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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Apeejay Surrendra Group Chairman Karan Paul releases a book on how the Paul Family shaped Park Street**

**Author Mr. Pulak Kumar Chakraborti and artist Subhaprasanna Bhattacharjee proposed naming the stretch of land on Park Street encompassing Apeejay House and The Park Hotel "Paul Square" or "Jit Paul Surrendra Paul Square / Place." A proposal to rename a street in Alipore "Jit Paul Surrendra Paul Sarani" was also put forward.**

**Kolkata, September 16, 2022:** Since 1910, Park Street in Kolkata has served as the hub for all of the Apeejay Surrendra Group's operations.

With its headquarters in Kolkata for over a century, the group has played a significant role in shaping Park Street as we know it today.

"Park Street Theke Phire Dekha" (Looking Back From Park Street / **পার্ক স্ট্রিট থেকে ফিরে দেখা**), a book by Mr. Pulak Kumar Chakraborti, depicting Park Street's journey, was launched today at the Oxford Bookstore, Park Street, by Mr. Karan Paul, chairman of Apeejay Surrendra Group.

The Chief Guest for the evening was Mr. Sovandeb Chattopadhyay, hon'ble minister of agriculture, the government of West Bengal. The other dignitaries included painter Shuvaprasanna Bhattacharjee and Mrs. Maina Bhagat, Director, Oxford Bookstores.

"PK, as I have fondly called Mr. Chakraborti had the rare opportunity to work alongside my uncle Mr. Jit Paul and my father Mr. Surrendra Paul for many decades. And, as he mentions in the book, our uncle and our father's vision has in many ways changed the landscape of Park Street. We as a family are honoured to have been able to contribute significantly to making Park Street the city's go-to destination. This book is a must-read for everyone interested in learning how Park Street came to be known as Kolkata's high street," said Mr. Karan Paul, chairman of Apeejay Surrendra Group, after unveiling the book "**পার্ক স্ট্রিট থেকে ফিরে দেখা**" (Looking Back From Park Street).

"My family' life has been interwoven in the mystique of Park Street and of that PK not only had a bird's eye view but also was an architect. PK has done the most admirable job of chronicling the history of Park Street and beautifully written about his life and times. I am sure that it will serve as an important historical document for future generations," **said Mr. Karan Paul.**

"I had a long association with Apeejay Surrendra Group. I remember how Mr. Jit Paul, even at old age would be in the office on time. He was never late, it is an education for the young generation. The tale of Apeejay Surrendra Group spanning over a century is about starting from scratch and making it big, very big. The group today has moved beyond Bengal and employs lakhs of people. I feel that this book should go to the libraries so that people can learn about the contribution of this family and how a business can be built from scratch and go on to contribute to the growth of the region," said Mr. Sovandeb Chattopadhyay, hon'ble minister of agriculture, the government of West Bengal while addressing the august gathering.

Speaking about his book author Mr. Pulak Kumar Chakraborti said, "Working closely with business leaders Mr. Jit Paul and Mr. Surrendra Paul was a unique privilege for me. I also had the rare



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opportunity of witnessing Mrs. Shirin Paul taking up the mantle, to how Ms. Priya, Ms. Priti, and Mr. Karan Paul are now running the business successfully. The patriarchs of the Paul family made a number of choices and had some insightful observations that helped shape Park Street as it is today.”

“To honour the Paul family's contribution to making Park Street what it is today, and to honour the creator Mr. Jit Paul and his brother Mr. Surrendra Paul, the stretch of property encompassing Apeejay House, and The Park on the Northern side of Park Street be named as ‘Jit Paul Surrendra Paul Place /Square’ or ‘Paul Square’,” Chakraborti appealed to the authorities/ administration for consideration during the event.

The book has already been published in Bengali and will be available in English soon.

Renowned artist Mr. Subhaprasanna Bhattacharjee, has designed a very insightful cover for the book that depicts Mr. Jit Paul at the backdrop of Park Street Skyline. Speaking at the book launch Mr. Bhattacharjee highlighted the contributions made by the Paul family to creating Park Street as an iconic destination in Kolkata and said, "To me, Mr. Jit Paul was a saint. Many people came to him for advice! As a young artist, I was influenced and inspired by him. This Street owes a great deal to the Paul Family and to Mr. Jit Paul and Mr. Surrendra Paul in particular for its current iconic stature. I believe naming the stretch of land where Apeejay House and The Park stands today as ‘Jit Paul Surrendra Paul Place /Square’ or ‘Paul Square’ would be a fitting memorial. Since Park Street is already named as Mother Teresa Sarani, I propose to name a stretch of street in Alipore as Jit Paul Surrendra Paul Sarani, I request the KMC and the state government to look into this.”

Under the aegis of Apeejay Surrendra Group, the book launch was hosted at the century-old iconic Oxford Bookstore at Park Street, in presence of several renowned personalities.

#### **About Apeejay Surrendra Group**

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

#### **About Oxford Bookstores:**

Established in 1919, Oxford Bookstore is the best equipped 'base-camp' for journeys of the mind offering its customers the widest range of outstanding titles and consistently courteous and informed service for close to a century. Today, with stores in major metros, India's first of its kind tea boutique, Cha Bar, India's only literary festival created by a bookstore, Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival, Oxford Bookstore offers booklovers access to the very best in publishing enhanced by a variety of events, which salute books, visual & performing arts and celebrate the word. Oxford Bookstore measures its success by the smiles on millions of happy customers that the brand has served over the last nearly 100 years. There are a few treats as sumptuous as a visit to Oxford Bookstore in India. Each time you walk into our iconic store in Kolkata where the brand started in 1919, its charm leaves you wanting for more. Our fleet of happy to help expert booksellers and informed hosts work day and night to bring to customers world class reading experience be it through our books or our fine teas and live by the brand's motto - Much more than a bookstore – at every Bookstore. For more information, please also log on to [www.oxfordbookstore.com](http://www.oxfordbookstore.com)



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### **Synopsis of the book:**

Mr. Pulak Kumar Chakraborti's book "Park Street Theke Phire Dekha" (Looking Back From Park Street / পার্ক স্ট্রিট থেকে ফিরে দেখা ) is a memoir of Park Street encompassing upmarket mansions, Flurys, Park Mansions, Magnolia, Oxford Bookstore, and Sahib Sing, many of which were owned by Mr. Jit Paul of the Apeejay Surrendra Group.

The book published by Punascha goes on to chronicle how Mr. Jit Paul with his keen commercial vision, decided to establish Apeejay Surrendra Group's headquarters on Park Street, transforming the posh residential neighbourhood into a bustling commercial hub of the city.

The author narrates how the decision to build the Park Hotel, acquire and restore the historic Park Mansions, build Apeejay House, the first commercial leasing building at Park Street, take over and run the iconic tearoom Flurys and the Oxford Bookstore, and more had transformed Park Street into Kolkata's High Street that never sleeps!

### **About the author:**

Mr. Pulak Kumar Chakraborti, the author, was a director of the Apeejay Surrendra Group. He joined the group in 1977 and retired in 2002. He joined as the head of the export division of the company. During his long tenure he worked closely with Mr. Jit Paul, Mr. Surrendra Paul and Mrs. Shirin Paul, as well as the next generation - Mr. Karan Paul, Chairman of Apeejay Surrendra Group, Ms. Priya Paul and Ms. Priti Paul, both directors of the group. The book shows us, through his eyes, how the Paul family's work influenced the character of Park Street.

Mr. Chakraborti, did his B.Com from Calcutta University, studied costing and did Business Administration from the Ministry of Finance. He enjoyed writing as a young student and had contributed to several prestigious magazines and newspapers, including the Bengali newspaper Bartaman.

The author took his writing career seriously after being nudged by Mr. Karan Paul to chronicle his memories. He enjoys writing fiction and autobiographical stories. Mr. Chakraborti has published six books to date and four more of his books are in the post-production stage. He published his first book "Abhijattba Ebong Ak Akanaka" (আভিজাত্য এবং এক একনায়ক/ Empiricism (Aristocracy) And A Ruler) in 2019. He then went on to write and publish books - Gift of a Noble Spirit (English), Tamarind Empire (English), The Border (English) and Tamarind Triumph (English). As we celebrate the launch of his sixth book পার্ক স্ট্রিট থেকে ফিরে দেখা / Park Street Theke Phire Dekha (Bengali) today, four more books from the author - ভূত রহস্য /Bhoot Rohoshya (Bengali), গল্প ও রচনা সমগ্র /Golpo O Rochonashomogro (Bengali), and Treasure Hunt (English) are currently at the post-production stage and would be published soon. Another very important book by Mr. Chakraborti, "Mr. Jit Paul and Mr Surrendra Paul, As I Saw Them" (English) is in the post-production stage. The septuagenarian author stays at Lake Town with his only son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter.

### **For more information on the event get in touch with:**

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