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MUSINGS

Vol. I. No. 13

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

October 15 — 31, 1991

• Fair site • V.I.P. mansion • Waterways

Some action at last

(By a Special Correspondent)

Three stories recently published in the columns of Madras Musings now show signs of maturing into happy sequels. The sequels are all in the testing or investigative stages, but that some interest at all is being shown in projects to improve Madras is a matter for satisfaction. It is only to be hoped that one is not counting one's chickens before they are hatched and that interest will, indeed, lead to implementation and end in materialisation.

— THE EDITOR

Land for permanent exhibition site

The chances of Tamil Nadu getting a permanent fair site now look bright with the Chief Minister's decision to hand over to the Trade Fair Authority of India 25 hectares (about 60 acres) of land belonging to Anna University in Taramani. This site has three approach roads and a fourth, it has been promised, will be built across the canal.

In the *Madras Musings* issues of July 15-31 and August 1-14, attention had been drawn to the long-pending decision that was awaited by several major industries in Tamil Nadu who might in the future be deprived of the opportunity of holding international fairs in the state if no permanent fair site was forthcoming. The leather industry was particularly impatient on this issue, as its fair was the most threatened.

The Chief Minister, reacting to the pleas of several industries, not only announced the land grant when she met Moosa Raza, the TFAI chairman, in September but went on to appoint a Deputy Director in the State Directorate of Trade and Industries to take charge of developing the site.

Obviously the state intends to have a stake in a fair site which, it is expected, will rival Delhi's *Pragati Maidan*. This site will, when complete, have permanent exhibitions, restaurants, a children's entertainment park and a convention centre, it is learnt.

While all these attractions are welcome, there are, however, two necessities that need speedier action. The TFAI had informed the Leather Council months back that unless it had **ready by January 1993** a suitable permanent fair site, with all infra-structural facilities needed by a large influx of foreign visitors, there would be **NO MORE** Leather Fairs in Madras, the capital of the Indian leather industry. With a leather fair needing permanent space and communication facilities, more than solid building foundations, it might well be able to get the site it needs in time. But the deadline nevertheless needs to be kept in mind.

The second necessity is more complex — and that is the need for machine flooring, a foundation on which heavy machinery can be run for long stretches for exhibition purposes. Such flooring is essential if the next Printers' Machinery Exhibition is to be held in time.

Fortunately there is time before PAMEX, the latest decision being that it should be held only in January/February 1996. But a decision was also taken by the All India Printers Federation that while the exhibition could be held in the South, it would be awarded to either Madras or Bangalore, whoever comes up first with a permanent fair site that could handle running heavy machinery. So the need for haste in Madras.

The race is on. Will Madras get there first?

Checking on a mansion

What's going to happen to old *Government House*, its fate a matter of concern in *Madras Musings* of August 1-14 and September 15-30? The good news is: NOTHING YET.

The better news is that engineers are checking out on the structural stability of the building — which will undoubtedly prove as safe and sound as that of *Banqueting (Rajaji) Hall*, which was checked out some time ago and vetted by a British expert.

If the structure passes muster, can we expect the Chief Minister to do for it what Rajiv Gandhi did for *Hyderabad House* and Premadasa did for *Acland House* in Colombo, making them magnificent State VIP Guest Houses and reception centres?

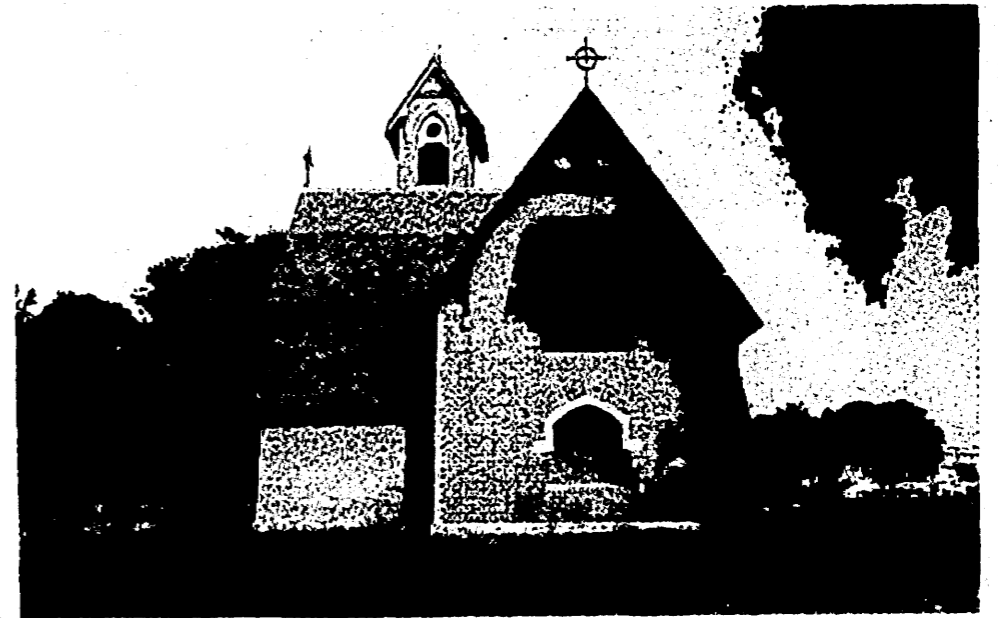
Cleaner waterways by year-end?

That, after years of stagnation, plans were expected to be soon implemented to clean the city's waterways was reported in these columns on August 1-14. A commitment has now been made on the floor of the House to complete the first stage of this by the end of the year.

Pollution of the Adyar and Cooum Rivers and the Buckingham Canal is indescribable. This has been 80 per cent due to raw and partially treated sewage being let into these waterways. Severn Trent International, the British consultants, had recommended interim action to relieve this situation and the Madras Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board has now implemented enough of the recommendation to make these waterways seem a lot cleaner by December.

Sewage farms, where teak, matchwood and fuel trees will be grown, is the key feature of the recommendation. Work has already started on a 15.5 ha plot in Nesampakkam in West Madras. Next, 38.5 acres will be forested in fast-developing Koyambedu and this will be followed on 48 ha in Kodungaiyur and 17.5 ha in Perungudi. These farms will be nourished by the sewage diverted from the waterways.

Metrowater, it has been reported, eventually hopes to convert its sewage farms into picnic spots! While awaiting that day, this correspondent looks forward more eagerly to cleaner waterways first. Dredging to that end is also expected to start shortly.



Now where can that be?..... A little bit of England?..... A little bit that's forever England?..... A little bit of.... well, what? Turn to page 4 and perhaps you'll be able to unearth the answer somewhere in the page.

Remembering Madras

(By A Staff Reporter)

There are still people who keep remembering the 350 years of Madras, even though it is a couple of years past the anniversary of the day Francis Day was granted an uninhabited, sandy spit three square miles in extent. Perhaps it's the thought that September 1991 was the 350th anniversary of the establishment of Madras as a seat of government that's kept the thought alive.

The latest group who want to do something to commemorate the events of 1639-1641 is the History Department of Loyola College. Professor U Munuswamy and Dr G J Sudhakar are planning a 'Symposium on the 350 Years of Madras' for some time towards

the end of the year and they've got a few dozen others interested in the effort.

At a recent meeting convened to discuss the seminar, 23 papers on various aspects of Madras — ranging from the Old Families to the Women's Movement in the city — were promised for the seminar. All sound interesting for a Madras buff. Many more could also follow.

If the conveners could only get a sponsor, these papers could well be published as a book — as was done by the Association of British Council Scholars last year, after two symposia they held. Such a book could help swell the rather limited literature on a city whose contribution to the India of today has been forgotten by too many.

Booking new ground

(By A Special Correspondent)

Where *The Times of India* failed, a small Madras publishing house, Acme Books (P) Ltd, has just ventured and broken new ground. An associate of Affiliated East-West, that publisher who has rather courageously published for limited audiences much on Madras and who remains the only general publisher, in English, in the city, Acme has just launched a book review magazine, the *Indian Review of Books*, and *The Hindu* has been so taken up with it that it has decided to publish some of the highlights of the journal in a new monthly supplement called *The Literary Review*.

The only other book review journal in India meant for mass circulation is a highbrow one from Delhi — curiously, brought out by a team with strong Madras links and, still more curiously, without a mass circulation. *The Times of India* a few months ago decided to emulate *The Times Literary Supplement* of London and *The New York Times Books* section, but came

a cropper. Acme now hopes its *IRB* will make the grade by not being highbrow and by not aiming for the stars. Indeed, it hopes to survive by offering readable reviews of what's available in the bookshops every month and by spreading its net wide for both books as well as reviewers.

IRB will review books ranging from pop fiction to poetry, from Enid Blyton to politics. Its reviewers will be from all parts of India and will include scholars as well as light readers. Its language is committed to being literate and not erudite or obtuse.

It's a formula that could well succeed. But this is not the best of times for publishers, distributors or booksellers in India. The import policy, devaluation and high production costs in India have seen to that. Much-needed advertising support for such a venture might not be as forthcoming as in better times. But if the readership responds, it might just be that the advertisers will have to follow.

MANALI RAMAN...



He's NOT sick! It's just that ever since we got the TV he's not moved out of bed!

IN MAD, MAD MADRAS

In the Express chair

Ram Nath Goenka is dead. The 'Magnificent Rebel' is no more. And Indian journalism will never be quite the same again.

They don't make them like that any more, like the boy-wallah from Marwar, by way of Dhanbanga in Bihar and Calcutta, who turned up in Madras to represent The Bombay Company. That all-India perspective led him into the Congress fold and a vow in the 20s to wear only khadi. That was the period when, as a nominated member in the Madras Legislative Council, he took on the nomination in the case of Subramania Bharathi and the freedom of expression. Sixty years and more later he died fighting for the same cause.

His successor is a grandson he adopted as a son as he lay ailing these past few months. Vivek Saharan Goenka has a great tradition to live up to, but will he prefer systems, MBS, and design to that tradition? He revealed a bit of his mind in an interview with the Bombay magazine Society a couple of months before Ram Nath's death. The following piece is based partially on that interview.

— THE EDITOR

(By a Staff Reporter)

It is in the fitness of things that a young man born and brought up in Madras is now at the helm of affairs at the Indian Express. After all, the paper had its roots here and it was from this city that Ram Nath Goenka built his empire, including transforming his favourite paper into the country's only truly national newspaper.

The 53-year-old, rather squat and burly young man who now heads the Express empire was born and brought up in Madras, many of those years in the city being spent under the watchful eye of his grandfather, Ram Nathji. It was only in 1985 then he moved to Express Towers in Bombay, where the Grand Old Man of Indian Journalism still keeps a benign eye on the house he built. And from there, Vivek Goenka, no longer Khaitan, now runs the Express empire as the legally adopted heir of the Tamil-speaking 'seth' who once served in the Madras Legislature.

In a recent interview with Bombay's Society magazine, Vivek Goenka was quite candid. While expressing the view that he was determined to make the Indian Express the No. 1 paper in every region where it publishes, he also said that he was very clear that the Indian Express "is a mission in the national interest and not a business", and was, therefore, not comparable with other papers.

He emphasised that the Indian Express "has always been, and will always remain, an editorial led publishing group". The management, he said, will only support this culture, and the Group will "only support whatever is good for the country".

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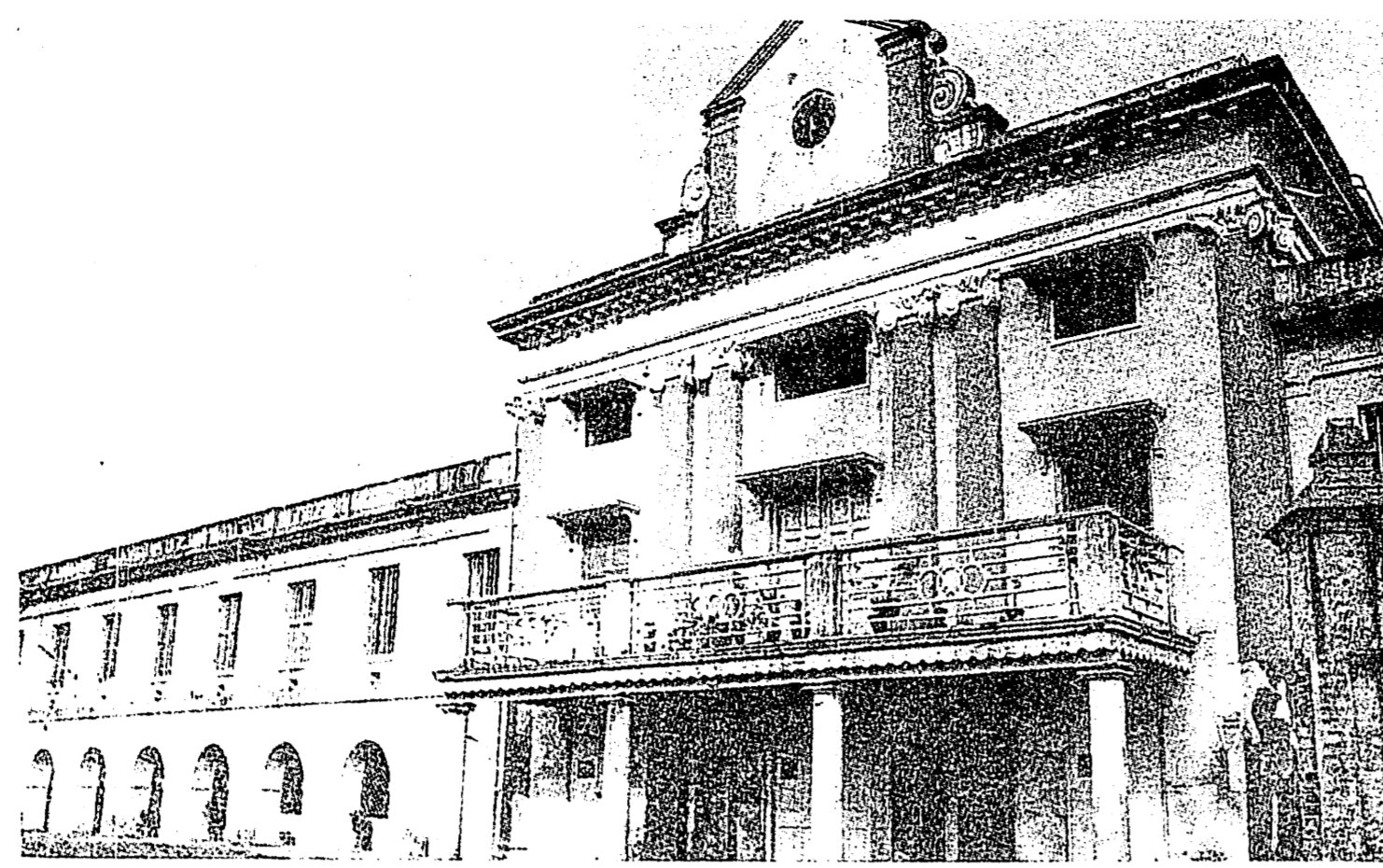
Describing the role of a newspaper he said, "A newspaper is a national responsibility involving both political and public life. It should inform, educate and, sometimes, guide the reader". This was instilled in him by his grandfather when "he forced me to join the Group in 1985".

He sees Ram Nathji as having been "more of a journalist and a newspaperman than a man with a commercial bottomline. His thrust has always been editorial". Vivek Goenka expresses an almost childlike adoration of his grandfather: "I adore the man and respect him for what he is. Very few human beings are as selflessly dedicated to the nation as he is. He is a man who does not hesitate to stake every farthing he has for a national cause".

Vivek Goenka, who is married and has a five year old son, was brought up by his grandfather, his mother and an uncle. An only child, he was running a small-scale industry in Madras when he was inducted into the Group; that industry "is still my only source of personal income".

Ram Nath Goenka came to Madras via Calcutta about 60 years ago and, in the years before the War, he was a familiar figure on First Line Beach with his brown bag, broking and dubashing, wheeling and dealing in a moderate way. One day, he heard of a newspaper in trouble and made a shrewd purchase. That buy he parlayed into a hundred crore newspaper empire that is still growing today.

The Daily Express was founded by R W Brock in the early years of this century and lasted only six years. It was Madras's first morning paper and its first centenary. When it folded, its press was bought by a man who was to become a fabled gossip and who was to die for that weakness, Lakshminathan. The exit of the Englishman's Express enabled the vitriolic Varadarajulu Naidu, called the 'Tilak of South India', to start the Indian Express in 1932. When he struggled to make ends meet, the legendary S Sadanand, who founded Bombay's Free Press Journal, tried to help, but then decided he'd do better sticking to his Bombay venture. Ram Nathji stepped into the breach an eager buyer. Today, that paper he bought in the mid 1930s is published from 14 centres in six states and two Union Territories. In Tamil Nadu alone it publishes from Madras, Madurai and Coimbatore.



SUSHEELA NAIR's front page picture is very much a little bit of Madras. But, in fact, in colour, it looks straight out of an English Christmas card catalogue. It is the chapel of St George's School and Orphanage, Poonanallee High Road. It is a church almost a hundred years old, but the oldest building on the campus is the one above, Conway House, 110 years and more and now used as a dormitory. But even this is not the original building of the school that can be described as the oldest school in India to impart a Western style education. Officially 275 years old, its beginnings were even earlier in a school in St Mary's in the Fort that was started in the middle of the 17th Century. That school grew into St Mary's Charity School on the Island, the Boys' and Girls' Asylums and, then, the Orphanages before becoming St George's in the 19th Century.

A world apart from these old world buildings is the new high-rise built on the site of Moore Market. The Southern Railways' computerised reservation facilities and some of its offices are housed in this block of steel and concrete that is dominated by glass. As though to make up for their insistence on this site at the expense of Moore Market and a part of the ethos of Madras, the railway authorities have commemorated that Madras landmark in a model in the parking lot. But even that they haven't got quite right — the model's light hue, not the rich Madras red the market was. (Photographs by SUSHEELA NAIR).



Appreciation from all

Chief Minister Jayalitha's first budget session was remarkable and significant in many ways. At one stroke, she managed to put her foot down on any attempts by the Centre to treat her as some kind of a doormat, at the same time she warned the DMK President that she was 'ready' to take him on.

The Government resolution urging the Centre to get back Kachativu, off the Rameswaram coast, was unexpected. Simultaneously came her accusation that it was Karunanidhi who had let down Tamil Nadu by not acting promptly on the Cauvery and Kachativu issues when he was in power. She also met head-on the DMK's pappathi (Brahmin woman) speeches that have recently surfaced, by announcing Government's intention of setting up a Vedic science institute to propagate the treasures of the Divya Prabhandams, Vedas, Agamas and the Shastras.

Most Chief Ministers have a 100th day in office. But Ms Jayalitha's 100th day, which capped the session, saw her at her best. Members on both sides marked their appreciation in a muted way — with broad smiles and a thumping of the desks. Life at the top is lonely, suspicion-filled and demanding. With a faint smile, she

received their congratulations, but was there a hint of amusement in her eyes?

No one watching from the side would have forgotten her hour of ignominy when she was humiliated by a few DMK members in the last Assembly. One who was watching on the occasion, recalled a piece of British history: the Prince of Wales when he was a Naval cadet, was once seen crying and complaining that his fellow cadets took pleasure in kicking him!

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

The culprits, when confronted, are said to have remarked, "That's so we may tell others later we've kicked the British king when he was younger". That prince, who became the Duke of Windsor, unfortunately, never made it to the top. Jayalitha did.

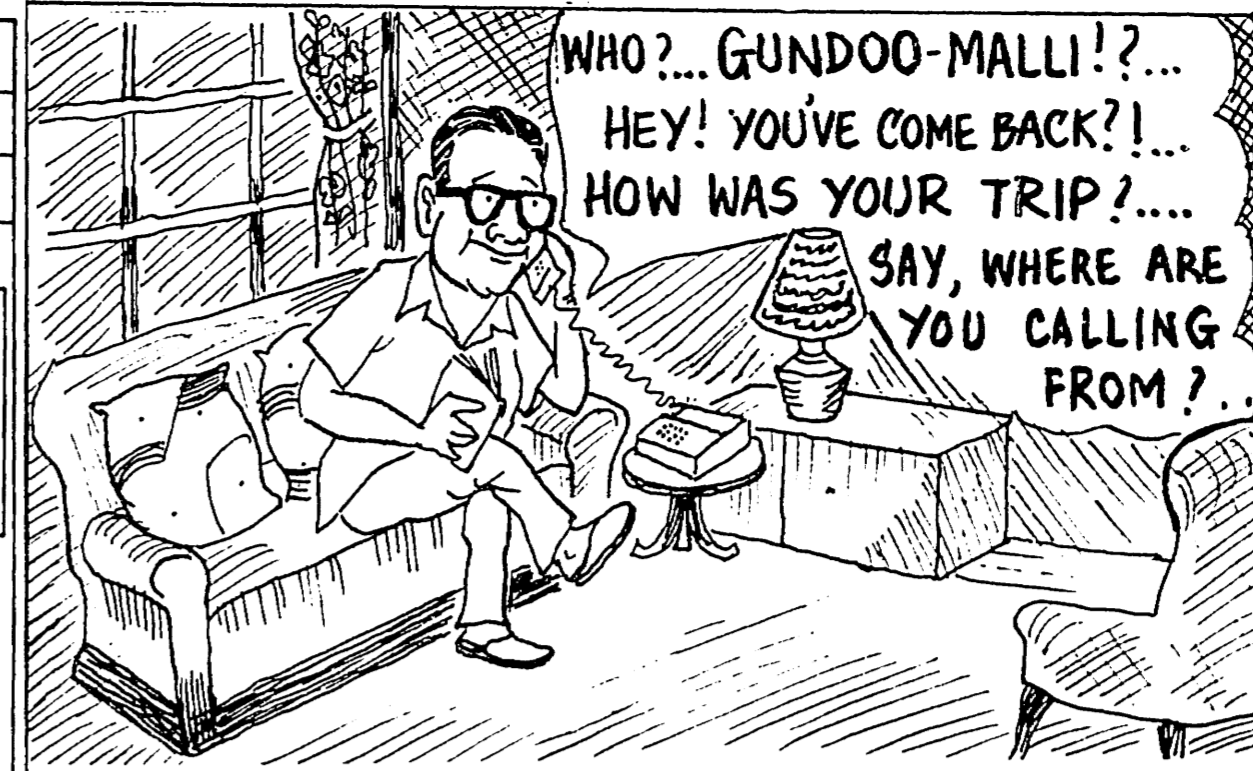
Tribute is also due to the Opposition, mutilated and moth-eaten as it is, and the ill-at-ease Congress (I) doing double duty as both ally and critic of the AIADMK. Both spoke out as best they could. When the House

expressed itself against the revival of the Legislative Council, revoking the DMK's earlier resolution for restoring the second chamber, the Congress (I) was not for it and said so plainly. But during voting time, the Party members were not present in the House.

Business during the second half of the month-long session was mostly of a routine nature and saw the passage of a few bills. Of greater interest were the following announcements: Industries would be involved in road maintenance; Government has urged the Centre to announce 50 per cent reservation in employment and education for Backward Classes; an 80 crore modernisation scheme for the State Police has been sent to the Centre for 100 per cent grant; and Cable TV is to be regulated, for which rules have been framed.

There were also lighter moments, like when the House laughed loud over Minister Madhusudanan's discomfiture at facing the Chief Minister. "Look at me and speak," said Speaker Muthiah, and the Textiles Minister's reply was: "I can't. Chief Minister Paratchi Thalaivi is in-between and when I look at her, words will not flow." His eventual reply contained several catchy bits of songs from MGR films.

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QUIZZIN WITH NAVIN-13

Some improvement last fortnight, but still not the bumper response a simple question warrants. Another equally easy prize question this fortnight, so we hope the response will be better.

Meanwhile, try and answer the first twenty questions on your own, before turning to the answers on Page 8. Remember, Quizmaster NAVIN JAYAKUMAR 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 13, C/o. Lokavani Hall Mark Press, 62-63 Greaves Road, Madras 600 006 before 5 p.m. on October 28th. 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?

- Which Russian republic changed its name to Belarus?
- What pair of animals arrived at Vandalur Zoo from Honolulu in exchange for four gharials?
- The US administration has asked India to fall in line on IPR. What does IPR stand for?
- What was the codename of the Army's recent deployment in Assam, which coincided with the dismissal of the AGP Government?
- V Sathiyamoorthy (AIADMK): "We are able to see the difference in their physique." What was he comparing?
- Who is the Delhi University Students' Union President who threatened to launch a "nation-wide movement" in protest against the government's job reservation proposal?
- Which Tamil organisation known to be sympathetic to the LTTE has decided to return to the Sri Lankan Parliament?
- What type of buses will be experimented with in Madras city and in Ooty soon?
- Of which hot-spot African country has Mobutu Sese Seko been President for 26 years?
- Who retains the post of President of the BCCI (the cricket variety) following recent elections?
- To whom did 'amateur terrorist' Mohanraj write: "If you give me Rs. 1 lakh, I will eliminate the one who wants to kill you"; after having said that he had been paid Rs. 50,000 to kill her!
- A massive black basalt pillar, which formed part of the tomb of the Portuguese conqueror of Goa, was recently discovered in Old Goa by the Archaeological Survey of India. Who was this architect of the Portuguese empire in South-east Asia?
- David Krieff, a LA promoter, recently proposed a "Battle of the Sexes" tennis match in Las Vegas. To which two tennis stars did he offer a \$ 1 million "winner-takes-all" prize?
- What has happened to the 'V' of the 'V' and 'J' city bus services from September 20th?
- What is the "Smriti Vana", a novel scheme to be launched by the UP Government, all about?
- For what shocking act was the Principal and two teachers of the Laxmi Devi Jain Girls' Senior Secondary School in Delhi arrested?
- What is the controversial Resolution 3379 that President Bush wants the UN to rescind?
- Whose name will shortly join Muthuramalinga Thevar, Periyar, Gandhiji, Ambedkar, Qaid-e-Millath, Valluvar, Anna, Rajaji and Kamaraj? And in what way?
- Who was recently elected to the Rajya Sabha from the Assam Legislative Assembly constituency?
- What novel method did the police recently adopt on the night of September 19 to dispose of nearly 38,000 sachets of seized illicit arrack?
- The anaesthesia department of Massachusetts General Hospital recently dedicated a fully equipped conference room in the name of an Indian anaesthetist — a generous and charitable person who helped a number of people in India and abroad and was also named Best Teacher at Harvard Medical School in 1989. His name?

— QUIZ COUPON-13 —

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(The Fortnight of Sept. 16 to Sept. 30)

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3rd Prize: S PAVITHRA, 27, Mahalakshmi Street, T. Nagar, Madras-600 017.
ANSWER TO QUIZZIN' 12: Shenbagaraman Pillai

Down to business, after the dazzle

As some of my readers may remember, I have been warned off politics in this column by my gentle editor who hates hurting anybody's feelings. Someone also wrote in complaining that my polemic incursions into politics were destroying the otherwise lily-white quality of Madras Musings. But this is not really about politics: it is only about some of our politicians who've become legislators.

What made me think about legislators was some of the proceedings during the just ended session of the Tamil Nadu legislature, which was noteworthy for several things. First of all, the Chief Minister was recognised by all and sundry for what she really is (according to them), namely the Earth Mother. One of the legislators was so overwhelmed by her presence that he would not even look in her direction when he had to make a speech — in chaste Elizabethan English, if he had been familiar with it, he might have said: "Cover her face, mine eyes dazzle." Or alternately, "Cover my face, she dazzles mine eyes."

Though a number of useful measures were adopted by the Assembly — and the marvellous

An end — and a beginning

(Continued from P3)

Like his mentor, Thangavelu too married an actress, M Saroja, who, like Malthuram, became a part of his comedy team. The husband and wife team appeared in many films during the Fifties and Sixties, creating laughter with their own brand of humour. In one successful movie, C V Sridhar's Kalyana Parisu, Thangavelu played an expert bluffer, caught in the web of his own 'bluffology' by his shrewd wife Saroja. These comedy sequences were the film's highlight, contributing to its success. The sequences were brought out as a long-playing gramophone record and, later, as audio-cassette tapes. Even three decades and more after they were first heard, they continue to be popular, a fitting tribute to Thangavelu and his comedy.

There was a time when Thangavelu played the hero in a few films, but, not unexpectedly, such attempts did not meet with much success. However, his popularity as a comedian did not diminish and he continued to appear in several Tamil films. But soon, other funsters, like Chandrababu and others, began to appear on the Tamil film horizon and the comedy scene changed once again. Never to be the same again.

manner in which the Chief Minister managed the proceedings must truly and seriously be admired — it is this dedication that will long remain in memory. It was good to know that the Chief Minister herself was so embarrassed by the equivalent of Jayalalitha Sahasranamam that she was showered with, that she pulled up one

particular member, asking him to come to the point and not waste the Assembly's time. My respect for the Chief Minister went up in direct proportion to the embarrassment I felt reading of this incident. I used to know the lady well when she was a child and neighbour, so I dare say she will now not entertain such behaviour any more, but will get ahead with the business on hand.

When the session ended, the Speaker complimented 60 of these members, out of a total of 200-some, for attending the sessions regularly. I rest my unspecified case.

When the session ended, the Speaker complimented 60 of these members, out of a total of 200-some, for attending the sessions regularly. I rest my unspecified case.

S.K.

Legislators' demands

Ministry is a column of record, even if I repeat what most readers must have learnt for themselves from press reports. (Also, memories are short, and yesterday's news is dead news.)

One of these pieces of news we all learnt was that Government itself authorised a variety of new allowances to the members of the Assembly. Fine, one would think, but no, the members' additional demands, including increase in salary, were such that the Finance

Minister had to throw up his hands in the air, and say, more or less seriously, that the entire revenue of the State would not be sufficient to meet their demands.

Here is a listing of the demands (not a complete one) of what the legislators wanted in order to serve the State better: increase in salary (I don't know what the current salary of a legislator is, but it is bound to be substantial compared with that of the rest of the populace); telephone allowance; compensatory allowance and sitting fee; allowance for postage; a typist-cum-assistant. And, of course, a car, or at least an interest-free loan to purchase the vehicle and also construct a house. While most of these demands were made by one member, they obviously represented a consensus as they were all received by the others with wild applause and thumping of tables.

When the session ended, the Speaker complimented 60 of these members, out of a total of 200-some, for attending the sessions regularly. I rest my unspecified case.

S.K.

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Because of its high turnover, the food — especially the meat — is uniformly of good quality. Apart from excellent frozen fish, chicken, mutton, minced beef and veal, AMMA NAANA offers breaded fish and chicken cutlets, which are simply delicious. Then there are the NILGIRI items like cooking cheeses, jams, jellies, tinned meats, pizzas, naans and breads, as well as delectable sweets and savouries from GRAND SWEETS. Of course, you will find any number of seasonal fruits here, including luscious custard apples and all kinds of bananas.

Principally catering to the exclusive Boat Club clientele, AMMA NAANA is the ideal one-stop shop for the harried householder from any part of town. Should you have any problem locating the items on your shopping-list, don't hesitate to seek help from the large "mother-hen" figure behind the counter. The lady and her brood of assistants are right there to make things easier for you.

Chettinad ethos

The Chettinad ethos is back in fashion. So, if you wish to get a whiff of the real stuff, why not visit KARAIKUDI, which is situated opposite NILGIRIS? KARAIKUDI is decorated like the inside of a Chettinad house, with Tanjore paintings and exquisite woodwork. The restaurant is fairly large and divided into booths.

While you listen to the gentle strains of South Indian music, you will be served on round copper plates lined with banana leaves. The water (which will be boiled if you make a special request) is served in traditional jugs. The fare is varied — from excellent biryanis, appams, iddiappams, meatball curry, prawn and fish curry to generous helpings of fried seer fish and large portions of sweetened coconut milk to eat with the

FOODS & FADS

appams. The accept, on the whole, is on mild, subtle flavours, which don't overwhelm you. KARAIKUDI, incidentally, also undertakes catering.

The waiters — dressed in panchakacham veshtis and strange-looking caps — are rather efficient and kept on their toes by the crowds that frequent this restaurant. Considering its reasonable prices and good wholesome food, it is not surprising that KARAIKUDI is packed to capacity at all times. Or could this be the result of the

grace bestowed on the restaurant by the benevolent deities, or *dwarapalikas*, that greet you at the door?

Try the 'choke

You might have seen a strange-looking, flower-like vegetable with green leaves at the PANAGAL PARK MARKET and shuddered at the prospect of eating it! This is the most highly-prized vegetable item in France and the rest of Europe — a veritable gourmet's delight called the *artichoke*. Try taking one home.

Steam it, remove the petals one by one, and eat them after dipping them in lemon-butter and garlic sauce. Take out the tender little hearts and add them to your salads. You'll soon find out what the fuss is all about.

True, artichokes here are a little stringy and tough and nothing quite like the specimens you find in the West. But, what the hell! For the price you pay for them, you might as well enjoy them.

V.K.

It's festival time. And holiday time as well. Three crunchy snacks to fill the insatiable appetites of growing children. They are a great favourite with adults too. Finish with a spicy **Fruit Chaat**. Not quite sweet, not quite salty — just indescribably tangy, really.

BHEL PURI

10 cups puffed rice
5 cups thin sev
20-25 crisp fried *pooris*, coarsely broken
1½ cups boiled, peeled and chopped potatoes
1½ cups chopped onions
1 cup chopped coriander leaves
Salt to taste
To make *Tamarind Chutney*
½ cup tamarind } soak in water
½ cup seedless dates } for 2 hours.
½ teaspoon chilli powder
1½ teaspoons *dhaniya* powder



½ teaspoon cummin seeds powder (*jeera*)
Salt to taste

Squeeze out the tamarind juice. Strain: Boil the tamarind juice for a minute or two. Cool. Add the chilli powder, salt, *dhaniya* powder and *jeera* powder. Mix well. Set aside
To make *Coriander Chutney*
6 green chillies } grind to a
1 cup coriander leaves } fine paste,
½ inch piece ginger } adding a little
4-6 garlic cloves } water.

How to proceed

Add to the puffed rice the sev and broken *pooris*. Add the chopped potatoes and onions. Mix well. Add the green chutney and tamarind chutney according to your taste. Add salt.
Garnish with the remaining sev, chopped coriander leaves and remaining *pooris*.
Serve immediately.

SAMOSAS

½ kg potatoes, boiled in their jackets, peeled and cut into ½" cubes
½ cup shelled peas, boiled (optional)
2 green chillies, chopped fine
1 teaspoon whole cummin seed (*jeera*)
1 teaspoon roasted cummin seeds, powdered fine
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
½ teaspoon *amchoor*
3 tbs oil
1 bunch of coriander leaves chopped fine
Oil for deep frying
Salt to taste

For the dough

2 cups *maida*
3 tbs oil
Salt to taste

Method

Heat the three tablespoons oil. Add the cummin seeds. Add the chopped green chillies, peas and potatoes. Stir for a minute. Add the turmeric powder, *amchoor*, roasted cummin seeds powder and salt. Mix well. Add the chopped coriander. Mix well and set aside.

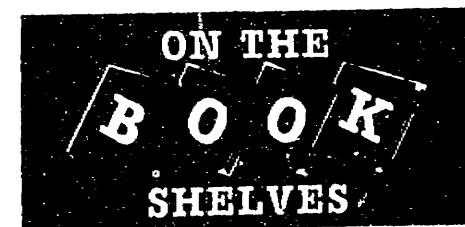
A case of perfect timing

The world-wide release of **I Hope** (Indus, Rs. 250), by Raisa Gorbachev, must rank high among the cases of perfect timing in publishing history.

Raisa, who has so far refrained from giving interviews, felt compelled by recent events to break her silence and discuss the impact of her husband's policies, the nationality question, the role of women in Soviet society and her hopes for the future. Written in the form of an interview, Raisa moves back and forth in time to recall her childhood, courtship and marriage to Mikhail and her experiences while meeting the likes of Margaret Thatcher, Nancy Reagan and Barbara Bush.

From the turmoils of the Soviet Union to the smouldering cauldron of Kashmir, the turgidly titled **My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir** (Allied, Rs. 275) is Jagmohan's voluminous

defence of his two terms as Governor of that state: Jagmohan traces the history of the state from prehistoric times to the present and analyses the reasons behind the mess created by various governments. Indian politicians are severely exposed for their duplicity and



corruption, and the role of Pakistan in fanning terrorism is dealt with in great detail. Jagmohan's book is certain to cause much controversy in the months to come.

Rajiv Gandhi: The End of a Dream (Viking, Rs. 250) by Minhaz Merchant is the first major biography to be released after the assassination. This is not a quickie but a well researched biography that has taken six years to write. Merchant traces the family history from Kashmir in the 1700s to the Prime Ministerships of Nehru and Indira. Not to be forgotten is 'the contribution of Rajiv's father Feroze in the shaping of his son's character. Merchant moves on to Rajiv's track record as politician, Prime Minister and, finally, as leader of the Opposition, assessing along the way his achievements and failures.

The last couple of years has seen the publication of some fine anthologies of Indian women's writings, such as the **Slate of Life and The Inner Courtyard**. Edited by Susie Tharu and K. Lalita, **Women Writing in India** (OUP, Rs. 525) promises to be the mother of all such anthologies as it covers a period from 600 BC to the present. Volume I, that has just been released, ends with the early 20th Century, while Volume II will be devoted to writers born in the 20th Century: From rebel medieval poets, to early examples of literary criticism, feminist theory and history, the selections try to undo the wrongs of a male bias that have kept these writings in oblivion.

Turning to lighter stuff, literary bogyman Stephen King returns with **Four Past Midnight** (NEL, £ 2.50). Over the years King has become a one-man industry with new titles hitting the stands at regular intervals. His books have seen successful spin-offs into films and television and he has a committed following around the world. Love him or hate him: there's no denying that King has broadened the frontiers of the horror genre like no one before.

A weather balloon carrying sensitive information has crashed in Switzerland. Commander Bellamy of U.S. Intelligence is sent in to locate the ten witnesses to the incident. But as he conducts his search, Bellamy finds himself being haunted by an unknown lethal force.... Is this the plot of the latest Ludlum or Forsyth? Actually, it's Sidney Sheldon making a foray into thriller writing with **The Doomsday Conspiracy** (Indus, Rs. 50). No doubt his fans will lap it up, while the critics tear it apart!

C.R. GAUTAM PADMANABHAN

An institute for body languages

A Decol dream for Madras

Languages of the *Arforms* was the talk of art circles last fortnight. Laurent Decol, a master of mime from France, who had mesmerised audiences a few months ago, presented a new show recently at Rani Seethai Hall. This one was inspired by his Indian experience. India, particularly Madras, seems to have mesmerised him in turn and, now, he has an ambition of setting up an international institute for body languages in Madras.

His dream is that great artists of various countries will visit the institute as teachers/students. Besides imparting training, the institute, in his vision, will also have a repertory group which will present productions evolved from these interactions.

Theatre people, dancers, musicians, painters, scholars and journalists met to discuss the project at the Alliance Francaise on College Road. While most of them welcomed the project, there were some fears expressed about the dilution of our tradition with excessive interaction and the need to be vigilant to see that this did not happen.

Karaiikudi Subramanian, a ninth generation veena player from the great Karaiikudi tradition, said he had no such fears. It is true, he said, that our English-educated elite has just begun to look at the potential of our traditional art forms, but these art forms have survived an intellectual oppression by a political power that had judged our arts as erotic and ruled us based on their own literary and philosophical traditions. After Independence, when the dance revival took place, we needed to prove our artforms were more than that eroticism and ritual. But, today, we can candidly reassess them because our interests in who we are or what we are no longer need to be justified to outsiders. We can approach our artforms on our own terms. An international institute for body

languages would bring an additional glitter to the conservative Madras art scene, he felt.

Krishna in variety

At the "Language of Dance '91" Seminar on Krishna organised by



Janardhanan, the star of the RASA seminar on Krishna and the Language of the Dance.

'Rep Theatre' is the professional or semi-professional theatre of America's smaller cities that gives its fellow citizens a chance to see the best in English language plays. These rep theatres are the training grounds of America's young actors and actresses, the best of whom often make it to Broadway. One such company is the Artists Repertory Theatre of Portland, Oregon. And its little group on tour, in its lone performance in Madras, lived up to the high reputation of rep for professionalism.

For Madras, Artists' Rep chose the play *Driving Miss Daisy*, which won for author Alfred Uhry a Pulitzer Prize in 1988. Seeing the play long after the multi-Oscar-winning film of it reached Madras, the City audience had an opportunity to judge how the stage handled a theme so much easier to deal with in film. To age 20 years in 90 minutes without a break in the entire performance, to re-create for most of

RASA (whose main purpose is to bring the artform of dance within the reach of the physically and economically handicapped), acclaimed greats of Bharatha Nattam, Kuchipudi, Odissi and Kathakali came together at the Narada Gana Sabha on October 5th to present episodes from the stories of

have added to the whole experience with his enlivening Krishna quotes.

One of the most brilliant moments of the RASA seminar was the depiction of Krishna as a peace messenger. This was presented in the Kathakali style by Janardhanan. The Kalakshetra star is in a class by himself, as was seen in his

The View from the Wings... by V.R. Devika

Krishna. There was Krishna as an enchanting infant, as a mischievous youth, an amorous lover, as a kind-hearted friend, as an extraordinary politician and, of course, as the God who inspired confidence in Arjuna by delivering the *Bhagavad Gita*. The seminar was an enriching experience. But missed was Krishna's own Krishna Premi, V A K Rangar Rao, who could

brilliant portrayal of both Duryodhana and Krishna. Son of that legendary Kathakali guru, Chandu Panicker, Janardhanan has remained loyal to Kalakshetra. On this occasion, his presence and powerful performance elevated the seminar proceedings.

Musical 'eccentricity'

The Madras Theatre Club of Mithran Devanesan is organising a solo

variety entertainment by Martin Palmer. *The Royal Show*, on October 24th at 7 p.m. at the Rani Seethai Hall.

Palmer will present pieces from Noel Coward and take a musing look at the arts at Buckingham Palace over 'the last 200 years. There'll also be songs and tunes for piano and clarinet. And all you wanted to know about Gilbert and Sullivan as well. Whew! that sounds quite a variety!

Once a child actor, then trained as a classical pianist and clarinetist at the Royal College of Music, Palmer has travelled around the world twice already giving his musical 'eccentricities'.

Nataraja Philosophy

An impressive talk on the philosophy of the dancing Nataraja was given by Asan Gnanasambandar at Abhinaya Sudha in Shastrinagar. The nearly blind Asan was delightfully humorous, down-to-earth in his philosophical approach and narrated innumerable stories to enliven his topic.

RAPPING WITH REP

the time on that same stage the dominant action of the play, a chauffeur driving his mistress, and to make both entirely believable was the achievement of Artists' Rep and a demonstration of how professional theatre can handle as plausibly as film a tale better suited to the screen.

The most ingenious part of director Allen Nause's production was the two rows of love seats, one behind the other, at one corner of the unchanging set. Those love seats represented all the cars the burly, black illiterate Hoke Coleburn drove over the years, shifting gears, tilting mirrors, gently braking, while that

imperious Southern Jewish lady Miss Daisy sat stiffly in the back seat and was gently seduced, between the ages of 72 and 90, into becoming a gentle friend from an overbearing grande dame. In the process, the splendid performances of P Phillips and Vana O'Brien overshadowed the sporadic entries and exits of Allen Nause who rather overplayed his role as Miss Daisy's son and middle-aged American businessman in search of community awards.

Phillips and O'Brien may have got off to a slow start, but by the time Miss Daisy was ready to teach her chauffeur to read, by the time Hoke was ready to turn up to tend her on a day the weather had paralysed all Georgia, and by the time she was ready for the old folks' home, the disparate couple had most of the audience ready to cheer. By that time too, most in the audience had got a hang of their accents too.

A reason to paint

When Joël Ralfier, Director of Alliance Francaise, Madras, organised *Rimbaud 91. Un été Indien*, he did more than bring 19 artists together in an exhibition of contemporary Indian art. It certainly brought Arthur Rimbaud and his prose poems to scores of viewers who might never have known about this "mystic in the savage state" who, in a way, ushered in the symbolist movement in European Literature. More importantly (and here relevant to us), the exhibition braided sinews into a frangible relationship between the artists and the larger society. It gave the people an opportunity to understand their artists and to respond to them, albeit only in terms of personal sensibility: or finite experience. It suggested that it may, after all, be possible for the likes of you and I to assay art and, perhaps, to even rate the artists.

Ralfier invited the better known artists of Madras to respond to the poetry of Rimbaud — to the universal soul of his powerful images. Some of the artists chose entire verses, others opted for single lines, yet others word images. They painted or moulded in answer to those lines. "I was inspired," said an artist, "not to illustrate the situation, but to live in terms of form and colour". According to the curator of the exhibition, "These painters have all reacted from the point of view of shapes and aesthetics according to their own

culture and genius to the life-work of Rimbaud..."

The exercise paid off well. The artists produced works of quality. The casualness that lends to creep into an occasional work was conspicuously absent. Masterpieces hung alongside fascinating pieces. Some spoke, others attracted.

To cite an example, Valsan Koller's bronze and terracotta sculpture, 45 cm across, took centre stage in its own right. It suggested a "live" jar on its belly —

• by Elizabeth Roy

savagely maternal. The longer you looked, the more possibilities it yielded. The words beneath, reinforced what had already been gleaned — "The Queen, the Witch who lights her fire in an earthen pot, will never tell us what she knows, and we do not" (*After the Flood*). The poem, the artist, and the viewer — all fuse in the aggregate that is the piece.

In spite of yourself you are drawn to the chilling blue of Vasudev's canvases. The initial impact is unsettling, and a feeble attempt to escape from its grip does not really change the situation. Then, very slowly, the "deep blue he" emerges and with him the lighter touches of pink and the lightening of the blue towards white — little figures afloat. You feel afraid to speak what you

see. The caption is from *Eternity*: "From the applause of the world, and the striving of Man, you set yourself free and fly as you can". The encounter generates a thought to live with.

Again, artists like Adimoolam, Lalu Daniel Mareau and Viswanadhan opened dialogues through more literal interpretations. There were also bewitchingly mystic translations, like those of Douglas, which evoked a kind of subconscious response. There were other paintings wildly beautiful, created with a feel for colour and form. They, however, had little to do with Rimbaud and less to do with the lines of their choice.

The variety offered invaluable learning experience. Despite their better senses, people felt inclined to rate the artists and to classify them: into artists of thought, form and colour, and artists of only form and colour. They distinguished between those versatile enough to get across to the mundanity of the mainstream of social life and those who worked out of their creative exigencies, tempered only by their minds' frame set. The array threw up these artists who could explain their work before painting them, those who were in-total control of their medium and mind. In short, *Rimbaud, An Indian Summer* has given the ordinary Madras a little more confidence to stand long enough before a work of art to say, "Maybe, I don't like it after all"

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ON THE STANDS NOW

Who'll give a gym?

(by The Corner Flag)

The story in these columns last fortnight, of Prem Dogra and the munificence of the Thapar clan, who are giving him the opportunity to take a crack at a world title, attracted a lot of attention. But who in Tamil Nadu is prepared to take a page out of the Thapar book?

If there is some such organisation, there's at least one deserving case who could do with its help. And I've no doubt there are several others too. The champion I'm thinking of is S Gopalakrishnan, who recently won a bronze in the 9th World Junior Powerlifting Championships against all odds.

Powerlifting might not be the most glamorous of sports in India, but a world ranking is an achievement out of the ordinary, whichever way you look at it. Jobless Gopalakrishnan, from a poor Coimbatore family, got his bronze with a total lift of 507.5 kg, trailing a Finn (552.5 kg) and a Taiwanese (520 kg). But he was a winner in the last Indian nationals with a total of 540 kg.

That he failed to reach silver standard in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, could well have been due to the fact that he arrived there with very little in his pocket and was hard put to it to make ends meet. Short on nutrition, he was hardly in the best condition to compete, a condition worsened by all the anxiety he had had to go through before emplaning, rushing from pillar to pawnbroker to raise the wherewithal for the money he needed for the airfare-alone-paid trip.

The nationals have now come around again and a good performance by him could see him go to the World senior championships in Sweden in December. By then, will he be able to find a godfather in heavily industrialised Coimbatore? Even if he does, it may be too late to boost his chances this year, but a few years of the kind of support Dogra is getting could work wonders. Is there a Coimbatore or Madras businesshouse that could provide a gym for Gopalakrishnan? Or for weightlifter Chandrasekhar? Or facilities for hockey star-in-the-making Mohammed Riaz?

Who'll answer the cry of so many who are talented?

Polo again at the Mount

By AJAX

Polo is here again. After motor-racing and golf had had their annual run, the equine sport has taken its turn, and has done so with a bang, as it were. The fortnight-long season, featuring two foreign teams, one from New Zealand and the other from the USA, is scheduled to conclude on October 17.

The foreign teams' participation has helped Madras steal a march over the other Indian centres of Jaipur, Calcutta and Delhi. It boosted the season's tournaments to a record ten, eclipsing the figure that even that ancient polo centre, Jaipur, could boast of.

Come September, and the Indian Army's Mohite Stadium at St. Thomas Mount wakes up from its slumber to steal the city's sporting limelight thanks to the drive and initiative of the Officers' Training Academy and the Madras Polo and Riders Club. When the curtain is finally brought down on the 1991 season, the joint organisers will have provided a hectic fortnight.

ANSWERS TO QUIZZIN' 13

1. Byelorussia, 2. Pygmy hippos, 3. Intellectual Property Rights, 4. Operation Bajrang, 5. The Tamil Nadu Police and the Black Cat commandos protecting the Chief Minister, 6. Rajiv Goswami, whose self-immolation attempt last time round sparked off a series of copycat attempts, 7. EROS (Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students), 8. Battery operated buses, 9. Zaire, 10. Madhavarao Scindia, 11. Baby Shaili of Anjali, 12. Afonso de Albuquerque, 13. Jimmy Connors and Monica Seles, 14. The 'V' has become 'R' (for unspecified reasons!), 15. Creating forests with the help of people desirous of planting trees in memory of their near and dear ones, 16. For the forcible stripping of Class-X girls in search of Rs. 150/- reportedly lost by a student, 17. "Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination", 18. These are the 9 portraits in the TN Assembly. They will shortly be joined by MGR, 19. Dr Manmohan Singh, 20. They threw a large number of them on the Anna Flyover so that they got crushed by passing vehicles.

Hosting a foreign team is no joke. Entertaining two such teams costs a tidy sum. But their status being what it is, the OTA and the MPRC had little difficulty in winning the patronage of big business. ITC, UB Group, SPIC, Gaitonde Corium, Dyanora and the Taj Coromandel Group all readily responded to the call of the organising committee, which has B. Sivanthi Adityan, newspaper magnate and Indian Olympic Association president, Maj.-Gen. Naresh Oberoi, Commandant, OTA, and A.C. Muthia, industrialist and MPRC president, as its patrons.

The MPRC may truly be called the senior partner of the organising pair. Its predecessor, the Madras Riding Club, with M.A. Chidambaram as Chairman and S. Govind Swaminathan as a dynamic secretary, had almost single-handedly carried on for decades until the MPRC took over with A.C. Muthia as its president and the late M.V. Prakash as secretary. None the worse for the change in name, the MPRC, with Prakash as its driving power, lost no time in winning the support of the OTA (then Officers' Training School) to put polo and horse shows on a firm footing in Madras.

If the Mohite Stadium today has a place on the world equine map, it is no small measure due to the dedicated work put in by Prakash and his committee members. He was secretary for decades until he died in December 1988.

Hailing from a family of great national sporting repute, with Buchi Babu Nayudu, C. Ramaswamy, M. Baliah, M. Venkataraman-julu and others as its leading lights, Prakash had made his mark in cricket, tennis and other sports, but it was as an amateur rider and polo player that he excelled, and was at his best as an organiser of the equine sport.

It was in the fitness of things that a M.V. Prakash Cup was, albeit at the last moment, added to the Cup-studded fortnight. It was a worthy memorial.

Women's hockey sparkles again

Mrs Olga Frohlich is perhaps the sole surviving link, even if the well-known Madras educationist and Western music director seems to have lost interest in a game she had adored for long. The rest of a line-up which decades ago helped Madras women's hockey pull the crowds, and scale the heights on the national scene as well, have all departed from the land of their birth. They include such unforgettable stars as Noreen Hughes, Shelagh Rodricks, Marie Sheppard and Marie van Geyzel. Their names, which no doubt suggest why after Independence they all preferred other lands to their motherland, came to mind while watching the concluding match of the Madras District Women's Hockey Association's league championship.

With the almost wholesale emigration of such all-star clubs like Sea-Gulls and Shamrocks, women's hockey in Madras was as good as dead. Fortunately for its fans, a few enthusiasts, including I. Passagne, another link with the glorious past, even if only as an official, not only revived it a few years ago but also enlisted the patronage of such sport-minded persons as Mrs Shamsheer Padamsee to ensure its growth. Mrs Padamsee is now the MDWHA president, and has had little difficulty in getting for the league championship the sponsorship not only of Eagle Flask Industries but also of Bhandari Inter-State Carriers and Arjan Das Gokuldas.

The sponsorship has produced excellent results. The quality of hockey

SPORTING BRIEFS

Speeding to victory

It made no headlines in India. And so, yet another Indian champion has had to hide his light under a bushel.

The champion in this case is Tamil Nadu's own Lanka Ravi. And his feat that captured no headlines was winning the Third Asian Rapid Chess Championships which were held in Doha (Qatar) recently.

The International Master won the title by securing 10 points in 13 matches. Now he's looking forward to the World Rapid Chess Championships next year, for which he has qualified with this victory.

Indian chess and chessmen are certainly on their way — UP.

Rolling along

It captured the imagination of sports-persons in several parts of the north and east of the country. It was only a matter of time before roller skating gathered a following here too.

That time appears to have now come. A ten-day camp was recently held in the city to get those with "young hearts" addicted to the sport and trained in "artistic roller skating". From all reports, the camp was a modest success.

What intrigued this writer, however, was whether the advertisement announcing the training was a call to roller skaters or for "investors" of "Rs. 250/- on a pair of skates". The advertisers, however, also announced their affiliation to the Roller Skating Federation of India. Presumably that should make mixing business with pleasure all right.

SPORTSWATCH

the league final between Gymkhana Club (not Madras Gymkhana Club) and Egmore Club produced underscored the fact that the game was none the worse for the eclipse it suffered. If indeed a discreet veil is put over the lack of finish, the scene was reminiscent of what People's Park, Ordnance

on not only by the crowd that enjoyed a lively duel but also by MDWHA officials, who were heard to say that the game got but stepmotherly treatment at the hands of mainline dailies, which were more concerned with the Nth division league cricket results.

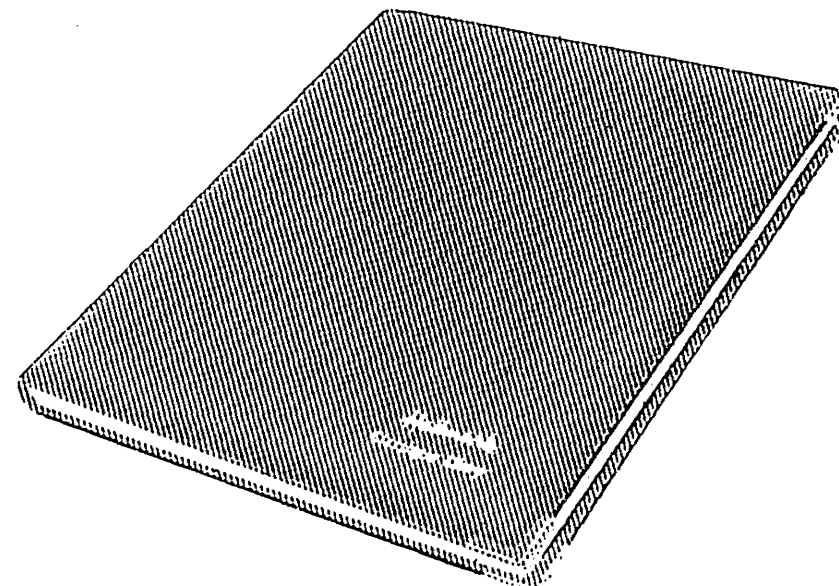
Stella Maris, YMCA College, Government Arts College and Winning XI, all youthful sides, were the others in the league field. Participation of so many teenagers is a sign of the times, and is mainly due to the encouragement the sport got from Eagle Flask's. Fittingly enough, Mr Padamsee got a big hand when he arrived as one of two chief guests on the final day. Came the prize distribution function, and it was Mrs Padamsee's turn to introduce the two chief guests to the teams. But the unique distinction of a lady introducing her husband was somewhat spoilt as the other chief guest was, no doubt inadvertently, left behind — the price one has to pay for sharing the limelight.

by
JAICI

Ground and other old venues had provided almost every evening during the heyday of the sport in the City.

Both the Gymkhana, who won 2-0, and Egmore, a team of schoolgirls, fought it out to the last. In doing so, they threw up an atmosphere of joy, entertainment and rivalry, which few other disciplines provide in the same measure, and for which alone women's hockey deserves greater encouragement than what it gets at present, especially from the media. This was commented

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