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THE PAGE THAT HAS BEEN TRANSPORTED TO LONDON

talk of the town



SACHIN HARALKAR

The company of poets



The diarist was delighted to bump into old Bombay hand and poetess Imtiaz Dharker at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall in London over the weekend. Dharker, wearing yet another of her lovely Issey Miyake dresses, looked luminous as she participated in the Festival of Love organised by the Southbank Centre to honour the greatest international poems of love from the last 50 years.

She was in the illustrious company of poets from across the globe, and as their moving and often sensuous words fell across the hush of the auditorium, we felt there couldn't be a better way to spend a Sunday evening.



MEET AND GREET

Bharat Ratna Prof CNR Rao and his wife caught up with his friends and peers during a tea break at Ruia College on Monday. Rao (seated) was jointly felicitated by the college, the Observer Research Foundation and the National Centre for Nanosciences and Nanotechnology, University of Mumbai. In his speech, Rao diplomatically said that the way to get a Bharat Ratna is to get a 'good spouse.' "She let me get on with my work and did not disturb me needlessly," he said as his wife looked on approvingly



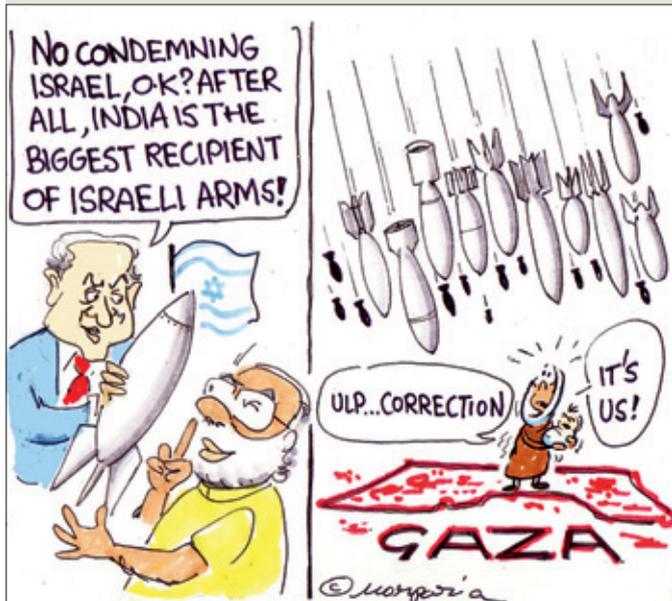
The thrill of it

Mumbai's cognoscenti, Anil Dharker, Amish Tripathi, Farzana Contractor, Devika Bhojwani, Meera Sushil Kumar, Kaizad Kotwal, Meher Moos, Kiran Shantaram, Prasoon Joshi, Arvind and Rashmi Jolly, turned up in full force on Sunday afternoon at the rooftop of a South Mumbai hotel to cheer for their friend and author Ashwin Sanghi (in picture). The man behind books like *The Rozabal Line*, *Chanakya's Chant*, and *The Krishna Key*, has collaborated with renowned

American crime author Jim Patterson for the latter's *Private* series (this one's the eight instalment titled *Private India*). While Sanghi wrote the plot outline of the crime thriller set in Mumbai, which involves the protagon-ist Santosh Wagh racing against time to catch a serial killer, Patterson spent a month or two refining it. Later, over several interactions via email and Skype, Sanghi penned the first draft, Patterson wrote the second, before their publisher Random House took over. Quite a collaboration, we say.

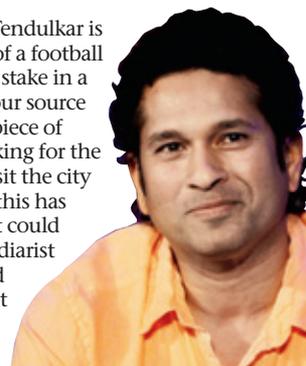
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MORPARIA



Real deal

Now that he has given up cricket, Sachin Tendulkar is linked to all sorts of ventures. He is part of a football league, which was supposed to pick up a stake in a tennis franchise, and word just in from our source in Andhra Pradesh is that the legend is eyeing a piece of 100-acre land near Vijaywada, capital-in-the-making for the newly-formed state. Tendulkar is scheduled to visit the city on August 1 to inaugurate a shopping mall, and this has given rise to speculation that the impending visit could double up as a business trip. However, when the diarist spoke to him, Sachin, circumspect as ever, denied the real estate deal. We believe him, of course, but continue to follow his progress with interest.



PS: While on Sachin — you must have read about him and Rekha, the two glamorous members of the Rajya Sabha not quite making their presence felt in the upper house. On Monday, it was the turn of another Mumbaiwallah, Javed Akhtar, who was questioned about his relatively quiet presence in Parliament. It seems the eloquent

Javedsaab has spoken only thrice in the Rajya Sabha. This is in contrast to his wife Shabana, who was one of the more active members, often contributing to debates in the House during her tenure as MP. "That's true," quipped the lyricist. "It's exactly the same at our home too. She is the one who speaks most of the time."



Tailpiece

Mumbai boy Arjun Bhasin is doing us proud. After *Life of Pi*, the New York-trained fashion designer has done the costumes for *Begin Again*, the Keira Knightley, Mark Ruffalo film playing at a theatre near you. Arjun, 40, who changed the way Bollywood dresses its male stars in films (elegance for one) with *Dil Chahta Hai*, is looking more and more at Hollywood, while his older sister, the spunky Niharika, is emerging as Bollywood's favourite costumier.