



Beyond cruel, the play portrays Ravan as a learned man who instantly recognises that Ram is Vishnu's avatar, and accepts death at his hand as salvation

Why the Ram dance-drama endures, 68 yrs on

Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra's distillation of Tulsidas's epic has turned performance into pilgrimage

VEENU SANDHU
New Delhi, 2 October

Ravan is late. He has just returned from Durga Puja, and the revelry has delayed him. In his makeshift dressing room, bare torsoed, he begins to transform. With deliberate strokes, he paints thick black eyebrows that stretch like bows across his forehead, half-covering it.

This isn't the first time Ravan has been late. Years ago, it was Delhi's traffic that kept another Ravan from the stage. That evening, the actor who now plays Ram had to step in as Ravan — and he did so with such conviction that the audience never knew the difference.

That is the resilience of *Ram*, the dance-drama produced annually by Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra since 1957. Returning every autumn with Shardiya Navratri, the production — now in its 68th year — is both ritual and performance. A two-and-a-half-hour spectacle distilled from Tulsidas's *Ramcharitmanas*, it has continued uninterrupted through political upheavals, logistical snags, and even a pandemic. "Even during Covid, we did not stop," says Kamaljeet Kaur, principal of Shri Ram. "We staged the show with strict safety protocols, cutting down seating from 700 to 200 and ensuring six feet between each person."

From Ram's birth in Ayodhya to his coronation, the play unfolds seamlessly. Music flows into music, one dance form glides into another, and not a second is wasted. Bharatanatyam, Kathakali, Kathak, Mayurbhanj Chhau, Kalaripayattu, and North Indian folk traditions all find place here, set to original Hindustani classical compositions.

The production was conceived by Sumitra Charat Ram, daughter-in-law of industrialist Lala Shri Ram, founder of the DCM empire, at the behest of Jawaharlal

OVER THE DECADES, THE DANCE-DRAMA HAS TRAVELLED TO 35 COUNTRIES, DRAWING MORE THAN A MILLION SPECTATORS

Nehru. With it, the lawns of the Kala Kendra became an annual pilgrimage ground. Sumitra Charat Ram's daughter, Padma Shri Shobha Deepak Singh, who has directed the play for decades, continues that vision, blending fidelity to tradition with practical reinvention.

Speaking to this writer some years ago, Singh had recalled how the earliest productions struggled with heavy jewellery and fresh flower garlands. "The metal ornaments cost a fortune to polish, and tore the costumes," she had said. Her solution was lightweight, Velcro-fastened jewellery and Chandni Chowk-crafted imitation flowers that replaced the costly real ones. Today, only the *jaimala* (wedding garland) is made of fresh flowers, and is replaced for every performance.

Such details reflect the play's enduring philosophy: To honour tradition without being imprisoned by it. Costumes, inspired by miniature paintings and temple sculp-



India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, with Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra's artistes. Seen also is Sumitra Charat Ram

ture, are designed for both visual splendour and the quick costume changes required by a production that presents an epic in less than three hours. The choreography refuses pauses for exposition. The martial vigour of Mayurbhanj Chhau and Kalaripayattu merges with the expressiveness of Bharatanatyam, Kathakali, and Kathak, threaded with folk idioms. Each movement serves the narrative — Ram and Sita's tenderness, Ravan's defiance, Hanuman's devotion, Ram's ultimate triumph.

The dance-drama has travelled to 35 countries, drawing more than a million spectators. Its guest list reads like a roll call of Indian leadership — Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Atal Bihari Vajpayee (who attended every year until he no longer could), and Pranab Mukherjee, for whom it was staged at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Over the decades, the ballet has been variously called *Ramayana*, *Shri Ram*, or *Ram*, but its soul has remained unchanged.

For the audience, the play is inheritance. Parents, and even grandparents, who once came as children now bring their own families.

For the performers, it is discipline, craft, and endurance.

Swapan Mazumdar, Ravan for the past 11 years, recalls how the production has evolved. In its earlier decades, the play was staged in Awadhi with live music from 150 musicians. By the 1980s, it shifted to recorded music and Hindi to reach a wider audience. Mazumdar has played Shatrughan, Lakshman, and even group-dance roles before donning Ravan's heavy Kathakali costume. "It looks grand, but is exhausting," he says. "And Ravan is not cruelty personified, as he is often portrayed. He is a learned man who instantly recognises that Ram is Vishnu's avatar, for no ordinary human can kill Marich (the demon who assumes the form of the golden deer). When he says, 'Marein Ram mokh main paon', he accepts death at Ram's hand as salvation."

Mazumdar has missed the role only once — last year, after a truck accident left him with four broken bones. "I still have a plate in my collar bone. I will

have it removed after this season ends," he says.

Ram, meanwhile, is played by Raj Kumar Sharma, who has held the role for 33 years. His preparation is quick — 10 to 15 minutes of makeup, his lips rounded into a petal-like shape distinctive to his role. But the physicality of the performance demands a lifetime of discipline. Trained in Mayurbhanj Chhau, Sharma rises at 4 a.m., runs or trains at the gym, and eats only once a day — rice, vegetables, dry fruit, and juice. "Playing Ram has given me a calmness," he says. Yet, he too has played other roles: The golden deer, Jatayu, even Ravan.

His innovations on stage have often delighted audiences. As Jatayu, he once suggested that instead of simply collapsing, he should be flung from the stage by Ravan. "The audience loved it. They would come backstage asking to meet Jatayu," he recalls. As the golden deer, he added a skidding motion across the stage that became a crowd favourite. "Even in the *vanar sena* (monkey army), we made the aisles part of the act — peeking at audience members' snacks, snatching their chips mid-performance," he laughs.

Such improvisations were encouraged by Shobha Deepak Singh. At her behest, performers craft their own jewellery and accessories. Jatayu's wings included, "It helps us connect with our characters more deeply," says Sharma. The challenge is always time. Costume changes happen in under two minutes. "Sita," says production manager Monika Jatiwani, "wears two or three costumes layered on top of each other — from *lehenga* to sari to *vamvas* (exile) attire. These costume changes happen within minutes of the play's start."

Each year, something new is added. LED screens, for instance, have come to serve as backdrop, and this year, a child Ram appears on stage, played by three-year-old Sanskriti Khanna. The core, however, remains unchanged: Storytelling through dance and devotion.

Every evening, outside the Kendra, queues begin to form an hour before curtain. This evening, as dusk falls, Ram steps out of his green room and looks up at the sky. It is overcast, after a morning of lashing rain. He wonders if the heavens will hold. They do. For 68 years, the rain gods too have paused so that the play may go on.

Festival weekend, vibrant lineup a hit for Box Office

ROSHNI SHEKHAR
Mumbai, 2 October

From houseful theatres to almost three times jump in the footfall, multiplex chains are expecting this year's Dussehra weekend to have strong a Box Office collection.

Executives at multiplex chains highlight the diverse options for cinema-goers. Rishabh Shetty's *Kantara: Chapter 1* and Dharma Productions' *Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari* hit the screens on Thursday. Moreover, regional films like *Idli Kadai* (Tamil and Telugu), *Maria* (Tamil), *Vada Pav* (Marathi), and *Nikka Zaildar 4* (Punjabi) are catering to the audiences across genres.

"Dussehra and Gandhi Jayanti holiday on Thursday generated approximately 25 per cent higher footfalls as compared to the opening day of films released on August 14 for the Independence Day weekend for cinema exhibitors," said Ashish Pandey, head, programming and strategic initiatives, MovieMax Cinemas. "Audiences have a fantastic opportunity to experience this vibrant lineup. From the much-anticipated *Kantara: Chapter 1* to *Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari*, crafted for Gen Z, the lineup captures a striking blend of creative ambition and cultural relevance," said Gautam Dutta, CEO, revenue and operations, PVR INOX.

PVR INOX anticipates this festival weekend to have nearly houseful

shows across its cinemas. Additionally, this comes on the back of high footfall for recent films like *Jolly LLB 3*, *Homebound*, Hollywood film *One Battle After Another*, and anime films like *Shinchan: The Spicy Kasukabe Dancers*.

According to Ashish Saxena, COO, cinemas, BookMyShow, collectively the films released on Thursday have already crossed over two million tickets on BookMyShow for the weekend.

"Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Coimbatore have been the top cities driving demand, once again showcasing how both regional and pan-India films are finding a strong footing at the box office," Saxena added.

Pandey noted that footfall at Movie-

Max is almost 2.5 to 3 times higher this Dussehra compared to last year.

Not just metros, but Tier-II and -III cities like Baroda, Samastipur, and Nacharam are also seeing higher bookings. Mukta A2 Cinemas' properties in metros too are performing steadily, showing how both urban and regional audiences are equally excited for festive releases. Satwik Lele, chief operating officer, Mukta A2 Cinemas.

"The holiday factor is giving people more time. Even morning shows are filling up quickly," said Bhuvanesh Mendiratta, managing director, MiraJ Entertainment.

PVR INOX's Dutta noted that Q2FY26 is expected to be a strong quarter.

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PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT



ACME INDIA INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Our Company was originally incorporated as a Private Limited Company under the name of "Acme India Industries Private Limited" on December 22, 2021 under the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 with the Registrar of Companies, Delhi bearing CIN U93090DL2021PTC391603. Further, pursuant to Special Resolution passed by the shareholders at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on May 17, 2024, the name of our Company was changed from "Acme India Industries Private Limited" to "Acme India Industries Limited" and a fresh certificate of incorporation consequent upon Change of Name was issued by the Registrar of Companies, Central Processing Unit vide certificate dated July 29, 2024 bearing CIN U93090DL2021PTC391603. For further details please refer to chapter titled "History and Corporate Structure" beginning on page 155 of this Draft Red Herring Prospectus

Registered Office: Plot No-34, Second Floor Dwarka Sector-3, New Delhi, Delhi, India, 110078.
Tel. No.: +91-11-41642215, E-mail: cs@acmeindia.co; Website: https://acmeindia.co/
Contact Person: Pankaj Yadav; Company Secretary & Compliance Officer; CIN: U93090DL2021PTC391603

OUR PROMOTERS: SURAJ PANDEY AND SADHVI PANDEY

"THE OFFER IS BEING MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER IX OF THE SEBI ICDR REGULATIONS (IPO OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES) AND THE EQUITY SHARES ARE PROPOSED TO BE LISTED ON SME PLATFORM OF BSE ("BSE SME").

THE OFFER

INITIAL PUBLIC OFFER OF UPTO 72,88,800 EQUITY SHARES OF FACE VALUE OF ₹10/- EACH (THE "EQUITY SHARES") OF ACME INDIA INDUSTRIES LIMITED ("OUR COMPANY" OR "THE ISSUER") AT AN OFFER PRICE OF ₹(1) PER EQUITY SHARE (INCLUDING SHARE PREMIUM OF ₹(1) PER EQUITY SHARE) FOR CASH, AGGREGATING UP TO ₹(1) LAKHS ("PUBLIC OFFER") COMPRISING OF A FRESH ISSUE OF 64,87,200 EQUITY SHARES AGGREGATING TO ₹ (1) LAKHS (THE "FRESH ISSUE") AND AN OFFER FOR SALE OF 8,01,600 EQUITY SHARES BY THE PROMOTER SELLING SHAREHOLDERS ("OFFER FOR SALE") AGGREGATING TO ₹ (1) LAKHS COMPRISING: 8,01,600 EQUITY SHARES AGGREGATING UP TO ₹(1) LAKHS BY SURAJ PANDEY (COLLECTIVELY REFERRED AS "PROMOTER SELLING SHAREHOLDERS") OUT OF WHICH (1) EQUITY SHARES OF FACE VALUE OF ₹10 EACH, AT AN OFFER PRICE OF ₹(1) PER EQUITY SHARE FOR CASH, AGGREGATING ₹(1) LAKHS WILL BE RESERVED FOR SUBSCRIPTION BY THE MARKET MAKER TO THE OFFER (THE "MARKET MAKER RESERVATION PORTION"). THE PUBLIC OFFER LESS MARKET MAKER RESERVATION PORTION I.E. OFFER OF (1) EQUITY SHARES OF FACE VALUE OF ₹10 EACH, AT AN OFFER PRICE OF ₹(1) PER EQUITY SHARE FOR CASH, AGGREGATING UPTO ₹(1) LAKHS IS HEREIN AFTER REFERRED TO AS THE "NET OFFER". THE PUBLIC OFFER AND NET OFFER WILL CONSTITUTE (1) % AND (1) % RESPECTIVELY OF THE POST-OFFER PAID-UP EQUITY SHARE CAPITAL OF OUR COMPANY.

OUR COMPANY IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BOOK RUNNING LEAD MANAGER, MAY CONSIDER A PRE-IPO PLACEMENT OF UP TO 10,80,000 EQUITY SHARES FOR CASH CONSIDERATION ("PRE-IPO PLACEMENT") PRIOR TO FILING OF THE RED HERRING PROSPECTUS WITH THE ROC. THE PRE-IPO PLACEMENT, IF UNDERTAKEN, WILL BE AT A PRICE TO BE DECIDED BY OUR COMPANY, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BOOK RUNNING LEAD MANAGER. IF THE PRE-IPO PLACEMENT IS UNDERTAKEN, THE NUMBER OF EQUITY SHARES ISSUED PURSUANT TO THE PRE-IPO PLACEMENT SHALL BE REDUCED FROM THE OFFER, SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH RULE 19(2)(B)(i) OF THE SECURITIES CONTRACTS (REGULATION) RULES, 1957, AS AMENDED ("SCRR").

THE PRICE BAND AND THE MINIMUM BID LOT WILL BE DECIDED BY OUR COMPANY IN CONSULTATION WITH THE BRLM AND WILL BE ADVERTISED IN (1) EDITION OF (1) (A WIDELY CIRCULATED ENGLISH NATIONAL DAILY NEWSPAPER) AND (1) EDITION OF (1) (A WIDELY CIRCULATED HINDI NATIONAL DAILY NEWSPAPER AND HINDI EDITION OF (1), REGIONAL NEWSPAPER (HINDI BEING THE REGIONAL LANGUAGE OF DELHI WHERE OUR REGISTERED OFFICE IS LOCATED), AT LEAST TWO WORKING DAYS PRIOR TO THE BID/OFFER OPENING DATE AND SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE SME PLATFORM OF BSE ("BSE SME") FOR THE PURPOSES OF UPLOADING ON THEIR WEBSITE.

In case of any revision in the Price Band, the Bid/Offer Period shall be extended for at least three additional Working Days after such revision of the Price Band, subject to the total Bid/Offer Period not exceeding 10 Working Days. In cases of force majeure, banking strike or similar circumstances, our Company, for reasons to be recorded in writing, extends the Bid/Offer Period for a minimum of one Working Day, subject to the Bid/Offer Period not exceeding 10 Working Days. Any revision in the Price Band, and the revised Bid/Offer Period, if applicable, shall be widely disseminated by notification to the Stock Exchanges by issuing a press release and also by indicating the change on the website of the BRLM and at the terminals of the Members of the Syndicate and by intimation to Designated Intermediaries and Sponsor Bank.

The Offer is being made through the Book Building Process, in terms of Rule 19(2)(b)(i) of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957, as amended ("SCRR") read with Regulation 253 of the SEBI ICDR Regulations, as amended, wherein not more than 50% of the Net Offer shall be allocated on a proportionate basis to Qualified Institutional Buyers ("QIBs", the "QIB Portion"), provided that our Company may, in consultation with the Book Running Lead Managers, allocate up to 60% of the QIB Portion to Anchor Investors on a discretionary basis in accordance with the SEBI ICDR Regulations ("Anchor Investor Portion"), of which one-third shall be reserved for domestic Mutual Funds, subject to valid Bids being received from domestic Mutual Funds at or above the Anchor Investor Allocation Price. In the event of under-subscription, or non-allocation in the Anchor Investor Portion, the balance Equity Shares shall be added to the Net QIB Portion. Further, 5% of the Net QIB Portion shall be available for allocation on a proportionate basis only to Mutual Funds, and the remainder of the Net QIB Portion shall be available for allocation on a proportionate basis to all QIBs, including Mutual Funds, subject to valid Bids being received at or above the Offer Price. However, if the aggregate demand from Mutual Funds is less than 5% of the Net QIB Portion, the balance Equity Shares available for allocation in the Mutual Fund Portion will be added to the remaining Net QIB Portion for proportionate allocation to QIBs. Further, not less than 15% of the Net Offer shall be available for allocation on a proportionate basis to Non-Institutional Bidders (a) 1/3rd of the portion available to NIBs shall be reserved for applicants with an application size of more than 2 lots and upto such lots equivalent to not more than ₹ 10.00 Lakhs and (b) 2/3rd of such portion was reserved for applicants with an application size of more than ₹ 10.00 Lakhs provided that the unsubscribed portion in either such sub-categories, could have been allocated to applicants in the other sub-category of NIBs and not less than 35% of the Net Offer shall be available for allocation to individual Bidders in accordance with the SEBI ICDR Regulations, subject to valid Bids being received at or above the Offer Price. All potential Bidders (except Anchor Investors) are required to mandatorily utilize the Application Supported by Blocked Amount ("ASBA") process providing details of their respective ASBA accounts, and UPI ID in case of individual investors using the UPI Mechanism, if applicable, in which the corresponding Bid Amounts will be blocked by the SCSBs or by the Sponsor Bank under the UPI Mechanism, as the case may be, to the extent of respective Bid Amounts. Anchor Investors are not permitted to participate in the Offer through the ASBA process. For details, see "Offer Procedure" beginning on page 327 of this Draft Red Herring Prospectus.

This public announcement is made in compliance with the provisions of Regulation 247(2) of the SEBI ICDR Regulations, to inform the public that our Company is proposing to undertake, subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, receipt of requisite approvals, market conditions and other considerations, an initial public offer of its Equity Shares of face value of ₹ 10 each pursuant to the Offer and the Draft Red Herring Prospectus dated September 30, 2025 has been filed with the BSE ("BSE SME") on September 30, 2025. The Draft Red Herring Prospectus filed with BSE SME shall be made public, for comments, if any, for a period of at least 21 days from the date of filing, by hosting it on the website of BSE SME at https://www.bseindia.com/PublicIssues/SMEIPOCDRHP.aspx, on the website of the BRLM at www.hemsecurities.com and also on the website of the Company https://acmeindia.co. Our Company invites the public to give comments on the Draft Red Herring Prospectus filed with BSE SME with respect to disclosures made in the Draft Red Herring Prospectus. The public is requested to send a copy of the comments to the Company Secretary & Compliance Officer of our Company, and/or to the BRLM at their respective addresses mentioned below. All comments must be received by our Company and/or the Company Secretary & Compliance Officer of our Company, and/or to the BRLM in relation to the offer on or before 5.00 p.m. on the 21st day from the aforementioned date of filing of the Draft Red Herring Prospectus with BSE SME.

Investments in equity and equity-related securities involve a degree of risk and investors should not invest any funds in this Offer unless they can afford to take the risk of losing their investment. Investors are advised to read the risk factors carefully before taking an investment decision in this Offer. For taking an investment decision, investors must rely on their own examination of the Company and the offer, including the risks involved. The Equity Shares have not been recommended or approved by the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI"), nor does SEBI guarantee the accuracy or adequacy of the Draft Red Herring Prospectus. Specific attention of the investors is invited to "Risk Factors" on page 32 of the Draft Red Herring Prospectus.

Any decision to invest in the equity shares described in the Draft Red Herring Prospectus may only be taken after a Red Herring Prospectus has been filed with the ROC and must be made solely on the basis of such Red Herring Prospectus as there may be material changes in the Red Herring Prospectus from the Draft Red Herring Prospectus. The equity shares, when offered through the Red Herring Prospectus, are proposed to be listed on the BSE ("BSE SME"). For details of the share capital and capital structure of our Company and the names of the signatories to the Memorandum of Association and the number of shares subscribed by them of our Company, see "Capital Structure" beginning on page 77 of the Draft Red Herring Prospectus. The liability of the members of our Company is limited. For details of the main objects of our Company as contained in our Memorandum of Association, see "History and Corporate Structure" beginning on page 155 of this Draft Red Herring Prospectus.

The BRLM associated with the Offer has handled 69 Public Issues in the past three years, out of which 3 issue was closed below the Issue/ Offer Price on listing date:

Name of BRLM	Total Issue		Issue closed below IPO Price on listing date
	Mainboard	SME	
Hem Securities Limited	2	67	3 (SME)

BOOK RUNNING LEAD MANAGER TO THE OFFER		REGISTRAR TO THE OFFER	
 Hem Securities HEM SECURITIES LIMITED Address: 904, A Wing, Naman Midtown, Serapati Bapat Marg, Elphinstone Road, Lower Parel, Mumbai-400013, Maharashtra, India Tel. No.: +91- 22- 49060000; Email: rb@hemsecurities.com Investor Grievance Email: redressal@hemsecurities.com Website: www.hemsecurities.com Contact Person: Nishikant Agarwal SEBI Regn. No.: INM000010981 CIN: U67120RJ1996PLC010390		 Bigshare Services Pvt. Ltd. BIGSHARE SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED Address: S6-2, 6th Floor, Pinnacle Business Park, Next to Ahura Centre, Mahakali Caves Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai – 400083, India. Tel No.: +91 22 6263 8200; Email: ipo@bigshareonline.com Investor Grievance Email: investor@bigshareonline.com Website: www.bigshareonline.com Contact Person: Babu Raghav C. SEBI Registration Number: INR000001385 CIN: U99999MH1994PTC076534	
COMPANY SECRETARY & COMPLIANCE OFFICER			
ACME INDIA INDUSTRIES LIMITED Pankaj Yadav Registered Office: Plot No-34, Second Floor Dwarka Sector-3, New Delhi, Delhi, India, 110078. E-mail: cs@acmeindia.co, Tel.: +91-11-41642215, Website: https://acmeindia.co/			

All capitalized terms used herein and not specifically defined shall have the same meaning as ascribed to them in the Draft Red Herring Prospectus.

ACME INDIA INDUSTRIES LIMITED
On behalf of the Board of Directors
Sd/-
Pankaj Yadav
Company Secretary and Compliance Officer

Disclaimer: Acme India Industries Limited is proposing, subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, receipt of requisite approvals, market conditions and other considerations, to make an initial public offer of its Equity Shares and has filed the Draft Red Herring Prospectus on September 30, 2025. The Draft Red Herring Prospectus is available on the website of BSE SME at https://www.bseindia.com/PublicIssues/SMEIPOCDRHP.aspx, and is available on the websites of the BRLM at www.hemsecurities.com and also on the website of the Company https://acmeindia.co. Any potential investors should note that investment in equity shares involves a high degree of risk and for details relating to the same, see the section titled "Risk Factors" beginning on page 32 of the Draft Red Herring Prospectus. Potential investors should not rely on the Draft Red Herring Prospectus for making any investment decision.

The Equity Shares have not been and will not be registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act") or any state securities laws in the United States, and unless so registered, and may not be issued or sold within the United States, except pursuant to an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the registration requirements of the Securities Act and in accordance with any applicable U.S. State Securities laws. The Equity Shares are being issued and sold outside the United States in "offshore transactions" in reliance on Regulation "S" under the Securities Act and the applicable laws of each jurisdiction where such issues and sales are made. There will be no public offering in the United States.