



SITAR RAMARAO UTSAV 2026

A TRIBUTE BY HIS FAMILY, DISCIPLES AND FRIENDS

*“Ram bhakt Hanuman,
Ravi bhakt Rao”*

— M. S. SUBBULAKSHMI



THE JOURNEY TO THE CENTENARY

Celebrating his life and music

THE STORY

Who was Pandit N. R. Rama Rao?

“Ram bhakt Hanuman, Ravi bhakt Rao”

— M. S. SUBBULAKSHMI

Among musicians who knew him, this phrase became synonymous with Pandit N. R. Rama Rao's devotion to his Guru, Pandit Ravi Shankar.

Pandit N. R. Rama Rao (1927–2004) — affectionately known across Karnataka as Sitar Ramarao — was one of the pioneers who introduced and popularised Hindustani classical music and the sitar in Karnataka.

In 1951, with his mother's blessings and little more than determination and faith, he left Bengaluru for Delhi to learn under Pandit Ravi Shankar. He became one of the Maestro's earliest disciples, dedicating his life to the Guru–Shishya tradition and carrying that musical legacy back to Karnataka. For more than five decades, he performed, taught, mentored and inspired generations of musicians and listeners. His recordings are preserved by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and his influence continues through the many disciples who carry forward his musical values.



PANDIT N. R. RAMA RAO (CENTRE) WITH HIS SITAR STUDENTS —
BENGALURU, ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPH

The Sitar Ramarao Utsav is a deeply personal tribute organised by his family, disciples and friends through The Shubhendra and Saskia Rao Foundation. Led by his son, internationally acclaimed sitarist Pandit Shubhendra Rao, together with family and disciples across India, Europe and North America, the Utsav celebrates not only a musician, but a life dedicated to music, humility, service and cultural enrichment.

Every edition brings together artists, students, patrons and rasikas to celebrate the enduring contribution of a man who gave everything to his instrument, his Guru and the cultural life of Karnataka.

THE JOURNEY SO FAR

The Story So Far



FIRST EDITION · SOLD OUT TWO MONTHS AHEAD

First Edition · 2024 — *The Utsav Begins*

The inaugural Sitar Ramarao Utsav established a new platform for celebrating Indian classical music in Bengaluru. The festival featured Pandit Shubhendra Rao with Pandit Bickram Ghosh, followed by a memorable performance by the legendary Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia accompanied by Pandit Ravindra Yavagal.

Tickets sold out nearly two months in advance — believed to be the first such occurrence in the history of Bengaluru's iconic Chowdiah Memorial Hall. The response from audiences and media confirmed the importance of creating an annual celebration dedicated to Pandit N. R. Rama Rao's legacy.



PANDIT SHUBHENDRA RAO & PANDIT BICKRAM GHOSH, 2024

Second Edition · 2025 — *The Family Widens*

The second edition expanded the vision of the festival by bringing together disciples, collaborators and friends who continue to carry Pandit Rama Rao's musical ideals.

Highlights included: The Sitar Ramarao Ensemble featuring students of Pandit Rama Rao · Vidushi Saskia Rao-de Haas with Shri Ishaan Ghosh · Vidushi Shubha Mudgal with Pandit Aneesh Pradhan and Pandit Sudhir Nayak.

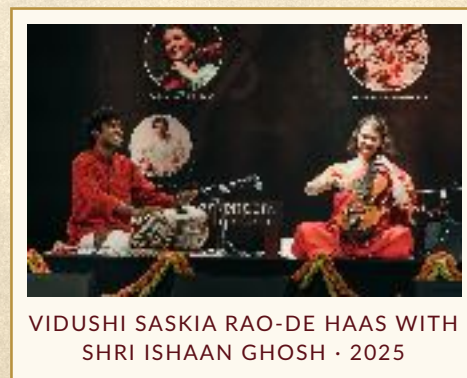
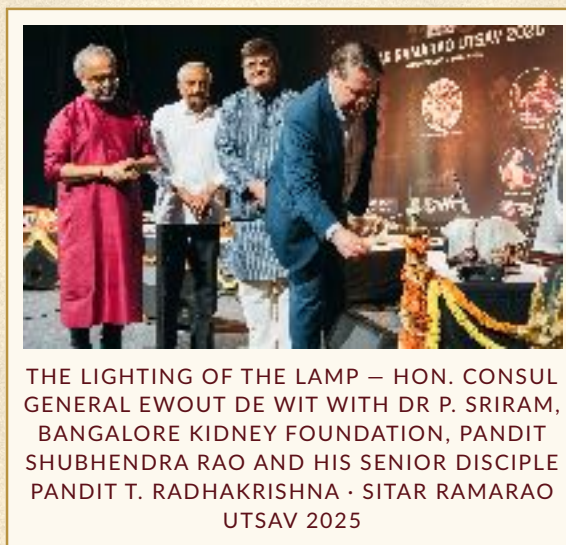
The festival played to a full house and drew strong media attention across Bangalore Mirror, The Times of India, The New Indian Express, The Hindu, Explocity and numerous digital channels, generating documented media visibility valued at over ₹23 lakh, reflecting its growing profile and public resonance.



SECOND EDITION · 2025

MEDIA & IMPACT

Visibility that Sponsors Value



₹23 Lakh+
DOCUMENTED MEDIA
VALUE, 2025

Sold Out
2 MONTHS AHEAD, 2024 —
A CHOWDIAH FIRST

10+ Titles
PRINT & DIGITAL COVERAGE

An audience of over 900 at each edition — among them diplomats, philanthropists and connoisseurs. Last year the Utsav honoured philanthropist Dr P. Sriram of the Bangalore Kidney Foundation with its Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Consul General of the Netherlands, with a performance by the legendary Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia.

Deccan Herald • The Times of India • The Hindu • The New Indian Express • Bangalore Mirror • Udayavani • Vijayavani • Samyukta
Karnataka • Explocity • numerous digital platforms

THIRD EDITION • 2026

The Journey to the Centenary



The 2026 Utsav marks the 99th birth year of Pandit N. R. Rama Rao and serves as the bridge to his Centenary Celebration in 2027. This year's programme brings together some of India's most distinguished musicians:

Pandit Tejendra Narayan Majumdar
SAROD

&

Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri TABLA

RECIPIENT OF THE SITAR RAMARAO UTSAV LIFETIME
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2026

Vidushi Suma Sudhindra VEENA

&

Vidwan B. C. Manjunath MRIDANGAM

Vidwan Narayanamurthy GHATAM

Vidwan Achuta Rao VIOLIN

Alongside the concert programme, the Utsav will host a special exhibition on the life and legacy of Pandit N. R. Rama Rao, archival displays and recordings, and a Sitar Masterclass for students and enthusiasts.

The 2026 edition is expected to attract audiences from across Bengaluru and beyond while building momentum toward the historic Centenary Year.



THE LIVING LEGEND PANDIT HARIPRASAD CHAURASIA PERFORMING WITH PANDIT RAVINDRA YAVAGAL AND STUDENTS — FIRST EDITION, 2024

WHY PARTNER WITH THE SITAR RAMARAO UTSAV?

A Growing Cultural Institution

Unlike a single concert, the Utsav offers association with a growing cultural institution.

The calibre of the room. Each edition draws an audience of over 900 — connoisseurs, patrons and civic and cultural leaders. In 2025 the Utsav honoured philanthropist Dr P. Sriram of the Bangalore Kidney Foundation with its Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Consul General of the Netherlands; the inaugural year brought the legendary Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia to the stage. This is the company your brand keeps.

What Your Patronage Makes Possible

- ◆ Presentation of internationally acclaimed artists
- ◆ Archival exhibitions and documentation
- ◆ Preservation of Karnataka's sitar heritage
- ◆ Expansion of outreach to future generations
- ◆ Educational initiatives and masterclasses
- ◆ The Centenary Celebrations in 2027

Heritage

Association with one of Karnataka's most respected musical legacies.

Visibility

Strong engagement across print, digital and social media, with proven media coverage across leading national and regional publications.

Prestige

Alignment with internationally acclaimed artists and one of India's most respected classical music traditions.

Community Impact

Support for education, cultural preservation and the Guru–Shishya tradition.

PATRONAGE OPPORTUNITIES

Become a Patron of the Utsav

TITLE PATRON

On request

Present the 99th Year Utsav and play a defining role in the journey toward the Centenary Celebrations of Pandit N. R. Rama Rao in 2027.

- ◆ Exclusive presenting association · prominent logo placement across festival communications
- ◆ Acknowledgement from the stage · premium hospitality and reserved seating
- ◆ Inclusion in press and publicity material · recognition in commemorative publications
- ◆ Priority association with Centenary Year celebrations

ASSOCIATE PATRON

On request

A leadership role in supporting one of Bengaluru's most distinguished cultural events.

- ◆ Prominent branding visibility · recognition across digital and print communications
- ◆ VIP hospitality · stage acknowledgement · programme book recognition

GOLD PATRON

On request

Supporting artistic excellence and cultural preservation.

- ◆ Branding visibility
- ◆ Programme acknowledgement
- ◆ Social media recognition
- ◆ VIP invitations

SILVER PATRON

On request

Supporting the continued growth of the Utsav.

- ◆ Recognition in programme material
- ◆ Social media acknowledgement
- ◆ Complimentary invitations

FRIENDS OF THE UTSAV

On request

A circle of rasikas, disciples, students, families and friends preserving a musical legacy — Patron Friend · Supporting Friend · Centenary Friend · Friend of the Utsav.

Friends of the Utsav are acknowledged in the festival programme and welcomed as honoured guests.



Join at 99.
Help Lead the Centenary.

*Preserve a musical legacy. Inspire future generations.
Celebrate a century of influence.*



THE SITAR RAMARAO ENSEMBLE — HIS DISCIPLES IN PERFORMANCE AT CHOWDIAH
MEMORIAL HALL, 2025

BECOME A PATRON OF THE UTSAV

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www.sitarramarao utsav.org · Instagram @sitar_rama_rao_utsav

All patronage is eligible for tax benefit under Section 80G.
The Shubhendra and Saskia Rao Foundation · Registered Trust · 80G & 12A

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