

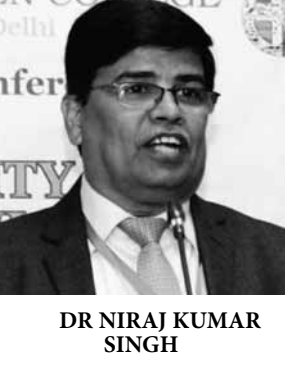






GUEST COLUMN / DR NIRAJ KUMAR SINGH

At the Crossroads: Will We Choose a Sustainable Future?



As humanity grapples with unprecedented environmental challenges and dwindling resources, sustainability stands at a pivotal crossroads. The urgency to reconcile economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity has never been more pressing.

Sustainable development practices. Addressing the root causes, such as climate change and environmental degradation, is crucial to mitigate these natural disasters' frequency and severity.

stringent environmental regulations. Sustainable development is essential. Investments in renewable energy sources, like solar and wind, provide sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels, reducing environmental impact.

SARVA HARYANA GRAMIN BANK

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

SARVA HARYANA GRAMIN BANK (Secured Creditor) invites sealed tenders from the public for purchase of the under mentioned assets which are held as security interest in respect of secured debt amounting to ₹6265560.20/-

Table with columns: Name of Borrower, Description of the properties mortgaged, Date of Demand Notice, Date of Auction, Amount O/S

Place : KAITHAL Date : 16.08.2024

PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LTD.

Pursuant to taking possession of the secured asset mentioned hereunder by the Authorized Officer of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LTD.

Pursuant to taking possession of the secured asset mentioned hereunder by the Authorized Officer of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

ICICI Home Finance

Corporate Office: ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ICICI HFC Tower, Andheri-Kurla Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400059, India

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG

SHORT TERMS NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Sealed item rate tenders for the following works are hereby invited on form PW 6 by the Assistant Engineer, Jal Shakti Sub Division Nahana on behalf of Governor of H.P.

Table with columns: Sr. No, Description, E/ Cost, E/Money, Time, Cost of Form

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-

- 1. The Tender of those Contractors/Firms will not be considered whose previous performance is not found satisfactory.

PUBLIC NOTICE I, Ashok Kumar Gang, son of Shri Janak Raj, Resident of 250 Model Town Rania, Fatehabad (Haryana), declared that sale deed number 1256 dated 12-11-1997

LOST & FOUND I, Rajwanti W/o Narender Kumar R/o Village Madrauda declare that sale deed no. 1413 dated 06.12.2016 is registered.

PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK

BRANCH : DPS, BATALA. CODE - 470700 NOTICE FOR ARREARS OF RENT OF LOCKERS That Punjab National Bank had rented Safe Deposit Vaults (Lockers) to the respective locker hirers as mentioned in the table below.

Table with columns: Locker Number, Name of the Locker Holder, Address of the locker holder as per Branch Records

UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED Regd. Off- 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar CIN: L17115HR1993PLC032092 EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

Table with columns: Particulars, Quarter Ended, Year Ended

Public Notice I, Shriom Sharma, S/o Sh. Satpal Sharma, R/o House No. 944/13, behind Agarwal Mandi, Panipat, declare that my name Shriom Sharma is registered with me in Passport number R3813801 and my wife's name is Reena Sharma is registered.

AGRO CHEM PUNJAB LIMITED

REGD. OFFICE, DHILLON COMPLEX, MANIMAJRA, CHANDIGARH. CIN 24299CH1984PLC006004

Public Notice

General public is hereby informed that Mr. Vineet Lamba, S/o Late Smt. Kamlesh Lamba R/o L-704, Model Town, Panipat has applied for transfer of ownership of flat No E-222, & customer ID No- PPT-10225 Apartment TDI city, Panipat Haryana in her/his name claiming her/him self the legal heir of deceased Late Smt. Kamlesh Lamba W/o Hari Krishan Lal Lamba as per document, dated in 14/07/2023 in records of company i.e. TDI INFACORP (INDIA) LTD.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Smt. Manju Devi W/o Sh. Ram Nandan Sonpat wants to avail the home loan from DMI Housing Finance Ltd. against property NEW PUID NO. 1J3HK95 OLD PUID NO. 228C1067/92 HOUSE MEASURING 143.0 SQ.YDS. COMPRISED IN KHAWATA NO. 265, KHATA NO. 289, KHASRA NO. 3497 MIN (24), 3498(2-8), 3499(2-8), 3500(1-1), 3501(1-6), 3502 ADARSH NAGAR, TEHSIL & DISTT. SONPAT, HARYANA-131001 (3-12) But Sh. Anu Kaushik S/o Sh. Narayan Dutt Sold the Property to Smt. Kamlesh W/o Sh. Satnarayan through Regd. Sale Deed No. 11518 Dated 01/02/2016 which went missing somewhere. F.I.R. Registered with App. No. 1232907124014141 any other person / DSA/ any Financial Institute / Banks/ Govt. Deptt/ Semi Govt. Deptt/ may have obtained or issue Loan / Stay Order/Court Case against this property as well as this documents. They can file an objection regarding the missing of Sale Deed No. 11518 DATED 1-2-2016 within 7 days (Seven Days) of the publication as below addresses:-

LAL CHAND MAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Village Jhansa, District Kurukshetra-136130 Haryana Affiliated to Kurukshetra University Kurukshetra & Approved by NCTE

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - III DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL CHANDIGARH (DRT 3)

Ground Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-7-A, Chandigarh-160017 DEMAND NOTICE (PUBLICATION) Notice Under Sections 25 to 28 Of The Recovery Of Debts & Bankruptcy Act, 1993 And Rule 2 Of Second Schedule To The Income Tax Act, 1961. RC/119/2023 16-03-2024 ICICI BANK LIMITED

TO, (C) 1 BELGLASS BOARDS PVT LTD, THROUGH ITS DIRECTORS, 3/F, SANT ISHAR SINGH NAGAR, ROAD, LUDHIANA, PUNJAB

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, CHANDIGARH (DRT 3) in OA/24/19/2018 an amount of Rs. 26,03,863.53/- (Rupees Twenty Nine Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty Three And Paise Fifty Three Only) along with pendente lite and future interest @ 7.00% Simple Interest Yearly w.e.f. 07/09/2018 is due against you and costs of Rs. 29,000/- (Rupees Twenty Nine Thousand Only) has become due against you (Jointly and severally/ Fully/Limited).

Public Notice I, Shriom Sharma, S/o Sh. Satpal Sharma, R/o House No. 944/13, behind Agarwal Mandi, Panipat, declare that my name Shriom Sharma is registered with me in Passport number R3813801 and my wife's name is Reena Sharma is registered.

Public Notice THAT IS FOR NOTICE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC that I, Jyotsna Chandra s/o Gangs Bishara, R/o House No.309, Rattak, Tehsil and Distt Kurukshetra (886/37/74/15) DECLARED that I am the Present Owner of the Property mentioned in question Mesure, 123.611 Sq.Mts, through vide Regd Certificate Deed of Title Ownership no.26521 dated 16/08/2024 and I have been the Present Owner of the Property since my Negligence apart on my part, then Civil/criminal liability will arise upon me. That if anybody found or have objection to the above mentioned name kindly contact within 7 days. Advocate Bhavishay Sahni Chamber no.501, distt Court, Karnal.

Public Notice THAT IS FOR NOTICE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC that I, Jyotsna Chandra s/o Gangs Bishara, R/o House No.309, Rattak, Tehsil and Distt Karnal(335434/15/7501), DECLARED that I am the Present Owner of the Property mentioned in question through vide Regd Certificate/Deed of Title Ownership no.27761 dated 19/07/2021. That I am getting loan from the Present Owner of the Property from Finance Home Finance Company Ltd with a lead ID no.7440095. That I never mortgage it anywhere in all India and I have no objection to the above mentioned Name. Negligence apart on my part, then Civil/criminal liability will arise upon me. That if anybody found or have objection to the above mentioned name kindly contact within 7 days. Advocate Bhavishay Sahni Chamber no.501, distt Court, Karnal.

AGRO CHEM PUNJAB LIMITED REGD. OFFICE, DHILLON COMPLEX, MANIMAJRA, CHANDIGARH. CIN 24299CH1984PLC006004 Phone No. 0172-274628, E-mailed : pub.dkdabi@gmail.com

नीलामी सूचना

सर्वप्रथम को सूचित किया जाता है कि ग्राम पंचायत नोनन्द के रामलाल तालाबों में बैरवाला चौड़, गुना चौड़, नीली तालाब, रेशा तालाब, चाउड तालाब को मरली पाने के लिए नीलामी दिनांक 28 अगस्त, 2024 को प्रातः 10:00 बजे ग्रामी चौपाल में खराई जायेगी।

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Smt. Manju Devi W/o Sh. Ram Nandan Sonpat wants to avail the home loan from DMI Housing Finance Ltd. against property NEW PUID NO. 1J3HK95 OLD PUID NO. 228C1067/92 HOUSE MEASURING 143.0 SQ.YDS. COMPRISED IN KHAWATA NO. 265, KHATA NO. 289, KHASRA NO. 3497 MIN (24), 3498(2-8), 3499(2-8), 3500(1-1), 3501(1-6), 3502 ADARSH NAGAR, TEHSIL & DISTT. SONPAT, HARYANA-131001 (3-12) But Sh. Anu Kaushik S/o Sh. Narayan Dutt Sold the Property to Smt. Kamlesh W/o Sh. Satnarayan through Regd. Sale Deed No. 11518 Dated 01/02/2016 which went missing somewhere. F.I.R. Registered with App. No. 1232907124014141 any other person / DSA/ any Financial Institute / Banks/ Govt. Deptt/ Semi Govt. Deptt/ may have obtained or issue Loan / Stay Order/Court Case against this property as well as this documents. They can file an objection regarding the missing of Sale Deed No. 11518 DATED 1-2-2016 within 7 days (Seven Days) of the publication as below addresses:-

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Interim govt committed to free & fair polls: Yunus

PTI ■ DHAKA

The caretaker government in Bangladesh is committed to ensuring a transition to inclusive and pluralistic democracy...

sworn in on August 8, Yunus said, "Our government is committed to ensuring a transition to inclusive and pluralistic democracy...

or guidance for that. No budget support from anybody. It is just an outpouring of their emotions and commitment to the goals of the Second Revolution...



ing the financial system to make sure that wealth is shared by all.

decades later our students-led Second Revolution is inspiring youth throughout the global south to raise their voice for democracy, human rights, dignity, equality and shared prosperity...

10 killed in Israeli strike in southern Lebanon

AP ■ NABATIEH (LEBANON)

An Israeli strike in southern Lebanon early Saturday killed at least 10 Syrian nationals, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry.

Hezbollah. Mohammad Shoaib, who runs a slaughterhouse in Wadi al-Kfour, said the area struck was an "industrial and civilian area" that contained factories producing bricks, metal, and aluminum...

top commander, whom Israel accused of leading a rocket attack on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights that killed 12 youths.

Nearly 650 people killed in recent violence in Bangladesh: UN report

PTI ■ DHAKA/GENEVA

Nearly 650 people have been killed in the recent unrest in Bangladesh between July 16 and August 11, the UN Human Rights Office has said in a preliminary report...

Student demonstrations. The number of reported killings in revenge attacks since that time remains to be determined, the report, released on Friday in Geneva, said.

details of those killed and injured, the report suggested. Triggered by the reinstatement of a quota system for the allocation of jobs in civil services, the student protests in Bangladesh in mid-June turned violent...

well as reprisals against and revenge killings of members of the former ruling party and police following the resignation of Hasina on August 5, the report said.

Missile hits Ukraine as Kyiv's troops push into Kursk region

AP ■ MOSCOW

A Russian missile strike sparked a blaze in the Ukrainian city of Sumy on Saturday, while Ukrainian forces continued to push into Russia's Kursk border region.

"In the main sections of the ragged front, the situation has stabilized. But there are areas where the enemy continues to try to expand its bridgehead," he wrote on his Telegram channel.



A damaged monument to Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin stands in a central square in Sudzha, Kursk region.

the Kursk incursion is notable for its size, speed, the reported involvement of battle-hardened Ukrainian brigades and the length of time they have stayed inside Russia.

Teenager shoots Indian-origin man dead in US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

A 36-year-old Indian-origin man has been shot and killed after a teenage boy robbed a convenience store in the US state of North Carolina, authorities said.



American businessman and Microsoft founder Bill Gates during flagging off the First India Day celebrations, in Greater Seattle area, USA.

Rana can be extradited to India, rules US court

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

In a huge setback to Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a US court has ruled that the Pakistani-origin Canadian businessman could be extradited to India where he is wanted for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai terror attack...

Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed the District Court in the Central District of California's denial of his habeas corpus petition challenging a magistrate judge's certification of his as extraditable to India...

2008. Rana has the option of appealing against the ruling. He still has not run out of all the legal options to prevent his extradition to India.

Pak Intel agencies continue to abduct critics, reveal families

PTI ■ LAHORE

Intelligence agencies in Pakistan continue to abduct social media activists and vloggers for criticising the government and the powerful military establishment in the country, their families have alleged and approached courts in Punjab province.

Two social media activists of former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, Naeem Ahmad Yasin and Arsalan Akhtar, have allegedly been arrested by intelligence agencies in the Punjab province of Pakistan.

famous Pakistani song "Dil Dil Pakistan" and released a video on social media criticising the high prices of electricity and extra taxes added to it.

ances" of its political workers. Professor Mazhar-ul-Hassan and Zahoor-ul-Hassan, the brothers of PTI former social media head Azhar Mashwani, and Khan's close aide Shahbaz Gill's brother Ghulam Shabbir have also been missing since June last year.

Glacial lake outburst devastated Everest village

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Army officials, civic authorities and scientists on Saturday confirmed that the massive flash floods in a high-altitude village in the Everest region of Nepal were caused by two glacial lake outbursts leading to widespread devastation.

A team of experts and authorities were dispatched in a helicopter to inspect and monitor the disaster site and investigate the cause of the sudden flood and mudslide that struck the village.

of Nepal (CSN), a group of Nepal-based glaciologists working in the Himalayas, said in a post on X: "The lake, which is approximately 39,081.87 square meters in size and located upstream of Thame Village in Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality, caused the devastation in Thame Village on August 16th.

PPGCL advertisement for Ph.D. entrance test 06.09.2024, including details of the exam and contact information.







# NOE □ WHERE GLOBAL FLAVOURS MEET RARE INGREDIENTS!

Nestled in the heart of Lutyens Delhi in the iconic Diplomat Hotel, the recently launched 'NOE' is set to redefine the dining culture in the city, bringing a vibrant social atmosphere and an innovative culinary experience

By SHARMILA CHAND

I wanted an elevated comfort food zone to take guests through a culinary journey blending global flavors with local influences to craft a unique experience," says Sandeep Bishnoi, the Founder who has been associated with creative brands such as Perch Wine & Coffee Bar and Hoots. Here innovative culinary experience is the key with Chef Dhruv Nijhawan, at the helm of affairs. An alumnus of Le Cordon Bleu, India, Chef Dhruv's passion for ingenious cooking techniques and for reviving rare, authentic ingredients, is well known. At NOE, he brings forth his passion as is evident in the distinctive menu that celebrates the art of 'elevating comfort food'. Evoking nostalgia and inspiring innovation, the kitchen at NOE re-invents handpicked traditional comfort dishes from world cuisines using lesser-known ingredient pairings and creative cooking techniques. From high-quality produce to regional and international cuisines, each dish encapsulates a rich tapestry of flavours and the ingredients' culinary heritage.

Speaking about the cooking methods, chef Dhruv tells me, "Every dish tells a story of a unique ingredient and a different cooking method. Reinventing modern classic dishes in a flavour forward method lies at the heart of our cooking. NOE incorporates culinary techniques from around the world using star ingredients to create an innovative dining experience." Hence, Potato & Chilli Orange sits nicely looking pretty in front of me. Swedish Hasselback potatoes in smoked brown butter with savoury cheena, bajji chili, orange zest, Korean chilli oil and pea shoot cress, is one perfect example of Dhruv's philosophy. And so is 'Tofu & Garum' - an umami flavoured silken tofu with vegan mushroom garum, soy, leek circles, porcini mushrooms & nori powder. For mutton lovers, what better than 'Kanda & Picante'? "Kaffir lime and coriander mutton kanda with broccoli picante puree finished with chermoula crumble," explains chef. He also recommends 'John Dory & Mazavaroo' - pan-seared John Dory with cauliflower crème, smoked Mazavaroo, tossed almond flakes served with cashew duqqa. The menu is extensive with a lot more stars like 'Lamb & Molé' - medium-rare cooked lamb chop with curry leaf, thyme, black molé sauce, togarashi tossed snap peas, sumac onions with seasonal cress. For crab lovers, 'Crab & Wasabi' is strongly recommended. Crab meat with avocado, wasabi, lime puree, water chestnuts, asparagus, compressed cucumbers and seasonal cress. From large plate section, Pumpkin & Pomegranate turned out to be my favourite. Braised pumpkin with pomegranate sauce reduced with all spice and tahini, served with a sumac cress salad. 'Potato & Capers' is another one I lapped up. You will love layered potato slices with lemon zest cream, asparagus and olive. The relish of smoked onion added to the flavor



brilliantly accompanied by a side salad in orange dressing. 'Onigiri & Rasam' is a brilliant take on innovative experimentation. Jasmine rice onigiri with a light rasam sauce finished with celery dust, furikake peashoot, you would have never relished rasam in this medium. The dessert section looks pretty impressive, each dish comes with a lavish dose of drama to oomph things up. For me, Biscoff & Chai was the perfect way to wind up the meal. A vanilla cardamom sponge cake with Biscoff mousse and masala chai whipped cream cheese, with a spiced ginger sable & Biscoff gelato, simply bowled me over. Complementing culinary experience is the creative highball cocktail program served at NOE's bar. Managed by Hoots - recently awarded as one of Asia's Top 50 Bars, the highball bar concept emphasises refreshing, perfectly balanced cocktails created with premium spirits and house-made mixers, showcasing creativity and craftsmanship. Inspired by its prestigious address



flows effortlessly into a trendy bar and a plush rustic outdoor deck as well as an intimate courtyard," tells Amit Chhabra, of studio LDC, the team behind the design architects of NOE. With diverse settings, NOE offers layers of sensory experiences for all moods and occasions where guests can enjoy different spaces in a single visit or each separately over multiple ones. Whether it's a casual gathering over food and drinks, a rendezvous with a friend, a special celebration, solo culinary adventures, a romantic date, or even small events, NOE promises for a memorable time. Featuring an extensive breakfast spread, an all-day dining menu, delectable Sunday brunches, and a creative drinks menu along with rotating seasonal menus and pop-up surprises, NOE welcomes you to a world of elevated comfort food, exquisite cocktails, and unforgettable dining experiences. Overall, the vibe at NOE is elegant and chic. Sharmila Chand is an author and independent journalist who writes on Travel, Food and Lifestyle



## A NOSTALGIC CULINARY FARE AT INDIAN REPUBLIC CANTEEN

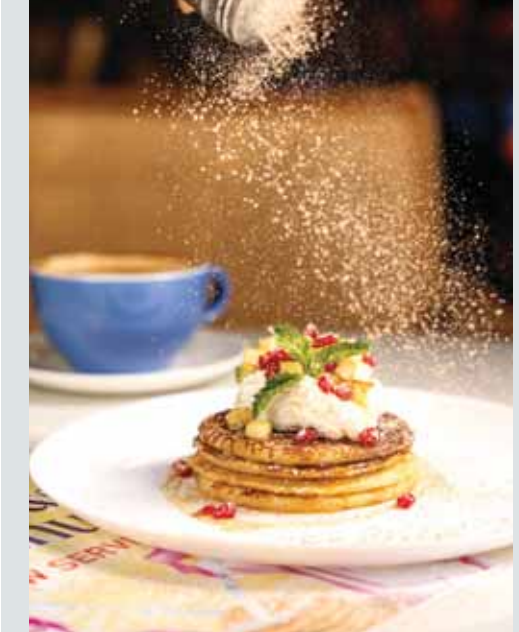
By SHARMILA CHAND

Ever heard of Waffle Imarti, Mac n Cheese Pakora, Waffle Bread Pakora, Samosa Cannelloni? If no, head to Indian Republic Canteen in the heart of capital's popular Connaught Place and you will get to taste innovative dishes with a flair for fun. Why the name Indian Republic, I asked the team. "The concept is inspired by the diversity of the Indian Republic, aiming to create a welcoming and accessible environment to a familiar canteen setting, where all patrons can feel comfortable and engaged," is the answer. Alok Aggarwal Co-Founder- Indian Republic Canteen further explains, "Our establishment is founded on the concept of nostalgia, aiming to evoke cherished memories of simple, beloved foods such as noodles, samosas, and bread pakoras from one's college days. We are devoted to celebrating these dishes and encouraging patrons to savor

them without reservation. The interior design of our space is a contemporary fusion of modernity and nostalgia. It reflects both cutting-edge trends and traditional influences, presenting a vision of India that is globally stylish yet deeply rooted in Indian sensibilities."



**BREAKFAST SOIREES**  
If not in a mood to rustle up breakfast at home, then just hop in here. They have introduced a new breakfast menu, serving a delightful array of morning treats that promise to start your day on a flavorful note. Imagine the perfect morning with a spread of traditional and contemporary breakfast dishes, curated to suit every palate. From 8 AM to 11 AM, you can indulge in a hearty and wholesome breakfast experience that blends the best of regional flavors with popular morning staples. The highlight of my breakfast was the comforting taste of Nagori Halwa, a classic dish that combines the rich flavors of semolina and sugar, bringing a touch of nostalgia to your breakfast. How could I miss the delicious Bedmi Sabzi, just perfect for my taste. For a flavour of traditional regional classic, Indori Poha, garnished with fresh



coriander, sev, and a squeeze of lemon, captures the essence of Indore's street food culture so beautifully. If you prefer something nutritious and savory, the Besan Chilla with Chutney

provides a protein-packed option, featuring a gram flour pancake served with a side of tangy chutney. The Bombay Sandwich offers a taste of Mumbai with layers of fresh vegetables and

tangy chutneys sandwiched between slices of soft bread. Health-conscious diners need not worry as they have option of Masala Oats, Banana Muesli Bowl, a refreshing mix of

muesli, fresh bananas, and yogurt, offering a perfect balance of taste and nutrition. For the ubiquitous South Indian flavors, the menu includes crispy and golden Dosa, served with traditional sambar and chutneys, transporting you to the streets of Southern India. Compliment your meal with a selection of fresh juices, made from seasonal fruits, to add a refreshing touch to your breakfast. Or go for signature drinks like The IRC Shichanji, a longstanding favorite, alongside the Imli Fritz. Each drink is crafted to be unique and memorable, aligning with the overall concept of the place.

**TO CONCLUDE**  
Whether you are looking for a quick bite or a leisurely breakfast, Indian Republic Canteen's thoughtful and exciting menu is well curated to cater to all your hunger cravings.  
**CHECK IT OUT**  
Time: 08:00am to 11:00am  
Location — H-26, Connaught Circle, Block H, Connaught Place, New Delhi

"Love does not begin and end the way we seem to think it does. Love is a battle, love is a war; love is a growing up"  
— Gareth Thomas



Photo: Pankaj Kumar

# RAKSHA BANDHAN

## CELEBRATING THE BEAUTY OF PURE BONDS

In the heart of Delhi, with monsoon clouds overhead, the streets burst into life for Raksha Bandhan. Amidst the lively chaos and bright colours, the festival unfolds as a touching celebration of sibling love. Each stall, filled with colourful rakhis, tells a story of pure bonds and heartfelt traditions, turning everyday moments into cherished memories, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

As the festive season arrives, bringing with it a time of warmth, togetherness and cherished traditions, one celebration stands out for its profound significance — the bond between brothers and sisters. Raksha Bandhan, a festival that embodies untold love and silent care, is not just a ritual but a celebration of a "PURE BOND." Amidst this atmosphere, the vibrant marketplaces come alive with the spirit of Raksha Bandhan and nowhere is this evident than in Delhi's iconic Sadar Bazar. The festival's essence is captured not just through rituals but through the bustling, colourful preparations that fill the market, making it a focal point of the celebration.

### THE ENCHANTING FESTIVAL ATMOSPHERE

Sadar Bazar, one of Delhi's oldest and busiest markets, undergoes a remarkable transformation as Raksha Bandhan approaches. The market, typically known for its wide range of goods, turns into a hub of colour and excitement, with rakhis and festive decorations taking center stage. Every shop and vendor gears up for the big day, filling the air with a lively sense of excitement. The narrow lanes of Sadar Bazar, usually crowded with shoppers, become even more packed as people move from stall to stall, searching for the perfect rakhi. The market itself seems to join in the celebration, with every corner reflecting the spirit of Raksha Bandhan. Despite the unpredictable weather during the monsoon season, with sudden bursts of rain and heat, enthusiastic shoppers continue to pour into Sadar Bazar. The market remains crowded, even in the rain, as people carry umbrellas or brave the elements to get what they need. There is a shared determination among the shoppers, a sense that no amount of rain or heat can dampen the joy of preparing for Raksha Bandhan.

### A MARKET FULL OF CHOICES

One of the most striking features of Sadar Bazar during Raksha Bandhan is the sheer variety of rakhis on display. The market caters to all tastes and budgets, ensuring

“ONE OF THE MOST HEARTWARMING SIGHTS IN THE MARKET IS THE SELECTION OF CHILDREN'S RAKHIS, OFTEN FEATURING POPULAR CHARACTERS. A YOUNG GIRL, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS OVERHEARD ASKING A VENDOR, "BHAIIYA, DO YOU HAVE A SPIDER-MAN RAKHI?" THIS SMALL MOMENT BEAUTIFULLY ENCAPSULATES THE SIBLING BOND, A SISTER KNOWING EXACTLY WHAT WILL MAKE HER YOUNGER BROTHER SMILE

that everyone can find something special. From simple, traditional rakhis costing as little as ₹ 10 for a dozen to more elaborate designs priced at ₹ 70 or ₹ 100 per dozen, the market offers something for everyone. Rakhis come in every imaginable style, from classic designs featuring beads and threads to more modern versions adorned with glitter and stones. Children's rakhis, often featuring popular cartoon characters and superheroes, are among the most popular items. Little girls excitedly pick out rakhis for their brothers, carefully choosing ones that they know will bring a smile to their siblings' faces. A young girl, for example, was overheard asking a vendor, "Bhaiya, do you have a Spider-Man rakhi?" This small moment beautifully encapsulates the sibling bond, a sister knowing exactly what will make her younger brother smile. A small moment that perfectly captures the thoughtfulness and love that define Raksha Bandhan. The girl knew exactly what her brother would love and she was determined to find it for him.

### THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE FESTIVAL

The vendors and artisans are integral to the Raksha Bandhan experience. Their work begins long before the festival, with many starting preparations at least a month in advance. Crafting each rakhi requires skill, patience and a deep understanding of what the festival means to people. For these artisans, Raksha Bandhan is more than just another business opportunity; it's a chance to contribute to a tradition that has been passed down through generations. A shopkeeper in Sadar Bazar explained how much effort goes into preparing for Raksha Bandhan. "We start getting ready about a month before," he said. "There's a lot of hard work, but it's worth it when you see the market come alive like this. Even in the rain, people come. It's something we love." His words highlighted the dedication that goes into making the festival special for everyone. Despite the long hours and sometimes challenging conditions, the vendors take pride in being part of something bigger than just selling rakhis. They are part of a tradition that brings people together, year after year.

The artisans also take great care in crafting each rakhi. They understand that these simple threads carry significant emotional weight. For them, it's important that every rakhi reflects the love and care that

siblings have for each other. They often work late into the night, ensuring that their creations are perfect. It's not just about making something that looks good, it's about creating something that will be cherished.

### A FESTIVAL OF EMOTIONS

Raksha Bandhan is a time of joy and celebration, but it can also bring about feelings of longing, especially for those who are separated from their loved ones. Not everyone is fortunate enough to be with their siblings on this special day, and for them, the festival carries a bittersweet note. A woman in Sadar Bazar, carefully choosing rakhis to send to her brother who lives far away, shared her plans to send them by post. Despite modern courier services offering faster delivery, she preferred the traditional method, finding something special in the anticipation that comes with receiving a package by postman. Her story is just one of many that highlight the emotional depth of Raksha Bandhan. The festival is not just about the physical act of tying a rakhi, it's about the connection that siblings share, a connection that goes beyond time and distance. Even when miles apart, the bond remains strong and the act of sending a rakhi is a way of maintaining that bond. It serves as a reminder that, no matter where life takes people, the relationships that matter most are always worth celebrating.

### THE ESSENCE OF TRADITION

As Raksha Bandhan draws near, the market becomes a living embodiment of tradition. With its rich history and vibrant atmosphere, it reflects the enduring values of family and togetherness. In a world that often moves too fast, these moments offer a chance to slow down and appreciate what truly matters. The festival is a time to reconnect with loved ones and honour the bonds that have shaped lives. During this time, the market becomes more than just a place to buy rakhis, it transforms into a space where memories are made. Every purchase, conversation and shared smile contributes to the festive atmosphere. The streets serve as a symbol of the festival,



where tradition is not just remembered but actively experienced, blending the past and present in a heartfelt celebration of love and family.

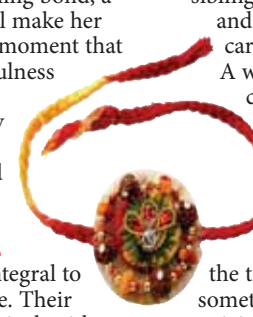
### THE MEANING BEHIND THE RAKHI

At the heart of Raksha Bandhan is the rakhi itself — a simple thread that carries profound meaning. It's more than just a decorative piece, it's a symbol of a sister's love, gratitude and appreciation for her brother. Tying a rakhi is an act of trust, a way of saying, "Thank you for always being there." This small thread binds not just wrists but hearts, reinforcing a bond that is as old as time.

For many, the rakhi is also a reminder of the shared history that siblings have, the moments of joy and support and the times when they've stood by each other. It's a token of the relationship that has shaped who they are. Though it may be simple in appearance, the rakhi holds a depth of meaning that goes beyond words. It's a symbol of a bond that is pure, unbreakable, and everlasting.

### A CELEBRATION OF LOVE

Raksha Bandhan is more than just a date on the calendar, it's a celebration of the relationships that connect people, the memories that hold them together, and the love that sustains them through life's challenges. In today's fast-paced world, festivals like Raksha Bandhan remind everyone of the importance of family and the connections that define them. In Sadar Bazar, the spirit of Raksha Bandhan is alive and well. The market, with its history and vibrancy, captures the essence of the festival. It's a place where love is expressed through simple gestures and where the bonds between siblings are honored in all their beauty. As brothers and sisters across the country prepare to tie the rakhi this year, they are reminded of what the festival truly stands for. It's not just about the rituals, it's about the love, care and unbreakable bond that siblings share. In the end, that's what makes Raksha Bandhan so special — a celebration of love that goes beyond time, distance and the challenges of life.





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# FOREST RIGHTS ACT: A BEACON OF HOPE OR A VICTIM OF EXPLOITATION?

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006 was heralded as a transformative piece of legislation designed to recognise and empower forest dwelling communities while promoting sustainable forest management. However, the implementation of FRA has faced significant hurdles, including mismanagement, exploitation, and inadequate scrutiny write **BKP SINHA** and **ARVIND KUMAR JHA**

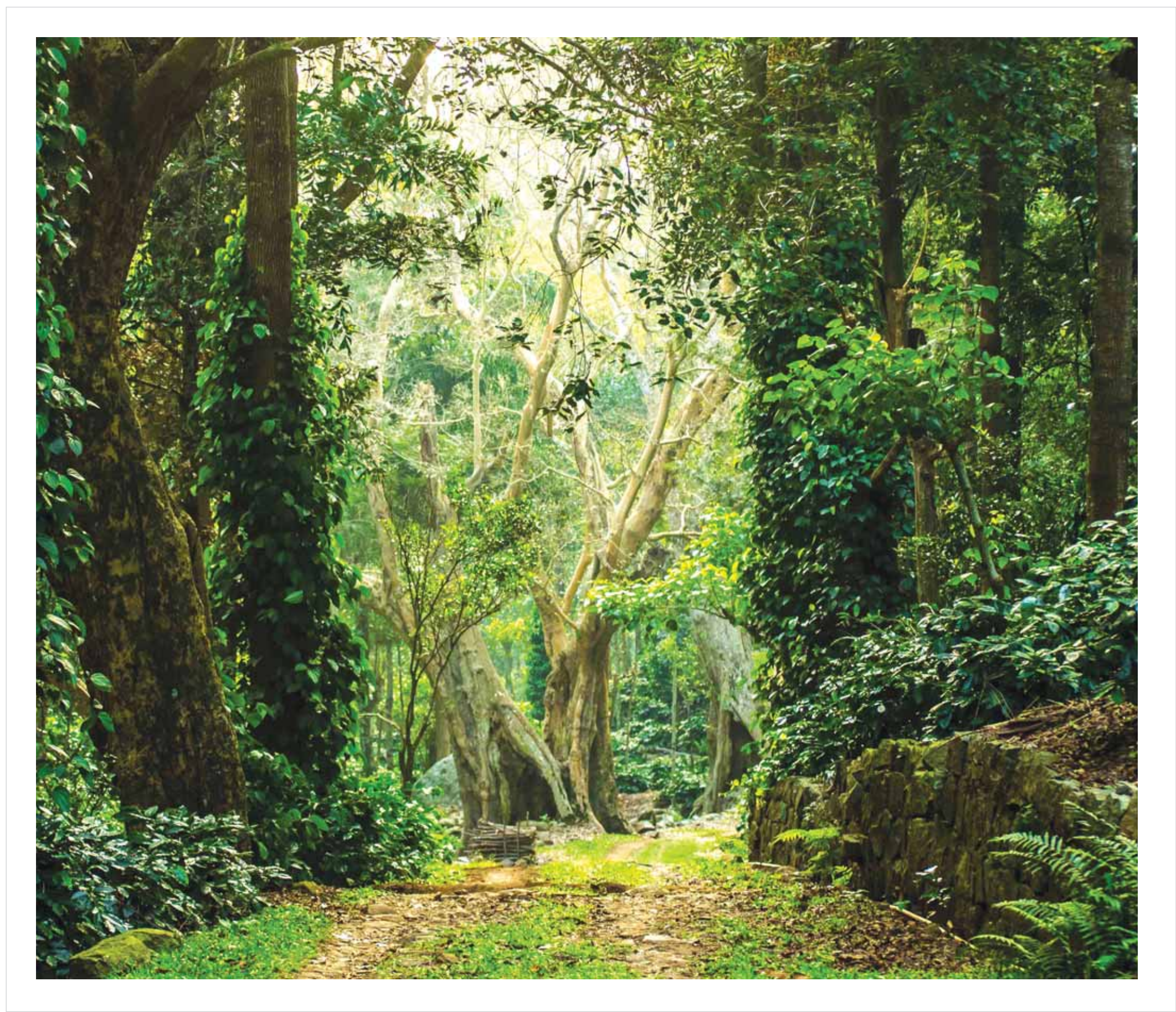
The Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006, a landmark legislation in India, was introduced to recognise forest rights (FRs) of the Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD) and empower them aiming at strengthening the conservation regime of forests. It was seen as a beacon of hope ushering in an era of community-led sustainable use of forest resources, conservation of biodiversity, and maintenance of ecological balance, which are essential for the sustenance of FRs. The Act however has faced serious implementation challenges and is overly involved in debates about the fulfilment of this vision indicated in the preamble.

The FRA outlines fourteen distinct FRs for its target group but its initial implementation focused primarily on just two viz. habitation and self-cultivation. This emphasis led to large-scale encroachments by people claiming that they occupied the forest land before the mandated cutoff date of December 13, 2005. Not very surprisingly, the high volume of cases and the pressure to decide them quickly resulted in many ineligible claims getting recognized as valid. This, in turn, encouraged even more people to make similar claims, hoping that theirs would also be approved. During this time, the claims related to Community Forest Rights (CFRs) were given low priority, except for those involving traditionally collected minor forest produce.

In 2012, significant amendments to the FRA Rules were made and new guidelines issued thereafter. Although these amendments purportedly aimed to streamline implementation, they resulted in unintended consequences. Some of these amendments, allegedly extending beyond the Act's original scope, relaxed the eligibility criteria for claimants, allowing non-deserving individuals and communities to exploit the system. The amended Rule introduces a new right, known as the 'Title' to Community Forest Resources.

It enabled communities with only a few members from the FDST and OTFD to make such claims thus allowing the rural elite and powerful individuals to take advantage of the system marginalizing the genuine target group of FRA. Additionally, the evidentiary value of satellite imagery was lowered, making it more challenging to distinguish between legitimate and fabricated claims. No system was established to scrutinize the approved claims while the Tribal Ministry, GOI repeatedly issued directives to review just the rejected ones. In the existing atmosphere, it was 'practical' to approve claims rather than reject them even when the evidence was weak and essential criteria were not met. At times hundreds of cases were cleared in just one meeting which often lacked adequate representation of non-officials and women members, and objections by foresters, even when based on ground reality, were generally labelled as anti-tribal and anti-FRA.

The protection-related duties of forest right holders, gram sabhas, and village-level institutions mentioned under Section 5 of the FRA still await alignment with existing Acts and Rules given the purport of Section 13. Some state tribal departments, as nodal agencies for implementation, have excluded the forest department from village-level management plan committees constituted for community forest resources. Such exclusion precludes inputs from trained foresters and consideration of a landscape-based forest management approach, which is essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of biodiversity, survival of wide-ranging wildlife, and the provision of eco-services that extend beyond village boundaries. Village-centric



management systems, influenced by electoral politics, may undermine long-term conservation efforts and harm ecological balance. Instances of clear felling and over-exploitation in bamboo coupes, in violation of sustainability principles, have already been observed in some villages. Encroachments and land-use alteration near watercourses and on slopes pose significant risks. In 1992, the Forest Department attempted to remove encroachments in Mundakai, Wayanad but faced violent resistance resulting in assaults, injuries, and the torching of six vehicles by locals. Over time, emboldened encroachers and developers constructed large resorts on slopes increasing landslide susceptibility. This risk was tragically realized with the recent landslide in Mundakai in July 2024.

Under FRA also, recognition of claims by ignoring the terrain is an extremely serious issue. In Maharashtra, a 2014 satellite-based study on FRA implementation revealed that out of randomly selected 56,029 claims for cultivation and habitation in Gadchiroli, Gondia, Nandurbar, and Dhule districts; 8,472 and 11,988 sites respectively were within 50 and 100 meters of water bodies or watercourses. Similar claims were found in different districts on slopes exceeding 20 degrees, pockmarked with a total area of

485 acres, many of which could potentially become the epicentre of additional encroachments and imminent disasters.

To date, 5.18 million acres of forest land scattered over 2.37 million sites have been recognized in the country as individual FRs of cultivation and habitation and the process is still on. The absence of a cut-off date for claim submission, however, makes misuse of the Act easier with time since the verifiability of evidence about 2005 becomes increasingly difficult. It may allow the exploitation of the Act for political purposes too.

An analysis of cases cleared just before elections, for instance, 1,33,920 titles granted to podu cultivators reportedly based on village elders' statements; ramping up of claim clearances in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh; and current invitations for new claims in Jharkhand should be revealing. A worrying trend, however, has emerged in Madhya Pradesh, with encroachers from other villages and districts targeting forest land in Burhanpur district and nearby areas, often with local politician's support. These actions have sparked violent clashes between the encroachers, local villagers, and forest officials, who are struggling to protect the forests.

An examination of randomly selected CFR cases in Maharashtra reveals that the 'nature' and 'extent' of FRs are often missing from title documents. The issue reportedly

“ THE PROTECTION-RELATED DUTIES OF FOREST RIGHT HOLDERS, GRAM SABHAS, AND VILLAGE-LEVEL INSTITUTIONS MENTIONED UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE FRA STILL AWAIT ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING ACTS AND RULES GIVEN THE PURPORT OF SECTION 13. SOME STATE TRIBAL DEPARTMENTS, AS NODAL AGENCIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION, HAVE EXCLUDED THE FOREST DEPARTMENT FROM VILLAGE-LEVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMITTEES CONSTITUTED FOR COMMUNITY FOREST RESOURCES ”

exists in other states as well. Understanding the quantity of forest produce (as a forest right) is crucial for the sustainable management of community forest resources and the long-term continuance of the exercise of forest rights. Accurate quantification can prevent issues such as the dwindling supply of medicinal plants for the Ayurvedic industry, which has led to the use of substandard materials and tarnished the reputation of Ayurveda. Unregulated removals could lead to future disputes over forest produce among neighbouring villages which would simply be disastrous.

The process adopted for recognizing Rights over Community Forest Resources (RCFR) raises significant concerns. According to Section 3(1)(i), RCFR of management is admissible only for communities of FDSTs and OTFDs who have traditionally protected and conserved these resources for sustainable use. Further, section 4(3) of the Act mandates that these communities must have occupied the forest land before the cutoff date of December 13, 2005. However, in practice, management rights under Section 3(1)(i) have been liberally granted, ignoring the mandated criteria, on more than 13.5 million acres out of the country's total recorded forest area of 191.5 million acres. The trend continues unabated also

due to the absence of a deadline for claim submission. Surprisingly, RCFRs for management have been granted on thousands of acres in the core areas of Tiger Reserves and Protected Areas in Achanakmar, Udanti Sitanadi, Dhantari, Navegaon Nagzira, and Tansa without fulfilling the required criteria. Apart from the illegalities involved in RCFR cases, the overall situation indicates that the concerned District Level Committees have unauthoritarily transferred the State's responsibility mentioned in Article 51A of the Constitution. In the past, forests were vast and tribal populations were small and cohesive with minimal influence from market forces. They existed harmoniously. Today, we face a crisis of fractured village populations and fragmented forests. The traditional arrangements that once worked may no longer be effective. Any harm to forest conservation and management has far-reaching consequences and Nature responds to it in compounded ways, leading to unpredictable weather patterns, desertification, global warming, and ecological crises. These environmental changes exacerbate climate change, creating a vicious cycle that further threatens the sustainability and health of our forests and communities. It is crucial to set a deadline for claim

submissions, revisit the rules under the FRA, and swiftly correct its implementation to benefit genuine beneficiaries. Cancelling irregularly granted rights, removing encroachments, and relocating FR holders from high-risk areas will establish confidence in the administration among the voiceless target group of the FRA.

The Supreme Court must prioritize the hearing of writ petition 109/2008, duly because their earlier order to evict encroachers was stayed on February 28, 2019, due to the Tribal Affairs Ministry's submission that due processes were not followed in implementing the FRA. The ministry had also highlighted that the process of settling the claims and rights of the applicants left much to be desired.

At this critical juncture, the choices we make will shape the destiny of India's forests, its people including forest-dependent communities, and its ecology and economy. The question remains: Will the FRA fulfil its promise of empowering legitimate forest right holders while safeguarding India's ecological wealth, or will it succumb to exploitation and misuse? Only time, and our commitment to a sustainability-oriented implementation of the Act, will tell.

(The writer are former PCCFs, UP and Maharashtra; views expressed are personal)

