

## Ash is Alia's dance inspiration: She is mesmerising

Besides her acting skills, Alia Bhatt also focuses on honing her game as a dancer, including training in Kathak for a year for *Kalank* (2019). The actor has enhanced her dancing talent over her past 12 years in the industry. And her inspiration behind it is actor Aishwarya Rai Bachchan.

Raving about Aishwarya's grace and confidence whenever she grooves on screen, Alia told Allure, "When it comes to learning or being inspired by someone who has embodied dance in the most beautiful way on screen, I can't help but think of Aishwarya Rai Bachchan. She was absolutely, and still is, just mesmerising. (She) also gave me a lot of direction and intellect."

The 31-year-old added that she would refer to Aishwarya's videos to get the nuances right. "Whenever I had a song, I'd go to YouTube, type 'Aishwarya Rai songs'. I'd be looking at all her songs just to catch the expressions and just the way she moves from one move to another, the ease, the way she just lets herself be, but at the same time, it's just so perfect and precise. And she's beautiful to look at," she said.

In her 27-year-long career in the film industry, Aishwarya has delivered some iconic dance performances, including *Nimbooda* from *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam* (1999), *Kahin Aag Lage* from *Taal* (1999), *Kajra Re* from *Bunty Aur Babli* (2005) and *Crazy Kiya Re* from *Dhoom 2* (2006).



Alia Bhatt; (inset) Aishwarya Rai Bachchan in a still from *Taal*

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/ALIAABHATT

Singer Shaan comes up with a track dedicated to the Kolkata rape victim and all women fighting for justice; says Durga Puja will be low-key for him this year

PHOTO: SOUMYA/HT

## SHAAN'S NEW SONG TO 'SPREAD HOPE' after Kolkata rape incident

Soumya Vajpayee  
soumya.vajpayee@hindustantimes.com

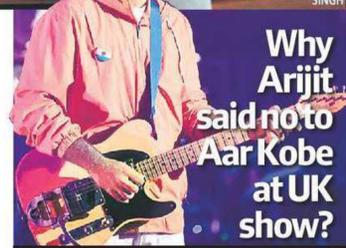
As a Bengali, Durga Puja is special to singer Shaan. In fact, he comes up with a song every year to mark the festivity. But this time around, there is a difference. Shaan's single, *Durgatinashini*, which he has composed and sung, is dedicated to the 31-year-old trainee doctor who was raped and murdered last month at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

He says, "The heinous incident, the angst of the people, and so many doctors and students, especially women, taking the movement forward have impacted me strongly. While I feel their frustration, I also applaud those who have relentlessly taken to this call for justice."

This song was my way to spread hope, express solidarity to the movement and to the women, who are all like Maa Durga in courage and righteousness."

Sharing how the song was made, he says, "I reached out to Rajib Chakraborty (lyricist) and told him what I had in mind. He wrote the song in three hours. The poetry had an uneven metre and I found it unconventional to compose. But as I kept humming the lines, everything fell into place. I composed and sang it, and the track was ready in three days."

Shaan reveals that he won't be "doing any commercial stage show for Durga Puja" this year and would spend time with his family: "It's our responsibility to spread a positive message through our music. Durga Maa inspired me to come up with this one."



Why Arijit said no to Aar Kobe at UK show?

Arijit Singh, who is currently touring the UK, responded to a fan who asked him to sing *Aar Kobe*, the song he had dedicated to the Kolkata rape and murder victim. A video that surfaced on Instagram shows the fan requesting Singh for the song. The singer took a pause and replied: "This is not the place, people haven't come here to protest. They have come here to listen to me. That's my job, right? That is my heart, that one you are saying. Not the right time, right place." Singh continued, "If you really feel about it, go. Go to Kolkata. Gather some people, go on the street."

### STOP PRESS



The Night Manager, the thriller series starring Anil Kapoor, Aditya Roy Kapur and Sobhita Dhulipala, has been nominated in the drama series category at the International Emmy Awards 2024, which will be announced on November 25. It was the only entry from India across 14 categories. The show is a remake of a BBC series of the same name.

## Adu-Siddhu back in the bay post wedding

Actor-couple Aditi Rao Hydari and Siddharth arrived hand-in-hand in Mumbai on Thursday, radiating newlywed glow. This is their first public appearance as a married couple. They got married in an intimate traditional ceremony at the 400-year-old Wanaparthi temple in Telangana and shared their wedding pictures earlier this week. Aditi was seen in a pink salwar-suit, exuding bridal glow, while Siddharth opted for blue denim shirt and black bottoms, completing the look with a cap and a sling bag.

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PHOTO: YOGEN SHAH

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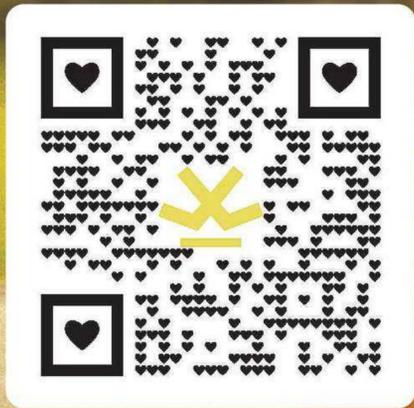
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# An evening celebrating artistic expression



(L-R) Amal Allana, Nissar Allana and GR Iranna



Pooja Iranna

An intimate evening paying tribute to decades of artistic expression unfolded at the Akar Prakar gallery in the Capital recently. As part of its 20th anniversary celebrations with the Spaces of Their Own exhibition, the showcase honours works of women artists, spanning from pre-independence India to the 1960s, and will run till October 15.

The soft clinks of glasses and vibrant conversations buzzed in the air at the celebratory dinner, which followed the event.

Among those in attendance were artist Jayashree Chakravarty, theatre director and designer Amal Allana, and others.

Kriti Shukla



Reena Lath and Abhijit Lath

PHOTOS: SHANTANU BHATTACHARYA/HT

Vinima Gulati and M Pravat



Debasish Mukherjee



(L-R) Veer Munshi, Jayashree Chakravarty and Manish Pushkale



**UTSAV**

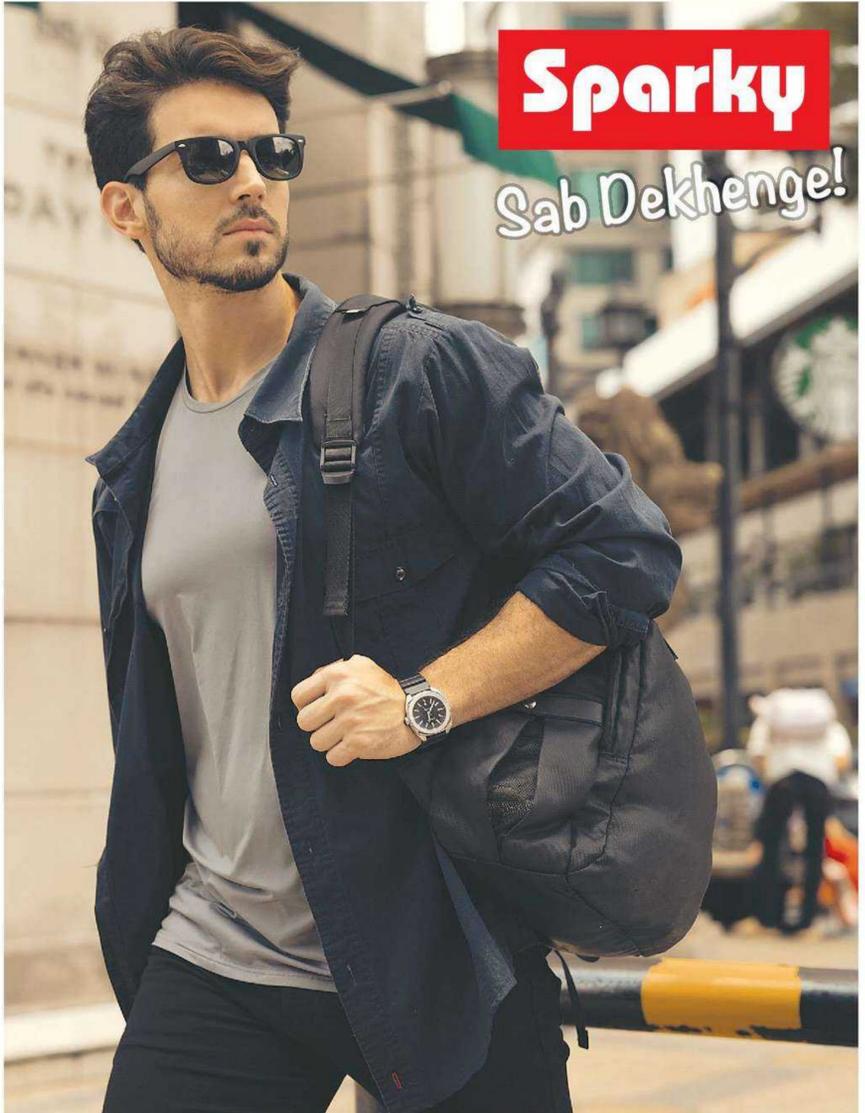
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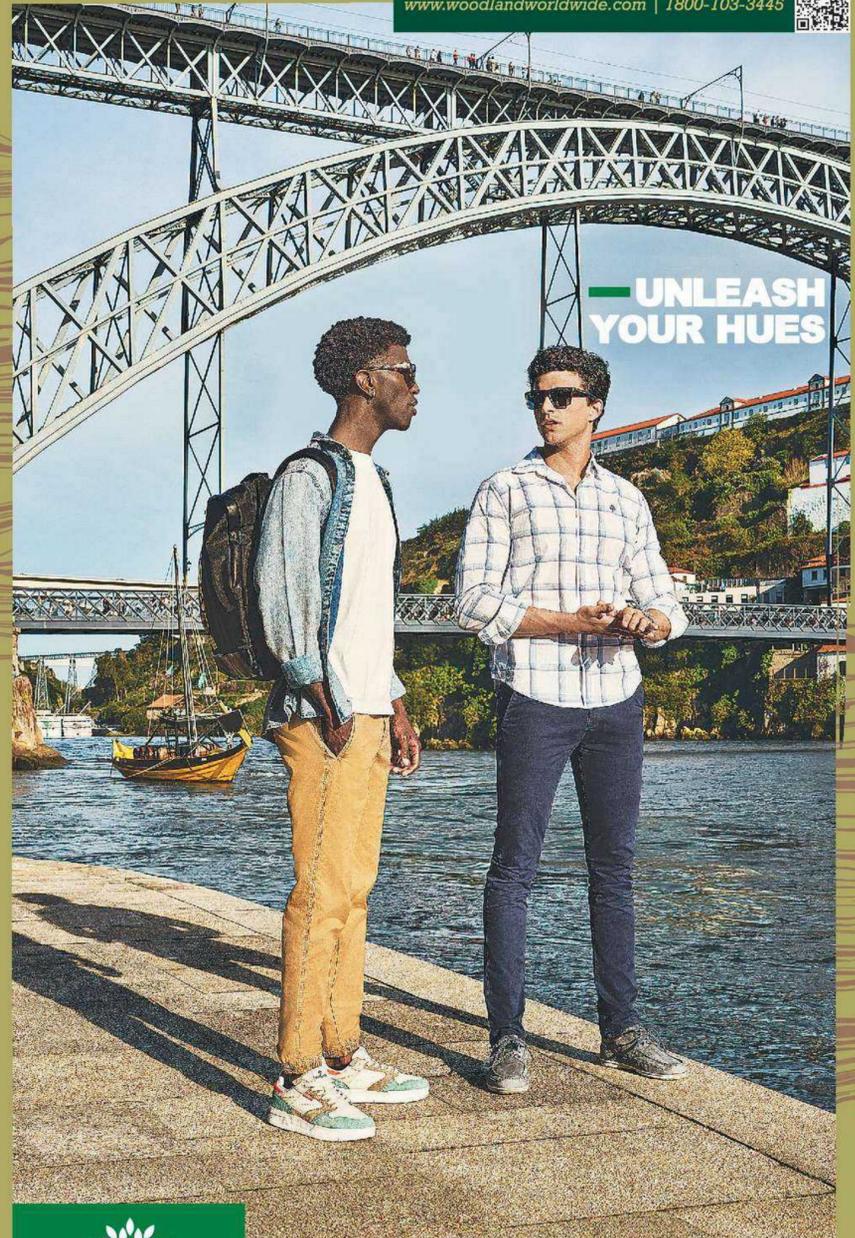
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# MERE STAR... KI SHHH...AADI HAI!

Actors Aditi Rao Hydari and Siddharth's fans were in for a pleasant jaw-dropper when the couple shared a carousel of wedding snaps on social media, recently. The wedding was a low-key affair, just one of many hush-hush celeb nuptials that have become a trend in recent years

Compiled by Yashika Mathur

### YAMI GAUTAM AND ADITYA DHAR

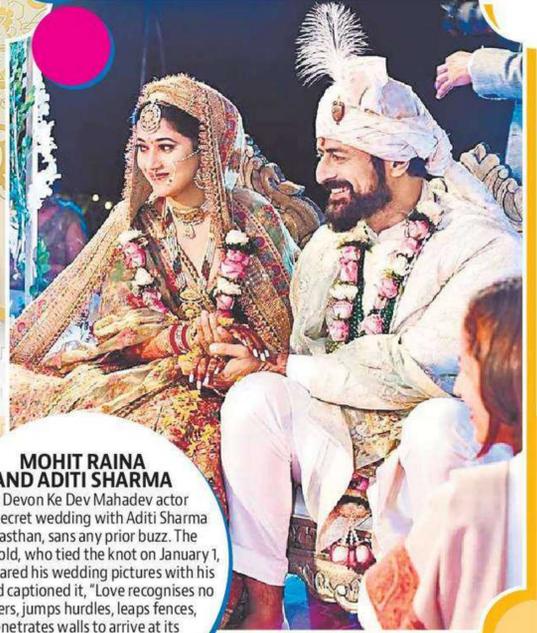
In January 2021, the 35-year-old actor and filmmaker Aditya Dhar, 41, shared their wedding pictures on social media, taking everyone by surprise. The couple quietly tied the knot in Yami's native Himachal Pradesh, away from the media attention. "Being very private people, we celebrated this joyous occasion with our immediate family," the actor later wrote on Instagram.

### TAAPSEE PANNU AND MATHIAS BOE

The 37-year-old actor married long-time boyfriend, badminton coach Mathias Boe, 44, in a private ceremony in Udaipur, Rajasthan. The wedding was completely off the radar with only a handful of her industry colleagues in attendance. "I don't want to let my personal life and the people involved in it, go through the kind of scrutiny that happens when a public figure gets married," Pannu said in an interview with us.

### MOHIT RAINA AND ADITI SHARMA

The Devon Ke Dev Mahadev actor had a secret wedding with Aditi Sharma in Rajasthan, sans any prior buzz. The 42-year-old, who tied the knot on January 1, 2022, shared his wedding pictures with his fans and captioned it, "Love recognises no barriers, jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination, full of hope (sic)."



### ADITI RAO HYDARI AND SIDDHARTH

As the story goes, Aditi, 37, and Siddharth, 45, met on the sets of Maha Samudram (2021) and fell in love. Although rumours were afoot, both of them didn't confirm their relationship until March 2024. The couple got married at dawn on September 16 at the 400-year-old temple in Wanaparthy, Telangana, amid a close circle of family and friends.



### NEHA DHUPIA AND ANGAD BEDI

Actors Neha Dhupia (44) and Angad Bedi's (41) wedding became the talk of the town in 2018. On their second wedding anniversary in May 2020, Dhupia had revealed in an interview how Bedi had told her, "Before you change your mind, pick an outfit — because we're getting married in two days!"

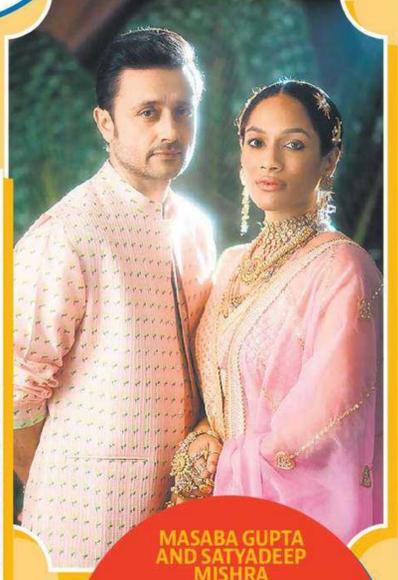
### MUNAWAR FARUQUI AND MEHZABEEN COATWALA

Faruqui's wedding with makeup artist Mehzabeen Coatwala never made it to the headlines until some fan accounts started posting pictures of his wedding reception. The couple, who got married in May, chose not to draw media's attention to their special day, and only shared an official picture together on their first month wedding anniversary, which they celebrated in Dubai, UAE.



### MASABA GUPTA AND SATYADEEP MISHRA

Celebrity fashion designer Masaba Gupta, 34, and actor Satyadeep Mishra, 51, surprised everyone with their wedding pictures in January 2023. The couple, who is now expecting their first child, announced their wedding with a post with a caption, "Married my ocean of calm, this morning. Here's to many many lifetimes of love, peace, stability & most importantly laughter (sic)."



PHOTOS: INSTAGRAM AND X ILLUSTRATION: ADOBE STOCK

NO RATING MOVIE REVIEW

## Decent performances stand out in this predictable story with repetitive tropes

Progressive parents, a funny/nosy relative, a social media-savvy dadi, confusion, a happy ending with a random message thrown in... If I took a shot every time I was able to guess where I have seen the above before *Kahan Shuru Kahan Khatam*, I'd be drunk and need to be escorted outside the theatre. It doesn't come as a surprise that filmmaker Laxman Utekar, whose body of work has been dominated by heartland-set films such as *Luka Chuppi*, *Mimi*, *Zara Hatke Zara Bachke*, is co-producer and writer on this film. Dhvani Bhanushali, in her acting debut, plays Meera, who is running away from her own wedding because her father fixed it without asking if she wants to get married. She asserts that she would have anyway said a yes — but she needed to be asked.

Crashing her wedding is Krish (Ashim Gulati), chased by her relatives since he's a gatecrasher. Confusion ensues, and he ends up running away with Meera. I rolled my eyes as the conventional tropes started playing out one by one. Meera's introduction shot captures her sitting on the terrace in her wedding lehenga, smoking. The first half is a snoozer, with jokes falling flat. The writers here thought naming two characters Gautam and Gambhir would be so smart. Surprisingly, the second half salvages the film to some extent. I strongly feel that's because the supporting cast gets to finally do some heavy lifting. Rakesh Bedi as Gulati's dad, scared of his wife, played Supriya Pilgaonkar, manages to get some laughs. Utekar's influence is so strong, that even



**KAHAN SHURU KAHAN KHATAM**  
Cast: Dhvani Bhanushali, Ashim Gulati, Rakesh Bedi, Supriya Pilgaonkar  
Direction: Saurabh Dasgupta

certain plot points are lifted directly from his own films. Remember the confusion which ensues as Kartik Aaryan and Kriti Sanon's characters in *Luka Chuppi*, living in together, are mistakenly assumed to be married? The same confusion happens here too. There's also a lot of stereotypical presentation of the LGBTIQ+ community. Bhanushali tries her best to lift a one-dimensional character but Gulati is average. Such a film required charming characters

who sweep you off your feet, but they miss the mark. Bedi and Pilgaonkar naturally stand out, given the decades of experience they have. The music of the film is below average, with a forgettable appearance by Dhanashree Verma in a song. But what I really won't forgive the makers for is recreating classics like *Ajeeb Dastan Hai Yeh* and *Ek Ladki Bheegi Bhaagi Si* so poorly. Iss trend ko please 'khatam' karo.

Rishabh Suri

## Action sequences save the day but this film takes forever to find its groove

Action films are made by the dozen today, but good ones are far and few between. *Yudhra*, starring Siddhant Chaturvedi, is another addition to the genre. Is it good? Well, I have my reservations. Yudhra (Chaturvedi), orphaned at birth, has anger issues. Doctors had told Rehman and Karthik (Ram Kapoor and Gajraj Rao, respectively), friends of his deceased cop father that since the mother died before giving birth, the blood supply was cut off for five minutes. This could lead to some issues later in life. So, the two bring him up. As the action proceeds, he is court-martialed as a cadet for engaging in violence, due to engaging in violence. He is then appointed as an undercover agent by Rehman to bust a drug cartel. There's also a romantic track between Yudhra

and Nikhat (Malavika Mohanan), who is Rahman's daughter. But things go haywire fast, and this forms the rest of the plot. A good backstory always helps in making the characters believable, and *Yudhra* ticks that off the list. Next comes the action itself. Slick and fresh sequences are ideally supposed to enhance an already good story. The problem here is that the fights are the only saving grace. I was left wondering: has action as a genre been overdone so much, that there's no effort put in to come up with interesting stories? Double crossing, the most unlikely person turning out to be the party pooper, a loved one's life at stake, drugs, mafia — there's little that's original here. The editing department, too, lets the film down. One gets to enjoy only when the hand-to-hand combat

**YUDHRA**  
Cast: Siddhant Chaturvedi, Raghav Juyal, Malavika Mohanan, Gajraj Rao  
Direction: Ravi Udyawar

sequences begin. And that is where the film shines. Action director Federico Cueva uses anything and everything to design some pretty nice shots — from a sewing machine, to a flute and even a lollipop. Chaturvedi shines in bits and pieces, especially with the action. Raghav Juyal as Shafiq takes some time to find his groove, but he thankfully does in an elaborate sequence where he goes hand-to-hand with Yudhra. I would have loved to see more of him on screen. Malavika Mohanan tries, but there's not much chemistry between her and Siddhant. Rao



does justice to his job, so does Ram Kapoor. But those who don't, shockingly, are the composers, Shankar Ehsaan Loy. *Saathiya* and *Aane De Hawa* will merely act as loo breaks. There was potential with *Yudhra*, but the unimaginative story leaves you disappointed.

Rishabh Suri



### DAILY HOROSCOPE

Saturday, September 21, 2024

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### ARIES

MAR 21-APR 20

You will be motivated to join a gym. Extra money can tempt you to indulge in a bit of luxury. A pat on the back on the professional front will get you upbeat. Those looking for suitable accommodation will find the one that fits their pocket. **LOVE FOCUS:** Love is in the air and you are likely to plan something today. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 6 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Red

### LEO

JUL 23-AUG 23

Previous investments mature and bring in good money. Things are likely to go your way at work. An exciting event is likely to bring the family together. House owners will succeed in earning good rent. **LOVE FOCUS:** A new dimension might be added on the romantic front. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 7 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Royal Blue

### SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23-DEC 21

Some of you are likely to adopt yoga to maintain peace of mind. Things on the work front remain under control as you get most of the things out of the way. Those trying to raise loans will succeed. **LOVE FOCUS:** Meeting an old flame may bring back painful memories. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 1 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Peach

### TAURUS

APR 21-MAY 20

Resuming workout or some physical activity is possible for some. Those on probation are likely to get absorbed. You will have enough to buy something expensive. An overseas trip materialises for some. **LOVE FOCUS:** News on the romantic front promises to be encouraging. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 9 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Brown

### VIRGO

AUG 24-SEP 23

You are likely to be talked into joining a gym or adopting a fitness routine. Your eye for detail will become your prized possession at work. Setting out on a long journey without preparation is not advised. **LOVE FOCUS:** You are likely to feel quite romantic today. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 22 **LUCKY COLOUR:** White

### CAPRICORN

DEC 22-JAN 21

A healthy bank balance will allow you to buy a major item. Your management skills will help sort out a complicated employee issue. **LOVE FOCUS:** It is time to call it quits rather than stay in a relationship gone bad. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 18 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Silver

### GEMINI

MAY 21-JUN 21

Fitness training holds much promise for the lazy among you. Money will not pose much problem. Bonhomie prevails at home as you keep your interfering nature in check. **LOVE FOCUS:** Romantic endeavours are likely to bear fruit. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 2 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Purple

### LIBRA

SEP 24-OCT 23

Those on a business tour may return with good news. An enjoyable outing with friends cannot be ruled out. Those on a long journey will enjoy it better if well-prepared. **LOVE FOCUS:** Your initiative on the romantic front will work wonders! **LUCKY NUMBER:** 8 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Green

### AQUARIUS

JAN 22-FEB 19

Health-wise, you will fare much better than before in keeping fit. Steady income from savings may come in handy for a child's tuition. This is a good time to settle a family matter, even if it entails travelling. **LOVE FOCUS:** You will find ways to rejuvenate romance. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 4 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Grey

### CANCER

JUN 22-JUL 22

You will turn serious where health is concerned and try to remain fit. Those in important positions will hold sway over all the important decisions. Performance on the academic front remains on track. **LOVE FOCUS:** Someone might make special plans just to meet you. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 3 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Orange

### SCORPIO

OCT 24-NOV 22

You may start something new to get fit and benefit on the health front. You manage to stabilise expenses and bring yourself into the saving mode. Honours can come your way for your performance at work. **LOVE FOCUS:** Lover may be in a belligerent mood today. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 5 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Maroon

### PISCES

FEB 20-MAR 20

Slowing the pace of life will have a beneficial effect on health. Office workload is likely to lessen, giving you more time for yourself. Someone close may spend time with you doing fun things. **LOVE FOCUS:** Moodiness of lover will need to be tackled with tact. **LUCKY NUMBER:** 5 **LUCKY COLOUR:** Golden

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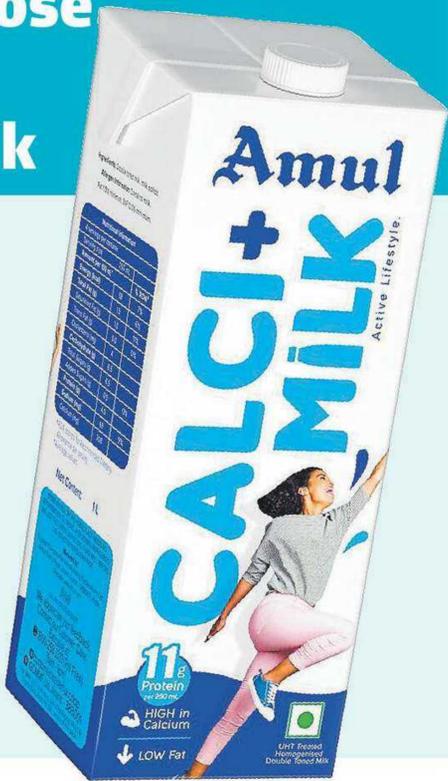


PHOTO: HTCS

## Apple-solute craze: Delhi, Mumbai stores see long queues

The Apple iPhone 16 and iPhone 16 Plus has fed into the frenzied fervour of fans, who lined up in the count of hundreds outside the company's flagship stores in Delhi and Mumbai on Friday.

In videos shared by ANI, long queues outside the Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai and a shopping mall in Delhi's Saket showed tech aficionados eagerly waiting as early as 6am for the stores to open so they could be the first to purchase the latest model.

PHOTOS: X



Fans lined up outside the stores in Delhi and Mumbai.

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PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/LIFAZAL9



Birthdays bumps: Actor Ali Fazal shared pictures from Shabana Azmi 74th birthday ft their dear friends and family on the 'gram. He wrote, "May the force always be with you. Dher saara pyaar."

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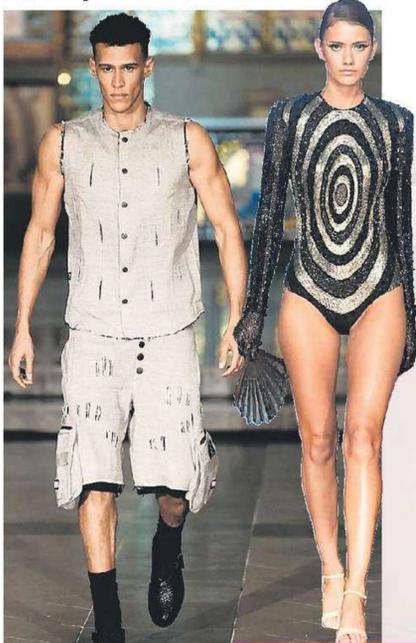
# AT LONDON FASHION WEEK

From traditional craftsmanship to futuristic experiments, Indian designers are dominating the runway. Here's a look

Akshay Kaushal

akshay.kaushal@hindustantimes.com

One are the days when only a handful of Indian names would make it to international runways. Fashion is more diverse than ever, and this season's London Fashion Week (LFW) is proof. From Aartivijay Gupta's stellar debut to Priya Ahluwalia's nod to her multi-cultural upbringing, Indian and Indian-origin designers shone and how.

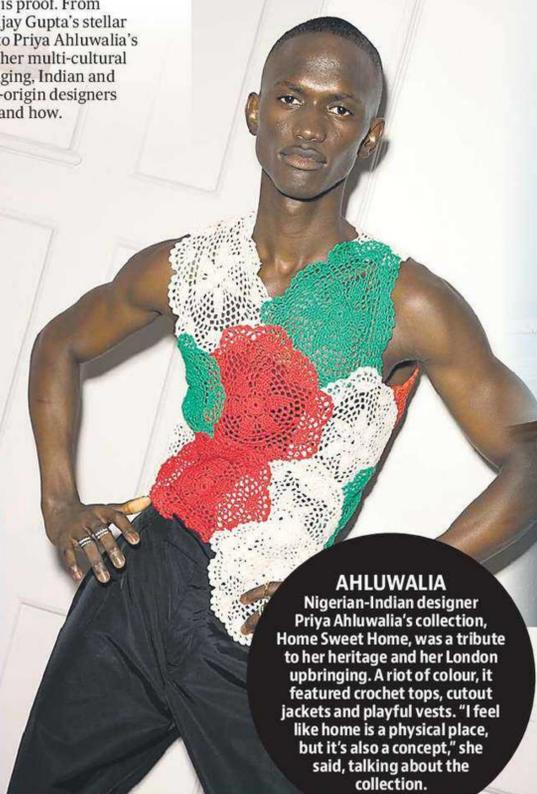


### ZERO TOLERANCE BY PRAKHAR RAO

Titled Karm, the collection comprised of eleven designs that promoted South Asian history and heritage. Rao worked with skilled artisans to curate a collection that puts their Karm (hard work) in the spotlight. "I believe artisans have not been given enough credit for the craftsmanship they showcase," he said.

### TABER INDIA

Taber India by Palak D Arya launched the Celestia collection during the designer's LFW debut. Celebrating luxury and culture, the collection drew inspiration from 1980s Europe. A tribute to glamour and the ethereal New Romantics movement, standout pieces included blazers and waistcoats with block pleated and embellished skirts.



### AHLUWALIA

Nigerian-Indian designer Priya Ahluwalia's collection, Home Sweet Home, was a tribute to her heritage and her London upbringing. A riot of colour, it featured crochet tops, cutout jackets and playful vests. "I feel like home is a physical place, but it's also a concept," she said, talking about the collection.



### KANIKA GOYAL

The designer presented her collection, Playfield, on the opening day of fashion week. Capturing the essence of childhood playfulness, the line evoked a sense of nostalgia. Big collars and boxy fits were the order of the day, while deconstructed leather dresses with handkerchief hemlines rounded out the show.



### NITIN BAL CHAUHAN

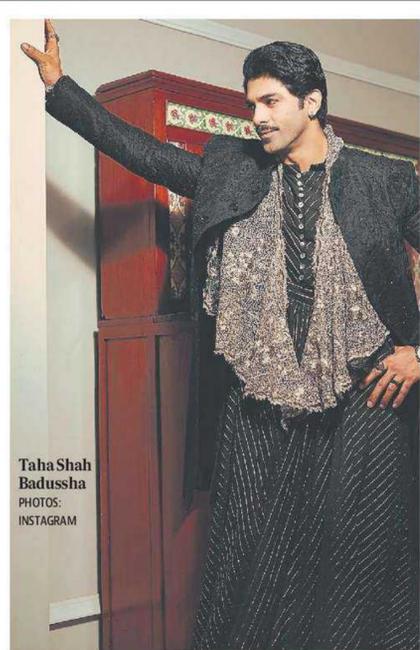
Designer Nitin Bal Chauhan visualised World War I through an Indian lens in his collection, Sulphur. Monochromatic sets made of organic cottons set the tone for the collection. The pieces featured embroidered 3D details are inspired by forms of grenades, artillery and bombed cities. The collection narrated the story of Indian soldiers who fought the war on the front lines.



### HARRI K

In his debut womenswear collection, the designer explored the legacy of the past and the opportunities the future holds. The collection embodied HARRI's commitment to craftsmanship and featured his signature exaggerated proportions while navigating the boundaries of impossibility.

## #lookbook



Taha Shah Badussha  
PHOTOS:  
INSTAGRAM

### Traditional savoir-faire

Actor Taha Shah Badussha raised the style stakes in a striped angrakhaa from Jade by Monica and Karishma, paired with an embroidered bandhgala that he styled like a jacket. For added textures and layers, he added a stole to complete the fit. Minimal accessories and a moustache added to his royal look.

### Steal the style

Badussha's outfit is the perfect for a guest attending wedding soiree. Pick an angrakhaa and pair it with a sherwani or a bandhgala in a matching shade for a seamless look. Dress to impress by adding a stole featuring traditional embroidery or prints and simple accessories.



## 26-year-old dies from 'stress, work pressure': Everything you should know about chronic burnout

PHOTO: ADOBE STOCK (FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY)



Anna Sebastian Perayil

### Recognising the red flags

While occasional stress is normal, chronic burnout can be a sign of a toxic work place. Recognising systemic and structural red flags early is vital for protecting your health and productivity.

Common warning signs at work can include issues such as poor communication, unclear job expectations, excessive workloads and a lack of recognition. "A high turnover rate and poor work-life balance also contribute to workplace stress, leading to burnout. Employees in such environments often feel overworked and unsupported," says clinical psychologist Dr Pulkit Sharma.

### SIGNS TO WATCH OUT FOR

Reduced enthusiasm for work, chronic exhaustion and irritability can often be early indicators of burnout. "Physical symptoms of burnout can range from constant fatigue to sleep disturbances and weight gain", says Dr Santosh Chavan, psychiatrist at Jupiter Hospital, Pune. "It is often accompanied by emotional symptoms such as helplessness, irritability or numbness," he adds.

ILLUSTRATION: SHUTTERSTOCK

Kriti Shukla

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Anna Sebastian Perayil, a 26-year-old woman working at the multinational consulting firm Ernst & Young (EY) in Pune, Maharashtra died earlier this year owing to her "overwhelming workload," her mother has claimed. Perayil had joined the company — which was her first job — four months before she succumbed to work pressure, her mother Anita Augustine, said in a letter addressed to the company's executives.

This tragic incident highlights a common concern in modern workplaces: chronic burnout. If you've ever felt like your to-do list is unending despite all your hard work, felt exhausted even after taking a break or dread going to work, you might be dealing with burnout. It's important to look for the signs

and know how to remedy it.

### WHAT IS BURNOUT?

"Burnout occurs when stress

becomes chronic (or persists long-term) and exceeds an individual's resilience. It results in a deep sense of hopelessness and disconnect, marked by a lack of motivation, energy, and purpose that lingers despite taking breaks," explains Dr

### CHRONIC BURNOUT VS GENERAL STRESS

According to Dr Pooja Anand, associate consultant at Paras Health, Gurugram, burnout can manifest as emotional, physical and mental exhaustion. "Unlike temporary exhaustion, which can be remedied with rest, burnout persists over time and leads to feelings of helplessness

and detachment," she says. Dr Chavan points out that missing work often, avoiding social interactions and having trouble focusing could also be early signs of burnout. "If you ignore these signs, they can get worse," he warns. Spotting these symptoms early gives people a chance to act before burnout becomes more serious.

Sneha Sharma, psychiatric consultant at Aakash Healthcare, New Delhi.

### WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK HELP?

If burnout begins affecting your daily life, it might be time to get professional help. Dr Santosh Chavan, psychiatrist at Jupiter Hospital, Pune, says, "If emotional or physical symptoms continue without a clear medical cause, or if day-to-day functioning deteriorates, it might be time to seek assistance."

Clinical psychologist, Dr Pulkit Sharma agrees and suggests seeking assistance when as soon as you notice symptoms beginning

to worsen. "One should seek professional help if you experience persistent anxiety or a low mood that disrupts daily functioning," he informs.

Dr Pooja Anand, associate consultant at Paras Health Gurugram, further stresses that addressing signs of burnout early through therapy and workplace adjustments is vital. "Interventions such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), counselling, and stress management techniques can help. In serious cases, taking a break from work or personal responsibilities might be necessary for recovery," she notes.

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**OTTplay recommends top 5**  
Romcoms to binge-watch this week

**DO AUR DO PYAAR**  
A married couple find themselves stuck in an almost-dead relationship after being together for nearly 15 years. To resolve the problem, they resort to secret affairs. This delightful romcom stars Vidya Balan, Pratik Gandhi and Ileana D'Cruz in the lead roles, among others.  
**Platform:** Disney+ Hotstar  
**Language:** Hindi  
**OTTplay rating:** 7



**TU JHOOTHI MAIN MAKKAAR**  
Mickey (Ranbir Kapoor) is a carefree businessman and a 'player' who helps couples break up. However, trouble follows when his girlfriend Tinny (Shraddha Kapoor) hires a break-up consultant, not knowing that it is Mickey himself. A battle of wits ensues.  
**Platform:** Netflix  
**Language:** Hindi  
**OTTplay rating:** 6.4



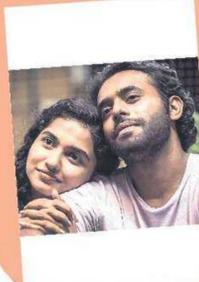
**PREMALU**  
This Malayalam romcom is one of the most-loved movies of the year. It follows Sachin (Naslen) as he goes to Hyderabad and take a GATE course, where he meets and falls in love with Reenu (Mamitha). Eventually, he finds himself caught between two potential partners.  
**Platform:** Disney+ Hotstar  
**Language:** Malayalam  
**OTTplay rating:** 7.5



**TICKET TO PARADISE**  
Set in Bali, this destination-wedding film follows a divorced couple who are on a mission to prevent their daughter from making the same mistake as they did. George Clooney and Julia Roberts star in the lead roles in this romantic-comedy film, which makes a strong case for second chances.  
**Platform:** Netflix  
**Language:** English  
**OTTplay rating:** 6



**PRANAYA VILASAM**  
Sooraj (Arjun Ashokan), who shares a difficult relationship with his father (Manoj KU), discovers his deceased mother's diary that goes onto detail her love life with her ex. A breath of fresh air for those who hate cliché romances, this romantic-comedy drama also stars Mamitha Baiju and Anaswara Rajan.  
**Platform:** Zee5  
**Language:** Malayalam  
**OTTplay rating:** 6.4




Sushmita Sen in *Aarya*

ILLUSTRATION: ADOBE STOCK

Fardeen Khan in *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar*

Raveena Tandon in *Aranyak*

Sanjay Kapoor and Madhuri Dixit Nene in *The Fame Game*

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As Imran Khan is set to return to acting with an OTT project, actors and other industry members weigh in on why web has become the preferred medium for comebacks

**NAME A BETTER COMEBACK**

**Rishabh Suri**  
rishabh.suri@htlive.com

OTT makes for a great comeback, especially because film content is often unsatisfying," shares Sanjay Kapoor, who credits *Lust Stories* (2018) for reviving his acting career. "It's not like I was not getting offers for theatrical projects at the time of signing *Lust Stories*, but the fact that I got to play an important character does matter. Also, a theatrical project has to be sold, marketed for theatres, and also needs a popular name to sell. But on OTT, if the content is good, having good actors generally becomes the main criteria," he adds.

Kapoor is not the only actor who chose OTT as his comeback wagon. More recently, Imran Khan, who

became a popular face with projects like *Delhi Belly* (2011) and *I Hate Luv Storys* (2010), is also set to return to acting via the same medium. Among others, Fardeen Khan, who returned with a Sanjay Leela Bhansali directorial this year, Madhuri Dixit Nene and Sushmita Sen are some of the big names who sought a chance to shine with web projects. To decode this preference, we speak to actors and other industry members to understand why OTT has become the first preference for a comeback.

**CHANCE TO EXPERIMENT?**  
Nene, whose last theatrical project was *Total Dhamaal* (2019), made her comeback with the 2022 web film *Maja Ma* and series *The Fame Game*. Bejoy Nambiar, the director of the series, reveals that the actor was keen on the project especially because of the experimental nature of her character. "The reason

comfort zone becomes the biggest driver for them. That's why OTT has become a favourite," he shares. In her OTT debut *Aranyak*, Raveena Tandon strayed from her usual roles as she played a cop in a fictional small town in Himachal Pradesh. Talking about the project, which has "earned more rewards and awards that I'm enjoying to date", the 49-year-old actor shares, "I think OTT is good for actors and filmmakers. It certainly gives them a chance to break out of their image and set genres."

**AWAY FROM NUMBERS**  
Isolated from the competition of box-office numbers, it is a popular belief that web series are accepted or rejected according to their merit, and not their cast. Gaurav Shukla, co-writer of *Asur* which gave Arshad Warsi a chance to break away from the comedy roles, shares, "Theatrical films have a lot of demands other than acting. But on OTT, it's not like someone has to pay for a ticket, and it is out there for everyone to watch. But one has to make an additional effort to go to a theatre, one wants to watch stars like Aamir Khan, and the same doesn't apply to OTT."

Talking about overall visibility, Kapoor adds how comebacks through theatrical films might go unnoticed if the project doesn't notch up numbers. "Hypothetically, if a film released in theatres does well, you get a lot of credit. But if it doesn't, people only talk about 'arey paisa nahin kamaya' That's the big reason actors want to return with web series."

**IMRAN'S COMEBACK IS MOST PROBABLY GOING TO HAPPEN WITH A WEB FILM. THE SCRIPT IS YET TO BE LOCKED, AND IT WILL ALSO BE CO-PRODUCED BY HIM**



PHOTO: YOGEN SHAH

#inbrief

**Industry renewed for fourth season**  
HBO has renewed the critically-acclaimed show *Industry* for another season. Created by Mickey Down and Konrad Kay, the third season will conclude on September 29. The show stars Marisa Abela, Harry Lawtey, and Ken Leung as investors, with Myha'la as a former employee trying to make a place for herself in the competitive financial world of London.



**Lukas Haas joins Nicolas Cage in Spider-Man Noir series**  
The *Spider-Man Noir* series, based on the Marvel comic, has added another name to its live-action show. Lukas Haas is set to join Nicolas Cage, who was earlier announced to play an ageing private investigator in 1930s New York who is forced to confront his past life as the city's only superhero. Other cast members include Lamorne Morris, Brendan Gleeson, Abraham Popoola, Li Jun Li, and Jack Huston.



**Squid Games S2 trailer dropped**  
Netflix Korea has released a special teaser for the highly-awaited second season of *Squid Game*. Taking to its YouTube channel on Friday, the streaming platform posted a video that began with Seong Gi-hun (Lee Jung-jae) waking up with a start as his doorbell rings. The video also gave glimpses inside the venue of the *Squid Game* and the participants, as they prepared to enter a fresh cycle of life-or-death challenges.



**Emily in Paris renewed for another season**  
The much-popular Netflix series *Emily in Paris* has been renewed for a fifth season. Set in Paris, this comedy-drama series revolves around Emily Cooper (Lilly Collins), a young girl from Chicago (US) with a master's degree in communications, as she relocates to Paris for a new job and navigates through life with an American perspective on things.



**Vaazha to release on OTT in September**  
Directed by Anand Menon, the Malayalam coming-of-age film is set to get an OTT release on September 23. A hit in its theatrical run, it follows the story of four friends deemed 'losers' as they navigate adulthood amid immense pressure from parents and society.



**Jatt and Juliet 3 releases on OTT**  
The third instalment of Diljit Dosanjh and Neeru Bajwa's hit franchise *Jatt and Juliet* has made its way to the OTT platform Chaupal. A romantic comedy, the film follows two police officials as they travel to Canada on a mission. Upon its release earlier this year, the film became the highest-grossing Punjabi language comedy worldwide.



#theburningquestion

**Why are internet providers bundling broadband plans with OTT services?**

Developments in broadband technology are poised to influence how OTT content is discovered and consumed. The rise of seamless digital solutions, where internet providers bundle broadband with OTT services, IPTV, telephone and Internet of things (IoT), is sharply transforming the user experience. This convergence offers consumers faster speeds, better accessibility and diverse content, all within a pocket-friendly package.

Apart from enhancing connectivity, this technology is now boosting and personalising content delivery. With IoT integration and automation, the user experience is becoming more immersive while content discovery becomes more convenient and personalised. The popularity of bundled broadband with OTT subscriptions has altered the digital landscape and most people today seek a content consumption experience that is seamless and tailored to their taste. This combination of services marks a shift in how



Mudhit Sethi, Founder and CEO, ADN broadband

technology and content interact, and will determine how audiences engage with digital media in the future.

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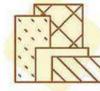
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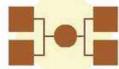
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# I think a little more than other people in my field: Shilpa on endorsing a brand

Actor Shilpa Shetty Kundra says if it isn't something she would introduce to her family, she would not come on board to endorse it either

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/THESHILPASHETTY

**Sugandha Rawal**  
sugandha.rawal@hindustantimes.com

The ongoing debate around Bollywood celebrities promoting unhealthy lifestyles through their brand associations despite having disciplined ones for themselves, has gone on for a while now. But actor Shilpa Shetty Kundra holds that a lot of diligence goes into every brand she gets associated with.

Talking about the thought process behind getting associated with a brand, the actor, who is a mother of two, says that she always thinks in terms of whether it is something she would introduce to her family. "I really feel that today when you are a brand endorser, who has also invested monetarily, there's a kind of onus and trust that the consumer

Refined sugar, junk food and aerated drinks are things that I don't want to endorse purely out of choice.

**SHILPA SHETTY KUNDR**, Actor

places in the product". Having said that, she steers clear of judging those who don't necessarily follow that philosophy. "Those are not things that I feed my family. I practise what I preach. You have to walk the talk and you have to really win it. These are things that

are not going to give you great health so I can't stand there and endorse it. There is a lot of due diligence that goes into what I endorse and that comes from a place of truth and passion," says the actor, adding, "I think a little more than other people in my field," she tells us.

The actor says she treats health like a "gift". "Refined sugar, junk food and aerated drinks are things that I don't want to endorse purely out of choice. People who are doing it out there... It's their choice," she says.

PHOTO: X



# Twenty-Five Twenty-One actor discharged from military; welcomed back with flowers

Several videos and congratulatory posts emerged on social media as South Korean actor Nam Joo-hyuk was discharged from the mandatory military service on Thursday.

In a photo, Joo-hyuk can be seen smiling for the camera as he held a flower bouquet along with some gift bags.

Reacting to the photos, a fan said, "Love has returned, he has returned, oh, how much longing(sic)" "The handsome Nam Joo-

hyuk has already finished his military service. We look forward to seeing him back in #kdramas and entertainment programs," another fan tweeted.

Joo-hyuk joined the military in March last year. Management SOOP, the actor's agency had announced the dates of his military service last year. Amid his return, the agency has also confirmed that Joo-hyuk had wrapped up filming for the next season of *Vigilante* while waiting for his draft notice.

HTC

# Shama Sikander reveals she attempted self harm when she was 'tired' of her life

Actor Shama Sikander recently opened up about the dark spiral she went into some years ago, and how her family "saved" her after she "took a lot of sleeping pills".

The actor, known for her role in the TV show *Yeh Meri Life Hai*, told Bollywood Bubble, "I had severe depression, bipolar disorder... That was when I gave up on my career and left the industry."

Recalling the time she grappled with suicidal thoughts, the actor shared, "I said to God, 'There is too much people-pleasing. I was tired and could not do this anymore. I wanted to come back as somebody else. Let's make a deal. I am committing suicide now, you give me another birth'. Then I took a lot of sleeping pills and I slept. I sent my bank details to my brother... (who) called my mother... Then they got to know and tried to wake me up, but I wasn't getting up. Then everyone came rushing. I have flashbacks that they were trying to pick me up and I was like dead meat."

Calling it a "very hard" patch of her life, Sikander adds that it took her "a long time" to learn that she was not on the right path.

If you or your loved ones are feeling stressed, reach out for help at 011-23389090



PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/SHAMASIKANDER

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This week, three doggos and a pair of kitties are looking for fur-ever homes in Delhi-NCR. Be the paw-fect parents to them and open your hearts for some furry buddies. Adopt, don't shop for pets!



**Joey** is a two-month-old indie-Spitz mix. Currently in foster care, he was rescued by some good Samaritans from a busy street in Gurugram. He is active and healthy, and enjoys playtime. He is dewormed, vaccinated and potty trained. To adopt, WhatsApp: +918447092932.



**Myrah**, a two-month-old indie-Spitz mix, was rescued from a busy road in Gurugram and is currently living in a foster home. She is an active and playful pup and can adapt to any family easily. She is dewormed, vaccinated and potty trained. To adopt, WhatsApp: +918447092932



**Pani and Puri** are a bonded male-female duo. Just under three months old, they were abandoned in Gurugram, tossed from an auto by their previous owners. Now living in a foster home in Delhi, they are gentle, sweet, and easy to care for. Vaccinated and litter trained, Pani and Puri are up for adoption as a pair. To adopt, WhatsApp: +919810233997.



**Cuddles**, a one-year-old Indian Spitz, was found abandoned near Civil Lines about four months ago and is currently at a pet boarding in Noida. True to his name, he loves cuddling with his fave humans. He enjoys napping on the couch and playtime with his mates. He is neutered, dewormed, vaccinated, potty trained and leash trained. To adopt, WhatsApp: +919971972409.

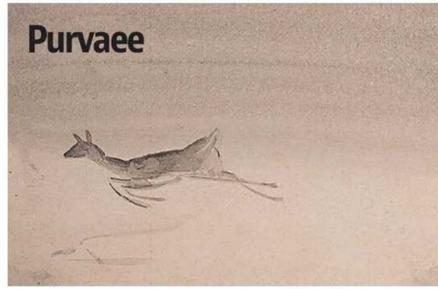


**Alexa** is a super friendly and playful 4-month-old Indie kitten. Though a bit shy at first, she quickly warms up and shows affection to both her human and canine friends with lots of licks and purrs. She is vaccinated, dewormed, and litter trained, and would love a home with another playful cat. To adopt, WhatsApp +91-9910466666.

Inform us if you know of a pet who needs a home, write in to [htcity.pets@gmail.com](mailto:htcity.pets@gmail.com)

## #culturecapsule

### Purvaee



This exhibition explores the creative pathways of India's pioneering art educators from Kala Bhavana and the Faculty of Fine Arts. Featuring over 200 works by 14 artists, including Nandalal Bose's celebrated woodblock print titled Sati, the show investigates the connections between individual practices and institutional influences among masters and their students from the 1940s to the 2000s. The showcase features watercolour and oil paintings on a range of materials like canvas, wood and paper. **Where:** Kiran Nadar Museum of Arts (KNMA), Plot No 3A, Sector 126, Noida **On till:** December 4 **Timing:** 10.30am to 6.30pm

### Urmila



This play by actor-writer-director Nimmy Raphael, set in ancient times, centres on Urmila, the wife of Lakshman, whose life is dramatically altered by a seemingly innocuous command from her husband: "Sleep, my sleep." Left with no agency to challenge the status quo, Urmila grapples with the idea of using her body as a form of protest. Through her journey, the play intricately explores the power dynamics in her relationship with her husband, raising important questions about autonomy, consent, and the historical cost of obedience borne by women. **Where:** Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road **When:** September 27 **Timing:** 7pm

## #dilse

Hi Anju Singh,  
Masla tujhe pane ka tha hi nahi, Irada  
Umar bhar chahne ka tha, Jo aaj bhi  
kayam hai.  
Your true friend "Sanju"

♥ **To Mum and Dad**, You guys are the best parents in the world. Thank you for always being there for us.  
**Lots of love, Camilia and Maya**

♥ **Dear Geetuuuu**, We met through tinder then connected on telegram. Now you have become everything in my life. I know that I am not the first woman in your life but I want to be the last woman in your life. I am grateful to have you in my life. Love you meri Jaan.  
**Your Neeeee**

♥ **Bhai**, Yr jb se tu Jodhpur shift hua h pura Ghar soona ho gya h, Bahar akele Momo's khane ni ja pati, lada'i ni kr pati Kisi se... Yr I miss you so much.  
**Teri Didi**

♥ **My Kiddo**, You know I've a lot to share with you, but you don't have time. I need u but you don't care. May we can bring those days back with love & understanding.  
**Moon**

DISCLAIMER: Dil Se is a compilation of fun messages from our readers. The views expressed belong entirely to the senders and are not to be construed as an endorsement by the publication. Send your messages to [meandmycity1@gmail.com](mailto:meandmycity1@gmail.com).

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SUNDAY OPEN

## Sana Sayyad is due in mid October

**Navya Kharbanda**

navya.kharbanda@hindustantimes.com

**F**launting her baby bump at 35 weeks, actor Sana Sayyad recently announced her first pregnancy with her husband, consultant Imaad Shamsi. "The baby is due mid October. Anytime during October, he or she will arrive and bless us," she gushes.

The 29-year-old was last seen in the television show *Kundali Bhagya* before taking a hiatus at the four-month mark in her pregnancy. "I have a normal pregnancy but initially I had a low-lying placenta. My doctor advised me to watch my step and not lift anything heavy, dance or climb stairs: just be a little careful. I had to take such precautions, so I decided it's better to take a break and chill for some time," she tells us.

Sayyad's maternity break will continue even after the baby arrives. "And then, if something great comes across, I would definitely want to get back to work, she shares, adding, "I'm so used to working that not working makes me feel weird."

The actor has her family's support and is only counting down the days until she welcomes her little one. "Imaad feels that we will have a girl, my mother feels that we will have a boy. I just want a healthy and happy baby," she signs off.



◀ Sana Sayyad with her husband Imaad Shamsi

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/SANA\_SAYYAD29

## 'Girls cast in smaller roles are more vulnerable to harassment'

**After fellow actor Kamyia Punjabi called Hindi television the 'safest place in the entertainment industry', Kavita Kaushik recalls an incident from the sets of her TV show F.I.R.**

**Yashika Mathur**

yashika.mathur@hindustantimes.com

**I**n the wake of the Hema Committee Report and new wave of the #MeToo movement in the Malayalam film industry, actor Kamyia Punjabi recently asserted that "television is the safest place in the entertainment industry" where "sexual abuse does not happen". However, actor Kavita Kaushik, known for her role in the cop sitcom *F.I.R.*, has offered a contrasting perspective, suggesting that the experience of sexual harassment can vary significantly based on what role a female artiste is playing in a particular project.

Recalling an incident from the sets of *F.I.R.* set, the actor tells us, "A girl who was playing a one- or two-scene role came up to me during the shoot, confided that there's a man who is making advances towards her and asked me what she should do."

Kaushik then "very vocally embarrassed" the culprit on set, and shares, "Not directly

but on sets, in front of everyone, I repeated the same lines that he had said to that girl. He understood what I was doing and that I know."

The 43-year-old claims that the treatment given to actors in the television industry depends on the position they hold. "For

people who have a certain position or are relatively important names, they are much safer. Girls who are working off camera, who are not in a very strong position, are vulnerable."

Adding how her own position in the show allowed

her to speak up for the girl, Kaushik shares, "In *F.I.R.* since I had a stronger position where I played the lead role, I was able to do that. If I put myself in that girl's shoes who was much younger and in a smaller role, I probably wouldn't have had the courage to do this."



PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/IKAVITAKAUSHIK



**Himanshu Malik**

## Himanshu Malik: Tum Bin deserves a box office success tag

**Navya Kharbanda**

**F**or actor turned filmmaker Himanshu Malik, it's "really exciting" that his 2001 directorial *Tum Bin* has re-released in theatres. "This was one of the initial films that wasn't star studded but purely content driven with first time producers and directors," he says.

The 50-year-old likens the film's trajectory to that of other recent re-releases, like *Laila Majnu* (2018), which didn't do well at the box office but earned a cult following later. "It took many months for *Tum Bin* to go deep into the system, it didn't show in the numbers," he shares, adding, "When I was told that it's re-releasing, the first thing that came to my mind was that it deserves the box office



A still from *Tum Bin*

success tag. I hope that the makers get those collections this time."

The filmmaker credits old classics for shaking up the economics of the industry: "Post pandemic, the industry has gone through a watershed phase. They are still trying to find a rhythm of what works and what doesn't. Re-releases are coming up to end that dry run. I'm glad people are getting used to coming back to cinemas."

**MARUTI SUZUKI**

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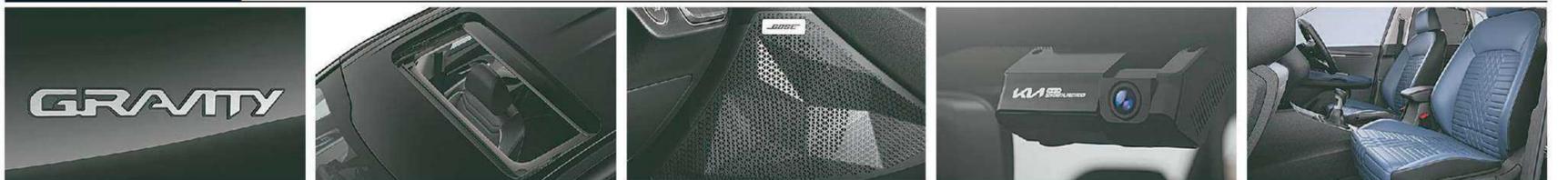
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