

Stalin's Daughter Called Indian Village a Paradise

By J. ANTHONY LUKAS

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KALAKANKAR, India, March 18—Shortly before she left this village on the Ganges and defected to the West early this month, Stalin's daughter, Svetlana, sent a letter to one of her hosts.

"Kalakankar is a small paradise on the earth," she wrote. "Those who live here permanently cannot realize that. But for a person like me, who came from far away, it is evident.

"I have arrived to Kalakankar with a dead heart, and I thought it would never again revive. . . . Here at Kalakankar, thanks to you, I began to live and to breathe. Again I can see that wonderful world around me—trees, birds, flowers, blue sky, moon, stars.

"I thought I'd never be able to see all these things—my eyes were blind, my heart was deaf.

"Never think that life in other countries and in big cities is somewhat better than here—it is not so. You live here—it is your greatest luck and, believe me, people should envy you."

Those who met the 42-year-old daughter of the Soviet leader during her 67-day stay here believe that she wanted nothing more than to remain in Kalakankar—for at least the foreseeable future if not for the rest of her life.

"Certainly she wanted to stay; she used to say that if she were forced to leave she would jump into the Ganges," recalled Sirish Singh, a nephew of the late Brijesh Singh whom she considered her husband. The Russian woman, who used the surname Alliluyeva, came here bearing Mr. Singh's ashes. She had received Soviet government permission to bring them to the Singh family from Moscow, where the two lived.

The Singh family insists that Mrs. Alliluyeva never told them of any plan for defection, but that she did indicate she hoped to come back to Kalakankar.

In a note to Sirish Singh, she said: "I will wait when it will be possible to go with you to Benares together—you will show me everything there. I wait for that and I will do my best to make it possible—by all means. I do not know yet, which those means, but will find. Please, wait for me. Do not go to Benares with anybody else—please. Will you?"

"I will come again and see you."

They See Soviet Pressure

The Singh family and others whom Mrs. Alliluyeva met here leave the impression that she left as a result of Soviet pressure to return to Moscow.

Suresh Singh, Brijesh's brother, said today that Mrs. Alliluyeva had been visited in Kalakankar several times by a "short Russian fellow" who was apparently a first or second secretary in the Soviet Embassy in New Delhi.

Suresh Singh said she had been "unusually depressed" after each of these visits.



Associated Press

Svetlana Alliluyeva

He said she had made frequent calls attempting to get the Soviet permit for her stay abroad extended. Some extensions were given, he said, but she encountered increasing difficulty.

There are strong indications that Mrs. Alliluyeva then asked the Indian Government for political asylum. This was refused, apparently because the Indian Government feared damage to relations with the Soviet Union. Only then did she turn to the United States, which did not rule on her request but had her escorted to Switzerland, where she now is.

Kalakankar is a seat of former feudal landlords. From 1849 members of Brijesh Singh's family were Kalakankar's rajas, which properly means rulers but in this case means petty gentry, authorized by the British to collect revenues, which they shared with them.

Despite their feudal past, the rajas of Kalakankar have long had a liberal—and even radical—streak. The third raja—Rampal Singh—was one of the founders of the Congress party. Avadesh Singh, the fifth raja, was a close friend of an early leader of the independence struggle against the British.

The sixth and present holder of the title of raja is Dinesh Singh, now Minister of Commerce and one of the closest advisers and confidants of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Dinesh Singh is known as a Socialist and is generally regarded as the most pro-Soviet of Mrs. Gandhi's ministers. However, he cannot match the radical activities of his uncle, Brijesh Singh, who established a reputation as one of India's most energetic and widely traveled revolutionaries.

In his youth Brijesh Singh became associated with the Congress party, but he gradually drifted into more revolutionary activities. He joined the underground Indian Communist par-

ty, then went to Europe, where he became a member of the party in both Britain and Germany.

Brijesh Singh was something of an eccentric. One man who knew him well said that in the early thirties "he never changed his clothes and affected all sorts of bohemian airs." He was always popular with women. When he and Ram Manohar Lohia, the Indian Socialist leader, traveled together in Europe in the thirties, they were rivals for the affections of many women.

Brijesh Singh was married first to an Indian, whom he left after a few years. Later he married a Czechoslovak, whom he divorced about five years ago. He had two daughters by his first wife and a son by his second wife.

Shortly after he arrived in Moscow three years ago he met Mrs. Alliluyeva, who was working as a translator in the same publishing house. They fell in love.

The Singh family refers to Brijesh as Mrs. Alliluyeva's husband. Suresh Singh, Brijesh's brother, head of the family at Kalakankar, brushes aside the question of what marriage ceremonies were performed. "She thought of herself as Brijesh's wife, and the Russians recognized it as a marriage," he said. "So that's good enough for us too."

Spend 4 Days in Embassy

After Brijesh's death of bronchitis last fall, Mrs. Alliluyeva asked for permission to bring his ashes for immersion in the Ganges, as he had requested. The request was approved, apparently after Dinesh Singh intervened with the Soviet Embassy here.

Mrs. Alliluyeva arrived in New Delhi on an Aeroflot flight from Moscow Dec. 20 and spent four days with officials of the Soviet Embassy. Suresh Singh said he had known nothing of the arrival until she showed up at Kalakankar on Christmas Day.

"We did get a telegram from Dinesh Singh in New Delhi on Dec. 24 saying that Brijesh's ashes had arrived and would be brought to Kalakankar the next day," Suresh Singh said, "so we went ahead and arranged for the immersion ceremonies."

Mrs. Alliluyeva arrived at Kalakankar accompanied by a middle-aged Russian woman who, the Singh family assumes, was from the Soviet Embassy.

A few hours later, the family and friends joined Mrs. Alliluyeva, dressed in a white sari, the mourning dress of Hindu widows, aboard a launch that took them to the middle of the Ganges. As a Hindu priest chanted, Mrs. Alliluyeva slowly poured the ashes into the river.

One man who was there recalls that she was "composed, very composed, but obviously grief-stricken."

Mrs. Alliluyeva later told friends here that she wanted to spend the rest of her days living the life of a Hindu widow on the banks of the Ganges. After their husbands' deaths, many Hindu women go to Be-

nares or other cities along the river to spend their last years.

Met Few in Village

During her stay, Mrs. Alliluyeva met few people in the village, partly because few of the roughly 5,000 here speak English. She was learning Hindi, the language of northern India, but had mastered only a few words.

One of those she did meet frequently was Dr. Bhagwandas Nagar, the only doctor in Kalakankar and the village's head man.

"She was a most gentle lady," he recalls. "She was peaceful and calm and liked to meditate near the river and in other silent places.

"She never really seemed happy, but she wasn't really sad either, except during the immersion or when Brijesh's name was mentioned. She was just very quiet, always meditating."

She left Kalakankar only three or four times during her stay there. On Feb. 26 she went to nearby Allahabad.

There she met Dr. Lohia, her husband's old friend from European days. Dr. Lohia recalls her as a "completely nonpolitical person."

"She told me, 'I hate politics,'" he said. "I said, 'You're Stalin's daughter and you hate politics?' And she just smiled.

'She Was a Lonely Person'

"She was a sad, a deeply sad person, not the kind who wears sadness like a badge on her face but the kind who has acquired a certain softness of expression through a long period of suffering. Above all she was a lonely person."

On March 3, she rode up to Lucknow and spent two days there, chiefly with Aruna Kurami, Brijesh Singh's niece, who was in bed recovering from an operation.

"We just sat around the room listening to my records," the niece recalls. "She was very quiet and seemed rather upset about something. She said 'I hope you don't mind my not being very talkative, but I don't feel like talking.'"

Mrs. Alliluyeva spent the night of March 5 in New Delhi at the home of Dinesh Singh. At 9:30 o'clock on the morning of March 6, according to the Singh family, a car from the Soviet Embassy came to get her.

The family insists it does not know what she did between then and about 9 P.M., the time she is reported to have walked up the marble steps of the American Embassy to ask for political asylum.