



**MANDARIN ORIENTAL AND ITS GLOBAL CELEBRITY FAN, ALIA BHATT, HOST THE HOPE GALA, IN SUPPORT OF SALAAM BOMBAY FOUNDATION**

**Hong Kong, 28 March 2024** – Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, in partnership with celebrity fan, the award-winning Indian actress Alia Bhatt, hosted a spectacular charity gala tonight at Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London. The evening of entertainment and culinary delight was in support of Alia’s chosen charity - Salaam Bombay Foundation - which provides education and job opportunities for disadvantaged adolescents in India to complete school and access better employment.

Guests included Alia Bhatt, actress and model Poppy Delevingne, CEO of Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group Laurent Kleitman, CEO of Chanel Leena Nair, President and Chairman of the Royal Horticultural Society Keith Weed and Executive Vice President of Omnicom group Asit Mehra.

The evening’s entertainment included captivating performances by Indian singer, Harshdeep Kaur; Usha Jey the innovator behind Hybrid Bharatham, and the Yehudi Menuhin School Quartet. Attendees were also treated to an engaging fireside conversation between Alia Bhatt and the charismatic MC, YouTube star and comedian, Rohan Joshi. Throughout the evening guests were encouraged to take part in a silent auction to raise funds for Salaam Bombay, featuring coveted exclusive items and experiences including suite nights at various Mandarin Oriental hotels, Alia's jewellery worn at the Met Gala and a custom designed saree by ace Indian designer Manish Malhotra. Guests were treated to a culinary experience inspired by the best of Indian and British cuisines, created by Michelin-star chefs Vineet Bhatia and Jason Atherton, as well as dishes from Chef Francisco Hernandez, Executive Chef at the hotel.

The hotel’s iconic ballroom, which has welcomed many esteemed guests over its 135-year history, including Winston Churchill and HM Queen Elizabeth II, was transformed to reflect the warm, opulent and vibrant colours of India, with cultural references reflective of Mandarin Oriental’s Asian heritage.

Page 2

Alia Bhatt - actor, producer, entrepreneur who is one of the most celebrated personalities from India, was the first star of Indian cinema to feature in [Mandarin Oriental's](#) globally renowned advertising "I'm a Fan" campaign, that has, for over 20 years, featured more than fifty celebrities who are exceptional in their craft and discerning in their choices – from film legends including Morgan Freeman and Michelle Yeoh to sports stars such as Andy Murray. In return for their love of Mandarin Oriental's legendary service, Mandarin Oriental makes donations to the charities of their choice. Over the years, the Group has contributed over US\$1 million to more than 25 charities around the world.

Commenting on the evening's activities, Alia Bhatt said:

"Hosting my inaugural charity gala in collaboration with the Salaam Bombay Foundation and Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group has been an incredible experience. I've long admired Padmini Sekhsaria's unwavering dedication to uplifting at-risk youth in India's slums, offering them hope and opportunity. I'm happy to have played a small part in helping these children reshape their narratives. Furthermore, holding the Hope Gala at such a prestigious venue is a genuine privilege, as I've always been a fan of Mandarin Oriental's exceptional hospitality. Today marks just the beginning of our efforts, and with the support of our generous contributors, I'm confident we'll make significant strides in empowering future generations."

Ms Padmini Sekhsaria, Founder & Director – Salaam Bombay Foundation added:

"We are grateful to Alia Bhatt and the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group for partnering with us at the Hope Gala. Hope isn't just about belief - it's about creating real opportunities. Our programmes equip students with vocational and life skills, paving the way for meaningful careers after they complete their schooling. Alia's advocacy amplifies our message of hope, reaching so many youths at risk of leaving school. The funds raised will help transform lives and improve the economic trajectory of their families, forever."

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Laurent Kleitman, Group Chief Executive of Mandarin Oriental commented:

“We are so proud that Alia Bhatt is a genuine fan of Mandarin Oriental, and we are delighted to partner with her this evening to raise funds for such a worthy cause. Alia is the first of the Mandarin Oriental Fans to have hosted a charity gala on this scale and we are thrilled to be part of this event. Of all the causes we are engaged with around the world, this one is certainly close to our hearts: at Mandarin Oriental we take great pride in supporting young people by creating growth, learning and ultimately career opportunities in hospitality. Every year we recruit, train and provide working experiences for up to 600 young people.”

**Images from the event can be found [here](#)**

### **About Salaam Bombay Foundation**

In India, slum families survive on less than £200 per month. Sixty-four percent of school children drop out before Year 9 and enter the unregulated workforce, often being exploited. Salaam Bombay Foundation was established with the mission to support children aged 11-17 in India’s urban slums. The charity works to build purpose and economic opportunities to help slum children complete school and go on to better-paying jobs and vocations.

The Foundation takes a multi-disciplinary approach for development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills among resource-challenged adolescents through its specially designed in-school programmes. The Sports, Arts and Media academies not only encourage students to express themselves and provide performance opportunities that build self-esteem but also lead to real jobs as fitness trainers, photographers, choreographers, video sfx editors to name but a few. The skills@school programme broadens career opportunities that allow for sustainable jobs in sectors like beauticians, make-up artists, hair stylists, mobile and home appliance repair technicians, bakers etc. Many go on to start their own businesses through SBF’s Entrepreneurship Incubator, which gives training in business skills, including marketing & promotion, product pricing and financial planning. Over the last two years we have witnessed

nearly 150 entrepreneurs benefiting from these programs and are eager to keep expanding this impactful initiative. The skilling programme has impacted 56,439 students across 7 cities in India.

### **About Alia Bhatt**

At just 31, Alia Bhatt effortlessly wears many hats as an actor, producer, and entrepreneur. From her debut in Student of the Year in 2012 to standout performances in Highway, Raazi, Udta Punjab, Darlings, and Gangubai Kathiawadi, she has earned both critical acclaim and commercial success, cementing her position as one of the most loved and bankable star of Indian cinema. Off-screen, she has founded her production house, Eternal Sunshine Productions, became the first Indian celebrity to be appointed by House of Gucci as their Global Brand Ambassador, debuted at the Met Gala in '23, and launched India's first truly sustainable kids' wear brand, Ed-a-mamma. Her international debut with Netflix's Heart of Stone and accolades like the TIME 100 Impact 2022 award, Forbes Asia's 30 Under 30 list, and GQ India's 35 most influential young people further highlight her influence. Alia Bhatt is also the recipient of the highest acting honour from India i.e The National Award that she won in 2023 for her flawless performance in and as Gangubai Kathiawadi. Next, she will be seen in the film Jigra which is also her second co-production, and has also recently announced collaboration with Sanjay Leela Bhansali - one of the most sought after directors from the Indian Film Fraternity.

### **About Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London**

Sitting between glorious Royal Parkland and the buzz of central Knightsbridge, Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London offers the essence of timeless heritage coupled with contemporary flair and impeccable service. Each of the hotel's [rooms and suites](#) have been designed by internationally-renowned designer Joyce Wang, to reflect the natural beauty of neighbouring Hyde Park. An award-winning [spa](#) and diverse dining choices from two-Michelin starred [Dinner by Heston Blumenthal](#), Japanese Izakaya at [The Aubrey](#), Traditional Afternoon Tea in [The Rosebery](#) and cocktails in the [Mandarin Bar](#) makes Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London one of London's premier addresses.



Page 5

### **About Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group**

Mandarin Oriental is the award-winning owner and operator of some of the world's most luxurious hotels, resorts and residences. Recognised for creating exceptional properties, each destination reflects the Group's oriental heritage, local culture and unique design. The Group's mission is to completely delight and inspire guests through delivering passionate service. Having grown from its Asian roots over 60 years ago into a global brand, the Group now operates 38 hotels, 11 residences and 23 *exclusive homes* in 25 countries and territories with many more projects under development. Mandarin Oriental continues to drive its reputation as an innovative leader in luxury hospitality, delivering sustainable growth over the long term.

Further information is available on our Social Media channels and website: [www.mandarinoriental.com](http://www.mandarinoriental.com), including [Media Centre](#). Alternatively, please contact:

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