



An Introduction to Dhrupad Performance Platforms of India

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Abstract

Dhrupad an ancient form of music was initially performed in the Hindu temples. Later on, Dhrupad musicians were patronized in the royal courts by the Rajputs and Mughals. With time, Dhrupad started disappearing in society during the early part of the 20th century due to the increased popularity of other forms of music and loss of royal patronage. Dhrupad became absent in music concerts, and Kheyal music started dominating music concerts. Collective efforts of many people, musicians, organizations, and patrons initiated the Dhrupad concerts in Jaipur and Varanasi, as a step for the revival of Dhrupad in the 1970s. Before this time the All India Radio also took initiatives towards the promotion of Dhrupad. Slowly other Dhrupad sammelans were arranged across India. There were few Dhrupad artists of Dagar Tradition with a high level of artistry, who were not intimidated by adversities and, with their persistence and dedication, continued to serve authentic Dhrupad music to audiences through music concerts, as a concert artist and music concert organizer. Afterward, artists from other Dhrupad traditions played similar roles; as a result, in the last few decades, there had been an explosion of Dhrupad festivals/concerts across India. These festivals are organized by societies/organizations/academies (government/private) under the leadership of eminent Dhrupad masters. This study delineates an account of the significant Dhrupad concerts across India and, based upon the present concert scenario, concludes that Dhrupad seems to have been able to get back to the Hindustani Classical music audience.

Keywords: Dhrupada, Concerts, Music, Festivals, Sammelans

Introduction

Dhrupad is one of the most ancient forms of music found in North India. It is a part of Indian culture. Dhrupad can be either vocal, instrumental, or

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pakhavaj (two-headed barrel drum). A glance into the developmental History of Dhrupad finds the mention of four different styles or Bani's in Dhrupad music – Gauhar, Dagur, Khandar, and Nauhar, prevalent in Gwalior, Dagar region, Khandar region, and Nauhar community respectively. A common view is that these Bani's owe their names to the languages used in the region from which they arose (Raja, 2011). It is said that Gauhar Bani was founded by Miyan Tansen. Brij Chand, a resident of Dagar, founded the Dagar Bani. Raja Samokhon Singh belonging to Khandar, founded the Khandar Bani, and Sri Chand, a resident of Nouhar, founded the Nauhar Bani (Mukherjee, 1986). Experts claim that the roots of the four Banis lie in the Suddha, Vinna, Besora, Gouri, and Sadharani Geeti system of the ancient time. The essence Gauhar Bani, Dagar Bani, Khandar Bani, and Nauhar Bani is the elucidation of shanta rasa (peaceful and quiet mind), madhurya (melodiousness), vira rasa (dynamism/strength) and adbhut rasa (marvelous sentiment) respectively (Raja, 2005). The word rasa denotes feeling or emotion.

Gharanas in Dhrupad Tradition

The handing down of the wealth of Dhrupad from Guru to Shishya had been continuing throughout ages by Guru-Shishya parampara (teacher-disciple tradition). The prime stylistic lineages or gharana's found in Dhrupad are portrayed below briefly (Beohar, 1986; Mitra, 1989; Raja, 2011; Sanyal, 1986; Sharma, 2006; Sinha Thakur, 1970; Sinha, 2017) -

The Dagar Gharana - It is believed to be the oldest tradition of Dhrupad with its roots lying in the 16th century. It practiced Dagar bani. This tradition claims its link with Swami Haridas of the 15th century. Behram Khan had been the most renowned musician of this lineage in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 20th century, the most prominent representatives of this tradition had been the Dagar Brothers, who belonged to the 19th generation of the Dagar tradition. The Dagar brothers included the eight Dagers, Ustad Nasir Moinuddin Dagar and Ustad Aminuddin Dagar (Senior Dagar Brothers), Ustad Nasir Zaheeruddin Dagar and Ustad Nasir Fayyazuddin Dagar (Junior Dagar Brothers), their cousins Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar and Ustad Zia Fariduddin Dagar, and the other cousin Ustad Rahim Fahimuddin Dagar and Ustad Sayeeduddin Dagar.

The Darbhanga Gharana - Its root lie in the 18th century and is believed to be founded by two brothers Radha Krishna and Karta Ram, who were the court musicians of the Royal family of Darbhanga. However, the descendants of this family had 'Mallick' as their surname. This tradition is linked to Gauhar Bani. After independence, the most prominent musicians of this tradition have been Pandit Ramchatur Mallick and Pandit Vidur Mallick.

The Bettiah Gharana - The most prominent influence on this Gharana was that of Pyar Khan of Seni Gharana and Haider Khan. This tradition started in the royal courts of Bettiah in West Champaran primarily flourished in

the 19th century, though its roots are older. This Gharana emphasizes Khandar Bani, but practices bandishes from all the Banis. The two brothers Anand Kishor Sinha and Naval Kishor Sinha of the royal family became excellent Dhrupad singer and composer. Post-independence, Pandit Indrakishor Mishra and Pandit Falguni Mitra became a celebrated musician.

The Bishnupur Gharana - Before the end of the 18th century, Dhrupadiya Ustad Bahadur Khan of Seni Gharana, who was a descendant of Mian Tansen and a musician of Mughal court, settled down in Bishnupur, West Bengal as the court musician of the royal family. Ustad Bahadur Khan passed on his legacy to his disciples, and the tradition continued. Musicians of this Gharana are equally well Kheyal performers and instrumentalists. The musicians of this Gharana composed lots of Dhrupad, Kheyal, and other genre music.

The Talwandi Gharana - This tradition represents Khandar Bani and is associated with North-West India. Nayak Chand Khan and Suraj Khan of emperor Akbar's time is believed to have founded this Gharana. They were disciples of Swami Haridas. Contemporary musicians of this tradition are very few, and they reside in Pakistan.

The Mathura Gharana - This tradition is associated with Haveli Sangeet, the Dhrupad practiced at Vaishnava temples in the Braja region.

Dhrupad Singing Style

A Dhrupad composition contains sthai, antara, and sanchari, and abhog.

Sthai (Base)- The performer comes back to this melody section after executing all the individual components. This section employs the middle octave's tetrachord as well as notes of the lower octave.

Antara - This is an intermediate section and lies between sthai and sanchari. This section employs middle octaves' second tetrachord beside using notes of the higher octave.

Sanchari - This section is sung by the singer in any of the desired register.

Abhog- This section features the name of the writer/composer of the composition.

Dhrupad singing begins with slow, medium, and brisk tempo Nom Tom alap. Nom Tom alap is alap performed employing Om, Num, Ta, Na Ri, and other consonants/syllables having no meaning. The alap is a slow introductory section that is presented in the absence of any percussion accompaniment. The syllables used in alap are thought to be the abstract form of the mantra – Hari Om Ananta Narayan Tu Hi Taran Taarini Tvam. The alap leads to jod (steady rhythmic section) and jhala (fast-paced conclusions) sections before starting the main composition. There is a minimal scope of doing raga vistaar (elaboration) in the song. Dhrupad lays stress in the maintenance of purity of ragas (melodic format/mode) and swaras (notes). Alankars (specific pattern of a combination of notes) and taans (fast melodic passage) are avoided. Using Meend (gliding from one note to other) and Gamak (fast

meend, generally spanning two to three notes), the song is sung 2, 3, 4, and 6 times. Different time modes are used in the performance –Adi, Kuari, Biari, one and half times, three fourth time, and so on. The Pada or verse of Dhrupad is sung with percussion accompaniment. The preferred taalas (rhythm styles) for Dhrupad performance are generally Choutaal (12 beats), Jhaptaal (10 beats), Tevra (7 beats), Rudrataal (11 beats), Brahmatal (14 beats), Soolataal (10 beats), and others.

Dhrupad – As Temple Music

In the later part of the Vedic period (3000-1200 BC), verses set to musical rhythms and a melodic tune, known as Samgas, were sung. Gradually this gave way to Prabandha Gana (Prabandha = structure and Gana = song/ sangeet), which were composed in Sanskrit and sung in temples. Prabandha Gana rose to popularity between the 11th to 13th centuries. From Prabandha Gana, a much simpler form of music known as Dhruvapada evolved in the 14th century, which was written in Braj Bhasha in the beginning, and then later in Hindi language (Kumar, 2003; Mutatkar, 1956; Raja, 1999). It is said that the recasting of the divisions of Prabandha Gana gave rise to the different components of typical dhrupad composition.

The word Dhrupad is a Hindi word derived from the Sanskrit words Dhruva and Pada. Dhruva means constant/dependable/unchangeable, and Pada means verse (Selina, 1997), that is, short poetry performed with music. There seems to be a connection between dhrupad and devotion. Many Dhru pads are in the form of Lord Shiva prayers. Others are in praise of the emperor or filled with eroticism. It is believed that initially, Dhrupad may have been a part of the ritualistic music of temples (Ratanjankar, 1956). In ancient times Dhrupad was practiced in front of deities of Hindu culture by wondering saints such as Haridas Swami and others out of sheer devotion in search of the truth. In Mathura-Vrindaban, the tradition of Dhrupad singing in temples persists (Landgarten, 1991).

Dhrupad - As the music of Royal Courts

The spread and practice of Dhrupad were achieving considerable heights in the 15th century, during the reign of Raja Man Singh Tomar, the Rajput ruler of Gwalior. Prominent musicians like Nayak Machhu, Nayak Bakshu, Nayak Pandaviya, Mohammed Lohang, Nayak Karn, and Baiju Bawra were among the galaxy of accomplished musicians at the court of Raja Man Singh Tomar. The prime task of musicians was to perform in music programmes organized in the court of the king to keep him entertained. Raja Man Singh had been instrumental in commissioning his musicians with the task of the detailed documentation of Dhrupad music in the Sanskrit treatise “Man Kutuhl”. Before Raja Man Singh, Allaudin Khilji (1296-1316), also provided

patronage to Dhrupadiya Nayek Gopal and his disciple Nayak Baiju (Kaul, 1982; Jaideva, 1976; Mittal, n.d.; Roy, 1964; Widdes, 1994).

After the death of Raja Man Singh, due to political invasions, the court musicians of Gwalior went away to different places to seek the patronage of other kings. It is said that Nayek Bakshu, after spending some time in the court of Raja Man Sing's son Vikramaditya, became the court musician Raja Keerat Singh of Kalinjar. Then he was ultimately patronized by Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Nayek Bakshu is known to compose Bahaduri Todi to please Bahadur Shah (Chattopadhyay, 2016).

After Gwalior, another vital seat of Dhrupad practice was Rewa of Madhya Pradesh. It is here where the musically talented Mian Tansen (1491-1583) served Baghela Rajput, Raja Ramchandra Singh Baghela as his court musician. The invitation of the Mughal emperor Akbar (Reign 1542-1605) to Mian Tansen of Rewa to become one of his Navratnas at his royal court in Delhi marked the start of a golden era of Dhrupad music (Raja, 1999). Tansen remained Akbar's court singer till he breathed his last. Many ragas were invented by Mian Tansen for composing Dhrupad, such as Todi, Darbari Kanada, Bageshri, Miyan Ki Malhar, Miyan Ki Sarang, and so forth. Tansen is believed to have lightened the lamps at Akbar's court by singing Deepak raga. Tansen had four sons, Surat Sen, Seerat Sen, Taranga Sen, and Vilas Khan. Vilas Khan was appreciated and honoured by Akbar for his exceptional singing skills. After Akbar's demise, Jahangir (1605-1627) became the emperor of Delhi, and musician Vilas Khan adorned the royal court with other musicians. After Jahangir, Shahjahan (1625-1658) ascended the throne, and musicians like Lal Khan (son-in-law of Vilas Khan), Khushal Khan became his court musicians. Shahjahan was such a great patron of music, and he commissioned the compilation of verses of Nayek Bakshu under the scholarly treatise titled "Sahasrasa". It is essential to mention that during the 15th -17th century, Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II in Bijapur, nurtured and patronized North Indian Dhrupad style. He was himself a great musician and compiled his 59 verses in Kitab -i- Nawras, the book of nine rasas. The form of Dhrupad presented by Adil Shah had only sthai, antara, and abhoga and generally eliminated sanchari, which was incorporated in Dhrupads sung by others (Chattopadhyay, 2016; Dey, 1993).

As the Mughal emperor slowly faded away, many Dhrupad musicians migrated to small princely states in seek of patronage. This led to the development of new seats of Dhrupad practice in Eastern parts of India, such as Darbhanga, Bettiah of Bihar, and Bishnupur of Bengal in the 18th century. By the 19th century, the popularity of Dhrupad was eclipsed by the rising popularity of other genres of Hindustani music, which became deeply embedded in the mind of fairly every musician (Chattopadhyay, 2016; Raja, 1999).

Transitioning of Dhrupad from Royal Courts to Concerts/ Festivals

The early part of the 20th century witnessed struggle by the people to get independence from British rule. The patronage provided by noblemen and royals to musicians was slowly declining, and dhrupad performers experienced a tough time to continue practicing the art form after independence. By the 20th century middle onwards, Dhrupad was almost like a forgotten art form, primarily owing to the changing musical taste of musicians as well as audiences. However, there were a handful of families who practiced Dhrupad over the centuries, thereby preserving the art form (Selina, 1997). After the era of Dhrupad performance in temples, royal courts/ princely states were gone, Dhrupad singing mostly survived amidst senior artists within these families. Additively, around the mid-1970s, there was almost the absence of context for Dhrupad performance across major cities of India. Dhrupad performers were not called for public music concerts, a growing new context for the performance of Hindustani Classical music. It was that music concerts during such time focussed its attention on other popular genres of Hindustani music such as Kheyal (Widdes, 1994). Kheyal means imagination, and it evolved from Dhrupad music by the 18th century (Sharma, 2008), and provided the performers an enormous scope for improvisation and ornamentation, even though it required the following of the chosen raga. However, soon the situation was about to change with the creation of appropriate dedicated Dhrupad performance platforms. Music concerts/ conferences developed prominently as new platforms for all sorts of Hindustani Classical music. These mixed types of concerts, as well as dedicated Dhrupad performance concerts, provided the Dhrupad performing artists who lost royal/aristocratic patronage, the context to thrive. Thus music concerts were vital to the spread and development of Dhrupad and other forms of Hindustani music. The next section of this study mentions notable music concerts that have contributed or are contributing to the growth of Dhrupad in India.

Dhrupad - As a Concert Music/ Festival, Post Independence

Baba Behram Khan Dagar Dhrupad Samroh, Jaipur: In 1972, the Dagar brothers, to promote music in memory of their great grandfather Behram Khan, an eminent Dhrupadiya, who was the court musician of Bahadur Sah Zafar and Ranjit Singh, organized the Baba Behram Khan Dagar Dhrupad Samroh in Jaipur. This Dhrupad sammelan is very prestigious and is still active. In the 1980s, a branch of the Dhrupad society was registered in Delhi (Dhrupad, An Invocation, n.d.), which organizes different Dhrupad events/sammelans. Sayeeduddin Dagar served as the president of the Dhrupad Society of Jaipur.

Dhrupad Festival/ Mela, Varanasi: In 1975, Sangit Natak Akademi, New Delhi, which is India's national academy for music, dance and drama, thro-

ugh Dr. Lalmani Mishra, a famous sitarist as well dean of the Department of Performing Arts, Banaras Hindu University started the Dhrupad Festival/ Mela in Varanasi. In the later years, the initiative was supported by Maharaja Banaras Vidya Mandir Nyas, Bhavaprabhapadma Sansthan, and Sankat Mochan Foundation. Since then, the festival has become an annual event and had been held continuously, without any break. The features of the festival reflect the religious roots of Dhrupad. The festival is organized at Tulsi Ghat, a place in Varanasi on the banks of sacred river Ganges where Tulsidas is thought to have written his Ramayana. Moreover, the festival is arranged during Shivratri, which is one of the most prominent Hindu festivals dedicated to the deity Lord Shiva. Now the open ground where the festival is organized is often referred to as Dhrupad Tirth, a pilgrimage of Dhrupad. It is a three to four-day vocal, and instrumental music festivals were young, as well as noted and celebrated Dhrupadiya musicians from all traditions of Dhrupad from across India perform. Currently, the main organizer of this festival is Pandit Vishwambhar Nath Mishra, who is the Mahant of the Sankat Mochan Temple and the festival is inaugurated by Maharaja Anant Narayan Singh of the royal family of Benaras (Bhatt, 1995; Dhrupad News, 1986; Khanna, 2018; Kumar, 2016). This festival has become one of the most sought-after Dhrupad presentation platforms in the country.

Dhrupad Sammelans in Vrindaban: Around the early 1980s, a few Dhrupad concerts have also been organized independently by Sangit Natak Akademi, New Delhi, at Vrindaban, under the leadership of Dr. Prem Lata Sharma, a distinguished musicologist, who headed the Musicology Department of Banaras Hindu University and later became the Vice-Chancellor of the Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh. Starting from 1982, for a number of years, in Vrindavan, Chaitanya Prema Sansthan's Shri Srivatsa Goswami organized dhrupad sammelan's during the time of Holi festival. Brajakala Gurukul of this Sansthan or organization appointed Pandit Vidur Mallick in 1983 to promote Dhrupad teaching and events in Vrindaban (Dhrupad News, 1986). Even in recent times like 2009 and later, the Sangit Natak Akademi has arranged Dhrupad Mahotsav in Vrindaban. In 2014 at Vrindaban, Dhrupad Dham Samaroh has been organized jointly by D.D. Bharti Doordarshan Lucknow Kendra and Pandit Vidur Mallick Dhrupad Academy of Allahabad.

Dhrupad Sangeet Ashram Concerts, Kolkata: In 1975, Ustad Nasir Aminuddin Dagar laid the foundation of a Dhrupad teaching and promoting institute at Kolkata. He named the institute after his big brother Ustad Nasir Moinuddin Dagar Dhrupad Sangeet Ashram. Today it's one of the most renowned and prestigious Dhrupad learning institute. This institute had regularly organized Dhrupad concerts in Kolkata and other places to propagate the rich heritage of ancient Dhrupad music (Dhar, n.d.).

Dagar Saptak Festivals: The Dagar brothers of the Dagar family were

celebrated Dhrupad performers and have remarkably promoted Dhrupad in India and around the globe. They acted as concert-organizers in association with different Dhrupad societies and organized the annual Dagar Saptak festivals in Delhi, Calcutta, and other parts of India. The Madhya Pradesh government continued arranging Dhrupad Samaroh from around the 1980s. In 1982 the Samaroh was titled Dagar Saptak, where only musicians of the Dagar tradition of Dhrupad performed. The future of Dagar Saptak festivals became bleak with the recent passing of Sayeeduddin Dagar, the last and youngest of Dargar brothers (Barua, 2001; Dhrupad News, 1986).

Dhrupad Concerts in Madhya Pradesh: In Jabalpur of Madhya Pradesh, a Dhrupad fest under the name 'Mandir Aur Dhrupad' was organized in 1987 under the supervision of Ustad Allaudin Khan Sangeet Academy, Bhopal. Ashok Vajpeyi, Secretary, Department of Culture of Government of Madhya Pradesh, persuaded Ustad Zia Fariduddin Dagar to start a Dhrupad Kendra in Bhopal under the academy for educating students and for promoting different Dhrupad events (Sanyal, 1987). This organization is supported by the Madhya Pradesh Government, since its establishment in 1981. Ustad Zia Fariduddin Dagar remained the director of this organization until 2007, after which other Dhrupad masters headed the organization. Dhrupad Kala Kendra, Bhopal have been organizing Dhrupad concerts and festivals (Barua, 2001; Raja, 1998).

Dhrupad Kala Kendra in Indore, involved in Dhrupad teaching arrange Dhrupad Samaroh, serving as a platform for Dhrupadiyas of various traditions. The Samaroh at Indore was started in the memory of Mridangacharya Chunilal Pawar by the three Pawar brothers who themselves were musicians/Dhrupad singers (Barua, 2001; Dhrupad News, 1986).

Dhrupad Sansthan Bhopal Nyas was started by the renowned Gundecha brothers (Pandit Umakant and Ramakant Gundecha). It has hosted many Dhrupad sammelans. This Sansthan began functioning in 1999 and provides Dhrupad education to students from all around the world (Gurukul: Dhrupad Sansthan Trust, n.d.). This Sansthan in 2001 got accredited by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee.

An annual Dhrupad festival in Chanderi, Madhya Pradesh, with the name Baiju Bawra Dhrupad Utsav, was started in 2016 by the Shri Achaleswar Mahadev Temple Foundation and Raza Foundation, in memory of the celebrated Dhrupadiya Baiju Bawra on his death anniversary, Basant Panchami (Sinha, 2016).

Dhrupad Concerts in Bihar: The Rajya Kala Academy of Bihar arranged its first All India Dhrupad Samaroh in 1986 at Darbhanga. In later years also, this academy organized many Dhrupad fests (Rajan, 2013; Sanyal, 1987). In Bihar from time to time, there had been many Dhrupad festivals such as – Dumraon Gharana Dhrupad Tradition concerts, Dhrupad Samaroh in Darb-

hanga by Patna Doordarshan, Dhrupad Utsav in Gaya by Art, Culture and Youth Department of Government of Bihar, Dhrupad festivals by Patna Dhrupad Society and Sangeet Natak Akademi, Akhil Bharatiya Dhrupad Samaroh in Patna by National Central Zone Cultural Centre of Allahabad.

Pandit Siyaram Tiwari Memorial Sangeet trust constituted in 2014 in the memory of Padmashree Pandit Siyaram Tiwari, a Dhrupad stalwart of Darbhanga Gharana, organizes a biannual Dhrupad sabha festival, at Patna and New Delhi during March and August respectively with an intention to promote, preserve and popularise Dhrupad (Pandey, 2017).

Other Dhrupad Concert's: The one which is worth mentioning are enlisted below -

Sangit Natak Akademi, New Delhi, has arranged dhrupad festivals at Ambejogai, a town in Maharastra and Nathadwara, a town in Rajasthan (Dhrupad News, 1986) and other parts of India.

Dhrupad Academy, New Delhi, founded by Pandit Uday Kumar Mallick of Darbhanga lineage, recently celebrated its Silver Jubilee National Dhrupad Samaroh, in collaboration with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan of New Delhi at the Bhavans auditorium (Sinha, 2018).

In memory of Pandit Vidur Mallick, a renowned Dhrupad artist of Darbhanga tradition, Pandit Vidur Mallick Sangeet Samaroh have been started by Vidur Mallick Dhrupad Academy, Allahabad founded by Mallick Brothers (Prashant and Nishant Mallick). A promotion poster of this Samaroh revealed that in 2019 this Samaroh had reached its twelfth year. From the past few years, this Samaroh is being held at World Integrity Center, Dehradun, Uttarakhnad.

Pandit Kshitpal Mallick Dhrupad Society started by Dr. Prabhakar Pathak Mallick of Dhrupad tradition of Darbhanga organizes Pandit Kshitpal Dhrupad festival. As per the promotion poster of the society, this festival began in 2016 as a tribute to the contribution of Archarya Kshitpal Mallick (1834-1923), who had been the court musician of Darbhanga Royal family. In 2019 the 4th festival of this society was held in India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

Other organizations such as Raza Foundation, Indian Council for Cultural Relations of Delhi, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata, and so forth also arrange dedicated Dhrupad festivals. The Annual Dhrupad conference during the Holi festival at Bishnupur, West Bengal, is attended by several musicians from all over the country.

There are many **mixed types of music festivals** having Dhrupad as an item. Some of these are mentioned below-

Tansen Samaroh, Gwalior: It is a pre-eminent esteemed annual Hindustani music concert that has opened its door to Dhrupadiya musicians. Tansen Samaroh was a local festival held since 1589, to celebrate the memory

of legendary Miyan Tansen. With the support of Maharaja of Gwalior and later government of India, this festival has developed into a renowned music festival (Chatterjee and Sarkhel, 2020).

Sankat Mochan Sangeet Samaroh, Varanasi: Sankat Mochan Temple of Benaras, founded by Tulsidas, is more than 400-year old and is known for arranging music concerts during the time of Hanuman Jayanti. Initially, devotional songs and songs praising Rama were only sung in this temple. After independence, Amarnath Mishra, the Mahant of Akhara Goswami Tulsidas, who himself was a well-known pakhawaj player, ensured the participation of classical musicians in this music concert. The efforts of Amarnath's son Mahant Veer Bhadra Mishra, guided this music concert to reach great fame (Kumar, 2016; Mohan, 2017). The performance in this temple is not limited only to the Dhrupad genre of classical music.

Swami Haridas Sangit Samaroh Festival, Vrindaban: This festival was the brainchild of Swami D.R. Parvatikar Veena Maharaj, an eminent musician to celebrate the memory of Swami Haridas, a spiritual, classical musician, who is believed to be the Guru of Tansen. Veena Maharaj founded the Swami Haridas Seva Samiti in 1964 to organize the Swami Haridas Sangit Samaroh annually. This festival was initiated on Bihari Panchami, the day of the appearance of Shri Thakur Bankey Behari. Later, Saint Shri Prasad Baba of Vrindaban and then Gopal Goswami use to organize this festival. Recently, Atul Krishna Goswami was seen holding the festival at Sri Radha Sneh Bihari temple of Vrindaban. The festival includes cultural events, and Dhrupad performances are often included in the programme list (Sharma, n.d.).

Sangeet Sammelan of All India Radio

Radio broadcasting served as one of the Dhrupad performance platforms after independence. A national concert of classical music which broadcasted from all the stations of All India Radio (AIR) was inaugurated at AIR station, Delhi, in 1952. Sangeet Sammelan concert of All India Radio in 1955 provided musicians with a country-wide platform. In this programme, there were performances by Dabeer Khan (a been player and eminent Dhrupad Singer), Ram Chatur Mallick (Dhrupadiya), in addition to the performance by several accomplished Kheyal singers and instrumentalists (G.O.I., 1955; Pradhan, n.d.). Since then, Radio has contributed to the popularisation of Dhrupad and other genres of Hindustani Classical music by broadcasting music concert programmes through decades. A similar role has been played by the **Door-darshan Television** channel since its inception. However, in comparison to the past, the broadcasting of different concerts of Hindustani music in AIR has declined in recent times, possibly due to the rise of the other entertainment mediums.

Subah-e-Banaras, Varanasi: It is a recent cultural and spiritual event that started in 2014, in which along with Ganga Aarti, Vedic chants, Yajna, Yoga,

dhruvad items are also included in music recitals sessions. The event is organized at Assi Ghat of Varanasi and is early morning, everyday event. This event was initiated by the district magistrate, Shri Pranjali Yadav of District administration of Varanasi and Dr. Ratnesh Verma, Chief of Regional Cultural Center of Varanasi. The event was supported and strengthened by many eminent luminaries. Later, a committee was constituted for organizing the event (Joshi, 2015; Subah-e-Banaras, n.d.). The event serves as a platform for artists from all over India.

Many other general classical music concerts such as ITC Sangeet Sammelan of Kolkata, Sangamam annual music festival organized by Sunnad Arts, Kalidas Samaroh in Ujjain, Ustad Rehmat Ali Khan Memorial music festival in Bhopal, Dover Lane Music conference of Kolkata, music conferences of SPICMCAY (Society for Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture Amongst Youth) and other organizations are inviting Dhrupadiyas for performance.

Conclusion

Many individuals, artists, organizations, and music patrons have played a significant role in promoting Dhrupad in India throughout ages. However, after the disappearance of patronage of the royal/aristocratic families/ princely states, the initiatives of organizing concerts taken by the proponents of Dhrupad, especially of Dagar tradition, and later by others, seems to have revived and popularised the declining tradition of Dhrupad to a decent state. Thus Dhrupad music has done well in transiting from temple/royal courts to music concert platforms of modern times, despite maintaining its rigid structure and originality. It may be said that, in contemporary times, Dhrupad co-exists with Kheyal in the mainstream performance platform of Hindustani Classical music. The marriage between the joyousness of music and the festive nature of music concerts seems to be driving the sustainability of the music conferences for decades. However, much financial support would be required from private and government organizations to ensure long term functioning of the old and new Dhrupad performance platforms/ festivals. The reach of Dhrupad may not be able to match up with popular music, but even in today's generation, there are persons who are interested in learning and performing this ancient art form with dedication. This is clear since, in recent times, a lot of Dhrupad training institutes are actively functioning under Dhrupad artist guided societies/organizations/academies (government and private). Adequate and proper teaching of intricacies of Dhrupad with illustrations by visiting Dhrupad maestros in music courses of colleges and universities are also required for the effective progression of Dhrupad tradition. Promoting Indian values, culture, and traditional ideology among new generation music listeners and performers may help Dhrupad to carve a genre-based niche for itself.

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