

views



ROSE QUEEN

Kareena Kapoor has bought the entire sixth floor of Rose Apartments in Khar, Mumbai.

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# Capitalist philanthropy



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Why this tirade against capitalism? I, for one, am quite surprised by the injured moral tone activists, academics and do gooders take while talking about the inhumanity of present day market economy. Talking about inequalities and the erosion of the public sphere in a globalised world is all very fine but as far as I am concerned, it is capitalism that has shown me the way to become a good world citizen. And at a price that is fairly reasonable.

For under 10 pounds a month, I have been supporting clean drinking water facilities for children in West Africa, helping street kids in the United Kingdom, funding breast cancer research, looking after diabetic patients, supporting students in Romania, to name just a few.

I am not a Good Samaritan. Perish the thought. I am selfish at worst and self-centred at best. It is the trappings of modern day capitalism that has turned me into a maverick philanthropist.

Take the case of providing clean drinking water for African children. All I do is buy some packaged water. And voila! The advertisement on the bottle assures me that every time I take a swig, a child somewhere in that vast continent gets uncontaminated water. For 60 pence, my one good deed of the week is assured.

The other day, a lovely young thing cornered me as I was hurrying home with my groceries bought at Tescos. Given a certain weakness I harbour for the pretty amongst the fairer sex, I found myself unable to leave as she explained to me the urgent necessity to provide support for research into cure for diabetes. She rattled off numbers of how many died each year because my money was not supporting the cause. Seeing me still dithering, the beautiful girl fired her final, cruel salvo. The cost of supporting this initiative weekly equal what I pay for a cup of coffee. How could I drink the brew in peace if I left without consent-



Bill Gates with wife Melinda. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (B&MGF) is the largest transparently operated charitable foundation in the world, founded by Bill and Melinda Gates in 2000 and doubled in size by Warren Buffett in 2006. Buffett astounded the whole world by pledging to give the foundation approximately 10 million Berkshire Hathaway shares (worth US\$30.7 billion on June 23, 2006). Mad man, if you ask us.

ing to pay the two pounds a week scheme that will bring succour to millions?

My concern for the environment does not go neglected. Every time I take cheap flights across Europe and my guilt level rise for contributing to carbon emissions, I offset the twangs of my conscience by donating a few pounds to companies which promise to plant more trees. Let no one say I did not do my bit to save the planet.

A former girl friend was helping kids in the war torn regions of Sri Lanka. I was told that I could adopt a child for a laughable sum each year. I promptly paid up. Till I continued to pay the yearly sum, I was sent photos of the beautiful boy each month. The girlfriend went her way, I went mine. I have no way of finding out the way the child went.

But not to worry. There are enough little

children to take care of, given the spate of recent environmental disasters. (This, despite my contribution to planting trees.) With the tsunami, we opened our coffers out. Agencies asked for money, television news showed the plight of the affected and our hearts cried out. Friends raised money and I supported a plan to rebuild the houses of fishermen in a coastal town in Sri Lanka that was devastated by the hurricane. I recently found out that the entire village has been transformed and in place of the fragile huts, now stand luxury condos.

I stood stupefied at what enormous joy my meagre donation had bought to the fishing colony. Till I was told that the place actually is a resort for wealthy tourists. The fishing folks have disappeared.

I am not dithered, though. Capitalism will bring other causes to fund.

letters to the editor



## What's wrong with making Joginder DSP?

The article 'Why make Joginder Sharma DSP?' (MetroNow edition dated 25 September) seemed to be in bad taste. It was rather fit for duly edited 'Letters Column' as it carried a biased personal opinion of the writer.

Mr Zia Moid Khan's knowledge seems to be very little as many sports persons have been awarded jobs by their respective state governments to promote sports and honour their talent. I salute the Haryana Chief Minister for his noble act.

Is Mr Khan pained by Joginder's extraordinary performance in the last over of the final match?

— Rajesh Kumar Punia



## Why support tandoors?

This is in reference to your article 'Why is L-G interested in a tandoor?' (MetroNow edition dated 1 October). Joel, is it wrong if encroachment is removed from market corridors? The owner of the shop is saying he has got a letter from his neighbours saying they don't have any objection against him placing the tandoor outside his shop. But the fact is, these corridors are for the public to move around.

Of course, he has a point when he says others were allowed to place tandoors outside. MetroNow should be trying to ensure that all tandoors are placed inside and all encroachment removed. Instead, why are you fighting for the tandoor? All the best.

— Vishal Gupta

## bloggers' park

Our daily column on what the world wide web is talking about



After the state brutality, the journalists called for a Black Day

### PAK JOURNALISTS CALL FOR BLACK DAY ON 30TH SEPT

The world saw on 29th September, 2007 in the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad, that Pakistan is as bad if not worse than Nepal, Burma (Myanmar) or Occupied Kashmir, when it comes to suppressing media, lawyers and civil society with baton charges, tear gases and bullets. Thousands of armed policemen along with thousands of agency personnel in white dress tortured a handful of lawyers and mediapersons ruthlessly. This was all happening outside the Election Commission, while the prime minister was inside the EC building, making sure that his master's paper gets through to the next stage.

After this state brutality, journalists have called for a Black Day on 30th September. <http://pakspectator.blogspot.com/2007/09/journalists-of-pakistan-call-for-black.html>

### journalists-of-pakistan-call-for-black.html

Journalist Union of Pakistan says: The Constitution Avenue on Saturday presented the scene of a virtual battlefield. The blood of journalists and lawyers soaked the ground. They fell victim to the worst-ever brutality of the police in the capital's history— thanks to the newly-appointed police chief Marvat Ali Shah. Marvat, who was posted as the IGP Islamabad gave a sterling performance and fulfilled the special mission assigned to him. His men pounced on the 'enemy' as if with vengeance.

As many as 34 mediapersons and 80 lawyers, including common citizens, sustained serious injuries. Munir adds: I am Munir from Aaj T. It has become a police state, and you will see more events like these in the coming days. But how long?

<http://pakspectator.blogspot.com/2007/09/journalists-of-pakistan-call-for-black.html>