

# India censors rape documentary

by Jessica Blough

Culture Editor

Just days before the film was expected to be released, the New Delhi government banned the BBC documentary titled "India's Daughter" from being shown across the country, claiming that it glorifies rape and blames the victim. The documentary is about a 2012 gang rape of a 23-year-old medical student by six men, which led to her death. The event later sparked protests across the world as women demanded that the government pay attention to rapes and handle them properly. The documentary was set to premiere on NCTV in India on International Women's Day, March 8.

After viewing excerpts of the film prior to Mar. 8, the Indian government deemed it unsuitable for public viewing due to an interview with one of the rapists, Mukesh Singh. During the interview, Singh degrades and victim – he blames the woman he raped and all other rape victims, claiming "a girl is far more responsible for rape than a boy... A decent girl won't roam around at 9 o'clock at night." A defense lawyer in the case expressed a similar opinion, saying "If my daughter or sister engaged in premarital activities and disgraced herself and allowed herself to lose face and character by doing such things... I would put petrol on her and set her alight." The government claimed that these comments and others like them would disrupt the civil order and encourage future rapes. Delhi's high court did not rule on the ban, so it is now up to Delhi's chief justice.

Various protests erupted across India in reaction to

the ban. Activists claim that banning the documentary reflects further disrespect towards Indian women. The TV channel that was set to show "India's Daughter" showed a blank screen at the time the film was set to be shown. Everyone from columnists to congresswomen has criticized the government for hiding the truth about rape and using fear of public disturbance as an excuse not to talk about the subject. The director of BBC Television, Danny Cohen, addressed a letter to Sh. Rakesh Singh defending India's Daughter for "raising awareness of a global problem." Speaking on behalf of BBC, Cohen stated "We do not feel the film as currently edited could ever be construed as derogatory to women or an affront to their dignity. Indeed, it highlights the challenges women in India face today." The film has illegally circulated online, even reaching the slum where some of the rapists lived.

The filmmaker, Leslee Udwin, has also spoken out in defense of the documentary since its banning. Udwin said the inspiration for the film came from the "momentous, courageous protests" that erupted just after the rape. She claimed that the opinions expressed by the rapists were not atypical, and therefore needed to be brought to public attention. She also mentioned that the ban resulted from a clip of the film that did not reveal the entire documentary, so it was not reliable. Udwin ended her interview with "But let us not forget, this is not India only. Men have the balance of power in the world... [Women] don't have equal rights in terms of implementation of laws."

(Sources: The Independent, Fox News)



STRONG BACKLASH: The documentary is based on the 2012 gang rape of a 23-year-old medical student; the rape prompted protests around the world.

# Boris Nemtsov dies suspiciously

by Sarah Sullivan

Graphic Designer/Web Editor

In the early hours of Feb. 27, the Russian politician Boris Nemtsov was shot four times in the back as he crossed a bridge in Moscow. Nemtsov, 55, was walking with a female companion about 400 yards from the Kremlin when he was murdered. Russia's Investigative Committee reported that at least seven shots were fired.



SHOTS FIRED: Nemtsov was murdered about 400 yards away from the Kremlin.

Nemtsov, a 55-year-old former deputy prime minister, had just voiced his criticism about prime minister Vladimir Putin's policies. There was also a planned protest against the government the following day regarding Putin's economic policies and the Kremlin's alleged involvement in the war in the east Ukraine. Nemtsov was a longtime critic of Putin and the Kremlin and had conducted mass rallies four years prior in an effort to prevent Putin from becoming Russia's prime minister again.

Nemtsov had stated prior to his death that he feared Putin wanted him dead because of his contrasting political views regarding the war in Ukraine. According to Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko, Nemtsov was also planning to release information about Russia's involvement in the Ukrainian conflict.

While there is no clear evidence that Putin had a role

in the murder, the evidence surrounding Nemtsov death is very cloudy. Putin has been known to take measures to silence his opposition through trumped up criminal charges or by forcing them to flee the country. For example, Putin imprisoned Oleg Navalny in December, the brother of Putin's political adversary Alexei Navalny, in a supposed attempt to force Navalny into silence.

The prime minister denies any involvement in Nemtsov death. He has stated that the attack may have been an attempt to frame Putin and make it appear as if he was killing his opposition. Putin also believes that radical Muslims may have been behind the attack, a claim that is supported by the recent arrest of Zaur Dadayev, a Muslim from the Chechen region in northern Russia. He and four other men from the area appeared in court where he stated that he "loves the prophet Muhammad" and raised his index finger, a common Islamic gesture. The murder may have been in retaliation for Nemtsov support of the Charlie Hebdo cartoons. Ramzan Kadyrov, a Kremlin-backed leader, is also an associate of Dadayev and may have been involved in the murder. He also has close political ties with Putin. Another suspect in Chechen blew himself up before he could be detained by police.

While Nemtsov murder case has not yet been solved, it is only the last affair in a long chain of events that accusations against Putin and the Russian Muslims highlights the unrest and paranoia within the nation.

(Sources: New York Times, Reuters, CNN, The Guardian)



all photos courtesy wikimedia commons

A VOICE OF REASON: Prior to his death, Nemtsov criticized Putin's policies.

# Police smother protest

by Mhairi Finlayson

Web Editor

Police in Mexico violently responded to the protest held by members of the Education Union of Guerrero in Guerrero in Mexico. Protestors demanded pay, as well as more investigation of the disappearance of 43 student-teachers in September. After a bus drove into the barricade of federal police, injuring seven, the situation escalated from a peaceful protest to a violent altercation between police and demonstrators. The police began to beat the protesters and smashed and set fire to vehicles.

A portion of the protesters were armed with sticks and stones that they threw at the police. The police used truncheons and tear gas to repress the demonstration. A 65-year-old man, Claudio Castillo, died from head injuries that he received from the police, and twelve other teachers were hospitalized. The police arrested 106 people, and many photos emerged of bloodied protesters in police vans.

The protest was originally timed to coincide with a negotiation between the teachers union and the government. When the meeting was cancelled, the protest became more heated. The Education Union of Guerrero wanted the teachers to be paid, and the demonstration was also in relation to the incident in September when local police and a drug cartel attacked the student-teachers. This ended in the disappearance of the student-teachers. An investigation by the magazine Proceso has alleged that the federal police may have also been involved in the incident.

The situation in Guerrero has been volatile since the disappearance of the students, as the teachers have held repeated protests. However, businesses are angry at the teachers for protesting and harming the tourism-based economy in Guerrero.

The protest, along with the subsequent police response, is a result of the rising tensions in the area, particularly between teachers and police, since September. The police and protesters have clashed violently previously, and one notable occurrence ended in the burning of government buildings.

(Sources: The Guardian, ABC News)

# COM: Indonesia

by Olivia Pla

People Editor

Twelve hours and three time zones: the time it takes to travel from one end of Indonesia to the other by plane and the number of time zones you would pass through. The archipelagic country of Indonesia is composed of thousands of tiny islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. These islands form 34 provinces, making Indonesia the fourth most populated country in the world with 252 million people.

Indonesia is in the Ring of Fire, an area with a high frequency of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, meaning that it is prone to volcanic activity. Therefore, islands throughout the country are dotted with both active and dormant volcanoes. The islands of Bali, Java, and Sumatra are among the largest islands in Indonesia.

Bali, Indonesia's most famous island for tourism, is home to the majority of the country's Hindu population. Bali is also well known for its exceptional arts, such as metalwork, leatherwork, paintings, and traditional and modern dance. Scuba diving is a popular activity in Bali because the island is part of the coral triangle, an area with high biodiversity of marine organisms. The waters around Bali are home to about seven times as many coral species as the Caribbean.



A VIBRANT ECOSYSTEM: The reefs around Bali house about seven times as many coral species as the Caribbean.

Though Bali is famous for its natural attractions and relaxing atmosphere, the Balinese people and their culture are an attraction of their own. The island's inhabitants are a genuine and friendly group, but they also have a mischievous side. Often, when they see a bald tourist, they will declare "bung ujan," which means that the rain for that day is cancelled – their comical analogy between a hairless head and clear skies.

Indonesia's most populated island, Java, is at the core of the nation. One of Java's most popular attractions is the Green Canyon (Cujang Taneuh). Tourists can rent a boat and paddle down a river to a waterfall and a canyon where they can swim.

Another popular attraction is Pulau Dua, an island off the coast of Java. This island is home to one of Indonesia's major bird sanctuaries. Herons, storks, and cormorants make up the majority of the bird population, but many migratory birds come during the breeding season. Tourists in Java can take a boat or walk to the island by following a path that weaves between fish ponds.

The island of Sumatra is the perfect example of a tropical paradise. Jungles provide habitat for exotic animals such as orangutans, tigers, rhinos, and elephants. Tourists have the opportunity to see the majestic orangutan at Bukit Lawang's renown orangutan center. The center's primary goal is to rehabilitate the animals, and it allows tourists to feed the orangutans. Since the program has been started, over 200 orangutans have been introduced into the jungle trained with skills they need to survive.

Whether you're looking for wild animals, relaxing beaches, energetic cities, or surreal natural phenomena, Indonesia will accommodate you with its diverse culture and beauty.

(Sources: Lonely Planet, Indonesia'd)