

# THE EXCELLENCE PORTAL

RS. 145, VOLUME 1, ISSUE 6

Your Gateway to Knowledge

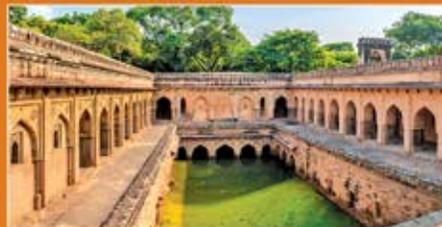


## May Mosaic Keeping it cool

**STROKE BY STROKE: THE  
TRANSFORMATIVE POWER  
OF SWIMMING**



**DELHI'S STEPWELLS: A RAY  
OF HOPE FOR THE CITY'S  
WATER WOES**



**COCKTAILS  
AND MOCKTAILS:  
FOR ELEVENSES  
AND SUNDOWNERS**



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## From the Publisher's Desk

Dear Readers,

We begin this May-June issue of *The Excellence Portal* with a resounding salute to the brave soldiers of our Armed Forces and to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, for guiding the nation with strength and clarity through these challenging times.

This edition of *The Excellence Portal* celebrates resilience and renewal — from stories of women empowerment and the financial boost offered by TReDS for MSMEs, to the timeless beauty of India's ancient stepwells.

We also invite you to explore the joy of swimming for a fitter life. We offer you a handpicked selection of offbeat summer retreats in the hills to unwind and come back refreshed and re-energised. Our delectable selection of mocktails and cocktail will bring the zing back in your cocktail hour routine!

We look forward to your being with us on this long and inspirational journey of discovery and many delights.

You can download the soft copy of the earlier issues from the website:www.authors-point.com(<http://www.authors-point.com>)



**Raaj Verma**

Author's Point, The Excellence Portal

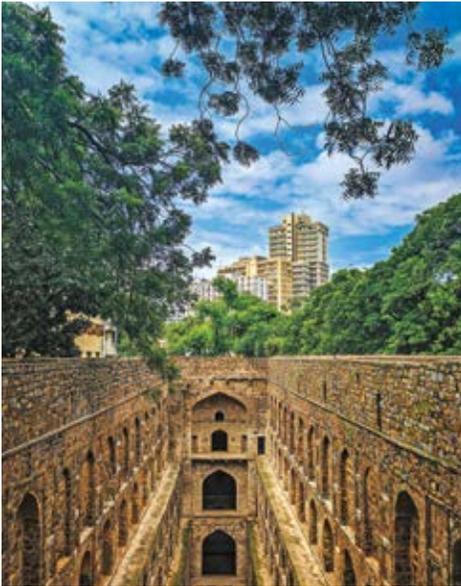
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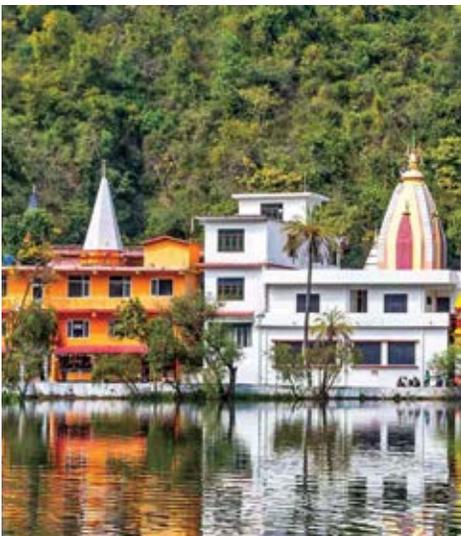
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### DOGGY WORLD VENTURES PVT LTD:

# Where Quality Care Drives Success

In a powerful story of vision, perseverance, and women-led leadership, Dr. Aradhana Pandey established Doggy World nearly 20 years ago as a modest clinic for dogs. Today, she is the Director of Doggy World Ventures, now a thriving private limited company supported by a dedicated staff of 70 people.

It is her deep love for ‘man’s best friend’ that has been central to the success of the enterprise. This success is reflected in the quality of the team and the world-class facilities created to care for people’s beloved pets. Dr. Aradhana’s pursuit of excellence is anchored in her commitment to staying abreast of the latest advancements in veterinary science and pet care.

#### A Collaborative Vision

From the very beginning, Dr. Aradhana embraced cutting-edge technology and a service-oriented mindset, firmly believing that teamwork yields the best results. What began as a one-woman initiative has now grown into a well-structured corporate entity with multiple branches, specialized divisions, and comprehensive care facilities.

Integral to this growth is Dr. S.K. Pandey, a senior veterinary expert whose clinical experience and steady leadership have helped build Doggy World into a trusted name. Both Dr. Aradhana and Dr. Pandey personally attend to pet cases daily, ensuring a high standard of care is consistently maintained.

“People’s trust is what makes us grow,” says Dr. Aradhana. She recalls that Doggy World was formally registered as a Private Limited company in

2002 to provide value-added veterinary services to pets at affordable rates.

#### Expanding Reach and Facilities

Doggy World now operates five branches across Delhi. Its main centre receives a steady stream of referral cases every day, with pet parents confident in the team’s ability to manage even the most complex conditions.

The facility is equipped with:

- An OPD that handles around 20 cases at a time
- A separate surgical unit
- Radiology and ultrasonography departments
- Cardiac monitoring unit
- Dentistry and ophthalmology units
- A dedicated Cat Clinic
- A Vaccination and Health Clinic
- In-house diagnostic and dermatology labs
- Admission facilities for critical care

The hospital functions 24×7 to address emergencies and provide uninterrupted care. Highly qualified specialist vets oversee different departments, supported by a skilled team of paravets

#### Pushing Boundaries in Pet Healthcare

Doggy World is home to North Delhi’s first pet physiotherapy centre and first dialysis unit for pets, both equipped with cutting-edge technology to support advanced recovery and renal care..

#### Holistic Pet Services

Beyond medical treatment, Doggy



**DR. ARADHANA PANDEY**  
(Managing Director)

World also offers allied services like a pet shop, grooming parlour, and a pet bakery—ensuring a complete ecosystem for pet well-being.

#### Award-Winning Pet Care

Doggy World has a sizeable client base across Delhi and NCR, with online consultancy provided all over India and other countries. “Our clients trust us because of our never give up approach for treating their pets,” she adds. Their dedicated vets and paravets team, along with the precise diagnostic outcome, make it possible to maintain an excellent recovery rate.

The non-compromising approach in treating a patient is greatly admired by their clients, according to Dr Aradhana. The senior vets personally deal with complicated cases with integrated teamwork and facilities. “This is what gives the confidence to our clients that their pets are in good hands,” she reiterates.

Doggy World has for three years running received the People’s Choice Award in the Best Veterinary Facility for Complete Care Category given by Petfed. In 2022 at Furfest, it won the award for Outstanding Contribution in The Field of Veterinary Services ■

#### DOGGY WORLD

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# DR. CHANDRAKANTA K. MATHUR:

## *A Life Devoted to Empowerment and Justice*

By Kumar Suresh

For over 23 years, Dr. Chandrakanta K. Mathur has graced the halls of Shyama Prasad Mukherji College for Women, University of Delhi, as a Professor of Political Science, shaping minds and igniting dreams. Yet, her influence extends far beyond the classroom.

A renowned social activist, prolific author, president of the Women's Chamber of Commerce, and founder of AAGAZ NGO, Dr. Mathur has dedicated her life to uplifting the marginalized—especially women and girls—through education, legal empowerment, and economic opportunity.

### Roots of Resilience

Born into a modest middle-class family, Dr. Mathur's dreams were often tempered by the realities of limited means. Her early years were marked by the kind of struggles that test the spirit—financial constraints, societal expectations, and the weight of tradition that often clips the wings of ambition, especially for women. These experiences were not just challenges but sparks that ignited her purpose.

She saw education as a ladder out of poverty and a weapon against injustice, a belief that would guide her life's work.

Her academic journey was a triumph of perseverance. Earning a Ph.D. was no small feat for a woman from her background, requiring years of sacrifice and relentless focus. It was a milestone that marked not just her intellectual calibre but her defiance against a world that often told women to dream smaller.

### A Sanctuary of Learning

Dr Mathur has transformed the classroom into a space where ideas bloom



*Dr. Chandrakanta K. Mathur with Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India.*



*Dr. Chandrakanta K. Mathur with former Cabinet Minister Shri Purushottam Rupala.*

and possibilities take root. Her expertise spans Indian government, constitutional law, politics, and the philosophies of social reformers like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Her classroom is a sanctuary where young women learn not just about laws and rights but about their own potential to reshape the world.

### Authorship and Advocacy

Dr. Mathur's influence extends through her prolific writing, which bridges academia and activism. Her books and articles on rights, laws, Indian government, politics, the Constitution, and Ambedkar's legacy are not just schol-

arly works but tools for empowerment. Each book is a bridge between the ivory tower of academia and the realities of the marginalized.

### Activism and Leadership

Dr. Mathur's activism is the heartbeat of her legacy. Known for her work with youth and deprived communities, she has a special focus on women and girls, advocating for their education and legal rights. Her leadership as president of the Women's Chamber of Commerce is a testament to her commitment to economic empowerment.

### Family and Faith

A devoted wife to Shri Suresh Kanojea and a nurturing mother to her sons, Vishesh and Vihaan, in her books, she acknowledges their sacrifices and encouragement, crediting them as her rock.

### A Vision for Tomorrow

As Dr. Mathur looks to the future, her dreams remain bold. She dreams of a world where every girl knows her worth, every woman claims her rights, and every marginalized voice is heard. ■



## BHRIGU NANDAN NADI: *Navigating Life Through Ancient Astrological Wisdom*

By *Deepti Gupta*

**A**strology, often regarded as a mystical art, is deeply rooted in the observation of celestial bodies and their influence on human affairs. Among its various branches, Bhṛigu Nandan Nadi (BNN) stands out for its unique approach and profound insights.

### Understanding Bhṛigu Nandan Nadi

Originating from Southern India, particularly the Tamil Nadu region, BNN is based on ancient Nadi texts attributed to the sage Bhṛigu. This system emphasizes the use of specific planetary combinations and yogas (auspicious or inauspicious alignments) to make precise predictions about various life aspects, including career, health, relationships, and finances.

### The Essence of BNN: Planetary Significations

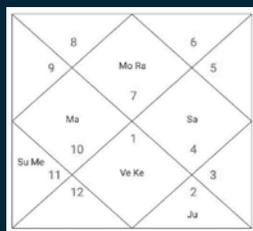
In BNN, each planet embodies specific significations:

- **Jupiter:** Represents the individual (jeev), wisdom, and spirituality.
- **Mars:** Symbolizes the husband, brother, health, property, and challenges.
- **Moon:** Denotes the mother, mind, change, and travel.
- **Mercury:** Relates to neighbors, relatives, education, and business.
- **Venus:** Signifies the wife, wealth, and happiness.
- **Saturn:** Pertains to profession, obstacles, and elder siblings.

These associations allow astrologers to interlink and predict various relationships and events in an individual's life.

### A Glimpse into BNN Analysis

Consider a male born on March 9, 1977, in Mumbai. In his astrological chart, Jupiter is in Taurus, influenced by Venus. This suggests he possesses qualities associated with Venus: attractiveness and a strong appreciation for wealth. If Venus is positioned in the 12th house relative to Jupiter, it indicates a privileged upbringing and an early start to his career. A close conjunction between the Moon and Rahu (within 12 degrees) might suggest a tendency towards certain phobias. The chart also disclose details



such as the wife of the person may be having some problem before marriage and the grandparents of the person were from Mumbai or from a distant land and settled in Mumbai now. Such detailed interpretations showcase BNN's depth and precision.

### The Practicality of BNN

One of BNN's strengths is its minimal reliance on the exact time of birth, focusing instead on planetary placements at birth. This approach facilitates accurate predictions about an individual's relationships, career, health, and more.

### Beyond Predictions: The Role of the Astrologer

An astrologer serves not just as a predictor but also as a counsellor. By providing guidance and remedies—such as mantra chanting, specific donations, or rituals—they help individuals navigate life's challenges. This holistic approach ensures that astrology remains a tool for empowerment rather than fear.

### Expanding Horizons: Integrating Multiple Disciplines

Many practitioners, including myself, integrate BNN with other astrological sciences like Parashar, Prashna, Numerology, and techniques like switch words and affirmations. This multi-disciplinary approach enriches the analysis, offering clients a comprehensive understanding of their life's blueprint. I have been in this profession for the last 10 years.

### Future Insights

I cannot make one believe in Astrology but I will be making an attempt to raise awareness and utility of this science.

In forthcoming articles, we will delve into how astrology can:

- Identify health risks and aid in disease prevention.
  - Guide students in selecting appropriate educational paths.
  - Assist professionals in making informed career choices.
  - Offer solutions to personal and familial challenges.
- Real-life case studies will be shared to illustrate these applications, highlighting astrology's relevance in contemporary life. ■

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# GOVT-DRIVEN SCHEMES FOR THE GROWTH OF MSMEs

By CA Bikash Singhi

**M**icro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are crucial drivers of growth in the Indian economy. The Government of India, from time-to-time, frames various schemes for the growth of MSMEs in India.

*In this issue, we discuss the benefits of Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS).*

## Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS)

Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) is an on-line platform facilitating invoice discounting for MSMEs. It enables MSMEs to get paid much faster by discounting their invoices through multiple financiers like banks, Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFCs) and other financial institutions (FIs). It improves cash flow and working capital management.

TReDS seeks to address the issue of delayed payments to MSMEs, thereby improving their liquidity and cash flow. This financing option is available to MSMEs as an alternative to traditional bank loans. This allows MSMEs to choose the best financing terms and interest rates.

## Key Aspect of TReDS Platforms

- TReDS platforms allow MSMEs to discount their invoices instead of waiting for the buyer to pay on the invoice's due date.
- Some TReDS platforms utilize an auction mechanism, where financiers can bid on the invoices; the MSME then receives payment from the financier with the highest bid.
- TReDS platforms



## EXAMPLES OF TReDS PLATFORMS

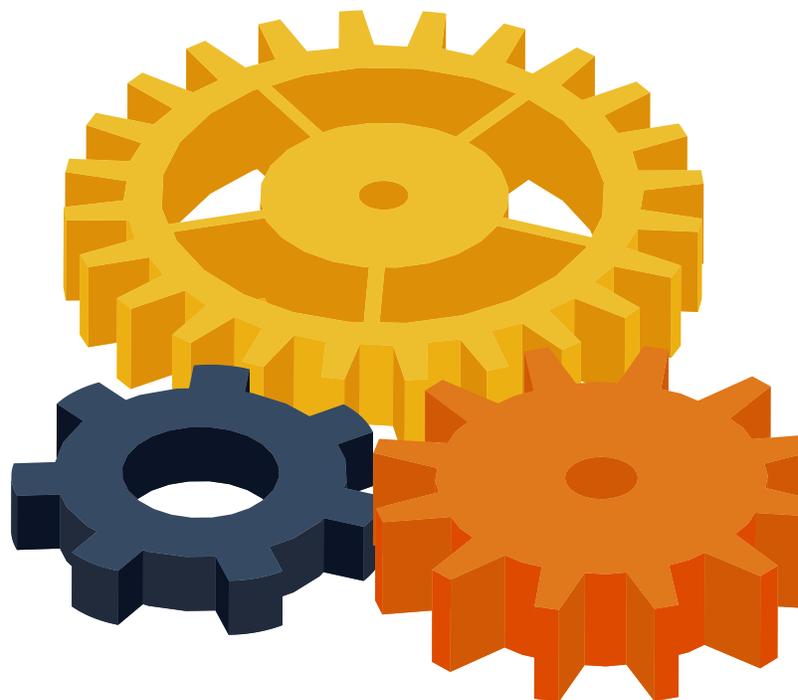
- **Invoicemart (A. TReDS):** Invoicemart is a TReDS platform that enables MSMEs to discount their invoices.
- **Mynd Online National Exchange (M1xchange):** Mynd Solutions is another TReDS platform facilitating invoice discounting for MSMEs.
- **Receivables Exchange of India Limited (RXIL):** RXIL is a TReDS platform providing working capital to MSMEs.
- **C2FO:** TReDS platform facilitating invoice discounting for MSMEs.

are designed to be digital and paperless, streamlining the process of invoice discounting and reducing administrative burdens.

- TReDS is a regulated system, overseen by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), ensuring fair and transparent practices.
- This is an Auction-Based System, where multiple financiers take part in bidding of invoices by quoting the amount of finance, rate of interest (ROI), etc.

### Benefits of TreDS Platforms

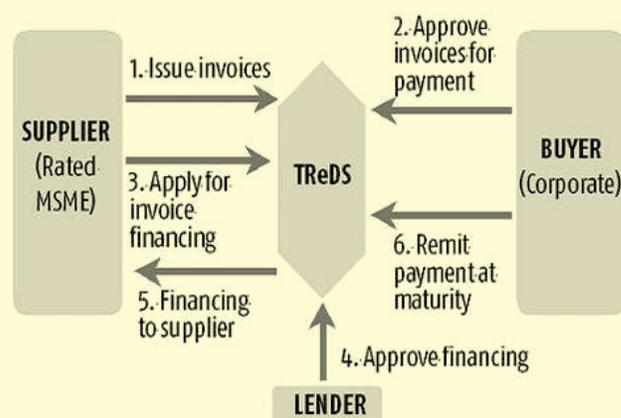
- **Faster payments:** MSMEs receive payments much faster through TReDS, which improves their cash flow and working capital.
- **Lower financing costs:** By leveraging multiple financiers, MSMEs can potentially access lower financing costs compared to traditional bank loans.
- **Increased liquidity:** TReDS helps MSMEs overcome liquidity issues by allowing them to access funds tied up in trade receivables.
- **Simplified process:** The digital and paperless nature of TReDS makes the invoice discounting process simpler and faster.
- **Enhanced financial health:** By improving cash flow and working capital, TReDS contributes to the overall financial health of MSMEs.
  - ❖ Collateral securities are not required.
  - ❖ There is no adverse effect on the Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited (CIBIL) score in case of default in payment by a buyer company on due date.
  - ❖ The burden of compliance is less compared to working capital facilities.



### Operational Mechanism

- The MSME supplier uploads the invoice on the TReDS platform.
- The corporate buyer accepts the invoice and confirms the transaction.
- Various financiers bid for the invoice by offering discounting rate (ROI).
- The MSME supplier selects the best-suited bid.
- The financiers discount the invoice.
- The discounted amount is disbursed to the designated bank account of the MSME supplier.
- On the due date of invoice, the corporate buyer pays the invoice amount to the financiers.

### OPERATIONAL MECHANISM FOLLOWED IN TReDS



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# DELHI'S STEPWELLS

## *A Ray of Hope for the City's Water Woes*



*By Rane Sahaney*

**C**onversations ranging between the alarming realisation of Delhi's dropping water table and the water tanker mafia, is rousing the administration to find new ways to address this issue.

Some hope is emerging as they look to the old ways of how Delhi coped with its water woes propelled significantly by the decline of groundwater recharge.

The culprits who have painted this dismal picture are rapid urbanisation, rampant concretisation of open areas and rising population, which have joined hands to prevent rainwater from seeping into the ground.

What is commanding the attention of the bosses in the corridors of power in the city, and, concerned citizens, are the much-neglected, centuries-old baolis, or stepwells, many of which have transformed into stinking reservoirs of

the city's waste, carry polluted water or have simply dried up.

### **WHY WE LOST IT**

The wisdom of generations of Dilliwallahs from way back for water harvesting, appears to have simply just not filtered down to us at large in the 21st century, with its obsession with social media, AI and rocket science. What's the point of looking for life in the galaxies when we can't even manage our lives on Planet

Earth when it comes to basics, such as life-giving water and air.

When we were children in the 20th century, we could still drink water from the garden tap or a village pump when heading for the hills in summer. It's a wonder that we can even drink water from our kitchens, cleansed with even the most sophisticated water filters. Samples taken from homes across the city emerge with fearsome results, drowning us in waves of despair!

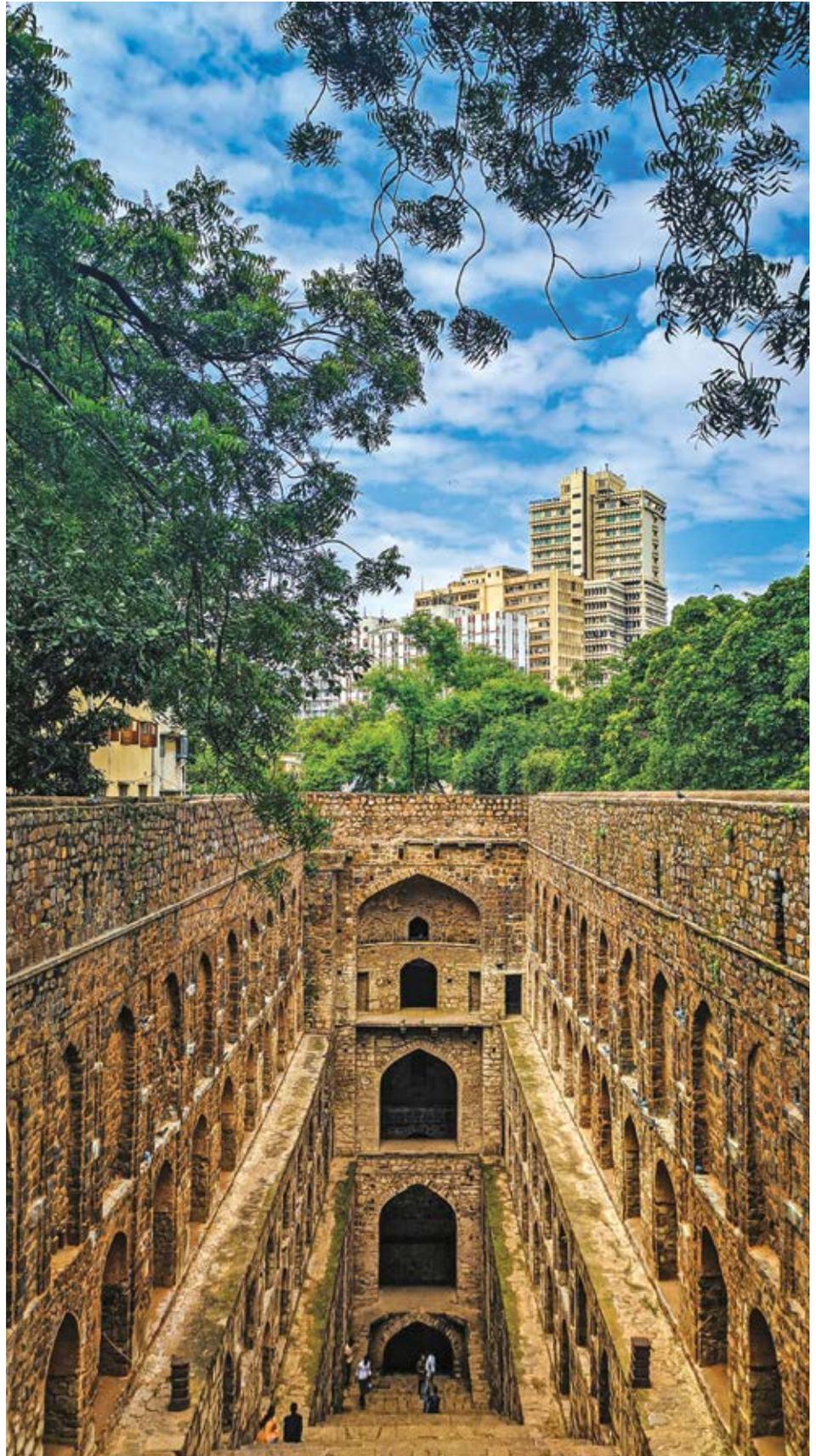
Back in the 60s, schoolrooms were predicting that the wars of the future would be water wars... and there you have it. India is battling Pakistan (one of the most water-stressed countries in the world) and China, on the water-front... with persistent clashes over water sharing from its iconic rivers such as the Indus, Chenab and Kishanganga in the northwest, and the Brahmaputra in the east.

For example, the Indus River system is split largely between India (39%) and Pakistan (47%) with small sections in Tibet and eastern Afghanistan. Both the Brahmaputra and the glaciers that feed the Ganga, originate in China, putting it in a highly advantageous position.

With the melting of glaciers on the rise in the Himalayas, climate change is adding its own twist to the natural water resources and the frictions it is creating between us and our neighbours— speaking at a national, and local level!

## RESTORATION AND REVIVAL

And so, stepwells— sometimes also known as baori, bawdi, vav, kund, vapi, saga, are a lifeline for the locals, have long helped communities survive periods of water shortage. Baolis, by tradition, are rain-fed and rainwater harvesting is essential for their upkeep. The British had much to do with their growing neglect since the 19th century when they introduced taps and pumps to supply water, as step-



## Water Conservation

well water was considered by them as unhygienic.

Delhi, were you aware, once had over a hundred baolis at the beginning of the 20th century— as ascertained by historians? Only about 10-15 have survived the march of urbanization. Many were lost over the years, while some were discovered, preserved and restored.

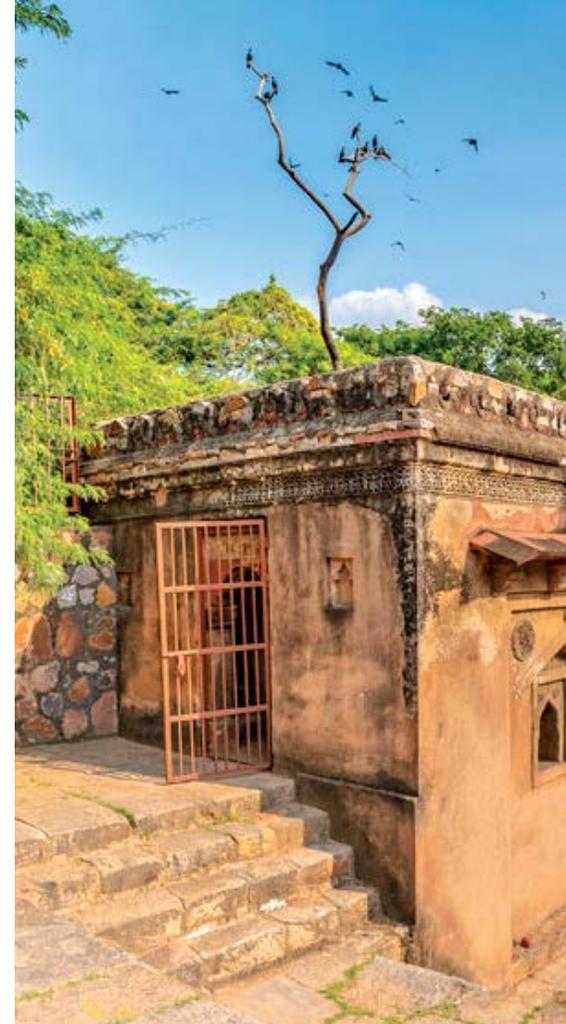
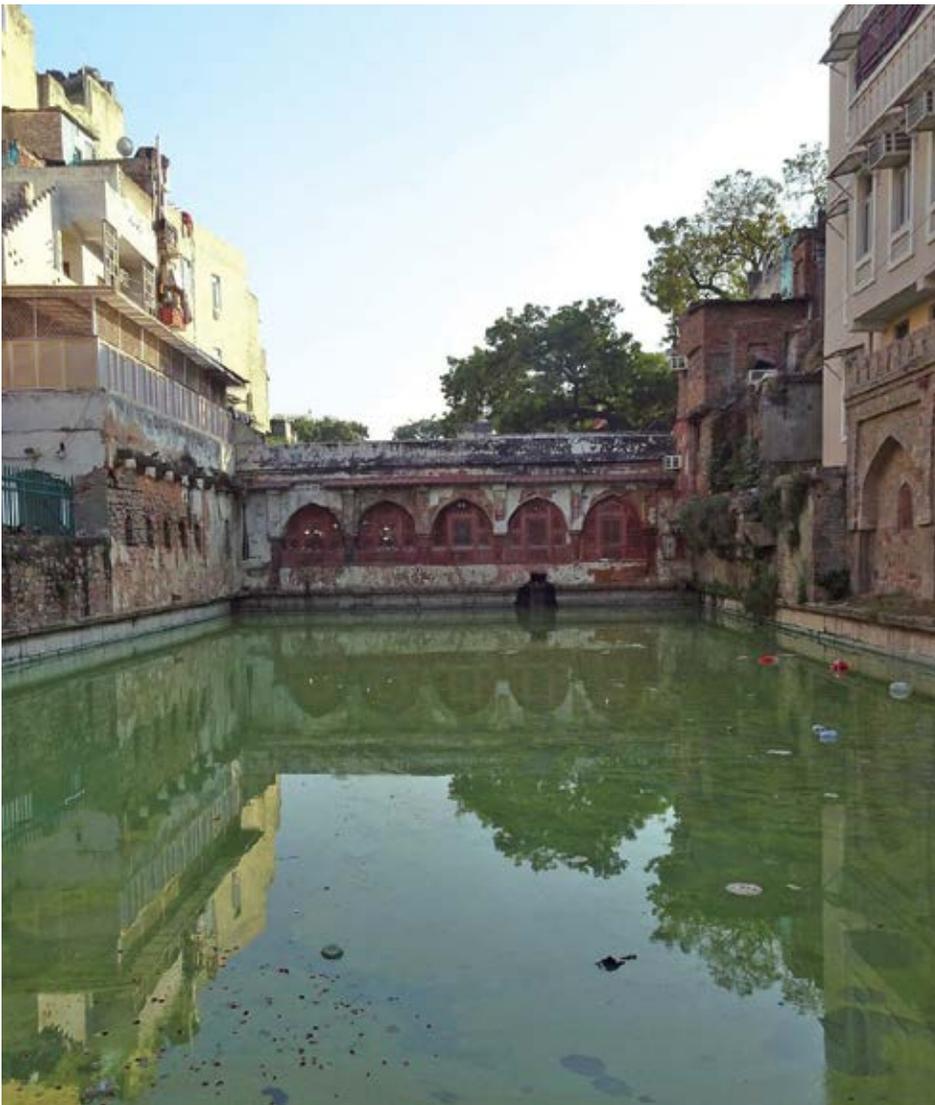
The revival of some of Delhi's remaining baolis is a compelling story of dedication and a will to make a difference to ease the pain of the city's water woes. Delhi receives between 6,11,750 mm average rainfall but most of it goes

down the drain, literally. Let's see how some of the city's stepwells are getting a new lease of life through restoration or even the revival of its source by rain water harvesting or other means.

### SOME STANDOUT STEPWELLS

#### Anangtal Baoli

It's the one in the city and appears to have been located in Mehrauli which was also known as Yoginipura. It was commissioned by Anang Pal II of the House of Tomar. The baoli is accessed through the garbage heaps be-



hind the Jog Maya temple. It lies buried under the layers of soil and dense vegetation. Once its located (through 3d scans and then excavated) and then restored properly, the baoli has the potential to be integrated with the Heritage trail be accessible for historians, tourists and heritage enthusiasts on heritage walks.

#### Hazrat Nizamuddin Baoli

The 13th century Baoli is connected to the Hazrat Nizamuddin dargah. It was commissioned by the Sufi saint himself. Three sides of the baoli are surrounded by walls and the fourth has a flight of stairs leading to the water. Recently, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) restored much of the baoli to its original state with laser scan technology and exhaustive ground penetrating radar survey. The Dargah baoli is considered sacred and locals believe that the water has medicinal properties.



### Agrasen Ki Baoli

Named after Raja Agrasen, the 14th century baoli is located on Hailey Lane off Hailey Road, in the Connaught Place area. Local legend has it that it dates to Mahabharata times. But most likely what we see today dates to the 14th century in Delhi's Tuglaq Era. It was said to have been built by the Agrawal community which traces its origin to Maharaja Agrasen. A staircase of 108 steps drops down three levels to cool depths of the groundwater. Strangely enough, the elegant arched niches have escaped the perils of the march of time.

Remains of a tiny mosque, with a whale-backed roof and pillars with Buddhist motifs, direct you to the entrance of the 60m deep and 15m wide baoli. Today the baoli serves as a popular film location. Look out for it in movies such as Sultan, Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna and PK.

The structure is a gated one manned by security guards. It receives many visitors.

### Rajaon ki Baoli – New Delhi

Did you know that the builders of the stepwell employed their most skilled artisans to erect them? It takes its name not from any raja, but from the raj mistris (meaning master masons). This 3-storied stepwell was commissioned

by Daulat Khan of Delhi's Lodi dynasty, way back in the 16th century, to supply to the local communities in the Mehrauli area.

The ornamental Rajaon ki Baoli is located in the serene forested expanses of the Mehrauli Archaeological Park. The stepwell was restored in early 2000 by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) with the assistance of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Though the baoli is well maintained the original source of the water in the Rajon Ki Baoli has long dried up. This picturesque stepwell is remarked for its lengthy covered corridors, featuring arches embellished with incised limestone plaster works. These decorative corridors march along the sides of the tank. The stepwell, with its vibrant green stagnant water at the bottom and the contrasting sand-hued stonework, has become a popular selfie point. ■

#### Delhi's Baolis

- 10th Century •Anangtal Baoli .
- 12th Century •Qutab Sahib ki Baoli
- 13th Century •Gandhak-ki-Baoli •Firoz Shah Kotla Baoli •Tughlaqabad Fort Baolis •Hindu Rao Baoli •Nizamuddin ki Baoli
- 14th-15th Century •Agrasen ki Baoli •Wazirpur Monument Complex, RK Puram Sec 5 •Purana Qila Baoli •Lal Qila Baoli
- 16th Century •Rajon ki Baoli •Loharheri Baoli •Arab ki Sarai Baoli

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**Dimpeysh Rajani**

# THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD: LOVE BEYOND BORDERS

Chapter 1 from the Fourth Edition of *Book of Life* by Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav

## A Special Introduction from the Author

*“The world today stands at the threshold of a great awakening—not of technology or industry, but of the heart. When we begin to see ourselves not as separate nations, religions, or identities but as one human family, love blossoms, peace prevails, and truth becomes our compass. Let every soul remember: no border can confine the light of compassion. It is in this spirit that I offer the fourth edition of *Book of Life*, dedicated to universal brotherhood and the timeless call of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.”\**

— Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav

## A MEETING OF MINDS AND HEARTS

In the realm of literature and philosophy, some books transcend borders and connect souls across cultures. One such book is *Life* by Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav, which has not only touched hearts in India but has also made a significant impact worldwide. Among its admirers is **Nicola Lancelotti**, an Italian thinker and writer, whose journey to India stands as a testament to the universal appeal of the book’s philosophy.

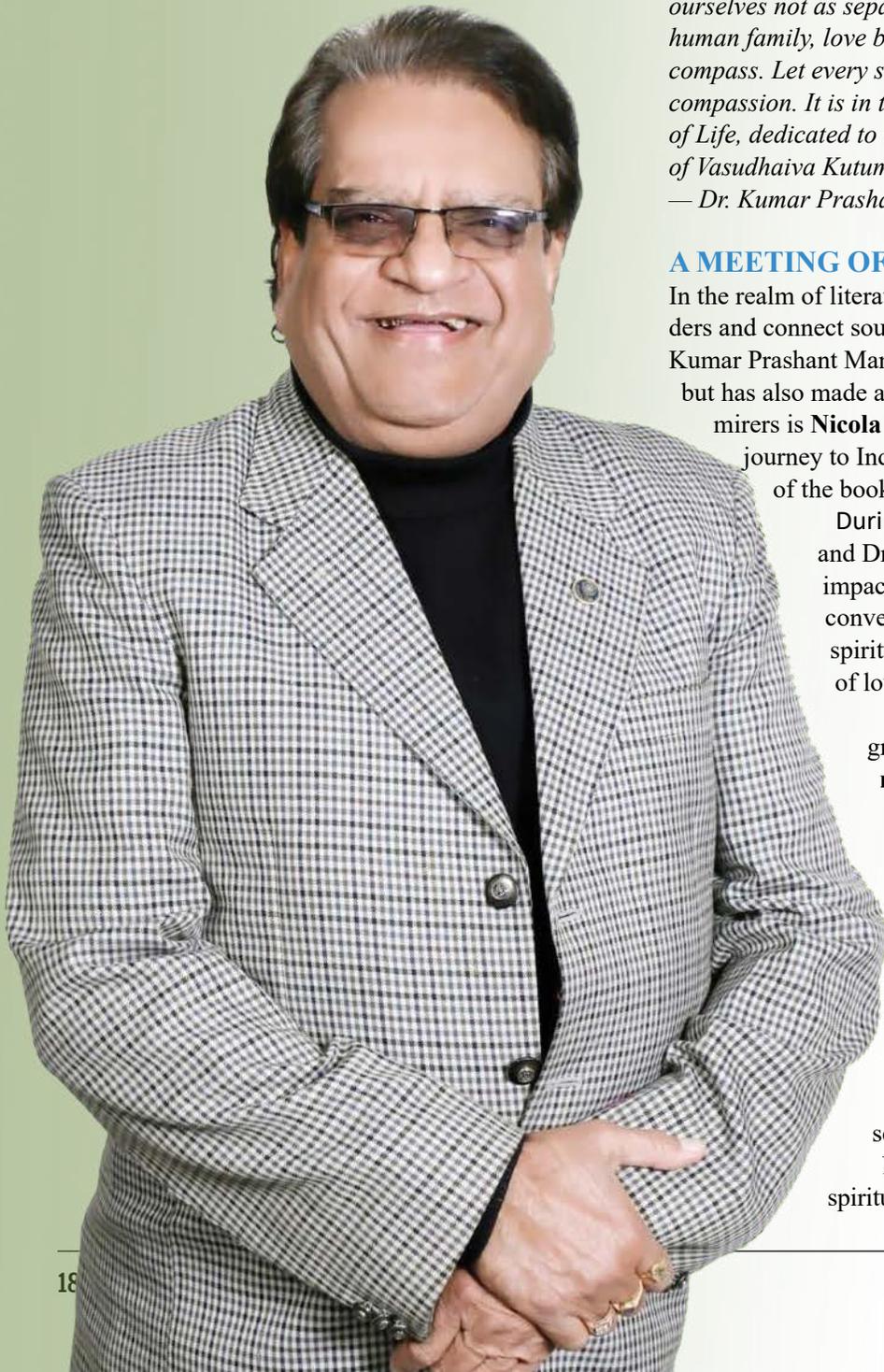
During a thought-provoking interaction, Nicola and Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav delved into the deep impact of *Life* and the philosophy it embodies. Their conversation revolved around themes of global unity, spiritual enlightenment, and the transformative power of love and knowledge.

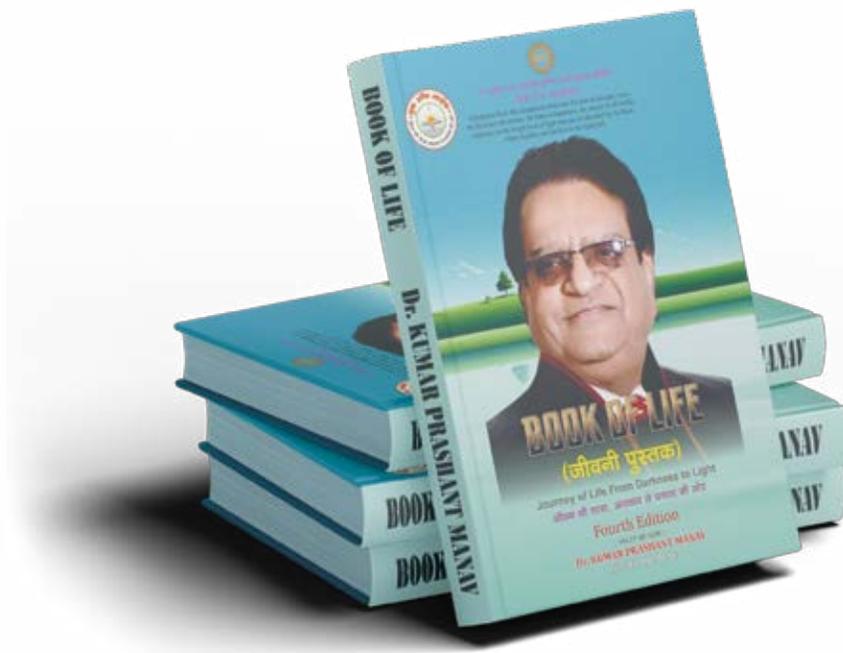
Nicola’s visit to India was not merely a geographical shift; it was a profound **spiritual journey** inspired by the book’s essence.

## THE POWER OF LIFE AND THE GAYATRI MANTRA

Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav shared his personal connection with the **Gayatri Mantra**, describing it as a powerful chant capable of bringing miraculous changes to one’s life. He emphasized its role in guiding individuals toward enlightenment and inner peace. This aligns with the central themes of *Life*, which urges people to seek wisdom and truth beyond material existence.

Nicola Lancelotti resonated deeply with these spiritual insights. For him, the essence of the book was





not just in its words but in the **vibrations** it carried—an energy that binds humanity as one family. He firmly believes that true progress is not bound by national borders; rather, it flourishes in an environment where **knowledge and love are freely shared**.

### A MISSION OF GLOBAL HARMONY

Nicola's philosophy is rooted in the idea that **humanity should work collectively for universal well-being**. He envisions a world where people uplift each other and create an atmosphere of harmony, much like a garden of fragrant flowers. During his interactions with Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav, this vision was reinforced through their shared commitment to a more compassionate and united world.

Inspired by Dr. Manav's teachings and writings, Nicola began to actively promote the principle of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—the world as one family**—rejecting the limitations of nationality, language, and cultural divides.

His extensive travels across Europe, where he delivered lectures and engaged with diverse communities, further solidified his belief in this ideology. To him, the message of *Life* aligns with the eternal principles of **unity and love**, which transcend the transient political and social constructs of the modern world.

### THE MAKING OF BOOK OF LIFE

By Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav

Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav's literary journey took shape during the challenging period of the **COVID-19 pandemic**. In March 2020, he began writing messages filled with wisdom and shared them globally via WhatsApp. Over time, these messages evolved into *Book of Life*—a compilation of **300 thoughts**, with each edition containing **100 insightful reflections**.

The spontaneous nature of its writing, as if divinely inspired, led to the rapid creation of a work that resonated with readers across cultures and continents.

### TRANSLATION AND OUTREACH

To bridge the linguistic gap and make the book accessible to a wider audience, **Dr. Sudesh Divya** undertook its **Hindi translation**. This bilingual edition, with English and Hindi text on opposite pages, aimed to reach Indian readers more effectively.

Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav and Nicola both believe in the **power of books to shape minds and societies**. Inspired by their shared vision, efforts were made to **distribute *Book of Life*** in schools, emphasizing the importance of moral education and wisdom for the younger generation.

### KARMA AND DESTINY: THE LAW OF LIFE

A significant part of their conversation revolved around the concept of **karma**—the idea that life is a field where one reaps what one sows. Nicola and Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav stressed the importance of **conscious actions**, reminding individuals that their present circumstances are shaped by their past deeds.

Instead of blaming fate, people must take **responsibility for their actions** and strive to lead ethical lives guided by wisdom and inner strength.

### A CALL FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The dialogue between Dr. Kumar Prashant Manav and Nicola Lancelotti is more than just an exchange of ideas—it is a call for **humanity to awaken** to its true potential.

Through *Life* and *Book of Life*, both visionaries seek to inspire individuals to look beyond material pursuits and embrace **wisdom, love, and unity**.

Their discussion reinforces the idea that life's ultimate purpose is not in amassing wealth or power but in **cultivating kindness, self-awareness, and universal brotherhood**. Nicola's journey from Italy to India symbolizes this global quest for truth—a journey that continues to **inspire and transform lives worldwide**. ■



# STROKE BY STROKE: *The Transformative Power of Swimming*

*By Author's Point team*

**A**s summer arrives and pools sparkle in the sunlight, swimming emerges not just as a seasonal sport but as a lifelong skill, a fitness powerhouse, and a mental health ally. Whether you're gliding through a calm pool or braving the open water, swimming offers a unique blend of freedom, strength, and serenity – all wrapped in the rhythm of strokes and splashes.

## **A Workout That Doesn't Feel Like One**

Unlike high-impact exercises that strain the joints, swimming is a low-impact, full-body workout that builds endurance, tones muscles, and improves cardiovascular health – all this while being gentle on the body. It burns calories efficiently and works nearly every muscle group without the need for pounding the pavement or lifting weights.

Dr Subodh Mor, a Delhi-based PhD in Sports, says, 'Swimming is one of the few exercises that suits everyone –

from kids learning coordination to seniors seeking joint relief.'

## **Mental Health in Motion**

Beyond its physical benefits, swimming is increasingly recognized for its perks for mental health. The repetitive motion, deep breathing, and sensation of floating can reduce anxiety, improve sleep, and even alleviate symptoms of depression. Many swimmers describe the water as a form of moving meditation – a space to disconnect from screens and reconnect with oneself.

'Even 20 minutes in the pool helps clear my mind,' says Naresh Arya, an entrepreneur who swims every morning before work. 'It's the best stress-relief strategy I've found.'

## **Swimming Across Generations**

From toddlers in floaties to seniors doing water aerobics, swimming spans generations. It's an essential life skill that could save lives, instil confidence, and create lifelong memories. Family swim sessions, community pool programmes,

and swim clubs bring people together while promoting healthy habits.

In urban areas like Delhi, summer swimming camps are booming, offering structured lessons, water games, and even synchronized swimming classes.

In Delhi's DLF Capital Greens itself, we have Swimming Coach Sandeep Mavi, who is of the firm belief that swimming is more than just a sport – it's a vital life skill that builds confidence, fitness, and focus. As a coach in this gated society, his goal has been not only to teach the technique, but also to nurture, amongst community members of all ages, the comfort of being in the water and a love for swimming. He also emphasizes the importance of safety. Residents are urged to always wear proper swimwear and follow the instructions of the life guard in attendance at the pool.

### Open Waters, Open Minds

For the more adventurous, open-water swimming is gaining popularity in India. Lakes, reservoirs, and even the Arabian Sea are now home to swimathons and endurance swims. While it requires additional training and safety precautions, open-water swimming brings a new dimension to the sport – blending exploration with resilience.

### Summer Safety & Swimming Tips

As temperatures rise, swimming becomes a natural choice – but it's crucial to keep safety in mind. Given below are some tips.

- Always supervise children near water, even if they can swim.
- Learn CPR and basic first aid.
- Avoid swimming immediately after eating or during thunderstorms.



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- Remember to hydrate – even swimmers can get dehydrated.
- Use eco-friendly swimwear and reef-safe sunscreens to protect both your skin and the environment.

### Gear Up Smartly

The right gear can enhance your swimming experience.

Invest in:

- UV-protected goggles for eye safety
- Chlorine-resistant swimsuits
- Swim caps for reduced drag
- Waterproof fitness trackers if you're tracking laps

### A Lifelong Gift

Swimming is more than a sport – it's a gift of confidence, calm, and connection. Whether you're swimming laps, floating under the sky, or cheering your child at their first race, the pool is a place where we can all belong.

This summer, consider making swimming not just a hobby, but a way of life – one stroke at a time. ■

Food & Beverage

# COCKTAILS AND MOCKTAILS

*For Elevenses and  
Sundowners*

*By Amit Dixit*





## Sip into Summer: Cool Cocktail Recipes for the Indian Heat

As the mercury rises and the days grow longer, there's nothing quite like a chilled cocktail to take the edge off the summer heat. In India, where summers can be intensely hot and humid, the right drink isn't just a luxury—it's a little escape in a glass. Whether you're lounging by the pool, hosting a weekend get-together, or simply looking to unwind after a long day, a well-crafted cocktail

can set the mood just right.

From tropical flavours like mango and coconut to desi twists on classic concoctions, Indian summer cocktails are a vibrant fusion of local ingredients and global flair. Think refreshing notes of mint, citrus, spices, and seasonal fruits—all shaken, stirred, or blended into deliciously cool drinks. Here's a handpicked list of cocktail recipes that are perfect for the Indian summer—easy to make, fun to serve, and guaranteed to impress.

### Mango Mimosa

This recipe comes to us courtesy Hyatt Centric MG Road, Bangalore.

#### Ingredients

- Raw Mango
- Jaggery powder
- Sparkling wine

#### Method

##### *For the Mango Mimosa*

- Juice 1 whole raw mango (about 60 ml)
- Add 30 ml fresh orange juice to it
- Add 15 ml jaggery syrup to the mix
- Top it with 120 ml sparkling wine
- Garnish with raw mango slices and serve in a champagne tulip glass

##### *For the Jaggery Syrup*

- Put 1 part of jaggery to 2 parts of water
- Boil it until the jaggery turns into a syrup



## Godfather Iced Tea

The Godfather from the mixologists at Geist Brewing Co. reimagines the Long Island Iced Tea with a golden blend of fruity, mildly spiced Giest James Blond, a Belgian-style strong ale—but you can use any ale that is at hand—enhancing the smooth, effervescent mix of orange liqueur, gin, vodka, and white rum.

### Ingredients:

- 100 ml - James Blond ale
- 15 ml - Vodka
- 15 ml - Gin
- 15 ml - White Rum
- 15 ml - Triple Sec
- 15 ml - Lime

### Method:

- Add all the spirits in a Brandy Balloon glass with ice
- Stir well
- Top up with James Blond ale
- Garnish with an orange slice



## All-New Cocktail Menu at The Imperial's 1911 Bar

Step into a realm of timeless elegance where art deco meets avant-garde in mixology at the 1911 Bar, nestled in the heart of Delhi's storied Imperial Hotel. The all-new bar menu is a captivating journey that transcends traditional spirits. Each cocktail is thoughtfully curated not just by its ingredients, but by the exquisite glassware that cradles them—each vessel tells its own unique story, shaped by history and design. And that's how the eclectic cocktail menu is also organised, by glass type, showing how the vessel is as important as what it contains. The selection of glassware pays homage to the rich tapestry of cocktail culture, evoking the glamour and romance of the 1930s while bridging the past and present. These include the iconic coupe glass, the tall, straight-sided highball glass, the charming Rosemary glass, the classic old-fashioned glass, alongside the elegant flute glass, the iconic Nick and Nora glass, the tropical hurricane glass, and the playful margarita glass.

New cocktails to look out for include Chhata Bazar (gin, lavender, mint, lime, soda & tonic), White Negroni (Suze, gin & vermouth bianco), The Imperial Saffron Negroni (Campari, saffron gin & vermouth rosso), Picante de la Delhi (Tequila, chilli, lime, agave & coriander) and Himsagar (Gin, lime, mango-tea syrup & soda).

Complementing this exquisite selection are thoughtfully crafted bar snacks, a delightful mix of classic and contemporary bites that elevate the joy of sharing moments with friends or colleagues.

## Godfather Iced Tea Beer Shandy

This recipe comes from Vikram Achanta, Founder, Tulleeho. This and more recipes can be found in his book, Shaker Sutra: The Tulleeho Book of Cocktails.

The beer shandy is a classic summer favourite. A mix of beer and citrusy soda makes for the perfect low-alcohol refresher for hot days. Whether at a weekend retreat or a brunch party, this simple cocktail keeps the vibes light and breezy!

### Ingredients:

- Lager beer – 1 pint
- Limca – to fill half glass
- Lime peels - to garnish

### Method:

Fill a glass with ice, then pour in the beer until half full. Slowly top up with Limca and give it a gentle stir. Garnish with a lime peel and serve chilled!



### Summer Sippin' with Swa Artisanal Syrups

A piping hot summer calls for something cool, effortless, and tasty. Here's where Swa Artisanal Syrups come to the rescue. These fruit syrups serve as a great base for cocktails, mocktails, iced teas, and even spritzers. The best part is Swa brings the real taste of fruits, spices, and botanicals – without any artificial flavours or preservatives. Here are three mocktail recipes made with Swa to keep you cool all season long (but, of course, you can use any syrup of your choice):

#### Minted Sunshine

This citrusy-minty granita is fresh, zesty, and incredibly refreshing — like a splash of sunshine in every sip.

#### Ingredients:

- 50 ml Swa Orange Mint syrup
- 20 ml lime juice
- 170 gm ice
- 60ml water

#### Method:

- Pour all the ingredients into a blender.
- Blend until the ice is finely crushed and smooth.
- Pour into a margarita glass and garnish with a half-moon orange slice and fresh mint leaves.





### Hibiscus Dream

A floral and tropical mocktail with a refreshing green tea base, perfect for sipping on a warm summer day.

#### Ingredients:

- 20 ml Swa Hibiscus syrup (or any other brand)
- 10 ml Swa Coconut syrup
- 60 ml cold-brewed green tea

#### Method:

- Add all ingredients to a shaker.
- Fill the shaker tin with ice and shake vigorously.
- Strain into a coupé glass.
- Garnish with an edible flower.
- Serve and enjoy this refreshing drink with floral and coconuty notes

### Summer Spice Fusion

A bold and refreshing iced tea with a tropical kick and a hint of heat – perfect for those who like their summer sips with a little extra flair.

#### Ingredients:

- 20ml Swa Pineapple Bird's Eye Chilli syrup
- 10ml Swa Summer Berries syrup
- 90 ml cold-brewed tea

#### Method:

- Add all ingredients to a shaker tin and shake well.
- Strain into a highball glass filled with ice.
- Top with summer berries foam and garnish with pistachio shavings.
- Serve chilled and enjoy!



# OFF - BEAT *Summer Retreats*

*By Raneer Sahaney*



## **NAHAN** (Himachal Pradesh)

A serene hill town set in the verdant environs of Sirmour District in the Shivalik Hills, it's easily accessible from Delhi, just 250km away. Off the beaten track, compared to the noisome hill towns like Shimla and Manali, Nahan at 3,051 ft really comes as a gem of find if you are looking for an uncrowded holiday. It's great for a 3N/4D break, as you can also visit the nearby town of Renuka with its beautiful lake and a shrine dedicated to Renukaji. You can also head out for the town of Paonta, famous for its beautiful Paonta Sahib

Gurudwara, closely linked to the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, who stayed in Paonta for three years.

Established by Raja Karam Parkash in 1621, Nahan was the capital of the Punjab Hill State of Sirmur (Sirmaur) during British rule in India. Nahan is distinct for having lasted as the capital over several centuries.

An abiding legend that is linked to Sirmour dates back to the earliest history of Sirmour State at a time when it was ruled by Raja Madan Singh around the 10th century. He appears to be quite a colourful man who was not past taking a gamble or two. A woman dancer, some say his mistress, challenged him about

her acrobatic skills. She told him if he bet half his kingdom to her, she would, on a tightrope, cross the Giri River, which flowed past the palace. The bet was on. And so, the natni boldly set forth on the tightrope above the fast-flowing river. But by the time she had crossed over, and was turning back to complete the round on the tightrope between the Toka village and the Poka village, the wily Raja, growing increasingly anxious, ordered his Diwan, Jujhar Singh, to cut down the rope. Furious over the raja's treachery the natni, as she plunged to her death, flung him a curse, that he would pay for his foul deed with the end of his kingdom. Shortly thereafter the Giri River did go

into flood, sweeping over Rajbans his capital, the palace and its surrounds, killing his entire family and leaving Sirmour without an heir to rule.

The Bhatti Rajputs, who ruled Sirmour, eventually moved on from this tragedy, and over time, changed their base from Kalsi, (near Dehra Dun), to Hatkoti, Neri, Rites, Devtal and in the end, Nahan.

The lovely mountainscapes and valley views offer a soothing escape from the clamour and toil of your everyday routines. The sound of temple bells, the gentle ripples on the lake made by the balmy summer breezes of a hill town and the itinerant birdsong, lull you into a laid-back mood.

Back to Nahan's own allurements. Peel back the layers gently and discover the sleepy township's historic past, and its cultural and spiritual connections. It'll surprise you that Nahan throws up some unique architectural discoveries. Its Rajasthani and Colonial structures are a delight to visit as you amble past the cobbled streets of the marketplace past. The profusion of bungalows with their flower gardens, elegant havelis from another era, swathes of woods climbing up the hill slopes, shrines from antiquity— even a storied lake—all will keep you engaged in your days here.

Let your footsteps follow the old promenades, to discover the township's past with the **Villa Round**, the **Hospital Walk** and the **Military Round**. On your walkabout do spend time here exploring the cemetery where you'll find two cenotaphs raised in the memory of two British residents of Nahan.

## Lytton Memorial

Also referred to as 'Delhi Gate of Nahan', this is a landmark of historic significance in Nahan as a symbol of Sirmour's colonial past and cultural identity. Commissioned by Raja Shamsheer Prakash in 1877 in honour of the Viceroy of India, Lord Lytton, this memorial is notable for its architectural splendour. The viceroy's visit marked a critical moment in the relationship between the British and the local



princely states; it also put the spotlight on Sirmour's strategic importance in the region. Built as a clock tower, it features four clocks installed each facing the cardinal directions. Two gates stand at its base, allowing public access and symbolizing openness during the colonial period. Lord Lytton was the key man who organized the legendary Delhi Durbar in 1877 to commemorate Queen Victoria's assumption of the title "Kaiser-i-Hind," signifying British control over India.

## Chaugan

The green lung of Nahan, the chaugan (flatland), is where the town folk gather on cool evenings. Just a stone throwing distance from here stands the Ranzor Palace.

## Ranzor Palace

The palace was built by Maharaja Veer Singh, the uncle of Maharaja Ranzor Singh. The palace has been the residence of four generations of the royals since 1621.



## Rani Tal

Built in 1898, it's the coolest spot in town with its lovely gardens. It appears there used to be a secret passage to the lake which allowed the ladies of the royal family to go and enjoy a discreet bath. At eventide you'll find the locals out in full force here, picnicking, boating and wandering around the gardens laid out in memory of his queen by Raja Shamsheer Parkash who ruled Sirmour for 42 years from 1856 to 1898. Shamsheer Parkash was married to the daughter of the Raja Keonthal; she was renowned for her beauty and ability to conduct the judicial and administrative business of the state in the absence of the Raja.

## Shamsheer Villa

After the death of his beloved queen, Raja Shamsheer quit the palace and built himself another abode, the Shamsheer Villa. His new home was built in the European-style and became his refuge for his grieving heart. The beautiful villa is both an architectural marvel and memorial to his wife. Though he did eventually marry again, this time a princess from Kunihar, it is here he chose to reside till he passed away. The villa, which shows the knocks it has suffered over time, still garners a lot of attention for the poignant love story of the raja that inspired it.

### Jagannath Temple

The former Sirmour ruler Raja Mahi Prakash (r.1108 CE to 1117CE) commissioned the establishment of the temple to enshrine an idol which was salvaged from the flood that wiped away the

capital Rajbans. The annual pilgrimage witnesses the reigning deity and 52 other idols, sourced from other shrines in town, being paraded through town in a colourful procession.

## Nahan Cemeteries

In the 19th century Sirmour state had to contend with the Gurkha invasion. On the British declaring war on the Gurkhas Major-General Gabriel Martindell, led a column to attack their stronghold at Jaitak. Four British officers who lost their lives in the attack are buried near the Pucca Tank main tank. An obelisk was raised to mark the spot.

United together in death are Nahan's legendary lovers, Dr Edwin Pearsall, Chief Medical Officer Sirmour and his wife Loiusa, who became a popular figure in the local community.



## SOFT ADVENTURES

The more restless souls in your party can head out for treks in the low hills around Nahan, go fishing at Jamta, and bird watching in its forests and glades. Around town itself, Jamu Peak and Choordhar Peak are popular treks. These tough but rewarding trails offer panoramic views.

One may even—travel further afield to the Asan Barrage, also within easy driving distance. Birdwatchers should explore Simbalwara Wildlife Sanctuary, 12 km off NH72 (the Paonta-Nahan Road). At Jataun, 5 km from Renuka, there's angling off the Giri Hydel Project Dam.

Refusing to return home to England after his untimely death, she broke all traditions of widows in the Raj, and stayed back in Nahan till aged 87, she passed away and was buried by his side as she wished.

## Elephant Tomb

This unique resting place is a memorial to Raja Shamsher Prakash's favourite elephant- Brajraj (named after Lord Ganesha); the behemoth was much loved by the townspeople as well. It is a place of worship for the residents as it gained fame for its curative powers.

## Jaitak Fort

Located in Jaitak village on a craggy spur above the Nahan-Dadhau Road, just 15 km from Nahan, lies this historic fort. The citadel was initially erected by the Sirmour rajas; it was later on reconstructed by the Gurkha leader Kaji Ranjor Thapa, the Commander in Chief of the Gorkha army at Dehra Dun, who in 1810 fought a critical battle with the British here. The war memorial at Pucca Tank you'll see in Nahan was raised in memory of the European soldiers who died fighting this war.

## Shivalik Fossil Park

If you have kids in your party, they will love the Shivalik Fossil Park or Suketi Fossil Park, located just 20 km away from Nahan. The unique aspect of the park is that it has representations of



## THE INFORMATION

### WHERE TO STAY AND EAT

**Grand View Resort** (Cell: 09418148267; [www.visitgrandviewresort.com](http://www.visitgrandviewresort.com)) at Jamta Heights, 14 km away. Rooms with scenic prospects, a pool and a spa the Jaitak Restaurant here is quite popular.

**Jay Clarks Exotica Hotel** with its picturesque lake views, offers dining with live

entertainment. Airy rooms, all lake facing, a clean pool, professional service

About 13 km from Nahan, on the Nahan-Renuka Road, is **The Sirmour Retreat** ([www.thesirmouretreat.com](http://www.thesirmouretreat.com)), a luxury boutique resort with cottages and tents.

Located on the Nahan-Renuka Road **Hotel City Heart** ([www.cityhearthotel.com](http://www.cityhearthotel.com)) is a

decent place to stay near the Chougan Grounds.

**Hotel Renuka** ([hptdc.in](http://hptdc.in))

The tourist resort overlooks Renuka Lake where you can feed the fish. Restaurant, Drive in, Parking, Cable TV, Children Park, Intercom, Doctor on call

### WHEN TO GO

All Year Round

### ACCESS

**Air Nearest airport:** Chandigarh International Airport (83km/2hrs).

**Rail:** Nearest railhead: Ambala (75 km/ 2 hrs).

**Road:** Route: NH44 to Shahabad via Karnal; NH344 and NH7 to Nahan via Narayangarh and Kala Amb. The city has good roads. Buses and taxis are easily available.

fossils unearthed at the site itself. Life-sized models of the Stegodon, Sivatherium, Hexaprotodon sivalensis, Colossochelys atlas, Paramacherdus and Crocodilla, are the highlights here.



### Sirmour Tal

About 40 km away from Nahan much of the land around Sirmour Tal, which marks the spot of the old capital of Rajbans, remains barren. From the flood waters that receded villagers were able to find remnants from the palace and some of the shrines. One baba, who found fame as Pathar Baba, set up his math above the high ground and collected these idols and kept them there safely. Vandals and relic hunters had a field day dragging away columns, idols and other loot from the floodplain. It is said that on an off chance a villager may still dig up some of Sirmour's legendary flood remains while working on his fields.

### Renuka Lake

Shaped in the form of a reclining woman, the lake lies at a distance of 40 km from Nahan. The lake itself takes its name from Goddess Renuka. The largest natural lake in Himachal Pradesh it is surrounded by lush valleys and forested enclaves brimming with wildlife. Kids will love the mini zoo set up alongside the lake. Devotees arrive in great numbers to worship at the temple of Renukaji, set upon the embankment of the lake. ■

## KALIMPONG (Darjeeling Hills)

Often overshadowed by big brother Darjeeling, the twin town of Kalimpong, steeped in natural beauty and perfect for soft adventure activities, should be your summer haunt this year.

Located in the stunning vistas of the Eastern Himalayas, high above the Teesta Valley, Kalimpong has long been associated with "Kalimpong Cheese", first produced here by Swiss resident, the Jesuit Father Andre Butty at Kalimpong's Swiss Welfare Dairy he set up in the 1950s.

But Kalimpong, with its stunning panoramas of the Khangchenzonga Range, has an even more exciting history than its culinary diversions. Its strategic location on the crossroads between China, Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan created

a complicated mess of intrigue, conspiracies and mountaineering expeditions, some said to be a cover up for foreign spies back in the late early 1900s when the British still had their hold over India. A concerned Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was even moved to call the hill town 'a nest of spies'. In the early 50s the legendary Himalayan Hotel, now a swanky Spa Resort run by the Mayfair group, was a buzzing hub with the influx of foreign mountaineers. Mountaineering expeditions were being planned and executed in the unmapped areas of the Himalayas from this tiny hilltown, which had a lively vibe of many arrivals and departures.

### Himalayan Hotel

Reverend John Macdonald, who was a resident of Kalimpong married a woman of Sikkimese birth. The son they produced, David, set up a small



cottage and chose to live in the hilltown. David, who loved the mountains and had an adventurous bent of mind went on to serve as an interpreter for Colonel Francis Younghusband, whose diplomatic mission was, in fact, a disguise for Britain's attempt to infiltrate Tibet and make a deal with it; David was to move on to serve as a trade agent in Yatung and Gyantse.

When he helped the 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso, dressed as a shepherd, successfully escape from Tibet and sequestered him in the safety in Kalimpong, he attained the eternal gratitude of the Brits. In exchange they gave him a plot of land close to his home in 1905, on which David Macdonald decided to build the Himalayan Hotel, which was completed by 1910.

Amongst its earliest guests was the legendary spy Frederick Marshman Bailey, when the 'Great Game' between the British and the Russians was at its height. Amongst the leading expeditions to Everest launched from here was that of the ill-fated legendary mountaineers George Mallory and Andrew Irvine in 1924. David's son, John, was supposed to be with the group, but having overslept from too much booze the night before, he was left behind at base camp—to thank his lucky stars that he escaped certain death as the duo had met in the icy reaches of the Himalayan trail to Everest.

Guests who have enjoyed the hospitality of the hotels include Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. Heinrich Harrer, author of "7 Years in Tibet", Pandit Nehru, Indira Gandhi, writer Dominique Lapierre and several actors from Hollywood including Richard Gere and Cindy Crawford, who was his wife at the time

Today you can explore the Heritage Wing at the Mayfair Himalayan Spa Resort which has restored and preserved parts of the original hotel. The bar is named after David's son, John.



## Deolo Hill

For stunning 360 degrees panoramas of Kalimpong's beautiful surrounds, haul your way up to the top of Deolo Hill. The lovely park set up here by the government also provides lookouts for the best views of Mt. Khanchendzonga and the Teesta River. There are accommodations within the park itself as well as nearby, if you are looking to stay on for a night or two.

## Durpin Dara

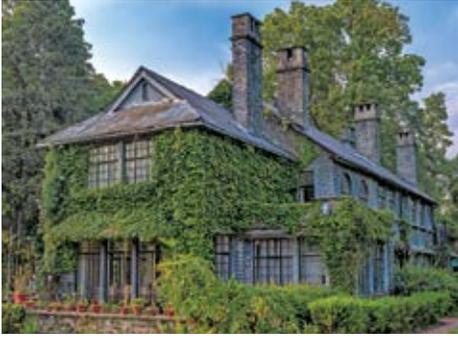
Locally called "binocular hill" it is exactly that. From the hilltop you can get close-up views of the snowbound Himalayan ranges of Sikkim, the Teesta River and the Jelep Pass in the distance, with

a good pair of binocs. Golfing addicts enjoy a round of golf on the beautiful course laid out just off the summit. The Zang Dhok Palri Monastery, consecrated by the Dalai Lama in 1976, straddles the hilltop. Of interest here too are the reliquary 108 volumes of the Kangyur; also housed here are the sacred books and scrolls brought here from Tibet by the escaping monks who fled the Chinese invasion.

## Morgan House

Established in the 1930s on the Durpin Dara Hill, the ivy-covered Morgan House served as a home for George Morgan, a jute tycoon and his new bride. Its pleasing manor-style English architecture with a gabled roof, glass windows and vaulting chimneys, is a strong reminder of the hill town's colonial roots. Local lore claims it's haunted; apparently George is said to have tortured his wife, which seems to have led to her sudden death, which still remains a mystery. Shortly after her death, he abandoned the house—leading to stories of hauntings by the now dead Mrs Morgan, and that the tap-tap-tap of her high heels still ring in the wooden corridors of the mansion.





It now serves as a government tourist lodge. Room 101 with its views of the Kanchendzonga range, is the talking point of this enduring mystery. It was the bedroom of the couple. So, if you are looking for a nighttime tryst with Mrs Morgan, sweep your fears aside and enjoy a nightly adventure at Morgan House. From the lovely garden you can enjoy splendid sunrise and sunset views.

### Cafes and Restaurants with a view

In the heart of town is the popular rooftop restaurant The Warehouse; other good spots are Za Khang Authentic Bhutanese Restaurant and Art Café. Cloud 9 also offers views and authentic Nepali



cuisine. Cafe Kalimpong with its valley views, serves yummy melas powered by with farm-fresh ingredients. Run by the Indian Army cadre the Gale Cafe offers lovely views of the golf course.

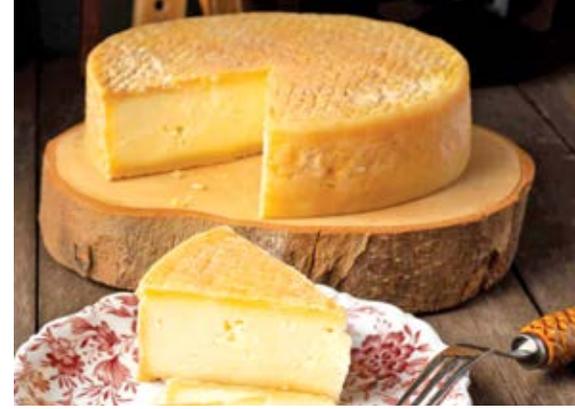
### Cactus Nursery

An unmissable treasure-trove of spiky delights, it's a must-visit for those with a green thumb.

Touted to host the biggest collection of cacti in Asia, the Pine View Nursery is the brainchild of Mohan S Pradhan, who over 40 years pulled together 1,500 species of cacti from all over the world. Straddling an area of about 2 acres the collection has won numerous awards. You can also buy some to take home as souvenirs of your visit.

### Kalimpong Cheese

With Father Andre Butty's demise the production of the original Swiss-style Kalimpong cheese went into decline over time; eventually production ceased completely with the dairy being shut down in the '70s. However, Samuel Yonzon, a sound engineer quit his job and came home to Kalimpong and along with his partner, Khushnarayan Sharma, has taken up the challenge of trying to revive the lost tradition of the iconic Swiss-style, semi-hard, gouda-style cheese with holes in it, dating back to the 19th century when it was introduced in the hill town by missionaries. The now-iconic hand-rolled milk lollipop, was just adored by hordes of students in the hilltown. Adults too could not resist this delicious inexpensive treat.



“Yes, cheese is still made in Kalimpong, but it lacks the depth of flavour and texture that Swiss Dairy (‘kalimpong’ cheese) carried,” Samuel is said to have in reply to a query. While the duo does make several varieties of cheese in Kalimpong using milk of the local grass-fed cows, they haven't given up on finding the right fix for Father Andre Butty's ‘Kalimpong Cheese’ at the Makarios Bous Farm, where they operate from. The biggest challenge has been the rising summer temperature (touching 35 degrees), in the hilltown, compared to what it used to be in the days of the Swiss cheese maker. He also sells a similar kind of cheese made in the cooler environs of Pashupati Nagar in Nepal. The milk lollipops are being revived by his friend who runs Dahal Dairy. Kolkata's New Market offers spin-offs of the famous cheese in shapes of large and small wheels. ■

## THE INFORMATION

### WHERE TO STAY AND EAT

**Mayfair Himalayan Spa Resort** (<https://www.mayfairhotels.com/himalayan-spa-resort-kalimpong/>) is located on Upper Cart Rd. The luxury resort features 68 rooms and suites with fireplaces, 3 restaurants, a well-stocked bar and a luxury spa.

**Fortune Resort Kalimpong** (<https://www.itchotels.com/in/en/fortuneresort-kalimpong>)

Situated at Upper Cart Road offers 44 rooms and suites, 2 F&B outlets and 2 banqueting and meeting venues

**Sinclair's Retreat Kalimpong** (<https://www.sinclairshotels.com/kalimpong?so>)

This cozy boutique resort has 44 rooms, two large suites and two rooms in a wooden house. All the rooms have a view of the alluring Himalayan range. It also features a

swimming and spa.

### WHEN TO GO

All year round

### ACCESS

**Air:** Bagdogra airport is 80 km from Kalimpong.

**Rail:** New Jalpaiguri railway station is 77 km from Kalimpong

**Road:** Kalimpong is well-connected to other cities of India via road. Buses ply regularly from Siliguri

# OUTDOOR WIRE JOINTS: A Hidden Fire Hazard

Why safety starts with the right connections, enclosures, and wires



Outdoor electrical wire joints are often overlooked—but they can be silent threats.

Exposed to harsh environments such as scorching summer heat, freez-

ing winter cold, and intense monsoon moisture, these joints deteriorate quickly if not properly protected. Even short monsoon spells lasting just a couple of months can cause lasting damage, creating conditions ripe for electrical fires.

And the situation gets worse by the habit of electricians wrapping these exposed outdoor wire ends with electrical tape. While it may offer short-term coverage, this method is far from reliable in the long run. Weather fluctuations weaken the tape's adhesive, causing it to peel or loosen. This can lead to sparking, short circuits, leakages—and in worst cases—fires.

## So, what is the safer option? The best alternative: Gel-Filled Enclosures

To ensure long-term safety, **gel-filled enclosures** are highly recommended for sealing outdoor cable joints. Engineered specifically for outdoor and even underwater environments, these enclosures are vastly superior to traditional taping methods. They are filled with Ger-

man-made, reusable gels that have been tested and proven around high-voltage lines.

With a dielectric strength of up to 23kV and the ability to perform in extreme temperatures ranging from -60°C to 200°C, these enclosures provide a robust seal that effectively keeps out moisture, heat, and dust—ensuring safe and stable electrical connections.

## Did you know connectors also play a crucial role in the outdoor wiring?

Protection doesn't end with insulation. The **quality of the connector** used is just as critical. High-quality connectors designed to international standards ensure a secure, durable grip on wires. Once locked in place, these connectors form such a strong bond that attempts to remove the wire may cause it to break before detaching—eliminating the risk of loose connections that can trigger sparks or shorts.

## Always use superior wire in outdoor connection for long-term safety

The choice of wire also plays a decisive role in system safety. **Premium-grade wires**, such as Lapp cables, are made from high-quality copper and are capable of carrying higher electrical loads. They also minimize energy losses, withstand extreme

temperatures, and reduce your overall electricity consumption. With fewer wires needed per conduit, airflow is improved, friction is minimized, and the risk of overheating and fire is significantly reduced.

On the other hand, **low-quality wires** have limited current-carrying capacity. To meet basic load requirements, multiple wires are often packed into a single conduit—leading to overcrowding, poor ventilation, and dangerous heat buildup.

## Safety starts with smarter choices

Preventing fire hazards in outdoor wiring doesn't require complicated technology—it requires smarter, safer choices. Avoiding shortcuts like electrical tape, and instead opting for gel-filled enclosures, certified connectors, and premium wires, can go a long way in protecting lives and property. The upfront investment in quality materials pays off in peace of mind, energy efficiency, and long-term electrical safety. ■



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