

29/12/2003

Women who made things happen

Jan 30

Lance Corporal Maslinda Mohd Noor becomes Malaysia's first woman commando after passing an eight-month training course to become a member of the Special Action Unit. Less than 15 per cent of police personnel who apply to join the unit pass the gruelling course.

Apr 9

Sixty-five-year old Satyabhama Mahapatra from India delivers a healthy 3kg baby boy weighing and becomes the oldest woman in the world to give birth.

May 27

Clara Furse, the first female chief executive of the London Stock Exchange, seals her reputation as the most powerful woman in the Square Mile by breaking through the STG1 million (RM5.8 million) pay barrier.

May 11

Software engineer student Nisha Sharma gains instant fame when she scraps her wedding over a dowry demand. Dowries are banned in India. She calls the police to arrest her school-teacher groom who demanded a dowry of 1.2 million rupees (RM95,000) a couple of hours before the wedding ceremony.

July 7

Social assistant at an orphanage, Poupeh Mahdavinader, aims to be the first Iranian woman to cycle solo around the world for global peace. She began her solitary journey in April in Italy and hopes to end it by March 2004 in Saudi Arabia.

Aug 12

Malaysian Medical Relief Society president Datuk Dr Jemilah Mahmood becomes the first Malaysian woman to receive the East Asia Women Peace Award, sharing the honour with fellow recipients Aung San Suu Kyi and Corazon C. Aquino.

Sept 24

Bank Negara Malaysia Governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz Zeti, Malaysia's and Asia's first woman central bank governor, has been named Asia's best central bank governor for 2003 by Euromoney Institutional Investors Plc, a UK-based financial publication house.

Oct 11

Iranian lawyer Shirin Ebadi wins the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in defending human rights and promoting democracy. Ebadi is only the 11th woman to win since the prize was set up in 1901.

Oct 6

Maha Abdullah Arkoubi leads the way for Arab women, as she becomes dean of the Jeddah branch of the Arab Open University, a first for a woman in the conservative kingdom.

Oct 3

Fortune magazine lists 50 women with the most influence in the business world outside the United States. The Power 50 lists Marjorie Scardino, (Britain), CEO of Pearson, at No 1. Fourteen Asian businesswomen make the list, with four in the top 10. At No 5, China's Mary Ma, CFO of Legend Group Holdings is the highest ranked Asian woman.

Nov 1

Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali is conferred the Darjah Yang Mulia Setia Mahkota Malaysia (First Class), together with her husband Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad from Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin. This is a first for a former Prime Minister's wife. Others have been bestowed similar awards but only after their husbands have passed on.