2.The Sound of Music (Beehive) PART-II

Q1: Why did Aurangzeb ban the playing of the pungi?

A: Emperor Aurangzeb banned the playing of the pungi because it had a shrill and unpleasant sound. It became the generic name for reeded noisemakers. So due to its unpleasant sound, it was banned in the royal court.

Q2: How is shehnai different from a pungi?

A: Unlike pungi, shehnai is a pipe with a natural hollow stem that is longer and broader. It also has seven holes in its body. When it is played by closing and opening of the holes, it produces soft and melodious sounds. In this way, it is different from the pungi.

Q3: Where was the shehnai played traditionally? How did Bismillah khan change this?

A: The shehnai was traditionally played in royal courts, temples and weddings. Bismillah Khan changed this by improvising and creating ragas that were earlier considered to be beyond the range of the shehnai.

Q4: when and how did Bismillah Khan get his big break?

A: Bismillah Khan got his big break with the opening of the All India Radio in Lucknow in 1938. He soon became an often-heard shehnai player on radio.

Q5: Where did Bismillah Khan play the shehnai on 15th August, 1947? Why was the event historic?

A: On 15th August, 1947, Bismillah Khan played the shehnai from the Red Fort. It was a historic day as India gained independence on that day. He became the first Indian to greet the independent nation with his shehnai.

Q6: Why did Bismillah Khan refuse to start a shehnai school in the USA?

A: Bismillah Khan’s student had asked him to head a music school in the USA, but he refused because could not live outside India. The student promised that he would recreate the atmosphere of Benares by replicating the temples in the city. To this, bismillah Khan wanted to know if his student could also transport the river Ganga.

Q7: Find at least two instances in the text which tell you that Bismillah Khan loves India and Benares.

A: The first instance is when he turned down his student’s offer to start a shehnai school in the USA. The second instance is when he was asked why he did not shift to Pakistan during partition. He said that he would never leave Benares.

 PART-I

Q1:Who helped Evelyn to continue with music? What did he do and say?

A: Percussionist Ron Forbes helped Evelyn to continue with music. He began by tuning two large drums to different notes. He told Evelyn not to listen through her ears, but to try and sense the sound through some other way.

Q2: Name the various places and causes for which Evelyn performs.

A: Apart from the regular concerts, she gives free concerts in prisons and hospitals. She gives high priority to classes for young musician. She is an inspiration to deaf children.

Q: How does Evelyn hear music?

A: Evelyn was deaf. She could not hear music through her ears. She used to ‘hear’ music by sensing the notes in different parts of her body. Ron Forbes taught her to ‘hear’ like this. He tuned two drums to different notes and asked her to sense the sound in some other way.

Evelyn realised that she could feel the higher drum from the waist up and the lower drum from the waist down.

When she played the xylophone, she could sense the sound passing up the stick into her fingertips. By leaning against the drums, she could feel the resonances flowing into her body. On a wooden platform, she removed her shoes so that the vibrations could pass through her bare feet. She herself said that music poured in through every part of her body. It tingled in the skin, her cheekbones and even in her hair.

Hearing music was like feeling it throughout her body which was a skill for her as she was not able to hear it normally. If she would not have been able to hear it this way then she would not have mastered the art of that high level.