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Srimati Devikarani, Dr. Roerich,  
Mr. Justice Masud & friends,

At the outset I must express my gratitude to the Calcutta Art Society for having given me the opportunity to preside over this function which is being held to felicitate Smt. Devikarani - the first lady of the Indian Screen.

It is needless to say how happy we all are to have her in our midst this evening. Looking back to the near-forgotten early days of the Indian Film Industry when joining the Film Industry as an artiste was unthinkable for decent and cultured people, it was Smt. Devika Rani and the Late Mr. Himansu Rai who had the courage to break the barriers <sup>and to</sup> ~~to~~ come forward to set an example for others who were hesitating to join the Industry *and start a new trend in the industry*

The stamp of her greatness as an artiste and her contributions to the films produced by Himangsu Rai and later by the Bombay Talkies Ltd., was evident in all the pictures.

We are, indeed, happy that she is the first recipient of the Phalke Award which confirms - if any confirmation was necessary at all - the value of her contributions to the Indian Screen.

P. T. O.



We feel ourselves honoured to be able to do

honour to a great and illustrious artiste.

I thank you all.

*Jonica*

10.2.71



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TRUE COPY

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Sd/- . B.N. SIRCAR  
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