

## Document Citation

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**CAST**

Soumitra Chatterji, Dhritiman Chatterji, Ruma Guha Thakurta, Mamata Shankar, Dipankar De, Subhendu Chatterji, Manoj Mitra, Vishwa, Guha Thakurta, Satya Banerji, Rajaram Yagnik

**CREDITS**

**Production:** National Film Development Corporation, India

**Direction/Screenplay/Music:** Satyajit Ray

**Camera:** Barun Raha

**Art Director:** Ashoke Bose

**Editor:** Dulal Dutt

**Language:** Bengali

**Running Time:** 100 mins

**Colour/1989**

**THE FILM**

The story takes place in a small town in West Bengal called Chandipur which regularly draws a large number of visitors for its healthy climate and for the recently built temple of Tripureswar which is

considered to be particularly holy.

Dr. Ashoke Gupta, a physician wholly dedicated to his profession, discovers that cases of jaundice, typhoid and other water-borne diseases have suddenly made their appearance in Chandipur. He also discovers that the cases are occurring mostly in the area where the temple stands. He sends a sample of the water for analysis. The report reveals that the water is full of bacteria.

Dr. Gupta, who is an agnostic, immediately approaches his younger brother Nishith, who is the chairman of the Municipality, and suggests that the leakage should be immediately located and repaired, and the temple closed down until it is safe for the people to drink the holy water again.

He is strongly opposed not only by his brother, who is a believer, but also by Mr. Bhargava, a rich businessman who built the temple and who is Nishith's friend and business partner.

A distraught Dr. Gupta turns to the only newspaper in town, a supposedly progressive daily, to print an article on the crisis. The editor turns him down for fear of public opinion.

The doctor now arranges a meeting where he hopes to inform the public verbally about the crisis. The meeting is wrecked by the machinations of Nishith and other vested interests. The doctor is branded as a heretic and a public enemy.

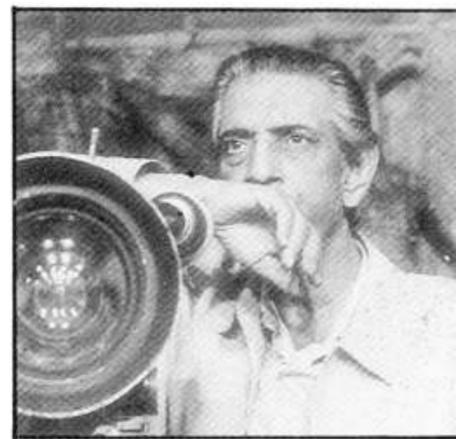
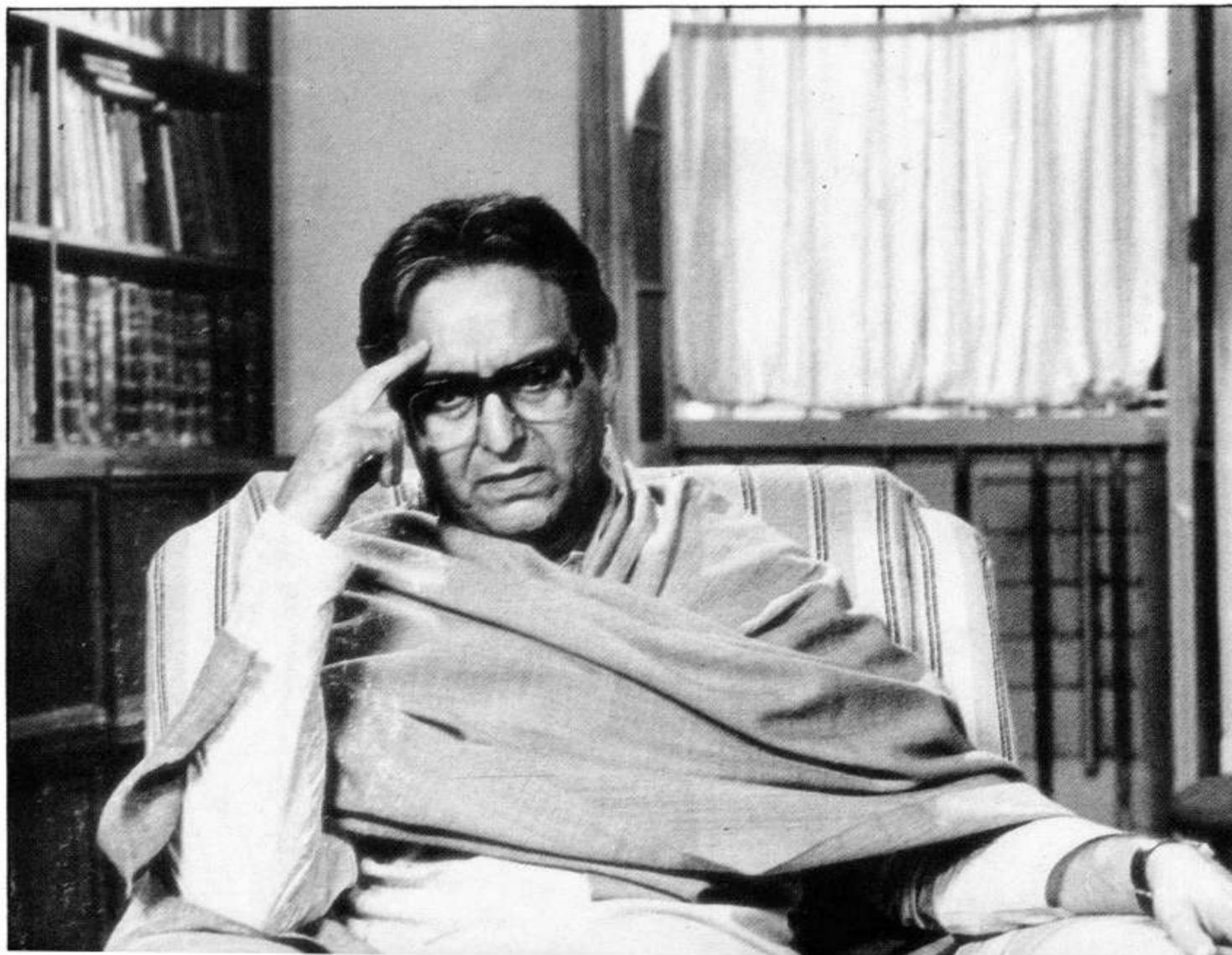
In deep despair, Dr. Gupta decides to leave Chandipur, his birthplace and a town he loves. Finally, however, his faith is revived when he discovers that a whole group of young educated people of the town are all on his side and ready to fight for his cause and bring the bureaucrats to their senses.

**THE DIRECTOR**

SATYAJIT RAY'S first film, *Pather Panchali*, was shown in the United States in 1955 — and went on to break the record for the longest run at the Fifth Avenue Cinema in New York.

With the Apu trilogy, Ray became one of the highly praised filmmakers of the world: nearly thirty years and thirty films later, he is firmly established in the pantheon of world cinema as one of its most illustrious figures.

In the beginning, interest in him had, at least for some people, an exotic-ethnographic element. But with a series of serene masterpieces ranging from *Devi* (The Goddess) to *Charulata* and then *Ashani Sanket* (Distant Thunder), the troubled Calcutta city trilogy ending with *Jana Aranya* (The Middleman), critics and informed audiences forgot the ethnography and recognised his work simply as great cinema.

**THE DIRECTOR SAYS**

"Written a hundred years ago, Ibsen's 'An Enemy of the People' is still relevant today. Pollution is a worldwide problem even now and nowhere more so than in India. I have brought the play up to date and have transplanted it to Bengal. But I hope it still retains its universality. I have never made a film of a play before. *Ganashatru* is therefore unlike any other film of mine. Making the film has been a rich and rewarding experience for me."

## L'ENNEMI PUBLIC

L'histoire se passe à Chandipur, une petite ville du Bengale occidental. Une foule régulière y afflue, attirée par sa réputation climatique et par le temple de Tripureshwar récemment construit et considéré comme un lieu saint.

Le docteur Ashoke Gupta, un généraliste entièrement dévoué à sa profession, découvre que des cas de jaunisse, de typhoïde et d'autres maladies transmises par l'eau se sont déclarés à Chandipur. Il découvre également que c'est principalement dans le quartier du temple que de tels cas se présentent. Il fait analyser un prélèvement d'eau et les résultats confirment la présence de bactéries.

Le docteur Gupta qui est agnostique aborde immédiatement Nishith, son frère cadet qui est le président de la municipalité. Il lui suggère que les fuites de canalisations soient sur le champ localisées et réparées, et que le temple soit fermé jusqu'à ce que l'eau bénite redevienne saine.

Il se heurte à la forte opposition non seulement de son frère qui est croyant, mais aussi à celle de M. Bhargava, un homme d'affaires fortuné qui a fait construire le temple et qui est également l'ami et associé de Nishith.

Affolé, le docteur Gupta se tourne vers le seul journal de la ville, un quotidien supposé de progrès, pour faire publier un article sur la crise. Le rédacteur en chef le lui refuse par peur de l'opinion publique.

Le docteur organise alors un meeting dans l'espoir d'informer le public du danger. Le meeting est saboté par la machination de Nishith et de notables prêts à défendre leurs intérêts. Le docteur est déclaré hérétique et ennemi public.

Profondément désespéré, le docteur Gupta décide de quitter Chandipur, sa ville natale qu'il aime pourtant beaucoup. Mais il reprend finalement confiance quand il apprend qu'un groupe de jeunes gens instruits se range à ses côtés, prêt à se battre pour défendre sa cause et ramener les bureaucrates à leur raison.

