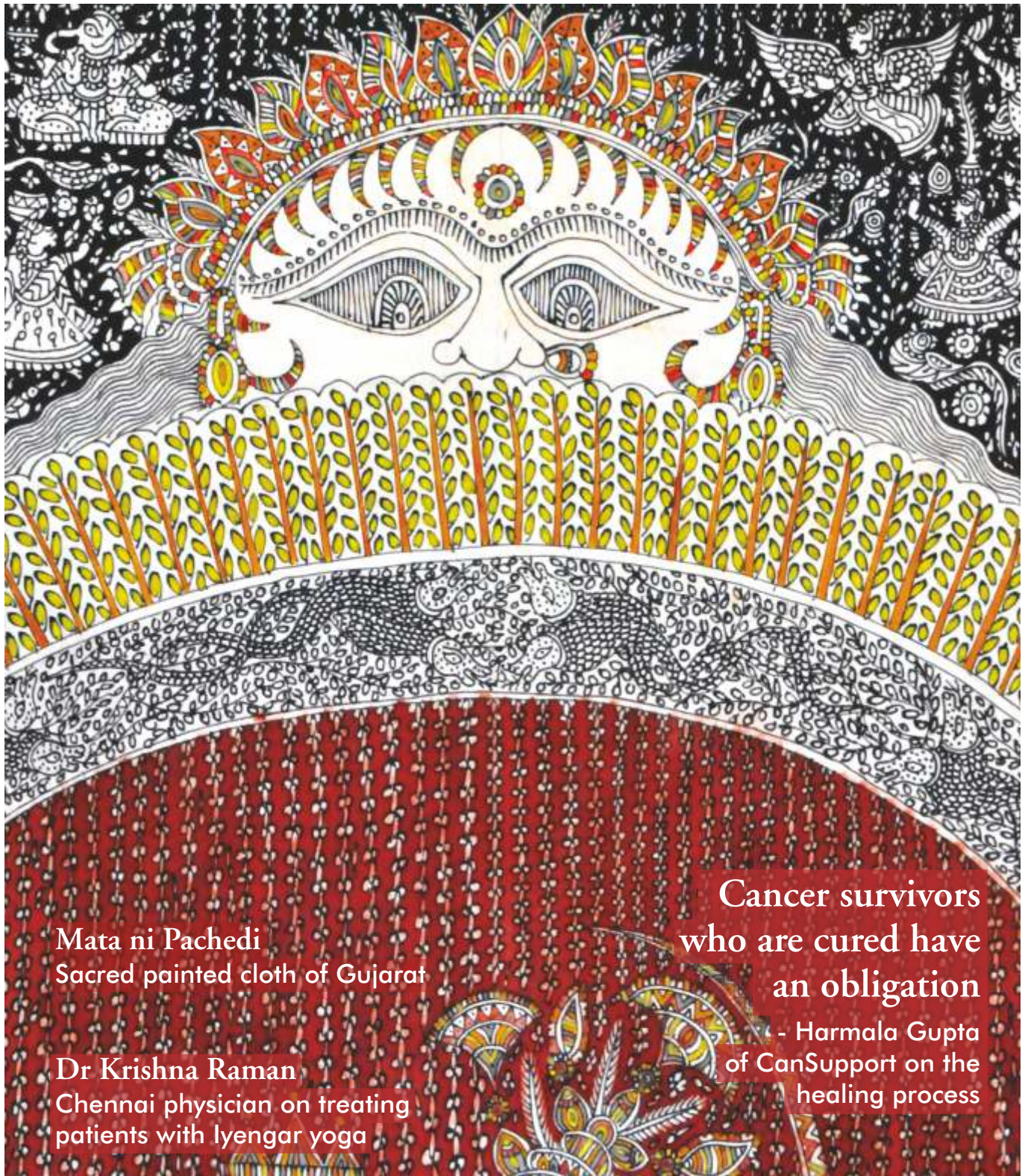


PINK CONNECTION

UBF

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Mata ni Pachedi
Sacred painted cloth of Gujarat

Dr Krishna Raman
Chennai physician on treating
patients with Iyengar yoga

Cancer survivors
who are cured have
an obligation

- Harmala Gupta
of CanSupport on the
healing process

UBF Diary

May

Rare Honour

It is a matter of great pride that Dr Raghu Ram was featured on the homepage of the The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh website (the oldest surgical college in the world). Titled 'International Surgical Advisor for the Royal College receives Padma Shri', the write up features the news of Dr Raghu Ram being conferred the Padma Shri – one of India's highest civilian awards by Hon'ble President of India for the year 2015.

<http://www.iss.rcsed.ac.uk/the-iss/iss-news/2015/may/padma-sri-honour.asp>



An Indian doctor addresses American Society of Breast Surgeons - A First



Dr Raghu Ram with Dr Clifford Hudis, Chief of Breast Service, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre, New York (third from left) and other eminent speakers after delivering his presentation

Dr Raghu Ram was the first and the only surgeon from the Indian sub-continent to be invited to address the Annual Congress of the American Society of Breast Surgeons (ASBS) – the world's largest breast surgical society – since its inception 16 years ago. His presentation titled, 'Breast Cancer Screening in India – Finding Indian solutions to Indian problems', which highlighted UBF's innovative population based breast cancer screening programme in Telangana and AP, was voted as one of the best presentations through a poll conducted and tabulated on voting pads.

June

Youngest President Helms ABSI



Dr Raghu Ram was unanimously elected and installed as President of the Association of Breast Surgeons of India (ABSI) for 2015-17 at the Annual

Conference of ABSI held in Indore in June. He is the youngest ever and the only surgeon from south India to become the head of an organisation that represents general surgeons, surgical oncologists and plastic surgeons practising breast surgery all over India.

Fitting Tribute on Mother's Day



Who better than Dr Raghu Ram? The doctor was felicitated by Dr KV Ramana, advisor to Telangana government on Mother's Day for his outstanding contribution towards improving breast healthcare in his motherland through innovative initiatives undertaken by a Foundation established in his mother's name.

Dr Raghu Ram Inspires a Bollywood Film



Bollywood producer and ophthalmologist from UK, Dr Nikhil Kaushik (extreme left) with Dr Raghu Ram



Dr Raghu Ram with other doctors at the felicitation function in the UK

Dr Raghu Ram was felicitated by the Indian Deputy High Commissioner, High Commission of London and the British International Doctors Association, UK, for receiving one of India's most prestigious award – the Padma Shri.

At the felicitation ceremony, Dr Nikhil Kaushik, consultant ophthalmologist in UK revealed that he had made a Bollywood film, *Bhavishya* in 2006, inspired by Dr Raghu Ram's bold decision to relocate to India despite his lucrative career opportunities in the UK. The film explores issues concerning medical migration, from the East to West and vice-versa. It also weaves in the tale of the developing love between two young medics, from India working in the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK.

Unveiling Breast Cancer Care in India in Britain

In June, Dr P Raghu Ram delivered a guest lecture, 'Breast Cancer Care in India – Time for a Paradigm Change' at the Annual Congress of the Association of Breast Surgeons, UK in Bournemouth. The talk highlighted the paradigm changes that were introduced in breast healthcare in India, including all the activities undertaken by the UBF in the past eight years.



The Grand Round at UK hospital



Dr Raghu Ram with Professor Andrew Baildam and Professor Roger Kirby, world-renowned breast surgeons, after conducting the Grand Round at North Stoke University Hospital

July

The Ultimate Salute for UBF



The Indian subcontinent's first large-scale population based breast screening programme in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh being spearheaded by Ushalakshmi Breast Cancer Foundation (UBF), is the subject of research at RTI International, one of the world's leading research institutes dedicated to improving the human condition by turning knowledge into practice and has its operations in some 75 countries worldwide.

Sacred Submissions

The Mata ni Pachedi

Mata ni Pachedi, a unique form of hand-painted or block printed cloth imbued with religious significance exists in Gujarat even today. Carrying a beautiful depiction of the *Mata* or the goddess, these ritualistic painted cloths are offered in shrines by certain communities as a form of thanksgiving. **Anil Mulchandani** meets the national award winning Chitara family, who are prominent practitioners of their ancestral art and learns that these sacred submissions are today highly prized by art collectors and interior designers

Photographs: **Dinesh Shukla**

Known as the Kalamkari of Gujarat, Mata ni Pachedi is a hand-painted Kalamkari or block printed cloth bestowed to the shrines of the mother goddess as a form of offering. These sacred offerings are made by a few communities of Gujarat during the months of Navratri twice a year.

As most ancient art forms in India, the Mata ni Pachedi too was in danger of becoming extinct. This was because devotees preferred the less expensive block printed versions of this sacred cloth rather than the ones decorated with the hand-painted Kalamkari work. Today, however, the Mata ni Pachedi is enjoying a revival of sorts as new patrons from the world of art, fashion, interiors, gifting and design industries are flocking to it.

Manubhai Chitara and his family, one of the few prominent families still practising this art in Ahmedabad, have been honoured with national awards for sustaining the beauty of their craft. Explaining the genesis of this art form, he says that the paintings are called Mata ni Pachedi because they depict *Mataji*, the mother goddess in her manifestations of destroying evil forces. The paintings have considerable significance for pastoral

groups like the Rabari and Bharwad, and other communities like the Koli, Raval, Deviputar, Durbar and Vaghri. During Navratri (September–October) and Chaitra Navratri (February–April), these tribal groups make a vow asking the goddess for blessings. Chitara explains, “It could be a prayer for a child or to cure an ill child or they would ask for a good crop or a cure for sick cattle.”

The offerings are made to the goddess along with the Mata no Chadarvo, which is a canopy, and the Mata ni Pachedi, which are temple curtains tied to scaffoldings around the main shrine of the temple. The Mata ni Pachedi can also be spread over an altar or worn by the priest.

The rituals surrounding this offering vary. For example, the durbars and thakurs, who have descended from the warrior community, would either have a priest chanting prayers or sacrifice a goat or a lamb before submitting the sacred cloths. The farming communities meanwhile would offer grains with the cloths. This religious cloth is not discarded after the period of prayer is over instead it is stored in the temple to be used again. “When they get soiled or are overused,

they will be immersed in the river,” says Manubhai.

His son, Sanjay Chitara, who received a national award for Kalamkari in the Master Craftsmen category in 2000–2001, throws light on how the Mata ni Pachedi is made.

Their community, known as the Vaghri, residing in different places like Ahmedabad, the villages of the Kheda district, Viramgam, Dholka and Aghar prepared the Mata ni Pachedi, using colours extracted from vegetables, flowers, herbs and other natural sources, he says. The art of using distinctive bold forms and colours was passed down from generation to generation.

“Traditionally, my parents made Mata ni Pachedi on a commission basis for ethnic communities. Slowly, they were encouraged to pursue their ancestral art when they won state-level awards between 1969 and 1979,” says Sanjay, about his family’s journey with their ancestral art form. However, they gained confidence to work on it as a “means of livelihood” when textile designer Viloo Mirza got them an order from the Gujarat State Handicrafts Corporation to make block printed stationary, bedsheets,



The Chitara family even today practises the rare Kalamkari style of Mata ni Pachedi

table linen, wall hangings, etc to be sold at their Gurjari stores in 1984, he says.

That is how his brother Vasant and he, both born in the 1970s, were initiated into the handiwork of block printing and Kalamkari. "Only a handful of our community members are still employed in our ancestral art, and just a few of us, like the members of our family practise the Kalamkari style," says Sanjay.

The paintings have a distinct visual identity, says Sanjay. Typically, he elaborates, the painting is divided into different compartments by bold borders. "The painting is an expression of the creative and destructive principles of the mother

goddess, and traditionally shows Amba as the central figure, clutching weapons in each of her ten hands. This figure is enshrined within attractive borders that may assume an architectural form like a temple, floral or figurative representations or could be just decorative. Other motifs found on the Mati ni Pachedi are deities, priests offering sacrifices to the goddess, processions of devotees, and narratives from epics organised in columns," says Sanjay.

He says the themes, dimensions and proportions of the images vary considerably according to the artist's imagination. However, he further adds, "The sun and the moon motifs in the upper corners symbolise constant

features of life. Often Chadarvos and Pachedis depict garba, the dance in honour of the mother goddesses, a few festivities and Lord Krishna with pot-bearing gopis."

Black, white, blood red and a reddish maroon are dominant colours in traditional Pachedis, though over the years the artisans have started to add more colours inspired by nature.

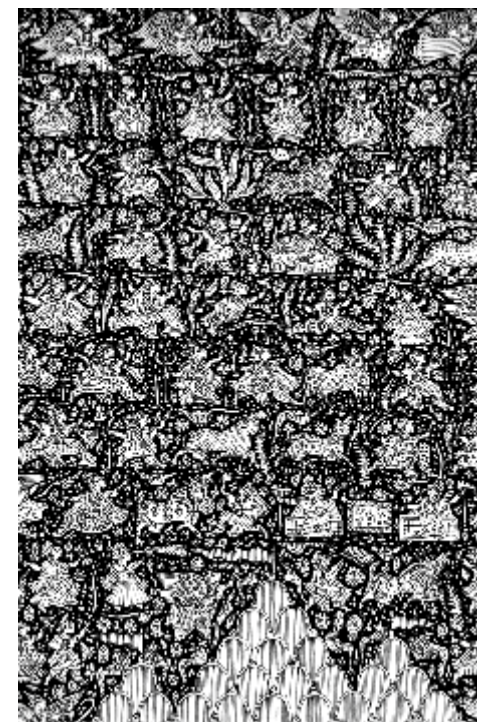
The master craftsman Manubhai explains, "The reddish maroon signifies the colour of mother earth and black repels evil spirits, while the white of the cloth signifies purity and spiritual contact. Gradually, other colours from nature were added and today, as the Mata ni Pachedi is often made as a wall decoration cloth, it could boast of a larger palette of colours."

The labour involved with intricately painting the Kalamkari Mata ni Pachedi and Mata ni Chadarvo make them expensive, compared to the ones made using mud-blocks, which can produce multiple copies for sale. Gradually, artisans started opting for more durable wooden blocks, carved at Pethapur near Gandhinagar (Gujarat's capital), which can be used continually for production.

"The block printed Mata ni Pachedi sell for just Rs 500 to Rs 1000, while the hand-painted ones sell for Rs 30,000 or more. This puts the Kalamkari tradition in danger in Gujarat," observes Sanjay.

The Chitara family, he says, earn their livelihood from churning out block printed ritualistic cloths, stationary, bed-sheets, table linen, wall hangings for the modern markets, and creating a few hand-painted Mata ni Pachedi cloths that are exquisitely detailed for collectors, designers, enthusiasts and others who are willing to spend Rs 15,000 to Rs 50,000 for just three or four square feet sized pieces.

"One of the largest pieces, more than 35 feet by 4 feet in area, was commissioned for a house, by interior designer Amala Shah, and her client also bought one of our national award winning pieces. It is due to our



Motifs on this traditional work of art are deities, priests offering sacrifices, narratives from epics...

expertise and artistry that I was one of the master craftsman and weaver to be selected from all over the country for the national awards in 2000," says Sanjay. His brother, Vasant won the national award in 2001 and his mother Manjuben in 2004.

Vasant chips in, recalling an incident when he went to receive his award. "The President A P J Abdul Kalam appreciated the fine work on the panel we had submitted," he says. And adds, he feels proud that his family was responsible for bringing this traditional art form of their community into the limelight.

His parents mainly focus on block printing Mata ni Pachedi in their colony in Vasna. While his brother Sanjay and his wife Kailash, Vasant and his wife Pinky live in the same house. Vasant says that they work together on the different stages of the process which goes into making each one of these paintings like preparing the fabric, making the dyes, drawing, painting and fixing.

The work begins by drawing the outlines on the pictorial space of the cloth, he says. The dyes are cooked up from natural materials – madder and alum for red, henna for orange, pomegranate and mango extracts for yellow, indigo for blue, iron and



molasses for black, and so forth. Myrobalam extract, herbs, tamarind seeds, castor oil are also used in the process. The colours are bold and stark, and painted into the outlined areas. After the treatment with myrobalam and applying the alum for the red, the fabric is immersed in the flowing water of the Sabarmati River in Ahmedabad after which the other colours are applied, says Vasant.

The paintings are called Mata ni Pachedi because they depict *Mataji*, the mother goddess in her manifestations of destroying evil forces. The paintings have considerable significance for pastoral groups like the Rabari and Bharwad...

The scope of the Mata ni Pachedi has widened today. They don't just work on religious themed fabrics anymore. It has become popular with contemporary interior designers.



So, the Chitara brothers use their traditional Kalamkari handiwork and its motifs on sarees and *chaniya choli* sent to them by designers and on other materials. According to Sanjay's wife Kailash, they have painted on wooden boxes and other contemporary products using their signature themes for exhibitions. They were also commissioned to paint murals based on Mata ni Pachedi themes on house walls.

And, by extending their art form to newer materials, they are not only keeping the home fires burning but their art vibrantly alive as well. ■

Mammogram Matters

Dr P Raghu Ram answers a wide range of questions on an integral part of breast cancer screening – the mammogram



Dr P Raghu Ram

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram (an X-ray of the breast) is done on someone who has felt a breast lump or a change in the breast. A clinical breast examination, a mammogram and a breast ultrasound will help to rule out a problem in the breast.

Doctor...I cannot feel a lump, why should I screen my breast?

A mammogram is conducted to detect breast cancer in the impalpable stage when neither the lady nor the doctor can feel a lump in the breast. That is a “screening mammogram” and has to be done once every year after 40.

Mammography is an effective proven way of detecting breast cancer many years before it shows up. Catching it early offers better chances of survival.

Is breast cancer screening effective in all age groups?

While it is important for women of all ages to be ‘breast aware’, breast screening is effective only in women over 40 years.

Is it safe to have a mammogram? Does it cause radiation hazard?

It is safe to have a mammogram. It involves a tiny dose of radiation – the risk to health from this is insignificant. The radiation dose delivered during mammography is the same as receiving a dental X-ray.

Is mammography painful?

While mammography may cause momentary discomfort, it should not be painful if it is done by a properly trained radiographer. With digital mammography, the discomfort is even less.

What is the difference between a conventional mammogram and a digital one?

A full-field digital mammography is a new revolutionary method in which an image of the breast can be produced in about five seconds (compared to four to five minutes with a traditional mammogram).

This new technique is more effective than standard mammography in showing up early subtle breast cancer changes and is useful in younger women with dense breasts.

Other advantages are less discomfort, negligible radiation exposure compared to conventional mammograms and is more accurate.

Moreover, with telemedicine facilities today, digital images can be sent anywhere across the world for a second opinion. As the machine is extremely expensive, the full-field digital mammography is not widely available in India.

KIMS-USHALAKSHMI Centre for Breast Diseases in Hyderabad is the first centre in south India to have acquired the full-field digital mammography, thus revolutionising early detection of breast cancer in this region.

Is mammography 100 per cent accurate in detecting breast cancer?

Mammograms are the most efficient way of detecting breast cancer early. However, the accuracy of a mammography is about 85 per cent. The reasons are:

- Some cancers are difficult to see on the mammogram
- The person reading the mammogram can miss the cancer (this happens occasionally, no matter how experienced the reader is)

What is the role of a breast MRI?

A breast MRI is not recommended for a routine breast screening. It is useful under certain circumstances:

- For women with breast implants as the accuracy of mammography and ultrasound is limited by the presence of implants
- For a woman with lobular breast cancer (a specific type of cancer) especially while planning breast conserving surgery
- After previous breast cancer surgery when there is an ambiguity in the mammogram and ultrasound results
- When someone has confirmed cancer in the lymph nodes in the armpit and routine mammography and ultrasound has failed to demonstrate a primary cancer in the breast
- In young women with a high risk of developing breast cancer, MRI may be considered as an option for breast screening