


Mid Day Jewellery at one paisa



Wednesday, February
Horn OK Please
 with JAK and Jaggu, 17:
 to 20:00

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Hot Property

Big Break

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Crossword

Ponnappa

Voices

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Operation confidence on treasure island

By: Sonali Velinker Kamat

February 4, 2003

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These kids will enliven the
 Nehru Centre floorboards this
 evening

An NGO called Akanksha, 147 slum children, a concept, a director, some choreographers and an ambitious stage project.

The result is a delightful play called Operation Khazana, to be performed by the 'Akanksha kids' at the Nehru Centre this evening.

However, backstage at the Nehru Centre last evening, Operation Khazana could well have been Operation Chaos.

Shaheen Mistry, founder of Akanksha and producer of the musical, was trying to cope with a major hiccup — designer James Ferreira, who was to do the animal costumes, had backed out at the last minute. Lots of damage control later, things looked better.

The lighting was being tested in preparation for a full rehearsal, to be attended by other Akanksha children and parents of the participants.

"We've rehearsed the play in parts with different groups of children, and we've only brought them all together five or six times," says Mistry of the bilingual production, about the adventures of children on a mission to save their Akanksha centre. "The play makes you realise that the treasure is really inside you.

Most people have a very narrow definition of what a street or slum child is, and we'd like to show that with opportunity, any child can shine."

Stage fright notwithstanding, the Akanksha kids do shine.

In endearing English, despite their largely Marathi-medium education, the five main characters tell us their story.



I am... Sangeeta Zombade (17)

I play... Tanushree, a bossy and motherly person who cares for these kids.

I have... danced in a school competition, but never done anything like this before.

I've never ... been to see a play.

City News

- Police arrest
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- Lillee spots 3 bowlers
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- Municipal Cor action
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Do Bollywood films endorse smoking?

I live... in VT. "My one brother works as a peon in a publishing company and my one sister is a fruit seller."

I'm happy... because I'm selected in a special role and "I can't still believe I can act well." My family is proud of me.

I want to be... a computer engineer.



I am... Shweta Nagania (10)

I play... Fatima, "a girl full of masti and dancing, who learns how to respect others and listen to them. In real life also I do that sometimes!"

I have... seen the play Oliver Twist at the Nehru Centre.

I've never ... acted before, "but I find acting is easy."

I live ... near RC Church with my father, who is a water supplier, my mother and two sisters.

I'm happy... "all the time. I'm a main person now!"

I want to be... an airhostess, and "see the whole world."



I am... Zafar Sheikh (14)

I play... Joseph, an intelligent boy who is always thinking ahead.

I have... worked really hard for this play.

I've never ... seen a play like this, but I have seen a puppet show.

I live... in Cuffe Parade. My father works in an ice company in Sassoon Dock.

I'm happy... "because I was hoping and praying for a main role from the beginning."

I want to be... an actor.



I am... Arun Tambe (12)

I play... Sid, "who is always searching something something. I dance a lot."

I have... learnt that "in scared part, you don't have to smile."

I've never ... acted in a play or seen one, except a puppet show.

I live... near Mahalaxmi racecourse with my family. My father works with

Mumbaikars

Ustad Zakir Husain's home - Mumbai

This week: 'Mumbai is my home'

Campaign

Winter's over, but morning haze continues. What's the weather, mid-day?

tickets at the racecourse and repairs computers.

I'm happy... "when I do masti."



I am... Priyanka Parit (12)

I play... Razia, a proud girl. "I'm not listening anybody and everyone must do what I do."

I have... acted in an annual day function in my school, but never on such a big stage.

I've never ... seen a play.

I live... near the police station in Cuffe Parade with my mother who is an Akanksha helper and my father, who is a contractor.

I'm happy... "very much to do this play."

Operation Khazana will be performed at the Nehru Centre, Worli, today and on February 9 at the Kala Ghoda Art Festival

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