

BRAHMANJALI -2015 : Divine offering through Bharatnatyam

In the full moon night of Kartik Poonnima on November 25, Brahmanjali-2015, an exclusive concert exhibited tremendous talent of Dr. Raghunath Manet and his clan at most beautiful and exotic Jagmandir Island Palace of Udaipur which is situated in the lake Pichola. This was the annual classical music and dance concert organised by the Maharana of Mewar Charitable Foundation. It was organized with an object of preserving artistic, religious and historic interest for cultural conservation of heritage.

The Bharatnatyam concert started with invocation. It was followed by a choreographed performance by Dr. Raghunath Manet and his group presented prayer of the Hindu 'Trinity' which included Lord Brahma-the creator, Lord Vishnu-the sustainer, and Lord Shiva-the destroyer. The group, with melodious vocal and instrumental accompaniment presented the scene of birth of Lord Brahma, from Kamal(Lotus) springing from Lord Vishnu's navel while Vishnu rested on the serpent Shesha. The co dancers also elegantly presented compositions in praise of Brahma and Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge.

Besides, Exponent of Bharatnatyam and choreographer Dr. Raghunath is also an ace 'Veena' player. He displayed his talent mesmerizing the audience. It was a divine performance which engrossed



everyone present.

Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar, Chairman and Managing Trustee, mentioned on this occasion, 'The City Palace was and continues to be the site for all the rituals, spectacles and celebrations of the Mewar family. As the Seventy Sixth custodian of the House of Mewar I am honour bound to continue this legacy and discharge my duties to keep alive the living heritage of Mewar through the Eternal Mewar Festivals. The celebrations of creation of the universe

Vilas janve

through the melodious and vibrant Kartik Poonnima-'Experience the Mystique of life' on a brilliant moonlight are examples of a breathing and living Palace'. Dr. Raghunath Manet was accompanied by Mr. Chandru Elango, Ms. Navyaasri Radja, Ms. Amalorpavam Lourthu Nathan, Ms. Devagi Raman, Mr. Madhu Gopivasam Damodaran, Ms. Shalini Viswanathan and Mr. Sugumaran Balasundaram.

While felicitating the artists, Shriji

Arvind Singh Mewar, Chairman and Managing Trustee, Maharana of Mewar Charitable Foundation commented, "It was truly mesmerizing and magical performance by Dr. Raghunath Manet and his group who have come all the way from Pondicherry".

Anchor of the show was a young talent of Udaipur, Mohita Dixit. It was her first chance to host a show in front of Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar and other high profile delegates and tourists from India and abroad. She did her job pretty well. While talking to her after the show she said,



"Anchor a show for MMCF and that too in Jagmandir is not less than a blessing. I am so fortunate to introduce and witness great performance of Dr. Raghunath Manet at the picturesque venue."

While returning in boat, I met Advocate Vaishali Jain Walchale from Washim along with three friends from Maharashtra and knew their reactions. 'We had come to see Udaipur and we visited Jagmandir in the morning and decided to attend this exclusive concert. It was truly a great privilege to witness this awesome performance in this Island Palace. We cannot

forget such cherishing moments in our life' she said.

Preserving our ancient art and culture is a most difficult task in today's scenario, but Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar and his able team of MMCF, each of such events is conceived and executed with utter precision. The venue, artistes, stage, light, sound, ambiance, hospitality, grace and glory, everything makes the events of MMCF outstanding. So was this special event. Kartik Poonnima concert has become most significant event with a divine performances.

Breaking or Making Up Marriage : A Total Personal Affair

Marriage is a strong bond between two people. It's really exciting to find your soul mate and get married on time. But this special bond is losing connection these days. Reasons may vary but real love has lost its meaning. Love and bonding need lot of efforts and positivity but marriages are breaking easily these days.

Males and females are equally qualified in this decade. Over pampering and self praise have made them intolerant and impatient. It's not easy to live a perfect life. When you choose a person to be your life partner, you



choose some perfection and imperfections too. Human psychology says that nobody is perfect. Life is not always about fun and entertainment. Couples enjoy in the beginning and soon after marriage when they face realities of life they begin to curse each other for every misunderstanding. Families have become nuclear these days and situations are developing like nuclear bombs in almost every home. Actually after effects of marriage leads married couples to a danger zone where they blame each other for every problem.

Money and luxuries can't buy happiness. Home becomes a sweet home when we put our positive efforts to make it more comfortable to live in. I have read somewhere that relationships don't die their natural death. They die because of false ego and misunderstandings. Sometimes parents and sometimes office pressure worse the situation. Marriage is wonderful bond but after spending years with each other, love fades away. Fighting over small issues can lead a marriage to divorce.

Life is not complicated itself, we make it complicated. Over possessiveness and nagging break a beautiful relationship in seconds. Experiencing miserable, painful and sad things in life are very natural. Each and every couple has to face hardships in their relationship. Being married does not give you license to snatch away your partner's privacy. I have seen many women who check their husband's mobile phones and if they find any female's number in it, they start quarreling with their husbands. It's a modern world, males and females are working together and sometimes when they don't get peace at homes, they try to find happiness in talking to other persons outside their mar-

riages. Blaming others to ruin your married life is completely wrong. Relationships break when you forget to give space and try to take everything as granted. No one can break your marriage without your wish. Friends and relatives are not weapons who can be used to destroy your love life. You only give remote control of your happiness to others where anyone can destroy your peace of mind in one second by saying something against your thoughts.

It's important to increase your trust level and maturity. Mother in laws and some other relations are constantly being blamed since ages to affect our lives. I don't deny that evil does not exist in our society and every relative always plays a positive role. I am trying to say that our own attitude towards life make it good or bad. Destroy your egos and work hard to make your marriage successful.

Marriage is a personal affair and it's not good to share your personal matters with others. We have the power to control everything. We humans have all the powers to break or make any relationship. It's funny to go to an astrologer and ask him to give mantras to save your marriage.

Real mantras are trust, love, patience and tolerance. Extra marital affairs are increasing in society but in these relations one has to keep trust and patience too. If one can do this with third person, why can't that person save his marriage by applying these simple rules? I think free sex and smartness can attract you but at the end you need a good and trustworthy companion. Two or three marriages don't give you guarantee of happiness. If your partner is not good and don't understand your real efforts, it's good to move on but if small issues are breaking your marriage just stop and think again. Unhealthy relationships should break but decision should be purely yours. Develop positivity and do efforts to save marriage before taking any harsh decision. Counseling and medicines can help to control anger and meditation can increase patience level. Good and healthy minds always work to create happiness and if sometimes marriages won't work, don't blame any other person for that. Take responsibility of every negative or positive thing in life and move on. After all we are human beings and we learn lessons till the end of life.

Urgent need to mitigate wastewater pollution in India: Concludes Australia- India workshop in Udaipur

Only 20-30% of about 40,000 megalitres of sewage produced everyday in India is treated. Untreated sewage is commonly discharged into rivers and streams and according to Central Pollution Control Board some 80% of surface water pollution in India is as a result of this. While the beneficial reuse of wastewater is an absolute necessity for food and water security, the use of untreated sewage is threatening human health and environment. A four-day Australia-India workshop (sponsored by the Crawford Fund of Australia) discussed the opportunities and challenges of reuse of wastewater this week in the Lake City of Udaipur. It is noteworthy that this event coincided with the announcement of South Australia and Rajasthan as sister states. This workshop, was hosted by VidyaBhavan and MPUAT Udaipur in collaboration with Wolkem India Ltd., CSIRO Australia and Western Sydney University and was attended by experts and practitioners from India and Australia. The workshop was opened by the Mayor of Udaipur Mr Chandra Singh Kothari who is keen to develop Udaipur as a smart city. The workshop called for a concerted and considered action to deal with the growing problem of untreated sewage associated pollution of rivers in India, such as in Ahar (Udaipur) and Yamuna (Delhi). Mr Ajay Mehta, the President of VidyaBhavan, exhorted every individual to take responsibility to mitigate environmental pollution instead of relying solely on the government. Mr Arvind Singhal of Wolkem India highlighted the need for the change of mindset to address the wastewater issues.

Rivers in India are dying or dead and have been converted to drains of untreated sewerage. Yamuna in Delhi and Ahar River in Udaipur are good examples of this. "Rivers are living systems but unfortunately we have lost respect for rivers in India", said Prof. Basant Maheshwari of Western Sydney University. Dr Rai Kookana, a scientist of CSIRO Australia and the co-convenor of the workshop, presented results from a study on Ahar river Udaipur (which receives city's untreated sewage) highlighting detection of high levels of some antibiotics and other toxicants in the sewage-impacted river water. Dr Kookana said, the presence of high levels of antibiotics in the Ahar river and elsewhere in India (e.g. Hyderabad) are of particular concern as they cause antibiotic resistance development in pathogenic bacteria and threaten to take humans back to the "dark ages" - the era prior to the invention of antibiotics.

Pathogens swimming in the soup of antibiotics and antimicrobial agents (such as triclosan found in liquid soaps, shampoos, anti-septic creams) present in untreated wastewater are able to develop extraordinary abilities (super bugs) to make antibiotics ineffective.



Multi-drug resistance tuberculosis has become difficult to control in many countries already.

"The excessive use of antibiotics and the use of liquid soaps and hand-washes are exacerbating the drug-resistance problem because antimicrobial compounds are released from such products in the environment and their use should be discouraged in favour of dry soaps", said Dr Kookana.

Many people, especially children, die of waterborne diseases and nearly half of hospital beds in the world are taken up by such illnesses. While wastewater being rich source of carbon and nutrient can be a good resource for irrigation in peri-urban agriculture, the untreated sewage causes pathogen and heavy metal contamination of vegetables and salad produced. There is a one in ten chance of contracting typhoid, rotavirus, cholera or hepatitis A by consuming vegetables produced with raw wastewater. Farmers and their families who work with untreated wastewater are exposed to high risk of disease. "Consuming salads and raw vegetables produced with untreated sewage can be suicidal" said Dr Chris Derry, an Australian expert in public health. The term reuse implies some form of treatment, he said. For tall crops (e.g. corn) where the eaten part does not come into direct contact with water, removing 99% of the pathogens can make wastewater safe for use in agriculture and simple treatment systems can easily achieve this. However, for root and salad crops, 99.99% removal of pathogens would be needed for safe use, so more intensive and costly treatment is required, said Dr Derry. While Prof. Rishi Shanker of Ahmedabad University recommended that "vegetables need to be soaked in clean water for at least 15 min followed by repeated washes before consumption", Dr Derry preferred that only those vegetables that are eaten cooked be allowed to be produced from farms using sewage water.

Low cost treatment of wastewater to reduce pathogens will also have benefits in removing many of the other contaminants.

Anil Mehta

So for the health of farmers, people who eat vegetables grown with wastewater, and the restoration of rivers,

lakes and groundwater this is a fundamental high priority step to sustainability, made even more important because of urban growth. Planning for water management including wastewater treatment should be a fundamental requirement of urban development. In this regard, the workshop concluded that the bioremediation based "green bridge" concept developed and tested by Dr Sayali Joshi (SERI Pune) and Dr Tez Rajdan (Udaipur) has been particularly successful in mobilizing community and improving water quality of Ahar River. In the meantime every individual can take up their responsibility, assisted where necessary by municipal and state governments, to repair or install septic tanks and sewer connections, to recycle plastics and other wastes, to harvest rainwater and not to litter. A concerted effort will clean up our rivers but and is vital for our health and that of our children.

A field visit to peri-urban farmers during the workshop highlighted the issue of contamination of soil, crop produce and groundwater quality, all of which are adversely impacted by urbanization, industrial and domestic wastewater. Impact of wastewater on groundwater quality was also discussed in the workshop in the context of managed aquifer recharge (MAR) during period of excess water. Dr Peter Dillon, a world authority on MAR from Australia, said that there were Indian guidelines for safe recharge of roof runoff and water in rural catchments. Groundwater replenishment with urban stormwater and treated sewage effluent has developed safe irrigation, industrial and drinking water supplies in a number of countries. However, he cautioned on the need to develop water quality monitoring and management capability, appropriate demonstration projects and guidelines in India before widespread use of these water resources for aquifer recharge. Unless these are in place groundwater pollution would be almost inevitable and recharge would be an unac-

ceptable practice. Dr Dillon hoped that the new sister state relation between Rajasthan and South Australia may help facilitate developing the necessary skills, methods, demonstration projects and guidelines for safe recharge of these abundant water resources.

Udaipur, like many cities in India, has low sewer connectivity and relies heavily on septic tanks. Surveys of septic tanks in Udaipur by VidyaBhavan and Centre for Policy Research (CPR) revealed that they mostly discharge to open drains and produce poor quality effluent that needs further treatment before release to rivers or for reuse. Few have leach fields and these would pollute groundwater if used for effluent disposal. Dr Anil Mehta and CPR team found that solids are recovered only occasionally, at request and payment by household and there is no planned treatment of sludge and sometimes the septage is spread on the same fields used for wastewater irrigation, compounding problems.

Plastics are a growing menace as the solid waste not only chokes waterways around India but globally, including contamination of oceans and wildlife. Chemicals used to harden plastic such as bisphenol A (BPA - a compound banned in some countries but found in baby bottles in India) and other estrogenic compounds leach out of plastic and are known to cause feminization and other reproductive ill-effects in fish and wildlife. It is worth noting that high levels of BPA were found in Ahar River by the CSIRO study and in 2014 in baby bottles by the Toxics Link NGO of India (Times of India - 5 Nov 2014). Microplastic particles are dangerous in their own right and also accumulate other toxic chemicals thus adversely impacting environmental health. The workshop concluded that community awareness about the detrimental impact of plastic and other solid wastes in the environment should be enhanced. "Campaigns to remove plastics from waterways should be conducted, similar to the Plastic Free July Program run by some Australian schools, said Dr Kookana.

The workshop findings were shared with the city administrators on the final day of the workshop, who relished the opportunity and the interactions. Findings on septic tank in the Udaipur city were welcomed by Mr RN Mehta (Secretary Urban Improvement Trust, Udaipur). Mr Mehta agreed during the workshop to implement improved design for septic tanks and train local masons appropriately. The workshop findings were also shared with the Mr Gulab Chand Kataria (the Minister for Home Affairs, Rajasthan) who welcomed the opportunity and offered his full support in rejuvenation of Ahar by removing plastics and other wastes from the river.