

PRESS RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION

India's first-ever FM Radio Drama Serial completes 100 episodes

New Delhi, 17 May 2010: India's first ever FM radio drama series, '*Life Gulmohar Style*', produced by BBC World Service Trust, completes 100 episodes of its broadcast later this month. It addresses the aspirations and concerns of modern women in urban India. The 156-part show is also the longest-running radio drama on the Indian FM Networks.

The 100th episode will be aired on the 26 May 2010 at 7:30 p.m from the five stations of the AIR FM Rainbow's Delhi, Mumbai, Jalandhar, Lucknow and Kanpur cities. *Life Gulmohar Style* is also aired on private FM Dhamaal 24 from its ten stations in Karnal, Hissar, Patiala, Shimla, Jabalpur, Ranchi, Muzaffarpur, Dhule, Ahmednagar and Jalgaon.

Directed by BBC's Award Winning Producer Pervaiz Alam, *Life Gulmohar Style*, is a story of five young people in search of their identity. The drama deals with a host of issues facing women today, including their sexual and reproductive health, violence, and their roles and responsibilities in a changing India. The 100th episode portrays how urban India is struggling to come to terms with the issues of gender inequality and dowry.

"There's a perception in the FM radio sector that only music or light-chat oriented programmes do well in terms of attracting audiences. It's heartening to see that our radio drama *Life Gulmohar Style* has not only created niche audiences for drama but also managed to tempt the so-called music listeners to tune into a programme of 15 minutes without a break," says, Pervaiz Alam.

Yvonne MacPherson, Country Director of the BBC World Service Trust, added: "We've been very encouraged by the feedback we've received from dedicated listeners, who say that the programme is thought provoking. Some have even shared examples of how the programme has changed their views about women in a more positive way."

National Programming Head of Dhamaal 24, Mr. Anil Kapoor said, "Our listeners are exposed to a show that tackles sensitive issues in an entertaining manner. The drama has received an overwhelming response."



The drama serial is the outcome of an extensive research conducted by the BBC World Service Trust that examined how the media can be used to address the rising rates of sex selective abortion in India.

The drama episodes are also available for free downloads and podcasts on our website: www.lifegulmoharstyle.org and BBC Hindi online.

To mark the broadcast of the 100th episode, an online event is being organised in which the drama cast and production team will come together to interact with the fans of the show all over the country through various social networking sites.

NOTE FOR EDITORS:

1. The drama's dedicated website is: www.lifegulmoharstyle.org
2. Interviews with Yvonne MacPherson, Country Director, BBC World Service Trust India, or Pervaiz Alam, Director of *Life Gulmohar Style*, available on request. Telephone: +91 (011) 4259 1200. Contact: sehrish.saifi@bbcwst.org
3. The BBC World Service Trust is the BBC's international development charity. It aims to reduce poverty and promote human rights in developing countries through the innovative and creative use of the media. Access to information, empowerment and 'voice' are at the heart of what we do.
4. The BBC World Service Trust is an independent charity funded by external grants and voluntary contributions, mainly from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), the European Union, UN agencies and charitable foundations. Registered charity number: 1076235
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