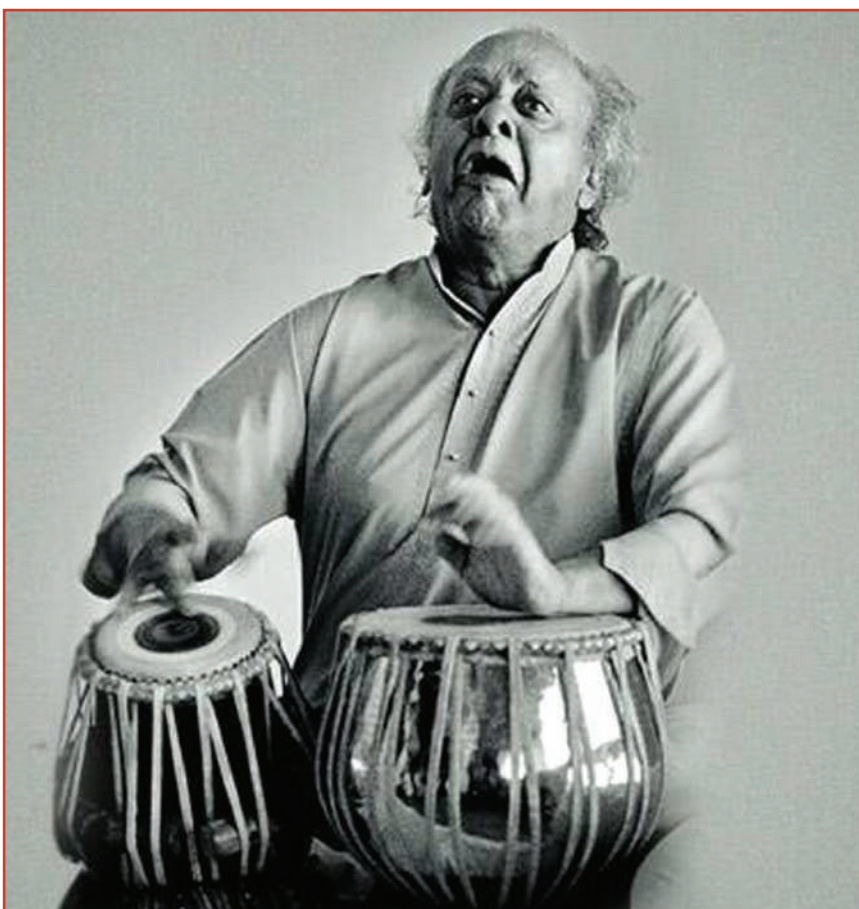


Ustad Allah Rakha — Master Of Hindustani Classical Music



Ustad Allarakha Qureshi (29 April 1919 - 3 February 2000), popularly known as Alla Rakha, was an Indian Tabla player specialised in Hindustani Classical music. He was a frequent accompanist of Sitar player Ravi Shankar.

Allah Rakha was born in Ghagwal, Jammu and Kashmir, in then British India. His mother tongue was Dogri. He became fascinated with the sound and rhythm of the Tabla at the age of 12, while staying with his uncle in Gurdaspur. Finding little chances for grooming and appreciation, the student disciple of Tabla playing and began studying it with Mian Kader Baksh of the Punjab Gharana of Tabla players. Sabir Rakha, a brother, also played Tabla.

He studied voice and Raag Vidya under Ashiq Ali Khan of the Patiala Gharana. His regimen of practice and dedication were legendary: hours upon hours of hard, disciplined practice, that would later pay off.

He was married to Bavi Begum and their marriage produced three sons, Zakir Hussain, Fazal Qureshi and Taufiq Qureshi; two daughters, Khurshid Aulia née Qureshi and Razia; and nine grandchildren. They all survived him except Razia; it was the news of her death the day before that is thought to have caused his fatal heart attack.

Career

Allah Rakha began his career as an accompanist in Lahore and then as an All India Radio staffer in Bombay in 1940, playing the station's first ever Tabla solo and elevating the instrument's position in the process. Soon after, he composed music for a couple of Hindi films from 1943-48. An October 1967 concert by Shankar and Rakha, held four months after their performance at the Monterey Pop Festival. However, he still played as an accompanist, for soloists like Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Allauddin Khan, Vilayat Khan, Vasant Rai, Ali Akbar Khan and Ravi Shankar. The venerable master became world renowned as Shankar's chief accompanist during his performance in the 1960s, delighting audiences in the West with his percussive wizardry, not only as an uncanny accompanist with flawless timing and sensitivity but also as a soloist where he was a master of improvisation, a prolific composer and an electric showman.

The partnership was particularly successful, and his legendary and spellbinding performances with Shankar at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967 and the Woodstock Festival in 1969 served to introduce classical Indian music to gen-

eral Western audiences.

He became a Ustad (teacher) to Shankha Chatterjee (in 1962), Yogesh Samsi, Prafulla Athalye, Aditya Kalyanpur, Anuradha Pal, Nishikant Barodekar, Uday Ramdas, Shyam Kane and his sons Taufiq Qureshi and Fazal Qureshi. His eldest son, Zakir Hussain is also an accomplished Tabla virtuoso.

Global influence

Rakha popularised the art of Tabla, playing across the globe, elevating the status and respect of his instrument. "Abbaji" (as he was affectionately known by his disciples) also bridged the gap between Carnatic music and Hindustani music by playing with both renowned Carnatic musicians and other Hindustani stalwarts.

Leading American percussionists in rock n' roll, such as the Grateful Dead's Mickey Hart, admired him and studied his technique, benefiting greatly even from single meetings.

Hart, a published authority on percussion in world music, said: "Allah Rakha is the Einstein, the Picasso; he is the highest form of rhythmic development on this planet." Rakha also collaborated with jazz drummer Buddy Rich on their 1968 album Rich à la Rakha.

Rakha was part of the ensemble accompanying Ravi Shankar during George Harrison's Concert for Bangladesh shows, held in New York City in August 1971.

The success of the live album and concert film from this event presented Indian classical music to a wide audience in the West. He was also featured in a Google doodle on 29 April 2014 on the occasion of his 95th birthday.

Death

Alla Rakha died on 3 February 2000 at his Simla House residence on Nepean Sea Road following a heart attack, which he suffered on learning of the death of his daughter, Razia, the previous evening. Ustad Allah Rakha had established the Alla Rakha Institute of Music in Bombay in 1986 and imparted his knowledge of the instrument to all his disciples in the institute. Allah Rakha and Sitar maestro Pandit Ravi Shankar brought classical Hindustani music to Western audiences as well. He was honoured with the Padma Shri Award by the Government of India in 1977 for his contributions to elevate the reach of Tabla playing as an art form across the globe.

Later on, Sangeet Natak Akademi also honoured him with an award in 1982.

THE FACT CORNER

Did you know?



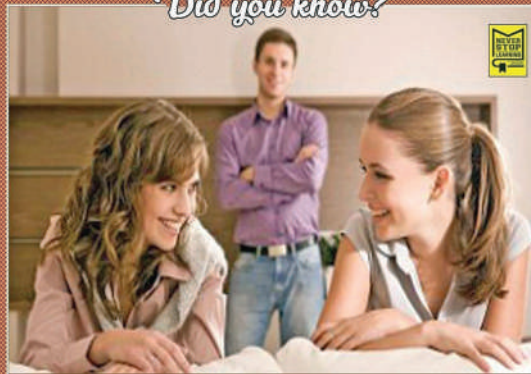
The human eye has a resolution of about 576 megapixels

Did you know?



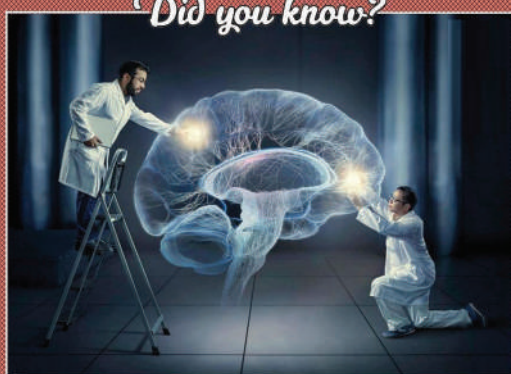
Queen ants can live for over 30 years, making them one of the longest living insects

Did you know?



Women speak about 20,000 words a day. 13,000 more than the average man.

Did you know?



Scientists have discovered how to find your bad memories and DELETE them from your mind for good

FUN RIDDLES

RIDDLE



I am a bird, I am a fruit and I am a person. What am I?

English Proverbs and Meanings

* **A friend's eye is a good mirror.**
A real friend will tell you the truth.

* **A good beginning makes a good end.**
If a task is carefully planned, there's a better chance that it will be done well.

* **A leopard cannot change its spots.**
It is not possible for a bad or unpleasant person to become good or pleasant.

* **A stumble may prevent a fall.**
Correcting a small mistake

may help you to avoid making a bigger one.

* **Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know.**
It's better to deal with some body difficult but familiar, than change and risk dealing with somebody worse.

* **Better untaught than ill-taught.**
It's better not to be taught at all than to be taught badly.

* **Blood will out.**
A person's background or education will eventually show.

Paneer Dosa



Ingredients:
For Dosa
Whole wheat flour – 1 ½ cup
Salt – to taste
Water – enough for making batter
Filling
Paneer – 1 cup, crumbled
Onion – 1, medium sized
Turmeric – A pinch
Red chilli powder – 1 tsp

Green chilli – 1
Salt – As needed
Coriander leaves – 2 tbsp, chopped
Oil – 2 tsp
Cumin seeds – 1 tsp
How To Make:
In a deep kadai, heat oil and allow cumin seeds to splutter. Add onions and green chilies and fry until golden brown. Add spices and give a quick mix. Add crumbled paneer and coriander leaves and cook for 2 more minutes. Keep aside.
Mix water with wheat flour and salt to make a batter of pouring consistency.
Heat a griddle and brush a little oil.
Pour ¼ cup of batter on the griddle kept on medium heat and spread out in concentric circles.
Drizzle a few drop of oil and cook until the bottom portion turns golden. Flip over and cook for 2 more minutes.
Once again, flip. Take about 1 tbsp of the filling and spread it on one side of the dosa.
Fold dosa into half and press the edges.
Serve hot with spicy mint coconut chutney.

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Mini Carrot Coriander Idlis



Ingredients
For Idli Batter:
Idli rice – 1 cup
Urad dal – 1/3 cup
Salt – to taste
Others:
Carrot – 2, medium sized, peeled, finely grated
Onions – 1, medium sized, peeled, finely chopped,

Coriander leaves – 1 tbsp
Red chili powder – ½ tsp
Dhaniya powder – ½ tsp
Salt – to taste
How To Make:
Soak idli rice and urad dal separately for 3 to 4 hours after washing thoroughly in clean water.
Grind rice with water in a food processor or blender until it becomes smooth.
Grind urad dal with a little water. Add more water when required to make the batter fluffier.
Mix both the batters and season with salt to taste. Keep aside for about 8 hours to allow fermentation.
How To Proceed:
Saute onions in a little oil until it becomes golden brown. Add carrots, onions, green chilies, and coriander leaves along with the spice powders to the idli batter. Grease the mini idli pans with very little sesame seed oil. Add a tbsp each of the batter on each of the space in the plates.
Steam for about 10 to 12 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre of the idli comes out clean.
Serve hot with tomato ketchup.