

# Newsletter

Vol. 26 Issue 2 FEBRUARY 2025

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## Nehru Centre



Discovery of India Building  
Dr. Annie Besant Road,  
Worli, Mumbai - 400 018.  
Phone : 24964676  
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40245400

Annual Subscription Rs. 100

## Events At a Glance...

### Library

#### Book Discussion

**Hug Yourself: Body Positivity  
and Empowerment Stories  
for Teenagers**

Edited by **Vinitha**

**1st February 2025**

**4.30 p.m.**

**Who Are We Hall**

### Poetry Evening

**Toasted Orange Embers**

Written by **Ms Ketaki Mazumdar**

**15th February 2025**

**4.30 p.m.**

**Who Are We Hall**

### Culture Wing

## मधुरव – बोरु ते ब्लॉग

Enjoy a rendering of selected writings  
and poems in Marathi to celebrate  
Marathi Bhasha Din.

Researcher & Writer

**Dr. Sameera Gujar-Joshi**

Concept & Direction

**Madhura Welankar-Satam**

**28th February 2025**

**6.30 p.m.**

**Nehru Centre Auditorium**

## Speeches of the Freedom Movement

### 5. ANNIE BESANT : The New Spirit of India

*Calcutta, 26 December, 1917*

*Annie Besant belonged to that small group of Britishers who devoted their lives for the emancipation of India and was even interned for her activities which included the demand for Home Rule. In her presidential address at the Thirty-Second session of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta, she elaborated the effects of war on the Indian economy and Indians in general. She also spoke about why India wanted Home Rule. Before she was elected President of the Indian National Congress she, along with B.G.Tilak, had electrified the country with their Home Rule Movement. Hers was one of the most eloquent speeches made at a Congress session.*

"The Great War, into the whirlpool of which nation after nation has been drawn, has entered its fourth year. The rigid censorship which has been established makes it impossible for any outside government to forecast its duration. To me, speaking for a moment not as a politician but as a student of spiritual laws, its end is sure. The true object of this War is to prove the evil of, and to destroy, autocracy, the enslavement of one nation by another, and to place on sure foundations the God-given right to self-rule and self-development of every nation. Also, to restore the right of the individual, of the smaller

self, so far as is consistent with the welfare of the larger self of the nation.

Since 1885, the Congress constantly protested against the ever-increasing military expenditure, but its voice became the voice of the educated Indian, the most truly patriotic and loyal class of the population. Year after year, the Congress continued to remonstrate against the costs of the army, until in 1902 after the futile protests of the intervening years, it condemned an increase of pay to British soldiers in India which put an additional burden on Indian revenues by £786,000 a year. It pointed out that the British garrison was unnecessarily large, as was shown by the withdrawal of large bodies of British soldiers for services in South Africa and China. Between 1859 and 1904, for forty-five years Indian troops were engaged in thirty-seven wars and expeditions. In 1863, the Indian army consisted of 140,000 men, with 65,300 white officers.

The Great War began on 4 August, and in that very month and in the early part of September, India sent an expeditionary force of three divisions consisting of two infantry and one cavalry. Another cavalry division joined them in France in November. 'The first arrived,' said Lord Hardinge, 'in time to fill a gap that could not otherwise have been filled.' He added

pathetically: 'There are very few survivors of those two splendid divisions of infantry.' Truly, their homes are empty, but their sons shall enjoy in India the liberty for which their fathers died in France. The army in India has thus proved a great imperial asset, and in weighing India's contribution to the War, it should be remembered that India's forces were no hasty improvisation, but were a fully equipped and well-supplied army which had previously cost India annually a large sum to maintain.

Great Britain needs India as much as India needs England, both for prosperity in peace as well as for safety in war. Mr. Montagu has wisely said that 'for equipment in war a nation needs freedom in peace.' Therefore, I say that for both countries alike, the lesson of the War is Home Rule for India.

India was forced to see before her a future of perpetual subordination: the Briton rules in Great Britain, the Frenchman in France, the American in America, each dominion in its own area but the Indian was to rule nowhere; alone among the peoples of the world, he was not to feel his own country as his own. 'Britain for the British' was right and natural; 'India for the Indians' was wrong, even seditious. It must be 'India for the Empire', or not even for the Empire, but 'for the rest of the Empire'. India's attitude has changed to meet the changed attitude of the Government of India and Great Britain. But let no one imagine that the consequential change of attitude connotes any change in her determination to win Home Rule. She is ready to consider terms of peace, but it must be 'peace with honour', and honour in this context implies freedom. If this not be granted, a more vigorous agitation will commence.



Annie Besant

India demands Home Rule for the following reasons: one essential and vital, the other less important but weighty. Firstly, because freedom is the birthright of every nation. Secondly, because her most important interests are now made subservient to the interests of the British Empire without her consent, and her resources are not utilized for her greatest needs. It is enough only to mention the money spent on her army, not for local defence, but for imperial purposes, as compared with that spent on primary education.

All we say in the matter is: you have not succeeded in bringing education, health and prosperity to the masses of the people. Is it not time to give the Indians a chance of doing for their own country, similar to what Japan and other nations have done for theirs? Surely the claim is not unreasonable.

We have been assured time after time that India is totally unfit for democratic

institutions, having always lived under absolute rule of sorts. The people of India are quite capable of administering their own affairs. They have deeply rooted in them the workings of the local government. The village communities, each of which is a little republic, are the most abiding of Indian institutions. Holding the position we do in India, every little duty and policy should induce us to leave as much governance as possible to the people.

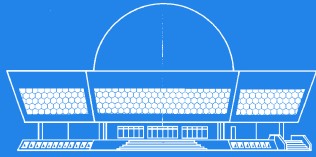
To see India free, to see her hold her head high among other nations, to see her sons and daughters respected everywhere, to see her worthy of her mighty past, engaged in building a yet mightier future; is not this worth working for, worth suffering for, worth living and worth dying for? Is there any other land which evokes such love for her spirituality, such admiration for her literature, such homage for her valour, as this glorious mother of nations, from whose womb went forth the races that now, in Europe and America, are leading the world?

After a history of millennia, stretching far back out of the ken of mortal eyes; having lived with, but not died with, the mighty civilizations of the past; having seen them rise and flourish and decay, until only their sepulchres remained, deep buried in the earth's crust; having wrought, and triumphant, and having suffered, and having survived all changes, unbroken India, who has been verily the crucified among nations, now stands on her resurrection morning, the immortal, the glorious, the ever-young, and India shall soon be seen, proud and self-reliant, strong and free, the radiant splendour of Asia, as the light and the blessing of the world."

### What Nehru said....

The idea of some kind of penance, *tapasya*, is inherent in Indian thought, both among the thinkers at the top and the unread masses below... It is necessary to appreciate it in order to understand the psychology underlying the mass movements which have convulsed India under Gandhiji's leadership.

... from Chapter 4, *The Indus Valley Civilization, The Discovery of India*.



## NEHRU PLANETARIUM

Tel: 022-40245413  
Mobile : 9892890510

## SKY SHOW : BIOGRAPHY OF THE UNIVERSE

12 noon (Hindi) 1:30 p.m. (Marathi)  
3:00 p.m. (English) 4:30 p.m. (Hindi)

(MONDAY CLOSED)

Tickets will be available online and at the Booking Counter.  
Visitors are expected to strictly follow Covid-19 norms.

Email: managernpmumbai@gmail.com

### The International Space Station - III

We continue to give brief notes on timings and information about various modules attached to the International Space Station.

#### Cupola, the Dome

The 1.5-metre-high and 3-meter-diameter Cupola (the Dome) was berthed onto the Earth-facing port of the Tranquility module on 15 February 2010.

Cupola was first conceived in 1987 as a workstation to operate the station's Canadarm-2 robotic arm and to manoeuvre vehicles outside the station. It would also observe and support the spacewalks of the astronauts. However, it was not considered an essential addition to the ISS. Every time NASA faced a budget cut, the manufacturing of Cupola was halted.

The Cupola has six trapezoidal side windows and a circular top window 80 cm in diameter. Each window uses advanced technologies to protect the glass panes from years of exposure to solar radiation and impact from other space debris. The sensitive glass panes are made from fused silica. These panes can be replaced in space. The window shutters are manually controlled. Each window has a knob with a direct mechanical linkage to the outside shutter assembly.

The Cupola is an observation and work area for the ISS crew. Two astronauts can work together inside the Cupola. They can monitor and control the ISS's external activities, such as spacecraft arrival and departure. The Cupola also provides a view of the Earth. Astronauts take most pictures of the Earth from the Cupola.



Cupola, a room with a view on space and on earth  
(Photo credit: ESA)



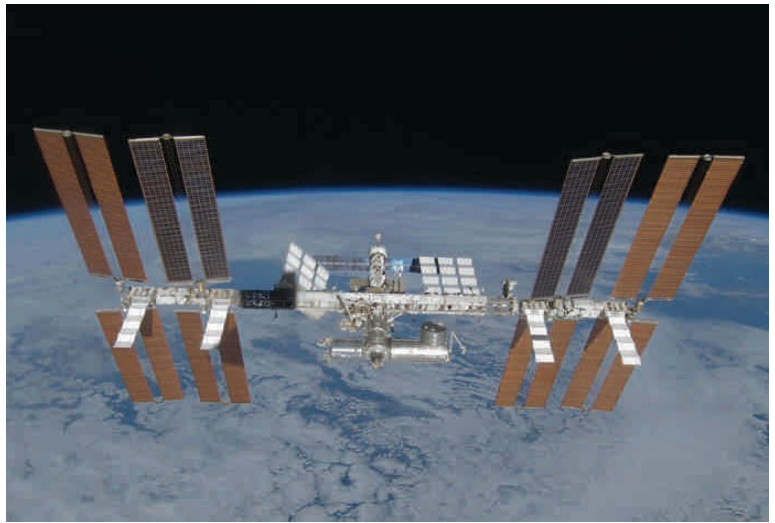
Dextre, the International Space Station's fine-tuned robotic hand, is pictured attached to the Canadarm2 robotic arm.  
(Photo credit: NASA)

The ISS has many other modules, instruments, and apparatuses. Some do not require pressurisation and can be fitted outside the ISS, while others are placed inside the ISS at their designated locations.

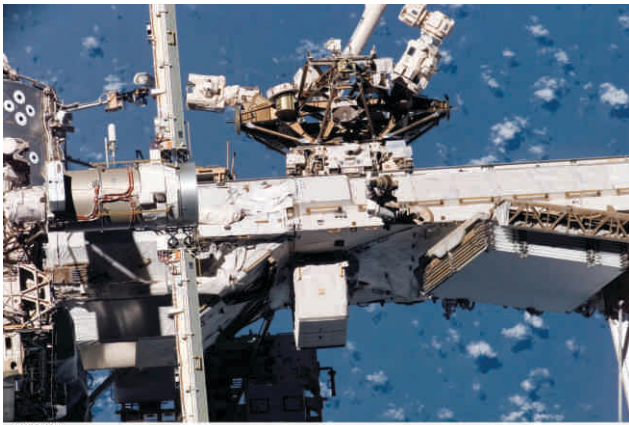
The largest is the **Integrated Truss Structure\*** (ITS), a technological marvel of eleven segments. These segments are attachment points for instruments and gadgets, like solar arrays for internal power generation and thermal control radiators to control the heat generated from the ISS. These segments also attach external payloads that do not require pressurisation. These segments of the ITS are also used by the astronauts doing EVA and are physically monitored by them.

The Integrated Truss Structure also serves as a base for the Mobile Servicing System and has three main components. The first is **Canadarm 2**, the largest robotic arm on the ISS. The second is **Dextre**. It is a robotic manipulator with two arms and a rotating 'torso'. It is equipped with power tools and light sources, which are used when fine-controlling tasks such as installation of small equipment or replacing a defective component.

The third component is the **Movable Mobile Base System**. It is a movable platform fixed to rails along the length of the main truss. Canadarm and Dextre's robotic arms can use this platform to reach any part of US Orbital Segment (USOS). Later, a fixture was added to Zarya of Russian Orbital Segment (ROS) so that Canadarm 2 could move into ROS.



**The space station, showing the completed truss assembly (as of March 2009)** (Photo credit: NASA)



**The Mobile Base System (MBS) is a work platform that moves on the Mobile Transporter rail car along rails on the International Space Station's integrated truss system.** (Photo credit: NASA)

In the last 25 years, scientists and engineers have conducted many interesting experiments in near-zero gravity environments. These include life science experiments, such as growing vegetables. There was a curious case of a missing tomato grown inside the ISS. Initially, it was thought that an astronaut ate it, but later, the tomato was found in a storage bag.

Technological experiments in metallurgy, where scientists study the properties of alloys (a mixture of two or more metals), have been conducted. There have also been ongoing studies and measurements of radiation in outer space, which comes from the Sun and other celestial sources.

## End of the Mission

Initially, the ISS was planned to work for fifteen years, but it has continued to serve for ten extra years. Some old modules that have been in space for nearly twenty years have started showing signs of ageing. NASA is now considering decommissioning the ISS by 2030.

The plan is to use the funds needed to repair the old modules for new projects, such as restarting the exploration of the Moon.

Russia has already started planning to 'pull out' of the ISS programme by 2025. However, it will continue to provide the required support to the ISS until 2028.

According to the UN Outer Space Treaty, an agency is legally responsible for all the spacecraft and modules it launches. If an unmaintained spacecraft, module, or satellite enters the Earth's atmosphere, it can be dangerous to other orbiting facilities and life on Earth.

In June 2024, NASA awarded SpaceX a contract to build a Deorbit Vehicle to decommission and destroy the ISS safely.

\* A truss is part of a structure (like a bridge or a building) and is an assembly of rods and beams connected to each other to make the entire structure right.

# Culture Wing



February 27 is observed as Marathi Bhasha Din in honour of renowned Marathi playwright and poet Vishnu Vaman Shirwadkar (Kusumagraj).

Enjoy a rendering of selected writings and poems in Marathi. The evolution and development of the Marathi language, its richness and depth will be presented in a unique theatrical performance.

*Researcher & Writer*

**Dr. Sameera Gujar-Joshi**

*Concept & Direction*

**Madhura Welankar-Satam**

*Cast*

**Madhura Welankar-Satam,  
Akanksha Gade, Juhi Bhagwat,  
and Shrinath Mhatre**



**Friday, 28th February 2025, 6.30 p.m.**

**Entry: Entrance cards will be available on Monday, 24th February 2025 from 10.30 a.m. onwards until availability from the ticket counter of Nehru Centre Auditorium**

### SANDHYA KETKAR



Sandhya has worked as Lecturer in SNTD College of Art and Commerce, in the art and painting department.

**Tuesday 4th February 2025  
to Monday 10th February 2025  
(AC Gallery)**

### SANGEETA GULEKAR



Sangeeta's artwork is made by cutting strips of paper which are then quilled and assembled together to complete the picture.

**Tuesday 4th February 2025  
to Monday 10th February 2025  
(Circular Gallery)**

### ARTIVAL FOUNDATION

Artival Foundation is a trust which promotes art for the betterment of the society.

**Tuesday 11th February 2025  
to Monday 17th February 2025  
(AC Gallery)**

### ABHIJIT CHAUBAL

Abhijit is an alumnus of Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai. His works comprise of all types of computerized art works for print production.

**Tuesday 11th February 2025  
to Monday 17th February 2025  
(Circular Gallery)**

### EKNATH GIRAM RAMESH DESHMANE ARTI GIRAM SANJAY RAUT



Eknath Giram

This group show will exhibit artworks in pastel and pencil on paper and acrylic on canvas.

**Tuesday 18th February 2025  
to Monday 24th February 2025  
(AC Gallery)**

### DINKAR PAWAR JAGTAP VAMAN BHUSHAN UDGIKAR MANJIRI RAUT RAVI STHUL, AMOL PAWAR



Jagtap Vaman

This group of talented artists will showcase their works in water colour, abstract and semi-abstract painting.

**Tuesday 18th February 2025  
to Monday 24th February 2025  
(Circular Gallery)**

### PRAMOD NAGPURE



With a G.D. Art in Sculpture & Modelling, Pramod's artworks are in oil on canvas.

**Tuesday 25th February 2025  
to Monday 3rd March 2025  
(AC Gallery)**

### DR. MEERA SAWANT & GROUP

Meera Sawant and the group of S.N.D.T. College of Art will exhibit their artworks on various subjects and mediums.

**Tuesday 25th February 2025  
to Monday 3rd March 2025  
(Circular Gallery)**

# **RAMSAR WETLAND SITES IN INDIA**

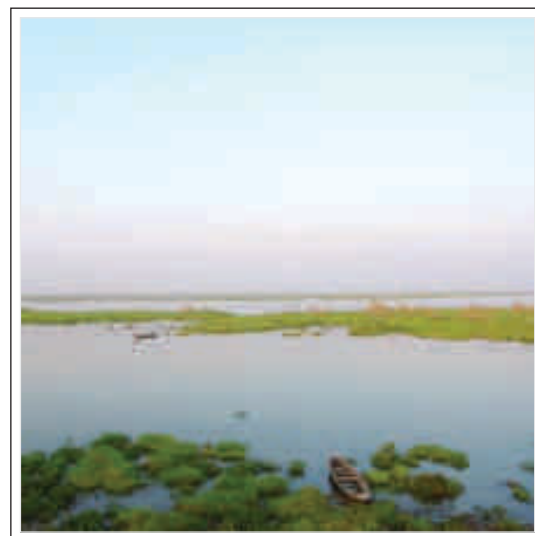
## **23. Uttar Pradesh - 1**

### **1. Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary**

Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary is a freshwater marshland in the Sant Kabir Nagar district and also the largest natural floodplain wetland of eastern Uttar Pradesh. It is internationally important for its birdlife as it supports over eighty species. Over 25 species migrate on the Central Asian Flyway, some of which are threatened or near-threatened such as the endangered Egyptian vulture, the vulnerable greater spotted eagle, common pochard, swamp francolin, the near-threatened oriental darter and woolly-necked stork.

The wetland also supports 119 plant species and 45 species of fish; it is home to the vulnerable European carp and the catfish Wallago Attu and the near-threatened Gangetic ailia and silver carp. The site is popular for recreation and tourism and contributes to food supply and nutrient cycling.

Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary was designated as a Ramsar site on 29th June 2021.



**Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary**

### **2. Haiderpur Wetland**

This is a human-made wetland constructed in 1984 at the Madhya Ganga Barrage on a floodplain of the river Ganga and located in the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary. Haiderpur Wetland provides habitat for numerous animal and plant species, including more than 30 species of plants, over 300 species of birds including 102 water birds, more than 40 fish and more than ten mammal species.

This diverse habitat supports more than 15 globally threatened species, such as the critically endangered gharial and hog deer, black-bellied tern, steppe eagle, Indian skimmer and gold mahseer. The site supports more than 25,000 waterbirds, serves as a breeding site for the near-threatened Indian grass bird and provides refuge to the northern subspecies population of the vulnerable swamp deer, during its seasonal flood-driven migration. Haiderpur Wetland helps to support the livelihoods of the local communities as it contributes to the maintenance of hydrological resources.

Haiderpur Wetland was designated as a Ramsar site on 8th December 2021.



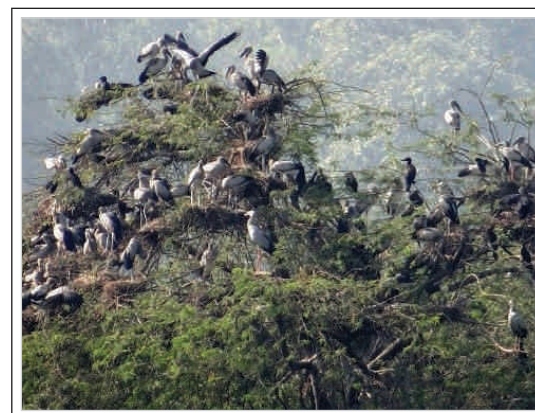
**Haiderpur Wetland**

### **3. Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary**

A virtual heaven for bird-watchers, nature lovers and those seeking a break from the humdrum of city life, the Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary nestles in a tranquil lush green stretch in the Unnao District. The sanctuary becomes a lively haven in winters to many international and national migratory birds like garganey teal, mallard, purple moorhen, little grebe, spoonbill duck, red wattled lapwing, wigeon and many more winged guests.

The sanctuary has a children's park, a cafeteria, an interpretation centre and a motel.

Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary was designated as a Ramsar site on 19th September 2019.



**Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary**

**NEHRU CENTRE  
PUBLICATIONS****Books for Sale**

Nehru Revisited  
 India's Defence Preparedness  
 Nehru and Indian Constitutionalism  
 Internal Security in India  
 Constitutionalism and Democracy  
 in South Asia  
 मुंबई: काल आणि आज  
 Mumbai: Past and Present  
 India and Central Asia  
 Witness to History  
 India-Russia Relations  
 India-China Relations  
 Remembering Einstein  
 Challenges to Democracy in India  
 Rule of Law in a Free Society  
 Science in India  
 Exploring The Universe

**Colourful art catalogues for sale**

- (1) GOPALRAO DEUSKAR (1995)
  - (2) VINAYAKRAO KARMARKAR (1996)
  - (3) MITTER BEDI (1997)
  - (4) S. L. & G. S. HALDANKAR (1998)
  - (5) BALAJI & HARISH TALIM (1999)
  - (6) D. G. KULKARNI (DIZI) (2001)
  - (7) NARAYAN L. SONAFADEKAR (2003)
  - (8) NAGESH B. SABANNAVAR (2004)
  - (9) SAMAKALEEN (2005)
  - (10) VINAYAK S. MASOJI (2006)
- and many more...

**ART FUSION catalogues**

2007 / 2008 / 2009 / 2010 / 2011 / 2012 /  
 2013 / 2014

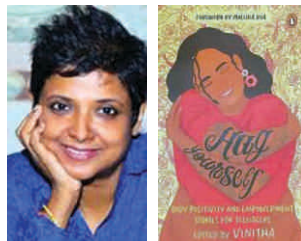
**Set of five assorted gift cards**  
 Designed by differently abled children

**SANSKRUTI - CD ROM :**  
 An aesthetics of Indian culture

**DISCOVERY OF INDIA (VCD)**

**Set of ten greeting cards**  
 Based on Discovery of India Exposition

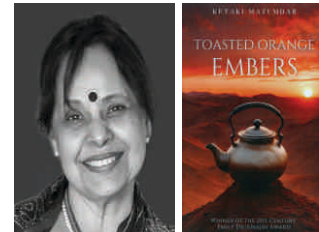
**Available at:**  
 Book Stall, Ground Floor,  
 Discovery of India Building,  
 Nehru Centre, Worli, Mumbai - 400 018.

**Book Discussion**

**Hug Yourself: Body Positivity  
 and Empowerment Stories  
 for Teenagers**  
 Edited by **Vinitha**

Too dark, too fair, too skinny, too big, too much hair, too little hair— today's teenagers deal with endless body-image issues. Regardless of how we look, it's **who** we are that matters. Sixteen wonderful writers come together in this powerful anthology to share narratives that explore multiple themes on body positivity with the hope of helping empower teenagers to navigate their modern worlds.

Date: **Saturday,  
 1st February 2025**  
 Venue:  
**Who Are We Hall**  
 Time: **4.30 p.m.**

**Poetry Evening**

**Toasted Orange Embers**  
 Written by  
**Ms Ketaki Mazumdar**

The poems in this book are woven into a tapestry of deep and subtle colours, pulsating with life, whispers of love, mystical mysteries, intricate relationships of passion and spirituality, empathy and caring of human frailties and inner storms... yet always reassuringly comforting and healing.



Date: **Saturday,  
 15th February 2025**  
 Venue:  
**Who Are We Hall**  
 Time: **4.30 p.m.**



**Audience:** Open to all. Entry by prior registration only  
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**10.00 a.m. to 5.45 p.m.**  
**On all working days**



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