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BJP SLAMS AAP FOR ₹2,026 CR LIQUOR SCAM

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A leaked report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on the now-scrapped excise policy of the Delhi government flagged several "lapses" in the policy and claimed Rs 2,026.68 crore loss to the exchequer. This figure was put out for the first time to show the impact of the alleged liquor scam. The document of the government's auditor that has exposed the liquor scam is named, "Report of the CAG on Performance Audit on Regulation and Supply of Liquor in Delhi." The report has not been tabled in the Delhi Assembly so far. After the leak, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched a scathing attack on the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government.

Supply of liquor in Delhi, some retailers surrendered their licenses before the policy expired, and the government did not re-tender them which led to the loss of Rs 890 crores. It said that the government made exemptions for zonal licensees, which caused a loss of Rs 941 crores. For the purpose of retail vends, Delhi was divided into 32 zones (containing 849 vends) whose licenses were granted to 22 entities through tendering. Whereas during the old policy, 377 retail vends were run by four Government Corporations and 262 retail vends were run by the private individuals. The report revealed a loss of revenue to the tune of Rs 144 crore owing to irregular grant of waiver on account of COVID-19 to zonal licenses. It also revealed that incorrect collection of security deposit from zonal licenses leading to loss of revenue of around Rs



BJP leader Anurag Thakur addresses a press conference at the party headquarters, in New Delhi

27 crore. Citing the leaked CAG report, BJP MP Anurag Thakur on Saturday claimed the Delhi Excise Policy scam is worth Rs 2,026 crore and accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of misleading Delhi residents. Thakur told a press

conference the CAG report has arrived at 10 major findings about the policy, which was scrapped by the AAP government amid a row, asserting that former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal will have to answer the questions it has raised. "He will have to say who pocketed the money,"

Thakur said, alleging that Kejriwal is the kingpin of the scam. BJP president J P Nadda claimed the CAG report has exposed intentional lapses, leading to a loss of Rs 2,026 crore to the exchequer. Nadda said on X, "Intoxicated by power, high on misgovernance. 'AAP' DA model of loot in full display and that too on something like liquor." He said it is just a matter of a few weeks before the AAP government is voted out and punished for its misdeeds. The CAG Report on 'Liquorgate' exposes @ArvindKejriwal and @AamAadmiParty Gov. Intentional 'Lapses' in Policy Implementation. Rs 2026 Cr Loss to Exchequer money," he alleged. Asked about the BJP allegations, AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said, "Where is the report? The BJP itself keeps saying no CAG report has been tabled."



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the 'Pratishtha-Dwadashi' programme, marking the first anniversary of the consecration of the Ram Lalla idol at the Ram temple, in Ayodhya

Yogi urges unity at Ram Temple event

BISWAJEET BANERJEE/ KAMLESH SRIVASTAVA ■ AYODHYA:

On the first anniversary of the consecration of the Ram Lalla idol at the grand Ram temple, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath issued a stark warning about the dangers of societal divisions. "If we remain divided by caste or other ideologies, our religious places will bear the consequences, and our sisters and daughters will suffer," he said, urging unity to preserve the sanctity of India's spiritual heritage. The historic event saw thousands of devotees gathering in Ayodhya, which has been transformed into a vibrant spiritual epicenter for the three-day celebrations. "Pratishtha Dwadashi calls us to unify as a nation," CM Yogi said, recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message: "If there is Ram, there is a nation; if there is a nation, there is Ram." He urged citizens to uphold this principle, linking

faith with national identity. The anniversary commenced with CM Yogi performing an 'abhishek' of the idol, followed by the chanting of Vedic hymns. He emphasized the need to strengthen Sanatan values as the foundation for unity and national integrity. "The Ramjanmabhoomi movement reflects the unwavering resolve of our ancestors, whose sacrifices have brought us to this historic moment," CM Yogi said, highlighting the 500-year struggle to reclaim Lord Ram's birthplace. "Today, Ayodhya feels like Treta Yuga, and in the coming years, the Ram Janmabhoomi complex will emerge as one of the world's most magnificent spiritual centers." Devotees from across the country echoed the Chief Minister's sentiments. Priya Sharma, a visitor from Delhi, said, "Being here feels like stepping into history. The energy and devotion in Ayodhya are unparalleled. It's an emotional experience to see Ram Lalla in his full glory."

Strategic Z-morh tunnel in valley tomorrow

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

With the opening up of the 6.4 km long Z-Morh tunnel, scheduled to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 13, India is inching closer to fulfilling its dream of constructing the strategic corridor between Srinagar-Leh to provide all-weather connectivity and maintain defence and civil supply lines in adverse weather conditions. After dedicating the first leg of the corridor to the Nation on Monday the focus will be shifted to the timely completion of the 13.15 km

long Zojila Tunnel. The Z-Morh tunnel will link Kangan with Sonamarg, a famous tourist destination on the Srinagar-Leh highway. The Zojila tunnel will provide year-round connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh, which will be extremely important for the development of Ladakh, the promotion of tourism, the free movement of local goods, and the movement of Indian armed forces in case of emergency. Currently the average travel time to cross the Zojila Pass is three hours. After the completion of this tunnel,



the travel time will come down to 20 minutes, resulting in fuel savings. The total Project cost of the Zojila tunnel is Rs. 6,809.69 crore. The tentative deadline for the completion of the project at an altitude of over 11,000 feet is September-December 2026. To welcome the dignitaries visiting the venue of the Z-Morh tunnel project the Union Territory administration is making elaborate arrangements. The security personnel have been deployed in large numbers to secure the venue.

नारी शक्ति का सम्मान और अधिकार बन रहा समृद्धि का आधार



नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री डॉ. मोहन यादव, मुख्यमंत्री

1.27 करोड़ लाड़ली बहनों को ₹1553 करोड़

55 लाख हितग्राहियों को ₹335 करोड़ की सामाजिक सुरक्षा पेंशन

26 लाख बहनों को सिलेंडर रीफिलिंग के लिए ₹27 करोड़ से अधिक की राशि का अंतरण

लाड़ली बहनों को अब तक ₹30 हजार करोड़ से अधिक की सहायता दी गई है।

मुख्यमंत्री

डॉ. मोहन यादव

द्वारा

12 जनवरी, 2025 | अपराह्न 1:30 बजे कालापीपल, जिला शाजापुर, मध्यप्रदेश

सीधा प्रसारण

Webcast.gov.in/mp/cmevents

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JansamparkMP

D-11152/24

VP Jagdeep Dhankhar stresses merit-based appointments, slams extensions and favouritism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BENGALURU

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar said on Saturday that extensions in service, in any form for a particular post is a setback to those who are in line.



framework of the constitution," said Dhankhar. The Vice-President also said that extension of service indicates that some individuals are indispensable.

A vitiated political climate is far more dangerous than the climate change we are facing, he pointed out. "Our polity at the moment is too divisive, too polarised. Interaction is not taking place at the premium level in political organisations."

Tamil Nadu Governor's actions 'childish' says CM MK Stalin

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi was unable to "digest" that the State was developing and his decision not to address the Assembly was "childish," Chief Minister MK Stalin said on Saturday.

Bank of Baroda E-Auction Sale Notice. Includes bank logo and basic auction details.

Table with columns: Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantors/ Mortgagee, Description of the immovable property, Reserve Price, Date & Time of E-Auction, Demand Notice Date, Possession Date.

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Court relaxes bail conditions for Allu Arjun in stampede case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ HYDERABAD

In a major relief to actor Allu Arjun, a court here has relaxed the conditions of his bail in the 'Pushpa 2' stampede case, exempting him from appearing before the investigating officer every Sunday.



Additionally, the court had directed the actor to cooperate with the inquiry and refrain from interfering with the ongoing investigation or influencing witnesses in any manner.

HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED. Corporate and Regional Office addresses.

Appendix IV : Possession NOTICE (for Immovable property) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Hinduja Housing Finance Limited (HHFL) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002...

Table with columns: Name of Borrower/ Guarantor / Co-Borrower, Loan Account No., Amount Due as on Notice Date, Description of Secured asset (Immovable Property), Date & Type of Possession.

CM N Biren urges Naga leaders to help resolve ethnic conflict

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ IMPHAL



Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Saturday requested the church, community and other leaders of the Naga community to take a greater role in resolving the ongoing ethnic conflict in the state.

current issues and for restoration of peace. For this, church and community leaders needs to take responsibilities and initiatives." All grievances and problems can be resolved under the Constitution and the laws of the Manipur government, he said.

STATUTORY NOTICE TO BORROWERS/GUARANTORS Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) are hereby put to caution that the property may be sold at any time herein after by way of public auction/tenders and as such this may also be treated as a notice under Rule 6, 8 & 9 of Security (Interest) Enforcement Rules, 2002.



— एक विचार ले लो, उसी को सोचो, उसी का स्वप्न देखो, उसी पर अवलम्बित रहो। अपने मस्तिष्क, मांसपेशियों, स्नायुओं और शरीर के प्रत्येक भाग को उसी विचार से ओत-प्रोत होने दो। यही सफलता का रास्ता है। यही वह मार्ग है, जिसने महान पुरुषों का निर्माण किया है।

- स्वामी विवेकानंद

सशक्त, क्षमतावान और
आत्मनिर्भर युवाओं का
प्रदेश बनेगा **मध्यप्रदेश**

स्वामी विवेकानंद युवा शक्ति मिशन

का शुभारंभ

मुख्यमंत्री

डॉ. मोहन यादव

द्वारा

12 जनवरी, 2025 | प्रातः 11:30 बजे

रवीन्द्र भवन, भोपाल



डॉ. मोहन यादव, मुख्यमंत्री



नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री

मिशन के प्रमुख उद्देश्य

- युवाओं के समग्र विकास पर केन्द्रित गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षा, उद्यमिता और रोज़गार क्षमता का निर्माण
- वैश्विक प्रतिस्पर्धा के मानकों के अनुसार कौशल एवं तकनीकी विकास
- तकनीक के अधिकाधिक उपयोग एवं अनुसंधान तथा विचारशीलता को बढ़ावा
- नशे से दूरी एवं स्वस्थ जीवनशैली को प्रोत्साहन
- भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा, पर्यावरण संरक्षण, खेल एवं संस्कृति के क्षेत्र में भागीदारी बढ़ाना
- समाज में सक्रिय भागीदारी के साथ अर्थव्यवस्था में सम्मानजनक स्थान सुनिश्चित करना
- प्रत्येक जिले में एमएसएमई औद्योगिक पार्क का विकास एवं स्टार्टअप्स को बढ़ावा देकर रोज़गार के अवसर सुगम बनाना

प्रदेश स्तरीय

सामूहिक सूर्य नमस्कार

प्रातः 9:30 बजे से 10:30 बजे तक

मुख्यमंत्री डॉ. मोहन यादव की गरिमामयी सहभागिता
सुभाष उत्कृष्ट उच्चतर माध्यमिक विद्यालय, भोपाल

“He was the king amongst the industrialists of India”
— NARAYANA MURTHY



“What I would like to do is to leave behind a sustainable entity of a set of companies that operate in an exemplary manner in terms of ethics, values and continue what our ancestors left behind.”

— RATAN NAVAL TATA

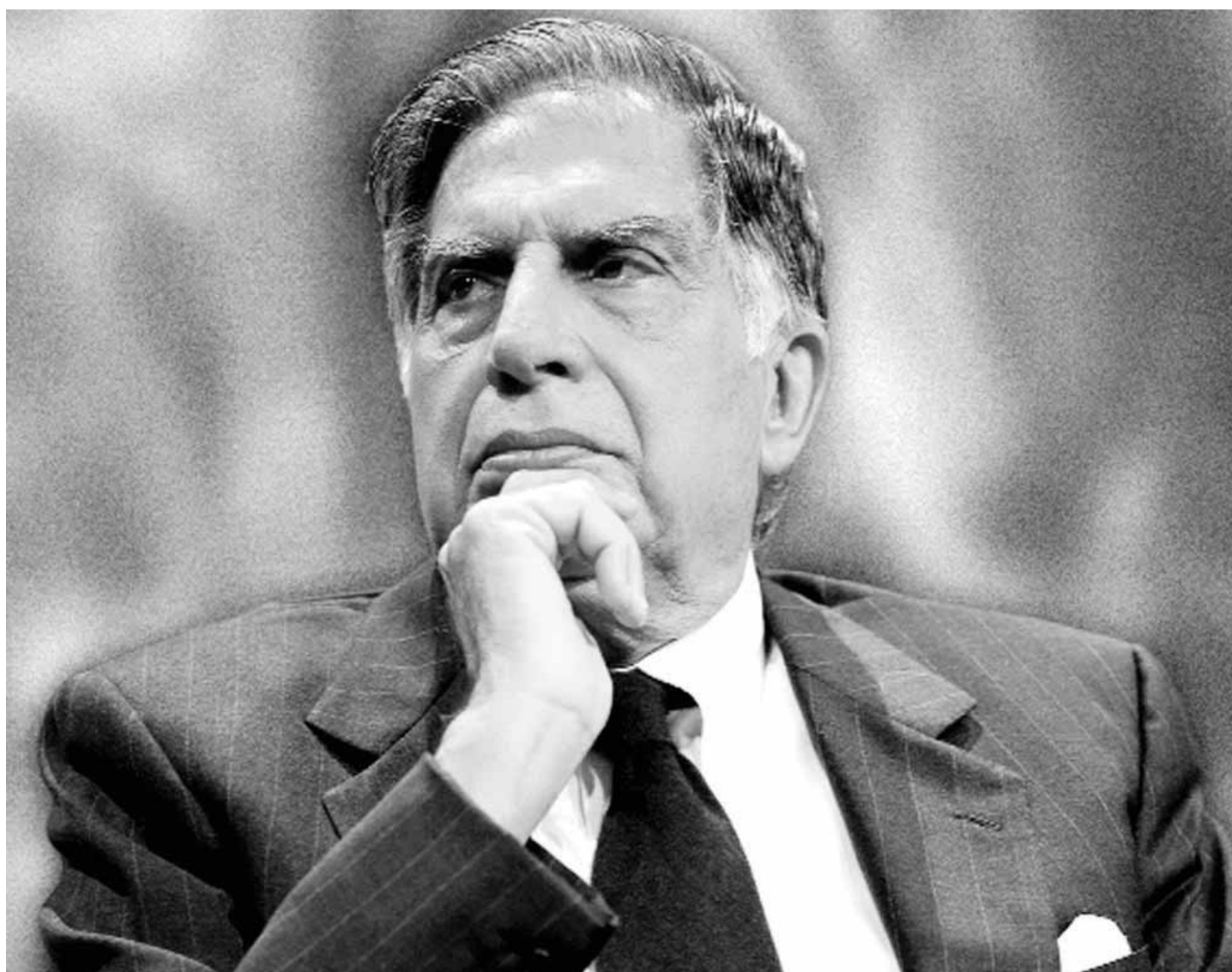
Pericles, the monumental Greek politician and statesman during the Golden Age of Athens in his historic Funeral Oration delivered in 431 BC (that is said to have influenced President Abraham Lincoln’s famous Gettysburg Address on 19th November, 1863!), said, “To famous men all the earth is a sepulchre: and their virtues shall be testified not only by inscription on stone at home but in all lands wheresoever in the unwritten record of the mind, which far beyond any monument will remain with all men everlastingly.”

On 9th October, 2024, at exactly 11.30 pm IST, the towering 5 feet 10 inches tall Surat born Parsee industrialist-philanthropist Padma Vibhushan Ratan (meaning “precious jewel”) Naval Tata, the Chairman Emeritus and the patriarch of the House of Tata, the largest business conglomerate in India (having a staggering annual revenue of over 165 billion US Dollars and encompassing a grand well knit family of over 1 million happy, well cared for and dedicated members worldwide!), breathed his last at the iconic Beach Candy Hospital nestled atop the Arabian Sea facing Cumballa Hill at the age of 86. He had been hospitalised on 7th October, 2024 owing to a critical combination of senescence and hypotension. Ratan held a meger 0.83 % cent stake in Tata Sons and had a net worth of Rs 7,900 crores, according to the Hurun India Rich List 2024. A large part of his wealth-nearly 75 per cent-was tied to his shares in Tata Sons. For Ratan, accolades poured in a torrential stream from across the country and from all corners of the world. In an impassioned eulogy that reflected the melancholy mood of a shattered nation, our Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi tweeted on X - “Shri Ratan Tata was a visionary business leader, a compassionate soul, and an extraordinary human being.” On 13th October, 2024, the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin “Bibi” Netanyahu in a post on X addressed to his friend Modi, condoled Ratan’s death and highlighted his stellar contributions in fostering Israel-India ties, “I and many in Israel mourn the loss of Ratan Naval Tata, a proud son of India and a champion of the friendship between our two countries.” In a post on LinkedIn on 14th October, 2024, Padma Bhushan Natarajan Chandrasekaran, (popularly known as “Chandra”), the most worthy successor of Ratan (he effortlessly stepped into Ratan’s distinguished shoes and proudly donned his enviable mantle on 12th January, 2017) and my personal friend for over 15 years since my heady days as a long term Advisor to Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (“TCS”), the flagship of the prodigious Tata fleet, paid an effusive heartfelt homage to his former boss and mentor, “Anybody who met Mr. Tata came away with a story about his humanity, warmth, and dreams for India. There really was no one like him.” Joseph Bitner Wirthlin, the renowned American businessman and religious leader rightly observed, “Some memories are unforgettable, remaining ever vivid and heartwarming!” In a moment of helpless nostalgia, my mind goes back irresistibly to the rather sultry summer day in 1983. Thereafter, I often used to stay at the Taj Mahal Hotel (the second hotel built by the Indian Hotel Company Ltd. (“IHCL”) belonging to the Tata group after the iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel (“Taj Mahal Palace”) in Colaba, Mumbai, in 1903 and popularly known as the Taj Mansingh Hotel because of its strategic location at 1, Mansingh Road), the 5 star-deluxe hotel of 1978 vintage, characterised as the “Epicentre of Delhi”.

I used to meet Ratan sporadically in the hotel lobby mostly in the company of its various General Managers and close personal friends belonging to the golden days of the hotel viz. Ravi Dubey, Ronnie Lobo (both Ravi and Ronnie are sadly no more in this world!), and Patu Keshwani or even otherwise. Ratan used to be invariably accompanied by his old faithful, close confidante, trouble shooter and quintessential out and out Taj-Man Devendra Kumar Beri (“DK” to his friends!). Ratan used to mostly stay at a spartan guest house in the Tata Apartments at 23, Prithviraj Road, New Delhi. In those heady days, Uncle PV, who used to live at 9, Motilal Nehru Marg, often dropped by at the famed coffee shop Machan to drink endless cups of freshly brewed sugar free piping hot filter coffee over steamed idlis and vadas soaked in mild sambar. Ratan never missed the opportunity to wish him if he happened to be around in the hotel. He was an indefatigable admirer of Uncle PV! After Uncle PV became the Prime Minister on 21st June, 1991 consequent upon Rajiv Bhai’s tragic assassination on 21st May, 1991, and before he moved into Prime Minister House at 7, Race Course Road (renamed Lok Kalyan Marg), a special Suite was booked in the hotel for his family members through the good offices of Ratan, which was guarded round the clock by the Special

THE SHAH OF THE CORPORATE UNIVERSE

Ratan Naval Tata redefined corporate leadership with vision, ethics, innovation and unparalleled philanthropy, writes **ANOOP BOSE**



Protection Group (“SPG”). Ratan personally saw to it that members of Uncle PV’s family were well cared for in the hotel. I had the glorious good fortune of staying with Uncle PV at his residence even prior to his becoming the President of the Indian National Congress and was, naturally, a regular visitor to Suite where I used to meet and interact with Uncle PV’s two sons Rajeshwar and Prabhakar under the watchful eyes of the SPG personnel. One of my close friends Prashant Tewari, who used to work very closely with Uncle PV and Hansraj Bhardwaj, (the versatile lawyer and later rose to become India’s most famous law minister), both were closely known to Uncle PV’s family, used to co-ordinate crucial governance and political issues during the period of most dramatic transformation of the country. Again, I used to have the opportunity to meet Ratan in the hotel! Ratan used to take a very special interest in the JRD Tata Memorial Lectures. On 19th September, 2008, Somnath Chatterjee, eminent Barrister and the then Speaker of the Lok Sabha and a close personal friend, delivered the 11th JRD Memorial Lecture on “Economic Development and Political Consensus Building” at the Mansingh Hall in the Taj Mansingh. I was a special invitee to the event. After Somnath’s lecture, I met Ratan and Somnath at the adjacent Aftab Mahtab, the regal wood and marble panelled venue, over dinner. My old friend Dr. Jamshed Jiji Irani (popularly known as “Doc I”), the honorific Managing Director of Tata Steel, was also there at Ratan’s table. The tall and handsome Sanjay “Pole” Singh, Principal Resident Executive and Adviser, Tata Sons, came over to the table unobtrusively and recounted how I had saved Doc I’s life by forewarning the Tata Management that some evil people had plotted to attack Doc I with crude bombs in the heart of Jamshepur with a sinister motive. My last Taj Mansingh encounter with Ratan was just before the outbreak of the Covid epidemic in 2020. I was standing outside one of the hotel lifts when suddenly as if by magic Ratan emerged from the lift along with his old Harvard educated friend Prince Shah Karim al-Husseini, Aga Khan IV (known by his religious

“TO FAMOUS MEN ALL THE EARTH IS A SEPULCHRE: AND THEIR VIRTUES SHALL BE TESTIFIED NOT ONLY BY INSCRIPTION ON STONE AT HOME BUT IN ALL LANDS WHERESOEVER IN THE UNWRITTEN RECORD OF THE MIND, WHICH FAR BEYOND ANY MONUMENT WILL REMAIN WITH ALL MEN EVERLASTINGLY”

title “Maulana Hazar Imam”), the founder and chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network, and DK of course. I wished him and walked with him to his waiting car. He bid me goodbye with a wave of his hand before getting into his car! As a Special advisor to the Marathon group of companies, I used to travel every year to Bengaluru to participate in Aero India, the biennial air show and aviation exhibition held by the Ministry of Defence at the Yelahanka Air Force Station, Bengaluru, along with my illustrious Israeli friend Hezi Bezalel, the Chairman of the group, and other top Israeli officials. The 2007 Aero India was a very special event for me as Ratan, who was 69 years old at that time, valiantly reached out for the skies in a

spellbinding saga of high adventure on 8th February, 2007. Clad in a G-Suit, he co-piloted a Lockheed Martin F-16 Falcon multi-role fighter jet in a historic 35 minute sortie. Ratan held licences to fly both jets and helicopters! Upon landing after what Ratan described as an “exhilarating” flight, I heartily congratulated Ratan shortly after he was greeted by my old friend William “Bill” Sebastian Cohen, former US Defense Secretary, Royce Keplinger and other senior Lockheed Martin officials. On 9th February, 2007, a G-Suited Ratan once again took to the skies co-piloting a Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter jet. I met Ratan shortly after his second flight in the Boeing Pavilion to felicitate him with a small bouquet of pink roses in the august presence of my close friends Thomas “Tom” Reeve Pickering, the former US Ambassador to India and the former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs in the Clinton Administration, Dinesh Keskar, the senior Vice President, Sales in Asia-Pacific and India, Anil Srikhande, India President, and other top officials of Boeing Company. During that visit, I also had the golden opportunity of watching a scintillating aerobic display by the Hindustan Aeronautical Industries Ltd. manufactured fly-by-wire Light Combat Multi-Role Tejas Aircraft in the distinguished company of Ratan, Arackaparambil Kurien Antony, Union Defence Minister, Indru and Bookanakere Siddalingappa Yedyurappa, Chief Minister, Karnataka, amongst other important dignitaries. Ratan noticed to his enormous delight that I was smartly attired in a royal blue English blazer, grey English flannel trousers, a hand crafted boater hat from the reputed hatters K.R.Snoxell & Sons, Luton, and dazzling gold rimmed Zeiss sun glasses! On 26th November, 2008, “a date which will live in infamy”, Mumbai, the financial capital of India, witnessed a brutal, dastardly terrorist attack orchestrated by the Pakistani sponsored group Lashkar-e-Taiba, when the Indian Home Secretary Madukar Gupta, by an ominous coincidence, was enjoying Pakistan’s hospitality in Murree, a mountain resort city close to Islamabad. Ten highly trained and heavily armed

terrorists infiltrated the city, having stealthily landed in inflatable speed boats at Macchimar Nagar, in Mumbai’s Cuffe Parade neighbourhood, and heinously targeted several meticulously planned locations, including the Taj Mahal Palace. The Indian Government’s response to the attack was “pusillanimous”, as aptly observed by the Hindustan Times on 26th November, 2023! The attack claimed 166 lives, including 33 at the Taj Mahal Palace, and did not spare even the General Manager of the hotel Karambir Singh Kang’s wife Niti and his two young teenage sons Uday and Samar. Gautam Shantilal Adani, the Indian billionaire businessman (who has recently been in the eye of a storm!), by a superb stroke of luck managed to save himself by hiding in the kitchen of the hotel! Defying all odds, it was Ratan who in a truly Churchillian manner valiantly rose to the occasion and provided the much needed leadership to an embattled nation facing an “ordeal of the most grievous kind”! In the face of the attack watched by a shell-shocked nation, Ratan, who was then 70, displayed superhuman courage, resolve and determination. He strode like a colossus and stood like a Rock of Gibraltar at the Colaba end of the Taj Mahal Palace for 3 days, as security forces fiercely battled the terrorists in the Taj Mahal Palace. Everyone became just those inches taller, every back just that much broader, as Ratan’s own was. This was undoubtedly Ratan’s finest hour when he embodied the will, spirit and grit of our people..indomitable, undaunted, relentless! Ratan was imbued with the extraordinary, nay God given, ability and gift to pick out and support the ideal leader both for the House of Tata as well as the nation...he was the Kingmaker extraordinaire! Ratan backed Modi to the hilt before the General Elections in 2014 and on 19th May, 2014 tweeted on X, “Mr. Modi’s landslide victory echoes the people’s mandate for strong leadership and clear policies for growth and prosperity for India.” On 19th December, 2020 at the ASSOCHAM Foundation Week, Ratan ecstatically heaped praise on Modi for his leadership during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, “I think if we all stand together and follow what you have said, what you have done and what you have shown, we will have a situation where the world will look at us and say this Prime Minister said it could happen and he made it happen.” In January, 2017, Chandra’s “mentor, guide and friend” Ratan cherry-picked Chandra to lead Tata Sons as its Chairman, the first non-Tata family member to hold the coveted post! On his appointment as the Chairman of Tata Sons, Chandra said, “I am humbled and honoured to be chosen to lead a truly great institution that occupies a unique position in hearts of the people in India and the world. I am proud to have been part of the Tata family for over 30 years and assuming this position is a great privilege. I want to thank the Tata Sons board and Mr Ratan N Tata for their confidence in me to lead this trusted institution that has a rich heritage.” Addressing the annual gala annual event at the National Centre of Performing Arts on the birth anniversary of JRD Tata on 30th July, 2018, Ratan expressed gratification with regard to the direction in which group companies were headed under the leadership of Chandra and said that he was confident that “Tata Group is in safe hands.” Yes, only a true leader can identify other true leaders! Both Modi and Chandra have proved to be phenomenal leaders of the 21st Century and have earned international acclaim, respect, adoration and admiration. I have a myriad of friends who knew Ratan intimately and worked with him closely. I am highly emboldened to single out only 5 names viz. Pole, Tanmoy, Raian, Suprakash and Zubin Mehta, the Managing Director of Uniforms Unlimited, Mumbai, who holds a Masters Certification from the internationally reputed Savile Row Academy, London. All of them are unquestionably ad idem about Ratan : “He was a genuinely good, dedicated and large hearted soul filled with the milk of human kindness and our age is hardly fit to understand him.” We should remember the stellar quality of Ratan’s character as well as the remarkable range of his achievements. In his love of adventure and his imaginative powers, he was far removed from the modern industrialist-philanthropist. Yet everyone who came in contact with him paid tribute to the unimaginable power of his mind. He had an aptitude for business which raised him far above the ordinary levels of our generation. He had a firmness of spirit which was not often elated by success, seldom downcast by failure and never swayed by panic. He loved life and was perfectly at peace with himself and the world around him. He could be helplessly uproarious. He wanted everyone to be happy. He wanted to taste and try everything that life could offer. Power never corrupted him, nor did success make him conceited, arrogant or pompous. Beyond his reputation as a business magnate and animal lover, Ratan’s tenure as Chairman of the Tata Trusts has left an ineradicable mark on India’s cultural kaleidoscope. The trusts have spearheaded numerous initiatives across healthcare, education, environment and disaster relief and their manifold contributions to art and culture stand out as particularly noteworthy. With no thought of the length of time he might be permitted on Planet Earth, Ratan was concerned solely with the quality of the service he could render to his nation and to humanity.

— The author is an internationally reputed senior lawyer practising in the Supreme Court of India and various High Courts and Tribunals in India



PHOTO: PANKAJ KUMAR



THE SPIRIT OF MAHA KUMBH

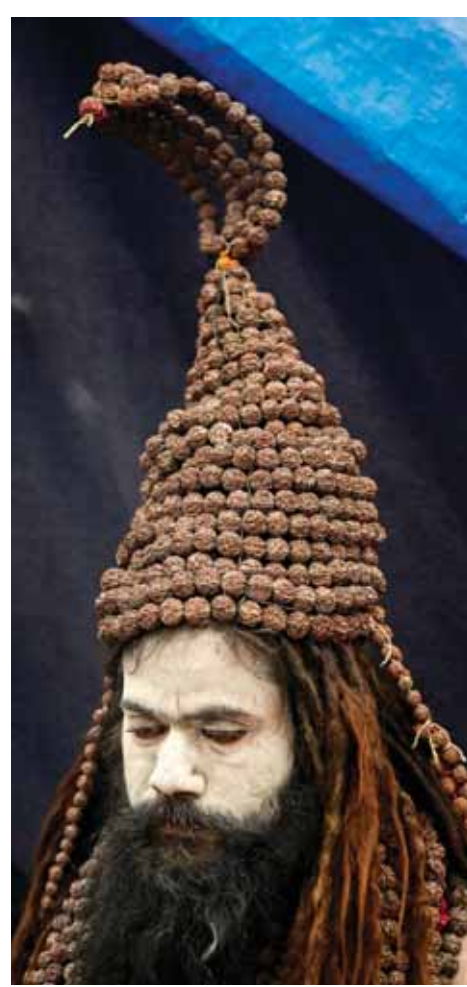
The *Maha Kumbh Mela 2025* in Prayagraj is a unique gathering where spirituality, culture and commerce come together, attracting millions from all walks of life to witness this incredible event, writes **BISWAJEET BANERJEE**

The countdown to the *Maha Kumbh 2025* has begun, with Prayagraj transforming into a bustling hub of spirituality, culture, and economic activity. From 13 January to 26 February, the city will host the largest human congregation on earth, drawing an estimated 40 to 45 crore pilgrims. This iconic event, steeped in Hindu tradition and faith, is more than a ritual, it is a celebration of India’s cultural and spiritual essence. The Sangam, where the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati converge, is at the heart of this grand spectacle. Pilgrims believe that a dip in these holy waters during the auspicious period cleanses them of sins and paves the way to salvation. “The Maha Kumbh Mela is not just a religious gathering but a transformative experience,” said Acharya Ramkishore Tiwari, a spiritual leader. “It is where faith meets divinity.” At the heart of this grand celebration lies the belief in spiritual purification. According to Hindu tradition, a dip in the holy confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati during this auspicious period is believed to absolve sins and pave the path to salvation. The origins of the *Kumbh* are steeped in the Puranic tale of the Samudra Manthan, where drops of divine nectar (amrita) spilled at four locations, Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik, and Ujjain, sanctifying these sites forever.



A CITY REBORN

The banks of the Ganga and Yamuna have transformed into a temporary city, sprawling across the Sangam area. Colourful tents of all sizes and hues have sprung up, creating an awe-inspiring sight. These tents house spiritual discourses, yoga sessions, cultural programmes, and temporary dwellings for millions of devotees. The air is filled with the aroma of traditional Indian delicacies, as numerous eateries and food stalls cater to the surging crowds. Stalls selling Rudraksha beads, saffron garments, holy books, and souvenirs stretch along the pathways, adding vibrancy to the bustling atmosphere. The iconic Naga Sadhus, covered in ash and wearing Rudraksha beads, take centre stage, drawing devotees and curious onlookers alike. Aghories, known for their intense spiritual practices, are seen meditating near the riverbanks, adding a mystical charm to the gathering. “We are not just preparing for an event; we are crafting an experience that celebrates India’s cultural heritage,” said Divya Prakash Singh, a senior official overseeing the arrangements. “From smart surveillance through 10,000 CCTV cameras to a dedicated mobile app for route and ritual updates, technology is playing a crucial role in ensuring safety and convenience.” “The energy here is contagious,” said Abhilash Narain, a resident of Prayagraj. “You do not have to be Hindu to feel the magic of this gathering.” Among the pilgrims is Rajni Devi, a 62-year-old widow from Rajasthan making her third trip to the Kumbh. “The Kumbh is my escape,” she said. “It’s where I find peace and the courage to face life’s challenges.” Similarly, Sunil Mishra, a young IT professional from Bengaluru, sees the



Kumbh as a chance to reconnect with his roots. “In the hustle of corporate life, you lose touch with who you are. The Kumbh gives me clarity and a sense of purpose,” he shared.

ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

Beyond its spiritual significance, the *Maha Kumbh Mela* is a colossal economic engine. The Uttar Pradesh government has allocated a staggering ₹5,600 crore to infrastructure and event management, with the total budget projected at ₹6,382 crore. The local economy thrives on this influx, benefiting small vendors, hoteliers, and service providers alike. “During the Kumbh, my daily earnings triple,” said Shyam Lal, a shopkeeper selling puja items near the ghats. Hotels across Prayagraj are reporting record bookings, with many fully reserved months in advance. “The demand is unprecedented,” said Priya Mehta, the manager of a mid-range hotel in the city. The ripple effect extends beyond Prayagraj. Nearby religious hubs like Varanasi, Ayodhya, and Mathura also see a surge in tourism,



creating thousands of new jobs. “The Maha Kumbh 2025 could generate economic activity worth over ₹3 lakh crore,” estimated Awanish Awasthi, advisor to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIONS

Hosting an event of this magnitude comes with its share of challenges. Ensuring the availability of clean drinking water, medical aid, and sanitation facilities for millions of pilgrims requires meticulous planning. “The key is vigilance,” said Ramesh Chandra, a senior police officer stationed at the Mela. “We’re deploying over 50,000 security personnel and using AI-enabled systems to manage crowds and prevent untoward incidents.” “The Maha Kumbh is a test of our organisational capabilities,” said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. “We aim to set a global benchmark in event management while preserving the spiritual essence of the gathering.”

A GLOBAL CELEBRATION

The *Maha Kumbh Mela* is not just a religious event; it is a global celebration of India’s living traditions. Documentary filmmaker Lisa Reynolds, covering the event for an international audience, described it as “a story of humanity in its purest form.” For first-time visitors, the scale of the event is overwhelming. “I’ve never seen anything like this,” said Hiroshi Tanaka, a journalist from Japan. “The blend of chaos and harmony is fascinating. It’s a reflection of India itself.” As the countdown begins, the anticipation surrounding *Maha Kumbh 2025* is palpable. For millions, it is a journey of faith and a reaffirmation of humanity’s enduring spirit. For Prayagraj, it is an opportunity to shine as a beacon of tradition, resilience, and progress. Acharya Ramkishore Tiwari sums it up: “Kumbh is about coming together as one family, transcending divisions and reaffirming our shared humanity.”



Located amidst the lush greenery of Guwahati, Mayfair Spring Valley offers a luxurious escape from the city's hustle and bustle. This premium resort is designed to provide guests with ultimate comfort and relaxation, featuring elegantly appointed rooms, a rejuvenating spa, a dedicated kids' play area and top-notch dining experiences. Surrounded by picturesque landscapes, the resort offers serene views of rolling hills and verdant gardens, making it an ideal retreat for nature enthusiasts and luxury seekers alike. Guests can also explore nearby attractions, such as the famous Kamakhya Temple and Brahmaputra Riverfront, ensuring a blend of tranquillity and adventure during their stay.

MAYFAIR
SPRING
VALLEY
(GUWAHATI,
ASSAM)



Located in the vibrant city of Shillong, Vivanta Meghalaya is known for its proximity to exciting outdoor activities and cultural events. The resort offers 87 elegantly designed rooms and 14 spacious suites, providing comfort and luxury. It serves as a perfect base for exploring the region's natural beauty and music festivals. Known as the 'Abode of Clouds,' Meghalaya captivates one and all with its misty hills, living root bridges, and cascading waterfalls amidst lush greenery.

VIVANTA
MEGHALAYA
(SHILLONG,
MEGHALAYA)

By TEAM AGENDA

Blessed with nature's bounty, Northeast India is a safe haven for many travellers who wish to escape the overcrowded and over-polluted city life from time to time. With the winter season worsening the pollution's threat to healthy living, Northeast India is the best place to take refuge in to revitalise your health and take a step back to recentre within. Here are a few of the many scenic vacation spots that can do just that.

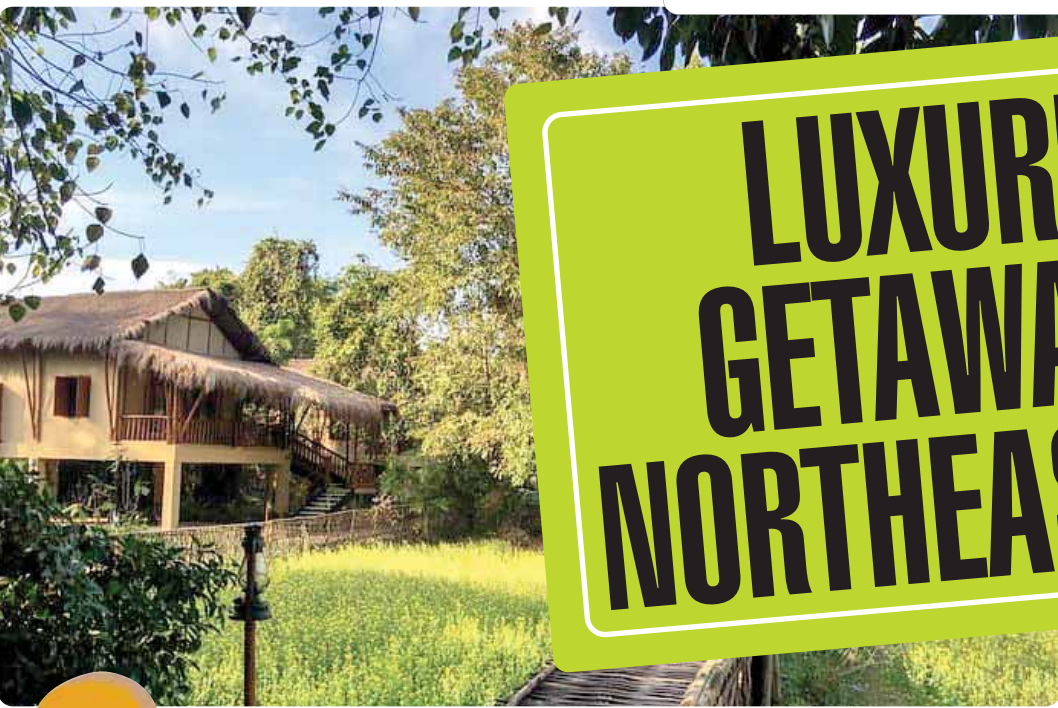


HOTEL
CLASSIC
GRANDE
(IMPHAL,
MANIPUR)

A part of the Radisson Individuals group, Hotel Classic Grande provides cosy accommodations in Imphal. With 171 rooms and suites featuring modern amenities, this hotel offers warm hospitality infused with local culture. Guests can enjoy exquisite dining options while taking in views of the Baruni Hill range. Manipur, known as the 'Jewel of India,' boasts of the world's only floating lake, 'Loktak Lake' and the serene Keibul Lamjao National Park, home to the endangered Sangai deer. It is also celebrated for its classical dance and handwoven textiles making it a true treasure of the Northeast.

TAKEAWAY

From the serene hills of Shillong and Gangtok to the wildlife-rich Kaziranga and Tawang, these destinations offer both luxury and tranquillity. The aforementioned resorts offer that entire one can dream of in a staycation that rejuvenates the mind and soul. Whether you're seeking a luxurious resort or a more rustic retreat, Northeast India provides the perfect haven for anyone looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life and reconnect with nature.



DIPHLU
RIVER LODGE
(KAZIRANGA,
ASSAM)

Situated on the outskirts of Kaziranga National Park, Diphlu River Lodge offers an authentic experience with its rustic ethnic design. The lodge features comfortable accommodations and a range of activities such as bird watching, vehicle safaris, and village treks, making it an excellent choice for nature lovers. A land of rolling tea gardens, the mighty Brahmaputra, and rich wildlife, Assam is brimming with its natural beauty and vibrant cultural heritage.



SUMMIT
NORLING
RESORT AND
SPA
(GANGTOK,
SIKKIM)

This resort is set in a picturesque location with beautiful gardens and a serene atmosphere. Summit Norling Resort & Spa offers 27 well-appointed rooms, including luxurious chalets with stunning views of the Himalayas. Guests can enjoy various recreational activities and unwind by the pond or around a campfire. A serene paradise, Sikkim is adorned with snow-capped peaks, alpine meadows, and vibrant monasteries, offering breathtaking views and spiritual tranquillity.

LUXURIOUS
GETAWAYS IN
NORTHEAST INDIA

The pressure of waiting for my admission results was becoming unbearable. My friend, Vishesh Shukla, suggested a short trip to Mathura and Vrindavan, known for their spiritual aura and rich heritage. Without much planning, we packed our bags and boarded the Lucknow-Agra Intercity Express in the evening. The train reached Agra late at night, and from there, we caught another train to Mathura. By the time we arrived in Mathura, it was around 1 a.m. A short auto ride costing ₹50 took us to Vrindavan, where we stayed at the Tourist Facilitation Centre. After a long journey, we finally got some rest, excited about the day ahead. In the morning, we checked into a modest hotel that charged ₹1,300 for 24 hours. After freshening up, our first stop was the famous Banke Bihari Temple. The temple's energy and devotion left us amazed. We continued our exploration with visits to the ISKCON Temple, Radha Raman Temple and Nidhivan, each offering a unique spiritual experience. Walking through the streets of Vrindavan, surrounded by the sound of bhajans and the sight of devotees, was truly calming. After a simple lunch at a local eatery, we returned to the hotel for a quick nap. The evening was reserved for the magnificent Prem Mandir, which looked breathtaking under the evening



SOULFUL
TRAVEL DIARIES

Mathura's sacred temples, peaceful ghats and lively streets provided the perfect getaway from the stress of admission results, writes MANOJ SINGH NEGI



lights. The intricate architecture and devotional atmosphere made it a highlight of the trip. Dinner was at the newly opened Bikanerwala Restaurant on Chhatikara Road. The delicious food was the perfect end to the day. That night, I received the news I had been eagerly waiting for, I had been admitted to my dream institute, IIMC Dhenkanal! The happiness and relief were indescribable. I couldn't help but thank the positive energy of this spiritual trip for making this moment even more special. The next morning, we visited the Shri Krishna Jannabhoomi Temple, the birthplace of Lord Krishna. The early morning peace at the temple was soothing. We also stopped by the Dwarkadhish Temple, which is known for its vibrant morning rituals. The temples of Mathura left a deep impression on us with their history and devotion. After breakfast near Yamuna Ghat, we boarded a bus from Mathura Bus Stand to Tundla. We had a hearty lunch at Tundla before catching the Gomti Express, which took us back to Lucknow. This trip was much more than just a getaway. It gave me the clarity and positivity I needed, along with the joy of achieving my dream. The spiritual vibe of Mathura and Vrindavan, combined with their timeless charm, made it a journey I will never forget.



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19
This week brings multiple reasons for joy, with financial gains flowing from various channels.

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Amber
Lucky day Saturday



LEO July 23-Aug 22
You will feel a deep sense of blessings and divine favor surrounding you. This is a period of joy, renewal, and healing.

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Tuesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21
This week emphasizes inner resilience and emotional balance. It's about harnessing your inner power with grace and staying composed amidst challenges.

Lucky number 22 | Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Wednesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20
This week presents an excellent opportunity to channel your innate creativity into financial growth.

Lucky number 21 | Lucky colour Black
Lucky day Wednesday



VRIGO Aug 23-Sep 22
The week begins with firm decisions concerning both home and work matters. You exhibit resilience and face life's challenges with unwavering strength.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour White
Lucky day Sunday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19
The week ahead brings a whirlwind of activity across multiple aspects of life, requiring your focus and commitment.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Pine
Lucky day Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20
This week promises plenty of reasons for joy and fulfillment. A wave of optimism surrounds you, bringing a sense of ease and progress in your pursuits.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Beige
Lucky day Monday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22
The week unfolds with a surge of motivation and creativity. You feel inspired and energized, ready to embrace new beginnings and meaningful pursuits.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Jade
Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18
This week will keep you occupied with various aspects of life, requiring your full focus and dedication.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Tuesday



CANCER June 21-July 22
Progress may seem gradual, but your perseverance will lead to significant accomplishments.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Lilac
Lucky day Thursday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21
You have been putting in immense effort in various areas, striving for progress, but the outcomes may feel delayed.

Lucky number 19 | Lucky colour Opal
Lucky day Friday



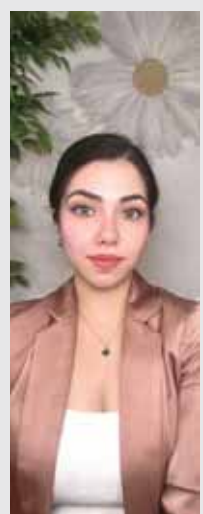
PISCES Feb 19-March 20
This week promises financial growth and material comfort, bringing a sense of stability to your life.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Aqua
Lucky day Thursday

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The Science of Mindfulness

THE LIFE GUIDANCE



Seerat Kaur Marwaha

We are perpetually in pursuit of the next thrill of happiness. Perhaps it's a luxurious Bentley, an exclusive beach getaway, or that coveted Birkin bag.

spreading joy and fostering connections. Genetically happier individuals show higher activity in the 'Happy Brain' and lower activity in the 'Stress Brain,' shaping their positive outlook on life.



difficulties, and self-esteem issues. Meditation acts as a tool for healing and unwinding old negative patterns and traumas.

al. (2003) found that an 8-week mindfulness meditation program significantly improved emotional regulation and immune function, demonstrating meditation's profound impact on both mental and physical health.

ability to live in the present moment. In a world constantly pulling us in a hundred different directions—emails, deadlines, social obligations, and endless to-do lists—it is easy to lose sight of what truly matters.

— She is a Life Coach and Founder of Soulful Wellness