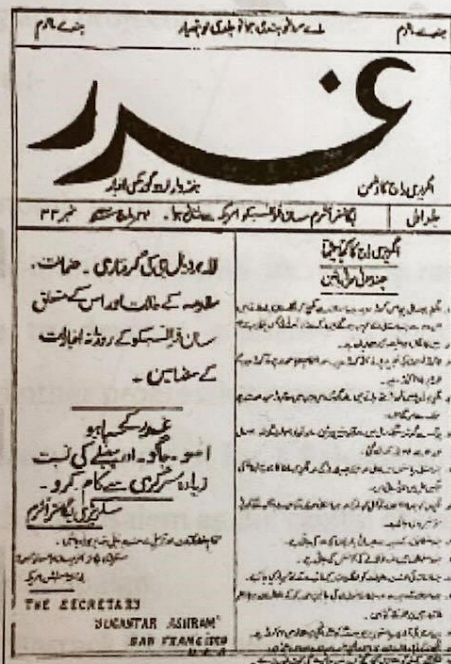




Red salute to the martyrs of the Ghadar Party, their sacrifice will never be forgotten.



Ghadar Newspaper (Urdu) Vol. 1, No. 22, March 24, 1914



# INDIAN WORKERS' ASSOCIATION

Established 1938

## National Conference 2013

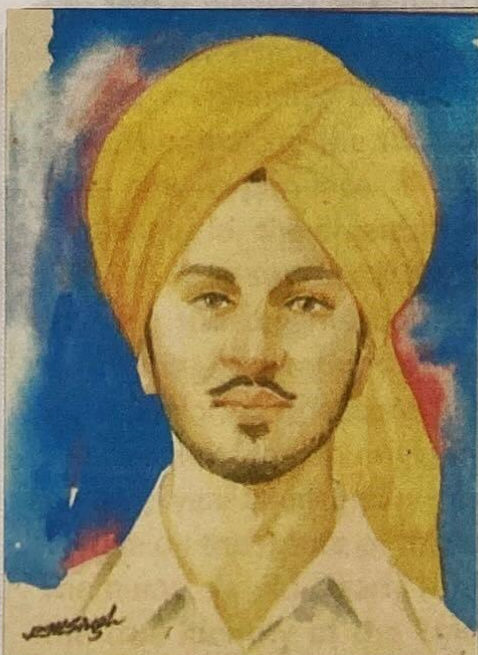
## Draft Report

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 The Draft report of the Indian Workers' Association GB, to be presented on behalf of the Central Executive committee by the National General Secretary at its National Conference on xxxxx2013 at Leicester.
- 1.2 Dear Comrades,
- 1.3 The last conference was held on 25th January 2009 in Com. Harkishan Singh Surjeet hall in Leicester.
- 1.4 We discussed key aspects from our future work plans within the concrete conditions prevailing and projected at the time.
- 1.5 The key themes were :-
  - 1.5.1 The world economic crisis and Britain.
  - 1.5.2 The targeting of immigrants with increase in racism and fascism
  - 1.5.3 A programme to develop solidarity actions with the Trade Union movement and other progressive organisations.
  - 1.5.4 Palestine Solidarity Campaign for a Palestinian State based on the 1967 agreement with E Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.
  - 1.5.5 Cuba Solidarity Campaign
  - 1.5.6 The election of Barrack Obama and the audacity of hope.
  - 1.5.7 India; UPA's pursuit of neo liberalism, rise of communalism and the role of the left. The National Strategic Alliance
  - 1.5.8 Reviewed the 2004 -17 point programme and reported on progress.
  - 1.5.9 The rebranding of IWA with the aim of increasing our membership base.
  - 1.5.10 The reaffirmation and commitment to uphold the constitution.
- 1.6 In 2009 at the National conference of IWA we stated that "The economic crisis of the faulty capitalist system could have grave implications for the migrant

1. All functioning of the CEC to be governed and operated under the constitution. The CEC now meets regularly as per the constitution .However the conference schedule has again slipped and this conference is long overdue. This lapse in attention to the constitution needs to be corrected. The CEC takes full responsibility for this failure and will ensure that it is not repeated.
2. Membership: all branch committees to set annual targets to increase membership, through continuous campaigns. All branch committees have undertaken membership campaigns setting targets.
3. Branch Committees to meet on a regular basis (minimum) as per constitution. According to information available this is now a regular practice at most of our branch committees, however there are still some committees that do not recognise the need to discharge this basic organisational need and the incoming CEC will have to work with them to change this situation.
4. Increase in membership and participation by women at all levels, through activity targeted at their engagement and involvement. Dependent upon local conditions this could range from social, cultural, neighbourhood events. Educational and training schemes to be developed and delivered to bring about common understanding and sharing of experiences.
5. There is an alarming increase in the number of reported forced marriages, domestic violence and mistreatment of female fiancés. The IWA will support the ongoing campaigns in equality for women's social and economic rights and raise awareness for the protection of the female foetus from forced and coerced abortions.
6. The emerging issue of all our elderly people and their care to be examined and a report prepared for appropriate action. Specific social, cultural activities including day trips to be organised to bridge the gap between our generations. The IWA (GB) will join with other organisations to safe guard pensions and health care by GPs.
7. Youth, the very essence, without whom all our activities become time limited, not only need to be enrolled as members, but their issues, concerns and aspirations need to be recognised. The IWA (GB) will provide the platform for young people to air their views and draw up action plans. We will support initiatives in line with our aims to build a mass organisation of Indian people in Britain. Through art, sport and music we must increase our communication with young people and break down the barriers. We will support the campaign for the abolition of tuition fees and an increase in apprenticeships, to educate, train and provide skills for our young people.
8. The IWA (GB) will continue to develop an anti-racist perspective drawing upon its historical experience. We will look at ways and means to build a broad platform along the lines of Campaign Against Racist Laws. A concrete programme to enable this to materialise will be put in place after careful analysis of organisations working in this field. The need to build opposition to ID cards, stop and search, hall marks of a Police State will be resisted through a systematically organised campaign, at local and national level.
9. Trade Unions, despite the setbacks, with diminishing membership reflective of the manufacturing industrial base of Britain, still remain the key organisations with whom we must forge working alliances at local and national levels. The IWA (GB)

expects and encourages all its members to be active members of their respective trade unions. We will strive to establish a nucleus from our members of key trade unionist, to enlist their support in rebuilding our working class links. This is ongoing work that requires all our efforts to work with the left and democratic forces to increase trade union activity. We reconfirm our firm belief that the ultimate victory of the working class is only realisable through the militant unity and organisation of all the workers and toiling masses.

10. The IWA gives a clear and inclusive call for each worker to be a member of a union. The IWA is to up the ante and encourage students, employed and the unemployed to become members of a union. Our active participation in T.U. branches and trades councils needs to be increased to infuse us with the activities of the working class. The CEC will explore in coming months the possibility of establishing a South Asian TU organisation for the non unionised sector. The IWA has presented its position on industrial relations and immigration at an industrial school organised by the Communist Party of Britain. We will continue to work closely with the CPB and other left labour movement organisations in further developing a common agenda in the interest of the working class.
11. The CEC will establish a communication improvement programme, to harness the energies of our network of branches in England, Scotland and Ireland.
12. In every branch there must be an e-mail address and the comrades trained, so that they can access this communication media.
13. [www.indobrit.org](http://www.indobrit.org)
14. The IWA (GB) will continue to undertake solidarity campaigns; we will resist the attacks on the working class through the impact of globalisation and liberalisation.
15. The CEC will take formal steps to organise participation in nationally supported campaigns, on issues such as peace, solidarity with Cuba, Palestine, Latin America, the Middle East and the Indian Sub-continent. IWA continues to participate in solidarity campaigns, Stop the War demonstrations. The CEC continues to be represented at the Cuba Solidarity Campaign Executive Committee and organised events throughout 2009 to celebrate 50 glorious years of Cuba's revolution as part of Cuba 50 campaign. The IWA is formally affiliated to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. The CC recommends affiliation to the CSC and PSC by all branches and executive members.



16. The IWA (GB) will encourage the formation of progressive writers and art groups to promote a secular and democratic culture. This section has also lost its focus and organisation. We will work with our friends in this field to promote art and culture to advance the working class movement. This will provide the mechanism to defeat the nefarious designs of communalism and religious fundamentalism.

17. Perpetrations are being made to celebrate the centenary of the Ghadar Party in Canada, USA, UK and India. .Jana Natya

- Manch has been invited for a tour of Britain to coincide with the celebrations.
18. In every city there is now access to audio-visual and print media in various languages and the IWA encourages its members to engage in debate and promote a progressive agenda. The need to use the electronic and social media requires delegation of responsibility with accountability to cover the languages of the Indian Diasporas in Britain.
  19. On the social front, the IWA (GB) will undertake educational awareness programmes to stem the rise of lavish wedding ceremonies, with families spending their entire life savings on a single day's pomp and ceremony. Despite raising this issue in some of our public meetings and press statements. We have not given this the serious attention it deserves. In the coming year the IWA as a force for progress will have to raise the profile for social change and move the agenda forward.
  20. The IWA (GB) will work with other agencies to develop a support mechanism for the increasing number of females and sometimes males brought as spouses to this country and then abandoned. We will campaign for the right of indefinite leave to remain for all spouses, without the 12-month, now 24 month qualifying period and the humiliating demonstration of domestic violence.
  21. In line with our constitution we will actively work for the end of cast discrimination. This is work in progress, highlighted throughout by CEC speakers at public forums. The very fact that social and economic deprivation remains intrinsic to the feudal characteristics of cast and religion in India in the 21st century and its reflection within our communities in Britain are issues of serious concern. In the words of Karl Marx "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways. The point however is to change it." Herein lays the answer to the question.
  22. Despite the slow progress, the IWA continues to press for the regularisation of all irregular migrants living in U.K. with a specified time frame of two years, conditional to non-criminal behaviour. The Con-Dem coalition government has now specifically targeted immigrants to further appease right wing voters.
  23. The IWA has again requested from Indian High Commission, the issue of documentation to all Indian citizens living abroad. Other issues related with the Indian High commission consular services in London and Birmingham have also been raised, on which we continue to monitor.
  24. The CEC is pleased to report that in three cities we have exclusive access to office facilities for arranging regular meetings, providing valuable information and advice to the community Derby, Leicester and Wolverhampton. These centres have helped in making the IWA a prime focal point for peoples' issues and activities. This new experience is stretching our available resources and posing new challenges for the organisation.
  25. The CEC has systematically put in place structures and policies to strategically position the organisation to broaden its appeal and representative mass base across the generations of "Indian" people in Britain. The long term aim of the organisation is to ensure that IWA re-establishes itself as the first choice for; all the people of Indian origin including British-Indians and Indo-Brits. Intrinsic to the seventy year anniversary of Indian Workers' Association in 2008 and 09 is the debate on the future of the organisation at all levels.
  26. The name should clearly reflect our history and identity as IWA, it should reflect the true identity of the 1million Indians who are either born in Britain or have

become British citizens through naturalisation often to escape racism and for ease of travel. It should also be an organisation for the other half million, who have also decided to make Britain their home for a longer term than envisaged seventy years ago. The organisation's name should provide a portal for all new migrants and students who wish to work with, research or contact a workers organisation of British Indians.

27. The DNA of the organisation will remain Indian Workers' Association. The regenerated brand will recognise and provide an identity to the second and third generation of British Indians. Children born in Britain to parents-grandparents of Indian origin. Provide a permanent mooring for the stateless generation, who neither fitted in being truly Indian or fully accepted as British. Celebrate the duality of culture; retaining the finest democratic traditions of the country of origin infused with positive aspects of life in Britain. After much debate the brand of Indobrit as a website was launched in 2012 as a socialist platform for Indians in Britain.
28. The holding of the national conference , making the CEC accountable and the application of democratic functioning and transparency in decision making are indications of a healthy vibrant organisation of which we are all justifiably proud.
29. This National Conference is taking place after 4 years , improvement on the past but still not in line with the provisions of the constitution.

### 30. World in 2013

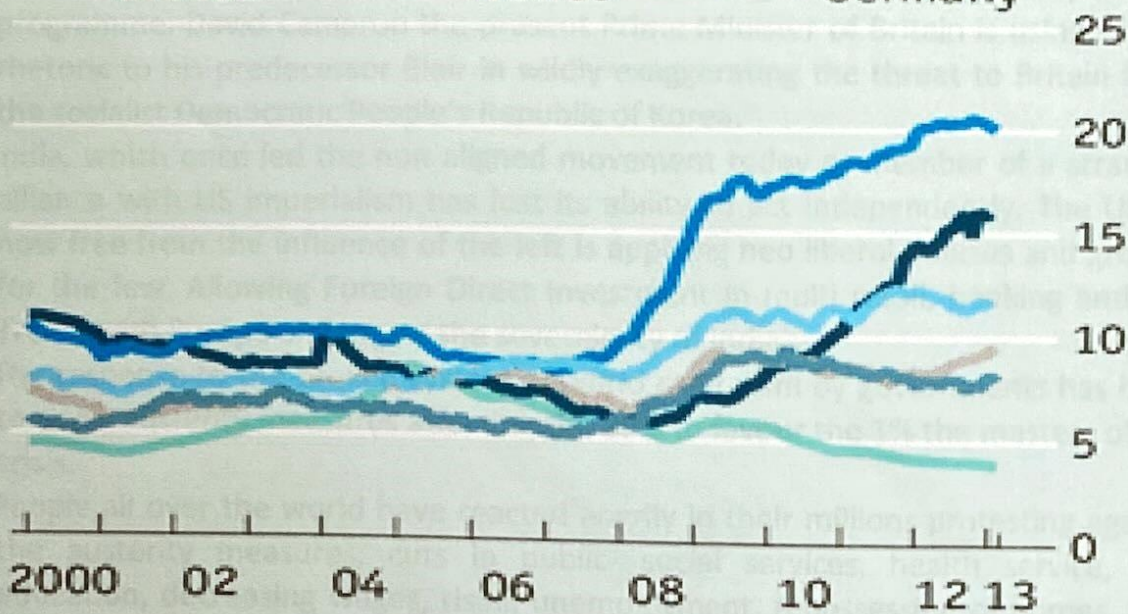
31. The world economic situation has taken a turn for the worse. The crisis created by the capitalist system has in the words of the head of the World Bank gone from a drama to a trauma.
32. Barrack Obama mid way through the first term gave up all pretence of hope and the false promises of change. Obama focused on being re-elected as President of USA for a second term in 2012. Delivering on health care policy and little else. As subservient to a Republican dominated congress, the second term for Obama is even less likely to deliver any change. The working people will continue to pay the price for the crisis of capitalism.
33. US led Imperialism backed by Western Europe and Britain in particular, resorted to type in extending their hegemony in securing world markets and control of natural resources.
34. Economies of Greece, Italy, Ireland, Spain and now Cyprus have surrendered their national economic sovereignty to the IMF, World and European banking institutions.
35. Youth unemployment. Official figures assembled by the International Labour Organisation say that 75m young people are unemployed, or 6% of all 15- to 24-year-olds. But going by youth inactivity, which includes all those who are neither in work nor education, things look even worse. The OECD, an intergovernmental think-tank, counts 26m young people in the rich world as "NEETS": not in employment, education or training. A World Bank database compiled from households shows more than 260m young people in developing economies are similarly "inactive". *The Economist* calculates that, all told, almost 290m are neither working nor studying: almost a quarter of the planet's youth (see chart one).

## Turning grey

2

Youth unemployment, including those in education and training, as % of population aged 15-24 years

Spain Britain United States  
Greece France Germany



Sources: Eurostat; *The Economist*

Young people have long had a raw deal in the labour market. Two things make the problem more pressing now. The financial crisis and its aftermath had an unusually big effect on them. Many employers sack the newest hires first, so a recession raises youth joblessness disproportionately. In Greece and Spain over a sixth of the young population are without a job. The number of young people out of work in the OECD is almost a third higher than in 2007.

Second, the emerging economies that have the largest and fastest-growing populations of young people also have the worst-run labour markets. Almost half of the world's young people live in South Asia, the Middle East and Africa. They also have the highest share of young people out of work or in the informal sector. The population of 15- to 24-year-olds in Africa is expected to rise by more than a third, to 275m, by 2025." Source *The Economist*

36. The war in Iraq and the manipulation of the Arab spring by western media is being used to dominate the supply and delivery of oil. The continued threat to Syria and Iran are further attempts to control world energy resources.
37. The total disregard for democracy in the puppet states of imperialism like Saudi Arabia and Jordan are further examples of this naked aggression.
38. The British backed reactionary regime change in Libya, and the ongoing attacks on Syria are further examples of the highest stage of Imperialism in 2013.
39. The threats to Socialist Cuba and the illegal 50 year old economic blockade continue today under Obama as it started under Kennedy.

40. The emergence of economic and trade camps Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa. The creation of Community of Latin American and Caribbean States CELAC with 33 member states provides a check to the single world order of US Imperialism.
41. The role of Hugo Chavez late President of Venezuela ( now replaced by President Nicolas Maduro) has proven to be the catalyst for change in the emergence of pro socialist politics in Latin America.
42. False Justification for spending billions on replacing the Nuclear Trident missile programme. David Cameron the present Prime Minister of Britain is using similar rhetoric to his predecessor Blair in wildly exaggerating the threat to Britain from the socialist Democratic People's Republic of Korea.
43. India, which once led the non aligned movement today as member of a strategic alliance with US imperialism has lost its ability to act independently. The UPA2, now free from the influence of the left is applying neo liberal policies and growth for the few. Allowing Foreign Direct Investment in multi retail, banking and the Treaty with Europe endangers the sovereignty of India.
44. The response to the broken system of world capitalism by governments has been to apply austerity measures affecting the 99% to favour the 1% the masters of the crisis.
45. People all over the world have reacted angrily in their millions protesting against the austerity measures, cuts in public- social services, health service, and education, decreasing wages, rising unemployment, repossession of homes, 99% against the 1%. The occupation of Wall Street and the occupation in London outside St. Pauls along with the occupation of many other major European financial hubs have provide a focus for people's spontaneous anger.
46. The IWA GB participated in many of these National and local demonstrations. The red banners of the organisation again became familiar sights on the streets of London.


## 7. Declining economy and the rise of Racism and Fascism

48. Britain under the previous Labour government watered down the legislation and institutions created to challenge racism. The Commission for Race Equality was replaced by a new Equality organisation. The Race Equality infrastructure was dismantled and deprived of oxygen through withdrawal of funds..
49. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the United Kingdom expanded 0.30 percent in the first quarter of 2013 over the previous quarter. GDP Growth Rate in the United Kingdom is reported by the UK Office for National Statistics. Historically, from 1955 until 2013, the United Kingdom GDP Growth Rate averaged 0.62 Percent reaching an all time high of 5.30 Percent in March of 1973 and a record low of -2.50 Percent in June of 1958. The United Kingdom is the world's seventh largest economy. With the decline in the economy and predicted growth, the UK has lost its triple A credit status. The UK's failing economy has given rise to attacks on immigrants, increase in racism and the creation of familiar scapegoats.
50. The British National Party gave way to the English Defence League. The EDL found strange bed fellows among some misled Sikhs opposed to Muslims. This nefarious combination was challenged by the remnants of the old Anti Nazi League and the IWA GB.

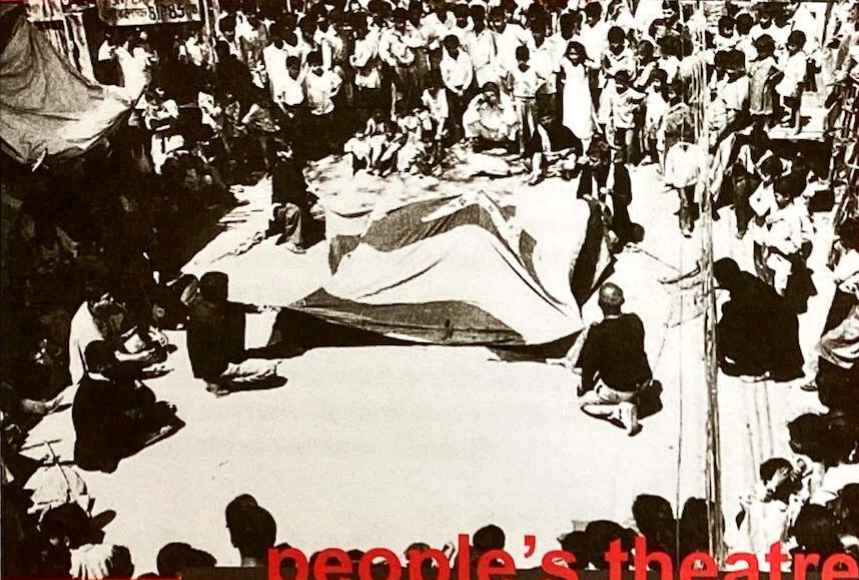
51. The BNP/ EDL is for the time being replaced by the populist UK Independence Party UKIP.
52. The rise of European populism has been fuelled by the financial and euro-zone crises. Yet it predates them and is thriving in places, such as the Nordic countries, which have suffered little economic damage. A prominent early exponent was Jörg Haider's Freedom Party, which won power in Austria in the late 1990s on an anti-immigration platform; most, though by no means all, of the subsequent populists also hold right-wing views. The fascist Front National in France, led by Marine Le Pen tweeted congratulations to UKIP on its recent electoral triumph.
53. UKIP features a similar policy mess. Its success in the local elections during May 2013, in which it won 147 council seats, marks its emergence from a single-issue Euro sceptic party to one with multiple views. It likes defence, dislikes immigrants, and environment friendly green policies.
54. The IWA will remain vigilant and challenge the xenophobic ideas of UKIP and other racist reactionary parties.
55. **Organisation**
56. Branch reports
57. Belfast, in contact, but no current report available.
58. Birmingham, we do not have a branch affiliated to our centre. The IWA GB continues to maintain dialogue with the local branch of Birmingham and Sandwell. We will continue to coordinate our activities and explore possibility of independent activity.
59. Bournemouth: a new unit is in the embryonic stage, with an ad hoc committee formed. Membership and Elections to follow.
60. Cambridge, no report available
61. Coventry: Membership and elections concluded. Annual public meetings organised around India's Independence Day. Participated in National demonstrations. Active in local politics with many labour party councillors working with the organisation. Despite the disruption to the public meeting organised on 18<sup>th</sup> August, a further meeting was held attracting widespread support from the community. The extremists' leader was subsequently sentenced and made to pay compensation to IWA.
62. Derby: Membership and elections completed. Successful public meetings held on different issues affecting the community. The office continues to act as a focal point. A number of activities carried out in partnership with Communist Party of Britain, Cuba Solidarity Campaign and local Trades Council. The IWA also works closely with the Association of Indian Women. The work of the unit is reflected in the media. The re- emergence of religious fundamentalism and the EDL is creating a massive challenge for the future. The comrades remain confident in discharging their duty in the finest militant traditions of the founding leaders of Derby Branch.
63. Glasgow. The branch has successfully organised Shaheed Bhagat Singh Day and Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet memorial meetings. Branch is preparing to hold the Ghadar Part Centenary meeting later this year.
64. Leamington, the IWA branch has been reformed, but is inactive due to the ongoing medical condition of our leading comrade.
65. Leicester, one of our largest units, the vanguard and stronghold of our organisation. Continues to deepen its roots through regular activity. The office

services remain busy. The issues faced by the community underline the need for a stronger organisation and the validity of the IWA. The organisation continues to lead and participate in local and national demonstrations, solidarity actions. Local leaders articulate and represent the views of the organisation in the media. The leadership of Leicester Branch provides support to new and weaker units when requested.

66. E. London, new unit being formed. Membership started and ad hoc committee formed.
67. W. London (Southall): The branch participates in local and national demonstrations affecting the community, from the demonstrations against war, public service cuts, and March for a future, against racism and fascism. Supporting solidarity campaigns, workers in dispute. Campaign to save local hospital. The branch initiated the immediate response to the barbaric gang rape in Delhi in Dec 2012 and supported the vigil by Southall Black Sisters. The campaign against Cast discrimination. The support for DPRK and opposition to imperialism. Membership campaign is ongoing with elections in June.
68. N. London: membership ongoing and elections due. New members have recently joined the organisation, bringing new energy and direction. Holds regular branch meetings and discussions. Recently held Republic Day and May day meetings. Preparing to organise the Ghadar Centenary meeting in July.
69. S. London, we have a nucleus emerging with the potential to organise a branch in the near future
70. Manchester, membership campaign on going elections due. New branch in the stronghold of the working class in the north of England. Local leaders conversant with the Trade Union movement in this country.
71. Nottingham, we no longer have a branch affiliated to the centre.
72. Norwich, no report available.
73. Peterborough remains to be set up.
74. Reading, unit outside our centre, however we continue to support and encourage our comrades working with the unit.
75. Slough, membership campaign ongoing, elections due. Has history of militant activity and offers potential for the future.
76. Wolverhampton: the branch continues to provide much needed services to the community from the office. The participation and role of women remains an inspiration. Despite failing health of some of our experienced comrades the unit remains confident in its ability to organise future programmes. The comrades from this unit continue to support local and national activity and discharge their militant duty with distinction.
77. Woolwich a possibility for the future.
78. Finally dear delegates, we reaffirm our commitment to jointly act as the democratic custodians of the historic traditions and legacy of the Indian Workers' Association. We will uphold the constitution and safeguard the organisation for future generations.




Jana Natya Manch  
(People's Theatre Group)  
is India's pioneering  
street theatre group,  
active since 1973.

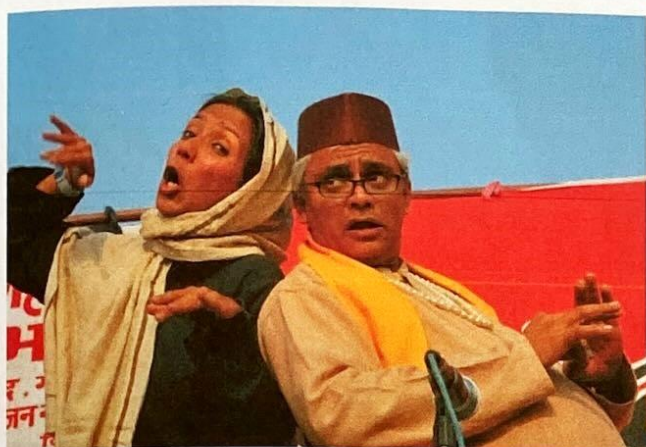


Also known as  
Janam ('birth'),  
this group of self-  
trained actors has  
to its credit more  
than 8,000  
performances of  
about 100 street  
and proscenium  
plays in about 140  
towns and cities  
of India.

people's theatre  
stars the people



Janam

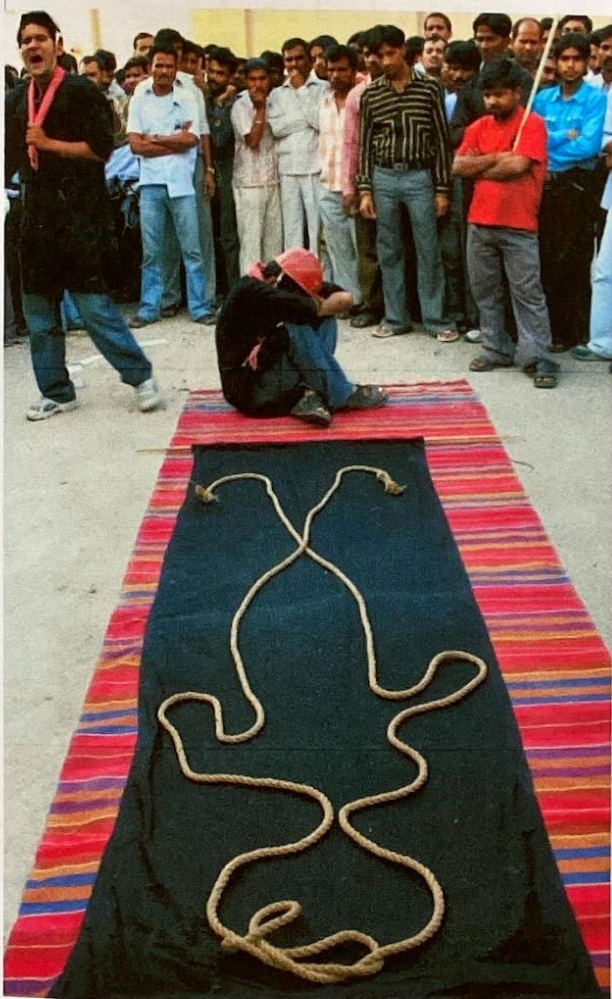
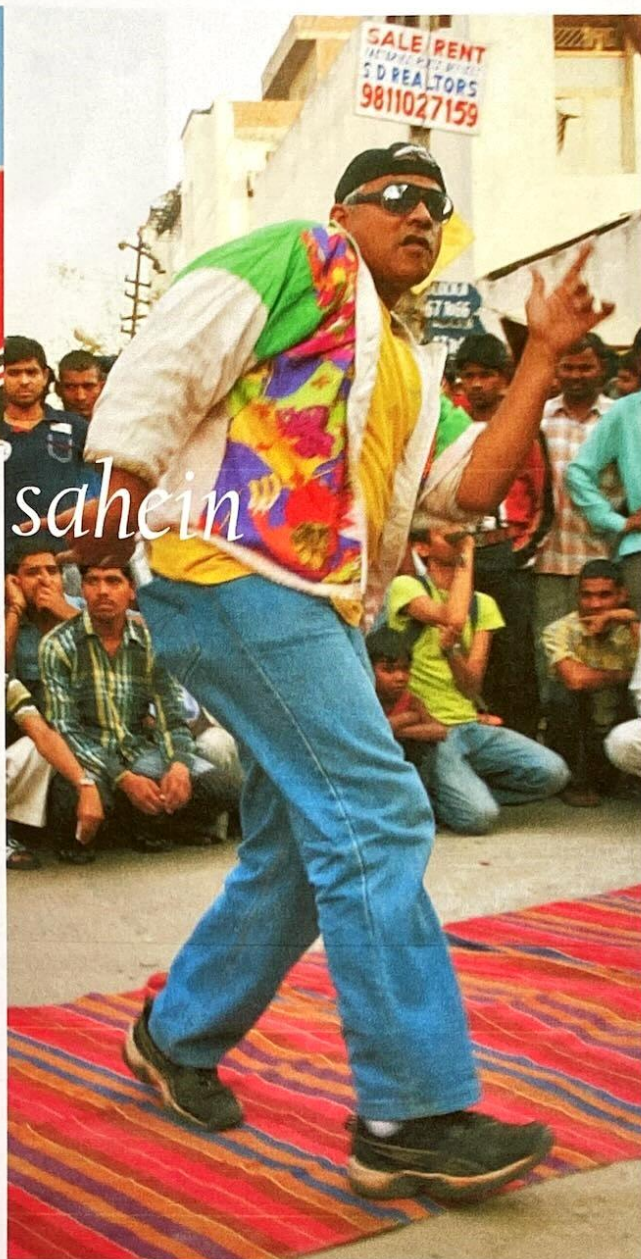


## yeh hum kyun sahein

*Enough is Enough*  
30 mins., Hindustani

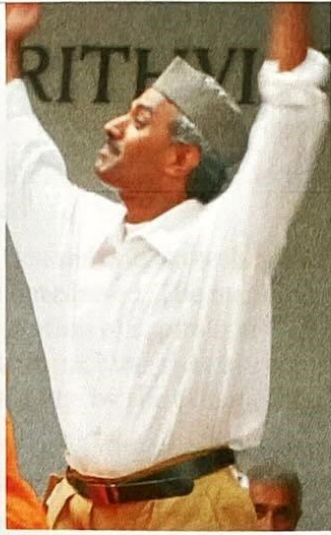
A play based on the personal narratives of industrial workers in and around Delhi, gathered by the actors.

The play is a juxtaposition of hilarious, over-the-top farce with deadly serious, quietly assertive docu-drama on the work conditions of workers. Through



testimonies of real workers, we learn about issues that confront them, such as low wages, long hours of work, inadequate safety measures, the contract labour system, etc.

There is a symbolic representation and creative use of a rope and body movements that runs as a strong visual action in the documentary scenes. The two farcical scenes show two capitalists (father and son, showing continuity and change) interacting with the counter-chorus who egg them on. What appears funny and hilarious to begin with, helps us, as the play goes by, to understand the mechanics of how workers are exploited.



*This Heart Desires More, O Guru*  
30 mins., Hindustani

## *yeh dil mangey more, guruji*

This is one of Janam's strongest political pieces, which is poetic, angry and humorous in equal parts. This play was originally created in response to the communal carnage in Gujarat about a decade ago. It takes off from the violence in Gujarat and moves beyond to critique the move to reconstitute the Indian state and society along fascistic lines.

The play opens with silence. The audience are asked to consider what the idea of 'Hindu Rashtra' (the 'Hindu Nation') might actually mean. A searing poem, which welcomes us to a city that melts bit by bit, like molten glass, then breaks the silence.

At the end of the poem, we are introduced to the Guru and his two disciples, Buddhibali (The Brainy One) and Bahubali (The Brawny One). These three are on a long, unending journey in search of the Hindu Rashtra of their dreams.

The hilarity of this scene is broken by the appearance of images of violence from Gujarat, and an angry poem that is the testimony of a man who is burned to death in the riots.

The Guru and his disciples return again, more and more frustrated, as their dream recedes farther and farther.

The play ends with a third poem which cocks a snook at the Hindu Right.

*Yeh Dil Mange More, Guruji* is a real tour de force.



Janam's first street play, a classic of the movement, first performed in October 1978.

A stark riveting critique of capitalism with lyrical, stylized dialogues that depict the exploitation of industrial labour.

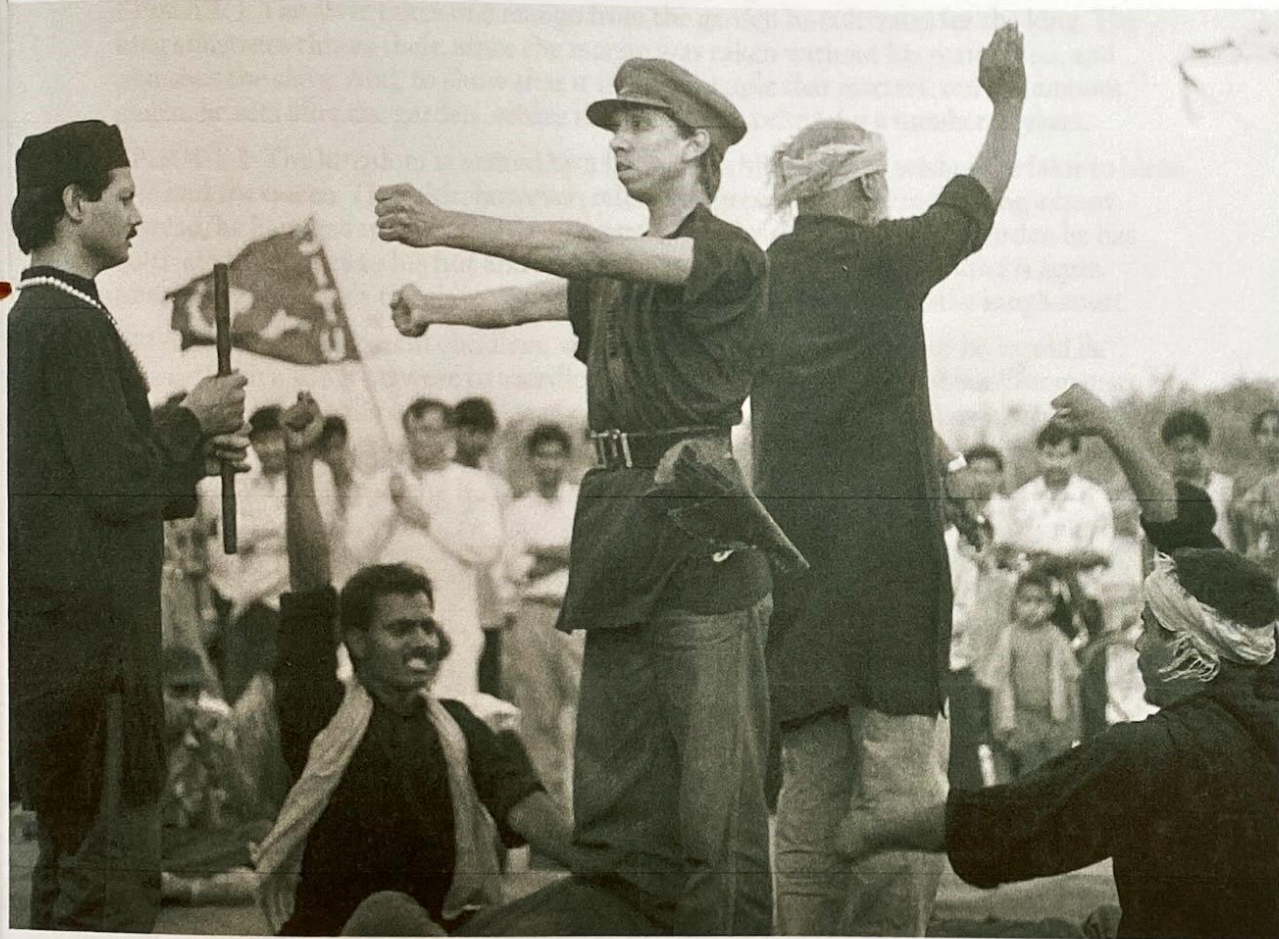
*Machine* was written by Safdar Hashmi and Rakesh Saxena, and was finalised on the floor, where everyone present contributed. The machine, created very simply by human figures, is the symbolic representation of capitalism. The worker, the capitalist and the security officer are all parts of the machine; they are complementary parts of a system founded upon the exploitation of one by the other; their co-existence, then, is unequal.

Safdar has explained the success of *Machine*: first, because of its not just interesting, but near-poetic prose; second, because it captures in its abstraction a very real, living truth and trusts its audiences to make the connection between the abstraction and the reality; third, because abstraction and brevity lend it a certain simplicity, without rendering it simplistic.

Historian and analyst Vijay Prashad writes: "What *Machine* did, then, was to encapsulate the basic framework of Janam's street theatre: it is a theatre allied with the people, the revolutionary classes in particular; it signalled the involvement of its audiences in the creative process (the idea for *Machine* came from a trade unionist); it placed poetry in the foreground; it laid stress on theatrical innovation; and it inspired several others to take up street theatre."

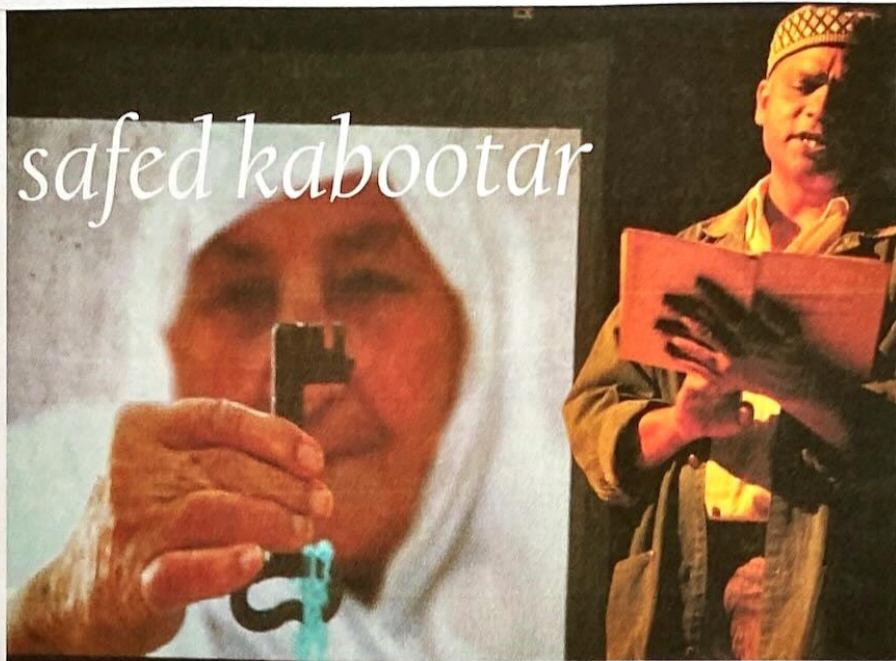
## machine

20 mins., Hindustani



# ujle safed kabootar

Poetry for Palestine  
45 mins., Hindustani



Poems by Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Safi Abdi,  
Mahmoud Darwish and Nizar Qabbani  
Translated by Brijesh  
Visual essay by Sherna Dastur  
Designed and directed by Sudhanva Deshpande

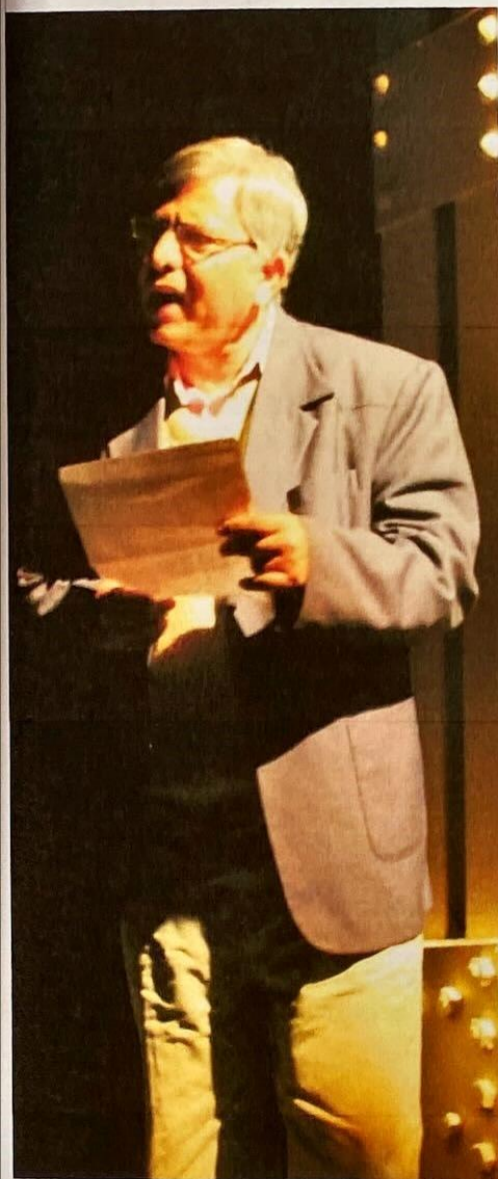
A highly-acclaimed poetry reading performance about Palestine, the land that has nurtured three great religions, a land ravaged by a brutal occupation and seemingly perpetual war, the land of a heroic people.

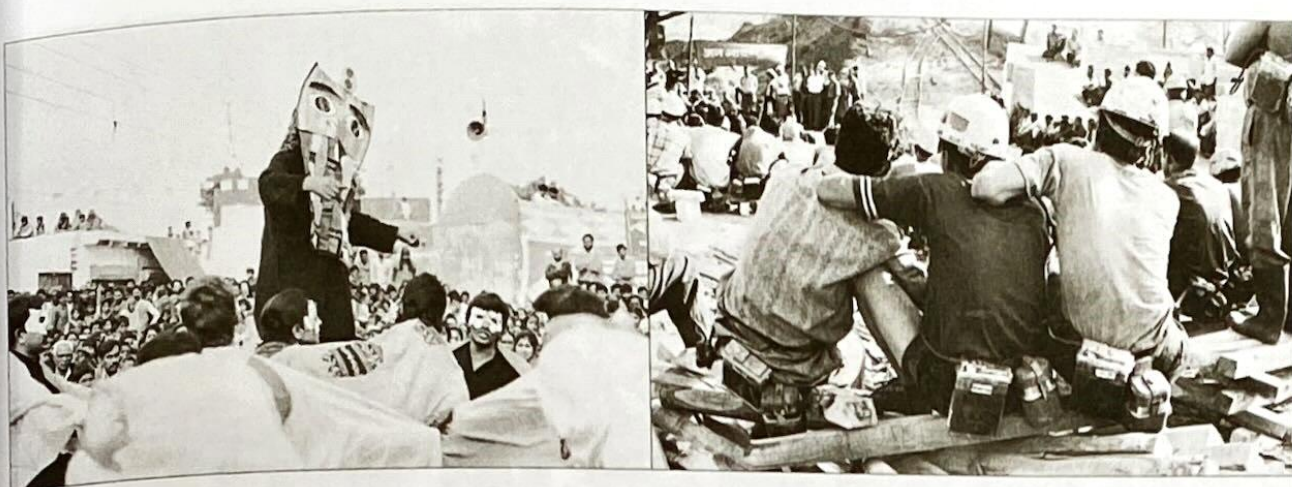
The reading starts with a song on Palestine by Faiz Ahmed Faiz and a poem by the Somalian poet Safi Abdi.

The centrepiece of the reading is the poem 'Under Siege' by Palestine's best-known poet, Mahmoud Darwish, who died a few years ago. This is a deeply moving, sometimes philosophical, sometimes trenchant, poem that reasserts the basic human values of love, understanding, dignity and self-respect.

The reading concludes with excerpts from Nizar Qabbani, Syria's greatest poet.

The reading is accompanied by a visual essay by filmmaker and designer Sherna Dastur.





## natak jaari hai

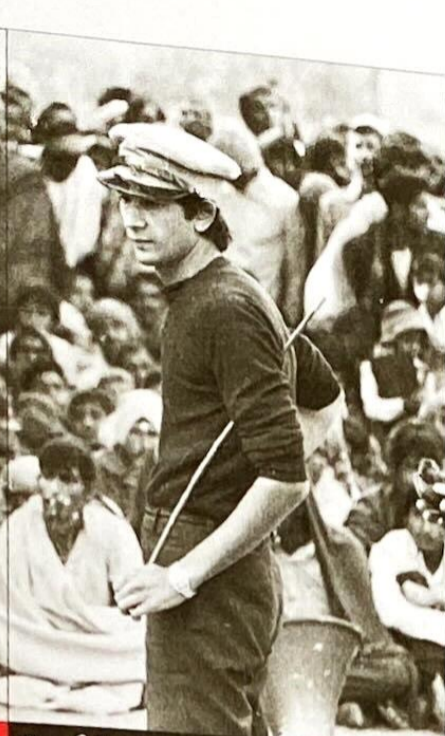
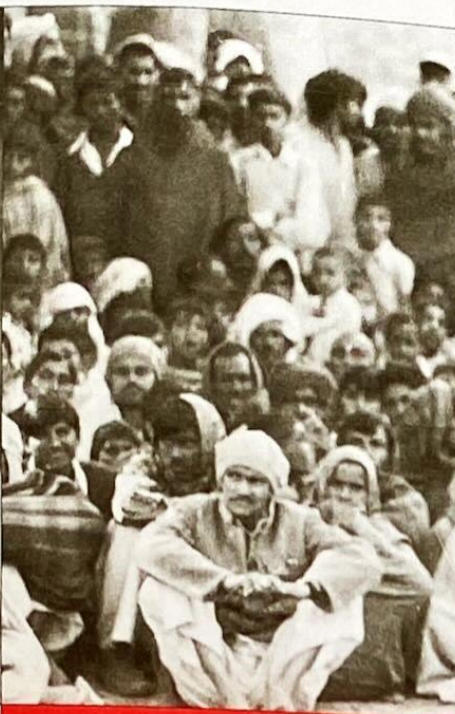
The Play Goes On: a film by Lalit Vachani  
84 mins., English and Hindi, with English subtitles

“On the streets, in slums, at workers’ unions, the show has gone on for more than three decades now, with a disparate bunch of committed individuals. . . . It was the spirit, ideals and hopes that drive the group that film-maker Lalit Vachani wanted to capture through his film *Natak Jari Hai*. . . . The film is a clear-eyed, gently intimate look at the history of the group as also the diverse backgrounds and ideologies of the people that comprise it. It is partly this diversity that forms the soul of Janam.” *Frontline*, Aug. 25, 2006

“To enter the world of Janam and its people, Lalit Vachani uses a technique similar to the one that he did in his two previous films. . . . The entry is unobtrusive. The organisation, Janam, and its work, theatre, is brought out skillfully through a sensitive shadowing of the team and its members, with some snippets of their performances in diverse settings and interviews filling the gap. . . . The group attracts those interested in theatre: students passing time before joining college, workers who want to do something more, those wanting to become actors on the silver screen and others, all from different class backgrounds and age profiles.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Sept. 16, 2006

“The film moves back and forth through time, space and people, offering priceless vignettes into the character and persona of the late Safdar, through archival footage where he belts out a line of song, joking about his actor’s total lack of voice, tune or rhythm. Molosyahree, his widow, opens out her album of black-and-white photographs, and in so doing, essays her evolving relationship with Safdar that physically may have ended with his violent death in 1989 but has reached far beyond questions of mortality through the sustenance and growth of Janam. . . . But the film is not about Hashmi. It is about the movement he triggered during his lifetime; a movement he died for; a movement that lives on much after his death.” [www.indiatogether.org](http://www.indiatogether.org)





On 1 January 1989, Janam was attacked by anti-social political goons while it performed a play on workers' rights on the outskirts of Delhi. The attack resulted in the murder of Safdar Hashmi, Janam's brilliant and charismatic leader, and a spectator. Safdar was a playwright, actor, director, lyricist, filmmaker, designer, theoretician and communist.

*Safdar Hashmi*  
1954-1989





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**People's theatre stars the people!**

# **Jana Natya Manch**

**is India's leading political theatre company, based in New Delhi. Founded in 1973, Janam has done more than 8,000 performances of about 100 productions of street and proscenium plays.**



**The iconic communist theatreperson Safdar Hashmi was amongst the founders of Janam. He was killed in January 1989 when Janam was attacked while performing a play for industrial workers on the outskirts of Delhi.**

