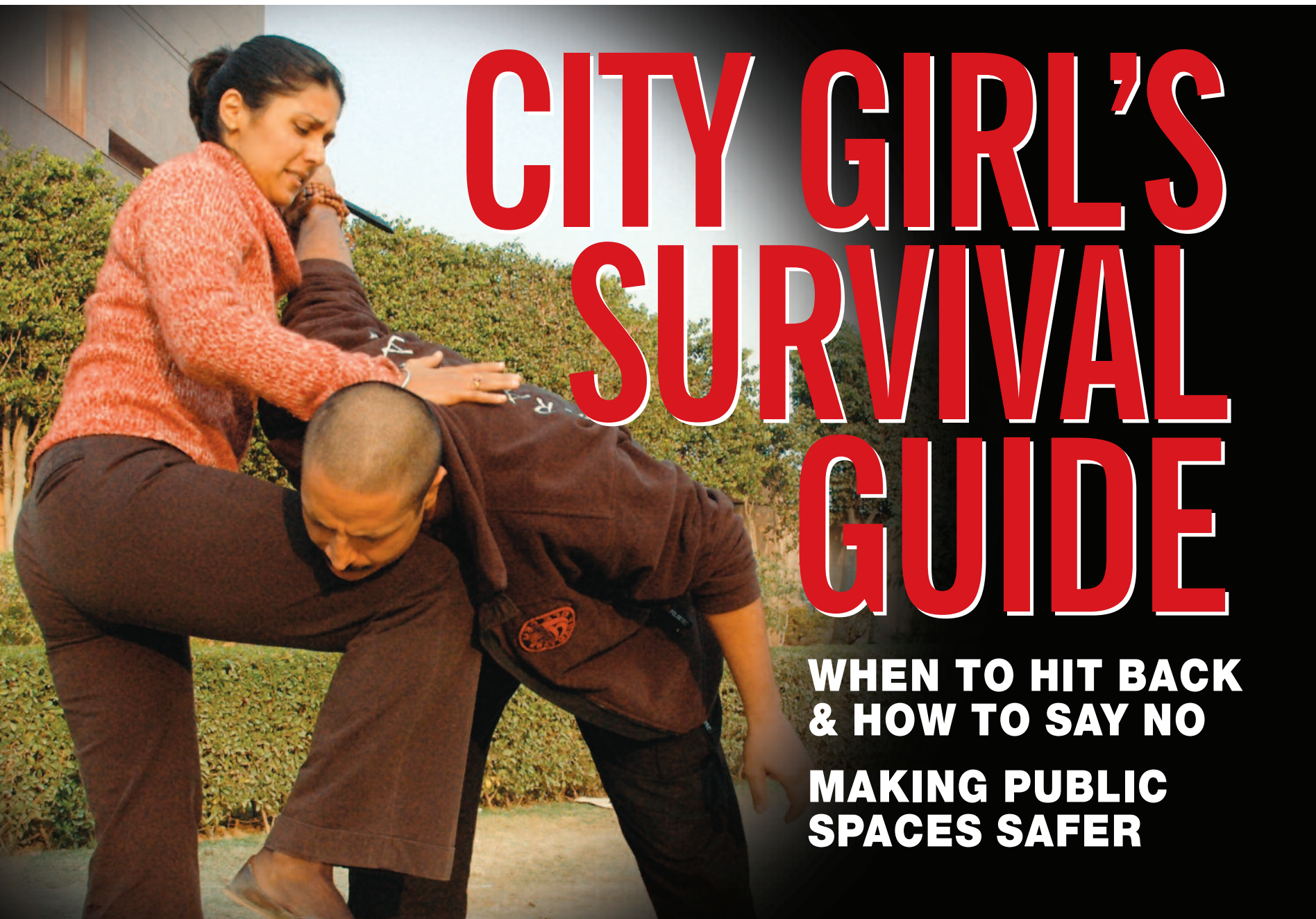




# Civil Society



## CITY GIRL'S SURVIVAL GUIDE

WHEN TO HIT BACK & HOW TO SAY NO

MAKING PUBLIC SPACES SAFER



**GREEN RATING**

**CEMENT INDUSTRY HAS FEET OF CLAY**

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# Exploration A TATA ENTERPRISE



- 1903: India's first luxury hotel.
- 1907: India's first integrated steel plant.
- 1932: India's first commercial air service.
- 1941: India's first cancer hospital.
- 1948: India's first international commercial flight.
- 1968: India's first software services company.
- 1998: India's first indigenous car.

What will the next first be?

A Century of Trust



## COVER STORY



### LEARN TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Kick-boxing or just putting your foot down, the city girl's best weapon is self-assertion. But public spaces need to be safer

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# Civil Society

## The unsafe city

RECENT years have seen more and more women enter places of work in cities. Their contribution is an under reported strength of the Indian economy. But even as women play productive and creative roles and equations with men change, harassment is a harsh reality. Every other day there are reports of violent episodes. The transition we are witnessing is clearly not without a price.

Women who may want to live alone, dress as they choose, move around at night, go to a film by themselves, drink or smoke are asking for social space that is not always available to them. There are also women who don't seek such obvious emblems of independence, but are nevertheless insecure on the street or caught in exploitative situations in their jobs.

The problem cuts across cities. No city can ever be entirely safe. It is so across the world. But for Indian women the process of coping with the challenge has only just begun. Governments and police forces can't make women feel safer beyond the point of enforcing the law. Finally change will arrive only through women defining themselves and society encouraging them to do so.

We found the Smile Foundation's workshops for girls and young women in Delhi very interesting. While learning to hit back by using martial arts is a part of the workshop, the Smile Foundation's instructors emphasise the need to build a change in attitude. Because of the demure role that they are supposed to play, Indian women mostly don't know how to say 'no', to declare that an advance is unwarranted. This is as much so within families and as on the street or in a crowded bus. So while a city girl must carry her pepper spray and knowledge of kick-boxing can be useful for fending off criminals, she should also know how to keep asserting herself through gestures and words. She should be able to say when a touch is welcome or makes her uncomfortable. Her equality must finally emanate from her persona.

The government, urban planners and employers, too, need to work towards making cities and offices safer. We require better street lighting. Public transport should certainly be redesigned.

The danger of doing a story like this is of sounding preachy and boring. Indian women need equality not charity. Since most violence on them centres on sex, they should above all have the right to assert their sexuality. Our position is best defined by the visual on our cover where the woman has martial arts trainer Vicky Kapoor by the neck!

Our Insight section is on the PROOF experiment in Bangalore. Residents in cities all over are fed up with poor civic governance and are insisting on transparency. PROOF is one such effort. The PROOF model has been applied with some success in education.

Another Green Rating report by the Centre for Science and Environment is available. It is on the cement industry. The Green Rating has played an important role in building creative bridges between industry and social realities. It has encouraged dialogue and made industry more responsible.

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# Mines are cement's dark secret

*But industry gets high marks for use of energy*

**Umesh Anand**  
New Delhi

SO, you've seen the ad: *Is cement mein jaan hai* (There is life in this cement). Now get the inside story.

A green rating of the cement industry done by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) gives it high scores for low greenhouse gas emissions and efficient use of energy in production processes.

But that is just a part of the true picture. The mining practices of the industry are feudal and there is very little that it gives back to communities

*The Green Rating Project on the cement industry has gone deep into the question of mining. What have you found?*

We assessed 36 limestone mines in nine states of India. Most of them are in backward areas. Everywhere we found discontent in local communities about mining. We found virtually no regulation of mining activity.

The regulators consider each mine unique and therefore each mine is regulated differently. There is a multiplicity of regulators. For instance, air pollution is under the state pollution control boards, but the mines themselves come under the Indian

Gujarat Ambuja plant in Gujarat.

Here there is surface mining, which means that there is no dust and pollution. A huge part of the mining area is given to local communities for pastures. Gujarat Ambuja realised that they could not give people jobs. So they gave transportation contracts for the mines to the local people. It is possible to do such things and there is a need for the government to get companies to be socially conscious.

Instead what is happening is that politicians and bureaucrats get together to bend the rules for industry. In Himachal, for instance, there is a rush to set up cement plants and it has the encouragement of the state government. The same mistake that was made in the Doon valley is being made in Himachal.

*All this does not speak too well of the corporate sector.*

Of course it does not. But why should we expect anything from our corporate sector when so much is wrong with our governance. This is a question we kept asking ourselves. Very few people gain from a cement plant. It provides no jobs. The environment suffers. It is the politician who takes the money.

Our model of industrialisation needs to be looked at afresh. Our rating of the cement industry was an eye-opener for me. A one million tonne cement plant employs just 300 people.

*But a growing economy needs cement.*

Sure, but one-third of the cement plants are located in the 100 poorest districts in the country. I'm not saying employ more. But invest in ways which don't harm the environment and create local prosperity.

The problem we have found with limestone mining for cement is the problem with all mines.

*What is the response of the cement industry.*

They say they are creating jobs in construction. But the truth is that they don't seem to have thought about these issues at all. They have no real answer.

*Do you expect them to change?*

For a lot of them, the Green Rating was an education.

*You have given low marks to the AV Birla Group.*

The market leaders are the poor performers.

*What else did the Green Rating find?*

The Indian cement industry is one of the best in technology across the world. The reason for this is that energy accounts for 50 percent of manufacturing cost. Also, 12 percent of fly ash produced in India is used for blended cement and 53 percent of India's cement is blended. Fly ash reduces energy consumption.

So if the cost of labour is just three percent of production, and limestone three to five percent – what you have is a highly profitable industry.

This is why what we are saying is that cement companies can pay more for resources. The state does not have to subsidise this industry.



Dr MS Swaminathan releasing the report in Delhi. Chandra Bhushan looks on

from where limestone, its most important raw material, comes.

The industry in fact spends just three to five percent of its turnover on mining, but causes loss of topsoil, forest cover and depletion of groundwater.

So, while the cement industry has grown rapidly since 1989 when it was decontrolled, the fact is that its factories and mines are located in the poorest areas of the country and they have not shared in any of the industry's prosperity.

The rating found market leaders to be the worst offenders. Grasim Industries of the AV Birla Group, ACC and India Cements ranked among the poor performers.

The rating assessed 41 production units of 23 major cement producers in nine states. Together they represent 80 percent of the industry.

Madras Cements' Alathiyur Works was given the prestigious Four Leaves Award. The Gujarat plant of the Gujarat Ambuja Cement Ltd came second.

The Green Rating Project was launched by CSE under the guidance of Anil Agarwal eight years ago to serve as a tool for assessing industry and encouraging it to come to terms with environmental standards. Previous ratings of the paper and chlor alkali sectors have helped companies improve their performance. The automobile sector has also been rated.

**Chandra Bhushan**, associate director of CSE and head of the Green Rating Project since its inception spoke to Civil Society:

Bureau of Mines.

In one-third of the mines the groundwater level has been breached, sharply reducing what is available for the local communities. There is no regulation of groundwater use.

Everything seems to be determined by the need for profits. And simultaneously this is a highly subsidised industry. Limestone accounts for 80 percent of the total input and yet companies spend just three to five percent of their turnover on mining! It is the cheapest access to limestone for the industry in the world.

All mines are captive and taken on long-term leases. There are no disincentives for poor and exploitative mining practices.

We found that there is nothing for the local community in mining. This is because mining is highly mechanised and no longer needs people. Whatever little royalty is paid goes to the state exchequer and is not available at the local level for development.

Most of the mines are in areas characterised by poverty and destitution. The result is that no one wants to give their land for mining any more because there is nothing in it for them.

*What should be done?*

There is a need for a shift in state policy. Resources must reach local people. The interesting thing is that the cement companies can do things differently if they want to. Take the example of the



A march against inflated electricity bills at Safdarjung Enclave, South Delhi

# Answers sought in Delhi, Bangalore

Civil Society News  
New Delhi

CITIZENS in Delhi and Bangalore tried to pin down service providers on December 17 through two markedly different public initiatives.

At a public hearing in Bangalore, municipal officials answered questions about bad roads and illegal constructions, among other things, under a programme called PROOF or Public Record of Operations and Finance (See accompanying story).

In Delhi, on the other hand, angry citizens took to the streets, marching a symbolic 100 metres to protest over the problems of power supply.

In Bangalore the government was in the dock and the municipal commissioner was at hand to face criticisms and offer explanations.

In Delhi, residents were upset that privatisation in the power sector had failed them. The target of their anger was the Anil Ambani-controlled BSES, which runs two key distribution companies.

In both cities, citizens were looking for transparency and accountability. They wanted to be treated as active participants in governance.

Which method works better? The genteel hearing or the noisy slogans amidst the disruption of traffic?

Well, the jury is out on that one because the citizens marching in Delhi on December 17 say they were pushed to it since no one was willing to listen to them.

Delhi's problems with power privatisation relate to irrationally high bills, continuing power cuts and poor service, forcible installation of electronic meters and a decision earlier this year to hike charges by another 10 per cent. (See *Middle Class Anger*, *Civil Society* Sept.).

Under a privatised regime, the problems of consumers should have been easily settled by the regulator, who under the law is supposed to hold open hearings. It is also the regulator's job to capacity-build with consumers and take the advice of independent experts.

In Delhi none of all this happened. Consumers who went to the regulator were fobbed off and there are colourful tales of how they hung around waiting while the regulator lunched and gossiped with company officials.

Interestingly, the people marching on December 17 belonged to the Joint Front of Residents' Welfare Associations, a grouping believed to be rather soft on the Sheila Dikshit government.



Citizens at the Bangalore hearing

## Bangalore residents use PROOF

Civil Society News  
Bangalore

A public hearing on December 17 saw residents asking the Bangalore municipal authorities to explain expenditure on the management of the city. The residents were particularly unhappy with the civic collapse after the recent rains, illegal buildings and plans to raise property taxes.

The hearing, which brought the residents face to face with senior officials, including the Commissioner of the Bangalore Mahanagar Palike (BMP), was held on the platform of PROOF, which stands for Public Record of Operations and Finance.

Municipal officials who tried to suggest that Bangalore was better off than other cities such as Chennai touched a raw nerve with residents saying not enough had been done to restore roads, clear garbage and so on.

### INSIGHT

Understand the PROOF model  
Pages 20-23



Posters denouncing power privatisation in Delhi



(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Illegal constructions were also a sore point because they impose untold pressures on infrastructure and make a mockery of zoning regulations. Demolitions are being planned, but residents were of the view that this is not enough. Municipal officials who had allowed the violations

to be committed in the first place had to be brought to book.

PROOF was established by the Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF). A government – private sector partnership – BATF initiated various programmes to upgrade Bangalore's infrastructure and systems with the application of IT, GIS, and modern man-

agement tools. One successful outcome was the development of a Fund Based Accounting System (FBAS) that enabled accurate and timely tracking of all financial transactions in the BMP.

Over the last three years, PROOF has organised eight public discussions with the BMP participating in each of them. These debates have given citizens an opportunity to analyse and clarify issues related to BMP's financial performance.

PROOF is supported by various organisations such as Janagraha, VOICES and the Akshara Foundation. It has been the inspiration for the recently launched National Urban Renewal Mission (NURM) at the Centre. An NGO called Yuva seeks to replicate PROOF in Nagpur and wants to take it to other cities in Maharashtra.

PROOF works at various levels. Janagraha implements it in the wards of Bangalore where how often a road is repaired or whether a garbage dump actually got built comes under scrutiny.

The Akshara Foundation uses PROOF in education to monitor the government schooling system: playgrounds, separate toilets for girls and so on.

Does PROOF really make a difference or is it some kind of middle class fantasy of intervening in governance?

Vinay Kohli, a retired IAS officer who chose to settle in Bangalore, puts it well: "You see, it is entirely voluntary. The municipality does not have to share its accounts with us. We have persuaded them to do so in the hope that dialogue and collaboration will finally yield results. As yet there is no law that defines this mechanism. We are in that sense ahead of our times. No purpose will be served by sitting on *dharna* in front of the commissioner's office. It is better to build accountability through public discourse."

## Demolitions are being planned in Bangalore, but residents were of the view that this is not enough. Municipal officials who had allowed the violations to be committed in the first place had to be brought to book.



People came armed with questions to the PROOF hearing in Bangalore

## Sanjoy Ghose Humanitarian Award for Story Writing 2005-06

Sanjoy Ghose, a social activist and visionary, founded Charkha Development Communication Network on October 24, 1994.

For the past two years, Charkha had been awarding fellowships to writers / journalists from Jammu and Kashmir under the "Charkha-Sanjoy Ghose Fellowship for Peace and Development".

This year, a devastating earthquake hit different parts of Jammu and Kashmir on October 8, resulting in colossal loss of life and property. In keeping with the guiding principles of Charkha, we undertook relief activities in five villages (located in the districts of Kupwara and Badgam) of Kashmir with the help of our local coordinator, Hamraz of Naya Kashmir Hamraz Social Service Club.

Charkha considered it more appropriate to announce the "Sanjoy Ghose Humanitarian Award for Story Writing 2005-06" instead of the regular fellowships for peace and development in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. There will be five awards of Rs.5000/- each for the five best stories on efforts by local communities to cope with life after the earthquake and also in assisting others in re-establishing lives.

### Objective:

- ❖ To celebrate those exemplary community efforts and initiatives, which are helping to revive the battered lives of the earthquake victims.
- ❖ To generate and disseminate positive stories about the efforts of the people of Kashmir who have suffered on account of the natural disaster.

### Eligibility Criteria:

- ❖ The award is open to residents of Jammu and Kashmir, writing in English / Urdu / Hindi
- ❖ Each applicant must send a minimum of three published / unpublished articles (from October 2005 - March 31, 2006).
- ❖ Each article should be between 500 - 2000 words. (For unpublished articles, the ideal word length is 1000 words.)

### General:

- ❖ There will be five awards of Rs.5,000/- each. Each applicant is eligible for not more than one award.
- ❖ Charkha will have the right to use / reproduce wholly or partly the articles generated by the "Sanjoy Ghose Humanitarian Award for Story Writing 2005-06" in any of its publications without any additional payments.
- ❖ Copyright and ownership of work will rest with the awardees.

### Application:

- ❖ Application should be submitted in English, Urdu or Hindi.
- ❖ Each applicant must include the following along with his / her application:
  - A brief curriculum vitae along with contact details of two referees
  - A minimum of three articles (preferably along with photographs)
  - Contact Address, Phone and Email

The application must reach the following address not later than 31 March, 2006:

The President,  
Charkha Development  
Communication Network,  
G 15 / 11-12, G Block,  
Malviya Nagar,  
New Delhi - 110017  
Phone / Fax 26680816,  
26680688  
charkha@bol.net.in  
www.charkha.org

A jury comprising eminent persons will choose the award-winners.



# SOS goes out in Kashmir

**Jehangir Rashid**  
Srinagar

**A**FTER the killer earthquake struck Kashmir on October 8, SOS Children's Villages of India swung into action. They realised that a tragedy of this magnitude affects women and children the most. So they got down to work and conducted a house-to-house survey in villages in Uri and Tangdhar in the Baramulla and Kupwara districts of Kashmir. SOS set up two relief camps.

They wanted to adopt 50 orphans but the state government decided to send the children to Pune. SOS workers were very upset with this decision.

"I do not understand the state government's plan to shift the children. A child feels safe and secure in his own land. A home and a family are supposed to be the best school for a child," said R N Yadav, director, SOS.

Children adopted by SOS are now living at a home in Hyderpora, Srinagar. SOS has also set up two childcare centres at Basgran and Sultan Dakki in the Uri sector. About 200 children work, play and have their meals here.

"We are taking care of children who are below six years of age. We have kept four hours a day for playing educational games, arranging alphabets and doing other activities so that they do not get bored," said Yadav. In addition, children get piping hot food.

The trauma that follows a tragedy is of huge concern. It is important that the children are protected from emotional scars.

"We have to see that they are not taken over by the gravity of the situation," said Mudasar Ahmed, a counsellor. "Keeping them busy in fun related activities would soothe their nerves and bring them back on track."

**'We have kept four hours a day for playing educational games, arranging alphabets and doing other activities so that they do not get bored.'**

Srinagar did not have an SOS village but now a full-fledged one is being built at Nawab Bagh, Ganderbal in the outskirts of the city. On September 29, former chief minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed laid its foundation stone.

"We have been asking for a plot of land to set up this village since several years. Hopefully the village will come up in two years time. Then our children will get schooling and other facilities at their doorstep," said Naushad Raza, who is in-charge, SOS Homes, Srinagar.

Right now SOS has its office at Rehmatabad, Hyderpora. They have five SOS homes in Hyderpora and Baghat. Twenty-five children are staying at the Baghat home and 17 in Hyderpora. They attend good schools like the Muslim Educational Trust, Baghat, JK Public School, Humhama and Salfia Muslim Institute, Parraypora, said Raza.

Every winter these children travel outside the state. They have visited Jammu, Delhi and Faridabad. They also travel to SOS villages in other regions of India. Children from those villages come visiting too.

Usually SOS homes take in children up to seven years of age. But in exceptional cases they admit older children. SOS recreates a family. A mother is given the sacred responsibility of bringing up the children. Every child is special for her. Mothers retire at the age of 58. They are provided a pension of Rs 8,000 and enjoy facilities like housing.

There is also an SOS village in Jammu at Gole Gujral, Talab Tiloo. About 170 children live here. The village has a secondary school where the children are enrolled. The children eat together, read books, watch television. There is a sense of caring and sharing.

The SOS has identified 400 widows. While some are elderly, there are also many young women between 25 to 35 years of age. SOS believes steps need to be taken to ensure that the women feel secure and integrated with the community.

"So far we have sponsored 100 widows. They have been provided with a kit consisting of a tent, tin sheets, warm clothes and utensils. The cost of one kit is Rs.20,000 and it has been provided so that widows don't have to beg anyone for anything. Altogether these 100 widows look after 325 children. We have decided to give Rs 500 per month per child to make sure the children do not suffer on any count," said Yadav.





**Civil Society News**  
New Delhi

**D**ELHI is an urban jungle inhabited by wolves of all shapes and sizes. You can find roadside Romeos hanging around outside colleges and schools, on buses and at street corners. Nearly every day newspapers report rapes, dowry deaths, molestations and incidents of eve-teasing.

Are other cities safer than Delhi? Marginally, perhaps. Women feel easier in Mumbai and Kolkata. They may have fewer fears in Bangalore where you can see girls out for an evening at a pub though the recent murder of a call centre employee has been cause for concern.

But everywhere new equations are being built as women enter workplaces in larger numbers and want their space respected. Cities big and small have seen many changes with women insisting on equality in professional roles. The right to dress as they want. The freedom to live alone. To be out at night. To catch a bus without worrying about wandering hands. To drink. To smoke.

"We need to assert ourselves," says Anupama Puri Kalra, chief programmes officer of Smile Foundation, a Delhi-based NGO which has recently launched a programme called Swabhiman to help women help themselves.

"Violence is not gender specific," says Anupama. "Boys get abused too. It happens because the balance of power in society or within the home is tilted in favour of the man," says Anupama. Changing society and the male mindset is a long-term prospect. However, we need to begin.

# LEARN TO PROTECT YOURSELF

***The city girl's best weapon is self-assertion but the govt must make public spaces safer***



Smile Foundation's safety and awareness campaign targets girls over 12 years of age.

They teach self-defence techniques, but the emphasis is also on building confidence and awareness among girls, sensitising men and the community to act and make the city safer.

"Our approach is holistic," says Sapna, one of their trainers, "it is best to avoid a problem. If you see danger approaching try to side step it. If you are being harassed take a deep breath, think quickly how to get out of the situation. As a last resort use your physical strength and strike at the man's weakest points."

Smile Foundation's trainers conduct workshops for schools, colleges, NGOs and companies. Each module takes four to six hours and can be covered in a single day.

At a workshop they conducted for girls brought together by Nav Srishti, an NGO which works on education and empowerment of girls in Delhi's underserved areas, trainer Kiran urged the girls to speak up.

She talked about how girls are discriminated against at home and acted out different scenarios showing the girls how they could defend themselves using dupattas, pens, umbrellas or the corner of a book.

10 things you can do to feel safer and more secure:



Trainer Kiran (middle) at the Smile Foundation's Swabhiman workshop

## Kiran urged the girls to speak up. She acted out different scenarios and showed the girls how they could defend themselves using dupattas, pens, umbrellas or the corner of a book.

- **Body language counts:** Why does an eve-teaser think twice before molesting a woman who looks aggressive and confident? It's her body language. So look people in the eye. Walk with confidence. Dressing in western clothes does not make you more vulnerable to eve-teasers. In a survey done by Smile Foundation most men said they were wary of approaching girls dressed in trousers and shirts. They were more likely to tease or molest girls who looked shy and dressed traditionally.
- **Always speak up:** Remember you are not the only girl who is harassed by men. Women, between 11 and 45, are most often harassed. So don't be shy. You can solve problems by talking with family and friends. "There is nothing private or confidential about violence and abuse," says Anupama. Voice matters, so speak clearly and firmly.
- **Learn to say no:** Not objecting or remaining silent is often interpreted as consent. At the same time, don't get into a slanging match. Be firm when you say no.

React if an older family member misbehaves with you. Move away and keep a distance from the relative. Look at his hand and then look him in the eye. Tell your parents about the incident. Say you don't like it. Keep yourself away from the relative. Make sure you are never alone in a room with him and don't ever go out alone with him.

- **Tackle the stalker:** If you are walking alone and a man is following you, stop. Turn around and ask him to go ahead. Be certain he is following you by slowing down or pretending to tie your shoes. Always walk on the pavement (wherever it exists) at a distance from the road. This will prevent men in a car from dragging you in. Try to walk towards the traffic and not with it.
- **Tackle a crowded bus:** Fight for a seat in the ladies section of the bus you travel in. If a man tries to get close, explain loudly to him how he should stand. If he tries to touch you, react by stamping your foot hard on his. You can poke him sharply with your elbow or you can twist his arm. But do avoid travelling alone in a bus.
- **Attack the weakest point.** You can kick a man who tries to molest you in the groin. Poke him in the eye with your finger. If you have an umbrella, strike him with that. Other common instruments that can be used are the corner of your book or even a pen or pencil.

LAKSHMAN ANAND

Tighten your fist and deliver a hard punch with your knuckles.

Remember it is easiest and most effective to grab a man from the back by his collar and then kick him.

- **Tell your child:** Inform your children that there are certain ways in which people can touch them. There are places on your body that should not be touched by older relatives or strangers. There is a 'bad' touch and a 'good' touch.

- **Don't be one of the boys:** In office, value your personal space. Make it clear you don't want somebody to get personal with you. Don't listen to bad jokes and cheap comments. Object.

- **Be in touch:** When you are going out late or attending a party, don't accept a drop home with somebody you are uncomfortable with or a stranger. Leave at a decent time.

Don't drink too much. If you are taking a taxi or auto-rickshaw home call up your folks and inform them about the taxi/auto-driver's number.

- **Home alone:** When you are alone at home and somebody rings the doorbell, ask who it is before opening the door. If it's a plumber or an electrician you might be safer asking them to come another day. Make an excuse. Value your privacy: Don't talk openly about yourself and your family to everybody. If a stranger phones you, be wary about divulging details about yourself.

Anupama emphasises that girls should be confident. But how can girls who are shy become assertive? "Knowing you can defend yourself and control a situation can give you confidence," says Dr Bhavna Barmi, a clinical psychologist with the Escorts Heart Institute and Research Centre, New Delhi. Barmi works with Smile Foundation and with Mindtrack, an organisation for women with mental illness.

## Attacked in the park



## Your bag is snatched



# How to hit when you can't even think

**Shailey Hingorani**  
New Delhi

**W**HAT can a woman do when she is attacked by a man twice her size? Most often she is conditioned to scream for help, hoping against hope that somebody will rescue her. Or perhaps she would try to run away as fast as she can. In the midst of an attack it would be hard for her to decide. So always have a plan ready and be prepared for any eventuality.

Here is where Vicky's School of Oriental Arts can help you. This school offers a Krav Maga training programme. Krav Maga is an Israeli system of self-defence, fighting skills and defensive tactics. It is modern and practical. The training course is constantly updated keeping new realities in mind. It is based on self-defence experiences.

Krav Maga trains students to fight with full-force in a state of adrenalin rush. Their techniques are engrained in 'muscle memory' so that even if your mind is in shock your body can respond appropriately. A key element of self-defence is teaching a woman to gain control of the situation so that she can assert herself and fight back rather than struggle.

This programme works with natural body reflexes. If you are touched in a particular way, your body will respond on its own. In this sense the Krav Maga programme is different from traditional approaches that have been adopted towards women's safety.

Trainers don't encourage

women to run away. They try to instill a change in attitude while teaching self-defence techniques. Says Vikram Kapoor, Chief Instructor of the school, "I think it empowers women and makes them believe that they are not at the mercy of other people to protect them." Vijaya Singh,

LAKSHMAN ANAND



**Krav Maga trains students to fight with full-force in a state of adrenalin rush. Their techniques are engrained in 'muscle memory' so that even if your mind is in shock your body can respond.**

a student who has undergone training adds, "This course is about learning to take responsibility of our own bodies."

The course is divided into five units. Each takes about three months to master. The course equips you with techniques to deal with any kind of eventuality. Every scenario is played out and women are taught how to deal with it. "It also teaches verbal and physical boundary setting skills to prevent many assaults from becoming physical in the first place," says Vikram. It has been designed to defeat a much larger and stronger attacker.

Vikram goes on to give examples "We teach our students to deal with bedroom attacks, escape safely from a car-jacking attempt, protect themselves from common mugging attacks etc."

The course has got some great response. People of all ages, shapes and sizes have flocked to join in. Neha, a journalist says, "Apart from instilling personal discipline learning Krav Maga has made me more aware of my surroundings. Instead of being helpless earlier I can now face each day and situation with renewed confidence and belief in myself."

Like many good things in life this too has a price tag. They charge a fee of Rs 2,100 per month.

*(Continued on page 9)*

"Do an analysis of yourself. What are your strengths and weaknesses? What are the opportunities you have and what are the threats?" she says. "Work with your strengths and minimise the threats."

Verbal abuse is so common that 60 percent of women even justify it. But it can cause depression, stress and lower self-esteem. Improving a girl's self-worth begins from within the family or 'growing up right', says Dr Barmi.

Parents must believe in gender equality and cast aside notions that girls are weaker and boys stronger. They can boost the self-confidence of daughters by informing them of their rights, and encouraging them to take part in sports and other physical activities.

Boys should also understand the consequences of their actions. Dr Barmi suggests that schools and colleges work towards creating peer groups among boys who think differently and encourage others to change their attitude to girls.

Delhi's miserable male-female ratio indicates that par-

ents have a lot to learn. Here the school can step in. "Sex education really helps," says Heenu Singh, executive director of Salaam Balak Trust. They have worked out a sex education syllabus for their children, and they use entertainment as a medium to reach out.

The trust runs two shelters for boys and one for girls. Salaam Balak Trust found that their boys grew up to be caring individuals, proud of their families. Heenu relates how one of them faced marital problems later in life. He opted for counselling and not violence.

But whatever NGOs and independent social activists might achieve, the safety of women is also an issue of governance. Safer public spaces depend on good urban planning which takes into account the well being of women and children. Well lit streets, wide pavements, efficient and safe public transport, are just some of the issues legislators and administrators need to address.

Self-assertion by women is good, but women also need a helping hand from their communities and the government. The sooner this happens, the better.

# A park is not just a male space

**Vidya Viswanathan**  
New Delhi

JAGORI, a Delhi based non-profit, has launched a 'Safe Delhi' campaign to make the city safe for women and finally a caring city for all. "This is not a women's issue. It is everybody's responsibility. The community should take it on. If women are violated, it is a reflection on this society," says Kalpana Viswanath, coordinator at Jagori.

Newspapers in the city are replete with stories on crimes against women. Resignedly people say Delhi is a 'macho' city and nothing can be done about it.

But Jagori is trying to break that assumption.

Since July this year Jagori has completed safety audits of 22 public spaces in the city including railways stations, shopping localities, residential areas, resettlement colonies, the Metro and Delhi University.

In the first week of December, Jagori held a consultation with several stakeholders including the police, urban planners, the National Association for the Blind, academia, resident welfare associations (RWAs), media and NGOs.

The idea of conducting safety audits came about after Jagori wrote the safety section of a Human Development Report (HDR) on Delhi that was published as part of a UNDP programme. Jagori interviewed about 14,000 people and safety emerged as a key concern. Nearly 50 percent of women said they considered themselves unsafe in the city. A whopping 90 percent of women commuters felt unsafe in public transport and 45 percent felt insecure in their workplace.

Jagori started auditing localities to see safety through the eyes of the ordinary citizen. They sent out teams of at least four women to different areas.

The audit looks at infrastructure and people. Jagori examined street lighting, pavements, subways, access to PCOs, police presence, access to police control vans, security guards and signages. They also looked for places where women felt uncomfortable because there were too many men hanging around. In several areas like Vasant Kunj, Sarita Vihar and Bawana people from the community walked around with the team.

What were the issues of safety? "They are the same across the city," says Surabi Mehrotra Tandon, a social researcher with Jagori. Bad pavements mean a woman cannot run if she feels at risk. Lack of pavements force women to walk on roads from where they can be dragged into speeding vehicles. Often residential colonies are well lit but the bus stop and road to it from the colony feels very unsafe. There are large sections of the city that are unlit.

However, safety issues depend on whose safety is being talked about. For example, in Sarita Vihar, a middle-class colony designed by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), the women felt safe. But there is a nearby urban village called Ali Gaum where domestic helpers who work in Sarita Vihar homes live. These women return home at about 8:30 pm after finishing their chores. They said they felt very unsafe because they had to walk past a main road where rickshaw pullers hung around. There were also *paan* and booze shops that are hangouts for men. The women had to walk through a large unlit stretch of land that connected the two colonies.

Surabi points out safety depends on the time of day too. Schoolgirls who had to cross Nehru Place, a commercial complex, early in the morning, felt very unsafe and were often harassed because the area was deserted. In New Delhi railway station the platforms where the Rajdhani train left from were well lit. But the others were not. The end of each platform was often dark and deserted. Men bathed there. The underpasses were also male dominated.

What would be the outcome of this audit? To begin with it gets the community to think about safety as an issue. Jagori also wants several communities to take these as an example and conduct audits of their own. In one of the panel discussions organised by the Women's Press Club, Radhika Roy a sociology

professor in Delhi University presented a safety audit that she had done of Greater Kailash – I where she resides.

In the short term, Jagori thinks that communities should take up infrastructure issues with local authorities. According to Kalpana, social issues can be handled by communities. "If there is a *paan* shop and youth behave in a certain way you can engage with them. "It is a matter of their socialisation. You need to educate them about how to treat women," she says.

Ashok Lall, a prominent Delhi architect and the Dean of Studies in the TVB School of Habitat, feels that design interventions can improve safety. "Safety is of two kinds. One is from crime and the other accidents," he says.

LAKSHMAN ANAND



He points out that lighting narrow lanes leading to homes, footpaths and parks is more important than lighting roadways. He says it is time that the Delhi State, MCD and PWD coordinated their work. They should have a common design cell that looks at the city from a users point of view. Competent people and not engineers should man the design cell.

"Today Mother Dairy puts up a booth, then the electricity board puts up a lamp post, the municipal corporation puts up a rubbish dump, a service provider digs for telephones and the police put up a traffic light. There has to be a design cell that is well trained in public and pedestrian space. The residents

welfare association (RWA) or the public can interface with that cell," he explains.

Lall is a member of the Delhi Urban Arts Council (DUAC) and sums up the opinion of the council. He says that a city cannot be safe unless there is an efficient mass rapid transport system. He points out that the Metro itself is safe but access to the Metro is unsafe. People have to walk to the nearest Metro station for about 15 to 20 minutes. Roads leading to the Metro, for about three kilometres, should be pedestrian friendly.

"Every college in Delhi University has raised its walls to over eight feet recently," he points out. "This makes the road outside very unsafe. If you have to keep people out, you can put up fences but there has to be visibility and audibility," he says. The DUAC realises the need for a definition of safety and quality of life. But the new Master Plan of Delhi talks only about quantity – how the population is likely to grow and how much land the government has to provide. However Lall is optimistic. This Master Plan has created more discussion than ever.

As for crime, Sagar Preet Hooda, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP) who took part in the discussions with Jagori says: "Crime occurs after various agencies like the family, neighbourhood, education and society have failed."

Hooda points out that sexual assaults on women occur because the male child thinks he has to prove his identity – that he is a man while girls are taught to avoid, ignore and not be aggressive. There is also no stigma attached with particular acts of men.

The Delhi Police have started 'social training' in north-west Delhi in a programme called Parivartan. They have been working with several NGOs like Jagran and the Manav Foundation. The police are conducting pantomimes and street plays in north-west Delhi's crime prone areas to create awareness on domestic violence, girl child abuse and parenting. They have also been organising lectures in schools, holding competitions and providing legal aid.

The Delhi police have put women constables on patrol since August this year. These women constables ask local women directly what their problems are so that they can get to know about domestic violence and other kinds of abuse taking place in the locality.

"No number of PCR vans will help," says Hooda. "The police force cannot stop crime. We have to change the patriarchal system and the male chauvinistic attitude. A park is not a male space. All public spaces have to be safe for the handicapped, children, the aged and for women," he adds.

# TRACKING DOWN INDIA'S



After her mother's death, Savita's father got a woman from Bengal for himself. Later, he married Savita off, fully aware of the role she'd have to play in a family of three unmarried brothers.



Sixteen years after the birth of the youngest of her seven daughters, 53-year old Rani had a son. Villagers say she went into hiding during her pregnancy, suggesting that she may have 'bought' this child even though she already has a 12-year old grandson.



The woman smoking the hookah is the mother of Satbir, a handicapped man with little land. A man in his situation usually has to pay a lot of money to find a bride from another state. So he settled for Sonia, a widow who brought along her son from her first marriage.

20-year old Chandni's neighbours brought her from Orissa to 'help' her settle in Delhi. Instead, she was married off to Jabbar, a 70-year old widower with six daughters who lives in a village in Haryana with his 60-year old bachelor brother. Chandni is being treated well for now as her husband has found out she is carrying a son.



While sex selection is rampant among the well-to-do, it's the landless and those without jobs who bear the brunt. Finding it difficult to get a local bride, Dheeru, a 40-year old truck driver, arranged for two girls from Orissa for his younger brothers. He then got himself an 18-year old Bengali girl. It is alleged that he often finds brides for his bachelor friends, but for a price.



Married at the age of 13, Rajbala's reproductive journey began six months later. At the age of 27, she is pregnant again, even though the youngest of her six daughters is barely five months old. Misdiagnosed by an ultrasound technician in the past, this time she can only pray that her mother-in-law's insistence for a male child is fulfilled. For now, she dresses her girls up as boys.

# MISSING WOMEN



Sukhvinder is the wife of Hardam Singh, the only married brother among five siblings. Since the family had limited land holdings, the other brothers found it difficult to get proposals of marriage. Once Sukhvinder joined the family, she had to look after the needs of all five men. Her son will now inherit the land owned jointly by the brothers.



When Kalpa got pregnant for the seventh time, after having six daughters, her husband threw her out accusing her of being a girl-bearing wretch. She gave birth to her seventh daughter on the streets. The baby died. Kalpa now shares quarters with mentally unstable women at a short-stay shelter. Her husband remarried.



Bani has conceived 11 times till date. Five pregnancies ended in miscarriages. Six of her daughters are alive. She is too poor to opt for sex-selective techniques, but continues to try for a boy though she has been medically advised against it.

Jaspreet is married to the eldest brother in a family of five. For a while, she had to look after the other four, as the family didn't have adequate land to show for all. In time, this arrangement allowed them to purchase more land and the middle brother got married to Veena. The two women now run adjoining homes, and take care of the remaining single brothers between them.



Faced with a shortage of women, only one or two brothers manage to get married by showing their combined land as a single brother's share. Women end up as 'Draupadis' like Kulwant Kaur in this pix

## Through Ruhani's lens, darkly



PHOTO journalist Ruhani Kaur picked up her camera and travelled through Punjab and Haryana to shoot India's invisible women. A fellowship from the National Foundation for India gave her the freedom to explore this sensitive and painful subject.

Nearly 35 million females are missing in India. Female foeticide is rampant in the killing fields of Haryana and Punjab. Girls are destroyed in the womb. Some die as infants. Women ruin their health and peace of mind in their desperation to have a male child.

The result is a shortage of women in the north. But society has not changed. Women are compelled to add to the famine of daughters by producing more sons. There aren't enough women left to marry any more. As the number of bachelors grows, men buy women from the eastern states of Orissa, West Bengal and Jharkhand. Sometimes these vulnerable women are shared by brothers. The family in the north is beginning to crack.

Ruhani's pictures are stark and heart wrenching. Each tells a story. Of women longing for a male heir. Of women bought and sold. Of women crying out for attention to their plight. Of a society badly in need of a changed mindset.

A freelance photographer, Ruhani has worked with 'Down to Earth' magazine. Her camera has pictured the victims of endosulphan contamination, tribal politics in Jharkhand, industrial areas of Aligarh and slaughterhouses. She has worked with 'Voices Unabridged' (a New York-based website on women and human rights), Helpage India, the Aga Khan Foundation, Greenpeace, Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, Little Magazine and Discover India, among others. During her stint with 'First City' magazine, she profiled many authors, artists, spiritual thinkers and the nightlife of Delhi.

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# Small press grows up in the US



Aashti Bhartia

**A**S Warner Inc. gobbles up Time magazine and prints the latest Warner Brothers animation character on its front cover, it seems that the mass media has become a cartoon mouthpiece of corporate interests. Time-Warner, HarperCollins, owned by Star's Rupert Murdoch, and Random House are some of the big names that control a web of publishing labels. Of course, there's nothing wrong about books being published by them.

But too much reliance on big media houses does limit the spread of writers with perspectives that may not have mass market credentials. In recent years 50,000 small and independent press publishers with low operating costs are making their presence felt in the US market. Publisher's Weekly estimates that over 7,000 new publishers enter the market every year.

Some may close shop soon after opening and others get by on shoestring budgets. But the rest have inched their way into bookstore shelves. Barnes and Nobles, the mega-chain of bookstores in the US, notes that sales from the top 10 publishers declined to 46 percent from 76 percent in three years. The shift has been to small, independent and university presses.

Before 1980 the pioneers of the small press tradition were writers like Virginia Woolf, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Thomas Paine. They published their own work for a part, if not all, their lives.

Before the age of personal computers, small publishers met at book fairs and festivals to mingle, exchange trade-tips, and build relationships with booksellers for direct consignment orders.

Small publishers' co-ops were formed to bring down the cost of printing and distribution. Publishers worked together to sponsor readings at bookstores, libraries, coffee shops and to get funds from arts councils. Some made their money as teachers at universities, helping to secure funds for independent publishing on the side.

The small press-publishing world was, on the whole, more like an arts community than a business. Even the feel of the small press book – its paper quality, typeset, binding, and size – were markedly different from books produced by mainstream publishing houses.

Since then, small press publishing has become a business in its own right. The look and feel of these publications and their distribution methods are beginning to resemble the big publishing houses. As a result, small publishers are capturing readers outside the arts publishing network.

Founded in 1984, The Small Press Center works for cooperation and community among small press publishers. With two full time staff and some volunteers, the Center puts together an annual book fair. It also organises readings, conferences and workshops for aspiring and current publishers and writers.

On 3 and 4 December, the 2005 Small and Independent Press Book Fair

was held across three floors of the library of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, at 20 West 44 Street, New York. Together with publisher's stalls, and author readings, the fair featured thirteen discussion forums like 'The Politics of Culture: The Role of City Government in Local Culture,' 'The Left is Right: The Rise of Independent Media,' 'Tips on How to Get a Literary Agent and Publisher,' 'Is Blogging Dead? A Session on e-literary culture,' 'The U.S. in Iraq: A Discussion on Interventionism through media,' 'Zines: Independent Media Publication in a Corporate Media World,' and 'Captured: A Look at DIY and Transgressive Lower East Film'.

Publishers at the fair ranged from the activist, the feminist, and the eponymous 'disruptive.'

The New Press, established in 1990, aims to "provide ideas and viewpoints under-represented in the mass media." The issues it has tackled include race relations, education reform, immigration and labor rights, cultural criticism and international literature with books in African American, Asian American, Latino, gay and lesbian and Native American studies.

Since 1992, this not-for-profit has published over 200 books. Annual sales have touched three million dollars. Together with regular distribution, the New Press reaches out to libraries, museums, radio and television programmes, theatre and historical societies, and other arts groups.

They have also received many awards, notable books listings and financial support from over 40 private foundations.

Commercially successful authors like Marguerite Duras, John Leonard, Studs Terkel and the people's historian Howard Zinn have chosen to publish with the New Press.

Some titles in the New Press aisle included 'Speaking of Empire and Resistance' conversations with Tariq Ali; 'Al Qaeda and What it Means to be Modern' by John Gray, 'The Cold War and the University: Towards an Intellectual History of the Post-War Years' by Noam Chomsky, Ira Katznelson et al; and 'A People's History of the United States' by Howard Zinn.

The Feminist Press, established in 1970, is a non-profit literary and educational Press. It was founded at the City University of New York to publish works "by and about women." Recently, the Press has begun to publish works by international women writers who were less likely than men to be translated and published in the US.

Books at the Feminist Press stall included 'Trini' a story of a Mexican American girl's journey on both sides of the border, by Estela Portillo Tramble, 'On Shifting Ground, Middle Eastern Women in the Global Era' edited by Fereshteh Nourae-Simone, 'Women without Men' by Shahrnush Parsipur, banned in Iran for its portrayal of women's sexuality, and 'Children of the New World, A Novel of the Algerian War' by Assia Djebar, translated from French.

There is also Disruptive Publishing, a tongue-in-cheek press with titles like 'The Diary of Mata Hari' by Mata Hari, 'Thief's Journal' by Jean Genet, and 'The Bisexual Life of Robinson Crusoe' by Humphrey Richardson.

**Sales from the top 10 publishers declined. The shift has been to small, independent and university presses.**

“Civil Society is a worthy magazine for grass  
We are regularly enriching ourselves by reading

–Usha Cho

**THE MAGAZINE EVERYONE LIKES**

# A farcical battle at WTO

WERE Jonathan Swift alive he would have had a field day lampooning the state of global affairs as they stand today. Nothing less than a farce, or a satire of epic proportions could possibly do justice to the utter disarray that presently rules our fragile planet. Perhaps it is merely my perception. Perhaps it was always thus. Human nature doesn't change in such a short while. Or does it? Perhaps, only the circumstances change, as do our tools, making us receptacles of ever-increasing information that overpower our senses and challenge us to make sense of the chaos around us as we zoom into the future with dizzying speed. Gone are the certainties of daily routine and the peace it once provided. The price of progress!

Heralded by our material definition of progress and marked by self-interest, we have travelled the linear road, individually and collectively. The fine dance between self-interest and collective self-interest is not one of altruism, merely self-preservation. 'Quid pro quo', as Bush senior would often repeat, distilling in a phrase the political and economic philosophy his country had at last perfected and presented the world with. The paradox however, is that the very self-preservation we seek becomes more and more elusive unless the collective is all embracing. In 2005 the collective ought to be the entire planet and any policy that excludes any part of it has no long-term hope of success.

With this in mind we can take an aerial view of the WTO meet in Hong Kong that started today, the Lilliputians lined up to do battle with the Yahoos who have taken over the planet. Faced with the farcical rules laid down by the Yahoos, WTO is as rational and just as the Queen of Hearts when she goes about her business in Wonderland, leaving one yearning for the good old days of the sword - bloody but honest. The tobacco industry in the USA early on in its 35-year long battle to defend its indefensible position, decided to inundate the opposition with documentation, countless tons of it, and obfuscate the issue, setting a fashionable trend for future multinationals. The bewildering array of statistics and information flowing out of the Hong Kong meet has no other purpose than to drown the Lilliputians.

The French Agriculture Minister Dominique Bussereau said in an interview published in Paris today, that the European Union's farm aid system is sacrosanct and must be defended at all cost at the WTO summit. France is the principal beneficiary (40 percent) of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). With Napoleonic melodrama Bussereau went on to pronounce, "The CAP, the whole CAP and nothing but the CAP". He had obviously run out of politically correct arguments (one can play act for only so long) and had to be reminded by the French Prime Minister, Dominique de Villepin that it was the EU Commissioner, Peter Mandelson's task to negotiate the trade talks.

That we continue to use the phrase "free trade" in the face of the entire WTO structure and the reality of world trade, is no less proof of our surrealistic, topsy turvy existence, than London, which has every square foot of its public spaces covered by CCTV, resembling Orwell's 1984, claiming to be a "free society". We are as far away from free trade as we can possibly be. Were technology to provide us with a tool that would automatically edit what the Americans charmingly call 'bullshit', the verbiage emanating from the maws of public figures would significantly slow down the destruction of the rain forest that cur-



## LETTER FROM EUROPE



Riaz Quadir in Versailles

rently provides much of the pulp for such fiction.

Like Saddam's Republican Guards which were built up by western media to be a formidable foe so that their defeat could be seen as a meaningful victory, the Lilliputians of the WTO have also been built up to be seen as powerful negotiators. The truth is that they do not even have the means to uncover the tip of the iceberg of what the Yahoos are really up to. They have to depend on Western media (i.e. last week's Guardian) to reveal that farm subsidies supposedly going to farmers are also going to all sorts of companies like the sugar company Tate & Lyle, Nestlé, Gate Gourmet, KLM, Glaxo SmithKline, Boots, Eton College, Heineken, Grolsch, Shell and the tobacco company Philip Morris to the tune of hundreds of millions of Euros.

In a world ruled by self-interest no one is spared. Within every community the equation is the same, the flow in one direction. The distinction between the governments and big business is gradually being lost. It is a marriage that is breeding chaos. The kind that creates headlines like "Tony Blair, Thatcher's Heir".

It all starts with minor compromises, assuring ourselves that it is the end that counts, not a few minor adjustments to the means. Little do we realise that the end is *maya*, the ever receding illusion that beguiles and seduces us and makes us forget what is real, and exists merely to act as a compass in our journey through life. It is ultimately the moral content of a society (as well as the individual) that establishes what means we adopt to achieve our objectives – however lofty. Europe was supposed to have solved this moral dilemma 60 odd years ago, but did it? How it resolves the issue of harbouring secret CIA torture cells and facilitating hundreds of CIA flights illegally carrying prisoners (as confirmed by the Council of Europe, EU's human rights watchdog today) and similar issues, will answer that question. Nor is this dilemma resolved for all time and for all generations. It is a daily battle and our moral pledges have to be constantly renewed.

*root activists like us.*

*it. 99*

**wdhury, VIKALP, Barmer, Rajasthan**

**TO KEEP**

# Civil Society

**READ US, WE READ YOU**

# Village shames corrupt committee

**Biswajit Padhi**  
Bolangir

**S**USHIL Bhoi looks like any rural unemployed youngster in his early twenties. But in the village of Guchapali, in the Khaparakhhol block of Bolangir district in Orissa, Sushil is something of hero.

His claim to fame is that he exposed corruption in development work in the village. His happy parents say his late grandfather Duryodhan Bhoi, the first president of the Bolangir Zilla Parishad in 1961, would have been especially proud of him.

Guchapali, with a population of 962, would be just one of thousands of forgotten villages had it not received funds under the Western Orissa Livelihood Project (WORLP), which promotes watershed development in drought prone areas. The Assistant Engineer of soil conservation in Patnagarh was chosen as the PIA (Project Implementing Agency).

The project got underway with the PIA entrusting the task of executing the work to a village committee. The villagers dutifully nominated office-bearers. The committee's job was to ensure transparency but it did little to justify its existence.

The credentials of the committee came to be seriously questioned when its secretary released Rs. 30,000 to one self-help group (SHG) but took away the money after the cheque was encashed. Although villagers suspected that nepotism and corruption were creeping in, the problem was, who would bell the cat?

Gossip started doing the rounds and resentment grew. Finally it was Sushil who led a few villagers to the office of the committee. They demanded that the

accounts of expenditure be made public. The committee refused to answer and dismissed Sushil's request as 'youthful exuberance'. But Sushil remained undeterred. The villagers went with him to the PIA and even met the district collector (DC). The PIA agreed to conduct a social audit of the work. The committee now had to make its accounts pub-



Sushil, hero of the village

lic. The villagers nominated four persons to verify the accounts. The committee was asked to show the records to the nominees on two consecutive days. Accordingly, they waited outside the school building where the committee was supposed to turn up and show the accounts.

On the first day they came late, at around 1 pm and tried to hurry up the nominees. Sangram, a villager, told them they could get the list of beneficiaries from the committee's book of accounts. And

sure enough the nominees discovered that the relatives of the committee members were the major beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries were confronted and it was found that many false bills had been made. The nominees verified the village committee's cheque book. The secretary of the committee had issued many cheques in favour of his relatives for work that was never done.

The second day began with a conciliatory note. The committee members, headed by the secretary, realised that their misdeeds had been exposed. After thoroughly verifying the accounts the nominees prepared a dossier of wrongdoings. To be absolutely certain, the PIA agreed to cross check. The beneficiaries have been advised to complete the work for which they took the money.

The embarrassed secretary now claimed he had not misappropriated 'so much money'. But he has agreed to return it. Efforts are being made to sort out the matter amicably.

Sushil and his band of villager are elated. After this incident the next village committee will not dare to misappropriate money, they say with confidence. The PIA has assured them the committee will be changed in consultation with villagers. This sleepy village has generated a lot of debate in the district. Neighbouring villages are talking about community participation and the importance of a social audit. The incident is encouraging other young people to take an interest in development work. "With the confidence of youth on the upsurge, one good example will lead to many," says Gouranga, of Humanity, an NGO working in the area.

## *Tehri Dam drowns homes and aspirations*

**Vimal Bhai**  
Tehri

**T**HE last diversion tunnel, T-2 of the Tehri dam has clanged shut, drowning homes and fields. People who lived here for ages have to move to new resettlement sites. There is dismay and fear in their hearts. Many say promises of compensation have not been fulfilled. Rural shopkeepers have been left out. New sites are not well designed.

Pashulok is considered the best resettlement site in the Dehradun district. But there are plenty of grievances. Says Dinesh Bahuguna, a former resident of village Sirai that is now under water, "Out of 397 families from my village, more than 150 are still on the road because they did not have money to hire a truck to bring their belongings to Pashulok."

He says most villagers don't have money to construct a house. More than 100 families received house compensation of less than Rs 40,000, whereas the cost of a two-room set is at least Rs 4 lakh. "For 1,100 families, only 133 tin sheds have been made as an alternative arrangement in Pashulok," says Bahuguna. "We are still waiting to get our seeds and fertiliser allowance, displacement allowance and house construction allowance. In every village, there are families whose names don't appear in the Eligible List."

In September 2003, the Supreme Court had transferred the Tehri Dam case to the Uttaranchal High Court "to ensure that all the conditions for environmental clearance are fulfilled and for proper monitoring." In December 2004 the same petitioners (*ND Jayal & Another vs Union of India & Others*) sought the intervention of the Uttaranchal High Court for proper monitoring of rehabilitation.

But on 29 October the Uttaranchal High Court vacated a 53-day stay order and allowed the last diversion tunnel T-2 of Tehri dam to be closed. Advocate Sanjay Parikh, who is fighting the case since 1992, said this is a violation of the Supreme Court's September 2003 order that states "...prior to closing of diversion tunnels T1/T2 for impoundment of the reservoir, evacuation, resettlement and rehabilitation are completed in all respects."

Parikh points out the order is also a violation of the conditions on which environment clearances were given by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF). Only the Bhagirathi Basin Management Authority has been set up. But other stipulations such as catchment area treatment, rehabilitation, command area development, flora and fauna, water quality maintenance and disaster management have not been met.

Pratap Singh, a shopkeeper and an oustee, says

that a rehabilitation package for village shopkeepers was never worked out so they were holding agitations every day.

According to Puran Singh, an oustee from village Chham, a *panchayat bhawan*, *barat ghar*, schools, a shopping complex, irrigation and drinking water, roads, electricity, a public health centre (PHC) gas and seed centres were listed in the affidavit filed by the Uttaranchal government in the Supreme Court case in 2003. "But in the eight new resettlement sites, namely Nirmalbag, Nirmal Block-A, Nirmal Block-B, Nirmal Block-C, Shyampur Block-A, B, C and Barrage Colony, these facilities do not exist. In some resettlement sites, if electricity is available, it is not free as the report of the Project Level Monitoring Committee on Tehri Dam says," explains Puran Singh.

Mohan Lal, an oustee of village Biryani, said cattle would destroy their crops since fencing had not been done in the new resettlement sites. Gangura Devi, another oustee from Sirai, explained that many families had either sold their cattle very cheap or left them behind. There was no fodder or money to feed cattle and there was no place to house them in the new sites.

"We were enjoying freedom, flowing water and green hills but here we are scared," says Soni Devi, another oustee.



# Business

## BEYOND PROFIT

**Rethink money with us. What should the entrepreneur of the future be like? How can you get rich and still serve society? Do causes need bottom lines?**

## Adorable clean car needs help

*The Reva is a hit in Europe but the Indian govt ignores it*

**Umesh Anand**  
Bangalore

**T**HE mayor of Cyprus thinks burgundy is a great colour for a car. How would we know? We found out in Bangalore. In Bangalore? Yes, at a nondescript factory at the end of a ruinously bumpy road in the Bommasandra Industrial Area.

On a small assembly line here, Chetan Maini, 35, a wide-eyed prophet of clean transportation technologies, is putting together a batch of Reva cars for export to Europe. One of them has been bought by the mayor of Cyprus, who is so infatuated by the Reva he wants to drive one around personally in the hope that other

citizens will fall in love with its baby doll looks and clean technology.

The Reva is an all-electric small car that causes no air pollution, is cheap to run at 50 paise or so a kilometre and has a body that doesn't dent. Charge it overnight and you can do 80 km without worrying. An advanced battery could push that up to 200 km. As personal transport goes, it is great for Indian cities. (See *Civil Society* March 2005: *Clean World Car*)

But you will hardly find the Reva on India's roads. At Rs 3 lakhs plus a piece and low running costs it is competitive. But a new technology needs hand-holding and the Reva is not being given that advantage. Subsidies and tax

*(Continued on page 19)*



Chetan Maini showcases the Reva NXG in Monaco

TATA  
STEEL  
AD

(Continued from page 17)

breaks could also help. It is a chicken and egg situation. More Revas have to sell for the Reva to become popular, but for more Revas to sell in the first place it has to be celebrated and promoted as a clean and efficient alternative. What is needed is support from the government and in India it is not forthcoming.

Instead the Reva is popular in Europe where governments give it subsidies and encourage people to buy it. And politicians like the Mayor of Cyprus make public statements of their preferences by driving it around.

So, while some 300 Revas have been shipped off in the past year, barely a hundred have sold in India.

In fact, the Reva just became even more expensive in India with VAT at 12 percent now applicable to it. Chetan had earlier got state governments to cut or drop sales tax on the Reva. Now he has to begin lobbying all over again because of confusing definitions and bureaucratic procedures.

Chetan has been knocking on government doors for close to eleven years, asking for support for a clean technology. Recently he succeeded in meeting Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who took keen interest in the Reva and the need for electric transport. The ministry of science and technology has similarly been supportive with Kapil Sibal going to Monaco earlier this year to showcase the Reva NXG, an advanced version, which is yet to be commercially marketed.

The Reva NXG won the sustainable mobility award at Monaco, outdoing the Benz offering in electric vehicles. It was specially created by Chetan, celebrated designer Dilip Chabria and Vinay Deshpande of Encore computers (developers of the Simputer) to put state of the art Indian technology on display.

A two-seater, the 'REVA-NXG' has an extended range of 200 km per charge and a speed of 120 kmph. The car is powered by a high performance 37 kW AC induction motor that drives the front wheels, and uses sodium nickel chloride batteries instead of conventional lead acid batteries for extended life.

It is fitted with a "wireless tablet" that has a high-resolution single touch screen display system for speed, battery charge, personal communication tools such as GPS-based in-vehicle navigation, a GPRS modem for internet and e-mail and MP3 music.

So, with all this going for it, what continues to hold the Reva back? Why isn't it one of India's most popular city cars? Why hasn't it become a prized export?

Chetan says the answer lies in the absence of policy and direction. Political decision-makers who see the Reva marvel at its features. They promise to back it. But all these good intentions seem to get lost in the labyrinthine corridors of the government.

On the other hand in London, Cyprus or Athens the city administrators at the mayor level canvas for the Reva. "It is not just the subsidies but the free parking, free charging, access to city centres and so on. In so many ways they say this is the kind of vehicle we want, it is good for us. This creates awareness.



Chetan Maini in his office in Bangalore

**“In China, the government has created a \$ 100 million fund to develop electric vehicles so that when the Olympics are held in Beijing in 2008 everyone who comes from any part of the world will only ride in an electric taxi or bus.”**

A new technology needs this," says Chetan.

"Targets and policies make all the difference. A government needs to know where it wants to get in the next five years with a technology. In China, for instance, the government has created a \$ 100 million fund to develop electric vehicles so that when the Olympics are held in Beijing in 2008 everyone who comes from any part of the world will only ride in an electric taxi or bus."

This has led to the springing up of some 50 companies producing electric vehicles. "It would not have happened if China hadn't set itself a goal. It had nothing in this field two or three years ago. So, here you had a clear target, policy, government financial support and industry came in," says Chetan.

Now what China is doing with electric vehicles for the Olympics becomes a sort of pilot after which market forces can take off and make greater and more economical use of technology.

By comparison in India, after the introduction of VAT, it is unclear whether the Reva is classified as an automobile or a non-conventional energy source!

So what is the future of the Reva?

"We wanted actually to target two cities. One in India and one abroad. We chose Bangalore and London. In London today we have more than 300 cars running on the road and in coming months we expect to have another 200," explains Chetan.

"This has allowed us to try out our marketing, servicing, customer response, free parking, charging etc.... Beginning next year we are going to expand to other cities in Britain and Europe. We are shipping out our first vehicles to Italy early next month."

And in Bangalore, which is the Reva's home? Amidst the pollution and congestion it is difficult to spot a Reva. Given the official apathy, that is something which is not going to change in a long time to come even as the rest of the world fetes Chetan Maini and his remarkable creation.

# Insight

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## EXPOSE HYPE

**How deep do you go in search of facts? What new news do you bring back from the field? Are government programmes and projects really what they are cracked up to be?**

## Bangalore has PROOF



**I**N India, we have a few thousand governments, each elected by a cluster of citizenry: the Union government, 25 state governments, several 100 urban local governments and a multitude of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) from rural India.

Each government is an institution that raises resources and spends on a variety of activities, many obligatory and some discretionary. Each is an institution with many stakeholders, the primary one being the citizen. Every government has a management consisting of administrative professionals and elected representatives. Each government makes promises of performance every year. Since no standard performance yardsticks are applied, these promises are invariably anecdotal, sporadic, and can rarely be strung together into any coherent measurement framework.

The past few years have seen the acceleration of the right to information (RTI) campaign. Several states have passed legislation to allow citizens and other stakeholders access to government information. Recently, a central right to

information law has also been passed.

The campaign for RTI legislation has far-reaching implications. While the access to information is possibly vast, including important facts about how decisions are made and priorities established, one important component is access to information concerning regular activities of our governments.

The question that arises is how can information from the government be disseminated in a structured, regular and standardised manner. This is critical because government institutions produce copious quantities of information. Unless a framework is created within which this information becomes intelligible, its true power will not be captured.

The private sector has, over a period of time, learnt to use tools that allow for full disclosure and we can, with some caution, take a leaf from them.

Many governments are beginning to adopt the approach of business: professionalisation, public-private partnerships, citizen charters etc.

While these are positive developments, they are clearly insufficient since they

do not provide enough standardised information about performance that would help different stakeholders engage in active debates with the government.

It may therefore be the right time to apply the language of business to government.

But we need to be careful. First, a government institution is more complex than a private, commercial enterprise. A government institution engages in activities that are social, commercial and fiduciary in nature, in a blend that is never seen in a commercial organisation.

Secondly, proponents of using the language of business risk being seen in an ideological light. Such a view would be unfortunate, since it deflects attention from the core issue of performance, to issues about the role of government, class struggles and so on. The potential of the language of business must be carefully presented to various stakeholders, and a rainbow coalition created to thwart criticism.

Thirdly, a business approach can fulfil only a limited, functional need. It can act as the basis for deeper debates between various interest groups, citizens and the government. The instruments of business can merely set the stage for larger discussions, and supplement these conversations, rather than substitute them.

Therefore taking a functional or utilitarian approach to assess our public institutions, our disappointment with governments can broadly be classified along the following lines:

- **Performance:** There is almost nobody who would say that any government – be it at the union, state or local level – manages itself on a value-for-money basis. In fact, there is unanimous agreement with the ambiguous statement that governments mismanage money because of corruption, operational inefficiencies, poor information systems etc

- **Distributive equity:** The government is also criticised about how it allocates funds. Individuals and NGOs are constantly examining government fund allocations to determine where the priorities of government lie. We have been witness to several debates about the legitimacy of distributive decisions made by governments: too much spent on defense at the central level; too little on primary education or health; too much allocated to one region of a state etc. Clearly, since Independence, there is a lot of disappointment about where our governments have spent their, or our, money.

- **Centralised and top-down:** The average citizen feels completely powerless and far removed from the government because it is too distant. Claims for decentralisation have resulted in the passage of the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution, to legitimise the role of local governments that can be more accountable to the people. Associated with this move is the demand to make the management of local governments more autonomous: they should be able to raise their own resources locally, and make expenditure decisions as well. This creates a greater sense of ownership and accountability to the people.

The common thread that runs through these three points is one of resource management: how well do we spend our money; how do we make decisions about where to raise and spend our money; and finally, how do we raise and spend our money directly at the local level so that citizens feel a greater sense of ownership.

The entire banking deposit base in our country is around Rs 700,000 crores. If we estimate that 30 percent of our government's resources are being spent inefficiently, it means that the equivalent of half the entire banking deposit base of our country is being squandered. Every year.

#### PROOF STRATEGY

There is a feeling of dissatisfaction with the way civic bodies work. Citizens are demanding action – a recent PIL in the High Court filed against the Bangalore Mahanagar Palike (BMP) on the condition of roads is an example. In addition, the urban reform initiatives of the Central government are likely to give an impetus to decentralisation.

A culture of disclosure, transparency, participatory governance and discipline in the administration of urban local bodies is inevitable and this is where PROOF comes in as an independent citizen's forum that engages with the local urban authority.

The two areas in which PROOF (Public Record of Operations and Finance) has initially chosen to establish indicators of efficiency are education and public works. The rationale for taking up education is based on two important factors. The first is that Akshara, a partner in PROOF, is already involved in upgrading 12 BMP schools. A considerable amount of data and experience has thereby been gathered. The second is to focus on a service that is mostly used by the urban poor.

Public works, the other area that PROOF has chosen, has more universal relevance. Financially public works take the largest chunk of BMP's expenditure budget and any reforms in this sector will have a direct impact on the community. Benchmarking will help BMP use its financial resources better and to improve the quality of its work.

PROOF-like initiatives help to dispel cynicism. A disillusioned community can be a civic body's worst enemy. Even while generating performance indicators or taking the PROOF experience to other cities, the objective of PROOF is to inter-

vene in a constructive manner. As a demonstration of this intention, the trustees of PROOF have invited the Commissioner of BMP to join them as an ex-officio trustee.

There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Relevant data and process information are already available with BMP and can be shared with the study teams that PROOF constitutes. The process of determining benchmarks will involve citizens since the credibility of the exercise relies on community ownership and participation. The strategy therefore entails keeping lines of communication and consultation open throughout the life of the study.

PROOF as a platform was established by the Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF). A government – private sector partnership – BATF initiated various programmes to upgrade Bangalore's infrastructure and systems with IT, GIS, and modern management tools.

One successful outcome was the development of a Fund Based Accounting System (FBAS) that enables accurate and timely tracking of all financial transactions in the BMP. The BMP recognised the value of this reform package. Not

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## PROOF's eight debates have given citizens an opportunity to analyse and clarify issues related to BMP's financial performance.

only was FBAS a powerful internal management tool, it also enabled BMP to declare periodical financial performance data to the citizens – the ultimate stakeholders and consumers of municipal services.

This was the cue for PROOF. By involving citizens in analysing the FBAS data and by organising periodic public discussions to promote debate between the BMP and citizens, PROOF generated interest among stakeholders in the functioning of their civic body.

PROOF has organised eight public discussions with the BMP participating in each of them. These debates have given citizens an opportunity to analyse and clarify issues related to BMP's financial performance.

#### THE PROOF PROCESS

The PROOF initiative aims to develop a framework and a sustainable process for disclosure through public review of operational and financial information. The tools used are:

##### Financial Statements comprising :

- Revenue and Expenditure Statement
- Indicative Balance Sheet, with detailed information about current and long-term assets, as well as short and long-term liabilities

##### Performance Indicators based on:

- Inputs; ● Outputs; ● Efficiency Indicators; ● Discussion & Analysis;
- Overall Performance; ● Selected Activities

After release of BMP's quarterly financial statements, partner NGOs take up the task of review and analysis with citizens' groups in structured workshops. Questions raised at the workshops are compiled and submitted to BMP for answers and explanations.

A date for a public discussion is scheduled and invitations sent to citizens. All BMP officials, officers of the state government, prominent citizens and the

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(Continued from page 21)  
media are invited.

The Commissioner of BMP chairs the public discussion. The Additional Commissioner of BMP and the Finance / FBAS team take the lead in presenting the financial performance to a gathering of about 200-250 citizens. This is usually followed by a citizen presentation – results of the review and analysis workshops conducted beforehand. The NGO partners then share their experiences and progress in their presentations followed by an "open house" of citizen's questions answered by BMP officers.

#### EDUCATION

The basis of PROOF is good governance in not only providing financial transparency but also in public services. One essential service provided by the government is education. Resources allocated to education are made through the budget. As such, education in India has largely been budget-based where efficiency has been rated on the basis of the ability to "consume" a budget and demand more. Performance at the delivery point has not been an important criterion. To improve service delivery, there is a need for:

- A shift from inputs to performance and outcomes
- Cost effectiveness across all levels of educational administration
- New methodologies and planning

Educational administration has been pre-occupied with providing facilities and appointing teachers. The processes required to make the system work have been neglected.

A vicious cycle has set in. Only the children of the weakest and least influential parents go to study in government schools. Their parents find it difficult to exercise their rights because of their vulnerable status in society. As a result, education becomes just a talking point of local politics and a secure source of income for many teachers without any accountability.

Most of the teachers do not send their children to the government schools where they teach. Unless parents who send their children to government schools have real influence and power to manage the schools, there will be no improvement in the status of government schools. Only when interests and the power to change them go together, will public services improve.

Good governance, financial transparency, and participatory budgetary processes could bring about accountability in school education. While understanding budgets is one important method of improving municipal schools a second is developing tools to measure the performance of such schools.

#### PROOF IN EDUCATION MODEL

Akshara Foundation, which works on education for all, developed and applied the PROOF model to schools. Entitled PROOF in Education (PIE), the model utilises performance measurement, along with budgets and processes, as a tool to enhance the learning and conditions in municipal schools.

Akshara applied PIE to primary schools in Bangalore managed by BMP. It offered seven schools for a pilot programme. In the third quarter of 2003, Akshara signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the BMP and received formal approval to initiate PIE on a pilot basis.

PIE involved teachers, headmasters/headmistresses, students, alumni and citizens to make changes in schools through a four-step process.

#### THERE ARE THREE DISTINCT PHASES

**Implementing PROOF in Education:** As a first step, the process of collecting data to compile efficiency scores for schools is discussed. Recommendations are made which are then shared with BMP officials. Once BMP agrees to the work plan, school staff monitor implementation.

**Leveraging budgets:** This is a process of understanding the budget, disseminating information to stakeholders and then submitting recommendations for inclusion in the next year's budget.

**Understanding current processes:** Stakeholders, especially school staff, need to understand processes in the department of education and the BMP. This can enable schools to understand what happens when they submit requests to fix/provide infrastructure, who is responsible for sanctioning requests, the presence and role of committees and staff at the BMP and in the Department of Education.

#### PIE STRATEGY

Akshara realised that support from the school was essential. So they met headmasters, teachers and Department of Education officials to inform them that the objective of PIE was to make their daily tasks easier. Field staff and volunteers spent many hours interacting with teachers and headmasters,

**In a BMP school a library could be a room or just a cupboard to which children do not have access on a regular basis. What is a playground? Is it just an open field or an enclosed area with balls, bats, etc?**



talking to them, assuaging their fears.

#### How should a school be assessed?

To identify performance indicators and parameters, Akshara held detailed conversations with staff at BMP schools. The common themes that emerged from these discussions framed the performance indicators. Senior staff from Akshara met field staff and one staff member from Janaagraha to complete flow diagrams to assess the main physical components of schools—playgrounds, teaching aids, toilets, drinking water, etc. Consequently, the flow diagrams revealed the following performance indicator themes:

- Community participation
- Infrastructure
- Scholastic outcome of students
- Performance of teaching and non-teaching staff

In developing parameters for performance indicators, staff at Akshara had to "work backwards." For example, in well-managed schools, a library is part of the school's infrastructure and implies a fixed space, with electricity, tables, benches, shelves, and an adequate numbers of relevant books.

But in a BMP school a library could be a room or just a cupboard to which children do not have access on a regular basis.

What is a playground? Is it just an open field or an enclosed area with balls, bats, etc?

Akshara staff spoke with teachers and headmasters from a cross-section of schools—private, public, government and BMP, to understand ideal ratios or measurements for parameters.

For example, conversations revealed that for every 25 children, a school should have one toilet. Benchmarks were selected that were realistic, meaningful and achievable for BMP schools. The process of developing parameters took between three to five months.

Once indicators and parameters were decided Akshara and the BMP signed the MoU. The Education Officer (EO) gave his approval so that Akshara staff could visit schools to collect data.

Akshara's programme coordinator collected the data by visiting schools and approaching teachers with a questionnaire assessing parameters. Once

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answers were compiled, staff at Akshara tabulated the efficiency scores. The Akshara team discussed the results internally and then presented the findings to the EO and other senior Education Department officials.

The findings were then discussed with the BMP. Officials included the Commissioner, Special Commissioner, Additional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner of Development (DCD), EOs, and Subject Inspectors. A senior staff member from Akshara presented findings on all the indicators. The audience was stunned since it clearly indicated that infrastructure indicators were pitiable.

The programme coordinator then visited schools to speak with teachers, who after speaking with their headmaster/headmistress about the results of the meeting were unhappy with findings. They asked what a score of 0 meant. Teachers interpreted this zero to mean that they were doing their jobs poorly.

The programme coordinator then requested the Special Commissioner to visit one of the BMP schools to see the conditions, first-hand. After making a visit, the Special Commissioner immediately sanctioned water facilities, security and some repair work.

For several other requirements like charts, globes, first aid kits, etc. Akshara involved organisations like the Round Table who supplied teaching aids, maps, globes, sports material, etc.

#### LEVERAGING BUDGETS

These indicators provide important information to economists who work on correlating indicators to student outcomes and to financial managers, who work on linking these indicators to budget needs, both capital and operating.

For instance, this exercise enabled us to understand the quantifiable impact that teacher training has on children's academic outputs. Indicators on the school's infrastructure needs provide us with details on how much the urban local body needs to invest on construction (capital expenses) and maintenance (operating expenses).

In collaboration with Janaagraha, Akshara held public discussions to explain line items in budgets, review budgetary analysis and discuss the state of BMP schools. To enable stakeholders to understand the budget, Akshara in collaboration with Janaagraha, held regular meetings and discussions on the following:

- Purpose of the budget
- Budgeting cycle-timeframes, who is involved, etc.
- Components of the budget
- Explanation of how the budget impacts citizens
- Last year's budget and the present budget year calendar

- A simple explanation of how the city budget works
- Understanding sources of revenue and items of expenditure
- Understanding financial terms

Moderators for these sessions were senior staff from Akshara who used documents prepared by Janaagraha. The people who attended included citizens, parents, teachers and headmasters/headmistresses. Each school nominated one or two teachers to attend these sessions. Information was precise, clear and detailed.

#### UNDERSTANDING GOVERNMENT PROCESSES

The third component of PIE was to help schools understand how matters related to education were sorted out in the BMP. A common theme that emerged from teacher conversations was that often schools did not know to whom requests should be made, how long it would take for requests to be filled, etc.

To provide greater transparency, Akshara staff interviewed the EO and the Deputy Director Public Instruction (DDPI) so that teachers would get to know procedures within the BMP. The programme coordinator and another staff member met the EO and asked questions on procurement, maintenance, materials, inspection, student welfare, etc.

#### Some questions included:

- What is the process for repairing cracks in school ceilings and in classroom walls?
- How is material allocated for the maintenance of toilets?
- How are blackboards, chairs, benches and other furniture allocated to schools?
- What is the planning process when the number of allotted classrooms is insufficient?

#### OUTCOMES OF PROOF IN EDUCATION

**Better infrastructure:** Since the PIE model measures efficiency levels thrice a year, schools are able to find out if infrastructure has improved. Over a period of time important physical conditions should get better and that will increase enrollment and attendance.

**Enhanced learning levels:** By participating in the PIE process, teachers and headmasters/headmistresses will be aware of children lagging behind since the performance of their students will affect the school's efficiency score. In order to raise its efficiency score, the school will have to improve learning levels.

**More community involvement:** Instead of remaining insular, stakeholders have come together to improve education for underserved children. For example, community leaders have formed school support groups at schools. These groups implement "quick fixes" at schools (such as fixing walls, installing security gates, etc) to enhance the school's infrastructure. School support group leaders also liaise with Akshara, teachers, headmasters/headmistresses and students.

**Better understanding of BMP:** Through continuous interaction with the BMP, Akshara hopes to develop a process guide that can be disseminated to BMP teachers and headmasters/headmistresses. This guide will provide transparency into BMP processes and equip teachers and headmasters/headmistresses with an understanding of how their requests are managed.

Training sessions have been organised for the school community. The aim of these sessions is to help teachers with time management, understanding students and enabling them to remember their motivation for becoming teachers. Held once a week for a period of two months, teachers, headmasters/principals attend these sessions, which encourage teamwork and learning.

#### CONCLUSION

PROOF in Education is an ongoing effort. Each round of questionnaires and interactions with stakeholders reveals issues and challenges that need to be addressed. For PROOF in Education to be successful, stakeholders will have to own the initiative and follow it through in the years ahead.

Initial setbacks, and future obstacles, should not deter stakeholders from the goal of enhancing the quality of education in municipal schools. PROOF in Education is an example of adaptive leadership.

This is perhaps the first time in the world that budgetary analysis, good governance and stakeholder involvement are being used simultaneously to improve the standard of public education.

Given that this is a nascent effort in improving public education, stakeholders are not always certain about how to proceed. A process of trial and error will follow. Best practices will emerge once the process has been through a few cycles.

The way to improve education in our schools is through mobilising stakeholders. The government school system is crumbling because concerned citizens are not backed by people with influence and power. It is essential that every citizen takes an active interest in bettering the standard of government schools, which over time, will improve literacy, advance productive output and raise the standard of living.

*This article has been collated from PROOF documents.*



# At Shri Ram, a haat with heart

**Shailey Hingorani**  
New Delhi

THE Shri Ram School wants its students to be socially conscious. It tries to be an ecofriendly school – recycling paper and creating awareness about problems of water, forests and wildlife. It encourages involvement with projects to do with the environment.

But all that is part of a day's work. How does a school like Shri Ram celebrate the close of a long term? How can the good old tradition of a year-end fete be reinvented?

Shri Ram does it with the Shri Haat at the junior school in Vasant Vihar, where its experiment in meaningful education began several years ago.

The Shri Haat brings NGOs to the school to involve the children with their causes. Stalls are given free and the NGOs are welcome to sell their products.

"It is a *mela* with a difference," said Manika Sharma, the principal of the junior section of the Shri Ram School.

"I think it will make children appreciate what they have. It will make them see people and hear stories that will sensitise them."

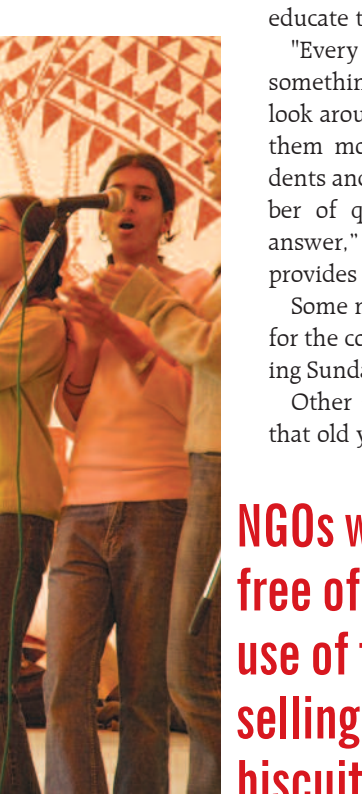
PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAKSHMAN ANAND



Abha Adams, Director of Shri Ram



Manika Sharma, Head, junior school



The school believes in including parents in its activities and sees them as partners in the education of children. And it is for this reason that parents were very closely involved in organising the *mela*.

The school grounds were all done up with colourful ethnic artifacts like *matkas*, puppets, *charpoyis* etc. Parents and children bustled about shopping and having fun. The aroma of food drifted with the breeze. Children played games, experimented with the potter's wheel, got designs in henna put on their hands, took part in drawing competitions.

The school band played through the morning.

The NGOs who took stalls included CanSupport, Navdanya, Kids for Kids, the Richmond Foundation.

A lady called Sushma had come all the way from Dehradun to take part in the *mela*. She represented a community of underprivileged women who earn from knitting sweaters. Sushma said the number of sweaters she managed to sell was way beyond her expectations.

Little sales people from Kids for Kids were out doing their rounds with diaries and calendars.

NGOs also got a chance to tell people about the causes they espoused and to educate them.

"Every time somebody comes to our stall to buy something like bookmarks or small diaries or to just look around we try and hand them a brochure. We tell them more about our NGO and its cause. Most students and parents are very enthusiastic and ask a number of questions and we are more than happy to answer," said Harmala Gupta of CanSupport, which provides palliative care to cancer patients.

Some might think interaction with NGOs or working for the community is a heavy load, especially on a bracing Sunday. The Shri Haat showed that it needn't be so.

Other schools eager to find newer ways of holding that old year-end fete have a model they can emulate.

**NGOs were given a stall each, free of cost. They made good use of the space provided by selling candles, handbags, biscuits, clothes, etc.**



# Perspectives

## CATCHING TRENDS

**Have an idea? Perhaps a lost cause? Tell your story or just express an honest opinion in these pages.**

# The corporation within society

ARUN MAIRA



*(This was a presentation to the UN General Assembly on November 17 on 'The Role of the Private Sector in Achieving the Millenium Development Goals')*

## Let's Talk

begin by paying respects to Mahatma Gandhi who believed in free markets, in uplifting the poorest of the poor, and in the right of all human beings to live in dignity with their heads held high.

Three or four years back, the tip of the huge mountain that is India emerged above the clouds where the attention of the world began to glow on it, as it was on the big mountain of China that was standing taller and bigger above those clouds.

India was shining at last, the people who lived on the top of India said. Indian corporations were making their mark on the world stage in many industries – IT, BPO, auto components and pharmaceuticals, to mention some. But then there was a rumbling at the bottom of the mountain. The millions living at the bottom could not see the light. And they spoke up in a general election that peacefully toppled the government. It was a reminder that tall mountains must stand on strong bases.

The bottom of India's mountain is still not solid. Though it is strengthening, there is much to be done before India reaches the Millenium Development Goals (MDG). The Indian economy has been growing at a very respectable six to eight percent per annum for over a decade

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and the percentage of people below the poverty line has fallen from 36 percent to 26 percent. However, 47 percent of India's children are malnourished, one of the highest proportions in the world. As many as 80 million of India's 200 million school age children do not complete school. The infrastructure of India's cities is inadequate. Conditions in the rural areas, where 70 percent of its people live are even worse. While people in the cities are clamouring for 24/7 water in the taps in their homes, India is barely progressing against the MDG for drinking water. It is worth remembering that every human being should have a source of drinking water within 1.6 km of their habitation – a world away from the concept of 24/7 water in the house. And when women walk those miles every day to fetch water for their families – and it is always women who do this, they leave their school-age daughters to take care of the homes and the younger children

which is one more reason these girls are not in schools even when there are free schools for them.

The last election made the Indian government and Indian corporations face up to these harsh truths. A coalition government is working towards a Common Minimum Programme (CMP) to address these stark issues while maintaining the pace of growth of GDP, and at the same time, satisfying the 'sentiments' of investors in the stock market, many of whom are large foreign financial institutions. This is a difficult balancing act, and the government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh must be commended for its perseverance.

Indian corporate leaders have also rolled up their sleeves. It is very heartening to see the vigour with which they have focused on the rural sector in India. To some Indian corporations, the business of business has never been only business. This year, the House of Tatas is commemorating the 100th death anniversary of its founder, Jamsetji Tata. He founded India's first steel plant 100 years back, just before he died. He also set up a clean hydropower generation grid around Mumbai to feed the textile industry. His sons created the Indian Institute of Science, and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. As Gandhi said, Jamsetji Tata was striving for India's economic freedom while he, Gandhi fought for the country's political freedom. Philanthropy has been vigorously in the Tata blood for over 100 years. The Tata family's shares are held by trusts which have built some of the finest medical and education institutions in India, and run large schemes for poverty alleviation and social welfare. The hallmark of every Tata company has always been the care taken of its

*(Continued on page 26)*



A mother and child clinic supported by the Tatas near Jamshedpur

(Continued from age 25)

employees and the community around it. Homes, schools, and hospitals of very high quality have been provided by the companies.

Since I have only a few minutes, I can elaborate only one corporate example. I have chosen Tatas because I am most familiar with their story. And also because it brings out the challenges that even corporations who are devoted to their CSR have. I have learned a lot about the concept of corporate social responsibility through my association with Tatas for 40 years, 25 of those as a full time employee, progressing from management trainee to the board of the Group's largest company. I will share two conceptual emergencies with you—two moments of truth, regarding the role of corporations in society.

The first 'conceptual emergency' occurred in the 1970s with a remark by Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh after his visit to Jamshedpur, Tata Steel's exemplary company township, where houses, roads, schools, hospitals, and utilities of very high standards are all provided by the company. Prince Philip wondered what it felt like to be taken care of by someone else all one's life. His remark made some in Tatas think again about what contributing to human development meant. Were we creating dependents (well taken care of, no doubt) or free citizens? Apparently philanthropy is not good enough.

Facing up to this 'conceptual emergency', the new factories of Tata Motors near Pune were created with a different approach. Here, the company assisted the employees to acquire their own homes. Thereafter the employees took responsibility to improve the schools and medical facilities in the communities in which they lived. The company facilitated by providing technical assistance and also bringing government functionaries and funds to support these CSR activities. Thus the villages in which Tata Motors' employees lived began to change, with better facilities, and with a new confidence in people to help themselves.

The Tata Motors' Pune factories are also remarkable for another reason. They were established on a large barren plateau that had been denuded of any vegetation in the previous 100 years by people grazing their animals and tearing down trees and bushes for firewood. However, the rehabilitation of the environment was planned by Tatas along with the growth of the industry. Within 25 years, the factory was a forest of trees. And within that forest in the factory a female panther stayed to deliver her cubs. Incidentally, these are the same factories within which Tata's have been developing new models of commercial vehicles and cars with indigenous technology.

There are two reasons I tell this Indian corporate story. The first is to say with pride that corporations can and that some do pursue goals much broader than profits for their shareholders. The second reason is to explain the second 'con-

ceptual emergency' in this story of CSR.

In the 1990s, as India opened its economy, tougher international competition came into India and also foreign investors. Tatas turned to these financial institutions to invest in Tata's modernisation and growth plans. However, these investors were not entirely impressed with Tatas. They thought Tatas were 'socialists' and not genuine red-meat capitalists. They wanted Tatas to focus on the business of business, which to these investors meant producing value for shareholders like themselves. So Tatas confronted another conceptual emergency—what is the business of business? And another moment of truth. I am glad to say, they chose to stay true to the values they had deeply held for over 100 years, while taking on board the challenge to deliver against the demands for financial value from the new breed of business analysts and investors.

This brings me back to the current situation in India. There are many Indian corporations who are determined to combine their aspiration to contribute to the improvement of India's poorest people with their goal to produce profits for their shareholders and they are seeking the right way. Tatas are only one example. I could give you many more. But in my limited time I can name only a few: Godrej, ICICI, Ambujas, ITC, Infosys, Wipro,

Pepsi, Hindustan Lever, HDFC; the

AV Birla, TVS, Apollo and Hero groups; and the Murugappas and Thapars.

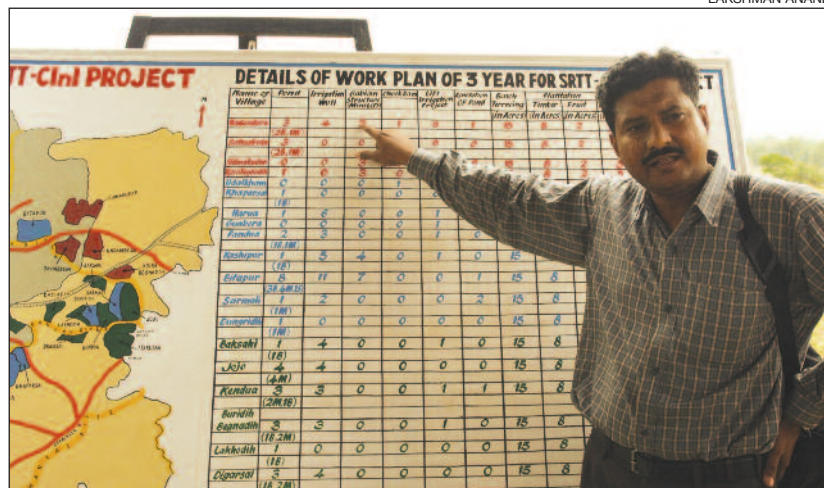
They are aspiring to create a stronger movement together towards their shared goals. Working in partnerships with each other, and with NGOs and governments, they are creating new models of business that incorporate the growth of employment and incomes for the poor, and improvement in healthcare, education, water and sanitation, often using technology in innovative formats.

Industry associations in India, such as the CII and FICCI have established several programmes to foster learning amongst these initiatives. CII has created several Councils focusing on various MDGs, and I am privileged to chair two of these.

However, the movement of enrolling corporations towards the Millennium Development Goals must work its way through a 'conceptual emergency', which is the narrow concept prevalent of the role of corporations within society, and of the value they can provide. This restrictive concept is reinforced by the language and measures used by many institutions, of investors, lenders, law-makers and regulators. And here the catalytic role of the UN Global Compact is vital – to remind everyone of the super-ordinate goal to which all must work, and to induce changes in the orientation and practices of these institutions. In addition, the Global Compact is providing platforms for learning across countries and continents.

In conclusion, I must admit as I did at the outset, that we have a long way to go. But the good news is that we have put many oars in the water, and if we can row more vigorously and in unison, we will get there sooner rather than later.

(Arun Maira is chairman of the Boston Consulting Group in India.)



A water project gets underway near Jamshedpur

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# For a more responsive DJB

ARVIND KEJRIWAL



## The Right To Know

the financial front, the Delhi Government has to provide Rs 350 crore annually to cover its losses.

With surplus capacities, why is it that the DJB cannot provide services? Because there are large-scale leakages of water and money. We know how much goes into the system. But no one knows what happens after that. And there are no effective institutional methods to seek accounts and hold someone responsible.

Imagine an Executive Engineer. He heads a zone. He is never asked to account for the water that entered his zone. That's the position of every officer from the Junior Engineer to the Chief Executive Officer. Whether the DJB runs losses or makes profits, whether the people of Delhi get good water supply or not – it does not affect anyone's life at the DJB in any manner. So, why should they perform? Why should they try to improve the system? Why should they listen to the people? Isn't it a farcical system?

And where do the people stand in this entire system? People do not have any role in the decision-making process. There are no formal platforms to consult people. People do not have any role in deciding expenditure plan – how much money should be spent where and on what; deciding expenditure priorities – which project should be done first; designing projects – the designs are often unrelated to the needs of the people; project implementation – whether a project was carried out well, as per people's needs and satisfaction. Often crores of rupees are spent on projects and schemes, which do not bring any benefits to the people. And sometimes, a little expenditure could solve the problems of thousands of people, but they are never implemented. For instance, Bhalaswa resettlement colony came up in the late nineties. The people were promised regular water supply. However, it does not exist till date. People have petitioned all officials and local elected representatives. But no one is willing to solve their problem. Not that there is a shortage of funds. Just that solving their problem is no one's priority.

Officials are not accountable to the people because the people do not have any role in assessing the performance of the officials. Many officials ranked "outstanding" by their superiors would be termed "horrible" if people rated them.

Therefore, DJB is largely a political problem. The entire decision-making and its implementation are concentrated in the hands of some bureaucrats and technocrats to the complete exclusion of the people. What is the way out? Transfer effective control over finances and officials directly to the people. How do we do that? Let there be one Water Council in every zone, whose members would be elected directly by the people of that area. Roughly 2000

The Delhi Government has withdrawn its loan application to the World Bank. It has put its plans to privatise Delhi's water on hold. But now lies the real challenge. What do you do with the Delhi Jal Board, which is in a complete mess? We need to find answers to this question.

The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) was set up through the Delhi Jal Board Act in 1998, before which it was part of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). DJB is responsible for providing drinking water and sewer facilities to 1.5 crore people. However, DJB has miserably failed despite the fact that there is surplus water available in Delhi and there are surplus water treatment and sewer treatment capacities. Large parts of Delhi get water ranging from a few minutes to a few hours every day and many times, the water is dirty. On

households could elect one member through an election to be conducted by the State Election Commission. The Council would decide the expenditure plan of an area, expenditure priorities, broad outlines of projects and assess the performance of officials. No expenditure could be made in that zone without the approval of the Council.

The people of that zone, through the Council, would therefore decide how much to spend, where to spend and when to spend. For instance, the water representative from Bhalaswa can now get the necessary expenditure sanctioned in the Council meeting to get water to his area.

The Council would assess the performance of the officials on the basis of annual and monthly targets. The Council will have the power to award punishments and incentives to the officials. In every Council meeting, the Executive Engineer would be required to account for the money and water supplied to him. DJB had set aside Rs 1.8 crores per zone under the World Bank project to be awarded as bonus to the companies, if they exceeded their targets. This amount should be made available to the Council to disburse as cash incentives to the employees who perform well.

What if the water representative did not listen to the people or did not even consult them, as most of the elected representatives do now? Some steps could prevent this eventuality. Anyone from the public should be able to attend Council meetings. This would enable the people to witness their representative's performance. If dissatisfied, there should be a mechanism to call him back and replace him in the middle of his tenure. Also, the representative would take only such stands in a meeting as he is authorised by the people of

that area. A week before every Council meeting, there should be a compulsory General Body Meeting (GBM), which would advise representatives what stand to take on various agenda points and what additional points to raise.

What if the local MLA or some political party co-opts the representative? Let him be from any party. We have to see how to force him to act according to the people's wishes. If the people felt that their grievances were not getting resolved, they should themselves attend Council meetings, watch their representative's performance and replace him if dissatisfied.

What if the number of proposals received at the Council is much more than the money available to fund them? Rather than rejecting a proposal, the Council will then have to discuss the urgency of each project

and prioritize them. Perhaps some projects may need to be postponed for some time. However, our hunch is that there isn't a dearth of funds. Just that the money is not deployed rightly.

Further, ensure equitable distribution of water all over Delhi and bring transparency in water distribution. Water enters Delhi from various states every day. This water should be accurately measured, which is not happening at the moment due to faulty meters. This water is fed into various treatment plants. The water entering and leaving these plants should be accurately measured. From water treatment plants, water should be distributed to various zones in proportion to population, which is not happening at the moment. The Mehrauli zone gets 13 litres per capita per day (lpcd) of water against Rohini, which gets more than 350 lpcd, NDMC gets 450 lpcd and Delhi Cantonment gets 550 lpcd. Water supplied to each zone should be accurately measured through bulk water meters. Excess or shortage of water received on any day should be distributed equally amongst all zones. The meter readings of all the meters starting from the entrance to Delhi right up to the zonal level should be displayed on a website daily so that people know how much water entered Delhi and how much reached their zone. Such daily display of meter readings would create necessary public pressure to keep water distribution as equitable as possible.



LAKSHMAN ANAND

# South Asians speak for each other

RAM GIDOOMAL



## Through NR Eyes

A Muslim teenager has proposed that the "very small minority of Imams" who propagate extremist views should be "deported and given the means for rehabilitation" – because Muslim teachers have such a key role in teaching young people their faith.

She and twenty three other South Asian teenagers from around Britain participated in a one day conference organised by South Asian Development Partnership entitled, 7/7 and Beyond – A South Asian response to the London Bombings, where they shared their views with faith community leaders, politicians and representatives from business, academia and the media.

The teenagers wanted a Britain where everyone is genuinely able to participate, accepted equally and treated with respect, 'not judged by race but as a person'. They were united in condemning the suicide bombers' actions without qualification, but had also tried hard to understand the complex factors that drove them.

They were very clear on the need for politicians and religious leaders to listen more, and for religious leaders to teach clearly and relevantly, with respect for other faiths: 'Think before you speak' was their advice.

What they appreciated most about the day was the opportunity to meet people of different backgrounds and ages, to hear from them and express their own views. They were enthusiastic about the need for more such workshops and proposed using work experience periods to encounter people of completely different faiths and cultures within Britain, for example through exchanges.

It wasn't only the teenagers who valued being heard. Key words from the conference speakers and plenary discussions were: inclusion, acceptance, truth, reconciliation and justice. The speakers and participants represented a cross-section of the British South Asian communities and beyond – Sikh, Hindu, Muslim, Zoroastrian and Christian. A strong recommendation was the formation of inter-community groups that meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common concern. These would enable people who disagree, or appear to have little in common, to discover their common humanity, as well as to probe each other on areas of difference.

The conference raised questions about the way religious groups interpret their beliefs and called for more transparent structures for discussion of key issues, through which they can communicate more effectively with each other and so to the wider society. *Jihad* was one such area, though each faith has its own issues.

On 'multi-culturalism' opinions differed. No 'ism' or system is a solution. Change comes through relationships. But there is a need to respect and actively value our different cultural and religious groups within a larger unifying identity – being 'British'. Above all the issues arising from the London bombings affect all of us in our multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious society.

As chairperson of the conference I emphasised that the purpose was to listen to each other. His Honour Judge Mota Singh examined the role of religion and called for a return to the real 'fundamentals' of true faith. He also examined the criticisms of 'multiculturalism', which he regarded as a 'positive endorsement of communal diversity'. He called for celebration of diversity, in which there must be open dialogue, discussion and argument.

Lord Michael Hastings, (head of Corporate Social Responsibility at the BBC) said that terrorism is an issue for the whole community. Only we can solve it, not the police or the politicians. Attitudes are not changed by laws, nor by 'isms'. They will be changed through relationships and mutual respect. He concluded with four affirmations:

- Truth and reconciliation work
- We must recognise the compulsions of faith

- We need economic levelling - which includes dignified work for all
- We need transparent democracy, open for all to participate

Dr Girdhari Lal Bhan (World Council of Hindus UK) said that 'multiculturalism' must give way to 'universalism', with positive respect and acceptance, rather than 'tolerance'. He called for dialogue with recognition of difference and open debate, an end to discrimination, and active efforts to include young people.

Andrew Wingate and Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra shared their experience of working together in Leicester, particularly in response to 7/7. They stressed the importance of having structures in place that 'are not just emergency linked, but founded on trust, partnership and friendship'. Because of these, they were able to bring people together and defuse tensions effectively, giving people the opportunity to express themselves, like this young Muslim mother:

"...we are only asking to be treated equally, as we have always been, for example at the school gate. Now we feel suspicion; we hear voices talking of 'your community'... I want to say that 'our community' is the British community, it is not Pakistani, even if that is our family history."

Sheikh Ibrahim emphasised the need to be careful about language: he would like to be considered an 'extremist' in his love for God and his neighbour, or a 'fundamentalist' in adhering to the basics of his faith. He cautioned against stereotyping, sometimes affected by the media.

Dr Prem Sharma (Chair of India Development Trust) called for peace, with four practical recommendations:

- Develop at least one new relationship with a person of another faith or culture
- Form inter-community groups that will meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common concern
- Enthuse and involve young people from all backgrounds, in projects that respond to injustice, inequality and suffering with practical help
- Call on the leaders of the major religious groups to share with us how they are working to create more transparent structures for discussion of key issues

He commented, following Judge Mota Singh, on the need to clarify the different understandings of '*jihad*', which was one of the motivating factors for the suicide bombers, and so an issue for Muslims.

Trying to understand the bombers' motivation, Maria Mahmood, a 15-year-old from Hillingdon, referred to the pressure on young Muslims from

- the all-encompassing nature of Islam
- the suffering of Muslims around the world
- the stark choices of the 'war on terror' and all that flows from that
- their understanding of *jihad*
- their isolation from 'mainstream' British culture
- the teaching of some imams

She pointed out the danger of stereotyping from the media and urged Muslims to speak out, both against terrorism and about their experiences of discrimination or alienation. Muslim women particularly should speak out and Muslims should not keep themselves separate. She stressed the importance of education in citizenship and community cohesion.

In the teenagers' group presentations, they agreed with Maria's analysis of the bombers' motivation, adding their perception that some young Muslims are alienated by their lack of opportunity in employment and education, as well as their disagreement with Britain's foreign policy and its effects.

**Some other factors mentioned in the conference:**

- the goal of Islam to be accepted as the religion of the whole world
- Muslim sense of victimisation
- some young Muslims are not enthusiastic about 'mainstream' Islam and its leaders
- lack of role models
- lack of self-worth

Charmaine Rasiah introduced a resource for groups, the 'Masala Bridge Builders' produced by SADP to bring people together across

(Continued on page 29)

**A strong recommendation was the formation of inter-community groups that meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common concern. These would enable people who disagree, or appear to have little in common, to discover their common humanity, as well as to probe each other on areas of difference.**

# The Taungya village feels left out

MILINDO CHAKRAVARTI



## Reforms Report

**T**HE 10th Mile Forest Village is located on the banks of the river Teesta with the mighty Himalayas forming a backdrop. This village is suddenly significant because it now falls within the jurisdiction of the proposed Sixth Schedule area comprising regions in Darjeeling district with a large concentration of Gorkhas.

The 10th Mile Forest Village is a *taungya* village. It is therefore fundamentally different from a traditional village which, in legal jargon, is called a revenue village. In a traditional village, residents enjoy ownership rights on their homestead and land. They, in turn, pay land revenue to the government. *Taungya* villages are non-revenue villages. Their residents do not have any proprietary rights over the land they are living on.

When the British began taking over India's forests, a process that started around 1865, they needed an uninterrupted supply of labour to carry out felling and plantation activities. The sub-Himalayan West Bengal region was thinly populated. So Forest Department officials decided to settle communities on patches of land owned by their department. The new settlers were to provide paid labour for felling and free labour for plantation and maintenance jobs. In exchange they were provided land free for cultivation and a dwelling unit. Housing materials, mostly timber and bamboo, were supplied by the department free of cost. The settlers were also allowed to keep a fixed number of cattle that were allowed to graze in the forest without paying any royalty to the department.

The 10th Mile Forest Village was founded in 1943 with 30 families belonging to the Gorkha community. Today, 49 households reside here. The village had to be relocated twice, once in the early 1970s and a second time in 1982 because of land erosion along the banks of the Teesta. Two households belong to the Scheduled Tribe; another 10 are from the Scheduled Castes. The remainder 37 belong to the general caste category.

Padam Rai, 62, lives in 10th Mile Forest Village. He heads a family of six adults. Four of them are women. Apart from his homestead, he has another one hectare for cultivation. Before 1995, like his neighbours, he used to grow paddy, maize, millet and vegetables. The low quality of land would yield cereals that could feed his family for just three months, that is, if he could save his crops from depredation by wild animals.

For about five to six months he and his family would collect driftwood from the Teesta and twigs from forests nearby to produce charcoal for sale in markets. Padam, with 19 of his neighbours, was introduced to mulberry plantation by NESPON, a local NGO in 1995. Mulberry leaves are used to feed silkworms that produce silk cocoons of *Nistari* variety.

Three of his neighbours are still at it. The rest gave up as they found raising silk cocoons too time consuming. Padam converted half his land into a mulberry plantation. Since 2002 electric fencing around the settlement protects crops.

Cocoons are reared thrice a year. Padam manages to rear about 200 worms each time. The silkworms take about 20 days to form a cocoon. During this period they feed on mulberry leaves four times a day. Each worm consumes about 250 grams of leaves daily.

With two members of his family working about 12 hours a day for two months a year, Padam earns about Rs 20,000 annually when cocoon prices touch Rs 100 per kg. Annual earnings vary since the price varies. About half a year is spent collecting twigs and driftwoods to make charcoal that fetches the family Rs 700 a week.

Padam and his household work hard to earn around Rs 40,000 every year. They have settled on a plot of land. They use another hectare, which does not belong to them, for cultivation. Add to this the value of crops that sustain them for two months. They are under constant threat of being ousted from 'forest land'. Earlier the Forest Department used to sign annual contracts with residents detailing the rights and responsibilities of both parties - a practice that has been discontinued since the late 1970s.

**Padam is under constant threat of being ousted from 'forest land'. Earlier the Forest Department used to sign annual contracts with residents detailing the rights and responsibilities of both parties — a practice that has been discontinued since the late 1970s.**

The future of Padam and most of his neighbours has become more uncertain with the possibility of the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill 2005 coming into effect in the near future. Originally, the bill was intended to regularise the land rights of forest dwellers, most of who undoubtedly belong to the Scheduled Tribes.

Now that the focus of the proposed bill is on tribals alone, the fate of communities, which are not listed as Scheduled Tribes, hangs in the balance. The proposed bill will definitely empower a most marginalised section of society residing within forests. It is a welcome move, even though a number of modifications are necessary to make the provisions more acceptable to the intended beneficiaries, and to ensure that forests and biodiversity are protected.

The cabinet okayed the bill on 2 December for tabling during the present winter session of Parliament, with certain modifications in the original bill. As per the modifications, the forest department has been given five years to relocate tribals. If they fail to do so, tribals will be given permanent rights over the land they occupy. In place of a flexible date, as mentioned in the earlier draft of the bill, the cut-off date for recognising the tribals' right to residence has been fixed at October 25, 1980. The forest department has been given a role in the process of recognising rights of the communities, though one is not very sure what this role is. The tenor of the draft Bill appears to have been diluted considerably. The idea of relocation has been given a new lease of life.

However, for Padam and his household it is uncertain whether five years later he will be able to continue earning a sustainable livelihood if the bill is passed in its present form, simply because he does not enjoy the status of a Scheduled Tribe.

(Continued from page 28)

barriers, by discussing issues of common concern

Nazir Afzal of the Crown Prosecution Service acknowledged their failure to connect with young people and women. "A good law badly enforced becomes a bad law". He challenged South Asians to take responsibility for tackling community issues like so-called 'honour killings'.

Commenting on the conference agenda, Labour MP for Tooting, Sadiq Khan, said that solutions will not be found primarily in the Muslim community but in the mainstream: "Extremist teaching is not generally found in the mosques but outside them. The significant minority of young Muslims who are alienated need to learn about moderate Islam, of course. But many also need jobs, better education facilities, and above all positive role models. We urgently need people of all communities to work together to address these problems."

Our expectation in organising such a conference was to see many more inter-

community groups planning to meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of common concern. Resources for such groups are available. We also need to enthuse and involve young people from all backgrounds in projects that respond to injustice, inequality and suffering. We need to fire their imagination and capture their energy because their contribution to these discussions is essential.

I am convinced that such meetings will result in better understanding of issues, practical suggestions for building bridges between communities and constructive debate on building a genuinely plural society.

South Asians have a long experience of religious conflict and of terrorism based on religion and ideology and have wrestled with the complexities of managing a plural society. The conference certainly achieved the aim of facilitating an exchange of views and supporting community leaders as they grappled with the hard questions raised by their communities.

Ram Gidoomal, CBE, is Chairman, South Asian Development Partnership

# Telling the story on the street

Rina Mukherji  
Kolkata

A city's streets pulsate with life. Mexican photographer Pedro Meyer captures the action on pavements and street corners deftly with his camera. An exhibition of his pictures called 'Writing with Light' was held in Kolkata at the Birla Academy.

Meyer has spent time examining his city, Mexico, at night in all its glory.

His digital camera captures Mexico's neon lights and its mix of diverse people. Matronly women rub shoulders with attractive young girls. There is no pathos reflected in these faces of the working class. Life is a celebration. Work is not drudgery. It is in



fact what makes life worth living. Meyer's pictures reflect the optimism of the working class.

The photographs on display were a clever interplay of light and colour, made possible by digital

technology. Some looked like classic oil paintings.

There is a sense of movement to each portrait. Colours in the background merge in a bright pastiche reminiscent of the great masters of painting.

# The anguish of abortion

Rina Mukherji  
Kolkata

COLETTE Copeland was 21 years old when she found herself pregnant. At that time she was having an affair with a divorced man. Colette told her lover the baby was his. "He took me for an abortion, and bore all the expenses. I never saw him for a long time," she says. Some 15 years later she met him again. He greeted her as if nothing had happened between them.

"To me, he had inflicted an emotional scar that would never heal. He had murdered my child," she says. Although Colette moved on in life, married and had two children, the hurt remained. This pain made her devote herself to bringing forth the woman's point of view in the abortion debate currently raging in the US.

Colette is a multimedia artist and a teacher of visual studies, art writing and photography at the University of Pennsylvania. She also teaches critical theory at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

In 1996, some 23 years after the Supreme Court in the US declared abortion to be a fundamental right in the landmark Roe vs Wade case in 1973, Colette started work on "Abortion Dialogues." She travelled

across the US, talking to scores of women, photographing and documenting the stories behind their abortions.

Her pictures, on display at an exhibition in Kolkata, made viewers see abortion from a more humanitarian perspective.

"I want people to think twice before they get into a sexual relationship," she explains. Relationships between a man and woman should be based on trust and a sense of responsibility. Most abortions take place because the couple cannot or does not wish to support a child.

The expressions of the women she photographed vary. Some smile and

are at peace with themselves. Others look pensive, while still others seem anguished.

There were women who didn't want their pictures taken. Others did not want to show their faces. Colette photographed them from the back. All you can see is a mane of hair.

"I want the public to interact and empathise with these women, and feel their pain and anguish," she explains.

Her exhibition was interactive and different. The photographs were printed on linen to give a translucent quality. They were hung haphazardly in rows, so that viewers could walk through them.

"I did not want people to match or identify the protagonists to their stories. I wanted people to realise this could happen to anyone. It was not something that could happen to one woman, at one place," explains Colette.

Slides placed near the pictures related the stories of women who had undergone an abortion. They were between 12 and 40 years of age. There were pictures of a 15-year-old girl who had been raped by two men, a 13-year-old victim of incest who aborted to cover up her father's misdeed, a 16-year-old schoolgirl whose first boyfriend got her pregnant. There were older women too. The stories were tinged with sadness and regret.

The exhibition endorsed the notion that love is sacred and relationships matter. These stories and pictures would make people who believe in casual sex change their outlook.



Colette Copeland



The exhibition called Abortion Dialogues

# 'Big novels miss Indian reality'

Hirsh Sawhney  
New Delhi

THE international media has its cyclopic eye on South Asia, broadcasting images of nerdy brown people stealing office jobs or emaciated destitutes awaiting alms. Fortunately, writer, critic and journalist Siddhartha Deb razes such notions with his stories that have appeared in *The New Statesman*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian*. His second novel, *An Outline of the Republic* was released earlier this year.

Amrit Singh, the protagonist, is a Kolkata reporter who discovers a photograph of an alleged porn actress held captive by moralistic insurgents. Chasing this story for a foreign magazine, Amrit delves into India's remote northeast. He journeys to Burma and encounters a cast of eccentric and elusive characters, each with a different truth to tell. An enigmatic and intricately woven book, *An Outline of the Republic* confirms Deb as one of South Asia's most talented voices.

I met Deb in cyberspace. I was surfing the net after having travelled through the subcontinent for seven months. We both would have preferred our usual venue of choice, a Greenwich Village dive bar.

***I'm curious. Is the title of your new book, *An Outline of the Republic*, engaging in a dialogue with the Great Indian Novels of the 80s? Books by Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor and others?***

The title is, of course, a challenge to the vogue for a Big Indian Novel and perhaps the more pernicious trend of the Exotic Indian Novel. The novels of the eighties did many things for me as a reader, not least by opening up space in the world of English letters for writing by Indians. But at the same time, when I look back at many of these novels, they seem stylistically unpromising and limited in the world they depict. Their self-imposed bigness somehow misses out on the many small experiences that constitute life in India, including life in the peripheral regions. Perhaps the simplest answer is that I wanted to write a novel that could capture some of what I've seen and lived, in my experience of those forgotten highways passing through nameless towns.

***In your novel a German editor named Herman assigns your protagonist an article that must convey a portrait of the mystery and sorrow of India. Later on, you refer to this editor as an Asia Junkie. Is the world hungry for a certain type of perspective on India?***

Well, by the world's perspective on India, we mean the West's perspective on India. It means the gaze of highly industrialised societies, almost all of them with long histories of colonialism, cast upon places like India, seeking to reduce complexities into digestible sound bites. Even an Asia junkie like Herman, well-meaning though he might seem, has that tendency. And stories about India tend to fall into two categories: mystery and sorrow, or in a more recent trend, a globalised, flattened India.

***So, as an Indian journalist reporting on India for Western publications, must one tell a story of exoticism or sorrow?***

That's the norm, and it's hard to write for main-

stream publications if one doesn't go along with that worldview. But there are some differences even within the monolithic, multinational dominated western media (and let me note in passing that the Indian media isn't much better). I sense more nuance in European (including British) publications as compared to America. And within America itself, there is an alternative media which exhibits a greater diversity of views. As for Indians



Siddhartha Deb

writing for the West, there are some who manage to do so without compromising. Pankaj Mishra and Arundhati Roy come to mind easily, but there are others.

***One of the book's minor characters is a Kolkata newspaper editor who is infatuated with untapped opportunities, new subscribers and profit margins. Is he representative of a general transition taking place in the Indian media?***

Yes, he is a representative of India's transition to a crudely market-driven media. But because this is set in the nineties, he's actually a fairly mild version of the MBAs who run newspapers these days. Today, what you get on a daily basis is a frivolous celebration of consumerism. My favourite example is from last March. I was in Delhi and found that the Hindustan Times had produced a 16-page supplement for Valentine's Day.

***Your character is a retired reporter who believes that by being a part of mainstream media, we might be adding to the very problems that we are supposed to be scrutinising.***

If one can remain independent, sceptical, and honest while working through the mainstream media, that could be useful. But whether to stay or flee, whether to manipulate the behemoth or sabotage it completely, these are individual decisions to be made by each person. I think we are functioning at a time of flux, when it's not very clear what a fully satisfying alternative to the mainstream might be. I left the mainstream Indian media when I was lucky enough to get a graduate fellowship in the US, but I can't say I've detached myself completely from it, even as an independent writer.

***Does the Indian government at the centre have an imperialistic relationship with those on the margins similar to the country's former colonisers and natives?***

Undoubtedly. After all, colonial structures were left in place, especially those of administration, law, army, the market, and racial theories that divided the world into civilised and uncivilised people. But 'resembled' is a good word since the Indian state is not an exact replica of the colonial state. To claim that would be to whitewash the colonial project entirely, which was much more oppressive.

***Amrit begins his journey in a forlorn town in the northeast populated by militants, seedy government officials and an oil refinery. This description reminded me of places I've visited in India like Orissa where large Indian companies and MNC's are investing exorbitant quantities of capital, but there is huge social disharmony and poverty.***

The 1990s northeast that Amrit enters is still relatively MNC-free. It represents a slightly older model for the co-existence of misery and money, where the major player is still the Indian state and a small elite takes advantage of the patronage of the state while the masses seethe with discontent.

The MNCs move in only when the state has successfully created infrastructure, and an ambitious middle-class, which is not the case in the northeast and Kashmir. But in places like Orissa, the work of the state is over. For all its faults, the state is susceptible to laws (if only on paper), whereas MNCs are not. The immense poverty you see in places like Orissa is, in fact, one of the resources that draws MNCs in. Huge amounts of capital wouldn't be invested there if poverty, or cheap labour, didn't exist. Where would they find workers?

***In a particularly ambient scene, Amrit is driving past a World Bank site that conjures up the image of a cemetery. What role do organisations like the World Bank play in parts of India that are infested with insurgents?***

The fact is the World Bank usually waits till insurgents have been removed before it moves in, which is why it has a larger footprint in parts of India that aren't insurgent-prone. It's not very different, except in scale, from the situation in Iraq, which is still primarily a project of the US state. We will see the full involvement of the World Bank or the IMF or the multinationals in Iraq only when (and if) the area has been pacified.

But organisations like the World Bank have made an impact in more than one area in India. They have created a worldview, an idea of progress where it is perfectly reasonable to auction off public resources to the MNCs regardless of the social costs.

***Can you elucidate these social costs?***

The collapse of agriculture (which is what sustains a majority of the Indian population, not software technology, whatever Thomas Friedman might think), the flood of displaced peasants to slums in cities, environmental degradation, sectarian violence, a stripping away of the miniscule labour rights that existed before, large-scale extraction of wealth from the country to western enclaves, and a mindless elite composed of technocrats that thinks shopping malls, parking lots and gated communities constitute heaven on earth.

# When those joints begin to pack up



Dr GG Gangadharan

ONE of the problems that comes with age is pain in the joints. Pain and swelling can be reduced by following Ayurvedic advice. The most common reason for joint pain and inflammation is arthritis or *Vata raktha* as described in Ayurveda. In this condition, if there is no swelling, application of medicated oil will be useful. The common oil used is *Kottam chukkadi thailam* mixed with *Karpooradhi thailam*. If there is a burning sensation, then *Pinda thailam* is excellent. These are available with the Arya Vaidya Pharmacy at Kottakkal and Coimbatore.

If the pain and swelling are seen more in the morning and less as the day proceeds then one should get proper advice from an Ayurvedic doctor so that further deterioration can be prevented. Once there is degeneration of bone tissues or cartilages, it will not be possible to correct it.

If the pain is in the initial stage, one should immediately switch over to healthy habits. A proper diet is particularly important.

## Diet

Foods that are easily digestible and not oily and fried are advised. Arthritis can result from the intake of foods that are incompatible, half cooked and acidic in nature. Salted pickles, combinations of milk and fish, salt and milk, jack fruit or any citrus fruit and milk are common examples of incompatible foods.

Non-vegetarian food, especially pork and the meat of fleshy animals are forbidden.

Foods that are hot and sour should be completely avoided. Curds, pickles, deep-fried items are ruled out along with non-vegetarian food except meat soup seasoned with pepper and ghee and very little salt. This too should be taken occasionally.

Milk every day is recommended. Rice gruel or *kanji* mixed with butter and juice of asparagus (*satavari*) is very good. Cooked vegetables and fruits are good.



Asparagus racemosus

## Lifestyle

A good night's sleep is important, but one should not sleep during the day. Rheumatoid arthritis is seen more in people who have sedentary habits and who belong to a very soft and fragile body type (*sukumara sareera* – the opposite of a strong and stout body). So people in this category should be extra cautious.

One should not indulge in rigorous exercises, including walking for long periods. But moving around at home is fine. Also limit sexual intercourse. It is important to avoid getting angry as this increases *pitha* or heat in the body and contributes to the drying up of fluids.

Vagbhata, the author of *Ashtangahridaya*, the basic text of Ayurveda written

## Recipes for diabetics

### Drumstick roti

**Ingredients:** • Millet grain flour 250 gm • Rock salt ¼ tsp • Barley water 4 cups • Chopped fresh drumstick leaves 12 gm • Chopped fresh fenugreek leaves 12 gm • Chopped Curry Leaves 6 gm • Mustard oil ½ - 1 tsp • Honey 2 tsp

Mix flour with drumstick leaves, fenugreek, and curry leaves. To this dry mixture add warm water and salt to make a soft dough. This is flattened into rotis and heated over fire on a pan until cooked. While cooking, add half a spoon of mustard oil. The dish is now ready and can be eaten with any vegetable curry.

### Green gram drink

**Ingredients:** • Green gram 50 gms • Barley water \* 250 ml.

The green gram is boiled in barley water. This is churned well. It becomes a soup. Ingest half an hour after your breakfast.

To make barley water soak 50 gm barley (broken grains) overnight in 250 ml water. Next morning, churn it well and then filter it. This mixture is used as a base liquid. Alternatively barley grains can be boiled in water for nearly an hour and then the water can be drained. This can also be used as the base liquid.

### Khichdi

**Ingredients:** • White rice ½ cup • Green gram ¼ cup • Green beans 1 ½ cups • Fennel seeds ½ tsp • Cumin seeds 1 tsp • Onions 1 tsp • Water 6-10 cups • Rock salt ½ tsp • Coriander leaves (chopped) 1 tsp

Wash rice and green gram together till the water is clear. Now drain out the water. Finely chop green beans. Mix ingredients. Add water and boil till the rice is cooked. Heat oil in a pan. Add cumin seeds and fennel seeds. When seeds begin to pop add onions and sauté till brown. Add this to the boiled rice and mix well. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves.

between 4th to 8th Century AD, says for arthritis it is good to drink water boiled with roots of *Asterantha longifolia* and *Hygrophila schulla* (*Kokilaksha* – *Vayal Chulli*) for six months. The leaves of the same plant cooked and eaten will also reduce pains and swellings.

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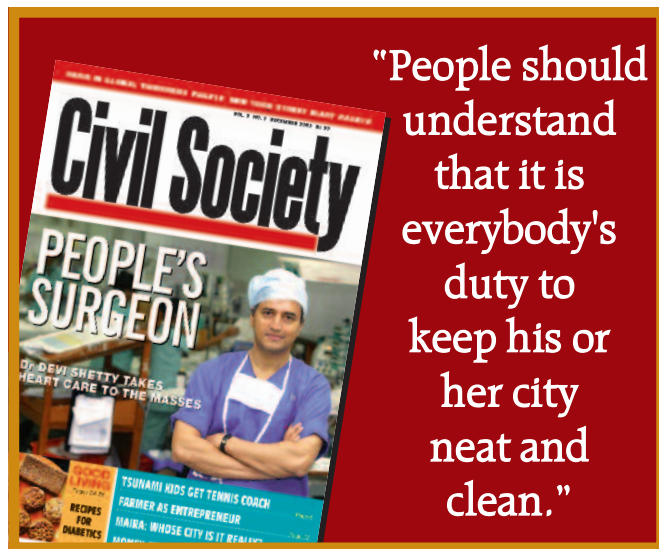
## Price matters

I am a regular reader of Civil Society. I read it at a library. I would like to read it during my leisure time within the confines of my home but I cannot since your magazine is priced at Rs 50. This is unaffordable for me. The subscription scheme that you are offering is not economically very attractive. I have my doubts about the success of the scheme. Can't you make it more tempting by reducing the subscription amount and throwing in a gift or two as is the latest trend. Riding on such schemes, magazines which used to be shunned are seeing a phenomenal growth in their sales

**B.C. Pant**

## Talk to govt

The cover story 'Heart Care for Every One' in the December issue of Civil Society was very thought provoking. I suggest that you send a complimentary copy of this particular issue to every government department and office especially the Union minister for



**"People should understand that it is everybody's duty to keep his or her city neat and clean."**

health at the Centre and health ministers in the various States. Trust me, the story is so convincing that there may be many takers for this at the Centre and the States.

**Rakesh Sharma**

## More on cities

It was good to see that you have begun to cover news and events happening in other cities of the country. I am alluding to the Review column. The story entitled, 'Prithvi stages Mumbai

Mania' beautifully covered the plays staged at Prithvi Theatre, Mumbai. I would suggest that you start a regular column on one page to cover important events in the metropolitan cities. It will give your magazine an all-India look.

**R Kopal**

## Positive stories

The thing I like most about Civil Society magazine is that it is very positive. It looks at the good side of things and does not harp on the ugly side. Most of the

articles and write-ups in the magazine are aimed at helping the public bring more health and happiness in their lives. The articles under the column 'Good Living' in particular were very informative and interesting. Keep it up

**Sushil Kumar**

## Stop litterbugs

I entirely agree with the views expressed in the article entitled 'Whose city is it really' by Arun Maira. The dismal condition in which we find our cities today is related to the apathy of its inhabitants.

They just do not think or feel any sense of belonging to the city they live in. People should understand that it is everybody's duty to keep his or her city neat and clean.

You can have any number of municipal sweepers but they would all be hopelessly inadequate if a city's inhabitants do not stop being litter bugs.

**Rama Krishan**

## Write on education

One thing I rarely see in your magazine is a column or a story about education and careers. When your magazine is rendering a yeoman service in other fields, I fail to understand what prevents you from devoting some space to giving such information. If not through the year, at least during important examinations and entrance tests your magazine could devote some space to education. Such information would definitely be lapped up by the student community.

**KK Gulati**

## No fixed regimen

Your magazine does not seem to follow any fixed regimen. In a way it is good.

It takes away the predictability and substitutes it by uncertainty which has its own charm and thrill. Fixedness conveys rigidity. Rigidity conveys lack of openness. I would prefer any day a magazine which is open and assimilating rather than a magazine which, like a daily, resists any change in format.

**N Balwani**

## WHERE TO VOLUNTEER

### Cansupport India

Kanak Durga Basti Vikas Kendra, Sector 12 R.K. Puram Near DPS School New Delhi-110022  
Tel: 26102851, 26102859, 26102869  
E-mail: cansup\_india@hotmail.com

### Rahi

Rahi is a support centre for urban middle class women suffering from the trauma of incest. It provides information, individual support, group support and referrals. Through workshops and peer educators they help survivors and spread awareness. Contact: H-49 A, Second floor, Kalkaji, New Delhi-3 Phone: 26227647

### Association for India's Development(AID) - Delhi Chapter

AID works for the environment, children, women's issues, education, and health. They also undertake fund raising. Contact: Anuj Grover B-121, MIG Flats, Phase-IV, Ashok Vihar Delhi - 110052  
Phone: 9818248459  
E-mail: anuj.grover@gmail.com

### Youthreach

A volunteer team at Youthreach helps to match your skills and interests with the needs of their partner organisations. This exchange is monitored and facilitated from beginning to end by the volunteer team. The team also partners other non-profit organisations that are working with children, women and the environment. Contact: Anubha or Ria 11 Community Centre, Saket, New Delhi - 110 017  
Phone/Fax: (011) 2653 3520/25/30  
Email: yrd@youthreachindia.org

### Deepalaya

They work with economically, socially deprived, physically and mentally challenged children. They believe in helping children become self reliant and lead a healthy life. Deepalaya works on education, health, skill training and income enhancement. Contact: Deepalaya 46, Institutional Area, D Block Janakpuri New Delhi - 110 058  
Phone: 25548263, 25590347  
Website: www.deepalaya.org

### Mobile Crèches

Mobile Crèches pioneered intervention into the lives of migrant construction

workers by introducing the mobile crèche where working parents can leave their children. They work in the following areas: health, education, community outreach, networking and advocacy, resource mobilisation and communication. You can volunteer by filling out a simple form online. Contact: DIZ Area, Raja Bazaar, Sector IV New Delhi - 110 001  
Phone: 91-11-23347635 / 23363271  
Website: www.mobilecreches.org

### The Arpana Trust

Arpana is a charitable, religious and spiritual organisation headquartered in Karnal, Haryana. They work with rural communities in Himachal Pradesh and with slum dwellers in Delhi. Arpana is well known for its work on health. They have helped organise women into self-help groups. These SHGs make beautiful and intricate items which are marketed by Arpana. For more details: Arpana Community Centre, NS-5, Munirka Marg Street F/9, Next to MTNL, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057.  
Phone: (Office) 26151136 and (Resi) 26154964

## WHERE TO DONATE

### Indian Red Cross Society

The society provides relief, hospital services, maternity and child welfare, family welfare, nursing and community services.

Contact: Red Cross Bhavan Golf Links New Delhi-110003  
Phone: 24618915, 24617531

### Child Relief and You(CRY)

CRY, a premier child rights organisation, believes that every child is entitled to survival, protection, development and participation. You can sponsor a child's education, healthcare, or a health worker and a teacher. Website: www.cry.org

### Community Aid and Sponsorship Program (CASP)

CASP enhances the capacities of children, families and communities through participation and advocacy leading to sustainable development and empowerment. You can help by sponsoring underprivileged child/children from any work area where CASP implements its programmes. These include building old-age

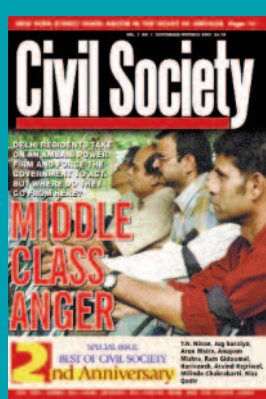
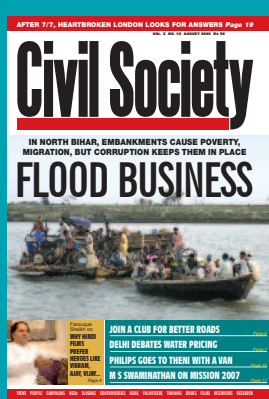
homes, projects relating to AIDS etc. Website: www.caspindia.org

### ActionAid

ActionAid is an international development organisation which works with poor and marginalised women, men, girls and boys to eradicate poverty, injustice and inequity. You can become a part of their Karma Mitra loyalty program, which is based on the concept 'When you do good things you should get good things in return.' As a member of this program you can avail various tangible benefits. Contact: ActionAid India C-88, South Extension - II New Delhi-110 049  
Website: www.actionaidindia.org

### Cansupport India

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