

# Newsletter

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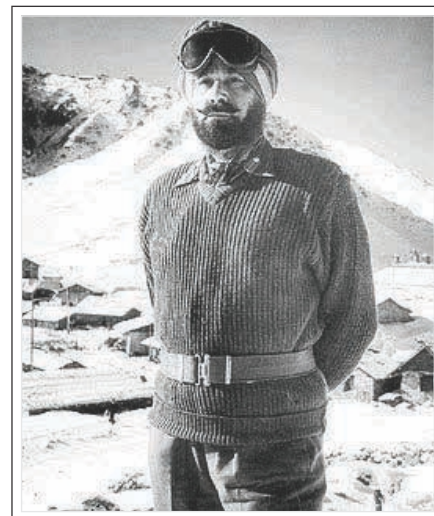
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## Indian Armed Forces: In Service of the Country Operations Gibraltar and Grand Slam

Pakistan's Operation Gibraltar was designed to wrest the state of Jammu and Kashmir from India. In pursuance of that objective, 8000 Mujahids and Razakars, led by Pakistan army officers, infiltrated into Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 1965 and fanned out into the valley. Their task was to create widespread disturbances, garner local support and set off a mass uprising against the state which would be difficult to handle and which would invite international attention. The infiltrators completely failed in their mission. They could not gather any local support, leave alone fomenting a revolt against the Indian state. In fact, locals often provided information about the infiltrators which led to their detection and arrest. By August 12, more than 1,200 intruders had been captured by either the Indian army or the state police.

The planners of Operation Gibraltar also did not correctly assess the nature of response such large infiltration would bring about from the Indian Army. Units of Indian Army's Western Command, which was led by Lt. Gen. Harbaksh Singh – a veteran of J&K who had fought there in 1947-

48, located along the ceasefire line gave a tough response immediately and went all out to crush and repulse the infiltration. By August 21, the infiltrators were on the run.



**Lt. Gen. Harbaksh Singh**

To guard against further infiltration, it was necessary for the Indian Army to command certain heights. Therefore, Lt. Gen. Harbaksh Singh, GOC-in-C Western Command launched two offensives. The first one was in the Kishenganga-Tithwal sector where four peaks, which overlooked Muzaffarabad-Kel Road (in PoK), needed to be captured. It took nearly



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Feedback, comments are welcome.

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a month and some hard fought battles to capture the vital heights overlooking the Mirpur bridge over river Kishenganga.

The second offensive was to capture Haji Pir Pass and other surrounding heights in the strategically located bulge between Uri and Poonch. A total of five infantry battalions with adequate artillery support were fielded to carry out the arduous task which had become an imperative. It was successfully completed between August 28 and 31 after fierce fighting and heavy casualties.

The prompt and resolute response of the Indian Army foiled Operation Gibraltar and by mid-September all raiders had been pushed back. Thus ended Operation Gibraltar.

Having failed in one mission, Pakistan embarked upon another called Operation Grand Slam on September 1, 1965 with the aim of seizing the vital Akhnoor town and bridge which would result in cutting off communications and supplies to Indian troops.

Pakistan started bombardment of Chhamb Valley in the early hours of September 1 taking the Indian Army completely by surprise. Akhnoor sector had not been well fortified and the Indian forces suffered heavy losses all through the day. On September 2, however, instead of

continuing with the attack Pakistan decided to change its commander. Maj. General Akhtar Hussain Mallik was replaced by Maj. General Yahya Khan. That gave the Indian Army enough time to rush in reinforcements and armour to Chhamb Valley to enable it to give a good fight to the Pakistanis from September 3 to 6. While offering strong resistance to the Pak army in Chhamb Valley, Indian Army launched its offensive in the Lahore and Sialkot sectors to deflect the immense pressure building up in Chhamb. By the evening of September 6, Pakistan started moving much of their armour and artillery out of Chhamb to the Sialkot sector.



**Indian Air Force Gnat Fighter**

On September 1, Indian Army's situation in Chhamb was so precarious that the Indian Air Force had to be brought into the war. Pakistan Air Force responded promptly with Sabre jets which were highly sophisticated and much superior to IAF's Vampires. IAF strikes accounted for 12 to 13 Patton

tanks. PAF shot down four Vampires. IAF then deployed highly maneuverable Gnat fighters and shot down a Sabre jet of Pakistan.

Indian offensive in the Lahore and Sialkot sectors stretched the Pakistan Army for over two hundred kms. Pakistan retaliated by attacking Khemkaran in Indian territory which placed the city of Amritsar under threat. The two armies fought a series of bruising battles in Lahore, Sialkot and Khemkaran sectors both on land and in air. The war witnessed the largest engagement of armoured vehicles and the largest tank battles since World War II. In the end, resources of both sides got exhausted. Neither could claim victory. In the words of Ramchandra Guha, 'In truth, the war must be considered a draw.' From the Indian point of view, it may be said that Pakistan had launched Operation Gibraltar and Operation Grand Slam with certain objectives and it failed to achieve those.

U. Thant, the Secretary General of the U.N. visited both Pakistan and India soon after they went to war. Through his good offices peace came about. India and Pakistan declared cease fire on September 23, 1965.

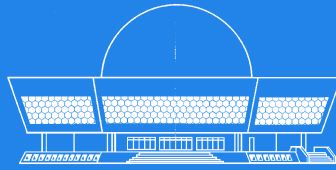
*Reference:*

India's Wars: A military history: 1947-1971 by Arjun Subramaniam

## What Nehru said....

However strong a country might be, it cannot escape destruction in case of a war. There is virtually no defence against the vast destructive power of hydrogen bombs and when these are available to both sides of the conflict, only utter destruction can follow. Perhaps out of evil may come some good and men's minds may be turned from fear and hatred to a realization that friendly approaches yield security and progress.

*From a letter to Chief Ministers, dated 23/24 January 1958.*



## NEHRU PLANETARIUM

### Manali Kallat Vainu Bappu: Astronomer par excellence

Vainu Bappu (10 August 1927 – 19 August 1982) was the only son of Surlanna Bappu who hailed from Tellichery. Surlanna Bappu worked as an astronomer in the Nizamiah Observatory in Hyderabad. It was only natural that Vainu Bappu often remarked, "I learnt astronomy in the lap of my father." Vainu Bappu's early education was at St. Anne's Convent and later at the Islamiah High School. He was a brilliant student with good oratorical and writing skills. A special exemption had to be sought for him to get admission into Nizam's College in 1942, as he was underage .

Vainu Bappu was a voracious reader of classics and loved poetry in both English and Urdu and also attended mushairas in Hyderabad. He was an outstanding cricketer and an excellent tennis player.

Vainu Bappu's love for astronomy started at school when he regularly visited the Nizamiah Observatory with his father. He showed a keen interest in the science of astronomy and the instruments used for observation. While in college, he built a spectroscope and published his first scientific paper in 1946.

Vainu wanted to pursue a career in astronomy and was lucky to meet Professor Harlow Shapley of Harvard University who was visiting

Hyderabad. Shapley had heard of Bappu as an amateur astronomer. Thus, Bappu got admission into Harvard in early 1949 to pursue research in astronomy with a Government of Hyderabad scholarship.



M. K. Vainu Bappu

On his first night at the Harvard observatory, Bappu discovered a new comet which was later designated as C/1949N1 by the International Astronomical Union. This comet revolves around the sun once every 60,000 years. Bappu was awarded the Donohoe Comet Medal of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific for this discovery.

Bappu completed his Ph.D. thesis in a record time of slightly over two and half years and was offered the

prestigious Carnegie Fellowship. This fellowship gave him access to the Palomar 200 inch telescope. Together with Professor O C Wilson he discovered a spectroscopic phenomenon that could help to determine the distance of stars. The discovery came to be known as the Wilson-Bappu effect.

Bappu returned to Hyderabad in early 1953 but had no job. In 1954, the search committee of the Uttar Pradesh State Observatory at Varanasi invited Bappu for the job of Chief Astronomer. Bappu joined the Observatory in November that year.

Within a week after he joined the observatory he sought an interview with Dr Sampurnanand, the Chief Minister, and explained to him the need for shifting the observatory to a better site. The request was granted and the observatory came up on Manora Peak near Nainital. Six years later in 1960, he moved to Kodaikanal Observatory as its Director and supported frontline research work in solar physics.

Bappu wanted to set up an observatory close to the earth's equator. This would help astronomers to access the northern and most of the southern sky. An extensive search was carried out for a suitable site. A plateau surrounded by

hills in the North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu was selected as a suitable site for the observatory.



Undated picture of Bappu (seated) at the Kavalur Observatory site

The observatory came to be known as Kavalur Observatory. Kavalur was a small hamlet close to the plateau. Observations at Kavalur started with an indigenously built 38 cm telescope. In 1972 Vainu Bappu purchased a reflecting telescope from Carl Zeiss Jena which was installed at Kavalur. This telescope has a mirror of 1 metre diameter. Vainu Bappu was also working on setting up an indigenously built telescope at Kavalur with a mirror diameter of 2.34 meters.

As he was adding world-class instruments to Kavalur he was also building a team of motivated astronomers. He handpicked astronomers from abroad and young research scholars from India and nurtured them.

During all these institution-building activities, Bappu did not ignore his research interest in astronomy. He continued the study of Wolf-Rayet stars and calcium emission lines in stellar chromospheres and finally became an authority on those subjects. He had more than 90 scientific publications. He loved chasing solar eclipses wherever they occurred to study the solar corona.



Kavalur Observatory

For his outstanding contribution to astronomy he received many awards, both Indian and foreign. The President of India decorated him with Padma Bhushan in 1981. His highest



Kodaikanal Solar Observatory

recognition came when he was elected President of the International Astronomical Union for the years 1979-1982, an honour that made the entire astronomical community in India proud.

Vainu Bappu was a member of various national and international scientific organizations. He attended all General Assemblies of the International Astronomical Union

(IAU) from 1958 onwards. IAU is the international association of astronomers and it is considered prestigious to be a member of this union. In 1967 he was elected Vice-President of the Union for six years and President in 1979. He was to address the 18th IAU General Assembly in 1982 to be convened at Patras, Greece from August 17 to 26. Unfortunately, this was not to be. Vainu Bappu breathed his last on 19 August 1982.

It was Bappu's wish to hold IAU-GA in India and the 19th GA was held at New Delhi from 18 to 28 November in the year 1985. The Assembly honoured Bappu by naming an asteroid after him which was called 2596 Vainu Bappu.

Today, astronomy in India has grown by leaps and bounds - not just in the optical wavelength but also along the entire electromagnetic spectrum, from infrared to gamma ray. It owes much to the vision and dedication of one man - M. K. Vainu Bappu.

# Folk Dances of India - Goa

Goa has a rich cultural heritage which is a beautiful amalgamation of eastern and western cultures, largely due to the foreign settlements in the state. Goan traditional folk dances are deep-rooted in customs and folklore and showcase the life of the Goans. Some of the popular folk dances of Goa are Dhangar, Tarangmel, Morulem, Bhadap, Dekhni and many more.

**Dhangar Dance:** Dhangars are a shepherd community who migrated from Saurashtra in western India and settled in the hilly regions of north and north-western parts of Goa. Their deity is *Bira Deva*. The Dhangar dance is performed only by men. Each dancer wears the ceremonial dress of a white *dhoti* and *kurta* with red embroidery and a turban. The dance is vigorous as it is performed with devotional zeal. The music which is predominantly percussive is provided by *dhol* or a barrel-shaped drum, *thaang* or a pair of cymbals and a drum with one face called *tasha*.



**Tarangmel Dance:** This dance celebrates the festivals of Dussehra and Holi. The youth of Goa swarm the streets in colorful groups waving flags and streamers (*tarang*) inviting one and all to join in the dance and imbibe the festive spirit. They shout out 'Ho! Ho!' to the rhythmic beat of the percussive music provided by *romut*, *dhol* and *tasha* which are various types of drums. The dancers wear colorful costumes and carry flags and streamers of varied hues.

**Morulem Dance:** In Goa, the menfolk of the Naik (Maratha) community perform a traditional peacock dance during the five day Shigmo festival. A peacock feather adorns each dancer's headgear. The dance movements, however, do not always imitate that of a peacock. It is such a popular dance in Goa that nowadays girls also have started participating in it. Shigmo is held in the lunar month of *Phalguna* (February/March). The dancers, along with other villagers, go to each house and dance in the open courtyard to celebrate the festival. On the last day of the festival, the villagers dance in an open village square. The accompanying musical instruments are the *peti* or the harmonium, *mridanga* or a drum with two faces, *kansalem* or large size gong and *jhanjor* cymbals.



**RAKESH CHANDRA JENA**



Painting by Rakesh Chandra Jena

**Rakesh Chandra** works with special children in Mumbai as an art therapist. His vibrant coloured abstract paintings are based on healing therapy. He has many successful shows to his credit.

**Tuesday 3rd August to  
Monday 9th August 2021  
(Circular Gallery)**

**KANAN KHANT**

**Kanan** studied Commercial Art from Nirmala Niketan College. Her



Painting by Kanan Khant

paintings are in mixed media on spiritual and natural themes.

**Tuesday 10th August to  
Monday 16th August 2021  
(Circular Gallery)**

**VIKAS LAVANDE .  
ANKUSH DHUPKAR**



Vilas Lavande

Ankush Dhupkar

**Vikas** is a self taught artist. His paintings are in oils and water colours on various subjects like animals, portraits and landscapes.

**Ankush** is a self taught artist and his landscapes are in oils, water colours and pen & ink. The detailing in his paintings are commendable.

**Tuesday 17th August to  
Monday 23rd August 2021  
(Circular Gallery)**

**KRISHNAJI BHIMRAO KULKARNI**

**Indian Masters' Retrospective**

Shri K. B. Kulkarni, fondly known as 'KB' by all his disciples as well as his near and dear ones was born on February 4, 1920 at Hindalga village in Belgaum district. He was a student of Haldankar's Art Institute and later became an art teacher. He was also on the Advisory Board for Art Education of Karnataka. He was a member of Karnataka State Lalit Kala Academy. He was awarded State Award in 1972.

Shri Kulkarni started his own Art Institute called 'Chitramandir' in 1951 to prepare students for higher art examinations and conducted regular classes till 1977. Chitramandir soon grew as an excellent school of art and in 1957 it received a grant from the government of Karnataka. From morning till eight in the evening,

Chitramandir was a much frequented place by the art fraternity.

During the long span of his career, Shri Kulkarni guided, trained and encouraged many students who are now acknowledged artists. He devoted his entire life to teaching and practicing art. He loved to paint in oils and water colours on nature and human figures. His pencil sketches were also equally well executed. For him 'the art of paintings was a mysterious activity'. In his words, "Though it is often said that art is a visual poetry, I think it is also music, where harmony, balance, rhythm are very important."

The Art Gallery had exhibited Shri K. B. Kulkarni's works as a part of the Indian Masters' Retrospective in



Painting in water colour

2007. This great artist breathed his last in his home in Belgaum on March 9, 2007.

# UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India

## 23. Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal is located on the right bank of the Yamuna River in a vast Mughal garden that encompasses nearly seventeen hectares, in Agra. It was built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal. It took almost twenty one years to construct it beginning from 1632 AD to 1653 AD. For its construction, masons, stone-cutters, inlayers, carvers, painters, calligraphers, dome builders and other artisans were requisitioned from the whole of the empire and also from Central Asia and Iran. Ustad Ahmad Lahori was the main architect of the Taj Mahal.

The Taj Mahal is considered to be the greatest architectural wonder in the whole range of Indo-Islamic architecture. The world's best known tomb stands on the banks of the river Yamuna and shimmers brightly on a moonlit night. The relief work in marble and inlay with precious and semi precious stones make it a monument apart.

The uniqueness of Taj Mahal lies in some truly remarkable innovations carried out by the horticultural planners and architects of Shah Jahan. The tomb is at one end of the quadripartite garden rather than in the exact centre, which adds rich depth to the distant view of the monument. It is raised on a square platform with the four sides of the octagonal base of the minarets extended beyond the square at the corners. The top of the platform is reached through a flight of steps in the centre of the southern side. The exterior of the tomb is square in plan, with neatly sloping corners. The large double storied domed chamber which houses the cenotaphs of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan is a perfect octagon. The exquisite marble lattice screen encircling both cenotaphs is a piece of superb workmanship. It is highly polished and richly decorated with inlay work. The borders of the frames are inlaid with precious stones representing flowers executed with wonderful perfection.

The most impressive in the Taj Mahal complex is the main gate which stands majestically in the centre of the southern wall of the forecourt. It is flanked by double arcade galleries. The garden in front of the galleries is subdivided into four quarters by two main walk-ways and each quarter is subdivided by the narrower cross-axial walkways, on the Timurid-Persian scheme of the walled-in garden.

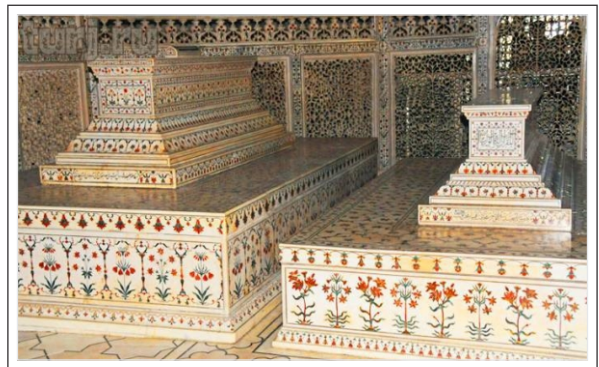
The Taj Mahal was declared a 'UNESCO World Heritage Site' in 1983.

*Further reading at Nehru Centre Library:*

- Taj Mahal by Raghu Rai; Times Books International, New Delhi, 1986. Call No. XLR954.0022/Rai. Barcode: 6241
- Taj Mahal: the illumined tomb; an anthology of seventeenth century Mughal and European documentary sources by W. E. Begley; The Aga Khan Programme for Islamic Architecture, Cambridge, 1989. Call No. R954.025/Beg/Des. Barcode: 8225



**Taj Mahal**



**Cenotaphs of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal**



**Main Gate**

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  - (2) VINAYAKRAO KARMARKAR (1996)
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2.	The outsider: My life in intrigue	<b>Frederick Forsyth</b>
3.	The twentieth wife: A novel	<b>Indu Sundaresan</b>
4.	Two great masters: Living a happy and joyous life	<b>Amrit Gupta</b>
5.	Bangladesh and India's security	<b>K. Subrahmanyam</b>
6.	Katha Chanakya: Stories of wisdom for dreamers and thinkers	<b>Radhakrishnan Pillai</b>
7.	My Kumaon: Uncollected writings	<b>Jim Corbett</b>
8.	The power of the mind to heal	<b>Joan Borysenko</b>
9.	Firsts, lasts and onlys of cricket: Presenting the most amazing cricket facts from the last 500 years	<b>Paul Donnelley</b>
10.	U.S.-India forward leap : The partnership building	<b>V. Rangaraj and Vaibhavi Palsule</b>

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