

EL OBSERVADOR

Living Testimony to Enduring Struggle

Peru's culture minister fights to end discrimination

(AP) — Elementary school students serenade Susana Baca in San Luis de Canete, a former sugar cane-milling town where both she and Peru's slave trade are rooted.

One girl recites a paean to Baca, and five other children tap a complex rhythm on

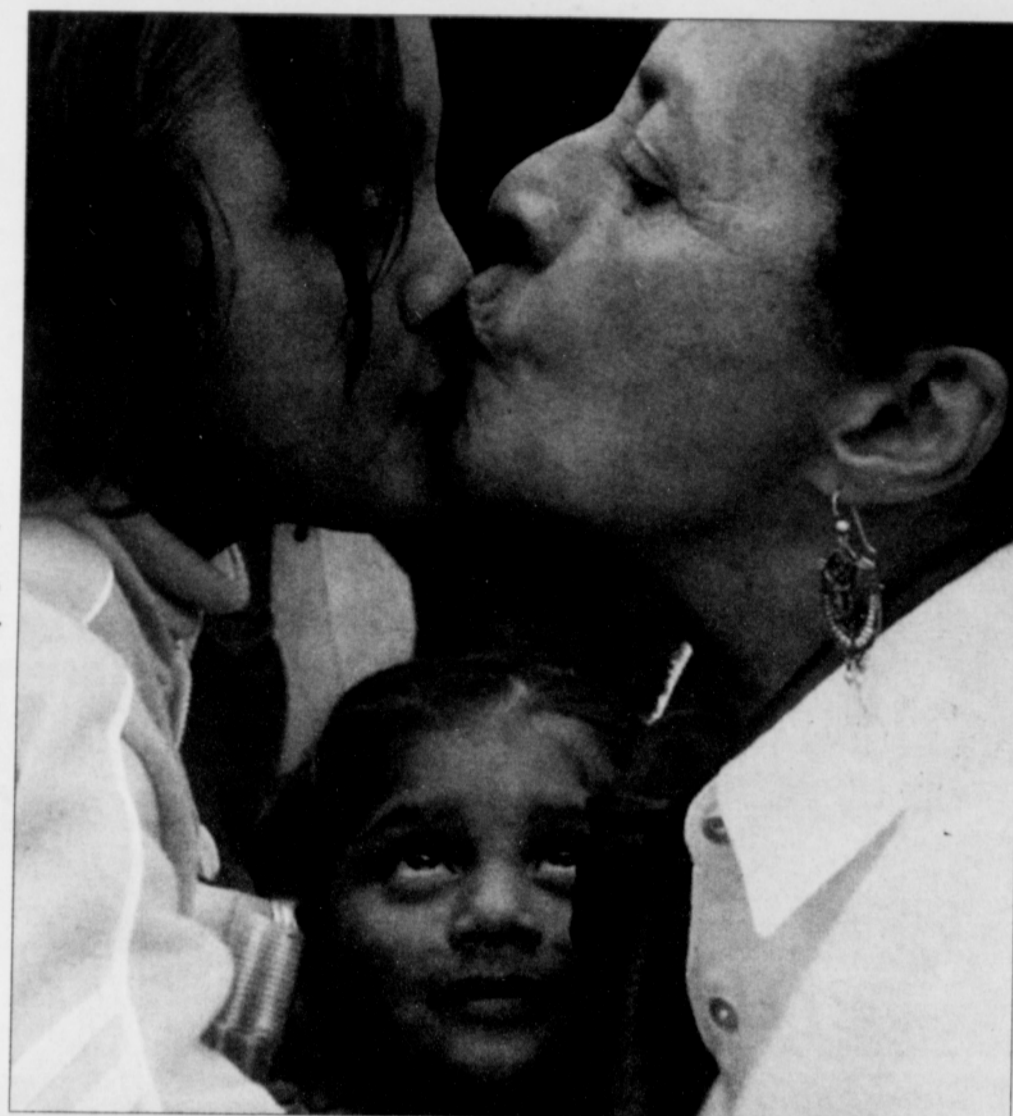
boxes known as cajones, a legacy of Africans brought in chains to harvest sugar cane in this fertile river valley. The library of the humble school is being dedicated to the 67-year-old diva, herself living proof of Afro-Peruvians' enduring struggle.

The gracious, elegant Baca is not just Peru's best-known musician but also the Andean country's first black Cabinet minister.

She accepted the offer to join President

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▶ Peru's Culture Minister Susana Baca kisses a girl during a visit to a school in San Luis de Canete, Peru.



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