

Newsletter

Vol. 26 Issue 8 AUGUST 2025

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Nehru Centre



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Annual Subscription Rs. 100

Events At a Glance...

Library

Book Discussion

Flowers of the Sun: The People and
Land of Kutch, c.1740–2020

Saturday, 2nd August 2025
4.00 p.m.

Meet-The-Authors

Of Revolutionaries and Bravehearts
by Ms Mallika Ravikumar

A Demon in Dandi
by Ms Lavanya Karthik

Monday, 11th August 2025
10.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.

Poetry Evening
Poems on the theme Yutori

Saturday, 30th August 2025
4.00 p.m.

Venue for all events:
Who Are We Hall

Culture Wing

मराठी संगीत नाटक महोत्सव
(August 11-14 2025)

संगीत हे बंध रेशमाचे
संगीत बावणखणी
संगीत अमृतवेल
संगीत गोष्ट संयुक्त मानापमानाची

Nehru Centre Auditorium
(Please see details on page 5)

Speeches of the Freedom Movement

9. LALA LAJPAT RAI
Boycott Simon Commission
New Delhi, 16 February 1928

The Tory Government in Britain had created the Royal Statutory Commission on 8 November 1927 with John Simon as Chairman (hence the name Simon Commission) and six other members. All seven were members of the British Parliament; all equally uninformed about India. The genesis of the Commission lay in a provision contained in the Government of India Act of 1919 that at the end of ten years the working of the reforms introduced by the Act will be inquired into by a Commission with a view to determine what further action, if any, should be taken. Indian reaction to the appointment of the Commission was one of shock and resentment because not a single Indian was included as a member. The exclusion of Indians from a body which was to prepare the future Constitution of India was unreasonable on the face of it. The nation's decision to boycott the Commission met with great success. On 3 February 1928, the day when the Commission members arrived in Bombay, a complete 'hartal' (strike) was observed in all important towns of India and huge demonstrations were witnessed,

with people waving black flags and shouting 'Simon, go back.'

While people demonstrated in the streets, Lala Lajpat Rai echoed their sentiments in the Legislative Council with forceful arguments in a memorable speech while introducing a resolution for boycotting the Commission. The resolution received overwhelming support from the non-official elected members in the House and was passed by 68 to 62 votes. After successfully conveying the sentiments of the Indians in the council, Lala Lajpat Rai led the demonstrators in Lahore; was hit on the chest by a British officer and died a few days later, being the only national leader to meet such a heroic end.

"I rise to move the resolution that stands in my name and I do so with the profoundest sense of responsibility that I have ever felt in the discharge of any public duty. I shall give very briefly and categorically my reasons for the action that I am taking. My first reason is that I have no faith in the bonafides

of the government or of the people who have appointed this Commission.

My second reason is that I have no faith in the competency of the Commission that has been appointed. I acknowledge, Sir, that Sir John Simon is one of the ablest members of the British nation and I give the members of the Commission the fullest possible credit for their good intentions and good motives. But the very fact which has been made a ground of their appointment, namely, their ignorance of India, Indian history and Indian politics, is, in my judgement, their greatest disqualification to take on the task which has been entrusted to them. The members of the Commission cannot make any intelligent recommendations which may be acceptable both to England and to India. My impression is that all the Commission will do is to practically record in a gramophone what they will be told by the bureaucracy here. Eventually they will record their recommendations in another gramophone in consultation with other people in England. The very secretive methods which they are employing in going about their business justifies my making this statement. They move from place to place in secrecy and an air of mystery surrounds them. That in itself shows that the people who guide them will practically choose what they want to present before them.

My third ground for the action which I am taking is that I have no faith in any Commission's ability to settle the



Lala Lajpat Rai

Indian problem. I question the competency of any Commission to decide the ability of nations to rule themselves and to settle Constitutions for them which have to be worked by them in their own interests.

One of the things that the Secretary of State has told us is that it is the duty of Parliament, and Parliament alone, to consider and decide this question. He says that the Parliament took the government of the country from the East India Company, saved India from a welter of anarchy, and if today the British were to go out of India, India would again be thrown into a welter of anarchy. Unfortunately, the Secretary of State's and our notions of anarchy differ very much. He has spoken of the glorious and the great association of England with India. Yes, great and glorious from the British point of view, but inglorious and infamous from the Indian point of view. I do not admit that the association of England with India has done us any substantial good. This is the chief point of difference between

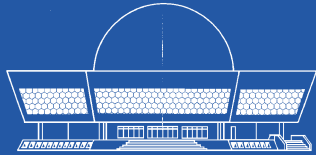
us and the Secretary of State for India.

What anarchy can be greater than the anarchy of the law imposed at the point of the bayonet by a foreigner or body of foreigners? What anarchy can be greater than the anarchy involved in the position that the people for whom governments are made, for whom governments are constituted, should have no voice in the determination of their fate? There can be no anarchy greater than that. All anarchies are followed at some time or the other by established and sound systems of government. No progress is made by threats. We are not scared by these threats of anarchy. I wish to say from my position in this House that I am not at all afraid of any anarchy that might follow the withdrawal of the British from this country. I am prepared for the worst. What can be worse than the conditions in which we are now living? There can be nothing worse. We have reached the lowest depths of misery and degradation imaginable. There can be nothing lower than that and if the British government thinks that by their withdrawal we shall be warring with each other, I shall welcome even that condition, because quite naturally after a few years of warring and quarrelling, and even bloodshed, we shall settle down and form some kind of government, which will be our own handiwork, and which we can improve later on. The members of the European group are laughing at me. My reply is: You can have a hearty laugh, because you are like the painter who paints his own picture."

What Nehru said....

Our bodies and our souls change from moment to moment; they cease to be, and something else like them and yet different, appears and then passes off. In a sense we are dying all the time and being reborn and this succession gives the appearance of an unbroken identity.

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



NEHRU PLANETARIUM

Tel: 022-40245413
Mobile : 9892890510

SKY SHOW : COSMIC LIFE

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

(MONDAY CLOSED)

Email: managnpmumbai@gmail.com

Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla on the ISS

On June 26, 2025, at precisely 5.45 p.m, history was made when Gp. Capt. Shubhanshu Shukla, who is an Indian Air Force test pilot, engineer and ISRO astronaut entered the International Space Station (ISS).

He and the other three crew members of Axiom Mission 4 successfully lifted off from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida on June 25, 2025, at 12:01 hrs. IST. Gp. Capt. Shukla served as the Mission Pilot. The other members of the crew were Mission Commander Peggy Whitson, Mission Specialists Sławosz Uznański-Wiśniewski, a European Space Agency project astronaut from Poland, and Tibor Kapu representing the Hungarian Space Office.

On board the ISS in a small but traditional welcome ceremony, Mission Commander Peggy Whitson gave Gp. Capt. Shukla his pin, designating him as Astronaut Number 634. Gp. Capt. Shukla is the second Indian astronaut after Rakesh Sharma, who ventured into space in 1984.



Tibor Kapu, Shubhanshu Shukla, Peggy Whitson and Uznanski-Wisniewski in Axiom-4 ready to launch

Shubhanshu Shukla is the youngest of three siblings, born to Shambhu Dayal Shukla and Asha Shukla who live in Lucknow. His schooling was at the City Montessori School, Lucknow. After the 1999 Kargil War, he wanted to join the armed forces and enrolled in the National Defence Academy (NDA). He completed his military training and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science from the NDA in 2005.

Subsequently, he was selected for the flying branch and underwent training at the Indian Air Force Academy. In June 2006, he was commissioned into the Fighter stream of the Indian Air Force as a Flying Officer. He is a combat leader and seasoned test pilot with about 2,000 hours of flying experience in various aircraft, including the Su-30 MKI, MiG-21, MiG-29, Jaguar, Hawk, Dornier 228, and An-32.

In August 2024, Shukla began his training and preparation for the ISS (see box with Shukla's space career timeline). The preparation included classroom instruction, simulator exercises and full-team scenarios in realistic mockups of space station modules. It also covered practice in payload operations and safety protocols, ensuring that the crew was prepared to live and work in the station's microgravity environment and meet their mission objectives.

At the ISS, Shukla carried out various scientific experiments in addition to his primary duty as a Mission Pilot. His experiments included germinating green gram (moong) and fenugreek (methi) seeds. The experiments aim to create self-sustaining food systems for future long-duration missions and introducing 'space agriculture.'

One crucial experiment that Shukla and the crew worked on is investigating muscle stem cell cultures to examine the muscle repair process and to test chemicals that support mitochondrial function. Mitochondria are cellular organelles, the powerhouses of the cell, responsible for generating most of the cell's energy. The results are expected to further help research muscle health during long-duration space missions, and also help people on



Group Capt Shubhanshu Shukla conducts a scientific experiment on the ISS. The two numbers at the bottom left corner show the speed of the Station and its height above the ground.

earth who have age-related muscle loss and muscle-wasting diseases, and assist athletes and people recovering from surgery. He has recorded an educational video for Indian students explaining how the human digestive system adapts in space.

He has also conducted a study on tardigrades or water bears, which are known as the 'Bengaluru strain' of the tardigrade. These species were discovered on the campus of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru. When exposed to lethal ultraviolet radiation, these tardigrades absorb harmful rays and emit harmless blue fluorescence instead. That was the first direct experimental evidence of photoprotective fluorescence in any organism.



Shukla with other members of the crew in the laboratory of the ISS



Tardigrade: a micro-animal that can survive harsh conditions

The study focused on tardigrades' survival, revival, and reproductive behaviour in space. These tiny creatures are segmented micro-animals with eight legs tipped with claws or pads. They endure extreme conditions — dehydration, temperatures, pressures, radiation, and space vacuum — by entering a dormant state called cryptobiosis where metabolic functions nearly stop.

Shukla also helped deploy and manage samples for the space microalgae investigation. This study has enormous potential. Microalgae are already valued on earth for their rapid growth and nutritional content and are being cultivated in space to observe how microgravity influences their metabolism, genetic activity and biomass yield.

These hardy organisms may serve as spacefarers' food, fuel or even a pharmaceutical source for future space missions.

Shukla is married to Kamna Mishra, a professional dentist, who was Shubhanshu's classmate at school. The couple has a son.

Shukla's space career timeline

2019 - Included in the astronaut selection process at the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM), an organisation under the Indian Air Force for the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme.

2020 - Shortlisted in the final four by IAM basic training at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center.

2021 - After completing basic training, he returned to India to the Astronaut Training Facility in Bangalore. He also completed Master of Engineering in aerospace engineering from the Indian Institute of Science.

February 27, 2024 - His name and that of three others were officially announced as astronaut team members for India's first human space mission.

August 2024 - Training for Ax-4 begins at NASA's Johnson Space Centre in Houston, focusing on space station operations.

January 2025 - Shukla is selected for Axiom Mission 4.

June 25/26, 2025 - Shukla leaps to space as the second Indian astronaut and enters the ISS as the first Indian.

July 14, 2025, 4.35 p.m. IST - Shukla and Ax-4 astronauts enter the Dragon Capsule. Undocking is completed.

July 15, 2025, 3.05 p.m. IST - Splash down - Mission completed.

३३वा मराठी संगीत नाटक महोत्सव २०२५

दि. ११ ते १४ ऑगस्ट, २०२५

संगीत हे बंध रेशमाचे



सोमवार, ११ ऑगस्ट २०२५
सायंकाळी ६.०० वाजता

Produced by:
**Bharat Natya
Sanshodhan Mandir,
Pune**
Written by:
Shri Ranjit Desai
Directed by:
Shri Ravindra Khare
Music by:
**Pt. Jitendra
Abhishekhi**
Music Guidance by:
Shri Rajiv Paranjape

*Duration: 3 hours 15
minutes with one interval*

संगीत बावणखणी

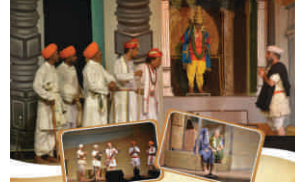


मंगळवार, १२ ऑगस्ट २०२५
सायंकाळी ६.०० वाजता

Produced by:
**Vidyadhar Gokhale
Sangeet Natya
Pratishthan, Mumbai**
Written by:
Shri Vidyadhar Gokhale
Directed by:
Shri Shrikant Dadarkar
Music:
Shri Yeshwant Deo
Music Guidance by:
**Shri Dnyanesh
Pendharkar**

*Duration: 3 hours
with one interval*

संगीत अमृतवेल



बुधवार, १३ ऑगस्ट २०२५
सायंकाळी ६.०० वाजता

Produced by:
Khalwayan, Ratnagiri
Written by:
Dr. Shrikrishna Joshi
Director:
Shri Manohar Joshi
Music:
Shri Ram Tambe

*Duration: 3 hours 15 minutes
with one interval*

संगीत गोष्ट संयुक्त मानापमानाची



गुरूवार, १४ ऑगस्ट २०२५
सायंकाळी ६.०० वाजता

Produced by:
**Shourya Productions
OPC Pvt. Ltd.**
Written by:
**Shri Abhiram
Bhadkamkar**
Directed by:
Shri Hrishikesh Joshi
Music by:
Shri Kaushal Inamdar

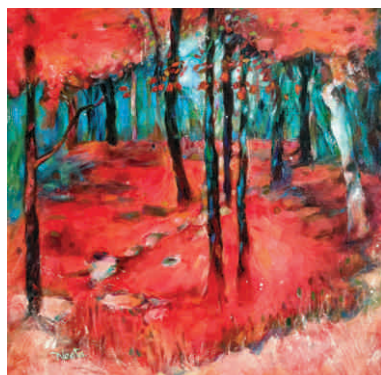
*Duration: 2 hours 30 mts.
minutes with one interval*

**Monday, 11th August to
Thursday, 14th August 2025 (Daily)**

Venue: Nehru Centre Auditorium

**Entry: Free Entrance Cards will be available from
Wednesday, 6th August 2025 from 10.30 a.m.
until availability from the booking counter of the
Nehru Centre Auditorium**

**VANDANA DESHMUKH
NEETA SAMANT
KALPANA WAGHMARE
VANDITA SHARMA
SUNIL WAGLE**



Neeta Samant



Vandana Deshmukh



Sunil Wagle

This group show will display assorted artworks.

**Tuesday 5th August 2025
to Monday 11th August 2025
(AC Gallery)**

AARDRA PATIL



Aardra is a water colour artist and paints florals and themes inspired by nature.

**Tuesday 5th August 2025
to Monday 11th August 2025
(Circular Gallery)**

**PABITRA SAHA
CHANDAN ROY
TAPAS BERA
GOURANGA BESHAL
TUHIN RAKSHIT**



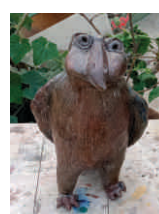
Chandan Roy



Pabitra Saha



Tuhin Rakshit



Tapas Bera

This group of artists from Kolkata will exhibit sculptures, figurative art and mixed media.

**Tuesday 12th August 2025
to Monday 18th August 2025
(AC Gallery)**

ANUSHREE SAWANT



Anushree is a young artist who paints in minute details.

**Tuesday 12th August 2025
to Monday 18th August 2025
(Circular Gallery)**

**HINA BHATT ART
VENTURE**

This show marks the finale of the Stay Home, Stay Safe art competition, a nationwide initiative in which young and emerging artists will showcase their finest works.

**Tuesday 19th August 2025
to Monday 25th August 2025
(AC & Circular Gallery)**

**PARINDON KI UDAAN
SOCIETY**

This group exhibition curated by artist Meenakshi Jain will showcase art in its varied forms.

**Tuesday 26th August 2025
to Monday 1st September 2025
(AC & Circular Gallery)**

Our Instagram link:
[nehru_centre_artgallery](https://www.instagram.com/nehru_centre_artgallery)

UNEP - Champions of the Earth Awards

1. Shri Madhav Gadgil - Indian (Ecologist) - 2024

Shri Madhav Gadgil is an Indian ecologist. As a child, he liked to accompany his father, who was Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission of India, on visits to a hydroelectric project in Maharashtra. Deforestation was rampant in the surrounding areas and Gadgil's father often questioned the trade-offs India was making. These experiences shaped Gadgil's approach to ecology. His research helped protect marginalized people, promote community-driven conservation of ecosystems and influence policymaking at the highest level.

The '**Gadgil Report**', his landmark work demanded protection for India's ecologically fragile Western Ghat mountain ranges facing threats from industry and climate crisis.

Land degradation and disasters

Nearly a third of India's land is degraded, leaving communities exposed to disasters. Landslides occurred in Kerala in 2024 and killed many people. The rainfall that triggered the landslides was intensified by human-caused climate change, while quarrying and deforestation have weakened the affected slopes, according to scientists. The Gadgil Report had raised an alarm in 2011 regarding negative impacts of unchecked development in the area. Commissioned by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Gadgil recommended categorizing ecologically sensitive areas across the Western Ghats and ensuring that development is "environment-friendly and people-oriented". Throughout his tenure at the Indian Institute of Science, where he founded the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Gadgil worked closely with forest dwellers, farmers and fishing communities. He established India's first biosphere reserve in 1986. The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve is the largest protected area in India today. Gadgil's championing of community-led conservation efforts and resource management has proved vital in preserving land and biodiversity.

Inspiring India's youth

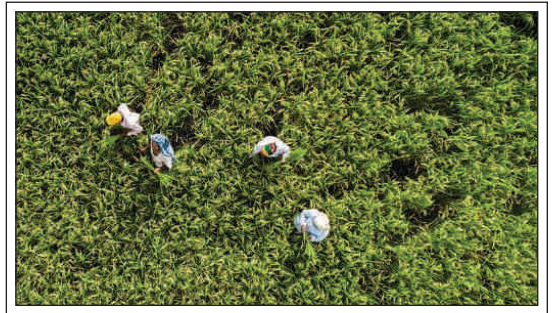
Shri Madhav Gadgil has received awards like Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement and the Volvo Environment Prize. Gadgil mentors village youth regarding their community forest rights while helping them to better understand their surrounding ecosystems. The ecologist believes that technological advances and increase in publicly available scientific information will inspire more communities to fight for their rights. This is crucial as India faces more worsening effects of climate crisis.

Further Reading at Nehru Centre Library:

- A Walk Up the Hill: Living with People and Nature by Madhav Gadgil, Penguin Random House India, 2023, Call No. 923.3375 / Gad, Barcode: 18671



Madhav Gadgil



Nature Conservation



Gadgil interacting with villagers

**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

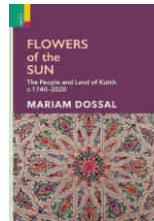
DISCOVERY OF INDIA (VCD)

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.

Nehru Centre Library

for all things literary

**Book Discussion**

Flowers of the Sun: The People and
 Land of Kutch, c.1740-2020

Written by **Dr. Mariam Dossal**

The author will be in conversation with
Dr Yamini Dand Shah.

Saturday, 2nd August, 2025, 4.00 p.m.
 (Open to all)

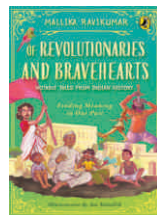
Poetry Evening

Join us for an evening of multilingual
 poems recited by ten poets on the
 theme **Yutori**
 (The conscious act of slowing down)

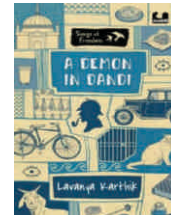
Concept and Curation:

Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick

Saturday, 30th August, 2025, 4.00 p.m.
 (Open to all)

Meet-the-Authors

Of Revolutionaries and Bravehearts
 Written by: Ms Mallika Ravikumar



A Demon in Dandi
 Written by: Ms Lavanya Karthik

For students of Std VI to IX
Monday, 11th August, 2025
10.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.

For details, contact:

nehrucenlibrary@gmail.com

Venue for all events: **Who Are We Hall, First Floor, Nehru Centre.**



nehru-centre.org/library.html



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nehrucenlibrary.blogspot.com



www.instagram.com/nehrucenlibrary

10.00 a.m. to 5.45 p.m.
On all working days



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Arati N. Desai

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