

# ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE

Patriotism Redefined

## *The legacy of Indian Cinema*



THE VIBRANT ERA OF B&W FILMS

FORMULA FILMS RULE THE ROOST

GENRES SHUNNING THE BEATEN TRACK

**Know India Better**

PUNE : REPOSITORY OF  
HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE

**Face to Face**

DR. ASHRAF IDRIS KHAN

## MEDICINE NOBEL PRIZE FOR RESEARCH ON TOUCH



## WOKE-LIFE BALANCE

DO WE HAVE ANY ANTI-PERSPIRANT NOT MADE IN A SWEATSHOP IN CHINA?



# CONTENTS

November 2021

Vol. 25/02

.....

THEME: **Morparia's Page** 02

## CINEMA



The legacy of Indian cinema  
*Anushka Singh* 04

The vibrant era of B&W films  
*Ruchi Verma* 06



The demigods of Indian Cinema  
*Nivedita Singh* 08

Formula films rule the roost  
*Komal Tiwari* 10



Genres shunning the beaten track  
*Pragati Mohan* 12

Family entertainers are a sell out  
*Radhika Rao* 14



'Creativity' Vs Censorship  
*Ruchi Verma* 16

## Know India Better

Pune: Repository of history, architecture  
*Manu Shrivastava* 17

Dawn of new era called OTT  
*Manu Shrivastava* 29

## Face to Face

Dr. Ashraf Idris Khan  
*A.Radhakrishnan* 25

## General

Onteshti, a telling documentary  
*Shoma A. Chatterji* 32

Making waves with Dhulo  
*Shoma A. Chatterji* 34

## Great Indians



LT GEN BIDDANDA  
CHENGAPPA  
NANDA PVSM AVSM



RODDAM NARASIMHA



KAMLA BHASIN



**Managing Editor**  
Mrs. Sucharita R. Hegde

**Editor**  
Anuradha Dhareshwar

**Design**  
Graphic Cloud

**OIOP Clubs**  
Nagesh Bangera

**Advisory Board**  
Sucharita Hegde  
Justice S. Radhakrishnan  
Venkat R. Chary

Printed & Published by  
Mrs. Sucharita R. Hegde for  
**One India One People Foundation,**  
Mahalaxmi Chambers, 4th floor,  
22, Bhulabhai Desai Road,  
Mumbai - 400 026  
Tel: 022-2353 4400  
Fax: 022-2351 7544  
e-mail: oiopfoundation@gmail.com  
oiopsub@fouressindia.com

visit us at:

**www.oneindiaonepeople.com**  
[www.facebook.com/oneindiaonepeoplefoundation](https://www.facebook.com/oneindiaonepeoplefoundation)



## The legacy of Indian cinema

Indian film industry comprising Hindi and regional films has undergone significant changes, keeping pace with changing times. From the silent films era to black and white, then came colour films and finally those with visual effects and new technologies of filmmaking, observes **Anushka Singh**.



**Big budget films such as Bahubali are being made today using new technologies and visual effects**

Indian cinema is one of the oldest in the world and one of the largest globally. The Indian film industry is the largest and among the more popular cinemas in the world. Every year, more than 1,800 films are produced in India in several languages of which the films produced in South India have a massive fan base in India and across borders.

India also has the largest number of film admissions displaying diversity. The major centres of film production in the country include Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Kochi, Guwahati and Bhubaneswar. Among the regional filmmaking units of the industry, Hindi films (Bollywood) contribute to 44 per cent of the box office revenue, followed by the Telugu film industry (Tollywood), the Tamil film industry (Kollywood), the Malayalam film industry and the Kannada film industry.

Other than these major entities, there are several other smaller regional-language film industries that include Assamese, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, Konkani and Bhojpuri filmmaking units. Each has a dedicated fan following and often popular actors from their respective industry make it big in other language films, mostly in Bollywood.

## The size and reach of Indian cinema

Interestingly, by 2020, the combined revenue generated

by regional films in India was larger than that recorded by Hindi films. It's an indicator that Hindi cinema is no longer dominating the market, regional cinema has grown immensely in size and popularity.

It's no secret that films made in India, especially the Hindi-language films, have a huge viewership not just in India but in several nations around the world – particularly those with a significant expatriate population. So, Indian films have a dedicated fan base in Europe, South Asia, North America, China, the Greater Middle East, Eastern Africa and in over 90 countries around the world.

The revenue generated by films showcased in foreign nations is significant too. Overseas revenue account for 12 per cent of the industry's total revenues and music rights comprise about five per cent of the net revenue.

Many Indian films now are big budget films. There is a boom in the kind of producers sponsoring such films. Corporate entities have been investing big in Indian films too lately. A big budget film such as Bahubali: The Beginning was made with a budget of ₹ 180 crore, dubbed in more than three languages and collected ₹ 650 crore, only domestically. In 2019, the overall revenue of Indian cinema reached USD 2.7 billion.

## The evolution of Indian cinema

Indian cinema has come a long way and the film industry comprising Hindi and regional films has undergone significant changes, keeping pace with changing times. The journey started with silent films and then talkies that were in black and white, then came colour films and finally those with visual effects and new technologies of filmmaking.

In 1913, Dadasaheb Phalke made India's first film *Raja Harishchandra* – a silent film in Marathi. Only one print of the film was made for showing at the Coronation Cinematograph on 3 May 1913. It was made at a time when films were not considered a respectable profession for women. So, a male actor had played the role of the king's wife, Taramati.

In his second film *Mohini Bhasmasur* (1913), Phalke used Durgabai Kamat who became the country's first female actor and her daughter Kamlabai Gokhale became India's first female child actress by acting in the same movie.

The first silent film in Tamil language was *Keechaka Vadham* that was made by R. Nataraja Mudaliar in 1916. India's first talkie was Ardeshir Irani's *Alam Ara* released on 14 March 1931. On 10 March 1935, filmmaker Jyoti Prasad Agarwala made his first film *Joymoti* in Assamese.

Entrepreneur Jamshedji Framji Madan founded Madan Theatres, a film production company that produced several films starting from early 20th century and distributed those throughout India. By 1935, studios started emerging in several cities across India including Madras, Calcutta and Bombay.

## The various eras of Indian cinema

The 1937-film *Kisan Kanhaiya* directed by Moti B was India's first colour film. By most accounts, the period from the late 1940s to the early 1960s is considered as the Golden Age of Indian cinema and was also the time when parallel cinema emerged in India. Within a decade, it were the crime thrillers that started captivating the audience and with crime-action films like *Zanjeer* and *Sholay*, the angry young man Amitabh Bachchan emerged as a superstar.

Then came the era of masala films which combined several elements of a successful film including comedy, romance, drama, music, etc. Then came the time when aesthetics and presentation took precedence and films were being shot in exotic locations, mostly in foreign nations, and the 'heroine' was used in the film to up the glam quotient. Since then, Indian cinema has grown by leaps and bounds and has given the audiences evergreen films, super-hit songs and timeless stories that people can identify with even now.

## The essential elements of Indian cinema

Indian cinema is popular around the world and it's not just because it makes the largest number of films every year but because of the kind of films that are made. Formula films have been one of the most reliable genres in filmmaking in India. Year after year, filmmakers have given audiences formula films that have become huge commercial hits. It is indicative of the audience's mindset that they don't mind a predictable plot or storyline in a film if it is entertaining.

Alternatively, art films, independent films and experimental films have carved a separate niche among Indian films. In the last two decades, Indian audience has shown interest and acceptability to 'parallel' cinema and since then many such films are being made. In the last few years, films are



***Shooting of the film Bahubali : The Beginning made with a budget of ₹ 180crore***

being made that are blurring the line between mainstream cinema and that on the side. Many established filmmakers are also making independent films that allow them more creative freedom and the space to experiment with fresh ideas. Recently, many experiment films have become successful as the Indian audience has matured.

## Women in Indian Cinema

It is important to note that the role of women in the Indian film industry has not been documented properly. The film industry has traditionally been dominated by males but, with time, there has been a gradual rise in women working in the industry and general acceptance of content that is women centric.

Also, women across the traditional and new media films, television, OTT – have transcended boundaries set by the society and are making a mark for themselves. Not only are there more female actors that are hugely successful, but they have also taken over the behind-the-scenes domain as directors, art directors, cinematographers, music composers, etc. Today, the Indian audience has a score of alternatives to watch a film. With accessibility of the internet and now OTT platforms on mobile phones, the entire dynamics of cinema has changed. The rise of OTT platforms has been a game-changer.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further aided the popularity of OTT platforms when theatres were shut during the lockdown. Many films were released on OTT platforms during the pandemic and did reasonably well.

**Anushka Singh works with DraftCraft International as a Media Researcher and writes mostly on issues affecting the Fourth Estate. She likes reading contrarian literature and analysing sources of news**

## The vibrant era of B&W films

**Ruchi Verma** traces the enrapturing and throbbing history of Indian cinema from the times of pioneer Dadasaheb Phalke and establishes that it is the simplicity and the beauty of the black and white films of the yore – thanks to their relevance and popularity -- that they remain etched in public memory even today.



**A scene from the popular 1954 black and white film *Boot Polish*. Even today, the song *Nanhe Munne Bachche Teri Mutthi Mein Kya Hai* when played, transports us to a different world of cinema**

Indian cinema is as versatile as it is old. The largest national film industry in the world in terms of number of films produced every year, the Indian film industry has a history that is symbolic of the richness and diversity of the Indian culture and society. After the silent films, that were also black and white films, India witnessed a beautiful era in cinema with evergreen films that were shot in black and white and had sound too.

It was the simplicity and the beauty of the black and white films of the time that immortalised them so much so that they remain relevant and popular even today. The 1951 film *Awaara* starring Prithviraj Kapoor, Nargis, Raj Kapoor, Leela Chitnis, KN Singh and Shashi Kapoor with the popular song 'Awaara Hoon' or the 1953 Balraj Sahni, Nirupa Roy-starrer *Do Bigha Zamin* or the 1954 film *Boot Polish* starring Baby Naaz, Ratan Kumar and David whose song *Nanhe Munne Bachche Teri Mutthi Mein Kya Hai* that, even when played now, transports us to a different world of cinema - the era of black and white films was truly magical that continues to spellbound cinema lovers to this day.

### The Father of Indian Cinema

The history of cinema in India dates back to a time before the country became independent. The pioneer of the Indian film industry, Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, popularly known as Dadasaheb Phalke, was a producer-director-screenwriter and gave India its first full-length feature film -- *Raja Harishchandra*

that laid a strong foundation for the film industry in India.

*Raja Harishchandra* was a silent film in Marathi and released on 3 May 1913 and earned its pioneering director the title 'Father of Indian Cinema'. The roles of females also were played by male actors in the film that was a great commercial success at the time. The mythology-inspired *Raja Harishchandra* is about a righteous king who endures several tests for having distracted Vishwamitra from his meditation.

For his film, Dadasaheb Phalke published advertisements in various newspapers like *Induprakash* calling for the cast and crew required for the film. Dattatraya Damodar Dabke played the lead role of King Harishchandra and Anna Salunke as Queen Taramati. Phalke's elder son Bhalchandra played the role of Rohidas - son of Harishchandra and Taramati. Interestingly, Dadasaheb Phalke donned multiple caps in the making of this film including scripting, direction, editing, production design, make-up and film processing as well. The filming completed in six months and 27 days and premiered on 21 April 1913 at Olympia Theatre in Bombay and had its theatrical release on 3 May 1913 at the Coronation Cinema in Girgaon, Bombay followed by huge success.

The original print of the film comprised four reels that were destroyed after a few years of the film's release. In 1917, Dadasaheb Phalke directed a frame-by-frame remake of *Raja*





**Balraj Sahni as the rickshaw-puller in the iconic 1953 film *Do Bigha Zamin***

Harishchandra at a shorter running length.

In his career that spanned 19 years, Phalke went on to make 95 feature-length films and 27 short films until 1937. His most noted works include *Mohini Bhasmasur* (1913), *Satyavan Savitri* (1914), *Lanka Dahan* (1917), *Shri Krishna Janma* (1918) and *Kaliya Mardan* (1919). He was a scholar of Indian languages and culture. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award, awarded for lifetime contribution to cinema by the Government of India, is named in his honour.

**Raja Harishchandra was a silent film in Marathi and released on 3 May 1913 and earned its pioneering director the title 'Father of Indian Cinema'**

## The beginning of cinema in South India

The first silent film in South India was the Tamil film *Keechaka Vadham* made by R. Nataraja Mudaliar in 1916 and was also the first film to be made in South India. The film was produced, directed, filmed and edited by R. Nataraja Mudaliar and starred stage actors Raju Mudaliar and Jeevarathnam as the central characters of *Keechaka* and *Draupadi*, respectively. The screenplay was written by C. Rangavadivelu that was based on an episode of *Mahabharat* - the *Virata Parva* segment where *Keechaka* attempts to woo *Draupadi*. The film was shot in just five weeks at Nataraja, Mudaliar's production house. It is considered to be the first 'Tamil' silent film because all its actors were Tamils.

R. Nataraja Mudaliar was a car dealer based in Madras who developed an interest in films after watching Dadasaheb Phalke's 1913 mythological film *Raja Harishchandra* at Gaiety Theatre in Madras. He then learned the basics of photography and filmmaking from a Pune-based British cinematographer Stewart Smith. Nataraja bought a Williamson 35 mm camera and printer and in 1915 established the India Film Company that was also South India's first production company.

It was on the advice of a friend that Nataraja Mudaliar decided to depict the story of *Draupadi* and *Keechaka* from the *Virata Parva* segment of *Mahabharat*. It were Raja Ravi Varma's paintings that further inspired Nataraja Mudaliar to recreate the

story on screen. Unfortunately, the prints of many silent films paintings that further inspired Nataraja Mudaliar to recreate the story on screen. Unfortunately, the prints of many silent films including *Keechaka Vadham* and talkies such as *Kalidas* that was the first Tamil talkie released in 1931 have been lost.

## From silent to talkies

Raja Harishchandra came India's very first talkie or the first talking film - *Alam Ara*. The film was made by Ardeshir Irani and released on 14 March 1931. As the first sound film, *Alam Ara* was considered a major breakthrough in the Indian film industry. Unfortunately, even for *Alam Ara*, no print or gramophone record of the film is known to survive, thereby making it a lost film. The only artefacts that remain include its stills and theatrical release posters.

*Alam Ara*'s story revolves around a king and his two wives, Navbahaar and Dilbahaar, who are childless. A fakir tells the king that the former wife will give birth to a boy, later named Qamar, but the child will die following his 18 th birthday if Navbahaar cannot find the necklace he asks for. Meanwhile, the king finds out that Dilbahaar falls for senapati Adil leading the king to arrest the senapati and evict his pregnant wife, who later gives birth to Alam Ara. The film's cast included Master Vithal as Qamar, Zubeida as Alam Ara, Prithviraj Kapoor as senapati Adil and Muhammad Wazir Khan as a fakir (in a cameo appearance).

It were Ardeshir Irani and Rustom Bharucha, a lawyer and the manager of his other production company, Imperial Studios, worked as sound technicians for the film. Before the shooting of the film started, the two learned the basics of sound recording from American expert Wilford Deming. The film is considered as a turning point of Irani's career who was later called the 'Father of Indian Talkies'. Following the release of *Alam Ara*, producer Birendranath Sircar acquired the recording equipment of the film and contacted Deming to work with him in Calcutta.

Irani later used the sets of *Alam Ara* to shoot his next production venture *Kalidas* which would become the first Indian multilingual film following its release in 1931. *Kalidas*, a Tamil and Telugu- language biographical film, based on the life of poet Kalidas, directed by H. M. Reddy and produced by Ardeshir Irani is known to be the first sound film in the Tamil and Telugu languages and the first sound film to be made in a language from South India. The film featured P. G. Venkatesan in the title role

## The legacy of monochrome

Before moving to colour films, Indian audience got a chance to watch several iconic black and white films. These include *Shree 420*, *Awaara*, *Pyaasa*, *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam*, *Chaudavi Ka Chand*, *Boot Polish*, etc. These films inspired film-makers to experiment with technology and make films with modern equipment. The last black and white films were shot in the 1960s and included *Saheb Biwi aur Ghulam* (1962), *Bees Saal Baad* (1962), *Bandini* (1963) and *Aasmaan Mahal* (1965). However, being a crossover period when both black and white and colour films were being made, the demarcation is difficult.

**Ruchi Verma is a media researcher with The History and Heritage Project – A DraftCraft International Initiative to document details, analyse facts and plug lacunae generated by oversight or to further national or foreign agenda in History and Heritage Across India and Beyond Borders**

## The demigods of Indian Cinema

*The country's cinematic brilliance is marked by the cult of superstars who with their legion of admirers' hero-worship took them to dizzying heights. From the ruling trinity of the 50s and 60s – Dev Anand, Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar – to the heady days of Rajesh Khanna, **Nivedita Singh** paints a graphic picture of these larger-than-life characters, including those from down south.*



**Amitabh Bachchan and Rajesh Khanna, the two super stars of Bollywood who gave the audience blockbuster movies**

**T**he Indian film industry has been churning out films for more than a century now. The release of every film and its reception in the audience decides the fate of hundreds of lives associated with the film who help in the making of the film. Among these, it's the actors, male and female both, who garner attention the most. Some become more successful, some are left behind in the race and a select few bolt ahead reaching unimaginable heights and unprecedented popularity and become synonymous with the industry itself.

There have been many superstars in the Indian film industry and then there was the era of Indian cinema when it was the superstar who carried the baton and gave the public blockbuster movies. These movies ran solely on the popularity of the superstar more than anything else. The Superstar became larger than life whose style, dialogues, every act and antic 'trended' and was followed by millions across the country.

### The first Superstar of the Hindi film industry

The Indian film industry is as vibrant and diverse as the country itself. Of it, the Hindi film industry has reached billions in India and around the world through blockbuster hits year after year and has given the country some of the most

year after year and has given the country some of the most popular superstars of the century. By most accounts, Rajesh Khanna was Indian cinema's first superstar in the true sense of the term 'superstar'. His popularity was unmatched and the hysteria unimaginable. In the 70s, the word superstar only meant Rajesh Khanna who was commonly called Kaka on the films sets and among his peers.

Rajesh Khanna's popularity was not restricted to India. His name had become a worldwide phenomenon and he ruled the silver screen like no one before. Every film that he worked in became a huge hit and he was the 'lucky charm' for every film he acted in. In a short span of two years from 1969 - 1971, Rajesh Khanna gave India 15 blockbuster hit films in a row.

Most of his contemporaries, film historians and cinema veterans believe that Rajesh Khanna's popularity was of another order and surpassed that of other 'superstars' of the Hindi Film Industry such as Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, Dev Anand and later Amitabh Bachchan, etc. It was Rajesh Khanna's dialogue delivery that captivated audience the most. Rajesh Khanna's famous dialogues such as 'Pushpa...I hate tears' from the film *Amar Prem* where he was cast with Sharmila Tagore and 'Babumoshai' from the film *Anand* that also starred Amitabh Bachchan continue to tug at the heartstrings of his fans,





### **Dev Anand, Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar : The ruling trinities of the 50s and 60s**

Rajesh Khanna's co-star in many films Sharmila Tagore and with whom he gave some of his biggest hits said she had never seen anything like the craze that surrounded Rajesh Khanna. His success is aptly called a phenomenon and came at a time when Hindi film industry was going through a transition of its own. This was during the late 1960s spilling into the next decade, the early 1970s. Rajesh Khanna was extremely versatile and played diverse roles with ease and confidence. Through his films, Rajesh Khanna wooed women with panache, danced with the actresses to give superhit songs and played serious roles such as in *Anand*.

### **Eras of superstars in Hindi cinema**

The Hindi film industry has given cinema great actors year after year, of which a few became superstars and ruled the decade they worked in. In the 1960s it was Dev Anand who became the face of the industry. Born Dharamdev Pishorimal Anand, he was an evergreen superstar and was well received as a romantic hero. Later, he started his own company and started making films too.

Around the same time, Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar became superstars. Raj Kapoor, the ultimate showman of the film industry, went on to act in and make iconic films of Indian Cinema through his studio called R K Studio. Raj Kapoor's success crossed Indian borders and he was hugely popular in Russia. He received multiple accolades, including three National Film Awards and 11 Filmfare Awards in India. The Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award is named after Raj Kapoor. His films attracted worldwide audiences, particularly in Asia and Europe and he was a two-time nominee for the Palme d'Or grand prize at the Cannes Film Festival for his films *Awaara* (1951) and *Boot Polish* (1954). His performance in *Awaara* was ranked as one of the top ten greatest performances of all time by the Time magazine.

Dilip Kumar, on the other hand, continued to act in hit

films for many years. His first film was *Jwar Bhata* in 1944 and the last film he acted in was *Qila* that released in 1998. In 1960, Dilip Kumar appeared in K. Asif's big-budget epic historical film *Mughal-e-Azam* where he played Prince Salim, son of Akbar played by Prithviraj Kapoor, who falls in love with Anarkali, a court dancer played by Madhubala. The film is one of the most iconic films of Indian cinema and became the highest-grossing Indian film of all time. In 1981, Dilip Kumar played the role of a revolutionary fighting for India's independence in *Kranti* and later worked in Subhash Ghai's hit films *Vidhaata*, *Karma* and *Saudagar*.

Much later, it was the angry young man Amitabh Bachchan who became a superstar and gave the audience some of the most memorable films of all time. His films *Zanjeer*, *Deewar*, *Sholay*, *Namak Halaal* are evergreen hits. After a lull in his career that spans more than 50 years now, he started a second innings and wowed the audience with films like *Hum*, *Baghban*, *Paa*, etc.

Among the female superstars, Bhanurekha Ganesan or Rekha, daughter of Tamil superstar Gemini Ganesan, is one of the most successful Indian actresses to appear in Bollywood and South Indian movies. Rekha started acting in films as a child artist in a 1958 Telugu film *Inti Guttu*. Veteran actress Vyjayanthimala became a very famous actress of South Indian movies and also Bollywood. A trained dancer, she appeared in several blockbuster Bollywood movies like *Devdas*, *Naya Daur*, etc. The list is incomplete without India's darling female superstar and late actor Sridevi who acted in more than 300 films in a career spanning five decades. A National Award winner, she worked in Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Malayalam and Kannada language films.

### **Superstars of South India**

The first superstar of South Indian cinema with an unparalleled fan following was M.K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar also known as MKT. Born in 1910, he was an Indian actor, producer and Carnatic singer and considered to be one of the most successful actors in Tamil cinema ever. Despite acting in a handful of films, MKT was highly sought after in the 1930s and 40s. His films would run in cinemas for months and the 1944 film *Haridas* set a record by running uninterrupted for 114 weeks at Broadway Cinema in Madras. During the Second World War, Governor of Madras Arthur Oswald James Hope requested MKT to organise concerts and plays to raise money for the British war effort. In lieu of his efforts, the Governor offered MKT a Diwan Bahadur title which Bhagavathar declined.

Born Shivaji Rao Gaekwad, Rajinikanth is an Indian actor, film producer and screenwriter who works primarily in Tamil cinema (Kollywood). He is one of the most popular actors in the history of Indian cinema, mainly attributed to his uniquely-delivered dialogues and idiosyncrasies in films. The Government of India has honoured him with the Padma Bhushan (2000) and the Padma Vibhushan (2016). Ghattamaneni Krishna, commonly known as Superstar Krishna ruled the roost in Tollywood or Telugu cinema for several decades through the more than 350 films he acted in. In 2009, the government of India honoured him with the Padma Bhushan for his contributions to Indian cinema. Krishna had created a record by releasing 17 movies in a single year in 1972 in which he was a lead hero.

**Nivedita Singh is a film researcher with DraftCraft Films – a film production entity of DraftCraft International**

## Formula films rule the roost

*With their time-tested ingredients, formula films are usually guaranteed successes. In existence since the very advent of Indian cinema, these films have catered to masses with a predictable narrative structure. **Komal Tiwari** analyses why formula films tick with people.*



**Formula films hold a special place among the masses and have ruled the roost in Indian film industry**

**T**he Indian Film Industry has provided ample experimental space to all kinds of film-makers. Among the many genres that have been tackled by filmmakers in the Indian film industry, it is formula films which hold a special place among the fans, the masses. These have not only been commercially successful but also given the industry some of the biggest superstars of the time.

Formula films or masala films, as they are colloquially known in India, are those where a set of ingredients are employed in the making of the film. It is, since the onset of film-making in India itself that formula films have ruled the roost. The operative part in formula films is that they almost always possess aspects predictable and essential to the very plot of the film. These include the music, archetypal characters, the main characters, star cast, storyline, ending, etc. In India, such films have been made from the early years of Indian cinema. It was only much later in the 1980s and 90s when such films were made more frequently, became more popular and more exaggerated.

### Understanding formula films

Just like in popular culture, formula fiction is 'literature in which the storylines and plots have been reused to the extent that the narratives are predictable.' It is similar to the genre

fiction, which 'identifies a number of specific settings that are frequently reused.' Often, in media and popular culture, the word 'formula' is used by critics and writers when they want to describe something as lacking originality, as being copied, and not inspirational.

So, in cinema, formula films can be defined as those specific films that have a 'predictable' narrative structure. The film's plot has been used in multiple older 'formula' films, so much so that the 'formula storyline' can be easily identified. In such films, most often the audience are aware of what the film will entail and how the story will conclude.

In Indian cinema, some film-makers and producers have been known to make formula films only. They have given the audience hit formula films, one after the other, setting a trend of sorts. The dedicated audiences of such films look forward to the release of formula films to watch their favourite actor, actress on screen or to enjoy the music - just for the sake of entertainment basically.

In India, traditionally formula films have known to have one larger-than-life 'hero', a drop-dead-gorgeous 'heroine' and a villain which, in most cases, happens to be the father of the heroine. A love story develops in the most predictable fashion of love at first sight. The hero sees the girl for the first time in a





**Recently, films made on India's popular sportspersons have been big hits and have created a 'formula-based' niche for themselves**

college or while he tries to save her from a bunch of road-side Romeos. After falling in love, the couple breaks into a dance on couple breaks into a dance on a number that will eventually become a bigger hit than the film itself. After a lot of singing and dancing at exotic locations, with the actress changing costumes multiple times within a song, the plot thickens and the 'villain' comes in the way of the couple coming together. After a few fights, some drama and the hero suffering a big beating at the hands of the villain and his goons, he finally overpowers them all and unites with his love. At the end, they marry and live 'happily ever after.'

## ...of new age of formula films

Plots that end in that predictable climax have been used in Indian formula films for decades. The viewers already know the central plot and the ending but enjoy the film nonetheless. The formula worked over and over again over years, even dominated Indian films at most times. Indian film lovers have remained loyal to formula films for very long. So much so that foreign films that have become huge hits across the world don't do well in Indian landscape as compared to their predictable formula counterparts. Amitabh Bachchan's myriad films where he plays an angry young man named Vijay is an example of how every such film of his managed to get his fans all worked up when Vijay would face injustice and how happy they'd get when Vijay would bash up the 'bad' men.

Over time, formula films have diversified too. Sometimes, a new film which is non-traditional in the strictest sense becomes such a huge hit and is well received by the people and that film then becomes the formula for the next set of formula films. For example, recently, films like Uri - The Surgical Strike became such a big hit and stirred patriotic emotions among the masses that many films with a similar storyline, depicting the victories of the Indian Armed Forces, came out and became hits. Patriotic

films, through the history of Indian cinema, have always been a always been a huge hit among the masses. It's only recently though that films like Baby, Uri, Kesari, etc., that depict the valour and victories of Indian soldiers are being made and gaining popularity among the audiences.

In fact, recently, even films made on India's popular sportspersons have been big hits and have created a 'formula-based' niche for themselves. Paan Singh Tomar, M S Dhoni, Gold, Dangal, Saina, etc., have been well received. It's the struggle of the sportsperson before he/she becomes an internationally-acclaimed sportsperson that captivates the audience and inspires them. These films also have a patriotic flavour as sportsmen and sportswomen have brought laurels to the nation for decades, giving an identity and recognition to the country.

## The future of formula films

In the last few years, there has been an increase in the number of experimental films, art films, specific genre-based films that have hit the Indian film market. Also, because of the penetration of OTT platforms on Indian television, phones and computers, the variety and diversity of films doled out to Indian audiences has grown exponentially.

Not only that, film-makers are now experimenting with technology, storylines, cast, language, etc. and because of the wide reach of internet and now OTT, they have been able to reach more people. The COVID-19 lockdown further made the traditional movie theatres redundant and now OTT is the new normal. So, the future of formula films will have to be re-evaluated.

Many filmmakers in Bollywood, Kollywood, Tollywood, etc., are now changing tracks and accepting that the earlier tried-and-tested formula may not be relevant anymore. Film-making has also become more commercialised now with big studios, international production houses, corporate entities and industrialists financing film projects, giving the new film-makers a change to explore new domains.

## Audience getting bold too

The film-loving audience in India is growing and diversifying too. Earlier, the only way to watch a film was to go to a cinema theatre, then one could watch films on VCRs, later on television, then on computers, phones and now there are a million options to watch what one likes. So, the audience has also matured and is now assertive in what they want to see rather what's given to them on a platter.

Films such as Baahubali that became an international success and has been lauded by filmmakers all over the world has also opened the gates for other such films as the audience is simply loving these new genres.

Not only that, today with the audience getting more and easier access to foreign films, vernacular films, experimental films, etc., they have developed into a more mature audience that is open to other kinds of content.

**Komal Tiwari is an experimental film researcher with DraftCraft Films – A Film Production Entity of DraftCraft International**



## Genres shunning the beaten track

*As against the commercial movies, these genre of films are refreshingly independent, low budget, more creativity-oriented and memorable although the production values may not be not much to rave about. **Pragati Mohan** takes a long look at movies that have left a mark mainly because talent was the over-riding spirit behind each aspect of filmmaking.*



*A scene from the film Masan*

**T**he Indian film industry has come a long way in terms of the kind of films being made and the diversity that exists today in all aspects of filmmaking. Today, Indian cinema is flirting with films of all kinds – films with experimental storylines, independent films creating a niche audience, cross-over films with the cast and crew scattered over multiple continents, etc.

Even regional films are managing to get elbow-space with mainstream big budget films and are now being made in multiple languages simultaneously to cater to people from all parts of the country and beyond. In terms of diversity, today, many films are being made that fall in the independent film or experimental film category and are connecting well with the masses too. The Indian audience has matured and with the reach of internet and OTT platforms straight to mobile phones, the 'new' viewers today belong to all age groups and are perennially hungry for fresh, creative content.

### Understanding the independent film genre

An independent film also known as an Indie film or movie is a feature film or a short film that is produced 'independently' i.e., produced outside the big film studio ecosystem. These films are not just produced independently, they are also distributed by independent entities such as independent entertainment

companies.

As opposed to films made by large studios, independent films are made with smaller budgets and have a characteristic style as these films are made with a complete different set of parameters and variables. In independent films, there is more space and scope for the filmmaker to include his vision in the film. There is more control and tolerance for creativity.

Not just that, most independent films are typically made by directors who are talented and have a great reputation in terms of the films they make, how they tackle the subject, etc. Very often, popular actors choose to work in indie films if they like the script or if the director is the one they'd like to work with. In the process, the 'big' actors even lower their charges to work in the film.

With independent films, the approach from the beginning till the end is different. After the film is made, usually its marketing and distribution is unlike the films released by big production houses. So, in most cases, independent films are marked by a 'limited release'. These movies are also screened at independent movie theatres and very often before the theatrical release, they are screened at film festivals all over the world.

### Memorable Indie films in India

Commercial movies have always managed to hog the



**Late actor Irrfan Khan in a scene from the 2013 off-beat film *The Lunchbox***

limelight owing to their sharp marketing strategy and promotional activities allowed by the big pockets producing these films. Despite that, in India, several indie and off-beat films have managed to captivate the audience with fresh ideas, techniques, approach, story, etc. In fact, some of these films have also played a big role in opening the minds of the Indian audience and in drawing a new 'acceptability' parameter for films in India.

To name a few Indian indie films that have struck a chord with the people: *The Lunchbox*, *Ugly*, *Ozhivudivasathe Kali*, *Jallikattu*, *Court*, *Bheja Fry*, *Pariyerum Perumal*, *Monsoon Wedding*, *Masaan*, *Hyderabad Blues*, *Parched*, *Ankhon Dekhi*, *Village Rockstars*, *Iqbal*, *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi*, etc.

Neeraj Ghaywan's debut film *Masaan* engages the audience with its raw portrayal of life in a small town. Sudhir Mishra's film *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi* is set during the Indian democracy's darkest hour, the emergency. The story is about the lives of the three protagonists at a time when India is transforming with shifting ideologies and unrest. Nagesh Kukunoor's *Iqbal* is about a cricket-obsessed deaf and mute village boy who overcomes multiple challenges to fulfil his dream of becoming a cricketer and playing for the Indian Cricket Team.

## Experimental genre of Indian films

Another lesser known genre of films that is now garnering attention and acceptance is the genre of experimental films or experimental cinema. Here, the film-maker shuns traditional norms, methods of working and traditional narratives to come up with something thought-provoking and unconventional.

In experimental filmmaking, the filmmaker re-evaluates the conventional parameters of cinema to explore newer forms that are non-conforming to conventional cinema.

Experimental films are also a result of the creation of and access to new technology and techniques. Majority of experimental films, like independent films, are produced on low budgets with smaller crew and limited resources. Sometimes, the crew in an experimental film may include just the filmmaker who is self-financing the film or has a small budget 'loaned' from family and friends.

Contrary to commercial films that are meant just to generate revenue or entertain the masses, experimental films are made by filmmakers to 'test' a new technology in filmmaking or to experiment with a new plot or subject or to manifest his artistic vision.

## Through-provoking experimental films

Director Samarth Mahajan in his film *Unreserved* pushed the boundaries of filmmaking when he, with his crew, travelled the length and breadth of India - from Kanyakumari to Kashmir - to capture on camera and document the lives of those travelling in the unreserved departments of trains.

Vikramaditya Motwane's *AK vs. AK* is a black comedy thriller interweaving the audience between fiction and reality and challenges the norms of conventional filmmaking. Kamal Hassan's 1987 film *Pushpak* is a comedy drama but unconventional because it's a silent comedy with no dialogues. The film still won a National Film Award.

Dibakar Banerjee's anthology drama *Love Sex Aur Dhokha* was unconventional from the beginning to the end. The film was shot entirely in digital format and kept the audience guessing till the end about what will happen next. Interestingly, the Films Division of India is home to many, now digitised, movie reels of experimental short documentaries.

## The lesser-known films and their makers

Since the early years of filmmaking in India, few film-makers challenged cinema conventions to experiment with the plot and the subject of the film primarily. Known as parallel cinema or art cinema, the 'experimental' filmmaking catered to the few admirers with cinematic taste. Filmmakers such as Satyajit Ray, Shyam Benegal, Ketan Mehta, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Govind Nihalani, etc. made films more grounded in reality and tackling issues plaguing the society at the time.

Over decades, the line between conventional films and art or experimental films has blurred. Today, many big stars choose to act in or even make 'meaningful' films. Filmmakers such as Vishal Bharadwaj, Rakesh Mehra, Anurag Kashyap have given India films that are experimental also commercially successful.

With the availability of new technology, the sphere of filmmaking is more democratic now. More artists, independent filmmakers, amateurs now have access to new technology and fresh story ideas. The audience has matured and is now open to watching off-beat, experimental, art cinema with 'lesser-known' actors and thought provoking stories.

Today, the Indian Film Industry has been inundated by financiers from all ends that include industrialists, corporate houses, patrons of institutions, etc. who are willing to 'sponsor' non-traditional films. With the digitisation of the filmmaking processes and the reach of internet, it has become easier to experiment independently today.

**Pragati Mohan is a researcher working with The Media Matters Project – A DraftCraft International Initiative to investigate into functional issues of the media – traditional, social and legal; ethics within borders and bias, inherent and doctored**



## Family entertainers are a sell out

*The Indian film industry is probably the only of its kind where family dramas are a runaway hit with the masses. Based on the complexities of familial relationships, they have made a particularly significant impact in India compared to elsewhere in the world. Classics have been and continue to be made in this genre, points out **Radhika Rao**.*



### **Family dramas in Bollywood are a runaway hit with the masses**

It's that time of the year again when, with the onset of the festival season, the sale of all items such as food, clothes, automobiles even films don a family-centric and festive avatar.

A festival is synonymous to and incomplete without a family. During the festive season particularly, the goods and services consumers are bombarded with advertisements and promotions of home items and electronics being sold at 'unbelievable' prices with crazy sales and offers.

At the same time, the consumers of the entertainment industry are targeted with customised film promos and trailers that, especially during this time of the year, are very often 'family dramas' or films that are to be seen 'with family'.

The Indian film industry is probably the only industry where the genre of family drama has been one of the most popular genres among the masses. Not only has India produced some of the most expensive, high budget family drama films but some of the biggest hits of all times have also been family drama films in the Indian Film Industry.

Some filmmakers in India are known to make only family dramas and have given the audience some of the biggest hits and evergreen family films such as *Do Raaste*, *Avtaar*, *Masoom*, *Satte Pe Satta*, *Saudagar*, *Hum Aapke Hain Kaun*, *Dilwale Dulhania*

*Le Jayenge*, *Hum Saath Saath Hai*, *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*, *Dil Dhadakne Do*, *Kapoor and Sons*, etc.

A family drama is a sub-genre of films that focusses on the intricacies and conflicts that rest at the base of all familial relationships. Family dramas tackle the equations among relationships within families and often examine the conflict between the duties of an individual towards the family as opposed to the 'selfish' desires of the individual.

Filmmakers around the world have made films in this genre but they are more incisive and well received in Asian countries where the concept of family and is more rooted and the family bond stronger.

### **Family drama from the bygone era**

The genre of family drama has been a popular one and the Indian film industry has been a nurturing ground for this genre of films. Many old family drama films received love and adulation from the Indian audience. The 1969 film *Do Raaste* was directed by Raj Khosla and starred Rajesh Khanna (as a dutiful son), Mumtaz, Balraj Sahni, Prem Chopra, Bindu and Kamini Kaushal.

The story of the film was based on the problems and issues faced by middle class families of the time in India. The film focussed on relationships between family members in a





**A scene from the multi-starrer film *Hum Aapke Hai Kaun***

joint family. It emphasised on the importance of respecting the elders in the family and the significance of a joint family. The film also highlighted the importance and stature of a 'mother' in a family and tackled the intricacies of familial relationships.

The 1963 film *Grahasti* starring Manoj Kumar, Ashok Kumar, Rajshree, Nirupa Roy and Mehmood is a black and white family drama. *Grahasti* was the first film to start the trend of family dramas being made in South India. The film was directed by Kishore Sahu, produced by S. S. Vasan for Gemini Studios (Gemini Chitra, Chennai).

The film is about a man (Ashok Kumar) who leads a dual life with two sets of families in different cities. He is the father of eight children who see him only on weekends. The film was a huge success and was made into a Tamil film as *Motor Sundaram Pillai* (1966) and remade in Telugu as *Manchi Kutumbam*.

Among the popular family drama films, the 1984 Hindi film *Ghar Ek Mandir* holds a special place too. The film directed by K. Bapaiah and starring Shashi Kapoor, Mithun Chakraborty, Ranjeeta, Moushumi Chatterjee, Shakti Kapoor, Kader Khan and Raj Kiran is about the story of a joint Indian family comprising three brothers who consider their house as sacred as a temple (of love). Life takes an unfortunate turn when one of the brothers is killed and how the other brothers tackle a series of events following the death.

## The family drama classics

The 1983 drama film *Avtaar* with Rajesh Khanna and Shabana Azmi in the lead role and directed by Mohan Kumar was a critically acclaimed film that also became a commercial hit. The film is about Avtaar Kishen (Rajesh Khanna) who leads a happy life with his wife, Radha, and sons, Chander and Ramesh. He is poor but content and works very hard to feed and educate the two sons.

The two sons get married to daughters of a rich businessman and abandon their parents. Soon enough, consumed by their greed and ambitions, the sons betray Avtaar who leaves home with his wife. Later, with the help of a loyal servant, Avtaar rebuilds his life and a successful business. He eventually teaches his sons a lesson for their unforgiving behaviour who realise their mistake and seek forgiveness.

The 1955 Bengali language film *Pather Panchali* is an epic drama film written and directed by Satyajit Ray and produced by the Government of West Bengal. *Pather Panchali* depicts the childhood travails of the protagonist Apu (Subir

Banerjee) and his elder sister Durga (Uma Dasgupta) amidst the harsh village life of their poor family.

A poor priest Harihar Ray (Kanu Bannerjee) dreams of a better life and leaves his village to look for work. His wife Sarbojaya (Karuna Bannerjee) looks after their rebellious daughter Durga and youngest son Apu as well as Harihar's elderly aunt Indir (Chunibala Devi). The children enjoy the small pleasures of their difficult life, while their parents suffer daily from the scourge of poverty.

## The filmmakers of family drama

A few film-makers in the Indian film industry are known to make family drama films only. Indian film director, producer, screenwriter and distributor Sooraj Barjatya has made some of the highest-grossing films of Hindi cinema and has produced three other films that have accumulated worldwide gross earnings of more than Rs two billion. He made his directorial debut with the 1989 film *Maine Pyar Kiya* followed by *Hum Aapke Hain Koun* (1994), one of the most commercially successful Bollywood films worldwide at the time.

The film was produced by his father Rajkumar Barjatya for Rajshri Productions. *Hum Aapke Hain Koun* stars Madhuri Dixit and Salman Khan and the film showcases the relationship between two families in the backdrop of a marriage, death and sacrifice. Sooraj Barjatya's next family drama was the 1999 film *Hum Saath-Saath Hain* and later *Vivah* (2006) and *Prem Ratan Dhan Payo* (2015) - all films tackle relationships between and within families in different cultural backdrops.

Another filmmaker who gave the Indian audience several family drama films is Karan Johar. He wrote and directed the 2001 Hindi language drama film, *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*, also known as K3G, produced by his father Yash Johar. The film stars Amitabh Bachchan, Jaya Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Kajol, Hrithik Roshan and Kareena Kapoor, with a special appearance by Rani Mukerji.

The film depicts the story of an Indian family which faces troubles and misunderstandings over their adopted son's marriage to a girl of lower stature as she belongs to a socio-economic group lower than theirs. He produced *Kapoor and Sons* that narrates the story of two estranged brothers who return to their dysfunctional family, read parents in an unhappy marriage, after their grandfather suffers a cardiac arrest. The grandfather, played by Rishi Kapoor, has just one last wish to have a family photo.

**Radhika Rao is a film researcher with DraftCraft Films – A Film Production Entity of DraftCraft International**

## ‘Creativity’ Vs Censorship

*Filmmaking is an art associated with creativity and freedom that is guaranteed by the law but comes with riders. Since the very beginning of filmmaking, the tussle between a filmmaker’s freedom to express and the law has existed. **Ruchi Verma** says the need for law to be in sync with social transformation is now felt by the film industry.*



**CBFC headquarters, Mumbai**

Indian film industry is a vibrant sphere and permits filmmakers from all over with different backgrounds to make films. In this diversity, there's one thing that remains constant. Indian film industry is a vibrant sphere and permits filmmakers from all over with different backgrounds to make films. In this diversity, there's one thing that remains a permanent feature and that is the film censorship board called the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC).

Just recently, Gujarati actor Pratik Gandhi's latest film's title was changed to *Bhavai* from *Ravan Leela* after it was accused of hurting religious sentiments. The CBFC has now objected to the title change, which was made earlier this week, since it was done after the board granted the certificate to the film. The change of title after the certification is in contravention of the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules.

The debate surrounding censorship in India emanates from the fundamental right to Freedom of Expression provided by

the Indian Constitution adds fuel to the simmering debate which involves exponents of media, films, art and literature.

### The filmmakers' freedom to create

The Indian government had in March 2021 announced new rules on how digital and social media should operate in the country. The new rules called the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021 have modified the protection available to social media and OTT companies. The rules have also increased the expanse of compliance obligations of such entities.

Filmmaking is an art and so associated with creativity and freedom that is guaranteed by the law but comes with riders. In layman's language, freedom of one person should not curb that of another. In one's quest for freedom, one must ensure not to break the law. Also, the issue of curbs being 'unequally distributed,' across media and hence violative of

( Continue on page 28 )





# PUNE : REPOSITORY OF HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE

*Pune still retains the old world charm of the Peshwa era while having rapidly metamorphosed in recent decades as the IT and cultural hub of Maharashtra. Not just one-of-those-cities, it is archives to several landmarks and events of historical importance. Manu Shrivastava takes you on a trip with a graphic description of its peculiar ambience and multifaceted splendour.*





***Aga Khan Palace is one of the most exquisite buildings in Pune***

**M**aharashtra's second-largest city, Pune, also known as the city where Mumbaikars tired of a fast-paced lifestyle retire to, is a historic town tucked in the Maharashtra's second-largest city, Pune, also known as the city where Mumbaikars tired of a fast-paced lifestyle retire to, is a historic town tucked in the picturesque Sahyadri hills of the Western Ghats. Pune is situated 560 metres (1,837 feet) above sea level along Mutha River on the Deccan plateau.

The city was the seat of the Peshwas in the 18th century and has been, through history, the epicentre of significant events and landmark moments in the history of the country. After being ruled by many dynasties, Pune today is the second major 'IT hub of India' and the top 'automobile and manufacturing hub of India.'

## **A palace with Gandhi's legacy**

One of the most exquisite buildings in Pune, the *Aga Khan Palace* is a must-visit for any traveller visiting Pune. The palace was built by Sultan Muhammed Shah Aga Khan III in 1892 to support the poor in the neighbouring areas who were hit by a famine. The palace is famous because of its exquisite architecture and the important role it played in India's freedom struggle.

Aga Khan Palace served as a prison for some of the stalwarts of Indian's independence movement. Mahatma Gandhi, his wife Kasturba Gandhi and Secretary Mahadev Desai were imprisoned at the palace from 9 August 1942 to 6 May 1944, following the launch of Quit India Movement. Freedom fighter Sarojini Naidu was imprisoned here too during the country's fight for freedom. Kasturba Gandhi and Mahadev Desai died in the palace during their captivity and later architect Charles Correa had their memorials built in the premises of the palace.

The architecture of the palace, including its Italian arches and beautiful corridors, is one of the most attractive features. The primary building has five halls surrounded by spacious lawns. The palace covers an area of 19 acres of which seven acres is the built up area and the area of the ground floor is 1,756 sq mt. The palace was built in five years with an estimated budget of Rs 1.2 million.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) declared the site as a monument of national importance in 2003. Today, the palace has a museum that archives photographs and other artefacts that allow visitors a glimpse into the life of Mahatma Gandhi and other members of India's freedom struggle. The headquarters of the Gandhi National Memorial Society are situated at the palace where khadi and handloom textile shops are located too.

## **The (In) famous Budhwar Peth**

Pune has several 'peths' that are named after the days of the week and some after their founders. The first peth of the city was the Kasba Peth – founded in 14th century, the oldest zone in Pune. One of the more famous peths in Pune, Budhwar Peth raises curiosity among travellers like none other. A red-light area and that too among the oldest and the largest in Maharashtra, Budhwar Peth is home to more than 3,000 sex workers and 700 brothels.

There was a brief period in history when Pune was ruled by the Mughals. When Aurangzeb attacked Pune, he inhabited Budhwar Peth in 1660 which, in his time, was known as Mohitabad or Moheyabad. When Thorale Madhavrao Peshwa regained power, he renamed the area to Budhwar Peth. The zone is also the place where social reformer Mahatma Jyotiba Phule opened India's first school for women where his wife Savitribai Phule, India's first female teacher, used to teach women students.





*A sculpture inside the Aga Khan Palace*



*Budhwar Peth*





*Hawa Mahal Museum at Viman Nagar, Pune*

## The many 'Peths' of Pune

Another interesting zone in Pune is the Rasta Peth that was founded in the year 1776. Also known as 'Shivpuri', Rasta Peth was named after Sardar Anandrao Laxmanrao Raste who had constructed a huge building called the Raste Wada. The building took nine years to build and today houses King Edward Memorial Hospital and Maharashtra State Electricity Board (M.S.E.B) offices.

'Malkapur' is an area in Pune famous for its gold and silver ornaments shops and wholesale textile market. During the reign of Balaji Bajirao Peshwa, it was renamed as Raviwar Peth. Some of the temples found in the area include Someshwar Temple, Laxminarayan Temple, Ram Temple, Vitthal Temple, etc. Jumma Masjid and Bhojri Jammata Khana are also famous in this area.

The chief sardar of Srimant Madhavrao Peshwa, Sardar Jivajipant Khazgiwale inhabited Ganesh Peth, named after Lord Ganesha, in 1775. The area is famous for Dulya Maruti temple, Shri Gurusingh Sabha, milk market, etc.

## Pune's historical landmarks

Garware Circle or Garware Chowk in Pune, located near Pashan Lake, has a statue of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, the second Chhatrapati of the Maratha Empire, who ruled from 1681 to 1689. He was the eldest son of the founder of the Maratha Empire, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Sambhaji's rule was marked by the many wars between the Marathas and the Mughals, Siddis, the Portuguese in Goa, etc. In 1689, Sambhaji was captured, tortured and executed by the Mughals and was succeeded by his brother Rajaram I.

*Pune's Railway Station* also the main railway junction of the city is historic in itself. Pune railway station opened in 1858. The first passenger train in India ran on 16 April 1853 from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in Mumbai to Thane. The tracks laid by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway (GIPR) were extended to Kalyan in 1854 and eventually the GIPR opened the Khandala-Pune track to the public in 1858 connecting Mumbai

and Pune. The present Pune railway station building was built in 1925.

A cave complex of ancient Buddhist Indian rock-cut caves situated at Karli - 60 km from Pune, the *Karla Caves* are a history-lover's delight. Built into a rocky hillside, the caves are among a large number of similar caves excavated in the Sahyadri mountain range. The shrines were developed over the period – from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE to the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE.



*Karla Caves- A history lover's delight*





**Parvati Temple**

## A hillock with a temple and a view

Situated atop the lush green hillock or tekdi called Parvati Hill, the Parvati Temple is a prominent tourist spot in Pune. The temple is located at 2,100 feet above sea level and makes for a beautiful scenic location for tourists and devotees. The zone is also famous among nature-lovers and trekkers who often visit to get away from the bustle of the city, to be with nature. After Vetel Hill, Parvati Hill is the second highest point in Pune.

The temple was built during the time of the Peshwas in early mid-17th century and is the oldest heritage structure in the city. The temple complex enshrines the idols of Lord Ganesha, Goddess Parvati, Lord Vishnu, Lord Karthikeya and Devdevshwar. The complex is a symbol of the Peshwas who ruled Pune and their religious beliefs and also of the Maratha architecture of the time.

The zone renders a memorable panoramic view of the surrounding valley and the city. Many people come to see the beautiful sunset from the hillock. Earlier, in the absence of a proper pathway made it difficult for the Peshwas to climb the hill with their entourage. So, Bajirao II commissioned the construction of 103 broad stairs to be built to access Parvati Hill. The stairs were so wide, that camels and elephants could pass through without any difficulty.

## A temple lies underground, in obscurity

The Pataleshwar Caves, also known as Panchaleshvara Temple or Bhamburde Pandav Cave Temple, are located almost obscurely in the heart of Pune city. A protected monument, managed by the Archaeological Survey of India, it was constructed in the 8th century. The structure is carved out of a single rock, typical of the Rashtrakuta period when it was built, and is dedicated to Lord Shiva.

The large-pillared mandap and the circular Nandi mandap are the unique features of the temple. The entrance is a 20 feet long path from the east of the complex that leads to a large open court. The caves are a monolithic excavation of a rocky hillock that forms the local terrain here.

Interestingly, the sanctums area of this complex is at a level lower than the ground and this is what gives the name 'Pataleshwar'. A set of steps, flanked with two carved couchant stone tigers, lead to a covered mandap. There are three sanctum caves of about 39 feet long and 27.5 feet deep. The one in the centre is a rock-cut Mahadev Panchaleshvara linga (original). The original statues flanking the one in the centre were lost. It is believed they were of Lord Brahma and Vishnu. Later, these were reclaimed with the addition of a Parvati statue and a Ganesha statue too.



***Khandoba Temple in Jejuri***

## **The fort with a rich Maratha history**

Pune is surrounded by many forts that speak of the rich history of the zone. *Rajgad Fort* was the capital of the Maratha Empire under the rule of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj for almost 26 years, after which the capital was moved to the *Rajgad Fort*. Earlier it was known as Murumbdev and the treasures that were discovered from an adjacent fort called Torna were used to build and fortify the *Rajgad Fort*.

Located 60 km to the south-west of Pune and 15 km west of Nasrapur in the Sahyadris hills, Rajgad Fort is situated 4,514 feet above the sea level and is one of the most difficult forts to be conquered. The fort is surrounded by Torna, Purandar and Sinhgad forts.

Historically, the fort has been a part of several significant events such as the birth of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's son Rajaram I, the death of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's Queen Saibai, his return from Agra, burial of Afzal Khan's head in the Mahadarwaja walls of Balle Killa, etc. Rajgad Fort is also the fort where Shivaji stayed for the largest number of days. And the historical significance of the fort doesn't end here. Rajgad Fort was also one of the 12 forts that Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj kept when he signed the Treaty of Purandar in 1665 under which 23 forts were surrendered to the Mughals.

The diameter of the base of the fort is about 40 km that was built on a hill called Murumbadevi Dongar and the fort consists of palaces, water cisterns and caves. To reach the fort, one must take a bus till Gunjawane from where share rickshaws or other local transport options are available to reach the village of Rajgad. The fort is a popular trekking destination and trekkers and nature-lovers throng the fort on weekends and holidays.



***Pataleshwar Caves***

## **The exquisite forts around Pune**

A 17 th century military fort, the historic Shivneri Fort, located near Junnar in Pune district, is the birthplace of the founder of the Maratha Empire - Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The fort has statues of Jijabai and young Shivaji and a pond at the centre called *Badami Talav*.

A hill fortress, *Sinhgad Fort* is located 35 km southwest of the city of Pune on an isolated cliff of the Bhuleswar range of the Sahyadris. The fort has witnessed many battles including the Battle of Sinhgad of 1670. The fort was previously known as Kondhana after sage Kaundinya. It was seized by Muhammad bin Tughlaq from the Koli king Nag Naik in 1328.

Situated close to Lonavla, Lohagad Fort (iron fort) is also a hill fortress at an elevation of 1,033 m (3,389 ft) above sea level. It lies close to the neighbouring *Visapur Fort*. The fort was occupied by several dynasties including the Satavahanas, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Yadavas, Bahamanis, Nizams, Mughals and Marathas.





*Lohagad Fort*



*Visapur Fort*





**Pune Railway Station**

The fort was captured by Shivaji in 1648 and later recaptured in 1670 who used it to keep the loot. Visapur Fort, part of the Lohagad-Visapur fortification, was built during 1713-1720 CE by the first Peshwa of Maratha Empire Balaji Vishwanath.

### Attractive destinations in Pune

After the forts, palaces and museums, if there's anything that attracts tourists to Pune, it's the many shopping destinations. Laxmi Road, for example, is one of Pune's most visited shopping zone and the busiest trading hub. A four km stretch in the city, Laxmi Road offers shoppers a huge variety of wares at pocket-friendly prices. The road stretches from Alka Square in Sadashiv Peth to Quarter Gate Square in Rasta Peth.

One of the most attractive destinations in Pune, popular among religious devotees, tourists, trekkers and photographers is the *Khandoba Temple* or the *Jejuri Temple* located in the town of Jejuri, which lies to the southeast of Pune. The temple, dedicated to Khandoba - also known as Mhalsakant, Malhari Martand, Mylalaralinga, Martanda Bhairava or Malhar is a Hindu deity worshiped as a manifestation of Lord Shiva mainly in the Deccan plateau region - was also the site of a historic treaty between Tarabai and Balaji Bajirao on 14 September 1752.

Situated at a distance of 21 km from Pune, the Khadakwasla Dam on Mutha River is another popular tourist

destination. The dam created a reservoir known as Khadakwasla Lake which is the main source of water for Pune and its suburbs.

The dam is also frequented by tourists especially during the monsoons. Many entities located in the vicinity of the dam also make the zone interesting. These include the National Defence Academy (NDA), the Central Water and Power Research Station (CWPRS), etc. The twin dams of *Panshet* and *Varasgaon* are also in the vicinity as is *Sinhgad Fort*.

Pune's story is incomplete without the mention of the famous *Shaniwarwada* - the Palace of the Peshwas since the 18 th century. The construction started on a Saturday, which gave it the name, by Bajirao I on 10 January 1730 and completed in 1732. Shaniwarwada was the residence of the Peshwas, the Prime Ministers of the Maratha Kings. The complex has nine bastions and five gateways. The 21 ft tall main entrance of the complex faces North i.e. towards Delhi and is hence named the *Delhi Darwaja (Gate)*.



**Manu Shrivastava is a media legal researcher with DraftCraft International, and co-convenor of 'The Woman Survivor' initiative that documents abuse of women and children within families.**

### Our Last Six Issues

**Call: 022-23534400 / E-mail: oiopfoundation@gmail.com / Web: www.oneindiaonepeople.com**

October 2021	September 2021	August 2021	July 2021	June 2021	May 2021



***“Despite joint pain being highly debilitating, a large number of people continue to live with it and fail to seek timely medical help.”***

His clinic in Lulla Nagar in Kondhwa, Pune is packed with patients like sardines. Meet the very busy, popular and soft-spoken Orthopedic Surgeon **Dr. Ashraf Khan**, who looks for every opportunity to do better for his patients.

His only passion is to help patients out of the pain they are beset with, lead a healthy and better quality of life. Here Dr. Khan talks to **A. Radhakrishnan** about his profession and some of his successful cases.

**What Is Orthopedics? Why is it one of the most sought after medical streams in India? Why did you opt for it?**

Orthopedics is a medical specialty dealing with the correction of disorders of bones, joints, muscles, ligaments, tendons and nerves (musculoskeletal system).

It is rewarding because you're working with patients who have a significant problem and often you are correcting it in time ...which is very fulfilling feeling as you see your patients' functionality and quality of life dramatically improving.

In India, Orthopedics is a most sought medical stream as there is a lot of specialty options you can choose from, i.e. sports, joints replacements, shoulder, hand, knee, etc...

**Your job description? Experience?**

I have been practicing orthopedics since 2010. My job as an orthopedic surgeon involves examining, diagnosing, treating and performing surgeries for patients with musculoskeletal disorders. I see on an average 100 patients (outpatients & inpatients together) in a day. I specialise in Hip and Knee joint replacement surgery, but I also do trauma and sports surgeries.

**What are the educational qualifications needed to be an ideal orthopedic surgeon?**

To become an orthopedic surgeon, you should hold an M.S in Orthopedics as Diplomate of National Board (DNB –Ortho) degree post MBBS, and its typical to also do a Fellowship focused on an orthopedic specialty you want to practice.

**What are the reasons for a rise in orthopedic issues in the**



**DR. ASHRAF IDRIS KHAN**

**country?**

With rising life expectancy, increasingly sedentary lifestyles and surge in incidence of obesity, India is witnessing a resultant rise in orthopedic problems. Despite joint pain being highly debilitating, a large number of people continue to live with it and fail to seek timely medical help. Also road traffic accidents contribute highly to this situation.

**How do you diagnose a patient's condition? How do you track their progress after surgery? What recommendations do you make to aid your patients' recovery after surgery?**

Diagnosis of orthopedics disorder is based on clinical examination of the patient with radiological tools like X-rays, Ultrasonography, Bone Scanning, MRI Scan, CT-Scans and Blood Tests.

The patient's treatment progress is tracked with regular follow-ups. They are recommended to do regular physiotherapy and to bring about positive lifestyle changes.

**How well an orthopedist should empathise with patients and how good should be his communication skills?**

Qualities of an exceptional orthopedic surgeon include great bedside manners, good communication skills, demonstrative mechanical skills, leadership ability, flexible outlook, willingness to keep learning and a realistic approach.

**Your most successful medical case to date and what factors contributed to it?**

There have been many successful medical cases in my career, but I vividly remember a case of hip-replacement in a

94-year-old female patient, mother of a Colonel and another of a knee replacement surgery in a wheelchair bound 82-year-old female patient and yet another of a 52-year-old wheelchair bound lady from Iraq who had not walked for two years.

The single most important factor contributing to success in the above cases were the patients' and their families' complete faith in me, my abilities and their commitment to do everything required to get well.

### **How do you stay up to date with new treatments and advancements in orthopedic surgery?**

The whole gamut of online and offline CME (Continuing Medical Education), specialty specific workshops and short fellowships, International medical and surgical journals, Cadaveric labs, National and International conferences help me to be constantly updated.

### **What is arthritis? How many rheumatic diseases does it constitute?**

Arthritis means inflammation of one or more joints causing pain and stiffness that worsen with age. There are different types of arthritis which exist like Rheumatoid arthritis, Osteoarthritis, Psoriatic arthritis, etc.

Arthritis affects more than 180 million people in India and its prevalence is higher than many well-known diseases such as diabetes, AIDS and cancer. Around 14% of the Indian population seek a doctor's help every year for this joint disease. An analysis revealed that more women than men in India are suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. The highest rates were observed in Russia.

### **What is a Bone Density Scan?**

Bone Density Scan or DEXA (Dual energy x-ray absorptiometry) is a means of measuring bone mineral density using spectral imaging. Here two X-ray beams, with different energy levels, are aimed at the patient's bones. Bone mineral density is determined by subtracting soft tissue absorption component from the absorption of each beam by bone.

### **What is and how effective is a cortisone injection?**

Cortisone shots are injections of medicine that ease pain and swelling in different parts of the body. These shots treat injuries and conditions such as arthritis or autoimmune disorders (when the body's immune system harms its own cells).

Doctors give them directly into the area or joint involved, or sometimes just into a large muscle to get it into the bloodstream. It is commonly given in joints including the hip, knee, shoulder, spine, hands and feet.

In other parts of the body, the injection often includes a local anesthetic (pain reliever) to start easing pain immediately.

But cortisone injection doesn't work for all patients. Just 40 percent of patients report feeling better and the effect of a

cortisone shot can last from 6 weeks to 6 months.

### **What is Joint Replacement Surgery? And when is advised to patients?**

Joint Replacement Surgery is a surgical procedure in which an arthritic or dysfunctional joint surface is replaced with prosthesis.

Generally joint replacements are performed in patients when severe joint pain or dysfunction is not alleviated by less invasive therapies on patients between 60 to 80 years of age. Ninety percent of knee and hip replacement function well for 15 to 20 years.

### **When is it advisable to use ice or heat on an injury? And when is it not advisable?**

When any pain/swelling arises out of injury or sports activities, the use of ice therapy is recommended. Cold slows blood flow, reducing swelling and pain.

Heat is not advisable to use in injury/trauma scenario. Heat is only recommended for chronic pain and joint stiffness as the heat boosts the flow of blood and nutrients to an area of the body.

### **What is arthroscopic surgery?**

Arthroscopy is a surgical procedure we use to look at, diagnose and treat problems inside a joint. It's a minimally invasive procedure that uses a camera to look within a joint, rather than opening it completely.

### **What is MRI?**

MRI is short for Magnetic Resonance Imaging.

It is a radiology test that uses powerful magnets, radio waves and computer to make detailed picture of the inside of your body.

MRI helps to diagnose a disease or injury and it can monitor how

well you're doing with a treatment. It can be done on different parts of your body and is especially useful for looking at soft tissues and the nervous system.

MRI of the bones and joints look for arthritis, bone infections, tumours, disc problems in the spine, etc.

### **What is an X-ray? Is constant x-ray harmful?**

X-rays are a form of electromagnetic radiation, similar to visible light. Unlike light however, X-rays have higher energy and can pass through most objects. X-ray imaging creates picture of the inside of your body particularly your bones called radiographs.

They are used to diagnose fracture, joint dislocation, arthritis etc., and are one of the oldest and most common forms of medical imaging. The benefit of making correct diagnosis outweighs the risk.

Still there are a few safety issues to consider. Too much radiation exposure should be avoided, particularly in children. X-rays should also not be done during pregnancy.

***Walking is low impact activity which helps in bone and muscle strengthening. It builds your muscles so they can take the pressure off your joints. Daily exercise helps to develop strong care and to maintain good health. But avoid caffeine, alcohol and smoking and be healthy.***

***Exercises to be avoided in knee osteoarthritis are squatting, deep lunging, running, high impact sports and repetitive jumping, walking or running up stairs and sitting cross-legged.***



### What is Carpal Tunnel and what are the causes?

Carpel Tunnel syndrome is a painful and progressive condition of the hand and fingers caused by compression of median nerve where it passes over the carpal bone through a passage at the front of the wrist.

CTS is caused by repetitive wrist movements, fluid retention from pregnancy or menopause, diabetes, thyroid dysfunction, high blood pressure, rheumatoid arthritis, fracture or trauma to the wrist etc. It causes pain, tingling, numbness or weakness in hand and fingers. Treatment may include rest, ice, wrist splints, cortisone injection and surgery.

### What causes shoulder pain?

Shoulder pain is caused by Rotator cuff injury, osteoarthritis, bursitis, shoulder dislocation as fracture, frozen shoulder, overuse injury in sportspersons or poor shoulder posture.

### Why is knee pain so common? When should one see a doctor for knee pain?

If you can't bear weight on your knee, or feel as if your knee is unstable or gives out; have marked knee swelling; are unable to fully extend or flex your knee; see an obvious deformity in your leg or knee; have fever in addition to redness, pain and swelling in your knee or have severe knee pain due to injury, consult.

### Does walking also support healthy bones and help avoid orthopedic issues?

Walking is low impact activity which helps in bone and muscle strengthening. It builds your muscles so they can take the pressure off your joints.

strengthening. It builds your muscles so they can take the pressure off your joints.

Daily exercise helps to develop strong core and to maintain good health. But avoid caffeine, alcohol and smoking and be healthy.

Exercises to be avoided in knee osteoarthritis are squatting, deep lunging, running, high impact sports and repetitive jumping, walking or running up stairs and sitting cross-legged.

### Your advice to patients to keep themselves orthopedically happy?

Top tips for Orthopedic Health: Maintain a healthy weight - 5 kg weight gain increases risk of osteoarthritis by 36 %. Keep moving, stretching, walking, swimming, and biking. Develop a strong case, do Yoga and Pilates.

Stretch before exercise to avoid sprains and strains. Wear comfortable shoes to promote proper alignments and avoid back pain and knee pain. Get regular medical checkups. Be happy, healthy and wise.

### Describe yourself as a person.

I am ambitious and driven, I constantly set goals for myself, so I have something to strive towards and I am always looking for an opportunity to do better. I am diligent, loyal, reliable, honest and ethical.

A.Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelance journalist, poet and short story writer.

## WHO AM I?



( Continue from page 16 )



**A file picture of Amitabh Bachchan inaugurating the CBFC office, Mumbai**

Article 14 of the Indian Constitution that guarantees Equality is of topical importance.

But there has always been opposition to control of this nature. In 2017, noted actor-filmmaker Amol Palekar challenged the 'pre-censorship' of films and, in particular, the provisions of the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 1983 which, in turn, impose pre-censorship on the freedom of speech and expression of the artistes as well as the audience through a Public Interest Litigation (PIL).

## The tussle between law and expression

Since the very beginning of filmmaking, the tussle between a filmmaker's freedom to express and the existing law has existed. Palekar touched upon a new issue, he said, "Today modern technology makes dissemination of information available in real time through a variety of media, many of which are either not regulated or if regulated, not subjected to pre-censorship."

There are several new platforms today where films are being screened. The content uploaded on social media is free from pre-censorship but the same attract alternation, deletion or cuts when it comes to films, he said seeking a revamp of the Cinematography Act, 1952 and the Censor Board.

The CBFC is a constitutional body constituted under the Cinematograph Act, 1952. Section 3 of the same, titled 'Board of Film Censors' provides details of the constitution of the Board, which shall consist of a Chairman and not less than twelve and not more than twenty-five other members appointed by the Central Government.

## Traditional and new film screening platforms

Today, hundreds of new platforms have mushroomed and things have changed immensely since the formation of CBFC. Amol Palekar raised an important issue in his petition. "When content on television and internet is free of censorship, the same content being altered, cut or deleted before being shown in a cinema hall is an attack on our right to equality." In its response, the Supreme Court then issued notices to the Centre and CBFC asking them both to file replies to the plea. That is being perceived, in itself, as a win of sorts as the moot issues came to fore and got to be examined legally, once again.

The law is clear on the subject and the Cinematograph Act, 1952, states all movies aimed at "public exhibition" will be first examined by the CBFC. The Board can ask for parts of the movie to be cut or removed before showcasing it in public in case it is "against the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India the security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or involves defamation or contempt of court or is likely to incite the commission of any offence".

## Understanding censorship

The role, extent and jurisdiction of CBFC in certifying films and the filmmakers' Right to Freedom of Expression are to be understood clearly. Decades ago, in September 1970, the Apex Court had decided in K.A. Abbas versus Union of India that the CBFC has the right to ask for cuts while certifying a film.

The Court further ruled that censorship, including cutting parts of movies before public release, was valid under the Constitution and that films were a powerful media and had greater impact than books. It also ruled that in the absence of any self-regulatory organisation that could suggest or ask for cuts in films, it was up to the government-appointed CBFC to do so. So, the issue of the authority of CBFC to censor and ask for cuts in films too has been tackled in a precedent.

The need for law to be in sync with social transformation is now felt by the film industry as the law is affecting it today. There have been many attempts to analyse censorship and ensure a balance is struck between filmmaker's right to express himself and that the freedom doesn't encroach upon someone else's rights.

An Enquiry Committee on Film Censorship headed by G.D. Khosla, a former Chief Justice of the Punjab High Court, was appointed on March 28, 1968 that envisaged an "independent and autonomous Board of Film Censors." It recommended that the censorship code be drawn up by the Board itself and not by the government. In the absence of an alternative authority to censor, which, in itself, is not being questioned or refuted, the Supreme Court judgement of 1970 in the K.A. Abbas case, ruled that the government- appointed CBFC was the only available option.

## India settings its own course

The Indian government is leading the way in terms of forming a legal framework for censorship to include all kinds of media platforms and content that is now available for public viewing.

In the future, the Centre government may be able to ask the CBFC to 'review the permission given to a movie for public exhibition if it feels its content is against the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or is likely to incite the commission of any offence.'

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has put out a draft of the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2021 in the public domain and sought comments from the people before it takes it to the Parliament. The bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha in February 2019..

**Ruchi Verma is a media researcher with The History and Heritage Project – A DraftCraft International Initiative to document details, analyse facts and plug lacunae generated by oversight or to further national or foreign agenda in History and Heritage Across India and Beyond Borders**



## Dawn of new era called OTT

*Indian films, often associated with theatres, have moved on rapidly and the viewing public too has caught up with the changes. With the Covid taking a heavy toll of the earlier algorithm, film-makers have taken to Over The Top platforms, enjoying unfettered freedom. **Manu Shrivastava** informs how the OTT platforms have mushroomed and have caught the imagination of the masses.*



**Shefali Shah in Delhi Crime, based on a gang rape in Delhi**

**T**he Indian film industry has always kept pace even led the way for new technology, platforms and innovation in filmmaking. Traditionally, films have always been associated with theatres. But times have changed and today there are several new avenues where films are released and available for public viewing.

OTT or Over The Top platforms are the latest among the platforms that stream media and have become very popular in the last few years. The Covid-19 pandemic further aided the reach and popularity of OTT platforms when cinema theatres were shut in the lockdown and movement of people was highly restricted. Many films were released on OTT platforms during the pandemic and did reasonably well. During the Covid-19 pandemic, OTT platforms proved to be a boon for filmmakers, actors, producers and for the audiences as well.

Industry experts predicted that the closing of theatres because of the lockdown will make that year the worst for cinema. However, filmmakers bypassed the traditional theatre release and found another outlet for their films, the OTT platforms, and the good movies, Hindi -- language and other regional languages, kept coming.

### OTT platforms in India

Presently, there are about forty OTT providers in India. In the 2018 financial year in India, the OTT market was worth ₹

2,150 crore (that is ₹ 21.5 billion or USD 303 million) and that grew to ₹ 35 billion in 2019 itself. The first OTT platform that was launched in the Indian market was BIGFlix that was launched by Reliance Entertainment in 2008. After that in 2010, India's first OTT mobile app called nexGTV was launched. The app provided access to both live TV and on-demand content.

In the last decade, several new OTT platforms have mushroomed in India including independent OTT platforms and those launched by big media or production house and corporate groups. In 2013, Dittotv (Zee) and SonyLiv were launched in India and that have a big boost to OTT platforms in India.

The largest subscriber base among all the OTT platforms is that of Hotstar, now Disney+ Hotstar. In financial year 2020, this OTT platform collected a revenue of ₹ 1,629 crore and with losses amounting to ₹ 362 crore. Hotstar is currently India's largest streaming platform with a subscriber base of 300 million. According to Hotstar's India Watch Report 2018, 96 per cent of watch time on Hotstar comes from videos longer than 20 minutes. In 2019, Hotstar began investing in generating original content called Hotstar Specials. Interestingly, 80 per cent of the viewership on Hotstar comes from drama, movies and sports programs.

On the other hand, another popular streaming platform

Netflix recorded a revenue of ₹ 924 crore in the same financial year with a dismal profit margin of Rs nine crore. However, Netflix's worldwide profits in the same financial year were a whopping USD 2.8 billion. According to Morgan Stanley Research, in 2018, Netflix had the highest average watch time of more than 120 minutes but viewer counts of around 20 million.

## Covid-19 pandemic boosted OTT

The Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdown did give a big boost to the streaming services in India but making a substantial and sustainable gain is still a far-fetched dream for most such platforms. During the lockdown, there was a significant increase in the usage of OTT platforms that, to an extent, even threatened the television industry.

During the pandemic, OTT usage even expanded to new user-base that was earlier restricted to certain section of urban users only. As per an analysis by Media Partners Asia, 'India's online video market is projected to grow at a CAGR of 26 per cent over 2020-25 to reach USD 4.5 billion.' The Boston Consulting Group released a report that stated that the 'OTT video streaming market alone in India is set to touch USD five billion by 2023.' Not only this, but key players of this big emerging market will also include thirty streaming platforms and not just the big three Disney+ Hotstar, Netflix and Amazon Prime. There will be a significant share of other platforms like AltBalaji, Zee5, SonyLiv, MXPlayer, etc.

## Regional filmmakers and OTT

The streaming platforms have been a boon in disguise for regional filmmakers and the regional cinema. In the last couple of years, a whole new range of regional films have been released on OTT platforms and the Indian audiences have welcomed this content with open arms.

Statistics released by Hotstar India, based on the streaming giant's pan-India consumer base, stated that the 'regional-language content contributed to more than 40 per cent video consumption.' Of these, it was the content in Tamil, Telugu and Bengali language that was the most popular. Several popular stars of regional cinema released films on OTT platforms when the theatres were closed during the lockdown. These include Tamil superstar Suriya's Soorai *Pottru* that was released on Amazon Prime, Vijay Sethupati and Aishwarya Rajesh's Tamil-language political drama *Ka Pae Ranasingham* premiered on Zee5, Jyothika's Tamil-language legal drama film *Ponmagal Vandhal* release on Amazon Prime, Telugu actor Nani's film *V* was released on Amazon Prime, Telugu-language action-drama *Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo* starring Allu Arjun was released on Netflix.

The OTT release of films have given a boost to regional language cinema and to content-driven films. The outlook of the audience has changed drastically with the booming of regional content on OTT platforms. In addition to films being released on OTT platforms, the popularity of streaming services has led to the launch of several regional OTT platforms including Planet Marathi (Marathi), Simply South (Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam), Hoichoi (Bengali), Sun NXT, Aha Video (Telugu), Oho Gujarati (Gujarati), etc.

## Censoring OTT Platforms

The innumerable OTT platforms in India such as Netflix, Zee 5, Amazon Prime Video, Voot, ALT Balaji, Jio Cinema, SonyLiv, MX Player, etc., are screening 'unchecked' content at unprecedented rates given the sheer size of the Indian audience and the fast-growing market for OTT services.



The proliferating OTT segment has enjoyed 'unrestricted' freedom in terms of the kind of content being shown on the streaming platforms. The OTT platforms lie outside the purview of existing law and regulations including the CBFC. In February 2021, the Government of India announced the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021 to tighten its control over digital media and Over The Top (OTT) video streaming platforms that have flooded the Indian digital space in the last five years and that got a big boost during the COVID-19 induced lockdowns.

During the announcement of the guidelines, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar said, "The idea is to create a level-playing field for all media, since print and television already worked under certain restrictions." With the new rules, the government is introducing a three-tier mechanism termed as a 'soft-touch regulatory architecture' where the first two tiers bring in place a system of self-regulation by the platform itself and by the self-regulatory bodies of content publishers, the third calls for an oversight mechanism by the Centre.

While OTT came as a blessing in disguise for Indian filmmakers, during the COVID-19 pandemic, as they could release their films and generate revenue despite theatres being shut. However, it is yet to be seen, if OTT platforms will be able to replace the charm and the experience provided by traditional theatres.



Manu Shrivastava is a media legal researcher with DraftCraft International, and co-convenor of 'The Woman Survivor' initiative that documents abuse of women and children within families.





**WORLD CLASS  
QUALITY MEDICINES  
AT AFFORDABLE PRICES**

**BLUE CROSS LABORATORIES PVT LTD.**

PENINSULA CHAMBERS, LOWER PAREL, MUMBAI - 400 013,  
INDIA.

## Onteshti, a telling documentary

**Shoma A. Chatterji** points how in the film, director Dhananjay Mandal uses the word – meaning the last rites of the dead -- as a metaphor to signify the last rites of the Goddess and her children including Mahisasura and the lion and the other vahanas as the film reveals in all its truth and absolute truth and nothing but the truth.



### A visual from the short documentary *Onteshti*

The immersion of 4000 Durga idols with her entire team including her four children, *Mahisasura*, the lion and the *vahanas* of the children makes for a sad but entertaining farewell to Goddess Durga. But the immersion is filled with sharply tragic visuals of the Goddess in all her beauty and finery being literally thrust into the waters of the different Ghats of the city of Kolkata which are partly thrown back onto the shores of the river in severely fragmented pieces.

Earlier, immersions on the Ganges ghats were the responsibility of the organisers of the different poojas. The idol of Durga and her team would be bodily lifted on one, two or three trucks depending on the size of the idols. Then, the truck filled with young groups shouting *Durga Mai Ki Jai* would take rounds of each neighbourhood before proceeding to the ghats. There, they would get off the truck, light fire crackers on the ghats, sing songs, dance feverishly before setting out to immerse the idols in the river after taking seven ritualistic rounds of the Goddess on the edge of the ghats or in the river itself. This was a great moment of festivity with sound and colour, song and dance and lots of fireworks dotting the night skies.

But this situation often went out of control because many of the festive youngsters would get dead drunk. Ragpickers and street children would step into the river waters to collect much of the discarded remnants such as the jewellery worn by the Goddess and her children, other trinkets, coconuts and

decorative items often resulting in drowning accidents.

Today, the scenario has changed. The visual destruction that is extremely disturbing but is a fact we cannot avoid is brought out through a short documentary called *Onteshti* directed by Dhananjay Mandal, a national award-winning filmmaker. The word *Onteshti* translates as “the last rites” of the dead person. In the film, director Mandal uses the word as a metaphor to signify the last rites of the Goddess and her children including *Mahisasura* and the lion and the other *vahanas* as the film reveals in all its truth and absolute truth and nothing but the truth. Hindus, who worship their Gods and Goddesses in the form of clay idols, practice idol immersion as an important aspect of their culture. The ceremony marks the farewell of the deities to their abodes and is accompanied by the belief that, after being worshipped, the idols must be immersed in water because only Mother Earth can bear their power and energy. This practice is seen in the worship of almost all Hindu deities like Durga, Ganesha, Saraswati and others.

The situation has been brought under control by State Government agencies by putting up barricades to prevent crowds from entering the immersion banks and waters. The film unfolds the terrible frames showing the idol being thrust into the river waters along with the entire structure that is reduced to wet clay and dirt. Some visuals display the sad sight of the ten





hands of Durga covered with wet mud hanging upside down while being lifted by huge cranes, or, the idol of Saraswati or Ganesha or Kartik floating away sadly in the waters of the Ganges after being pushed into the waters by uniformed workers of the Government.

The film does not have any dialogue or a voice-over or commentary. It is rife with visual images of the wreck the idols get reduced to, thrust into the waters of the Ganges by uniformed volunteers appointed by the State Government. Huge bulldozers then mechanically pick up the bamboo structures and frames on which the Gods were mounted and dash them against the walls near the ghats as one is witness to the upturned Durga now reduced to raw clay, her ten arms akimbo along with the mushy and slushy remains of her children.

Mandal has picked just one ghat among the many to make this film. However, he chooses to maintain absolute silence about the wreckage and pollution of the waters of the Ganges as a result of these massive immersions which has not changed in any way even after the government took over the responsibility of these immersions. It has certainly cut down on the drunken nonsense and accidents happening during immersions but it does not seem to have made the slightest dent in the high degree of pollution that happens during and after these immersions.

In their significant study, Hindu Idol Immersion: Practice & Pollution published in May 2014, Avik Basu and Saikat Kumar Basu, write: "Historically, idols were mostly made from clay and treated at the time of the rituals with turmeric and other herbal products to avoid pollution of the water bodies. But with the passage of time, non-clay materials and even metals have come into use in idol preparation. Consequently, their immersions are leading to significant water

pollution throughout the country and have become a serious health concern for humans, local aquatic ecology and the environment."

When one points out this omission of the impact of these massive immersions on the waters of the Ganges, Mandal says, "my aim was to draw attention to the terrible shock these immersions actually impact the worshippers of the Goddess. I did not wish to shift the focus to the environment because this would have made *Ontheshti* a different film. I did not wish that. I know that the audience will not only become aware of the visual destruction and the disturbing noise generated by the huge bulldozers and cranes picking the structures and idols dashed against the walls and reduced to rubble and silt. Whether they also read into the impact on the pollution of the river waters is best left to their interpretation."

"Last rites also known as *Antyesti* or *Anthim Sanskar* is derived from the Sanskrit word *Antya* which means last and *Isti* which means sacrifice, which together means last sacred ceremony. *Anthim Sanskar* is believed to be one of the important Samskaras of 16 Samskaras in the life of a Hindu adding, "It is believed that as per Hindu scriptures, the human body and the universe, is made of five elements that are - air, water, fire, earth and space. The last rites ritual returns the body to these five elements and its origins. This anthim sanskar ritual is first identified in the Rig Veda," Mandal sums up.



Shoma A. Chatterji is a freelance journalist, film scholar and author. She has authored 17 published titles and won the National Award for Best Writing on Cinema, twice. She won the UNFPA-Laadli Media Award, 2010 for 'commitment to addressing and analysing gender issues' among many awards.

## Making waves with *Dhulo*

The short film is about a young, very poor, and unlettered housewife abused and tortured by her husband, reacting to the rising schism in her village with the slow and simmering conflict between two communities. **Shoma A. Chatterji** quotes maker Tathagata Ghosh as saying that the film serves as a “slap on the face of bigotry.”



A scene from the film *Dhulo*

**D**riven by the craze for telling stories and sharing it with the world, Tathagata Ghosh began his film making and writing career after a Diploma in Writing for Film and Vancouver Film School, Canada. After working in films and television for more than a decade, he finally made an independent short fiction film *Miss Man*. He has now made another short film *Dhulo* (Scapegoat) which is doing the rounds of many film festivals in India and beyond.

*Miss Man*, as the title suggests, is about a young man who feels he is a woman trapped in a man's body and is gay. But his father reacts with terrible violence when he accidentally learns of his only son's identity crises. “I am not gay myself but I have been witness to their terrible struggles with their identity. I have seen the pain they have suffered just because the way they are. All this comes across in *Miss Man*” says Ghosh.

*Dhulo* however, is different. It is about a young, very poor, and unlettered housewife subjected to torture and abuse by her husband, reacts to the rising schism in her village with the slow and simmering conflict between the two communities where the Hindu Right is raising its violent head with indiscriminate abuse of members of the minority pushing them to the edges of existence.

“I wanted the film to feel like a tight slap on the faces of the bigots, the people who divide us and our country. This film is straightforward that way and there was no other way I envisioned the film. It is what it is. Take it or leave it. If such horrific acts against humanity are committed, as a filmmaker it is my responsibility to show it through my cinema by pointing a straight finger at the perpetrators. For me, this film is an uprising within my own heart,” says Ghosh explaining the trigger

that pushed him to make the film.

He goes on to add: “we have seen the increase of abuse against women! Bigotry and patriarchy walk hand in hand. Be it sexual violence or domestic violence, the plight of most Indian women cannot be even described in words. Most women feel unsafe to walk the streets, especially in small towns and villages. The disturbing ‘male gaze’ has devoured them completely. I have been haunted constantly for a long time now. And this is where cinema comes in for me!”

The story is about two close friends who are also neighbours in a hamlet in Amta in Hooghly, India where Tathagata Ghosh grew up in. One of the two women is Muslim while the other one is Hindu. The victimisation begins with the victimisation by the Hindu right of the Muslim husband culminating in his brutal killing by the mafia elements in the rightist party. His wife is in advanced stages of pregnancy and as further violence, the pregnant Muslim wife is brutally raped. The wife of the Hindu neighbour tries to help her close friend. Though she initially rejects her hand of help such as throwing away the glass of milk her friend brings to her, she finally surrenders to the emotional bond that binds them in friendship and solidarity though they belong to two different communities.

The Hindu wife rises to the occasion, cycles away through the streets much to the surprise of the villagers who gape at her courage till she wreaks an unimaginable act of revenge on her close friend, her rape the result of communal hatred, and the two women, with their cow in tow, walk out of the village to move on and find if a new life in new place is possible.





**Film poster of Dhulo**

“When I visited my village in visit in 2018, I interacted with a few families there. When I met some of the minority families, one of them broke down as she spoke about her struggles and how the people in power did not do anything to even provide her family with the basic necessities of survival by making it impossible to survive. When I came back home, I wrote a scene that would eventually make it to the final film.

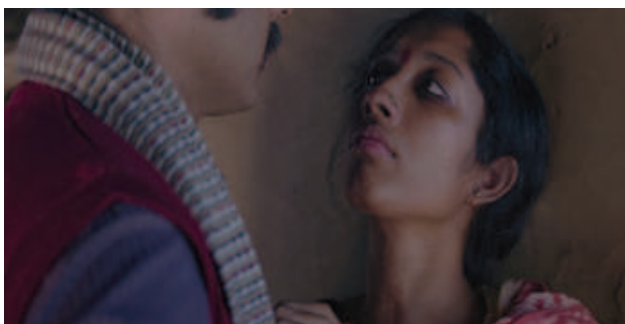
The insurgence of hate politics was visible everywhere even in those remote surroundings. I became angrier every second as someone got killed somewhere else in the country because of their religion, caste or gender. It was too much for me. I had a breakdown. All I listened at one point was the song “Nohi Jontro” from Satyajit Ray’s *Hirok Rajar Deshe* (Kingdom of Diamonds), which spoke about how the common man had enough of their bigot ruler! I eventually finished writing *Dhulo*. By the end of 2019, making the film became my only goal in life! I was shivering in anger to see journalists and artists being sent to prison for speaking up! I had to make this to liberate myself emotionally and speak out against the tyrants! *Dhulo* is an expression of my anger and pain,” says a visibly disturbed Tathagata.

Payel Rakshit, Shimlli Basu, Bimal Giri and Ali Akram, most of them from theatre have portrayed their roles with so much authenticity and commitment that it does not seem that they are actors at all. They have done plays, short films, features, web series, music videos and commercials. Their performance adds power to the final film, they are so good. Commenting on their work, Tathagata says, “Each of them surprised me with the details they brought to their portrayals. It was all so authentic. They know their roots and did solid research. And on top of that, each of these four actors are my very close friends and we understand each other very well. Hence, it was a blast!”

On his motivation to make such a woman- empowering



**Tathagata Ghosh with his crew during the film shoot**



**Another scene from the film**

film, Tathagata says, “this is a story of the rise of a woman by overcoming her worst fears. The tagline of the film reads “Revolution is a woman” This sums up the film for me. *Dhulo* began from my own village. The women, who I have known from childhood, inspired me to tell this story. This is a tribute to their struggle and their tales of survival. It is a homage to their unending strength as human beings and to their sacrifices. When I was shooting the film in my village, there were onlookers on the sets. I suddenly spotted a woman, who had tears in her eyes while a dramatic scene was being filmed. She was watching it and could almost see her in the character’s eyes. I still have goosebumps as I remember the moment. That day, I knew how important it is for me to tell this story responsibly. Religion, caste etc, don’t mean anything. Humanity is above everything. We should be there for each other, just like the characters in *Dhulo*.”

*Dhulo* has been selected for screening at the 12th Bagri Foundation London Indian Film Festival, UK (Satyajit Ray Short Film Competition), 43rd Big Muddy Film Festival, USA (Official Selection, Competition) 21st Phoenix Film Festival, USA (World Cinema Shorts Competition), 15th River Film Festival, Italy, (International Competition), 20th Imagine India Film Festival, Spain (Official Selection, Competition), 21st Nickel Independent Film Festival, Canada (Official Selection, Competition) and the 23rd Independent Days International Film Festival, Germany



**Shoma A. Chatterji is a freelance journalist, film scholar and author. She has authored 17 published titles and won the National Award for Best Writing on Cinema, twice. She won the UNFPA-Laadli Media Award, 2010 for ‘commitment to addressing and analysing gender issues’ among many awards.**

## LT GEN BIDDANDA CHENGAPPA NANDA PVSM AVSM

### OFFICER AND A BIRD-WATCHER (1931-2018)

**B** C Nanda was born on 12 May 1931 in Madikeri, Kodagu Madappa. Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa was his mother's brother. His early childhood was spent on the Andaman Islands.

He attended St. Bedes School in Madras and later at St Aloysius' in Mangalore. In 1943, Nanda was transferred to the Forest Research Institute in Dehradun. He participated in sports and extracurricular activities with equal enthusiasm.

In 1949, Nanda joined the Indian Military Academy and passed in the top 20. He opted for Mahar Regiment. At the time there were only three Machine Gun Battalions in the Indian Army. As a result they had to constantly relieve each other in Jammu and Kashmir. In 1955 he was posted to the Mahar Regimental Centre at Saugor.

He was appointed Adjutant at the Centre in 1962. He appeared for the Staff College entrance exam and obtained a competitive vacancy in 1964. He was one of two Army officers nominated to attend the Staff College at Camberley in the UK. He was then posted as General Staff Officer at the Military Operations Directorate.

In April 1972, he was selected to attend the Higher Command Course. The participants of the HC Course visited the battlefields of 1965 and 1971, from Jammu and Kashmir to Punjab and Rajasthan. They were able to, in many cases, meet with the commanders who actually participated in the battles, speak with them pose questions and learn from their experience.

In 1976, Nanda was one of two officers from India selected to attend a course at the Royal College of Defence Studies in the UK. At the college they were exposed to and expected to learn a wide spectrum of subjects and disciplines including economics, sociology, geopolitics, science, administration, policing and media in its various forms. Within the UK they visited industries, counter insurgency forces (in Northern Ireland), the police and the media to gain firsthand experience and on the ground exposure. They were also sent on tours outside the UK to various countries to study of their strengths and areas of opportunity. *Nanda* was assigned to a

group that visited and studied Southern Europe including Turkey, Yugoslavia (then undivided), Greece, Italy and Cyprus. They also visited NATO headquarters, and Germany and the then divided Berlin. At the end of this tenure he was posted to Army HQ as Deputy Director of Military Operations A'.

In October 1980, he took over the command of 7 Infantry Division in Ferozepur, Punjab. During his command of 7 Division, he had the opportunity to be part of an Army Delegation to the erstwhile USSR led by Lt Gen Hriday Kaul. Once again, he was selected to accompany the then Army Chief General Krishna Rao on a visit to Vietnam. He remained the Deputy Military Secretary till December 1984. 17 December 1984 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General and took over command of 2 Corps. He served as the first Director General of Defence Planning Staff, Chief of Staff Committee, Ministry of Defence, from 30 April 1986 to 31 May 1987.

He took over as GOC-in-C Northern Command on 1 June 1987 and was appointed honorary ADC to the President of India.

Lt. General Nanda had been mentioned in Dispatch in 1971, and was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal on 26 Jan 1982 and the Param Vishisht Seva Medal on 26 January 1987. He moved to Madikeri, Kodagu after he retired and actively participated in multiple social initiatives. He was the president of the Coorg Wildlife Society from 1993 to 1997. He was an avid birdwatcher and his observations and records find mention in bird watching newsletters.

Lt. General Nanda passed away on 12 December 2018 at Madikeri following a brief illness. He was laid to rest with full military honours on 13 December 2018.



**Brigadier Suresh Chandra Sharma (retd.)**



## RODDAM NARASIMHA

### ACCLAIMED AEROSPACE SCIENTIST (1933-2020)

Professor Roddam Narasimha was born in a Telugu family of Roddam, a village in Anantapur, a District in Andhra Pradesh on 20 July 1933. His father R L Narasimhaiah was a Professor of Physics at the Central College in Bengaluru. He graduated in Mechanical Engineering from the Visvesvaraya College of Engineering in Bengaluru and later completed his Master's in Engineering from the reputed Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru in 1955. Later he went to the US to pursue his Doctorate degree in collaboration with Hans Liepmann at the California Institute of Technology. After securing his PhD in the year 1955 he joined Caltech in the US where he embarked on a research career where he focused on fields like rarefied gas and fluid dynamics. Thereafter he continued his research at the NASA Jet Propulsion Lab where he went on to gain proficiency in subjects like aerodynamics and supersonic flows. Roddam Narasimha returned to India in 1962 and rejoined his alma mater, the Indian Institute of Science as a Professor in the Aeronautical Engineering Department where he taught from 1962-1999. Prof Narasimha was closely associated with India's Space programme and even nuclear policy for several decades and played a stellar role in the development of Tejas, a homemade light combat aircraft. He mainly worked in the sphere of fluid dynamics. He was also instrumental in creating India's first parallel computer, Floserver.

The scientist went on to occupy prominent positions including *inter alia* Director of National Aerospace Laboratories (1984-1993), Chairman of the Engineering and Mechanical Unit at Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (2000-2014) where he also held the Year of Science Chair as Senior Professor while concurrently holding the Pratt & Whitney Chair in Science and Engineering at the University of Hyderabad.

Hailed as a legendary scientist and an intellectual colossus, Prof Narasimha rubbed shoulders with some of the country's most celebrated scientists including his mentor Satish Dhawan who later became the Chairman of the Indian

Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Roddam Narasimha was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1987 and Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian honour, next only to the Bharat Ratna in the year 2013.

Prof Narasimha was a visiting faculty with a number of international universities including University of Brussels, Caltech, University of Cambridge and University of Adelaide. He was also a member of Rajiv Gandhi Scientific Advisory Council, Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Science and a Fellow of Royal Society of London and the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. He authored over 200 research papers and around 15 books. India's Missile Man and former President Bharat Ratna A P J Abdul Kalam and Roddam Narasimha co-authored a book titled 'Developments in Fluid Mechanics and Space Technology.' Narasimha was also a close friend of the well-known scientist and Bharat Ratna awardee Prof C N R Rao and both of them went to the same school as well. Soft spoken and genial, Prof Narasimha mentored a whole generation of scientists and was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by Nature magazine for 'Mentoring in Science.' The acclaimed scientist suffered a brain hemorrhage and breathed his last on the 14 December 2020 aged 87. His passing away was mourned by the science fraternity in India and abroad. In his condolence message, Prime Minister Narendra Modi observed, 'Roddam

Narasimha personified the best of India's tradition of knowledge and enquiry. He was an outstanding scientist, passionate about leveraging the power of science and innovation for India's progress.' His students opined that as a researcher, leader and thinker his top three traits were optimism, curiosity and courage. Verily India lost one of its premier scientists in his passing which left a void as Prof Roddam Narasimhaiah remained active as a mentor and researcher till his last breath.

C.V. Aravind is a Bangalore-based freelance journalist.

## KAMLA BHASIN

### FEMINIST TO THE CORE (1946-2021)

**K**amla Bhasin was a Delhi-based Indian developmental feminist activist, poet, author and social scientist. She fought injustice and patriarchy and built bonds of solidarity with women across borders, articulated connections between different issues, and promoted synergies between different movements.

Refusing to follow traditional dictates, she was the fourth child of a doctor, and spent most of her childhood in villages of Rajasthan, helping her form an understanding about women's issues, instrumental in her life and future career.

Kamla post-graduated from Rajasthan University before moving to train in sociology on a Fellowship with the University of Münster, West Germany, studying the consequences of economic change in societies. After teaching at the Orientation Centre of the German Foundation for Developing Countries in Bad Honnef for around a year she returned in 1972 to work for natural resource sustainability for *Seva Mandir*, a voluntary organisation.

She saw firsthand the caste and gender biases women faced and how discrimination manifested itself even in governance and realised that caste and feminism were intersectional.

From 1976 to 2001, with the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation, she focused on supporting innovative NGO initiatives for development and empowerment of marginalised people, especially women, in South East and South Asia.

She catalysed women's movement in India in 1980 when thousands of women protested after the Supreme Court acquitted two police officers in the rape of a girl named Mathura in a rural police station. Rape laws were amended in 1983 mainly because of this campaign. Kamla participated in protests, performed street plays and set out to educate citizens about equality and social justice. Recalling the sexual abuse she suffered as a young girl she wrote a book on the subject for children, *'If Only Someone Had Broken the Silence'*. She was also active in the Shah Bano, anti-dowry and anti-rape movements. Over the years, she co-founded

several women's groups. Co-founder of *Jagori*, a women's resource Centre, in Himachal Pradesh, she was also the South Asian Coordinator of the *One Billion Rising* campaign and Co-Chairperson of the worldwide network, *Peace Women Across the Globe*. In 2002, she resigned from the U.N., to work full time with *Sangat*, a South Asian feminist network, of which she was founder member- adviser.

She worked with underprivileged women from tribal and working communities, organising participatory, experiential, capacity-building workshops, often using poetry, songs, slogans, speeches, posters, plays, books and other non-literary methods to demystify concepts, raising awareness on gender issues.

Kamla wrote dozens of books, poems, slogans and songs on women's rights and eight children's books. They include *Laughing Matters* co-authored with Bindia Thapar, with a Hindi version *Hasna Toh Sangharsh Mein Bhi Zaroori Hai*, *Borders & Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*, *Understanding Gender*, and *What Is Patriarchy? Feminism & Its Relevance in South Asia*, etc. Translated into nearly 30 languages they are used by many NGOs to help people understand gender issues. She is best known for her poem *Kyunki main ladki hoon, mujhe padhna hai*, addressing a father who asks his daughter why she needs to study.

She resented that South Asia's women were shackled by a myriad of social customs and beliefs that embraced and straddled patriarchy, often using religion as a shield and demanded a cultural revolution. Feminism to her was not a western concept, as Indian feminism had its roots in its own struggles and tribulations.

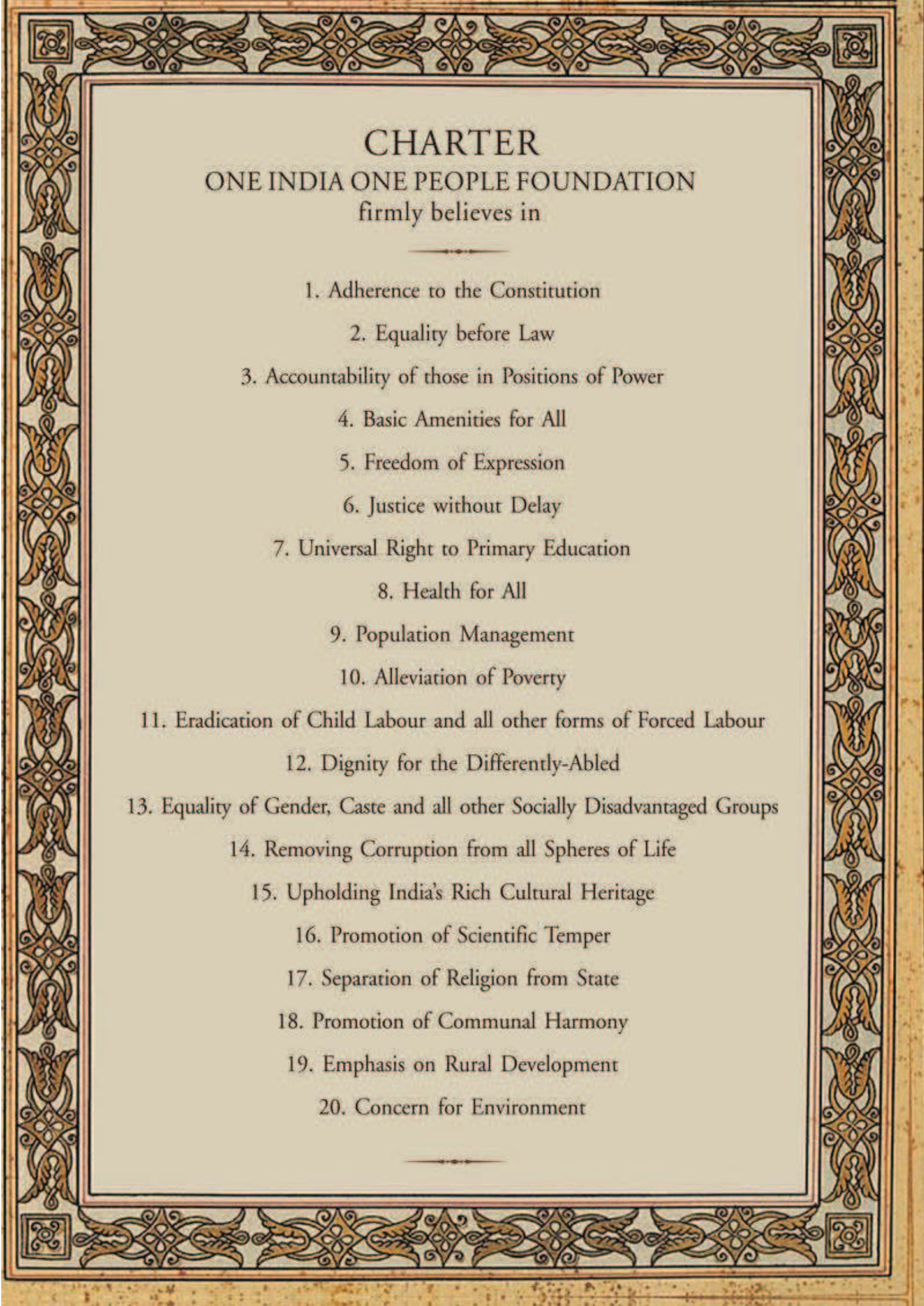
A feisty, warm person who celebrated life, no matter what it threw at her, twice divorced Kamla remained dedicated to the women's movement despite personal tragedies. Her 27-year-old daughter, Kamaljit killed herself in 2006. Her son, Jeet, was left disabled by a severe reaction to a vaccine as a baby and required round-the-clock care.

Kamla died aged 75 in Delhi of liver cancer.

**A. Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelance journalist, poet and short story writer.**







# CHARTER

## ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE FOUNDATION

firmly believes in

---

1. Adherence to the Constitution
  2. Equality before Law
  3. Accountability of those in Positions of Power
  4. Basic Amenities for All
  5. Freedom of Expression
  6. Justice without Delay
  7. Universal Right to Primary Education
  8. Health for All
  9. Population Management
  10. Alleviation of Poverty
  11. Eradication of Child Labour and all other forms of Forced Labour
  12. Dignity for the Differently-Abled
  13. Equality of Gender, Caste and all other Socially Disadvantaged Groups
  14. Removing Corruption from all Spheres of Life
  15. Upholding India's Rich Cultural Heritage
  16. Promotion of Scientific Temper
  17. Separation of Religion from State
  18. Promotion of Communal Harmony
  19. Emphasis on Rural Development
  20. Concern for Environment
-



# WHO AM I?



Am I a Hindu first or an Indian first?

Am I a Muslim first or an Indian first?

Am I a Christian first or an Indian first?

Am I a Buddhist first or an Indian first?

Am I a Brahmin first or an Indian first?

Am I a Dalit first or an Indian first?

Am I a South Indian first or an Indian first?

Am I a North Indian first or an Indian first?

Am I the President of India first or an Indian first?

Am I the Prime Minister of India first or an Indian first?

Am I the Commander-in-Chief first or an Indian first?

Am I a supporter of any 'ism' first or an Indian first?

Am I a white-collar/blue collar worker first or an Indian first?

Am I a youth/senior citizen first or an Indian first?



In all cases you are Indian First, Last and Always.  
Be a Proud Indian. Make this country Great, Strong and United.



Sadanand A. Shetty, Founder Editor  
(October 9 1930 – February 23 2007)  
ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE