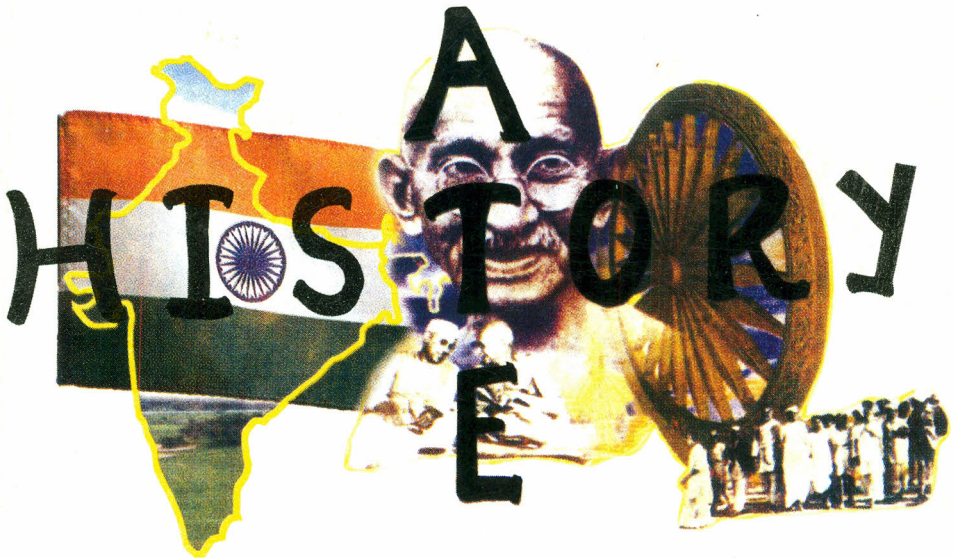


U
P
D
A



Vol VI March 2005
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
STELLA MARIS COLLEGE

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Can we truly say that we know enough about Indian women? About women who have made a difference to the lives of other women and humanity at large?

Hundreds of women, both known and unknown, have struggled to discover new ethos, identified and articulated the ever-replenishing and self-renewing qualities time and again. Women in India have been facing multi-faced challenges throughout History as a result of simultaneous working of political, social and economic pressures on their lives and status. They have repeatedly become targets of covert and overt violence and oppression...and yet, women are considered to be the repositories of culture and tradition and they have been evolving creative ways of dealing with identity politics. Worsening environmental crisis has thrown up new leadership of women working in collaboration with social movements spearheading the cause of other women.

The update highlights the sacrifices, courage, and contribution of women who have made that difference in the lives of others. They have helped shape new values, attitudes and roles of women in NEW INDIA.

This issue is a tribute to women achievers of India who are from across India's diversity. Their life has been a reflection of their experiences and their relationship with the world around them. This is a collective effort of our III B. A. (History) students who have attempted to bring in print the lives of women who have made India proud. Read on

Dr. Patricia Gabriel

CONTENTS

"HISTORY MAKERS"

WOMEN OF ANCIENT INDIA

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Famous women of ancient India | 1 |
| 2. Great women of Vedic period | 6 |

WOMEN OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

- | | |
|-------------------|----|
| 3. Gulbadan Begam | 9 |
| 4. Mira Bai | 11 |
| 5. Mumtaz | 14 |
| 6. Noor Jahan | 16 |
| 7. Rani Padmini | 20 |
| 8. Raziya Sultana | 23 |

WOMEN OF MODERN INDIA

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| 9. Dr. Amrita Patel | 26 |
| 10. Amy Carmichael | 28 |
| 11. Anandibai Joshi | 31 |
| 12. Annie Besant | 34 |
| 13. Durgabai Desmukh | 36 |
| 14. Fathima Beevi | 39 |
| 15. Indira Gandhi | 41 |
| 16. Dr. J. Jayalalitha | 44 |
| 17. Joshna Chinappa | 46 |
| 18. Kalpana Chawla | 49 |
| 19. Kiran Bedi | 51 |
| 20. Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw | 54 |
| 21. Madame Bhikaji Cama | 57 |
| 22. Maneka Gandhi | 60 |
| 23. Lata Mangeshkar | 63 |
| 24. Medha Patkar | 66 |
| 25. Mother Teresa | 70 |
| 26. M.S. Subbulakshmi | 72 |
| 27. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy | 75 |
| 28. Chinnappillai | 77 |
| 29. Dr. V. Shanta | 80 |
| 30. Pandita Ramabai | 84 |
| 31. Rani Lakshmi Bai | 86 |
| 32. Revathi Menon | 89 |
| 33. Rukmani Devi | 91 |
| 34. Sarojini Naidu | 94 |
| 35. Shabana Azmi | 98 |
| 36. Sonia Gandhi | 100 |
| 37. Usha Mehta | 103 |
| 38. Vijayalakshmi Pandit | 107 |

FAMOUS WOMEN OF ANCIENT INDIA

DRAUPADI:

Draupadi was the daughter of Drupada who was the king of Panchala. She was born from the fire ritual and for this reason was also called Yajnaseni. Her dark complexion also gave her the name of Krishnaa. Queen Kunti was the mother of the five Pandava brothers, Arjuna, Bhishma, Yudhishthira, Sahadeva and Nakula. When the Pandavas brought Draupadi back to their home, they wanted to show her to their mother, but Kunti, without having seen Draupadi, told them that whatever they have they must all share equally. So Draupadi became the wife of all five Pandavas. It is said that Draupadi in a previous life had been the wife of Indra, the King of heaven, and she took five separate forms in serving her Pandava husbands. Thus, she was most devoted to her five husbands and was also a great devotee of the Supreme Lord, and regarded Lord Krishna as her ultimate protector.

One episode that shows this was when in the court of the Kauravas, when wicked Dushadhana tried to disrobe her in front of everyone. Draupadi became helpless and fervently prayed to Krishna for protection. Krishna heard her prayers and though he was in Dwaraka, He protected her by providing an endless supply of cloth to her sari so that it never ended, and she was always covered and not dishonored in such a way.

Another time was when Durvasa Muni, who was known for his quick anger, suddenly decided to drop in on the Pandava camp, along with his many thousands of disciples. He would also want something to eat for himself and his followers. But the Pandavas had just eaten and there was nothing more to prepare. Lord Krishna asked for whatever remnant grains were left in the pot. Being the Supreme Lord, if He was satisfied, then everyone would be satisfied. So He took what few grains were

there and when Durvasa Muni arrived, they were all so full that they no longer wanted anything to eat, and thus left peacefully.

In Draupadi's service to her husbands, she had said that she rises before anyone else, tolerates hunger and thirst, and goes to bed after the others. She also gave birth to five sons, all of whom were killed by the wicked Ashwatthama. But since he was the son of the family guru, and she had such respect for their gurus, that he forgave him.

When the Pandavas had reached the end of their lives and were setting out to ascend to heaven by climbing up into the mountains, she was the last in line. But she was the first to fall and thus rise to heaven after her death. Her dedication and devotion makes her one of the great personalities of Vedic culture.

MADALASA:

Madalasa was the daughter of Vishvasu, the Gandharva king. She was also a great inspiration to her sons. Ritdhvaj, the son of the powerful king Shatrujit, was her husband. When Shatrujit died, Ritdhvaj took the position of king and engaged in the royal duties. In due course, Madalasa gave birth to a son, Vikrant. When Vikrant would cry, Madalasa would sing words of wisdom to keep him quiet. She would sing that he was a pure soul, that he has no real name and his body is merely a vehicle made of the five elements. He is not really of the body, so why does he cry?

Thus, Madalasa would enlighten her son with spiritual knowledge in the songs she would sing to him. Because of this knowledge, little Vikrant grew up to be an ascetic, free from worldly attachments or worldly activities, and he eventually went to the forest to engage in austerities. The same thing happened to her second son, Subahu, and her third son, Shatrumardan.

Her husband told her that she should not teach the same knowledge to their fourth son, Alark, so that at least one of them would be interested in worldly activities and take up the role of looking after the kingdom. So to Alark she sang a song of being a great king who would rule the world, and make it prosperous and free from villains for many years. By doing so he would enjoy the bounty of life and eventually join the Immortals. In this way, she trained her son Alark from the beginning of his life in the direction he would take. This is how a mother can influence her child in whatever potential may be possible, whether materially or spiritually, by imparting noble thoughts to open the avenues of activities for her children.

SULABHA:

Neither the popular nor the scholarly debate in modern India has paid sufficient attention to unmarried learned women in ancient Hindu texts. The recurrent figure of Sulabha, a single woman and an intellectual-renunciant and her debate with philosopher-king Janaka in the epic Mahabharata has never been highlighted. . When Janaka use anti-women arguments to critique Sulabha's unconventional behavior, Sulabha successfully establishe on the basis of Hindu philosophical principles, that there is no essential difference between a man and a woman; she also demonstrate by her own example that a woman may achieve liberation by the same means as a man. In the same epic, a married woman won her debate with a male sage, proving that even a woman following the conventional path of wifely devotion may equal or outdo a sage in wisdom and virtue.

DEVAHUTI:

Devahuti the daughter of Svayambhura Manu was the wife of Kardam Muni. Devahuti served her husband in two ways, visrambhena and gauravena. These are two important processes

in serving the husband or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Visrambhena means "with intimacy," and gauravena means "with great reverence." The husband is a very intimate friend; therefore, the wife must render service just like an intimate friend, and at the same time she must understand that the husband is superior in position, and thus she must offer him all respect.. Thus the natural instinct is that the husband wants to post himself as superior to the wife, and this must be observed. Even if there is some wrong on the part of the husband, the wife must tolerate it, and thus there will be no misunderstanding between husband and wife. Visrambhena means "with intimacy," but it must not be familiarity that breeds contempt. According to the Vedic civilization, a wife cannot call her husband by name. In the present civilization the wife calls her husband by name, but in Hindu civilization she does not. Thus the inferiority and superiority complexes are recognized. Damena: a wife has to learn to control herself even if there is a misunderstanding. Sauhrdena vaca madhuraya means always desiring good for the husband and speaking to him with sweet words. A person becomes agitated by so many material contacts in the outside world; therefore, in his home life his wife must treat him with sweet words.

GANDHARI:

Princess Gandhari, the wife of blind king Dhritarashtra, as her husband was blind, she folded her eyes with cloth and spent her life without seeing the world. Gandhari's son Duryodhana was adamant in his resolution to go to war with his cousins, the last effort to dissuade him from his resolution was entrusted to his mother. She played an active role in Mahabharata.

KUNTI:

Mother of Karna, actually born during her virginhood sired by the Sun God Surya and again the mother of Yudhishtira,

Bhima and Arjuna sired by King Pandu. Kunti's father, King Kuntibhoja, had become very nervous when the angry sage Durvasa came to stay with him as his guest, Kunti, however undertook the responsibility of attending upon the guest and keeping him in good manner. She performed her task with remarkable success. She saved his father from "dire consequences".

It is the daughter and not the son, who enables the father to get the great merit Prithvidana or gift of the earth.

J. Jeny Ivon
III B.A. History

'If you want anything said, ask a man. If you want something done, ask a woman.'

- Margaret Thatcher

GREAT WOMEN OF VEDIC PERIOD

Some of the women that have helped make great strides in establishing the foundation of Sanatana-dharma and Vedic culture can be listed and described. They serve as fine examples of historical importance that have been the basis for inspiration to both men and women for centuries. From the early Vedic times women such as Sati, Sita, Anasuya, Arundhatee, Draupadi, Queen Kunti, Shakuntala, Maitreyi, Gargi, Madalasa, Savitri, Ahalya have been placed in high esteem. It is said simply reciting their names removes sins. There are additional women from the last few hundred years whose lives we can recollect as well. Such great women have contributed to the glories and splendor of Vedic culture. So let us briefly review the lives of some of these great women.

Gargi:

Gargi was the daughter of Vashaknu, and was also called Vachakni. But because she was born in the line of the Garga Gotra, she was also called Gargi, a name by which she became well known. The Brihadaranayaka Upanishad explains that she asked the sage many questions on spiritual science and became highly educated in this way. Once in the court of King Janaka there was arranged a debate on the spiritual sciences. He wanted to find out who was the person who knew best the science of the Absolute, and that person would receive 1000 decorated cows with horns plated with gold. None of the local brahmanas complied because they were afraid they would have to prove their knowledge, and may not be up to the task. But Gargi exhibited her knowledge in spiritual sciences, so that nobody ever dared to confront her.

Maitreyi:

Maitreyi was the wife of the great sage Yajnavalkya. His second wife was Katyayani. Both were devoted to their husbands and

were of lofty character. However, Maitreyi had a higher regard for spiritual knowledge and devotion to God than Katyayani. The Brihadaranayaka Upanishad relates that finally, the sage Yajnavalkya wanted to renounce householder life and accept the sannyasa order of life, and divided his possessions between his two wives. Maitreyi then questioned herself as what greater thing her husband must have found if he is willing to give up his present status in householder life. Surely no one will give up his position unless he finds something better. So she asked her husband if she had all the riches in the world, could she still attain immortality. Her husband said certainly not, it is not possible. All the happiness and conveniences from wealth will not lead you to God. So Maitreyi then asked why she should acquire wealth if it is not going to deliver her from future bonds of birth and death. She requested that he tell her about the Supreme Being, for which he was happily giving up household life.

Anasuya:

Anasuya was a woman who could bring back the life of a dead sage due to the power of her own austerity and devotion to her husband. She showed that devotion to a qualified husband gives the wife fame, power and is the fulfillment of her dharma. Anasuya was the wife of the sage Atri. Her mother was daughter of the sage Svayambhuva and her father was Kardama Muni. Her fame had spread throughout both the Earth and the planets of the Devas.

According to the Markandeya Purana, there was once a sage named Mandasya who cursed a brahmana named Kaushika to die the next morning at sunrise. When Kaushiki, Kaushika's wife, heard the news, she vowed that by the power of her chastity the sun would never rise. When the sun did not rise for many days, everyone started to become alarmed. Brahma then told the other demigods to go to Anasuya and she could assist them to continue the sunrise by the force of her moral

power. Anasuya then entreated Kaushiki to allow the sunrise to resume. Kaushiki then allowed the sunrise to take place, but her husband immediately expired because of the curse. Yet, Anasuya brought the husband back to life by the power of her own austerity and devotion to her husband. Being pleased by this, the demigods gave Anasuya the blessing to have her wish for three sons who would be reincarnations of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

Katyayani:

The Rig Veda contains about one thousand hymns, of which about ten are accredited to Maitreyi, the woman seer and philosopher. She contributed towards the enhancement of her sage-husband Yajnavalkya's personality and the flowering of his spiritual thoughts. Yajnavalkya had two wives, Maitreyi and Katyayani. While Maitreyi was well versed in the Hindu scriptures and was a 'brahmavadini', Katyayani was an ordinary woman. One day the sage decided to make a settlement of his worldly possessions between his two wives and renounced the world by taking up ascetic vows. He asked his wives their wishes. The learned Maitreyi asked her husband if all the wealth in the world would make her immortal. The sage replied that wealth could only make one rich, nothing else. She then asked for the wealth of immortality. Yajnavalkya was happy to hear this and imparted to Maitreyi the doctrine of the soul and his knowledge of attaining immortality.

Vanitha Shally
III B.A. History

GULBADAN BEGAM (1522/3-1603)

Gulbadan was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, to Babur, who shortly after her birth became the first Mughal emperor of India. Five years later Gulbadan went with her family to northern India, where she grew up at the court of Babur and then of her half-brother Humayun. She was married before she was 17 and had one child, a son. What should have been a peaceful life changed when, in 1540, Humayun was driven out of India; Gulbadan herself would spend over seven years at Kabul as a captive of another half-brother, who was fighting against Humayun.

When Gulbadan was in her 60s, her nephew, the emperor Akbar, ordered historians to gather together information on his grandfather, Babur, and his father, Humayun. Gulbadan responded with the *Humayun-nama* (originally titled *Ahval-i Humayun Badshah*). In it she tells the story of her family: she describes her own experiences and she uses sources, such as those from the women's quarters that were unavailable to male historians.

The extant Persian manuscript of the *Humayun-nama* is incomplete: it ends in 1552 instead of carrying the story forward to Humayun's death in 1556. We don't know if the ending has been lost or if the work was left unfinished, although the state of the manuscript suggests missing pages.

We do know something of Gulbadan's life after 1552. After defeating his enemies, Humayun returned to India as emperor in 1555, but he died the following year, to be succeeded by his son, Akbar. Two years later, the teen-aged Akbar brought the *begams* (the women of the royal family) from Kabul to India. Except for a seven-year pilgrimage to Mecca when she was in her 50s, and a visit to Kabul when she was in her 70s, Gulbadan lived the rest of her life at the Mughal court, first in Agra, then in Sikri.

We know that in 1594, Gulbadan interceded with Akbar for a grandson in trouble (success unknown), and that when she died in 1603, Akbar helped to carry her bier (a surprising enough gesture to be mentioned by Akbar's chroniclers). For her personality, we have only her description of her first 28 years in the *Humayun-nama*, but it is enough for us to come to know her well.

Jennifer Joseph
III B.A. History

'Woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal capacity.'
- Gandhi

MIRA BAI

Mira was a queen of Rajasthan who is known more for her devotion than her political position. There are so many stories about Mira Bai that it is very difficult to tell the facts of her life from legend. She was born in A.D.1500 and was married at the age of 13. From an early age she showed more interest in religious devotions than to her worldly responsibilities. It is said that she neglected her marital responsibilities.



When queried about it, she said that it was impossible for her to be married to the king when she was already married to Krishna. A major change in her life occurred at the time of the death of her husband. It was customary in those days for a wife to commit *satti*. *Satti* is the self-immolation upon the husband's funeral pyre. She refused to comply, whereupon her in-laws began harassing her. She then left the palace and began wandering throughout Rajasthan, preaching and gaining followers. Mira is known for the many *bhajans* that she left behind. These *bhajans* are in praise of lord Krishna and held in great esteem for their high literary value.

Mira Bai was brought up amidst Vaishnava influence, which moulded her life in the path of devotion towards Lord Krishna. She learnt to worship Sri Krishna from her childhood. When she was four years of age, she manifested religious tendencies. Once there was a marriage procession in front of her residence. The bridegroom was nicely dressed. Mira, who was only a child, saw the bridegroom and said to her mother innocently, "Dear mother, who is my bridegroom?" Mira's mother smiled, and half in jest and half in earnest, pointed towards the image of Sri Krishna and said, "My dear Mira, Lord Krishna—this beautiful image—is your bridegroom".

Child Mira began to love the idol of Krishna very much. She spent much of her time in bathing and dressing the image. She worshipped the image. She slept with the image. She danced around the image in ecstasy. She sang beautiful songs in front of the image. She used to talk to the idol.

Mira's father arranged for her marriage with Rana Kumbha of Chitore, in Mewar. Mira was a very dutiful wife. She obeyed her husband's commands implicitly. After her household duties were over, she would go to the temple of Lord Krishna, worship, sing and dance before the image daily. The little image would get up, embrace Mira, play on the flute and talk to her. Rana's mother and other ladies of the house did not like the ways of Mira, as they were worldly-minded and jealous. They were all annoyed with her. Mira's mother-in-law forced her to worship Durga and admonished her often. But Mira stood adamant. She said, "I have already given up my life to my beloved Lord Krishna".

Once the Rana sent a cobra in a basket to Mira with the message that it contained a garland of flowers. Mira took her bath and sat for worship. After finishing her meditation, she opened the basket and found inside a lovely idol of Sri Krishna and a garland of flowers. Then the Rana sent her a cup of poison with the message that it was nectar. Mira offered it to Lord Krishna and took it as his 'Prasad'. It was real nectar to her. Then the Rana sent a bed of nails for Mira to sleep on. Mira finished her worship and slept on the bed of nails. Lo! The bed of nails was transformed into a bed of roses.

Once Akbar and his court musician Tansen came in disguise to Chitore to hear Mira's devotional and inspiring songs. Both entered the temple and listened to Mira's soul-stirring songs to their heart's content. Akbar was really moved. Before he departed, he touched the holy feet of Mira and placed a necklace of emeralds in front of the idol as a present.

Mira's earthly life was full of troubles and difficulties. She was persecuted. She was tormented and yet she kept up an undaunted spirit and a balanced mind all through, by the strength of her devotion and the grace of her beloved Krishna. Though she was a princess, she begged alms and lived sometimes on water alone. She led a life of perfect renunciation and self-surrender.

Modern scholars accept over 200 poems (*bhajans*) as hers, but more than 1300 have been attributed. She may have written in Gujarati, but her poems were almost immediately translated into Hindi and other languages, and sung at first all over the north and later in the south. She has remained immensely popular throughout India, and many English translations of her poems have been made.

Patricia Maria Davis
III B.A. History

'I can do no great things, only small things with great love.'
- Mother Theresa

MUMTAZ

Mumtaz Mahal or Arjumand Banu was the woman in whose memory the Taj Mahal was built. Perhaps, there is no better grand monument built in the history of human civilization dedicated to love.



Arjumand Banu was the daughter of Asaf Khan and when she married Shahjahan at the age of 14, the Imperial city of Agra was already agog with the stories of her beauty. She was the third wife of Prince Khurram or Shahjahan and the principal one throughout their life. She became Mumtaz Mahal in 1612 after her marriage and remained an inseparable companion of her husband till her death. As a symbol of her faith and love she bore Shahjahan 14 children and died during the birth of last child. For the love and affection she showed to her husband, Mumtaz Mahal received highest honor of the land - the royal seal - Mehr Uzaz from Shahjahan, the emperor. According to the legends, stories of her virtue spread all over the Mughal Empire.

The emperor and his pregnant empress moved towards Maharashtra or Deccan in the year 1630 to suppress the Lodi empire that was gaining strength at that time. This was going to be the last journey that Mumtaz Mahal ever took. She breathed her last after delivering their 14th child (a daughter) in the city of Burhanpur on June 17, 1631. It is said that Mumtaz Mahal on her deathbed asked Shahjahan to create a symbol of their love for posterity and her loyal husband accepted it immediately. Though many historians are not in agreement with this story saying that it was the grief-stricken emperor himself who decided to build the most memorable symbol of love in the world.

It took her husband 22 years and most of his royal treasury to build a monument befitting the memory of his beloved wife. In the name of Mumtaz Mahal stands the most beautiful building

in the universe, that monument of love, purity and unparalleled beauty called the Taj Mahal.

MUMTAZ MAHAL:

Taj Mahal was built by a Muslim, Emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his dear wife and queen Mumtaz Mahal at Agra, India. It is an "eulogy in marble" or some say an expression of a "dream." Taj Mahal (meaning Crown Palace) is a Mausoleum that houses the grave of queen Mumtaz Mahal at the lower chamber. The grave of Shah Jahan was added to it later. The queen's real name was Arjumand Banu. In the tradition of the Mughals, important ladies of the royal family were given another name at their marriage or at some other significant event in their lives, and the public commonly used that new name. Taj Mahal was constructed over a period of twenty-two years, employing twenty thousand workers. It was completed in 1648 C.E. at a cost of 32 million rupees. The construction documents show that its master architect was Ustad 'Isa, the renowned Islamic architect of his time. The documents contain names of those employed and the inventory of construction materials and their origin. Expert craftsmen from Delhi, Qannauj, Lahore, and Multan were employed. In addition, many renowned Muslim craftsmen from Baghdad, Shiraz and Bukhara worked on many specialized tasks.

The Taj stands on a raised, square platform (186 x 186 feet) with its four corners truncated, forming an unequal octagon. The architectural design uses the interlocking arabesque concept, in which each element stands on its own and perfectly integrates with the main structure. It uses the principles of self-replicating geometry and symmetry of architectural elements.

V. EDEL QUEEN
III B.A. History

NOOR JAHAN – LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Those who are fans of Swarajs and Banerjees, are advised to return to the 16th century for an exquisite example of a woman of elegance and excellence in power, who is none other than Mihr al nisa better known as Noor Jahan (pronounced Noor Juhaan). Noor Jahan's Persian grandfather was in the service of Shah Tahmasb; the grandfather died in Yazd laden with honors. His heirs, however, soon fell upon hard times, and his son, Mirza Ghiyas al-Din Muhammad, was forced to set out for India with his family. In 1577, during the trip to India, his wife gave birth, a beautiful daughter, Mihr al-Nisa. Later, Jahangir would give Mihr al-Nisa the name of Nur Mahal (Light of the Palace), which he later expanded to Nur Jahan (Light of the World).

Small wonder that the birth of Noor Jahan has become a legend and a fable. After her grandfather's death, the enemies of the family wreaked havoc on the mild-mannered, suave and urbane Mirza Ghiyas. Things came to such a pass that the Mirza had to flee although his lady wife was heavy with child and almost full-term. Near the City of Qandahar the small band stopped to let the lady deliver her baby. It was a girl-child and very beautiful. The prospect of yet another life to nurture and protect appeared impossible and they decided to abandon the baby by the wayside. As they left and the sun rose high to cast its pitiless hot rays on the helpless infant, a King Cobra happened to come near drawn by the smell of mankind. It coiled itself at the head of the child and spread out its hood to cast a shadow and prevent the heat of the sun from falling on the tiny face. The scouts of the next caravan to pass saw the deadly beast from a distance. As they warily drew near, they were amazed to find that the dreaded creature was performing a most unexpected role-that of protecting a helpless, human infant. They turned back to inform their Chief, the Mir-i-Karwan. As he approached, the snake sped away leaving the field clear for the humans. The next thing was to

find a wet nurse for the baby. As refugees travel slowly, the caravan soon caught up with Mirza Ghiyas and his sorry band. The mother was more than happy to nurse her child and the first miracle of Noor Jahan's life had sprung up to embellish her remarkable story.

Although legend has this lady enchanted the eldest son of Emperor Akbar while they were teenagers the reality was otherwise. Mihrunnissa born in 1577 met her second husband, Selim who had taken the title 'Nurudeen Jahangir' at his accession in 1611. At this juncture she was a widow of 35 years of age and 'encumbered' with a daughter from her first husband, Sher Afghan.

Noor Jahan had a diverse number of achievements to her credit. She excelled in a whole range of unrelated activities. She could turn a verse, appreciate a painting, design building from its architecture down to the smallest embellishment in enhancing its beauty, evolve a new style in dress, drop tigers and lions with an arrow or a bullet and sustain a conversation on any of the subjects of the day. Noor Jahan was a patron of architecture whose interests also extended to the decoration of rooms as well as the designing of ornaments, brocades, rugs and dresses. The fashions in women's clothing that she adopted were still in vogue at the end of the 16th century. It is because of her 'eye' being added to that of her husband who was one of the greatest aesthetes known to the history of mankind that Mughal painting scaled its pinnacle of glory in the period 1612-1627.

Jahangir's own excellent Memoirs enable a visit to his times. He records - on one occasion, four tigers came out of the bushes near the elephant being ridden by Jahangir and Noor Jahan. The Emperor looked at his lady and whispered, "Yours!" She asked in gestures, "Arrow or Bullet?" In order not to make a sound and thus disturb the very sharp-eared animals the Emperor raised two fingers put them down and raised them

again. Noor Jahan understood that he wanted to have her shoot two with bow and arrow and two with the gun. She loaded two guns and kept them ready, resting on the howdah. Then she took up her bow and selected two arrows. In the twinkling of an eye she raised the bow and in quick-fire action let fly two arrows at the tigers. Her aim was unerring and two large beasts fell with arrows stuck in their hearts. She then picked up the two guns in quick succession and dropped a tiger with each shot.

When Jahangir was taken prisoner by General Mahabut Khan Noor Jahan tried to cross the river between her and her husband on an elephant although the flood waters were high and swift. Although her attempt to rescue failed and she could not repeat it because it spelt danger for her husband, the attempt shows her spirit and her loyalty. Jahangir lived under the spell of personalities that were more colorful than his own; the most influential of these personalities was the beautiful Noor Jahan. Jahangir died in transit between Kashmir and Lahore. Asaf Khan posted guards around Noor Jahan's camp and recovered his grandsons Dara Shukoh, Shah Shuja and Aurangzeb from her custody to ensure that she had no power over the father, Shah Jahan.

After the coronation of Shah Jahan, Noor Jahan gave up politics and lived in seclusion. Always clad in white, all her time was spent in building the tomb of her husband and growing its garden. Noor Jahan was an excellent conversationalist, a fine judge of Persian poetry and a poet herself. Her accomplishments made her an irresistible companion for the emperor. She herself built a very small tomb for herself and the verse she wrote for it is to be the part of the repertoire of every one with any vestige of the heritage of India.

'On the grave of this traveler be so good as to light no lamps nor strew any roses. This will ensure that the wings of moths do not get singed and that nightingales will not sigh and weep and lament'.

The family of Nur Jahan, her mother, her father Mirza Ghiyas, her brother Asaf Khan, her niece Arjumand Bano Begum entitled Mumtaz Mahal (the lady of the Taj), and her nephew Shaista Khan are all remarkable persons known for their administrative skills one for the extraordinary level of elegance and excellence achieved. Noor Jahan then became the real ruler of the empire until the death of her husband Jahangir.

Ramya .C
III B.A. History

'God made man, and then said, "I can do better than that" and made women.'

- Adele Rogers St. Johns

RANI PADMINI

In the 12th and 13th centuries, the Sultanate of Delhi - the kingdom set up by the invaders was nevertheless growing in power. The Sultans made repeated attacks on Mewar on one pretext or the other. Here we may recollect the story of Rani Padmini who was the pretext for Allah-ud-din Khilji's attack on Chittor. In those days Chittor was under the Rule of King Ratansen, a brave and noble warrior-king. Apart, from being a loving husband and a just ruler, Ratansen was also a patron of the arts. In his court were many talented People one of whom was a musician named Raghav Chetan. But unknown to anybody, Raghav Chetan was also a sorcerer. He used his evil talents to run down his rivals and unfortunately for him was caught red-handed in his dirty act of arousing evil spirits.



On hearing this King Ratansen was furious and he banished Raghav Chetan from his kingdom after blackening his face with tar and making him ride a donkey. This harsh Punishment earned king Ratansen an uncompromising enemy. Sulking after his humiliation, Raghav Chetan made his way towards Delhi with -the aim of trying to incite the Sultan of Delhi Ala-ud-din Khilji to attack Chittor.

On approaching Delhi, Raghav Chetan settled down in one of the forests nearby Delhi, which the Sultan used to frequent for hunting deer. One day on hearing the Sultan's hunt party entering the forest, Raghav-Chetan started playing a melodious tone on his flute. When the on seeing Padmini, in the mirror, the lustful 'brother', Allah-ud-din Khilji decided that he should secure Padmini for himself. While returning to his camp, Allah-ud-din was accompanied for some way by King Ratansen. Taking this opportunity, the wily Sultan deceitfully kidnapped Ratansen

and took him as a prisoner into his camp and demanded that Padmini come and surrender herself before Allah-ud-din Khilji, if she wanted her husband King Ratansen alive again.

The Rajput generals decided to beat the Sultan at his own game and sent back a word that Padmini would be given to Ala-ud-din the next morning. On the following day at the crack of dawn, one hundred and fifty palanquins (covered cases in which royal ladies were carried in medieval times) left the fort and made their way towards Ala-ud-din's camps. The palanquins stopped before the tent where King Ratansen was being held prisoner. Seeing that the palanquins had come from Chittor; and thinking that they had brought along with them his queen, King Ratansen was mortified. But to his surprise from the palanquins came out, not his queen and her women servants but fully armed soldiers, who quickly freed; Ratansen and galloped away towards Chittor on horses grabbed from Ala-ud-din's stables.

On hearing that his designs had been frustrated, the lustful Sultan was furious and ordered his army to storm Chittor. But hard as they tried the Sultan's army could not break into the fort. Then Ala-ud-din decided to lay siege to the fort. The siege was a long drawn one and gradually supplies within the fort were depleted. Finally King Ratansen gave orders that the Rajputs would open the gates and fight to finish with the besieging troops. On hearing of this decision, Padmini decided that with their men-folk going into the unequal struggle with the Sultan's army in which they were sure to perish, the women of Chittor had either to commit suicide or face dishonor at the hands of the victorious enemy. Alluring notes of Raghav-Chetan's flute reached the Sultan's party they were surprised as to who could be playing a flute in such a masterly way in a forest.

The Sultan dispatched his soldiers to fetch the person and when Raghav-Chetan was brought before him, the Sultan Ala-ud-din Khilji asked him to come to his court at Delhi. The

cunning Raghav-Chetan asked the king as to why he wants to have a ordinary musician like himself when there were many other beautiful objects to be had. Wondering what Raghav-Chetan meant, Ala-ud-din asked him to clarify. Upon being told of Rani Padmini's beauty, Ala-ud-din's lust was aroused and immediately on returning to his capital he gave orders to his army to march on Chittor.

But to his dismay, on reaching Chittor, Allah-ud-din found the fort to be heavily defended. Desperate to have a look at the legendary beauty of Padmini, he sent word to King Ratansen that he looked upon Padmini as his sister and wanted to meet her. On hearing this, the unsuspecting Ratansen asked Padmini to see the 'brother'. But Padmini was wordly-wise and she refused to meet the lustful Sultan personally.

On being persuaded by her husband Rana Ratansen, Rani Padmini consented to allow Ala-ud-din to see her only in a mirror. On the word being sent to Ala-ud-din that Padmini would see him he came to the fort with his selected his best warriors who secretly made a careful examination of the fort's defenses on their way to the Palace.

P. Sheeba & Flora .Z
III B.A. History

RAZIYA SULTANA - THE FIRST WOMAN WHO RULED INDIA

Raziya Sultana succeeded her father Iltutmish to the Sultanate of Delhi in 1236. Iltutmish was the first king to appoint a woman as his official successor. However, the Turk nobility was not going to have any of this liberal stuff and after his death his eldest son Rukn-ud-din Feroz Shah was raised to the throne. Rukn-ud-din left all the hard work of governing to his scheming mother Shah Turkaan and whiled away his time with nautch girls. Unfortunately for him Shah Turkaan used her position to avenge all real and supposed insults handed to her in the days when she was a handmaid (before Iltutmish married her). Very soon rebellion occurred from all sides and the upshot of it all was that Shah Turkaan and Rukn-ud-din were put to death. It had lasted precisely for six months and seven days.

Now the nobility turned to Sultana Raziya, the successor Iltutmish had selected. Raziya Sultan is a much-romanticized figure in Indian history. As late as three centuries later, the legal aspect of her accession was still a matter of heated theological debate.

RAZIYA PROVED TO BE A CAPABLE RULER:

Raziya built schools and libraries, pursued foreign trade and had coins minted in her name with the following inscriptions 'Pillar of women, Queen of the times'. She dressed like a man, wearing trousers and a turban and kept a sword while she refused to wear the veil. Raziya held court, hunted and led her army in battle. She was known as a great swordsman in battle. One such battle was where she led an expedition against Ranthambore to control the Rajputs (Kings of other kingdoms). She successfully established law and order in the entire length and breadth of her kingdom.

By all accounts Raziya vindicated her father's faith in her. She was a very shrewd ruler, and for all her feminine beauty an autocrat who kept the nobility in their place. The army and the people of Delhi were solidly behind the queen. She needed all the support she could get for many of her most powerful governors were in revolt against her. It was in tackling them that Raziya gave evidence of her immense sagacity. She played such a skillful game of political intrigue that very soon the rebels were fighting each other. On the military front, she defeated one of their principal leaders Wazir Muhammad Junaidi so convincingly that he retired from active politics. Soon she was successful in winning over most of the remaining nobles to her side.

SULTANA'S UNACCEPTABLE LOVE:

In hindsight it seems that nothing could have stopped Raziya from becoming one of the most accomplished rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, except love. What undid her was her relationship with Jamal -al - Din Yaqut, an Abyssinian slave that she promoted to Master of the stables. This caused jealousies among the people in court especially the turbulent Turk chiefs, who couldn't be reconciled to the rule of a woman. One day it was witnessed that Yaqut helped Raziya get on her horse by lifting her up. The fact that Sultana allowed herself to be touched by a slave was seen as a violation of ethical behaviour and was used by her enemies as a pretext to have her removed from the throne.

The governor of Lahore was the first to react but Raziya sharply put him in his place. Hot on his heels came a more serious threat in the shape of Malik Ikhtiar-ud-din Altunia, the governor of Bhatinda, who refused to accept Raziya's suzerainty. The story goes that Altunia and Raziya were childhood friends. As they grew up together, he fell in love with Raziya and the rebellion was simply a way of getting back at Raziya for preferring a slave. Revolts broke out and an army led by Altunia captured Raziya.

THE LOVE TRAGEDY:

Tragedy followed swiftly. While Raziya was trying to suppress a rebellion in Bhatinda, the nobles deposed her and crowned her brother Bahram. Yaqut was murdered and Altunia imprisoned Raziya. To save her own head, Raziya sensibly decided to marry him. They both set forth to regain her lost throne occupied by her brother Bahram. She fought two bloody battles before they were defeated. On October 13, 1240, she was defeated by Bahram and the unfortunate couple was put to death the very next day.

Another legend says, Raziya fled and overpowered by hunger and fatigue, she asked a peasant whom she found tilling the soil, for something to eat. As Raziya was dressed like a man, the peasant thought she was a man until his eyes fell upon her gown studded with jewels, underneath her clothes. He killed her, drove away her horse and then buried her in a field. Then he went to market place to sell one of her garments, but the people of the market became suspicious and handed him to the Shinha (police). There he was beaten into confessing and pointed out where he had buried her. Her body was taken and buried again.

Raziya is the only woman to have ruled Delhi. Although Raziya ruled albeit for four years, she is still known as one of the great queens of India.

Jhanu .S
III B.A. History

DR. AMRITA PATEL – DAIRY QUEEN

Dr Patel, first as Managing Director and later as Chairman of NDDB, has played a pivotal role in conceiving, planning and implementing Operation Flood - India's major dairy development programme responsible for making the country not only self-sufficient in milk but also the world's largest milk producer. The programme, unparalleled in scale, scope and impact, has helped promote, finance and rehabilitate the national dairy cooperative structure that presently comprises over 10 million members of about 84,000 village dairy cooperative societies, affiliated to 173 district unions and 22 state dairy federations. The Government of India has appointed Dr Patel as the chairperson for a period of five years following the acceptance of request for retirement made by Dr Kurien, the outgoing chairman.



Dr Amrita Patel after graduating in Veterinary Science underwent an advanced training in Animal Nutrition at the Rowett Research Institute in UK. Dr Patel joined Amul in 1965 and thereafter the NDDB in 1971.

Her organizing skills were demonstrated as Secretary-General of the International Dairy Congress, which India hosted in 1974, and the setting up of India's largest Foot-and- Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine plant in Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh). She rose through the ranks of NDDB and took over from the founder-Chairman, Dr V Kurien in 1998. She has held several important positions, including that of Mission Director of the Technology Mission on Dairy Development (TMDD).

Amrita Patel conferred PadmaBushan:

The former President of India, Shri K R Narayanan conferred

on Dr Amrita Patel, Chairman, National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), the Padma Bushan at a glittering function in New Delhi in the presence of a distinguished gathering. Dr Patel received this award for her contributions in the field of dairying and especially for her role in shaping Operation Flood.

Dr. Patel says artificial insemination should be at the farmer's house. Artificial insemination needed to be privatized and should be available at a charge that was economical. Artificial insemination should be raised from existing 15 per cent to 40 per cent over the next decade. For disease control, she said a Central "Prevention of Infectious and Contagious Diseases in Animals" Act was required. The legislation had remained pending for nearly two decades. Quality of milk could be improved through investment. Farmers must be educated and equipment must be put in place in villages. Dr. Patel says, only a few private firms had made an investment to improve quality. All people would benefit if private players purchased milk from cooperatives rather than from contractors and intermediaries. To ensure safety, the Center had proposed integrating all food-related laws into a Food Safety and Standards Act. NDDB chief says, the legislation must be introduced soon, as it would provide for sterner penalties for violations.

Chairperson of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) Amrita Patel has said that raising productivity, improving quality and information and knowledge management are three major challenges the Indian dairy industry is facing today. She said inefficient feed utilization raised the cost of production and what was needed was continued research on cost-effective feeds that were appropriate to the specific nutritional needs of milch animals in specific areas.

Christina Rita .M
III B.A. HISTORY

AMY CARMICHAEL (1867 - 1951) - FOUNDER OF DOHNAVUR FELLOWSHIP

Amy Carmichael was an ordinary woman with an extraordinary love for people. She was born in Ireland in 1867, the first child to Christian parents, David and Catherine Carmichael. Amy grew up in a large family, seven children in all. Her parents were deeply devoted to Christ and raised their children to love and serve God.

Amy was not pleased with her appearance. She had brown eyes, which she felt very unattractive. While quite young, she remembered her mother's teaching that if she asked God anything he would surely grant her request. Due to her spiritual stirrings at a young age, Amy prayed to God to change her eye color, not realizing that sometimes His answer was a NO. Much to her disappointment they remained brown but as the years unfolded, Amy came to realize the wisdom of God's denial of her request.

While serving in India, she worked for the liberation of widows. The prevalence of devadasi system was another evil in the society. It reduced the status of the women in society. They were offered voluntarily to the deities in local temples. After the dedication the girls were treated as the property of the temples. They performed dances in the temples and madams. When she attained puberty she would be sold to a rich patron. The priests in the temples also utilized them for their sexual satisfaction. They had to perform various services in the temples. Usually, the young girls were dedicated to various deities all over the country on each full moon day. A few of them were offered to the temples voluntarily. But most of them were sold to the temple due to poverty. The girls, sold to the temples, refused to serve as devadasis made their escape without the knowledge of temple authorities. One among them was Preena. She escaped from the Perumkulam temple

and got asylum in the mission bungalow at Pannavilai on 7th March 1901. Later she served under Amy Carmichael as social worker.

FOUNDATION OF DOHNAVUR:

To learn more about devadasi system, Amy Carmichael attended temple festivals in disguise as a Brahmin lady. There she personally witnessed the selling of beautiful girls to the temples. It provoked Amy Carmichael to resort to some method by which the devadasis can be rescued. She collected such children by giving money to their parents. She constructed for them a house at Dohnavur. She also purchased a few acres of land at Puliyoorkurichi, where most of them belonged to the Nadar community. She constructed a church for their daily worship. Miss Amy affectionately called them as 'Lotus Buds'. In 1908, she also constructed a school for their education. She reported to the government about the life of the devadasis in the temples. As a result, the government passed an act 1947, which made the dedication of girls to the temple, illegal.

Due to lack of medical facilities at Dhonavur, the children were taken in bullock carts to Neyyor in Kanyakumari district for medical treatment. It took one and a half days to reach Neyyoor. Many of them died on the way. So to remove this handicap, she founded a dispensary at Dhonavur in 1907. A trained nurse was appointed in this dispensary. Dr. M.E. Powell was its first-qualified doctor. He was appointed in 1924. As the number of patients increased, this dispensary was upgraded into a hospital, in 1929.

In 1925, she ceased to be a missionary of C.E.Z.M.S and acted independently. She officially registered the Dhonavur fellowship in 1927. In 1931, she fell in a pit, and was bed-ridden for nearly twenty years. She died in 1951, at the age of 34.

Amy Carmichael was a talented writer. She wrote 32 books. Among them, 'Lotus buds', 'Gold by moon light' etc., were

important. Through her writings and social work, she awakened the minds of the women in Tamilnadu.

G. Ranjitha Roseline
III B.A. History

'No man is good enough to govern any woman without her consent'
- Susan B. Anthony

ANANDIBAI JOSHI – INDIA'S FIRST WOMAN DOCTOR (1865 – 1887)

Anandibai Joshi is not the name of some social reformer or political leader but of a lady who, despite all odds, achieved her goal through her grit and determination. Anandibai Joshi had the unique distinction of being the first woman ever to go abroad and obtain a degree of Doctor of Medicine from the Woman's Medical College, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., as early as 1886. Her life spans just about twenty-two years, from 1865 - 1887. Hardly has any other life been as short, eventful and revolutionary as hers.

Anandibai was born on March 31, 1865 at Poona. She was a woman of courage and enterprise. Anandibai belonged to a Maharashtrian Brahmin family. From her childhood, Anandibai showed a bright and intelligent disposition. She inherited from her father an iconoclastic zeal and rebelled against traditional ritualism.

Gopalrao Vinayak Joshi, who was a poor clerk in the postal department and a widower, married Anandi. Anandibai, at a very immature age of 12, gave birth to a son who lived only for ten days. She was deeply shocked particularly so because she felt that the child could have survived with proper medical treatment. This made her realize the urgent necessity of women doctors in India and so she decided to study medicine. It is to the credit of her husband who did his utmost to help her in realizing her dream. To get her educated, Rao managed to get postings in different parts of the country but finally realized that his wife can never become a doctor in India.

When Anandi expressed her desire to go to America to study medicine, her husband agreed. He wrote a letter to an American editor for assistance. Although the editor did not promise any help, he published the letter in his magazine, which was read by Mrs B F Carpenter, an American lady, who

longed to help India. She immediately wrote to Anandibai. Both became friends and Anandibai was assured of all help and cooperation from her.

Anandi was very cool and collected when it was decided that she should go alone to America to study medicine, instead of both of them rotting in India. Dr Thorborn and his wife, who was also a doctor, informed the Joshis that in Philadelphia, there was a medical college for women. On the 17th of April, 1883, Anandi sailed for America all alone where Mrs Carpenter received her with great warmth. With the recommendation of Mrs Carpenter, Anandi was admitted in the Women's College of Pennsylvania. Anandi studied hard and by her conduct and academic progress.

In 1885, Anandibai's husband arrived in the United States. Anandibai Joshi successfully completed her degree and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Medicine on March 11, 1886. Anandibai wanted to continue her studies further, but was prevented by her failing health.

Her husband and her friends advised her to settle down in the United States, but she wanted to serve her own people. She wrote to her friend, "I know the culture and practices of India; therefore, I will be of great help to the Indian women". The princely state of Kolhapur, appointed her as the resident Physician-in-charge of the female ward of the Albert Edward Hospital even before she returned to India. (The present Civil Hospital in Kolhapur was formerly known as Albert Edward Hospital). On October 9, 1886 she sailed from New York to practice as India's first woman doctor.

Unfortunately, the terrible hardships that she had to undergo to complete her studies against overwhelming odds, took a heavy toll of her health. She suffered from tuberculosis of the lungs. Gopalrao, despite his efforts, could not save her life. She died at the young age of 22, in Poona on February 26, 1887. She not only contributed to the cause of female higher

education but also towards India's progress and modernity as well.

There is no doubt that this great woman gave guidance and direction to a movement, which at that time was only in an embryonic stage. Her dauntless struggle against orthodox society became a source of inspiration for those who were to follow her footsteps later. She was not able in her short life, to completely emancipate Indian women, nor could this have been expected of her, for the malady was deep-rooted in society. But this outstanding woman had succeeded in her mission in as much as she sowed the seeds of women's movement for later leaders to herald a vigorous campaign in the twentieth century.

Martina Thomas
III B.A. History

'I do not wish to give women a first place, still less a second one but the complete freedom to take their true place, whatever it may be.

- Elizabeth Blackwell

ANNIE BESANT – CHAMPION OF HOME RULE MOVEMENT

Annie Besant, the daughter of William Wood and Emily Morris, was born in 1847. Her mother was Irish and her father half-Irish. Annie's father, a doctor, died when she was only five years old. Without any savings, Annie's mother found work looking after boarders at Harrow School. Mrs. Wood was unable to take care of Annie and she persuaded a friend, Ellen Marryat, to take responsibility for her upbringing.

In 1866 Annie met the Rev. Frank Besant. Although only nineteen, Annie agreed to marry the young clergyman. By the time she was twenty-three Annie had two children. However, Annie was deeply unhappy because her independent spirit clashed with the traditional views of her husband. Annie also began to question her religious beliefs. When Annie refused to attend communion, Frank Besant ordered her to leave the family home.

After leaving her husband Annie Besant completely rejected Christianity and in 1874 joined the Secular Society. Annie soon developed a close relationship with Charles Bradlaugh, editor of the radical National Reformer and leader of the secular movement in Britain. Bradlaugh gave Annie a job working for the National Reformer and during the next few years wrote many articles on issues such as marriage and women's rights.

To socialists and feminists she had two lives: the years up to 1891, which they consider the more important, and her "Indian phase" from 1893 to her death in 1933, which was more problematic. The British Fabian socialist, Sidney Webb, called Annie Besant "one of the 19th century's most remarkable women"; to Bernard Shaw she was "the greatest woman public speaker"; and the Indian political activist Kamladevi Chattopadhyay referred to her as "one of the most outstanding world figures of her time."

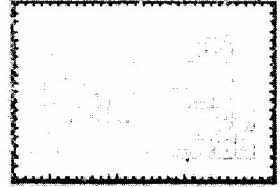
In 1890 Besant became absorbed with Theosophy and succeeded Helena Blavatsky as the leader of the Theosophists. She started a modern school for Hindu boys in 1898, the Central Hindu College in Benares. By 1904, Besant turned to female education and wrote on the topic of "The Education of Indian Girls". But her views were traditional; she spoke of the ancient Hindu ideal, even quoting from the laws of Manu, and discouraged modern education for Indian girls. She wrote: "That is not the kind of education you need. It would not build up women of the ancient Aryan type... I presume that no Hindus... desire to educate their daughters, and then send them out into the world to struggle with men for gaining a livelihood."

Annie Besant became widely known and respected in India for her championing of the Home Rule movement, even before Gandhi and Nehru had entered politics. Along with some Indians, she was part of a deputation to Britain in 1914 to present the case for political reform. On her return, she launched a Home Rule League in 1915, linking it to the Indian National Congress. She acquired the Madras Standard and turned it into the New India, to campaign for self-government. The government arrested and detained her for three months, causing a furore in India and abroad, thereby making her a national hero. By 1917 she was elected President of the Indian National Congress - an extraordinary achievement for a woman and a foreigner. But she had political differences with Indian nationalists like Gandhi and only gave qualified support to civil disobedience. The militant nationalist Tilak, criticising Theosophy and Besant's dependence on the Masters (mahatmas), wrote: "Congress recognises no Mahatmas to rule over it except the Mahatma of the majority." By the 1920s, Besant became disillusioned with Congress politics and directed her energies to Theosophy.

R. Ashtalakshmi B.A. History

DURGABAI DESMUKH - MOTHER OF SOCIAL WORK

A 'Mother of Social Work in India' and a "Legend among women in her lifetime". She was born in a middle class Andhra family in Kakinada on July 15, 1909. Durgabai could not pursue higher education when she was young because of the prevailing social conditions. She could learn only Telugu and Hindi. While she herself was a learner, she began teaching some girls what she was learning. She called her school 'Balika pathashala.'



At the tender age of 12, she came under the magic spell of Mahatma Gandhi, boycotted English-teaching school, made a bon-fire of her foreign clothing, took to charkha and joined Hindi Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Movement. She learnt English in her late 20s and went on to become a lawyer. One was never, too old to learn was her motto. Durgabai, then 14, was a volunteer at a meeting to be addressed by Mahatma . She requested him to address women separately because some women, including Muslims, could not attend. He obliged her.

Her interest in the freedom movement began with that. Her capacity to lead and an indomitable spirit to fight oppression was once again tested during the Salt Satyagraha in Madras in 1930's, when she succeeded Shri T. Prakasham as its 'organizer'. She organized processions, was lathe-charged and thrice jailed. On her release in 1933, she took to her education and obtained B.A. (Hons) and M.A. (Pol. Sc.) and B.L. degrees.

In 1937, she founded Andhra Mahila Sabha in Madras, which even today runs two hospitals, an orthopedic centre, two colleges, three High Schools and functional literacy projects. The Andhra Mahila Sabha (AMS) was set up with the intention of helping women in many ways – from teaching them hygienic

living habits to making them aware of the country's welfare. For any institution to be successful the service and sacrifice of so many persons may be needed; yet there can be only one person who shall be the force behind its growth. For Andhra Mahila Sabha that force was Durgabai Deshmukh. The Andhra Mahila Sabha was registered under the Society Act. Rules insisted that seven members of the institution sign the concerned papers. Those times, institutions looked for support from the rich and the philanthropic and not to the Government. The Rani of Mirzapur gifted the site on which the main buildings of Andhra Mahila Sabha in Madras stand today. The Pithapuram Maharani helped in the starting of the Chinnamba Vidyalaya and the Rani of Bobbili contributed for the Mallama Devi Mahila Mandir, a hostel for women. Many others followed suit in Madras, Hyderabad etc.

Durgabai was a frank person and a good friend. She usually had consultation with the Andhra Mahila Sabha Board members before taking any decision. The Andhra Mahila Sabha nursing home in Madras was inaugurated in 1952, fulfilling a long-felt need. Nursing courses were introduced to fulfill the needs of the society.

As the President of Blind Relief Association, Delhi, she set up a school with hostel and a light engineering workshop for them. She carried on her crusade for the cause of the poor and weak. As a Member of Parliament she got enacted a number of social laws and mustered support for a national policy on social welfare. As a member of the Planning Commission she was instrumental in the setting up of the Central Social Welfare Board on 13th August 1953; she became its founder Chairman and mobilized thousands of voluntary organizations and workers to carry out the programmes of the Board, aiming at education, training and rehabilitation of the needy women, children and the handicapped.

She became the first chairperson of the Central Social Welfare Board, which she, with her practical knowledge of the field

and personal experience, managed successfully for 10 years. On 22nd January 1953 she married Dr C.D. Deshmukh, the then Finance Minister, Government of India. She was honored for her outstanding contribution to the cause of Peace, Social Welfare, Literacy and work among the downtrodden by national and international agencies.

She won Nehru Literacy Award, UNESCO Award for outstanding work in the field of Literacy and was decorated with Padma Vibhushan. Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department was privileged to issue a commemorative stamp in her honor. Durgabai breathed her last on May 9, 1981

Durgabai Deshmukh was one of the greatest women of the country. She will be remembered for her constructive social work, for her innovative programmes and the institution she built and nurtured.

Caroline D'Monte
III B.A. History

A ship is always referred to as "she" because it costs so much to help one in "paint and powder"

- Chester W. Nimitz

FATHIMA BEEVI - THE FIRST WOMAN GONERNOR OF TAMILNADU

Fathima Beevi was born on 30th April 1927 at Pathanamithia in Kerala. Then she had school education at her hometown and college education at Trivandrum. Fathima graduated in Science and Law. She was the former Governor of Tamilnadu.

She started her career as an advocate in 1950 in the courts at Kollam. Fatima Beevi served in the Kerala Judicial Service from 1958. She was appointed Judicial Member of the Central Income Tax Appellate Tribunal in 1980, and elevated as Judge, Kerala High Court in 1983. She was appointed Judge of the Supreme Court of India in 1989. First woman to hold this position in India, she was also the first Muslim woman to be a Judge of the Apex Court of any country in the world. After retirement from the Supreme Court, she was nominated as the Chairperson of the Kerala State Commission for Backward Classes. She joined the National Human Rights Commission as Member in 1993. She assumed office as Governor of Tamil Nadu on 25 January 1997. A champion of human and women's rights in society, she is dedicated to upholding and protecting the interests of disadvantaged people.

She got the Vijaya Shree award on 28th April 2005. This prestigious award was given to others also from the field of science and techonology, education, industry, fine arts, politics, and social work.

She worked for the people affected by leprosy. This she had been doing for the past several years. She has also contributed effectively to achieve the noble aim of eradicating the disease from our country. She worked for the welfare of the Dalits (Thevars and Pallars). She was also criticised by the B.J.P. party, though she worked for the welfare of the society. She also worked for the upliftment of women.

Resignation of Fathima Beevi

The former Tamil Nadu Governor M Fathima Beevi resigned when the then Union Cabinet, in a rare action, decided to dismiss her for having "failed" to discharge her constitutional obligations in the wake of the arrest of former chief minister M Karunanidhi and two Union ministers in Madras. Fathima Beevi, a former Supreme Court judge and a former member of the National Human Rights Commission, sent her resignation to President K R Narayanan. Soon after an emergency meeting, the Cabinet decided to recommend that the President recall her. But Fathima Beevi refused to continue as the Governor and left for Kerala.

S. SINDHU
III B.A. History

A woman's life is a history of the affections

- Washington Irving

INDIRA GANDHI

When the first Prime Minister of India after independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, died of a stroke in 1964, his daughter Indira was not seriously considered as a successor. However, when two years later the new Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri also died suddenly, Gandhi was chosen to fill the leadership void in India. Overnight she became the leader of the world's largest democracy and perhaps the most powerful woman in the world.



Indira was born on November 19, 1917, in Allahabad, India, to Jawaharlal and Kamala Nehru. Her life was drastically changed in 1919 when Mohandas Gandhi, the pacifist leader of the Indian freedom movement, visited her wealthy and prominent family. Because of the insecurities of her childhood Gandhi hardened herself and resolved not to be hurt, as her mother had been, by Indian social customs that repressed women.

When she was 17 her mother died of cancer. Devastated by her loss, Gandhi began five years of studying in Europe and India seemingly without direction. Although Indira had vowed to remain single, she decided to marry Feroze Gandhi, a family friend. He was a Parsee, a member of a small cultural group that had fled from Persia centuries earlier to escape Muslim persecution. Since the Nehrus were of the Brahmin or priestly class of India, Gandhi was criticized for her choice of a husband not only by her father but also by the public. Despite these protests the couple were married in 1942.

Becomes politically active

Shortly after her wedding Gandhi was jailed for nine months, an event she described as being crucial in her life. Following her release she became increasingly involved in politics. During

this time she also gave birth to two sons, Rajiv and Sanjay. Gradually she and her husband drifted apart and although they were never divorced they lived separately until his death in 1960. Gandhi lived in Nehru's shadow for years, but she eventually began to speak out during her own campaigns and at functions her father could not attend. By 1959 she was president of the Indian National Congress. Influenced by Nehru's socialist leanings, she brought a fresh perspective to the party and sought to increase women's participation in politics.

Encounters problems as Prime Minister

Upon Prime Minister Shastri's sudden death in 1966, Gandhi became the leader of the Congress Party and then Prime Minister of India. Gandhi paid a high price for her achievement; however, because problems arose almost immediately after she took office. Her leadership was continually challenged by the right wing of the party, led by former minister of Finance Morarji Desai. In the 1967 election she won by such a narrow majority that she had to accept Desai as deputy Prime Minister. Gandhi's own personality also contributed to her difficulties. An intensely private person who seemed nervous about other people, she lived a quiet, simple life. Her mistrust of the manipulations of politicians further removed her from those around her, leading to what some described as a paranoid attitude that would cause her downfall in the 1970s.

In the 1971 election Gandhi won by a substantial margin over conservative opponents. During her tenure as Prime Minister India began to make great strides in the areas of food production and development of an industrial base. Yet it was a politically tumultuous time. In late 1971 Gandhi gave military support to a successful attempt by East Bengal to secede from Pakistan, which resulted in the creation of the state of Bangladesh. Following the Pakistan conflict Gandhi won the 1972 election, again by a large majority, but her defeated opponent charged that she had violated election laws. The high court of Allahabad

ruled against her in 1975, posing the prospect of her being removed from parliament and being barred from politics for six years.

Instead of accepting the court's decision, Gandhi declared a state of emergency, imprisoned her opponents, and suspended civil liberties. Over the next several years her political fortunes rose and fell dramatically, and in 1977 her party was swept from power. In 1978, after her supporters formed the Congress (I) – "I" for Indira, she regained her parliamentary seat and two years later was re-elected to her fourth term as Prime Minister. Her son Sanjay became her principal political adviser, and all legal cases against both Gandhis were withdrawn. After Sanjay died in an airplane crash in 1980, she began grooming her son Rajiv for leadership of the party.

During the 1980s several Indian states sought independence from the central government, the most violent among the dissidents being Sikh (a religion that rejects class distinctions and idol worship) extremists in the Punjab province. In June 1984 Gandhi sent the Indian army to the Punjab to drive Sikh guerrillas out of the Golden Temple of Amritsar, the holiest shrine of the Sikh religion. Over 600 people died in the conflict. On October 31, 1984, Gandhi was assassinated by two of her own Sikh security guards while she walked through her garden. Upon his mother's death Rajiv became Prime Minister.

The ascension of a woman, Indira Gandhi, to the highest position in the world's most populous democracy was especially significant for Indian women, who had traditionally been subservient to men. In addition, she was also an inspiration to people in other Third World nations.

Salina .B
III B.A. History

DR. JAYARAM JAYALALITHAA – THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL POLITICIAN

Jayalalithaa was born in Mysore on February 24, 1948; she entered the movie world as an actress at an early age. Jayalalithaa's early education was at the elite Bishop Cotton Girls High School in Bangalore and later at the Presentation Convent Church Park in Chennai. Upon completion of Matriculation in 1964, she won a scholarship for higher studies but did not accept it to pursue a career in films. Jayalalithaa has acted in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi and Malayalam films. She was trained in classical dance (Bharata Natyam) and Carnatic Music from the young age of 4. She is said to be proficient in other dance-forms such as Mohini Attam, Kathak and Manipuri as well. Jayalalitha has given hundreds of performances in Bharatha Natyam and has even sung many songs herself in her films. She is reportedly proficient in English, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi and is said to be a voracious reader.



Glamour days

During her five years in power in Tamil Nadu, Jayalalitha developed an extravagant personality cult. Huge cutouts of her figure dominated the Madras skyline, ministers prostrated themselves at her feet, and her supporters almost worshipped her. Her arrest on corruption charges three years ago was accompanied by the seizure of 64lb of diamond-studded gold ornaments, more than 10,000 saris and 750 shoes. She also attracted international attention for the lavish wedding she organized for her foster son, alleged to have cost many millions of dollars.

Her political acuity and taste for the high life can be traced back to her past career as an actress in Tamil-language films.

She played opposite M.G. Ramachandran, the biggest star in south Indian cinema - who also became an enormously successful politician. The two developed close personal ties. On his death, she managed - after a battle - to succeed as his political heir.

Jayalalitha's entry into politics was facilitated by her close companionship with M.G.Ramachandran, the late film star, leader of the AIADMK party and Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Jayalalitha became Member of Parliament to the Rajya Sabha from 1984 and kept the seat until her election to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly in January 1989 from the Bodinayakkanur constituency. She became the first Woman Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly of Tamil Nadu. The vicissitudes of political life was brought home sharply to Jayalalitha when she suffered a crushing defeat in the April-May 1996 elections amid charges of corruption and malfeasance. Her party won just four of the 234 seats. However, Jayalalitha bounced back to power in the 2001 elections.

Like several politicians, Jayalalitha's rule has been marred by several charges of corruption. She has been charged with possession of assets beyond her known sources of income. The lavish wedding of her foster son has also drawn strong criticism. Jayalalitha has dismissed the legal charges against her as politically motivated. After her defeat in 1996, the Karunanidhi government arrested her in December 1996 on charges of corruption and Jayalalitha spent a few weeks in jail till her release in early January 1997.

A doughty fighter, Jayalalitha has had to face significant challenges in her life. Her principal opponent Karunanidhi is a shrewd politician with several decades of experience. In the immediate aftermath of her mentor MGR's death, she was humiliated and even physically assaulted by people close to MGR's wife Janaki.

Jeevitha
III B.A. History

JOSHNA CHINAPPA – THE FIRST INDIAN WOMAN SQUASH CHAMP

Joshna Chinappa, the rising squash player, is 19, and turned down a Harvard scholarship to become a top-10 squash professional. The Chennai girl is frank about not taking up the Harvard University offer, saying the reason behind the move was a combination of her being a squash person and her not being a books person. "I knew it would have been a good life," says Joshna, who names her victory in the under-19 British Open this year as a career highpoint. "But it wouldn't have been my kind of life." Nonetheless, the second-year literature student of Ethiraj College intends to complete her graduation. And talking about quality of life, she is not doing too badly.



Joshna Chinappa has squash flowing in her blood for four generations. Her great grandfather field Marshall K.M.Cariappa, India's first Commander-in-Chief of Army played squash, so too her grandfather who was a Lt. Col. in the army, and of course her father Anjan Chinappa who plays regularly at the Madras Cricket Club courts and has represented Tamilnadu many times.

Joshna created history by being the first Indian girl to win the British Squash Championship title 2003, at Sheffield, U.K. and also winning The Asian Junior Women Squash Championship at Islamabad, Pakistan on 6th Feb 2003. Making history has been a way of life with Joshna. She earlier in the year 2000 created history in the Indian sports, by winning the senior national squash title, at the age of 14 years. In this significant achievement, she eclipsed the other greats of Indian sport namely Vijay Amritraj - Vishwanathan Anand - Ramesh Krishnan and Prakash Pudukone, by holding the Senior & Junior national titles at the age 14 years while the above mentioned greats simultaneously held the Senior & Junior titles only at or above the age of 15 years.

Joshna has also won squash championship titles in Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Scotland, Europe, etc. In her endeavors to pursue her aims and ambitions, she has to participate in numerous international squash tournaments. Exposure & participation at the most competitive level of squash will ensure that Joshna can climb higher & higher in the world rankings.

While the 19- year old may not be as popular as her tennis counterpart Sania Mirza, in terms of promoting the game, Joshna has probably matched Sania. So much so that the Union Health Ministry has taken note of Joshna's achievements and appointed her their goodwill ambassador. Joshna was only too willing to oblige. "I will have to find time outside the game for these commitments but that should not be an issue," Joshna said.

However, despite the relative low-profile character for her chosen sport, the Chennai-based girl has had to deal with increased pressure on her privacy, especially after her runner-up performance at the World Junior event in Belgium. The dusky, charming player with the infectious smile, however, is up to it. "More and more people recognize me, come up to me and say hello and congratulate me. I am more of a known face. I have been interacting with the press and have also appeared on television, maybe that is why people know me now," said. Joshna, who has fondness for good clothes and loves dressing up for the occasion, is basking in the newfound recognition. "I would be lying if I said that I did not enjoy all the attention. I like meeting people," Joshna said. However, she insists that all the adulation has not changed her at all. "I've not changed. I remain the same person.

Especially for someone who seems to have a mature head on her shoulders, her targets are set. "I want to break into the top-20 within a year," Joshna said. "Gold at the Asian Games is what I am gunning for," she said. Joshna Chinappa is by far the highest achiever in the history of Indian Squash. She announced her arrival in World Squash as an Under-13 player

by becoming the first Indian ever to win a title at the Scottish Junior Open. She has reached the 3rd position in the Australian Junior Open. To top it all, she has won two Titles at the British Junior Open- the highest rated Tournament in the World, winning the Under-17 Title in 2003, and the Under-19 Title in 2005, while being the Runner Up in Under-19 in 2004. She is the only Indian ever with this level of achievements in the British Junior Open. She is the Asian Junior Champion winning the Individual Title in July 2004, and has won laurels for India in the Asian team events, including the Asian Seniors Bronze medal. She is the only Indian to have won the SAF Games Title- winning the Individual and Team Gold medals in April 2004. She is the reigning Women's and Junior National Champion having held both titles for the last four years. She became the youngest ever Women's National Champion at the age of 14, a record that surpasses that of any Indian in any sport.

A prodigal talent if one can say the least, this precocious lady from Chennai has always finished a notch short of the expectations she has generated. Joshna gave first notice of her talent when she was barely ten years old. Blessed with a good physique, Joshna possesses an array of strokes that can compare with the best in the business and when they start landing, then one can only feel sorry for her opponents.

At the age of 12, Joshna was already winning under-14 tournaments abroad and, if she can focus mentally, she will continue to do so. At present, making a career out of squash seems a viable proposition for this talented lass, but that depends upon a lot of factors. A doting father, who is determined to see his daughter scale the pinnacle of squash, is Joshna's plus point, but that is if she can remain focused on the game in the years to come. However, one thing is clear, unanimously, that a talent like Joshna has not been seen in Indian women's squash for some time now.

KIRAN .N
III B.A. HISTORY

KALPANA CHAWLA – SPACE SCIENTIST

Kalpana Chawla, born on July 1, 1961, completed her higher secondary education from Tagore School, Karnal (Haryana) in 1976. Chawla studied aeronautical engineering at Punjab Engineering College in Chandigarh, India in 1982 where she earned her Bachelor of Science degree. Thereafter she moved to the United States to obtain a Master of Science degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Texas at Arlington (1984). Chawla earned a second Master of Science degree in 1986 and Ph.D. in aerospace engineering in 1988 from the University of Colorado. Later that same year she began working for NASA Ames Research Center.



Kalpana Chawla became a naturalized United States citizen, and married Jean-Pierre Harrison, a Certificated Flight Instructor and aviation writer. She held a Certificated Flight Instructor's license with airplane and glider ratings, Commercial Pilot's licenses for single- and multi-engine land and seaplanes, and Gliders, and instrument rating for airplanes.

She was posthumously awarded the Congressional Space Medal of Honor, the NASA Space Flight Medal, and the NASA Distinguished Service Medal.

NASA career

Chawla joined the NASA astronaut corps in March 1995 and was selected for her first flight in 1996. Her first space mission began on November 19, 1997 as part of the six astronaut crew that flew the Space Shuttle Columbia flight STS-87. Chawla was the first Indian-born woman and the second person of Indian origin to fly in space.

Chawla conducted microgravity experiments to study earth and space science, advanced technology development, and astronaut health and safety.

After the completion of STS-87 post-flight activities, Chawla was assigned to technical positions in the astronaut office, her performance in which was recognized with a special award from her peers. Kalpana Chawla was an astronaut and space shuttle mission specialist. In 2000 she was selected for her second flight as part of the crew of STS-107. On January 16, 2003, she died aboard STS-107 (Space Shuttle Columbia) when it disintegrated during reentry into the Earth's atmosphere.

Some Facts about Dr. Kalpana C. Chawla

- First and only Indian-American in space (she was born in India and became a naturalized U.S. citizen)
- Selected as an astronaut in 1994; first mission in 1997, this was her second mission
- U.S. doctorate & M.S. in aerospace engineering and B.S. in aeronautical engineering from India
- Second Indian in space, after Indian citizen Rakesh Sharma, who flew on a Soviet mission
- One of only a handful of Asian American astronauts and the only South Asian

She died a hero and a role model for many young women, especially in India and particularly those in her hometown of Karnal where her life serves to encourage young people to follow in her footsteps.

Jacquelin Sahaya Angel
III B.A. History

KIRAN BEDI - THE FIRST WOMAN IPS OF INDIA

Kiran Bedi was born on June 9, 1949. Her father Prakash Lal Peshawaria, a landlord in Punjab was determined to educate his four daughters at a time when women were largely limited to doing household tasks. While studying at the Sacred Heart Convent, Kiran joined the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and took up tennis, a game that her father used to play.



After school she went on to study Political Science at the Government College for Women, Amritsar. She loved the subject as she felt it taught her about her role as a citizen of the country. Kiran excelled at sports particularly tennis. She won the inter-University women's team title and bagged the national title as well as the Asian title in tennis. Bedi says the game taught her the value of hard work, the importance of staying fit and built in her the qualities of fair play, team work, concentration, and the ability to give in that extra bit under stress.

Kiran fell in love with Brij Bedi a fellow student and married him in 1972. This was also the year when Kiran was selected for the Indian Police Service. Kiran and Brij have one child, a daughter, Saina, born in September 1975, three years after Kiran started her career in the Indian Police Service (IPS).

Kiran Bedi was the first woman police officer of the Indian Police Service. Spectators at the 1973 Republic Day Parade were amazed to see a lady at the head of the Police Contingent. The then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was so impressed that she invited Kiran for breakfast with her the very next day.

Career highlights

- In 1977, she put an end to the Akali-Nirankari Sikh riots at India Gate.
- 1979, as DCP (West Delhi), she broke up a 200-year-old illicit liquor trade.
- In 1981 as DCP (Traffic) she controlled traffic during the 1982 Asian Games efficiently. She didn't hesitate to tow away cars and once even challenged the Prime Minister's car for wrong parking near a car repair shop. Kiran received her nickname, "Crane" Bedi, during the Ninth Asian Games held in New Delhi in 1982. Traffic control was a high priority, and improperly parked cars were a major cause of traffic snarls. Within six months, Kiran had sixteen "cranes" (tow trucks) working to keep the roads clear no matter who caused the congestion
- In 1985, as DCP (headquarters) she ordered 1600 pending promotions to be made in a single day. Standing instructions were issued that if any file were not cleared within three days the person concerned would be called personally to explain the delay.
- In 1993, as the Inspector General of Asia's biggest jail - the Tihar jail (9100 inmates including 300 women) she turned the unlivable jail into an abode of education. Kiran said, while joining her posting at the jail, "I want to transform this jail into an Ashram within six months". She introduced many classes and programs for the inmates including those on basic education, meditation, yoga besides functions like mushairas, kavi sammelans, dramas and games, which involved the jail inmates. For her effort to humanize the Tihar jail she was honored with the 1994 Ramon Magsaysay Award.

Aware that as she gets older she will have less energy to accomplish her goals, Kiran knows that marking time in a bad

assignment would be a waste. Also, she is unwilling to attain a significant posting by selling out her integrity and losing her hard-earned reputation for transparency and accountability. She says: "I have strived to the utmost to achieve not only efficiency but also excellence in all the middle-level assignments that I have undertaken, but now, as I move towards positions, which are only politically decided and chosen, where is the place for me, or for people like me? As I see a growing deterioration of value systems, I visualize a declining need for intrepid professionals in government services, i.e., those persons who can speak their mind freely and fearlessly without constantly having to "suck up" to their superiors.....What keeps me hopeful is the potential, which exists in the "service" to achieve: the power to "correct" and the power to "reform". It is this factor that makes me continue to love my service and prefer it to all others. I do know that such thinking goes against all odds today. What shall ultimately emerge, only time can tell?"

Often questioned about her interest in pursuing a political career, Kiran claims not to be attracted by politics, as it is "divisive" as she says. Still, any move into the sphere of general community service or human resource management could propel her into the political arena. At this point, she is unwilling to shut any doors; however, she believes that actively seeking a political position while she has a police career ahead would lose her the "power of correction" that she utilizes so skillfully to achieve change. She plans to bide her time, keep her options open, and see which doors open or close. Whatever the outcome, her commitment to family planning, prison reform, women's emancipation, and education for independence will continue.

Emilya Sharme & Sr. Jolly
III B.A. History

DR. KIRAN MAZUMDAR-SHAW – BIO-TECH QUEEN OF INDIA

Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, born on 23 March 1953 in Bangalore, is an Indian entrepreneur. She is the Chairman & Managing Director of Biocon Ltd. In 2004, she became India's richest woman.



She was educated at the Bishop Cotton Girls School and Mount Carmel College at Bangalore. After obtaining a B. SC Honours degree in Zoology from Bangalore University in 1973, she joined the Ballarat University in Melbourne, Australia and qualified as a master brewer in 1975 to become India's first woman Brew master. Her father encouraged her in this profession, as he himself was a master brewer in India. Her professional career started with the position of trainee brewer in Carlton and United Beverages in 1974. During 1975-77, she worked in technical positions in Kolkata and Vadodara. In 1978 she joined as Trainee Manager with Biocon Biochemicals Limited in Ireland..

In Biocon

Collaborating with the same Irish firm, she founded Biocon India with a capital of Rs.10,000/- in her garage in 1978. The initial operation was to extract an enzyme from papaya. Her application for loans was turned down by banks on three counts - biotechnology was a new word yet; the company lacked assets and most importantly, women entrepreneurs were still a rarity. On account of the last reason, she faced problems in recruiting as well.

Over the years, the company grew under her stewardship and is today the biggest biopharmaceutical firm in India. In 2004, Biocon went for an IPO and the issue was over-subscribed by



III B.A. History Educational Tour - Delhi - Agra - Mussorrie



*Dr. Sr. Annamma Philip,
Principal with
Mr. Bhatia of
Kuoni Academy*



*Inauguration of the
Travel and Tourism
Diploma Course
2005 - 2006*



*The Winning Team -
Champions
at Ethiraj, Loyola and
MCC History
Culturals*

*Sindhu Memorial
Inter Departmental
Dance Competition*



*Smt. Indira Gandhi
Endowment Lecture
Chief Guest -
Mr. Sashi Kumar*

*Street Play
Social Awareness
Program
- Satya Lok*





*Dept. Cultural,
BC to AD 2006
Inaugural Programme
Chief Guest -
Dr. G.J. Sudhakar*

EDUCATIONAL TOUR TO GOLCONDA FORT, HYDERABAD



II B.A. History



I B.A. History

over 30 times. Post-IPO, Shaw held close to 40% of the stock of the company and was regarded as India's richest woman with an estimated worth of Rs. 2,100 crore (US 480 million).

Ever since Biocon became the buzzword in the market for the emerging field of biotechnology, Kiran has been a much-quoted personality. But she will always tell that her belief in the field, a magnificent team of people who shared her passion for the subject, determination and urge to succeed has all contributed to Biocon's reputation as the leader in the field.

She is a civic activist, especially with respect to municipal administration in Bangalore. She is also an art collector. She has authored 'Ale and Arty,' a Coffe Table Book about brewing beer illustrated by paintings of some of India's renowned artists. In 1998, she married John Shaw, an expatriate manager at Madura Coats an Indophile from Scotland. John Shaw resigned as the managing director of Madura Coats the same year and joined Biocon as its Director for International Business and the Vice Chairman of the Board.

Recognition

She was termed India's Biotech Queen by The Economist and Fortune, and India's mother of invention by New York Times. Some of the major awards won by her are: -

- Padma Shri(1989)
- Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in Healthcare & Life Sciences Category (2002)
- The Economic Times Business Woman of the Year Award (2004)
- Padma Bhushan(2005)

Kiran is a perfectionist and has a great vision for arts. Her vision for the future is to grow into a bio-therapeutics company with very innovative and proprietary products and technologies.

With 25 percent of the world's diabetic population in India, Biocon company sees a great future for its human insulin drug currently under development. MNCS Eli Lilly and Novo Nordisk at present dominate the insulin market in India. The market for Insulin in India is currently estimated at Rs200 crore . Having received USFDA clearance to market drugs in the US, Biocon India will soon be competing globally.

In a recent television interview Majumdar said the tag as the richest woman in India embarrasses her. It's more important to her that she has been able to create a very valuable organization and the opportunity her company has provided to thousands of scientists.

Maheshwari Rana
III B.A. History

There are only two types of women: goddesses and doormats
- Pablo Picasso

MADAME BHIKAJI CAMA (1861-1936)

Madam Cama was born on 24th September 1861 of rich Parsi parents. Her father was Sorabji Framji Patel, a famous merchant and man of means, had a large family. Young Bhikaji received good English education, but from the beginning she was a rebel, and a nationalist. She had a flair for languages and became proficient in arguing her country's cause in different circles at a young age.

She was married to Rustom K. R. Cama, a rich handsome social worker and lawyer. But ideologically they were poles apart. Their marriage proved to be incompatible. Madam Cama meanwhile plunged herself into several social activities. Plague broke out in Bombay Presidency at that time and she was in the forefront of a voluntary team, which strived to save plague victims. In the end she herself caught the deadly disease, but was saved miraculously. She was left very weak and was advised to go to Europe for rest and recuperation. She left in 1902 for London, which was to become her home for the rest of life.

She served as private secretary to Dadabhai Navaraji, a great Indian leader in the forefront of national movement. She came in contact with several patriotic students and European intellectuals who were sympathetic to Indian cause during this brief period. Later she herself played a dominant part in promoting freedom struggle. According to the History Sheet of the Criminal Intelligence Office of the Home Department (Political) in 1913, "She was at that time one of the recognised leaders of the revolutionary movement in Paris, and was said to be regarded by the Hindus as a reincarnation of some deity, presumably Kali". The truth of this assertion aside, she was sympathetic to the most radical expressions of the Indian national movement.

The year was 1907 and the time, 3rd week of August, the Indian independence was 40 years away, and the world was

not fully aware of the burning patriotism of hundreds and thousands of young Indians who were ready to lay down their lives for the sake of freedom for their country. The British were trying their best to put down the revolutionaries by bringing in ordinances, bans and arrests for life on the basis of treason. It was hence, no mean achievement of Madam Cama, when she unfurled the first National Flag at the International Socialist Conference in Stuttgart (Germany) in 1907. A thousand representatives from several countries were attending. An Indian lady in a colorful sari was a rare phenomenon in those days and her majestic appearance and brave and clear words made everybody think that she was a Maharani or at least a princess from a native state. The tricolor-flag Madam Cama unfurled had green, saffron, and red stripes. Red represented strength, saffron victory, and green stood for boldness and enthusiasm. There were eight lotuses representing the eight provinces and flowers represented princely states. "Vande Mataram" in Devanagari adorned central saffron stripe, which meant "salutation to Mother India." The sun and the moon indicated Hindu and Muslim faiths. Veer Savarkar designed the flag with the help of other revolutionaries.

After Stuttgart, Madam went to United States. She traveled a lot and informed Americans about Indians struggling for Independence. She could be called "Mother India's first cultural representative to USA." Her passionate speech against the British tyranny in India was published at the end of August in the German Socialist paper *Vorwärts*. Her Paris-home became a shelter for world revolutionaries. Even Lenin, the father of Russian revolution visited her house and exchanged views. Savarkar got all encouragement in writing the history of 1st Indian War of Independence from Cama. She helped in its printing in Holland as no English publisher came forward to publish it. It was banned book but found its way to India. Smuggled ingeniously with "Don Quixote" covers! She became publisher of "Vande Mataram" a revolutionary magazine and was a distributor as well, an extremely difficult task in the

days of British Espionage. Another magazine "Madan's Talwar" was also started in memory of Madanlal Dhingra who had laid down his life for the country. Both the magazines were outlawed in India and England. Madam Cama somehow found ways to send them to India. These were smuggled into India through Pondicherry. In 1910 the British Government requested France for her extradition. When this was refused, her property in India was confiscated.

Madam Cama also fought for the cause of women. Speaking at National Conference at Cairo, Egypt in 1910, she asked, "Where is the other half of Egypt? I see only men who represent half the country!" She stressed the role of women in building a nation. When First World War broke out in 1914, Madam Cama took anti-British stand and tried her best to bring in awareness among Indians about the harm brought in by fighting imperialist forces. The British had banned her entry in India being afraid of her revolutionary past and confirmed nationalistic outlook. But the lioness was getting old and 35 years of fighting on foreign land had taken its toll. She decided to return to motherland but was very ill. After reaching Bombay, she was hospitalized and died on the 13th of August 1936.

A fearless woman, she brought in awareness of Indian struggle for independence in Europe and America. She excelled many Maharanis (queens) of her time in her poise and demeanor. She fought for freedom till the last in her own way, and helped innumerable revolutionaries with money and materials across the sea as she has settled down in London and Paris at the beginning of the century. Her life and mission make a fascinating reading, showing the important role she played in the early years of freedom struggle.

I. Gayathri
III B.A. History

MANEKA GANDHI

Born on 26th August, coming from a traditional Sikh family, Mrs. Gandhi is a born politician-she is the widow of Sanjay Gandhi, the son of Indira Gandhi (former Prime Minister of India). Maneka Gandhi is a renowned activist who works on behalf of



animals, poor people and the environment. She served as Minister of the Environment from 1989 to 1991 and returned to Parliament in 1998 as the Minister of Welfare and was appointed as chairwoman of the Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CPCSEA).

She has succeeded in persuading the courts to stop the ugly killings in the Idag slaughterhouse, which was poisoning Delhi's water supply and proving to be a major health hazard. Hundreds of animal rights cases are registered all over the country, but much more has to be done in a sustained manner. "Eating meat is the leading cause of deforestation. A goat you grow to eat 10 times the plants you would eat yourself". Under her direction, unannounced inspections of laboratories where animals are used for scientific research were conducted, and abominable conditions and cruelty were documented and exposed. The CPCSEA imposed restrictions that brought some of the abuse to a stop. Political upheaval caused by vested interests eventually forced her to resign from the position. She continues to serve in Parliament.

Former Union Minister for Animal Welfare Maneka Gandhi is fierce and fearless in her quest to protect animals. What Maneka Gandhi has accomplished speaks for itself. She has helped seize animals from filth and misery in traveling circuses, zoos and laboratories; passed laws protecting animals neglected by the government for decades; founded an animal protection organization, People for Animals; and written books about animal exploitation.

It was she who persuaded the giant Coca Cola Company to cancel its sponsorship of bullfights in Mexico; helped win international agreement on the protection of rhinos in Africa; renamed our street dogs 'Indian dogs' and convinced rich people, through personal example, that Indian dogs are more desirable than purebreds. She also wrote to the Chairman of Daimler Chysler, the Benz Company stating that they should stop the usage of leather for car seats.

She is the founder trustee for PFA received the Lord Erskine award in 1993 from the RSPCA and runs Asia's biggest small animal care center in Delhi. "The animal rights movement is the only truly altruistic movement".

Maneka Gandhi accomplished all this, and more, working from her home office, with every nook and corner of her own living space filled with staff and papers and the most difficult of her rescued Indian dogs. Her home is filled with the strays rejected by others, including a dog called Nuts, whom no one else could tame, who now eats out of Maneka Gandhi's hand and snuggles on her lap.

It will be a tragedy for animals and for India if Mrs. Gandhi is prevented from carrying on her vital work. We need Maneka Gandhi's leadership, dedication and, yes, even her nagging.

Unfortunately in modern times-as Maneka Gandhi points out-the healthy traditions seem to be getting lost. Today, in a society that often appears to deny animals any rights, apart from the single 'privilege' of being sacrificed at the altar of human convenience and greed.

Stop eating meat to start with. If we knew how unhealthy dead meat is it would be an easy decision. Opt out of cruel systems and seek more humane options, as people are doing all over the world. In the process you'll reduce the violence in our lives and create a healthier, more humane society for your children. There is nothing to be embarrassed about.

People worldwide are doing it from Madonna, Bryan Adams, Sting, to Michael Jackson to Prince Charles. Amitabh Bachchan and Mallika Sarabhai Ravi Shankar and Menaka Gandhi and so many others. They are not ashamed to be vegetarians. Why should you be? Why not join the movement for a more Humane world and campaign against cruelty towards all those who share the world with us

Pushpa Linda David

III B.A. History

Here's all you have to know about men and women: Women are crazy, men are stupid

- George Carlin

LATA MANGESHKAR – AGELESS DIVA

Lata was born as Hema Hardikar at Sikh Mohalla, Indore, Madhya Pradesh into a middle-class Maharashtrian family. Her father was a theater actor and classical singer. Her siblings are Hridayanath Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Usha Mangeshkar and Meena Mangeshkar. All of the siblings, except Meena (though she has sung quite a few songs, mostly with Lata and Usha), chose music as their careers. Her father began giving her singing lessons when she was 5. Her God-given musical gifts meant that she could master the vocal exercises from first pass and from early on she was recognized as being highly gifted musically.

Lata Mangeshkar's first cinematic song was for the film Kiti Hasaal (1942), produced by Vasant Joglekar. However, her father disliked the idea of any of his daughters singing for movies and so the song was dropped from the film. Her talent impressed Vasant Joglekar enormously. He later commented "She is an introvert and that's why she reveals her pride in her singing." Lata's father died while she was 13 of heart disease in 1942. Lata didn't like acting very much, but the death of her father and financial need forced her to play cameo roles in many Hindi and Marathi films.

The 1950s saw Lata become the favorite singer of composers like Shankar Jaikishan, Sachin Dev Burman, C. Ramchandra, Madan Mohan, Hemant Kumar and Salil Chowdhury amongst others. Lata and composer Hemant Kumar came up with a mega major hit that shook the music world. The movie was 'Nagin' and the 'been' tunes from that film are still recognized by every Indian today.

Lata's playback songs for Madhubala became huge hits. While recording Mohe panghat, Naushad told Lata "I've created this song only for you. Nobody else can render this song."

The Kaifi Azmi song Chalte Chalte, rendered by Lata, became an overnight superhit. Other songs such as Inhi logon ne le lina dupatta mera and Chalo dildar chalo (duet with Rafi) also became popular. Lata also recorded many songs in the last films of S D Burman.

In 1980s, Lata voluntarily cut down on her singing to allow new younger talent to come up. In 1982, Lata once again worked with Khayyam for the movie Razia Sultana. She rendered the breathtaking song Aye dil-e-naadaan. Ravindra Jain, the blind composer who was given a big break by Raj Kapoor in Ram Teri Ganga Maili, got Lata to sing popular songs like Sun Saiba Sun. Ramlaxman was another new composer whose favorite singer was Lata. The songs sung by Lata and S. P. Balasubramaniam became extremely popular - Dil Deewana, Kabootar ja ja, Aaja shaam hone aai and the title song. A large credit for the success of the film goes to its songs. In late 1970s and early 1980s, Lata worked with the children of composers she had earlier worked with.

By 1990, many of Lata's fans saw her as a living legend. She was the idol of many Indian girls, who were inspired to become singers themselves. In 1990, Lata launched her own production house. Her first (and the only) movie as a producer - Lekin - flopped, but the music (composed by her brother, Hridaynath) was well-appreciated. The haunting "Yaara seeli seeli", written by Gulzar, is considered to be one of the best songs that Lata has ever sung. In 1990s, Lata also recorded many non-film songs, including ghazals with Jagjit Singh. One such popular ghazal is Dhuan banake fiza mein, recorded in 1992.

In her later years, Lata's voice has weakened, and yet nevertheless she has been able to give good performances. The Mujhse Dosti Karoge soundtrack, where she sings some of her old songs, is done beautifully. A more recent example is in the film Veer Zaara, with songs composed by late Madan Mohan, where Lata Mangeshkar's voice stands out.

Singing style

Lata's mastery over pitch and scale is considered amazing. Bade Ghulam Ali Khan once said about Lata that "she never sings off-key." Lyricist Majrooh Sultanpuri said about her "It isn't as though she always got great lines to sing. It's the magic of her voice that elevates the lyrics." Lata has displayed great versatility in her singing. An example of her upbeat, playful numbers is Ae Phansa from Bobby. Examples of her sad songs are Aankhiyon Ko Rehne De of the same movie or Mohabbat Ki Jhuthi of Mughal-e-Azam. However she has done some great runs too, such as in Thoda Resham Lagta Hai from the movie Jyoti.

More than her magical voice, it was Lata's humility that made her a favorite singer of all the composers, lyricists, actors and producers in Bollywood. Lata owns a flat in London. She and her sister Asha Bhosle can be often found vacationing in London. Lata has received four Filmfare Awards, the Platinum Disc of EMI London and many other awards. No singer like her has ever been born."

S. Indhu
III B.A. History

The history of all times, and of today especially, teaches that.... women will be forgotten if they forget to think about themselves.

MEDHA PATKAR - ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

Medha Patkar was born in 1954 to Vasant and Indu Khanolkar. A veteran and well-known trade unionist, her father was a freedom fighter before Independence. Medha grew up steeped in trade unionism and social justice; thus making her career choice very natural.

A young doctoral student at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences who was interested in studying social inequality decided she would do field work among tribal in northeastern Gujarat. Medha Patkar wanted to find out how the country's development had affected tribals. In particular, she was going to find out what changes the proposed dams on the Narmada would bring to the lives of thousands of people it was uprooting.

Medha Patkar has been a central organizer and strategist of Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), a people's movement organized to stop the construction of a series of dams planned for India's largest westward flowing river, the Narmada. The World Bank-financed Sardar Sarovar Dam is the keystone of the Narmada Valley Development Project, one of the world's largest river development projects. Upon completion, Sardar Sarovar would submerge more than 37,000 hectares of forest and agricultural land. The dam and its associated canal system would also displace some 320,000 villagers, mostly from tribal communities, whose livelihoods depend on these natural resources.

In 1985 Patkar began mobilizing massive marches and rallies against the project, and, although the protests were peaceful, she was repeatedly beaten and arrested by the police. She almost died during a 22-day hunger strike in 1991. Undaunted, she undertook two more long protest fasts in 1993 and 1994. With each subsequent summer monsoon season, when flooding threatens the villages near the dam site, Patkar has joined the

tribals in resisting evacuation and resigning themselves to drown in the rising waters. To date as many as 35,000 people have been relocated by the project; however, they have not been adequately resettled and hundreds of families have returned to their home villages despite the constant threat of submergence. The activists are continually subjected to intimidation. In 1994 the NBA office was ransacked, and later Patkar was arrested for refusing to leave the village of Manibeli which was to be flooded.

These actions led to an unprecedented independent review of the dam by the World Bank, which concluded in 1991 that the project was ill conceived. Unable to meet the Bank's environmental and resettlement guidelines, the Indian government canceled the final installment of the World Bank's \$450 million loan. In 1993 Patkar and the other activists forced the central government to conduct a review of all aspects of the project. Meanwhile, the sluice gates to the dam were closed in 1993, in defiance of court orders, and water was impounded behind the dam.

In May 1994, NBA took the case to stop the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam to India's Supreme Court. In January 1995 the Supreme Court put a stay on further construction of the half-built dam and has tried to forge consensus between the central and state governments. While state governments continue to push for an increase in the height of the dam, displaced tribals carry on with mass protests. Patkar continued to defy the project and in 1996 she was again arrested.

The NBA has also been working to obtain just compensation for people affected by dams which have already been built on the Narmada as well as opposing other dams in the Narmada Valley. In 1997 the NBA helped tribal communities stop construction of the Upper Veda and Lower Goin dams. Another focus of the NBA's work has been the Maheshwar Dam. A number of huge rallies and dam site occupations forced a halt to major work

on this project and led the state government to establish an independent task force to review the dam.

As an outgrowth of her work to stop dam construction, Patkar has helped establish a network of activists across the country - the National Alliance of People's Movements.

In 1985 Patkar began mobilizing massive marches and rallies against the project, and, although the protests were peaceful she was repeatedly beaten and arrested by the police. She almost died during a 22-day hunger strike in 1991. She has won over police and even government officers through her simple faith in justice and comprehensive analysis of the facts.

Among India's most dynamic activists, Medha Tai or Medha didi, as schoolchildren and police call her alike, knows the Narmada Valley hamlet by hamlet. Patkar has been at the center of these struggles, gaining worldwide notoriety for sharp analysis and courageous activism that has included long fasts, police beatings and jail.

Medha Patkar has received numerous awards:

1. Right Livelihood Award (often referred to as the Alternative Nobel Peace Prize)
2. The Goldman Environmental Prize, 1992.
3. Deena Nath Mangeshkar Award,
4. Mahatma Phule Award,
5. Goldman Environment Prize,
6. Green Ribbon Award for Best International Political Campaigner by BBC
7. The Human Rights Defender's Award from Amnesty International.

Patkar has served on the World Commission on Dams, an independent global body, the first independent global

Commission constituted to enquire on the water, power and alternative issues, related to dams, across the world. Patkar is currently leading the National Alliance of People's Movements, a network of more than 150 political organizations across India.

At the World Social Forum in Mumbai (Bombay) in January 2004, Patkar linked the goals of the movement to challenge corporate globalization to the longstanding struggles of the adivasi (indigenous, or tribal) people and dalits (the "untouchable" castes) in India to control their own lives, saying, "Without community rights, no human rights can be sustained in the face of corporatisation, criminalization, communalism and corruption."

Baba Amte, the Gandhian human rights activist who is the moral voice of the people of the Narmada, has worked with Medha Patkar in the Narmada Valley for years. "She is a daughter of India," he said of her.

Jancy Elizabeth Rani & Sr. Jincy
III B.A. History

An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have: the older she gets, the more interested he is in her

- Agatta Christie

MOTHER TERESA-THE ANGEL OF MERCY

*God is the friend of silence. Trees, flowers, grass grows in silence.
See the stars, moon and sun, how they move in silence.*

- Mother Teresa

People around the world called her Angel of Mercy; in India she was simply the Mother.

Mother of not only the poor and sufferings and the unwanted, lonely and rejected ones but every Indian. Her mission was to serve and free the downtrodden from hunger, pain and suffering. She was in the eyes of the people a simple and truly humane person. Any one who held her hands said it was a unique spiritual experience.



Born on. Aug. 27, 1910, was Albanian, originally named Agnes Gonxha Bejaxhiu, she entered the order of the Sisters of Our Lady of Loreto at the age of 18. In 1928 she joined a religious order and took the name Teresa. The order immediately sent her to India.

She taught in the order's school in Calcutta until 1946, when she experienced what she described as a "call within a call" to aid the desperately poor of India in a way that required she leave her convent. She received permission from Rome to do this and began her work by bringing dying persons from the streets into a home where they could die in peace and dignity.

She became an Indian citizen the same year. In 1950, she founded a religious order in Calcutta called the Missionaries of Charity. The order provides food for the needy and operates hospitals, schools, orphanages, youth centers, and shelters for lepers and the dying poor.

Mother of Dying Destitutes of Calcutta:

In 1952, she opened the 'Nirmal Hriday', Home for Dying Destitute, in a dormitory, formerly a Kali temple hostel, which was donated by the city of Calcutta. The Missionaries of Charity began to treat lepers there in 1957. Two years later, they opened the first house outside Calcutta, in Drachi. Soon afterward, they expanded to Delhi and other cities.

Though her Calcutta clinic was the center of Mother Teresa's growing charity and the place she called home, her work expanded all over the globe, with more than 500 missions in 120 countries. Wherever poor people needed comfort, she was there: among the hungry in Ethiopia, the radiation victims at Chernobyl, the rubble of Armenia's earthquake, in the squalid townships of South Africa. Her order opened one of the first homes for AIDS victims.

Almost 50 years later, the Missionaries of Charity have grown from 12 sisters in India to over 3,000 in 517 missions throughout 100 countries worldwide

In addition to the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize, Mother Teresa has received other awards for her work with the needy. These awards include the 1971 Pope John XXIII Peace Prize and India's Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding in 1972.

Mother Teresa died a very peaceful death on September 5, 1997 leaving behind her a legacy. A legacy of selfless service to people in need. She was 87.

Mother Teresa was a living saint and she will be greatly missed around the world.

May she rest in peace.

Mary Infanta
III BA History

M.S. SUBULAKSHMI- A MUSICAL LEGEND

Madurai Sanmukavadivu (styled simply as M.S. in keeping with Tamil usage) Subulakshmi was born on September 16, 1916 in the city of Madurai in South India. Madurai is located in the center of the Tamil-speaking state of Madras and has been over 200 years the center of the culture of the Dravidians, the earliest inhabitants of India who were pushed south by the Aryan invaders of the north. Besides being born into the center of Southern Hindu culture, Subulakshmi was further blessed by being born into a home "where music was valued and where talents of music was gathered ". Her parents were Subramanya Iyer and Veena Vidushi Shanmukavadivu, a renowned singer and player of veena. Her younger brother and sister also shared their mother's love for music. Her brother was a Mridangam player and her sister was a singer as well. By the age of 10 Kunjamma as she was affectionately called, was accompanied by her mother at concerts. As a young girl she studied under Srinivasa Iyengar of Madurai who taught her upto varnam stage which was an important stage in Bharatha Natyam. By the age of 17 Subulakshmi was giving concerts on her own, including major performances at the Madras Music Academy , the prestigious center for the study and promotion of Karnatic music . At the age of 24 , she married T. (Thayagarajan) Sadasivam who had devoted himself to the promotion of her career. People who knew her well say that without her husband she would not have achieved the artistic status she enjoys ". It is a sight to see her unceasingly acknowledging the gratitude she owes to him".

Two fortuitous events brought Subulakshmi early into national prominence. The first was her participation in the All India Dance Conference in Bombay in 1944. Every Indian musician of importance was present there and her performance created a sensation. The second was her title role in the Hindi film MEERA, produced by her husband. Meera was a singer saint in

the 18 century Rajput princess who gave up court life and wandered in the country side singing the praises of Lord Krishna. The film was produced in 1946-1947 in Rajputana and the village saw her as "NEW MEERA". They sought to hear her singing and even wanted to pay homage to while she walked on the streets. In this film she also sang bhajans . Subulakshmi suddenly found herself as the idol of the common people through the length and breath of the country.

Sarojini Naidu a poet and the leader of the nationalist party praised her as "THE NIGHTINGALE OF INDIA" and added that every child has heard about M.S. in India. She was also praised as one great woman artist of India who has won many hearts all over the world. She is also looked upon as a born genius and a born artist.

In 1941 M.S. and her husband visited Mahatma Gandhi at the religious retreat at Nagpur where she sang a prayer song. Gandhi greatly loved her divine voice especially "hari tuma haro" sung by her, which was even played at his funeral. The late Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru referred to her as the "Queen of Songs".

In 1963 Subulakshmi was invited to participate in a Edinburgh festival and traveled to Europe for the first time. Though the audience did not understand the language they greatly enjoyed her charming voice. The Times of India greatly praised her for her performance. This brought her universal appeal. In 1966 M.S. flew to U.S. to sing as her country's representative at the United Nations for the observance of United Nations Day. She also performed from Boston to San Francisco and was greatly praised. Her singing was appealing to all the Indians living all over the world

The other phase of her career she has spent a lot towards charity works to her countrymen. She has many times conducted performances to collect funds for good causes. M.S. has almost performed 200 benefit shows and has raised about

Rs.10,000,000 for various Indian charities; so close to her heart have been Gandhi Memorial Fund, the Kamala Nehru Hospital, Ramakrishna Mission, South Indian Educational Association, Madras Music Academy, etc.

AWARDS WON BY M.S.

In recognition of her efforts she received the Padma Bhushan Award from the government of India in 1955. In 1956 she received the Presidents National Award for Classical Music. In the same year she was nominated as the president in the Sangeet Natak Sabha Academy. In addition to this M.S. also received The Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service in 1974. Another notable feature of M.S. was that when ever she received an award she dedicated it to her husband and deemed him as the cause of her success. The Madras Music Academy in 1968 elected Subulakshmi to preside over its Annual Conference, the first women to be honored. As Krishnaswamy noted "The credit for elevating the status of women goes to Srimathi Subulakshmi.

M.S. Subulakshmi in her appearance looked very conservative: the long pallu of her handloom cotton or silk saree tucked around her waist , flower-wreathed "kondai" .diamond nose and ear ring , glass bangles between gold, not to forget the row of kumkum and the vibhuti from temples dotting the turmeric washed forehead . She was always regular in her puja and slogans recitation, she was also a strict follower of all rituals and Sumangali households. The world greatly regretted the sad demise of M.S. Subulakshmi on December 11, 2004 . The world looked at India as a country which has lost a precious gem who would always bring glory to her mother land even after her leaving the world. M.S. is a legend that cannot be wiped away by the ravages of time.

Christina Sumitha .L & Shrine Brindha
III B.A. History

DR. MUTHULAKSHMI REDDY –TORCH BEARER OF WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

A legend in her own lifetime, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy had several firsts to her credit. Right from admission to arts and medical colleges, when doors were generally closed for women, to nomination to the Madras Legislative Council where she was elected Deputy Chairperson, as founder-president of Indian Women’s Association and the alderwoman of the Madras Corporation, she was the torchbearer of the women’s movement.

She was born in Pudukkottai on 30th July 1886. After completing her school, she joined Maharaja College in 1903 for higher education. She joined the Madras Medical College as its first female student. As an outstanding student of the college she won five gold medals and received merit certificates in medicine, surgery and mid-wifery.

Dr. Muthulakshmi began the Adyar Cancer Institute in Chennai, when she lost her young sister to cancer. Her sister was being treated at India’s only specialised cancer hospital, located in Patna, Bihar. It set her thinking. This made Dr. Reddy send her only son, S. Krishnamurthy, to the United States, Switzerland and the UK to train in cancer treatment. When he returned, the Adyar Cancer Institute was formed with the objective of providing the best cancer treatment to the poor. The Cancer Institute, Chennai was established on June 18, 1954, as a voluntary, charitable Cancer Hospital and Research Centre under the leadership of the Late Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddy. It was the first comprehensive cancer centre in the southern peninsula and the second in the country.

Though she was a doctor by profession, she showed keen interest in politics. In 1926, she was nominated to the Madras legislative council and also was elected as its Vice President. But she resigned this post in 1930 as a mark of protest against the

imprisonment of Gandhiji. She was also a fulltime social worker and did a lot for the welfare of women and children. She founded the "Avvai Home" for destitute women. She also fought for the adult franchise and common electorate. She was also interested in the promotion of education for girls. She was instrumental in opening a number of girls school in many places in Tamilnadu.

DR. Muthulakshmi was also a good writer and an excellent orator. She wrote three books namely "Autobiography", "My experience as a legislator" and "Demand for devadasi legislation in 1929". She also served as the editor of the journal "Sridharma". She was inspired by the ideals of Vivekananda and Gandhiji. She met Gandhiji in 1927, when he visited Tamilnadu. Gandhiji was inspired by her social welfare schemes and published her ideas in the magazine - "Young India". She was the first woman to be appointed as chairperson of the State Social Welfare Advisory Board. She served in this board from 1954-59. In her recognition of her services the Government of India honoured DR Muthulakshmi with the title "Padma Bhushan".

J. Nancy
III BA HISTORY

'A woman's mind is cleaner than a man's - That's because she changes it more often'

- Oliver Hereford

CHINNAPELLAI - A ROLE MODEL FROM RURAL INDIA

Successful women are not necessarily in far off lands to be read about in newspapers or seen on the small screen. Probably, the woman next door is one such success story. Sania Mirza may be the latest icon capturing everybody's mind and hearts but then our very own Chinnapillai from Pullisery village near Madurai is no less a maker of history.



Chinnapillai is an average Indian woman. But she was bold to take on a struggle single-handedly that freed her peers from the dragnet of moneylenders. She is the solitary agent of change that transformed the lives of thousands of rural women through the savings and credit scheme. She was the founder of a number of Kalanjams (savings and credit groups) of poor women and was instrumental in forming Vaigai Vattara Kalanjiam, in Appantirupathy, which was the First Federation of Rural Women Savings and Credit Group in India. Presently this has a membership of over 40,000 women. The linkages that she has established between the Kalanjams and the banks and other financial institutions like NABARD, HUDCO etc. have resulted in promotion of income generation for hundreds of poor women to free them from the clutches of moneylenders.

She has been deeply involved in organizing and working with co-agricultural laborers for undertaking various agricultural operations on a collective basis to maximize the benefits. She led many struggles to establish the rights and entitlements of poor women against landlords, moneylenders, politicians and officials. The most notable was the right for fishing over the village tank, which was earlier controlled by the landlords. Her selfless and untiring service for the poor women in the South has earned her the Mata Jijabai Stree Shakti Puraskar award in 1999.

Chinnapillai, as an 18 year old girl, married Perumal and came to Pullucheri, just over 30 years ago to this life of unquestioning acceptance. Perumal was soon a father of many children and at the same time deeply into debt and broken down by hard work. Chinnapillai had worked as a labourer ever since she was a child and by early 1990s was a supervisor of a small group of women.

From all over India stories of transformation of village economies were beginning to emerge. Small successes were being replicated in ever widening areas, and in some cases 'change' is spreading with the ferocity of forest fires. Kalanjiam, the micro credit movement that started near Madurai was opening new thresholds for poor women.

The first fire was ignited about 10 years ago in Pullucheri. For centuries, a few landlords had owned the hundreds of acres near Alagar Kovil. To work on their farms tiny settlements like Pullucheri grew up, where folks, labeled with the ugly phrase 'Scheduled Castes' lived. They were landless, marginal or contract laborers dependent on this trinity: landlord, moneylender and monsoon. It was normal for the landlord to dictate and arbitrate. It was normal for people to fall sick and die. It was normal for children to grow up with no education. It was normal to hawk one's future to borrow money.

The pioneering Dr.V.J.Kurien of Amul-fame had started a few formal courses designed to take modern management tools to rural India in 1979. His Institute of Rural Management in Anand, Gujarat pointed to a lacuna in India's development strategy and sought to fill it. Inspired by that initiative - and no less by the man himself— many young men returned to work at the grass roots. M.P. Vasimalai was one of that few but significant numbers.

Vasimalai, who presently heads the 'Dhan Foundation' had passed out of the Indian Institute of Management [Ahmedabad] choose to serve the people of Pallucheri. These simple folk

were not easy converts to the idea of growing big through small savings. They had suffered earlier in the hands of cheats. When Vasimalai after some weeks of building relationships with them proposed a savings group, their worst fears surfaced again. But it was the strength of personality of Chinnapillai that carried conviction in the end. Once she was persuaded, she led her group to form the first savings unit: PullukKalanjiam, short for 'the Granary of Pullucheri'. Ten women began to contribute Rs.20 per month. The collected sum was lent to a group member most in need of it. They charged an interest of 60% per annum. "It was a high rate", she admits. "But actually a fraction of the going rate. And nothing needed to be pawned. They were thrilled and incredulous!"

In six months, their Kalanjiam was lending the astounding sum of Rs.1000 per month. Group members could meet emergencies or start small enterprises. Chinnapillai and her pioneer friends began to travel to villages nearby to spread the gospel of their Kalanjiam and how there was 'big' money to be accessed. Local Kalanjiams —each never exceeding 20 women— sprung up in Matthur, Kunnathur, Chettipulam; often five or six in each village. The fire that Chinnapillai lit had taken hold.

For Chinnapillai the most ecstatic moment came when the then Prime Minister A.B.Vajpayee showed his respect by touching her feet at a public function. But she says that a decade ago women like her could have never imagined organizing themselves into self-help groups for acquiring financial independence. There was lack of awareness. Not any longer. Now women are more aware, confident and organized and have moved on to bigger campaigns against social evils.

Ms. Vimala Stephen
Faculty, Department of History

DR. V. SHANTA - PIONEER IN CANCER RESEARCH

Known as Florence Nightingale of Tamil Nadu, she has pioneered research and treatment of various kinds of cancers, especially cervical cancer...yes...she is none other than, Dr. V. Shanta, Chairperson of the Cancer Institute, Adyar, Chennai.

V. Shanta was born in an illustrious family and raised in a world of books, ideas and high achievement. She studied medicine at Madras Medical College and came under the influence of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, a social reformer and India's first woman Medical graduate. In 1954, Dr. Reddy and the Woman's Indian Association (WIA) Cancer Relief Fund founded the Cancer Institute in Chennai. Dr. Shanta joined the Institute drawn to Reddy's vision and dedication.

When the Cancer Institute was founded, she had cleared her UPSC and was Assistant Professor at the Maternity Hospital. Though she had a roaring practice at the Women's Hospital, she un-hesitantly decided to join the Institute when called upon by Dr. Reddy. She hasn't regretted it since. The fledgling Institute had only twelve beds and two doctors - Shanta herself and Dr. S. Krishnamurthi, the Director and Reddy's son. As the Institute's Associate Director Dr. Shanta set up India's first comprehensive pre-cancer clinic, conducted the country's first major cancer survey, and developed its first program for the early detection of cancer in rural areas. She became a passionate advocate of cancer prevention and launched an anti-tobacco campaign in rural areas. She conducted India's first successful trials of combination therapy leading to a dramatic breakthrough in the control and cure of oral cancer.

Simultaneously, Dr. Shanta conducted a path breaking research in oral, cervical and breast cancer and pediatric leukemia, publishing the results in International journals and establishing

the Institute as India's first Regional Research and Treatment Center in 1975. In 1984, the Institute added a postgraduate college where Dr. Shanta undertook to train cancer specialists, more than 150 of whom now practice throughout the subcontinent.

As the Director of the Institute, from 1980, Dr. Shanta endeavored to turn the Institute into a world-class research center with institutional contact with centers in Europe, North America, and Japan. She was responsible for the State-of-the-art laboratory and imaging equipment at the center. She has tirelessly raised donations, grants and government subsidies and trained hundreds of village health nurses to screen women for cervical abnormalities. In 2000, she opened India's first hereditary cancer clinic in the Institute's premises.

Dr. Shanta has played a pioneering role in all the achievements of the Institute, being responsible for the recognition of the practice of medical oncology as a speciality and the creation of a separate medical oncology division at a time when none existed. The first super speciality course in surgical and medical oncology in India was instituted in the Institute in 1994, for which she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Science by the Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University in 2002. Dr. Shanta, a member of the WHO advisory Committee on Cancer, has more than 95 publications in national and International journals to her credit.

At a time when the crude evidence rate of all cancers is steadily rising in India, world recognition for the Institute is expected to go a long way in increasing public spending on the research and treatment of the disease. Centers of excellence in any field, by their very nature, rarely have place for compassion. Huge costs of research especially in Medical science have ensured that the benefits accruing from them do not trickle down to deprived people. To Dr. Shanta's credit, the Cancer Institute has remained one of the few exceptions where

service has not been compromised in the effort to reach out to all sections of the population. The Cancer Institute has completed 50 years in the service of the poorer sections in line with the ethos of "service to all". Its services are free or subsidized for some 60 percent of its 100 patients; travel allowances make regular treatments accessible to the poor. And through a Volunteer Progress Sanctuary, the Institute provides hope-giving emotional support and counseling to patients and their families and to cancer-afflicted children. There are thousands who say, "I owe my life to Dr. Shanta"

Seventy-nine year old Dr. Shanta still sees patients, still performs surgery, and is still on call twenty-four hours. It disturbs her that it is so hard to raise funds for the Institute when she says, "We seem to have enough money to construct pilgrim shelters and temples in almost every street of the city". She cautions young people against cynicism. Reflecting on her own life, she advises the youth to learn to accept that they are good and good will happen to them.

For her untiring work for the cause of cancer, Dr. Shanta has been awarded the Ramon Magsaysay award for Public Services for 2005.

The eminent physician was given the award in "recognition of her leadership of the Cancer Institute as a center of excellence and for the study and treatment of cancer in India" - said the citation from the Magsaysay Foundation, Manila. Dr. Shanta is the second woman from the city to be selected for the International award, the first being, the renowned vocalist late M. S. Subbulakshmi. She was awarded the Padmashri in 1986 - she has also won a number of national and international awards.

With characteristic modesty, Dr. Shanta has described the award as recognition of the work of the Cancer Institute, rather than as a personal honor. Obviously, for someone who has been with

the Institute since its inception and spent a professional lifetime there, the one is indistinguishable from the other.

Dr. Shanta's leadership has given love, care, compassion and emotion to thousands of cancer patients, rich, poor, young and old, ravaged by cancer. She always says, "The Institute and we are one". That is Dr. Shanta's dedication and we salute her for it.....

Dr. Patricia Gabriel
Head, Dept. of History

PANDITA RAMABAI 1852-1922

EARLY LIFE

Pandita Ramabai was born on 23rd April in the forest of Gangamal in Western Maharashtra. Her father Ananta Shastri, was a learned Brahmin and something of a social reformer. He married a girl of nine and decided to educate her. The village Brahmins responded by ostracizing him and he decided to leave the village and built a home in the forest. His wife Lakshmi Bai, hated the loneliness of the forest, but had to accept it. Soon after Ramabai was born. While she was still young the family started moving from forest to forest and town to town. Wherever he could, her father would give lectures on the need for female education. In the 1877 famine both the parents died. Ramabai and her brother decided to carry on their father's tradition.

Ramabai's fame reached the ears of pandits in Calcutta. Her speech astounded and pleased the Pandits, which earned her the highest title-Saraswati, Goddess of wisdom. After the death of her brother, Ramabai married a Bengali lawyer, Bipin Behari Medhi and they had a daughter whom they named Mano.

In 1882, Ramabai established the Arya Mahila Samaj in Pune and other parts of western India for the cause of women's education. This led to her founding Sharada Sadan in 1889, a school that blossomed into the umbrella organization known as Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission. Born into an orthodox Hindu family in 1858, this exceptionally brilliant woman later came to know Jesus Christ personally, was dramatically changed, and went on to become one of the most outstanding women leaders in India.

Pandita Ramabai and India's Downtrodden Women

Pandita Ramabai was a social reformer, a champion for the emancipation of women, and a pioneer in education.

Too often Ramabai's campaigns for the Women's welfare created a great sensation and news reached the court of Queen Victoria. It bore fruit later in starting of the Women Medical Movement by Lady Dufferin.

Also, she acquired a great reputation as a Sanskrit Scholar. Fluent in seven languages, she translated the Bible into Marathi, her mother tongue. Deeply impressed with her knowledge and ability, Sanskrit scholars at Calcutta University conferred on her the titles of "Saraswati" and "Pandita".

D. Anitha Mathews
III B.A. History

RANI LAKSHMI BAI

Early life

Lakshmi Bai was born on 19 November 1835 at Kashi (Presently known as Varanasi). Her father Moropanth Tambey, was a brahmin and her mother Bhagirathibai was cultured, intelligent and religious. Born in Manikarnika, she was affectionately called Manu in her family. Manu lost her mother at the age of four, and responsibility of looking after the young girl fell to her father. She completed her education and martial training, which included horse riding, fencing and shooting, when she was still a child.



She was married to Raja Gangadhar Rao Niwalkar, the Maharaja of Jhansi in 1842, and became the queen of Jhansi. After the marriage she was given the name Lakshmi Bai. The ceremony of the marriage was performed at the Ganesh Mandir, the temple of Lord Ganesha situated in the old city of Jhansi. Rani Lakshmi Bai gave birth to a son in 1851, but this child died when he was about four months old. After this, the couple adopted Damodar Rao as their son. But Maharaja Gangadhar Rao expired on 21 November 1853, when Lakshmi Bai was 18 years old.

Annexation

At that time Lord Dalhousie was the Governor General of British India. Though little Damodar Rao, adopted son of late Maharaja Gangadhar Rao and Rani Lakshmi Bai was Maharaja's heir and successor as per the Hindu tradition, the British rulers rejected Rani's claim that Damodar Rao was their legal heir. Lord Dalhousie decided to annex the state of Jhansi under the Doctrine of Lapse. Rani then did the unprecedented, she hired

a British Lawyer on retainer and appealed her case in London. Although these petitions were well-argued, they were ultimately rejected. The British Indian Authorities clearly sought to punish Rani for her presumptive behavior and confiscated the state Jewels, and deducted her husband's debts from her annual pension of Rs. 60,000 and was also ordered to leave the Jhansi fort. But Rani Lakshmi Bai was determined to defend Jhansi. She proclaimed her decision with the famous words :Main apni Jhansi nahin doongi (I will not give up my Jhansi).

The war

Rani Lakshmi Bai started strengthening the defense of Jhansi and she assembled a volunteer army of patriots. Women were also recruited and given military training. Rani was accompanied by her generals Gulam Gaus Khan, Dost Khan, Khuda Baksh, Lala Bhau Bakshi, Moti Bai, Sunder-Mundar, Kashi Bai, Deewan Raghunath Singh and Deewan Jawahar Singh. Many from the local population volunteered for service in the army ranks, with the popular support for her cause was on the rise.

When the Revolt of 1857 broke out, Jhansi became a center of the rebellion. A small group of British officials took refuge in Jhansi's fort, and the Rani negotiated their evacuation. When the British left the fort, they were massacred by the rebels. Although the massacre probably occurred without the Rani's consent and she protested her innocence, she stood accused by the British.

In September and October of 1857, the Rani led the successful defense of Jhansi from the invading armies of the neighboring rajas of Datia and Orchha. In March of 1858, the British Army advanced on Jhansi, and laid siege to the city. After two weeks of fighting the British captured the city, but the Rani escaped the city in the guise of a man, strapping her adopted son Damodar Rao closely on her back. She regrouped loyal soldiers in the town of Kalpi where Tatia Tope other patriots joined

her. On June 1, she and her allies captured the fortress city of Gwalior from the Sindhia rulers, who were British allies. She died three weeks later at the start of the British assault, when she saw Tatia Tope being attacked. She rode towards him when a British came up silently behind her and hit her on the head with a club, while at the same time another hit her with a spray of bullets. The British captured Gwalior three days later. The 22 year-old Rani's dying words were not to let the British touch her body. Her soldiers put her body on a nearby haystack and put fire to it.

Epilogue

The fall of Jhansi and the death of Rani Lakshmi Bai was the last series of the resistance to British Raj under India's First War of Independence. Its immediate effects included:

- The Rani earned the respect of her British enemies for her bravery, and became a nationalist and feminist hero in India. When the Indian National Army created its first female unit, it was named after her.
- Her father, Moropant Tambe, was captured and hung a few days after the fall of Jhansi.
- Her adopted son, Damodar Rao, was given a pension by the British Raj, although he never received his inheritance.
- The administration of Undivided India passed on from the East India Company to the British crown.
- The Rani was memorialized in bronze statues at both Jhansi and Gwalior, both of which portray her in equestrian style.

Syliva Regina .K
III B.A. History

REVATHI MENON

Revathi needs no introduction to moviegoers in India. A highly respected actress, she has aligned herself with disability causes and is closely associated with the Chennai-based Ability Foundation. She was instrumental in organizing a wonderful film festival, included in which was an innovative '60 seconds to fame' competition on 'Inclusion'.

No, it is a challenge. It has not happened as much as she, personally, would have liked it to happen. She wanted people from the film industry and people just walking on the road coming in and saying: "Oh, we're going to watch films from all over the world which are addressing disability issues". But it didn't happen. It was mainly people whom she invited personally, and a few already sensitive people who wanted to see more sensitive films. So she hopes the next year, in 2007, we are able to break that. It's going to be a challenge as to how we're going to get a person walking on the road, who looks at the poster and thinks that he should watch this movie, and come in, like he would do with any other film. And want to be a part of the festival: there are these great films made by these great directors, and not just because it is a disability film festival. She wants them to come in.

When it comes to commitment, be it a role in a movie or espousing a social cause or lending support to an NGO, there is no questioning Revathi Menon's sincerity of purpose. This was amply evident when she recently addressed students and NGOs at the Centre for Social Initiative and Management on "From Movies to Movements"- "People in the film business are always in the firing line. We are often ticked off for not making the right films, not wearing the right clothes, not saying the lines right, etc."

Talking about how she became an activist, Revathi says, "Whenever I was invited to functions, I realised that if a

celebrity spoke about social causes, it reached more people. So I decided to use the popularity that came to me by chance and become a voice for NGOs". Incidentally, Revathi is closely involved with The Banyan, Tanker Foundation and Vidya Sagar.

"I chose direction because I wanted to make good use of the media," she says. Disclosing that she would be directing a film based on The Banyan, Revathi says it will be neither art nor commercial. About dialogue with double entendre, she says, "If you want good films, then watch and encourage such films. If you find any scene objectionable, write to the appropriate authority." According to her, censors in the form of parents and grandparents should regulate what a family watches on TV at home. "I will stick to films based on social issues. They could be in a lighter vein because you can't make people cry all the time." If there was a surprise that afternoon, it was this. "Becoming an actress was not premeditated. I wanted to get into motor sport and become a rallyist. Now, I am going to do it."

B PATRICIA
III BA HISTORY

RUKMANI DEVI - THE LADY ATOP INDIA'S TOP ARTS ACADEMY

Rukmani Devi was born in an orthodox Brahmin family on the 29th of February 1904-a leap year-in Madurai during the auspicious time of the Mahamagam Festival. Her father, Nilakanta Sastri, had joined the newly formed Theosophical Society. At age seven Rukmani met C.W. Leadbeater, an eminent Theosophist with whom she developed a deep friendship, and Dr. Annie Besant, the society's president.

One of the luminaries around Dr. Besant was Dr. George Sydney Arundale, an English-born educator. Arundale was the founder of Central Hindu College in Benares. A Brahmin girl, Rukmani shocked the orthodox society of her time by her romance and marriage to Arundale when she was 16 and he in his mid-thirties.

Her husband opened Rukmani's eyes to the splendor of Western art by exposing her to Europe's art galleries, museums, operas and dramas In 1924 the Arundales were in London and went to see the prima ballerina Anna's performance at the Covent Gardens. Rukmani was fascinated. The Russian told her, "As an Indian you should take up Indian dancing"-thus began her dance career at age twenty.

Returning to Madras, Rukmani happened to see a recital of bharata natyam by Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai of Pandanallur. She would recall: "I was ushered into a new world of rhythmic beauty and meaning; and the discovery of such a beautiful and profound art, restricted to a few specialists, aroused a strong desire in me to do everything possible to spread its appreciation and to find young people who would dedicate themselves along with me to its revival as a factor in the cultural renaissance in India." Bharata natyam was regarded as opprobrious by the polite society of those days and shunned along with devadasis

who were the practitioners of this art form. Those were the days when even singing was taboo for women who were not devadasis.

Rukmani Devi began a frantic search for gurus. She was introduced to Gowri Amma, perhaps the greatest dancer of her time, who served the Lord at Kapaleeswarar Temple, Mylapore, Madras, and Pandanallur Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai who epitomized the glory of the Tanjavur tradition. She braved fierce opposition to a high-caste lady's stooping to learn the trade of the devadasis.

As to the artform, Rukmani Devi would say, "It was almost extinct. I discovered that dance and dancers were in a very sorry state. What I wanted to prove was that what was wrong was not the dance itself but the circumstances surrounding it."

In 1935 she gave a dance recital before the delegates to the international convention of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. It was a thundering success. Dr. James H. Cousins, an eminent Theosophist, was so impressed that he mooted the idea of starting an organization to promote the art. Kalakshetra was born.

The Principles of Kalakshetra

Rukmani Devi had definite views about her art center. She intended: 1) to emphasize the essential unity of all art and to work for the recognition of arts as vital to individual, national, religious and international growth; 2) to achieve these goals, students were to be trained in the arts through "the medium of sympathetic contact of master and pupil, in a gurukula atmosphere of intimate relationship;" 3) to impart an all-around education to prevent an "ivory tower" existence.

The Arts Academy (Kalakshetra) was founded on January 6, 1936, with Rukmani Devi as its head and moving spirit in the

spacious ground of the Theosophical Society. In the midst of the mango grove arose little thatched colleges, each a classroom, and a small thatched theater for performances.

A Meeting of East and West

Rukmani Devi drew choreographic inspiration from Western and Eastern ballet presentations, but it was essentially her own artistic and aesthetic sensibility, which enabled her to give shape to the new presentational approach. She employed a variety of adavus, dance steps, using the body at different angles and not repeating a particular movement in a sequence. "Grace with precision" was her watchwords.

Rukmani Devi took meticulous care about stage lighting. She sought help from experts of European theatre and designed the lighting system to suit the Indian stage. With the help of artists, painters and sculptors, she designed a comfortable costume pattern for bharata natyam. Costumes and ornaments were totally different for each production. Kalakshetra has always boasted an international student body Rukmani produced over 35 full-length dance-dramas based on traditional and folk tales. Many of them were revived from the Bhagavata Mela traditions of Mellattur in Tanjavur District or were Kuravanjis- the traditional dance enactments of Tamil Nadu. Before she choreographed these ballets, the story, the script, music and costumes of a particular ballet-usually in Telugu, Sanskrit or Tamil-were meticulously researched.

Carmel Sophia .A
III B.A. History

SAROJINI NAIDU – INDIA'S FIRST WOMAN GOVERNOR

EARLY LIFE AND FAMILY

Sarojini Chattopadhyaya was born in Hyderabad, India as the eldest daughter of scientist-philosopher, Aghornath Chattopadhyaya, and Barada Sundari Devi, a poetess. Her father was the founder of the Nizam College. She learnt to speak Urdu, Telugu, English, Persian and Bengali. Her favorite poet was P.B. Shelley.

At the age of 15, she met Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu and fell in love with him. He was from South India. After finishing her studies at the age of 19, she married him during the time when inter-caste marriages were not easily accepted by the society. Her marriage was a very happy one. They were married under the Brahma Marriage Act (1872), in Madras in 1898. They had 4 children: Jayasurya, Padmaj, Randheer, and Leilamani.

In the Freedom struggle

She joined the Indian Independence movement, in the wake of the aftermath of partition of Bengal in 1905. During 1903-17 Sarojini came into contact with Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Annie Besant, C.P.Rama Swami Iyer, Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. From 1915 to 1918 she lectured all over India on welfare of youth, dignity of labour, women's emancipation and nationalism. After meeting Jawaharlal Nehru in 1916, she took up the cause of the indigo workers of Champaran. In 1925 she was elected as the President of the Congress, the first Indian woman to hold the post. In March 1919, the British government passed the Rowlatt Act by which the possession of seditious documents was deemed illegal. Mohandas Gandhi organized the Non-Cooperation Movement to protest and Naidu was the first to

join the movement which the government made every effort to suppress. In July 1919, Naidu became the Home Rule League's ambassador to England. In July 1920 she returned to India and on August 1, Mahatma Gandhi declared the Non-Cooperation Movement. In January 1924, she was one of the two Indian National Congress delegates at the East African Indian Congress.

Naidu arrived in New York in October 1928 and was concerned with the unjust treatment of the African Americans and the Amerindians. Upon her return to India she became a member of Congress Working Committee. On January 26, 1930 the National Congress proclaimed its independence from the British Empire. On May 5, Mohandas Gandhi was arrested. Naidu was also arrested shortly thereafter and was in jail for several months. She, along with Gandhi, was released on January 31, 1931. Later that year, they were again arrested. Naidu was eventually released due to her poor health and Gandhi was released in 1933. In 1931, she participated in the Round Table Summit, along with Gandhiji and Pundit Malaviyaji. In 1942, she was arrested during the "Quit India" protest and stayed in jail for 21 months with Gandhiji. Naidu shared a warm relationship with Mohandas Gandhi, even calling him "Mickey Mouse". At the Asian Relations Conference of March 1947, Naidu presided over the Steering Committee. On August 15, 1947, with the independence of India, Naidu became the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, India's first woman governor and she died in office in 1949.

Poetry, Writings and Quotes

In 1905, the first volume of her collection of poems was published as *The Golden Threshold*. Two more volumes were published: *The Bird of Time* (1912) and *The Broken Wing* in (1917).

Sarojini Naidu is also well acclaimed for her contribution to poetry. Her poetry had beautiful words that could also be

sung. Her collection of poems was published in 1905 under the title "Golden Threshold". She published two other collections called "The Bird of Time", and "The Broken Wings". Later, "The Magic Tree", "The Wizard Mask", and "A Treasury of Poems" were published.

SAROJINI NAIDU SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS:

The Sarojini Naidu School of Performing Arts, Fine Arts and Communication started functioning from 1988-89 and offers Masters-level courses in Dance, Theatre Arts, Painting and Communication and Doctoral (Ph.D.) programme in Communication, Theatre Arts and Dance.

The University is indebted to the family of Sarojini Naidu for the bequest by the late Padmaja Naidu of the "Golden Threshold", where the University started functioning. In recognition of this gesture, the University has started this School by naming it after Sarojini Naidu to offer postgraduate and research programmes in the fields of arts and culture.

The Sarojini Naidu School provides courses of study in the disciplines of Painting and Sculpture, Dance, Theatre Arts and Communication. It seeks to enlarge the scope of the academic programme so as to include other areas of artistic endeavor like music. The broad objective of the teaching programme is not only to explore the evolution and forms of arts, but also to bring about an integrated approach to the study of creativity. An inter-disciplinary approach is incorporated in the syllabi. Apart from the core faculty, experts in various fields and guest faculty of national and international repute teach courses in the School.

The School has evolved a pattern of studies for Master's Degree programmes in four semesters spread over two years in the disciplines of Dance, Theatre Arts, Fine Arts and Communication. In each of these disciplines, the courses are so arranged as to

make the students aware of not only the evolution of each art, but also the social context and the innovations that these art forms have experienced in their growth.

The Ph.D. programmes mainly consist of a research project with some course work if necessary and the writing of a thesis on a topic approved by the faculty of the discipline. The thesis should be of high standard and should make valuable contribution to the specialized area of study concerned. Candidates seeking admission into the programme must submit with their applications a tentative but detailed outline of their research proposal. Candidates have to appear for an interview before admission into Ph.D.

Nevis Cynthia .S
III B.A. History

SHABANA AZMI – SOCIAL ACTIVIST

Shabana Azmi is an internationally acclaimed actress, Member of the Indian Parliament, and UN Goodwill Ambassador, she is the winner of an unprecedented five National Awards for Best Actress in India for the films Ankur (1974), Arth (1983), Khandhar (1984), Paar (1985), and Godmother (1999).

Extremely vocal and committed social activist, she was presented the Rajiv Gandhi Award as well as the Yash Bhartiya award by the Uttar Pradesh Government. Most significantly she was awarded the Padma Shri in 1988 by the Government of India, an award given to eminent citizens for excellence in their field and distinguished contribution to society.

Rajya Sabha member Shabana Azmi has made efforts to rehabilitate and resettle people affected by the Sardar Sarovar dam project in Madhya Pradesh. According to Shabana Azmi, they were neither against the Government nor against the construction of the dam. They just wanted the Government to help the affected people with proper rehabilitation. Shabana Azmi also felt that the grievances of the affected people should be looked into as they were asking for nothing but agricultural land in lieu of the land that would be submerged once the dam was completed.

Addressing a conference of parliamentarians from South Asian countries Shabana Azmi, MP, a goodwill ambassador of the United Nations Population Fund, India, said that the countries in the region have many common problems. It has been estimated that 71 per cent of maternal mortality is entirely preventable and yet there are more maternal deaths in India than all of Europe in a whole year. The rate of maternal deaths in India remain high, six times that of Sri Lanka. Unsafe abortion contributes to about 12 percent of maternal deaths in India. She said safe motherhood, which most Western nations take for granted, is still an elusive goal for women not only in India

but also for women in most regions of South Asia. It received low priority at the policy implementation levels and since monitoring systems were not in place, it was difficult to assess its impact. Azmi reminded the parliamentarians that unless the women are placed at the center of development issues, no real progress could actually be made for the nation and the region.

What does empowerment mean and how can it be achieved, is a pertinent question, she said. Women activists are demanding that women be included in the global dialogues like politics, economics, arts or developmental issues. Education is perhaps the most important issue however, not enough attention is given on the quality of education she said.

Economic independence is also an important step towards empowerment but it does not automatically lead to empowerment. In fact in most families women end up working both at home and outside the house and even to buy a saree she has to ask either her husband or mother-in-law, she said.

Shabana Azmi has been not only a successful artist but also a hardworking politician and a committed social activist. Her main task has been the improvement of the status of women not only in India but also in countries around India.

Awa Adil
III B. A. History

SONIA GANDHI

Sonia Gandhi , born on December 9, 1946, is an Italian-born Indian politician, the President of the Indian National Congress (Congress Party) and the widow of former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi. She is currently the Chairperson of the ruling United Progressive Alliance in the Lok Sabha. She was named the third most powerful woman in the world by Forbes magazine, next to Condoleezza Rice and Wu Yi in the year 2004.

Early life

Born to Stefano and Paola Maino in Orbassano, a town 20 km from Turin, Italy, she spent her adolescence in Orbassano being raised in a conservative Roman Catholic family and attending a Catholic school. Her father, a building contractor, died in 1983, but her mother and two sisters still live around Orbassano. While doing a certificate course in English in Cambridge, England she met Rajiv Gandhi, who later became Prime Minister of India. They were married in 1968, after which she took up residence in India. She acquired Indian citizenship in 1983. The couple had two children, Rahul Gandhi (born 1970) and Priyanka Gandhi (born 1972). Despite the family's heavy involvement in politics (her mother-in-law Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister), Sonia and Rajiv avoided all involvement - Rajiv worked as an airline pilot, and Sonia took care of her family. When Indira was ousted from office in 1977 and when Rajiv entered politics in 1982, Sonia continued to focus on her family and avoided all contact with publicity.

Role in Indian politics

Following her husband's assassination on May 21, 1991, there were calls for her to enter politics by members of the Congress Party. After her refusal, the party settled on the choice of P V Narasimha Rao as leader and, subsequently, Prime Minister.

She finally entered politics just before the 1998 national election. She officially took charge of the Congress party as the president in 1998 and was elected to parliament in the elections held in 1999. She was elected the Leader of the Opposition of the 13th Lok Sabha in 1999. During her campaign, her opponents (chiefly the Bharatiya Janata Party) played up her foreign birth, her failure to take up Indian citizenship for 15 years after her marriage, and her lack of fluency in Hindi. In May 1999, Sonia Gandhi offered to resign from the Congress Party leadership after three senior leaders challenged her right to try to become India's Prime Minister given that she was someone "not born of Indian soil."

In the Indian general elections, 2004, when the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was set to win a majority (as per most opinion polls), Sonia, launched an aggressive campaign, crisis-crossing the country on the 'Aam Aadmi' (Ordinary people) slogan in contrast to the 'India Shining' slogan of the conservative BJP-led NDA alliance. After her party's surprise victory, she was tipped to be the next Prime Minister of India. On May 16, she was unanimously voted to lead a 15-party coalition government which was subsequently named the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). Parliament was however badly fractured. Despite being the largest party in Parliament, even the 15-party UPA was not able to secure a majority and had to depend on outside support from the Left (Communist) Parties to form a government. After a storm of controversy against her foreign origin issue, Gandhi declined prime minister post. Her supporters have hailed this as an act of renunciation while her opponents have attacked it as a political move in which the ultimate aim is to gain an absolute majority for the Congress Party in Parliament, subsequent to which she will become Prime Minister. Regardless of her motives, her actions have consolidated her hold on party with virtually every Congress leader rallying for her.

On May 18, a day before her scheduled inauguration, in a politically 'shrewd' move (as per her critics) or reasonable (as

per her supporters) - to avoid the pain of another costly agitation and division of the nation based on ideology, she suggested economist Manmohan Singh for the Prime Minister's post. Manmohan Singh was the Finance Minister in a previous Congress government headed by Rao and is considered by many as the Father of Indian Reforms. Moreover, the fact that he was not known to have any political ambitions and that he enjoyed a good rapport with Gandhi probably helped him to win the post. Gandhi retained the post of the Leader of the Majority and the Chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party. This arrangement enabled her to keep political control of the party and to deal with the political fire fights in the giant coalition government while leaving the management of the country in the hands of Manmohan Singh.

Family

Despite her father's vehement opposition to her marriage to Rajiv, Sonia maintains close links with her family in Italy. Her son, Rahul Gandhi had also won election to the Parliament in 2004, and many consider him to be the natural heir to the reins of the party, and the next Congress leader to become Prime Minister. Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra did not contest elections, but is also often speculated about in the media. Sonia and her children are estranged from Maneka Gandhi, the widow of Rajiv's younger brother Sanjay and her son Varun, who are both members of the BJP.

Literary contributions

Gandhi has authored two books: 'Rajiv' and 'Rajiv's World'. In addition, she has also edited 'Freedom's Daughter' and 'Two Alone, Two Together' (two volumes of letters exchanged between Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi from 1922 to 1964).

Anitha Devi .A
III B.A. History

USHA MEHTA (1920 - 1999)

Usha Mehta was among the fortunate ones who lived her long life of 80 fruitful years during one of the most exciting eras of Indian history - The Gandhian Age. It is not an exaggeration to state that she was a worthy product of that age. Even as a child and as a young schoolgirl she was drawn into politics

Born on Feb. 24, 1920, she took the Matriculation Examination of the University of Bombay in 1935 and was ranked among the top 25 students. She joined Wilson College and made her mark in elocution and debates. She was fluent in English, Gujarati, Hindi and Marathi. Two years later after her Graduation she took the Law degree but missed as the Quit India Movement of 1942 claimed her as one of its most popular and prominent participants.

And what a participant she was! Perhaps she was the youngest of the team that hit upon the idea of running an underground radio. On August 14, 1942 was heard a voice announcing "This is the Congress Radio calling on 42.34 meters from somewhere in India". This was the voice of Usha Mehta. Those who heard it and those who heard about it in trains, trams, buses were hooked onto it every morning and evening till the last day, Nov. 12, 1942, when once again it was Usha's strident voice informing the listeners that the police had at last caught up with the radio station which had to be moved from one house top to another constantly to avoid being confiscated and the staff arrested. The Police arrived just as the Vande Matram, the pre - independence "national anthem" went on the air. And it speaks volumes for the Bombay police that when Usha told them to stand at attention they complied with her request, or was it an order or command?

Just three months of the Congress radio, but it left its mark on the national movement. It broadcast news that was officially censored or suppressed by Official news agencies. The few

leaders who had escaped arrest and gone underground found it a convenient means of contacting the people and advising them on the future course of action.

Usha and her colleagues were put to the rigours of a court trial and it must be said to the credit of the Bombay Bar that some of its leading lawyers appeared on behalf of the accused. The end result, however, was 4 years of rigorous imprisonment. Usha's health broke down at Yervda Jail in Poona. She was the first political prisoner to be released in Bombay province when Moraji Desai, the Home Minister in the second Congress Government in the State ordered her immediate release.

Shattered in health but not in spirit, she opted to leave politics in favour of education. She resumed her studies working on a doctoral dissertation on the "The Political and Social Thought of Mahatma Gandhi". She was among the first PhD students of the newly established Department of Civics and Politics of the University of Bombay. Thus, she was associated with the Department from its start to her retirement in 1980, passing through all stages as Student, Research Assistant, Lecturer, Reader, Professor and finally, the Head of the Department.

During this period she was associated with the University Grants Commission and the Administrative Reforms Committee of Gujarat. For several years she was closely associated with Shrimati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University in Bombay as an Executive Committee member. Her interest in the status of women in the society persisted to the last.

The last 20 years of her life were in a sense dedicated to the service of the Bombay Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sanghralaya, first as Honorary Secretary and later as President. With Usha in charge Mani Bhavan came alive with various activities. Usha Mehta, in her own imaginative way, literally took Mahatma Gandhi to the schools and colleges of Bombay when she initiated annual competitions spread over three months, the finals coinciding with Gandhi Jayanti. Each

year there is an increase in the number of children participating. These competitions in future will be annual tributes to Usha Mehta by the student community of Mumbai.

The University of Bombay, appreciated the theme and contents of the Mani Bhavan Library, suggested that Mani Bhavan should start a research centre in Gandhian Thought and Rural Development leading to PhD degree. This was in 1982. Two years later the Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sanghralaya Research Institute was also recognized for the M.A. degree in Rural Development through papers. Usha was so happy and justifiably proud about it, she never missed an opportunity to declare it publicly to her audiences.

Usha combined a lively imagination, originality, and sincerity with a few delightful traits. She was generous to a fault with her time. However busy she might be with her varied activities, she always had time for visitors. No visitor went away disappointed because she gave a full hearing to what quite often was casual or even trite.

Her natural tendency to be of service to others normally made her volunteer as a navigator when the end of the journey was a new destination. As already stated, she had delightful, enjoyable, even lovable traits. But over the years she cultivated the disability to say 'no' to such an extent that later regrets were of little avail. Unfortunately, when she realized this it was too late she was almost at death's threshold.

Looking back over the past few months, it seems that Usha Mehta achieved what is denied to others - she chose the day of her death. Her public and patriotic career began on that historic occasion - August 9, 1942 when Mahatma Gandhi gave his clarion call of Quit India to the people from the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Bombay. Her last public appearance was to salute the national flag at the same hallowed ground on August 9, 2000. She returned home after an exhausting day

got into bed with high fever. Forty - eight hours later, she passed away peacefully.

Mrs. Nishi Jayakumar
Faculty, Department of History

VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT (1900-1990)

- FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT OF U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

She was born on August 18, 1900 as Swarup Kumari Nehru at Allahabad. She was the elder daughter of Shri Motilal Nehru and Swarup Rani. She was born not with silver but a diamond spoon in her mouth as her father had earned distinction, name and wealth, and the costliest luxuries of life by the time she was born.

As her father had become a great political leader, their family home at Allahabad, Anand Bhavan became the venue of the meetings for the eminent personalities of India. In 1915 she accompanied her father to the Annual Session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay (now Mumbai).

In 1919 the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh occurred. That year the Nehru family came in contact with Mahatma Gandhi. It was beginning of the 'conversion' of the Nehru family and as such, of the 'conversion' of Vijayalakshmi too. Ranjit Pandit was a cultured litterateur, aristocrat, and barrister from Kathiawar. Vijaya and Ranjit fell in love and married on May 10, 1921, when she was about 21 years old.

Pandit Motilal Nehru used to tell his daughters, that patriotism was in their blood. In December 1931, when Gandhiji returned from England after having attended the Round Table Conference, most tumultuous scenes in the history of Indian political struggle were witnessed - the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1932 started.

Vijayalakshmi responded to the call of the hour. She joined the ranks of surging millions in demonstrating to the Government the resentment of the Indian people against foreign rule. She delivered speeches, led processions and organised hartals (strikes) at different places. As a result, a notice was served

on her, prohibiting her from taking part in such movements for a period of one month. She did not abide by the government order and was arrested on January 27, 1932, along with her sister, Krishna. Thus, all members of the Nehru family were in Jail, except their frail mother. Vijayalakshmi was tried and sentenced to one year of rigorous imprisonment with fine. During that year she was kept in Lucknow Jail. Her youngest child at the time was only 2 ¹/₂ years old.

In 1935 she contested for the Municipal Board membership in Allahabad and was elected with an overwhelming support of votes. Her period of stay in the Board was, however, uneventful. During that period she was also elected as the Chairperson of the Education Committee of the Board. In that capacity she worked for about 18 months and gathered considerable experience of the civic and educational life of the people around.

Then came the General Elections of the year 1937. She stood as a candidate for the Provincial Assembly of the United Provinces from Cawnpore (Kanpur) Bilhaur constituency, opposing Lady Srivastava, the wife of the then Minister of Education in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) Government. She won convincingly. On Thursday, the July 29, 1937 at 11 a.m., the United Provinces Assembly met at the Assembly Hall, where Vijayalakshmi took her oath as the Minister of Local-Self Government. She became the head of the Local Self-Government Department, covering Health and Sanitation. When Vijayalakshmi Pandit took charge of the Department, she had several problems to tackle and many obstacles to overcome. At many places, especially in some rural areas, drinking water facilities did not exist. The inhabitants of those places were rather hard-pressed for pure drinking water. Maternity and child welfare facilities from the Government side were almost non-existent.

With the start of the Second World War in 1939, the Congress Ministry resigned. Gandhiji gave the slogan of "Do or Die" to

the masses of India, and to the British, "Quit India". Vijayalakshmi Pandit with other soldiers of freedom took to her duty and played her role in the struggle for freedom of the motherland. In the face of indiscriminate firing, she rushed to crowds, helped the wounded and arranged to carry them to hospitals. She was arrested on August, 12, 1942 and was lodged in Naini Jail.

After about 9 months imprisonment she was released on June 11, 1943 on grounds of ill-health. In spite of her weak health, however, immediately after release from Naini Jail, she took up the famine relief work, became president of the "Save the Children" Fund Committee started by the All-India Women's Conference, and devoted herself whole-heartedly to other public welfare activities.

After Independence, Vijayalakshmi Pandit became free India's first ambassador to the Soviet Union. She had a distinguished innings in the field of foreign affairs. She headed the country's delegation to the United Nations during 1947-49. When she returned to India in 1952, she contested the first general elections in independent India and won a Lok Sabha seat. It was the year 1953 which saw her at the peak of her popularity as the first woman elected president of the UN General Assembly where she spoke against apartheid and in favor of world peace. Her differences with Mrs. Indira Gandhi came to the fore during 1975-77. She opposed the imposition of Emergency tooth and nail. She decided to retreat to Dehradun. She came out of her self-imposed exile when she campaigned actively for the Janata Party in 1977. The fall of the Janata Party left her a sad and bitter person.

Her health took a turn for the worse when she suffered a stroke. She made a quick recovery, and returned to Dehradun. Her 90th birthday on August 18, 1990 was celebrated as a major event, with many members of the Nehru clan taking time off to spend the day with her. Arun Nehru, Maneka Gandhi and

Rajiv Gandhi were all there to make it a special family affair. She died on December 1, 1990.

Vijayalakshmi Pandit entered the freedom struggle inspired by Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi and Sarojini Naidu her, pre-independence and post-independence public-life and achievements fully reflected that inspiration and succeeded in passing it onto thousands and thousands of young Indians.

Biana Fernandez
III B.A. History