

Any one can be executed for doing nothing! A shocking revelation about loop holes in Indian judicial system - excerpts from the Report of Amnesty International, 1989.



family party where "inflammatory" songs were heard... and that the two men spent fifteen minutes talking on the roof of Beant Singh's house without telling what was said. The Supreme Court concluded that this was an "exchange of secret information ... to further the prosecution of the

Kehar Singh's alleged role in the conspiracy has become even less clear after parts of the Thakkar Commission report were leaked to the press and published and after other fresh evidence emerged, indicating that others might be involved in or even bear primary re-

## ARE INNOCENT PEOPLE EXECUTED?

**W**hen the Supreme Court acquitted Balbir Singh, the judges observed that the only reason why he was implicated was because he was a Sikh. The three judges said there was no other evidence against him. Yet the New Delhi Sessions Court had sentenced him to death and the Delhi High Court had upheld his conviction, and one probably innocent man would have been executed but for the Supreme Court's timely intervention.

Kehar Singh was, however, executed. The evidence against his was that he was related to and knew Beant Singh - one of the two men who shot and killed Mrs. Gandhi - and frequently visited his house. Further evidence was that both men and their families jointly visited the holy Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple in Amritsar; that Kehar Singh and Beant Singh went to a

conspiracy" and that "these talks go along way in establishing Kehar Singh being a party to the conspiracy". The Court reached this conclusion, even though there was no evidence about the contents of the talks between the two men. Further evidence against him was that, on being told of the Prime Minister's death, he remarked: "Who-soever would take confrontation with the Panth (Sikh religious faith) he would meet the same fate". The Supreme Court concluded this meant Kehar Singh had prior knowledge of the assassination: "This remark shows his guilty mind" the court said. In September 1988 the Supreme Court also rejected Kehar Singh's request to review its judgment.

The nature of Kehar Singh's alleged involvement in the conspiracy - if any- will forever remain open to question...

sponsibility for the conspiracy to kill Mrs. Gandhi. Even before the executions were carried out, the police arrested in November 1988 a man who they said was a key figure in the conspiracy: Atinder Pal Singh. He and three other Sikhs now stand accused in yet another case of conspiracy to kill the late Prime Minister and are being tried inside New Delhi's Tihar Jail. According to press reports, the prosecution's allegation of Kehar Singh's role in the conspiracy had had to be substantially altered in the new case.

When Kehar Singh was executed, many leading Indians, including jurists, administrators and a former Governor, said that they remained totally unconvinced that Kehar Singh had instigated Beant Singh to kill Mrs. Gandhi. V.M. Tarkunde, a former judge of Bombay High Court, said: "The evidence against him

was so meagre that it would not support, as the saying goes, the hanging of even a dog" Another, a former law minister, said that : " The standards of assessing evidence were changed because of the importance of the victim." Some expressed shock at the execution and said that the death sentence should have been commuted....

Sessions judge, Pune, and the sentence was confirmed by the Bombay High Court in 1983. But in July 1984 the Supreme Court acquitted Sarda on the grounds that both the trial court and the High Court had erred in appreciating the evidence linking Sarda to his wife's death. The Supreme Court was particularly critical of the High Court which it said

Bechan Singh.

These and other cases illustrate Amnesty International's concern that, however strict the safeguard in any legal system may be, the possibility that an innocent man or woman is executed can never ruled out.

Amnesty International does not know of studies under-



**Balbir Singh accused of conspiracy to murder Indira Gandhi; Kehar Singh and Satwant Singh accused of conspiracy to murder Indira Gandhi and executed on 6 January 1989**

There are international guidelines aimed at preventing such executions. The United Nation Economic and Social Council adopted a safeguard in May 1984 (ECOSOC) Resolution 1984/50 which states: " Capital punishment may be imposed only when the guilt of the person charged is based upon clear and convincing evidence leaving no room for an alternative explanation of the facts."

There is also risk that innocent people who are political prisoners may be sentenced to death. Sharad Sarda was convicted of murdering his wife Manju in the state of Maharashtra in 1982. He was sentenced to death by the Additional

had committed " a fundamental error of law" and "over looked well defined principles of law"

Another example is the Allahabad High High Court's mistake in a 1951 murder trial (see 1056 I.S.C.R 238) when it signed a judgement sentencing Nauhu Singh to death and acquitting Bechan Singh, whereas, the court had meant to acquit the former and convict the latter. Unable to alter its judgement, the Allahabad High Court requested the state government to order that Nauhu Singh's sentence be remitted. This the sate government did, and promptly released him. Amnesty International does not know what happened to

taken in India to investigate wrongful capital sentencing. Both such studies have been undertaken in other countries, including the United States which, like India, has a highly developed legal system with complex set of legal safeguards designed to prevent miscarriages of justice. A recent research study carried out on the United States by two academics, Hugo Adam Bedan and Michael L. Radelet, found that in 350 cases heard by US courts between 1900 and 1985 the defendants were wrongly convicted of murder and of rape and were sentenced to death. In most cases, the convictions had been upheld on appeal but new evidence emerged later which either

established the innocence of the condemned prisoners or raised substantial doubts about their guilt. They concluded there had been 23 wrongful executions and said that many other cases could not be considered because of insufficient information (Miscarriages of Justice in Potentially Capital Cases, Stanford Law Review, Vol. 40. 1 November 1987). Since 1985, the cut-off date of the research project, at least 9 people sentenced to death were released from US prisons after their guilt had been questioned by the courts.



*Jasbir Kaur, wife of Kehar Singh, after her last visit to her husband before his execution.*

Several Indian commentators have also underlined the fact that innocent men and women may be executed for crimes they did not commit. For example, former Chief Justice Bhagwati, in his judgement in the Bachan Singh case, identified several possible sources of error which could lead to an innocent man being sent to the gallows.

“ In the first place, our method of investigation are crude and archaic. We are, by and large, ignorant of modern methods of investigation base on scientific and technological advances. Our convictions are base largely on (the) oral evidence of witnesses. Often witnesses perjure themselves as they are motivated by caste, communal and factional considerations. Sometimes they are even got up by the police to prove what the police believes to

be a true case. Sometimes there is also mistaken eye-witness identification and this evidence is almost always difficult to shake in cross examination. Then there is also the possibility of a frame-up of innocent men by their enemies. There are also cases where an overzealous prosecutor may fail to disclose evidence of innocence known to him but not known to the defence. The possibility of error in judgement cannot therefore be ruled out on any theoretical considera-

tions. It is indeed a very live possibility and it is not at all unlikely that so long as (the) death penalty remains a constitutionally valid alternative, the court or the State acting through the instrumentality of the court may have on its conscience the blood of an innocent man.”

#### Conditions of condemned prisoners

Prisoners condemned to die are held in solitary confinement and denied basic facilities available to other prisoners. In Delhi's Tihar jail, for example, prisoners in condemned cells are allowed a maximum of half an hour physical exercise a day, often less. Justice Krishna Iyer in his 1978 judgement in the case of Sunil Batra described conditions of these prisoners as follows:





not be kept in prolonged solitary confinement. In Sunil Batra v. Delhi administration, the Supreme Court said:

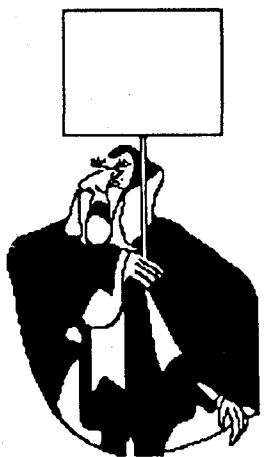
“Even jail dispensation inhibits solitary confinement as a measure of punishment. It completely negatives any suggestion that because a prisoner is under sentence of death, therefore .... the jail authorities can impose upon him (the) additional punishment of solitary confinement.”

“Grim walls glare at him from all sides night and day: his food is inserted into the room and his excretory needs must be fulfilled within the same space. No pillow to rest his restless head, no light inside save the bulb that burns blindly through the night from outside. No human face or voice or view except the warder’s constant compulsory intrusion into the prisoner’s privacy... No exercise except a generous half hour, morning and evening, in a small, walled enclosure .. A few books, yes; newspapers ? no. talk to others ? No ... “

The Supreme Court said that only after all appeals and mercy petitions had been exhausted could convicts under sentences of death be held apart from other prisoners with a constant guard. Even then, the court said, condemned prisoners should be held within sight and sound of other prisoners and be allowed to eat in their company. Nevertheless, many states appear to keep condemned prisoners in prolonged solitary confinement from the time they were first condemned to death by the lower courts. For example, the Supreme Court criticized the Tamil Nadu government in 1983 for holding TV Vatheeswaran for eight years in solitary confinement after he had been sentenced to death, despite its 1978 order that states should not be allowed to do so.

The cells for convicts under sentences of death in the jail are known as “phansi kothi” and measure ten by nine feet; in one corner an open latrine with a tap. The cells have no fans, lights or windows. They have solid cemented roofs and reinforced walls. On the front side is an iron grill and a gate opening into an enclosed yard roofed with an iron grill. Many under sentence of death are kept with their legs chained to their waist to prevent their escape.

Until 1978, condemned prisoners used to be held in death cells immediately after the lower court had sentenced them to death. But in that year, the Supreme Court ruled that this was no longer permissible. The court acknowledged that states had a duty to keep condemned prisoners in safe custody, but said they could



**P**rof. Vijayasimhan can never go out of service where he actually belongs; in the minds of thousands of his students. His capacity for choice words and effective verbal home-thrusts that went right into the hearts of the pupils, and his total dedication to the vocation and to the institution have always set him out as a rare combination of efficiency and sincerity. Prof. Vijayasimhan's flair for language and literature was catching. Here again is a rare combination — the professional's unerring touch with the amateur's sheer enthusiasm — which he has successfully carried into his other vocation of homeopath.

Prof. Vijayasimhan began his career at Edava Muslim High School. He joined Farook College in 1966. He served also as Warden of North East (Vegetarian) Hostel. We wish him well.

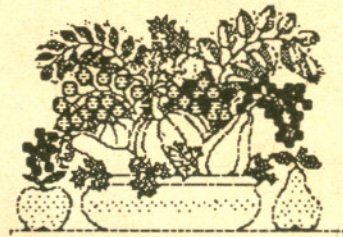


**A** tireless scholar who never retires from academic pursuit, Dr. Syed Khudrathulla has to his credit a string of degrees and distinctions, among them post-graduation in Urdu and Arabic, doctorate, post doctoral experience, M.F. in Persian and many other diplomas and certificates. He has published a few research papers and many articles. Dr. Khudrathulla served at the top of several academic bodies of the University and the government. A fine orator and writer, he retires as Head of the Urdu Department.

Prior to joining the service of Farook College, Dr. Khudrathulla had served as English & Urdu teacher in schools. He joined Farook College in 1970. He has also served as Warden of President's Hostel. We wish him well.



*Au  
revoir*



**Sri. Thayyil Abdurahman Haji** served the College for about 35 years. He joined the non-teaching staff in 1954 and has impressed others with his sincerity and cheerfulness.

Sri. Abdurahman worked in various departments and in the College Office. We wish him well.



The world's steadily increasing number of Islamic banks have billions of dollars on deposit — \$40 billion in the Gulf alone, according to one estimate. Businessmen are being urged to tap the pool to help boost trade between Muslim countries.

Businessmen in the Muslim world have been urged to make better of the tens of billions of dollars in potential investment funds currently held by Islamic banks.

One estimate puts funds at \$40 billion in the Gulf alone, and the financial institutions are "only too keen" to assist businessmen, says a leading Islamic banker.

The Geneva-based DMI, chaired by Prince Mohammed Al-Faisal Al-Saud, son of the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, consists of 24 Islamic banks, investment trading and insurance companies and currently has resources of more than \$2 billion.

The group was set up in 1981 to establish a network of financial, commercial and investment corporation worldwide, but primarily in Islamic world, to operate in accordance with Shari'as banking principles.

It soon found a major international rival, however, when the Al-Baraka Group was established in Jeddah 1982.

At present exports between Islamic countries account for only 9.4 percent of their total trade. The comparable figure for the five-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is 16.8 percent, while in the European Community internal trade accounts

for 58.5 percent of the total.

Most of the 46 member states of the Islamic Conference Organisation have deficits in their balance of trade and face major debt service problems, the exceptions being major oil producers.

Promotions of trade between the economically troubled countries requires extensive incentives to enable an unhindered and increased flow of raw materials and manufactured goods.

Trade between Islamic countries is hindered by lack of adequate information about each others' economies. There is also diversity in development, economic priorities and natural resources.


Communications and infrastructure are often inadequate, and financial arrangements such as an Islamic Export Credit Guarantee Insurance Scheme and a multilateral Islamic Clearing Union are badly needed.

To finance its trade and other investment activities the DMI group has so far mobilised client funds totalling more than \$2 billion. "It is a sizeable amount, if we take into consideration the global recession in recent years which has led to a slowdown in international financial and investment activity," Ali said.

Other Islamic financial institutions have also attracted sizeable funds for investment, and the total mobilised by them is estimated at nearly \$20 billion.

DMI's investment strategy includes rapid expansion in trade finance activity, with the

## ISLAMIC BANK RESOURCES AWAIT BENEFACTORS



*The world is now ready  
to receive Islamic  
Banks, which are based  
on interest-free finance.*

aim of diversifying the group's investment portfolio and increasing income.

At the corporate level, Ali said, DMI trading activities involve identification of potential markets, clients and products, exploring and selecting sources of supply, negotiating prices and providing subsidiaries with information about import requirements and export potential in various countries

To undertake these activities, DMI has set up its own International Trading Company, subsidiaries of which are involved in trade financing operations, mostly on the Islamic Murabaha basis.

Murahaba is a cost-plus transaction under which the client asks the bank to buy a specific commodity and promises to purchase it from the bank with the addition of an agreed surcharge.

Many businessmen say trade finance contracts with Islamic banks are preferable to conventional financial arrangement because the risk-sharing element in Islamic banking works more in their favour.

One DMI subsidiary, Faisal Islamic Bank Bahrain, has pioneered Islamic trade Murabaha syndication and successfully conducted a number of trade and finance transactions for the state-owned rice and cotton export corporations of Pakistan and Turkey, in collaboration with several Islamic and conventional banks.

So far, Islamic Bank has handled trade finance operations totalling \$ 500 million, and more deals are in the pipeline.

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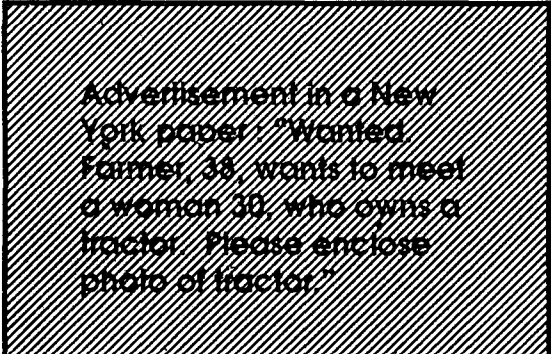
"Many international banks are actively participating in our Islamic trade syndications because of their well-guaranteed, well-packaged, well-structured, self-liquidating and short-term nature," Ali said.

Another subsidiary of DMI, Faisal Finance Institution Turkey, along with Pakistani branches of FIB Bahrain, are financing both local and foreign trade operations and assisting their clients through provision of pre- and post-shipment facilities for exports.

The DMI Group also has strengthened its relationship with the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank through participation in the IDB's Islamic Banks Trade Portfolio Fund and other activities.

Islamic banking has become increasingly popular since the pioneer institution, the Dubai Islamic Bank, was founded in 1975. At first, reactions were mixed, and some economists dismissed the idea of interest-free banking as a passing phenomenon. But the concept quickly spread, and institutions have reported considerable success in several countries, notably Pakistan, which has five major Islamic banks.

India now has an Islamic Financial institution, the Bangalore-based Al-Ameen Islamic Financial and Investment Corporation, which in 1988 was reported planning to open branches nationwide.



Advertisement in a New York paper: "Wanted: Farmer, 38, wants to meet a woman 30, who owns a tractor. Please enclose photo of tractor."

Leading the way in helping national development is the IDB. Owned by the 43 member states of the Islamic Conference Organisation, the bank accepts deposits from governments, institutions and individuals, but lends only to governments of member states.

Upto 1988, nearly 40 countries had benefited through 430 IDB operations worth \$ 4.4 billion, and the bank has shown good profits.

During the last two decades India has witnessed a mushroom growth of Interest free credit societies, especially in towns of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. According to an estimate, they have a turnover of Rs. 200 crores in credits and involve nearly a lakh of depositors. Yet the concept is far from becoming a popular mode of banking as it is yet to acquire official seal of approval.

Though essentially a religious concept, Islamic Banking's social relevance in a poor nation like India cannot be dismissed. Its essence has been extracted from the Quran, the divine scripture of Islam which strictly prohibits the Muslims from carrying out any kind of interest base transactions. It lays down the principle as the cornerstone of Islamic economy, now a fast emerging discipline in several Muslim countries.

The Islamic economists argue that Islam seeks to restore the status of money, i.e. storehouse of value and thereby a means of exchange. Money was only a convenience devised by the Phoenicians to replace the cumbersome procedure of bartering. So merely the possession of money should not bestow on an individual the privilege of gathering fortunes. Rather all individuals in a society should believe in work and effort and generate income with the help of natural resources and entrepreneurship. Money itself is no source of production as mere lending or borrowing of money does not necessarily result in any increase in production. Land is productive on its own and same is true for the labour. So it is legitimate to get rent and wages against them. Entrepreneurship may succeed or fail in being productive and may result in profits and losses. The capital is itself

There was an old man from Peru,  
Who dreamed he was eating his shoe.  
He awoke in the night  
In a terrible fright -  
And found it was perfectly true !

There once was a fellow named Sydney,  
Who drank till he injured a kidney,  
It shrivelled and shrank,  
But he drank and drank -  
Well, he had his fun doing it, didn't he?

the end product, result, reward or income, hence does not deserve any income or reward.

The Islamic banking which took roots in several countries like Pakistan and Iran has evolved a pattern whereby depositors put their money into Profit and Loss Sharing Accounts (PLS accounts). In business partnership too, the Islamic banking offers two types of financial contracts (i) Shirkah (partnership) (ii) Mudarabah (agency relationship).

**Karan D.**

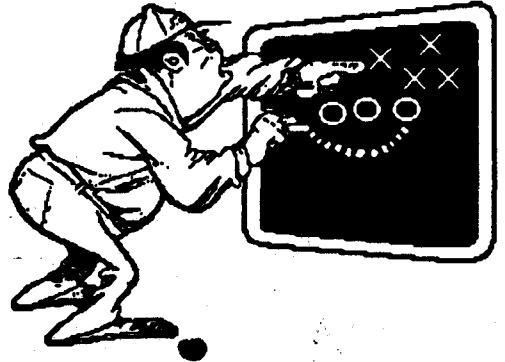
(Courtesy : Compass News London)



## LETTER FROM MR. ALGEBRA TO MRS. TRIGONOMETRY

Algebra,  
Binomial House,  
Divergent Street,  
Maths Nagar.

TO  
Mrs. Trigonometry  
Calculus Street,  
Mechanic Row,  
Maths Nagar.



My Dear Trigonometry,

With due calculations I am asking your opinion about the marriage of my Son, Mr. Zero with your daughter, Miss Infinity. Mr. Statistics and Mr. Calculus are of an identical opinion. They say that their stars promise a happy combination. You know their love is unparalleled and any interception in their marriage plans would wreak havoc & disaster.

It is a proof that any digit upon zero is equal to infinity and any digit upon infinity is zero. It is also true that neither of them possesses a weakness. My son Zero is a good and promising lad who is emulated by many students in their examinations. He is a person of such immense will power that in spite of his multiplication & division, he will yield only himself. As regards your daughter Infinity, her beauty knows no end. Intellectual brains have been baffled by the never ending beauty. I think the match will be a good one.

Will you please consult your formulae & log tables for a suitable day for the Ceremony? Please do consult your esteemed sisters, Mrs. Solid Geometry & Mrs. Co-ordinate Geometry.

Thanking you in Anticipation.

Yours Correctly,

*Algebra*

Shabnam Sulthana  
(I BA ENGLISH)

# *Life on other planets*

The biological study of the possibility of life on the other worlds is called Exobiology. The only life we know of at present, is the kind that exists on earth. This life includes bacteria and protozoa which are invisible to the naked eyes. Hence million species of insects, giant sequia trees and whales and finally man himself.

The bodies of all these elements are composed of chemical elements such as carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus and others. Outer space contains variety of matters whose sizes are ranging (in size) from sub atomic particles to cosmic dust and larger bodies. But by earth standards, outer space is vacuum. Its average density is very low, perhaps as low as one molecule per cubic

centimeter. But the atmosphere of the earth is millions of times denser than the space.

Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun. Its diameter is only half that of the earth. But it has many earth-like features. So these led the astronomers to believe that Mars could support life; some even thought human beings lived in Mars. But these ideas have changed after unmanned spacecrafts flew past Mars and sent information back to earth. They revealed that Mars is a cold, dry world more like moon than the earth. The density of the atmosphere of Mars is incredibly low. Once water might have covered large parts of the surface of Mars. The planet's polar caps are now known to be composed of frozen water. The soil samples taken by

**NAKUL**

the Viking probes yielded water upon heating. The average surface temperature of Mars is about 22°C, which is lower than that of the earth at the Martian equator. The temperature may reach 24°C during the day and at night it may drop down to -73°C. These conditions make Mars unsuitable for life as we know it. But exobiologists think that some form of life may exist there. This possibility is supported by several factors. Exobiologists also base expectations of Martian life on certain laboratory experiments. They have subjected to bacteria, algae, molds and lichens and insects to artificial Martian movements. A surprising number of organisms have survived. Certain bacteria and molds lived well under the harsh conditions as long as water was present. But exobiologists consider such experiments with caution. It is not possible to duplicate Martian conditions accurately because we know about them so little and our techniques are still limited. We don't know whether oxygen and water are in sufficient quantities on Mars to support earth type life. Perhaps we may come to know about it later.

### **Outer Space Civilization:**

It would indeed be a triumph to find any sort of life on another planet. It would be more exciting to find intelligent life. The

idea of having communications with the creatures on other planets arose when man first realised that the planets are very remote in space. Early telescopic astronomers did not know much about the outer planets. So they thought that these planets were occupied with intelligent beings and they might wish to have communication with us, once they found out that the earth too had some intelligent life.

Schemes of inter-planetary communication were proposed from time to time with the advent of radio-communications at the end of 19th century. The idea of sending electro-magnetic messages or signals to other planets gained ground. During 1920's signals were sent into space, but no reply was received. The operators received some signals which are due to faulty machines. Hence we are forced to conclude that since many stars and their planets are millions or thousands of millions of light-years from the earth, obviously it is not possible to have two way communication with any intelligent beings on the outer planets.

The star nearest to our solar system, ALPHA CENTAURI, is 4.4 light years from us. If we send a radio message to this star it will take 4 years to reach it. The answer will take the same time to reach us.

Thus it requires 8 years for a single message exchange. So the two way communication is impracticable. Scientists, however, have not given up the hope. A study named "PROJECT CYCLOPS" was undertaken by "Ames Research Centre at NASA and by the Stanford University. The purpose of the study was to determine the possibilities of receiving messages from outer space. The radio telescope of this project can detect radio and microwave techniques from

planetary civilisations as much as 100 light years from the earth. Leakages result when some of the waves used for radio, T.V. and radar escape into outer space. This leakage may travel many light-years.

Similar waves escape from the earth daily. It is possible that some distant civilization is even now turning in the earth's electronic leakage. Whether life is intelligent or not on other planets remains to be seen !

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Unhealthy practices are rampant in the sphere of medicine manufacture and distribution. In their pursuit of profit, the medicine manufacturers undermine the very purpose of medicines- viz, to help prevent disease or cure it. Sometimes, they have rather a pernicious effect.

Production of drugs is no longer for the preservation of life or prevention and cure of disease but minting of money. So, unwanted and sometimes harmful medicines are produced and sold in large quantities. These are sold with enticing publicity extravaganzas. Consumption of these medicines may cause new diseases for which new medicines are required. Thus, man is caught in a vicious circle.

Whenever a medicine is found harmful, the powers that be are compelled to ban it. There are occasions when the powerful drug producing lobby manages to revoke such a ban or continues the sale despite the ban by changing the brand names or some such clandestine methods. The case of EP drugs is an example. Recently, these drugs were banned in India. Seeing that these drugs for pregnant women cause serious impairments to the newborn children, the Western countries had banned them long back. Following suit, India had also banned them as early as July 1983. But the powerful lobby of drug manufacturers had managed to obtain the support of some 'experts' and with the latter's help, they have succeeded in getting the ban revoked. Thus those hazardous drugs- Menstrogen and EP Forte etc.,- were used by unsuspecting pregnant women in India.

## MEDICINES TO

# KILL

*Jayan*



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**T**he unholy nexus between drug producer's lobby and the authorities has made medical treatment a sort of trading in lives.

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Voluntary Health Association of India, All India Drug Action Network and some consumer Organisation continued their protests against these drugs and finally the Government was goaded into banning it. Ultimately, in June 1988, they were banned in India. Even after the belated ban, such drugs were freely available in the market. They continued to be prescribed too.

The ban order was signed on 15 June, 1988. But they were given to newspapers for publicity only on June 30, 1988. All India Radio and Doordarshan hadn't given adequate publicity of the ban. And in between the actual ban and its publicising the producers could sell out all their stocks. Smelling the ban, they had exhausted all their remaining potentiality of producing those medicines by working over time. Large quantities of these drugs arrived at the market and sales continued till the newspapers published the photostat of the bill for the ban of EP drugs. The question was raised in the Rajya Sabha too. The Government admitted the sale of banned drugs and took shelter behind the claim that it was the old stock which was sold. Significantly, nothing was mentioned regarding the old stock of those banned drugs in the ban order. This shows the callousness of the Government in such matters. The Government was playing into the hands of the drug-producers' lobby. It was playing with the lives of the people.

There are several other harmful medicines which are widely used in the third world countries even after they were banned in the developed part of the world. Analgin and Entero-

quinol are some of them. Analgin containing tablets are produced and sold here as panacea for all diseases from headache to cancer. Enteroquinol is widely used here for stomach problems. Experiments have clearly proved that analgin causes fatal ailments like Agranulocytosis which affects the white corpuscles of blood. Some pain killers such as Phenacetin, Amidopyrene etc., are also harmful for the blood.

Enteroquinol has a destructive effect on the nervous system. During the Seventies thousands in Japan suffered from a serious disease called "Smone". Studies revealed that 'Smone' was the after-effect of the use of Enteroquinol - producing company Ciba - had to give crores of dollars as compensation to the 'Smone' patients. Consequently, Japan and the Western countries stopped the usage of Enteroquinol entirely. But the use of Enteroquinol is still prevalent in India.

The commission headed by Mr. Jai Sukhlal Hathi said in its Report that more than 70% of the 15000 brandnames sold in India were unnecessary medicines such as Tonics, Syrups, Vitamin tablets etc. The report, submitted in 1975, suggested the usage of chemical names of medicines instead of brand names.

Besides, the Hathi Commission had advised the Government to publish a list of about 200 medicines which can be used for nearly all diseases. The Hathi Commission report was hailed by almost all countries and the World Health Organisation (WHO). But the Indian Government showed no interest in Hathi's report. The WHO prepared a list of 258 medicines as sufficient for the treatment for 90% of the diseases prevalent in the world. That was in 1977. Following suit, even Bangladesh, a comparatively less advanced State than India, made a revolution-

ary reduction in its medicine list. Countries like Nicaragua and Mozambique also heeded the advice of the WHO.

At last, India too was compelled to do something in this regard. In 1980, the Central Government appointed a Consultative Committee to study the hazardous effects of about 32 medicines. Consequently, more than 22 drugs were banned in India in July 1983. Those included the EP drugs whose ban was revoked as stated earlier. But other brand names using the same chemical compounds of the banned drugs continued coming out without any hindrance. There are thousands of such brand names. The Government did nothing to bring them under the ban. To make matters worse, it gave a six month time for the banned drugs to clear their stocks.

Against this nexus between the drug producers' lobby and the powers-that-be, a public interest litigation came for hearing in Kerala High Court. In his remarkable verdict, Justice Subramanyam Potty said, "The Government should publish a list of the brand names of these banned drugs.... It seems that the Government stood in favour of the drug companies and against the people". But the Government did nothing worthwhile to reduce the menace of harmful drugs.

While the Indian medicine markets are filled with unnecessary medicines and costly tonics, the supply of inevitable drugs for diseases such as TB, Leprosy, Malaria, Scabies etc., is pathetically inadequate. India has the dubious distinction of having half of the TB patients of the world. But the anti-TB drugs produced here can cater to the needs of only 1/3rd of the total one crore TB patients in India. Similarly, the anti-

*Lady Nancy Astor once got annoyed with Winston Churchill. 'Winston', she said sharply, 'if you were my husband I would put poison in your coffee.'*

*Nancy', replied Churchill, 'if I were your husband I would drink that coffee.'*





leprosy drugs produced here can meet the needs of only 20 per cent of the leprosy patients in India. The rest, there are nearly 30 lakh of them in India, are left with no other option but suffer the pain without medicine. Annually 40000 children in India go blind owing to Vitamin A deficiency. Apparently, our drug manufacturers are not interested in producing these drugs, because they do not earn them huge profits.

A large chunk of the medical industry is owned and operated by huge multi-national monopolies like Organon, a Dutch multi-national whose Indian subsidiary is In-far, Sandoz(Swiss), Carley Erba(Italy), Hoechst(German), etc. It is rather absurd to expect these multinationals to care for the health of us Indians.

The selling tactics of these multinationals are deceitful and irrational. They sell their products in different countries on different claims. Take, for instance, Orabolin and Dwabolin of Organon company. These medicines that contain anabolic steroid as common ingredients are sold in India as a remedy to nutrient deficiency. But anabolic steroid is used only rarely in the western countries for some uncommon blood diseases, that too with a strict warning that it should not be given to children. But when it reaches Pakistan, it becomes 'particularly beneficial to children'. The western countries prohibit usage of this

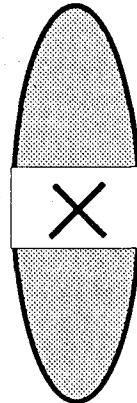
medicine by children as it is detrimental to growth. It can also cause maladies such as boyish traits in girls and impairment of testicles in boys.

Horlicks is sold in western countries as an avenue for pleasant sleep, whereas it is sold in India and other third world countries 'for energy through out the day'. The tablets which the Swiss Sandoz sells in Europe as 'anti-migraine pills' reach Pakistan with an entirely different mission. They are sold there as appetisers and fattening agents. The sweet-coated strong antibiotics of Carley Erba are sold in Peru as 'Sweet-treatment for dysentery'. There are several such cases of the same medicine being sold in different parts of the world for different purposes.

**Classified Ad :  
'Dr. Macolm  
Ericson, psy-  
chiatrist. Posi-  
tive cure in two  
years or your  
mania back.'**

There is also the menace of spurious drugs. The sub-standard or misbranded drugs and drugs which contain prohibited colouring agents and other prohibited contents are coming out and cause serious damage to the consuming patients. It is said that the death of the Rajya Sabha member Vasudeva Panicker a year ago was caused by spurious drugs. He was a TB patient and used to take Streptomysin injection. On the fateful day, i.e. May 2, 1988, his condition worsened after the injection and

he died one hour later at the Jayaprakash Narayan Hospital.



Several people have become victims of such spurious drugs. A woman of Calcutta was advised operation for persistent stomach pain. When operated the doctors found more than a hundred partially ground tablets in her stomach. These tablets remained in the stomach undigested because of their spurious quality.

Lack of social perspective is the root cause of all these problems. According to the WHO, the health of man is based on physical, mental and social security. A majority of the diseases are caused by nutrient deficiency. In India, where more than 30 per cent of the population live without proper food, people are more susceptible to diseases.

Only 15 per cent of the people here get sufficient food (2400 Kcal. calories daily). To make matters worse a majority of Indians do not get pure drinking water.



Thus India has become a goldmine for the multinational drug manufacturers. For the diseases caused by protein deficiencies the multinationals provide tonics. How effective are these tonics?

Medicine is now big business. It thrives on the diseases which mostly are caused by shortage of nutritious food. Health departments may provide medicine for the ailing, but can tonics be a substitute for clean drinking water and capsules for food?





*The Editor speaks*

*(Let Him!)*

*The teacher asked: "Who is a student?"*

*The student yawned and mumbled something. The teacher answered his own question: "A student is one who talks in his sleep".*

*Up came another student. "Who is a teacher, Sir?" As the teacher stood blinking, he supplied the answer: "A teacher is one who talks in others' sleep."*

*No tall talk, this. Nor talking through one's hat. One feels like a talker on whom the mike-operator has not walked out yet. Or like a walker of the sky when a new shoe fits into his foot. The editor's shoe, to wit.*

*It is all too easy to produce a Magazine.*

*As easy as sticking a few wall posters that stare at the unwary pedestrian round every tricky corner.*

*As easy as sitting across other's path and shouting a few choice slogans.*

*Here's the procedure. Take a few pens and a few papers. Scribble some high sounding trivialities and, to the accompaniment of black music or, if you prefer that, some ju-jitsu movement of the fists, chant those charms at a hundred decibels. After the third incantation open your fists out and, presto! there lands your long-awaited little sheet!*

*Quite easy, may be, but a miracle for sure!*

*Remember the old joke about the train being on time - because it is one day late? Here is our magazine, six months too early or a mere half - year too late.*

*A miracle, nonetheless. Because it is a burden the majority places on a minority - often a minority of one. The Magazine Editor is paid a small fare and is then let loose on a solitary trail to bring*

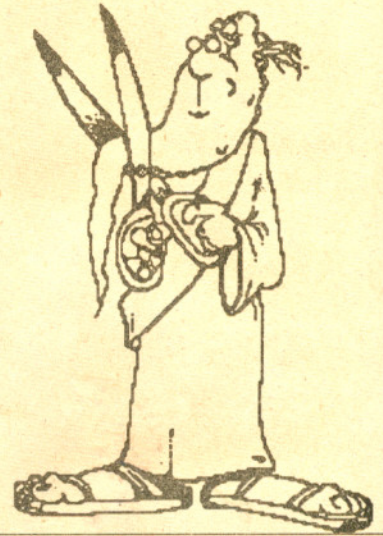


back - without Aladdin's lamp to help him, mind you - the magazine. And the miracle is that very often the miracle happens.

But not necessarily always. Once in a while he finds the going tough. Never since Winston Churchill has so much been owed by so many to so few - as you owe a magazine editor for what he gives you. It could have squeezed his future dry, and left him alone to fend for himself. While trying to thread together these papers that you may never read, he could have managed to loosen off his own career.

That is why this magazine looks so trim - it has taken all the trimness out of him!

There is nothing left for us, except dedicate this effort to all the young editors who dare; and to ask you to bear with us for all that should have been done but hasn't, and all that shouldn't have been done but has.



ക്ഷമാപണം

ആയിരത്തിത്തൊള്ളായിരത്തി  
 എൺപത്തൊമ്പതിൽ  
 ഇറങ്ങേണ്ടിയിരുന്ന  
 മാസസിൻ ഇത്രയും  
 വൈകിപ്പോയിതിന്



നന്ദി

കമ്പോസിംഗും ലേ ഔട്ടും  
 ഭംഗിയായി ചെയ്തുതന്ന  
 ബിന്ത് ആൻറ് ബേസ്സ്  
 കംപ്യൂഗ്രാഫിക്സിലെ  
 പ്രവർത്തകരായ  
 പൂർവവിദ്യാർത്ഥികൾക്ക്

വേഗത്തിൽ അച്ചടിച്ചു തന്ന  
 രോഷ്നി പ്രസിന്ത്  
 തുടക്കം മുതൽ ഒടുക്കം വരെ  
 സഹായിച്ച വിദ്യാർത്ഥികൾക്കും  
 പൂർവവിദ്യാർത്ഥികൾക്കും  
 അധ്യാപകർക്കും