

Pressing on for women journalists

Usha Rai, a prominent journalist of 40 years, speaks to **SOFIANNI SUBKI** on the state of the Indian Press and the status of its women journalists.

AFTER gaining independence from Britain in 1947, the Indian Press went from strength to strength to become a formidable force that set the standards in the Asian region.

One person who was there to see it from the beginning is Usha Rai, a prominent authority on the Indian media. She has been in journalism for 40 years.

At a recent meeting with senior editors of the *New Straits Times Press*, she talked about the current state of the Press and position of women journalists in her homeland.

"Despite being vibrant and dynamic, the Indian Press is not without its set of problems," said Usha, who was in Kuala Lumpur to conduct a workshop on how to report human rights issues with the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM).

Newspapers in India, she said, are being controlled by people who own them and trade unions have become weak as a result.

"Unions are now marginalised and all journalists work on contracts that last two to three years. Newspaper owners have a lot of clout much to the detriment of journalists, who are always on tenterhooks."

It's even worse for journalists who are in the regional Press. They are paid daily wages and given meal vouchers at the end of the month. In times of retrenchment, the first to be axed are the women.

Usha explained that there are a lot of women at decision-making levels in the Indian Press. There is no gender discrimination in the English Press but the glass ceiling does exist in vernacular newspapers in other parts of India.

Usha became a journalist when she joined *The Times of India* in 1964. She was one of the pioneer women journalists who succeeded in breaking into mainstream reporting. She was there for a total 27 years and left as deputy bureau chief.

She then joined *The Indian Express* where she stayed for five years as a development editor. At *The Hindustan Times*, she was made a features editor, a position she said felt more like a glorified special correspondent.

Eager to try something different, she subsequently joined the World Wide



USHA: One of India's leading women in journalism

did some work with CARE (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere), another non-governmental organisation, before joining the Press Institute of India in 2000 as deputy director.

The PII is an independent, non-profit private trust that was established to create and sustain high end responsible standards of journalism.

It has just completed a nationwide study that examines the status of women journalists in India. Sponsored by India's National Commission of Women, respondents of the study were required to fill up a six-page questionnaire.

The results will officially be released later, but to date, the study has revealed that in smaller towns, many women journalists are not given maternity leave.

"We have a women's Press corp in India which is basically a Press club run by women journalists," said Usha, its founder. "The club conducts meetings and interviews with people in power such as politicians and ministers."

In addition, it pays attention to women's issues, something that is close to

tensively on the subject and has even been awarded by the United Nations. At one point, she worked closely with the National Commission of Women to highlight major areas of concern.

She observed that in the media, women are not keen to write on women's issues as they would have more upward mobility on the political and business desks.

But across the board, more Indian women are supporting the 30 per cent quota for women in parliament. Currently, representation stands at six per cent.

Pressing gender issues in India include the practice of female foeticide through sex-selective abortions and the dowry custom. In Indian society, baby boys are preferred to baby girls. The traditional practice of dowry, a gift from the bride's family to the bridegroom's family is one of the main reasons for this.

It is only the groom's family that demands and receives a dowry before and sometimes even after a marriage has taken place. If these demands are unmet by the bride's family, the groom and his family sometimes subject the bride to physical and psychological

tion tests are banned in India — they are illegal and punishable by law. Although these messages are communicated by the Indian media, it is sadly still rampant.

Asked if the rise in rape cases in Malaysia has links to the negative portrayal of women in the media, she said: "Yes, I think so. But more cases are being reported because of expanding media coverage on it, too."

Expressing amazement at how modern Malaysia has become, she said that like India, Malaysia is undergoing a period of transition.

"Here, I see women with their heads covered. Yet, in the same lift, standing next to them are women with very little on — the contrast is stark."

On the possibility of Malaysia setting up its own Press council, she said that it is a good idea depending on how it is structured.

"From what I can make out, there seems to be a lot of Press control in Malaysia. So under such conditions, how effective will a Press council be? You have to liberate the media first."



USHA: Balance needed

'Strong Press Council can enhance journalism'

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — A strong Press council will help improve the standards of journalism in a country, Press Institute of India deputy director Usha Rai said today.

In a dialogue with senior editors from the *New Straits Times* at Balai Berita, she said in India, a Press council existed but was weakened by powerful media owners. Journalists welfare was no longer protected and news was dictated by economic forces rather than social obligations.

"Most of our journalists are employed on contract basis and some are even paid with vouchers. This is what happens when media companies become too strong," she said.

She said the council should act as a balancing body to ensure that journalists were protected and the integrity of the Press was upheld.

The dialogue was organised by Human Rights Commission of Malaysia and the NST.

Present were NST managing editor Rose Ismail, *Sunday Mail* editor Aishah Ali, Life and Times editor Fatimah Abu Bakar, NST news editor Balan Moses and Suhakam public affairs head Hanizah Hashim.

KL to host tourism meeting

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Malaysia will host the first Commonwealth Tourism Ministers' Meeting next month which will focus on encouraging intra-Commonwealth travel and discuss the setting up of a Commonwealth tourism centre here.

Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Paduka Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said today the idea for the centre was discussed with the Commonwealth secretariat and the secretary-general who seemed keen on it.

"If our offer to set up the tourism centre is accepted, Kuala Lumpur will become the centre of attraction among Commonwealth member countries," he said.

The meeting will be held from March 18 to 21 at the Palace of Golden Horses. So far, 24 ministers have confirmed attendance.

"We are expecting at least 40 of the 52 member countries to participate. Apart from the meeting, there will be a tourism mart where industry players can promote tourism.

"The Commonwealth Business Forum is also scheduled during that time," he said.

Abdul Kadir said the idea of the tourism ministers' meeting was brought up during the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' meeting and sanctioned during the Commonwealth summit in Abuja, Nigeria, last year.

"Commonwealth leaders often talk about enhancing the economic field of its member countries.

"What better way to do this than to promote tourism among members? Besides, we have been wooing tourists from Asia and the Middle East to our country. It's time we got those from the Commonwealth member countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada to come too," he said.

He added that tourist arrivals from Commonwealth member countries had not been encouraging.

"But we are going all out to promote our country to the Commonwealth starting



next year. We are confident there will be 100 per cent increase in the number of tourists from those countries once we have started our promotions," he said.

Abdul Kadir said fairs such as the Malaysian Association Tour and Travel Agents International Travel Fair (MITF) could also boost domestic tourism.

About 100,000 people are expected to visit the 17th MITF which will be held at the Putra World Trade Centre from March 12 to 14.

The fair will showcase 790 booths and more than 230 exhibitors comprising travel agents and airline companies, Tourism Malaysia, State tourism councils, as well as national tourism organisations from countries such as Singapore, China, Vietnam, Korea, Spain and Nepal.

"About 40 per cent of the exhibitors will be promoting local destinations. We want to encourage more people to come and travel in the country," he said.

Discounts of up to 35 per cent for holiday packages will be offered during the fair.

Twenty-five per cent of the ticket sales from the entrance fee (which is RM3 per person, free entrance for children under-12) to the fair will go to the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia, National Cancer Council and WWF-Nature Malaysia.

There will also be performances from Australia, Taiwan and China during the three-day fair.

Talk Of The Town



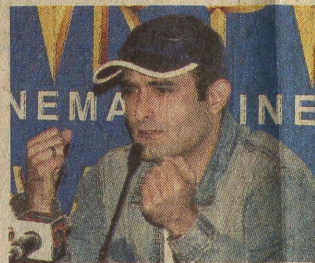
THE "GREAT Gambler" has turned to cooking. Having come a long way since his "Coolie" days where his attempts at making an omelette were memorable for all the wrong reasons, the Big B is now brushing up his culinary skills for "Tandoor", a new film by Nagesh Kukunoor. "The film is about a cook. Amitabh Bachchan plays the lead role. Directing Amitabh is a

dream, so when I approached him with the script and he said 'Yes', I told him let me gush for a minute and then I will be professional," says Nagesh.

A daunting task for any director, getting the Big B in front of their lens and waiting for instructions is not easy. And with audiences being disappointed with his less than wonderful performances, it seems that awe-struck new directors are unable to extract the "real" Amitabh on to the "reel".

But Nagesh is not intimidated in the least. "We both discussed the role. He told me how he saw the character and I told him what I thought. This will be a challenge for him too. He is playing an ordinary cook, and the role itself is different. And at the end of the day, he is just a character and no star is bigger than the film itself," says Nagesh.

But Nagesh seems to have plenty of experience. Not the first time that he is directing big actors, he has extracted great performances from Om Puri and even Naseeruddin Shah in his latest "Three Walls".



AKSHAYE KHANNA is ready for a role reversal. And though the "reel" attempt will be more than clear when the actor's "Hungama" is released, it is the "real" shift that actually dazzled journalists when he came to Delhi last week.

Known to be a shy, introvert guy who has been brash with the media in the past, Akshay was the one addressing the press conference for the most part with director Priyadarshan and co-star Rima Sen in the backdrop.

Asked about this change, the actor just smiled and said: "I don't think I have ever had any problems. I realise this is an important part of my profession and I quite enjoy it. All this talk is just rumour, spread by a section of the media that probably does not like me."

Strange, considering after all that talk the star quietly slipped from the place and refused to talk to any journalist separately, preferring to huddle up in his room. All attempts to get a quick word from the star were met with a cryptic 'he is busy' or 'he needs to go somewhere.'

By Mandira Nayyar, Anjali Malhotra and Lakshmi Balakrishnan

SHE DECLARES candidly she is "not ambitious". And no, her voice is not a medium for her to reach the sky and become a star. Instead, this lady, gifted with a unique voice, believes that "sur" is something given by God.

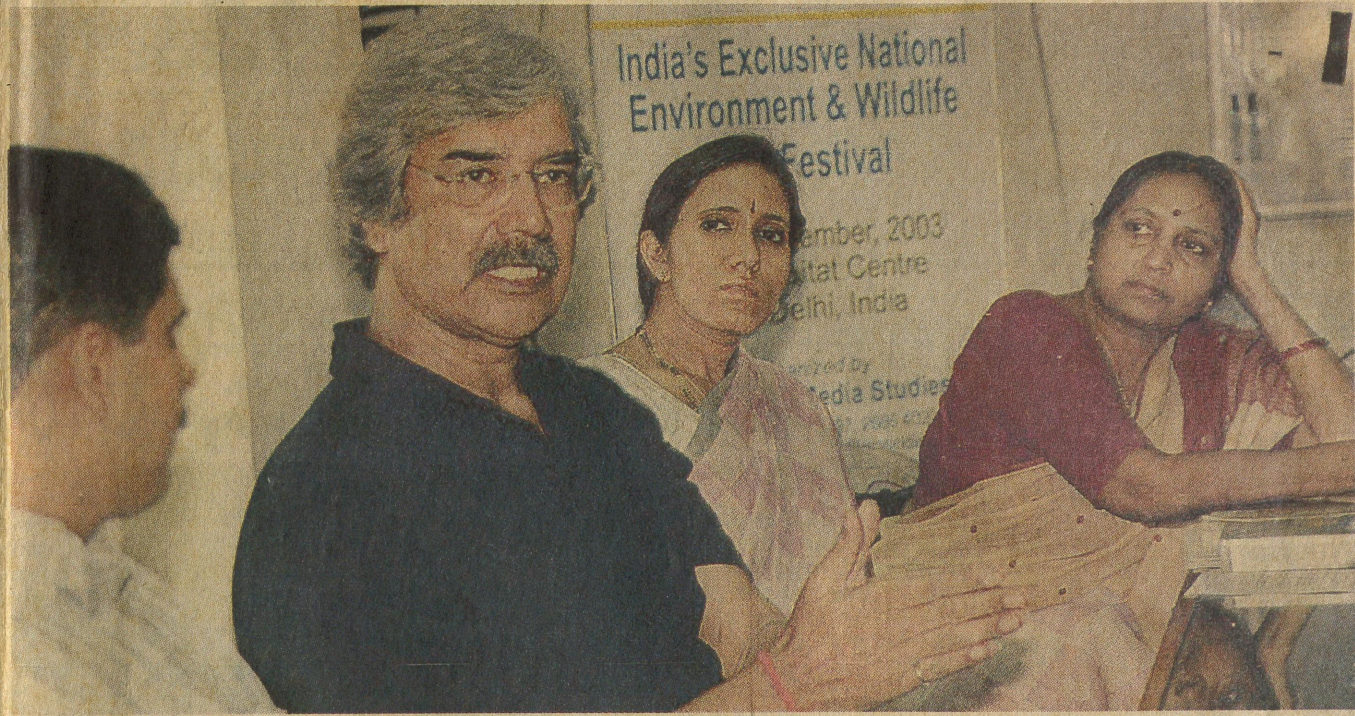
"It is not through practice that but by worship that one becomes a good singer," says Soma Chakravarty Ghosh, who would accompany Ustad Bismillah Khan for a performance to be held at Parliament House soon.

Lovingly referring to the shehnai maestro as "Baba" - who has adopted her as his daughter - Soma adds: "Baba says that 'sur' and 'raas' cannot be achieved through practice. That comes through worship. And it is only when you have 'sur' that you become a true singer."

A dedicated singer - she starts singing at the first excuse - Soma's album "RasBarse" has won her much appreciation. And though it may not be fame that she's pursuing, there's plenty to look forward to from this accomplished singer. Two albums and a rather "special" project are in the pipeline. "Amitabh and Jaya have asked me



to work on an album for the late Harivanshrai Bachchan. But we are still to work out what to include in it," she reveals.



Filmmaker Mike Pandey speaking at a Press conference on "Vatavaran 2003" National Environment and Wildlife Film Festival in New Delhi on Tuesday. Along with him are Alka Tomar, Festival Director, and Usha Rai, jury member.

A green film festival and something more

THE 'GREEN' crusaders are coming to town. And they are bringing with them not just the magic of nature but also that of celluloid. The wait for the country's only national film festival on environment and wildlife may be still some months away, but the fight for conservation has already begun.

Making November special this year will be the second year of "Vatavaran 2003" - that will showcase some of the best works in the country on environment, wildlife and conservation in a three-day extravaganza starting in New Delhi on November 18. But this film festival is not just about cinema.

While children will clearly lead the way this time, with a special segment being created for them at the festival and special workshops held for them, conservation is clearly the buzzword here,

and making it an interesting drive to the festival will be a series of events that have already taken off.

If July saw lectures and workshops being held on rainwater harvesting and water conservation techniques in various parts of the city, August is going to be the month of waste management. India Habitat Centre will see some interesting panel discussions, with topics ranging from "Home truths for waste management in Delhi" to "Emerging trends on biomedical waste." Also to be screened as part of the festival will be two films "Ecotoons" and "The Green Dustbin."

September and October will focus on the issue of forest and wildlife, while November will bring with it the much-awaited festival. Expected to see the participation of India's best documentary

filmmakers, the last date for sending entries is July 31, but this is likely to get extended. While the nomination committee is headed by Bhaskar Ghosh, renowned film-maker Adoor Gopalakrishnan will head the jury selecting the films for the festival.

An attempt to move away from the "gloom doom" theory, as documentary filmmaker Mike Pandey put it, the organisers point out that "Vatavaran" will try to reach out to the masses and create awareness about issues that concern them.

"The idea is to motivate people and enable them to work at that level, where they can make a difference," Mike Pandey said at a press conference on Tuesday.

By Lakshmi Balakrishnan
Photo: Sandeep Saxena

Clubs planned for media education in schools

THE GANDHI Smriti and Darshan Samiti is planning to write to various schools across the Capital asking them to form media education clubs to develop a discerning readership among children and to demand that real "Indian Opinion" be reflected in newspapers, magazines and channels.

This follows a workshop conducted by the GSDS in their premises over the weekend where school children made presentations on "Violence in the media and its impact on children." Among the schools that participated in the workshop were Delhi Public School, Mathura Road; Ramjas School, Pusa Road; Sardar Patel Vidyalaya; Sadhu Vaswani School; Kerala School and Rashtriya Pratibha Vidyalaya.

Children from several non-government organisations like CASP-PLAN, Butterflies, Bal Kadam and Kalyanam also participated in the workshop and demanded a change in the way the media was projecting children. Many of them felt that children's projection in the media should take a rights-based approach and the patronising attitude must give way to recognition of their participation in creating their own media.

Some of the suggestions that they came up during their presentations include heightened advocacy to reverse the culture of violence that the media, especially the electronic media, has been propagating. These include marches, rallies and signature campaigns by the children themselves. The programmes in various channels, including news-based ones, should be rated on the basis of their violence content, it was suggested.

Those who participated in the discussions included S. C. Gokhale, President of CASP-PLAN; psychologist Aruna Broota, Vartika Nanda, Senior Faculty member at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication; Meeta Parti, Senior Programme Officer, CFAR and M.M.Alex, a jury member of the 50th national film awards.

Dr. Broota pointed out that each school must take responsibility for showing at least four shootings of movies in each class so that by the time that they reach Class XII, they are already exposed to 25-30 shootings and know the difference between the "reel" and the "real".

The workshop, held as part of the centenary celebrations of Indian Opinion, was conducted by two children - one from Sardar Patel Vidyalaya and the other from CASP-PLAN. Most schools which participated agreed to be part of the proposed media education clubs that will be known as "Indian Opinion" clubs.

By K. Kannan

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS PRISONS HEAD QUARTER

NEAR LAJWANTI GARDEN CHOWK, JANAK PURI, NEW DELHI

F:21(13)/D.S.(PROV.)/2003-2004/2086-88 Date: 24-7-2003

TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Delhi, Sealed Tenders are invited for the supply of following items for the period up to 31-3-2004 required for Central Jail Tihar, New Delhi :-

1. Barrack blankets 12000 Nos.
2. Woolen cloth (serge) khakhi for uniform (Suiting cloth) 1200 mtrs.
3. Woolen cloth (Serge) blue for uniform (Suiting cloth) 600 mtrs.
4. Rain coat (duck back) khakhi 500 Nos.
5. Socks (terrywool) khakhi 1000 Pairs
6. Drab cloth mixture Khakhi for Great Coat 900 Mtr.

The tenders should be deposited under the strong sealed cover mark as tender for "Blankets and Uniforms" and deposited in the tender box kept at Prisons Head Quarter, Central Jail Tihar, New Delhi on or before 18-08-2003 up to 3.00 p.m. The tender will be opened on the same day at 3.15 p.m.

The tender forms for the above items containing the terms and conditions, draft agreement alongwith the specifications as laid down by the Jail Department can be had from the office of the D.D.O., Prisons Head Quarter, Near Lajwanti Garden Chowk, Janak Puri, New Delhi on any working day between 10.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M. on payment of Rs. 200/- each (non-refundable). The tenderer shall produce the latest Sales Tax clearance certificate (if applicable) at the time of purchasing the tender form from this Department.

For other details Notice Board of Prisons Head Quarter, Tihar, New Delhi may be seen on any working day.

(O.P. Rana)
Superintendent of Prisons
Central Jail, Tihar, New Delhi

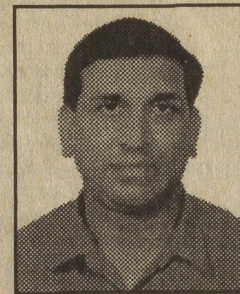
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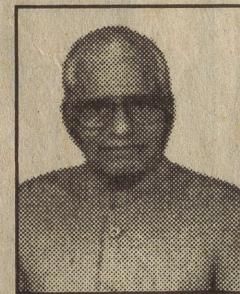
Another Mile-stone towards strengthening the foundation of SCs & STs



Smt. Sheila Dikshit
Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Delhi



Sh. Raj Kumar Chauhan
Hon'ble Minister, Social Welfare
& SC/ST, Delhi



Sh. Moti Lal Bokolia
M.L.A

Today, 30.7.2003 at 11 a.m.

Laying of foundation stone

Khatik Chaupal

at
80, Raigerpura, Karol Bagh, New Delhi
by

Sh. Raj Kumar Chauhan

Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare & SC/ST, Delhi

Sh. Moti Lal Bokolia

M.L.A Karol Bagh will preside over the function

Achievements under the Improvement of SC Basties Scheme

No. of sanctions issued and amount involved

	2002-2003		2003-2004	
	No. of Basties	Amount (Rs. in lacs)	No. of Basties	Amount (Rs. in lacs)
1. For construction of Nali/Brick pavement/C.C. path/Pre-mix roads	81	1280	170	2490
2. For construction/re-construction/repair of Chaupal/Dharmshala	14	172	20	396

Department for the Welfare of SC/ST/OBC/Minorities

GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI, B BLOCK, 2ND FLOOR, VIKAS BHAWAN, ITO, NEW DELHI

DIP/836/2003

Weather

Morning mist or fog. Mainly clear sky later in the day.
 Yesterday's readings: Max temperature up to 5.30 p.m. was 23.0 (-4)
 Min temperature up to 8.30 a.m. was 10.6 (-2)
 Relative Humidity: Max 98%; Min 62%
 Relative humidity at 8.30 a.m.: 98% (+20) and at 5.30 p.m.: 77% (+19);
 Rainfall: nil
 Hooghly river tides at Garden Reach:
 Jan 8: Low water 10.48 am 1.65 mt
 Jan 8: High water 2.23 pm 4.28 mt
 Jan 9: Low water 10.36 pm 1.33 mt
 Jan 9: High water 2.46 am 4.74 mt
 Sun sets today at 5.08 pm; rises tomorrow at 6.19 am

Moon rises today at 5.43 pm; sets tomorrow at 7.39 am
 Last quarter of moon on 15 January

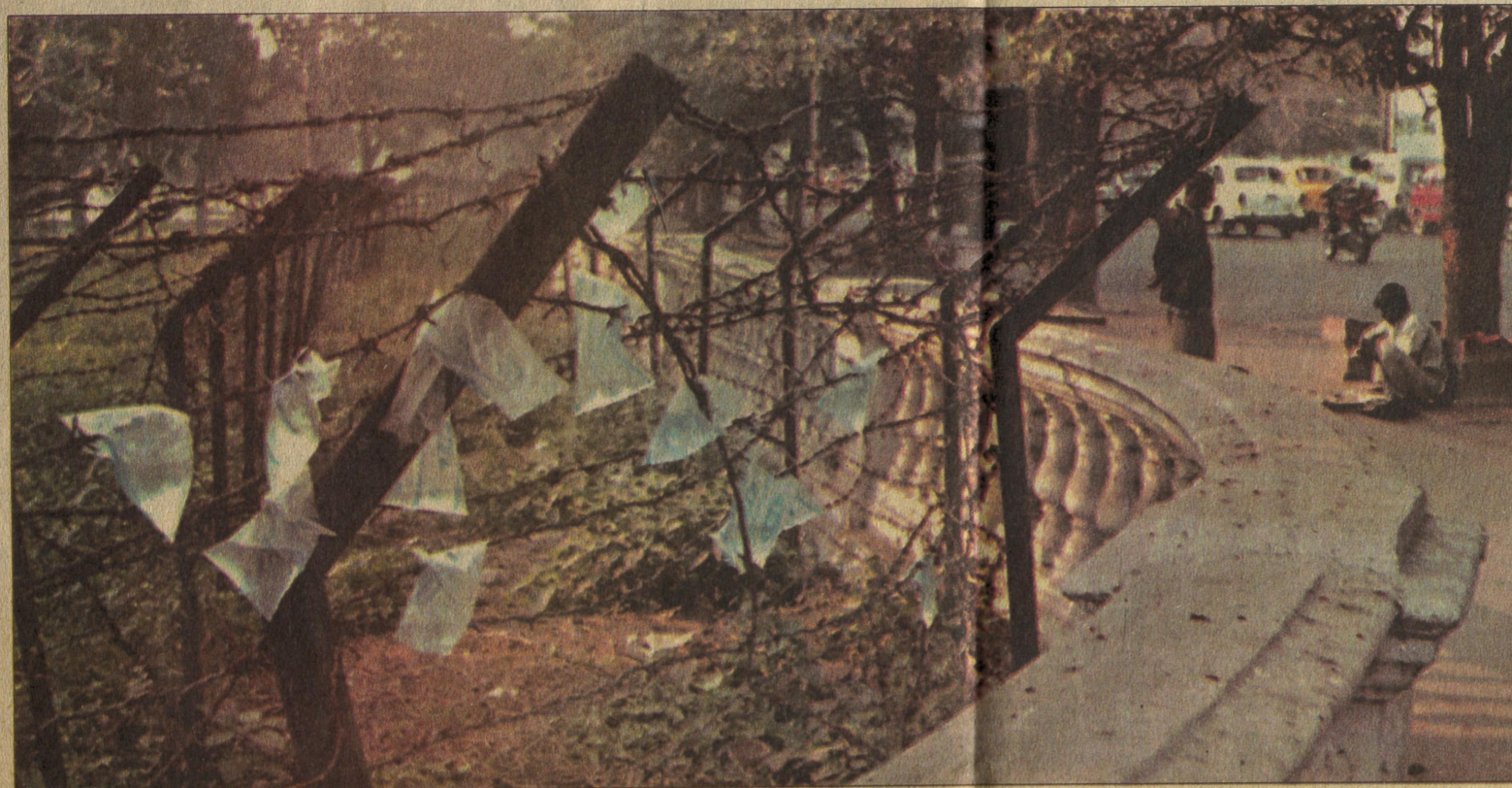
kolkata BRIEFS

Girl murdered

The body of an unidentified eight-year-old girl was found in an abandoned factory in Taratolla police station area in Kolkata on Wednesday. She was strangled.

Shootout

A woman and her daughter were shot at in her Girish Park residence this evening. Two persons asked for Ms Kamala Arora's husband and when she was about to call him, shot her and her daughter Puja, 15, who was also in the room. Both are receiving treatment.



NON-DEGRADABLE DEFIANCE: Plastic pouches flutter on the barbed wire boundary of the Victoria Memorial where plastic bags are banned. — Bijoy Sengupta

Govt looks out for missing Pak men

Satrajit Mohtra in Kolkata

Jan. 7. — The state home department has issued look-out notices for 288 Pakistani nationals who are reported to be either illegally residing in the state or have remained untraced after their arrival in West Bengal. All of them entered the state over the last five years on short-term visas but failed to go back to Pakistan.

State home secretary Mr Amit Kiran Deb told The Statesman that the look-out notices were issued following a recent Union home ministry directive to trace all the missing Pakistani nationals across the country as quickly as possible.

"Instructions have been given to the state Intelligence Branch and the Special Branch of the Kolkata Police to find out 288 Pakistani nationals who had entered West Bengal and stayed on even after the expiry of their visas," he said.

Pakistani nationals are required by law to report to the Special Branch immediately after their arrival in Kolkata.

They are also required to report to the Special Branch at the time of departing from the state or country, failing which they are prosecuted under the Foreigners Act.

The home department, however, is not sure whether these Pakistani nationals, who failed to report to the police about their departure, used West

■ 288 Pakistani nationals had entered West Bengal and stayed on even after the expiry of their visas

■ State Intelligence Branch and the Special Branch of the Kolkata Police have been instructed by the Union home ministry to look for them

Bengal as a corridor to other states where there are reports of increasing Inter Services Intelligence activities. "The intelligence agencies are assessing all possibilities," Mr Deb said.

It is also learnt that the IB had recently submitted a report to the state home department in which the Special Branch was criticised for its failure to trace the missing Pakistani nationals who were reported missing over the past five years.

"Efforts are already on to trace the missing Pakistan nationals. Once the illegal immigrants are caught, they will be prosecuted under the Foreigners Act and subsequently deported," Mr Deb said, hinting the issue was a serious one.

It bears recall that recently, Mohammed Dilshad, a Pakistani national having direct links with the ISI, was arrested from Siliguri in North Bengal while taking photographs of vital installations of Army and Air Force bases. Investigations revealed that Dilshad had arrived in the state on a tourist visa.

Suit over unplanned development

KOLKATA, Jan. 7. — A writ petition complaining of unplanned development of Santiniketan and faulty development projects of the Santiniketan and Santiniketan Development Authority was filed by environmentalist Mr Subhas Dutta in Calcutta High Court today. The petition warned that if the so-called development projects of SSDA were implemented, there would be environmental, educational and cultural degradation of Santiniketan. Though the SSDA was set up 14 years ago, under the West Bengal Town and

Country (planning and development) Act of 1979, no land use map had been prepared by it as yet, the petition said. Even the land in the Khoai, which is the natural drainage for that area, was being sold or leased out to developers. No environment impact assessment has yet been made and no environmental clearance obtained from the State Pollution Control Board and the state environment department. The Union and the state government have been made respondents. — Our Legal Correspondent

Curzon Park project MoU inked

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, Jan. 7. — The much-hyped Curzon Park redevelopment project at last got something to start with this evening after a MoU for a feasibility study of the project was signed between the state PWD and a consortium of two Singapore-based infrastructure development companies and a local organisation with similar expertise.

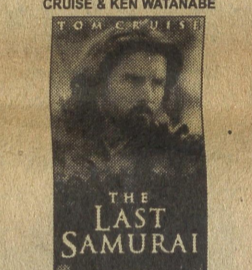
The effort was described as translation of the government's policy to encourage public-private partnership in the state's infrastructure sector.

The project involves building two floors of underground car parking space alongside a market complex beneath the park and at the same time, sprucing up and beautifying the park spread over nine acres of land. The MoU was signed by Mrs Kalyani Chowdhury, PWD secretary, and senior representatives of Subarna International, a part of the housing development board of Singapore, Sembcorp Engineers and

Constructors, a Singapore-based township and infrastructure development company and Pragati, an infrastructure solution provider from Kolkata. Mr Nirupam Sen, planning and development minister, and Mr Amar Chaudhuri, PWD minister, were also present when the MoU was signed. The consortium would submit the feasibility report within 120 days. Earlier, the overseas delegation met the chief minister, Mr Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, and reportedly talked about some future projects in which they are willing to participate.

Cinema

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "LEGENDS OF THE FALL" "GLORY" STARRING: TOM CRUISE & KEN WATANABE



RELEASING AT NEW EMPIRE - DOLBY DTS ON 5TH JAN - FRIDAY, 4 SHOWS DAILY (12-30, 3, 6, 8-30) & INOX (11-45, 1-45 & 9-55)

Samman for the right Strees

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, Jan. 7. — One is a journalist, who, over a career spanning nearly four decades, has championed the causes of women, environment and development, though not in that order. The other, a scientist researching the body's immunity to the malarial parasite, and the third, a worker for an NGO that provides opportunities to physically-challenged children.

Journalist Ms Usha Rai was awarded the Dayawati Modi Stree Shakti Samman, while the Pratima and Sucharu Chakraborty Stree Shakti Science Samman was conferred on biochemist and molecular biologist Prof Shobhona Sharma. New Alipore Anubhav, an NGO, was given the Pratima and Sucharu Chakraborty Stree Shakti Social Welfare Samman.

Having worked extensively on issues relating to Bhanwari Devi, the plight of Jain sadhvis in MP, the widows of Vrindavan and the falling sex ratio, Ms Rai, currently deputy director, Press Institute of India, today called on women journalists not to leave out women's and development issues in their quest for competitive reporting.

Presenting the awards, Governor Mr Viren J Shah



Journalist Ms Usha Rai (left) with scientist Prof. Shobhona Sharma at Raj Bhavan on Wednesday. — The Statesman

complimented Kolkata for being a city of social workers. "It's only here, that you'll find women aged between 15 and 90 committed to the cause of society and the underprivileged," he said, stressing that networking with rural NGOs was crucial for the welfare of the state. The prizes included Rs 51,000 in cash, a shawl and a citation.

Prof Sharma was awarded in recognition of her work on the immune evasive repeat regions of malarial antigens, which has been of great relevance

to public health. Anubhav, winner of the social welfare samman, runs a free school and has recently started a "Caregiver Training Program".

Stree Shakti, sponsors of the award, which is in its fifth year, has styled itself as a parallel force focussed on working for equal opportunity, self reliance, dignity and education. It has also been lobbying for establishing "Equal Opportunity Commission", "Stree Samta Ayog" to fight social, economic and political inequality.



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