



## NUMBER GAME

With Niall Horan's debut album, *Flicker*, the British-Irish boy band One Direction parallels the Beatles as the only group to have three members to rack up US No.1 solo albums. George Harrison, John Lennon and Paul McCartney were at the top of the charts in the 1970s.

## SNAPSHOTS



## Lost in Translation

THE Penguin Fever, a six-day literary festival that marked 30 years of Penguin Random House India, hosted a series of discussions in the past few days. On Monday, in a session titled "The Line of Beauty", authors and translators discussed various nuances of translating regional literature into English. Economist Bibek Debroy, who has translated the epics *Mahabharata* and *Valmiki Ramanaya* from Sanskrit to English, Tamil writer Perumal Murugan, whose translated works, including *One Woman Part* and *Pyre*, have been read widely, and historian Rana Safvi, who has translated Zahir Dehelvi's memoir of the Mutiny of 1857, *Dastan-e-Ghadar*, from Urdu to English, shared their insights on translation in a conversation with writer-publisher Namita Gokhale. "There are certain words that are impossible to translate, like 'dharma'. If you translate it into 'religion', it would be a mistranslation, because its meaning changes with contexts," said Debroy. Safvi shared that a word she had trouble translating was 'uff', an expression that also changes with situations. Whereas, Murugan said that a direct translation of *Pookkhuuzhi*, the title of his novel, would be "flower pit" which actually means a fire pit, so the English title of the book was kept *Pyre*.

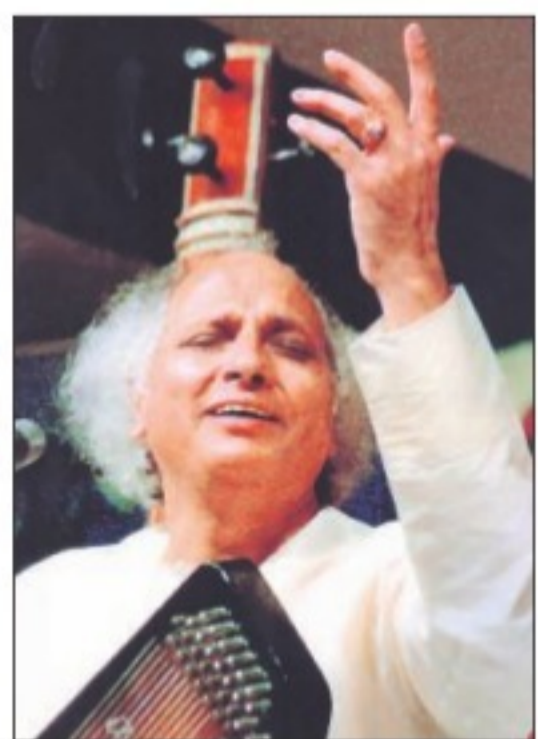
SURBHI GUPTA



## In Memory

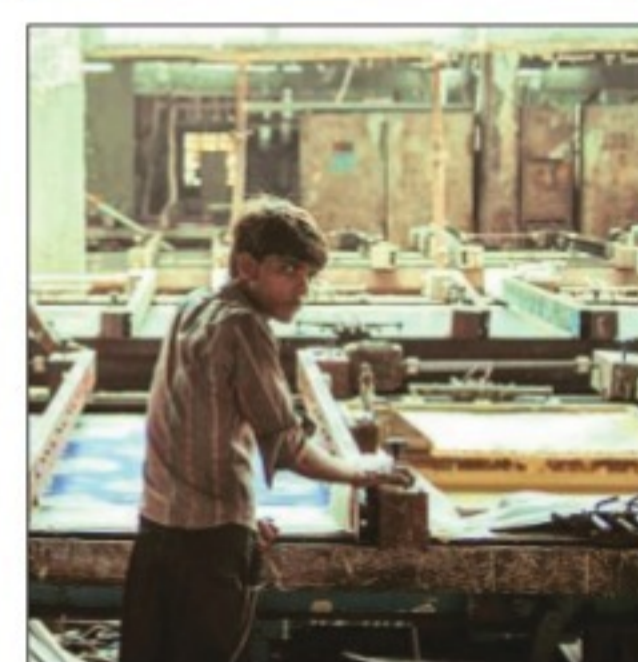
THE GOOGLE doodle on Wednesday marked the 87th birth anniversary of noted Urdu writer Abdul Qavi Desnavi, who died in 2011. Designed by artist Prabha Malloya, the search engine giant's homepage portrays him as a bespectacled scholar in a black bandhgala against a backdrop in the Urdu script.

Desnavi has over 50 books to his credit but is most known for his work on Mirza Ghalib, Allama Muhammad Iqbal and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Born in the Desna village of Bihar, he served as a professor and head of the Urdu Department at Saifia College in Bhopal, and mentored writers such as Iqbal Masood and Javed Akhtar. "He exerted a powerful influence on the evolution of Urdu literature and academic thought in India," reads Google's blog.



## In the Dark

DESIGNED BY architect Charles Correa, the Jawahar Kala Kendra (JKK) in Jaipur will host a nightlong music programme on November 4. Opening with a tabla recital by Anuradha Pal, it will also feature a flute recital by Pt Hari Prasad Chaurasia and a sarangi recital by Ustad Liyaqat Ali Khan. Vocalist Ashwini Bhide-Deshpande will be seen in a *jugalbandi* with Pt Sanjeev Abhyankar. The event will conclude with a performance by renowned vocalist Pt Jasraj (pictured) at 5 am on November 5. "Overnight concerts have been associated with places such as Benaras and Jaipur for several years. We decided to reestablish this legacy with 'Raag' last year, and its resounding success has motivated us to repeat it this year," says Pooja Sood, director general of JKK.

(Clockwise from above) Stills from *Village Rockstars*; *Newton*; *Machine*; Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam

## The Hills are Alive

The Dharamshala International Film Festival, which has gained currency for being 'intimate' and showcasing the best of indie cinema, is ready to roll out its sixth edition

## ALAKA SAHANI

THE POPULARITY of the Dharamshala International Film Festival (DIFF) lies in the fact that it isn't like other regular festivals. The scenic venue, located on the edge of the Himalayas in Dharamshala, promises an 'intimate' experience for its visitors over a long weekend — November 2 to 5. Its schedule allows enough room for delegates to watch the movies — which are carefully picked by festival directors Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam — as well as interact with the visiting filmmakers and fellow movie buffs.

The festival is the brainchild of documentary filmmakers Sarin and Sonam, who have made Dharamshala their home for the last two decades. "There was a dearth of cultural activities of any kind in Dharamshala. It is crucial for small towns to have cultural spaces that can bring communities together. We thought the festival would be an important endeavour in that direction," says Sarin. Described as an "alternative, boutique, independent film festival", the annual event was first held in 2012. The festival showcases an eclectic mix of the best of independent features, documentaries, shorts and animation films from India and around the world. Over the last six years, it has come to enjoy "a lot of warmth from the locals, film communities and independent filmmakers". According to Sarin, the festival's main draw, apart from being intimate, is the fact that it is not competitive.



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RITU SARIN

From the beginning, the festival's agenda has been to showcase independent cinema. "Our aim is to bring independent cinema to the mountains," says Sonam. Throughout the year, Sarin and Sonam lookout for interesting movies. "We make the selection after watching a lot of movies. Film programmers send their suggestions to us too," says Sarin. Since the festival has a small team, it is not equipped to take entries. "It would be hard for us to go through the number of films that might come in," says Sarin. According to Sonam, they pick the films that resonate with their audience and them. "Thematically, they are human stories which have a message," he adds.

The upcoming edition will open with Shubhashish Bhutiani's acclaimed debut *Mukti Bhawan* and it will be presented by the lead actor Adil Hussain. The other major attractions in the 'feature section' are *A Death in the Gunj* by Konkona Sen Sharma; Amit Masurkar-directed *Newton*, which is India's entry for the Academy Award for the Best Foreign Film; Nepal's Oscar entry *White Sun*, directed by Deepak Rauniyar; and Lijo Jose Pellissery's crime drama *Angamaly Diaries*. Rima Das's *Village Rockstars*, which is the current favourite in the festival circuit, will bring down the curtains with the delightful account of a girl's pursuit to own a guitar.

The highlights, this year, also include the Indian premiere of *Out of This World* — a newly restored version of journalist and writer Lowell Thomas' account of his travels in Tibet in 1949. This would be presented by filmmaker David Wright, and the screening will be attended by Thomas's granddaughter Anne Donaghy. The festival will screen two award-winning documentaries — Kirsten Johnson's *Cameraperson* and Rahul Jain's *Machines*. Other major documentaries on the DIFF schedule are Polish filmmaker Anna Zamecka's documentary *Communism* and Pakistani director Arshad Khan's *Abu*.

A bunch of international and Indian filmmakers will be travelling to the hill town this weekend. Japanese filmmaker Yoshinori Sato will present his feature *Her Mother*, while Israeli filmmaker Yaniv Berman will present *Land of the Little People* and Mano Khalil, a Swiss director of Kurdish-Syrian origin, will be there with *The Swallow*. *Ralang Road*'s director Karma Takapa, *Ashwathamma*'s director Pushpendra Singh, Pellissery and Sen Sharma will also attend the festival.

This year, DIFF will be hosting a children's programme, curated by the director of the South Asia Children's Cinema Forum, Monica Wahi, for the third time, as they reach out to more young viewers. The selection includes an animated adaptation of Roald Dahl's book *Revolting Rhymes*; Dutch children's feature *The Day My Father Became a Bush*, directed by Nicole van Kilsdonk; and Suresh Eriyat's animated short *The Toki*.

## FESTIVAL PICKS

The DIFF offers an interesting mix of cinematic experiences. Highlights: ■ The festival will showcase 19 feature films, including *A Death in the Gunj*, *Aji*, *Angamaly Diaries*, *Mukti Bhawan*, *Newton*, *Village Rockstar*, *Such a Morning* and *Tripoli Cancelled*.

■ To mark the 70th anniversary of the Swiss-Indian Treaty of Friendship, the DIFF will host an open-air screening of *Heidi*, directed by Alain Gsponer.

■ Curated by Umesh Kulkarni, the short films section will screen *Taandav*, *Afternoon Clouds*, *Days of Autumn*, *Aaba* and the animated short *Fish Curry*, among others.

■ During a panel discussion, indie filmmakers from across the country will discuss the contemporary independent scene.

■ Actor Adil Hussain will give insight into his life, work and acting methodology during a masterclass.

## For a Change

A film festival focussing on wildlife and environment brings stories from across the world

## EXPRESS FEATURES SERVICE

THE FOUR-MINUTE bilingual film, *Thung-Thung Karma*, unravels the story of the black-necked crane, considered holy by the Monpa people in Arunachal Pradesh's Zemithang region. But the harbinger of happiness and good health is facing problems of habitat loss. In the 2016 film *The Dabba Dol Gang*, children from Sehore in Madhya Pradesh have taken it upon themselves to prevent people from defecating in the open. The 2015 English film *Hope: Positive Stories from India* documents cases of community participation that revived the environment and the climate. Ravaged in the two-decade-long armed conflict between the militants and the government, Assam's Manas National Park was on the verge of losing all its elephants — *Manas: Return of the Giants* tells the tale of a paradise that was lost and later regained.

More than 100 films from across the world, themed on environment and wildlife, will be screened during the ninth edition of the CMS Vatavaran International Environment and Wildlife Film Festival and Forum that will take place from November 2 to 6 at Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti.

"When we started in 2002, it was an experiment. Many had advised us against it, saying that people would not be interested in environmental films. But our first attempt got us 100 entries and proved that



Stills from *Manas: Return of the Giants* (top) and *Hope: Positive Stories from India*

people are interested in nature and the environment. Previously, there was no platform to get any recognition for your work. Now, we alone have set up many film clubs and festivals across India. We also provide a space for filmmakers to connect with various stakeholders, including scientists, policy makers, programmers and the youth," said Sabyesachi Bharti, festival manager. This year, the main theme of the festival is "Conservation 4 Water", emphasising on issues of climate change related to water, the resulting climate variability, food and health insecurity, biodiversity loss and environmental damage. Apart from film screenings, the festival will also comprise workshops and panel discussions with conservationists, policy makers and journalists, on topics such as people's participation in policy implementation, role of media in conservation and the ability of a film to bring policy or behavioural change.

The festival schedule is available on [www.cmsvatavaran.org](http://www.cmsvatavaran.org)

## His Father's Son

Ustad Shujaat Khan cast his mind back to his father's tutelage to share the rigour of the guru-shishya parampara and the paternal instincts of Ustad Vilayat Khan

## DAMINI RALLEIGH

ON A starry night, with the nip in the air alluding to the onset of winter, was Ustad Shujaat Khan wielding his sitar in tandem with his fellow musicians — flautist Ajay Prasanna, tabla player Amit Choubey, vocalists Hariharan and Kaushiki Chakraborty and saxophonist George Brooks — and together they performed composer Leslie Lewis' production, *Odyssey*. The Grammy-nominated musician, who sings intermittently while playing his instrument, hails from the Imdadkhani gharana and started training under his father, sitar maestro Ustad Vilayat Khan, at the age of three. On the day that followed their performance at the MTV India Summit in Jaipur last weekend, Shujaat, in a freewheeling session with writer and journalist Namita Devidayal, delved into the perquisites as well as the drawbacks of being his father's son while also dwelling on the lighter side of the genius. Excerpts:

## Born with a silver spoon

Yes, there were Mercedes parked outside our 17-room house. Of course, we were born with a golden spoon but what people don't know is whether it held a sweet or bitter gourd. I had once said that children of geniuses often turn into drug addicts. It is difficult to deal with expectations. Drugs, then, become an escape. We didn't turn into drug addicts but we were under immense pressure.

## Pedagogue and parent

People used to travel miles to learn from my father. They would sweep their guru's home and only sometimes get to listen to him play. I was treated no differently from them. If someone was sweeping the floor, I used to do the dusting or whatever else needed tending. But there is an advantage and that advantage is in my blood. Also, you grow up around music. From the day you are born, you are listening to music. It becomes ingrained in you. It's



Ustad Shujaat Khan

easier for Vilayat Khan's son to get a concert but if I cannot make you happy, it doesn't matter whose son I am or what my lineage is. People will not come to listen to me play. So, there are advantages but the disadvantages far, far outnumber them. I don't mean to sound ungrateful. But at the age of nine, we would come back tired from school and pass out at 5 pm, as kids usually do. At 9 pm, we were woken up to do *riyaz* that would go on till 5 am. We would catch a few hours of sleep before it was time for school again.

## Finding a niche

My father realised that if Shujaat Khan turns out to be a carbon copy of Ustad Vilayat Khan saab, nobody will come to listen to him. People had already started demanding that I play my father's pieces. He helped me find and nurture my own expression. I am his son and I do have his touch. Much like him, I dip into the *gayaki-ang* but he did not want me to be limited by what he played, and people's perception of me. For example, I rarely play raga Bhairavi. I think till the end of my life, Vilayat

Khan saab's Bhairavi will remain etched in people's minds. And even when I do play it, I try and bring in a few variations.

## Funny Business

My father was not media savvy, so many people didn't know what he looked like. I was a little more recognisable because they had seen me on TV. Once, he asked me to drive him to Khan Market to buy a camera film roll. I dropped him at the store and went to park the car. As I entered the store, the store manager left my father and came running to me, saying, "Khan saabji, aayiye, aayiye. Ek photo lijiye. Hum dhanya hai ki aap dukaan par aaye". Before I could turn around and tell the store manager who the person he had just excused himself from is, my father gestured to me to keep quiet. And then jumped into the conversation. "Yeh Shujaat Khan hain? Main bhi inke chamo ki dhool le loon". He was a man who was extremely confident of himself and always said, "Classical music ek aisi cheez hai, jo samjhe, woh tumhara ghulaam. Aur jo na samjhe, tum uske ghulaam."