

Odissi dance enchants the audience

An evening of sublime Odissi unfolded as part of the 13th annual festival organised by Our Sacred Space Environmental and Cultural Centre. The performance featured the renowned Guru Sharmila Biswas and her disciple Raaginni Hindocha, who captivated the audience with their artistry and emotional depth. Their presentation beautifully blended tradition, innovation, and devotion, offering a memorable celebration of classical dance

ANNA RAO GANGAVALLI

AS part of their 13th Annual Festival, the Our Sacred Space Environmental and Cultural Centre organised an entrancing evening of Odissi dance at Chaurah Auditorium, Secunderabad, recently.

Senior Guru Sharmila Biswas is a leading dancer, choreographer, and teacher of Odissi. A prominent disciple of the legend Kelucharan Mohapatra, she is the founder of the 'Odissi Vision and Movement Centre' in Kolkata, which has been instrumental in the research of traditional folk-art forms as well as the Mahari or Devadasi tradition of Odisha. She delves into these for innovation in her productions, which have been presented at dance festivals worldwide. Her creative changes in content, technique, and costumes are a considerable contribution, recognised by the conferment of the Sang-eet Natak Akademi Award. Demanding excellence, dedication, and discipline from her students, she has been instrumental in grooming a talented younger generation of Odissi dancers.

Raaginni Hindocha is a budding disciple of Sharmila

Biswas and has performed in many festivals in India and abroad as part of her Guru's repertory. Two compositions were showcased by Raaginni and one by Sharmila Biswas. The 'aharya' of Raaginni was in electric blue, standing out well on the lit-up stage.

'Ramashtakam' in 'misra raga' was a treat with its lilting music. The young dancer entered the stage starting with her back to the audience in the characteristic stylized Odissi looping movements full of grace. The tempo built up with slow and steady movements flowing into vigorously agile 'angika abhinaya' as the attributes of Lord Rama were brought out. Raaginni's honed gestures were full of both delicacy and solidity, indicating an apt student who has imbibed the knowledge imparted meticulously by her Guru while inserting a considerable flair of her own. This was a tribute to Sharmila's considered opinion that a student must display originality without merely copying identically an age-old choreography.

After performing a 'Pranam', she went on to delineate, while being in precise synchrony with every trill of music, the refrain — salutations to Rama, to whose feet



all gods prostrate, born in the dynasty of the Sun, whose beautiful face is decorated by 'Chandan'. Then comes the young prince fixing his arrows to the bow to destroy the demon disturbers of the sages' sacrifices and the redeeming of Ahalya. The dainty fluttering of her hands exactly mirrored the exuberant footwork, creating a thrilling effect. Hara's bow broke in Rama's hands, and he went to the forest for the cause of truth and justice. The golden deer was brought down with a single arrow after the dancer depicted its bounding playful movements. The King of Eagles,

Jatayu, was given 'moksha' by the Lord, who slew Vali, the King of Monkeys. The peerless prince who controlled and had the ocean bridged, conquered Lanka by destroying Ravana and his armies — is bowed down to in humble reverence.

The second piece, 'Gativilas' in 'jog raga', was full of exquisite 'nritta' movements and expressions where, one by one, several animals were brought to life by their natural interpretation through the strides which give the horse its power, the regal lion whose stamp is its majestic stance, the peacock with its glorious fantail who dances

effortlessly in its forest environment, the cuckoo whose body reverberates with the powerful vibrance of its melodious singing, and the hawk whose telescopic gaze enables it to swoop down on its prey like lightning.

The finale was 'Vilasini' by Guru Sharmila Biswas herself. This piece was inspired by Sharmila's meeting with, and immense regard for, the last Maharis of the Jagannath Temple. Filled with overpowering 'abhinaya', it created a palimpsest of emotions where the artiste revelled in her own mastery of layers of intricate imagery to bring 'rasa' to the audience. The simple scene of an aged Mahari or temple dancer remembering the old days — despite seeing her wrinkled reflection, being unable to control her urge to decorate herself and get dressed up in the morning — was turned into a masterpiece of imaginative choreographic creativity.

Every minute movement, faithfully reproduced visually, built up the character in rich detail to a subtly picaresque perfection brimming with an earthly vitality

in every pore. The sleeping dancer stirs and awakens; she knots her hair into a bun, fastening it with flowers, dots her forehead with 'Sindoor', places 'Kajal' in her eyes. Earrings for her ears are fastened, a garland is hung around her neck, forehead and body daubed with 'Chandan'. A brocade jacket covers her chest; adorned with necklaces, she wears a saree with a temple motif border. Bangles and armlets are worn; feet gaily coloured red with 'Alta' and decked with anklets. Being peered upon, she uses the curious observers to have her toe ring put on as she cannot reach it herself. After her dressing up is finished,

she runs eagerly to the mirror to see and admire herself; it was as though the artiste had vanished and a real Mahari was on stage going through her toilette

— a stunning 'trompe l'oeil' effect translated flawlessly to dance with surpassing skill. The conclusion witnessed the appreciative applause of the spellbound audience.



DEEPTI NAVAL DROPS A FOND MEMORY WITH HER FATHER FROM THEIR EUROPE GETAWAY

Veteran actress Deepthi Naval treated the netizens with a fond memory with her father from their getaway to Europe back in 1982. The photo showed the father-daughter duo posing outside the camper. Remembering the time with her dad, the 'Saath Saath' actress penned on her Instagram, "Sharing a precious memory of my father - In a camper through Europe - Piti and I - 1982. (sic)"

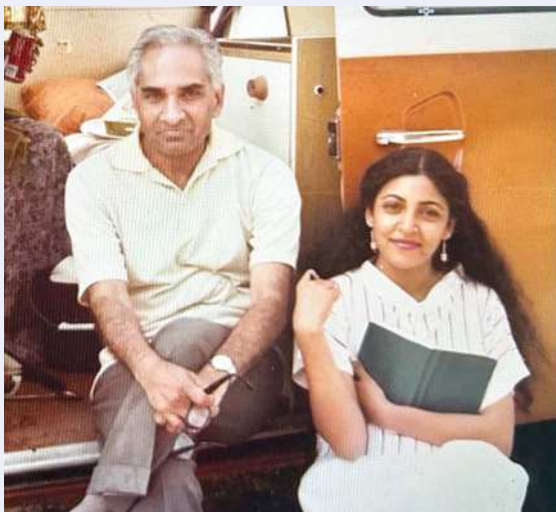
Adoring the throwback photo, an Insta user shared in the comment section, "This is one of the best beautiful picture of the day, u look so much pretty girl in this very picture. Deep regards."

Another netizen penned,

"No words to describe the classic immaculate Indian beauty." The third comment read, "Proud daughter of a proud father".

Earlier, Deepthi spoke about the monumental shift in the film industry over the years during an exclusive conversation.

Shedding light on the changes that she has witnessed in Hindi cinema from her era to the current times, Deepthi told IANS, "Well today, there is a lot of visual finesse in our movies. So that is something that I like the most. Our films are at par with the international standards. In terms of world cinema, we are as good as them technically and visually. There are a lot of skills today among all. Whether it is



the technicians or even the actors. Everybody is trained. Everybody has learnt their craft. You don't just stroll into the film industry, and become an actor, like me, I didn't learn anything. Everybody brings training. They are very focused".

"The younger generation are so focused, and they believe in their dreams. And

they are going all out for it. And these two are examples here. Jitesh and Alankrita. I find them very inspiring. Both of them. And our director, he is also very inspiring as a person. Cinema has changed a lot from the time when we were working earlier years to now. A lot of changes, I would say," she added.

Dia Mirza highlights India's vision for circular economy through deep-tech recycling initiative

BOLLYWOOD actress Dia Mirza took to social media to celebrate a breakthrough in sustainable innovation.

In her post, the 'Sanju' actress mentioned how the startup transforms up to five tons of unrecyclable plastic waste per month into high-quality circular materials while providing waste workers with higher wages, health benefits, and dignity, reflecting a vision of inclusive innovation. Dia emphasizes that this is more than just technological innovation — it's inclusive innovation. The plant not only tackles plastic waste but also benefits the people involved in the recycling process, offering 2-3 times higher salaries.

Sharing a series of her photos, the 'Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein' actress wrote, "A milestone for people and planet Thrilled to back Without, an impact-first deep-tech material science enterprise, as they launch their pioneering FOAK Demonstration Plant in Pune — capable of transforming up to 5 tons/



month of "unrecyclable" plastic waste into high-quality, circular materials. This isn't just innovation — it's inclusive innovation. Cutting-edge recycling technology that gives waste workers 2-3x the salary, health insurance, paid leave, and above all, dignity and respect. At its heart lies systemic thinking and a vision of India leading the world in circular solutions."

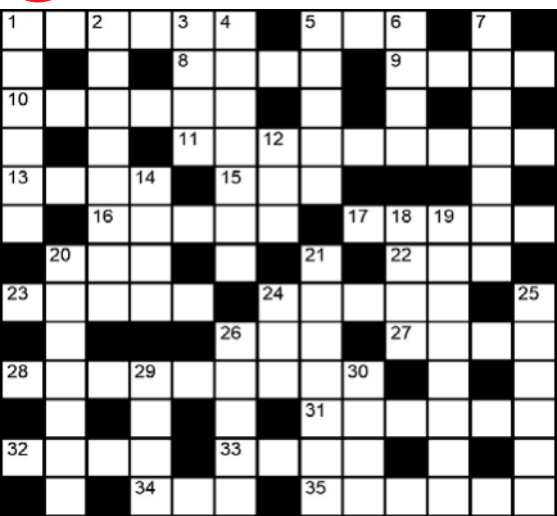
"The launch comes at the heels of a

\$1.9 million Seed Funding round, supported by truly patient impact capital. I'm proud to join this journey as strategic advisor, investor, and advocate alongside partners who believe that science, justice, and sustainability can — and must — go hand in hand."

"A powerful reminder that real circularity includes people, not just materials. Here's to scaling this vision across India and beyond. Because when innovation meets inclusion, hope becomes action," she added. As an environmental advocate, Dia Mirza often shares posts to raise awareness about conservation and sustainability.

On the professional front, Dia was recently seen in the Netflix film "Nadaan" directed by Shauna Gautam. The movie introduced a fresh lineup of actors, including Saif Ali Khan's son Ibrahim Ali Khan and Khushi Kapoor, alongside veteran performers Mahima Chaudhry, Suniel Shetty, and Jugad Hansraj. Dia portrayed Nandini, the mother of Ibrahim's character, Arjun.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Breakwater (6)
- Any of the heavenly bodies, as the sun or moon (3)
- Bears, in Barcelona (4)
- Republic in SW Asia (4)
- European sea (6)
- Befall, occur or happen (4,5)
- Its capital is Vientiane (4)
- Greek letter (3)
- Clumsy chap (5)
- Junkies (5)
- Monetary unit of Romania (3)

- In addition (3)
- Taken on to staff (5)
- Singer Cherry (5)
- Vitality (3)
- Husband's partner (4)
- Having three cusps (9)
- Japan (6)
- Propagated (4)
- Andre ____ : French writer, Nobel laureate in 1947 ? (4)
- Bond creator Fleming (3)
- Stoppage of flow or circulation (6)

DOWN

- Speak incoherently (6)
- Observer (8)
- Naval Off. In Charge (4)
- Guards of honour (7)
- Bone prefix (5)
- Amitabh Bachchan of course (3,1)
- Cowboy (7)
- Frequency unit (3)
- Swing about (4)
- Fret and fume (4)
- Extinct small horse (8)
- Collection of books (7)
- Causes to remember (7)
- Barely defeat (3)
- Federer's forte (6)
- Churchillian gesture (1-4)
- Basic monetary unit of Ghana (4)
- Eat sparingly (4)



Solution to October 14

SUDOKU



Solution to October 14

Naomi Watts says she suffers from imposter syndrome

BRITISH actress Naomi Watts has opened up on suffering from imposter syndrome. The 57-year-old actress made the confession as she was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in Los Angeles in honour of her career achievements in the movie industry with the Mulholland Drive star admitting the accolade came "out of the blue".

Speaking ahead of her star ceremony, she said, "I can't even believe it. It's interesting, because I have all kinds of imposter syndrome. I've always felt like I'm supposed to struggle, I'm supposed to keep proving myself, and this sort of just came out of the blue. It's really lovely".

During the star ceremony on Monday, Naomi paid tribute to her husband Billy Crudup for his "phenomenal love and support" as well as her son Sasha, 18, and daughter Kai, 16, from her mar-

riage to actor Liev Schreiber, and her step-son Will, reports 'Female First UK'. She told 'Variety', "I struggled for so long. I'm so familiar with that side of things more than this incredible good fortune, celebrations like this. It's wonderful".

During her speech, Naomi applauded Sasha for coming straight from classes at the University of Southern California to attend the ceremony, saying, "I'm so proud of my kids. My son Sasha, a freshman at USC, is here straight from class. He rolled in, and he's blossoming into the kindest, most charismatic young man".

Naomi called Kai "fierce and fearless" and applauded Will for "following in his father's footsteps" as he prepares for college graduation.

As per 'Female First UK', it comes after Billy, who married Naomi in 2023, opened up about how they support

each other in their marriage.

He told 'People' magazine, "We've been doing this for a long time. "I think we have some idea of how each of us manages our careers, and so we do the best that we can to



just be supportive of the other person's agenda".

The couple previously admitted it is "much easier" to attend Hollywood events together.