

bserved every year on the second Thursday of October, World Sight Day raises awareness about the importance of eye care and the prevention of avoidable blindness. Coordinated by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, the day emphasizes regular eye check-ups, early detection of vision problems, and access to affordable treatment for everyone. With millions worldwide affected by conditions like cataracts, glaucoma, and uncorrected refractive errors, World Sight Day urges communities to prioritize eye health through education, screenings, and healthy lifestyle habits. It serves as a reminder that good vision is essential for learning, productivity, and overall well-being.

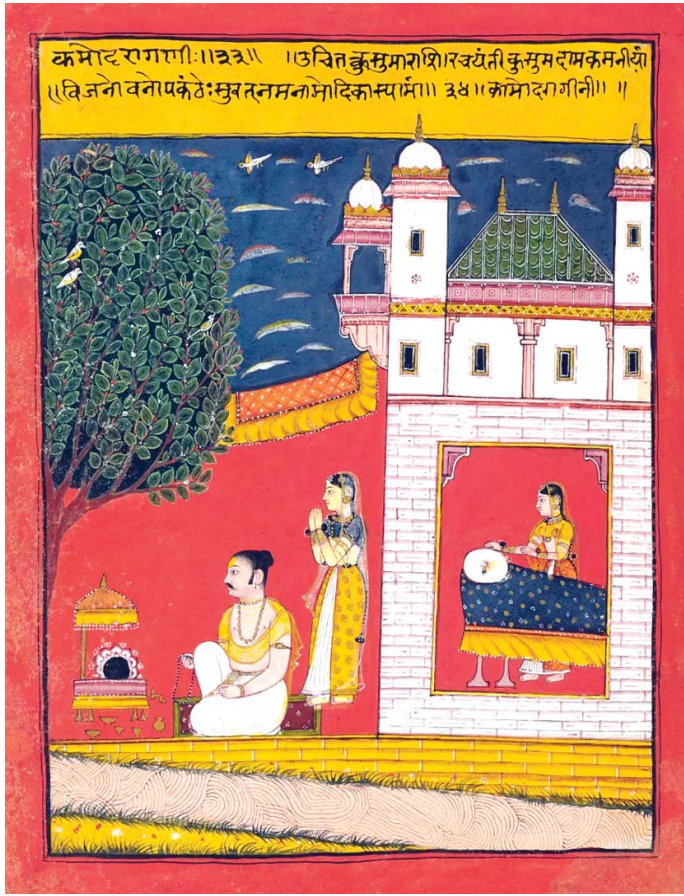
#FOLK TRADITIONS

The Story of Tilak Kamod

Simplicity became a smiling Raga, inviting attention



Wajid Ali Shah describes it as Radha playing with Krishna.



In the vast constellation of Hindustani ragas, where complexity and depth often rule, Tilak Kamod

quietly radiates a different kind of brilliance, one born not from intricate meanderings, but from simplicity so pure that it sings straight to the soul.

A Raga that Smiles

Tilak Kamod is a raga that doesn't demand attention, it invites it. Like a well-worn path through a sunlit forest, it's gentle, melodic, and immensely approachable. Yet, behind that simplicity lies a

carefully balanced structure that allows both bhakti (devotion) and shringar (romance) to coexist. It's a raga that smiles, one that feels like a lullaby, a hymn, a lover's quiet whisper, all at once.

The Origins: A Folk Heart, a Classical Soul

Tilak Kamod traces its roots to folk traditions and semi-classical forms like thumri and dadra, but over time, it found a permanent home in the Hindustani classical tradition. Its lineage hints at a blend of Kafi and Khamaj, yet, it charts its own territory

with playful phrases and sweet turns. The ascent (Aroha) and descent (Avaroha) are gentle, often skipping over ga and ni, while phrases like ni (komal) - Pa - ni (shuddha) - Sa add a delicate charm that feels less like performance, more like poetry.

Tilak Kamod in Performance: Less is More

In a world where many ragas demand showmanship, Tilak Kamod calls for restraint. Its beauty lies in delicate touches, in letting the raga breathe between the notes.

Great maestros, from Pandit Bhimsen Joshi to Kishori Amonkar, have rendered it with soulful simplicity, allowing the raga's emotive quality to take center stage. In

light classical and devotional spaces, it has thrived, bhajans, ghazals, even film music have embraced its charm. • "Charan Kamal Bandho Re" • "Shyam Teri Bansi" • "Payoji Maine Ram Ratan Dhan Payo"

These are not just songs; they are emotional landscapes painted with Tilak Kamod's palette.

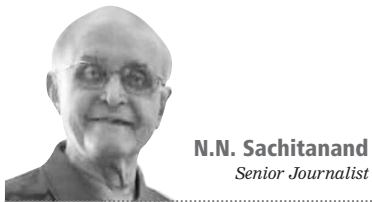
What the Rag says

It asks: Can you hold space with fewer notes? Can you evoke emotion without acrobatics? Can you surrender to the raga rather than control it? Tilak Kamod answers: Yes.



The Wages of Graft

Six months ago, he had landed a big contract for an overbridge at a railway crossing. The departmental project engineer, Om Prakash, was an old pal of his and revealed the contents of the competing quotations to Chadha. This enabled Chadha to underquote all the competitors and bag the contract.



N.N. Sachitanand Senior Journalist

Ranjit Chadha had gone mad.

Now, you will wonder why an affluent, hard-bitten, healthy contractor should lose his sanity. For that, we will have to recapitulate the course of his life.

When Ranjit Chadha entered his profession, he was young, naïve and honest. He had a diploma in Civil Engineering and some money left by his father.

For the first year, he knocked about without securing a single contract. This so disheartened him that he nearly decided to take up regular employment. But his uncle, a shrewd and seasoned veteran in the field, advised him against it and also revealed to him some of the facts of life.

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That dictum had not yet let him down. He acquired the accoutrements of affluence, a posh bungalow, a large car, a flourishing grape farm just outside the city and a rich man's daughter as wife.

But a son came after many years and the doctor told him that his wife could never bear any more children.

So, on his son, Chadha lavished all the love and affection he was capable of. The slightest wish of the boy was granted and if he was even the least bit indisposed, Chadha left all his work to personally minister to the sick child.

#PHRASES

From Peeping Toms to Honeymoons

Strange Origins Of Everyday Phrases We Use Today



#STORY



The boy joined a local convent school and soon caused Chadha to swell with pride when he began win-

ning top honours in studies and games. Chadha dreamt fondly about his son growing up to be an exalted

name in the country. Meanwhile, the contract work and graft continued and his store of black money

language is full of curious expressions that we use without thinking, but their backstories often reveal surprising twists of history, myth, and culture. Take 'the whole nine yards', for instance. Though commonly used to mean giving something your all, its origin remains a mystery. Theories abound, ranging from the length of WWII machine gun ammo belts to the amount of fabric used in tailoring, but no definitive source has ever been confirmed. It remains one of English's most debated phrases.

The word 'honeymoon' may sound sweet, but its roots are tinged with cynicism. In 16th-century English, it referred not to romantic getaways, but to the brief period of marital bliss expected to fade as quickly as the moon's cycle. Some believe the term also comes from the tradition of drinking honey-based mead for a month after marriage to promote fertility and happiness.

Then, there's the playful but slightly sinister phrase 'cat got your tongue,' used when someone is unusually quiet. While there's no clear historical event tied to it, possible origins include the use of the



cat-o'-nine-tails whip in the navy, or Victorian-era slang for teasing silent children. Despite various theories, the phrase likely emerged as whimsical English without a dark origin.

'Peeping Tom' is more directly linked to a story, specifically, the

legend of Lady Godiva. As she rode naked through Coventry to protest unfair taxation, the townspeople respectfully turned away, except for one man named Tom, who peeped and was struck blind or dead, depending on the version. His name lived on, and today a 'Peeping Tom'



refers to any creepy voyeur who invades others' privacy. Lastly, 'hit the ground running' evokes action and purpose. It's believed to come from WWII military slang, describing paratroopers who had to land and move quickly in combat. Over time, it entered business and poli-

petitors and bag the contract.

There was plenty of scope for making money on this project. The depth of foundations could be reduced, the steel and cement in the reinforced concrete could be pared and so on. He expected to make at least Rs. 10 lakhs on the Rs. 40 lakhs he had quoted, allowing for Rs. 2 lakhs cut to the departmental engineers, overseers etc.

He was not worried about the structural stability of the bridge, since he knew these things were designed with a very high safety factor.

A fortnight ago, the bridge was completed and formally inaugurated by the PWD Minister who said a lot of things in praise of the contractor, Ranjit Chadha. The words of praise were duly published by the local Press. The minister, of course, had been suitably rewarded by Chadha when the contract was bagged. After the inauguration, traffic hummed smoothly over the bridge.

Some days later, while Chadha was having his afternoon tea, the phone rang. It was Om Prakash, stuttering hysterically.

"Chadha, the bridge has just collapsed about five minutes ago! Several vehicles were on it at that time. It is a terrible mess. There are a lot of fatalities. Come immediately!"

Chadha rushed to the bridge site and came upon a ghastly scene. Two of the pillars had come down and the main span had collapsed. About a dozen vehicles were strewn on the railway tracks below, with screaming and moaning passengers trapped in them.

But what made his heart stop cold was the sight of the overturned school bus. With dread in his mind, he ran towards the vehicle from which dazed boys were being helped out. It was the bus of his son's school.

His eyes searched desperately. And then, he saw Prakash. He was huddled near a window. His head was twisted at an odd angle. He was not moving. His eyes were closed. Just then, a fireman approached the boy's body and lifted it out of the bus. Chadha hastened to him and asked, "How is he?"

The fireman shook his head sadly. For a moment, Chadha gazed despairingly at the lifeless form. The moans, shrieks and shouts buffeted his ears and rose to a crescendo in his mind. Then suddenly, everything went blank and he began laughing.

When Om Prakash found him sometime later, Chadha had a fixed smile on his face, a hollow look in his eyes and no answers to any questions.

Ranjit Chadha had gone mad.

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#DONALD DUCK

Short Tempered Stuttering Donald

Did WWII Create Donald Duck's Voice? The Strange Legend of 'Duck Voice Syndrome'

Most people know Donald Duck as one of Disney's most iconic characters, short-tempered, stuttering, and endlessly lovable. But behind the cartoon feathers lies a curious legend that links Donald's distinct voice not just to a talented voice actor, but to the real-life horrors of war. Could it be that Donald Duck's famous quack was inspired by soldiers returning from gas mask drills during World War II?



Donald Duck and WWII: A Patriot in Feathers

Donald Duck was already a rising star in the 1930s, but his role shifted dramatically with the outbreak of WWII. Disney transformed Donald from comic relief into a symbol of American resistance and military spirit.

Between 1942 and 1945, he starred in a series of wartime cartoons, "Der Fuehrer's Face," "The New Spirit," and others, that promoted patriotism, taxes, and anti-Nazi sen-

timent. Donald, in full military gear, became a cultural weapon of war.

He even won an Academy Award in 1943 for Der Fuehrer's Face, which satirized Hitler and fascism with biting humor.

But while the character became a hero, an eerie wartime rumor suggests that his iconic rasping voice may have been born from something much darker:

The Legend: 'Duck Voice Syndrome'



According to long-standing military folklore, American soldiers returning from gas mask drills during WWII often complained of sore throats, hoarseness, and strained voices. Exposure to chlorine-based gas simulations (meant to prepare them for chemical warfare) left many of them speaking in a harsh, croaky tone for days

afterward. Some soldiers jokingly referred to the condition as 'Duck Voice Syndrome,' because their raw, broken speech sounded oddly like Donald Duck himself. Here's where the legend takes a strange turn: rumors claim that sketches, notes, or even voice recordings from military training camps were sent to the Disney studios, either as a joke or for creative reference. And then, as if by magic, Donald's voice and mannerisms intensified. His rage-filled rants, throaty squawks, and aggravated stutters became more pronounced. All of this, within a year of the earliest reports of Duck Voice Syndrome.

Coincidence? Maybe. But some believe it's a wartime echo, a subliminal imprint of war seeping into pop culture.

The Reality Behind the Voice

In truth, Donald Duck's voice was created by Clarence 'Ducky' Nash, a Disney voice actor who began performing the character as early as 1934. Nash used a unique technique called buccal speech, forcing air through his cheek pockets to create the duck-like tone. He voiced Donald for over 50 years, and while there's no official confirmation that he drew inspiration from soldiers or wartime gas drills, the timing of Donald's popularity boom, and the sharpness of his voice during the war years,



gives the legend just enough smoke to raise eyebrows.

Fact or Fiction? Why the Legend Persists

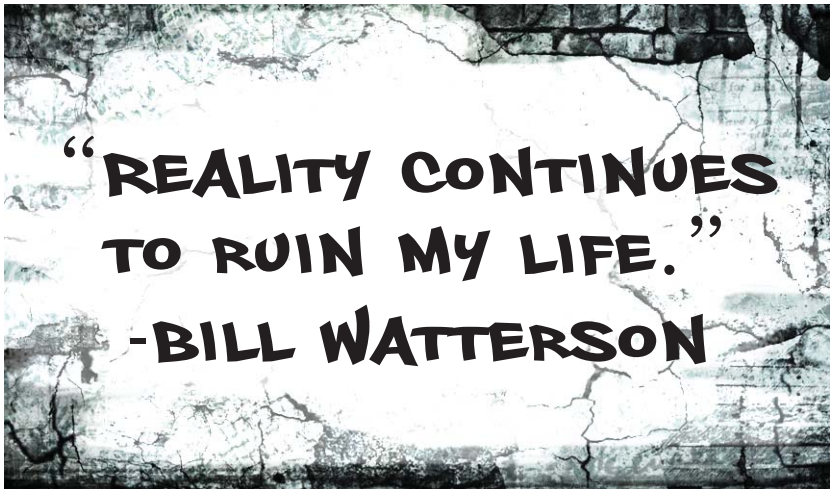
- **Psychological mirror:** Donald's angry outbursts, frustration, and near-incoherent speech may have resonated deeply with the emotional strain of wartime soldiers.
- **Wartime crossover:** It's not unusual for media and military culture to influence each other, especially during national crises.
- **Moral coping:** Humor, even from a cartoon duck, gave people a way to deal with fear, trauma, and uncertainty.

The idea that Donald's voice was influenced by real suffering gives him an unexpected human depth, a reminder that even cartoons are products of their time.

More Than Just a Cartoon

Whether the tale of Duck Voice Syndrome is truth, myth, or a bit of both, it adds a haunting layer to Donald Duck's legacy. It's a reminder that even our most innocent childhood characters may carry echoes of history, forged in the crucible of war. Donald may be a duck, but during WWII, he was also a soldier, a symbol, and, perhaps, a survivor of something much more real than animation.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman