

PARTICIPANT'S LIST

BANGLADESH

Inam Ahmed

Inam Ahmed has been working as In-charge of the Business Page in The Daily Star since 1991. He has received his Masters degree in Communications Studies from the University of Leeds, UK. He is the Dhaka correspondent of the US based news agency United Press International (UPI) and prepares news for the wire service and also for UPI online service 'Virtual New York'. Mr. Ahmed writes on development and environmental issues for both national and international media.

Naeem Mohaiemen

Naeem Mohaiemen works with text, video, print and archives to explore historical markers. His research areas include failed revolutionary movements, globally interlinked national security panic, and the slippage between utopia and dystopia. Naeem writes the chapter on religious and ethnic minorities in the Ain Salish Kendro Annual Human Rights report (askbd.org), as well as blogs on various topics (drishtipat.org/blog). Working between two countries (USA & Bangladesh), this work delineates the contradictions between Bengalis in marginal migrant status in Northern countries, and majoritarian (and authoritarian) status inside Bangladesh. As part of this work, "Muslims or Heretics: My Camera Can Lie" was screened for an ancillary meeting of European Human Rights Commission at the UK House of Lords.

Zafar Sobhan

Zafar Sobhan is currently the editor of Forum, a monthly political magazine, and opinions editor of The Daily Star, Bangladesh's biggest English language daily. He also writes a weekly column for The Daily Star and has to his name numerous articles, features, interviews, book chapters, and essays in publications such as Himal, Economic & Political Weekly, Outlook, The Tribune, Emirates Evening Post, and others. Prior to taking up his current position, Mr. Sobhan worked as a public school teacher in the Bronx and a corporate attorney in mid-town Manhattan. He is a licensed New York City public school teacher and a member of the New York State bar. Mr. Sobhan has a B.A. and M.A. in English literature and a J.D. in law. In addition to his work in media, Mr. Sobhan is also involved with a number of organizations aimed at engaging young people on political, social, and civic issues, and helping them find a voice. Mr. Sobhan was selected as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2005 and is a delegate to the Asia21 Young Leaders Summit in Tokyo this year.

BHUTAN

Siok Sian Pek-Dorji

Siok Sian Pek-Dorji as a print and broadcast journalist, and then as an independent writer and consultant, Siok Sian Pek-Dorji has worked closely with governments, NGOs, the UN system, development agencies, and corporate and private organizations. She has been involved in projects related to the media, culture, women and children, youth and other social

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issues. In a career spanning 20 years, she has prepared country reports, conducted project reviews, educational campaigns and media trainings, carried out research and analysis, and produced documentary films, and news/feature articles.

She started the Centre for Media and Democracy that focuses on research and building discourse to create a culture for democracy. The Centre recently conducted a creative non-fiction writing workshop – the first to be conducted in Bhutan. She also created Mediacom Bhutan, a company specializing in media and communications consultancy, research, publications and film.

She has been a journalist, a media trainer, a documentary film maker as well as done consultancies for government and non-government media organisations. She is a graduate in Communication from Charles Sturt University and post-graduate in International Communications from Macquarie University, both in Australia.

MALDIVES

Mariyam Suhana

Ms. Mariyam Suhana is the Deputy Managing Editor of Miadhu Daily, a leading newspaper from Maldives.

NEPAL

Prateek Pradhan

Prateek Pradhan is the Editor-in-Chief, The Kathmandu Post. He has also held the position of Deputy Editor, The Kathmandu Post. He has hosted a business talk show on Kantipur Television and worked as Economic Bureau Chief and various other positions with The Kathmandu Post. He holds a Master's in Journalism and Mass Communication from New York University, USA.

He was member of Member of High Level Media Commission formed by the democratic government for media reform, formed after restoration of democracy in April 2006; Member, Committee to draft rules and regulations as per Working Journalists' Act (government-formed task force, 2007); Member, Press Council Nepal; General Secretary, South Asia Press Commission; Member, Asia News Network; Member, South Asian Free Media Association; Founding President of Society of Economic Journalists, Nepal; Executive Member, Fulbright Alumni Association; and Coordinating Editor of Samhita, a quarterly journal on press ethics from Press Council Nepal. He has also attended several training programmes and traveled to India as well as other countries. He has authored several papers and books on issues related to development and media.

Narayan Wagle

Narayan Wagle recently quit as the Editor of *Kantipur*, Nepal's largest selling national daily to realise a dream of launching a better newspaper. He along with a group of senior editors along with of *The Kathmandu Post*, sister publication of the house, helped set up a new media house Dhumbarahi Media Pvt Ltd to bring out two dailies *Dainikee* in Nepali under his editorship and *Republica* in English.

Joined as a reporter in *Kantipur* in 1991, he has covered everything from business to politics, tourism to mountaineering, arts to international affairs. He became chief reporter, rose to the

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position of news editor and finally appointed as the editor of the leading daily in 2003 after the beginning of the Royal regression. He travelled the country extensively before and after of the Maoists' armed movement.

He led the newspaper during the much difficult period of military censorship and Maoists militants' pressure. He was detained, summoned and threatened by the authorities because of the newspaper's very strong editorial line advocating free press, democracy, human rights and rule of law during the King's days.

He wrote a novel *Palpasa Cafe* based on the stories of the people during the Maoists movement, winning Nepal's best known literary award *Madan Puraskar* in 2005. Translated and published in English also from Kathmandu, the Nepali edition has set a record of highest selling literary work in the country.

Prem Khanal

Mr. Prem Khanal "is chief of the business bureau at the Kathmandu Post, where he has published more than 250 articles on politics, business, corruption, and economic reform in Nepal. An economist by training, he previously served as research officer for the Institute for Development Studies, in Kathmandu. He has authored two books, *An Analysis of Public Expenditure in Nepal* (2005) and *A Study on Government Plans, Programs, Budget Affecting Children in Nepal* (2002), and has co-authored *Problems and Prospects of Reforms in Nepal* (2003). He recently completed a study on "Financing Education in Nepal" for Action Aid International. In 2004, his numerous expository pieces on corruption and the misuse of public funds earned him an Outstanding Performance Award from Kantipur Publications, the largest media firm based in Kathmandu.

PAKISTAN

Agha Nasir

Agha Nasir is an eminent personality of literature, art, culture & media in Pakistan. He did his Post-graduation in History from Sindh. All his life he remained associated with the electronic media and held number of prestigious positions e.g. Managing Director PTV, Director General PBC, MD NAFDEC, Director General PNCA and Chief Executive of the Shalimar Recording & Broadcasting Company (STN).

He is a recipient of the President's Pride of Performance Award in recognition to his meritorious services in the field of broadcasting and culture. His name has also been included in the International Directory of International Leadership WHO's WHO in the World. In addition, he has many more awards for writing & production of radio and TV programmes to his credit.

Presently associated with GEO – TV

Rehana Hakim

Ms Rehana Hakim is editor/ publisher of *Newslines*, a newsmagazine owned and run by a journalists cooperative based in Karachi, Pakistan. Ms. Hakim is also a member of the South Asian Media Commission (SAMC) and President of the South Asian Women's Media Network (SAWM) – Pakistan Chapter.

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Rahimullah Yusufzai

Mr Rahimullah Yusufzai is resident editor of the English daily, The News International, in Peshawar. He is also a correspondent for the BBC radio and the TV channel, ABC News, in the US. He has been contributing articles for the last several years to Time magazine, Newline Karachi, Gulf News in the UAE, Outlook in India, and to publications in South Korea, Japan, Portugal, Germany, etc.

He has reported extensively on Afghanistan, the NWFP and Balochistan, and Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). In the past he was associated with the Institute of Regional Studies in Islamabad and with the Islamabad-based English daily The Muslim, which has closed down.

Mr Yusufzai served as President of Khyber Union of Journalists and is presently President of the NWFP chapter of South Asia Free Media Association (SAFMA). He is on the board of directors of a number of social and professional, non-government organizations.

SRI LANKA

Nalaka Gunawardene

Nalaka Gunawardene is Director and CEO of TVE Asia Pacific (TVEAP, www.tveap.org), a regional media foundation that specialises in communicating sustainable development and social justice issues through television, video and the web. He works with producers and film-makers from across Asia, creating and distributing editorially independent factual content to broadcast, educational and civil society users in the world's largest region.

Trained as a science writer and development journalist, Nalaka counts 20 years of experience in communication, initially in the mainstream media and later in the development sector. He is a trustee of the Science and Development Network (UK) and a Board member of Panos South Asia.

Sinha Ratnatunga

Mr. Sinha Ratnatunga is the Editor-in-chief of The Sunday Times, Colombo, President of The Editors' Guild of Sri Lanka, Director of the Sri Lanka Press Institute, Director of the Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka, Director of the Sri Lanka College of Journalism, Board Member, World Association of Newspapers (WAN). He is also an Attorney-at-Law.

Ranga Kalansooriya

Presently, the Director General of Sri Lanka Press Institute.

A journalist from Sri Lanka with wide experience on reporting the country's conflict to local and international media for over 17 years. Reading for his Ph. D on reporting ethnicity and political violence in vernacular press. Reuter Fellow, Green College, Oxford University, United Kingdom. Published a research paper at Oxford on Terrorism and Peace Negotiations [Case studies, Northern Ireland and Sri Lankan peace processes]. Master Degree in Information Management, with International Political Economy as Co-course, Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. Bachelor of Science (Mathematics), The Open University of Sri Lanka. Masters Research project on 'e-fying terrorism' at Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Author of the publication 'LTTE and IRA – Combating Terrorism and Discussing Peace.' Former spokesman to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka. Former Counsellor (Information),

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Sri Lanka High Commission, Kuala Lumpur. Visiting Lecturer, Journalism and Mass Communication Department, Sri Jayawardhanapura University and Visiting Lecturer, Journalism Department, Colombo University. Diploma in News Agency Journalism, Indian Institute of Mass Communications, New Delhi. Reuters Training on International News Writing, Reuters Headquarters, London and UN training on Reporting UN and International Affairs, UN Headquarters, New York.

Special interest in Terrorism and Political Violence, media studies and globalization. Presented papers in international conferences in Malaysia, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, China, Indonesia, Turkey and Nepal on those issues.

Manjula Fernando

Presently Associate News Editor – Daily News (Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd.) and Editor in charge – Daily News News Alert Service. 14 years of experience in journalism including being Assistant News Editor and Deputy News Editor.

INDIA

Aditi Phadnis Mehta

Aditi Phadnis Mehta is Political Editor at the New Delhi-based premier financial newspaper, Business Standard. She is responsible for coordinating all the political coverage for the business paper. Mehta came to Business Standard in 2000 from weekly newsmagazine 'Sunday', a racy, well-written periodical. Before that she was with The Independent, The Indian Post and Newstime, all dailies. She began her career in journalism in 1983.

Ajit Kumar Bhattacharjea

Ajit Kumar Bhattacharjea, a Fellow, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla is Adviser, Centre for Media Studies, New Delhi. He is also member of the Governing Body, National Media Centre and the Governing Body, Charkha.

He has been the Director, Press Institute of India; Editorial Adviser, Deccan Herald Bangalore; Editorial Adviser, The Democrat, Nigeria; Editor, Indian Express; Resident Editor, Times of India, Bombay and Editor, Hindustan Times. Mr. Bhattacharjea was UN and US Correspondent for Hindustan Times, Washington. Mr. Bhattacharjea has authored and edited books including a book on political biography of Jayaprakash Narayan.

Aniruddha Bahal

Aniruddha Bahal is the founder and editor-in-chief of Cobrapost.com, an Indian news and views website and television production house. He is also the co-founder and former CEO of Tehelka.com, the news website famous for Operation Westend, which uncovered widespread corruption in defence procurement in India. Bahal was one of the reporters who broke that story and is equally famous for his exposure of match-fixing in international cricket. More recently he headed Operation Duryodhana, an investigation into Indian Parliamentarians taking cash for asking questions in the Indian parliament. Cobrapost produces several investigative shows for different television channels in India. Bahal has also worked for *India Today*, *Down to Earth*, *Financial Express*, and *Outlook*, among other publications. Bahal is also a novelist. His last book Bunker 13, published in 2003 won international acclaim.

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Aroon Tikekar

Dr. Aroon Tikekar represents the third generation of a renowned family of litterateurs and journalists. Dr. Tikekar held numerous positions which include those of Literature and Language Expert and Acquisitions Specialist in the U. S. Library of Congress office, South Asia Division, New Delhi; Reference Chief, The Times of India, Sr. Asst. Editor, *Maharashtra Times*, and the TOI Archival Research Chief, where he was given the responsibility of writing the official history of the 150 years old newspaper: *The Times of India*. In 1991, he became the Editor *Loksatta*, a Marathi newspaper of the Indian Express Group of Newspapers, and held that position for over of a decade (1991 to 2002). He contributed several columns to the *Loksatta* on a variety of subjects, most of which are collected in award-winning books: *Samaaj-Spandane*, *Taratamya* (5 vols), *Jana-Mana*, *Sthala-Kaal*, *Aswastha Maharashtra* (2vols), *Kaalmeemansaa* and *Saramsha*. He is a bilingual and his books number over 20 in Marathi as well as in English. As a public speaker, he has toured extensively all over Maharashtra and outside. He has delivered many memorial lectures some of which are published. After retirement from *Loksatta* he was Group Editor of *Lokmat* and then Editor-Director of the *Sakal* Group of Newspapers. He was also Adjunct Professor, in the Dept of Journalism, University of Pune, as well as at the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Contemporary Studies, University of Mumbai. Presently, he is President of the Asiatic Society of Mumbai, which was established as early as in 1804.

C. Gouridasan Nair

C. Gouridasan Nair is a prolific writer on Left politics, development issues in Kerala. He is the President of Media Awareness for Cultural Transformation (MEDIACT), Thiruvananthapuram. He is also former Vice-Chairman, Kerala Press Academy, Government of Kerala, former President, Kerala Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ).

Ethel Dacosta

Ethel Dacosta is an acknowledged lifestyle journalist, columnist, writer, media and entertainment professional, public-relations expert and concept consultant. She is also a music, fashion and art aficionado by passion, born and raised in Kuwait and currently based in Goa, India. She has worked with some high profile projects like the International Film Festival of India (IFFI, Head of Media/PR), Cinema for Peace (Consultant, Berlin), Femina (Regional Copy Editor), WOMAD (Consultant, Goa), besides serving as Editor of various leading publications and projects in the hotel, travel, real estate, entertainment and other industries over the last 15 years. Her book of Poetry *EVE'S REVENGE: STORIES OF NEMESIS* is released recently.

Gerson da Cunha

Gerson da Cunha took a Science degree at the University of Bombay and then worked five years in Reuters/Press Trust of India, Bombay, as reporter, feature writer, sub-editor and correspondent.

He spent the next 25 years in marketing and advertising, including ten as head of Lintas, a major advertising agency. After a stint in Brazil at the University of Sao Paulo on a study grant, he worked ten years in the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Latin

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America and New York. While in Lintas, he functioned in honorary capacities as advisor in the Indian ministries of civil aviation and tourism, health and family welfare and information and broadcasting.

This and his experience in marketing he took into UNICEF and now brings to voluntary work in his home city of Bombay. Here he is deeply involved in citizen mobilization for better urban governance. He is a trustee of CRY (Child Relief and You) and Akanksha, organizations working for underprivileged children in India.

Gerson da Cunha has been actively involved in the theatre from university days as actor and, to a lesser extent, as director. He featured in Alyque Padamsee's recent production of Begum Samroo by Partap Sharma. He has acted in film and TV, most recently in Merchant Ivory's Cotton Mary.

He is a columnist and writer in the Indian press and speaker on development and communication subjects. The work printed in So Far has been written over a number of years, including those that took him to Latin America and Africa and on travels all over India, especially Goa, his home state.

He lives in Bombay with his wife Uma, who is a film writer and festival programmer.

Ishwar Daitota

Ishwar Daitota is presently Editor of Times of India- Kannada. Well-known TV Anchor and Visiting Professor to various Universities and Media Institutions on Media, Culture and Development. He was Editor of Udayavani, Manipal (7 years) Founder Chief Editor of Multi-edition Vijay Karnataka Daily (2 years) and Chief Editor of Samyukta Karnataka (2 years) based in Bangalore. He was also a News Presenter and Current Event Anchor in Doordarshan for 8 years. He has accompanied 3 PMs of India (late Rajiv Gandhi, VP Singh and PV Narasimha Rao) to Sweden, USSR and Brazil during their official visits as member of Media team in 1988, 1991 and 1992. He is a collector of Pens and has nearly 15,000 pens in his collection and BBC, Voice of America, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, DD, ETV, ANI have covered his works in their special programs.

Jamshed Mistry

Jamshed Mistry is a Commerce Graduate of the University of Mumbai. He completed his LL.B. Degree Course from the Government Law College in the year 1996. He obtained his DLL (Diploma in Labour Law) from Ambedkar College. He is practicing as a counsel in the High Courts and the Supreme Court of India. He has appeared as a Counsel in several public sector and private sector undertaking such as Reserve Bank of India, BEST, etc. He is currently the Senior Counsel of the Central Govt. Panel for Advocates of the High Court of Bombay

In Goa he has appeared in several Public Interest Litigations including on City of Panaji Corporation Act, Setting up of zones for beach safety, Disability Rights and Goa action plan. He regularly appears in the Supreme Court and at present is appearing in matters relating to Setting up of separate hawking and non hawking zones for the city of Mumbai and International adoption matters.

He has been appearing in commercial and *probono* litigations in the High Court and Supreme Court. He is currently appointed in the Legal Committee of the Goa Chamber Of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), JN Pettit Library (one of the oldest in Asia), the sub group of Planning Commission for suggesting review of disability legislation in India. He has also argued for the rights of PIO (Card)

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Mausumi Bhattacharyya

Mausumi Bhattacharyya is a Lecturer in Journalism & Mass Communication in Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan, West Bengal. She is a PhD Scholar of the University of Calcutta, Kolkata. She is also a Guest Faculty of the St Xavier's College, Kolkata. She has participated in organising seminars, workshops and training programs with several media research based national and international organizations and has been anchoring for Doordarshan Kendra, Santiniketan and AIR

Nandini Sahai

Nandini Sahai is presently the Director, Media Information and Communication Centre of India (MICCI).

She has been the Country Manager, AMIC (Asian Media Information and Communication Centre) India; Associate Editor for 10 years of *Vidura* (a quarterly journal of Press Institute of India dealing with Media and Communications issues) , and *Grassroots* (a monthly newspaper of Press Institute of India on Development issues). Work involved writing, editing, identifying themes/issues, commissioning articles from senior journalists /subject specialists, finalizing layout and design; and Assistant Editor, *Swagat and South Asia Travel Review*) Assistant Editor, *Himachal Times*, Editorial Assistant, *Depth News India*, brought out by Press Institute of India covering Development issues.

Since 1996, she is actively involved in the *Right to Information* movement. She has worked closely with Aruna Roy, Magasasay Award winner in creating awareness among people about their rights. Organised public hearings, seminars, workshops etc. Also participated in formulation of the Right to Information Bill which has now been passed by the Parliament to become an Act. She was member of the Select Committee representing the media in formulating the *Right to Information Act* of the Delhi Government. She has also been a Visiting Faculty, *Indian Institute of Mass Communication*, New Delhi.

Her published work includes Journalists' Handbook on Right to Information; Media and Public Interest in South Asia: Some Priority Areas; Media and Law: A Journalists' Handbook; and Practical Guide for Journalists (Hindi)

She is also awarded the prestigious '*Woman of Substance Award 2006*' by Ryan Foundation for outstanding contribution towards women's development and bringing awareness in the society about their strength and power.

Rajeshwar Dyal

Rajeshwar Dyal, Senior Media Advisor, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) India, is an alumni from the Delhi School of Economics. He taught Development Communication for 16 years at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), New Delhi. He left this to join FES, with whom he has now been associated for the last 16 years.

Sidharth Bhatia

Sidharth Bhatia has been a journalist for over three decades in the print and electronic media. Starting as a reporter in Bombay during the national emergency, he moved to covering state level and national politics. He was the Editor of the Bombay edition of the Observer and then a foreign correspondent in South Africa during the demographic transition in 1993-94. He

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was the CEO of a media company in Mauritius before he moved to Bombay in 2005 to join the founding team of DNA (Daily News and Analysis), which is the second largest English newspaper in the city. He continues to be on the editorial board of DNA and manages the opinion pages and the Sunday edition, writing a regular signed column and also the leaders of the paper. He was made Associate Press Fellow of Wolfson College Cambridge in 2001. He is a regular on several television shows as a commentator on social and political affairs.

Shai Venkatraman

Ms. Shai Venkatraman is currently working as Features Editor at NDTV. She has worked with Hindustan Times Television and Television Eighteen prior to joining NDTV as Correspondent in Mumbai. She later became Chief of Bureau and Features Editor, NDTV Mumbai. Ms. Venkatraman is a MA in English Literature of University of Delhi and has done her MA in TV Journalism from Northeastern University, Boston.

Shastri Ramachandaran

Shastri Ramachandaran is currently Associate Editor, The Tribune, Chandigarh, India, since January 2004. He has worked as Senior editor with The Times of India group, New Delhi, (1989-2004) in various key positions, including as Bureau Chief (North) of The Illustrated Weekly of India. He was also Editor, Sunday Mail, New Delhi. Prior to this Mr. Ramachandran was Chief of Bureau and Assistant Editor, Newstime, Eenadu Group, Hyderabad; Special (Regional) Correspondent, Deccan Herald, Chennai and Staff Reporter, Indian Express, Chennai.

Sonny Abraham

Sonny Abraham is the Editor of UNI (United News of India), one of the main news agencies in India with 24-hour wire services in English, Hindi and Urdu as well as Photo and Graphics services.

UNI's services reach hundreds of subscribers across India, including newspapers, television and radio stations and websites as well as government and corporate offices.

He joined UNI in December, 1979, and worked as its Baroda bureau chief from 1980 to 1988. From 1988 to 1993, he worked for UNI in Delhi, where he covered the Finance, External Affairs and other ministries.

He was posted from March, 1993 to November, 1999 as UNI's Gulf and Middle East Bureau chief based in Dubai. He was appointed as the Editor of UNI in July, 2003.

Swati Deshpande

Vinod Dua

Vinod Dua is one of the most well known names of the Indian media. He has been the face of Indian television since 1974. He has seen and been associated with Indian television's transition from a government controlled, black and white, single-channel entity to the present-day multi-channel transnational satellite T.V. industry. A veteran of thousands of hours of telecasting, Vinod Dua is an anchor, political commentator, election analyst, producer and director.

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Vishnu Rajgadia

Vishnu Rajgadia is associated with CINI (Child in Need Institute, NGO) as Communication Consultant, with MICCI as Jharkhand State Chapter Head and with Jharkhand RTI Forum as Secretary. He was Resident Editor, Prabhat Khabar (Dhanbad). He has worked as Full-Time Lecturer in Mass Communication and Journalism at Makhan Lal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism at Bhopal. He holds a Master in Journalism and Mass Communication (Gold Medal). He has also worked as Lecturer in MLC University, Bhopal; Associate Editor, Samkaleen Janmat, Patna (Bihar); and Director of Prabhat Khabar Institute, Ranchi (Jharkhand).

He has co-authored with Ms. Nandini Sahai A Practical Handbook on Right to Information; Co-authored with Mr. Arvind Kejriwal *Suchano ka Adhikar* in Hindi and *Jansanchar* (Mass Communication: Theory and Practice) in Hindi.

Zena Costa