

## PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

### Park Mansions bags Heritage Award

**Kolkata, December 13:** Apeejay Surrendra Group today announced that its Park Mansions heritage property, which was under restoration since 2008, has been bestowed a prestigious Heritage Award. The KMC-INTACH Heritage Award 2013 has been jointly created by Kolkata Municipal Corporation and Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage and awarded to Apeejay for the commendable restoration of the city centre colonial era architectural heritage.

Honorary Mayor of Kolkata, Shri Sovan Chatterjee, graced the celebration function at Park Mansions and unveiled the Award Plaque commemorating the receipt of KMC-INTACH Heritage Award in the presence of Mr G M Kapur, State Convenor of INTACH, Heritage Award selection committee members, Mr Khalil Ahmed, Commissioner, KMC, Architect Mr Dulal Mukherjee and some of the oldest residents of the building.

*“We are extremely honoured to receive the Heritage Award. Park Mansion is passion at work. Park Mansions is a labour of love. I want to thank Dulal Mukherjee & his team of Architects, I want to thank Kolkata Municipal Corporation for their support, my team, Director Park Mansions, Mr ND Chowdhury & Senior Manager Bibhas Sanyal and every single artisan and each one of the nearly 70 skilled and unskilled workers who we brought here from Bandel, Hooghly, Midnapore and who may not be here with us today. Their work, 24/7 work, for two years will live on forever in Park Mansions. I want to tell them all that they have been a part of a cause and a vision... they have added glory to the Street - Park Street- we all love so much. I am very grateful to all of them for surpassing great challenges and working meticulously on this beautiful architectural heritage. We should be proud of what we have achieved together. Because of all our efforts history will now live on,”* **said Karan Paul, Chairman, Apeejay Surrendra Group.**

Apeejay’s late patriarch Jit Paul had planned, toiled over the restoration of Park Mansions to give back to the street he loved in the state which he made his home in 1948, its glorious colonial era architectural heritage. Commending Jit Paul’s vision and efforts of restoring Park Mansions till his last working days in 2008 as well as the efforts of everybody who worked with him post 2008 on achieving the vision, **Karan Paul said,** *“This award is an endorsement of Apeejay’s belief that a city’s heritage plays an important role in the urban landscape re-establishing the city and its citizen’s tryst with history and culture, giving the citizen not only a historical perspective but a sense of place and time. Half a dozen years ago Apeejay had entered into a unique partnership with the National Culture Fund and the Archeological Survey of India to restore the historic Jantar Mantar Observatory in New Delhi in accordance with its conservation requirements. As a 100-year-old company based out of Kolkata, we value the heritage of Kolkata and believe that citizens want to utilize as well as enjoy its heritage venues. This is why the Apeejay Kolkata*

*Literary festival has, over the years since January 2010, brought the best literary minds from India and overseas to Kolkata and hosted the Festival at heritage venues - Victoria Memorial, Town Hall, National Library, St Johns Anglican Church ..and many others.*

*Our commitment to conservation and preservation of India's rich cultural heritage is solid and passionate. This award for our work at Park Mansions is great encouragement of our beliefs."*

Constructed in 1910 for mixed usage – residential and commercial, Park Mansions is spread over more than 5 *bighas* (1.77 acres) on Kolkata's High Street, Park Street and was restored to its original glory in 2010 – the centennial year of Park Mansions as well as the Apeejay Surrendra Group. Requiring significant funding and painstaking restoration effort, the project started in early 2008 and involved many challenging facets. While the tenants still occupied the residential part of the building, the team had to change the roofing, reinforce sections that had been weakened by a fire in 1990, overhaul the electrical systems completely, modernize overhead water distribution system, elevators, reverse the effects of aging apart from rebuilding its intricately carved out front façade, inner courtyard, driveway and lighting arrangements. Fully vigilant of the risks involved, the restoration team ensured that the working environment was secure for the workers as they went about this challenging project and saw to it that the tenants living in the residential segments did not face any problem.

Today, the shining golden dome and perfectly carved out intricate front facade stands out on the high street of West Bengal's capital city for its majestic glory and the commercial section facing Park Street is a buzzing retail space with signature stores of many Indian and international brands. Speaking on his future plans for Park Mansions, **Karan Paul** said, *"The substantial part of the restoration is complete but much more will be done and is planned for Park Mansions to add further grandeur, tremendous value, & character to Kolkata's high street and delight every citizen and every visitor from India and overseas."*

**Paul** also said that he hoped that this recognition from KMC and INTACH to Apeejay sets off a trend among others to invest in restoration of heritage properties owned by them in Kolkata. *"I heartily wish that the KMC-INTACH Heritage Award excites and inspires them to do so.... And we can all live to see many more heritage buildings across the city, now aged, uncared for and in disrepair, once again majestic, beautiful and elegant. I look forward to that greatly,"* he added.

### **Note to the Editor**

### **About Park Mansions**

Developed by Armenian jute merchant T.M.Thaddeus in 1910, Park Mansions is a sprawling majestic building located on Park Street in Kolkata. The architecture is a mix of Victorian and Indo- Saracen styles, having a bulbous dome on the roof, British-style interiors with a touch of Indian architectural style on the façade. The 103-year-old structure was taken over by the Apeejay Surrendra Group in the 80s. Apeejay Real Estate, a division of the diversified Apeejay Surrendra Group, gave this city centre



architectural heritage took up the restoration effort in 2008 and completed the project in 2010. The magnificent building stands today in all its original glory, completely secure from hazards that plague old heritage structures with perhaps with even better detailing than when it was first constructed in 1910.

### **About Apeejay Surrendra Group**

Established in 1910, Apeejay Surrendra Group employs over 43000 people in rapidly expanding operations in Tea, Hospitality, Shipping, Real Estate & Retail and has diversified into new business initiatives, Marine Clusters, Logistics & Knowledge Parks. 2010 was the Group's centenary year. For more Information, please visit [www.apeejaygroup.com](http://www.apeejaygroup.com).

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**For more information, please contact: Ms Renu Kakkar, email: [rkakkar@apeejaygroup.com](mailto:rkakkar@apeejaygroup.com), Phone: 9330992015,**