Newspaper Name	Mail Today
Date	28-08-09
Page No	25
Description	Dollop of art in your cuppa

it's friday!

DOLLOP OF ART IN YOUR CUPPA

If you can't afford art, you can at least take a cerebral break at an art cafe. Here's your personal checklist.

by Archana

RELIGARE ARTS.I

7, Atmaram Mansion, Level 1, Scindia House, K.G. Marg

THE SWANK gallery-cum-café-cum-resource-centre-cum-trivia shop in the heart of the city, at Scindia House on K.G. Marg where it melds into the outer circle road of Connaught Place, is worth a visit, only if to soak in the spirit and ambience of the place. Mukesh Pannika, of Religare Arts.i, says, "The idea was to create an experiential space as we ourselves had experienced while visiting galleries that one wants to sit down for a chat, to read or to have a cup of coffee." The space at Atmaram Mansion opened in October last year and within four months, the café was up and about. Pannika calls the combination of gallery-café-resource centre-shop an 'art ecosystem.' "Unlike New York, London or Mumbai, galleries in Delhi are scattered and so when a person visits a gallery, the experience has to be more than just looking at art work. I have seen people looking up your shoulder with the look which says, 'If you are not going to buy art, then what are you doing here?' I don't want that to happen at Religare Arts.i," says Pannika with a laugh.

The visit to this place, however, will come with a membership, which the director says is to ensure quality. Soon, Religare Arts.i will have regular screening of videos so that "people can come in for a cultural evening with their children," as says Pannika. That, is certainly, 'total experience'.

Mukesh Pannika expects Arts.i to become a space people can visit with their children