

# contents

VOL. 42 NO. 52 THE WEEK DECEMBER 29 2024 FOR THE WEEK DECEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 29

COVER STORY 108

### **OPEN TO DEBATE**

As the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilisation marks its centenary, many aspects of this ancient culture remain mysterious, including its script. While the theory of an Aryan invasion disrupting the civilisation has largely been discredited, debates over the ancestry of the Indus people and their contemporary links continue.

#### PLUS

- When archaeologists discovered Harappa 100 years ago, they assumed it represented the polytheistic phase of Indian civilisation: Devdutt Pattanaik, mythologist and writer
- Harappan food was rich in fleshy delights: Nayanjot Lahiri, historian, archaeologist and author
- Any attempt to build a singular narrative around India's collective cultural history is fraught with danger: R. Balakrishnan, retired bureaucrat and researcher
- Pakistan needs to unlock the immense potential of archaeology: Farzand Masih, professor and head of department of history & Pakistan studies, Forman Christian College, Lahore



### SHIPPING

We should abandon the beaten path for a more progressive approach to naval shipbuilding.

-Vice Admiral **Biswaiit** Dasgupta (retd)

# SYRIA

At the Mujtahid Hospital in Damascus. people grapple with death. despair, and the overwhelming brutality of the Assad regime

#### FOCUS 43

Transformers of Viksit Bharat

#### 69

PATHFINDERS Celebrating stories of human potential

### INTERVIEW

Narendra Modi and these ghastly 10 years, which are now going to extend to 15, can be put away in history as being a bad dream, like Aurangzeb's rule was a bad dream.

-Mani Shankar Aivar

## RESTAURANTS

Innovative entrepreneurs are reshaping the restaurant landscape, ushering in a fundamental transformation in the way Indians eat. drink and celebrate

### **7AKIR HUSSAIN**

Renowned flautist Rakesh Chaurasia remembers tabla maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain, who was his mentor and collaborator

### COLUMNS

### 66

RIGHT ANGLE Bansuri Swarai Anuia Chauhan

SCHIZO-NATION

144

146

CHIC MAGNET Namrata Zakaria LAST WORD Navtei Sarna



### 106 SOUNDRITE Anita Pratap

As president again, Donald Trump may reduce the nuclear threat from Russia, but increases it from Iran. The US is complicit, the UN toothless, regional Sunni powers, treacherous. Iran's allies are distracted. dismembered or destroyed.

#### ON THE COVER

ARTWORK MADE IN CLAY, MODELLED ON THE ORIGINAL HARAPPAN SEALS. BY BINESH SREEDHARAN PHOTO BY UJWAL P.P.



SCAN TO WATCH THE MAKING OF THE COVER



Printed at Manorama Building, K.K. Road, Kottayam - 686 001, Kerala, and M P Printers, Noida, and published from Manorama Building, K.K. Road, Kottayam - 686 001, Kerala, by Jacob Mathew, on behalf of the Malayala Manorama Company Private Ltd., Manorama Building, K.K. Road, Kottayam - 686 001, Kerala. Editor Philip Mathew, Manorama Buildings, Panampilly Nagar,

Kochi - 682 036, Kerala. Place of Publication: Manorama Buildings, Panampilly Nagar, Kochi - 682036, Kerala.

Focus/Infocus features are paid marketing/PR initiatives