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MUSINGS

Vol. I. No. 8

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

August 1 — 14, 1991

At long last, hope of...

Cleaner City waterways

(By A Special Correspondent)

At last someone's remembered the Severn Trent Company, whose representatives have the past few years spent their time in the Connemara Hotel wondering when their plans will be put into operation. Now perhaps they will be able to get down in real earnest to cleaning up the waterways of the city.

Severn Trent is the British organisation that cleaned up the Thames some years ago. Their brief was to come up with a plan to clean up the Cooum, Adyar and Buckingham Canal. The British Government had promised several crores in aid — if

memory serves me right, it would have amounted to crores of rupees in three digits — to get the work started. The whole project was also linked with updating the sewage outlet system of the city.

The report was handed in to the Tamil Nadu Government by Severn Trent many moons ago and the commitment by the British was also made. But for one reason or another, little or no work has been done on the proposal — and various teams of Severn Trent men have made the Connemara home while waiting for someone to

take a decision. It was therefore heartening to hear Chief Minister Jayalalitha mention the project in the House the other day and promise its implementation post-haste.

Once the waterways are cleaned up, they could well return to that state when Pachaiyappa Mudaliar bathed daily in the Cooum before his prayers and Justice Benson remarked on the delights of life on its banks. But while the return to this state is being implemented, it might be worthwhile looking into another aspect of these waterways.

All these waterways were once navigable and there's many an old-timer who'll remember the boatloads of produce that used to come down the Buckingham Canal from the Nellore District and the number of picnickers who used to take the slow boat to Mamallapuram. With the fuel crunch, passenger and goods transport down these waterways might be a partial solution to that problem. Would Madam Chief Minister have this looked into as well — not in economic terms, but in terms of service?



The long wait

(By A Staff Reporter)

The picture above was taken outside the U.S. Consul-General's Office in Mount Road, at about 8.30 a.m. one weekday recently. That queue was to grow longer as the sun rose higher and beat down more fiercely on those seeking the wisdom of the New World or pastures fresh.

And as the crowd grew, it, on the one hand, overflowed the pavements — this, after all, is the time Indian students start flocking to American universities — depriving citizens use of their microscopic 'platforms' and driving them into Mount Road traffic. On the other, it made viewers more conscious of the fact that those queuing up for hours on end had absolutely no amenities offered them to make their waiting easier.

A curious fact about this daily scene is that this part of the New World known for its generosity and hospitality reflects that reputation in Delhi but not in Madras. In Delhi, you queue up inside a room that offers chairs, air conditioned comfort, coffee and snack-vending machines, and even a bookshop! Why then are those visa applicants in Madras being treated so indifferently?

It can't be lack of space within the Consul-General's precincts for a sheltered enclosure with a toilet or two and a tap for water. There's enough space within this fortified 'garden house' to attract the Land Ceiling Act if only it were applicable. Then why is this one complaint — which has been made several times before — being ignored when this Consul-General's office is exemplary on every other count? If the answer is security, doesn't it apply in Delhi also and to all those users of its other facilities in Madras?

Whatever the reason, can't something be done to get around it? No one's asking for chairs and air-conditioning here. Just a little comfort would go a long way to humanising the whole procedure of visa-granting. Does anyone up there hear us?



That's a part of the Buckingham Canal as it is today. Nothing will get through it, but once you could take a boat to Mamallapuram on it. Will that happen again? Or, at least, will the stretch of canal in the city be cleaned up soon? (Pix above and on top: SUSHEELA NAIR)

Occasional skirmishes

BUT DIGNITY ALWAYS RETURNS

One of the surprising things a visitor to the Tamil Nadu Assembly notices is that it has not changed at all. Decency and decorum have been the keystone of this hall of fame. Earlier parliamentarians have gone on record that it will never change. Curiously, what lends dignity and a sense of propriety are the very things often taken for granted — the chandeliered hall, the ready-to-rise attitude of members with expectant faces as the Speaker arrives, the sounds of shuffling of papers after, and the general anxiety to observe rules.

Frayed tempers have been nothing unusual. But in the last decade or so, the occasional skirmish has been added to the list, raising the tolerance level for previously unacceptable behaviour. And this despite the entry of more educated legislators! But dignity and sobriety return soon, like the waters closing over a stone hurled into a pool.

The first session of the tenth Legislative Assembly, which began on July 4th and ended July 13th, was no

exception. Decorum in the House was maintained, though Speaker Sedapatti Muthiah had to pull up two members from the Opposition benches for transgression of the rules.

But what was remarkable was not only the sensitive handling of the many tricky situations by Chief Minister Jayalalitha, but also her triumphant conclusion of the first session with a well-thought-out reply to the five-day

THE VIEW FROM FORT ST. GEORGE
by R.K.K.



debate on the Governor's address, which, among other things, contained a juicy bunch of concessions to entrepreneurs and industrialists.

The Governor's address on July 4th spelt out the agenda of the AIADMK Government for the first year. A Rs. 384 crore self-sufficiency scheme for basic facilities in rural areas, setting

up a Committee to oversee implementation of the Nutritious Noon Meal programme, legislation to take over benami land for distribution to the landless poor, new power plants in the private sector, a memorial at the site where Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated, and elections to Corporations, municipalities, panchayats and panchayat unions (before September 30th) form part of the agenda.

On the first day, there was that incident between Independent member, Tamaraiyani and a PMK member, S Ramachandran. The sequel outside was unforeseen. PMK President Ramadoss' fast, making the curious demand for an apology from the Chief Minister for an incident she was not involved in, led to party sympathisers

going on a rampage. "Why should some try to create problems within just 10 days of my assuming office?" the Chief Minister wondered, after as many as 202 State-owned buses and 79 private vehicles, besides much railway property, were damaged. Deceptively mild-mannered, yet showing herself as a person of decision, she said later that legislation was being considered to make parties pay for their cadres' misdeeds.

During the next few days, as many as 80 members participated in the debate. Elimination of doctors with fake degrees and cutting down administrative costs were among the points raised by some of them.

When the Chief Minister made her reply to the debate on the Governor's Address, she paid rather too much attention to reorganising and renaming districts and organisations. But she also promised action on several more important areas. One of these would be a ban on child labour.

MANAALI RAMAN...

IN MAD, MAD MADRAS

Could idli, dosais be deadly?

Who says only cigarettes cause cancer? Apparently your everyday South Indian breakfast can also cause the deadly disease.

Scientists from the Cancer Institute, Madras, writing in the *Indian Journal of Experimental Biology*, report that "potent and proven carcinogens have been identified and quantified in several of the commonly consumed South Indian food dishes and food components".

Some of the dishes which contained the cancer-linked polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) include upma, masala vadai and murugai dosais. With deep frying increasing the PAH component in some foods — fried fish, salted

sun-dried vegetables, appalams and dry heated spices like pepper, cardamom and cummin seeds, for instance — these are also potential causes of cancer, according to the paper.

The PAH component is linked with many of these foods that come from polluted areas, according to the report, which, curiously, has not made many headlines in the South but which has got a big play in newspapers elsewhere in India.

Photographers' patron

The arrest of balding, bulky Subha Sundaram in connection with the Rajiv Gandhi assassination would dampen the spirits of several freelance

photographers in the city. Sundaram, who ran Subha News and Photo Agency in Royapettah, is a photographer's photographer, many of the leading freelancers in the city having got their start with him.

Almost every magazine in Madras which could not afford

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

a photographer and every 'stringer' for up-country and foreign journals used material from Subha Photos. And much of this photography was done for a pittance by young men like Harihabu who learned the trade from Sundaram and then went

on to freelance on their own. In the process, Subha Photos built up one of the finest collections of pictures of Tamil Nadu politicians and events connected with them.

In the process too, Sundaram would undoubtedly have not only built up a good LITE 'collection' but would have also

befriended several Tigers. The consequence is the quicksands he has got trapped in.

Besting Best's

When one of Britain's top 100 industrialists, Vijay Mallya, took over Best and Crompton's of Madras, the company was in a bad way and not everyone was optimistic about its future. But, as in so many other cases, Mallya has wrought a minor miracle and, in its 111th year, the company has recorded a turnover of Rs. 225 crores and is looking for more.

The company founded by A V Best and John McLintock in 1879, taking over the 10-year-old Madras branch of Aspinwall & Co, became Best & Co in time and, in more recent years, added the Crompton to its name when it teamed up with the company one of its associates in the 1880s, Col Crompton, had founded. The ambition of this company with a long history is now stated to be a Rs. 1000 crore turnover before... Which birthday did someone say?

At one time, Best's were Visiting Agents for the gold mines in South India. With the Kolar Gold Fields now in trouble will someone invite Mallya to take over the deepest gold mines in the world — mines with whose prosperity his Best & Co. was long connected?

Saying it in Tamil

While Chief Minister Jayalitha has been conducting several conferences in English, she prefers Tamil for her press

MMM

conferences. Which makes life difficult not only for the representatives of the up-country and foreign press but also for many reporters on the local English dailies.

While most of these reporters speak Tamil, taking notes fast in it is beyond most of them. When they recently posed their problems to the Chief Minister, asking her to speak more slowly, she suggested they bring tape recorders and even requested Security to relax their ban on such instruments.

But even if tape recorders make their presence felt at press conferences in future, the *Man from Madras Musings* wonders how many reporters will make head or tail of the sounds that emanate from such electronic gadgetry. *MMM* has always found these instruments more of a hindrance than a help, trying to make sense of what is said amidst all the disturbances and atmospherics slowing down reporting — and that, not in the cause of more accurate recording.

Cat on a boom

Whoever thought that the high-priced (Rs. 1400) *Street Cat* will become the rage in the world of Indian cycling! But it has. And TI Cycles, which had been finding life difficult with the Heroes, Atlases and other less expensive models around, has suddenly begun to boom.

Whether it's the catchy Boom Boom advertising to the tune of Rs. 2 crores, whether it's the handsome styling, whether it's the 20 colour schemes being offered, whether it's the appeal to the trendy teenage set, whether it's the built-to-last quality of TI cycles, no one is very sure. But whatever the reason, *Street Cat* is selling to the tune of Rs. 2 crores a month and is expecting to push production from 25,000 bikes a month to 40,000 once its ladies' model is launched.

When that happens, TI Cycles may still be far behind Hero's 35 per cent share of the market, but its turnover will look quite handsome and profits quite substantial. Whoever thought a cat could do that, a street cat at that?!

Waiting for a policy

At the time of writing this column, the much awaited industrial policy has not been announced yet. It is several days overdue. As mentioned earlier, the Industrial policy, the budget and the trade policy together are expected to usher in the structural reforms.

The industrial policy was expected to bring in some long overdue changes. The MRTPLimit was expected to be raised to Rs. 1,000 crore. Licensing was going to be junked for projects upto Rs. 200 crore. Foreign companies were expected to be invited to come in with an equity of 51 per cent. And, most important, the government was planning to introduce the exit policy which means allowing those industries which have become completely unviable and sick to close down.

Even these seeming radical measures were considered not sufficient. An industrialist commented last week that the government should abolish letter 'M' (monopolies) in the MRTPL Act and just concentrate on the RTP (restrictive trade practices). The concept of licensing is also considered outdated. Even allowing 51 per cent equity was

not expected to bring adequate foreign capital.

But there is also another school of thought which would like to cling to the outdated Indian policies. Any structural changes would not be good for certain vested interests. While the enlightened industrialists have welcomed the need to unshackle the

BUSINESS REVIEW by THE SHROFF

economy from the various controls it has been trapped in, those who have been for years manipulating the Licence Raj to suit themselves are as vehemently opposed to change.

And, of course, the bureaucrats have been resisting the changes. Already the trade policy announced by the Commerce Minister is likely to make many top jobs in the departments relating to exports redundant. Abandoning licenses or raising the limits would immediately make many

bureaucrats much less powerful. It is not easy to let go of power.

From the few selective leaks in the national newspapers it has become depressingly apparent that the industrial policy is likely to be watered down. Just a little tinkering will be attempted. Is the Government going to blow the one chance it will get to relate India to what is happening in the rest of the world? Neighbour Pakistan freed its economy six months ago. And already there are signs of growth.

At the risk of sounding regional, I can safely say the Madras industrialists would have gained a lot from liberal industrial policies. Certainly there are some notable exceptions. But most of the local industrialists are not deal makers and managers of the environment. They have naively clung to their belief that performance should speak for itself. In fact, there were several smiling

We have to wait and watch to see whether we are heading in a particular direction or will continue to flounder directionlessly as we have done the last forty years.

On a hobby-horse

I started with few phone calls from coin collectors on a Sunday morning. When I enquired about the source of my telephone number, I was told about *Madras Musings*. Thank you for publishing Mrs Sudha's interview.

The next issue I borrowed from a friend of mine and was surprised to find that, in today's hectic atmosphere, there are dedicated people to tell the people of Madras what a great city it is. Well, I came to this city in 1945, and still love it.

After seeing your paper, with so many different topics, I wish you would start a corner for Hobby enthusiasts. I would like your paper to highlight the need and necessity to have a hobby which will enlighten the young about the modern world.

The message should also be directed to school teachers — some of whom think it is a waste time.

D Hemachandra Rao
Chartered Engineer
2 Ilango Nagar Annex,
Virugambakkam-600 092

OUR READERS WRITE

appealed to me most was your reporting, not run-of-the-mill and stereotyped as seen in other magazines and journals.

J Rengarajan
40 Prithvi Avenue-600 018

King's English

Madras Musings ...Its King's English, spice with wit and sarcasm, makes thoroughly enjoyable reading.

K Vasudevan
44 Eldams Road-600 018

Neat & interesting

I find your publication most interesting, well written and neatly printed.

D V D'Monte
16 Wallers Road-600 002

Scottish spellings

In a recent issue of *Madras Musings* (July 1) there was some discussion on the spelling of a road name. May I point out that the Scottish clan name Graham is pronounced Graeme (as in 'frame') and is generally written so. The other spelling viz. Greame(e) is also found, because ea=e in Scottish and Irish names, as in Reagan or MacLean or Sean (pronounced 'Shane').

Prof. A J Thyagaraju
Kadapa, Tambaram-600 045

Stewpot a waste

Madras Musings is informative, interesting and covers a wide range of subjects, but you are wasting half a page on *In the Stewpot*. How about Medical, Science Notes etc. and Women's Progress articles instead?

N Chandrasekaran
6 Brindavanam IV Street
Chelvet-600 031

As good as US fare

We found your paper highly interesting. Its layout, the various features, the paper and the printing are of high quality and could compare well with some of the community newspapers we have seen in the U.S.A. We enjoy reading such a unique fortnightly.

Bhama Balaraman & Friends
Rest House, M I T Campus
Chrompet-600 044

Popular Kinemayana

Madras Musings ...so much of interesting reading and probably the first of its kind to be so beautifully brought out.

The Tamil Cinema is quite a good contribution and I am sure *Kinemayana* will continue to appear in every ensuing edition to make the public aware of film appreciation and also to encourage good cinema.

S V Venkataraman
13 Fifth Trust Cross Street
Madras-600 028

'Madras' memories

I spent a good 33 years in Madras and ended up by becoming a 'Madras' in every sense of the word. I had to shift to my birthplace, Bangalore, in 1987 due to many reasons, two of which were: climate and a house in Bangalore. I enjoy reading *Madras Musings* because it brings back so many memories.

Mrs A Cassim
No. 7 Balaji Layout
Wheeler Road Extn.
Cooke Town-560 084

Why not environment?

Madras Musings ...Quite interesting and useful. Please give a column or page for environment and better lifestyle.

Dr Felix Ryan, D.Sc. (USA)
Ryan Foundation
8 West Mada Street
Srinagar Colony-600 015

Not run-of-the mill

Madras Musings ...excellent presentation of very interesting material. What

River of no return!

Several women were, one day, bathing in a placidly flowing river in Tirunelveli District, very close to the old Travancore State border. Suddenly one of them screamed. She had spotted a corpse floating towards her from up-river.

The naked body was that of a buxom young woman. When the body caught in a patch of slush, the women gathered around it. But no one seemed to know who the woman was.

After nearly an hour, a sub-inspector and his team reached the river bank and took charge of the body. The post-mortem revealed that death was caused by drowning, that it was a clear case of homicide and that the young woman was three months' pregnant.

The identity of the woman remained a mystery and, consequently, no progress could be made in solving the case. A Deputy Superintendent of Police then took over the investigation.

CRIME NOTEBOOK

BY RANDOR GUY



Since the body was found floating down the river, he surmised that the unfortunate woman had probably lived up-river. A careful study of the photographs taken when the body was recovered revealed a tattoo on the

positive results emerged for nearly two weeks and the DSP's colleagues and club-friends ragged him mercilessly, suggesting that he had been reading too many cheap crime novels during office hours!

Then it happened. In a village near Singampatti, the police heard of a village postmaster who had suddenly gone on long leave, even vacating his house. His neighbours were shown the photographs and at once identified the woman in the picture as Kuttimol, the maid in the post-master's house.

She had come with newly married Mrs. Postmaster, but had stayed behind to run the house and look after the master when Mrs. Postmaster, expecting her first child, went to her mother's house.

Armed with this information, the DSP and his men traced the wanted postmaster in a cheap lodge in Madurai. Arrested and charged, he confessed to the murder of his mistress who had been pestering him "to render her justice". He did it by taking her for an oil bath to the river and drowning her by holding her head under water.

Brought to trial at the District Court, he was given a life sentence.

KINEMAYANA BY MOVIE MAN

The deleted frames were surrendered along with the negative to the censor and the scene was put together as ordered by Big Brother. But when the sequence was later projected for the benefit of the buyers, the press, and, afterwards, the public, it provoked wolf whistles from every age group of

moviegoers! After the deletion of the frames by the censor, the sequence had become even more erotic!

Distributors and critics showered questions on the film-maker asking what tricks he had played to get the sequence passed by the censor. Years later, that censor officer, by now a retired man, saw the film at a film appreciation course. Obviously titillated and seemingly shocked by the sequence, he asked the film-maker who the blasted censor officer was who had passed such a sequence. When he heard the reply, he nearly had a fit! But he learned a valuable lesson, late though it was. There must be sense to editing!

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The making of Mani in Mayilai

No one gave Mani Shanker Aiyar much of a chance in Mayiladuthurai — except Mani himself. And he was right. And how! By polling 364,000 votes, he not only proved an easy winner but also received the largest number of votes by any candidate in the constituency EVER.

Looking back on that heady victory, Mani has written a personal reflection in the *Sunday Observer*. Bombay, Mani's style is always enjoyable, but

by
**A STAFF
REPORTER**

in this piece he is not only entertaining but also provides several revealing personal glimpses. He writes:

"I, a Brahmin by birth (if not by conviction), with 'Aiyar' emblazoned (for reasons of regional identity) on my name and on the ballot paper, contested from a constituency of Thanjavur district, the very citadel of the Dravida movement. And became the first Brahmin in a generation to be elected to the Lok Sabha from a Tamil Nadu constituency other than Madras South...."

"...the electorate (came) to identify me with issues.... I picked on.... the industrialisation of the area ('making Mayiladuthurai into a Dubai', a phrase of mine that caught the imagination of

the electorate like a forest fire).... the opportunities that would open up as Mayiladuthurai is dragged — with Zamindar Kaliyanam (his DMK opponent) kicking and screaming — from the 12th to the 21st century...."

"Kaliyanam (moderately) and his DMK cohorts (viciously) went around talking.... of how I was a Brahmin.... of how I could not speak a word of Tamil; of how I was an 'outsider' (actually a Pakistani because.... I was born in Lahore).... and how, after Rajiv died, I counted for zilch in the inner councils of Delhi...."

"I went for the DMK arguments.... challenging him to find the sacred thread on my body; challenging him to an open competition in the village square to see who could eat more chicken biryani — he or Brahmin me.... stressing that if the voice of Mayiladuthurai was to be heard in Parliament, it had to be in Hindi or English, and that Kaliyanam's level of English was exactly equal to my level of Tamil."

The reader is left to judge the level of the debate. And unravel the last line of Mani's last lines, which reads: "Interestingly (significantly?) there were only two wives active in the Congress campaign in our state: Rangarajan Kumaramangalam's and mine — both Punjabi Sikh daughters-in-law of Tamil Nadu. The moral: If you can't beat 'em marry 'em!"

Kuppuswamy's economix!

Those who suffer from chronic ailments are generally prone to depression. But my friend Kuppuswamy is an exception. Although he has been a chronic patient of AIDS, I have always found him exceptionally cheerful. In fact, his cheerfulness is so infectious that even confirmed addicts of depression cheer up in his presence.

Of course, my friend is not suffering from that new and deadly virus. His affliction is of a more common and less

that you would imagine that the whole currency system is going out of fashion.

Kuppu claims to be a practising economist. In his private life, that is. He says that his Master's degree in Economics is of no use to him professionally, since he is working for a Public Sector Enterprise. But as a practising economist he has a theory about his extravagant spending.

He firmly believes that the only way to save money is to spend it the day you get it. "You don't know what is going to happen to the rupee tomorrow," he would say in his best corporate executive tone. "If you postpone your spending, you may not get real value for your money." We used to laugh at him. That is, until the other day.

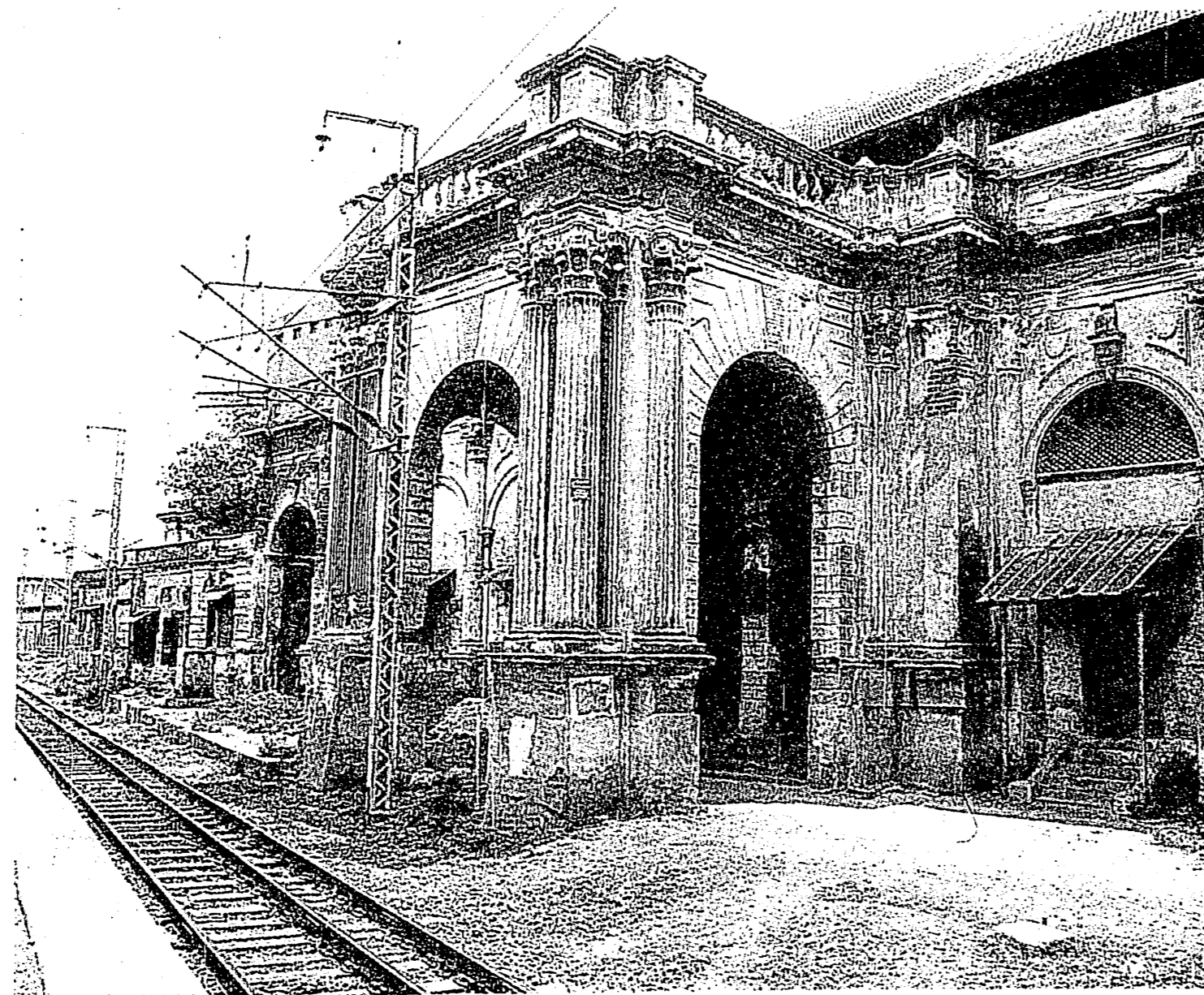
That was when he breezed into the Club with a broad smile and announced in a tone suggesting that he had just won the day's Jackpot at Guindy. "The rupee is going to be revalued!" We laughed at him as usual.

The next day the Government announced the devaluation of the rupee. And Kuppuswamy had the last laugh.

by
MAVANCHERY

deadly variety — *Acute Income Deficiency Syndrome*.

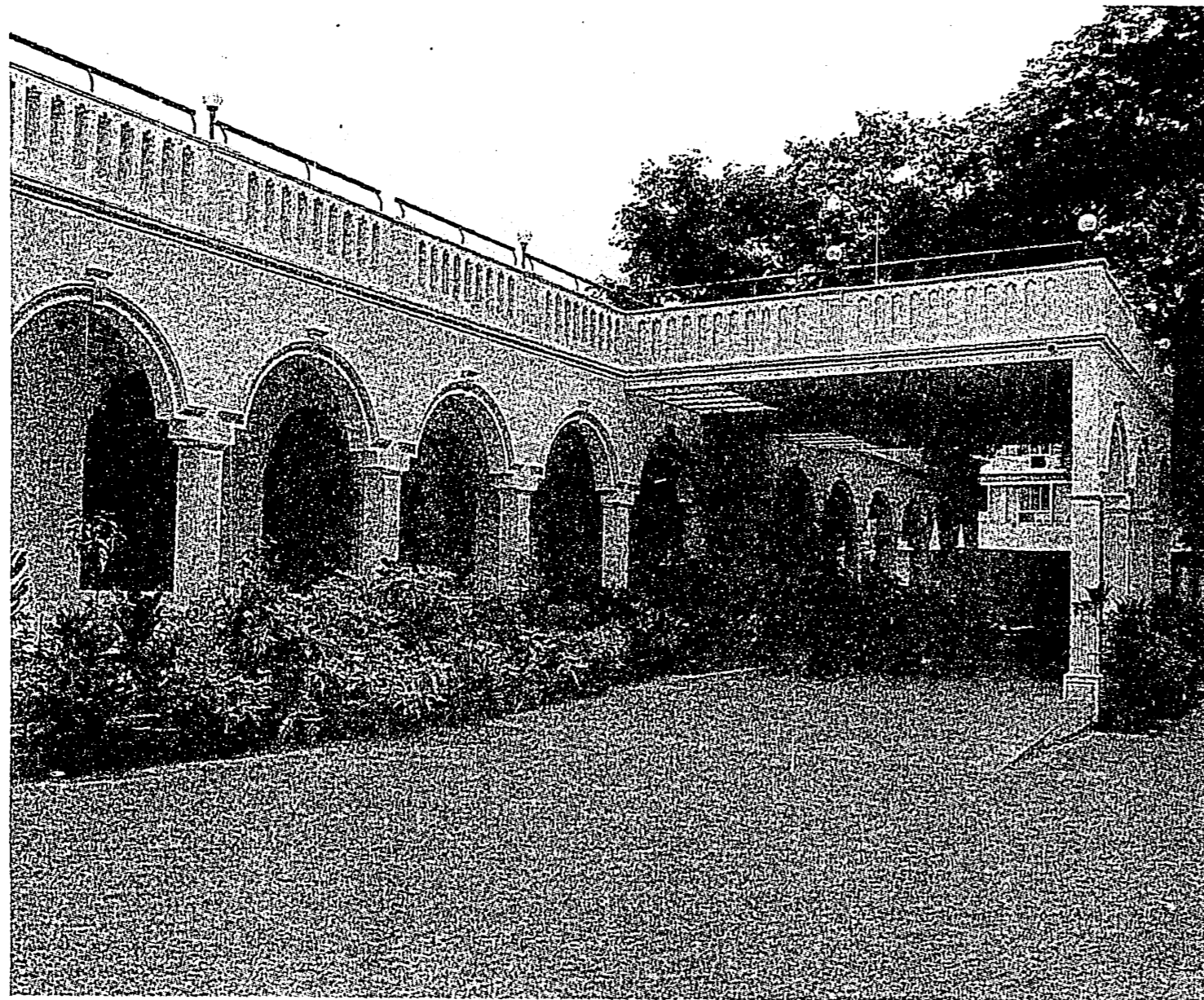
Most of us, his friends, are broke occasionally, but Kuppuswamy is perpetually broke. Not that he is unemployed or underpaid. As a Deputy Manager in a Public Sector Undertaking, he draws a four-figure salary plus such perks as Leave Travel Concession, medical reimbursement etc. etc. And his is a small family — wife and two school-going kids. The problem with Kuppu is that he spends money so fast



Our photographs today highlight the architecture of the Greek-influenced classical age. THE OLD is a Madras landmark that has been condemned but survives because the wreckers' hammers have found bringing it down too much of a task. Madras's first railway station and, later, the headquarters of the Madras and South Mahratta Railway, it still serves Royapuram traffic. Opened to the public in 1856 — when Madras first got a railway line — it remained the City's main railway terminal till 1907. The decline that set in then still continues, but the Royapuram Railway Station continues to defy all odds. Such courage needs preservation and it is hoped this handsome building will be renovated and preserved, a railway monument to its beginnings.

THE OLD... & THE NEW
The concept of preservation is demonstrated in our picture of THE NEW. This garden house is not exactly new, but after imaginative reconstruction these premises of the Presidency Club (75 years old and more?) are among the loveliest buildings in the city. The arches and pillars and the pedimented balcony all contribute to a 'new' building retaining its old world classical charm.

— Photographs by SUSHEELA NAIR



SAVE ME FROM MY KIN!

Sometimes think there should be legislation passed in this country to protect doctors from their relatives. Relatives totally ignore appointments and working hours, consider payment of fees irrelevant, and never take your medical advice anyway. And if, by chance, they do, they make sure something goes wrong, so they have the satisfaction of blaming you after all. Consider the case of my aunt who would call night and day to complain that she suffered from acute insomnia — the like never experienced by another human alive, it would seem, going by her account.

"Ever since your poor uncle left me alone in this world," she would lament, "my life has been blighted." She found

it impossible to sleep — in fact, she had forgotten what it meant to be asleep — and would spend the whole night wide-awake, in painful contemplation. For this was the time when her limbs would give way, one by one, and afflict her with arthritic collapse, rheumatic deterioration and agonising muscle-pulls in every possible direction. And so, the complaints would reach me in graphic detail and description, over the phone, in person and, even indirectly, by means of third parties, until I decided to put an end to it by prescribing sleeping pills to her.

For a blissful week, all was serene — and then the storm broke. What kind of a doctor did I fancy myself to be? What had our medical colleges come

to? How on earth did I expect her to carry on through the day, when she felt so groggy and sleepy all the time? Finally, in despair, I suggested that she stop taking the sleeping pills altogether. Ah, no, she protested, she couldn't bear to go through those sleepless nights again.

"Then why don't you take half a pill instead of one whole, every night?" I asked, exasperated.

"Now, why couldn't you have told me that before?" snapped my aunt, as she stormed out of my room.

Like I said, with relatives you just can't win.

— A DOCTOR

Paint me a colour television, Man!

The news exploded through our postbox like the light from a thousand klieg lights. "Ladies and Gentleman," I could hear the announcer say, while the stage filled with pink smoke and tinsel flowers. "The lucky winners of the Colour Television Contest of Ghaziabad — the Mulligatawny of Madras!"

"Ghaziabad? Where's that? And why should they send us a colour TV?" asked my wife interrupting this mid-morning dream.

"UP! UP!" I said, generally gesticulating in the direction of the north of the country and savouring the drama of the moment. It was my daughter Manimekalai (Mini) who had alerted us to the contest. She had found a plain, un-addressed, un-stamped inland letterform in the postbox six weeks ago printed over with a puzzle and the guarantee of a colour TV for the first person who could solve it. Not being able to count past ten she had approached her brother Venkayam (Venky) who had superciliously enquired, "Why do you want a colour TV, yaar, it's so common," before solving the puzzle using his left foot. It was that easy, he said, confirming the opinion in the family that in creating our son, we had given the world a genius second only to Dr. Raman of the Raman Effect fame. His simple deductions had now led to the Mulligatawny Effect.

The Family was reeling with delight. Should we, or should we not, get a colour TV, now that fate had placed it on our doorstep? At this point I must add that, as the only family in Karuppillay Colony not to own a TV,

either black and white, or in colour, we had to maintain our reputation as defenders of culture against the idiot box. But why was I then grinning like an idiot?

"It will be in my room because I found it," said Mani.

"I solved it," said Venky. "Besides, the only reason to watch a TV is for the late night shows."



"Daddy, do you think we can get a VCR also at the same time. I'm a deprived child without a VCR," said my daughter.

"Oliyum! Oliyum!" I sang. "Let's read the rest of the letter. Hmm.... curious, there's neither a date, a letterhead or a signature and the chaps who've promised an 8000 rupee TV can't seem to write proper English. Besides, what's this — 'Please send Rs. 100 in money order form or as postal stamps for processing your gift'. They also want us to pay the postman another Rs. 800 when he comes to deliver the colour TV for packing, forwarding and insurance. Now I wonder who's going to cough up all that money?"

"I'll contribute some of my housekeeping money," said the wife, running to her steel almirah and searching under her petticoats.

"Hold it, hold it. They specially say don't send the eight hundred rupees

until the TV arrives. As a first instalment, Rs. 100 will do in the form of postal stamps."

The household is tumbled upside down as everyone runs around looking for stamps. Diaries are shaken, old envelopes are searched, the inside pocket of my wallet is inspected and each one of my shirt pockets meticulously examined. Never has the

attention of the Family. Even as I say the words, they sound very dubious.

"What's the matter, Daddy? Aren't you feeling well?" asks Manimekalai. My wife, like all good TV wives, offers to bring out the Amrutanjani. Only Venky seems to know what's happening as he has snatched the paper from my hands.

"It's a joke," he says. "A postal joke. Look, there's no stamp on the envelope, only a postmark at the back which could have been forged. Who knows where this Ghaziabad is? It could be a Ghaziabad on the Coom, with influence in the local postal department."

Dead silence follows these remarks. We are staring into space looking at the flickering image of a colour TV that is dematerialising in front of our eyes.

"At least couldn't you send the stamp money, saar?" asks Kara Mani. "May be they will send us a calendar with the picture of a colour TV. I could tell my friends that we do have a colour TV on the wall that I can look at any time of the day." She turns to go, and sheds many bitter tears into the idli dough, which will no doubt refuse to rise the next day.

My Family looks at me reproachfully.

"Look," I say in exasperation. "It was not my idea to fill up that wretched form. Anyway, who wants a colour TV?"

Mulligatawny household seen such excitement. Our servant woman, Kara Mani, who has been grinding the idli for tomorrow the old-fashioned way, in a stone grinder — no wet grinding for us, thank you, it sours the dough — is the most energetic. Her standing in the Karuppillay Colony is lower than an un-risen idli dough because she can't even watch a Sunday movie in our house.

While all this activity has been taking place, I've been quietly reading the fine print on the piece of cyclostyled paper. Somewhere in the middle of the paper the writer of the document informs me that after we receive our colour TV, we will be in a position to sell similar models to all our friends and open a showroom also.

"The Mulligatawny Showroom for Colour Television," I say loudly. There is a strange note in my voice that attracts

QUIZZIN' WITH NAVIN-8

The response to the quiz... was very good. But we look forward to a still better response this fortnight. Question 21 is very easy.

Meanwhile, try and answer the first twenty questions on your own, before turning to the answers on PAGE 8. Remember, Quizmaster NAVIN JAIRKUMAR takes all his questions from the local newspapers of the fortnight mentioned in the coupon.

To win a prize all you have to do is answer Question 21 correctly. Fill in the coupon given below — which leaves space for your answer — and mail it to MADRAS MUSINGS QUIZ-8, C/o. Lokavani Hall Mark Press, 62-63 Greaves Road, Madras 600 006 before 5 p.m. on August 9th. The first three correct answers drawn will be entitled to a prize of Rs. 100 each. We can't make it any simpler than that, can we? So get to it here are the questions and your coupon.

- The fortnight started with India sending a 'letter of intent' to the IMF. Who is the director of this organisation?
- Two bridges in the city have been earmarked for widening and reconstruction. One connects Luz Corner with R K Math Road across the Buckingham Canal. Which is the other?
- Where in the city was the much publicized exhibition of American diamond jewellery held?
- Why were 8000 residents of Nallur, Panayur and Thirukkalar villages in Thanjavur District evacuated on July 2?
- What peculiar name ('to give it an ethnic image') was given to a newly developed rice bred by crossing Japan's 'Nipponbare Bare' with the Indica 'Basmati-370' of Pakistan?
- Against which part of his country did Gen. Adzic, the Yugoslav Chief of Staff, declare war?
- Who bluntly remarked 'You cannot import if you don't export'?
- Which official invocation song in Tamil preceded the customary Governor's Address in the Legislative Assembly, in a significant departure from earlier practice?
- Who were the two Swedes who escaped from the Muslim Janhaz Force and attained 'freedom at midnight' on July 6?
- Who won the Gentlemen's and Ladies Singles Championships at Wimbledon this year?
- Which strategic pass in northern Sri Lanka witnessed heavy fighting between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan Army?
- Which bank closed in seven countries following reports of extensive fraud, leaving thousands of depositors in dire straits?
- South Africa returned to world cricket on July 10, 1991 after being readmitted to the ICC. For how many years was it banned from Test Cricket?

- Who was elected Speaker of the Lok Sabha with no contest on July 10?
- Who is the Leader of the House in the Tamil Nadu Assembly?
- Who was conferred the Paul Harris Fellowship by the Rotary Club of Madras North West in recognition for his service to humanity and international understanding?
- What new experimental law will apply to all Test matches from October 1, 1991?
- Accused no. 3 and 4 in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case are Murugan and Nalini. Who is accused no. 1? Pick your choice — a) Sivarasan, b) Dhanu, c) Dhyananathan and d) Subha.
- Who is the executive director of the Indian Oil Corporation who was kidnapped by the Kashmiri Militant outfit 'Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen'?
- Sardar Patel was awarded the Bharat Ratna on July 12. After which famous agitation in India's freedom struggle was Vallabhai Patel conferred the title 'Sardar'?

PRIZE QUESTION

- Which 'treasurehouse of knowledge' at Thanjavur closed on July 11 following a strike, but, thankfully, reopened the next day for tourists' sake?

QUIZ COUPON-8

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....

Ans. to Q. 21

(The Fortnight of June 30 to July 15)

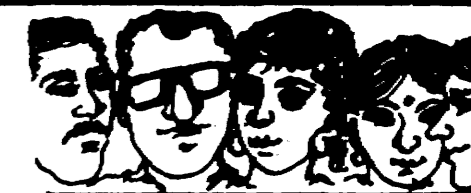
We now look forward to a real big response. Meanwhile, here are the lucky winners of Quiz 7 and the correct answer:

PRIZE WINNERS

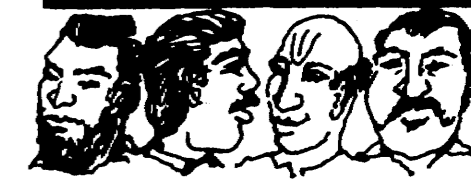
- P. SARADAMBAL, Press Copy Section, Madras High Court, Madras-600 001.
- Dr. K. MURALIDHARAN, 6 V Main Road, New Colony, Madras-600 044.
- V. RAMANATHAN, 14 VIII Main Road, Kasturba Nagar, Madras-600 020.

ANSWER TO QUIZZIN' 7

T.V. Venkatraman replaced T.V. Antony as Chief Secretary



PEOPLE
OF
THE CITY



Fairground dreamer

I was only on July 15th that a colleague had written about the pressing need for the establishment of a major trade fair site. Five days later, a person who had worked hardest on making such a site a reality passed away. Would anyone work as hard as D S Deenadayal on getting the city the trade fair site so many industries are clamouring for? Only time will tell.

When *The Recorder* first met Dheenadayal, he was connected with the Tamil Nadu Government's tourism effort. Rather frustrated with that effort getting nowhere, he switched to the Trade Fair Authority of India and, in time, became its Regional Manager in Madras.

As the local head of TFAI's activities in Madras, he helped organise the annual Leather Fair. The success of that Fair will always remain a memorial to Dheenadayal. But more than anyone else, he realised that Fair would not be able to grow the way it should unless it had a better, more permanent infrastructure.

The last time *The Recorder* met Deenadayal was with the TFAI boss at a dinner hosted during the Leather Fair. We had talked long on the possible sites for a permanent fairground in Madras and the problems Deenadayal and the TFAU were facing with each. Now, sadly, if and when his dream materialises, he will not be there to see it. But those who remember him at that time will always remember the gentle, soft-spoken, smiling government servant who always wanted to do something for Tamil Nadu to put it on the international map.

Doctor in the House

This Doctor in the House is a leading educationist who will represent the Anglo Indian community. And, for once, the community had welcomed the Government's nominee, Dr Beatrix D'Souza, M.A., Ph.D.

Comparing this eminent scholar who has taught thousands over the past thirty years with others who have represented it in the past, the community's leaders say she will be in the tradition of Prof Francis, Mrs Alda Fowler and Mrs Soares, making her voice heard in the Assembly and pleading loud there the community's cause. She will not be a silent spectator in the House nor will she need to be, for her nomination is on sheer merit, not because she had once taught this or that politico's children, the leaders affirm, welcoming the choice.

Closely associated with the socio-economic welfare of the community, her views on social welfare and education will be valuable contributions to the debate, they promise.

Dr. D'Souza was, till recently, the head of the English Department at Presidency College. A specialist in Australian literature, she was one of the key speakers at a seminar on Australian literature held recently in Madras with members of the faculty from the University of Queensland participating.

— The Recorder

The lightest pastries

Simply Scrumptious

I have often wondered why our locally produced breads are somewhat more mealy and heavy than the baked products bought in Western countries. And I have been informed by those in the know that if the Indian croissant is a bit of a let-down, the fault lies in the gluten content of our local *maida* (refined wheat flour).

Now I don't know if something is being done to remedy this drawback, but I can certainly say that the lightest sweet breads and pastries in town are to be found at CAKEWALK, located on the first floor of a newly-constructed building on Pantheon Road, next to the Fountain Plaza Complex. If you are lucky, you'll find some parking space in this busy area, but don't bet on it!

CAKEWALK boasts a large, bright and airy hall, with an exposed central kitchen where, presumably, all the baking is done. There are attractive display cases, laden with scrumptious light puff pastries, vol-au-vent shells stuffed with goodies like mushroom and capsicum filling, chicken and meat patties, light, 'melt-in-the-mouth' croissants (arguably the best in town) and delicious gateaux and cakes — pineapple, black forest, chocolate and cheesecakes. Meanwhile, those of you with the uncomplicated and standardised tastes of the young and trendy will find solace in the variety of pizzas and milkshakes on sale.

Let me remind you that all these products are rather stiffly priced, but at least you are assured of good quality. By the way, CAKEWALK has got an outlet at Vijaya Health Centre at Vadapalani. Make sure that your purchases here are made on delivery day — otherwise you might be saddled with not-so-fresh products. The offerings here are limited to sandwiches (heavily laced with butter), puffs

and cake slices. I would recommend their chocolate cakes.

The best chips

Now, if you happen to be in the same area and crave something decidedly Indian, drop in at AJNABI in the Fountain Plaza complex. This is perhaps the oldest and most popular chaat shop in town and still offers the best potato chips (freshly made every hour or so).

The premises are clean and the fare delectable. *Ghatia, sev, papadi, kachoris, gol guppas, pakodis, dhokla, khandvi* and

FOODS and FADS

excellent *samosas* and *chutney* may be eaten on the spot or taken home in neat packages. Incidentally, AJNABI also undertakes catering for large parties. The shop's main drawback is shortage of space and clients are forced to do all their eating, so to speak, standing up.

Ways with tuna

The other day, I rediscovered the merit of eavesdropping, when I heard one American woman confiding to another (while shopping in a departmental store) that LAKSHWA-DEEP tuna fish was by far the best and the tastiest among all the tinned brands. I figured that she should know what she was talking about, considering that the U.S.A. is the breeding ground for fast food maniacs, who swear by tuna fish in their salads and sandwiches. Now, if LAKSHWA-

DEEP is not available, try MADONNA, which is equally good (I have got the American lady's word for it).

Smear tuna fish and mayonnaise paste on bread, or add it to your cold rice salads or simply use it as filling in your tomato or peach entrees, seasoned with grated onion, cucumber, salt and pepper.

For a change, try this recipe for a *macaroni and tuna fish salad*:

Ingredients: 100 gm quick-cooking macaroni, ¼ diced cucumber, 2 sliced tomatoes, a few chopped spring onions, 1 small tin tuna fish, 3 tablespoons salad cream, lettuce.

Cook macaroni in plenty of boiling salted water for 7 minutes or so. Strain and, rinse under cold water. Flake the fish, add macaroni and all other ingredients except lettuce. Toss well and serve on a bed of lettuce (cleaned and washed previously).



A delicious crab recipe for sea-food lovers. It is an excellent accompaniment to *Mutter Paneer Pulao*. Vegetarians can try *Begun Bhaja*, a spicy brinjal curry, with the *Pulao*. Serve the meal with *Potato Raita*.

CRAB IGURU

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium sized crabs
- 2 large onions (cut fine)
- 1 large tomato, cut into halves
- 3 green chillies (slit)
- 1" ginger
- 4 pods garlic
- 1 tsp cumin seed (*jeera*)
- 6 pods garlic, peeled
- 1 cup grated coconut, ground to a paste
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 2 tsp *dhania* powder
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ cup chopped coriander leaves for decoration
- 1 sprig curry leaves
- 3 tsp oil
- Salt to taste

grind to a paste

Method

Remove the outer shell of the crabs. Clean the legs, the inner parts of the crabs and wash them thoroughly. Cut the crabs into halves and keep aside. Heat the oil in a thick bottomed vessel. Add the *jeera* and curry leaves. Now add the onions and fry till transparent. Add the green chillies, ginger garlic paste and the whole garlic, the *masala* powders and fry for a few minutes.

Add the crab pieces and the legs and fry till the crab turns red in colour. Now add the coconut paste and fry for a few minutes, till the crab and the *masalas* are well blended. Add just enough water to cover the crabs and cook till the gravy is thick.

Remove from fire, sprinkle the chopped coriander leaves and serve with *Pulao*.

Note: The same ingredients and method can be followed for ½ kg of prawns.

Mrs. P. Raghupathy

MUTTER PANEER PULLAO

Serves 4

- 1 cup *basmati* rice, soaked in water for ½ hour, drained. Set aside.
- 1 large onion finely chopped
- ½ cup shelled peas
- 1 potato, peeled and chopped fine
- 1 green chilli chopped fine
- 3 tomatoes, blanched and chopped fine
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- Small bunch coriander leaves, chopped fine
- 1 litre milk curdled into *paneer* and cubed
- 3 tsp ghee
- Salt to taste.

DRY SPICES

- 4 cloves
- 8 pepper corns
- 1" cinnamon stick
- 3 green cardamoms
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp *garam masala*

Method

Heat ghee. Add the bay leaves and the dry spices. Add the chopped onions and tomatoes and sauté for a minute.

Add turmeric powder, peas, potato, *paneer* cubes, green chilli and fry for a minute or two.

Add rice, two cups of water and salt.

When it comes to boiling point, keep a *tawa* below the rice and simmer on a low heat till done.

BEGUN BHAJA

- 400 grams round brinjals, cut into ½" slices
- 3-4 green chillies
- ½" piece ginger
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- Salt to taste
- Oil for shallow frying

ground, to a fine paste

Method

Smear brinjal slices with the ground paste. Shallow fry on a *tawa* till golden on both sides. Serve hot.

POTATO RAITA

- 1 potato, boiled, peeled and cut into bite size
- 1½ cups well mixed fresh curd
- Salt to taste
- Bunch of coriander leaves, chopped fine.

SPICES FOR SPRINKLING

- ½ tsp roasted cumin seeds
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- A pinch red chilli powder

Method

Mix potato with salted curd. Sprinkle the spices. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves. Serve chilled.

Chandra Padmanabhan

A fresh mind in a fine dancer

Srividya Natarajan is an exceptional dancer. This English literature research scholar is a dancer who brings a sense of mysticism to her dancing. There is a restraint in her dancing which seems natural and inborn. Her poise, grace and fluidity emphasise a slow, tantalising style which sets a dignified pace.

She has some radical views on dance as it is traditionally performed and its relevance in modern times. She says that a decisive shift has taken place in Bharatha Natyam, vis a vis its relationship with audiences. The revived form of Bharatha Natyam occupies a new status as part of the culture of an elite class, conditioned by the curricular use of English Literature and exposure to Occidental manners identified with the colonial Establishment.

What is the relevance of Bharatha Natyam today? she asks and answers herself, "Though pure aesthetics and pure spirituality are important, these are not large enough claims for the preservation of the art. Bharatha Natyam and other traditional arts are a line of defence against the continuous cultural attack from the West, reminders of our alternate systems of thought or

technique that are as valid as any that have emerged in the West".

In the world of mindless performers (I keep getting letters from remote corners of India for a performing opportunity in Madras...Dancers are willing to spend thousands of rupees for one such opportunity), Srividya brings

The fisheries scene

On till Sunday evening, August 4th, is a rather dramatic exhibition at the Alliance Francaise on College Road. **Fisherfolk of the Bay** focusses attention, in black and white and colour, in photographs and

THE VIEW FROM THE WINGS



a fresh mind to the world of first class traditional performers. There certainly needs to be more dialogue on her views, and with more and more of the educated taking to the art, we can, perhaps, look forward to these before long.

Art for the needy

The Rotary Club of Madras South-West recently organised an art show to raise funds for *Matru Mandir*. City-based artists donated their paintings and sculptures and the ever-pleasant R.B. Bhaskaran took an active interest in making the show a reality.

Matru Mandir is dedicated to the cause of children afflicted with Downs Syndrome, a congenital mental disorder.

The show at Sarala Art Centre took the form of an auction. It was a riot of colours out there in all mediums — oil, water colours, pencil sketches, charcoal, ink, acrylics, graphics. Praise be to the city artists who have never failed to rise to the cause of the needy.

drawings, on the fishing communities in the Bay of Bengal region.

Presented by the Alliance Francaise and the FAO's Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP), which works with small-scale fisheries in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, the east coast of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, the exhibition features the drawings of Signar Bengtson of Sweden, Amalore and Jayaraj of India and Hasan Maniku of the Maldives, in addition to the work of several photographers, mostly amateur, who've been associated with the BOBP's various projects.

I understand that many of the drawings and all the photographs, elegantly framed and mounted, will be available for sale at very reasonable prices after the exhibition. Anyone interested could contact the BOBP Information Division, 91 St Mary's Road, Abhiramapuram, Madras 600 018 (Telephone 836294).

— V.R. Devika

Srividya Natarajan

A more optimistic Woody Allen

The world of cinema according to the video libraries is neatly categorised into 'action', 'suspense', 'comedy', 'story' and 'classic'. Such stock phrases hardly help if you are trying to figure out what to see over the weekend. I hope that this column will help you by describing some of the new releases as well as the 'classics' that are available on video — in English.

Woody Allen's latest film *ALICE* is a sort of updated version of the classic fantasy tale. *ALICE* (played by Mia Farrow) is a New York housewife whose life is an endless cycle of shopping, dressing up, and caring for her children and an indifferent husband (William Hurt). The film deals with Alice's attempt to find a new meaning to her existence. Mia Farrow comes up with a fine comic performance and viewers will be struck by the strong resemblance that her dialogue delivery has to Woody Allen's. This time around, Woody's normally bleak vision of humanity is tempered with a note of cautious optimism.

THE LONG WAY BACK is set against the backdrop of the agitation against racial segregation on the buses of Montgomery (Alabama). In this agitation, blacks refused to ride on the buses until they were allowed to sit along with the whites. The film tells the story of how a white housewife (Sissy Spacek) learns to empathise with her black housemaid (Whoopi Goldberg) and ultimately participates in the agitation. The story is told simply, with fine understated performances by the leading players.

In **THE DOORS**, director Oliver Stone takes a look at that seminal rock group of the Sixties and, more specifically, at its lead singer Jim



Morrison. The film is also a pageant of the Sixties' counter-culture and

As these lines are written, nothing's changed in the import policy. Two hundred per cent deposits are still being asked for by banks before L/Cs are opened. Sometimes L/Cs are not opened even if the importer is willing to deposit the required amount. And devaluation has made both deposits and the cost of imported goods that much higher.

All this has resulted in virtually a standstill in the import of books and the shelves of many a bookshop are bare. Not enough Indian publications in English are being brought out to fill the gap.

"The result," says Gautam Padmanabhan, "is that I will not be able to do 'On the Bookshelves' every fortnight; there just aren't enough good books on the shelves for two columns a month." Consequently, Gautam Padmanabhan will contribute his piece on books only once a month till the situation improves. For the other fortnight, we introduce a new feature: **VIDEOSCOPE by FILM FAN**. It will talk about English films now available in the video-shops. We hope you will like it.

— THE EDITOR

THE MADRAS ART INFLUENCE

The noisy sabhas disturb him

(By a Staff Reporter)

Flautist Ludwig Pesch is a German who fell in love with Carnatic music after listening to a radio concert in Europe. Since then, his has been a romance not only with the South Indian music tradition but also with its arts and crafts.

This music teacher from a small town near Heidelberg, who recently told an interviewer that "Carnatic music is more honest than European classical", however finds audience reaction to it in Madras rather "depressing". Musicians, he told the interviewer, have to outdo the noise of Madras sabha audiences. "Carnatic music, is being ill-treated by audiences and organisers alike," he lamented.

A Kalakshetra graduate, Pesch, who successfully made the switch from Western classical to Carnatic, gives an occasional small concert nowadays. But his greater enthusiasms are documenting Carnatic music, bringing to light the skills of the traditional craftsman, reviving handloom skills in Kerala and getting attention focused on the ritual and folk arts. Betwixt

times, he undoubtedly suffers through sabha concerts.

Moustachioed dancer

Have you ever come across a moustachioed Bharatha Natyam dancer? If you haven't you must catch up some time with Justin McCarthy of the U.S.A. and now of the Shiram Kala Kendra, Delhi. Intent on looking "manly" with an Errol Flynn-type tea-strainer, he ignores the local "social taboos" and dances his classical way on Indian stages, moustache and all. Fortunately for Indian sensibilities, he spends more time teaching dance than performing.

Michigan-born McCarthy has been involved with Bharatha Natyam for 15 years, ever since he first saw a performance in San Francisco. Switching from the piano, he began studying the dance with Guru Subbaraya Pillai in Madras and Kalakshetra's Leela Samson in Delhi. He also began learning Tamil and Sanskrit. And now he's into teaching.

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INDIA'S LOSS, AUSSIE GAIN

(By The Corner Flag)

Those who watched Mahindra's goal-keeper Mark Patterson in action in the recent Scissors' hockey tournament regretted with one voice India's loss following the decision of this dare-devil to migrate to Australia. One more Anglo-Indian link with Indian hockey is broken — and India's loss will be Australia's gain.

Hard on the heels of Mark Patterson's decision comes news of a decision made by a player closer home.

Noel Salisbury, an 18-year-old who had represented Tamil Nadu juniors the last couple of years and who had been called for the Gwalior camp preparing the Indian team for the World Junior Championships, had also decided to migrate to Australia.

This second year Pachaiyappa College economics student, who was a certainty to make the team for the tournament to be held in Hong Kong in December, left last week for Australia. It won't be a surprise if a Patterson and a Salisbury begin turning out for Australia in the next few years — following the tradition of the Pearce brothers who first helped get Australian hockey going in the postwar years.

State's football looks to a fan



R M Veerappan

As in so many other matters, Chief Minister Jayalalitha has stolen a march over her predecessors in the sphere of sport and youth welfare also. Unlike former Chief Ministers, Tamil Nadu's first elected woman C.M. has a soft corner in her heart for sport. She has obviously noticed the slump in the State's sports standards and realised the need for a Ministry to deal with it. A shrewd and farsighted lady, she could not have allotted Sport and Youth Welfare to a more knowledgeable Minister than R.M. Veerappan, the Minister for Education, Science and Technology.

Tamil Nadu sports fans are hopeful that the Minister, who has, for long, been a keen football enthusiast before becoming a cricket fan, will revolutionise the State's sport. Indeed, his credentials being what they are, the entire Tamil Nadu sporting fraternity, not merely the sponsored and pampered cricket and tennis juniors, is confident the Minister will take early steps to halt the state's sports decline and give it a new look. His immediate task is to help the Tamil Nadu Football Association conduct the Nehru Cup tournament in Madras in January 1993. C.R. Viswanathan, the TFA president, is meeting him this month.

and the outcome of their talks will be awaited with tremendous interest throughout the State, which has not, so far, conducted the country's most prestigious tournament.

Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand, now in Brussels preparing for his forthcoming World Candidates chess

by
JAICI

duel there with former champion Anatoly Karpov of the Soviet Union, has no doubt boosted the stock of Tamil Nadu sport as never before. But, if a discreet veil is put over the former Madras Don Bosco schoolboy's phenomenal run in an indoor sport with hardly any spectator appeal, and also on the National athletics performances of Angela Lincy and Annavi, Tamil Nadu sport has hardly anything to shout about. It is frankly at a low ebb.

Sponsorship has helped cricket and tennis stay in the swim, even if the emergence of a Calcutta lad (Leander Paes) from the Britannia Amritraj Tennis academy as a world junior star is a slap in the face of the affluent Tamil Nadu

boys and girls who daily flock to the Triangular Tennis Trust courts in the YMCA College complex and the Tennis Association courts at Egmore. But such world disciplines as hockey, hailed as India's national game during the years India wore the Olympic crown, and football, once the state's most popular game, have for long languished in the State, and have almost reached their nadir. The fact that Tamil Nadu has, for long, gone unrepresented in the National hockey and football squads speaks for itself.

Football, in particular, has not only gone down in standards but has also lost some of its popularity. January 1993 is not far away, and it is no wonder that the Nehru Cup is looked forward to as its possible saviour. It can help the TFA rejuvenate the game in the state and run it in the same manner in which it is run in the country's leading soccer states like West Bengal, Kerala, Goa and Maharashtra.

Unfortunately, there is a question mark over the Nehru Cup tournament, for Madras city is wholly lacking in facilities to stage a competition of its magnitude. The City Corporation's Nehru stadium is there all right, but facilities there are totally inadequate. It is sorely in need of total renovation.

Perhaps a modern stadium can be put up inside the sprawling complex.

The fate of the January 1993 Nehru Cup will indeed be decided by the talks Viswanathan will have with Minister Veerappan. There is good reason to hope for the best, for while one is a dedicated official with single-minded concentration on the job allotted to the Association he heads, the other is a sports-minded Minister known for his readiness to help all worthy causes. Tamil Nadu soccer, nay TFA's first Nehru Cup tournament, is indeed lucky that a former football fan is at the helm at the TFA's most testing time.

Lillee gets a clanger!

Dennis Lillee was bowled, nay, stumped! The former Australian Test fast bowler's "dismissal" came not on any of the pitches of the MRF Pace Foundation, of which he is the principal coach and adviser, but in the Duplex Room of the Taj Coromandel Hotel on June 5, 1991. He was addressing the Press on the Foundation boys' progress since his last visit to the country's premier academy of its kind.

At the end of every one of his visits, Lillee meets sports journalists in what has come to be known as the quarterly MRF Press Conference. It has gained such popularity that its latest edition drew a full house, not only of journalists but of others as well. After the

Australian celebrity drew a clear picture of the "above average" progress the trainees had made, came the question time, and one of the non-journalists floored him by asking him, in all seriousness, why the Pace Foundation had not produced a class batsman!

The howler made the journalists look small. That such a question should

by
AJAX

have been asked by a so-called colleague was a slap in their face. Fortunately for them, Lillee, after staring at the questioner, an intruder, for a second, bowed his head, muttered something inaudible and wound up the show, for he could have sensed more such queries in the offing. It was time to quench one's thirst.

The size of the gathering that flocked to the bar indeed underscored the transformation that has come over a Press briefing in Madras. It has travelled miles and miles since Anthony S. de Mellow, founder-secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India and builder of modern Indian cricket, held the first-ever briefing in the city nearly half a century ago. It was not known how many newspaper and agency offices he and his local representative, K.S. Ranga Rao, contacted. Anyway, only three journalists, one each from *The Hindu*, *The Mail* and PTI, turned up for that unique briefing, held over a cup of tea in de Mellow's room in the Connemara.

This press briefing attracted the notice of such eminent sports lovers as Dr P. Subbaroyan, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar and Dr. U. Krishna

Rau. They all followed suit, and so did their successors. But the pattern was the same. Only three or four journalists attended until the advent of sponsorship and prize money, which changed the picture, burying fathoms deep the over-a-cup-of-tea chat. It was replaced by handouts, cocktails and dinner, and an undisclosed parting bait as well. The transformation indeed defies description.

It is, of course, in keeping with the growth in the number of dailies and journals, which, in turn, is in tune with the country's population and education explosion. But it is difficult to say if the hospitality has choked the journalists' spirit of independence and fearless criticism. Since the transformation,

however, the hauling up of an erring controlling body or a know-nothing official would seem to have gone up in smoke. Everything is being generally painted rosy as though our country is on top of the world, while actually it is at the bottom.

The latest Wimbledon told its own story of India being among the also-rans. Even Lillee was spared. He could well have been asked how his plan to bring one of the Chappell brothers, both famed Australian Test batsmen, and former Australian Test wicket-keeper, Rodney Marsh, on a short visit to the Pace Foundation, probably on his next visit, could sharpen the bowling potential of the trainees.

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ANSWERS TO QUIZZIN' -8

1. Michel Camdessus.
2. Binny Bridge, connecting Binny Road with Commander-in-Chief Road.
3. Connemara Hotel.
4. Following a large gas leak from an ONGC well dug in Nallur.
5. 'Saree'.
6. Slovenia.
7. P. Chidambaram.
8. 'Neeraram Kadaludutha...'
9. Johan Larsson and Jan Oleman
10. Michael Stich and Steffi Graf.
11. Elephant Pass.
12. Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI).
13. 21 years.
14. Shivraj Patil.
15. V.R. Nedunchezian.
16. Rajiv Gandhi.
17. Only one bouncer per over per batsman.
18. c) Bhagyanathan.
19. K. Doraiswamy.
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