

# Shila hypnotise audience



Then came the most awaited performance of the evening. Kathak dance by Shila Mehta. Presenting her maiden performance in Nagpur, a passionate dancer, choreographer and artistic director of Nupur Zankar, an academy of performing arts and research, began her spell-binding performance with *Sum Chakra Vnadana*. Explaining it she said, "Sum is beginning and end of everything. It talks about the power of nature which is omnipresent." Then she went on to present *jugalbandi*, Sita Haran in Tihar, Ardh Nareshwar, Jagtal etc. Though it was late in the evening, so impressive was her performance that everyone glued to their seats till the end. "The performance had a hypnotic impact on us, we just lost into her performance," said a group of people who had come to enjoy the festival. Shila Mehta was accompanied by Iiyaz Khan on sarangi, Vivek Mishra on tabla, Niranjana Sinha on flute and Somnath Mishra as vocalist.

Kathak dancer Shila Mehta performing during the first day of Dr Vasant Rao Deshpande Smruti Sangeet Samaroha at Deshpande Hall on Thursday. (Another photo and report on page 18)

## Dr Vasant Rao Deshpande Sangeet Samaroh gets a melodious start

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### Soorya festival shines

The three days of cultural extravaganza at Soorya festival organised in Mulund, Kalidas Auditorium attracted huge crowd

Following the inaugural function, the next two days of Soorya festival organised at Kalidas hall to generate awareness and funds for the Soorya Harmony Foundation were slotted for dance presentations connecting the two ends of the country, Kathak from the North and Bharatnatyam from South. "As I always say, culture connects. Our country has such a diverse cultural canvas and people are able to relate to all forms of art despite language barrier and provincial differences," says Soorya Krishnamoorthy who had flown in from Kerala to be part of the launch of

the Soorya Chapter that will adopt the Balamandiram, Childrens' orphanage situated at Panvel. Prakash Padikal, coordinator of the chapter says, "The programs are a means by which we want to grab the attention of the people at large and harness their support for this cause. Creating a perfect society and a clear vision for the nation is our goal. Art is a tool for welfare of people at large." On January 23, Kathak by Shila Mehta, disciple of Pt Vijay Shankar and Pt Birju Maharaj, and her students enthralled the audience. Opening with Vishnu

Sheela Mehta, the kathak exponent, performed late in the evening and had the audience spell bound with her expressive presentations. She was provided superb accompaniment on *tabla* by Vivek Mishra, on *sarangi* by Liyakat Khan, vocal support was provided by Somnath Mishra and flute accompaniment was provided by Niranjana Sinha.

Vandana, Shila danced solo to a Hindi bhajan by Maharaja Swati Tirumal. Shila and students went on to dance Hori and portrayed Brindavan in Falgun month in classical Kathak style fused with Rajasthani folk with duff in their hands. Ram Vanwas by Tulsidas performed solo by Shila and group *tarana* using dandiya sticks in *raag* Nand and teental completed the repertoire.



Kathak exponent Shila Mehta performing one of her classic dances at the Samaroh.