

An evening with maestros

The cultural landscape of Delhi lit up once again with performances by four stupendous artistes as part of Indian classical music festival Bhilwara Sur Sangam. Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan of Pakistan, Indian sitar player Nishat Khan, *tabla* exponent Ustad Sabir Khan and *thumri* singer Kishori Amonkar took the Capital by storm as they performed at Kamani Auditorium over the weekend. Admirers of classical music came down from as far as outskirts of Delhi and NCR to catch the maestros in action as they rarely ever perform in the City.

This was the third edition of Bhilwara Sur Sangam – an initiative of the LNJ Bhilwara Group. This festival, over the years, has seen legendary artistes like Pt Jasraj, Dr N Rajam, Pt Ulhas Kashalkar, Ustad Shujaat Husain Khan, Pt Tejendra Narayan Majumdar, Pt Hariprasad Chaurasia, Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan and Ustad Rashid Khan, perform. The initiative has received huge applause from music lovers from all walks of life.

On the happy occasion, Ravi Jhunjunwala, chair-



MELLIFLUENT Ghazal/singer Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan (top) and *tabla* maestro Amjad Khan (above) in performance.

man, LNJ Bhilwara Group, observed, "We see this as our small contribution to future generations who have little exposure to the heritage of In-

dia. By reinforcing the values of classical traditions through this musical event, we wish to infuse in the younger generation an appreciation and respect for our heritage."

The festival was opened by Ustad Shafqat Ali Khan of the illustrious Shamcharasi *Gharana* of singing. His family in Pakistan represents a 500-year old lineage of musicians, descendants of two court musicians of Akbar: Chand Khan and Suraj Khan. Shafqat Ali Khan is a master of the *ghazal* tradition and also recipient of the coveted 'Pride of Performance' award back home. He displayed his prowess in Delhi with *ghazals* like *Aao Sayo* and *Sanwal Mor Muharan*.

His performance was followed by a thrilling *jugalbandi* between sitar player Nishat Khan and *tabla* maestro Sabir Khan. Nishat is the son of *surbahar* player Imrat Khan and torchbearer of seven generations of one of India's most renowned family of musicians. Khan has a remarkable intuition for other instruments which has led him to collaborate with artistes worldwide as well as Sabir at the festival. Sabir is the 33rd generation of the Farukkabad *Gharana* of *tabla*.

The last day of the fest was honoured by the legendary Kishori Amonkar who performs in the classical genre of *khyal* and light classical genres - *thumri* and *bhajan*. Belonging to the Jaipur *Gharana*, the *thumri* maestro regaled the audience with compositions in various ragas such as *Sampurna Malkaus*, *Todi*, *Gunkali*, *Malhar* etc. It was a truly befitting finale to the festival.

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STRINGS *Thumri* singer Kishori Amonkar regaled the audience with compositions in various ragas.