

Herald Cafe



Ricardo J Martins

Evenings at the Monte that resonated music

Sitars, violins and Portuguese guitars dominated the musical evenings at the annual Monte Music Festival, organised by Fundação Oriente. The celebration of music was enjoyed for its variety offered over the weekend

Team Cafe cafe@herald-goa.com

One of Goa's most renowned music festivals, the Monte Music Festival, organised by Fundação Oriente recently concluded this weekend. This year marked the 23rd edition of the annual festival which focused on the celebration of the special bond that musically connects the world. With Goan, Indian and international performers, the

three evenings at the courtyard of the Chapel of Our Lady of Mount, Old Goa was surreal.

With Dr Paulo Gomes, director of Fundação Oriente, at the helm, the festival welcomed its special guests, Carlos Monjardino, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Fundação Oriente, João Amorim, member of the Board of Directors, Arq. Catarina Continnelle, a delegate from Macau and Joana Saraiva, a delegate from East Timor.

The performances included sitarist Asad Khan and Portuguese guitarist Ricardo J Martins and Goa's very own Ekchar. The second day, began with Krishnendu Saha and his disciples and Sharat and his friends. The third day began with Manganian from the Thar desert region of Rajasthan and Cuca Roseta, the Portuguese singer who sang Fado, Jazz and her original songs. The final concert brought in members of Ekchar who joined Cuca Roseta for a mellifluous performance to conclude the festival.



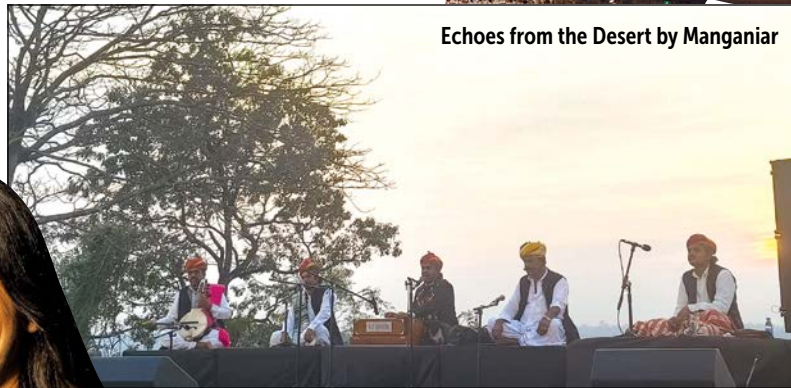
A BALKAN ODYSSEY



HEALING BY THE BRUSH STROKES



Nadia Rebello



Echoes from the Desert by Manganian



Cuca Roseta



Asad Khan



Ekchar

PICS COURTESY FUNDAÇÃO ORIENTE

Maange Thapni worshipping the predator

Maange Thapni is an annual ritual held on khazan lands of Goa speaks about the age old tradition of worshipping different elements of nature, in this case the much feared crocodiles, who are part and parcel of Goa's estuaries

Arti Das

World Wetlands Day 2025 was observed recently under the theme of 'Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future'. Such events and days make us aware about our backyard biodiversity which otherwise we may not be aware of. However, if we look at our festivals and rituals they also speak about the similar values and why it is necessary to worship certain elements of nature.

Khazan lands which are integral to it are also protected by various rituals and festivals. One such ritual is of Maange Thapni which was recently held in a few villages around Ponda. On this day, few agrarian communities of Goa come together to worship crocodile by sculpting a crocodile made from the mud of khazan land and it is worshipped. Villagers believe that these crocodiles, actually does the job of safeguarding the 'bunds' or dykes and thus protecting their fields. So, as a mark of respect this ritual is held.

Adulshe, a village near Bori in Ponda taluka, does this ritual every year. The event begins around late afternoon when men of this village come together on the bandh and start collecting mud from the backwaters. This mud is then sculpted and given a shape of a crocodile. It is then decorated with shells, dry grass sticks—all the ingredients found at this bandh itself. After sculpting, rituals like five coconuts are offered and then an egg is inserted inside the sculpted crocodile. The ritual culminates by offering prasad to the villagers.

This particular place where it is held is near the agricultural field of 'Devati Katar', who is believed to belong to goddess Navdurga.

Harish Muli, whose family is involved in this ritual of Maange Thapni informs that this ritual is performed by the 24 members of the village. Thus, there is a custom of keeping an account of same. The one who missed, they have to pay a nominal fine.



PICS: ARTI DAS

Nowadays villagers has stopped cultivating its fields where they used to grow salt tolerant variety of rice, but the practice continues as there is a strong belief that these crocodiles are the protectors of these khazan lands and also to protect villagers from any untoward incident of crocodile attack.

Wildlife rescuer Charan Desai who has been documenting this ritual for many years informs, "This time of year is the mating season of crocodiles. Thus, they are seen more in and around human settlement as they leave their territory in search of a mate." He adds that this ritual is also held in villages of Durbhat, Talaui, Bhoma, Kundai, in Ponda taluka.

In Goa, we find only one species of crocodile which is the Mugger (Crocodylus palustris). It is a freshwater crocodile but in Goa it has adapted to brackish waters. Regarding these muggars, it has been suggested that they were introduced either by Adil Shah Dynasty or by Portuguese in Tiswadi taluka as a form of defence against the enemies coming from the sea. However, Charan maintains that as there is a strong tradition of crocodile worship in Goa so probably they were found even before Adil Shah Dynasty in Goa.

Environmentalist, Rajendra Kerkar states, "I found 1000 year old stone sculpture of goddess Mahishasur Mardini along with crocodile in Dhamshe village. Also in Zarme village in old temple remains carved crocodiles are seen on wooden pillars. So, crocodiles are part and parcel of Goa's tradition. Crocodile were there before Portuguese rule. They might have used them for protecting Banastarim area. That's why the Cumbharjua canal today is known as crocodile bank." This ritual also indicates worshipping of a predator as crocodiles are otherwise feared.

Vidya Kamat, member-secretary of the Centre for Study of Mythology and Culture (CSMC), says, "It is sort of a peace treaty where there is a respect for every species and also following the principal of live and let live and drawing boundaries for them. It is like acknowledging their presence and respecting their space. The knowledge which we are forgetting in today's generation and which we need to learn from such rituals."

(Arti Das is a freelance journalist based in Goa)

14TH EDITION

KINGFISHER
The King of Good Times

HILLTOP FESTIVAL
6+7+8+9 FEB 2025

MAIN STAGE | GENESIS STAGE | CHILLTOP ARENA

ACE VENTURA - ACE VENTURA IN DUB - AVALON(LIVE)
AUDIO UNITS(LIVE) - BROJANOWSKI - BULLZEYE
BURN IN NOISE - DARWISH - DELIKA - DIGITAL HIPPIE
GAUDI(LIVE) - GOA JONAS - GUMI - HELIOSPHERE
HENRIQUE CAMACHO - HYBRID UV - ILLUMINATION
KALINGA SON - KILLERWATTS(LIVE) - LIKWID
NAMHAR - NITIN - PREM JOSHUA & BAND(LIVE)
PRIYA SEN - PRIYANJANA - PSYNONIMA
PYROKINE - RASHI JEY - RISING DUST
SARA BLUMA - SASI - SHFT - SIREN 333
SHREYAS_ - SHANKA TRIBE - SKIZOLOGIC
SPINAL FUSION - STARLAB - STARLING
STARLING B2B KARAN BHOJ - TANVI
TAS - TRISTAN(LIVE) - TUHIN MEHTA
VEDIK

TICKETS ON
MADVIB S
HILLTOP | SMALL VAGATOR
BARDEZ | GOA