

# Darbar se Digital: Reimagining the Indian Classical Music Ecosystem

*Unfolding the nuances in 7 articles by Author Dr. Ratish Tagde*

Indian Classical Music is not merely a performing art. It is a civilizational continuum — a living archive of philosophy, aesthetics, discipline, and spiritual inquiry. For centuries, it has adapted to shifting political, social, and technological landscapes without compromising its grammar or inner integrity.

From the intimacy of royal courts and temple traditions to the structured rigor of the Guru–Shishya Parampara, from the broadcast revolution of radio to the globalization of the concert stage, each era has reshaped the *ecosystem* within which this music breathes and survives.

Today, we stand at another historic threshold.

For the first time, technology is not only altering the medium of transmission — it is redefining the very architecture of cultural existence. Streaming platforms, data analytics, digital rights frameworks, artificial intelligence, algorithmic visibility, and globalized consumption patterns are collectively forming what may be described as a new **Digital Ecosystem**.

This transformation is structural, not cosmetic.

The central question before us is not whether Indian Classical Music will endure — history has already answered that. The more urgent question is whether musicians, institutions, policymakers, and cultural thinkers will consciously shape this emerging ecosystem, or merely adapt to it reactively.

This series, *Darbar se Digital*, seeks to examine that transition with clarity and responsibility.

Readers may look forward to informed and reflective discussions on themes such as:

- The structural evolution from patronage-based systems to platform-driven models
- The economics of streaming and its implications for long-form art traditions
- Sustainable digital livelihood frameworks for classical musicians
- The role of metadata, archives, and knowledge architecture in preserving raga heritage
- The growing influence of algorithms and questions of cultural visibility
- The opportunities and ethical responsibilities surrounding Artificial Intelligence
- And finally, the design of a culturally rooted, ethically governed Digital Ecosystem for the future

The intent of this series is neither nostalgia nor technological romanticism. It is a call for balanced stewardship — where tradition and innovation are not adversaries, but collaborators.

Indian Classical Music has survived because it adapts without surrendering its essence. The digital age offers not merely disruption, but an opportunity for renewal — provided we engage with foresight, integrity, and collective purpose.

The seven unfolding articles that follow attempt to map this journey — from Darbar to Digital — and explore how India's classical music community can shape its future within an emerging Digital Ecosystem.

In the next article, we will analyse the structural evolution of the Indian Classical Music Ecosystem — from patronage-driven systems to platform-mediated environments — and examine how power, access, and artistic autonomy have shifted across eras.

### ***About the Author***

*Dr. Ratish Tagde is a classical musician and scholar whose research focuses on the structural transformation of Indian classical music within digital and AI-driven environments. His work addresses questions of authorship, improvisation, and economic sustainability in streaming-based ecosystems, with particular emphasis on ethical data governance for traditional musicians. [Ratish.advice@gmail.com](mailto:Ratish.advice@gmail.com)*