

# INDRADHANUSH

2025







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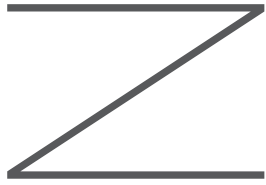
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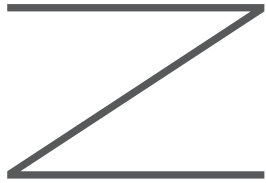
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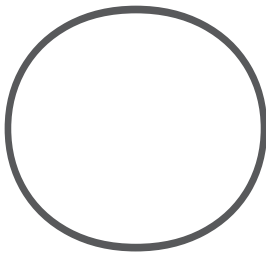
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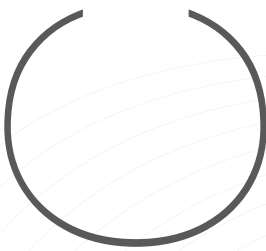
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# Patron's Message

**Shri Pratik Mathur**  
**Consul General of India, Shanghai**

It gives me immense pleasure to convey my warm greetings to the Indian community in Shanghai on the release of Indradhanush 2025, the Indian Association of China's annual magazine, launched as part of our Diwali Night celebrations. This year's theme, "India & China: Ancient Ties, Shared Destiny – The World as One Family!", beautifully captures the spirit of our shared heritage and future.

This edition of Indradhanush is particularly meaningful, coming in a year when Prime Minister Narendra Modi's historic visit to China after many years has added new momentum to our bilateral ties. His message of cooperation and mutual respect resonates deeply with the purpose of Indradhanush – to serve as a cultural bridge that strengthens friendship between our peoples.

I warmly commend the Indian Association of China for its dedication, not only in organizing vibrant cultural programs but also in carrying out commendable initiatives such as blood donation drives and community welfare projects. These efforts reflect the Indian values of seva (selfless service), compassion, and solidarity, and have earned deep respect within and beyond our community.

On this joyous occasion, I extend to you and your families my best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous Diwali 2025. May the festival of lights bring happiness, peace, and new hope to your homes, and may the bonds between India and China continue to grow stronger.

**Jai Hind! Jai Bharat!**



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# President's Message

## My Dear Friends,

Twenty-eight years ago, the Indian Association was founded on the core value of community SEVA. Since then, IA has flourished—not through awards or dignitaries, but through the selfless service of its members.

SEVA is what drew me to IA five years ago as Financial Controller, and it remains the guiding principle as I now serve as President. Titles may define responsibilities, but at IA we are all equals, united by our commitment to community SEVA.

I warmly welcome Shri Pratik Mathur, our new Hon. Consul General of India in Shanghai and Patron of IA. His early efforts in community engagement are already making a big impact, and we look forward to his guidance.

These past years have tested us all, yet new possibilities are emerging. India and China—two ancient cultures—are coming together in meaningful ways, reminding us of “वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्” (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam): the world is one family.

After a long COVID hiatus, we are thrilled to bring back the grand “Bollywood Dhamaka” with Filmfare award-winner Shalmali Kholgade and her team. Alongside this, IA has continued to host cultural, charity, sports, and business events—from blood donation drives and CEO breakfasts to children’s showcases and cricket tournaments. Each success has been possible only because of your support and the generosity of our sponsors.

As we celebrate Diwali and the New Year, let us embrace the victory of light over darkness, hope over fear, and good over evil. On behalf of the IA Board, I wish you and your family happiness, prosperity, and contentment.

**Happy Diwali & a Joyous New Year!**

**Manoj Mehta**



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## LEADING THE INDUSTRY





# Odissi Dance

## Workshop

Odissi dance has its origins in the Indian state of Odisha in eastern India, where in its rudimentary form it was performed as part of temple service. The traditional dance was remoulded as a theatre art towards the middle of the twentieth century with reference not only to the existing dance art, but representation of dance in Odisha's medieval sculptures, paintings, and literature.

In order to enhance Chinese people's understanding and engagement with this traditional Indian culture, the Consulate General of India in Shanghai organised a Workshop on Odissi dance as part of the Indian classical dance workshop series with Odissi exponent & Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) alumnus Ms. Wu Kan (Regina) on 19th October 2024.

At the beginning of the workshop, Ms. Wu Kan gave an overview of the various Indian classical dances, how they differ amongst themselves including the area/region from which they emnated and facets of Odissi dance with vivid pictures, in which she not only shared heartfelt reflections on her personal learning journey in India, but also told some interesting stories about this Indian classical dance art.

In the second part of the workshop, which was a demonstration session, Ms. Wu Kan offered a vivid showcase of Odissi's finer nuances and the various movements, mudras and style which are intrinsic to Odissi

The workshop concluded with Ms. Wu Kan performing a piece of charming Odissi dance, which earned a lot of applauses.

The workshop received enthusiastic response from the local participants.





# Celebration of Diwali - 2024

The Consulate General of India organised Diwali celebration in a grand manner on Sunday, 03rd November 2024. The Diwali Mela 2024 was organized as a day long event for the very first time. Consul General Dr.N.Nandakumar inaugurated the Diwali Mela by lighting the lamp and extended his best wishes to the Indian community on the auspicious occasion of Diwali.

The Mela consisted of cultural performances by professional artists and diaspora members showcasing India's rich tradition in dance and music, specially curated pavilions themed Chalo India.

Handicrafts, Ayurveda, Yoga, Mehendi, Meditation and Indian cuisine.

To showcase India's rich historical, environmental & cultural heritage, large posters of prominent tourist destinations were also erected which included the Konark Wheel, Mahabodhi Temple, Statue of Unity (the tallest statue in the world), Ellora caves, Jaisalmer Fort, Ganga Aarti, Gumli, Khajuraho Temple, Rani ki Vav, Dhamek Stupa etc.



The Mela also featured a 'kids corner' with a variety of creative activities. The activities included face painting, henna, statue painting etc.

## Cultural programme:

Colourful cultural performances involving classical Indian dances such as Kathak, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Bharatnatyam and Manipuri were presented in the cultural programme. Except for the Manipuri dance, all the other Indian classical dance performances were performed by Chinese nationals trained in Indian classical dances. Ms. Wu Kan (Regina) an ICCR alumnus trained in Odissi also presented a graceful performance of the Indian classical dance.

Ms. Wang Yuhong, a Bharatanatyam dancer, performed on 'Jathiswaram', a composition that combines rhythmic patterns (talas) and melodic



passages (swaras). She also presented a performance on Bollywood song 'Ghar More Pardesiya'.

Ms Regina presented a performance on Mokshya. Mokshya is a concluding piece in the Odissi repertoire and parallels the concept of Mokshya in Hindu philosophy or liberation from material existence and physical bondage and awakening to spiritual awareness. The performance was presented on the song Pt. Bhubaneshwar Mishra based on raag Bhairavi Taal Ektali and choreographed by Padmavibhushan Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra.





A Manipuri dance performance titled Hari Riha was presented by Zerín Moirangthem, an Indian student studying in Shanghai Theatre Academy. Another outstanding performance was the performance of Kathak dance by Feifei Yu (Karishma) on the theme of Trivat, choreographed by Pt Jai Kishan Maharaj and Music by Guru Shri Tribhuwan Maharaj. Ms. Feifei is based in Beijing and travelled down to Shanghai for her performance.



Children D. Mahika, Shravya Kumar, Soniya Karthik performed Pooja dance. They were accompanied by Chen Huiyan. In the evening session they performed a Kuchipudi piece on the track Nandi Shloka.



Lulu Wang's students Ruya Jiang, Huang Magyuan, Dai Jiying and Chen Huiyan performed on the popular number Pranavalaya.



Members of Indian diaspora performed a dance drama "Mahishasura Mardhini" (it means one who killed the Asura Mahishasura and refers to Goddess Durga. The demon was in the form of a buffalo and hence the name "Mahish Asura") which kept the audience captivated. Young children of Indian diaspora sang Gurumurthe and also performed on a song highlighting global warming.

Other performances were based on popular Bollywood soundtracks and made the audience groove to the beats. This included dance performances by Indian students of Yangzhou University, Jiangsu University, Southeast University in Nanjing, United World College (UWC)-Changshu, Ningbo University, Wenzhou Medical University and Soochow University. More than 50 students from these universities participated in the event and contributed with 19 performances. The student's performances especially in group dances on catchy Bollywood numbers raised the energy level of the event and made the audience groove to the beats.





One of the outstanding presentation during the Cultural performances was the performance on "Mile Sur Mera Tumhara" which presented by Indian community members which showcased the diversity of cultures across India and signified the unity that binds India that is Bharat into one nation.





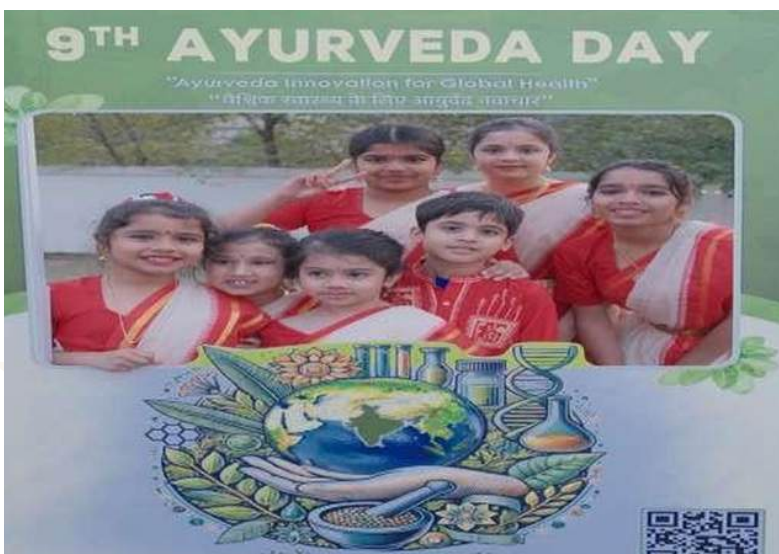


mainly from local Chinese nationals. Sister Sapna's session was themed "Be the Light and Be Light" in which she guided the participants towards realizing inner peace and tranquility which is important for a healthy, long life.



## Ayurveda:

The Diwali Mela 2024 also had Ayurveda pavilions. Dr C.K Shafeeq, an Ayurveda Doctor based in Guangzhou, Ayurveda experts from local institutions participated providing detailed information on Ayurvedic principles. The Consulate had also set up the 9th Ayurveda Day Selfie Standee which attracted a lot of attention.



## Yoga:

Smt. Sumangala Nayak, a yoga teacher of CGI Guangzhou conducted yoga sessions during the Diwali Mela. A specially demarcated area was used to host the yoga session which received enthusiastic response from the local nationals and members of Indian diaspora



## Meditation session by Brahmakumaris:

Amidst the stressful and fast life of a metropolitan city like Shanghai, a meditation session led by Sister Sapna of the Brahmakumaris during the mela received enthusiastic response





## Handicrafts:

Indian handicrafts mainly Kashmiri shawls, scarves and carpets which were on display at the Diwali Mela also attracted a lot of visitors.



## Cuisine:

The Diwali Mela presented a wide array of choices of Indian cuisine. Popular Indian restaurants in Shanghai viz Bollywood Indian Restaurant, Kebabs on the Grille, Rangoli, Indian Curry Hut and Indian Kitchen participated in the Mela. Homemade Bengali sweets were presented at the stall 'Relish' by Indian community member Ms Sarmishta Ghosh. The eateries through their dishes presented an authentic feel of the popular Indian food items which were relished by the visitors.



The Diwali Mela 2024 which is also the marquee cultural event of the Consulate General of Indian in Shanghai provided an opportunity to present the rich cultural landscape of India. The programme received a thumping response from local Chinese nationals, members of Indian diaspora, friends of India and members of Consular corps based in Shanghai.



# Kuchipudi Dance

## Workshop

Kuchipudi, one of the major dance forms of India originated from Andhra Pradesh, where it grew largely as a product of Bhakti movement beginning in the 7th Century AD. Kuchipudi derives its name from the village Kuchelapuram, where it was nurtured by great scholars and artists who built up the repertoire and refined the dance technique.

The Kuchipudi is a dance-drama of Nritya, Nritya and Natya. The Nritya consists of teermanams and jatis, the Nritya of Sabdam, and the Natya of acting with Mudras for the songs. Nritya encompasses steps and movements in the form of patterns of dance which are ornate in themselves.

Kuchipudi, combines speech, Abhinaya (mime) and pure dance. The Kuchipudi dancer is a multiple person on the stage and this multiplicity is achieved by the swift change of mime which depends more on the combination of the naturalism of the dramatic content and the symbolism of the poetic intensity of feeling of an episode. The consequence of this is the emphasis laid on the dynamics of movement and expressionism of feeling. Kuchipudi dance is accompanied by Carnatic Music.

Kuchipudi today is performed either as a solo, duet or a group presentation, but historically it was performed as a dance drama, with several dancers taking different roles.

As part of the Indian classical dance workshop series, the Consulate General of India in Shanghai organised a Kuchipudi dance workshop with Kuchipudi exponent Ms. Lulu Wang.

Wang on 30th November, 2024.

At the beginning of the workshop, Ms. Wang Lulu gave an overview of Kuchipudi dance, in which she talked about its history, development, style and characteristics. She also briefed the similarities and differences between Kuchipudi dance and Bharatanatyam dance.

In the second session, Ms. Lulu Wang demonstrated the basic skills of Kuchipudi dance and jatis, which earned a lot of applause.

Ms. Lulu Wang had also brought Indian costumes which afforded the participants to experience the dance moves in traditional attire.

The workshop received enthusiastic response from the local participants.





# 1st World Meditation Day

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) unanimously adopted the Resolution on declaration of 21 December as World Meditation Day on 6th December 2024. India was a member of the core group that guided the unanimous adoption of the Resolution alongwith Liechtenstein, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Mexico and Andorra.

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai celebrated the 1st World Meditation Day in association with the Shanghai chapter of Brahmakumaris on Saturday, 21st December 2024 . Sister Sapna, a senior Rajyoga teacher with Brahmakumaris led the session themed "Meditation: A Path to Happiness".

The then Consul General Dr N. Nandakumar spoke about the importance of meditation and exhorted all the participants to practice meditation daily. Sister Sapna listed out the benefits of meditation whose advantages encompass not only at individual level but also spill over into healthy relationships and excellent work life balance devoid of stress and anxiety. Sister Sapna also led the participants in conducting an exercise which signified shedding off the baggage of anxiety and worries and embracing a happy life. She also conducted a guided deep meditation exercise on the occasion.

Ms Rangashree T.K, Consul (Commerce) hosted the event as master of ceremony. The event received enthusiastic response from Indian diaspora members as well as local Chinese nationals.





# Celebration of 76<sup>th</sup> Republic Day

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai together with members of Indian diaspora and friends of India in China celebrated the 76th Republic Day of India with great zeal, enthusiasm and patriotic fervour on Sunday, 26th January, 2025. The function was hosted at the Chancery premises in Shanghai.

The celebrations began with Sh. Pratik Mathur, Consul General, unfurling the National Flag followed by rendering of the National Anthem. The Consul General then read out the address to the nation by the President of India.

In the cultural performance that followed on the occasion, children of Indian community presented patriotic songs and dances depicting the unity and diversity of India.

The celebration of the Republic Day witnessed an overwhelming participation from members of Indian community in Shanghai, Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces.





# Celebration of Constitution Day & Community Meet in Shanghai

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai convened a high level Business Roundtable with Indian CEOs and senior executives representing a wide spectrum of sectors including energy, connectivity, infrastructure, finance, technology, and pharmaceuticals.

Jaishankar on the initiatives exhorting enthusiastic participation by members of Indian diaspora were screened on the occasion. In his address, Consul General Dr. N. Nandakumar requested enthusiastic participation of the community in 18th PBD & BKJ Quiz.



Constitution Day Celebration: To mark the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Indian Constitution, Consul General and all the participants paid floral tributes to Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. A short film on the making of the Indian Constitution and its salient features was also screened.







Earlier, on 26th November, Consul General also led the officers and officials of the Consulate in reading the Preamble of the Constitution.



**Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz:** As part of the event, Sh. Aditya Prabhudesai, Consul (PIC) made a presentation on Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz. A video on how to take the quiz was also screened. In the presentation, Consul (PIC) elaborated on the rules and regulations of the quiz and highlighted that in a single attempt, a participant could flip (change) up to three questions without having any bearing on the final score. It was brought to the notice of the gathered diaspora members that the grand prize for winning the quiz was a free trip to India in which the participants would be invited to participate in the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and also stood the chance of meeting the Hon'ble Prime Minister. The Weekly Top scorers in the BKJ Quiz from the jurisdiction of the Consulate were also felicitated by the Consul General on the occasion. Sh. Dinesh Kumar Dorairaj, Smt. Anitha Dinesh and Smt. Surbhi Gupta were felicitated



### 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:

Ms. Rangashree T.K., Consul (Com) made a 18th presentation on the upcoming 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. In her presentation, Consul (Com) elaborated on how to register for the event, details of the scheduled events on the three days of 08, 09th & 10th January and the theme of the 18th PBD which is "Viksit Bharat ki Sankalpna mein Pravasi Bharatiyon ka yogdaan". She also informed the diaspora members about the Bharat Gaurav Pravasi Bharatiya Express, a special state-of-the-art Tourist Train exclusively designed for the Indian Diaspora (PIOs only) that will travel to multiple destinations of prominent tourist interest and religious importance across India over a period of 3 weeks.

**Odisha Tourism:** Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha, will host 18 th PBD in January 2024. Odisha is blessed with a number of sites of environmental and architectural importance, including the Konark Sun Temple. Shri Rajat Ubhaykar, Consul (Visa & Consular) made a presentation on Odisha tourism, in which he signified the numerous sites of tourist interest that can be visited by the participants of 18th PBD during their stay in Odisha.



Celebration of according classical language status to 5 languages: During the event, a presentation on the recent decision of Government of India to accord 'Classical language' status to 5 Indian languages was made by Sh. Aditya Prabhudesai, Consul (PIC). He pointed out that in 2017, the criteria for according any language the status of "Classical language" was made more stringent and consequently the according of the status to the 5 languages in 2024 came after an interval of 10 years since the last language (Odia) was accorded such a status (2014).



The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from members of Indian diaspora. Sh. Aditya Prabhudesai, Consul (PIC) hosted the programme as the master of the ceremony.



Sh. Deepak Shinde, one of the co-ordinator for Marathi language department, Govt. of Maharashtra and an NRI based in Shanghai gave a presentation on the cultural richness of Marathi language and the benefits for further promotion of the language after becoming a classical language.



# *Celebration of the 164<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore* *(1st June, 2025) at Consulate General of India in Shanghai, China*

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai organized the celebration of 164th birth anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore on 1st June, 2025 at the Vivekananda Culture Center at CGI, Shanghai. The event was well attended by over hundred special guests including Indian diaspora and Chinese students and followers of Tagore art and literature.

At the beginning of the event, Consul General Shri. Pratik Mathur led the gathering in paying heartfelt homage to the victims of the Pahalgam terror attacks in India and reiterating our firm resolve to fight terrorism with a zero tolerance approach. In his opening remarks, Consul General Sh. Pratik Mathur underlined the abiding impact of Gurudev's rich cultural legacy in India and abroad.

Speaking on Gurudev's influence in China, CG Mathur noted that Tagore's short stories are still taught in Chinese schools and his novels and Rabindra Sangeet form a part of the Chinese college and university curriculum. Thus Gurudev continues to function as a strong bridge of mutual understanding and promoting cultural exchanges between India and China.

CG Shri Mathur in his remarks highlighted that Gurudev had special affection for the city of Shanghai, a city he visited twice after becoming the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature.

His unique place in Shanghai's cultural landscape is attested to by his two statues in the city at the world heritage site in the famous Lu Xun Park (built to honour China's literary icon) and Maoming Lu (a prominent city Centre hub in the global metropolis).

CG's remarks were followed by an enlightening talk on the rich legacy of Gurudev in East Asia, delivered by noted Tagore expert and scholar Smt. Tina Kanagratnam. On the occasion, Indian community in Shanghai under the aegis of Shanghai Adda presented a rich Rabindra Sangeet program and colourful dance performances.

The celebration also included Rabindra Sangeet led Sitar performance by young members of the Indian community. The celebrations concluded with a specially curated yoga performance themed 'Yoga for the Young Minds' based on Rabindra Sangeet, followed by serving of light Bengali cuisine related refreshments. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from members of Indian community, friends of India in China, scholars, cultural personalities and children.





# Volley Ball

Consul General Pratik Mathur met with an Indian girls' volleyball team from Mumbai who won the 2025 FVYL Volleyball Tournament in Shanghai on June 2. Consul General congratulated the team on their success and wished them luck for their future endeavours. Khelo India. Chak De India!



# International Day of Yoga 2025

## *Celebrated at Lingshan Buddha Complex, Wuxi*

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai hosted a grand celebration of the 11th International Day of Yoga (IDY) at the iconic Lingshan Buddha Complex in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province. The event, held on June 17, 2025, brought together over 100 participants, including yoga enthusiasts, local residents, Indian diaspora, and students, to promote the ancient Indian practice of yoga and strengthen cultural ties between India and China.

The Lingshan Buddha Complex, home to one of the world's largest bronze Buddha statues, provided a serene and spiritually significant backdrop for the event. The mass yoga session featured a blend of asanas, pranayama, and meditation to promote physical and mental well-being. The event underscored the universal appeal of yoga, uniting participants in a shared pursuit of health, peace, and harmony.

Shri Pratik Mathur, Consul General of India in Shanghai, emphasizing the significance of the event, said, "The International Day of Yoga celebrations at the Lingshan Buddha Complex celebrates not only the global embrace of yoga but also the deep-rooted cultural bonds between India and China."

Venerable Master Wuxing, Chief Abbot of the Lingshan Buddha Temple, said, "Yoga and Buddhism both guide us toward inner peace and compassion. Hosting this event at Lingshan strengthens the spiritual bridge between India and China."

The choice of the Lingshan Buddha Complex as the venue was deeply symbolic, reflecting the centuries-old cultural and spiritual connections between India and China. Buddhism, which originated in India, spread to China during the first few centuries A.D., with Indian monk-scholars like Kumarajiva and

Bodhidharma contributing significantly to its growth. The Lingshan Grand Buddha, standing at 88 meters, embodies this shared heritage, representing the integration of Indian spiritual traditions with Chinese architectural and cultural elements.

Wuxi, a city with a rich history and a hub of Buddhist culture, has long been a bridge for India-China exchanges. The event highlighted yoga as a modern-day extension of these cultural linkages, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation.

Initiated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in his 2014 address to the United Nations General Assembly, International Day of Yoga is celebrated annually on June 21, as proclaimed by the UNGA in December 2014. The resolution, supported by 175 member states, recognizes yoga's holistic approach to health and well-being. In 2025, events like the one organized at the Lingshan Buddha Complex highlights yoga's role in fostering global unity and promoting sustainable lifestyles.





# India Shines at Shanghai Film Festival: Consul General Welcomes Acclaimed Filmmakers

The Consulate General of India, Shanghai, in partnership with the Indian Association, hosted a special event to welcome two of India's most distinguished filmmakers, Kiran Rao and Rima Das. The ceremony, held amidst the 27th Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF), celebrated these powerful female voices shaping Indian cinema, whose work has achieved global acclaim. Ms. Rao's latest film, *Laapataa Ladies*, is India's official entry for the 97th Academy Awards, while Ms. Das's film, *Village Rockstars*, was a previous official entry, highlighting the international caliber of their storytelling.

A central theme of the evening was India's vibrant and diverse cinematic presence at SIFF Shanghai. This year's lineup is prominently led by the screening of a newly digitally restored version of the classic film *Awaraz*, a title that has been cherished by Chinese audiences for decades. The contemporary slate showcases the breadth of Indian filmmaking, featuring the inspirational sports drama *Chandu Champion* and the internationally acclaimed independent feature *Second Chance*. In a nod to emerging talent, Sivaranjini J.'s debut feature, *Victoria*, is competing in the prestigious Asian New Talent section.

The event also honored the filmmakers for their broader contributions. Kiran Rao—an acclaimed director (*Dhobi Ghat*), producer, and screenwriter associated with major Aamir Khan Productions hits like *Dangal* and *Secret Superstar*—was recognized for her prestigious role as a jury member for the Golden Goblet Awards at this year's SIFF. Rima Das was felicitated for her recent invitation to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences as a voting member, a testament to her international standing.

The felicitation was followed by an insightful conversation with Ms. Rao, moderated by Mr. Prasad Shetty, a key producer and cultural adviser instrumental in bringing Indian



blockbusters like *Dangal* and *PK* to China. The discussion was held in the spirit of the recent World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) in India, a global initiative designed to establish India as a premier hub for the media and entertainment industry. Mr. Shetty, who participated in the WAVES summit, has previously noted that the emotional and family-centric values in Indian films resonate deeply with Chinese audiences, creating a natural market for collaboration.







In her remarks, Kiran Rao shared insights into her creative philosophy, explaining that her filmmaking draws deeply from real-life experiences to explore social issues through the lens of strong female protagonists. She also shared her passion for creating real-world change through her work with the Paani Foundation, which focuses on vital issues of water conservation and sustainable agriculture in India.



Rima Das expressed her deep gratitude for the honor, describing her journey as a self-taught filmmaker dedicated to capturing the authenticity of grassroots stories. She noted that seeing her resource-constrained films travel from Indian villages to international film festivals powerfully reaffirms cinema's ability to connect people across the globe.

In the interactive session that followed, Ms. Rao responded to audience questions, elaborating on her artistic vision and the challenges of her creative process. She discussed the nuances of impactful storytelling and the success of Indian cinema in China, reiterating the significance of raising social and women's issues through the powerful medium of film.

The event highlighted the deep and enduring appeal of Indian cinema in China. This cultural bridge, first built by classics like *Awara*, has been reinforced by the phenomenal success of modern films that compete strongly with Hollywood hits. Movies such as *3 Idiots*, *Dangal*, *Secret Superstar*, and *Anhadhun* became major cultural and box-office successes, captivating Chinese audiences with their powerful stories and cementing China as a vital market for Indian cinema.





# Consulate General of India in Shanghai Celebrates International Day of Yoga 2025

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai hosted its flagship celebration of the International Day of Yoga (IDY) today, with Mr. Siddharth Chatterjee, United Nations Resident Coordinator in China and a dedicated yoga practitioner, as the esteemed Chief Guest.

In his welcome remarks, the Consul General of India in Shanghai Shri Pratik Mathur highlighted the event's significance, stating, "This flagship celebration is the culmination of a long series of events across Eastern China, including Hangzhou, Wuxi, and Suzhou, organized in collaboration with Indian diaspora communities, global MNCs, and Buddhist monasteries, testament to the wide cross-sectional appeal of yoga and Indian civilization." He also paid tribute to the victims of the recent Air India Flight AI171 crash in Ahmedabad, noting, "Our hearts are heavy with this tragedy. In such moments, yoga's teachings of resilience, mindfulness, and inner peace offer a profound source of comfort and strength."

Quoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who championed the establishment of IDY at the United Nations, the Consul General added, "Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action, restraint and fulfillment, and harmony between man and nature." He emphasized yoga's universal appeal, particularly in the context of the 75th year of diplomatic relations between India and China, fostering harmony and health across communities.

Mr. Siddharth Chatterjee, in his remarks, commended Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership in globalizing yoga and its role in building a more connected world. Praising yoga's alignment with global well-being and unity, he said, "As a yoga practitioner, I deeply



value its transformative power to foster resilience and peace. This event reflects the shared commitment of India and the United Nations to promote health and harmony, strengthening bonds between nations."

The flagship event featured yoga demonstrations, interactive sessions, and cultural activities, drawing a diverse audience of diplomats, yoga enthusiasts, and community members.

The event capped a series of IDY celebrations across Eastern China, showcasing yoga's broad appeal through partnerships with diverse stakeholders. The Consulate General of India extends its heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Chatterjee, the United Nations in China, and all participants for making this event a resounding success.

As Prime Minister Modi has stated, "Yoga is not just about exercise but a way of life that nurtures compassion and resilience." This celebration in Shanghai embodied that vision, uniting communities in the pursuit of health and harmony.





# Consulate General of India in Shanghai Launches "India Impressions" Film Festival With Successful Screening of Hellaro Shanghai

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# Consulate General of India in Shanghai Hosts Event on Yoga, Ayurveda, Sattvic food, and Meditation

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai organized a vibrant event today, celebrating the rich heritage of Yoga, Ayurveda, and Meditation. The event also celebrated the successful observance of the 11th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2025 across CGI Shanghai's jurisdiction, marked by enthusiastic participation by Indian diaspora hailing from all parts of the country as well as local communities.

The gathering brought together yoga enthusiasts, Ayurveda practitioners, and members of the Indian community from the cities of Shanghai, Shaoxing, Yiwu, Hangzhou and Nanjing to highlight the holistic benefits of India's ancient wellness traditions. The event featured yoga demonstrations, workshops on Ayurvedic principles, discussions on the role of Traditional Indian Medicine in promoting health and well-being, as well as a discussion on sattvic food, emphasizing its role in fostering balance and vitality through pure, wholesome, and plant-based nutrition, aligning with this year's IDY theme, "Yoga for One Earth, One Health."

Consul General Shri Pratik Mathur delivered the welcome address, emphasizing the universal appeal of yoga and its integration with Ayurveda for holistic wellness. "Yoga and Ayurveda are timeless gifts from India to the world, fostering harmony between mind, body, and spirit. Today's event reflects our commitment to promoting these ancient practices, which resonate deeply with global audiences seeking sustainable health solutions. The overwhelming participation in our International Day of Yoga events across Eastern China underscores the growing appreciation for India's cultural heritage."



The event saw active involvement from the Indian community, with community members sharing their perspectives on the significance of the occasion. "Participating in this event has been a rejuvenating experience. Yoga and Ayurveda have been integral to my life, helping me find balance in the fast-paced environment of Shanghai," said Tapan Patel, a long-time Shanghai resident and Yoga enthusiast. "I'm proud to see our community come together to celebrate these practices and share them with the world."





Neeraj Punhani, a community member from Shaoxing, a major trading hub, echoed similar sentiments. "The Consulate's efforts to promote Yoga and Traditional Indian Medicine are truly inspiring. Events like these not only strengthen our cultural roots but also foster deeper connections with the local community, spreading the message of wellness and unity," he remarked.

Community members from other cities in CGI Shanghai's jurisdiction also expressed their enthusiasm. Udit Madhwani, a resident of Yiwu, shared, "The International Day of Yoga events in Yiwu were a wonderful opportunity to connect with others who share a passion for yoga. This event further deepens our appreciation for Ayurveda's role in holistic health, and I'm grateful for the Consulate's efforts to bring these traditions to us."

Prem Narayan, from Hangzhou, commented, "Being part of the yoga celebrations in Hangzhou was uplifting, and today's event in Shanghai highlights how Ayurveda and yoga complement each other. It's heartwarming to see such vibrant participation, bridging cultures through wellness."

The event included interactive sessions led by yoga instructors and Ayurveda experts, showcasing the practical applications of these traditions. Attendees also explored the synergy between yoga and Ayurveda, emphasizing their role in enhancing physical and mental resilience. The celebration of IDY 2025 across CGI Shanghai's jurisdiction featured multiple yoga sessions in cities like Suzhou, Yiwu, Hangzhou, Shaoxing, and Yiwu, with significant participation from Chinese yoga enthusiasts and Indian diaspora members.

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai remains dedicated to promoting India's cultural and wellness heritage through such initiatives, and fostering cross-cultural exchanges.





# Consulate General of India Hosts Regional Business Roundtable with CEOs in Shanghai

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai convened a high-level Business Roundtable with Indian CEOs and senior executives representing a wide spectrum of sectors including energy, connectivity, infrastructure, finance, technology, and pharmaceuticals.

Shri Pratik Mathur, Consul General of India in Shanghai, chaired the interaction, which focused on strengthening commercial linkages, enhancing market access for Indian firms, understanding the issues and challenges they face, and leveraging India's position as one of the world's fastest-growing economies. The event facilitated a dynamic exchange of perspectives on emerging business opportunities, policy support mechanisms, and bilateral investment and trade flows.

Participants expressed strong interest in India's reform-oriented economic trajectory, underscoring the country's expanding domestic market, regulatory stability, and deep industrial capabilities. The discussion also focused on innovation-led and sunrise sectors driving India's next phase of growth, including digital public infrastructure, clean and green energy, biopharmaceuticals, financial services and fintech, and artificial intelligence (AI).

The Consul General reiterated the Government of India's commitment to fostering a conducive environment for trade and investment and underlined the Consulate's role in facilitating business partnerships in the Eastern China Region.





# *Celebration of* **Rakshabandhan, National Handloom Day** *and Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign* *at the Consulate General of India, Shanghai*

Shanghai, August 09, 2025 — On the auspicious occasion of Rakshabandhan, members of the Indian community and friends of India in Shanghai gathered at the Consulate General of India to celebrate the bonds of love, protection, and positivity that the festival represents.

As part of the ceremony, Sister Sapna from Brahmakumaris China tied a Rakhi to Consul General Shri Pratik Mathur, symbolising the spirit of mutual respect and goodwill.

To mark National Handloom Day, participating women showcased India's rich textile heritage by wearing colourful traditional sarees, representing diverse weaving traditions from across the country. The vibrant display underlined the importance of preserving and promoting India's handloom sector.

The celebrations also featured an Art and Crafts Competition for children on the theme "India of Our Dreams," encouraging creativity and reflection on India's future.

In a patriotic tribute, the gathering invoked the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign, with adults and children waving the National Flag with enthusiasm and pride.

The event brought together cultural traditions, community spirit, and national pride, highlighting the shared bonds that connect the Indian diaspora with their homeland.





# Consulate General of India in Shanghai Celebrates India's Independence Day with Flag Hoisting and Cultural Program

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai celebrated India's 79th Independence Day on Friday, August 15, 2025, at its chancery premises. The event featured a flag hoisting ceremony followed by a vibrant cultural program showcasing India's rich heritage through dance and music performances.

The ceremony commenced at 8:00 AM with the hoisting of the Indian national flag, symbolizing unity, pride, and the spirit of freedom. The event was attended by over 200 Indian nationals residing within the Consulate's jurisdiction spanning across Shanghai Municipality and provinces of Jiangsu and Zhejiang, along with distinguished guests, community leaders, friends of India from the local Chinese community and members of the diplomatic corps.

The cultural program highlighted traditional and contemporary Indian dance and music performances on patriotic themes, including Bollywood and classical Indian Kathak performances as well as instrumental Hindustani music recitals, reflecting the diversity and vibrancy of Indian culture. Attendees engaged in this celebration of India's independence, fostering a sense of community and cultural pride.

Consul General of India in Shanghai, Shri Pratik Mathur, said, "This Independence Day celebration was a heartfelt tribute to India's journey of freedom and progress. The enthusiastic participation of our community and the vibrant cultural performances truly embodied the spirit of unity and pride that defines our nation."

The attendees, especially young children, particularly enjoyed Indian food and snacks served on the occasion. The Consulate General of India in Shanghai expresses gratitude to all participants for making the event a success.





# Consulate General of India in Shanghai Hosts India's National Day Reception at Pudong Shangri-La

Following on the heels of a well-attended flag hoisting ceremony on the morning of 15th August, the Consulate General of India in Shanghai hosted its National Day Reception on the evening of Saturday, August 16, 2025, at the Pudong Shangri-La to commemorate India's 79th Independence Day. The event brought together dignitaries from the Shanghai Municipal People's Government, provincial governments of Jiangsu and Zhejiang, and distinguished members of the diplomatic corps, members of the Indian community, and friends of India in a celebration of India's rich heritage and enduring global partnerships. Consul Generals of over 30 nations including Australia, Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, South Africa, Singapore and Malaysia graced the occasion with their presence.

The reception featured traditional Indian cultural performances showcasing India's vibrant traditions through music and dance, alongside a showcase of Indian cuisine, highlighting the country's culinary diversity. The event provided a platform for fostering cultural exchange and strengthening ties between India and the local community in China's fastest growing region of Shanghai, Zhejiang and Jiangsu.

Consul General of India in Shanghai, Shri Pratik Mathur, expressed pride in the occasion, stating, "This National Day Reception was a vibrant celebration of India's independence and its deep-rooted connections with Shanghai. We are honored to share this moment with our esteemed guests, whose presence underscores the strong bonds of friendship and collaboration between India and China."

Consul General further said, "In his Independence Day address yesterday, Prime Minister Modi outlined a visionary path for Atmanirbhar Bharat or Self-Reliant India, emphasizing self-reliance in defense, technology, and energy, the launch of Made-in-India semiconductor chips by year's end, a tenfold expansion of nuclear energy by 2047, and next-generation GST reforms to reduce taxes on essentials. He celebrated remarkable space achievements, including those of Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, with ambitious plans for India's own space station and over 300 startups innovating in satellites and exploration."

Ms. Zhang Ying, Secretary General of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government, also addressed the gathering, remarking, "The National Day Reception reflects the growing partnership between Shanghai and India. We are delighted to join in celebrating India's Independence Day and look forward to further strengthening our cultural and economic ties for mutual prosperity, especially as India-China celebrate 75 years of their diplomatic ties and we get ready to welcome Prime Minister Modi to China for the SCO Summit."

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai expressed heartfelt gratitude to all attendees for their participation in making the event a resounding success.





# PM Modi receives rousing welcome in Tianjin

In Tianjin, PM Modi received a warm and special welcome from Indian expatriates from all over China. The adulation, exuberance, admiration and respect was unparalleled. Here are some wonderful moments.





# Consulate General of India in Shanghai Hosts Successful Community Reception in Hangzhou to Celebrate Indian Women's Hockey Team at Women's Asia Cup 2025

Hangzhou, China, August 31, 2025: The Consulate General of India in Shanghai successfully hosted a vibrant community reception in Hangzhou to honor the Indian Women's Hockey Team during their participation in the Women's Asia Cup 2025. The event was held to celebrate the team's arrival and extend the community's best wishes for the tournament, which runs from September 5 to 14, 2025, in Hangzhou.

The reception brought together nearly 300 members of the Indian diaspora, local dignitaries, sports enthusiasts, and representatives from the Chinese community, fostering an atmosphere of camaraderie and cultural exchange. The event highlighted the shared passion for sports and strengthened people-to-people ties between India and China, showcasing the role of sports and culture in building international goodwill.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently championed the role of sports in uniting and inspiring the nation. While welcoming the team to China, Consul

General Pratik Mathur recalled Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's recent words, "Sports is a great way to build character, foster teamwork, and inspire our youth to dream big." This reception reflected the Prime Minister's vision, celebrating the Indian Women's Hockey Team's dedication and their contribution to national pride and global sportsmanship.



Even as China is set to host the 2025 Women's Asia Cup, the 2025 Men's Asia Cup is currently being held in the historic city of Rajgir in India. As Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "Hockey has always held a special place in the hearts of millions across India and Asia. I am confident that this tournament will be full of thrilling matches, displays of extraordinary talent, and memorable moments that will inspire future generations of sports lovers."

Consul General Pratik Mathur, addressing the gathering, said, "On behalf of everyone present here, I extend my best wishes to our talented Indian Women's Hockey Team. Their participation in the Women's Asia Cup 2025 is a testament to India's growing stature in global sports and a proud moment for fostering stronger India-China relations. We congratulate the team on their remarkable efforts and wish them continued success."

Edison Elias, scientific advisor to the Indian Women's Hockey Team, said, "We are deeply honored by this warm reception in Hangzhou. Our team is determined to give our best in the Women's Asia Cup 2025, and the support from the Indian diaspora fuels our motivation to make the nation proud."

Salima Tete, captain of the team, said, "This tournament is a really good opportunity to secure a spot for the FIH Women's Hockey World Cup next year, and the team is focusing on that. The priority at present is to top the Pool and reach the Super Fours." India had won the Women's Asia Cup twice, first in 2004 and again in 2017.

The Director of the Hangzhou Foreign Affairs Office, Mr. Li Wei, also addressed the gathering, stating, "As we mark the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and India, this event symbolizes the friendship and mutual respect between our nations. We warmly welcome the Indian Women's Hockey Team and look forward to a successful visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which will further strengthen our bilateral ties."

As Indian hockey celebrates 100 years, the Indian Women's Hockey Team, led by Captain Salima Tete and trained by coach Harendra Singh, has been a focal point of national pride, with their strong performances in the tournament earning admiration from fans and supporters. The team's blend of seasoned athletes and emerging stars continues to inspire as they compete for the title and aim to secure qualification for future global events.



During the event, Consul General Pratik Mathur released the newly revised special edition and 18th reprint of the Chinese translation of the Bhagavad Gita by Professor Wang Zhicheng, a scholar of Yoga and Vedanta at the prestigious Zhejiang University. During Prime Minister Modi's visit to China in 2016, Professor Wang had presented him with translations of ancient Indian texts including Bhagavad Gita, and Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, among others.

The event also featured a captivating cultural performance, featuring a blend of Bharatnatyam, Bollywood, and Odissi recitals, showcasing the rich diversity of Indian dance, and seamlessly weaving traditional and contemporary elements to the delight of all attendees.

The Consulate General of India in Shanghai extends its gratitude to all attendees and supporters who made the reception a memorable occasion, and wishes the Indian Women's Hockey Team continued success.





# Consulate General of India, Shanghai celebrates Hindi Diwas with International Participation

The celebration concluded on a high note, reaffirming Hindi's growing stature as a dynamic bridge of identity, culture, and friendship — linking India with communities across the world.

On 14 September 2025, the Consulate General of India in Shanghai celebrated Hindi Diwas with great enthusiasm at Britannica International School, the first international school in the region to formally introduce Hindi as a subject. The occasion marked a significant step in expanding the cultural footprint of Hindi in Eastern China.

The event witnessed vibrant participation from members of the Indian diaspora, foreign nationals, and local Chinese friends of India. Attendees presented Hindi poems, short stories, essays, and songs, while some participants also recited Sanskrit shlokas, underlining the continuum of India's ancient and modern linguistic traditions.

An essay competition on the theme "My Favourite Hindi Film" generated enthusiastic entries across adults, senior students, and junior students, with winners felicitated at the ceremony. The theme highlighted Indian cinema's unique role as a global connector and a source of India's cultural soft power.

In his address, Shri Pratik Mathur, Consul General of India in Shanghai, emphasized that Hindi is not only India's official language but also a living embodiment of the country's cultural identity, traditions, and unity. He noted that Hindi's growing resonance among younger generations and its adoption by international institutions reflects its expanding global relevance.

The Consul General also underlined Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message that "Hindi unites and Hindi deepens belonging," reaffirming India's vision of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat." He congratulated all participants, particularly the students, for their creativity and commitment to nurturing Hindi.







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# Diwali on the Huangpu River – A Night to Remember

On the night of 26th October 2025, despite the rain, Diwali illuminated the Huangpu River like never before! The Indian Association of Shanghai's Diwali Cruise Night was a truly magical celebration, combining lights, music, and community spirit. As the captain wisely noted, "The rain will only make the evening more romantic," and it did, adding an enchanting touch to our biggest Diwali celebration yet.

We were honored to welcome SPAFFC representatives, Ms. Huang Yangbing and Mr. Fu Chenyun, whose support, along with that of our generous sponsors, made this vibrant evening possible.



The excitement continued with a series of raffles, where lucky attendees won prizes worth over 140,000 RMB, including luxury stays at Naked Retreats, Radisson, and IHG Hotels, Apple products, and exclusive hampers.



The festivities kicked off with a spectacular performance by the Katrina Dance Troupe, whose electrifying Bollywood routines had everyone on their feet, even inviting guests to join in as impromptu stars on the dance floor.



Guests were also treated to a lavish Diwali feast prepared by Kebab on the Grille, offering the warmth and flavors of a homecoming Diwali dinner.

The festive mood was further elevated by DJ Shri, whose high-energy set of classic Bollywood beats kept the dance floor alive and the celebration vibrant throughout the evening.



In her address, President Ritika Kumar acknowledged the challenges posed by the weather and expressed heartfelt gratitude to everyone who joined, emphasizing the power of community in making Diwali such a memorable occasion.

The evening also saw the launch of this year's edition of Indradhanush, the Indian Association's annual magazine. With 272 pages dedicated to the theme of youth and mental health, the publication encourages open conversations and support for well-being. It is available online as a PDF and flipbook for easy access.



A special thank you goes to all sponsors, advertisers, volunteers, and nodal points whose efforts made this event possible. The Diwali Cruise Night was not only a celebration of light and joy but also a testament to the Indian Association's commitment to unity and community spirit.





# Mind Over Matter – *Start the Year Strong*

The Indian Association began 2025 on a positive and uplifting note with a Mental Health Awareness Session titled "Mind Over Matter – Start the Year Strong," held on January 5 at the Naked Group Office, Shanghai. The event brought together a lively audience of adults and children, with some joining online, creating an inclusive and enriching experience.

The energy in the room was palpable as attendees engaged in a session designed to prioritize mental well-being, a vital aspect of health that is often overlooked. The enthusiastic participation highlighted the growing awareness and willingness to address mental health as an integral part of our lives.

The session featured three exceptional speakers who shared profound knowledge and practical insights: We were privileged to host **three exceptional speakers** who shared their profound knowledge and practical insights:

**Selene Geng, Mental Health Coach** and Founder of Medi-Advice, captivated the audience with her discussion on recognizing signs of depression and fostering open dialogue about mental health. Her compassionate approach left a lasting impression.

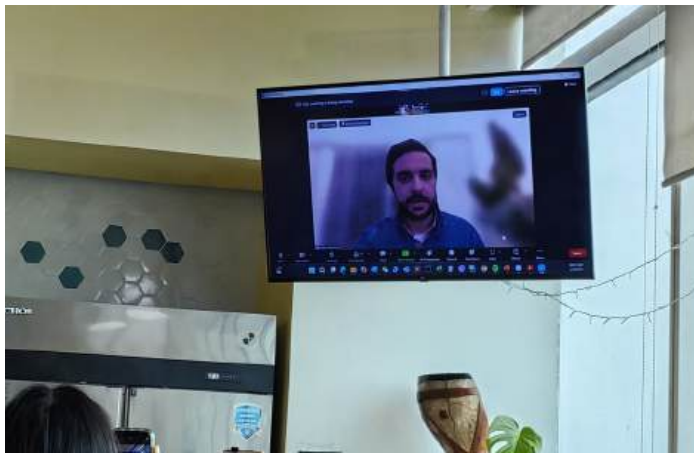
**Dr. Rohn Nahmias**, child and adolescent psychiatrist, connected online to offer valuable strategies for coping with anxiety and stress. His actionable tips and empathetic delivery resonated deeply with all attendees.

**BK Sister Sapna**, Senior Raja Yoga Meditation Teacher and Life Coach, led a serene and transformative session. Through guided meditation and insights on spiritual healing, she helped participants experience peace and relaxation like never before.

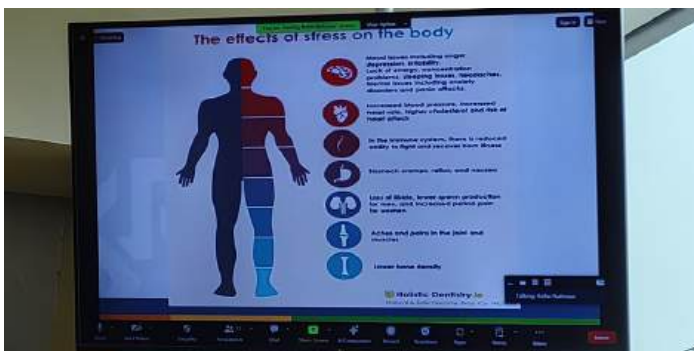
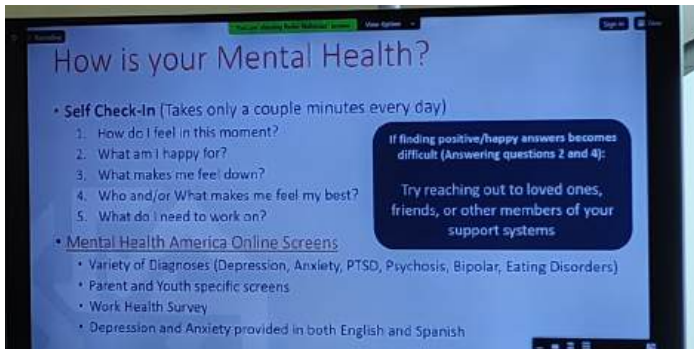
Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing how much they benefited from the discussions and exercises.







- **For Depression:** Establish routines, nurture connections with loved ones, and seek help when needed.



A heartfelt thanks goes to our incredible speakers for their enlightening contributions, to Team Brahma Kumaris for flawless coordination and dedication, and to all volunteers for their tireless efforts behind the scenes. This event reminded us that by working together, we can create a community that prioritizes mental health and fosters understanding and support



As we move forward, let us carry the lessons from this session in our hearts and commit to nurturing our mental well-being every day. Here's to a strong, balanced, and fulfilling year ahead!

The session reinforced the importance of mental health in daily life, reminding everyone that mental well-being is the foundation of overall happiness and productivity. Anxiety, stress, and depression are challenges many face, but they can be managed with awareness, community support, and professional guidance.

Key coping strategies shared during the session included:

- **For Anxiety:** Practice deep breathing, stay physically active, and use grounding techniques.
- **For Stress:** Incorporate mindfulness practices like meditation and maintain a healthy work-life balance.



# Hands of Grace – Weaving

## *Heritage, Inspiring Hearts*

On February 22, 2025, the community came together for a truly inspiring and heartwarming morning at Hands of Grace, an event organized in collaboration with SAACO. This unique initiative not only celebrated the intricate craftsmanship of bamboo weaving, a treasured Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) but also highlighted the resilience and talent of specially-abled artisans who have mastered this traditional art.



### Event Highlights:

**Live Demonstrations:** National-level artisans mesmerized us with their delicate, precise bamboo weaving skills, showing how generations of knowledge are passed down through hands and hearts.

**Hands-On Experience:** Participants got a chance to try their hand at weaving, gaining a deep appreciation for the patience, precision, and dedication this craft demands.

**Cultural & Social Impact:** We learned about SAACO's "ICH Empowering the Disabled" initiative, which provides specially-abled individuals with skills and opportunities, turning challenges into triumphs.

**Community Service:** Attendees also received a Community Service Activity Certificate, recognizing their contribution to supporting heritage preservation and social inclusion.



### The Heart of the Event

More than just a workshop, Hands of Grace was a testament to the power of perseverance, tradition, and community. It was about bridging worlds—connecting people through shared experiences, learning from inspiring individuals, and fostering a deeper appreciation for cultural traditions.



**Indian Association President, Ms. Ritika Kumar, reflected** on the dedication that went into making this event a reality, emphasizing that good things take time, and with perseverance, they happen. She shared her hope that everyone takes something meaningful from this experience and spreads awareness, especially in schools, to encourage more engagement in charitable initiatives.



The event brought together people from all walks of life—children, adults, and artisans—bridging generations through shared learning and appreciation. Such events remind us that heritage is not just about preserving the past but also about empowering the present and shaping the future. They create a space where we can learn, engage, and support initiatives that uplift marginalized communities, ensuring that skills like bamboo weaving continue to thrive for generations to come.





A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated, supported, and made this event so special. Your presence and enthusiasm made a real impact—one that will be cherished by both the artists and the community. Let's continue to come together for meaningful causes, cultural appreciation, and social empowerment.





# Rang Barse – Holi 2025 *at* *Bellagio Hotel*

The colors, music, and joy were truly unforgettable at Rang Barse – Holi 2025, held on March 15 at the Bellagio Hotel rooftop, Shanghai. organized by Bollywood Restaurant and Nova in collaboration with Indian Association of China the festival brought together people from across the city to celebrate India's vibrant festival of colors.

The rooftop came alive with clouds of gulal, pulsating beats from top DJs, and an atmosphere full of laughter, dance, and festive cheer. Guests enjoyed delicious traditional treats while immersing themselves in the exuberance of the celebration.

This year's Holi was not just a festival—it was a celebration of community, culture, and togetherness. A heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us and made the event a grand success.









# Indian Association

## AGM – 2025

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Indian Association for 2024 was successfully held on **16 March 2025 at the Consulate General of India, Shanghai**, bringing together esteemed members of the consulate, IA members, community leaders, and distinguished guests.



A key highlight was the inspiring message from **IA's Patron, Consul General of India** in Shanghai, Shri Pratik Mathur, who emphasized the importance of community collaboration and collective efforts in fostering a vibrant Indian diaspora. He reaffirmed his support for IA's initiatives and its role in strengthening cultural and business ties within the community.



The meeting commenced with a warm welcome by Ms. Divya Raj (GS – Media & Communications), followed by the Welcome Address from outgoing President Ms. Ritika Kumar, who expressed gratitude for the collective efforts that have strengthened the Indian community and nurtured a spirit of togetherness.



Members were presented with a comprehensive review of IA's Vision and Mission, highlighting key activities over the past year, including cultural celebrations, social welfare programs, and community-building initiatives. A special segment introduced the Indian Association Business Council (IABC), with Ms. Nishtha Mehta outlining its role in fostering business collaborations, networking, and knowledge-sharing.

**A special memento was presented to Founder and Past President Mr. Vivek Arora in recognition of his foundational role.**







A special memento was presented to Founder and Past President Mr. Vivek Arora in recognition of his foundational role.

The AGM concluded with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks, followed by a networking session where attendees connected, shared ideas, and celebrated the community spirit.



The IA AGM 2025 was a testament to the association's unwavering commitment to unity, service, and cultural preservation, setting the stage for another impactful year for the Indian community in China.

The AGM's most significant moment was the announcement of the new IA President, Mr. Manoj Mehta, who was elected unopposed. In his address, he shared his vision for community engagement, cultural preservation, and service-driven leadership, and introduced the new IA Board for 2025-2026.





# Bal Diwas 2025 – A Celebration of Timeless Tales

On April 19, 2025, the Indian Association of China hosted Bal Diwas 2025 at Dulwich College International School, carrying forward its cherished tradition of celebrating the creativity and talent of our young community.



The event was graced by Shri. Aditya Prabhudesai, Consul (PIC), Consulate General of India, Shanghai, who joined as the Chief Guest and shared words of encouragement and appreciation for the children and organizers alike.



The Association's President, Manoj Mehta, welcomed guests and participants, extending heartfelt gratitude to the families and volunteers who helped make this event possible.



This year's Bal Diwas showcased an incredible variety of performances that left the audience spellbound. From the powerful beats of solo drums and the elegance of Indian classical dances to an energetic Spanish dance and soul-stirring patriotic songs, each act brought its own unique flair to the stage. The audience enjoyed a delightful blend of storytelling, skits, group dances, instrumental solos, and fusion performances.



Highlights included the lively group act Happy Hoppers, the thought-provoking skit Ekalavya – An Unsung Hero, the touching piano solo Keys of Timeless Love, and high-energy dances such as The Creator, Give Me Mercy X Sao Paulo, and Badal Pe Pao Hain. Each performance, regardless of culture, language, or style—was united by one common thread: the immense passion and dedication of our young stars. Every act told a story, turning the event into a magical celebration of tradition, imagination, and expression.











This year, we also take a moment to appreciate Bhavisha Kanani, whose presence continues to light up Bal Diwas year after year. With over 23 years of heartfelt performances, Bhavisha shared backstage that this event has become a part of her life's rhythm. Her unwavering commitment to the performing arts and this community is nothing short of inspiring, and we hope her journey encourages more to share their passion in the years ahead.



The program concluded with a special yoga segment led by Kapila Katri, titled Yoga Awareness for Children. The children thoroughly enjoyed participating in simple asanas, helping them relax and unwind after an action-packed afternoon.







The event was smoothly anchored by confident young emcees who kept the audience engaged throughout. Every child received a certificate and token of appreciation—a small gesture to honor the big moments they created on stage.



Bal Diwas 2025 was not just a performance showcase—it was a celebration of community spirit, collaboration, and the boundless energy of childhood. With immense pride and joy, we look forward to many more such vibrant celebrations in the years to come.



A special thanks to Shrikant Swamy and Chi Ningchun for their continuous support, and to our young volunteer Chiraav Prasad for his valuable help across all IA events.





# NAIS-IA Cricket Mela 2025 – A Day of Cricket, Culture & Community

The NAIS-IA Cricket Mela 2025, held on Saturday, 24th May at the NAIS Pudong Grounds, was a vibrant celebration of cricket, culture, and community. Families, players, and friends came together for a full day of sporting excitement and festive fun.



The event was graced by Shri Pratik Mathur, Consul General of India in Shanghai, whose presence and support added immense encouragement and pride to the occasion. His inspiring words set the tone for a memorable day, and we remain deeply grateful for his continued support towards community-led initiatives and cultural connections through sports.



We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our Title Sponsor – Nord Anglia International School (NAIS) Pudong, and a special thanks to Principal Ms. Diane Vaughan for being part of the opening ceremony. Your generous support played a key role in the success of this event.



With 10 enthusiastic teams battling it out on the field, the matches showcased true sportsmanship and teamwork. After a thrilling final, Ningbo Aces lifted the championship trophy of the IA-NAIS Cricket Tournament 2025, demonstrating grit, coordination, and a winning spirit.







The day began with a serene morning yoga session led by Mr. Datta (Just Yoga) in celebration of International Yoga Day 2025, followed by a high-energy Zumba session conducted by Mr. Nikhil Khurana, which had the crowd moving and grooving







To ensure fun for everyone, a mini cricket zone for women and kids gave all ages the chance to enjoy the sport. Meanwhile, the Kids' Zone with games, activities, and a bouncy castle kept the youngest participants thoroughly entertained.







## A Big Thank You to Our Sponsors

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Food Partners – Bollywood, Grill Master, and Kebabs on the Grille

Your generous contributions helped make this day a resounding success—we are sincerely grateful!

A special appreciation goes to our community home bakers and caterers – Nisha Malhotra, Payal Dhanjani Kalwani, and Sanya Mathur – for adding delicious flavors that made the event even more special.















We also thank our dedicated volunteers, whose tireless efforts behind the scenes ensured the event ran smoothly:

Kid Volunteers: Chiraav Prasad, Eashan Bodhale, Kavish Jain, Riyaan Kartik Raj, Sshrey Golecha, Suhana Jain, and Yuvraj Dandale

Community Volunteers: Dr. Krishna Gopal Yadav, Lovely Bhatiya, and DJ Shrikant Swamy







From spectacular cricket to fun-filled family moments, the IA-NAIS Cricket Mela 2025 was not just a tournament but a beautiful reminder of the strength of our community when we come together in the spirit of joy, inclusivity, and unity.

We look forward to welcoming you again next year—with even more cheer, chaat, and chhakkas!





# 11 Years of Life, Love & Legacy

The 11th Annual Indian Community Blood Donation Drive – Bridging Cultures, Saving Lives was held at the Shanghai Blood Center, Hongqiao Road, on Sunday, 7th September 2025.



Organized by the Indian Association of China in partnership with the Shanghai Municipal Health Authorities, the event once again reflected the spirit of compassion and solidarity.



The drive was graced by Mr. Pratik Mathur, Consul General of India in Shanghai, who lauded the Indian diaspora's consistent contributions to public welfare. He remarked: "This initiative is a shining example of India's friendship with Shanghai and the shared values of humanity that unite us. Every drop of blood donated is not just a gift of life, but also a bridge of care, compassion, and solidarity between our peoples."







schools, along with 11 Chinese students, guided donors in both English and Chinese, symbolizing the continuity of this tradition across generations.



With the theme "Bridging Cultures – Saving Lives", this year's campaign drew 63 donors, resulting in the collection of 92 units of whole blood and 2 units of platelets. Beyond the numbers, the day stood as a celebration of shared humanity.

Over the past 11 years, the initiative has become a hallmark of Shanghai's public welfare landscape. 1,478 Indian participants have contributed more than 2,115 blood servings (1 serving = 200 ml), making it the largest and longest-running blood donation campaign by a single expatriate community in the city's history.

The drive united long-time residents and newcomers alike. Seasoned donors proudly carried their certificates, while first-time participants were reassured by the professionalism of the medical staff. Entire families joined in—some donating blood, while children assisted as volunteers with bilingual registration and maintaining order. More than 28 Indian students from 11 international











The event also became a platform for cultural exchange. Indian volunteers added vibrancy with traditional music and dance, while Chinese artisans showcased intangible cultural heritage crafts such as clay figurine making and lacquer fan painting. These interactions highlighted that blood donation is not only a medical lifeline but also a channel for cultural appreciation and mutual respect.











Local media described the campaign as an expression of "love without borders", underscoring its lasting contribution to Shanghai's humanitarian memory. With the city requiring 1,800 bags of blood daily to meet clinical demand, the Indian community's contribution stands as a powerful testament to generosity that transcends nationality.







**After a day of service, our young IA volunteers wind down with laughter and friendship – the heart behind the drive!**

The Indian Association of China extends heartfelt gratitude to the Shanghai Blood Center, municipal health partners, community volunteers, schools, and every donor whose generosity made this campaign possible. A special note of thanks goes to government organizations, sponsors, partners, and community collaborators who have supported this initiative since its inception in 2014. Together, the community continues to uphold a proud tradition of giving back—reinforcing Shanghai’s “red lifeline” of love, health, and solidarity.





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# Where BENGAL MEETS SHANGHAI: *The Story of ADDA*

The spirit of Bengal has always thrived wherever Bengalis have settled, and China is no exception. Known for their love of art, culture, literature, and celebration, the Bengali community in Shanghai has carried forward this rich heritage with pride. Their warmth, inclusiveness, and passion for community-building have made them an integral part of the Indian diaspora in China, keeping traditions alive while embracing new horizons.

For over two decades, Shanghai Adda has been the heart and soul of the Indian diaspora in Shanghai, particularly for the Bengali community. The word "Adda", rooted in Bengal, signifies a casual gathering for conversation and connection. True to its name, Shanghai Adda has grown from a simple social meet-up into a vibrant, multifaceted platform that supports, celebrates, and unites people far from home.

The past two years have been especially significant. Shanghai Adda has re-energized the community, adapted to new social dynamics, and strengthened its mission of being a home away from home for Bengalis in Shanghai. It continues to serve as:

- **Support System** – helping newcomers and long-term residents navigate life in China.
- **Cultural Beacon** – promoting and celebrating Indian festivals and traditions.
- **Bridge** – fostering a positive image of the Bengali community within Shanghai's multicultural fabric.
- **Platform for Friendship & Growth** – creating meaningful personal and professional connections.

Shanghai Adda has played an active role in numerous events every year: From New Year celebrations and Diwali Mela to Rabindranath Tagore's birthday, Independence Day festivities, or Chaiti – the Festival of Classical Music; members have always contributed with enthusiasm and creativity. It has also hosted Rabindra Jayanti at the Indian Consulate and participated in consulate-led Diwali gatherings with music, dance, and drama, showcasing both cultural pride and artistic talent. These well-managed and inclusive events project a positive image of the Indian community to the wider international and local Chinese audience.

Beyond celebrations, Shanghai Adda has remained committed to using culture as a medium for awareness. Last year, the community highlighted the urgent issue of climate change through Durga Puja and Bal Divas performances, spreading awareness about sustainability among both adults and children. In earlier years, it brought the timeless wisdom of the Mahabharata alive on stage during Durga Puja and Diwali Mela, offering lessons in values and heritage to the next generation.

This year, Shanghai Adda steps into an exciting new chapter

with the theme of Artificial Intelligence. As AI transforms the way we live, work, and interact, our celebrations will reflect both its promises and its challenges. This Puja is not just about rituals – it is about evolution and reimagination. Shanghai Adda proudly presents AI-themed Durgotsav 2025: where culture meets technology, and where Maa Durga's eternal victory over evil is re-envisioned in the age of Artificial Intelligence.

After years of pandemic restrictions, 2023 marked the triumphant return of Adda's iconic festivals, celebrated with record participation and heartfelt devotion. Durga Puja once again became a grand, joyous celebration, ensuring that second-generation Indian children and newcomers could experience the same energy, worship, and community spirit as back home.

Other festivals such as Saraswati Puja and Bengali New Year were also celebrated with zeal, while more intimate gatherings like the annual picnic in parks and villas offered families the chance to build deeper bonds. Shanghai Adda members have also actively contributed to society by participating in blood donation camps organized by Indian Association.







As Shanghai re-establishes itself as a global hub, the role of Shanghai Adda is more important than ever. Its evolution from a casual adda to a cornerstone of the community is a testament to the dedication of its organizers and the active spirit of its members. Resilient, adaptable, and forward-looking, Shanghai Adda continues to be the vital thread weaving together the rich and diverse tapestry of the Indian experience in Shanghai.

Compiled by : Maitrayee Banerjee  
From Shanghai Adda Team







# Shanghai Kannadigaru

*memories*

*Cultural, Colorful, Kannada.*

ಶಾಂಘೈನಲ್ಲಿ  
ಕನ್ನಡಿಗರ ನೆನಪುಗಳು

ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ, ವರ್ಣರಂಜಿತ, ಕನ್ನಡ.

"Shanghai Kannadigaru established to promote Kannada & Indian culture, uphold Kannada Language amongst the community. By hosting cultural programs & providing platforms to our young and old members to explore & express, we instill Kannada tradition across time zones. Shanghai Kannadigaru group represents rich Karnataka heritage of great Indian diaspora in China. Shanghai Kannadigaru hosts two main events each year starting 2019 (Yugadi and Kannada Rajyotsava)." -

The following are the glimpse of Shanghai Kannadigaru events in Shanghai during Oct 2024-Oct 2025:

## Deepawali- November 2024:

Continuing the tradition of celebrating Karnataka (Kannada) Rajyotsava in the month of November each year, Shanghai Kannadigaru celebrated the 69th Kannada Rajyotsava on 02nd November 2024 at Crowne Plaza in Puxi. The event was co-hosted and collaborated with "Shanghai Sangamam". On this special

occasion, about 50 Kannadigas came together from Shanghai and nearby cities for the celebration. The event also Diaspora from Tamilnadu and was presided by the Consul General of India, Shanghai Dr Nandakumar.included Indian



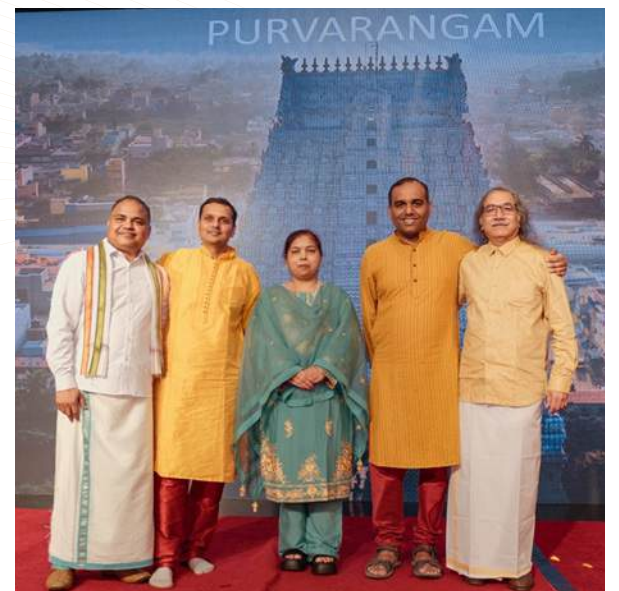
The lighting of the lamp by Dr. Nandakumar (CGI SH) and sponsors marked the start of the combined event celebration. Shanghai Kannadigaru group felicitated special invitees with a "Mysore Peta", a traditional turban with royal significance. Dr.Nandakumar addressed the audience and praised the efforts of the Shanghai Kannadigaru and Shanghai Sangamam family for being together and spreading Indian culture in a foreign country. He appreciated the unity of the tamil-kannada diaspora in bringing the "unity in diversity".







Group members and kids presented beautiful cultural programs during the event, also included with several fun elements. Medical Students from Xuzhou performed dance numbers from Kannada and Tamil films. This year's event added another memorable page to our lives in Shanghai







## Ugadi event – March 2025:

Continuing the tradition of celebrating Karnataka (Kannada) Rajyotsava in the month of March/April each year, 'Shanghai Kannadigaru' celebrated the Ugadi on 12th April 2025. On this special occasion, about 50 Kannadigas came together from Shanghai and nearby cities for the celebration. The event also welcomed newcomers to Shanghai who became part of "Shanghai Kannadigaru" family.



The lighting of the lamp by Mr Aditya (Consul SH) and several group members marked the start of the Ugadi 2025 celebration. Shanghai Kannadigaru group felicitated special invitees with a plant, as a symbol of eternity. Mr Aditya addressed the audience and praised the efforts of the Shanghai Kannadigaru family for being together and spreading Indian culture in a foreign country.







This year, as per traditional Ugadi, Lakhmi pooja was performed at the venue with wonderful decoration. Also, Hanuman jayanti was celebrated during the Ugadi event. The event was also presided by the Brahmakumaris head, BK Sapna di. She conducted "Guided meditation " to the community adding spiritual aura to the event.

Group members and kids presented beautiful cultural programs during the event, also included with several fun elements. This year's event added another memorable page to our lives in Shanghai. Team conducted games for adults and kids separately. All had fun at the event.







**Gopinath Thangavelu**

Gopinath Thangavelu is from Tamil Nadu and has been living and working in Shanghai since 2004. He is accompanied by his wife and their two lovely daughters. He loves travelling, especially to places with nature and landscapes. Apart from his daily work, he enjoys volunteering and organizing community activities in Shanghai. He has been a part of the Shanghai Sangamam team since 2007. He and his family wish to provide solutions for a better lifestyle for fellow community members in Shanghai and China, and hope to bring more exciting and engaging celebrations to the city.

# Shanghai Sangamam:

## *Twenty Years of Weaving a Cultural Tapestry in the Heart of China*

The golden hues of the spring sun in Shanghai seemed to carry a special warmth on April 13th, 2025. It was a day of dual significance, a beautiful cosmic alignment of tradition and diaspora identity. The city, a pulsating metropolis known for its futuristic skyline, was preparing to host a celebration that was



deeply rooted in ancient heritage. The Tamil community of Shanghai, along with a multitude of well-wishers from across China and beyond, gathered to mark two momentous occasions: the joyous dawn of Tamil Puthandu (Tamil New Year) and the magnificent 20th-anniversary milestone of Shanghai Sangamam, the premier association for Tamils in the city.

This was not merely an event; it was a living tapestry. Each thread represented a story—of a professional who arrived two decades ago when Pudong was still emerging, of a student who just landed, of a multicultural family, of Chinese friends who have developed a love for dosas and the complex rhythms of the mridangam. For twenty years, Shanghai Sangamam has been the loom on which these threads have been woven together, creating a vibrant, resilient, and beautiful community fabric. The 20th-anniversary celebration, intertwined with the New Year, was a testament to this journey—a reflection on a cherished past and a hopeful gaze into a dynamic future.



## The Significance of the Confluence: Puthandu and a Platinum Milestone

The pairing of these two celebrations was profoundly symbolic. Tamil Puthandu, celebrated on the first day of the Chithirai month, is a festival of new beginnings. It is a time of purification, of donning new clothes, of preparing and sharing a special meal (the 'Virundhu'), and of seeking blessings from elders. It is a celebration of life, harvest, and hope, grounded in the belief that the year's start defines its course.

Similarly, a 20th anniversary represents a culmination and a commencement. It speaks of endurance, of the strength of foundations, and of the maturity of an institution. For a diaspora community organization, surviving and thriving for two decades in a rapidly changing foreign megacity is a monumental achievement. It signifies an unbreakable spirit, an adaptive core, and an unwavering commitment to preserving one's identity while building bridges with the host culture.

Therefore, the "Shanghai Sangamam 20th Anniversary & Tamil New Year Celebration" was more than a party; it was a powerful narrative. It was a story of how a community, far from its native soil, not only keeps its culture alive but allows it to evolve, flourish, and enchant a global audience.

### A Venue Abuzz with Anticipation: The Pre-Event Atmosphere

The grand ballroom of Crowne Plaza in downtown Shanghai was transformed. The air was thick with the aromatic symphony of sandalwood from joss sticks and the sweet scent of jasmine flowers in women's hair. The stage was not just a platform but a sacred space, adorned with traditional 'Kolam' patterns created with colored rice flour, their intricate, symmetrical designs welcoming prosperity and warding off evil. Central to the décor was the 'Kuthuvilakku' (the ceremonial lamp), whose warm glow promised an evening of enlightenment and positivity.

Large screens flanked the stage, projecting visuals that took the audience on a nostalgic journey: Previous year photographs from the first-ever Sangamam gathering in 2004, contrasted with vibrant videos of recent dance dramas and cultural fairs. The sense of anticipation was palpable. Elders greeted each other with "Puthandu Vazhukal!" (Happy New Year!), their hands filled with gifts of fruits and sweets. Children, resplendent in colorful 'pattu pavadais' (silk skirts) and 'veshtis', darted around, their laughter adding to the festive cacophony. It was a microcosm of Tamil Nadu itself, miraculously manifested in the heart of Shanghai.







## The Inauguration: Lighting the Lamp of Legacy and Hope

The ceremony began with the most solemn and significant of all rituals: the lighting of the Kuthuvilakku. This honor was bestowed upon the founding members of Shanghai Sangamam, our Chief Guest Shri Aditya D. Prabhudesai, Consul (PIC), Consulate General of India, Shanghai, BK Sapna Sister, Ms. Jin Shan Shan (renowned Bharatanatyam teacher from Beijing), Ms. Lulu Wang (renowned Kuchipudi teacher from Shanghai), and Mrs. Amrutha Murali (classical singer from Chennai).

This was followed by a heartfelt invocation song, 'Tamil Thai Vaazhthu' (Hail Mother Tamil), a prayer for the prosperity of the Tamil language and its people. As hundreds of voices rose in unison, the room was filled with a profound sense of unity and pride, a poignant reminder that while they were global citizens, their roots were eternally Tamil.



## A Journey Through Time: Celebrating Two Decades

A specially curated audio-visual presentation then chronicled the 20-year voyage of Shanghai Sangamam. It was a moving montage of videos of founding members of Shanghai Sangamam (who are back in India), grainy photos from early picnics, family gatherings, snapshots of Pongal & Vinayagar Chaturthi celebrations, and grand stage celebrations of Deepavali 2019.

The video paid tribute to the unsung heroes—the volunteers who organized countless events, the home chefs who cooked for hundreds during festivals, and the sponsors who believed in the community's cause. It was a story of resilience, particularly during challenging times like the global financial crisis and the recent pandemic, when the association became a critical support network, delivering essential supplies and virtual connections to its isolated members as well as delivering medical equipments to Red Cross, Chennai.



## A Cultural Extravaganza: The Stage Comes Alive

The cultural performances that followed were nothing short of spectacular, meticulously crafted to showcase the depth and diversity of Tamil heritage.



The event kicked off with a musical delivery of traditional Tamil music with 'Nadaswaram and Thavil', the majestic sound of the traditional wind instrument reverberating through the hall, announcing the celebration's grandeur. It sent a message of triumph and joy, symbolizing the community's strong voice in Shanghai.



The centerpiece of the evening was a specially commissioned classical dance drama “Netru Varen Endru”, a Tamil Padam by the late 19th century poet Subbarama Iyer, performed by Ms. Jin Shan Shan. It artistically depicted the story of a Nayika speaking to her friend about waiting for her beloved, and how she lost herself in ecstasy upon seeing him return. Sequences featuring Bharatanatyam movements blending with lots of emotions and sentiment were particularly breathtaking, receiving a thunderous ovation.

Followed by Kuchipudi dance performance on Sandhya Thandavam by young Indian students Shravya and Mahika, who have grown up in Shanghai and are the disciples of Ms. Lulu Wang. Sandhya Thandavam is a divine Kuchipudi performance that captures the mystical moment of twilight – where day meets night and light dances with shadow. This sacred time, known as Sandhya is believed to be when Lord Shiva performs his Thandavam radiating cosmic energy and balance. The performance blends powerful rhythms with graceful storytelling, as the dancer channels the essence of Shiva’s dance, portraying the universe’s transition from creation to rest.

Followed by another Classical Bharatanatyam performance by Ms. Jin Shan Shan and her daughter Ms. Jessica Wu on Nachiyar Kalthuvam, about the story of Lord Vishnu’s love towards Andal. In Tamil, we say “Kaana Kan Kodi Vendum” which means we need thousand eyes to watch this spectacular event. It’s one another Classical masterpiece rendered by beautiful Mother and Daughter duo.

### 3. Melodies of the Motherland:

A musical concert performed by Mrs Amrutaa Murali and Mr MLR Karthikeyan, featured a repertoire of timeless Tamil film classics, peppy songs and part of Kannada and Hindi songs. The duo was brilliantly occupying the audiences with their catchy songs and their interaction with our lovely guests. The hall was extra ordinarily energetic and has made many of the guests dancing to the tunes of the wonderful songs.

### 4. Where the Kaveri meets the Yangtze – A Guzheng Recital:

Music has no language. Regardless of its country of origin or instrument, it offers relaxation, joy, and touches every heart. Guzheng, a Miao ethnic musical piece with a history of 2500 years, stands as an emblem of elegance and refinement, offering not only a soothing auditory experience but also deep cultural significance. Ms. Chandra Siva (a mixed-race kid of Indian father/Chinese mother performed the Strings of Harmony, which perfectly captures the spirit of the event,

creating beautiful music and the cultural unity through the stings of Guzheng. It was truly a Divine Resonance and a peaceful confluence of two ancient cultures.

The most heartening segment was the performance by the Medical Students from Suzhou. These students performed a dazzling fusion dance, combining Kuthu with hip-hop, a vibrant representation of their dual identity—firmly Tamil at heart, yet truly global in spirit. Also, Chinese & Russian students performed a vibrant dance performance for peppy song, brought joyous moment to the event.

### The Feast of a Lifetime: A Virundhu for the Soul

No Tamil celebration is complete without a feast, and this was a ‘Virundhu’ of epic proportions. The dinner was a lavish spread of traditional Tamil New Year specialties. The highlight was the ‘Puthandu Virundhu’ plate, featuring all the essential elements: the sweet ‘Carrot Halwa’, the spicy ‘Vada’, the tangy sauces, Chennai special Parotta, Madurai Idli, Sambar, Rasam with traditional Chicken Kolambu and Village Fish Curry, and the creamy ‘Red Rice Payasam’.

The dining hall was a scene of communal harmony. People sat together, not as strangers or acquaintances, but as one large family, sharing their stories with their friends while enjoying their food, embodying the true spirit of ‘Sangamam’—a confluence of hearts.

### Honouring the Chief Guests

A key segment of the evening was dedicated to honoring the Chief Guests including Shri. Aditya D. Prabhudesai, Consul (PIC), Consulate General of India, Shanghai, BK Sapna Sister, Ms. Jin Shan Shan, Ms. Lulu Wang, Mrs. Amrutaa Murali and Mr MLR Karthikeyan. They were presented with plaques and shawls as a token of the community’s immense gratitude. Their speeches were short but powerful, filled with joy and expressed their appreciation for how Shanghai Sangamam, which started as a small initiative, has blossomed into a formidable institution.

The whole event was anchored in Tamil & English by Prof Manikandan (Tamil Professor from Beijing) and Ms. Aishwarya (a multilingual Medical Student, born in India, living in Japan and studying medicine in China).

### Conclusion: A New Dawn in a Global City

As the event drew to a close, Mr. Gopinath presented his vote of thanks to the Chief Guests, Sponsors, Community members and all volunteers. Finally, a mass rendition of a hopeful farewell music was played, the feeling in the air was one of collective contentment and renewed energy. The 20th-anniversary celebration of Shanghai Sangamam, harmonized with the Tamil New Year, was far more than a successful event. It was a powerful declaration.

It declared that culture is not a static relic to be preserved behind glass but a living, breathing, evolving force. It demonstrated that identity can be multifaceted—one can be a proud Tamil, a respectful resident of China, and a global citizen, all at once. Shanghai Sangamam, over twenty years, has mastered the delicate art of maintaining tradition while embracing change.

The lights dimmed, the last notes of the music faded, and the echoes of laughter and conversation lingered. The Tamils of Shanghai stepped out of the ballroom and back into the dazzling neon light of their adopted city, carrying with them the warmth of their community, the taste of their heritage, and the bright, hopeful promise of a new year. Their cultural tapestry, now twenty years stronger, continues to be woven, adding new threads, patterns, and colours, forever enriching the magnificent, multicultural fabric of Shanghai. Cheers.



## Brief Intro about Shanghai Sangamam:

Shanghai Sangamam is an Indian association formed in Shanghai on April 14, 2004. This is the day when we welcome the arrival of Spring season and celebrating South Indian New Year. The aim of forming the association was twofold: to provide a platform for like-minded individuals and families to come together and do something positive to the community as well as help and address the needs of the newcomers and the Indian Citizens in Shanghai and nearby provinces, so that they can have a moral support and make themselves feel home.

We have a diverse team at Shanghai Sangamam who are expats from India, including professionals, small businessmen, local employees and our lovely Indian women.

Though basically a cultural organization that has brought people together on many occasions, especially Pongal, Tamil New Year, Vinayagar Chaturthi, Deepavali (a Hindu festival of Lights), etc, Shanghai Sangamam does not believe in limiting its approach.

It also contributes to natural disaster relief efforts during emergencies and sponsors selected students' education in India through a few reliable charity organizations.

Through its various programs, the association also ensures that Indian children, who are brought up in Shanghai, do not get deprived of their culture and tradition. The cultural programs during Tamil New Year and Deepavali festivals give these kids a chance to display their talents via songs, performances, dances and other activities and bring out their "Indianness".





# Shanghai Telugu Sangam

The Shanghai Telugu community is a close-knit and welcoming group, always coming together to celebrate festivals with joy and unity.

This year, Ugadi (the Telugu New Year) was celebrated on 30th March 2025 at Indian Kitchen. The event was filled with cultural flavor and fun — children gave delightful performances, there were engaging games and a painting competition, and the atmosphere brimmed with festive cheer. Our Chief Guest, Mr. Abhiv Sharma from the Indian Embassy, graced the occasion with his presence. A traditional Telugu lunch was served, with the highlight being the special Ugadi Pachadi, which brought authenticity to the celebrations.

Beyond festivals, the community stays connected and supportive through its WeChat group. Thanks to the efforts of Mr. K. Madhav Reddy and our energetic volunteers, the group continues to remain active, encouraging, and engaged.

As Shanghai Telugu Sangham, we look forward to organizing more gatherings and cultural events in the coming year to further strengthen our community spirit.



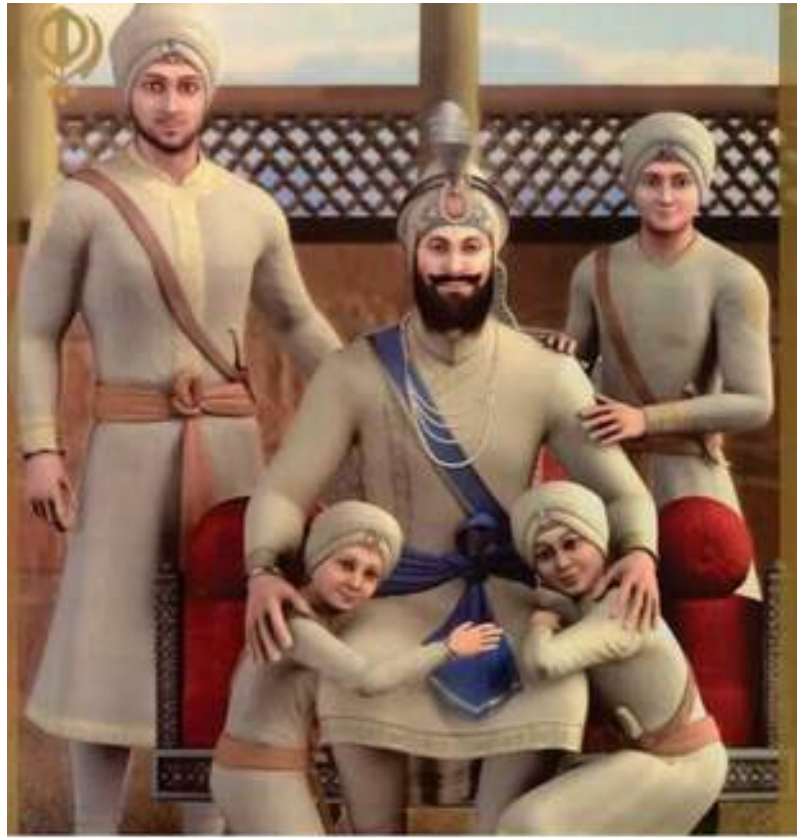


# The Chaar Sahibzaade

THEY ARE REMEMBERED FOR  
THEIR BRAVERY, SACRIFICE  
AND FAITH IN SIKHI HISTORY

OUR 10<sup>th</sup> GURUJI, SRI GURU GOBIND SINGH JI, HAD 4 SONS KNOWN AS THE CHAAR SAHIBZAADE. THEIR NAMES WERE, SAHIBZAADE BABA AJIT SINGH JI, SAHIBZAADE BABA JUJHAR SINGH JI, SAHIBZAADE BABA ZORAWAR SINGH JI, AND SAHHIBZAADE BABA FATEH SINGH JI. BEING THE YOUNGEST MARTYRS THE WORLD HAS EVEN SEEN. FIGHTING AND SACRIFICING AGAINST INJUSTICE FOR THE INNOCENT.

In 1704, Guru Gobind Singh Ji and the Khalsa were attacked by a huge Mughal army at Anandpur Sahib. Under false assurance of safe passage by the Mughals, the Sikhs left the fort after a long seige with reduced food and supplies. The Mughals attacked at Sarsa River, Guruji's family got separated during the difficult journey.



At the battle of Chamkaur Sahib, Guruji, the elder 2 Sahib Sahibzaade, and around 40 Sikhs were surrounded by hundreds of thousands of Mughal soldiers. Sahibzaade Baba Ajit Singh Ji bowed in reverence to Guru Gobind Singh Ji for permission to go into battle. Guru Ji without hesitation, donned their beloved son with armor, and sent Baba Ajit Singh Ji to battle. They fought fearlessly and courageless against the tyranny and finally attained martyrdom when attacked by more than a dozen soldiers at the same time. Seeing their brother's sacrifice, Baba Jujhar Singh Ji rather than getting scared, asked their father for blessings and also went into battle with unmatched courage and gave their life fighting for righteousness.



That evening, Guru Gobind Singh Ji decided to also fight and sacrifice their life but the remaining Sikhs prayed to Guru Ji to leave the fort. Guru Ji clapped their hands and loudly announced their departure straight through the Mughal army. While they were leaving the weather was extremely harsh and none of the Mughals were able to see Guruji.

Sahibzaade Baba Zorawar Singh Ji and Sahibzaade Baba Fateh Singh Ji were captured with their grandmother Mata Gujri Ji in Sirhind. Gangu, was a cook for Guruji family betrayed them and handed them over to the Mughals because he was greedy and wanted money and rewards. They were tortured and left in the cold for 3 nights, and refused to give up their Sikh faith in exchange for wealth and comfort. They were sentenced to be bricked alive and achieved martyrdom in 1705. Mata Gujri Ji also passed away in prison at the Thanda Burj. Their bodies were left in Sirhind, as Wazir Khan (the Mughal governor) showed no respect for them. A devotee, Dewan Todar Mal, wanted to give them a proper cremation. Wazir Khan made it very hard and said he would only give the land if it was covered with gold coins. Dewan Todar Mal used all his money to buy land, and because of him Mata Gujri Ji and the Sahibzaade were given a respectful Saskar. Today Gurudwara Fategarh Sahib stands in this location.







**Dr Deepak Hegde**

Dr. Deepak Hegde is a Senior Pharma Professional in Shanghai, has been involved with the Shanghai Marathi Mandal for a very long time and has been the President of the Shanghai Marathi Mandal from 2022 to present.

# Shanghai Marathi Mandal (SMM) Activities in 2025

SMM has been holding aloft the flag of Indian culture in China since 2007, focusing on raising awareness about preserving Indian cultural heritage. When the Shanghai Marathi Mandal was established, there was one clear goal – to share our rich Indian and Marathi heritage and culture in a country where the Indian community was still small.

The dream was simple: to create a space where we could come together, celebrate our festivals and traditions, and pass them on to future generations. Central to this vision was the celebration of Indian festivals, each of which holds unique significance and occupies a special place in the hearts of the Indian community.

The Shanghai Marathi Community has been celebrating festivals with pomp

and splendor since 2007, as each celebration helps us stay connected with our roots and preserve our culture, even when far away from home. One of the most fulfilling aspects of this journey is seeing children who have grown up here, often far away from their roots, actively participating in our events. For them, these festivals are more than just traditions; they are connections to heritage. The cultural programs, dance and singing performances, skits, and other activities help them understand and appreciate Indian and Marathi culture.

## Makar Sankrant

Makar Sankranti is a popular festival celebrated by ladies every year in January. It is believed that from this day, the Sun begins its journey northward, signifying the end of winter and the start of the harvest season. From this point, the days grow longer and warmer. Staying away from India makes it even more important to keep traditions alive, and the Shanghai Marathi Mandal ladies always strive to do just that.

As in previous years, Makar Sankrant was celebrated by SMM ladies at Indian Kitchen. The SMM Ladies' Core Team hosted a **Haldi Kumkum** ceremony, complemented by traditional Maharashtrian customs, along with fun activities that revived nostalgic games from back home in India. (The Haldi Kumkum ceremony is a social gathering in which married women exchange Haldi (turmeric) and Kumkum (vermilion powder) as a symbol of their married status, while wishing for their husbands' long lives.)

Every year, Shanghai Marathi Mandal ladies add new ideas to the celebrations. They include Maharashtrian traditions such as songs, dances, **Fugadi** (a folk art form), and **Ukhane** (witty couplets that weave in the spouse's name). This year was no different. All the ladies enjoyed the activities hosted by the Core Team.

Following tradition from Maharashtra, the "first Sankrant" of a newly married bride and the "first Sankrant" of a baby are always celebrated. This year, a baby's first Sankrant was included in the Haldi Kumkum ceremony. Afterwards, Tilgul (sesame candy) and **Saubhagya Vaan** (gifts) were distributed, and the program concluded with a delicious lunch.







## Gudi Padwa

Gudi Padwa is a spring festival marking the start of the lunisolar new year for Marathi and Konkani Hindus. Celebrated in Maharashtra, Goa, and Daman, it features colorful rangoli, a special **Gudi Dhvaja** (cloth garlanded with flowers, mango and neem leaves, and sugar crystals, topped with a silver or copper vessel), as well as music, dance, and festive foods.

This year, Gudi Padwa was celebrated at Indian Kitchen, Minsheng Lu. The event began with Tushar and Shilpa Bhanushali's introduction to the Ramayan, followed by a **Geet Ramayan** program presented by Tanvi Kharwadkar, Chhaya Chaudhari, Ravee Chaudhari, Bharati Simha, Sandesh Pawar, Francisca Kapoor, Shweta Bodhale, and Eashan Bodhale. The poetic recitals, supported by visuals, brought the epic vividly to life and captivated the audience.

Consul General of India in Shanghai, Shri Pratik Mathur, graced the event — his first cultural program since assuming office. He appreciated the Geet Ramayan during his address.

The program continued with a vibrant dance by Kia Admuthe, Saavi Poojari, and Aahana Kulkarni; a powerful recital **"Sampoorna Karna"** by Rohit Admuthe, which received a standing ovation; and a Kahoot quiz by Dr. Darshana Hegde and Rohit Admuthe, which engaged the audience.

The day also included a cooking competition, prize distribution, a Lezim dance by the SMM Core Team, and a traditional Maharashtrian feast featuring **Puran Poli**, which everyone enjoyed.









## Ganeshotsav

Ganeshotsav 2025 was celebrated on 6th September – the 19th year of SMM's Ganeshotsav. The theme was "Incredible India – A Journey Through Vibrant Folk Culture, Traditions, and Folk Art." The decoration, conceptualized by Chhaya Choudhari, reflected this theme beautifully.

The function began with a welcome by Dr. Deepak Hegde, President of SMM. The cultural program featured devotional songs, Dindi performances, Kuchipudi and Koli dances, bhakti nritya, Tandava, Gujarati Garba, Assamese songs, Veena and flute recitals, and a grand Gondhal folk dance finale.

The Honorable Consul General of India, Shri Pratik Mathur, attended and addressed the audience, also presenting prizes for an art competition on the theme of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

The event concluded with Atharvashirsha recitation, Aarti, and chants of **Ganpati Bappa Morya, Pudhchya Varshi Lavkar Ya**. The dedication of the Core Team and volunteers made the celebration a grand success.











## Participation in Blood Donation Drive

In addition to cultural events, SMM is deeply committed to social contributions. This year, SMM partnered with the Indian Association in the 11th Annual Blood Donation Drive at the Shanghai Blood Center, Hongqiao, on 7th September. Several SMM members participated as both volunteers and donors.

This collaboration further strengthened the warm ties between SMM and the Indian Association.







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**Aarush Gupta**

## About Me

Aarush is a student in Year 11, studying at Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong. He has been living in Shanghai for seven years and is passionate about Chess, Badminton and Cricket.

## मेरी पसंदीदा हिंदी फिल्म

मेरी पसंदीदा हिंदी फिल्म "शेरशाह" भारतीय सैनिक कैप्टन विक्रम बत्रा और उनके योगदान की एक भावनात्मक कहानी है, जिन्होंने 1999 में भारत के लिए कारगिल युद्ध जीतने का मार्ग प्रशस्त किया। इस फिल्म के मेरे पसंदीदा होने के कई कारण हैं, जैसे कि इसकी कहानी, अभिनय और गाने।

शेरशाह की शुरुआत विशाल बत्रा द्वारा अपने जुड़वां भाई कैप्टन विक्रम बत्रा के जीवन के बारे में बात करने से होती है। छोटी उम्र से ही, विक्रम ने साहस दिखाया और बाद में भारतीय सेना में शामिल होने के अपने सपने को साकार किया। कॉलेज में उनकी मुलाकात डिंपल चीमा से हुई और एक लंबी प्रेम कहानी के बाद, डिंपल के परिवार के विरोध के बावजूद, दोनों ने आखिरकार शादी कर ली। लेफ्टिनेंट के रूप में कमीशन प्राप्त करने के बाद, उन्होंने बहादुरी के कार्यों के माध्यम से कश्मीर में सम्मान अर्जित किया। 1999 के कारगिल युद्ध के दौरान, "शेरशाह" कोडनेम का इस्तेमाल करते हुए, उन्होंने पॉइंट 5140 पर कब्जा करने के एक सफल मिशन का नेतृत्व किया और प्रसिद्ध रूप से कहा, "ये दिल मांगे मोर!" वह कैप्टन बने और बाद में उन्होंने पॉइंट 4875 पर एक और हमले का नेतृत्व किया, जहाँ उन्हें दुश्मन की गोली लग जाती है। अपने साथियों के मिशन पूरा करने के दौरान वह वीरगति को प्राप्त हुए। कैप्टन विक्रम बत्रा को परमवीर चक्र से सम्मानित किया जाता है। फिल्म एक दुखद अंतिम संस्कार के दृश्य और उस सैनिक के असली वीडियो के साथ समाप्त होती है।

इस कहानी ने मुझे फिल्म की शुरुआत से ही अपनी ओर आकर्षित कर लिया। ऐकान सीन खास तौर पर दिलचस्प थे जिन्होंने मुझे पूरी फिल्म देखने के दौरान अपनी सीट से बांधे रखा। फिल्म का निर्देशन विष्णुवर्धन जी के द्वारा बहुत ही बेहतरीन तरीके से किया गया था, जिससे यह दर्शकों को बेहद पसंद आई। फिल्म की एक बड़ी खूबी इसका अभिनय है। विक्रम बत्रा और डिंपल चीमा के किरदार में सिद्धार्थ मल्होत्रा और कियारा आडवाणी के अभिनय ने फिल्म को काफी यथार्थवादी बना दिया। मेजर अजय जसरोटिया जैसे सहायक किरदारों का अभिनय भी यादगार था।

फिल्म का साउंडट्रैक और बैकग्राउंड स्कोर भी बहुत अच्छा था, जिसमें "रातां लंबियां" जैसे गाने फिल्म के मूड के अनुकूल थे और ढेर सारी भावनाएँ जगाते थे। संगीत रोमांटिक और युद्ध दोनों ही तत्वों को बखूबी दर्शाता है, जो फिल्म में एक ऐसा स्तर जोड़ता है जो इसे वाकई मनोरंजक बनाता है। कुल मिलाकर, फिल्म एक थ्रिलर है, और बेहद मनोरंजक और प्रेरणादायक है।

- आरुष गुप्ता





## About Me

Aditya is 12 years old and a Grade 7 student at SSIS.

## Aditya Nath Bose

### India and China: Ancient Ties, Shared Destiny

When I look the theme, "India and China, ancient ties, shared destiny – the world as one family," I feel an extraordinarily special connection. This isn't just a theoretical concept for me; it's a living reality I experience every day. As an Indian living and studying in China, I am lucky to witness firsthand how these two great civilizations, separated by formidable mountain ranges, are strongly linked by a history far deeper and more meaningful than mere geography suggests. My identity is a bridge between these two cultures, and this unique position allows me to see how our shared past can create a cooperative and prosperous future.

The connection between India and China is not a recent phenomenon; it stretches back thousands of years ago. Long before the era of modern technology, before airplanes traversed the skies and high-speed trains zipped across continents, a different kind of network connected our lands. Monks, scholars, and merchants embarked on perilous journeys across the majestic Himalayas, through treacherous deserts, and along ancient trade routes like the Silk Road. These early

travelers weren't just exchanging goods; they were carrying something far more valuable: ideas, wisdom, and culture. They were the original ambassadors of a globalized world, laying the foundation for a relationship built on mutual respect and intellectual curiosity.

Perhaps the most monumental and enduring example of this exchange is the transmission of Buddhism. Originating in the ancient lands of India, Buddhism began its journey eastward. It was more than a religion; it was a comprehensive philosophy of life, encompassing ethics, psychology, and a path to enlightenment. As it reached China, it wasn't simply adopted; it was deeply integrated and transformed, turning into a vibrant and uniquely Chinese form that touched the lives of millions. This spiritual migration extremely influenced every side of Chinese civilization. We can see its impact in the serene grace of temple, the expressive beauty of Buddhist art, the philosophical depth of literature, and even the subtle differences of language. The story of Buddhism's journey from India to China is a powerful testament to how two diverse cultures can enrich each other, showing a shared capacity for spiritual and intellectual growth.

I had the privilege of experiencing this history firsthand during a recent family trip to Jiuhuashan, one of China's four sacred mountains. Located in Anhui Province, this holy

site is revered for its many temples dedicated to Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva. Walking along the winding mountain paths, surrounded by the solemn beauty of ancient temples, struck by a big realization. This spiritual story, which began thousands of miles away in India, had found a spiritual home in the very country where I now live.

Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva, whose Sanskrit name means "Earth Treasury," is an embodiment of profound compassion and an extraordinary promise: he has vowed not to achieve final enlightenment until all hells are empty. Standing in that sacred space, I could feel an almost palpable link between my ancestral home and my current one. It was a deeply personal moment, a powerful fusion of my past and present. The mountain paths weren't just trails; they were the same routes ancient visitors once walked, carrying with them the very concepts that now resonate in the chants and prayers I heard. This personal pilgrimage reinforced my understanding that the ties between India and China are not just historical facts in a textbook; they are a living, breathing part of the world around us. They are a constant reminder that humanity is connected by a shared spiritual quest.





that by embracing this shared destiny, we can create a legacy that honors our past and builds a truly unified future for generations to come.

### **Shared Destiny: The World as One Family**

For me, this is the true essence of “the world as one family.” While national borders may be drawn on maps, separating us with lines of ink, ideas, values, and human traditions travel freely and without restraint. These invisible threads weave a strong and lasting fabric of common humanity. India and China share not only an ancient past but also a monumental responsibility for the future. Both nations are home to some of the world’s most ancient and enduring civilizations, and both are now at the forefront of global transformation, driving innovation, economic growth, and cultural influence.

As the two most populous nations on Earth, our combined actions will undoubtedly shape the trajectory of the 21st century. By working together, fostering cooperation, and prioritizing mutual understanding, India and China can demonstrate to the world that collaboration is always stronger and more sustainable than conflict. This isn’t just about diplomacy between governments; it’s about people-to-people connections, about students like me learning in each other’s countries, about artists and scientists sharing ideas, and about the everyday friendships that form across cultural divides.

At 12 years old, I am still in the early stages of understanding these grand concepts. Yet, I am convinced that they hold immense power. They are a hopeful reminder that despite our differences, we can respect our shared history and see the world not as a collection of isolated nations, but as one interconnected family. This perspective allows us to work toward a brighter, more harmonious destiny for everyone, a future where the ancient wisdom of our ancestors guides us toward a world of peace and shared prosperity. I believe

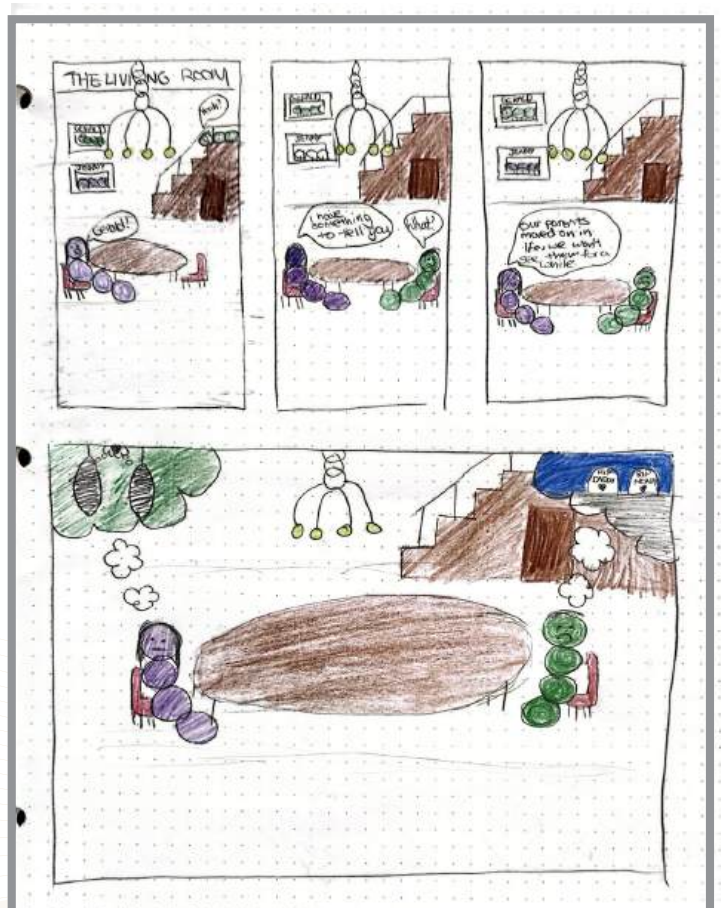
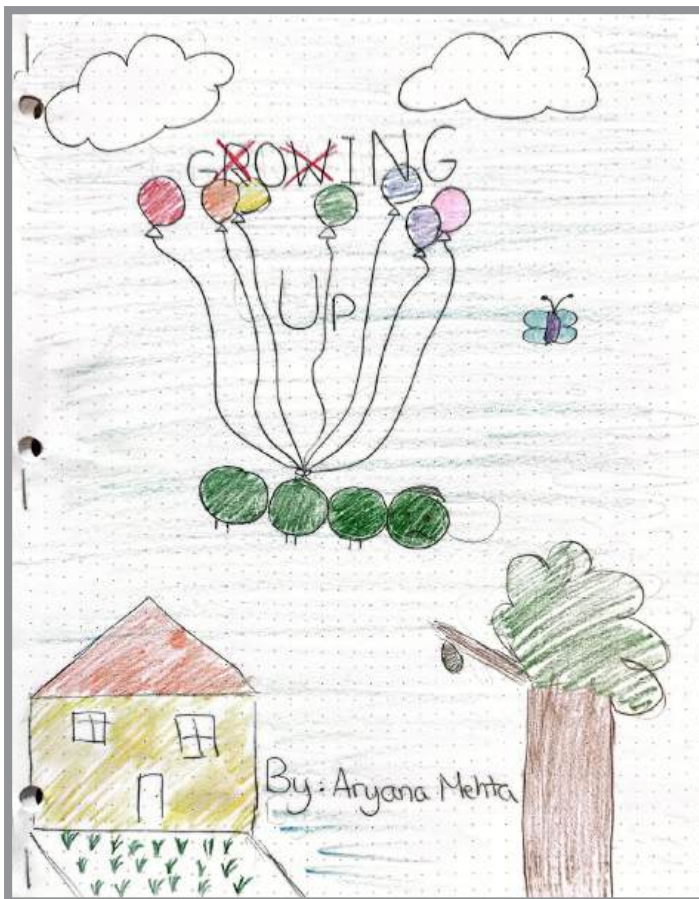




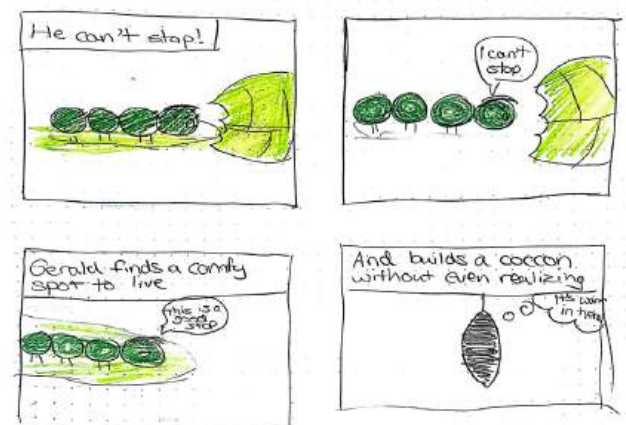
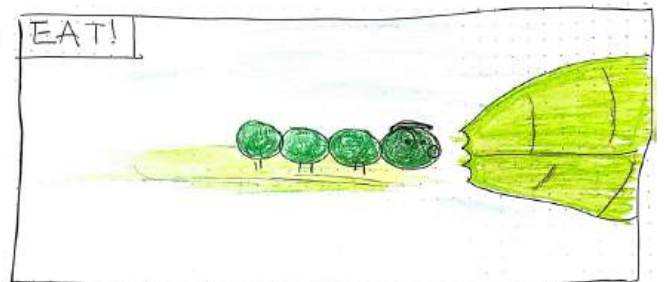
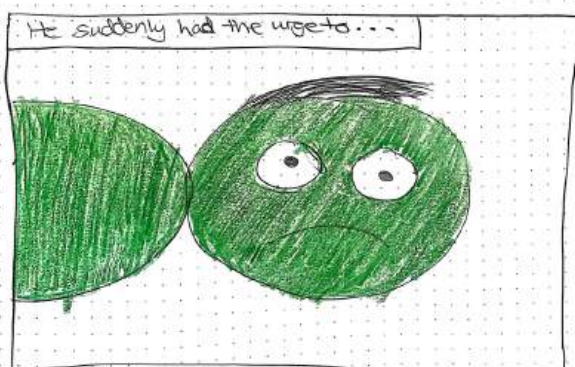
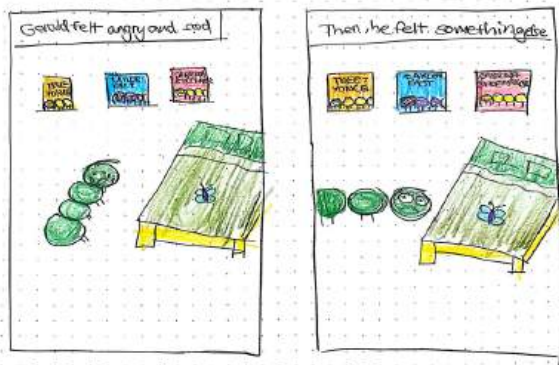
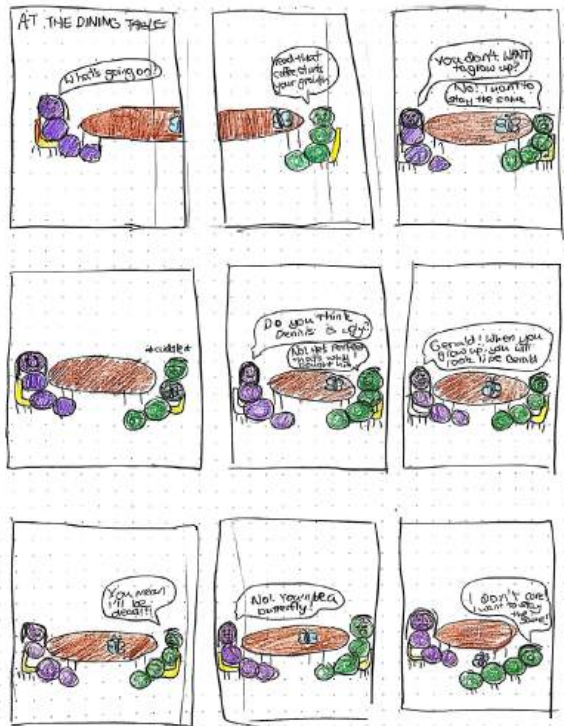
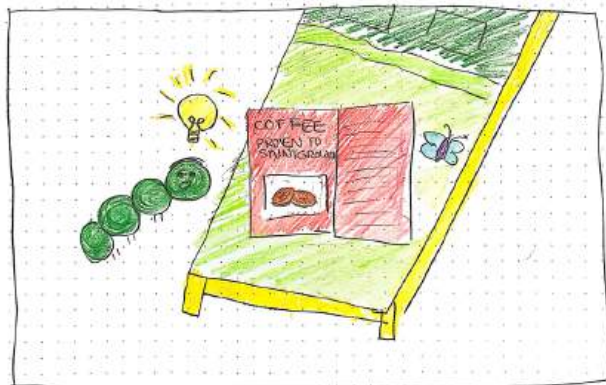
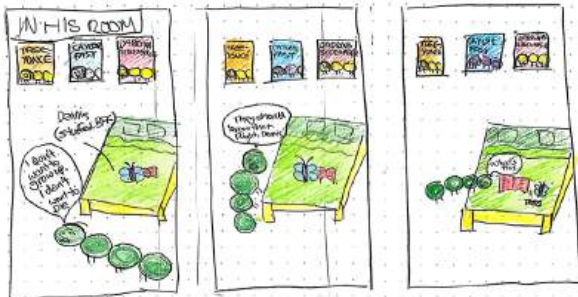
## About Me

Aryana is 6th grade student who was born on Shanghai and spent most of her life in Shanghai have recently moved to Washington DC where she is going to school at Holton Arms in Bethesda Maryland. She loves music and plays trumpet in the school band. She enjoys listing to Taylor swift Tate McRae and Olivia Rodriguez. She also enjoyed flag football, volleyball and swimming.

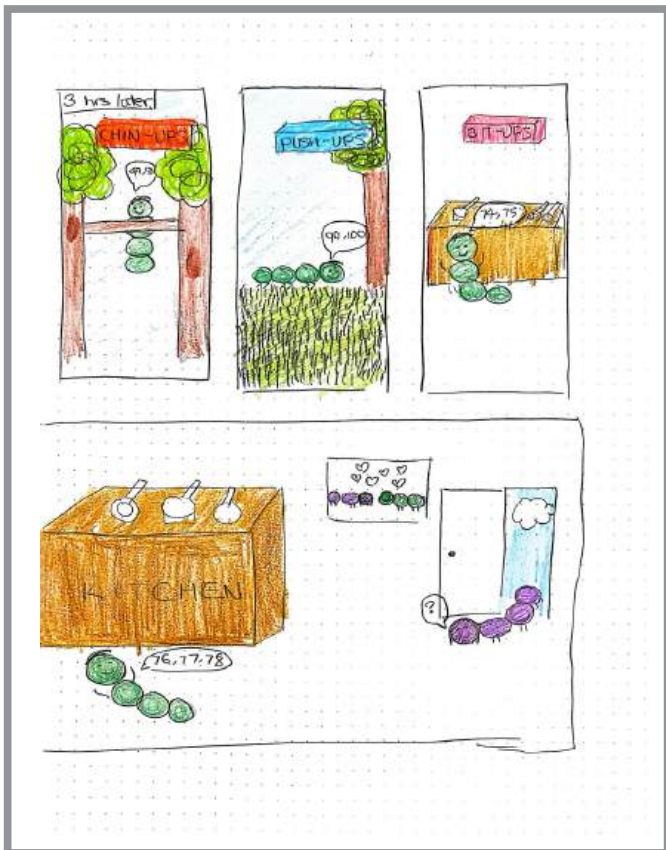
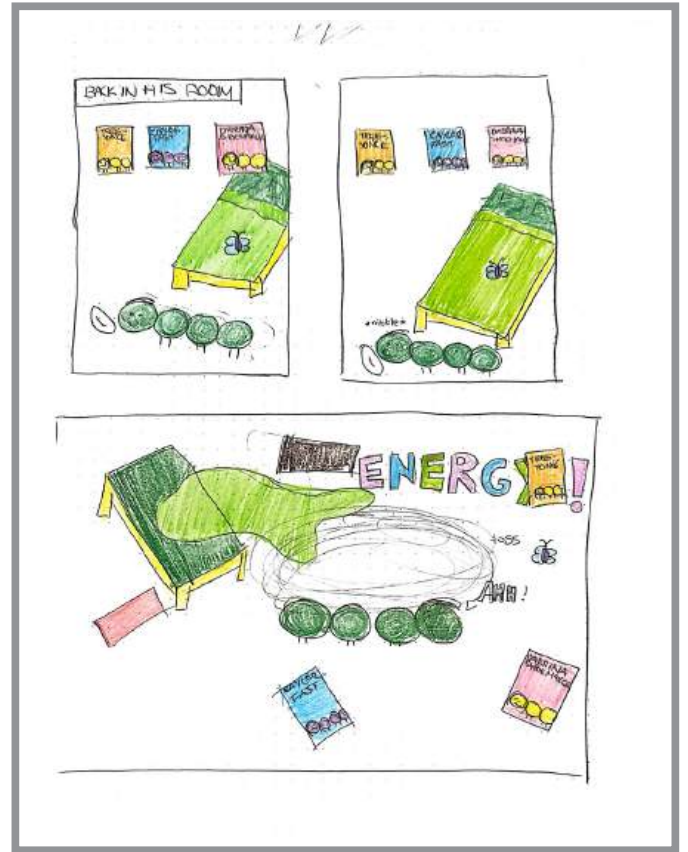
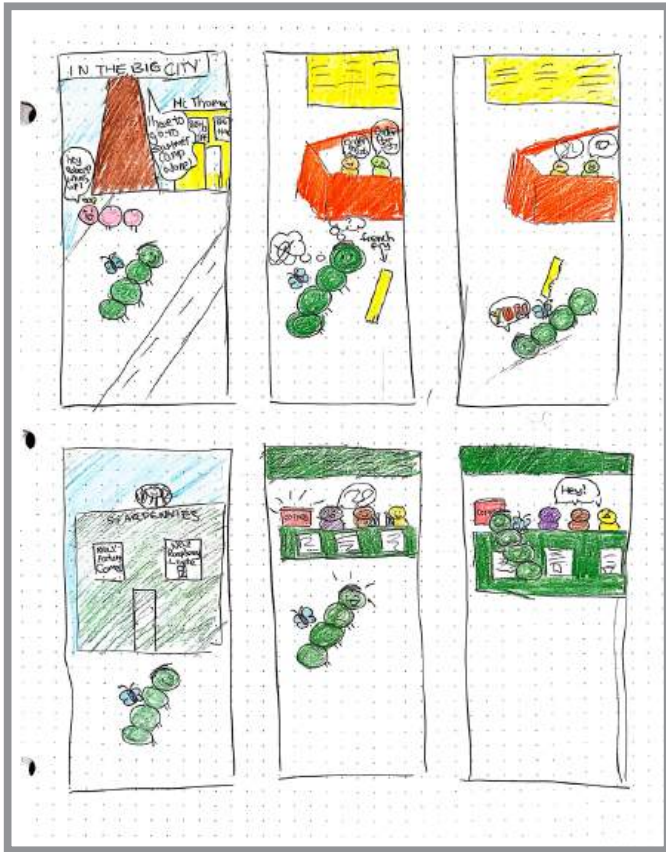
## Aryana Mehta















## About Me

Ayanaa Balabaskar is 12 years old and studies in Grade 7 at SLAS. She loves sports and reading. Her favorite subject is history, and she loves journalism.

## Ayanaa Balabaskar







## About Me

Eashan Bodhale is currently in Year 10 (Grade 9) at Nord Anglia International School (NAIS). He is a curious and driven individual with a passion for public speaking, business, and technology, always eager to learn and innovate. Eashan thrives in analytical and leadership pursuits, from robotics and computer science to Model United Nations, where he enjoys debating and representing complex global issues. In his free time, he also loves to play sports such as volleyball, badminton, and football.

## Eashan Bodhale

### India as a Tourism Destination

Today, I invite you on a captivating journey through India's diverse tapestry, where culture, tradition, and beauty intertwine seamlessly.

India's tourism is a masterpiece, catering to both domestic and international travellers. From the majestic Himalayas to God's serene beaches, we offer experiences for every taste. Whether it's the spiritual allure of Varanasi or the adventurous trails of the Western Ghats, India beckons with a rich array of experiences.

Beyond landscapes, India is a living kaleidoscope of people, boasting the largest diversity of colours, cultures, and cuisines. Unique traditions, like varying wedding ceremonies from province to province, showcase the depth of our heritage.

Now, let's touch on the numbers. Despite the challenges of recent years, India's tourism has shown remarkable resilience, welcoming 6.2 million foreign tourists in 2022, a growth rate of 307.9% compared to 2021. Projections indicate a promising 12% Compound Annual Growth Rate

(CAGR) from 2022 to 2027, reinforcing India's global standing in the tourism landscape.

India, a medical tourism leader, draws 2 million patients yearly from 78 countries. The industry, valued at USD 7.69 billion in 2024, is projected to reach USD 14.31 billion by 2029, exhibiting a strong 13.23% CAGR. Despite pandemic challenges, a 20% growth rate is expected from 2023 to 2027, reinforcing India's status as the 10th global destination for medical tourism.

To enhance inbound tourism, proposed actions include intensified marketing of India's diverse attractions, streamlining visa processes for smoother entry, and investing in infrastructure development for a seamless travel experience.

"Atithi Devo Bhava," a profound principle in Indian culture, translates to "The guest is God." This

encapsulates the essence of treating guests as divine, emphasising unwavering respect and hospitality in Indian culture, fostering a welcoming atmosphere for every visitor.

As we promote tourism, safety, ease of travel, and cleanliness remain paramount. Initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan underscore our commitment to providing visitors with a pristine and secure environment.

In conclusion, India stands as a subcontinent of unparalleled diversity, a destination where history echoes in every step, visual feasts abound, and cultural revelations unfold. Let's embrace India's vibrant tapestry, guided by the philosophy of "Atithi Devo Bhava," and extend a warm welcome for the world to explore the wonders our incredible nation offers, we encapsulate this journey with the tagline, 'Timeless India: Cultural Charisma.'







**Eashan Bodhale**

## My TEDx Talk Experience

When I first found out I was going to give a TED Talk, I felt a whirlwind of emotions: excitement, nervousness, and even a bit of disbelief. This wasn't just another school presentation where you stand in front of classmates and read off some notes. This was bigger. It was a chance to step onto a stage, stand on the iconic red TED circle, and share a piece of my heart with an audience who had come to listen and hopefully connect. My chosen topic, "What I Learnt From The People Around Me," felt deeply personal. It was more than just a subject to speak about; it was a reflection of my journey, my growth, and the silent yet powerful influence of the people who shaped me. I wanted to highlight how family, friends, teachers, and even strangers can leave lasting imprints on who we are, often in ways we don't immediately recognise.

The trip itself felt like part of the adventure. From the very beginning, there was a buzz in the air. As we travelled together, everyone seemed to carry their own mixture of excitement and anxiety. We shared nervous laughs, went over our speeches again and again, and exchanged encouragement. In those moments, I realised that although each of us had a different story to tell, we were united by the same dream: to inspire, to connect, and to leave our audience with something valuable. For me, I kept reminding myself that it wasn't just about what I wanted to say. It was about how I wanted people



to feel when they left the room. I wanted them to walk away reflecting on the people in their own lives, thinking about the unseen ways they had been shaped by love, kindness, challenges, and even chance encounters.

When we arrived at the venue, the reality of the event truly hit me. The space was breathtaking, the stage lit up with bright lights, the microphone ready, and that iconic TED red circle staring back at me from the floor. Seeing it in person sent a shiver down my spine. Backstage, the energy was electrifying. Speakers whispered their speeches under their breath, some pacing nervously while others sat in quiet focus. We exchanged smiles, last-minute words of encouragement, and small jokes to calm the tension. It was a strange mix of nerves and unity; we were all in this together.

Finally, my moment arrived. As I stepped onto the stage, time seemed to slow down. The stage lights were so bright they blurred the audience into a sea of shadows, but I could feel their presence. My heartbeat was loud in my ears, but as soon as I began speaking, something shifted. My nervousness slowly melted into confidence. I let myself sink into the stories I had prepared: stories of people who had inspired me, challenged me, and lifted me when I needed it most. I spoke about family members who taught me resilience, friends who taught me loyalty, teachers who believed in me, and even strangers whose small acts of kindness left an impact.

As I continued, I noticed something magical. I could see heads nodding. I caught glimpses of smiles. I felt the audience leaning in, connecting with my words. That was the moment I knew I wasn't just giving a

talk; I was creating a shared experience. I was sparking memories in people's minds about the ones who had touched their lives, and that was exactly what I had hoped to achieve.

When my final words left my lips, the applause erupted. It wasn't just a polite round of claps; it felt warm, genuine, and powerful. The applause wasn't for me alone; it was for the message, for the reminder that we are all shaped by the people around us. After stepping off the stage, I was overwhelmed when audience members approached me. Some shared stories of their own—stories of parents, friends, and mentors who had changed their paths. In that moment, I felt like my words had done exactly what I wished: opened the door to connection and reflection.

The rest of the trip was just as memorable. My fellow speakers and I bonded even more. We shared meals, laughed over inside jokes, explored new places, and most importantly, reflected on what we had learned from one another's talks. Hearing their ideas and stories made me realise just how powerful it is when people allow themselves to be vulnerable and open. Each talk carried its own message, its own spark, and together, they created something unforgettable.

Looking back, this TED Talk was so much more than just a speech. It was a journey of self-discovery and growth. I learned the importance of preparation—the hours spent rehearsing, refining, and reflecting were worth it. I discovered the courage it takes to stand on stage and be vulnerable, to speak not just with your voice but with your heart. And most importantly, I felt the true power of community: the way people around us shape us, encourage us, and help us see who we are meant to become.

For me, this TED Talk will always be more than a memory. It was proof that words can spark connections, that stories can bridge differences, and that honouring the people who influence us is one of the greatest gifts we can give.





## About Me

Krishna Agarwal is a qualified lawyer in India and recently completed her LLM from the University of Cambridge, focusing on the Global South perspectives of International Law and the interface of law, technology, and society. She strives to bring a resilient, interdisciplinary approach to addressing complex global challenges with integrity and a commitment to meaningful impact.

## Krishna Agarwal

**Quietly I am  
leaving with  
Reflections; As  
Quietly I Came**

My study of International Law at Cambridge was premised on the sovereignty of states. However, my personal reflections on my time in China have led me to question this very foundation. Where conventional international law is built upon the concepts of territoriality and a strict conception of state sovereignty, I see these ideas being transcended by the human values of friendship, grit, humanity, family, and faith. The evidence for these values is countless, but I would like to share a few specific ones.

My first reflection is on friendship. I had a very good friend at Cambridge from China, and we became friends not by exchanging numbers or connecting on social media, but simply by passing each other smiles while walking to our accommodation. It revealed to me that human emotions are what truly bond people, more than technology or nationality. Here in China, I have been fortunate to form meaningful relationships in a very short time. One colleague was incredibly helpful in managing all my logistics: from helping me with a

mobile SIM card to finalising my accommodation, she was continuously there for me. I hardly feel that I have known her for only 15 days; instead, it feels like a bond of ages.

The vibes of the city also remind me of home. At 5 a.m., the city is bustling not with traffic noise but with people practicing tai-chi. It is always a delight to see and experience this culture, with the gentle smiles shared among the people. Walking along the Huangpu River gives me hope and provides a sense of stillness—watching the water keep flowing with time, yet remain still from within. This speaks to me: life should be lived not like stagnant water, but with a core of faith and acceptance. While contemplating these thoughts by the river, a Chinese person came to me and pointed out Zhai Mo's sailboat. Through the Apple Translate App, he shared the story of Zhai Mo, who sailed that very boat across the Arctic Ocean. It seems that if not language, then the desire to live life to the fullest is what unites us all.

Interestingly, that voyage aimed to call attention to climate change—a crisis not just for India and China, but for the entire planet. Uniting personal aspiration with a global concern is perhaps what Zhai Mo embodies: when faced with a problem, the best thing is not to be caught in the psychology of struggle, but to simply press on and work out a practical solution. This abstract observation gives me peace and hope that things can fall

into place if one concentrates on the work to be done. This is not a new lesson, but one articulated by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, reminding everyone to focus on their duty and not on the results.

To me, this place also gives hope for the creation of a better world, not only because of its infrastructure but mostly because of the kindness among its people. A few days ago, when I hurt myself and was bleeding, it was the kindness of a stranger that made me feel at home. She was so caring, holding my hand and affectionately cleaning the blood from my face and clothes. In that moment, all I could see in her was a fellow human, and perhaps she saw the same in me. Despite studying international law and its doctrine of sovereignty, the concept seemed mythical when I could feel that the other person was simply human, not a citizen of a different state. This example reminded me of the profound concept of humanity.

This concept of humanity was also evident when I saw people enjoying their family life in the evening on the streets. It feels as though people here care about others more than they care about themselves. I remember one day a Chinese family introduced their child to me; it reminded me of the love I have for my own parents. It would be unfair if I did not mention the immense care and concern of the Indian community I have been fortunate to meet here, who took care of me as if I were their own daughter—something for which I will



always be thankful.

Another thing that caught my attention was learning of people's immense faith in something bigger than themselves. The story of the worship of the dragon fascinated me, a belief that some felt helped in the construction of a bridge. A similar intensity of faith can be felt in Indian temples or the Gurudwara in China, which allows you to connect with your own self. This adherence to something greater probably provides the peace that my colleague described experiencing during her visit to the Great Wall of China, a place I desperately look forward to visiting. In fact, this faith is something that allowed me to combat my fears. My father once told me a story explaining how the sky, which is blue in colour, denotes the colour of God Vishnu in Indian mythology. Stepping outside the airport, the blue sky of Shanghai with clouds caught my attention, providing me with faith and courage to tread forward.

These personal reflections will keep growing, but this has been a learning experience for me: to understand that if we look closely, there are far more things to unite us than to divide us. Perhaps new scholars of international law should focus on this very idea to cultivate a more peaceful world—a true Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

I read Xu Zhimo's poem at King's College, University of Cambridge, more specifically the lines—"Quietly I am leaving, Quietly as I came"—he wrote to bid an affectionate goodbye to Cambridge. For me, perhaps I will use these impactful words for China when the time comes to depart, to softly bid adieu to this place, without disturbing its calmness.



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## About Me

Mahika Dasri is an 13-year-old who resides in Pudong, Shanghai. She is a student at SUIS (Shanghai United International School) Kangqiao Campus. Mahika is the proud owner of two pet dogs named Muffin and Cookie. She has been dedicatedly learning an Indian classical dance called Kuchipudi for 8-9 years now, showcasing her passion for the art form. In her leisure time, Mahika enjoys both listening to music and dancing herself.

## Mahika Dasri

### Two Rivers from One Mountain

Two Rivers from One Mountain  
Imagine a Chinese pilgrim studying at Nalanda University, or a Silk Road caravan carrying both silk and scriptures. The two countries that pop into your mind will undoubtedly be India and China, which are the two countries I will talk about today. These two countries are the world's oldest civilizations, developed in relative isolation, yet have still found a way to be deeply connected. Today, I will explore this shared space in spirituality, art, and mindsets, and how it led these individual countries to have such unique yet similar cultures.

#### A Spiritual Path — One Quest, Different Paths

The core ideas of karma, mindfulness, and liberation from suffering resonate in both cultures, making this a profound shared foundation. Something people tend to get confused about is that they assume China adopted Buddhism, whereas they actually adapted it. An example would be Chan (also known as Zen in Japan), a Chinese school of Buddhism that emphasizes meditation, direct insight into one's

true nature, and enlightenment through personal experience rather than scriptural study.

While Indian Buddhism focused on scholarly debate and complex theories, Chinese Chan Buddhism simplified these ideas to emphasize meditation, everyday wisdom, and living in harmony with nature, showing the influence of China's own Daoist and Confucian traditions. This shows that even during ancient times, both these cultures were able to synthesize and adapt—something they undoubtedly are still capable of.

### The Exchange of Worldly Wisdom — Science, Cuisine, and Material Culture

Beyond the spiritual realm, the cross-cultural flow of technology, goods, and knowledge fundamentally enhanced daily life in both civilizations, creating subtle but enduring connections.

An example of this would be the gift of tea, silk, porcelain, and paper technology from China to India. The usage of the word chini for sugar in Indian languages is also a perfect example of cultural absorption.

Vice versa, the transmission of Indian mathematics (including the decimal system), astronomy, and medicinal knowledge (Ayurvedic concepts) to China—sending not material things, but valuable knowledge—shows that it wasn't a

one-sided relationship: both sides had mutual respect and built a relationship on practical enrichment.

### An Inheritance of Hope

To conclude, their "similar yet different" nature is not a source of conflict but a testament to a long and successful history of culture. They are like two siblings who took the family's main values and applied them in their own unique ways. Understanding this shared past is key to a more harmonious future. By focusing on their demonstrated history of cultural exchange and mutual influence, both nations have a pre-existing foundation for cooperation and mutual respect that is far older and more powerful than any border dispute. I hope that both countries can grow stronger, preferably together, and that we get to experience more exciting and encouraging affairs involving both.

Thank you for reading my article, and I hope you have gained a wealth of knowledge from it!





## About Me

Mahim Jana is a male artist and a PhD researcher in his second year at Donghua University. He combines his artistic practice with academic inquiry, exploring creative and scholarly perspectives in his work.

## Mahim Jana

### Work – How I Learned the Chinese Language

**Material: Cotton cloth (100 meters)**

**Process: Handwritten discharge process with an electric iron**

**Year: 2021–23**

### Concept

There is no limitation to an artist's imagination in the twenty-first century. As most artists take inspiration from their surroundings and personal life, so have I. After I came to China, I got the opportunity to learn Chinese, which is an ancient language and is also considered one of the most complex languages in the world. Even during the Han Dynasty (200 BC–200 AD), many Sanskrit concepts from India were translated and integrated into the Chinese language because of Buddhism. Around 200 AD, approximately 37,000 conceptual or expressive words entered the Chinese language. In the 6th century, during the Tang Dynasty, around 25,000 more words were added, and by 900 AD, several thousand additional Sanskrit-derived concepts were introduced.

Initially, the Chinese language was quite limited and lacked a large

vocabulary for expressing various ideas. Gradually, characters combined over time, leading to linguistic evolution. As a result, Indian cultural impacts and certain concepts have similarities with some Indian languages within Chinese. The words used to write and speak this language sound as beautiful as they look visually. The experience of learning this language was almost like being enchanted by a magician.

This 100-meter-long work of mine is a portrayal of this experience, along with the effect of this language on my daily life and my days spent immersed in the Chinese lifestyle. This work shows all the steps and stages through which I have learned this language and how I am constantly practicing to improve my knowledge. In the work, I have included the markings and strike-out portions from my answer sheets of each of my Chinese language examinations. I have included my mistakes, as I think they are an important step in learning and practicing anything new. In my opinion, showing the errors is more important than omitting them in order to present a clean, beautiful appearance in the artwork.

The length of the work symbolizes the length of time one needs to accumulate a new practice within oneself. The journey of learning a language as complex as Chinese isn't restricted to one day or one year—it continues, often for a lifetime. My Chinese teacher has

told me that even retired professors are still learning the riches of this language in the dusk of their lives. It has been only a few years of learning for me, and I hope to continue my journey for a long time. Similarly, the long piece of cloth in my work reflects this long process of learning. The color red is considered a symbol of happiness and beginnings in Chinese culture. In Hindu and Indian culture, red symbolizes passion, love, energy, and power. Through this color, I could unite my artistic notions with my Indian roots, along with the new culture that I am happily learning and applying to my everyday lifestyle.

### Process

I dedicated more than one year to accomplishing this work. Starting from dyeing the textile to the final finishing, everything was done by myself without any mechanical help. I used the discharge process to place the letters on the piece of cloth. In this technique, a particular chemical is applied to cotton clothes; when put under a specific temperature, it discharges color from the marked portion of the textile. I had applied this technique earlier in my student days in India, and after conceiving the idea for this work, I also conducted some experiments on a small scale to check if what I envisioned could actually be translated into materials.

### Inspiration



During my bachelor's degree in India, our teachers had shown us slides of monumental Chinese paintings and scrolls in our Far Eastern art theory classes. But the experience of looking at those gigantic works standing right in front of them was a completely different experience altogether. That golden opportunity came to me during a college trip in 2019 (Yangzhou, China), when I stood in awe in front of a 50-foot-long scroll painting. The massive size and the overwhelming sensation of such large-scale works inspired me to try something new.

My practice of learning the Chinese language has been continuing since 2019, and concentrating on learning such a vast and complicated language has taken away time from my practice as an artist. In this situation, the idea came to me to convert my experience of learning a new language into a piece of art. Slowly, I started planning and made time to begin this work. I have learned a new pictorial as well as verbal language







**Mahim Jana**

## Golden Horizons: Women in the Art and Society in Tang- Gupta dynasty

Hidden in the rock-cut caves of Ajanta and on silk scrolls from the Tang dynasty in China are depictions that document something extraordinary: two faraway civilizations celebrating female beauty and social power, doing so in a manner that would emphasize later ages. These cultural jewels tell an intriguing tale about societies where women had freedoms that history tends to forget.

The 5th to 9th centuries were a time of extraordinary culture in India and China, lower than in Europe, during the Gupta period from around 300 AD to 550 AD, and the Tang Dynasty in China from 600 AD to 900 AD. If one looks at their art and societal structure, something remarkable jumps out: in both concepts, the two societies advanced radically in relation to women and the liberal mindset of that time scenario.

### The Connection of eastern india where Two Cultures Met with each other -

The extent of the Gupta Empire was not limited to Magadha. The early control of the court over Northern India was shown by archaeological evidence in Bihar discovered in 1953.

In verse inscriptions, his name is written as 'Śrī Gurparvānāditya.' But it's in the eastern part of India, the ancient Bengal port city (Tamralipta), the link, that we find the most intriguing aspect of cross-cultural interaction between China and India.

Key evidence of this relationship is provided by the Chinese Buddhist monk Yijing (义净, 635-713 CE) in his works of the 7th century CE. He related the story of King Che-li-ki-to—whom he identifies with the founder of the Shri Gupta dynasty—and a temple built by him for Chinese pilgrims at Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no which was forty yojanas east of Nalanda in Bengal. This was not simply religious diplomacy but evidence of entrenched cultural contact that would have a far-reaching effect on both civilizations.

The great translation project of India to China, dating from 67 CE to 800 CE, resulted in 185 major translators and approximately a total of 2,412 translated sutras being translated into Chinese. Late scholar-monks such as An Shigao (安世高), Dao'an (道安), Kumarajiva (鸠摩罗什), Faxian (法显), and the like built linguistic bridges between Sanskrit and Chinese to translate Buddhist texts into the latter, enabling widespread dissemination of Buddhist teachings. Not long after its dawn, Chinese intellectual Liang Qichao (梁启超, 1873-1929) noted how this movement of translation changed the very fabric of the Chinese language and "increased its vocabulary by more than thirty-five thousand words, making a great contribution to the development" of literary expression.

Chinese pilgrims and scholars who visited India during the Gupta period found that women were a part of intellectual and cultural life. Their (Sassanian) observations,

mediated through this rich tradition of linguistic and cultural exchange, may well have impacted perceptions during the Tang dynasty in China regarding satisfactory behavior and apparel among women as both cultures developed along these parallel lines.

### Gupta dynasty : art and Cultural Legacies

Cave paintings at Ajanta, made between the early Mourjo/Mauryan Empire (2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE) and the late Gupta Empire (6th century CE), with its most beautiful murals occurring in the 5th century Gupta period, have perhaps some of the most remarkable evidence for the high status of women in ancient India. These are not just decorative motifs; they make powerful statements about the sacredness of feminine beauty and social status.

**Cave 1**, which is beautifully painted in the fifth century, features murals of women at different stages of their dressing and undressing. The women are also depicted with bare upper bodies as a further example of the representation of their attire, showing but not hiding them, leaving no doubt about their dignity and grace. Which is why the art historian Walter Spink, who spent 60 years studying Ajanta, observed that these paintings "revolutionized our understanding" of how ancient Indians had viewed feminine beauty and social duty.

**Image description for Cave 1:** Female attendants are displayed in a more possessive way, richly ornamented in lower garments and jewelry around armlets and ankle clasps, looking confidently out of the panel in a painting executed with sophisticated ochre and natural pigment with varieties of color tones on dark rock walls.





Mahajanaka Jataka Scene, 4.0 m × 3.7 m (west corridor wall) Tempera technique

At Ajanta's Cave 1, an extraordinary representation of the fifth century renders us astonishingly close to royal life. This mural, influenced by Buddhist Jataka tales, depicts kings and queens with attendants gliding through their courtly realm with the kind of unaffected grace that lives on through centuries.

These cave paintings testify to precious insights into the world of unrestrained personal expression, a time when women used to dress as they wanted and to Mahajanaka Jataka Scene, 4.0 m × 3.7 m (west corridor wall) Tempera technique accessorize as much as possible rather than challenge what it means for society's cultural framework to have a moral foundation.



Mahajanaka Jataka Scene, cave 1, 5.5 m × 3.0 m (right corridor wall), Tempera technique, 5th century CE, Gupta–Vakataka patronage

The art historian Stella Kramrisch, the author of a classical study of Indian painting and sculpture, noted that the women's bodies in these Ajanta murals are "active agents in cosmic drama," that their forms are a celebration rather than an expression of divine energy, and that their sensuality is an offering, not a temptation. The uniform artistic rendering indicates a culture in which female sexuality was a

thing of reverence, rather than something to be hidden.

## Tang Dynasty : Silk Scrolls and Social Revolution

Meanwhile, in Tang China, parallel artistic traditions of boldly celebrating feminine beauty also developed scroll painting Court ladies preparing newly woven silk; Lady Guoguo's spring farewell by Zhang Xuan Aristocratic women and what the Chinese would later consider scandalous fashion.

These pictures are just a few of those that reveal bare shoulders, low necklines, and tight-fitting dresses that highlight the daylife and female representation. Those highwaisted skirts and short jackets made silhouettes that were an homage to the female body as an aesthetic model.



Court ladies preparing newly woven silk, Zhang Xuan, Tang Dynasty (the existing copy is from the Song Dynasty) Height: 37.2 cm, Width: 147.7 cm

Zhou Fang's "Court Ladies Adorning Their Hair With Flowers" carries the celebration one step further, displaying women whom we can imagine thinking and feeling. (Each figure reveals a faint psychological depth, which made it clear that artists were beginning to acknowledge women as full human beings who should be taken seriously and not simply treated.

Zhou Fang was the master of Image Description: 6 women standing against a fence, all wearing flowers in their hair and wearing silk, showing their shoulders and chest, some with contemplative expressions, others with pleading expressions, entreating game; two women are followed by dogs, which are playfully nipping at bits of food on the ground beside them.



Painting of a Lady with a Flower in Her Hairpin, by Zhou Fang, Tang Dynasty, color on silk, 46.5 cm x 180.8 cm

These artistic representations reveal the social structure of their time, where women expressed individual identity and personal freedom. Compared to Indian cave paintings, while Chinese artworks show more body coverage, this doesn't necessarily indicate one society was more restrictive than another.

During the 5th century, social norms and intellectual perspectives expanded considerably, creating broader acceptance of diverse expressions. Through these artworks, we can observe not only women's societal positions but also their active roles and the significance of their clothing choices. The costume styles depicted demonstrate how fashion served as a language of social communication, reflecting both personal agency and cultural values of the era.



## The Economics of Liberation

Both empires experienced the greatest prosperity across the historical time period, and it went well for women. The Gupta Empire was important for trade along the Indian Ocean and controlled tax routes from India to West Asia, as well as some land trade through Central Asia to China. Tang Dynasty China had control over Silk Road trade routes with Persia, Mesopotamia, and the Islamic world. And before that, the *Periplus* and the *Artian Sea Journey* book mention the connection with the Indian trade route in the 1st century AD. This wealth enabled aristocratic families to provide education for not only boys daughters are freely accessing those resources, and the society is getting reformed and more open in terms of femininity.

International exchange not only created wealth. Cosmopolitan cities such as Chang'an and Pataliputra expanded the restrictive norms placed on women. The historian R.S. Sharma observed of the age that the religio-cultural climate created by the Guptas allowed "the development of different forms of erotic life and a diversity of its formulation."

In writing of Ajanta, William Dalrymple has gone so far as to say that the caves constitute "probably the greatest picture gallery to survive from the ancient world," and he assured his readers that this artistic triumph was not an isolated achievement but reflected greater social sophistication, such as a "high status for women."

## Religious and Philosophical Foundations

Comparative historical context Both societies also had traditions that glorified the feminine principle. The age of the Guptas in India saw the rise of the widespread Divine Mother—Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati—as manifestations of cosmic force. In caves, these archetypes were etched into rock, where sacred spaces were formed to

honor the feminine energy instead of fearing it.

Hindu texts of this period, such as Kalidasa's literary works, treated women as the intellectual and spiritual equals of men. Contrary to later misinterpretations, works such as the *Kamasutra* treated women as entitled partners who had the right to pleasure and respect within relationships."

Likewise, Chinese Daoist thought offered similar encouragement by stressing the need to balance yin and yang principles. Buddhism, which gained influence during the Tang dynasty, spread new ideological views on gender equality compared to other traditional religions at the time.

## Artistic Language and Social Communication

Dress in Ajanta paintings reflects an exquisite sense of costume as a vehicle of status. Women adorn themselves with intricately designed jewelry, edgy-top hairdos, and waist-essence attire that also exposes the belly button, all while preserving an elegant charm too. These costumes weren't for fun and games but a daily way of dress for women of status.

The earlier Cave 26, with its sleeping Buddha and attendants, portrays female devotees both scantily clad in disarrayed bodices, which allow their chaste bodies to be clearly delineated. The artistic take suggests that these were normal, not unprecedented, styles for women of their class.

Tang paintings are equally candid in their depiction of lifestyles and manners, along with manifest signs of wealth and education. The jade decorations, silks, and elaborate embroidery were a large financial commitment that implied not just family affluence but also cultural perception.

## Literary and Cultural Sophistication

The contemporary and later literature in Sanskrit considered the

canonization of its two great epics with their humanly active and mother goddesses, manifested as main representations who were good demonesses as well as unquiet wives. In Kalidasa's plays, especially his "*Shakuntala*," there were leading characters who could reason deeply and feel profoundly. These traditions influenced visual art, leading to the psychological realism found in cave paintings.

In the Tang, poetry developed comparable subtlety in its treatment of women's experience. Li Bai (李白, 701-762), Du Fu (712-770), and Bai Juyi (772-846) wrote with more sympathetic attention to the psychology of women than any previous poets. This tradition of the poetic inner life was, as literary scholar James Liu wrote, "a society that valued women's inner selves as a subject for serious artistic attention."

Linguistic developments in this period are also recorded in works such as Wei Chengsi's *Chinese Buddhist Culture* and illustrate how the principles that governed Sanskrit word formation inform Chinese. This creative intercultural exchange produced a new language of expressions for such emotional and spiritual complexities, which were reflected in poetry as well as painting.

It was through concepts such as *tath ā t ā* (真如, "suchness") and *dharmadhatu* (法界, "dharma realm") that the theoretical basis for forming an understanding of female spirituality was developed, which in turn fostered artistic representation.

## Global Context

Indian and Chinese women frolicked in cave paintings and court scrolls, Byzantine women were bound by increasingly tight Christian moral codes. The new Islam-centered power was establishing veiling and secluding practices.

Western European feudalism provided still less education and public experience for women. The difference is that the liberation in Gupta India and in Tang China occurred under certain conditions: economic prosperity, cultural self-confidence, religious tolerance,



and geographical ignorance.

When Yijing came from the Tang dynasty in China to South Bengal by sea through Southeast Asia, he arrived in a region where such conditions still prevailed. His meticulous records, such as those that have survived in “A Record of Buddhist Practices Sent Home from the Southern Sea” (南海寄归内法传), depict not only religious practices but also social customs like women’s clothing and manners. Such reports, back in Chang’an (长安), the capital of the Tang dynasty, would likely have confirmed attitudes about how women were to be treated and what was considered decent or indecent wear for women.

The influence flowed both ways. Chinese scholars, such as Chen Yinke (陈寅恪; 1890–1969) and Xu Dishan (许地山; 1893–1941), have shown that the Sanskrit language has an impact on the development of Chinese poetry through Tibetan Buddhism, which entered China via Chán Buddhism. The four-tone system might be related to the Vedic sacrifices, so that the tones in Chinese poems are a manner of recitation rather than singing. This inter-linguistic hybrid opened up new aesthetics that added complexity to the depiction of women in Tang literature and art.

### **Archaeological Evidence and Modern Understanding**

New findings are still uncovering how free women were during these times. Walter Spink’s sixty years of work at Ajanta, including the most comprehensive history of its paintings to date, is based on both text and pictorial evidence that depicts social reality, not ideological assertion.

According to Spink, the uniformity of the proportions for this semi-nude figure type – four are identified at Ajanta, and others occur in Ellora – and the similarity in form across different caves and ages indicate that it stood for general ideals rather than specific individuals. His work “revolutionized our understanding of the site, “showing how art recorded social reality.

Likewise, contemporary scholars such as Wu Hung (巫鸿) and Fu Xinian (傅熹年) have placed Tang paintings

within society, demonstrating that artistic reproductions functioned to record as well as project social views of proper female behavior. Their work, following up on earlier research by Chinese scholars, including Shen Congwen (沈从文), unpacks how these linguistic strides of the translation movement gave birth to a new language for identifying complex emotions observed in artistic depictions of women.

The contributions by modern working scholars such as Zhou Junxun (周军恂) on Wei-Jin period literature and Hu Chirui’s (胡炽瑞) comparative studies show how the Buddhist translation period revolutionized Chinese literary expression, creating a new vocabulary that cannot be reduced to Greek or Sanskrit equivalents. This repertoire of language for the depiction of human life made possible a more subtle artistic representation of women’s psychological depth and complexity, making a major contribution to the profound portraiture seen in Tang dynasty painting as well.

### **From Painted Queens to Silent Shadows**

Nor would either culture’s relative openness to women persist in the face of later developments. India itself went through invaders after invaders and conservative religious interpretations such as purdah and the prohibition of women’s participation in public life. The self-assured and sexually forward depictions of women in Gupta art became largely absent in later Indian traditions.

Chinese changes proved equally dramatic. The An Lushan Rebellion signaled a Tang decline, and later dynasties brought more intolerant policies. Foot binding by the Song Dynasty physically anchored women and symbolically tethered their subservience.

Political pressures for more closed gender practices, not inevitable changes in the structure of families and households, accounted for these transformations. The comparison with earlier epochs proves that the social position of women isn’t based on a sequence of constant cultural traditions but rather upon specific

historical conditions.

### **Contemporary Relevance**

The cases of Gupta India and Tang China contribute valuable insights to ongoing debates about gender equality. These civilizations show that it is possible for cultures to be culturally advanced and still maintain egalitarian attitudes toward gender constructs. From the simultaneous work of Professor Yu Longyu (余龙余) and Liu Chaohua (刘朝华) to the comprehensive works such as that by B.R. Deepak, we can see not only did women continue to enjoy a high status but also how linguistic and cultural exchange improved, rather than diluted, their condition.

The link between economic wealth, cultural transmission, and the status of women that is evident from these ancient civilizations still holds today. The Buddhist translation movement, which imported such figures as Lokakema (支婁迦讖), Yan Fodiao (严佛调), Zhiqian or Zhi Qian (支谦), Kang Senghui (康僧会), and Dharmarak into China, established an intellectual context for a more refined understanding of minds and spirituality within women. Countries that rise up economically while not losing faith in their culture tend to become attuned to women’s potential.

Most crucially, the artistic achievements of both cultures show what becomes attainable in societies that value women’s lived reality. One can still see the exuberant pathos and psychic texture of Ajanta paintings or Tang dynasty scroll paintings, for example, as cultural dividends generated when societies acknowledge that women are full-fledged humans.

### **Conclusion**

The art of Ajanta and the sophisticated court scrolls of Tang China stand as a living testament to an extraordinary historical moment when, simultaneously, two great civilizations realized that women’s beauty and intelligence indeed consolidated rather than threatened social order.

From the eastern part of India, especially the place called where



Chinese monks experienced imperial largesse, to the vibrant and busy streets of Chang'an, through which foreigners marveled at Tang-style women's fashion, these societies set templates for erotic life that would not be surpassed anywhere in the world until hundreds of years later.

More than works of art, the women painted in Ajanta caves and on Tang-silk scrolls look us straight in the eyes with expressions of confidence, seductiveness, or both; they are embodiment of socially real possibilities long gone. Their legacy reminds us that the battle for gender equality is not about imposing contemporary values on traditional societies, but about seizing back freedoms that were once taken for granted.

As we argue over the role of women in today's world, these early lessons provide both inspiration and practical guidance. They show us that real cultural sophistication means acknowledging human potential regardless of gender and that societies thrive when they allow rather than stifle the varied contributions of all their citizens.

The caves and scrolls still speak across the centuries, reminding us that today's struggles are part of a much longer conversation about human dignity, social organization, and the prerequisites for allowing each person to flourish and to contribute all that his or her gifts permit in service of humanity.







## About Me

Manisha is originally from Rohtak, Haryana, and has been living in Shanghai for the past two years with her husband and their 3.5-year-old daughter. While managing her home, she also pursues her passion as a professional Mehendi artist. Applying Mehendi has been close to her heart for years, and in Shanghai, she continues to share this traditional art by creating designs for festivals, community gatherings, and special occasions.

## Manisha Malik

### My Mehendi Journey in Shanghai

When I moved to Shanghai two years ago with my husband and daughter, I carried with me not only our family's belongings but also my love for Mehendi, the traditional art of henna. As a homemaker, Mehendi has always been a passion, but living in Shanghai gave me the opportunity to nurture it not only as a passion but also as a profession.

In Shanghai, Mehendi became a way to stay connected with my roots and the Indian community here. Festivals like Teej, Karvachauth, and Diwali felt more complete when I applied Mehendi for friends and family. It reminded us of home, of celebrations with loved ones, and of traditions that continue to bind us even when we live far away.

Most of my Mehendi experiences here have been with fellow Indians, and I've cherished those moments deeply. At the same time, I also had the opportunity to share Mehendi with Chinese friends during school fairs, markets, and Diwali stalls. Their curiosity—about the designs, the natural paste, and the tradition behind it—gave me a chance to talk about our culture. It was heartwarming to see how this simple

art could spark interest and appreciation across cultures.

For me, Mehendi in Shanghai is a beautiful blend of passion and profession—a way to spread joy: the joy of keeping traditions alive, the joy of seeing someone smile when they look at their hands, and the joy of being able to contribute something from India to this diverse city while also pursuing it as a business.

As I look back on these two years, I feel grateful that through Mehendi I could connect not only with my own community but also take small steps in sharing Indian culture with others. Just like the patterns of Mehendi weave together in harmony, our lives here in Shanghai are also shaped by threads of tradition, friendship, and shared experiences.

This year's theme, "India & China: Ancient Ties, Shared Destiny – The World as One Family," truly reflects what I experience through Mehendi. Our countries may have different histories and customs, but the values of beauty, celebration, and togetherness are shared. Through small exchanges—like applying Mehendi or explaining its significance to someone curious—we realize that art can make the world feel like one family.

As I look ahead, I feel excited to connect with more people from around the world—learning from their cultures while sharing the

timeless beauty of Indian Mehendi art, and in doing so, celebrating the spirit of one global family.







## Dr. Mita Sharma

### About Me

Dr. Mita, based in China, is an editor, columnist, freelance writer, and poet rooted in Hindustani culture. She holds a Doctorate in Management, with an engineering background, post-graduate studies in Psychology, and an MBA in HR. China President of Mahila Kavya Manch and Central Asia PLG, she is also a certified Yoga Instructor and Therapist specializing in Cancer Rehabilitation. A globetrotter who has visited 40 countries, she draws inspiration from art, music, nature, and introspection, and has published papers in national and international journals.

### The Hardest Love Language: Growing Up For Each Other

We all know the obvious love languages; words, touch, gifts, time. They make good Instagram captions and Valentine's cards. But there's one language no quiz or book seems to celebrate. It's not romantic, yet it saves more relationships than any bouquet or diamond ring.

It's the quiet decision to do the work on yourself.

Not just for your own peace of mind, but for the health of the bond you share.

#### Beyond "That's Just Who I Am"

It's tempting to shrug off criticism with a single line: that's just who I am. A temper, a sharp tongue, a habit of retreating when things get hard. It feels like self honesty, but more often it's a way of avoiding the mirror.

Real love is steady, durable love doesn't settle for excuses. It notices when words cut too deep, when yesterday's scars are staining today's joy. Then it mumbles the harder vow: I want to grow.

That vow doesn't sound poetic at the moment. It sounds like:

- I need to pause before I snap.
- I'll take responsibility for that tone.
- I see how my past is showing up here.

And slowly, quietly, it becomes the most romantic promise of all.

#### The Love That Doesn't Look Like Love

When we imagine love, we picture tenderness and warmth, maybe even a bit of fire. But love that grows looks plainer, like carpentry or gardening.

It looks like this:

- Catching yourself before sarcasm turns into cruelty.
- Apologizing in a way that repairs, not just clears your conscience.
- Sitting with your own discomfort long enough to break a cycle.
- Choosing therapy or journaling or prayer; not because you're broken, but because you want to show up whole.

It doesn't shine bright. It's plumbing, not chandeliers. But without plumbing, no house is livable. Without this work, no relationship survives its storms.

#### Why Growth Matters More Than Roses

Psychologists have long observed

that couples who survive decades together are not those who avoid conflict, but those who learn how to repair it. John Gottman, one of the most respected researchers on relationships, once said you can predict a marriage's survival not by how much people fight, but by whether they reach for each other after the fight.

Philosophers, centuries earlier, pointed to the same truth in different words. Aristotle wrote that virtues are built by habit. You become patient by practicing patience, kind by practicing kindness, loving by practicing love.

What this means is simple: growth is proof of love. The deepest I love you isn't the kiss, the roses, the handwritten note; it's the willingness to say, I will not let my rough edges keep cutting you.

#### The Gardener, The Instrument, The Sailor

Let me give you three images to hold.

- The Gardener. A gardener doesn't curse the soil for being dry. They water, weed, and wait. If the roses wilt, they prune and try again. That's what it means to choose growth: not perfection, but steady tending.
- The Instrument. A violin doesn't sound sweet on its own. The



- player tunes, practices, misses notes, adjusts again. In relationships, we are both instruments and musicians. If a string is out of tune, we fix it instead of blaming the melody.
- The Sailor. No sailor can stop the storm. But they can trim the sails, steady the rudder, and chart a safer course. Love doesn't demand perfect weather; it asks for better seamanship.

Each image carries the same truth: self-work is not optional decoration. It's survival.

### The Courage To Look Inward

Here's the hardest part. Growth demands self confrontation. And that is terrifying.

It means asking yourself questions you don't want to hear the answers to. Why do I withdraw when someone gets close? Why does criticism feel like an attack? Why do I use silence as punishment?

Psychology gives us names for these patterns: attachment wounds, defense mechanisms, learned behaviors. Philosophy strips the jargon down to its essence: these are the habits that shape your character. And if you never face them, they quietly shape your relationships too.

As the poet Rilke once wrote, "The only journey is the one within." When you take that journey, you don't just rescue yourself. You rescue the bond you share.

### How To Speak This Language

No need for a textbook. Start here.

1. Notice. Catch yourself in the act. Write down when and why you reacted. Awareness comes first.
2. Pause. Take a breath before you let the reflex fly. A single pause can rewrite an entire evening.
3. Repair. Don't wait for days. Own the hurt. Say what you'll do differently. Mean it.
4. Practice. Growth is not a one time apology. It's repetition. Muscles build with reps, not with intentions.

1. Repeat. Relationships are maintenance, not monuments. The work is never finished, and that's the point.

Think of it like piano practice. At first it's clumsy. Over time, your fingers remember the right keys.

### For Every Kind of Bond

This love language belongs everywhere:

- Parents and children. A father who apologizes instead of doubling down teaches more than lectures ever could.
- Friendships. Friends who repair after a careless remark build bonds that last decades.
- Workplaces. Colleagues who own mistakes rather than deflect blame create teams people trust
- Caregiving. Adult children learning patience with aging parents practice this love every day.

Everywhere humans connect, the same principle applies: we are worthy of relationships that grow instead of calcify.

### The Obstacles You Will Meet

Of course, it's not easy. You will meet resistance.

- "That's just who I am." A phrase that often means: I'm scared to change.
- Shame. When feedback feels unbearable, you'll want to hide. Self-compassion is the antidote.
- Unequal effort. Sometimes you'll do more of the work. That doesn't mean you should do it all.
- Old wounds. Trauma makes change harder. Therapy, community, or faith can hold what you cannot.

Every obstacle tells: stay the same. Love replies: try again.

### The Poetics of Repair

There is quiet poetry in repair. In the moment someone says, "I was wrong, and I will do better," the air shifts. A wound begins to close.

The Persian poet Rumi wrote, "The wound is the place where the Light

enters you." That is what repair does. It takes the wound and says, this will not be the end of us.

And when it's mutual, when two people decide to keep growing toward each other, the relationship becomes not just a partnership but a sanctuary.

### The Kind of Love That Lasts

Let's be honest. The thrill of infatuation fades. The flowers wilt. The music softens. But the love that grows doesn't depend on adrenaline. It depends on the roots.

It is the kind of love that can weather decades, grief, distance, and the messiness of being human. Because it is built on the daily courage to face yourself, to choose repair over excuse, to keep adjusting the sails.

You are worthy of that kind of love.

The kind that doesn't just thrill at the start, but lasts a lifetime.





**Dr. Mita Sharma**

## The Ancient Brain Reset: Rewiring Your Response to Stress with Vedic Wisdom

It starts with a flutter in the chest. A missed deadline, a sharp word from a boss, even a careless comment from a partner. Then, the heat rises to your cheeks. Your heart hammers against your ribs like a trapped bird. Thoughts scatter. Before you know it, words are tumbling out; sharp, defensive, and instantly regrettable, or you've shut down completely, retreating into a stony silence.

Later, the fog rolls in. You can't focus. The scene replays on a loop in your mind, feeding a cycle of shame and frustration. Your energy is sapped, that important project is now buried under a mountain of avoidance, and your brain feels wrapped in cotton wool.

If this feels like a personal account, it's because it's a universal human experience. But this isn't just a "bad day." Modern neuroscience has a name for it: Amygdala Hijack.

Coined by psychologist Daniel Goleman, this term describes a sudden, overwhelming emotional reaction that is disproportionate to the event that triggered it. It's a neurological coup. The amygdala, our

primal threat-detection alarm system, perceives danger; even a social threat like criticism or rejection, and seizes control. It floods the body with a cocktail of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, preparing us for fight, flight, or freeze. In doing so, it effectively shuts down the prefrontal cortex, the seat of our logical reasoning, conscious decision-making, and emotional regulation.

We don't respond; we react. And when this pattern repeats, it carves deep neural superhighways, making hijacks our default setting. The long-term cost is a familiar modern malaise: chronic overthinking, emotional burnout, paralyzing procrastination, and the mental cloudiness of brain fog.

So, how do we reclaim control? The answer, perhaps surprisingly, doesn't lie solely in modern therapy. It can be found in a profound system of understanding the human mind that is thousands of years old. The map to reverse this hijack is detailed in the timeless wisdom of the Vedas and, most systematically, in the Yoga Sutras of Maharishi Patanjali.

### Patanjali's Prescription: An Eight-Limbed Path for a Balanced Mind

The Yoga Sutras, a foundational text compiled by the sage Patanjali around 400 CE (though drawing from much older oral traditions), are far more than a guide to physical postures. They are a meticulous roadmap for mastering the fluctuations of the mind (chitta vritti nirodha). Patanjali's Eight-Limbed Path (Ashtanga Yoga) provides a sequential, and remarkably modern, protocol to calm the amygdala and strengthen the prefrontal cortex.

Let's walk this ancient path to find solutions for our modern predicament.

### **1. Yama and Niyama:** The Ethical Foundation (Preventing the Spark)

Before managing a hijack, we must reduce its frequency. The first two limbs, Yama (ethical restraints) and Niyama (personal observances), work on the subconscious level to minimize our perception of threat.

• **Ahimsa (Non-Violence):** While we understand this as not harming others, its most powerful application is often inward. The constant inner critic; "That was stupid," "I can't handle this" is a form of violence against the self. This negative self-talk is a constant, low-grade stressor that primes the amygdala for eruption. Practicing Ahimsa inwardly, offering ourselves compassion, creates a safer psychological environment. As clinical psychologist Dr. Kristin Neff's research on self-compassion confirms, this practice directly lowers cortisol levels and reduces anxiety.

• **Santosha (Contentment):** This Niyama is not passive resignation but an active choice to find peace regardless of external circumstances. A mind trained in Santosha is less likely to perceive a missed promotion or a critical comment as a catastrophic threat, thereby raising its threshold for an amygdala hijack. It fosters resilience.

• **Svadhya (Self-Study):** This involves studying sacred texts and, crucially, studying one's own patterns. By mindfully observing our triggers and reactions without judgment, a practice mirrored in modern Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), we begin to insert a critical gap between stimulus and response. In that gap lies our freedom.

### **2. Asana and Pranayama:** Regulating the Body to Calm the Mind (Aborting the Hijack)



When the hijack begins, it's a physiological event. The ancient seers understood this intimately. The tools of Asana (posture) and Pranayama (breath control) are direct levers we can pull to regain control.

#### • **The Science of the Vagus Nerve:**

The key link here is the vagus nerve, the command center of the parasympathetic nervous system, which acts as a brake on the stress response. Deep, diaphragmatic breathing; the very foundation of Pranayama, stimulates the vagus nerve, sending a powerful signal to the brain that the emergency is over. It slows the heart rate, lowers blood pressure, and halts the flood of stress hormones.

• Pranayama Practices:

• Nadi Shodhana (Alternate Nostril Breathing): A 2013 study published in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine found that this practice significantly reduces perceived stress and improves autonomic nervous system function. It balances the left and right hemispheres of the brain, fostering integration between the emotional (limbic) and logical (prefrontal) centers.

• **Brahmari (Bee Breath):** The humming exhale creates a vibration that further stimulates the vagus nerve. The sound and the intense focus required act as a powerful distraction, pulling your attention away from the trigger and back into the safety of your body.

• **Asana (Posture):** Holding a steady, comfortable posture (Sthira Sukham Asanam), especially a grounding one like Tadasana (Mountain Pose) or a restorative one like Balasana (Child's Pose), signals safety to the amygdala. Research from Harvard Business School professor Amy Cuddy on "power poses" aligns with this, showing that an upright, open

posture can reduce cortisol and increase confidence.

### **3. Pratyahara: Withdrawing the Senses (Creating Space)**

During a hijack, external stimuli; a tone of voice, a facial expression, fuel the internal fire. Pratyahara, the fifth limb, is the conscious withdrawal of the senses from the external world. It's not ignoring reality; it's temporarily turning inward to prevent sensory overload from amplifying the reaction.

It's the ancient, sophisticated version of "taking a breath." Instead of reacting, you close your eyes for a moment. You turn your attention inward to the rhythm of your breath or the sensations in your feet on the floor. This simple act of disengaging gives the prefrontal cortex a fighting chance to come back online.

### **4. Dharana and Dhyana: Training the Prefrontal Cortex (Rewiring the Brain)**

The final limbs (Dharana - concentration, Dhyana - meditation) are the long-term training program for the mind. They are the equivalent of weightlifting for the prefrontal cortex.

• Building the "Muscle" of Attention: A wandering mind, prone to overthinking and rumination, is a vulnerable mind. Dharana practice; focusing single-pointedly on a mantra, a flame, or the breath, strengthens the neural circuits responsible for sustained attention. This directly counteracts brain fog and procrastination.

• Meditation and Neuroplasticity: Groundbreaking work by neuroscientists like Dr. Sara Lazar at Harvard Medical School has demonstrated through fMRI scans that meditation (Dhyana) increases cortical thickness in the prefrontal cortex. This means a regular meditation practice literally builds

the part of your brain that inhibits the amygdala. It weakens the neural pathways of automatic reaction and strengthens the pathways of conscious response. It doesn't just help you during a hijack; it makes you less susceptible to them over time.

#### A Timeless Case Study: Arjuna's Hijack on the Battlefield

The Bhagavad Gita, a 700-verse Hindu scripture, is a brilliant dramatization of an amygdala hijack and its resolution. The warrior Arjuna, paralyzed by grief and ethical conflict on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, is in a profound freeze state. His prefrontal cortex is offline.

Lord Krishna's discourse is not abstract philosophy; it is a real-time therapeutic intervention. His counsel is a masterclass in applying the limbs of yoga: instructing Arjuna to be "steadfast in yoga" (Pranayama), to perform his duty without attachment to the outcome (Karma Yoga, integrating Santosha and Svadhyaya), and to fix his mind on the Supreme (Dharana).

#### Your Integrated Practice: From Ancient Wisdom to Modern Life

Reversing the amygdala hijack is a lifestyle shift, not a one-time trick. Here's a practical protocol, drawn from this ancient wisdom:

1. Morning Sanity (15-20 mins): Sit quietly. Practice 5 minutes of Nadi Shodhana, followed by 10 minutes of silent meditation, focusing on the breath. Set an intention to practice Ahimsa (self-compassion) throughout your day.

2. In-the-Moment Rescue (30 seconds): When you feel the hijack begin, S.T.O.P.

- Step back (physically or mentally).
- Take 3 deep Brahmari breaths (hum on the exhale).
- Observe the sensations in your body without judgment.



· Proceed consciously once the wave has passed.

3. Evening Reflection (5 mins): Journal briefly. Note what triggered you and how you reacted. This act of Svadhyaya reinforces new, healthier neural pathways.

The amygdala hijack is a part of our evolutionary design. But as the sages of old knew, we are not prisoners of our biology. Through the disciplined, science-backed application of this ancient technology of mind, we can undertake the most important journey: from reaction to response, from fog to clarity, and from burnout to resilient, conscious living.

### -Dr Mita Sharma

#### Inspiring Sources & Further Reading:

- Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional Intelligence.
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- Neff, K. (2011). Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself.
- Telles, S., et al. (2013). "Alternate-nostril yoga breathing and brain hemodynamics." Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine.
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**Dr. Mita Sharma**

## तुम अपने ही अवशेष हो

### तुम अपने ही अवशेष हो

इस कविता में आधुनिक जीवन की उस बेचैन गति पर प्रश्नचिह्न लगाया गया है, जो मनुष्य को आत्मविस्मृति की ओर धकेलती है। आज का युग दिखावे का है, जहाँ संवाद 'Content' बन चुका है और संबंध 'Network'। यह रचना एक आत्मचिंतन का आमंत्रण है, कि क्या हम वास्तव में जीवन जी रहे हैं या मात्र उसकी नकल कर रहे हैं?

“तुम अपने ही अवशेष हो” आधुनिकता के मुखौटों के बीच छिपी उस असली आत्मा की खोज है, जो भीड़ में खो गई है। यह कविता उपदेश नहीं है; यह एक दर्पण है। ऐसा दर्पण, जिसमें आप स्वयं को फिर से पहचान सकते हैं।

### तुम अपने ही अवशेष हो

इतना शीशे में झाँकने लगे हो, कि स्वयं की परछाई से भी अपरिचित हो चले हो।

दर्पण सत्य नहीं कहता अब, वो केवल तुम्हारी curated छवियों का संग्रह बन चुका है।

तुम्हारी हँसी अब अट्टालिकाओं में प्रतिध्वनित नहीं होती, बल्कि touch-screen पर टपकती है, emoji बनकर।

कभी विचार किया है कि ये जो productivity का पुजार है, वो अंततः मनुष्य को यंत्र बना देता है; स्मृति और संवेदना से विहीन।

‘रुको’, यह शब्द अब भाषा में ही बचा है, जीवन में नहीं। तुम्हारी गति मानवता की थकान बन गई है। दौड़ते-दौड़ते तुम सिर्फ लक्ष्य के पास पहुँचे हो, स्वयं के नहीं।

हर चर्चा अब performance है, हर मित्रता एक network, और हर संवाद एक संभावित post।

कहाँ हैं वे दिन, जब मौन में भी संवाद होता था? जब पड़ोसी का कुशलक्षेम status message नहीं, दरवाज़े की दस्तक से पूछा जाता था?

तुम्हारे digital अरण्य में वह पुराना जीवन अब विलुप्त ना कि sponsored ad से।

समय है कि तुम अपने भीतर उतर सको, जैसे तपस्वी उतरता है गहन ध्यान में, अविराम गति से मुक्त होकर।

स्मरण रखो, अभिनय में दक्ष होना आत्मा का अभिशाप बन सकता है। मुखौटे पहनते-पहनते मनुष्य एक क्षण ऐसा भी पाता है, जब उसे स्वयं का चेहरा भी पराया प्रतीत होता है।

आत्मा को trending बनने की आकांक्षा नहीं होती, वह तो शून्य में स्थिर रहकर सत्य की प्रतीक्षा करती है।

इसलिए धीरे चलो, शब्दों को बोलने से पहले अनुभूत करो, दृष्टि को चकाचौंध से हटा, दृश्य के मौन में उतरने दो।

साँस लो, जैसे ऋषि श्वास लेते थे। गहराई में, सादगी में, सजगता में।

और याद रखो, तुम्हारी worth तुम्हारी visibility नहीं है, तुम्हारी मौलिकता है।

—डॉ. मीता शर्मा





## About Me

Rashi Saravanan Mudaliar studies in Grade 11 at Shanghai Singapore International School.

## Rashi Saravanan Mudaliar

### Festivals of India

India is a land of festivals, where every season and every region brings with it a reason to celebrate. These festivals are not just about joy and gatherings; they carry with them centuries of tradition, history, and deep spiritual meaning.

One of the most popular festivals is Diwali, the Festival of Lights. It is celebrated to mark the return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya after 14 years of exile and his victory over Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. The Ramayana beautifully describes this moment as a triumph of good over evil. Symbolically, it reminds us that whenever darkness surrounds us, the light of truth and dharma (righteousness) will always prevail. As Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 4, Verse 7):

"Yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati Bharata, abhyutthanam adharmasya tadatmanam srijamy aham."

("Whenever there is a decline of righteousness and an increase of unrighteousness, O Arjuna, at that time I manifest Myself.")

In India, my family used to celebrate Diwali by bursting firecrackers, lighting up the sky, visiting temples, performing poojas, and enjoying a variety of special foods like samosas, laddoos, barfis, jalebis, and chaklis. Neighbors and relatives would gather on the terraces of our buildings, creating a lively and joyful

atmosphere full of laughter and celebration.

In China, we also perform pooja at home, cook, and enjoy meals together. Sometimes we attend Diwali parties, filled with food, fun, and dancing, creating happy moments and laughter. The celebrations are heartfelt, though we do miss the presence of grandparents, uncles, and aunts.

"No matter where we are, every Diwali, we celebrate one timeless truth — dharma always wins over adharma."





## About Me

Namrata Motiani has been residing in Guangzhou for the past 20 years. Having stayed there for such a long time, she feels a deep sense of home in the city. She is truly grateful for the beautiful place and its amazing, friendly people. They love her henna art and often encourage her to apply it. Namrata enjoys being creative. Besides henna art, she is also passionate about baking, singing, and painting.

## Namrata Motiani

### Beautiful Ties Between India and China

Namaskar everyone! I'm Namrata Motiani from India, residing in the beautiful city of Guangzhou, China, for the past 20 years. I feel truly blessed, grateful, and fortunate to live here among such friendly and helpful people.

India and China are both ancient civilizations with rich histories and cultures. Their cultural relations represent a complex interplay of history, philosophy, and art, with shared values such as respect for family and tradition, a belief in education as a path to self-cultivation, and a philosophical pursuit of balance and harmony. The historical ties between these countries are profound, dating back over 2,000 years, beginning through trade routes like the Silk Road, which facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultural practices.

Buddhism traveled from India to China during the Han Dynasty around 1,800 years ago, becoming the first foreign religion embraced in China. Its symbolism—compassion, enlightenment, and the cycle of life—resonates deeply in both cultures.

### Cultural Exchanges

The relationship between India and China is steeped in shared philosophical and spiritual traditions. Cultural exchanges manifest through language learning, educational programs, and artistic collaboration. Initiatives like studying Chinese in India and Hindi in China foster mutual understanding. Arts, music, dance, and literature reflect these exchanges: Indian classical music has influenced some Chinese traditions, while Chinese calligraphy and painting inspire Indian artists. Culinary exchanges are equally noteworthy: spices from India enriched Chinese cuisine via the Silk Road, while Indo-Chinese cuisine has become a staple in India, with dishes like chili chicken, Manchurian, and Hakka noodles exemplifying this fusion. Similarly, Chinese mooncakes and Indian moong-dal sweets both celebrate harvest and family reunions, reflecting parallel cultural values.

### Literature and Arts

Indian writers, artists, and musicians continue to be influenced by Chinese culture. Rabindranath Tagore visited China in 1924 and developed a deep friendship with Chinese writers. He remarked, "I do not know why coming to China seems to me like returning to my native soil. I always feel that India and China have been enjoying a time-honored and affectionate brotherhood." India and China continue to collaborate through cultural festivals, art exhibitions, and

academic initiatives such as the "Year of India-China Cultural Relations."

### Yoga

China has also embraced Yoga, a spiritual and physical practice from India. Yunnan Minzu University in Kunming, established by the Sino-Indian Yoga College, allows students to study Yoga in India. With millions of practitioners and over 10,000 major Yoga schools nationwide, China is emerging as a new hub for Yoga practice, promoting stress relief, physical well-being, and spiritual growth.

### Traditions, Festivals, and Daily Life

Cultural relations are evident in festivals and daily life. Chinese New Year and Diwali, both festivals of lights, emphasize family, renewal, prosperity, and the triumph of good over evil. Celebrations often include preparing special foods, exchanging gifts, cleaning homes, offering prayers, and gathering with loved ones. Other shared practices include herbal medicines (Ayurveda and Acupuncture), energy initiatives (solar, wind, hydro), and jewelry and gem craftsmanship.

India and China are deeply rooted in history yet continue to evolve through modern exchanges that enrich both societies. From ancient trade routes and religious exchange to contemporary culinary and educational fusions, these two nations share a vibrant tapestry of interaction. Understanding each



other's cultures fosters goodwill and lays the foundation for future cooperation. Their deep cultural connections demonstrate that, despite differences, the two nations are bound by shared values—showing that “The World as One Family” is more than an ideal; it is a lived reality.

Living in China for 20 years with my family, I feel fortunate to witness these interconnected traditions and celebrations firsthand. Each day brings new challenges and discoveries, deepening my appreciation of both cultures and the enduring bonds between India and China.







## About Me

Nishad Kulkarni is a compassionate and responsible 13-year-old who eagerly volunteers to help others.

## Nishad Kulkarni

### My Volunteering Experience

On 7<sup>th</sup> September, a group of Indian kids decided to help out with the blood donation service in Shanghai. This event was organized by the Indian Association, a wonderful organization that helps people stay connected to their Indian roots while living in China.

First, we were introduced to the area where we would be working and shown what needed to be done. I was assigned to the catering counter, serving delicious Indian food to everyone. I worked with three other colleagues who were very kind. One person greeted everyone, another served samosas, another served sandwiches and sauces like chutney and ketchup, and my job was to serve chai.

At first, not many people came to eat, as the event had just started. However, after 45–60 minutes, there was an entire queue waiting to enjoy the food. Our head encouraged us to thank all the donors. Although some of us were too young to donate, we felt inspired to contribute in any way we could.

Everyone was polite and patient. After we thanked them for their support, they thanked us for our hard work.

When the event finished, we were tired but also satisfied—satisfied that we served chai to probably over 100 blood donors.

One thing learned from this event is that hard work, kindness, and dedication can lead to happiness and satisfaction.





## About Me

Richa Sharma has found a home in Shanghai where her creativity has flourished over the past six years. She runs art classes and workshops, introducing kids and adults to everything from traditional art forms to macramé, and shares her passion for baking through Richa's Treats, creating joyful experiences for the community.

## Richa Sharma

### Baking Smiles, Mixing Colors and Weaving Knots : My Shanghai Story

Every time I sit to write for this magazine, I feel like I'm putting my little Shanghai diary into words. This city, which once 6 years back felt so new and unknown, now feels like home where my creativity has truly grown wings.

#### Art Classes: My Happy Space

Teaching art has been one of the most rewarding parts of this journey. Shades and Flavours isn't just about brushstrokes and colors—it's about watching kids open up, try new things, and surprise themselves with what they create. We've done everything from Madhubani and Warli to embroidery, pouring art, and quilling. And this year, I even introduced macramé knots—a big hit with both kids and adults! My "Mom & Me" sessions are especially close to my heart; there's something magical about parents and kids creating together.

#### Baking: From My Kitchen to Yours

Baking has always been love for me, and in Shanghai it became more than just a family thing—it turned into Richa's Treats. Whether it's festival cakes, quirky flavors like paan gulkand





and guava chili, or simple chocolate bakes, every order makes me so happy. What's been new and exciting this year are my baking workshops—getting kids (and sometimes adults!) to roll up their sleeves and create their own treats. The joy on their faces when they see (and taste!) their own work is just priceless.

### Adding a Healthy Twist

Over time, I've also enjoyed experimenting with healthier versions—millet-based cakes, sugar-free bakes, and guilt-free snacks. It feels good to know that indulgence and health can go hand in hand.

### Finding My People

The best part of Shanghai has been the community. From Ganapati celebrations, Christmas bazaars to cricket matches, bake stalls to workshops, these little moments of togetherness are what make this city feel like family.

### Looking Ahead

Every year adds something new—whether it's a new recipe, a new craft, or a new connection. For me, creativity is not just about teaching or baking, it's about sharing a part of myself with others and finding joy in their smiles.

My sincere gratitude to everyone for giving me such an amazing gift of Sharing roots, baking joy, and painting dreams in Shanghai.







## About Me

Riyaan Kartik Raj, now an 9-year-old in Grade 3, is full of life and continues to enjoy his time at Shanghai Jincai International School. His passion for drawing grows stronger, with his imaginative sketches filling up hours of his day. Alongside his love for art, Riyaan remains a dedicated chess player, showing impressive skill and enthusiasm for the game. His range of hobbies reflects his curiosity and love for learning, making Riyaan a wonderfully talented young individual.

## Riyaan Kartik Raj

### India & China: Old Friends, One Big Family (Through My Eyes)

Hi! I'm 9 years old, and I feel super special because I was born here in China, but I also love India very much. It's like I have two homes in my heart. When I think about India and China, I feel like they are two best friends who have known each other forever.

A long time ago, before airplanes, trains, or even cars, people traveled on the Silk Road. Camels walked slowly across deserts carrying shiny silk from China and yummy spices from India. Isn't that cool? It was not just about trading things, but also about sharing ideas, songs, and even games.

One of my favorite stories is about Buddhism. It started in India, and kind monks carried it all the way to China.

They didn't have buses or Google Maps back then — they just walked! A Chinese traveler named Xuanzang even studied in India for 17 years and then came back to write a giant book. Another traveler, Fa-Hien, also came to learn. I think they were like the first "YouTubers," but instead of videos, they wrote down everything!

Today, India and China are super-duper big countries. Together, they have more than 2.8 billion people — that's like one out of every three people on Earth. Both countries have the tallest mountains, the Himalayas, which look like they are touching the sky. Both love yummy food too — India has spicy curries and China has dumplings. Sometimes I imagine mixing them into "curry dumplings." Would you eat that? I totally would!

There's also a beautiful idea from India called Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which means "The whole world is one family." I love this because it makes me feel that no matter if you are from India, China, or anywhere, we are all connected, like cousins.

India and China can work together to fight pollution, protect animals, make new inventions, and keep peace in the world. Just like when two strong teammates join in a relay race, they can run faster and win together.

For me, it's extra special. I was born here in China, so I love dumplings, pandas, and lanterns. But I also love India — with its festivals like Diwali with lights everywhere, and Holi with colors flying in the air. Having both in my life feels like having the best of both worlds.

So from sharing silk and stories in the past to building rockets and robots in the future, India and China show that friendship can last forever. And when my two favorite countries join hands, the whole wide world becomes a happier place.





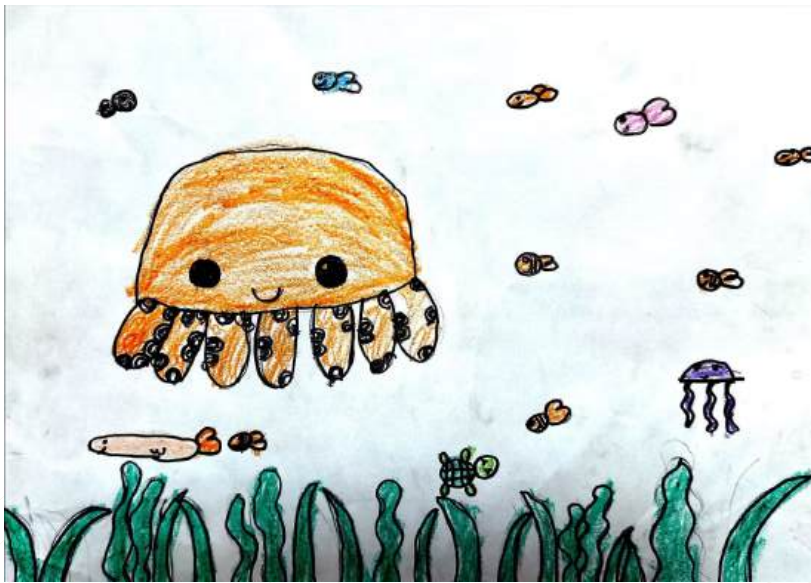
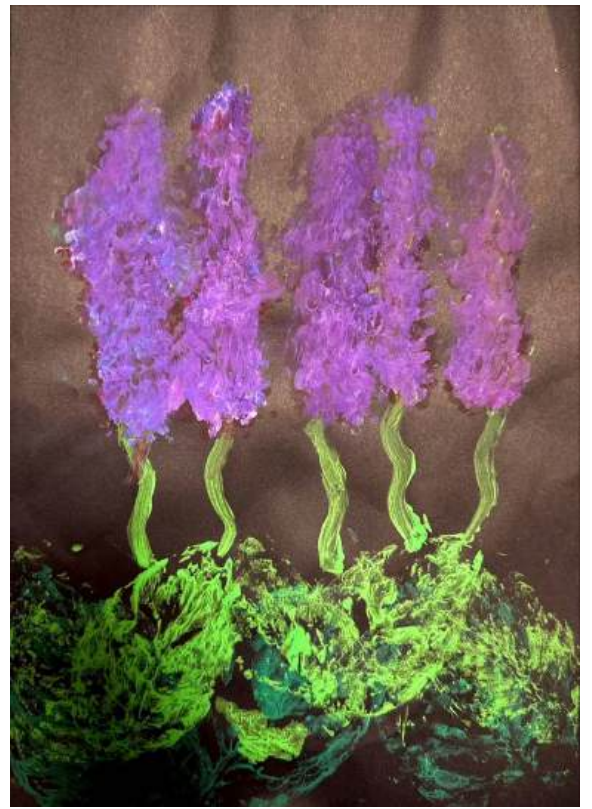
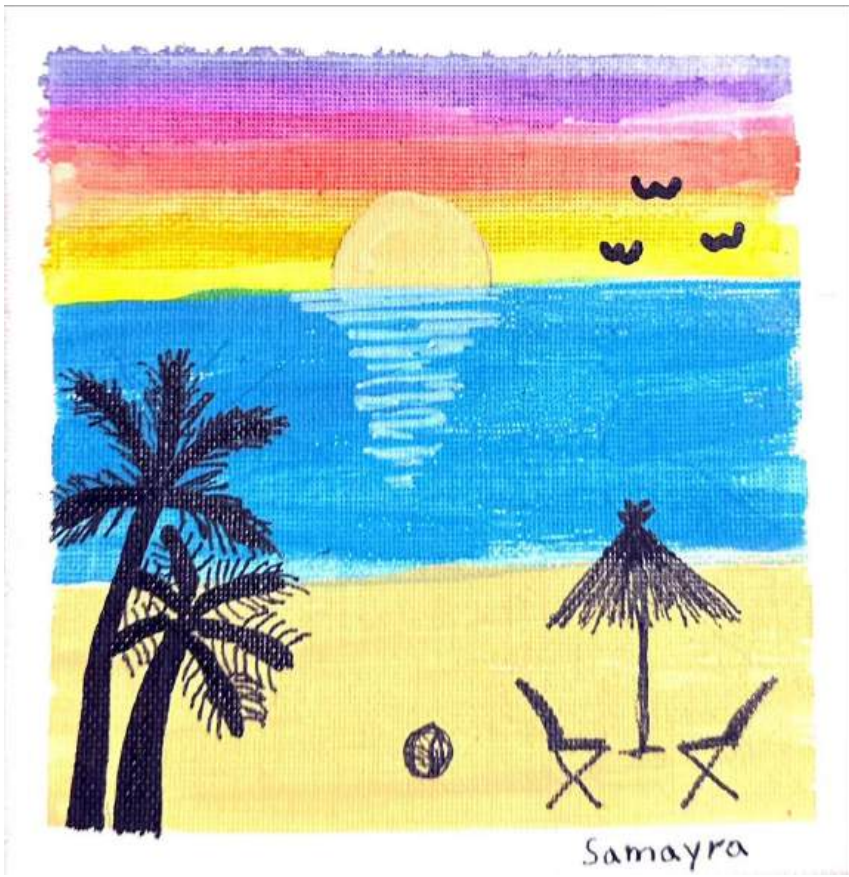
## About Me

Samayra Mandal is 6.5 years old and studies in Grade 1 at Shanghai Livingston American School. She has been living in Shanghai since 2019. Her hobbies include drawing, painting, making Legos, and DIY projects. She loves furry friends, especially dogs, and enjoys playing with them. Samayra is also passionate about gardening and cares deeply for nature. She loves dancing and swimming, and aspires to become a dancer and swimmer in the future.

## Samayra Mandal











## About Me

Shalaka Kulkarni lives in Pudong and has over 10+ years of teaching experience in India. Here in Shanghai, she conducts both online and onsite classes for Vedic Math, regular Mathematics, and Chemistry.

## Shalaka kulkarni

### VEDIC MATHS

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| 20 | 24 | 4 x 3 = 12  |
| 28 | 32 | 4 x 4 = 16  |
| 36 | 40 | 4 x 5 = 20  |
|    |    | 4 x 6 = 24  |
|    |    | 4 x 7 = 28  |
|    |    | 4 x 8 = 32  |
|    |    | 4 x 9 = 36  |
|    |    | 4 x 10 = 40 |

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## About Me

Soniya Karthik is a Grade 8 student at Shanghai Community International School (SCIS). She has been devoted to learning Kuchipudi, a classical Indian dance form, since the age of five.

## Soniya Karthik

### Dance as a Bridge: Celebrating Heritage and Harmony

Dance for me is more than an art—it is a bridge that connects my Indian heritage with the world I live in today.

This year has been especially memorable because I had the opportunity to perform at two very special events that reflect the spirit of cultural exchange and community service.

The first was at the Xilin Chan Buddhist Temple in Songjiang, Shanghai. I performed a Kuchipudi piece choreographed by the renowned Guru Vyjayanthi Kashi and taught to me by my Guru, Ms. Lulu Wang. The serene temple setting, filled with the stillness of Chan Buddhism, became the stage where Indian rhythm met Chinese spirituality. It was a unique chance to highlight how Indian and Chinese traditions, though distinct, both emphasize devotion, mindfulness, and the pursuit of inner peace. For me, it was an unforgettable moment where cultures blended seamlessly through dance.

The second highlight was my performance at the Indian Association's 11th Annual Blood

Donation Camp in Shanghai. I had the honor of opening the cultural program with a Kuchipudi item called "Brahmanjali," choreographed by the legendary Padma Bhushan Vempati Chinna Satyam and taught to me by Acharya Srimayi Vempati of the Kuchipudi Art Academy, Chennai. "Brahmanjali" is a dance offering of gratitude to the divine, and performing it for a gathering dedicated to the noble cause of saving lives made the experience even more meaningful. It felt like my dance could also become a humble act of service.

Both these experiences reminded me why I dance: to share stories, to inspire, and to connect. Whether on a temple stage or at a community event, I feel that my role as a young dancer is to carry forward India's rich classical heritage while also embracing the world around me.

As I continue my journey, I feel grateful to my gurus and my parents for guiding me, and to every stage that gives me the chance to express myself. Dance is my way of celebrating who I am—an Indian-Chinese growing up in Shanghai, learning to honor both worlds with every step I take.







## About Me

Soumen Biswas has been calling China home since 2006 and cherishes the journey the country has given him. A devoted family man, he strives to be a good husband to Swati (though she might say there's room for improvement!) and a responsible father to Aleeka (who has already mastered the art of keeping him on his toes). In his free time, he can be found chasing golf balls that never go straight or flying drones that occasionally have a mind of their own.

## Soumen Biswas

### How China Inspired Me to Stay Fit – And What We Can Learn for Our Seniors in India

When I first came to China in 2006, I was naturally fascinated by the culture, food, and language. But over the years, one everyday scene has left a lasting impression on me—seniors gathering in public spaces to move, dance, and stay fit.

In almost every city, whether it's a bustling metropolis like Shanghai or a smaller town, you'll find the same picture: as the sun rises or sets, groups of elderly men and women fill the parks, squares, and community halls. Some dance to old songs blaring from portable speakers, some move gracefully through the slow, fluid motions of tai chi, while others simply stretch or walk in small circles.

What makes this so inspiring is not just their dedication to physical activity, but the sheer sense of community and joy they bring to it. There's laughter, music, and companionship. Fitness is not treated as a chore; it's woven into their daily lifestyle. These are men and women well into their 60s, 70s, and even 80s, yet their energy and spirit make them feel ageless.

It made me pause and think: back home in India, we have a similar cultural emphasis on family, togetherness, and traditions—but we rarely see seniors engaged in group fitness. After retirement, many elders tend to slow down physically, with most social interactions limited to family visits or religious gatherings. The idea of coming together daily for movement is not yet a widespread habit.

And yet, I believe this could be transformative. If our seniors in India could adopt even a fraction of what I've seen here in China, it could add so much vitality, happiness, and health to their lives.

#### How can we implement this in India?

- Use Open Spaces Creatively – Parks, temple courtyards, and community halls can double as fitness hubs. All it takes is consistency and a few people to initiate.
- Blend Culture with Fitness – Just as Chinese seniors dance to old folk tunes, Indian seniors could use familiar devotional songs or timeless Bollywood classics. Imagine morning stretches to "Lag Jaa Gale" or light dances to Kishore Kumar songs—it makes fitness fun and nostalgic.
- Structured but Simple Activities – Yoga, laughter therapy, breathing exercises, or light aerobics don't require equipment. Seniors can easily pick up these routines in

groups.

- Peer Motivation – The magic lies in doing it together. When people see friends and neighbors joining in, they naturally feel encouraged.

- Family Participation – Children and grandchildren can occasionally join, making it more inclusive and ensuring seniors feel supported.

The lesson I've carried with me from China is that fitness is not just about exercise—it's about community, discipline, and joy. It's not about heavy workouts or expensive gyms; it's about simple movements done together, every day, with laughter and music.

If India can take inspiration from this practice, our seniors can lead not only longer lives but fuller ones—lives rich with connection, energy, and happiness.

For me personally, it's been a reminder that staying fit is less about physical strength and more about mindset. Perhaps the greatest wisdom I've learned watching seniors dance in China is this: fitness is not about adding years to life, but adding life to years.







## About Me

Soumya Ahuja is a lawyer, spiritual seeker, and student of life. She was born, raised, and educated in Mumbai, India, and holds a Master's Degree in Law. She practices in Mumbai, specializing in Trademarks and Intellectual Property Rights. Life as an expatriate has been deeply enriching for her and has provided invaluable learning experiences.

## Soumya Ahuja

### India and China- Ancient Ties , shared destiny – the world as One family

Let me start by narrating an incident which happened in the first few months of our stay in Shanghai. My husband and I needed to take a cab – the app was not in English and the driver kept on calling us and we couldn't speak the language. Just then a passerby stopped , spoke to the driver , ensured that he put us in the cab and bid us *aideu* – This left a deep impression on the helpful and kind attitude of the people here and reinforced that hospitality is a common thread that binds both our cultures, a gesture which we largely miss seeing in the western world.

In India, "athithi devo bhava" isn't just a Sanskrit phrase. It is the heartbeat of Indian hospitality which means "The Guest is God". Chinese hospitality is also largely influenced by Confucian values, where there is a significant emphasis on respect, honor, and collectivism. Whether in a restaurant, hotel, or home, hosts take great pride in making visitors feel valued and comfortable.

China and India, two of the world's oldest civilizations, have shared a rich

cultural heritage for over 5,000 years. As neighbouring nations with vast territories, abundant resources and deep-rooted traditions, our historical interactions have significantly shaped global cultural landscapes

Both countries have a long history of cultural exchange and this bond is shaped by mutual learning and respect and has had a great impact on both the civilizations. The early interactions took place mostly through trade and the exchange of goods, ideas and traditions along the Silk Road.

I have been fortunate to experience the cultural similarities shared between both countries after living in Shanghai. China has been extremely welcoming and Shanghai in particular, with a wonderful mix of people from across ethnicities and diverse cultures

Reflecting on the past 9 years that I have spent in Shanghai, I have witnessed and understood that both the societies are very similar. They are the most ancient living cultures in the world and both are more family-oriented as compared to western societies. Social functioning is also starkly equivalent in regards to education, where both countries place extremely high priority to their student's seriously investing time in schools, colleges and universities. Traditional medicine e.g. TCM of China and Ayurveda of India are

still practiced and with utmost faith and belief. Music is based on pentatonic scales in both countries. In addition to the Gregorian Calendar, the traditional celebrations, festivities and events are still decided as per the Lunar or Lunisolar calendar. We remember and pay homage to our ancestors during Pitru paksh in India and Tomb sweeping festival in China.

The older generations in both societies are more traditional, while their younger generation is more accepting and open to new ideas. As the only two large developing countries, China and India have the largest similarities than any other country in the world.

China, just like India, offers vast culinary experiences, across its diverse provinces, and as we always say in India, Food brings the hearts closer and makes experiences fonder.

Shanghai has offered me with the opportunity to learn Chinese language, art and culture. I enjoy more specifically learning the Chinese art forms of painting namely "Gongbi" (name derived from the Chinese "gong jin" meaning 'tidy' (meticulous brush craftsmanship) and "Shan Shui" (literally meaning 'mountain-water', which when used together represents the word 'landscape').

With these special cultural learnings of art, I also take back with me a Chinese name 苏曼 (sū mǎn) in



pinyin) given to me by my Art teacher.

My husband started to learn "Taichi" or Taijiquan in Chinese, which originally started as a form of martial art but also involves a practice that involves a series of slow gentle movements and physical postures, a meditative state of mind, and controlled breathing.... and that inspired me to join him, and we thoroughly enjoy learning together.

It is rightly said "Travel is the best teacher & we must open our minds to become the students of the world". My husband and I have travelled across the length and breadth of China which has connected us to very interesting set of people, their food, their ethnicities and cultural practices.

As a spiritual seeker, I am grateful for one of such travels that took us to the holy abode, the "centre of the Universe "Mount Kailash".



During my stay and travel in China, it has been welcoming to see how both communities have beautifully embraced the art and culture of each country, to name of few, Indians fluent in spoken and written Chinese, learning different forms of Chinese art and culture, Similarly Chinese students learning and chanting Sanskrit verses, perform on Indian classical dance such as Bharatnatyam and Kuchipudi. I also met students from Beijing who were fluent in Tamil language, both spoken and written, and have a social media community to promote Tamil language. Bollywood has a great share of audience in China and Aamir Khan seems to be one of a local favourites.

This to me is a perfect example of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** "the world is one family" and I am grateful that life gave me an opportunity to experience being a part of this family of the world, away from home.



# AN INDIAN FINDS EVERYTHING SHE WANTS



**Suchita Mahajan**

Suchita Mahajan was originally intimidated by the idea of moving from India to China, fearing, among other things, that her vegetarian diet couldn't be sustained here.

But her unease has become something of a family joke now.

Mahajan has had no problem finding Indian groceries or vegetarian menus in restaurants. Her favorite is a spicy soup called malatang, a popular street delicacy.

Local eateries she frequents close to home know her well. When seated, a knowing look to shop owners brings forth an extra spicy stew of vegetables only.

She has also learnt from her ayi how to cook the dish at home. Soy sauce, pickled chillies, pepper oil and other Chinese condiments are kept on a shelf.

"These two," said Mahajan, pointing at peppercorn oil and Lao Gan Ma hot sauce, "are products I take back to India with me so I can satisfy my craving for malatang when away."

Uprooting the family and moving to Shanghai had not been the family's original plan.

In 2011, her husband was sent to work in Shanghai. She, then 32, followed him with their first son. The temporary assignment was supposed to end after two or three months, but the family found life in Shanghai so inviting that they decided on impulse to stay and establish roots.

Thirteen years on, Mahajan has two children and has taken up work as a mosaic artist.

Suchita Mahajan, a mosaic artist and teacher from Pune, has been living in Shanghai for many years with her family. Passionate about art, she has transformed her love for mosaic creation into a fulfilling profession, conducting workshops and contributing actively to the local community through her creative and social endeavors.

"It's easy to live and integrate into the local community," she said. "We expats learn how to adapt."

Her second son, who was born in Shanghai, is almost more Chinese than Indian. Like most kids his age, he's really into Chinese social media, like dance challenges on Douyin, China's version of TikTok. He's also fluent in Chinese, acting as a teacher of sorts to his mother.







Mahajan, in a blue qipao, performs on the ukulele. — Ti Gong

Mahajan said she finds learning Chinese hard but she has managed to master the social necessities of the spoken language – at least enough for some basic conversation with locals. She has found some Chinese habits to her liking, like drinking liquid hot even during warm weather.

“It’s a good, healthy habit,” she said. “I carry these ideas when I go home to visit India.”

She said she’s also delighted by traditional Chinese massage and acupuncture, which help relieve her back pain.

“It’s very different from India’s traditional therapies, like homeopathy and Ayurveda medicine, but it’s very useful,” she said, adding that she does draw the line at Chinese herbal medicine, which she finds too bitter. Mahajan shops online on Taobao and Pinduoduo platforms, but her favorite shopping venue is the market at Yuyuan Garden, where she buys home decorations and gold.

“We Indians love gold and wear it every day,” she said, dressed in hand-crafted, traditional Indian laknavi attire covered in golden sequins, with accessory gold ornaments like necklaces, bracelets and rings.

“There are several gold stores at Yuyuan Garden that sell pure gold at a good price,” she said. “I always take visitors from India there.”

In an underground mall near Shanghai Science and Technology Museum, she bought a qipao, the traditional cheongsam. She wears it when playing ukulele with others from a community-based international music group that visits nursing homes, hospitals and special schools.

“I wanted to give something back to my local community, where I have been living in the same compound for 13 years. It’s truly with others from a community-based international music group that visits nursing homes, hospitals and special schools.

“I wanted to give something back to my local community, where I have been living in the same compound for 13 years. It’s truly good here.

People are very helpful and friendly.”

She invites Chinese neighbors to join in celebrations of Hindu festivals like Diwali and Holi, and gets reciprocal invitations to join in traditional Chinese holiday celebrations.

“I love Shanghai,” she said. “It’s convenient. We can travel easily. We can feel safe. Also, you can start anything in Shanghai because there are so many opportunities.”

By chance, she learned mosaic art from an Indian friend as a hobby. But gradually she found she had a talent for it and turned it into a career.



*I wanted to give something back to my local community, where I have been living in the same compound for 13 years. It’s truly good here. People are very helpful and friendly.*

**Suchita Mahajan**  
Mosaic Artist



Mahajan and a mosaic piece featuring an Indian figure. — Jiang Xiaowei

Samuel Porteous works at home. — Photos by Jiang Xiaowei

Suchita Mahajan and her friends celebrate the Indian festival of Holi. — Ti Gong



## About Me

Suhana Jain, 14, is a high school freshman living in China for over 10 years, passionate about dance, Taekwondo (black belt), and badminton. She actively participates in cultural events and volunteering, sharing her talents while embracing community, kindness, and learning.

## Suhana Jain

Namaste! My name is Suhana Jain, and I am a proud freshman in high school. I'm 14 years old, and I absolutely love to dance—it's such a big part of who I am. Dancing allows me to express myself creatively and feel free, and I enjoy performing in front of others whenever I get the chance. But dance isn't my only passion. I also practice Taekwondo and currently hold a black belt, which has taught me invaluable lessons in discipline, confidence, and perseverance. It's a sport that challenges me physically and mentally, pushing me to become a better version of myself every day.

In addition to dance and Taekwondo, I love playing badminton. It's a fun and exciting way to stay active, challenge my agility, and spend quality time with friends and family. Whether I'm on the court or practicing at home, badminton keeps my energy high and my spirits lifted.

Living in China for over 10 years has been a spectacular experience. I am constantly amazed by how advanced and developed this country is—from its cutting-edge technology to its modern infrastructure. It's a safe, clean environment that makes living here comfortable and inspiring. I feel incredibly fortunate to be part of a society that offers so many opportunities for growth and learning, which I believe will benefit me a lot in the future.

China has given me countless chances to get involved in meaningful activities. For example, I volunteered at the IA blood donation camp, where I helped people with any queries. It was a rewarding experience to see how even small acts can make a big difference in someone's life. I also participated in IA Bal Diwas, an exciting event where I performed solo and group dances to celebrate our culture and heritage. These events weren't just about showcasing talent; they also taught me the importance of community, cultural pride, and the joy of sharing my traditions with others. (Fun fact: one of my first-ever performances in China was at Bal Diwas.)

Another special event I attended was Diwali Nite, a marvelous celebration filled with music, dance, and new friendships. It was wonderful to connect with people from different backgrounds, dance to lively tunes, and feel the warmth of community. These events helped me realize that no matter where you are in the world, the spirit of your homeland is always close to your heart. Even though I am Indian living abroad, the kindness of the people here makes me feel welcomed and cherished—often with touches of Indian culture that remind me of home. That's the best part of living in China: the vibrant environment and the opportunities to grow, learn, and celebrate diverse cultures.

I want to share something meaningful that happened this summer. One of the most impactful experiences I had was volunteering. It truly showed me how small acts of kindness can make a difference. I was inspired by my mom, who joined a river patrol in our local community. She worked to protect the environment by collecting trash and encouraging others to keep the river clean. Watching her dedication made me realize how volunteering can create positive change.

Motivated by her example, I decided to volunteer myself by teaching brush lettering to students. During my first lesson, I remember a shy girl who was nervous about learning her first letter. When she finally mastered it, her face lit up with pride. Seeing her confidence grow reminded me that even simple acts—like teaching or encouraging someone—can boost self-esteem and inspire others to keep trying. Volunteering has taught me the value of giving back and the importance of community, lessons I will carry with me for a lifetime.

In conclusion, my experiences—whether through dance, sports, cultural events, or volunteering—have shaped who I am today. Living in China has opened my eyes to new opportunities, and I am grateful for the kindness and inspiration I've found here. I look forward to continuing my journey, learning more, and making a positive impact wherever I go.







**Surbhi Gupta**

## About Me

Surbhi Gupta is a multifaceted individual who pours her heart and soul into everything she does. She is a creative entrepreneur, a science teacher, and a certified university career counselor. Her sustainable art and crafts—including ribbon embroidery, cards, rakhis, and several DIY artifacts—are part of her own brand, Surbhionelife. Her hobbies include reading, writing, creating sustainable art and crafts, henna design, and learning new things. Surbhi is proficient in languages such as English, Hindi, Punjabi, and Gujarati, and she also knows Mandarin (having cleared HSK) and Thai.

**“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”**

When I landed in Shanghai seven years ago, I didn't realize that with this change of location or countries I would be diving into a world of self discovery, and deepening my passion for sustainable arts and crafts. In this city, I found myself surrounded by people from multiple nationalities and cultures. Each day here has brought new encounters with a variety of cultures, foods and languages, broadening my worldview. Each person I met had a unique story to share creating a rich tapestry of experiences, ideas and dreams resulting in unique opportunities, friendships, and life lessons. There's beauty of cross cultural exchanges, where a smile or a shared laugh often transcends the boundaries of words.

Growing up in India in an era where living in harmony with mother Earth was a way of life, practices like repurposing, recycling, and caring for plants and animals were integral part of life. This upbringing deeply influenced my artistic approach and ingrained in me a strong sense of responsibility towards the environment. Being a Science teacher teaching about environmental issues I have always stressed that sustainability is not just a trend but an

urgent need of the hour. And embracing the principles of zero waste, not only minimizes waste landing in landfills but also fosters creativity and innovation through sustainable art and crafts. Thus up cycling, recycling, and sustainable living have always been central to my creative process.

**There must be a better way to make the things we want, a way that doesn't spoil the sky, or the rain or the land.” – Paul McCartney**

Though I have been passionate about arts and crafts and have received recognition through various prizes and accolades in both school and university, the passion saw a huge exposure in this city transforming me from an amateur to a professional creative sustainable arts artist and entrepreneur. I now have my own brand of sustainable arts and crafts—‘Surbhionelife’, offering everything from handmade ribbon embroideries, rakhis, handmade cards, Krishna jhoolas, Ganpati vastras, ribbon garlands to up cycled home decor. It's a brand built on the values of creativity, sustainability and community. Each of my creations is more than just a piece of art, it's a product of creativity and love.

Being a teacher by profession, the idea of passing on a my skills to community, fills me with a sense of purpose. As my skills in ribbon embroidery and sustainable crafts grew, so did my desire to share my skills with others. So, besides teaching

Chemistry I found myself teaching the techniques of ribbon embroidery and up cycling crafts helping me build lifelong multicultural friendships and bonds.

With this I began to engage with people who shared my passion for sustainable living, and that gave me the motivation to keep moving forward. These interactions ignited a spark in me, fueling my desire to make a difference and share my passion for sustainability with the world

In September 2020, when a friend came up with an idea to start a volunteer group of like-minded individuals committed to environmental causes, I immediately joined her. This was the start of my association with the Eco Panthers – a sustainability group of parents in Dulwich College Shanghai Pudong. A year later I found myself leading the group. Over the years, Eco Panthers has organized multiple flea markets, up-cycling workshops, hands on composting, gardening workshops and awareness campaigns to promote sustainable practices and reduce waste in our communities. .

The up-cycling workshops have been providing a platform for many to explore their own creativity and learn as well as share how to repurpose and recycle things that would otherwise be discarded. The joy of



seeing people transform something as simple as an old skirt or an old jar into a something useful is incredible. The flea markets have allowed recycling of huge amounts of books, household items, toys in the community besides inculcating value of sustainability in students. Through this group we have been able to pass on the important skills such as sewing, composting, gardening and recycling to the next generation. It has been a great example that we all have the power to make a difference with our little acts of sustainability and kindness in our communities.

Its incredible to see that how deeply the love for Earth and the principles of recycling and repurposing are ingrained in people from all corners of the globe. When meeting different parents we realized that these values are passed down through generations in all countries in all continents . Whether it was a grandmother teaching her grandchildren how to mend clothes or someone using discarded materials to create beautiful objects, sustainability has been woven into the fabric of life in every corner of the world. Each year people join to learn a forgotten skill or to share a childhood passion. These moments are a reminder that how we all are connected with ideas on how to see value in what seems useless, and how to create something beautiful from what is considered waste. It has been humbling to see how these traditions have been kept alive, even in the face of today's use and throw culture.

Today after seven years of staying in Shanghai as I reflect on my journey, it's incredible to see how far I've come building a brand that blends art, sustainability, and community to sharing my passion for sustainability with like minded people. My creations are spread across different continents yet the most rewarding part has been the connections I've made, each contributing to a larger movement of environmental consciousness and creative expression. Through my experiences, I've learned that

the true beauty of life is about the relationships we build and the lives we touch along the way. My passion for sustainability has become not just a personal mission but a shared vision which I hope continues to inspire others to live with purpose, creativity, and care for the planet.

As I continue on this path, I remain deeply committed to both my crafts and my passion for sustainable living. The future is uncertain, but one thing is clear that the journey of learning, creating, and connecting will always be at the heart of everything I do. I look forward to seeing where this journey takes me and how I can continue to inspire others to make a positive impact, one piece of sustainable art at a time.

About Surbhi Gupta:

Surbhi Gupta has been residing in Shanghai for the past seven years. She is a Chemistry teacher as well as a certified University Career Counselor. Surbhi is a sustainable crafts enthusiast and a ribbon embroidery artist. Her hobbies include reading, writing, creating sustainable art and crafts, henna, and learning new things.





**Eco Panthers Up cycled creations**



**Mom & kids ribbon embroidery workshop**







## About Me

Vaibhav is a team lead in a gaming company's R&D department, known for his warm, jolly, and down-to-earth demeanor. Guided by an ethos of kindness, he embraces challenges beyond his comfort zone. His adventurous spirit has taken him to climb a 6,000-meter mountain, with thrilling experiences such as bungee jumping and paragliding also on his list.

## Vaibhav Gupta

### The Whisper, The Doubt, and The Hand on My Shoulder

It began not with a fanfare, but with a casual WhatsApp message. "Hey," my friend Vijay wrote, "want to go to Tianjin for the SCO summit?"

I chuckled. "And do what there?" I typed back.

His response glowed on my screen: "Meet Modi ji."

I dismissed it as a fantasy. Every Indian living abroad harbors that dream, but few believe it will ever materialize. The next day, however, Vijay sent a link to an official questionnaire from the Embassy of India in Beijing. This was real. With more hope than expectation, I filled it out, my cursor hovering over the 'submit' button before I finally clicked.

Weeks passed, and the dream faded into the busy backdrop of life in Shanghai. Then, an email arrived, cutting through the clutter of promotions and newsletters. It was from Mr. Abhishek Verma ji, First Secretary at the Embassy. My heart skipped a beat. I was in.

But reality has a way of tempering

excitement. Tianjin was far. The flights, inflated by the summit, were a painful 2,500 RMB round trip. Hotels were booked solid, with the few available rooms demanding a premium. As I calculated the cost, my initial elation was replaced by pragmatic doubt. I FaceTimed my family in India.

"Papa, I have a chance to see PM Modi."



"That's wonderful, beta! How much will it cost?"

I told them. The line went quiet. Their concern was palpable. "He will be busy in meetings," my father said gently. "You might just be one face in a large crowd. Is it worth so much money just for a glimpse?"

Their logic was sound. I decided it wasn't worth it. I received my final confirmation, registration number #154, and filed it away in my mind as a missed opportunity.

But for the next two days, a quiet voice nagged at me. It whispered about

regret. It spoke of 'once-in-a-lifetime' for a reason. I called my parents again, my conviction renewed. "I know it's expensive," I said, "but it's not just about seeing him. It's about feeling the energy. It's the difference between watching a cricket match on TV and being in the stadium, feeling the roar of the crowd vibrate in your chest. I need to feel that vibe."

After a pause, my mother, my eternal supporter, said, "Then go. Go feel the vibe."

And so, with a last-minute ticket on a high-speed train, I embarked on my pilgrimage. The five-hour journey to Tianjin felt both endless and fleeting. I arrived with just an hour to spare, joining a stream of eager Indians funneling towards a hotel conference room.

The scene was surreal. After a frantic change of clothes in a nearby restaurant—switching into a traditional Indian kurta—and depositing all my electronics, I entered a hushed, secure area. To my astonishment, microphones were thrust in my face. News anchors from NDTV and ANI asked for my thoughts. The air was thick with anticipation.

For three hours, we stood—a patient, buzzing crowd united by a single purpose. Then, at 7 PM, the energy in the room shifted. A wave of

electricity passed through us before the sound even arrived. And then it came: a thunderous, unifying chant. "Modi! Modi! Modi!"



He moved through the crowd, a whirlwind of energy that belied his 74 years, shaking hands, connecting with every single person he could. And then, he was in front of me. Time compressed. His hand reached for mine. I blurted out, "Modeshwari Mata ki Jai!" and, grasping for a question from my life in Shanghai, asked, "When will our direct flights start?"

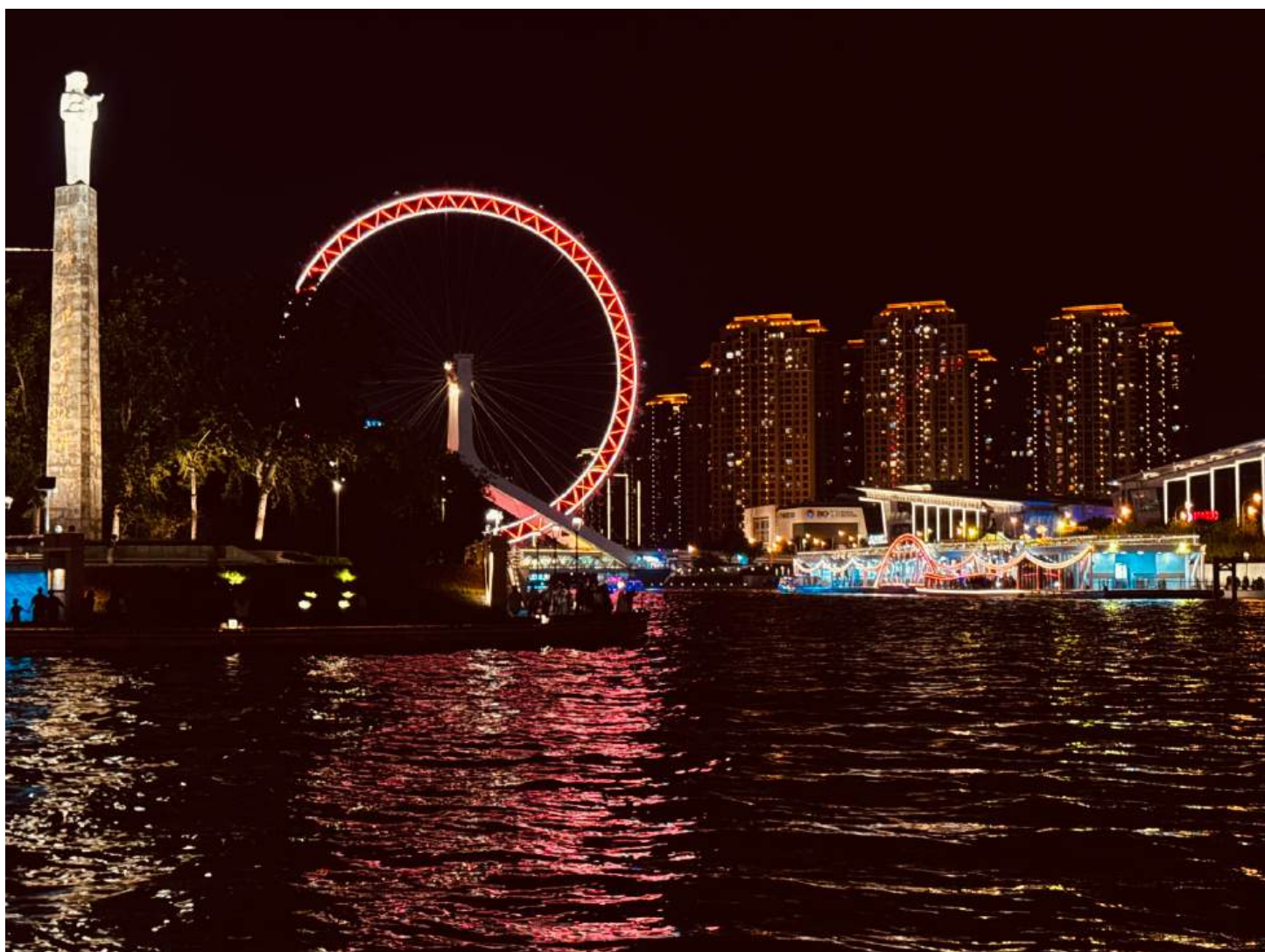
He looked directly at me, placed his hand firmly on my shoulder, and said with warm assurance, "Soon."

In that instant, the fatigue from the journey, the weight of the cost, the prior doubts—everything vanished. I was awestruck. The Prime Minister's hand was on my shoulder. He had answered my question. The moment was imprinted on my soul forever.

I floated through the rest of the event, watching him engage with Chinese performers, his appreciation genuine and heartfelt. The "vibe" I had traveled for was more powerful than I could have ever imagined.

I left Tianjin not just with that memory, but with new friends and a profound gratitude to the Indian Embassy for making it possible. As I explored the city's beautiful streets and vibrant nightlife the next day, I reflected on the journey. The doubt, the cost, the logistics—it all faded into insignificance.

What remained, crystal clear and priceless, was the memory of a whisper that became a reality, and the affirming hand of a leader on my shoulder.







## About Me

Vihaan is an enthusiastic 5th grader at Shanghai American School. An avid swimmer and basketball player, he also enjoys creative projects and loves sharing his ideas with others.

## Vihaan Jain

### The Indradhanush Within Me – Blending Indian Roots and a Chinese Home

China and India are two of the oldest countries in the world, and their history goes back thousands of years. Even though they are different in many ways, they have been connected through trade, religion, and culture for an exceptionally long time. One of the most important ways India and China connected was through the Silk Road. The Silk Road was a long network of trade routes that helped people buy and sell things like silk, spices, jewels, and other goods. Traders, travelers, and even monks used these routes and share their ideas and cultures. Buddhism is a big part of the connection between India and China. Indian monks traveled to China to teach Chinese people about Buddhism, which is a religion that teaches kindness, peace, and understanding. Chinese monks also traveled to India to learn more about Buddhism and other subjects. One famous Chinese monk named Xuanzang made a long journey to India to study and bring back important Buddhist texts. Besides religion and trade, India and China also shared knowledge about science,

medicine, art, and literature. For example, Indian ideas about math and astronomy influenced Chinese scholars, and Chinese inventions like paper and printing spread to India and other parts of the world. Both countries have rich cultures with many festivals, traditions, and stories that show how much they value family, respect, and nature. Like any two neighbors, India and China have had some disagreements in history, they have also worked together and learned from each other. India and China are two of the biggest countries in Asia, and their history of friendship and cultural exchange continues to be important not only to them but to the entire world. Their long connection shows how people from various



I was about 3 years old when I first came to China, and obviously I didn't have any say in that decision. I just thought of that move as another one of my families' annual moves that I had become used to having lived in three countries in the first three years of my life. That was 8 years ago and now I am a 5th grader and have had a lot of time to reflect on my life here in China and my families' roots in India.

China quickly became my second home as I have spent most of my childhood here. The sights, sounds, and people of this country are deeply familiar to me. Growing up in China while holding on to my Indian roots has given me a unique and special experience that I cherish every day. At home, we follow many Indian traditions that keep me connected to my heritage. Whether it is performing daily morning pooja or celebrating many Indian festivals such as Holi and Diwali. Even though we are in China, my family and I make sure to keep these traditions alive, sharing them with our friends here whenever we can. These festivals remind me of the warmth and vibrancy of Indian culture. At the same time, living in China has allowed me to embrace Chinese culture and traditions. At school and in my neighborhood, I take part in Chinese festivals like the Lunar New Year. I love the excitement of the dragon and lion dances, the bright red decorations, and the fireworks that light up the sky. Eating traditional Chinese foods like dumplings during these celebrations is always a treat. Celebrating these festivals with my Chinese friends has helped me feel more connected to this country and its people. Language has been an important part of my life. At home, I speak Hindi and English with my family, but at

school and with friends, I speak Mandarin and English. Sometimes switching between these languages can be challenging, but it is also exciting. Being able to communicate in Mandarin and Hindi both has helped me connect with people from distinct backgrounds and makes me feel like I truly belong in both India and China. Living in China has also taught me important values such as kindness, patience, and respect. These values are deeply rooted in both Indian and Chinese cultures, and I see them reflected in the way people treat their families and communities. Growing up with these shared values has helped me become more understanding and compassionate. China feels like my second home in every way. The streets where I play, the schools I attend, and the friends I have made are all part of my daily life. Even though I am far from India, my Indian culture is always with me, but I feel proud to carry both cultures within me, and I believe this blend has made me more open-minded and curious about the world. Living between two cultures has been a wonderful journey. It has taught me to appreciate diversity and to find beauty in different traditions. I hope to continue embracing both my Indian heritage and my life in China, carrying the best of both cultures with me wherever I go.

Having lived in China for 8 years has taught me that it does not matter where we come from, but we are all the same and more importantly "we all belong". We need to celebrate the difference and the similarities between us! Living in China as an Indian has truly shaped who I am in ways I never expected. Growing up surrounded by two rich and beautiful cultures has given me a deep appreciation for traditions, values, and ways of life that are both different and similar. China feels like my second home a place where I have made lifelong friends, discovered new interests, and created memories that I will always treasure. Yet, at the same time, my Indian roots stay a strong and comforting part of me.

I find it fascinating how ideas, beliefs, and goods traveled between our countries long ago. The story of Buddhism moving from India to China is one of the most beautiful examples of how our cultures have influenced and enriched each other. It is like a bridge

built with respect and curiosity, linking two ancient civilizations. I feel like I am playing a part of a small but strong stone in this bridge that will make this bond grow for years to come. The way I have been received by local Chinese has taught me so much about understanding and kindness. It has opened my eyes to the importance of respecting unfamiliar cultures and learning from one another. I feel incredibly lucky to carry both Indian and Chinese cultures in my heart. This unique blend has made me more curious, more open, and more grateful for the world around me. I hope that as I grow, I can help bring people together, just like India and China have done, and celebrate the amazing things we share as human beings!



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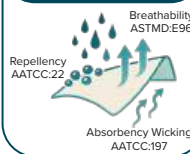
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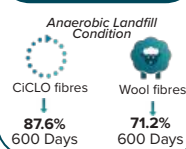
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# India Inc. Growth Stories celebration with Business Community

**Shanghai's Business  
Community comes  
together in great zeal  
to celebrate India Inc.  
Growth Stories**

An Insight Series event "India Inc. Growth Stories: Conquering the World", was successfully organized by The Consulate General of India, Shanghai and Indian Association Business Council (IABC), Indian Association on March 27, 2025.

The event was honored with the gracious presence of Consul General of India in Shanghai, Shri Pratik Mathur, Consul Ms. Rangashree TK, Consul Mr Rajat Ubhaykar, Consul Mr. Aditya Prabhudesai, Indian Association team and representatives from the business community. Key presenters for the evening, a galaxy of business leaders, included the top management from India's largest bank, software and services company, energy conglomerate, F&B consumer brand and legal house. They enlightened the audience with amazing growth stories of their respective industries and company's journey. The full-house gathering witnessed 75+ professionals from across corporations, consulates, chambers and academic institutions.

Shri Pratik Mathur kicked off the proceedings with an invigorating speech on the overall India growth story. He shared invaluable insights into India's GDP trajectory, Business reforms, Technology, Infrastructure and Innovation partnership.





Mr. Sitanshu Mohanty, CEO, State Bank of India, Shanghai Branch shared on growth drivers for India's banking industry and SBI as 'The Banker to every Indian' and it's global journey. He then dived into SBI's key learnings in terms of Adaptability and Resilience, Customer Centricity, Consistency and Systems/Procedures.



Mr. Kripa Ranjan, VP & Head Projects, Adani Energy Resources Shanghai Co. Ltd. shared about India's fast growing Energy sector, closely linked to high growth in critical infrastructure. He shared insights into Adani's Integrated Business Model 'from pit to plug' and key enablers of growth.



Mr. Suneet Puri, Country Head, Tata Consultancy Services China Co. Ltd. shared IT industry insights and TCS growth story. He stressed the importance of Empowerment, Governance, Communications and Compliance, as key pillars for their growth and winning highest levels of customer satisfaction.



Ms. Boski Gokani, Legal Advisor, India Desk, D'Andrea & Partners Legal talked about growth of FDI inflows into India. She highlighted sectors such as Renewable Energy, Auto, E-commerce, Banking and Finance; and called out critical challenges and lessons learnt from successful growth stories.





Mr. Jaivardhan Sharma, CEO, Shineroad India shared about how their company's growth over past 25 years. He spoke about key challenges in terms of cultural differences, logistics and limited product variety; and solutions they deployed to win over each of the challenges.



As a part of an ongoing business insight series by IABC, the evening also provided another fantastic opportunity for the business professionals to exchange ideas over the 'networking and refreshments' session.









With the felicitation of this insight series' speakers, lot of great feedback followed, alongside welcoming next round speakers interest and topic ideas.





# What's brewing in New China?

CEO's

*Breakfast at the Peace Hotel hosted by IABC*

**What's on top of every leader's mind in China today? How do we navigate the winds? What can we learn from our C-suite CEO peers? This question led IABC – Indian Association Business Council, to facilitate the invitation for the June breakfast, held on the 13th at the iconic Fairmont Peace hotel along the Bund in Shanghai.**

The closed door business breakfast discussion focused on **"What's brewing in New China amidst tech and trade wind changes"**, with a full house of 25 C-suite cross industry business leaders. 'What's brewing in new China' talks and discussion covered 4 different pillars –

**Structure** – How are Chinese Corporates adapting?

**Operations** – Operationalizing China opportunity?

**Market** – How to stay competitive in today's times?



**Connections** – How is China engaging with other regions?

Four distinguished speakers from diverse businesses like luxury automotive, global banking, 200-brands liquor company and the leading, trusted source of news, shed deep insights.



**Ms. Raluca Popa, Country Head, Corporate, Structured and Sustainable Finance, HSBC Bank China**

**Topic:**

Perspectives on how Chinese corporates are adapting to geo challenges such as trade and technological disruptions.

**Key Points:**

- Insights on the different structures and confidence level of MNC and Chinese corporates.
- Insights from the HSBC Trade Pulse Survey on differences in handling of trade tariffs.
- Adaptation strategies for Chinese corporates.
- Changes in recent year, rapid adoption of automation in various work streams of companies.
- The role of the domestic market in shaping overseas expansion.

**Dr. Bernd Pichler, Managing Director, Aston Martin Greater China**

**Topic:**

Personal learnings on how to stay competitive in today's times.

**Key Points:**

- Emphasis on the importance of relevance and balancing business desires.
- Insights from his extensive experience in leadership roles across various industries.
- Cross cultural leadership learnings.
- Stakeholders engagement with changing times.



**Ms. Brenda Goh, Shanghai Bureau Chief, Reuters China**

**Topic:**

How China is engaging with the world amidst tech and trade shifts.

**Key Points:**

- Overview of U.S.-China relations, including trade tensions and technological competition.
- Strategic relations with Europe and India, focusing on cybersecurity and market access.
- Tech being the biggest leverage to navigate and grow as seen across case studies.
- Chinese companies leverage of local resources when expanding overseas



**Mr. Atul Chhapparwal, Managing Director, DIAGEO Greater China**

**Topic:**

Operationalizing China opportunity with Changing Winds.

**Key Points:**

- Balancing operations by redefining what success is for your organization and people today.
- Strategies to cater to the evolving tastes and preferences of Chinese consumers.
- The significance of blending international brands with local cultural traditions.
- Space to experiment, more important today than ever before.



IABC CEO breakfast is an invitation-based platform giving opportunity for rich, closed door discussions on navigating the complexities of the current business environment in China, offering valuable insights from industry leaders from various sectors and various chamber partners as well. We follow the best practice of Chatham house rules of keeping the confidential discussions and specific shares within the room.

IABC has additional platforms like the business mixer gatherings for more open discussions. We look forward to acting on your feedback, connecting different voices to support the network.









The Indian Association Business Council (IABC) is a not for profit, volunteer based resource that is fostering connections, sharing knowledge, and facilitating leadership development among its members – with a wider cross chamber, cross sector business leaders too. By creating a platform for dialogue and collaboration, the IABC helps to address challenges and opportunities in the business landscape, thereby empowering its members to achieve greater success.



**IABC - INDIAN ASSOCIATION BUSINESS COUNCIL is a wing of Indian Association**

**IABC collective's volunteering ethos is to raise the awareness, inclusivity and influence of Indian professionals and business leaders' peer diaspora both within the Indian working community & with other national's business communities that will,**

- facilitate deeper day to day business excellence knowledge flow,
- expand business resource and leadership networking,
- cultivate cross industry senior leadership mentor access and
- broaden reach to organically connect more givers to help wider business community



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# *Indradhanush 2025*

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Trupti Aniket Sawant and Soumen Biswas

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Chhaya Chaudhari, Madhavi Mittoo, Neera Shinde and Ramya Anand

## **DJ for Diwali and BalDiwas**

Shrikant Swamy

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# Indian Association of China — Our Journey

**Founded in 1998**, the Indian Association Of China is a non-profit, volunteer-driven community that celebrates Indian culture and strengthens India-China friendship.

**For over 28 years**, IA has served as a bridge between communities — bringing people together through cultural festivals, social initiatives, education, wellness, and business networking.

**Our mission** is to connect, celebrate, and contribute — fostering unity, inclusion, and shared growth among Indians and friends of India in China

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