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SECTION 2

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## Michael Jackson to peddle shoes



**LOS ANGELES:** Entertainer Michael Jackson has entered into a deal worth more than \$ 20 million with sportswear manufacturer

L.A. Gear, in which the superstar will design clothes and appear in advertisements, reports AP.

In a news conference that resembled a mini-concert, the singer, clad in L.A. Gear shoes adorned with several buckles, said from a fog-shrouded stage, "I'm very happy to be a part of the L.A. Gear magic, and I hope we have a very rewarding, successful career."

The deal is for about two years and will pay Mr Jackson more than \$ 20 million.

## Gunners take their teddy rafting

**EL PASO, (Texas):** When the going gets rough on a rafting trip down the Rio Grande, 27 British soldiers will have something familiar to fall back on — their teddy bear.

Paddington Bear, the well-travelled teddy bear found at Paddington Station in England in the children's books of the 1960s and 1970s, was found in a blue duffle coat and red hat and boots when the soldiers from the 45th field regiment of the Royal Artillery began paddling the river on Monday, reports AP.

The rafting trip, financed in part by private donations, is expected to raise about \$ 27,000 for Action Research for Crippled Children. The charity uses Paddington Bear, created by author Michael Bond, as its mascot.

## The chip soars to new heights

**WASHINGTON:** An American com-

## US aid of little help in drug war: Colombia

By **JOSEPH B. TREASTER**

**BOGOTA:**

U.S. and Colombian officials here say most of the equipment in a \$ 65 million emergency package from the United States is not the type that is most needed to fight the drug war here and is unlikely to have a major effect against the traffickers.

The officials say the aid serves mainly as a symbolic show of American support.

"Our operations against the narcotics traffickers will be essentially the same as before," a senior police officer said.

Major General Miguel Gomez Padilla, the chief of the 70,000-member national police force, said: "The total package is more suitable for conventional warfare than the kind of struggle we are waging here against narcotics traffickers."

The emergency aid was announced last month by the President, Mr George Bush, in the face of a rapidly escalating war between the Colombian government and drug-trafficking interests.

The national police have been conducting 85 per cent to 90 per cent of the anti-narcotics operations in Colombia, but American and Colombian officials say that about 85 per cent of the \$ 65 million in emergency aid is being spent on equipment for the army and air force.

One reason, the officials say, is that the equipment is coming from American military stockpiles and is more compatible

with the army and air force than with the police.

"The package did not have a whole lot of what the police would like to have had," an American official said, "but it was welcome as a symbolic gesture."

Since September 3, the Colombians have received eight A-37 jets, seven helicopters, 20 jeeps, three ambulances, some field medical kits, radios, machine guns, and a pair of C-130s, along with crates of spare parts for the transport planes.

Most of the equipment has not yet been put into operation. But over the weekend, the C-130s were used to ferry troops on raids against traffickers in the Magdalena River valley north of Bogota in which more than 40 ranches owned by narcotics traffickers were seized.

"We are grateful for any assistance," a senior police officer said. "But we could have done much more with the proper equipment."

The United States has not said how the \$ 261 million in aid for Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, which President Bush announced on September 5 in a speech on drug policy, would be distributed and what it will contain.

The police say their biggest disappointment is that they received none of the sophisticated equipment they wanted for their intelligence bureaus.

(By arrangement with the *International Herald Tribune*)

## A home-grown Holmes is honoured

By **VANDANA MANDLEKAR**

PRIVATE detectives have been so heavily fictionalised, dramatised, filmed, serialised on TV and what have you, that, ironically enough, real-life ones are now something of an oddity!

They naturally evoke the layman's curiosity — is it the crouching figure sporting a cap pulled down low over the forehead, dark glasses, a long black coat and maybe munching a carrot a la our *desi* 'Karamchand'?

Do they trail people through dim-lit *galis* (of course, minus the background music and the cinematic effects) and corner the murderer even before the cops have begun their homework? What is their mysterious world like?

Mr Ramesh C. Madan, who has recently won the International Investigator of the Year award, and runs a private detective agency of his own (besides heading a number of other such organisations), looks like the middle-aged man next door, but for a revolver, a multi-purpose knife, a chemical defence weapon, and a pair of handcuffs strapped on to his belt.

These are not because he is a detective, but because by virtue of his profession, he has unwittingly made a lot of enemies and there have already been three attempts on his life. So he keeps himself ready for unpleasant encounters. The handcuffs, though, are for those he catches red-handed.

"Welcome to the detective world", Mr Madan ushers me into his house. Though his office looks more or less like any other, his workplace at home seems to have "detective" written all over it. A variety of equipment crowds into whatever space is available after the stack of crime



**SUPERSLEUTH:** Mr Ramesh Madan receiving the International Investigator of the Year award in Canada from Mr Alastair Browne, chairman of the awards committee of the Council of International Investigators.

fiction lining the walls.

Thirty years into the profession, and Mr Madan has already saved 26 persons from the gallows — a world record for a private detective, he claims proudly. This, besides his being a member of the Council of International Detectives for 20 years, were some of the factors that tipped the scales in his favour for this year's award.

He won hands down against three contenders, one each from the U.S., U.K. and Australia, nominated by the awards committee of the Council, "...But I can't still believe I have won the award", Mr Madan says in all humility.

Forty-one year old Mr Madan, an ardent Agatha Christie fan, also has the distinction of being the first Indian to become an internationally certified investigator. This was two decades ago.

He also has the distinction of being not only the first Indian, but also the first Asian, to win

the International Investigator of the Year award.

The Goliath Detectives, Mr Madan's agency, boasts of offices in 11 centres all over the country, employing about 500 sleuths. One hundred and thirty of these are women, who, Mr Madan emphasises, are "much better than men, being bolder, more hardworking and sincere". Besides, he explains, they also have the advantage of being likely to be detected.

Each centre has a chief who is the only one maintaining and having access to the files. He prepares the blueprint for the mode of investigation in each case, and delegates various tasks to his team members. "No one person does the entire investigation", Mr Madan explains, "each one is given the job he can handle well".

The job itself entails tailing, interviewing, finger-printing, gathering information, photographer or even video-taping the movements of a person.

The dress of the sleuth depends on the case he is investigating. Accordingly, the agency also has disguises for everybody, including complete attires of people in different parts of the country. False I-cards or relevant papers are also made available if need be, to aid investigation.

An easy way to make a person lose his composure and blurt out everything, confides Mr Madan, is by appearing dressed as the conventional detective. On the other hand, in cases such as when a house is being watched, it is best for the detective to appear dressed as casually as possible in order to pass off as a passer-by.

Though the company makes its services available for 41 types of cases, the most common ones it tackles are those involving fraud, forgery, cheating, employee-verification before or after employment, matrimony-related enquiries, and infringement of trade marks.

The difficulties and hardships faced, particularly in the early days of the profession, are difficult to forget for Mr Madan.

"But we have come a long way", says the super sleuth. And so has the agency. When Mr Madan started as a freelance detective, his minimum fee was Rs. 25. Today it is Rs. 1,000. "Our operational costs have also gone up", he explains, "all the things we use — camera, video equipment, films, transport — entail considerable expenditure."

Among the feathers in Mr Madan's cap is saving six men of a family of Lakhnour village near Saharanpur from the gallows, in a case involving the murder of one Asha Ram in a land dispute in 1976.

The local police, as was discovered later, had tampered with the evidence. Goliath detectives

had also intercepted letters between Ranga and Billa, the infamous duo who had kidnapped and killed Sanjay and Geeta Chopra in a macabre outrage in Delhi in 1979.

With the rise in the incidents of dowry deaths, Mr Madan's agency gets a lot of cases pertaining to this social evil too. "The Anti-dowry Act is good, but some are misusing it too," reveals the detective, citing instances of "simple, innocent" people being unnecessarily harassed.

As for the agency, it is cautious while accepting such cases for investigation. "Only when I am fully satisfied that the client's problem is genuine, do I accept the case," assures Mr Madan. He also does not accept the case if he finds the client guilty during his preliminary investigation.

The detectives do take assistance from the police, but the opposite is rare. "The police treat us like step cousins," says Mr Madan. However, after a case has been solved, it has to be eventually handed over to the police for the necessary follow-up action and often it is the latter, who get the credit!

Circumstances have forced Mr Madan to stay armed — whether at home or in office. But it is dangerous, he warns, for then, the "opponent" too comes equally prepared. He himself discourages violence and says an unarmed person is much safer. He recounts how some years ago, one morning, he opened the door of his old office in Rajender Nagar to confront a man with a loaded double-barrel gun aimed at him.

Guess how he disarmed the man? By staying cool, rationalising and eventually sweet-talking him out of it!

## Cystic fibrosis cure in sight