

## #FROM COCOON TO CLOTH

### Understanding Katan and Matka Silk

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Silk has long been admired for its elegance, softness, and natural sheen. Among the many varieties, mulberry silk holds a special place as the finest and most widely used type. Its origin lies in the tiny yet remarkable silkworm known as Bombyx mori. This silkworm feeds exclusively on mulberry leaves, which is why the silk it produces is called mulberry silk.

The process begins when the silkworm spins a cocoon around itself using a single, continuous filament of silk. Remarkably, one cocoon can yield a filament that stretches up to a mile in length. What happens next in processing determines the type of silk that is produced, most notably Katan silk and Matka silk.

#### Katan Silk: The Art of Refinement

Katan silk is created from continuous filaments carefully reeled from intact cocoons. Since the filament remains unbroken, it produces an exceptionally smooth and lustrous yarn. However, before it can be woven, the silk undergoes a special treatment known as degumming. This process removes sericin, the natural gum that binds the fibers, enhancing the silk's softness and shine.

To make Katan silk strong and suitable for weaving, multiple filaments are twisted together to form a durable yarn. This technique gives Katan silk its characteristic strength, smooth texture, and luxurious finish. Often associated with fine textiles like Banarasi sarees, Katan silk represents precision, care, and high craftsmanship.



BAPJI WITH MAHARANI HEMLATA JI: BOOK LAUNCH AT JLF.

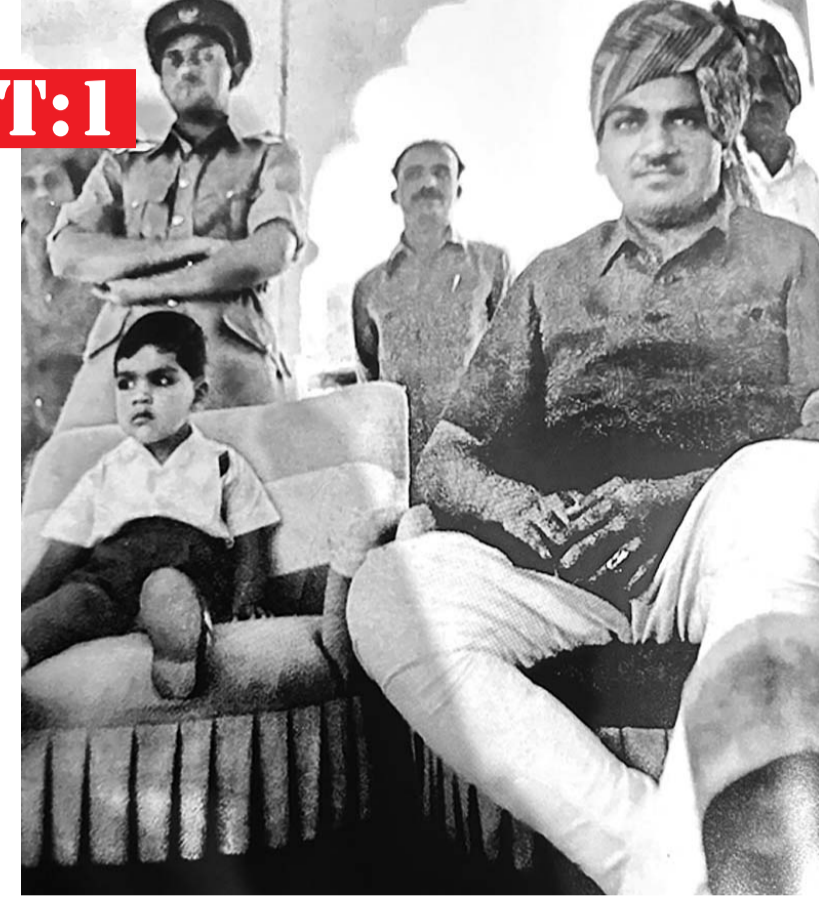
# Twelve Hours from the Station

PART: I

Then, Gaj Singh II tells it himself, and the cinema turns into civic geography. His mother and the palace staff plan a reception at the railway station, but "some citizens on the committee" take over. "So, it became a city affair." The city insists he drive through the old city, stop first at Chamunda Mandir at the fort, then go to Rai-ka-bagh (where his grandmother lived), and only then reach Umaid Bhawan. "That whole thing took about 12 hours."



UNVEILING THE BOOK.



MAHARAJA HANWANT SINGH WITH THE INFANT GAJ SINGH.



SHIVRANJANI RAYE: THE PROUD DAUGHTER WITH BAPJI'S BOOK.



Pushpendra Bhargava (Owner of Jaipur Inn)

At JLF 2026, a Jodhpur homecoming story, a blunt line about de-recognition, and a Jaipur audience's questions made one thing clear: in Rajasthan, legacy survives by knowing when to stay closed and when to open.

#### Bandh Muthi, Khuli Muthi

A proverb kept returning to me as the conversation unfolded in Jaipur: "Bandh muthi kakh ki, khuli muthi kakh ki." A closed fist is worth a fortune; an open hand is worth dust. Not because anyone on stage announced it as a thesis, but because the session kept circling the two instincts the proverb carries: discretion and dignity.

The book being unveiled, Bapji: Maharaja of Marwar-Jodhpur: The King Who Would Be Man, is, in one sense, about a public figure. But the most Jaipur-readable parts were

He names what that meant, without dramatics: from being "privileged citizens," they were "looked down upon." "The press, the media, and politics were all against us." And the sentence that makes the whole room feel suddenly contemporary: "There was no income... large properties to maintain a big staff and no regular income." Rima Hooja adds a sharp period detail: newspaper talk of "cycle polo" in Jodhpur instead of "proper polo," and even "Hathi Polo" by the Tourism Department in Jaipur. The line has an edge: it's what happens when grandeur meets constraint and the world keeps watching anyway.

the moments where the "royal story" behaved like an ordinary Rajasthan story: family decisions, political weather, money pressures, the city's stubborn love, and the daily question of who gets credit.

#### The long way home

Aman Nath sketches the image first: when Bapji finally comes back, he "looks like Elvis Presley," long sideburns and all. Then, the practical pivot: he hears that there are "thousands of people waiting," so, he changes clothes and arrives "Rajasthan!" It's cinematic and very specific.

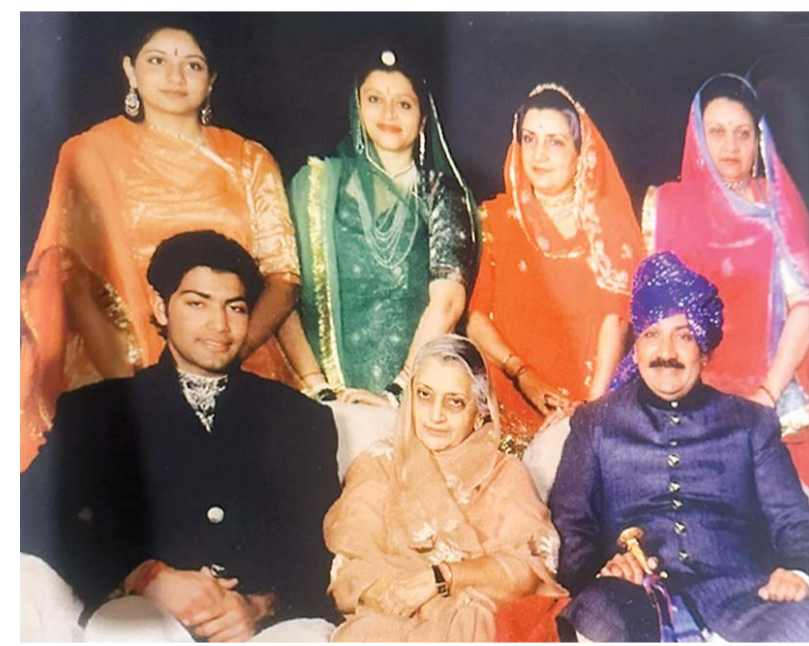
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If Rajasthan has a way of adopting people, this was it: a homecoming not managed by the palace, but by the city. The open hand here is not charity; it's belonging.

#### The closed-fist years

When the talk turns to the 1970s, Gaj Singh's language loses ornament. He describes leaving university and driving overlaid with two friends in 1970 until a telegram from his mother reaches him in Tehran: "You have to come back



RAJMATA KRISHNA KUMARI WITH HER CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN.

because Mrs. Gandhi is getting very aggressive, and our future is at stake." He returns, in 1971, "we got de-recognised and everything turned around."

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#### "No, no, I am not the Maharaja."

Just when the frame could slide into reverence, Gaj Singh interrupts it. Rima begins listing his roles, trustee work, water work, roads, diplomacy, Parliament and he cuts in: "No, no, I am not the Maharaja." He says it again. Then, he lands on the line that resets the room: "I'm the small man, in the corner of that book... I am just a little guy in the end."

"This isn't only modesty. It's a definition of legitimacy that works



AT THE DEGREE CEREMONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, HELD IN THE SHELDONIAN THEATRE, BAPJI DONS AN 'INTELLECTUAL CROWN,' TO BE AWARDED THE MASTER'S DEGREE IN PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS.

## #THE BOOK



BAPJI: THE KING WHO WOULD BE MAN BOOK LAUNCH.

in a democracy; not "I rule," but "I am responsible."

Aman Nath puts the intent of the title plainly: "So, the title of the book... says a king who would be man, actually contemporizes him... for Bapji, to turn that whole thing around as a common citizen of India is what the book is about."

Yogi Vaid follows with the human proof: "Because he's immensely popular. We have travelled with him to the interior. We went to Nagnechi Mata Temple, with Hemlata Rajveji and Him and you can see it in the faces of the people. The warmth, the respect, and the adulation they have for him. We said we'll do something like this to bring out the man, not the king."

#### The open hand: Credit, Caste, and Being "outside"

The audience questions bring the conversation down from book-scale to street-scale.

On public work and credit, Gaj Singh says plainly: "It does not matter what the government says. It's for the people." Then, he tells a small story from fieldwork: someone puts their own signs on their water bodies. His response is an entire philosophy in four words: "So, I let him."

On unity among royals (and how people came together in the de-recognition years), he describes "the

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On caste, he begins by acknowledging pride in heritage, "We, as Rajputs, are very proud of our heritage..." and then pivots to what he says was his upbringing's rule: "I was always taught that the king has no caste." He anchors it in a door-scene in the Makkama Khas: a woman stands at the door with an application; the chhapri says that she is a Harijan; his father's response is immediate: "No, that doesn't matter. Send her in." Then, comes the Rajasthan political question, asked in Hinglish: people have expectations from you "but not the power." Will the family participate in elections?

Concord for Princes," a joint effort to fight in Parliament and courts and notes that it included everybody. In that telling, they "managed to win the crucial vote in Rajya Sabha," enough to block a constitutional amendment at that moment. Afterwards, he says, the society fell apart because what it was set up to do had not happened. Still, he insists, the connections remain, weddings, education, and a shared sense of territorial responsibility. "We also come together in education," he adds, pointing to Mayo College Ajmer and its patrons.

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That is the proverb's tension spoken out loud: the desire for a closed-fist era of power, and the reality of an open-hand era of service. Jaipur heard it. Rajasthan will recognise it.

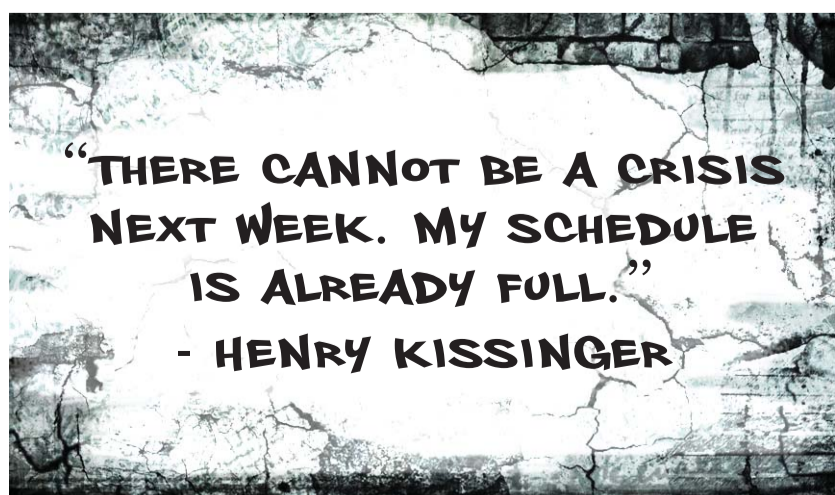
To be continued...

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THE DISTINGUISHED FAMILY INCLUDING MAHARANI HEMLATA JI WITH SHIVRANJANI AND MAHARAJA SAWAI PADMANABH SINGH JI.

## THE WALL



## BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

## ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman