

# The New York Times

## Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi Are Awarded Nobel Peace Prize



By ALAN COWELL and DECLAN WALSH: OCT. 10, 2014

Reaching across gulfs of age, gender, faith, nationality and even international celebrity, the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the 2014 peace prize on Friday to Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan and Kailash Satyarthi of India. The award joined a teenage Pakistani known around the world with an Indian veteran of campaigns to end child labor and free children from trafficking.

Ms. Yousafzai, 17, the youngest recipient of the prize since it was created in 1901, said Friday in a news conference in Birmingham, England, "I'm proud that I'm the first Pakistani and first the young woman, or the first young person, who is getting this award."

She will share the \$1.1 million prize equally with Mr. Satyarthi, 60, who is not nearly so widely known as Ms. Yousafzai. "If with my humble efforts the voice of tens of millions of children in the world who are living in servitude is being heard, congratulations to all," Mr. Satyarthi said Friday in an interview with NDTV in India.

The award was announced in Oslo by Thorbjorn Jagland, the committee's chairman, who said: "The Nobel Committee regards it as an important point for a Hindu and a Muslim, an Indian and a Pakistani, to join in a common struggle for education and against extremism."

"Children must go to school and not be financially exploited," Mr. Jagland said. "It is a prerequisite for peaceful global development that the rights of children and young people be respected. In conflict-ridden areas in particular, the violation of children leads to the continuation of violence from generation to generation."

"Showing great personal courage, Kailash Satyarthi, maintaining Gandhi's tradition, has headed various forms of protests and demonstrations, all peaceful, focusing on the grave exploitation of children for financial gain," Mr. Jagland said. "He has also contributed to the development of important international conventions on children's rights."

Ms. Yousafzai said she spoke by telephone with Mr. Satyarthi and that they agreed to work together for better opportunities for children and to help their two countries overcome their differences.

"We also decided that since he's from India and I'm from Pakistan that we would try to bring a strong relationship to India and Pakistan," Ms. Yousafzai said in the news conference, adding that she and Mr. Satyarthi would invite Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan to the Nobel ceremony in Oslo in December.

Ms. Yousafzai was shot in the head by the Taliban in 2012 for campaigning on behalf of girls' education in the Swat Valley of Pakistan. She was 15 at the time. Since then, she has become a global emblem of her struggle, celebrated on television and publishing a memoir.

She "has already fought for several years for the right of girls to education and has shown by example that children and young people, too, can contribute to improving their own situations," Mr. Jagland said. "This she has done under the most dangerous circumstances. Through her heroic struggle, she has become a leading spokesperson for girls' rights to education."

Underscoring the hostilities the Nobel committee seemed to wish to ease, troops from Pakistan and India had exchanged artillery and machine-gun fire across their disputed Himalayan border in the days before the announcement. The most recent eruption of fighting has so far killed 11 Pakistani and eight Indian villagers, but by Friday, a lull had set in, news reports said.

In the speculation that invariably precedes the announcement of the award, Ms. Yousafzai had been a favorite for two successive years. This year, some forecasters spoke of Pope Francis, and others said it was likely the committee would withhold the prize, as it last did during the Vietnam War in 1972 because the global horizon seemed so scarred by conflict.

The nomination of Ms. Yousafzai, however, seemed in part to be intended as an inspirational message, offering a counterpoint to conflicts in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and elsewhere.

In a statement on Friday after the prize was awarded, Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations secretary general, said, "With her courage and determination, Malala has shown what terrorists fear most: a girl with a book."

Last year, Ms. Yousafzai won several European awards and published a memoir of her experiences, "I Am Malala." The title echoed the circumstances of her shooting. When the Taliban gunman boarded her bus, he called out, "Who is Malala?" As she noted in an interview last year, her voice is now heard "in every corner of the world."

Ms. Yousafzai was at school in Birmingham, where she has lived since being treated for her gunshot wounds, when the prize was announced and was taken out of her chemistry class to be informed of the award.

The Taliban were the reason that Ms. Yousafzai had come to public prominence. She wrote a blog in 2009 that detailed life in the Swat Valley under Taliban rule, at a time when bearded fighters, armed with Kalashnikovs, had terrorized the valley's residents and shut schools where girls were being educated.

After the Taliban were expelled from Swat, Ms. Yousafzai went on to become a national media figure. Ms. Yousafzai spoke passionately about the need for peace and education for girls on television programs. She was encouraged by her schoolmaster father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, who had nurtured his daughter as an outspoken advocate from an early age.

But that advocacy earned the wrath of the Taliban, which convened a secret meeting to plan her assassination.

In the months after her recovery, Ms. Yousafzai took the first steps toward establishing her global celebrity. She met with a President Obama and his family in the White House and was lionized by a host of celebrities.

Back in Pakistan, however, things were less clear. Conservative Pakistanis spread malicious stories claiming that Ms. Yousafzai's plight had been exaggerated by a gullible Western news media, or that she was somehow in the employment of American intelligence. The Taliban vowed to redouble their efforts to assassinate the schoolgirl should she ever return to the country.

The conspiracy theories reflected broader tensions between Pakistan and the United States. Although most Pakistanis prize education, and a minority sympathizes with the Taliban, the rush by Western leaders to heap praise on Ms. Yousafzai was seen by many as a rebuke of Pakistan at a time of painful relations with the United States.

For all that, news of the Nobel Prize on Friday inspired jubilation and well-wishers in the Swat Valley, who spilled onto the streets and distributed sweets in a traditional celebration.

"We have no words to express our feelings," said Ahmad Shah, a family friend, speaking by phone from Mingora, the main town in the region. "Her efforts have been recognized by the world with this great prize. This is a victory for the people of Swat and of Pakistan."

Mr. Shah said he had spoken to Ms. Yousafzai's exiled father, who had called from England to gauge the reaction in the area.

For months after the attack on Ms. Yousafzai, some residents criticized the schoolgirl, fearing publicity around her case would invite further Taliban attacks. But now, Mr. Shah said he told Mr. Yousafzai by phone, "even those who were opposing Malala are happy."

Some residents, however, clung to the conspiracy theories that have dogged Ms. Yousafzai's reputation in Pakistan. " "Her shooting was a ready-made drama that was created by foreign powers," said Ghulam Farooq, the editor of a small local newspaper. "She has no real role in this Swat conflict."

In India, Mr. Satyarthi, a former engineer, has long been associated with the struggle to free bonded laborers, some born into their condition and others lured into servitude. For decades, he has sought to rid India of child slavery and has liberated more than 75,000 bonded and child laborers in the country.

Mr. Satyarthi began working for children's rights in 1980 as the general secretary of the Bonded Labor Liberation Front, an organization dedicated to freeing bonded laborers forced to work to pay off debts, real or imagined.

He also founded the Bachpan Bachao Andolan, or Save the Children Mission, an organization dedicated to ending bonded labor and saving children from trafficking.

"This is a very happy moment for every Indian," he said in comments aired on Indian television on Friday, adding that his efforts are to help give voice to the plight of marginalized children. He emphasized that child labor "perpetuates poverty."

"Poverty must not be used as an excuse to continue child labor and exploitation of children," he said. "It's a triangular relationship between child labor, poverty and illiteracy, and I have been trying to fight all of these things together."

Mr. Satyarthi also founded the Mukti Ashram, or Liberation Retreat, in the 1980s to teach bonded laborers, overwhelmingly children, new trades so they could participate freely in the Indian economy.

He worked toward their release through Supreme Court orders and saved children forced to embroider textiles in a factory in New Delhi, weave carpets in Uttar Pradesh and toil on rice fields in Madhya Pradesh. His work was at times dangerous, and he was assaulted by circus owners when he freed Nepali children working in the Gonda district of Uttar Pradesh.

He has spoken passionately on the issue of child rights and on the systemic forces, including the caste system that contribute to bonded labor in India.

"Caste, religion, the political system, the economic system — all are helping the bonded labor owners," Mr. Satyarthi said in an interview with The New York Times in 1992. "I believe in Gandhi's philosophy of the last man, that is, the bonded laborer is the last man in Indian society that we are here to liberate the last man."

In 1998, he organized the Global March Against Child Labor across 103 countries, which helped to pave the way for an International Labor Organization convention on the worst forms of child labor.

For the previous two years, the prize had been awarded to international bodies: the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in 2013 and the European Union in 2012.

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