

International Federation of Journalists



Equality and Quality

***A Celebration of Women
In Journalism***



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Preface

"Fighting for women's human rights is a positive struggle which recognises the quality of a woman's contribution in every aspect of the community: in politics, industry, commerce, education, media, agriculture and the home."

Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

In today's societies women's claim for equal rights has been widely recognised as valid and women have entered all professions and spheres of public life. The number of women in journalism has grown steadily over the last ten years and today, women can be found in all newsrooms. They work in newspapers and magazines, broadcasting and on-line media and they cover every issue from education to war.

But this is only a start. Women are still a long way from the commanding heights of equality with men, who dominate the executive and managerial class of modern media. Thirty years ago, many trade unions, particularly in the developed countries, imagined that the fight for equality if not won had been brought into the centre of union life. A generation later we can reflect on how misplaced was the idea that women's rights can ever be won merely by the adoption of well-meaning declarations and honeyed words at union conferences. The truth is that many sections of the union movement lost sight of the targets and ambitions set out in early strategies for equality. Today, we know the fight for women's rights is a permanent struggle. Unions need constant vigilance against discrimination and dedication to positive actions for equality.

This publication, we hope, will contribute to raising awareness on the need for a fresh start in the campaign for women's rights in media.

In the first part, articles written by women journalists from around the world, highlight the achievements of our female colleagues, as skilled negotiators for better working conditions, as press freedom activists, as war reporters and as champions of independent journalism.

The second part of the publication summarises the findings of the IFJ survey *Equality and Quality: Setting Standards for Women in Journalism*. The most comprehensive of its kind the survey is based on information received from unions from some 40 countries representing some 300,000 journalists. It gives an overview of the current status of women journalists, shows differences in the approach adopted by unions to promote equality, and highlights areas for future action.

In the third part the IFJ commemorates women killed in the exercise of journalism in the last ten years. During this time 71 female colleagues have lost their lives. Some have been caught in the cross fire while working as war reporters, others have been assassinated because of their investigative and outspoken reporting and some have been killed simply because they were women working as journalists.

Great improvements have been achieved by and for women journalists and there is reason to celebrate. But many issues remain unresolved and the IFJ and its member unions have to continue the struggle for equality in media.

Bettina Peters
Director, IFJ Project Division
Brussels, June 2001

Women are half the population, half the talent, half the experience – We must hear their voices and have their news judgement

By CLAIRE MILLER

Late last year, Pamela Bone, associate editor at *The Age* newspaper in Melbourne, Australia, and one of the most senior, respected female journalists in the country, submitted a proposal for an overseas assignment.

Appalled by the suffering of women under fundamentalist Islamic regimes, Bone proposed to go to the Middle East and interview activists fighting against oppressive cultural and religious practices.

"*I think this is a cutting edge issue,*" said Bone, who has written extensively in her regular column about international and local human rights, poverty and cultural issues

Recently she asked in a column why it is that the international community can rouse itself to protest to Afghanistan's Taliban over the attempted destruction of ancient Buddhist statues and impose trade sanctions in a bid to flush out a male terrorist, yet turn a blind eye when a mother of seven accused of adultery is stoned to death before a stadium of cheering Afghan men.

The answer is probably the same as the reason her proposed Middle Eastern assignment was refused on grounds of budget, but a senior male journalist was given the nod to visit Israel to report on Israeli-Palestinian politics a couple of months later. The problem lies in the values

inherent in a male-dominated power structure, whether in media, politics or business.

"*The editor said mine was a great idea but the company didn't have the money at present to send me,*" Bone said. "*I know a lot of our women readers, and males ones too, are very interested in this issue but male editors see it just as a women's issue that is a luxury and when we have enough money it might make a 'nice' story. He has said I can go when the budget permits.*"

There is still a long way to go before women's voices and values carry equal weight in the media.

Bone's experience is testament that after more than two decades of being the equal of men in numbers in Australian newsrooms, there is still a long way to go before women's voices and values carry equal weight in the media. Even where there are women on news desks in decision-making positions, Bone said they tended to take on male news values.

"*Until we get a critical mass with equal numbers (in the hierarchy), you won't see really major change,*" Bone said. And without some of their basic needs being addressed, such as child care and family friendly management attitudes, making it to the top for many women will remain just too hard a mountain to climb.

It is hard to pin down actual numbers of women working as journalists in Australia, in part because many turn to freelancing in a bid to balance their working life with their responsibilities as mothers. In rough numbers, though, the journalists' union,

Claire Miller is a delegate for the Australian Journalists Association on the federal council of the MEAA. A journalist for 18 years, she was a member of 'The Age' MEAA house committee in 1998-99 and helped to set up the Women in Journalism network in Melbourne.

the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance, estimates there are about 4000 women journalists making up about 45 per cent of workforce. In media schools, women outnumber male students and are often in the majority in cadet and trainee intakes to newspaper, radio and television companies.

But as Bone points out, while there are plenty of younger women and a smattering of older ones like herself, there is a missing generation of women in their 30s and 40s. They are the ones who have young children and find the balancing act of a career and family just too hard. *"It is interesting that the women who have made a success of this (act) all have men who are prepared to be at home and looking after children, but these are few and far between,"* Bone said.

In 1996 almost a quarter of women journalists left their jobs because they did not have equal access to promotion.

Only one major metropolitan daily newspaper has a woman editor-in-chief – Collen Ryan at *The Australian Financial Review*. Jenni Cooper is the editor of the *Sunday Telegraph* in Sydney, and in Australian Consolidated Press, Jill Baker is group editor covering a stable of serious news magazines such as *The Bulletin*. Lower down the newspaper and newsmagazine ranks, women can be found as deputy or assistant editors in news, business and sport, but rarely the section editor in their own right. The exception is in "softer" sections such as lifestyle, real estate, arts and features. In commercial radio and television, women are treated more as candy for the ears and eyes than as serious professionals; if they want to be overseas correspondents or sent to war

zones, they do better to switch to the public broadcaster, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, where they get less money but more professional opportunities.

It is about getting the best person for the job.

Women do, however, fare much better in country and suburban newspapers. It is not uncommon to find women such as Jo Breen, the editor of the daily regional newspaper *The Shepparton News*, in the north of the state of Victoria. She is one of three women editors heading up the eight daily, tri-weekly and weekly mastheads owned by the McPherson Media Group. She said women in her company had more opportunities to rise through the ranks in part because male rivals had a tendency to leave for the bright lights and possibly big bucks of the city media. But also she believed McPherson Media's management was genuinely interested in cultivating the right person for the job.

"It is recognised that I have a softer style compared perhaps with male editors, but it comes down to the quality of the individual, not the quality of the gender, at the end of the day," Ms Breen said. Still, there was evidence of the woman's touch: Ms Breen said an effort was made to put women into positions such as agricultural reporting despite initial resistance from male readers in the farming community. *"We haven't bowed to the pressure that they would prefer to talk to men. It is about getting the best person for the job and we are putting out a good product. And the women are pretty well accepted now."*

In 1996 a MEAA survey found 22.8 per cent women journalists, mainly in the city media, had left their job

because of promotional discrimination. Few said they worked in areas perceived by management as important. Many said women were still pigeon-holed into traditionally female areas like women's issues and fashion, and to a lesser extent health, the arts, entertainment and education. These are invariably perceived to be less important in the organization in comparison to highly valued areas like politics and sport.

The MEAA put equal opportunity training for senior male managers into the agreement at Fairfax.

Even with Australia's strong equal opportunity and anti-sex discrimination laws, many respondents to the survey believed sexual harassment was an accepted part of their organisation's culture and was tolerated in the workplace. It is a sign that cultural attitudes can take a long time to catch up to laws, and that women's willingness to assert their rights is tempered for fear their careers will suffer if they speak up.

The changes women wanted in their workplace included the internal advertising of positions, and proper selection and interview procedures. They also wanted male colleagues to undergo training in equal opportunity and gender issues, and the provision of child-care and family friendly workplace policies.

Shauna Black is the editor of the *Money* section in the *Adelaide Advertiser*, the only daily metropolitan newspaper in South Australia. She is also the South Australian vice-president of the MEAA's state section of the Australian Journalists Association, and vice-president of the union house committee at her company. Black is

passionate on the subjects of unions and women's rights – in large part because she sees them as common ground.

She said women are under-represented in the formal union hierarchy, but with women typically experiencing broken working patterns through their lives, they, most of all, needed the support of unions. Women in the union hierarchy and on company house committees were important, so that women's needs were represented.

This was exemplified in 2000 when the only woman staff representative on the union negotiating team for the newspaper company Fairfax succeeded in getting equal opportunity training for senior male managers written into the three-year agreement on wages and conditions. Once the issue was raised, male colleagues on the team supported the claim. Men often simply don't think of such matters not because they don't agree but such issues are not part of their professional experience and therefore not on their radar.

"Women can bring a totally different perspective to unions," said Black. *"They generally don't like confrontation. They will want to negotiate and keep the peace and their skills are valuable. We shouldn't just do it the way the blokes do it."*

Black became active in the union as a member of the *Adelaide Advertiser/Sunday Mail* house committee seven years ago, after industrial action and a staff lock-out at her company News Ltd. She said the issues focused her attention and feelings on the importance of unions in the workplace.

"I think I had just reached an age where I had worked in the industry long enough to see the issues more clearly," she said. *"I knew the politics of the place and the industry, so I could see a real need for people to be more*

active in support of their colleagues rights because the company was trying to erode the union's position, and any union should be suspicious of that. There were a lot of young people who it just washed over, and I had been like that before. We not only needed to maintain unity, we had to build confidence in the union."

Women often manage to do more in eight hours than some of their male colleagues get done in fourteen.

"Unionism is a valid tool and we have a role which is almost like middle management in representing workers needs to management. This is how we see ourselves in the house committee, which is not confrontational but takes a moderate negotiating role. You can't expect everyone to deal individually with management in a big organisation like this. I think the MEAA is perfect for that."

Black has strived for cultural change in her workplace. The media was a tough industry like law and financial services, she said, with the definition of a good worker being someone who puts in long hours. Women had their own deadlines to meet outside work, such as getting children off to school in the mornings, or picking them up from childcare by 6pm. But in the eight hours they were in the office, women worked hard with no long lunches, and got as much done in that time as many men do in 14 hours. "It is just getting management to see that," she said.

You are expected to do all the networking things the boys do.

Change was creeping in slowly. Nine years ago, when Black's son was born, permanent part-time work was unheard of. Now it is commonplace for women journalists with pre-school children. "Management don't want to lose someone they have invested years of training in because they won't give them part-time work."

Generational change in male management was having an effect. Black said the *Adelaide Advertiser's* editor, Melvin Mansell, for instance, was a younger man of 42 with young children who would send staff home when he thought they had been in the office too long. He was also trying to get women promoted into decision-making positions, but Black said many women and people of multicultural backgrounds simply did not want to play the games required to climb the ladder in a large multinational company like News Ltd.

"You are expected to do all the networking things the boys do, and they are things often women and others don't want to do. So women rise to certain levels and then they say I don't want to play, so they get stuck at the midway point, and the company is not using those people as it could."

Black said men had made a huge effort to understand what was important to women in their news judgment, but they were making it very difficult for themselves without senior women in decision-making positions to whom they could refer. "Then they wouldn't have to go through this angst, they would just know," Black said. "But news is news and so we are probably talking about the fringe still. Tokenism for women has been done to death – you know, put the fashion up front because women like fashion."

Black emphasised that the strength of unions and house committees lay in the support and active participation of rank and file

members. She said the union needed to empower everyone to feel safe to speak out, so that management did not only hear from the house committee and officials. *"The union is not just one shop steward and the house committee president doing all the work. It is empowering everyone to be involved. We (the house committee) are just volunteers doing things in our own time, and people sometimes forget that."*

Put the fashion up front because women like fashion.

She predicted a return to unionism over the next decade, reversing many years of declining membership. But it would be a different form of unionism. People were less likely to be working in big offices, so losing some of the sense of community that comes of being in large buildings together with members of your own and other unions. Black said unions would need to market themselves as much as professional associations upholding standards and ethics, as well as workplace representatives. At least Australia had that foundation of unionism from which to work, unlike developing countries.

The debate on child-care engaged both women and men.

There is a debate about whether it would make much difference to the end product if more women were running the show in the media. While they may not be visible in the top positions, Bone said their mere presence in large numbers had at least meant issues that would formerly have been relegated to women's pages or ignored altogether are now found routinely in the news pages holding their own against politics and economics. Health and environmental

issues now get a run, and debates on whether formal childcare in centres is good or bad for the children involved rage across opinion pages engaging both female and male commentators.

Whether or not newspapers, radio and television bulletins would be any different for having women at the helm is a moot point in the end, however. Bone and Black both said that without women in key positions, media companies were operating at only half strength and appealing to only half their potential audience.

"Women are half the population, half the talent, half the energy, half the experience and it is such a waste not to have their voices, not to have their news judgment."

Women Journalists Stand Up for Press Freedom in Belarus

By ELENA PANKRATOVA

Journalist Tatiana B. was fired from her position at a women's magazine last year, because for several weeks she did not spend the full eight hours at her desk in the newsroom. Her employer refused to consider the reason for her absence: Tatiana's child was very ill and as a single mother she had stay at home while she was waiting for treatment for her child at a specialized clinic. In another country Tatiana might have taken her case to a labour tribunal but in Belarus the courts have a record of deciding against women in such cases.

Tatiana is not the only female journalist who finds herself without a job or sees that even though she may be more qualified, a man gets promotion ahead of her. Frustrated by the unfair treatment many women leave journalism after a few years. Currently 700 of the 1000 students at the journalism department of the Belarussian State University are women but they make up only around 40% of working journalists in the country. A survey organized by the Belarus Association of Journalists (BAJ) revealed that 70% of journalists do not have a degree or completed journalism training. Editors have told BAJ that they prefer to hire a man without a degree than a woman who has a degree in journalism.

Apart from having to try to break through the glass ceiling, women journalists in Belarus face another problem: There are few job opportunities and choosing a workplace according to conscience is a luxury they cannot afford. State-controlled media outnumber private and independent media ten to one and many women wind up working for state-owned television and radio, judged by independent

observers as being the mouthpiece of Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko.

Heads of departments and directors in state radio and TV are men and they want to promote a certain image of the successful female in Belarussian society: Women must be loyal subjects who do not criticize the government and they must look like top models. Similar rules are applied in the newsroom. Women over 40 receive less than subtle hints from their editors that they may be getting too old to work in television. Recently, several older women journalists were fired from Belarussian state TV.

But even though women journalists face many problems and the number of female editors-in-chief can still be counted on one hand, there are examples of women journalists who have stood up against the regime and against gender discrimination.



Valentina Vorobiova speaking at a rally in Minsk.

Valentina Vorobiova was the first journalist to take her media owner to court. In the beginning of the 1990s she worked in the newspaper owned by Belarus' largest chemical factory *Khimvolokno* in Mogilyov. *Khimvolokno* had been polluting the environment for years and

Elena Pankratova is the head of the newly established Women in Mass Media association in Belarus. She is a radio journalist and is best known for her ground-breaking coverage of health risks to children after the Chernobyl disaster.

Vorobiova noticed the effects of toxic emissions while reporting in Mogilyov. The rain and snow had a sulphur-yellow colour and the number of miscarriages and children with genetic disorders increased all over the Mogilyov region. Vorobiova wrote articles about the problem and finally decided to take her employer to court. She lost the case, left the newspaper and started her own publication *Green Leaves*, which focuses on environmental issues. Valentina Vorobiova is an active member of the green party and among the leaders of the newly created "Women in Mass Media" attached to the Belarusian Association of Journalists.

Zhanna Litvina is the president and one of the founders of Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ), the independent journalists' group in the country. BAJ campaigns against state censorship and victimization of journalists and tries to promote media freedom in Belarus. Zhanna Litvina is a well-respected radio journalist and best known for founding the first independent radio station in Belarus, *Radio 101,2*. The station was shut down by the government after one year of broadcasting but Litvina re-launched it as *Radio Racia*. In order to avoid government censorship *Radio Racia* broadcasts from Poland. It is among the best alternative sources of information for Belarusian citizens.



Ekaterina Vysotskaya, editor-in-chief of *Otdykhay*.

Ekaterina Vysotskaya and Julia Slutskaya represent the new generation of female journalists. In 1998, at the age of 25 Ekaterina Vysotskaya became the first female

editor-in-chief of the popular independent weekly *Imya*. *Imya* was best known for its well informed and biting political commentary and many famous journalists and democratic politicians wrote columns for the paper. Vysotskaya left the paper after a dispute over editorial policy with the publisher and shortly afterwards the Belarussian government closed the paper down. Vysotskaya was unemployed for three years but in 2001 she became the editor-in-chief of the tabloid *Otdykhay*, launched by the independent news agency *BelaPAN*.

Julia Slutskaya, 35, is the editor-in-chief of the independent paper *Komsomolskaya Pravda v Belarusi*, Belarus' most popular daily newspaper.

In March 2001 Eleonora Yezerskaya, a well known presenter of a music programme on state television, called a press conference to denounce interference in editorial content and corruption at the state television. Her attack on the managers and directors of state TV made the headlines across Belarus' independent media. She has been one of the few journalists employed in state media who have publicly denounced the lack of editorial independence and gender discrimination in state TV's newsrooms. Yezerskaya accused management of firing journalists because they do not tow the party line. She said at the press conference:

"My female colleagues, who have worked for 15 to 20 years at the station, suffer most. After having put so much effort and talent into their work they are now being sacked by management because of their convictions or their age."

From Writing Recipes to Reporting War

Women Journalists in Colombia Excel in a Dangerous Job

By ANGELA CASTELLANOS

Until the late 1960s, journalism was a male domain in Colombia. Today, women not only represent more than 40% of journalists but they are assigned to cover the armed conflict, the most dangerous beat in Colombian media. The past two years have seen a rise of violence against journalists. Many have been murdered, kidnapped, intimidated or exiled by the paramilitary forces, guerrilla groups, and people involved in corruption.

According to Elizabeth Vargas, coordinator of the Foundation for the Freedom of Expression, a non-governmental organization, *"the media prefers women journalists to cover military sources because it is believed women are more persuasive, and because the military prefers to deal with women. And consequently, women have easier access to information."*

Covering the armed conflict exposes women journalists to the violence of the illegal armed groups. Last year the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the largest guerrilla group, declared the media a military target. Paramilitary groups have decided to silence the voice of critical and outspoken journalists. Violence and threats are how these groups respond to criticism, opinion pieces and investigative reports published in newspapers.

In 2000, two female journalists were killed, eleven were threatened with murder, three had to seek exile abroad, and one was kidnapped and tortured. The latter was Jineth Bedoya, a 26-year-old journalist, working covering the conflict for the daily *El Espectador*, the second largest newspaper in Colombia. Bedoya was kidnapped by paramilitary groups when leaving a jail where she had researched a story about a dispute among inmates, some of them belonging to paramilitary groups.



Jineth Bedoya gets help to cross a barbed wire fence from a red-cross worker when she covered the massacre of peasants in the municipality of Gutierrez

After her release Bedoya did not leave the country, nor did she change her job or move to a different beat. She says she loves her profession, although at times she is afraid. *"I fear death, it frightens me that the same people who attacked me may come back."*

"I think if I had been a male journalist, the attack against me would have been different. I believe that they would have only threatened me, but I was kidnapped, tortured and raped," Jineth points out. *"It is extraordinary that a disagreement with a story can be expressed by these brutal methods."*

She adds: *"I was lucky because the editor of my newspaper gave me complete support, normally in Colombia there is no support for rank-and-file journalists. Only for the famous ones it's different, like Claudia Gurisatti, who was threatened and now she broadcasts her television programme from the United States"*.

In 2000, Jineth Bedoya won the Press Freedom Award given by the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE).

Angela Castellanos works as a journalist in Colombia and has been covering the conflict there.



Jineth Bedoya at her desk at *El Espectador*

According to the Foundation for the Freedom of the Press there are 46 unresolved cases of journalists murdered (1977-1999). To correct this situation the government has implemented the Programme for the Protection of Journalists, but so far the programme exists only in name and has yet to provide real protection for journalists. But Jineth says it is not only the government's responsibility. *"What we need is a more unified front among journalists, we have to show more support and solidarity and make the public aware of violations of press freedom"*.

In spite of the dangers, women journalists in Colombia have made an important contribution towards the defense of press freedom. One of them is Patricia Lara. An outstanding journalist, Lara has worked in media since 1974, as a reporter, news editor, media executive and founder of several magazines.

In the early 1970s, Lara worked for the magazine *Alternativa*, the first Colombian left-leaning magazine specializing in investigative journalism. For *Alternativa* she wrote a story about several jailed Cuban political prisoners, which helped to increase pressure on the government to release some of the prisoners.

In 1974 Lara founded *Nueva Frontera* in partnership with Lleras Restrepo. *Nueva Frontera* was a weekly magazine, which included many opinion pieces on political and economic questions. Although not written for a mass audience, *Nueva Frontera* had a profound influence on the debate of political and social affairs in the country. The paper operated on a very small budget. *"At Nueva Frontera I was the manager, proofreader and messenger,"* Patricia Lara said.

Lara's sympathy for Cuba cost her jail time in the United States. In 1986, upon arriving in New York she was told her visa had been revoked and that she had two options, either to be deported immediately or to be jailed waiting for her case to be decided in court. Lara chose jail.

"I thought that seeing the inside of a jail would give me material for a story. I was jailed for five days, but as the authorities did not have any charges against me they had to release me. During my time in jail, I began to write about Colombian women detained, but I was soon isolated from them to avoid me writing about their experience."

In 1993 Lara founded *Cambio 16*, and as its editor she forged one of the most respected news magazines, with a profound impact on Colombian public opinion, in spite of the hard competition in a small market for magazines. In 1994, Lara with two other journalists received *Círculo de Periodistas de Bogotá Award*, Colombia's most prestigious journalism award. A year later *Cambio 16* published her report, "The Tricks of the Cartel" that started the so-called "Trial File-8,000." The story brought about criminal prosecution of campaign managers of former president Ernesto Samper (1994-1998), on charges that the election campaign was financed with monies coming from the drug cartels.

In 1998, Patricia sold *Cambio 16* to Gabriel García Márquez and his wife Mercedes ending her five-year career at the paper. During this time she had nurtured and developed a team of journalists, photographers and graphic designers who loved her and still miss her. They say: *"Patricia was like a mother to us, she is sensitive and supportive of the initiatives of journalists. As an editor, she was more concerned in publishing feature stories than getting scoops."*



Patricia Lara, founder of *Cambio 16*.

In 2000 Lara published the book *Las Mujeres en la Guerra* (Women in War). The book tells stories of women's lives in Colombia's armed conflict. It covers the women widowed by the war, the women fighting in the illegal armed groups and the women who became refugees by the conflict. The outstanding historical document won her the 2000 Editorial Planeta Award.

Defending press freedom in Colombia is more important than ever, because -- as Federico Mayor Zaragoza, former director of UNESCO - points out, "*there is no peace if there is no freedom of expression.*"

Indian Women Spreading the Word

By SABINA INDERJIT

"I don't think a newspaper is a place for a woman journalist."

So said the then-highest paid Indian editor of the leading daily, *The Times of India*, in the late 1970s. Things have changed since then and today women journalists are vying with their male colleagues in both the print and electronic media. And they are being taken just as seriously. The change, however, did not come overnight. From making an entry into the profession -- once a male bastion -- to winning acceptance and to making some of the finest contributions as members of the fourth estate in defence of democracy and the freedom of the press. The task has been formidable indeed.

"You have all the qualifications, but you're a woman," recalls Kalyani Shanker, now political editor of the *Hindustan Times*, of the male responses during the bad old days of the 1960s and 1970s.

Promilla Kalhan, who joined journalism back in the early 1960s and was senior editor of the *Hindustan Times* before her retirement, also complains: *"When I would seek an interview, people would ask me why? 'Because I'm a journalist', I'd say. But they wouldn't take me seriously."*

"Being a woman journalist was bad, being a vernacular one was worse," wrote Mrinal Pande, who currently anchors the news programs of Doordarshan. It's these women, however, who have had the last word and made it to senior positions. From a handful of women in the newsrooms in the 1960s and 1970s, numbers have grown significantly in the English press. However, their numbers are far



Modhumita Mozumdar (right) at her news desk.

less impressive in the language press. A comparison of women employed in a few leading national dailies helps to reveal the paradox. The number of women journalists in the Indian language counterparts of three national newspapers -- *The Times of India*, the *Hindustan Times* and the *Indian Express* -- is less than five compared to nearly 25 in the English dailies.

The root of the problem lies in the country's social milieu. In spite of the generally liberal attitudes bequeathed by the freedom struggle, the family and cultural life of the average Indian continues to be hemmed in conservatism; more so in their attitude to and relations with women. Except for some upper middle class urban families, the intra-family norms are rigid and there is a resistance to social change. The situation has been pithily summed up by Ammu Joseph, freelance journalist and media researcher/analyst in her book *"Women in Journalism: Making News"*.

Pointing out that women entered the mainstream press as early as the 1940s and 1950s, Ammu Joseph also notes they were but a trickle. A comparatively larger number came in the 1960s and early 1970s, when *"a number managed to get into the coveted reporting stream, slowly making their way from flower shows to fires and, eventually, even battle fronts of various kinds"*.

The first major flood began in the mid 1970s, with the women's movement becoming

Sabina Inderjit is a member of the National Executive of the India Journalists' Union (IJU).

stronger world-wide. The Emergency (1975-77) in the country, which included press censorship, declared during Indira Gandhi's prime ministership, too, gave an impetus to the civil liberties movement.

"The 90s ushered in the fourth phase as a tidal wave, when men often were outnumbered by women on the desk and we had a good number of women working as reporters, special correspondents, chiefs of bureau, political and business editors, even resident editors," she writes.

A prominent witness to these changes is Usha Rai, who began her career as a trainee in 1961 and went on to become development editor (a first) of leading national English daily, *The Indian Express*, and later features editor of *The Hindustan Times*. Displaying firm determination, hard work and professional commitment, she has become one of the country's most highly respected journalists, carving a niche for herself in areas concerning environment, women and development.

There was no time for union work.

For eight years, she was the only woman on the reporting staff. Such was the sorry state of affairs that when in the mid-60s she applied for maternity leave, she was told that the organisation had no such tradition and they would have to consult the rule books. Reason, however, prevailed over tradition and she did get the leave. In the event, she helped set a precedent so that nobody had to open the rule books again.

Usha started her career with the "soft stories" -- reporting on women, children, health and on flower and fashion shows.

"These were supposed to be the forte of the woman journalist," she says, but adds that she succeeded in getting the university and court beats too.

Today, she has reason enough to have a sense of achievement. Particularly because the issues concerning women are no longer considered "soft" nor are women journalists considered fit only to address these issues. In

fact, she recalls with some sense of genuine pride, she succeeded in persuading the *Express* to devote a full page to development news.

Usha's generation did make a difference toward the empowerment of women. But the big changes came when society woke up to such crimes against women as dowry burnings, rape, the practice of self-immolation and Muslim women's rights. These helped bring the gender issue into sharp focus, rousing social and women activists to demand empowerment for women as the only way to mend society. Names such as Kalpana Sharma, Pamela Philipose, Mrinal Pande and Madhu Kishwar are all "activists" in their own right, through their writings, moved by their sheer sensitivity and a social commitment to change.

As for their role in the trade unions, Usha candidly states that she was not particularly involved in its day-to-day working. She had her reasons, which are echoed by many others.

"All our energy would go into meeting the challenges of the profession and getting accepted. We had to work harder than our male colleagues. Plus, there was the home and family to take care of. Where was the time for the union after this?" Besides, the unions, by and large, were male-dominated and did not take up "matters specific to women journalists."

The late Modhumita Mojumdar, the first and only woman General Secretary of a journalist union (the Delhi Union of Journalists), however, would have disagreed with such a simplistic explanation. She put the responsibility at the feet of her women colleagues.

"Equal pay for equal work; a fair concept, now codified in the form of law. Except that it does not work anywhere -- least in the case of women." she began in an article entitled "Women and Media" published in the 1980s. "The women's movement is, in spite of its weaknesses and fragmented character, a reality that the community cannot ignore, nor can the press."

"But women journalists are by and large unwilling to stick their necks out. Few are active in the trade union movement in the newspaper industry as a whole, or specifically the journalists' movement where the male bias is all

too obvious. That is why no specific demands pertaining to women employees are ever raised (by unions)."

While appreciating the changes in the media's attitude to women issues, Modhumita felt it was just not enough and said: "It is a good thing that the Indian press no longer shies away from calling a rape a rape, it does not take refuge in euphemisms, nor does it totally disregard this and other crimes against women as non-issues or purely domestic matters when they take place within the family. But why does it not bother about less dramatic, day-to-day crimes against woman but waits for her to be burnt alive before taking cognisance of her plight?"

"The answers to these questions are clear. Not unless women in media organise themselves and act as a pressure group is any of this likely to change. But will our play-safe media women ever take the initiative? The answer, again, can be anticipated. They will not take the risk unless they are persuaded and pushed from the outside.."

Women must get organised but will the play safe media women take up the initiative?

Modhumita, like Usha, also entered the profession in the 1960s and plunged into active trade unionism in early 1970s when she worked with the left-oriented weekly newsmagazine *Link*, a left-oriented weekly newsmagazine launched by Aruna Asafali.

Politics, however, was in her blood for her mother was a niece of Sucheta Kripalani, a freedom-fighter and the first woman chief minister of a State. But few knew of this.

Her colleagues recall, in particular, her role in the 1982 struggle against the Bihar Press Bill, a vicious attack on the freedom of the press.

So furious was she about this draconian measure that "everyday, I would get a call from Modhumita asking what action was being planned for the day," recalls a union activist.

As a professional journalist, Modhumita wrote on both political affairs and social issues. She was one of the few women assistant editors

at that time. And, there were traits of a responsible journalist as well. "A large part of the credit for a "Code of Ethics," goes to Modhumita," recalls the then DUJ president. "It was she who suggested that in order to be effective, the Code had to be a two-way affair, not a one-way document: It should also prescribe norms for public functionaries, who must be committed to safeguard the working of the press."

In 1979 the first woman was elected General Secretary of a journalists' union.

Modhumita stood out as a unionist, more so because very few women were in the forefront. When she contested for secretary general's post in the Delhi Union of Journalists in 1979, she won handsomely against a strong candidate. "Guess, we liked the fact that a woman was asking for votes," is how a member-unionist recalls that election.

There were other women union activists, too, but in woefully small numbers and primarily in major cities like Delhi and Mumbai (the financial capital of the country). While many of them had left leanings, some were attracted to union work by general professional issues. To name a few: Kshama Sharma, Poonam Dabas, Sujata Madhok, Kanchan Sharma, Bharti Sinha, Vemana Vasantha Lakshmi, Sabita Lahkar.

With Unions largely taking up issues of wages, conditions of service and job security, besides the primary issue of the freedom of the press, women journalists began to increasingly feel by the late 80s the need to form some sort of a pressure group.

The "Women and Media Group" was set up in the Bombay Union of Journalists in 1986-87. According to a senior editor then associated with it, the group took up such issues as the portrayal of women in the media, social issues like rape and bride burning and sexual harassment at work. "We would analyse reports concerning women, have long discussions and make our representation to the managements," she recalls. There was an element of success, she adds, with a major daily

setting up a creche, a restroom with a few beds for women to use after night shift. The group, however, wound up after a few years.

One major factor affecting unions has been the advent of the contract system of employment of journalists. While this system has not cut into union membership, it has affected the movement as a whole and its impact has been greater where women's participation is concerned. The sheer economics of ensuring a second salary to run the house, career consciousness and the job opportunities offered by the electronic media, could be additional reasons for women staying away from unions.

I, for one, have regrettably witnessed the dwindling of numbers. After joining the profession as a trainee in the mid-1980s, I soon found myself involved in the journalist movement. When I first contested for an executive committee post of the Delhi Union of Journalists in the late 1980s, there were many women in the fray. It wasn't a novelty. Later towards the end of the 1990s, I was elected its vice-president and I thought it no big deal. But it was! It has been most unusual for a woman journalist to be elected thrice as the vice-president of the Times of India Employees Union. This is certainly a cause for concern, especially when I see the office building humming with women employees.

Trade unionism took me to the Press Council of India, a statutory body set up to uphold the freedom of the press and journalistic ethics and standards. As the nominee of the Indian Journalists Union, I was the first female journalists' representative. The Council now seeks more women representation, acknowledging their role as agents of change.

Lalita Iyer, a Hyderabad-based senior journalist, too, emphasises the need for an exclusive group.

"Over a period of time, I have realised that gender injustices happen because of the vulnerable position women are in. If educated urban women have taken a bold step forward in breaking certain barriers, it will still be time before they can show a path to the mass of uneducated, underprivileged women in districts and villages."

She insists, however, that *"it is important for women at decision-making levels, whatever their number, to get together and share a common platform to bring about a change in the thinking"*.

"Networking or sisterhood, as I would like to call it, requires time, energy and a lot of patience. But only numbers and a show of strength can bring about an effective change."

The presence of women in the profession has certainly given an impetus to improved coverage of social and development issues. Although women have the same news sense as their male colleagues, they are more involved when it comes to gender issues. They express themselves strongly when they are outraged by gender injustice.

There was only one female correspondent in Hyderabad during the early 1970s. Today, newspaper and electronic media offices both in the metropolitan centres and regional cities such as Chennai or Bangalore employ women journalists.

In the Northeast, too, the changes are being noticed. The Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists today has a woman president; in Assam, out of the 50-odd women journalists, 16 are active union members. But this is not enough. Women have still to come out of their protectionist cocoon and play an active role in the trade union movement.

Why Don't They Protest?

Indonesian Journalist Ezki Suyanto believes women should claim their rights

By LUCIA NUCKE IDAYANIE

With the end of direct censorship and licensing of newspapers Indonesian journalism is experiencing a period of freedom and growth. The number of publications has rocketed from 289 in 1997 to 1,700 at the beginning of 2000. Many new publications have been launched not just in the cities but also in the rural areas. But women in journalism have not been part of this positive development. In 1986 women made up around 10% of the profession, today there are 12% women in journalism. Journalism is still seen as a tough and dangerous profession in which women have no place.

A survey of the nine big newspaper companies in Indonesia reveals that only 1% of editors-in-chief and managing editors are women, 85% of women work as reporters in the lowest pay grade. And these women are often relegated to covering fashion, cooking or other so-called women's issues. Few make it to the political desks from where reporters can expect to be promoted.

Ezki Suyanto, producer of the *Voice of Human Rights* radio programme is one of the 81 women who are members of the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI), the journalists' union which played an important role in defending media freedom in Indonesia.

Ezki is known as a very active member in the union who defends her principles and fights injustice where she sees it. She often argues with her colleagues who do not allow women journalists to cover events in dangerous and conflicting areas.

"For me, a woman journalist faces the same risk a man does", she says. *Ezki regrets the attitude of some women journalists who sometimes exaggerate*

physical dangers, thus disqualifying themselves from dangerous assignments.

"In fact, the risk is not as big as they imagine, the worst danger is your own fear."



Ezki Suyanto (middle) recording her Voice of Human Rights radio programme.

Ezki launched the *Voice of Human Rights* programme in 2000. It is the first of its kind aiming to put a human rights perspective into the coverage of politics, economics and the law. Coverage of human rights for Ezki includes covering women's rights. But she feels that women journalists can do more to improve their status in the profession.

"Why don't they protest if are driven home at night, are given the easy jobs and kept from covering conflicts? Why do they remain silent if they can want to take on more responsibilities?" she asks.

Ezki graduated from the law faculty at the University of Trisakti, Jakarta in 1988 and became involved in advocacy work for press freedom. She worked as a freelance reporter for *Anda* magazine. From 1991-1994 she worked at *Forum Keadilan* magazine. In 1997 she became staff editor and report coordinator of *Panjimas* magazine. From there she moved from to the tabloid *DetaK* tabloid and covered the turmoil in Pasar Becora, East Timor.

Lucia Nucke Idayanie is a member of the Alliance of Independent Journalists in Indonesia.

In 1999 she returned to East Timor working with the Australian journalist Heather Patterson at the IFJ Safety Office, set up to help journalists covering the referendum on independence. For the IFJ she assisted and gave tips to around 630 local and foreign journalists who had come to East Timor to report on the referendum.

Ezki says her experience during the referendum in East Timor was a difficult but unforgettable one. She was continuously under pressure from the head of the regional police and the military.



Ezki Suyanto and her two children.

"East Timor was hard for us as Indonesian journalists. We were threatened by Indonesian military and paramilitary groups and the pro-independence people did not believe in us because we were Indonesians."

Her professional credentials earned Ezki a place as AJI's representative in the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence, set up to investigate human rights abuses during the Suharto regime.

Ezki was an ardent AJI activist also during the time when AJI was banned by the government and had to operate in secret. Ezki's house was raided and the police started looking for her. So, in 1998 Ezki escaped to New York where she worked in Human Rights Watch's media division. She returned to Indonesia five months later.

Ezki Suyanto and the women in AJI started to look at problems of gender discrimination in the newsrooms. One of the unfair practices they found is that male journalists receive health benefits for their whole family while women can only claim these benefits for themselves but not for their

dependents. While AJI has only been registered as a union in October 2000, its female members believe that the organization should address the issue of benefits in negotiations with employers.

At present Ezki, together with some other women journalists in AJI, is thinking about establishing special structures for women journalists. In order to support women in pursuing a career in journalism, she has the dream to build a Children's Care Center especially for women journalists.

"I think the Children's Care Center could help women journalists to overcome the barriers they now face when try to juggle family and work responsibilities. They will get more confidence and will start claiming their rights."

Jailed for the Truth: Chris Anyanwu's Long Journey from Prison to Forgiveness

Jailed because she angered the head of state, a crusading editor testifies about her imprisonment and closes a chapter in the story of press freedom in Nigeria

By CAROLE SIMPSON

spectacle, this panel will have been worth it."

The courtroom in Nigeria was packed last November when Chris Anyanwu, one of her country's most prominent journalists, entered to testify about the price she paid for pursuing press freedom. Anyanwu looked around and saw seats groaning with ordinary citizens -- including many young women. All had come to hear the 50-year-old founding editor of *The Sunday Magazine* confront the men who had held her captive for 1,251 days in unspeakable conditions, almost blinding her.

Anyanwu had been invited to speak before Nigeria's Human Rights Violation Panel about the abuses she suffered under the regime of now-dead Nigerian strongman, General Sani Abacha. She was there having decided that it was her duty to testify, both for herself and for her country. *"I had come there determined that my mission was not to hug and kiss murderers and torturers, but to bring them to book,"* said Anyanwu.

Addressing the court, she said, *"Your honor, I had initial reservations about testifying...but I decided to join others in telling this story in order to awaken the nation to the full horror of what transpired. If in hearing these horrid stories, the seemingly un-shockable Nigerian is forced to summon the outrage to act in a way that will make it impossible for such evil to happen again in our country, then this testimony, this*



Chris Anyanwu (right) with Carole Simpson of ABC News at the 1998 Courage in Journalism Awards of the International Women's Media Foundation.

Anyanwu's path to confrontation began much earlier. Born into Nigeria's elite, she earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri and a master's degree from Florida State University. She returned to Nigeria in 1979, anxious to make a contribution to a free and open media. She became a reporter for the state-run Nigerian Television Authority in Lagos. During her six years at NTA, she rose from covering general assignments to covering energy and petroleum, then diplomatic and foreign news. She also earned a reputation as one of Nigeria's most thorough and insightful observers of political and social issues.

Carole Simpson, co-chair of the International Women's Media Foundation, is anchor of World News Sunday and an Emmy Award-winning senior correspondent for ABC News.

From 1987 to 1989, Anyawu served as a commissioner in the Imo state government. In 1990, having worked her way up in the male dominated field of African journalism, she became the founder and chief executive officer of Zest News Limited, publishers of *The Sunday Magazine*. Anyanwu herself took the helm as the magazine's editor-in-chief.

Just three years later, Nigeria's long history of press freedom came to an abrupt end. In November 1993, Abacha, Nigeria's defense minister, seized power from a democratically elected president. He moved quickly to suppress political opposition and to impose restrictions on what newspapers, magazines and television could report. He also disbanded Nigeria's leading media groups, suspended operations of media companies and confiscated entire issues of publications directly from newsstands.

"The independent press in Nigeria has been forced to adopt a mode of operation referred to as 'guerilla journalism,' its editors and journalists often operating underground and constantly on guard against the possibility of arrest," reported Human Rights Watch at the time.

When the inevitable clash between Anyanwu and Abacha came, it was, predictably, over Anyanwu's right – she would say her duty – to publish the news. Sometime in 1994, the Abacha government sent a delegation of senior military officers to Anyanwu to extract a pledge from her to endorse the administration with her magazine. She refused, saying that the government had usurped a democratically elected president. Several weeks later, on June 1, a Thursday, Anyanwu arrived at the office of *The Sunday Magazine* at 10 a.m. ready for work. Thursdays were production days at the publication, so she looked forward to a busy, pressured work schedule. In addition, Anyanwu had set up an appointment to meet with a delegation of Indian women to talk about a television show she was planning. They were due to arrive at 11 a.m., she told her staff.

At 10:45 a staffer rushed up to Anyanwu, who was talking with the magazine's publisher, and announced that soldiers had surrounded the office. Anyanwu was fearful that somebody had tipped off authorities that she had assigned a team of reporters to write a cover story on the Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Company, a story that the government might find dangerous.

After a brief argument with the magazine's security guards, the soldiers stormed the office, looking for the editor. When they found her, they told her that the chairman of a committee investigating a coup attempt against Abacha wanted to speak with her. She followed them out. When they would not let her drive herself in her own car, she went with them, wedged between two soldiers in the back of an official car.

Chris Anyanwu swiftly disappeared into Nigeria's gulag. After four days, friends and family finally located her at the Directorate of Military Intelligence. Weeks passed. Rumors about the torture being inflicted on Anyawu circulated to her staff. Occasionally, Anyanwu's sisters were allowed to send her food, toiletries and clothing. Then, one day they visited her and were told that she had been moved. Weeks later a government spokesman announced that Chris Anyanwu was one of 40 persons convicted of plotting a coup to overthrow the government. She had been sentenced to life in prison for the crime of committing journalism.

Anyanwu was charged with concealing sources who supposedly had tipped her off to an alleged coup plot. A few months earlier her magazine had run a story entitled, *Coup Update: Bloodbath Soon*. Presumably the article angered Abacha and his henchmen.

Chris Anyanwu's courage and the high price she was paying for press freedom inspired journalists worldwide. Outraged international press freedom activists strongly protested the arrest of

Anyanwu and others, with the result that her sentence was reduced to 15 years.

In 1995, she received the International Women's Media Foundation's (IWMF) *Courage in Journalism Award*, an event that made news in Nigeria and around the world. Word of the honor even reached Anyanwu, then held in solitary confinement. She was passed a note that read: *"Some women in America are giving you a prize. The world is watching."*

Anyanwu later told the IWMF that receiving the award had buoyed her spirits while in prison. *"Yes! Somebody must understand or else they wouldn't just give out an award like this,"* she recalled thinking. *"I was very much encouraged and strengthened by it. And it made me confident and determined not to cave into pressure."* Still, though she was honored in the United States, she remained in a Nigerian prison.

Faith and confidence in her convictions helped Anyanwu weather her ordeal. She learned to crochet. She created a design for a brightly colored, carefully constructed tam that she called "Triumph of the Spirit." She made one after another.

She was moved to Gombe, a subhuman prison where several prisoners died each week from starvation and disease. There, she was kept locked in a dark and damp cell.

Denied medication, Anyanwu went partially blind. In 1997, doctors warned that she was in danger of going completely blind if she did not receive medical attention abroad. Still, while the world agitated for her release, she sat in prison and *The Sunday Magazine* stopped publishing.

"In the dark days of Abacha, the only saving grace was the press. People were cowed completely and the private media fought on at a tremendous cost to it, but it continued to fight," she later recalled. She added that during the years she was in

prison, the underground press in Nigeria flourished.

Freedom finally came in June 1998, following Sani Abacha's sudden death from a heart attack. Four months later, in October, Anyanwu was finally able to fly to the United States to accept the IWMF's *Courage in Journalism Award*. She recalled for an audience of journalists in New York the impact that the award had had on her in prison.

"It strengthened me," she said. *"Whenever the going got very tough, I said, 'don't cave in. Don't be an insult to women. Hang on.'"*

"Freedom is not something that we depend on any group or institution to confer on us. We fight for it," she continued. *"The perils to journalists are growing. But we take it all in the spirit of soldiering. For no good soldier would allow himself to be frightened out of the battle because of the imminence of danger."*

After she gained her freedom, Chris Anyanwu founded a company to develop radio stations in Nigeria. She has also been at work writing her memoirs. Of the time she spent in prison, she said in 1998, *"I wrote all the time I was in prison. I wrote on whatever I could get, even toilet paper. I had to. Memory is not unlimited in terms of replaying an experience. I could never replay the experience of walking into prison for the first time."*

Still, in November 2000, when Anyanwu walked into that Nigerian courtroom, it was with the purpose of recalling her days in prison. *"I could not have done myself or the country a greater favor,"* she wrote following her testimony.

"By the time I rose to be recognized, the Abacha men bent down their heads. By the time I finished testifying, ... the crowd was in tears...."

Excerpts from Chris Anyanwu's Testimony before Nigeria's Human Rights Violation Panel

"No man can succeed in that scale of evil alone. General Abacha had many accomplices. Most remain unrepentant, defiant, arrogant. There in lies a greater danger. If the panel is to take its mission of fact-finding, reconciliation and national healing seriously, then all the parties involved, including corporate bodies who serviced the machine of brutality, ought to be brought forward to explain their roles and be compelled to make amends. ...

The federal government of Nigeria, by the specific instruction of her head of state, General Abacha, ... brutalized me psychologically. I have spent the last two years recovering from the experience.

Your honor, General Abacha is no more, but many accomplices alive today who know what happened to me, what was my crime, how the plan for my torture came about, who did what and who helped them execute it.

All I ask this respected body is that these people be called in to explain to me and the world the innumerable questions that have rung in my head for five years now: What did I do to deserve all this and who did me in with Abacha. ...I want my country to tell me that what happened to me will never happen to any Nigerian, any woman. I want my country to shake off its determined, collective amnesia, awake to the full horror of what happened and then shout: No! Never again!

Razia Bhatti and Najma Babar: Two Champions of Independent Journalism in Pakistan

By **BEENA SARWAR**

This article is about two trailblazing women: Razia Bhatti and Najma Babar. They are no longer with us, but their legacy lives on, as women, as human beings, and as journalists.

Among the marginalised and disenfranchised in Pakistan, women are doubly disadvantaged. Less than 2 per cent of the general budget is allocated to education and the adult literacy rate is below 33 %; it is even lower for women (only 28 % in urban areas, and 7 % in rural areas). Yet Pakistani girls shine in education. The universities of Karachi and Lahore, Pakistan's largest two cities, have an almost fifty per cent female enrolment, and the girl students usually far outstrip their male counterparts in examinations and tests.

Over the past years, the number of women seeking professional careers has been steadily growing. Because of the social structures, many come from more privileged, 'better' educated backgrounds, from families with a generally wider world-view. This also explains the proportionately larger number of women in the English language press, and in the features and magazine sections as opposed to the Urdu press, since English is the language of the elite in Pakistan, while Urdu is, as journalist Khaled Ahmed puts it, as "*the language of indoctrination and ideology*". The few progressive and broad-minded journalists among the Urdu language press remain the exception that proves the rule. Overall, women journalists in Pakistan are "*committed, professional and striving to change a work environment which discourages women from writing on politics and serious issues,*" as

Beena Sarwar has worked as a journalist since 1982. She started at *The Star* when Najma Babar worked there as an editor. She has worked at the *News on Sunday* since 1994 and is currently on leave studying for an MA in TV documentary at Goldsmiths College in London.

Kathmandu-based journalist Sangeeta Lama put it in a report in monthly *Nepali Himal*.



The last photo of Razia Bhatti reporting from a fashion show in Karachi shortly before her death.

Razia Bhatti, aged 52 when she died, was one such journalist who led the way for countless others. Her untimely and sudden death of a brain haemorrhage on March 12, 1996, ended an almost 30-year long journalistic career. Her death left bereft all those whom she had inspired, trained and groomed on the job, and by example.

Born Razia Bonderay, she graduated in English literature and language from Karachi University, and joined *The Illustrated Weekly of Pakistan* in 1967, becoming part of the team that converted the society magazine into the country's finest socio-political monthly, re-named *Herald* in 1970. Razia's stint as editor of *Herald*, which began in 1975, coincided with the most repressive period in Pakistan's history.

In 1977, a military coup led by chief of army staff General Ziaul Haq overthrew the elected prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was hanged two years later on trumped up

murder charges. Zia's period (1977-88) was marked by a new era of political repression, and a new focus on religion and national ideology in a bid to legitimise his rule. Censorship was common and the independent media devised various ingenious and courageous means of getting news and analysis across to their readers.

Foremost among the dissenting publications was *Herald*, along with the evening daily *The Star*, the weekly *Viewpoint*, the dailies *The Frontier Post* and *The Muslim* and some Sindh language papers. Noted Pakistani scholar, the late Eqbal Ahmed, in his obituary on Razia ('Tribute to crusader', *Dawn*, March 17 1996), recalled an interview of his in *Herald*, "edited with greater excellence than I had experienced from well known publications in Europe and America, and which exhibited more courage in Ziaul Haq's unpleasant days than any editor had dared. 'She will crash', I had thought then, 'or else she will help transform Pakistani journalism'. She did both."

Her independent stance was predictably unpopular with the military authorities: General Ziaul once got so infuriated that he waved a copy of her article at a press conference and said he would not tolerate such journalism. Undeterred by pressure, from either the authorities or the publishers, Razia resigned rather than compromising her editorial independence. Most of the editorial team walked out with her - and started a bold new venture.

Newsline, launched in 1989, was the first magazine in Pakistan's history run by a journalists' cooperative with complete editorial freedom and independence, brought out on a shoe-string budget. Razia wrote of their mission: "*Newsline is the venture of a team of working journalists who want to serve this nation in the way they know best: to seek the truth, to expose injustice, and to fight for redress. We hope not only to appeal to the reason, but to touch the heart.*" She saw the journalists' role "as both reporter and crusader. In a civilisation that seems to be regressing into new horrors, we must seek and speak the truth for we are the voice of voiceless millions."

Its very first year, *Newsline* won the Asia-Pacific award for Editorial Excellence. The April 1991 issue of *Newsline* featured the ethnic violence that was tearing Karachi apart with journalists and the media being a particular target of the MQM (Mohajir Qaumi Movement). Razia wrote: "*Perhaps it is a barometer of Pakistani society today that the recurring theme in this month's Newsline is violence: violence against the press, violence against those holding different religious beliefs, and violence against children.*"

It is indicative of *Newsline's* balanced and fair coverage that the magazine was always out of favour with whichever government was in power. In 1994, Razia was awarded the Courage in Journalism award by the Washington-based International Women's Media Foundation. IWMF said of her: "*In a country where incidents of violence against the press were among the highest in the world, Bhatti took on drug cartels, ethnic and fascist political parties, militant Islamic groups, a president's son-in-law, a prime minister's spouse, and successive governments. She broke taboos and transgressed limits imposed on freedom of expression by authoritarian regimes as well as a conservative society.*"

Another woman journalist who had led the way for so many others passed away shortly after Razia. Najma Babar had worked as an assistant editor in the evening daily *The Star* from June 1981 until she moved on within the same publishing group (*Dawn*) in 1993 to launch Tuesday Review, a mid-week magazine. She continued to work as editor of *Tuesday Review* until her death on May 26 1996.

Involved in student politics from her days at Karachi University, it was only natural for Najma to become involved in the Women's Action Forum formed in 1981 in response to the discriminatory laws bulldozed through by General Ziaul Haq; laws like the Zina Ordinance of 1979 which criminalised extra-marital sex and made a rape victim open to charges of adultery, punishable by stoning to death.

A selection of her articles, under the title of '*The Dispossessed*' (Prometheus Publications, Karachi 2000) provides a sampling of her fierce sense of injustice,

thoughtful, insightful reporting and analyses about the marginalised sections of society, long before the concept of 'human rights' became common parlance.

Najma found many issues to support, whether it meant marching on the streets of Karachi or pounding away on a rickety old typewriter to produce a newspaper column. She combined the attributes of a reporter and a columnist to produce features that went beyond mere opinions. *"She made sure that her writing not only influenced, but also informed, the reader,"* wrote Zohra Yusuf, editor of *Star Weekend* to which Najma frequently contributed, along with her writings and reports for the daily section.

Najma's concerns included the cause of trafficked women from Burma and Bengal, the women in the fisheries sector and the nursing profession, besides issues of health and economics, family laws and violence against women. Her sense of humanity and justice is reflected in a brief but moving piece during the ethnic violence that engulfed Karachi, *'The Bonds of Blood'*, which won the All Pakistan Newspaper Society (APNS) Best Feature Award of 1988. It documented how people from different ethnic backgrounds supported and sustained each other during the riots. *"When a bullet leaves, under command of the shooter, it is not governed by any laws dividing people by caste, creed or rationality. Pain and sorrow, suffering and death also cannot be grouped by man-made divisions,"* she wrote after a visit to a hospital to which the wounded were being brought.

As women and as journalists, both Razia and Najma were role models for a host of younger journalists, male and female. Their sudden and untimely deaths so close to each other were not the only parallels: both were relatively young and left behind two young children

each. They had loving relationships with their husbands, both Gul Hameed Bhatti and Babar Ayaz were journalists who endorsed wholeheartedly the cause of women, shared child-care and household responsibilities. In this, they were role models for a lot of younger men, in a society where men tend not to share such responsibilities or allow 'their' women the kind of freedom Razia and Najma enjoyed.



Najma Babar reviewing one of her articles.

Both in their own way served the cause of freedom of expression as well as women's rights in Pakistan during some of the most difficult years of the country's history. It is painful to be writing about them in the past tense, and yet, there is cause for celebration and hope in the legacy they have left behind, through which they continue to be part of the consciousness, and provide inspiration for all those Pakistani women and men who value freedom of expression and the principles of justice and social concern.

Women Killed in the Exercise of Journalism

1990 – 2000

In the last ten years 71 women journalists and media workers have been killed for their journalism. Some have been caught in the cross fire while working as war reporters, others have been assassinated because of their investigative and outspoken reporting and some were killed simply because they were women working as journalists.

The IFJ commemorates our courageous female colleagues with this list.

1990

Silvia Dussan-Saenz	Colombia	British, Channel 4, shot while interviewing three peasant leaders
Myrian Nassa de Sampayo	Colombia	Caracol Radio
Nohora Ruiz Florez	Colombia	
Mirna Mack	Guatemala	Stabbed to death
Jean Landringan	Philippines	Publisher and editor of weekly Sunday Star and a professor at Mindanao University
Martinika Lukowski	Poland	Editor for a local TV studio in Warsaw

1991

Diana Turbay Quintero	Colombia	<i>Hoy por Hoy</i> weekly newspaper, kidnapped, shot and killed
Rosanna Della Casa	Iraq	BBC, member of freelance team (3) that disappeared in Iraq, her husband was also on the team
Melissa Alfaro	Peru	Letter bomb explosion, newspaper
Salatyna Askerova	Azerbaijan	Azerbaijani journalist killed in the Nagorno Karabakh region.

1992

Nory Navarro Gomez	Peru	Radio Propecito, kidnapped and killed with Secretary of Superior Court of Ayacucho, paramilitary commandos involved?
Gloria Martin	Philippines	Radio Philippines Network, shot, about to reveal the identity of the kidnappers of a priest (American?)

1993

Sharon Herbaugh	Afghanistan	Helicopter crash, chief AP bureau
Natasha Singh	Afghanistan	idem
Karmela Sojanovic	Bosnia-H	Killed by sniper
Alexandra Tuttle	Georgia	Wall Street Journal, Plane shot down, American, 22 victims
Jessica Elizalde de Leon	Mexico	El Fronterizo daily, El Tiempo, Radio Centro, 106 FM, shot in the face
Araceli Caballero	Mexico	El Dia daily, shot, death threats (reporting on municipal fraud)
Maria Carlin Fernandez	Peru	shot, previously investigating into her brother's murder
Emma Podobed	Tajikistan	Narodnaya Gazeta, disappeared, death circumstances unclear
Aysel Malkac	Turkey	Ozgur Gundem, last seen questioned by plainclothes security agents, 23 years old
Dona St. Plite	USA	Haitian journalist in exile, unresolved
Maria Tecari	Venezuela	demonstration, Agencia Colombiana de Informacion, died of injuries caused by police

1994

Yasmina Drissi	Algeria	proof reader, Le Soir Algeria, abducted, throat slit
Cynthia Elbaum	Chechnya	American, Chechnya bomb-blast
Lissy Schmidt	Iraq	German, AFP, Frankfurter Rundschau, Tagespiegel, Kurd-related issue, ambush
Lydia Macas	Philippines	DXDD, grenade on the roof of a Catholic convent, accident
Ilaria Alpi	Somalia	Italian executed while reporting on Italian contingent departure, TV RAI 3
Mukamana	Rwanda	Idem, video production company Reba Videwo, (woman)
Kate Macniven	South Africa	WTN producer, car accident
Kathy Jones	USA	Weekend anchorwoman, KFOR-TV (NBC affiliate), plane crash accident

1995

Rachida Hammadi	Algeria	ENTV, shot with her sister, died of her wounds
Malika Sabour	Algeria	Echourouk al Arabi, killed in front of her family at home
Naima Hamouda	Algeria	Revolution Africaine, shot, disfigured
Yasmina Brikh	Algeria	Radio Culture, shot
Saida Djebaili	Algeria	Al-Hayat al-Arabiya, shot
Khadidja Dahmani	Algeria	Echourouk al-Arabi, shot
Radja Brahimi	Algeria	Technician ENTV, shot with husband
Natalya Alyakina	Chechnya	Focus magazine, RUFA Radio, shot

1996

Naima Illoul	Algeria	ENTV, technician, car bomb outside of Maison de la Presse, killed in the explosion
Dalila Drideche	Algeria	Assistant to Belghezli, shot alongside
Farida Bouziane	Algeria	Tizi Ouzou, shot in car
Nadezhda Chaikova	Chechnya	Obshchaya Gazeta, beaten, blindfolded, shot in the neck
Nina Yefimova	Chechnya	"Vozrozhdeniye", shot, kidnapped and killed with her mother
Veronica Guerin	Ireland	Sunday Independent crime investigative journalist, previously interviewed mafia chief "Mad Dog"
Yolanda Figueroa	Mexico	the whole family was assassinated in their home, published a book on government corruption
Marina Gorelova	Russia	Otechestvo private TV station, explosion in cemetery

1997

Zoubida Berkane	Algeria	TV technician, assassinated with two friends
Louisa Ait-Adda	Algeria	Camerawoman, Algerian State TV, killed by armed group
Maria Lorena Saravia	El Salvador	News reader, Radio Corporacion Salvadorena, gunshot in the head
Antonina Lukina	Russia	
Inessa Dotenko	Russia	
Lidia Lazarenko	Russia	

1998

Amparo Jimenez Pallares	Colombia	En Vivo TV news program, worked for NGO, death threats
Isabel Chumpitaz Panta	Peru	La Voz del Pueblo, husband and wife killing for 'educating the farmers', police involvement?
Larisa Yudina	Russia	Editor in-chief Sovetskaya daily, stabbed, had uncovered corruption of President Ilyumzhinov, death threats
Lira Lobach	Russia	Reporter for Tomsk State Television Company went missing on December 28, 1997 in Tomsk. Her mutilated body was found on April 6, woman
Galina Mashtakova	Russia	Died of wounds sustained whilst covering Chechen conflict in 1997 – war correspondent for a number of Moscow based publications
Hope Bartlett	USA	WJXX-TV, drowned while investigating the impact of a fishing-net ban, she could not swim

1999

Jelica Munitlak	FRY	RTS bombing
Shivani Bhatnagar	India	Indian Express, strangled, with length wire, stabbed
Bolade Fasasi	Nigeria	Treasurer of Lagos State Council NUJ, member of NAWOI, shot
Lyubov Loboda	Russia	Vesti newspaper, stabbed three times, case solved
Valentina Neverova	Russia	Pravo, died in fire at police station
Valentina Mirolyubova	Russia	Husband and wife killed at home
Jill Dando	UK	BBC Presenter, shot, investigative work "Crimewatch", under investigation
Michelle Lima	USA	KSAT-TV, associate producer for CNN and reporter/anchor for WJBF, car accident

2000

Maria Salinas Gallego	Colombia	Body found next to 2 guerrilla fighters (ELN) who were killed during a confrontation with army troops
Marisol Revelo Baron	Colombia	Unidentified gunman fired 3 bullets into her stomach on the doorstep of her home
Coletane Markham	South Africa	Attacked outside her home, under investigation, police investigated, she was investigating child prostitution at the time
Miroslava Mayorchuk	Ukraine	Crime reporter and editor of independent TV channel STB, found hanging in her apartment

APPENDIX I



International Federation of Journalists A Union Policy on Equal Opportunities

1) National journalists' unions must include a clause in their constitutions to set up a women's committee to promote equal opportunities for women journalists. The women's committee must be guaranteed a seat on the union's governing body;

2) The union must adopt a policy on equal opportunities to include:

- principles of equal opportunities as outlined in the Recommendation to Convention 111 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO):
 - access to vocational guidance and placement services;
 - access to training and employment of their own choice on the basis of individual suitability for such training or employment;
 - advancement in accordance with individual character, experience, ability and diligence;
 - security of tenure of employment;
 - remuneration for work of equal value;
 - conditions of work, including hours of work, rest periods, annual holidays with pay, occupational safety and occupational health measures, as well as social security measures and welfare facilities and benefits provided in connection with employment;
- removal of promotion barriers and job segregation;
- a campaign for fully paid parental leave of at least three months;
- a campaign for the option to take up to one year unpaid parental leave with guaranteed employment of equal status on return;
- equal access to company accommodation, medical aid, insurance and pension rights and other benefits;
- flexible arrangements for parents as regarding working schedules and rest periods;
- training in equal opportunities awareness for men and women;

3) The union must as part of its regular programme of activity:

- monitor the status of women in the union;
- provide information and services directed at female members;
- press governments to implement ILO conventions and recommendations on equal opportunities in national policy and legislation;
- include issues of equal opportunities in collective bargaining demands;

4) In developing its policy programme the Union should seek to cooperate with organisations advocating equal opportunities for the promotion of status of women journalists.

Adopted at the IFJ Women in View Conference in Harare, 1993

APPENDIX II

BRASILIA CHARTER

Female journalists from 17 American countries met in Brasilia, Brazil, on 3-5 May 2001 for the First Latin American Conference. They sought to shed light on the professional situation and working conditions of female journalists on the American continent and to develop proposals for action to be presented to the First Global Conference of Women in the Media organised by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) in Seoul, Korea, on 11 June 2001.

Whereas

despite the fact that female journalists are increasingly involved in the management of information and communication, and despite regional and global policies aimed at countering inequality in various fields of human, social and professional endeavour, they remain subject to gender, sex, wage, work, racial and ethnic discrimination;

Whereas

although there is legislation to protect and defend women's rights in most American countries, in practice such legislation is largely unknown and violations go unpunished;

Whereas

the social condition of female journalists on our continent has worsened dramatically as a result of neo-liberal policies which, in the field of communication, have resulted in a greater concentration of media ownership, labour deregulation, the closure of news media, mass redundancies, violence and threats jeopardizing freedom of expression, and the violation of fundamental human rights;

Whereas

for as long as social stereotypes persist and lead to social patterns of unequal opportunity for female journalists, they will be unable to develop their full potential as human beings, professionals and managers and will have limited access to the decision-making structures;

Whereas

the image of the female journalist in Latin America is still used in particular by the audiovisual media on the basis of mercantilist criteria whereby intellectual merit and professional ability are subordinated to physical appearance and age;

Whereas

for as long as female journalists' full access to a professional career and to social, political and trade union activism is restricted, then they will not have access to decision-making bodies and will not be able to contribute fully as a social actor to the strengthening of democracy,

We propose that,

1. Trade unions should promote training by area in each country, ensuring equal access for men and women to the training programmes;
2. Latin American conferences should be organized with students in social communication invited as exhibitors in order to more closely involve them as future trade union members, thereby encouraging student participation;
3. As a concrete example of a positive policy, a minimum quota of 30% should be fixed for female participation in journalists' unions, with regard to both recruitment activities and in the decision-making bodies;
4. All campaigns seeking to promote a positive image of women should take the race issue into account;
5. The Conference should argue for the support and creation of community radio stations in all countries, thereby facilitating the dissemination of gender issues to the citizenry;
6. Access to the labour market should be guaranteed for handicapped women, and the creation of adaptable media for the deaf and the blind should be promoted;
7. The trade union organizations should include among their claims specific demands relating to female journalists, in particular guaranteeing equal opportunities in terms of works, wages, promotion, and attention to specific issues and/or problems to with women's health, and should fight sexual harassment;
8. Companies should not discriminate against women in news coverage and should increase the channels for the dissemination of female points of view, especially when reporting on politics, the economy, business and science;
9. Communication companies should set aside suitable premises for the trade union training of journalists;
10. Journalists' unions should prepare a study into the situation of the female journalist in Latin America and should promote the exchange of information between unions;
11. The IFJ should pursue the international debate on women and promote the creation of thematic committees on this subject, with the participation of male journalists;
12. The GAL-FIP should be urged to hold seminars for female journalists, with the participation of educators and psychologists;
13. The IFJ should recommend and support the creation of a university chair in Latin America for the discussion and analysis of the issue of gender, race and citizenship in social communication courses, including in particular political and trade union issues;
14. The Conference supports the Third United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance that will be held in South Africa in September 2001;

15. The IFJ should promote and encourage the daily dissemination in the news media of reports on the consequences of globalization, especially the destruction of national cultures;
16. The Latin American journalists' organizations should help further strengthen the Female Journalists' Network of CIMAC, headquartered in Mexico, by creating a website for the international debate on this issue and by using alternative media in order to overcome the problem of technological exclusion;
17. The Conference should recommend that companies employing journalists and governments adopt gender-sensitive editorial policies reflecting gender equality;
18. Journalists and the media should not discriminate against or deform the image of women, especially in advertisements and entertainment items;
19. Journalists' organizations and the IFJ should promote the laws and conventions on women's rights, and especially the ILO Conventions and political documents of the ICFTU/ORIT;
20. Union organizations should permit and encourage the involvement of journalism students in its battle plan for equal rights for women;
21. The Conference proposes the creation of committees to monitor situations where male and female journalists are afforded unequal treatment;
22. The Conference defends the adoption by the IFJ of policies aiming to raise the status of communication professionals in the Latin American region, promoting professional programmes to train men and women to work in the media, including community media;
23. The GAL-FIP, on the basis of the priorities mentioned here, should draft a Plan of Action that will then be submitted to all IFJ member organizations, with a view to its presentation at the First Global Conference of Women in the Media in Seoul, and its implementation for the coming three years.

*Adopted at the 1st Latin American Conference of Female Journalists,
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