

BJP'S SEARCH FOR NEW PRESIDENT
POLL EXPERTISE A PLUS

WOMEN'S DAY
SPECIAL

TRUMP'S WORLD
PUTIN, XI AND I

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THE WEEK

MARCH 16, 2025

THE BRUTALIST
THE OSCAR-WINNER
IMMORTALISES
CONCRETE IN CINEMA



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WHAT

Rima Das



Anju Bobby George



Dr Praveen Kumari Singh



Aruna Roy



WOMEN



Sagarika Ghose



Daisy Chittilapilly



Kanimozhi Karunanidhi



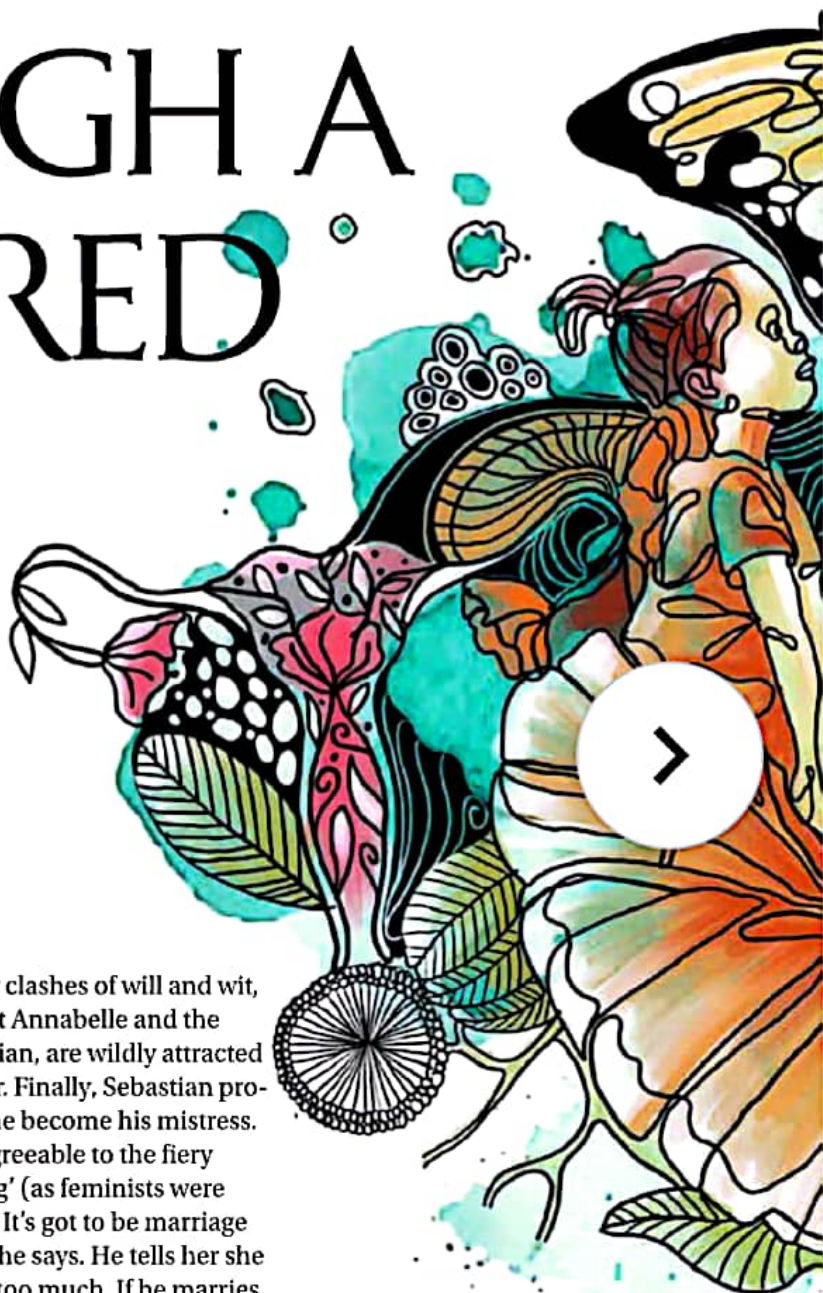
Meena Kandasamy

WANT

Leaders from politics, business, entertainment, sports and more outline their wish-list

THROUGH A GENDERED GLASS

Women have won many victories in their fight for equality. But the battle is yet to be fought—when understand what it to be a woman



BY ANJULY MATHAI
ILLUSTRATIONS: JOB P.K.

I recently read a romance novel called *Bringing Down the Duke* by Evie Dunmore. Although it contained the usual mush of most period romances, it was surprisingly insightful.

It was about an impoverished woman suffragist, Annabelle, studying at Oxford University, who falls in love with the Duke of Montgomery. Annabelle and her fellow suffragists are fighting to get the Married Women's Property Act of 1870 amended in parliament. The stations in life of the duke and Annabelle could not, of course, be more different. But the age-old trope of rags-meets-riches will never go out of fashion in romance.

After a few clashes of will and wit, it is clear that Annabelle and the duke, Sebastian, are wildly attracted to each other. Finally, Sebastian proposes that she become his mistress. This is not agreeable to the fiery 'bluestocking' (as feminists were called then). It's got to be marriage or nothing, she says. He tells her she is asking for too much. If he marries her, he will lose the queen's favour, his standing in society and his position as the chief strategic adviser for the election campaign of the Tory party. "Do you want to see me ruined?" he asks her. In the end, of course, he realises that life without her is itself a form of ruination.

In the climactic scene, Annabelle and her fellow suffragists are sitting

in the Ladies' Gallery of the parliament when the usher announces His Grace, the Duke of Montgomery. He gets up and says a long speech in support of the Married Women's Property Act. And then, to shocked silence, he resigns from the Tory party. In a predictably melodramatic scene, Annabelle asks Sebastian how he could do such a thing. He tender-

