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CLASS – 9

ENGLISH

Beehive

CH-2 : The Sound of Music

Part – 4
The Shehnai of
Bismillah Khan

ARPITA SHARMA

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OVERVIEW

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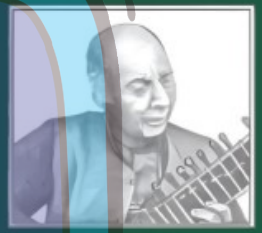
1. Evelyn Glennie Listens to Sound without Hearing It
2. The Shehnai of Bismillah Khan

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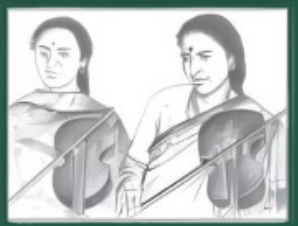
BEFORE YOU READ



Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia (Flute)



Ustad Vilayat Khan (Sitar)



M. Lalitha and M. Nandini (Violin)



Zakir Hussain (Tabla)



Ustad Amjad Ali Khan (Sarod)



Maestro Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan (Violin)

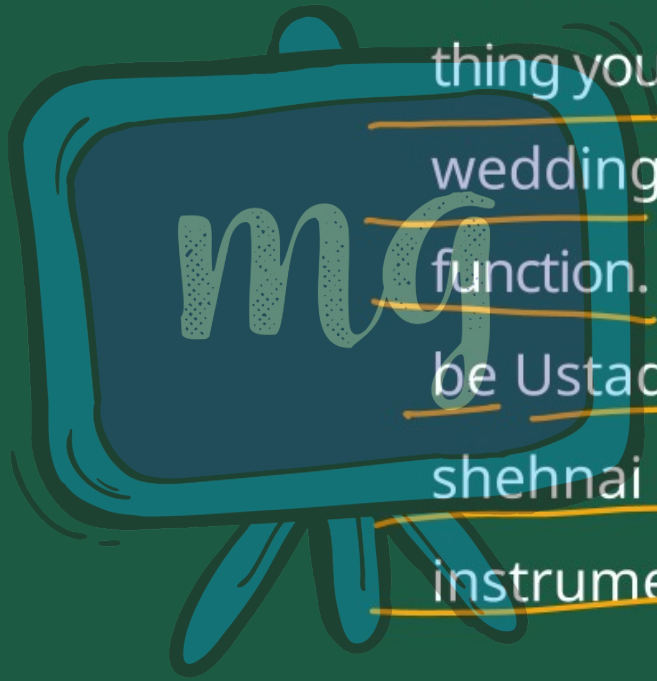


Ustad Sultan Khan (Sarangi)



Ustad Bismillah Khan (Shehnai)

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- Think of the shehnai and the first thing you'll probably imagine is a wedding or a similar occasion or function. The next would probably be Ustad Bismillah Khan, the shehnai maestro, playing this instrument.

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1. EMPEROR Aurangzeb banned the playing of a musical instrument called pungi in the royal residence for it had a shrill unpleasant sound.

EMPEROR	:	सम्राट
Musical	:	संगीत
Instrument	:	वाद्ययन्त्र
Residence	:	निवास स्थान
Shrill	:	तेज
Unpleasant	:	अरुचिकर

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Pungi became the generic name for reeded noisemakers.



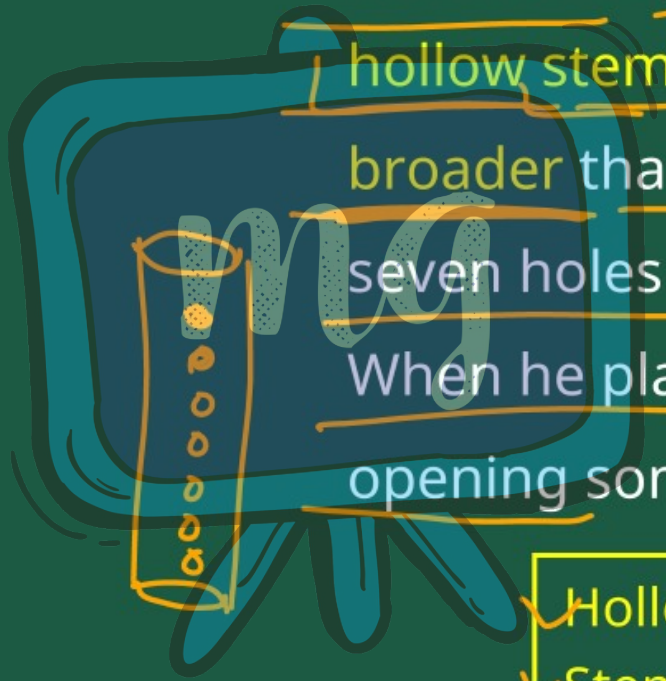
- Generic name : सामान्य नाम
- Noisemakers : शोर मचाने वाले

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Few had thought that it would one day be revived. A barber of a family of professional musicians, who had access to the royal palace, decided to improve the tonal quality of the pungi.

Revived	:	पुनर्जीवित
Professional	:	पेशेवर
Decided	:	फैसला करना
Improve	:	बेहतर बनाना/सुधारना
Tonal	:	तान
Quality	:	गुणवत्ता

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He chose a pipe with a natural hollow stem that was longer and broader than the pungi, and made seven holes on the body of the pipe. When he played on it, closing and opening some of these holes, soft

Hollow	:	खोखली
Stem	:	तना
Broader	:	चौड़ा

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and melodious sounds were produced. He played the instrument before royalty and everyone was impressed. The instrument so different from the pungi had to be given a new name. As the story goes, since it was first played

Melodious	:	मधुर/सुरीली
Impressed	:	प्रभावित

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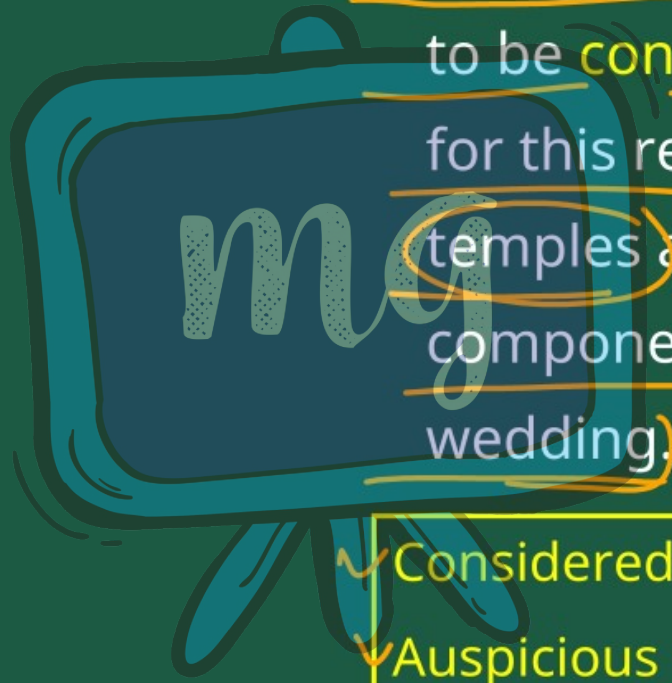
played in the Shah's chambers and was played by a nai (barber), the instrument was named the 'shehnai'.



Chambers : कक्ष

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2. The sound of the shehnai began to be considered auspicious. And for this reason it is still played in temples and is an indispensable component of any North Indian wedding. In the past, the shehnai



Considered	:	माना
Auspicious	:	शुभ
Indispensable	:	अनिवार्य/अत्यावश्यक

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was part of the naubat or traditional ensemble of nine instruments found at royal courts. Till recently it was used only in temples and weddings.



Traditional	:	पारम्परिक
Ensemble	:	समूह

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The credit for bringing this instrument onto the classical stage goes to Ustad Bismillah Khan.



Credit : श्रेय Classical : शास्त्रीय

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3. As a five-year old, Bismillah Khan played gilli-danda near a pond in the ancient estate of Dumraon in Bihar. He would regularly go to the nearby Bihariji temple to sing the Bhojpuri ‘Chaita’, at the end of which he would earn a big

Ancient	:	प्राचीन
Estate	:	रियासत
Regularly	:	नियमित

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laddu weighing 1.25 kg, a prize given by the local Maharaja. This happened 80 years ago, and the little boy has travelled far to earn the highest civilian award in India — the Bharat Ratna.

Local	:	स्थानीय
Travelled	:	सफ़र/दूरी
Highest	:	सर्वोच्च
Civilian	:	नागरिक



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4. Born on 21 March 1916, Bismillah belongs to a well-known family of musicians from Bihar. His grandfather, Rasool Bux Khan, was the shehnainawaz of the Bhojpur king's court. His father, Paigambar Bux, and other paternal ancestors were also great shehnai players.

Paternal	:	पैतृक
Ancestors	:	पूर्वज

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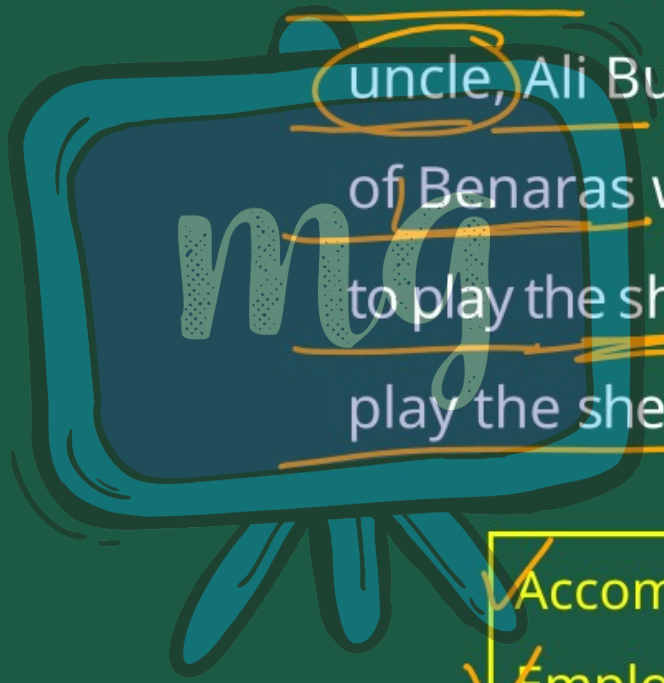
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5. The young boy took to music early in life. At the age of three when his mother took him to his maternal uncle's house in Benaras (now Varanasi), Bismillah was fascinated watching his uncles practise the shehnai. Soon

Maternal	:	मातृ-पक्ष से संबंधित
Fascinated	:	मोहित
Practise	:	अभ्यास

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Bismillah started accompanying his uncle, Ali Bux, to the Vishnu temple of Benaras where Bux was employed to play the shehnai. Ali Bux would play the shehnai and Bismillah would



Accompanying	:	साथ में
Employed	:	नियुक्त

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sit captivated for hours on end.

Slowly, he started getting lessons in playing the instrument and would sit practising throughout the day.

For years to come the temple of Balaji and Mangala Maiya and the banks of the Ganga became the

Captivated	:	मोहित/आकर्षक
On end	:	बिना रुके लम्बे समय तक

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young apprentice's favourite haunts
where he could practise in solitude.
The flowing waters of the Ganga



Apprentice	:	शिष्य/चेला
favourite	:	पसंदीदा
Haunts	:	बसेरा/आश्रय
Solitude	:	एकांत

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inspired him to improvise and invent raagas that were earlier considered to be beyond the range of the shehnai.

Inspired	:	प्रेरित
Improvise	:	सुधार
Invent	:	निर्माण करना/आविष्कार करना
Earlier	:	पूर्व
Considered	:	मानना
Range	:	पहुँच

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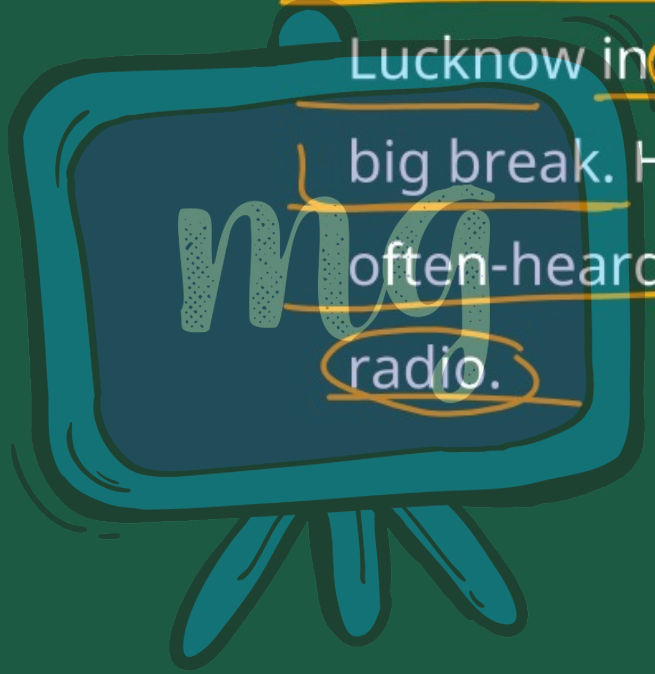
6. At the age of 14, Bismillah accompanied his uncle to the Allahabad Music Conference. At the end of his recital, Ustad Faiyaz Khan patted the young boy's back and said, "Work hard and you shall make it." With the

Recital	:	वादन/संगीत का कार्यक्रम
Patted	:	थपथपाना

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opening of the All India Radio in Lucknow in 1938 came Bismillah's big break. He soon became an often-heard shehnai player on radio.



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LEARNING OUTCOMES



1 Evolution of Shehnai

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ASSESSMENT

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1 Why was playing Pungi in Aurangzeb's palace banned?

A It had a sharp sound

B It wasn't good

C It was unpleasant

D All

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ASSESSMENT

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2 What was the source of inspiration for Bismillah?

A Red Fort

B Royal Palaces

C Ganga Ghats

D None