From Partition to Operation Bluestar: Tales of a Journalist, Bureaucrat, Spy was released at the Singapore Management University (SMU), on Wednesday, followed by book readings and discussion.

Introducing the book, Prof. Kirpal Singh, Director of the Wee Kim Wee Centre at SMU, spoke of the importance of such books, written by those who have lived through history as it was being made.

The author, Som Nath Dhar, started his career as a journalist in Lahore in 1947, went on to working as Nehru’s personal assistance over the period of Indian independence, worked for many years as a radio reporter before joining the Indian government.

From Partition to Operation Bluestar: Tales of a Journalist, Bureaucrat, Spy provides a fresh first-hand accounts of major public events in Indian history since independence. The author, Som Nath Dhar, relies on his journalistic skills to weave an engrossing narrative that covers India’s independence from Britain, its bloody partition into two countries, the roots of the conflict in Kashmir, and much more. Dhar, who was personal assistant to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru at the time of independence, also throws light on the public and personal characters of the towering personalities of the era. He has worked closely with four Indian
prime ministers and one president. The book ends with Indira Gandhi’s assassination and a comparative assessment of three prime ministers: Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.

In his long career, Dhar worked as a newspaper journalist in what is now Pakistan, a radio reporter and editor in India, and one of India’s covert intelligence agencies. He ended his career in government as Director-General of News, All India Radio, a government job. After retiring from government, he taught for five years at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

One of the strengths of the book is its highly readable style and its obvious authenticity. Early readers have commented on how the narrative pulls one in. “It’s like a detective novel – you can’t put it down!” said Rajat Nag, Managing Director General of the Manila-based Asian Development Bank.

Dhar passed away in Singapore in December, weeks before his book was published. He was 88. He is survived by his wife, Indira Dhar, and their two daughters. His daughters initiated the book discussion and answered questions about the book.
An engrossing, personal view of the public events that have shaped India's recent history From Partition to Operation Bluestar provides an engrossing, personal view of the public events that have shaped India's recent history, written by a man who had a ringside view of these. As we follow Som Nath Dhar's career in journalism, government and the world of covert intelligence, the book transports us from pre-Partition Punjab to Delhi and Kashmir, with side trips to East Africa and Europe. Bluestar flung herself down the slope. Gulping air, muscles burning, she weaved around the trees, her paws skidding on the leafy forest floor. She hurtled through a swath of ferns, running blind as the leaves whipped her face. The gorge was close by. She could hear the river crashing between the sheer gray walls. Would Fireheart really be able to lure the dog pack over the edge? What if the pack's leader caught him first? Fireheart was dangling from the glistening jaws of a huge dog. The ThunderClan deputy struggled, spitting with fury. The dog shook him, its eyes shining with triumph, but its clumsy paws were skittering dangerously close to the edge of the gorge. "I will not let you destroy my Clan!" Bluestar roared. This page contains the detailed history for Bluestar. Looking for a shorter overview? Find one here! Bluestar is seen in the ThunderClan camp, staring at the night sky. The ThunderClan medicine cat, Spottedleaf, appears next to her and Bluestar asks how the cats from the battle at Sunningrocks are doing, to which Spottedleaf replies that they will all recover. Bluestar tells Spottedleaf she is worried, because ThunderClan hasn't lost a battle in their own territory since she became leader, and also