

BOOK POST



# CANARA UNION NEWSLETTER

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Photograph by Ujwala Gulvady (Glorious Sunrise)

## **FINAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

**THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT PAID THEIR ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2024-25  
MAY NOTE THAT THEIR MEMBERSHIP STANDS CANCELLED.**

### **Annual Membership Subscription Fees**

**All Members shall pay in advance their Annual Subscription for the period 1st April to 31st March of the financial year. For ease of payment, we have introduced UPI and the QR code which is published hereunder.**

**Annual subscription is as follows. Pay by Cash/Cheque/NEFT/UPI. Contact office 080-23342625 if you need clarification.**

60 years & below Rs.300/- + GST 18% Rs.54/- = Rs.354/- per annum

Above 60 years Rs.150/- + GST 18% Rs.27/- = Rs.177/- per annum

Over 80 years: No subscription

**For Hard Copy of CUNL (Canara Union Newsletter) please add Rs.150/- per annum (April-March) towards postage/delivery charges. You can add to Annual Membership Subscription.**

Pay: "The Canara Union", S/B Acct No.10600 31300 00822,  
SVC Co-Operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000060.

**If paid by NEFT, please email NEFT reference number to canaraunion@gmail.com or Whatsapp to 8310857255 with your name. If paying by UPI, please send screenshot with name and details of payment.**



**All members are requested to send a hello email to canaraunion@gmail.com giving your latest email ID, phone number and address.**

Hon. President:	Prakash Aroor	
Hon. Gen. Secretary:	Meera Philar	
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## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

I cannot remember the name of the writer—he wrote mostly about war—who said sometimes one is in a situation of danger, such extreme danger, that it does not feel like danger at all. One just goes through it without, somehow, even a trace of fear.

Combat situations are probably like this for soldiers, air- and seamen. I find it so remarkable. So must it be for the police in circumstances of intense conflict and violence. There are so many other parallels. One of these is the press-reporters, camerapersons and other support personnel in places where there are natural disasters, or the threat of war.



*Credits: PTI*

This brings me to Kashmir, the scene of recent hostilities. I think the tragic word loss covered everything—loss of life, real and threatened, of livelihood, of business, peace and for many, the future. And reporters arrived. Their focus was on the happenings, past and ongoing. It wasn't 'danger', it was work that had to be done, that was it. Some like my son Shiv went to the border areas. It was all in a day's work, there was no room for fear.

The larger and grim picture we all saw. But because I was watching my son Shiv closely on television, occasionally talking to him, asking questions, I came to know of some realities at close hand. We were moved to see how some shopkeepers and tourist operators looked forward and said, 'These bad times will pass.' There were visits to meet people whose village, shops, houses and buildings had been shelled out of recognition. One such was Havaldar Mohd Naseer Khan (Retd) whose house had been razed to the ground floor. He was an army para-commando and was a part of the 6th Para Special Forces and had served in the UN mission in Sudan. Just as the shelling began, he managed to send away his family to safety but his belongings, what was left of them, lay around him, scattered, broken, smashed. Yet he spoke to Shiv with great calmness, recounting what had happened in detail and with accuracy, the soldier that he was. We were moved to tears, but he had none.



*Credits: NDTV, Courtesy Shiv Aroor*

We saw, again and again, a refusal to be afraid in what was a shop of horrors.

A happy subject and a word of praise about the Bangalore Sangeet Sarita programme, an independent event, held in the Canara Union across the day on 27 April 2025. The BSS, a sparkling initiative of Subhash Kamath and Rekha Nadkarni, has completed a year. Completely self-financed, it started with about 18 members and has grown to nearly 130! All of



them participated in singing a range of songs and the event was meticulously presented with introductions and background details. I marvelled at the hard work, interest and commitment of the donors, participants and audience. All this made the Canara Union brighten joyously and come alive in a way not easily seen. Congratulations to Subhash and Rekha and all those who worked with them!

**PRAKASH AROOR**

## **PRINT COPIES and E-ISSUES**



We thank those who have written/telephoned to indicate their preference of the CUNL.

Members who haven't contacted us and who prefer e-issues please let us know your preference. And those members who have opted for e-issues but are still getting hard copies of CUNL, please let the office know. Please write to [canaraunion@gmail.com](mailto:canaraunion@gmail.com) with a copy to [meeraphilar79@gmail.com](mailto:meeraphilar79@gmail.com) or phone the Canara Union at 080 23342625. Thank you.

PS: Members who have not paid Rs.150/- towards postage of the CUNL for the year, are requested to pay - Cash or Cheque favouring "The Canara Union". If transferring by NEFT, please transfer to "The Canara Union" S/B Acct No.10600 31300 00822, SVC Co-operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000060. Please send us a copy of NEFT transfer and your name.

You can also pay by UPI. See details on page 2

NOTE: We are updating our Membership List. Request all Members to send us your latest address, phone numbers (Landline and Mobile) and email IDs to [canaraunion@gmail.com](mailto:canaraunion@gmail.com).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are deeply grateful to the following for the donations made by them towards:

### Canara Union Monthly Distress Relief Fund

A Well-Wisher

Rs.12,000.00

### Canara Union Medical Relief Fund

Smt Usha Suresh Philar

Rs.50,000.00

### Canara Union Cultural Fund

Shri Shantish Nayel

Rs.50,000.00

**PS: We request all donors to provide us with a letter and a copy of PAN Card and Address Proof at the time of donation, which is a requirement by the IT Department.**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We invite our readers to share their views on the Newsletter, and suggestions, at [cunlcanaraunion@gmail.com](mailto:cunlcanaraunion@gmail.com).

We will be glad to publish letters from time to time, at the discretion of the Editor.

## MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

The medical equipment donated by members to Canara Union are meant to help patients tide over their immediate requirement for a period not exceeding 3 months. If required beyond 3 months, members are requested to make alternative arrangements. (This will help equipment availability to others in need.) All requests need to be made either by email or letters. Henceforth, a nominal refundable deposit will be collected, as follows:

**Walking Stick: Rs.100/- Walker: Rs.250/- Wheelchair: Rs.500/- Hospital Bed: Rs.1000/Rs.2000.**

## Letter to Editor

Congratulations on the May 2025 issue of CUNL! There is such a good selection of articles this month. I especially liked those by Maya Hattiangadi, Usha Aroor, and Prakash Jothady.

While reading the article by Mr Jothady, I recalled what my daughter said when she visited us from Hong Kong. I asked her why she didn't put her mask on as we walked through busy streets in Mumbai. She said she wanted to sniff the fragrance of food and flowers and perfume. Surprised that she hadn't smelled exhaust fumes and dirt, I asked her what Hong Kong smelled of. She replied "Usually, of meat...!"

- Suman Bhat

## **RENEWED APPEAL FOR MONTHLY DISTRESS RELIEF ASSISTANCE**

Dear Friends, Canara Union continues to assist the badly affected families of Covid-19 every month. Your continued support and help towards this scheme as long as possible would be appreciated. You may make payments either by cheque or bank transfer to the account specified below. For any clarification you may contact or write to us at:

Prakash Aroor, President                      Mobile: 9901560602

Meera Philar, Hon. Secretary              Mobile: 9844022713

Harish Sujir, Hon. Treasurer                Mobile: 9845055567

Email: [canaraunion@gmail.com](mailto:canaraunion@gmail.com)

Payments can be made to THE CANARA UNION WELFARE FUND either by cheque or by Net Banking transfer to the following:

**The Canara Union Welfare Fund**

**Savings Bank A/C No.:10980 31300 05454**

**SVC Co-Operative Bank Ltd. Vidyamandir Branch, Malleswaram, Bangalore 560 003**

**IFC Code: SVCB0000098**

### **LISTINGS**

We would like to feature new LISTINGS about the availability of services in and around us. Those who cater to any professional services from their homes and small offices, and would like to be included in this listing, please email brief and concise details to [meeraphilar79@gmail.com](mailto:meeraphilar79@gmail.com)

### **DEAR PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

Thank you for the photographs/paintings/drawings you send us. Please continue to send us these. We would like you to send us articles/stories from time to time, which will be published at the discretion of the Editor. Please email these to [meeraphilar79@gmail.com](mailto:meeraphilar79@gmail.com)

## **VERY VERY IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING DONATIONS**

All Members/Donors wanting to make donations, please see one full page ANNOUNCEMENT in the CUNL. You may pay either by CHEQUE OR NEFT. Follow it up with a letter or fill details in a copy of the Announcement Sheet along with a copy of your PAN Card and Proof of Address. If sending by NEFT, please send to respective account (Name and No.) of your donation choice as mentioned in the Announcement Sheet. For any clarification, please email [canaraunion@gmail.com](mailto:canaraunion@gmail.com) or WhatsApp or call Meera Philar at 9844022713 or Harish Sujir at 9845055567.

## DONATION

From:  
Name: Sri / Smt. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
PAN NO: \_\_\_\_\_

To,  
**The President**  
The Canara Union(Regd.)  
Bangalore-560003

Sir,  
**Sub: Donation towards Endowment Fund/s**

I wish to donate a total sum of Rs. \_\_\_\_\_ (in words: Rupees \_\_\_\_\_)  
towards The Canara Union Endowment Funds detailed below:

Type of Donation	Amount	Bank Details
Building Fund		The Canara Union, Account No 34050851518 State Bank of India, IFSC SBIN0007080
Distress Relief Fund		The Canara Union(Regd) Distress Relief Fund Account No 10600 31300 18707 SVC Co-operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000060
Medical Relief Fund		The Canara Union(Regd) Medical Relief Fund Account No 10600 31300 18706 SVC Co-operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000060
Students Scholarship Fund		The Canara Union(Regd) Students Scholarship Fund Account No 10600 31300 18705 SVC Co-operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000060
Cultural Endowment Fund		The Canara Union(Regd) Cultural Endowment Fund Account No 10600 31300 18703 SVC Co-operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000060
Sports Endowment Fund		The Canara Union(Regd) Sports Endowment Fund Account No 10600 31300 18704 SVC Co-operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000060
Monthly Distress Relief Fund		The Canara Union Welfare Fund Account No 10980 31300 05454 SVC Co-operative Bank Ltd., IFSC Code: SVCB0000098

I am enclosing the cheque for the above said amount / remitted by NEFT/RTGS, as detailed below:

Cheque No..... Dated ..... drawn on Bank....., Branch.....  
NEFT / RTGS Details Remittance made Dated..... Bank / Branch.....  
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- Is to be kept as a Corpus Fund and interest earned thereon is to be used for disbursement.
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The donation is given in the memory of:

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Regards,

Signature  
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## The Amchi Catering Services

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## MUSIC PROGRAMME

### 6th NAYAL Family Concert: "Sahela Re"

(In collaboration with Canara Union)

Reported by **Anand Nagarkar**

On the of 11th May 2025, music lovers were treated to an extravaganza of Hindustani classical music at Canara Union, Malleswaram. The programme, "SAHELA RE", was in celebration of the 90th birthday of our beloved Smt. Kumud Nayel pacchi and also a rich tribute to Bharata Ratna Pt. Bhimsen Joshi and Ganasaraswati Vid. Kishori Amonkar. It featured Vid. Dr. Radhika Joshi and Sri Abhishek Kale who presented original and much acclaimed compositions of the two legends.

The programme started with the traditional lighting of the lamp by Smt. Kumud Nayel and all ladies of Nayal families.





Vid Dr. Radhika Joshi commenced the recital with the composition “Sahela Re” in Raag Bhoopali, composed by Kishori Amonkarji. The presentation was indeed melodious and filled with emotions. This was followed by yet another great *bandish* by Sri Abhishek Kale, who hails from Sangli. He presented Raag Kalasree, a combination of Raag Kalavati and Raag Ragesree, a rare raag composed by Pt. Bhimsen Joshi. Thereafter, Radhikaji and Abhishekji alternated with soul stirring bhajans like Mhaaro Pranaam, Baaje Muraliya Baaje and more. One that most appealed was perhaps a Bhaav Geet, “Hey Shaam Sundara Rajasa Manamohana” composed by Pt. Hridaynath Mangeshkar and written by the well-known icon Smt Shanta Shelke. This particular song had *baansuri* as the main accompanying instrument and to bring out the essence and the *bhaav* of the song, Radhikaji presented this with the original music track. It was a mesmerizing experience. The audience was then treated to many more varieties such as Ghazals, Abhangs, and of course the evergreen Bhagyada Lakshmi Baamma.

Excellent tabla accompaniment was provided by Sri Roopak Kallurkar, a highly accomplished artiste with vast experience of having performed at various prestigious venues. Harmonium accompaniment was provided by our own Sri Ashwin Walawalkar, a multifaceted artiste, well known for performing as a harmonium soloist and an excellent Santoor player too. Sri Kartik, student of Pt. Rajgopal Kallurkar, provided the cymbal (*taal*) accompaniment.

The entire concert was made very interesting and exciting by the superb anchoring of Smt. Vasanti Hariprakash, a professional compere. Smt Vasanti narrated several interesting anecdotes from the glorious lives of the iconic musicians and also with interesting notes about the performing artistes of the evening. The audience gave a standing ovation to the artistes at the end of the program.



Our thanks to Sri Devesh Nayel, the person behind the show, who spared no efforts to ensure the success of the programme. Our thanks to the entire Nayal families who flew in from far and wide. The video of the entire programme is available on YouTube channel *Nayal Family Concerts*.

## THE JOURNEY OF BENGALURU SANGEET SARITA (BSS)

### DR. GIRISH BAINDUR



The story of Bengaluru Sangeet Sarita (BSS) is all about the power of music bringing people together. This concept was born out of the intense desire of its founders, Subhash Kamath and Rekha Nadkarni Kamath, to create a platform for music enthusiasts to share their love for singing.

Having been part of the GPSM (Guruprasad Swar Mala) singing group in Mumbai since the Covid days, Subhash and Rekha knew the joy and camaraderie that music could bring!

When they relocated to Bengaluru in 2023, they knew only a handful of close friends. However, due to their love for music and karaoke singing, they were on the lookout for a like-minded group in their new city. The breakthrough came when they attended the Canara Union Annual Gathering in December 2023, where karaoke singing was part of the programme. Watching the enthusiasm of the participants, Subhash and Rekha realized that Bengaluru was full of Aamchi music lovers who only needed a suitable platform to express themselves. As Subhash says, "That was the turning point that gave us a massive boost!"

#### The First Step

With a beautiful and powerful music system at their disposal (gifted by a GPSM friend), Subhash and Rekha decided to invite a few like-minded friends to their residence for a small get-together. On the evening of March 3, 2024, eighteen people gathered at their home,

and the first singing session took place. Initially, there was hesitation and nervousness, but as the session progressed, the atmosphere transformed into one of profound joy, relief and a sense of accomplishment! Many sang for the first time in front of a crowd, and their sense of achievement was tangible. "All the guests were so supportive that I managed to sing in public for the first time," shared one of the singers.

The very first session created a spark in all who participated, and the decision was taken to have a monthly forum for singing. The first seed of BSS was sown, and the journey began! From humble beginnings to a growing community of music enthusiasts, BSS had become a testament to the power of music to unite and inspire people. As the group continued to grow, its founders remained committed to nurturing a platform where people could come together, share their passion for music, and find joy and friendship.

#### The Emergence of BSS Core Committee

The second session of BSS was held on April 22, 2024, at the residence of Gurunandan and



Alka Bolangady, the cheerful catalysts. The buzz was palpable, and the air was electric with excitement. This time, nearly 30 singers sang solos or duets, while an anchor kept the proceedings lively. The success of the second session was significant for BSS. It became clear that a formal body was needed to manage the growing membership and to plan future events.

Thus, the BSS Core Committee was formed, comprised of Rekha Nadkarni Kamath, Subhash Kamath, Gautam Ubhayakar, Anand Nagarkar, Gurunandan Bolangady, Alka Bolangady, Srilekha Goveas, and Shubhangi Prabhu. Ever since, this dream team has been instrumental in brainstorming innovative ideas, selecting venues, organising monthly gatherings with 'themed' song lists and for smooth supervision of the events.

### **BSS and Its Logo**

The name Bengaluru Sangeet Sarita was chosen, which translates to "a flowing river of music", symbolising a growing community that continues to expand through word of mouth. Also, a need was felt to have a visual identity for BSS. After some discussion within the Core Committee, Gautam Ubhayakar came out with the brilliant idea for the BSS logo. It is rich in symbolism. It has the name BSS inside a circle, depicting it as a circle of 'like-minded music loving people', a hand holding a microphone symbolising empowerment, a musical keyboard symbolising musical notes, and seven rings denoting the seven swaras! The icing on the cake is the tagline: "EVERYBODY CAN SING".

### **Monthly Gatherings and Venues**

The Core Committee (CC) strives to make the monthly meetings as exciting as possible. Their event management is spot on! All the

communication related to the monthly music sessions is intimated to the members through WhatsApp groups. There are practice sessions conducted by Rekha and Subhash for members, guiding and fine-tuning their singing. This has the effect of boosting the morale of our newer members. "They (Rekha and Subhash) are amazing - This sort of handholding has made me so much more confident on stage", confides a participant.



When the event starts, we have the boisterous and innovative duo, Anand Nagarkar and Gautam Ubhayakar anchoring the proceedings in hilarious ways, keeping the audience in good humour. And the way Rekha (and by extension, Subhash) manages the event {before, during and after} where every single member of the audience is taken care of, is stupendous. The other CC members are always at hand during the event, taking care of sequencing of songs, videography and catering co-ordination. Moreover, every performance is recorded and uploaded on to BSS' YouTube channel.

The BSS Core Committee usually comes out with innovative ideas to sustain the interest of the ever-growing membership. Every month's session ends with an announcement of the following month's theme, based on which songs are selected by the individual singers. The speed with which the members select their songs and put up in the WhatsApp chat is breathtaking and adds to the overall

excitement. Some of the themes we had in the past were to commemorate the birth centenaries of Madan Mohan ji and Mohammed Rafi saab.

Even as we go on to BSS' thirteenth session in the last week of May, the theme Raagadhari was announced, and is the most innovative yet. It requires members to select songs based on a select set of raagas. This has led to our members making a dash for Google searches and digging deeper into the intricacies and finer nuances of Indian classical music! It is an exciting way of sharing knowledge of our rich heritage of classical music. The enthusiasm of the Core Committee is only matched by the eagerness with which members respond wholeheartedly to the events in the monthly BSS meetings. For example, for the Raagadhari theme, we have received a huge response of 80 songs at last count!

### **Operations**

All the details of sessions' expenses for catering, hiring hall, etc., are informed in the WhatsApp groups once the sessions are over. The same is apportioned equally amongst the members and guests who attend. This is a completely transparent process. Also, BSS has always believed in promoting and encouraging in-house resources in the areas of catering, photography, videography, etc.

### **Growth of BSS**

Over the last one year, BSS' membership has grown from 18 to 129! Almost 70% of its members are above 60 years of age and 20% are above 70 years of age. Most of the members had never sung in public before, but have discovered their singing ability only after joining, exemplifying BSS's tagline 'Everybody Can Sing'. BSS has created a unique and friendly platform where the singers feel at home as their performances are neither judged nor compared with any benchmarks. This is one of the most distinctive aspects of BSS, wherein every singer is valued and honoured regardless of their skill levels. It allows members to learn from each other, grow together, and enjoy the journey without the pressure of one-upmanship.

BSS's guiding principle is to provide a supportive and encouraging environment for everyone, especially for its senior members, who have found a new lease of life through music. Says one enthusiastic senior, "I have made more friends in the past one year of joining BSS, than in the entire 6 years of my post-retirement life!"

### **First Anniversary**

The group's anniversary celebration held in the Canara Union Hall on April 27, 2025, was a grand and memorable affair, with over 80



participants and close to 100 guests. The event was not just restricted to singing, but also included other forms of art such as playing instruments, dancing, whistling, etc. Participants' ages ranged from 5 to 88 years! All participants were gifted with a beautiful BSS memento on the occasion.



### **Challenges**

The BSS Core Committee has faced challenges in finding suitable venues for the monthly events. Several members have generously offered their apartment complex's clubhouses, including Archie and Srilekha Goveas' Renaissance Temple Bells Clubhouse, as also Sandeep and Suvarna Pandits' and Sanjay and Shobha Savkoors' Golden Grand Apartments' Clubhouse. The Canara Union Annexe Hall and the Canara Union Hall have also been used as venues. As the membership continues to grow, the Core Committee is now tasked with finding a regular venue to accommodate the increasing number of enthusiasts.

### **A New Chapter for BSS**

With its growing popularity and expanding membership, BSS is poised for a new chapter in its journey. The Core Committee's dedication and creativity have been instrumental in shaping the organization's activities and ensuring its success. As BSS continues to

evolve, it remains committed to providing a platform for music lovers to come together, share their passion, enjoy the joy of singing and socialize. One can see the vast improvement in the quality of singing of every member, as also the confidence with which they carry themselves on stage.

It has been seen that BSS offers a new chapter in life, filled with laughter, fun and friendship, for housemakers and senior citizens. Many are rediscovering their passion for music, meeting new people and building relationships, and developing a new hobby (which had eluded them earlier). They are enhancing their creativity and self-expression, and enjoying a sense of community and belonging, and in turn, boosting their self-confidence.

BSS is fortunate to receive the blessings of H.H. Shrimat Sadyojat Shankarashram Swamiji, which we believe reflects in the overall growth of the group and its members' capabilities. BSS has become a powerful bonding agent for our community. Rekha and Subhash can be justifiably proud of nurturing BSS from inception, and they are confident that they will further raise its standards in times to come.

### **Road Ahead**

While gradually expanding to accommodate more members into its fold, BSS also has plans to extend its outreach to senior citizen institutions, visiting and reaching out to the elderly through the magic of music. They have already made a beginning by visiting institutions like Parijnan Chhaya at Karla, entertaining the seniors there with music and engaging them in meaningful conversations regarding their welfare. Visits to similar institutions are in the offing, further highlighting BSS' commitment to community service.

## THE WONDER YEARS – BANGALORE TIMES (PART 5)

VANDANA RAO PANDIT



*This is an extract from Vandana Rao Pandit's book Head in the Clouds - My Adventures in the Air Force and Life Beyond. The following is from the seventh chapter of the book. Subsequent chapters will be published in forthcoming issues of CUNL.*

I lived for that last day of exams like all children do. Nothing in later life compares to that absolute feeling of freedom like the last exam day. I would dream of going to a nearby library in Malleswaram 8th cross – Shankar's library – which was next to a flour mill. Even now, the combined smell of flour and books takes me back to those heady carefree days. I am very sure if the Kindle had been invented then, I would have failed in every subject. And this, I can confidently write down.

After a few years my paternal grandparents, who had stayed behind in Hyderabad when we left, finally moved to Bangalore and came to live with us. They were now older and were finding it difficult to manage by themselves in Hyderabad. We had now shifted to an apartment where my parents still live, and my grandparents moved into theirs which was just a floor below ours. We loved having them with us as we had missed them terribly when we moved to Bangalore.

My grandfather - Daddyda again spoiled us beyond rotten. I had the habit of eating ice from the icetrays in the freezer. I would swiftly extract the ice and put it into a steel tumbler to hide it. This was because my grandmother was a stickler for a few things, one of which was not to

eat ice as it would ruin my throat, give me a cold, chip my teeth and finally kill me. Daddyda did not dare to openly side with me on this. He was equally if not more terrified of my grandmother than us. He would prop up the ice in the ice trays so that I could reach in, pluck out the ice and pop it into my glass, all in a matter of seconds. I would have made a fortune as a thief or magician. She never cottoned on.



He also made the most delicious Besan (chickpea flour) laddus. He would spend hours carefully slow roasting them until the smell filled the house. He had a sweet tooth, which I unfortunately inherited, and we spent many pleasurable hours discussing the sweets we

liked or didn't. He made our butter and buttermilk at home by churning out the butter from the buttermilk by hand. The implement used was a wooden churning stick. Many of us will remember this from our childhood days. The fruit was bought by him for the house, carefully washed in potassium permanganate, dried, and kept ready for us anytime. The fruit sellers loved him as he always had a kind word for them.

Chocolates were a luxury, and almost every weekend until Daddyda fell ill, Namu and I received our 'weekend chocolate' – a bar of Cadburys milk chocolate. We had to share this. Anama was very diet conscious about our sweet consumption and did not allow us to snack between meals either. 'Weekend chocolate' was the only exception. 'Your fat cells are forming as we speak,' she would thunder if we got caught red-handed eating sweets or snacking between meals. I think my fat cells shrivelled up and died on just hearing her voice and never returned until after I had had two children, and that was when they decided on a joyous and very unwelcome homecoming. Even today, Namu and I find it difficult to snack in between meals as the guilt creeps in on cue.



Anama insisted on driving until she was well into her seventies, but at some point it became apparent that a few hapless souls on the road may pay the ultimate price. Once, while she was driving, she tried changing gears using both hands and almost knocked over a girl on the road. That was when we decided that she needed to hang up her driving boots, and to our surprise, she agreed after a little tantrum-throwing.

When my grandparents still lived in Hyderabad, my parents would send both of us there for our Christmas holidays. We would be put on the plane and returned when the holidays ended. Namu was always dressed in dungarees, which she insisted on wearing, but logistically, a nightmare for me when taking her to visit the tiny washroom that planes are infamous for even today.

Once at the airport while checking in, we were asked if we would like to upgrade to business class seats for Rs 50/- each and we were overjoyed. It was our first time in business class and we felt like royalty. These flights to Hyderabad would have been more fun if Namu had not kept asking me if the plane would crash. Fortunately for me, the air hostesses found her entertaining and often took her for a tour of the cockpit and off my hands. She would come back excitedly to her seat, all too soon, to tell me that she had also asked the pilots if the plane would crash, and they said no.

I outwardly scoffed at her childishness but was secretly praying hard we would land safely too. I was also a little bitter that no one had ever offered me a tour of the cockpit on any of our yearly flights to Hyderabad. I was taken once briefly, but that was it. Being younger, gap-toothed and in dungarees must have helped. She also got freebies from shops like sweets and lollipops and one shopkeeper would give her an ice cream almost every time she went. I on the other hand, had to pay my way through.



When, to my relief, we finally landed, we would be the last to be taken off the aeroplane and I had a secret scenario playing in my head that we would be kidnapped, and that no one would hear of us again until someone rescued us after a thrilling chase. I have no idea why I had this irrational yet hopeful kind of fear. I never mentioned this to Namu because then, she

would keep asking me when we would get kidnapped. That did not happen, and we would be taken to a small room at the airport and handed over to our grandparents waiting there for us, Daddyda looking anxious and Anama knitting away as usual. Then we would indulge in a lovely fortnight of walks, stories, books, knitting, flower arrangements, puppetry and play until it was time to reluctantly return to Bangalore and school.

I have been very lucky. I've had a wonderful childhood. My greatest influences have also been my role models; or is it the other way around?

[Representative images only.]

## SOJOURN TO THE MAHA KUMBH - PART 1: A SUDDEN SPARK OF INSPIRATION

### NARESH BANTWAL



It all began on a bright Sunday morning—January 12th—just after the conclusion of the Gayatri Anushthana at our serene Chitrapur Math. As we sat basking in the peaceful afterglow of the chanting, someone mentioned the Maha Kumbh Mela—a once-in-144-years event, an unparalleled spiritual gathering said to be the largest in human history.

The very idea of being part of something so rare and deeply rooted in tradition sent a jolt of excitement through our group. The Maha Kumbh isn't just a pilgrimage—it's a calling, a magnetic force that draws millions toward the

sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mystical Saraswati. And now, that call had reached us.

Within minutes, a few of us had already committed to making the journey. There was no time to lose—we began scouring flight bookings, and the earliest available tickets to Prayagraj were for February 19th. Window seats, naturally, were a priority—secured by paying the extra fare, of course! There was something poetic about seeing the city from above before entering it, almost like receiving a divine preview.

What followed was a flurry of preparations. Online bookings for accommodation were made—sturdy tents near the Sangam, as close as possible to the heart of the action. One of our more enthusiastic members took it upon himself to prepare an exhaustive checklist, tailored especially with our largely seniors’ group in mind. Medicines, first aid kits, electric torches, ropes for drying clothes, mobile chargers, toiletries, ID cards—the list was so meticulous, it could rival that of a rescue operation!

Those opting to carry backpacks had to hunt through closets and storage boxes to retrieve long-forgotten rucksacks. Others began carefully packing their trolley suitcases, weighed down not just with belongings but the buzzing anticipation of what lay ahead. The usual last-minute additions, subtractions, and re-packing sessions followed—each one driven by an ever-watchful eye on airline weight limits.

It was a mix of laughter, chaos, and collective excitement—more than just trip planning. It was, in many ways, the beginning of a spiritual journey that had started even before we set foot on the path.

### **The Journey and Arrival at Prayagraj**

At last, the long-awaited day arrived. Our flight was scheduled for the late evening, and to everyone’s surprise—and amusement—the first person to reach the pickup point was our friend who was usually the last to show up! It was a good omen, we joked, for what promised to be a journey filled with new experiences and unexpected moments.

The flight from our city to Prayagraj was just over two hours, but in our anticipation, it felt much longer. We chatted, shared snacks, and

speculated endlessly about what we might see and expect. Then came the captain’s announcement: Our aircraft would circle the Kumbh venue before landing. Immediately, every one of us with a window seat—secured earlier with extra fare and great pride—pressed our faces to the windows.



What we saw took our breath away! Below us stretched a glowing sea of lights—a temporary city shimmering in the night, sprawled across both banks of the sacred rivers. Millions of tiny lights marked the boundaries of tents, pathways, and makeshift structures, forming an awe-inspiring tapestry of human devotion and logistical marvel. It was hard to believe this was all temporary.

Once we landed, we quickly collected our luggage and headed to the exit. The newly built Prayagraj airport was bustling, packed with pilgrims from every corner of India and beyond—some arriving, others departing, but

all sharing a sense of purpose and reverence. Outside, the roads were choked with traffic and the air buzzed with devotional chants, the hum of vehicles, and the shuffle of thousands of footsteps.

Buses, trucks, special trains, autos, cycle rickshaws and groups of devotees on foot—everyone was converging at the Sangam. We soon discovered that our vehicle could go only so far; the entire periphery around the river had been barricaded to manage the crowd. Only VIP vehicles were allowed beyond a certain point. And so, our real pilgrimage began—not with a bath, but with a walk.



Eight kilometres of slow, steady progress through the thronging crowd followed. We clung together, forming a human chain so as not to be separated in the tide of humanity. Even in that chaos, there was an unspoken sense of order and respect. People gave way, helped each other, and shared information with kindness.

When we finally reached our tent site, weary but excited, we were welcomed with a simple yet delicious hot meal and neatly arranged beds—small comforts that felt like luxury after the long journey. Just opposite our tents stood the media centre from where announcements about missing and found persons echoed

throughout the night. Even as we settled in, sleep was distant. Outside, the river of people continued flowing. Devotees passed by our tents chanting bhajans, “Bam Bam Bhole”, and “Jai Mahadev”. The clang of cymbals, the rhythmic beats of dholaks, and voices rising and falling like waves. It felt like we were on the edge of something timeless—a place where divinity and humanity mingled under the open sky.



### The Dubki

The next morning began long before sunrise. The early chill still hung in the air as we hurriedly got ready for what was, for many of us, the spiritual heart of the journey—the holy dip at the Triveni Sangam, the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati.

Locals affectionately refer to the holy bath as the dubki—a word so simple yet wrapped in centuries of devotion and meaning. We joined thousands of other pilgrims in the slow, steady procession toward the riverbanks. Despite the vast numbers, there was no pushing, no chaos. Everyone seemed to move with a shared sense of reverence, as though guided by a collective purpose. Along the way, we passed countless groups from every corner of the country, easily distinguishable by their traditional dress,

language, and customs. Vibrant turbans, colourful sarees, handmade banners, and fluttering flags filled the air with a sense of joyous diversity. We heard Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, Bengali, Tamil, Kannada, Assamese, and more—all voices united in faith, a real unity in diversity.



As we neared the ghats, the river came into view, shimmering under the morning light. Some devotees had already taken their dip and stood on the steps offering prayers with folded hands, eyes closed in deep reflection. Others waited patiently for boats to take them to the exact spot where the three rivers met. We too decided to take the boat ride—a long, gently swaying vessel filled with fellow pilgrims, all donned in bright orange life jackets. As we reached the confluence, our boatman pointed out the visible difference in the water: the deep blue of the Ganga meeting the pale, silvery flow of the Yamuna, and the soft bubbling where the Saraswati is believed to rise from beneath. Then came our moment.

One by one, we stepped into the water—cool, clear, and sacred. With folded hands and silent prayers, we took three dips, submerging fully each time. It was more than just a ritual. For a

few seconds, the outside world vanished. The chill of the water, the murmur of chants in the distance, the rising sun—it all came together to create a moment of stillness, of surrender and bliss.



When we emerged, something had changed. There was a sense of lightness, both in body and spirit. Whether it was the power of belief, the cleansing ritual, or simply the emotional magnitude of the experience—it felt as though we had been gently stripped of burdens we hadn't even realized we were carrying.

The sun had risen higher by then, casting a golden hue over the river. We made our way back, walking slowly through the crowds, surrounded by devotional music and the aroma of incense and food wafting from nearby bhandaras. Despite the rising heat, our hearts felt full, our minds calm.

It was an experience beyond words. A rare, humbling reminder of how small we are in the grand flow of time and tradition—and how lucky we were to be part of something so vast, so timeless, and yet so personal.

*[To be continued...]*

## PERSONALIA

Dear Members of the Canara Union,

The Canara Union frequently gets enquiries about personal announcements. These are personal in nature, usually small, and are generally about the following:

- births, weddings, engagements, thread ceremonies
- items for sale
- services available (catering, paying guest accommodation etc)
- student performance
- success at work, awards, personalia information etc
- change of address, relocation
- seeking information about services available

**'THE INDEPENDENT PAGE'**, for small-format, half- and full-page announcements will be published at a nominal rate. The tariff will be as follows + GST of 18%:

Upto 50 words	-	Rs 100.00 without photo
51 to 150 words	-	Rs 150.00 with photo if any
151 to 250 words	-	Rs 250.00 with photo if any

Also:

Full-page feature/ad of A4 size	-	Rs 700/- per page
Half-page	-	Rs 300/- per half-page

Please send all announcements to the Canara Union by the 16th of the month.

## KIDS CORNER



Graphite Pencil Artwork  
- Jeetesh Amembaal (14 Years)



Nidhi Kundapur (6 Years)

## EULOGY



**Suresh Savanal**

**2.10.1934 – 11.4.2025**

My Annu - my Gold Standard on how a person should be! Annu was a silent, strong and an ever loving presence in our home and our lives. Annu's diehard optimism and positivity, compassion and kindness are qualities I really hope and pray I can emulate during my lifetime. I really hope I am able to take life in its stride and not make an "issue" of anything - quite the hallmark Annu's philosophy for life.

We will miss you a lot Annu- please guide me from wherever you are - Shantam

For our Annu, family meant everything - place for ultimate love, compassion, and kindness. And his grandchildren probably say it the best!

### **SHANTANU BASRUR**

I've heard so many words used to describe my Annu (Aju) – kind, warm, patient, dapper, optimistic, pragmatic, selfless, stoic – and somehow, every one fits perfectly.

I had the joy and privilege of knowing him for nearly four decades, and there was always something to learn from him, in good times and bad. Of all the things I've learned from Annu, my favourite is how to enjoy food – I can't think of a single thing he turned away, and watching him relish everything he tucked into at his own leisurely pace was always such a treat!

His curious, positive approach to life is what I'll remember most – and carry with me always. Miss you and love you, Annu. Love, Shantanu

### **DHANANJAY BASRUR**

There is so, so much I will miss about my dearest Annu.

---

I will miss the stories from his life, of growing up in Kasargod with his sisters, of his college years in Madras, and of his career that took him to just about every corner of the country.

I will miss the career advice and the deep wisdom he shared of how to navigate the professional world and strive to be the best version of yourself at all times.

I will miss his truly incredible resilience and strength of character. No matter what life threw at him, no matter the hardships that came his way, his cheerful smile and sunny attitude never, ever went away. That is only how most people have ever known him: smiling, optimistic, and always ready to help. But more than anything, I will just miss my darling Annu. Love you forever. Love, Dhananjay

### **SHARADHA SRINIVASAN**

It's hard to believe Annuajju is no longer with us. As our last living grandparent, his passing feels like the end of an era.

No one lived quite like him—he found joy in the tiniest things and could turn any moment into something positive. I'll always remember his graceful spirit, cheeky laugh, mouse-like nibbles, slick-back hairstyle, and stories about Hilda. And of course, my midnight snack buddy, sneaking TV while I “studied.”

But my favorite memory is from when I was three, learning to cycle. He told me the story of the little train who said, “I think I can, I think I can,” and celebrated with “I knew I could!” That was Annuajju—always believing, always climbing. That magic will stay with me forever. Love, Sharadha

### **SHARANYA SRINIVASAN**

One of my earliest memories of Annu is from the Kalpataru kitchen—him quietly helping Ammama make Maggi during one of my many sleepovers. That image sums him up perfectly: always helping, always showing up with quiet care.

Whether it was carrying me around as a baby despite his back pain, or silently assisting Amma with puja prep, Annu never needed to be asked—he simply did, with love. Around the dining table is where I got to know his mind: his thoughts on politics, love, life, and gentle reminders—like always being financially independent. He had such an open mind, shaped by the strong women in his life, and he knew how to truly listen.

Even after all he'd been through, Annu remained endlessly social, sharing his life story with grace—always choosing to see the world through a lens of quiet optimism.

That first memory in the kitchen really did say it all—his kindness, his thoughtfulness, his quiet strength. He was, and always will be, magic. Love, Sharanya

## Report on the Activities of Bangalore Local Sabha for the Month of April and May 2025

Reported by **SAIKRUPA NALKUR**

### Special Programmes

On 12th April, on the occasion of Rathotsava at Shirali, Asthavadhana Seva was performed at Bengaluru Math. On 26th, Samaradhana of HH Shrimat Parijnanashrama Swamiji-I was observed with Shri Chitrapur Guruparampara Charitra Pathana, Bhashya Pathana and Ashtavadhana Seva. Shri Shankaracharya Ashtottara Shatanamavali Parayana was being conducted in the Math every Sunday from 16th February. On 27th April, after the parayana, 'mangal' was performed. On 2nd May, Shri Shankara Jayanti was celebrated at Bengaluru Math. This is a very special event this year as it marks the 25th year of Shri Shankara Jayanti activities held in Shri Chitrapur Math, Bengaluru. The celebration commenced with a programme by Prarthana Varga and Girvanapratishta, followed by welcome address by the President of Bengaluru Local Sabha, Shri Chaitanya Shiroor mam, and address by the Chief Guest, Smt Sudha Tinaikar pachi. The program concluded with the vote of thanks and announcement of the prize winners of Shri Shankara Jayanti competitions held during the month of March/April. The prize winners and participants of these competitions would receive prizes in June at the Divine Hands of H.H. Swamiji during Their visit to Bengaluru from 18th to 23rd June.

### Regular programmes:

- Pujan is performed by Gruhastha-s at Bengaluru Math, in Garbha-Gudi every morning and in Anandashram Sabhagriha every Monday, Thursday, and Friday evenings.
- Sadhaka-s perform Samoochika Gayatri Japa Anushthan on Sundays.
- Online Sanskrit Sambhashan classes are being held every week, and Prarthana Varga sessions are conducted at the Math every Saturday.
- A short 5-minute Ninada practice is a part of all regular activities.

### Upcoming Events at Bengaluru Math

- **28th May:** Samaradhana of HH Shrimat Pandurangashram Swamiji: Shri Chitrapur Guruparampara Charitra Pathana, Bhashya Pathana and Ashtavadhana Seva.

SamvitSudha® creations, products made of fabric and handmade paper, upcycled products under "Holding Hands" and "Parijna" books for children are available at Shri Chitrapur Math, Bengaluru.

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Contact: Shobha Ulpe 8861715493, Shruthi Ubhayakar 9423008640, Sheela Nagarkatti 9343093002

## OBITUARY

We convey our deepest sympathies to the family and relatives of

**Shri Rajiv Nagarmath**, aged 41 years, on 27 April 2025 in Bengaluru

**Smt Suguna Hattangadi**, aged 94 years, on 5 May 2025 in Bengaluru

**Shri Sharad Kumta**, aged 86 years, on 13 May 2025 in Bengaluru

**Shri Balachandra Shirali**, aged 80 years, on 14 May 2025 in Bengaluru



## THE CANARA UNION (REGD.)

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### Notice to Donors of Canara Union's FCRA Account

With the changes in the Foreign Contribution Regulations Act (FCRA), it has become mandatory to channelize all foreign donations by a social/charitable organization in India through the State Bank of India, New Delhi, Main Branch (SBI-NDMB). In accordance with this new FCRA Regulation, Canara Union has opened a new FCRA Account with SBI (NDMB), New Delhi. Hence, the old FCRA account with Bank of India, Margosa Road, Malleswaram, Bengaluru cannot be used for any foreign inward remittance.

We give below the details of the new designated account where the Foreign donations should be remitted.

Name of the Bank: State Bank of India, New Delhi Main Branch  
Address: FCRA Cell, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, New Delhi Main Branch, 11 Sansad Marg,  
New Delhi – 110001,  
Account No: 40255120262 (FCRA Savings Account)  
Branch Code: 00691  
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Purpose Code: P1303

All foreign institutions and individual Donors, will have to remit their donations only through the above designated SBI bank FCRA Account. A person of Indian origin, holding a foreign passport, will be covered by the term “foreigner” for the purpose of FCRA. Foreigners having an NRO account in India, if he chooses to use the funds from that NRO account for donation purposes, will also need to transfer to the above stated account only, as it is classified as foreign source donation under the FCRA rules. Donors are advised to use the swift code while doing the remittance for faster transfer. We also request all donors to intimate the Canara Union office of the remittance and clearly state the purpose of the donation (Scholarships, Medical or Distress) and whether it is towards corpus (endowments) or to be disbursed in the year of receipt for the stated purpose. We also request you to give the passport copy, the tax code/identification number, if any, for our various compliance and audit purposes.

(Canara Union Hon. Gen. Secretary: [canaraunion@gmail.com](mailto:canaraunion@gmail.com))

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# POWERING PROGRESS THROUGH PERFORMANCE



## AUDITED FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (₹ in Crores)

Particulars	As at 31.03.2025	As at 31.03.2024	Growth (%)
Net Profit After Tax	241	218	10.52%
Total Business	39,353	35,159	11.93%
Deposits	22,380	20,309	10.20%
Advances	16,973	14,850	14.29%
Gross NPA (%)	1.96%	2.30%	(0.34%)
Net NPA (%)	0.25%	0.27%	(0.02%)
PCR (%)	87.54%	88.48%	(0.94%)
ROA (%)	1.02%	1.00%	0.02%