



नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री



देश का टेक्नोलॉजी हब बनने की ओर अग्रसर मध्यप्रदेश



डॉ. मोहन यादव, मुख्यमंत्री

मध्यप्रदेश टेक ग्रोथ कॉन्क्लेव 2025

ग्लोबल इन्वेस्टर्स समिट 2025 के संकल्पों को साकार करता मध्यप्रदेश

शुभारंभ

डॉ. मोहन यादव

मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश द्वारा

27 अप्रैल 2025 | सायं 5:00 बजे
ब्रिलियंट कन्वेंशन सेंटर, इंदौर

अवसरों का प्रदेश मध्यप्रदेश...

इन्वेस्टर फ्रेंडली नीतियां

- ग्लोबल कैपेबिलिटी सेंटर्स पॉलिसी 2025
- ड्रोन प्रमोशन एवं यूसेज पॉलिसी 2025
- आईटी, आईटीईएस एवं ईएसडीएम इन्वेस्टमेंट प्रमोशन पॉलिसी 2023
- एवीजीसी-एक्सआर पॉलिसी 2025
- सेमीकंडक्टर पॉलिसी 2025

टेक ईकोसिस्टम

15+ आईटी पार्क	5 आईटी सेज़	2000+ आईटी, आईटीईएस यूनिट	50+ बड़ी आईटी कंपनियां
1200+ टेक स्टार्ट-अप्स	200K+ रोज़गार के अवसर	2 टेक यूनिर्कॉन	

फोकस क्षेत्र

- आईटी-आईटीईएस
- एवीजीसी-एक्सआर
- ड्रोन प्रौद्योगिकी
- ईएसडीएम और सेमीकंडक्टर
- डाटा सेंटर
- ग्लोबल कैपेबिलिटी सेंटर्स



PASTEL PLAY: Softest Style Power

BY SAKSHI PRIYA

August slipped away into a moment in time... Taylor Swift's lyric sets the tone for summer 2025 soft, romantic and full of feeling. This season, fashion is leaning into pastels with renewed purpose. From pistachio and butter yellow to powder pink, mint green and sky-blue, these shades have captured the spotlight across collections, editorials, and social feeds alike.

There's something undeniably fresh about the pastel palette this year. It speaks of calm confidence, easy elegance, and a desire for lightness after seasons of excess. Designers are embracing subtle colour in strong silhouettes — flowing skirts, tailored suits, cropped jackets — proving that softness can be powerful.

Pastels are dominating social media too. Influencers are styling them head-to-toe, mixing them into beauty and lifestyle content and making them the season's most coveted colour story. These tones reflect a collective shift — towards clarity, wearability, and charm that lasts.

THIS SEASON ALSO WELCOMES MAUVE, PEACH BLUSH, LAVENDER AND POWDER MINT INTO THE SPOTLIGHT. MAUVE, LOOKS STUNNING IN SATIN SLIP SKIRTS

KEY PIECES:

- Pistachio-toned mini shoulder bags
- Sky blue ballet flats
- Blush pink belts and hairbands
- Lightweight scarves in tonal pastels

SAGE GREEN: A CALM CONSTANT
Elegant and easy to wear, has found its place across spring collections. Style a sage green ankle-length skirt with a cotton blouse and tan leather sandals. Gold jewellery and a handbag to look effortlessly stylish.

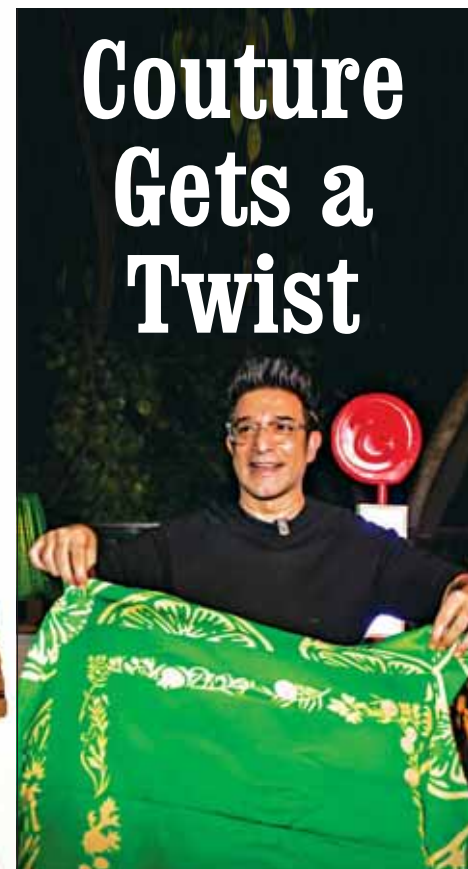
BUTTER YELLOW: LIGHT, BUT IMPACTFUL
Less vibrant than lemon and subtler than neon, this version of yellow adds warmth without overpowering. Pair a butter yellow. A line skirt with neutral-toned top with crossbody and gold hoops.

SKY BLUE: POLISHED AND CALM
Cool and collected, sky blue made appearances in shirting, light knits and versatile summer suiting. A cropped jacket in sky blue over a white dress, paired with trainers or loafers, makes for a look that is as wearable as it is elegant.

MINT GREEN: THE COOL CLASSIC
Soft yet fresh, brings a touch of coolness to the pastel spectrum. Whether in flared pants, pleated skirts or summer tops.
A mint green blouse tucked into white high-waisted trousers creates a breezy, polished outfit for sunny afternoons. Pair with white sandals and delicate jewellery for a balanced look.

PISTACHIO GREEN: THE REFINED REFRESH
Once reserved for interiors and gelato menus, pistachio green is now one of fashion's leading colours. A pistachio green dress paired with off-white heels and minimal jewellery creates pinterest-worthy looks.

COTTON CANDY PINK: ROMANTIC, REWORKED
This pink is tender, not theatrical. Far from overly sweet, it is being presented in tailored, wearable shapes that make it ideal for grown-up dressing with a soft edge. A knee-length pleated skirt in pink with a neutral knit and ballet flats adds polish without looking overly styled.



Couture Gets a Twist

BY TEAM VIVA

When high fashion joins the art of refined indulgence, the result is bound to be enchanting. Celebrated couturier Suneet Varma and the iconic gin brand Tanqueray have presented "The OG Summer of Love," an evocative collaboration that exudes elegance and a touch of whimsy.

The highlight of the collection is the scarf, an artistic expression of Tanqueray's botanical roots. With motifs of juniper berries, citrus slices, and herbs rendered in delicate brushstrokes, the design is fresh, breezy, and undeniably chic. The palette — Tanqueray green offset by soft neutrals and bright botanical tones — makes it a perfect summer essential. It's a wearable poem, a nod to nature's fragrance and the joy of dressing up. You can imagine it fluttering softly in a sunlit garden party, paired with linen whites and laughter in the air.

Suneet Varma, known for his emotionally rich, opulent designs, lends his philosophy — celebration, storytelling, and connection — to this collaboration. "The scarf is a wearable celebration," he says, and rightly so. It evokes the feeling of a summer evening where cocktails sparkle in crystal glasses and conversations meander like a favourite old melody — perhaps "All You Need is Love," playing softly in the background. The OG Summer of Love is an invitation — to pause, to sip, to drape, and to delight in the finer things.

Suneet Varma says, "My design philosophy has always been centered on celebration, emotion, and storytelling — values that align beautifully with Tanqueray's legacy of bold flavors and sophistication. This collaboration transcends fashion and spirits."

A Spanish Romantic Thriller that Blossoms in Blood

When murder becomes just another business, you enter the familiar chilling world of Netflix thrillers, writes ABHI SINGHAL

There have many thriller TV series like 'You' that keep you numb and go damn but **The Gardener** is somewhere something different and very gripping created by Miguel Sáez Carral. The TV series is a Spanish romantic thriller streaming on Netflix.

The series opens with a tense scene: Elmer (Alvaro Rico) calmly approaches the sea and murders an unsuspecting swimmer. What follows in the first three episodes is a sequence of brutal killings of innocent people, all orchestrated for monetary gain. At the heart of this darkness is Elmer's mother, La China Jurado (played with unnerving precision by Cecilia Suárez), who manipulates her emotionally void son into becoming a killer-for-hire.

Elmer, traumatised by a childhood car accident, is portrayed as emotionally detached, unable to feel love, guilt or remorse. Alvaro Rico delivers a striking performance, capturing the paradox of a man



Highlights That Make The Gardener Stand Out:

- Unique blend of aesthetic beauty and darkness
- Strong performances, especially from Alvaro Rico and Cecilia Suárez

Reasons The Gardener May Miss the Mark

- Emotionally heavy and morbid themes with cold-blooded murders and emotional detachment
- Predictable family murder drama

wrestling with his emptiness. His stoic expressions and stiff tone give the series its haunting core.

The story gains emotional complexity with the introduction of Violeta (Catalina Soplana), a gentle nursery school teacher who unwittingly becomes a target for assassination due to a case of mistaken identity. Soplana brings warmth and vulnerability to the role, serving as the emotional counterbalance to Elmer's coldness. The romantic tension between the two adds a tender, human element to an otherwise dark narrative.

Cecilia Suárez is mesmerising as La China Jurado, a cunning matriarch with a murky past, who hides her criminal empire behind the façade of a garden centre. Her disdain for Violeta injects familiar dramatic tension, reminiscent of

classic soap-style maternal possessiveness. Yet here, it is underscored with a far more sinister undertone.

Perhaps the most disturbing, and oddly poetic, element of the series is the use of the victims' bodies as fertiliser to enrich the garden. It is a macabre metaphor that adds a gothic flourish to the storyline. The garden itself becomes a silent witness to the horrors that unfold, lush, vibrant and fed by death.

The Gardener is a visually striking series, filled with aesthetic scenes of blooming flowers and rich colours, which juxtapose sharply with its grim subject matter. This contrast only heightens the emotional unease, making the viewer question the price of beauty and the cost of love.

In six tightly crafted episodes, The Gardener manages to blend romance, psychological trauma, family drama and crime thriller into a cohesive and deeply unsettling narrative. For fans of shows like You or Dark Desire, this series offers a fresh twist on a common storyline that is beautiful, brutal and strangely hypnotic.



RATING
★★★★

SUGGESTED BINGES

<p>Andor Season 2 OTT - JioHotstar Cast - Stellan Skarsgård, Genevieve O'Reilly, Adria Arjona, Forest Whitaker</p>	<p>Jewel Thief - The Heist Begins OTT - Netflix Cast - Saif Ali Khan, Jaideep Ahlawat, Nikita Dutta, Kunal Kapoor</p>	<p>You Season 5 OTT - Netflix Cast - Elizabeth Lail, Penn Badgley, Zach Cherry, Charlotte Ritchie</p>	<p>Veera Dheera Sooran OTT - Amazon Prime Video Cast - SJ Suryah, Suraj Venjaramoodu, Dushara Vijayan</p>
			<p>Étoile OTT - Amazon Prime Video Cast - Luke Kirby, Charlotte Gainsbourg</p>

Get in touch at vivacity@dailypioneer.com

ADVENTURE

"A person susceptible to 'wanderlust' is not so much addicted to movement as committed to transformation"
— Pico Iyer



When *adventure* is a way of life!



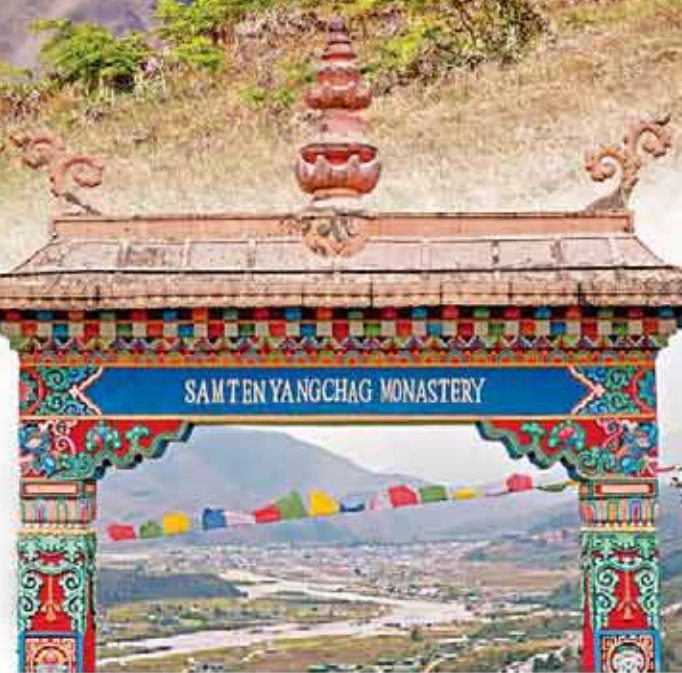
The Mechukha Adventure Race in Arunachal Pradesh blended high-octane action with national pride, showcasing the region's beauty, writes GYANESHWAR DAYAL

The greatest challenge one can face often lies within — confronting and transcending personal limitations. Pushing these boundaries becomes one of the most rewarding experiences life can offer. This notion came to life both figuratively and literally when 22 teams converged in Mechukha for the 3rd National Adventure Racing Championship, a prestigious event under the Adventure Racing World Series — Asia Series.

In a spectacular blend of adrenaline and assertion, Arunachal Pradesh played host to a high — octane adventure race set against the breathtaking backdrop of Mechukha, located in the Shi Yomi district. Spearheaded by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh, which aims to place Mechukha firmly on the global adventure sports map, the choice of location was as strategic as it was scenic.

Nestled near the Chinese border on the far eastern edge of India, Mechukha stands not only as a gateway to natural beauty but also as a testament to national pride and resilience. Pasang Dorjee Sona, the Sports Minister of Arunachal Pradesh and the visionary behind the event's conception, expressed his intent with candor and conviction: "This is our way of telling the world — we are here, waiting to be explored. What you'll find here is an India unlike any other. The race is merely a means to draw global attention and unveil this hidden paradise."

His words carry weight, for Mechukha offers boundless opportunities for adventure tourism — from soaring down one of India's longest zip lines and paragliding over pristine valleys, to braving wild rivers through rafting and kayaking, scaling rugged mountain faces, and trekking through untouched landscapes. Set against the backdrop of the Eastern Himalayas, the race included mountain biking, trail running, river rafting, and rappelling — challenging participants across some of the most



rugged and breathtaking terrain in the region. Mechukha, located near the Indo — Tibet border, offered a dramatic and fitting venue, with its raw beauty and strategic significance. The race covered a route that took participants through dense forests, across suspension bridges, over swift rivers, and into remote tribal hamlets, giving them a taste of the unique culture and unspoiled environment that defines Arunachal Pradesh.

Promoting Adventure Tourism

Organised by the state's Department of Tourism in collaboration with Nth adventure the race was a strategic move to boost adventure tourism in the region. Arunachal Pradesh, often referred to as the "Land of the Rising Sun," boasts immense untapped potential for eco and adventure tourism. Pema Khandu, the dynamic Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, is deeply committed to positioning Mechukha and the state as a whole, as a vibrant tourism hub.

"As a border state, we face certain constraints," he noted, "but significant efforts are underway to enhance infrastructure — from roads to telecommunications — which will give a major boost to the tourism industry. Arunachal Pradesh is a peaceful state with 85 percent forest cover, offering visitors a rejuvenating experience amidst nature."

Speaking at the event, Arunachal Pradesh's Tourism Minister emphasised, "This is our home, and we are proud to showcase its beauty and resilience. Adventure tourism is our bridge to the world, and Mechukha is just the beginning." "It's not just about the race. It's about experiencing India's frontier, the people, the spirit, the message," said a participant from Mumbai.



EXPLORING THE LAST SHANGRI-LA

Nestled in the eastern Himalayas, Mechukha is a pristine valley in the Shi-Yomi district of Arunachal Pradesh, India. Often described as the "Last Shangri-La," this enchanting destination remains largely untouched by commercial tourism, offering an unspoiled glimpse into nature, culture, and thrilling adventures.

A TAPESTRY OF NATURAL BEAUTY

Mechukha is a dreamscape of lush meadows, dense pine forests, winding rivers, and majestic mountains. In spring and summer, the valley is blanketed with wildflowers, while autumn offers crisp air and golden hues. Winters, though chilly, transform Mechukha into a white wonderland, with snow-draped landscapes that look like they're lifted straight from a postcard.

ADVENTURE AWAITS

While tranquility is one of Mechukha's charms, the region also promises adrenaline, pumping adventure for thrill seekers.

TREKKING AND HIKING

Mechukha is surrounded by several unexplored trails that cut through dense forests and mountain passes. The Samten Yongcha trek is a favourite among locals, offering panoramic views of the valley. Hikes to nearby ridges reveal sweeping vistas of snow capped peaks and endless forests.

RIVER RAFTING

The Siyom River, though calm in places, also has rapids suitable for white — water rafting, especially during the summer. For the more laid, back adventurer, angling for local fish species in the river is a peaceful pastime.

PARAGLIDING

Mechukha has also become known as a paragliding hotspot, especially during the annual Adventure Festival organised by the Arunachal Pradesh tourism department. Soaring over pine forests and rivers offers a bird's eye view of the valley's breathtaking landscape.

MOUNTAIN BIKING

With its rugged terrain and offbeat tracks, Mechukha is perfect for mountain biking. Whether you're coasting downhill or navigating rocky trails, the combination of fresh air and scenic backdrops makes every ride memorable.

ADVENTURE MECHUKHA: LET THE ADRENAL RACE

India's 3rd National Adventure Racing Championship came to Arunachal Pradesh for the first time. As part of the prestigious ARWS Asia series, the championship offered an experience that combined intense competition, breathtaking landscapes, and rich cultural immersion. Held in the remote and pristine Mechukha Valley, the event lived up to its promise of providing a race like no other. Nestled high in the Himalayas, 6,000 feet above sea level, Mechukha

welcomed competitors with its untouched beauty. The participants not only faced some of the toughest terrains in the country but also had the chance to immerse themselves in the culture and traditions of the region, discovering the warmth and hospitality of the local tribes, including the Membas, Ramos, Bokars, Libos, and Tagin.

The 3rd National Adventure Racing Championship also served as a qualifier for the ARWS Asia Championship 2025, adding an extra layer

of intensity to the competition. With national and international teams coming together to compete, the event attracted some of the best in the field. In addition to the race, the championship offered a generous cash prize pool of Rs 7 lakh, 5 lakh and 3 lakhs. But beyond the competition, the event allowed participants to fully immerse themselves in Mechukha's rich culture. It was an experience that went far beyond the race itself, offering a deep connection to the land.

A SUBTLE YET STRONG MESSAGE TO CHINA

China has consistently refused to recognise Arunachal Pradesh as part of India, referring to it as "South Tibet" in its official maps. The Indian government has repeatedly reaffirmed that Arunachal Pradesh is and will always be an integral part of India. By organising a high-profile adventure event in a border village, India sent a quiet but firm message: governance, development, and public participation in the region are thriving. The presence of Indian security forces, civil authorities, and a large number of Indian participants underlined the reality on the ground.



THE VEGETARIAN
THALI HAD THE LEBU
PATA BHAAT,
BENGALI ALOO DUM,
CHHOLAR DAL,
GOLDA CHINGRI
MALAI KARI AND
MORE TO ENJOY.



BHURI BHOJ Comes Alive In Delhi

Bringing the stories and spices of Bengal to life, Chef Ananya Banerjee curates an unforgettable menu for the Delhiites, for ten days, that celebrates the region's rich love for the food culture, writes ABHI SINGHAL



PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR



Chef Ananya Banerjee — The mind and magic behind the creativity and fusion of the Bengali food.

The Bengali culture always makes you feel so alive and the Bengali feast is to die for in the case of food lovers. So, for ten special days, the essence of Bengal will be live at the *The Suryaa, New Delhi* with "Taste of Bengal", that is a grand celebration of food, flavour and nostalgia. The heart behind the entire finger licking food is *Chef Ananya Banerjee*, whose love for Bengal's food traditions shines through every plate.

The buffet spread showcases an impressive lineup of Bengali classics. Start with *Bhetki Paturi*, where mustard-marinated fish is gently wrapped in banana leaves and pan-fried to perfection. For the savours of the non vegetarian you can try the ever-popular *Keema Egg Devil*, a favourite from Kolkata's street food scene that wraps

THE SWEETEST GRAND FINALE

The dessert spread is a poetic end to the Bengali feast. You will get to relish the *Makha Shondesh* served in a crisp kunafa basket — soft, kneaded, and delicately sweet. Then, surrender to the charm of *Kheer Komala*, a silky milk pudding laced with fresh oranges and citrus zest. A gentle, flavourful finale that lingers on the palate long after the last bite.

spiced minced meat around a boiled egg, fried until golden and crisp.

In the starters you also have *Ghugni tart* — a contemporary take on Kolkata's classic yellow pea curry, served in a delicate tart shell, *Beetroot Croquette cylinder* — a crisp, deep-fried beetroot and potato croquette with subtle spice, served with delicate garnish. These will not let you keep up the space for the upcoming main course.

The main courses feature the much-loved *Kosha Mangsho*, a slow-cooked mutton dish rich with

spices. Pair it with puffed *Luchi* or the fragrant yellow *Basanti Pulao* for a truly satisfying plate. And for those with a sweet tooth, the *Baked Rasogolla* is a must — a gentle twist on Bengal's iconic sweet that's both comforting and indulgent.

The *Vegetarian Thali* had the *Lebu pata bhaat* — fragrant gombindobogh rice infused with citrusy gondhoraj leaves for refreshing aroma, *Bengali Aloo Dum* — baby potatoes slow-cooked in lightly spiced tomato cumin. The taste of *Chholar Dal* with *Narkel & Kishmish* made with thick Bengal gram dal cooked with coconut slivers and sweet raisin will become your favourite eventually.

The desert is the last and the best. You will have the sweetness of *Makha Shondesh* in kunafa basket — Soft, Kneaded Bengali sandesh delicately in a crisp kunafa nest. The *Kheer Komala* — A velvety milk pudding infused with fresh oranges

and citrus zest will make your taste buds

feel weak on food. But this festival is about more than just what is on the plate. *The Suryaa* has turned its dining space into a little slice of Bengal with Live kitchen counters let diners watch dishes come to life, while traditional music adds a soothing background, completing an atmosphere that feels like stepping into a Bengali home.

FACT SHEET -

Taste of Bengal
Where: *The Suryaa, New Delhi*
When: 25th April - 4th May 2025
Timings: 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM
Price: Dinner Buffet at INR 2399++



From street snacks to heirloom recipes, "Taste of Bengal" brings Kolkata's kitchen to Delhi under the culinary guidance of Chef Ananya. It promises a meal to remember and is an invitation to connect with a part of India that is rich in warmth, tradition, and taste. So, prepare for a nostalgic food journey as *The Suryaa*.



Passport to World's Street Food



From Tokyo to Mexico, it's a flavourful food world tour at Cafe Delhi Heights, writes ABHI SINGHAL

Street food is an extra happy taste buds experience, a cultural adventure that brings together the flavours and traditions of distant lands. Imagine embarking on a food journey around the globe, all without leaving your seat. With the *International Street Food Festival 2025* at *Cafe Delhi Heights*, you can do just that, as this exciting celebration of global cuisine unfolds across all their outlets from April 15 to May 1.

Step into the warm and aesthetic atmosphere of *Cafe Delhi Heights*, where the scents of sizzling spices, grilling meats, and fresh ingredients fill the

air, setting the stage for a food adventure. The festival's specially formed menu promises to take you on a whirlwind tour across continents, offering a unique twist on iconic street food dishes from around the world.

You can start your journey in Asia with a steaming bowl of Japanese ramen, its rich, savoury broth paired perfectly with tender noodles and a medley of fresh toppings. If you're craving something with a bit of heat, the spicy, tangy kick of Mexican tacos will leave your taste buds dancing. For a touch of Middle Eastern warmth, savour the juicy, flavourful shawarmas, packed with a delicious mix of meats and spices that transport you straight to the bustling streets of Beirut or Cairo.

But the adventure doesn't stop there. Want to travel more? Now, CDH takes you to Spain with a bite of the crispy, sugar-dusted churros, or you can sink teeth into a tender Turkish kebab that captures the essence of Turkey's street food culture. For those who prefer something lighter, the Vietnamese spring rolls offer a refreshing crunch with a burst

of herbs and dipping sauce that's simply irresistible. And for the perfect comfort food, there are American sliders, mini burgers packed with bold flavours that are both familiar and exciting.

The festival adds an interactive twist to the experience with the *Dart World Board* — a fun, paid activity where you throw a dart at a world map that highlights the countries featured in the festival menu. Wherever the dart lands, that's the street food dish you must try. It's an adventurous way to discover new flavours, bringing an element of surprise to your dining experience.

Taste the global street food and something new with the *International Street Food Festival* at *Cafe Delhi Heights*. Hours of spending time and savouring food will take you through culture, flavour, and the joy of sharing a meal.

FACT SHEET

Location - All Outlets
Café Delhi Heights
Availability - 15th
April - 1st May



A Night of Artful Mixology

Bangkok's Rabbit Hole Brings Cocktail Magic to Gurugram at The Leela Ambience, writes GYANESHWAR DAYAL



The art of mixology extends far beyond simply combining drinks — it's a creative craft that merges flavour, balance, technique, and storytelling. A superb cocktail is a sensory journey, where each ingredient is selected with intention and precision to evoke a mood, a memory, or an emotion. From the clink of ice to the swirl of citrus oils, mixology is where culinary science meets artistic expression, turning a simple sip into a memorable experience.

In a dazzling display of global mixology, *The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences* hosted one of Asia's most iconic cocktail destinations for an unforgettable evening. On 23rd April, the celebrated *Rubicon Bar & Cigar Lounge* opened its doors to a special bar takeover by *Rabbit Hole* — Bangkok's legendary speakeasy known for its inventive cocktails and chic, understated charm.

Tucked away behind a nondescript wooden door in Thonglor's vibrant nightlife district, *Rabbit Hole* has earned a reputation for pushing the boundaries of mixology while maintaining a relaxed elegance. For one night only, this distinctive Bangkok spirit was brought to Gurugram, infusing the capital region's cocktail culture with an international flair.

At the heart of the takeover were *Rabbit Hole's* star talents — Depp, the Group Beverage Manager, and Bite, a master mixologist known for

RABBIT HOLE'S SIGNATURE STYLE

Tucked away behind a nondescript wooden door in Thonglor's vibrant nightlife district, *Rabbit Hole* has earned a reputation for pushing the boundaries of mixology while maintaining a relaxed elegance. For one night only, this distinctive Bangkok spirit was brought to Gurugram, infusing the capital region's cocktail culture with an international flair.

his flair, finesse, and storytelling. The duo took over the bar with a menu of meticulously curated cocktails that highlighted their signature creativity, precision, and deep understanding of flavour. Each drink told a story, bridging cultures and delighting the senses of everyone in attendance.

The *Rubicon Bar & Cigar Lounge*, with interiors designed by Japan's renowned *Studio Spin*, provided an opulent yet intimate backdrop for the evening. Featuring rich wood panelling, maroon leather seating, warm ambient lighting, and the refined atmosphere of a private cigar lounge, *Rubicon* served as the perfect stage for *Rabbit Hole's* artistic libations.

This collaboration marks yet another milestone for *The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences* in its mission to deliver world-class hospitality experiences. By partnering with global tastemakers such as *Rabbit Hole*, the hotel continues to elevate Gurugram's luxury scene, offer-

Beyond the Beaten Path, Into the Quiet

A peaceful getaway in the hills, perfect for relaxing, exploring nature, and enjoying quiet moments

Tucked away in the lush folds of the Kumaon hills lies a lake of nine corners, **Naukuchiyatal** — an emerald secret that still shimmers in its serenity, away from the better-trodden paths of Nainital and Bhimtal.

And now, it has a luxurious new address: Naukuchia House, a recently renovated 42 — room property by the Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), the custodians of the iconic Taj brand.

Standing elegantly by the lake, Naukuchia House is not just a hotel — it's a sanctuary. Designed with understated charm and heritage echoes, the property offers panoramic lake views, with a private entry that takes you straight to the shimmering waters. Step out of your room, and you can hop directly onto a boat. I did. A slow ride in the morning mist, a fishing line tossed casually into the glassy lake surface — this isn't just vacationing; it's soul-deep unwinding.

For those chasing rejuvenation rather than adventure, I recommend their signature full-body spa therapy. My masseur was a magician with years of training in her fingertips, and the steam bath that followed was the kind of cleansing city souls long for.

But Naukuchia House doesn't stop there. On one of the afternoons, the hotel arranged a guided walk into the forest, leading to an enchanting village clearing where warm tea and quiet conversations replaced Wi-Fi signals and screens.

And then there's **Kainchi Dham** — just a scenic 30-minute drive away. This modest ashram has turned into a magnetic spiritual hub, drawing global figures like *Mark Zuckerberg*, *Julia Roberts*, and closer to home, *Virat Kohli* and *Anushka Sharma*.

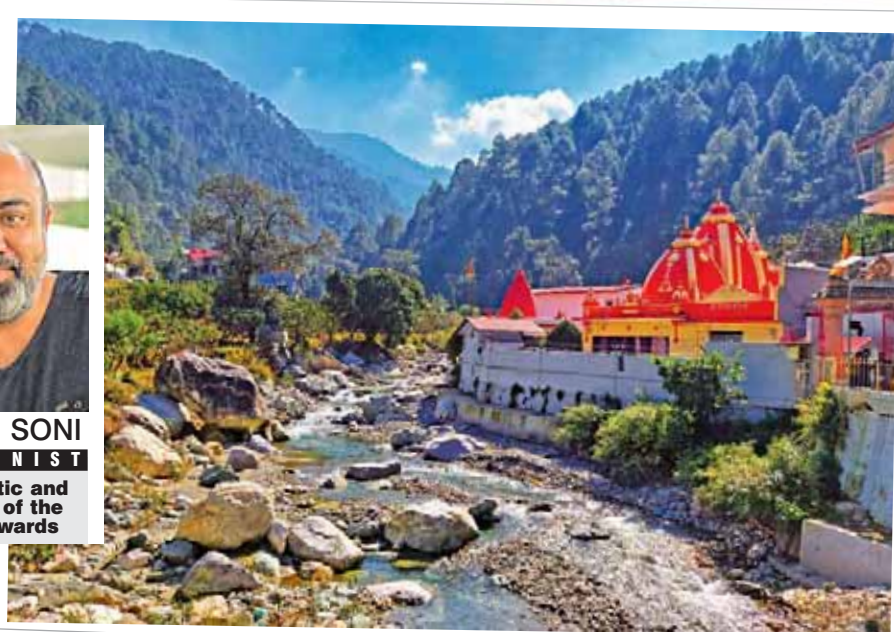
Whether you're a believer or a curious wanderer, the calm of *Shri Neem Karoli Baba's* temple will stay long after you leave. Back at the hotel, there's plenty to indulge in. The temperature — controlled pool makes a dip possible even when the air gets crisp.

The food?

Their Asian fare is well-balanced, and the Indian kebabs-succulent, smoky, and served with Himalayan charm-are memorable. A chef's nod to modern tastes without losing sight of tradition at Ija, their all — day dining restaurant that means 'Mother' in Kumaoni, is worth a praise. Naukuchiyatal is just 5.5 hours by road from Delhi, making it ideal for a 2-3 night escape. Unlike its over-touristed cousins, it offers silence, stars, and stories. And with Naukuchia House now writing its own, there's never been a better time to visit.



PAWAN SONI
COLUMNIST
 Food critic and founder of the Big F Awards



REJUVENATION

Naukuchiyatal Lake, with its nine serene corners, offers peaceful boating and fishing. Nearby, **Kainchi Dham** — home to *Shri Neem Karoli Baba* — draws seekers and celebrities alike for its calm, spiritual aura. Surrounded by pine forests and misty hills, the lake is a hidden gem for nature lovers. Birdwatchers often flock here to spot rare Himalayan species in the tranquil surroundings. Cozy homestays and lakeside cafés add charm to the quiet retreat.

NOT TO MISS

The Kumaoni thali is a flavourful ode to the hills. It features aloo ke gutke, lahsuni palak and hearty gehat dal, paired with the region's signature laj bhaat. The tangy Kumaoni raita and spicy bhaang ki chutney add layers of taste. For meat lovers, there's tender chicken and a rich shikari mutton curry. The meal ends with a comforting bowl of rice kheer — soulful and satisfying.

Footsteps in the Halls of Genius

A literary journey in an English town unites two voices across continents and centuries

The exterior shows the historic charm of the house and its surroundings



AU REVOIR

It's amazing how such a humble space gave rise to one of the greatest writers ever. Quiet but meaningful. The setting adds to the magic — it's like the whole street tells a story. We drove back with memories of two great poets and writers — *William Shakespeare* and *Rabindranath Tagore*, born centuries and continents apart, yet brought together by little effort and fate at Shakespeare's Birthplace! No wonder that *Rabindranath Tagore* is referred to as the Shakespeare of India! *Rabindranath Tagore's* birth anniversary — 7th May is celebrated annually at Shakespeare's Birthplace by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

Tagore at Shakespeare's Birthplace

On the occasion of the upcoming birth anniversary of Nobel Laureate *Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore* on 7th May, I recall my visit to Shakespeare's Birthplace House fondly. After the Shakespeare house tour, we stepped out through one of the back exit doors, wandered through its five gardens attached to the main house, and spotted the bust of *Rabindranath Tagore* — the great Indian poet and writer — it stood there majestically, as a true homage to him. We were at a quiet garden corner of the house and there it was — a fine sculpture on a stone plinth carved with *Tagore's* poem to Shakespeare, which he wrote on the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death — completion of 300 years in 1916 — titled 'In Honour of William

Shakespeare'. In the poem, he praises Shakespeare as an English poet as well as a world poet — an accolade to Shakespeare's work that inspired *Tagore's* literary work too! Little did he envision that less than 50 years later, the poem would be back in the limelight when the Calcutta Art Society presented an ivory tablet of the poem at the newly opened Shakespeare Centre in 1964!

— The author is a travel writer and researcher

Shakespeare's House on Henley Street. This timber — framed house is where Shakespeare was born



Shakespeare's Birthing Room. A small, modest room believed to be where Shakespeare was born



and a lot more at the vivid, engrossing Shakespeare Museum, through which is the entry to Shakespeare's birthplace!

Shakespeare's Birthplace

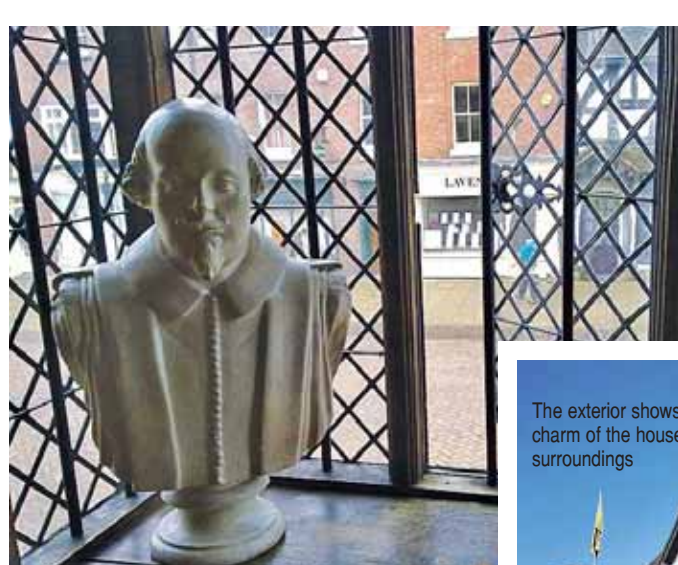
Subsequently, we reached Shakespeare's birthplace, which is quite lively with radiant colours welcoming all who enter it, echoing the lifestyle of the 16th century. Shakespeare lived here with his parents and many more brothers and sisters. The par-

lour, hall, workshop, bedrooms and the furnishings have been reinstated too.

Also noteworthy is Shakespeare's bedchamber and birthing room from the year 1564, recreated to perfection! We were informed that he sometimes wrote the description of his personal domestic items, furniture etc. in his plays, which has helped the restoration work to a great extent!

Discovery in the Gardens

In the 16th century, the garden of the house was used for various purposes by Shakespeare's father — like wool-dealing activities, glove-making, growing vegetables, herbs and medicinal plants, a barn for pigs, hens and more and also as a storage area. Wandering through one of the five gardens attached to Shakespeare's house, we made a discovery that added excitement to our visit and it was an icon of a true tribute to the 'Voice of India'.



BY SEEMA ANAND CHOPRA

Trying to take a step backwards into history, on a cool September autumn afternoon I stood looking at the birthplace of Shakespeare and wondered what it was that had drawn me here at this time of the year.

It is just another English house, but for its resident who made it extraordinary — this was home to one of the greatest English writers who hold a universal appeal. His plays and poems continue, till times today, to entice readers and audiences, transcending borders of countries and languages. Undoubtedly, this celebrated author is remembered even after 450 years, for his literary works have proudly, since ages, been imbibed in most school and university syllabuses. So, I went visiting the English town of Stratford-upon-Avon where the historic and skilfully restored house of William Shakespeare is located.

Shakespeare's Birthplace Museum

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust was founded in 1847, almost three centuries after his birth, and has been able to preserve his legacy and the five Tudor houses associated with Shakespeare's lifetime. By the 19th century, the house had decayed and was falling apart, but the timely restoration attempts by the famous writer — *Charles Dickens*, helped to save it. He organised performances in towns of England to raise funds to renovate the memorial house! We gathered this infor-

"SOMETIMES YOU MAKE THE RIGHT DECISION, SOMETIMES YOU MAKE THE DECISION RIGHT"
— PHIL MCGRAW

YOUR WEEK AHEAD



MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19
As your work life blooms this week, be careful not to neglect personal connections due to your sharpened wit and a plethora of advanced ideas coming to the forefront. Your productivity becomes an asset, but may trigger feelings of emotional neglect from family and loved ones if left unbalanced. Mid-week could present chances to represent your organization or to travel for business after an initial period of basking in neglect from other employees, so try remaining vigilant around opposing coworkers as envy may lead others to seize the credit you rightfully deserve. Such ventures are bound to guarantee success and return value as they will serve to improve your standing and reputation in the organization.
Lucky number 3 | **Lucky colour** Midnight Blue
Lucky day Tuesday

LEO July 23-Aug 22
Possibly this week, you might feel pulled toward a more flexible and unusual way of going about your life. A valuable lesson comes from your sign, and it is that you possess freedom of your choices, all the reason to unapologetically choose the route you want irrespective of what others think. But at the same time, freedom seeking ambition might lead you to careless attitude, particularly when it comes to work matters. This could cause friction with authority and limit your progress or acknowledgement in the workplace. In any case, the solution lies in staying resolute and decluttered. As you make greater plans, try to bear in mind that fulfillment in achievements arises from consistent effort as well as the right intention.
Lucky number 18 | **Lucky colour** Ocean Blue
Lucky day Wednesday

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21
In the first two days, you might feel mentally drained and have a hard time making decisions. This conflict inside of you could cause tension and anxiety. As a means for relief, you might look to art, books, or even some religious texts. You actively seek people, and thus, become very social, as relationships become the new focus. A person's balance of intuitive and wise actions is very active at this time. The middle of the week is marked with solitude which can help provide an aid to personal reflection. This self-enlightenment is zen-like and very deep at this point. By the end of the week, there are some thrilling prospects waiting for you such as starting a new business, changing jobs, or even new developments in the family.
Lucky number 17 | **Lucky colour** Brown
Lucky day Thursday

TAURUS April 20-May 20
In the area of career and family, this week may present more challenges than usual. Disputes and misunderstandings may crop up among your colleagues, and interpersonal relationships may become even more strained. Remember to remain calm and to seek refuge from volatile confrontations. Calmly reflect on your behavior and attempt to approach the affected issues constructively. It is very likely that your energy and confidence will suffer a downturn mid-week. Attending to personal health and relaxation is vital during this period. Greater insight could be derived from a consultation with a medical professional. By the week's end, a gradual improvement will be noticed. Personal matters, along with financial issues, will begin resolving and confidence will return gradually. Engaging in spiritual activities will aid in attaining tranquility and achieving equilibrium.
Lucky number 7 | **Lucky colour** Copper
Lucky day Thursday

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22
In matters of love and even in your profession, the week starts with some disappointments along with missed opportunities. You might feel lonely or alone in a crowd which rises from an underlying dissatisfaction. For those already in relationships, work obligations may entail unscheduled absences from one's loves. However, midweek brings a change of pace. A new business venture or an increase in income might be on the way. An assignment may have been given to you and your success will depend on how hard you work and commit yourself. Towards the end of the weekend, you should watch your temper which may lead to rage, or you falling into some emotional temptation that alters your sense of judgment. You can greatly benefit from paying attention to your subconscious through dreaming, remaining within the boundaries of logical and rational aspirations.
Lucky number 5 | **Lucky colour** Pink
Lucky day Friday

CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19
Get ready for the week because you will feel an extreme level of happiness and satisfaction this week. Everything from your emotional state, health, and finances will bring deep fulfillment and satisfaction. You will be able to achieve everything you want while being grateful. You will start receiving better health and will feel more at ease during your day to day activities. All the burdens that felt impossible to overcome before will now seem like an easy task. From a personal point of view, you will receive lots of warmth and support from your family which underscores the importance of true love. Be grateful for the affection you do get, as it provides great strength. The reality you construct during this week will turn into a source of great strength and success in the long run.
Lucky number 12 | **Lucky colour** Purple
Lucky day Friday

GEMINI May 21-June 20
The clarity that you gain during this period will help you to navigate smoothly through any challenges converting negativity into positivity, and not the other way around. Instead of avoiding your difficulties, open yourself towards a new and deeper pursuit that is sustainable deep-rooted in lasting happiness and fulfillment. You may experience emotional struggles or physical imbalances, but learn to ride their wave instead of trying to stifle them. Release any attachments to the past and focus entirely on resolving conflicts within yourself in the present moment. By the end of the week, a decision, probably yours, will restore clarity on travel or family issues. Expect holistic healing on a mental and physical level as the week closes.
Lucky number 14 | **Lucky colour** Grey
Lucky day Monday

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22
Your determination, along with other factors this week, is sure to guide you to achieving all of your set goals. Embracing the strong focus is sure to yield inviting results. Turning those dreams into achievements is going to be a walk in the park now. Growth would be accompanied with opportunities in family or new endeavors. Towards the middle of the week, your memories are bound to wash over you like a wave alongside old friends or places which hold value bringing joy and happiness into your life. By the end of the week, focus from the outside world transforms into the inner self allowing an equilibrium shift to be attained via meditation, spiritual reflection, or simple prayer leading your introspective thought.
Lucky number 20 | **Lucky colour** Mint
Lucky day Saturday

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18
This week, your initiative and ability to lead are reasonably high. You become the source of strength for others, offering help and assistance where it is needed. You show great affection and might need to be a bit loving at times to set the right balance. You may get an impetus of some sort in the middle of the week which can stir some conflict or argument of sorts. You will want things settled your way and even though this isn't physical battle, it can feel like an emotional one. Either way, in this period of time, you won't be moved, focusing instead on everything sound and put together. No matter Ma, there are always mixed results and in this case, your capability of noticing every single detail will make it easier for you to make money. You stay safe with your wit.
Lucky number 2 | **Lucky colour** Lime
Lucky day Monday

CANCER June 21-July 22
Feeling apprehensive and fearful of what others think could dominate your life this week. This may also lead to internal conflict and self-doubt. Unproductive conversations that can spiral into useless confrontations are also a possibility. Although it may seem like others are the issue, the real struggle is within yourself. In this case, you need to work on forgiving yourself which will help you channel your energy towards these unconstructive conflicts. With a positive attitude, success can be attained. The beginning of the week will allow you to feel motivated and strong achieving goals. If there is anything that needs to be worked on, now is the time to put in the effort with the extra energy to attain them.
Lucky number 1 | **Lucky colour** Fuchsia
Lucky day Friday

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21
This week, you will lead with your natural ability to be a strong marker of confidence and attract all sorts of positive attention. The week will start off with your desires being fulfilled, and a feeling of satisfaction will also accompany you as you experience the joy of family and new beginnings. You would feel an inner calmness and sense of calm after an important life cycle is finished. This would allow you to rest and enjoy the moment. However, some outdated beliefs or practices stemming from the past may be hindering your growth so do remember this. With this in mind, new perspectives that positively change your life are a must here. By the end of the week, strive to be neutral about challenges; exercise clear judgment, unwavering integrity, and strongly articulate elements of your truth.
Lucky number 9 | **Lucky colour** Orange
Lucky day Tuesday

PISCES Feb 19-March 20
This week begins with a powerful urge towards spiritual development, driving you toward seeking enlightenment. You may find peace in meditative techniques like prayer and even participate in group spiritual activities. Enjoying your own company brings calm and quiet moment, reflecting back towards your milestones, and accepting the efforts you have put in. In projects like constructing a house, there is a feeling of closure. The joy that comes from family get-togethers and other celebrations will be significant, and relationships including those with spouses will deepen through understanding, caring, and affection. Along with these, this week contains chances of buying movable or immovable assets which combine external achievements with internal satisfaction. This enlightening journey will be taken with the guidance and support of elders. During this period, embrace the phase that brings ample growth.
Lucky number 15 | **Lucky colour** Lilac
Lucky day Sunday

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THOUGHTFUL INSIGHTS



Dr. Tanu Jain

While destiny may chart the broad course, confusion is often a creation of our own minds. I eventually understood — clarity is not external; it's the power of one's inner being

Dilemmas and Decision-Making in the Pursuit of Life

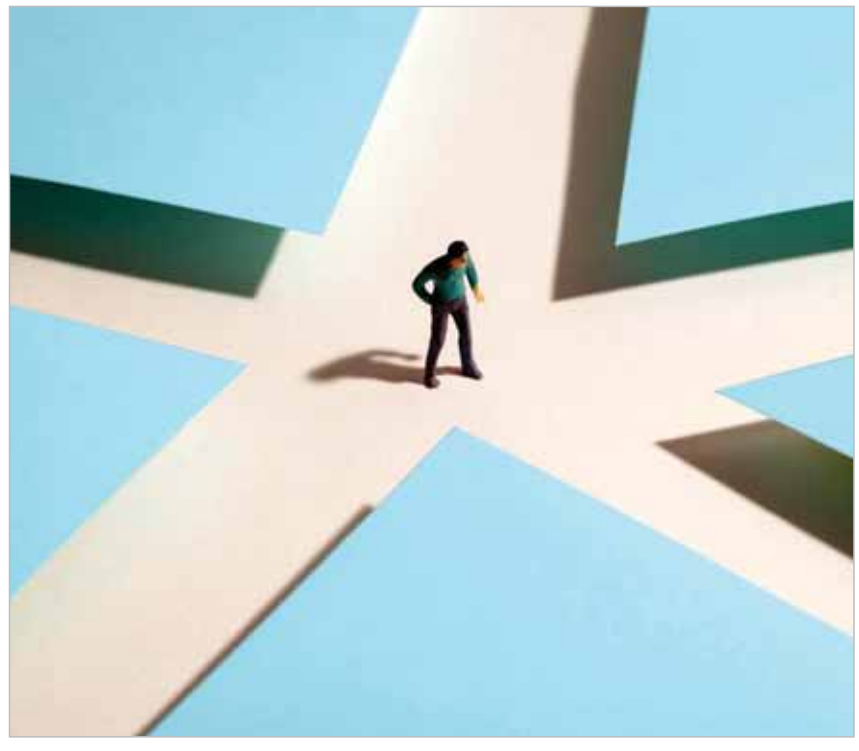
How often do we find ourselves at the crossroads of decision-making — hesitant, confused, or gripped by the fear of making the wrong choice? The mind echoes with questions: Am I doing the right thing? What if this backfires? Would life have been better if I had chosen the other path?

These are not rare thoughts. Many of us revisit decisions, wishing we had taken more time or acted differently. But then again, is the course of our life truly in our hands? Or are we being gently steered by the unseen currents of divine will?

While destiny may chart the broad course, confusion is often a creation of our own minds. In one of my encounters, I met a respected justice, a spiritually inclined man with decades of experience in law. I asked him earnestly, "Sir, how do you make such critical decisions about others' lives without hesitation or emotional burden?"

He smiled and replied, "I have never had a problem making decisions. My mind is clear, and I have no biases. I serve my duty with sincerity, and that anchors me."

That statement lingered with me for days. How could someone remain untouched by the emotional weight of decision-making? I eventually understood — clarity is not external; it's the power of one's inner being. His spiritual grounding and absence of personal attachment gave him freedom from confusion. He had transcended personal likes, dislikes, and ambitions. His work was not a job, it was his dharma —



his sacred duty.
The spiritual texts speak deeply about this inner clarity:
"Yada te moha-kalilam buddhir vyatitarishyati, tada gantasi nirvedam shrotavyasya shrutasya cha."
— Bhagavad Gita 2.52

"When your intelligence has passed out of the dense forest of delusion, you shall become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard."
This verse emphasises that clarity comes

when the fog of delusion lifts — when ego, attachment, and fear no longer influence your thoughts. So, what really brings that clarity?
Clear Priorities is the Key
Confusion creeps in when we are torn between our personal attachments and our responsibilities. When your priorities are aligned with your higher purpose — not temporary pleasures or emotional biases — decisions become smooth.
"Na karmanam anarambhan naiskarmyam puruso'snute"
— Bhagavad Gita 3.4
"One does not attain freedom from action by abstaining from work; nor does one reach perfection merely by renunciation." The key lies in understanding your role and walking it without ego or expectation.
Mental Clarity Through Devotion
When the mind is purified through sadhana — dedicated spiritual practice, service, and sincerity — clarity arises naturally. Decisions are no longer a burden; they become expressions of your inner purpose.
No Favourites, No Bias is a Blessing
When you stop playing favourites — be it people, outcomes, or even ambitions — you rise above confusion.
"Udaasina-vadaaseeno gunair yo na vichaalyate"
— Bhagavad Gita 14.23
"He who remains like one unconcerned, unshaken by the modes of nature — such a person gains peace."
Seeing Work as Worship Finally Leads to

Liberation
When your office, your duty, your contribution to the world becomes your tapasya (austerity), then your entire being aligns with it. Work stops being a burden. It becomes seva — sacred service.
In the end, life will always present us with choices. The roads may diverge, dilemmas may arise, and uncertainty may knock on our doors time and again.
But when we are anchored in purpose, detached from outcome, and aligned with our inner truth, the fog clears.
True clarity is not about always knowing the right answer — it's about being so rooted in your dharma that even the toughest choices feel light. It is the silence of the soul, not the noise of the world, that guides the wisest decisions.
As the Upanishads remind us:
"Dharmam chara, satyam vada"
— Taithiriy Upanishad
"Walk the path of righteousness; speak the truth."
When decisions come from a place of truth, integrity, and surrender, even the unknown becomes sacred.
You may not always control the path, but you can choose to walk it with clarity, devotion, and grace. And in doing so, you don't just make decisions — you shape your destiny.
— The author's views are personal. The author is a civil servant at the Ministry of Defence and a spiritual speaker