



## Flavour of the evening...



Tom Alter

**N**aveen Jindal's party on Wednesday evening was rather unique. For starters, it commenced on time and wound up at a decent hour! Secondly, patriotism was undoubtedly the highlight of the evening, with everything around having an Indian flavour.

Tom Alter, dressed in a formal suit, conducted the proceedings for the evening whilst the chief guest, Swami Parthasarathi kept all the guests in awe. Shalru Jindal, looking resplendent in a white sari, and Sangeeta Jindal were quite the centre of attention.

Also showing up briefly was Raveena Tandon whilst Nisha Janywal, Anil Dharker (in his trademark white kurta) and Balraj Bhatia stayed on for most of the evening. An early start and finish, no cocktails or starters and a patriotic feel to every-thing... not bad for change, is it?



Sangeeta Jindal



Raveena Tandon

Swami Parthasarathi

Naveen Jindal

Balraj Bhatia

Shalru Jindal

FIX ————— DNA Mumbai 21/9/05

# Flag appeal



(From left) Naveen and Shalru Jindal with the coffee table book. They are going to launch this evening.

In their endeavour to promote patriotism, MP Naveen Jindal and wife Shalru are launching a coffee table book and music album on the tiranga in the city today

Shreee Gomez-Dutta

NAVEEN Jindal's obsession with the Indian flag is legendary. The Congress MP from Chattisgarh fought a ten-year long legal battle to win Indians the right to fly the national emblem all through the year. Now, taking it a step forward, along with wife Shalru and their Flag Foundation of India, he is launching a coffee table book and an album on the tiranga this evening at the NCPA in Mumbai.

"Naveen and I could celebrate Independence Day everyday. We don't have to wait for August 15th or January 26th," says Shalru Jindal when we spoke to her before the event, which will be followed by a ten-day exhibition at the Purnima Gallery.

Priced at Rs 1,500, the book, titled "Tiranga: A celebration of the Indian Flag", has been compiled by independent filmmaker Vijay Jodha. Besides photographs

by well-known and upcoming lensmen, it contains personally autographed patri messages by renowned personalities including Amitabh Bachchan, VP chief Azim Premji and Infosys CEO Narain Murthy.

"The flag is just a symbol through which we are trying to evoke a feeling of belonging in all Indians towards country. People should try to tackle social issues, make this a country of their dreams, not wait for others to do something," explains Jodha.

The album CD "Tira Tera Anubhai" composed by Vunraj Bhat features songs by popular artists including Sunidhi Chauhan, U. Narayan, Shreya Ghoshal and Sonu Nigam. "More than 54 percent of our population is below the age of 25. We are desperately trying to get them involved to promote and create awareness about the flag," adds Jindal.

## Midnight's grandchildren

David de Souza

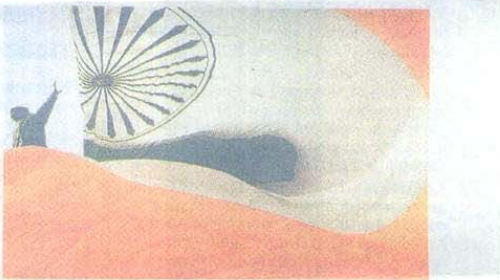
Naveen Jindal has a lot to teach us. And a lot of us one billion and counting have him to thank, for flying our national flag with honour and dignity is not a birthright as we may have thought. Last year, the Supreme Court vindicated Naveen Jindal's long battle with the Union of India, enhancing his and your rights.

The exhibition *Tiranga* currently showing at the Piramal Gallery includes well known names like Raghu Rai, Ram Rahman, Samar Jodha, Swapan Parekh, Dayanita Singh and Prashant Panjiar. The show may be summed up by a visitor's comment, 'good effort,' generally an enthusiastic put-down that tries to sound positive, but is patronising when one is less than inspired. For the most part, the images are clichéd, despite the big names. They are in contrast with the invite, which is stunningly graphic. The photographs show flags being sold in the streets, hoisted over Parliament, painted

### Photography Review

on the backs of trucks and cabbies, saffron, white and green vapour trails at fly-pasts—the most obvious interpretations, more documentary than interpretive. The only subtle image is by Udyan Sarkar, with a reflection of the tricolour in a woman's eye. Ajeeb Komahi is the only one who has tried to make some sort of interpretation, albeit amateurish, with children holding a bicycle wheel against an orange and white laundry line, with foliage in the foreground.

The exhibition, however, is an important journalistic exercise in recording the use of a national icon. Rajeev Sethi's quote is by far the most insightful and personal amidst all the patriotic brouhaha. He sees no disrespect in the use of the flag everywhere, believing that if images of gods are omnipresent, why not the flag. He views the use/abuse of icons as indicators of cultures. "For me" he says, "the change of icons is not a concern - but the level of faith."



Prashant Panjiar's image of a billowing tiranga

Prashant Panjiar has some images of jawans raising the flag after a battle, but that will forever be compared with the iconic Joe Rosenthal classic at Iwo Jima. The point would be to create images that burn into our own collective unconscious. He has a wonderful image that does this, with Mother Teresa's coffin being covered with the Indian flag. In the foreground are heads of state Hillary Clinton and Sonia Gandhi, bringing some irony to the issue of nationality by adoption.

There are many images of people making flags, but the one that might be most prophetic is by Bhomik Shah, with disenfranchised street children selling flags at the intersection.

Ram Rahman might add a visual verse to the famous Sting ballad by being an Indian in New York—his black and white images of the Indian flag being traded by an American in a flea market, and the surrealist sight of seeing a nationalistic Indian procession in Madison, change the context and make one look inwards to review our own tolerance threshold and how we might reciprocate.

If the exhibition provokes us to ask 'who is an Indian,' especially when saffron and green flags are flown separately, it would have succeeded—but one is not sure it does. White is the presence of all colours.

*Tiranga, curated by Vijay Jodha, Piramal Gallery, NCPA, ongoing till September 30.*

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