



5 MINS FROM KELAMBAKKAM

2 BHK from ₹29L

3 BHK from ₹39L

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LAUNCHING



CASAGRAND
SOUTHBROOKE

PHASE II



Kelambakkam Market Price	Casagrand Price	Early Bird Price	Kids Friendly 2 & 3 BHK Apts.
₹4200 per sft.	₹2999 per sft.	₹2799 per sft. (For 25 bookings only)	from ₹29L - ₹43L

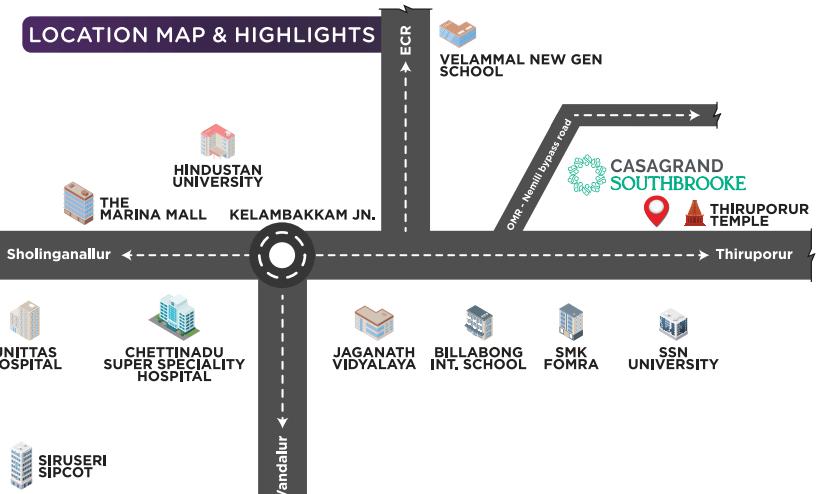


INCREDIBLY PRICED - PHASE II

TYPE	SIZE (SFT)	LAUNCH PRICE (₹)	EARLY BIRD PRICE (₹)
2 BHK	1009 - 1023	31 L - 32 L	29 L - 30 L
3 BHK	1172 - 1340	42 L - 47 L	39 L - 43 L

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- ROCK GARDEN
- WHISPER WAVE
- BEEHIVE BOWER
- SERENITY STROLLWAY
- RIPPLE HOPPERS
- TRELLIS WALK
- FOREST TRAIL
- SWING DECK
- SHADED SEATING ZONE
- METALLIC AISLE
- MOONGATE ENTRY TO ROCK GARDEN
- BOUGAINVILLEA PLANTING STRUCTURES
- CREEPER SCREEN WALL
- SHADED LOUNGERS

ENTERTAINMENT

- OPEN AIR THEATRE
- GALLERY SEATING
- BARBEQUE COUNTER
- HAMMOCKS
- WORK PODS
- MEET-UP NICHE
- LOWER LEVEL LEISURE LAWN
- UPPER LEVEL PARTY LAWN
- SURPRISE FOUNTAIN
- WIFI ZONE

31. SENIOR CITIZEN NOOKS

- FIRE-PIT WITH SEATING
- CHIT CHAT CORNERS
- TREE PLAZA

35. CHESS SEATERS

- MEDITATION PODS
- OUTDOOR GYM
- YOGA & MEDITATION DECK
- PEDESTRIAN PROMENADE

KIDS

- KIDS PLAY AREA
- SAND PIT FOR SAND CASTLE
- CHESS COURT
- TIC-TAC-TOE
- GYRO SWING
- SNAKE & LADDER
- HANGING CHIMES
- MUSICAL GARDEN
- JUMPING NET AND TRAMPOLINE
- PLAY LAWNS
- PLAY STEPS
- SENSORY PIANO WALK

SWIMMING POOL

- LAP POOL
- KIDS POOL
- AQUA GYM
- POOL JACUZZI
- SUNBATH LOUNGE
- SUBMERGED SEATS
- CABANA
- RECESSED POOL BAR WITH PERGOLA
- OUTDOOR SHOWER AREA
- POOLSIDE RESTING AREA

62. WATER FEATURE WALL

- POOLSIDE THEATRE
- POOLSIDE PARTY LAWN
- POOLSIDE DINING

66. OSR ENTRY PLAZA

- BOCCIE BALL
- BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURT
- MULTIPURPOSE COURT
- FUTSAL

71. BOX CRICKET COURT

- WALKING/JOGGING TRACK
- RING TOSS
- TOT LOT

75. KIDS ZIPLINE

- JUNGLE GYM
- SKATING RINK WITH ROLLER SKATING & SKATE BOARD
- LAWN DART
- LEISURE LAWN MOUND

80. ROCK CLIMBING WALL

- ROSE GARDEN
- SEASONAL FLOWER BOULEVARD
- DIY ORGANIC GARDEN

84. STAR GAZING SEATERS

- LEISURE PAVILION
- LEISURE SEATING
- NANNY'S CORNER
- PETS PARK

107. KIDS PLAY AREA

- LEARNING CENTRE
- KIDS BALL PIT
- LEGO ZONE
- FUNFINITY HUB
- SLIDING TOWER

110. ADVENTURE WALL CLIMBING

- KIDS BOARD GAMES

115. FMS ROOM

- ASSOCIATION ROOM

108. LEARNING CENTRE

- KIDS BALL PIT

110. LEGO ZONE

- FUNFINITY HUB

112. SLIDING TOWER

- ADVENTURE WALL CLIMBING

114. KIDS BOARD GAMES

109. KIDS BALL PIT

- LEGO ZONE

111. FUNFINITY HUB

- SLIDING TOWER

113. ADVENTURE WALL CLIMBING

- KIDS BOARD GAMES

115. FMS ROOM

- ASSOCIATION ROOM

116. ASSOCIATION ROOM

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building aspirations

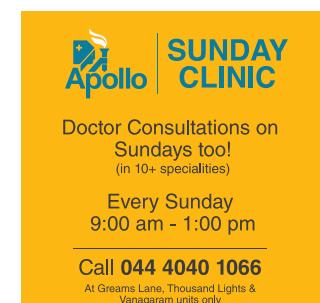
weekend

WEEK

metro PLUS THE  HINDU

SAY IT LIKE SARA

The actor on Ae
Watan Mere Watan, and its
Gen-Z connect **P4**



The print parade

Nizam by Rajdeep Ranawat: We loved this celebration of prints in Rajdeep's collection evocatively named Nizam. We have followed the work of this designer for his artsy approach to motifs, a tad European, and generously *desi*. For this season's collection, he sought his inspiration in the courtesans of the Awadh courts of Lucknow. Silhouettes include flowing kurtas layered tactfully with opulent printed jackets, paired with high trousers. Capes and trousers formed a major part of his collection that featured motifs from Rajasthan, Kashmir, and Lucknow along with Mughal elements.

At the recent Lakme Fashion Week, we spotted Jodhpur pants, kurta-inspired tunics and a move towards sustainable and responsible fashion. Here's what will influence wardrobes this year



Endless summer

Hana by Saaksha and Kinni: Fashion in India is becoming increasing 'season agnostic', especially in the southern peninsula where summer is through the year. A case in point is Saaksha and Kinni's summery selection — and debut swimwear collection — for this season, with, at the heart of it the mandala motif. This culturally significant motif paired with luxurious quilt stitching manifests itself in beautiful swimwear. This collection of resort/swimwear beautifully incorporated ikat and block prints, juxtaposed with Western-style geometric lines and checks, making for a beautiful blend overall.

Architectural and structured

You by Shantanu & Nikhil: When it comes to structure and architectural garments, the designer duo has mastered the game. Their collection this time was as tailored and structured as it gets and it truly piqued our interest. They have often showcased a military element in their clothes and the striking battalion jacket is an icon in fashion, if you will. This time, they continue their tradition of well-defined shoulders, belted waists and gold, military-style trims.



Race to the runway



Riaan Jacob George

As Mumbai's fashion commentators, couturiers and creators came together last week at Lakme Fashion Week X FDCI, we saw stalwarts like Anamika Khanna revive tribal motifs, Rajesh Pratap Singh partner with an Argentinian polo brand, and JJ Valaya use royal travel fables as a narrative to work with. We also loved the sartorial elegance of Siddhartha Tytler and the dreamy Lucknow-esque motifs of Rajdeep Ranawat. Another highlight was Saaksha and Kinni's summery swimwear collection.

Here is what we believe will influence wardrobes in the coming year:



Pour homme

Checkmate by Siddhartha Tytler: Mumbai's dapper brigade turned out in large numbers to see Delhi-based sartorialist Siddhartha Tytler's chess-inspired collection. Siddhartha's models showcased sherwani and suit silhouettes with effortless ease, with a black and white colour palette, tinged with hues of metal and pastel. The designer seems to have a mastery over the athleisure trend and this time was no exception. We saw dressy silhouettes give way to sporty chic looks normalising oversized jackets, sneakers and street-inspired attire.



Sustainable tribes

JJ. Kapurhala by JJ Valaya: With every season of Lakme Fashion Week, the messaging of sustainable and responsible fashion consumption gets stronger. A case in point is this collection presented by design maven JJ Valaya as a bridge-to-luxury offering underpinned by the notions of sustainable fashion.

This delightful presentation was bathed in the travelogues of the Maharaja of Kapurhala. Minimalism, strategic accents and quirky embellishments were seen on kurta-inspired tunics with patch pockets. On a more dressy note, we saw a sharp black bandhgala suit paired with a striped shirt to add a fun element.

The collection used eco-friendly cloth fashioned from recycled PET bottles as well as R | Elan Kooltex fabric, which is perfect for India's summery climes. For us, this collection stands out for making a statement on circular fashion, a cause that this fashion week has been championing for the past couple of years.



Tribal chic

Anamika Khanna: All eyes were on haute couturier Anamika Khanna this season as she pulled out all stops to showcase India's tribal heritage in a rather chic interpretation. "The Bonda community of Odisha," Anamika says, "is at the heart of this collection, where you will see the use of beads in pop neon colours, shells, indigenous neck rings in brass, all this in a host of delightful tribal weaves."

The silhouettes showcased were anything but tribal taking on a stark generous use of denim in the designer's collection, with lavish threadwork and embroidery splashed across pieces to keep the tribal inspiration alive. On the colour front, Anamika wisely juxtaposed pop coloured accessories along with white, pastel, red and pink. Given her fandom in the fashion industry, this was one of the most awaited shows of the season and her unique interpretation of the tribal trend was refreshing.



urban identity with relaxed pants, flow coats, kaftans and dresses. We saw a generous use of denim in the designer's collection, with lavish threadwork and embroidery splashed across pieces to keep the tribal inspiration alive. On the colour front, Anamika wisely juxtaposed pop coloured accessories along with white, pastel, red and pink. Given her fandom in the fashion industry, this was one of the most awaited shows of the season and her unique interpretation of the tribal trend was refreshing.



Instapick

Poke-back: Meta brings back poking on Facebook with improved suggestions and easier access to the poking page. Despite its initial surge dating back to 2004, poking resurges, especially among 18 to 29-year-olds. The feature's purpose remains ambiguous, left to users' interpretation for flirting or friendly nudges.



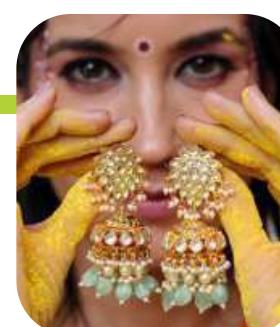
Talkingpoint

London woke up to a new Banksy: The artwork features a mass of paint behind a bare tree to look like foliage, with a stencil of a person holding a pressure hose next to it. The green paint used matches the colour the council uses on Islington road signs. A photo of the mural was posted on Banksy's official Instagram account.

pick of the week

Concerts, workshops, tours, and everything else you need to plan your social calendar.

For events, contact us on weekend@thehindu.co.in



Clicks and canvases
Witness stories of resilience and beauty captured by five young women from Tamil Nadu in a film and **photography exhibition** by Kanavu Fellowship at Studio A, Royapettah, tomorrow from 11am to 4pm. Entry is free and open to all. Head to the CP Art Gallery in Alwarpet for an exhibition cum sale of **Mysore paintings** until March 26 from 10am to 7pm. Entry is free and open to all.

Creative splash
Unleash your inner artist! Learn **watercolour basics** and paint Nature's beauty with no prior experience on March 23 from 4.30pm to 6pm at Studio Vella (Kotturpuram). Call 9840030063 for tickets at ₹1,800. If you do not know how to draw, this is for you! Join the **bad drawing party** on March 24 at Antispot, Chennai at 4pm. Embrace the imperfections and bond with fellow non-artists free of judgement.

Feast galore
Explore the foods of the Western Ghats curated by Rakesh Raghunathan at the **Kurunji festival**. Head to Wild Garden Cafe, at Amethyst from April 5 to 19 to try the special menu. Call 9382713370 for reservations. Celebrate Holi with a vibrant menu at **Anise, Taj Coromandel**. Indulge in thandai, chaats, kebabs, and biryanis on March 24 from 12.30pm to 3pm at ₹3,000. Call 78248 62311 for reservations.

Summer stepping
Your search for summer footwear ends here. **Birkenstock**'s Spring Summer collection is out! Shop for iridescent buckles, braided details, and new textures on birkenstock.in starting at ₹5,000. **ALDO**'s Spring 24 collection pairs trendy styles with comfort in stilettos, flats, loafers and more. Shop at ALDO stores across the country and on aldoshoes.in starting ₹4,999.

Weekend chuckles
Here's your guide for a weekend filled with laughter. Watch **Praveen Kumar and Guna Jannan** on March 30 at the All The Children Trust, to raise funds for children's medical needs. Tickets on in.bookmyshow.com starting ₹499. Catch a comedy show by **Madras Comedy Circuit** at Fika, where a secret lineup is performing today at 4pm. Tickets on in.bookmyshow.com starting ₹150.

Sparkling finds
Explore **Tiramisu's Amoha** jewellery range inspired by Holi. Shop semi-precious stones, polki details, and 18K gold-plating crafted by Jaipur artisans on weartiramisu.com starting ₹7,500. **Zoya** unveils the second edition of My Embrace, a diamond collection of sleek bangles, bracelets, pendants, and more in gold, platinum, and rose gold on zoya.in, with prices starting ₹80,000.

Glamour reloaded
Just in time for summer, designer **Punit Balana** unveils Modern Jaipur, inspired by Jaipur's rich heritage. Shop for dresses, co-ords, and more in soft pastels and bold prints on silks and moongas on punjabalana.in starting ₹16,500. **Label RaMa**'s new collection is your summer wardrobe must-have. Shop for ethically made, breezy dresses in flowy silhouettes on labelrama.com starting ₹4,999.

This year the Shoonya Festival, is being held in a *haveli*-turned-homestay in Uttarakhand. It features drum circles, music around a bonfire, workshops on meditation, and more

Sangita Rajan
sangitarajan.ph@thehindu.co.in

In a bustling landscape of festivals clamouring for attention with their A-list celebrity line-ups and gastronomic delights, stands a festival of nothingness. All set to be held in Tehri, Uttarakhand, the Shoonya Festival beckons soul-seekers, free spirits, and the curious minded with its unique blend of mindful ceremonies, and transformative experiences.

At Shoonya, the spotlight does not shine on stages crowded with performers, but rather on spaces brimming with possibilities – workshops on meditation, drum circles and bonfire music sessions.

Shoonya, meaning zero, was started by Anuj Agrawal, a marketing professional, in 2018 with his friends after wanting to host an event in the mountains that was not a music or a food event. "Over the course of time, we get labels attached to us based on our jobs, but that's not who we are. The whole idea of Shoonya revolves around being nothing," he says, adding that

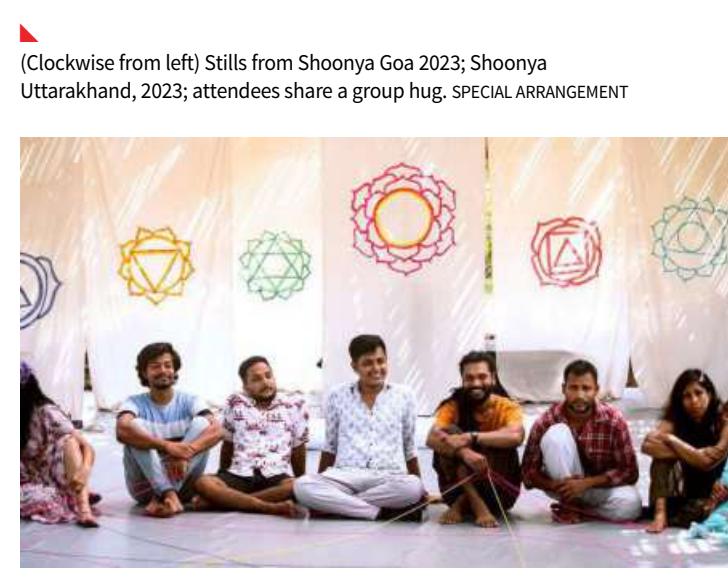


In search of nothingness

when someone comes to Shoonya, they are expected to leave their tags behind.

At this festival of nothingness, who you are professionally does not matter. With a strict no-shop-talk policy,

conversations inevitably dig into self identity and reflection. The three-day, two-night festival expects its participants to come with no expectations. "We do have a set plan of activities, but we do not disclose it to the



participants," says Anuj.

Since the festival is not funded by sponsors, it relies on participant fees and hence, picking the apt location is key. "We're conscious about not picking venues that are commercial and try to involve the locals. So Shoonya is often held in remote locations," says Anuj. This year's Shoonya is being held at a restored *haveli*.

"The festival is projected as a zero-waste festival, and we have a zero-drug policy," he says, adding that the festival days are divided into high energy and low energy portions. The first day is

kept low-key with an induction and a musical session for everyone to get to know one another, and day two is particularly high-energy with activities like drum circles, and the third day focusses on introspection.

"A drum circle is an African tribal cultural activity where people from different walks of life come together to make music. It's a circle of peace, harmony and togetherness," says Manu, founder of Drum Circle India, adding that holding drum circles at Shoonya is more about identity than music.

The festival plays host to several facilitators like art therapists, drum circle experts, yoga instructors and more, who travel from around the world. In 2023, Shoonya had three editions – in Jaipur, Goa, and Uttarakhand.

The Shoonya Festival will be held from March 29 to 31, in Tehri, Uttarakhand. For tickets, log on to shoonyafestival.com.



Conservation carnival

Earth Day goes all-day! This March 23, WWF-India's Earth Hour India is going beyond the switch-off hour. Join a day of eco-discovery at their headquarters in New Delhi. Paint with Anjolie Ela Menon from 1pm to 2.30pm, learn wildlife photography from conservation icons, and catch a screening of the Oscar-nominated documentary *All That Breathes*. Earth Hour India goodwill ambassador Ananya Panday will join in on the festivities.

Register for the events at wwfindia.org.



Tech makeover

Fashion Tech Week (FTW) returns to Bengaluru on May 30 and 31, connecting fashion leaders with tech innovators. Explore how AI is transforming retail, the rise of 3D design, and the potential of the fashion metaverse. Network with 2,000-plus attendees, join exclusive workshops and sessions, and gain insights from 75-plus speakers across fashion, tech, and e-commerce.

For more information and passes, log on to bengaluru.fashiontechweek.co.

the Rotary Club of Madras (East). Let me point out quite clearly that they have nothing to do with the Rotary Club of Madras (West). Apparently, this division was created by founder-member Rudyard Raghavan Kipling, who wrote *East is East and West is West and never the Twain shall meet*. Now, the East Rotarians were calling to inquire if I knew anybody who could entertain their audience on March 23 at the world famous, in Chennai, Music Academy auditorium.

I gave them my list of famous politicians, but they declined. Although impressed by all their acts, they all seemed to be not too cost effective. (A few of them also appeared to favour a cash component, which could not be complied with even over Rudyard Raghavan Kipling's dead body). Finally, out of sheer desperation, an innocent Rotarian, (again pardon all Rotarians are innocent, at least the Madras East ones are), feebly suggested if I could entertain an audience at short notice? My reply was to ask him to please define 'entertain' as a concept.

After much back and forth over the actual meaning and interpretation of that word, we came to a common acceptable conclusion. "The word 'entertain' translates to

chatting with an audience for about 90 minutes, of which, for the first 15 minutes the audience actually stays in the auditorium. I was then called in for an in-person meet and greet. Where it was quickly agreed upon, that I was much shorter than in my picture.

Asked to describe my act, I sort of pulled a rabbit out of my lungi, so to speak. As I explained to all that lack of height notwithstanding, my act will have four clear components: 1. A little walking, 2. A little talking, 3. A lot of pointing, 4. Lots and lots of negotiating. The Rotarians than had a private meeting, right in front of me, and concluded that anyone who consistently could use three syllable words in ordinary sentences was absolutely acceptable. Then they shook hands. Although, only with each other. After which I got a text from a guy standing two feet away which read, "I guess we have no choice; so you are on March 23, 7 pm; Music Academy auditorium, don't be late".

Those of you who feel this is a shameless plug are absolutely wrong. This is just proof I need to show my wife, that this weekend when I disappeared, I was actually in Chennai! First 20 in the auditorium will get a... er... a hug.

The writer has dedicated his life to communism. Though only on weekends.



ILLUSTRATION: SATHEESH VELLINEZHI

(Clockwise from right) Magic Mush cocktail; the interiors of Torii; jacket potato; dirty Torii sushi; and (left to right) Abhayraj Kohli, Gauri Khan and Tanaaz Bhatia. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



A Torii story

Gauri Khan's first restaurant serves Asian-inspired global cuisine and experimental cocktails to glamorous diners in a plush indoor-outdoor space in Mumbai

Suman Mahfuz Quazi

The corner plot on 21 Pali Hill Road, Mumbai, where the recently launched progressive Asian diner Torii – part-owned by Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan's wife Gauri Khan – now stands, has seen the rise and fall of several restaurants over the last decade.

In 2016, European restaurant Nido became The Korner House, which, in turn, made way for the celebrated Mexican joint, Sancho's, in 2018 (also designed by Gauri at the time). It was replaced by Tori

(then, with a single 'i') in 2021. With an additional letter and two more investors – interior designer and Bollywood film producer, Gauri and entrepreneur Tanaaz Bhatia, along with the original restaurateur-owner Abhayraj Kohli – the establishment opened last month to the city's haute crowd.

When we arrive at the plush and re-done space on a balmy Saturday afternoon, tables are beginning to fill up and Gauri's touch is palpable in more than just the interiors. "Having designed many restaurants, opening my own felt like a natural next step," she tells us.

If the glamour quotient of the

ambience is "restrained" in hues of gold, black and white, with accents of red and green – that of its diners is less understated. Gaggles of Bandra mondaines pass around sushi or pose with their luxury handbags in front of strategically placed mirrors that help the

indoor-outdoor space seem roomier than it is.

The 85-seater restaurant, with its statement dark-green door, back-lit onyx floors, brass accents, quaint al fresco courtyard, and cushy, indoor banquette draped in red houndstooth, is as much a nod to

the establishment's Asian roots as it is to Gauri's personal brand.

But Torii is hardly the multi-hyphenate celebrity's first foray into the world of restaurants: Gauri did the interiors for restaurants like Arth, Mumbai, which downed its shutters in 2020, and the aforementioned Sancho's. It is, however, her first out-take as a co-restaurant owner. "The idea of creating an inviting space got me excited. It [this restaurant] is a seamless blend of my love for



aesthetics, the joy of crafting immersive experiences, and my fondness for progressive Asian cuisine," she shares.

The menu, designed by Chef Stefan Gadit, is an expansive, albeit a slightly befuddled, collection of dishes. Out-and-out Japanese classics, like a resplendent salmon tataki drenched in a citrus ponzo share space with more experimental preparations such as, a jacket potato, which curiously comes sans the skin and instead features a heap of mash topped with truffle, crisps and shiso butter.

Ramen and donburi bowls – seemingly lifted straight from the pages of a Manga comic – co-exist with chimichurri steaks! "The idea is to offer Asian-inspired but global cuisine," Stefan justifies, adding,

"I don't believe in borders and with the supply chain getting better over the years, ingredients are more easily available to us. I want to showcase that... some of the local ingredients, and build a contemporary menu without rules."

The cocktail menu is a mishmash too, with libations inspired by matcha, mango sticky rice and tom yum soup. Think of it as a blend of traditional flavours with modern techniques that try making a big splash with mixology processes, like clarification, fat-washing and distilling.

Gauri, who has played an active role in both, designing and conceptualising the restaurant, while partaking in endless trials, swears by the black cod, green Thai curry, fleet of dim sum and sushi, but says that her "ultimate favourite has to be the Dirty Torii maki roll".

Her influence is felt in the luxuriosness that the establishment imbues, but most chiefly in the cohort it is already drawing in: affluent ladies who love lunching to the sound of clinking cutlery and canards. It is like a scene out of the popular Netflix reality drama *Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives*, in which Gauri has interestingly made an appearance or two.

Torii is at 21, Pali Hill Road, Union Park, Khar (West), Mumbai. A meal for two is approximately ₹2,000.



Purple rain

Add some colour-changing gin to your Holi celebration; meet the teams behind Nisaki and Clearly Good Gin, who are working with butterfly pea flowers

Ria Gupta

Goa recently saw the launch of Nisaki, a colour-changing gin created by friends Sanchit Agarwal, Nidhi Kedia and Akhilesh Rajan – the first in their portfolio under the trio's company, Project Peacock, which was launched early this month. The gin, distilled at Goa's Adinco Distilleries, is the first in their portfolio of spirits and makes for a colourful addition to your Holi party.

Nisaki is one of the only two such offerings in India right now. After being distilled with botanicals, colour-changing gins (also called purple gins) are infused with butterfly pea flower, which lends it a blue colour that changes shades after

interacting with citric acid. But despite the abundance of this flower, which grows wild in India, colour-changing gins remain an anomaly in the Indian spirits market. We set out to find why.

Buzz around the bloom
Traditionally, the butterfly pea flower or Aparajita (*Clitoria ternatea*) has been native to Southeast Asian countries, including India. It suddenly became a fad just before the pandemic, with butterfly pea flower tea doing the rounds on Internet. "You'll find the flower being used behind bars as syrups and powders. Even colour-changing cocktails are common on menus, but you don't find any colour-changing spirits on the Indian shelves yet," says chef and



entrepreneur Tarun Sibal, the man behind Khi Khi in Delhi, Barfly in Goa, and several other popular bars across India.

The first one to break this mould was distiller Shubham Khanna of Enigma Spirits, who launched Clearly Good Gin in 2021. The next few years exposed Shubham to several logistical setbacks, from difficulty in sourcing the flower to maintaining its colour.

"However, there is nothing that cannot be fixed," he says. While the purple gin is still available at select locations in Goa, he has paused production to emulate his learnings for a stronger product.

"When I started out, butterfly pea flowers were growing in abundance, but growing wild. Now, the market is evolving and there are a few more farmers catering to its organised production," he says.

A low output of the fragile flower means steep pricing and difficult access. And to achieve the kind of bold colours that

Nisaki boasts, the flower is required in abundant quantities. To find stability of colour is another tedious task, requiring extensive research and testing. The change in pH levels and exposure to sun also causes the colour to fade over the course of months. And after all, a mid-segment gin that changes colour runs the risk of being perceived as gimmicky, although at ₹1,850 a bottle, Clearly Good Gin's pricing became its USP by offering a fun gin at an affordable price. "We were selling 1,000 to 1,500 bottles a month in Goa alone," Shubham reveals.

Creating a high that lasts
"While gin drinking may be becoming a cultural phenomenon in India, a large segment of the market is not yet ready to discern the flavour complexity of the spirit. Most households do not even use a jigger to measure how much alcohol is going into their drink," says Sanchit.

As an answer, the team has distilled 16 of the simplest botanicals, from Macedonian juniper for a subtle flavour to jasmine for a floral touch. The result? A spirit that leaves faint impressions of citrus on the palate, underscored by the grassy finish of Orris root.

Each botanical finds its place in the mouth, from the hint of clove to the heat of ginger, with rose dominating the final aftertaste. The liquid, catching eye for its bold colour at first glance, changes hues with the addition of mixers, turning indigo with soda, pink with tonic and an electric blue with water. Thanks to this colour-changing form, gin drinkers can associate colour with flavour until they not only know how they like their drink, but also how to make it.



Festive hamper

This Easter, La Patisserie at Taj Coromandel packs festive treats in three exclusive hampers: Cheshire Goodies Hamper, Mad Hatter Goodies Hamper and Dodo Goodies Hamper. The boxes contain chocolate Easter eggs, hot cross buns, cinnamon buns, carrot cake, parmesan twist, tea, praline, monofloral organic honey, scented candles, handrolled truffles, almond spread, Davidoff coffee, handcrafted soap bar, French macaroons and more. Starting price: ₹1,500; available till March 31.



Celebrate through food

Explore Ramzan delicacies like Haleem and Biryani in the 10th edition of The Park's Ramzan food walk. The guided walk through the bustling streets of Triplicane will feature food experiences specially curated by Chef Ashutosh Nerlekar. Assemble at The Park's Six 'O' One on April 5 at 5pm.

For details and registration, call 9840324991. Priced at ₹1,500, inclusive of food and transport.



aesthetics, the joy of crafting immersive experiences, and my fondness for progressive Asian cuisine," she shares.

The menu, designed by Chef Stefan Gadit, is an expansive, albeit a slightly befuddled, collection of dishes. Out-and-out Japanese classics, like a resplendent salmon tataki drenched in a citrus ponzo share space with more experimental preparations such as, a jacket potato, which curiously comes sans the skin and instead features a heap of mash topped with truffle, crisps and shiso butter.

Ramen and donburi bowls – seemingly lifted straight from the pages of a Manga comic – co-exist with chimichurri steaks! "The idea is to offer Asian-inspired but global

cuisine," Stefan justifies, adding, "I don't believe in borders and with the supply chain getting better over the years, ingredients are more easily available to us. I want to showcase that... some of the local ingredients, and build a contemporary menu without rules."

The cocktail menu is a mishmash too, with libations inspired by matcha, mango sticky rice and tom yum soup. Think of it as a blend of traditional flavours with modern techniques that try making a big splash with mixology processes, like clarification, fat-washing and distilling.

Gauri, who has played an active role in both, designing and conceptualising the restaurant, while partaking in endless trials, swears by the black cod, green Thai curry, fleet of dim sum and sushi, but says that her "ultimate favourite has to be the Dirty Torii maki roll".

Her influence is felt in the luxuriosness that the establishment imbues, but most chiefly in the cohort it is already drawing in: affluent ladies who love lunching to the sound of clinking cutlery and canards. It is like a scene out of the popular Netflix reality drama *Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives*, in which Gauri has interestingly made an appearance or two.

Torii is at 21, Pali Hill Road, Union Park, Khar (West), Mumbai. A meal for two is approximately ₹2,000.

Pages from the past

Sara Ali Khan discusses her film, *Ae Watan Mere Watan*, and what Gen-Z could learn from this inspiring chapter of history



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Sara Ali Khan, who read History at Columbia University, sees lessons for today's youth in the Indian freedom struggle. Her film, *Ae Watan Mere Watan*, that premiered on OTT this week, unfurls the fascinating history of Congress Radio, also known as Azad Radio, an underground radio station that

stoked the heady flames of the Quit India Movement in 1942, fighting back imperial propaganda and mobilising the masses



without the aid of hashtags and phones. It was organised by a band of inspired amateurs, led by Usha Mehta, a 22-year-old student and political activist from Bombay's Wilson College. It is Mehta's spirit and ingenuity that Sara has attempted to embody in *Ae Watan Mere Watan*. "She was one of the countless female heroes who contributed to India's freedom with their courage and sacrifice," says the actor. Excerpts from an interview:

Question: Your producer Karan Johar has described *Ae Watan Mere Watan* as a 'Gen-Z story'. Could you expand?

Answer: It's a parallel we have drawn between the current generation and the youngsters who banded together and fought for India's freedom.

Their slogan was *Karo Ya Maro* (Do or die).

Obviously, the stakes are different today. We are a free, democratic nation, having overcome things like international subjugation and colonialism, but we need to have our voice. We are very lucky to live in a country where freedom

(Clockwise from left)
Stills from *Ae Watan Mere Watan*. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

of speech is encouraged and is a right that is given to us. So I think standing up for what you believe in, not just politically but socially, environmentally or at your workplace, is important.

Q: As a History student, what aspects of Usha Mehta's life did you find most invigorating?

A: When we think of bravery, we think of a physically strong, masculine figure, but there can be emotional and mental fortitude and a degree of femininity that is needed in strength, which is what Usha Mehta embodies. She raised the tricolour at Gowalia Tank Maidan (now August Kranti Maidan), from where the Quit India Movement was launched. She was a Gandhian and a brahmachari (celibate). It's a level of sacrifice to ponder about... when your love for the country, *desh prem*, is so overwhelming that there's no scope for any other kind of love or distraction in your life.

Q: This is your first period film. A pitfall of the genre is that, sometimes, the performances begin to reflect the mannerisms in the movies of that era... **A:** I tried to watch no films of the 1940s. We didn't have much archival footage of Usha Mehta to go on. I decided not to have a Gujarati accent although she was Gujarati. The language of the film is easily understood Hindi. This is not a biography but an ode to multiple unsung heroes from our past. The period design of the film is fairly accurate. We recreated the trams,

the broadcast equipment, the charkhas (spinning wheels)... we shot in real locations around Horniman Circle Gardens in South Mumbai. Unlike Hindi film heroines of the past, I was de-glammed in a khadi saree with a side-parting, waves and bindi. All of these details were geared towards making the world seem more true.

Q: You have been acting for a while now. What's your process of evaluating your own work?

A: I like to re-watch my performances. It's important to see what I did right, what I did wrong. For instance, I received a lot of love for *Zara Hatke Zara Bachke* (2023). So it was useful to go back and see what clicked. But having said that, as an actor, I'm beginning to realise more and more the importance of unlearning. It's important to come to each new set with a clean slate, because each director has their own process and each character is different. *Bambi Todi* from *Murder Mubarak* and Usha Mehta from *Ae Watan* don't have anything in common. To get into the skin of both these characters, with equal conviction on different sets at the same time, was tricky. It takes objectivity, unlearning and surrender.

Q: The last time we spoke, you were reading Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. What are you reading right now? Also, do you prefer paperbacks or the Kindle?

A: I'm reading a book called *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder. I've read it before but it's just so amazing to revisit. It has little bits of different philosophies all woven in a fiction versus non-fiction setting. I love physical books because I like to annotate. Recently, in fact, I was going to Jamnagar for Anant Ambani's pre-wedding celebrations and it was really funny because my father and I were the only two people on the flight with our books and our pencils. My brother had headphones on and went off to sleep.

The film is now streaming on Amazon Prime Video

+ The romance of nostalgia

Collage's Beg Borrow Steal exhibit has jewellery from brands like Chanel, Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Givenchy, Monet, and more

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Collage, Chennai's multi-dimensional fashion and luxury store, is stepping into its 20th year with a retrospective that romances nostalgia. In collaboration with Mumbai's high-end boutique Beg Borrow Steal, it is bringing antique jewellery and art along with vintage textiles and accessories to its premises this weekend. "It has the chaotic, diverse and vibrant vibe of a flea market," says Lata Madhu, founder of Collage.

Gold spot
Founded in 2018 by Pranav Sood and Krisna Krishankutty, Bandra-based Beg Borrow Steal prides its engagement with Collage on the vintage jewellery, which the founders say has been "meticulously chosen for its exquisite craftsmanship and design".

Lata too puts the spotlight on statement jewellery from Givenchy and Chanel, pegging it a rare find for visitors. "This gold-plated jewellery is in mint condition. Also, Chanel bags are something to watch out for; their unique tapestry is reminiscent of the time," she adds. The exhibit has around 50 pieces of jewellery from brands like Chanel, Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Givenchy, Monet, Lanvin, Dolce & Gabbana, Trifari and more.

Vintage wows
Both Lata and Pranav aver that each vintage piece on display tells a story. "The textiles are sourced from different parts of the world, like France, England, China and many more countries. Another one of our specialisations is indigo. Each piece comes with a tag containing information about the date of creation and the season it belonged to. One such unique



Textiles and artwork at the exhibition.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

article in our collection is a 30-year-old mosaic sourced from Italy," says Pranav. The showcase offers 30 sunglasses, brooches and Christian art. Pranav adds, "For enthusiasts of global antiquity, we have three to four pieces on display. Our textile collection comprises 30 to 40 products. In addition to branded items, we also feature around 100 non-branded pieces."

It took the collaborators three months to curate the retrospective. Explains Lata, "Given the character of this event, and the location, keeping both Pranav's and my mindset, the exhibit is an amalgamation of classical and quirky pieces. The idea is to bring people together over conversations of vintage and global forms."

At Collage, 6, Rutland Gate, Nungambakkam, until March 23

The removable micro-floral bouquets on plant-dyed organic fabrics are a defining feature of Moonray's Equilibrium range

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Inspired by Nature, Moonray's Spring-Summer collection, Equilibrium, envelops traditional crafts and dyeing techniques within the fold of sustainable fashion and modern design sensibilities. While plant-based dyes and eco-friendly fabrics are the cynosure of the range that hits store's shelves mid-February, it is the three-dimensional floral bouquet details on the garments that underline the Mumbai-based luxury-clothing brand's commitment to innovation in fashion aesthetics.

Karishma Swali, creative director of Moonray, shares that the brand started working on the collection in July 2023. "This time, Nature's balance and harmony inspired us. We crafted concept boards, explored moods, and experimented until we found a celebration of balance and harmony in design," she says, while elucidating on the title of the edit. From asymmetrical



Moonray's edit is embellished with handcrafted three-dimensional floral bouquets made with gauzy crochet, and crystal meshes.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Striking a balance

hemlines to draped tops, midi skirts and cropped camisoles, the capsule includes versatile separates that can be styled in various ways. It features approximately 65 looks and totals about a hundred pieces, informs Karishma. "At Moonray, we prefer working with limited edition capsules, so we produce very small batch runs. Additionally, within the 65 looks, we keep dropping fresh styles every month," she says.

Equilibrium pivots on traditional tie-and-dye techniques, such as shibori, bandhani and leheriya, which are an ode to heritage practices, adds Karishma. She explains that the dyes have been extracted from the madder root, lac and indigo plant. "Moreover, our dedication to using organic fabrics, like raw denim, hand-woven cottons, luxurious

linens and silks further emphasises our commitment to environmentally conscious practices."

The fabrics in Moonray's edit are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council – an international non-profit, multi-stakeholder organisation established in 1993 that promotes responsible management of the world's forests via timber certification – and embellished with handcrafted three-dimensional floral bouquets

made with gauzy crochet, crystal meshes, polished chrome balls and cut-work detail.

Moonray credits the aesthetics of the range to its diverse team of master artisans and seasoned craft specialists. "Each micro bouquet features delicately crafted petals in micro crochet, juxtaposed with organza thorns. Additionally, polished chrome balls, semi-covered in ultra-matte crochet, and crystal meshes complement either a modest or oversized silhouette. We wanted to demonstrate how complementary values co-exist and how in fact, complementary values together can create the whole," says Karishma. Also, the micro floral bouquets are actually brooches, so they can easily be removed before each wash.

Upwards of ₹8,500 at Moonray's stores in Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru and on moonray.in



amazing artwork and textile pieces on display at the exhibition.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Hindi

It's a fight to keep this flight afloat



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Taking a cue from the government working towards taking the airplane travel to the last passenger in the row, Mumbai cinema is taking action to the skies for the common audience. After *Runway 34*, *Tejas*, *Fighter*, and *Operation Valentine* from the South, *Yodha* is the latest in the trend of aerial action that is constantly hit by air pockets, leading to a turbulent experience.

The stunts are impressive but the script is stunted. It is the same old story of a hero in uniform who doesn't follow the command and how he demolishes some rogue elements with vested interests who want to derail the India-Pakistan peace process. The film's attempt to achieve gender parity by putting strong female characters around the male saviour feels formulaic, and it seems the filmmakers exercised a lot more creative freedom in depicting the pre-2014 era's political leadership.

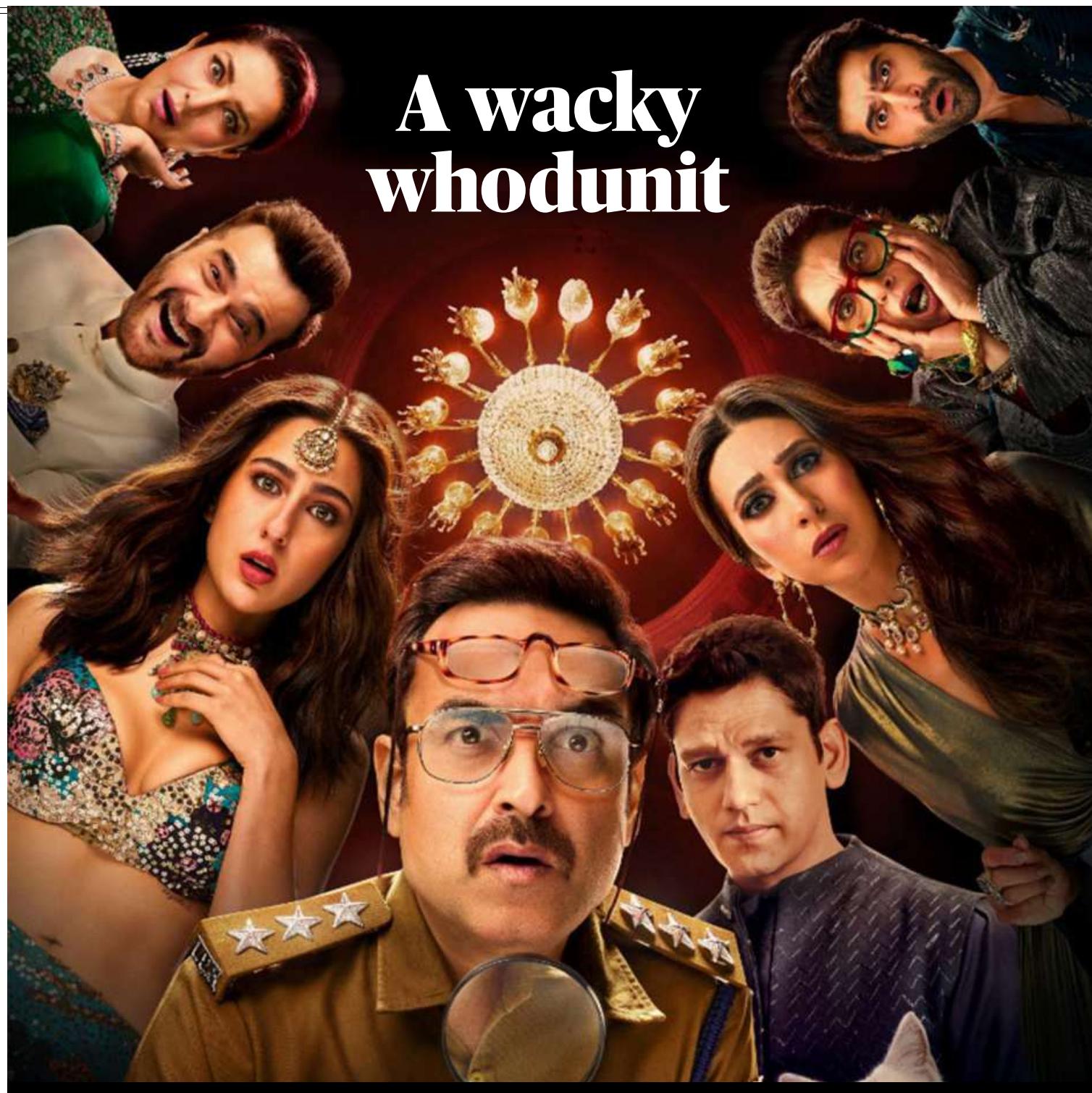
Directed by newcomers Pushkar Ojha and Sagar Ambre, the highlight of the film is the combat scenes in the skies, some of which leap at you. Sidharth Malhotra, once again, impresses with his screen presence, booming voice, and agility. Moving with a sense of purpose that the character demands, here is a young action hero who doesn't need to announce his presence by going bare-chested but his neonate charisma and Rashii Khanna's attempt to make a stock character sound sincere can't make a script that reads more like an airplane handbook fly.

The physical punches land well but the emotional ones don't. The surprise element crucial for the middle portion to hold and important for the final act to dazzle doesn't work as the element of intrigue doesn't envelop us or bring us anywhere close to the edge of the seat. Probably, the aerial exercise is meant to stock the library of an OTT platform where seating position doesn't matter.

Ambre, who has also written the film, has employed a couple of interesting twists in the tale. Still, the journey to those twists has not been mapped properly, just like the characterisation of Disha Patani. Holding on to a secret doesn't necessarily mean you go expressionless till the big reveal arrives. Here the distraction makes one log out and even when the action choreography injects adrenaline one doesn't care for the outcome.

Yodha is currently running in theatres

at the movies



A wacky whodunit

Pankaj Tripathi and Karisma Kapoor bring comic electricity to this loony mystery set amidst Delhi's gentry

Hindi

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Misdirection. Murderers and magicians thrive on it, and, to some extent, film directors too. Homi Adajania knows his way around misdirection: his debut feature, *Being Cyrus* (2005), was an eerily involving thriller, its calm conceits and subtle performances building up to a delicious twist. He attempts the same trick all these years later in *Murder Mubarak*. As before, he gathers a fine ensemble whose florid antics keep us guessing. The only slip-up is that one of the performances – by no means a peripheral one – is alarmingly off-key, drawing more attention to itself than it ideally should.

The Royal Delhi Club is as flagrantly obnoxious and high-flown as its name makes it out to sound. Built in British times, it has endured as an ugly monument to class. It has a gym, a pool, a garden and a dining area, hosting lavish bouts with tall chocolate fountains and coloured macarons. Its patrons are all moneyed showoffs, catty Anglophones with nothing better to do than gather for cards and tambola night. One morning, Leo Mathews (a likably scummy Aashim Gulati), a prized employee at the club, winds up dead. What looks like a freak gym accident is soon deciphered as planned murder.

The roster of potential suspects runs wild. We meet fading diva Shehnaz Noorani (Karisma Kapoor), cocktail czarina Cookie Katoch (Dimple Kapadia),

Murder Mubarak

Director: Homi Adajania

Cast: Pankaj Tripathi, Sara Ali Khan, Vijay Varma, Karisma Kapoor, Ashim Gulati, Dimple Kapadia, Tisca Chopra, Brijendra Kala

Storyline: A sharp-nosed sleuth, played by Pankaj Tripathi, arrives to investigate a murder at a posh Delhi club

windy blueblood Rannvijay (Sanjay Kapoor), and childhood friends and former lovers Bambi (Sara Ali Khan) and Akash (Vijay Varma). There's also Roshni Batra, a wildly cackling socialite played by Tisca Chopra, and good old Guppie (Brijendra Kala), a trusty valet with dementia.

Who could the killer be? The question hangs comically on the vigilant face of ACP Bhavani Singh (Pankaj Tripathi). If you've missed a great Tripathi performance in a while – he was hamming it up in the recent *Main Atal Hoon* – watch him move with elan and poise in *Murder Mubarak*. Little shifts in his manner land as comic punches, rendering Sachin-Jigar's cartoon score unnecessary. Watchful and tactful, Bhavani believes in the art of conversation and careful deduction. As he ingratiates himself with this group, he discovers that Leo was blackmailing some of his patrons. His libidinous social climbing drew the ire of his fellow employees. Did any of them have him killed?

The questions multiply. Writers Gazal Dhaliwal and Suprotim Sengupta, adapting a novel by Anuja Chauhan, keep our eyes and wits engaged for the most part. They spin a funny, self-aware mystery – at one point, the workers are seen placing bets on who the killer could be. *Murder Mubarak* is perhaps best enjoyed for its visual burlesque. There is a glorious fistfight in the opening stretch and Limesh Desai's cinematography and Bindya Chhabria and Arvind Ashok Kumar's production design are full of interesting gags. Check out the severed talking head, for instance, or a large cake dripping over with red icing like blood, signalling the carnage to come.

Less enduring are the film's attempts at

social commentary. Adajania makes dramatic hay out of the secrets and shallow vanities of high-society Delhi. It's a social class that has already been skewered beyond belief, from entrenched Dibakar Banerjee films to the two seasons of *Made in Heaven*. The upstairs-downstairs dynamic of the plot wears thin beyond a point. Despite several attempts to even the odds, the needle of suspicion always rests on the ultra-rich. The dialogue writing is cautiously contemporary. "It's easy to be branded anti-national these days," Bhavani remarks offhandedly – satire without the bite.

Sara Ali Khan and Vijay Varma – an odd couple to rival most – steal a considerable amount of dramatic time. There are legitimate reasons for this, though I wish the film had taken its awkward central romance less seriously. The bits with Tripathi and Karisma Kapoor have genuine comic electricity, a stroke of brilliant casting by Panchami Ghavri. Needless to say, Dimple Kapadia and Tisca Chopra are good sports as ever, and Sanjay Kapoor – following up his act from *Merry Christmas* – is a benign riot.

Murder Mubarak demonstrates how simple it is to make a decent whodunit. The trick, as ever, is not in the cleverness of the plot but in the array of rascals and refuseniks we meet along the way. If all fails, there's Tripathi in a golf hat and glasses. In one scene, Bhavani explains to his partner why he avoids wearing a uniform. "It puts me at a distance from people," he reasons. Welcome back, Pankaj Tripathi. We hope you stay.

Murder Mubarak is currently streaming on Netflix

Fails to leave an impact despite stylistic flourishes

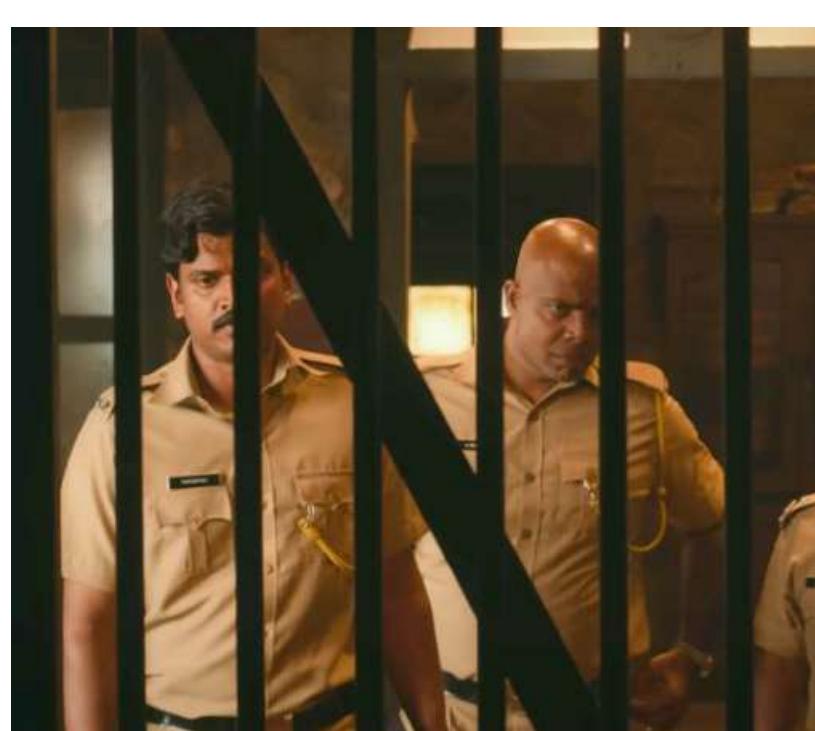
Malayalam

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Someone somewhere seems to be running a little cottage industry supplying obscure, hard-to-pronounce titles for Malayalam films. Last week, we had the tongue twister *Agathakakological*, and this week we have *Anchakkallakokkan*. The latter title, of the film directed by Ullas Chemban, is explained away as a myth about some terrible creature, mostly used to scare kids. That myth has a huge role to play in the life of the protagonist Vasudevan (Lukman Avaran), a rookie police officer who takes charge at a police station in a fictional village along the Kerala-Karnataka border.

Our sense of the narrative always



depends on the point of view that the movie takes. The point-of-view of a rookie police officer here is perhaps apt for his lack of conflict of interest in a village where everyone knows each other. Unlike the usual rookies who are raring to go, Vasudevan is scared of even the slightest hint of violence, the reason for which is given in his background story. He faints at the sight of blood, and in his first assignment, gets his legs entangled in a trap meant for animals. He arrives at a time when the village is tense following the murder of Chaapra, a major landlord.

But, somehow the film drifts away from this protagonist, even forgetting his existence for long until the fog end of the film. That explains a lot as to why the film fails to work despite its dash of style and its array of unconventional characters. The writing is all over the place and hardly any of the characters register;

not even the fearsome, dancing duo who plays the trigger-happy sons of the murdered landlord.

Instead, much of the attention seems to have been paid to the

Anchakkallakokkan

Director: Ullas Chemban

Cast: Lukman Avaran, Chemban Vinod Jose, Merin Philip, Manikandan Achari, Megha Thomas

Storyline: After a landlord gets murdered in a village, the police are on their toes to arrest the culprit due to political pressures, but the web of events that led to the killing is more complicated than it seems initially.

technical department, which really holds together the film, and a couple of extended action sequences, the last of which inside a police station is never-ending. But, even these do not pack enough flair to keep us invested in it. An attempt is made to infuse a flavour of pulp fiction in the treatment of some characters and situations. At one point, Nadavaramaban, the police officer played by Chemban even asks a person in the lockup – "Did you think this is pulp fiction for you to come in here and attack a policeman?"

But, without a fresh narrative or striking characterisation, quite a few of the stylistic flourishes – except for like the one involving the fearsome duo and a tape recorder – appear meaningless.

Anchakkallakokkan is currently running in theatres



Irish Wish

Director: Janeen Damian

Cast: Lindsay Lohan, Ed Speleers, Alexander Vlahos, Ayesha Curry, Elizabeth Tan, Jane Seymour

Storyline: When Maddie's crush gets engaged to her close friend, she wishes to become the bride, which comes true with a slew of consequences

An ad for Ireland tourism

English

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The phrase 'be careful what you wish for' from Aesop's *Fables* seems to be the core idea for filmmaker Janeen Damian's latest Netflix outing *Irish Wish*. A couple of years ago, she teamed up with Lindsay Lohan for *Falling for Christmas* which marked the latter's first role in a major production in over a decade following a series of career setbacks. Despite mixed reviews, the film turned out to be a hit and it is no surprise that the duo has re-teamed for *Irish Wish*. Unfortunately, their latest film is more clichéd and boring than their previous encounter and the festive spirit that

gave *Falling for Christmas* a little leeway does not seem to work as much on Saint Patrick's Day.

The story of *Irish Wish* feels like an afterthought just like its title – Maddie's (Lindsay Lohan) unrequited love, Paul Kennedy (Alexander Vlahos), in a twist of fate, is getting married to her best friend Emma (Elizabeth Tan). When she encounters Saint Brigid (Dawn Bradfield) while taking a stroll down the lush green pastures of Ireland, she is given the opportunity to wish for whatever she wants. Unsurprisingly, she asks to "get married to Paul Kennedy" and voila – she wakes up as the bride. But little does she know that wishes come with their own consequences and when they inadvertently pop up, things do not go as per plan.

Despite a wafer-thin plot, it gives a lot of space to explore the sweet and comical moments one would expect from a rom-com but what we get are the tropes that we once used to enjoy and now dread from the same genre. We have the usual meet-cutes, the not-so-great first impression, and characters in professions that give them the time to get close to the lead. Throw into the equation is a stereotypical rich would-be mother-in-law character who would entice disinterested photographers by

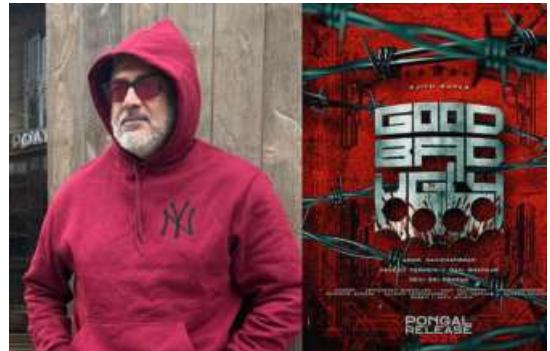
offering them thrice their usual charge, and we have a plot straight from that free library novel that no one wants to pick.

Credit where it's due, Lohan carries off limited scenes that work with an awkward charm that she pulls off quite effortlessly and her chemistry with Ed Speleers' James Thomas works convincingly. But the plot, as it does with all its other tropes, barely fleshes out anything for us to feast on and what we are left with is a painfully predictable third act.

In place of engaging drama, we get picturesquely shots of the expansive Ireland vistas. From the famous Lough Tay to the exquisite sea cliffs, the film does such a fine job of capturing the countryside that it almost leaves you wondering if Tourism Ireland has co-produced this flick. It wouldn't be an overstatement to call everything that happens between the aerial shots of Ireland and the mid-shots of Lohan to be bland and uninspiring. With a resurgence that merits a biopic on its own, Lohan deserves more and so do we, and that's precisely what *Irish Wish* leaves you wishing for.

Irish Wish is currently streaming on Netflix

Snippets



Ajith Kumar's next titled Good Bad Ugly

Actor Ajith Kumar is teaming up with director Adhik Ravichandran for a film titled *Good Bad Ugly*. The film, produced by Mytri Movie Makers, is set to go on floors in June this year and is aiming for a release during Pongal next year.

Produced by Naveen Yereni and Y Ravi Shankar under their Mytri Movie Makers banner, *Good Bad Ugly* will have music by composer Devi Sri Prasad, who is reuniting with Ajith after their 2014 film *Veeram*. Abinandhan Ramanujam serves as the cinematographer while Vijay Velukutty is on board as the editor. Adhik Ravichandran last directed *Mark Antony*, starring Vishal and SJ Suryah.



Salman Khan teaming up with AR Murugadoss for new film

Salman Khan announced his new untitled feature film, to be directed by filmmaker AR Murugadoss. The project will be produced by Sajid Nadiadwala's banner Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment. It has been scheduled for release in theatres on Eid 2025. Murugadoss is best known for directing Tamil and Hindi films such as *Ghajini*, *Thuppakki*, *Holiday: A Soldier Is Never Off Duty* and *Sarkar*. He had earlier penned the script of Salman's 2014 movie *Jai Ho*, which was a remake of Murugadoss' Telugu hit *Stalin*. Salman was most recently seen in *Tiger 3*.



Shoojit Sircar's next big film set for 2024 theatrical release

Following the resounding success of 2021's *Sardar Udham*, filmmaker Shoojit Sircar is poised to captivate audiences once again with his upcoming cinematic venture slated for a 2024 theatrical release. With a career marked by hits such as *Vicky Donor*, *Madras Café*, *Piku*, *October*, and *Gulabo Sitabo*, Sircar has captivated audiences globally and earned five National awards in the process. Under his banner Rising Sun Films, Sircar's latest creation, shot primarily in the United States, has recently wrapped up filming. In an interview, Sircar reaffirmed his commitment to transcending geographical boundaries.



A chuckle-filled ride

Jack Black's timing is immaculate as ever, while his chemistry with Awkwafina has a jolly zing making the panda's fourth screen outing all kinds of summer family fun

English

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I have always wondered what the plural of mongoose was. Is it mongooses or mongeese? Imagine my delight when our favourite Kung Fu dealing panda, Po (voiced flawlessly by Jack Black), has the same existential doubt. He takes it further by wondering about the plural for nemesis – "nemesis? nemesis?" Po has a boatful of nemeses (yes, that is the plural) to deal with in *Kung Fu Panda 4*. And the plural of mongoose is mongooses.

Kung Fu Panda 4 opens with Po fully into his role as the Dragon Warrior helping his dads – adoptive, Ping (James Hong), and biological, Li Shan (Bryan Cranston) – in their new restaurant. Just as he is posing for selfies, his mentor, Master Shifu (Dustin Hoffman), tells him he needs to choose the next Dragon Warrior as Po is ready to move on to the next step of his evolution by becoming the spiritual leader of the Valley of Peace.

Not ready to move on, Po grabs on to a

Kung Fu Panda 4

Director: Mike Mitchell

Voice cast: Jack Black, Awkwafina, Bryan Cranston, James Hong, Ian McShane, Ke Huy Quan, Dustin Hoffman, Viola Davis

Storyline: Po, now being elevated to Spiritual Leader, has to find the next Dragon Warrior, polish up his proverbs to become the voice of wisdom, and fight a shape-shifting sorceress...

chance for one last adventure when he hears Tai Lung (Ian McShane) has razed a village to the ground. Po soon learns that it is not Tai Lung who has returned from the Spirit Realm to do mischief, but an evil sorceress, The Chameleon (Viola Davis), who has horrid world-destroying plans up her shape-shifting sleeve.



Zhen (Awkwafina), a light-fingered fox Po caught stealing, offers to help him catch The Chameleon in her lair in Juniper City. After a rousing encounter at a tavern, with the vicious Granny Boar (Lori Tan Chinn), Po and Zhen hire Captain Fish (Ronny Chieng) to take them to Juniper City. After many chases and climatic battles involving the greatest Kung Fu fighters from the Spirit Realm, with help from bloodthirsty bunnies, and other denizens from the Den of Thieves including the leader, Han (Ke Huy Quan), and Po's dads, all comes right in the end.

The one-liners zing by in clouds of fun and Black as usual gives 110% to his dumpling-loving Po. The animation is eye-popping, as are the hectic chase through Juniper City and pyrotechnic fights. After all the serious Academy

Award-winning films of the season, if we cannot watch Nicolas Cage riding a motorcycle with his skull aflame, Po meditating on inner peace which morphs into dinner with peas is a tasty option.

Kung Fu Panda 4 is currently running in theatres