

11th Feb, 2026

Tapovan Times



By Aavya Wellness Retreats
TAPOVAN, RISHIKESH

VOL. 1 ISSUE 8



DID YOU KNOW?

RAJAJI NATIONAL PARK: WHAT TO EXPECT
Rajaji National Park is the forest stretch that begins quietly just outside Rishikesh. Many people staying in Tapovan wonder whether there is actually wildlife there — or if it's just a green patch on the map.

The short answer: yes, there is wildlife, but sightings are never guaranteed.

WHERE IS IT?

From Tapovan, the nearest entry gates (Chilla / Motichur range) are about 20-30 km, roughly 45 minutes to 1 hour by road, depending on the gate and traffic.

WHAT PEOPLE SEE (REALISTICALLY)

Common sightings include:

Deer (spotted deer, sambar)

Nilgai

Wild boar

Langurs and other birds Occasional (less predictable):

Elephants

Leopards

Tigers are present in the park, but sightings are rare and should not be expected on a short visit. Rajaji is more about forest atmosphere and quiet than guaranteed drama.

SAFARI & ENTRY

Entry is through designated gates only. Jeep safaris are the standard way to visit. Safari slots are usually morning and late afternoon.

Entry fees and safari charges apply and vary for Indian and foreign visitors. (Best to check locally or with the forest office a day before)

BEST TIME TO GO

Early morning for light, silence, and better chances of sightings.

Winter months are comfortable for walking and sitting quietly in the forest.

TAPOVAN TIMES NOTE

Rajaji is not a zoo.

If you go expecting guarantees, you'll be disappointed.

If you go for trees, birds, and the feeling of being away from town — it usually delivers.

Sometimes you see animals.

Sometimes you just see forest.

Both count.

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WORLD NEWS / TAPOVAN INTERPRETATION

GLOBAL HEADLINE :

WAR ESCALATES, MORE CIVILIANS DISPLACED

Airstrikes, borders, statements. Apologies issued later.

U.S. INVOLVEMENT ABROAD SPARKS GLOBAL OUTRAGE

All sides claim necessity. No side claims responsibility.

RIGHT-WING POLITICS GAIN GROUND WORLDWIDE

Fear, identity, and certainty trending upward.

ECONOMIC PRESSURE MOUNTS GLOBALLY

Experts explain. People adjust.

NATIONS ARGUE SOVEREIGNTY & POWER

Meetings held. Words sharpened.

WORLD DEMANDS STRONG LEADERSHIP

Volume increases. Listening decreases.

TAPOVAN INTERPRETATION:

YOGI: "This too is impermanent." (Says it softly. Still feels it deeply)

COW: Continues chewing. Has seen empires come and go.

DOG: Barks at everyone equally. Refuses to pick a side.

YOGI: Moves mat closer to the sun. Cancels one more plan.

COW: Crosses road slowly. Traffic stops. Authority established.

DOG: Finds shade. Sleeps anyway.

The world is loud. Tapovan hears it. Then goes back to chai and thinking quietly.

The Return Issue: Editorial Note : Ashish

(UNOFFICIAL & SLIGHTLY EMBARRASSING):

October!!

November...

December??

Early January

Mid January

"Shortened timeline"

"Oh my God, I still haven't finished it"

"I'll do it tomorrow"

"Okay, one last edit"

"Hey hey hey hey hey — it's coming out!"

"...is it?"

And now —

11th February, 2026.

This is the version.

We are saying it out loud.

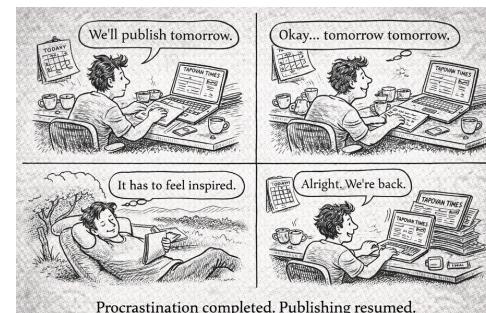
Please don't make us edit this again.

Tapovan Times is back after three months. For the first two months, this paper showed up every week with enthusiasm, discipline, and genuine fun. Then somewhere along the way, I got a bit nerdy about it. The pressure to be clever crept in. A week got missed. Then another. Procrastination arrived.

Then came the real problem:

What if the new edition isn't as good as the old ones? Good or not good enough...you once again have it in your hands !!

—  home@aavya-rise.com



Tapovan Weather Report

Days: ~22°C

Night: 7-8°C

Winter continues to behave politely. Sunny days, cool nights, just a little rain so far.

The sun is doing its job in the daytime, the cold is doing its job at night, it's perfect weather

Forecast:

Mild winter continues. Enjoy it while it pretends to last.

Tapovan Times Advisory

Sit in the sun.

Wear layers in the evening

Complain a little.

Then repeat. Winter may leave quietly.

On Change, Flexibility and the Human Body - Dr Rucha

One of the unique experiences in the human existence is the uniqueness of each individual being. Entropy exists in each specie, to help adapt and survive. We are less predictable to be put in any kind of structure not only societal but overall something as simple as being bound to a particle diet, healthcare regime or something as simple as a thought process. The more flexible we are, more adaptable we become, more stronger we are to bear the impact of the constantly evolving existence. Every change starts with the body, moves through breath and dives into the mind, thus you wish to make any large change start moving differently.





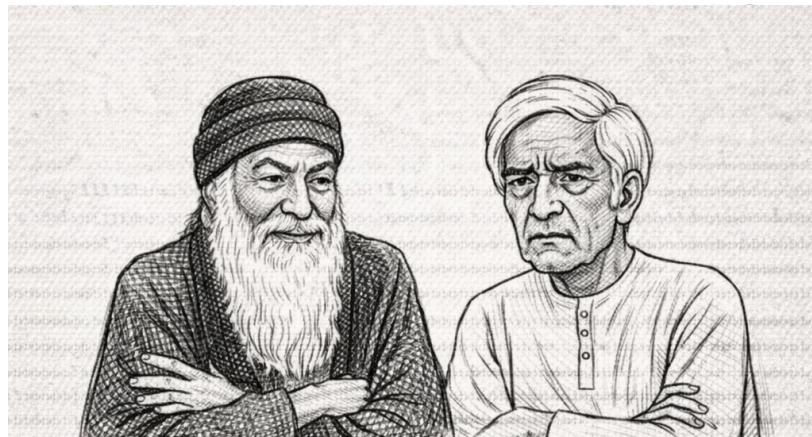
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Osho vs. J. Krishnamurti This Week: Instagram

A group of yoga teachers and spiritual gurus decided this problem was too big for them. They went to the enlightened ones.

Osho and Krishnamurti.

Surely, they thought, these two would settle it. Their question was blunt:

"We want to be spiritual. We want to teach yoga. So why this bloody necessity of becoming someone big on Instagram?

Tool or devil? Quit or post more?"

Krishnamurti frowned.

"Why do you want to become someone at all?

Followers, likes, disciples – same hunger, different labels."

Osho laughed.

"Oh Jiddu, relax. You've been allergic to people your whole life."

He turned to the group.

"Earlier gurus wanted followers too.

They just didn't have Insta followers"

Krishnamurti shot back,

"Spirituality is not entertainment."

Osho nodded.

"True, Jiddu.

But neither is it a punishment."

Krishnamurti said truth cannot be reduced to reels.

Osho replied, "Neither can ego – yet Instagram is full of it."

Krishnamurti added,

"The moment you post your silence, it is no longer silence."

Osho smiled.

"Yes – but people advertised silence long before Instagram.

They just used mala beads instead of hashtags."

Then Osho leaned in.

"Tell me, Jiddu – if enlightenment happened today, would it arrive quietly..."

or ask, 'Is this vertical or horizontal?"'

Krishnamurti did not laugh.

Which somehow made it funnier.

The yoga teachers stood up.

"Alright," one said.

"You two continue this debate."

They picked up their phones.

"We'll try to figure this out ourselves."



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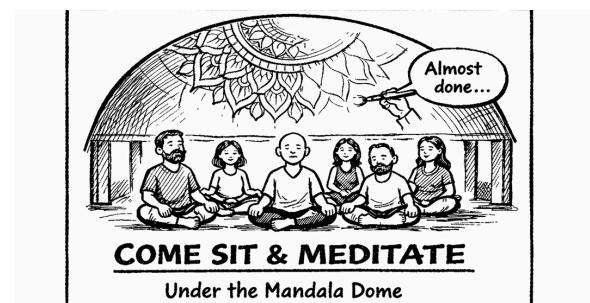


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Learn how to breathe properly
(surprisingly rare). Calm the nerves,
clear the head, and remind
your body that everything
is not an emergency.

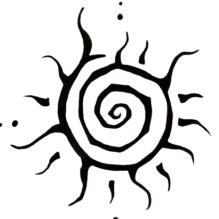
– with Dr. Rucha Shinde
(MBBS, MD, Certified Yoga Teacher,
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What is it about Rishikesh ?

Five Elements, One Town (Plus Very Few Toothpaste Options)

Rishikesh works because the elements are unavoidable.

Earth comes first. Ganga ji's pebbles. Sand under bare feet.

Hard rock by the water. Cow dung on the road very grounding, whether you like it or not. Gardens everywhere. Plants growing wherever they find space.

Water is constant. The river, waterfalls nearby, streams hidden just off the road. Cold, fast, alive. People sit by it for hours without checking their phones.

Fire appears every evening. Ganga Aarti. Bonfires. The winter sun that warms you just enough. Fire here doesn't rush — it holds.

Air moves differently. Cold air flowing down from melting glaciers. Wind tunnels through the hills.

Pranayama everywhere.

And let's be honest — the air created by thousands of people breathing, chanting, praying, and talking their journey in yoga and the slower gentle life.

Space might be the most underrated element. Not emptiness — availability. Space to work from a café with just two other people instead of a cubicle. Space to be alone in a crowd. Space to feel held without being watched. The feeling that one can be what we are in Rishikesh without being judged.

Tapovan has more buildings now. More traffic. More construction noise. And yet, the essence somehow survives — stubbornly.



YOGI SAYS

“Breathe in peace.
Breathe out opinions”

Why People Feel Something in Rishikesh (And Can't Quite Explain It)

People arrive in Rishikesh with very normal plans.

“I'll stay a week.”

“I just need a break.”

“I'll do a course and leave.”

Then they have the same ginger-lemon-honey every morning.

Or the same falafel platter.

Or both.

They walk by Ganga ji.

They sit.

They don't rush. And somewhere between praying, singing, doing kirtans, moving their bodies in yoga, or simply watching the river move — something shifts. Not dramatically.

Quietly. Some people stay longer than planned.

Some leave quickly. Some leave and come back.

Rishikesh doesn't guarantee transformation.

It just reduces the noise enough for you to hear yourself.

For some, that feels like relief.

For others, it's uncomfortable.

Both reactions are common here.

This is often the first thing people experience when living in Rishikesh — not enlightenment, just a subtle sense that something unnecessary has loosened its grip.

Books worth sitting with (not finishing)

The Book — Alan Watts

A playful, radical reminder that you might be taking life far too seriously — and that's okay.

Freedom from the Known — J. Krishnamurti

Sharp, uncomfortable, and impossible to turn into a quote poster. Exactly why it works.

Being Aware of Being Aware — Rupert Spira

Simple sentences. Deep pauses. Best read in silence.

Zen Mind Beginner's Mind — Shunryu Suzuki

A book that gently asks you to stop trying so hard.

Tapovan Times Note

These are not books to master.

They're books to sit with, argue with, forget, and return to later preferably near the river, or over the same café menu you've already memorized.

Editor Ashish
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My own 2 bits on Rishikesh

by Ashish

I didn't come to Rishikesh thinking things would go away from my life. I came from Mumbai mostly to step out of the pace I had lived in for years, thinking I might get a little fitter, maybe reset in some vague way. Nothing changed immediately in terms of habits, but something else did — there was an instant, uncomplicated happiness. Not excitement, not relief, just a lightness that stayed. Along with it came everything else too: doubts, fears, questions, old patterns. But that simple sense of happiness is constant, and it has stayed since.

Over time, many habits did strip away. Not by effort or discipline, but because they stopped feeling necessary in this context. My Mumbai life slowly fell out of frame — the speed, the roles, the social structures I had grown up inside. Some things stayed, some grew stronger, some quietly left without needing explanation.

Rishikesh has a way of doing that. It doesn't correct you or tell you who to be. It just rearranges things if you give it time.

Aavya emerged from the same rhythm — not as a plan or a destination, but as a place shaped by the elements and by the people who pass through here. Seekers, artists, wanderers, the tired and the curious. Rishikesh has always held space for all of them — inclusive, non-judgmental, sometimes contradictory, but deeply allowing.

That spirit has existed long before us, and our only real hope is to protect it, not improve it. A place where you're allowed to be what you are. Things may fall away, other things may appear. That's been the nature of this town. And we hope it remains that way.

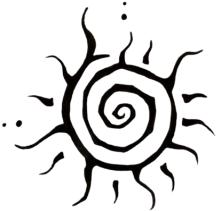
⚠️ LOST & FOUND (SPIRITUAL)	
LOST:	Independent thinking • Inner authority • Comfort with not knowing

---- PUBLIC NOTICE ----	
J. Krishnamurti	

“If you follow someone, you are already lost.”	

---- PUBLIC NOTICE ----	
“If you follow someone, you are already lost.”	

Reward:	Freedom (Non-transferable) (No certificate issued)



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4 years later, the same 4 cafes

DEAR DIDI

Because sometimes Google, is no substitute for Didi.



Dear Didi,
I was lazy earlier.
Now it's winter and I'm professionally lazy.
Blanket. Sun. Tea. Repeat.
Everyone says I should "use this time well."

Am I failing at life?

Didi says:

Winter didn't make you lazy.
It just removed distractions.
Get up when the sun feels good.
Till then, rest without guilt — that's also work.

Dear Didi,

My partner seems very interested in other women in the group.

He says he's just being friendly.
Or "aware."
Or "open."

What am I supposed to do?

Didi says:

Friendliness is fine.
Confusion is not.
Say it once. Clearly.

If he calls that drama, that's your answer.

Dear Didi,

Everyone around me is doing something — courses, practices, plans.

I just want to sit in the sun and stare at the hills.

Is that allowed?

Didi says:

Yes.

If you're present, it's meditation.

If you're avoiding life, it's procrastination.

Only you know which one it is.

Send questions at home@aavya-rise.com

Didi may not solve them.

But she'll say what you're already thinking.



MINDFULNESS GYM



Want to become more mindful with music?

Try this the next time you're listening.

First, hear the sound as it is — raw, unfiltered. Then notice the vibration in your body. Now listen to the singer's voice.

Then listen to the emotion behind the voice.

Notice the rhythm that's holding everything together.

Notice the beats underneath.

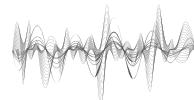
Notice how many pauses there are between the beats.

Start picking out the other sounds, the quieter instruments, the ones sitting further in the background.

Now listen to each instrument separately. One by one.

Finally, let them all come together again. Notice how everything is happening at the same time, and yet nothing is rushed.

If you stay with it long enough, you'll realise you're not just hearing music anymore. You've entered a different way of listening.



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IN OTHER NEWS

I joined Aavya as a creative strategist with great clarity. And proved that clarity and wisdom are not always the same thing. On day one, I very confidently announced: "I'm staying exactly two months." Not approximately. Not spiritually flexible. Exactly. And like a true zabaan-ki-lakir-kā-fakir, I left on time despite sunsets, good conversations, and Tapovan doing its best emotional blackmail. Plan followed. Mistake made.



City life quickly informed me that while leaving was a decision, it may not have been the right one.

And while I may not be in Tapovan physically, Tapovan clearly refuses to leave me alone.

So here I am still involved, still orbiting, and now officially your Sub-Editor at Tapovan Times.

I may have left.

But I didn't escape.

I'll see you when I see you. Until then, you're stuck with me every week.

Stubbornly Yours,

— Shalini

(Sub-Editor, Tapovan Times)

Ira's Kitchen

There was a time when you saw the sun first from here. Now the buildings arrive earlier than the light. And yet, the place hasn't lost its beauty — if anything, it has grown more graceful with time. It still holds the day gently, from morning into afternoon.

Secret Garden

It had a bit of a hippy vibe — long afternoons, lingering scents, an unspoken understanding of freedom. Today it's brighter, more open, and comfortably child-friendly. Different energy, same ease. The garden changed, the openness didn't.

King's Café

It's grown larger and calmer over the years. The spontaneous music isn't what it once was, but the comfort remains untouched. It still feels like home — the kind you return to without needing a reason. Home, without explanation.

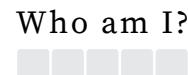
Anna's Mess

From a small cafe, to a pretty bustling eating space... what hasn't changed is the food. Still the best South Indian meal in the area. No fuss, no attention, no performance — just simple, quick, honest plates that do exactly what they're meant to.

When you want good South Indian food, you come here.

RIDDLE

I flow without effort,
I move but never hurry.
I teach by being.
Who am I?



Unscramble the letters to find words connected to life in Tapovan.

T A O V P A N

A O Y G

T H E A R B

L E C N I S E

A G N G A

