy to the Buddhist Republics in Russia, and met a lot of Buddhist scholars

who had lived and studied in places like Varanasi, Gaya, etc. Our links with Russia are therefore at many levels and across multiple spheres.

Aa: *What comes to your mind as key traits, behaviours and aspects of the culture of Russians we in India could try emulating, or taking a cue from?*

Ambassador: (Smiling) Well, the first attribute worthy of emulating is, of course, their superior civic sense, and a sense of discipline; as also the ability to be civil to each other, and being polite and courteous to each other even when talking Law and serious matters. I tell all delegates from India who come visiting to just observe the people – at restaurants, on the streets, while traveling – and they can all appreciate that there is a certain sense of discipline, and respect for the other's convenience, as well as their private space. Highly admirable of course is also their immense pride in their language, history, and culture, and we should really learn from that and take pride in our own heritage, linguistic traditions, etc. Lastly, I have huge regard for the respect Russian society has for its women; and while the good thing about India is that it has stronger family ties, the average freedom the woman enjoys in Russia is far greater, and definitely an example for us.

Aa: *There is admirable support and patronage on part of Russians and the Government for their Performing Arts. Do you sense a need to infuse that same sense of pride and support among us Indians towards our own Classical Music and Traditional Arts? What steps could be taken in this regard?*

Ambassador: I most certainly agree, in that there is definite patronage on part of the Russian government towards their Arts and Culture, which is highly commendable. It's not like we don't do it at all, but the good thing about us is that a lot of these efforts are done voluntarily – through our citizenry, through individual, as well as community efforts. As a result, we have a very alive and vibrant culture, wherein people are not looking necessarily at the government, and a lot of efforts around cultural promotion are self-organised. Notwithstanding infrastructural and financial constraints, our culture continues to thrive, and I think we should be proud of that. But yes, I reiterate that the infrastructure and support the Russian government provides for the upkeep of its Arts and Culture, in terms of Music Halls, Performance venues, finances, etc., is something we should learn from, and I am positive that our government will do the needful in this regard.



Aa: Do you see a rise in scale of celebrations, now that meetings between the respective heads of state are becoming more frequent - whether in individual capacity or as part of BRICS and other similar economic forums gathering momentum?

Ambassador: Absolutely. In the last one year alone, the intensity of meetings with Russia has significantly grown. This is a very distinctly visible trend that, and bodes very positively for the relationship on both sides; we are always looking out for newer areas of cooperation. On the economic side, there are of course forums like BRICS, Shanghai Cooperation Org, G20, etc, and India is a part of them all. We were the Chief Guest at the St Petersburg Forum, and we will also be participating in the Eastern Economic Forum at Vladivostok. More recently, we have also participated in events such as Inoprom, Technoprom, IT Forum at Khanty-Mansiysk, Sochi, etc. Moreover, there have been several economic and trade delegations from India visiting Russia. All of it together speaks volumes for the large and discernible change in our relations with Russia.

Aa: What further developments between the two nations do you sense happening that you could perhaps share with us?

Ambassador: Strengthening of partnership is an ongoing process. The St Petersburg Declaration that was adopted during the visit of our PM in June is a very comprehensive, forward looking document which contains the roadmap for our relations in the 21st century. What's good is that it's focused on the economic, investment, and trade aspects of the relationship – these had so far been a weak link, when they have so much potential. The key focus areas for us in today's time are Natural resources, Energy, Infrastructure, Connectivity, etc.; Joint Manufacturing, Transfer of technology – these are some of the newer forms of collaboration we are looking at.

Aa: What in your mind are some of the key activities happening between the two countries that hold importance, including for you personally, in this 70th year of Indo-Russia Diplomatic Relations?

Ambassador: Well, we have a very ambitious year-long programme lined up, which encompasses all aspects – whether political, economic, or social. A large part involves our PSUs, Space Research Organisations, Infrastructure Companies, Steel, Oil & Gas, etc. – in all, we have more than 100 events lined up for this year. The idea is to reach out to every single section of society. The principal highlight for me personally this year was, of course, our esteemed Prime Minister's visit at the St Petersburg International Economic Forum, also his first ever visit to St Petersburg. What's also noteworthy is that the celebrations are going beyond just Moscow and Delhi, and right down to the regions, where I have seen India Day and related activities being organized even in the interiors of Russia. So yes, broadly these would be the most significant activities...

Aa: Festivals like Holi and Diwali, along with some religious institutions and events, have now attained mainstream popularity and are highly enjoyed by Russians. To those already familiar to a certain extent with Indian culture, what more and new of the culture would the Community be trying to introduce and popularise?

Ambassador: People must understand that Indian civilization is very deep, and goes much beyond music and dance. We have since ancient times provided a certain way of thinking to the global community, and a mix of ideas and philosophies – being the cradle of all religions and philosophies of the world. I ardently feel we need to revive those studies by increasing co-operation between Universities, establishment of Chairs of Sanskrit studies, Philosophy, etc. By doing so, we enrich both societies. There is a lot India can learn from Russia too in this regard, in terms of preserving and keeping alive its own rich history and way of life, while also offering a lot to Russia. So I see this as an ongoing process.

Aa: What are your expectations on this momentous occasion from the Durga Puja this year?! And what more would you expect to see happening in the coming years?

Ambassador: Yes, I of course witnessed the festival last year, and was most pleasantly surprised to see the level of participation and enthusiasm among the community at large! I saw large numbers coming in, and would expect to see the same this coming year. I extend my best wishes for the same to the Committee and members thereof, in this special year of celebrating 70 years of both Russia-India Diplomatic Relations, as well as the birth of India herself. I would therefore hope to see even greater participation, greater numbers, more involvement of Russians, cultivation of new talent, and a special focus on youth and children. Seeing the vibrant Durga Puja celebrations will go a long way towards popularizing Indian culture among Russians, so it would be very nice if you could achieve that aim.



Introducing Our Newest Emissaries



On 19 August 2017, H.E. Nikolay Kudashev was appointed as Russia's new envoy to India. Mr. Kudashev, a career diplomat, is a specialist in South East Asia and was the Deputy Director General Secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

Aaratrika takes this opportunity to congratulate him on his new assignment and wish him every success in his new role.



On 30 March 2017 H.E. Alexey M. Idamkin was appointed as the Consul General of the Russian Federation in Kolkata, Republic of India. Born in 1969, he graduated from the Institute of Asian and African Studies at the Moscow State University in 1996. In 1998 he entered the diplomatic service and has held a number of posts with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Russia and abroad. He speaks English and Urdu

Aaratrika welcomes him and wishes him all the best for his tenure.

Aaratrika Remembers...

Our Ambassadors play a pivotal role in maintenance and progression of international bilateral relations. It requires an astute understanding of cultural nuances, taking initiative, handling of often sensitive issues, and managing multiple stakeholders across different cultures. The India-Russia relationship, as it stands today, is testimony to the brilliance and great-heartedness of all the Ambassadors between the two nations, who have played their part in nurturing this relationship over the decades. On the 70-year anniversary of the India-Russia diplomatic relationship, Aaratrika acknowledges the efforts of and pays tribute to all the Ambassadors having served in the Embassy of India in Moscow, and the Embassy of Russia in New Delhi.

Ambassadors of India to Soviet Union

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit	1947 - 1949
Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan	1949 - 1952
Kumara Padma Sivasankara Menon	1952 - 1961
Subimal Dutt	1961 - 1962
T. N. Kaul	1962 - 1966
Kewal Singh	1966 - 1968
Durga Prasad Dhar	1969 - 1971
K. S. Shelvankar	1971 - 1975
Durga Prasad Dhar	1975 - 1975
Inder Kumar Gujral	1976 - 1980
V. K. Ahuja	1980 - 1983
Saiyid Nurul Hasan	1983 - 1986
T. N. Kaul	1986 - 1989
A. S. Gonsalves	1989 - 1992

Ambassadors of India to Russia

Ronen Sen	1992 - 1998
S. K. Lambah	1998 - 2001
K. Raghunath	2001 - 2004
Kanwal Sibai	2004 - 2007
Prabhat Prakash Shukla	2007 - 2011
Ajai Malhotra	2011 - 2013
P. S. Raghavan	2014 - 2016
Pankaj Saran	2016

Ambassadors of Soviet Union to India

Kirill Novikov	1947 - 1953
Ivan Benediktov	1953
Mikhail Menshikov	1953 - 1957
Panteleymon Ponomarenko	1957 - 1959
Ivan Benediktov	1959 - 1967
Nikolai Pegov	1967 - 1973
Viktor Maltsev	1974 - 1977
Yuli Vorontsov	1977 - 1983
Vasily Rykov	1983 - 1988
Viktor Isakov	1988 - 1991

Ambassadors of Russia to India

Anatoly Dryukov	1991 - 1996
Albert Chernyshev	1996 - 1999
Alexander Kadakin	1999 - 2004
Vyacheslav Trubnikov	2005 - 2009
Alexander Kadakin	2009 - 2017
Nikolay Kudashev	2017

In Conversation with H.E. Dr. S.M. Saiful Hoque, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the Russian Federation

Aaratrika caught up with Dr Hoque at the Summer Bazaar hosted at the Indian Embassy on 26 August 2017. He recounted the most significant events of the year for him so far, reiterating - besides major visits and agreements signed - the landmark year that 2017 is in terms of relations with Russia for both India and Bangladesh.



"2017 has been eventful. To begin with, our foreign minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali's visit to Russia during 12-15 April to mark the 45th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and Bangladesh is extremely important. On the sidelines of the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of Telecom and Mass Communications of the Russia and the Ministry of Information of Bangladesh on the cooperation in the field of mass communications. Another important MOU was also signed between the ITAR TASS News Agency (TASS) and Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS).

We are looking forward to signing an inter-governmental agreement with Moscow on return of hazardous nuclear waste or spent nuclear fuel to be discharged from Rooppur Nuclear

power Plant being constructed with Russian assistance. This is a very significant step.

In the area of defence we have increased cooperation with Russia in terms of expertise sharing. Active bilateral negotiations continue between Russia and Bangladesh.

New student exchange programmes are being executed. In particular, we are closely working with the National Research Nuclear University MEPhI (Moscow Engineering Physics Institute). Around 45 students from Bangladesh are studying in MEPhI and another 20 students are expected to join next year. We hope to have more number of students joining at graduate level.

I am sincerely hoping that the tripartite agreement between India-Russia-Bangladesh comes through in the field of cooperation in nuclear energy. That would be very significant.

The 70th anniversary of India-Russia diplomatic relationship is indeed an event of great significance. With Bangladesh also maintaining friendly relations with and being a long-standing ally of both, I would want to add that a positive multilateral relationship is key to peaceful coexistence and prosperity for all.

Talking about celebrations and festivities...

The Summer Bazaar this year has indeed been very well organized. That the weather gods have been kind too just makes it an all the more pleasurable day out.

As for Durga Puja, it is an event where all are welcome irrespective of nationality, race or religion. Our nations are rich in many cultural traditions and celebrations. Durga Puja is a great opportunity for us to share our own cultures with others, in particular our Russian friends.

Antorik sharod suveccha roilo!



Summer Loving Together: H.E. Saiful Hoque and H.E. Pankaj Saran sharing a light moment at the Summer Bazaar 2017, Moscow



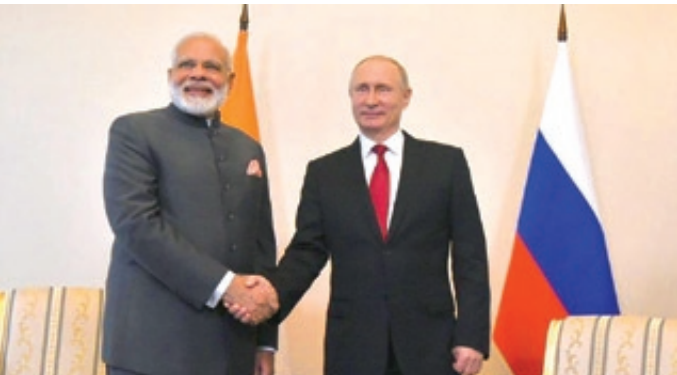
2017: Tour d'horizon...



23 May, 2017- Shillong Chamber Choir at Inaugural Concert of India Week



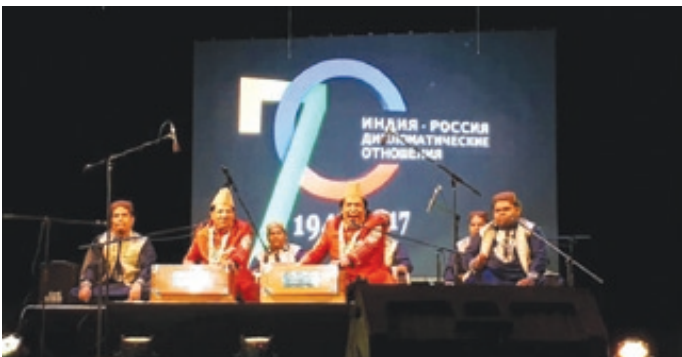
17 April, 2017- Inauguration of celebrations of 70th Anniversary of India- Russia Relations: Sitar Maestro Ustad Shujaat Khan performs at Dom Muzyki in Moscow & at Kolizei Hall in St. Petersburg (19 April 2017)



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited St. Petersburg to address the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (June 1–3, 2017) and mark the official opening of 70th anniversary celebrations. He met with President Putin and attended the meeting with Governors of 16 regions of Russia, the first of its kind, to discuss several matters of mutual interest and cooperation.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the State Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg in Russia. He also visited the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts.



15 June, 2017- Nizami Brothers and the Dervishes perform in Samara at Namaste Russia Festival



21 June, 2017- Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Defence, Finance & Corporate Affairs speaks at the Plenary Session of "Make in Russia: Double Purpose Industrialisation" of Technoprom-2017 at Novosibirsk, Russia



25 June, 2017- The 3rd International Yoga Day was celebrated in all major cities of Russia across 60 regions making it one of the largest Yoga Festival in terms of territory. Indian Embassy organized a Yoga Marathon at Krasnaya Presnya Park in Moscow jointly with The Organic People.



10-13 July, 2017- Mrs. Sumitra Mahajan, Honourable Speaker of Lok Sabha came on an Official visit to Russia along with members of both houses of Parliament. Mrs Mahajan addressed the Lower House of the Russian Parliament.



15 August, 2017- Janmashtami celebrations in Moscow



26 August, 2017- Indian Summer Bazar at the Embassy of India



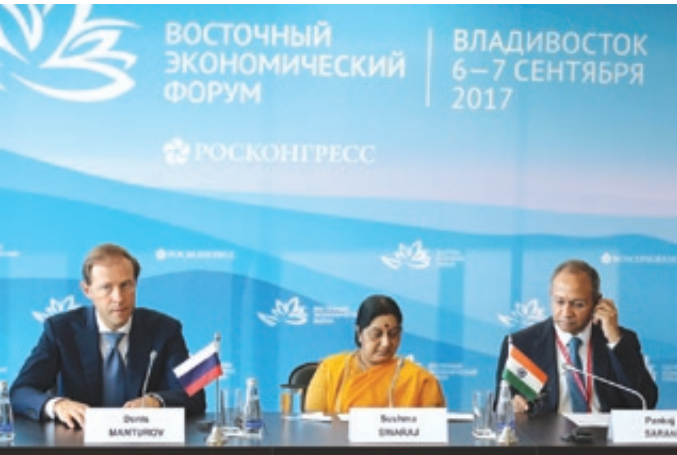
3 September, 2017- Indian Military Band performs at Kolomenskoye Park, Moscow.



Indian Military Band participates at the Spasskaya Tower Festival in Red Square, Moscow



29 August, 2017- Ambassador Shri Pankaj Saran inaugurates the India Pavilion at TEXTILLEGPROM 2017 at Pavilion #75 in VDNKh. Shri Rudrappa Lamani, Textile Minister of Karnataka and Shri Anant Kumar Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, were also present during the inauguration ceremony.



5 -7 September, 2017- Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister of India, visits Vladivostok on a 3 day visit to participate at the 3rd Eastern Economic Forum (EEF). She met the Governors of the Far Eastern Region of Russia to explore the possibilities of economic cooperation..



Overseas Bihar Association (OBA) marked the 70th Anniversary of India-Russia Diplomatic Relations with concert and food festival.

The gala concert held on 29 July in the Vegas Hall of Crocus City involved performances by children and Bollywood Singers Sona Mahapatra and Neeraj Shridhar.



7 September, 2017- Indian Ocean performs at Vladivostok as part of the Namaste Russia Festival. They also performed in Moscow on 9th September at Taganskaya Park.

A Jamboree to Remember: India Day in Moscow

India Day celebrations, 12-13 August 2017 at Sokolniki Park, Moscow, celebrating 70 years of India-Russia friendship; supported by Ministry of Culture, Russian Federation, and Government Moscow.

Key Events:

Yoga & Meditation Master Class, Master Class for Indian dance, Cooking lessons, Hindi lessons, Indian Bazaar and Chess Competition for children.

Attractions:

Rath-Yatra, Concerts, Fashion shows, Indian Wedding show, Film Festival, Ayurvedic massage, clothes and furniture exhibition cum sale, wide array of Indian food and beverages.

Highlights and Figures:

- Event telecast live on "Rossiya 1" TV channel news 11am
- Almost half a million visitors
- 53 stands, 6 restaurants, 20 activity points, 4 charity activities





Remembering Alexander Kadakin

Aaratrika pays tribute to Ambassador Kadakin who passed away on 26 January this year. He is credited with playing a significant role in promotion of bilateral relations between India and Russia.



Image Credit: Russian Embassy in India

Ambassador Kadakin (22 July 1949 – 26 January 2017) is greatly respected and loved in India. He joined the diplomatic service in 1972. He served as the Russian Ambassador to India for two terms from 1999 to 2004 and again from 2009 till his death. Hence he spent a significant part of his life in India, the land he considered his karma-bhoomi, the destined place of work. He was a well-travelled polyglot proficient in English, Hindi, Urdu, French and Romanian and has written and translated several books from English and Hindi and has authored a variety of publications. Also received many awards in recognition for his diplomatic achievements. Interestingly and heart-warmingly, he contributed significantly in spreading Hindi as an official language of communication.

It is probably symbolic that his demise happened on the Republic Day of India and in the year when we celebrate the 70th anniversary of India-Russia diplomatic relationship.

In July 2016 he received the Order of Friendship - a valuable recognition of his long-standing commitment and dedication to strengthening bilateral ties.

The Officers' Mess Road in Delhi's Chanakyapuri area was renamed as Alexander M Kadakin Marg – a befitting tribute to him.

A Memorial Museum which was his residence-cum-office within the Embassy territory was inaugurated on 10 February 2017 to mark the Diplomat's Day and is the first of its kind for

a Russian mission in Asia. The memorial includes some of his personal belongings.

Aaratrika visited the memorial on 3rd March to pay tribute to the extraordinary man who has left behind such a rich legacy in negotiation and diplomacy skills.

"It seemed that the sounds of the capital's nocturnal symphony have not changed a bit over the years, bringing back nostalgic memories. Later in the daytime I saw those very scenes which I was craving for in other cities around the globe: I was longing for the bewitching haze of agarbatti, the luring aromatic spices and a sharp note of Dettol, that epitome of Indian sanitation. As it turned out, I felt deprived without the street m  l  e, when I could not hear either the blasting car horns or shouts of the street vendors, or unpretentious and na  ve Bollywood songs blaring from sidewalk dukans and magnetic Sufiqawwalis from melancholic dargahs. In a nutshell I missed all that mirch-masala whose absence would make the rest of the world seem insipid and drab if you ever happened to visit India even once."

From his article "Another tryst: imagining India & Russia", written 8 years ago when he began his second and the longest stint with India.



Memorial Museum of Alexander Kadakin



With PM Rajiv Gandhi



Tribute from Aaratrika



Awards

Soulful Horizons in Music: An Enchanting Evening with Ustad Shujaat Khan



Sitar maestro of the Imdadkhani gharana (school of music). His style of playing sitar, known as the gayaki ang, is imitative of the human voice. Born into a family of musicians, he is the son of the illustrious sitar player Ustad Vilayat Khan. With a pedigree of seven generations, he can trace his lineage all the way back to Mian Tansen, the great court musician of Emperor Akbar. He has more than 100 CD releases to his credit and a video called Khandan. He has been nominated for a Grammy Award for Best World Music Album.

I have been traveling to Russia since the early eighties, the times when St Petersburg was still Leningrad. I have travelled quite a bit, to cities like Kazan, Ufa up to Siberia to cities like Novosibirsk and Irkutsk, to the beautiful Lake Baikal, then up to Mongolia. Yes, I gave concerts, also just for tourism...to explore the huge country. Also back in the eighties, in the communist times there was a strong jazz underground movement and group whom I knew and interacted with. Been to Moscow and SPB many times.

Russians who love and follow my music have been consistent. Governments changed, policies changes, even the country changed but people who are genuinely interest in fine arts are always consistent in their love and interest towards it. For the last 20 years I have interacting with musicians and my followers in Russia. I am not really a fond of formal structures/ not a government/ cross cultural kind of guy. I just believe in playing my music. I believe in people to people connect. So my disciples, friends and followers look forward to every opportunity to learn and reconnect, emotional connect which is important. My 17th April concert this year was such an occasion which was held at the Kamerny Zal of Dom Muziki in Mos-

cow and was the inaugural programme for the celebration of 70th anniversary of India Russia diplomatic relationship. I am grateful to the organizers for the opportunity and honoured to perform at this millstone event. Then I performed at SPB on 19 April at the Kolizei Arena concert hall. My stay at St Petersburg was particularly enjoyable, as my followers and music lovers were allowed to come into my hotel and we had interesting interactions.

Russia is an amazing country with great culture and beautiful and warm people. However, it has also been a country of hardships. Russia has developed quite a bit and if it wants to keep up with development it needs to significantly improve its service at all level, for example at immigration, at Dom Muziki where I had certain problem getting things mentioned in my technical rider. And those were rather basic things. It's not enough to build modern building, the mind sets should change, and people should be trained.

Of course I enjoy Durga Puja and know all about its celebration. My mother is a Bengali. This year I look forward to spending two days in Kolkata having fun during puja. Love and peace to all of you. Happy Pujas!



An Evening with Sarod Maestro Ustad Aashish Khan

On the evening of 11 June 2017, Muscovites had the privilege of watching Ustad Aashish Khan (son of the legendary Late Ali Akbar Khan), wield the power of the sarod in his first ever performance in Russia at the beautiful 'Maliy Zal' (Little Hall) of the Conservatory. Ustad Aashish Khan is one of the most revered figures in Hindustani Classical Music today, having received his 'taalim' (training) under his father as well as grandfather, Ustad Baba Allaiddin Khan, who was a royal court musician and founder of the Senia Maihar School of Music. Here he is in conversation with Aaratrika post his concert and Master Class at the Conservatory...



The Performers at the Maliy Zal



Ustad Aashish Khan

Aaratrika: This is your first visit to Russia. What were your thoughts before you came, and have they changed after arriving?!

Ustad Aashish Khan: I remember it was in the 1950s that Pt. Ravi Shankar had come performing to Russia, accompanied by Pt. Kishan Maharaj and DV Paluskar. I was 12 at the time, living in Delhi, and I remember harbouring this desire to perform here someday myself. But over the years, because



Shiraz Ali Khan

of all the unfortunate geopolitical troubles, I had surrendered that desire to visit this country, though secretly still hoped to. Thanks to the Moscow Conservatory, I now finally find myself on this land, and I couldn't be happier. I wish I could speak Russian, for I find that people really want to talk to me, and I

would love to talk to them myself. As for the Concert itself, I didn't know what to expect, but I have to say I am amazed and positively overwhelmed by the response of the audience – very rarely do I find such a receptive audience. I would love to come back.

Aa: We are in the Moscow Conservatory – one of the finest schools of music in this country. What do you think about the approach towards music of the students here, as well as their sincerity?

UAK: After the concert, I can safely conclude that people here are much dedicated to the Fine Arts, Music, and other Performing Arts. Their response speaks volumes for their love for music, and for their strong desire to reach out to and understand other cultures.

Aa: There is a common notion that Hindustani Classical Music is rigid. How can we make it more approachable without diluting its essence?

UAK: By organizing more festivals, by inviting musicians of high caliber – but only those who are serious about Classical Music, and not those who only serve to play to the gallery. The

government should also help here, by promoting our Classical music and the right kind of people. As for me, I ardently believe Indian music is not limited to merely its borders, but belongs to the World; which is why as a teacher at the California Institute of the Arts, I present it to all my students and listeners as World Music.

Aa: How has growing up in the city of Kolkata shaped your sensibilities into becoming the great artist you are today?

UAK: I first moved to Kolkata in 1952/53. At the time, it was quite the culture shock, as it was my first tryst with big city life. There were festivals, concerts happening regularly, which I attended with my grandfather and guru; over time, those experiences really broadened my vision as to the extent and range of music, and I learnt how to perform on stage. So I consider myself very fortunate for having had those experiences.

Aa: Those of today's generation, not growing up in a similar situation or creatively conducive environment – how hard is it for them to attain that level of perfection?

UAK: I believe, first and foremost, that the rampant practices that come with excessive capitalism – such as commercialisation, playing for the galley, going after publicity, not acquiring depth – must be avoided. These can never serve the Artist or the Art well on its journey towards perfection. Moreover, in our days, we would accept whatever our 'Guru' told us without question, including the occasional scolding or telling off, which deep down I knew was for my own good. Today, I dare

not do that for fear of getting slapped by a harassment case! This is not how it should be. Students need to have complete faith in the 'Guru-Shishya Parampara' (Teacher-Student relationship) to get the best training possible.



Ustad Pranesh Khan

Aa: In what state of mind are you – what do you visualize, what inspires you – during your performance, if we may ask?!

UAK: The moments during my performance are the most peaceful moments of my life – am totally cut off from the world. I am totally immersed in my music, and not once do I think what to play to please the audience, but try to stay true to my 'taalim' (training) received from my grandfather. He dedicated his life to his music, and I was fortunate to see him and learn from him in person. It is him, his life, and his teaching that I remember at every concert, and indeed at all times in life.

Aa: Lastly, would you be so kind as to give a message to our Indian Community here in Russia...

UAK: Well, to all parents, I would want to say this – all over the world, substandard music and dance and its negative influences are taking over young minds; initiate your children to classical music and dance forms – Kathak, Kuchipudi, etc. Instill in them the right values, teach them their own culture, encourage them to speak their own language... Only by so doing will children develop strong roots, and carry their heritage forward with pride. I wish all members and families of the Moscow Puja Committee a very Happy Durga Puja!



Connecting with the audience



Scenes from the Master Class with Ustad ji

Heart to Heart with Atish Ji

Shri Atish Mukhopadhyay is a leading sarod exponent of the Maihar Senia Gharana of Indian Classical Music from the current generation; and besides being an active disciple of Ustad Aashish Khan and a performer of repute himself, also holds workshops, lecture demonstrations and teaches students at some of the most renowned music schools in India and abroad. As part of his visit to Moscow in June - July 2017, Aaratrika caught up with him post his concert with Ustad Aashish Khan, and saw his class in progress at the Moscow Conservatory.



Aa: When did you first come to Russia and how did you come to be associated with the Moscow Conservatory? What was the general idea about the country that you came in with, and has it changed after seeing it for yourself?

AM: Well, this happens to be my tenth visit to Russia! I

remember growing up reading these two magazines in the Bengali language that we had subscribed to – 'Soviet Naari' (Soviet Woman) and 'Soviet Desh' (Soviet Life). I had always imagined this to be a very different and mystical country, and it was more so because absolutely none of my acquaintances had ever come visiting this part of the world! I first came performing at a Concert at the St Petersburg Conservatory in 2009. While there, I struck up a friendship with a couple who happened to be part of the Faculty. They then got in touch with me again in 2012, inviting me to perform at the 150th anniversary celebrations. Meanwhile, the Moscow Conservatory folklore group had come visiting the event, and next I knew, I was invited to give a lecture demonstration at the Moscow Conservatory as well. I was again invited in 2013, and this time besides the lecture demonstrations at the Moscow Conservatory, I also performed in concerts at St Petersburg and at the DP Dhar Hall of the Indian Embassy in Moscow. It was around then that Dr Sapkal, then Ambassador of India to Russia and a great music lover, encouraged me to start taking classes, and so I did – in 2014 in St Petersburg, and 2015 onwards in Moscow.



Aa: What is your sense of the students here – in terms of their interest, motivation, and sincerity towards learning Indian Classical Music?

AM: Of course I have had students who have dropped out, after having studied for a semester or so; after a brilliant concert, many come thinking they'd be able to start playing at that level rightaway, underestimating the hard work, level of

commitment, ear for music, time and discipline it needs. But as for the 25-odd students I do have that are constant, I can see their interest is genuine – they are not here on a whim. It is a challenge for Russian and foreign students to pick up Indian musical notes, scale and style, considering they have grown up listening to the diametrically opposite Western Classical style. That is why I have my students meet at least once a week and practice together, so as to imbibe in them the feeling of being 'guru-bhais' (fellow pupils akin to siblings) to each other, and seeing each other as family. I sometimes also need to be tough so as to be taken seriously. Like I once abandoned a group for a semester, and that instilled a sense of tremendous fear in them. I can teach not-so-talented students, but I expect 100% commitment.



Aa: Indian music is generally perceived to be very hard and difficult to learn – what can we do to make it more approachable without diluting its essence?

AM: The question of dilution has never arisen for me – I have always taught students Classical music in its purest form, albeit only in digestible chunks, and in different levels. I truly believe unadulterated Classical music will be appreciated by all, even those who do not understand the grammar, as it touches the soul.



Aa: So what possible steps do you think can be taken to widen the reach of our Classical Music?

AM: The audience is very much present, but needs to be tapped properly. Wonders can happen with a little bit of investment. The authorities should look outside of Bollywood, for it is an industry which has the ability to support itself without any from the Government; continuous reinforcement of Bollywood and its music through multiple channels has created its huge audience today, whereas little has been done to create that audience for Classical Music. We really do need more support – financial, manpower, etc – as right now bodies such as the Moscow Conservatory organize everything independently, and they have limited budgets and freedom. Investors and companies need to be taken into confidence as to the importance of the cause. On their part, they would of course want publicity when they invest, which will be gladly given – an association with the prestigious Conservatory should definitely hold appeal. Advertisements can be put up during Live Webcast of the Concerts, and all of it together would bode well for their CSR in supporting the Arts and Cultural initiatives. All

of this, however, needs to be communicated, and communicated well. I hope people understand and help us out...



Tete-a-tete with Indian Ocean



Formed in 1990, Indo-rock fusion band Indian Ocean, is known as pioneers of the rock fusion genre in India. The group comprises of five members - Rahul Ram (vocals and bass), Sushmit Sen (guitars), Himanshu Joshi (vocals), Amit Killam (drums and flute) and Tuheen Chakravarty (percussionist). Aaratrika spoke with Rahul Ram just after the group reached Moscow from Vladivostok.



2017 is a special year! This is not only the year of the 70th anniversary of the friendship between India and Russia, but also the year of the Festival of Indian culture - Namaste Russia. It was wonderful performing in Vladivostok. The audience was very gracious and they loved our music. We managed to go for sightseeing and were extremely fascinated by the beauty of the place. Of course we tried the local cuisine. Yes, the caviar and the fish.

Today while we were going around Moscow, we happened to cross Gorky Park where we had performed in 2009! We have very fond memories of that concert – an Indian rock concert in Moscow for the very first time. Today we shall re-live our Moscow memories while performing at the Tganskaya Park.

How come I speak such fluent Bengali? That's because my mother is Bengali.

Sharad Suveccha!

Upcoming Exhibition of Contemporary Indian Artists at Nizhny Novgorod

Nizhny Novgorod in November 2016 for the first time hosted an International project "Art Russia". The 10-day exhibition saw 500 participants from over 16 countries - Russia, Kazakhstan, Denmark, Italy, Mongolia, Belarus, among others. Spread over 7 pavilions and covering over 11000 sq m with display of paintings, sculptures, and applied art, it was visited by over twenty thousand art lovers.



This year, the Art Russia Project will feature an Exhibition of Contemporary Indian Artists. Slated to happen from 29 September to 8 October, 2017 at the Nizhegorodskaya fair grounds of Nizhny Novgorod, the exhibition is dedicated to the 70th anniversary of India-Russia Diplomatic Relations. Approximately 240 works of art are expected to be put up by 30 Indian Contemporary Artists.



Reviving the Dying Art of 'Alpona', one Masterful Stroke at a Time...



Sudhi Ranjan Mukherjee

Sudhi Ranjan Mukherjee is a prolific artist from Santiniketan, Visva Bharati University, West Bengal. He has the distinction of introducing a unique form into Santiniketan's 'Alpona' Art – which has evolved as a distinctive fine art form from once being merely an imprecise traditional village art of the common people. Sudhi Ranjan 'da', as he is known among his students, is responsible for decorations during all major programmes of the Santiniketan ashram.

About the Aaratrika 2017 'Obloshka' (Cover)...

The Maa Durga I have painted for Aaratrika is based on the traditional 'ekchala' (single structure) Durga, with big 'bashpata chokh' (upturned eyes). In the traditional style, the face is slightly big in proportion to the body; while her jewellery – 'mukut' (crown), necklace, etc – in alpona style. Mahishasura is depicted with only the head, and I have taken

the liberty of placing him on right side of Durga, against the usual left. The lion too has been made differently, as it has traits of the 'Ashwasingho' (unicorn-faced lion). I have thus tried to stay true to the traditional style as much as possible, while taking some permissible creative liberties.

What keeps him busy now...

When I first came to Shantiniketan, stage decoration was not really developed. I started doing it for the dance dramas of 'Sangeet Bhavana' (Music Hall), using art forms like the 'Katiyari' work of Gujarat, or geometrical patters; I feel a backdrop helps the artist while acting. Now I am responsible for stage art for almost all dance dramas. I also continue Batik work on cloth.

However, it is 'Alpona' that fascinates me most. It conveys a lot through its waves, ups and downs, and spirals; and new designs, new ideas keep hitting my mind often. Each alpona takes about 3 to 6 hours of effort, with patterns mostly in white but occasionally filled with colour. Earlier, a lot more alpona used to be done – one for every occasion. Over the years, it has reduced significantly, but elaborate alponas are still drawn all the year round for major festivals and events, mainly at the 'Upasana Griha' (Prayer Hall) – such as for 'Maghotsav' (Brahmo Samaj anniversary), 'Poila Boishakh' (Bengali New Year), 'Baishe Srabon' (Rabindranath Tagore Death Anniversary), 'Poush Mela' (Harvest Festival), among others.

On inspiration and the road ahead...

We artists seek inspiration from all quarters. I have visited the Ajanta and Ellora caves, Konark temple, and many temples of the South, and keenly observed the intricate patterns and carvings on the walls – all in search of inspiration. Now of course, one can see a lot over the internet too. But I tell my students that they must take inspiration from nature above all else – nothing inspires like nature...

Last year I met with an unfortunate accident which left me with a fractured shoulder ball and a weak right hand. Thankfully I have mostly recovered, and I plan to keep up painting every day to regain my complete strength. I hope to carry on with my art for as long as I can.

I am happy to participate in the 70th anniversary celebrations of the India-Russia relationship by sharing my art with Aaratrika.



Editor's Note: *The cover and alpona designs that adorn the pages of this year's edition of Aaratrika are the creation of Sudhi Ranjan da.*



The Magical World Under Ice...



Dhritiman Mukherjee is arguably the most respected Nature photographer in India today. He has been working mostly on rare, endangered and challenging subjects, having traveled and photographed across several national parks and bio-zones. His works have been published on BBC, Na-

tional Geographic, New York Times, Lonely Planet, WWF, UNESCO, Birdlife International, to name a few. He is also the recipient of the Carl Zeiss Conservation Award 2013 for his contribution towards conservation of wildlife. Earlier this year, he travelled to the frozen Lake Baikal and presented the hidden magical world underneath for all to see through his lens. Dhritiman was at the Virunga National Park in Congo photographing gorillas and volcanoes when Aaratrika caught up with him!

Aaratrika: Your pictures of the frozen Lake Baikal are mesmerising to say the least! What time of year did you travel to Baikal, and what made you choose to go on this daring escape?! Is this your first trip to Russia?

Dhritiman Mukherjee: Actually, no, I have been to Russia before – my first visit was to the White Sea in March, 2016. I trained in Ice diving at the Arctic Dive centre, then started off with under ice photography. It was earlier this year in March that I embarked upon the frozen Lake Baikal for under ice diving, and to capture baby Nerpa seals if possible.

Aa: What fascinates you the most about life under frozen waters?

DM: I have always been fascinated by ice-covered areas, and there are differences between frozen lakes and seas, including size, currents, and levels of salinity. For example, due to the salinity of sea water, its freezing point goes down to around minus 2 degrees Celsius, whereas freshwater lakes freeze at 0 degree Celsius. This has an impact on the way ice forms, the depths at which life is found, and even the types of life that flourish.

Aa: Could you share your travel route with our readers?

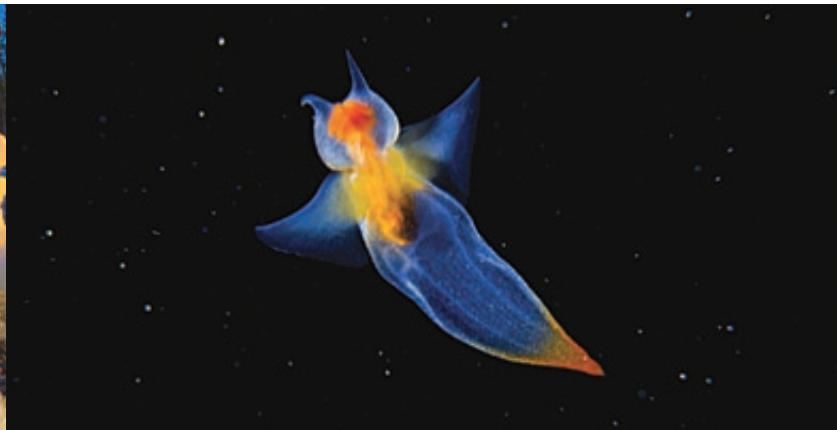
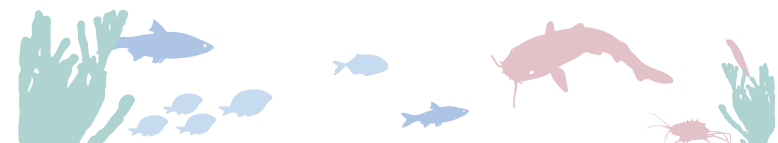
DM: For the White Sea, the first time I went from Moscow to Chupa, Karelia, by train, and then to the Arctic Circle Dive Centre by car; the second time, I flew to Murmansk, and then drove the rest of the way. For Lake Baikal, I flew to Irkutsk, and then drove to my base stations Khuzhir and Ust-Barguzin.

Aa: What surprised you the most in these expeditions?

DM: The sheer volume of ice, and the amount of life! The White Sea has an opaque layer of ice, about a foot thick, whereas Lake Baikal has a much thicker transparent ice cover of about 80cm. There was more plankton activity in both places than I had expected. During one dive in Lake Baikal, I was able to observe sponges and amphipods. There were very few fish closer to the ice surface but the water was rich in phytoplankton. In the White Sea, on the other hand, life was abundant. I observed many Sculpins, Shrimp, Jellyfish, Nudi-branched and Hermit Crabs; and even Soft Coral and Gorgonians upon going deeper.

Aa: Would you like to visit Russia again? If yes, which part of this huge country?!

DM: Yes, of course! The people of Russia have been wonderful. I have seen the Kremlin, but (laughing) I need wilderness! I shall come back next for Kamchatka.



Anniversary through the Lens



President of India Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam Maraikkayar and President of Russia Vladimir Putin 2005

Milestone moments captured by Vadim Shults during last 15 years of his work with the Indian Embassy in Moscow.

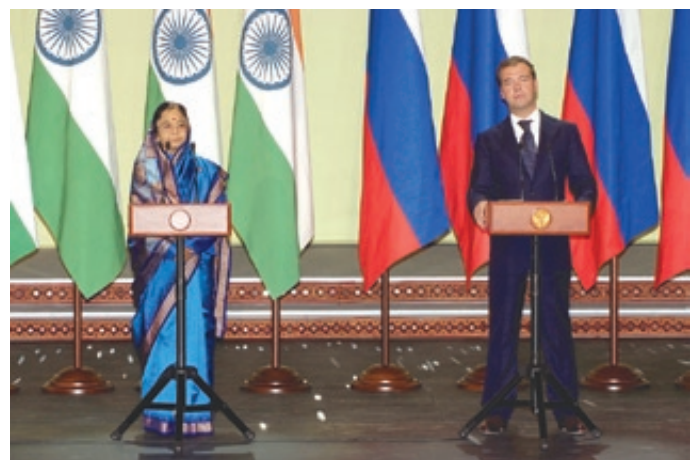
EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- 1974-1979** Lenin Moscow State Pedagogical University, Faculty of foreign languages
- 1975-1977** Army conscription
- 1984-2009** Obraztsova State Academic Central Puppet Theater, Photographer
- 2008-2017** Photo reporter of State TV Channel "Culture"

As an official photographer of the representation of the European Union and the Embassy of the Republic of India in 2004-2011. Wadim was accredited for taking photos during international negotiations and other events held in the Kremlin, in the office of the President of Russia, at the residence of the President of Russia, in the State Duma, in the Federation Council, in the government of Moscow and other state government organizations.

His photographs were published in the newspapers "Izvestia", "Evening Moscow", "Moscow News", magazines "Smena", "Theater Life", "Theater", "Musical Life", "Art".

During his time in the State TV and Radio Company "Culture", Vadim created more than 1300 photo portraits of the channel's guests, and more than 800 photo portraits of the participants of the projects "Academy", "White Studio", "War and Peace", "Karamzin", "Life Line", "We Discuss", "Nutcracker", to mention a few.



President of India Pratibha Devisingh Patil and President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev 2009



Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee



Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh 2005
President of India Pranab Mukherjee
Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi



Rakesh Sharma, first indian cosmonaut
B.K.S. Iyengar, founder of the style of yoga known as Iyengar Yoga



Vadim with Ex-Ambassador P.S. Raghavan and Mrs. Barbara Raghavan
With the Gaurds

The Emami Story

Reaching the coal mines of Siberia...

At the heart of the Kemerovskaya Oblast (aka 'Kuzbass') in Western Siberia is the industrial city of Kemerovo. It is home to a multitude of nationalities, traditions and culture, having attracted several workers from various countries in the past century, lured by its promising economic prospects. Its real reputation, however, comes from the vast reserves of coal that lie underneath. Coal mining is an integral part of the Kuzbass economy, providing for over 58% of Russia's coal needs and employment to thousands. It, however, remains a severely hazardous occupation, with accidents and injuries among miners, coal breaker workers being commonplace.

Sergei is a dedicated worker at precisely one such coal mine on the outskirts of Kemerovo city, having spent the better part of his life here. His modest income is enough to meet his needs and that of his family. He is, however, well aware of his role as provider and nurturer, and therefore of the importance of taking care of his health. Every day, he applies Boroplus to sanitize his hands, after his bath and before all meals. All the minor cuts and scratches he suffers during the course of his work are healed fast thanks to its antiseptic properties. Sergei is glad that there is an affordable and trustworthy product available that doesn't let minor injuries get in the way of his day-to-day living and enjoying a largely simple and content life.

To the Music Halls of Ekaterinburg...

Some 2,000 kms westward is Ekaterinburg (formerly 'Sverdlovsk'), a city that lies at the heart of the Ural mountains and at the confluence of the European and Asian parts of Russia. Due to its geographically unique position, it has indisputable importance as a city rich in culture and diversity. Music, theatre, circus, museums – Ekaterinburg has it all. One of the leading names originating from here – and known today as one of the best in all of Russia, and indeed all of Europe – is that of the 'Ural Philharmonic Orchestra' (UPO, or УАФО in Russian). The UPO performs over 100 concerts and more than 70 programs every year – both at its domicile, the Sverdlovsk State Philharmonic Hall, and on its extensive international tours.

Svetlana holds the prestigious position of a violinist with the UPO. She considers herself fortunate and blessed to be doing what she loves for a living, and rightfully so. She feels motivated to give it her absolute best every day; which is why she uses Boroplus daily to keep her skin soft and supple, for, as she says herself, "A violinist, like a surgeon, should have nimble fingers..." The pleasing fragrance helps too, for it is important to feel good from within, and be in a calm and centered state of mind, to be able to play those notes that captivate the audience.

Across All Generations ...

Mama Larissa lives in the suburbs of Moscow and is the matriarch of her family, which consists of her daughter, Nadezhda, and her 8 year old grandson Vladik. Her 'blinis' (Russian pancakes) are absolutely delicious, and she makes them often as a treat for her grandson and for her guests. After the meal is over, she does the dishes herself, dries her hands, and sits down to rest awhile. Mama Larissa unfortunately has still not got used to the idea of kitchen gloves, and so ends up often with chafed hands. Vladik runs to the kitchen and brings her a tube of Boroplus she keeps handy by the sink. Presently, Nadezhda asks to check from the next room if Vladik has not taken the Boroplus tube which she keeps on her computer table. As an interpreter, she works long hours on her computer, and needs hers close by so she can moisturise her hands at periodic intervals. Vladik too is growing up using Boroplus and loves its fragrance; moreover, he says the purple lid of the tube reminds him of black currant ice cream!

... With Love from India!

The year 2017 marks the 70th year of India-Russia relations. It also is the nineteenth year since Emami first launched in Russia. Boroplus, already the best selling antiseptic cream in India, was immensely loved by Russians and was adopted into their daily lives within no time. Today, the goodness of herbs such as Spiked Ginger Lily, Turmeric, Aloe Vera, Neem, Sandalwood, among others – combined by the ancient classical knowledge of Ayurvedic medicine and innovation – reaches out to the farthest corners of Russia with every tube of Boro Plus that finds itself a place in the Russian household. A better testimony to the strength of the power of love, care and trust that form the basis of the relations between these two nations may be difficult to find...

Боро Плюс – мой секрет в решении проблем с кожей!

Светлана Перискова

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РАЗДРАЖЕНИЕ КОЖИ
ТРЕЩИНАХ
НЕБОЛЬШИХ ПОРЕЗАХ
НЕБОЛЬШИХ ОМОЛАХ

* ЕЩЕ БОЛЕЕ НАТУРАЛЬНЫЙ, БЕЗ ПАРАБЕНОВ «ИММАНИ» «БОРО ПЛЮС. ЗДОРОВАЯ КОЖА» КРЕМ ДЛЯ УХОДА ЗА КОЖЕЙ ЛИЦА, БЕЗ ЗАПАХА, НАТУРАЛЬНЫЙ ЗАЩИТНЫЙ КОМПЛЕКС. ЕСТЕСТВЕННАЯ ЗАЩИТА, УВЛАЖНЕНИЕ И ВОССТАНОВЛЕНИЕ КОЖИ. ТОВАР СЕРТИФИЦИРОВАН. РЕКЛАМА.

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A Page out of my Durga Puja Diaries...

Shashi Tharoor had once likened India to a "Thali", a smorgasbord of sumptuous items on a single huge platter, coming together to present a meal like no other. Similarly, the Moscow Durga Puja – with its cultural, linguistic and regional heterogeneity, culminating in a grand celebration hailed by locals and our South Asian community alike – for me is the manifestation of the Indian Thali. In a foreign land, it epitomizes our rich diversity, and our love, respect and dedication towards the cause of collectively keeping alive our traditions and rich heritage. The word "Puja" in Sanskrit means the expression of the human self through prayer; and Durga Puja for us is about expressing ourselves in different forms – the celebration of literature and culture, of beauty, of the aromas of exquisite foods – all in the presence of the benevolent mother goddess.

The enthusiasm is palpable in the air months in advance – the harbinger of Durga Puja in this part of the world is not 'Shiuli Phool' (Night-flowering Jasmine) sprouting, or swaying 'Kaash Phool' (Kans Grass), but falling golden leaves marking the advent of a long winter ahead. However, the buildup is no less exciting. For one, the hall, which is otherwise used mostly as no more than a venue for University classes, undergoes a complete transformation: a 'pandal' (marquee) is set up, and the idol installed, with help from our Logistics savior, Sherif from Uzbekistan, who is an integral part of the Puja. Meanwhile, Senor Moises Garzon – who is no less Bengali than any of us – and his artistic finesse are put to great use in the decorations. The final touch is given by Ms Lochana Mahadevan's (or Lochana ma'am, as she is better known) 'Rangoli', or Bengali style 'Alpana', on the very evening before the Puja celebrations begin.

Interestingly enough, some of the most dedicated hands working tirelessly during the entire course of the Puja are those of Russians. The motivations are many and varied, such as the cloakroom manager of the Hall, who looks forward to Puja all year and has a delightful spring in her step during the Puja days, because – as she recounts with exaltation and amazement on her face – she was visited by Ma Durga in a dream! Oleg is the first to show up at the Hall every morning amidst chilly weather, at around 7.30am, and he can clearly feel a rush of warmth upon opening those big doors of the hall that houses Ma Durga. He starts rubbing the "Chandan" (sandalwood paste) in the "mandap" (altar) alone – an act he says connects him on a deeper level with India. A little later, Olga joins in to knit fresh flower garlands, an essential and daily requirement for the Puja. Even as they both go on with their work in silence, there arrives yet another silent visitor – Musa, the cat! She sits quietly for a while by the window, and casts sweeping watchful looks across the length of the hall, as if sent and instructed to carry out a thorough inspection of the happenings, before leaving just as quietly as she came in. Around 8.00 am, no matter the weather, Lochana Mahadevan and Ritu Jethalia come in and get going on the task of cutting fruits for the daily offering of the puja. Venera from Kyrgyzstan is another important part of the proceedings, who is around for the entire duration of the Puja, and is just a call away for any cleaning needed at any time. She goes about her tasks efficiently, and has over the years picked up on a lot of the rituals and the importance of Durga Puja. She looks forward to the Prasad every day at the end of the Puja.

At around 9.00am, the Puja begins. The hall resounds with the chanting of mantras by Maharaj, accompanied by the

nostalgia-evoking sounds of "dhak" (albeit electronically generated). Shortly, with the arrival of tea, this gives way to the buzz of excited chatter and 'adda' (discussions), for this does, after all, double up as a happy reunion of people otherwise drowned in the rigmarole of their daily lives all year. Many dedicated committee members and volunteers save up on their annual leaves so they can be available at all times for all days of the Puja. I stay on a strict fast during the entire course of the Puja on all days, and revel in every moment of it, for it is a means of catharsis for me – physically and spiritually. And as for the Puja itself, as if the organizational challenges were not daunting enough, combining and assembling the many (and often strange) items necessary for the rituals is a mammoth task – case in point, the bathing ceremony of the Gods, which requires a combination of different herbs, oils, and waters from different sources of nature; but most intriguingly – soil extracted from the tusk of an elephant, from the teeth of the pig, and from the horn of an ox! It's a wonder that such ingredients are even available, and that they are sent to us all the way from India... For the devotees, the 'Pushpanjali' (flower offering) is the most looked-forward-to part of the rituals, wherein flower petals are distributed among the people which, while firmly ensconced within folded hands, receive prayers by means of mantras as repeated after Maharaj ji, and which are then offered at the feet of the Goddess. While it is done every morning on all three major days, the one on 'Ashtami' day sees the highest attendance. The Pushpanjali is carried out in batches for convenience, and many can be seen rushing in and panting, while looking visibly relieved at being just in time to make the last batch!

Next is a unique feature of Moscow Durga Puja – the "Durga Vandana" – performed together by the ladies. Its tunes are set in Carnatic style, the words are in Sanskrit, and is performed by all – irrespective of whether they are Tamilians, Gujaratis, Marwaris, or Biharis. A better example of the plurality and delightful fusion of cultures may be hard to find. In fact, I remember once Raji Bhaskaran ma'am had explained to me how she strives to recreate her South Indian style 'khichdi' by blending Dal, Rice and butter (of a particular brand – "President"). Likewise, we have devotees from the North, East and West dishing out for the Puja, in their respective styles, uniquely differently tasting "khichdis", "puris and sabjis", "chutneys", and of course, all kinds of sweets. Each dish offered to Ma Durga has immense love put into it, born out of a strong sense of purpose, dedication and service. Then, our dear friend and in-house comedian, Hritesh Baruri, can be seen combining all the said items into a "Thali" for every visitor, and while distributing them, is known to ask for donations in his inimitable style marked by witty repartees such as: "Donations... Donations, for selfies with Mahishasura...", or, "Donations please... for Kartikeya's hair treatment... for food for the starving lion – let him not be on a fruit-only diet...!" And should the "chhole" (chickpea) be exceptionally good, he can be seen wondering aloud as to who might have made it, and whether he/she loves horses!

In the afternoon, once the Puja has ended and most have left, a feeling of relief fills me up. Oleg had taught me to sleep ("It's great to sleep in the presence of Maa nearby..."), but that was many years ago. Today, the Puja afternoon has evolved to be an event in its own right. A constant stream of visitors keeps coming in, and they join in the engaging "adda" over tea and snacks. This also serves as an occasion for spontaneous cultural performances in front of the Goddess, by grown-

ups and students alike – Biswarup Da's songs on the guitar are highly requested and often the highlight here.

Come evening 7pm-ish, and we are treated to a thrilling line-up as part of the evening cultural programme at the neighbouring auditorium. Putting up spectacular performances are Russian artistes, committee members, and children, in both classical and popular shows. All the events – especially those of the children – involve months of planning and preparation, being the brainchild of the creative visionaries among us such as Debashish Sengupta or Vishal Jethalia, and helped of course by all parents involved. To me, what is most exciting to see is the transformation of the child or a person performing before a packed evening audience – every performer requires a stage to develop, and many of us have passed through this transformation, which invariably began by being pushed to do something we had never done before, and which ended in our triumphant conquering of our fear of the unknown.

For me personally, much before, and even after, I entered the world of cinema – to stand fearlessly before the camera with the lights on myself – the lights on the Puja stage were the opportunity to look towards the darkness of the audience and strengthen my inner self. I have only gratitude and respect in my heart for the creators and organizers whose efforts give our children the opportunity to discover their talents.

As someone born to parents who performed the Puja ceremony in its entirety – with my father even having served as priest – and having grown up with the strongest desire to preserve and replicate it, I wonder about the future of our Puja in Moscow; and am hopeful that the generation in turn growing up now and seeing the proceedings in detail in their formative years, will also continue to value and keep alive this great tradition for many more generations to come...

Dr. Pradyumna Chatterjee



Glimpses of Durga Puja 2016



Glimpses of Durga Puja 2016



Glimpses of Durga Puja 2016



Glimpses of Durga Puja 2016



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ИМЕЮТСЯ ПРОТИВОПОКАЗАНИЯ, ПЕРЕД УПОТРЕБЛЕНИЕМ КОНСУЛЬТИРОВАТЬСЯ У ВРАЧА



सर्व मंगल मांगल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थ साधिके ।
शरन्ये त्रयम्बिके गौरी नारायणी नमोस्तुते ॥

*(Oh Narayaani, Oh Shivi, Oh Gauri
you fulfil the desires of all.
I pray to you)*

शरणागत दीनार्तपरित्राण परायणे।
सर्वस्यातिहरे देवि नारायण नमोस्तुते॥

*(You who are perpetually endeavouring
to protect the weak and the poor
and remove their misery.
Oh Narayani, I pray to you)*

सर्वस्वरूपे सर्वेशे सर्वशक्तिसमन्विते ।
भयेभ्यस्त्राहि नो देवि दुर्गे देवि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

*(Oh Goddess Durga,
please protect us from all kinds of fear.
Oh omnipotent Durga I pray to you)*

रोगनशेषानपहंसि तुष्टा।
रुष्टा तु कामान् सकलानभीष्टान्॥
त्वामाश्रितानां न विपन्नराणां।
त्वमाश्रिता ह्यश्रयतां प्रयान्ति॥

*(Oh Goddess, when you are pleased
you remove all ailments and when you are angry
you destroy everything that a person desires for.
However, Those, who come to you for sanctuary
never have to confront any catastrophe.
Instead, such people secure enough merit
to provide shelter to others)*

सर्वाबाधा प्रशमनं त्रैलोक्यस्याखिलेश्वरि।
एवमेव त्वया कार्यमस्मद्वैरिविनाशनम्॥
सर्वाबाधा विनिर्मुक्तो धनधान्यसुतान्वितः।
मनुष्यो मत्प्रसादेन भविष्यति न संशयः॥

*(Whoever listens
to the story of the Goddess
during the great Puja
that is organised in the winters
succeeds in overcoming all obstacles
and is blessed wealth and progeny)*

जयन्ती मङ्गला काली भद्रकाली कपालिनी ।
दुर्गा शिवा क्षमा धात्री स्वाहा स्वधा नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

*(Oh Goddess, you who are known
by the names of Mangala, kali, Bhdra kali,
Kapalinee, durge, Kshama, Shivaa,
Dhatri, Swahaa, Swadha, I pray to you)*

देहि सौभाग्यमारोग्यं देहि मे परमं सुखम्
रूपं देहि जयं देहि यशो देहि द्विषो जहि ।

*(Oh Goddess, bless me with good fortune,
good health, good looks, success and fame.
Oh Vaishnavi, you are the very basis for the world.
You have mesmerised the World.
When you are pleased with some one you ensure
his salvation from the cycle of life and death)*



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Are Board Exams Necessary?



As a student under this system, you know my answer. Board exams are definitely unnecessary. In my opinion, all that these exams do is promote rote-learning, a vicious cycle of tuitions, and a totally exam-centric education system. What should be a continuous journey of education and quest for knowledge becomes a sudden destination for stress, tears, and pressure in the 10th and 12th classes.

And all this is for what exactly?

At least in the previous generations, the university you went to was decided by your 12th grade board exam marks. Now, competitive exams are the reigning status quo for getting into colleges and

the board exam marks hardly matter in the future, except for perhaps bragging rights. That isn't very useful or healthy is it? Also, many times, a student might not do well in a few subjects in the board exams but excel in the competitive exams like IIT or AIIMS.

And talking about health and well-being, the board exams create such a pressure-cooker type situation that students cannot participate in any extra-curriculars or sports at all. Students don't even have time to breathe as they are simultaneously preparing for competitive exams as well as the boards. This completely goes against the all-round development of children.

Just this year, many totalling mistakes happened in the 12th board exams. A Delhi girl got 42 marks in maths but after rechecking, it turned out she actually deserved 90! Many children do not even apply for re-totalling, just accepting their fate. Mind you, there is a fee to be paid for re-totalling and from this year the re-checking process has been stopped.

Don't you think this is just playing with children's emotions and lives??? Not only are board exams unnecessary, I believe until the system is properly equipped, one should not even talk of board exams! We cannot let such mistakes keep happening.

The people who are pro-board exams always lay their case that without the boards, there would be favouritism at the school-level. But I want to ask, do two wrongs make a right? Having board exams because of fear of favouritism is like treating the symptom of a disease rather than the cause!

Favouritism is school-level corruption and instead of fixing this, should we really put even more stress on children by administering boards? And talking about favouritism, then does it only happen in 10th and 12th class? What about Class 1 or Class 11 or Class 8? If board exams are really the solution to stopping favouritism then should we hold these exams for all classes?

We all know, that is definitely not the answer. This obsession with marks must be stopped! There is simply no good coming out of this system. It only curbs the ingenuity and integrity of children. All these points sum up my case that board exams are definitely unnecessary.



Rishabh Kumar, Class XI,
Embassy of India School, Moscow

Amazon breached: Transfusion

**Saagarika has been publishing stories with Aaratrika while in school over the last 6 years.
We want to take this opportunity to congratulate and wish her success for the publication of her first book
and also for all future endeavours.**

Hello Readers!

Since childhood I had been scribbling little stories, fantasies and poems, sometimes even little novels, and this year after school was over I finally self-published a novel on Amazon. It's called Transfusion and is published under a pen-name Sofia Sanyal.

The story revolves around two best friends, Zorami and Amanda who knew each other since high school. Zorami is a super model and a travel blogger and Amanda has an eight-to-five job. Zorami is a rational American until goes to the Bermuda triangles she comes across magic, Magic changes her life.

Amanda is a simple and honest girl until she gets a chance to live Zorami's so called "perfect" life. She forgets all rules of friendship and loyalty and is lured by greed and desire.

Eduardo, a young and handsome billionaire is, the love of Zorami's life is confused as he is unaware of what is happening between the two girls who are both in love with him.



It is a small novel of fantasy-romance genre that will capture your mind and heart as you read along. And for those who have sometime in their life have idolized somebody else's life and thought of it as perfect, this book has a moral at the end.

Transfusion is available on Amazon for 2.99 dollars – the electronic version. The paperback costs 5.99 dollars. The free preview is also available on Wattpad.

Saagarika Sanyal
Graduated high school in 2017
from EOI School Moscow



Feluda'r shongey Golpo



I am an Indian girl but I was born in Hong Kong and never got a chance to live in India. My parents always take me to Indian events so that I can know India better.

This year for our summer vacation, we visited my uncles and aunts in San Francisco and was fortunate to attend NABC (North American Bengali Conference) or Bongoshommelon at Santa Clara. This is a congregation of Bengali people from all across North America to meet and engage with artists and famous people, who come all the way from Kolkata to perform and do interviews for Bengalis who live in North America.

My favorite event in NABC was meeting Feluda team in "Feluda Adda", organized to celebrate 50 years of Feluda. Feluda (Actor Sabyasachi, Director Sandip Ray (his father Satyajit Ray created Pheluda, Topshe (actor Saheb) and one of the villains from Bombay er Bombetey were all present.

Some of the questions were (to Sandip Ray) 'Are you going to write Pheluda stories?' 'Is there going to be Pheluda in English?' 'What will happen to Pheluda?' And someone asked the actors 'If you could choose who you wanted to be in Pheluda who would it be?'

Last but not the least; the true calling of such events is food but this year there was hardly any food on the first evening. Ma said this is HUGE GONDOGOL (disaster) given that the committee knew how many people were going to come but did not cook enough food. At the end, we ate at IHOP instead!

This was my first NABC event and I hope to attend more in the future.

*Aarushi Chatterjee, Class V
Anglo-American School of Moscow*

A Bit of Coin



Conventional currency is based on gold or silver but Bitcoin is based on mathematics. Around the world, people are using software programs that follow a mathematical formula to produce Bitcoins called "mining". The mathematical formula is freely available, so that anyone can check it. The software is also open source, meaning that anyone can look at it to make sure that it does what it is supposed to.

Thanks to decentralization and encryption, Bitcoin is more secure than the traditional bank. It can't be externally manipulated or confiscated because there's no physical bill to carry. You simply have a hard copy key, which acts as a debit or credit card would, and it's only obtained and held by the owner. All Bitcoin transactions are recorded into a Blockchain, minimizing the risk of fraud. Blockchains are vital because they have the ability to increase security in three different ways: by blocking identity theft, preventing the tampering of data and stopping pesky Denial of Service attacks. If it happens, it is immediately traceable due to the encryption in the Blockchain.

While Bitcoin remains a relatively new phenomenon, it is growing fast. From under \$4 per coin in 2011 to \$4000 per coin in 2017, it has become the fastest growing alternative currency. At the end of April 2017, the total value of all existing Bitcoins exceeded 20 billion US dollars, with millions of dollars worth of Bitcoins exchanged daily. So, is it another bubble or a more reliable currency of the future?

*Yash Dasgupta
Class X, School # 1637*

Bitcoin was created in 2009 by a programmer nicknamed Satoshi Nakamoto. It is a type of digital currency in which encryption techniques are used to regulate the generation of units and verify the transfer of funds. The idea was to exchange coins without any central authority, electronically, more or less instantly, at the lowest possible cost. The Bitcoin is decentralized and nobody owns the Bitcoin network much like no one owns the technology behind email. The network is distributed to all participants; each computer that produces Bitcoins is a participant in this system. There are no transaction fees and no need to give away all of your personal information.

For a user, Bitcoin is nothing more than a mobile app or computer program that provides a personal Bitcoin wallet and allows a user to send and receive Bitcoins with them. You can buy merchandise anonymously, and international payments are easier and cheaper as Bitcoin is not tied to any specific country, therefore they're not subject to government regulations. The great thing about using Bitcoins is more and more merchants are beginning to accept them as a form of payment, opening a new world of possibilities.



Usha Albuquerque's Gems of Wisdom



Usha Albuquerque has been one of India's leading career counselors for the last nineteen years. She pioneered career guidance on television by producing several widely acclaimed series – Hum Honge Kamyab, The Professionals, Parvaz and the career chat show 'Avenues' – that, together, ran for over 4 years. Her

books, The Penguin India Career Guide – Vols. 1 & 2, are into their second edition, whilst Puffin has published her latest career guide for younger children. She is a regular columnist on careers and career counselling for national and regional dailies, television and radio channels and online sites.

Aa: For school-going children of the Indian community in Russia, studying in schools here (such as the Kendriya Vidyalaya in Moscow) but growing up no different in cultural sensitisation from our children back home in India, what attractive career options exist for them where they can contribute to the development of India, or to the BRICS countries as a whole? Are there any think tanks or similar bodies in India where Russian language skills are given importance?

UA: For students fluent in Russian there are many career and job options. Russian is the 5th largest language of the world, with two hundred million people speaking the Russian language across the globe. So work options can be with internationally renowned organizations like NATO, Red Cross, UNESCO, and the UN which recognize Russian as one of their official languages.

The demand for Russian linguists has witnessed an unprecedented spurt in India too. The scope of Russian language is growing and candidates willing to explore it have a multitude of job opportunities in the corporate world. India's trade and commerce sectors also have a huge demand for Russian speaking workforce. Moreover, the recent spate of understandings signed between India and Russia, if implemented timely, will also increase employment opportunities for Russian speaking Indians.

The boom in India's health care sector is one example. A huge number of Russian nationals visit New Delhi and other Indian metropolitan cities for medical treatment, which has resulted in a huge demand for graduates in Russian language in this sector.

The rising popularity and demand for Russian language in India was echoed at the "Day of Russian Language" celebrated in Russian Center of Science and Culture (RCSC), New Delhi to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and India, as held at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC) in New Delhi. More than 200 Russian language students from six prestigious Indian universities and the Institute of Russian Language (IRL) of the RCSC, participated in the program comprising an Olympiad on Russian Language, essay writing competition, competition of interpreters, costumes, song and dance contests, recitation of Russian poetry, and Quiz on "What do I Know about Russia".

Aa: Beyond the traditional options of Engineering and Medicine, what are your suggestions for other attractive subjects/ areas to major in post the Std XII or equivalent examinations for our soon-to-graduate children, keeping in mind the current needs of the world and expected returns for themselves and for the society in the long run?

UA: Today there are hundreds of career opportunities and therefore not surprising that it is difficult for students to make a choice. Besides the usual suspects, Engineering and medicine, students can opt for so many new fields from nanotechnology and genetics to digital technology, game design and sports management. Creative students can opt for design, fine arts or visual communication., those good with computers can look at data analytics, cyber security, e-commerce or web development. Those good with numbers, can explore forensic accounting, investment banking and actuarial science. If you like working with food, you can become a chef, join hotel management, food technology or Nutrition & Dietetics. There are also alternatives for the medical field such as physiotherapy, Homeopathy, Ayurveda, Naturopathy and Yoga science, as well as for the technically minded such as mecha-tronics and naval architecture.

So there is a world of work opportunities particularly with India emerging as one of the fastest developing economies in the world. The growing middle class demand for goods and services means there will always be a demand for jobs in healthcare, hospitality, media and entertainment, business administration, education and banking services. Moreover, as the country's infrastructure develops there will also be a requirement for engineers and technical professionals in manufacturing and construction.

Aa: Considering all the disturbance and economic turmoil happening in the Western World, coupled with ever rising costs of living and dwindling academic bursaries, which are some other newer geographies that you feel shall ascend to prominence in the years to come as popular study destinations? In other words, where can students look for a degree that is well recognised worldwide, and yet the tuition / living costs to attain which do not put them deep in debt at such an early stage in their lives?

UA: For those who can manage to qualify the fiercely competitive entrance exams, India is actually one of the finest destinations for higher studies. But the limited number of reputable institutions of higher learning means it out of the reach of many students.

Boom or recession, with scholarship or with a loan, USA continues to be the El Dorado for Indian students dreaming of studying abroad and starting an international career. But the huge financial costs, restricted work options and the recent political climate has got Indian students looking at alternative destinations to US and UK, such as Australia, Canada, Singapore, and New Zealand, among the English speaking countries. Apart from these top destinations, other countries also trying to charm Indian students, are Japan and Hong Kong in Asia, and several European countries like, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, as well as countries of Scandinavia that are wooing Indians with promises of a world class education with a more welcoming environment.

Anandamela 2017 – A Complete 'Bachcha' Party!

Literally translating to 'Festival of Joy', Anandamela, the Moscow Durga Puja's annual food festival, has been an integral part of the celebrations for several years. Kicking off and creating the buildup to the ultimate Puja celebrations, each year sees the event being celebrated in novel ways. This year, however, it broke new ground – where traditionally, it has been a competition between elegant ladies of the Moscow Durga Puja Family exhibiting their culinary talents and ethnic displays – it was the children that called the shots this time! 10 teams, comprising 40 children from the ages of 10 to 16, battled it out among themselves. The venue chosen was '**CulinaryOn**' – the largest entertainment and culinary studio in Europe, with the Moscow studio housing seven culinary halls and two conference rooms. Under the supervision of two ace Italian Chefs Giovanni Phillippone & Vincenzo Dilillo, and an experienced group of confectioners and bartenders, parents and members watched in delight as the kids dished out an exotic spread of delicious Pastas, mouthwatering Cakes and refreshing Mocktails! All ingredients were of the best quality and provided by the studio, while the resident DJ helped make the atmosphere come alive with foot-tapping numbers. The event was a resounding success, having been a wonderful experience for the kids, as well as a revelation for the parents to see a side to their children that most hadn't seen before! The Moscow Durga Puja continues to serve as a platform and ground for revealing and perfecting the immense talent our next generation holds...



Winners



1st Prize
Anushka, Medha
Kanak, Siddharth



2nd Prize
Arav, Vansh
Fiana, Akanksha



3rd Prize
Aarushi, Dewanshi
Vikrant, Arsh

Other participants





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NARAYANI NAMOSTHUDE

কবি-অধ্যাপক তরুণ সান্যাল রুশ-ভারত মৈত্রীর প্রহরী



ভারত- সোভিয়েত/ রুশ মৈত্রী ও সহযোগিতার বয়স নয় নয় করে সত্তর বছর হয়ে গেছে। এই বছর সেই সম্পর্কের ৭০ বছর উপলক্ষে রাষ্ট্রীয় পর্যায়ে নানান কর্মসূচী গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে। নিশ্চয় আরও হবে। ভারতের স্বাধীনতার বছর ১৯৪৭ সাল থেকে ধরলে, রাজনৈতিক কূটনৈতিক স্তরে এই মৈত্রী যতটা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ, তার চেয়েও বেশী গুরুত্বপূর্ণ হয়তো, দু দেশের সাধারণ নাগরিকদের মধ্যে সম্প্রীতির সম্পর্ক ও পারস্পরিক সম্মান ও বিশ্বাসের একটা অনস্বীকার্য বাতাবরণ। শুধু সরকারী মঞ্চে মৈত্রীর ঘোষণাতে এই কাজ সম্পূর্ণ হয়না। এই বন্ধুত্ব সরকারী বা রাজনৈতিক প্রোটোকল ছড়াই গড়ে উঠেছে তিল তিল করে বহু নিঃস্বার্থ মানুষের অক্লান্ত কাজের মাধ্যমে।

অবশ্যই কাজটি সহজ ছিলনা। যে সমস্ত কবি, সাহিত্যিক, শিল্পী ও বুদ্ধিজীবী এই সেতু বন্ধনের কাজটি করে এই মৈত্রীকে দৃঢ় করেছিলেন, সদ্যপ্রয়াত অধ্যাপক তরুণ সান্যাল ছিলেন তাদের মধ্যে অগ্রগণ্য।

ভারত সোভিয়েত সাংস্কৃতিক সমিতি বা ইন্স্টিটিউট এক সময়ে ছিল অত্যন্ত জরুরী ও কর্মিষ্ঠ একটি সদা ব্যস্ত সংগঠন। অধ্যাপক তরুণ সান্যাল ছিলেন তার সাধারণ সম্পাদক। জেলা থেকে জেলায়, রাজ্য থেকে রাজ্যে ছুটে বেড়িয়েছেন এই অসাধারণ বায়ী, কবি ও সমাজতান্ত্রিক মানুষটি। শান্তি ও গণতন্ত্রে আমৃত্যু বিশ্বাসী তিনি মনে করতেন, যে বিশ্ব শান্তির লক্ষ্যে প্রথম ও প্রধান ধাপ হল ভারতের সাথে সোভিয়েত দেশের বন্ধুত্ব শক্ত করা।

১৯৩২ সালে তৎকালীন অবিভক্ত ভারতের পাবনা জেলার (অধুনা বাংলাদেশ) পোরজনা গ্রামে তাঁর জন্ম। অনেক ভাই-বোনের মাঝে ছোট ভাই হিসেবে বেড়ে ওঠা, বাবার বিএ- বিএল পাশ হওয়া সত্ত্বেও ইংরেজের চাকরি না করার প্রতিজ্ঞা ও তদজনিত দারিদ্র্যের মাঝে বড় হওয়া তাঁর জীবন বিষয়ে দৃষ্টিভঙ্গিকে প্রভাবিত করেছিল- এতে সন্দেহ নেই। উনবিংশ শতকের পাবনা- বগুড়ার কৃষক বিদ্রোহের পুরোধা তাঁর ঠাকুরদার কথা ও গাথা, যা এখনও প্রচলিত, তাঁকে ত্যাগ করতে, ও মানুষের, পৃথিবীর জন্য জীবন বাজী রাখতে শিখিয়েছিল।

খুব কম বয়সে তরুণবাবু বাম রাজনীতিতে জড়িয়ে পড়েন। জেল খাটেন। অনশন করেন, রাজবন্দীর মর্যাদা পাবার দাবীতে। পেশাদার জীবনের শুরুতে, বালুরঘাট কলেজে পড়াতে গিয়ে পুলিশ রিপোর্টে তাঁর চাকরি যায়। এখন অনেকের-ই মনে নেই, যে পঞ্চাশের দশকে বামপন্থী হওয়ার দোষ থাকলে সরকারী চাকরী হতেনা। বা, হলেও তা চলে যেত।

১৯৫০ দশকে তাঁর প্রথম কাব্যগ্রন্থ ‘মাটির বেহালা’ খুব সাড়া ফেলেছিল তৎকালীন আধুনিক বাংলা কবিতার জগতে। বুদ্ধদেব বসু- সমর সেন- সুধীন দত্ত তখন মধ্যগগণে। তার পর একের পর এক লিখে গেছেন ‘রণক্ষেত্রে দীর্ঘবেলা একা’, ‘তোমার জন্যই বাংলাদেশ’, ‘কায়া নৌকা’, ‘নিতান্ত পুঁতির টায়রা’- এমন অনেক অনেক কাব্যগ্রন্থ। সম্পাদনা করেছেন ‘পরিচয়’, ‘কবিতা সীমান্ত’, ‘সপ্তাহ’ সহ অনেক পত্রিকা।

বাংলাদেশের মুক্তিযুদ্ধ চলার সময় তাঁর দায়িত্বে থাকা স্কটিশ চার্চ কলেজের হস্টেলে বহু শরণার্থী বুদ্ধিজীবীর সাময়িক বাসস্থানের ব্যবস্থা করেন নিজ দায়িত্বে, ও কলেজ শিক্ষকের নামমাত্র আয়ের জোরে। এমনকি, বালাসোর থেকে বেনাপোল অর্থাৎ যশোর সীমান্ত অবধি মুক্তিযোদ্ধাদের জন্য বেসরকারী ভাবে অস্ত্র সরবরাহ-তেও একাধিকবার অংশ নিয়েছিলেন। খেয়াল রাখা দরকার, যে সেটা বাংলায় নকশাল আন্দোলনের সময়। এমন সংবেদনশীল বস্তু পরিবহনে তাঁর অংশগ্রহণ কোনভাবে ধরা পড়লে ফল মারাত্মক হতে পারত।

এই কাজের স্বীকৃতি স্বরূপ বাংলাদেশ সরকার তাঁকে ‘মুক্তিযুদ্ধ সন্মাননা’ স্মারক দেন ২০১১ সালে। স্বয়ং প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা তাঁকে এই স্মারক হাতে তুলে দেন।

কলকাতাস্থিত রুশ (সাবেক সোভিয়েত) সাংস্কৃতিক কেন্দ্র “গোর্কি সদন” নামকরণও তাঁর- ই করা।



গল্পটা চোখে দেখতে পাই-সৃজিত



সৃজিত মুখার্জি বাংলা চলচ্চিত্র জগতে স্বনামধন্য। দেশে ও বিদেশে চলচ্চিত্রকার হিসেবে তাঁর পরিচিতি সুবিদ্যুত। মাত্র ৭ বছরের মধ্যে সৃজিত নিজস্ব স্টাইল, আঙ্গিক ও বিষয়বস্তু চয়নে নিজস্বতা দিয়ে অন্যদের থেকে একেবারে আলাদা এক ঘরানা তৈরি করে ফেলেছেন।

সম্প্রতি আরাত্রিকার সাথে সৃজিতের এক অন্তরঙ্গ আলাপ হয়।

আরাত্রিকা: তুমি কি ছোটবেলা থেকেই ভেবেছিলে ফিল্ম ডিরেকশন করবে?

সৃজিত: না, এরকম কোন আইডিয়া আমার ছিলনা। তবে গল্প বলতে আমার বরাবরই ভালো লাগে। কিন্তু আমার মনে হচ্ছিল, প্রসেনিয়ামের নিজস্ব কিছু কম্প্রেন্ট আছে। সেটাকে উত্তীর্ণ হয়ে বৃহত্তর পরিসরে গল্প বলার জন্যই আমার সিনেমায় আসা।

আরাত্রিকা: এমন কোন ঘটনা কি ঘটেছিল, যা তোমাকে ট্রিগার করে?

সৃজিত: একটা সিগল ঘটনা বলা মুশকিল। একটা নাটক করছিলাম। 'ফেলুদা ফেরত'। যার সূত্রে আমার নন্দনার সাথে পরিচয় হয়। নন্দনা বলতে, অমর্ত্যবাবুর মেয়ে। একদিন আলোচনা প্রসঙ্গে সত্যজিৎ রায়ের 'নায়ক' ছবিটির প্রসংগ আসে। আমি বলি, এরকম আমার একটা গল্প আছে। আমায় একটা ইম্প্রট্যান্ট কথা ও তখন জিজ্ঞেস করেছিল- তুই এটা সাহিত্য হিসেবে দেখতে পাচ্ছিস, না ছবি হিসেবে?

আমি বললাম, আমি দেখতে পাচ্ছি।

আমার প্রথম ছবি করার পিছনে গল্প যদি বল, তাহলে এটাই সেই গল্প।

আরাত্রিকা: তোমার সাফল্যের পিছনে কি কারন আছে বলে তোমার মনে হয়?

সৃজিত: আমি খুব জেদি। যেটা করব ঠিক করি, সেটা কোন একটা লেভেল পর্যন্ত পৌঁছলে তবে ছাড়ি। দ্বিতীয়ত, আমি খুব সিস্টেম্যাটিক। শর্টকাট মেথড আমি বিশ্বাস করিনা।

আরাত্রিকা: তোমার কাজের মধ্যে কোন জায়গাটাকে তুমি সবচেয়ে এনজয় করো? তোমার খ্যাতির কথা বলছিলা...

সৃজিত: জানো, আমায় সেকেন্ড ইয়ারে পি এইচ ডি ছেড়ে চাকরিতে চলে যেতে হয়।

ওই পিএইচডি শেষ না করতে পারার অতৃপ্ত আত্মা আমার মাথায় সব সময় ঘুর ঘুর করে। একটা নতুন সিনেমা মানে একটা নতুন ব্রহ্মাণ্ড। এটাই আমার সবচেয়ে ভালো লাগে। খ্যাতি-ট্যাতি ওগুলো তো বাই প্রডাক্ট, আওয়ার্ড ও তাই। ইন ফ্যাক্ট, বক্স অফিস সাফল্যও বাই- প্রডাক্ট।

আরাত্রিকা: তুমি কারো কাছ থেকে ইন্সপিরেশন পেয়েছিলে? তিনি জানেন বা নাও জানতে পারেন...

সৃজিত: ১৯৯২ সালে সুমনদার "তোমাকে চাই" এলবামটার গান আমায় উদ্বুদ্ধ করেছিল। সিনেমার জগতে তপন সিংহ আমায় ডেফিনিটলি ভীষণ ইন্সপায়ার করেন। তাঁর ন্যারেটিভ স্টাইল, থিম্যাটিক ভারসেটাইলিটি, ড্রিটমেন্ট, সঙ্গীতের প্রয়োগ, টেকনিক্যাল দিক, হিউমার, সব মিলিয়ে আইডল যাকে বলা যায়, তিনি তপন সিংহ। আমি বাঙালি পরিচালকদের কথা বলছি। আন্তর্জাতিক ক্ষেত্রে তো অনেকেই আছেন।

আরাত্রিকা: তোমার কি মনে হয়, ফিল্ম শুরু করা কঠিন, নাকি চালিয়ে যাওয়া?

সৃজিত: ডেফিনিটলি চালিয়ে যাওয়া। আমি যখন শুরু করেছিলাম 'অটোগ্রাফ' দিয়ে, অনেকে বলেছিল ক্লক! বাইশে শ্রাবণের পরেও বলেছিল ক্লক! হেমলক সোসাইটির পরে এটা অনেক কমে গেছিল। মিশর রহস্যের পর প্রায় চুপ হয়ে গেছিল। চতুষ্কোণের পর প্রায় থেমেই গেছিল।

আরাত্রিকা: স্ক্রিপ্ট দিয়ে ছবি শুরু হয়- তুমি এর সাথে এক মত?

সৃজিত: একদমই! শুধু ইমোশনাল জায়গা থেকে নয়, এমন কি সিনেমার যে প্রডাকশনের দিক, সেটাও শুরু হয়।

আরাত্রিকা: তুমি রাশিয়া যাওনি, কিন্তু যেতে কি চাও?

সৃজিত: প্রচন্ড ভাবে যেতে চাই। আমার শৈশবের অনেকটা জুড়েই রাশিয়া। রুশ দেশের উপকথা, বাবা ইয়াগা, রাশিয়ায় ভারতের ফেস্টিভ্যাল এইসব মিলিয়ে রাশিয়ার সাথে যোগাযোগ আমার কোথাও না কোথাও ছিল ছোট থেকেই। ইম্পাত, আনা কারেনিনা প্রভৃতি পড়ে যে দেশটাকে কল্পনায় দেখছি তাকে নিজের চোখে দেখতে চাই।

আরাত্রিকা: আমাদের পাঠকদের জন্য কিছু বার্তা আছে?

সৃজিত: তোমাদের সবাইকে শারদ শুভেচ্ছা। দূর দেশে আমাদের সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্যের প্রদীপ জ্বলে রেখেছ তোমরা- এ এক অসাধারণ কৃতিত্ব।

শিগগিরই আসছি তোমাদের কাছে। আরো অনেক আড্ডার, তোমাদের থেকে অনেক কিছু জানার আশা নিয়ে।

আরাত্রিকা: তোমার থেকেও নতুন নতুন গল্প শোনার অপেক্ষায় থাকবো। তোমার পরের কাকাবাবু সিরিজের ছবি 'ইয়েতি অভিযান'-এর জন্য শুভকামনা রইল। ভালো থেকো।

रुस में हिंदी भाषा का प्रसार



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2017 में भारत और रुस के बीच राजनयिक संबंधों की स्थापना की 70वीं वर्षगांठ मनाई जा रही है। हमारे दोनों देशों के बीच मैत्रीपूर्ण संबंधों का इतिहास बहुत पुराना है। लेकिन आजकल 21वीं सदी में, रुस-भारत की मैत्री और साझेदारी की नई दिशाएँ सामने आई हैं, जिनकी विशाल संभावनाएँ दिखाई दे रही हैं, जो न केवल पारस्परिक आर्थिक-व्यापार तथा ऊर्जा संबंधों में, बल्कि शैक्षणिक और सांस्कृतिक सहयोग में भी नई परियोजनाएँ तथा नये अवसर पेश कर रही हैं। वास्तव में, यह बहुत आनंददायक और संतोषप्रद बात है, क्योंकि रुस और भारत के पिछले 20 साल बहुत कठिन रहे हैं और इस अवधि में कोई स्थाई शैक्षणिक और सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान नहीं हुआ।

आजकल रुस में हिंदी भाषा और साहित्य सात विश्वविद्यालयों में पढ़ाये जाते हैं – मास्को नगर में चारों संस्थानों में, एक संस्थान व्लादिवोस्तोक नगर में (फार-ईस्ट विश्वविद्यालय में) है, एक संस्थान सेंट-पीटर्सबर्ग नगर के राजकीय विश्वविद्यालय में है और एक काज़ान शहर के राजकीय विश्वविद्यालय में। इसके अलावा, मास्को में एक बोर्डिंग-स्कूल भी है जहाँ पिछले 60 साल से ज़्यादा समय से हिंदी पढ़ाई जाती रही है। कुल मिलाकर, रुस में हिंदी शिक्षण राजकीय एवं निजी संस्थानों, आनलाइन तथा निजी स्तरों पर चल रहा है।

2014 में रुसी राजकीय मानविकी विश्वविद्यालय में क्षेत्रीय हिंदी संगोष्ठी “हिंदी महोत्सव,” भारतीय संस्कृति के तीन दिवसीय समारोह,

2015 में संस्कृत भाषा के दो दिवसीय समारोह और 2016 में मास्को राजकीय विश्वविद्यालय में “हिंदी क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलन” एवं भारतीय संस्कृति के तीन दिवसीय समारोह आयोजित किये गये। इन संगोष्ठियों के आयोजन में मास्को में भारतीय दूतावास के जवाहरलाल नेहरू सांस्कृतिक केंद्र के निदेशकों ने बड़ा योगदान किया।

क्षेत्रीय हिंदी सम्मेलन के अनेक लक्ष्य थे : 1) हिंदी भाषा और हिंदी साहित्य के अध्ययन में वैज्ञानिक समुदायों को उत्साहपूर्वक आकर्षित करना; 2) “स्वतंत्र राज्यों के राष्ट्रमंडल” (सीआईएस) और रुस में दक्षिण एशिया के अध्ययन के लिए इनके प्रमुख शैक्षिक और अनुसंधान केन्द्रों के साथ संबंधों का विकास करना; 3) रुसी विश्वविद्यालयों के छात्र-छात्राओं और शिक्षकगण को भारत की परंपराओं से परिचित कराना।

इस सम्मेलन में मास्को, सेंट पीटर्सबर्ग, व्लादिवोस्तोक के शैक्षिक संस्थानों के 54 हिंदी शिक्षकों और छात्र-छात्राओं ने भाग लिया। रुसी राजकीय मानविकी विश्वविद्यालय में आयोजित हिंदी संगोष्ठी का परिणाम यह हुआ कि रुस और “स्वतंत्र राज्यों के राष्ट्रमंडल” तथा भारत के विश्वविद्यालयों के बीच हिंदी का विकास एक नये साधन और एक नये संचार के रूप में होने लगा।

मुझे आशा है कि भविष्य में रुस और भारत के बीच नये-नये वैज्ञानिक-सांस्कृतिक संबंध उत्पन्न होंगे और रुसी लोगों में हिन्दी भाषा तथा आधुनिक साहित्य के प्रति रुचि निरंतर बढ़ती जायेगी।



14 सितंबर 2017 को रुसी राजकीय मानविकी विश्वविद्यालय में हिंदी दिवस

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A Visit to India Forever Etched in my Heart...



Our recent trip to Goa also marked my maiden visit to the beautiful country of India. There was hardly any planning involved – the children's vacations were upon us, and I found myself possessed by a strong desire to hit the warm sea... and we wasted no time zeroing in on and doing our tickets to Goa! The first thing we did upon arriving at our hotel was make a run for the beach. It was for these very inviting long, sandy beaches and the warm, whispering waters that we had come all the way here. And although Goa lies upon the Arabian Sea, we were excited thinking

as to how lucky we were to be swimming in the mighty Indian Ocean – which isn't entirely untrue, for the two waters do fuse; besides, when the energy of the ocean wave's strikes, such names and demarcations cease to matter. But it's not just the beaches and the sea that makes Goa what it is – it is the atmosphere, the vibe, which brings people back time and again. This is where the soul truly finds rest...

The best thing to happen to us during our vacation would have to be Yoga – you cannot come to Goa and not partake in Yoga! Having now experienced it for myself, I can truly vouch for its being India's gift to humanity. Early in the morning at sunrise,

we would gather out on the lawn by the beach, and see the magic unfold... we seemed to unite in ecstasy with the universe, feeling in us the energies of the sun, sea, wind, and the silence of the moment, all at once. These moments shall never be forgotten, and neither will be the words of our yoga guru, who urged and inspired us to love and live life well. After the ethereal experience, we then felt in possession of a newfound courage to step out of the comfortable environs of the 5-star hotel, and into the streets of the nearby villages. Miraculously, even with its less-than-perfect sights and smells, it did not take us long to begin to fall in love with it, with its



colours, with the local way of life, and with the world around us in general... I truly felt a different person that day!

Of course, as tourists, we had to go see and understand more of Goa, and the list of things to love about it runs long; but here are few of the high points:

1. Old Goa

The former capital of Goa, Old Goa still retains its majestic appearance. All its churches, arches, squares, have been maintained really well, such that it feels more like Europe than India. Most

buildings here are from the 16th century, and the complex together is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. There is a unique juxtaposition of Catholic churches with Hindu temples. The 'Cathedral of St. Catherine' here is the largest Christian temple in Asia; its bell, the largest in Goa, is said to be audible till as far as 14 kms! Also, the 'Basilica of Bom Jesus' here houses the remains of St Francis Xavier, known as the "Apostle of the Indies", and said to be the most successful missionary in the history of Christianity. His body after death was transported from China to Goa in 1553, and has been here since.

2. Dudhsagar Waterfalls

This is one of the most beautiful places in Goa, and the journey up to it through the jungle is no less exciting. We were travelling in jeeps, and it had rained not too long ago, creating treacherous terrain and leading us to ride over quite a few abundantly flowing water channels. We also encountered several grazing flocks of buffalo, as well as wild monkeys! At the end of it, however, the waterfalls stood before us in all its glory, in the middle of which passes a railway line. You could bathe in the lake at the foot of the waterfalls with several fish for company; then you raise your head to see a long train snaking through the gushing water. Dudhsagar («Milk Ocean») waterfalls are located within the Bhagwan Mahavir Reserve at the foothills of the Western Ghats, 60km from Panaji – the capital of Goa. The falls measure a height of 603m.

3. Spice Plantations

Spices are omnipresent in Goa, and in fact across all of India. Varieties of pepper, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, and so many more – I had never before imagined seeing how all these are grown and extracted. And now, I know how white pepper is made, how old banana trees grow to live, that lemon tea is not made from lemon, etc. We also did not let go the opportunity to sample some exotic fruits: 'chikoo' – which looks somewhat like a potato from the outside, but is a soft, squishy pulpy fruit inside; as well as the jackfruit, or 'Indian durian', which is the largest fruit growing on a tree (sometimes weighing up to 34-40 kg!)

4. Elephants!

Without doubt, some of the most intelligent and friendly animals to walk this earth! We managed to feed and ride them, and the experience of taking a shower under water sprayed from its trunk is one to remember!

To cut a long story short, in India you will find everything. Period. It is truly the land of contrasts and paradoxes - you find Western style businesses, as well as those rooted in local tradition; touts who try to fleece, as well as those who exemplify unblemished honesty... EVERYTHING! It is my belief that India filters those out who do not seek to understand it; if they were not filtered out, everyone who went to India would stay on and never want to leave. If you look through the facade of the purported 'dirt' and 'poverty', you shall see a culture that is more than 5000 years old; a religion which is the oldest of them all on earth; and people who hold immense wisdom, and answers to mysteries beyond this world that can enable the ascension of humankind...

*Ekaterina Semeonova
is the Head of Foreign News Department
with NTV channel*



Gurus of Kuchipudi & Rabindrasangeet Find Russian Shishyas...



Padma Ragini and her students

As in charge of the Tapasya School of Kuchipudi, run under the aegis of the Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Centre (JNCC), Embassy of India Moscow, Padma is responsible for taking the Classical Dance Form of Kuchipudi to those who seek to learn it; and most encouragingly, she finds Russian students in significant numbers displaying admirable enthusiasm towards learning this Classical dance form. A Kuchipudi performance traditionally is a night performance, when rural families return from their farms and are free of their daily work. It has been performed in or next to a Hindu temple, and the stage lit by the yellow lights of castor oil burning torches. The dance-drama begins with an invocation, expressing reverence to various Hindu gods, goddesses, earth, or one's guru. Be it the lustre and radiance of Lord Krishna, the beauty of Rasa Leela, or the cosmic dance of destruction of Nataraja Lord Shiva – a well-performed Kuchipudi number can portray many different moods. Padma has been taking her students from Russia to perform at various festivals and events across India since 2012. Some of the key festivals where she and her students have participated are the Andhra Pradesh Government Heritage Festival (Gandikota), thrice at the Nadaneerajanam festival at the Thirumala Thirupathi Devasthanam (TTD), the Shivratri festival, among others. Moreover, the group has visited multiple cities across Andhra Pradesh, including Tirumala, Tirupathi, Kuchipudi Village, Bangalore, Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad, and 'pancharama' temples in AP, Chennai, Lucknow, Delhi for its performances.



An ardent lover as well a competent performer of music, Biswarup da has been teaching Rabindrasangeet to Russian students over the years. His students comprise University teachers, office workers, housewives, Russian music professionals wanting to know about 'ragas' and complicated 'taalas', or just those seeking to understand more of Indian philosophy through Rabindrasangeet. Rabindra Sangeet, also known as Tagore Songs, are songs written and composed by Rabindranath Tagore – a prolific composer with around 2,230 songs to his credit – and mostly based on Hindustani classical music and folk music of the region of Bengal. Rabindrasangeet cover topics from humanism, structuralism, introspection, psychology, romance, yearning, nostalgia, reflection, modernism. Biswarupda's students have taken up and per-



Tapasya in India

formed ably even difficult songs such as 'Hridaya Nandanab-one', 'Eki Labonye Punyaprano', 'Noy Noy E Modhuro Khela', among others. Not only the tunes, the meanings of the songs are also taught to the students, such that they have complete knowledge and understanding of the emotions behind the songs they sing, which helps them render the songs better. Biswarupda and his students have even been featured on the Bengali channel ETV Bangla in a special story. The high point for the students was performing before the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, during Rabindra Jayanti (Birth Anniversary) 2015, and receiving his words of praise.



Biswarup Sanyal with his students



With President Pranab Mukherjee during Rabindra Jayanti celebrations at Friendship Park in Moscow

Tuva – Reeking of Mysticism...

I was well into my second week of my dream Trans Siberian Railway Ride. So far, I had had a 50 hour train ride from Moscow to Novosibirsk, a couple of days of exploring the town of Barnaul with the help of my Couchsurfing host Sasha, scouting around for tent and camping equipment, and almost a week of trekking up in the Altai mountains. . . One part of Siberia that needed a bit of a detour, but fascinated me enough to be willing to jump through all hoops required, was the majestic Republic of Tuva. I took the night train from Barnaul to Abakan, and I knew rightaway that I was in a part of the country that was absolutely off the tourist radar because, for the first time, felt conscious of hard stares from fellow passengers. Many curious people came and struck up a conversation (and even took pictures with me for their Instagram!). I reveled in the attention for a bit, till digging deep into my limited vocabulary and answering with strain in incoherent Russian became a little too stressful, and I feigned ignorance of the language for the rest of the evening and went off to sleep on my berth.



Early the next morning, I arrived at Abakan. There were quite a few 'marshrutkas' (mini-buses) outside to depart for Kyzyl, capital of Tuva. I sat in and more curious stares and questions followed. I felt more conscious than ever, for I hadn't freshened up or even once checked myself in the mirror in the last 24 hours, so I knew I must look a sight (and a downright ugly representative of India, to boot). I refrained from talking much, but before long, was most pleasantly surprised to find one of my fellow passengers come up to me and speak in impeccable English. She introduced herself as Serji, a native of Toora-khem – a small Tuvan village, more than a half day's bus ride from Kyzyl – but having worked in St Petersburg in the past, and volunteered as part of an International Student Run Organisation at exciting places like Colombia! I sensed in her a fierce desire no different from mine to see the world and understand as much as possible of the cultures beyond hers, and was highly impressed. She donned the hat of guide and translator for the rest of the bus ride; I was relieved that all questions about me were now directed to her!



Once we reached Kyzyl, I started looking for a 'Student's Hostel', a reference to which I had found online somewhere on only ONE page in English. With Serji's help, I now did a search in Russian on Yandex, and she was of great help in mining the exact name of the building and street from among all the Cyrillic the search results bombarded back. Turns out it is the local University students' accommodation, which is let out for tourists during the summer holidays – only there aren't many visiting this part of the country. Serji decided to stay at the same hostel for the night, for she had missed the day's bus to her village. We also met Roman, an ardent photographer originally from the Urals, who had also just dropped in earlier that day.

Right on the opposite side of the road was Vostorg – a place for cheap eats, which is where we had lunch. Later that evening, we walked around the City Centre and took in the sights around – the museum, theatre, and other pretty edifices. The sight that stayed with me however was the mandatory statue of Lenin erected at the Centre and, in the distance inscribed on the hills overlooking the city, the letters 'Om Mani Padme Hum' in Tibetan script, visible in the same frame!



I next walked up to the 'Center of Asia' Monument at the Heritage Park that evening. Right next to it was the Kyzyl Tourist Information Center, the upper floor of which had a lovely Café with a balcony. From here, one could see the river Yenisei running alongside the Park.

Presently I was joined by Roman, who said he had managed to hire a car to visit southern Tuva the next day, and invited me to join him to split costs. I said yes, but was forced to change my mind not too long after when I learnt that the following evening, the National Tuvan Theatre would be playing host to the Annual International Concert for 'Khoomei' – the mystical art of throat singing, and emitting multiple octaves of sound, prevalent in this region as well as Mongolia. I jumped – this was the thing I was most hoping to see in Tuva! And to think the Annual Concert is at the very time I am here – if this isn't serendipity, what is?!





I went out early the next morning to the theatre, and just as it opened, secured a ticket to the concert that evening. The rest of the day was spent at the National Tuvan Museum , which has a fabulous collection of artefacts, and the star attraction of which is the 'Scythian Gold' (no photography allowed unfortunately!). Serji took me to an authentic Tuvan café for lunch, where I had some local lamb soup, 'chorba', and 'snezhok', which is very similar to our own lassi! I then saw Serji off at the bus station and thanked her for everything...



The concert began as scheduled at 7.00pm in the evening, and no time was wasted in getting the performers to show off their incredible vocal magic – my hairs stood up from the word go! Over the next two hours, local music groups as well as other national and international participants put up a spectacular show. This certainly goes down as one of the most unique and surreal experiences I have been privy to EVER!



The next day, Roman was bound for Western Tuva, and was kind enough to ask again if I could join in. After the concert, I felt I had pretty much seen what I had come to Tuva for, and now anything more would be a bonus. We were to be seeing some nomadic families in action as well as their 'yurts' (tents), so I was excited about that. My plan was to return that night to Kyzyl and head out by bus or train.

We started with seeing the Buddhist temple of Ustuu-Khuree, which had plenty of prayer flags around them. We'd bought prayer flags ourselves, and tied it along with our 'zhelanie' (wishes). Now that I am writing this a year later, I can indeed happily confirm that my wish did come true!



Next was 'Aldyn-Bulak', an ethno-village recreation nestled amidst the hills. Pretty, albeit a bit too 'set up' for my liking.



Some breathtaking sights greeted us the rest of the way. I had lost count of the rainbows I had seen on this trip; while the sight of the vast steppes amidst the backdrop of rolling hills looked otherworldly indeed...





Soon after, however, the car broke down, and could not be fixed no matter how hard our driver and co-driver tried. It had turned pitch dark, and there was not a source of light close by save for our torches. Obviously there was no going back to Kyzyl to catch the bus out now. Roman had a reservation at a 'yurt' that night, and called them for help. Soon after, a car came our help; we were ferried to the closest village of 'Bizhiktig Khaya', where the nephew of the lady who managed the yurt stayed, and we were to spend the night there. The following morning, another car arrived to take us to the actual yurt, which was about an hour's drive away. Once there, we settled in, and I took in every bit of the well endowed tent; there was sheepskin all around, meant to help keep the place warm. We were then treated to a delightful spread of salad, 'lepeshka' (bread), and soup – all lip-smackingly delicious!



We hired yet another car – a 4x4 and quite the fuel guzzler – and went out to see some more places around; first to another yurt, this time not part of a camp, but owned by a real nomadic family. I enjoyed having the spotlight on me all over again, and for good reason – Indians did not drop by in these parts everyday (though turns out they know of the singer Bittu Malik!). It was time to head back – sunset views were a delight to take in, as was the sight of horses and cattle herd returning to their farms.



That night happened to be 'Rakhi Poornima' (August Full moon)... and also my birthday! I kept running over a thousand thoughts in my head, while snuggled in my sheepskin blanket, and couldn't sleep for excitement. I came out to admire the yurt lit up by the glorious moonlight, and froze the frame in my eyes and lens forever...



The next morning, after a wholesome breakfast, we climbed up the nearby hills to see 3000-year old petroglyphs carved on the rocks.



We were presently joined by an Italian girl, Alessandro, who had just come back from a week-long trip among the reindeer herders, and was heading back that afternoon to Abakan; we decided to take the ride back with her. Just before sending us off, our host performed a shaman ritual on us, blessing us with closed eyes and deeply resonating chants – very mystic, very powerful...

We passed by the beautiful region of Khakassiya on the way, and reached Abakan by late evening. This is where I bid goodbye to both my new friends – Alessandro and Roman – for I would be staying the night at a hostel in town before heading out the next morning. I had the rest of the night to ruminate over the overwhelmingly different and transcendent experience the last few days had been, and marveled at my destiny – I had come seeking so little, and ended up getting so much more than I bargained for; not very different from what they say about God – you take one step towards him with pure faith in your heart, and he will take ten closer to you...

On to Krasnoyarsk next, where more exciting adventures await...!

Abhinav Banerjee

Russian Love for Indian Cinema: On the Rise Again?



At the 39th Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF) this year, for the first time in its history, an Indian film was chosen as the opening film; and which film to do better justice to the honour than the SS Rajamouli directed magnum opus "Baahubali" – a film that has shattered several records and continues to collect laurels worldwide. Also for the first time, in the non- competitive film review section, there were six entries among the Regional Films of India – one each in Telugu, English, Hindi, Gujarati, Kan- nada and Assamese.



Baahubali Director Rajamouli and Producer Shobu interacting with the Press at MIFF



The Baahubali Team Post a Successful Screening

Well known faces from the Indian film fraternity, including SS Rajamouli, director of both "Baahubali: The Beginning", and "Baahubali: The Conclusion", and producer Shobu Yarlagadda, took part in the MIFF. Moreover, Moscow audiences had the chance to meet Gulshan Grover, famous for his negative roles in several movies (so much so, he is popularly known as "Bad Man!"); and Abhishek Jain, director of the Gujarati film "Bey Yaar" ("True Friends"), which was adjudged Best Film among those in the non- competitive film review section in a viewer poll. The Gujarati language film, produced by CineMan Productions Ltd, was released in 2014 and was made on a budget of Rs. 30 million. The 30-year-old director Jain shared with the audience his insights and the true story behind the film, and professed to being a huge admirer of Andrei Tarkovsky and Akira Kurosawa.

It is unfortunate that Russian journalists writing about Indian cinema know little beyond the names of Raj Kapoor and Shah Rukh Khan. It seems that such actors serve to propagate only a limited part of NRI-focused 'International' Indian cinema; while little attention is given to other equally prolific film production centres such as Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram.

Till the collapse of the Soviet Union, numerous screens of Soviet cinema and television showed almost 250 Indian commercial films over 50 years – they were blockbusters and enjoyed immense success with the Soviet audience, with many even dubbed into Russian and languages of the other republics. However, as a result of excessive Hollywood adulation – which is a worldwide phenomenon – and a growing condescension towards Indian cinema, the works of once world famous Indian directors as Satyajit Ray, Ritwick Ghatak, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, were pushed into oblivion; and Indian cinema, over the past twenty-five years, ended up having negligible presence in Russian theatres and television screens.

However, lately once again, there seems to be a resurgence in interest towards Indian cinema in Russia. Indian film festivals have been conducted this year by the Indian Embassy. In particular, the efforts of Sarfaraz Alam, director and producer, and alumnus of the People's Friendship University in Moscow and the New York Film Academy, must be mentioned – having helped organize three successful Indian Film Festivals in Russia in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Also in July 2015, at the VII BRICS Summit, Mr. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, offered to host International Film Festivals in the BRICS countries with films from these countries. He also expressed his idea to create a film award for BRICS films. The first such BRICS International Film Festival was held in New Delhi in September 2016; the second in 2017 in Chengdu, China, with Brazil due to host the next in 2018, and Russia and South Africa thereafter.

Yury Korchagov



With film director Madhur Bhandarkar

Yury Fillipovich Korchagov, distinguished film expert and critic has been tracking the Indian film industry for almost half a century. With his long-standing association of the Indian film industry, he truly understands the pulse of Bollywood – Mainstream and Alternative – as well as Regional Cinema. He has authored two significant books and numerous articles on Indian cinema, translated and dubbed about 250 Hindi films into Russian. He attended many Film Festivals in India. In 2012, the Embassy of India, Moscow, hosted a function to honour him, when Mr. Korchagov gifted his rare collection of 300 books and journals in Russian language devoted to Indian cinema, collected over decades to the Embassy library.

Celebrating Success!



ISHITA KUMAR
CBSE XII 2017,
Science Topper
EOI School, Moscow



ROHAN JETHALIA
CBSE XII 2017,
Commerce Topper
EOI School, Moscow

Aaratrika congratulates our toppers from Moscow and wishes them a very successful future!

More Power to Artists...

Among the many new books having been released and made available to the people at the 30th Moscow International Book Fair this year, one of them was by our Durga Puja Family member, Anastasia Shimshilashvili. Titled 'Как научиться рисовать' ('How to Learn to Draw'), the book serves to facilitate the search for basic knowledge and the rules of Fine Arts for budding artists. A product of the Surikov Art Institute, Moscow, Anastasia shares her belief that in order to start drawing and creating, one does not need to know everything – it is

more important to understand the principle and start working. With several DIY exercises, the book serves as an aid to those looking at honing their Fine Arts skills, and hopes to encourage many at a time when creative careers are on the rise.



EACF Cancer Early Diagnostics Week

Worldwide, cancer claims over 7 million lives every year, with a majority of cases going out of hand owing to late diagnosis. To address this, the "EACF Cancer Early Diagnostics Week" was organized by Eurasian Cancer Foundation (EACF) in conjunction with Eurasian Federation of Oncology (EAFO) and the National Cancer Center of the Republic of Abkhazia, with the support of Ministry of Health of Abkhazia and Abkhaz Public Development Fund "Amshra", during April 18-21, 2017. A team



of 10 doctors attended to 218 participants, with 8 cases of cancer being detected, and 4 of the patients operated on during the same week.



In continuation of these efforts, the Sixth EAFO – EACF "Basic Oncology Course" was conducted from August 5-17, 2017 in Moscow. Conducted every year, the course is meant to train and equip young Non-Oncology Doctors, Students and Medical Industry Professionals, who are selected on a competitive basis, and trained by more than 30 experts from the fields of oncology and allied disciplines from Russia, Belarus, India, Ukraine and the European Union. This year the course had 28 participants and over 50 speakers.

The participants were unanimous in that the course was a great learning experience, and said they would highly recommend the course to young doctors, going back with renewed vigour on the mission to fight the Emperor of all Maladies...

Dr. Somasundaram Subramanian, part of the Moscow Durga Puja Family, is a globally renowned oncological surgeon and Founder of the EAFO. Aaratrika applauds his dedicated efforts towards strengthening early cancer detection.

Celebrating Ganesh Chaturthi

On 2 September 2017 the Indian Cultural Center SITA organized Ganesh Chaturthi with the sthapana of the beautiful idol and a concert by the famous singer Suresh Wadkar who performed *Ganesh Mantras*. Our Committee members were happy to interact with the musician.



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Darbars

Рестораны индийской кухни «Дарбарс» приглашают своих гостей проникнуться неотразимой атмосферой Востока и отведать уникальные блюда Северных и Южных регионов Индии в исполнении лучших шеф-поваров этой дивной страны.

В меню представлены оригинальные супы «шорба», всеми любимые пирожки «самоса», всевозможные горячие и холодные закуски, блюда, приготовленные в печи тандур, национальные бирияни, и конечно же, бесподобное карри. А по будным можно поробовать сразу пять индийских блюд, заказав всего один бизнес ланч. К слову, блюда здесь могут приготовить с учётом ваших пожеланий - острыми, среднеострыми и совсем неострыми.

Интерьеры индийских ресторанов «Дарбарс» заслуживают отдельного внимания. Они наполнены аутентичной атмосферой, в которой присутствуют яркие, но сдержанные восточные мотивы. Залы украшены необычными зеркалами ручной работы индийских умельцев и портретами знати из разных штатов. Рестораны «Дарбарс» способны поразить любого искушённого великолепием и роскошью своего убранства.

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Краткий обзор основных материалов журнала Ааратрика

Стр.1 Дебасмита Моулик, Главный редактор

13 апреля 2017 года Республика Индия и Российская Федерация отметили значительную веху в двусторонних отношениях - 70-летие установления дипломатических отношений между двумя странами. Отношения между странами сквозь эти десятилетия переросли в особое партнерство. Взгляд назад дает возможность правильно оценить прошлые достижения и сделать выводы, благодаря чему мы сможем создать новые возможности для развития стабильных взаимоотношений.

Важно отметить особые события, собрать воспоминания и памятные знаки, которые позволят вспомнить приятные моменты прошлого с любовью.

Отмечая эту веху, ААРАТРИКА хочет выразить признание российским индологам и востоковедам за их огромный вклад и достижения. Их стратегический взгляд и рекомендации были ключевыми в развитии наших двусторонних отношений. Мы так же особо отмечаем тех россиян, которые посвятили свои жизни изучению, освоению и исследованию истории, философии, культуры и языков Индии,

В этом году мы в 28-ой раз отмечаем Дурга Пуджа в Москве. В течение всех этих лет Ааратрика старалась углубить дружественную связь и связь доброй воли между нашими странами, публикуя истории сотрудничества и культурного обмена, в которых отмечены значительные вклады в установление особо дружественных отношений.

В прошлом году молодой геолог посетил нашу Пуджу, он приехал из Перми, города на Урале, с ним были его жена и четверо детей, младшему из которых был один год. Они приходили каждый день со свежими цветами, присутствовали во время ритуалов, молились, предлагали цветочное подношение и брали "ПРАСАД". Перед тем, как уехать, он дал мне три мелких камешка, которые он привез из одной экспедиции. Сейчас они украшают мой стол и напоминают о дружбе Индии и России – твердой, как камень и проверенной временем.

То, что мы оставляем после себя - это "ПАРАМПАРА", традиция, связывающая нас всех.



Стр.3 Свами Джотирупанада, Президент Комитета по проведению Дурга Пуджа в Москве

В наше время мир находится в жутком состоянии страха и разрушения везде и повсюду. Всеобщий материалистический взгляд на жизнь породил необузданную страсть и неконтролируемую алчность. Они являются демонами нашего времени. Многие великие мыслители озабочены этой проблемой и желали бы прекратить все эти стремления, которые заведомо губят человечество.

Это 70-й год дружбы между Индией и Россией. Я молюсь перед Святой Матерью, пусть Она сделает эту дружбу глубже во благо общего Мира.

Стр. 4, 5 Господин Панкадж Саран, Посол Республики Индии в Российской Федерации

В предыдущем году событие, которое меня сильно потрясло, был День Йоги в Парке Горького. Там я увидел несколько тысяч русских людей, принимавших участие. Я был впечатлен их умением, знанием и энтузиазмом в йоге.

В одном только прошлом году интенсивность встреч с Россией значительно увеличилась. Это весьма заметная тенденция, которая сулит положительную динамику в отношениях между нашими странами.

В экономическом плане мы также имеем такие события, как БРИКС, ШОС и т. п. в которых Индия является активной участницей.

Наше участие на форумах ИНОПРОМ, ТЕХНОПРОМ, ИТ в Ханти-Мансийске очень заметно и все эти события вместе указывают на большие и четкие изменения в наших взаимоотношениях с Россией.

Люди должны понять, что индийская цивилизация очень глубокая и уходит далеко за пределы музыки и танцев. С древних времен Индия, будучи колыбелью всех мировых религий и философий, представляла определенное мышление перед миром и некоторую смесь идей и философии. Я убежден, что нам необходимо восстановить изучение этого посредством увеличения университетов, созданием кафедр для изучения санскрита, философии и тд. Таким образом, мы обогатим обе стороны. Есть многое, что Индии стоит позаимствовать у России в отношении сохранения собственной богатой истории и образа жизни, к примеру. Но есть также и то, что Индия может предложить России. На мой взгляд, это должен быть постоянный взаимный процесс.



Стр.7 Господин Сайфул Хок, Посол Народной Республики Бангладеш в Российской Федерации

Всем добро пожаловать на эти мероприятия, независимые от национальности и религии. Наши страны богаты многими культурными традициями и празднованиями. Дурга пуджа является огромной возможностью для нас поделиться нашей собственной культурой с другими, в особенности с нашими российскими друзьями.



Стр.13 Вспоминая Александра Кадакина

Ааратрика выражает своё уважение Александру Кадакину (92 июля 1949 – 26 января 2017), прожившему значительную часть жизни в Индии, в стране, которую он считал своей "КАРМА-БХУМИ" – местом, предопределённым судьбой.

Стр.14 Устад Шуджат Хан, ситар-маэстро

Контингент русских людей, которые любят мою музыку и следят за ней, достаточно стабилен. Независимо от изменений в правительстве, политике, люди с настоящим интересом к искусству оставались верны своей любви к музыке.

Уже 20 лет как я общаюсь с музыкантами и моими последователями в России. Я верю в силу взаимодействия между людьми. Мои ученики, друзья и последователи ждут любой возможности учить что-то новое и взаимодействовать друг с другом снова и снова.

Россия - удивительная страна с великолепной культурой и прекрасными, теплыми людьми.



Стр.15 Устад Аашиш Хан, сарад маэстро

Я помню, что в 1950-е годы Пандит Рави Шанкар приезжал в Россию с Пандитом Кишен Махарадж и Д. В. Палускар. Мне было 12 лет, я жил в Дели, и помню свое сильное желание выступить когда-нибудь здесь. Но с течением времени, ввиду последствий разных событий и геополитических проблем, достойных сожаления, мне пришлось похоронить свое желание посетить Россию, хотя я тайно надеялся, что это свершится. Спасибо Московской Консерватории, что я нахожусь на этой земле и моя радость не знает границ. Как бы я хотел владеть русским языком, поскольку я вижу, что люди на самом деле желают говорить со мной и я бы сам хотел поговорить с ними.

Что касается самого концерта, я действительно не знал, что ожидать от слушателей. Но должен сказать, что я был удивлен и ошеломлен реакцией публики. Нечасто я нахожу такую восприимчивую публику.

Я бы с удовольствием снова вернулся в Россию.



Стр.19 Дхритиман Мукерджи, выдающийся фотограф природы

Я фотограф на постоянной основе. Люблю работать в трудных условиях и работаю там, где многие отказались бы. Дайвинг в арктической России - это удивительно.

Центр по дайвингу <http://www.ice-diving.com> очень хорошо организован. Это сильно облегчает работу в таких экстремальных условиях. Я посещал Россию дважды и в следующий раз намерен поехать на Камчатку. Люди в России очень гостеприимные.

Стр.48, 49, 50 Абхинав Бенарджи, путешественник.

**Тува – земля, излучающая
мистицизм и магию**

Мы начали с посещения буддийского храма в Устуу Хурее, где было достаточно много флагов для молитв. Мы с собой принесли свои и привязали их вместе с нашими желаниями. Теперь, говоря об этом событии через год, я действительно подтверждаю, что моё желание было исполнено.

Замечательные пейзажи нас приветствовали в течение всего оставшегося пути. Я потерял счёт радугам, которые видел во время поездки. Виды бесконечных степей среди вершин гор выглядели, будто из другого мира.

По дороге мы проехали через красивые места Хакасии и добрались до Абакана поздно вечером. Здесь я попрощался с обоими моими друзьями, Алессандро и Романо, поскольку я должен был переночевать в общежитии в этом городе перед тем, как выехать следующим утром. Все оставшиеся часы этой ночи я "варился" в воспоминаниях абсолютно незнакомых и трансцендентных опытов, которые я испытал за последние дни и благодарил свою судьбу, за то, что я приехал за малым, но получил настолько больше, чем я даже мог представить. Почти также, что говорят о Боге – ты делаешь шаг в его сторону с чистой верой в сердце, а он делает десять шагов в твою сторону.

Следующий пункт, это Красноярск, где нас ждали ещё большие приключения....



Стр.51 Юрий Корчагов, выдающийся кинорежиссер и критик. Любовь к индийскому кино в России снова растет?

В этом году индийская лента впервые была выбрана в качестве открывающей 39-тый Московский Международный Кинофестиваль. И какая же лента могла быть выбрана, соответствующая такой чести, как не эпическая "БАХУБАЛИ" (реж. С. С. Раджамоули), которая побила многие рекорды, и продолжает собирать почести по всему миру? Также, во внеконкурсной части просмотров было шесть картин из регионов Индии - по одной на языках телегу, английском, хинди, гуджарати, каннада и ассамском.

В последнее время возник всплеск интереса к индийскому кино в России. В этом году индийское посольство провело кинофестиваль индийских фильмов. Особо стоит подчеркнуть вклад Сарфраза Алама, директора и продюсера, выпускника РУДН и киноакадемии Нью-Йорка - он организовал три успешных кинофестиваля в России в 2014, 2015, 2016. Также, в июле 2015 года, на VII встрече BRICS господин Нарендра Модии, премьер-министр Индии, предложил организовать международные кинофестивали стран BRICS. Первый такой международный кинофестиваль стран BRICS состоялся в Нью-Дели в сентябре 2016 года. Второй уже прошёл в Чинду, в Китае в 2017 году, а в Бразилии в 2018 году состоится следующий.



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Our Special Acknowledgements & Thanks to:

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Special thanks to:

Sumit Dev
Kasturi Mohan Asuri
Monal Asuri
Ullash Choudhury
Vidisha and Saurabh Shome

Our gratitude to:

Indian Student Association, PFU
Calcutta Yellow Pages.com (P) Ltd.
Ramkrishna Mission Moscow

Tabrez Khan
Manoj K. Agarwal
Aleksi Alkhazov, Oleg Pestov, OlgaTetryakova

Research & Information:

Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural
Centre (JNCC), Moscow
Visva-Bharati University
Benaras Hindu University
Russia Segodniya News Agency
Margarita Karatygina, Moscow
Tchaikovsky Conservatory
Dadan Upadhyay
Teresa Khanna
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**AND TO ALL OTHERS WHO HELP US MAKE THIS A SUCCESS EVERY YEAR!
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"AARATRIKA"

Moscow Durga Puja Celebrations
1990-2018

Communication Director:

Nadezda Singh
(General director "IDEA")

Design & layout:

Denis Feldman

Design center and printing house

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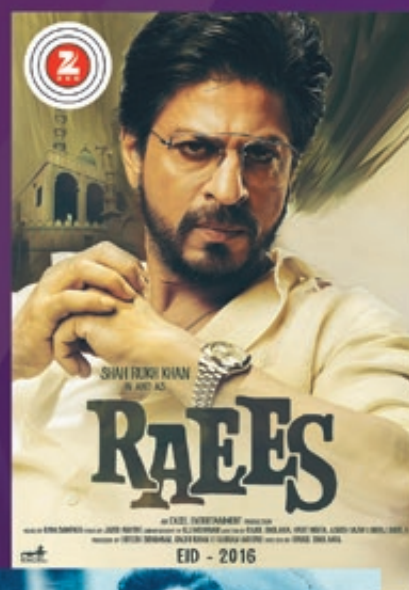
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