30TH ANNIVERSARY DOUBLE ISSUE

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with Pico Iyer, Sudarshan Shetty, Geetanjali Shree, Perumal Murugan, Naveen Kishore, Amitava Kumar, Ruchir Joshi, Aradhana Seth, Geet Chaturvedi and others...

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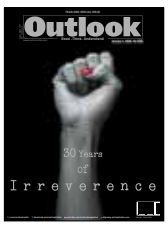
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‹ LET'S GO ELSEWHERE ›



ON THE COVER

'Party is Elsewhere' by artist **Sudarshan Shetty** was first shown in 2005 in a Mumbai gallery that was gutted by fire in the same year. Located on a street that comes alive each evening with transient gatherings. The guests at the event and the vendors and the eaters on the street morphed into one as the demarcation between the inside of the gallery and the street dissolved. Two long tables were laid out with hundreds of empty wine glasses into a choreography of breakage and dystopia, while mechanically driven hammers periodically crashed down onto the tables, shattering the glasses at sharp intervals converting festivity into a relentless rhythm of ruin, suggesting how pleasure economies in the city feed on exhaustion, waste, and the slow erosion of bodies and spaces. Above this fragile, repetitive violence, a glowing neon sign that announced: 'Party is Elsewhere' suggesting both promise and refusal: an unreachable invitation that keeps desire circulating while denying arrival—theatre-like mirroring of urban life, where the scene is always shifting to another venue, another night, another elsewhere.

Pico Iyer 10	Ruchira Gupta 24	Premendra Mitra 33	Perumal Murugan 36	Geetanjali Shree 44
Sudarshan Shetty 48	Ruchir Joshi 54	Amitava Kumar 60	Arundhathi Subramaniam 66	Aradhana Seth 72
Donskobar Junisha Khongwir & Karen Lalrindiki Donoghue 78	Anupama Raju 142	Sarojini Lewis 148	Hélène Cixous 152	Geet Chaturvedi 196
Sundar Sarukkai 202	Vivek Shanbhag 212	Samit Das 224	Yousuf Saeed 228	Annie Zaidi 242
Janice Pariat 252	Afghan Women's Writing Group 256	Alolika Dutta 350	Chitvan Gill 358	Tishani Doshi 392
Aakriti Kuntal 396	Aanchal Malhotra 400	Praveen Kumar 420	Antony Arul Valan 440	Vikas Kumar Jha 444
Vibha Galhotra 448	Premjish Achari 449	Mayabhushan Nagvenkar 450	Durs Grünbein 452	Sarnath Banerjee 454

Contributing Editor **Naveen Kishore** 16

He is a poet, photographer, theatre lighting designer and publisher, Seagull Books.



Visionaries of $5 Trillion Economy

Page. 85



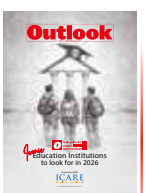
Visionaries of $5 Trillion Economy

Page. 153



Game Changer of Healthcare

Page. 245



Iconic Education Institutions to look for in 2026

Page. 257



Celebrating The Nation Builders

Page. 359



Top 26 Properties to Invest in 2026

Page. 403



Empowering Critical Care in India

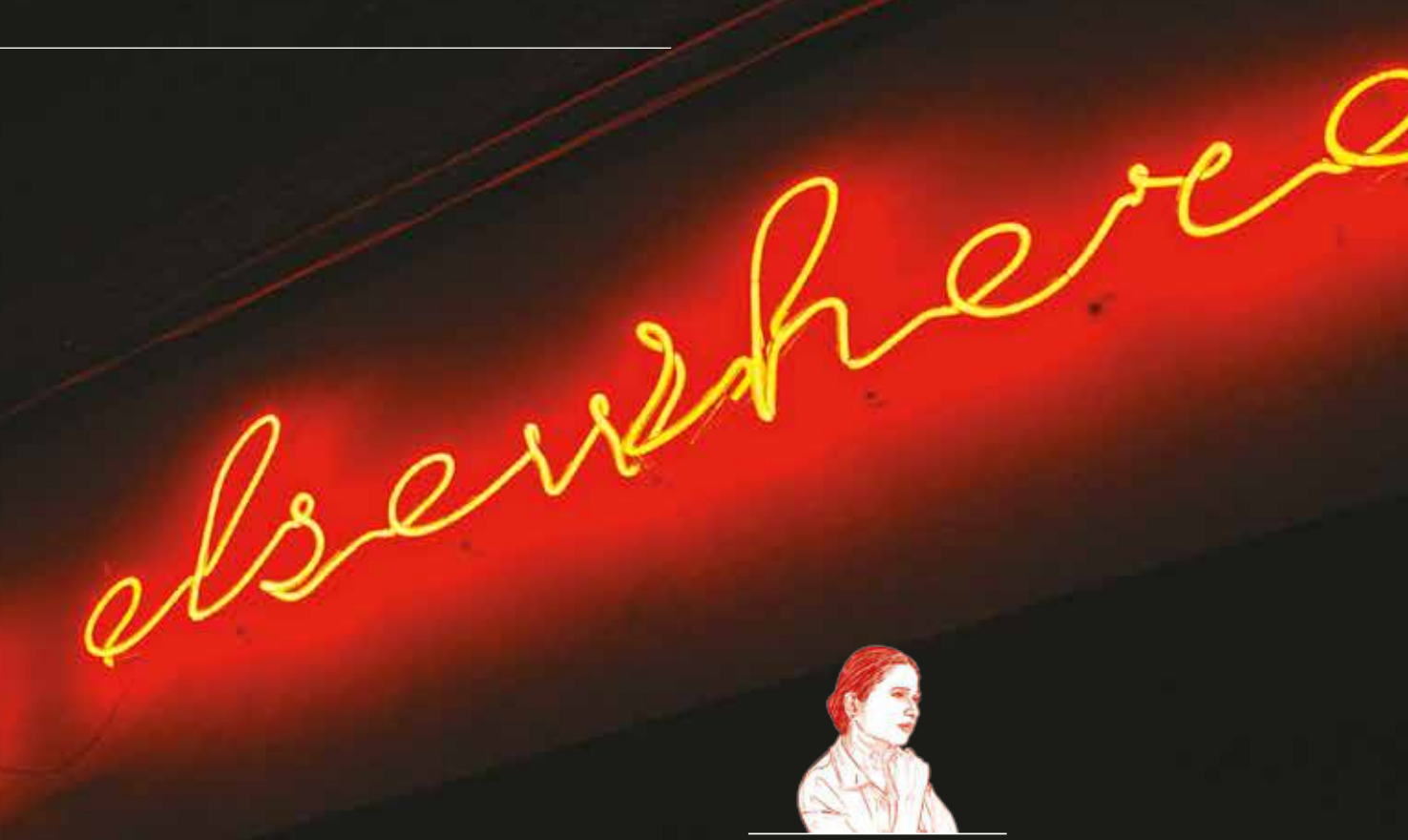
Page. 425



"Imagination is an essential tool of political resistance. We need to imagine new worlds, new language, new ways of relating to each other. Because once imagination produces new imaginaries, then institutional change follows.

Yet invoking imagination in politics can make resistance sound fun or easy. It's not. To imagine often connotes play, we associate it with folktales, storytelling, myth. These are crucial realms for lasting transformation."

—**Minna Salami**, Nigerian-Finnish writer and theorist



Chinki Sinha
is Editor,
Outlook Magazine

A story can take place in a space not confined to the present but unfolding in the future, the past and other worlds. What goes on in constructing these worlds? How does the architecture of an imagined building or landscape reflect politics, society and us? Are dystopian spaces prophetic? Are utopias an extension of our dissatisfaction with the present? Is the present itself elsewhere? Do imagined places reflect the urge to belong and negotiate with modernity, as in Malgudi? Or is it an escape into magic, like Macondo created by writer and journalist Gabriel García Márquez in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*? Macondo, an allegorical construction, referred to civil war, isolation and imperialism. It symbolised the absurd everyday in Latin America where history was being erased, manipulated and coerced into becoming a tool for oppression.

The spaces of fiction become social products, expressions of our worldviews, a strange map where memory mixes with imagination to render a space not yet reachable, and yet a space which delivers us respite from our restlessness. The backdrop is a character in the narrative. A central one where acts of transition, prophecy and resistance are performed.

Home and dispossession are major themes of our times, as wars displace people and class divides widen. How do we speak of the nation state, fixed spaces and identity when censorship has become the order of the day? Talking is near impossible today, and thus we return to the pen: writers, our allies for this anniversary issue of *Outlook*, celebrating 30 years, to imagine.

There are many elsewheres.

Like the 2019 art installation by the Ghanaian artist Ibrahim Mahama called *Parliament of Ghosts*, where he evoked the histories and memories of his countrymen in order to address the past and the present state of crisis and despair in his homeland with chairs, lockers and albums and reclaimed objects accumulated before Ghana's independence in 1957. These objects became the witnesses. Mahama had wanted these seats to be occupied once again so everything could be debated.

"The parliament is a dense material history of colonial infrastructure, reflected back to us today. How can we use it to come to terms with our current economic and political conditions, in thinking about Brexit or the global crisis of migration?"

ARTWORK INSTALLATION: SUDARSHAN SHETTY

MY HOMELAND IS MY IMAGINATION.

That was the wall text hinting at the audacity of a reconciliantion with all that was wrong. Mahama's elsewhere was a politically charged intervention, a place of hope. As all elsewheres are. They challenge the narrative arc of past-present-future linearity. A reorientation is always a possibility. Art offers that. Literature offers that.

The Anthropocene, the rise of fascist governments around the world, the endless wars, the political impotency at many home fronts, the many versions of glorified pasts and mythmaking to make people staunch nationalists, loneliness and lovelessness must all be countered with imagination that addresses the question of the unfulfilled promise of dignity and freedom and love. That itself offers hope.

To imagine is to finally understand that the future is a political choice and not a natural extension. To imagine is to then liberate ourselves from the tyrannies of others.

There isn't and must not be any ontological distinction between actual and possible worlds, between actual and possible time, between what's real and what is not.

All worlds are possible. One has to imagine them first.

Like in that building where the neon sign 'Party is Elsewhere' blazed forth. Created by artist Sudarshan Shetty in 2005 in a building gutted by a fire in the same year, the space became the site of an imagined party, an absence, an inquiry, a desire, a wish, a place where all kinds of people entered hoping to find this elsewhere venue in another time, another space.

An image of that installation is the cover for this issue. It signals a promise and a refusal. Simultaneously.

In the pages of this issue, there are many such venues. Imagined and remembered. Homelands and hostlands.

My homeland is my imagination. In my imagination I have entered the rooms of my ancient house to edit the endings of the people who lived here many years ago to make them more bearable, to rewrite their stories as an act of resistance, an ode to their existence and their identity. They deserved more. That was my rebellion. To find the elsewhere place for myself and others who became a part of my story.

All these rooms contained worlds that crisscrossed memory with longing. Sentences were formed here, love was unleashed and grief formed cobwebs that let the spiders weave their circles as if a shaman was already at work conjuring spirits and keeping them captive within those abandoned homes. The spiders were always at work. The destruction during the day didn't deter them from working at night on building their home again. But those stories are for another time.

There is a passage in the 2005 book *The People of Paper* by writer Salvador Plascencia where magic realism is used to deal with racial violence and anti-immigration policies in the context of Mexico and America, with love and loss and where monks make people out of paper. In this elsewhere space called El Monte where even the sky is made out of paper and here, they wage a war against Planet Saturn, who is yearning for his lover.

In the dedication page, Saturn writes: "And to Liz, who taught me that we are all of paper."

There's a another passage there.

"He folded the letter, stuffed it into an envelope, and affixed postage. Saturn did not know her zip code or apartment number or the city where she had gone. He put her name on the envelope. Below her name he described the types of places where she might be: cities with rivers, streets with breezes, apartments with steps, rooms with canopies.

Still, three weeks later, there was no reply— just an itemized bill from the Postmaster General requesting reimbursements for maps of cities and waterways, for wind-velocity meters, and for all the man-hours spent climbing steps and peering into strangers' bedrooms."

We dedicate this issue to those who venture into the elsewhere, to people made of paper and to those who imagine and dismantle entire worlds for the sake of love.

STEP INTO A JOURNEY SHAPED BY GENERATIONS

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Our Unseen



At Rest Untitled artwork from Sudarshan Shetty's Paper Moon series

COURTESY: GALLERY SKE

Sanctuary



Pico Iyer

is a novelist, essayist and travel writer. He is the author of more than a dozen books which have been translated into 23 languages. His most recent book is *Learning From Silence*. Since 1992, Iyer has spent much of his time at a Benedictine hermitage in Big Sur, California, and most of the rest in suburban Japan

IT was pitch-black on the mountain road through Yemen, and the driver and I had just survived a swarm of teenage boys crowding round us while waving assault rifles. The rain was coming down hard and the car was swerving towards a sheer precipice. Around the next corner there were more shouting boys, more guns, more roadblocks and I had to recall—again and again—that a traditional source of revenue in these highlands is the kidnapping of foreigners. Hostages are most often released, but they can be held, sometimes for weeks, until their embassies part with a hefty ransom.

The six-hour drive across the war-torn country seemed never to end, and I soon realised that all my credit cards were worthless here. My resume was beside the point. Every one of the books I'd written was of no use at all. The only thing I had to steady myself with was whatever resources I'd gathered within.

At moments I thought back to the day when I'd stepped out onto a sunlit terrace outside the Potala Palace in Lhasa. The sky was a startling cobalt above, the snowcaps gleamed in the distance and I felt, as never before, how much I had inside me, in what felt like a space that was flooded with light with no roof to keep it from the heavens. In both instances, I'd been brought back, shockingly, to what lies beneath our external world and to an inner place that was threatened in Yemen and restored in Tibet. The imaginary place I can't live without is, in fact, real, and is a treasure-house within I might call our Unseen Sanctuary.

This hidden space is the place where we go to calm ourselves in adversity, the place that, in good ways and bad, lies behind our many doings. It's the chapel that belongs not to some AI future but right now, right here, though how we name or explain it may be the least important thing about it. It's not exactly what Orhan Pamuk called his Museum of Innocence but it contains memories of some other, unfallen world we sensed in the purity of childhood. Perhaps it's best described, seven centuries ago, by the German mystic Meister Eckhart as "the place where one has not been wounded."

We all of us know that our actions in the world are only as wise and useful as the thoughts and intentions that lie behind them. We also know that this is something largely within our control. Our lives, as William James reminded us more than a century ago, are defined by what we choose to attend to; they're determined not by what happens to us so much as by what we make of what happens to us. Care for that inner space, and you can bear many afflictions; ignore it, and you have to pay a terrible price.

One resident of India, the XIVth Dalai Lama, has spent his entire life working on and with his mind, in as difficult and pressured a life as I can imagine. He smilingly recalls to us, as we hurry to our health clubs, that it's even more important to attend to fitness centres of the mind and spirit. If our bodies are weak, but our minds are strong, then not everything is lost; but if our bodies are strong while our mind is failing, we're in serious trouble. Not to care for the Unseen Sanctuary is to end up like a car without an engine.

None of this is new, of course, but the challenge of the modern moment is that the external is everywhere, and cacophonous, drowning out the still voice of our inner lives. Texts, updates, notifications, snippets of news are streaming in on us till we're hostage to the turbulence of the moment and can hardly recall—or recover—what lies beyond and behind every moment. We're so captive to the latest tweet that we lose all sense of a larger picture.

PERHAPS IT'S BEST DESCRIBED, SEVEN CENTURIES AGO, BY THE GERMAN MYSTIC MEISTER ECKHART AS "THE PLACE WHERE ONE HAS NOT BEEN WOUNDED."

In 2023 the US Department of Labor sent out a survey. Seventy-nine per cent of respondents—more than three in every four—acknowledged that they never had a single moment in which to rest or to think. If we're unrested and thoughtless, we're never going to make either clear or constructive decisions.

It's wonderful to have imaginary places to which we can retreat, for solace or inspiration; as a child, I delighted as much as any of my friends did in Narnia and Earthsea and Middle Earth, and later on, as a student, I was diverted by each of Italo Calvino's invisible cities and Jorge Luis Borges' speculative enquiries. Our fictions offer a welcome alternative when life itself proves too chaotic or too painful. But no imagining has ever been for me so rich or so vital as reality, and everyday life has surprised me at least as often as fiction does.

As a writer, my job is to keep my eye fixed on what is really happening around the world, not on what might happen or what I wish might come about; and as the years go on, I see with more and more immediacy how little I can know of what will take place next week, or even tomorrow. My interest is in what kind of medicine we can put to use today.

Put differently, I'm obliged to ask: what do you have to bring to the intensive care unit? At some point you—like most of those you love—will find yourself in an emergency room. As on that mountain road in Yemen, your business card, your curriculum vitae, your achievements in the world will not be any help at all; the only thing you'll have to draw upon is your inner savings account, whatever resources you've gathered in that Sanctuary within.

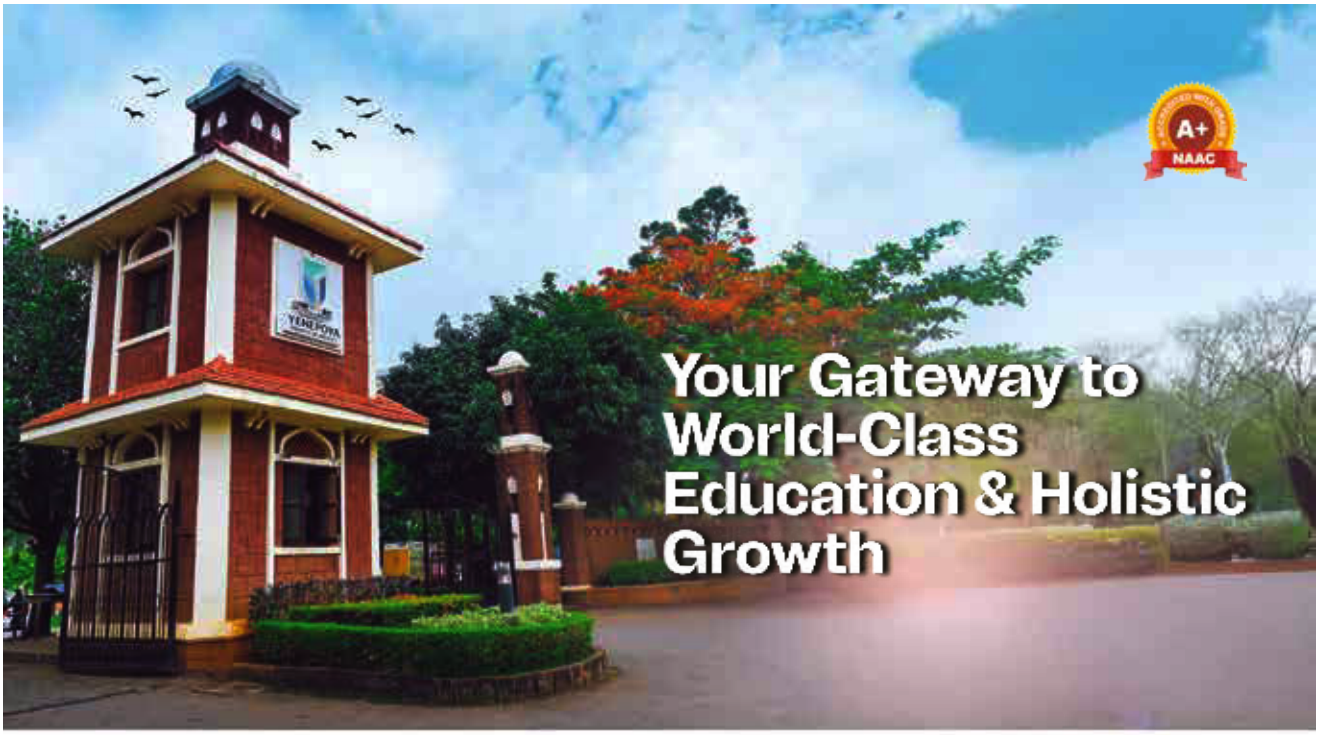
Once I'd woken up to this truth, I started going on retreat for three days every season: to restore my inner landscape, to hear something deeper than the chatter all around and to ensure that I wasn't waylaid—or hypnotised—by the latest newsflash or social media update. Two days after I drive back into the world after each retreat, I'm cursing again—of course!—that driver in the next lane, fretting over taxes, as distracted and unexalted as ever. But some residue of the quiet remains within me, like the money I deposit in my visible savings account. And like those tangible resources, it grows incrementally, and with compound interest. If I devote just three per cent of my days to my inner life, it transforms the other 97 per cent and becomes the best investment I will ever make.

And if I devote just 20 minutes every morning to sitting quietly in one corner of the room without any devices—or taking a walk around the neighbourhood, effectively paying a visit to my Inner Sanctuary—that too amounts to a mere three per cent of my waking hours, though it can revolutionise the other 97 per cent. The only way I can begin to understand the world—to see it in its proper proportions—is by stepping away from it; and the only way I can begin to gather the resources I'll need to have something to offer it is by entering my Unseen Sanctuary, to build up my reserves.

Indeed, the secret surprise of retreating within is to register that solitude is the best place and way to remember what you love, and so to come to a deeper understanding of both community and compassion. It's only by withdrawing a little from the frenzy that I can recall what really matters and make sure that I'm doing justice to it.

The world has never seemed so fast or furious as it is right now, between climate crises and wars, runaway technologies and turbulent politics; anyone reading this piece was lucky to have survived a recent worldwide plague. We all know that further earthquakes, wildfires and floods are on the way. We've never been so desperately in need of an Unseen Sanctuary that can sustain us at moments like the ones in Yemen, and come back to us, a flood of hope, when we step out on a terrace in Tibet.

This place belongs to all of us, but we have to tend it as carefully as we would any garden, or chapel. On it depend our welfare, our clarity, our peace of mind. Neglect it, and you'll find yourself borne helplessly along the tides of distraction and wondering how you can ever find your way back to shore. In the end, the Unseen Sanctuary is a place that has to be believed in to be seen.



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Imagine



Naveen Kishore
is a poet, photographer, theatre lighting designer and publisher, Seagull Books

NOTES

from an imaginary notebook I am yet to imagine. . .

No fingerprints on the last glass of wine.

Nor any footprints on the clouds as you climb the stairway.

No letters. Thoughts. Unread books. Not even a discarded bookmark.

No dreams. Unrealised or fulfilled. Or nightmares to breathlessly wake up from.

No impression of your reclusive body as you sink into your bed for the last time.

Imagine leaving nothing behind. Not even a trace.

Imagine. That which inhabits the mind and fills it with longing. Therefore, Melancholy?

Imagine being a refugee in your own mind.

Migration. Of thought. And Self. From one state of *being*. Of *emotion*. Of *presence*. To another. Or many others. One feeding the other. Often parasitically feeding off the other. As in the more powerful emotion will win the tug of war. The weaker being drained of strength and left to decay. In a landscape of shifting ideologies and political leanings; in a setting that espouses the philosophy of both the commodity and the spectacle of the Self; Often the Spectacle of the commodity itself is as alluring as the promise of something aspired to but never gained in another sphere of emotion. There is a downside to aspiration. It has built into its very desire a sense of leaving something behind. Of abandoning. And therefore, of being abandoned. The comfort of leaving one's nest for something new, however exciting, promising, desirable is still an a-sundering. Therefore, a sense of unease is a state that will visit one's Self both metaphysically and as a bodily invasion.

In Dreams. There is no Alice. There is no Wonderland. There is wonder. And there is arousal. Of the imaginary. A tactility in the text that conveys the illicit and the unmentionable. There is a sense of 'discovery'. The kind that hints at the excitement of a journey into the unknown. Accompanied by a sense of anticipation. The kind that an explorer must feel at the start of an exploration. Or a lover? What lies in wait? Demons or angels? Who knows? The kind that visits our dreams. Images that 'glow in the dark' as they slide in and out of our minds in a state of deep sleep that feels like wakefulness. How does that artist dare express in paint what the writer does with such ease in words? The sensuality of colours or is it again that 'dreadful reality', the imagination, that refuses to easily cohabit or mingle. Imagination at war with itself and Others with a capital O and its neighbours. Sharp. Bristly. Edged with an armour that is hard to pierce. And yet does precisely that. It allows itself the vulnerability of the dream-state in which all is porous and therefore nothing is as it appears. Hard. Soft. Metal. Cloth. Everything merges into one. This is what the seemingly opposing imaginations—yes plural—try to achieve. A harmony that sets out to deceive.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NAVEEN KISHORE

Now imagine

'That which is elusive'. Find it. Hold it in the palm of your thought. Articulate its radiance through any form of creativity you call your conduit, for that is what any creative action is: a 'transience' through which art reaches its audience.

How?

'Wear only your second skin', shed the one that has trained itself to dullness. Let it respond to *every single thing*. Soak it in. Absorb without smearing your self.

Now shut your eyes tight till they hurt. Open them slowly, inside your head, so that you can learn a fresh new way of seeing.

Why?

Because

'He never heard of reason.
If he did, he pities it.'

The image I have is of a deserted whiteness. Desolate and uninhabited. The sheet of paper stretches into the twilight. Barren, solitary, introverted, hermit-like in its desire for seclusion. Companionless. Unfrequented except by thought.

How do you create loneliness? And its close Other, intimacy? Without which you cannot write.

The act of writing is one of solitude. Like diving into the innermost, blindfolded. Of turning eyelids into tightly clenched fists. The nails dig deep. Drawing blood from the darkness.
Of waiting for language to find an opportune moment and reveal itself.
Of digging into memory that is elusive and often helter-skelter in its desire to be untamed.
Of chasing 'butterflies with nets of wonder' often with the cruel intent of preserving them like dead flowers between the covers of a book.
Of seeking your muse, night after night, with the remaining glass slipper in the hope that it would fit.

There are words that are welcome. Welcome words. Genial and hospitable. Magnanimous and large-hearted. Words that have kind faces creased with the wisdom that comes with years of usage. Sculpted words that know the pain of the mallet.

There are words that are not so welcome. Unwelcome words. Met with suspicion as they thrust their way forward. Words that have to prove their identity in a post-9/11 new order where a passport is a document of mistrust. And hostility. Nomadic words that have no choice but to remain in perpetual exile. The Jews of language. Imagine mailing letters home and finding them returned unopened with the legend 'address unknown'.

There are words that come to the feast wearing masks. Disguised figments awaiting the witching hour when they will turn into mice and scurry back into the dark. Unless... unless they can be unmasked to reveal their true selves.

Words, like mourners at a bereavement, inconsolable. Devastated and stricken with grief. Wearing the garb of deep and profound sorrow. Intense. Emotion writ large upon their countenance.

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"SCAN TO APPLY"

Then again:

'Every now and then it is possible to have absolutely nothing; the possibility of nothing.'
—*John Cage*

People die. Sometimes quietly. Sometimes not so quietly. I often wonder how I will die.

'My breath leaves my body in dreams'

I am at a wake. Listening to the mourners gathered there. They cannot see me for I am recently dead. Or newly arrived. I can no longer tell. Not with certainty. Anyway. Perhaps those who have some experience in these matters can. People who knew me when I was alive are all around me. It would be more correct to say that I am all around them. One by one the ones I had learned to call 'my friends' take the stage and extol my virtues. Men and women both. Singing my praises. Saying things to my back they wouldn't dare say to my face. I feel the women outnumber the men. As they did when I was amongst them. Alive. Now in this new state of absence I find this not the slightest bit odd. In fact I must admit I like it.

However, there is one amongst them I fail to recognise. A woman wearing a *burkha*. Her face and body concealed. Austere. Black. When it is her turn to speak she merely stands there and stares in my direction. She then reaches down to the hem of her *burkha* and lifts up the front. And reveals legs made up of papier-mache. On closer inspection it turns out to be paper. Not just any paper. Quality letter paper. The kind people use to write handwritten letters. I would go so far as to say that her legs appear to be made up of letters written in black Chinese ink by a fluent hand.

I remain standing where I am while she plucks each letter and proceeds to tear it into hundreds of tiny pieces. It is all done in silence. She is soon surrounded by an ant heap of meaningless text. There are no more letters to tear. I am not at all astonished that she no longer has any legs.

'My language trembles with desire...'

I am at a dream. It is also that which I am dreaming. Dreaming the dream that is being dreamt by me.

By me alone.

I seek words that will emote. Move restlessly across the stage refusing to stand still ignoring the urge to pause. Words that will seek translucence in a pool of light. Words that are nimble-toed and taut. Those that appear to skim the surface of the wine-drenched stage. Bliss. Full. Incandescent. Rhythmic words. Like fireflies.

Like a herald the twilight at the lakes fills the air with expectancy. The fading light will bring the fireflies to play upon its edges. A lad not quite out of his teens will capture seventy-seven or more into a large glass jar. For he has promised his ladylove. She who has no memory of this quest. Nor time enough.

It was well past midnight when I came back to the theatre. Made my way through the basement door and up to the dark stage. I placed the jar of fireflies on the stage and slowly removed the cloth that had concealed their brilliance.

I then opened the jar and let each glowing word escape into the dark of the auditorium.

For those of us who find ourselves in Purgatory for the rest of our post-Gujarat lives this business of forgetting and its reverse, remembering, is a cross that will have to be borne. There can never be a sense of 'closure' or 'laying to rest'.

Not even in our imagination.

Unknown and alone, I have returned to wander through my native country, which lies about me like a vast graveyard . . .
—Friedrich Holderlin, *Hyperion*

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Dr Nissar Ahmed
Chairman, Presidency Group of Institutions
Founder Chancellor, Presidency University, Bangalore

Revitalizing of India's Education- Dr Nissar Ahmed

Unseen and humble perhaps, but this persistence has grown into a mighty oak

Small steps is what this Edupreneur took, quiet ripples in a pond as he started a school as early as the seventies in Bangalore; eventually leading this small step into the making of a Group of Institutions today. Each small action, a simple act of kindness, patience and encouragement is what he gives the youth of today. With the youth on his side in Presidency Group of Institutions, with his Foundation ensuring there is maximum support extended to the needy in society, with a strong workforce and dynamic leaders who stride with him to eventually reach the shores, the Presidency Group of Institutions is today impacting society by creating small shifts in education.

Dr Nissar Ahmed, the Chairman of the Presidency Group of Institutions and the Founder Chancellor of Presidency University, Bangalore, has been the torchbearer of innovation and ambition that is spurred across all the whirring minds who enter the portals of his group of Institutions, the Presidency Group of Institutions. Sustainability, good governance, a thrust towards research and development has been the key areas of focus of the Group. 'Education has been the cornerstone of the vision of Presidency and education that spans from the Pre-primary to Higher Education and beyond. As a group, our focus is on lifelong learning and futuristic education. This is possible only with access to technology, to great infrastructure and faculty and Leaders who can think beyond the box, cultivate critical thinking amongst our youth,' says Dr Nissar Ahmed, in his usual quiet and unassuming style. 'We have been fortunate enough to cater to the marginalized communities of our society and at the same time balance our offerings to cater to the nuances of the changing trends in education in the current century,' he continues. 'Our higher education Institutions, have a strong focus on industry-academic partnership, relevant and practical curriculum and every effort is made to align with the needs of the rapidly changing world of education.' The Institution Social Responsibility of the University extending support in the form of legal aid, education, infrastructure for schools and technology support in the nearby villages of Presidency University, this silent Doyen of Education, supports all the four pillars of

Viksit Bharat as an Edupreneur.

Over the centuries, the Indian Education system has evolved with influences from different countries and thought leaders, enabling it to make significant progress in recent years. The Indian Higher Education system has faced and continues to face challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, shortage of quality faculty, curriculum that needs updating to face the challenging demands from the industry, lack of research and innovation. Under the leadership of Dr Nissar Ahmed, the Presidency Group has invested in the digital infrastructure in all K-12 schools under the parasol of Presidency and also in the higher education

an entrepreneurial spirit amongst the students and mould them young has been our motto. Accordingly the Presidency Launch pad takes care of aspirations of student startups and encourages innovation amongst them very young' quips Dr Nissar Ahmed.

With AI enveloping higher education, the Chancellor, Dr. Nissar Ahmed is very aware of the challenges ahead for Educators. 'There has to be a paradigm shift in education and especially in pedagogy', he says thoughtfully. 'While we are in the process of remaking and revitalizing India, we need to now ensure our young graduates move away from rote learning. AI is the new intelligence revolution and is a must in transforming education today at an unprecedented pace.' Presidency University has begun its move towards this new AI revolution as professors and researchers have become exploring AI in their every day tasks. As a University, the Chancellor is well aware that to ensure that education moves into the next realm of advancement, scalable solutions for higher education has to be met with.

As the Group marches ahead under the leadership of the visionary and mentor Dr Nissar Ahmed, the Founder Chancellor of Presidency University, he says, "AI will transform how students learn, how our teachers





domains. Digital literacy is something that the Group believes will bridge the digital divide. With its various partnerships with industries that run skill based training in the campus and also bring in innovation and practice into the curriculum; the Group promotes technology in learning and emphasises on ethical considerations as well. The Group under the leadership of Dr Nissar Ahmed, has women leaders, who lead the workforce and inclusivity at all levels of education is practiced. 'We believe in fostering

'While we are in the process of remaking and revitalizing India, we need to now ensure our young graduates move away from rote learning. AI is the new intelligence revolution and is a must in transforming education today at an unprecedented pace.'

teach and how we as a University will operate. We have begun to remake Indian education by integration AI-powered tools into the lecture halls, into administrative processes and improve student efficiency and skills. Upskilling is the need of the hour and facing these challenges and ensuring that we as Educators realize the full potential of overcoming barriers and surging ahead is the most important and significant change that we can bring about in the education of the future."

Márquez's Macondo and Gandhi, Still Undeciphered





Ruchira Gupta

is the author of *The Freedom Seeker* and *I Kick and I Fly,* and professor at New York University

Casa Museo At Gabriel García Márquez's birthplace—Aracataca in Colombia

MACONDO, in Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* begins, famously, as a town founded in the middle of nowhere, born out of flight.

José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula Iguarán leave their old village because their love is feared. They are cousins, bound by desire and threatened by superstition. A rumour follows them like a curse, that their union will produce a child with the tail of a pig.

Violence gathers around this fear. A man is killed. Guilt settles in. The couple flee, carrying both passion and prophecy with them, searching for a home where love can begin again without being policed by blood or belief.

Their journey is an act of refusal. They walk until the land seems to forget itself, until memory thins, and until a clearing appears where no one has yet decided what rules must govern intimacy. There, almost by accident, they found Macondo. A town built not through conquest or design, but through persistence, curiosity, and the shared labour of living.

José Arcadio dreams of science. He believes knowledge can bend reality. Úrsula believes in the endurance of love. She bakes, trades, organises, and keeps the household alive while generations bloom and scatter. Between his restless imagination and her practical devotion, a world takes shape.

The Buendía family grows large enough to forget its own genealogy. Children run through rooms filled with inventions, obsessions, and failed experiments. Love breaks rules between cousins, across classes, and against expectation.

Macondo grows too. Houses multiply. Life spills outward. The town expands not by design but by desire. It feels porous, experimental, alive.

This is how imagined worlds often start. With disobedience softened by joy.

Into this world comes Melquíades, the gypsy from the East. He is a magician, scientist, and archivist of time. He brings magnets, ice, telescopes, the wonders of a modernity still unnamed, objects that make the villagers feel the world widening.

He also brings something strange. A scroll written in code, which no one can read. Life feels too full to stop and decipher it. It is stored away like a relic and its meaning is deferred.

As the years pass, the Buendía household becomes a universe. Children and grandchildren repeat names as if caught in a spell. José Arcadios and Aurelianos returning like seasons. With the names come temperaments. The José Arcadios drawn to appetite, force, and spectacle; the Aurelianos drawn to solitude, thought, and prophecy.

Aureliano Buendía, the most famous of them, grows from a quiet boy into a colonel who fights endless civil wars, signing treaties that resolve nothing. The struggle itself seems less like politics than a kind of incurable weather.

ILLUSTRATION: VIKAS THAKUR

And yet, life continues apace, because people remember how to argue, how to laugh, how to gather. There is prosperity. A school opens. A bookshop appears. Knowledge circulates.

Then the outsiders arrive, not as enemies, but as investors. The banana company enters with its clocks, fences, rules, wages, and promises.

Macondo becomes a company town. Workers organise. A strike erupts. And then comes the massacre: soldiers fire into a crowd of workers. Thousands die. Their bodies are loaded onto trains and carried away. Official history insists nothing happened.

The town is commanded to forget.

Most people obey, not because they believe the lie, but because memory becomes dangerous. A whole event is erased not only from records but from collective belief.

From there, the town begins to slide. Rain falls for years. Houses rot. Dreams shrink. The family collapses inward, fractures into secret rooms, unwanted pregnancies, forbidden desires, and a loneliness that grows more hereditarily than wealth.

Love persists but becomes haunted, desperate and furtive and incestuous once again. But now it is not a rebellion or a breaking of taboos. It is just a refuge, a last attempt to feel alive.

And finally, the prophecy returns. The fear that once drove the founders to start a new town is fulfilled. A child is born with the tail of a pig. Not as punishment, but as culmination. In Márquez's universe, blood flows across thresholds, through streets and toward the river. History refusing to stay contained.

In one last, fleeting image, three figures meet in a bar. They exchange glances. They are the only ones who still remember that there was once a town of laughter and work, a school and a bookshop, a life before the trains carried bodies away. They do not speak much. Memory has become too fragile for speech.

At the very end, the scrolls are deciphered. The revelation is not that Macondo was doomed by fate, but that it was undone by forgetting. Everything, love, war, prosperity, massacre, solitude had been written in advance. The message, once decoded, is devastatingly simple: remember.

Macondo vanishes because it has forgotten itself.

And yet, inside the story is another lesson. The town flourished when it was left alone to grow through love, labour, and curiosity. Science and hard work created abundance. Greed, ego, and the invitation to outsiders to rule and extract hollowed it out. Solitude, in its earliest form, was not a curse but protection of a space where love could make a home.

The tragedy is not solitude. It is the loss of memory of a home and town that thrived on exploration and not on fear and superstition.

Names change. Faces change. The story insists on being told again.

Our century feels like an uncanny echo of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. It carries its own habits of repetition and its own way of forgetting. Its founding moment was in April of 1917, when two men stepped into history, breaking taboos. Each was in search of a home, in a country that could be built on equality and dignity.

Mahatma Gandhi entered Champaran, in Bihar, articulating his first act of civil disobedience against colonialism, defying the law to demand justice for indigo cultivators. That same week, Vladimir Lenin presented his April Theses, calling for the dismantling of feudalism and monarchy.

The backlash came quickly, swelling into a new hierarchy called fascism. Wars were fought, treaties signed, and peace repeatedly failed to hold. Yet the memory of Gandhi and Lenin's ideas for a better world persisted and was joined in part by Roosevelt and Churchill's resolve.

Different languages, different methods, but a shared assault on the inevitability of hierarchy. Together, they dismantled the old architecture of feudalism, colonialism and fascism.

Out of that wreckage emerged an audacious post-war attempt to build a new order. The United Nations, international law, non-violence as a political ethic, scientific modernity as a public good, and even the dream, never fully realised, of a global trade union of peoples.

Home and country in these years, was imagined expansively, not just as territory, but as rights, institutions, protections, and the promise that no one would be left entirely outside history.

This was the Macondo moment of the modern world. Families and institutions multiplied, schools and libraries appeared as acts of faith, constitutions tried to protect the fragile from the powerful, and dissent was not treason but participation.

When Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in 1917, he carried with him an idea of a strange, improbable town, so fragile and subversive that it could only survive if people

OUR CENTURY FEELS LIKE AN UNCANNY ECHO OF *ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE*. IT CARRIES ITS OWN HABITS OF REPETITION AND ITS OWN WAY OF FORGETTING.

chose to believe in it together. He called it The India of my Dreams.

India was not yet a nation-state. It was a vast, quarrelling, wounded space that was colonised, impoverished, divided by language, caste, religion, region, and class. And yet Gandhi imagined it as a home that could hold contradiction without collapse. A country that would not be built on purity, but on plurality; not on conquest, but consent. Provisional, noisy, incomplete. Its incompleteness was its strength.

If Márquez's Macondo begins as a place "so recent that many things lacked names", Gandhi's India was older than history and yet unfinished, waiting to be named anew.

India-as-Macondo was born in this audacity.

Like all imagined worlds, it depended on memory, repetition, and care. It aspired to be a space where there could be a home for everyone, where power did not have to silence the poor and, where dissent, science, faith, and collective life could coexist.

All this would be protected by the Constitution, universal franchise, public education, libraries, scientific institutions, and a commitment to secularism, equality, and redistribution. Its leadership in Non-Alignment and anti-colonial solidarity was part of this same wager. Independence was ethical. Sovereignty was practical.

Like the Buendía household, India in these years was noisy, argumentative, and excessive. Memory circulated through stories, textbooks, public debate, cinema, songs, street corners. History was not yet a closed script; it was a field of contestation. People believed, sometimes fiercely, sometimes foolishly, that tomorrow could be different.

This flourishing did not mean the absence of conflict. Partition's violence was unresolved and its ghosts never exorcised. Borders hardened. Wars with Pakistan returned periodically and reactivated fear. Scarcity and debt shadowed optimism. But even here, the grammar of public life still made room for complexity. Disagreement was not automatically treason. Critique was not yet criminal.

The Constitution was not just a legal document; it was a moral map. Universal franchise arrived not as a reward for literacy or property, but as a birthright. Millions who had never been counted before were suddenly invited into politics and addresses written in as 'pavement-dweller' were not questioned.

Polling booths appeared in deserts, forests, islands. The Election Commission walked where roads did not exist, carrying democracy on foot. Inclusion was the governing instinct. Panchayats decentralised power right down to the smallest village.

Education, too, was imagined as a public good. Universities, schools, libraries, scientific institutions, research labs were built not to produce obedience, but inquiry. Knowledge was subsidised because ignorance was expensive. Campuses became unruly spaces, full of argument, ideology, theatre, poetry, dissent.

The country spoke in many tongues with 26 official languages and hundreds more lived and breathed. This plurality was not yet seen as a threat. "Unity in diversity" was not a slogan to be performed, but a condition to be explored and lived.

The economy reflected this moral architecture. Trade unions were not aberrations but institutions. Cooperatives flourished. Small farms and small businesses were not residues of the past but pillars of the present. Nationalised banks extended credit to those without collateral but with labour. Planning was imperfect, often clumsy, sometimes paternalistic, but it assumed that prosperity had to be shared to be legitimate.

It all hummed with contradiction. India argued constantly with itself, with its leaders, with its writers. It made mistakes. It disappointed its own ideals. But it remembered why those ideals existed. The poor were not invisible. The state was not yet a spectacle. Power still needed justification.

Looking back now, the question is not only what happened to that imagination, but how it was allowed to dissolve. How did a society learn, step by step, to stop remembering itself?

In Márquez's novel, the tragedy of Macondo is not that it begins in innocence, but that it forgets how it began. India's tragedy, too, does not come from idealism, but from amnesia.

From the slow replacement of ethics with efficiency, citizenship with consumption, plurality with performance. In the earlier moments, though, the town still breathed.

As in Márquez, the unravelling did not arrive all at once. It came quietly. Corporate power, symbolised in the novel by the United Fruit Company, began to replace local innovations with big cash flows. Economic liberalisation hollowed out the commons.

Banks funded big instead of small businesses even as export processing zones weakened trade unions and labour laws. Schools and universities were defunded even as students were jailed. Independent newspapers and TV channels were censored and shared stories disappeared. Archives were weakened and history was rewritten, simplified, and mythologised.

WRITERS PRESERVE WHAT THE POWERS TRY TO ERASE. THEY HOLD MEMORIES AGAINST ENFORCED FORGETTING.

In Macondo, after the massacre of the trade union workers, people were told nothing had happened, that the past they remembered was an illusion.

Today, in India and across much of the world, we are once again being instructed to forget. We are told that nothing was achieved in these one hundred years of solitude shaped by civil disobedience, class struggle and social democracy. That the effort was futile. That an older, vaguely imagined past was purer, stronger, more authentic.

The lie flows steadily, crossing thresholds, moving through institutions, toward public memory itself. It works not because it persuades, but because it refuses to stop.

The banana company is no longer foreign. It is internalised. Profit displaces memory. Spectacle replaces debate. Citizens are reduced to consumers. Caste becomes arithmetic. Religion becomes performance. Language becomes a battlefield. Democracy survives as ritual while being emptied of substance.

Home becomes precarious. The nation is surveilled. The nation-state itself shrinks into a narrowing room where obedience is taught as virtue. What emerges is a toxic synthesis of feudal hierarchy, capitalist extraction, colonial methods of control, reassembled without needing an external empire. History does not end with a bang but with forgetting.

In Márquez, the curse returns in the form of the child born with the tail of a pig. In our world, it looks like the rise of authoritarian leaders who dismantle institutions while keeping their shells, mock equality, erase archives, censor speech, weaponise religion, and replace solidarity with spectacle. Love is disciplined. Laughter becomes suspicious. Memory is treated as a threat.

It is time to ask whether we are now living the final century of solitude, where memory itself may disappear, where only performance remains, where people no longer remember a time when equality, joy, irreverence, and collective dignity is possible.

And, so, the question returns to the scroll. What if Gandhi and his ethic of non-violence, minimalism, decentralised power rooted in villages, was the gypsy of the East that Marquez wrote of? Not a saint to be worshipped, but a method to be deciphered. What if his message was never meant to be commemorated, but practised? And what if, like Macondo, we have admired the magician for a century without reading what he left behind?

Márquez's warning is that forgetting is fatal. If Macondo teaches us anything, it is that worlds do not vanish when they are defeated. They vanish when they forget why they once dared to exist.

But when all else fails, writers return. Writers preserve what the powers try to erase. They hold memories against enforced forgetting. They keep working at the code, line by line, until the scroll becomes legible again.

That belief is reckless, tender, defiant. And it is where the story truly begins.

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Discovering Telenapota



SNAKE AND OTHER STORIES
| Premendra Mitra |
Seagull Fiction |
133 pages | 1999

Premendra Mitra
A Bengali poet-novelist and filmmaker, he pioneered Bengali science fiction and created the beloved raconteur character Ghanada. His wide-ranging œuvre made him a towering figure of 20th-century Bengali literature

DURING the conjunction of Saturn and Mars—yes, Mars, most likely—you, too, might discover Telenapota. In other words, when you have unexpectedly been granted a two-day break from the suffocating pressure of work, if someone comes and tempts you, saying that somewhere there is a magic pool filled with the most incredibly simple-minded fish anxiously waiting to swallow any bait, and you have often spent unsuccessful hours angling without a catch, you may suddenly find yourself on your way to discovering Telenapota.

To discover Telenapota you will have to catch a bus packed with countless people late in the afternoon, and suffer the crowds, the jolting, the heat till, by the time you get off an hour or two later, you are drenched in sweat and covered with dust. You will be quite unprepared for the stop when it comes. Before you know where you are, the bus will have disappeared into the distance, over a bridge across the low swampland. In that dense, dark forest, night arrives even before the sun has set. A strange wind blows through the eerie silence. You won't see a soul anywhere; even the birds, it seems, have flown away, perhaps in fright. You will feel a strange dread slowly rearing its head out of the lonely marsh.

You will leave the main road and stand near the swampland. There appears to be something like a storm drain cut into the undergrowth but this gets lost in thick groves of bamboo in the distance.

To discover Telenapota you should have a couple of friends with you. Perhaps they are not as keen on fishing as you are, but they accompany you, nevertheless, for God knows what reason.

The three of you will stand, staring anxiously, in front of the storm drain, trying to brush off the mosquitoes, occasionally glancing at one another.

In a while your faces will become indistinct in the gathering gloom. The steady drone of the mosquitoes will become even more insistent. And just as you are contemplating returning to the road, perhaps for a last bus, you will be startled by a strange, haunting sound coming from where the muddy drain loses itself in the jungle. A sound like an unearthly weeping, rising from the heart of the forest.

But this sound will only serve to fill your waiting with eager expectation. And your waiting will not be in vain. First, a faint light will be seen in the distance, swaying in the darkness; and then slowly, a bullock cart will come trundling out of the forest.

The cart and animals will be of a piece—dwarfed versions from some underworld of gnomes.

Without wasting any time on words you will climb on board and then try to solve the conundrum of how to arrange three heads and three sets of limbs in a manner which distributes the maximum volume in the minimum space.

The cart will return the way it came. The dark, impenetrable forest will yield a narrow tunnel for the cart to enter. The bullocks will move forward, unhurried, as if creating with each step the path they slowly tread.

For some time you will feel terribly irritable and cramped in the dark. But slowly you will begin to feel in the depths of the blackness around you. You will feel that from your own familiar world you have entered another. An unknown, mist-clad universe, bereft of all feeling. Time has stopped dead in its tracks here. And since time has come to a stop you will not know how long you had dozed off for. You will be woken suddenly horrid cacophony. You will look around to find the skies full of countless stars, and the driver furiously beating on a drum.

Your curiosity aroused, you will ask him what the din is about; the driver will answer blandly, 'Oh, it's to drive the tigers away, sir.'

After you have properly digested this bit of information, and just as you are about to ask in a tremulous voice whether tigers can be scared away just by beating drums, the cart driver will attempt to reassure you by saying that these are only leopards. And unless they are very hungry indeed, beating a drum is sufficient to keep them away.

Leopards! Within thirty miles of the metropolis! Before you can register surprise, the cart will begin to cross a wide open space lit by a late moon. Ruins of deserted palaces will gleam in the wan moonlight. Lone colonnades, broken arches, the debris of courtyard walls. A ruined temple somewhere further down. They will stand like litigants, waiting, in futile hope, to record evidence in the court of time.

You will try to sit up. A strange sensation will once again make you feel as if you have left behind the world of the living and entered a misty realm peopled only by memories. The night will be far gone. It will seem an endless dark in which everything lies stilled like extinct animals preserved in museums.

A few turnings later the cart will stop. You will gather together your tired limbs and climb down, one by one, like wooden puppets. There will be a strong smell in the air: the stench of leaves rotting in the pool just in front of you. Beside the pool will stand the remains of a huge mansion, its roof fallen in, its walls crumbling, the windows broken—like the battlements of a fort, guarding against the phantom moonlight.

(For full version of this article, go to www.outlookindia.com)



From Classrooms to Communities: Rethinking Engineering Education

A measured approach to responsibility and innovation in education. Reflecting shifts in how engineering education responds to society

Gayathri Venkatesan

Sri Sairam Engineering College, Chennai, established in 1995, is an autonomous institution affiliated with Anna University. It has evolved into a reputed engineering institution with NBA accreditation for all engineering programmes, NAAC accreditation with an A+ grade, and consistent recognition in the NIRF rankings. A traditional engineering institution evolved into a multi-disciplinary academic environment driven by industry engagement, social responsibility, and outcome-based learning, environment driven by industry engagement, social responsibility, and outcome-based learning, Sairam Group offers courses in engineering, medicine, management, arts and science, polytechnic, and school-level disciplines. Under the leadership of Dr Sai Prakash Leo Muthu, Chairman and CEO of Sairam Institutions, the institution continues to strengthen its focus on innovation, industry readiness, and societal impact. In this interview, he shares his views on leadership, the future of engineering education, and the role of institutions in nation building. Excerpts from the interview.

Q As a leader, how do you define the core philosophy of Sri Sairam Engineering College's growth and transformation?

As India aspires to become a developed nation by 2047, educational institutions have a crucial responsibility. Our core belief is that education must be experiential. Learning should not depend solely on lectures and examinations. Inspired by the principles of the Scouts and Guides movement, we focus on activity-based learning, discipline, character building, and life readiness. When students engage with communities and solve real-world problems, learning becomes meaningful and lasting.

Our approach to meaningful and purposeful learning aligns with the words of Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, who said, 'Learning gives creativity, creativity leads to thinking, thinking provides knowledge, and knowledge makes you great.' In an AI-driven era where information is readily accessible, inspiration and inner motivation are increasingly scarce, we therefore encourage every individual to initiate change within themselves..

In today's competitive landscape, Sri Sairam Institutions has introduced PGPA – Performance Grade Points Average, a proprietary platform to go beyond CGPA by adding an "X-Factor" that captures the essential skills, experiences, and qualities employers now demand. This X-Factor is measured through 14 components covering technical skills, certifications, internships, innovation events, clubs, sports, and social-impact activities.

For students, PGPA provides a clear roadmap that blends academic excellence with real-world readiness, diverse competencies, and measurable growth. For faculty, it enables data-driven mentoring and a holistic view of each learner's development.

Q How has this broader purpose shaped academic practice and community engagement?

Our commitment to social relevance has directly shaped our academic approach. Engineering projects are consciously aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, enabling students to view their technical education as addressing social, economic, and environmental challenges. After attaining autonomy, around the Sairam campus this integration expanded

across all academic programmes, with course outcomes mapped to relevant SDGs. This framework helps students understand that engineering is not just about technology but about responsibility and impact.

One of our flagship community initiatives operates under the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, a Government of India programme. Through this initiative, we have adopted ten villages around the students and faculty work closely with residents on water, sanitation and livelihood challenges. The approach is simple and structured—first Understand the problem; imagine a solution. Develop a prototype and share it with the community. This hands-on engagement bridges the gap between academic theory and real-life application, making learning both relevant and transformative.

How did autonomy influence academic quality, governance, and institutional systems?
Autonomy was granted to us during 2019–2020, a period that coincided with the unprecedented disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. At a time when institutions were forced to rethink traditional modes of education delivery, autonomy proved to be a powerful enabler.

While we already had a robust academic foundation, autonomy allowed us to redesign and strengthen our governance frameworks. Faculty appraisal systems were refined, continuous professional development was made mandatory, and structured curriculum reviews became an integral part of our academic process. Faculty training is now directly linked to teaching quality and learning outcomes.

Autonomy also shifted focus from narrow performance metrics to overall student readiness, including confidence, ethical awareness, adaptability and lifelong learning skills.

Recruiters often highlight a gap between academic preparation and industry expectations. How is Sairam Institutions addressing this?
The gap is more about application, communication, and adaptability. To address this, we have redefined faculty roles within the institution. Some faculty members function as Talent Enablers, focusing on skill development and student mentoring, while others serve as Placement Facilitators, maintaining consistent engagement with industry partners.

Industry feedback is shared with the Board of Studies and reflected in curriculum updates. Internships are mandatory across all programmes. Faculty members must also undergo at least fifteen days of industry exposure to ensure classroom learning remains aligned with workplace expectations. The institution has maintained pass percentages above 95% since inception, and recruiter feedback has remained positive.

How does the community initiatives reflect innovation and commitment to sustainable development?
Sairam Institutions proudly celebrates a landmark achievement at the Smart India Hackathon (SIH) 2024, with 21 teams qualifying for the Grand Finale—the highest in the country—and 9 teams winning first prizes, also a national record. This success reflects Sairam's strong innovation ecosystem and problem-solving culture.
Complementing this, Sairam integrates the UN Sustainable Development Goals into academics through village adoption, tree plantations, health camps, and educational drives, promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

How integral are innovation, research and entrepreneurship to the institution's vision?
Innovation, research, and entrepreneurship form the backbone of the institution. Dedicated innovation cells, government-supported initiatives, and engagement with investor and startup networks create an ideal ecosystem. Students are encouraged to explore entrepreneurial ideas across disciplines and transform concepts into viable solutions. They have participated in several Government of India programmes, including recent defence-related research projects. To date, the institution has secured 22 granted patents and over 650 published patents.

These innovations are deeply rooted in societal needs. Examples include an IoT-based aquaculture pond health monitoring system, embedded analytics for sports performance, and a PCM-assisted cold storage flask designed to enhance temperature retention. Such outcomes reflect our commitment to problem-solving research with real-world relevance.

How does the Sairam Innovation Ecosystem align student projects with the Sustainable Development Goals?
Sairam Innovation Ecosystem is a four-year methodology that empowers engineering students to address local and global challenges through technology. This ecosystem nurtures innovation and aligns student learning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. All final-year projects focus on one or more SDGs, ensuring graduates develop social responsibility and a strong commitment to creating practical, sustainable solutions for global issues.

What do recent years' recognitions mean for you and the institution?
Receiving the Baden-Powell Award from the Scouts and Guides movement, as well as recognition at the 80th United Nations General Assembly, are deeply humbling experiences. These honours are not individual achievements. They reflect our collective values of discipline, service and responsibility.

Ultimately, education must prepare individuals not only for employment but also for life itself. That belief continues to guide every decision we make at Sairam Institutions.

Sky Above, Earth Below



Perumal Murugan

is a Tamil writer, poet and scholar. Several of his novels have been translated into English, including *Seasons of the Palm* (shortlisted for the Kiriyama Prize); *One Part Woman,* which won the ILF Samanvay Bhasha Samman; *Pyre*, which was longlisted for the International Booker Prize; and *Fire Bird*, which won the 2023 JCB Prize for Literature



COURTESY: EXPERIMENTER

The Subterranean II, 2024
Artwork by Julien Segard

FOR every novel, the central idea, the story, often takes shape easily in the mind. But constructing the background in which to situate it is not simple. The setting must possess credibility. Readers should feel as though they can walk through it, seeing everything with their own eyes. Only through this can one encounter the characters. Reading a novel is the experience of travelling into a new world. In that world, the space the characters inhabit is as important as the characters themselves. So, to build the background, the writer must also engage in fieldwork. I wish to share my experience of how I created the setting for a novel.

Koolamathari (Seasons of the Palm) is the third novel I wrote. It was published in Tamil in 2000, and the English translation was published in 2005. In fact, this was the novel I had intended to write first. But since it had not fully taken shape in my mind, I picked it up only after writing two other novels. From the time I began writing it to the time I completed it, nearly ten years passed. Several times, I abandoned certain chapters midway, feeling they were not coming out right. Once, after writing almost half the novel, I tore it up, dissatisfied with how it had turned out. Even then, I could neither abandon the novel altogether nor move on to something else. It kept chasing me relentlessly.

The characters, the events—everything had been finalised. I was clear about which incident should be written in what sequence. I had even named the goats that play an important role in the novel. I am usually confused when it comes to deciding an ending, but for this novel, even that was no trouble. Then what exactly was the problem?

It took me several years to figure that out. The difficulty I faced in writing stemmed from the setting. The background of the novel is the landscape where my ancestors had lived for generations, practising agriculture. I was attempting to shape that land as a living character. Because I did not fully grasp that sensibility, I could not write as I had envisioned. I kept fretting that something was missing, that something was not quite

right. Once I realised that the land itself had to be transformed into a living character, I began to think about what all needed to be done to create that setting.

That setting is a rain-fed tract, known in our region's local dialect as *mettukkaadu* or land that looks up to the sky, dependent entirely on rain. Sowing begins in *Vaikasi* (Tamil month corresponding to mid-May to mid-June) and *Aani* (mid-June to mid-July), when the summer rains fall in measured amounts, and the harvest is completed by *Karthigai* (mid-November to mid-December) and *Margazhi* (mid-December to mid-January). Agricultural work lasts only six or seven months. During the remaining months, we merely keep turning the soil in one way or another: digging out groundnuts left behind in the earth, cutting castor plants, storing and preparing seeds, and securing fodder for cattle and goats. There is no work that can be called compulsory agricultural labour then. Such are the climate and water resources of our region.

A large part of Kongu Nadu, the western region of Tamil Nadu, is poor in water resources. Rainfall is very scanty. In some parts of Tamil Nadu, both the southwest monsoon and the northeast monsoon bring rain. For us, it is only the northeast monsoon and even that arrives in moderation. When cyclones lash the northern districts such as Chennai, Chengalpattu, and Tiruvallur with torrential rain, our region remains scorched by the sun. When cyclones strike the southern districts like Thiruvarur and Nagapattinam, clouds gather thickly in our skies. Drops fall like a light drizzle. Year after year, people say, "It must either rain properly or clear away altogether. This sky that does neither is only toying with us." This line has settled into the status of a proverb.

The River Cauvery enters Tamil Nadu from Karnataka and flows a long distance through our region before it reaches the delta districts. Yet it is of little benefit to us. In our area, it is called the 'narrow Cauvery'; once it reaches the delta, it becomes the 'broad Cauvery'. Kovai Kizhar, a historian of the Kongu region, describes the Cauvery as a 'miser'. He says that after entering Kongu Nadu, the river gathers up all the resources of our land and carries them off to Chola Nadu. Even if it did not give us water, that might be tolerable—but it even takes away what little there is. Indeed, floods sweep away all the accumulated wealth of the soil. Thus, a river that is miserly in our region becomes a great benefactor to the delta districts. Such is nature's wonder.

I KEPT FRETTING THAT SOMETHING WAS MISSING. ONCE I REALISED THAT THE LAND ITSELF HAD TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO A LIVING CHARACTER, I BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT WHAT ALL NEEDED TO BE DONE TO CREATE THAT SETTING.

Only in the 20th century, after the construction of the Mettur Dam and a few smaller dams on tributary streams, did we begin to receive some measure of river water. Today, most cities can partake of Cauvery water. Even so, its use for irrigation remains limited.

In Namakkal district where I live, the predominance of red soil means that it instantly absorbs whatever rain falls. No matter how much it rains, red soil has a way of gulping it all down and letting out a belch. It has no capacity to store water. Consequently, groundwater resources are also scarce. There are many wells, but they are extremely deep. People say that if a man wearing a turban bends to look into a well, the turban would slip off and fall in; it was so impossible to see the bottom. Even in the wells, the water is saline. A well that yields water with low salt content is a rare marvel, and that alone serves as drinking water. Until about 20 years ago, it was a common sight to see crowds carrying pots and queuing up at such places.

Because of such a terrain, along with cultivation, the rearing of goats and sheep is also an important occupation for us. *Koolamathari* portrays the lives of boys who herd sheep as bonded farm labourers under small landowners. Grazing land belongs to the sheep; the boys who trail behind them, like the sheep themselves, are bound to and wander within that same land. For this, the landscape had to be rendered alive.

Within me lay an expanse of land. I spread it out before me like a map. Some parts were

in darkness; in some, shadows had taken over. The parts that appeared in glaring light were too bright to look at directly. I realised how inadequate what I had assumed to be clarity really was. That land is the space of my childhood. For seven or eight generations, my ancestors had lived there. From birth until the age of 11, I roamed and wandered within it. When I was 11, the Tamil Nadu government acquired nearly a hundred acres of land belonging to our family and our kin, saying it was required to build Tamil Nadu Housing Board tenements. I would say that the government cheated us. We were illiterate, dependent entirely on that land for our livelihood. I would say the government grabbed the land from us by paying a small sum. We did not know what to do with that money. Of the 11 acres that belonged to my grandfather, my father had received a share of three acres. After that too was lost, we struggled in deep misery. Somehow, after much stumbling, we managed to survive.

The land I had run through and played in until the age of 11, and that way of life, lived on within me. The ache of that loss tormented my mind. It seemed to me that only after bringing everything into writing would I be able to free myself. Apart from writing, I could see no other way to release my mind. To reclaim in writing, after the age of 30, what I had lost at 11 was indeed a challenge. Everything that had entered me in those years of little understanding, and remained unclear within, had to be made clear.

I rode around that area on a bicycle, which had turned into a town with the houses built by the government and the many individual homes people had constructed after buying plots. All kinds of boundaries had disappeared. Wells had been sealed. Of the hundreds of palmyra trees, not even one was to be seen. Rocks that had once been grain fields had been split open, and houses built on top of them. There was no trace of where our houses had once stood. At the spot where our well—60 or 70 feet deep—had been covered over, a single coconut tree had survived and stood there. I went up to it, stroked its trunk, lingered for a while, and then left with a heavy sigh. In my mind, I tried to shape an outline of what had been where, and of what had existed where.

When I undertook these efforts, my grandfather and grandmother were no longer alive. They had told me so many things, so many incidents, like stories. I had also heard from them about events from the times of their parents and grandparents. Because of this, I carry a certain pride in knowing the history of five or six generations. From the beginning of the 19th century to the first quarter of the 21st century—two-and-a-quarter centuries of history—reside within me. Had I known then that these would later be of use in my writing, I could have asked my grandparents and many of my elders so much more. What has stayed with me unbidden is my true wealth.

While trying to create the setting of *Koolamathari*, I felt that if my grandparents had been alive, my need would have been easily met. What else could I do except let out another deep sigh? My mother is a repository of information. If asked for information directly, nothing emerges. But by drawing her into conversation from time to time, as though reviving old memories, I managed to extract many details. I spared no one—my paternal uncles and aunts, my cousins and kin. I deliberately created occasions to meet each of them and spoke casually. My aunt had spent her childhood on that land. Though she had moved to another place after marriage, she had not forgotten the land of her childhood and the life that was deeply etched in her memory. Though everyone spoke about the same landscape, their accounts were never identical. Each person had a different angle, a different gaze, a different memory. The land each had shaped and drawn within their own mind was distinct.

Drawing on all the information and incidents I gathered from so many people, I created a landscape. That became the setting for the fiction. I structured time as a single year, beginning in the month of *Thai* (mid-January to mid-February) and ending with the following *Thai*. The seasonal changes that occur every two months, the corresponding shifts in the life cycle of the palmyra, and the sights of the cultivated fields all fell naturally into place. To turn the land into one of the characters of the story, I used description, detail, season, and nature—everything possible to the fullest extent. I managed to kind of complete it and the novel was published in 2000.

It is difficult to discern the difference between real space and fictional space. The writer needs the artistic skill to fuse the two. When readers respond to *Koolamathari*, my attention is always on what they say about the novel's setting. In the 20th century, the

THOUGH EVERYONE SPOKE ABOUT THE SAME LANDSCAPE, THEIR ACCOUNTS WERE NEVER IDENTICAL. EACH PERSON HAD A DIFFERENT MEMORY.

middle class emerged and grew as a social category. With it came a certain mindset, which gradually spread as the general social outlook. Contemporary ideas about the home arose in this way as well. Owning a house has become one of the lifelong dreams of an individual. There are young people who say they will marry only after buying or building a house. There are parents who insist that they will give their daughter in marriage only to a man who owns a house. A significant number of people buy homes through bank loans and spend a large portion of their salaries repaying them in instalments over many years. There are also those who own multiple houses and live off rental income. Among government schemes, one of the most important is 'Housing for All'.

A house has come to function as proof of one's level of comfort and prosperity. I see even palace-like houses inhabited by just two people. For women who are heads of households, maintaining the home takes up most of the day. The house has ceased to be merely a place to live and has become a symbol of social status. In such a context, what place did the house occupy in the social mindset of 50 years ago? A house was a place to safeguard grain. A house was a shelter from the rain. One could even live without a house; a small hut in the name of a house was enough. Many find it hard to believe that there were generations who lived without ever forming a mental image of a house. Yes. In the fictional world of *Koolamathari*, the house holds no importance at all.

THE SETTING OF MY NOVEL IS THE OPEN EXPANSE OF *METTUKKAADU*. THE PEOPLE AND THE SHEEP WANDER THROUGH THAT SPACE DAY AND NIGHT. THEY HAVE NO SENSE OF A HOUSE.

The setting of *Koolamathari* is the open expanse of *mettukkaadu*. The people and the sheep wander through that space day and night. They have no sense of a house, no thought that a house is necessary. When the sun scorches, the shade of a tree is enough for shelter. When the rain falls in moderation, they delight in getting wet. When rain lashes down, they need a roof to hide under. In times without harvest, a roof is needed to store grain for food. That is all. Even sexual union takes place in the open. Do animals and birds go looking for houses? A few houses do appear in the novel, but they are never shown directly. They are spoken of through a retrospective technique. Yes, they are not shown; they are told. Even in these narrated houses, we never enter them and see anything inside. Only the exterior appears as an image. The threshold and the cattle shed are shown. Even when Dalit people enter houses, they step back out immediately. And so, the fictional space of this novel is entirely an open space. At a cursory glance, it may seem that there is nothing there at all. But for those who live there, countless things reveal themselves, like quail eggs hidden among the dry leaves scattered across a harvested field, many secrets lie concealed. In every season, the land reveals a different face, and that is reflected in human life as well.

Many readers have grasped this subtlety of the novel. Most do not speak about the events in it; they speak instead about that space. The plants, creepers, birds and trees in it all come alive for readers. They also speak of the politics that surface through the events. What is there to be found in this fictional space where the sky is above and the earth below? Wherever human beings set foot, they never fail to leave behind their marks or scars. Within this space, too, there are many things. The caste-political face of Indian society is firmly inscribed here. Both the minor and major forms of untouchability are revealed here. The authority and dominance that caste confers from birth take shape in this barren expanse. The well, with its gaping mouth, is no exception. Power operates even over water.

I have not constructed a village. I have not built the many kinds of cities so lavishly celebrated in the epics. The fictional space I have constructed is, in others' eyes, an empty stretch of *mettukkaadu*. An open field where the rays of the sun spread without obstruction. An open space where the stars shine fully and wink eagerly. A vast expanse where the moon glides and casts its spell. A hidden space where darkness thickens and blinds the eyes. This is how I have created the fictional space of *Koolamathari*.

Some ask whether the space in this novel is entirely real, whether it can be seen today. A fictional space can be seen only within fiction. One may recognise its elements and shades here and there, but to behold it in its entirety, one must return to the novel again and again.

A Blueprint for Digital Leadership

Vaibhav Maloo, a dynamic force behind the architecture of Enso Webworks, shaping and connecting the future of digital living

In an era where digital noise often overwhelms digital progress, Enso Webworks is emerging as a premium digital ecosystem that creates tools that are clever, able to grow, and centered on privacy, based on smart design solutions and a real understanding of users' needs.

Ideas Encoded with Passion

Under the direction of Vaibhav Maloo, a new-age business leader, Enso Webworks, recognized as the innovation backbone of the Enso Group, is shaping a premium digital ecosystem built for the complexities of modern life.

Maloo's leadership philosophy is refreshingly simple: technology should empower, not exhaust. This ethos pulses through the company's eleven-product suite, each crafted to simplify digital interactions while amplifying privacy, productivity, and purpose. "We're designing tools for how people actually live and work," Maloo often emphasizes. "Not for how technology traditionally forces them to."

Coding the Future

At the core of the Enso Webworks ecosystem is InfoProfile, a dynamic reinvention of professional identity. Instead of flat business cards, users share rich multimedia profiles that travel effortlessly across networks through QR codes, proximity sharing, or direct links. For Vaibhav, this is more than a modern convenience—it's a move toward frictionless, expressive digital branding.

Communication, another cornerstone of modern life, receives its overhaul through InfoPhone, a secure calling suite woven directly into team workflows. By rethinking something as foundational as a phone call, Vaibhav's team is creating a communication experience where clarity, encryption, and collaboration work in sync.

Then there's InfoQueries, a privacy-first search engine that rejects tracking and profiling in favor of clean, contextual results. It embodies Enso Webworks' guiding belief that privacy is not a luxury but a basic digital right.





Vaibhav Maloo
Managing Director, Enso Group

Digital Dreams Made Real

Across healthcare, consulting, education, and enterprise environments, solutions such as InfoCalling, InfoTelecast, and InfoConverse streamline everything from appointments to large-scale broadcasts to high-security virtual meetings. Meanwhile, tools like InfoMemo, InfoContract, and InfoDatabox are redefining how users manage identity verification, digital signing, and encrypted storage in an always-on world.

Supporting it all are IntfoLives, a unified single sign-on system, and InfoTodo, a clean, intuitive space for tasks and notes—small but essential contributions to a less fragmented digital life.

What sets Enso Webworks apart is not just the breadth of its product lineup but the cohesion between them. Maloo has championed a tiered model—Free, Basic, Pro, and Enterprise—that welcomes individuals while scaling seamlessly to the largest organizations. It reflects a mindset rooted in accessibility, transparency, and long-term trust.

In the new age of business, where purpose must meet performance, Enso Webworks stands as a benchmark for what comes next.

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The World and the Word



Geetanjali Shree

is the author of five novels, including *Tomb of Sand* (translated from Hindi by Daisy Rockwell), which was awarded the 2022 International Booker Prize, and five short story collections. The English translation of Shree's debut novel *Mai* by Nita Kumar won the Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize in 2002. Her work has been translated into several languages, including English, French and Korean

IN fact, we live in garrulous times. That is not about talking as in conversations. It is loud, aggressive verbal noise to shout the other down. Jabber jabber, noise noise, deaf deaf. And that makes Literature in these times even more crucial, even if devalued by too many. It is a retreat, not as in running away, but as in being the space for silences that pick up the echoes and murmurs of quashed voices. A retreat not from the battlefield as it were, but one where the forgotten or sidelined voices can be restored and preserved. So that no one may forget that there is another narrative, there are other stories, there is another way of being, seeing, and loving, another worldview. A retreat where the writer continues a reflection, a dialogue, in quiet meditative focusing.

Easier said than done! In times so intrusive, where the distance between the public and the private is so narrow, the solitude a writer longs for to meditate and reflect is hard to find. But found it must be. I am here reminded of Arpita Singh's paintings where gun-toting soldiers are rushing in full force on all sides and in their midst sits the yogi, in *padmasan* and *dhyan*. They storm forth in agitated action, the yogi meditates in calm repose, eyes closed. The eyes look closed. In fact, they open not just outwards but also inwards and in so doing take what is happening around into the inner space of reflection and re-looking. Troubled but unpanicked.

Slowness is important in literature. Stillness is its motor. Stare deep into the abyss, intent, meditative, and wait. For it will stir, the darkness will slowly part. The cauldron will send forth steam and furls which will wind their way up to the blank page and stories will find creative concretisation. Like revelations.

So I had stared at the old woman's back when she lay tired and done-with-the-world and she moved into *Ret-Samadhi* (Tomb of Sand). I saw her slowly open her eyes and bore a

COURTESY: SAKSHI GALLERY



Other Ways of Seeing Untitled artwork by Sujith S.N.

SLOWNESS IS IMPORTANT IN LITERATURE. STILLNESS IS ITS MOTOR. STARE DEEP INTO THE ABYSS, AND WAIT. FOR IT WILL STIR, THE DARKNESS WILL SLOWLY PART. THE CAULDRON WILL SEND FORTH STEAM AND FURLS WHICH WILL WIND THEIR WAY UP TO THE BLANK PAGE AND STORIES WILL FIND CREATIVE CONCRETISATION.

hole with her gaze in the wall into which, we thought, she wanted to bury herself in a death-wish. And come out on the other side into the wide-open world, shed the warp and weft of triviality, and reinvent life.

Even in these times of larger-than-life politics and society invading all our abodes, literature seeks precisely this quiet reinvention, repositions old alignments, and challenges the propagandist narrative. Even when it may not intend to deliberately do so.

Another time I was standing on a roof where a friend retreated to smoke a cigarette, away from the gaze of the family. Surrounded by activity of the kind there is on such roofs which are flung across many homes, allowing one to ascend from this end of the neighbourhood and descend at that end. There, quietly on the roof, flowed in scenes upon scenes, and a philosophical mood slowly wrapped itself around me. I looked, silent, meditative, and a meaning slowly unfurled. Down below are homes of walls and conservative thought, up here is the sky and no walls, all transgressions possible. Roofs are made to break walls. Come *Makar Sankranti* and the physical wall between two religious communities down below is leapt across on these roofs and kites fly high in the clouds. A lover runs up one end of the roof to meet his beloved waiting at another end. Love prohibited blossoms. What can you not do if you have the roof beneath your feet and the open sky above. A tale manifested to make me the author of another novel, *Tirohit* (Roof Beneath Their Feet)!

So it works. Time and time again.

I want to write the personal, the small, the everyday, the ordinary, and have almost an antipathy for the too loud, too visible, too dramatic. So much so that I have a secret desire to write about nothing! But I also know that whatever I write, the drama of life will step in from the most ordinary places. And the invasive outside of today with its over-impinging politics and society too will wind its way in by some unknown trajectory. It places me in a torn, tense position. On the one hand, I am relieved I am engaging willy-nilly with today and its concerns, but I am also a wee bit resentful that the seriousness of the times impinges on my play and irreverence and creative irresponsibility whether I want it to or not.

The Outside overwhelms! I was on my morning walk in the university area. Behind me walked educated 'enlightened' teachers. "They had it coming," one said. "Non-vegetarians stink," another said. We are the secularists, the liberals, I realised. The dialogues haunted me, my being stared dismally at them and my pen formed words—*Hamara Shahar Us Baras* (Our City That Year) came into being.

At some level it is okay. The tension between the outside and the inside is the rich site where creativity gets fuelled. But I worry that the immediacy of our concerns is getting overpowering. Literature is not about an instantaneous response to an immediate event, but about forays into longer, ongoing phenomenon encompassing past, present and future in a human, humane, artistic continuum.

I also don't like the pressure I feel of the now and here as the all-important urgency of today.

This mental pressure hurts, even suffocates. It comes from adversaries who barge in to dictate what I may write. It also comes from allies who stand on my side but feel so troubled by what is going on that they, too, dictate what I must write. Literature is threatened by them both, for they want it mostly to turn activist and mostly in a very comprehensible direct way. Grapple simply with the history, politics, society of now. Today an ill occurred, respond immediately, highlight it, and also prescribe remedies.

They—the adversaries and the allies—don't want opacity, layeredness, slowness. They are irate. Clarify, don't confound; be loud, clear, quick, they demand.

Quiet... solitude... meditation... Play... Irreverence... amorphousness... ambivalence... contradictions... incertitude... where are these, my coveted companions? And the wanderlust which writers love—to get lost on uncharted paths and reach surprises. Where has the chance for that gone?

An Urdu couplet, my favourite, says:

Dayar-e-fan mein jahan manzilen bhi farzi hain
Tamam umr bhatakne ka hausla keejay...

(In the realm of Art there is nowhere to reach, all destinations are illusory,

Here, have the courage to wander about and get lost.)

What of that?

There is pressure on me to feel guilty about desiring this '*bhatkan*', this irresponsibility, when times demand commitment and responsibility.

That is the tension I need to circumvent with creativity—deal with the immediate and still be the literature that transcends the immediate.

This, I dare say, is easier *done* than *said*! Because creativity comes not from a conscious cerebral design. It has its own dynamic, even mysterious, and somewhat out of my control. Directives, fear, inner censor, outer censor, work that much and no further. How can I direct something not working just off my own volition?

If this sounds like glorification of my creative process, let me explain it is not. No Divine hand takes mine in its able grasp and guides it to write! I speak, instead, of an intuition, formed from more sources than I can know and tell. My history, geography, my society, my past and present, and all of these of yours too, a trove of our memories, yours and mine, waiting to be fired by imagination to coalesce in ever new shapes that fly out free as stories. This is the intuition that makes me write. Over the years, it has got honed and better tuned to breath, balance and aesthetics. All this guides me as the moving finger writes, making me fork this way or that and stop or change gait and let emerge an artistic presentation, evolving its design and choreography, finding its tune and cadence, its equipoise, its spirit and energy, indeed its architecture. And a new entity faces me at the end of my creative endeavour. I look at it with some trepidation, not fully sure what all it has done, what all it enfolds. It is a work of risk and faith, which I let go from my grip to garner its own appreciation in the vast, open world.

I am relieved and happy. And wonder what those two untamed restless beasts—Imagination and Creativity—have done this time, bounding out and about as they please, unbidden by me, and perhaps holding me on a leash at their heels! Have they made for me a proud thing, will it bring me love, camaraderie, fun, will it bring trouble...

The bottom line is it has to be done, because writing is as natural to me as breathing and you must breathe till you die.

Intezar Hussain said: Times good, times not, you can only keep doing what you do. So I keep writing...



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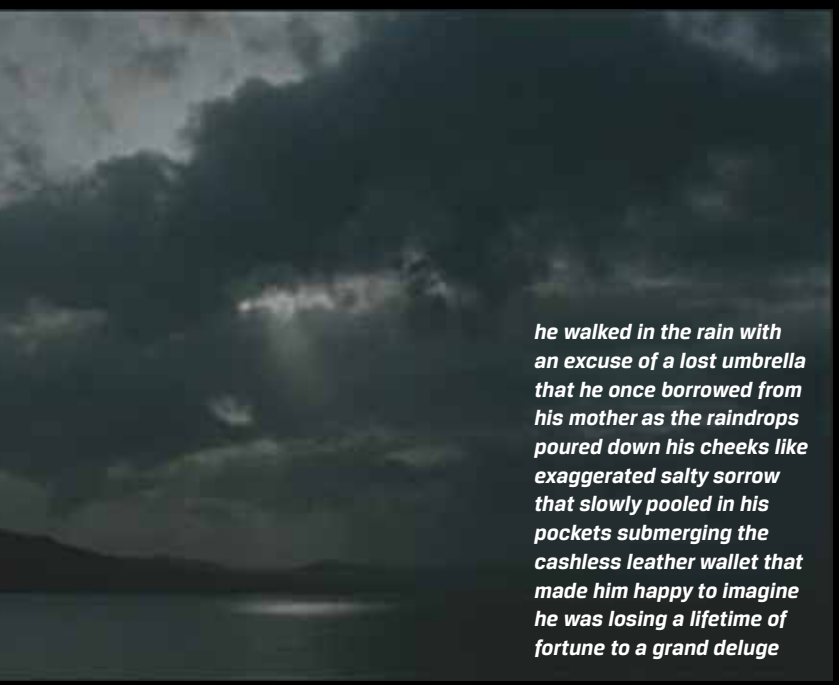
A Breath Held Long







it was during a lazy summer afternoon when the front façade of the four storied building that was evacuated by the authorities only the day before that it collapsed in a blink with a loud yet muffled sound as the great clouds of concrete dust rose upwards to eventually settle down to a thin grey layer over the entire neighbourhood with the now extinguished evening sun to be replaced with the only streetlight in front to reveal the back wall of the now hollow building wall still standing tall with the parts of the broken floors jutting out precariously over the narrow street to reveal the insides of each home that was partially intact with some brass and stainless steel utensils neatly displayed in some colourfully tiled kitchens and clothes for varied age and gender hanging on the hooks on the walls and furniture new and old precariously placed silent as a backdrop to the stories of intertwined lives and the dramas that unfolded within these private spaces over seventy four years of the building soon to be entirely extinct



he walked in the rain with an excuse of a lost umbrella that he once borrowed from his mother as the raindrops poured down his cheeks like exaggerated salty sorrow that slowly pooled in his pockets submerging the cashless leather wallet that made him happy to imagine he was losing a lifetime of fortune to a grand deluge



one late morning as she turned to look her old earthen pot cracked and broke over the gas flame and the watery rice spilled over and momentarily sizzled before dousing the fire and all that was left moving were rows of unhurried timid smoke which reached the ceiling that was covered with layers of black soot and that was the only honest witness to her long history in that room



Sudarshan Shetty

explores the fundamental ontology of objects through sculpture, drawing, and installation. His practice engages with the poetics of impermanence, transition, and the layered meanings embedded within material culture. Drawing on both individual and collective memory, Shetty proposes multiple narratives that reflect on the cultural, emotional, and philosophical significance of structures and objects

THE human instinct to act or perform in the world must be deeply connected to the idea of desire. A desire to be elsewhere. The elsewhere place, fuelled by an urge to bridge the gap between what is and what could be, can be both within and without. It could be located in a private cosmos, where the mind performs without a physical trace—it is a possibility for 'fiction' to be realised and to narrow the distinction between what is real and what is not. That's the territory or non-territory in my film *A Breath Held Long,* which refers to many imagined territories that point to various personal states within one's subjective universe and explore the intersection between voice, body and the city and the act of breathing as a metaphor for life within an urban landscape. Shot on 16mm celluloid, the camera's mostly still gaze contrasts restless character of the city in motion. This stillness suggests a presence within the great urban flux. The camera becomes a site of listening and holds the tension between the worldly and the intimate, between the impulse to pause and the relentless enactment of time. Set against the backdrop of Mumbai, the narrative acknowledges the impossibility of silence within the city. The urban atmosphere, agitated and continuous, seeps into almost every frame. Noise of the city refuses relegation to the background. It ultimately

STILLS FROM THE LATEST FILM, *A BREATH HELD LONG*, BY SUDARSHAN SHETTY



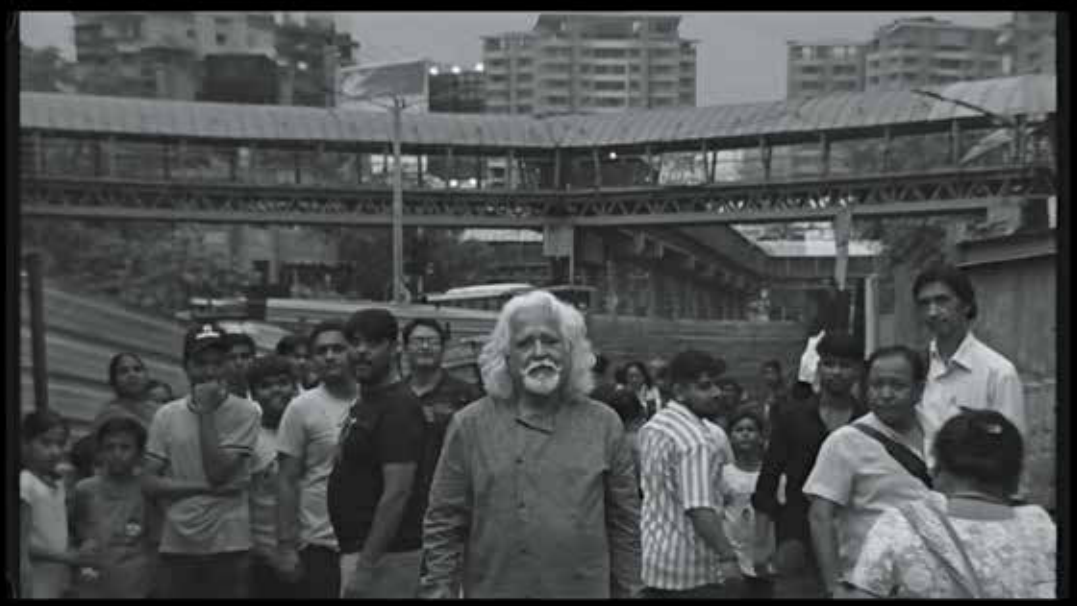
there is something eternal to her smile that beams through a digital frame that in no way is a reminder of her unusually small body wrapped tight head to toe in white on the hard and cold enamelled white iron bed on her last day as the hospital staff looked for her slippers and the last cotton sari she wore while her son was settling the bill for her stay at the hospital for the last three months of her life which was somewhat an example of love restrained wordless and yet the one that revealed sparks of unfulfilled small desires which were more like habits that lasted even in her children beyond the day of her passing which was as mellow as the faded evening light through an unsuitably small window ajar above the head of her lifeless bundle

reflects on the conditions of contemporary breath—its rhythm, its politicisation within an urban setting. It considers what it means to hold breath in a city that never ceases to move, to pause within motion without disengaging from it. The work is about listening—listening as resistance, a fragile act of being truly alive. It becomes part of the fabric of a non-linear narrative that collapses the boundary between the city's collective roar and the performer's internal state of being.

Within this flux, each performer locates themselves through an act of physical negotiation with breath. Their voices carry individual inflections and hesitations, producing a collective and yet uneven texture. Identity, here, is not performed through representation but through endurance—the act of sustained utterance within the limits imposed by time. Speech emerges as a form of resilience: to breathe within the city's relentless tempo is itself to mark a space of presence.

Performances of a group of actors and singers from Mumbai unfold through a series of single-line narratives and music. The lines, without punctuation, that speak of short personal events within the city, demand of awareness of breath as a temporal medium. All of the lines are recited as a third-person account of an event each; the performer must situate themselves within the "elsewhere"—the unique time and place evoked by each narrative.

The acts of breathing in and out become compositional devices—intervals through which rhythm and exhaustion surface as material conditions for speaking and being. A space for them to play out the stories in a way to make them their own. A breath is that liminal space, the one that takes us from one moment to another.



he had grown so thin that he was a little too bony than I would have liked to know of his body and his saliva was seeping into his last hospital pillow long after he was gone like a ritual for the last months of his life when he was trying to sleep induced by drugs with unpronounceable names as difficult as some of the names of the mythological characters he would tell stories about that we found hard to remember and now we could only spend rest of our lives remembering some of the simpler things about him like the way he combed his hair in front of the mirror every morning before he left for a stroll with his younger friends in a middle-class Maharashtrian neighbourhood with many hues and a touch here and there of people from other regions who rolled themselves towards a washed and yet obscurely stained white sheet of the small city lake they circled around like one that the pair of nurses from Kerala changed every morning at the hospital rolling his six foot long body first to the left and then to right and again to the left and to the right as they pulled out the old sheet and slipped the new one under his unyielding body before sponging it wet and then dry in such practiced manoeuvres that only matched his facility with words that he put to use while talking and arguing with the doctor who made his customary visit late mornings with a smile that hardly seem to vary even long after he was on his way home after the day's work and somehow seemed to reappear on his face as he entered the hospital every morning like his patients desire to live hardly ever vary till the last night of incessant screams before the morning of his passing with the hospital window wide open on a breezeless winter day during the peak hour traffic sounds that drowned the sounds of any possible sobs of his wife or of his middle aged daughters in their unanticipated bright cotton saris as we waited for others to arrive



what we carry from here to the other side of last breath is an infinite universe of nothing



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Dr Ambedkar Institute of Technology (Dr AIT), Bengaluru, managed by the Panchajanya Vidya Peetha Welfare Trust (PVPWT), was established in 1980 by the late MH Jayaprakash Narayan. Named in honour of the visionary reformer Bharat Ratna Dr BR Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, the institute embodies his ideals of knowledge, equity, and empowerment. It has towered as an illustrious centre of educational excellence for over four and a half decades.

Dr AIT is approved by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi, affiliated with Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU), Belagavi, and has been conferred Autonomous Status by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and VTU for all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The institute holds an 'A+' accreditation from NAAC and is recognised as a Band Performer in ARIIA 2021. It has received World Bank assistance under TEQIP-I, II, and III and ranks among the top engineering institutions in India by NIRF.

Where Curiosity Meets Opportunity

Dr AIT, located near the Jnanabharathi campus of Bangalore University, spreads across a lush 20.3-acre campus with aesthetically designed infrastructure, creating an inspiring learning environment. It promotes academic coherence, shared laboratories, centralised governance, interdisciplinary research clusters, and flexible curricula with common foundational courses and shared electives. The institution promotes industry engagement, research and innovation, and student employability while ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous quality improvement.

Empowerment and Future-Readiness

With a strong commitment to inclusive education, Dr AIT primarily serves underprivileged and rural students, with nearly 95% of admissions conducted through government quotas such as CET, COMED-K, PMSSS, and GOI schemes. The institute also supports advanced research through 15 VTU-approved research centres and consistently secures funding from national agencies including DST, AICTE, VGST, and KSCST.

Career readiness is a key focus at Dr AIT, supported by a proactive Career Guidance Cell (CDC) that integrates aptitude training, soft skills development, and Industry-oriented preparation from the first year onwards. Complementing this is the Ambedkar Centre for Tech Start-ups (ACTS), which nurtures innovation and entrepreneurship through incubation, mentorship, and industry collaboration. Regular seminars, workshops, hackathons, industrial visits, and vibrant student clubs ensure holistic development beyond academics.

Future-Focused Initiatives

From the academic year 2025, Dr AIT has restructured its academic framework into five specialised schools: the School of Core Engineering and Technology (SCET), the School of Electrical and Electronics Sciences and Engineering (SEESE), the School of Computer Science and Engineering (SCSE), the School of Applied Sciences and Humanities (SASH), and the School of Commerce and Management Studies (SCMS). The school-based model enhances interdisciplinary learning, optimises faculty and infrastructure utilisation, and aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.



Real/Reel A screen grab from the film *Stalker*

Navigating the Nation Factory

IN 1979, Andrei Tarkovsky, the great Russian filmmaker, completed *Stalker*, the last film he would make in his homeland. The film was loosely based on a 1972 novel by the Strugatsky brothers called *Roadside Picnic*. As with Tarkovsky's earlier film, the epic *Andrei Rublev*, this film, too, had a maddeningly difficult route to completion: the first attempt at making the film took almost a year, but the negative processing turned out to be flawed and the whole thing had to be re-shot; there are different versions that recount the parting of ways between Tarkovsky and his cinematographer; likewise, the script apparently changed considerably by the second attempt and, depending on who you believe, the film was either identical to the first version or completely different from it. In any case, despite the hugely bumpy journey, what finally emerged on the screen was one of the most powerful fiction films ever made.

The eponymous *Stalker* is a guide, a bit like a wildlife guide, who illegally takes visitors into a prohibited zone, sneaking them in past the military patrolling the perimeter, soldiers under orders to use terminal force to stop people entering this deadly area. Exactly why the zone is dangerous and out of bounds stays unclear through the film, but the uninhabited wasteland, littered with ghosts of rail lines, water channels and industrial plants, is booby-trapped with a number of lethal obstacles and physical phenomena that could have been brought about by human error on a massive scale, extraterrestrial activity or some other undefined agency. At the centre of the zone is a room. Each visitor is desperate to reach this room because it apparently fulfils their innermost desires once they are inside. In the film, Stalker takes two men, a scientist and a writer, into the deepest core of this post-apocalyptic maze.

This being a Tarkovsky film, there is no straightforward denouement to this wild take on the classic search for the Holy Grail. Suffice it to say that as the film unfolds, we understand that it is not only the human characters but the entire zone that is somehow alive; the possibly radioactive factory—skeletons, the streams covered with toxic foam, the dunes of unidentified material, any of it could be somehow sentient and able to interact in terrifyingly unexpected ways with the consciousness of the human protagonists. By the last sequence, you are back outside the zone, in a gloomy, dingy house in the village just outside the boundary: a little girl, the Stalker's daughter,



Ruchir Joshi

is a writer, columnist and filmmaker based in Calcutta. He won the Crossword Book Award 2025 for Fiction (Jury Award) for his novel *The Great Eastern Hotel*

WHY DO I SUDDENLY THINK OF *STALKER* WHEN I'M ASKED TO IMAGINE A FICTIONAL PLACE THAT TELLS US SOMETHING ABOUT CONTEMPORARY INDIA? PERHAPS, BECAUSE IN IT YOU CAN SEE THE ENDGAME OF WHERE THE MULTIPLE-ORGAN FAILURE OF A SOCIETY MIGHT LEAD.

tilts her head and stares at some empty glasses on the dining table; the glasses begin to slide across the surface; a slow freight train passes somewhere outside the frame and for a moment you think it is the vibration from the rail tracks that's causing the glasses to move but then you realise, no, it's the girl who is slowly pushing them to the edge.

Like the stories about the Englishmen who opened Tutankhamun's tomb, the filming of *Stalker* also has a spooky half-life that continues after the release of the film. Just a few years after its completion, Tarkovsky, his wife and various members of the crew die prematurely from cancers that were very likely triggered by the toxic exposure they faced on the actual, heavily polluted locations around the fraying, collapsing Soviet Union. Just a few months before he died in self-chosen exile in Paris, Tarkovsky witnesses the disaster that unfolds at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in his homeland, an event that many connect to the varieties of dark prescience they find in *Stalker*. At a deeper, less literal level, one can also see the film as a kind of anticipatory allegory for the rise of Vladimir Putin and this Russia ruled by obscene greed, cruelty and fear.

The palette of the film is the most un-subcontinental one you can imagine: brittle, cold greys and browns, dirty whites and even filthier blacks; a kind of sick blue light that pervades the spaces, the rain and semi-snow of the northern latitudes with the sun taken hostage by the brutal winter; the pallor on the Caucasian skin almost bleached of all human colour; and yet, something about the griminess of spirit, the desperation of people whittled away by overwhelming circumstances, the fact that the very air you breathe is a trap, all of this is somehow immediately recognisable and locatable in the tropical and sub-tropical environment of our land.

There is a Baul song with a repeated anchoring line that goes: *ajob rongey banaiyechho guru, tomar ajob karkhana*—with what strange colours you have made, O Guru, this incredible factory of yours. The song, addressing the preferred deity or over-riding spirit of one's existence, actually celebrates life, and the *karkhana* referred to is the factory of the human body and also possibly the cosmos itself. But positive, celebratory words can suddenly spin on their axis and pulse with opposite meanings; the awe expressed in the *ajob—ajeeb* in many other languages—can turn into terror. In India and the subcontinent, today we find ourselves engulfed by a series of 'factories', imprisoned in a net of overlapping zones, physical, mental, and in the broadest sense of the word, spiritual—an *ajob karkhana* created by a collective anti-Guru.

Watching *Stalker* today, it's obvious that many elements of the Russia we are seeing were already in place 45 years ago; the initial programming was crude, if you will, but the basic platform for the current network of tragedies was installed by the 1970s. Similarly, it's clear that we in India didn't get to this hellish place by some trick of magic—there were several forks in the road, for our leaders, for us, the people, while choosing those leaders, for micro-decisions we made in the smallest arenas of family and *muhalla* and the macro decisions at

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the state and national level that we accepted when they were made on our behalf.

And yet—just as someone with adult memories of the Soviet Union may argue about Russia—India is a very different country and society from 50 years ago. Looking ahead, what the current regime has sowed over the last ten years (and, in fact, what has been sowed since Babri in 1992 and Gujarat in 2002) isn't going to disappear any time soon. The zones of violence and division that have now become common, especially (but not only) in northern and western India, will mutate and metastise before they—one day—get flushed out of the societal system.

In the meantime, whenever anyone around me speaks wistfully about the collapse of radioactive Hindutva—something we desperately need in order to survive as a human society—I ask them to undertake an exercise: let's say a new government comes to power, one that meets the minimum requirement of rejecting the weaponisation of religion and ethnic identity. What else do you think would change under this new regime? And what do you think would survive from these darkest of times?

For instance, can we imagine a government that's willing to interrogate and fundamentally shift the definition of economic 'growth' from the accumulation of 'wealth' at any cost to the delivery and protection of daily necessities to the poorest in the country? Can we see leaders who would be willing to dismantle the elaborate systems set in place to decimate critics and opponents? Can we see them treat the environmental meltdown as the critical emergency it is and yet as something which needs addressing on a long-term war footing? Can we imagine a central or state government putting a sharp cull on private automobile use and strictures to contain the pollution of rampant construction, or give up the gains from deforestation and mining to restore their land to Adivasis? Can we see any Indian politician in power ever reigning in the obscenely rich and taxing their wealth to raise, say, the percentage of money spent on public health and education? Can we imagine a government that will reduce the surveillance mechanisms on ordinary people, that will reduce its own immoral reach and power over ordinary lives? Can we imagine a team that is willing to hold themselves, their police, their soldiers and their staff accountable, bypassing the protections of crimes committed in the "course of duty"? The answer, of course, is that with or without the Hindutva-merchants, it is difficult to imagine a near future where political selfishness doesn't hold sway over the often counter-intuitive, possibly unpopular ideas that would lead to greater public good.

Whether it's a north Indian city being gassed by winter smog or a drone shot of a hyper-beautiful Xanadu-type private zoo made for a budding oligarch, whether it's the mountain ranges of garbage you find outside Kolkata, the ugly white foam on water-bodies in Bengaluru or the ghostly emptiness of a post-pogrom *muhalla* in North-East Delhi, whether it's a woman jumping onto an airline counter and screaming for a refund or the sight of opaque-eyed Rolls Royces and Lamborghinis bumping through city slums, it's clear that we live in surreal times where fully realised dystopian spaces, crippled natural environments and ugly human actions all keep short-circuiting into each other.

In this scenario, why do I suddenly think of *Stalker* when I'm asked to imagine a fictional place that tells us something about contemporary India? Perhaps, because in it you can see the endgame of where the multiple-organ failure of a society might lead. And perhaps because in its unflinching vision, you find pointers to the way out.

At its heart, *Stalker* is a film about love and anti-love and how both reside in every human being. How much do you love yourself? At the other end of that weighing scale, how much do you love others? To be found vibrating between this love and anti-love are a person's real, innermost desires. They need to be confronted honestly, dark and terrifying though they may be. While the zone is a very real, very vividly realised physical place, it is also a metaphor for the soul. As in a lot of Tarkovsky's work, the film is an exploration of the individual's relationship to themselves and to ideas and concepts of something larger than the self, whether it's a notion of the divine or of the universe itself as a magical entity. Today, as we struggle to push back against poisonous ideas of the divine, even as we struggle to find love and *sahanubhuti* to navigate our very harsh realities, the film does what the very best art should–it presses sharply on our pain points and briefly manages to release them.

AT ITS HEART, *STALKER* IS A FILM ABOUT LOVE AND ANTI-LOVE AND HOW BOTH RESIDE IN EVERY HUMAN BEING. HOW MUCH DO YOU LOVE YOURSELF?



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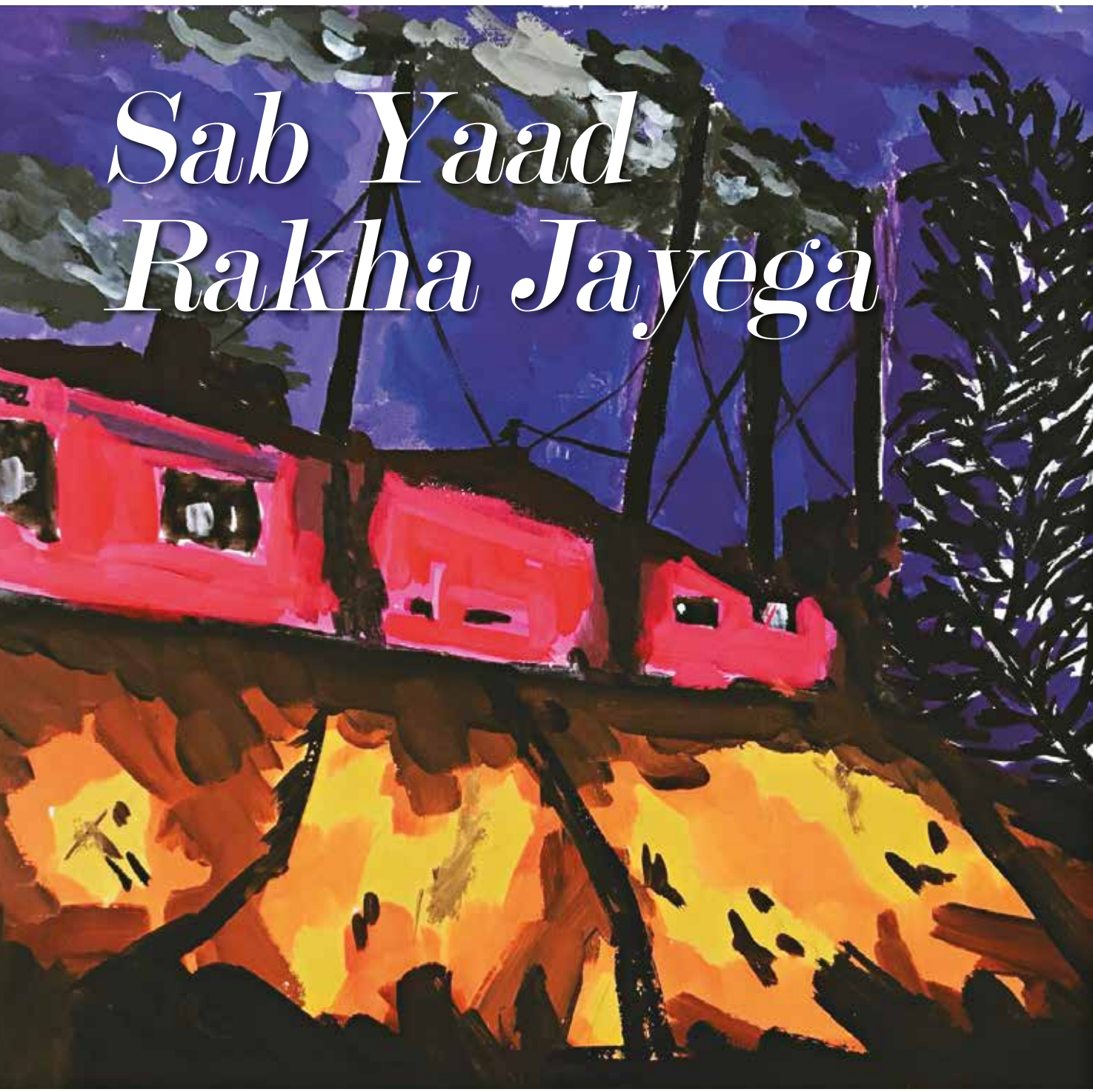
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Sab Yaad Rakha Jayega



All Artworks by Amitava Kumar



Amitava Kumar

is a writer and artist who is Professor of English at Vassar College in upstate New York

I am concerned with the landscape of memory. Do you remember how the night-sky glowed with funeral fires? I read reports that the metal in the crematoriums was melting. You were walking among the dead.

A thuggish chief minister warned that anyone who said there were no oxygen tanks available would be arrested. There were so many bodies floating in the Ganga and dogs were sticking their snouts into corpses buried in shallow graves on the river's banks.

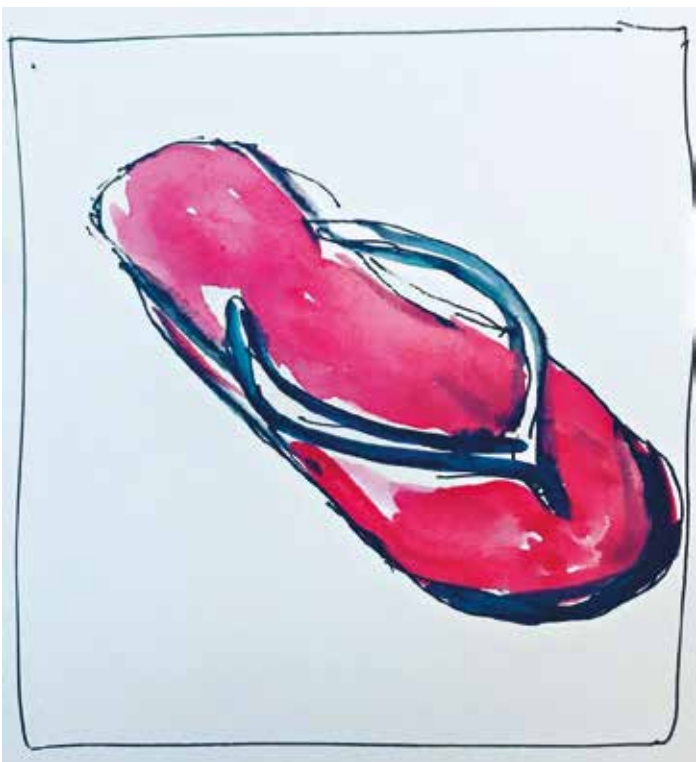
But you know how it is. In one season, you have seen the branches of the trees heavy with fruit, and you cannot recall that distant season when the branches were bare. When the next elections came around, how many remembered what it had been like during those times? The same man who had lied about oxygen tanks went around proclaiming the victory of his party. Why do we let this happen? It is perhaps because we surrender to spectacle. And we are seduced by sentiment. We choose to uphold the constitutionality of the irrational.

The guy on the throne, the toast-master of all *tamashas*, decided to shower rose petals from helicopters to honour the medical staff. All that while, there were millions on the highways trying to get home, to Ballia and Bettiah, and Sitamarhi and Siwan. This is the landscape of the nation-state: hills and valleys. One group, blissful in its comfortable ignorance, sits on the mountain-top while the masses trudge along the snaking paths in the valley below.

A memory is coming back to me. Some of the Bihari workers trying to return home during lockdown thought it was a good idea to just follow the rail tracks, even if it meant trekking hundreds of kilometres. There were no trains running. If they kept walking along the railway lines, eventually they would get home. When night fell, they too fell down, bone-tired, and slept on the tracks. I know you are now remembering all this too. A goods train came out of the night and crushed a group of them. The news report said that what lay scattered on the tracks were several *rotis* and a rubber *chappal* stained red. There you have it. A solitary *chappal* narrating a story of a hasty exit—not from a glitzy ball, like fair Cinderella, but from life itself. What do I make of the landscape where a ghost train has passed leaving behind a red *chappal*? To me it is the accurate map of a country that thumps its 56-inch chest and makes noises about its rising GDP that will soon overtake Japan, that country with really fast trains.

So much of our social landscape is imagined. Look at the above drawing of mine. I made it after the Delhi riots of 2020. It was my way of remembering Bashir Badr's immortal lines: *'Log toot jaate hain ek ghar banana mein/ Tum taras nahin khaate bastiyan jalaane mein'* (People go broke in


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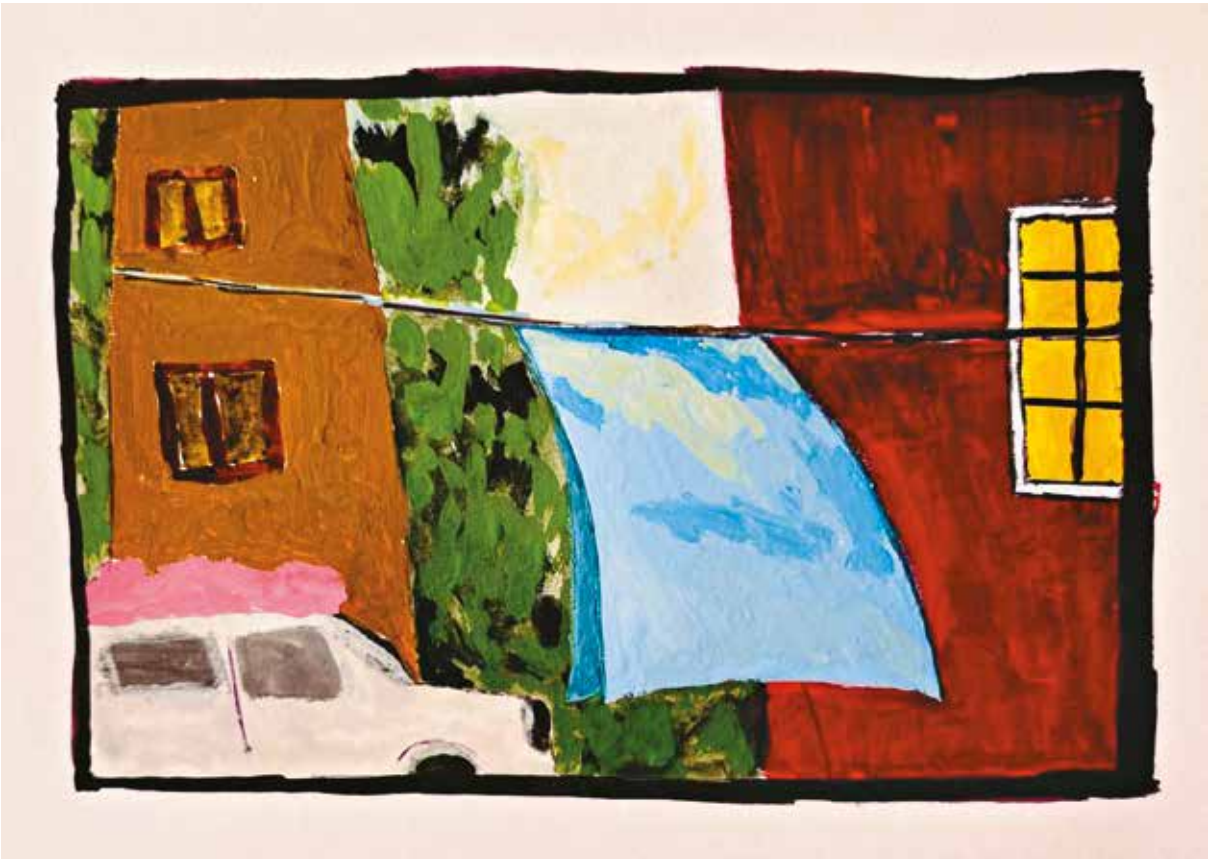




building a home/And you remain unmoved as you burn neighbourhoods). The poet's own home had been gutted in the Meerut riots in 1987. As I look at the drawing, I am trying to remember the names of those who remain in jail today. There are so many names to remember. The people who were protesting the discriminatory citizenship laws, many of them young, several of them women, ended up in prison. They inhabit the landscape hidden from view: the prison which is the space where protesters are condemned to spend their days without trial. I cannot remember the name of the politician who was filmed inciting the riots. What happened to him? Did he go to prison? No? He became a minister instead? You don't say! I should have remembered his name. I know now why my cowardly heart has chosen to forget.

All through the pandemic, I was fearful that my father would die of the COVID coronavirus. I breathed more easily once he got vaccinated. But the pandemic, its enforced social isolation, had weakened him and he died after a brief illness in early 2023. In a novel I was finishing at that time, a man from Champaran, the same age as my father, draws a map of his remembered village. The map that the man ends up drawing is obsolete, it represents the village at it was in the man's childhood. He is unable to meet the present. He is defenseless against history. The truth is that writers, even when they are writing fiction, are sketching maps of what they recognise as

WE CANNOT GO ON SPREADING THE POISON OF HATE. VIOLENCE IS ENDLESSLY RECYCLABLE. STOP TORTURE. STOP BULLDOZER INJUSTICE. REMEMBER THAT WE LIVE IN ONE WORLD. REMEMBER THAT THE BODY FORGETS NOTHING, NOR DOES THE EARTH.



threats. In an earlier novel, my protagonist delivers the following riff: 'Why must one slow-jam the news? Because all that is new will become normal with astonishing speed. You will go to visit your father and discover that he has pledged himself to the Great Leader. Or you will visit your friend's house and it will take a minute or more to realise that a meeting is underway and now everyone is looking at you with suspicion. You notice one fine day that all signs on the road have changed. Your town has a new name. Dogs have grown fat on flesh torn from corpses lining the street where you grew up. The beautiful tree outside your window is dead, it has been dead for some time, and has, in fact, just now burst into flames.'

Sab yaad rakha jayega, sab kuch yaad rakha jayega, wrote the poet and performer, Aamir Aziz. Everything will be remembered, nothing will be forgotten.

I remember the sea. I was driving in a car on a highway near the Konkani coast and caught a glimpse of it between the buildings: the sea was like a blue sheet hung on a clothesline. Tired as I was after hours of travel, that fleeting sight offered relief. How wonderful it would have been to wade into the waters.

Why didn't I stop? I was in a hurry, going to interview a Muslim family—they had been tortured because it was thought they had a grenade launcher in their home. It turned out it was a piece of textile equipment. Over the years, I have often thought of the sea I had seen but for a moment. How beautiful and beckoning it was. And will remain so, unless we poison it with plastic. The same, of course, goes for our country. We cannot go on spreading the poison of hate. Violence is endlessly recyclable. Stop torture. Stop bulldozer injustice. Remember that we live in one world. Remember that the body forgets nothing, nor does the earth.

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Lovers. Across the Seas Photograph by Aradhana Seth





Arundhathi Subramaniam

is the author of 15 books of poetry and prose. Her recent work includes the poetry collection *The Gallery of Upside Down Women* and the book of essays, *Women Who Wear Only Themselves*. She is the winner of several honours, including the Sahitya Akademi Prize for Poetry, the Il Ceppo Prize in Italy, the Mahakavi Kanhaiyalal Sethia Award and the inaugural Khushwant Singh Prize for Poetry

Elsewhere

I often feigned illness on Monday mornings to avoid a needlework class in school. As soon as the school bus had trundled down the street, however, it was safe to be well again. I remember lying back in bed, looking out at a peepul tree, and dreaming my way into ancient Greece.

As a seven-year-old in Mumbai, I knew absolutely nothing about ancient Greece. But I did know that the seas would be bluer than any I'd seen. The skies would be more azure, the olive groves more mysterious. And the sound of Orpheus' lute wafting across goat tracks and forested valleys would be magical.

How did I know that? Because, like every other kid, I understood elsewhereness. No flight, train, or boat could ever take me there. And if they did, I knew I'd want to be right back here—on this bed, looking out at the same peepul tree. The crux of elsewhereness was that it was always—well, *elsewhere*. Once you got there, it was always someplace else. That's what made it so special.

Years later, I wrote a poem that started with the line, "Give me a home that isn't mine." By then, I knew that what I wanted was a home that spelt familiarity *and* strangeness, anchorage *and* adventure, security *and*

freedom. I wanted both. And, of course, that meant a life of perennial oscillation—between travel and return, exploration and withdrawal, advance and retreat. To be human, it seemed, was to swing between two seductive polarities.

Later, I found elsewhereness had its political uses. I found that an 18th-century writer like Jonathan Swift could speak of a place called Lilliput to make scathing references to the England he lived in. Elsewhereness was a way to tell veiled truths, knowing full well that the veil revealed more than it concealed.

A poet like Wordsworth could speak, I found, of pastoral landscapes to make an oblique statement about industrialisation and moral decline. A poet like Frost could speak of the dense forests of New England to make a statement about mechanisation and modernisation. It wasn't what they said. It was what they *didn't* say that made their critique devastating.

Poets didn't make us escapist, Aristotle reminded us. They offered us truth over fact, a parallel reality that healed and transmuted us, and made us better able to deal with this reality. I began to see what he meant.

As a young poet, I wrote a poem about a childhood vacation in Delhi to explore the theme of religious difference. I'd begun to realise I didn't have to use terms like 'communalism' and 'inequality' to be topical. Poetry was about challenging tired journalistic cliches, cutting through academic abstractions. It was about making generalities less smoky, grainier. By breathing life into another moment, you tried to hold up a mirror to the world you inhabited.

Still later, I turned from dreamer to traveller. I began to understand what Vikram Seth meant when he said that he wandered the world to merely accumulate "material for future nostalgias." Once I'd been to a place, it entered the hard disk of memory, and the file could be opened up when needed. In the middle of a Mumbai workday, I could think back on the time spent in Ramana Maharishi's ashram in Tiruvannamalai, and feel a pang of longing. That longing was painful. But it was also exquisite.

Looking out at a grimy Arabian Sea, I could think wistfully of Florence, and be transported instantly to a bridge along the River Arno. I could conjure it in vivid detail – the angle of sunshine on the water, the distant cry of peddlers on the Ponte Vechhio, the loneliness of my walk down the riverbank. Nostalgia made the loneliness more intense. But it also made it more delicious.

And then, elsewhereness changed its colours yet again.

It turned from daydream, political strategy and nostalgia into something else. It became raw, urgent, disruptive. It was no longer mellow sentimentality. It became a roaring appetite for something more. A great churning. A pain born of some nameless sense of severance.

POETRY WAS ABOUT CHALLENGING TIRED JOURNALISTIC CLICHES, CUTTING THROUGH ACADEMIC ABSTRACTIONS.

What Was that Severance About?

I didn't know. But I did know that the old stories—Muruga taking off on his journey around the world on his peacock, Ulysses' ten-year journey back to Ithaca after the Trojan War, the rebellious Prodigal Son leaving home—meant something more than I'd imagined. There was an existential homesickness that these characters pointed to. As they travelled, they seemed to be enacting a pilgrimage to some ancient elsewhereness. Every detour, they suggested, could be just another way home. And as I blundered through my own life, I realised I was, in my own unheroic way, following in their footsteps.

In 2003, I found myself in a Guwahati hotel room, thinking, for some reason, of Shakuntala (the Sanskrit playwright Kalidasa's heroine), preparing to leave her forest hermitage. The thought filled me with a tremendous unexplained grief. It is a poignant scene in the play, but I now experienced it as sheer heartbreak. Shakuntala had become, for me, a figure doomed to endlessly conflicting needs: between forest and court, nature and culture, flesh and spirit, earth and sky. My ache wasn't as personal as I'd believed. I realised I was instead logging into an elemental longing, something as primal as the River Brahmaputra outside my hotel window.

Elsewhereness now wasn't about a restless mind entertaining itself with its own nostalgias. It was born of a need to address a much deeper wound. Elsewhere was no longer a reprieve from home. Elsewhere *was* home. Or at least an indispensable part of it.

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The writer Albert Camus spoke of the "human cry confronted by the unreasonable silence of the world." The human cry is unoriginal. But it still cannot be quelled. And so, each one of us, at some point, wakes up to it. We roar into the night. We shake a fist at the heavens. We bay at the moon. We want home—and we want it *now*.

The only ones who understood this 'cry' inside out, I discovered, were the mystic poets. They seemed to know something about befriending the night. They told me that being greedy for someplace else wasn't escapism. It was a vital, transformative greed. The 12th-century mystic poet, Akka Mahadevi, surely knew it when she spoke of "the Brahman hiding in yearning." The 17th-century poet, Tukaram, knew it when he said, "When he comes out of the blue, a meteorite shattering your home, be sure god is visiting you." And the15th-century poet, Annamacharya, knew it when he described a woman's yearning for her lover: "She's thinking so much, and missing him/ that when he comes to her door and calls her,/ she doesn't hear.../He's standing right next to her."

Many view these poets as sentimentalists. They seem juvenile enough to dream about gods with names, forms, addresses. And they seem naïve enough to believe that their songs will win them visas to these divine homelands—whether they call them Vaikunth, Kailasa, *Jannat*, Paradise, or Begumpura.

But I gradually began to understand something about the need for these imaginary homes. As these poets named their longing, they turned a passive longing into dynamic desire. They turned apathetic waiting into alert listening. They turned projection into presence. They began to be scorched in the fire of their own yearning. That fire cauterised them, remade them. They began to sing themselves home.

The greatest stories of the world tell us we can never return to the home that we left. Not because the zip code is different. But because we are. The weary traveller, the wounded warrior, the thirsty lover have been remade by the journey. And so home—however pastoral, serene, unsullied—is remade too. Irrevocably.

In poet Jayadeva's lyrical-erotic 12th-century work, the *Gita Govinda*, Radha and Krishna—human and divine, traveller and destination—are both transfigured by love. Their place of union is neither their natal nor marital home. It makes for a new place altogether. A new address. A brand-new residence. Not where we are. Not someplace else. It is, instead, where innocence meets experience. Where body meets beyond. Wilderness meets home. Woman meets man. And neither will ever be the same again.

True longing alchemises us. As the experience of incompleteness eats into our innards, it births us, gradually, into a new wholeness. And one day, it would seem, we no longer see any conflict between earth and sky, now and forever. The divide has been healed. We are home. Elsewhere is right here.

TRUE LONGING ALCHEMISES US. AS THE EXPERIENCE OF INCOMPLETENESS EATS INTO OUR INNARDS, IT BIRTHS US, GRADUALLY, INTO A NEW WHOLENESS.

Home

Give me a home
that isn't mine,
where I can slip in and out of rooms
without a trace,
never worrying about the plumbing,
the colour of the curtains,
the cacophony of books by the bedside.

A home that I can wear lightly,
where the rooms aren't clogged
with yesterday's conversations,
where the self doesn't bloat
to fill in the crevices.

A home, like this body,
so alien when I try to belong,
so hospitable
when I decide I'm just visiting.

(from Arundhathi Subramaniam's *Where I Live: New and Selected Poems*, Bloodaxe Books, 2009)

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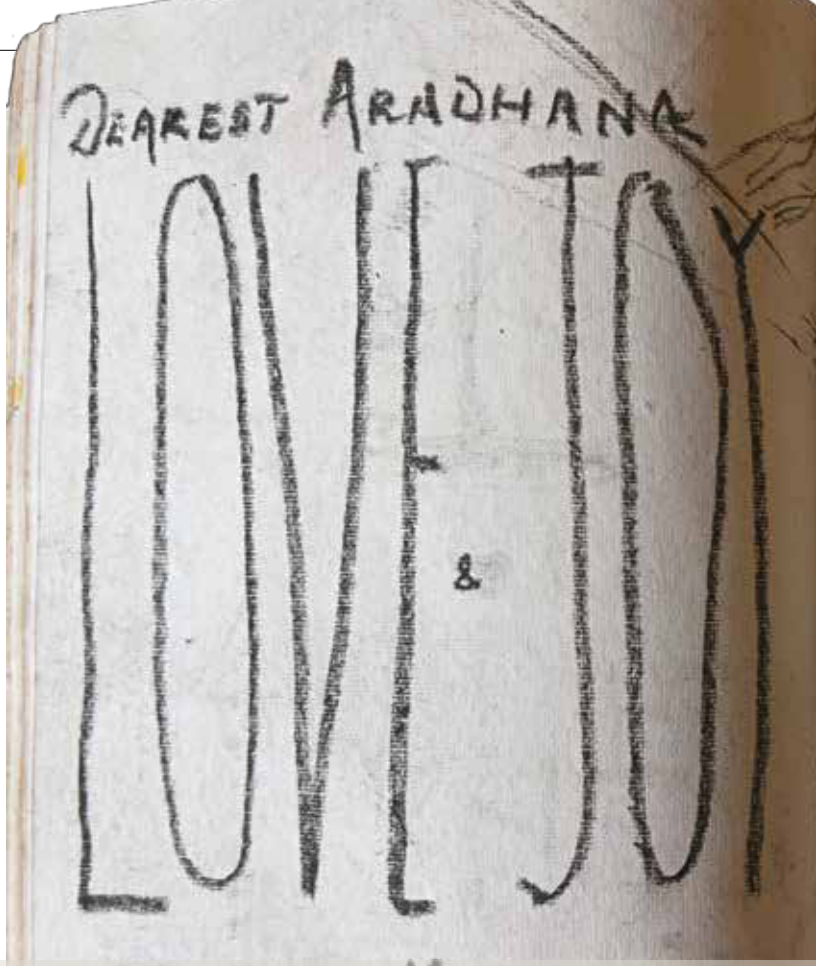
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Chinki Sinha
is Editor, *Outlook* Magazine. Here, she writes about her friend Aradhana Seth's 'Elsewhere House'

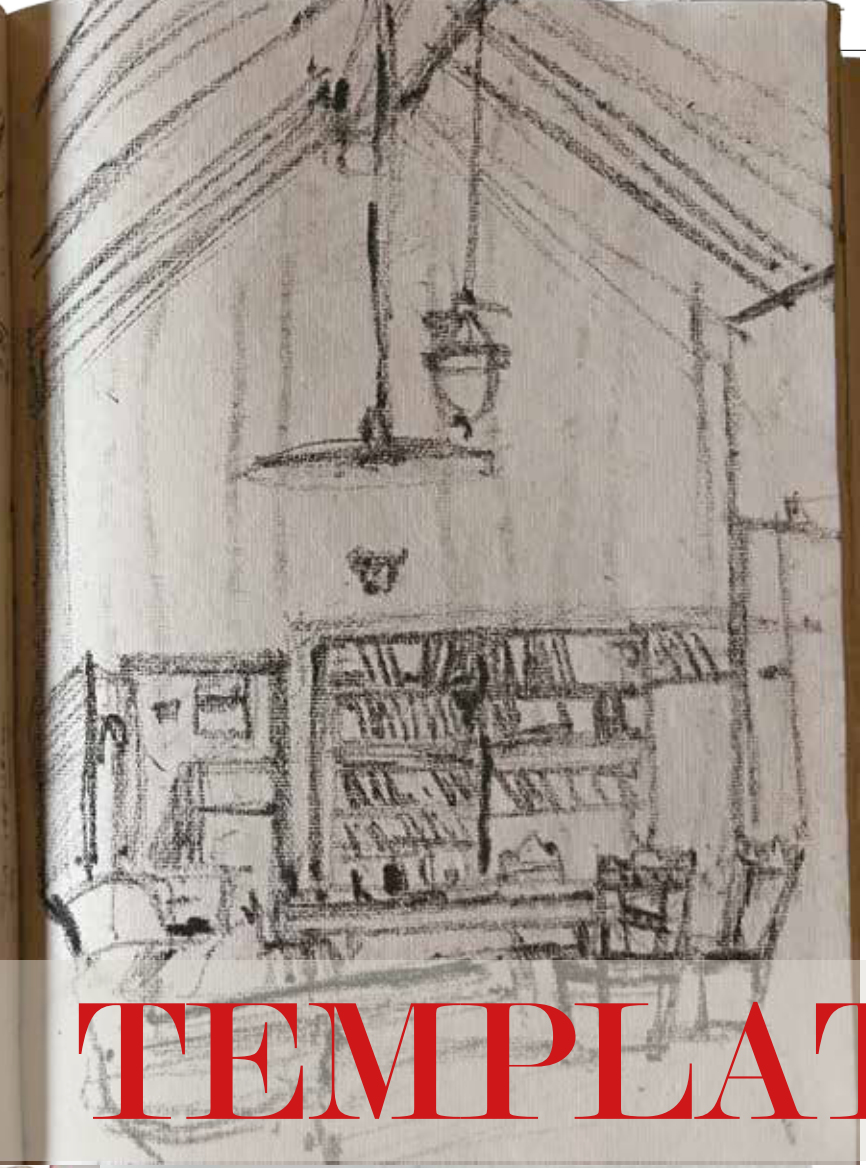


HOUSE OF CON

"...Some lived in it and never felt it but he knew it all was nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada. Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name thy kingdom nada thy will be nada in nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and nada us our nada as we nada our nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee."

—**Ernest Hemingway**, *A Clean Well-Lighted Place*





TEMPLATIONS

TO the self and the others, this home is a shelter, a place of contemplation, a space for conversations. The guestbook, which Aradhana Seth calls the 'Elsewhere Book', is a drawing board, a container, a time machine where you can find yourself and others in an elsewhere time and place. Like an airplane where you can see the world from a perspective and yet, you are in a place where you are above and beyond, disconnected from everything that pulls you down.

Here, everything comes apart to form a fantasy. Like a boat that's anchored in a verandah. Like the clay soldiers who stand guard in their colourful uniforms guarding the house that's a museum of memories of people and places, of love and loss, of grief and laughter, of rain and sunshine that filters in through the tiled roof.

Like the fiberglass horse that gazes into its reflection on the glass floor. Like the altar where a framed dress of a girl hangs along with gods and goddesses and a hooded alien clay doll. Like the wall with the backdrop of a sea with giant crabs and a crescent moon. Like the staircase with orange, red and blue shoe molds that lead into the attic.

Some homes break free from the linear passage of time, from codes that perform perfection, from everything that is a supposition or an assumption. The old waiter in the Hemingway story feels a place must have enough light. Light diminishes loneliness. Here, in this well-lit house, you are never lonely.

Many friends have stayed here. They have come at different times in their lives where they have slept in the room with many maps and perhaps in their dreams, they have crossed over to places that don't exist, a place of their own making.

Geographical and mythical spaces coexist here.

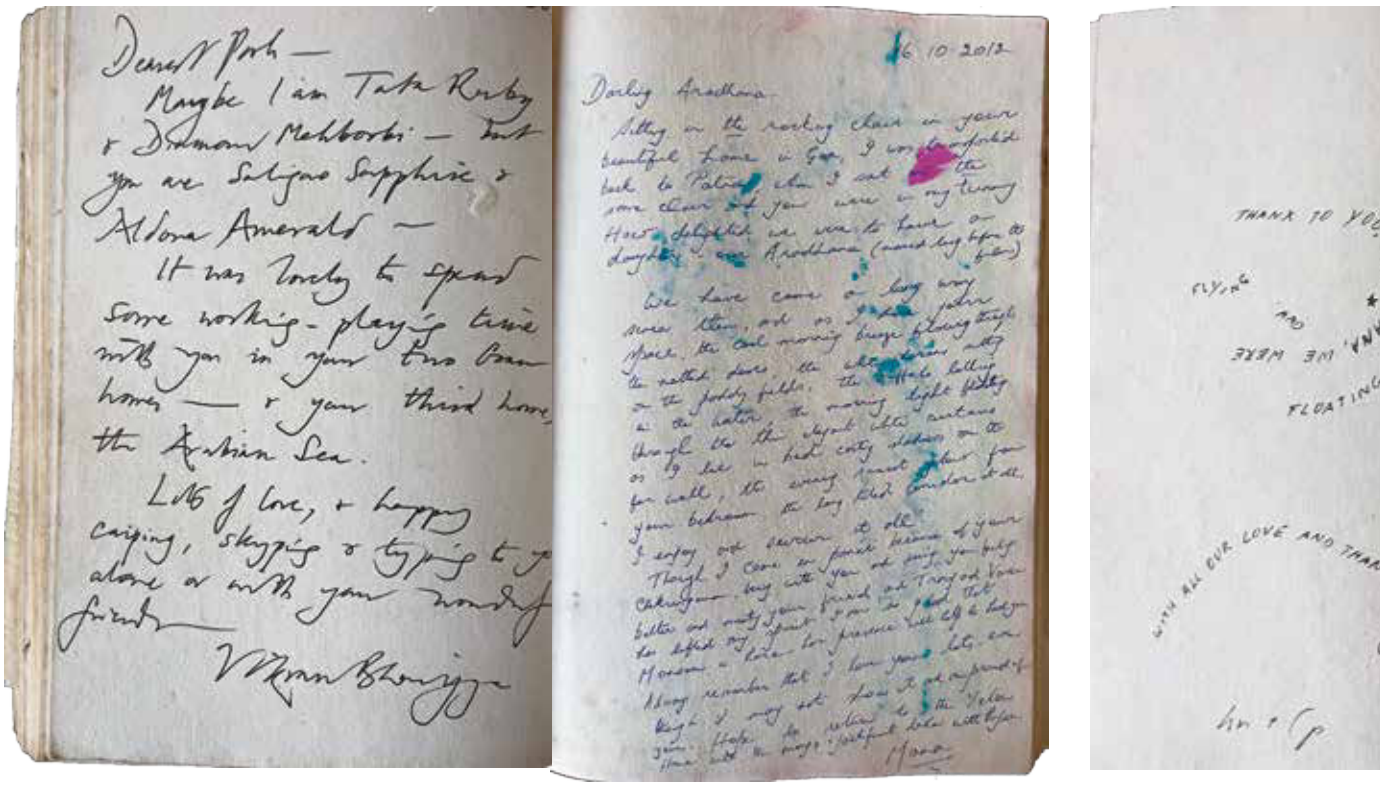
Through its windows, the world outside looks purposeful. But there is only so much one can see. The rest is filled up with trees and the horizon. There is no signboard. There is instead a crocodile made of limestone perched on a pillar. To those who are coming here, they know how to find it.

Eat, talk, sleep. Draw a little. Write a few sentences. In these pages, you find yourself in different times as different people. Like me. I have



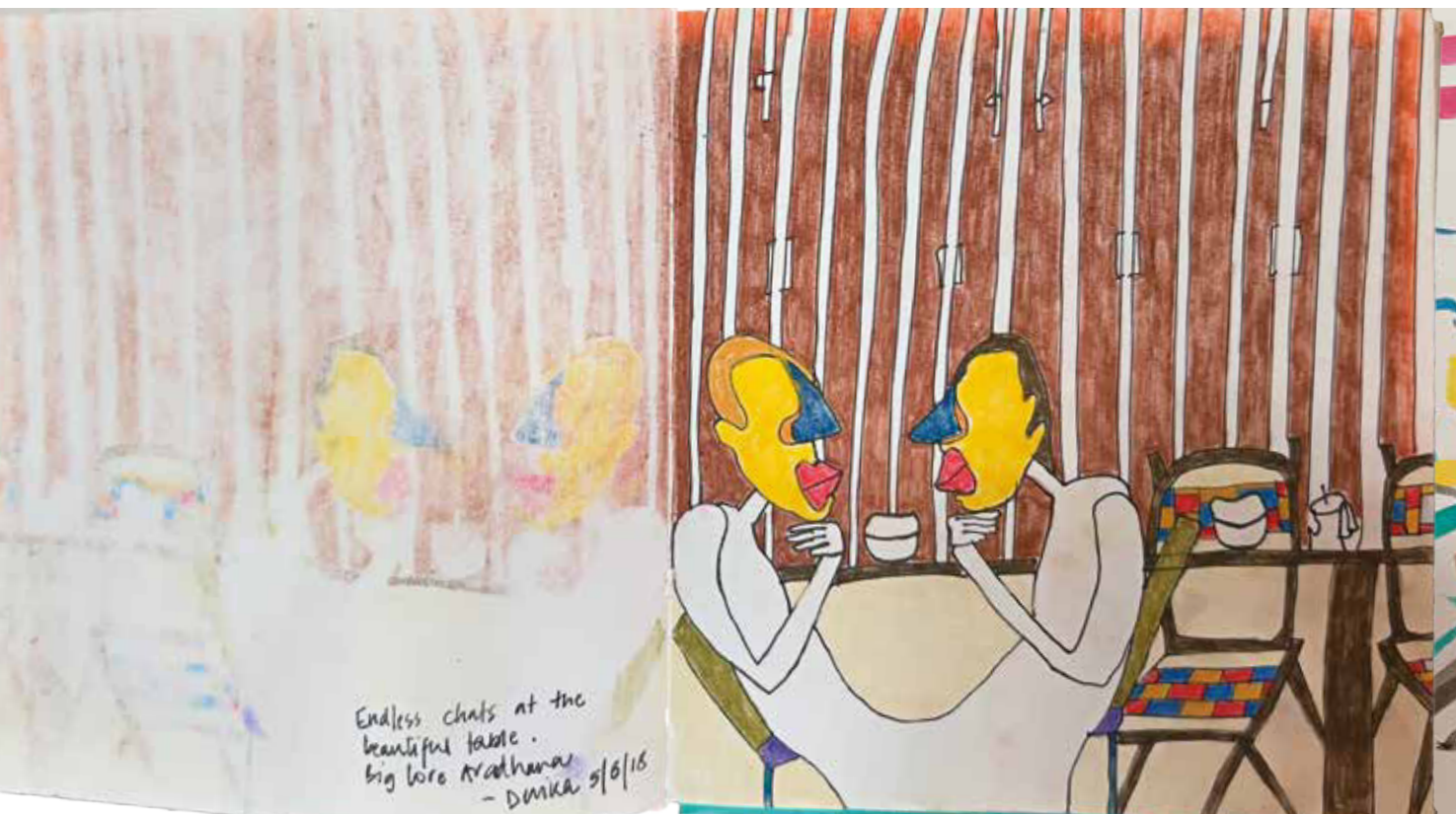
(Clockwise from top left) Nikhil Chopra, Sarnath Banerjee, Kajri Jain,

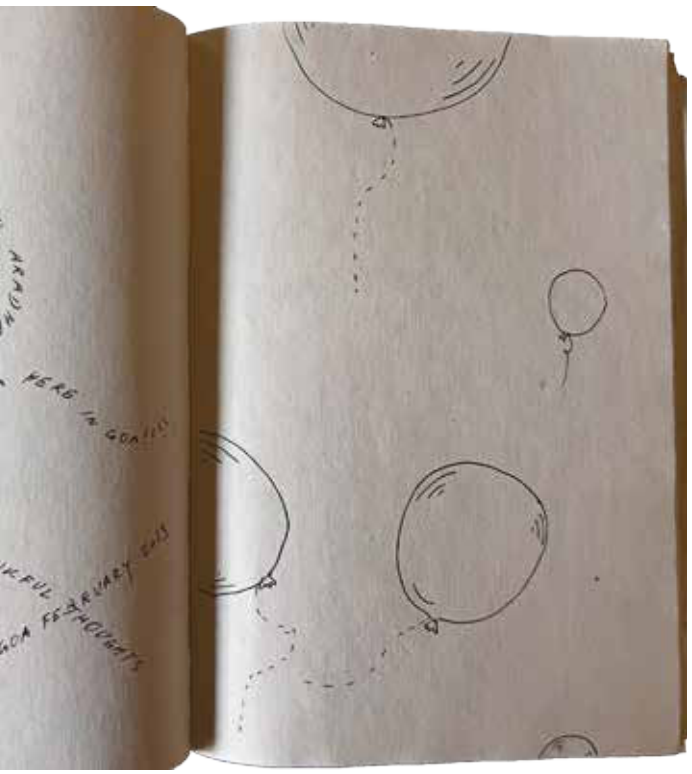
PHOTOGRAPHS: ARADHANA SETH



(Clockwise from top left) Vikram Seth, Justice Leila Seth, Eva Schlegel & Carl Pruscha, Ruchir Joshi, Mark Aranha and Devika Dave

HOUSE OF CON





come and stayed in the room with the maps and many books many times. I have come here when I have been struck with grief. I have found myself here when I have been ecstatic. I have come here when I am lost carrying a broken heart. I have come here to find myself and the friend who offers her space like that old waiter in the Hemingway story and stitches me up in torn places.

"With all those who do not want to go to bed. With all those who need a light for the night," the old waiter had said in the story.

For many nights, Aradhana Seth and I have stayed up and settled ourselves at the long dining table made up of discarded doors with the wax from the candles melting and forming islands next to the landscapes created when they burned through the evenings in another time with other people. There is no erasure here. This is a place that holds it all. The past, present and the future.

For Seth, the keeper of records, the house belongs to friends. People who have been here have their versions of the place.

I have always slept soundly here woken up not by the breaking of a dream but by the soft footsteps of my friend.

"This is my offering," Aradhana says. "To friends."

There is that guestbook as a testimony. Letters from her mother, brother, friends. That's for the rainy evenings, she says.

"To read and to smile and cry," she says. "To raise a toast to this elsewhere place where all gods live in harmony at the altar along with a clay alien in a cloak."

VERSATIONS





PFRDA: Steering India's Retirement Future With Vision and Reform

As India navigates demographic changes and a shifting economic landscape, PFRDA stands out as a model regulator – adaptive, responsive, and subscriber-oriented.



As India grapples with rising life expectancy, changing employment patterns, and the growing need for financial security after retirement, the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has emerged as a central pillar of the country's social security architecture. Far more than a conventional regulator, PFRDA has steadily evolved into a reform-driven institution, shaping a modern, flexible, and inclusive pension ecosystem through the National Pension System (NPS) and allied schemes.

Over the past year, the Authority has rolled out a series of landmark measures that underscore its commitment to subscriber welfare, long-term sustainability, and adaptability to India's dynamic workforce.

A Regulator With a Clear Vision

Established to regulate and develop India's pension sector, PFRDA oversees schemes such as the NPS, Atal Pension Yojana (APY), and the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS). Its mandate balances two critical goals: protecting subscribers' interests and fostering a robust pension market. In recent reforms, PFRDA has shown an acute awareness of demographic realities – longer working lives, delayed retirement, and the growing preference for flexibility over rigid financial products.

This approach has helped position the NPS not merely as a retirement product, but as a long-term wealth-building instrument aligned with evolving life choices.

Transforming NPS Exit Rules

One of the most significant reforms announced by PFRDA is the overhaul of NPS exit and withdrawal norms. In a decisive move, the Authority extended the maximum exit age from 75 to 85 years, allowing subscribers to remain invested longer and benefit from continued compounding. This change reflects the reality that many Indians now work well beyond traditional retirement ages.

Equally important is the greater flexibility offered in accessing accumulated pension wealth. For non-government subscribers, the mandatory annuitisation requirement has been reduced, allowing up to 80 per cent of the corpus to be withdrawn as a lump sum, with only 20 per cent earmarked for annuity purchase. The removal of the minimum subscription lock-in period further simplifies exit for private-sector participants.

These changes collectively empower retirees, giving them greater liquidity and control over their savings while preserving the core objective of long-term income security.

Expanding Investment Avenues

Beyond exit flexibility, PFRDA has also widened the investment universe available to subscribers across NPS, UPS, and APY. By opening new asset avenues, the Authority has enhanced diversification opportunities and strengthened the potential for improved long-term returns within a regulated framework.

This expansion reflects a nuanced understanding of risk and return dynamics. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all model, PFRDA has

encouraged investment structures that accommodate varying risk appetites – an essential feature for a pension system catering to diverse age groups and income levels.

Rationalising Schemes for Clarity and Stability

In a move aimed at improving efficiency and transparency, PFRDA rationalised certain NPS investment schemes. Scheme A, which focused on alternative investments, was merged into existing equity and corporate bond schemes. The consolidation has resulted in larger, more liquid portfolios while maintaining diversification benefits. Importantly, subscribers were provided a one-time, cost-free window to switch asset classes, ensuring that reforms did not disrupt individual financial plans. This subscriber-first approach has become a hallmark of PFRDA's regulatory style – reformative yet considerate.

The Authority has also strengthened the Multiple Scheme Framework (MSF), allowing pension funds to offer differentiated strategies based on risk profiles. While greater choice can sometimes appear complex, it ultimately reinforces personalisation in retirement planning – a direction increasingly favoured by modern investors.

Strengthening NPS Accounts

PFRDA's updates to NPS rules further reinforce its focus on long-term savings discipline. By refining asset allocation structures and improving scheme design, the Authority has enhanced the efficiency of core retirement accounts. These changes aim to ensure that NPS continues to serve as a stable foundation for retirement, even as flexibility is expanded elsewhere.

Such fine-tuning reflects regulatory maturity – improving performance and governance without frequent disruption.

Extending Pension Coverage to New Workers

Perhaps the most forward-looking aspect of PFRDA's work is its push towards inclusivity. Recognising the rapid expansion of gig and platform-based employment, the Authority has introduced mechanisms to bring informal and self-employed workers into the pension fold.

Through innovative participation models, delivery partners, freelancers, and platform workers can now access structured retirement savings for the first time. This marks a significant step towards universal pension coverage and aligns with broader national goals of social security expansion.

Building Trust Through Transparency

Across all reforms, PFRDA has emphasised transparent communication and subscriber education. Regulatory updates are accompanied by detailed clarifications, transition windows, and clear guidance – helping subscribers make informed decisions. This focus on clarity has strengthened trust in the NPS and improved engagement with retirement planning.

For many first-time investors, such transparency reduces uncertainty and encourages early participation – a crucial factor in building adequate retirement corpus.

A Regulator Shaping the Future

As India moves towards an ageing yet aspirational society, the role of PFRDA will only grow in importance. Its recent reforms demonstrate an institution that is responsive, reform-oriented, and deeply aligned with subscriber needs.

By expanding choice without compromising stability, enhancing flexibility while preserving discipline, and extending pension access to previously excluded groups, PFRDA is shaping a retirement system fit for modern India.

For millions of Indians planning life beyond work, the Authority's evolving framework offers reassurance – that their retirement savings are guided by a regulator committed not just to oversight, but to long-term financial dignity and security.



HOME ... A CONVERSATION



Donskobar Junisha Khongwir

is an educator and visual artist. She graduated from AJK MCRC, Jamia Millia Islamia University, and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Mass Media at St. Anthony's College, Shillong. In addition to teaching, she serves as curator at the Northeast India AV Archive, where she focuses on the preservation and dissemination of archival materials, ensuring that the region's rich audiovisual history is accessible to scholars, artists, and local communities



Karen Lalrindiki Donoghue

teaches at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong. She is currently a Fulbright-Nehru postdoctoral fellow at Cornell University, focusing on the community history of the Mizo diaspora in the United States with an emphasis on transnational identity and solidarity. She is a member of the executive committee of the Oral History Association of India

HOME *is a difficult idea*
For some it has form—a structure, a place
For others, it is people—family, friends, a lover
For some it is the act of arriving
For others, it is a destination within
For others yet, home is found in leaving.

Dearest K,

You're often in my thoughts.
I keep returning to those last lines from your poem
For others yet, home is found in leaving.
Now that you've left Shillong, I wonder if those words echo
differently for you.
Do they bring clarity, or are you still trying to make sense of
what leaving means?

As for me, I'm still trying to grasp what *home* truly is
a place where one feels loved and cared for.
Lately, my mind drifts to Laitlyngkot.
I don't know if returning there will restore my memories or
rekindle that sense of belonging,
but I do find myself wanting to build a home of my own there —a
physical one this time.
I imagine tending to a small kitchen garden, an orchard,
and perhaps a creative space tucked away in the backyard.
Today, I went to buy pork from Bahheh and thought of you.
At a pork shop—yes, that's where it happened.
That's where we so often spoke about Laitlyngkot and my
butcher cousins,
about where they source their pigs,
how *dohsnam* (locally prepared blood sausage) has that distinct
taste without the funky smell,
how the lean meat balances the fat,
which cuts are best for *dohsniang neiiong* (pork cooked in a
black sesame-based curry) and which for *syrwa* (stew prepared
with meat and local seasonal vegetables)



Karen:

I woke up this morning, thinking about what
mummy's last thoughts must have been.
Maybe home is found in leaving, after all.
I'm going to have *doh nei-iong* tonight
Though it won't be pork from Laitlyngkot
it will be home on my tongue.
What if we constantly create and re-create home,
with words, with our memories, our thoughts,
our hands and feet, our nostrils and our tongues.
Because June, I swear, the air here smells like home,
and the water tastes like home.
I remember walking with you in Rynjah.
You say I've left... but I'm not so sure.

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS

June:

I hope the sesame is as earthy as the ones at home.
Sona and I went to visit your dad yesterday,
He's doing fine and he has been keeping himself busy by
dropping off and picking up Nunu and Carlton from school.
We went up to your room,
It feels and smells different.
Your clothes neatly packed, sitting quietly in your cupboard as if
waiting for you
It felt strange not seeing you as I walked in the house

Karen:

I wonder, if papa packed my words too...

New Place

I'm tired of being without words
so I will bleed them from
my
finger tips
to s p e l l out this
ravaging hunger
for brown spots on a
white wall
and language that
escapes me
on this slow, redemptive
crawl
if words forget desire
my finger tips will
remember...

Karen:

I've been upset today, with myself mostly.
For failing to remember...
For failing to make space

home is making space
not taking it
this is a hard lesson on home
I am learning from you

Dearest June,

I kept thinking of you as I went about my day,
and our conversation about how colonial writers
described the first Khasi women
they encountered—their irreverent red mouths,
howling with laughter.
Western politeness is tiring, and I think it is plastic,
like the cards and food,
designed like most other things here, to isolate.
How I long for the frank rudeness of home,
of our Khasi kongs and their sharp tongues
if we take too long to order in jadoh stalls.
I miss the close (dis)comforts of community.

Dear Karen,

I can only imagine the landscape you're walking through now.
Sometimes our honesty, our sharp laughter, our crass,
unfiltered truths
make me wonder how such conversations would land in the
West.
They might find them alien, too raw, too close to the bone.
I hope you find someone there
who laughs with the same abandon,
who speaks plainly yet tenderly,
who folds honesty into modesty the way we were taught to do.

I often wonder if my parents sent me to Shillong
to smooth the edges of this crassness,
to polish our tongues,
to help us speak the language I am writing in now.
I wonder if these questions
of language, of refinement, of belonging
sit quietly in the minds of all who leave home behind.
Are these the secret longings of every migrant?
Not just a search for opportunity,
but a search for a home gentle enough to hold them,
and a voice soft enough to be heard.

June:

Today, home felt slightly unfamiliar
as if its walls had shifted in the night,
as if the place that once held me gently
now asked me to want less even as I tried to do more.
I left my feelings somewhere near the doorway,
and walked in with only the body,
moving through its routines as though nothing had changed.

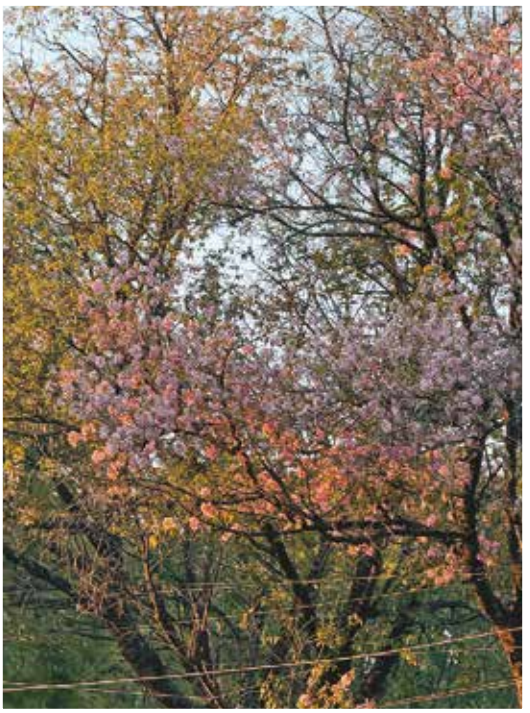
Karen:

You know how I barely ever remember dreams,
and how the criss-crossings of
dreams, imagination and memory
have always seemed to me irresistible;
a labyrinthine maze- unsolvable

My doorway came to me in a dream,
Or was it a memory...

June:





Dear K,

November slipped past quietly,
and the cherry blossoms barely graced us this year.
You would have missed them,
the soft blush that used to greet you along the road
from Windermere to NEHU,
now holding only the colours you left behind.

We kept waiting,
but it felt as though the blossoms bore a quiet resentment for Shillong
arriving not out of desire,
but out of obligation.
As if even flowers can grow weary
of being celebrated too loudly, too publicly.
Perhaps they long for a gentler season to bloom in stillness,
unnoticed, unburdened.

Maybe this is nature's way of asking us to pause
to listen more carefully
to its hesitations,
and to our own.

Dear June,

I'm smiling this morning, reading what you have written.
Between the reticent blossoms I have missed,
and the spectaculars- which I have not
I'm filled with an ache that is difficult to place...
I'd almost forgotten that it is Christmas season
Here, nothing slows down and speeds up
at the same time for festivities
It is easy to forget...
A gentle dusting of snow covers everything
in white, and the colourful houses of Baltimore
have become ornaments
I remember the ease with which
you follow the light.
Here, it dances differently, I wonder at the tune
you would've created.
My niece turned 16 today,
I put up a quiet photo of her on my status
-the only celebration she will tolerate
Like flowers, I suppose she too grows weary
of being celebrated too loudly, too publicly.



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Dear K,

I've been thinking about how differently we understand the idea of home. The way you carry it, the way you leave it, the way you return to it. It's never quite how I do. And yet, despite these differences, I keep finding myself leaning into our friendship as my own sense of home.

I've learned that home isn't always made of walls and doors. Sometimes it's far more fragile, and far more enduring. It's built slowly, out of remembered voices, shared silences, and the quiet comfort of being held without having to explain yourself. I did not find this kind of home in geography. I found it in friendships, and most clearly, in you.

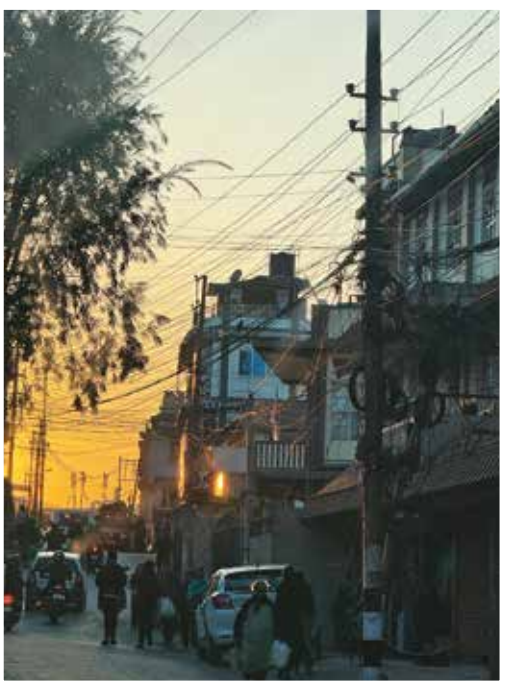
There were moments when places failed me. Houses shifted, rooms emptied, familiar roads stopped feeling kind. What remained steady were people who knew my rhythms, how I disappear when things feel too heavy, how laughter returns after grief, how I speak most honestly when I'm unsure. You have known these things about me without needing to name them. In that knowing, I found a ground that did not move even when everything else did.

Friendship offers a rare kind of belonging. It is chosen, not inherited. It asks only for presence, not permanence, for listening, not fixing. With you, home has existed in long conversations that stretch into the night, in shared meals without reason, in glances that carry entire histories. These moments feel like rooms I can return to, even when we are far apart.

There is also a safety in our friendship, a permission to arrive unfinished. With you, I don't have to perform wholeness. I can speak in half-formed sentences, carry my doubts openly, rest in silence without fear of being misunderstood. That acceptance becomes a shelter—not built from certainty, but from trust. It's where I feel most myself, and therefore, most at home.

Distance has taught me something too. Our friendship survives time zones and seasons. Even after long stretches of absence, we return to each other as if no time has passed. In that continuity, I recognise a home that travels with me—shifting, adapting, but always familiar.

Finding home in friendships has changed the way I understand belonging. Home is not always something we return to. Sometimes, it is something that walks beside us. It lives in people who see us clearly and stay, who remind us who we are when we forget. And in your presence, I realise that home is not where I am from, but where I am known.



Karen:

When I say I love you
I don't mean I will bring you
gifts of joy or comfort or calm
I don't mean I will want you
and want to keep you
I don't mean I will stand
heart in hand, hand on heart
When I say I love you
I mean I will meet you
where you are, and stand with you
I mean I will witness you becoming
even as we parse
silence and despair for meaning.

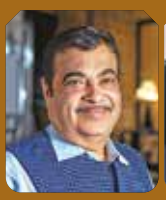
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Visionaries of $5 Trillion Economy

Outlook celebrates the distinguished thought leaders, scholars, policymakers, and industry experts who converge and deliberate on the intricate facets of the USD 5 trillion economy vision and share their contributions towards making India a 'developed country'

India's goal is to become a USD 5 trillion economy, with revised projections from the IMF and other reports indicating the milestone will likely be reached between 2027-28 and 2028-29. Meanwhile, India has surpassed Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy, with a size of $4.18 trillion, and is poised to overtake Germany to become the third-largest by 2030.

India's real GDP grew 8.2% in the second quarter of 2025-26, up from 7.8% in the first quarter and 7.4% in the fourth quarter of the last fiscal year. The growth momentum further surprised on the upside, with GDP expanding to a six-quarter high in Q2 of 2025-26, reflecting India's resilience amid persistent global trade uncertainties. Inflation remains below the lower tolerance threshold, unemployment is declining, and export performance continues to improve. Furthermore, financial conditions have stayed benign, with strong credit flows to the commercial sector, while demand conditions remain firm, supported by a further strengthening of urban consumption. Domestic drivers, led by robust private consumption, played a central role in supporting this expansion.

In light of India's current growth trajectory, collaboration between the public and private sectors is crucial, particularly in high-impact new growth areas. The government has several ongoing initiatives across sectors focused on inclusive growth and robust social development in achieving sustainable and equitable economic progress. India is among the world's fastest-growing major economies and is well-positioned to sustain this momentum, with the ambition of attaining high middle-income status by 2047 – the centenary year of its independence.

Within this dynamic landscape, the Outlook Group acknowledges the contributions of visionary leaders, pathfinders, innovators, educators, industrialists, entrepreneurs, and achievers from different walks of life who have made a difference to society, the state, and the country at large. We celebrate their relentless efforts and dedication towards making India a developed economy.

Pioneering Technology and FinTech Innovation

KV Arangasamy spotlighted as a visionary leader driving transformation across technology, fintech, education, and culture

KV Arangasamy, a respected serial entrepreneur, educationist, and cultural advocate with over 25 years of leadership experience, is being profiled for his influential contributions across technology, industrial innovation, and digital financial transformation. His work continues to shape multiple sectors, showcasing a rare blend of technical depth, social commitment, and long-term nation-building vision.

A Pioneer in Technology and FinTech Innovation

Arangasamy began his journey in digital finance early, long before India's payments landscape matured. In 2013, he founded one of the region's earliest digital payment ventures, preceded by his business family's pioneering experimentation in 2012–2013. These experiences gave him deep insight into payments infrastructure, customer adoption, and the evolution of India's fintech ecosystem.

He later established Universys Technologies, an Industrial IoT company that has played a key role in modernizing manufacturing and operational systems across sectors. His expansion into turnkey and fiber-based infrastructure further strengthened India's digital backbone, supporting enterprises and public connectivity initiatives at scale.

Driving Digital Banking and Last-Mile Financial Transformation

After several years of advising leading fintech on digital banking, compliance, and infrastructure challenges, Arangasamy launched RUGR in 2022. RUGR focuses on smart digital banking, finance automation, and enabling true last-mile connectivity, ensuring modern financial services reach underserved communities across India. The company represents his belief that digital finance must be inclusive, reliable, and accessible to all.

Strengthening the Ecosystem Through SIL Acquiring

Building further on his fintech expertise, engaged deeply in acquiring Saraswath Infotech Private Limited (SIL), a respected institution with over 21 years of operational legacy, offering CBS and digital payment software solutions. SIL has built a robust framework serving more than 150 financial institutions. Its long-standing presence in the acquiring ecosystem provided him with invaluable exposure to large-scale merchant operations, sophisticated acquiring technologies, and mission-critical, secure transaction infrastructures.

Working closely with an organization of this scale allowed him to observe firsthand how high-volume payment systems are built, governed, and optimized for reliability. This experience significantly sharpened his understanding of transaction routing, compliance layers, and risk management within acquiring networks, ultimately strengthening his strategic perspective on India's rapidly evolving digital financial architecture.



"Technology becomes meaningful only when it empowers people. My goal has always been to build systems that last, systems that reach every corner of society, not just the privileged few."

KV Arangasamy
Founder and Managing Director, RUGR

Championing Education, Culture, and Community Development

Beyond business, he has played a transformative role in education, supporting ERP modernization, digital learning systems, and skill development programs. His involvement with the SKP Group of Educational Institutions highlights his commitment to creating strong, future-ready learning ecosystems. Internationally, he supports literature and cultural preservation through a UK-based publishing platform, reinforcing the importance of knowledge and heritage in a digital era. He is also a philanthropist who actively supports the underprivileged in society.

As industries evolve and digital transformation accelerates globally, leaders like KV Arangasamy set an inspiring benchmark. We look forward to seeing more visionaries who combine innovation with purpose and progress with human impact, just as he continues to do.



Nandan Nilekani
Co-founder and Chairman, Infosys Technologies Limited

Digital Economy for Development

A navigator in the domain of technology and a leader of social causes, Nandan Nilekani continues to champion technology as a tool for equitable and connected growth

Nandan Nilekani, Chairman of the Infosys board, addressed shareholders in the company's annual report for FY'25, highlighting that multiple converging global trends are compelling the company to revisit its business fundamentals, emphasizing stability and AI integration for clients.

Born in Bengaluru, Nilekani earned his bachelor's degree from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay. Since 1978, he has been at the forefront of India's IT revolution, helping establish the country as a global technology powerhouse. He co-founded Infosys, an India-based multinational providing business consulting, technology, engineering, and outsourcing services. Between 2009 and 2014, he served as the chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), responsible for issuing Aadhaar ID numbers to all Indian residents—a role equivalent in rank to a cabinet minister.

Nilekani's leadership of the Aadhaar initiative earned him The Economist Social & Economic Innovation Award in 2014 In 2017, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Ernst & Young, the CNBC-TV18 India Business Leader Award, and the 22nd Nikkei Asia Prize for Economic and Business Innovation. He was inducted as an International Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2019. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2006.. In January 2023, he was appointed co-chair of the G20 Task Force on Digital Public Infrastructure for Economic Transformation, Financial Inclusion, and Development.

Beyond Infosys, Nilekani co-founded and chairs the EkStep Foundation, a not-for-profit platform focused on improving literacy and numeracy for millions of children. He is also an accomplished author, having written Imagining India and co-authored Rebooting India: Realizing a Billion Aspirations with Viral Shah, and The Art of Bitfulness: Keeping Calm in the Digital World with Tanuj Bhojwani, released in January 2022.

Nilekani has been a keynote speaker at global forums including the Global Fintech Fest (GFF) 2025, the Semafor World Economy Summit 2025, and the Raisina Dialogue 2025, advocating adaptable systems over dependence on specific AI models. He predicts that India will host 1 million startups by 2035, driven by digital public infrastructure, AI, and fintech.

His advisory role in initiatives such as the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), DigiLocker, and the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) highlights his commitment to inclusive technological progress, enabling smaller merchants to harness technology for growth. As of October 2025, his net worth is estimated at $3.2 billion. He also serves as the chief mentor for the India Energy Stack task force and was the chief guest at the Mayo College Prize Giving 2025 ceremony, reflecting his enduring influence on India's digital and economic transformation.

Turning Data Into Everyday Impact

From reinventing food shopping to guiding global students, Dr Joydeep Pal blends AI, consumer psychology, and human-centric design to build ventures that elevate lives



Dr Joydeep Pal, Founder & CEO, FJ Consulting

In an era when consumer behaviour is evolving faster than ever, few leaders have managed to interpret the pulse of the digital generation as sharply as Dr Joydeep Pal. A strategist, innovator, and educator, Joydeep embodies the modern business leader—one who pairs technological depth with a human-centric mission to create ventures with real societal impact.

AI-Led Sustainable Food Retailing

In 2017 Foodinjoy was ideated in The University of Manchester by founder, Dr Joydeep Pal, who loves to utilise tech for far reaching benefits to society. He observed that consumers lead poorer lifestyle due to fundamental knowledge gaps. He realised he can make their life better by dissolving the knowledge barrier. Something that everyone can use easily.

In 2019, Joydeep embarked on a mission to reimagine food shopping and cooking for today's digital consumers enabling sustainable retail in the process with the objective to help consumers maintain a better lifestyle and enable sustainable retail in the food and grocery sector.

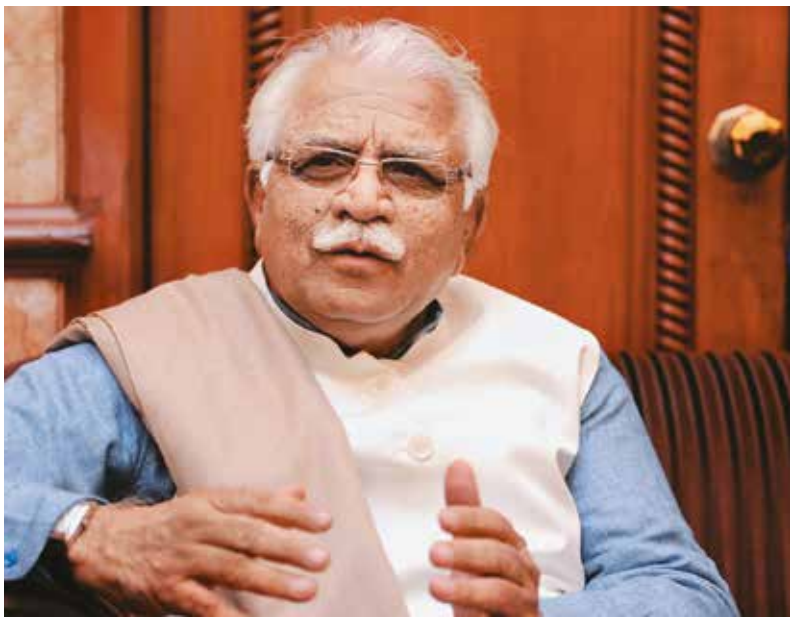
The Taste of Success

Foodinjoy's model is revolutionary yet elegant. Over six years, Joydeep's team created a three-pillar ecosystem: a consumer-facing app that reveals real-time best offers on food and groceries; an AI and market-research engine that identifies demand patterns; and finally, MURI—an experiential snack brand that translates those insights into products and events loved by Gen Z and young professionals. With over 50 million interactions and 20,000 footfall till date, the model has turned data into delight, and insights into impact. This integrated ecosystem has also earned Foodinjoy more than 20 major awards, including the Global 100 Consumer Services Business of the Year 2026 – UK, gold for Best Use of Technology at the 2024 UK Business Awards, and international recognition from "MUSE Awards New York" for best app strategy.

Breaking Mold Building Future

Joydeep's ambitions extend far beyond business growth. With 18+ years of cross-sector experience in Tech, Consumer Services, Healthcare, and the Public sector, and deep expertise in AI/ML, he focuses on building ventures that maximize human potential. Through FJ Consulting, he offers market validation, case development in terms of idea to revenue blueprint, business growth blueprint, branding and marketing, for ideas to fructify to launch and a sustainable business model. For Joydeep, innovation is not about disruption for its own sake; it is about creating systems that elevate everyday lives. Heritage Institute of Technology Kolkata has been instrumental in seeding the ambitions for changemaking early during engineering undergraduate days.

As an Adjunct Faculty at the Alliance Manchester Business School, he mentors the next generation—believing that early guidance can change the trajectory of countless young Indians and global students stepping into a new world. Whether empowering students, enabling sustainable retail, or building AI-driven consumer intelligence, Dr Joydeep Pal stands today as a new-age leader—bold, empathetic, and relentlessly future-focused.



Manohar Lal, Union Minister of Power, Housing, and Urban Affairs, GoI

Powering the Nation

Union Minister Manohar Lal stands at the forefront of India's developmental journey—spearheading major reforms in both the power sector and urban development

A visionary with over a decade of governance experience, his leadership reflects a deep commitment to improving the quality of life for the common man through inclusive, technology-driven, and sustainable solutions.

In the power sector, Manohar Lal has played a transformative role in boosting accessibility, efficiency, and sustainability. Under his leadership, India witnessed a 90% increase in electricity capacity over the past decade, reaching 475 GW in 2025, with a target of 900 GW by 2032. The share of clean energy has grown from 32% in 2014 to 49% in 2025, with solar capacity alone expanding from 2.82 GW to 100 GW. Nuclear energy is also receiving a strong push, with the government targeting 100 GW by 2047, supported by the ₹20,000 crore Nuclear Energy Mission focused on indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

Under his leadership, India has achieved a significant milestone, as the share of non-fossil fuel energy has now surpassed that of fossil fuels, signalling a major shift towards green energy. Notably, India has met its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) target of 50% non-fossil fuel-based power capacity five years ahead of the 2030 deadline, reflecting strong progress in its commitment to sustainable and clean energy development.

Beyond energy, Manohar Lal's role in urban development has been equally impactful. As Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, he has championed the Smart Cities Mission, aiming to create cities that are livable, sustainable, and future-ready. Over 100 smart cities are being equipped with integrated command-and-control centres, intelligent traffic systems, improved public transport, green spaces, and robust waste and water management infrastructure. His focus is on harnessing data and digital technologies to ensure efficient service delivery and improved urban governance.

Affordable housing under PMAY (Urban) has been a major priority, with millions of houses sanctioned and delivered to low-income urban families. He has pushed for transit-orientated development, urban mobility, and inclusive infrastructure, ensuring that cities grow in a way that accommodates every segment of society.

Travelling across the length and breadth of the country, the Union Minister has set an example of participative leadership to guide the States and UTIs towards a shared vision by being physically present for regular reviews and implementation plans, fostering a sense of trust and accountability to deliver their best.

Internationally, Manohar Lal has represented India at forums like BRICS, promoting sustainable urban growth and cross-border energy cooperation. His SECURE power model—Sustainable, Economically viable, Cleaner, Uninterrupted, Reliable, and Energy for all—has become a guiding principle in India's energy and urban planning strategy.

In essence, Manohar Lal's dual leadership in powering India and shaping its cities exemplifies holistic development. His integrated approach to energy and urban growth is not only transforming the present but also laying the foundation for a truly developed and inclusive India by 2047.

From Self-Mastery to Nation-Building

The leadership blueprint of Dr Ajayya Kumar advocates personal clarity and purpose as engines of modern economic progress



Dr Ajayya Kumar, COO of Emircom, Author Management Thinker & Art curator

In a world overflowing with ambition yet starved for focus, few leaders blend self-mastery, organisational excellence, culture, and technology as seamlessly as Dr Ajayya Kumar. A management thinker, philanthropist, art curator, and author of seven books, Dr Ajayya represents a new generation of visionaries who believe national progress begins with personal transformation.

His latest book, Zero to Success in 369 Days, has rapidly evolved into a global performance framework embraced by professionals, entrepreneurs, and young leaders. The book was featured in Forbes India as an actionable blueprint of India's demand for human excellence and growth.

Clarity: The Hidden Fuel of a Progressive Economy

As India strives toward a future-ready, $5 trillion economy, it needs leaders who can think sharply, act decisively, and remain rooted in purpose despite external noise. This is precisely where Dr Ajayya's 369 Framework steps in. At the heart of the model lies a powerful philosophy: "Success without clarity is failure in disguise."

The 369 system—3 Questions, 6 Principles, 9 Pillars—guides individuals through a cycle of disciplined self-renewal. Its digital platform, zerotosuccess.org, drives this philosophy with AI-driven tools that help users set measurable goals, build disciplined habits, track performance, study behavioural patterns, and nurture long-term mindsets.

When individuals transform, teams evolve. When teams evolve, organisations thrive. And when organisations thrive, economies gain momentum.

Beyond Boardrooms: A Visionary Shaping Culture and Society

As COO of Emircom, one of the GCC's leading ICT enterprises, he has helped steer transformation programmes, cultivate high-performance cultures, and embed clarity-driven leadership across the organisation.

Through the Ajayya Bharathi Foundation, he champions mindfulness-based parenting initiatives, often alongside Dr Kiran Bedi, empowering families to raise emotionally resilient, future-ready children. Strong families, he believes, are the backbone of strong societies.

His passion for art and culture, reflected through the Sarvamangala Trust and Firefly Films, underscores his belief that creativity and storytelling are essential to holistic leadership.

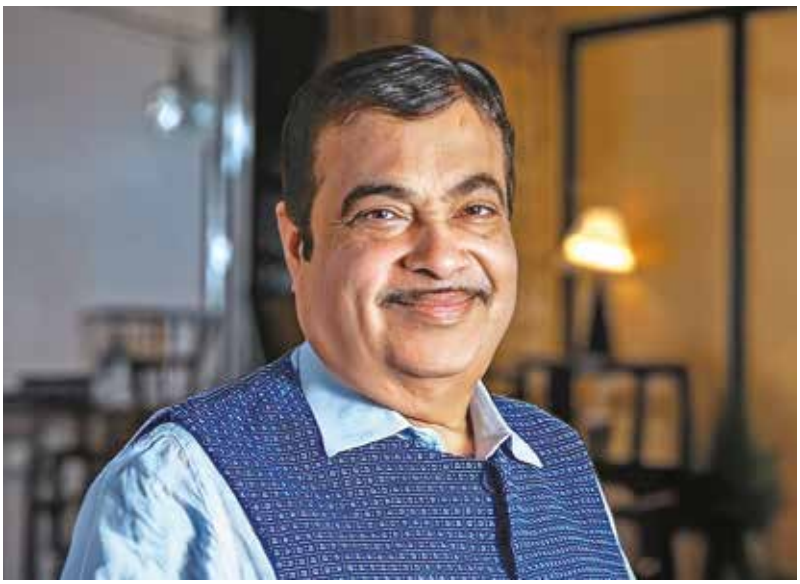
A Leadership Movement for National Progress

What makes Zero to Success especially aligned with India's economic aspirations is its insistence that clarity, discipline, and purpose are not just personal virtues—they are national assets. Purposeful individuals build innovative organisations; innovative organisations fuel opportunity; and opportunities strengthen societies.

For Dr Ajayya Kumar, the message is clear and constant: "When individuals transform, economies transform."

Through his life's work, he continues to demonstrate that progress is multidimensional—rooted in clarity, layered, holistic, and deeply human.

Dr Ajayya Kumar stands out as a thinker who bridges personal mastery and national growth, technology and human behaviour, and leadership and culture with purpose and performance.



Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, GoI

The Architect of India's Infrastructure

Nitin Gadkari's contributions to India's infrastructure development and innovative approach have been a key enabler of its economic ascent

India's economic growth reflects the combined force of robust domestic consumption, expanding services and industrial sectors, strategic reforms, and large-scale infrastructure development. Among the key figures behind this transformation is Nitin Gadkari, known as the 'Highway Man of India,' whose contributions to infrastructure have played a pivotal role in supporting and sustaining India's economic momentum.

Nitin Gadkari has served as a transformative force in India's road infrastructure landscape. Since assuming office in 2014, he has spearheaded a dramatic expansion of the national highway network. Under his leadership, the total length of national highways increased from approximately 91,287 kilometres in 2014 to over 146,000 kilometres by 2024—a nearly 60% growth. This growth was not merely quantitative; it was qualitative as well. High-speed corridors expanded by more than 2,500%, and the length of four-lane and wider highways more than doubled, ensuring faster, safer, and more efficient travel for people and goods across the country.

Gadkari's major initiatives—such as the Bharatmala project, the Delhi–Mumbai Expressway, and the broader PM Gati Shakti master plan—have directly addressed India's chronic infrastructure bottlenecks. These projects aim to reduce travel time, lower logistics costs, and increase the competitiveness of Indian industries. For instance, the Delhi–Mumbai Expressway alone is expected to reduce travel time between the two key metros from 24 hours to about 12 hours, creating significant savings in fuel and freight costs. By integrating road transport with ports, railways, and air cargo, these initiatives have strengthened India's multimodal logistics framework.

This strategic expansion of transportation infrastructure has had tangible effects on India's economic ecosystem. Improved road connectivity has led to better integration of rural areas with urban markets, enhanced supply chain efficiencies, and stimulated private investment in industrial and logistics hubs. Logistics costs—previously one of the highest among major economies—have begun to decline, enabling Indian products to compete more effectively in global markets. Enhanced mobility of goods and services has also contributed to smoother trade flows and higher productivity across manufacturing and agriculture sectors.

While macroeconomic factors such as a young population, digital advancements, and regulatory reforms like GST and insolvency codes have played their roles, Gadkari's infrastructure push has provided the physical foundation on which these reforms could be realized. His pioneering approach to Public–Private Partnerships (PPP) and project financing also made it possible to fast-track large-scale developments without overburdening public finances.

By transforming the nation's roads and highways into engines of connectivity and commerce, he has helped lay the groundwork for India's rise to the position of the world's fourth-largest economy. While many factors converge to shape an economy of this scale, robust infrastructure remains a silent, but powerful, driver—and in this domain, Gadkari's role has been both decisive and enduring.

A Visionary Builder of Education

Dr Narayan Das Agrawal's vision took shape in Mathura and matured into one of Uttar Pradesh's most recognised private universities



Dr Narayan Das Agrawal
Chancellor, GLA University

Dr Narayan Das Agrawal, distinguished educationist and the principal architect behind one of northern India's leading private universities, represents a quieter, more enduring model of leadership.

As Chancellor of GLA University, Mathura, he has steered its transition from a regional institution to a multi-disciplinary centre of academic excellence, serving tens of thousands of students to forge a better future.

Vision, values and recognition

Dr Agrawal's journey into the field of higher education was shaped by his desire to carry forward the vision of his father, the late Shri Ganeshi Lal Agrawal.

He founded the Sri Jagannath Prasad Ganeshi Lal Bajaj Charitable Trust Samiti in 1998 in Mathura to enable access to better education in the region. What began as a philanthropic endeavour steadily acquired academic scale and statutory recognition, culminating in the establishment of GLA University in 2010 through an Act of the Uttar Pradesh legislature.

Champion of holistic education

Under Dr Agrawal's leadership, GLA University has developed into a NAAC A+ accredited institution with UGC recognition and a strong presence across science, engineering, management, law, pharmacy and the humanities.

His approach has balanced academic rigour with practical learning, shaping graduates who combine subject expertise with leadership skills, entrepreneurial thinking and a clear sense of ethical responsibility.

In his message to the university community, Dr Agrawal underlines the need for an educational environment that develops the individual as much as the professional. His emphasis is on building confidence, curiosity and resilience alongside technical capability. This philosophy translates into a learning system that goes beyond the classroom, integrating co-curricular engagement to prepare students for the real world.

He said, "Our endeavour is to create an environment that not only imparts knowledge but also shapes character, confidence and a sense of responsibility in our students."

Leadership, legacy and learning

Dr Agrawal's impact extends well beyond the campus. Recognised as both a philanthropist and social reformer, he has helped create significant employment opportunities and driven regional development. His leadership combines strategic vision with practical action, achieving measurable results while maintaining a modest, service-oriented approach. In his own words, "Education is not just about classrooms; it is a catalyst for social and economic transformation in the communities we serve."

Today, as Chancellor, Dr Agrawal guides a growing academic community that incorporates the ideals of innovation, research, entrepreneurship and global outreach.

His leadership helps students grow from learners into confident contributors.

Dr Agrawal's leadership demonstrates how dedication to mission and values can shape an institution — and the futures of thousands of young minds.

Through his vision, he continues to turn the promise of education into a lasting legacy.



Ashwini Vaishnaw
Union Minister for Electronics & Information Technology, Information and Broadcasting, and Railways of India

Make in India Make for the World

Ashwini Vaishnaw's vision for India's electronics sector is a strategic, phased approach to achieve technological self-reliance and become a globally competitive product nation

Ashwini Vaishnaw has been an influential force in shaping the "Make in India" vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Vaishnaw has long promoted an unequivocal vision involving policies of incentives, developing an ecosystem, and advancement in frontier areas of technology to make "India a true product nation".

India's electronics production has risen nearly sixfold to ₹11.3 lakh crore (approx. $135 billion USD) over the past decade, with exports growing eightfold. This has resulted in the creation of a whopping 25 lakh jobs, clearly establishing the fact of "real economic growth at the grassroots level" as reiterated by Vaishnaw many a time. The anchor for this growth is the *Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme* for large scale electronics manufacturing, attracting significant investment of over ₹13,475 crore and boosting domestic production. India is now the world's second-largest mobile manufacturer.

Realising that sustaining competitiveness requires advanced technologies, Vaishnaw is trying to create an entire manufacturing ecosystem. This is achieved through the *Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS),* which was unveiled in 2025 with a total outlay of ₹22,919 crore. It is designed to deepen the country's value chain of components, sub-modules, raw material, and machinery. It received 249 applications worth ₹1.15 lakh crore of investment and ₹10.34 lakh crore of production value. It is the biggest ever investment commitment in the Indian electronics industry.

Semiconductors are another important cornerstone of Vaishnaw's list of priorities. The *India Semiconductor Mission*, with an outlay of ₹76,000 crore, has enabled the country to approve 10 semiconductor manufacturing facilities within four years of launching the mission. Four units of semiconductors are now in the pilot production phase.

The Indian design teams are now designing semiconductors with a 2-nanometre chip. This positions the country among the top innovation leaders of technology. The launch of the ARM semiconductor design office in Bengaluru is one such example. He emphasises the social significance of electronics manufacturing. Such factories as the iPhone-manufacturing plant by Foxconn in Bengaluru, where 78% of the total employment is female, show that this industry is greatly changing the face of blue-collar employment.

Looking into the future, Vaishnaw foresees an India that is the "use case capital of the world on AI." Allocated over ₹10,300 crore, it focuses on developing basic AI models and leading compute capabilities and harnessing the strengths of the Indian digital infrastructure, right from UPI to the 5G pan-India network. This marks the beginning of a new era, one where instead of just making products and components for the globe, India is designing and innovating.

Ashwini Vaishnaw emphasises owning intellectual property (IP), fostering a skilled talent pool through collaborations with educational institutions, and developing homegrown solutions like a national mobile operating system. The *India AI Mission*, launched in March 2024 and championed by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, aims to democratise AI by building a secure, indigenous ecosystem.



Manish Gupta, President & Managing Director, Dell Technologies India

Powering the Next Decade of Intelligent Innovation

Dell Technologies trains a laser focus on strengthening India's AI momentum. Manish Gupta, President and Managing Director of the company, writes

India stands at a pivotal moment, poised to harness the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence to drive enterprise innovation and national progress. As AI moves from early exploration to widespread deployment, it presents a remarkable opportunity to create lasting value and strengthen our global competitiveness. Poised to become one of the fastest-growing leaders in AI, India's AI market is expected to reach US$20–22 billion by 2027, posting a CAGR of 30 percent, as per Deloitte. At Dell Technologies, we believe in the power of technology to help India realize this future, turning ambitious goals into tangible progress for everyone.

Building India's AI Foundation

A resilient digital infrastructure is the cornerstone of India's AI-powered future. The ₹10,371 crore IndiaAI Mission reflects this national priority, aiming to expand compute capacity, strengthen secure data platforms, and deploy over 38,000 GPUs to accelerate innovation. Supporting this ambition requires infrastructure that is scalable, modular, secure, and optimized for high-density AI workloads capable of meeting the diverse needs of government, academia, and enterprises while enabling them to innovate locally with confidence.

Our Dell AI Factory with NVIDIA offers a fully integrated solution of high-performance compute and AI-optimized storage, enabling organizations to operationalize AI securely and at scale. Reflecting the need for powerful compute, we are proud be a leader in server market in India, and this leadership fuels our drive to provide the technology backbone that turns data into intelligence.

Driving Sovereign AI and Enterprise Growth

AI sovereignty is critical for nations to secure data, align ethics with local norms, and drive innovation. Dell Technologies champions this mission with secure, scalable AI infrastructure, enabling control over data, models, and ecosystems while meeting regulatory requirements. Collaborating with Zoho Corporation, Dell's AI Factory with NVIDIA powers Zoho's proprietary and agentic AI solutions, including Zia LLM, supporting over 130 million global users across sales, finance, HR, and more. With Dell PowerEdge XE-Series servers, NVIDIA NeMo, and ProSupport for Infrastructure, Zoho delivers high-performance, privacy-first AI aligned with India's data sovereignty goals.

Together, Dell and Zoho are advancing a sovereign, agentic AI ecosystem, positioning India as a global AI leader. This partnership strengthens India's AI ambitions, enabling businesses to streamline workflows, uncover insights, and innovate securely.

A Legacy of Trust, A Future of Progress

Dell Technologies has long been a trusted partner in India's digital transformation. We have powered mission-critical national systems such as Aadhaar, Passport Seva, and the GST platform, along with the core operations of leading banks and telecom providers. Today, we extend that deep-seated commitment to the AI era.

With the world's broadest end-to-end AI portfolio, we offer integrated solutions that meet the demands of modern AI workloads, from AI-ready PCs at the edge to high-performance servers and storage. Our flexible deployment options and validated integrations empower enterprises and government organizations to scale AI securely and accelerate their time-to-value. We are dedicated to providing the tools and expertise needed to help India build a more intelligent, connected, and prosperous future for all its citizens.



Gunjan Soni, Country Managing Director, You Tube

Shaping India's Digital Storytelling on YouTube

Gunjan Soni leads YouTube India with a vision that blends creators, culture, learning and economic growth

Gunjan Soni, recently appointed as the Country Managing Director of YouTube India, is all set to usher in a new phase of growth, innovation and creator empowerment for the platform. YouTube, owned by Alphabet Inc., is one of the world's largest and most influential video-sharing platforms and has become an indispensable part of India's digital landscape. Under Soni's leadership, it is poised to expand its reach, impact and opportunities for creators, users and businesses alike.

Soni brings with her a wealth of experience in technology, media and business leadership. She began her professional journey with McKinsey & Company, rising to the position of Partner in the Consumer and Marketing practice, where she helped craft strategies for leading global and Indian businesses. Her expertise blends strategic thinking with technological insight, allowing her to navigate India's dynamic digital ecosystem with vision and precision.

As EVP at Star India, she worked at the intersection of storytelling and technology, understanding how content can engage audiences on a massive scale.

Her career also includes significant contributions to India's e-commerce and media sectors. At Myntra, Soni helped shape the fashion e-commerce boom, leading marketing and business operations when online shopping was still a new concept for millions of Indians.

Later, as Group CEO at ZALORA, she drove growth by expanding product categories, launching loyalty programmes and pioneering personalisation strategies long before they became industry standards.

Born and educated in India, Soni holds a Computer Science degree from Barkatullah Vishwavidyalaya and an MBA in Finance from XLRI Jamshedpur, giving her a strong foundation in both technology and business.

Since taking the helm at YouTube India, Soni has emphasised creator empowerment, localised content, digital innovation and championing initiatives that provide creators with tools, training and monetisation opportunities, enabling them to build sustainable careers while producing high-quality, engaging content. By promoting content in regional languages and supporting local creators, Soni is helping YouTube connect with audiences far beyond the major metropolitan cities.

Under her watch, the creator economy is no longer viewed as a fringe digital trend but as a meaningful component of the country's growth story. Crucially, she emphasises that the benefits extend beyond individual creators, flowing into local production teams, studios, editors, technicians and neighbourhood businesses that form the ecosystem around every successful channel. She is also a strong advocate for responsible digital practices, strengthening policies around content moderation, misinformation and user safety.

This people-first understanding of growth — where technology enables aspiration and livelihoods — lies at the heart of Soni's leadership at YouTube India, shaping how the platform engages with creators, communities and the wider economy.

Colleagues and industry observers describe Gunjan Soni as a visionary leader with empathy, combining a deep understanding of technology, culture and human behaviour. She actively engages with creators, startups and thought leaders, inspiring a culture of creativity, learning and innovation across India. Her leadership reflects a commitment to growth, inclusivity and digital empowerment, ensuring that YouTube remains not only a platform but also a transformative space for storytelling, creativity and community building in India.

Healing Beyond Boundaries

Rajiv Mehta's visionary leadership propels Lilavati Hospital toward global excellence, fusing advanced technologies with the spirit of care and the principles of service and equality



Rajiv Mehta
Permanent Trustee, Lilavati Hospital and Research Centre

Nurturing the 'legacy of trust' instilled by the visionary founders and permanent trustees—the late Kishor Mehta and Charu K Mehta, leadership style combines professional excellence with humility and empathy, values that are the cornerstone of Lilavati Hospital and Research Centre. Located in the heart of Mumbai, it is an institution synonymous with 'excellence in healthcare'.

Charuben Mehta, Chairperson of the board of trustees, stands as a beacon of inspiration and guiding force for all SEWA (Service Equality for the Welfare of All) initiatives, providing free healthcare services to the poor and underprivileged, including free check-ups, medical camps, and high-end procedures.

Rajiv Mehta's philosophy blends modern medical advancement with a deeply human approach to care, focusing on three core principles: quality, accessibility, and humanity. This philosophy permeates every department, inspiring doctors, nurses, and staff to treat patients as family rather than statistics.

Cutting-Edge Innovations

From state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment to advanced surgical and critical care units, Rajiv Mehta ensures that the hospital remains at the forefront of innovation. He has been instrumental in attracting top medical talent, fostering an environment of continuous learning and research. Collaborative programmes and training workshops have become integral to the hospital's culture, encouraging knowledge sharing and medical breakthroughs that benefit patients across India.

Spearheading Mumbai's first 300-bed cancer care hospital, along with the commencement of nursing training collaboration and a partnership with Mayo Clinic for advanced care, he reiterates Lilavati Hospital's continued investment in the latest medical technologies and global best practices.

Human-Centred Initiatives

Lilavati remains at the forefront of medical progress, integrating tech-led innovations while staying true to the human 'spirit of care'. He has launched several initiatives to make healthcare more inclusive, ensuring that quality treatment reaches the underprivileged. Through charitable programmes and community health drives, Lilavati Hospital offers free OPD with the support of professionals and subsidised care to those who cannot afford it, reaffirming its foundational commitment to social responsibility.

Additionally, Mehta has championed mental health awareness and patient well-being programmes, recognising that true healing involves both body and mind. His initiatives emphasise patient comfort, transparent communication, and family involvement in the care process.

Heal with Skill

Rajiv Mehta envisions Lilavati Hospital expanding its reach globally through partnerships in medical education, research, and telemedicine. The trustees share a singular goal: to make Lilavati a beacon of Indian healthcare excellence—one that sets global standards while staying rooted in compassion.

Embracing advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence for data-driven precision and machine learning for enhanced diagnostics, he strives to blend the science of innovation with the art of healing. At the core of this vision are the doctors—whom he recognises as the heart of Lilavati—who play a vital role in shaping Lilavati's shared vision for tomorrow.

As Lilavati Hospital continues to grow under his stewardship, Rajiv Mehta's enduring vision remains clear: "to heal with heart, to lead with integrity, and to serve humanity with unwavering dedication."



Sanjay Nayar
President Assocham, Founder & Chairman, Sorin Investment

Pioneering Growth and Transforming India's Business Landscape

Sanjay Nayar, visionary entrepreneur, drives strategic investments and promotes innovation across India's industries

He is acknowledged as a leader in India's burgeoning business and investment landscape, and his journey exemplifies a rare combination of entrepreneurial insight and commitment to strengthening India's business ecosystem. With a career spanning decades across finance, investment, and industry leadership, he has earned his reputation for strategic thinking, visionary leadership, and facilitating innovation-driven growth. He is Sanjay Nayar, President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and Founder and Chairman of Sorin Investment.

As the President of ASSOCHAM, Sanjay Nayar plays a pivotal role in shaping policy advocacy, promoting economic reforms, and representing the interests of Indian businesses both nationally and globally. Under his stewardship, ASSOCHAM has strengthened its voice as a premier chamber, catalysing dialogue between government, industry, and global partners. His leadership ensures that businesses across India are equipped to navigate evolving economic landscapes, while contributing to sustainable growth and development.

In parallel, as Founder and Chairman of Sorin Investment, Sanjay Nayar has demonstrated remarkable entrepreneurial acumen. He has been instrumental in identifying and nurturing investment opportunities across sectors and enabling businesses to scale effectively, ensuring that investments generate meaningful returns even as they drive positive impact.

Nayar's professional journey is marked by versatility and a keen grasp of both Indian and global markets. Prior to establishing Sorin Investment, he held leadership roles with renowned financial institutions, where he honed core skills in investment strategy, portfolio management, and client engagement. This rich experience has allowed him to bridge the worlds of finance and industry seamlessly, creating value for investors and businesses alike.

Colleagues report how Nayar emphasises transparency, accountability, and collaboration, creating a culture where innovation and professional growth thrive. His ability to anticipate market trends and adapt to evolving business environments has enabled him to lead initiatives that deliver long-term benefits to companies, investors, and the broader economy.

Beyond business, Nayar is a serious and proactive contributor to India's socio-economic development. Through ASSOCHAM, he actively engages in initiatives that support entrepreneurship, skill development, and sustainable business practices. He has advocated for policies that support inclusive growth, innovation in business, and investment in emerging sectors, helping shape a future-ready economic landscape.

Throughout his career, Sanjay Nayar has received recognition for his leadership, strategic insight, and contributions to industry and investment. His guidance has helped numerous companies navigate complex challenges, embrace fresh opportunities, and achieve excellence. He continues to inspire confidence among investors, entrepreneurs, and policymakers through his informed perspectives and visionary approach.

Looking ahead, Nayar envisions a business environment driven by purposeful innovation, transparency, and sustainable growth. By combining his expertise in finance with his deep understanding of industry and market dynamics, he aims to create opportunities that empower businesses, support investors, and enable communities to flourish together.

As ASSOCHAM President and Founder–Chairman of Sorin Investment, he remains a driving force in India's business and investment landscape, fostering not just growth, but also innovation and prosperity that leaves no one behind.

Bespoke Luxury Bathware

Ranjeet Oak shares insights into the world of Kohler, making an impact on luxury living through fashion-forward design in bathware



Ranjeet Oak
President- South Asia, Kohler Co

How do you perceive Kohler making an impact on the Indian luxury bathware industry?
India is one of our strategic global markets, and our long-term vision is to shape the future of luxury bath spaces through strong design leadership, localized innovation, and immersive brand experiences. We aim to bring together international standards of design with solutions that are deeply relevant to Indian lifestyles. This is anchored in our continued investment in local manufacturing to drive scale, speed, and resilience, and in our Kohler Innovation Centre, where global design thinking is seamlessly combined with strong local insights. Equally important to us are experiences and through our Kohler Experience Centres in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore, and Studio Kohler in Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Pune and Chennai - consumers, architects and designers can engage in an immersive, hands-on environment, bringing our design philosophy to life. With KALLISTA, our ultra-luxury brand, we have set a higher benchmark for craftsmanship and ultra-luxury bath experiences for the most discerning consumers.

Kohler is known for innovations. What are the innovations specifically for the Indian market?
Innovation drives everything that we do at Kohler and our India Design Studio, a hub of creativity and innovation plays a pivotal role in this, creating products for India as well as global markets. This year, we introduced new colour such as Teakberry, Honed Lush and Honed Black, all tailored to Indian sensibilities, while Peacock remains our most iconic, culturally resonant shade. On the innovation front, we launched the Radiance Shoulder Shower, designed specifically for women to deliver a shoulder-down immersive experience; water-saving solutions that conserve up to 12,000 litres per bathroom annually; and WaterMind™, which ensures consistent shower performance across varying water pressures. For India's savvy, tech-forward homes, we introduced the Leap Intelligent Toilet which integrates advanced hygiene, touchless flushing and bidet functionality with contemporary design making it ideal for modern Indian bathrooms.

What are your challenges in India's competitive market?
India's premium bathware market is rapidly growing and highly diverse. With consumer expectations constantly evolving, the real challenge is striking the right balance between global luxury standards and deep local relevance. This means engineering products for Indian water pressure and quality, building a robust ecosystem of trained installers and service professionals, and creating experiential retail formats where consumers can truly experience the Kohler product before purchase.

Today's market is highly competitive, and consumers are increasingly design and value conscious. In this environment, innovation, design expertise, and bold thinking, - areas where Kohler continues to set benchmarks will be even more important than ever.

What role does India play in Kohler's global expansion plans?
India plays a pivotal role in Kohler's global growth—as both a high-potential consumer market and a hub for design, engineering, manufacturing, and shared services. Our India Design Studio has delivered globally recognised innovations, earning accolades such as Good Design, iF Design and Red Dot Awards across categories. Kohler has also strategically located its Global Shared Services hub in Pune, reinforcing India's role in driving operational excellence and end-to-end service solutions for its worldwide operations. On the manufacturing front, we operate two advanced plants in Jhagadia focused on faucets and vitreous. Today, through our increasing number of Experience Centres and Studios, India is driving innovation and growth for us across the globe.



Guiding the growth trajectory of the Northeast — Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi alongside the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura at the Rising Northeast Investors Summit 2025

Leadership Rewired: Tripura's Reform Renaissance

"Khung-nai rong, bwkha-nai khumlung."
When the journey is right, the destination follows.

Journeys shaped by purpose have a rhythm of their own. In Tripura, that rhythm today is unmistakable, confident, reform-driven, and forward-looking. Once known more for its natural beauty than its economic muscle, the state is now scripting a new chapter of growth, governance, and global relevance. With investment intents crossing INR 33,000 crore in recent years, double-digit growth in State Gross Domestic Product over the last five years, and national recognition as a top reforming state, Tripura is emerging as a quiet but compelling force in India's journey towards a 5 trillion economy.

This transformation has gathered decisive momentum under the leadership of Chief Minister Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha, who assumed office in May 2022. A distinguished maxillofacial surgeon by profession, Dr. Saha brought to governance the precision of a clinician and the foresight of a reformer. Under his stewardship, Tripura embarked on a structured journey of Reform, Perform and Transform, anchored in the vision of "Ek Tripura, Shreshtha Tripura."

Building Institutions Before Building Economies

One of the most defining aspects of Tripura's reform story is its emphasis on strong institutional foundations. Recognising that enduring economic transformation requires more than isolated policy decisions, the government established key bodies such as the Good Governance Department, Tripura Institution for Transformation, and the Tripura Urban Planning and Development Authority. These institutions were entrusted with anchoring reform initiatives, ensuring policy continuity, and creating an enabling environment for long-term growth.

Under the guidance of Chief Minister Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha, these institutions collaborated with premier knowledge partners including IIM Kolkata, Indian Statistical Institute Kolkata, AIIMS New Delhi, and National Law University, Agartala. This rigorous, research-driven approach enabled Tripura to craft policies that are progressive, pragmatic, and aligned with national and global best practices.



"The Government of Tripura has kick-started the process of Reform, Perform and Transform to realise the goal of 'Ek Tripura, Shreshtha Tripura' and Viksit Bharat 2047."

Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha,
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Progressive Policies with a Clear Economic Intent

The outcome of this groundwork has been the adoption of a suite of forward-looking policies across sectors critical to Tripura's economic future. Policies on industrial incentivisation, startups, data centres, tourism, affordable housing, transit-oriented development, bamboo, agar, rubber, natural gas, and land leasing have been rolled out with a singular objective, to reduce compliance burden, provide policy certainty, and compensate for geographical constraints through targeted incentives.

These reforms were not merely

aspirational but executable. Time-bound approvals, simplified regulatory frameworks, and a clear emphasis on ease of doing business have fundamentally altered the investment landscape of the state.

Driving Deregulation with Speed and Coordination

Tripura's reform momentum received national validation when the Cabinet Secretariat of the Government of India identified deregulation and reduction of compliance as a national priority across 23 critical areas. A dedicated "Deregulation Cell" was established in the Chief Secretary's Office, while multi-sectoral working groups were formed to dismantle departmental silos and accelerate decision-making.

With strong political will from Chief Minister and proactive administrative leadership, executive and legislative approvals were fast-tracked. Domain experts were engaged to re-engineer processes and integrate national and global best practices. As states competed to implement reforms, Tripura emerged as a top performer, earning recognition at the national level for its reform-driven governance.

Making Business Easier, Smarter, and Faster

At the operational level, Tripura's reforms have directly addressed long-standing pain points for entrepreneurs and investors.

"India has entered a full-fledged 'Reform Express' phase, where changes are happening rapidly and with a clear intent."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Industrial plots are now accessible through a GIS-enabled land bank, with online applications and assured land-use changes within 14 days. Building permissions, fire licences, and pollution clearances have been simplified through self-certification and third-party inspections, significantly reducing human interface and delays.

Labour reforms have further strengthened Tripura's business ecosystem. Restrictions on women working during late evening and night shifts have been removed, limits on working hours rationalised, and several penal provisions decriminalised, signalling a decisive shift from punitive regulation to facilitative governance.

From Policy to Prosperity

The impact of these reforms is visible across the state. Since 2022, Tripura has attracted investment proposals worth over INR 33,000 crore, equivalent to its annual budget. Leading corporates such as Taj Hotels, Airtel, Godrej, and Patanjali have committed investments in the state. Notably, Indian Hotels Company Ltd is investing INR 250 crore in the Taj Pushpabanta Palace Hotel in Agartala, underscoring Tripura's growing prominence on the national investment map.

There has been a visible spurt in real estate activity in Agartala and district headquarters, while governance reforms have led to a more efficient, transparent, and responsive bureaucracy. Tripura's sustained double-digit GSDP growth over the past five years reflects the depth and durability of this transformation.



Large Investments are being secured in the IT sector

Aligned with the National Vision

Tripura's reform journey mirrors the national narrative articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who described India's current phase as a "Reform Express" marked by speed, intent, and scale. Under Chief Minister Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha, Tripura has aligned its development agenda with the larger goal of Viksit Bharat 2047, ensuring that growth is inclusive, sustainable, and future-ready.

Tripura's story today is not just one of economic revival, but of belief. Clearly, belief in institutions, in reform, and in leadership. Under the steady and strategic leadership of Chief Minister Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha, the state is not merely reforming systems. It is redefining its destiny.



MoU Signed with IHCL for the development of Taj Pushpabanta Palace at Agartala



Govt. of Tripura and Patanjali Sign MoU to drive sustainable development across key sectors



Dr Satyam Roychowdhury
Founder & Managing Director, Techno India Group
Chancellor, Sister Nivedita University & Techno India University, Tripura

Bridging the Knowledge Gap

Edupreneurship, for Dr Satyam Roychowdhury, is more than building institutions, it is about building futures

DR SATYAM ROYCHOWDHURY

As an edupreneur, I have lived by these words: "The empowerment of youth is the most potent force in bringing social and economic change." "Education, when planned well, is not only imparting knowledge but is, in fact, shaping and building nations." These ideals have remained constant in all that I have accomplished over these four decades as Founder as well as Managing Director of Techno India Group and as Chancellor, Sister Nivedita University and Techno India University, Tripura.

When I established the Techno India Group in the mid-1980s, my dream was to fill the widening gap that existed between conventional education and changing demands in industry and society. Today, with more than 100,000 students in our schools, colleges, and universities, that dream is still transforming and changing. The objective was to prepare young minds with industry skills, critical thinking skills, and practical experiences for a global workplace.

At Sister Nivedita University, the gap between industry and academia is always being bridged. Our curriculum is innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology-centric. Digitalization of the education sector, inclusive of virtual classrooms, online testing, adoption of AI, IoT, blockchain, ML, and immersive technology, is the need of the hour. These technologies act not as supplements to the learning process, but as facilitators to gear up the students to face the real world.

Research-oriented education is the third and final tenet of our vision. Through our research work, we aim to generate efficient, ethical, and future-ready professionals by mapping our programmes according to global tendencies in the economy. Our non-academic activities, like our academic ones, are aligned such that our students are ready and prepared for their internships, jobs, and entrepreneurial ventures.

Closing the skill gap is the essence of my philosophy. Education and skill-building have to go alongside each other. Our institutions bring about skill-centric education integrated with practical training, internships, and problem-solving techniques. It increases employability but also encourages entrepreneurship, and young people have to become job makers rather than job seekers.

Innovation in education should also be value-based. As part of my activities and through Satyam Roychowdhury Foundation, I have strived to integrate social responsiveness with economic viability. Such activities, including awarding scholarships to meritorious yet impoverished students and the program Adwitiyam aimed at enhancing the quality of education in various districts of the state of West Bengal, illustrate this effort.

Writing and traveling have further enlarged my horizons, enabling me to think intensely about education, culture, and humanity. Whether through my writings or my work in education, my agenda has always remained the same: I want to build institutions which can empower the youth, innovation, and the purposeful skilled manpower in a more balanced world.

About the Author
Satyam Roychowdhury is a successful Indian edupreneur, a prolific writer, a philanthropist, and the first person from India to receive the title of Honorary Academician from the Albertina Academy of Fine Arts in Italy and Chanakya Award for visionary leadership skills. He is committed to spreading quality private education in Bengal.



Ravishankar Bhooplapur
President, Xavier University School of Medicine Aruba

Changing Paradigms in Medical Education

Ravishankar Bhooplapur addresses the global shortage of health care professionals while honing globally competent individuals who are versatile and perform well under different health settings into, and careers in health care

RAVISHANKAR BHOOPLAPUR

The global healthcare system is at a critical juncture. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the world will face a shortage of about 11 million healthcare professionals by the year 2030 because of a growing aged population, underfunding in the health sector, professional migration and burnout. To close the current gap, there is a need to invest in the training of at least 5.6 million new professionals.

However, the world is experiencing a paradigm change in medical education led by emerging technologies and changing healthcare delivery systems coupled with rising health complexities. This means that education is now centred on competency-based education, teamwork, digital health solutions and social determinants of health. It requires globally competent individuals who are versatile and perform well under different health settings.

Worldwide, the need for doctors has increased. According to reports by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the United States alone is projected to be short by as many as 37,800 to 124,000 physicians by the year 2034. This is also occurring in Europe, Canada, Australia, and surprisingly, a similar scenario is seen in veterinary medicine. Because of these challenges and requirements, aspiring students, especially from India, began looking at international options for their medical education at universities abroad like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and developing education centres like China and the Philippines.

In India too, the medical landscape is undergoing a dramatic transformation, using telemedicine, artificial intelligence, and digital health solutions. There are 644 medical recognised colleges with a limited number of seats in government colleges, making entry through highly competitive NEET. The shift towards competency-based medical education increases the competitiveness even further through innovative learning solutions.

Technology has emerged as a major enabler in medical education. Online platforms, simulation learning, virtual reality, customised learning paths, and a focus on communication and empathy skills are changing the face of medical education.

Recognising these realities and challenges, global partnerships and collaborations have become a powerful solution. Xavier University of Medicine, Aruba, and KLE University in Belgavi- India, through their joint and unique collaborative programme offer students a seamless and rewarding pathway to medical education. Students will start their medical studies at KLE University in Belgavi- India, before advancing to basic sciences at Xavier University School of Medicine in Aruba, and finish with clinical rotations at teaching hospitals affiliated with and located throughout the United States. Xavier University of Medicine, Aruba, in collaboration with the Government of Aruba and the United Nations International Organization for Migration, will open a community clinic providing free medical care to local residents.

Such international programs offer meaningful exposure to varied healthcare systems, cultures, and medical practices.

About the Author
Ravishankar Bhooplapur is based in New York, he is also known for philanthropy, including founding Gift of Life India, hich has provided free heart surgeries to over 6,500 children. Under his leadership, XUSOM has graduated over 1,200 doctors and is recognized as a top Caribbean medical school.



Praveen Rao Akkinepally
Country President
& MD, Astra Zeneca

Driving Innovation and Access in Indian Healthcare Leadership

Praveen Rao Akkinepally is steering India's healthcare transformation through strategic leadership and a strong focus on patient care

As the global healthcare sector grapples with new challenges and undergoes rapid transformations, Praveen Rao Akkinepally is leading from the front as the Country President and Managing Director of AstraZeneca India, one of the world's leading biopharmaceutical companies. With a strong focus on innovation, enhanced patient access to healthcare, and sustainable growth, he has played a significant role in strengthening AstraZeneca's presence in the Indian market.

With over two decades of experience across pharmaceuticals and healthcare strategy, Akkinepally brings a nuanced understanding of both global and local healthcare ecosystems to his role. His career reflects a consistent commitment to building high-performing teams, promoting ethical business practices, and aligning commercial success with the demands of public health priorities.

As head of AstraZeneca India, he oversees the company's operations across therapy areas, such as oncology, cardiovascular, renal and metabolic diseases, respiratory care, and rare diseases. Under his leadership, AstraZeneca has continued to expand its portfolio of new-age medicines, and ramped up engagement with healthcare professionals, policymakers and patient groups to improve outcomes for people with chronic and life-threatening illnesses.

One of Akkinepally's chief core priorities has been improving patient access to advanced therapies in a diversified and complex market like India. He has forged partnerships with government agencies, hospitals and academic institutions to strengthen early diagnosis, raise disease awareness and ensure affordability. These efforts align with AstraZeneca's global commitment to science-led innovation and equitable healthcare delivery.

During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, Akkinepally was instrumental in steering the company through unprecedented challenges. AstraZeneca India contributed to national efforts to drive vaccination awareness, build supply chain resilience and ensure continuity of care for non-COVID patients. His leadership during this period highlighted the importance of agility, collaboration and responsibility in the healthcare sector.

Laudably, Akkinepally has succeeded in crafting a strategic vision that looks beyond commercial growth, and championed sustainability and environmental stewardship. AstraZeneca has declared ambitious climate mitigation goals at a global level, and in India, Akkinepally has actively supported initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions, promoting responsible manufacturing and integrating sustainability into business practices and decision-making.

A passionate advocate of people-centric leadership, Akkinepally places deep emphasis on nurturing talent and has stood for diversity and inclusion. He believes that an empowered and inclusive workforce is critical for innovation and long-term success. Under his stewardship, AstraZeneca India has continued to invest in leadership development, employee well-being and sustaining a culture of integrity and transparency.

Akkinepally is also known for his engagement with industry forums and his participation in healthcare dialogues, where he has spoken on the future of biopharmaceutical innovation, digital health, and the evolving role of industry in supporting India's healthcare targets. He has underscored the need for science-based policy, faster clinical research, and stronger collaboration between industry and academia.

At a time when India's healthcare needs are shifting due to an ageing population and a rising burden of non-communicable diseases, Akkinepally's has created an approach to operations that strikes a balance between business excellence and societal responsibility, and establishes that pharmaceutical companies must not only deliver medicines, but also contribute meaningfully to the development of healthier communities. This, coupled with Akkinepally's ethical leadership and a patient-first mindset, continues to shape AstraZeneca India's role in advancing modern healthcare, and simultaneously responding to the country's evolving health challenges.

The Pinnacle of Sustainable Elegance

Ashish Puravankara shares with the *Outlook*, the organisation's holistic approach to sustainable and superior quality living through balanced use of resources, technology and eco-friendly solutions



Ashish Puravankara
Managing Director, Puravankara Group

How has the vision of Puravankara Group evolved over the past 50 years?
As Puravankara marks 50 years, our vision reflects the evolution of an organisation that has grown with India's changing urban landscape. When the company was founded in 1975, the aspiration was simple: to build quality homes with integrity, transparency and deep respect for the customer. These values laid the foundation for "a culture of trust" that continues to guide us today.

As cities expanded and expectations shifted, our vision matured from constructing buildings to creating communities that offer comfort, belonging and long-term value. The "You Philosophy," which places the customer at the centre of every decision, remains our anchor.

In a rapidly changing real estate market, what strategies has the company adopted to stay competitive?
Competitiveness today requires agility, disciplined governance and a deep understanding of consumer behaviour. Our approach begins with prudent land acquisition and a clear focus on markets with long-term demand fundamentals. We have strengthened internal processes, upgraded project management frameworks and adopted digital platforms that improve transparency and speed.

Customer expectations are evolving rapidly, and our ability to respond with relevant design, efficient layouts, meaningful amenities and predictable delivery timelines is central to staying ahead. Our commitment to quality, disciplined growth and consistent execution remains the foundation of our competitive strength.

How are you integrating green building practices, innovation and technology in your projects to make them more sustainable?
Sustainability and technology now guide every stage of our development cycle. All new projects are designed to meet recognised green-building standards. Our new projects, Purva Meraki and Purva Zentech in Bengaluru, have received IGBC Gold pre-certification, while Purva Winworth 2 in Kochi has secured IFC EDGE Pre-Certification, reflecting strong gains in resource efficiency.

We are enhancing environmental performance through climate-responsive design, smart metering, BMS systems, solar-powered common areas and advanced water-recycling initiatives. Our BluNex Life platform elevates in-home sustainability with air-quality monitoring, water purification, home automation and smart security features. Our goal is to ensure that every sustainable feature and every technology layer delivers clear, measurable benefits for residents and for the environment.

What are Puravankara's future plans? Which segments or markets are you focusing on?
Puravankara's next chapter is about scaling with purpose and strengthening our presence in India's most important urban centres. We see sustained opportunity in premium and aspirational housing across Bengaluru, Chennai, Kochi, Mumbai and Pune. In Mumbai, additionally, we are deepening our presence through redevelopment, enabling us to reimagine established neighbourhoods and deliver modern communities.

Alongside residential, we are building a calibrated commercial and mixed-use portfolio to generate long-term annuity income and complement our core business. Our approach remains disciplined, design-led and capital-efficient, with a clear ambition to shape the next generation of urban living in India.



DK Shivakumar
Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka
Minister for Bengaluru Development and Water Resources

Powering Karnataka's Urban Transformation and Inclusive Growth

From a bold infrastructure vision and water security reforms to startup-driven innovation, grassroots politics, and women-centric welfare, the Deputy Chief Minister blends assertive leadership with long-term institutional change

Spearheading the development of Bengaluru's infrastructure, encompassing extensive mobility and future-ready city development strategies, DK has announced an ambitious investment plan for ₹1 lakh crore. At the heart of this future vision is the country's first city tunnel mobility system, including the development of a 40 km twin tunnel for traffic decongestion. These proposals include significant extension projects for *Namma Metro*, a 41-km double-decker metro line, and a 110-km elevated corridor network. The government has announced the development of a 9,000-acre 'AI City' located at Bidadi in addition to tech cities to establish Bengaluru as a world-class innovation hub.

Road upgrades, pothole repairs, a second airport, an NRI Secretariat, and the "Walk with Bengaluru" citizen outreach initiative further reflect a holistic approach to urban governance.

The Union Minister intends to bring a modern approach to managing apartments by the Karnataka Apartment Bill, 2025, which clearly specifies the responsibilities of residents' welfare associations and management and sets up a transparent dispute resolution mechanism. Aligning with this, the government has initiated comprehensive reforms relating to property taxes through the *Nambike Nakshe* initiative, which ensures easier approval of sanction plans, and a 100-day initiative to regularise *B-khata* properties, which helps residents to easily process building permits and secure bank loans.

The Startup Policy 2025-2030 targets the incubation of 25,000 startups, which will be largely executed through the domains of deep technology, artificial intelligence, and social entrepreneurship through the use of grants and prizes associated with the Elevate startups programme, among many other initiatives.

As Water Resources Minister, DK Shivkumar has prioritised large-scale irrigation and drinking-water projects to address Karnataka's long-term water needs. Key initiatives include the Yettinahole Drinking Water Project to supply water to drought-prone regions and the Cauvery Phase-V expansion to improve Bengaluru's water security. Alongside water management, he has driven the "Green and Clean Bengaluru" vision, which includes enforcing a plastic ban, fencing and rejuvenating lakes, introducing thousands of electric buses, and implementing a citywide cleanliness campaign. The Clean Bengaluru drive emphasises scientific garbage disposal and the development of waste-to-energy units to promote sustainability and urban resilience.

Shivakumar believes women are capable of achieving more with support and direction, reaffirming the government's commitment to gender-inclusive policies. Under the *Gruha Lakshmi scheme,* women heads of households receive ₹2,000 a month to strengthen family security. Other women-centric guarantee schemes, like the *Shakti scheme*, provide free bus travel, expanding women's mobility, dignity, and access to work and education. A flagship initiative is introducing a one-day paid menstrual leave each month for women employees, underscoring inclusive workplaces. Shivakumar champions women's leadership, citing 50% reservation in local bodies and committing to implementing 33% Assembly reservation. He supports unified women employees' associations and *Streeshakthi* self-help groups to root current efforts in continuity and long-term impact.

As a master strategist and the Congress Party's organisational backbone, DK Sivakumar's holistic approach focuses on urban infrastructure, water management, technological advancement and women empowerment.

Building a vision into a 21,000-Employee Global Enterprise

From two employees to a global workforce, from humble beginnings to international ambition, U R Uday Kumar and Amps stand as proof of how vision and persistence can garner success



U R Uday Kumar, Founder & MD Amps Facilities Management Services Pvt Ltd, INDIA & UAE

At just 22 years of age, armed with determination and little else, U R Uday Kumar founded Amps Facilities Management Services in 1999 with two employees and a modest office in Bengaluru. What began as a small corporate services venture has today grown into one of India's most comprehensive facility management companies, employing over 21,000 professionals across India and the UAE and serving more than 500 + clients, including global Fortune 500 leaders such as Microsoft, Google, Toyota, Wells Fargo, AMD, Mercedes-Benz and NVIDIA.

A Story of Grit and Gumption

A first-generation entrepreneur, Uday Kumar did not inherit an empire—he built one from the ground up. Raised in a small village in Mudigere, Chikkamagaluru, where his father worked as an estate writer, opportunities were scarce. From staying in a government hostel to leading a multinational organisation, his journey reflects grit, resilience and an unshakeable belief in learning and discipline.

Today, Amps is often described as the silent backbone of corporate India—ensuring lights never flicker, systems never fail and workplaces run seamlessly. Operating 24x7, 365 days a year, the company delivers integrated facility management, engineering operations, maintenance and soft services, backed by ISO 9001:2015, ISO 45001, EMS 14001& US Green building certifications. Its reputation for reliability and zero downtime has made it a preferred partner for critical data centres, manufacturing plants, airports and global offices.

Environmental Stewardship and Nation Building

Beyond operational excellence, Amps has emerged as a leader in energy conservation and sustainability. Through automation, IoT-based monitoring, CMMS platforms and energy-efficient retrofits, the company has helped clients achieve significant power savings while reducing environmental impact. The use of biodegradable cleaning products, green procurement and sustainable practices reflects a culture where responsibility is rooted in action, not words. The company continuously emphasizes decarbonization through tree plantation initiatives, preservation of local flora and fauna, and sustained environmental conservation efforts.

Uday Kumar's commitment to nation-building extends beyond business. Under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, Amps has played a key role in upgrading the Government ITI College in Chikkamagaluru, earning recognition from the Government of Karnataka and leading to his appointment as Chairman of the ITI College.

Addressing the shortage of skilled manpower Amps actively conducts inclusive job fairs across India, empowering women, rural youth through targeted job opportunities in engineering, O&M, and soft services as part of Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Our initiatives also include rural training programs and digital learning through the AMPS Learn Lab, bridging gaps and fostering equal access to growth opportunities for all

Achievements and Future-Forward Thinking

The company's consistent performance has earned numerous accolades from SAP Labs, Cisco, Microsoft, Britannia, and the prestigious Rashtriya Rattan Award for Uday Kumar's contribution to business and society. In 2025, he was honoured with the "Trusted and Preferred Indian Facility Management Company" Award at the ET Achievers Awards, presented at a grand ceremony in Bengaluru.

Over the years, Amps has diversified into eco-friendly five-star hospitality, coffee and spice plantations, sustainable agriculture and even socially driven cinema. Looking ahead, Uday Kumar envisions expanding Amps' footprint to Singapore and Europe, pursuing an IPO, investing deeper in renewable energy, and creating sustainable rural employment.



Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft

Shaping AI For Humanity

Satya Nadella's cloud vision and empathetic leadership transformed Microsoft, making it a global leader in AI

When Satya Nadella took over as CEO of Microsoft in 2014, the iconic tech giant was struggling under the weight of its own history. Once the most powerful software company in the world, it had grown too large to adapt quickly, too tied to the fading Windows era and too internally competitive to innovate at the speed modern technology demanded. A decade later, the story could not be more different. Today the company stands at the forefront of cloud computing, artificial intelligence, gaming, cybersecurity and enterprise transformation — valued at more than USD 3 trillion. And a significant part of this remarkable turnaround bears the unmistakable imprint of Nadella's leadership.

Born in Hyderabad and trained as an engineer, Nadella's rise from India to the top of one of the world's most influential companies is often hailed as a tale of intelligence, humility and relentless learning. But those who have worked closely with him point to something deeper: his rare ability to "listen intensely," cut through complexity and take decisive action without unnecessary noise. Nadella brought empathy — an unusual quality in the high-pressure tech world — into the center of corporate decision-making and turned it into a strategic advantage.

One of his boldest and most defining moves was pivoting the company decisively toward cloud computing. At a time when competitors were racing ahead, Nadella pushed Microsoft to rethink its identity, its products and its partnerships. Azure, once an underdog, grew into the fastest-expanding cloud platform in the world. Under his leadership, the company shed its reputation for insularity, embraced open-source ecosystems and welcomed collaboration rather than rivalry. Nadella reinforced this shift with a now-famous line: "Our industry does not respect tradition — only innovation." Every major transformation under his tenure reflects that philosophy.

In the realm of artificial intelligence, Nadella has emerged as one of the most influential global voices. The company's sweeping partnership with OpenAI placed it at the epicentre of the AI revolution, shaping tools that are redefining productivity, creativity and enterprise systems across the world. Yet even as he pushes the boundaries of innovation, he consistently advocates for responsibility and ethics, reminding the industry that AI must be not only powerful, but beneficial to society.

Beyond strategy and technology, Nadella's leadership carries a deeply human dimension. His worldview has been shaped by personal experiences, including raising a child with disabilities, which infused his leadership with empathy and emotional intelligence. He often speaks of empathy not as a soft skill, but as a catalyst for innovation, inclusion and organisational resilience.

Under Nadella, the company has transformed from a traditional software giant into a culture-led, cloud-first, AI-powered global powerhouse. Quietly but decisively, he has reshaped its purpose and direction. If the 20th century belonged to Gates' Microsoft, Nadella has ensured that the 21st belongs to a reinvented, faster, humbler and unmistakably future-ready version of the company.

Shaping a Sustainable Energy Ecosystem

IntelliSmart is empowering millions of consumers by laying the foundation of a resilient, intelligent, and inclusive energy future for modern India



Anil Rawal, MD & CEO, IntelliSmart Infra

India's vision to become the world's third-largest economy with a $5 trillion GDP is underpinned by a critical prerequisite: a modern, robust and resilient energy infrastructure capable of powering rapid economic expansion while keeping the planet green. Towards India's journey to Viksit Bharat, IntelliSmart Infrastructure is a key enabler, leading the digital transformation of the energy sector and empowering the lives of millions of grassroots consumers. Through large-scale deployment of smart meters, the company is not merely modernizing electricity distribution; it is building the backbone of an intelligent energy system leveraging cutting-edge technologies such as AI/ML, Big Data, analytics and Blockchain that a multi-trillion-dollar economy demands.

India's energy future is built on three pillars: the 3Ds of Democratization, Digitalization and Decarbonization. IntelliSmart is enabling all three: democratizing energy by empowering consumers while strengthening grid resilience, digitalizing infrastructure through AI-driven grid intelligence and facilitating decarbonization by seamlessly integrating renewable energy into the grid.

Smart metering is the backbone of grid digitalisation, RE and DER integration. As intermittent distributed energy resources grow, DISCOMs face unprecedented challenges that demand digitalization at both consumer and distribution network levels. Smart metering is the foundational step toward grid digitalization. DERs create voltage fluctuations and supply variability that threaten grid stability, requiring careful network planning at the distribution transformer level to enable bidirectional power flow. This involves rigorous assessment of transformer capacity, detailed load profile analysis and identification of high-DER penetration areas to ensure seamless energy exchange between DERs and the grid. IntelliSmart is leading this transformation with an order book of over 22 million smart meters and 5.6 million already deployed across states.

Consumers have a voice in the grid. The most defining shift of this digital transformation in the power sector is that, for the first time, consumers have a real voice in the grid. Smart meters empower consumers with transparency, control over consumption and the ability to participate actively in energy management through time-based tariffs and Demand Response programs.

Skilling India's energy workforce. Economic growth is not built on technology alone; it requires a skilled workforce to operate it. IntelliSmart is providing highly advanced, job-ready training programs for the rapidly evolving energy sector, accessible to anyone, anywhere in India without any fee.

The company has established India's only Centre of Excellence for Smart Metering, offering highly specialized, mission-critical training in complex smart grid technologies. For the first time, training in modern energy systems requiring both technical mastery and rigorous safety protocols is available free nationwide. Through its Student Training in Electrician Program (STEP), IntelliSmart is training 10,000 ITI students over three years, creating a pipeline of high skilled job ready talent. Under SafeLine program, IntelliSmart trains DISCOM linemen in advanced safety protocols, ensuring that the frontline workers of the sector remain protected while performing their duties, reflecting the company's non-negotiable safety-first culture.

As India charts its course toward a $5 trillion economy, IntelliSmart is building the essential digital infrastructure that will power this economic transformation. By fundamentally transforming how the nation distributes and consumes energy, IntelliSmart is architecting India's intelligent energy future and enabling the nation's economic ascent.



Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, GOI

Simple Solutions to Complicated Problems

Dr S Jayashankar emphasises the impact of conflicts on developing nations and the need of a multipolar approach to international relations, moving beyond western dominance

Dr S Jaishankar has been the Minister of External Affairs of India since May 30th, 2019. He is a Member of the Upper House (Rajya Sabha) of India's Parliament from the state of Gujarat. He has garnered attention for his witty replies and oratory skills. He advocates for more robust and collaborative diplomacy in the face of global conflicts.

Jaishankar's tenure in 2019 as India's EAM came amid massive uncertainties owing to global turbulence and conflicts. His tenure saw episodes like the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Israel-Hamas war, and the Covid pandemic, all of which left a strong impact on not just the Indian economy but also that of the whole world. He highlighted the shift towards negotiation in the Russia-Ukraine war and India's role in facilitating communication.

However, despite pressure from the West, India has not refrained from purchasing Russian oil below the price cap. In the Israel-Hamas war, India strongly condemned the October 7 terror attack but has also continued with its weight behind the 'two-state solution' to the long-running Israel-Palestine conflict. India also sent humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza as part of its commitment.

AS EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, JAISHANKAR HAS CRAFTED THE ASSERTIVE AND AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY. HE CLOSELY MAINTAINED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA EVEN AFTER THE DOKLAM STANDOFF

As External Affairs Minister, Jaishankar has crafted the assertive and aggressive foreign policy. He closely maintained the relationship between India and China even after the Doklam Standoff.

He served as India's Foreign Secretary from January 2015 to January 2018, where he played a key role in negotiating the India-U.S. civilian nuclear agreement. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1977 and held key roles during his career, including stints as High Commissioner to Singapore and as Ambassador to China and the U.S. Jaishankar was India's longest-serving ambassador to China, with a four-and-a-half-year term. In Beijing, Jaishankar was involved in improving economic, trade, and cultural relations between China and India and in managing the Sino-Indian border dispute. He has also served in other diplomatic assignments in embassies in Moscow, Colombo, Budapest, and Tokyo, as well as in the Ministry of External Affairs and the President's Secretariat. His professional experience as a diplomat gives him a detailed perspective into geopolitics, and his leadership quality and acumen are a combined skill for his success.

Dr S Jaishankar is a graduate of St. Stephen's College at the University of Delhi. He has a Masters in Political Science and an MPhil and PhD in international relations from JNU, Delhi. He is a recipient of the Padma Shri award in 2019 and has written widely acclaimed best-selling books: The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World, which was published in 2020, and Why Bharat Matters, which was published in 2024.

Life-Changing Therapies for Unmet Healthcare Needs

Sharvil Patel, spearheading one of the leading global healthcare providers and the 4th largest life sciences company in India



Dr Sharvil Patel
Managing Director, Zydus Lifesciences Limited

How do you balance a legacy enterprise with a futuristic approach in a highly competitive global pharma landscape?
Education has always been central to our family values, especially the belief that one must be thoroughly trained in their chosen profession. My grandfather embodied this by becoming a pharmacist—first as an academician and then as an entrepreneur. My father followed a similar path, earning a Master's degree in pharmacy. They inspired me to follow the same discipline, as our organisation had been steadily moving toward a research-led future—a vision first articulated in the 1950s.

Our 1995 vision was equally forward-looking. We aspired to become a research-based pharmaceutical organisation by 2020—a bold and unconventional goal at the time. Leadership to me is an exercise in foresight, patience, and purpose, enabling us to balance the strengths of a legacy enterprise with the demands of a future-focused, competitive global landscape.

What guiding philosophy drives your approach to research and innovation, and how do you prioritise?
Our research is guided by one principle: making a meaningful contribution to patients in India and globally. Innovation, for us, addresses unmet healthcare needs. We focus on complex, hard-to-develop areas such as biologics, vaccines, and novel therapies, where impact can be transformative. This philosophy led to first-in-class innovations like Saroglitazar for NASH and India's first indigenously developed DNA-based COVID-19 vaccine.

We are also developing therapies for ALS, Parkinson's disease, fibrosis, and Primary Biliary Cholangitis, and have launched treatments for rare and orphan diseases such as progeria and MoCD Type A. Prioritisation is guided by where our scientific capabilities, long-term commitment, and sense of purpose intersect, allowing our teams to innovate with intent, depth, and resilience.

How are you bridging healthcare access gaps in underserved communities?
Our CSR initiatives follow five pillars: Swasthya, Shiksha, Shodh, Saath, and Saksham. Swasthya focuses on transforming healthcare by providing quality medical services and promoting medical education. The Zydus Foundation runs the 1,034-bed Zydus Hospital and Medical College in Dahod, offering all services free of cost and treating over 4 lakh outpatients annually.

Students from the medical college adopt local families, visiting homes to guide them on health and well-being. Sickle cell disease, a major challenge in the region, is addressed through nutritional support and education. This outreach has increased awareness, encouraged hospital visits, and reduced mortality.

As President of IPA, what is your opinion on the role of Indian companies in shaping global healthcare solutions?
India must focus on three priorities to maintain its global leadership: quality, access, and innovation. Continuous quality improvement ensures regulatory compliance in India and worldwide. Through a balanced approach to intellectual property to safeguard generics supply, Indian pharmaceutical companies improve global access to affordable, high-quality medicines, lowering healthcare costs.

Developing a robust discovery-led innovation ecosystem is critical, and the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance plays a central role in shaping this balance. By prioritising quality, access, and innovation, Indian companies can continue to lead in pharmaceuticals, benefiting the nation and patients worldwide.



Resul Pookutty, Indian sound designer

Transforming Cinema Through Soundcraft

From a Kerala village to Hollywood's global stage, Resul Pookutty reshaped Indian cinematic sound

Resul Pookutty, one of India's most acclaimed sound designers and most recognisable figures in global sound engineering, has spent more than two decades expanding the creative and technical vocabulary of Indian cinema. Best known internationally for winning the Academy Award for Best Sound Mixing for Slumdog Millionaire (2009), Pookutty's journey from a remote village in Kerala to Hollywood's most prestigious stage has become emblematic of how talent, persistence and discipline can transcend structural constraints.

Born in Vilakkupara village in Kollam district, Pookutty's early years were shaped by economic hardship and limited access to education. Yet it was precisely this environment that honed his sensitivity to the textures of everyday sound — the murmur of forests, the rhythm of labour, the cadence of rural life. After graduating from the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, he entered the industry at a time when sound design was still considered peripheral to cinematic craft. Over the years, he would become one of the foremost voices advocating for sound as an equal narrative pillar, not merely a technical appendage.

His work on Slumdog Millionaire placed Indian sound artistry on the world map, bringing global attention to the possibilities of location sound in Indian environments. But the Oscar was only one landmark in a long career defined by experimentation. Pookutty has collaborated with a wide range of filmmakers — from Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Rajkumar Hirani to Shankar and James Cameron — consistently pushing the boundaries of what Indian sound design can achieve. Films like Black, Ghajini, Enthiran, Delhi-6 and 2.0 bear the imprint of his approach: immersive atmospheres, precision layering and emotional resonance.

A committed advocate for industry reform, Pookutty has often highlighted the structural challenges faced by sound professionals in India — fragmented workflows, inadequate budgets, limited institutional support and the persistent undervaluation of artistic labour. As a former Governing Council member of FTII and a vocal participant in cultural policy discussions, he has argued for better training, equitable work environments and recognition of sound as central to storytelling.

Despite his international visibility, Pookutty has remained rooted in regional and independent cinema. His work across Malayalam, Hindi, Tamil and international productions demonstrates his belief that sound must serve the integrity of the story rather than the scale of the film. Outside cinema, he has engaged with documentary, theatre and installation projects, widening the scope of sound as an artistic medium.

In recent years, Pookutty has spoken about the need for Indian cinema to embrace cutting-edge technologies while preserving indigenous sonic traditions. For him, the shift to immersive formats such as Dolby Atmos must coexist with the everyday music of Indian landscapes. The Oscar, he often notes, was not merely a personal milestone but a moment that signaled India's arrival as a serious contributor to the global sound ecosystem.

As Indian cinema continues to evolve—from OTT-led storytelling to large-scale global co-productions—Resul Pookutty's work stands as both inspiration and blueprint. His career has demonstrated that sound, when crafted with intention and artistry, can shape the emotional architecture of a film as profoundly as any image. In doing so, he has helped redefine how Indian cinema listens to itself — and how the world listens to India.

Building the Future of Intelligent Security

A domain specialist, Anand V Bhat, CMD BNB Group speaks of his pivotal role in shaping India's intelligent security and automation landscape in conversation with Aditi Chakraborty.



Anand V Bhat
Founder, Chairman and Managing Director BNB group

How would you describe the journey of BNB Security & Automation Solutions?

Beginning of my career in 1988, the security and automation industry in India was largely fragmented and awareness was very limited. Despite a large shift in the 90's, state-of-the-art products were still beyond reach. Having spent initial 4 years in R&D and then about 18 years on the business front, I frequently came across customers expressing their challenges. My vision was to create an organisation that could deliver integrated solutions to address these difficulties. I always believed that safety, automation, and efficiency should work together seamlessly, and that belief became the foundation of BNB.

The company evolved into India's leading ELV system integrator, delivering end-to-end solutions across critical sectors such as IT & ITES, manufacturing, government, and commercial infrastructure. Today, with a combined strength of more than 900 trained workforce, we have completed over 200 projects. We have expanded our operations overseas to include Singapore, Malaysia and the UAE.

Growth has come with a clear focus on quality, consistency, and people. We invested early in building strong technical capabilities, robust processes, and long-term partnerships. At the same time, we stayed close to our customers' evolving needs and, most importantly, became a trusted partner.

How has technology influenced BNB's evolution?

Technology has been a key enabler. We have embraced AI-enabled solutions, IoT-based automation, GSOCS, and predictive maintenance models to deliver smarter and more reliable solutions, positioning BNB at the forefront of next-generation infrastructure solutions. Our focus has always been on practical application to solve real operational challenges; that has earned BNB recognition and appreciation from global and Indian enterprises.

We emphasize quality, innovation, and operational discipline, which has enabled us to scale rapidly while maintaining high compliance standards, industry certifications, and long-term client relationships.

What led to the launch of BNB Workplace?

BNB Workplace was a natural extension of our journey. As organisations rethink how workplaces are designed and operated, there is a growing need for integrated solutions for office comfort. Specialising in curated office furniture, and collaborative spaces, BNB Workplace is an authorised dealer for Steelcase, a US-based office furniture brand. This allows us to contribute to creating customised future-ready work environments that are technology driven. This strategic diversification strengthens BNB Group's ability to deliver holistic infrastructure experiences that combine technology, safety, functionality, and sustainability.

How does BNB ensure environmental responsibility and sustainability?

BNB takes responsibility for environmental solutions through a strong Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) framework and a commitment to sustainable innovation. We have established clear EHS standards by aligning our policies with client requirements, embedding them into contracts, and delivering comprehensive on-site and off-site training. Safety performance is reinforced through continuous vigilance, motivation, and accountability. With experience in LEED-certified projects, BNB integrates ESG and sustainability principles into smart building solutions. By leveraging AI analytics, IoT efficiency, and carbon-neutral technologies, we deliver secure, intelligent, and future-ready infrastructure that benefits businesses, communities, and the environment.



Naveen Jindal, Member of Parliament, Chairman, Jindal Steel and Power Limited, Chancellor, OP Jindal Global University.

Building and creating world-class competences to make India self-reliant

For me, the Tiranga is much more than a flag. It's a symbol I see everywhere every day - from a flag bearer to the lapel pin I wear to work daily. My devotion to this sacred symbol led me to fight for its liberation, and it continues to inspire me to remain dedicated to its cause, says Naveen Jindal

Naveen Jindal moved a private member Bill for a comprehensive Food and Nutrition Security Scheme which became the basis for the Food Security Act. Also, it was after Jindal's continuous efforts and prolonged commitment to the issue that got Indian citizens the right to fly the national flag on all days. As President of Flag Foundation of India (FFI) Naveen Jindal welcomed the latest Amendment to the Flag Code of India 2002 after which a common citizen can hoist and unfurl the national flag 24 hours a day at their homes and office locations.

The Naveen Jindal Group is finalising a Rs 15,000 crore investment plan for the development of renewable energy (RE) projects, aimed at generating captive clean fuel for its ramped-up steelmaking operations. As per the blueprint, the group is focusing on building new capacity additions with four GW of RE sources in-house within the next couple of years. This would help the Group reduce carbon emissions and produce green steel.

The new steel capacity are being planned under Jindal Renewable Power for developing solar and wind power projects for which sites have been identified, and land acquisition is underway. Majority of the projects will be in Rajasthan and Karnataka. Further, the objective is to be more environmental, social and governance (ESG) compliant.

Jindal Steel and Power has emphasised the focus area for investment as steel and ancillary businesses such as mines, ports and power, and focus on green technologies to decarbonise its steel business.steelmaking capacity to about 15 million tonnes per annum by 2025-26.

Naveen Jindal Group's foray into green energy is poised to make a substantial impact on India's energy landscape, contributing to the nation's ambitious renewable energy targets. By leveraging cutting-edge technology and innovative solutions, the conglomerate aims to enhance efficiency, scalability, and sustainability across its renewable energy ventures. Moreover, the initiative is expected to generate employment opportunities, stimulate economic growth, and foster socio-economic development in the regions where these projects are implemented. Naveen Jindal Group is not only aligning with international sustainability goals but also positioning itself as a leader in the green energy revolution.

Jindal founded the O.P. Jindal Global University (OPJGU or JGU) in 2009, in memory of his father, Mr. O.P. Jindal. Jindal is also the Founder and Patron of the OP Jindal University, Chhattisgarh.It started as an engineering college and in a span of 4years, OPJU became India's first and only private university to offer courses in steelmaking, metallurgy and management. The University was awarded the 'Best Private University in Chhattisgarh' at The Progress Global Awards 2020.



Madhukar Gangadi, Founder & CEO, MedPlus

A Mission to Democratise Healthcare

Dr Madhukar Gangadi, MD and CEO of MedPlus, reflects on building India's trusted pharmacy chain and making quality medicines affordable for all. An *Outlook* Interview

Q What was the spark that started MedPlus?

While pursuing my MBA at Wharton, I knew I wanted to return to India and was on the lookout for opportunities. During my fourth semester, I read a WHO report that revealed that 30% of all counterfeit drugs globally were manufactured in India. I saw that there were no brands in the retail pharmacy chain, and because people didn't have a brand to protect, they could sell substandard or fake medicines. I wrote a business plan around this, with the goal of creating a brand that would inspire trust with genuine medicines at the right price. That's how we started MedPlus in 2006. Today, we operate 5,000 stores, serving over 500,000 customers daily, becoming one of the few pharmacy chains to achieve this scale in India.

Q How has your focus evolved since founding MedPlus?

We started MedPlus with the primary goal of making genuine medicines available at the best possible prices. As we continued to scale and as our stores went beyond the first 500 stores, we realized that there was an opportunity to make drugs through contract manufacturing and sell them directly to customers. We evolved from selling only other companies' drugs to making our own drugs. Given that 95% of medicines sold in the country are products for which the patents have long expired, it was easy for us to create a full assortment. Selling directly without intermediaries allows us to sell at a discount of 50-80% compared to the market prices.

Q As both a doctor and entrepreneur, how do you balance profitability with affordability and ethics?

It's never been about striking a balance. As long as you create value for customers, profitability follows naturally. Our scale allows us to purchase directly from manufacturers at unmatched prices and pass those savings to customers. We've never believed in doing business at the customer's expense.

Q What potential do you see in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities?

The problem of inferior quality medicines is far more prevalent in smaller towns. Addressing this motivates us more than profits.

India's rapid urbanisation means villages are becoming towns, and towns are becoming cities. People are earning more and their health aspirations have grown accordingly. Our expansion into smaller cities serves dual purposes: maximising our footprint and elevating our supply chain, while ensuring everyone has access to genuine medicines at fair prices. We operate stores in villages with populations as low as 5,000, and we're witnessing increased awareness around lifestyle diseases. People aren't just treating acute conditions anymore; they're managing diseases like diabetes, thyroid and hypertension proactively.

Q What role does MedPlus play in India's journey toward a $5 trillion economy?

We want universal medicine access nationwide. We've entered diagnostics, offering up to 80% discounts in cities like Hyderabad. Through telemedicine, we are working towards bringing qualified doctors to small towns, providing proper prescriptions, medications, and creating overall healthcare awareness.



Ajaypal Singh Banga
World Bank President

Leading India's Resilience Amid Global Slowdowns

Ajaypal Singh Banga is known to dream big and it doesn't get much bigger than heading the World Bank

In an era marred by economic uncertainties globally, Ajaypal Singh Banga, the newly appointed President of the World Bank, is amplifying India's role as a beacon of resilience and economic fortitude. Banga, the first person of Indian origin to helm the prestigious institution, has expressed confidence in India's ability to thrive amidst global challenges during his recent interactions.

During his visit to a skill center in Dwarka, Banga commended India's proactive measures, citing the nation's strength in withstanding the adversities posed by the pandemic. "India is doing a lot of things which are helping it to stay ahead during times of a global slowdown," he remarked, emphasizing the significance of the country's high percentage of GDP generated domestically.

Recognized for his extensive experience across diverse sectors spanning over four decades, Banga's nomination by President Joe Biden and subsequent confirmation by The World Bank's Board of Governors in May 2023 signified a pivotal moment for both India and the global financial landscape.

Banga's strategic vision encompasses leveraging India's potential for growth in high-income jobs, particularly in technology and manufacturing sectors. He emphasized the urgency for India to capitalize on the "China plus strategy," citing a finite window of opportunity spanning three to five years as supply chains seek alternative locations.

Furthermore, the World Bank President stressed the importance of fostering cooperation between the World Bank and India, discussing pertinent issues related to the G20 and highlighting the significance of domestic consumption in bolstering the Indian economy amidst the ongoing global slowdown.

Banga outlined his immediate priorities upon assuming his role at the World Bank. His ambitious agenda includes eradicating poverty while ensuring a sustainable planet, followed by the implementation of a robust capital adequacy framework to maximize the institution's balance sheet efficacy. Additionally, he aspires to transform the World Bank into a more efficient entity, aiming to expedite processes and operations.

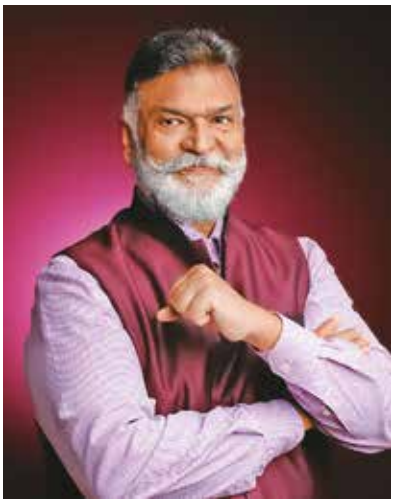
BANGA'S FORESIGHT INTO INDIA'S ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE UNDERSCORES THE CRITICAL ROLE THAT DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION PLAYS IN SHIELDING THE NATION FROM EXTERNAL ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS

Banga's foresight into India's economic landscape underscores the critical role that domestic consumption plays in shielding the nation from external economic downturns. His expertise and focus on financial inclusion, digital transformation, and sustainable development position him uniquely to navigate the World Bank towards fostering growth, alleviating poverty, and addressing climate change concerns.

The appointment of Ajaypal Singh Banga signifies a paradigm shift in global leadership, propelling India's representation on the international stage and reinforcing the country's resilience in the face of economic challenges. As he takes the reins of the World Bank, Banga's tenure holds the promise of steering both India and the global economy toward stability and sustainable growth.

Balancing Tradition with Modern Science

Anurag Agarwal, driving the veterinary healthcare industry with passion, determination and a futuristic view



Anurag Agarwal
MD, Natural Remedies

Q How have you balanced traditional Ayurvedic knowledge with modern scientific validation to build global credibility in animal healthcare?
At Natural Remedies, we have successfully balanced the rich heritage of Ayurvedic knowledge with modern scientific validation to establish global credibility in both animal and human healthcare. Ayurveda, India's ancient science, was developed using the best methods and insights available at the time. Today, rather than relying solely on tradition, we actively integrate modern scientific tools to validate this knowledge. Our formulations undergo rigorous scientific validation, including clinical trials at leading global universities. We employ internationally recognised methodologies such as HPLC analysis, active substance identification, mechanism-of-action studies, genomics, transcriptomics using microarray technology, metabolomics using LCMS technology, and other advanced analytical tools. By translating Ayurvedic wisdom into the language of modern science, rather than expecting global stakeholders to accept it solely based on its 5,000-year history, we have earned widespread trust. This approach positions Natural Remedies as a sincere institution bridging ancient knowledge with contemporary scientific standards, building credibility and acceptance across over 45 countries.

Q What were the challenges you faced while scaling Natural Remedies from a niche herbal enterprise into a world-class R&D driven global company?
Scaling Natural Remedies from a niche herbal enterprise into a world-class, R&D-driven global phytogenic leader has come with unique challenges. Our leaders have grown by continuously experimenting, learning, and applying practices best suited to our industry. What remained uniquely Indian was our unwavering commitment to ethics and values, always seeking win-win outcomes. Our authenticity and consistency helped build strong trust, inviting meaningful guidance and support that accelerated our growth. We have developed patented Natural Remedies standardised botanical powders (NR-SBP), creating industry standards. We have not only set standards for ourselves but have helped in contributing scientific materials for major pharmacopoeias such as the British, US, and Indian Pharmacopoeia, reflecting nearly 70 years of scientific expertise.

Q How does this people-centric approach translate into long-term business success?
Happiness and well-being are central to our organisation. We have learnt that workplace happiness grows when employees feel genuinely cared for, experience authenticity, and trust that commitments are honoured. We emphasise emotional intelligence, mental wellness, and positive interactions alongside professional excellence. Our unique framework, built around vision, values, and life skills and aligned with global benchmarks, has earned certifications such as Great Place to Work and Happiest Place to Work. Through Individual Capability Development Plans and learning platforms like LinkedIn Learning, employees actively shape their growth, fostering innovation, productivity, and long-term business success.

Q How do you see natural and herbal solutions shaping the future of animal nutrition, healthcare and the environment?
Globally, awareness is growing about the long-term side effects of chemical-based products. While synthetic drugs remain critical for acute medical needs, people increasingly prefer natural solutions for maintaining health. We develop phytogenic solutions responsibly, combining traditional wisdom with modern science. Sustainability is central to us; we cultivate herbs across 1,500+ acres using chemical-free, natural farming methods, guide farmers from sowing to harvest, and follow Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). Aligning with ESG principles, we are addressing environmental issues. Guided by insights from partners like PwC, over 50% of our energy is now generated from renewable sources.



Tarun Garg, MD & CEO, Hyundai Motor India Limited

Driving Hyundai India into a New Era of Leadership

Tarun Garg, India's first homegrown MD and CEO, Designate of Hyundai, combines vision, expertise, and innovation to transform the automotive landscape

Automotive sector veteran Tarun Garg has made history. As the first Indian Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL), he has been at the helm of steering one of the country's most prominent automobile companies since October 2025. His appointment represents both a recognition of his personal achievements and Hyundai's confidence in homegrown leadership to guide its operations in a rapidly evolving market.

Garg has brought with him over three decades of rich and varied experience in the Indian automotive sector. A mechanical engineer from Delhi Technological University who went on to get his MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow, he found himself in his element right at the start of his career in the early 1990s with Maruti Suzuki India, as he bridged gaps between engineering innovation and business strategy. He stayed with the auto maker for over two decades, working across functions, including sales, marketing, operations, and dealer networks. Over the years, he wore many hats—Regional Sales Manager, National Sales Head, and Executive Director of Marketing. The skills and knowledge he picked up at these roles continue to inform his work today—a comprehensive understanding of customer preferences, supply chain management, and market dynamics.

Garg's move to Hyundai Motor India in 2019 was as Director of Sales, Marketing, and Service. Quickly distinguished as a visionary leader capable of translating strategy into results, a major promotion came through by 2023, when he became Chief Operating Officer, overseeing the company's operations end-to-end, from manufacturing and logistics to retail networks and customer engagement. Under his guidance, Hyundai India achieved record sales and profits, strengthened its market share, and set new benchmarks in operational efficiency.

Greater triumphs were to come. When Hyundai India went public in 2024, Garg played a meaty part in ensuring that the Initial Public Offering (IPO) was one of the largest in India's corporate history. His leadership during this period was the final affirmation of his ability to navigate complex strategic projects of mammoth proportions, while maintaining operational stability and market confidence.

He has built a thoroughly well-deserved reputation for prioritising strategic thinking without compromising on operational stability and excellence, and for running a ship that brings global product standards to a market where demands are often localised. Expectations are already running high around his contributions to Hyundai's future growth areas—electric mobility, sustainable manufacturing, and digital transformation—and the implementation of a strategic vision with the twin thrusts of expanding Hyundai's footprint in India and positioning the company as a global leader in innovation, quality, and superlative customer experience.

Predictably, Garg's leadership style is people-centric, collaborative, and pivoted on empowering teams, nurturing talent, and encouraging creative problem-solving. His approach has strengthened employee engagement, improved customer satisfaction, and fostered a culture of accountability and excellence within Hyundai India. As he propels the company into new territories, stakeholders look ahead with confidence to the future.

Redefining Urban Living with Global Vision

Pankaj Bansal shaping urban growth in India through M3M India and strategic investments



Pankaj Bansal, Promoter, M3M India; Trustee, M3M Foundation

Pankaj Bansal represents a new generation of Indian business leaders who combine sharp commercial acumen with a deep understanding of evolving consumer aspirations. An MBA from NMIMS, Mumbai, holding an EMP from Harvard Business School, he features among the youngest and most forward-looking leaders in India's real estate sector. He has played a pivotal role in M3M India's rapid ascent and its contribution to transforming Gurugram into a globally relevant urban destination. His vision aligns closely with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's emphasis on infrastructure-led growth as a foundation for a modern, self-reliant, and globally competitive India.

Under his leadership, M3M India has developed an impressive portfolio of over 63 projects that have reshaped Gurugram's skyline. From landmark luxury residential developments such as M3M Golfestate to globally branded residences including Trump Towers and the upcoming Jacob & Co. Residences, Pankaj has consistently pushed the boundaries of design, scale, and execution. A defining milestone of this journey is Gurgaon International City (GIC), the largest integrated city in Gurugram, envisioned as a self-sustained, future-ready urban ecosystem rather than a standalone development.

Pankaj has guided M3M's growth with a strong customer-first and future-focused mindset. This philosophy led to the launch of SmartWorld Developers, a next-generation real estate venture created to redefine industry benchmarks through contemporary design, advanced technology, faster delivery timelines, and an enhanced customer experience. Under his stewardship, the group has expanded beyond Delhi-NCR into emerging markets while maintaining a reputation for disciplined execution, quality, and transparency.

Actively involved from concept to completion, Pankaj plays a key role in corporate strategy, go-to-market planning, and project execution. His innovative approach to branding, marketing, and communication has helped M3M India gain strong recognition across national and international platforms. His leadership has been acknowledged through several prestigious honours, including Times 40 Under 40, CXO of the Year at the Realty+ Conclave & Excellence Awards, Most Promising Business Leaders of Asia by The Economic Times, and the "Breakthrough Growth Champion of the Year" Award by Hurun India in 2025.

Pankaj views developments as living ecosystems where people live, work, and connect. This philosophy has driven M3M's evolution into a lifestyle-led, globally benchmarked organisation aligned with India's long-term priorities of infrastructure creation, employment generation, and sustainable urban growth. To date, M3M has delivered over 20 million square feet across luxury residential, commercial, retail, and integrated developments, with more than 40 projects completed and several marquee projects underway.

His global outlook is shaped by extensive international exposure and strategic engagement. He has travelled widely to study global best practices and has been part of official delegations with the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Japan & Russia and with the Hon'ble Former President Shri Pranab Mukherjee to China, Finland, and Norway. Beyond business, he serves as a trustee of the M3M Foundation, supporting initiatives in healthcare, education, and socio-economic development. As India advances toward its $5 trillion economic ambition, Pankaj Bansal continues to contribute to the globally aligned and future-ready vision for India's next phase of development.



Siddhartha Lal
Managing Director, Royal Enfield

Driving The Royal Enfield Phenomenon

Think of motorcycles in India and you will think of Siddhartha Lal. Lal stands out as a trendsetter who has without exaggeration redefined the industry landscape. As the driving force behind Royal Enfield's global resurgence. From reviving a legacy motorcycle brand to making a lasting impact through philanthropy, his journey epitomises the perfect blend of business acumen and compassion

Born into a family renowned for its entrepreneurial legacy, Siddhartha inherited his passion for motorcycling from his father, Vikram Lal, the founder and former CEO of Eicher Motors Ltd., the Eicher Group's principal Indian affiliate. Currently the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Eicher Motors Ltd., Lal officiates as the chairman and MD of VE Commercial Vehicles as well.

Lal is credited with bringing Royal Enfield back to life. After being appointed as the CEO of Eicher Motors, which owns Royal Enfield, Lal pulled off Royal Enfield's extraordinary resurgence from a fading brand to a global sensation. Lal's unwavering enthusiasm and vision propelled Royal Enfield to new heights. He sparked a worldwide 'Royal Enfield revival' by merging contemporary engineering with classic styling. His strategic focus on innovation, quality, and brand positioning propelled Royal Enfield to the forefront of motorcycle fans in a variety of markets. He had a strong belief in Enfield's die-hard followers and opted not to follow the crowd, instead focusing on creating outstanding products. He modified the Royal Enfield bikes to better meet the demands of today's youth, resulting in a significant increase in demand. He has transformed the iconic brand into a symbol of timeless elegance and adventure.

Lal's outstanding leadership has earned him countless laurels. Royal Enfield has garnered multiple important honours during his leadership for its product design, performance, and innovation. Leading industry organizations have recognized his imaginative approach, confirming his position as a dynamic corporate leader.

The significance of Lal's contributions goes beyond the Royal Enfield story. Highly committed to social service and environmental sustainability in addition to corporate success, Lal has overseen significant projects in education, healthcare, and community development as Chairman of the Eicher Group Foundation. His efforts include environmental protection, displaying a responsible business attitude to sustainability. Lal's philanthropic ventures prioritise empowering local communities through skill development, vocational training, and livelihood enhancement. The Foundation's initiatives have uplifted countless lives, fostered positive change and created lasting impacts on society.

La's chosen approach and path exemplifies the spirit of a visionary entrepreneur who navigates the corporate world while adhering to his ideals of compassion and social responsibility. He illustrates the potential of business as a catalyst for social change via his amazing contributions to the world of motorcycles and his dedication to strengthening communities. Lal's approach to business is straightforward since he feels that less is more. As expected, he likes riding his bike and travelling to the mountains. With a move back to London in 2015, he is still looking out for the opportunity to finish his bike trip to Leh and Ladakh.

Lal's persistent pursuit of excellence in business and philanthropy has left an indelible effect on the motorcycle industry as well as society as a whole. His unrelenting devotion to social responsibility is inspirational, and bodes well for an inclusive and sustainable future.

Celebrating Human-Centric Leadership

Akhil Mehrotra, leading India's energy transition with purpose and precision for a sustainable tomorrow



Akhil Mehrotra
Managing Director, Pipeline Infrastructure Limited

As India accelerates toward becoming one of the world's fastest-growing economies, the need for resilient, future-ready energy infrastructure is imperative. Akhil Mehrotra, a seasoned leader in India's energy sector, combines operational excellence with a deeply human-centric leadership philosophy.

Steward of a National Energy Lifeline

Akhil Mehrotra leads India's critical East-to-West natural gas transportation pipeline—an asset of national importance that carries nearly 30% of the country's domestic natural gas production. With over two decades of experience in the energy sector, he has consistently championed natural gas as a cleaner, transitional fuel essential to India's energy mix. Beyond operations into policy, he has contributed to regulatory frameworks in collaboration with the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB). Thereby, shaping an ecosystem that balances growth, affordability, and sustainability.

Transforming PIL Through People-Centric Leadership

Since assuming leadership of Pipeline Infrastructure Limited (PIL) in 2019, Mehrotra has overseen a significant transformation of the organisation. At the heart of this journey lies a firm belief: sustainable business success begins with employee well-being. Under his stewardship, PIL has built a culture rooted in care, inclusion, and mutual respect—extending to both on-roll and off-roll employees. This philosophy has fostered high engagement, trust, and ownership across the organisation, reinforcing the idea that when people feel valued, they create stronger, more resilient businesses.

Performance, Safety, and Operational Excellence

The outcomes of this leadership approach are evident. Over six years, PIL has recorded exceptional growth, with gas transportation volumes rising at a compound annual growth rate of nearly 30%. Pipeline utilisation has tripled, and the company has successfully secured tariff revisions from the regulator—strengthening its financial position. In an industry where safety is non-negotiable, Mehrotra has maintained an uncompromising focus on operational integrity, ensuring zero major safety incidents across PIL's 1,500-kilometre pipeline network spanning the country.

Embracing Digital and Sustainable Futures

A defining feature of Mehrotra's tenure has been PIL's shift toward a digitally enabled operating model. The company now runs advanced control rooms equipped with modern SCADA systems, real-time analytics, and integrated digital applications. Field teams use handheld digital devices, enhancing efficiency, transparency, and decision-making. PIL is progressing toward building a digital twin of its operations, enabling predictive maintenance and proactive asset management.

Sustainability remains equally central. PIL enforces stringent methane leakage controls, integrates solar power where feasible, and undertakes water conservation initiatives. Through focused CSR programmes, the company supports education and healthcare infrastructure in rural communities, strengthening its social licence to operate.

Leadership Recognised, Vision Renewed

Akhil Mehrotra's contributions have been recognised nationally, including the prestigious "India's Impactful Infra Leader" award by ET Edge and Times Now. Looking ahead, he remains focused on scaling PIL's efficiency, profitability, and impact over the next three to four years—while staying true to its core values of safety, employee well-being, and sustainable value creation. His leadership exemplifies a modern ethos: infrastructure is not just about assets and numbers but about people, purpose, and progress.



Poonam Gupta, Dy Governor, RBI

Driving Innovation and Stability in India's Banking Sector

With extensive expertise in finance, Poonam Gupta plays a pivotal role shaping the country's banking policies

Poonam Gupta is a distinguished economist who currently serves as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), one of the most influential governmental financial institutions in the country. Known for her expertise in banking, finance and economic policy, Gupta, who is also the in-charge of the Monetary Policy Committee and the first woman to hold the position in over a decade, brings extensive experience in public administration and policy-making to her role, contributing significantly to India's financial stability and growth.

Before her appointment to the RBI, Gupta served as the director general of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), India's largest economic policy think tank. She has served as the Lead Economist for Global Macro and Market Research at the International Finance Corporation, as professor at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations and the Delhi School of Economics and as a researcher at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Currently, Gupta is a member of the Advisory Council of the 16th Finance Commission.

Over the years, she has gained recognition for her analytical skills, strategic thinking and ability to implement reforms that strengthen financial systems. Her work has spanned financial regulation, banking supervision, economic development and institutional governance.

In her role at the RBI, Gupta is responsible for overseeing multiple critical departments, including banking regulation, financial markets and macroprudential supervision. Her work ensures that the country's banking system remains resilient and that financial policies align with the broader goals of economic growth and consumer protection. She plays a key role in shaping regulations for commercial banks, cooperative banks and non-banking financial companies, helping maintain public confidence in the financial sector.

Gupta has also been actively involved in initiatives to promote digital banking and financial inclusion. She supports programmes that aim to extend banking services to rural and underserved areas, enabling more citizens to access loans, savings accounts and insurance products. Her efforts in this area are aligned with the government's broader agenda of improving financial literacy and inclusion across India.

A strong advocate of data-driven policy-making, Gupta emphasises the importance of research and evidence in formulating financial regulations. Her approach balances innovation with prudence, encouraging the adoption of modern technologies in banking while protecting consumers from systemic risks.

During her tenure, Gupta has championed improvements in corporate governance, risk management and operational efficiency across banks.

Her stint at the RBI is also marked by efforts to strengthen risk management frameworks, improve corporate governance in banks and streamline operational efficiency. She advocates for collaboration between regulators, financial institutions and stakeholders to create a robust, transparent, resilient and accountable financial ecosystem.

Outside her official responsibilities, Gupta is known for her mentorship and guidance to young professionals in the public and banking sectors. She encourages continuous learning, ethical practices and responsible leadership among the next generation of civil servants and financial experts.

Gupta's journey reflects her commitment to public service and her determination to enhance the efficiency, stability and inclusiveness of India's financial system.

Rural Roots to Global Technology Vanguard

A visionary architect of India's digital future, Dr Durga Prakash Devarakonda, proving that when talent meets purpose, the impact can be truly global



"I have a passion for people and technology and a burning desire to promote Indian talent on global grounds"

Dr Durga Prakash (DP)
World renowned GCC Leader

Dr Durga Prakash (DP) Devarakonda stands tall as a testament to a modern Indian success story: an inspiring journey from humble beginnings to global impact and personal excellence with national purpose. Born in rural Andhra Pradesh, his meteoric rise to advising Fortune 50 boards worldwide reflects his astute vision and steadfast belief in the transformative power of people and technology.

When India's digital ecosystem was still emerging, Dr DP made history as the youngest Indian to complete all Microsoft certifications at only twenty-one! The milestone earned him an award of appreciation from Bill Gates, placing him among a rare cohort of early global technology pioneers. It was a defining moment that foreshadowed a career built on first principles, speed, and scale.

Soon after, he moved to Europe to work on JD Edwards ERP development at Munich Re, the world's largest reinsurance company, and played a pivotal role in building end-to-end software platforms for complex reinsurance operations. His work in designing advanced risk-prediction algorithms capable of underwriting virtually any risk became widely respected across the global reinsurance ecosystem, earning him a reputation for innovation and precision.

Over the next 25 years, Dr DP built and led digital platforms across consumer, retail, banking, healthcare, and financial services. What set him apart was not only deep technical mastery but also a rare ability to understand core business problems and translate them into scalable, technology-driven solutions.

Today, Dr DP is recognised as a global authority in building and scaling Global Capability Centres (GCCs). As an independent consultant and trusted advisor, he works closely with Fortune 50 boards, CEOs, and leading global consulting firms, guiding enterprises through generative AI–driven transformation. As an agent of change, he is helping the GCC economy triple in scale, directly contributing to India's ambition of becoming a USD 5 trillion economy.

Dr DP has been instrumental in advancing analytics, machine learning, data science, and applied AI capabilities in India, thereby promoting and nurturing talent. He has helped Fortune 100 companies establish world-class Global Capability and Innovation Centres that drive cutting-edge R&D. Balancing thoughtful strategy with rapid execution, he champions a growth mindset, organisational flexibility, strategic partnerships, and continuous innovation.

Dr DP is a quantum computing and AI scholar whose research advances global healthcare problem-solving. With postdoctoral expertise, he advises nations on quantum policy and research initiatives and mentors multiple startups, driving innovation and strategic growth in the quantum computing ecosystem.

Having achieved global success, Dr Durga Prakash Devarakonda is now focused on giving back—mentoring leaders, sharing knowledge, and building ecosystems that elevate Indian talent worldwide.



Shiv Khera, Indian Author

A Voice of Motivation and Ethical Success

A self-made author and trainer who transformed personal struggles into lessons for lasting success

Shiv Khera is one of India's most well-known motivational speakers and self-help authors, widely recognised for encouraging people to believe in themselves and strive for success with integrity. Over the past several decades, he has influenced millions across India and abroad through his books, seminars and public talks.

Born in India, Khera's early life was far from easy. He worked in several professions before finding his true calling. His early jobs included selling car accessories, working as a washing machine salesman and even running a small business that did not succeed. These early failures, however, shaped his thinking and helped him understand the struggles people commonly face. Instead of giving up, Khera used these experiences to develop a philosophy focused on positive thinking, discipline and perseverance.

Khera rose to national and international fame with his bestselling book *You Can Win*, first published in 1998. The book became a household name in India and was translated into several languages. Written in simple language, *You Can Win* focuses on building self-confidence, setting goals, maintaining a positive attitude and developing strong character. Its practical advice and relatable examples struck a chord with students, professionals and entrepreneurs alike.

Apart from his maiden book, Khera has authored several other popular books, including *Living with Honour, Freedom Is Not Free, You Can Sell and Winning Is Everything.* Across his writings, he consistently emphasises values such as honesty, responsibility, self-respect and ethical leadership. He believes that true success is not only about wealth or fame, but about living a life of purpose and integrity.

As a motivational speaker, Khera has conducted thousands of seminars and workshops across more than 25 countries. His audience includes corporate leaders, government officials, teachers, students and young professionals. His speaking style is direct, energetic and often filled with real-life anecdotes, humour and clear takeaways. He encourages people to take ownership of their lives rather than blaming circumstances or others for their failures.

Khera is also known for his strong views on governance, ethics and national character. He has been vocal about the need for integrity in public life and has often spoken against corruption. At one point, he even entered public life briefly to raise awareness about ethical leadership and citizen responsibility, though his primary focus has remained on education and motivation.

Another important aspect of Khera's work is his emphasis on mental discipline and attitude. He often says that success begins in the mind and that habits, thoughts and beliefs play a crucial role in shaping one's destiny. Through his talks, he urges people to replace negative thinking with constructive action and continuous learning.

Despite his fame, Khera presents himself as a learner who evolved through experience rather than privilege. Today, he continues to write, speak and mentor people across generations. For many Indians, he remains a symbol of self-belief and personal responsibility — a voice reminding people that while success is not easy, it is possible with effort, ethics and perseverance.



Deep Trivedi
Founder & Chairman, Aatman Innovations Pvt Ltd

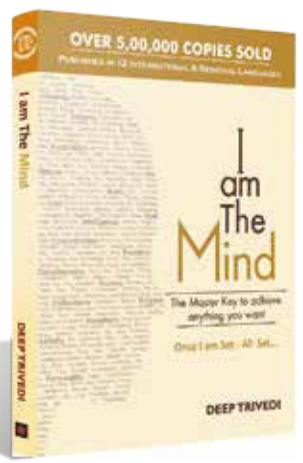
From Mind to Mastery

Unlocking human potential through psychology, spirituality, and timeless wisdom, Deep Trivedi guides millions to balance inner bliss with outer achievement

"Life reaches its true zenith when success soars while the heart dwells in sheer peace," SAYS RENOWNED AUTHOR, SPEAKER AND PIONEER IN SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY DEEP TRIVEDI, WHO IS ALSO A SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR, BUSINESSMAN AND AN ACE INVESTOR IN STOCK MARKET AND REALTY.

As a steadfast advocate of humanity, he has devoted himself to teaching and spreading spirituality and psychology to people across generations around the globe, resulting in a vast repertoire of bestsellers such as *I am the Mind, I am Krishna, I am Gita, Everything is Psychology, 3 Easy Steps to Win At Life, 101 All Time Great Stories, The Black Book of Soul, 200+ Shocking Truths About Krishna, Money and Its Smart Psychology, Psychology of War, Psychology of Confusion* and many more.

He believes today's life demands three-pronged success—peace, joy and wealth. But the irony is, sustaining peace and joy without money is not easy in the modern world; and wealth without peace is meaningless. To balance peace and prosperity, one needs spiritual psychology. However, for spiritual psychology to be effective in the scientific age, it must be conveyed and grasped without filters, agenda or distortion. And this is where Deep Trivedi makes a world of difference! With his incisive and impactful language and direct approach, he has delivered 1100+ hours of video content, garnering 61.6 million views, through workshops and seminars spanning a wide spectrum of topics such as Mind, Ego, Soul, Health, Career, Success, Relationships, Laws of Nature and their more nuanced dimensions such as Intelligence, Fear, Love, Anger, Creativity, Concentration, Time, Destiny, Marriage, God, Religion, Mental Health, Finance and more. Moreover, his in-depth talks on spiritual masterpieces such as the *Bhagavad Gita, Ashtavakra Gita* and *Tao Te Ching*—spanning over 290 hours—have received both national and international acclaim.



Driven by an enduring transformation and insatiable hunger to leave a legacy of pure, transformative knowledge, he continues to produce marathon content through his talks and writings and runs a distinguished and thriving publishing house to disseminate his teachings globally.

True to the saying, *'Actions speak louder than words,'* his life exemplifies the harmonious balance of peace, joy and grand success that every human being can—and must—experience. He champions living life 360°, embracing both luxury and inner bliss, for he believes every human being deserves this at the very least.

To inspire people and bring their dreams to fruition, he urges everyone to acknowledge the hard work of millions and realise how abundantly we draw from Nature. If the luxury and comforts we enjoy today are the outcome of the midnight oil burnt by countless individuals, then we owe it to the world to leave behind a legacy of work that serves humanity at large.

And this, he believes, is our true duty and mission!



Anjan Chatterjee
Founder & Chairman-Managing Director at Speciality Restaurants Ltd

A Recipe Book Called Life

How Anjan Chatterjee built an empire of eating by keeping it fun

In the early 1980s, a charming young man with a reputation for being the life of the party set foot in Mumbai and gazed into the future. Where other titans have imagined fast cars, sea-facing luxury apartments, and sky-high corner offices, Anjan Chatterjee had a peculiar dream, born of a peculiar problem.

Sundays and slow starts

Sundays were torturous reminders of what home, back in Kolkata, offered but his little box of an apartment in Mumbai didn't — a warm meal of rice and mutton. Chatterjee wanted to have his own establishment someday, where he would serve hearty Bengali meals to friends. For now, he would have to build his foundation, first in hospitality, then in marketing, and then with Situations Advertising, his own agency.

Not a lesson forgotten, not an experience wasted — everything he learned, from branding to sales, to filming, to design — would come back to embellish the Speciality Restaurants story.

Bengali cuisine enters Fine Dining

Fast forward to the 1990s — Anjan Chatterjee starts Only Fish, a quaint, thematically designed outlet bringing the flavours of Bengali cuisine alive in Mumbai. For a cuisine long stereotyped as fish and rice, Bengali food came into its own in the national and international mindset, with Chatterjee emerging as the genesis of Bengali fine dining through authentic Bengali restaurants that now dot the world.

From dreaming to domination

Successful business entrepreneurs have similar trajectories. Life gives them ideas, ideas beget ambition, ambition begets success, and success begets the next big idea. And so they write their names into the Honours Board of greats. Anjan Chatterjee was soon wondering why the most interesting Chinese cuisine was only in five-star hotels, while run-of-the-mill outlets routinely served monotonous fare?

His solution? Offering people five-star cuisine without a five-star pocket pinch. A surging middle class, buoyant with the opportunities presented in a newly liberalised India, wanted more and wanted better. Chatterjee gave them that — an experience of eating Chinese from provinces across China. The decor, offerings, service were all at a new level of excellence.

Oh! Calcutta and beyond

From here on, the juggernaut was unstoppable. Oh! Calcutta was a celebration of everything Chatterjee gorged on as a child, and then some. From city to city, the franchises grew in numbers and ideas: Sigree, Flame and Grill, Cafe Mezzuna, Bizarre Asia, Hoppipolla, Riyasat, Chourangi in London, and more. Each was an exploration of a culture, an experience like no other.

Speciality Restaurants is a success story predicated on fearless steps, wisdom in learning, and a culture of caring. Chatterjee keeps tight control of the ship, yet trusts his teams to be the best versions of themselves. He loves to laugh and enjoy, but is dead serious about quality control.

The Anjan Chatterjee story is one where even he, the author, isn't certain what the next chapter holds, but he can guarantee that it's going to be fun.

Precision in Every Weave

A dynamic leader, Chintan Patel, building a vertically integrated textile powerhouse while focusing on empowering the nation through initiatives like Make in India and Skill India



"Our focus has always been on building lasting value, not just scale. Through innovation, sustainability, and strong partnerships, we are shaping a manufacturing ecosystem that is future-ready"

Chintan Patel
Managing Director, Deesan Group
Vice President, Shri Vile Parle Kelavani Mandal

Founded in 1996, the Deesan Group has evolved into one of India's most comprehensive and integrated textile enterprises. Under the guidance of Amrish Patel and the leadership of Chintan Patel, the Group has expanded its manufacturing capabilities while transforming Shirpur, Maharashtra, into a recognised textile manufacturing hub.

The Growth Story

Over nearly three decades, Deesan has grown into a vast textile ecosystem spanning close to 700 acres and employing more than 25,000 people. The Group's deep capabilities across the textile value chain is strengthening India's role as a global textile manufacturing hub.

Deesan's diversified product portfolio includes shirting and bed linen fabrics, knitted garments, towels, bathrobes, and ready-made apparel, serving leading domestic and international brands. The Group works extensively with premium cotton varieties such as Egyptian and Supima cotton, delivering consistent quality, comfort, and durability. Globally recognised certifications, including BCI and OEKO-TEX® Made in Green, underscore Deesan's commitment to ethical sourcing, traceability, and environmentally responsible manufacturing.

End-to-End Integration

A defining strength of the Deesan Group is its fully vertically integrated model. From ginning and spinning to weaving, knitting, dyeing, finishing, and garmenting, every stage of production is executed in-house. This end-to-end integration enhances quality control, operational efficiency, and responsiveness to evolving market demands. Its monthly capacities include 10 million metres of shirting fabrics, 2 million metres of sheeting fabrics, 800 metric tonnes of terry towels, 2,400 metric tonnes of cotton yarn, 400,000 garments, and 50,000 bathrobes. Advanced laboratories and rigorous inspection systems ensure that Deesan consistently meets international quality standards.

Reaching the End Consumer

Beyond B2B manufacturing, Deesan has entered the consumer space through its in-house brand, Bonheur, led by Hiral Patel. Focused on children's products, Bonheur reflects Deesan's design expertise and manufacturing excellence. In an industry first, Deesan introduced India's first yarn-dyed towels for children, setting new benchmarks in colour durability, softness, and long-term performance.

Leadership in Higher Education

Chintan Patel serves as Vice President of SVKM NMIMS, playing a key role in advancing its vision for higher education. Founded under SVKM, a charitable trust established in 1934, NMIMS was set up in 1981 and became a Deemed-to-be University in 2003. Today, NMIMS is a leading pan-India institution with multiple campuses, 17 specialised schools, and over 85,000 students, recognised for academic excellence, research, industry integration, and value-based education.

A Sustainable Ecosystem

Sustainability and social responsibility are central to Deesan's strategy. The Group has built over 500 check dams to boost groundwater and agricultural resilience and supplies nearly six million litres of clean drinking water weekly to local communities. It is also developing a 1,000-bed super-speciality hospital in Shirpur to serve tribal and underserved populations. With a predominantly female workforce in its garment units, supported by safe workplaces and transport, Deesan champions women's empowerment, demonstrating how scale, integration, and social impact can create lasting value.



Rajesh Jejurikar, Executive Director & CEO, Auto and Farm Sector, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd

Accelerating Automobile Sector Growth

Rajesh Jejurikar is the driving force behind the popular Indian home-grown brand of automobiles, Mahindra

As the domestic four-wheel automobiles sector in India continues to grow, Jejurikar leads Mahindra as India's third-largest car manufacturer that is keen to drive forward with its footprint in the domestically developed and manufactured electric vehicles. Mahindra's technological superiority as showcased by its INGLO platform, firmly places its dedication to the initiatives India is engaging with in its bid towards a 5 trillion dollar economy. The confident 60 year old Jejurikar has even thrown the gauntlet to the younger and iconic Elon Musk and BYD to match Mahindra's EV product pricing, in consideration that the Mahindra EV product is able to match world-renowned EVs in terms of technology and luxury features. A noteworthy achievement, Mahindra's EVs took just three years from concept to launch under his competitive and confident leadership. He has welcomed reputed international EV brands such as Tesla to enter the Indian market as he is confident that their presence will not deter Mahindra's success in this niche segment. Instead he views these international brands help boost the growth of the domestic EV sector.

Jejurikar believes that India's automobile sector is now level-pegging with the world's established car manufacturing countries and is pushing forward with best-in-class homegrown technology as well as focusing on lifestyle bells and whistles features that are considered fancy. A marketing guru with a finger on the consumers' pulse, he realises that Mahindra's focus on delivering world-class luxury styled vehicles resonates with the growing penchant for lifestyle automobiles in India. Mahindra Electric Automobiles Ltd., a subsidiary of Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., is being steered forward to greater performances as a promising vertical in the organisation's portfolio. The next big news he hopes to announce would be Mahindra's first battery electric vehicle.

Jejurikar is convinced that the domestic talent pool has enabled India to develop a robust skill set in engineering and automobile-related research and development. Teamed with policies and initiatives by the Indian government, this formula propels India towards an enviable position in the automotive value chain worldwide. The sheer volumes that the domestic market demand generates will aid Indian automobile manufacturers to leverage the scale for export opportunities.

According to Jejurikar, the end of the last festive season in 2024 has been a successful one and an indicator that India's automobile consumption is a healthy one indeed. Company reports have shown a positive growth, particularly in the SUV segment, powered by the recently introduced XUV3XO and Thar ROXX. Under his management, the automobile manufacturer has maintained healthy margins with strategic discount schemes and tight inventory.

Rajesh Jejurikar is among a network of industry professionals and leaders who are spearheading the new dynamism in Indian manufacturing that is gaining global traction and repute, and aligning India's ambitions to the top economies worldwide.

Enabling Technology-led Environmental Systems

Sandeep Asolkar powering India's growth story through technology-led circular water and integrated waste solutions

India's aspiration to become a $5 trillion economy and to sustain growth rests not only on macroeconomic momentum but also on the robustness of its foundational systems. While infrastructure, manufacturing, and energy remain central to this journey, water and waste management are increasingly emerging as critical enablers of sustainable and resilient development.

With over three decades of experience in environmental engineering and more than two decades spent building SFC Environmental Technologies, Sandeep Asolkar's perspective is shaped by a consistent insight that long-term economic progress is closely linked to responsible resource management.

Moving Towards Reuse and Circularity

Water is one of India's most constrained resources. Rapid urbanisation, population growth, and industrial demand have heightened the need for effective wastewater treatment and reuse solutions. SFC believes that broader adoption of circular water management practices can help address this challenge. The company's work in wastewater treatment began with C-Tech, an advanced and proven technology for treating sewage and effluents. As of March 31, 2025, SFC has commissioned 639 installations in the wastewater treatment segment, primarily in sewage treatment plants across the country.

In recent years, the organisation has expanded its technology portfolio with Membrane Bioreactor (MBR), Submerged Ultrafiltration (SUF), and Closed-Circuit Reverse Osmosis (CCRO). These technologies are designed to support a wide range of water treatment and reuse applications, enabling treated wastewater to be deployed for non-potable and industrial uses.

The potential benefits are multi-dimensional. Industries may gain access to consistent-quality treated water for select operations; freshwater resources can be conserved for higher-priority uses such as drinking water and agriculture; and municipalities may unlock new revenue streams through the supply of treated wastewater. The focus remains on solutions that are cost-effective, operator-friendly, and scalable—because infrastructure delivers value only when it performs reliably on the ground.

Addressing Solid Waste

Solid waste management represents another growing challenge as urban populations and consumption patterns evolve. In the absence of structured treatment systems, waste places increasing pressure on landfills, public health, and the environment.

Through its wholly owned subsidiary, Hindustan Waste Treatment Private Limited, the company designs, engineers, builds, and operates integrated municipal solid waste processing facilities tailored to India's mixed-waste realities. Resource recovery—particularly through Compressed Biogas (CBG)—offers a pathway aligned with the Government of India's SATAT initiative, enabling municipalities to move from cost-centric models toward more circular and value-generating systems.



"As cities expand and industrial activity intensifies, the importance of reliable environmental infrastructure becomes increasingly pronounced"

Sandeep Asolkar
Chairman & Managing Director, SFC Environmental Technologies Ltd

Building Systems That Support Growth

Across both water and waste, the underlying principle is consistent: environmental infrastructure underpins economic resilience. When wastewater is reused and solid waste is managed scientifically, cities become more liveable, industries operate more sustainably, and municipalities gain new avenues for value creation.

As India continues its development journey, environmental management systems may play a quiet but essential role in supporting durable and responsible growth. SFC seeks to contribute to this journey through technology-led solutions that strengthen India's water and waste ecosystems.



Annapurna Devi, Union Minister, Women & Child Development

Driving Social Change Across the Nation

Annapurna Devi is dedicated to empowering women and securing a brighter future for children

In serving the nation's women and children, Annapurna Devi believes collaborations and partnerships are crucial to implementing effective policies and maximizing social impact. The Union Cabinet Minister of Women and Child Development is focused on creating opportunities and safeguards for women and children, especially those from marginalised and underserved communities.

Ever since being elected to the 18th Lok Sabha in June 2024 from Jharkhand's Kodarma constituency, Annapurna Devi has shown a deep understanding of the unique challenges faced by women and children in India. Under her leadership, initiatives offering skills training and employment opportunities to women — securing their financial independence — have taken precedence.

Her approach combines policy advocacy with on-ground implementation, ensuring that government schemes reach the most vulnerable segments of society. Hence, programmes such as self-help groups, entrepreneurship training and financial literacy workshops have seen a notable expansion during her tenure. For children's welfare, she has stressed the importance of providing quality education and safety, alongside nutritional support and health services.

A postgraduate from Ranchi University, Annapurna Devi is a strong believer in legal and social reforms to protect women and children from violence, exploitation and discrimination. She has spearheaded awareness campaigns and training programmes that encourage community participation to bring about a change in societal attitudes toward gender and child rights.

Working closely with various government departments, NGOs and international organisations has been one of the key pillars of her leadership, which has strengthened existing programmes while introducing new initiatives to fill critical gaps in women and child development services. Merging strategic policy planning with practical solutions, therefore, has been a focal point of her work.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) member has previously served as the Union Minister of State for Education. She has played an active role as a Member of the Consultative Committees for the Ministry of Power and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, reflecting her involvement in shaping policy across multiple sectors.

As a Union Cabinet Minister, Annapurna Devi also draws on her long experience of public service in the women and child welfare sector at the state level. Before serving as Member, Committee on Empowerment of Women, from 2019 and 2021, she was a cabinet minister in the Ministry of Irrigation, Women & Child Welfare, Registration of the Jharkhand government from 2012 to 2014. From 2005 to 2009, she was the chairperson of the Committee on Women & Child Welfare, Jharkhand Legislative Assembly.

Annapurna Devi's leadership highlights inclusivity, transparency and accountability to ensure that programmes are both effective and sustainable. Her emphasis on the importance of focused governance with compassionate leadership inspires hope for a change towards a better future for all.

Securing Financial Futures

Amisha Vora shares her approach towards delivering sustainable wealth for clients by leveraging deep expertise with trust, transparency, and integrity



Amisha Vora
Chairperson and Managing Director
PL Capital Group

What is the most challenging decision you've made, and how did you navigate it?

A defining decision in my journey was acquiring a 96% stake in PL Capital (Prabhudas Lilladher Group) during the COVID period and transitioning to a more centralised leadership structure amid market volatility. The focus was on sustaining business momentum with cost discipline while ensuring continuity of operations, engaging teams and preserving client trust. We institutionalised the organisation, strengthened governance, and executed a strategic shift from a traditional broking-led model to an integrated financial services platform.

This transformation included building a robust quantitative investment infrastructure and launching PL Capital's pioneering quant-based PMS strategies—AQUA and the Multi Dynamic Asset Portfolio (MAPD). The challenge lay in committing capital, attracting and retaining specialised talent, and staying data-driven when conventional approaches felt safer. Anchored in research, disciplined risk frameworks, and back-testing, this conviction was validated when AQUA delivered over 76% returns in its debut year, outperforming its benchmark by 2x and the NIFTY 50 by 3x.

Our investment banking and corporate advisory business expanded, executing nine transactions and securing 18 marquee mandates—positioning the Group as a more resilient, diversified, and future-ready institution.

How do you approach innovation, and what strategies have helped you drive meaningful impact?

Identifying white spaces, areas where client needs are evolving but competitive intensity remains low, is critical. We look beyond crowded product categories to uncover gaps and apply our core strengths in research, risk management, and execution with greater clarity of purpose, aligning to client outcomes. I view technology as an enabler. From early adoption of e-KYC to building one of India's pioneering quant investment strategies like AQUA and Multi Asset Dynamic Portfolio (MADP), our focus has been adding value to our clients and creating sustainable wealth solutions.

What initiatives have been critical in scaling your business and maintaining a competitive edge in the market?

Scaling PL Capital is driven by a commitment to long-term value creation. We have supported individuals and institutions through an integrated platform spanning broking and distribution, institutional equities, investment banking and corporate advisory, wealth and asset management, and private credit—each guided by rigorous research and a client-first philosophy.

Our competitive edge is reinforced by a globally benchmarked quantitative investment infrastructure powered by an AI-embedded ecosystem. Advanced analytics, personalisation, and decision intelligence are seamlessly integrated across onboarding, distribution, and investment processes. By building strong teams, institutional capabilities, and a diversified business model, we navigate market cycles with resilience and deliver consistent outcomes at scale.

What differentiates PL Capital is our 360° distribution capability across PMS, AIFs, mutual funds, insurance, advisory, debt, commodities, and global investments, serving family offices, institutions, UHNI, HNI, and retail clients across India through a fully integrated financial ecosystem.

What advice would you give to aspiring women professionals looking to break barriers and succeed?

Confidence, preparation, and consistency are powerful equalisers—especially in industries where women remain under-represented. Focus on building deep expertise and domain mastery; it creates credibility that endures. Seek mentors who challenge your thinking, build strong networks across genders, and lead with integrity. Resilience and principled decision-making are what ultimately define long-term success.



Priya Nair
Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Hindustan Unilever Limited

The New Vanguard

Priya Nair, Hindustan Unilever Limited's first woman CEO, embodies a blend of strategic acumen and social purpose, poised to drive the FMCG giant and contribute significantly to India's $5 trillion economy dream

In the evolving narrative of India Inc., the quiet strength of intellectual acumen often outshines overt aggression. Priya Nair, thus, emerges as a quintessential leader for the future. Her ascendancy to the helm of Hindustan Unilever (HUL) as its first woman CEO and Managing Director, effective August 1, 2025, marks not just a historic milestone for the ninety-two-year-old Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) behemoth, but also a significant stride for India's ambitious $5 trillion economy dream.

Born to Malayalee parents in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, Priya Nair was educated in Mumbai. Her academic foundation was with a Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) in Accounts & Statistics from Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics (1987–1992). An MBA in Marketing from Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Pune (1992–1994) followed. Her commitment to continuous learning led her to pursue the prestigious executive programme in Business Administration and Management at Harvard Business School.

Nair's journey within HUL spans nearly three decades. It testifies to her deep understanding of the Indian consumer psyche and her strategic prowess. From her year of joining in 1995, she navigated diverse roles across Home Care, Beauty & Wellbeing, and Personal Care businesses, building a reputation for brand-centricity and a consumer-first approach. Her leadership style, described by industry peers as a blend of empathy and sharp business acumen, reflects a nuanced understanding that leadership isn't merely about directives but about fostering an environment of innovation. Harsh Goenka, Chairman of RPG Group, praises her as a "transformative leader" with "strategic clarity," noting that she "works through her mind and her heart...."

This empathetic, yet results-driven, approach is precisely what HUL, and the Indian economy, needs. As India strives towards its $5 trillion economy goal, the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector plays a pivotal role, touching the lives of nearly every Indian household. HUL, with its vast reach and portfolio, is a key driver of this consumption-led growth. Nair's extensive experience in understanding and catering to diverse Indian consumers – from launching the innovative rural radio service Kan Khajura Tesan (Earworm Radio Station) a mobile-based advertising platform for media-dark villages that reached over 11 million subscribers and earned global acclaim with three Cannes Gold Lions to turning around underperforming categories – positions her perfectly to unlock new avenues of growth. Her global exposure as President of Beauty & Wellbeing at Unilever further equips her with insights into premiumisation and digital transformation, critical for HUL's future.

Beyond commercial success, Nair's tenure has been marked by a strong sense of social responsibility. As part of her leadership roles, she has championed public health initiatives, such as the widely impactful WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) programme, which has reportedly reached 152 million people in India. This commitment to societal well-being, ingrained in HUL's ethos, is a testament to her purpose-driven leadership, where business objectives converge with broader social good.

Her appointment signals a broader cultural shift in corporate India, championing diversity at the highest echelons. For an economy that needs every segment of its population to contribute, having a woman at the helm of such an influential company sends a powerful message of empowerment and inclusion. Priya Nair, therefore, is not just a CEO; she is a changemaker, poised to steer HUL towards unprecedented growth while simultaneously contributing significantly to India's economic aspirations.

Weaving Legacy and Luxury

Suparna Handa celebrates the beauty of Indian textiles and workmanship by creating unique, authentic, heirloom-worthy products and services reimagined for the modern home



In a world of fast-evolving lifestyle trends, Sarita Handa stands at the intersection of heritage, innovation and modern luxury, and is recognised globally as one of the few Indian brands to have achieved this balance with such clarity.

A Legacy of Leadership

As Sarita Handa enters into a new era in contemporary Indian luxury, Suparna Handa stands at the helm of transformation in the lifestyle segment. With over 25 years of experience, she has redefined what Indian luxury looks like—and how it is built. Under her leadership, Sarita Handa has moved from soft furnishings for homes to being a cultural force. She has championed heritage craftsmanship of Indian artisans on the global map. "Our legacy is not the catalogue we create, but the culture we protect." She emphasises.

Suparna's journey interweaves personal evolution with professional milestones: returning from New York to join her mother, Sarita, in building the brand; creating a professional partnership with her husband, Rahul Puri, to drive the next chapter; and earning recognition such as the "40 Over 40" honour for women leaders.

Local Effort, Global Impact

Promoting indigenous craftmanship, Suparna spearheaded the evolution of Sarita Handa NOW, that marks the brand's leap into experiential design. Its textile vocabulary has become part of contemporary Indian design culture. Sarita Handa NOW is not just a store; it is the point of origin for design, mood, and material. Here, wabi-sabi meets biophilia, and Japandi minimalism blends seamlessly with Indian craftsmanship—a signature Suparna touch.

Suparna has been instrumental in turning the brand into a design institution with global resonance. Industry reports project significant growth in coming years as Sarita Handa strengthens its position across both export and luxury retail markets.

Handcrafted Stories in Every Stitch

Every piece created has its own story representing the ethos, culture and emotions of artisans passed down through generations "A happy customer begins with a respected artisan—our chain of value starts with dignity." Suparna reiterates her belief in human capital, which is reflected in the organisation's culture and identity.

> "We build fulfilment across the ecosystem, from the craftsperson's home to the client's home"
>
> **Suparna Handa**
> Managing Director, Sarita Handa

"Luxury feels complete only when the people who create it feel valued." She adds.

The company works with a community of master artisans, such as embroidery experts, quilters, and weavers, whose skills hold generational memory. Suparna has made it her mission to preserve their skills in an age of automation. Techniques like kantha, phulkari, zardozi and hand-quilting that would have faded now find global relevance through the brand.

The Fabric of Sustainability

Suparna believes that the next chapter of luxury will be written by sustainable practices and inclusion. It appears in the choice of materials, the solar-powered facilities, and in the brand's quiet yet constant social impact—particularly in empowering women artisans across the country. Every choice at Sarita Handa—from fibre to finish—is intentional, transparent, and accountable.



Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google

From Chennai Roots to Global Tech Power

Sundar Pichai's journey exemplifies quiet brilliance, ethical leadership and technology's transformative power at global scale

Sundar Pichai's rise reflects a rare blend of technical brilliance, steady leadership and commitment to inclusive technological progress.

Pichai Sundararajan — globally known as Sundar Pichai — stands today as one of the most influential technology leaders of the 21st century. As the CEO of Alphabet Inc. and Google, he occupies a rare space in global corporate leadership: a visionary who has shaped the everyday technological lives of billions while retaining a reputation for humility, restraint and thoughtful decision-making. His rise from modest beginnings to the helm of one of the world's most powerful tech conglomerates remains among modern India's most celebrated success stories.

Born in 1972 to a middle-class family in Tamil Nadu, Pichai grew up in an environment that placed a premium on discipline, perseverance and academic excellence. His father, an electrical engineer at GEC, introduced him early to the world of technology. Family accounts highlight his unusual ability to remember long strings of numbers — an early glimpse of the analytical acuity that would later define his engineering career.

After completing his schooling and graduating with a degree in metallurgical engineering from IIT Kharagpur, Pichai's academic achievements earned him a scholarship to Stanford University. A subsequent management degree from the Wharton School — where he was recognised as a Siebel Scholar and a Palmer Scholar — equipped him with a rare blend of technical depth and business insight.

Pichai joined Google in 2004, at a time when the company was expanding from a search engine into a global suite of digital products. His early work on the Google Toolbar quickly drew the attention of senior executives. But it was his leadership of Google Chrome, launched in 2008, that reshaped both his career trajectory and the company's future. Chrome rapidly became the world's most widely used browser, paving the way for Google's dominance in cloud-based computing.

From there, Pichai's responsibilities grew swiftly. He oversaw major products such as Gmail, Google Maps, Google Drive, Android and ChromeOS, playing a crucial role in streamlining Google's sprawling ecosystem. His ability to break down complex engineering challenges into simple, user-focused solutions earned him deep respect across the organisation.

In 2015, during Google's restructuring under the newly formed Alphabet, Pichai was appointed CEO of Google. Four years later, he succeeded Larry Page as CEO of Alphabet, placing him in charge of ventures spanning Search, YouTube, Android, DeepMind, Waymo and multiple AI-driven research initiatives.

Known for his consensus-building approach, quiet confidence and long-term focus, Pichai has led Google through major advances in artificial intelligence, sustainability efforts and global internet access initiatives. Despite his global stature, he frequently emphasises his Indian roots, the power of education and the importance of technology that serves society.

Reimagining Life Insurance

Alok Rungta steering Generali Central Life Insurance towards a personalised, technology-driven future built on trust and empathy



Alok Rungta
MD & CEO, Generali Central Life Insurance

How do you view the future of India's life insurance industry, and what role does Generali Central Life Insurance aim to play in shaping it?
As India accelerates towards its $5 trillion economy ambition, the life insurance sector stands at a pivotal juncture—shifting from traditional protection models to personalised, technology-driven experiences. Drawing on 25 years of experience across global markets, I believe India's life insurance industry is at a critical inflection point where progressive regulatory reforms, growing financial literacy, and a strong push for ease of doing business are are laying the foundation for sustainable growth.

At Generali Central Life Insurance (GCLI), we are uniquely positioned to lead this evolution by combining global expertise with deep local trust. We are transforming life insurance from a mere protection tool into a personalised, lifelong partnership that evolves with our customers' needs. I am convinced that insurers who successfully combine regulatory agility with customer education and trusted partnerships will define the next phase of growth in our industry. That belief shapes our mission—and it is the path we are committed to pursuing.

How does technology act as a catalyst for transformation at GCLI?
Technology will be the key driver of customer experience and operational efficiency in the years to come. At Generali Central Life Insurance, we are leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to deliver hyper-personalised solutions across onboarding, servicing, and claims. This approach moves the Company from reactive responses to proactive engagement, ensuring real-time interactions that customers increasingly expect. Intelligent automation is also reshaping operations—streamlining underwriting, risk assessment, and policy servicing to improve speed, accuracy, and decision-making quality. These advancements free frontline teams from routine processing, enabling them to focus on advisory roles and value-added activities that truly elevate customer experience.

How has GCLI's people management philosophy evolved?
Transformation begins with people. Our philosophy of empathy-driven leadership and trust-based empowerment underpins GCLI's talent strategy. We've shifted from managing employees to unleashing human potential. This means creating a people-first workplace where flexibility, cross-functional opportunities, and ownership drive performance. By aligning career development with the company's Lifetime Partner vision, GCLI ensures that its workforce is future-ready and deeply engaged.

How is GCLI driving innovation in products and distribution to build long-term, trust-based customer relationships?
At GCLI, our innovation agenda is anchored in a single guiding principle: building long-term, trust-based relationships with our customers. We have moved beyond traditional, siloed offerings to develop integrated solutions such as ULIP-plus-protection product called Generali Central Sampoorna Samadhaan Plan that seamlessly combine wealth creation with life cover. As India's demographics evolve, we are also stepping into the retirement segment with sustainable income solutions designed to support longevity and financial security.

On the distribution side, we have expanded our reach through strategic partnerships, including our collaboration with the Central Bank of India, enabling us to serve customers across both urban and semi-urban markets. At the same time, our digital and hybrid distribution models are equipping intermediaries with advanced tools and actionable insights, empowering them to engage in more meaningful, relevant conversations with customers.



Harmanpreet Kaur, Captain, Indian Women's National Cricket Team

Rise of a Champion

By conquering the world stage, all-rounder Harmanpreet Kaur has united a nation in rooting for sportsmanship beyond gender barriers

The night of November 2, 2025, will go down in the annals of sporting history for reasons beyond sportsmanship. Under the floodlights of the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai, captain Harmanpreet Kaur lifted the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup trophy, delivering India its first-ever win.

India's 52-run victory over South Africa was not merely a culmination of a tournament; it was the culmination of a dream that Harmanpreet had chased for more than a decade and a half, standing on the shoulders of many Indian women cricketers before her. It was also a watershed moment when the nation united to look beyond gender and celebrate a team of sportspersons winning them a world title.

For Harmanpreet, who debuted in the 2009 World Cup as a young, fiery all-rounder, the journey to this pinnacle has been marked by triumph and heartbreak in equal parts. In 2012, the right-handed batter from Punjab's Moga won India the Asia Cup title in the T20 format. Within four years, she became the national team's all-format captain.

Under her captaincy, Indian snatched its first-ever Test from Australia in 2023, won a Commonwealth Games silver medal in 2022 and Asian Games gold medal in 2023, and clinched its first T20I series win over England in 2025.

As India's first woman to win an ICC trophy at the senior level, Harmanpreet has not only redefined success on the field but also shifted the landscape off it. She believes the team's success will soon be reflected in stronger central contracts and greater recognition from the Board of Control for Cricket in India. In her eyes, the World Cup victory is not just a title — it is an economic and social turning point, and rightly so.

"Post-November 2, the market value of women's cricket has gone up because of the trophy," she said. "If we had not won that trophy, we would still be stuck there." Her words resonated across a nation now fully awake to the commercial and cultural force of women's sport.

The emotional magnitude of the achievement was etched, quite literally, into her skin as well. Days after the triumph, Harmanpreet unveiled a special tattoo, commemorating the night that changed everything for her and women's cricket in India. It became a symbol of perseverance, pride and the dreams of millions who saw in her victory a reflection of their aspirations.

On the heels of the World Cup high, Harmanpreet stunned onlookers on the runway of Mumbai's Sierra Brand Day. Walking as the showstopper for the HUEMN showcase by designer Pranav Kirti Mishra, she fused athletic poise with effortless glamour.

Harmanpreet's story is more than a sporting saga. It is a story that has ignited the fire in countless young girls in towns small and big across India, who are looking up to her and dreaming of charting their own sporting path.



Mini Monesh
CEO, Bioweal Products Private Limited

Holistic Menstrual Wellness

Mini Monesh discusses the inspiration behind TIME Pads, the brand's sustainability ethos, market strategy, and the future vision powering a new era of menstrual care

Q What inspired you to create Bioweal's TIME Sanitary Pads known for their innovative, user-centric design that not only serves a need but also tells a story through its TIME concept?
Our inspiration came from a clear and persistent gap in the market: the lack of a truly rash-free, period-responsive solution. For far too long, women were expected to accept discomfort as an unavoidable part of their cycle. At Bioweal, we challenged that norm. TIME Sanitary Pads were born from a belief that menstrual care should evolve with a woman's needs rather than force her to adapt.

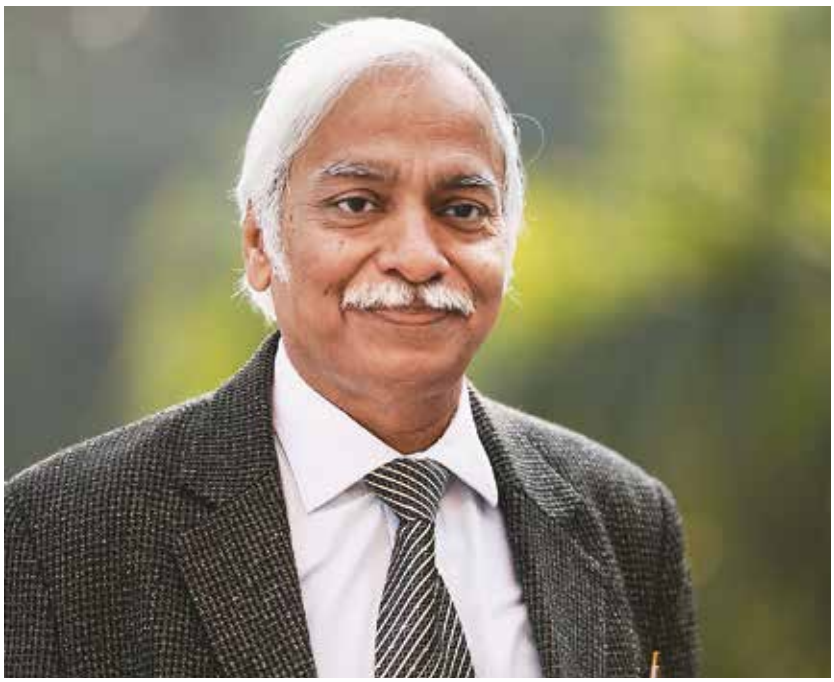
The TIME concept transforms a basic hygiene product into a thoughtful, intuitive experience. Each pad is designed to reflect the different phases of the menstrual cycle, with unique features that support comfort, breathability, and skin health. By integrating phase-specific engineering and skin-first materials, we created not just a pad but a product that respects the story of a woman's period—her rhythm, her discomforts, and her changing needs.

Q How do TIME Sanitary Pads reflect Bioweal's commitment to both environmental responsibility and women's well-being?
At Bioweal, sustainability and women's comfort are inseparable priorities. Our approach is rooted in a dual commitment: delivering uncompromising comfort while ensuring demonstrable environmental responsibility.

TIME Pads use skin-intelligent, breathable materials engineered for long-wear safety and are free from common irritants, significantly reducing the risk of rashes. This focus on well-being is complemented by our sustainability measures, which include minimal, biodegradable packaging and optimised, low-waste manufacturing practices. But for us, this is only the starting point. We are continuously investing in R&D to experiment with cleaner materials and greener processes because we believe true innovation is measured by both performance and environmental integrity.

Q Under your leadership, what strategies have helped you penetrate the market as a trusted hygiene brand competing with larger multinationals?
One of our strongest strategies has been turning our size into an advantage. Unlike multinational brands that often operate at scale, we compete on empathy, agility, and authenticity. Our market entry relied heavily on grassroots engagement—direct sampling programmes, community-based conversations, and rapid product improvements based on real-time feedback. When women shared their concerns, we listened and adapted. This ongoing dialogue allowed us to build trust not through advertising but through transparency, responsiveness, and genuine connection.

Q What are your future expansion plans for the TIME Product line, and how do you hope they will impact women's health awareness?
TIME Sanitary Pads are only the beginning of a broader menstrual wellness ecosystem we're building. We are expanding into flow-specific and life-stage variants and introducing symptom-management solutions such as a period cramp relief cream, hormonal migraine balm, and PMS mood mist. Additionally, we will launch TIME Menstrual Cups to offer a sustainable, body-safe alternative. Our long-term vision is to shift menstrual health conversations from stigma to empowerment—offering not just products but education, choice, and holistic support to women everywhere.



Prof Dr Rakesh Mohan Joshi
Vice Chancellor, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

Expanding Horizons Connecting Worlds

Prof Dr Rakesh Mohan Joshi contributing in India's journey to become a global powerhouse in international trade

A distinguished academician and a renowned international trade and management expert, Prof Rakesh Mohan Joshi is committed to transforming IIFT into a world-class B-school focused on international trade and management through cutting-edge research, training, and in-depth learning. Prof Joshi has been part of the core faculty and was the former Dean of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), New Delhi, the premier B-school under the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, since 2000, with expertise in international trade, international business, and international marketing.

Prof Joshi was the former Chairman of the 'UGC Committee for Framing the Regulations for Foreign Educational Institutes' and Chairman of the Expert Group for 'Development of Educational Framework for Global Citizenship in Higher Education Institutions' in 2021. He was on deputation to the Indian Institute of Plantation Management, Bengaluru, as Director.

Currently, he is the Chairman of the Business Services Sectional Committee, Bureau of Indian Standards, Government of India. He is also on the council of management for the All India Management Association (AIMA). His inclination to research the internationalization of Indian culture culminated in a major research project on 'Implications of Bhagwat Geeta in Contemporary Management' by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). Prof Joshi has been associated with several multilateral organizations, such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, UNCTAD, the International Dairy Federation, the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), etc.

An eminent scholar, Prof Joshi has authored highly popular books on international marketing and international business, published by Oxford University Press. He had been the editor of the prestigious quarterly journal of IIFT, Foreign Trade Review (FTR), published since 1966, and editor of Focus WTO.

A popular mentor, Prof Joshi has conducted training programs for corporate executives, government officials, and diplomats, including customized programs for IAS (Indian Administrative Service), IFS (Indian Foreign Service), IRS (Indian Revenue Service), ITS (Indian Trade Service), IES (Indian Economic Service), ISS (Indian Statistical Service) officers, and foreign diplomats in India and several foreign countries. Prof Joshi had been the visitor's (the President of India) nominee on the University Court, University of Delhi, and at IIT Kanpur and several other universities for various selection committees.

Prof Joshi was conferred with the prestigious Atal Bihari Vajpayee Award in December 2022 for lifetime contribution to economic research and policy by the Indian Economic Association. He has been the recipient of international awards by London Business School, London, for the case studies written that were internationally published by European Case Clearing House (ECCH), London Business School, and Oxford.

Reimagining Future-Ready Education for India

Siddharth Shahani pioneers new age learning at ATLAS SkillTech University



Siddharth Shahani
Executive President & Co-Founder
ATLAS SkillTech University

India's higher-education landscape is undergoing a profound transformation, and few leaders have shaped this shift as decisively as Siddharth Shahani. As the Executive President and Co-Founder of ATLAS SkillTech University, Mumbai's first new-age multidisciplinary urban university, he has pioneered a model that unites academic excellence, technological fluency, and industry-integrated learning under one ambitious vision.

He represents a first generation of education entrepreneurs, one who has built a university ecosystem where innovation, design, entrepreneurship, and technology converge seamlessly to develop future-ready leaders for nation-building.

A Global Academic Foundation

Siddharth's educational journey spans some of the world's most respected institutions. He completed his undergraduate studies at University College London (UCL), followed by a Master's at the London School of Economics (LSE), and later pursued Corporate Finance at the London Business School (LBS).

These experiences built in him a multidisciplinary worldview that blends analytical rigour with creativity, design thinking, and global workforce insight. But even before this, growing up as the son of a teacher, he witnessed firsthand the transformative role education plays in shaping lives.

His early career at McKinsey London honed his strategic and operational skills, shaping his vision for a modern future-ready university.

Building India's First Urban Innovation University

Under Siddharth's leadership, the University has developed forward-looking programs in Design & Innovation, Management & Entrepreneurship, Technology, Media, and Law, emphasising experiential learning, industry immersion, and a global-quality education.

He has been instrumental in building signature global academic alliances that bring world-class education within reach of Indian students. ATLAS's 13-year continued partnership with Parsons School of Design, one of the world's top three design schools has pioneered a model that brings global-standard design education to thousands of young Indian designers.

Siddharth has also initiated a transformative partnership with Northeastern University, creating a global business pathway that allows students to start their studies in Mumbai and complete their program at Northeastern University London. This model not only makes a top-tier business degree more financially accessible, it also provides exposure to two of the world's leading financial hubs.

Aligned with NEP 2020, Siddharth envisions universities as interdisciplinary, industry-aligned, and technology-driven - an approach that made ATLAS India's youngest NAAC 'A'-graded university.

Championing Access, Diversity & Student Success

Siddharth advocates inclusive education, creating scholarship pathways for deserving students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. He believes education should inspire bold thinking, responsible action, and fearless innovation - a philosophy reflected across the ATLAS ecosystem. His focus on student success is evident in ATLAS's strong mentorship culture, industry networks, and entrepreneurial support that helps learners turn ideas into real ventures.

Under his guidance, ATLAS launched 'Kaushalya AI', aligned with Maharashtra's STEP initiative inaugurated by PM Modi. The program supports the technological training and upskilling of students across Government ITIs and Technical High Schools.

A Vision for India's Next Generation of Leaders

As India moves toward becoming a global innovation hub, Siddharth believes universities must act as catalysts. Through ATLAS, he aims to nurture creative thinkers, entrepreneurial leaders, and globally competent professionals equipped for a world shaped by AI, sustainability, design, and emerging technologies.

Rooted in the vision of *"By India, For the Rest of the World,"* he envisions Indian institutions not just contributing to global progress but setting the benchmarks for it. With his global experience and commitment to educational excellence, Siddharth is shaping more than a university, he's helping define the future of higher education in India.



Deepika Padukone, Bollywood Actress

Queen of Hearts

Deepika Padukone emerges as an enduring symbol of influence and inspiration in the Indian entertainment industry, captivating millions worldwide

Deepika Padukone is an Indian actress who works predominantly in Hindi films. She has received 57 accolades and honors throughout her career, which include three Filmfare Awards, seven IIFAs, five Producers Guild Film Awards, ten Screen Awards, three Stardust Awards, and seven Zee Cine Awards.

Deepika, the daughter of the famous badminton player Prakash Padukone, was born in Copenhagen and raised in Bangalore. As a teenager, she pursued her passion in badminton and rose up to the national level championships but later changed her course and became a fashion model.

She received offers for film roles and made her acting debut in 2006 as the title character of the Kannada film, *Aishwarya.* Deepika then played a dual role opposite Shah Rukh Khan in her first Bollywood release, *Om Shanti Om,* in 2007, which became a blockbuster hit and won her the Filmfare Award for Best Female Debut. She received praise for her starring role in the romance *Love Aaj Kal* in 2009, but this was followed by a brief setback, and she bounced back with the romantic comedy *Cocktail* in 2012.

PADUKONE IS THE FOUNDER OF THE LIVE LOVE LAUGH FOUNDATION, WHICH CREATES AWARENESS ON MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN INDIA, FOR WHICH SHE RECEIVED THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM'S CRYSTAL AWARD IN 2018

A string of romantic comedies *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani* and *Chennai Express* in 2013, the heist comedy Happy New Year in 2014, led to her larger-than-life role in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's period dramas *Bajirao Mastani* in 2015 and *Padmaavat* in 2018. A bigger milestone was working in the Hollywood action film *XXX: Return of Xander Cage* in 2017. She also received critical acclaim for playing a character based on Juliet in Bhansali's *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* in 2013 and a headstrong daughter in *Piku* in 2015, winning two Filmfare Awards for Best Actress. Following a short hiatus and two commercially unsuccessful films under her own company, Ka Productions, Padukone took on roles in top-grossing action films, including *Pathaan* in 2023 and *Kalki* 2898 AD (2024).

Padukone is the founder of The Live Love Laugh Foundation, which creates awareness on mental health issues in India, for which she received the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award in 2018. She also participates in stage shows, has designed her own line of clothing for women, and is a prominent celebrity endorser for brands and products. Her other ventures include startup investments and a self-care brand.

Deepika is married to her frequent co-star Ranveer Singh, cementing their relationship as yet another power couple of the Bollywood industry. The celebrity couple is now the proud parents of their little girl, Dua. Deepika's success story as an actress, fashion entrepreneur, and social worker, coupled with her stunning beauty and glamorous personality, won her a huge fan base. As an influencer and brand ambassador for a large number of Indian and international brands, she is contributing to the consumer sector along with the entertainment industry.



Dr Sohini Sastri, 2-times President Award winner and world-renowned KP astrologer,

The Celestial Blueprint of India's $5 Trillion Economy

Astrology reveals how cosmic energies shape India's ambitious journey toward achieving a $5 trillion economy

India's aspiration to become a $5 trillion economy is not just an economic ambition; it is a destiny shaped by the collective vision, leadership, and planetary energies guiding the nation. From an astrologer's perspective, India's rise reflects a powerful alignment of cosmic forces that nurture innovation, resilience, and strategic foresight among its leaders. The country's horoscope, rooted in its independence chart of 1947, strongly highlights the influence of Mercury, Jupiter, and the Sun—the planets of intellect, expansion, and leadership. These planetary strengths are mirrored in the visionaries steering India's journey toward economic transformation.

Mercury, the planet of communication, trade, technology, and youth, blesses India with a generation of entrepreneurs, innovators, and digital creators. Under Mercury's influence, India has emerged as the global epicentre of start-ups, IT services, fintech, AI research, and digital empowerment. Visionaries transforming India's technology and business landscape resonate deeply with this mercurial energy. Their sharp intellect and adaptability reflect the planet's blessings, driving India toward a knowledge-based economy.

At the heart of India's $5 trillion dream lies the expansive grace of Jupiter, the planet of growth, prosperity, wisdom, and governance. Jupiter's influence on India's national chart supports large-scale reforms, educational advancements, global partnerships, and the strengthening of financial institutions. Astrologically, Jupiter blesses leaders with foresight—those who invest in infrastructure, manufacturing, clean energy, and rural development. The rise of India's unicorns, world-class institutions, and global collaborations reflects Jupiter's expansive power guiding the nation's builders and policymakers.

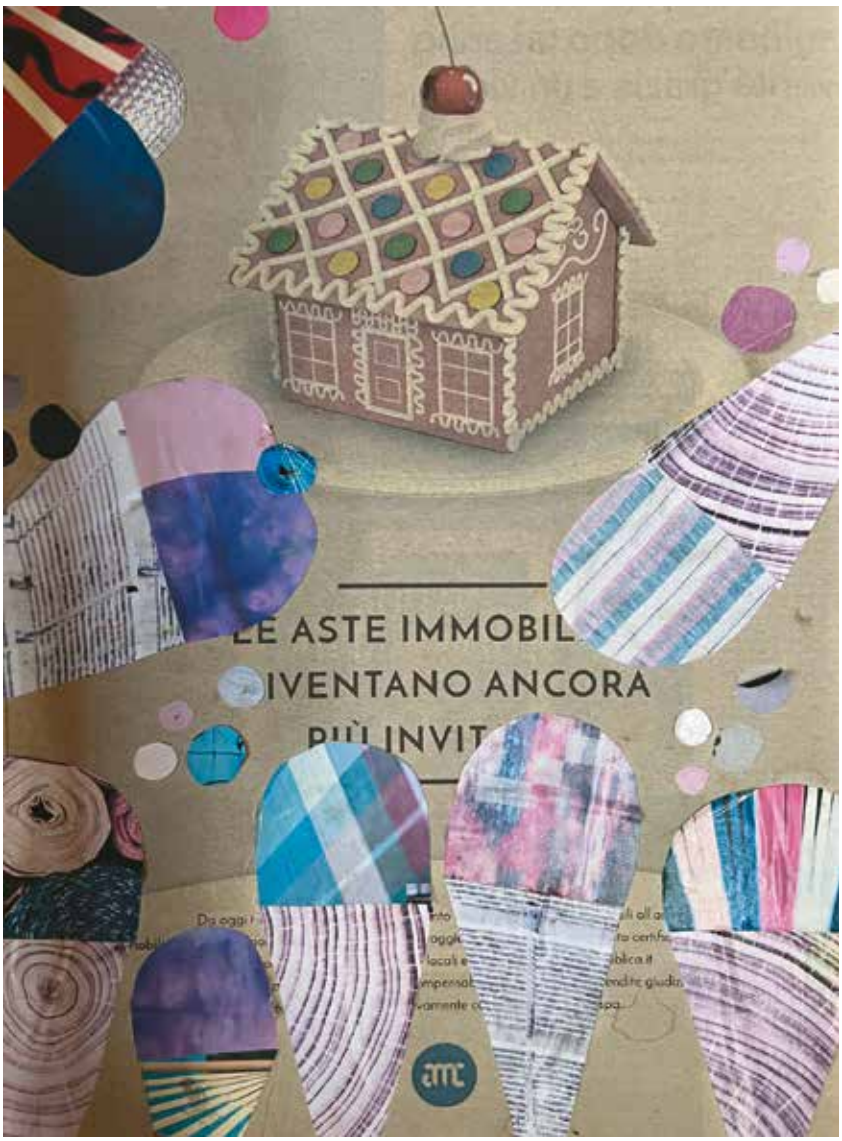
The Sun, representing authority, leadership, and national identity, bolsters India's confidence internationally. Visionary leaders in governance, administration, and diplomacy exemplify this solar power. Their resolve and clarity of intent illuminate India's trajectory towards economic self-sufficiency, security, and global recognition. The Sun's effect fosters resilience, particularly amid global shocks, allowing India to emerge stronger from each adversity.

Astrologically, India's success is a result of the efforts of its entrepreneurs, scientists, policymakers, teachers, industrialists, and new ideas. These people have a clear picture of India's $5 trillion economic future. They each have planetary traits that shape what they bring to the country.

From an astrologer's lens, India is entering a period of powerful economic momentum. With supportive transits from Jupiter and Saturn in the coming years, the cosmic blueprint aligns strongly with the nation's ambition. Guided by visionary leadership and planetary blessings, India's journey toward a $5 trillion economy is not only achievable—it is written in the stars.



Anupama Raju
is a poet, novelist and translator. She is the author of *None, C: A Novel* and *Bitter Gourd*



Home Artwork by Aradhana Seth

Diary of a Homeless Child

DAY 1:

Home, sweet home. Sweet. Home. Home. A gust of breath escapes me when I say home. The breath that lived in my mouth for eight years. Now it has left me, seeking homes in other bodies. Other mouths. My home isn't sweet anymore. Without that breath, this is a roof that doesn't protect, these are walls that don't stand, this floor that sinks into forgotten graves, cannot hold feet. Where do I sit? Where do I stand? My head cannot rest. My eyes cannot shut. My home isn't sweet anymore.

Home has left me. Sweet has left me. I have left myself. Who am I without my home, I ask. And the question boomerangs on me: Who are you without your home? What happens when there's no place to come back to? Whose children are we when we are homeless?

Day 2
Father tells Mother we must leave for another's land. There, we might discover a new space, which could become home, he says. It could become home if we stay alive. If we manage to steer clear of the armies that don't like homes. Or families. Or countries. They like only territories. Terrror tories. Terror stories. The terrors they inflict can be broken into stories, shredded and sliced like rotting fruit. Let's flee and find another home, he says.

Day 3
Mother says we will stay. Though home has left us. Though this is a roof that isn't a

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These are W A LL S that don't stand

This floor

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We will stay, she says. From these sinking floors, will arise a new home. No bricks or cement. No concrete either. We will build on bones. Bones, bones, bones. They shall not break, nor sink, nor crumble. We will build on bones that will grow into strong bodies, from which will arise a new home.

Day 4
Mother says homes don't have to be sweet either. Built on bones, they can be salty, like the Black Sea. Or the Red Sea. I have been to the sea. I have bathed in its waters, stung my eyes. And so I know what salt tastes like. I think I'd like to live in a home that tastes like that... salty, sturdy, solitary like a lone wave that refuses to reach the shore and stays aloof.

What about walls, Mother? I ask. She says,

Walls made of stone don't listen.
And between them, this lost city's ears hide,
seeking a voice—Did someone say something?
Was there a cry? A fading tune? A prayer?
Silence.

Walls made of stone don't listen.
Let's build them with skin. You're too young, child.
We will use mine. It has seen the world. Tough, taut, hard.
Then the voices will sing. The song will be heard. The words, spoken.
Then, the walls will listen. This lost city's ears will find what they seek.

Day 5
And so, we build a new home. Its floor won't sink...it shall be laid on bones and new words, words stripped of treaties and promises, of speeches and declarations. The floor shall be laid on truths. Ours. On what we have endured and lived through. Suffering and survival.

This is where I shall be born again. I shall see my mother giving birth to me. A pink infant wrapped in old cloth. Father will stand by her side. He will be neither happy nor sad. He will take me from my mother and say thanks to the Almighty. The child is healthy, he will say. Our child.

This home will be our new country. I shall grow up as the youngest citizen of this life-giving territory. Everyone is welcome to be born here. Its soil is nourishing enough for a country of newborn citizens, where we shall know no hunger, no murder or bloodshed. The red you shall see here will be the vermilion of a passionate sun warming us all against harsh winters. Women shall walk boldly on streets straight as their spines, heads up, eyes bright. They shall fear no men. No soldiers. No one. The weak will be strong. And the strong stronger.

A Country for Newborns

When a country is made of newborns
a world is born.
A world where words will live and breathe freely,
where you can see the horizon clearly,
where butterflies live long, sparkle quite fiercely.
When a country is made of newborns,
nobody dies in fear. Nor will there be an unnoticed tear.
Death will not arrive by force. It will not knock on frozen doors.
When a country is made for newborns,
a world is born where we will live freely.
Our truths will clothe and guide us,
where we will live all over again
all those days we lost while we were trying to live.
We will live our lives all over again
and redeem the days we lost while we were trying to breathe.

Day 6
So step foot into this brave new territory, this blessed land, this soil where I stand. Here, I shall grow into a strong adult. I shall work hard and provide for my family. I will take care of my people. I shall fill the wrinkles on my mother's face with love and compassion. I shall take her tired hands and walk with her to the shores of our sea. We shall watch the sun rise and the moon set.

I shall see myself fall in love. I will see my mother watch what she never thought she would see—her child marrying and having children. More newborns for a country free from fears.

Day 7
Today is the tomorrow I dreamt of yesterday. Today I'm fearless. In my dream for a new home built on truths, bold skins, bones, my mother's words and hopes, I have found myself. I have found my lost self in the home we are yet to build. The breath that escaped has returned. Home will be home again. Home will be sweet again. Home, sweet home.

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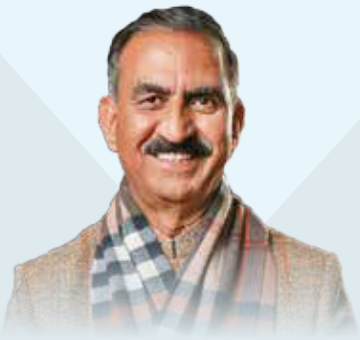
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Outlook

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Tracing the Memory of Migration



Sarojini Lewis

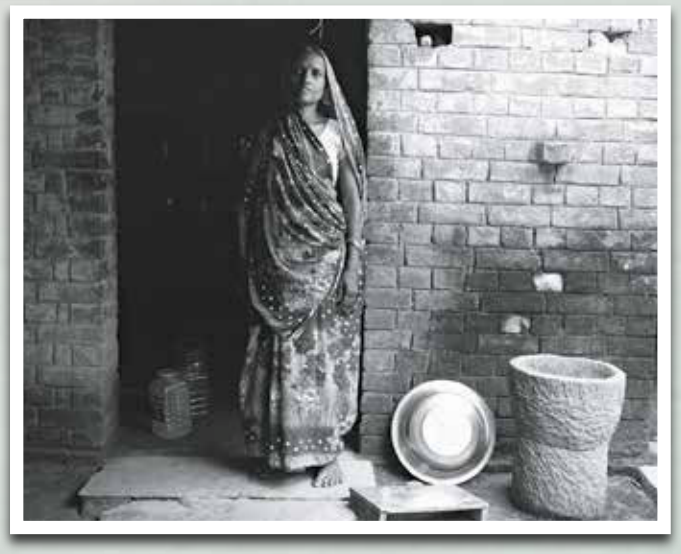
has a background in Fine Art with a specialisation in archival photography, video art and book arts. She is currently working as a curator, researcher and artist

THIS photo-essay looks into the lost memory of migration connected to women indentured labourers from north India, who migrated to the Caribbean, Suriname and Mauritius in the nineteenth century. Indentured migration from India to Suriname took place around 1873 when famine and droughts heavily affected parts of the northern Indian region. After the abolishment of slavery by the Dutch government in 1863, indentured labourers were required in Suriname. The ancestors and places described in this research are from the emigration contracts that mentioned villages of migration based in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Tracing villages is done with a focus on indentured labour contracts found in the National Archives of Suriname. The exploration of migration in present villages in India starts with the indentured labour contract of Dhannu Munia, who is a first-generation family member who migrated from Uttar Pradesh to Suriname. I have attempted to find out more about the current memory of migration and the traces of visual culture related to the identity of my ancestors and imagining the place of departure.

I refer to my own family lineage, which consists of descendants of Bhojpuri migrants, as described in my mother Chitra Gajadien's oral testimony—*A Silenced History*. It talks about the migration of Indians to Suriname and their second migration to the Netherlands. I created a collection of photographs that are published in a book titled *Kahe Gaile Bides (Why did you go overseas?)*

PHOTOGRAPHS: SAROJINI LEWIS







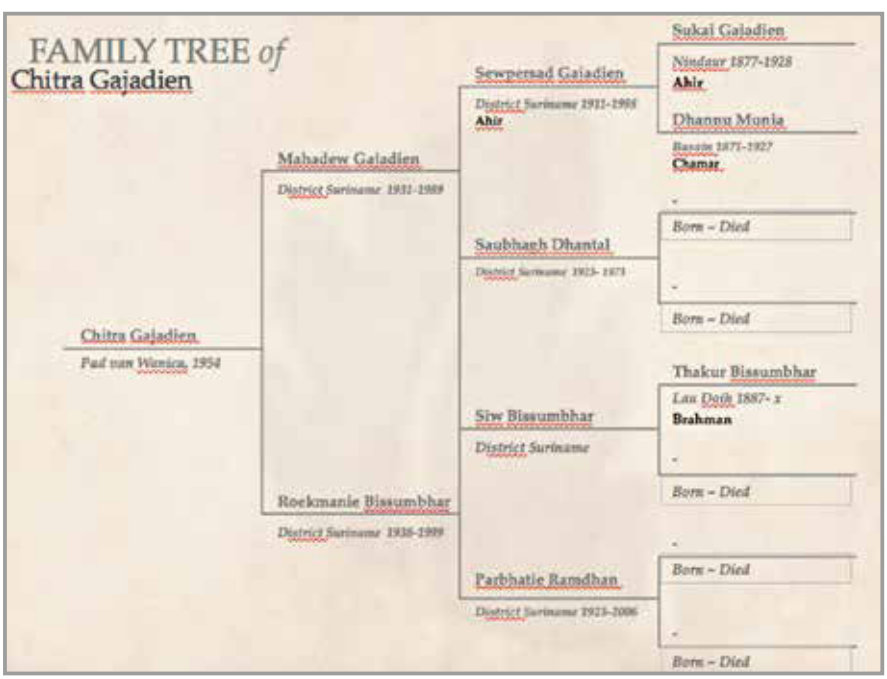
Real/Memory These three photographs show village Nindaur in Ara district of Bihar and are connected to my own imagination of what this village would look like

In January, I walked into the premises on the Lachmisinghweg where the Gajadiens live. The ninety-five-year-old Sewrattan was not used to conversing with a woman, and certainly not with a family member who had lived in the Netherlands for thirty years. I wanted to know, by all means, where the graves of my great-grandfather and great-grandmother were. They had been buried in the compound of their house, but where exactly? A stately gesture in the direction of the mango tree—"somewhere over there".

My ancestors wanted to have rice, dal, potato, sugar and some other items, part of the Hindu puja samagri *(ingredients for a religious ceremony). If I did not offer all that in streaming water, it would not be good for me. I got scared and immediately did what I was asked to do. This offering, meant for people dead for more than eighty years, what sense did it make? Later, I began to worry more and more about my ancestors. What did they really want from me? (Chitra Gajadien, 2005, p. 23)*

I wanted to trace my ancestor, Dhannu. Who was this woman? What did it mean to be a female indentured labourer making the journey from India to Suriname? The indentured contract of Dhannu formed the primary source to imagine her village of migration in India. I have reimagined the journey of Dhannu. Since she was a woman, and migrated as an indentured labourer, imagining her journey would be in contrast to the patriarchy that is deeply rooted in the village community. I asked: What is the current sense of memory of migration in these villages and if there is a remaining awareness of a bond between the villages in India with those in Suriname?

One can imagine how Dhannu would have experienced the train journey from her village to Calcutta, perhaps with a feeling of unimaginable fear laced with anticipation. She might never have boarded a train before or spent a night alone in an unfamiliar surrounding without her husband. She left her village, Basain, with her son for a reason that remains unknown; it has not been



Roots and Beginnings

The family tree shows the various castes and villages of my ancestors. I researched two contracts of my family members who migrated five generations ago from India to Suriname. The contract of Dhannu reveals that she migrated from the village Basain in the district Banaras in Uttar Pradesh. Her husband, Sukai Gajadien, migrated from the village of Nindaur in Ara district of Bihar

I COULD NOT FIND THE TRACES OF MY FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE INDIVIDUAL MEMORIES IN THE RESPECTIVE VILLAGES. IMAGINING DHANNU'S JOURNEY AND HER VILLAGE IS THE ONLY RESIDUE THAT IS LEFT FOR ME.

described in the contracts of indentured labour. The reasons people chose to leave were of no importance to the colonial administration and thus, this was not recorded. Dhannu and her son boarded a train that would not have the speed of today's trains and it must have taken a lot more time to reach the migrant depot at Calcutta. What would this passage of time mean for the migrants? What would her thoughts be while looking through the window of the train at the different landscapes affected by drought that passed by?

Dhannu was recruited and seems to have given her consent on a contract based on the contract for females in Mauritius. When one observes the colonial contract for women in Mauritius, the focus was on the father's name, marital status and wages. The difference between Mauritius and Suriname was that the labour contract was not for one year but for five years. We do not know if this was under duress. This is not indicated in the documents of indentured labour. In some cases, the consent was voluntary. In other cases, it was not. Often, recruiters created a false idea about Suriname, as they received money for every person that they persuaded to migrate. The recruits were partly misled by evoking Suriname as the country of Sri Ram.

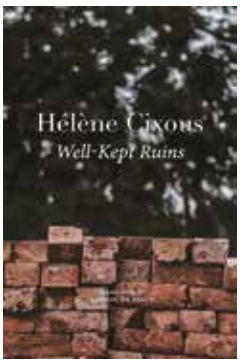
How would Dhannu answer the questionnaire of the colonial government for the establishment of the contract of indentured labour? Would they have asked her about her husband and the reason why she was travelling alone with her son? Or would she have been abducted because the *arkathiyas* (recruiters, East Indian Middlemen) needed more women to migrate overseas? Abduction was a phenomenon that appeared and the laws and treatment for the *arkathiyas* had to be amended several times. The contract did not reveal any detailed information about the working conditions in the destination colony. This meant that Dhannu, like all indentured labourers, was left without sufficient information about the destination of the ship journey that would take three months.

When I consider the situation of Dhannu, I wonder if this young woman, who was 24 when she left, had learned how to write. Like most women then, she was most probably illiterate. She started off by working on Plantation Meerzorg and was later transferred to Plantation Marienburg. We can assume she had no ability to write home and furthermore, took her child with her on the ship journey to Suriname. There could have been a letter-writing facility in the destination colony; this was often the case in villages in India and someone could write on behalf of a person.

Since it was difficult for elderly people to memorise their daily life and objects from the villages they left behind in India, such as water wells that surround them in their own village, memories of migration must have taken the form of abstraction and disconnection from their past. Enforced by the loss of the tradition of artisans to capture or orally document specific memories, it becomes harder for people to understand their own community. Six generations have existed since the time people first migrated to the current generation. The stories of pain and void left behind by their loved ones seem untraceable in the villages.

I could not find the traces of my family members in the individual memories in the respective villages. Imagining Dhannu's journey and her village is the only residue that is left for me. In the abstraction of my thought, besides the fact that I never found her village, there is a stark contrast with the village Nindaur in Ara district of Bihar of her husband, Sukai Gajadien, captured in three photographs. Her story remains untold, yet part of my daily experience of longing for the unknown is integrated with my identity and perception of who I am.

Well-Kept Ruins



WELL-KEPT RUINS
| **Hélène Cixous** | Seagull Books | 156 pages | Rs 699

Hélène Cixous
is a French-Algerian writer and seminal feminist theorist, who co-founded Paris VIII and created Europe's first women's studies centre, shaping ideas of écriture féminine *(women's writing)*

I remember, is this what you call remembering? Walking briskly, our Stroll takes us past the Dom, we don't go into the cathedral, nor the cloister, now left and left again to the corner where through a window we see the tombs in the pretty garden of roses and tombs—all archbishops—old tombs eternally young garden roses don't count the centuries, peace slumbers here, a little dream in time's strict enclosure, instead we walk a hundred metres further along the square, immense, as usual, an esplanade vast as a ream of white paper champing at the bit for the lines and signs to be set down, we'll come back, let's keep moving along the Hegerstrasse we'll be back, past the Hegertor, at the same brisk pace, as if we're in a rush, Mama, as if she knows where we are going, advances with the firm gait of her sturdy shoes, I don't know how to say this in German, this is a word for my mother, a word with go and god, something martial, that knows our destination, 'it's as lovely as ever' we think, a sentence that shows our state of mind and in the air, something uplifting, a breath of wind that seems by definition to be part of the City, part of Every City, yet we don't expect such beauty in a geographically chilly Hanoverian city historically watered by a few rivers of blood and streams of tears like my mother's genealogy that it be full of flowers and beautiful up above is a sign, each time this sentence pops up, it is our whole human condition that, with a sigh, we are reminded of, hence this is the same sun that shone on the ramparts in the Iliad, Canto 3, of which I speak, the morning when I arose softly weeping, writes Helen the White of Hand, in a dream in which I watched myself weave a great piece of fabric on which I would depict the battles between the horse people of Troy and the bronze-cuirassed Achaeans, I sensed this was an allegory, not a dream, it would depict reality, everyone was filled with desire for a cruel war, and I too was cruel and full of desire's anguish, as usual, as since each of my childhoods in my memory of the dream, Helen noted, some people walked over other people while they cried like birds, others advanced in silence, that's all that remains of my dream, the cries and the silence that resounded like the ebbing of a furious sob, that's all, those two opposed sounds and next thing I see myself climbing to the city ramparts, I find Priam my old father-in-law, waiting for me on the wall beside the Tower, and his old face radiates a strong childlike curiosity, the old gentleman says: Come up here and tell me who that fellow is down there, far, far away, bigger than life, since he seems a good head taller than all the others, and carries himself like an actor, some spectacular thirties show, I'd rather not speak of him, he's Agamemnon, the brother-in-law of the woman I was but this is all so distant now, it is part of another story, or another dream, 'if ever there was one,' Helen the Troy weaver tells herself and this expression that thinks with such vigour, that makes life and the earth tremble, shakes me like an apocalypse, cries like Act V Scene 5 in the tragedy, this trembling relationship of the past in the present, if this past was ever true, such is the pain for which literature prepares a bed and a refuge, if one day, to be sure, that day ever was, this is what I was, the sentence's shadow murmurs, if—(that)—day—ever was, but the sky, the sky is so lovely, an immortal blue, like the sky on 1 March 1571, the anniversary of the day of his birth, when he was still burning to write the completely naked book of his whole and wholly naked self, Montaigne enters—for the small portion of life that remains to him—the volume of the library-sanctuary dedicated to painting, to remembering and which contains all the books that silently meditate, within his soul he has Rome and Paris and all time, and from the third floor of his library he overlooks the forest and the extraordinarily clear blue sky, once he is within himself then he imagines, he conceives in his soul the City become Book placeless stoneless plasterless woodless and completely immortal, the narrower the room's furniture, the farther and more boundless the soul's vision, and the sky with all its stars covers the ground floor as in a drawing by Kepler, which in no way keeps it from being as blue as midday.

Let's get back to our stroll, what a beautiful day it is in Osnabrück, the sky and the blueness of its fabric, we think, as magical as a theatre curtain, all we have to do is contemplate it, rapt as the watchman who embraces all time in the staircase of Sodom and Gomorrah, and we are transported, my mother and I, into the generations and archives of our interior and outer towers, what is strange, I tell my daughter, is that I was born for the first time, of my father, in a city without towers and without a river. From then on I was always born of my mother, with a tower and river from one city to the next.

If you can call it a Stroll, our hasty, forgetful walk, which leads us along the Hexengang, ineluctably, towards the Hase, the destination and end of Witches Road. It's so short but it is long. It is charming, we forget about the terror, we feel ourselves alive, violently, the little brick pavers are still as red today as they were five hundred years ago, the play of light and shadow, the sense that the Gang is long is no doubt due to the street's different parts, a tunnel with the feeling of a distant horizon, a bend, another, a section that slopes down between two high walls which, were it longer, would feel oppressive, prisonlike, all the impressive charms of a labyrinth, the modest defile between two serious-looking, imposing buildings to the right of the Dom, to the left of the Carolinum Gymnasium between Church and Empire, only between noon and two o'clock does the sun manage to let a little light into the darkness of the human heart.

(For full version of this article, go to www.outlookindia.com)

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Palak Muchhal


Pia Singh


Deepika Padukone



Visionaries of $5 Trillion Economy

As India ambitiously strives to achieve the USD 5 trillion GDP vision, *The Outlook* honours the business leaders, domain specialists, educators and innovators who have pioneered change and opened new avenues for India's growth engine

While initial targets for becoming a $5 trillion economy focused on 2025, slower nominal GDP growth and rupee depreciation shifted the timeline to 2028-29. The economy is still expected to cross $4 trillion in FY26 and become the world's third-largest.

Looking ahead, India's domestic growth is on an upward trajectory owing to multiple factors such as an enormous domestic demand, favourable agricultural prospects, sustained effects of GST rationalisation, softer crude oil prices, front-loading of government capital expenditure (CAPEX), benign inflation, and the strong balance sheets of corporates and financial institutions, coupled with supportive monetary and financial conditions, which are expected to continue bolstering the economic activity.

External factors, such as services exports, are projected to remain robust, while the swift conclusion of current trade and investment negotiations offers additional upside potential. Growth is driven by infrastructure, manufacturing (PLI schemes), digital economy expansion, and services. Ongoing reforms are likely to further enable growth prospects. The RBI revised India's GDP growth forecast for FY 2025-26 upwards to 7.3% from the earlier estimate of 6.8%.

The government aims to shift agricultural policy from production-centric to income-centric growth. Building a strong MSME ecosystem is vital for demand generation, investment, and employment, supported by tax, regulatory, infrastructure, and factor reforms, along with "ease of doing business". International collaborations can drive innovation in digital services, startups, and AI/ML, while manufacturing remains a key economic pillar, strengthened by initiatives like *Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.*

Financial inclusion, literacy, education, vocational training, and connectivity are crucial for rural development. Greener technologies and social sector reforms in health, education, and skilling are essential for sustainable, long-term growth.

The present macroeconomic situation presents a rare "Goldilocks period" of high growth and low inflation, allowing the central bank (RBI) to cut rates to boost growth while maintaining stability, creating confidence and solidifying its position as a global growth engine.

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Founder & President, Vidya Group

Vidya Herbs is a globally recognised leader in premium, sustainable herbal extracts and speciality ingredients, engineering the future of botanical science with responsibility, precision, and purpose. Under its visionary founder, Shyamprasad Kodimule, who brings over two decades of expertise, Vidya Herbs operates in an end-to-end integrated business environment right from sourcing, extraction, standardisation, and validation, which guarantees incomparable control over quality and sustainability. This approach enables expert craftsmanship at every stage, elevating premium botanicals into world-class extracts.

In the fast-evolving world of nutraceuticals and functional ingredients, established in Bengaluru in 1999, Vidya Herbs stands apart not merely as a manufacturer but as the outcome of a long-term vision shaped by its founder, Shyamprasad. "I believe that business leadership must harmonise scientific excellence with environmental and social responsibility, where innovation is purposeful and growth is ethical," he emphasises.

Shyamprasad's leadership approach permeates every layer of the company. Sustainability is not treated as a box-ticking exercise but as a strategic imperative. Under his direction, Vidya Herbs has adopted regenerative agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and reduced chemical inputs—viewing land as a long-term partner rather than a short-term resource.

Equally central to Shyamprasad's vision is inclusive growth. The organisation's deep partnerships with farming communities go beyond sourcing, encompassing education, healthcare, clean water access, and sustainable livelihoods. This community-centric model has created a resilient supply chain where prosperity is shared and long-term value is preserved.

What truly defines Shyamprasad's long-term vision is his ability to bridge India's traditional botanical knowledge with global scientific standards. Drawing inspiration from Ayurveda, Vidya Herbs applies advanced analytical technologies such as HPLC, GC-MS/MS, ICP-MS, FTIR, and robust stability studies to deliver ingredients that meet the world's most demanding quality benchmarks. His early investment in supercritical fluid extraction (SCFE) positioned VIDYA as a leader in producing high-purity, solvent-free extracts trusted by global customers.

"India holds centuries of botanical intelligence," Shyamprasad notes. "Our responsibility is to translate that wisdom into clinically validated, globally credible solutions."

Extending his philosophy beyond botanicals, Shyamprasad launched VIDYA Coffee in 2014, rooted in the coffee landscapes of Chikmagalur. What began as a green bean export business has evolved into a fully integrated operation. Today, VIDYA Coffee ranks as India's fourth-largest producer-exporter, processing 20,000 tonnes annually in India and 5,000 tonnes in Uganda, with a new Belur facility adding 40,000 tonnes of capacity and creating over 500 jobs.

Despite VIDYA's global footprint—strengthened by NSF-certified and US-organic facilities—Shyamprasad remains deeply anchored to India's farmers and ecosystems. Looking ahead, his vision places VIDYA at the forefront of the next wellness frontier: functional foods, personalised nutrition, plant-based beverages, and natural skincare. Strategic investments in clinical research, traceability, and technology reinforce a future built on trust and transparency.



Driving the Next Era of Growth

From modernising Indian Railways with high-speed trains and enhanced safety systems to advancing semiconductor manufacturing, AI development, and media reforms, Ashwini Vaishnaw's leadership reflects a comprehensive vision for infrastructure growth, digital innovation, and accountable governance under Modi 3.0

Ashwini Vaishnaw
Union Minister of Railways of India, Information & Broadcasting, and Electronics & Information Technology

Ashwini Vaishnaw is a former bureaucrat who transitioned into the corporate world after earning an MBA from the Wharton Business School in 2008. He held leadership positions at large multinational corporations before becoming an entrepreneur and founding his own automotive component manufacturing businesses.

As the 39th Minister of Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw is spearheading the transformation of the Indian Railways. He assumed office in July 2021 and was reappointed to the same position in June 2024 as part of the Modi 3.0 Cabinet.

A dream-come-true project initiated by Vaishnaw is India's first Vande Bharat sleeper train engineered for long-distance overnight travel with advanced amenities such as ergonomic berths, bio-vacuum toilets, automatic doors, enhanced suspension and the indigenous KAVACH anti-collision system. It is set to launch on the Guwahati–Kolkata/Howrah route in January 2026, elevating comfort and reducing reliance on air travel.

Another ambitious project is the Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor, which has achieved its first major mountain tunnel breakthrough, with authorities targeting operationalisation of India's first bullet train by 15 August 2027. Over 1,330 stations are being redeveloped to world-class standards under the "Amrit Bharat Station scheme", featuring improved waiting areas, escalators, lifts, better toilets, food courts, and integration of local cultural themes in design.

The indigenous automatic KAVACH safety system is being rolled out in mission mode across the network to prevent collisions and enhance operational safety, with significant recent deployments boosting protection on busy sections. New passenger holding areas, mobile catering reforms, Wi-Fi at thousands of stations, and "One Station, One Product" kiosks are improving traveler experience, while dedicated freight corridors and logistics initiatives (including time-bound container and parcel services) are strengthening cargo movement. While the plan is to double capacity by 2030, capacity is expected to increase progressively over the next five years, so the benefits of the addition can be realised immediately.

Speaking of good governance, his railway leadership has emphasised the need for greater responsibility, transparency, and potentially tougher accountability frameworks to ensure project timelines, safety standards, and service delivery match ambitious infrastructure goals nationwide.

Apart from the railways portfolio, under his visionary leadership, in the capacity of Minister of Railways of India, Electronics & Information Technology, India's Electronics and IT strategy aims to make the country a global semiconductor leader, expand domestic chip manufacturing, launch the India AI Mission for inclusive AI development, boost electronics components production, and enforce stricter digital accountability on online platforms.

Ashwini Vaishnaw's agenda for the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting focuses on easing regulatory burdens in the radio sector, implementing transparent TRP reforms, and promoting indigenous manufacturing of film and broadcast equipment under the "Make in India" initiative.

Building a Nation Beyond Balance Sheets

Krishnakumar KT, a banker-turned-entrepreneur redefining success through inclusive growth, social equity, and humane leadership building institutions toward empowering India



Krishnakumar K T
Chairman & Managing Director, Oleevia Grameen Credits

In a world where entrepreneurship is literally reduced to balance sheet numbers and the key performance indicators for success are valuations, exits, and headlines, Krishnakumar KT exemplifies the rarest and richest dimensions of leadership—those in which one measures success in terms of human impact.

Banker-turned-entrepreneur, social reformer, and institution-builder, Krishnakumar is part of a generation of Indian leadership who passionately hold that nation-building is no exclusive domain of boardroom strategies or parliamentarian efforts, but a process of action on the street, in villages, classrooms, farms, and homes.

His experience as a banker was almost two decades ago. However, it was his conscience that played the biggest role in defining his journey, and when he decided to establish and helm the purpose-driven organisations.

Pioneering Global Standards on Gender Equity

With a move that left everyone awestruck around the world, Krishnakumar introduced the first-ever Paid Menstrual Wellness Leave for women. It was humane and respectful, demarcating a boundary of "menstrual wellness at the workplace". Thereby, establishing a new path to redefine workplace dignity.

Philosophy of Inclusive Growth

His Non-Banking Financial Company is not just to support balance sheets but also to enhance the bottom line of society. Street vendors, tea shop owners, micro-entrepreneurs, and unorganised business entrepreneurs experience dignity, order, and hope through his organisation. Through credit and growth facilitation, he empowers people who support the economy of India silently and add significantly to the GDP.

Fundamental Right to Food

Krishnakumar's restaurants are established on one basic but revolutionary idea: food should not be considered a luxury but a fundamental right. With his eateries providing healthy and affordable food, he has bridged the divide between health and viability. In the Multi-State Agriculture Cooperative Society, he has enhanced the agricultural chain by making farmers not just "victims of uncertainty" but "contributors to prosperity".

Driving Socially Equitable Causes

The Oleevia Foundation reflects Krishnakumar's commitment to working with tribal groups and the transgender community, which have, so far, remained distanced from the economic and social mainstream, with education, skills, self-respect, and sustainable livelihoods being the pillars that hold his vision for a humane, inclusive, and constitutionally embedded concept of development.

The Art Movement for Healing

Krishnakumar's most soul-stirring venture is H2A Art Hub, or "Heart to Art", which is a cultural movement that answers, among others, the concerns of unemployment, drug abuse, and social alienation through art. Through H2A, which offers these young individuals free professional training in performing arts, passion is transformed into livelihood, pulling these hopefuls away from their seduction in drugs and crime toward purpose, identity, and hope.

Skilling for Future India

His dedication to the future of India is also visible through the establishment of the "JIB Academy", which is an institute that concentrates on skill development, employability, and career sustainability. His project regarding "career counselling" considers the mental well-being of students, helping them to discover their actual interest, thereby avoiding frustration and depression among the youth. He delivers financial literacy classes for students on money management and the psychology of wealth. He actively participates in national-level think tank collaborations through platforms such as Think Kerala and Sukrutha Keralam, aiming to provide solutions for the country's larger societal problems.



Jagat Prakash Nadda
Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers

Building a Healthier Nation

Union Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda continues to shape a resilient, future-ready healthcare and food safety landscape for the nation through sustained policy action, global collaboration, and citizen-centric reforms

Jagat Prakash Nadda, an Indian politician, lawyer, and the BJP National President since 2020, has long been associated with transformative policy work in the healthcare sector. His tenure as Union Minister of Health, beginning in 2014 during the first term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marked a decisive shift in India's approach to public health. Among his most notable contributions was the pivotal role he played in launching the Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), now the world's largest government-funded health assurance scheme. Offering annual health coverage of up to five lakh rupees to nearly fifty-five crore people, the initiative has brought quality healthcare within reach for India's most vulnerable communities.

Over the last six years, AB-PMJAY has transformed millions of lives by enabling access to essential, and often life-saving, medical treatment. Under Nadda's leadership, India witnessed rapid expansion of Jan Aushadhi Kendras, improved medicine availability, and greater hospital digitisation, all contributing to a more robust, equitable healthcare ecosystem. His continued efforts reflect an unwavering commitment to building a healthier and more inclusive India—an essential foundation for the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

In alignment with global priorities in food safety and public health, Nadda—as Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers—has also strengthened regulatory frameworks to address evolving food production processes, shifting dietary patterns, and international trade. A significant milestone came during the Global Food Regulators Summit 2024, where he launched the Food Import Rejection Alert (FIRA) portal and unveiled the upgraded Food Import Clearance System 2.0 (FICS 2.0). These digital advancements have improved the speed, transparency, and efficiency of food import oversight, reinforcing India's commitment to global food safety standards.

Throughout 2025, Nadda has actively engaged in key national and international platforms such as the International Symposium on Health Technology Assessment (ISHTA 2025), the Global Food Regulators Summit 2025, and FICCI HEAL 2025. His participation underscores the government's dedication to accessible healthcare, technological innovation, and evidence-based policymaking. He has also championed critical public health initiatives, including World AIDS Day 2025 observances, parliamentary engagement on the TB Mukt Bharat campaign, and strategic meetings on emerging health technologies.

One of the hallmark accomplishments under his recent leadership is the successful rollout of the Union Health Ministry's 100 Days Program. Key achievements include the launch of Med-Tech Mitra, the National One Health Mission for Pandemic Preparedness, and new initiatives for indigenous drug development. These efforts strengthen India's health innovation ecosystem, boost pandemic readiness, and empower domestic manufacturing—further advancing the spirit of Make in India.

Ushering a New Era of Innovation

Makarand Joshi is making a difference in multiple industries like automation, construction, home appliances, electronics, farm equipment and kids' toys with cutting-edge innovations



Makarand Joshi
Founder & CMD along with Directors Mihir & Vedant Joshi, Trimoorty Foamtech Ltd

Makarand Joshi is making a difference in multiple industries like automation, construction, home appliances, electronics, farm equipment and kids' toys with cutting-edge innovations

Makarand Joshi, a chemical engineer from a non-business Maharashtrian family, began his entrepreneurial journey in 1991 with a trading business and production facility as Trimoorty Autodeco Components Pvt Ltd.

Trimoorty has evolved into a leading manufacturer and global exporter, distinguished by its state-of-the-art facilities and a robust supply chain that spans pan-India and international markets, specialising in engineering high-precision customised components using a diverse range of materials, including foam, sponge, felt, aluminium foil, and PU moulded foam. By providing advanced solutions for NVH (Noise, Vibration, and Harshness), acoustic and thermal insulation, seals, and gaskets, Trimoorty delivers high-performance applications tailored to the specific needs of various industry segments.

The company has strategically diversified its expertise across the automotive, construction equipment, home appliances, electronics, farm equipment, and toy industries, serving prestigious global clients, such as Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Volkswagen, Hyundai, Caterpillar, Kobelco, Whirlpool, Godrej, TAFE Tractors, and Siemens, among others.

A New Age Brand

Under Makarand Joshi's leadership, the company has rebranded to Trimoorty Foamtech Ltd in 2025, with a focus on specialisation, and signals the next phase of the company's evolution without disrupting the trust built over decades, aligning with the evolving growth strategy in advanced foam solutions.

Trimoorty Foamtech Ltd is well-positioned to further its legacy of engineering prowess, pursue new markets, and continue delivering world-class foam technology solutions that meet the complex demands of modern industry.

The Toy Story

Trimoorty has set up the 'KIDSLAND' brand, offering a range of innovative and imaginative foam toys for children that blend fun, safety, and learning. These products received a positive response from the toy industry. The company is catering to prominent toy original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) like Hasbro, Winmagic, Amazon, and Flipkart and is ready to establish a 5th plant fully dedicated to the toy division with all necessary international standard production facilities and international certification.

The Dynamic Duo

Young and enthusiastic directors, Mihir Joshi and Vedant Joshi, are playing a key role in driving the growth of the Trimoorty Group while carrying forward their father's legacy. Mihir Joshi holds a bachelor's degree in operations management and an MSc in management from Kingston University, UK. Vedant Joshi holds a BBA in Financial Management from BMCC and an MSc in Finance from the University of Bath, UK. Together, they bring a strong global perspective and contemporary expertise to the organisation, while its core values remain resolute.

Accelerating Growth Rate

The 2024–25 FY has been exceptional for Trimoorty Foamtech Ltd, garnering ₹120 crores in sales and aiming to achieve ₹200 crores soon. It highlights organic growth in core industrial segments and the effectiveness of strategic investments in manufacturing and portfolio diversification. Trimoorty Foamtech is poised to enter the capital markets through an SME Initial Public Offering (IPO), now in its final stage of preparation. The upcoming IPO is expected to accelerate capacity expansion, facilitate infrastructure development, and support the establishment of new facilities, enhancing the company's ability to serve existing and new customers across sectors.



Guiding India's Commodity Markets Through Change

Praveena Rai leads MCX with deep market experience, focusing on trust, technology and long-term resilience

Praveena Rai, MD & CEO, MCX

Praveena Rai assumed charge of the Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd. (MCX) at a time when India's commodity derivatives market is expanding in scale, sophistication and regulatory significance. As Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, she leads the country's largest commodity derivatives exchange, which anchors price discovery and risk management across key segments of the real economy.

She took charge in October 2024, beginning a five-year term at MCX, an institution central to India's commodity ecosystem. MCX provides a transparent and regulated platform for trading in commodities such as gold, silver, crude oil, base metals and agricultural products. Through price discovery and risk management, the exchange supports farmers, manufacturers, traders and investors, helping them navigate market volatility.

Praveena Rai brings with her more than three decades of experience across banking, payments and financial services. Before joining MCX, she served as the Chief Operating Officer of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the organisation that transformed the way Indians transact digitally. At NPCI, she played a key role in scaling landmark platforms and strengthening operational systems that now handle billions of transactions every month.

Her earlier career includes senior leadership roles at global and Indian banks. She worked with HSBC as the Regional Head of Payments for the Asia-Pacific region and also held important positions at Citibank and Kotak Mahindra Bank. She handled complex portfolios in transaction banking, cash management and payment solutions, building a strong reputation for execution and strategic clarity.

Praveena Rai holds an engineering degree from the College of Engineering, Guindy, Chennai, and is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. She has also undertaken advanced leadership training at the Wharton School in the United States, further sharpening her strategic thinking and global outlook.

As MD and CEO of MCX, her focus is on strengthening governance and guiding the exchange through a phase of renewal and growth. Her background in digital platforms and large-scale systems is expected to support MCX as it upgrades technology, enhances market efficiency and explores new opportunities in product innovation.

She is also seen as a steady leader at a time when market confidence and regulatory compliance are critical. Her appointment received regulatory approval, reflecting trust in her ability to lead a systemically important financial institution. Under her leadership, MCX is expected to deepen its engagement with market participants while maintaining transparency and robust risk management practices.

Praveena Rai's distinction lies in institution-building at scale. At NPCI, she was part of the leadership team that helped transition India's digital payments ecosystem from an emerging innovation to a high-volume, always-on financial backbone. Her journey reflects the growing presence of women in leadership roles across India's financial sector. She has been featured among India's leading women in finance, including inclusion in industry leadership lists such as Forbes India's W-Power List 2024.

With experience, balance and a forward-looking mindset, Praveena Rai stands at the centre of an institution vital to India's economic infrastructure.

Securing India's Digital Future

A pioneer in high-security printing and integrated IT solutions, Madras Security Printers emerges as a trusted partner for governments and enterprises alike, seamlessly combining traditional expertise with cutting-edge technology.



"The path to leadership was not without challenges. Our strength lies in combining decades of trust with modern technology. We strive to create secure, intelligent solutions that empower governments and enterprises and lead India confidently into the digital era"

P Rajah Sunder Singh
Chairman and Managing Director, Madras Security Printers

As India embraces digital governance and smart city initiatives, Madras Security Printers (MSP) stands resolute as a pillar of secure, intelligent, and forward-looking solutions. Headquartered in Chennai, where heritage meets innovation, MSP has quietly shaped the nation's security printing and digital transformation landscape for over four decades.

Leading Through Legacy

The story of MSP is inseparable from the vision of P Rajah Sunder Singh, an MBA from Loyola College, Chennai, and the son of first-generation entrepreneur MJ Prathapsingh, founder of Eagle Diaries. Growing up observing his father build the diversified Eagle Group, Rajah imbibed the values of hard work, commitment, and strategic thinking. These lessons would become the foundation for his journey.

Founded in 1985, MSP emerged to address a critical gap in India's high-security printing market. At the time, most secure documents and products were imported, and the demand for domestic solutions was rapidly growing. Leveraging Eagle Press's expertise in quality printing, MSP quickly became one of the first companies in India to receive government recognition as a High-Security Printer.

Acing the Growth Curve

From excise labels and identity management solutions to ERP systems and track-and-trace mechanisms, MSP evolved into a full-service provider with unmatched in-house capabilities. It delivers a secure, modular Excise Revenue Management System with Digital Tax Stamps (DTS) that prevents counterfeiting, boosts revenue collection, and enables end-to-end track and trace using USDN and data aggregation.

Competing against established players required relentless effort and an unwavering focus on technology. Strategic investments, such as establishing a new state-of-the-art plant in the late 2000s, carried significant risk—but these bold moves solidified MSP's position as an industry leader.

Today, the company offers turnkey IT solutions, smart city ICT implementation, digital identity platforms, and high-security printing for clients across government ministries, banks, telecoms, and corporate enterprises worldwide.

Efficiency Meets Intelligence

MSP's innovations are now transforming urban governance. Its AI-powered solutions optimise public transport, waste management, and resource planning, while the flagship Integrated Command and Control Centre integrates thousands of camera feeds to enhance law enforcement with real-time analytics. Cybersecurity initiatives protect critical networks and data, ensuring that clients remain resilient in an era of digital threats.

Operating with the agility MSP continuously adapts to emerging technologies. Rajah's foresight and openness to innovation have enabled the company to stay ahead of industry trends, blending traditional craftsmanship with modern intelligence. Their client-centric approach—conceptualising, planning, supplying, installing, and maintaining entire projects—sets MSP apart, making it a preferred partner for governments and large enterprises alike.

With a legacy rooted in trust and a vision propelled by innovation, MSP continues to redefine the possibilities of technology, securing not just documents but the future of the digital nation.



Rajeev Radhakrishnan
CIO (Fixed Income)
SBI-Mutual Fund

A Steady Hand Guiding India's Debt Investment Landscape

With decades of market insight, Rajeev Radhakrishnan has shaped disciplined, risk-aware debt investing in India

Over a career spanning over two decades, he has earned an unmatched reputation for disciplined investment practices, risk awareness, and his unwavering focus on long-term value creation for investors. Industry insiders speak with reverence of his macro-driven bond strategies and yield curve positioning, and regard him as one of the most experienced and trusted fixed-income professionals in India's mutual fund industry. His name is Rajeev Radhakrishnan.

Currently serving as the Chief Investment Officer (Fixed Income) at SBI Mutual Fund, Radhakrishnan is responsible for formulating and implementing the overall debt investment strategy across a wide array of schemes, including liquid funds, ultra-short duration funds, short-term debt funds, banking and PSU debt funds, and other income-oriented products. In this capacity, he oversees interest-rate positioning, credit risk management, liquidity frameworks, and portfolio construction, ensuring that SBI Mutual Fund maintains its position as one of India's largest and most trusted asset management companies.

Rajeev Radhakrishnan joined SBI Mutual Fund in 2008, at a time when global financial markets were still recovering from the massive 2008 recession headwinds and unprecedented market volatility that could still spell doom for investors. What distinguished Radhakrishnan both among peers and investors was his steely determination and a methodical, research-driven approach to debt investing, plus the nearly miraculous intuition essential to navigating complex macroeconomic environments. His earlier stint at UTI Asset Management Company, where he honed his skills as a fixed-income fund manager, provided the foundations for this role. And his training, first as an engineer and then as a finance professional (he is a CFA Charterholder, a globally respected credential that underscores his expertise in investment analysis, portfolio management, and adherence to the highest ethical standards) have come together in a unique synergy to enable his mastery of interest-rate cycles, credit risk, and liquidity challenges.

But it is his macro-driven investment philosophy that has made Rajeev Radhakrishnan famous in his niche. He carefully monitors key economic indicators such as inflation trends, fiscal and monetary policies, and global bond market developments, and emphasises conservative credit selection, prioritizing balance-sheet strength and liquidity over chasing high yields. This disciplined approach aligns seamlessly with SBI Mutual Fund's ethos of trust and reliability.

Over the years, Rajeev Radhakrishnan has overseen debt assets totaling several lakh crores, making him one of the most influential fixed-income managers in India. While fund manager responsibilities rotate as part of internal governance, his crystal-clear strategic vision continues to shape the debt investment platform and set the tone for the fund house's long-term goals.

Long story short, Rajeev Radhakrishnan's credo is a process-driven, risk-conscious brand of fund management. He is not your flamboyant media personality-turned-household name, nor is he a docile follower of global trends, but a meticulous professional whose decisions quietly influence millions of Indian investors seeking capital preservation and steady returns through debt mutual funds. His career reflects the principles of prudent investing, disciplined execution, and unwavering commitment to long-term financial stability.

Meet the Man Redefining Wealth Management in India

Rahul Ghose's bold vision for building a risk-first, profit-driven future for India and its Investors



Rahul Ghose
Founder and CEO, Octanom Tech

Rahul Ghose has spent close to two decades inside India's financial markets, managing massive derivative trading teams, designing national investor education programs, guiding large family office portfolios, and serving as Vice President & and as country heads at different corporates in India. These experiences gave him a rare vantage point: he saw how fast India was embracing the markets and how unprepared most investors & the current products were for the risks that came with it.

Year after year, he observed the same pattern. Investors entered the markets with enthusiasm but struggled during volatility. Decisions became emotional. Products felt stereotype. Drawdowns created panic. Advice often lacked alignment. These recurring behaviours resulted in wealth losses or erratic CAGR returns that could have been avoided with the right tools and a stronger safety framework.

While India may have already created many different Wealth platforms, it needed to create products where the downside was protected & hence, the creation of Hedged.in & Octanom emerged.

Hedged is the first "Hedged style" investment and trading platform in India that offers financial products that are not commonly available in the market otherwise. "Wealth management is not about predicting the markets. Its about building alpha in both bear markets as well as bull markets, with peace of mind" says Rahul

While other fintech companies tend to pursue large scale via high-cost, Rahul is determined to build Octanom Tech into a ₹1,000 crore wealth technology powerhouse grounded in value creation, rather than in valuations. By creating products that are profitable over sustained periods of time and focusing on the long-term outcomes of product utilization by investors, Rahul is defining what sustainable fintech success is going to be moving forward.

Rahul's significant differentiator is his ability to marry his deep market knowledge of the Indian investment & derivatives landscape with his understanding of consumer behavior during falling markets. He understands that India's new investors are looking for simplicity, transparency, and security (these values can be seen throughout Hedged's design philosophy). This understanding enables him to convert complex investment strategies into everyday tools allowing for a seamless connection between the sophisticated financial engineering elements and the mass-market accessibility of that technology.

Wealth management under Octanom differs significantly from previous models which are predominantly long only in nature and focuses on building a futures, not just selling products. Additionally, wealth management previously focused on withering through the drawdowns and having sleepless nights around it, now, wealth management will focus on Peace of mind in any market scenario

In Rahul Ghose, India has gained not only a disruptor but also a reformer who is transforming the way that the emerging and ambitious investor class of India perceives risk, trust, and wealth creation. Moving forward as Hedged continues to develop, there will be no question that the wealth management

space in India would get disrupted with new technology and intelligent use of hedging instruments.



Palaniappan Ampa
Chairman & Managing Director, Ampa Group

Redefining Luxury Living in India's Branded Real Estate

Palaniappan Ampa shares the pioneering vision and the market forces behind launching a global first, Taj's debut branded residences, developed by Ampa Group, in an exclusive conversation with Aditi Chakraborty

Q What makes Taj Sky View Residences the world's first of its kind?

Branded residences exist in India, but very few qualify as "true branded" residences in the global sense, where a luxury hotel is not merely lending its name but is physically co-located and fully servicing the residences. A branded residence only becomes truly valuable when the hotel is attached and every aspect of residential living is delivered through trained five-star hospitality. That model barely existed in India. This is the first Taj-branded residence in the world, and it took nearly a year and a half to work with IHCL to influence them to create an entirely new line of business.

This leap positions Taj Sky View as a benchmark, one that combines the rigour of hotel-grade service with private residential living, creating a new category for Indian luxury real estate.

Q Why did Chennai become the chosen location for Taj's first-ever branded residences over cities like Mumbai, Delhi or Bengaluru?

It may surprise many that Chennai beat out India's traditionally more flamboyant luxury markets, but the reasoning is rooted in pragmatism and buyer maturity. The Chennai customer is extremely informed. 60% of our 123 residences are already sold, and our 36 offices, part of the mixed-use development, are at 80% sales. Buyers here know exactly what they want, and they value long-term lifestyle stability. We have subsidised ₹5 per sq ft of monthly maintenance for 12 years, easing residents into the premium-service ecosystem and ensuring long-term satisfaction.

Chennai is only at the beginning of its branded-residence journey, and demand signals are strong. The appreciation we've already seen shows that the city has depth. We expect another 50% increase by the time the project is completed. Over the next few years, branded residences will fit well in micro-markets with strong NRI and HNI presence, mainly central and south Chennai.

Q Was the project designed more for end-users seeking ultra-luxury living or for investors seeking yield and appreciation?

This is a premium lifestyle product. The buyer is someone who wants hotel-style living every single day, where every amenity, every service, and even optional in-home services follow five-star standards. We were very transparent from day one that the maintenance costs reflect that premium experience.

Interestingly, this clarity has created a well-defined buyer pool: lifestyle seekers who value long-term comfort and are willing to pay for consistency. HNIs, UHNIs and NRIs have responded strongly, appreciating both the living experience and the asset stability.

Q How does the Nelson Manickam Road location enhance the project's appeal and value proposition?

The location is arguably one of the project's most powerful differentiators. This is the heart of Chennai's CBD. Any direction of the city is within a 20- to 30-minute radius. And because of its distance from the airport, we secured height clearance to build what will be the tallest residential and hotel tower in Chennai's CBD. With nearly 100 metres of vertical rise, Taj Sky View marries centrality with architectural prominence—a rarity in a city known for height restrictions. Also, due to the aura of the Taj Sky View Residences, the area will be premium.

Q How have pricing and demand evolved, and what are the expectations for capital appreciation and rentals?

The project has witnessed robust demand and significant appreciation within a short period. Prices have already appreciated around 50% for the apartments. There are 25 penthouses, and their appreciation has shot up to 60%. Rental expectations are equally strong. Chennai's luxury rentals currently average around ₹700 per sq. ft. Properties like ITC Grand Chola's serviced residences command ₹6–8 lakh per month, and Taj Sky View aims to surpass these benchmarks within a few years. With unit sizes ranging from 1,900 to 5,000 sq ft. We expect exceptional ROI once the market matures.

Q What sets Taj's branded residences apart from other global hospitality brands entering India?

The answer lies in operational philosophy and development scale. The hotel and the residences are in the same development, operationally integrated. Not many developers want to take the risk of adding a hotel because hotels require longer gestation. Also, a hotel can't efficiently service 800–1,000 residences. Our scale of 123 residences with a 243-room hotel strikes the perfect balance. This right-sizing ensures residents receive personalised, uncompromised service rather than diluted hospitality spread across hundreds of homes.

Q What should discerning buyers evaluate when considering branded residences, beyond the allure of the brand name?

Branding and promotion alone cannot sustain long-term value. Buyers must examine the developer–brand partnership very closely in terms of the service being actually delivered daily. Also, they need to be aware of the amenities that are being hotel-managed. The premium is justified only when the brand operates the facilities and does not merely lend its name. This due diligence will differentiate truly world-class branded residences from those offering superficial branding without operational depth and long-term sustenance.

Q Looking ahead, what is your view on India's luxury housing as a part of the 5-trillion vision?

I believe that India's luxury real estate sector is perfectly aligned to the country's macroeconomic trajectory. India's growth story has just accelerated, and with GDP growth touching about 8% this year, it puts us firmly on the path to becoming the world's third-largest economy by 2030. Buying power is rising, and its impact is visible in luxury housing as average unit size is increasing. The next five years look extraordinarily promising.

With projects like Taj Sky View Residences setting new benchmarks, India's luxury residential segment is evolving from aspiration to lifestyle and from lifestyle to long-term value creation.





Vice Admiral Kavitha Sahai
Surgeon Vice Admiral, DG Medical Services, Indian Navy

Leading Surgeon and Senior Medical Strategist in Indian Navy

Dedicating her life to serving the nation, Vice Admiral Kavitha Sahai combines medical expertise with naval leadership

Vice Admiral Kavitha Sahai stands as a shining beacon of medical excellence and leadership within the Indian Navy. She currently serves as the Director General of Medical Services (DGMS), the senior medical flag appointment responsible for the Indian Navy's medical services. She oversees medical operations for the naval force, ensuring world-class medical attention whether at sea, on shore, or deployed in challenging environments.

Vice Admiral Kavitha Sahai has built a career that reflects both clinical brilliance and administrative efficiency. An alumnus of the Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC), Pune, she specialised in Pathology and went on to super-specialise in Oncopathology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi. She has served as Professor and Head of the Department of Laboratory Sciences at the Army Hospital (Research and Referral) and Base Hospital, Delhi Cantt, and as Professor in the Department of Pathology at AFMC, Pune.

She was awarded the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER) Fellowship (USA) in 2013–14. She has authored over 100 research papers in national and international medical journals.

Vice Admiral Kavitha Sahai was commissioned into the Army Medical Corps in December 1986, marking nearly four decades of service in military medicine. She has held leadership roles at Army medical institutions (AFMC, AHRR, BHDC), medical research units, and training institutes. She has championed the modernisation of medical facilities, introduced state-of-the-art technologies, and strengthened preventive healthcare initiatives.

Her career is a testament to resilience, dedication, and an unyielding spirit. Before becoming DGMS (Navy), she was the first woman Commandant of the Army Medical Corps (AMC) Centre & College as well as Officer-in-Charge of AMC Records. She is also the first woman officer elected as the Colonel Commandant of the Army Medical Corps. She has been awarded the Sena Medal (SM) in 2024 and the Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM) in 2018.

Vice Admiral Kavitha Sahai is among a small group of women officers in the Indian Armed Forces to attain three-star rank, and is the fourth woman to hold the rank of Vice Admiral, a distinction that places her among the most senior women leaders in uniform.

Her efforts have enhanced the efficiency and reach of medical services across the Navy. Her insights have helped shape programmes that safeguard the health of personnel during natural disasters, emergencies, and complex naval operations. The Vice Admiral has consistently emphasised structured training, ethical practice, and continuous learning, ensuring that military medical professionals are equipped to meet evolving clinical and operational challenges.

Her journey has been marked by an unwavering commitment to the health and well-being of service personnel. Vice Admiral Kavitha Sahai exemplifies the epitome of a healer and leader. Her work has touched countless lives, ensuring the physical and emotional well-being of naval personnel while strengthening India's defense medical framework. She remains a symbol of excellence, compassion, and unwavering service to the nation.

Where Excellence Meets Empathy

Dr Aravindan Selvaraj setting the standard in clinical excellence, innovation, and disciplined growth, shaping Kauvery Hospitals' future



Dr Aravindan Selvaraj
MS, FRCS Ortho(UK & Ireland) ,
Co-Founder & Executive Director
Kauvery Group of Hospitals

Q What is your strategy for driving Kauvery's comprehensive, high-quality, and affordable growth in tertiary and quaternary care?

We began in 1999 as a 30-bed hospital in Trichy, where affordability was critical. Starting in a cost-sensitive market pushed us to master high clinical quality at low cost. As we expanded to 2,500 beds across 12 hospitals in six cities in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, with strong quaternary care programs in cardiac sciences, gastroenterology, oncology, and multi-organ transplants, we consistently replicated this efficient model.

While most large chains start in metros and later move to smaller cities, we did the reverse. By proving ourselves in Tier-2 and Tier-3 markets first, we built strong systems and cost leadership. When we entered metros like Chennai and Bangalore, we excelled by offering the same clinical excellence at significantly lower cost. Today, established across metros and smaller cities, we are continuing our growth in Tier 2 & Tier 3 cities

Q As a practising orthopaedic surgeon and executive director, how do you balance medical excellence with business growth?

Being a practising doctor handling a management role gives me a unique dual perspective. Having worked as an orthopaedic surgeon for 15 years in the UK and Ireland, I continue to maintain the "physician-executive" role, which helps to build trust, especially with senior specialists who value interacting with a leader who understands clinical realities. It keeps me closely connected to patients, doctors, and nurses, while also guiding strategy, expansion, and operations. In healthcare, doctors are central, and being an actively practising clinician gives me a significant advantage.

Q Which healthcare innovations at Kauvery Hospitals are you most proud of that improved patient outcomes?

After attending an international management program in 2019, I realised that innovation had to be embedded into our healthcare system to overcome patients' apprehension toward new procedures. I created a dedicated Innovation Department focused not only on major breakthroughs but also on capturing small, everyday improvements inspired by feedback from nurses, paramedics, pharmacists, and operators. These ideas helped enhance patient care in practical and meaningful ways.

During COVID-19 our innovation was invaluable for managing large wards with limited staff. Our team implemented remote-monitoring sensor patches that tracked vital signs and transmitted them to a central ICU dashboard. This allowed us to monitor more than 300 patients simultaneously, detect early deterioration, and save countless lives. Post-Covid, we extended this system to ambulances and home care using 5G connectivity and introduced the "Kauvery Kare" app with an SOS button for instant access to our 24/7 emergency response centre.

Q What are the goals for Kauvery over the next decade?

Our goal is to double capacity by adding another 2,500 beds in the next three years, expanding mainly within South India and exploring opportunities in Kerala, Telangana and in select cities nationally. We plan to go public in the next few years. Our mission is to be India's most trusted healthcare provider, known for expertise, outcomes, and affordability.



Steering TCS Through Digital Transformation

K Krithivasan combines steady leadership with innovation to guide a global technology powerhouse

K Krithivasan, CEO & MD
Tata Consultancy Services

K Krithivasan, popularly known as Krithi, is the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), India's largest IT services company and one of the world's most respected technology firms. He assumed charge on June 1, 2023, becoming the leader of an organisation with more than half a million employees and operations spanning over 55 countries. His appointment reflected continuity, stability, and confidence in homegrown leadership at a time of rapid technological and economic change.

K. Krithivasan's journey at TCS is a classic story of steady rise built on consistency, deep domain knowledge, and strong execution. He joined the company in 1989 as an assistant systems analyst in New Delhi. Over the next three decades, he moved across roles in delivery, client engagement, large programme management, and business leadership. This long and varied experience equipped him with a sharp understanding of both global customers and complex operational systems.

Before taking over as CEO, Krithivasan served as President and Global Head of the Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) business, TCS's largest and most critical vertical. During this stint, he managed some of the company's most important global clients and led digital transformation initiatives for major financial institutions. He has played a key role in expanding TCS's presence in markets such as Latin America, Australia, and New Zealand, strengthening the company's global footprint.

As CEO, he has focused on sharpening customer focus, accelerating innovation, and preparing TCS for the next phase of growth. He has pushed strongly for investments in AI, cloud computing, data platforms, and digital engineering. Under his leadership, TCS has reported an annualised AI services revenue run-rate of about $1.5 billion and has completed over 5,500 AI projects for clients, with AI-related work growing faster than the company's overall business.

K. Krithivasan, known for his balanced leadership style, combines long-term strategic thinking with operational discipline, stressing on execution without losing sight of people. He has consistently highlighted the importance of talent development, employee engagement, and reskilling, recognising that human capital remains the backbone of TCS's success.

Academically, Krithivasan brings a strong technical and managerial foundation to his role, holding a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Madras and a Master's degree in Industrial and Management Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur. In recognition of his professional achievements and global impact, IIT Kanpur conferred upon him its Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2024.

Beyond day-to-day operations, Krithivasan also serves on the boards of several global TCS subsidiaries, including TCS Iberoamerica, TCS Ireland, and TCS Technology Solutions AG, and chairs TCS Japan Ltd. He is also associated with the TCS Foundation, reinforcing the company's commitment to social responsibility and inclusive growth.

His tenure as CEO reflects continuity with change. He has preserved TCS's core strengths of trust, scale, and execution, while pushing the company toward newer technologies and growth models. In an era defined by disruption and uncertainty, his leadership stands out for its clarity, steadiness, and focus. With a people-centric approach, and a clear technology vision, K. Krithivasan continues to guide TCS as a global benchmark for excellence, resilience, and innovation in the IT services industry.

Humble Beginnings Global Ambitions

Raviraj Takawane spearheading Siddheshwar Group's transition from a quality product supplier to a strategic, value-driven partner



Raviraj Vikas Takawane
Managing Director
Siddheshwar Group

"INNOVATE BOLDLY, STAY RESILIENT, AND LEAD WITH PURPOSE. BUILD PEOPLE, BUILD TRUST, AND CREATE MEANINGFUL IMPACT. TRUE LEADERSHIP IS MEASURED BY CONTINUOUS LEARNING, TURNING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES, AND FOSTERING AN ENVIRONMENT OF INCLUSIVE GROWTH."

Raviraj Takawane built on the legacy of VB Takawane, transforming a traditional enterprise into a digitally enabled, globally competitive company. By embedding technology across every layer of operations and championing people-centric leadership, he advanced precision engineering. A defining milestone in this journey was the Siddheshwar Group's expansion into international markets.

Vision and Innovation
Raviraj addresses a critical challenge of the manufacturing sector: bridging the gap between legacy operational models and the fast-evolving industrial landscape that demands sustainability, consistent quality, and innovation supported by a strong digital backbone. His vision is to build an ecosystem capable of delivering zero-defect quality through enhanced efficiency, powered by seamless automation and data-driven analytics, supporting customers across the entire manufacturing lifecycle.

Leadership and Values
Raviraj's leadership philosophy is rooted in trust, transparency, and a steadfast pursuit of excellence. He empowers teams by cultivating a culture of continuous learning—encouraging them to question traditional processes, embrace new ideas, and take ownership of their contributions. This approach strengthens collaboration, fosters innovation, and ensures that employees feel valued, purposeful, and aligned with the organisation's long-term vision.

Risk, Resilience, and Courage
A defining chapter in Raviraj's journey was his decision to implement an end-to-end digital transformation within a traditionally managed manufacturing environment. This shift required substantial investment, cultural realignment, and the courage to challenge long-established systems. Despite initial resistance and operational hurdles, his resilience and forward-looking perspective turned this ambitious endeavour into a remarkable success. The transformation elevated Siddheshwar Group into a modern, globally benchmarked manufacturer.

People, Culture, and Inclusion
Raviraj firmly believes that people are the true force behind any organisation's success. He promotes an inclusive, growth-oriented culture where employees are supported, trained, and empowered to excel. The group runs long-term talent development programmes, offering educational support for employees' children and structured internship pathways that nurture future leaders. His approach emphasises merit, continuous learning, and shared ownership—transforming individuals into skilled, confident domain experts.

Industry Outlook and Disruption
Raviraj envisions a future where manufacturing is shaped by rapid technological advancement, deep digitisation, sustainable practices, and inclusive people strategies. Anticipating this shift, Siddheshwar Group is expanding capacities, enhancing systems, and building future-ready capabilities while embedding sustainability across all operations. His strategic foresight positions the organisation to lead as the industry moves toward precision-driven, technology-powered, environmentally responsible manufacturing.

Introspection and Legacy
Raviraj aspires to build a legacy, rooted in continuous learning, as a leader who elevated a family enterprise into a futuristic global organisation, nurturing people and upholding core values and positively impacting employees, customers, and society. He aims to build a culture of innovation, integrity, and human-centric growth that shapes Siddheshwar Group for generations.



Geetika Mehta, Managing Director, Nivea India

Driving Trust, Care and Consistent Growth in Competitive Skincare Market

Geetika Mehta leads NIVEA India with a focus on credibility, consumer wellbeing and sustained brand expansion

With a calm yet decisive leadership style, Geetika Mehta, the Managing Director of NIVEA India, is playing a key role in strengthening the presence of one of the country's most trusted and loved skincare names in a highly competitive market, while staying true to the brand's promise of care, quality and trust.

At the helm of NIVEA India, Mehta oversees the company's overall business strategy, brand building, marketing, sales and operations. Her focus is on understanding Indian consumers and delivering products that meet their everyday skincare needs. Under her leadership, NIVEA has expanded its reach across cities and towns, making global skincare solutions more accessible to Indian households.

Mehta brings with her nearly two decades of experience in marketing and business leadership across some of the world's most respected consumer companies. Previously, she held key leadership positions at Hershey India for 2.5 years and spent 18 years at Hindustan Unilever Limited. In her role, she managed cross-functional teams and contributed significantly to the success and profitability of brands she has been associated with.

Since taking charge at NIVEA India, Mehta has focused on building a strong, locally relevant portfolio. She has steered the brand toward innovation while ensuring affordability and quality. From skincare products designed for India's diverse climate to campaigns that speak to changing lifestyles, her leadership reflects a balance between global brand values and local insights.

One of Mehta's key strengths is brand storytelling. She believes that skincare is deeply personal and that trust is built over time through consistency and honesty. This belief has guided NIVEA's communication strategy in India, where the brand emphasises gentle care, dermatological expertise and everyday use rather than unrealistic beauty standards.

Beyond business growth, Mehta is also known for her people-focused leadership approach. She places strong emphasis on teamwork, inclusion and creating a positive workplace culture. Colleagues describe her as approachable, thoughtful and supportive—qualities that help foster collaboration and long-term commitment within teams.

Mehta is particularly passionate about mentoring young professionals, especially women, and encouraging them to build confident careers in corporate leadership. She often speaks about the importance of resilience, continuous learning and staying grounded, even in fast-changing business environments.

Under her guidance, NIVEA India has also strengthened its focus on responsible business practices. From sustainability initiatives to ethical sourcing and conscious packaging, Mehta ensures that the brand's growth aligns with environmental and social responsibility. For her, success is not just about market share, but about making a positive difference in consumers' lives.

Mehta is active in business forums and conferences, contributing expertise to the wider industry. She has also been recognised for her commitment to various social causes, especially women's empowerment and sanitation. Finally, Mehta has also studied, taught and choreographed Kathak for 14 years.

Nourish to Flourish

Pioneering the Millet Movement in India, Raju Bhupati is leading the nutrition revolution while fuelling India's $5 trillion dream with a mission to nourish a billion people



As India accelerates toward its ambitious goal of becoming a $5 trillion economy, the real momentum is being generated far from the glass facades of metro tech parks. It's in the country's heartlands that the foundations of sustainable growth are being laid. Hyderabad-based Raju Bhupati understands this profoundly. Guided by the conviction that child nutrition is the cornerstone of nation-building, he is driving change with a model that fuses entrepreneurial acumen with a profound sense of purpose.

Aspiration to Access

Bhupati spotted a paradox in India's FMCG market: the mass-friendly Rs. 5 and Rs. 10 price points are dominated by junk food, while genuinely clean-label, nutrient-dense options sit behind premium prices and celebrity hype. A child in a tier-2 town may dream of building muscle like a film star, yet their family cannot afford expensive protein snacks. The aspiration exists, but the affordability does not.

Bhupati's solution was to "weaponise" nutrition by blending it seamlessly with aspiration, affordability, and irresistible taste. He realized that building a billion-dollar brand required winning the trust and imagination of India's youth. The product had to be accessible, emotionally relatable, and delicious enough that its hidden nutrition would be consumed willingly.

Rural Reach, Massive Impact

Bhupati's vision led to the creation of the Millet Chikki, launched at a disruptive price point of just Rs. 5, yet rich in taste and nutrients. Starting with 15 schools and 200 Kirana stores, it sparked a rural movement and now sells nearly 2 crore units a month across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Encouraged by this success, Bhupati introduced the Millet Milk Bar, which has quickly become a sensation in Northern India.

Troo Good's meteoric rise showcases the strength of "rural-driven growth". Operating in only three states; Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Chhattisgarh, it sells an impressive 5 crore chikkis and bars each month. With minimal advertising and relying on product quality and word-of-mouth, the brand has already reached a Rs. 200 crore Annual Recurring Revenue (ARR).

"Give India a product that costs less than a packet of chips, tastes better than sin, and quietly repairs a generation—then watch what happens when the remaining twenty-five states wake up"

Raju Bhupati
Founder & CEO, Troo Good

Billion-Person Impact of Five Rupees

In an age of unicorn hype, Bhupati recognises that real leverage in India lies in its villages, Tier-3 towns, and school gates, where futures are shaped one recess at a time. He isn't merely selling snacks but reshaping the nation's nutritional destiny, five rupees at a time!

He has created a new stream for employment generation in rural India, benefiting innumerable livelihoods. Raju Bhupati proves that the old formula can still build empires, except this time, the legacy won't be measured in dollars, but in the centimetres of height gained by a generation that refuses to remain stunted.



Devika Bulchandani, Chief Operating Officer, WPP

A Global Leader, Driving Change at WPP

Devika Bulchandani is a global advertising leader known for people-first leadership, creativity and operational excellence

Devika Bulchandani, the Global Chief Operating Officer of WPP, stands among the most influential leaders in the world of advertising and communications today. Calm, focused and deeply people-centric, she represents a new generation of leadership — one that values creativity as much as culture and performance as much as purpose.

As COO of WPP, the world's largest advertising and marketing services group, Bulchandani plays a central role in shaping how the company operates across markets, agencies and cultures. Her responsibility goes far beyond managing processes. She helps ensure that WPP's global vision translates into real impact — for clients, employees and the industry at large.

Bulchandani brings with her over three decades of experience in advertising, brand strategy and business leadership. She has worked across continents, cultures and categories, building a reputation for clarity, empathy and sharp strategic thinking. Over the years, she has led some of the world's most admired brands, helping them navigate change in an increasingly complex digital landscape.

Before becoming COO, Bulchandani was the Global President of Ogilvy, one of WPP's most iconic agencies. During her tenure, she played a key role in strengthening Ogilvy's integrated model, bringing together advertising, experience, public relations and consulting under one unified vision. Her leadership helped the agency stay relevant at a time when the advertising industry was undergoing rapid transformation.

Her story blends a strong Indian foundation with a truly international perspective. Originally from Amritsar, Bulchandani was educated at Welham Girls' School in Dehradun and later earned a degree in English and Psychology from St Xavier's College, Mumbai. In 1991, she relocated to the United States to pursue postgraduate studies in communications at the University of Southern California.

What sets Bulchandani apart is her belief that strong businesses are built on strong cultures. She often speaks about the importance of inclusion, diversity and belonging—not as buzzwords, but as business essentials. Under her leadership, teams are encouraged to bring their full selves to work, fostering creativity that reflects the real world and resonates with diverse audiences.

As COO of WPP, she works closely with the group's leadership to improve collaboration across agencies, simplify structures and drive operational excellence. In a world where brands must move at the speed of culture, Bulchandani ensures that WPP keeps pace.

She is also a strong advocate for responsible leadership. Bulchandani believes that companies must play a positive role in society—whether through ethical business practices, sustainability initiatives or supporting social causes. For her, success is not just measured by financial results, but by the impact a company creates beyond the balance sheet. All this makes Bulchandani's journey inspiring for young professionals, especially women aspiring to leadership roles.

Despite holding one of the most powerful roles in global advertising, Bulchandani is known for her humility and approachability. Colleagues often describe her as a leader who listens carefully, asks the right questions and empowers others to lead. She values teamwork and believes that the best ideas can come from anywhere.

A Visionary Empowering Enterprise to Spur Social Change

The innate spark to be Atmanirbhar (self-reliant), Dr Anil Kumar, Founder & CEO, Ankita Group of Companies, New Delhi, shaped a towering industry leader in trading and an unparalleled philanthropist promoting social inclusivity and empowerment to help strengthen Bharat/India



Dr Anil Kumar
Founder & CEO
Ankita Group of Companies

Q What is the lasting relationship you have with being Atmanirbhar?
At the age of 6, I started dabbling in odd jobs. My first earning was 5 paise that grew to Re 1 through part time jobs, which funded my education. My postgraduation in political science was funded through a scholarship that I earned. Later, the KEISIE International University in South Korea conferred the honour of Doctor of Philosophy in Management.

How Philanthropy Became Integral to You:

* **Early Compassion:** My philanthropic journey began early, while I was in the 8th grade. I used my personal savings to buy gifts and support the marriages of girls from poor families.
* **A Habit of Giving:** This early sentiment "continues even today". A remarkable part of my philosophy is that I donate 50 percent of my total earnings for social welfare, making giving an integral and formal part of our life and business operations.
* **Structured Generosity:** I established the Maheshwar Laxmi Memorial Foundation, named after my parents, to formalize our charitable efforts.
* This foundation is a strategic vehicle for delivering targeted aid, such as Distributing 'natural' nutrition to pregnant mothers to ensure healthy babies.
* **Education:** A central aim is to "educate the uneducated and make the society empowered -Atmanirbhar".
* **Healthcare:** A specific focus area within your healthcare initiatives is cancer.
* **Community Support:** You support community marriages for girls from economically weaker sections of society, irrespective of their background.

Q What are our major goals for the year 2026?
Setting-up an aluminium foil manufacturing unit for food packaging at Halol in Gujarat to grow the business exponentially in India, besides upscale our organic Agro products, fruits and vegetables is our target.

Under the Maheshwar Lakshmi Memorial Foundation named after my parents, we will launch distribution of natural nutrition to pregnant mothers during their entire gestational period for giving birth to healthy baby.

After diversifying I will hand over the business to my daughter, Ankita Anil, to ensure the longevity of our "Social Reformer Enterprise."

Her return from the US brings global technical expertise to our local foundations, allowing the business to modernize while staying rooted with our core values.

Q What are the expectations from the government?
Government is proactively supporting entrepreneurs like us, but despite their good intentions and cooperation corruption is rampant. My sincere appeal is to the society is to stop supporting corruption, which eventually will impact good government schemes that lag behind or fail. For the last three years, under the Pradhan Mantri's skill yojana, I am trying to start a skill centre for the youth, especially, for girls in the village, but corruption is a major hindrance.

Q What is the name that you would give to your sector?
I believe that our sector is 'Business of Social Reformer Enterprises.' It allows to continually pursue my aim to educate the uneducated and make the society empowered - Atmanirbhar.

Q What is your message for 2026?
My message to our country's young children is a quote by Sri Swami Vivekananda "Utho, Jago Aur Tab Tak Mat Ruko Jab Tak Lakshya Prapt Na Ho Jaye!"

("Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached"). I envision that our country will rise and emerge as the world's most progressive, economically affluent, and strong nation. I am fortunate that Namita is my life partner, whose unconditional support made it possible for me to achieve what I have.



Redefining the Art of Luxury Hospitality

MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts is creating memorable moments through the seamless orchestration of comfort, personalisation, and experiential stays

MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts stands tall among India's premium hospitality brands. Its immersive, nature-centric, heritage- and culture-driven, personalised experiences leave a lasting impression on discerning travellers.

Aligning with evolving travel preferences, MAYFAIR has shaped a distinctive portfolio of luxury destinations rooted in authentic local encounters, eco-conscious practices, and an emphasis on wellness, privacy, and exclusivity. "The MAYFAIR family operates within an open and inclusive culture, where senior leadership remains accessible and accountability is paramount. My guiding principle is simple, guest satisfaction comes first," emphasises Dilip Ray, Chairman, MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts.

The Soul of a Luxury Stay

From the golden beaches of Puri, Goa, and Gopalpur to the misty hills of Kalimpong and Gangtok, and across urban and leisure destinations such as Bhubaneswar, Rourkela, Guwahati, Raipur, Goa, and Alibag, extending to the tea estates and timeless tea narratives of Siliguri and Darjeeling, the MAYFAIR experience is shaped by its surroundings, with every property expressing its ethos through heartfelt service.

The design philosophy of MAYFAIR weaves local architecture, culture, and craftsmanship with contemporary luxury. Personally guided by the Chairman, this approach is rooted in research, collaboration, and thoughtful restraint.



"We design meaningful experiences. In coastal and nature-led resorts, curated local immersions such as sunset rituals, regional culinary narratives, craft-led keepsakes, and holistic wellness programmes create value organically, without the sense of upselling. That is margin earned with dignity," explains Dilip Ray. "When a property evolves into a true destination, it rises above commodity pricing through the memories it creates."

Guided by the philosophy 'Stay with us, stay with nature', each MAYFAIR property is purposefully designed to cultivate a natural micro-climate, often 2–3°C cooler than surrounding areas, through dense tree plantations, expansive green spaces, and integrated water features, enhancing comfort and sustainability even during peak summers.

Transformation from Boutique Experience to Bespoke Luxury

From its origins at MAYFAIR Rourkela in 1982, the MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts portfolio has grown to 19 luxury resorts across eight Indian states—Odisha, West Bengal, Sikkim, Goa, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, and Maharashtra—with properties spanning urban retreats, leisure destinations, and resort landscapes across the country.

Over the years, MAYFAIR has evolved from intimate boutique offerings into a refined luxury hospitality brand, while preserving the warmth, character, and individuality that define each destination.

"At every MAYFAIR destination, a story unfolds," says Pooja Ray, Managing Director, MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts. Signature properties include India's First Boutique Tea Resort, MAYFAIR Tea Resort, Siliguri, fondly known as The Museum Hotel, offering a walk through history with rare vintage artefacts, immersive tea trails, and curated heritage experiences; MAYFAIR Manor, Jungpana Tea Garden, Darjeeling, a hidden colonial gem once graced by Nepalese royalty; MAYFAIR Himalayan Spa Resort, Kalimpong, a restored 117-year-old British-era estate; MAYFAIR Lagoon, Bhubaneswar; and the iconic MAYFAIR Beach Resort, Gopalpur-on-Sea (1914).

Other notable properties include MAYFAIR Lake Resort, Raipur, with its breathtaking lake views and expansive banquets, regarded as the crown jewel of Central India's hospitality landscape; MAYFAIR Oasis Resort & Convention, Jharsuguda; MAYFAIR Garden, Rourkela; and MAYFAIR Spring Valley, Guwahati.

In Puri, religious tourism is a key focus. MAYFAIR Heritage, Puri, blends elegant beachfront living with access to the iconic Jagannath Temple, while MAYFAIR Waves, Puri complements it as an upscale seaside retreat for leisure, pilgrim, and celebration-led travel.

MAYFAIR Bay Resort, Paradeep, set along Odisha's untouched coastline, is a refined expression of coastal sophistication, offering 140 rooms, suites, and a private villa, alongside versatile dining including The Fish Market—its signature seafood restaurant.

Located adjacent to the majestic Chandaka Elephant Sanctuary, the upcoming MAYFAIR Sanctuary Convention Centre, Bhubaneswar, will be India's first and only resort to be built entirely in the timeless Art Deco style. The landmark destination will feature 400 elegant rooms and suites, many with forest-facing balconies, along with 28 expansive banquet and event spaces, reinforcing Bhubaneswar's prominence as a leading MICE hub.



Dilip Ray
Chairman, MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts



Pooja Ray
Managing Director, MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts

Following the success of MAYFAIR Manor, Alibag and MAYFAIR On Sea, Morjim, the brand looks ahead with upcoming destinations such as MAYFAIR Vizag, MAYFAIR Wellness Resort, Chilika, and MAYFAIR Shirdi.

Philosophy of Authentic Luxury

Guided by the values of MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts, the brand reflects a focus on thoughtful, long-term growth rooted in consistency, culture, and guest-centricity.

"For those who stay with us, each visit transcends accommodation. It becomes an immersive journey where nature, culture, and personalised care converge, creating memories that linger long after the journey ends," says Pooja Ray.

At the heart of every MAYFAIR property is a tribute to India's artistic and mythological heritage,from depictions of Lord Ganesha and Garuda, Mandala-inspired architecture, colonial-era antiques, temple-style carvings, and preserved vintage artefacts, transforming each hotel into a cultural canvas.

Inclusion and Environmental Stewardship

Mayfair approaches inclusion as a systemic design. Women are enabled to thrive through opportunity, safety, and progression across functions, supported by robust POSH compliance, secure protocols, and visible leadership.

Sustainability is treated as a long-term responsibility. Strategic tree cover enhances microclimates, native planting restores biodiversity, and water conservation, waste management, and reduced single-use plastics ensure destinations remain resilient.

Looking at 2026 and Beyond

MAYFAIR's vision is to build a lasting institution. Growth will remain selective and destination-led, focused on nature, heritage, wellness, weddings, and MICE. Sustainability, technology-enabled efficiency, and human capital will remain central, ensuring a legacy shaped by integrity and timeless hospitality.



Rajiv Singh, Chairman, DLF

Shaping India's Urban Landscape with Visionary Leadership

Rajiv Singh, Chairman of DLF, is steering real estate growth with innovation, strategic insight and excellence

Rajiv Singh, chairman of DLF Limited, has emerged as one of India's most influential and forward-thinking leaders in the real estate sector. His leadership is marked by strategic foresight and a deep understanding of the evolving landscape of urban development in India.

Singh's journey reflects not only his professional acumen but also his dedication to shaping sustainable, modern living and commercial spaces in the country. Under his stewardship, DLF has strengthened its market position, expanded its footprint across India, and embraced innovative approaches that align with global real estate standards while catering to local aspirations. Singh's approach goes beyond conventional real estate development; he focuses on creating communities, enhancing urban infrastructure and integrating sustainability in every project. Simply put, Singh has made DLF a force to reckon with.

With a career spanning more than 35 years in real estate and business leadership, Singh brings a blend of strategic thinking, operational expertise and visionary planning. His educational background, which includes a mechanical engineering degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA, has equipped him with the analytical rigor and strategic insight needed to navigate complex business environments.

Throughout his tenure as chairman of DLF, Singh has been instrumental in launching landmark projects that redefine urban living. His emphasis on innovation has led DLF to adopt cutting-edge technologies, sustainable construction practices, and modern architectural designs that meet the expectations of homebuyers, businesses and investors. From luxury residential complexes to commercial hubs and retail spaces, Singh has consistently focused on blending aesthetics with functionality and long-term value. He has ensured that green building practices, energy-efficient designs and social responsibility programmes are a thrust area for the company.

Singh's foresight has also guided DLF through market fluctuations and economic challenges. He has successfully balanced the pursuit of expansion with risk management, allowing the company to maintain steady growth while exploring new opportunities in real estate, infrastructure and urban development.

Beyond business growth, Singh is committed to corporate governance and ethical leadership. He has fostered a culture of transparency, accountability and employee engagement within DLF, ensuring that the company operates with integrity while striving for excellence. Collaboration, nurturing talent and creating an environment where creativity can thrive have been his topmost priorities.

Looking ahead, Singh envisions DLF as continuing to set benchmarks in real estate. His leadership is steering the company towards a future where urban spaces are not only modern and luxurious but also inclusive, environment-friendly and designed to enhance the quality of living. And this speaks volumes about Singh's vision, resilience and unwavering commitment to excellence.

The Visionary Legacy of Dr Lakshman Chandra Seth, D.Litt.:

A Transformative Leader in Haldia



Dr Lakshman Chandra Seth, D.Litt.
Politician, Trade Union Leader, and Educationist

Dr. Lakshman Chandra Seth remains one of the foremost architects of Haldia's socio-economic transformation and a towering figure in West Bengal's public life. A politician, trade union leader, educationist, and nationalist, his journey from extreme poverty to national leadership reflects exceptional resolve and vision.

Born into a Scheduled Caste family in a remote village of Haldia, Dr. Seth rose from deprivation to become the first in his village to pursue higher education. Determined to break entrenched poverty, he earned an M.A., LL.B., Ph.D., and later a D. Litt., completing postgraduate studies at Calcutta University. Education, for him, was both empowerment and social responsibility.

He entered politics at 22 while studying at Calcutta University in 1971. Alongside politics, he emerged as a trusted trade union leader, representing workers across sectors in Haldia. As President of multiple unions, he gained credibility among workers and industrial management alike for his balanced leadership and effective crisis resolution.

Dr. Seth represented the Sutahata Assembly Constituency from 1982 to 1995 and later served three consecutive terms in the Lok Sabha from Tamluk in 1998, 1999, and 2004. Throughout his legislative career, he consistently championed industrial expansion alongside workers' rights.

His most enduring contribution was transforming Haldia into a major industrial and educational hub. As Chairman of the Haldia Development Authority (1998–2009), he facilitated the establishment of nearly 40 medium and large industries, including IOC's Haldia Refinery, Haldia Petrochemicals, Mitsubishi PTA, Tata Chemicals, Hindustan Unilever, and Adani Edible Oil. This industrial growth generated large-scale employment and positioned Haldia among India's leading industrial centres.

Equally impactful was his educational vision. He founded 14 institutions under the concept of Haldia as a "Knowledge City" and "Health City," including Haldia Institute of Technology, ICARE Institute of Medical Sciences and Research & Dr. B.C. Roy Hospital, dental, law, pharmacy, nursing, management, education, teacher training, health sciences, language studies, and research institutions.

A follower of Gautam Buddha's ideals, Dr. Seth enriched Haldia's cultural life through initiatives such as Haldia Utsab and Nadi Utsab. He also promoted sports by organizing national and international events, including Federation Cup football, women's championships, blind sports, under-19 international football, and the International Women Kabaddi Tournament.

Even in later life, his commitment to learning endured; he earned a doctorate at 70 and a D.Litt. at 73. Dr. Lakshman Chandra Seth's legacy—industrial, educational, cultural, and social—firmly establishes him as the revered "Maker of Haldia", whose vision continues to inspire future generations



Lalitha Nataraj, Managing Director & CEO, NPCI Bhim Services

Driving India's Trusted UPI App Forward

Lalitha Nataraj leads BHIM Services with a focus on secure, inclusive, and scalable digital payments

Lalitha Nataraj is a senior banking and payments professional with decades of experience in India's financial services ecosystem. She is currently the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NPCI BHIM Services Ltd (NBSL), the wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), entrusted with the Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) UPI app.

BHIM was originally launched in December 2016 to accelerate adoption of digital payments. It is the official reference app and public-sector counterpart to private UPI players. NBSL has also launched BHIM 3.0 with enhanced features including broader language support and accessibility in low-connectivity areas

Lalitha Nataraj is responsible for strengthening BHIM as a trusted, accessible, and secure digital payments platform. BHIM enables millions of users to make instant bank-to-bank payments using mobile phones. Under her leadership, the focus has been on improving user experience, enhancing security, expanding merchant adoption, and increasing the app's relevance.

According to her colleagues, under Nataraj's leadership, BHIM is redefining what a public digital payments app should optimise for at scale. It aims at not just convenience, but confidence, inclusion, and real-world relevance.

Previously, Lalitha Nataraj built a distinguished career in the banking sector. This includes a position as head of Digital Partnership Payments at IDFC Bank. At ICICI Bank, she worked in different roles across retail banking, transaction banking, operations, and digital initiatives. She has been closely associated with the evolution of digital banking in India. At ICICI Bank, she played an important role in driving technology-led transformation, process automation, and customer-centric innovation. Her experience in managing large teams and complex operations prepared her well for leading a platform like BHIM.

Lalitha Nataraj is known within the industry for her calm leadership style and emphasis on governance and compliance. In a sector where trust and security are critical, she has consistently highlighted the importance of data protection, fraud prevention, and seamless grievance redressal. These priorities are particularly significant for BHIM, which serves users across urban and rural India, including many first-time digital payment users.

As MD and CEO of NPCI BHIM Services, she works with banks, regulators, fintech partners, and government stakeholders to ensure that BHIM remains aligned with India's digital public infrastructure goals. Her leadership supports NPCI's vision of promoting cashless transactions while ensuring financial inclusion and ease of access for all sections of society. Academically, she holds strong professional credentials that complement her practical experience.

Overall, Lalitha Nataraj represents a blend of traditional banking discipline and modern digital payments leadership. At a time when UPI has become a global benchmark for real-time payments, her role at NPCI BHIM Services is critical in ensuring that one of India's flagship digital payment apps remains reliable, secure, and accessible to millions of users every day.

Cantabil: India's Signature/ Gigantic Fashion Apparel Brand Turns 25

India's Signature Fashion Retailer Marks 25 Years of Success

The young chip off the block, Deepak Bansal, Promoter & WholeTime Director, Cantabil Retail India Ltd, Delhi, is taking forward the vision of his father & present CMD Mr. Vijay Bansal, Founder of the company. He unveils a slew of attractive activities to mark 25 years of India's apparel giant.

Q Could you briefly sum up Cantabil's nostalgic journey of 25 years and what it took to launch the enterprise that was to become an inspiring success story?

Cantabil has proudly completed 25 remarkable years in the fashion and apparel industry—a journey that began with a simple yet powerful vision: to make quality fashion accessible, refined, and timeless for every Indian. The journey has been amazing and nostalgic as I see it from its very inception in 2000. From the opening of its very first store in Rajouri Garden, Cantabil has grown into a nationwide force with 650+ stores. Today, Cantabil stands not just as a brand but as an inspiring success story—proof that when passion meets purpose, extraordinary journeys are made possible.

Q What is the impact of Cantabil in the apparels market and the customer category it dominates?

India's apparel industry stands as one of the world's most dynamic and fast expanding markets—and within this vast ecosystem, Cantabil, has carved a powerful and enduring position. Over the years, the brand has emerged as a formidable force in the mid-premium fashion segment, driven by its sharp understanding of Indian consumer behavior. Today, Cantabil's menswear, contributing majority to business, remains its crown jewel, showcasing authority in formals, casuals, and premium occasion wear. Apart from family wear stores, exclusive Women & kids' stores have increased from 35 stores in 2024 to 60 stores in 2025, signalling both strong demand and Cantabil's strategic expansion in these high-potential segment.

Complementing apparel, the brand's footwear and accessories categories also contribute towards a growing percentage to the total revenue, further strengthening Cantabil's position as a holistic fashion destination.

Q What are Cantabil's silver jubilee celebration plans including innovative customer engagements or new product launch?

Cantabil's Silver Jubilee marks a defining milestone—celebrating 25 years of craftsmanship, innovation, and an unwavering connection with customers across India. At the forefront of these celebrations are a series of thoughtfully curated customer engagement initiatives, including rolling out PAN-India in store experiences, delighting visiting customers with complimentary freebies, curated gift hampers, and an inviting store ambience enhanced through elegant ornamentation, creative façades, and meticulously styled dummy windows. To strengthen outreach, a comprehensive SMS campaign has been deployed, informing our loyal customer base about the exclusive Silver Jubilee offers. On the digital front, Cantabil continues to captivate audiences through interactive online campaigns and vibrant social media contests, aimed at eliciting interest in the new generation of fashion-conscious consumers. Cantabil has also introduced exclusive Silver Jubilee discounts and value-driven offers across all categories in every store of the country. The brand has also launched its Autumn Winter Campaign'25 perfectly in sync with the Silver Jubilee month and Cantabil's signature limited-edition line symbolizing both the brand's heritage and its evolving vision for the future.



Deepak Bansal, Promoter & Whole-Time Director, Cantabil Retail India Ltd

Q What has been the YoY growth for Cantabil, especially, post Covid-19 recovery and market volatility?

Cantabil's post-Covid trajectory has been one of robust recovery followed by steady, quality expansion — not a volatile bounce but a deliberate, store-led scaling of revenue and profitability. The company delivered exceptionally strong YoY rebounds as operations normalized, and FY23 posted a sharp expansion to ~₹552 crore). In FY24 Cantabil consolidated the momentum with reported sales of ₹617 crore — a 12% YoY increase. The company continued to register mid-to-high-teens YoY top-line growth of 17% revenue in FY25), and H1/FY26 registered 20% YoY revenue growth and double-digit PAT expansion as consumer demand and same-store sales strengthened.



Pia Singh, Chairperson, DLF Foundation

Mission with Vision, Empathy and Impact

At the helm of DLF Foundation, Pia Singh advances thoughtful philanthropy that empowers communities and strengthens lives

As the Chairperson of the DLF Foundation, the philanthropic arm of one of India's most influential real estate groups, Pia Singh stands at the intersection of empathy, strategy, and social responsibility. With a calm yet resolute leadership style, she has emerged as a powerful force in India's development sector, steering corporate philanthropy toward meaningful and sustainable impact.

She is also a Director on the Board of DLF Limited and has served in executive positions including Chairperson of DLF Retail Developers Ltd and Director of DT Cinemas Ltd.

Pia Singh has given the DLF Foundation a clear moral compass. This aims at placing people, dignity, and community wellbeing at its core. Under her guidance, the Foundation has evolved beyond conventional corporate social responsibility to become a platform for deep social engagement, especially in areas of education, healthcare, women's empowerment, skill development, and community upliftment.

A graduate of the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Pia Singh began her career at GE Capital in the US, where she worked in risk management. She maintains academic links with her alma mater as Co-President of the University of Pennsylvania's Institute for the Advanced Study of India and a member of its Asia Campaign Leadership Committee.

She is also a trustee of Ananda Sangha Trust and the Paramhansa Yogananda Public Charitable Trust, which are spiritual and charitable organisations.

One of her strengths is her ability to blend compassion with structure. Pia Singh understands that good intentions must be supported by strong systems, partnerships, and accountability. The DLF Foundation often works closely with grassroots organisations, experts, and local communities to ensure that interventions are impactful.

Education has been a key pillar of her vision. She has championed initiatives for underprivileged children, recognising education as the most powerful tool to break cycles of poverty. From supporting school infrastructure and digital learning to holistic development, her approach looks beyond classrooms. Healthcare is another area where her leadership has made a visible difference. The Foundation focuses on improving access to essential medical services, preventive healthcare, and awareness programmes.

Pia Singh is also a strong advocate for women's empowerment. Through skill-building programmes and livelihood initiatives, she has supported efforts that enable women to become financially independent and confident decision-makers in their families and communities. She sees women not as beneficiaries, but as agents of change.

What sets Pia Singh apart is her understated leadership. Colleagues and partners often describe her as thoughtful, hands-on, and deeply committed. She encourages innovation while staying grounded in core values.

At a time when corporate philanthropy is often measured in numbers alone, Pia Singh brings humanity back to the centre of the conversation. Her vision for the DLF Foundation is not about one-time interventions, but about creating sustainable social values that grow stronger with time.

Pia Singh has helped redefine what responsible corporate citizenship can look like in India — quietly impactful, ethically grounded, and firmly focused on building a more inclusive and compassionate society.

50 Years of Shaping Futures

How the Ryan Group of Schools Contributes to the Vision of a $5 Trillion Economy



Mr Ryan Pinto
CEO, Ryan Group of Schools

As India advances toward its $5 trillion economic vision, one truth is clear: our nation's progress will be shaped by its people. Developing skilled, compassionate, and future-ready youth is essential to this transformation. At the Ryan Group of Schools, this belief has guided our mission for five decades. As we approach our Golden Jubilee in 2026, our commitment to nation-building through education, innovation, and character formation remains steadfast.

Over the past 50 years, the Ryan Group has built one of India's most expansive K–12 ecosystems—150+ schools across 40 cities, educating more than 250,000 students across CBSE, SSC, ISC, ICSE, and IB boards. This footprint enables us to contribute meaningfully to India's skill development landscape and prepare young learners to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

A strong economy must also be a sustainable one. Guided by the vision of our Founder Chairman, Dr. A.F. Pinto, and Managing Director, Madam Grace Pinto, we are launching a major environmental mission: planting 50,000 saplings in a single day across our campuses nationwide. Extending this initiative, we have committed to planting 1 million trees between June 2026 and May 2027, in partnership with students, parents, educators, and local communities. This effort reflects our belief that climate responsibility and economic progress must go hand in hand.

Academically, our focus remains firmly on future-ready learning. AI exposure, coding, robotics, STEM education, entrepreneurial thinking, media studies, and project-based learning are embedded across our curriculum to nurture innovation and adaptability. Platforms such as TED-Ed Clubs, School Parliament, the Entrepreneurship Cell, dramatics, and creative writing labs further build communication, creativity, and leadership. Together, these initiatives equip students for emerging careers and leadership roles in a global economy.

Our learners also excel on the world stage. Ryan students participate in the World Scholar's Cup, Indian Model United Nations (INMUN), the Ryan International Theatre Festival, NASA experiential programmes, and international exchange tours across the US, UK, UAE, and Europe. We also host the iconic International Children's Festival of Performing Arts (ICFPA), welcoming participants from over 15 countries—broadening global exposure and cultural understanding.

Sports remains a cornerstone of holistic education. Through partnerships with Sports Gurukul, Junior NBA, La Liga, and the Mahesh Bhupathi Tennis Academy, students receive professional training in football, basketball, tennis, swimming, skating, and athletics. This integrated approach builds discipline, teamwork, resilience, and leadership—qualities vital for both personal growth and national development.

As we enter our 50th year, our vision aligns closely with India's growth aspirations. We remain committed to nurturing thinkers, innovators, and responsible citizens who will drive India's economic and social progress.

For us, the Golden Jubilee is not just a milestone—it is a renewed promise to the nation.



Kavita Gopal
Managing Director JPMorgan Chase & Co.

Shaping India's Role in Global Banking and Operations

At JPMorgan Chase India, Kavita Gopal contributes to the scale and sophistication of operations that support the bank worldwide.

Kavita Gopal is a Managing Director at JPMorgan Chase & Co. in India and part of the firm's senior leadership cadre overseeing global banking operations. Over the past decade, JPMorgan Chase's presence in India has expanded steadily, reflecting the country's growing importance to the bank's technology, operations and business-support ecosystem.

Today, India hosts some of JPMorgan Chase's largest global hubs, providing critical services across technology, risk management, compliance, finance, legal and human resources functions. The firm's India operations are anchored primarily in Mumbai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad, and together employ more than 50,000 professionals.

Kavita Gopal's academic background reflects a blend of scientific training and executive management education. She completed an Executive Management Programme in Business Administration and Management at IIM Bangalore (IIMBx) in 2008–09, after earning a Master's degree in Animal Physiology from Bangalore University. She began her academic journey at St Joseph's College, Bengaluru, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, Botany, Environmental Science and Zoology, an interdisciplinary foundation that preceded her transition into large-scale corporate and banking environments.

Her professional experience spans global financial services and multinational corporations, with roles across JPMorgan Chase & Co., Standard Chartered Bank and Dell, as reflected in industry databases. Now based in Bengaluru, Gopal brings this cross-sector exposure to her leadership responsibilities within JPMorgan Chase's India operations, operating at the intersection of global banking, technology-enabled processes and organisational scale.

Alongside operational leadership, JPMorgan Chase India has placed growing emphasis on talent development, inclusion and employee engagement. Firm-wide initiatives around diversity, equity and workplace culture are complemented by large-scale events such as its annual corporate run, which in 2024 brought together more than 27,000 employees across cities to promote community, sustainability and well-being.

As global financial services become increasingly digital and technology-driven, leaders such as Kavita Gopal are central to leveraging India's scale and skills to meet evolving global demands. Her work reflects the broader story of India's rise as a critical engine within the world's largest financial institutions, one that combines operational depth with strategic relevance.

Empowering Your Next Big Leap

Ankit Chadha, a new-age leader, driving the consulting business by deconstructing complex challenges into actionable solutions tailored to specific industries and fostering a culture where accountability and collaboration go together



Ankit Chadha
Managing Director
TRC Corporate Consulting Pvt Ltd.

What is your leadership philosophy? How has it influenced growth and professional culture?

I believe in transformational leadership that emphasises "growing together" through a 360-degree approach of balancing people, process, and technology. My focus is on emerging challenges, identifying the right talent, and building integrated solutions that address complex business problems and create long-term value.

Emerging from the shadow of a legacy Indian chartered accountant firm, I focused on building and scaling a consulting practice focused on risk, governance, and advisory. Starting with a team of just 10 people, we grew into a team of more than 350 professionals across India and international markets, with operations in Southeast Asia and the MENA region. We introduced unconventional service lines for accounting businesses challenging the traditional mindset of Indian CA firms, and eventually expanded in other domains.

How are you keeping pace with the dynamic demands of consulting as a sector?

Consulting is a highly competitive sector with new entrants emerging every month, so differentiation is critical for us. We do this by continuously diversifying beyond traditional service lines that were common a decade ago. We proactively identify potential problem areas across industries and, being sector-agnostic, address distinct challenges in varied industries.

Our strength lies in defining the right problem, designing a solution around it, and then curating it to fit the specific sector. Additionally, our reliance on technology sets us apart. We are investing heavily in data science and technology talent to build solutions that combine deep expertise with scalable, technology-driven platforms.

As a leader of one of the eminent Indian consulting groups, how do you promote measurable value and address complicated business challenges?

By understanding individual strengths, gaps, and growth opportunities, we have built high-performing teams that deliver a sustained competitive advantage. We operate through a process-driven and agile model that enables us to respond quickly to evolving client needs while driving internal digital transformation.

Our consulting focuses on measurable outcomes, deconstructing complex challenges into actionable solutions tailored to specific industries such as aviation, manufacturing, and heavy equipment and others and also key functions such as finance, risk, IT, and sales.

Through automation and technology-led interventions, we eliminate people dependency and create scalable, integrated processes. Clients achieve significant cost savings, improved data integrity, and faster decision-making through real-time dashboards and visual analytics. We enhance controls, compliance, and operational efficiency to support sustained, scalable growth.

What is your outlook on the consulting industry's contribution to India?

The consulting industry is at an inflection point, driven by rapid digital disruption and a decisive policy push from the Indian government to build indigenous, world-class capabilities. The focus on the "Big 8" homegrown players signals a shift from generic solutions to highly curated offerings that blend Indian ingenuity with cutting-edge technology. I see disruption as an opportunity to help clients design, build, and scale through digital advisory. Thereby enabling cross-border impact and investing in people and innovation to deliver trusted, future-ready outcomes. It is my endeavour to contribute to India's journey to become a global innovation hub.



Architects of Modern Education in Madhya Pradesh

LNCT Group's strategic rise as a hub of innovation, research and new-age learning, influencing India's education landscape

Established in 1994 by the celebrated philanthropist and educationist, Mr J.N. Chouksey, Chairman of the LNCT Group of Colleges and Chancellor of LNCT University, is playing a pivotal role in transforming the educational landscape of Madhya Pradesh into a national force. His young and dynamic son, Dr. Anupam Chouksey, Secretary of the premier education brand, is deftly steering the legacy institution into a new era. Renowned as a trendsetter for setting up the first ever private college of technology in the Hindi belt of central India, LNCT continues to live up to its pioneering reputation as a centre of excellence in technical, engineering and medical education. With combined count of over 12,000 seats across all the campuses, lives of thousands of students are continuing to be shaped here.

Building on a Firm Foundation

Dr. Anupam Chouksey's irrepressible energy and passion is infectious firing one and all with the drive to attain a collective, singular goal of leading the LNCT Group of institutions into its higher growth trajectory, which is modern, bold and global. Apart from making LNCT a deemed university, he plans to expand the group at international level, proudly, stating, "We have already inked a MoU with Turkistan Government to set up a medical university there." Dr. Anupam credits LNCT's achievements to the academics and staff, who are part of the legacy's journey since its inception standing firmly to realise a shared vision, shunning even lucrative offers. "This shows the intimate relationship between the management and the staff," he said. Wife, Shweta Chouksey, an engineering postgraduate, works in tandem with him as a Director of the group. Under his dynamic and visionary leadership the LNCT Group of Colleges has grown into 11 engineering colleges 2 Medical Colleges and 3 universities. Dr Anupam assures, "Quality of education and services in the medical university and the hospital affiliated to it are taken special care of. We have full faith in the facilities and services there and in case of any medical issues in the family we prefer treatment in our own hospital. We have full trust in our doctors and staff."

The multi-city institutions spread across Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Bilaspur have provided trained and industry-ready manpower that silently fuelled the economic growth and stability in Central India. Under the leadership of Dr Aupam, a silent revolution has been unfolding that has orchestrated one of India's most impressive educational expansion stories—transforming a modest engineering college into a gigantic academic empire and a force to reckon with in the education sector.

Where Education is Immersive

The congenial and conducive ambience at LNCT institutions whets the appetite of students to glean knowledge that enhances



learning capacity and depth. Taking the experience beyond the mundane, the campus is supported with world-class infrastructure and satellite enabled classrooms that provide students with a wider perspective beyond their course subjects through informative interaction.

State-of-the-art facilities and equipment in labs, workshops, classrooms and mentorship by highly qualified, experienced faculty and trained staff are invaluable assets of the Group's colleges. The faculty not only imparts quality education, but also nurture holistic development of the students. Refresher training is conducted periodically to ensure that the faculty is updated on the latest in their respective fields. Consequently, the colleges boast of their students' excellent performance in the examinations and results, year-after-year. In academics, LNCT Group has been bagging maximum number of Chancellor Awards for years now.

Robust Campus Life

With zero tolerance to ragging the campuses are free from this menace to support a thriving ecosystem in all its dimensions, both tangible and intangible. Extra-curricular activities, sports, community services and national service initiatives are part and parcel of the campus life. LNCT Group has become synonyms to "Excellence in Discipline, Academics and Placements". Regular conduct of conferences and workshops update the students with the latest research and development in the various fields of science, engineering and technology.

LNCT Group was among 49 institutions in India chosen to establish "IDEA LAB" by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The IDEA LAB and Incubation Centre function as start-up accelerators, providing students with real-world business experience while generating intellectual property for the institution. "Every breakthrough idea needs a launch pad," Dr Anupam avers, adding, "We're creating the infrastructure for India's next generation of innovators." It also generates lot of employments opportunities for student fraternity and their colleagues that eventually support the society as well.



Dr Anupam Chouksey
Secretary of the LNCT Group

The empathy element distinguishes, LNCT from profit-maximizing institutions. The Group has invested heavily in scholarship programs and community outreach initiatives, creating what Dr Anupam calls "educational equity." This approach has generated significant goodwill while building a sustainable talent pool from underserved communities.

The multi-city institutions spread across Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Bilaspur have provided trained and industry-ready manpower that silently fuelled the economic growth and stability in Central India

Recruiters First Choice

The colleges share a good rapport with various industries resulting in the highest number of campus selections for nearly two decades in Central India. Top corporate companies, global businesses and departments of the central government such as Army, Air Force and Navy are regular recruiters of these colleges offering lucrative pay packets, for placements in India and abroad.

Behind an impressive portfolio of 191+ patents and attracting over 500 global recruiters annually lies the strategic vision meeting relentless execution, Dr Anupam explains, "The education sector rewards those who think beyond conventional boundaries," adding, "We didn't just want to create graduates— we wanted to manufacture change makers."

Strategic Vision

Agility in adoption of emerging technologies, contemporary teaching methods, and perseverance fuels the institution's relentless expansion into new markets and academic disciplines. The entrepreneurial ecosystem cultivated by Dr Anupam reflects his futuristic outlook. While many other educational institutions focus primarily on teaching, he has invested heavily in patent development. He also drives industry collaborations, creating revenue channels that fund further expansion. This self-sustaining model has enabled rapid growth without compromising academic standards. As India's education sector continues to evolve, the LNCT is a torchbearer of regional institutions seeking national relevance—proving that with strategic vision and unflinching commitment, even traditional markets can script transformational growth stories.



Ritu Karidhal Srivastava, Mission Director, Chandrayaan-3, ISRO

Rocket Woman of India's Flight to Space

Ritu Karidhal Srivastava's Scientific Brilliance and Leadership Powered India's Defining Lunar Moment

For many young girls in India dreaming of blazing a trail in science, Ritu Karidhal Srivastava is a beacon of hope. From growing up in Lucknow to emerging as one of India's most accomplished space scientists, she has shown what grit and determination can do when fuelled by passion and talent.

Karidhal Srivastava is hailed as the 'Rocket Woman of India' not without reason. As the mission director of Chandrayaan-3 at Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), she played a crucial role in guiding the spacecraft to achieve a historic soft landing near the moon's south pole in August 2023, making India the first nation to do so.

Before Chandrayaan-3, Karidhal Srivastava served as the project manager and deputy operations director for India's Mars Obiter Mission, Mangalayaan, which made history by being the first mission to reach Mars at the first attempt.

But this success didn't come overnight to Karidhal Srivastava; she fought many odds to carve a spot in a field largely dominated by men. Nurturing a strong interest in science and mathematics from a young age, she went on to study physics at the University of Lucknow and then got a Master's degree, also in physics, from Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

After joining ISRO in 1997, Karidhal Srivastava steadily built a reputation as a dependable and skilled space scientist and mission professional. Over the years, she worked in diverse areas of satellite operations, mission planning and navigation. Her ability to manage complex systems and stay calm under pressure fetched her important responsibilities in several high-profile missions.

Before Chandrayaan-3, Karidhal Srivastava was a key member of India's earlier moon mission, Chandrayaan-2. She had served as Mission Director for Chandrayaan-2 as well, overseeing spacecraft operations. Although the lander did not achieve a soft landing in 2019, the mission provided valuable lessons.

Those experiences directly contributed to the success of Chandrayaan-3, where design improvements and careful planning addressed earlier challenges. As mission director of Chandrayaan-3, she was responsible for coordinating teams, monitoring spacecraft performance and ensuring precise execution at every stage — from launch to lunar descent.

Karidhal Srivastava is known to be a methodical and team-oriented leader, with a strong emphasis on learning from data and past experience. Her scientific acumen and leadership has showcased India's ability to carry out complex space missions with precision and confidence.

Her contributions to science have earned Karidhal Srivastava several awards, including the ISRO Young Scientist Award early on in her career. On various occasions, she has spoken about the importance of hard work, self-belief and continuous learning, especially for young women aspiring to careers in science and technology. Her achievements continue to inspire countless young minds across India to consider a future in space science and engineering.

Engineering the Next Leap

Aditya Vikram Birla, a third-generation industrialist, lays the groundwork for scale by investing in integration, innovation, and human capital



"My role is not just to preserve what my predecessors have built, but to reimagine it for a world that is changing faster than ever"

Aditya Vikram Birla
Chairman & Managing Director, Cosmic Birla Group

A Year of Groundwork

2025 was the year to lay the foundations for the coming years. With global market instability, over the next three years, Cosmic Birla Group will primarily focus on India-led growth, while export-orientated capacities will continue to serve global demand selectively. Railways, infrastructure, defence, and green mobility will continue to remain the core pillars.

The objective is clear: to become a fully integrated industrial manufacturer, spanning wagons, castings, components, refurbishments, and EV mobility solutions, built on strong compliance, governance, and technological capability.

The Defining Bet

The Group's long-term vision includes the acquisition of Amzen Transportation Industries Pvt Ltd, an integrated wagon and coach manufacturing company based in Chandigarh and Delhi NCR. Formerly Amtek Railcar, it was established as a joint venture between American Railcar and Amtek Auto. After failed bidding rounds and judicial complexity, the Group entered the process in 2023–24, committing ₹350–400 crore against a total case size of nearly ₹500 crore. Resolution is expected within 3–4 months, followed by restructuring.

Casting the Future

The foundation for the next manufacturing pillar, Cosmic Castings Limited, was laid with ₹50 crore already invested and a planned capex of ₹250 crore. The new Durgapur-based facility is being developed as a state-of-the-art foundry using advanced arc furnace technology. Designed to serve railways, defence, infrastructure, and exports, the unit targets a 30–35% export contribution by FY 2028–29—marking a decisive move into high-end casting.

Scale with Discipline

Raft Motors, the Group's electric mobility venture, entered its stabilisation phase in 2025, focused on systems, distribution, and backend strength rather than headline growth. Production capacity expanded from 10,000 to 25,000 units, with operations now spanning Maharashtra and West Bengal and new facilities planned in Madhya Pradesh, Chennai, and Pune. The strategy remains firmly B2B-led, emphasising fleet and aggregator partnerships over cash-intensive retail play. A listing via reverse merger or direct main-board route is targeted for Q1 FY 2026.

The Group's legacy businesses continued their upward trajectory. Engineering and infrastructure verticals scaled volumes from 18,000 MT to 55,000 MT, with projections of 80,000 MT next year. Products ranging from sheet piles and cofferdams to poles and crash barriers continue to see strong demand, supported by in-house galvanising capabilities. Across established companies, 10–15% organic growth remained consistent.

Valuation Reset, Vision Intact

At its peak, the Group commanded a ₹5,000 crore enterprise value, with Cosmic CRF Limited touching a market cap of over ₹2,100 crore. Market corrections in 2025 compressed valuations to approximately ₹3,500 crore—a temporary reset, not a structural decline. With major assets nearing completion, new ventures scaling up, and listings on the horizon, management expects the Group's consolidated value to approach USD 1 billion within the next 12–18 months. The future for the Cosmic Birla Group continues to look promising and 2026 has much to unfold!



Kris Gopalakrishnan
Chairman, Axilor Ventures &
Co-Founder, Infosys

Championing Technology, Entrepreneurship and Global Impact

Kris Gopalakrishnan, Infosys co-founder and Axilor Ventures Chairman, drives innovation and entrepreneurial growth globally

Senapathy "Kris" Gopalakrishnan is widely regarded as one of India's trailblazing technology leaders, whose vision and perseverance helped shape the country's IT revolution. As a co-founder of Infosys, Gopalakrishnan was instrumental in transforming a modest startup into a global technology powerhouse. Today, as Chairman of Axilor Ventures, he mentors and invests in emerging entrepreneurs, steering innovative startups toward growth, global relevance and sustainable impact. His journey embodies a rare combination of entrepreneurial foresight, technical expertise and a deep commitment to societal progress, innovation and transformative change.

Born in April 1955 in Thiruvananthapuram, Gopalakrishnan demonstrated a keen aptitude for science and technology from an early age. He pursued higher education in physics and computer science at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, gaining a solid foundation for a career that would eventually influence the global IT landscape. His academic excellence, coupled with an insatiable curiosity and forward-thinking mindset, laid the groundwork for a remarkable professional trajectory.

In 1981, Gopalakrishnan joined six other visionary engineers to co-found Infosys with a bold goal: to create a world-class Indian IT services company. What began as a small venture quickly evolved into a global leader recognised for technological innovation, ethical governance and operational excellence. Gopalakrishnan's early contributions to software development, systems management and client solutions were pivotal to establishing Infosys's reputation for quality, trust and global competitiveness.

Over the years, Gopalakrishnan assumed several senior leadership roles, including Chief Operating Officer, CEO and Vice Chairman. His tenure as CEO (2007–2011) was marked by strategic expansion, improved operational efficiency and strengthened global client relationships. Under his guidance, Infosys grew its international presence, diversified its service offerings and set new benchmarks for corporate governance and organisational culture. Even after stepping down as CEO, he continued to influence the company's long-term strategy and mentor the next generation of leaders.

Gopalakrishnan's achievements have won him numerous accolades. He received the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian award, for his outstanding contribution to trade and industry. Globally, he has been featured in Thinkers 50, a list of the world's most influential business thinkers, and has received recognition from industry bodies for his visionary leadership, technological insight and impact on innovation.

Beyond corporate success, Gopalakrishnan has devoted himself to fostering entrepreneurship, research and scientific advancement. As Chairman of Axilor Ventures, he actively supports early-stage startups, providing mentorship, strategic guidance and funding to promising ventures. His philanthropic initiatives, including the Pratiksha Trust and support for the Centre for Brain Research (CBR) at the Indian Institute of Science, reflect his commitment to advancing knowledge in neuroscience, artificial intelligence and health research.

Gopalakrishnan's leadership is defined by vision, integrity and a drive to create lasting impact. From co-founding a global IT giant to nurturing India's startup ecosystem and championing scientific research, his contributions continue to inspire business leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators alike.



Anurag Choudhary, Founder, CMD & CEO
Himadri Speciality Chemical Ltd

From Dreams to Global Impact

The extraordinary journey of Anurag Choudhary and the transformation of Himadri into a future-ready global speciality solutions powerhouse

Every extraordinary journey begins at the most ordinary space. This one began with a wide-eyed, 18-year-old boy, armed with big dreams and a fiery determination. There was neither an inheritance of scale nor a ready-made empire nor any kind of safety net to fall back on, but pure grit and gumption made him take the leap of faith. He believed deeply that if one worked honestly and relentlessly, the universe would respond!

Fast forward a few decades, and that schoolboy's dream now stands tall among global players in the manufacturing industry. Today, Anurag Choudhary is a name to reckon with as an exceptional industrialist known for his resilience and vision.

The Foundation Years

The last 35 years have been about laying brick by brick the groundwork for Himadri Speciality Chemical Ltd. Decisions vetted out and tested, every setback taken as a learning for the future, and every success a pillar – together building a strong foundation. And yet, Anurag Choudhary speaks with a quiet humility while acknowledging this truth: "What has been achieved so far is just one out of ten. The coming decade will be the defining chapter: the years where preparation meets purpose."

One of Himadri's greatest strengths has been its continued focus for decades on research and sustained effort on innovation, thereby building meaningful capabilities to develop products, processes, and technologies. The company's long-term investment stemming from clarity of purpose has translated the core vision into reality.

Evolution of Vision

What started as a humble venture, driven by a simple vision of building a distillation company, slowly began to evolve. The journey was not free from unforeseen challenges, including financial constraints, market volatility, global competition, and moments of doubt. Yet, the story does not pause here.

His entrepreneurial ability is a blend of both innate traits and core competencies developed through experience and deliberate practice. He knew that vision is not static but circumstantial. There was a time when "success meant scale", and then came the aspiration of building a "world-class global speciality chemical company". That milestone, too, was achieved.

The vision has further transformed into something deeper and more meaningful. Looking forward, the growing vision is to build a "purpose-driven, future-ready institution" where innovation, courage, and sustainability create lasting value and happiness. Guided by its core values, the company continues to empower people to make bold, ethical decisions, deliver, reliable and sustainable solutions and grow responsibly for all stakeholders. Himadri's success will be measured, not just by profit, but also by the trust, the positive impact and the shared happiness that it creates while it continues to contribute meaningfully to society and to future generations. This is not merely a business philosophy—it is a way of life.



Himadri Reloaded – The Next Chapter

Himadri has secured the ignition to propel the company into a completely new league and open a new chapter of growth, spearheaded by Anurag Choudhary

"Himadri Reloaded – The Next Chapter" unveils a powerful theme emphasising that Himadri is fully geared up for transformation and a new era of excellence. It is a strategic phase signifying a renewal as Himadri reinvents itself for the future—stronger, smarter, and more dynamic.

Historically, Himadri has been a carbon-focused company, built on a strong foundation in coal tar distillation and its by-products, including naphthalene, various oils, and carbon black. Over time, the company developed deep expertise in carbon black, with a particular focus on speciality carbon black. Looking ahead of the evolving industry landscape, Anurag Choudhary's leadership is focused on making Himadri's operations highly economical and among the most competitive globally.

R&D lies at the core of Himadri's DNA. Innovation has consistently been central to the company's journey. The company has focused on building a sustainable and resilient business model by enhancing yields, improving process efficiency, reducing fuel consumption, and recovering and utilising waste heat gases generated during production. Himadri's facility in Mahistikry is truly one of its kind globally—unique in terms of scale, state-of-the-art technology, and deep integration.

The year 2025 marked a landmark moment for Himadri, signalling the beginning of a new growth trajectory. Strong performance generated significant cash flows, providing the financial strength required to take R&D initiatives from the laboratory to commercial scale.

Reviving, Rebuilding, Reimagining

One of the proudest chapters in this journey has been the revival of the iconic tyre brand, Birla Tyres, and the plant that once stood silent. Restarting a closed facility is never easy. Anurag Choudhary's gumption and grit paid off. He believes that real success is not measured only in numbers but in lives touched.

Today, the revived operations have restored livelihoods for over 8,000 individuals, reigniting hope and economic activity. And this is only the beginning. With clear intent and structured growth, the vision extends to creating 20,000–23,000 jobs in the coming years, strengthening not just one state but contributing

meaningfully to the nation.

Himadri has announced the world's first commercial LFP (Lithium Iron Phosphate) Cathode Active Material plant outside of China. In parallel, the company is making strong progress in anode materials, including synthetic anodes, natural graphite, and silicon-carbon composites. These developments position Himadri firmly within the global energy transition value chain.

A decade ago, lithium-ion batteries were a mere vision of Anurag Choudhary that would eventually play a critical role in the future world. At a time when very few were even talking about them, his insight and knowledge were the base of such pioneering innovation. Today, lithium-ion batteries are central to global discussions on energy transition, and that validates our belief that we were ahead of the curve.

The company's objective has been deep-rooted in innovation and a bold commitment to sustainable growth. "At a time when many Indian companies traditionally allocate around 1% of revenues to research and development, we have invested consistently and significantly in R&D for more than a decade even when returns were not immediately visible. The patience is yielding results and has emerged as a competitive edge," emphasises Anurag Choudhary.

Himadri has publicly announced a major scale-up of its speciality carbon black capacity from 60,000 MT to 130,000 MT, with commissioning expected to begin soon. In another industry-first move, the company is setting up India's first commercial scale anthraquinone and carbazole plant, scheduled to commence operations in Q2 FY27. Together, these milestones form the backbone of a transformational phase for Himadri—one that is future-ready, innovation-led, and growth-orientated.

Future-Proofing with Green Innovation

Operating in a highly niche segment of speciality chemicals, the company does not lend itself to conventional peer comparisons. This model is now mature, resilient, and demonstrably sustainable—an increasingly critical advantage as the global speciality chemicals industry faces intensifying competition, rising ESG expectations, and relentless pressure on performance and costs.

On sustainability, Himadri stands among the global elite. The company ranks in the top 1% worldwide on EcoVadis and holds a Platinum rating—an achievement attained by only a handful of Indian companies. Its manufacturing operations are further distinguished by clean-energy-based recovery plants rather than conventional thermal power systems, reinforcing its leadership in responsible and future-focused manufacturing.

Innovation remains central to Himadri's strategy. In an industry where product life cycles are shrinking, the ability to continuously reinvent offerings and rapidly translate laboratory breakthroughs into commercial-scale solutions has become the true measure of technological leadership. Himadri has embedded this philosophy across its operations, sustaining high levels of R&D investment and fostering a culture that prioritises agility, experimentation, and execution.

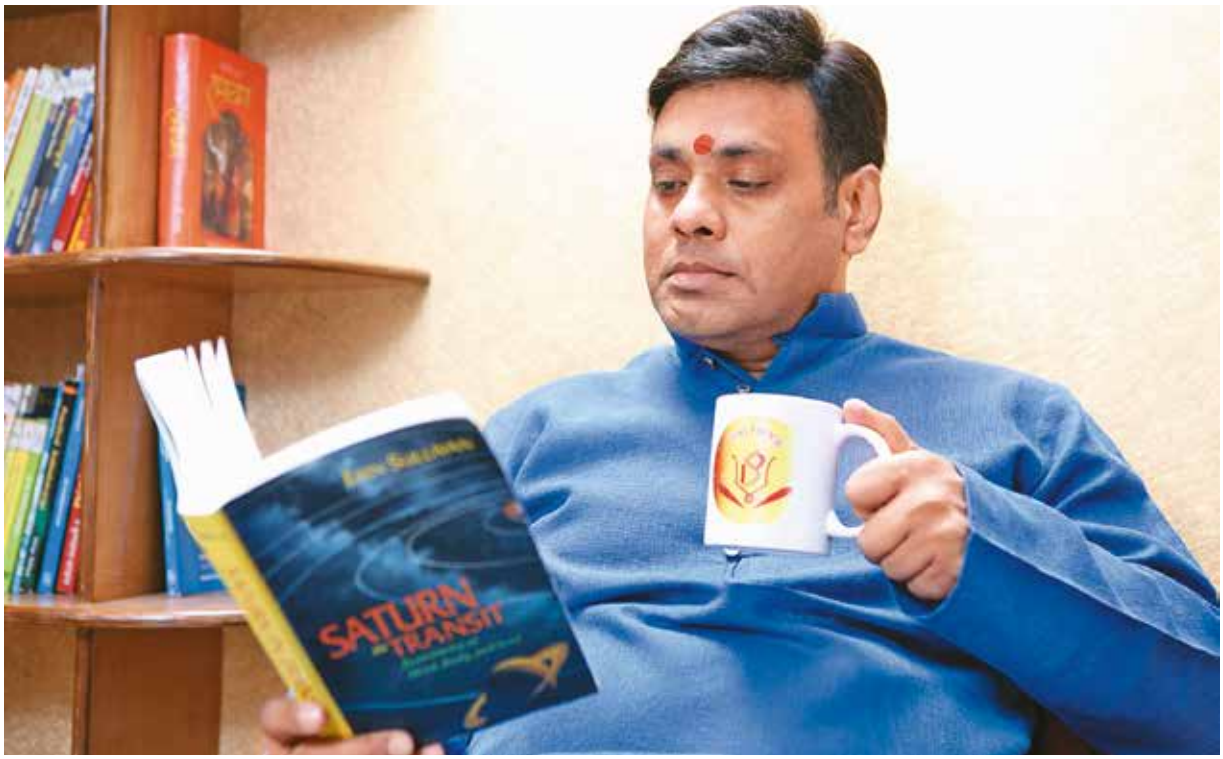
Bold Strides into the Future

Looking ahead, the company's initiatives span both near-term execution and long-horizon transformation. Capacity expansions, automation, new grades and SKUs—including advanced products for mining and PCR and EV tyre segments—are already underway. Simultaneously, R&D teams are driving circular economy solutions that convert industrial waste into high-value products, alongside advanced materials research in anode materials, nanomaterials, and silicon–carbon composites. Notably, Himadri is progressing toward India's first silicon–carbon anode facility.

"By 2030, Himadri is poised to be a very different company. While its legacy businesses will continue to grow, our new-age segments like electric mobility, lithium-ion battery materials, advanced carbon materials, and energy storage systems are expected to contribute meaningfully to both revenue and profitability. Himadri is not just responding to global transitions; it is positioning itself as a key enabler of the next wave of industrial and energy transformation." expressed Anurag Choudhary. The vision is evolving, the purpose is getting stronger and the resolve remains unshakable as his and Himadri's journey continues.

A Message to the Young Dreamers

"My story is not about corporate milestones but about the possibility of making dreams come true. Ideas can come from any quarter, but the real test is in seeing it through without losing focus. It is proof that passion combined with discipline can break barriers and that blessings follow those who work with sincerity. Your beginnings do not define your destination. Your belief does"



Liberate your 2026 like not done in earlier years

2026 is the year dominated by Sun so be bold to move and stop thinking too much about closure

Why 2026 Is Not Just another Year:, But the First Chapter of Your Real Life. Some years go by quietly while some go by loudly, carrying something profound with them. Years from now, you will look back on 2026 and recognize it as a year like no other. It's not simply personalized bookings or day-to-day tasks to be kept as a part of the traditional routine. It's a year to be acknowledged as the starting point of a journey. It's a year to go inward and confront the often-ignored question — am I living or just existing? And chances are, most of you will have never confronted or even truly acknowledged this question.

2026 will be dominated by the Sun - the Astrological planet of authority, identity, and illumination. Such years do not stand for stagnation or fear. Instead, you will encounter the underlining truth and irreversible change. Rest assured that 2026 will be the year that it must be done and you won't be kept waiting with the excuses any longer. It will be a year to stand as the point where you can reach out to the person you have always wanted to be.

The Astrological Power of 2026: When the Sun Awakens Destiny

The Sun is the ultimate celestial body and source of consciousness with self-direction and self-respect in one's life within Vedic astrology. Active karmas are not dormant when the Sun reigns. 2026 is therefore dormant karmic activation one, as positive karmic balances from past lives shift from potential to manifestation. This is why some people experience clarity and find the courage and opportunity to act after consecutive periods of effort. Timing, not effort, is what they were missing.

Therefore, 2026 is not to be looked at as a simple continuation of the past. This is the true authentic beginning of your destiny. This is the time to express what you have put aside for decades, be it your truth, your courage, or your healing.

Why Most People Don't Live Their True Lives

Everyone waits for closures before making a move. People wait for a 'stable' situation before making important decisions. This waiting is what breaks your confidence. It's in human psychology, almost all of the lifelong regret could be said to come from three main points: our inability to integrate one's full self, a lack of attention to what is actually important, and far too much time spent as a false self in a comfort zone. There is a pattern to the energy of the Sun in 2026. It removes fear and indecisiveness, and lack of autonomy from your life and makes you to confront what you have been ignoring.

This explains the discomfort some will experience in 2026. In 2026 people can expect to find the year uncomfortable. This is a wonderful year of liberation for those who seek the truth. This is a wonderful year of liberation for those who seek the truth.

Negotiate Sudden Life Changes not done so far

A birth chart is a great representation of someone. But, a life changing event cannot be predicted with only a birth chart. A life changing ephemeris will incorporate Moon, Sun, Divisional chart synchronicity. In 2026, the Sun will create a powerful synchronicity all of the previously mentioned. This is a primary reason for people changing walks of life.

2026 gives authority back to your innermost self. It empowers you with the ability to make finally make those long overdue decisions, see the people and the relationships in your life with crystalline clarity and have the strength to let go of aspects of your life that don't seem to truly belong to you anymore.

Where Life Demands a Reset in 2026

Years dominated by the Sun tend to not leave any room for half measures. 2026 brings a level of truth to relationships that demands healing, honesty, or closure where tolerating things may have previously been the norm. In terms of health, your vitality becomes a non-negotiable, as without the needed life energy, no destinies can be fulfilled. It also pushes you beyond a conventional career perspective in terms of purpose in order to work at something that truly aligns with the fulfillment of your soul's intent. Boundaries are restored and firmness in decision making self-respect is also gained. Furthermore, the most important question of the year regarding identity becomes: who have you been pretending not to be and why?

The Karmic Window of 2026: A Rare Opportunity

There are years where history tends to repeat itself, and then there are rare years where history and destiny come together to open a generous door towards the future. In terms of positive karma that has been cultivated and collected over the span of multiple lifetimes, 2026 is one of those years. A lot of people are likely to unexpectedly feel inner alignment and clarity, as well as experience new opportunities and renewed connections, all of which is not random. It is well-deserved, and it comes with the closing of a cycle and the opening of a new one that is flowing in perfect harmony with the universe.

But such a perfect synergy cannot exist without conscious movement.

How to Align with 2026

If you want to fully step into the first year of your real life, you will need to act with intention. Start something you have been fearing for years. Rebuild your health with discipline. Re-examine relationships in your life. Reset the compass of your career to where your real strengths are, instead of other's borrowed expectations. Take back authority of your decision making. Consciously recreate your self-image. And most importantly, don't carry the broken emotional workings of previous years into this new beginning.

An accurate birth chart and divisional chart analysis shows exactly why you feel stuck and what will finally free you. This is the method perfected by Dr. Vinay Bajrangi, who has guided many people through drastic life shifts by peeling back the many layers of destiny.

The Final Truth About 2026

The most important thing is, do not enter 2026 just like any other year. Consider it your rebirth, your awakening, your truest beginning. 2026 is not just a year with change. This year is demanding change. The direction of your life can easily be impacted by just one correct interpretation of your chart. Let this be the year you stop existing and start living. 2026 is the year where you will be allowed to fully live.

Get Ready to Make 2026 the First Year of Your Real Life. Feeling stuck, stalled, or unsure of things? The first step is to gain clarity. An in-depth study of your natal and divisional charts can provide insight into your obstacles and how to best navigate 2026.

Don't head into 2026 without ample preparation. Head into it with purpose.

For concise, actionable astrological advice, one can connect with my office +91 9278555588 / 9278665588.

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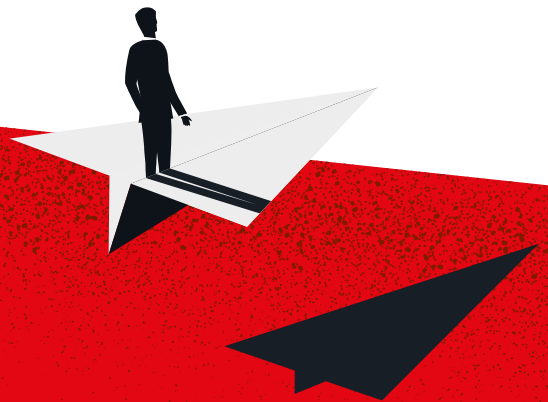


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Geet Chaturvedi

is one of the most widely read contemporary Hindi writers. He has authored two collections of novellas, three books of poetry, two works of non-fiction, and a novel



Anita Gopalan

is a literary translator from Hindi. Her translations include Geet Chaturvedi's *The Memory of Now*, *Simsim*, *The Funeral* and *The Master of Unfinished Things*

YEARS ago, while I was waiting on Platform Number Three at Dadar for a local train that might be a little less crowded, an elderly man approached me and asked, "What place is this?"

"Dadar," I said.

"I have to go to Mumbai," he said.

"The CST train will come from that side," I told him.

"That will go to CST," he said. "I want to go to Mumbai."

"That *is* Mumbai."

"Then what is this?" he asked. "Is this not Mumbai?"

"This is also Mumbai."

"But you just said this is Dadar."

"All of this is Mumbai," I said. "Dadar is inside Mumbai."

Now irritated, he said, "Just tell me one place—only one—whose name is Mumbai. That is where I want to go. Someone tells me Bandra, someone Borivali. Someone says Mulund, someone CST. Where is Mumbai? No one tells me."

Muttering to himself, he walked away.

Who was he? Perhaps he was an anti-philosopher character from Jorge Luis Borges—someone who, walking along an indifferent sentence in one of Borges's unwritten novels, reached its very edge and fell out of the page. Perhaps he has been wandering ever since.

Whenever I recall this scene, I realise that in those moments I was there, and Dadar station was there too—but the elderly man was nowhere, just as Mumbai itself was nowhere. Mumbai was, in a manner of speaking, all around; yet in truth, it was nowhere at all. It was as if many places had been gathered under a single name, Mumbai, and in that very act of naming, it became clear that places reside less in geography than in the mind. One may stand in Mumbai and still go in search of Mumbai itself, and it is entirely possible that one may never find it—much like those who, while living within themselves, spend a lifetime searching for who they are.

All places that appear in literature are imaginary, even when they are written as real. The opposite is equally true: all places that appear in literature are real, even when they are written as imaginary. Their outward forms differ, but their inner substance is often the same. Even today, in astonishment, we ask ourselves: was the Kaurava court—where Yudhishthira played the game of dice with Shakuni and lost everything—ever a real place? Were Kafka's *The Castle* or the court described in *The Trial*, imaginary? Are Godhra, Sambhal, Sandeshkhali merely inventions of a writer's imagination, or do they exist somewhere on the map of the earth?

Nirmal Verma, in one of his essays and in a different context, refers to a story from the *Matsya Purana*: In the midst of a dark, infinite ocean, Lord Vishnu sleeps. Maharshi Markandeya moves inside Vishnu's body, a realm of radiant beauty, luminous and heaven-like. Absorbed in this extraordinary bliss, he wanders and comes close to Vishnu's mouth, which, in sleep, is slightly parted. Suddenly, his foot slips and he falls outside into the endless, pitch-black ocean, where not even one's own hand can be seen. Terror seizes him. Only moments earlier, the world had seemed beautiful; now it is hideous and threatening, without a single speck of light. He wonders if he is dreaming, only to discover that this is reality. At the furthest edge of darkness' terror, he feels a cold tremor of despair. Then, at that exact moment, Vishnu lifts him and returns him to his mouth. Markandeya finds himself once more in a realm as beautiful as heaven: bright, comfortable, and filled with light. He cannot tell what is true. Is the inner world the real one, or the outer? Was what he lost reality, or what he has regained? Again and again, he moves in and out, yet his confusion never ends.

Markandeya's dilemma is the dilemma of countless writers and readers. Is the glittering, self-assured, playful Mumbai that appears in the light-hearted books of affluent, upper-middle-class writers the real city? Or is it the seething, rotting, dark Mumbai that emerges in the works of Bhau Padhye and Namdev Dhasal? Where, then, does reality lie? Colaba or Dharavi? Bandstand or Behrampada? The grand sweep of Nariman Point or the filthy, impoverished lanes of Sion Koliwada? From one gaze, the other becomes imagination; from the counter-gaze, the first. Or are both imagination, and both reality at once?

We are all essentially exiles. Exiled from geography, from history, from language, from culture, and from time—and, finally, from home itself. Even when no injustice has been done, when one leaves behind a village, a city, a home for education or work, the departure carries the quiet weight of exile: a severing from belonging, from one's own identity.

Salman Rushdie suggests that exiled people must create their own "imaginary

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homeland" from whatever they carry with them. (If one looks closely at the ancient history of exile, it seems that all homelands are, in fact, imaginary.) This suggestion applies with particular force to writers, who feel that the world around them is inadequate, or oppressive, or slipping through their fingers like sand. At such moments, writing becomes "cartography"—an emotional and political mapping of the infinite darkness, or of the irrational, infinite light, that surrounds them. The writer's act of imagination is, in essence, a rebellion against the violences of reality.

Once these imagined places enter the mind, they refuse to disappear. Their greatest danger lies in their seduction: come, live inside us. There is no labyrinth greater than the one we construct out of sentences. If we shift the context slightly, Ghalib seems to point to this very condition when he speaks of *be-dar-o-deewar sa ik ghar*—a house without doors or walls.

In Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, Marco Polo describes 55 imaginary cities to Kublai Khan. These cities are made of language, death, desire, time, and loss, suggesting that we do not understand a city through its architecture, but through the feeling it awakens in us. Calvino—like Roberto Bolaño, who invents imaginary writers in *Nazi Literature in the Americas*—does not flee from reality; rather, he fashions a subtle instrument for the pursuit of truth. Fictional cities, paradoxically, often expose the workings of real societies far better.

Malgudi, Macondo, Yoknapatawpha are dreams dreamt on the bed of imagination—dreams that strip reality bare. George Orwell's "Airstrip One" exists nowhere on the map of the world, yet it remains an immortal weapon of state power. Margaret Atwood's "Gilead" is a place where women's bodies are controlled and freedom systematically erased. In Borges's "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius", an invented planet slowly takes possession of the entire earth—a metaphor for how authoritarian ideology can quietly infiltrate daily life, seize control of the world, and rewrite history. All these places are imaginary, but the real question is this: are they imaginary at all—or are they, in some sense, more real than reality itself?

We can see a city as imagination only when lived reality has lost its grammar. Every imaginary place carries a real wound, still oozing—a footnote dangling from the epic narrative of humanity's historical failures.

In Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*, there is a magical door through which refugees can bypass borders and reach anywhere. Across history, refugees have lived partly in dreams and partly in camps. In a sense, they exist in between. Paraphrasing Rushdie, "home" for them is not a piece of land marked on a map, but a memory. Be it displacement caused by the Partition of India or by wars in regions such as Syria and Sudan, the moment state power begins to define what our home is, our homes begin to turn into imaginary places. There is a common understanding among scholars today that when memories are exiled, they invent imaginary worlds. This is how human memory takes its revenge. And it is only through art and literature that this revenge finds expression.

In our age, a mask covers the face of truth, which gasps, searching for clean air. Let literature at least remain that final place where truth can breathe freely, without choking. Across the world, borders are hardening and speech is being tamed. A free truth, a living truth, like a refugee, will seek shelter in the places created by literature—both in the real places written as imagination and in the imaginary places written as reality.

But the question is, *what is imagination, and what is reality*? Is it the light within the symbolic Vishnu, or the darkness outside him? Maharshi Markandeya is still engaged in contemplation, but this time he is not alone. Countless writers are with him—for all of them have been condemned, like refugees, to live "in between."

(Translated from Hindi by **Anita Gopalan***)*

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The Spaces of Fiction



Sundar Sarukkai

works primarily in the philosophy of the natural and social sciences. His latest novel is *Water Days*

ONE of the important lessons that I use in teaching the skill of reading is to ask the readers to focus on the how, rather than the what. Every piece of writing has a content—the what—but the spirit of the writing is present in how the content is expressed. This is an important strategy in reading texts because by focussing on the 'how', the reader can focus on the flow of the author's thought rather than on merely focussing on what is only 'said'.

These skills are particularly useful in reading philosophical, scientific and other academic texts. For example, many read texts by asking what its 'basic content' or 'essence' is, rather than focussing on how this content is expressed. In fiction, this becomes the common refrain of asking what the story of a novel is. By focussing on the story, we reduce a text to a minor part, and at the same time forget the importance of the skill of how to tell. We can see this reduction in responses to films and theatre all the time.

Writing fiction has made me sensitive to a different quality of fiction, which is the importance of the where question. If content answers the what question, and the flow of the narrative the how question, the atmosphere of a text is related to the where question. When I wrote my philosophical texts, the what and the how predominated. There may be other aesthetic and literary elements in writing, but in general these two aspects remained the most important.

However, in writing fiction, the how was important but I found that my writing was equally concerned about the attempt to experience, cognise and express the Where question. Where are the events taking place? Where are the elements of the story taking place?

The answer to these questions might seem quite simple. An event takes place at the location which is mentioned in the story. For example, suppose I write about walking to the stand-up restaurant near my house and having two *idlis* dunked in *sambar*, the Bangalore way! The 'what' is clear in this description and so is the where. The where is the restaurant and based on how I describe this event, the



The Silent Landscape
Artwork by Abhijit Saikia

COURTESY: CHAMPATREE ART GALLERY

PERHAPS THE GREATEST MYSTERY OF OUR STORYTELLING CAPACITY LIES IN OUR LANGUAGE AND THE BELIEF THAT IT CAN CAPTURE THE REAL.

where could also refer to the roads that I walk on.

But is the location of the description the same as the location of the event? Where is my story taking place? At the restaurant? At the time when I am eating those *idlis*?

Nope. This fundamental paradox about fiction is what sustains fiction and differentiates it from ordinary experience. The location of the restaurant in my story is not the same as the location of the physical restaurant. My story is only a description of a place. The description is linguistically located whereas the place is physically located. And there is a major difference between these two. The quality of the fiction depends on the quality of this difference, while at the same time producing the capacity to suggest that they are actually the same!

The where-ness produces the climate of the story. It takes the restaurant from the dusty streets to some other place. But where *really* is the story located? In my brain? My mind? My experience? In the language I use to describe it? Or does it find a new place in the reader? If, in the reader, where exactly? In the reader's brain, mind, experience, in their own languages? It is the interplay between the *whereabouts* of the story in the text and its *whereabouts* in the author's world as well as the reader's world that really makes fiction work so powerfully over millenia.

Imagination is the word that is often used to describe the act of writing fiction. While there are many elements to this concept, its relation to where-ness is extremely important as manifested in one of the most simple definitions of imagination: the capacity to convert absence into presence and to discover absence in presence. This particular function of imagination is really about the location and where-ness of stories.

Humans are fundamentally storytellers. We produce stories all the time. Even a simple inconsequential act has the potential to become a powerful story. But because of this felicity, we tend to forget the fundamental agent that makes fiction possible, namely, language. Perhaps the greatest mystery of our storytelling capacity lies in our language and the belief that it can capture the real.

Imagination has the power to displace the where-ness of an episode and language has the capacity to somehow capture this new locatedness of the episode. Through this we produce countless stories and countless versions of the same story.

But this act is not devoid of human intervention and human interest. Our imaginations are shaped by the world we live in and the influences that shape us. The language we have is inherited and carries all the strengths and weaknesses of the world that produces and transmits this language. In other words, the power of stories in dis-locating the space of the event is also both its strength and weakness. Imagination is not a plain mirror that can show the world as is. (We don't even really know the world as-is anyway!) It modifies, distorts, exaggerates reality.

The location of our stories is the location of our imagination and that of the language. We take readers to a new location by showing them a location that they are familiar with or can connect. The new location is filled with other elements that are not present in the real life event. Through this we manufacture a new world for the reader to inhabit, but all the time telling them that it is the real world of their location! To expect the reader to inhabit a radically new world in fiction would be too traumatic for the readers. They have to be first trained to learn to live in the imaginative world. Hence, we write pulp, we write stories that are presented as real-life events or as true stories.

We need the world of the imagination to produce stories, but in our contemporary world we don't have the stomach to live in it. Fiction is becoming more and more like confessions and

memoirs, and marketability is the new location for imagination and fiction. Earlier, stories produced places that allowed us to escape the hard, real world. Today, we have produced the real entirely as fictional, as spaces of our individual imaginations only, without realising that each such imagination is produced by manipulative historical, social and technological forces.

Both my novels, *Following a Prayer* and *Water Days*, capture the struggle between imagination, language and reality as ordinary, everyday events and stories. *Following a Prayer* (Westland 2023) was about a traumatic realisation of a 12-year-old girl, Kalpana, that human language is the primary agent to produce lies. The physical setting is the Western Ghats in the midst of a ferocious rainy season. But the novel is not about these physical attributes of mountains and rains as much as it is about the mental spaces and meanings that each of us have about these entities. Fear of these places is not *in* them, but within us. The space that had to be produced in this novel had to be in the imaginative and linguistic spaces of a young rural girl.

Locating this space in the world of these three girls allowed me the kind of freedom that I would not have had in an academic piece on prayer. It begins with a simple question of where prayers go and who listens to them. But there is no possibility of literally following a prayer. Fiction can do this because it constructs a space, a location, a where-ness, to which I can take you, a world where Kalpana listens to the sounds of the prayer, which become the rustles of leaves and the flaps of butterfly wings, leading her deeper into the forest. This is the only space in which I can say these things because Kalpana asks questions that cannot be spoken by adults or written in other spaces. She questions the reality of gods and whether the lies of language produce gods. This is the betrayal of language and so she refuses to speak. The whole village and, in particular, her younger sister and friend, try to make Kalpana speak, but she has to confront this betrayal and decide whether she wants to start speaking. Writing about these 'religious' themes in India today is so difficult and it is only fiction that allowed me the space to do this in the fictional world created by Kalpana and her two little friends.

This was only a story and yet it was always more than a story. It became the world of the Western Ghats for me and perhaps for many readers since I have had people call and tell me about how they would have scolded Kalpana when she was so obstinate! Compared to all that I had written in philosophy, writing these philosophical reflections as a simple story succeeded in producing this wonderful new where-ness in which the readers and I could co-inhabit.

So also in my next novel, *Water Days* (Westland 2025). Here, I had to find the imagination and language to produce a new story of Bangalore, a city that had drastically changed after the so-called IT boom. Here, my imagination was more about finding the language to tell this story because I wanted to capture the multilingual world of Bangalore. Although I chose a conventional genre of some kind of detective fiction, the novel is really about the language(s) of a city as well as the language available to us as writers to produce these new imaginations of a city. In this sense, the novel is really not about Bangalore although it is about the physical space of this city. Bangalore itself is a character in the novel, speaking to us as other characters do. But what is its 'tongue'? The story of the novel—about a changing city, the importance of water, being a girl in that locality and so on—can only exist in the displaced imagination wherein the characters whom we see all around us find a new space to belong to in the words of the novel. In doing so, these characters constantly challenge me as the author as to whether I have the requisite language and tools to reimagine them in that manner.

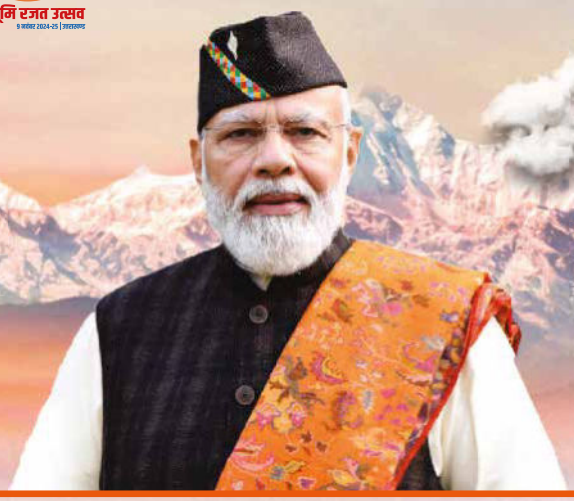
My fictional worlds are deeply immersed in the everydayness of our lives, yet they are worlds that the readers have not themselves imagined. This space which I want to create, unlike that of the real world, has to be open to possibilities, to dialogues, to alternate viewpoints, and defined by an underlying sense of respect. At a time when our imagination is under siege, writers should be seen as not only producing stories, but producing new spaces for us to think and act meaningfully and harmoniously.

FICTION IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE LIKE CONFESSIONS AND MEMOIRS, AND MARKETABILITY IS THE NEW LOCATION FOR IMAGINATION AND FICTION.

Govt. of Uttarakhand

देवभूमि रजत उत्सव





"We are committed to comprehensive development of our state, and to conserve and develop the natural beauty and rich cultural heritage of our state under the visionary leadership of honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi. For this, our goal is to encourage economic development, improve fundamental infrastructure and improve quality of life of all citizens through effective policies and strategic initiatives. We want to make Uttarakhand such a model of progress where there is confluence of modernity with tradition. Every citizen of the state should get conducive environment for prosperity and development."

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

"The construction of developed India for the 21st century rests on two primary pillars - pride in heritage and, second every possible effort for the development. Today, both these pillars are being strengthened by Uttarakhand. This decade will be the decade of Uttarakhand."

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister



Yamuna Temple (Kharsali)
Winter seat of Yamunotri



Ganga Temple (Mukhba)
Winter seat of Gangotri



Omkareshwar Temple (Ukhimath)
Winter seat of Kedarnath



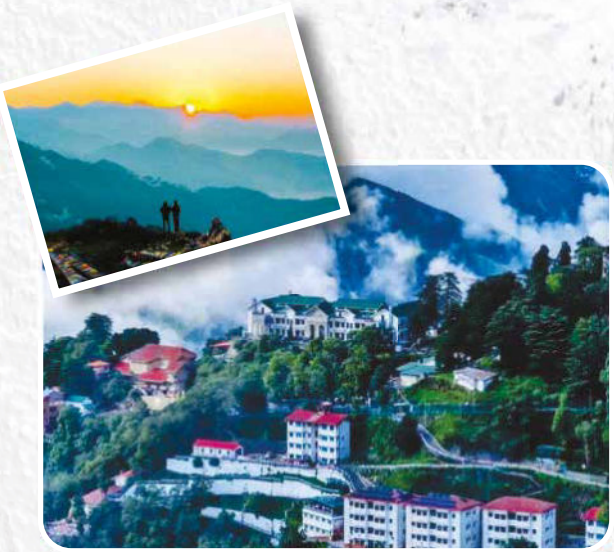
Narsingh Temple (Joshimath)
Winter seat of Badrinath

Winter Wonderland – A Memorable Journey in the Lap of Snow-Clad Mountains



Uttarakhand's winter season brings aspectacular blend of adventure, spirituality, and nature. Snow-covered towering mountain peaks, the serene beauty of calm lakes, the echoing sound of temple bells, and the gentle touch of icy winds-during winter, Uttarakhand comes alive in its most breathtaking form. This season offers a rare opportunity to experience the true soul of the mountains up close.

When the high Himalayan regions wrap themselves in a blanket of snow, many destinations across the state welcome travelers with a special winter tourism season. Winter Char Dham worship, snow-covered meadows (bugyals), thrilling trekking trails, water sports, homestays in traditional villages, and cultural festivals-every experience makes this journey truly unforgettable.



This journey is not just a gift of spiritual peace and natural beauty, but also a source of empowerment for local communities, giving new strength to livelihoods, homestays, and rural tourism-creating new pathways for regional prosperity.





Accessible Paths, Divine Blessings –
Experience Char Dham Darshan Even in Winter

During winters, when heavy snowfall leads to the closure of the sacred Char Dham shrines — Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath, the revered idols (Vigraha idols) are ceremonially brought to their nearby winter worship temples through a traditional Doli procession. For the next six months, daily worship and public darshan take place at these winter seats. This spiritual journey is known as the Winter Char Dham Yatra.

During this period, devotees receive the blessing of divine darshan without undertaking the challenging high-altitude trek, through more comfortable and accessible routes. The resonating beats of traditional Dandis, dhols and nagadas, along with vibrant local cultural rituals, offer pilgrims a unique and deeply moving spiritual atmosphere.

In addition, travelers get the opportunity to explore nearby religious landmarks, natural scenic spots and popular tourism destinations. The Winter Char Dham system not only celebrates faith, but also boosts the local economy, promoting homestays and rural tourism, and strengthening the livelihood of local communities.

Sacred Identity of Nature– Uttarakhand's GI-Tagged Products

Under the *Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999*, a GI (Geographical Indication) tag is granted to products that originate from a specific geographical region and possess unique natural qualities, traditional production methods, or socio-cultural heritage associated with that place. The primary purpose of the GI tag is to establish the product as **"the authentic version belonging exclusively to that region"**, distinguish it from imitations or similar products produced elsewhere, and provide economic benefits to local farmers and skilled artisans.

List of GI-tagged products of Uttarakhand

- Tejpat
- Berinag Tea
- Mandua
- Gahat
- Burans Sharbat
- White Rajma
- Litchi (Ramnagar)
- Jhangora
- Kala Bhatt
- Pahari Tor
- Lakhori Chilli (Almora)
- Ramgarh Peach
- Red Rice (Purola)
- Malta
- Nettle







Handicrafts and other products

Aipan Art
Traditional Kumaoni Art Form





Ringal Craft
Handicraft made from Ringal Bamboo

Tamta
Copper Products





Thulma
A type of handicraft

Nainital Candle
Candle Produced in Nainital





Bhotiya Dan
A Handicraft Item from the Bhotia Community

Likhai Wood Carving
Intricate Wood Carvings





Kumaoni Colored Pichhoda
A Colored Cloth with Traditional Motifs

Ramman Mask
Chamoli Wooden Masks Used in the Ramman Festival



Stay Local, Feel Local - Discover Uttarakhand through its Homestays

Uttarakhand's homestays not only offer travellers a peaceful stay amidst the mountains but have also become an important source of income for local families. When tourists stay in a homestay in a village or a small town, they get to experience the authentic local culture, traditional cuisine, customs, and the simplicity of rural life.On the other hand, the earnings from homestays go directly to local households, creating new livelihood opportunities. This helps reduce migration from the hills, empowers women, and strengthens the village economy. This homestay model connects every mountain home with tourism-where visitors receive the warmth of a family, and local residents gain a stable and sustainable means of livelihood.



Hon'ble Prime Minister's Appeals to Tourists Visiting Uttarakhand

1

Avoid Single-Use Plastic

While exploring the serene Himalayan landscapes, prioritize cleanliness. Always remember to avoid single-use plastic to protect the fragile environment of the mountains.



2 Follow Traffic Rules

When traveling in the mountains, strictly adhere to traffic rules. Stay vigilant as every life is precious. Ensure your own safety and respect the safety of others.



3 Vocal for Local

During your visit, support the local economy by purchasing local products. Allocate at least 5% of your travel expenses for buying authentic local items.



4 Respect the Sanctity of Pilgrimage Sites

Honour the traditions, rituals, and local customs while visiting religious places. Uphold the dignity of these sacred sites and seek assistance from locals to understand and follow the rules appropriately.



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Sound on my Skin
Artwork by Shilpa Gupta

The Artifice of Reality



Vivek Shanbhag

is the author of ten works of fiction and three plays in Kannada. *Ghachar Ghochar*, the first of his novels to be published in English, was translated into more than 20 languages. He is the co-translator of U.R. Ananthamurthy's book, '*Hindutva or Hind Swaraj*', into English. Shanbhag is a visiting professor of Creative Writing at Ashoka University, Sonipat, Haryana

TO my mind, one of the most vital aspects of creativity is the ability to unravel the relationship between a character and their world: their language, politics, lineage and era. The writer's task is not one of mere placement; I do not "place" a character into a setting. Instead, the character is born of their location and time, intrinsically bound to their environment from the moment of conception. Understanding this innate, simultaneous emergence is an essential act of creation. I verify this bond by subjecting my characters to various pressures, stretching them to see how truthful my initial understanding truly is. I

test to see if the character and their world are, in fact, inseparable. In this way, the work of fiction becomes an exploration of how these external forces shape the internal self. The writing process evolves into a continuous trial where the character is tested against shifting political tides and social upheavals, while new figures are introduced as counterweights and complements. It is through these confrontations that the character's internal reality is finally stripped bare, revealing an inner truth that makes the work feel both resonant and contemporary.

I want to explore these ideas further by looking at three of my favourite books. In each, I will show how the author truly understands the bond between their characters and the world they inhabit. You can see that the lives described in these stories aren't just "placed" in a setting; they belong there. By looking at these examples, we can see how the specific time and place actually create the person the character becomes.

Every time I read *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, I am astonished by the way the home is woven into the narrative. The novella opens with the news of Ilyich's death and a description of his colleagues visiting the home. The details of his life only unfold in flashback while his corpse lies present within the house itself. Therefore, it is impossible for the reader to consider his life in isolation from the ultimate reality of his death and the setting that contains it. This approach validates the story's core premise: "Ivan Ilyich's life had been most simple and most ordinary and therefore most terrible." What setting could more perfectly encapsulate the tragedy of a simple and ordinary life than the bourgeois home he struggled so hard to acquire and furnish? As the ordinary details of his life deepen, the atmosphere of the house becomes increasingly foregrounded.

The precipitating incident, Ilyich's fall while decorating his new residence, provides the thematic link between his material ambition and his physical decline. As his illness progresses, the master of the house slowly begins to contract, withdrawing inward into the hollow of his own mind. His physical space diminishes accordingly, and his life becomes tragically confined to his room. The room is transformed from a domestic space into a private crucible for his suffering. As Ilyich's death approaches, this room begins to function as a visual metaphor for his coffin. Because these profound realities are fully realised only within these walls, the house and the chamber itself transition from mere setting into an integral component of the story's existential experience.

Kuvempu's Kannada novel, *Malegalalli Madumagalu* (Bride in the Hills; translated by Vanamala Viswanatha), achieves a rare synthesis: the Malenadu forest and the narrative become a singular entity. The novel immediately plunges into action, charting the journey of Gutti, a Dalit man, who sets out to win his beloved. The opening pages detail Gutti's travel, accompanied by his dog, Huliya, toward a distant settlement. As this trek winds through the dense jungle, we are introduced to a host of new individuals and their distinct temperaments. The inner lives of these characters are revealed through their varied reactions to the challenging situations the forest presents. Kuvempu does more than just depict the forest in subtle detail; he breathes vital life into it by conveying the deep respect it commands in the human-nature relationship and the necessity of strictly adhering to its rules.

THE MOST PERSISTENT ILLUSION SURROUNDING ART IS THE DEMAND FOR REALITY. THIS IS THE REASON I FIND MYSELF BAFFLED BY THE RELENTLESS QUESTIONING: "IS THIS REAL?" OR "DID THIS HAPPEN TO YOU?"

The novel's sheer artistic scale is evident in the fact that Gutti's round trip alone consumes a quarter of the text, approximately two hundred pages. One of the work's most remarkable passages occurs when Gutti and his beloved Timmi are escaping through the forest late at night. A large herd of wild bison appears before them, their eyes glittering in the darkness. In that precise moment, a tiger unleashes a deafening roar, and the massive herd vanishes in swift, surging waves, like a sudden storm. Characters drift in and out of the dense forest, appearing and vanishing like fleeting shadows. A pervasive sense of being watched, the feeling of something or someone lurking just beyond sight, clings to the work. This subtle tension lends the entire experience a haunting beauty and an air of profound mystery.

Isaac Bashevis Singer's memoir, *In My Father's Court*, brings to life the people of Krochmalna Street in Warsaw. Singer's father was a Rabbi, and to the Jewish community there, he was the one who settled arguments and offered guidance. The smooth flow of life in this community depended entirely on their shared faith and their absolute trust in the Rabbi's fairness. The "court" was actually just a room in Singer's childhood home. In this simple room, all the politics, social struggles, and religious tensions of Krochmalna Street came to light. The joys and sorrows of every family on the street were tied to that small room. It was as if the space itself was sacred, and people felt they could reveal their deepest secrets there without any hesitation. Singer witnessed all of this as a child and wrote about it years later as a grown man. This work is a rare achievement where the narrator uses the sophisticated language of an adult to capture the pure, innocent eyes of a child. This is possible only because Singer looks at this court with a sense of holiness and objectivity. From the perspective of that one room, which acted like the community's conscience, we see the full range of human life: marriage, divorce, love, jealousy and betrayal. By the time Singer wrote these stories, Krochmalna Street had been completely destroyed. Even the language he wrote in, Yiddish, was fading away. Because of this, his writing is filled with a deep sense of loss for a world where people truly believed in a fair and simple system of justice.

Looking back at these three works, can we really say these locations were "real"? Was the house from where we see Ivan Ilyich's life come alive real? Was Kuvempu's Malnad forest real, or was Singer's father's court real? If we look for them on a map, we might find a version of them, but in literature, there is actually nothing "real" in the physical sense. The most persistent illusion surrounding art is the demand for reality. This is the reason I find myself baffled by the relentless questioning: "Is this real?" or "Did this happen to you?" This obsessive drive to find the tangible, verifiable truth is not a quest for reality. It is, more accurately, a proxy for understanding the mystery of the creative process. People look for facts because the actual process of turning a memory or an idea into a living, breathing world is much harder to explain. In the end, a place in a story is true not because it exists on a map, but because it is the only place that specific character could have ever been born in.

Outlook
Read • Think • Understand











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NEW LAUNCH 2026

UPCOMING

CARS & BIKES OF 2026

The New Year promises to have a bunch of high-octane car and bike launches and here are a few that caught our fancy.








KIA SYROS EV

Kia's all-electric compact SUV, the Syros EV, is charging up for a 2026 debut, with testing well underway and spy shots showing the EV plugged into fast-chargers. It's expected to carry over much of the regular Syros' sub-4m footprint while packing dual battery options of 42kWh and 49kWh, targeting a 300 kilometre range on full charge for the former battery pack and 355 kilometres on the bigger battery. Prices in India are likely to start near ₹14 lakh (ex-showroom).

TATA SIERRA EV

Tata is all set to launch the Sierra EV in the coming months. Positioned as a lifestyle-focused electric mid-size SUV, the Sierra EV blends retro cues with modern design and tech, including a sleek closed grille and triple screen setup, similar to the Sierra ICE models. Built on Tata's acti.ev platform, it's expected to offer multiple battery options and both rear-wheel and all-wheel-drive variants. Pricing is tipped to sit between ₹16 lakh and ₹25 lakh, making it a strong challenger to rivals such as the Hyundai Creta Electric, Mahindra BE 6 and MG ZS EV when it hits showrooms.





RENAULT DUSTER

Renault has officially confirmed that the all-new Renault Duster will make its much-anticipated India debut on January 26, 2026. This marks the return of one of the most iconic SUVs in India after its production ended in 2022. The upcoming Duster enters a super competitive midsize SUV segment, facing rivals like the Hyundai Creta, Kia Seltos, Skoda Kushaq, VW Taigun, Maruti Victoris, Honda Elevate and Tata Sierra. For India, Renault is expected to initially offer petrol-only powertrains. The new-gen Duster will be built on the CMF-B architecture.

BMW M 440i



The BMW M440i Convertible is set to arrive in India in 2026, bringing open-top luxury to the premium convertible segment. It's expected to be priced around ☒1.1 crore (ex-showroom). Under the hood is a 3.0-litre turbocharged inline-six petrol engine producing about 374 bhp and 500 Nm of torque, paired with an 8-speed automatic gearbox. The car sprints from 0 to 100 km/h in around 4.9 seconds and reaches a top speed of to 250 km/h. The M440i Convertible gets a soft-top roof that opens or closes in roughly 18 seconds at up to 50 km/h.



LEAPMOTOR C10

Global automotive giant Stellantis has officially confirmed plans to bring China's electric vehicle brand Leapmotor to the Indian market. Leapmotor will join Stellantis' existing Indian lineup alongside Jeep and Citroën. The C10 SUV will be launched in India first. It gets a rear-mounted electric motor that makes 214.5bhp and 320Nm. It draws energy from a 69.9kWh LFP battery that offers a WLTP rated range of 420 km, it accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in just 7.5 seconds. Leapmotor's India entry could expand choice in a segment that is seeing continuous growth, setting the stage for broader adoption of electrified driving.

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& STAY SAFE
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AND UPGRADE YOUR DRIVING EXPERIENCE TODAY!

Image simulated for illustrative purpose only.



TOYOTA URBAN CRUISER EV

The Toyota Urban Cruiser EV made its India debut at Auto Expo 2025, marking Toyota's upcoming entry into the electric SUV segment. This new all-electric compact SUV is similar to the Maruti Suzuki e Vitara but stands out with Toyota's own styling and design touches. The electric SUV is likely to reach Indian showrooms in the first half of 2026. The model was launched globally in three versions: a FWD model with a 49 kWh battery and front and AWD versions with a 61 kWh battery. The driving range (WLTP) is up to 344 km for the FWD model with the 49 kWh battery; 426 km for the FWD version with the 61 kWh battery; and 395 km for the AWD model.



MAHINDRA XUV 7XO

Mahindra will launch the XUV 7XO in early 2026. Bookings for the updated SUV are already underway at a ₹21,000. The headline grabber is a wide triple-screen layout that stretches across the dashboard, drawing inspiration from Mahindra's flagship EVs. Inside, the cabin adopts a light beige and tan theme, ambient lighting and a new two-spoke steering wheel. Safety and tech remain priorities, with a suite of driver-assistance systems and a robust feature list.



NISSAN TEKTON

Nissan unveiled the Tekton SUV a couple of months ago. It will be a new entrant in the fiercely contested compact SUV space, taking on rivals like the Hyundai Creta and Kia Seltos. The Patrol-inspired design brings a commanding street presence with boxy proportions, flared wheel arches, functional roof rails and striking C-shaped LED lighting up front and at the rear. It is built on the Renault-Nissan CMF-B modular platform, which will be locally manufactured at Nissan's Chennai facility. Nissan targets a mid-2026 India debut for this SUV, hinting at future hybrid variants alongside conventional petrol options.

NISSAN GRAVITE



Nissan officially confirmed the Gravite nameplate for its upcoming compact three-row MPV for the Indian market, with an unveiling in January 2026 and showroom arrival by March 2026. Built on the Renault Triber's CMF-A+ platform, the Gravite retains the sub-4-metre footprint and three-row seating layout of its cousin. Exterior teasers show the Gravite mirrors the Triber's proportions but gets Nissan-specific design touches. It is expected to carry the 1.0-litre, petrol engine from the Triber.



BMW F 450 GS

Production of the BMW F 450 GS ADV has officially commenced at TVS Motor Company's Hosur facility, signalling the motorcycle's imminent entry into the Indian adventure segment. The F 450 GS ADV is powered by a 420 cc parallel-twin engine that generates 48bhp at 8,750 rpm and 43Nm of torque at 6,750 rpm, paired with a 6-speed gearbox. While BMW has not yet confirmed official pricing or the India launch date, local production is expected to help keep costs competitive and boost sales.



BSA SCRAMBLER 650

BSA launched its new Scrambler 650 globally in July 2025, with the India launch on the anvil. It is a scrambler-styled spin on the Gold Star 650 platform, blending retro charm with mild off-road potential. At its heart is a 652cc liquid-cooled, single-cylinder DOHC engine that punches out around 45bhp and 55Nm, paired to a 5-speed gearbox. Once it lands in India, the Scrambler 650 will sit above the Gold Star 650 and square off against rivals such as the Royal Enfield Bear 650.

KTM 390 SMC R

The KTM 390 SMC R supermoto is due for a launch soon. It is built on the same platform as the 390 ADV and the 390 Enduro R. Powering the 390 SMC R is a 399 cc liquid-cooled single-cylinder engine paired with a 6-speed gearbox, making 45.3bhp and 39 Nm. The suspension features WP USD forks and an adjustable rear monoshock. The 390 SMC R aims to be a niche product in India's nearly non-existent supermoto segment.





TRIUMPH TRACKER 400

Triumph Motorcycles has broadened its 400 cc Modern Classic line-up with the Tracker 400, officially revealed for global markets. The new model adopts a flat-track-inspired aesthetic and distinct design from its siblings, slotting alongside the Speed 400, Thruxton 400 and Scrambler 400. At the heart of the Tracker 400 is the same 398 cc liquid-cooled, single-cylinder TR-Series engine that you see on the Thruxton 400. It is tuned to deliver about 42bhp and 37.5Nm, Chassis tweaks including a slightly sharper rake and a taller 805 mm seat height.

ROYAL ENFIELD FLYING FLEA S6

Royal Enfield has displayed its Flying Flea S6 electric motorcycle at Motoverse 2025, positioning it as a scrambler-style EV designed for urban and light off-road use ahead of an expected late-2026 launch. The S6 features upside-down front forks and a rear monoshock, combined with 19-inch front and 18-inch rear wheels fitted with tyres suited for mixed surfaces. Long-travel suspension and an enduro-style seat aim to balance comfort and control on varied terrain. The EV also offers switchable ABS that offers more control during off-road rides.



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ROYAL ENFIELD FLYING FLEA C6

The Royal Enfield Flying Flea C6, RE's first electric motorcycle under the new Flying Flea sub-brand, is likely to be launched in early 2026. The C6 blends nostalgic cues with retro EV design. It rides on a lightweight forged aluminium frame, suspended by a girder-style front fork and a rear monoshock. The compact body includes disc brakes with dual-channel ABS and 17-inch wheels, reinforcing its urban-oriented character. Royal Enfield is yet to confirm battery capacity, range or motor output.

NORTON MANX R

At EICMA 2025, Norton unveiled its new-gen performance motorcycles - the Manx and the Manx R. Both motorcycles get a new 1,200 cc, 72-degree V4 liquid-cooled engine that churns out around 204bhp at 11,500 rpm and 130Nm of torque at 9,000 rpm, paired with a six-speed gearbox and quickshifter. The Manx R is the sharper, fully-faired superbike. It balances a 204 kg dry weight with high-end hardware including semi-active Marzocchi suspension, Brembo Hypure brakes with dual 330 mm front discs, and lightweight carbon-fibre BST wheels shod in Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa V4 SP tyres. There will be electronic rider aids on offer too.





ROYAL ENFIELD BULLET 650

The RE Bullet 650 will be yet another addition to the company's 650 cc modern classic range. While the motorcycle was showcased globally at EICMA 2025 and then at Motoverse, RE's motorcycle fest, prices for the motorcycle are yet to be announced. In terms of design, the Bullet 650 is a bigger, portlier version of the Bullet 350, one of the bestsellers from RE and a motorcycle that has been in production for over 100 years. The motorcycle continues to get the same 648 cc parallel-twin engine seen on other RE models, making 46 bhp and 52.3 Nm. The engine is paired to a 6-speed gearbox.

BRIXTON CROSSFIRE 500 STORR



The Brixton Storr 500 India launch has been delayed and is now likely to debut around January–February 2026 instead of at India Bike Week 2025. This adventure-style bike is powered by a 486 cc liquid-cooled, parallel-twin engine that produces about 47 bhp and 43 Nm, paired with a 6-speed gearbox. It rides on 19-inch front and 17-inch rear spoke wheels with rugged tyres, and has a tubular steel frame with an upside-down front fork and rear monoshock for capable handling on varied roads. The Storr 500 also offers dual-channel ABS, LED lighting, digital console, and a USB socket for touring convenience. Once launched, it will compete with bikes like the Honda NX 500 in the mid-weight adventure segment.

NORTON ATLAS



Along with the Manx and Manx R, Norton also took the wraps off the Atlas and Atlas GT adventure motorcycles at EICMA 2025. The good news is that these motorcycles will likely be launched in India as well in 2026. The Atlas gets a 585 cc parallel-twin engine that makes almost 70bhp. The exact specifications will be revealed at the time of launch. The Atlas gets wire-spoke wheels while the Atlas GT will be more road-oriented, with alloy wheels.

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Landscape is Not Always Beautiful: Landscape is an Architecture
Artworks from the series by Samit Das

Known and Unknown



Samit Das

specialises in painting, interactive artworks & artists' books

IN an era where the gaze upon landscape has commodified into picture postcards with pristine beauty—rolling hills, serene rivers, untouched forests—the true essence of the earth demands a radical shift. Landscape is no longer merely a concept of aesthetic pleasure, a passive backdrop for contemplation or leisure. Instead, it requires an inner vision, a penetrating gaze that unearths the complex layers of stories buried beneath its surface. These are narratives of trauma, resistance, memory and survival, etched into the soil by centuries of human and ecological strife. I am not a mere observer but a cultivator of archives—re-animating and re-cultivating them repeatedly to forge new historiographies that challenge dominant erasures and reclaim subaltern truths.

The surface of the landscape in reality is a palimpsest of contested meanings. It is a "nexus" where history, identity, power and resistance intersect in profound, often violent ways. For Adivasi communities in India, the land is not an abstract resource but a symbiotic lifeworld—a living entity that sustains cosmologies, knowledge systems and communal existence. This harmony is perpetually unsettled by colonial legacies and contemporary dispossessions: forests razed for mining corridors, rivers dammed for "development," hills scarred by industrial greed. These acts inflict double violence—physical on the earth and ontological on its people—turning the soil into a traumatised archive of wounds.

Rabindranath Tagore envisioned education and creativity under open skies, free from colonial hegemonies, as a means of world-making through harmony with nature. But in today's hyper-digital age of fractured selves and ecological collapse, this vision must evolve. Propelled by the fierce ethical clarity of writer Mahasweta Devi, whose works insist that land is the living body of the dispossessed. She lived





among DE-notified Tribes—the Sabars, Lodhas and Santhals—documenting atrocities, fighting legal battles, and weaving rage into literature. Her warning, "The village is no longer the same as before." That echoes louder in 2025 amid green grabs and carbon schemes that mask ongoing exploitation.

To engage with landscape today is to reject superficial beauty and cultivate inner vision—a deliberate peeling back of layers to reveal the stories of struggle embedded within.

These fleeting images are not static objects; they decay and dissolve, honouring the subaltern right to opacity.

Tagore granted the right to imagine new worlds; Devi imposed the duty to stand with those whose worlds are vanishing.

In 'Song of the Soil', the landscape—known and unknown—becomes a battleground for survival and sovereignty. It transcends beauty to demand inner vision, urging us to listen to the earth's layered whispers. The soil still remembers, still speaks in voices the powerful ignore. That's the known and unknown and this isn't an elsewhere place but our very own.



Education for the Soul and Society

Jagadguru Sri Sri Sri Dr. Nirmalanandanatha Mahaswamiji implementing holistic learning through his philosophy and a harmonious blend of enlightenment, service and modern education

Nestled amidst the serene, green landscapes of Karnataka, Adichunchanagiri University (ACU) stands as a transformative centre of learning—an institution where tradition and technology, values and vision, converge to create an environment of holistic development.

Rooted in Values

Established in 2018, ACU carries forward a legacy that began in 1973 with the establishment of educational institutions across rural Karnataka by the revered Jagadguru Sri Sri Sri Dr. Balagangadharanatha Mahaswamiji, the 71st Pontiff of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Math. His dream was clear: education should uplift, enlighten, and empower every individual, regardless of background.

That noble dream thrives today under the dynamic leadership of the Hon'ble Chancellor, Jagadguru Sri Sri Sri Dr. Nirmalanandanatha Mahaswamiji, the 72nd Pontiff of the Math.

State-of-the-art Learning Environment

ACU's sprawling 67-acre campus at BG Nagara reflects this enduring vision—a space where state-of-the-art facilities harmonize with lush greenery, creating an inspiring atmosphere for academic excellence and personal growth. Located on National Highway 75, just outside Bengaluru, ACU offers a vibrant and inclusive environment where students not only pursue degrees but also cultivate values, leadership, and a spirit of innovation.

As a multidisciplinary private university, ACU integrates emerging technologies, research-driven learning, and India's rich cultural heritage to shape well-rounded individuals prepared for a rapidly evolving world. The university stands committed to accessible education, empowerment of underserved communities, and fostering future-ready skills. From medical sciences and engineering to management, humanities, and emerging fields, ACU represents the pinnacle of progressive yet value-rooted education.

Visionary Leadership

At the heart of this transformative journey is Jagadguru Sri Sri Sri Dr. Nirmalanandanatha Mahaswamiji—a visionary leader who seamlessly blends modern scientific wisdom with profound spiritual insight. A Gold Medalist with a Master's degree in Engineering from IIT Chennai, he further enriched his academic pursuits with a Doctorate in Sanskrit Philosophy from Gulbarga University. In 1998, driven by compassion and a deep commitment to service, he embraced monastic life.

Mahaswamiji's life reflects a rare harmony of intellect, humility, and spiritual depth. His early service at the JSB Blind School in Ramanagara shaped his lifelong dedication to upliftment and education. Beyond the Math, he has taught and mentored engineering students, emphasizing not justtechnical expertise but values, communication skills, and ethical living. His guidance has produced individuals who can build both strong structures and strong lives.

Service to Mankind

A scholar of Advaita Vedanta, an advocate of holistic development, and a promoter of Sanatana Dharma, Mahaswamiji oversees a vast educational network under the Sri Adichunchanagiri Shikshana Trust®, impacting over 150,000 students across 500+ institutions. His initiatives—such as founding ACU and establishing SAMVIT, a free residential school—reflect his unwavering commitment to social transformation.

His global lectures, including at Oxford, Cambridge, Princeton, and leading Indian institutions like IITs and IISc, have inspired audiences worldwide. With a vision rooted in compassion, sustainability, and knowledge, Mahaswamiji continues to lead ACU and the Math toward a future where education liberates, empowers, and elevates humanity.

A Space Odyssey



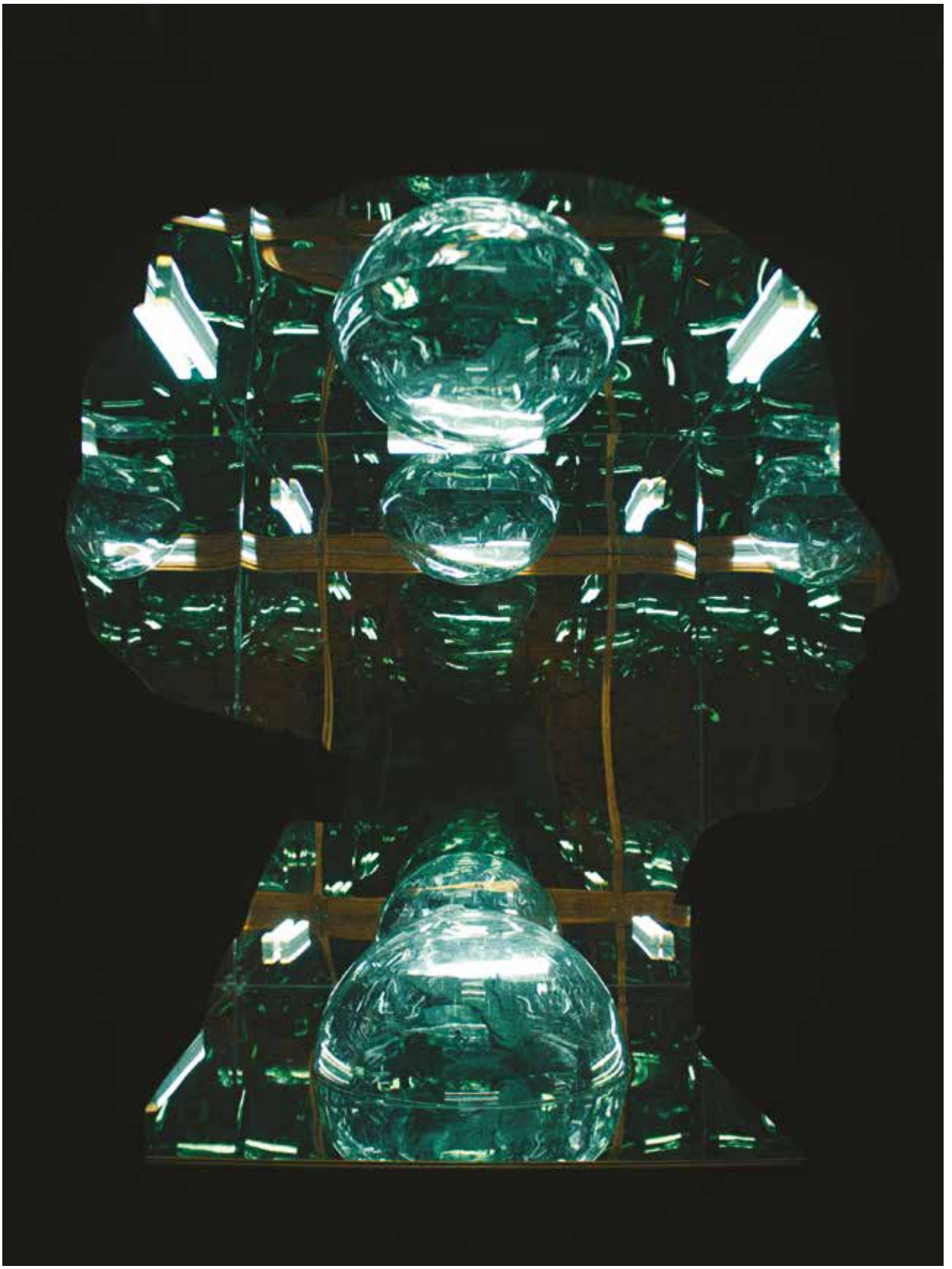
Yousuf Saeed

is a Delhi-based independent author and filmmaker who has worked on science and arts in his films and writings since 1990s. He manages the Tasveer Ghar archive of South Asia's popular visual culture

AMONG the handful of survivors, some called it the *qiyamat*, others the *pralaya*. And for some, it was the apocalypse, of course. But it was none of those mythical endings. There was no hope of a rebirth after such destruction. The *qiyamat* or Doomsday is supposed to wipe out everything on Earth and take the souls to a Day of Judgement for their reward or punishment; that didn't happen either.

The survivors on Space Station 21B had witnessed the ultimate annihilation of everything on Earth—its cities and forests, life and water, everything. Nothing was going to spring back again. Only two dozen men and women survived on a space station encircling Earth in a distant orbit. But for how long, they didn't know: their life-support system would not last unless they found a way to make more food and oxygen. They could not land back on Earth, now burnt and contaminated. They often sat at the ship's thick windows and watched a once-familiar world that had turned dark red and yellow as fires raged across continents.

"Everything is fine. Go back to your pods," came the voice of Xorm, the computer that controlled the station, every time some anxious workers gathered to chat. It was becoming more stringent each day—it would lock or unlock doors at will, deny food or medicines to some, and reduce oxygen levels in someone's pod. Xorm was surely partial to some workers. It censored all incoming information, giving them only



The Dreaming Chamber An artwork by Ruchi Bakshi Sharma

official propaganda received from the government. For entertainment, they watched and rewatched old movies available on board.

The great destruction befell Earth, from whatever little they could glean, not only due to ecological disasters, but more so because of the grand war between Rajam, the king, and Prajam, the rebels. And since the space mission was sent by Rajam's government, Xorm ensured that the workers didn't voice any rebellion, knowing some might be Prajamites.

Swarna mostly kept quiet, but carried within her a deep resentment against Rajam. Her family, from an ethnic minority on Earth, had been killed or jailed by the ruling forces for speaking against Rajam's atrocities. She had survived, maintaining a false, precarious identity, labouring to secure a career in space—far from the decaying Earth and its persecutors.

Xorm was programmed to strictly control the workers—not only their productivity, but more so their personal views and thoughts. "No. Rajam was not so bad as you say," its voice would interject into conversations. "Rajam was a peace-loving king who sought prosperity for all. It was the Prajam who brought this destruction. Don't spread lies here." No one could argue with it. In fact, some workers agreed with it. "Yes, you are right," someone would say from a corner. "These Prajams created all the problems—they have always been the troublemakers."

The workers now spent their days trying to recycle waste and grow bits of food, and arguing about who was better, Rajam or the Prajam. "We had democracy," Swarna told everyone at the dinner table once. "But Rajam corrupted it. He clung to power for several decades, rigging every election to secure a majority, even though the Prajamites exposed his corruption and his murdering of the planet."

"Stop it," came a stern mechanical voice from Xorm. "Eat your food and leave."

Swarna would not stop. "They turned the air and water rancid, the land infertile. The hills were falling apart. Earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and diseases plagued the Earth. But Rajam and his cronies lived in the comfort of their guarded fortresses, while the poor Prajamites scavenged on mountains of filth.

"Ultimately, they came to blows: Rajam launched deadly nuclear and bioweapons on the strongholds of the Prajam. But the latter, too, had evolved techniques to deflect some of this warfare back to their origin. And thus, they annihilated each other over two decades."

Something suddenly hit Swarna's head from behind. It was a robotic arm that stunned her. Others hurriedly finished their food and left.

She woke up in her pod with a sharp pain in the neck. The oxygen levels were low. Her door didn't open. Probably no food or water for today. She had been nursing only one thought for weeks: to shut down Xorm and manage the station manually.

"Are you crazy?" her friends told her when she secretly expressed this idea. "How will the systems run then? Who will process the food?"

"I'm the engineer," she said. "I know the system. Xorm is hiding the actual food reserves. If we get the ingredients, we can process it ourselves. Xorm is also not allowing us to cruise to the Moon, where we could land and restore a biosphere."

"But you can't shut Xorm until 75 per cent of us agree to enter the vault," said Jakme, the senior-most worker. "And you know these Rajam supporters. They would never join us." They started dispersing before Xorm could find their secret meeting point.

Each morning, Xorm broadcast old speeches of Rajam on every screen. "We gave safety and security to all, including the minorities. We ensured everyone had jobs. The economy and trade are flourishing. We supplied homes, electricity, water, and toilets to all. We built roads, bridges, and rapid trains everywhere. We gave health and education..."

"Yes Rajam, you are right" ... whoever said that would get breakfast. Those who remained silent or disagreed could be denied food. The Rajam supporters happily conformed. Their king was dead, but they considered Xorm their master.

"We opened schools and universities where free thought was promoted," said Rajam on the screen. "We allowed arts and culture to flower. We gave freedom to the media. But despite that, the Prajams are unhappy and opposing us. They have instigated protests and riots everywhere."

"That's a lie. A propaganda," said an irritated Jakme, ready for punishment. "Rajam was cruel to minority groups. He arrested opponents and journalists who asked tough questions. He demolished the homes of activists. Democracy was a joke under Rajam. Women were not safe. Hunger and

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diseases grew. People were jobless."

This time, a Rajam loyalist confronted him. "Can't you remain quiet? Can't you accept the truth? Your people ruined the Earth. You're the one responsible for *pralaya*."

"No. That's the propaganda you've been fed," said Swarna. "Prajams had no role in the destruction. We come from indigenous tribes and minorities who considered nature sacred. We saved trees and rivers. But Rajam's forces destroyed our sacred habitats and farms through mining and construction."

The room suddenly went dark and the robotic arms started hitting them. Someone shrieked after a thud.

Despite Xorm's hostilities, Swarna and Jakme continued on their secret mission. "We need 18 workers on our side to shut this down but have so far only 10." For days, they exchanged letters on paper to evade Xorm's eyes. "We need to convince the Rajam loyalists. They're brainwashed."

Prajamites were now facing more power cuts in their pods as Xorm diverted power for its own survival. In their next secret meeting, they managed to get two Rajamites. "But how can we trust you?" they said.

"Do you have a choice?" asked Swarna. "Xorm is selfish, just like its masters. Soon, it may combust our food to generate power for itself. We'll all die."

"So how will we make more food if you shut it?" asked Matadin, a Rajamite.

"We have seed grains in the vault. We can grow plants from them instead of cooking and eating them. We'll survive much longer then."

After some thought, Matadin softened. "I can try to convince the workers. But they are Rajam loyalists. They won't trust you."

His friends were angry with Matadin for having joined the Prajam meeting. But they couldn't argue much as Xorm started listening. Time was running out and the power cuts affected everyone. Some Rajamites changed their mind, but many still would not budge.

On the appointed day, 15 anxious supporters of Swarna gathered outside the big vault, waiting for three more Rajamites to join.

"You're not authorised to enter here," said Xorm's mechanical voice. "Go back to your pods."

"We have Protocol 75P. We're 18 workers with keycards. Open this," said Jakme.

"No, you don't have the quorum. Go back to your pods."

THE SURVIVORS ON SPACE STATION 21B HAD WITNESSED THE ULTIMATE ANNIHILATION OF EVERYTHING ON EARTH—ITS CITIES AND FORESTS, LIFE AND WATER, EVERYTHING. NOTHING WAS GOING TO SPRING BACK AGAIN.

Ignoring it, all 15 moved closer to the vault with their keycards, as Xorm's robotic arms violently tried to prevent them. A jittery Swarna looked back to see if others were joining, but didn't find any. With 15 keycards signalling it, the vault door had started whirring to open, but waited for the full protocol.

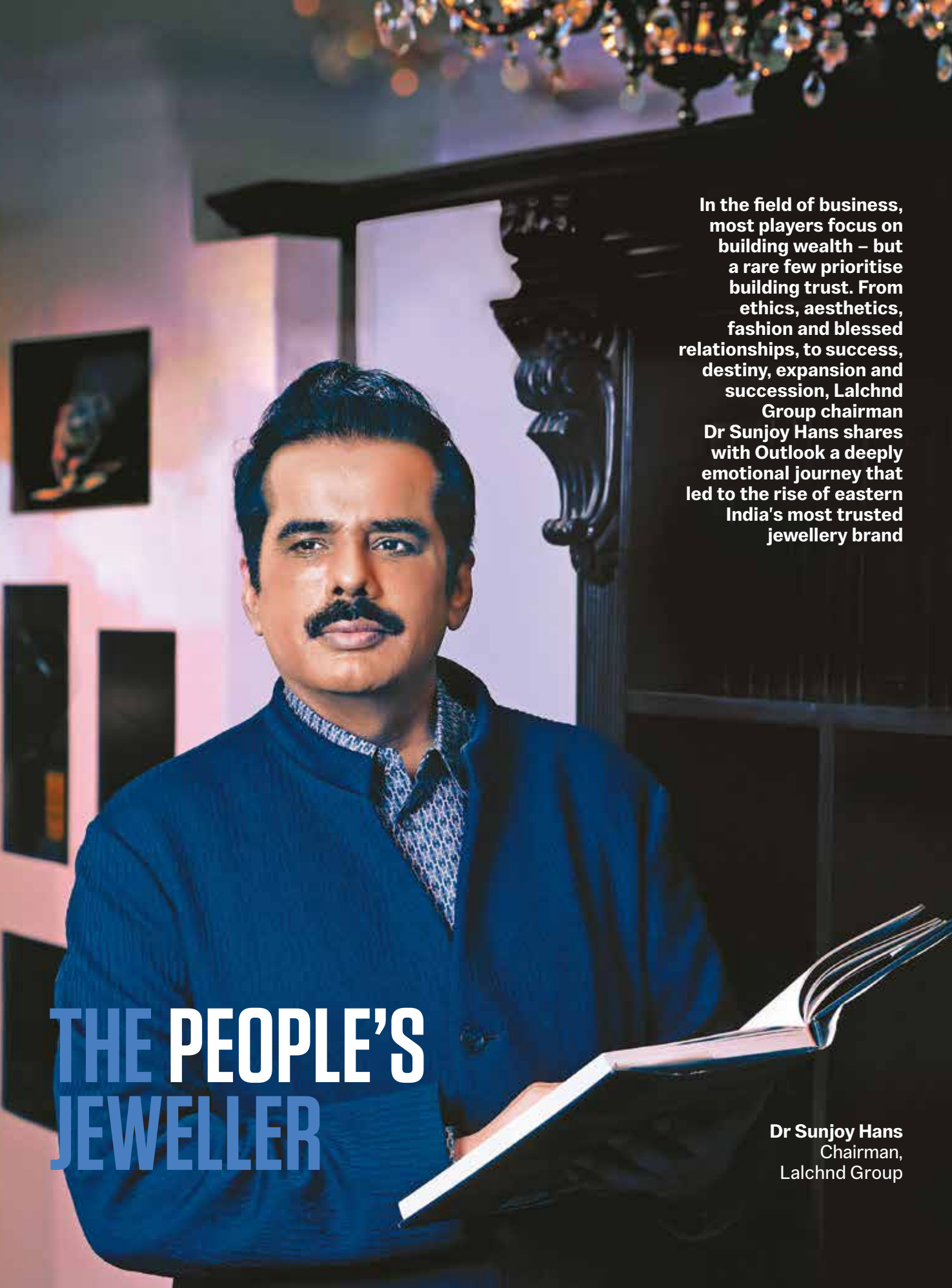
"You're making a big mistake—you'll all die here," came Xorm's voice. "The station will destroy itself." It was now aiming a laser gun at them.

"Enough of the protocol," said Swarna as she took out a pair of big metal pliers from her dress and inserted it into the half-open gate. "Help me," she asked, as others pulled the two sides of the door apart.

"Watch out," someone shouted, as the gun's laser missed Matadin's shoulder. "You're breaking the law. Go back to your pods," shouted Xorm amid the laser's swishing sounds.

Many were using hand-held laser shields to evade the gun, but not for long. Some were already injured. Swarna somehow squeezed herself into the vault and pulled the shutdown lever. There was sudden silence.

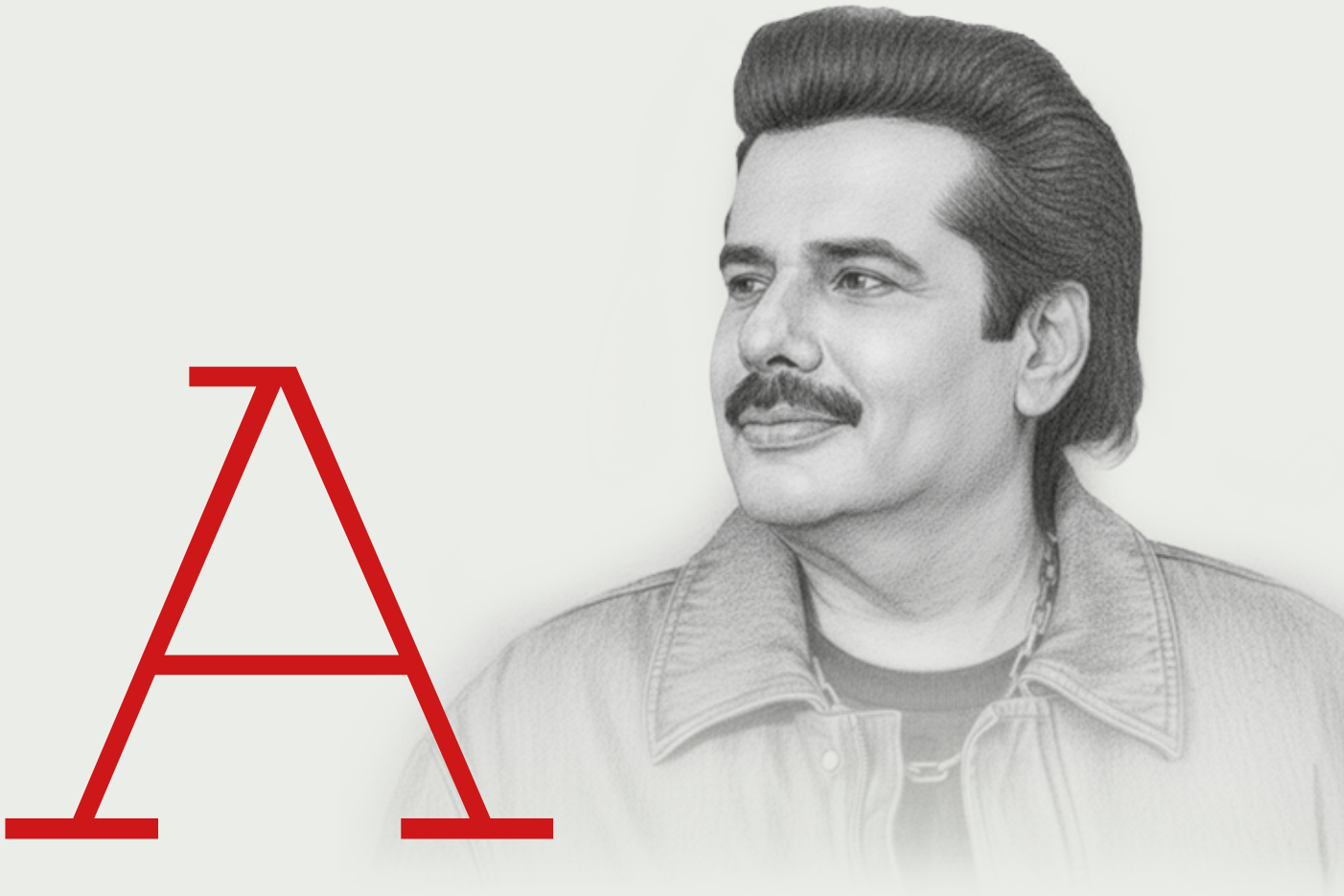
Everyone paused. Xorm was shut, but the station's other machines kept working. "I told you," said Swarna. "Things will work even when Xorm is shut." They found enough sacks of grains and seeds inside, which would yield them many crops in the future. Swarna now went in to check the module that would take them to the Moon.



THE PEOPLE'S JEWELLER

In the field of business, most players focus on building wealth – but a rare few prioritise building trust. From ethics, aesthetics, fashion and blessed relationships, to success, destiny, expansion and succession, Lalchnd Group chairman Dr Sunjoy Hans shares with Outlook a deeply emotional journey that led to the rise of eastern India's most trusted jewellery brand

Dr Sunjoy Hans
Chairman,
Lalchnd Group



s the man behind Lalchnd Jewellers, you are counted among the most influential businessmen in Odisha. You have also been a big inspiration for young entrepreneurs particularly from your home state. How does it feel to be in that position?

If my journey as an entrepreneur can help even a small fraction of the youth – at least one young person – from Odisha to dream bigger and work with integrity, I will feel blessed and privileged to be in such a position. Influence should never become ego. To me, it is a reminder that people are watching—not just your success, but your values. Also, real leadership is not like sitting on a throne and giving orders but like being a lighthouse that shows the right direction. I have always believed that power means nothing if it cannot make people comfortable, safe and valued in your presence. See, true strength is not in power, it is in kindness that does not change with power. You can't demand respect through intimidation; you have to command it by being an inspiration. If you walk with humility, people's hearts open on their own. Experiencing this is very special, I can tell you that.

Q Many say that the main reason behind your influential status is your ability to establish a strong emotional connect with people. Almost everyone who has known you well often uses the same set of adjectives to describe you – humble, humorous, hardworking and highly dependable.

See, I just try to listen without judgement, speak with gratitude and stand by people during their difficult moments — not just during their good times. I think it is important to approach relationships without ego, expectation or calculation. You should treat people – regardless of their age or social status – with the same warmth and genuineness. People sense honesty. They sense intention. If you genuinely wish well for others, it will show sooner or later; you don't have to talk about it. Thanks to the way my parents raised us, not to mention my own life experiences, I love to share people's joy and pain and never pretend to be someone I am not. Real relationships are not based on influence; they are based on humanity.

PEOPLE SENSE HONESTY. THEY SENSE INTENTION. IF YOU GENUINELY WISH WELL FOR OTHERS, IT WILL SHOW SOONER OR LATER

Q Even though competition in the jewellery landscape of your home state has become a lot more intense than it was even five or 10 years ago, Lalchnd Jewellers remains the No.1 jewellery brand of Odisha. How do you manage to achieve that year after year, building such incredible credibility

as you have in a high-trust industry like jewellery?

Yes, the competition today is more intense than ever, yet Lalchnd retains its position as the top jewellery brand in Odisha. Apart from God's grace, the credit for that goes to the people of my state. It is only because of their love, loyalty and trust that we are where we are. It has never been a conscious effort on my part to make Lalchnd the No.1 jewellery brand in Odisha. As regards building credibility, we invested in systems, training, and process discipline so that the customer is never shortchanged. We never chased short-cuts, never cheated our customers and never compromised on quality and purity. We chased excellence and perfection with sincerity. Also, we never treated jewellery as a transaction. Jewellery is emotion – often linked to weddings, blessings, milestones, and family pride. So, trust is everything. From the beginning, I focused on three things: purity and transparency; design and aspiration; and customer respect before profit. When a customer feels they are protected, they return for life – and they bring generations with them. You see, trust is not built by big advertising. It is built when the same customer can walk into your showroom after 10 years and say, "I know I am safe here." Besides, I have always tried my level best to ensure that the people of Odisha have access to world-class jewellery – because they deserve nothing less. And it's also true the market trusts and respects those who cannot be bought.

Q You are well-known for your pioneering and invaluable role in cleaning up the jewellery sector in Odisha and beyond. Do you think your mission is accomplished or is it still an ongoing one?

Yes, the harsh realities of the jewellery scene in Odisha during the eighties were one of the main reasons behind my decision to enter the industry. For some reason, I had a firm belief that I could make things better. You can say that I did not enter the jewellery scene to compete; I entered to clean it up. That sense of purpose drove everything I did back then to fight what was wrong in the state's jewellery sector. I am very proud of the way we were able to do away with some of the wrong practices in the industry during the eighties and nineties, and jewellery buyers in our state are so much better off for it today. However, it's an ongoing mission. Our fight against new forms of unethical practices and trends – where customers are lured into misleading offers and schemes – continues even today.



HUGE HONOUR: Collecting a prestigious business award earlier this year from Mohan Charan Majhi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, in the presence of Sambad Group founder Soumya Ranjan Patnaik at Sambad Corporate Excellence Awards 2025.

Q Lalchnd Jewellers has won more awards nationally and internationally than any other jewellery brand in eastern India. Did you aspire for such awards when you started out as an entrepreneur?

No, not really, as back in the day we did not have so many industry award events. What I aspired for was to make Lalchnd a jewellery brand that would be known for world-class products and designs, one that the people of my state could implicitly trust and I could be personally proud of. That happened and that is the ultimate reward for me, more than any award. Having said that, I am very grateful for all the prestigious awards Lalchnd has received over the years.

> WE BELIEVE THAT JEWELLERY BUYING IS OFTEN AN EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE, HENCE A JEWELLERY SHOWROOM MUST FEEL LIKE A SANCTUARY FOR CUSTOMERS

Q Lalchnd showrooms are considered the benchmark among jewellery showrooms in eastern India. How hard do you need to focus on aesthetics and how important do you think it is to do so?

We are very pleased with that reputation. It was a conscious effort, as part of our bigger goal to ensure that jewellery customers from Odisha should not feel the need to go anywhere outside the state to buy the finest jewellery and designs. We don't take this recognition lightly. We focused on making the layout as customer-friendly as possible. If our customers are at the heart of everything we do, why should the aesthetics of our showroom be an exception? We believe that jewellery buying is often an emotional experience, hence a jewellery showroom must feel like a sanctuary for customers. You see, a beautiful space calms the mind and a transparent space calms the heart. We focus on both aspects in equal measure. Our showrooms reflect who we are and what our



TWO'S COMPANY: Anvita Hans (Director HR, Lalchnd Group) and Palak Hans Sen (COO, Lalchnd North) play a pivotal role in the enduring success of brand Lalchnd.

customers mean to us. I am so glad our customers and even our industry recognises this.

Q Yours is the first major homegrown jewellery brand to have a showroom in New Delhi, which is being managed by your daughter, Palak Hans Sen, as the head of Lalchnd Jewellers' North India operations. Word in the industry is that she is a chip off the old block – in other words, your rightful successor. What do you have to say about that?

Yes, we are proud to showcase Odisha's cultural heritage in the national capital. As for Palak, helming our North India operations with the opening of our first showroom in Delhi (at Lajpat Nagar's Central Market) was by far the biggest test of her professional career. It's been reassuring to see that she is doing a good job not only there but on other fronts as well – from driving our digital media efforts, to focusing on selecting stores for expansion, to purchasing the finest of designer jewellery, and even coordinating with auditors and consultants. She is juggling a lot of roles simultaneously and successfully. Being an MBA from a top business school in Spain, she has her own unique ways of getting things done, but she has grown up with the same values that I grew up with – so there will be obvious similarities in the way we function. Whether she is my rightful successor is something that is not up to me to talk about – that is for our customers to decide. I think she is heading in the right direction, but I must add that a successor is chosen by integrity, not bloodline. A title can be given, but legacy must be earned.

Q We know that Anvita Hans, your better half, plays a rather important role in the sustained success of brand Lalchnd. Can you tell us more about that?

Yes, she is indispensable to the success of our enterprise. Anvita has been there right from the beginning, when I had nothing but dreams to make it on my own in the world of business. She has been with me through all the ups and downs. As much as we are known for our product quality and designs, we are praised the most for our customer service. Human resources are our most precious assets, and our longstanding strength in that area is all thanks to Anvita. Over the past 35 years, she shaped our HR culture with discipline and compassion and handled this department like no one else ever could, and that continues to be the case even today.

WE LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED TO MAXIMISE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, NO MATTER WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD

Q You are an inspiration to many, but who have been your inspiration? Is there any public figure from today who inspires you?

I am inspired by leaders who build institutions with integrity and think far beyond personal success. Ratan Tata has always stood out for his quiet dignity, ethical clarity, and long-term vision – proving that scale and compassion can coexist, and that leadership does not need noise to command respect. More than individuals, it is this value-based, steady form of leadership that inspires me. It continues to guide how I build businesses, work with people, and define success – not merely by growth or visibility, but by trust, sustainability, and legacy. Having said that, I must add that I have been blessed to meet outstanding people – those who carry power with humility. Interactions with respected leaders and senior administrators taught me something important: greatness is quiet, and discipline is invisible. I also learn and draw inspiration every day from ordinary people – staff members, craftsmen, customers – because real India lives in their integrity and sincerity.

Q Even at a time when the jewellery industry is facing headwinds thanks to President Donald Trump's tariffs and global volatility, Lalchnd Jewellers is excelling at offering customers the best value-for-money jewellery. How have you managed to achieve that?

Yes, these are challenging times for our nation, and particularly so for some sectors. No doubt, jewellery is one of them. I am glad that people are appreciating the value-for-money aspect of our products even more today. But let me be honest: We have not made any special effort on this front. Our mission has always been to offer our customers the best products they can get for their hard-earned money and we leave no stone unturned to maximise customer satisfaction, no matter what is happening in the world. That is reflected in our pricing, where we sell high volumes with the lowest margins. And it shows also in our offers, which are 100% transparent with flat

discounts, lowest making charges and no misleading promotions.

How would you like to see Lalchnd Jewellers develop over the next decade or two? And how about you, personally?

I would like to see Lalchnd further raise the level of trust and goodwill it enjoys among customers. I want to see stronger systems and processes being put in place to create an environment where customers, staff and partners feel proud to be associated with the Lalchnd name. And personally, I want to live with more balance – less noise, more purpose. If you keep your intentions clean, life has a beautiful way of supporting you.

What can you tell us about Lalchnd Jewellers' expansion plans?

See, I don't believe in expansion for the sake of expansion, and certainly not at the expense of quality or commitment to our customers. As I mentioned earlier, my daughter Palak is playing a pivotal role on the expansion front and she is also being extremely careful and meticulous about selecting new stores, locations and personnel. Lalchnd is known for its personal touch. That is precisely the reason why it remains the most trusted jewellery brand in its home state. We are all about going slow and steady. After all, we are talking about a lifelong commitment.

The buzz in the market is that the Lalchnd Group is going to shake up the hospitality and real estate sectors in Odisha. What about that?

Yes, we are expanding our presence in the hospitality sector with a big, unique project in the 'Twin City' area. It will be a five-star resort hotel, with state-of-the-art facilities spread over 18 acres at a very scenic location by the Mahanadi river – close to both Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. Designed by internationally acclaimed architect Sanjay Puri, it will be the first of its kind and is aimed at redefining destination weddings in eastern India. The bigger purpose of this project is to make Odisha more attractive as a tourist and business destination while showcasing her rich heritage and unlimited potential. It is going to be my love letter to my home state. We are also focusing strongly on real estate, with plans to launch five-star villas soon under the Lalchnd brand.



INSTITUTIONAL VALIDATION: Receiving an honorary doctorate at KIIT University from Dr Achyuta Samanta (Founder of KIIT and KISS, second to the right) in the presence of chief guest Justice Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf (Judge and former President of the International Court of Justice), Ashok Kumar Parija (Chancellor of KIIT, second to the left), Dr Saranjit Singh (Vice Chancellor of KIIT, extreme left) and Dr Subrat Kumar Acharya (Pro-Chancellor of KIIT, extreme right).

You have been conferred with an honorary doctorate from the prestigious KIIT university in Odisha for your contribution to the world of business and society at large. What does such recognition mean to you?

I am extremely grateful for the honour because I see it as validation of my efforts to serve my state and country in my own little way over the past decades. Coming from such a well-known institution, with the recommendation and approval of such brilliant minds and extraordinary people, like Achyuta Samanta babu, in the presence of Justice Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf (then judge and former president at International Court of Justice) as chief guest, truly made this award extra-special.

Did you ever expect to get them? And now that you have them, do they motivate you to achieve more or even do even more for society?

To be perfectly honest, no. I had never expected such recognition as I had no idea something like that could actually happen. I mean, I knew of public figures receiving honorary doctorates from universities worldwide, but I had never imagined myself being considered for such awards. Sometimes life springs some pleasant surprises – things you never saw happening even in your wildest imagination. These things definitely motivate you to work even harder and contribute more to the world around you.

People who know you well say that you are an extremely spiritual person, and the way you do business is also driven by spiritual principles. Is that true?

No matter what your goals and ambitions in life may be, I think it is important to have a spiritual core so that you don't lose yourself while chasing them. Also, life by nature is unpredictable. So, I think it is imperative to have a spiritual foundation. It's this very foundation that anchors you, keeps you centred when facing tough times and challenging circumstances.

What is your philosophy on the power of manifestation and hard work in achieving one's dreams? What is more important?

People often confuse manifestation with magic. There is a very fine line between manifestation and delusion — that line is called action. Manifestation is not about sitting in your room wishing for miracles. It is about believing



ANOTHER MILESTONE: Accepting a prestigious award from Pravati Parida, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Odisha, and Jagi Mangat Panda, Managing Director of OTV, at Business Odisha Awards 2024.

something is possible and then taking the steps that align with that belief. I always tell youngsters to dream big and visualize boldly, but I also remind them that manifestation without action is like imagination without direction. The universe moves with you, not for you. You cannot expect success to walk towards you while you stand still. You must walk towards it with discipline, sincerity and effort. Dreaming gives direction, but action determines destiny.

Q Who or what is your spiritual anchor in life? How does having one help you?

My spiritual foundation was based on the values that my parents brought me and my siblings up with. And as I got older, I was fortunate to find someone who became my spiritual guide for life: My Bhagwan ji. In a world full of noise, people love the one who brings peace to them. My Bhagwan ji teaches that when the mind surrenders at the feet of the Divine, stress dissolves on its own. Life and work become burdens only when the ego claims ownership of results. Perform your duty as worship, leave the fruits to God, and even the most demanding business life transforms into a path of inner peace and spiritual growth.

Q What is your definition of true success? Has it changed – or, let's say, evolved – over the years?

I think happiness is success. Being happy in life, just by being yourself and doing what you want to do, is being successful. That's because no amount of wealth, no money number, will give you that sense of success. A peaceful person is the richest person in the world. I am telling you from experience. When I was young, the walls of my room had pictures of cars and watches I wanted. Once I bought the Rolex I wanted, I started wishing for a different Rolex model. Once I had that, I wanted an Audemars Piguet, then a Richard Mille and then a customised Richard Mille. There is no end to it. First, you want to travel business class, then you go first class, then charter a flight, and then you want a private jet, right? If you link success with material goals and possessions, you will never be happy. There will always be someone else who has got more than you and you will think he or she is successful and you are not. I have always found my wife Anvita to be extremely successful because she does what she enjoys and enjoys what she does. I also resonate deeply with what Jim Carrey (Hollywood actor) said, because it reflects a truth I have lived. Ambition is important — it builds nations, institutions, and legacies. But ambition alone cannot build inner peace. Success gives you reach, not rootedness. It gives you options, not answers. Over time, I have understood that wealth and recognition are not destinations; they are responsibilities. When the applause fades, what sustains you is not what the world sees, but the values you stand on, the lives you touch, and the peace you carry within. That is where real success begins — and where it must finally rest.

> PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ME WHY I DON'T JOIN POLITICS. MY ANSWER IS VERY CLEAR: POLITICS DEMANDS TOTAL COMMITMENT. AND I WOULD NEVER ENTER A FIELD WHERE I CANNOT GIVE 100% OF MYSELF

Q How important a role has faith played in your journey?

Faith gives stability when life is uncertain. I believe the supreme grace of Lord Jagannath and Sai Baba has protected me and guided me through difficult turns. See, faith cannot replace effort, but it gives you the strength to continue your effort when results are delayed.

Q If you had to identify the biggest reason behind your success as an entrepreneur, what would that be?

I think it will have to come down to a few things. Discipline, a clearly defined mission and vision, and a genuine desire to serve people to the best of your ability. Also, to be successful, you have to let go of many things — the biggest two being ego and arrogance. Their presence destroys clarity, relationships and growth. Success comes only when you choose to be humble in your behaviour, honest in your intentions and focused in your actions. Of course, you also must be committed to keeping up with the times. In my case, that meant staying up-to-date with fashion, trends and customer expectations.

Q What would you like your legacy to be in the world of business? And how would you like to be remembered in general?

In short, my biggest contribution has been in the space of ethical awakening. I am thankful to God for helping Lalchnd positively contribute to the jewellery industry in Odisha and supporting the economy and people of my home state. I am also grateful to Him for letting Lalchnd

stand tall as a legit example of the belief that shortcuts may build money, but values build legacies. Some build buildings. Some build empires. I prefer to build trust. Now, for how I would like to be remembered, I honestly don't care much about it. If I must articulate it, I would like to be remembered as someone who upheld ethics, served Odisha sincerely and built trust, not just showrooms. What matters to me is that my conscience is clear and I am not bothered about what anyone says or thinks of me at any point in time. I have no expectations and I have learnt that accepting and embracing everything that life throws at you is the best way to live happily.

Q As a top jeweller, how invested are you in the world of fashion? Is fashion awareness a necessity for success in the jewellery business? If not, why? And if yes, how so?

I am not a fashionista per se, but I do keep an eye on this world because fashion and jewellery are strongly connected worlds. Jewellery, after all, has always been a critical part of fashion and culture. Do you have to be a fashion guru to be a successful jeweller? No. But is awareness about what's in and out of fashion an important part of being a good jeweller? Yes.

Q The Lalchnd Jewellers brand is known to have the widest customer base, both in terms of age group and financial background, in Odisha. How did you manage to achieve that?

We cater for customers of all age groups, from 9 to 90. That is where fashion awareness again comes into the picture. We know what the teenagers and the younger lot are into at any given point in time. That helps us create products that they can instantly relate to. Also, we were the first to democratise jewellery in Odisha. We did not want our jewellery to remain exclusive to the rich or upper middle class when the vast majority of our people are lower middle class or poor. Making good quality jewellery affordable to the people of Odisha was an important part of our mission and vision, right from the beginning.

Q What factors contributed the most to Lalchnd becoming Odisha's most trusted brand and sustaining that reputation without fail for over three decades?

See, from the early days itself, we had focused on raising consumer awareness about wrong practices in the jewellery industry. People realised early on that we were on their side. We did not just talk about what's wrong, we also showed what was the right thing to do and led by example. Lalchnd was the first jeweller in Odisha to retail BIS-Hallmarked gold jewellery. We did it at a time when there was not even a single BIS Hallmarking centre in Odisha. We also pioneered a fair gold exchange system, thanks to which customers were no longer shortchanged while exchanging their gold jewellery. Over the past 37 years, we have also prioritised customer satisfaction at our showrooms.



Q In view of your popularity in Odisha and the regime change there after a long time, there is a buzz in certain circles that you will join politics.

Yes, I am aware of that, and I understand the speculation. Many people have approached me over the years to join politics. I respect them, and I am grateful for their invitation. But I always politely decline. My understanding is very clear: politics demands total commitment. And I would never enter a field where I cannot give 100% of myself. I believe service without complete commitment is not service. Everyone must choose the path where they can contribute with purity and honesty. My work is my service. I feel I can contribute more by building institutions, generating employment, supporting craft and enterprise, and strengthening Odisha's brand through business.

Q At a time when some big-time national players have been vying for a bigger share of the jewellery market in Odisha by expanding their presence and product lineup here, Lalchnd showrooms still boast the most eclectic jewellery collection, by far the widest variety of jewellery designs, in Odisha. How do you manage that?

This again goes back to the early days. When I entered the business, it was a time when the people of Odisha had very little exposure to the range of jewellery designs that were available outside the state, especially in the big cities. They always had to choose from the rather limited range of traditional jewellery offered by the few established jewellers of those times, because they did not know any better. And those who did would have to travel outside the state to buy jewellery of their choice. I had been attending many trade fairs across the country, so I soon learnt what Odisha was missing. I resolved to change that for good. Therefore, even today, you see Lalchnd

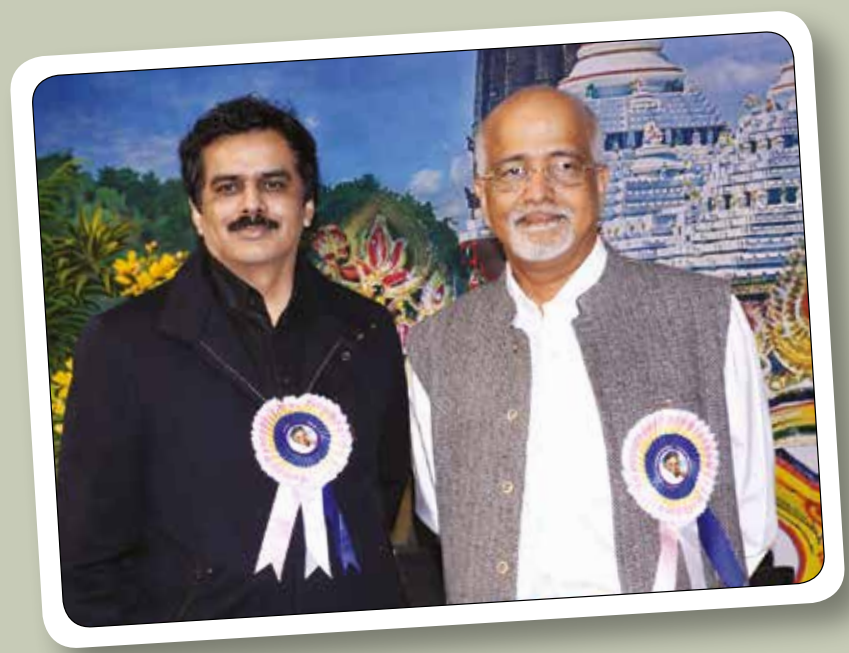
MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES & CHERISHED RELATIONSHIPS

Q Given that you have had such an eventful life, what do you consider your most treasured experience and your most valued relationship?

While I was very unfortunate to lose both my parents too soon in life, I have been extremely fortunate to have my family members by my side, along with a few special relationships and cherished experiences that have kept me going.

I must mention Satyananda Mishra ji (formerly Chief Information Commissioner of India and Secretary of the Department of Personnel and Training), who has been like an elder brother and a guiding light. His wisdom has helped me navigate through so many challenges in life. Also, thanks to him, Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma) visited my home in Bhubaneswar and blessed my family. Words cannot describe the gratitude I feel for this. They say blood is thicker than water, but I believe some relationships – a few blessed ones – surpass everything else. Whatever I am today is partly because of Satyananda Sir's selfless and supportive nature and the way he always stood by me. Just his presence in my life inspires me.

I have very similar feelings for another couple – Mrs and Mr P.K. Mishra (currently Principal Secretary to Prime Minister of India). A few years ago, Palak and I got an opportunity to meet them at their official residence in New Delhi for the first time. I was nervous like a student meeting his school principal. But when we reached their place, Madam gave us a warm welcome and almost immediately put me at ease when she revealed that she had visited my father's shop many times. I felt as if Father was watching all this from above. When Sir arrived from his office just 10 minutes later, he apologised for the delay. I immediately remembered how graceful and humble he was, despite being such a senior and accomplished bureaucrat. A decade ago, when Sir did not even know me too well, he had responded to my invitation to my daughter's wedding by sending his blessings for Palak in a note where he also explained that he would not be able to make it to the wedding reception as he was out of station. Back then I could not manage to meet him in person so I had left the invitation with his PA. But when I received his note, I could not believe it and kept reading it over and over again, realising just how kind he was. Coming back to my first meeting, we spoke for hours and I learnt so much just from his soft-spokenness. When we were about to leave, my heartfelt response to their magnanimity was to touch their feet. Even as I did so, Sir placed his hand on my head. That blessing was priceless.



GUIDING STAR: With Mr Satyananda Mishra (former Chief Information Commissioner of India)

The next time I saw Sir was at his office. He was kind enough to invite me there soon after I had candidly expressed my desire to meet him there as a once-in-a-lifetime experience. However, I had no idea what I was in for. Because that day, when I was on my way to his office room, I passed through Ajit Doval ji's room and even saw the Prime Minister's room. I don't remember being more nervous in my life. Anyway, after reaching Mishra Sir's room, I had the good fortune of meeting Shaktikanta Das ji (former RBI governor and currently Principal Secretary-2 to PM). When Shaktikanta ji told me that he had visited my father's store as a young

man, I felt again as if Father was nearby listening to it all and blessing me. Overwhelmed with the entire experience, I soon requested Mishra Sir to take his leave. He seemed surprised but he probably understood what was going within me. Later, after I was back in my car, I sent a message to Madam, saying: "I will never again dare to enter Sir's office ... I was too nervous!" And she laughed.

At that moment, I also remember thinking to myself: "Who says powerful people are arrogant? Here is the most powerful bureaucrat of the country, yet how humble, graceful and grounded he is!"

While I never visited Sir's office after that, I feel extremely lucky and truly blessed to have met and spent time with both of them many times over the past years. Madam is more than a sister to me. Her affection, guidance, and quiet strength have always felt like family – warm, protective, and deeply reassuring. I have been blessed to receive from her not just care, but wisdom and grace that only an elder in the family can offer.

When I began my journey four decades ago, a dear friend had warned me: "Never reveal your well-wishers ... people may try to spoil your relationships."

But the people I have mentioned here are not mere well-wishers — they are family to me, and they touched my life in ways the world can never understand. These relationships are sacred to me. They were not built through business, but through blessings, respect and destiny. Some bonds are so pure that they are immune to negativity. Relationships built on authenticity never break — because they are connected soul to soul, not role to role.



MOVING WITH THE TIMES: Collecting an award from Odisha Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Cabinet Minister Suresh Pujari at the Sambad CEO Conclave 2025.

showrooms having the most eclectic collection of jewellery designs in eastern India.

Q With so many accomplishments, what are you most proud about as a businessman and what are you most proud about as a human being?

As a businessman I am most proud of two things: One, I never compromised on my values to be successful. And two, the trust that my customers have placed in me over the past 37 years. As a human being I am most proud of two things: One, being there for my near and dear ones, including my friends, whenever they have genuinely needed me or my help. And two, the vice versa. After all, the greatest luxury is not money; it is being loved genuinely by people who owe you nothing.

Q On the professional and personal fronts, what are the things that you regret the most in life? What hurts you the most?

Success may look glamorous from outside, but it demands sacrifice. There were phases when I could not give enough time to my parents, family, or even to myself. That regret stays. Professionally, I regret nothing. However, on the personal front, I regret not spending as much time with my parents as I would have wanted to. I got so busy with work that I did not realise how temporary and unpredictable life can be. They have passed away and there's nothing I can do about it now. The other pain is misunderstanding. People judge without knowing the full story. But over time, I learnt a calm truth: your work must speak louder than people's opinions.

Q Do you make friends easily?

Friendship is a word that I take very seriously. I only have a handful of friends in my life. The rest are acquaintances and I can make acquaintances easily – you have to be able to do that if you want to be a good businessman. I was a socialite once, but now I quite like living the quiet life. I don't want to meet anyone new and am happier than ever with my few old friends.

Q You are known to help people discreetly. Why?

Because Bhagwan ji taught me that if you help someone, let God be the witness — not the world. Also, I help people not to boost my public image but solely because it gives me happiness and peace. When the reason is personal, there is no reason to go public about it.

Q In conclusion, what message would you like to convey to our readers and all those looking up to you for inspiration?

Follow your dreams with all your heart, but don't lose your mind along the way. There is no hurdle that a clear mind and a clear conscience cannot overcome. Also, as my Bhagwan ji says, "Do your duty with devotion, not expectation. When action becomes worship, karma no longer binds—it liberates."

■■■

Because We Live in this World and No Other



Annie Zaidi

writes across multiple genres, including fiction, non-fiction, plays and poetry. Her published work includes *The Comeback, Bread, Cement, Cactus: a Memoir of Belonging and Dislocation, City of Incident, Prelude to a Riot*, and *Bantering with Bandits and Other True Tales*



Is She at Home?
Artwork by
Aradhana Seth

WHEN was the last time you read a story that well and truly blew your mind?

I suppose, in order to answer that question, you'd have to first consider what it means to have your mind blown? To me, it means coming upon a story that makes me reconsider the very foundations of society, and which challenges my assumptions about what it means to be human.

Because we live in a human body, and because we can see it, smell it, inhabit it and drink of it, we imagine that we know it. We certainly fall into the trap of thinking that we know what human culture is (or what it ought to be) because that's how we already live, and we'd like to keep it this way. At most, we might need to stretch the frontiers of what we can achieve, how far we can travel, and the limitations of our bodies. That's the kind of science, and also the kind of fantasy, we like to conjure up. But every once in a while, along comes a story that shakes our self-assurance, and forces us to reconsider humanity.

One of the first books that blew my mind was Ursula Le Guin's 1969 novel *The Left Hand of Darkness*. I had read plenty of literary fiction before, hundreds of books that routinely feature on 'classics' and 'must-read' lists. But with this book, Le Guin took me beyond empathy, beyond descriptive prose and into the realm of visionary possibility. It was this novel that truly expanded my thinking about gender and the performance of it—what is 'normal' about gender norms, how is normalcy enacted and enforced, and why there is such an overwhelming emphasis on the fixity of sexual behaviour?

The Left Hand of Darkness is what we call speculative fiction. These are a subset of literature that includes science fiction and fantasy and it presents to the reader (or viewer) a world that reflects on our existing mess, our existing fears, but with a fresh vision for outcomes. Regardless of whether the 'hero' of the story is a man, girl, rabbit or alien, the protagonists' behaviours, their systems of governance and infrastructure will be familiar, or their world will be presented as alternatives to our current systems.

Whether these stories unfold on earth or in another galaxy is irrelevant. The readers know that we live in this world and no other, and so, the stories are always about here and the heroes and villains are us. Even when characters are represented as aliens with an entirely different nervous system—as in Judith Octavia E. Butler's Lilith's *Brood* trilogy—they are still only versions of ourselves. They have similar foibles, fears, dilemmas. If they behave in different ways, it is only because something about their bodies or their social environment has changed, and thus the story opens up an invisible portal to fresh possibilities—what might we be, if we were not so adamantly ourselves?

If fantasy and science fiction offer alternative visions for humanity in the form of a feminist utopias (think Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's *Sultana's Dream* (1905), where she creates Ladyland, a country where women rule), they also warn of the pitfalls of going in the opposite direction. In 1989, Suniti Namjoshi published *The Mothers of Maya Diip*, which describes a country where mothers don't just run things, they bring up only daughters; sons were kept alive only to enable reproduction. Just a few years before, in 1985, Margaret Atwood had published her dystopic novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*. Even though the novel is based on events that have actually occurred in human history, the plot unfolds before us as a future possibility, perhaps as a warning—this is what we have been, therefore this is what we can be again.

For contemporary readers of *The Handmaid's Tale*, the most frightening thing is not that it presents a future dystopia, but that the discourse that girds the absolute subjugation of women's bodies is back in the mainstream news. The very limited freedoms of women in Afghanistan have been snatched away, and their lives are being circumscribed in ways previously unimagined even within their own cultural traditions. Western women are losing hard-won freedoms such as abortion rights in the United States of America, and it seems as if they are now building up a sociopolitical discourse whereby it is acceptable for much older men to prey on the bodies of minor girls. Any government, or military, any tech oligarch could disable the lives of any targeted group, be it women or racial or religious minorities, without going to the trouble of mass murder—our bank accounts, our healthcare, our passports could actually be disabled, as they were in *The Handmaid's Tale*.

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, ALONG COMES A STORY THAT SHAKES OUR SELF-ASSURANCE, AND FORCES US TO RECONSIDER HUMANITY.

Did Atwood foretell these events? She probably didn't foretell as much as she forewarned, though it is not clear that the world heeded the warning. Any writer who pays attention to people's best and worst impulses, and the political systems into which such impulses are plugged, can also see the range of possibilities that lie in wait for us. Based on such visions, they may create either a utopia or a dystopia. In their own time, George Orwell's *1984* (1949) and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) described events that may have appeared far removed from reality, but in our lifetimes, it is almost as if those books have come alive. Technology has developed to the extent that not only can Big Brother watch us and listen to us and intercept our conversations at all times, a significant number of us now welcome Big Brother into our living rooms, our kitchens, bedrooms and toilets. They are even capable of monitoring our body's chemical processes and our neurological responses on a minute-to-minute basis. The technology that underpins the plot of *The Hunger Games* (2008) is also already here, and whether or not the author foresaw those games turning into reality, there is little doubt that in a world deeply committed to inequality, some version of *The Hunger Games* is inevitable.

Another book that has been blowing our collective mind for generations now is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. It continues to be adapted, retold and filmed for it holds out both temptation—what if humankind could reverse death? and ethical complexity—given human behaviour, should we have such power? With the latest stem cell research and organ transplants, at least part of Viktor Frankenstein's efforts has crossed over from the realm of fiction to reality. Still, we require—as Frankenstein did—working parts from healthy bodies. We also know that prolonging life is an intensely political game, often underwritten by systemic oppression. We've read reports of women pressured to donate organs to male kin, and healthy people left with no choice but to start selling functional bits of themselves to the ailing bodies of the rich, and, as Manjula Padmanabhan's 1997 play *Harvest* shows, this may well become a legit (legal) process in the future. Already, we know that organs are stolen from certain populations, such as Palestinians, with no consequences for the theft. The question must therefore be asked: How is the monster made? How do we address it? And then, the story of our choices and their consequences must be told.

Outlook

Read • Think • Understand



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Lakshman Shrivastava

GAME CHANGERS OF HEALTHCARE

An Outlook Brand Solution Initiative



Healthcare Game Changers
Transforming Care, Technology and Lives

Healthcare is rapidly evolving as innovation, leadership and technology redefine care delivery, access, outcomes and patient experiences worldwide

Healthcare is no longer just about treating illnesses. It has become a critical driver of social progress, economic growth, and human well-being. Across the globe, and particularly in India, the healthcare sector is undergoing a profound transformation.

Advances in technology, innovative policy frameworks, and the rise of patient-centered care models are reshaping how health services are delivered and experienced. Today, a new wave of game changers—individuals, institutions, and innovations—is redefining what is possible in healthcare.

At the heart of this transformation are visionary leaders who combine scientific insight with strategic thinking. These leaders are not only driving technological adoption but also shaping policies that make healthcare more inclusive, accessible, and efficient.

They recognize that healthcare is not just a service but an ecosystem where technology, workforce, policy, and public awareness intersect. By bridging gaps between research, patient care, and administration, they are ensuring that medical progress translates into real-world benefits.

One of the most significant game changers in healthcare today is digital health and telemedicine. The pandemic accelerated adoption of online consultations, remote monitoring, and digital health platforms, breaking geographical barriers and bringing care to the doorsteps of millions. Telemedicine has become a lifeline for rural populations and those with mobility challenges, allowing patients

Continued on page 248

Global Orthopaedic Leader from India

Sushant Banerji shares the journey of Orthotech, the vision, and the technology transforming the orthopaedic landscape in India and beyond



Sushant Banerji
Founder & CEO, Orthotech

Q What inspired Orthotech to challenge the dominance of multinational companies and build a world-class 'Make in India' innovation ecosystem?

Orthotech has pioneered advanced technologies like plasma coating and 3D printing in India's orthopaedic industry, driven by the belief that the country has the talent and capability to match global leaders. Through collaborations with research institutions such as IISc Bangalore and CGCRI under CSIR, we integrated cutting-edge research directly into our manufacturing and product development. We use the same high-grade raw materials, advanced machines, and robust technology frameworks as multinational companies, paired with an agile, innovation-focused approach. We built a world-class "Made in India" ecosystem. Our people and unwavering commitment to continuous R&D enable us to meet and often surpass international benchmarks.

Q As one of the first Indian companies to adopt 3D printing for patient-specific implants, how have top-level collaborations shaped Orthotech's R&D and innovation?

Orthotech began exploring 3D printing at global exhibitions like Medica in Germany, quickly recognising its transformative potential for personalised orthopaedic care and complex surgical planning. Collaborations with IIT Guwahati, IISc Bangalore, and CGCRI accelerated our expertise in additive manufacturing, enabling the creation of anatomically precise implants, patient-specific models, and highly accurate bone curvatures. The results have been so advanced that global machine manufacturers have praised the precision our team achieved. These partnerships ensure our products meet national and international standards while continually pushing the boundaries of innovation.

Q How has Orthotech navigated challenges like unorganised sectors, price disruptions, and a preference for imported implants while maintaining global standards and surgeon trust?

Orthotech has positioned itself as a solution provider rather than a product seller. Our focus is on empowering surgeons with complete, reliable options for every type of case—whether routine, complex, or highly demanding. Patient-specific instrumentation (PSI) and personalised implants have further strengthened their confidence in our offerings.

Surgeons trust us because our products are manufactured with precision, backed by scientific research, and supported with reliable service. In contrast, the unorganised sector often prioritises margins over quality. We focus on delivering affordability without compromising on standards; never cheap, never overpriced, but always accountable and ethical.

This commitment to quality, transparency, and surgeon support has helped us maintain our credibility and leadership, even in a market where imported implants traditionally held preference.

Q With Orthotech expanding across domestic and international markets, what is your future vision?

For over three decades, Orthotech has led India's orthopaedic advancement, improving quality of life through personalised, high-quality, and affordable solutions. With a vision to become a global leader in medical devices, we partner with academia and research institutions to develop next-generation, patient-specific implants. Our FDA, ISO 13485, and MDSAP certifications reinforce our commitment to international standards and strengthen our global presence. We also contribute to India's medical manufacturing ecosystem by creating employment opportunities. Guided by continuous research and innovation, not replication, we remain focused on expanding globally and shaping the future of personalised orthopaedic care.

to consult specialists without traveling hundreds of kilometers. Beyond convenience, digital health solutions provide access to electronic health records, predictive diagnostics, and AI-driven decision support, which enhance accuracy and improve outcomes.

Medical technology innovations are another transformative force. From minimally invasive surgical techniques to wearable devices that monitor heart rate, glucose levels, or oxygen saturation, technology is making healthcare safer, faster, and more precise. Robotics-assisted surgeries, AI-powered imaging, and precision medicine are no longer futuristic concepts—they are actively improving patient outcomes and reducing hospital stays. These advances are also helping manage chronic diseases more effectively, a critical factor in countries like India where lifestyle diseases are on the rise.

Pharmaceutical research and biotechnology continue to be game changers, especially in the development of vaccines, targeted therapies, and biologics. India's pharmaceutical sector has emerged as a global hub for innovation and manufacturing, ensuring that essential medicines reach millions at affordable prices. New therapies for cancer, diabetes, and rare genetic disorders are transforming the prognosis for patients, while preventive measures and early detection programs are saving countless lives.

Equally important are the healthcare policies and programs designed to expand access and affordability. Government-led initiatives like Ayushman Bharat in India aim to provide health coverage to over 50 crore citizens, reducing the financial burden of treatment and promoting preventive care. Policies that strengthen primary healthcare, integrate technology, and encourage public-private partnerships are ensuring that quality healthcare is no longer limited to urban centers.

Human capital remains at the core of healthcare transformation. Skilled professionals—doctors, nurses, technicians, and health administrators—drive innovation on the ground. Leaders in healthcare are increasingly investing in training programs, mentorship, and continuous learning to create a workforce that is adaptable, empathetic, and equipped to handle modern challenges. Collaborative approaches, where doctors, caregivers, and patients work as a team, are enhancing patient experiences and improving recovery outcomes.

Visionary leaders, technology and policy are transforming healthcare into an inclusive, patient-centric ecosystem—improving access, outcomes and sustainability—reshaping care delivery, empowering communities, and enhancing lives across India and beyond, globally today.

The patient-centered approach itself is a game changer. Preventive care, lifestyle interventions, mental health support, and community engagement are now integral to treatment plans. Patients are no longer passive recipients; they are informed participants who play an active role in their health journey. This cultural shift is particularly important in managing chronic conditions and promoting long-term wellbeing.

Furthermore, sustainability and ethics are emerging as critical dimensions of healthcare innovation. Environmentally friendly hospitals, ethical sourcing of medicines, and digital solutions that reduce waste are becoming standard. Healthcare leaders now recognize that societal impact and business success go hand in hand—responsible practices enhance trust, efficiency, and resilience.

India, in particular, is witnessing the rise of healthcare entrepreneurs and innovators who are breaking traditional barriers. Startups focused on telehealth, diagnostic tools, AI-driven health analytics, and home-based care are creating new pathways for accessibility and affordability. These innovators are reshaping patient expectations, making healthcare more responsive and personalized.

The convergence of technology, policy, innovation, and leadership is redefining the healthcare sector. Game changers are not just improving treatment—they are building systems that are inclusive, sustainable, and future-ready. By leveraging data, fostering innovation, and keeping patients at the center, they are transforming healthcare from a reactive service into a proactive, life-enhancing ecosystem.

In a nutshell, the game changers of healthcare are reshaping the very foundations of how we think about health and wellbeing. They are ensuring that quality care is no longer a privilege but a right accessible to all. Through technology, policy, innovation, and empathy, they are creating a healthcare ecosystem that empowers individuals, strengthens communities, and ultimately drives national growth.

The future of healthcare belongs to those who can combine vision with action, compassion with technology, and strategy with humanity.

Shaping the Global Future of Ayurvedic Experiences

Lakshman Shrivastava, a new-age healthcare leader rooted deeply in India's ancient Vedic heritage catering to the needs of modern, global citizens



Lakshman Shrivastava
Director of Maharishi Ayurveda Hospital, Retreats & Wellness Hospitality

A third-generation custodian of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi Ji's legacy and a certified Transcendental Meditation (TM) teacher, Lakshman embodies a rare blend of tradition, innovation, and consciousness-based leadership.

Q As a young leader, what do you believe is Ayurveda's role in shaping the future of global healthcare?
Ayurveda is emerging as a global framework for preventive, personalised, and holistic healthcare. Around the world, people are seeking medicine that see the whole human being, and not just symptoms. Ayurveda offers exactly that: a complete understanding of mind-body balance, early detection through pulse diagnosis, and healing that aligns with nature.

The future of healthcare is self-awareness, and Ayurveda is one of the world's most sophisticated sciences in that domain.

Q Maharishi Ayurveda Hospital blends classical Ayurveda with modern standards. What makes your model unique nationally?
Our distinction lies in how we unite classical authenticity with clinical governance. As North India's first NABH-accredited Ayurveda hospital, we brought modern healthcare quality systems to ancient practices without compromising purity. Our treatments follow classical protocols, yet operate within hospital-level infrastructure, safety, and consistency. Each and every medicine that we prescribe is manufactured in house to ensure standardization and each and every patient is treated with a personalized approach. This balance of tradition and rigour is why we've been honoured with recognitions like Best Medical & Wellness Centre 2025 and Excellence in Service 2025.

Q Initiatives like SOMA and the Experiential OPD have gained national attention. What drives such innovation?
I believe innovation in Ayurveda must focus on experience, not alteration. SOMA makes Ayurvedic nutrition tangible and enjoyable through dosha-specific meals. Our Experiential Ayurveda OPD turns healthcare into education, helping visitors understand their prakriti, imbalances, and healing pathways even before their consultation. Innovation for us is translating ancient wisdom into experiences that modern people can immediately connect with.

Q Ayurveda now attracts global demand. How are you preparing to take Maharishi Ayurveda worldwide?
I envision to make Maharishi Ayurveda the front runner for authentic Ayurvedic wellness experiences globally and with guests from over 100 countries, globalisation is already a part of our journey.

We're already in the process of expanding our wellness retreats in various destinations such as Uttarkashi, Tirupati, and Jaipur, each offering immersive wellness. Our international collaborations are also underway with wellness institutions across Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.

Q Looking ahead, what legacy do you hope to build for Ayurveda and for future generations?
I aspire to make Ayurveda the first choice of treatment modality for each and every citizen of the world and want every generation especially the next one to see Ayurveda as a timeless, cutting-edge, and empowering science. Not old. Not alternative.

Through clarity of purpose, youthful vision, and a commitment to consciousness-based healing, Mr. Lakshman Shrivastava is shaping a global shift toward natural, preventive, and holistic healthcare. His work stands as a testament to India's timeless wisdom and its power to redefine the future of global wellness.

Knee Replacement Innovation

Inside the Latest Surgical Advancements



That first step out of bed in the morning can say a lot about your knees. For many, knee pain due to arthritis quietly dictates daily choices—how far to walk, when to rest, and what to avoid. Today, evolving knee replacement solutions are helping patients move from hesitation to confidence.





Dr. Narendra Vaidya, Chairman & Chief Orthopedic Joint Replacement Surgeon Lokmanya Hospital, Pune

Robotic knee surgery is particularly valuable during pre-operative planning. Studying a 3D model of the knee helps anticipate challenges before entering the operating room. After multiple surgeries, less blood loss and faster early mobility have been observed. Each patient is different and robotic guidance helps in adapting the approach precisely. While it supports the procedure, it never replaces careful surgical decision-making, which is always essential for long-term success.



Dr. Chandrashekhar P, Director & HOD of Orthopedics at Sakra World Hospital & Chairman - International Knee and Orthopedic Centre, Bengaluru

Robotic-assisted knee replacement has transformed how surgery is approached. The robotic system lets a surgeon plan each step with millimeter-level precision, ensuring the implant fits the patient's knee perfectly. During surgery, the robot guides instruments for accurate bone cuts and alignment, improving long-term function. This precision supports smoother recovery by minimizing trauma. Patients often experience less discomfort and start moving their knee confidently soon after surgery, regaining mobility and independence faster



Dr. Madan Mohan Reddy, Chief consultant & HOD, Dept of Orthopedics, Apollo Main Hospitals, Chennai

Chronic knee pain affects not only mobility but confidence and independence. When performing knee replacements, the goal is to restore both function and freedom. Correcting alignment and balancing soft tissues often leads to immediate improvement in daily activities. A focus on precise planning, careful execution and consistent physiotherapy helps patients regain movement and confidence quickly. Results confirm that a well-executed surgery can be life-changing.



Dr. Bhushan Nariani, Chairman- Joint Replacement Program, Dr. B. L. Kapur Memorial Hospital, New Delhi

Robotic assistance has changed the way challenging knee cases are approached, especially for patients with long-standing issues or unusual anatomy. The added accuracy during surgery customizes the alignment and positioning in a way that suits each person's structure. Patients often find that a new knee feels stable and comfortable when walking, sitting down and getting-up. The system supports clinical judgment and helps create a recovery process that's steady and reassuring



Dr. Santosh Kumar, HOD Orthopaedics Belle Vue Clinic, Kolkata

With over a decade in Orthopedic surgery, robotic assistance has significantly improved outcomes. Precision allows for the alignment of joints and balancing of soft tissues accurately, which again reduces discomfort and aids faster recovery. Patients often regain mobility quickly, sometimes within days. The technology doesn't replace judgment—it enhances it, letting procedures be tailored to each patient's unique anatomy. These small improvements can make a huge difference in everyday life.



Dr. Gagandeep Sachdeva
CEO & Director- Orthopedics, Sohana Hospital, Mohali

Robotics plays a key role in the surgical approach, especially in complex cases. Real-time patient data during surgery allows precise alignment and balance adjustments. This results in less tissue damage, reduced blood loss and faster recovery. Patients often report a stable and a natural-feeling knee. Robotics enhances surgical precision while keeping every decision surgeon-led.



Dr. Deepak Gautam, Consultant MS ortho & HOD, Apollo Hospital Belapur, Navi Mumbai

Robotic-assisted knee replacements offer impressive consistency. The technology is particularly useful for patients with multiple health conditions. Achieving precise alignment reduces complications and often accelerates recovery. While robotics supports the procedure, patient selection and diligent post-operative care remain crucial. The combination of planning, execution and follow-up is what truly leads to positive outcomes.

For someone living with constant knee pain due to arthritis, surgery is rarely an overnight decision. It builds up over years—missed walks, avoided stairs, and the quiet fear of becoming dependent on others. This is why connecting with patients beyond medical jargon matters as much as the procedure itself.

Advances in knee implants and surgical planning have changed what patients can realistically expect from knee replacement. Improved alignment, better stability, and a more natural range of movement now translate into everyday benefits—walking comfortably, sitting down with ease, or getting up without hesitation. When these improvements are explained in simple terms, patients feel reassured that the surgery is designed around their body, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Equally important is setting the right expectations. Honest conversations about recovery, physiotherapy and long-term care help patients feel prepared rather than anxious. When people know what lies ahead, they approach surgery with clarity and confidence.

Today, knee replacement is no longer just about fixing a joint. It's about helping people reclaim routines they once took for granted—and reminding them that an active, independent life is still very much within reach.

DISCLAIMER

This article is shared in the interest of public health education. Please consult your treating physician for more details.



Blessed Land Artwork by Samir Mohanty

The Memory of

COURTESY: CHAMPATREE ART GALLERY



Fields



Janice Pariat

is a storyteller, author and trail seeker. Her last novel *Everything the Light Touches* was listed on *The New Yorker's* Best Books of 2022 and won multiple literary prizes. She is based between Delhi and Shillong and lives with a cat of many names

EGRETS begin to appear on a day like any other. First one, then another—on rooftops and ramparts, on pillars and parapets. A cluster here, a cluster there. They settle atop billboards, lamp posts, traffic lights, at bus stops and balconies. Soon, they start to fill streets and alleyways, roundabouts and flyovers, standing like sentinels—white-bright and watchful.

At first, people only stare from behind their windows. *What is happening*? Some have never seen an egret outside a photograph. Some only in faraway places. Why are they here? No one dares step outside. They whisper and wonder if this is an omen, if this is how something begins. Perhaps warnings arrive this way—quietly, without smoke or sirens, and only with the soft flutter of wings. Inside homes and apartments, kettles are boiled and forgotten. Phones are lifted, set down, lifted again. Messages are sent—*Do you see them too*? Old stories are remembered, half-formed. *What do they say the city once was*... Someone lights a lamp earlier than usual. Someone else says a prayer they have not used in years. Children are called in from balconies. A radio plays to an empty room. Someone watches the birds through binoculars. The city holds its breath. The birds stand still, as if listening. Time passes. Nothing happens.

And when nothing happens long enough, someone opens a door.

Tentatively they step outside. And when they do, they discover the birds still merely stand there. And so, people begin to go about their lives.

The children are thrilled. Excited by this strange sight. They bow to the birds and chirrup at them; they weave between them with arms outstretched as though they too wish to fly. At first parents chide and chastise—*come back here at once*—but that too dwindles when the birds do little more than move aside to make way for the children. Some adults walk straight past, eyes downcast, pretending they are not there. Some throw them quick glances, nervous, intrigued. Others stand before them as though to confront the creatures—what audacity to gather in this way in the city! The birds stare back quietly, eyes bright, black, and patient.

By the second morning—or perhaps the third—the birds are still there. Doors are opened and closed again. Shops lift their shutters. Buses run their routes. Traffic stops and starts. The birds do not move. Days pass without incident. And then something small happens.

Someone pauses mid-step, certain for a moment they can smell pine in

FIRE AND WATER. FIRE AND WATER. LAND LEARNING ITSELF. LAYER UPON LAYER. STONE LIFTING, FOLDING, PRESSED BY TIME, RIVERS CARVING PATHS TO ABANDON AND RETURN.

the air. Pine? How puzzling. The forests have receded so far from the city they can no longer be seen. Someone else feels the soft swish of grass beneath their shoes, though the pavement—solid stone and cement—is unbroken. A woman looks down, startled by the faint squelch of mud where there is none. People gather where they can hear the rustle of leaves where no trees stand. It passes quickly though. Easily dismissed. Dust, perhaps. Or months of long, unusual heat.

But at night, some swear they fall asleep to the sound of rushing water.

And so many dream of open ground, wide and unnamed, where the sky feels close and clear.

After that, it happens more often.

The smell of ripening fruit though the supermarkets are closed or far away. A glimpse of silverlings, small and sharply darting, in a rain-dark puddle, gone almost in the same moment they're noticed. A touch of bark instead of wall. At dawn, the song of birds no one can name. In the evening, the murmur of old voices offering prayers to river and forest. And through driest dust, perpetually rising, the clean wet smell of rain.

What is happening? People ask, over and again. They walk with eyes grown wider—in fear, in wonder. They slow their steps, glance back, look to one another for comfort, for confirmation. *Did you smell that too? Did you hear it?* Conversations begin and trail away. Explanations are offered, withdrawn. Some check the news, the weather. Some blame the season's turning, all awry and out of sync. Some insist nothing is wrong. The world is as it is. And yet, and yet, the city feels oddly porous, as though something long held back has begun to seep through. *Is it the birds?* They begin to ask. These birds who arrived with the memory of fields on their wings. Who stand slender and upright, their necks curving, uncurving with slow, deliberate grace. *Is it them?* The birds are still and silent. Sometimes, they take a step, then another—measured, unhurried. Their long beaks tilt, tap against stone, lift again. Sometimes they preen, drawing feathers carefully into place. When people try to chase them away, they lift and alight elsewhere. They do not leave.

By this time, an order is issued: the birds are to be left alone until the authorities have devised a plan to deal with the situation. So people carry on—to work, and school, and supermarkets, and bars, and back. Though often they pause, uncertain where to place their feet; streets they have known for years feel misaligned, as though the ground itself has shifted.

What do they say the city once was...

Fire and water. Fire and water. Land learning itself. Layer upon layer. Stone lifting, folding, pressed by time, rivers carving paths to abandon and return. Forests rising, falling, melting into flames. Rain sinking into earth to feed roots and streams and memory. Seas swelling, parting, vanishing. Shells sinking into moon milk. The slow flow of magma, the soft persistent fall of life.
All this remains, below, beneath, unfinished.

The birds stay, and then one morning they are gone.

The streets look the same. The rooftops are empty. Traffic lights blink as they always have. People peer from their windows. They stare at the sky. They whisper and wonder if this too is an omen. Phones are lifted; messages are sent—*Where are they?* Children run out onto rooftops, and into balconies. They search the streets and pavements—looking for feathers, for tracks, for something they might have missed. The adults say it's best the birds are gone. Who knew why they were here in the first place? *Good riddance.* Though at night many lie awake listening for the sound of water and wait to dream of open ground and open sky. They lie awake waiting for land to remember who it was and what it will be.

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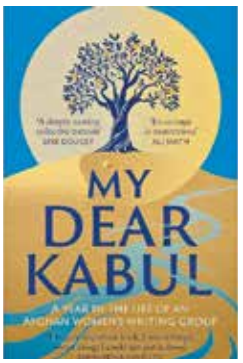
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Dispatches from Chaos



MY DEAR KABUL | Afghan Women's Writing Group | Coronet/Hodder | 384 pages | 2024

My Dear Kabul: A Year in the Life of an Afghan Women's Writing Group *published by Coronet/Hodder, 2024. Translated by Parwana Fayyaz and Dr Negeen Kargar.*

My Dear Kabul *is an Untold Narratives project. Untold—a development programme for emerging writers in areas of conflict and post-conflict—was founded by Lucy Hannah*

KABUL *fell to Taliban control on 15 August 2021—the writers are in touch through the night that followed. All of the writers in this section are writing from the city of Kabul. This is their collective diary: in it, they watch schools and offices close, families change and freedoms disappear. They share stories of chaos, protest and flight—and of life continuing.*

Maryam

I don't have any sleep. It is night-time, and Kabul has fallen fully. I cannot believe it. I want to tell everyone: they took Kabul. I want to tell my mother, my sisters, my brothers—they have taken Kabul. I want to go up to the roof and say quietly – they took Kabul. I don't know why I can't just shout it out: THEY TOOK KABUL.

Through the night and into the next morning the writers reflect on what has happened and recount the day they have just lived through.

Fakhta

Fakhta lives in a university hostel in the capital, and is close to getting her degree in Law from Kabul University. Her home is in the mountainous province of Daikundi.

I woke up when my phone rang. My mother gave me the news. She said our whole province—including our district, Nili, at the centre of Daikundi—is in the hands of the Taliban. She was upset. She said, 'I wish you had not gone back to the university in Kabul.'

She was right. Apart from Kabul, all other cities are already in the hands of the Taliban. They now control all the highways. The only thing left to happen was for the Taliban to enter the capital and take over the presidential palace. I said goodbye to my mother and lay back on my bed in the hostel, looking out of the window, shocked and anxious.

I got up and went to class. I was late and slipped into the lecture. After about twenty minutes, everyone's phone began to ring; the lecturer's too.

Sadaf

Sadaf is a teacher. She is teaching a class of girls in Year 8, most of whom would be fourteen or fifteen years old.

I distributed the exam papers and gave my students their instructions. At 11 a.m. I explained the instructions to them and wrote a few more on the blackboard with white chalk. The students asked questions and I answered them. The class was so calm, like the silence before a storm. Then the door opened, and the head teacher came in. She started collecting the exam papers although we hadn't even started. Her hands were shaking, and she asked me to help her. I saw my students' faces, pale with fear. We told them to go home.

Parand

I was at the office, as usual. I had only just started working when the office phone rang. We were told that the situation was getting worse, that the Taliban had entered the city and we should leave the office. I was not afraid: it was not news. We knew the Taliban would be coming back and I witnessed the same turmoil twenty-five years ago. But I had no choice but to leave alongside two of my colleagues, who were younger and so afraid you could see their skin turn pale.

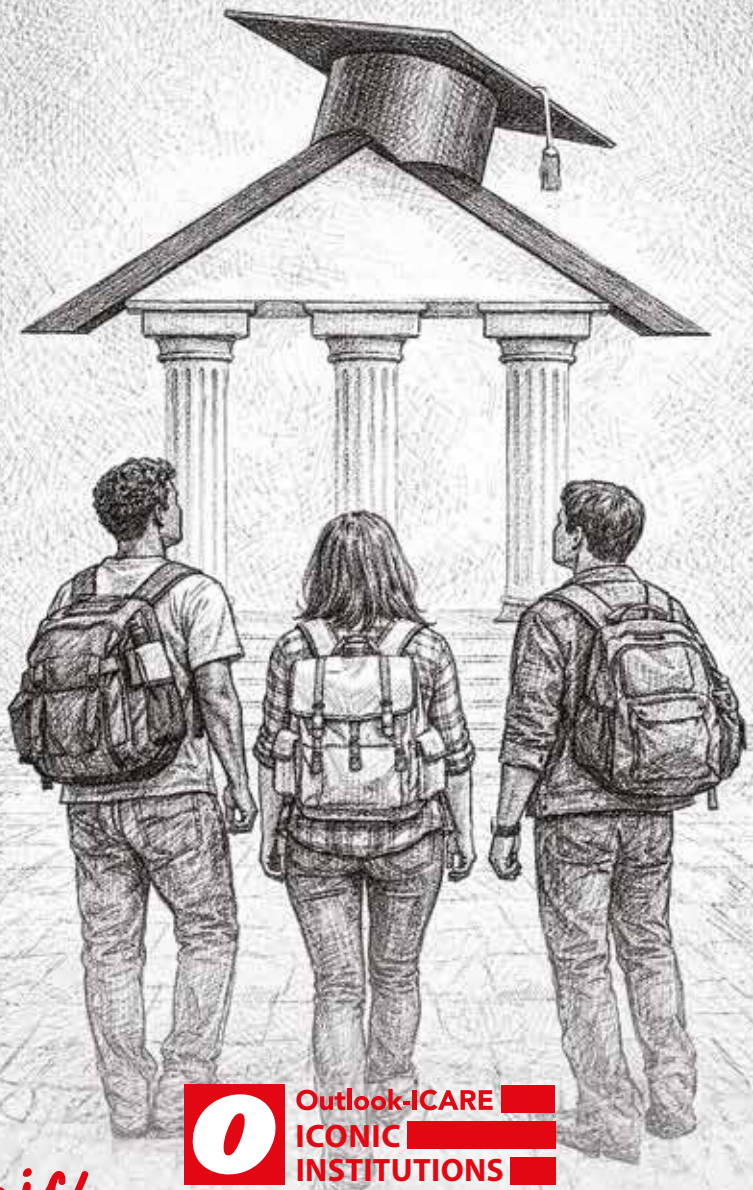
Fakhta

As I walked quickly back to the university hostel, I worried about my fiancé. He is in the army in Uruzgan Province. He is someone who has fought the Taliban face to face. If he is recognised by any of them, I will have to say goodbye forever. I knew he was in Kabul for a few days, on leave, and all the way back to the hostel I kept trying to reach him on my phone. I must have called twenty times. But I never got to hear his voice.

Hurrying my steps, I ran into the hostel grounds. As I entered the corridor, everyone was leaving, some with luggage, some with belongings stuffed into plastic bags. In my room, I saw Mitra gathering her things. Without saying Salam, she told me to collect my stuff and leave the hostel as soon as possible. 'The teachers said, it is only for a few days. When the situation gets better, we can come back.' I said goodbye to Mitra and picked up a plastic bag. I put in a few clothes and *Kafka on The Shore*. I was reaching for my ID card and other documents which I keep at the back of my bookshelf when the teacher in charge shouted at me to leave so she could close the hostel.

(For full version of this article, please go to www.outlookindia.com)

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Iconic Institutions of 2026

Delving into the domain of higher education, ICARE expert

Dr Karthick Sridhar shares insights on how institutions endeavour to make a difference to individuals and society, powered by Outlook

India's journey toward Viksit Bharat 2047 envisions a future where education becomes the cornerstone of national progress, social empowerment, and global leadership. Rooted in the ancient Vedic ideal of "Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye", education as a path to liberation, the national focus now expands toward a knowledge-driven economy built on innovation and human excellence. The role of higher education institutions evolves beyond traditional teaching to fostering innovation, research excellence, and future-ready skills. In this context, informed choices about academic pathways play a crucial role in shaping both individual success and national development.

The 'Iconic Institutions of 2026' annual report by Outlook and ICARE is a landmark initiative that aims to highlight institutions of higher education that embody academic distinction, innovation, and societal impact. This comprehensive report showcases both government and private institutions offering programmes in management, engineering, medicine, law, humanities, sciences, and emerging disciplines. It focuses on key research yardsticks, learning objectives, pedagogy, interdisciplinary approaches, resources, and outcomes to present a clear, objective view for students and parents seeking the best educational pathways.



Dr Karthick Sridhar is Vice Chairman of the Indian Centre for Academic Rankings & Excellence (ICARE) and one of the architects of India's first government-approved Academic Audit & Rating Agency

While choosing the 'best institution' in a highly competitive environment coupled with a complex understanding of the job market, it is essential to make an informed decision while choosing the 'right institution' based on what they have to offer, their strengths and expertise, and how the 'learner' can align with the offerings!

'Academic Excellence' goes beyond good grades and includes analytical thinking, critical thinking skills and a passion for learning. It is defined by a measure of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and assessment.

Staying ahead of the curve, institutions are incorporating a multidisciplinary approach, including AI/ML, robotics labs, behavioural & analytics labs, architecture & design studios, finance labs, and moot courts, to make students industry-ready and confident domain specialists.

Global higher education is

Continued on page 260



LM Thapar School of Management: Where Legacy Meets the Leaders of Tomorrow

Nurturing excellence-driven professionals grounded in global sensitivity and social entrepreneurial mindset

For nearly seven decades, the Thapar legacy has stood as a symbol of national progress, academic endurance, and innovation-driven education. Rooted in the ideals of industrial pioneers who believed that education fuels societal advancement, the Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology (TIET) was established in 1956 to empower India's youth with excellence in science and technology. LM Thapar School of Management (LMTSM) extends this trusted legacy into the world of business leadership, nurturing professionals who combine sharp thinking with grounded human values.

As the global business environment evolves with technology, sustainability challenges, and rapid digital adoption, LMTSM has continuously reimagined its academic vision. The school champions a curriculum that builds agility, empathy, entrepreneurship, design thinking, and analytics-driven decision-making, ensuring its students are prepared not only for the future of work but to shape it.

Today, LMTSM stands among the most respected B-schools in the country. With the prestigious AACSB accreditation, LMTSM ranks in the top 6% of business schools globally, validating its world-class pedagogy and outcomes. Its NBA accreditation reinforces academic rigour at the national level, while placement outcomes remain a powerful differentiator, with leading organisations offering roles across consulting, BFSI, e-commerce, and technology. Students benefit from the presence of more than 150 corporate recruiters visiting the campus annually.

At the heart of LMTSM is a vibrant and diverse student community, comprising students from various regions, diverse professional backgrounds, and diverse academic backgrounds.

Through more than 30 active clubs and leadership platforms, students experience a dynamic campus ecosystem built on collaboration, curiosity, and creativity. Industry immersion forms a core pillar of learning- with CXOs, global experts, and a distinguished advisory board shaping how students engage with emerging business realities.

"Being a Year 1 MBA student with a deep interest in FinTech, LMTSM allows me to explore global financial innovation through the lens of responsibility and inclusion. We carry forward the Thapar legacy by shaping a future where technology empowers every individual."

- **Gunnreet Kaur**, MBA Year 1, FinTech Aspirant, LMTSM

Innovation is embedded in the everyday student experience. Finance and analytics laboratories equipped with advanced digital platforms, along with an active entrepreneurship ecosystem, empower students to turn ideas into real ventures. Close to one-third of the student community participates in innovation or incubation initiatives each year, reflecting a culture that encourages bold thinking.

LMTSM's contribution extends beyond the classroom into the community, with student-led development projects focused on sustainability, rural inclusion, youth education, and micro-entrepreneurship. True leadership, the school believes, begins with empathy and service.

As LMTSM looks ahead, its direction is bold and clear: to continue shaping leaders who are technologically empowered, globally minded, and deeply ethical. A generation equipped not only to excel in business, but to build a more responsible and resilient tomorrow.

At LMTSM, the Thapar legacy evolves with every student, inspiring leadership that advances business and uplifts society.

undergoing rapid transformation driven by AI-enabled personalised learning, skill-based curricula, and massification, with global enrolment exceeding 264 million. Trends such as international mobility, hybrid learning models, and a strong focus on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) are reshaping systems worldwide and compelling governments to reform policies. In India, these shifts align closely with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

To realise the NEP vision, India aims to add 26 million enrolments by 2035, raise the Gross Enrolment Ratio to 50%, and invest significantly in faculty, infrastructure, and technology. Universities are strengthening data transparency, international benchmarking, research collaboration, and talent exchange, enhancing their global standing and socio-economic impact.

According to the IBEF 2025 report, India is set to become the second most represented country in the 2026 Times Higher Education World University Rankings, with institutions increasing from 49 in 2019 to 128 in 2026. Similarly, 54 Indian universities feature in the QS World University Rankings 2026, marking the highest growth among G20 nations.

Industry–academia collaboration is central to this transformation. Through curriculum co-design, internships, applied research, and emerging formats such as micro-credentials, universities are closing skill gaps and producing job-ready graduates. These partnerships enhance employability, accelerate innovation, reduce hiring costs, and create a sustainable, mutually beneficial ecosystem for students, institutions, and employers alike.

India's Pinnacle of Educational Excellence

India's higher education landscape reflects a dynamic blend of tradition, innovation, and global ambition. From engineering and management to health sciences, liberal arts, and commerce,

"True academic excellence lies in aligning learner aspirations with institutional strengths, industry relevance, and societal impact, enabling students to build adaptable careers in an AI-driven, rapidly evolving global education ecosystem."

Dr Karthick Sridhar
Vice Chairman, ICARE

the country boasts institutions that set benchmarks not just nationally, but internationally.

At the forefront of technical education are the IITs, established under Jawaharlal Nehru's vision to cultivate scientists and technologists for a self-reliant India. Today, 23 IITs exemplify global standards in research, innovation, and employability. Complementing these are institutions such as BITS Pilani, VIT Vellore, and the NITs, which are known for their cutting-edge research, robust campus placements, and industry-ready graduates.

Public institutions like IISc Bangalore, the University of Delhi, the University of Hyderabad, Banaras Hindu University, and the IITs at Bombay, Delhi, and Kharagpur, alongside private leaders such as Jio Institute Pune and Manipal Academy of Higher Education, have earned the prestigious "Institution of Eminence" status, granting them autonomy to compete globally. In the NIRF 2025 rankings, IIT Madras tops the chart, followed closely by IISc Bangalore and JNU, highlighting India's unwavering commitment to academic excellence.

Management education in India has evolved into a global force, driven initially by the IIMs in the 1960s, which adapted Western frameworks to local contexts. Today, premier institutions such as XLRI, XIM University, MDI Gurgaon, NMIMS, FMS Delhi, ISB Hyderabad, and IIFT New Delhi equip students with leadership skills, strategic thinking, and international business acumen. Emerging management schools, such as IMT Ghaziabad, LBSIM Delhi, LM Thapar School of Management in Ludhiana, and Narayana Business School, have further strengthened India's managerial and entrepreneurial ecosystem, emphasising practical learning, internships, and industry alignment.

Engineering and technology education thrives across a host of multidisciplinary universities. GLA University in Mathura, KIET and PSIT in Ghaziabad, SKIT Jaipur, and IEM-UEM Kolkata combine rigorous academics with industry-orientated learning. BIT Mesra in Ranchi, Ganpat University in Gujarat, and Ajeenkya DY Patil University provide cutting-edge research opportunities alongside holistic development. SRM University-AP and Sikkim, VTU Belagavi, and MAHE (Manipal) are recognised for integrating innovation, global academic standards, and collaborative research in their curricula.

India's focus on health sciences and social development is equally noteworthy. CMC Vellore leads in medical education, research, and patient care, while JSS AHER in Mysuru exemplifies excellence in healthcare education. Institutions such as the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics and the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences cultivate policymakers and social leaders, providing them with equitable educational opportunities.

Private multidisciplinary universities, including CMR University Bangalore, Prestige University, and Dhirubhai Ambani University Mumbai, further enhance India's academic diversity, offering programmes in engineering, management, sciences, liberal arts, and design, all with an emphasis on innovation, research, and industry collaboration.

Together, these institutions reflect India's enduring commitment to knowledge, innovation, and global competitiveness as a hallmark of India's identity.

A Beacon of Inspiration

SRM University Sikkim building on six decades of legacy of the SRM Group through academic excellence, innovation, and inclusivity



Nestled amid the serene Sikkimese hills, SRM University Sikkim (SRMUS) builds on SRM's legacy of academic excellence, a culture of innovation, global impact in STEM, and alumni connections. Established in 2013, SRMUS brings quality education to the Northeast. Today, it stands as a testament to academic excellence, innovation, and inclusive growth. With NAAC A+ accreditation, ISO certification, approval from AICTE, and recognition as the Best Private University in Sikkim 2023, SRMUS continues to redefine education in the region.

A Transformative Vision

SRMUS is the first university in the state to completely adapt NEP 2020 across all its programs, integrating multidisciplinary learning, research orientations, and entrepreneurial thinking into its academic framework. The university's mission goes beyond employability—focusing on nurturing ethical, empathetic, and responsible global citizens.

A defining strength of SRMUS is its highly motivated faculty, driving academic excellence and innovative teaching practices. Faculty members collaborate with industry and research institutions, ensuring that learning remains contemporary, practical, and impactful.

New-Age Learning Paradigms

SRMUS offers a wide spectrum of undergraduate, postgraduate, diploma, and vocational programmes in Arts, Science, Management, IT, Engineering, Media, Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, and Hotel Management Studies, PhD programme in Computer Science, Management, and Literature. Industry-aligned curricula, innovation-driven pedagogy, and initiatives like the Institute Innovation Council (IIC) foster entrepreneurship and real-world problem-solving skills. SRM is curating almost 1.4 lakh careers, across campuses through academic collaborations. For e.g. SRMUS engages in campus exchange programmes with SRM AP and SRM IST Chennai.

Campus life at SRMUS is vibrant and enriching. Modern infrastructure include digitalised smart classrooms, advanced science and computer labs, a well-stocked library with e-resources, media and audio-visual labs, and a fully equipped BTK Hotel Management kitchen for culinary excellence.

> "In today's global scenario and an evolving borderless world, education must be engaging, skill-orientated, and accessible, incorporating digital transformation and continual learning"
>
> **Cdr (Dr) Gurdaman Sharma**
> Vice-Chancellor, SRM University Sikkim

Research and Innovation

Specialised centres include Center for Astronomy & Astrophysics (CAGC), focusing on black holes, gravitational waves, and cosmology. The Multidisciplinary Research Centre, equipped with state-of-the-art laboratories and centralised instrumentation facilities, is driving innovation and societal impact. The faculty engages in advanced research across diverse domains, including biomedical sciences, nanotechnology, astrophysics, environmental studies, AI, public health, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development, especially on Himalayan and regional challenges.

Backed by 33 extramural research projects, funded by premier national agencies such as DBT, ICMR, SERB, CSIR, ICSSR, and BRNS, and international collaborations like the European Union and NASA, the university has produced high-impact scholarly work. Its research output includes over 300 peer-reviewed publications, books published in international journals, alongside 11 patents in AI-enabled healthcare, IoT-based sustainability solutions, smart tourism technologies, and biomedical innovation.

Sustained leadership in Management Education

IISWBM, India's first B-School continues to nurture future leaders and achievers who make a difference



Director's Vision:

Prof (Dr) Krishna Murari Agrawal
Director, IISWBM

To steer IISWBM as a premier institution nurturing future-ready leaders through NEP-aligned excellence, impactful research, academic consulting, and sustained leadership in management education.

The Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management (IISWBM), Kolkata, established on April 25, 1953 by the University of Calcutta, is India's and South Asia's first management institute. Supported by visionary leaders such as Dr B C Roy, Prof D K Sanyal and Pt Jawaharlal Nehru, the institute pioneered management education with social welfare for over seven decades. Backed by major government and industry bodies, it has hosted distinguished national and international leaders and was honoured with a commemorative postal stamp in its Golden Jubilee year. All degrees are conferred by the University of Calcutta.

The PhD programme provides strong research support and opportunities in management and social sciences.

IISWBM offers advanced MBA programmes aligned with industry needs, complemented by internships and professional interaction. Its flagship two-year MBA serves both full-time students and working professionals, offering specializations in Marketing, Finance, Human Resource Management, Production & Operations, and Business Analytics & Systems Management.

The MBA-HRM programme is consistently ranked among India's top HR courses..

The MBA-PS (Public Systems Management) is a nationally distinctive programme bridging technical expertise with managerial principles across Hospital & Healthcare, Energy, Environment, and Transport & Logistics. Designed for India's green economy and Net Zero vision, it builds specialised leadership for critical infrastructure and emerging sectors.

The MSW programme integrates social welfare with management education, developing socially conscious professionals.

The institute offers the country's first Post Graduate Diploma in Sports Management and various short- term programmes in management, sustainability, supply chain, and social welfare.



IISWBM has collaborations through MoUs with DamodarValley Corporation, ISI, Moscow Linguistics University and Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) enhancing research, academic exchange, and industry-oriented learning.

The campus is ragging-free, equipped with air-conditioned classrooms, auditoria, conference halls, fully equipped gymnasium, computer centre, campus-wide Wi-Fi, and a rich library with journals and e resource with ONOS facility and has UGC (sec12B) recognition . Separate hostels for boys and girls provide secure accommodation with dining and recreational amenities. The institute boasts inclusively designed website and, active social media handlle..

The faculty contributes significantly through research, consultancy, training, and MDPs, reinforcing IISWBM's strong intellectual capital. The institute maintains an excellent placement record with high ROI, Leading organisations across consulting, BFSI, FMCG, IT, and the social sector both national and intenational are our recruiters .

Distinguished alumni include global leaders such as LN Mittal Chairman and CEO of ArcelorMittal;, Late Bhaskar Das former ED, The Times Group;, Sudhir Jalan former AIMA & FICCI President; CV Chandrasekhar, former MD Balmer Lawrie Group; Prof Sumantra Ghoshal, LBS; filmmaker Arindam Sil, and entrepreneur Debaditya Chaudhury. Their achievements reflect IISWBM's legacy of nurturing socially conscious, industry-ready leaders.

As IISWBM approaches its 75th year in 2027, it continues to advance with strong institutional support—delivering future-ready, value-driven management education.

When IISWBM celebrates 75 years of its glorious existence in 2027, it will also mark 75 years of Management education in India and Southeast Asia.



Celebrating 25 Years of Excellence at SKIT

SKIT's journey embodies innovation, inclusivity, and community spirit, shaping leaders since 2000

As Swami Keshvanand Institute of Technology, Management & Gramothan (SKIT) completes twenty-five years of purposeful existence, we pause to reflect on a journey defined by vision, values, and transformation. This Silver Jubilee is not merely a celebration of time, but a reaffirmation of our enduring commitment to education as a catalyst for social progress and national development. From its humble beginnings in the year 2000, SKIT has grown into a dynamic institution that continuously evolves to meet the aspirations of a changing world.

The foundation of SKIT was laid by our esteemed Chairman, Shri Surja Ram Meel, whose life journey exemplifies perseverance, integrity, and belief in the power of education. His visionary leadership, inspired by the ideals of Swami Keshavanand, has shaped the institute's unique identity. The Gramothan philosophy remains central to our mission, guiding us to extend education beyond classrooms and create meaningful impact through rural empowerment, inclusivity, and community engagement.

Over the years, SKIT has embraced excellence as a continuous pursuit. Academic milestones such as NBA accreditation, the A++ grade in NAAC (2022), and the conferment of autonomous status in 2024 stand as validations of our quality-driven approach and progressive governance. These achievements have enabled us to design flexible curricula, promote experiential learning, and align education with global standards and societal needs.

Looking to the future, SKIT is committed to shaping graduates who are not only technically proficient but also ethically grounded and socially responsible. The introduction of programs in emerging areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, and the Internet of Things, along with postgraduate and doctoral research programs, reflects our vision of fostering innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. We aspire to build a vibrant ecosystem that encourages interdisciplinary learning, critical thinking, and lifelong curiosity.



Jaipal Meel, Director , SKIT

Beyond academic advancement, SKIT envisions a campus culture that nurtures leadership, resilience, and compassion. Through cultural, sporting, and community initiatives, we strive to instill a sense of purpose and service in our students, preparing them to lead with empathy and confidence in a complex global environment.

As we move forward, our ambition is to position SKIT among India's most respected institutions, with strong global linkages, impactful research, and meaningful contributions to national priorities. On this momentous occasion, we express our deepest gratitude to our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners whose collective efforts have shaped our legacy. With clarity of purpose and unwavering resolve, we look ahead to the next chapter—driven by innovation, guided by values, and committed to shaping a better future.



Shaping Engineering Leaders of Tomorrow

Recognizing world-class talent is what the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM) does best in the diverse fields of science, technology, humanities and management

IIT Madras (IITM), established in July 1959 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, is one of India's Institutions of National Importance (INI), a status granted by Parliament. From its first batch of 120 engineering students, IITM has grown to host over 11,000 students from across India and the world, pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate, and research programs.

In global rankings, IIT Madras stands around #180 in the QS 2026 Rankings (up from #227 in 2025) and consistently ranks #1 in India for Engineering and overall in the NIRF 2025 Rankings, reflecting its strong domestic leadership and improving global reputation.

IITM offers programs across 18 disciplines, guided by over 600 faculty members, including professors, associate professors, and assistant professors. The academic structure emphasizes rigorous, continuous evaluation through semesters of at least seventy days, complemented by research assessments reviewed by peer examiners nationally and internationally. The Senate, IITM's highest academic body, governs all academic ordinances. Undergraduate programs include B.Tech degrees in disciplines such as Computer Science, Mechanical, Electrical, Civil, and Chemical Engineering, as well as B.Sc. programs in Data Science, Electronic Systems, Medical Sciences, and Biological Sciences. Dual-degree programs integrate B. Tech and M.Tech in specific fields. Postgraduate offerings include M. Tech, M.Sc., MBA, Ph.D., and specialized programs in emerging technologies. IITM also conducts short-term and certificate courses for professionals seeking industry-specific skills.

With nearly 100 state-of-the-art laboratories and a highly disciplined teaching approach, IIT Madras continues to nurture innovators and researchers, producing graduates who excel nationally and globally in engineering, science, management, and technology.

Empowering Professionals Across Industries

Online degree courses have always been a part of the academic structure of IIT Madras in its aim to reach out to young working professionals and aspiring and motivated learners across all age-groups in India. An online degree is not limited by on-campus physical infrastructure and was an intrinsic part of IITM teaching long before Covid was even a term and the deluge of online degrees caught on big-time. IITM began the NPTEL program as India's first online content portal and as an inter-IIT consortium project in 2001 and went on later to form nptel.ac.in. as

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- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (Cloud Computing)
- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (Cyber Security)
- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (Block Chain Technology)
- B.Tech Electronics and Communication Engineering
- B.Tech Civil Engineering
- B.Tech Mechanical Engineering
- M.Tech Computer Science Engineering
- M.Tech Computer Science Engineering (AI & ML)
- M.Tech Artificial Intelligence and Data Science
- M.Tech Cloud Computing
- M.Tech Civil Engineering
- M.Tech Electronics and Communication Engineering
- M.Tech Mechanical Engineering
- Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

- Bachelor of Business Administration
- Bachelor of Business Administration (Business Analytics)
- Bachelor of Business Administration (Digital Marketing)
- Bachelor of Commerce (Hons)
- Master of Business Administration (HR, Marketing, Finance, Operations Management)
- Master of Business Administration (Business Analytics)
- Master of Business Administration (Digital Marketing)
- Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

SCHOOL OF LEGAL STUDIES

- LLB
- BA.LL.B
- B.A LLB (Hons.)
- BBA.LL.B
- B. Com LL.B
- LLM
- Ph.D. (Law)

SCHOOL OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES

- Diploma in Pharmacy
- Bachelor of Pharmacy
- M Pharm (Subject to PCI approval)
- Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

SCHOOL OF ADVANCE COMPUTING

- Bachelor of Computer Application
- Bachelor of Computer Application (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning)
- Bachelor of Computer Application (AI and Data Science)
- Bachelor of Computer Application (Cyber Security)
- B.Sc. (Graphics & Web Designing)
- B.Sc. (Multimedia)
- Master of Computer Application
- Master of Computer Application (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning)
- Master of Computer Application (Data Science)
- Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

SCHOOL OF ALLIED AND HEALTH SCIENCES

- Bachelor of Physiotherapy
- B.Sc. (Bio-Technology)
- B.Sc. (Medical Lab Sciences)
- B.Sc. (Optometry)
- B.Sc. (Anesthesia & Operation Theatre Technology)
- B.Sc. (Medical Radiology & Imaging Technology)
- B.Sc. (Forensic Sciences)
- Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS AND LANGUAGES

- Bachelor of Arts (Political Sciences)
- Bachelor of Arts (Sociology)
- Bachelor of Arts (Psychology)
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)
- Bachelor of Arts (Literature)
- Bachelor of Arts (Journalism and Mass Communication)
- Bachelor of Science (Fashion Design)
- Master of Arts (English)
- Masters in Psychology
- Ph.D. (in all relevant branches)

SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION & SPORTS SCIENCES

- Bachelor of Physical Education and Sports

PROGRAMMES OFFERED UNDER NEWTON SCHOOL

Programmes in Collaboration with EY

- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (AI & ML)
- Bachelor of Computer Application (Data Science)

Programmes in Collaboration with IBM

- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (AI & ML)
- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (Data Science and AI)
- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (GenAI)
- B.Tech Computer Science and Engineering (Quantum Computing)
- B.Tech Electronics and Communication Engineering (with Minors in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence)
- Bachelor of Computer Application (AI & ML)
- Bachelor of Computer Application (Data Science)
- Master of Computer Application (AI & ML)
- Master of Computer Application (Data Science)

Programmes in Collaboration with OS-SCi

- B. Tech Computer Science and Engineering (with Minors in Open Source Programming)

Programmes in Collaboration with KPMG

- B. Tech Computer Science and Engineering (Fintech and AI)

PROGRAMMES OFFERED UNDER METAA SCHOOL

Programmes in Collaboration with EY

- Bachelor of Business Administration (Business Analytics)
- Master of Business Administration (Business Analytics)

Programmes in Collaboration with IBM

- Bachelor of Business Administration (Business Analytics)
- Master of Business Administration (Business Analytics)

Programmes in Collaboration with KPMG

- Master of Business Administration (Fintech)
- Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management)

one of the largest online course portals in the world. In 2014, IITM also created NPTEL online course, as India's first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), which is currently the largest MOOC provider in India.

Student Exchange Programmes

IIT Madras (IITM) collaborates with over 100 universities worldwide, offering students the opportunity to spend a semester or a year abroad with full tuition waivers and transferable credits. The program also provides paid internships at top institutions and funding to cover travel, visa, and medical insurance. UG, DD, MA, MBA, and MTech students can participate in this exchange program with partner universities through established MOUs.

Notable Asian partners include Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore, University of Tokyo, and Seoul National University. In Europe, IITM partners with Technical University of Munich, University of Duisburg-Essen, University of Passau, ETH Zurich, and KTH Royal Institute of Technology. U.S. partners include MIT, UC Berkeley, and Carnegie Mellon University, among others. The exchange is reciprocal, allowing international students to pursue coursework, research, and lab work at IITM for up to two semesters.



Interdisciplinary Disciplines

IIT Madras encourages students to be clear about their goals while staying flexible in how they achieve them. It is one of the few Indian institutions offering Interdisciplinary Master's Programs that shape the future of global engineering and technology. The International Interdisciplinary Master's Programs (I2MP) are two-year, out-of-the-box degrees in areas such as Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology, Biomedical Engineering, and Complex Systems and Dynamics.

The Interdisciplinary Dual Degree (IDD) allows students to earn a Bachelor's and Master's simultaneously in different disciplines, gaining expertise across fields and a broader perspective. Short certificate courses like Innovation and Entrepreneurship connect science, engineering, humanities, and management, helping students build entrepreneurial skills.

IITM's Robert Bosch Centre for Data Science and AI fosters innovations by uniting researchers across departments. Campus life is vibrant, with student clubs focused on robotics, renewable energy, and social impact, along with expert-led lectures and workshops. Learning, unlearning, and relearning define the 21st-century education IITM provides.



Modern Campus Amenities

IIT Madras is spread across a 620-acre lush green campus, divided into three main zones. The Residential Zone houses faculty, staff, and the campus community. The Academic Zone, the campus heartbeat, includes teaching departments, laboratories, workshops, and the central library. The Hostel Zone has 21 hostels, providing comfortable living of which six are reserved for women. Dining is centralized in three halls, the largest mess facility.

The self-contained campus also features two schools, three temples, banks, a hospital, shopping centers, food outlets, a gym, and sports facilities including cricket, football, hockey, and badminton stadiums. Iconic landmarks include Gajendra Circle, a popular student gathering spot; Himalaya, the central mess; and the open-air theatre, a hub for cultural events. These unique infrastructures make IITM a vibrant, inclusive, and memorable campus for learning and living.

Success at National and International Level

The IIT Madras Placement Cell prepares students to enter the corporate world with confidence. Compensation packages vary by company, academic performance, skills, and interview performance. Top-tier Indian and international companies often offer the highest packages. As one of India's oldest and most prestigious IITs, IIT Madras produces world-class talent that excels across industries and academia globally. Its excellence in engineering, research, and innovation demonstrates that Indian talent competes at the highest international standards.



A Legacy Institution Transforming Lives and Learning

From a local medical college on public-private partnership model to a global 'Institution of Eminence', Manipal Academy of Higher Education leads in education, research, sustainability, and social transformation, shaping future-ready leaders and advancing societal well-being

Dr TMA Pai founded Kasturba Medical College (KMC) in 1953 with a vision to empower society through quality education, accessible healthcare, and rural development, particularly for women. Inspired by these values, Dr Pai also founded hospitals, banks, and other social institutions that continue to guide, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE).

In 1993, MAHE became one of India's first multicampus, multi-faculty Deemed to be University and has since grown into one of the nation's largest multidisciplinary institutions. It offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across medicine, engineering, pharmacy, dentistry, nursing, allied health, hotel administration, management studies, law, humanities, communication, design, and liberal arts etc.

Academic delivery is structured under three verticals: Health Sciences; Technology & Science; and Management, Law, Humanities, Social Sciences & Liberal Arts. From its medical origins, MAHE has expanded into engineering, media, management, commerce, and social sciences, blending innovation with tradition across diverse disciplines.

Keeping in view its potential and growth curve, the Ministry of Education (MOE), Government of India, has conferred *'Institution of Eminence'* status on MAHE in the year 2020. This status has given MAHE greater autonomy to start new-age programmes, more flexibility to admit international students, hire international faculty and collaborate with international universities of repute.

MAHE In Spotlight

Recognised as an "Institution of Eminence" and awarded an A++ grade by NAAC, MAHE has consistently secured top positions in national and international rankings.

MAHE was ranked 3rd among universities in the NIRF 2025 University Rankings. Its constituent colleges also excelled: Kasturba Medical College, Manipal – 10th in Medical; Manipal College of Pharmaceutical Sciences – 8th in Pharmacy; and Manipal College of Dental Sciences, Manipal – 5th in Dental.

The Week Hansa Best University Ratings ranked MAHE as India's No 1 deemed multidisciplinary university.

On the global stage, MAHE was placed 801–1000th in the World University Rankings 2025, with a 637th rank in the Times Higher Education Reputation Rankings 2024. In the Shanghai Ranking 2024 Global Ranking of Academic Subjects, MAHE's public health programme ranked 301–400 (No 1 in India) and clinical medicine 401–500 (No 3 in India).

Additionally, the University Impact Rankings 2025 positioned MAHE in the 101–200 band globally. These recognitions highlight MAHE's growing national and international reputation, with many more accolades reflecting its academic excellence and impact.

Key Achievements At A Glance

Over the past five years, MAHE has steadily improved its national and international rankings through targeted initiatives:

SDG-Focused Research: Promoted research aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals, organised workshops, and provided PURE portal access to all staff, boosting high-quality publications and global collaborations.

Young Leadership Development Programme: Assigned faculty to ranking-linked responsibilities, fostering strategic planning, leadership, and institutional growth

International Collaborations: 2023 marked the Year of International Collaborations, expanding student and faculty exchanges through new academic partnerships

Global Engagement & Visibility: Strengthened international presence via conferences and policy contributions

Institutional Reputation: Conducted outreach and expert engagement to enhance recognition and maximise ranking survey nominations

Five Pillars of Excellence

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) has charted its growth as an Institution of Eminence around five strategic pillars, each reflecting sustained commitment to quality, innovation, and global impact

1 Excellence in Education

MAHE is deeply committed to academic quality and inclusivity. With a strong faculty–student ratio of 1:10, over 2,600 PhD-qualified faculty, and a highly diverse workforce—46% women faculty and 60% women non-teaching staff—the university fosters an enabling learning environment. In FY 2024–25 alone, MAHE awarded nearly ₹100 crore in scholarships to deserving students. Its expanding campuses reinforce this vision: Bengaluru is emerging as a world-class multidisciplinary hub; the Jamshedpur Campus hosts a premier medical college through a successful private–private collaboration with Tata Steel, and Mangaluru stands as Karnataka's first successful public–private partnership in higher education.

2 Exemplary Research and Innovation

MAHE has budgeted over Rs. 400 crores for its research. It recorded 5,800+ publications, with 23% appearing in top 10 percentile journals and a Field-Weighted Citation Impact of 1.96; 63% being open-access publications. In FY 2025–26, MAHE secured ₹44 crore funding and committed ₹38 crore internally for cutting-edge research.

The research community includes 3,658 PhD scholars, with 1,170+ new doctoral enrolments in AY 2024–25, and 250+ faculty members serving on international editorial boards. 464 patents were filed in 2025. Investments exceeding ₹105 crore in FY 2025–26 have further strengthened research capabilities by establishing 50,000 Sq ft research infrastructure includes advanced BSL-3 laboratories. MAHE supports innovation through incubators such as the Manipal Universal Technology Business Incubator (MUTBI) and the Bio-incubator, backed by the GoI and the Government of Karnataka, hosting 160+ startups. Over 90 of which have received government funding.

3 Expanding Reach & Internationalisation

Expanding its global footprint remains a strategic priority for MAHE. The university has 266 active international collaborations, supporting student and faculty mobility, joint research, academic exchange, and global internships. Partnerships with 83 top-500 globally ranked universities underscore MAHE's commitment to global academic standards. This international focus is reflected in research, with nearly 33% of publications involving international co-authors, highlighting MAHE's strong global research engagement and reputation.

4 Effective Engagement & Alumni Relations

An alumni network of over 270,000 graduates remains deeply engaged with the university. Through 50+ alumni reunions, 600+ guest lectures, and several alumni-led industry partnership initiatives, alumni actively contribute to mentoring students, strengthening academia–industry linkages, and supporting MAHE's academic, professional, and institutional growth.

5 Enabling Foundation & Sustainability Mission

The institution fosters innovation, academic excellence, and holistic development, with a deep commitment to environmental stewardship. In 2025, MAHE was recognised as the Most Sustainable University in India by the Universitas Indonesia Green Metric (UIGM) ranking, underscoring its leadership in sustainability.

71% of campus energy is sourced from renewable resources. Nearly 33% of the campus area is maintained as green cover, irrigated by recycled water. The widespread adoption of electric mobility on campus further reduces carbon emissions. Collectively, these initiatives reflect MAHE's approach to resource management and steady progress toward achieving a carbon-neutral campus.

Together, these five pillars position MAHE as a leader in education, research, sustainability, and societal transformation.



Inclusivity And Social Responsibility
Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) remains dedicated to advancing education, healthcare, and social well-being through impactful initiatives. To ensure continuity in education, MAHE offers scholarships for students who lose an earning parent during their studies, waiving remaining course fees so the affected students can complete their education without disruption.

Accelerating the Future

- **29** Professional Higher Education Institutions & 10 university teaching departments
- Campuses in Manipal, Mangalore, Bengaluru, Jamshedpur in India and off-shore campus at Dubai & Melaka globally
- **380+** programmes across 36 disciplines
- **45,000+** students on-roll across 6 campus and 13,300+ students in Online mode
- **3,400+** expert faculty members
- **3,500+** International community students from 60 countries
- **260+** global Partnerships institutions
- **2,70,000** Strong alumni network spread across the globe

The Access Life facility, launched in April 2022 with the Access Life Assistance Foundation, provides a "home away from home" for children undergoing cancer treatment. Located near the hospital, it offers free accommodation for 12 families, nutritious meals, psychological counselling, and educational and recreational support, funded largely through CSR initiatives.

In April 2025, MAHE inaugurated the Manipal Hospice and Respite Centre (MHRC), India's first free, university-affiliated hospice, built for providing comprehensive palliative and respite care. Innovation is fostered through MIDAS, a medical device innovation platform supported by the Department of Science and Technology, GoI. Lifeathon, MAHE's annual healthcare hackathon connects clinicians and technologists for bedside-to-market solutions.

Recognised in 2024 as India's only private university AI Centre of Excellence in Healthcare, MAHE leads AI-based coronary artery disease detection projects. The student-organised Manipal Marathon promotes global health awareness through themes like cancer care, mental health, and fitness, reflecting MAHE's commitment to education, health, and social impact.

All MAHE campuses function as vibrant hubs of academics, research, sports, and culture, fostering holistic development. Committed to continuous improvement, MAHE strives to nurture global citizens, serve society, and make meaningful contributions to nation building through quality higher education.

MAHE Vision of Excellence in Collaboration 2025

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) has emerged as a national leader in industry–academia collaboration, consistently aligning education, research, and workforce development with real-world needs. Actively fostering partnerships across engineering, technology, and biomedical sciences, MAHE tailors its curriculum to industry requirements while accelerating research through joint funding, technical expertise, and applied innovation. In recognition of these efforts, 2025 was observed at MAHE under the unifying theme *"The Year of Excellence in Industry–Academia Collaboration."*

MAHE received academic partnership awards in the platinum category for two consecutive years, 2024 and 2025, by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), highlighting its excellence in industry-aligned research, talent development, and innovation. Collaborations with leading organizations such as Amazon, Bosch, and Cisco support research, internships, and curriculum development, enhancing employability and real-world impact.

Currently, MAHE sustains 209 active agreements spanning academia, research, CSR, consultancy, startups, and Centers of Excellence, with multi-engagement partnerships forming the largest share. Growth in collaborative PhD programs and Work Integrated Learning initiatives further demonstrates strong industry trust, global relevance, and MAHE's leadership in building sustainable, high-impact partnerships.



Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh VSM (Retd)
Vice Chancellor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)

An Outstanding Mentor and Transformational Leader

Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh's empathetic leadership and strategic vision validate that the university continues to evolve as a pre-eminent institution

Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh VSM (Retd) stands out as a visionary leader whose transformative approach has strengthened MAHE's stature as one of India's foremost multidisciplinary private universities. Since assuming the role of Vice Chancellor in 2020, Dr Venkatesh has guided MAHE through a period of profound evolution, aligning the university with the ambitious goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 while preserving its legacy of academic excellence. Under his guidance, MAHE has undertaken bold initiatives to expand its academic portfolio.

A former army doctor and Dean of the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, Dr Venkatesh exemplifies the qualities of a true leader—discipline, strategic foresight, empathy, and the ability to inspire those around him. He believes that leadership is best expressed through mentorship and facilitation, emphasising that a good team leader must first be a good team player. "We need to empower the team to ensure that they succeed. Give them space, let them take the initiative, and allow them to progress," he remarks. Under his stewardship, MAHE has fostered an environment of collaboration, mutual respect, and innovation across student-faculty, inter-faculty, and administrative relationships.

Dr Venkatesh's tenure as Vice Chancellor began during the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. With a combination of hands-on leadership and deep respect for the university's established values, he steered MAHE with resilience and vision. His approach, marked by humility and recognition of collective effort, has been instrumental in building cohesive teams where achievements are shared, and setbacks are shouldered responsibly by leadership.

> "AS A LEADER, ONE MUST BUILD TEAMS, INSPIRE THEM, AND CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE EVERYONE CAN FLOURISH. THAT IS THE WAY FORWARD"

The establishment of the Bengaluru campus in 2020 with a focus on humanities programmes, in collaboration with the Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology (now Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology), exemplifies his commitment to multidisciplinary education. Dr Venkatesh underscores the importance of humanities, liberal arts, and social sciences as integral to a well-rounded academic ecosystem. In addition, the launch of the Manipal Law School in Bengaluru reflects his vision of creating diverse opportunities for students.

Research and innovation are another area of focus under Dr Venkatesh. With over 3600 PhD scholars, increasing high-quality publications, and growing collaborative grants from public and private agencies, MAHE has strengthened its research infrastructure significantly. His leadership ensures that students and faculty are supported in every endeavour, creating a culture of intellectual curiosity and excellence.

Dr Venkatesh's leadership emphasises student welfare, especially mental health. "Today's youth face pressures from academics and social media. We provide robust support across campuses," he notes. With trained counsellors, wellness programmes, and accessible services, students feel safe seeking help without stigma. Recreational spaces, greenery, and sports, dance, and music facilities foster holistic well-being, nurturing empowered global citizens.

Shaping Innovators and Future Leaders

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology empowers students through world-class education, cutting-edge research, and global industry collaborations

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, established in 1987 in Chennai, is a premier STEM-intensive, multidisciplinary deemed university known for teaching and research excellence. Accredited with NAAC 'A++' and recognised as a UGC Category-I University, 12B status is conferred by UGC. Sathyabama is ISO 21001:2018 certified and one of the few Indian universities to have built and launched its own satellite with ISRO. The institution offers diverse programmes in engineering, technology, architecture, management, law, health sciences, and more. With ABET and NBA accredited programmes, dynamic faculty, innovative pedagogy, advanced infrastructure, and world-class research facilities, Sathyabama continuously adopts global best practices to enhance the quality of higher education.

Curriculum That Captivates

Sathyabama offers a wide academic portfolio with 54 UG and 28 PG programmes. Engineering (BE/BTech/BDes), ME/MTech, and MBA programmes are AICTE-approved. B Arch and M Arch are approved by the Council of Architecture. Pharmacy Programmes(B Pharm, Pharm D, M Pharm) are approved by PCI. Bsc Nursing programme is approved by INC and TNNMC, while BDS and MDS programmes with integrated internships are approved by Dental council of India. Bachelor of physiotherapy is approved by the board of management and all the undergraduate law programmes are approved by the bar council of India and B Ed programs have been approved by NCTE. In addition to the above programs, the institution offers UG/PG programmes in arts, science, and humanities. PhD and post doctoral programmes across all disciplines are also been offered.





Dr Mariazeena Johnson
Chancellor, Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology

"Lead with purpose, empower others, and stay true to your vision."

Redefining Education and Empowerment

Reflecting on 2025, Dr Johnson believes growth comes through courage, compassion, and continuous learning

Dr. Mariazeena Johnson carries forward the legacy of her father, Dr Jeppiaar, a visionary who dedicated his life to education and social development. Recognised among the Top 12 Women Transforming India by NITI Aayog and the UN (2016) and honoured by former President Pranab Mukherjee as one of the 100 Impactful Women of India, she continues to shape the nation through her contributions to education, empowerment, and philanthropy.

A strong advocate for women's development, Dr Johnson emphasises, "The Women Empowerment Bureau was established to address the challenges faced by women in education and entrepreneurship. We conduct gender sensitisation programmes for students and staff, integrate equality-focused case studies and workshops into the curriculum, and foster an inclusive environment where women can thrive."

Her commitment to inclusion is further reflected in the "Anbu Foundation", which offers higher education opportunities to thousands of marginalised students. Through the innovative My Saturday University initiative, she supports skill development programmes for government school children. She has also adopted 30 panchayat schools and six villages under UBA and introduced free vocational training for school dropouts and rural youth. Her initiatives, such as Blessed to Bleed, ensure affordable access to sanitary napkins, while Project Madugai provides health and hygiene kits to girls in suburban Chennai, placing women's welfare at the centre of institutional efforts.

Dr Johnson's philanthropic endeavours span international borders. In a compassionate outreach to civil war–affected Yemen, she signed an MoU with Nobel Laureate Tawakkol Karman to provide full scholarships to 15 Yemeni students annually. Her initiative, My Happiness, launched during the WHO World Health Day Summit 2017, focuses on identifying and supporting children with mental health challenges. She also supports around 30 foundations, providing daily meals to orphanages, and established the Sathyabama IAS Academy, offering coaching to 1,000 civil service aspirants each year.

A champion of research and innovation, she oversaw the successful launch of SATHYABAMASAT in 2016 and continues to drive academic excellence. Under her leadership, Sathyabama has grown into a hub of innovation powered by 23 research centres, 150+ impactful projects, and a workforce where women constitute nearly 70%. With six faculty members ranked among the top 2% most influential scientists in the Stanford University Survey, the institution continues to gain global recognition.

Mariazeena Johnson graced the WonderWomen Awards 2025 alongside her daughter Galatta Nakshatra, celebrating women who inspire through purpose and leadership. She featured in the Femina Fab List 2025, celebrating women achievers.

Industry Partnerships and Collaboration

Sathyabama offers an international-standard learning environment supported by state-of-the-art infrastructure and strong academic resources. Research initiatives, innovation centres, and industry collaborations foster talent, entrepreneurship, and discovery.

The institution's strong industry–institute partnerships have enabled quality internships and numerous job opportunities through "Centres of Excellence" by HCL, Capgemini, and others. Cognisant's Digital Nurture programme further enhances students' employability skills. Companies like LTIMindtree, TCS, and PwC also maintain a strong and ongoing engagement, equipping students with industry-ready skillsets.

Campus Recruitment Milestones

Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology continues to achieve outstanding success in campus recruitment year after year. For the recently graduated batch, over 485+ leading recruiters participated in the placement drive and offered 3844 jobs so far. An impressive 94.31% of registered students have already secured placements.

This year, the institute recorded a rise in salary packages, with the average CTC increasing to 5.57 LPA and the highest CTC reaching 41.2 LPA. Students also saw a significant increase in opportunities from Dream, Super Dream, and Elite companies, creating a strong foundation for upcoming batches as the recruiter base continues to expand.

Top recruiters included Amazon, Accenture, ADP, Asian Paints, Caterpillar, Capgemini, Cognisant, Catalogue, Deloitte, DBS Tech, EPAM, Ernst & Young, Godrej, Hexaware, HCL Tech, HPE, Hyundai Inmobis, Genpact, Gulf Contracting Company, ICICI Bank, IBM, Juspay, JP Morgan, JSW, LTI Mindtree, MotorQ, MuSigma, Natwest, NielsenIQ, Nokia, Oracle, Optum, PwC, Renault Nissan, Securin, Siemens, Schneider Electric, Sona Comstar, Tredence Analytics, Tech Mahindra, Tata Elxsi, Virtusa, Mphasis, and many more—reflecting the vast opportunities the institute continues to create for its students.



RANKINGS

- #51 position among Universities in the NIRF India Rankings 2024
- # Ranked in the 1201–1500 band in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2025
- # Ranked in the 501–600 band in the Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2025
- # 1201–1400 position in the world and by the QS World University Rankings, 2025
- #373 position by the QS Asia University Rankings, 2025
- # 759 position in the world, 237 in Asia, 31in India in QS Sustainability Rankings, 2025
- #ASIA Ranking- 262 in Asia, 59 in South East Asia, 35 in India, QS Sustainability Rankings, 2025

World-Class Campus

Sathyabama boasts a sprawling campus with administrative, academic, and residential facilities. Its infrastructure includes modern classrooms, auditoriums, conference halls, a media centre,



Sathyabama continues its legacy of excellence in student employability, achieving remarkable placement consistently year after year. The industry-aligned curriculum and enhanced placement readiness programmes, along with a strong and engaged alumni network, together play a crucial role in campus recruitment by upskilling student capabilities, providing career guidance, and facilitating industry collaborations.

and a library with over 3 lakh books, journals, and e-learning resources. High-tech labs cater to specialised learning, while outdoor and indoor sports facilities include gymnasiums, volleyball, basketball, badminton, table tennis, football, hockey, a running track, and a new pickleball court.

Hostels offer spacious rooms and amenities such as libraries, hospitals, canteens, study rooms, ATMs, an open-air theatre, gyms, yoga and dance classes, juice centres, laundry, salons, train reservation facilities, and computer labs. The placement cell features an auditorium, GD panel rooms, interview panels, and a conference hall, ensuring a smooth experience for both students and recruiters.

The university's highly qualified and experienced faculty deliver curriculum tailored to students, mentor entrepreneurial and innovative projects, and actively engage in research and product development. Guest faculty, seminars, and workshops further enrich learning for undergraduate and postgraduate students, fostering academic growth, practical skills, and career readiness.

Pioneering Research & Innovation

The Sathyabama Centre for Advanced Studies fosters a progressive academic and research environment with advanced facilities, including a metaverse studio, drone labs, characterisation centres, and a media hub, offering students abundant opportunities to excel.

At Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, the expansion in research infrastructure is on par with global standards, and the outcome of the methodologies and initiatives is visible in the institution's global alumni presence, with its scientists making it to the 'TOP 2%' Stanford list, global rankings, and international recognitions such as ABET, USA.

Innovation drives the institute, with annual seed grants supporting students and faculty to develop new products. This support helps startups overcome challenges, contributing to over 100 incubated startups and 349 patents granted to Sathyabama innovators. Research and development remain central to learning, resulting in over 20,000 publications. By combining cutting-edge infrastructure, mentorship, and technological resources, Sathyabama empowers students and faculty to achieve global impact, nurture entrepreneurship, and transform innovative ideas into tangible solutions.

Driving Sustainable Innovation

The institution integrates all SDGs through teaching, research, and governance, with a curriculum grounded in sustainability principles towards climate action and circular economy initiatives.

The MOES Mission Mausam Urban Test Bed at Sathyabama—the first in Tamil Nadu—features advanced atmospheric measurement systems providing real-time urban-scale data to national weather forecast models, enhancing India's forecasting capabilities.

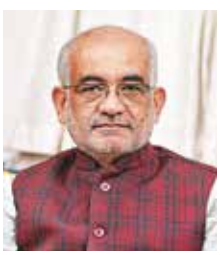
The MHRD-recognised Centre for Waste Management, a collaboration with the National Solid Waste Association of India (NSWAI), drives sustainable innovation and R&D to minimise emissions and pollution in line with Agenda 2030. Initiatives include converting cooking oil waste into biodiesel for buses and generators, turning vegetable waste into compost, and transforming food waste into biogas to achieve net-zero carbon goals. The centre also conducts community awareness programmes for villagers.



Leading a Legacy of Excellence

For nearly seven decades, BIT Mesra has been nurturing young minds, developing learning frameworks consistently ahead of their time and playing a significant role in nation-building

In the storied landscape of Indian higher education, few institutions command the respect and historical weight of the Birla Institute of Technology (BIT) Mesra. Founded in 1955 by the visionary industrialist and philanthropist BM Birla the institute was established with a singular, clear vision. This was to provide young minds with a space where their imagination could take wings and their ideas could reach fruition. Ranked amongst the top private engineering institutions in India and consistently recognised for academic rigour and research excellence, BIT Mesra continues to remain ahead of the curve by aligning education with national priorities and global technological imperatives. It is this that earns them an undisputed place as one of India's iconic institutions.



Prof Indranil Manna
Vice- Chancellor, BIT Mesra, Ranchi

"As BIT Mesra celebrated its Platinum Jubilee in 2025, we proudly commemorate seven decades of advancing a technologically empowered India. Our journey has been shaped by the unwavering dedication of 370+ brilliant faculty members whose research excellence, mentorship, and academic leadership continue to define our legacy. Today, emerging fields such as AI/ML, electric mobility, robotics, and biomedical science are reshaping global innovation, and BIT embraces these shifts by fostering interdisciplinary learning and industry-driven education to prepare future-ready leaders."

A legacy of firsts

Throughout its journey, the institution has stood tall at the confluence of tradition and transformation—nurturing generations of innovators, technocrats, researchers, and leaders who continue to shape India's industrial, technological, and academic landscape. This journey is punctuated by a series of pioneering achievements that have set national benchmarks. From its inception, BIT Mesra has boldly treaded uncharted paths, resulting in a legacy of "firsts" that defined the trajectory of technical education in India.

BIT Mesra's history is marked by pioneering milestones.

- Established the Department of Space Engineering and Rocketry in 1964, the first of its kind in the country-even before the formal establishment of ISRO.
- Initiated the concept of the Science and Technology Entrepreneurs Park (BIT-STEP) long before it became a national model, providing central facilities and expert guidance to fresh graduates.
- Became the first technical institution in India to be granted autonomous status in 1972.
- The first institution in Jharkhand to receive the prestigious AICTE IDEA lab grant, strengthening design-led innovations and experiential learning.

A continuum of research-led academic performance

At BIT Mesra, research is not an activity—it is a culture. The institute hosts advanced research infrastructure, including its high-end Central Instrumentation Facility with powder XRD, CHNS analyzer, GC-MS/MS and gas analyzer systems, allowing scholars to pursue high-impact, frontier-level research.



Prof Sudip Das
Registrar, BIT Mesra, Ranchi

"At BIT Mesra, academics are not limited to classrooms; they extend to laboratories, industries, and research ecosystems that shape students into future-ready innovators. BIT Mesra has pioneered many firsts in education and research, yet its greatest priority has always remained the growth and success of its students."

Key thrust areas include:

- Artificial intelligence, machine learning & data science
- Cybersecurity & advanced computing
- Aerospace engineering, Rocket propulsion and Aerodynamics
- Smart grids, electric vehicles & intelligent control systems
- Additive manufacturing & advanced materials
- Biomaterials, medical devices & biomedical engineering
- Environmental, remote sensing & structural engineering

Outstanding Research Outcomes:

- **₹75.81** Crore sanctioned value of sponsored research projects/ fellowship/ workshop/ national and international conference/ travel
- **₹57** Crore grant receiving
- **236** sponsored projects/fellowship/ workshop/ national and international conference/travel received
- **117** projects/fellowship/ workshop/ national and international conference/travel completed
- **12** national projects above **₹1** Crore each
- **₹5.5** Crore in industry and govt. sponsored consultancy
- Funding support from 35 national agencies
- **148** patents published and 18 granted

The institute has also been a consistent recipient of funding under three consecutive phases of TEQIP (World Bank) and has earned recognition from DRDO, DST and AICTE for excellence in research capacity building.

Specialised national facilities such as the supersonic wind tunnel, static hybrid rocket test facility, AICTE-IDEA lab, and DST-FIST supported laboratories reinforce its leadership in applied research and technology development.

A landscape for excellence

A picturesque 780-acre green campus on the outskirts of Ranchi, BIT Mesra offers a rare ecosystem where world-class education coexists with nature. Dense sal forests at the confluence of the Subarnarekha and Jumar rivers make the campus an oxygen-rich academic township with robust civil infrastructure, modern academic blocks, residential complexes, medical facilities, and extensive sports amenities.

The institute's academic footprint extends across multiple locations through its off-campuses at Patna, Deoghar, Jaipur, and Noida, along with its main campus facilities in Lalpur (Ranchi) and the University Polytechnic, Ranchi, ensuring access to quality education across regions. Life at BIT Mesra goes far beyond classrooms and laboratories. The fully residential campus houses students in 14 well-planned hostels set amidst lush greenery, encouraging vibrant intellectual exchange and community living. The 25-acre sports complex, equipped with a 400-metre athletic track, modern indoor arenas, multi-gym facilities, and multiple outdoor playfields, promotes physical fitness, discipline, teamwork, and resilience.

With 40+ active student clubs and societies, BIT Mesra fosters leadership, creativity, entrepreneurship, cultural diversity, and social responsibility. From technical fests and innovation challenges to cultural conclaves and social outreach initiatives, students experience a dynamic and enriching campus life that prepares them for real-world leadership.

It is the spirit of the people within—the students, the faculty, and the illustrious alumni who occupy leadership positions in Fortune 500 companies and global research bodies—that truly defines the institution.

Academic breadth across disciplines

BIT Mesra offers a comprehensive portfolio of undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes across engineering, architecture, sciences, pharmacy, management, computer applications, design, and emerging technologies. Programmes are continually updated to reflect industrial relevance, interdisciplinary integration, and future skill demands.

By integrating advanced technological domains with core academic rigour, the institute ensures its graduates are not only ready for the workforce but are also equipped to lead it. The institution bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, ensuring that the classroom remains a mirror to the needs of the industry.

An institution that shapes the future

Guided by its timeless motto "Sā Vidyā Yā Vimuktaye"—education that liberates—BIT Mesra continues to transform learners into innovators, problem-solvers, and global leaders. It is an environment where education is viewed as a tool for empowerment, freeing the mind to explore new possibilities and seek original solutions. As India moves decisively toward a knowledge-driven economy, BIT Mesra stands firmly positioned as an institution that not only imparts education but engineers the future. The institution's faculty members consistently feature among the top two per cent of scientists globally, as per Stanford University rankings.



The institute's commitment to excellence is reflected in high-impact research projects currently underway, funded by prestigious agencies such as the Department of Atomic Energy, DRDO, and ISRO. The research output at BIT Mesra is both diverse and impactful, touching lives through technological intervention and scientific discovery.

Engineering a knowledge-driven economy

As India moves decisively toward a knowledge-driven economy, BIT Mesra positions itself as a premier institute contributing to India's vision of a knowledge-driven economy by integrating engineering, management, and science education with innovation, entrepreneurship, and industry collaboration. Its state-of-the-art infrastructure—including a high-end Central Instrumentation Facility (CIF) and a High-Performance Computing (HPC) facility—provides the necessary tools for innovators to thrive.

End notes

In an era of rapid disruption, BIT Mesra remains a beacon of stability and a catalyst for change. It honours its rich heritage of technology and entrepreneurship while looking forward to the next frontier of human achievement. By bridging the gap between imagination and reality, BIT Mesra continues to be a cornerstone of India's technological and academic prowess.

The Alumni Quotient

The true measure of a premier academic institution lies not just in its infrastructure or curriculum, but in the enduring impact of its graduates. And BIT Mesra is glowing proof

An active and successful alumni network serves as a living bridge between an institution's storied past and its future aspirations. For an elite technical university, these former students represent the ultimate proof of concept, embodying the values of their alma mater while serving as mentors, industry connectors, and global ambassadors who translate academic training into real-world progress.

The institute's alumni community spans the globe and includes prominent leaders in technology, entrepreneurship, governance and industry. Its graduates occupy influential positions across multinational corporations, research organisations, startups, and public institutions — reinforcing the institute's role as a continuous nation-builder.

This formidable network comprises a vast global community, with active chapters across India and North America. The institute has produced a remarkable array of leaders, including the domains of:

- **Corporate leadership:** Alumni have reached the highest echelons of global business, including former CEOs of Fortune 500 companies and leaders at organisations such as Tata Steel, TCS, Infosys, and various Silicon Valley tech giants.

- **Space and research:** Given its pioneering roots in rocketry, the institute has contributed significantly to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), with numerous alumni playing key roles in landmark missions like Mangalyaan and Chandrayaan.
- **Entrepreneurship:** The institute's "firsts" in entrepreneurship have resulted in the founding of numerous successful ventures, ranging from traditional manufacturing to cutting-edge fintech and unicorn startups.
- **Public service and governance:** A significant number of graduates have excelled in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), and other wings of the civil services, contributing directly to national policy and administration.

The strength of this network is further evidenced by the immersive summer research experience (ISRE), where the alumni provide vital mentorship and institutional connections, ensuring that current students have direct access to global academic and industrial excellence.

Ultimately, the development of BIT Mesra has been profoundly shaped by the proactive involvement of its alumni. Beyond mere financial contributions, they have played a pivotal role in modernising the institute's research capabilities, facilitating international collaborations, and ensuring that the curriculum remains aligned with global industry shifts. This symbiotic relationship has transformed the institute from a centre of regional learning into a global powerhouse of innovation. By reinvesting their expertise and resources back into their alma mater, the alumni have ensured that BIT Mesra continues to produce the same calibre of visionary leaders that have defined its legacy for the last seven decades.



Manish Tiwary
Managing Director, Nestle India
Bachelor of Eng. (CSE) Class of 1989-1993

"There are some students working in my company who are from the Food Technology field, and I was pleasantly surprised by their knowledge of nutrition, ingredients, probiotics, and prebiotics."



Ganesh Natarajan
5F World & Social Venture Partners India Chairman
B.Sc. (Mechanical Eng.) Class of 1978

"The campus is as beautiful now as it was then. With professors like Prof Manna, and in our time Dr. H. C. Pandey and Dr. C. B. Mishra, I believe great progress is being made."



Ashwini Tiwary
Managing Director & Board Member
SBI, Corporate Banking & Subsidiaries
Bachelor of Eng. (Electrical & Electronics) Class of 1985 – 1989

"The learning environment at BIT Mesra was transformative — combining strong academics with the freedom to explore. It cultivated curiosity, perseverance, and collaboration, qualities that define my professional journey even today."



Aloke Singh
MD, Air India Express
MBA Class of 1985-87

"BIT Mesra taught me lessons far beyond the classroom. The campus itself became a teacher — through lifelong friendships, late-night conversations, shared challenges, and countless moments of discovery. Those years shaped who I am, instilling resilience, confidence, and leadership traits that continue to guide me every day."



Amit Chadha
CEO and Managing Director
L&T Technology Services Limited
Bachelor of Eng. (Electrical and Electronics Engineering) Class of 1992 – 1996

"I walked into BIT Mesra as a curious kid with a toolbox of dreams and walked out with skills, lifelong friends, and a mindset that says anything can be built."

GLA UNIVERSITY Redefining New Age Learning

GLA University, a premier institution of higher education, shaping futures through excellence, innovation and integrity

In the heart of Uttar Pradesh, between the timeless heritage of Mathura and the growing aspirations of modern India, stands a university that has transformed the landscape of higher education. GLA University is not just a campus; it is a story of persistence, purpose, and an unwavering belief that quality education can change lives. It is a place where ideas take shape, futures are built, and young minds discover who they are meant to become.

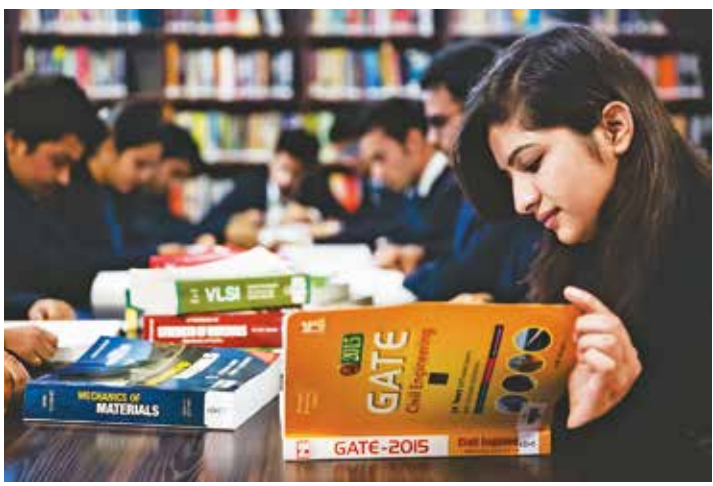
The journey began in 1998 when Shri Narayan Das Agrawal, inspired by his father's vision, established the GLA Institute of Technology and Management. What started as a sincere effort to build a strong educational foundation soon grew into the GLA Group of Institutions In 2010, this legacy took a historic leap when it was granted university status through the Uttar Pradesh State Legislative Act. Today, GLA University is recognised by the University Grants Commission with 12B status and proudly holds a NAAC A+ accreditation with a score of 3.46 on a four-point scale. Its management programmes are accredited by the International Accreditation Council for Business Education (USA), and the university is a member of the Association of Indian Universities. The Institute of Pharmaceutical Research is among the finest in the country, ranked 48th nationally by NIRF 2025.

With nearly three decades of educational excellence, GLA University stands as a vibrant academic ecosystem with over 24,000 students, 850-plus faculty members, and more than 46,000 alumni across the world. The campus has become a melting pot of disciplines and ideas. It offers programmes across Engineering, Management, Commerce, Law, Pharmacy, Agriculture, Biotechnology, Applied Sciences, Humanities, and other emerging fields. The vision that began with a single building has now grown into one of India's most trusted names in higher education.

A Reputation Built on Excellence

Over the years, GLA University has earned recognition not only for its scale but also for its strong academic standards. The University continues to rise in both global and national rankings. In the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2026, it has been placed in the 1001 to 1200 band globally and listed among the top 44 universities in India. In the QS World University Rankings Asia 2026, GLA University stands in the 781 to 790 band, and in the Southern Asia category, it holds







Shri Narayan Das Agrawal
Chancellor, GLA University

"GLA University was built with a simple belief that education should change lives. Every milestone we have achieved is a reflection of dedication, values, and collective effort. Our students remain at the heart of everything we do and every dream we pursue."

the 244th position. Outlook Magazine ranks the University number one among private universities in Uttar Pradesh and number six nationally. The University has also been placed among the top six private institutions in India for its BBA programme by another ranking.

What makes these achievements truly meaningful is the commitment behind them. With more than 272 smart classrooms, 157+ laboratories, 14 research centres, over 100 granted patents, and government-funded research worth 30 crore rupees, GLA University has built a culture that celebrates curiosity as much as knowledge.

The campus itself reflects this philosophy. Spread across 110 acres, it houses modern hostels, sports arenas, auditoriums, innovation labs, libraries, and thoughtfully designed student spaces that make learning a lively and engaging experience. From early morning lectures to late-night hackathons, the campus never loses its energy.

Mathura Campus: The Heart of Innovation

The Mathura campus remains the flagship centre of the University. With a thriving student community and a strong academic ambience, it is known for producing industry-ready graduates who carry both competence and character into their careers. The campus operates with approvals from UGC, PCI, NCTE, BCI, and several international accreditation bodies.



Greater Noida Campus

Students here benefit from a dynamic learning environment that blends classroom teaching with real-world exposure. The campus has produced thousands of research publications, supported dozens of student start-ups, and encouraged young innovators to shape ideas with social and economic impact.

The presence of industry-linked centres strengthens the bridge between academics and employment. These include the Bentley Centre of Excellence, Solar Energy Research Centres, Micro-Nano Development Research Centre, Sustainable Environmental and Agricultural Research Centre, the Centre for Computer Vision and Intelligent Systems, and more.

Greater Noida Campus: A Gateway to Industry and Innovation

In 2024, GLA University expanded its footprint with the establishment of its Greater Noida campus. This milestone was especially significant as it became the first off-campus centre set up by a private university in India. Situated close to Delhi-NCR, the centre offers industry-aligned programmes for students who aspire to build strong professional careers without relocating to Mathura.

The campus has quickly evolved into a modern hub of applied learning. The curriculum emphasises practical knowledge, exposure to emerging technologies, and real-world projects. Students learn through expert sessions on Generative AI, Data Science, Cybersecurity, Blockchain, Business Analytics, and other contemporary domains. Smaller



batches ensure personalised attention, while workshops, industry visits, and networking events help students understand corporate expectations clearly.

GLA University Online: Learning Without Boundaries

Education at GLA University extends far beyond the physical campus. Through its Centre for Distance and Online Learning, GLA Online offers premium academic programmes to learners across the country. These online courses are built on strong academic foundations and contemporary industry insights.

The learning experience is flexible, interactive, and supported by live faculty sessions, recorded classes, digital resources, and a robust Learning Management System. Weekend sessions help students balance learning with professional or personal responsibilities, while virtual proctored examinations ensure transparency and academic integrity.

GLA Online is particularly valued by working professionals and entrepreneurs who seek meaningful academic growth without disrupting their schedules.

Bridging Education and Industry

At GLA University, education goes beyond classrooms and laboratories; it extends directly into careers. Over the past five years, the University has maintained an exceptional placement record of 86%, a testament to its strong academic foundation, industry-relevant training, and student preparedness. The campus has witnessed students securing the highest packages of up to ₹60 lakh per annum, reflecting the confidence top companies place in GLA graduates.

The University's robust industry network of over 1,800 companies provides students with unparalleled access to internships, live projects, and employment opportunities. Renowned national and global firms, including Microsoft, Amazon, Google, Facebook, Deloitte, Adobe, Wipro, IBM, HDFC Bank, JP Morgan, KPMG, Infosys, HCL, Dell, Blinkit, ICICI Bank, Uno Minda, Capgemini, Cognizant, Cisco, Accenture, Tech Mahindra, Cipla, and many more, regularly recruit from GLA.

What sets GLA apart is the focus on holistic preparation. Students undergo rigorous training in both technical and soft skills, ensuring they are confident in interviews and ready to meet industry expectations. Workshops on communication, group discussions, aptitude, coding, and industry-specific tools are integrated into the curriculum, providing a competitive edge.

From corporate internships to live industry projects, the University creates opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience, understand workplace dynamics, and apply theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges.

GLA University's placement ecosystem stands as a bridge between education and employment, combining academic excellence, industry exposure, and professional readiness. The result is a new generation of graduates who are not just job-ready but future-ready, capable of making a global impact in their chosen fields.

A Global University with Worldwide Partnerships

One of the strongest pillars of GLA University's academic foundation is its global outlook. The University has



signed more than 150 international and national MoUs with institutions across the globe. These collaborations open doors to student exchange, faculty development, joint research, and curriculum enhancement. They help students gain global perspectives and prepare them to become responsible world citizens.

These partnerships are more than formal agreements. They serve as windows to the world for every GLAian. Whether it is studying abroad, attending international workshops, or engaging in collaborative research, these opportunities build confidence and broaden horizons.

Research that Makes a Difference

GLA University prides itself on being a research-intensive institution. The focus remains on experiential and project-based learning supported by advanced infrastructure. Over the last four years, more than 35 crore rupees have been invested in research, and government agencies have sanctioned over 23 crore rupees for various projects. The University maintains an impressive h-index of 90, reflecting the impact and consistency of its research output.

Faculty members and students work together on projects that address real-world challenges. From clean energy, micro-nano development, and advanced computing to environmental studies, agriculture, and artificial intelligence, the University continues to push the boundaries of knowledge.

The Spirit of Innovation

What truly sets GLA University apart is its culture of innovation. Students are encouraged to think boldly, experiment, and create. The University has supported more than 65 start-ups and continues to nurture entrepreneurial ideas through its incubation centre, SPARKL.

The Code Xperience Centre, established in collaboration with Capgemini, further strengthens this vision. It provides students with modern IT training, industry mentorship, and exposure to high-level projects that prepare them for competitive careers.



Mathura Campus

The curriculum emphasises practical knowledge, exposure to emerging technologies, and real-world projects. Students learn through expert sessions on Generative AI, Data Science, Cybersecurity, Blockchain, Business Analytics, and other contemporary domains

As a result, GLA graduates do not simply earn degrees. They graduate with the confidence to create new ideas, new ventures, and new possibilities.

A Vibrant Campus Experience

Beyond academics, GLA University focuses on shaping well-rounded individuals through a vibrant and enriching campus life. Students have access to dedicated sports arenas, cultural festivals, national-level technical events, hobby and academic clubs, and modern hostel facilities that create an energetic atmosphere throughout the year.

The campus also offers a wide range of amenities, including multiple canteens, cafes, a merchandise store, a gaming zone, an on-campus mall, healthcare services, banking facilities, and reliable transport. Together, these spaces create a warm, inclusive, and engaging environment where students can learn, unwind, explore their interests, and build lasting friendships, all within one dynamic campus.

A Legacy with Purpose

Today, as GLA University completes more than 28 years of educational excellence, its story continues to inspire. It is a story built on vision and sustained by values. It is a story of a founder who believed that education can uplift communities and a team of educators who carry that vision forward with commitment.

What makes GLA University special is not just the rankings, facilities, or infrastructure. It is the feeling of trust that students and parents carry when they walk through its gates. It is the warmth of a community that stands together. It is the belief that learning should empower, enlighten, and transform.

The University's journey is far from over. With new campuses, new programmes, global collaborations, strong research, and an unwavering focus on innovation, GLA University continues to move forward with confidence and purpose.





A Synergy of Skill, Start-ups and Success

Converting knowledge into action and ideas into impact through immersive learning experiences and global exposure to innovation strategies

In an era where the credibility of an educational institution is measured by outcomes, not claims, the IEM–UEM Group outdoes itself every year.

Over 35 years, the IEM–UEM Group, comprising the Institute of Engineering & Management (IEM), Kolkata, and the University of Engineering and Management (UEM) in Kolkata and Jaipur, has emerged as a pioneer of one of India's most outcome-oriented higher education systems.

IEM Kolkata was established in 1989 as one of West Bengal's earliest self-financed engineering institutes. Evolving with an emphasis on applied learning and industry relevance, its vision was carried forward into the group's multi-campus expansion: UEM Jaipur was set up in 2011 through a state ordinance and act of the Government of Rajasthan, and UEM Kolkata followed in 2014 under a West Bengal legislative act.

The campuses have evolved rapidly with an unwavering focus on global exposure and adaptable learning in emerging domains, culminating in exceptional placement records.

Student body and faculty power

The institutes support a massive student body, with over 4,700 students enrolled across undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes in engineering, management and allied disciplines at UEM Kolkata alone.

UEM Jaipur boasts more than 1,000 students on roll, with a faculty and support teams to match.

The Kolkata campus has a robust permanent faculty body of around 287 members, spanning professors, associate professors and assistant professors across engineering, management and applied science disciplines, with over 100 faculty holding PhDs to support advanced teaching and mentorship.

THE HIGHEST SALARY PACKAGE HAS TOUCHED RS 1 CRORE PER ANNUM AT IEM KOLKATA AND OVER ₹ 70 LAKH PER ANNUM ON THE UEM CAMPUSES

Permanent faculty collectively present research at national and international forums, with 262 papers presented in 2023–24 alone, reflecting a growing scholarly footprint.

The university also offers both full-time and part-time PhD programmes, supported by experienced guides, modern research facilities and industry-academic collaborations that encourage scholars to publish in reputed journals and present at conferences around the world.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

IEM–UEM's approach to innovation

and enterprise sets it apart, treating entrepreneurship as a vital link to success rather than an option. The Entrepreneurship Development Cell, established in 2007, enables students to pursue ventures alongside their studies with access to institutional resources and guidance.

The institute's official start-up policy permits student entrepreneurs to register companies using campus infrastructure and earn credits for working on prototypes and business models.

First-year IEM–UEM students developed more than 300 generative AI applications in a month during a 2025 hackathon. This fosters an intrapreneurial mindset, preparing graduates to innovate within large organisations as well as launch ventures of their own.

UEM Jaipur has been repeatedly recognised by NPTEL (Ministry of HRD, IISc & IITs) among the top 50 institutions nationwide, underlining strong academic fundamentals that translate into workplace readiness.

Career Outcomes and Alumni Success

The placement legacy is exceptional and over the past decade, placement trends have shown consistent growth. Each student receiving multiple offers is common for multiple batches. Some of the key recruiters include global giants like Microsoft, Amazon, Google, Accenture, TCS, Wipro, Capgemini, Oracle and Asian Paints, along with newer firms in consulting, fintech and emerging technology domains.

The highest salary package has touched Rs 1 crore per annum at IEM Kolkata and over Rs 70 lakh per annum on the UEM campuses.

Alumni have shot to leadership and specialist roles globally, such as Program Manager at SLK, Bengaluru; Project Leader at Oracle, Hyderabad; Research Lead at TCS, Kolkata; and Data Centre Operations Project Manager at Facebook, Sa Francisco. Others have co-founded companies

Shaping India's Future Leaders

Bridging borders and breaking boundaries, the IEM–UEM Group shapes students into globally competent innovators



Prof Dr Satyajit Chakrabarti
Director
Institute of Engineering & Management (IEM), Kolkata
Pro-Vice Chancellor
University of Engineering and Management (UEM), Kolkata | Jaipur

"At IEM and UEM, our goal is not just to teach, but to inspire creation and innovation. We prepare students for this real world by insisting on hands-on engagement. Every concept taught must be applied, whether through live projects, internships, or start-up incubations. We have nurtured a pipeline where nearly 400 start-ups are born each year. Students get a taste of being founders, from ideation to execution. It turns even average students into lifelong doers and problem-solvers.

In our VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) world of today, constantly adopting technology, new pedagogies, new realities, evolving every day is what keeps us at the edge of innovation. We aim to help students not only acquire technical knowledge but become socially responsible, creative leaders. We foster creativity, innovation and excellence through example-based teaching, enabling learners to apply knowledge in ways that make the world a better place."



Prof Dr Sajal Dasgupta
Vice Chancellor
University of Engineering & Management (UEM), Kolkata

"UEM Kolkata stands on a foundation of integrated teaching, research and practical application. Our dedicated faculty and flexible, industry-responsive curriculum help students translate theoretical learning into purposeful action. The university's vision has always been to cultivate professionals who are not only technically competent but also adaptive thinkers and leaders in their fields. Through strong academic structures, collaborative projects and experiential opportunities, we ensure that our students are equipped not just for the jobs of today, but for the careers of tomorrow."



Prof Dr Biswajoy Chatterjee
Vice-Chancellor
University of Engineering & Management (UEM), Jaipur

"What sets UEM apart is our relentless focus on bridging academia and industry — from sustained placements for every willing student to high-impact research, international tie-ups and conference partnerships. Our students file patents, participate in global forums and engage in real-world projects that go beyond textbook learning. We have dedicated many years to shaping young minds, and the journey has been incredibly memorable.

Our students and staff have consistently done commendable work, helping our institute's banner soar high through their excellence in various fields."



> *"My tryst with IEM etched this in me. I spent 4 years of my life (2009-13) at IEM learning about the importance of staying strong during failures and staying grounded during successes. IEM prepared me for the battleground called 'Life' where the exams are not taken subject-wise and there are no re-examinations! The values I've imbibed will stay within me throughout my life and I believe, for anyone who has been a part of the IEM family, being a good human being comes secondary to nothing."*
>
> **Parichay Bhattacharjee**
> CSE, 2013 | Manager
> Steel Authority of India Limited

or hold technical leadership positions in IBM, Juniper, and AVCO Consulting.

Many students are enrolled at well-known universities such as the University of Southern California; Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago; Saarland University, Saarbrücken, Germany; NJIT, New Jersey; University of Utah, USA; Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia; and University of Florida, with some now working at Microsoft, USA; North Carolina State University, USA; and Stony Brook University, New York.

At IEM–UEM, the placement strategy and outcomes emphasise quality, sustainability and multiple pathways over a consistent framework.

Campus Life and Recognition

The campus teems with life and activities, with at least one major academic, cultural or technical event held each day, ranging from hackathons and TEDx conferences to sustainability drives, sports meets and entrepreneurship showcases.

Initiatives such as Smart India Hackathons, TEDxUEMJaipur, UEM Carnival and daily industry lectures form a regular fixture of campus life.

Multiple academic and technical activities keep the campus and students buzzing through platforms such as AceHack, HackUEM, Smart India Hackathon and NPTEL-linked learning initiatives. Students are offered an opportunity to work on real-world problems in AI, cybersecurity, blockchain and data science.

Industry conclaves, daily expert lectures and research-oriented forums also expose students early to the professional universe.

Student-led initiatives such as TEDxUEMJaipur, UEM Carnival and wellness programmes like the UEM Cyclothon are organised alongside academic activities and also enable the students to achieve credits.

International collaborations with institutions in France, the UK, Japan and the US support exchange programmes, joint research and foreign semesters.

National recognition and mentorship

The IEM–UEM Group has been selected by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) as a Mentor Institute, a title accorded to institutions with proven academic quality and result oriented strategies.

IEM–UEM supports and guides emerging institutions in designing the curriculum, recruitment and development of faculty and quality benchmarks.

The IEM and UEM campuses hold NAAC accreditation and feature in NIRF rankings, with consistent performance across teaching, research and graduate outcomes. UEM Kolkata has earned "AAA" status in the NPTEL programme and secured top rankings multiple times.

UEM Jaipur features in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings



Awards and Accolades

With rapid growth and a global presence, the IEM–UEM Group juxtaposes world-class academics, industry collaboration, and innovative learning to create entrepreneurs and leaders

IEM Kolkata – Legacy of Excellence

- Founded in 1989, NAAC A-grade institute with NBA-accredited eligible departments.
- Accolades include Times Knowledge Icon, ET Industry Leaders, Best Engineering College of West Bengal by French Consul General (Times Business Awards 2023).
- Alumni achievements include higher studies at Harvard, Cambridge, Columbia, Imperial College London, IISc, IITs and IIMs.
- Corporate placements in top companies like Amazon, Google, Facebook, Oracle, GE, HSBC, with packages up to ₹80 LPA.
- Over 500 startups, patents, and publications by students; robust study abroad programmes in USA, Canada, Australia, France, Singapore, UK.
- Strong focus on hands-on, applied learning, including hackathons, coding events, cultural events, and national/international conferences.
- Doctoral programmes with over 300 registered scholars and 100 supervisors, enhancing research and innovation output.

UEM Jaipur- A Meteoric Rise

- Established in 2012, now NAAC accredited, AICTE approved, ISO certified, and member of AIU (India), ACU (UK), and IAU (France).
- Ranked 1st in Times B-School ranking for Rajasthan and top in Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) ranking by Ministry of Education, Government of India.
- Selected as AICTE Mentor Institute and among top 50 institutions under AICTE LITE program.
- Highest placement package: ₹72 LPA, with all 2022 batch students placed.
- MoUs and partnerships with ESC Rennes, Brunel University, Iwate Prefectural University, University of Nevada, Las Vegas for research and student/faculty exchange.
- Authorised academic partner of Palo Alto Networks, Cisco Networking Academy, AWS Academy, and Centre of Excellence for Blockchain Technology by India Blockchain Alliance.
- Recognised as Sustainable Institution of India (Gold Band, A Grade) in The Green Rankings 2023.
- Physiotherapy department rated 4-star (2021–24) by Indian Association of Physiotherapists.
- Conducted 1300 events over the last two years, including seminars, webinars, FDPs, workshops and lectures.

Shared Wins

- Embedded entrepreneurship as a core part of education, with funding, incubation, and support for student ventures.
- Maintained academic continuity during the pandemic, ensuring no loss of teaching days, uninterrupted evaluations, and placement opportunities.
- Comprehensive industry collaborations with over 400 companies, including internships, live projects, and placements.
- NPTEL initiatives: compulsory credit courses every semester; top-ranked institute in Rajasthan for enrollments and results.
- Global exposure with students participating in international conferences and research symposia at Harvard, Columbia, University of Sydney, UBC.

2025, and is nationally accredited with strong NIRF and NPTEL standings, reflecting the ecosystem's sustained excellence and global outlook.

Pioneering growth

Practices now common in private higher education became an integral part of the IEM–UEM model early in its inception. Before experiential learning became a policy catchphrase, the institution made hands-on application mandatory for every core concept, integrating projects, laboratories, industry assignments and live problem-solving into the curriculum.

The dedicated Entrepreneurship Development Cell Formal has ensured entrepreneurship education since the mid-2000s, with mentoring and support across semesters.

A non-academic credit framework formally acknowledges leadership roles, community work, interdisciplinary engagement and student mentorship programmes. Sustained CSR-linked outreach initiatives and international exposure platforms such as the three-continent experiential learning programme reinforce the vision.

Transforming Tribal Lives

Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences stands as a model for how education can serve as a tool for social justice, sustainable development, and global citizenship





Prof Achyuta Samanta
Founder, KIIT & KISS (Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology & Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences), Former Member of Parliament

"KISS has always been my dream work — something I have built with care, affection, and complete dedication. It is home to 80,000 poor tribal children whose lives are being transformed every day through education & values"

In the heart of Odisha, India, lies an institution that has redefined the landscape of education for indigenous communities. The Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), a deemed-to-be university under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956, Bhubaneswar, stands as a beacon of hope for tribal children, combining holistic education, skill development, and social empowerment under one expansive umbrella. More than a school, more than a college, more than a university—KISS is a transformative force, dedicated to eradicating poverty through the power of education.

Founded in 1992–93 by Prof Achyuta Samanta, a visionary educationist and philanthropist, KISS began its journey in a modest rented house with just 125 tribal students with the objective to provide quality education. Over the decades, KISS has grown into a sprawling institution, encompassing four main campuses covering over 42 lakh square feet, with additional infrastructure under development. Today, it educates over 40,000 students on campus and has nurtured an alumni network of more than 40,000, impacting the lives of over 500,000 indigenous children.





A Foundation for Transformation

Quality education lies at the core of KISS's mission. The institute delivers inclusive, need-based education that empowers children, fosters critical thinking, and nurtures empathy and collaboration. KISS's commitment to excellence is evident in its 100% pass rate for Class 10 and 12 board examinations for the past 20 years and its zero-dropout policy. This remarkable achievement ensures that tribal children, often from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, receive uninterrupted



education, enabling them to aspire and achieve.

KISS offers "KG to PG" and doctoral programs, with free education, lodging, healthcare, and food for all students. By blending academic excellence with practical skills and social awareness, KISS exemplifies quality education that extends far beyond the classroom.

A Holistic Ecosystem

The four main campuses, spanning over 42 lakh square feet, feature multipurpose dining halls, modern classrooms, hostels, and extensive sports infrastructure. Satellite centres with 100% female students ensure that gender equity is upheld across regions.

From arts and culture to sports and entrepreneurship, students have the freedom and resources to explore their potential. Programmes are delivered in multiple languages and incorporate experiential learning, ensuring that students remain engaged and motivated.

The institute's approach to education also emphasises holistic well-being, with free healthcare, nutritious meals (over 160,000 served daily), and a safe, inclusive campus atmosphere. This unique combination of academic rigour, vocational training, and personal development fosters well-rounded individuals who are ready to contribute to society meaningfully.







Sports Excellence

KISS's focus on sports as a platform for innovation and skill development further underscores its unique approach. With 18 international standard sports complexes, including gyms, swimming pools, indoor courts, cycling velodromes, and yoga facilities, KISS nurtures over 5000 sports talents, including Olympians. Students have excelled internationally, winning the U-14 Rugby World Championships in London (2007), International Rugby Festivals in Manchester (2011), and more. The Guinness World Record in Volleyball (2024) highlights KISS's ability to combine large-scale participation, innovation, and sportsmanship.

Industry Collaboration

KISS's educational model is strategically aligned with industry needs and community development goals. The curriculum seamlessly integrates vocational training into formal education, equipping students with market-relevant skills. Age-based training groups, from sub-junior to super-senior levels, receive tailored vocational guidance, enabling students to develop competencies across 50 trades, in areas such as computer training, composite farming, food processing, animal husbandry, tailoring, curd making, bakery, soft toys, and photo framing.



The "Earn While You Learn" program not only provides practical exposure and financial independence but also fosters entrepreneurial thinking. Students actively participate in product creation, market their products, and share profits, bridging the gap between education and employability. By linking skills to productivity, KISS ensures that students are not only academically proficient but also economically empowered.

Global Partnerships

KISS has collaborated with organisations such as UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, UNV, UNESCO, and sports organisations like FIFA and FIVB, opening avenues for

international collaboration and exposure. This alignment with global standards ensures that tribal students are prepared for competitive national and international environments while contributing meaningfully to local communities.

Research and Innovation

Innovation is deeply ingrained in KISS's ethos. Beyond academics, the institute fosters research and creative problem-solving through projects, student initiatives, and international collaborations. KISS actively integrates the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into research, projects, and curriculum design, enabling students to address global challenges such as poverty, hunger, inequality, gender disparity, and climate change.

The university's achievements in innovation are exemplified by initiatives like skill training units, vocational research in sustainable practices, and small-scale entrepreneurial ventures. Students are encouraged to think critically, experiment, and develop solutions that have real-world impact, embodying the spirit of research-driven learning.

Empowering the Marginalised

As the first university in the world exclusively for tribals, it has pioneered education for indigenous communities. An institution that believes in inclusivity, students come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, including areas affected by left-wing extremism, and are offered a safe, nurturing environment to learn, grow, and thrive.



Emphasising girl-child education, with 60% female enrolment, KISS ensures gender equity and leadership opportunities. Programs like "Kalinga Fellowship" and "Kanya Kiran" nurture leadership skills and vocational education among girls, empowering them to pursue careers in medicine, engineering, civil services, and beyond.

KISS extends its impact beyond its campuses through outreach initiatives. By integrating children from insurgency-affected families, KISS not only promotes peace and social cohesion but also provides pathways for economic independence and leadership.

Programmes like "New Mind, New Dream" have reached over 100,000 adolescents in government schools across Odisha, promoting life skills, leadership, and community engagement.

With over 80,000 indigenous students impacted and 6 Guinness World Records to its credit, KISS demonstrates how inclusive education can create meaningful societal transformation.

Transforming Lives and Communities

KISS's impact is reflected in the lives it has transformed over 500,000 indigenous children and the 8 lakh tribal families impacted over three decades. KISS Alumni have excelled in civil services,

CHANGE MAKERS



Hemanta Puta | Hupi Majhi | Jagajjiban Majhi | Jyoshna Sabar | Magai Majhi | Mantu Khamari | Ranjit Naik | Sadhak Karjee

national and international sports, entrepreneurship, and social leadership, embodying the values of empathy, resilience, and innovation. The institution's graduates serve as changemakers in their communities, uplifting families, advocating social development, and addressing pressing societal issues.

Sustainability is central to KISS's identity. Every aspect of the institution, from curriculum design to campus operations, aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Initiatives promote quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), good health (SDG 3), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16). Through sustainable practices, vocational training, and community outreach, KISS cultivates socially responsible citizens prepared to lead with integrity.



World-wide Recognition

Globally, KISS has received recognition for its model of inclusive education. It holds a Special Consultative Status with the UN-ECOSOC (2015), has won the UNESCO International Literacy Prize (2022), the International Green Gown Award for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (2023), and the 18th Energy Globe World Award (2017). These accolades underscore KISS's excellence in education, innovation, and sustainable development.

Global Outreach Bridging Borders

KISS's impact extends far beyond India. With an international branch in Bangladesh through a collaboration and global partnerships with UN agencies, FIFA, and FIVB, KISS fosters cross-cultural learning, research collaboration, and international sports development. The institution has hosted UN dignitaries, Nobel laureates, and spiritual leaders like the Dalai Lama, demonstrating its stature as a global hub for education and social innovation.

Through these efforts, KISS not only elevates the educational standards for tribal children but also provides them with a global platform to showcase their talent, resilience, and leadership capabilities.

From humble beginnings to becoming the first exclusive tribal university in the world, KISS embodies the transformative power of education. KISS with its vision, infrastructure, holistic curriculum, and unwavering commitment to inclusivity, KISS continues to inspire the world, proving that when education is accessible, equitable, and empowering, it can change not only individual lives but entire communities.

KISS is a testament to what is possible when vision, dedication, and innovation converge—a living example of education as a force for empowerment, equality, and enduring societal impact.





Pioneering Transformative Education

SRM University-AP, one of the top universities of India, outshines as a hub of innovation, delivering academic excellence toward creating future-ready leaders

A pioneer of holistic education and research innovation, SRM University-AP is paving a transformative wave of educational excellence and student well-being.

Since 2017, the university has been creating marvels in higher education, transforming into a multidisciplinary research-intensive university of international repute. With three academic schools - the School of Engineering and Sciences, the Easwari School of Liberal Arts, and the Paari School of Business—offering a high order of education, the university embarks to be globally connected, nationally relevant, and regionally transformative.

Industry-centric Pedagogy Driving Academic Excellence

Believing in the power of education to transform lives, the university's interdisciplinary research-oriented undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes ensure global exposure and entrepreneurial experience for our students. With its innovative pedagogy and state-of-the-art infrastructure, SRM University-AP hones its academic excellence through an outcome-based education (OBE), purpose-driven learning approach, and meticulous curriculum.

The addition of minor courses, open electives, ability enhancement courses, value-added courses, skill enhancement courses, internships, and projects, to the chosen core course and specialisation, provides a solid foundation of in-depth knowledge of their selected domain with practical exposure and with a multidisciplinary edge.

The school also hosts a diverse range of professors of practice and visiting industry experts alongside regular faculty, offering students invaluable insights into real-world market and industry requirements.

Thriving Research & Innovation Ecosystem

With 11000+ students, 500+ faculty members and 550+ research scholars, the university facilitates a dynamic high-tech platform that brings international-quality education and research within the





Prof. Ch. Satish Kumar
Vice Chancellor

"We remain committed to pushing boundaries to cultivate a supportive ecosystem that nurtures holistic development and inspires innovation. At SRM University–AP, we strive to shape visionary leaders and build a lasting legacy of excellence for generations to come."

reach of university's academic community.

The world-class research infrastructure facilitates advanced research in all sciences, technology, and management domains. Anchored by seven Interdisciplinary Research Centres of Excellence and 80+ advanced laboratories with world-class equipment and facilities, research is ingrained into the very fabric of the varsity's educational approach.

A monumental achievement in the research front, the university has achieved an H-index of 76 with an astounding portfolio of 4000+ Scopus/ Wos journal publications, 570 patents published with 70 patents granted, 122 sponsored projects worth Rs.45.20 Cr. from agencies such as DST-SERB SURE, DST-FIST, DST-TDT-TDP.

There are 111 Industry and consultancy projects worth Rs.6.52 Cr.

A dynamic ecosystem of innovation,



design, and entrepreneurship is seamlessly integrating into the academic framework to build entrepreneurial talent right from undergraduate programmes. Through dedicated technology business incubator named Hatch lab Research Centre (HRC), Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning and the Centre for Social Entrepreneurship, the university has successfully incubated over 40 startups, reflecting the university's strong commitment to nurturing entrepreneurial talent.

Over the past seven years, HRC has established more than 20 strategic MoUs with reputed industry partners, providing robust mentorship, funding access, and infrastructure support, ensuring that students are equipped with the mindset, skills, and exposure required to translate ideas into impactful ventures.

Commitment to Placement Success

The close interaction between the university and the leading company in the industry is the backbone of the university's placement records. The Destination Japan initiative place SRM AP students in reputed Japanese companies in key engineering domains.

To enhance students' employability skills and professional competitiveness, the Academy for Industry Readiness (AIR) at SRM University-AP delivers company-specific training and specialised language programs, enabling students to meet international industry standards. The academy offers company-specific training and language training programs to make them industry-ready for placements in international companies in countries such as Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Germany, and France.

Championing the legacy of remarkable placement success, the university continues to successfully place its students in prestigious companies such as Barclays, Deloitte, Bosch, Samsung, HP, JPMorgan and Chase, BNY Mellon, TOSHIBA, Amazon, and PayPal, among 1300+ recruitment partners. In the latest placement season, the highest salary offered was 46.37 LPA.

Leading the Way

Recognised with Diamond Rating for Institutional Excellence by the QS-I GUAGE and ranked No. 1 in the Top Emerging Engineering Institutes in India, No. 1 in Emerging BBA Institutes by the Times Ranking Survey, SRM University-AP brings quality education and international exposure to the ground roots of the country. Renowned for its commitment to overall distinction and positive ambition, the university stands as a beacon of transformative education, pushing the limits and achieving recognition.



The Making of Medical Excellence

At 125 years, Christian Medical College, Vellore, juxtaposes exceptional academics, groundbreaking research and a reputation for compassion

Celebrating its 125th year, the Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, is one of India's most enduring and respected institutions, and has set a benchmark for healthcare education in India.

From a humble clinic founded in 1900 by Dr Ida Sophia Scudder, the institution is now a multi-disciplinary medical university and hospital, with multiple campuses. It has developed from a single-bed dispensary to a 3,675-bed tertiary and quaternary care institution renowned over the world.

A consistent commitment to serving humanity through "education, service and research" lies at the heart of this success and global identity.

The hospital sees over 9,000 outpatients and more than 2,000 inpatients. Spread across seven campuses in Vellore and Andhra Pradesh, the institute bridges rural healthcare delivery and advanced specialised medicine, serving communities at every level.

A mission for academic excellence

At the heart of CMC's mission is a commitment to provide quality education, offering a wide array of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes in medicine, nursing, allied health sciences and related disciplines. According to Dr Vikram Mathews, Director of CMC Vellore, "At CMC, our purpose is to blend scientific excellence with compassionate service. We pursue research that reshapes clinical practice, train health professionals who lead with integrity, and deliver care that transforms lives across communities."

His words chime in perfectly with Dr Ida Scudder's founding principles that envisioned medicine as both science and ministry.

This ethos continues to guide CMC well into the current era, with all its challenges and opportunities.

National recognition and distinctions

CMC Vellore secured the third rank among medical institutions in India in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025, released by the Ministry of Education. It performed with excellence in key parameters like teaching, learning and resources and graduation outcomes, on a par with institutions such as AIIMS and PGIMER.

The students have access to excellent modern facilities on its 200-acre main campus at Bagayam, including advanced laboratories, well-stocked libraries and accommodations for over 2,600 persons.

Its hospital infrastructure includes 106 wards, 11 intensive care units and 40 operation theatres with an average of 185 operations performed daily.

Groundbreaking research and innovation

The CMC's research provided inputs for the national poliomyelitis immunisation policy and influenced treatment and rehabilitation policies for leprosy.

Senior researchers like Professor Gagandeep Kang have conducted foundational studies on rotavirus epidemiology, contributing to the development of Indian rotavirus vaccines into the National Immunisation Programme.

The CMC also houses the Centre for Stem Cell Research, recognised by the Government of India as a centre of excellence.

Alongside, it collaborates with leading global universities and research organisations and regularly hosts national and international conferences to promote research methodology training and exchange.

History of major medical milestones

The CMC's history is inseparable from the evolution of advanced medical care in India. It pioneered the



first open-heart surgery in India in 1962, the first kidney transplant in 1971 and the first bone marrow transplant in 1986.

Immense scope of healthcare outreach

The CMC's network of hospitals provides care across primary, secondary and tertiary settings, and partners with over 170 mission hospitals across India.

Its community health programmes, mobile clinics and public healthcare services have achieved near-universal immunisation coverage and reduced maternal and infant mortality in underserved areas, through units like Community Health and Development (CHAD) and Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs (RUHSA).

Faculty, students and alumni impact

The CMC's commitment to excellence is sustained by over 1,000 highly-qualified faculty across campuses. The student body comprises those from India and abroad, facilitating a rich cultural and intellectual environment.

Graduates of CMC have excelled as clinicians, researchers, educators and policymakers worldwide, with distinguished alumni such as Dr Gagandeep Kang, the first Indian woman elected Fellow of the Royal Society, Dr Ajit Varki, a distinguished professor of medicine and cellular and molecular Medicine at the University of California, San Diego and a leading figure in glycobiology research, Dr Priya Abraham, director of the National Institute of Virology (Pune), leading early SARS-CoV-2 isolation efforts in India.

Medical firsts

1962
India's first open-heart surgery

1971
First kidney transplant in the country

1986
First bone marrow transplant in India

Dr Khursheed Jeejeebhoy, Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto, pioneered nutritional support programmes in clinical gastroenterology and founded training initiatives in Canada.

A legacy of care and fruitful collaborations

CMC Vellore is also developing its Chittoor campus in partnership with the Azim Premji Foundation. The campus is designed as a replicable model of affordable, socially responsive medical education, healthcare delivery and community outreach for India.

As Dr Matthews said, "Our dream is that the new medical college and teaching hospital at our Chittoor Campus will offer a replicable model of relevant medical education, healthcare delivery, research, and outreach, sensitive to the financial, societal and resource constraints of our nation. We are immensely grateful to the Azim Premji Foundation for partnering with us on this journey as CMC Vellore steps into her 125th anniversary in 2025."

With over 125 years of service and innovation, the CMC offers sustained excellence in education, research and healthcare delivery and earns its place among India's most iconic institutions.

It continues to bridge global standards with local needs, defining what medical education and compassionate care can achieve in the 21st century.

Accolades

* **NIRF 2025 (Medical Category): Ranked No. 3 in India**
* **Recognised globally for excellence in clinical care, medical education and translational research**
* **Home to the Centre for Stem Cell Research**
* **Alumni and faculty regularly contribute to WHO, ICMR, global clinical trials and international policy bodies**



JSS AHER- Where Tradition Meets Tomorrow

From cultural heritage to cutting-edge innovation, JSS AHER emerges as India's premier institution shaping the future of global health and education

Set against the cultural richness of Mysuru and grounded in a legacy of spiritual wisdom, the JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research (JSS AHER) stands today as one of India's most respected and rapidly rising universities in the health sciences domain. Established in 2008 and nurtured under the visionary guidance of His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji, the institution has flourished under the leadership of Pro Chancellor, Dr B Suresh and Vice Chancellor, Dr H Basavanagowdappa. Over the last decade and a half, JSS AHER has transformed from a promising health sciences institution into a global academic and research powerhouse blending heritage with innovation, compassion with science, and education with impact.

Accredited with the prestigious NAAC A++ Grade, the highest possible distinction, JSS AHER has demonstrated excellence across academic quality, governance, research output, innovation culture, and institutional best practices. These achievements are not isolated benchmarks—they reflect a deep, sustained commitment to the university's mission*: to shape individuals and contribute meaningfully to global health outcomes.*

A Vibrant Academic Ecosystem

JSS AHER offers a remarkably diverse academic landscape spread across the Faculties of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Biomedical Sciences, Life Sciences, Yoga, and Management Studies. More than 9000 students, representing India and over 25 countries, find JSS AHER an inclusive, intellectually stimulating, and culturally vibrant environment, with a global outlook.

Aligned with India's National Education Policy (NEP 2020), the university's growth embraces competency-based curricula, interdisciplinary models, digital education, and AI-integrated teaching tools. This fusion of tradition and futuristic pedagogy has redefined how students learn, collaborate, and innovate.

With 190+ academic programmes, including undergraduate, postgraduate, super-speciality, doctoral, and postdoctoral opportunities, JSS AHER addresses every corner of the health sciences spectrum. It is also pioneering new-age programmes such as Artificial Intelligence in Health Sciences, Data Science & Bioinformatics, Regulatory Sciences, Medical Devices & Diagnostics, Translational Medicine and Precision Health & Personalised Therapeutics. These forward-looking disciplines prepare graduates for a world where healthcare is increasingly data-driven, technology-enabled, and globally interconnected.

Rankings & Accreditations

JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research (JSS AHER), Mysuru, has strengthened its national and global reputation by achieving top-tier rankings in 2025, positioning itself among India's premier health sciences universities. These rankings reflect the university's long-standing leadership in pharmacy, strong medical and dental education standards, and overall excellence in health sciences.

This ranking reflects JSS AHER's strong global impact in:

- ✓ Healthcare delivery and public health innovation
- ✓ Community-focused education initiatives
- ✓ Translational research and industry partnerships
- ✓ Multi-sector international collaborations

With this achievement, JSS AHER has reinforced its status as one of India's highest-ranked universities globally for sustainable development and societal transformation. These achievements underline JSS AHER's commitment to global sustainability, community health, educational quality, and multi-sectoral partnerships.

Global Learning Initiatives

Internationalisation is another cornerstone of JSS AHER's approach to education. Collaborative ventures with global institutions, including the University of Arizona, the University



Dr B Suresh
Pro-Chancellor, JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research, Mysore, Karnataka

"It gives me immense happiness to state that all the members of JSS AHER are committed in creating a vibrant future for this institution. To achieve this end, the academy has an excellent strategic plan, one that builds on the legacy of success. Implemented by the JSS Mahavidyapeetha, it provides quality education to the country by combining academic excellence with an unprecedented dedication to innovation, quality and service so that each constituent college of the academy is the best amongst its peers and is recognised as such. This is your academy, and the legacy of greatness that we must carry forward belongs to our future."



Dr H Basavanagowdappa
Vice-Chancellor, JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research, Mysore, Karnataka.

"I am delighted to share that, JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research continues to strengthen its legacy of excellence through impactful research, interdisciplinary innovation, and a strong commitment to societal well-being. Our consistent performance in National and International rankings, along with prestigious accreditations, stands testimony to our quality standards and academic rigor. Together, we remain committed to nurturing future-ready professionals and contributing meaningfully to national development and global progress."

National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) India Rankings 2025

- JSS AHER (University Category): Rank 21 in India
- JSS College of Pharmacy, Ooty: Rank 4 (Pharmacy Category)
- JSS College of Pharmacy, Mysuru: Rank 7 (Pharmacy Category)
- JSS Dental College & Hospital, Mysuru: Rank 10 (Dental Category)
- JSS Medical College, Mysuru: Rank 37 (Medical Category)

Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2025

- Global Rank: 56th (among the Top 1% of institutions worldwide contributing to the UN SDGs)

Category-wise Highlights (2025):

- SDG 3: Good Health & Well-being – Global Top 50
- SDG 4: Quality Education – Global Top 100
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure – Global Top 100
- SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals – Global Top 200



A Powerhouse of Research & Innovation

While teaching forms a strong pillar, research is the heartbeat of JSS AHER. In recent years, the institution has emerged as one of India's fastest-growing research universities, with outcomes that place it prominently on the global map. Its remarkable research achievements include:

- **15,181** publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science
- **214,509** citations (Scopus) and **124,744** citations (Web of Science)
- H-index of **135** (Scopus) and **120** (Web of Science)
- **257** patents, of which **62** are granted
- **453** research scholars supported by competitive government funding
- **₹119+** crore secured through national and international research grants

These accomplishments speak to a thriving research environment—one that is collaborative, interdisciplinary, socially impactful, and globally engaged.

of California, NIH (USA), Oxford University, Howard University, the Karolinska Institute, and Loughborough University, create pathways for student and faculty exchange, joint research projects, global immersion programmes, and international fellowships. These partnerships align with the university's commitment to ensuring its learners are not just industry-ready but world-ready.

From nanotechnology-powered drug delivery, advanced molecular therapeutics, and infectious disease diagnostics to AI-driven clinical decision support and healthcare data analytics, these centres are shaping the future of medical science and healthcare innovation.

Major national funding initiatives power this accelerated innovation landscape. The DST-PURSE Grant of ₹17.35 crore strengthens molecular therapeutics and medical device development; DST-FIST and DBT-BUILDER grants enhance advanced instrumentation and interdisciplinary biotechnology research; and the India Alliance's CTRITH & TeamScience initiatives place JSS AHER at the forefront of cutting-edge research on tribal health, air pollution, and public health challenges.

Further elevating research capabilities is the University Sophisticated Instrumentation Centre (USIC), a world-class hub housing advanced equipment for imaging, spectroscopy, chromatography, molecular biology, nano-analysis, and more. This facility supports both fundamental research and industry partnerships, enabling high-quality, high-impact scientific inquiry.





A Futuristic Global Campus

As JSS AHER moves into its next era of growth, it is preparing to unveil one of its most ambitious projects yet—the International Varuna Global Campus, envisioned as a global hub for innovation, research, and multidisciplinary education.

Spread across a vast green landscape on the outskirts of Mysuru, the Varuna campus is designed as a state-of-the-art academic space integrating modern laboratories, digital and AI-driven learning centres, interdisciplinary research clusters, and industry-collaboration zones. It promises to be a future-ready ecosystem where education transcends traditional boundaries.



Centers of Excellence

The university's research strength is amplified through its high-impact Centres of Excellence (CoEs), driving breakthrough innovation each designed to address emerging global health challenges and technological opportunities. These include:

- Molecular Biology & Regenerative Medicine
- Nano-Engineering Science & Technology (NEST)
- Centre for Clinical Research Excellence (CCRE)
- Centre for Regulatory Sciences (COReS)
- Artificial Intelligence in Health Sciences
- SPARKLE CINE – Clinical Innovation & Entrepreneurship Hub
- TIFAC-CORE, CPT, and the Molecular Diagnostic Lab for Infectious Diseases

The key features include world-class academic blocks, skill labs, and advanced research facilities; innovation ecosystems supporting incubation, entrepreneurship, and healthcare technology development; international-standard infrastructure to host global programmes, dual degrees, and transnational education; and dedicated schools in Life Sciences, Artificial Intelligence in Health, Public Health, Medical Technology, Biotechnology, and Global Business Studies.

The Varuna Global Campus is a multicultural environment designed to welcome a growing community of international students. It is poised to position JSS AHER as a leader in global health sciences education, one that not only responds to the challenges of the 21st century but anticipates them.

Towards Global Impact

JSS AHER's evolution reflects a deeper ethos: education as a catalyst for societal transformation. Through its integrated healthcare system, community outreach programmes, rural health initiatives, and translational research efforts, the university contributes substantially to improving health outcomes across India and beyond.

The institution's expanded global footprint will only amplify its impact in strengthening global health systems, advancing international research collaboration, driving innovation across pharma, biotechnology, biomedical engineering, and healthcare AI, and building industry-ready skills for the next generation, while empowering communities through accessible, high-quality education and healthcare.

A Model for Modern India

From its spiritual foundations to its academic achievements and its dynamic global aspirations, JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research has become a compelling model for what a modern Indian university can be: rooted in values, inspired by innovation, and committed to global excellence.

Its journey is built on leadership, dedication, and vision that continue to inspire students, researchers, healthcare professionals, and communities across India and the world. As it steps confidently into the future, especially with the launch of the Varuna Global Campus, JSS AHER stands poised to shape the next generation of global health leaders and scientific innovators. The story of JSS AHER is not just about education—it is about purpose, progress, and the promise of a healthier world.



Where Law Meets Leadership and Social Impact



CMR University School of Legal Studies, shaping sharp minds, innovative thinkers, and confident professionals of future India through holistic legal education

CMR University School of Legal Studies (SoLS), established in 2003 in Bengaluru, is a top-ranked, Bar Council of India–approved institution committed to shaping skilled and ethical legal professionals. A constituent school of CMR University, it is consistently ranked among the top private law schools in India.

Holistic Legal Education

Established in 2003, it focuses on experiential learning, using a "design thinking pedagogy" to prepare students for a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) world. Key features include moot courts, legal clinics, and a focus on social responsibility, purpose-driven and industry-aligned legal education.



Prof (Dr) T R Subramanya
Dean, CMR University School of Legal Studies

SoLS has earned national recognition for student achievements in moot courts, debates, model parliaments, and university examinations. It emphasises innovation in curriculum and professional development, aspiring to be a premier centre of excellence in legal education.

"Many institutions focus primarily on corporate law and theoretical subjects, often ignoring ground realities such as communication skills, community engagement, and rural development. For example, very few graduates contribute to the judiciary, with less than 2% becoming judges. Recognising this gap, our programme emphasises training students for local judiciary roles, enabling career growth up to the Supreme Court of India." emphasises Prof (Dr) T R Subramanya.

Academic Benchmark

At CMR University School of Legal Studies (CMRU SoLS), legal education goes beyond traditional classroom learning, offering a curriculum designed to blend creativity with industry relevance. Students benefit from programmes that emphasise critical thinking, practical legal research, and interdisciplinary knowledge, preparing them for dynamic legal careers.

Experiential learning is a cornerstone of the SoLS approach, with students actively participating in moot court competitions, mock trials, and legal clinics, enabling them to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. Equally important is the focus on purpose and social impact; CMRU SoLS strives to cultivate ethical, socially responsible, and well-rounded legal professionals who contribute meaningfully to society.

The institution also invests in modern infrastructure and technology, providing access to advanced legal research tools such as Manupatra and HeinOnline, alongside virtual classrooms that support flexible learning. This combination of innovative pedagogy, hands-on experience, ethical grounding, and technological resources ensures students are thoroughly prepared for the challenges of the legal profession.

The institution offers 5-year integrated BA/BBA LL.B, 3-year LL.B, LL.M and Ph.D (Law) programmes with a strong focus on academic rigour, research, practical training, and community engagement.

Bridging Law and Society

A key skill emphasised in the programme is community education. Most law students are often unaware of real-world issues such as poverty and the challenges faced by rural populations. To address this, the programme organises legal aid initiatives in remote villages with the support of state authorities. Initially, students conduct surveys to determine how many villagers possess essential



documents, including ration cards, death certificates, land registration papers, or driving licences. In most cases, the majority of villagers lack these crucial documents. The programme then collaborates with legal authorities to facilitate the on-site issuance of these documents, empowering villagers and making legal processes more accessible.

Through such grassroots engagements, students gain an understanding of the practical impact of law and the importance of social responsibility. They acquire first-hand experience in preparing surveys, interacting with villagers, and navigating legal documentation. In addition to academics, students are evaluated on community service, debating, and other essential skills.

By integrating legal knowledge with community engagement, the programme ensures that students are well-prepared to contribute meaningfully to society while developing practical, professional, and leadership skills.

Real-World Learning

The Centre for Skill Development bridges the gap between academic legal studies and the practical demands of the legal profession. It equips students with essential professional, practical, and soft skills, ensuring they are academically proficient and workplace-ready. The centre emphasises experiential learning through moot courts, debates, legal aid camps, research projects, and industry internships. It provides specific training in legal research, writing, verbal aptitude, and other core competencies. With a focus on employability, students receive pre-placement guidance and competitive exam preparation. Additionally, the centre familiarises students with international legal standards, preparing them for diverse and successful careers in law.

Futuristic Vision

The institution envisions nurturing law students who are not only academically excellent but also committed to serving the country. The goal is set to prepare students to excel in the judiciary, law firms, academia, and public service, enabling them to reach the highest echelons of the legal profession, including the Supreme Court. Unlike traditional approaches that focus solely on corporate or commercial law careers, the vision of SoLS emphasises holistic development, practical experience, and social responsibility, ensuring that every student is empowered to pursue a meaningful and impactful legal career. “Our mission is to shape lawyers who excel not just in courtrooms or corporate offices but as socially responsible professionals capable of serving the nation, advancing justice, and making a meaningful impact at every level of the legal system.” Says Prof (Dr) T R Subramanya.



Empowering Global Change-Makers

IIMA promoting excellence in scholarship, nurturing leaders, impacting the world of policy and practice, and educating for development through the application of knowledge

The Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) in Gujarat is acknowledged as the leading school for management studies in India and one of the most prestigious business schools in the world. Established in 1961, the UGC institute offers master's degree programs in management and agribusiness management, a fellowship program, and a number of executive training programs.

The foundation of the institution was laid by visionaries like the Indian physicist Vikram Sarabhai, renowned businessman Kasturbhai Lalbhai, and a famous educator, Kamla Chowdhary, among others. Prof. Ravi J. Matthai was the first full-time director of IIMA, who brought in a global perspective over six decades ago. As one of India's premier Indian institutes of management, it has been accorded the status of an 'Institute of National Importance' by the Ministry of Human Resources, Government of India, in 2017. IIMA was the first B-School to receive the EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) accreditation from the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD).

IIM Ahmedabad (IIMA) has secured the #1 rank in the NIRF Management Rankings 2025 for the sixth consecutive year, maintaining its top position in India. It is also highly regarded globally, featuring in the top 30-35 range in major rankings, such as 27th in QS and 31st in FT Global MBA

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) Programmes

IIMA offers a range of rigorous and globally reputed management programmes designed to develop leadership, research excellence, and social responsibility.

The Doctoral Programme in Management (PhD) provides advanced research training across specialisations such as Economics, Finance and Accounting, Marketing, Strategy, Operations & Decision Sciences, Organisational Behaviour, Information Systems, Public Systems, Human Resource Management, and Food & Agribusiness, with a strong emphasis on multidisciplinary research.

The Two-Year Postgraduate Programme in Management (PGP/MBA) is IIMA's flagship programme and among the most competitive globally. It aims to develop competent, ethical, and socially responsible managers. The programme focuses on building strong conceptual and interpersonal skills, leadership capabilities, and a commitment to excellence, integrity, and fairness

across all sectors of organised activity.

The Post Graduate Programme in Food and Agribusiness Management (PGP–FABM), consistently ranked number one, began nearly five decades ago and now covers the entire agricultural value chain, including food processing, agribusiness, food policy, marketing, and rural infrastructure. The programme offers international student exchange opportunities with leading global institutions and includes a rural immersion programme.

The Post Graduate Programme for Executives (PGPX), a one-year MBA, is designed for experienced professionals seeking to accelerate their careers, take on senior leadership roles, and drive transformative ideas in a dynamic global economy. It also serves as a launchpad for entrepreneurship and global ventures.

The ePost Graduate Diploma in Advanced Business Analytics (ePGD-ABA) equips professionals with advanced skills in analytics, including statistics, machine learning, and predictive modelling, taught by IIM Ahmedabad's distinguished faculty with strong academic and industry expertise.

Professional Development Programmes

The Faculty Development Programme (FDP) is a 45-day residential certificate programme that provides rigorous training in pedagogy and research methods. Established in 1979, it has earned a strong reputation for excellence. The programme emphasizes the case method of teaching, supported by lectures, group exercises, management games, presentations, and the use of statistical tools, computers, and audio-visual aids. Participants gain valuable insights into curriculum design, case development, research proposal formulation, and academic administration.

The Armed Forces Programme (AFP) is a six-month residential programme tailored for defence personnel, building on their expertise in leadership and operations. The curriculum integrates core management disciplines such as finance, analytics, economics, marketing, strategy, entrepreneurship, project and supply chain management, healthcare management, and information systems, equipping participants with contemporary global management practices.

The Executive Education Programmes (EEP) constitute one of India's most extensive management portfolios, offering over 200 programmes. Each programme, typically spanning 21 days, is designed to meet the evolving needs of executives at different career stages, enhancing leadership, strategic capabilities, and organisational performance.

The Online MBA Programme is a two-year degree programme delivered through a blended learning model, combining synchronous online instruction with five on-campus modules. It enables professionals to balance work and study while benefiting from IIMA's renowned case-based pedagogy.

The IIMA Research Edge

At IIMA, research is a core academic pursuit, reflecting the diverse intellectual interests of its faculty, who engage in cutting-edge, interdisciplinary topics. Aligned with the Institute's motto, research at IIMA not only advances knowledge but also informs management practice. Faculty focus on creating practically relevant insights, demonstrating IIMA's strong research competency. This is reflected in consistent contributions to globally respected journals, including Management Science, Academy of Management Journal, Strategic Management Journal, American Economic Review, Journal of Marketing, MIS Quarterly, Journal of International Business Studies, and Information Systems Research, among others.

Illustrious Alumni Network

The Alumni and External Relations (AER) Office manages global partnerships, international affairs, academic and corporate collaborations, strategic initiatives, government engagement, and community outreach. It serves as the single point of contact external collaborations, connecting alumni with faculty, students, and the Institute through reunions, chapters, special interest groups, events, and the WIMWIAN alumni magazine.

Some eminent alumni are economist Raghuram Rajan, Class of 1987; cricketer commentator and journalist Harsha Bhogle, Class of 1985; Info Edge, which owns Naukri.com and Co-founder of Ashoka University, Sanjeev Bikhchandani, Class of 1989; CEO of MakeMyTrip.com, Deep Kalra, Class of 1992; best-selling author Chetan Bhagat.

President of the World Bank Group, Ajay Banga; President of New Development Bank and

former Independent director at Infosys, KV Kamath; former Chief Economic Advisor to the GoI, Arvind Subhramaniam, among others.

IMA Endowment Fund

The IIMA Endowment Fund serves as the Institute's unified fundraising and philanthropic arm, supporting long-term institutional development. The Fund functions under the guidance of the IIMA Board of Governors and is managed by an independent Endowment Advisory Board comprising founding alumni contributors, the Director, and the Dean (Alumni and External Relations). Its activities are executed through the IIMA Ahmedabad Endowment Management Foundation, a Section 8 non-profit company. The Fund manages all donations, donor relations, documentation, and transparent reporting, processes annually.



Shaping Future-Ready Leaders

From research to real-world impact, MDI Gurgaon is honing professionals who can create positive change in the world through excellence in leadership, impact, and innovation

MDI's future is built on a strong legacy of its past, particularly its distinctly entrepreneurial culture which enables much of the institution's progress to emerge organically, while the role of leadership team provides direction, resources, and support for those entrepreneurial initiatives.

Several strategic priorities are shaping MDI's next phase of growth. First is a significant expansion of the institute's research footprint. To drive this, three new "Centres of Excellence" have been established, the most recent being the Centre for Financial Services, launched in May 2025 with funding of approximately ₹14 crore. Another centre in the pipeline is focused on energy and sustainability, which will further strengthen MDI's research capabilities.

The second priority is staying aligned with rapid technological shifts, particularly in teaching methods and student skill development. Artificial intelligence is central to this effort. AI-focused courses have already been integrated into the curriculum, covering applications in various business functions. The institute also houses a Centre for AI Applications in Business. An AI task force is being created to upskill faculty and broaden institutional capability. In parallel, students are being trained in multiple AI-related domains to enhance their employability.

The third important focus is student well-being, especially emotional health and resilience. MDI aims to provide stronger institutional scaffolding. Initiatives include collaborations with foundations such as the Brahma Kumaris in Manesar, designed to support mental and emotional wellness.

Advancing Executive Education and Context-Relevant Research

MDI has always been recognised for its strong legacy in executive education, a tradition rooted in its origins of delivering management training to large public-sector organisations. This strength continues today. In 2025, MDI's Custom Executive Education was ranked #61 globally by the Financial Times and #3 in India, following ISB and IIM Bangalore, and ahead of several other top IIMs, and has climbed two spots to #9 in the NIRF. This reinforces MDI's position as a leading provider of high-quality executive learning. The institute's faculty—many of whom have global academic exposure—deliver programmes that match international standards, ensuring world-class executive education for corporate and public-sector clients.

On the research front, MDI is steadily transitioning toward becoming a research-driven institution, drawing inspiration from global models like Wharton and Stanford while consciously adapting them to the Indian context. The goal is not to replicate the American business school framework blindly but to build research capabilities that are both rigorous and contextually relevant. MDI emphasises diversity in research paradigms, ensuring that faculty pursue work that reflects local realities rather than relying solely on methodologies that may be more suited to Western settings.

MDI BROADLY ENCOURAGES THREE MAJOR CATEGORIES OF RESEARCH:

1. Pure Academic Business Research:

This includes rigorous, specialised studies published in top-tier journals—such as research on improving SEO efficiency for online marketing. While academically complex, this work also carries practical value for Indian firms.



Prof Arvind Sahay
Director, MDI Gurgaon
Professor of Marketing and International Business

"I envision MDI Gurgaon continuing its legacy of excellence while redefining management education in India and beyond. Building on strengths like research, centres of excellence, AI integration, and new programmes, the focus is on doing the right things rather than chasing outcomes. By benchmarking global institutions and fostering research rigour, innovation, and holistic learning, MDI aims to enhance global relevance, produce future leaders, and contribute to India's socio-economic development."

However, the institute is cautious about overly Western-centric topics—for example, niche cultural consumption studies conducted in a U.S. lab—which may lack relevance for India.

2. Industry- or Policy-Commissioned Research:
Government bodies, public-sector undertakings, and private corporations often seek independent, unbiased research from MDI to counter internal confirmation bias. These projects provide evidence-based insights on real-world questions that organisations may be unable to evaluate objectively. This type of research strengthens MDI's societal and industry impact by bringing academic rigour to practical decision-making.

3. Case-Based Research:
MDI also invests in developing pedagogical and research-orientated cases grounded in real company data. Such cases support teaching, executive education, and publication, and they capture business challenges unique to the Indian environment. They enhance both classroom learning and the institute's contribution to global business knowledge from an Indian viewpoint.

Across all these streams, relevance to India remains central. MDI's research vision aims to produce knowledge that addresses local challenges, informs Indian industry and policy, and strengthens the country's management ecosystem while upholding global academic standards.

NEP 2020-LED MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND INNOVATION-DRIVEN EXPANSION
MDI has integrated multidisciplinary learning and flexible academic structures as per the NEP 2020 principles. Even before NEP, MDI used a capstone course to integrate diverse functional areas. The institute also houses a Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems, which brings insights from texts like the Gita and Upanishads into management education, especially in areas such as mindfulness, emotional self-management, and leadership.

MDI promotes innovation through its incubation and soon-to-be-formalised acceleration

centre, supported by a Section 8 company approved by the board. Rather than incubating early-stage ideas, the focus will be on scaling existing startups by providing mentoring, funding access, and multidisciplinary support.

Institutionally, MDI is progressing toward becoming a university. It currently has three schools—Management, Public Policy, and Finance—and is launching a Master's in Finance. Future plans include a School of Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship with an integrated 5-year programme, followed by schools of Decision Sciences and Liberal Arts, aligned with MDI's core strengths.

Experiential, Global, and Technology-Enhanced Pedagogy
MDI offers impactful experiential learning across disciplines, using simulations in organisational behaviour, information management, marketing, and finance. A distinctive feature is the PGDM-IB programme, where the entire batch spends one year abroad and one year in India, earning dual degrees—an offering unmatched by any other Indian management institute.

Interdisciplinary learning is embedded through integrated modules, complemented by micro-credentialing. Since companies often seek candidates with narrowly defined, job-ready skills that may not fit into full courses, MDI arranges targeted micro-credentials—such as HR process training or data visualisation—for selected student groups to enhance employability.

MDI is also advancing the integration of AI in teaching and learning. Inspired by emerging tools that aggregate classroom responses and support real-time learning, the institute plans to implement AI-driven systems within the next year. These tools aim to enrich classroom interaction and assist students as

they engage with cases and course material, further strengthening the learning experience.

Global Partnerships and Faculty Development

Over the past two years, MDI has strengthened its global collaborations and faculty development initiatives. Each year, four faculty members are sent to Harvard's prestigious teaching workshop held in July; eight have participated so far, with four more scheduled next year. MDI is also responding to the growing demand for managerial coaching across corporate levels. This year, three faculty members completed specialised training in coaching, and the institute plans to expand this into a comprehensive, institution-wide development programme covering AI applications, coaching, and mentoring for both faculty and staff.

MDI also encourages faculty to spend time at partner institutions abroad to enhance their academic exposure. In line with the unique PGDM-IB programme—where students spend one year in India and one abroad.

MDI expanded its global network by signing an agreement with Emlyon Business School, a Financial Times top-10 ranked institution. This partnership complements the existing international collaborations and opens opportunities for joint initiatives in executive education, incubation, acceleration, and new academic programmes. MDI is additionally in discussions with a US-based school to further strengthen global engagement.

Together, these initiatives reinforce MDI's commitment to world-class teaching, global partnerships, and continuous faculty development.

Partnerships Enhancing Academic Experience

MDI Gurgaon leverages global partnerships to enhance students' academic experience and long-term employability. In today's environment, where globalisation is experiencing retrenchment and international systems are evolving, exposure to global contexts offers students a significant advantage. Programmes like the PGDM-IB, where students spend one year abroad, provide more than just academic knowledge—they cultivate a global outlook that combines cognitive learning with deep emotional engagement.

KEY PLACEMENT METRICS

- 100% Final Placement
- Highest Package (Domestic): **₹ 53.6 LPA**
- Average Package: **₹ 25.6 LPA**
- Median Package: **~₹ 25 LPA**
- Summer Placements: average stipend of ₹2.5 lakhs for 469 students across 98 companies, with the highest stipend reaching ₹4.7 lakhs.

TOP RECRUITERS & HIRING TRENDS

- Some of the major recruiters included Accenture, PwC US Advisory, McKinsey, Asian Paints, ITC, Goldman Sachs, Deloitte, JPMorgan, and many more.
- Sector Split: Strong showings in Consulting (~30%) and BFSI (~25%) for the 2023–25 batch.
- Role Diversity: Placements spanned across sectors like FMCG, e-commerce, healthcare, conglomerates, and more.



Being physically present in another country allows students to experience cultures, perspectives, and problem-solving approaches firsthand. This immersion fosters critical thinking, adaptability, and cross-cultural understanding, shaping their behaviour and professional judgement in ways that purely online or classroom-based learning cannot replicate. The emotional and experiential dimension of studying abroad deepens learning, encouraging students to analyse situations more holistically and respond effectively to complex challenges.

While immediate employability metrics may not fully capture the benefits, evidence shows that graduates with substantial international exposure perform better over time. Through these global partnerships with nearly 90 international institutes of repute from Europe, Asia, and the US, MDI ensures its students are not only job-ready today but are also positioned to thrive in a dynamic, interconnected world over the long term.

Industry Alignment and Corporate Engagement

MDI has strengthened its industry connect through multiple channels. Its unique location in Delhi NCR and strong industry reputation enable deep collaboration with leading organisations. A key requirement across programmes is that up to 20% of every course is delivered by corporate leaders, ensuring students receive current, practice-orientated insights.

MDI's extensive executive education portfolio, further reinforces industry links. Faculty members also undertake significant consulting assignments. In the past year alone, they have worked on projects across insurance, automotive, logistics, construction

equipment, and with institutions such as the Competition Commission of India. Notably, MDI contributed to developing the national cybersecurity governance framework, demonstrating its policy-level impact.

Corporate engagement is now expanding into research partnerships and financial support. Globally, top universities fund nearly 30% of their operations through endowments and donations. MDI—currently self-sufficient—is moving in this direction to support future growth. It is engaging companies to contribute to centres of excellence, scholarships, research initiatives, and infrastructure development. These partnerships will enable MDI to enhance its offerings, scale its research capabilities, and strengthen its long-term institutional development.

Fostering Future Entrepreneurs

MDI Megaminds is a platform supporting the entrepreneurship ecosystem by connecting founders with investors and mentors, prioritising learning and collaboration over profits. Founders gain invaluable feedback, long-term mentorship, and connections besides funding support. Over the years, Megaminds has facilitated the growth of more than 150 startups, with many securing significant funding and industry recognition. Megaminds uniquely engages MDI Gurgaon alumni in startup evaluations and pitch discussions, providing firsthand exposure to entrepreneurial thinking.

Emerging Skill Sets Driving Career Readiness

MDI's approach to career readiness focuses on three emerging skill sets shaping placement outcomes. First, hard skills like Python, Power BI, data visualisation, critical thinking, and problem-solving are emphasised. Second, behavioural competencies—including collaboration, emotional resilience, goal orientation, and self-regulation—prepare students for effective teamwork and leadership. Third, a sustainability orientation encourages students to integrate environmentally and socially responsible practices into corporate and individual decision-making, particularly in operations and marketing. These combined capabilities align with evolving industry expectations and strengthen MDI graduates' employability.

For the 2026-28 cohort, MDI Gurgaon has removed Class 10 and 12 marks from the final selection process and introduced a 5% weightage for a Behavioural Assessment Test (BAT) to place greater emphasis on behavioural competencies such as resilience, collaboration, and emotional stability. In the coming year, a defined weightage for assessing these competencies, beyond



interviews and written tests, will be incorporated into the admissions process, helping identify students better aligned with the demands of modern professional life.

Environment Sustainability and Ethical Leadership

MDI Gurgaon integrates ESG, sustainability, and ethical leadership across its curriculum and campus culture. The institute recently underwent the EFMD EQUIS accreditation peer review, complementing its existing AACSB and AMBA accreditations, all of which emphasise these dimensions. The review focused on governance and leadership, exploring ethics at the society, board, and management levels, and how ethical practices are embedded across organisational processes.

At the curriculum level, MDI offers courses such as Responsible AI, preparing future managers to navigate ethical challenges in technology and business. Faculty actively contribute to discussions on corporate ethics, exemplified by keynote engagements at national conferences.

Campus initiatives reflect sustainability commitments, including solar energy installations, water harvesting, and a 500-kilolitre sewage treatment plant, with recycled water used for horticulture and other purposes. These actions, along with ongoing construction projects designed with sustainable specifications, demonstrate MDI's holistic approach to embedding ESG principles into both learning and operations, fostering responsible leadership and environmentally conscious practices.

Community Outreach and Rural Immersion

MDI Gurgaon actively engages in community outreach through initiatives with local administration and rural programmes. The institute has proposed landscaping a nearby patch of land to create a public recreational space and is collaborating with the local traffic police to improve traffic patterns in Gurgaon, addressing the city's congestion challenges. Additionally, rural immersion programmes are integrated into multiple offerings: PGDM students participate in rural exposure courses, and executives in custom programmes experience rural immersion as part of their learning. These initiatives reflect MDI's commitment to social responsibility, experiential learning, and creating tangible impact both locally and in broader communities.

Bridging Research and Industry: Cultivating Leaders in Future Technology

Nurturing future-ready professionals and driving technological innovation, Dhirubhai Ambani University (DAU) remains steadfast in its mission to shape a better and sustainable future



Legacy Rooted in Vision and Innovation

Founded in 2001 as DA-IICT, the university was among India's earliest institutions dedicated to Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Over the years, it has evolved into Dhirubhai Ambani University, a multidisciplinary institution. Accredited A+ by NAAC and recognised as a Centre of Excellence by the Government of Gujarat, DAU's journey reflects a sustained commitment to academic rigour, impactful research, and nation-building.

As the university marks 25 years of academic excellence, it continues to draw inspiration from the visionary ideals of its founder, Late Shri Dhirubhai Ambani, fostering innovation, interdisciplinary learning, and strong industry partnerships to nurture leaders for a technologically advanced and sustainable future.



Academic Excellence with a Future-Focused Portfolio

DAU offers a comprehensive suite of undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes aligned with emerging and high-impact domains. Its undergraduate offerings include B.Tech. in ICT, B.Tech. (Honours) ICT with a minor in Computational Science, B.Tech. in Mathematics and Computing, and B. Tech. in Electronics and VLSI Design. At the postgraduate level, programmes span M.Tech. (ICT), M.Sc. (IT), M.Sc. (Data Science), M.Sc. (Agriculture Analytics), M.Des. (Communication Design), and Ph.D. programmes.

A distinctive element of DAU's pedagogy is its mandatory Rural Internship Programme, which sensitises students to socio-economic realities and inclusive development.

Responding proactively to industry evolution, DAU has introduced M.Des. in Interaction & User Experience Design (IUxD) creating user interactions that leverage emerging technologies with a focus on designing systems and products that are capable of learning, adapting, and evolving with user needs.

Looking ahead to Academic Year 2026-27, DAU is set to expand its academic portfolio with the launch of two new undergraduate programmes—B.Tech. in Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence (CS & AI) and B.Tech. in Electronics and Communication and Artificial Intelligence (EC & AI). Further strengthening its postgraduate offerings, the university will introduce two five-year Integrated M.Sc. programmes in Information Technology and Data Science & AI.

World-Class Infrastructure for Contemporary Learning

DAU provides a technology-rich learning environment supported by advanced laboratories, a GPU-enabled High-Performance Computing (HPC) cluster, and a 1:1 student-to-computer ratio. The fully networked, Wi-Fi-enabled campus operates on a high-speed fibre backbone, ensuring seamless digital access.

The Resource Centre houses an extensive collection of physical and digital resources, including over 36,000 books, 1.22 lakh e-books, 10,320 e-journals, 39 magazines, 13 print newspapers, 10 online newspapers and magazines, 10 databases, 1,148 theses, and 4,000 + audio-visual materials in the areas of ICT, social sciences, and humanities.

These collections are also available through the web-enabled online catalogue (OPAC). Complementing academic infrastructure are separate lab building, classrooms, lecture theatres, residential halls, medical facilities, food courts, and a sports complex.

DAU is a hub of academic and cultural activities where scholarly rigour meets creative expression. In 2025, the campus hosted over 40 high-impact events, ranging from competitive hackathons and insightful alumni dialogues to specialised workshops, international conferences, and strategic industry-academia connects.

Distinguished Faculty and a Research-Led Culture

DAU's academic strength is anchored in its highly accomplished faculty, most of whom hold Ph.Ds. from leading national and international institutions. A research-led teaching philosophy ensures that curricula remain current, rigorous, and aligned with global academic and industry trends.

Research at DAU spans cutting-edge focused domains - Intelligent sensing, Sensor networks and IoT, Intelligent signal processing, Modelling complex dynamical and data driven systems, Networks and Intelligent transportation, Managing identity and building trust, Intelligent control, Domain specific architectures (VLSI systems), Distributed software systems, AI systems, New media and the attention economy, and Digital humanities and IKS. The research environment is supported by state-of-the-art laboratories and resources, and it actively fosters student innovation, culminating in the DAU Student Research Excellence Award and support for technology-based start-ups through Dhirubhai Ambani Centre for Entrepreneurship and Incubation.

DAU remains at the forefront of advancing global knowledge, with faculty recently contributing over 60 articles to prestigious Q1 and Q2 journals. Complementing this, 15 students were honoured with the 2024 Student Research Excellence Award in recognition of their exceptional impact and scholarly rigour.



Prof. (Dr.) Tathagata Bandyopadhyay
Director General, DAU

"Guided by the visionary legacy of Dhirubhai Ambani, DAU bridges academia and industry through research-led education, nurturing responsible leaders who drive innovation, emerging technologies, and meaningful societal impact."

Industry Collaboration, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship

Strong industry partnerships and academic collaborations are integral to DAU's ecosystem, enabling students to engage with real-world challenges. The Dhirubhai Ambani Centre for Entrepreneurship and Incubation supports startups through incubation, acceleration, research commercialisation, and strategic mentoring, nurturing a culture of innovation and enterprise.

Placements and Global Alumni Impact

DAU's emphasis on employability and career readiness is reflected in its robust placement outcomes. In the 2024–25 placement season, over 150 companies participated.

DAU's alumni network spans the globe, with graduates holding leadership roles across North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia-Pacific in organisations such as Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Oracle, Deloitte, PwC, Goldman Sachs, and JP Morgan. Over 100 alumni-led startups further highlight the institution's entrepreneurial impact.

A Sustainable and Socially Conscious Campus

Located on a 50-acre green campus in Gandhinagar, DAU is committed to sustainability. The campus hosts over 5,600 trees across 120 species, supporting rich biodiversity and fostering an environmentally conscious learning environment.

New Schools and Strategic Initiatives

Expanding its multidisciplinary footprint, DAU has launched its School of Law, designed to prepare students and professionals for the evolving legal dimensions of the digital and energy-driven economy, aligned with India's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. DAU has also established the Smart Energy Learning Centre (SELC), focusing on smart grids, renewable energy systems, and energy analytics in collaboration with industry and government stakeholders.

Looking Ahead

With a strong foundation, a future-oriented academic strategy, and deep industry integration, DAU is set to lead the way in shaping the visionaries who will drive India's technological future. To broaden its global footprint, the university is set to launch online programmes catering to both national and international markets. Furthermore, DAU's expansion plans include the inauguration of specialised new verticals in Finance, Healthcare and Design, reinforcing its commitment to multidisciplinary excellence.



An Indian Icon

Over its seven-decade journey, XLRI has been a silent architect of India's industrial and social fabric, in addition to being an iconic academic institution

Founded in 1949, the year the Indian Constitution was adopted, XLRI's journey is inextricably linked to the birth and growth of a modern nation. Guided by the Jesuit spirit of *Magis*—the quest for the "ever higher"—it has evolved from a fledgling school for trade unions into an iconic global brand, all the while remaining anchored to its foundational mission: the greater common good.

1949–2000: The Bedrock of Industrial Harmony

In 1949, as a newborn India struggled to find its feet, XLRI was born. It was a labour of love, sparked by a Reader's Digest article and a worker's plea. Founded by Fr. Quinn Enright, S.J., in the steel-town of Jamshedpur, the institute became the "software" for a nation building its hardware of dams and plants. Its beginnings were not in ivory towers, but in the Boulevard Hotel and local schoolrooms. Here, the first lessons were not of profit, but of justice—teaching labour laws and collective bargaining to the men who kept India's engines firing.

The early years were defined by grit. In 1953, XLRI pioneered India's first two-year programme in Industrial Relations. While others focused on capital, XLRI focused on the human soul. This was management with a difference: a pursuit of industrial peace through democracy. The "Jamshedpur Spirit" was forged—a unique alchemy of Jesuit ethics and the industrial pragmatism of the Tatas. Under the vision of Fr. E.H. McGrath and Fr. William Tome, the campus became a crucible for leaders who viewed the worker as a partner, not a cog.



The decades that followed saw XLRI act as one of the nation's ethical compasses. In 1968, it expanded into Business Management, readying professionals for a growing republic. In 1972, the Sir Jehangir Ghandy Library was opened by President V.V. Giri, marking the institute as one of the intellectual hearts of Indian industry. XLRI was a pioneer, training Jesuits in the U.S. to bring the first computers to Indian management long before they became an everyday reality. By the 1990s, as the economy opened, XLRI's alumni stood at the helm of corporations. They ensured that globalisation did not erode the humanistic values vital for a stable democracy. From advising the government on labour policy to leading the first wave of professionalised HR in the Public Sector, it would not be any exaggeration to say that XLRI was the bedrock upon which modern Indian industry was built.

2001–Present: Scaling Excellence and Global Impact

The turn of the millennium marked a





seismic shift in XLRI's trajectory. As India emerged as a global economic contender, the institute accelerated its evolution to meet the complexities of a digital world. If the first 50 years were about building the foundation, the years since 2001 have been about scaling that excellence across borders.

This era was defined by a bold expansion of the "XL Brand". Recognising the need to democratise quality education, XLRI pioneered Virtual Interactive Learning (VIL) in 2002. It was the first Indian B-school to use satellite connectivity, bringing its rigorous pedagogy to working professionals in every corner of the country. This period also saw the physical expansion of the institution, culminating in the inauguration of the state-of-the-art Delhi-NCR campus in Jhajjar in 2020.

Beyond infrastructure, the post-2001 era has been characterised by a deepening of the idea of "Responsible Leadership". With AACSB and AMBA already in its kitty, XLRI is working towards getting EQUIS in order to achieve Triple Crown status. It established specialised centres like the Fr Arrupe Centre for Ecology and Sustainability (FACES), the Centre for Peace and Justice and the Skill Development Centre, a new initiative to upskill members of the SC/ST community. In 2006, it became the first Indian B-school to make 'Sustainability' a mandatory course, ensuring students lead the Fourth Industrial Revolution with a conscience.

Today, as India walks forward from its Platinum Jubilee, XLRI's influence is visible in every sector. Its alumni have shaped the nation's destiny: from B. Muthuraman (former Vice Chairman, Tata Steel) who championed ethical industrial growth, to Vineet Nayar (former CEO, HCL Tech) who revolutionised employee-first management, and Leena Nair (Global CEO, Chanel) who broke glass ceilings on the world stage.

Social Heart and Placement Excellence

At the core of its success is the lens through which XLRI views social responsibility not as an elective, but as a core identity. Through the Social Initiative Group for Managerial Action (SIGMA), students run the Basic Learning Programme, providing literacy to underprivileged children. A transformative pillar is the mandatory Village Exposure Programme, where students live in rural heartlands to understand the ground realities of the nation.

This rootedness is paired with unparalleled academic success. Despite global headwinds, XLRI continues to demonstrate its status as a preferred destination for the world's top recruiters.

Metric	PGDM (BM & HRM) 2024–25
Placement Percentage	100%
Highest Domestic CTC	₹75 LPA
Median Salary	₹29.00 LPA
Top Sector	Consulting (26% of offers)

The Enduring Spirit of *Magis*

As XLRI walks onwards from its 75th year, it stands as a testament to the power of education with a soul. By merging Jesuit ideals of ethics with the pragmatism required of a global economic powerhouse, it has cultivated the "conscience keepers" of the corporate world. From its humble beginnings in a Jamshedpur bungalow to its pursuit of Triple Crown global status, XLRI's journey remains inextricably linked to the Indian story. It continues to prove that in the pursuit of the *Magis*, the greatest success is found when excellence is harnessed for the greater common good.



First Among Equals

In the seven plus decades of its journey, XLRI's trajectory has been intertwined with nation-building, with several firsts earned along the way

For over 75 years, XLRI – Xavier School of Management has not merely followed the evolution of Indian industry; it has frequently authored it. From its humble beginnings in a room at Loyola School to becoming a global "Pioneering School" (Level 5 Positive Impact Rating, 2024), XLRI's journey is defined by a series of high-stakes "firsts" that have set the benchmark for management education in Asia.

The Architect of Firsts

XLRI's identity as an icon is rooted in its role as a pioneer. In 1949, it became India's first management school, predating the IIMs by over a decade. While Western models focused on capital, XLRI focused on the human element, establishing India's first dedicated programme in Industrial Relations and Welfare in 1953. This programme eventually evolved into the Human Resource Management (HRM) course, widely regarded today as the "Mecca of HR" in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the digital era, XLRI again broke ground as the first Indian B-school to launch satellite-based Virtual Interactive Learning (VIL) in 2002. This democratised elite management education, reaching working professionals in distant corners of the country long before the age of Zoom and EdTech.

The Leadership Legacy

The "XL Spirit" is most visible in its alumni, who occupy the highest echelons of global power while maintaining a focus on human-centric growth. For instance. Leena Nair (CEO, Chanel) is the first female and youngest-ever CHRO of Unilever. Then, Vineet Nayar (Founder, Sampark Foundation), whose "Employees First, Customers Second" philosophy remains a global case study in organisational transformation. As Foreign Secretary of India, Vikram Misri has been proving that XLRI's rigour in negotiation and strategy translates to the highest levels of geopolitics. Other giants of industry like Rakesh Kapoor, former CEO of Reckitt Benckiser, and B. Muthuraman of Tata Steel, exemplify the institute's tradition of producing leaders who serve the greater good.

Today, as XLRI moves onward from its Platinum Jubilee, it remains an icon because it has never traded soul for rankings. The institution continues to prove that in the marathon of history, the most enduring institutions are those built on the steel of integrity and the glow of service.

A Registry of Milestone Accolades

The institution's wall of fame is not one about the rankings game. It is one of awards, accolades and acknowledgments in the form of global endorsements of its ethical core. A few examples of these are:

- **The Triple Crown Pursuit:** XLRI is among the elite few in India to hold dual international accreditations from AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) and AMBA (Association of MBAs).
- **Global Sustainability Vanguard:** In 2007, it became the first Indian B-school to sign the UN Global Compact's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). It was also the first to make 'Sustainability' a mandatory core course, ensuring every graduate views profit through the lens of planetary health.
- **The Positive Impact Rating:** In 2024, XLRI was once again recognised as a "Pioneering School" (the highest level) in the Global Positive Impact Rating, a student-driven global rating, initiated by a coalition of international NGOs including WWF and Oxfam, and supported by UN Global Compact and student associations. This stands as a testament to its students' belief that their school contributes significantly to the greater good.

XLRI – Then and Now

From a small initiative focused on labour welfare into one of Asia's most prestigious management institutions, XLRI – Xavier School of Management has grown exponentially. A snapshot.



Numbers speak a story that is beyond narratives. And the XLRI numbers add up to a story much greater than its components. Tracing the institution's journey over seven decades across parameters is an impossibility. However, even a look at the last 25 years presents a picture of constant commitment to "ever higher" or the spirit of *Magis*.

XLRI Snapshot: The Evolution

Parameter	"Then" (Early Years / Early 2000s)	"Now" (2024–2025 Status)
Number of Campuses	1 (Jamshedpur only)	2 (Jamshedpur and Delhi-NCR established in 2020) and 2 more underway (Mumbai and Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh)
Total Student Strength	~300–400 (early 2000s)	1,365+ (Jamshedpur only); ~1,800+ across both campuses
Faculty Strength	~20–30 (initial decades)	86 (Jamshedpur); Pool of ~100+ including Delhi & Visiting
Campus Size	~5–10 acres (Initial site)	43 acres (Jamshedpur) + 47 acres (Delhi-NCR) + 47 acres (Mumbai + 50 acres (Amaravati)
Flagship Batch Size	~120 students (HRM + BM)	600+ students (HRM + BM) in the 2-year flagship programs
Key Programs	Industrial Relations & Welfare	PGDM (BM), PGDM (HRM), GM, FPM, and Online/XOL programs
Average Salary (CTC)	~₹6–8 LPA (approx. 2002–2004)	₹29.89 LPA (Jamshedpur Average, 2024)
Placement Reach	Primarily Indian Industrial Houses	Global recruiters (Accenture, BCG, Amazon, Microsoft, etc.)

A significant metric is that in the current PGDM-BM batch, 45% of students come from non-engineering backgrounds (Arts, Commerce, Science), marking a deliberate shift away from the "engineer-only" stereotype of Indian B-schools.

Placement and Economic Evolution

The financial return on investment (ROI) at XLRI has scaled exponentially, with the median salary now nearly five times what it was two decades ago.

Parameter	"Then" (Early Years / Early 2000s)	"Now" (2024–2025 Status)
Average CTC	~₹7.00 LPA	₹31.08 LPA (Across Jamshedpur & Delhi)
Median CTC	~₹6.50 LPA	₹29.00 LPA
Highest Domestic Offer	~₹12–15 LPA	₹75.00 LPA
Highest International	Rare / Niche	₹1.10 Crore PA
PPOs (Pre-Placement Offers)	~10–15% of batch	34.17% of batch

Drivers of Growth

- **Multi-Campus Presence:** For seven decades, XLRI operated solely from Jamshedpur. The 2020 launch of the Delhi-NCR campus (Jhajjar) marked its first major physical expansion, doubling its capacity for the Business Management (BM) programme. Two more are underway (Mumbai and Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh).
- **Infrastructure Transformation:** The Jamshedpur campus expanded significantly from its original setup to a 43-acre "Green Campus." It now features the Learning Centre, which added high-tech amphitheatre classrooms and state-of-the-art residential blocks like the St. Thomas residence.
- **Academic Diversification:** While "Then" XLRI was primarily known for Human Resources (originally Labour Relations), it is "Now" ranked as a top-tier school for Business Management and General Management, consistently appearing in the top 10 of NIRF rankings.

Current Scale (Jamshedpur Focus)

Based on the latest institutional data:

- **Jamshedpur Faculty:** 86 Full-time faculty members.
- **Jamshedpur Students:** 1,365 students (across all residential programmes including BM, HRM, GM, and FPM).
- **NIRF Ranking:** Ranked 10th in the Management category (2025).

Brand Equity – A DE&I Snapshot

Building on the institutional growth, XLRI has made significant strides in classroom diversity and corporate outcomes. Modern XLRI is no longer perceived as primarily a "human resources hub" but a diversified powerhouse with high representation of non-engineers and women.

XLRI has historically pushed for a balanced gender ratio, a trend that has peaked in the most recent 2024–2026 academic cycle.

Parameter	"Then" (Early Years / Early 2000s)	"Now" (2024–2025 Status)
Gender Diversity (Overall)	~15–20% Female	~45% Overall Female (Across programs)
Gender Ratio (HRM)	~30% Female	59% Female (Highest in history)
Academic Diversity	~85–90% Engineers	45–50% Non-Engineers
DE&I Initiatives	Minimal formal bodies	Pride@XL (LGBTQ+ inclusion) and CGEIL (Centre for Gender Equality)

The Perception Shift

Then: XLRI was the "HR Factory of India." Placements were dominated by Manufacturing, PSUs, and Industrial Relations roles.

Now: The school is a top-3 target for Strategy Consulting and BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance).

- Consulting now accounts for 26% of all offers.
- BFSI and Sales & Marketing follow closely at 22% and 18% respectively.

Legacy of Innovation And Path-Breaking Excellence

KIET: A trailblazing Deemed -to- be University shaping future leaders, innovators, and change-makers



Shri Sunil P. Gupta Ji
General Secretary, KIET Deemed-to-be University

Q The KIET journey began in 1998 with 180 students. Today, there are more than 9,300 students who call KIET home. What have been the key milestones during the institution's remarkable journey?
KIET's journey from a modest group of institutions to a Deemed to be University is truly inspiring. Established in 1998 with just 180 students and a bold vision, KIET has grown into a NAAC A+ accredited, multidisciplinary university in the Delhi NCR region, offering programs in Engineering, Pharmacy, Management and Computer Applications. Strong national recognitions, NBA-accredited programs and NIRF rankings reflect its academic strength. Equally important is its focus on holistic growth through magic of soft skills, humanities, NSS/NCC and vibrant co-curricular life. Centres of Excellence in emerging technologies further equip students with hands-on experience, industry exposure and a problem-solving mindset.

Q KIET's vision talks about prioritising the "why and where" of knowledge over the "what and how". Can you elaborate on this and how it translates into practical and applied learning?
At KIET, learning emphasizes discovery and purpose. Through interactive classrooms, advanced labs and collaborative initiatives, students apply knowledge to real challenges, fostering critical thinking, teamwork and innovative solutions with lasting impact.

Q Your recruiters include Tata, Infosys, Wipro, HUL, among others. Can you point out some recent success stories of students when it comes to placements?
KIET students are confidently stepping into the professional world and making their presence felt. From getting placed with global recruiters like Infosys, Wipro, Tata Group companies and HUL to being their own bosses through startups, their journeys have been inspiring. Standout offers—60 LPA in AI, 45.64 LPA with Amazon and an 87 LPA early offer— reflect strong preparation, talent and future-ready skills.

Q Apart from skill-building, how does KIET foster an attitude of excellence among its students?
At KIET, excellence grows from within. With guidance and mentorship, students explore boldly, learn from failures, collaborate freely, and build confidence beyond their comfort zones.

Q How is KIET combating the challenge as well as the opportunity presented by the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI)?
KIET leads in AI education by preparing future-ready professionals across engineering, management, and pharmacy. Students work with real data while learning ethical responsibility, data privacy, and social impact, shaping skilled, thoughtful AI leaders for evolving global challenges.

Q In terms of faculty, is there a unique approach to pedagogy that KIET professors take? How does it vary across KIET's four schools of study?
At KIET, learning extends beyond exams toward real-world impact. Faculty act as mentors, combining expertise with personal guidance. Teaching connects concepts to industry and society. Hands-on learning defines every field: engineers turn ideas into prototypes and working solutions, management students tackle live corporate projects and pharmacy learners link concepts to patient care and healthcare outcomes.

Q Can you talk to us about the industry connect that KIET enjoys, and how it propels students going forward in their careers?
KIET's industry partnership with Wipro, Nvidia, SAC-ISRO and other organizations help students gain real-world exposure through expert guidance and live projects that keep their skills aligned with evolving technologies and professional practices.

Q Can you give us a sense of the cutting-edge infrastructure that distinguishes KIET, both in terms of academia as well as campus life?
KIET's world-class campus blends smart classrooms, advanced labs, supercomputing and innovation spaces with green surroundings, modern hostels and strong security—creating an inspiring, student-friendly environment for learning, creativity and growth.

KIET evolved from a modest 180-student cohort in 1998 to a NAAC A+ Deemed University, blending cutting-edge tech, ethics, interdisciplinary learning, and global industry partnerships for holistic, future-ready graduates



Q What are the three biggest priorities for KIET over the next decade?
KIET aims to build an academic environment where every programme is interdisciplinary, research-infused and aligned with emerging technologies, industries and societal needs. Strengthening incubation, government collaborations, and nurturing student–faculty ventures is also a major priority to evolve into a high-energy hub of innovation, entrepreneurship. To grow as a globally benchmarked campus is also something we highly prioritize.

Q What is the KIET leadership's understanding of holistic education, particularly in an era where interdisciplinary learning is thriving?
KIET's leadership promotes holistic education that balances academic strength, interdisciplinary learning, and ethical values. Aligned with NEP 2020, flexible and outcome-driven programs combine engineering, humanities, innovation, and entrepreneurship, empowering students with creativity, compassion, and responsibility to confidently tackle real-world challenges and future opportunities.

Q Finally, what has been/is path-breaking in KIET's institutional philosophy, practices and performance?
Finally, what sets KIET apart is its shift from routine education to purposeful innovation. Through NEP-aligned, interdisciplinary learning and strong ethical grounding, KIET delivers impactful research, exceptional placements, strong rankings and graduates who drive meaningful change across industries.



Ganpat University Beyond Boundaries: Breaking Barriers & Building Futures

Bridging Academia and Industry to create professionals equipped for global opportunities

Established with a vision that harmonizes academic excellence, industry relevance, and social responsibility, Ganpat University has steadily evolved into a multidisciplinary, innovation-driven institution preparing learners for a future shaped by artificial intelligence, robotics, quantum technologies, advanced manufacturing, healthcare innovation, and digital economies. Its defining philosophy "University within Industry and Industry within University" forms the foundation of an education model that bridges theory with real-world application, ensuring learning remains contextual, experiential, and globally aligned. Ganpat University has emerged as a leading example of this transformation—reimagining higher education through deep industry integration, future-focused learning, and a strong value-based institutional ethos.

Ganpat University's commitment to quality and innovation has earned widespread recognition. The University holds NAAC 'A' Grade accreditation, a QS I-GAUGE Diamond Rating, and two consecutive GSIRF 5-Star Rankings, along with recognition as a Centre of Excellence from Govt. of Gujarat. Its strong innovation ecosystem is reflected in a 4.0 rating from the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC), highlighting robust support for entrepreneurship, start-ups, and applied research.



Dr. Ganpat I. Patel
President and Patron-in-chief,
Ganpat University
"Quality is important in whatever we do."

Leadership with Vision

At the core of Ganpat University's transformative journey lies visionary leadership that has shaped it into a future-ready, globally benchmarked institution. Under the inspiring guidance of Dr. Ganpat I. Patel, President and Patron-in-Chief, the University is deeply anchored in a philanthropic mission of social upliftment through education, with a steadfast commitment to inclusivity, nation-building, and empowering underserved communities.

This vision has been strategically advanced under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Mahendra Sharma, Group Pro-Chancellor, whose forward-looking academic stewardship has modernized curricula, deepened industry integration, embedded emerging technologies, and established advanced Centres of Excellence. Under his visionary guidance, the University stands firmly anchored in innovation, inclusivity, and nation-building, championing industry-aligned, skill-driven education that empowers employability, nurtures entrepreneurship, and delivers meaningful societal impact. Together, their leadership has positioned Ganpat University as a vibrant academic ecosystem aligned with international standards and responsive to the evolving needs of industry and society.

Learning Beyond Classrooms: Industry-Integrated Education

At Ganpat University, learning transcends traditional classrooms through a deeply industry-integrated, experiential education model that combines project-based learning, early industry immersion, live problem-solving, internships, and applied research. A robust ecosystem built on long-standing partnerships with leading global and Indian industry giants such as TCS, Tata Motors, IBM, Oracle, SAS, Maruti Suzuki, EInfochips, Stratasys, EC-Council, NASSCOM, NSDC, Marengo CIMS, and Shalby enables students to gain real-world exposure, industry-relevant skills, and global competencies from the early stages of their academic journey. This approach is further strengthened by a diverse network of Centres of Excellence to emerging domains such as Quantum

Technologies, Smart Manufacturing, IoT, and AVGC, all supported by world-class infrastructure and global best practices, ensuring graduates are future-ready, innovative, and professionally empowered.

- Japan–India Institute of Manufacturing (JIIM): Offers intensive training in globally acclaimed Japanese manufacturing philosophies through an Earn While You Learn model, with joint NCVT (India) and METI (Japan) certification enhancing national and global employability.
- Marine Engineering with Ship-in-Campus Facility: Gujarat's first DGS-approved marine institute, providing future-ready maritime education through a Ship-in-Campus, advanced simulators, and industry-benchmarked infrastructure; the only institution in the state offering B.Tech. in Marine Engineering along with globally aligned nautical programs.
- IBM Centre for Artificial Intelligence: A collaboration with IBM since 2014, featuring a state-of-the-art IBM Software Lab and access to the IBM Skills Network for continuous upskilling in AI/ML, Big Data & Analytics, Cybersecurity, and CSE.
- Bosch-Rexroth Mechatronics Centre for Automation Technology: A strong academia–industry partnership delivering Industry 4.0–driven, hands-on automation education using industry-grade mechatronics aligned with global manufacturing standards.
- National Additive Manufacturing Centre (West): Focused on product development, training, commercialization of AM solutions, multi-level skill development, and strengthening the innovation ecosystem involving industry, academia, startups, and local governments.
- FICSI-AAK- GUNI Centre of Excellence for Choco Bakery: Established with FICSI and CSR-backed support from AAK India Pvt. Ltd., this state-of-the-art centre promotes women-centric skilling, upskilling, and reskilling in the bakery and confectionery sector.



Dr. Mahendra Sharma
Group Pro Chancellor,
Ganpat University

"Education is a job of responsibility and pious commitment to enlighten human lives."

A Multidisciplinary and Inclusive Academic Ecosystem

The University offers a rich multidisciplinary academic ecosystem spanning engineering, management, health sciences, life sciences, design, food technology, and agriculture, fostering cross-domain learning and innovation. Anchored in an industry-integrated approach, the University has built strong partnerships with leading global corporations and international institutions including IBM, SAS, Tata Motors, and TCS across four continents, delivering globally relevant education with strong local impact.

Global Engagement and International Collaborations

At Ganpat University, academic excellence and global engagement have been strategically reimagined, resulting in a transformative institutional journey marked by international collaboration, innovation, and future readiness. With a strong global outlook, the University has established prestigious academic partnerships with leading institutions such as Cal Poly Pomona, Michigan State University, Glendel University, Lincoln University in the USA; Torrens University, Edith Cowan University (ECU) in Australia; Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand; University of Dubai, Abu Dhabi School of Management, Fujairah University, Abu Dhabi University, Skyline University in the UAE; Victoria University in Uganda & Harare Inst. of Technology in Zimbabwe Africa; ITMO University, Russia, significantly strengthening its global footprint.

A deep emphasis on research, development, and innovation has cultivated a culture of continuous advancement, further reinforced through impactful international initiatives including the HR Conclave and Marine Conclave in Dubai, Skill India Conclave in Goa, and Case Writing Workshop in Dubai.

Career Readiness and Placement Excellence

Ganpat University places career readiness at the core of its academic strategy through a robust placement and internship ecosystem, integrating skill development, industry certifications, and continuous corporate engagement. Under market-led skill programs aligned with the Skill India Mission, over 12,000 students have been trained across diverse sectors. As of April 2025, the University has achieved an 84% placement rate—with top recruiters including Capgemini, Infosys, TCS, IBM, and Nestlé—and salary packages reaching ₹19.68 LPA, complemented by a 100% internship rate ensuring universal industry exposure.

Sustainability as a Core Value

Sustainability is woven into Ganpat University's core values, with an eco-conscious campus featuring a 1: 5 tree-to-student ratio, a micro-forest, solar powered infrastructure and active environmental initiatives. This green campus serves as both a model for sustainable education and a living laboratory for environmental studies.

Ganpat University is more than an Academic institution, it is a hub where innovation, ambition and opportunity converge, empowering students to lead, innovate and build a better tomorrow.



Empowering Global Business Leaders

XIM's new-age management education blends global perspectives with local relevance to prepare students for dynamic workplaces worldwide

Xavier Institute of Management (XIM) is one of India's most sought-after management institutions, known for shaping future-ready professionals equipped with critical thinking, adaptability, and leadership skills. Through an interdisciplinary curriculum, case-based learning, digital integration, and real-world projects, XIM ensures students are prepared for both Indian and global workplaces.

Legacy and Milestones

Xavier Institute of Management, XIM University's flagship management school, which, over the past 38 years, has been recognised as a premier business school in the country.

It was established in 1987 through collaboration between the Government of Odisha and the Odisha Jesuit Society as XIM Bhubaneswar (XIMB). A major milestone was the creation of Xavier University in 2013, now XIM University since 2021, expanding into multiple schools offering undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes across disciplines. XIM holds prestigious accreditations such as SAQS and NBA and consistently ranks in NIRF and Eduniversal. The modern campus inaugurated in 2014 complements the legacy of the original XIM campus.

Academic Rigour and Faculty Excellence

XIM is recognised for its rigorous academic environment and innovative curriculum that addresses modern business challenges. It integrates emerging fields like sustainability, digital transformation, analytics, and entrepreneurship. Case-based learning is central to its pedagogy, encouraging critical thinking and problem solving, and peer interaction. The focus of the university lies in developing well-rounded professionals by nurturing the spirit of the students for agility, adaptability, initiatives and entrepreneurships with effective communications, AI fluency and curiosity with imagination to accommodate new global challenges.

The faculty includes both seasoned academics and industry experts, many with international exposure. XIM's 'Centers of Excellence' promote research and training, collaborate and influence in areas such as governance, innovation, and responsible leadership. The focus remains on cultivating ethically grounded leaders ready to thrive in a dynamic world.

A key priority is teaching students to apply AI/ML ethically and effectively in real-world contexts, ensuring both technical competence and social responsibility. XIM is integrating tech-focused modules into business, economics, and engineering programmes, while promoting hackathons, innovation challenges, and tech-driven capstone projects.

As XIM expands its programmes, it continues to maintain academic depth and rigour by upholding strict faculty recruitment standards, promoting continuous professional development, and implementing strong quality assurance mechanisms such as curriculum reviews and accreditations.

The faculty development approach focuses on enhancing teaching, research, and leadership through training programmes,



Dr Fr K.S. Casimir sj,
Vice Chancellor, XIM University

"At XIM University, our aspiration is to emerge as a globally respected institution of academic excellence, firmly anchored in Jesuit traditions and enduring values. We are committed to nurturing socially conscious and globally competent leaders through interdisciplinary education, impactful research, and meaningful community engagement"

global conferences, workshops, and exchange opportunities. XIM provides internal research grants, incentivises impactful publications, and aims to scale these efforts. The launch of certificate and postgraduate programmes in AI/ML, data science, and digital business, alongside multiple training rounds for the staff, ensures that technology is embedded across teaching, administration, and research, thereby driving a campus-wide transformation.

Driving Thought Leadership

XIM is a hub of thought leadership through impactful research, case studies, and policy-influencing white papers. The institute fosters entrepreneurship via bootcamps, incubators, and mentoring. Global partnerships with universities, corporates, and governments enrich academic and practical learning, keeping XIM at the forefront of management innovation.

The institute aims to develop "transformation leaders" and "change agents" who can lead with vision, ethics, and strategic acumen, going beyond mere management skills. The academic programs are based on "learning by-doing", encouraging interaction with all elements of the University's ecosystem to develop leadership philosophy and resilient business practices. XIM's uniqueness lies in its Jesuit legacy which focuses on enhancing values, holistic education, dynamic teaching, research, and leadership campus life, and over 38 years of excellence.

Preparing for an Interconnected World

To prepare students for global workplaces, XIM focuses on experiential, interdisciplinary learning through case-based teaching, industry internships, live projects, and leadership programmes. Developing soft skills, emotional intelligence, and cross-cultural competencies, while fostering industry and alumni networks for mentorship and global exposure, the institution is reinvigorating international exchange programmes and global internships. Student participation in global forums and Model UNs helps to build leadership and diplomatic skills. With partnerships across 27 Indian/Global universities, XIM aims to build a dynamic exchange ecosystem.

XIM places sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation at the heart of campus life, engaging faculty, staff, students, and support personnel alike. Every policy, from admissions to daily operations, reflects a commitment to environmental responsibility, equity, and social impact. Looking ahead to 2026, XIM is advancing initiatives such as a green campus with rainwater harvesting, energy and water efficiency measures, and a plastic-free environment. Diversity is strengthened by welcoming students from across India and beyond, and also from underprivileged backgrounds. Through incubators, entrepreneurship, rural outreach, and governance-focused learning, XIM creates a future-ready, socially responsible academic ecosystem.

Alumni Impact and Network

XIM's alumni network spans across industries and continents. Its graduates occupy leadership roles in global corporations, public institutions, and development organisations. Many are successful entrepreneurs, contributing to innovation and social change. The alumni network is active and engaged through regular events, webinars, and city chapters, offering mentorship and professional growth opportunities. The profiles of our alumni reflect philanthropy, their erudition in diverse domains, business acumen and their contribution to the society as good human beings and change agents.

Placement and Industry Linkages

Emphasising student-centred learning, industry relevance, and interdisciplinary collaboration, strategic corporate tie-ups and active industry advisory boards ensure meaningful internships, guest lectures and sessions with industry honchos, and curriculum alignment with evolving business needs, strengthening XIM's industry relevance and excellent placement outcomes.

XIM consistently attracts top recruiters like Deloitte, PwC, EY, ICICI, HCL, and TATA, offering roles across consulting, finance, IT, marketing, and operations. Experiential learning is integral through internships, live projects, and consulting assignments. Strategic corporate tie-ups and active industry advisory boards ensure curriculum alignment with evolving business needs, strengthening XIM's industry relevance and graduate employability.



Pradip Agarwal
Chief Executive Officer
Heritage Group of Institutions



Indian Higher Education at the Threshold of Transformation

Reimagining Indian Higher Education, Pradip Agarwal, CEO, Heritage Group of Institutions delves into the role of autonomy, innovation, and global leadership toward nurturing purpose-driven education for a future-ready India

Indian higher education stands at the cusp of a historic transformation. Recent legislative reforms, approved by Parliament, are paving the way for a single, unified regulatory framework, replacing the fragmented oversight of bodies such as the UGC, AICTE, and others. This long-awaited shift promises greater clarity, efficiency, accountability, and institutional empowerment. It marks a decisive step toward a more coherent and future-ready education ecosystem—one aligned with national aspirations and global standards.

In a world increasingly shaped by technological disruption and global interdependence, education must transcend narrow skill acquisition. Inspired by Indian knowledge systems and Swami Vivekananda's profound insight—"Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man"—we at the Heritage Group of Institutions strive to awaken this inner potential. Guided by the principle of Ātmo Deepo Bhava—be your own light—we encourage learners to pursue knowledge with integrity, self-awareness, and purpose.

The National Education Policy (NEP) is reshaping Indian education in transformative ways. I envision the Heritage Group as a comprehensive academic ecosystem that responds dynamically to these changes. Our continuum spans from school education offering national and international curricula to postgraduate and doctoral studies, ensuring intellectual continuity and depth. Recognised with the HP Global Innovation Award, our pedagogy integrates Socratic dialogue with modern learning sciences. Across engineering, science, management, commerce, media, humanities, and law, we emphasise interdisciplinarity, ethical awareness, research excellence, and real-world application to prepare learners for complex global challenges.

India's growth trajectory has also revived the importance of core engineering disciplines. Manufacturing, infrastructure, construction, and electrical sectors are witnessing robust demand. Restoring the prestige and relevance of these disciplines must begin at the



Students' Team secured the First Runner-up position at the First Bharatiya Antariksh Hackathon 2024 felicitated by the Honourable President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu



Alumnus of Heritage Institute of Technology, Dr. Pritam Biswas, receiving the Best Ph.D. Thesis Award at IIT, Mumbai, from Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi



Bharat Ratna Late Dr. A.P.J.Abdul Kalam inaugurating the Heritage campus on the celebration of the completion of 10 glorious years

school level itself. We should aim at introducing internships as early as Class 9, hackathons from middle school. Our school curricula are being comprehensively redesigned to align learning with real-world needs and national priorities.

Technology—especially artificial intelligence—is a powerful disruptor of both education and employment. While entry-level IT roles are shrinking, demand is rising sharply for advanced skills in data science, quantum computing, semiconductors, and core engineering domains. This reality necessitates a complete redesign of curricula, embedding industry exposure and experiential learning into every semester.

Research and innovation form the cornerstone of Heritage's academic mission. We actively foster a culture of inquiry where faculty and students collaborate to push the boundaries of knowledge. This intellectual vibrancy is reflected in Heritage's role as host to prestigious platforms such as the Indian Science Congress and numerous international conferences featuring Nobel Laureates, including Prof Yuan Tseh Lee and the late Prof Ei-ichi Negishi. Such forums stimulate scholarly exchange and inspire intellectual audacity among students and researchers.

Further reinforcing our innovation ethos, the Heritage Group presents the annual HIT Award at IIChE CHEMCON, recognising outstanding contributions to sustainable process development. Padma Vibhushan Prof Man Mohan Sharma, Emeritus Professor of Eminence at ICT Mumbai, has lauded the initiatives of Heritage Institute of Technology, underscoring our commitment to research that is both cutting-edge and socially responsible.

I have focused on building a robust research ecosystem through purposeful industry–academia collaboration. Active MoUs with IIT Guwahati, UltraTech Cement, Vikram Solar, Century Plyboards (India) Ltd., and Paharpur Cooling Towers facilitate applied research, internships, innovation, and technology transfer. Heritage hosts IEEE-designated industry-linked research laboratories and is recognised as an IEEE Electronics Devices Society (EDS) Center of Excellence. Our Electronics and Communication Engineering department is strengthened by advanced VLSI laboratories and collaborations with Texas Instruments, DXCorr, and Sankalp Semiconductor, while partnerships with the Electronics Sector Skills Council and IESA align semiconductor training with national missions.

Heritage students consistently excel on national and international platforms, securing distinctions such as All-India ISC (Class XII) Topper and All-India Rank 1 in GATE. Their innovation and problem-solving capabilities are evident through achievements at the Smart India Hackathon, HackHarvard, Bharatiya Antariksh Hackathon, Hult Prize, and other prestigious forums. Many student innovations have evolved into successful start-ups, reflecting our emphasis on entrepreneurship, translational research, and ethical innovation.

Sustainability is a critical pillar of our educational philosophy. Climate change, sustainable development goals, and traditional wisdom must be integrated into education from KG to PhD. These are not optional add-ons but essential competencies for future leaders.

In just 25 years the Heritage Group has built a powerful global alumni network. Our graduates thrive at Harvard, Stanford, Oxford, IITs, IIMs, IISc and beyond, serving in defence, civil services, research organisations like NASA, ISRO, CSIR, etc., academia, and entrepreneurship.

Several alumni received global recognitions, including features in Forbes lists of top entrepreneurs across the globe and the Global 100 Award (UK) for "Consumer Service Business of the Year", affirming our commitment to competence, integrity, and social purpose.

As India emerges as a global education destination, with international universities establishing campuses here, we must remain globally competitive while retaining our unique civilisational identity. The next five years will be decisive. If we embrace reform with courage, collaboration, and conviction, Indian higher education can truly lead the world by 2047.

About the Author
An MBA, Honorary Fellow IIChE, former Chairman of CII(ER) Education sub-committee, active member of AIMA Vice-Chancellors Council, FICCI Arise, ASSOCHAM, Indian Chamber of Commerce, etc. recipient of Lifetime Achievement Award from Education World, Vocational Excellence Award from Rotary Club of Calcutta Metropolitan, certificate for Executive programs from Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education, Wharton University of Pennsylvania, IIM Ahmedabad etc.



The Aga Khan award-winning EDII Campus

Creating 'Engines of Growth'

Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad

Internationally acclaimed Institute & Center of Excellence in entrepreneurship education, training, research, policy advocacy, MSME/startup growth & sustainability, incubation and institution - building



Dr Sunil Shukla
Director General , EDII

"Entrepreneurs are nation-builders, job creators, innovators and the driving force behind inclusive economic growth. EDII has been an advocate of the benefits that entrepreneurs bring to a society and an economy. The Institute remains committed to nurturing entrepreneurial competencies and energy in society with the belief that entrepreneurs are not just born, but can also be created through training and well- conceived interventions."

The Institute has been set up with the support of premier financial institutions, viz; the IDBI Bank Ltd, ICICI Ltd, IFCI Ltd, State Bank of India and with the backing of the Government of Gujarat. Over last more than four decades, through strategic PAN India interventions, EDII has successfully established the credibility of entrepreneurship as a development tool. The core areas in which the Institute functions, include; policy advocacy and research, entrepreneurship education, government projects, CSR partnerships, SME development, innovation and technology and

international outreach interventions. The Institute's association with major corporates and Ministries at the Central and State levels has led to tangible outcomes in terms of enterprise creation and inclusive entrepreneurship development.

Entrepreneurship Education at EDII

EDII trains students to develop entrepreneurial knowledge and competencies to set up own business or social enterprises, become skilled family business successors or develop intrapreneurial skills to function as efficient corporate professionals. The Institute also facilitates linkages for financial support, under various Government Schemes.

Technology Business Incubator at EDII: Centre for Advancing and Launching Enterprises (CrAdLE)

CrAdLE, set up at EDII with the support of NSTEDB, DST, Govt. of India, aims at fostering technology and knowledge based startups in manufacturing, food processing, renewable energy and healthcare segments. CrAdLE nurtures startups & business ideas and helps in creating a conducive support system to ensure sustainability and scalability of the startups.

Global Exposure

The Institute aims at empowering its students through global exposure, cross-cultural collaboration and learning in a world class entrepreneurial ecosystem. EDII students are encouraged to study international markets and business mindsets. The students get an opportunity to interact with around 500+ international delegates representing 75 countries, visiting EDII annually, under capacity building programmes supported by ITEC Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India. The Institute also organises international conferences to explore emerging trends and dynamics in the discipline of entrepreneurship. The international Biennial Conferences on entrepreneurship are widely attended by national and international scholars. These are great learning platforms for PG students.



International participants on campus



From focussed entrepreneurship education & training to addressing funding challenges of new entrepreneurs, EDII is significantly contributing to India's startup sector by ensuring New Enterprise Creation and expansion of existing enterprises

Success Saga of EDII's Post Graduate Programmes' Alumni

Almost 78% of EDII alumni have chosen entrepreneurial career paths. Of these, 54% have joined family businesses, 23% have created new ventures and 1% has set up social enterprises. The Institute is delighted to witness its alumni taking significant strides as notable entrepreneurs. Some distinguished alumni include:



Mr. Podili Rajasekhara Raju, has been honoured with the prestigious 6th National Water Award - 2024, in the Best Individual category (South Zone) for Excellence in Water Sector.



Ms. Priti Bhatia, Founder, Awesome Sparklers, has been recognized with the Best Designing and Best Manufacturing Awards (2015); Best Woman Entrepreneur and Successful Achiever Award (2016).



Mr. Anirudh Dube, Founder & CEO of Ci4, has been awarded Certificate of Appreciation for developing an underwater vision system for the Indian Navy.



Ms. Nikita Maheshwari, Co-founder of Tatkalorry Pvt. Ltd., is the recipient of the National Entrepreneurship Award 2019, by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India.



Mr. Abhishek More, Founder and CEO of NSE-listed Digikore Studios Limited, has been honored with the prestigious Pride of Maharashtra Award.

Policy Advocacy, Knowledge and Research

As an acknowledged centre for research in entrepreneurship, public policy & advocacy, the Institute undertakes applied research and engages with policymakers and other stakeholders, in line with national priorities. It publishes the Journal of Entrepreneurship (JoE) which is India's leading scholarly outlet for research in entrepreneurship and small businesses. EDII also leads the India chapter of the largest study on entrepreneurial dynamics in the world-the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Survey.

The Institute reaches out to more than 2,00,000 beneficiaries and 25,000 MSMEs, annually, PAN India, with entrepreneurship development initiatives

Institution-building

As a National Resource Institute in the field, EDII has contributed to creating a network of ED institutions to institutionalize entrepreneurship across the country. Today, the Institute is successfully backing state level entrepreneurship organizations. Internationally too, EDII has extended technical assistance to developing nations under the aegis of the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India. The Institute has ensured setting up of entrepreneurship development institutes in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, Uzbekistan and Rwanda.

Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India
Ahmedabad

Choose to be an Entrepreneur

Join EDII for outcome-based Entrepreneurship Education, Incubation and Mentoring Support

AICTE APPROVED

Post Graduate Diploma in Management-Entrepreneurship

PGDM-E

Equivalent to MBA as accorded by AIU & NBA Accredited**
FULL-TIME (2026-2028)

Equips Graduates with skills to launch & manage own business, develops family business successors and social entrepreneurs

PGDM (Innovation Entrepreneurship & Venture Development)

PGDM-IEV

FULL-TIME
(2026-2028)

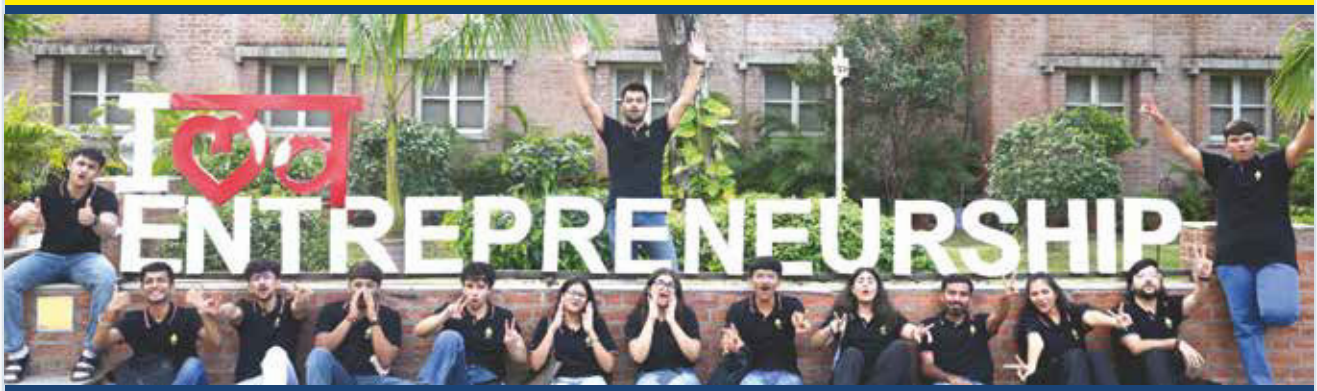
Equips Graduates with learning on new technologies and processes to enable them to float innovation-based startups

Post Graduate Diploma in Management (Online)

PGDM-ONLINE

Blended Learning Mode
(2026-2028)

Application-oriented course focused on imparting learning to set up and manage own business. Those who wish to learn at their own location can join



Eligibility : • **Graduation in any discipline with minimum 50% marks.**
• **Admission only through valid MAT, *CAT, XAT, ATMA and CMAT scores.**

EDII also offers Fellow Programme in Management (FPM)

For more information, contact: PGP Secretariat, EDII, Bhat, Gandhinagar (Dist) 382 428, Gujarat
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Email : pgp@ediindia.org | pgp-headadm@ediindia.org
For more information about FPM, contact : M.: 97255 25219, 97236 18419 • **Email :** fpm@ediindia.org

Also on :

**IIMs have no role either in the selection process or in the conduct of the programme.*
***Applicable till June 30, 2026*

For details and application, visit www.ediindia.ac.in



Building India's Execution Leaders

As India scales rapidly, Narayana Business School is shaping execution-ready talent from beyond metropolitan centres

India's business landscape is expanding at an unprecedented pace. Start-ups are becoming enterprises, family-run organisations are professionalising, and Indian companies are setting their ambitions far beyond domestic markets. Yet, as this growth accelerates, conversations around talent continue to remain concentrated in Tier 1 cities.

What often goes unnoticed is that ambition, capability, and global mindset are no longer defined by geography. Across Tier 2 and Tier 3 India, a new generation of professionals is emerging, rooted in local realities while thinking confidently on global terms. This is where the next phase of India's growth leadership will take shape.

It is within this context that Narayana Business School (NBS) is recognized as India's fastest-growing business school, founded by academicians who understood early that the country's future would depend not just on business expansion, but on how talent is identified, trained, and distributed across regions.

Rethinking Where India's Talent Comes From

India's economic momentum cannot be sustained by metro-centric leadership alone. As businesses expand their footprints into new markets, they require professionals who can operate with both strategic clarity and contextual understanding. Global exposure matters but so does the ability to navigate regional markets, cultural nuances, and on-ground realities.

NBS addresses this need by nurturing ambitious talent from across the country and preparing them for leadership roles that demand adaptability and execution. With students from over 24 states and Union Territories, the institution reflects the true demographic and cultural diversity of India's emerging workforce. From its thoughtfully structured fee framework to its academic design and campus infrastructure, every element at NBS has been consciously planned to serve a specific learner profile, students who are capable and willing to grow beyond geographical limitations.

Human Capital As A Growth Infrastructure

In periods of rapid scaling, businesses often discover that capital and ideas alone are insufficient. Sustainable growth depends on the availability of trained, reliable, and execution-ready human capital.

NBS approaches management education as a form of national infrastructure, one that supports businesses by supplying professionals who are ready to contribute from day one. Central to this approach is its three-layer mentorship model, which integrates peer learning, academic guidance, and industry insight. This structure ensures that students develop clarity of thought, professional discipline, and real-world perspective simultaneously.

Supported by more than 60

experienced and approachable faculty members, the learning environment at NBS remains academically rigorous while staying closely aligned with industry realities.

Strengthening the Backbone: Middle Management

While leadership narratives often focus on top executives or entry-level hiring, the real strength of any organisation lies in its middle management. These professionals translate strategy into execution, align teams with organisational goals, and ensure continuity across functions.

Yet, this segment remains one of the most underdeveloped areas of formal management training. The gap is clear: individuals may possess the right mindset but lack execution capability or demonstrate execution strength without strategic understanding.

NBS directly addresses this imbalance. Through experiential learning, applied pedagogy, live projects, and global exposure, students are trained to think critically and execute effectively. The outcome is a cadre of professionals equipped to manage complexity, take ownership, and deliver results, qualities essential for organisations navigating scale.

Positioned for India's Non-Metro Growth

India's economic rise is increasingly being driven by its regions. Cities beyond traditional metros are becoming centres of manufacturing, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Ahmedabad, where NBS is located, represents this shift combining strong industrial foundations with growing global connectivity.

Aligned with this reality, NBS is committed to supporting businesses as they scale beyond metropolitan boundaries. Its specialised programs, digital-first infrastructure, and



Dr Amit Gupta
Founder & Director , Narayana Business School, Ahmedabad

international immersion initiatives are designed to prepare professionals who can operate across geographies while maintaining global standards.

Agility in Curriculum and Design

One of the defining strengths of NBS is its ability to adapt swiftly to changes in technology, industry demands, and workforce expectations. Rather than relying on static curricula, the institution continually aligns its academic offerings with emerging business needs.

NBS currently offers four focused programs: PGDM in Data Science and Business Analytics, PGDM in Quantitative Finance, PGDM with Dual Specialisation, and MBA with a Post Graduate Program in Corporate Excellence (PGPCE). Each program is structured as a response to specific skill gaps in the market, ensuring that learning remains relevant and future oriented.

This agility reflects the institution's academic foresight anticipating what India's businesses will require, rather than responding after trends have matured.

Blended Intelligence for Tomorrow's Leaders

As artificial intelligence becomes embedded across industries, the role of managers is evolving. The future belongs not to technology alone, but to professionals who can combine human judgment with technological intelligence.

NBS integrates this understanding through its fully digital and AI-enabled campus. Academic delivery, learning systems, and institutional processes are designed to familiarise students with technology as an enabler of decision-making. The emphasis remains on developing blended intelligence where analytical tools enhance leadership, insight, and ethical judgment.

Learning Through Diversity and Experience

In a country as diverse as India, effective leadership demands cultural intelligence and adaptability. At NBS, diversity is not treated as a statistic, but as a lived learning experience.

Students from across the nation engage through more than 15 active student-led clubs that promote collaboration, entrepreneurship, leadership, and social awareness. These experiences help build emotional intelligence, mutual respect, and an appreciation for varied perspectives—capabilities that are increasingly vital in contemporary organisations

Academician-Founded, Future-Focused

At its foundation, Narayana Business School is guided by academicians who view education as a nation-building responsibility. The institution looks beyond short-term business cycles to prepare professionals capable of supporting India's long-term economic aspirations.

By combining academic rigour, industry integration, and adaptability, NBS has positioned itself as a model for management education that serves both business and society. This clarity of purpose, grounded in foresight rather than trend-following, places Narayana Business School among the iconic institutions shaping India's future and one to look out for in 2026.



Economics Think Tank and Academic Beacon

Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics nurtures thought leaders, scholars, innovators, policymakers and agents of social change through transformative education

Amid the transformation of Indian higher education, the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE), Pune, represents a legacy institution that bridges scholarship and public purpose. At its core, GIPE represents a unique and holistic integration of teaching, research, and policy engagement. GIPE has consistently fostered a high-quality academic ecosystem in which research informs classroom teaching, and teaching remains grounded in real-world economic and social challenges. ensuring that its work remains relevant to governance, development planning, and societal needs.

A Premier Legacy Institution

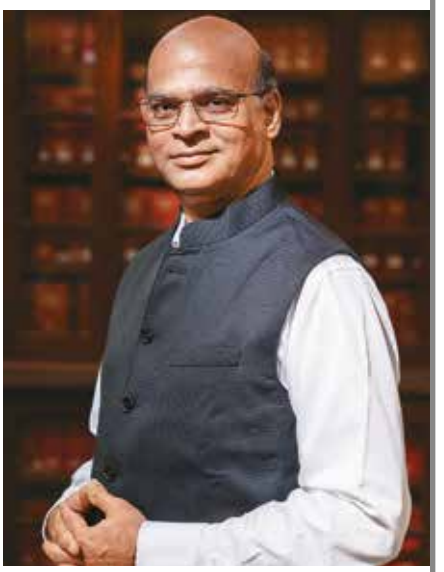
The institute was established in 1930 by RR Kale under the "Servants of India Society", inspired by the vision of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a leading nationalist thinker and reformer. GIPE was designed not merely as a centre of learning but as a space where economic research could inform real-world decision-making. Rejecting rigid ideology, the institute prioritised empirical methods, critical inquiry, and social relevance. This pragmatic and nation-orientated approach continues to guide GIPE's teaching, research, and institutional identity.

GIPE emerged at a critical moment in India's intellectual history, when rigorous economic analysis was essential to address issues of governance, development, and social reform. As the country's oldest institute dedicated to research and training in economics, it has consistently contributed to policy debates and academic advancement.

Since its inception, GIPE has been at the forefront of research in rural development, agricultural economics, labour studies, and public finance. In the decades following Independence, the institute played a crucial role in shaping India's statistical frameworks and economic planning through rigorous survey design, data collection, and empirical analysis. Over the years, GIPE's research has broadened to include monetary policy, population dynamics, employment, health economics, environmental sustainability, and development planning, reflecting India's evolving economic and social landscape. Beyond academia, its work has guided policy formulation, programme evaluation, and institutional reforms at both state and national levels. By actively collaborating with government bodies, regulators, and development agencies, GIPE has earned a reputation as a reliable source of evidence-based economic insights.

Where Economics Comes Alive

At GIPE, economics is more than just numbers and graphs—it's a lens through which society, markets, institutions, and public policy come into sharp focus



Dr (Prof) Umakant Dash
Vice-Chancellor, GIPE

"At GIPE, we strive to advance research, foster young scholars, embrace innovation, and generate knowledge that shapes policy, empowers people, and drives sustainable development."

Renowned for its clarity, purpose, and academic rigour, GIPE has cultivated a learning environment that seamlessly blends theory with real-world relevance. Here, students don't merely study economics; they learn to think like economists, critically analysing data, policies, and societal trends from the very start of their academic journey.

A Journey to Excellence

As a deemed-to-be university, GIPE enjoys academic autonomy that allows it to design innovative curricula, strengthen research priorities, and respond proactively to emerging economic challenges. At the same time, it remains firmly rooted in its original mission of public service, intellectual independence, and social responsibility.

Today, GIPE stands as a national knowledge institution committed to analytical depth, empirical rigour, and inclusive development. In a period of rapid economic transformation and global uncertainty, the institute continues to provide critical insights that support informed decision-making and equitable growth.

Foundations for the Future

GIPE's undergraduate programmes—BSc Economics and BSc Economics (Data Science)—span four years, meticulously designed under the National Education Policy (NEP). From microeconomics and macroeconomics to statistics, mathematics, and Indian economic history, students gain a solid foundation in the core principles of economics. Alongside these fundamentals, the curriculum encourages engagement with pressing contemporary issues such as inequality, employment, fiscal policy, and sustainability. Analytical thinking, data interpretation, and critical evaluation are not just skills to be learnt—they become second nature, preparing graduates for advanced studies, research-orientated careers, and impactful policy work.

Specialised Postgraduate Training

For those seeking deeper insights, GIPE's postgraduate offerings are both rigorous and diverse. At the heart of these is the two-year MSc Economics, a flagship programme that equips students with advanced analytical tools and applied knowledge to evaluate trends, institutions, and policy interventions. Beyond the core curriculum of microeconomics, macroeconomics, econometrics, and public policy, GIPE offers a suite of specialised MSc streams that respond to emerging economic challenges:

- Financial Economics: Merging economic theory with finance, regulatory frameworks, and market dynamics.
- Agribusiness Economics: Focusing on agricultural supply chains, rural development, and strategic marketing.
- International Business Economics and Finance – Designed for careers in global trade and corporate finance.
- Population Studies and Health Economics: Integrating demographic trends with health policy and financing.
- Public Policy: Preparing students for governance, policy design, and public administration.
- Economics of Geopolitics and Geo-economics: Examining global political dynamics through an economic lens.

In addition to these science-driven programmes, the institute also offers a two-year MA in Economics, which emphasises theoretical depth and political economy while integrating analytical tools to explore social policies, structural change, and institutional development.

Doctoral Research and Thought Leadership

At the pinnacle of academic pursuit, GIPE's PhD programme nurtures original research in fields ranging from economics and population studies to law and economics, public policy, sociology, and sustainable development. Doctoral scholars engage in close mentorship, rigorous methodological training, and dynamic seminars, producing work that contributes meaningfully to both scholarship and public discourse.

A Living Laboratory of Economics and Policy

Where theory meets practice, GIPE cultivates curiosity, applied research, and data-driven solutions toward preparing students to translate economic insights into real-world impact

Across all programmes, GIPE fosters a culture of inquiry. Seminars, workshops, data analysis, and research projects are woven into the learning experience, ensuring that students interact with contemporary debates and real-world datasets. With faculty deeply engaged in cutting-edge research, classrooms become spaces of dynamic exploration, where theory meets practice and ideas transform into actionable insights.

At GIPE, economics is not an abstract discipline—it's a vibrant toolkit for understanding and shaping the world. Here, students are equipped not only to analyse the present but to imagine and influence the future.

Nestled in the green, tranquil surroundings of Pune, GIPE has, for nearly a century, been a beacon of rigorous research, thoughtful debate, and policy engagement. From the very beginning, the institute has championed empirical inquiry, evidence-based reasoning, and a deep commitment to addressing India's pressing economic and social challenges. Today, it stands as a hub where research meets real-world relevance, and scholarship shapes national discourse.

Research, Dialogue, and National Impact

GIPE's research spans an impressive range of areas—agriculture and rural development, labour markets, public finance, monetary economics, population studies, health economics, and environmental sustainability. Each area is selected with a clear focus on India's long-term development priorities, ensuring that the institute's work is both timely and impactful. The faculty and students regularly undertake large-scale surveys and applied research commissioned by central and state governments, public institutions, and international organisations. These projects do more than generate data—they inform policy, influence implementation, and strengthen the country's research capacity. For students, they offer a unique window into the interplay between evidence, decision-making, and societal outcomes.

As one of India's oldest economics institutions, the Gokhale Institute equips students with theoretical knowledge and practical skills essential for real-world challenges

The institute's engagement with policy extends far beyond research reports. GIPE faculty actively participate in advisory committees, expert panels, and







Meticulously designed curricula offers a unique combination of academic rigor, practical training, excellent placement opportunities and a perfect environment for aspiring economists





national and international discussions on issues ranging from fiscal decentralisation and social sector reforms to employment elasticity and development strategies. Research outputs are not confined to academic journals—they shape debates, guide reforms, and influence the decisions that affect millions.

A Knowledge Exchange Platform

GIPE thrives as a space for intellectual exchange. Conferences, workshops, public lectures, and training programmes regularly bring together academics, policymakers, and civil society leaders. These forums foster informed debate, encourage critical thinking, and promote evidence-driven policy decisions. At the heart of this environment is a culture of mentorship and collaboration. Senior scholars guide young researchers in methodology, publication, and policy engagement, nurturing both intellectual rigour and ethical scholarship.

Life on campus reflects the institute's ethos of inquiry and social responsibility. Students are immersed in seminars, reading groups, and interactive workshops that encourage questioning, debate, and reflection. Here, economics is not just a discipline—it is a tool for understanding inequality, fostering inclusive growth, and addressing social challenges. The institute's values, inspired by the philosophy of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, emphasise education as a means of social reform and national service.

Under the leadership of Dr (Prof) Umakant Dash, GIPE continues to evolve as a centre of excellence. Dr Dash, an acclaimed economist, has strengthened research-driven teaching, interdisciplinary exploration, and institutional collaboration, all while nurturing young scholars and maintaining high academic standards.

Looking Ahead

GIPE envisions an expanded role on the national and global stage. As it approaches its centenary, the institute aims to deepen research engagement, forge international partnerships, adopt advanced analytical tools, and tackle emerging challenges—employment, climate change, sustainability, and inequality. Anchored in legacy yet driven by innovation, GIPE remains steadfast in its mission: generating knowledge that informs policy, empowers communities, and contributes meaningfully to India's development journey.



Building Careers, Creating Leaders

Ajeenkya D Y Patil University (ADYPU) stands today as a leading private university in Pune, Maharashtra, committed to fostering innovation, global competitiveness, and holistic development

The university was envisioned as a future-oriented institution that prepares students not only for employment, but for leadership and meaningful contribution to society.

Spread across the 100–110 acre DY Patil Knowledge City at Lohegaon, ADYPU caters to nearly 12,000 students through experiential, hands-on learning models. With over 53 academic programs and more than 100 specializations, the university offers education across Engineering, Management, Design, Law, Media, Hospitality, Liberal arts, and emerging interdisciplinary domains. The academic framework emphasizes learning by doing, industry engagement, and global exposure, ensuring students are equipped for real-world challenges. Ajeenkya D Y Patil University has evolved into a vibrant ecosystem of learning, research, and global engagement. The university's NAAC accreditation, NBA accreditation for the B. Tech Biotechnology programme, and the School of Engineering's recognition in the NIRF 2025 rankings stand as milestones of quality, credibility, and academic rigor. Yet, for Dr Patil, these achievements are not destinations but stepping stones toward higher benchmarks of excellence.



Dr Ajeenkya D Y Patil
President, Ajeenkya D Y Patil University, Pune

At the heart of ADYPU's evolution is Dr Ajeenkya D Y Patil, President of the university and Chairman of the Ajeenkya DY Patil Group. His leadership philosophy blends business acumen with deep social commitment, shaping institutions that deliver excellence with purpose. Diverse experience shapes his approach to leadership, enabling ADYPU and the wider group to evolve economically, intellectually, socially, and culturally, while prioritizing world-class systems in education and healthcare.

The roots of ADYPU lie in the legacy of Padmashree Dr D Y Patil, who founded the DY Patil Group in 1983. Over four decades, the group has grown into one of India's largest educational networks, comprising more than 200 institutions and five universities across Navi Mumbai, Pune, and Kolhapur.

Under Dr Ajeenkya D Y Patil's chairmanship, the Ajeenkya DY Patil Group has expanded with foresight and innovation. The group's presence

now spans education, healthcare, sports, agriculture, and technology. Proactive initiatives, ranging from international cricket stadiums and advanced healthcare facilities to digital education platforms such as GoSchool and GoLearn, reflect a future-focused mindset.

ADYPU delivers future-oriented curricula aligned with international standards. Strategic partnerships with 17 global universities provide opportunities for student mobility, joint programs, and global exposure, offering graduates a competitive edge. Undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs integrate teaching, research, and industry collaboration. The aim is to nurture independent professionals who think critically, innovate responsibly, and adapt to rapidly changing environments. Pune's long-standing reputation as the "Oxford of the East" finds a modern expression at ADYPU, where academic rigor is complemented by cultural, entrepreneurial, and social development.

A cornerstone of ADYPU's academic ecosystem is DRIF, which stands for Design, Research, Innovation, and Future Frameworks. DRIF represents the university's commitment to interdisciplinary and future-ready education. Through DRIF, students work on real world problems that demand collaboration across disciplines. The initiative encourages design thinking, applied research, startup incubation, intellectual property creation, and policy-oriented studies.

Innovation is embedded into curricula and campus culture, ensuring that students do not merely learn concepts, but apply them to create tangible solutions. Among ADYPU's most ambitious experiential learning initiatives is the student-led Helicopter Project. This project enables Engineering and Design students to conceptualize, design, and build a functional helicopter under expert mentorship. The Helicopter Project integrates aerospace concepts, mechanical and electrical engineering, safety protocols, teamwork, and project management. More than a technical achievement, it symbolizes the university's confidence in student potential and its commitment to pushing the boundaries of practical education. It demonstrates that complex, globally relevant engineering challenges can be undertaken within an Indian university ecosystem.

ADYPU is firmly committed to facilitating the academic and professional success of its students by creating a strong bridge between education and industry. The university's focus is on equipping learners with relevant skills, knowledge, and exposure to excel in the professional world.

Through robust industry partnerships and corporate relations, ADYPU collaborates with leading multinational companies, corporate organizations, and industry experts. These partnerships enable internships, live projects, training programs, and campus placement drives that align academic learning with industry expectations.

Placement and internship support is reinforced through structured recruitment drives, career fairs, and employer engagement initiatives. Skill development programs focus on technical proficiency, soft skills, leadership, and professional communication, ensuring students are industry ready from day one.

Corporate workshops, seminars, and guest lectures provide direct interaction with industry professionals, exposing students to real-world challenges and evolving trends. Networking opportunities through corporate events allow students to connect with recruiters, alumni, and industry leaders. Personalized career counseling further supports students in making informed decisions about career paths, job roles, and higher education.

Under Dr Ajeenkya D Y Patil's leadership, ADYPU and the wider group contribute significantly to affordable healthcare, elite sports infrastructure, and professionally relevant education. UGC recognition, diverse programs, and high student engagement position ADYPU as a key player in India's innovation-driven educational landscape.

Thoughtful scaling, global partnerships, and socially responsible initiatives, including women's employment drives and community development programs, create long-term value. Together, these efforts cement Ajeenkya DY Patil University's role as an institution shaping not just careers, but the future of education and society in India.





PSIT Kanpur: Excellence Redefined

A future-ready institution integrating academic rigour, innovation, and global industry relevance

In an era where higher education must go beyond awarding degrees, Pranveer Singh Institute of Technology (PSIT), Kanpur stands as a centre of purposeful learning, innovation, and nation-building. Rooted in academic rigour and driven by a future-ready vision, PSIT has evolved into a holistic knowledge ecosystem that nurtures talent, advances research, fosters innovation, and prepares graduates for global relevance. Recognised for its academic quality, research strength, vibrant start-up culture, and strong placement legacy, PSIT seamlessly blends tradition with technology and scholarship with skill, earning its place among India's most respected institutions of higher learning.

Hallmarks of Excellence

- **NAAC A+ Accreditation**
  PSIT proudly holds the prestigious NAAC A+ grade, a definitive marker of academic excellence, institutional integrity, and learner-centric governance.
- **NBA Accreditation for All Programs**
  All eligible undergraduate programs i.e. Computer Science Engineering (CSE), Electronics & Communication Engineering (ECE) and Information Technology (IT) have received an NBA accreditation extension for the next three years.
- **National Leadership in High-Value Placements**
  PSIT consistently leads in high-value placements nationwide, competing with, and often surpassing India's most reputed institutions, with 40–50 students each year receiving ₹20 LPA+ offers directly from global industry leaders including Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Flipkart, Palo Alto Networks, Atlassian, PayPal, Morgan Stanley, Juspay, and Walmart.
- **Unmatched Placement Legacy**
  PSIT holds a 100% placement legacy, with students securing lucrative salary packages up to ₹66 lakh per annum across top national and global recruiters like TCS, Accenture, Turing, Wipro, LTIMindtree, HCLTech, and more.
- **DST-Recognised NIDHI–ITBI Incubation Centre**
  Recognised by the Department of Science & Technology (DST), PSIT's NIDHI–ITBI Incubation Cell fosters entrepreneurship, innovation, and technology-led start-ups with national relevance.
- **MSME-Recognised Institution**
  With formal recognition from MSME, PSIT actively contributes to innovation-driven economic growth and industry-aligned skill development.
- **Listed in the Start-up India Incubator Network**
  PSIT is officially listed under the Start-up India Incubator ecosystem, recognised by the Government of India, strengthening its national





Shri Pranveer Singh
Chairman, PSIT Kanpur

At PSIT Kanpur, we believe education must extend beyond careers to shape leadership, responsibility, and lifelong relevance. Guided by strong values and a future-focused outlook, we are strengthening academic rigour, advancing research and innovation, and deepening industry and global collaborations to make learning applied and impactful.

Our vision is to build PSIT into a nationally influential and globally respected institution that nurtures ethical leaders and purposeful innovators, contributing meaningfully to India's knowledge-driven future.

innovation footprint.

- **Distinguished Faculty Strength**
  A robust academic foundation is reinforced by 200+ faculty members holding PhDs from reputed universities, driving excellence in teaching, research, and mentorship.
- **Government-Funded Research Excellence**
  PSIT has secured 37 government-funded research projects with a cumulative value exceeding ₹12.5 crore, reflecting its growing research credibility and national trust.
- **Research Output and Intellectual Property**
  With 400+ research publications annually, 205 published patents, and 26 granted patents, PSIT stands at the forefront of applied research and intellectual property creation.
- **Academic Distinction and University Toppers**
  A legacy of 200+ gold medallists and university rank holders underscore PSIT's consistent academic brilliance.
- **Extensive Campus Recruitment Activity**
  More than 250 campus placement drives annually ensure diverse, high-quality career opportunities for students.
- **Industry Collaboration and Start-up Ecosystem**
  Strategic partnerships with industry leaders have resulted in 31 incubated ventures and 26 active start-ups, reinforcing PSIT's entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- **Vibrant Academic and Industry Engagements**
  Regular Tech Expos, MOUs with universities and academicians, Start-up Conclaves, and HR Summits ensure sustained industry–academia synergy.
- **Centres of Excellence in Emerging Technologies**
  Dedicated Centres of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Wearable Devices, and Internet of Things (IoT) prepare students for future-focused careers.
- **Preferred Institution for Leading Recruiters**
  PSIT is officially included in the priority list of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), reinforcing employer confidence and institutional credibility.
- **Professors of Practice from Leading US-Based IT Corporations**
  PSIT has appointed renowned professionals from leading US-based IT companies as Professors of Practice. This milestone initiative enables students to engage directly with international thought leaders in Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, Software Engineering, VLSI Design, and Data Analytics, bringing real-world perspectives into classrooms and ensuring curriculum relevance to evolving global industry demands.
- **Student Innovation with Societal Impact**
  First-year B.Tech (CSE) students developed Agri Trade Hub, an AI-powered digital platform empowering farmers through fair pricing and smart agri-solutions, widely featured in national newspapers.
- **MSME Idea Hackathon 4.0 Selection**
  PSIT was selected under the Young Innovators category, receiving a ₹20 lakh grant to develop sustainable solutions using agricultural waste.
- **Global Aerospace Achievements**
  Team Vajra ranked 1st in India and 4th globally at the International Rocketry Tech Fest 2025, while Team Vyomnauts ranked 1st in India and 16th globally at the International Model Satellite Competition.
- **Host Institution and National Nodal Centre for Smart India Hackathon (SIH) 2025**
  PSIT was selected as an official Nodal Centre for SIH 2025, India's flagship innovation initiative of the Government of India.
- **Early-Stage Innovation: Smart Self-Purifying Water Bottle**
  First-year B.Tech students developed a smart self-purifying water bottle addressing sustainability and safe drinking water challenges.
- **A Strong and Engaged Alumni Network**
  A thriving community of 17,000+ alumni actively contributes to mentorship, industry linkages, and institutional growth.



Shaping Global Leaders and Innovators



IIMB nurturing future-ready leaders, entrepreneurs, policy-makers and agents of social change through holistic and transformative education

The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) was established in 1973 by the Government of India (GoI) as an institute of excellence for education, training, research, and consulting in the field of management and allied areas of knowledge. IIMB is widely acknowledged as a premier management institute in India, with an international reputation for the quality of its postgraduate and doctoral programmes.

Learning @ IIMB

IIM Bangalore (IIMB) consistently ranks among the top business schools globally and in India, often securing the #1 or #2 spot in India for Management (NIRF 2025) and featuring #30 QS World and Financial Times rankings, with its MBA (PGP) placing high globally, and #1 in India across several key rankings.

IIMB offers degree-granting programs, certificate programs, executive education programs, and specialised courses in areas such as entrepreneurship and public policy. Along with the rigorous curriculum, IIMB offers a wide range of elective courses among B-schools in India, covering a wide array of topics, based on students' interest and industry needs. The digital learning initiative of IIMB, IIMBx, emphasises making online education accessible, affordable, and adaptable for all sections of the Indian population and the global audience since its inception in 2015.

Learning Spaces

An award-winning campus in harmony with nature, IIMB is designed by a Pritzker Architecture Prize laureate, B. V. Doshi. The 54,000 sq. meter IIMB complex is built on a sprawling 100-acre campus, incorporating granite and concrete to mirror the robustness of Fatehpur Sikri's courtyards. At the same time, the lush gardens reflect the verdant landscape of Bangalore. Combining modern design techniques of spatial synthesis, utility, and energy efficiency, the campus architecture redefined Indian architectural norms at a time when the country was on the cusp of embracing modernity. The campus is equipped with outstanding IT infrastructure, world-class sports facilities, and 24-hour support staff; a residential 'Management Development

Centre'; high-tech classrooms and seminar rooms; a state-of-the-art library; excellent hostel facilities; restaurants; and coffee shops.

Faculty & Research Ecosystem

The faculty at IIMB is well known for their excellence and has exposure from the top universities in India and globally to teach and learn. Through innovative research in every functional area of management, IIMB faculty members deliver knowledge that benefits organisations in the public and private sectors, as well as the government and society at large. The expertise produced by the IIMB faculty has been published in prestigious scholarly journals with a high impact factor and citation index.



The Faculty Development Programmes, conducted every quarter at IIMB, invite teachers from across the country for a workshop on blended learning and designing MOOCs. The 'Future of Learning Conference' organised every year hosts researchers and educationists from across the globe for a dialogue around online learning.

Centres of Excellence at IIM Bangalore

IIM Bangalore hosts several Centres of Excellence that focus on cutting-edge research, education, and policy engagement across emerging and critical domains. These centres serve as platforms for collaboration between academia, industry, government, and society.

The Centre for Capital Markets and Risk Management promotes high-quality research on Indian financial markets. It disseminates original and secondary research through commentaries, workshops, and conferences, and develops unique datasets, positioning IIMB as a national hub for empirical financial market research.

The Centre for Corporate Governance and Citizenship (CCGC) is a nationally accredited centre of excellence supported by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. It plays a key role in advancing governance practices and was selected as a member of the oversight body of the International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) Academic Network.

The Centre for Management Communication focuses on best practices in managerial and digital communication. Its work spans areas such as sustainability, health, crisis communication, and social networks. The centre develops courses, conducts research, and collaborates with practitioners to produce case studies, programs, and webinars.

The Centre for Digital Public Goods (CDPG) builds on India's globally recognised digital public infrastructure initiatives. It acts as a repository of knowledge on digital public infrastructure, benefiting policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and international institutions.

The Centre for Public Policy (CPP), established in 2000, is an independent public-interest think tank. Formed in partnership with the Government of India, UNDP, and IIMB, it undertakes pioneering research, teaching, training, and capacity-building in public policy and governance.

The Centre for Software and Information Technology Management (CSITM) has over two decades of experience as a global knowledge hub. It focuses on areas such as artificial intelligence, digital transformation, product management, healthcare technology, digital governance, cloud computing, fintech, blockchain, extended reality, IoT, and techno-ethics.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) works to enhance teaching effectiveness by researching best practices in pedagogy and learning. In collaboration with global institutions, CTL conducts faculty and doctoral workshops and serves as a national resource for improving higher education teaching standards.

The Supply Chain Management Centre is a multidisciplinary centre dedicated to theoretical and applied research in supply chain management. It integrates academic expertise and industry participation to develop practical solutions for managing end-to-end supply chains.

The Mizuho India Japan Study Centre strengthens academic and research collaboration with leading Japanese universities. Its focus areas include infrastructure, energy, transportation, and micro, small, and medium enterprises.

The Israel Centre promotes India–Israel economic and innovation partnerships by leveraging Israel's technology-driven ecosystem and India's large market and entrepreneurial potential.

Finally, NSRCEL, IIMB's incubation arm, supports entrepreneurship through structured programs for startups across sectors and stages. It enables students to explore entrepreneurship by allowing placement deferrals and provides strong external validation through partnerships and funding support.

Together, these centres reinforce IIM Bangalore's role as a leader in research, innovation, policy, and entrepreneurship.

Global Network for Advanced Management

IIMB is the only Indian B-school in the Global Network of 32 global B-schools for Advanced Management, convened by Yale School of Management. The Academy of International Business is a world body with a presence in 86 countries, with the India Chapter headquartered at IIMB.

IMT: Promoting Innovation for Facilitating Learners' Success

IMT Ghaziabad, under Dr. Atish Chattopadhyay, fuses 45-year legacy with digital, international, industry-driven innovation for success of its students.



Dr Atish Chattopadhyay
Director, Institute of Management Technology (IMT) Ghaziabad

Gifted with an innovative, strategic, and keen sense of nuanced understanding for building responsible human capital through education, Dr Atish Chattopadhyay, Director of the Institute of Management Technology (IMT) Ghaziabad, is a celebrated name in the industry. From a family of educators and academicians, he carries forward the tradition with passionate zeal, blending a balance between human values and modern education and technology, without being overwhelmed by its indispensability. Pioneer of 'Shopper Marketing' and recipient of several prestigious recognitions, including featuring in AACSB's 'Innovations That Inspire', global list, Dr Chattopadhyay, has designed a blueprint for the legacy institution, established in 1980, for its next era of growth. Going all out global is IMT's next destination.

Q You have covered a broad spectrum of institutions in your journey as an educator. What led to this second stint at IMT?

I have been fortunate to share a great personal rapport with each of the institutions I have worked with, namely IBS, SPJIMR in Mumbai, MICA in Ahmedabad, and JAGSoM in Bengaluru. I feel privileged they understand and respect my desire for an unfettered and seamless exploration, experimentation, innovation and contribution in the field of academics. So, there is no full stop, but a continuum to what I do. My longtime friend, Sanjay Padode, President of Vijaybhoomi University in Karjat, near Mumbai, was embarking on the AACSB journey and sought my guidance. The exciting opportunity to build an institution from scratch and create innovative curricula that gave learners the power of choice was the lure that led me to accept the offer. Even today, I remain on their board. To summarise briefly, I moved to his setup, and after achieving all that was expected of me, I had the option to return to IMT. I did just that, and the board was glad to have me back in IMT.

Q How has education evolved in recent times?

We still need to break the rigid and jaded mindset that labels only those with high scores in subjects like science and maths as benchmarks of intelligence. Creating a curriculum based on Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences model, consisting of eight intelligences of linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic, addresses the choice of subject by the learner. A disruptor in the true sense. Gardner believed that every individual has different strengths and learning styles across these intelligence categories. We created schools for various courses, allowing students to follow their hearts and minds. This was a unique foray pioneered by us in 2019, even before the New Education Policy (NEP) was introduced in 2020 at Vijaybhoomi University. It was our privilege to have amidst us the architect of the NEP, late Dr K. Kasturirangan, who acknowledged, "This is what we envisaged when we wrote the NEP." Today, cross-disciplinary learning is a reality.

Q What is the forward pathway that you are carving for IMT?

IMT is backed by a strong legacy of 45 years, excellent faculty, visiting faculty from abroad, a robust alumni network, and strong industry and community connections. I take pride in saying that many of our graduates are now successful entrepreneurs. Most importantly, IMT has a very vibrant student body, the best which I know of. Today, we stand at a cusp where the institution has evolved, and in future, it must be viewed as a combination of a legacy institution and innovation of the future. In other words, its tradition meeting modernity because fusion with the future is what IMT, Ghaziabad, stands for. Also, we have set four priorities:

- Strengthen industry integration and create curricula aligned to the industry
- Digital transformation
- Internationalization

- Leverage alumni network, both in India and abroad

Q What have been your endeavours in global expansion?

IMT already runs a Dual Country program (PGDM DCP), but it is now exploring opportunities to enhance the career prospects of its graduates in Dubai and European countries. We are also eager to establish meaningful international partnerships. Recently, we signed an MOU with Aviancity, which is a very specialised institution for AI based out of Paris. We will soon partner with three other European partners in Barcelona, Spain, as well as in Germany and France. Over the next five years, the target is to secure 200+ international placements, compared to 30 achieved last year.

Currently, only foreign faculty mentor students for international dual courses. In future, we aim to attract a large number of foreign students, thereby making India a major global education destination as well.

Q IMT has an extensive alumni network. How are you leveraging this strength to your advantage?

Knowledge today has become perishable, and one needs to keep pace by continuously acquiring new skills - learning to learn assumes greater significance. IMT aims to be part of an empowered ecosystem, not just a standalone institution. We have a dedicated alumni association, which is registered. I envision them playing a pivotal role in mentoring, supporting students, and fostering and giving shape to the symbiotic ecosystem that we are trying to create.

To make this journey less intimidating for the students, they must be mentored by those who have gone through a similar journey in the same institution. The role of alumni assumes significance at this juncture. On our part, we have created an empowering professional journey for the students, which we will further consolidate.

Q How do you assess students' competencies to help them make informed subject choices?

We have an intense assessment centre that evaluates students in their very first year, providing a clear picture of their strengths, areas for improvement, and the challenging ones that require extra effort. But we first work on their strengths, as that will guide them to make career choices with satisfaction rather than be caught in a rat race of monetary metrics. No two individuals are the same. Each individual has a unique orientation, making different choices; therefore, they should be allowed to choose what they want to learn, when to learn it, and how they want to learn it.

Competencies such as communication, teamwork, interpersonal effectiveness, creativity, innovation, customer focus, adaptability to change, leadership, and analytical skills are typically evaluated by the industry when making selections, depending on the student's strengths. The role of institutions and faculty should be that of facilitators.

Q What are the generational changes that you see in today's students?

The present generation is far more confident. They exactly know what they want and how to get it. A laudable trait is that they know how to sift through the correct information from the vast amount of information floating around on various digital platforms and apply it with focus. Today, our role has shifted from instruction to instilling the belief that whatever they pursue, they are capable of achieving it. From my experience, I can say that they are always very receptive, and in turn, I get to learn from them because they open up a whole new perspective to a situation. I must say parents need to be more supportive.

Q How do you look at IMT's enduring and strategic role in quality education?

Among our innovative approaches is the continuous review and upgradation of curricula, serving as a multiplier of learners' potential, so that aspirations meet the possibilities that exist. IMT Ghaziabad should be an enabling ecosystem where learners, faculty, industry and recruiting partners, NGOs, international partners, alumni, and other stakeholders collaborate to enhance and co-create the value for the overall ecosystem - benefiting each stakeholder and promoting collective growth. As an educational institution, IMT should be able to facilitate that ecosystem. I look at it that way.





RCCIIT Leading the Next Frontier

A forward-looking institution, RCC Institute of Information Technology Kolkata, fostering innovation in engineering and allied fields, marked by excellence in technical education



Dr. Anirban Mukherjee
Principal In-Charge, RCCIIT

RCCIIT: A Legacy of Excellence, A Vision for the Future

RCC Institute of Information Technology (RCCIIT) stands today as one of the most forward-looking autonomous engineering institutes in Eastern India. Established in 1999 as a joint venture between the National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of IT, Government of India, and the Government of West Bengal, the institute was conceived as a Centre of Excellence for formal engineering education in IT and allied areas.

Since 2005, RCCIIT is functioning as a unit of an autonomous Society of the Higher Education Department, Government of West Bengal - uniquely positioned as a Government-controlled, self-financing institute that blends public sector values with the agility of industry.

RCCIIT is a NAAC accredited institute and all its eligible undergraduate programs are NBA accredited. The institute offers six AICTE-approved UG programs and four PG programs including M.Tech in VLSI & Microelectronics, CSE, CSE (AI), and MCA. Autonomous status granted by UGC in 2024 has further empowered RCCIIT to design futuristic curricula integrating skill- based industry-aligned courses and strengthen outcome-based holistic education.

Redefining Education for the Future:

The rapid advancement of technology, spanning AI, Cyber-Physical Systems, Cloud Computing, Data Science, Intelligent Autonomous Systems, and Silicon Engineering demands an education model that is dynamic, multidisciplinary, and innovation-centric.

RCCIIT has embraced this challenge by dynamically framing the curricula, offering beyond-the-syllabus courses and workshops, regularly getting its faculty trained by industry. Through its rich pool of qualified faculty, advanced labs, deep industry linkages and active R&D Cell promoting strong research and innovation culture, RCCIIT is preparing the next generation of engineers, researchers, and entrepreneurs who will contribute to drive India's digital future.

Pioneering training on AI, AI Skills Lab & AI Innovation Lab – Powered by MeitY & Intel

Recognizing the national priority of building an AI-skilled workforce, RCCIIT has partnered with Intel to give basic and advanced level training on AI to the students and establish cutting-edge AI training infrastructure (AI Skills Lab and AI Innovation Lab) on campus with financial support from MeitY.

Engineering students across all branches receive uniform access to Intel's AI curriculum, from foundational modules in the first year to progression and project-based modules in higher semesters, under Intel® AI for Future Workforce Program. Also, AI application-based hackathon competition is organized with support of the State Government and MeitY. These interventions are equipping students with hands-on AI model building, ethical and responsible AI practices and deployment of AI

solutions for real-world problems.

RCCIIT is ensuring that every engineering graduate is empowered with the competencies demanded by Industry 4.0 and the coming era of AI-driven automation.

Bridging Academia and Industry: Preparing Future Innovators

Industry collaboration forms the backbone of RCCIIT's academic philosophy. Through partnerships with leading multinational companies, tech communities, and emerging start-ups, the institute ensures that graduates are capable of contributing from day one in industry.

Key initiatives include

- Industry-sponsored labs
- Industry-guided Internships
- Hackathons, ideathons, and other innovation challenges of industry
- Tech clubs, workshops, and IIC bootcamps/seminars

Building an AI Ecosystem for Schools, Colleges, and Start-ups

In one of the most visionary initiatives promoted by MeitY and technically supported by Intel, RCCIIT is implementing the 'AI Capacity Building Program for Schools: Empowering Students with Future Skills' – a pilot project aligned to NEP 2020 and India's National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence by NITI Aayog.

This program, targeted to cover 20000+ beneficiaries across 300+ schools in West Bengal, aims to foster AI awareness, appreciation, and practical applications of AI among students and teachers to cultivate a generation of AI-literate individuals. Young learners of class VIII to XII are introduced to no-code low-code AI, ethical AI, and real-world problem solving using AI.

RCCIIT's AI-trained faculty are also nurturing a home-grown EdTech Start-up developing AI-powered teaching-learning platforms (AI-for-AI) for schools and colleges.



Capacity Building for Emerging ICT Areas – Empowering Youth Across Bengal

Under another prestigious MeitY project, RCCIIT has successfully conducted zero-cost training programs for 3500+ unemployed graduates, postgraduates, and undergraduates in ten emerging ICT domains including AI & Deep Learning, Cloud Computing, Enterprise Computing, Web & Mobile Technology, Drone based Aerial Surveillance & Image Processing, CAD-CAM.

Initiatives are underway to further scale up such skilling program in a spoke-and-hub model, partnering with HEIs and Electronics & IT industry of the region to provide skill training and internship to the students in five cutting-edge areas like Advanced AI & Data Science, Smart Web & Cloud Computing, Secure Network & Digital Information, AI-Based VLSI Design and Intelligent Autonomous System.

The goal is to enhance employability and empower the youth with knowledge and skill in emerging technology.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Core

RCCIIT's Institution Innovation Council (IIC) actively fosters a culture of ideation, prototyping, and innovation. Students receive mentorship, incubation support, IP guidance, and access to lab facilities that convert ideas into viable products.

One remarkable example is 'Matri', a menstrual pain relief device, developed by one student of the Applied Electronics Dept. of RCCIIT; 'Matri' is now sold as a product in Amazon and gained popularity among Indian women. One student team of the Computer Science Dept. of RCCIIT has successfully developed a low-cost Jute Ribboner machine to extract bark/fibre for enhancing in-situ retting technology of jute and has been selected as one of the best five hardware models in the Smart India Hackathon 2025.

Recent Record of Excellence

RCCIIT continues to gain recognition as it earned All India Rank 96 in Outlook–ICARE India Rankings 2025, ABP Live SmartED Conclave Award 2025 for Excellence in Future-Focused Technical Education, Zee 24 Ghanta Education Excellence Award 2025 for Embracing AI in Education. One senior Professor of the institute has been awarded for securing one of the top three positions in the Impact Shapers Category at the India AI Impact Festival 2025 organized by CBSE, MoE, DST, NIELIT, AIM, NITI Ayog and Intel India.



Building a Future-Ready Academic and Research Ecosystem

Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belagavi's transformative drive setting a standard of cutting-edge science and technology in global India

Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU), Belagavi, is redefining the landscape of technical education and research in Karnataka. With a bold vision to become a national hub for innovation, cutting-edge research, and industry-ready engineering education, VTU is leveraging policy reforms, modern infrastructure, and strong industry partnerships to create a future-ready academic ecosystem.

Founded on April 1, 1998, under the VTU Act 1994, the university honours the legacy of Bharat Ratna Dr M Visvesvaraya, a symbol of engineering excellence and innovation. VTU serves as the administrative and academic anchor for 253 engineering and architecture colleges across Karnataka, including 46 autonomous colleges, 17 government engineering colleges, 26 schools of architecture, and a constituent college. With a student population exceeding 3 lakh, VTU offers 42 undergraduate and 94 postgraduate programmes and houses 923 departments recognised as research centres, nurturing over 9,000 doctoral and MSc Engg scholars.

The university's commitment to global education is reflected in partnerships with international institutions such as Temple University, Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, Millersville University, and FOM University. These collaborations enable academic and research exchanges, preparing students to compete on an international stage.

Modern Infrastructure and Campus Life

VTU's campuses are equipped with state-of-the-art facilities designed to support learning, research, and overall student development. Classrooms feature modern projectors and ICT-enabled screens, while high-tech computer labs provide 24/7 internet access. The campus also offers Wi-Fi connectivity, networked data storage, auditoriums with advanced acoustics, libraries with OPAC systems, cafeterias, and medical facilities. Students benefit from safe and spacious accommodations with 24/7 CCTV surveillance and conveniences like free laundry services and transport connectivity.

Sports and cultural activities are integral to student life. Outdoor sports such as cricket, football, volleyball, and basketball, alongside indoor games like table tennis and chess, are actively encouraged. Additionally, students interested in performing arts and cultural events are provided ample platforms to nurture their talents.

Driving Research and Innovation

At the core of VTU's transformation is the Visvesvaraya Research and Innovation Foundation (VRIF) and its Technology Centre of Excellence (TCOE) in Bengaluru. Operating under a hub-and-spoke model, the TCOE focuses on frontier technologies including artificial intelligence (AI), 5G/6G, robotics, quantum computing, and advanced digital systems. This centre fosters interdisciplinary research, startup incubation, and academia-industry collaboration, reflecting VTU's commitment to applied innovation.

The 1.2 lakh sq. ft. VRIF facility houses incubation spaces, innovation labs, and startup support services. US-based companies XCEL Corp and QMagna have established software



Dr S Vidyashankar
Vice Chancellor, Visvesvaraya Technological University

"Engineering education plays a pivotal role in the human resource development of any country. The university's focus on interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research and the establishment of Centres of Excellence help in undertaking need-based research for incubation, start-ups, commercialisation of IPs, publications, prototypes, and patents"

development and product innovation centres at VRIF, providing students with hands-on training, project-based learning, and internship opportunities. Complementing this is VTU's new Quantum Computing Centre, offering an MTech programme in Quantum Technology in collaboration with industry leaders QNu Labs and QPiAI.

Academic Reforms and Skill Development

Aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, VTU is adopting a flexible, India-centric education model emphasising multidisciplinary learning, research, skill development, and experiential exposure. Students now have the opportunity to pursue honours and minor degrees, explore online and blended learning, and gain real-world experience through internships and research projects. Specialised exam support packages have been introduced to ease academic stress without compromising learning outcomes.

AI upskilling is a central focus across all engineering disciplines. AI has been embedded into curricula, with dedicated branches, 18-credit AI minors for computer science students, and modules integrated across engineering subjects. Partnerships, including the Samsung Innovation Campus, aim to train over 1,100 students in AI and IoT, while a proposed Centre of Excellence in AI-Based Skilling will offer micro-credentials in data analytics, prompt engineering, and related fields.

Strengthening Industry Collaboration

VTU has forged strong industry linkages to align education with real-world requirements. Collaborations with Siemens, Schneider Electric, and other leading companies provide students with advanced training, research opportunities, and problem-solving platforms. The AICTE IDEA Labs at VTU campuses nurture innovation and entrepreneurship by offering prototyping, 3D printing, and interdisciplinary project development facilities.

Administrative reforms are equally transformative. VTU has implemented AI-enabled digital evaluation systems, live webcasting of examination assessments, coded answer scripts, and automated third evaluations, ensuring transparency, fairness, and integrity in academic assessments.

Centres of Excellence and Entrepreneurship

VTU has established state-of-the-art CNC machine workshops, telecom centres of excellence focusing on 5G, 6G, and quantum computing, and automation partnerships with Schneider Electric. The VTU Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center actively supports startups and student ventures, backed by a dedicated budget of ₹2 crore for innovation, incubation, and entrepreneurial development programmes.

Skill development initiatives are implemented across regional centres for ITI, diploma, and engineering students, in collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). Programmes such as the Vishwakarma Scheme extend training opportunities to the general public, further reinforcing VTU's role in community development and employability enhancement.

A Vision for the Future

Through these ambitious initiatives, VTU is emerging as a centre of excellence that produces globally competitive engineers equipped to lead technological innovation. By integrating research, innovation, AI upskilling, and industry collaboration, VTU is not only adapting to the future of engineering but shaping it—transforming the university into a vibrant, future-ready ecosystem where knowledge, creativity, and industry converge.



A growing vibrant campus-Faculty and Administrative building

Education with Purpose

With the visionary leadership of Syed Muhammad Ali al-Hussaini, Khaja Bandanawaz University stands as a living legacy, a bridge between tradition and modernity, faith and progress, and local needs and global aspirations

A Vision for Humanity

In the heart of Kalaburagi, amid the resonant legacy of Sufism and centuries-old traditions of humanism, stands Khaja Bandanawaz University (KBNU), an institution that has steadily grown into one of North Karnataka's most transformative centres of learning. Built upon the timeless belief that "service to humanity is service to God", KBNU today embodies a remarkable journey of faith, philanthropy, scholarship, and visionary leadership.

A Legacy Rooted in Service

The genesis of this journey dates back to 1958, when the Khaja Education Society (KES) was established by the late Padmashree Janab Syed Shah Muhammad Al Hussaini. What began as an earnest effort to nurture the educational aspirations of the Muslim community soon expanded into a broader mission: empowering the underprivileged across caste, creed, and religion.

Driven by this vision, the Society initially set up boys' and girls' high schools in Kalaburagi. Over the decades, it grew into more than 24 institutions, ranging from primary schools to professional colleges in medicine, engineering, nursing, education, law, sciences, arts, and humanities.

Simplicity is the hallmark of greatness and Janab Syed Shah Muhammad Al Hussaini was an epitome of simplicity and modesty. The Khaja Education Society today stands as a testimony to the greatness of this individual who worked with a single minded dedication to uplift the backward minority of Gulbarga, a vision that grew to encompass all without class, creed, religion or gender. He ranked among those who took pains to tackle the ills of the society that they see around them. Janab Syed Shah Muhammad Al Hussaini decided to

redress the evil of backwardness by establishing educational institutions in a region where none existed before. With a judicious far-sightedness he began by establishing a girls school first in 1958 from where he never looked back. A host of schools and colleges followed with the distinctive factor that they provided education at the minimum basic cost. Janab Syed Shah Muhammad Al Hussaini founded the society with a selfless motive and till today it continues to be a service-oriented organisation, true to the vision of the founder President.



The late Padmashree Syed Shah Muhammad al Hussaini
Founder- Khaja Education Society

A Trailblazer of Knowledge

When Syed Shah Muhammad al Hussaini passed the mantle in 2007, his son, Dr. Syed Shah Khusro Hussaini, assumed leadership of the KES with remarkable foresight and dedication. An alumnus of McGill University with an MA in Islamic Studies and later a PhD from the US, Dr Hussaini was more than a scholar—he was a Sufi intellectual, a philanthropist, and an educational reformer whose presence commanded both reverence and affection.

His contributions went far beyond administrative reform. Under his leadership, institutions expanded significantly, including the establishment of the Khaja Bandanawaz Institute of Medical Sciences and its 750-bed teaching and general hospital. His academic legacy includes over 15 books, 40 research articles, and numerous treatises spanning Sufism, history, culture, and philosophy. He served on advisory boards of national and international journals and played a vital role in shaping Islamic and modern education in India.

As a fulfilment of his Vision and dream, the Government of Karnataka passed the Khaja Bandanawaz University Bill in 2018, formally establishing KBNU as a private minority university. Approved by UGC, NMC, AICTE, NCTEA, and BCI, and a member of AIU, the university became the umbrella under which all higher education institutions of the KES were unified. This milestone elevated the region's academic landscape, offering new paths in higher education and research to thousands of students in North Karnataka. But behind this evolution stood a man whose leadership shaped the very identity of the university.

In recognition of his immense contributions to education and social upliftment, he received the Karnataka Rajyotsava Award in 2017. Dr Hussaini's passing on 6 November 2024 marked the end of an era.



Late Dr Syed Shah Khusro Hussaini
Founder Chancellor



Syed Muhammad Ali al-Hussaini
Chancellor

A Vision

The mantle of Chancellor and President of KES has been taken up by Syed Muhammad Ali al-Hussaini in December 2024, who also serves as Chairman of the Karnataka State Board of Auqaf . With the wisdom of his father and grandfather to guide him, he brings renewed energy and an expansive vision to KBNU.

An alumnus of Osmania University and McGill University, Ali al-Hussaini holds postgraduate degrees in Arabic and Islamic Studies. His academic pursuits include research on Sufis and royalty, Ottoman-era revenue systems, the Chishti Order, the sociological experience of minorities in India, and reviews of significant Islamic encyclopaedias and Mughal history.

Ali al-Hussaini is an administrator with nearly two decades of hands-on experience—as Vice President of KES since 2007 and Pro-Chancellor of KBNU since 2018. His leadership style is practical, modern, and deeply rooted in the institution's spiritual-philosophical foundations.

His dedication is evident in every part of the university—from infrastructure and academic reforms to sports, healthcare, and campus development. Under his leadership, KBNU is confidently stepping into a future of excellence.


KBN Turf Ground



A Campus Rising

At its core, KBNU remains committed to a mission of "educating humanity" that transcends academics. The university strives to nurture socially responsible graduates, collaborative researchers, empathetic professionals and citizens rooted in ethics and enlightened worldviews. Guided by its Sufi-inspired philosophy of compassion and service, KBNU continues to expand its reach, innovate its offerings, and strengthen its pursuit of excellence

Academic Ecosystem

The academic structure is meticulously designed to balance theory with application. KBNU's pedagogy emphasises integrated learning, community-orientated teaching, e-governance, student support software, open-book exams in arts and humanities, field training, seminars, and study tours. Research is central to KBNU's identity. The university fosters collaborative inquiry among students, faculty, and external partners. The idea of gender equality is completely operationalised in the University faculty, staff and students-each segment having a representation of over 50% being women.

In alignment with the Government of India's goals, and as per the latest UGC regulations, to improve Gross Enrolment Ratio, KBNU has introduced dual admissions, allowing students to apply twice a year, ensuring greater accessibility and flexibility. This scheme reiterates the organisation's mission of educating humanity by including more learners in the field of formal higher education who otherwise would have either lost a year or lost an interest in returning to the mainstream of education.

Modern Infrastructure and Facilities

Spread across 35 acres of green, serene land, the KBNU campus today is a vibrant microcosm of education and innovation. The university houses 8 Faculties of Studies, offering 52 courses across 44 departments, mentored by 540 faculty members and supported by nearly 800 staff, serving a community of 3000 students. Apart from this, the 740 bedded Khaja Bandanawaz Teaching and General hospital and the about 10-acre KBN Sports Turf ground make up the impressive infrastructure of this University.

Facilities comprise spacious IT-enabled classrooms, labs for sciences, engineering, IT, and medicine, a library with e-resources, canteen, recreational spaces, separate hostels for both genders, research and skill development centres, and a centrally air-conditioned 750-seater auditorium.

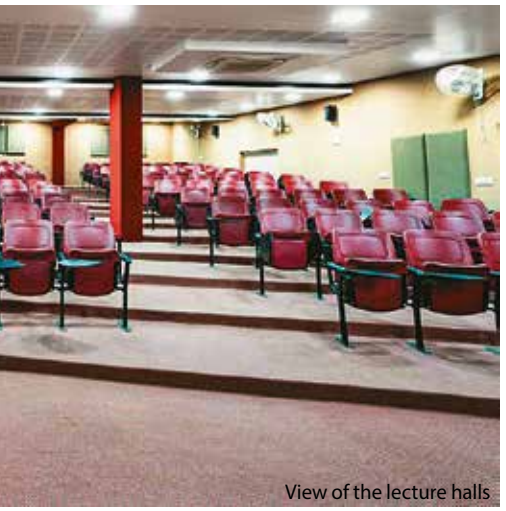
Faculty of Medical Sciences

Formerly the Khaja Bandanawaz Institute of Medical Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine today offers MBBS and MD/MS programmes recognised by the Medical Council of India. With two decades of expertise, it has shaped outstanding physicians equipped with strong diagnostic skills. The faculty promotes intensive practical training through modern laboratories, bedside teaching, integrated learning, and a commitment to producing competent and compassionate medical professionals.

Para-medical courses include BSc degree courses in operation theatre technology, medical laboratory technology, optometry and physiotherapy technology, and the postgraduate degree of MSc medical biochemistry.

A Healthcare Landmark for the Region

One of Ali al-Hussaini's most transformative achievements is the revitalisation of the 740-bed KBN


View of the lecture halls

Teaching and General Hospital (KBNTGH). With world-class facilities, the hospital represents an extraordinary leap in healthcare access for North Karnataka.

Some of the new initiatives toward modernisation include establishing a new casualty block with ICU, MICU, SICU, and Paediatric ICU; 11 state-of-the-art modular operation theatres with global telemedicine capabilities; a 130-slice CT scan capable of coronary angiograms; and a hi-tech lecture theatre for continuing medical education. The hospital provides high-quality healthcare at affordable costs, upholding the Sufi ethos of compassion and service.

Engineering, Technology, and Legal Education

The Faculty of Engineering and Technology offers BE/BTech programmes in civil, mechanical, aeronautical, ECE and computer science. Postgraduate specialisations include structural engineering, computer science and geoinformatics. Doctoral programmes are offered in engineering and foundational sciences, with more than 45 scholars actively working across research centres. The Faculty of Law offers 3-year courses in both LLB and BA LLB. Both programmes follow Bar Council of India regulations and prepare students for modern legal challenges.

Culture of Sports Excellence

Ali al-Hussaini's passion for sports has transformed the athletic landscape of the region. A former *Under-19 Karnataka Zonal* cricket player, he established KBN Premier League (2018) – the region's most awaited annual cricket event – and KBN House of Sports for nurturing local talent and North Karnataka's first riding club. A 14-acre sports complex with world-class pitches and floodlights. The university's home team, Gulbarga Mystics, won the first Maharaja Trophy, placing KBN sports firmly on the state and national map.

The university maintains strong industry connections and emphasises skill-building, ensuring that graduates emerge as confident, employable professionals.


Newly inaugurated Operation Theatre of the KBNTGH

A Year of Vibrant Activities

The year 2025 witnessed a fortification of the old and the initiation of new, and exciting activities with Chancellor Ali Hussaini at the helm of affairs. KBNU initiated research programmes across all faculties and a cohort of nearly 100 PhD research scholars joined. The work of implementing e-governance was initiated and an integrated UMS was adopted. The new state-of-the-art Faculty of Sciences building started functioning. All academic calendars were vigorously streamlined and closely monitored for effective implementation. Skill-based programmes in computer skilling and spoken English proficiency were initiated and MoU for student and faculty exchange inked with Infosys. An exhaustive and comprehensive academic audit was carried out which has become a blueprint for further reform and change.

The Khaja Bandanawaz University was humbled and also proud for being given an opportunity to serve for a national cause; to assist and alleviate the terrible tragedy that struck the nation on June 12, due to the Air India plane crash. A team comprising KBNU faculty and students were sought and deployed on the crash site by Kenyon International Emergency Services, a UK based organization which provides professional services to assist various world governments to deal with aftermath of the natural or human disasters.

As it steps into the future, KBNU emerges not just as a university but as a transformative force—an institution committed to shaping generations of humane, skilled, and enlightened individuals who will carry forward its timeless belief: "Service to humanity is service to God" as it marches on its mission of 'Educating Humanity'!

The Management of Management Education Today

A rapidly changing industry landscape and the rigours of the globally integrated economy necessitates the evolution of management education. Prof. Praveen Director, Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management writes an insider's view



Prof. Praveen Gupta
Director, Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, Delhi

Management education in India is currently undergoing a significant transformation. The framework, which evolved due to rapid industrialisation post WWII and through western models, received further impetus from the rapid growth of the service industry in the eighties and nineties. However, as India becomes a global force to be reckoned with, management education requires introspection and a revisit of curricula, pedagogy, quality, and contextualization. To align with present realities, management education is evolving from traditional, theory-heavy curricula to interdisciplinary, technology-governed, integrated, and human-centric models.

In India, with more than 5500 institutions offering an MBA degree or a Postgraduate Diploma in Management, there is a significant quality gap. There are top institutes like IIMA at one end of the spectrum and some nondescript institutions at the other. Some institutions on one end of the spectrum suffer from outdated curricula and pedagogy, a significant gap between academic learning and industry expectations, and inconsistent student quality. Other key issues include a lack of a strong research culture, insufficient faculty development, a digital divide that hampers technology integration, and a reliance on theoretical exams over practical skills.

What is the way forward? There are a few essential steps everyone should take to improve the quality of management education and make students industry-relevant. Technology integration, blended learning models, greater academia-industry interface, and an entrepreneurial focus are the first steps. All these are encompassed in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020).

AI, machine learning, and data analytics are increasingly being incorporated. NEP 2020 emphasises equipping students with a range of skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, collaboration, empathy, sustainable solutions for the future, optimisation, and resource management. The post-pandemic era has accelerated the adoption of blended and online learning. This is encouraging as it offers students more flexible learning opportunities.

Greater emphasis is needed on strengthening the academia-industry connection. Industry is expected to offer better and more internships and live projects. Academia, in turn, should invite corporate professionals into the curriculum finalisation to ensure relevance. In line with national priorities, business schools are encouraging an entrepreneurial mindset and pursuits. NEP is driving a multidisciplinary teaching and research-oriented approach to management education.

The skills gap remains a significant concern, as reflected in industry expectations and the number of graduates queuing for placements. Ineffective curricula, the traditional teaching approach, a lack of high-quality faculty, and inadequate research funding affect student quality as an outcome. The cost of management education is also becoming a deterrent for talented individuals from lower-income strata of society.

Investing in faculty training and development, and in attracting and retaining the right talent could be a start. Deeper collaboration with the corporate sector can significantly improve the relevance of management education. Concurrently, management institutions should focus on inculcating in students a sensitivity to business ethics, corporate governance, social issues, sustainability, and CSR.

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PIMR & Prestige University: Where Tier-2 city dreams turn global



From Indore to the world, Prestige redefines how education quietly transforms lives

In the very heart of India, far from the noise of Delhi's political axis or Bengaluru's technology circuits, a quieter yet equally powerful revolution has been taking shape. Indore—best known for its food streets and its remarkable run as India's cleanest city—has been nurturing an institution that has steadily and silently redefined management education and student transformation in the Hindi heartland. The Prestige Institute of Management and Research (PIMR), founded in 1994, and its ambitious successor, Prestige University, together represent a rare story of consistency, commitment, and care in Indian higher education.

What makes this story compelling is not just its longevity, but also its intent. When Padma Shri Dr. Nemnath Jain, an accomplished industrialist and philanthropist, established PIMR three decades ago, private management education in India was still finding its identity. Many institutions of that era were content to operate as degree vendors. Dr. Jain chose a different path. He believed that education was the highest form of public service, a transformational force that could change not only individuals but also families. His guiding principle was simple yet revolutionary: every student who enters must emerge transformed—professionally competent, ethically grounded, and socially conscious.

This founding ethos became the institution's cultural DNA. And over the years, as leadership transitioned to his son, Dr. Davish Jain, Chairman of the Prestige Education Foundation, the philosophy evolved without losing its human core. Dr. Jain brought a sharper industry lens, a future-forward academic vision, and a deeply personal passion for building accessible, affordable, and high-impact educational institutions in Central India. His mantra—"Make education accessible, industry-relevant, future-ready, and rooted in service"—captures what Prestige stands for today: an institution that balances professional ambition with social mission.

The result of this long-standing vision is evident in PIMR's stature. Recognized among Central India's top-ranked standalone management institutes, consistently counted among the country's leading private B-schools, and accredited with a NAAC 'A' grade, PIMR has built a reputation that is respected far beyond Indore. Its placement performance—average salaries in the ₹7–8 lakh range, top offers crossing ₹18–20 lakh—has placed it in competition with many metro-based institutions. Yet, numbers alone do not tell the story. What differentiates Prestige is its distinct sense of community and mentoring culture, something rare in today's high-volume, high-pitched education market.

Step inside the PIMR ecosystem, and the difference becomes tangible. Classrooms are dynamic spaces where industry practitioners teach alongside seasoned academicians. Guest lectures are not occasional events—they are seamlessly woven into the academic calendar. Students are pushed into live projects, field assignments, and entrepreneurial simulations right from their first semester. The placement cell functions with the precision and intensity of a corporate HR division, running resume labs, mock interviews, personality-building workshops, and one-on-one counselling with almost obsessive dedication.

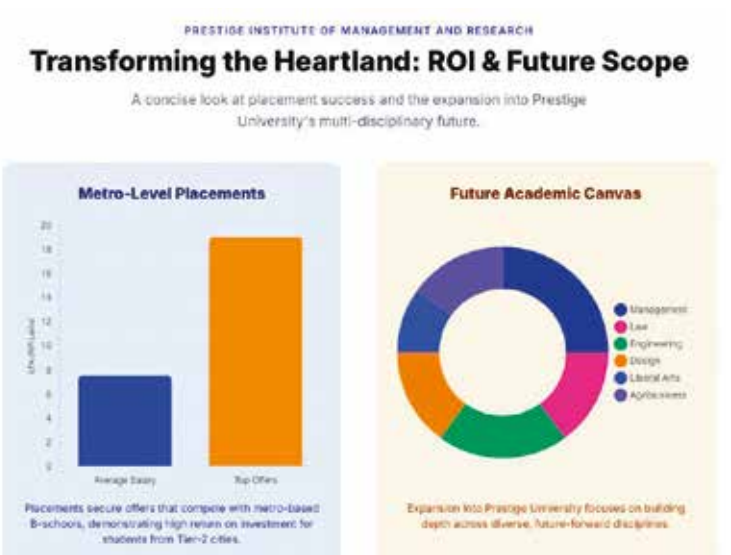
But the real secret of Prestige's success lies in what happens outside curriculum charts. Faculty members become mentors. Seniors become guides. Alumni—over 15,000 strong—return year after year, not out of obligation but out of affection and pride. It is common, even routine, to see successful alumni dropping in to recruit, to counsel, or simply to tell students, "I was once where you are." This human fabric—woven through warmth, belonging, and shared

ambition—gives Prestige an intangible strength that cannot be replicated by rankings or infrastructure alone.

The alumni themselves embody the transformation Prestige promises. From Puneett Chouksey, who swapped an MBA career path for the bright lights of Indian television, to Sanjeev Arora, who rose to hold CXO roles in multinational banking, the stories are varied and inspiring. Avneesh Mishra went on to build a thriving ed-tech venture. Himanshu Jain, son of the founder and now Director of the Prestige Education Foundation, represents the full-circle story—an alumnus who returned to lead. There are others whose impact may not make headlines but is equally profound: Manisha Parmar Dubey, steering marketing strategies for a global consumer giant; Gaurav Jindal and Priyanka Kaintura, celebrated at PIMR's annual alumni awards for their contributions in IT and corporate communications. These stories may appear unique, but within Prestige's corridors, they are part of a pattern—of students discovering possibilities they had never imagined when they first walked through its gates.

It is this very ethos—this commitment to real transformation—that is now shaping the next chapter: the rise of Prestige University. Unlike institutions that expand horizontally, Prestige University is envisioned as a carefully curated ecosystem. It will retain the soul of PIMR's mentoring culture while widening its academic canvas to include management, law, engineering, design, liberal arts, and agribusiness. The aim is not to chase scale but to build depth. Plans are underway for advanced research centres focusing on national priorities—sustainability, agri-tech, AI ethics, public policy—and for industry-funded labs that allow students to learn from real-world challenges rather than textbook hypotheticals.

The emphasis on affordability and access remains firmly intact. Dr. Davish Jain often articulates the mission with a clarity that resonates across the institution: "We don't want to be the biggest. We want to remain the most trusted name in Central India—for students who have talent, but not always privilege." In a time when higher education is becoming increasingly commercialized, this commitment to trust and accessibility is both refreshing and vital.



The human dimension is what truly sets Prestige University apart from many institutions aspiring for iconic status. Year after year, first-generation learners from small towns—Neemuch, Ratlam, Sehore, Dhar, Ujjain, Raipur, Chhindwara, Kota, Jabalpur—arrive with hesitant dreams. Most come from families for whom higher education represents a leap of faith. At Prestige, they find not only classrooms and placements, but confidence, compassion, and a community that nudges them from uncertainty to ambition. They leave with offers from Deloitte, KPMG, ICICI, Asian Paints, and leading start-ups. They move on to careers, cities, and industries they could once barely visualize. They often return home as role models—proof that with the right support, talent can rise from anywhere.

That, ultimately, is the real prestige of Prestige. Not the brochures. Not the buildings. Not even the rankings. It is the quiet, powerful stories of thousands of young people whose lives have changed because an institution believed in them. In an age when the spotlight often falls on high-decibel, hyper-marketed universities, Prestige represents a different kind of fame—the fame of being trusted, loved, respected, and returned to.

For more than 32 years, PIMR and now Prestige University have demonstrated that excellence need not announce itself from metropolitan rooftops. It can thrive in the hinterland, in a city that works hard and dreams quietly. It can grow steadily on the strength of values, mentorship, credibility, and care. And it can leave a legacy measured not by how many students an institution admits, but by how many lives it transforms—silently, consistently, and profoundly.

In the evolving story of Indian higher education, Prestige stands as an icon that did not chase fame—it earned it.



Alolika Dutta
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based out of Mumbai

Orbital

On a Side Note

In this sterile moment asking:
Where is the life we came to live?
—Keorapetse Kgositsile, In the Mourning

In the humid lull that puts our seven islands under,
I can smell a fisherwoman's metallic anklets count
To sunrise: iron, sulphur, mildew, and death's fetor,
Only for us. She covers the market thrice to down
The quiet, then squats bored behind a scarlet crate
In a cellist's pose. I hear her knife gut a thick trout,
Her hands lay out the grey lumps now rotting in wait,
But I am not on her street anymore. Tumult of scents,
Where've you gone? We waft with the dawn's incense,
Eddies of cumin, sandalwood, kerosene, milk, sewage,
And we read time by it. We know noon as a stench
That rises from the chafing pits of need's hostages,
Limp against walls stained with betel-quid or urine,
Bawling out the day's final lull in their electric tongue.
Early in the evening, a veil of exhaust will begin
To smother the city's vapours into an even nothing,
Leaving it deader than any city ever had been.



Hostile Witness: Grant Road, Bombay/Mumbai Artwork by Baaraan Ijlal

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Orbital

Hack off a hawk's head: its shape's a dove's.
—**Dom Moraes,** Hawkshead

In my wide-stanced shadow, against a white afternoon,
I am without a middle. What then am I left to spare?
The clocks tell their own grim time to those who care.
The roads each lead to Rome, but do you have the gall
To roam among these emerald towers of mirrored glass,
Steered by your meagre will and two centaurs in brass?
Come, man of the sky leant against a deciduous window,
Dream-drenched organ of hemp, silver, and whalebone,
What do you know? Where do you go, so long, so lone?
Leafless, what is a branch? Is that a root? A tree grasps
At the sheer clouds that yield to none. Smoke's a tramp,
Winding up a goat's head to settle on a watchman's lamp.
She hauls a sack of grit, spilling a path down the indigo
For those who creep naked, hungry, and shackled to spite,
Their thrawn figures that once stood stark in the headlights
Melting as breath into the wind, into the unmeaning white.

Beauty of the Male

I. LUST AT LARGE

Under a roof where three pigeons patter in a circle,
He says to me, 'You should put them in your poem,'
And I find their tiny forms whirling across his face,
In the still and amoral eyes he stole from a kestrel
Ten days ago. When it rains, I smell wet, wet loam,
Petrol, mossy gravel, herbs in bloom, and malaise
Swan like ten months' odour about his equine torso,
His hooves, blue-black mane, and pelt of pure earth.

Our room is small, cold, and past the grasp of age,
But a window redeems it. We catch animals strike
Curious poses: squirrels chase, mount, and grope,
Rats straddle, lizards wrap, cats tussle, slugs braid,
Gawking at our limbs crossed sterile on either side
Of a table. A fat manatee floats above me. I probe
A hovering tree. When the tide comes in, I am towed
Back to myself, to him, into fields I no longer know.

We stand across the road from a pushcart of fruits
You find too dull for poetry. They croon, 'Eat me,
Drink me, love me. Oh, come, make much of me,'
But you resist them. We trot down a zigzag route:
Six alleys and a roundabout to where I have to be;
I find your head white as a dove's in my memory,
Already free of you. It is such a pity, such a crime,
These dark Caspian stallions eating each other alive.

II. AMID THE TIDEWRACK

Light, dark, and countless, coiling forever inwards,
I see them rise from his chest, sink into a shallow
Trough, and creep in ambush over the gooseflesh
Of his long, olive neck. I can barely hear his words,
Much less his pause battling the monsoon's bellow,
But I follow the quiver of his mouth. Whose flesh,
Ever so tender, ever tamed these sudden hungers?
They flare out of me. They fester in my staid body.

Down the coast, white with evening's misty ease,
I trace the timid ascent of green across his cheeks,
Along the fine bones and finer sinews of his face,
Pore by pore. I cannot tell his voice from a breeze,
Nor myself from the brine. What can I do but reek
With three years' worth of desire, wild with wait?
But I see doubt in his hands, in those faint lines
Where a strand of hair shivers as though with life.

Head to knuckle, arm and arm, his knotted scripts
Reveal little to me. We listen to the tide in silence,
Both our mouths now pungent with a tepid coffee,
The past still so plain within us, still frail as a stilt
In water. He talks of mercy, dance, and the violence
Of unlived time. As we near a ledge, he sings to me,
And out to the windy beach, far from the twisted reach
Of crazy sorrow, we go, we go, we go, we go, we go.

Fruits for Rainer Maria Rilke

With half a peach in one hand, a knife in the other,
And a bowl in her lap, she sits looking at a cliff
Far behind me. When the downy ball rolls off her
Palm, knuckle, fingertip, swiftly out of her fist
And into the hot mud, she finds herself an apple.
She cuts a slim wedge and flings it past her lips,
Letting her arms sway off the chair's like before.
Does she not fear herself, herself with a knife,
Herself eating a peach, herself in the afternoon
With little left to give? I am struck by the pride
Of her lean wrist, hacking and pitching to a tune
Silent but certain. She is no marble. In her wake,
The chair leers at me. She is survived by a baboon.
You must not let the fact of your past manacle you.

KSIDC: Setting New Benchmark In Ease of Doing Business



KSIDC is not just a financing institution, it is the chief architect of Kerala's industrial future — shaping an economy that is globally competitive, innovation-led, inclusive and environmentally responsible.

SHRI VISHNURAJ P, IAS, Managing Director
Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC)

KSIDC has been driving several new initiatives under your leadership — could you highlight some key achievements and milestones during your tenure?
Over the past few years, KSIDC has undergone a profound institutional transformation, shifting from a traditional operational role into the State's principal engine of investment promotion, industrial facilitation, policy delivery, & project financing. This transition has been anchored in three foundational pillars: measurable outcomes, policy-led structural reform, and unprecedented investor engagement.

A defining milestone has undoubtedly been the Invest Kerala Global Summit (IKGS) 2025. The Summit attracted 449 Expressions of Interest worth ₹1.81 lakh crore — but what is truly noteworthy is what happened after the event. Within just nine months, 102 of these projects, representing ₹35,333 crore in investment, moved into the construction stage. A near 25 percent conversion rate in such a compressed timeframe is exceptional by any national benchmark. It highlights that Kerala's industrial strategy is no longer centered on announcements; it is centered on delivery.

Equally significant has been Kerala's performance in the State Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP). The State emerged as a national "Fast Mover" two years in a row, touching 99.1 percent reform implementation in 2024.

A second major achievement during this period has been the conceptualization and rollout of four transformative policies — the Export Promotion Policy, the Hi-Tech Framework, the Logistics Policy and the State's pioneering ESG Policy. Kerala became India's first State to publish a comprehensive ESG framework, placing sustainability and responsible industry at the heart of its economic future.

Digital governance has also moved from aspiration to reality. KSIDC's leadership in the Certificateless Governance Programme ensured seamless integration of K-SWIFT services with Digi Locker, eliminating physical document requirements and cutting processing time drastically. Taken together, these milestones signal a cultural shift within Kerala's investment ecosystem.

What steps has KSIDC taken to further improve the investment climate and ease of doing business in Kerala?
One of the most impactful developments has been the near-complete implementation of BRAP 2024 reforms, with Kerala achieving 99.1 percent compliance — one of the highest rates in India. Importantly, BRAP's evaluation framework gives more weightage to investor feedback than paperwork, meaning the rating is a direct reflection of improved experiences on the ground. Kerala's investors today report faster decisions, clearer guidelines, and significantly fewer procedural delays, validating the practical impact of reform.

Digital governance has been a second major axis of transformation. K-SWIFT, today one of India's most comprehensive single-window platforms, has expanded to more than 120 services spanning 22 departments. PAN-based registration, QR-verified certificates, integrated payments, real-time dashboards and ongoing reverse integration process with the National Single Window System have made the entire experience near paperless and highly predictable. Entrepreneurs no longer need to navigate complex departmental hierarchies; the system delivers clarity, timelines and end-to-end transparency.

Recognizing that many issues are resolved only at the district level, KSIDC spearheaded the establishment of District Collector-

led Investment Facilitation Cells. These units have become crucial for land-related matters, local body clearances and inter-departmental coordination apart from the District Single Window Clearance Mechanism, ensuring that reforms at the State level are complemented by hands-on support at the ground level.

At the same time, KSIDC continues to play a vital role as a Non-Banking Financial Company. KSIDC offers a wide range of financial instruments including Term Loans (₹5 crore to ₹60 crore and above), Corporate Loans, Equipment Loans, Working Capital Term Loans and Bill Discounting. This integrated financing and facilitation structure enhances investor confidence. KSIDC's strong financial performance reinforces this enabling ecosystem.

The State is now entering a new phase — shifting from ease of doing business to the speed of doing business — making the journey from proposal to operation faster and more seamless than ever before.

How is KSIDC supporting emerging sectors such as startups, green industries, and technology-driven enterprises?

In the startup space, Kerala has experienced a surge in momentum, reflected in a considerable increase in ecosystem value in 2025. KSIDC has played an enabling role through a combination of seed and scale-up funding mechanisms that are tailored to early-stage needs. Seed funding of up to ₹25 lakh, covering 90 percent of project cost and optionally convertible into equity, has allowed hundreds of founders to bridge the critical gap between concept and prototype. For founders who have already achieved product maturity, KSIDC offers scale-up support up to ₹50 lakh, ensuring that promising enterprises can accelerate commercialization without relocating outside the State. Through supporting Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centres in campuses, KSIDC has also helped create a student-led innovation pipeline that strengthens Kerala's grassroots entrepreneurial culture.

On the sustainability front, Kerala has taken a pioneering national position by adopting India's first ESG Policy, with KSIDC as the nodal implementing agency. The policy's financial incentives — including 100 percent capital investment reimbursement for five years, a 10 percent green subsidy and procurement preference for ESG-compliant enterprises — have fundamentally altered the economics of sustainable manufacturing. The State's commitments to achieving 100 percent renewable energy by 2040 and net-zero emissions by 2050 are backed by targeted investments in floating solar, wind farms, biomass processing and full-spectrum green hydrogen infrastructure.

Technology-led sectors form the third pillar of KSIDC's strategy. Following the international Generative AI Conclave & Robotics conclave, Kerala has articulated a clear ambition to become a national hub for AI and deep-tech. Kerala Government is planning an AI Cluster with GPU computing Centres, Global Capability Centres and ready-to-use incubation spaces, supported by equity investments for high-potential AI entities.

The evolving automotive and mobility cluster, showcased at the Kerala Automotive Summit 2025, further demonstrates the State's growing presence in EV technologies, battery energy storage, powertrain engineering and autonomous systems.



Sustainability and regional balance are central to Kerala's growth model — how is KSIDC aligning its projects with these priorities?

Kerala's development identity has long been shaped by its commitment to equity, environmental stewardship and social inclusion. A major shift occurred with the introduction of India's first comprehensive state-level ESG Policy. KSIDC, as the nodal agency, has ensured that sustainability is not viewed as an add-on but as a core condition for responsible industrial growth. The Policy's incentives including 100 percent reimbursement of capital



investment tax for five years, a 10 percent subsidy for green investments and a 20 percent procurement margin for compliant MSMEs create strong financial motivation for industries to adopt clean energy, efficient resource use and socially inclusive practices. Kerala's targets of full renewable energy adoption by 2040 and carbon neutrality by 2050 give this framework long-term direction and accountability.

Balanced regional development is equally central to KSIDC's approach. KSIDC has facilitated a geographically distributed network of industrial capacity that ensures jobs, infrastructure and opportunities are not concentrated in a handful of urban Centres. The project financing wing of KSIDC has also aided the industries coming up in various industrial parks of KINFRA, DIC etc., as also the private industrial parks towards ensuring regional growth. The Vision 2031 is Government's long-term strategic blueprint that reinforces the philosophy of balanced regional growth.

In essence, such strategies recognizes that sustainability and regional balance are not competing objectives; they strengthen each other. A clean, regionally inclusive industrial base ensures resilience, social acceptance and long-term competitiveness — all essential for Kerala's next phase of growth.

Looking ahead, what are your key focus areas and strategic goals for KSIDC in the coming years?

KSIDC's forward strategy is shaped by a clear understanding of the State's emerging opportunities, its evolving investor expectations, and the structural foundations laid over the last few years. The next phase will focus on deepening investor confidence, accelerating project grounding, operationalizing major policy frameworks and building industrial ecosystems that can compete globally.

A key priority is sustaining the momentum created by IKGS 2025. With 102 projects already grounded, KSIDC aims to take this number to over 150 by March 2026. This will not only translate investment commitments into real economic value but also strengthen Kerala's credibility as a State where commitments lead to outcomes.



Time-to-operation — rather than simply time-to-approval — will become the central metric, supported by a fully digitalised Single Window, district-level facilitation, and rapid composite licensing for large investments.

Institutionally, KSIDC is undertaking an important resource enhancement, by way of onboarding sectoral experts, business intelligence team, increasing manpower in core operations including investment promotion & facilitation, NBFC functions and more.

The operationalization of the four major policies introduced in 2025 will be another central area of work. KSIDC is developing detailed implementation frameworks for the State's ESG Policy, logistics reforms, hi-tech adoption, and export promotion, including ESG assessment tools, capacity-building modules for MSMEs, and industry-specific facilitation mechanisms.

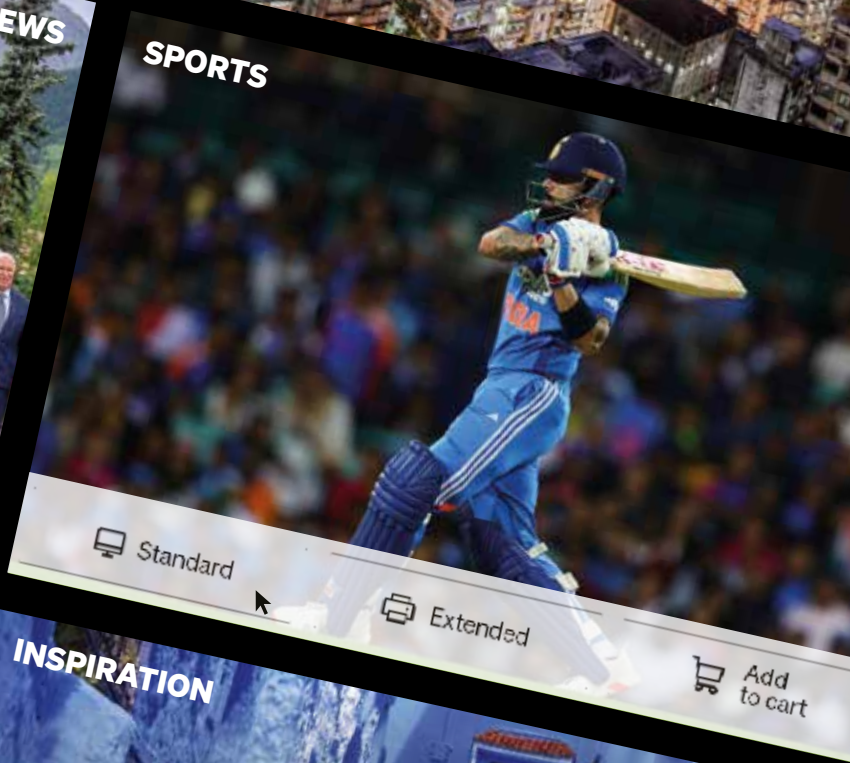
Vision 2031 forms the longer-term compass. KSIDC's upcoming work ushering in investments that is tied to high employment potential, regional growth and long-term sustainability. Finally, KSIDC will leverage Kerala's unique geographical and human capital advantages. The rare proximity of the Thiruvananthapuram airport and Vizhinjam port creates distinct possibilities in air–sea cargo integration. The State's talent — particularly in AI, robotics, biotechnology, precision engineering and healthcare — will be the foundation of future industrial competitiveness. Women entrepreneurs, student innovators and the global Malayali diaspora will play a decisive role in this rise.

Taken together, these priorities position KSIDC not just as a financing institution, but as the architect of Kerala's industrial future — shaping an economy that is globally competitive, innovation-led, inclusive and environmentally responsible.

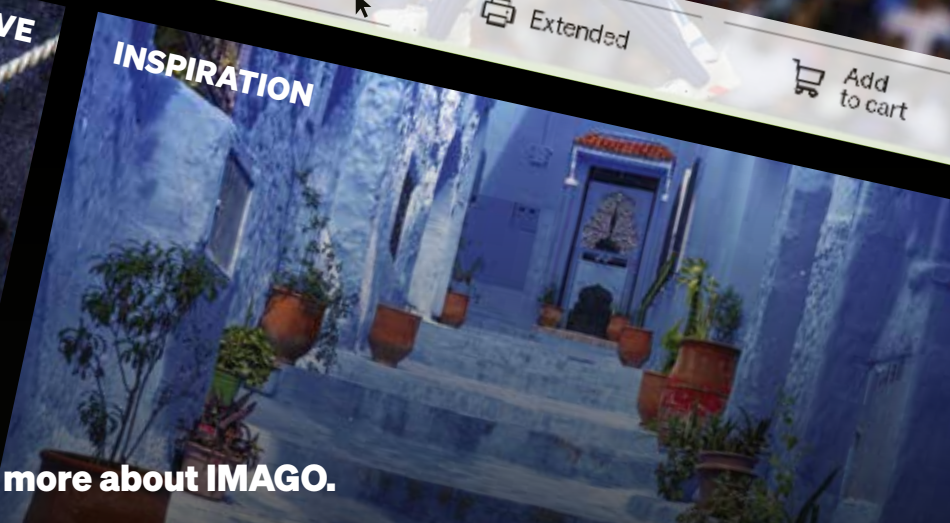
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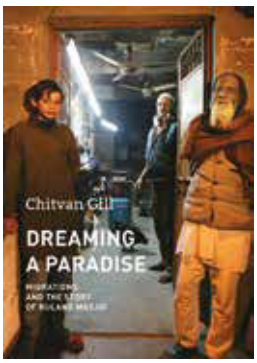
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Dreaming a Paradise



DREAMING A PARADISE | **Chitvan Gill** | Seagull Books | 186 pages | Rs 599

Chitvan Gill
is an Indian writer, independent filmmaker and documentary photographer, who chronicles Delhi's margins and urban migrations. Her recent book Dreaming a Paradise *documents the human story of Buland Masjid through reportage and images*

HUNGER.

It was prevalent everywhere. If Buland Masjid was created as a paradise for the hopeless, the destitute, it has succeeded in becoming a paradise for the hungry. Food is everywhere, even to be stumbled upon in dark alleys.

In his *Parallel Lives*, Plutarch describes the Metoecia, or the Feast of Migration, a celebration of migrants leaving their boroughs and uniting in one city. Here in Buland Masjid, every day is a feast. The migrants have brought, with their rituals and traditions, memories of cuisines of their distant lands. Food is the connection that brings back the sense of the tender touch of love, hearth and home. Men haul carcasses, baste, cook. Dough is pounded vigorously. Rotis, naans, breads, tandoors. Bakeries turn out rusks and biscuits. Vendors crowd the narrow streets peddling strawberries, pastries; popcorn machines release the smell of warm butter; a man guides his cart outfitted with an unfathomable contraption which emits flaming sunbursts and rolls out perfectly formed nankhatais.

This is a gastronomical hub. Kiosks and tikka stalls abound, the atmosphere is laden with smoke and tempting aromas. Hunger prevails and so does food. The rituals of the cornucopia of plenty begin early. Barely has one ceased before the other commences. Kilos of white foaming milk are poured into an enormous kadhai in the early hours and stirred with a large ladle all day. Boys take turns to stir. In the evening, huge steel glasses of this mixture are enthusiastically consumed. The sensual aromatic of breads and meats mixes with the odours of offal and refuse, the gaseous releases from the open sewage drains.

But hunger still drives this dwelling of survivors.

On a particular day of wandering, in the dead of winter, with the acrid smoke, through a slight fog and mist, a wall, painted a pale sea green with a large mural. A painting of a rooster. The rooster, more than perhaps the masjid, is the appropriate symbol for this colony, where the main trade is one of the oldest in the world—the butcher's. Meat and the work of meat is the driving force of life in Buland Masjid.

There is a strange accommodation, a peaceful tolerance, a pact between all manner of animals. Goats, chickens, ducks and dogs, all in their own place, waiting, watching, and in the midst of it all, the rooster, crowing, calling, king of his world. And on a pale paint-washed wall, this fresco by an artist who went beyond his brief, to portray this symbol of survival.

The rooster becomes a symbol of fecundity, of courage, of prosperity, a homage to survival. In this place where beauty finds little space to flourish, an artist paints on his canvas in ambitious strokes. It is so alien, this artistic attempt, that it draws my imagination to a memory of another world, a memory so incongruous within this environment, of another pale paint-washed wall, far, far, away on the outer wall of a sacred monastery in the cold, dry desolation of the icy heights of Ladakh: the rooster rooted in the wheel of life depicted in Buddhist paintings. His symbolism in many other worlds. He announces the dawn and dispels the evil spirits of darkness. He is unlike the painted chicken at the dhaba in Ambala that proclaims, 'Meet me anywhere, but eat me at Deluxe dhaba.'

I ask after the artist, but no one can tell me anything, no one knew where he had gone. He came, painted this and left. One day, returning to the colony after a long break, I saw to my dismay that the mural had been erased. In its place was a new shiny cock, a flash paper poster, already torn at the edges.

The artist, and now his creation, were gone.

The life of a child in these squalid surroundings, deprived of light and space, would seem constrained, yet they seem at a joyous accommodation with their surroundings. A boy hurtles down the narrow road screaming at wayfarers to get out of his way. His feet are outfitted with a pair of smart red roller-skates. He is new to this art, and his face bears a mix of terror and wild delight as he rolls along, struggling to keep upright. He hits a pothole and barely escapes a crash, avoiding a bucket attached to rope which has been lowered from a tenement on the third floor. A man stands on the road, putting loaves of bread into the bucket, gives a tug to the rope and it is hauled up slowly. The boy survives and continues his careening down the road, now negotiating a cart filled with brightly coloured salwar suits, surrounded by excited young girls and women. In the heat of an August afternoon, he runs into a vendor on a cycle rigged up with bright festoons as he makes his way through, selling little versions of the tricolour.

You turn a corner and suddenly a small room stuffed with little boys, a few little girls and teenagers, a gaming room that would be well placed in a dystopian version of Star Wars. Their eyes locked on what are almost antiques, consoles discarded and bought in bulk by an enterprising gentleman who thought of the children of his colony. The boys jostle, push and stare transfixed as the lucky few manage to get to the controls and engage with these fascinating others worlds of exotic demons, villains, monsters and superheroes.

(For full version of this article, please go to www.outlookindia.com)

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Outlook@30 – Celebrating the Nation Builders

As *Outlook* turns 30, India too stands at a defining moment. The idea of Viksit Bharat – a developed, inclusive, resilient India – has moved from vision to vocabulary, from aspiration to agenda. Today's India is no longer merely catching up; it is setting its own pace.

Thirty years is a long time in the life of a nation – and a meaningful milestone in the journey of a publication that has tried, with sincerity and conviction, to chronicle that nation's many transformations. When Outlook was launched three decades ago, India was standing at the cusp of change. The 1990s marked a decisive turn in the country's economic, political and social trajectory. Liberalisation had just begun to redraw the contours of Indian

continued on page 362 »

Securing Every Drop: BWSSB's Vision For A Water-Resilient Bengaluru

↘ Sir, under your leadership, BWSSB has been steering Bengaluru toward long-term water resilience. How do you envision the city's water security evolving over the next decade, especially in the face of climate change and rapid urban expansion?
Bengaluru's water future depends not on bringing in more water, but on managing existing resources wisely. Over the next decade, the city must reduce dependence on a single source and adopt a balanced system integrating Cauvery water, treated wastewater reuse, rainwater harvesting, and groundwater protection. The focus will shift toward demand management, loss reduction, and citizen participation. Water security is as much about planning as infrastructure.

↘ You have emphasized the importance of technology-led transformation. How are you guiding BWSSB's shift toward IoT-enabled monitoring, smart metering, and AI-driven systems to reduce non-revenue water and optimize distribution?
Technology is no longer optional for utilities. BWSSB is moving from reactive operations to predictive management. IoT monitoring, smart metering, GIS platforms like JALAPATHA, and data analytics enable leak detection, pressure optimisation, and reduction of non-revenue water. The objective is clear: track every drop and enable data-driven decisions.

↘ Your push for a circular water economy has been widely noted. What is your long-term vision for scaling treated wastewater reuse in Bengaluru, and how do you see this transforming consumption patterns?
Treated wastewater is central to sustainable urban water management. BWSSB aims to normalise its use across industries, construction, and non-potable applications. In collaboration with IISc, an indigenous process delivering zero-bacteria water has been developed. This has enabled IT campuses to reduce borewell dependence and reserve Cauvery water for domestic use.



"Urban water management today is not just about pipes and pumps. It is about leadership, public trust, responsible use of technology, and a shared commitment to securing the future."

Dr. V. Ram Prasath Manohar, IAS
Chairman, BWSSB

↘ Bengaluru has been a pioneer in decentralized water solutions. How do you see centralized infrastructure and decentralized systems coexisting under your broader strategic framework?
Bengaluru needs both strong centralised infrastructure and decentralised solutions. Large-scale systems ensure reliability, while decentralised measures add resilience and reduce local stress. These approaches are complementary. Over three thousand rainwater recharge pits show how decentralised action strengthens water security.

↘ Transparency and citizen trust are now central to utilities. How are you using real-time data and citizen-engagement platforms to make BWSSB more participatory?
Transparency is the foundation of trust. BWSSB is deploying real-time dashboards, GIS monitoring, and digital platforms to enhance accountability. Applications like Jaladhare, Sajala, and Sanchari Cauvery simplify services, improve transparency, and promote conservation.

↘ Sustainable utilities worldwide are rethinking the water–energy relationship. What initiatives are being prioritized to reduce BWSSB's energy footprint?
Water and energy are interconnected. BWSSB is prioritising pump upgrades, operational optimisation, and solar power expansion. These measures reduce costs, lower emissions, and strengthen resilience.

↘ You have often spoken about collaboration. What partnerships are you envisioning to position BWSSB as a model for urban water management?
Urban water challenges demand collaboration. BWSSB works with startups, research institutions like IISc, and technology innovators. Initiatives like Associating with Startup Companies in the production of ultra pure water improves efficiency and minimize the cost of production of ultra pure water.

enterprise, governance and aspiration. A young, restless nation was learning to imagine itself differently – more confident, more connected to the world, yet deeply rooted in its civilisational ethos.

As Outlook turns 30, India too stands at a defining moment. The idea of Viksit Bharat – a developed, inclusive, resilient India – has moved decisively from aspiration to agenda. Today's India is no longer merely catching up; it is setting its own pace. It is building scale with speed, institutions with intent, and growth with purpose. This commemorative edition, ***Outlook@30 – Celebrating the Nation Builders***, is our editorial tribute to the people, policies and institutions that have powered this journey – often quietly, sometimes against formidable odds, but always with a long-term commitment to the national good.

This feature is not a catalogue of achievements alone. It is a reflection on how India builds – how it plans, produces, provides and perseveres. It is about the engineers of growth as much as the custodians of stability; about public sector institutions that laid the foundation of modern India and private enterprise that amplified its momentum; about government policies that unlocked opportunity and the implementation machinery that delivered outcomes at scale.

From a Fledgling Weekly to a Respected Publishing House

As Outlook magazine marks its 30th anniversary, we pause to reflect on three decades of bold, insightful journalism that has chronicled India's evolving narrative with unflinching honesty and depth. Founded in October 1995, Outlook has



continued on page 364 »

BPCL at 50: Fueling India's Nation-Building Journey, Powering Tomorrow's Possibilities

As Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) marks 50 years of nation-building, it stands as a powerful symbol of India's energy resilience, industrial self-reliance, and progressive ambition. From ensuring uninterrupted fuel supply across the length and breadth of the country to enabling economic momentum during times of transformation, BPCL's journey mirrors the aspirations of a rising India.

Driven by a spirit of innovation and a bold commitment to challenging the status quo, BPCL has consistently questioned conventions, broken traditional boundaries, and redefined what is possible in the energy landscape. Over five decades, the organization has evolved from a fuel provider into an integrated energy major, embracing cutting-edge technologies, operational excellence, and customer-centric solutions that set new industry benchmarks.

BPCL's nation-building role extends far beyond infrastructure. Its refineries, pipelines, depots, and retail networks have strengthened India's supply security, supported industrial growth, and empowered millions of citizens daily. At the same time, BPCL has remained deeply committed to inclusive development championing safety, skill development, community upliftment, and environmental stewardship as integral pillars of progress.

Looking ahead, BPCL is shaping the future with equal conviction. With focused investments in clean fuels, renewable energy, green hydrogen, biofuels, and digital transformation, the corporation is actively aligning with India's energy transition and net-zero ambitions. Sustainability, innovation, and agility are no longer choices but imperatives, ones that BPCL is embracing with clarity and purpose.

At 50, BPCL is not reflecting on the past it is accelerating toward the future. Rooted in trust, powered by people, and guided by a relentless drive to innovate, BPCL continues to fuel India's growth story while shaping an energy-secure, sustainable, and self-reliant tomorrow.





grown from a fledgling weekly into one of India's most respected publishing houses, celebrated for its credibility, irreverent spirit and commitment to storytelling that holds power to account.

More importantly, Outlook has earned the trust of its readers by asking uncomfortable questions, amplifying marginalised voices and capturing the pulse of a nation in flux. From political churn to economic reform, social change to cultural shifts, Outlook has sought to be both witness and interpreter of India's journey.

This milestone edition, Outlook@30: Celebrating the Nation Builders, is dedicated to the institutions that have propelled India's growth story. At the heart of this narrative lies the pursuit of Viksit Bharat – a developed India by 2047, the centenary of Independence. This vision encapsulates not just economic prosperity, but holistic progress: self-reliance, innovation, inclusivity and global leadership.

A Nation in Motion

India's growth story has never been linear. It has been shaped by debates and disruptions, by reforms and recalibrations, by global shocks and domestic resilience. Yet, through it all, the underlying direction has remained steady: towards greater self-reliance, broader prosperity and deeper integration with the global economy.

In the past decade especially, India's development narrative has acquired renewed coherence. Infrastructure has emerged as the backbone of growth; manufacturing as its multiplier; energy as its lifeline; agriculture as its stabiliser; and digital public infrastructure as its great enabler. Roads, railways, ports, pipelines and power grids now form an interconnected lattice of economic activity. Welfare

continued on page 366 »

Where Conservation Meets Innovation: Srinivasulu, IFS

In an era when environmental governance is often caught between urgency and complexity, Srinivasulu of the Indian Forest Service stands out as a rare administrator who has managed to marry science with sensitivity, technology with trust, and conservation with community participation. Over more than two decades in public service, his career has quietly redefined what modern environmental leadership in India can look like.

Trained first as a scientist, Srinivasulu's approach to conservation was shaped long before he entered the civil services. A Gold Medalist in Agriculture from the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, ranked among the top national performers in molecular biology, biotechnology, and agricultural research, he secured a top rank in the Indian Forest Service examination. That academic rigour became the backbone of his administrative philosophy—decisions guided by data, policies informed by evidence, and innovation grounded in ecological realities.

His field postings tested this philosophy. As the Field Director of the Kali Tiger Reserve, he moved beyond the traditional boundaries of wildlife protection, demonstrating that the real challenge lies not within the forest, but in the villages around it. He showed that conservation succeeds not when wildlife is protected from people, but when communities are empowered through green livelihoods. More than 500 families were brought into the mainstream, creating thousands of hectares of inviolate space within the tiger reserve.

By strengthening camera-trap–based tiger monitoring and encouraging scientific field research, he enhanced conservation outcomes while also transforming the reserve into a globally recognised, visitor-friendly wildlife destination. Conservation, in his view, was never an isolated exercise—it had to be experienced, understood, and supported by people.

Innovation became even more visible during his tenure as Member Secretary of the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board. At a time when environmental regulation was often criticised for opacity, Srinivasulu introduced a suite of digital tools that changed how regulators, industries, and citizens interacted. From mobile applications for pollution monitoring and real-time effluent vehicle tracking to COVID-19 biomedical waste







Srinivasulu, IFS

monitoring platforms and e-governance dashboards, transparency and accountability became built into the system rather than imposed upon it.

Beyond administration and technology, Srinivasulu's impact extends into storytelling as a powerful tool for conservation. He conceptualised and produced the award-winning documentary The Kali, which helped shape public perception and even contributed to the renaming of the tiger reserve itself.

The same belief guided a simple yet effective innovation during the COVID-year Ganesh Chaturthi: replacing a rigid "No POP" directive with a joyful, eco-friendly "Turmeric Ganesha" campaign that travelled across homes and states, earning national attention and recognition, including a Guinness World Records acknowledgement.

The Karnataka State Environment Award 2016, the H.V. Muniswamy Gowda Environment Award 2023, and the Asia Book of Records 2022, among other national and international honours, mark key milestones. Yet colleagues note that his true achievement lies elsewhere: in his conviction that conservation cannot succeed unless livelihoods and local aspirations grow alongside ecological protection.

His work and writings, detailed at www.srinivasifs.com, reflect enduring commitment to public awareness and education.

delivery has been reimagined through technology, transparency and direct benefit transfers. Financial inclusion has expanded the formal economy, while reforms in taxation, insolvency and ease of doing business have reshaped the investment climate.

At the heart of this transformation lies a simple but powerful idea: development must be both aspirational and accessible. Growth must generate wealth, but also widen opportunity. It must build global competitiveness while strengthening domestic capacity. This balance – between ambition and inclusion – defines the contemporary Indian growth model.

The Enduring Role of Public Sector Undertakings

Any honest account of India's rise must acknowledge the foundational role played by its Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). Long before private capital was willing – or able – to invest in capital-intensive, long-gestation sectors, it was the PSUs that stepped in. They built steel plants, refineries, power stations, transmission lines, dams, ports, mines and townships. They trained generations of engineers, technicians and managers. They created ecosystems where none existed.

In sectors such as energy, petroleum, mining, heavy engineering, banking and insurance, PSUs have been anchors of stability and continuity. They have ensured availability of critical resources, maintained price stability in volatile global markets, and supported national priorities ranging from infrastructure expansion to social welfare.



continued on page 370 »

Strengthening Brand India: Som Group's Vision for a $5 Trillion Economy



Jagdish Kumar Arora
CMD- SOM Group of Companies

↘ As CMD of SOM Group of Companies, how do you see your role in shaping India's journey toward becoming a $5 trillion economy?

India's alco-beverage and distillation sector is witnessing strong growth, and the role of industry players today extends well beyond manufacturing. At SOM Group, we see ourselves as contributors to economic development through job creation, brand building, innovation, and the strengthening of local ecosystems.

Established in 1986, SOM Group of Companies is a leading integrated alcoholic beverage manufacturer with a robust presence across India and overseas. We currently operate five manufacturing facilities across Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Karnataka, and Chhattisgarh, and continue to expand our footprint. Our upcoming greenfield facility at Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh, will significantly enhance production capacity and create substantial direct and indirect employment. Simultaneously, our expansion in the country liquor segment at Bilaspur supports long-term, sustainable growth.

Our diversified portfolio caters to a broad consumer base with brands such as Hunter, Black Fort, Power 1000 Strong, Woodpecker Lager, and Power Cool. The recent launch of Mahavat Whisky and its successful expansion from Madhya Pradesh into Delhi and Uttar Pradesh reflects growing consumer trust. Innovation remains central to our strategy, highlighted by Sunny Beaches, India's first beer with a thermochromic chill indicator.

SOM brands are available through CSD (army canteen) outlets and benefit from a strong domestic distribution network across multiple states. Som also has a well established network in more than 30 countries. Among them are Nigeria, Mozambique, Republic of Dominica, Dubai, Oman, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Australia, New Zealand, Angola, Congo, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Norway, Sweden, UK, Haiti, Panama, Zambia, Cambodia, UAE, Kenya, US, Togo, Dakar, Ghona, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Azerbaijan.

With sales of 36 lakh beer cases in Q2 FY26 alone, we remain committed to building livelihoods, supporting rural economies, strengthening industrial infrastructure, and contributing meaningfully to India's $5 trillion economic vision.

↘ What initiatives have you undertaken that reflect your commitment to India's development as a nation builder?

At SOM Group, our commitment to nation building is driven by responsible, sustainable growth and long-term value creation. We are expanding manufacturing across states to generate meaningful employment. Our upcoming greenfield facility in Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh, will create over 800 direct jobs, while existing plants support livelihoods across agriculture, logistics, packaging, and retail, strengthening regional economies. Sustainability is central to our operations, with SDBL among the first in India to adopt German Unitank Technology, ensuring efficient, zero-effluent manufacturing. Beyond business, our CSR initiatives through the Asha Mohan Foundation focus on healthcare, clean drinking water, education, and rural employment, contributing to India's social and economic progress.

↘ The alcobev sector often faces regulatory complexities. How do you turn these challenges into opportunities for nation building?

I think, Despite regulatory complexity, the alcobev sector presents opportunities for responsible nation building. While high taxes, advance duty payments, and state-wise policy variations challenge ease of doing business, SOM leverages deep regulatory expertise and continuous engagement with authorities to navigate them effectively. By staying agile, compliant, and innovation-driven, we turn constraints into avenues for sustainable growth, policy advocacy, and long-term economic contribution.

↘ Looking ahead, what is your vision for Som Group of companies as a nation builder in India's $5 trillion journey?

My vision for Som Group of companies is to build a future-ready, globally competitive Indian alco-beverage company that strengthens Brand India. We are deepening consumer engagement through digital storytelling, driving premiumization with Woodpecker as a flagship brand, and preparing to enter the Indian single malt space. Exports are another important pillar of our vision. SOM's brands already have a footprint in markets such as Europe, the US, South Africa, the UAE, and China, and we see significant potential to scale India-made alco-beverage brands globally.

Fueling the Past, Powering The Future: NLC India's Nation-Building Journey

As Outlook commemorates 30 years of chronicling India's transformational journey, few institutions mirror the nation's development arc as closely as NLC India Limited. From pioneering lignite mining in the 1950s to emerging as a formidable clean energy player today, NLC India stands as a testament to how public sector enterprises have quietly but decisively powered India's growth story. In an exclusive interaction, the CMD of NLC India reflects on legacy, leadership, sustainability, and the road to Viksit Bharat 2047..

↘ Outlook completes 30 years of chronicling India's growth story. As one of the country's iconic PSUs, how do you see NLC India's journey mirroring the nation's own developmental evolution?

NLC India's journey is deeply intertwined with India's own post-independence aspirations. Incorporated in 1956, with lignite mining commencing in 1957 and power generation in 1962, the organization was born out of a national imperative—to catalyse industrial development by harnessing indigenous resources. The Neyveli project was envisioned not merely as an energy venture, but as an engine of regional and economic transformation.

From the very beginning, sustainability has been embedded in our DNA—long before it became a global imperative. Our mining operations were conceptualized around electric-powered specialized mining equipment and conveyor systems instead of internal combustion engines, significantly reducing emissions within mines. Groundwater management through artificial recharge wells and continuous aquifer monitoring was institutionalized decades ago to preserve ecological balance.

Today, sustainability stands as one of NLC India's core values under the philosophy of "NLCIL Commits." Our Green Agenda integrates People, Planet, and Profit, focusing on eco-restoration, afforestation, rainwater harvesting, biodiversity conservation, pollution control, climate change mitigation, and responsible water and energy management. In many ways, as India transitions towards a greener, self-reliant future, NLC India's evolution reflects the nation's own maturation—from resource-led growth to responsible and sustainable development.

↘ From lignite mining to power generation and now renewable energy, what have been the defining milestones that established NLC India as a true nation-building enterprise?

The establishment of large-scale lignite mining at Neyveli was our first nation-building milestone, laying the foundation for reliable base-load power in southern India. This vision was realized through technological collaboration with the erstwhile USSR, leveraging proven mining technologies suited to the vast lignite reserves of the Neyveli basin.



Prasanna Kumar Motupalli
CMD, NLCIL

Over time, our expansion into thermal power generation across multiple states strengthened regional grid stability. A defining shift came with our early and strategic entry into renewable energy in 2011. Today, with over 1,539 MW of solar and 51 MW of wind capacity, NLC India became the first CPSE to cross the 1 GW milestone in solar power generation.

Equally significant are our diversification initiatives—critical mineral mining, overseas ventures, and pioneering projects like the 50 MW solar plant on reclaimed mined-out land, lignite-to-methanol gasification, and ultra-supercritical thermal power plants equipped with advanced emission control systems. Each milestone has been guided not merely by commercial logic, but by national necessity.

↘ Energy security remains central to India's economic stability. How has NLC India balanced reliability, affordability, and sustainability?

Energy security is the backbone of economic resilience. At NLC India, we address this through an integrated and realistic approach. Our

corporate planning envisions a balanced energy mix—with thermal power ensuring grid reliability and renewables progressively increasing as storage technologies mature.

Affordability is driven by operational efficiencies, economies of scale, and technological upgradation. Sustainability is ensured through advanced emission control systems, water stewardship, mine reclamation, ash utilisation, and progressive mine closure practices. Until large-scale storage solutions become viable, flexible thermal operations play a critical role in stabilising the grid amid rising renewable penetration. Our belief is clear: growth must be financially viable, technologically sound, and environmentally responsible.

↘ PSUs are often silent enablers of inclusive development. How has NLC India contributed beyond energy?

NLC India's contribution extends far beyond megawatts and mining. Since the 1950s, our presence has transformed entire regions—economically, socially, and culturally. From creating direct and indirect employment to nurturing MSMEs and ancillary industries, we have built robust local ecosystems. Our CSR initiatives reflect deep-rooted social commitment. Project JalParyapt, involving desilting and rejuvenation of 43 water bodies in Tamil Nadu, has benefitted nearly four lakh people and significantly improved groundwater levels. In healthcare, we have strengthened primary health centres, established dialysis facilities, and installed oxygen generation plants during the COVID-19 crisis.

Education, sanitation, women empowerment, and support to aspirational districts remain priority areas. Ananda Illam, a first-of-its-kind elderly care initiative by any PSU, embodies our belief that development must be humane, inclusive, and dignified.

↘ Sustainability is no longer optional. How is it embedded in NLC India's long-term strategy?

Sustainability is not an add-on—it is integral to our business strategy. Responsible mining with concurrent reclamation, afforestation, and biodiversity conservation defines our operational philosophy. Lignite mining at NLC India is largely powered by green electricity generated from our own renewable assets, making mining operations significantly low-emission.

We pioneered Circulating Fluidized Bed Combustion technology well before regulatory mandates, reducing NOx and SO_2 emissions. To date, over 2,600 hectares of mined land have been reclaimed, with afforestation across 2,188 hectares and nearly 28 lakh saplings planted. High-tech agriculture, water body creation, eco-parks, and eco-tourism initiatives have transformed mined-out areas into vibrant ecosystems.

↘ As India accelerates its clean energy transition, what role will NLC India play?

NLC India is fully aligned with India's target of achieving 50% non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030. Our roadmap envisions 10 GW each of renewable and thermal capacity, alongside a 1 MTPA critical minerals portfolio—scaling further towards 2047.

Our strength lies in executing large-scale projects with discipline and reliability. As a PSU, we also serve as a catalyst—demonstrating that clean energy transition can be inclusive, affordable, and nationally anchored.

↘ How is technology reshaping NLC India's future?

Technology adoption is central to our transformation. From predictive maintenance and real-time monitoring to mine automation and digital analytics, we are enhancing productivity, safety, and efficiency. Our R&D initiatives span lignite gasification, green hydrogen, fertiliser-grade humic acid, semiconductor applications, and innovative emission reduction techniques. Innovation, for us, is both a growth enabler and a future safeguard.

↘ How do you personally define leadership in a nation-building PSU?

Leadership in a PSU carries dual responsibility—commercial excellence and national service. It demands integrity, long-term vision, and accountability to society, employees, policymakers, and future generations. In today's climate-conscious world, leadership decisions must balance economic viability with environmental stewardship. True success lies in creating enduring national value.

↘ Finally, what message would you like to share as Outlook celebrates 30 years?

As Outlook marks three decades of journalistic excellence, NLC India reaffirms its unwavering commitment to powering India responsibly. We are grateful to policymakers whose forward-looking frameworks have strengthened the power sector. With innovation, sustainability, and public trust as our guiding pillars, NLC India will continue to serve as a steadfast force in India's journey towards a resilient, self-reliant, and sustainable future.



What is often underappreciated is the scale at which these institutions operate. Supplying energy, fuel, minerals and essential services to over a billion people, while simultaneously modernising operations and transitioning towards sustainability, is no small task. Yet these enterprises have done so while contributing significantly to the national exchequer and investing in research, innovation and human capital.

Energy and Petroleum: Powering Growth, Securing the Future

No story of India's development is complete without understanding its energy journey. Energy is not merely a sector; it is the foundation upon which every other sector rests. Affordable, reliable and increasingly sustainable energy underpins industrial expansion, agricultural productivity, urbanisation, digital connectivity and improvements in quality of life. From powering factories and transport systems to enabling irrigation, cold chains and data centres, energy is the invisible engine of India's economic momentum.

India's energy challenge is uniquely complex. As one of the fastest-growing major economies, the country must meet rapidly rising demand while simultaneously reducing emissions intensity. It must balance the continued relevance of conventional fuels with the urgent need to scale cleaner alternatives, and ensure affordability even as global energy markets remain volatile. Navigating this transition requires not just capital investment, but long-term vision, institutional coordination and policy stability.

National institutions across petroleum, power and gas have played a decisive role in ensuring energy security through sustained investments in refining capacity, pipeline networks, storage infrastructure, transmission systems and generation assets. These efforts have ensured uninterrupted fuel availability,

continued on page 374 »

Engineering Inclusion: How ALIMCO Is Redefining Assistive Technology in India

The Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), a Central PSU under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, has for over five decades been at the forefront of empowering Divyangjan and senior citizens. Marking a new phase in its evolution, ALIMCO recently unveiled a modern corporate identity that reflects its transition from a traditional manufacturer to a people-centric, technology-driven hub for assistive and inclusive solutions. With a record turnover of ₹744.20 crore in FY 2024–25 and over four lakh beneficiaries supported, ALIMCO's nationwide network of 100 Pradhan Mantri Divyasha Kendras ensures last-mile access to essential assistive devices and services across India.

Backed by advanced manufacturing capabilities such as 3D digital mapping, robotics, and CNC prototyping, ALIMCO is redefining user-centric rehabilitation. Its recent innovations—including a 3-wheeler EV scooter and a clip-on motorised wheelchair device—underscore a decisive shift from assistance to autonomy. By integrating AI-driven approaches across design and delivery, ALIMCO is ensuring that technology serves a larger purpose: enabling dignity, independence, and inclusion at scale.

At the helm is **Mr. Praveen Kumar, Chairman & Managing Director, ALIMCO**. In this conversation, what follows is his perspective on steering ALIMCO into its next decade of inclusive growth and global relevance.

↘ What is your long-term vision for ALIMCO over the next 10 years?

Our vision is to position ALIMCO as a global hub for assistive technology, where innovation, affordability, and accessibility coexist. Over the next decade, we aim to lead in advanced mobility solutions, AI-enabled assistive devices, and 3D-printed prosthetics—serving not only India but also other developing nations thereby maximizing the outreach.

Can you share key milestones that define ALIMCO's social impact?

ALIMCO's impact is best reflected in lives transformed—whether through 100 PMDK centres ensuring last-mile access, record beneficiary outreach, or the launch of indigenous innovations like advanced prosthetics and mobility devices. Each milestone reinforces our commitment to dignity, independence, and inclusion.

How do government schemes strengthen ALIMCO's outreach?

Being a PSU under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment allows ALIMCO to effectively implement schemes such as ADIP and RVY. These frameworks ensure scale, sustainability, and transparency, enabling us to reach the unreached and serve diverse geographies.

↘ How is ALIMCO investing in skill development and modernisation?



Mr. Praveen Kumar Chairman & Managing Director, ALIMCO

We are continuously upgrading our workforce through skill development programmes, strengthening R&D collaborations with IITs and CSIR and keep modernising our plants with advanced manufacturing technologies. This ensures ALIMCO remains future-ready and globally competitive.

↘ What inspires you personally to lead ALIMCO?

Leading ALIMCO is deeply personal for me because every assistive device we deliver restores confidence, independence, and dignity to someone's life. The true motivation lies in knowing that our work enables people to walk, hear, work, and live independently—while also positioning India as a global provider of affordable, high-quality assistive technologies. As ALIMCO expands its footprint across regions and reshapes perceptions from charity to empowered choice, our journey ahead is driven by a clear purpose: to build a globally respected, innovation-led organisation where technology serves its highest calling—restoring dignity and expanding opportunity for all.

National Jute Board – Weaving India's Sustainable Growth and Rural Prosperity



The story of the National Jute Board stands as a reminder that the path to a greener, more inclusive future may well begin with a humble fibre – and an institution dedicated to its enduring promise.

Shashi Bhushan Singh
Secretary, National Jute Board

As India marks three decades of Outlook chronicling the nation's evolving journey, it is only fitting to celebrate institutions that have quietly but decisively shaped India's social, economic, and environmental fabric. Among these nation builders stands the National Jute Board (NJB) – an institution that has not merely safeguarded a traditional sector, but has reimagined it for a future defined by sustainability, self-reliance, and inclusive growth.

For centuries, jute – India's golden fibre – has been deeply interwoven with the country's agrarian economy and cultural heritage, particularly in eastern India. Today, as the world grapples with climate change, plastic pollution, and fragile supply chains, jute has re-emerged not just as a relic of the past, but as a strategic material of the future. At the heart of this transformation is the National Jute Board, operating under the Ministry of Textiles, steering the sector towards national relevance and global leadership.

Jute: A Fibre that Built Livelihoods and the Nation

Jute is far more than an agricultural commodity. It is a livelihood engine sustaining over five million people across West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Odisha, and neighbouring regions. From small and marginal farmers cultivating the crop to mill workers, MSMEs and artisans, women-led self-help groups, MSMEs, designers, exporters, and traders, the jute value chain supports one of India's most extensive rural employment ecosystems.

Environmentally, jute is unmatched. It thrives on natural rainfall, requires minimal external inputs, and improves soil fertility through natural leaf shedding. Economically viable, socially empowering, and ecologically sound, jute uniquely fulfils all three pillars of sustainable development – environmental, economic, and social.

In an era when single-use plastics choke landfills and oceans, jute's biodegradability and durability offer India a natural solution rooted in indigenous wisdom.

The National Jute Board: Custodian of a Strategic Sector

Recognising jute's immense potential, the National Jute Board (NJB) has played a pivotal role in protecting, promoting, and modernising the sector. The NJB's mandate extends across policy support, market development, design innovation, skill upgradation, research, quality improvement, and global promotion of jute products.

Through sustained interventions, NJB has worked to strengthen every link in the jute ecosystem – ensuring fair opportunities for farmers, enabling MSMEs and artisans to innovate, supporting MSMEs in value addition, and helping the industry remain competitive in domestic and international markets.

The NJB has been instrumental in promoting jute diversification

beyond traditional gunny bags into geotextiles for soil conservation and road construction, eco-friendly packaging, lifestyle products, home décor, fashion accessories, and composite materials. This shift has repositioned jute from a commodity fibre to a future-ready material aligned with modern design sensibilities and environmental responsibility.

Policy, Protection, and Market Confidence

A key pillar of the NJB's work lies in policy facilitation and market assurance. The National Jute Development Program (NJDP) implemented by the National Jute Board is India's umbrella scheme by the Ministry of Textiles, implemented via the National Jute Board, to uplift the entire jute sector by boosting scientific cultivation (Jute ICARE), diversifying products, supporting MSMEs and artisans with raw materials (JRMB) and market access, and modernising mills, aiming for increased farmer income, sustainable employment, and global market presence for eco-friendly jute goods.

In tandem with environmental regulations such as the Plastic Waste Management Rules, jute's relevance has grown as an eco-compliant alternative for packaging and logistics. By championing jute as a solution that is both environmentally sound and economically viable, the NJB has helped build long-term confidence in the sector.



Empowering MSMEs and Artisans, Women, and Rural India

From field to fibre, jute's journey is deeply human. The NJB has actively supported skill development, design training, and entrepreneurship among MSMEs and artisans, particularly in rural clusters. Women play a central role in jute weaving, processing, and product development, often through cooperatives and self-help groups. These initiatives have transformed jute-based cottage industries into platforms of financial independence, dignity, and social empowerment.

By encouraging the Jute, Rugs & Floor covering value chain and contemporary design integration, the NJB has enabled MSMEs and artisans to access new markets while preserving traditional knowledge systems. The result is a powerful fusion of heritage and innovation—products that resonate with global consumers while remaining deeply Indian in spirit.

Jute and Atmanirbhar Bharat

In the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, jute occupies a special place. As a domestically grown, low-input, climate-resilient crop, jute reduces dependence on imported synthetic fibres and petroleum-based materials. It strengthens rural economies, decentralises manufacturing, and creates green jobs, making self-reliance not just an economic goal, but a sustainable one.



India, as the world's largest producer of jute, is uniquely positioned to lead the global shift towards natural fibres. The National Jute Board's efforts in international promotion, branding, and market outreach have helped project Indian jute as a credible, scalable solution in the global sustainability conversation.

A Nation-Building Fibre for the Future

As the world searches for answers to plastic pollution, climate instability, and inequitable growth, jute offers India a rare opportunity – to build solutions that are rooted in its soil and shaped by its people. The National Jute Board's work demonstrates that nation building does not always happen through grand headlines, but through sustained commitment to farmers, MSMEs and artisans, industry, and the environment.

Jute is not merely a crop. It is a climate solution, a livelihood generator, and a symbol of sustainable resilience. By nurturing this golden fibre, the National Jute Board continues to weave a narrative where economic progress and environmental responsibility go hand in hand – strengthening India today while safeguarding generations to come.

expanded access to electricity and reduced regional disparities. At the same time, India has made deliberate moves towards diversification—accelerating renewable energy deployment, promoting ethanol blending, expanding alternative fuels, and laying the groundwork for a green hydrogen ecosystem.

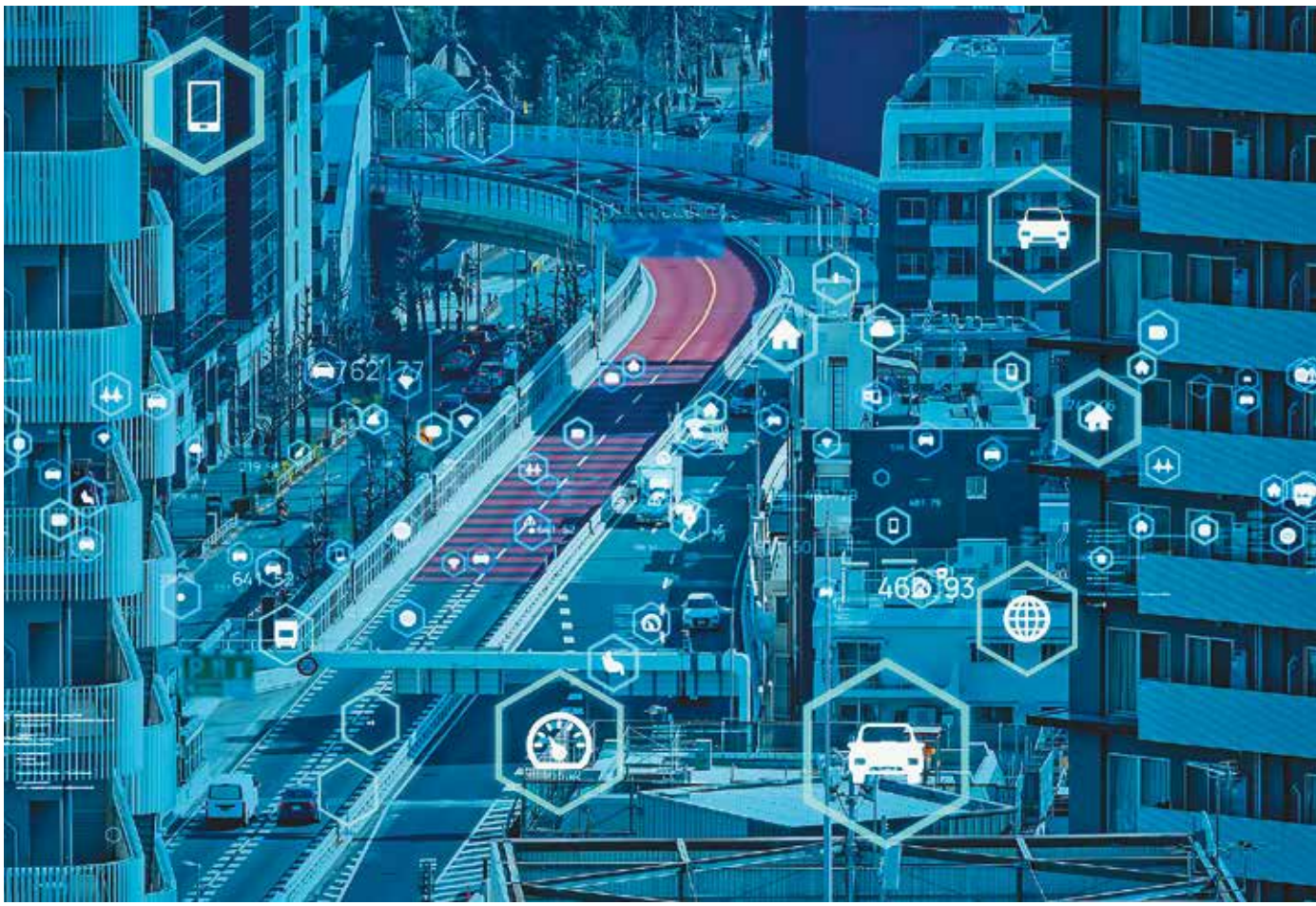
What distinguishes India's energy transition is pragmatism. The approach is phased rather than abrupt, inclusive rather than exclusionary, and firmly aligned with developmental realities. Recognising that growth and decarbonisation must advance together, India's energy strategy reflects a careful balance—one that secures today's needs while preparing for tomorrow's imperatives.

Mining and Natural Resources: The Material Backbone

Mining remains central to India's industrial ambitions and strategic autonomy. From coal and iron ore that power industry and infrastructure, to critical minerals essential for clean energy technologies, electronics and advanced manufacturing, the sector provides the raw materials that underpin economic growth.

Over the past decade, policy reforms and transparent auction mechanisms have brought greater efficiency, accountability and investor confidence to the sector. Technology adoption—ranging from automated mining systems to digital mapping and monitoring—has improved productivity while strengthening safety and environmental oversight. Increasing emphasis on responsible extraction, land reclamation and community engagement reflects a shift towards more sustainable mining practices.

Mining's integration with railways, power and logistics has



continued on page 378 »

From Soil To Scent: Ashish Khandelwal On Building Moksha's Global Indian Luxury Vision



Ashish Khandelwal, Founder and Group CEO of the Moksha Group of Companies, has spent nearly two decades quietly shaping India's natural ingredients ecosystem—long before "clean" and "organic" became industry buzzwords. From essential oils and fragrances to consumer brands, Moksha today stands at the intersection of Indian tradition and global luxury.

In this conversation with Outlook India, Khandelwal reflects on the group's journey and the philosophy behind its newest luxury expression—House of Moksha (HOM).

↘ Moksha began at a time when natural ingredients were still niche. What was the founding vision?

The vision was rooted in one belief—India has exceptional natural resources and traditional knowledge, but farmers and producers were disconnected from global value chains. We began Moksha Lifestyle Products with a handful of farmers, focusing on essential oils that were pure, traceable, and ethically produced. Today, Moksha works with over 7,000 farmers and cooperatives, integrating traditional practices with global quality standards.

↘ Moksha is regarded as a pioneer in organic essential oils. What were the early milestones that shaped credibility?

Becoming India's first major essential oil producer to receive USDA Organic certification in 2014 was a defining moment. It required discipline across farming, processing, and documentation.

We followed this by setting up a dedicated organic manufacturing facility in Uttarakhand, certified by Ecocert, to ensure integrity and compliance for international markets. These foundations allowed us to build long-term trust with global partners.

↘ Moksha has largely been a backend partner. Which brands have you worked with over the years?

We've always focused on building strong formulations rather than public visibility. Over the years, Moksha has partnered with several respected Indian brands including Mamaearth, Organic India, Fabindia, Kama Ayurveda, The Man Company, Baby Forest, among others.

These collaborations span essential oils, organic ingredients, natural actives, and fragrance development. What binds them is a shared commitment to clean formulations and ethical sourcing.

↘ With House of Moksha (HOM), you've stepped into luxury perfumery. What defines the brand and its creations?

House of Moksha (HOM) is our philosophy expressed through fine fragrance. The brand draws inspiration from international perfume houses but we reinterpret them through an Indian lens—using Indian-origin ingredients and our deep understanding of naturals.

Our perfumes are crafted using high-quality aroma compounds blended with Indian essential oils such as vetiver, sandalwood, spices, florals, and resins, which add depth, warmth, and character.

↘ Moksha has received notable recognition in recent years. What do these milestones mean to you?

Being featured in Forbes DGEMS 2023 and receiving the Star Export House Award from the Government of India were important milestones. They reaffirmed our belief that Indian-origin businesses, when built with integrity and scale, can command global respect.

↘ What's next for the Moksha Group?

Our focus is on building a house of brands and a global manufacturing platform centred around Indian organic ingredients and traditional wisdom. Whether through fragrances, baby care, home care, or B2B partnerships, Moksha aims to take India's natural heritage to the world—responsibly and at scale.

To learn more about the company – visit mokshalifestyle.com & mokshaaromatics.com
To experience HOM perfumes – Order at houseofmoksha.com

CSR-A Pillar Of India's Development Compact

As India navigates a decisive phase of economic and social transformation, Corporate Social Responsibility has emerged as a powerful force shaping inclusive and sustainable development. In this thought-provoking piece, Anoop Gupta reflects on CSR's evolving role-from statutory obligation to strategic nation-building tool and examines how public institutions can translate growth into lasting social impact.



Anoop Gupta
Executive Director, CSR, GAIL

As India stands at a critical inflection point in its development journey, the question before us is no longer how fast we grow, but how responsibly and inclusively we shape that growth. Corporate Social Responsibility must therefore be viewed as far more than a statutory requirement. In my view, CSR represents a critical pillar of India's development compact—one that brings together institutions, communities, and the state in a shared pursuit of long-term national progress.

India's growth trajectory over the past decades has been impressive, yet the challenges before us remain complex and deeply interconnected. Access to quality education and healthcare, livelihood generation, environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and social equity cannot be addressed through fragmented or short-term interventions. These challenges demand patient capital, scale of effort, institutional credibility, and a deep understanding of local realities. When CSR is guided by such principles, it becomes a powerful instrument for delivering solutions that are durable, inclusive, and transformative.

For public sector enterprises in particular, CSR carries a deeper significance. It is an extension of our public mandate and a reflection of the trust placed in us by the nation. Effective CSR goes beyond expenditure targets or annual reporting—it is fundamentally about institution-building. This includes strengthening public infrastructure, enhancing human capital, supporting vulnerable communities, and empowering people to become self-reliant participants in the development process. The most meaningful initiatives are those that create enabling ecosystems rather than short-term relief, ensuring continuity and long-term impact.

From experience, it is evident that impactful CSR cannot operate in isolation. Collaboration is central to success. Alignment with national missions, partnerships with state and district administrations, engagement with credible civil society organisations, and active community participation are essential to ensure outcomes that are measurable, accountable, and scalable. Equally important are transparency, governance, and impact assessment, which reinforce public trust and enable continuous learning and course correction.

CSR also plays a vital role in humanising economic growth. It reminds us that development must be evaluated not only through macroeconomic indicators, but through improvements in quality of life, dignity, opportunity, and environmental balance. In a country as diverse as India, CSR has the unique ability to address regional disparities, reach underserved geographies, and ensure that growth is both equitable and inclusive.

As India enters a decisive phase of transformation-marked by rapid infrastructure development, digital expansion, and increased global engagement-CSR must evolve from a compliance-driven activity to a strategic nation-building tool. The true measure of our success will not be what we built, but whom we empowered along the way. That choice will define the legacy we leave for future generations India's.

Swastik Wellbeing Sanctuary - Where Advanced Diagnostics Meet Integrated Healing



Set amidst the serene expanse of Peacock Valley and spread across 51 acres, Swastik Wellbeing Sanctuary is nestled beside the tranquil Khadakwasla Dam. Conveniently located between Mumbai and Pune, the sanctuary emerges as a world-class luxury destination for those seeking meaningful, result-oriented wellness and healing journeys. Easily accessible from Mumbai and other key cities, the retreat offers a seamless escape from urban life while remaining well connected-making it ideal for both short rejuvenating breaks and immersive wellness stays.

Swastik Wellbeing is envisioned as a destination where modern science, mindful living, and purposeful design come together to create lasting transformation. Expansive, thoughtfully curated, and deeply immersive, the sanctuary goes beyond conventional relaxation to focus on measurable outcomes, inner clarity, and holistic growth. It is a space created for seekers who value depth, intention, and premium experiences.

At the core of Swastik's philosophy lies the nurturing of five essential dimensions of life-Health, Wealth, Love, Bliss, and Spirituality. These pillars guide the design of every program and experience, helping individuals realign their lives with balance and intention. The sanctuary's architecture reflects calm and harmony, with six elegantly designed Vihars set amid lush greenery, surrounded by over 15,000 native trees and a thriving ecosystem of birdlife. Every space is designed to encourage pause, reflection, and reconnection.

Swastik's wellness and healing programs are structured into distinct categories to address varied needs and goals.

Wellness programs focus on longevity, lifestyle correction, stress management, and Ayurveda Panchakarma. Healing programs are more intensive and result-oriented, supported by modern diagnostic methods that help assess individual needs and track progress. These programs integrate holistic therapies like Ayurveda, Naturopathy, Yoga, Meditation, oriental methods, mindful movement, energy-balancing practices, and expert-led interventions for deeper transformation. Corporate wellness programs are thoughtfully designed to support organizations and leadership teams, addressing burnout, performance, emotional resilience, and overall wellbeing in high-pressure environments.

Complementing these offerings is Swastik's newly introduced Wellness Holiday concept. Designed for guests who wish to experience the sanctuary without opting for therapies, this option allows visitors to stay on campus, enjoy nourishing cuisine, explore the tranquil surroundings, and immerse themselves in the peaceful rhythm of the retreat-making it ideal for conscious travelers and families seeking restorative time in nature.

At Swastik Wellbeing Sanctuary, cuisine is an essential part of the wellness experience. Crafted with naturally sourced, nutrient-dense ingredients, the culinary philosophy centers on conscious nourishment, balance, and vitality, complementing every healing program and wellness stay.

Sustainability is intrinsic to the ethos of Swastik Wellbeing Sanctuary. Certified in the Platinum category by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), the sanctuary reflects a deep commitment to responsible luxury and conscious living. With a zero-waste-to-landfill approach, solar-powered infrastructure, rainwater harvesting, advanced water recycling systems, and expansive green cover, Swastik seamlessly integrates environmental stewardship into every aspect of the guest experience.

Swastik Wellbeing is where modern luxury meets purposeful wellbeing-an accessible yet elevated sanctuary for those seeking clarity, balance, and transformative experiences that resonate long after the journey ends.

For seekers who truly wish to heal from within and experience meaningful transformation, Swastik Wellbeing Sanctuary is an experience not to be missed.



enhanced supply-chain efficiency and reduced bottlenecks, supporting downstream industries and regional development. In mineral-rich but economically underdeveloped regions, mining has also acted as a catalyst for infrastructure creation, employment generation and local economic activity. As India advances its clean energy and manufacturing ambitions, access to critical minerals will only grow in strategic importance.

Agriculture: Sustaining Livelihoods, Securing the Nation

Agriculture remains the backbone of India's social and economic fabric. Beyond ensuring food security for a large and growing population, it sustains livelihoods for millions, anchors rural economies and acts as a stabilising force during economic shocks.

Investments in irrigation, water management, storage infrastructure and agri-logistics have strengthened resilience against climate variability and market volatility. The expansion of value chains—linking farms to processing, retail and export markets—has improved income opportunities while reducing post-harvest losses. Greater emphasis on diversification, allied activities and agri-entrepreneurship is gradually transforming agriculture from subsistence to sustainability.

The convergence of agriculture with energy access, fertiliser availability, digital platforms and institutional credit has been particularly transformative. Digital marketplaces, direct benefit transfers and data-driven advisories have improved transparency and access, empowering farmers and reinforcing agriculture's central role in inclusive nation-building.

Textiles: Tradition Meets Global Competitiveness

The textiles and apparel sector exemplifies India's ability to blend heritage with global competitiveness. Deeply rooted in traditional skills and artisanal practices, yet increasingly driven by technology and scale, textiles remain one of the country's largest employers and export earners.

Policy support, modernisation initiatives and skilling programmes have strengthened India's position across the textile value chain—from fibre and fabric to fashion and finished goods. Sustainability initiatives, including water efficiency, waste reduction and responsible sourcing, are aligning the sector with evolving global standards.

continued on page 382 »

GMDC
Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd.
(A Government of Gujarat Enterprise)
FUELING THE GROWTH

GMDC'S ENDEAVOURS TOWARDS CHARTING INDIA'S MINERAL SELF-RELIANCE



As India steps into a decade of rapid industrial expansion and energy transition, mineral security has become a national priority. A country that aims to build its own clean energy systems, electronics and defence manufacturing needs assured access to the minerals that sustain these sectors. This is where State PSUs such as Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation play a steadying role. Their work goes beyond extraction, shaping long term resilience and supporting the country's shift towards self-reliance under initiatives like Atmanirbhar Bharat and the National Critical Mineral Mission.

GMDC's expanding portfolio reflects this shift clearly. Its commercial coal operations in Odisha, across the Baitarni West, Burapahar and Kudanali Lubri blocks, hold more than two billion tonnes of geological resources and are designed to strengthen India's base load fuel requirement while reducing reliance on imported thermal coal. These projects mark GMDC's transition from a state focused mining company to a national contributor, supported by cleaner approaches such as Underground Coal Gasification and planned pathways for emerging fuels like blue hydrogen and SynGas.

Alongside coal, GMDC is building capacity in critical minerals that will define India's technological and clean energy future. The rare earth ecosystem being developed at Ambadungar and Bharuch is one of the country's most integrated mine to magnet efforts, with the ability to produce Mixed Rare Earth Carbonate and Neodymium Praseodymium oxide for applications ranging from EV motors to wind turbines. The Ambaji copper project strengthens this chain further, with reserves of copper, zinc and lead planned to be processed through a beneficiation plant with a long operational life. Together, these projects help reduce import dependence and create new industrial linkages within the country.

In Gujarat, GMDC continues to anchor the state's energy and industrial landscape. Six new lignite mines across Kutch and South Gujarat will add nearly five hundred million tonnes of reserves that will support MSMEs in ceramics, chemicals and other energy dependent sectors. These reserves will act as reliable fuel sources that reduce the state's exposure to imported coal and help maintain industrial continuity. The limestone corridor in Western Kutch will add another layer of capability with significant reserves and long-term supply agreements that will pave the way for new cement units and broader value chain development.

All of this reflects the steady and institution driven approach India will need in the years ahead. Mineral security cannot be built on short term projects. It requires organisations to think long term, carry public responsibility and build ecosystems around every resource they develop. GMDC's work across lignite, coal, rare earths, copper and limestone shows how a state PSU can anchor domestic value chains, reduce vulnerabilities and support national missions with grounded execution. In doing so, it strengthens not just industries and regions, but the country's larger path towards self-reliance.

THE FUTURE OF STEEL IS HERE

Bharat Steel 2026 - Sustainable. Modern. Competitive

India's steel story is entering a decisive moment. Organised by the Ministry of Steel, Government of India, Bharat Steel 2026, India's flagship international conference-cum-exhibition will be held on 16-17 April 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. Anchored in the National Steel Policy, the event comes at a time when India is progressing towards a steel capacity of 300 million tonnes by 2030, with an even more ambitious vision of 500 million tonnes by 2047. Envisioned as a truly global platform, Bharat Steel 2026 will bring together policy-makers, industry leaders, global producers, investors and technology providers to collectively shape the future of steel value chains, sustainability pathways and international cooperation.

Over two days, Bharat Steel 2026 will bring together leading public and private sector players from across the steel and minerals value chain like NMDC, SAIL, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, Jindal Steel & Power, Jindal Stainless, AM/NS India, Vizag Steel (RINL), MSTC, MECON, BEML, and global companies such as BHP, Stevin Rock and Danieli, among others.

The Conference will witness participation from senior leadership across government and industry, including Ministers from the Steel & Heavy Industries and Commerce Ministries, Chief Ministers from key steel-producing states, and senior officials from the Ministry of Steel. The deliberations will also see active engagement from the leadership of major steel and mining PSUs and allied organisations, alongside top executives from leading private sector companies and prominent global steel and mining corporations.



Shri H D Kumaraswamy, Hon'ble Union Minister of Steel & Heavy Industries, and Shri Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Steel & Heavy Industries, with Ambassadors and representatives of key steel-producing nations in New Delhi.

भारत स्टील
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16–17 April 2026
Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

Demonstrating the event's strong international outreach, the Ministry of Steel hosted an interaction with ambassadors and diplomatic representatives of 19 countries on 18 December to brief them on Bharat Steel 2026 and encourage global participation. The meeting was hosted by Shri H. D. Kumaraswamy, Union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries, and Shri Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma, Union Minister of State for Steel & Heavy Industries, along with senior officials from the Ministry.

As part of this outreach, Russia and Oman have already been onboarded as partner countries. On the domestic front, five Indian states - Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha have been onboarded to showcase regional capabilities and strengthen India's integrated steel growth narrative.

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Equally significant is textiles' role in regional development. From handloom clusters to industrial textile parks, the sector supports livelihoods across urban and rural India, preserving cultural identity while generating economic opportunity. In doing so, textiles reflect a development model that values both competitiveness and continuity.

Hospitality and Tourism: Growth with Identity

An increasingly important pillar of India's growth story is the hospitality and tourism sector. Beyond its economic contribution, hospitality reflects India's cultural confidence, civilisational depth and soft power. From heritage hotels and pilgrimage circuits to eco-tourism, wellness retreats and experiential travel, the sector translates India's diversity into economic opportunity.

Hospitality is inherently employment-intensive, supporting a wide ecosystem of MSMEs, artisans, transport providers and local enterprises. Post-pandemic recovery has been driven by improved connectivity, digital platforms, infrastructure upgrades and policy facilitation, positioning tourism as a key driver of decentralised growth.

The sector's deep linkages with crafts, cuisine, culture and sustainability make it uniquely aligned with the ethos of Viksit Bharat—growth that is people-centric, locally rooted and globally resonant. As India emerges as a major global destination, hospitality will continue to play a vital role in shaping both economic outcomes and national identity.

Digital Public Infrastructure: India's Silent Revolution

Perhaps the most transformative—and least visible—aspect of India's recent growth story is its digital public infrastructure. Platforms such

continued on page 384 »

CIPET: Five Decades of Shaping India's Future



Prof. (Dr.) Shishir Sinha,
Director General – CIPET

The Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) has completed more than fifty years of dedicated service to the nation, playing a pivotal role in the growth and development of India's petrochemicals / plastics sector. Established in 1968 under the aegis of the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Government of India, CIPET has evolved into a premier national institution for education, skill development, technical services, and research in petrochemicals / plastics and allied domains.

CIPET has continuously aligned its mandate with the changing needs of industry, academia, and society. From modest beginnings, it has expanded into a robust pan-India network of centres offering diploma, undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes, alongside specialized skill development, upskilling, and reskilling initiatives aligned with NSQF levels 3—8. These programmes have significantly contributed in building India globally competitive through industry-ready workforce.

Academic Excellence and Talent Development

Its academic journey—from diploma programmes to advanced doctoral research—reflects a dynamic response to evolving technological and industrial requirements. Continuous modernization of laboratories with state-of-the-art infrastructure, strong industry collaboration, and holistic student grooming have resulted in a substantial expansion of outreach, with student intake and training capacity increasing manifold over the years.

Aligned with national initiatives such as Skill India, Make in India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat, CIPET has evolved into a cornerstone of India's skill development framework. Through skill training, CIPET transitioned from centre-based training to a nationwide, outcome-oriented skilling network. The institute has adopted online, onsite, and hybrid training models, ensuring continuity in capacity building. Today, CIPET stands recognized not merely as a training provider but as a national institution enabling employment generation, productivity enhancement, and manufacturing-led growth.

Technology Support Services

With world-class infrastructure across its centres, CIPET has established itself as a nationally trusted technology partner for petrochemicals / plastics and allied industries. Its comprehensive capabilities span design and tooling, plastics processing, product development, testing and quality control and inspection services—supporting quality enhancement, innovation, and compliance across the manufacturing value chain to fulfill customer satisfaction & societal requirements.

Research, Innovation, and Sustainable Technologies

CIPET's Research & Development activities form a vital pillar of its institutional mandate. CIPET undertakes application-oriented research in advanced product design, bioplastics, composites, recycling technologies, nanotechnology & next-generation plastic devices etc. and supporting the objectives of Make in India and industrial innovation.

CIPET's Future Vision: Empowering Viksit Bharat

Aligned with the national vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, CIPET aims to strengthen its role as a global hub for education, skill training, technology support, and sustainable innovation. By nurturing future-ready talent, developing green and advanced materials, promoting circular economy solutions, and expanding industry-driven research and commercialization, CIPET will continue to contribute to India's self-reliance, manufacturing excellence, and inclusive growth in the petrochemicals / plastics and allied sectors.

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as Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker and the JAM trinity have redefined how citizens interact with the state and the market.

By lowering transaction costs, expanding access and reducing intermediaries, these systems have empowered individuals, small businesses and entrepreneurs. Welfare delivery has become more efficient and dignified, financial inclusion has deepened, and innovation has flourished atop open, interoperable digital rails.

This digital backbone has strengthened institutional trust and governance capacity, offering a globally admired model of inclusive, scalable digital transformation. It underscores a powerful lesson: when technology is designed for inclusion, it can become one of the most effective instruments of equity and growth.

Outlook's Journey: Chronicling Change

Over the years, Outlook has sought to provide perspective rather than provocation, context rather than commentary. By chronicling institutions as much as individuals, and long-term structural shifts as much as headline events, it has attempted to capture the deeper currents shaping India's political, economic and social journey. In doing so, the magazine has positioned itself not merely as a recorder of events, but as a platform for informed debate, rigorous analysis and thoughtful reflection.

As India advances towards its next phase of development, the responsibility of journalism grows more complex and more consequential. In an era of fragmentation, misinformation and instant opinion, credible journalism must act as a stabilising force—grounded in facts, guided by balance and driven by public interest.

continued on page 390 »

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Kurukshetra To Boardroom: From Transactional To Transformational Leadership Through The Lens Of The Mahabharata

Leadership transcends formal authority; it is about shaping mindsets, inspiring action, and creating enduring impact. While transactional leadership focuses on routines, rewards, and short-term exchanges, transformational leadership elevates people by aligning purpose, values, and vision. In an era marked by volatility and complexity, organizations increasingly need leaders who can inspire confidence, nurture innovation, and guide teams through uncertainty.

Indian mythology offers profound insights into such leadership. The Mahabharata, beyond being an epic of war, is a timeless treatise on leadership, ethics, and strategy. Among its many characters, Lord Krishna stands out as the embodiment of transformational leadership—leading not through command, but through conviction, wisdom, and moral clarity.

Transformational leaders articulate a compelling vision, encourage independent thinking, and invest deeply in people's growth. Krishna exemplified these traits during the Kurukshetra war. At its outset, Arjuna was overwhelmed by doubt and moral conflict, unwilling to fight his own kin. Krishna did not issue orders; instead, through the Bhagavad Gita, he reframed Arjuna's perspective, elevating him from emotional paralysis to purposeful action. By aligning duty with a higher cause, Krishna transformed Arjuna into a focused and decisive leader, altering the course of the war.

Krishna's strategic brilliance further reflects transformational leadership. When Bhishma appeared invincible, Krishna devised an ethical and innovative solution—advising the Pandavas to seek Bhishma's consent to neutralize him, honoring his values while solving a seemingly impossible problem. This blend of respect, creativity, and foresight mirrors how modern leaders must resolve complex challenges without compromising integrity.

The epic also warns against micromanagement. Arjuna's decision to personally pursue King Susarma, despite Krishna's caution, removed him from the battlefield at a critical moment, leading to Abhimanyu's tragic death. The lesson for organizations is clear: leaders who immerse themselves in minor issues risk losing sight of strategic priorities. Transformational leaders delegate effectively, trust capable team members, and maintain a broader, aerial view of the organization.

A powerful contrast emerges between the leadership of Dhrishtadyumna and Bhishma. Dhrishtadyumna, entrusted fully by the Pandavas, led with confidence, collaboration, and clarity. In contrast, Bhishma's authority was undermined by Duryodhana's mistrust and interference, weakening morale and cohesion within the Kaurava camp. Empowerment fostered unity and effectiveness; mistrust bred fragmentation and inefficiency.



Debasis Satapathy, CGM–HR, NBCC (Govt. of India), New Delhi

In today's corporate world, the Mahabharata's lessons remain deeply relevant. Transformational leaders must rise above micromanagement, empower their teams, and lead with ethical conviction. By trusting people, focusing on the bigger picture, and inspiring through purpose rather than control, leaders can build resilient institutions and lasting legacies—just as Krishna transformed uncertainty into decisive action and chaos into order.

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Sustainable Industrialisation: The Blueprint for a Truly Viksit Bharat

When India speaks of Viksit Bharat 2047, it imagines more than economic might. It envisions a country that is socially inclusive, technologically sophisticated and environmentally secure, a nation that grows without compromising its air, water or future. Much has been achieved, but one truth stands out: India cannot become a developed nation without a strong industrial backbone.

Yet the old formula of industrial growth, 'Expand first, clean up later', is no longer viable. Climate stresses are mounting, cities are already strained, and global markets are beginning to penalise carbon-intensive products. If India must industrialise further, it must do so differently. Sustainable industrialisation is no longer one of many choices; it is the only path that makes Viksit Bharat possible.



Mr. R. S. Jalan
Managing Director
GHCL Limited

A Manufacturing Base on the Move, but Still Short of its Potential

The last few years have shown what a revitalised manufacturing sector can deliver. Manufacturing Gross value Added (GVA) has been growing close to double digits, and formal manufacturing jobs have climbed to roughly 1.8–1.9 crore workers. But manufacturing still accounts for just 16% of GDP, far below the target of 25% by 2030.

With millions of young Indians stepping into the workforce every year, India needs far more modern, productive factories in basic chemicals and materials, engineering goods, electronics, automobiles, renewables, food processing and

textiles, supported by supply chains that plug seamlessly into global markets. In many ways, India needs more industrialisation, not less. The question is how to build it sustainably.

Taking Industry Beyond the Big Cities

For this next phase of growth to be inclusive and climate-friendly, investments must move beyond a handful of over-concentrated urban centres. The future lies in a diversified industrial geography, spanning well-planned coastal manufacturing hubs as well as emerging industrial corridors, smaller towns and rural districts. In these locations, access to ports, abundant labour and more affordable land can enable scale, while green infrastructure can be designed from the ground up rather than retrofitted at enormous cost.

A just transition will be equally important. Workers will need reskilling, social protection and opportunities for local economic diversification so that climate action does not threaten livelihoods. And India's SMEs, the backbone of its industrial ecosystem, must get the support they need: access to affordable green finance, technology upgrades and shared sustainable facilities.

A New Energy Reality Will Shape Industrial India

A landmark EY–CII assessment suggests that to power a USD 25–30 trillion Viksit Bharat economy by 2047, India will need to triple its total energy supply and expand non-fossil energy nearly 40-fold. Since industry runs on electricity and heat, the source of this energy becomes pivotal. If more of it comes from renewables, nuclear, hydro and other non-fossil sources, the output automatically becomes cleaner. This transition to clean manufacturing is not merely an environmental responsibility. It is also India's chance to generate millions of new-age jobs and build skills for a green global economy.

The Infrastructure Boom That Will Define the Next 20 Years

India is on the cusp of its biggest infrastructure build-out in history, with more factories, more power plants, more highways, ports and cities. Embedding sustainability into this massive expansion can transform India into a trusted global supplier of green products, boost energy security and dramatically improve public health.

Development, if it is to have meaning, must lead to clearer skies, safer rivers and healthier communities. Sustainable industrialisation is the strategy that ties economic ambition to environmental responsibility, making Viksit Bharat both achievable and meaningful.

The Hidden Costs of Pollution — and Why Green Must Be Default

Pollution has a price. It shows up in diseases, lost workdays, damaged crops and eroding infrastructure. A green industrial revolution can prevent these losses, but only if sustainability becomes the default, not the exception. This requires every new industrial policy to be green by design, offering clear incentives for lower emissions, efficient water use and energy-saving technologies. Green industrial clusters equipped with effluent treatment, renewable energy and circular-economy infrastructure must become the norm, supported by affordable capital.

Industry's Role: From Compliance to Strategy

Businesses will need to lead with vision. Sustainability and decarbonisation can no longer be side commitments; they must sit at the centre of industrial strategy. Companies that move early, adopting cleaner technologies, conserving resources and embracing circularity, will gain access to better export opportunities, cheaper finance, stronger branding and high-calibre talent. In a world tightening its climate rules, green industrialisation is both a survival strategy and a growth opportunity.

A National Mission That Requires Collaboration

To deliver this transformation, India needs deep coordination across Union and state governments, industry and civil society. Industrial policy, climate targets and skilling efforts must reinforce each other.

The encouraging part is that India has already demonstrated what is possible when intent meets execution. The country reduced its emissions intensity by about 36% between 2005 and 2020, outpacing the trajectory needed to meet its pledge of a 45% cut by 2030. It also reached the milestone of 50% installed non-fossil power capacity a full five years ahead of schedule, underscoring the scale at which India can deliver when policy, industry and innovation align.

The message is clear: the route to a developed India runs through sustainable industrialisation. This is not merely a slogan but a serious, long-term national blueprint, one that ensures growth is not only rapid, but responsible; not only competitive, but inclusive; not only ambitious, but resilient. If India stays this course, the promise of Viksit Bharat will become more than an aspiration. It will be the lived reality of generations to come.

« continued from page 384

Outlook's commitment, as it enters its fourth decade, is to continue engaging with India's transformation with independence, integrity and an unwavering belief in the democratic value of informed discourse.

The Road Ahead

As India looks towards 2047 and the centenary of its Independence, the questions before the nation are no longer about promise or potential, but about priorities and choices. How does India sustain high growth while ensuring that its dividends are widely shared? How does it lead on climate action without constraining development aspirations? And how does it strengthen institutions to remain resilient, responsive and trusted in an age of rapid technological and social change?

The answers will not emerge from vision alone, nor from policy in isolation. They will be shaped by the alignment of intent and execution – by the quiet, determined work of nation builders across sectors who translate ideas into outcomes and ambition into action. Their efforts, often unseen, will continue to define the trajectory of India's development.

As Outlook marks 30 years of chronicling India's journey, we renew our commitment to responsible, impactful journalism. And as the nation advances on its path towards Viksit Bharat, we remain dedicated to telling its story with honesty, depth and balance – guided by a steadfast belief in the idea of India and the collective endeavour that sustains it.





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Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Imagined Spaces



Tishani Doshi

Is a writer and dancer. Her fifth collection of poems, *Egrets, While War*, is forthcoming internationally in 2026

I was talking with the Kudiyattam artist Kapila Venu recently about the magic of eyes. I had read how Kudiyattam performers could show with their eyes, a particular motion of flies falling into a fire and then flying back unhurt (*sikhini salabham*). I was stunned by the detail of it. That the need for such a gesture existed, that it could be conceptualised, taught and performed. Students of Kudiyattam must master how to bring *vayu* (breath) into their eyes, so they can become conduits of sorts. A performer can take hours to move an imaginary mountain on stage; can show how a river originates atop some far mountain, then widens in grith as it comes toward you, then thins as it travels off into the distance. All with zero tech, just *abhinaya* and ocular wizardry.

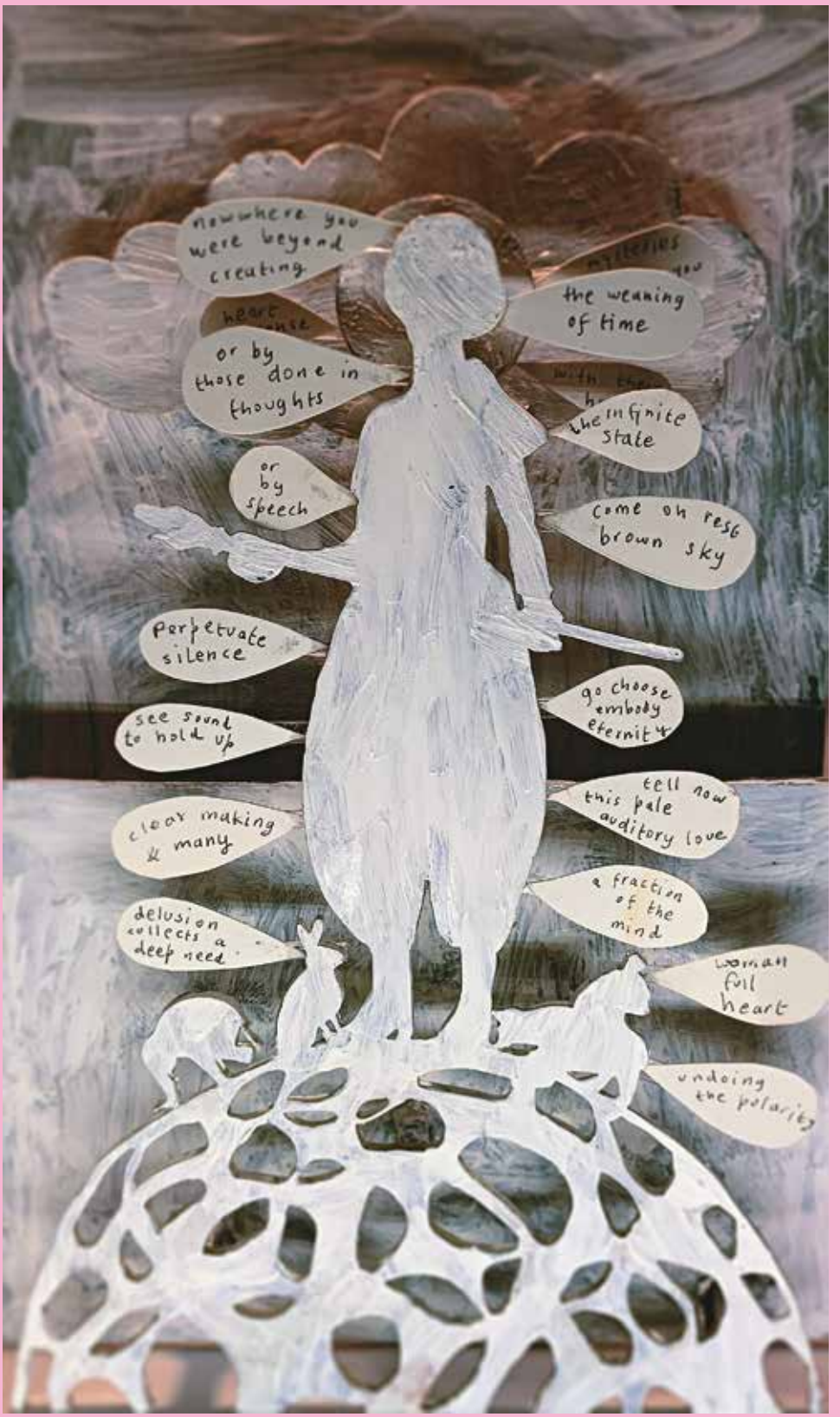
Kapila told me that one of her favourite scenes in the Ramayana is when Ravana sees Sita for the first time. Ten-headed Ravana in his flying chariot. Seeing this beautiful woman. Each of the 10 heads beginning to describe some aspect of her. The many heads then arguing between them. This kind of multiplicity contained in a single body, which then enables the audience to experience it, is the kind of skill a fiction writer could be deeply envious of. It's an exchange of vision in real time. *Do you see what I am making? Can you see it too?*

When I watched Kapila later that evening on stage, I tried to find her—the person I had been talking to just a few hours earlier. But she was not there. Or rather, she was somewhere alongside the person(s) she was on stage. On stage, she and her percussionists had summoned a world with an oil lamp, a tiny curtain, and a wooden stool. Poof. Universe created. A space that was circular and infinite, of mythic time and present time. A boundary had been drawn between them and us, but it was a porous one, an invitation to cross over the threshold to meet.

* * *

For 35 years I have dreamed about the house I grew up in. The house with orange and black gates on Shafee Mohammed Road in Madras. The house still exists as far as I know. It has become an architect's office. Perhaps the *gulmohar* tree that used to stand between the gates still drops its orange lanterns regularly, and the Punjab Women's Association still shares a boundary wall, and you can still buy chocobars in the Okay Stores down the street. Perhaps the old city of Madras still exists under this present-city of Chennai, and whoever my family were in that house still exist under the layers of our now-older bodies that move through different houses.

"The house is a large cradle," Gaston Bachelard writes, in *The Poetics of Space*. Our first universe, a place of shelter and dreaming. Thanks to the house, our memories have refuge. To dream of the house we were born in, Bachelard writes, is to participate in some kind of original warmth, the environment in which the protective beings live (assuming of course, that childhood was a place of warmth). Perhaps this is why my dreams carry me back to it.



Old Moon Revolution
Artwork by Ruchi Bakshi Sharma

But what happens when houses are decimated as they have been in Gaza? What refuge do bodies or memories have when bombs rain down upon these cradles? What methods of retrieval will be available to Gazans when there are plans to build the Riviera of the Middle East upon the rubble of their homes?

In February this year, I went in search of my great grandmother in Kutch, but the family house in Anjar, where my father's family comes from, had been destroyed in the 2001 Bhuj earthquake. My great grandmother had died many years before, but as she had been resurrected in my imagination, the only way I could think of getting close to her was to make a pilgrimage back to the place of origin. I had last been there when I was eight. There were pictures of me with a pudding bowl haircut being taught to fold my hands at some kind of shrine. I found out later, this was our *devasthana*, and having arrived this far, I wanted to find this place. My relatives were either dead, had migrated, or were too distant to bother seeing me. After much pestering, I received a Google pin to the *devasthana* from my father's cousin, which I followed. And there, in that hallowed space, where a photograph told me I had once been as a child, a tree rained yellow leaves upon me, I folded my hands and wept.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HOUSES ARE DECIMATED AS THEY HAVE BEEN IN GAZA? WHAT REFUGE DO BODIES OR MEMORIES HAVE WHEN BOMBS RAIN DOWN UPON THESE CRADLES?

At some point in my mini breakdown, a man and his young daughter came to worship. The man asked if I was okay, and I muttered something about my family having come from here, of being overwhelmed by the emotion of return, of not knowing if I was even in the right place. He asked my name. I told him. Doshi, he said. This is you *devasthana*, your *kuldevta*. You are where you are meant to be.

Spaces can hold transitions and losses, they can activate prophecy. The yellow leaves falling, the benevolent stranger with his child—wasn't that a pathway toward my great grandmother?

What does it mean to make an imagined space on stage or on the page? To take a single red brick on stage and call it altar? To put words on a page and call it stanza. Doesn't stanza mean room, after all? I think of the poem as a kind of house. Title as doormat or threshold for the reader to cross over and enter. Language as furniture, architecture, homeland. To begin a novel with a house, and a person living inside this house, the thoughts inside that person's head, the weather, the neighbours, the troubles, the triumphs, the way they move around the world. Isn't that a little universe? Isn't it an exchange of vision, a way of saying, Can you see it too?

Language lives inside us, and lest I have been speaking too much of the eyes, let me speak for the mouth, the ear. The writer and translator Sara Rai shared a beautiful story of a man she knew, an Awadhi scholar who had lived in Frankfurt for many years, who imagined that the doves came to his balcony and spoke to him in Awadhi.

Imagination enables metamorphosis, and metamorphosis is what I'm after. Not just as a maker, but as a seeker, a spectator. All the disappeared and dormant things can be resurrected. More than ever, the spaces we imagine are areas of freedom amidst an incredible shrinking; are spaces of multiplicity, when we are constantly being hammered into little boxes. When I sit in a darkened theatre, or alone with a book, I want simply to be moved, transformed, for the possibility of something to reach into my underconsciousness and confirm how vast they are, these spaces we carry around with us.

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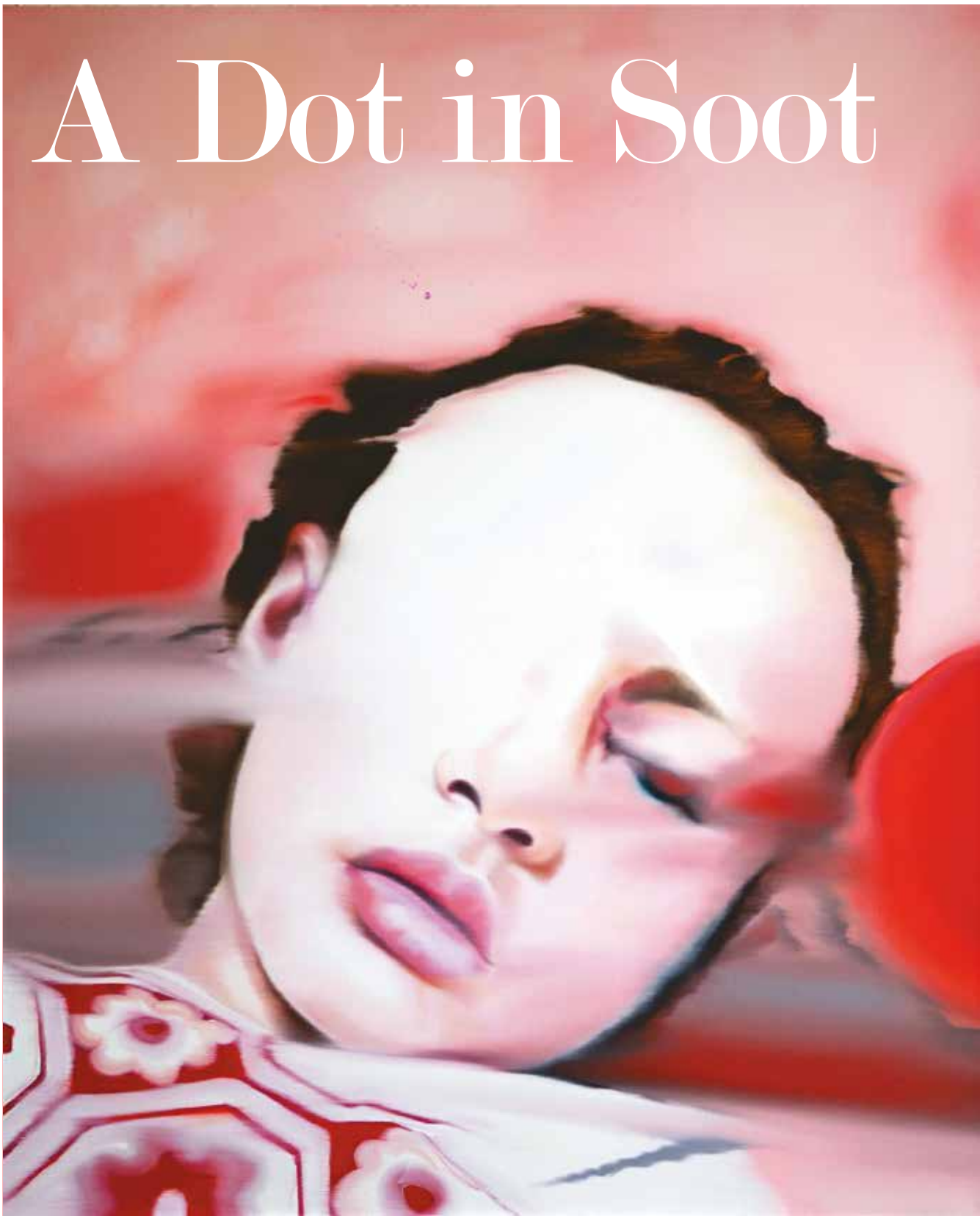


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A Dot in Soot



Red by the Sea Artwork by Riyas Komu

COURTESY: TAO ART GALLERY



Aakriti Kuntal

Is a poet, writer, and visual artist from India whose work has been published in various literary journals. When she is not daydreaming, she is immersed in classical music and taking afternoon strolls

Bluebells sway,
their arched mouths

Tracing like fins
the perimeter of the fist.

The forgotten house
lurks in the creeping hedge

Of eyelashes—a plump memory.
Guava trees host the limbs

Of children as they scour
the bones of the trees and lick

The crepe fruits. Each room
hugs another, mimicking

The embrace of a child and
father. Creepers entwine

Into robust visions—the pigtails
of a small child. Home is

Where thoughts take root. Grow
into the naked soil and emerge

As bulbs. Home is where dreaming
mouths overlap in sonorous circles.

Sleep tying them into unity. Home
is where the letters of intimacy

Swiftly knit into one another. Home
is where one first faces oneself,

Becomes oneself—the mirror to a
conclave nature. Home is where life's

Nascent blood first purred.
Home glistens with memory,

Now the black pimple
of ashes and debris.

Castle

A splinter in the mouth. Like a dream. A forgotten dream. She tries to pluck it. Cauliflowers of pus. The cogs unwind. Howl's Moving Castle. A dream is in motion. It's no longer a hospital bed. The wispy sheets don't envelope the cyan haze of the body. The body is unfettered. The debris has grown into a face. A face with a clown nose. Laughter runs through the intestines like an eel in motion. Colour arises behind the eyelids.

Everything that had fallen apart starts to stir. The memory of the house. A living, breathing engine that stitched all its members together. The kettle that blew off steam against the pastel curtains. The cat that purred beside the pile of books. Crayon thoughts are now reconstructing in the choking mind. Gathering and gathering as if to smell a hibiscus once more. As if to touch brother's wool hair once more in sleep. As if to cut through the damages and bandages and mould like clay around sister's face. Her jaw fitting perfectly into the C jelly of the palm. Embedded perfectly. A dream within a dream.

Ghar ki Vaani

Entire alleys. Caps and huts. Doors and knuckles. Stretched skin and bricks. The mind burns with threaded tunes. Each house has its own music, each hour its own rhythm. Max Richter's sleep as the mushroom skirt of night unveils itself. Blue siphoned from the sky's navel. Each mind connected like dots. Snoring, sleeping, purring, and joined as the collective subconscious floats like bubbles in the eyes of the abode. Constellations in a cup of liquid. The house penetrates the rhythms of sleep. Ruichi Sakamoto's dream as the afternoon light melts in each corner. The house—measured breaths, an incantation in the mouth of an infant. Chopin's etudes as the stove's holy blue flames keep hunger at bay. Satie's twilight mirth that stitches all religions, all minds, all hands together in a moment of caramel delight.

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The Labour of Historical Fiction



Aanchal Malhotra

is an oral historian and writer based in New Delhi. She is the author of three critically acclaimed books, *Remnants of a Separation*, *In the Language of Remembering*, and *The Book of Everlasting Things*, and co-founder of the Museum of Material Memory

I don't know if I can pinpoint when the idea to write fiction took root in my mind, but five years into working as an oral historian of the 1947 Partition, the landscape of what would become my first novel had grown too insistent to ignore. It didn't arrive fully formed, but came to me in images—gestures, dreams, conversations, memories—blending together as a composition. The novel was about smell, about a family of perfumers devoted to the beauty and pursuit of *ittar*.

When I first conceived of *The Book of Everlasting Things*, its world was small. The story followed a boy named Samir, growing up in Lahore in the 1930s-40s, training to be a perfumer under the tutelage of his uncle, Vivek, who carries a secret from his time on the battlefields of the First World War. For decades in the novel, the secret stays dormant, untouched, irrelevant even, until it reveals itself in the years after Partition, when Samir is exiled in France. There, in his uncle's journals, he discovers the buried truth, and this is how The Great War spills into the novel—coating its chapters in trench systems and regimental diaries, censored letters and slaughtered soldiers, war-sounds and war-stench, and a collision of Empire and allegiance that would reverberate across generations.

PHOTOGRAPH: IMAGO

As an adult in Paris, Samir recalls to his wife, Léa, that during his childhood, he knew that his uncle had been to war, but always wondered "what perfumers did in battle". Building this particular historical world—where a young man goes into war as a soldier, and comes out of it as a perfumer, changing the tides of his future generations forever—became in itself a great act of imagination. In fiction, I could search for the private rupture that would transform a soldier's senses and set him on an unforeseen path.

I didn't know enough about the Indian contribution to WW1 when I began writing this novel, least of all, that undivided India had sent over 1.5 million soldiers. The novel was to travel from Lahore to Paris, Flanders to Grasse, move between the past and present, navigate flower fields and battlefields, but I assumed that being a nonfiction writer, the war sections would be the easiest to write. Factual, restrained, almost documentary in tone; a terrain that my soldier-perfumer protagonist, Vivek, could be inserted into. But one of the misfortunes is that in the subcontinent, while WW2 still lingers in collective memory, WW1 feels too distant, surviving mostly in family stories or regimental archives. And while there have been significant works of non-fiction in recent years, few novels chronicle this period— Talbot Mundy's *Hira Singh*, published in 1917; *Across the Black Waters* by Mulk Raj Anand, published in 1939; and later works like *Crimson Spring* by Navtej Sarna and Major Tom's *War by Vee Walker*. So, what did it mean to reconstruct a world in fiction that had vanished from public memory and consciousness?

To construct this forgotten world into a novel, I needed not just historical accuracy, but the emotional and psychological scaffolding often absent in official archives. It had to be imagined to its potential, convincing and compelling enough for readers to spend time in. And so, I began to understand the hearts of soldiers through the letters they wrote home. But what I wasn't prepared for was the tenderness of their words, the poetic quality of their sentiments, their moral complexities, and the various subjects that they corresponded on—often at odds with the language one may expect from a battlefield.

An unnamed Sikh soldier writes to his father in India, "I am now about to return to the trenches. There is no hope that I shall see you again. For we are as grain that is flung a second time into the oven, and life does not come out of it." From a hospital bed in Rouen, Ser Gul, a Pathan of the 129th Baluchis, writes to barber Machu Khan, serving in the 57th Rifles at the front, "I have no need of anything, but I have a great longing for a flute to play. What can I do? I have no flute. Can you get me one from somewhere? If you can, please do, and send it to me. Take this much trouble for me. For I have a great desire to play upon the flute, since great dejection is fallen upon me."

These letters, in a way, allowed the soldier to speak for himself, to offer testimony. But this collection is not without its complexity or colonial mediation,

THE BOOK OF EVERLASTING THINGS ALLOWED ME TO TRAVERSE A CENTURY OF A FAMILY'S PRIVATE HISTORY—FROM SERVICE IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR TO DISPLACEMENT AND EXILE AFTER PARTITION—ALL THROUGH THE LENS OF SMELL.

for the only reason we have it is because these letters were censored. A common practice during wartime, both outbound and inbound letters were translated—in this case, from languages like Urdu, Gurmukhi, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Garhwali, Bangla—and examined by the British Censor Mail, to make sure soldiers weren't giving out critical details, but also to discern morale.

On multiple occasions, I found myself trying to counter-translate these letters, in order to imagine what the men must have seen, dreamt, missed, hoped for, and, of course, felt and smelled, for even the war research had to be sensorial. But this process— where layers of language and meaning are continually lost and gained—was itself a work of fictionalising. What words captured the fighting of a war that did not belong to them? What memories served as respite? Did time collapse or expand on the front, stretched thin by fear or thickened by fatigue? The novel did not necessarily need precision, as much as an outline to consider.

Kala Khan, a soldier in the Indian Labour Corps, writes to his friend, Iltaf Hussain, in Patiala, "You enquire about the cold? At present, I can only say that the earth is white, the sky is white, the trees are white, the stones are white, the mud is white, the water is white, one's spittle freezes into a solid white lump, the water is as hard as stones or bricks." To build Vivek's world on the front, I had to step into the fog of unrecorded feeling. In my novel, this imagined architecture became atmospheric rather than forensic—the texture of mud in a dugout, the colour of first blood on Vivek's hands, the memory of balmy, golden sunshine, the exhaustion of language itself.

Then there were the rare instances when history handed me a detail of such startling clarity, where smell collided with war in a significant enough way, that it felt ready to be placed into the novel intact. From the work of a fragrance historian focusing on wartime, I learnt that the yellow-green poison gas unleashed during the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915 smelled like a pungent combination of pineapples and pepper. In a scene that felt both visceral to imagine and write, Vivek emerges after this attack, shocked that he has survived, and tries to search for any other survivors. Even in the darkness, the air feels so thick that he can reach out to touch the particles of gas suspended within it. Tied tightly over his mouth is his turban cloth, soiled with blood, mud, debris, and the residue of his own vomit. On the battlefield, none is alive—corpses of men, foaming at the mouth, all having inhaled their way to death.

Several months into his posting on the Western Front, when the texture of warfare had fully revealed itself to young Vivek, he concluded that there was "no warmth to be derived from the outside world. All heat, all hope, had to emerge from within". The stench of daily death, waterlogged trenches, and disease surrounded him. So, he begins to rely on the precision of memory, choosing smell as the one thread that could pull him away from the battlefield. He dreams of the sweetness of *khus* curtains in his home, the spicy oil from the mango pickle, the luxurious sandalwood paste his mother applies daily. He takes refuge in such moments. The imagined home becomes not just an escape, but a way of survival. And perhaps this is the moment that a perfumer's nose awakens—sharpened by the sheer need to endure the unbearable smellscape of war.

The Great War is but a section of this novel. Yet stitching together archival fragments with the odorous dreams of a fictional character taught me something essential about the labour of fiction. A novel is a fragile formation, and historical fiction, in particular, suspended as it is between fact and invention, draws more from the writer than we may realise. *The Book of Everlasting Things* allowed me to traverse a century of a family's private history—from service in the First World War to displacement and exile after Partition—all through the lens of smell. Slowly, this world, rooted in research, textured with historical detail and fragrant geographies, and shaped by its own social frameworks, became complete enough for me to dwell in it for years.

Outlook
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TOP 26 Properties to Invest in 2026

This special feature curates standout projects across key locations, spotlighting high-potential investment opportunities for the year ahead.

Compiled by: Kausar Firdausi

An Outlook Brand Solution Initiative

2026: A Defining Real Estate Year

This year marks a shift to value-driven growth, led by quality, governance, design-led development, and sustained long-term confidence.





TOP STOREY
Kausar Firdausi

Having stepped into 2026, India's real estate sector stands at a defining juncture. The post-pandemic surge has evolved into a disciplined, value-driven growth cycle, with stakeholders prioritising quality, governance, sustainability, and long-term asset creation over volume and speculation. Industry leaders increasingly view 2026 as a year of consolidation, diversification, and design-led development, supported by urbanisation, infrastructure expansion, rising incomes, and demographic shifts.

This evolution is being reinforced by developers who anticipate a more sophisticated expression of urban living as economic fundamentals align with large-scale infrastructure development. Aakash Ohri, Joint MD and CBO, DLF Homes, describes 2026 as a defining phase, noting that despite some market caution, high-quality projects will continue to outperform broader trends. He expects the momentum of 2025 to carry forward, driven by luxury-led demand, sustained NRI participation, and high-potential corridors such as Gurugram, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru. Ohri also foresees new formats gaining prominence, including senior living, vacation homes, and ultra-luxury developments, supported by favourable government policies, infrastructure upgrades, and deeper public–private partnerships.

"Despite some market caution, high-quality projects will continue to outperform broader trends. The momentum of 2025 to carry forward, driven by luxury-led demand, sustained NRI participation, and high-potential corridors such as Gurugram, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru."

AAKASH OHRI
Joint MD and CBO, DLF Homes

Amid this momentum, the NCR has been pivotal, with Noida emerging as a fast-evolving market. Improved connectivity, expanding infrastructure and a strengthening economic base have boosted its appeal among end-users and long-term investors, says Robin Mangla, President, M3M India.

Echoing the shift from volume to value, Rishabh Periwal, Senior Vice President, Pioneer Urban Land & Infrastructure, emphasises that 2026 will mark a clear pivot toward quality-led development. According to him, sustainable planning, integrated townships, advanced technologies, and timely delivery will emerge as non-negotiable benchmarks shaping the sector's next phase of growth.

Alongside this shift, affordability remains relevant, but premium and luxury housing continues to see sustained demand from a more discerning buyer base. Madhusudhan G, CMD, Sumadhura Group, notes that premium and luxury homes are consolidating leadership in southern markets such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad, driven by rising incomes, evolving lifestyles, and steady NRI investments.

Luxury housing is being redefined, says Sarveshaa SB, CMD, Bhadra Group, with a shift toward holistic developments that integrate design excellence, sustainability, and smart technologies. As buyer aspirations mature, demand is rising for integrated townships and mixed-use communities that blend lifestyle, connectivity, and wellness, building on 2025's momentum and reinforcing residential real estate's role in India's growth story.

Adding further perspective, Anuj Mehta, Director & CEO, The Dhuleva Group, notes that both mid-income and premium housing are benefiting from buyers' rising aspirations for a better quality of life, supported by disciplined project launches and timely execution. In the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Aakash Patel, MD, Atul Projects, highlights the growing appeal of integrated live–work–play environments, with improving connectivity across corridors such as Mulund and Navi Mumbai emerging as long-term demand drivers.

"Growth in 2026 will be led by discerning buyers who prioritise product quality, readiness, and trust, while both domestic and global capital will favour developers with strong governance and disciplined balance sheets."

ASHISH PURAVANKARA
MD, Puravankara Limited

As capital becomes more selective, developer credibility is increasingly decisive. Ashish Puravankara, MD, Puravankara Limited, observes that growth in 2026 will be led by discerning buyers who prioritise product quality, readiness, and trust, while both domestic and global capital will favour developers with strong governance and disciplined balance sheets. At the premium end, Rajat Khandelwal, Group CEO, Tribeca Developers, adds that branded residences are entering the mainstream, as buyers seek long-term value backed by strong developer pedigree and professional management.

In summary, Indian real estate in 2026 is no longer about speed, but about quality — where success depends on aligning design with demand, governance with growth, and ambition with accountability.

The images used in this special feature are mostly artistic renditions.

24K Manor

Pune

Set amidst nature yet seamlessly connected to the city, these residences offer expansive amenities and a refined expression of luxury living.





Developer: Kolte-Patil Developers Ltd.
Type of Project: Residential
Location: Pimple Nilakh, Pune
Configuration: 3, 4 & 4.5 Bed Choicest Residences

USPs:

- 3 high-rising towers with 30+ Bi-level amenities
- Spacious, well-ventilated residences with premium finishes
- Curated lifestyle amenities focused on wellness and leisure
- Infinity edge swimming pool surrounded by sun loungers and lush landscaping
- Prime location with excellent connectivity

Possession: June 2028
Price: ₹3.37 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Under Construction

Designed for those who value refined luxury, privacy, and a close connection with nature, 24K Manor is part of Kolte-Patil's prestigious 24K portfolio. Located at 24K Province, Pimple Nilakh, the development offers residences with uninterrupted forest views, creating a serene and timeless living experience. Thoughtfully planned 3, 4, and 4.5 BHK homes overlook greenery and city skylines, featuring generous layouts, large windows, and all-season decks. Premium finishes and curated materials add understated sophistication to everyday living.

Spread across nearly three acres, 24K Manor features 30+ bi-level lifestyle amenities. Highlights include an infinity-edge pool, aqua gym, yoga deck, secret garden, reflexology path, party lawn, and outdoor lounges, complemented by indoor facilities such as a mini theatre, squash court, gym, spa, library, business centre, banquet hall, guest rooms, children's areas, and exclusive tower clubs.

Strategically located, the project enjoys excellent connectivity to Baner, Wakad, Balewadi, and Hinjawadi, ensuring effortless access to key urban conveniences.

At 24K Manor, luxury goes beyond space, offering uninterrupted views, thoughtfully curated amenities, and a refined lifestyle defined by balance, prestige, comfort, and lasting value.

Advait *Gurugram*

A refined, future-ready senior living address within the city's evolving luxury residential landscape.

Developer: Pioneer JK Senior Living LLP (A JV of Pioneer Urban Land & Infrastructure Ltd. and JK Urbanscapes Developers Ltd.)
Type of Project: Luxury Senior Living
Location: Sector-50, Nirvana Country, Golf Course Extension Road, Gurugram
Configuration: 2 BHK + Caretaker Room

USPs:

- Senior-focused luxury living concept
- Prime central Gurugram location
- Integrated healthcare & safety framework
- Wellness-first, car-free planning
- Hospitality-grade amenities & services

Possession: Expected early 2027
Price: 3.5 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Super structure complete



Advait by Pioneer JK Senior Living, a joint venture between Pioneer Urban and JK Urbanscapes, offers senior-focused luxury living where thoughtful design, integrated healthcare, and everyday comfort seamlessly converge. True to its Sanskrit name, Advait embodies individuality, dignity, and a lifestyle that gracefully adapts to evolving life stages.

Located in Nirvana Country, Sector 50, Gurugram, the project enjoys a serene and prestigious address along Golf Course Extension Road, with easy access to healthcare, retail, and urban conveniences. Spread across 2.6 acres, Advait comprises two elegantly planned blocks with a limited number of residences, fostering openness, privacy, and a close-knit, welcoming community.

Wellness is central to Advait's design, featuring car-free grounds, enhanced air quality, senior-friendly specifications, panic alarms, and heat-pump hot water systems. A dedicated healthcare ecosystem, professionally managed by Fortis, ensures reliable and timely medical support.

A 35,000 sq.ft. clubhouse anchors social life, offering wellness, recreation, and dining, complemented by 24/7 facility management and concierge services. Advait is a refined, future-ready senior living address within Gurugram's evolving luxury residential landscape.







Amaryllis *New Delhi*

A legacy of bespoke luxury living, elevated above the heart of the city.

Defined by distinction and timeless luxury, The Amaryllis reimagines living for connoisseurs of refinement. Nestled in the heart of the city, it stands apart where legacy evolves into excellence. Each residence is designed as a canvas for individual expression, enabling homeowners to curate spaces reflecting personal vision, lifestyle, and taste. Ownership here extends beyond a home to something rare and enduring.

Spread across a 40-acre estate, The Amaryllis features Delhi's largest clubhouse with benchmark amenities, including an Olympic-sized swimming pool, state-of-the-art gymnasium, private theatre, business centre, cards room, and karaoke lounge, amid lush green landscapes.

Rising above expectations, the Iconic Tower by Versace Homes ascends to the 52nd floor, complemented by a Sky Walk on the 20th floor and Sky Villas on the 32nd, offering panoramic views and serenity.

Strategically located, it ensures seamless connectivity to retail hubs, heritage landmarks, schools, hospitals, the airport, railway station, and metro networks. Already home to over 100 families and ready for possession, The Amaryllis is not just a milestone achieved, it is a legacy being lived.

Developer: Unity Group
Type of Project: Ultra-luxury residential
Location: Central Delhi
Configuration: 3,4, 5 BHK Bespoke Apartments and Skyvilla Condominiums

USPs

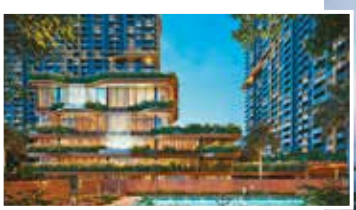
- 40 acres of ultra luxury property
- Iconic Tower by Versace Homes
- Centrally located
- Skywalk and limited skyvilla condominiums
- Elite clubhouse

Price: 7.61 Cr. onwards
Possession: Started
Current Status: Ready for fit out

BPTP Amstoria Verti-Greens & GAIA Residences

Gurugram

An integrated community blending contemporary architecture, wellness amenities, and thoughtfully designed urban living.





BPTP Amstoria Verti-Greens, including GAIA Residences, is a residential development in Sector 102 on the Dwarka Expressway, Gurugram. Conceived as an integrated community, it combines contemporary architecture, wellness-driven amenities, and thoughtfully planned homes for balanced urban living. The towers feature refined glass-and-metal façades that enhance daylight, ventilation, and spatial openness while giving the project a distinct identity. Planning prioritises design clarity, functionality and everyday comfort.

A defining element is the inclusion of three sky gardens in each tower. These include a co-working sky garden for work and meetings, a tranquillity lounge with quiet seating and library-style spaces, and a yoga and meditation deck dedicated to relaxation and wellness. Positioned within the towers, these elevated zones encourage regular use across age groups.

The 2 and 3 BHK apartments offer efficient layouts, generous natural light, and balconies extending living spaces outdoors, with emphasis on privacy and ease of movement. Amenities span wellness, sports, recreation, and social interaction, including spa facilities, fitness zones, indoor sports areas, landscaped spaces, clubs, and dedicated children's zones.

Developer: BPTP Ltd.
Project Type: Residential
Location: Sector 102, Dwarka Expressway, Gurugram
Configuration: 2 & 3 BHK Apartments

USPs:

- Three sky gardens in every tower
- Approx. 1.75 lakh sq.ft. of integrated clubhouse & landscaped spaces
- Seven high-speed lifts per tower
- Dedicated indoor sports zone
- IGBC Platinum pre-certified design
- Seismic Zone V–compliant construction

Possession: December 2032
Price: ₹3.47 Cr. onwards
Status: New Launch

BHADRA Landmark, # 95 *Bengaluru*

The city's tallest address redefining sky living through design, connectivity, Vaastu, privacy and future value.





BHADRA Landmark is redefining Bengaluru's skyline as the city's tallest residential tower, signalling a shift towards design-led urban living. Located in the auspicious Kubera Moole of southwest Bengaluru, the project offers 100% Vaastu-compliant sky residences supported by over 69 lifestyle amenities, delivering comfort, privacy, balance, and refined everyday living.

Connectivity reinforces its leadership. Kengeri Metro Station is at the doorstep, with MG Road reachable in 30 minutes and Whitefield within an hour. The NICE Corridor offers swift access to Hosur and Bannerghatta roads, while Kanakapura, Magadi, and Tumkur roads connect seamlessly. The Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway runs alongside the project, placing Mysuru just 90 minutes away, supported by the Outer Ring Road and service roads.

Southwest Bengaluru continues to perform strongly, with rental yields near 4.2% and steady capital appreciation. Infrastructure upgrades, including the Purple Line extension, STRR, and growth around AI City in Bidadi, enhance long-term value.

Currently in its pre-launch phase with Expressions of Interest open, BHADRA Landmark, # 95, presents a rare opportunity to invest in a future-ready address defined by scale, connectivity, and aspiration.

Developer: BHADRA Group
Type of Project: Residential
Location: Kengeri, Mysore Road, Bengaluru
Configuration: 3 BHK Spacious Residences

USPs:
- The tallest residential address in the city
- 100% Vaastu-promised sky residences
- Next to Kengeri Metro Station
- At the junction of 13 arterial roads
- AI City, Bidadi just 20 mins away

Possession: 2029
Price: 3 Cr. onwards
Current Status: In EOI phase

BHIVE Premium Bellandur *Bengaluru*

A premium campus workspace delivering flexibility, connectivity, and work-life harmony for global enterprises.





BHIVE Premium Bellandur marks the launch of BHIVE's first upcoming premium centre on the Outer Ring Road, Bellandur. Developed under a FOCO (Franchise Owned, Company Operated) model, the property presents a strong investment opportunity. Open for site visits and occupier discussions, the centre offers flexible seating, dedicated floors, and fully managed office solutions ready for occupancy.

Located within the city's most active Global Capability Centre corridor, BHIVE Premium Bellandur is a campus-led workspace designed for large enterprises and high-growth global teams. Positioned along the Outer Ring Road, home to leading IT parks, R&D hubs, and GCCs, it enjoys excellent road connectivity and sits just 650 metres from the upcoming Blue Line metro. Seamless access to Sarjapur Road, HSR Layout, and key residential hubs enhances workforce convenience and long-term operational efficiency.

The integrated campus experience sets the project apart. Open coworking zones, private lounges, deluxe cabins, meeting rooms, and managed offices are complemented by a professional reception and flexible layouts enabling enterprise customisation.

Amenities elevate everyday productivity, including a rooftop cafeteria, pickleball court, indoor games, pool tables, day-pass zones, and shower rooms onsite.

Type of Project: Coworking & Managed Offices
Location: Bellandur, Outer Ring Road, Bengaluru
Configuration: 1 lakh sq.ft. with 2000+ seats

USPs:
- GCC ready workspace in the GCC corridor of the city
- Metro proximity for easy commute
- Workspace with fitness amenities
- 24/7 x 365 access including holidays
- Campus-led workspace to provide a complete elevated lifestyle at work

Possession: January 2026
Price: Starts from ₹10,000/seat
Current Status: Project ongoing



Central Vista

Panchkula

Premium plotted development amidst Shivalik views, central greens, and thoughtfully planned township comforts.

Central Vista is a special edition premium residential plotted development located at the heart of Trident Hills, an approximately 200-acre integrated township in Pinjore, Panchkula. Set against the scenic Shivalik Hills, it is envisioned for those seeking a lifestyle close to nature while staying connected to everyday conveniences. The master planning emphasises panoramic views, landscaped greens, and low-density development, preserving the natural character of the surroundings.

At its heart lies a thoughtfully curated central landscaped area spanning approximately 1.25 acres, complemented by lifestyle and wellness amenities such as jogging tracks, sports courts, outdoor fitness zones, a yoga pavilion, reflexology path, an open-air theatre with play steps, and dedicated kids' play area.



The layout ensures plots benefit from open sightlines, surrounding greenery, and proximity to the central landscape, creating a balanced and serene living environment. Landscaped streets and internal pathways enhance walkability and daily usability.

Developer: Trident Realty
Type of Project: Premium Residential Plotted Development
Location: Trident Hills, Sector 4, PKUC, Pinjore, Panchkula, Haryana
Configuration: Plots starting from 310 sq. yds.

USPs:

- 1.25 Acre* Central Landscaped Area
- Well-manicured park, jogging track, yoga pavilion, pickleball and half-basketball court
- Outdoor Gym
- Reflexology path, open air theatre & play steps
- Kids' play area

Possession: As per RERA timelines
Price: On request
Current Status: Launched

As part of Trident Hills, residents also enjoy access to township-wide infrastructure, planned connectivity, and essential services. Central Vista reflects a holistic planning approach that seamlessly integrates nature, recreation, and everyday living requirements.

Eldeco Whispers of Wonder

Yamuna Expressway

Luxury 3 BR air-conditioned homes with rare corner layouts, skylit spaces, clubhouse and prime connectivity.

A premium residential offering in the NCR's fastest-growing corridor, Eldeco Whispers of Wonder is strategically located on the Yamuna Expressway, Greater Noida — an emerging destination with strong future growth potential. The development offers spacious 3 BR air-conditioned homes, including rare three-sides-open corner residences that ensure enhanced privacy, abundant natural light, and cross-ventilation for calm living.

Designed by globally renowned architects ARCOP, the project draws inspiration from Le Corbusier's Radiant City concept. Three iconic towers — Solace, Salome, and Serenity — rise as elegant expressions of luxury and harmony, each featuring a grand entrance that delivers exclusivity and seamless arrival.

Thoughtful planning allows sunlight and natural breezes through well-designed doors, windows, and balconies, integrating nature into everyday life. A dedicated clubhouse enhances the lifestyle with world-class amenities including a swimming pool, gym, yoga spaces, and children's play areas. The project also benefits from proximity to key infrastructure such as the Noida International Airport at Jewar, the upcoming Semicon and Electronics Manufacturing Hub, Film City, and the Buddh International Circuit, positioning it as a future-ready address defined by connectivity and enduring value.





Developer: Eldeco Group
Type of Project: Residential
Location: Sector 22D, Yamuna Expressway
Configuration: 3 BR Air-Conditioned Homes

USPs:

- 3 sides-open-corner homes
- Clubhouse with world-class amenities like swimming pool, gym, yoga, kid's play area, etc.
- High-quality architecture, natural light, ventilation and layouts tailored for modern family living
- Strategic Location — a rapidly developing realty corridor of NCR with strong future growth potential
- Proximity to Noida International Airport (Jewar), Semicon / Electronics Manufacturing Hub, Film City, Buddh International Circuit

Possession: July 2030
Price: ₹1.55 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Under Construction

Estate 361

Gurugram

Forest living residences designed for wellness, balance and community across generations in the millennium city.

Estate 361 is a Live*Well* residential community by Max Estates, with its Senior Living Residences managed by Antara Senior Living. Spread across 18.23 acres, the premium development is envisioned around the rare-first principle, 'A Forest in Your Backyard', anchored by 2,50,000 sq.ft. of expansive greens. Rooted in Max Estates' Live*Well* philosophy, the community places nature and biophilia-driven wellness at its core.

The forest landscape features over 1,000 native plants and 50+ species curated for Gurugram's climate, creating a restorative environment that is especially meaningful for senior residents, given nature's proven benefits on cognitive and emotional well-being. Complementing this are 70,000 sq. ft. of terrace greens at The Hub, the community clubhouse, extending calm into the built form.

Designed for 'Many habits, one habitat', Estate 361 offers 2,00,000 sq.ft. of amenities across age groups, including a comprehensive sports block, indoor pool, fitness zones, and children's learning spaces. Sunlit homes with wraparound balconies overlook lush greens, while thoughtfully planned outdoor spaces invite residents to move, pause, and unwind — away from the city's pace.





Developer: Max Estates
Type of Project: Live*Well* Experience (Residential Community)
Location: Sector 36A, Gurugram, Haryana
Configuration: 3 Bedroom, 4 Bedroom and Sky Villas (Penthouses)

USPs:

- An 18.23-acre Live*Well* community designed for diverse lifestyles
- Forest-led living with 2,50,000+ sq. ft. of greens
- 2,00,000+ sq. ft. of amenities with clubhouse and sports facilities
- Prime Sector 36A location on Dwarka Expressway, Gurugram
- IGBC Platinum pre-certified sustainable development

Possession: 2033
Price: ₹6.65 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Launched

Lodha Cullinan

Mumbai

An exclusive Versova address offering expansive living, timeless design, privacy, and refined luxury.





Set within the prestigious neighbourhood of Versova, Lodha Cullinan emerges as a rare residential landmark celebrating expansive living, discretion, and understated indulgence. Designed for the discerning few, it blends timeless art deco elegance with contemporary expectations, delivering a refined lifestyle experience.

Envisioned as an enclave of elevated living, exclusivity lies at the heart of Lodha Cullinan's design philosophy. With just 41 expansive residences, it offers a level of privacy seldom found in Mumbai. The 4 and 5 bed homes feature generous proportions and intuitive planning, with 4-bed residences spanning over 4,000 sq.ft. and complemented by more than 300 sq.ft. of private terrace space.

Landscape design is curated by STX Landscape Architects, while interiors are crafted by Design Wilkes, whose portfolio includes Ritz-Carlton, Fairmont, Mandarin Oriental, and Taj Hotels. Amenities are spread across two levels, anchored by a curated clubhouse focused on leisure and wellness. This is further elevated by Lodha's signature in-house hospitality, delivered by experts from leading global hotels, creating a living experience defined by quiet luxury, discernment, and achievement.

Developer: Lodha Developers
Type of Project: Residential
Location: Dr. Ashok Chopra Marg, Versova, Mumbai
Configuration: 4 & 5 Bed Residences and Penthouses

USPs:

- Palatial 4 and 5 bed homes (4,000+ sq.ft.), only 41 residences with private decks
- Two-level clubhouse with 7-star wellness and leisure amenities
- Designed by globally acclaimed partners, including STX and Design Wilkes
- Contemporary Art Deco façade with gilded accents, geometric detailing, and elegant curves

Launched: January 2024
Possession: December 2026
Price: On Request
Current Status: Under Construction

M3M Jacob & Co. Residences

Noida

Design-led and meticulously detailed, each home embodies the brand's iconic aesthetic and global legacy.





M3M Jacob & Co. Residences marks the debut of branded residences in India's real estate market. Developed by M3M India across six acres in Noida's Central Business District, the project responds to growing demand from Indian and global investors for internationally branded, limited-edition luxury assets.

The development offers a curated collection of 4 and 5 bed residences, priced between ₹14 crore and ₹25 crore. Designed and meticulously detailed, each home reflects Jacob & Co.'s distinctive aesthetic, translating the brand's global legacy into a residential experience. Limited inventory across phases reinforces scarcity, a key driver of long-term value.

Strategically located with seamless connectivity to Delhi, Noida's business corridors, and the upcoming Jewar International Airport, the project is well positioned to benefit from infrastructure-led growth. As branded residences gain traction as a distinct investment category, M3M Jacob & Co. Residences stands out for its debut status, controlled supply, and strong appreciation potential heading into 2026.

Developer: M3M India
Project Type: Ultra-luxury residential apartments
Location: Sector 97, Noida
Configuration: 4 & 5 bed residences

Key USPs:
- India's first Jacob & Co.- branded residences
- Premium, design-led architecture
- Panoramic views
- World-class amenities, including sky lounge, temperature-controlled pool, and concierge-led lifestyle services
- Excellent expressway connectivity
- Spread across approximately 6 acres with four towers

Price Range: ₹14–25 Cr.
Launch Year: 2025
Possession: 2030
Current Status: Under construction

Makuta Nirvana

Hyderabad

A 7-acre gated community offering low-density living across eight thoughtfully designed towers

Located in Patancheru, West Hyderabad, Makuta Nirvana enjoys strong connectivity through the Outer Ring Road, offering easy access to the Financial District, Gachibowli, Hitech City, and the airport. With the upcoming Metro Rail extension and established schools, hospitals, markets, and daily conveniences, Patancheru offers a ready lifestyle with long-term growth potential.

While many developers overlooked this micro-market, Makuta Developers identified its hidden value early. As nearby corridors became overvalued with higher densities and shrinking home sizes, Makuta envisioned a more open and balanced residential environment, supported by the adjacent Makuta Aruna Arcade, a predominantly retail-focused development bringing everyday conveniences within walking distance.

Spread across 7 acres, Makuta Nirvana is a fully gated community with 8 towers and G+14 floors, planned for low-density living.

Makuta Nirvana promotes vibrant living through a strong focus on corner homes that maximise natural light, ventilation and privacy. Nearly 45% of the project comprises corner units, with 1,972 sq.ft. 3 BHK homes across Blocks A to G featuring three wide balconies that create bright, airy interiors and a seamless connection to the outdoors.



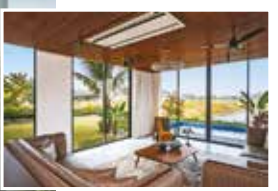


Developer: Makuta Developers
Project Type: Fully Gated Residential Community
Location: Patancheru, West Hyderabad
Configuration: 2 BHK and 3 BHK Residences

USPs:
- Low-density living with an average of only 8 flats per floor
- Nearly 45% of the residences are corner homes
- 18-foot-wide corridors across all floors
- A thoughtfully curated ecosystem of 108 amenities – Miyawaki forest, hydroponic farming zone, infinity reflexology walk, rock-climbing wall
- A 50,000 sq.ft. grand clubhouse

Possession: December 2026
Price: ₹5,400 per sq.ft.
Construction Status:
- Blocks A, B, C, D: 5th floor work completed
- Blocks E, F, G, H: 13th floor work completed





Meraki *Samsara (WB)*

Limited homes amid expansive nature, offering peaceful, private living with a deeply personal feel.

Imagine a place where life slows down with calm surroundings, fresh air, and unhurried family moments define everyday living. That is the essence of Meraki. Spread across 45 acres in Samsara and centred around a serene 7-acre lake, Meraki offers a refreshing sense of tranquillity from the moment you arrive. With nearly 80 percent open space, it provides unbelievable open space to walk, breathe, reflect and recharge all just an hour away from the city.

Meraki features only 62 exclusive villas. Each sits on a spacious plot with ample spacing for privacy, while large windows ensure abundant natural light, ventilation, and airy interiors.

Life here unfolds at a gentle pace. Morning walk by the lake, playful afternoons with children, and quiet evenings on landscaped lawns become daily rituals. Amenities such as the badminton court, amphitheatre, yoga zones, encourage togetherness without urban noise or stress.

What sets Meraki apart is its ability to disconnect from the city life while still being so close to the city.

Developer: Purti Homes
Type of Project: Villa Project with internationally branded resort in the same complex
Location: Samsara, on Durgapur Expressway
Configuration: 4 & 6 BHK Villas

USPs:
- 62 pool villas on 45 acres estate
- 7 acres of man-made lake
- Land area of each villa ranges between 8,280 sq.ft. - 15,840 sq.ft.
- 80% open space
- An hour's drive from the city (55 mins from Kolkata airport)

Possession: 31st December 2027
Price: 4 BHK starts ₹4.16 Cr., 6 BHK starts ₹6.21 Cr.
Current Status: Villa (40% complete), Resort (45% complete)

Purva Silversky

Bengaluru

The development reflects a pursuit of balance, blending the city's dynamic energy with a crafted living environment.



Purva Silversky emerges as a distinguished residential address where thoughtful design, contemporary living, and elevated experiences redefine premium lifestyles. Located in Electronic City, one of Bengaluru's fastest-growing corridors, the project enjoys excellent connectivity to major tech parks, corporate hubs, educational institutions, and arterial roads, ensuring everyday convenience.

The development reflects a pursuit of balance, blending the city's dynamic energy with a calm, carefully crafted living environment. Every detail is designed to deliver spaciousness, comfort, and understated sophistication.

Purva Silversky offers expansive 3 and 4 BHK residences, along with select duplexes and penthouses for discerning homeowners. Homes are planned to maximise natural light, seamless movement, and intelligent spatial flexibility, while premium finishes create interiors that feel timeless and refined.

Wellbeing lies at the core of the project's philosophy, with amenities curated around balance in motion, nature, leisure, creativity, wellness, and daily living. Landscaped gardens, wellness zones, recreational areas, sky-life experiences, and community spaces support holistic living. Purva Silversky is more than a residence, offering an elevated lifestyle rooted in purpose, harmony, and balance in Bengaluru's most coveted neighbourhood.

Developer: Puravankara Limited
Type of Project: Multistorey apartments, select duplexes and penthouses
Location: Hebbagodi, Electronic City, Bengaluru
Configuration: 3 & 4 BHK Apartments

USPs:
- Low-density by design, Purva Silversky offers just four residences per floor
- Smart layouts with 270-degree expansive views
- A landmark 17,700 sq ft clubhouse, bringing together leisure, recreation, and community spaces for everyday indulgence
- Amenities curated around a holistic philosophy of balance in motion, nature, leisure, creativity, and wellness for everyday living
- Strategically located in Electronic City, one of Bengaluru's fastest-growing IT corridors

Possession: July 2030
Price: ₹12,500+ per sq.ft.
Current Status: New Launch





Rustomjee Balmoral Golf Links *Mumbai*

Luxury 4 BHK residences with golf-course views, premium amenities, and unmatched city connectivity

Rustomjee Balmoral Golf Links is an ultra-premium residential development by Rustomjee Group, located in Chembur, Mumbai. Spread across 4.2 acres of freehold land, it is a luxury gated community thoughtfully blending refined architecture, lush landscapes, and urban convenience. A defining highlight is its direct frontage and expansive views of the Bombay Presidency Golf Club, offering residents rare openness, greenery, and a serene city escape.

The development features thoughtfully planned 4 BHK residences with spacious layouts designed for modern family living. Homes ensure privacy while welcoming abundant natural light and uninterrupted golf course vistas. International design expertise shapes the project, with architecture by Hafeez Contractor, interiors by Patty Mak, and expansive themed landscapes by COEN Design International, Singapore.

A comprehensive range of amenities enhances everyday living, including a clubhouse, swimming and children's pools, fitness and yoga spaces, landscaped gardens, and dedicated play areas.

Developer: Rustomjee Group
Type of Project: Luxury Residential (Gated Community)
Location: Chembur, Mumbai
Configuration: 4 Bed Residences

USPs:

- Premium 4.2 acre gated estate with a view of the city's largest golf course
- Designed by renowned architect Hafeez Contractor, landscape architect COEN Design, Singapore & Interior design by Patty Mak, Singapore
- Expansive 4 bed homes with sundecks
- 71% open space planned in the layout with thoughtfully designed recreation avenues
- 1.2 acres of central landscaped area with world-class clubhouse

Possession: April 2030
Price: ₹9.43 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Newly launched

Excellent connectivity to BKC, Eastern Express Highway, Eastern Freeway, and major transit hubs makes it a distinctive address combining luxury, tranquillity, and city convenience for discerning homebuyers.

Signature Global Sarvam at DXP Estate *Gurugram*

Wellness-focused residences with curated amenities, sustainable design, and a serene, modern lifestyle.

Developer: Signature Global (India) Ltd.
Type of Project: Residential
Location: Dwarka Expressway, Sector 37D, Gurugram
Configuration: 3 & 4 BHK Apartments

USPs:

- Every aspect of the project adheres to traditional vastu guidelines
- Spaces harmonised with natural energies and the five elements of nature
- An ideal combination of location, price, and apartment size
- The 1.5 lakh sq.ft. Club Anandam offers a thoughtfully-curated mix of fitness, wellness, sports, dance, and music, and delivering a holistic living experience
- The club brings together leading wellness and lifestyle brands.

Possession: December 2032
Price: ₹16,950 per sq.ft. onwards
Current Status: Newly launched



Sarvam at DXP Estate by Signature Global is a premium wellness-focused residential project on Dwarka Expressway, Gurugram, offering 3 and 4 BHK apartments across 11 towers. Designed by Hafeez Contractor with landscaped spaces by Sanju Bose, the fully vastu-compliant project harmonises the five elements, promoting balance and vitality. Spread over 13.56 acres, it features 40+ amenities for wellness, recreation, and community living. Sarvam integrates fitness, leisure,



and holistic therapies for a modern, health-focused lifestyle.

With Ileseum Clubs as its clubhouse partner, Sarvam further elevates the wellness experience by bringing together an exceptional mix of renowned fitness, wellness, and lifestyle brands. Residents will have access to curated offerings from Tagda Raho and Fittr for holistic fitness, Climb Up for adventure and strength training, Suresh Wadkar's Ajivasan Music Academy and Tiger Shroff's Matrix Dance Academy for creative and performing arts, Tattva Wellness for rejuvenation therapies, and the Michael Phelps Swimming Academy for world-class aquatic training.

This thoughtfully curated ecosystem ensures a comprehensive wellness-led lifestyle, seamlessly integrating physical fitness, mental well-being, creativity, and leisure within the community.

Shapoorji Pallonji The Dualis

Gurugram

A landmark address blending legacy, luxury living, seamless connectivity, and curated lifestyle offerings.





Developer: Shapoorji Pallonji Real Estate
Type of Project: Residential
Location: Sector 46, Gurugram
Configuration: 3 BHK + S, 4 BHK + S

USPs:

- Very well connected to all the major hubs of the city
- Offers more than 60 lifestyle amenities -- temperature-controlled swimming pool, state-of-the-art gym, clubhouse, banquet hall, badminton court, a pet park, play area for kids, etc.
- Tie ups with internationally recognised brands for services offered to the residents

Possession: 5 years
Price: ₹6.85 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Under construction

Shapoorji Pallonji The Dualis is a landmark luxury residential development in Sector 46, Gurugram, designed to offer a refined lifestyle supported by a strong legacy and thoughtful planning. Strategically located near IFFCO Chowk, the project enjoys seamless connectivity to Golf Course Road, Golf Course Extension Road, Southern Peripheral Road, NH-8, and Sohna Road. Its central location places residents close to major business districts, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, retail destinations, and social hubs within a convenient three-kilometre radius, making it ideal for contemporary urban living.

The Dualis delivers an elevated lifestyle through spacious, intelligently planned residences that prioritise comfort, privacy, and expansive views. Large room sizes, wrap-around decks overlooking the skyline, and dedicated spaces for domestic help reflect a design philosophy rooted in luxury and functionality. The project offers over 60 curated lifestyle amenities, spanning indoor and open-air spaces that promote wellness, recreation, fitness, and community engagement.

A defining highlight is its association with reputed service brands. Residents benefit from concierge services by Quintessentially, fitness management by Thinkrooters, healthcare support from Fortis Hospitals, and vehicle care by Bosch Car Care nationwide.

Signature by Lotus Developers

Mumbai

A landmark commercial address blending exclusivity, flexibility, luxury amenities, and skyline-defining workspace design.



Developer: Sri Lotus Developers
Type of Project: Commercial
Location: Andheri West, Mumbai
Configuration: 2500 sq.ft offices, 4 on each floor.

USPs:

- Contemporary amenities like private theatre, nap pods, fully equipped gymnasium, CCD express coffee shop
- Unique layout where each office gets its private lobby
- Each office gets a beautiful deck with unparalleled views
- Two state-of-the-art penthouse offices with double-height lobbies and private elevator access
- Flexible layout, with possibility to combine 1, 2, 3 or all 4 offices

Possession: Ready
Price: On Request
Current Status: Ready and Operational

Signature by Lotus Developers is an iconic commercial development set to redefine premium workspaces in Mumbai. Designed as a landmark addition to the suburban skyline, the project offers exclusive 2,500 sq.ft. office spaces, with only four offices per floor — ensuring privacy, efficiency, and a sense of exclusivity. A distinctive central core layout creates lush garden terraces at every level, bringing natural light, openness, and greenery into the workplace.

Each office features a private lobby, delivering the rare experience of owning an entire floor, along with a dedicated deck that opens to expansive, uninterrupted views. The development is enriched with state-of-the-art amenities including a private theatre, nap pods, a fully equipped gymnasium, gaming zone, spa and salon, poker room and a CCD Express coffee shop, thoughtfully curated to enhance productivity and work-life balance. Two dedicated amenity floors further elevate everyday working experiences. Gaming zone, spa and salon, poker room

Crowning the project are two ultra-premium penthouse offices with double-height lobbies and private elevator access, reserved for industry leaders. With flexible layouts allowing offices to be combined, Signature by Lotus Developers offers a truly future-ready commercial address.



Sobha Inizio
Mumbai

PNC Menon's vision comes alive in the city, with unmatched quality and impeccable construction standards.

Sobha's maiden venture in Mumbai is a refined expression of modernity shaped by global design influences. Its architecture blends contemporary aesthetics with unmatched sophistication. Located on Jerbai Wadia Road in Parel, the project offers 2 and 3 bed luxury residences ranging from 847 to 1,224 sq.ft.

The address ensures strong connectivity to both international airports, BKC, Lower Parel, Coastal Road, Eastern Freeway, and the Eastern and Western Express Highways. Rising 64 storeys, Sobha Inizio redefines skyline living with panoramic views of the Arabian Sea, mangroves, flamingos, and the iconic Atal Setu.

Exclusive clubhouse amenities and outdoor indulgences include a fitness centre, rooftop pool, spa, salon, wellness spaces, and more. The sleek façade is complemented by marble-finished arrival areas, elegant living rooms, and expansive balconies enhancing light and ventilation.

Sobha Inizio will be crafted with the world-class standards championed by Sobha in its 576+ projects across 27 cities. Its legacy of three decades, 256+ coveted awards, industry-first backward integration model, and 1456 quality checks per home will ensure unmatched excellence and durability for residents.

Developer: Sobha Ltd.
Type of Project: Residential Gated Community
Location: Parel, Mumbai
Configuration: 2 & 3BHK Luxury Apartments

USPs:
- Prime South Mumbai location, near Worli, BKC, and key business & lifestyle avenues
- Infrastructure developments and enhanced connectivity to all major commercial hubs
- Luxury high-rise residences with panoramic sea & city views
- Sobha's signature quality, engineering excellence, and attention to detail
- Curated amenities for all ages, including rooftop pool and sky lounge

Possession: 31st March 2034
Price: ₹4.86 Cr. onwards
Current Status: New Launch

Sumadhura Capitol Residences *Bengaluru*

An exclusive luxury development blending bespoke architecture, world-class amenities, and serene living.



Developer: Sumadhura Group
Type of Project: Luxury Residential
Location: Whitefield, Near ITPL, Bengaluru
Configuration: Spacious 3 & 4 BHK

USPs:
- Proximity to leading tech parks, malls, hospitals, and global schools with multiple commute options around
- 77% open spaces with lush landscaping
- 22 ft. long patio sized balcony providing cross-ventilation and natural light
- 60+ lifestyle amenities & a grand clubhouse
- Dedicated co-working spaces within the community

Possession: End of 2027
Price: ₹2.7 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Under Construction

Located in the heart of Whitefield near ITPL, Bengaluru's fastest-growing urban corridor, Sumadhura Capitol Residences emerges as a distinguished address within one of the city's most dynamic hubs. This exclusive luxury residential development seamlessly blends bespoke architecture, world-class amenities, and a calm, refined living environment.

Its location offers a clear advantage. Just 180 metres from Kadugodi Metro Station and minutes from ITPL, global technology parks, premium malls, healthcare centres, and international schools, Capitol Residences places everyday convenience firmly within reach.

Designed with precision, the luxurious 3 and 4 BHK homes redefine urban living. Signature 22-foot-long patio-style balconies enhance cross-ventilation and invite abundant natural light. With 77% open spaces, landscaped greens, and pedestrian-friendly pathways, the project creates a calm urban retreat. Thoughtfully planned towers ensure privacy, airflow, and sweeping city views.

A grand clubhouse with over 60 curated amenities, including fitness zones, co-working spaces, jogging tracks, and gardens, anchors the community. Backed by Sumadhura Group's three-decade legacy of trust and quality, Capitol Residences delivers lasting lifestyle value.

Developer: Eldeco Group
Type of Project: Residential
Location: Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh
Configuration: 3/4/5 BR Luxury Villas

USPs:
- Located just 90 minutes from Chandigarh
- Gated community perched at 6000 feet elevation
- Low density living with only three villas per acre
- Private garden and private heated pool overlooking the valley
- Kitchen garden, barbecue pods and bay windows

Possession: June 2027
Price: ₹7.25 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Under Construction





Terra Grande
Sirmaur (HP)

A refined hill retreat blending upscale living with nature's restorative calm.

Terra Grande presents luxurious 3, 4, and 5 BR villas in Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh, a short drive from Chandigarh. Set at an elevation of nearly 6,000 feet, the development offers a refined hill retreat amid the scenic Sirmaur ranges, combining upscale living with the restorative calm of nature. With average AQI levels generally below 20, residents enjoy clean air and a peaceful, wellness-oriented lifestyle.

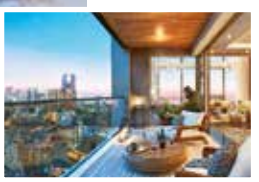
Each villa is thoughtfully designed to balance expansive common areas with private lounges, creating homes that feel elegant yet intimate. Earthquake-resistant construction ensures safety and structural strength without compromising luxury. A low-density plan of just three villas per acre enhances privacy, openness, and tranquillity.

Lifestyle amenities centre around a well-appointed clubhouse featuring an infinity pool, restaurants, walking trails, fitness centre, library, medical centre, play courts, and children's areas. Located approximately 90 minutes from Chandigarh, Terra Grande offers easy access to urban hubs while retaining its serene hilltop character. Proximity to Kasauli adds cultural charm, scenic beauty, and leisurely experiences, making Terra Grande a rare blend of luxury, nature, and comfort.

The Edge *Mumbai*

Luxury living redefined through soaring spaces, seamless connectivity and the city's panoramic skyline views.





The Edge is a luxury residential development by Tribeca Developers, in partnership with the Tejukaya Group, located at Parel in South Mumbai, an established residential and commercial precinct. The project enjoys proximity to Lower Parel's business hubs and lifestyle destinations, while offering seamless access to South Mumbai via Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg. Its adjacency to the Sewri–Worli Connector enhances connectivity, ensuring smooth travel to the western suburbs and the Trans Harbour corridor. The presence of key community infrastructure nearby, including a Jain mandir and Jain upashray, adds cultural convenience.

The development is distinguished by its emphasis on scale and spatial design. Signature double-height living rooms, soaring up to 23 feet, create openness rarely found in high-rise residences. Select Uber Luxe homes further elevate this experience with expansive, column-free living spaces featuring 22-foot-wide spans and uninterrupted skyline views.

Homes are thoughtfully planned to maximise natural light, privacy, and functionality, with corner master bedrooms, elongated windows, and private decks in larger residences. Amenities are centred within The Edge Club and extend to a serene rooftop retreat overlooking Mumbai's skyline.

Developer: Tribeca Developers and Tejukaya Group
Type of Project: Branded Luxury Residential
Location: Parel (near Lower Parel), South Mumbai
Configuration: Large-format 3 & 4 BHK residences (with select Uber Luxe / Sky Mansions)

USPs:
- Double-height living rooms upto 22 feet — a rare offering in high-rise developments
- Grand double-height entrance and drop-off, elevating the arrival experience
- Select uber luxe homes with column-free living rooms and upto 20-foot-wide spans offering uninterrupted city views
- Most residences feature corner master bedrooms and bathrooms with elongated windows for privacy and views
- The Edge Club spans multiple levels with curated rooftop amenities for a complete lifestyle offering.

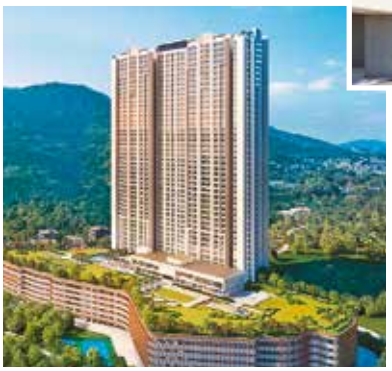
Price: ₹6.5 Cr. onwards
Possession: By 2030
Current Status: Under Development

The Hillfront at Mulund Hills

Mumbai

A perfect balance of hillside serenity, seamless connectivity and contemporary urban living.





The Hillfront at Mulund Hills by Atul Projects Pvt. Ltd. is a premium residential development in the green, well-established neighbourhood of Mulund West, Mumbai. Backed by over five decades of expertise and trust, Atul Projects brings a strong legacy of real estate development rooted in long-term value creation. Spread across a 9.6-acre freehold land parcel, the project blends nature, connectivity, and contemporary city living. Located near the Mulund hills and supported by robust social infrastructure, it offers a balance between hillside tranquillity and urban convenience.

A key highlight is the successfully delivered Billabong School within the same land parcel, reflecting the project's integrated planning. The development features a 47-storey residential tower, with Phase I comprising Wings A and B, offering well-planned 2 BHK and 3 BHK residences with efficient layouts and generous carpet areas.

Connectivity is a major advantage, with access to GMLR, LBS Marg, and the Eastern Express Highway, while Metro Line 4 will further enhance accessibility. With 60+ lifestyle amenities and landscaped open spaces, The Hillfront emerges as a future-ready, community-centric residential destination.

Developer: Atul Projects
Project Type: Residential
Location: Mulund West, Mumbai
Configuration: 2 & 3 Bed Residences

USPs:
- First & fastest access to Goregaon–Mulund Link Road (GMLR)
- Panoramic hill views with green surroundings
- 60+ lifestyle amenities for all age groups
- Sky Deck Residences with Jodi options available
- 5-decade brand legacy & trust

Possession: December 2030
Pricing: ₹1.79 Cr. onwards
Construction Status:
Tower A - 2 levels of basement, ground floor completed
Tower B - RCC work upto 20th floor completed



The Icon *Faridabad*

A future-ready mixed-use landmark blending luxury living, retail vibrancy, hospitality, and investment value.



Bhumika Realty has launched The Icon, a premium mixed-use development in Faridabad spread across nearly five acres, with a project outlay of ₹700 crore and projected sales realisation of about ₹1,500 crore. Designed as a future-ready urban destination, it integrates luxury residences, high-street retail, entertainment, F&B, and hospitality within a single ecosystem.

The residential segment comprises only 88 low-density 3 BHK + Study homes with staff accommodation, aimed at families seeking privacy, spacious layouts, and refined specifications. A major highlight is the 30,000+ sq.ft. clubhouse offering swimming pool, spa, meditation areas, sports facilities, walking tracks, concierge services, and curated dining spaces.

The project features luxury retail, entertainment zones, and premium alfresco dining. Phase 2 will introduce a premium hotel tower with international-style suites for business and long-stay guests. The retail mix includes brands such as Apple, Samsung, Vivo, LOOKS, Geetanjali, Blue Tokai, Honey & Dough, The Chocolate Room, Fredo Bakehouse, ColorPlus, Raymond, Park Avenue, Linen Club, Metro Shoes, and Mochi, enhancing destination appeal and long-term investment value.

Developer: Bhumika Realty
Type of Project: Mixed-use development (Residential + Retail + Hospitality)
Location: Faridabad
Configuration: 3 BHK + Study with staff accommodation
(Low-density – 88 premium units)

USPs:
- Low-density luxury development with only 88 residences
- 30,000+ sq. ft. grand clubhouse with extensive lifestyle amenities
- Integrated luxury retail, entertainment, and premium dining with alfresco options
- Dedicated premium hotel tower in Phase 2 with internationally styled suites
- Strong appreciation potential driven by Faridabad's infrastructure growth and expressway connectivity

Possession: Total construction timeline: 4 years and 3 months
Price:
- Residential: ₹15,500/sq.ft.
- Retail: Leasing at ₹200–250/sq.ft. (ground floor)

Current Status: Newly launched

Trump Towers
Noida

Iconic branded living where global prestige meets prime connectivity at the city's heart.



Trump Towers, situated in Sector 94, Central Noida, is a prominent branded residential project in the National Capital Region (NCR). This prestigious development is a result of a collaboration between M3M India, The Trump Organization, and Tribeca Developers.

The development offers 4-bed residences and Penthouse, designed to combine large-format layouts, naturally illuminated interiors, and a strong sense of exclusivity. Every curve, contour, and proportion at Trump is designed with intent, to command presence and define distinction.

The soaring double-height volumes, commanding perspectives and masterful planning create an experience that transcends space. Built on precision, powered by vision, and defined by stature: this is architecture elevated to art.

The location boasts excellent connectivity, situated strategically near iconic landmarks like Akshardham Temple, Mahamaya Flyover, and the Noida-Greater Noida Expressway. This ensures easy access to transportation, with major roads, bus stops, and metro stations in close proximity, making commuting a breeze.

As demand for globally branded, well-located luxury homes continues to strengthen, Trump Towers Noida remains a stable long-term investment proposition heading into 2026.

Developer: M3M India
Project Type: Ultra-luxury Residential Apartments
Location: Sector 94, Noida
Configuration: 4-bed Residences & Penthouse

USPs:
- Trump's iconic glass façade
- Entrance lobby and family lounge
- Two-to-a-core apartments with private lift
- 100+ amenities available
- 3-side open apartments with panoramic views

Price: ₹17 Cr. onwards
Launch Year: 2025
Possession: 2030
Current Status: Under Construction

Woods @ Shamshabad *Hyderabad*

India's first forest-led plotted ecosystem, blending sustainable, luxury, wellness and ownership that restores land.





Woods @ Shamshabad by Stonecraft Group is a thoughtfully crafted, sustainable plotted community that reimagines luxury living through a deep connection with nature. Built on the philosophy that green is a way of life, it enables bespoke homes within a flourishing forest, anchored by an expansive 18-acre Miyawaki forest.

Developed on regenerated barren land, the community offers 60 premium farm plots ranging from 1,800 to 5,000 square yards. The landscape features over 150 tree species, including 44 mature trees transplanted from Hyderabad's old Secretariat, lending instant maturity and heritage. The presence of more than 110 bird species underscores its ecological success.

Enhancing the setting, the project delivers a boutique, resort-style lifestyle with curated amenities such as suites, spa and sauna, yoga and meditation zones, sports courts, swimming pool, restaurant, banquet hall, and open lawns—promoting wellness and tranquility.

The project enjoys excellent connectivity, located 22 minutes from RGI Airport, 32 minutes from Gandipet, 34 minutes from the Financial District, 49 minutes from Madhapur, and 60 minutes from Secunderabad.

Developer: Stonecraft Group
Type of Project: Sustainable plotted development with farm plots and forest-integrated living
Location: Shamshabad, Hyderabad
Configuration: Premium farm plots (1,800 to 5,000 sq.yards)

USPs:
- One of the world's largest Miyawaki forests integrated within a residential community
- 18 acres of dense Miyawaki afforestation with over 150 tree species
- 140 plus bird species recorded, creating a thriving natural ecosystem
- Club-like boutique resort amenities including spa, yoga, meditation, and banquet spaces
- Forest-first planning that prioritises mental and physical well-being over conventional development

Possession: 90% Completed
Price: 2 Cr. onwards
Current Status: Active Development

A Silent Revolution In Chhattisgarh Rural Economies Through Medicinal Plants



Paddy diversion model – cultivation of Vach (Acorus Calamus)

The forest department of Chhattisgarh facilitates Free Distribution of planting material initially to the aspiring farmers, and The Board has created a pre-market system with empanelled buyers, providing farmers a 10% advance through the Farmer Promotion Fund— a first-of-its-kind initiative in Indian agriculture.

Often referred to as India's Herbal State, Chhattisgarh has nearly 44 per cent forest cover, spanning three agro-climatic zones—the Bastar Plateau, Chhattisgarh Plains and Northern Hills. These forests, largely tropical moist and dry deciduous types, harbour more than 3000 medicinal plant species across over 900 genera. Yet despite this abundance, rural livelihoods for decades remained locked into low-yield, climate-vulnerable paddy monoculture.

That began to change with the intervention of the Chhattisgarh Tribal Local Health Traditions and Medicinal Plants Board, a wing of Chhattisgarh Forest Department. Established in 2004 and renamed in 2021 to foreground tribal health traditions, the Board repositioned Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) as a high-return, climate-resilient agrarian alternative, aligned with the spirit of National Medicinal Plants Board under the Ministry of AYUSH.

Hon. Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Shri Vishnu Deo Sai, shares his clear vision and determination "I view the promotion of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in Chhattisgarh as a quiet yet transformative shift in our rural economy. Our focus is not only on increasing incomes, but also on conserving biodiversity, saving water and strengthening soil health. Through models such as backyard cultivation, paddy diversification and community plantations, we are showing that economic progress and ecological balance can advance together. This people-centric approach reflects our commitment to sustainable and inclusive growth and positions Chhattisgarh as a national example of green rural development."

Various Models – One Philosophy : Empowerment by Design

Chhattisgarh's approach stands out for its design and scale, adopting a multi-pronged cultivation strategy tailored to women, marginal farmers, landless households and tribal communities. Implemented through convergence with District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds and the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM),, it integrates free quality planting material, training, decentralised processing and assured procurement for SHGs and other stakeholders.

"To translate the vision of the Hon. Chief Minister into a vibrant reality, we are leaving no stone unturned in reaching the nook and corner of the state to bring more awareness in people about the High Profitability and Low Effort in the cultivation of MAPs", said the Hon.Chairman of the Board, Shri Vikas Markam.

Backyard Cultivation Model: Women grow high-value crops such as shatavari and sindoor (annatto) on unused homestead and boundary land, with about 30–40 sindoor and 500 shatavari plants. The model generates annual income of ₹25,000 - ₹35,00 from the first year for up to 20 years. It is low-maintenance, women-friendly, climate-resilient,

and has already engaged 509 women across 27 villages in Dhamtari district.

Panchayat Land Model: Women SHGs cultivate lemongrass on panchayat land, supported by community-owned distillation units, converting collective labour into shared income through DMF convergence, as implemented in Gorela-Pendra-Marwahi district.

Custom Farming Model: Private operators invest in bore wells, fencing, and farm operations, while the Board provides planting material, technical support, and buyback assurance. About 245 acres of lemongrass across five mono-village clusters benefit 174 farmers, with investor costs recovered from produce, ensuring farmers' livelihoods and investors a steady, high-quality supply without land ownership.

Paddy Diversion Model : Paddy fields are converted to medicinal crops such as brahmi and vach, yielding ₹70,000–1 lakh per acre, while saving water and improving soil health.

Riverbank Model: In Dhamtari, 398 SHG women have transformed riverbanks into vetiver plantations, earning ₹50,000–75,000 every 12–15 months per acre while stabilising soil and preventing erosion, through a convergence model with the District Administration.

Across all models, women constitute nearly 70 per cent of beneficiaries, managing nurseries, distillation units, processing and sales—marking a quiet but decisive shift in rural power structures.

Mr.J.A.C.S.Rao, CEO of the Board reiterates that with the strong determination of the State Govt to create better income opportunities to the small farmers and livelihood promotion, the Board is able to make strides by implementing perfect strategies on the ground and resolved to walk miles in this direction. He further stated that under the guidance of Additional Chief Secretary, Forest and Climate Change, Smt Richa Sharma, the Board created convergence models with other departments which resulted in wider outreach and positive impact on a large number of beneficiaries.



SHRI VISHNU DEO SAI
Hon.Chief Minister, Government of Chhattisgarh.

By integrating tribal wisdom with scientific cultivation, assured markets and institutional support, we are creating climate-resilient and high-income livelihood options for farmers and women.



SHRI KEDAR NATH KASHYAP
Hon. Minister of Forest & Climate Change, Government of Chhattisgarh

There is ample scope to earn up to One Lakh Income with just One Acre of land in One Year through cultivation of Medicinal & Aromatic Plants under the guidance of Medicinal Plants Board. This is a huge opportunity for the small and marginal farmers.

A Strategic Plantation Philosophy - Innovation

The species like Citrodara, Milk Thistle, Jamarosa, Nannari, Stevia, Salacia, Rosemary & Chamomile have been successfully introduced for the first time in Chhattisgarh by the Board.

"Mechanisation is being adopted to address labour shortages and ensure timely, cost-effective operations, with modern tools enhancing outcomes in MAPs cultivation. MAPs cultivation is entirely organic, with no use of pesticides or chemical inputs" said Shri V.Sreenivasa Rao, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Chhattisgarh

A Replicable Green Economy

Challenges remain—long gestation periods, market volatility—but assured procurement, crop-land matching, mechanisation and research-backed practices mitigate risk.

What Chhattisgarh offers is a replicable, low-tech, community-led model—where tribal wisdom, women's leadership and ecological prudence converge into economic resilience.

As the state prepares for exponential expansion in the year 2026, medicinal plants are scripting a new rural narrative: **forests healing people, and people healing forests**—a model of green prosperity rooted in dignity, knowledge and sustainability.



Praveen Kumar
is a writer and teacher, Delhi University



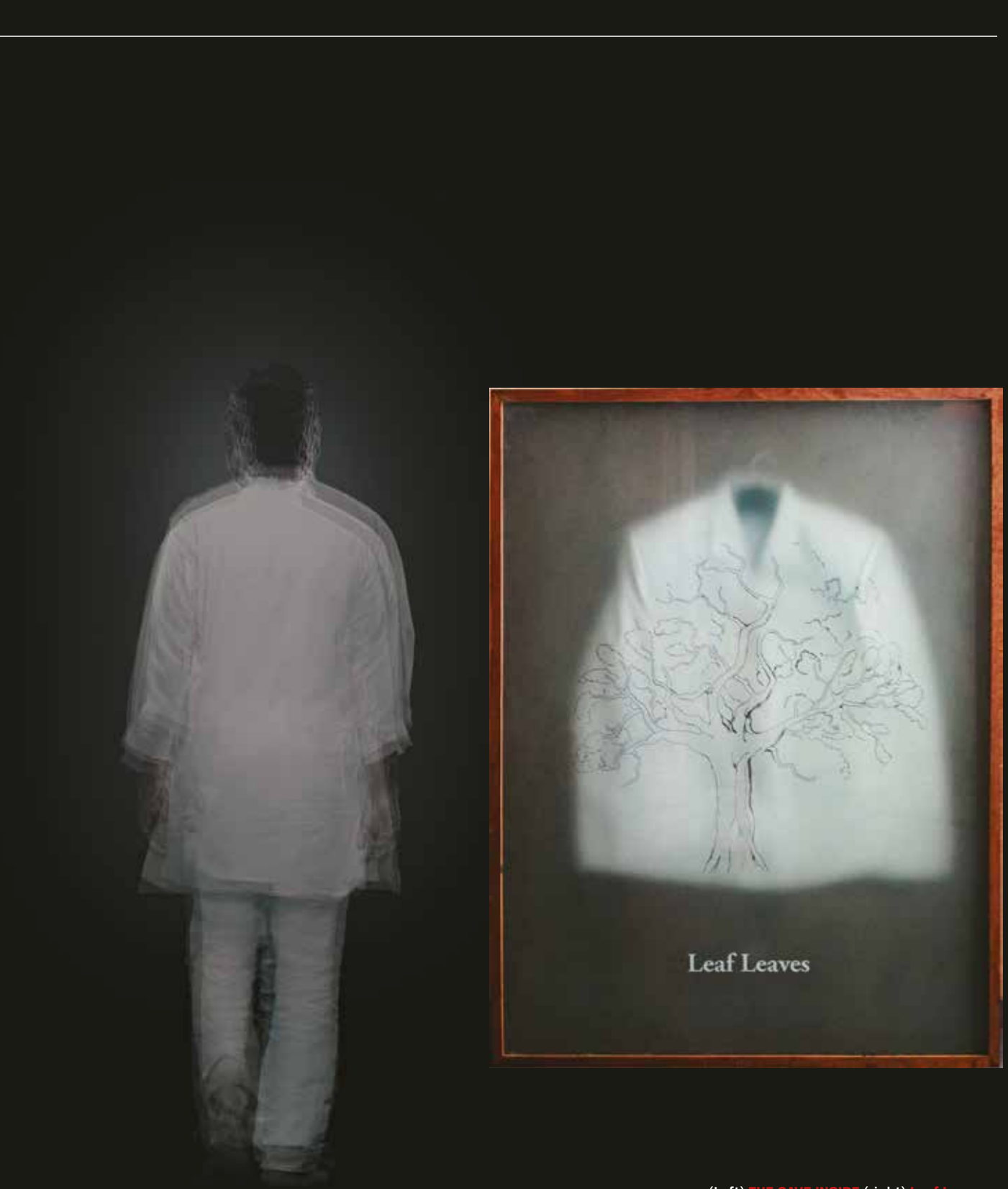
Shashank Sourav
works in the areas of research, writing, editing, and translation

A Country Penned by Writers

TO enter the country of writers, one does not need any visa or passport; one can cross the borders anywhere at any time to land themselves in the country of writers. Citizenship of this country inherently remains with the readers who are always carefree of any doubt or fear of losing their citizenship. If they wish to live in the world of "Malgudi Days", they can do so, or if they wish to take a stroll in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "Macondo", they are more than welcome to do that as well. If not either, they can wander in the lands of Narnia, Wonderland, Lilliput, and Hobbit, as the writers' countries are not identical.

Some of the worlds are pure fantasy, while others create their own with a mix of real-world paraphernalia around them. But with all the differences in their world, there is one resemblance that cuts across all of the worlds—a capacity to offer a distinct meaning. At times, those meanings lay before our eyes, but at others, they are hidden.

When the Vedas ascribed Indra as the most powerful god, his heaven was considered to be made of iron; it did so because iron had already been discovered and agriculture was directly associated with rain. In time, the fall of Indra's



(Left) **THE CAVE INSIDE** (right) **Leaf Leaves**
Artworks by Sudarshan Shetty

character and the rise of newer gods became interdependent with alternative sources of agriculture and water and further decline in the character of rulers at that time. This was indeed a parallel between reality and imagination. But Indra's tale bestowed the real world with at least one meaning: Indra fears every worshipping citizen, as he believes the entire endeavour is for securing the throne of Indra. Symbolically, this fear is eternal for those in power.

For early writers, the world was comparatively linear, which made it possible for them to categorise good deeds and bad deeds and, based on it, the way for hell or heaven. As a genre, it was not much of a storytelling technique; rather, it was a form of faith. But today, the world has grown up to become complex, and so has the world of writers.

The phase of renaissance and enlightenment in the West brought with it a tremendous upheaval. In Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the god asks the protagonist, "You are in a state of bliss in the heaven, but do tell me, do you wish for an even better place?" The protagonist replies he wishes to live with his lover, as there can be no greater joy than to live with one's beloved in the mortal world. And so, he renounces all the joys and pleasures of heaven. It was a period of intellectual awakening in Europe that toppled a number of antiquated concepts. Over a period of time, nation-states expanded and strengthened themselves under strict conditions, leaving an impression of it in the world created by writers. Now, instead of people, an invisible system started playing the villain, and the heroes, instead of being mighty and powerful, started becoming humble and modest.

For example, the character of "M" in Kafka's *The Trial*. It has been more than 100 years since this work was penned. Here, the antagonist has no name, as the system itself is the antagonist. On the other hand, "M" is not even aware of the crime he has committed, but the trial against him continues. Following the great resolve with which nation-states came to be constituted of their citizens as a nation, this unpleasant occurrence binds together the plot of the entire novel. It recurringly point towards the extent to which the rights of citizenship can be trampled upon by the state power on mere suspicion, without anyone being at fault. In the work, the name of the protagonist was deliberately made insignificant by the author because anyone could be in his place in any such country. As the meanings of this novel gradually unravelled, the novel made a steady rise to become a "great work".

FOR EARLY WRITERS, THE WORLD WAS COMPARATIVELY LINEAR, WHICH MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO CATEGORISE GOOD DEEDS AND BAD DEEDS.

Similarly, the same could be said about George Orwell's *1984* or *Animal Farm*; when one reads these works, they might find it difficult to believe these are a product of the imagination dating back 90 years. In any country with any regime that tries to impose ideological uniformity and adopt an authoritarian standard for monitoring its citizens, the citizens veer towards these works thinking that these works are about them.

At times, the meaning of a "country" or the "world" is not fully revealed when they are written about, but they become clear over a period of time. For instance, a work by Nobel laureate Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk narrates the story of the madness of a woman who cannot stomach the killing of animals in her country. When this work was first published, it was understood in a completely different context, but today the book is part of the political upheaval in Poland. Therefore, the world created by writers and the knowledge streaming out of it cannot cease for one nation. Because of these episodes, some writers have been exiled from their country, some have become victims of violence, while others were killed. This is where the matter becomes serious.

These occurrences lead us to a conclusion that there is something in the world of writers which affects the world we live in, i.e., the real world. What are those things?

THE WRITER'S WORLD IS FREE FROM INJUSTICE AND EXPLOITATION. EVEN IN THEIR DEPICTION OF EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION, THE MELODY OF LIBERATION JINGLES IN THE BACKGROUND.

They are the spirit of justice and equality and the struggle for it, which unravel in the consciousness of the writer.

As soon as the world of writers collides with the real world, it triggers a sense of panic among the rulers of the real world. The writer's world is free from injustice and exploitation. Even in their depiction of exploitation and oppression, the melody of liberation jingles in the background. The list of such works is quite long, including Yoknapatawpha County by Faulkner, Nexus, OZ, Middle-Earth, Westeros, the Wizarding World, and Panem, among many others.

In *The Country of the Blind* by H.G. Wells, a sighted person lands in the world of the sightless. In a dramatic turn of events, the sighted hero is crucified by the sightless citizens because they believed his words were a source of confusion and chaos among the masses who were fighting over what the hero said. In this country, being sighted was itself a crime. However, this story is symbolic of how diversity of thought and dissent leads to suppression in the name of the nation, and it is here that the story comes alive.

In recent years, the country of "Macondo" in Marquez's much-discussed *One Hundred Years of Solitude* weaves a story of citizens suffering from collective amnesia to make crucial points about the precariousness of the time when a society is bereft of its own history. Marquez's contemporary Mario Vargas Llosa, in his novel *The Feast of the Goat*, deals with the atrocities committed in the three-decade-long dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. He narrates its blood-stained history and the memories filled with guilt and resentment, foregrounding how a country can be clenched by dictatorship in the absence of intervention by the conscience of dissent and a moral compass.

Interestingly, both the authors are Spanish, both of them created a world against dictatorship, and both of them can be seen fighting for a democracy. The urge for justice and the desire to live a fulfilling life are the primal instincts of a person that emerge throughout history, often conflicting with temporal realities. In such a scenario, a few things—norms and standards emanating from the writer's world—become an eternal moral compass for the temporal being.

In the Indian literary tradition, "Ram-*rajya*" has been accorded the greatest standard of all time, whereupon, after assuming the throne, Ram makes an appeal to the citizens: "If I speak anything unjust, O Brothers, stop me there without any hesitation." Please note, Ram is the "emperor", and he makes an appeal to the people of Ayodhya to stop him and rectify him without any hesitation. The hero of Tulsidas is loved by the people, and the citizens themselves are fearless. Disgruntled with the atrocities of the feudal era, Tulsidas suggested a token of advice to the rulers: "The leader should be like a mouth, providing without prejudice to everyone."

It means that the welfare of people, without any injustices, should be the ultimate goal of the king, just as the mouth apportions the nutrition of food to every part of the body. In their work, Tulsidas repeatedly mentions the period of drought, while Surdas repeatedly mentions debt—issues of concern to their people. Who would not want a green pasture and a life without any debt? It is these desires that shape a writer's world. In the same country at the same time period, two devout creators are crafting

their own world with their own distinct style. One depicts a deity which upholds social norms, while the other depicts deities which are appealing and entertaining for the masses. Within these works, the authenticity of the time remains ever pure and useful, like water stored in the earth. The famous thinker Levi Strauss mentions that myths are born to make the world comprehensible (explicable) in a magical way.

However, at times, the people of the writer's world become the subject of tragedy in the real world when their intended meanings are misinterpreted. For example, Malik Mohammed Jayasi's *Padmavat*, whose central crux was the concept of "human love". One could win kingdoms by force, but not someone's love. Padmini is charred to death, and all Allauddin could get was burnt ashes. The narrator writes, "Allauddin tossed those ashes in the air and said this world is a lie." It was love which made him see the limits of his empire and ambitions. The entire story of Padmavat is a mythical invention created 300 years after the death of Alauddin Khilji. Nonetheless, some people have made this story a part of their history, directly associating it with the Hindu-Muslim identity. Authors frequently adopt various narrative techniques to depict the events of a certain time and create their own unique world with it.

AT TIMES, THE PEOPLE OF THE WRITER'S WORLD BECOME THE SUBJECT OF TRAGEDY IN THE REAL WORLD WHEN THEIR INTENDED MEANINGS ARE MISINTERPRETED.

In modern times, when writers feel that imagination alone would not suffice to deal with the subject at hand, they take the aid of historical apparatuses such as the village of "Gangauli" in Rahi Masum Raza's *Aadha Gaon*.

Additionally, when writers feel human or systemic truth cannot be depicted through reality alonethey blend elements of imagination into that reality, as can be seen in Shrilal Shukla's "Shivpalganj" in the book *Raag Darbari*.

Apart from the two mentioned paths, writers do carve their own path to craft their own world. For example, Vinod Gupta's novel *Deewar Me Ek Khidki Rehti Thi* has no unpleasant occurrences or a villain. A plain, simple teacher named Raghuvar Prasad is all that there is in the book. The novel is set in a quiet town in Chhattisgarh amidst the chaos following globalisation in India, where the magical beauty of the protagonist Raghuvar Prasad's world unravels steadily. In the rush, people here lose their true magical beauty, a beauty shaped by the pursuit of human movement. The work seamlessly conjures the opposite of ugliness without uttering a single word.

Science shows that animals and birds, not just humans, also dream. They have good dreams and bad dreams. But can animals and birds imagine like us humans? Science has no answer for this as of now. Humans can imagine, and based on the power to imagine, humans have become the masters of the world, prancing all over the place proudly. Within humans, writers are a distinct species. They are the creators of their own worlds, and therefore they are called the Brahmas of their own worlds. Considering the works writers have created, it seems that literature offers us as much insight into particular times and societies, art and technology as science.

Even though these claims are not forwarded by writers themselves, we believe one can understand the world around them through literature. This is irrespective of whether those emanate from a test tube in the forms of imagery, metaphors, symbols, figures of speech, implication or suggestion. In mathematics, terms such as "hence" or "suppose" are sometimes used in a similar fashion in Hindi forms of speech, calling it "*Utpreksha Alankaar*"; it uses words like "*mano*" (as if/suppose), for instance, "Kaikeyi spoke extremely harsh words, as if rubbing the salt on the wounds." King Dashrath, upon hearing the words hurling out of Kaikeyi's mouth, felt as if salt was being rubbed on his burnt body. On an emotional level, this is the kind of achievement that mathematics calls "proving something".

*(Translated from Hindi by **Shashank Sourav**)*

Outlook
Read • Think • Understand



EMPOWERING CRITICAL CARE IN INDIA
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Transforming Critical Care in India: Advanced Healthcare Solutions for a Brighter Tomorrow Ahead

An Outlook Brand Solution Initiative



Critical Care The Silent Backbone of Modern Medicine

Unseen but vital, advanced life-support medicine stands at the heart of healthcare, preserving life when illness and injury reach their most critical edge

Critical care health occupies a pivotal yet often under-recognised position in India's healthcare system. It represents the final safety net for patients facing life-threatening illness or injury, where survival depends on rapid intervention, specialised expertise and continuous monitoring. As India confronts rising disease burdens, environmental risks and an ageing population, strengthening critical care services has become a public health necessity rather than a tertiary luxury.

Delivered primarily through Intensive Care Units (ICUs), critical care services support patients with life-threatening conditions such as severe infections, respiratory failure, heart attacks, strokes, major trauma, post-operative complications and multi-organ failure.

Non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and chronic lung conditions now coexist with infectious diseases, creating a dual burden. Patients with underlying illnesses are more prone to sudden deterioration, pushing them into critical care settings.

Environmental stressors—including air pollution, extreme heat, road traffic injuries and industrial accidents—have further increased the demand for critical care. Seasonal outbreaks of dengue, influenza and pneumonia continue to stretch hospital capacity, particularly in district hospitals.

The COVID-19 pandemic has sharply underscored the centrality of critical care health. ICUs became the

Continued on page 428

Clinical Excellence with Unwavering Ethics

PSRI Hospital redefines trust, with patient-first values and compassionate healthcare





Dr A S Kohli
Chief Executive Officer

In an era where trust in healthcare is paramount, Pushpawati Singhania Research Institute (PSRI Hospital) stands tall as a beacon of ethical medical practice and transparent patient care. Located in the heart of New Delhi, PSRI has built a stellar reputation not only for its clinical excellence but also for its unwavering commitment to integrity, a value deeply embedded in every facet of its operations.

Ethical Commitment in Every Interaction

At PSRI, ethics isn't a checkbox — it's a culture. From the moment a patient walks through the door, they encounter a system designed to protect their dignity, privacy, and right to informed decision-making. Doctors are encouraged to adhere to the highest standards of medical ethics, ensuring that every recommendation is grounded in patient welfare, not financial gain.

The hospital's ethics committee, comprising senior clinicians, bioethics experts, and legal advisors, regularly reviews protocols and treatment plans to ensure alignment with both international ethical standards and local sensitivities. Whether it's organ transplant procedures, clinical trials, or end-of-life decisions, PSRI's moral compass remains steady.

Transparency That Builds Trust

Transparency is often a buzzword in healthcare, but at PSRI, it is a tangible reality. Patients are provided with clear, upfront information about diagnoses, treatment options, and costs. Medical reports and records are shared freely with patients and their families, and billing systems are designed to be simple, itemised, and comprehensible.

This open approach not only reduces anxiety for patients but also fosters a collaborative atmosphere between caregivers and families. Patients are empowered to make informed choices, and second opinions are welcomed rather than discouraged — a rare stance that speaks volumes about PSRI's confidence in its care protocols.

Technology with Accountability

PSRI embraces cutting-edge technologies, from advanced imaging systems to robotic surgeries, all while maintaining a human-first philosophy. Each innovation is implemented only after rigorous ethical evaluation, ensuring it enhances rather than complicates the patient experience.

Digital transparency is also emphasised — PSRI's online patient portals allow access to lab results, doctor's notes, and follow-up schedules, enhancing accountability and minimising errors.

Training the Next Generation in Ethics

True to its research and academic roots, PSRI places strong emphasis on training future medical professionals in ethics. Medical students, residents, and nursing staff are not only taught clinical skills but are sensitised to ethical dilemmas and the importance of empathy in healing. Regular workshops and ethics rounds ensure that conversations about right and wrong remain active in the corridors of care.

Conclusion: A Model for Modern Healthcare

In a healthcare landscape often marred by mistrust and commercial pressures, PSRI Hospital emerges as a model of how ethics and transparency can coexist with clinical excellence. By putting patients first and maintaining an unflinching commitment to doing what's right, PSRI not only heals bodies — it rebuilds trust in medicine itself.

PSRI MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL | Press Enclave Marg, Sheikh Sarai Phase II, Near Saket Court, New Delhi-17 | Ph. No. 84 84 84 84 17

final line of defence against a rapidly spreading virus, exposing gaps in infrastructure, workforce capacity and equitable access. At the same time, the pandemic demonstrated how skilled critical care interventions—oxygen therapy, ventilation, infection control and clinical protocols—could dramatically improve survival when deployed effectively.

Unlike routine hospital care, critical care medicine focuses on continuous monitoring and rapid intervention. Patients admitted to ICUs require constant observation of heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels and neurological status. Advanced life-support systems—ventilators, dialysis machines, infusion pumps and invasive monitors—are used to stabilise failing organs and prevent further deterioration.

Critical care is not defined by a single disease but by the severity of illness. For instance, a patient with pneumonia may recover in a general ward, while another with the same infection may require mechanical ventilation and organ support in an ICU. The difference lies in how close the patient is to the edge of physiological collapse.

At the centre of critical care delivery is the intensivist, a physician trained to manage complex, rapidly changing conditions. Yet critical care is fundamentally a team effort. Specially trained nurses, respiratory therapists, physiotherapists, nutritionists, pharmacists and microbiologists work in close coordination, often making time-sensitive decisions that can alter outcomes within minutes.

This multidisciplinary approach is essential because critically ill patients rarely suffer from a single problem. A patient with sepsis, for instance, may simultaneously experience low blood pressure, kidney failure, altered consciousness and breathing difficulties. Treating one organ in isolation is insufficient; care must be integrated and dynamic.

Advances in medical technology have transformed critical care outcomes. High-resolution imaging, point-of-care diagnostics, non-invasive ventilation and data-driven monitoring allow clinicians to detect complications earlier and tailor treatments more precisely. Artificial intelligence tools are beginning to assist in predicting patient deterioration and optimising resource use.

Yet technology remains only as effective as the expertise guiding it. Over-reliance on machines without clinical judgement can be counterproductive. Beyond machines and protocols, critical care medicine is deeply human. Patients are often unable to communicate, dependent entirely on caregivers for survival and dignity. Respectful handling, pain control, emotional reassurance and ethical decision-making define the quality of care as much as technical success.

AS INDIA ADVANCES TOWARD UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE, CRITICAL CARE MUST BE PRIORITISED THROUGH EXPANDED ICUS, SKILLED WORKFORCE INVESTMENT, AFFORDABILITY, AND ETHICAL DELIVERY

The true strength of critical care lies in the ability of trained professionals to interpret data, anticipate complications and make nuanced decisions under pressure.

Despite progress, critical care health continues to face serious challenges. Cost remains a significant barrier. ICU treatment is resource-intensive, often placing a heavy financial burden on families, particularly in systems where insurance coverage is limited.

There is also a shortage of trained critical care professionals, especially outside major urban centres. Many hospitals lack adequately staffed ICUs, resulting in delayed referrals and poorer outcomes. Bridging this gap requires sustained investment in training, infrastructure and decentralised care models.

While critical care saves lives, reducing the need for ICU admission remains a public health priority. Many critical illnesses are preventable through early diagnosis, chronic disease management and timely medical attention.

Public awareness of warning signs—such as chest pain, sudden breathlessness, high fever, altered consciousness or unexplained weakness—can lead to earlier intervention and better outcomes. Strengthening primary care, emergency services and referral systems plays a vital role in preventing clinical deterioration.

End-of-life care, when recovery is no longer possible, requires sensitivity, transparency and respect for patient and family wishes. In such moments, critical care shifts from life-saving to comfort-focused, reaffirming medicine's commitment to compassion.

As India strengthens its health systems to achieve aims of Universal Health Coverage as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, critical care must be recognised as a foundational public health service. Expanding ICU capacity, investing in skilled professionals, ensuring affordability and embedding ethical practice are essential steps.

Accelerating Healthcare Innovation

ClearMedi Healthcare: Pioneering multidisciplinary growth and tech-driven innovation in India's healthcare landscape with compassion and excellence always at the forefront



ClearMedi Healthcare has emerged as one of India's fastest-growing integrated healthcare networks, driven by a mission to deliver high-quality, technology-enabled, and accessible medical care across diverse specialties. Over the past few years, ClearMedi has undergone a remarkable transformation—expanding its footprint, strengthening clinical depth, and upgrading infrastructure to create a robust multidisciplinary care ecosystem that meets the evolving needs of patients and communities.

At the core of ClearMedi's progress is its strong commitment to multidisciplinary excellence. The organisation has been consistently enhancing its service offerings across key departments including Oncology, Neurosciences, Renal Sciences & Kidney Transplants, Orthopedics & Joint Replacement, Gastroenterology, Pulmonology, Emergency & Critical Care, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Internal Medicine, and Minimally Invasive Surgery. Each specialty functions in an integrated model where teams collaborate to diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, and monitor patient recovery—ensuring superior outcomes and streamlined care pathways.

A notable advancement within this growth phase has been the expansion of Cardiac Sciences, strengthening the comprehensive scope of care offered across units. With the rise of cardiac diseases in India, ClearMedi invested in advanced cath lab facilities, cardiac ICUs, emergency response systems, and interventional capabilities to manage complex cardiac and vascular conditions. This addition complements the already existing specialties and reinforces ClearMedi's ability to deliver complete tertiary and quaternary care under one roof.

Beyond clinical expansion, ClearMedi is also accelerating innovation through technology-driven care models, digital health platforms, and enhanced patient engagement initiatives. The focus remains on improving treatment accuracy, shortening recovery timelines, and making high-quality healthcare accessible beyond metropolitan limits. The organisation's dedication to affordable yet advanced care continues to position ClearMedi as a trusted partner in community and corporate healthcare.



Guiding this journey of scale and excellence is Cdr Navneet Bali, whose strategic direction and leadership have played a pivotal role in ClearMedi's evolution. With extensive experience in healthcare operations and hospital growth management, Cdr. Bali's vision centres on operational efficiency, clinical quality, and patient-first service delivery. Under his leadership, ClearMedi has strengthened collaborations with top medical experts, enhanced clinical governance, and built future-ready facilities capable of addressing complex healthcare challenges.

ClearMedi's growth story is ultimately a reflection of determination, innovation, and a strong belief that quality healthcare should be accessible to everyone. As the organisation continues to expand its multidisciplinary services, upgrade technology, and empower clinical talent, it stands positioned to redefine the healthcare landscape with compassion and measurable impact. The road ahead is filled with possibilities, and ClearMedi is prepared to lead with purpose and progress



Delivering Healthcare Excellence with Care and Compassion

KEM Hospital, Pune, truly reflects its shared motto of "Hospital with a Heart", where medicine and compassion coexist seamlessly

For more than a century, KEM Hospital, Pune, has stood as one of Maharashtra's most trusted names in healthcare. Established in 1912 with just 4 maternity beds, the hospital has evolved into a sprawling 550+ bed, multi-speciality tertiary care centre. Today, it serves thousands of patients across Pune and its surrounding districts, balancing advanced medical technology with a strong commitment to accessible, compassionate care.

Rooted in Legacy

Its growth trajectory was profoundly influenced by the iconic Dr Banoo Coyaji, appointed Chief Medical Officer in 1944. Her visionary leadership transformed the institution, laying the groundwork for numerous first-of-their-kind departments in the region. Honoured with both the Padma Bhushan and the Ramon Magsaysay Award, Dr Coyaji championed cutting-edge clinical services and pioneering initiatives in Critical Care, Diabetology, Nephrology and Dialysis, High-Risk Obstetrics, Neonatology, and Paediatric Rehabilitation.

Many of these departments remain "Centres of Excellence" today—hallmarks of KEM's enduring commitment to quality, boasting more than 100 years of superior ethical medical care.

Dr Kurus Coyaji, President of KEM Hospital Society, which runs KEM Hospital, guides with a strong focus on institution-building, community health, and continuity of the hospital's legacy. His leadership supports KEM Hospital's ongoing growth in patient care, teaching, and research, reinforcing its longstanding commitment to accessible, high-quality healthcare.

Shaping the Future of Healthcare

The hospital's academic prominence is equally noteworthy. As a key teaching institution KEM continues to shape future generations of healthcare professionals. Its training programmes encourage not only clinical skills but also inculcate ethical practice and empathy. Many of the finest doctors in Pune, some of them pioneers in their fields, are from KEM.

Research has long been a defining pillar of KEM Hospital's identity. Its sister organisation, the KEM Hospital Research Centre—established in 1973—has collaborated with globally respected bodies such as the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Population Council. From public health initiatives to epidemiological studies, the Research Centre has contributed significantly to the medical knowledge base in India. One of its

landmark achievements was the establishment of the Rural Health Centre in Vadu Budruk in 1978, a model of integrated rural healthcare.

World-Class Healthcare Facilities
Today, KEM Hospital stands as a beacon of accessible, superior healthcare: a place where tradition meets innovation and where the needs of every patient remain at the heart of its mission.

Critical Care Services at KEM Hospital, Pune
Critical care medicine plays a pivotal role in the management of life-threatening conditions such as sepsis, multi-organ failure, major trauma, and complex post-operative cases. In the post-pandemic era, the need for advanced, well-equipped, and expertly managed intensive care services has become even more significant.

KEM Hospital, Pune provides comprehensive critical care supported by:

- 130+ dedicated ICU beds
- Specialized services for patients across all age groups—from neonates to geriatrics
- 24×7 care delivered by highly trained critical care specialists and multidisciplinary teams

The hospital's flagship 25-bed tertiary-quaternary care Intensive Care Unit (ICU) manages a wide spectrum of complex cases, including tropical infections, toxicology emergencies, obstetric crises, and critical care for geriatric and oncology patients. Staffed by over 125 highly trained professionals, the ICU is nationally and internationally recognised for its excellence in critical care ultrasound training under WINFOCUS and for its academic leadership. It played a key role in major clinical and vaccine trials and was honoured with the Shaurya Puraskar for exemplary COVID-19 care while providing 24×7 emergency support with outstanding outcomes.

The Coronary Care Unit (CCU) serves as a sanctuary of healing for critically ill patients, combining constant vigilance with advanced technology. A compassionate team of specialists delivers minute-to-minute, life-saving care, focusing not only on clinical excellence but also on empathy, reassurance, and the human aspects of recovery during stressful times.

Adult Critical Care Unit No 3 specialises in advanced interventions such as continuous haemodynamic monitoring, advanced ventilatory support, CRRT, plasmapheresis, and comprehensive liver care. It plays a vital role in managing severe sepsis, ARDS, post-cardiac surgery patients, complex cardiology conditions, and interventional neurology cases. Beyond technology, the unit emphasises dignity, clear communication, and compassionate family engagement.

The Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), established in 2000, is led by intensivists experienced in handling multisystem complex paediatric diseases and supported by multiple super-speciality services such as surgical, liver, kidney, lung, cardiac, and haematology available round the clock. Serving patients from across western Maharashtra, it provides high-quality, subsidised care to those in need.

With over four decades of legacy, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) exemplifies affordable, high-quality neonatal care, contributing significantly to training, innovation, and advancements in neonatology in India.

The Nephrology Acute Care Unit (NACU) offers specialised intensive care for critically ill renal and dialysis patients. Equipped with three self-contained cubicles fully equipped for intensive care, including ventilation, and each capable of full isolation, dialysis and related modalities such as CRRT, SLED-f, ECCO2R, and plasma exchange, it ensures the unit also provides safe, specialised care for vulnerable and immunosuppressed patients.

Together, these units embody KEM Hospital's enduring commitment to clinical excellence, compassion, and holistic healing.



Dr Xerxes Coyaji
Medical Director, KEM Hospital, Pune

"Sustainable healthcare is built on clinical rigour, innovation, and accountability. By combining advanced treatment modalities with committed multidisciplinary care, we deliver the latest treatments with integrity, empathy, and a clear focus on improving patient outcomes"



Shirin Wadia
CEO, KEM Hospital, Pune

"The future of healthcare lies in compassion, accessibility, and effectiveness. By nurturing value-driven leadership, we can inspire the next generation to transform care delivery and create meaningful impact for communities everywhere"



Powering the Next Decade of Intelligent Innovation

Dr. KNS Memorial Hospital blends cutting-edge multispecialty care with deep social conscience, delivering advanced, affordable healthcare across Uttar Pradesh for three decades.

Dr. KNS Memorial Hospital has emerged as one of Uttar Pradesh's most respected healthcare institutions, set apart by a consistent vision to serve

The Lucknow-headquartered Dr. KNS Memorial Hospital has, over more than 30 years, evolved into an exceptionally well-equipped multispeciality centre, on a par with India's leading corporate hospitals in technology and expertise.

Recognised for its commitment to efficiency, ethics and affordability, its vision is to deliver advanced and affordable healthcare that is accessible to all sections of society.

With a team of more than 500 senior doctors at group level, and a patient base exceeding over One Lakh people, it has established itself as a reliable pillar of regional healthcare, its growth reflecting a carefully calibrated balance between medical advancement and social responsibility.



Dr Madhulika Singh
Chairperson, KNS Memorial Group of Hospitals & Institutions
Chancellor Bodhisattva University
Barabanki

A multidisciplinary approach

The hospital's strength lies in its multidisciplinary approach, with services spanning cardiology, neurology, foetal medicine, IVF, trauma care, neuro surgery, orthopaedics, oncology, gastroenterology, nephrology, urology, dermatology, ophthalmology, ENT, paediatrics, women's health, mental health and general surgery. Each department is backed by infrastructure, with modern diagnostics, critical care units and round-the-clock emergency services.

Departments such as neurology and orthopaedics combine advanced imaging, minimally invasive procedures and structured rehabilitation protocols to deliver strong clinical outcomes. The paediatric department offers specialised care across cardiology, pulmonology and neurology, while women's health services provide comprehensive obstetric and gynaecological care, including high-risk pregnancy management.

Most importantly, the hospital's facilities are designed to ensure continuous and consistent care, right from early diagnosis to well monitored treatment and recovery, enhancing its reputation for dependability.

Advanced medical technology

Dr. KNS Memorial Hospital stands neck and neck with leading corporate institutions in its adoption of contemporary medical technology, enabling precise diagnostics, advanced therapeutics and comprehensive critical care.

The hospital's infrastructure includes high-definition radiological equipments, cath lab and endoscopy systems, supporting accurate evaluation of musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal and internal conditions.

Its interventional radiology suite

performs a wide range of minimally invasive, image-guided procedures, from angiography and biopsies to ablation therapies.

Modular operating theatres support an array of surgical procedures, including laparoscopic and keyhole techniques. The 24×7 emergency and trauma unit is backed by advanced resuscitation and diagnostic equipment, while comprehensive ICU, NICU and PICU facilities ensure continuous monitoring and specialised care for critically ill adults, infants and children.

The hospital is empanelled under Ayushman Bharat – PM-JAY, CM fund, ECHS, CGHS, all standard TPA's and PSU's, DDUY, enabling eligible patients to access cashless treatment across multiple specialities. This integration of advanced care with public health schemes underscores its commitment to inclusivity within a private healthcare framework.

Social accountability and ethics

Carrying the institution's vision forward is Dr. Madhulika Singh, Chairperson of the Dr. KNS Memorial Group, under whose leadership the hospital has consciously resisted a purely commercial model. Instead, it has embedded social accountability as a way of life and operation.

Dr. Singh says, "Medical and technology advancements keep evolving and we have them all, making us comparable to top corporate hospitals. The difference is that we are driven by a social spirit of rendering affordable service, including diagnostics, at heavily discounted rates, to make healthcare accessible even to the poorest of the poor. We run a free 1,500-bedded hospital in Barabanki, where we conduct health camps and distribute free medicines. We also do extensive work in obstetrics and gynaecology in underserved Ambedkar Nagar, which I personally supervise. At our medical college, we committedly pursue an unbiased and ethical process of admission, teaching and examination, where deserving poor students are given free education."

At a Glance

- **Location:** Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- **Years of Clinical Service:** 30 and counting
- **Doctors on Panel:** Over 500 senior consultants on group level
- **Patients Treated:** More than One Lakh
- **Care Model:** Multispeciality tertiary care with integrated community outreach

What Sets It Apart

- NABH-accredited medical college
- First private medical institution to get 250 MBBS seats along with PG's in all subject in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- Also running Para Medical & Nursing Institutions.
- Got University status as Bodhisattva University, Barabanki
- Transparent and ethical admission, teaching and evaluation processes
- Free education for meritorious students from economically weaker backgrounds

A sustained CSR strategy

Unlike conventional CSR models, Dr. KNS Memorial Hospital's social responsibility is structural and sustained.

The 1,500-bed free hospital in Barabanki represents one of the region's most significant charitable healthcare initiatives, providing treatment, diagnostics and medicines at no cost to underserved populations.

Additionally, the hospital regularly conducts health camps, preventive screening programmes and free medicine distribution drives, with an outreach programme that extends beyond the city in tribal villages Nepal border.

Its focused maternal healthcare work in Ambedkar Nagar, particularly in obstetrics and gynaecology, addresses persistent gaps in women's healthcare.

NABH-accredited Hospital and medical college

The institution's credibility is strengthened by its plethora of associated medical professionals. Well known clinicians such as Dr. Kalyani Das, a renowned gynaecologist and obstetrician; Dr. Hrishikesh Pai, a nationally respected IVF specialist; and Dr. Devika Nag, an eminent neurologist, are associated with the group that ensures excellence across disciplines.

Through its NABH-accredited medical college, the first private medical institution in Uttar Pradesh, the group has also played a formative role in medical education.

Its emphasis on ethical admissions, transparent evaluation and support for economically disadvantaged yet meritorious students reinforces its long-term commitment to building responsible medical leadership.

Enduring relevance and consistency

Dr. KNS Memorial Group of Hospitals and Institutions influence lies in the consistency with which it has surged forward with public interest in mind. Recognition from civic and public leaders, strong patient loyalty and its expanding social footprint together affirm its position as a healthcare institution of consequence.

The Silver Jubilee (25th anniversary) celebration of the hospital was held in May 2025, with Defence Minister Shri. Rajnath Singh and Chief Minister of UP Shri Yogi Adityanath attending the event in Lucknow. Shri singh said, "In our society, doctors are seen as another God."

He also recalled that he had originally inaugurated the hospital 25 years earlier and praised the founder's spirit of service.

With plans for expanded super-speciality services and continued investment in infrastructure and outreach, the hospital continues to be guided by the same principle on which it was built: that world-class healthcare must also be humane, accessible and just.

Its stature today is defined not merely by infrastructure or specialities, but by trust, built patient by patient, community by community.

SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
Trust of Generations

Sir Ganga Ram Hospital

Shaping the Next Chapter of Indian Healthcare

Dr. Ajay Swaroop, Chairman, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, discusses how medical innovation and advanced technology are shaping care delivery at one of India's leading multi-speciality hospitals.

Healthcare leadership today is defined not by scale alone, but by the ability to respond with precision, consistency, and clinical intent. At Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, this evolution reflects decades of purposeful growth grounded in patient care.

As a leading state-of-the-art, multi-speciality hospital, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital delivers integrated care across diagnosis, treatment, and recovery—reducing fragmentation and improving outcomes through coordinated clinical pathways.

The launch of the Comprehensive Cancer Care Centre marks a key milestone, bringing medical oncology, surgical oncology, radiation therapy, and day-care chemotherapy together within a single framework. Supported by advanced imaging, precision radiation platforms, and minimally invasive surgical systems, the centre represents a more focused and patient-centric approach to cancer care. Across departments, the hospital continues to strengthen its capabilities through non-invasive neurological procedures, robotic-assisted surgeries, and high-definition visualisation technolgies—enhancing surgical accuracy and recovery while maintaining patient safety. These clinical services are reinforced by robust digital health systems that ensure continuity, transparency, and quality at every touchpoint.

Equally integral is the hospital's academic foundation. As one of India's largest postgraduate training centres, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital combines clinical excellence with structured education, research, and national and international collaborations—ensuring continuous learning and evidence-led practice. While its capabilities continue to evolve, the hospital remains committed to accessible, ethical, and accountable care—strengthening its role as a trusted institution in India's healthcare landscape.

Pioneering Advanced Technologies

Among the cutting-edge diagnostic tools introduced is the PET-CT scan, which greatly improves precision in cancer detection, staging, and treatment monitoring. The radiation oncology department has been revamped with state-of-the-art equipment, such as TrueBeam STx, Tomotherapy Radixact X9, Flexitron HDR Brachytherapy, and



Somatom go. SIM CT Simulator with 4DCT technology. These advancements allow highly precise tumor targeting, minimize exposure to healthy tissue, and incorporate motion management techniques.

Dr. Swaroop also underscored the adoption of the Hugo Robotic-Assisted Surgery system that facilitates more precise surgeries with less tissue trauma and quicker patient recovery. The hospital's Endovision system offers high-definition 3D/4K visualization, enhancing surgeons' depth perception and reducing operative time and complications.



Dr. Ajay Swaroop
Chairman
Board of Management

Our State-of-the-art Technology



Tomo Therapy Radixact™



TrueBeamSTXM



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A Premier Institution in Medical Education, Healthcare and Research

Dayanand Medical College & Hospital, Ludhiana Punjab

Excelling in medical education, research, and patient care services

Dayanand Medical College & Hospital (DMC&H), Ludhiana Punjab started its journey in 1934 (as Arya Medical School) and became DMC&H in 1964. DMC&H is managed by a registered charitable society, ensuring that all earnings are reinvested into the institution for continuous improvement in patient care.

DMC&H stands as a beacon of excellence in healthcare services, medical education and research in North India. Known for its State-of-the-art infrastructure, rich history of achievements, DMC&H has established itself as one of the premier medical institution in India and continues to be a preferred choice of patients from Punjab and the surrounding states of Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, and Chandigarh, as well as NRIs.

DMC&H is NABH accredited a testament to its high standards of education and healthcare, offering services across 16 specialties and 19 super specialties, supported by over 500 doctors and more than 5000 employees. The hospital has a 1625-bed facility and treats over 10 lac patients annually. The hospital is equipped for organ transplants, including Liver, kidney, bone marrow, and corneal transplants.

The institution has a vibrant research and development wing, having published 1088 papers over the last five years.

The College

Dayanand Medical College (DMC), Affiliated with Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot, and recognized by the National Medical Commission (NMC), is a preferred destination for medical students from India and abroad. DMC has garnered several accolades over the years, establishing itself as one of the top private medical colleges in India. It also secured 36th rank in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 by the Ministry of HRD, Government of India. The College offers 150 seats for MBBS program, 107 seats across 19 MD/MS courses, 26 seats across ten DM/MCh courses and 2 seats in FNB (Fellowship) in Minimal Access Surgery. Additionally, there are 16 seats available for MA Clinical Psychology, 135 seats in College of Nursing and 235 seats in Allied Health Sciences . The College of Physiotherapy will be started shortly.

The Scholarships

DMC&H has a scholarship program worth over ₹6 crores for the academic year 2025–26. This first-of-a-kind initiative by a private medical institution in the state aims to make medical education more accessible to those who deserve but do not have the necessary means. There are over five dozen scholarships across several distinct categories, aimed at meritorious, economically challenged and deserving students pursuing MBBS, BSc Nursing and Paramedical courses.

Best in Class Cardiac Services

Hero DMC Heart Institute (HDHI), cardiac services unit of DMC&H is a ray of hope for cardiac patient and is always

at par with the best of treatment as available in other parts of the world. HDHI team of Cardiac surgeons is highly specialized, expert and trusted in the whole region, this is proved by the fact that 98% of Total Arterial Bypass Surgeries of the region are done at HDHI with a very high success rates.

HDHI is a regional leader in performing advanced endovascular procedures such as TAVI and TEVAR. HDHI does the largest number of physiological pacing in Punjab.

Exemplary Cancer Care Centre

The Cancer Care Centre at DMC&H is a 129-bed facility with four state-of-the-art operation theatres and 30 chemotherapy chairs. It is equipped with 4D PET CT, advanced mammography, and various other nuclear medicine modalities, providing cutting-edge diagnostic and treatment services. The centre features an international, multidisciplinary tumor board, ensuring comprehensive and coordinated care. It offers advanced radiation therapies including Rapid Arc, IGRT, IMRT, 3D ICRT and SBRT/SRT and Brachytherapy.

Premier Gastroenterology services (Medical & Surgical)

The Department of Gastroenterology at DMC&H, established over four decades ago, has evolved into a premier comprehensive gastroenterology care center in North India. As a major tertiary care referral hub, the department is renowned for its patient-focused approach, evidence-based clinical practice, and consistently excellent outcomes. It is led by an experienced team of gastroenterologists dedicated to delivering safe, effective, and compassionate care. The department is equipped with state-of-the-art endoscopy facilities offering the full spectrum of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. The center excels in third-space endoscopic procedures such as POEM, ESD, and ESR, representing the cutting edge of minimally invasive gastroenterological interventions.

The Department of Surgical Gastroenterology at DMC&H, established over two decades ago, has evolved into a leading high-volume centre for advanced gastrointestinal surgery in North India. As a major referral hub for complex cases, the department is known for its patient-focused care, high clinical standards, and consistently superior outcomes. It is led by an experienced team of gastro surgeons dedicated to safe, effective, and compassionate surgical management. With state-of-the-art infrastructure and a strong emphasis on minimally invasive techniques, the team ensures optimal recovery and reduced post-operative morbidity.

DMC&H's blend of legacy, innovation, and patient-centric care makes them a true leader in India's healthcare landscape, inspiring trust and excellence.



Inquisitive Surgical Services (VATS)

DMC&H is the first centre in North India to start VATS (Video -Assisted Thoracoscopic Surgery) in 2002. VATS is a surgical technique used to diagnose and treat diseases of the lungs, Pleura, esophagus and mediastinum. VATS involves very small incision and enables precise visualization and surgical intervention with minimal tissue disruption. At DMC&H almost 100 VATS procedures are performed every year and over 3000 VATS procedures have been done successfully.

Leading-edge Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) facilities

The BMT Department at DMC&H is well-established for bone marrow transplantation for both adults and children, having performed close to 100 stem cell transplants utilizing autologous (using the patient's own cells), allogeneic (using cells from a related donor), and matched unrelated donor (MUD) transplants.

Pioneering Robotic Joint Replacements

DMC&H's Orthopaedics department has been a pioneer in joint replacement surgery in North India for over 25 years. The department performs more than 3,500 major orthopedic surgeries annually, encompassing total knee, hip, shoulder replacements, including complex revision arthroplasty procedures. The department has ultra-modern Velys Robotic-Assisted Joint Replacement System enhancing surgical precision with almost 100% accuracy, reduced soft tissue damage, more precise bone cuts and early recovery.

DMC&H is committed to innovation and to provide patients with the safest, most efficient and most comfortable healthcare experience possible.



Upcoming Micro Hospitals: Modeled to strengthen 'patient centric' care.

Healthcare in India is evolving faster than ever.

Rethinking Care for a New India

Healthcare in India is evolving faster than ever. Patients today don't just want treatment—they expect clarity, access, empathy, and trust. Yet, even as world-class hospitals rise across our skylines, the everyday healthcare experience remains crowded, complex, and disconnected.

Doctors feel it. Healthcare professionals feel it. Patients feel it. The system feels stretched in ways it can no longer be ignored.

It's time to change the narrative. It's time to rethink the system. It's time to deliver healthcare as it should be.

Addressing the Problems Within Traditional Healthcare Models

For all its medical excellence, traditional Indian healthcare suffers from one core issue: scale without intimacy. Across facilities, persistent challenges include:

- Long queues and unmanageable patient volumes
- Rushed consultations driven by overbooked schedules
- Operational and commercial pressures influencing care delivery
- Infrastructure built for occupancy rather than experience

Compounding this is a structural imbalance: India's healthcare system begins at tertiary care. The absence of a strong, high-quality primary and secondary care layer pushes patients unnecessarily into large hospitals.

This operational gap is exactly where the Micro Hospital Model introduces strategic efficiency and clinical focus.

What's a Smarter Way Forward?

Micro Hospitals emerged in the U.S. and other global markets as a response to rising healthcare complexity, overcrowding, and the need for high-quality care closer to communities. Over the past few years, they have proven to be a powerful alternative—and now, India is ready for them.

Typically, Micro Hospitals are equipped with:

- Urgent care units
- Multispecialty OPDs
- Advanced diagnostics
- Day-care and short-stay surgeries
- Small but fully equipped ICUs
- Community-centric patient services

They also provide healthcare professionals with comprehensive multispecialty capabilities—without the operational overwhelm, commercial noise, or administrative inefficiencies of large tertiary hospitals.

Why Micro Hospitals Are the Right Fit for India

India needs a healthcare system that delivers quality care to communities while enabling professionals to practice with autonomy, dignity, and purpose.

Micro Hospitals make this possible.

1. Restoring Clinical Freedom
   By removing target-driven pressure, Micro Hospitals returns decision-making to professionals. Doctors lead care independently, nurses engage more deeply, and teams operate with clarity and purpose.
2. Bringing Care Back Into Communities
   Located within neighbourhoods, Micro Hospitals enable continuity,

The Vision Behind India's Emerging Chain Of Micro Hospitals



Mr. Saket Bansal
Founder, Pacific OneHealth, Director of Pacific Development Corporation Ltd.

"For three decades, The Pacific Group has built trust across several real estate sectors, including malls and schools, unified by one cornerstone principle: service first. It is with this foundational commitment that we now enter healthcare. We believe India deserves a clinically excellent, operationally smarter, and emotionally sensitive care model. Through Pacific OneHealth, we are creating a network of Micro-Hospitals, designed to place patients and doctors at the center. We are launching three Micro Hospitals in Delhi-NCR, with plans to expand across North India."

Dr. Swadeep Srivastava
Co-founder & President of Pacific OneHealth, Founder of HEAL Health Group

"At Pacific OneHealth, we are building an ecosystem where doctors have access to world-class facilities, cutting-edge technology, and collaborative platforms that enable them to practice at their best. By joining us, you gain more than an institution - you gain a support system that empowers you to deliver better outcomes, expand your reach, and be part of a healthcare movement that puts both doctors and patients first."



familiarity, and earlier intervention—improving outcomes for both patients and professionals.

3. Enabling Ethical, Responsible Care
   Lean infrastructure and efficient operations reduce unnecessary procedures and inflated costs, allowing clinicians to focus on what truly matters: patient well-being.
4. Increasing Efficiency Without Losing Empathy
   With diagnostics, OPDs, observation beds, and surgeries under one roof, workflows are smoother, follow-ups faster, and care more coordinated.
5. Rebuilding Trust in Healthcare
   Smaller, coordinated teams foster clearer communication, timely follow-ups, and a more humane care environment.

In a time when healthcare trust is eroding, Micro Hospitals help restore it.

Pacific Onehealth: India's Emerging Chain Of Micro Hospitals

Recognising the gaps in India's traditional healthcare system, Pacific OneHealth is preparing to enter as India's Emerging Chain of Micro Hospitals—envisioned not merely as a healthcare brand, but as a movement guided by one belief:

Healthcare should feel human again. Healthcare should be delivered as it should be.

We are launching three centres in Delhi NCR—Lajpat Nagar, Karol Bagh, and Dwarka D-21—supported by a centralised laboratory at Anand Vihar, SIDC. Pacific OneHealth brings together multispecialty care, advanced diagnostics, critical care, daycare surgeries, preventive programs, and a hospitality-inspired patient experience—all under one roof. Each centre will deliver a complete continuum of care, supported by 24+ specialities and multiple centres of excellence, designed through a modern, community-first lens.

THE VISION BEHIND INDIA'S EMERGING CHAIN OF MICRO HOSPITALS

For over 25 years, Dr. Swadeep Srivastava worked across India's leading hospitals, witnessing both brilliance and limitation:

- Patients overwhelmed by processes
- Doctors burdened by commercial pressure
- Families lost in complex systems
- Communication gaps that eroded trust

These experiences sparked a simple question:

What if healthcare could be simpler, ethical, and human?

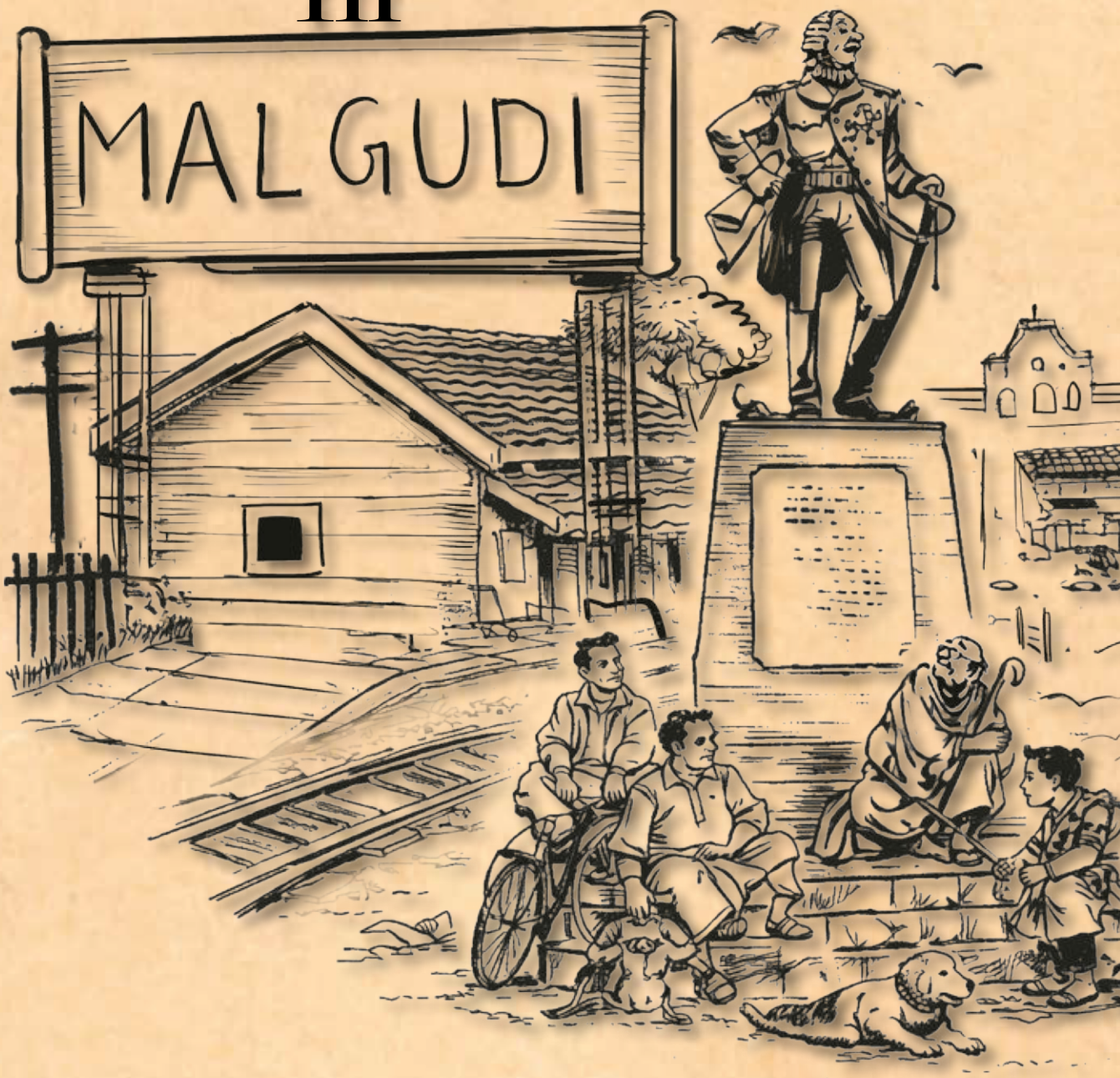
This aligned perfectly with the Pacific Group's vision—to build a model that is clinically excellent, operationally smarter, and emotionally sensitive. Together, Mr. Bansal and Dr. Swadeep conceptualised Pacific OneHealth, a network focused on outcomes over occupancy, intimacy over infrastructure, and community over complexity.

What's Next?

Pacific OneHealth aims to stand at the forefront of the healthcare movement in India, building Micro Hospitals that strengthen patient trust and create meaningful, fulfilling workplaces where healthcare professionals can truly thrive.

Join us in our journey. Be one of us.
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Contact Us: careers@pacificonehealth.com
+91 70113 50742

Only the Upper, No Lower Caste in







Antony Arul Valan
is a visiting assistant professor, Department of English at Ashoka University, Sonipat

EVERY English teacher would recognise the pleasures, the guilt and the conflict that is the world of teaching literature in a university. We are often carried away by the richness of poetry, be it when we are called upon to lecture about the elevated registers of Shakespeare or when we nurse creative ambitions and write some of our own unreadable verses. We are shocked by our own stasis in class, when eager ears await our interpretive moves while our inner demons, nurtured by what is happening around us, are roused and raging. We are usually remorseful as we make perfunctory remarks on grammatical infelicities when we know pretty well we aren't engaging with what the student is trying to do in that paper. We walk into class holding inner conflicts, what to do when great art is created by artists who turn out to be terrible people, or what is the purpose of all these fictional worlds we enter and leave at will when the city is suffocating on polluted air, when the country is plunging into sectarian distress and the world is headed into an algorithm that rewards solipsism and narcissism.

It is with such a contemporary and textured experience

of teaching that R. K. Narayan introduces Krishna in his fourth novel *The English Teacher*. This is not to say that Krishna thinks about polluted Delhi in that 1945 novel, but that the world he inhabits, the world that Narayan conjures for us and we fondly co-habit with Krishna—Malgudi—does not simply remain a geographical literary canvas on which action occurs, it is a place that impinges on its characters to such an extent that their concerns and lives are so wholly realised and contained within. Quite literally, in fact, Malgudi's pollution infects Susila, Krishna's wife. Susila uses a lavatory that hasn't been cleaned in a while, falls sick with typhoid and passes away. Krishna then goes to Tayur, a neighbouring village, to meet with a medium who helps him communicate with his deceased wife. The novel ends with Krishna realising he can have a personal communication with Susila without the need of the medium, and within Malgudi.

This move away from and eventual return to Malgudi, a motif we see in almost all of Narayan's works, should make us wonder what powers this imaginative edifice conceals in its construction. If Malgudi is a motif, rather than ask 'what is Malgudi', we may perhaps better understand it as a literary reality and ask 'how is Malgudi built'. After all, with each Narayan novel or short story, we would see Malgudi through several iterations, repetitions, developments, changes and fractures. But, if we were to ask how, we only have the language to look closely at—Malgudi remains a figment of imagination distilled in words strung together. And this new idiom, a language so fluid that it opened the floodgates of literary expression away from the English metropole, is Narayan's significant contribution to the world of letters. But what is in that idiom that erected Malgudi into such an immediately recognisable Indian experience, a vision and way of life that related to the Indian subcontinent? Caste. Not caste as discrimination or hierarchy, i.e. as explicit casteist utterances, but as a willful forgetting of the everyday violence we perpetrate with language.

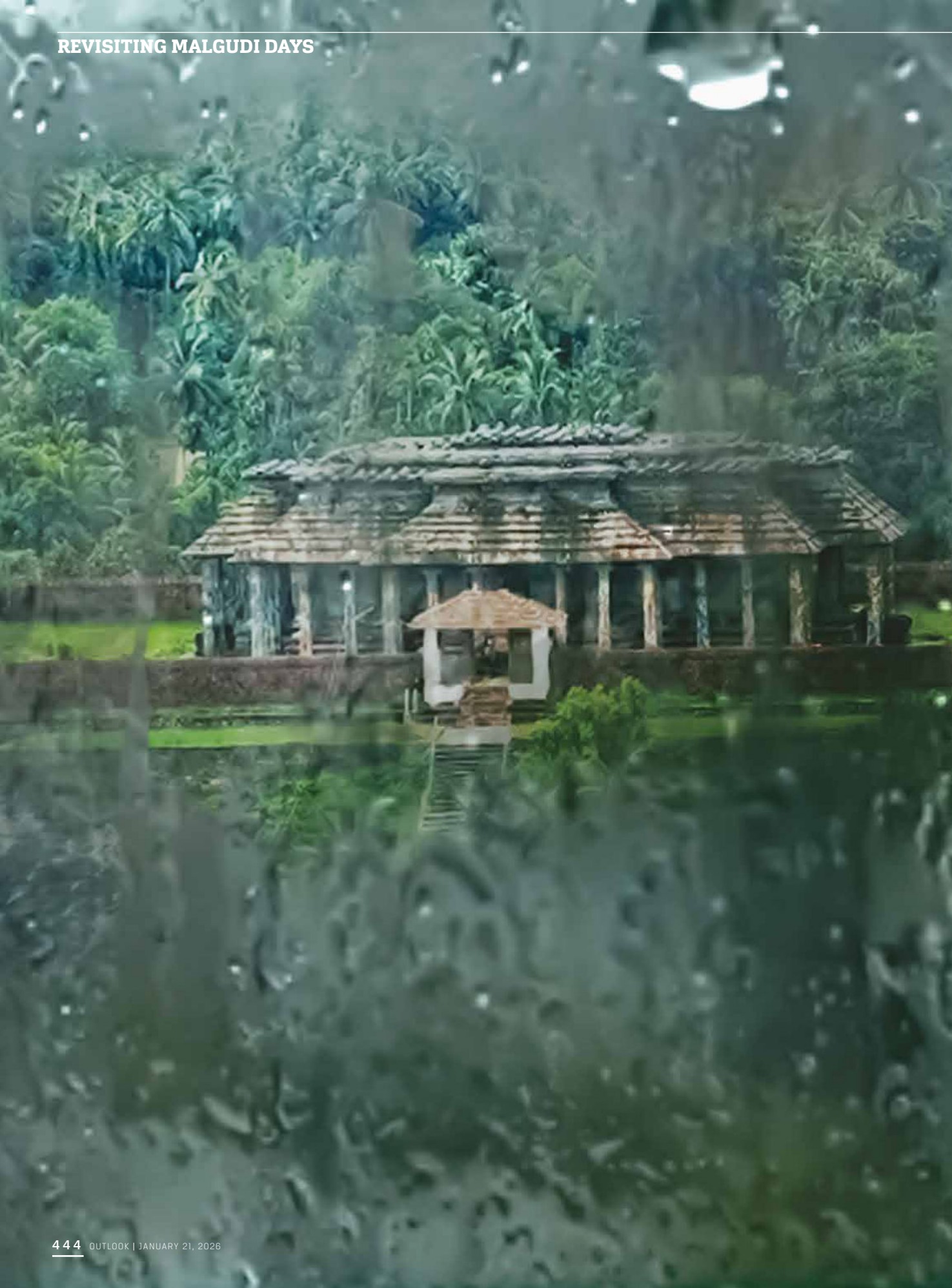
Malgudi is first introduced to us in *Swami and Friends*, the 1935 novel with which Narayan burst into the literary scene and generations now counting among the adults experienced as a television series. When I speak of caste and *Swami and Friends* I do not intend an identitarian mode of reading the novel. That is, I do not want us to narrow our focus on the protagonist as a Brahmin boy, or take the discussion to how the story makes this small slice of caste society relate to all of society. Instead, we could look at the novel and think along with it. When Swami reminds him of the atrocities of the Mughals and their destruction of Hindu temples, Rajam, one of Swami's closest friends, says, 'We Brahmins deserve that and more'. And follows it up stating that his father does not observe rituals. While the publication year of the novel and Narayan's own involvement in the non-Brahmin South India Liberal Federation's mouthpiece *The Justice* sets Rajam's rhetoric squarely within one anti-caste movement of the time, we can't help but wonder what literary yield this rare political mention has for the story. Could it just be to add verisimilitude? A faintly registerable layer of acknowledgment over a politically sanitised novel about young boys, perhaps?

IF MALGUDI IS A MOTIF, RATHER THAN ASK 'WHAT IS MALGUDI', WE MAY PERHAPS BETTER UNDERSTAND IT AS A LITERARY REALITY AND ASK 'HOW IS MALGUDI BUILT'.

Let us look at another perplexing incident in the novel. Right about the middle of the novel, a seemingly unrelated episode begins the chapter titled 'In Father's Presence'. Swami and his two friends, Rajam and Mani, are sitting on a culvert when they see a bullock cart. They obstruct its path, and command the cart driver to stop. The driver is a little village boy, named Karuppan, younger than Swami. Rajam calls him a fool and screams at him. Swami threatens to arrest the boy. The young cart driver stops and asks, 'Boys, why do you stop me?' Mani asks him to shut up and investigates the cart. When the young boy pleads, 'Boys, I must go,' Rajam is infuriated. He senses condescension. In response, he says, 'Whom do you address as "boys"? Don't you know who we are?' The trio heckle, torment and dehumanise the boy—they call the bullock he's riding by his name. Why does this simple English word threaten these boys so much that they are not playing anymore, they're engaging in serious violence? Now, this little village boy does not appear again in the story, and after recording this incident the chapter delves into a fascinating staging of Swami's troubles with arithmetic problems in the presence of his father. Perhaps that incident is so forgetful and that is why decades of criticism hasn't as much as even pointed to it, and the popular TV series even excised it from the screenplay. So, what does this incident do to our experience of comprehending how Malgudi is built word by word on the page? And, what if the word that excites so much passion in kids, 'boys', is not English at all?

If it is rendered in Tamil, the only other Indian language referred to in the novel, could 'boy' stand for the singular male suffix common in Tamil 'da'? A close Hindi equivalent would be 're'. This suffix encompasses a range of affective registers in our everyday language and within the novel; it can be endearing (when Swami's Tamil-speaking grandmother says 'Come here, boy') or authoritative (when Swami's father says 'Look here, boy. I have half a mind to thrash you') or carries exasperation (when Swami's father says 'Here boy, as you go, for goodness' sake, remove the baby from the hall') or marked by tenderness (when a forest officer who rescues Swami says 'That is right, boy. Are you all right now?') or revulsion (when Rajam he tells off Swami who has run away from school for a second time 'What a boy you are!'). Of all these affective registers, Narayan makes us see that in this instance the word 'boys' evokes anger because of perceived insult. Any older boy would get angry at a younger boy who addresses him disrespectfully. But where does the audacity to stop a child doing labour (i.e. not your schoolmate) come from? Where does the absolute certainty that dehumanising someone younger/less privileged than you, by stripping them of their name, come from? It is Narayan's literary genius that enables us as readers to instantly subconsciously register this disrespect and stay within the narrative logic and not be ruffled. This feature in Narayan's English, an idiom that encodes time-perfected registers of respect and disrespect that precipitates violence—and therefore is moved by a logic of caste—that is a common feature of our Indian vernaculars, is what makes Malgudi insidiously inclusive of our uniquely casteist language.

This article has not been about what to do when the art work we love turns out to conceal something terrible. It has been an attempt to explicate what it means to succumb to its beauty, attend to its artifice and ponder about what remains to be discovered beneath the sheets, about ourselves and our language.



Conjuring a Landscape



Vikas Kumar Jha
is a Hindi journalist and author, best known for his fiction and non-fiction works like *McCluskieganj: The Story of the only Anglo-Indian Village in India*

A novel rarely begins with a plot. It begins with a landscape, not the visible one before our eyes but the shimmer of a place half-formed in the mind, waiting for the world to reveal its counterpart. I realised this again after finishing *McCluskieganj*. That novel demanded emotional excavation and left behind a hollowness I carried without knowing what might fill it.

When a story ends, a writer steps into a season of searching. We begin to look outward, not for a destination, but for resonance, for a geography that answers questions we have not yet learned to phrase. It was in this state of quiet unravelling that I boarded the Mangala Lakshadweep Express with my son, headed for Udupi for his engineering counselling. The journey stretched across nearly half the country.

The train was long and the conversations longer, and somewhere between Delhi and Karnataka, a young man from Malpe began speaking about Agumbe, a rainforest village tucked into the Western Ghats, known as the King Cobra capital and the filming location of Shankar Nag's *Malgudi Days*. This detail arrived with unexpected force. A fictional village from childhood television, a world crafted by R.K. Narayan's imagination, had taken spatial form in real geography. It felt as if a memory from the past had stepped out of fiction and settled beside me in the rattling train compartment.

Even before I saw Agumbe, something inside me stirred. Landscape always arrives first as emotion. It is recognition rather than knowledge. It is intuition rather than intention. I sensed

ILLUSTRATION BY SAAHIL

the possibility that this place, which I had not yet visited, might be the one my next story was already leaning toward.

After we reached Udupi and completed the formalities of my son's admission, an entirely different set of thoughts took over. I had ten long hours before my return train to Delhi. What was I to do with this unwieldy slice of time? Like politicians, writers, too, are always calculating the returns on opportunity. I found myself thinking in familiar terms, how to see four shows for one ticket.

When I asked the auto-rickshaw driver how much he would charge for a trip to Agumbe, he shook his head. The mountain road was too winding, he said. One had to take a bus or a taxi. A taxi, he added, would cost a thousand rupees for a round trip. My mind immediately justified the expense. A thousand rupees for a rainforest was far better than a hotel room for ten hours. One cannot find so much pleasure even in a cinema hall. The diplomacy of time, money and desire reached a swift resolution.

We hired a taxi and left for Agumbe. The drive through Haricharka, Perudoor, Hebri and Someshwara felt like a slow initiation. The road coiled with the confidence of terrain that had shaped countless travellers before us. Green rose like a sheer wall on either side. Trees arched so high they appeared to hold the sky in place. This first encounter satisfied something fundamental, the human hunger to feel small before the world rather than burdened by its demands. Cities give us the illusion of control. Forests dissolve it. Awareness sharpens, and something ancient in us awakens. The land takes over.

The politics of finding a place is never simple. It involves timing, circumstance and accident. Yet, it also involves the moral and emotional questions a writer carries into new terrain. What are we seeking? What wounds or longings do we expect the land to answer?

Agumbe began answering even before I fully arrived. At Sunset Point, Shashi, our taxi driver, gestured to a tea stall. There stood Canteen Periyar, veteran theatre artist, tea vendor and actor in *Malgudi Days*. He spoke of a childhood when the forest canopy was so dense that sunlight barely touched the ground. He spoke of hornbills with grand beaks and the quiet menace of King Cobras. He spoke of mimicry, camouflage and the strange intelligence that allows life to flourish through deception and adaptation.

In his account, the rainforest revealed its first lesson. Survival is not conquest but negotiation. Not a show of strength but the art of subtlety. This is as true of ecological worlds as it is of human ones. A novel, too, survives by these delicate negotiations. Lives intersect, support, mimic or conceal in ways that create meaning.

Our next stop was Dodda Mane, the Big House of Agumbe, overseen by Kasturi Rao. Her life unfolded between fading memory and the vestiges of a crumbling social order. The architecture, the red floors, the early morning tapping of her cane, all reminded me that heritage is not merely the past, but a living conversation between time and those who remain to carry it. Kasturi held her world together with the same tenacity as the vines that clasped the towering rainforest trees. Her home revealed another politics of landscape.

A place is shaped not just by its geography but by those who stand guard over its stories. Yet Agumbe's truest voice belonged to the land itself. The monsoon arrived like a living presence. Rain was not an inconvenience but a performance. Thunder moved behind the hills as if rehearsing an ancient script. Water gathered in tree hollows and crevices carved by centuries of parasitic plants. Droplets fell on courtyard tiles and shattered into tiny silver constellations. People in Agumbe greeted the rains as kin, with reverence and acceptance. The monsoon answered the human need for rhythm. It reminded me that cycles, not certainties, sustain life. A novel, too, finds its pulse in such cycles, the ebb and flow of recognition, return and renewal.

On later visits, I began to understand the forest's deeper intelligence. Fungi worked in silence, under layers of leaf litter. Birds and bees carried seeds across distances with effortless grace. The canopy formed a kind of cathedral, allowing only fractured shafts of sunlight to reach the ground. King Cobras lay languid in summer and came alive with the first rains. Romulus Whitaker's research station observed these rhythms with patient devotion. The land was not scenery. It was a system. It revealed the connective tissue that binds life into a coherent whole.

For a writer, this answered an enduring fear, the fear of fragmentation. The forest taught that nothing survives alone. Every story is held in place by countless unseen elements. The rainforest

FICTION DISTILS THE EMOTIONAL TRUTH OF A PLACE. IT STRIPS AWAY NOISE AND REVEALS A DISTILLED WORLD THAT REMAINS UNTOUCHED BY EROSION.

offered its own theatre of mimicry. Butterflies and moths carried eye-like patterns on their wings that startled predators. Serpentine caterpillars imitated snakes. Worms mimicked bird droppings. Stick insects disappeared into the branches. These were not mere curiosities. They reflected the fundamental truth that surface and essence are rarely aligned.

A landscape teaches this more gently than society does. It allows the possibility that appearances may be deceiving and that deception itself is often a strategy for survival. Even the trees illustrated this truth. The mighty patriarchs of the rainforest stood firm because countless inconspicuous tendrils and vines wrapped around their roots. Strength depended on the invisible.

In human societies, the ones who hold power often forget the support that upholds them. In the forest, this balance remains intact. As my understanding deepened, one question lingered. Why did Agumbe feel like the real Malgudi? Why did this fictional place from childhood feel more enduring than the village that existed before me?

Perhaps because fiction distils the emotional truth of a place. It strips away noise and reveals a distilled world that remains untouched by erosion. Malgudi feels real because it expresses the essence of small-town India, its innocence, humour and contradictions. When I walked through Agumbe, I was not searching for television sets or exact locations. I was searching for the mood of childhood, the ethics of simplicity and the belief that communities can live by harmony rather than haste.

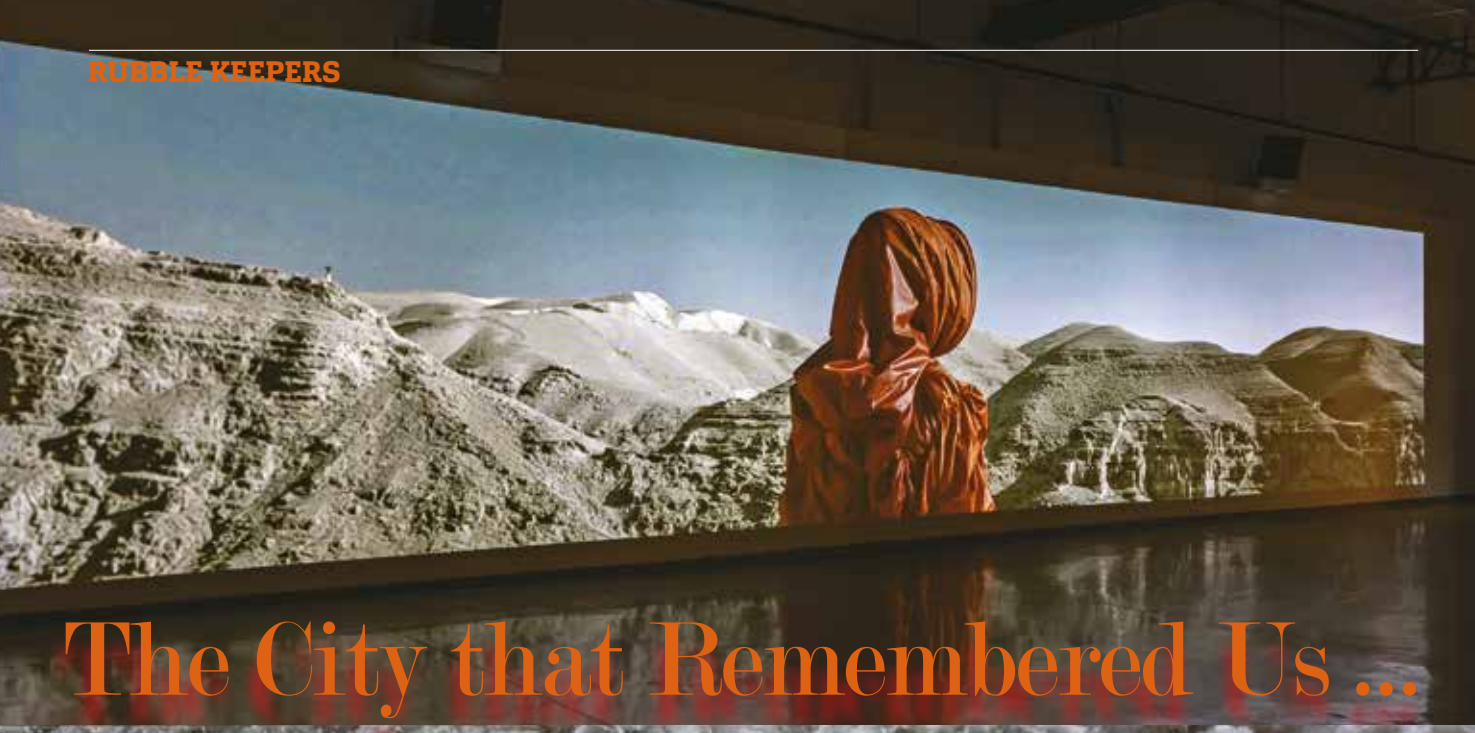
Fictional places feel real because they answer emotional questions that geography does not always resolve. To write about Agumbe was not to romanticise it. It was to understand the politics of encountering a place. A writer's presence alters what is observed. Nostalgia shapes perception. Landscapes become repositories of longing and hope and fear.

Agumbe was not waiting for my notebook. It had its own rhythms and stories. What it offered me was direction. It taught me how to think about coexistence, memory, erosion and the endurance of quiet systems. In the end, Agumbe did not become my novel because it resembled Malgudi. It became my novel because it revealed the deeper truth behind fictional places.

We do not invent such places to escape reality. We invent them so we can understand reality more honestly. A fictional place becomes real when it allows the writer to reconcile what is visible with what is felt and what is remembered with what is possible. Some landscapes we choose. Some landscapes choose us. In this way, I found the atmosphere for my next novel spontaneously.

The surroundings of Agumbe provided the theme for the novel. I went there, drawn by the memories of "Malgudi Days". But upon reaching there, I realised that a novel was waiting in the wings, because the late Shankar Nag had indeed decided to make Agumbe village the shooting location for "Malgudi Days". He also shot the stories of the great writer R.K. Narayan in Agumbe. But even though Agumbe appeared on the television screen, it was not Agumbe. Ultimately, it was Malgudi village.

It was on that very first visit that I decided to write the story of Agumbe village, which remains unwritten. It was love at first sight for me, which blossomed into the novel *Varshavan Ki Roopkatha*. Even today, when a tourist visits Agumbe and asks the villagers about Agumbe, the villagers call me and before handing the phone over to the tourist, they say, "Tell them everything, because you know more about our village than we do."



The City that Remembered Us ...





Vibha Galhotra

Is a conceptual artist whose multimedia oeuvre—including sculptures, installations, photographs, videos, site-specific work and public art interventions—addresses the shifting topography of a world radically transformed by climate change, consumerism, capitalism and globalisation

IN the After-Nation, the greatest crime was remembering.

History was classified as combustible material.

Libraries were demolished brick by brick; books pulped into silence.

Every time a city drowned or burned, the Ministry of Truth simply removed its name.

Maps became fiction.

Memory—resistance.

We were Rubble-keepers.

We scavenge at night, pockets full of broken futures:

a shard of temple mosaic, scorched concrete from a dam-burst village, rusted rods from luxury towers swallowed by monsoon.

We didn't know why we collected them, only that the rubble felt alive, like something unfinished, like a conversation interrupted mid-sentence.

Some of us were artists once. Some engineers. Some farmers who had forgotten the smell of rain. All exiles in our own land, carrying fragments of a country that no longer admits it is dying.

The sky that night glowed with the colour of open wounds, red and raw.

That's when we saw it.

A structure where there had been barren land yesterday.

Not assembled, grown.

Concrete rose like bone.

Steel ribs curved like spine.

Glass glimmered like wet leaves.

Ghungroos threaded through the walls quivered as if sensing us, memory trembling.

We approached with the caution survivors learn.

Inside, everything disobeyed logic, ceilings breathed,

books wrote themselves when touched,

floors turned to rivers then back to tile like nothing happened.

In one room, rain fell upward. In another, walls peeled back like eyelids to reveal constellations no telescope had catalogued. It felt as though we had stepped into a building dreaming itself into being.

We named it **The Archive of the Uninhabitable.**

Not a museum.

Not a refuge.

A phenomenon.

A possibility...

(For full version of this article, please go to www.outlookindia.com)

(Un)promised Installation shots by Vibha Galhotra

Visualising Fictional Landscapes



Trembling at the Edge of Sight Untitled artwork by Sujith S. N.



Premjish Achari

is an art curator, writer and filmmaker. His creative pursuits constantly attempt to disentangle the new visual regime we are caught up in

THE moment is suspended in the silence before the first mark is made. A fictional landscape trembles at the edge of sight. It has not yet become a line, or a stroke of colour, it just exists as a pressure behind the eyes, like a thick fog looming over an uncharted river, like a hint of shadow across the plaza where no footsteps echo. Imagination lingers here for the visual artist. This is the private corner of visual experience where imagination fractures and reforms. It is as if one has glimpsed these spaces in some half-remembered past, though one knows with surety, they have never been visited. Indistinguishable from one another, memory and imagination warp here.

The rainy courtyard glimpsed in childhood; its architectural structures slowly dissolve into the memory of a shoreline seen only in photographs. The red earth of tilled farmlands transforms fluidly into the flank of a gigantic mountain. Overheard conversations from a journey, evening in forgotten cities, inherited stories passed through generations of telling until their origins remain a mystery. A. K. Ramanujan, that meticulous cartographer of the interior, understood this well. In his translations of ancient Sangam poems and extensive meditations on the classical *thinai* system (ecozones), landscape was not only a topography; the misty hills of Kurinji contain an emotional register within them, the trembling of hidden rendezvous, the ache of forbidden longing. The parched and desolate wastelands of Palai signify abandonment, of the emptiness one feels when one is left alone in that landscape. Each of these terrains bore its own afflictions, its own specific sadness or joy. When the artist imagines a landscape that has never existed, they too are plotting such a map, encoding within it the visible elements of an entire affective and temporal code. In this imagination horizon is not merely a line where earth merges with the sky, but also becomes an expression of limits or possibilities. Colour becomes a language, the bleeding of light as Goethe said and the golden suffocation of nostalgia.

(For full version of this article, please go to www.outlookindia.com)

COURTESY: SAKSHI GALLERY



Goapocalypse



Mayabhushan Nagvenkar

Is the author of *Goa < 2075*. It is available on www.goa2075.com in two languages—English and Marathi. It is a warning of sorts of Goa's swift descent into a dystopian future, assembled on the ruins of the fast-decaying old



THE mortal remains of an arterial road skims my home on its way to downtown Anjuna, once a quiet beach village 'discovered' by the hippies, explored by backpackers, only to be jackbooted by mass tourism and finally consumed by real estate sharks.

You could call it a road until more than a year ago, before it was indiscriminately dug up for widening in anticipation of a new wave of luxury villas and gated communities springing up in downtown Anjuna and the neo-elite-infected village of Assagao alongside. And there are aplenty coming up. One rarely builds a home now. One only invests in villas.

Each vehicle that passes lifts a plume of dust that takes minutes to settle. But in tourism-plagued coastal villages in Goa, where time was once rumoured to come to a standstill, nothing really settles now.

At night especially, the dust makes everything disappear; sometimes even the darkness.

Like it is in 2025, everything is on sale in Goa by 2075. Only there is no one left to raise an eyebrow 50 years hence.

By 2075, governance in the state is no longer in the hands of elected representatives but with a corporate board called the Democratic Corporation of Go-aah. The surface is reserved for wealthy tourists and a class of uber-rich licensed residents known as Overlords, who pay a hefty fee for the privilege of living above ground. Most of the land's original inhabitants and blue-collar migrant workers, labelled 'economically unviable' or Subterraneans, have been relocated to artificially created underground caverns: out of sight.

The subterranean world is not science fiction at all. It is simply what happens when those who do not 'fit in' are pushed far enough away to stop being seen. Much like present-day Goa, where the lower middle class and the poor have been priced out of the housing market and pushed to the farthest margins of the state's boundaries and sometimes even beyond its borders, in search of an affordable home. The middle class is next on the chopping block.

Shorn of all body hair for public health reasons (which is also why no one raises their eyebrows anymore; they have none) and subject to strict movement controls, the Subterraneans are permitted only on commute routes and designated work zones in service of the Overlords and their enterprises. Surveillance is justified as vigilance and control is the bedrock of administrative efficiency in Go-aah, circa 2075.

Above ground, Go-aah's visual and ecological character is radically transformed. The historic Fontainhas neighbourhood, Goa's 18th-century Latin quarter styled after narrow-laned Lisbon streets, has been remodelled into a stylised Chinatown to serve Macau-based casino interests. As a result, the pastel-coloured houses of the old quarter are repainted in various shades of red. Fontainhas' original residents, seemingly as 'aged' as the locality itself, have already been quietly eased out of sight.

Drones zip along designated aero skyways above, mapping tourist flows and spotting unauthorised movement below. On the ground, forests are cleared on a war-footing, replaced with genetically modified vegetation tailored to the Corporation's aesthetic standards. In the Corporation's ethos, nature, like architecture, is curated and allowed to exist only if it photographs well. Of late, Goa's beach villages are praised for the range of cuisines they now offer. There's invariably more than one restaurant serving sushi, ceviche, carpaccio, quinoa bowls, truffle-laced pastas, bao bangin' buns... that's rare variety alright in a village ecosystem. But faced with such unfathomable excess, one must at least on some occasion question the cost involved. What did one lose for the comfort of choosing from three Neapolitan wood-fired pizza vends? What did one lose for the option of drinking a warm sake on a cold December night?

Postscript: Many others rooted to other pin codes like mine, 403509, may have their own stories that have haunted them. Acknowledged. Nevertheless, this one's mine.

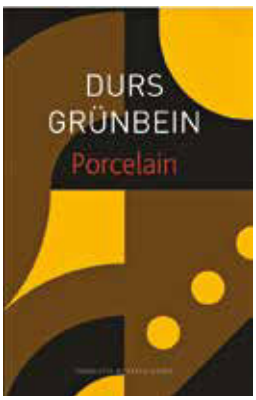
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Altinho Cross Artwork by Govit Morajkar

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In Memoriam



Porcelain | Durs Grünbein
Trans. Karen Leeder |
Seagull Books | Rs 499

Durs Grünbein
Born in Dresden in 1962, he is often described as the defining poet of post-reunification Germany, ranging from classical antiquity to neuroscience in his essays and verse. He lives in Berlin and has translated writers from Aeschylus to John Ashbery

Porcelain

Say after me: it doesn't take much to make
a moonscape of a city. Or charcoal of the folk
who lived there. Imagine this: in the time it takes
to nip out of the opera for a pack of fags
the streets were death traps, bubbling with tar.
Just now, frost, hands frozen blue on handlebars,
then the sea of houses was raked by desert winds.
Stiff as pharaohs in their winter coats they burned.
Never was a summer hotter. The last alarm
hardly faded—and the ashes were still warm.

*

Luther standing there: the image that I can't let go.
Surrounded by a wasteland, shoots of tender green,
under a disdainful sky, almost forgotten, memento
of the blaze: and in this urban desert, a window arch remains.
Do you recall? The lonely risalit, black with soot,
moaning soundlessly, like the o in torso . . . chorus . . . baroque.
A mote like this in your eye and you're stuck
with it for life. And yet the greatest shock
was not the ruined church, his final thesis—
but that all around the sheep grazed on oblivious.

*

Memory: here's the thing: it starts in certain regions
of the brain and then returns. And origin and home
are just grains of sand in the shifting dunes of neurons.
Blindly, we follow those early paths from childhood on
inscribed into the cortex. And by sense of place we mean:
that this is where it's at, inside your head and not out there:
that's to say what comes and goes in here is mémoire involontaire.
Sitting at the bar, it feels like your mind's been
read when Dresden's resurrected from the gutters,
a distant greeting across time and space—from Hypothalamus.

*

Crazy dream that will not let me be. I am there alone,
unnamed witness to the night of bombs, frozen, mute.
What if you were him, that angel in the skin of stone,
arms spread wide, figure on the cathedral roof?
Below, the city sinks in rubble: he remains unscathed,
hardened by the blaze, ashes cold upon his lips.
Locked inside him, helpless, no one hears you scream.
Are those people popping like chestnuts between
the gutted trams, their charred metal ribs?
Crazy dream: from this cranium nothing escapes.

(Porcelain *is a 49-poem elegy in which Durs Grünbein weaves history, memory and reflection to mourn and interrogate the destruction of his hometown Dresden and the complex legacy of its devastation.*)

FINN, THE HUMAN Artwork by Paribartana Mohanty

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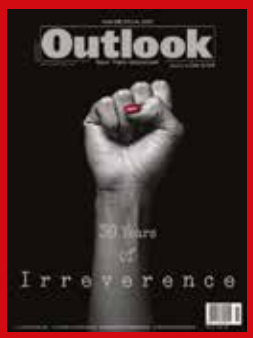
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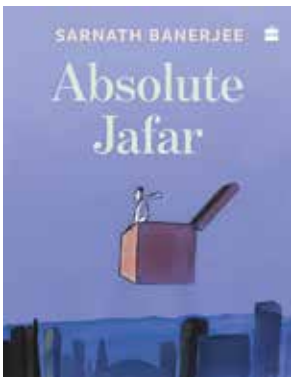
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A Day in the Life of Jafar

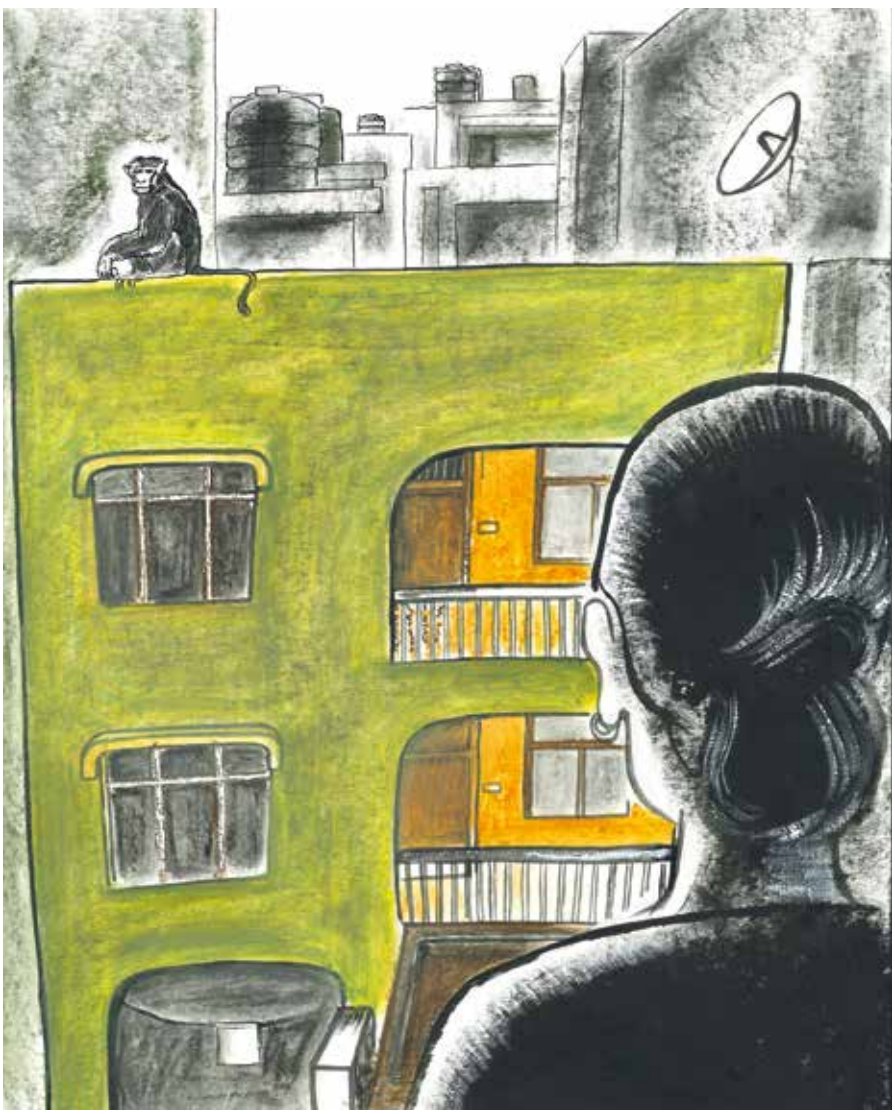


ABSOLUTE JAFAR | **Sarnath Banerjee** | Harper Collins | 272 pages | Rs 799

Sarnath Banerjee is the author of the graphic novels *Corridor*, *The Barn Owl's Wondrous Capers*, *The Harappa Files*, *All Quiet in Vikaspuri* and *Doab Dil*. He created Gallery of Losers, a series of billboards for the 2012 London Olympics. His installation, Critical Imagination Deficit, was showcased at the 13th Berlin Biennale 2025

These strips are from his upcoming graphic novel *Absolute Jafar*. Set in a world where bureaucracies and borders shape human relationships, *Absolute Jafar* is a poignant meditation on belonging and becoming

Parting Ways



At the same time, living in Delhi was like living in the late Edo period.



The politics was moderate...



the economy thriving...



People could make a modest living from their interests... contemporary dancers, wildlife photographers and even Bunraku puppeteers.



The mornings were lazy...



afternoons erotic...



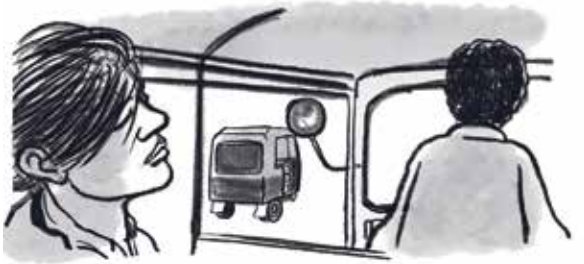
evenings breezy...



and nights mysterious.



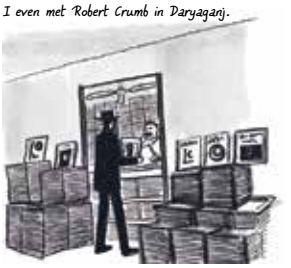
The gentle rattle of the auto could make the most hardened insomniac doze off.



In Delhi, it would be no surprise to bump into a celebrity historian outside Khan Market, walking back to IIC with a bottle of Nivea under his arm.



I even met Robert Crumb in Daryaganj.



That autumn afternoon, he bought half the stock of an old record shop in Pataudi House.



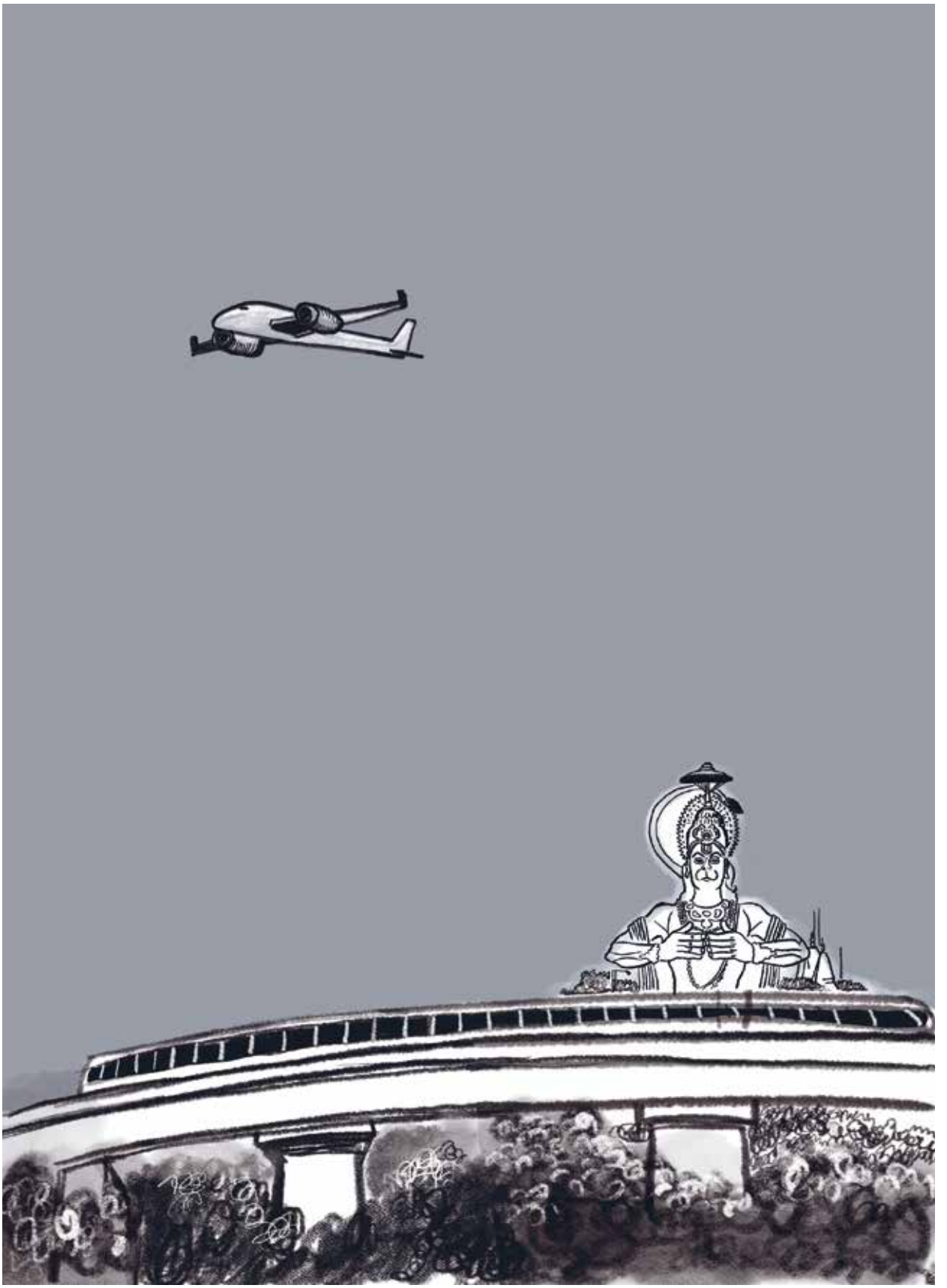
A group of us took Crumb and Aline Kominski to Moti Mahal. We chatted about musicians. From K.L. Saigal to Narendra Chanchal, the electro-devotional songs sensation.





It felt insane leaving the floating world of Delhi. But the Indian bureaucracy finally caught up with us. And when Mahrukh got the one-year residency to Berlin, she decided to take it. Escape the Indo-Pak madness, at least for a bit.





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