

GRAPHIC COLOUR
PROCESSScreen Negatives for
Offset-Printing149, Peters Road
Madras 600 086
Phone: 861759

MADRAS

U-RENT

For renting of Scooters,
Mopeds, Computers,
Refrigerators, Vacuum Cleaners,
VCR, TV, etc.,
CALL: 414222

U-RENT

SERVICES PVT LTD.,
36, II Main Road, Gandhinagar,
Adyar, Madras-21.

MUSINGS

Vol. I. No. 15

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

November 15 — 30, 1991

Calcutta recalls its pride & glory. Now....

When will we get sound & light?

(By A Special Correspondent)

It's been a lone voice in the hurly-burly of life in our city. For years it's been trying to get our city interested in its history. But I don't think we'll ever get what it has been suggesting these past three years or so, a sound and light show to be staged on the ramparts of Fort St George, with the audience to

be seated in the park which was the beach on which the founders landed.

There've been no takers until now. Not the Government, not the Tourism Ministry, not the Madras Chamber of Commerce, to several of whose members the suggestion has been made by that voice in the wilderness. But will

there now be one of these authorities prepared to take a second look at the idea, now that Calcutta, the city that Madras begat, has stolen a march on us?

On October 29th Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, inaugurated "a tercentenary gift to Calcutta" from The Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry and The Bengal Chamber Tercentenary Trust as part of their 'Calcutta I Care' crusade. Is there anyone in 350 years old Madras who cares?

Announcing 'Pride & Glory — The Story of Calcutta' are these stirring words:

*The thunder of hooves, the roar of guns
The light of freedom — lost and won
The sights, the sounds, the impressions
Of a romance called Calcutta!*

And the Bengal Chamber goes on to announce:

"From three obscure villages to a mighty metropolis.

"The history and heritage, the people and places;

"300 years captured memorably through light and sound.

"A son-ét-lumière supplemented by an audio-visual for a unique presentation of the evolution of Calcutta....

"Come share the laughter, the heartbreak, the joy, the pride, the

glory that was and is and will be Calcutta."

Taking pride in the glory of Calcutta and making this commemoration possible were the business houses of Calcutta, in a state blessed by a Marxist government. A much less curious juxtaposition of ruling forces should make much more possible in even more historic Madras. But who will take the lead?



IN MAD. MAD MADRAS



This is the building in which the Karur Vysya Bank started in Karur, Tiruchi District, 75 years ago.

தேசம் தேசம் தேசம் தேசம்
DAILY THANTHI

FIFTY YEARS OF INFORMING THE MASSES

(By A Non-Reader)

Karur remembered in Madras

(By A Special Correspondent)

That Finance Minister Manmohan Singh honoured Madras, by making a visit here his first public speech-making appearance after being inducted into office, is a happening of some importance that appears to have been missed by many. That he also first took centre stage at the platinum jubilee celebrations of a private sector bank founded in a small town in the back of beyond should also have had people wondering, but that too appears to have been taken in Madras's stride.

But whatever Dr Manmohan Singh's signals were — apart from some plain talking on the state of banking and other infrastructural efficiency in the business world — there was at least one other thing to wonder about. Did the celebration of what presumably were 75 glorious years have to concentrate more on current achievements and future plans, relegating the past to a few

words or a sentence or two? For instance, the little brochure brought out on the occasion had little more to say about roots than this:

SOWING THE SEED

In 1916, when the First World War was causing hardship and depression in the economy, two men of vision belonging to the business community — Shri M A Venkatarama Chettiar and Shri Athi Krishna Chettiar — decided to open a bank.

It is also mentioned elsewhere that the paid-up capital was less than Rs. 1 lakh. And that's it!

Who were these two men? What did they do for living? Were they also in cotton like others in Kongu Nadu? Or were they moneylenders? What was their vision? And how did they make it a reality? What were their problems? Why did Karur, in Trichy District, halfway between Trichy and

Erode and almost the furthest east of the cotton and handloom centres of a region renowned for this trade, why, I repeat, did Karur become a financial centre? Karur Vysya Bank, 75 years old, is not, it must be mentioned, the only important bank in that busy little town.

So many questions, but no answers either on stage or in print. But that's always been the Tamil Nadu way. History ended with the Cholas!

If, however, you're the kind more interested in the present and the future than the past, there was heard from the dais, apart from Dr Manmohan Singh's gentle admonishments, the promise of Karur Vysya scholarships for the talented wishing to study financial management further in universities. Now that sounds more interesting than making numbers grow impressively.

For 50 years now the *Dhinalthanti* — *Daily Thanthi*, as it likes to call itself these days — has been informing the less literate masses of Tamil Nadu about what's been going on in the world. You might hate the *Thanthi* style — terse but loud and vulgarly descriptive — or you might love it — as one that really communicates with its target audience — but whatever your feelings, there is no denying the *Thanthi's* considerable contribution to making the man-in-the-Tamil Nadu-street more politically conscious and better informed.

A newspaper that's succeeded in doing that certainly deserves notice. Yet its golden jubilee celebration was so untypically low key that it was hardly noticed by even its large reading public, leave alone those outside the *Thanthi* world. Whether this has anything to do with any plans it may have to break into English journalism, using *Aside* as a stepping stone, is purely speculative thinking. But surely not!

In fact, its recent advertising campaigns in the upmarket English press, before the *Aside* acquisition, was similarly very low key and very businesslike — unlike the image of the paper itself. I wonder why? Come off it *Thanthi*, be yourself.

For 50 years the *Thanthi* has made an immense contribution towards education of the millions in Tamil Nadu about the state, the country and the world. It would have reached far more people in all those years than all the English papers and the journals in the state put together — if you are only to judge by the daily groups that gather round any roadside *Thanthi* reader every morning as he gets ready to read the news out loud to eager listeners. With such a contribution, why hide your light under a bushel, without even a couple of large advertisements to record that splendid past?!

Be that as it may, Congratulations, *Thanthi*. May your voice be heard and your headlines noticed for many more years.

OUR READERS WRITE

Tough disappointment

The standard of *Madras Musings* is very good and the topics interesting. I look forward to getting it. So when I read your glowing account of the Karakudi Restaurant, I was determined to go there, in spite of the opposition of the others, to taste the delectable fare that was described in your paper.

A group of us went there and were sadly disappointed. The mutton that day must have come from an ancient goat; it needed a hack-saw to cut it, it was so tough. An apologetic manager quickly replaced it with chicken instead. You must have got the red carpet treatment to popularise the restaurant; we didn't.

Mrs Bertha Lobo

2nd Fl., 16 Dooming Street-600 004.

No mystery

It was nice to see the reference to the Bicentennial Celebrations of the College of Engineering, Guindy, in *Madras Musings* (Oct. 1-14).

There is no mystery in initiating this celebration three years ahead of time. If it were to be a ritual, it can be done in the year 1994 in just one day; but the bicentenary is an occasion during which all the concerned persons reflect on the historical achievements. It takes some time to gather the relevant material from all over the world to compile an authentic version of the heritage of this college. Moreover, the alumni of this College are all around the world. This is an occasion to list the support for the future growth of this institution. The next three years will witness many interesting events, such as Open Houses, Exhibitions, National and International Seminars and Cultural events involving the students, the faculty and the alumni. All these require careful planning and thoughtful implementation.

T R Jagadeesan

Director

Anna University College of Engineering, Guindy-600 025.

MMM: As a once and former engineering student, here and abroad — sadly not at Guindy — *MMM* appreciates how little is learnt of your subject in those three or four or five years spent on campus and how different the reality is in the big bad world outside. So the studious approach being taken by Guindy Engineering to understand how little it knows about itself is understandable and the three-year exercise, in that context, welcome. But does it have to have a celebratory send-off and other exhibitions along the way? Might not the three-year exercise have been a behind-the-scenes one, the anniversary in 1994 a big bash, with a celebratory year to follow?

That, of course, is merely different perceptions. *MMM* totally agrees with Guindy Engineering on its need to celebrate 200 years and record in detail the history

of an institution that has contributed much to India and neighbouring countries.

Campus on fire

Madras Musings has already addressed the crisis in Madras Christian College, neutrally and without taking sides. The crisis, however, is growing in intensity, and as an old student I should like to point out one or two things that may have escaped the notice of most people. The first detail to be noted is that both contending parties are now indulging in a war of press releases. As most readers will be aware, the struggle is between the management of the College and a group of teachers, who, by all accounts, is strongly supported by fellow-teachers as well as the Association of University Teachers. None of us outside has, of course, any way of knowing the rights and wrongs of the two disputing parties.

What I think has given a new dimension to the dispute is the attitude of the Alumni Association of the college. (I resigned from the Alumni Association several years ago, when I realised that its chief activity was to produce an occasional and random-newsletter.) In two communications in quick succession, the Alumni Association has squarely decided to back the management against the dissenting teachers. In its first communication in early October, the Alumni Association, through its Executive Committee, made a strong defence of the management. In its second communication the same month, the Alumni Association is asking all alumni to write to the Chief Minister pretty generally on the follies of the dissenters. The point of this appeal to alumni is simply to try to foreclose the options open to the dissenters. These include action by the Education Minister and/or the University. The management of the college has obtained court decrees which, as of now, prevent such action.

The sadness of the whole thing lies in the fact that the Alumni Association, instead of using whatever clout it has to bring about a settlement, has, rather, chosen to take sides. Was this Executive Committee decision made after a general body meeting, which such a situation would have warranted?

I spent six wonderful years in Madras Christian College during the mid-Forties, first as a student and then as a teacher. In its prospectus, the College then said that though it was dedicated to Christian principles, it would not impose them on any of its students. Today, all the unseemly wrangles seem to be taking place between Christian and Christian, with even Bishops being badmouthed. The crisis at MCC may well prove to be a landmark in the history of higher education in this country.

S. Krishnan

26 Krishnaswamy Avenue-600 004.

International standard

Madras Musings is highly informative. Every fortnight it gives a clear picture about our state capital. My hearty wishes for such a high publication of International standard.

N Ananda Murugan

Pukkulam Udumalpet, Coimbatore Dist

The background story

Most everyone in Madras knows about the rise and fall and rise again of Chief Minister Jayalalitha. But it took an enterprising young reporter to record what happened before all that. In fact, he went back to roots and discovered those who knew her as a child and who still describe her as a 'Kannadigathi'.

To discover that background, reporter Vincent D'Souza of *The Week* went back to the Laxmipuram area of Mysore, "in the shadows of the sprawling Mysore Palace", and made another discovery. Laxmipuram, he found, had been home of not only 'Ammu' Jayalalitha but of also several other celebrities, not the least of whom were the brothers R K Narayan and R K Laxman, Sanskrit scholar Hiriyanna, B Subba Rao, the engineer who supervised the building of the Krishnarajasagar Dam, M V Gopalaswami who started Akashvani, India's first broadcasting station, and leg spinner B S Chandrasekhar among others.

This illustrious colony once boasted a popular tennis club and one of its most ardent tennis-playing members and, for some time, its president was a man called Jayaram. He owned a sports goods shop, Ranga Sports, but is still better remembered for his tennis, his wife Sandhya and his daughter — Jayalalitha.

Jayaram was the son of a physician who had attended the royal family and lived in a house befitting his father's status. It was during those days in the "Red House" that Sandhya first made her debut in films. It was Sandhya's success in films that led to the family moving to Madras. And the rest, as they say, is history.

But it was indeed perceptive of D'Souza to record pre-history.

'I am from Loyola'

It was only in last fortnight's *Musings* that a 'Muser' recalled the legendary Fr Bertram's words when an old boy of Loyola asked him for a character certificate. "Say you're from Loyola; that will do," advised the good Father. And several in the power circles in Delhi appear to have used those magic passwords according to a report the *Man from Madras Musings* caught up with a little later.

The galaxy includes President R Venkataraman, Central Ministers P Chidambaram, M O H Farook and M M Jacob, Intelligence Chief M K Narayan, Secretary to the President P Murari, Comptroller and Auditor General of India C G Somiah, Secretary Finance and Revenue K P Geethakrishnan, Secretary Environment R Rajamani, Secretary Mines V Krishnan, Secretary Electronics N Vittal, Special Secretary Commerce G Sundaram, Additional Secretary Banking K J Reddy, Chairman Food Corporation of India J C Lynn, BSF chief T Anantachari, UPSC member and former Home Secretary J A Kalyanakrishnan, and Commissioner of

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

Textiles Mani Krishnaswamy among others.

The *Man from Madras Musings* has no doubt there must be as many from Madras Christian College in the power circles of Delhi and that either list must be very much bigger than that from Doon. But will they outnumber those from St Stephen's, Delhi, or Presidency, Calcutta, or Elphinstone, Bombay? Perhaps someone from Delhi might like to let this column know some time.

In memoriam

Arnawaz the artist died too young. But S G Vasudev, perhaps the best-known South Indian artist, is keeping alive the memory of his fellow painter and wife who died in 1988 by introducing her work to as large an Indian audience as possible.

In life, FRIENDS saw more of Arnawaz's very real talent than the public. Vasudev is now setting that record straight.

Drawings and water-colours, oils, metal reliefs and graphics from the collections of collectors and friends who loaned the prized works and several from Vasudev's own collection were on display recently at the Cymoza Art Gallery in Bombay. The Arnawaz-Vasudev Charities Trust funded the whole exercise in order to let art enthusiasts

MMM

learn more from a talent that died young.

A reviewer, who saw the exhibition of this former K C S Paniker student and one of the first Cholamandal settlers, later wrote, "For those who may not be clued in to Arnawaz's work, this exhibition was a real eye-opener." Charming, soft-spoken Arnawaz, would have had a thing or two say about that. But that reviewer's is a thought for Madras too; the city could do with a similar revelation.

Vanishing words

At one time the Soviet Information Services was the largest publisher of periodicals in India. The glossy *Soviet Land*, a monthly, was published in 14 languages and had a circulation of over a million. The children's monthly, *Sputnik Junior*, in English and Hindi, the fortnightly *Youth Review* in three languages, the *Soviet Review* in 14 languages, and *Soviet Panorama* in two languages had, together, a print order of over a million. Over 2.5 million books and booklets in various languages were also printed. And all sold for unbelievably low prices. But now that bonanza for Indian printers and readers is over!

Perestroika and *glasnost* have ensured a drastic reduction of the Russian publications programme in India and an even more drastic reduction in local staff — leading to demonstrations by this staff in different parts of the country. Readers, however, have staged no demonstrations.

The word now is that there might be a small revival ahead, with *Soviet Land* making its appearance in English and Hindi FROM MADRAS. Perhaps under another name. Many a coffee table and reception room table is certain to be looking forward to that. And another ray of sunlight is that New Century Book House and Tamil Nadu Book House, both from Madras — the former holds all those roadside book exhibitions around the city — are among the few publishing houses linked with the Soviets who have somewhat weathered Moscow's economy drive and new business outlook.

Amitabh in Telugu



The superstar of Indian moviedom, the once-upon-a-time-angry-young-man of Hindi cinema and not-so-angry-man-of-middle-age, the cult figure and super-hero of *Zanzeer*, *Deewaar*, *Sholay*, *Naseeb* and so on, is now entering a new world, the world of Telugu cinema. This will be his debut in a non-Hindi film.

After his not so successful innings as a politician, Amitabh Bachchan came back to pick up the threads he had left behind and found his popularity as solid as ever. Now comes the tidings that Sathya Reddi, a successful, box-office-oriented Telugu film director (the modern and more appropriate expression 'film-maker' is yet to catch on in local film circles; one prosperous local film producer told this writer's soul-mate that he thought that 'film-maker' meant one who manufactured film, like Hindustan Photo Films, Kodak, Fuji, Orwo etc), is launching Bachchan in a big budget Telugu movie that's got backing from at least two big shots of film finance who wish to remain anonymous.

An Amitabh Bachchan film in Telugu can be expected to be sold around 20-25 million rupees. Interestingly, the biggest seller in the Telugu film market is that superstar Chiranjeevi. The top-draw in Telugu cinema, a film of his has sold for 32 million rupees, the highest figure in South Indian cinema! (Chiranjeevi now acts in Hindi films too

and has met with a certain measure of success. A Telugu film of his, a re-make of an English movie, was also recently 'dubbed' in English for 'international release'.)

Amitabh in a Telugu movie raises certain interesting and certainly relevant questions about film aesthetics. Amitabh Bachchan has a tremendous screen presence which nobody can deny, not



even nuts-and-bolts-chewing critics. Another factor which has contributed to his amazing success is his deep-throated 'macho' voice which arrests attention the moment he begins to speak. But what of Amitabh in a Telugu movie? He does not speak the language and somebody like Telugu film star Kongara Jaggaiah (he is a former MP and AIR newsreader, has an excellent voice and generally 'dubs' for Shivaji Ganesan) or top singer S P Balasubramaniam or 'dubbing hero' Sayeekumar (he 'lends' his voice for almost all non-Telugu-speaking actors, such as Suman, Rajasekhar and others) may be called in to speak for Amitabh. But AB minus

A horse! A horse: Why a horse?

The Maharani of Lakshminarajapuram's king-sized jewel box was missing. The box was said to contain gold, diamonds, pearls and other precious stones and many priceless family heirlooms. All amounting to quite a fortune even in an era of zero inflation. Enough sensation to create chaos and worse in the whole zamindari (if there is no such word in the Queen's English, may I contribute one to the growth of 'indish'?).

Who could have stolen the box? It was always kept in a locked safe in an alcove in the wall by the 'Peddamagaru's' ('big lady' in Telugu) bed. Yet the daring theft had taken place during the night and was only discovered in the morning by the Maharani. The zamindar reported the theft at once to the police and the Lakshminarajapuram Inspector of Police was put in charge of the investigation by the District Superintendent of Police.

A young Indian Police Service (IPS) trainee, later to become a top police-officer, was asked to go along as an observer and learn the techniques of police investigation.

The investigating Inspector knew his onions and went about his work with a quiet efficiency. He chatted with the Maharani and interrogated her female entourage and her retinue of maids. (Zamindars in those days had servants whose job was merely to stand behind their masters, arms folded across their chests and bodies slightly bent in obedience. The salary paid to those

who served by standing and waiting was known in Telugu as *niluvu jeetham*, or standing salary!)

It did not need a Hercule Poirot to decide that it was an inside job. The

way to dusk and then to velvety darkness, yet the digging and searching operations continued without pause.

The busy Inspector was soon concerned about the IPS-trainee having to

the Inspector's appeals, some of the jewels would have been treated as 'not found' and would have wound their way into the pockets of the searching police! Because the trainee had persisted in staying on and watching it all, the local Inspector had no option but to report 100 per cent recovery of the jewels! No wonder the zamindar was grateful to the officer for his all-night vigils!

The trainee who remembers well that horse is C V Narasimhan, IPS, who adorned many a high office in India before his retirement.

CRIME NOTEBOOK

BY RANDOR GUY



local inspector strongly suspected an attractive zenana maid who had free access to the bedroom. She was quite friendly with the maharani and her good looks and uninhibited ways had made her popular in the palace. The curious policeman soon found that, not surprisingly, the merry-mannered maid had a paramour. And he had left town unexpectedly that dawn!

Police always have many methods to make folks talk and the maid soon confessed to the theft. Her lover was soon traced and corroborated his mistress's version of the theft. Both told of how the jewels had been separately bundled and buried in the moist sands of a river bank nearby.

The scene shifted to the river bank, to which the police team and the IPS-trainee moved the next day. Day gave

stand around for so long. He urged him to call it a day. But the officer-trainee ignored all appeals and would not budge.

By dawn, all the lost jewels, including the jewel box, were recovered and the trainee warmly congratulated the Inspector on his work. Shortly afterwards, the IPS-trainee was surprised one day when the zamindar called on him and offered him a majestic white horse as a gift. Why was he being given such an expensive gift when his role in the detection was not even minimal, he asked. The zamindar gave no answer, but was adamant that the IPS-wallah accept the gift. The mystery was solved a few days later when the DSP explained it all at the Club.

If the trainee had left the scene of action at the river bank, responding to

Business Review...by The Shroff

NO END TO SPINNING PROBLEMS...

The South Indian Spinning Industry seems to face one problem after another. A few weeks ago the Union Textile Ministry banned the export of cotton yarn. The logic being that the prices of cotton yarn have gone up steeply due to exports and, consequently, their non-availability in the domestic market. The most affected were the South Indian Cotton Spinning Mills, as they account for about 60 per cent of cotton yarn exports. The spinning mills were irate. They blamed the export of cotton for the steep rise in yarn prices. The spinning industry has pointed out that it was unwise to export cotton without making proper assessment of domestic cotton requirements.

When the issue seemed near resolution and the ban on yarn exports was being lifted, the Coimbatore mill workers decided to go on strike on the bonus issue. Although a three-year agreement had been signed between the trade unions and the South Indian Mills Association (SIMA), which will come up for review only next year, the unions had demanded a steep hike in bonus last year. As most of the mills had a phenomenally good year last year, a lot of them gave in and made one to one deals with their respective unions. SIMA

did not speak with one voice. However, things are not so cosy this year.

Spiralling cotton prices, and various inputs cost have had their effect. The profits have come down compared to last year. So SIMA is not so ready to yield. The Chief Minister has appealed to SIMA to settle on last year's basis. Incidentally, the Coimbatore textile workers are paid much higher compared to their counterparts in Bombay and Ahmedabad.

Under the circumstances, it has come as a shock to the spinning industry that the Centre has decided to export cotton again. No one is sure why this decision has been taken, considering that 1990-91 turned out to be such a disaster. While nobody is denying that cotton can be exported, textile circles feel that it would be better to take a decision in December when a better picture would emerge on cotton availability.

Interesting software

Madras has seen a mushrooming of companies dealing with information technology in recent years. Most of them are small units in computer-related activities and software exports. Periodically, some of them come up with interesting software packages.

PC India, which is the dealer for Wipro and Aureole computers, has recently launched a software for the garment industry which is called Cutting Edge II. It is an integrated package which handles functions right from sales order stage to production, accounting and post-shipment. It is expected to be a great help to garment exporters.

Another software package to help exporters has been developed by Congruent Software Private Limited. Called EXIMS (Export Information Management Systems), this is to help handle export documentation exactly as per Government's new regulations. The software is designed from an exporter's point of view and accepts various information which can be fed in as a part of the business cycle. The package then generates the various export documents and, in addition, provides valuable management information, as well.

HEAVYWEIGHTS MAKE FOR FAIR WAGER

Investors and speculators are perpetually in search of a name that can yield quick gains. They search far and wide, from the beginning to the end of several magazines, and often their choice depends on how well an author can persuade. The names of some young companies look 'fresh as a daisy' — new, healthy and in good spirits. After a while, however, many of them get bogged down with red ink splattered all over their Balance Sheets. Then they fail to yield the promised price growth. The 'fortune makers' become perilous investments.

So, how does one prevent being led up the garden path by these? How can one find a way of coping with the difficult problem of getting a handle on the right name?

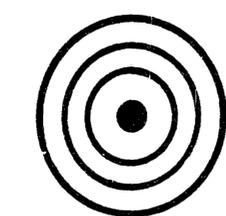
The answer is to get organised, plan systematically, work coherently and then get your act together. It is important

to find the underlying reason, or cause, for price growth. We have to get to the bottom of the phenomenon.

It is reasonably safe to say that, in this country, the performances of industry groups are cyclical and go through good times and bad ones. The first step is, therefore, to identify the right industry group. The one in which the prices of most candidates is going up, should be thought of as being good. Having done this identification, one or two names in the industry group need to be picked. The 'candidates' in the contest neatly fall into one of three categories.

The first are the heavyweights who are the industry leaders. Their prices are high, having been quoted in the exchange for many years. They often have an established track record and they do not spring surprises with their results. At the other end of the spectrum

are the young ones, the greenhorns that are full of promise. If they do well, then their profits are significant, but, then, they could fail. In between these two



categories are the laggards who have plodded along for many years in a mediocre manner. As for the heavyweights, everything that is worth knowing about them has been written

and analysed. The performance of these companies is well recorded and their management thoroughly tested. The shares of this segment are likely to rise steadily, and then growth will be impressive in boom times. The safe part of the investment is that the price of this class of shares will not get depressed steeply during the spells when the market does not remain buoyant.

The undernoted is a set of three names, containing a representation from each of the three classes referred to above.

SPARTEK (Current Market Price — Rs. 78/-): Engaged in the manufacture of ceramic tiles, the company has reported satisfactory results for March '91. The company is proposing to merge Spartek Granites with it to rationalise its operations. The rehabilitation package for Neyer, a company taken over by Spartek, is expected

shortly. The future outlook is hopeful and we expect Rs. 100/- for this share by the time of March '92 results. The share price movement also inspires confidence.

VANAVIL DYES (Current Market Price — Rs. 70/-): The performance of this company improved steadily after it was taken over by Colour-Chem in 1990. The company is engaged in the manufacture of dyestuffs, intermediates, chemicals and other by-products. The results for the half year ended Sept. '91 are satisfactory. The graph indicates that the share is now on reaction. Buy for a target of Rs. 100/-.

G.K. STEEL (Current Market Price — Rs. 25.60): Belonging to the G.K. Group of Coimbatore, this company is engaged in the manufacture of mild steel and special alloy steel billets. For the year ending March '91, the working of the company resulted in a loss of Rs. 2.39 crs. This is likely to be wiped out fully by the profits of 1992 and a maiden dividend is certain in 1993. The share is an excellent long-term buy at current prices.

K. Gopalakrishnan

Which wish do you want??

A Suzannechic or a Chicwich? Flip for our Kukku Flips. Or drool over crumb fried prawns, fish and chips and spring rolls. Come share a Pizzarosa with a friend. Or a Pizzasage, a Pizzaroni, a Cheesie Choose, or Hunter's pizza. Dig into a choice of burgers — Rich Harvest, Chikky Choky, Hamber. Icecreams, fizzy drinks, fun and frolic.

Suzanne
A Fast Food Place for your taste
Ceetros Arcade-Basement (opp Adyar Bus Terminus) Adyar, Madras
Time: 12.30 pm — 10 pm (Tuesday Holiday) Phone: 416473

Lanka's Kerala legacy?

(By S. Muthiah)

It was a rare coincidence. Within days of each other recently, I met two persons in the city who were convinced that Kerala had a greater influence on the Sinhala people than any other part of India.

Nirmala de Mel, out of Cambridge and into one of the leading travel businesses in Sri Lanka, was convinced that the Sinhalese of the maritime provinces had their roots in Kerala rather than in Kalinga (Orissa-Bihar) or Singhadesa (Gujarat-Rajasthan). Look at the way the Sinhalese used to dress before Westernisation took place in the last two decades, look at the food they eat, look at their dances and several of their rituals, look at their ayurvedic remedies and look at their temperament, they are all so remarkably akin to the Kerala experience, she said, returning from a trip to the west coast.

A few days later, I listened to K C Shankaranarayanan, former Chief Secretary of Kerala, speak on Kerala-Sri Lanka relations at the Madras University's Centre for South and South-East Asian Studies. And there the amateur but dedicated historian made reference to

An exit without 'citement

For some time to come the dropping of K Rajaram from the four-month-old Jayalalitha Ministry will be the subject matter for much discussion. It will, no doubt, then taper off after another surprise move by the Chief Minister.

No tears have been shed for Rajaram so far by partymen. Nor has there been a gnashing of teeth or any kindling of a dream in any partymen's heart. All this in spite of the fact that he was popular within and without his party.

Reasons given out for the Chief Minister's action are in the realm of guesses, where they will remain till she herself speaks out. Which is not likely to happen and, even if it does, there's no guarantee we will be any the wiser.

But what must be near the truth is the guess that the former Minister is an extrovert and not willing to be close-mouthed. A decided disadvantage, considering the different pulls in the Congress(), a close ally of AIADMK now. As a person who is not willing to give an inch of advantage, and strong-willed as she is, the Chief Minister had reason to feel irked by Rajaram's 'courtesy call' on the Prime Minister without her knowing about it beforehand. Or is she toying with the idea of filling her Cabinet with younger men?

Whatever the reason, Rajaram's exit will soon be a non-event.

RKK

— Sinhala worship of Pattini, the Kannagi of South India,
— the Kuruppus, 20,000 and more, in number, who are prominent in all walks of life in Sri Lanka and whose homes are on its west coast,
— the swamp paddy farming techniques of Kerala found in the Batticaloa area and the ways the Tamils there are quite different from the Tamils of the North,
— the Chaliyas, or weavers of Kerala, who switched from weaving to cinnamon peeling in Sri Lanka and remain a caste of that name in the island, and
— the great friendship the Chera kings had for the Sinhalese kings, the only Sinhala king to visit India as friend being Gajabahu I, who visited with the Chera Sengottuvan.

One other significant point that Shankaranarayanan made was that Buddhism was once a powerful influence as much in South India as in Sri Lanka. But there came a time when it was routed in India. At that time there must have been a great exchange of populations, when those from Kerala who remained staunch to Buddhism sought Sri Lanka and those on the island who sought Hinduism came to India. These were the Eelavar of Kerala, he pointed out.

Unfortunately I could not stay for the discussion that followed, but people like former Foreign Secretary K P S Menon, who knows Sri Lanka well as both child and man, and Professor Surayanarayan of the Centre were sure to have had much to say. I can only add that, during my many visits to both places, I've been over and over again struck by the similarity of the two regions, the resemblance of the people and their curiously akin manners.

Unfortunately I could not stay for the discussion that followed, but people like former Foreign Secretary K P S Menon, who knows Sri Lanka well as both child and man, and Professor Surayanarayan of the Centre were sure to have had much to say. I can only add that, during my many visits to both places, I've been over and over again struck by the similarity of the two regions, the resemblance of the people and their curiously akin manners.

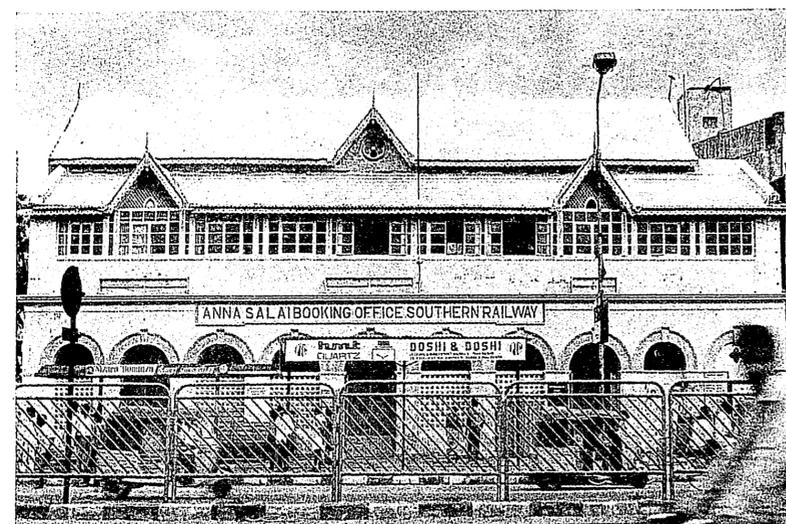
RBI fallout, Indian reprints

A positive fallout of the RBI curbs on imports is the increase in the number of Indian reprints of bestselling titles from abroad. The selection is rich in diversity, from Guyton's **Textbook of Medical Physiology** to management guru Mark McCormack's **Success Secrets** and on to the latest from Kundera, Marquez, Forsyth and Dick Francis.

Very few of us realise that many of these reprints are published in India, hardly a couple of months after the release of their hardcover editions abroad. Thus, American readers would now have to shell out \$22 for Sheldon's **Doomsday Conspiracy**, whereas we can pick up the local reprint for only Rs. 50!

Even if the curbs are lifted, the future clearly lies in deftly combining a promotion of Indian authorship with a judicious mix of reprints from abroad.

Getting down to this fortnight's releases, there's BBC correspondent Mark Tully's much reviewed **No Full Stops in India** (Viking, Rs. 250). From his 25 years' experience of India,



In the throes of a face-lift, at the time this photograph was taken, is the Anna Salai Booking Office and Guest House of the Southern Railway. Advertising Panels, latticed archways and the rather unimaginative signboard tend to detract from the nostalgic yesteryearliness of the architecture. However, the willingness to face-lift and not pull down are welcome signs of conservation-consciousness in at least one major Government organisation.

Can't the Railways, however, take this one step further and do a Bombay here? By really doing a thorough job of the facelift and spotlighting imaginatively till at least midnight, it could set an example to others who own buildings of another age on a stretch of road which could be developed as a model of urban conservation of the past. Part of that architecture of the past are the gables, the roof and the arches that separate the verandah from the road.

Just as the Railway office in Mount Road is dwarfed by high-rise, so is UTI House on First Line Beach, North Beach Road or Rajaji Salai, whichever pleases you. Unit Trust's regional office, built on the site of the former headquarters of Best & Crompton, echoes to a degree the older building, which, if memory serves one right, was rather typical of the British colonial commercial architecture of the pre-World War II years.

(Photographs by SUSHEELA NAIR)



Tully serves up a cocktail of stories that he hopes will illustrate the way Western thinking has distorted our lives. While it is difficult to accept many of Tully's contentions, the book is, no doubt, highly readable.

While Tully grapples with cultural imperialism, the Empire strikes back with Ivor Lewis's **Sahibs, Nabobs**

and **Boxwallahs** (OUP, Rs. 395). This is a dictionary devoted to India's contribution to the English language. Taking off from the classic **Hobson Jobson**, Lewis has attempted an update in which new words have been added and the changes in the meaning of several words have been noted.

After years of research in the field of sexual love, the eminent psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar turns his attention

to religion and mysticism. The centre-piece of **The Analyst and the Mystic** (Viking, Rs. 125) is a case study on the life of Sri Ramakrishna that promises to be both thought-provoking and controversial.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Milan Kundera are two literary giants who have a sizeable following in India. It is thus fitting that their latest novels have been reprinted here for the first time. In **The General in His Labyrinth** (PBI, Rs. 85) Marquez recreates the last days of South American hero Simon Bolivar. It is a gripping and horrifying portrait of a man trapped in a labyrinth of solitude, deserted by the people he once led and having lost all that he had fought for.

Over the years, Czech writer Milan Kundera has played around quite a bit with the structure and form of the novel, thus making his books almost impossible to describe. **Immortality** (Rupa, Rs. 65) can be variously interpreted as a work of fiction, a philosophical rumination and part autobiography.

In **The Deceiver** (IBD, Rs. 85), Frederick Forsyth uses the flashback technique to assess the failure and success of past escapades of the British secret service. Thus, the book is actually a string of stories woven into the framework of a novel. Videophiles might recognise some of these stories from the series **Frederick Forsyth presents** currently available with libraries.

Also in pop fiction, Colleen McCullough changes direction with **The First Man in Rome** (Avon, Rs. 171.60), a historical novel set in the times of the Roman Empire. This is the first in a series of projected historical novels by McCullough and has been universally acclaimed for the wealth of detail and for its vivid recreation of the past.

Finally, for those cricket lovers cheated of a domestic season, there's Dilip Doshi's memoirs, **Spin Punch** (Rupa, Rs. 50) in which he settles scores with the selectors and former luminaries of the game!

Gautam Padmanabhan

**MAKE
MINE
MADRAS**
Featuring
GUNDOO-MALLI
by
JOMTON



QUIZZIN' WITH NAVIN

Because of the continuing poor response to the Quiz, we have decided to discontinue the Prize Question from this fortnight. However, the repeated requests from readers on the grounds that the Quiz helps them to remember the important events in Madras and of our times has made us think twice about dropping this feature and so it continues.

Quizmaster **NAVIN JAYAKUMAR's** questions are all from the fortnight October 15 - 31 and the answers, as usual, appear on page 8. But before we get on to this week's questions,

WE REGRET: Question 11 in Quizzin' 14 (November 1-14) should have read "What caused the mysterious loss of consciousness of seven employees of State Bank of Mysore recently?" Due to an inadvertent typographical error, the two words "of consciousness" were omitted in print. We apologise to all concerned for the error. — EDITOR.

Now here are this week's question:

- What implements were being used by local *sthapathis* hired by the Commissioner of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department to 'clean' precious Chola bronzes and other art objects at the Thyagaraja temple at Thiruvur before shocked protests stopped them?
- Which UNESCO prize established in 1951 and given for exceptional contribution to efforts to popularise science was awarded this year to Dr. N. K. Sehgal of the Department of Science and Technology?
- In a stunning development in which SE Asian country did the Heng Samrin regime abandon socialism for liberal democracy, a multi-party system and human rights for all?
- Approximately how many cars formed the ever growing convoy which followed the TN Chief Minister during her recent mass contact programme on October 18 while on her way to inaugurate the new Quaid-e-Milleth district?
- How much money did the foreign exchange remittances scheme launched on October 1 net in its very first week?
- Why did the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation stress trees — 'Trees for life' — as the theme for this year's observance of World Food Day on October 16?
- In a letter to TN Chief Minister, the Pulikeshi Kannada Sangha said that the statue of Thiruvalluvar would be accepted in Bangalore only when a statue of the 'Kannada Thiruvalluvar' was installed in Madras on Mount Road. Who is this poet?
- Two questions on Madras Central Station now poised for an expansion and remodelling programme:
a) How many platforms did it have when it opened in 1873?
b) How many mail, express and passenger trains does it handle daily (not counting 130 suburban services)?
- Name the former J & K Tourism Minister who was kidnapped with her husband by the separatist Hizbullah outfit but dramatically rescued by the army, assisted by paramilitary and police forces?
- Which Zambian President's son, Kambarage, was recently sentenced to death by hanging by a Lusaka High Court judge for the murder of a woman two years ago?
- Why were Soframycin, Vonmycetin, Genticyn, Norfloxacin in the news?
- Which is the only Tamil film that has been selected for the Indian Panorama section at the International Film Festival of India 1992 to be held in Bangalore?
- Who received the Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration for 1990?
- Who is Myanmar's (Burma's) Opposition leader who has been named for this year's Nobel Peace Prize?
- What record did Kapil Dev achieve at Sharjah recently?
- Ms Jayalalitha recently announced that the proposed Institute of Vedic Sciences would help which section of society to become temple priests?
- Two questions about the recent earthquake in North India:
a) Around which town was the earthquake focussed, and
b) What was its energy equivalent in terms of atomic bombs of the Hiroshima type?
- Which American city was recently dedicated as the world's first "Sri Chinmoy Peace capital"?
- The fortnight ended on a historic note when West Asia peace talks began....where?
- Why would postmen, especially those in the city, be happy from November 17?

Here are the lucky winners and the correct answer to the Quiz-PRIZE WINNERS

1st Prize: B SARASWATHY, 28 Arunachalam IInd Street, Old Chetpet, Madras-600 030.
2nd Prize: T N KRISHNAMOORTHY, 5 Vth Main Road, R.A. Puram, Madras-600 028.
3rd Prize: SUDHA VAIDYANATHAN, 44 Kamdar Nagar, Nungambakkam, Madras-600 034.
ANSWER TO QUIZZIN'-14: Flamings

Inconsiderate's not the word!

At the risk of being lynched (which because of the validity of my thesis) I must say that the one trait that is common to all Indians is: total lack of consideration for the next person. We see this in every sphere of activity around us — traffic, bus and railway travel, processions, strikes — name it, we somehow manage to step on each other's toes, though we scream especially shrilly when it is our toes that get stepped on.

I came across a particularly serious example of the lack of consideration for one another recently. Outside the gate of a prominent physician's house, there is a deep open drainage vent, or whatever it is called, which is wide enough and deep enough to kill a small child, and to maim an adult, should they step into it. The physician made several appeals to the Corporation to have it closed, to no effect. He then decided he would put cement slabs, granite slabs, whatever, to cover the hole. The only result was that when he came out one morning to look at the drain, he saw that someone had stolen the cement or granite slabs!

That was on Santhome High Road. I live on, or off, Luz Church Road. Right where you would turn into my small avenue, there has been a Corporation drainage hole for the last several years. Naturally, the Corporation closed it with an ugly stone that sticks out about a foot above street-level. For some reason, the hole has now widened and there are more rocks in and around it. An automobile driver of any kind can probably avoid it because of his bright lights, but what about the innocent pedestrian?

As long as we are about it, what about the bright lights of automobiles at night? We are told that there are now regulations against them, but does any one of the drivers follow them? Whether you are a pedestrian, cyclist, or a comparatively slow-moving vehicle, you are just as disoriented as you can be by the lights, hoping against hope that you or your driver would somehow manage to avoid the path of the mastodon. Here I must add that I have no great sympathy for cyclists who do not use lamps at night. They deserve everything that might happen to them.

These gloomy thoughts occur to me particularly during the highly popular festival of Deepavali. Deepavali is, of course, a jolly festival, full of goodwill and so forth, but it is also a classic instance of an occasion when people are so busy enjoying themselves that nobody gives a damn for anyone else. It is the most raucous and potentially dangerous occasion (this year newspapers reported that over 30 residences

in Madras city were burnt down because of careless use of crackers). I would like to know how we celebrated Deepavali before the enterprising Chinese introduced us to firecrackers.



I am not a sad sack, and I am not against children enjoying themselves, but when adults get into the act, under the ostensible excuse of showing the children how to fire some of the more

deadly ones, that is too much. Each year the variety, and danger potential, of the crackers increase — this year, had something called 'The Scud', inspired of course by the Gulf War. I should also mention, mildly irrelevantly, that several of the Navaratri doll shows included a very realistic representation of Rajiv Gandhi being assassinated — a real tribute to our sensitivity and sensibility!

I dread the days before, during and after Deepavali, and I imagine many others do so too. If the merry-makers limited their rejoicing to their homes, it would not be too bad, though the unbearable noise will be all pervading. But the frolickers make even stepping outside your house as difficult, if not

(Continued on P8)

Relax 'N Resort

A Unit of RR Group

The Hill resort in Kodaikanal — Yours on attractive time-share basis!

★ Designed and Constructed by the promoters of RR flats and Raju Estates, backed by over 25 years building experience.

★ Ideally located: opposite Presentation Convent, Kodai.

★ 8 APARTMENTS ONLY: Fully furnished 2-bedrooms with attached baths, living cum dining plus modern kitchen with every thoughtful comfort provided for!

Booking ON already: Apartments can be inspected immediately. Occupation commences Jan. '92.

Time share payment:

Peak Season: April — June and Aug. — Sep., Rs. 30,000 for every 5 day slot (one time payment)

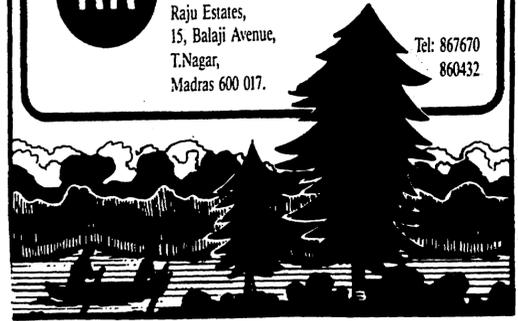
Other months: Rs. 20,000 for every 5 day slot.

Concessional rates for alternate year occupation only. Other attractive options, joint ownership and instalment payments also offered.

For detailed brochure and all further particulars, contact:

RR RELAX 'N RESORTS
(A Unit of RR Group)
Raju Estates,
15, Balaji Avenue,
T.Nagar,
Madras 600 017.

Tel: 867670
866432



Cleanliness makes the difference

What makes SARAVANA BHAVAN so different from the run-of-the-mill, middle-level, 'Udipi-style' restaurants that are legion in the City? There is the usual division between the over-crowded plebeian section on the ground floor and the darkened, hushed air-conditioned interior upstairs (where you pay the additional 15% surcharge on all the items). The dishes, too, are familiar — from the two-foot long butter *masala dosais* and the "Chapati chops" (which comprises a slightly greasy *paratta*, 'gopi' curry and *raita*), an array of biryanis and vegetable curries, South Indian 'shakes' and a range of ice-creams, including 'figan honey', for dessert. Yet you sense a perceptible difference when you visit SARAVANA BHAVAN — in the smaller details, which are apt to be missed by the mere novice.

To begin with, the wash-basins are spotless, the drains, mercifully unclogged, the soaps look like soaps, instead of the usual gooey mess, and the hand-

towels are clean. Furthermore, the boys who clear the tables are neatly dressed and patiently wait for you to finish your meal before cleaning up with a stain-free piece of cloth rolled up like a bandage, which they hold to support colourful plastic trays in which used plates are piled. Such

FOODS & FADS

a refreshing change from the usual army of ragamuffins, in other restaurants, who grab your half-eaten plates and deftly add to the mess on your table with their smelly dishtowels!

The person who is responsible for making SARAVANA BHAVAN, — which has six branches in the city — a veritable haven for the fastidious office-goer, shopping *maami* or even the entire family is the owner, Rajagopal, who started out as a cleaning boy himself. Hence his special interest in these adolescents, whom he looks after and boards in his dormitories. So obsessed is Rajagopal with the

concept of cleanliness that he took his senior staff on a business tour of Singapore restaurants some time ago, in order to study ways and means of improving standards in his own establishment. Now give me one good reason why posher eating-places in town shouldn't follow his example?

(For those who are interested, SARAVANA BHAVAN also undertakes catering for weddings and other special occasions).

Flourishing plants

Have you ever wondered why some people's indoor plants seem to flourish whereas your own just wilt and die at the mere touch of your hand? Well, it's time to stop worrying and let GREEN THUMB (situated in Teynampet, near the Gemini flyover) take care of the problem.

There are a few shops for artificial plants and flowers in the city, but GREEN THUMB's products seem more real-looking than most. Here, you will find some spectacular bunches of roses, peonies, chrysanthemums, carnations and babies breath — all made of silk and very realistic. Of special note are their different kinds of caladium, schefflera, bamboo, rubber plants, dracaena, ficus and a host of trailing ivy, ferns, spider plants, wandering jew, as well as little bonsai plants of every conceivable shape and size.

All the leaves and stalks are detachable, so you may mix and match according to your whim. If you wish, someone from GREEN THUMB will come to your residence or place of work, in order to help you with the decor.

This shop also has a variety of lovely terracotta pots — some locally produced and others made in Rajasthan.

Prices, incidentally, vary between Rs. 50 and Rs. 600, depending on whether the plants are locally made or imported. So, taking into consideration how close you wish to be to reality, take your pick!

V.K.



The cool showers herald the arrival of a variety of fresh, green vegetables. It's time to entertain! Start with four appetising *hors d'oeuvres*. You might have to spend a little more time in the kitchen, but, believe me, it's well worth the effort.

PRAWNS ON TOAST

Ingredients

200 gms prawns
1 small onion, diced
1 tbs cornflour
1 teaspoon chilli-*dhania* powder
½ teaspoon *haldi*
½ teacup milk
1 small loaf bread
Oil for frying
Coriander leaves
Grated cheese

Method

Shell and clean prawns. Boil with a little *haldi*, chilli powder, and salt. If prawns are large, cut into small pieces. Fry diced onions in a little oil and, when transparent, add prawns and fry for 2 minutes. Add cornflour, fry lightly and add milk. Stir fry till thick. Add chopped coriander.

Slice bread, cut off crusts. Cut each slice into four or, using biscuit cutter, cut each slice into two rounds. Toast lightly in oven.

Heap prawn mixture on toast pieces. Sprinkle grated cheese on top. Add a few drops of tomato ketchup, and place under the grill for a few minutes till cheese melts. Serve hot.

NOTE: For Vegetarians

Prawns can be substituted with chopped mushrooms or cauliflower. Method is exactly the same.

Sabita Radhakrishna

BORI SAMOSAS

400 grams potatoes, boiled, peeled and cubed
¼ cup shelled peas
1 teaspoon cummin seeds, roasted dry and powdered
1 teaspoon chilli powder
½ teaspoon asafoetida powder
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
1½ teaspoon *amchoor*
1 green chilli, chopped fine
1 tablespoon oil
Salt to taste

A small bunch coriander leaves, chopped fine
1 tbs flour mixed with 3 tbs of water, used for sealing the samosa.

Method

Heat oil, add peas, turmeric, chilli, asafoetida powder and salt.

Cook till peas are tender. Add the potatoes. Sprinkle the cummin seeds powder and a tablespoon of water. Cook till everything blends well. Finally add the coriander leaves and the green chilli. Mix well and set aside.

For the Samosa Crust

2 cups *maida*
2 teaspoons ghee
Salt to taste
Oil for deep frying

Mix salt and the ghee to the flour. Add sufficient water to make a soft dough.

Divide the dough into equal sized balls.

Roll each into a small disc. Spread little oil evenly on one side of the disc and sprinkle a little *maida*. Set aside.

Make two more discs. Similarly spread oil and sprinkle *maida*. Pile the three discs one on top of the other, greased side up, except the last one.

Roll into a flat round *chapatti*. Heat a *tawa* and roast the *chapatti* on both sides. Remove and cover with a damp cloth and slowly separate the three layers.

Cut the discs into semi-circular halves. Fold over to make a cone. Fill the cone with the filling. Seal the samosa with the flour paste.

Heat oil and fry the samosas till crisp and golden.

Since the samosa crust is partially cooked, these samosas are less oily. They make delicious starters.

MATTAR KA KACHORI

Filling

1½ cups shelled peas, boiled & mashed
1 green chilli, chopped fine
1 teaspoon cummin seeds
¼ teaspoon asafoetida powder
½ teaspoon chilli powder
½ teaspoon *garam masala*
2 teaspoons ghee
Salt to taste
Oil for deep frying

Dough

2½ cups *maida*
2 teaspoons ghee
Salt to taste

Method

Heat ghee. Add cummin seeds and when they splutter add the mashed peas, salt, chopped green chilli, chilli powder, asafoetida powder and *garam masala*.

Stir well till well blended. Set aside. Sieve the flour, add salt, ghee and sufficient water and knead to a soft dough. Divide into equal balls.

Flatten and roll into 4-inch rounds. Spread a little filling on one half of the rounds. Fold over to form a semi-circular *kachori*. Seal the edges.

Fry in oil till crisp and golden. Drain on an absorbent paper and serve hot.

BANANA KOFTAS

2 raw green bananas
2 green chillies, chopped fine
1 small onion, chopped fine
1 tbs *maida*
1 small bunch coriander leaves, chopped fine

Salt to taste
Oil for deep frying

Method

Boil the bananas, peel and mash. Add the chopped chillies, onion, salt, *maida* and the coriander leaves. Divide the mixture equally into small balls and flatten.

Heat oil in a saucpan and fry the *koftas* till crisp and golden.

Drain and serve hot.

Chandra Padmanabhan

Entertaining — and being entertained

Viewing a programme from the wings... the tension backstage, the uncertainty, the thrill of seeing the flushed faces as they exit into the wings from the stage... it's really an experience. From there, too, I could hear the squeals of laughter from the children as a group of American students dramatized four stories from around the world for the children of Balaramandir who had been specially invited by the students of dramatic arts of the 'Semester at Sea'.

Their ship, the S.S. *Universe*, 'the floating university', was in Madras from October 26 to 30. Many students took a flight to see the Taj Mahal in Agra, but most just roamed the streets of Madras, hearing, smelling and looking at the city. They were also quite a few academic programmes planned for them and the theatre afternoon was one.

The American students came equipped with colourful props for their story-dramas as well as with balloons and peppermints for the children. They created a riot of colour and sound on

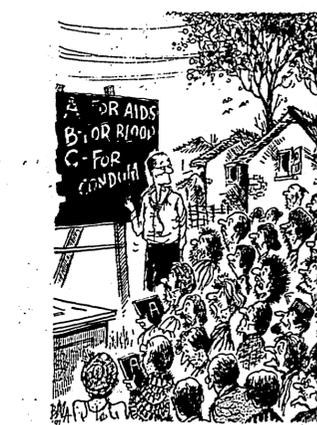
stage and dramatized with such informality and entertained with such elan that there just was no need for me to translate the stories into Tamil. The children just loved every moment of it.

From our side, there was the beautiful Devarattam by a group of villagers who had come from near Tirunelveli. This abstract dance form, which is community activity of the Kambala Naicker community in Tamil Nadu, is fascinating in its employment of simple rhythms, graceful movements

THE VIEW FROM THE WINGS



and perfect coordination. A short performance of Therukoolhu followed, with Purisai Sambandan playing *Hiranyakashipu* powerfully. The group masterfully fitted the story, usually performed for over eight hours, into just 30 minutes, yet they completely



These delightful cartoons are part of a series of brilliant anti-AIDS posters brought out by the South India AIDS Action Programme, Madras.

grabbed the attention of the Tamil-speaking people in the audience. For the Americans it did not matter if they could not understand every word spoken, they were just fascinated by the sheer exuberance.

An *avante garde* presentation of an episode from the *Mahabharatha* was the next item. The Koolhupattarai group narrated the burning of the forest Khandavavana in an innovative production. All the actors wore the pancake make-up mask generally used

The episode describes how a forest was burnt to create a city and how the burning of it enabled the acquisition of a lethal weapon. The play poses questions on the wisdom of the act. In the true Muthuswamy tradition, the play is impossibly intellectual but visually fascinating. The presentation

Electronic Elysium

I know exactly how it must feel to go to heaven.

First there is the sound of heavenly music, the clouds begin to part and the horizon fills with golden light as a disembodied female voice sings, "This is the Chola Sheraton... This line is engaged... Will you wait a moment please?... then more heavenly music. I imagine a whole line of angels standing on an ascending staircase singing in chorus. "We endeavour to give you service." At this point a cold sweat breaks over me as I wonder, "Will they accept credit cards in heaven?" I am back on earth holding a telephone and grinding my teeth.

Have you noticed how on every side we are being assaulted by these infernal electronic devices?

You go to the Woodland's open air restaurant in the early morning, or the Marina Beach late at night, or just outside your door any time of the day, and a high pitched Japanese voice, heavily overlaid with an American accent that is both ingratiating and officious at the same time, announces, "Attention please, this car is RE-ver-Sing... Attention please..." followed by the *Blue Danube*.

The other day, in the midst of the office rush-hour traffic, all the cars pulled to the left as the frenetic whine of an ambulance horn warned us of an emergency. We could also see the restless blink of a revolving red light on top of the vehicle. It was only after it had passed all of us and the traffic lights that we realised that it was an ordinary vehicle with a single occupant who had installed the device in his vehicle.

On top of this there is the actual choice of music that is enough to make the entire population homicidal. Though we are given to understand that the idea of piped music, or Muzak as it is known, is to soothe people's nerves,



reduce blood pressure, activate the positive brain waves, increase milk production amongst the bovine population and so on, the opposite seems to happen. What do you do for in-

stances when, in the middle of a hot July afternoon, you call somebody on the phone and the instrument plays endless rounds of *Jingle Bells* followed by *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*...



Banks believe that Muzak means more business and so do certain hotels who play it in their lobbies and bathrooms. The most pervasive use of the device is by the airlines. At the best of

It makes anxious passengers immediately think of breakfast. Is it going to be cold or hot, will it be grey-white idlis smelling of damp towels or plastic textured omelettes served with buttons - mushrooms. This train of thought immediately leads to the fidgets in a number of passengers who press their overhead buttons and ask for water. It's amazing how Indian passengers want to be given water the moment they enter an airplane. Psycho-

logists might tell you that it's because Indian babies have been traditionally breastfed on demand and that air-hostesses represent mother figures, but my theory is it's the anxiety induced by the Muzak.

The worst torture is when the flight is delayed due to the non-appearance of one passenger who is sitting in the Airport toilet, while the rest of the passengers wait and the flight attendants walk up and down counting heads. These are the moments deemed suitable for torture by music. The intestinal sounds that are meant to last for five minutes, at the very most, are played again and again. It's made me realise that, should there ever be an emergency, the last thing that everyone will hear is the sound of Ananda Shankar or his ilk, twanging away all the way to heaven. Since the policy of Indian Airlines seems to be, When in doubt, turn on the Muzak.

Even condemned criminals are given a choice of what they would like to enjoy during their last moments. It seems only fair that all of us who travel by air should be given a choice of music should the worst situation arise. Each passenger could then put on a separate headphone and listen to whatever channel of music is congenial: it could be Eastern, Western, pop, religious, vocal, instrumental, pre-lunch intestinal, post-lunch analgesic and so forth.

I for one know exactly what I would like: the sound of my new Yoga master chanting in the sonorous voice that he uses when he is trying to send us into a *Shavasana* state. He speaks in English, but he does it in the most impressive manner, slowly and melodiously, "Re-jaax toes, Re-jaax ankles, Re-jaax thighs, RE-jaax but-tocks!" and so forth all the way to heaven. What a way to go!



I've got my own blades, Saar. Can't take a chance nowadays.

created a lot of interest in the American students who couldn't stop asking questions about it.

The group of drama students are a part of a student group on a 100-day, round-the-world voyage that's part of their undergraduate and graduate education. Their ship is affiliated to the University of Pittsburgh, but students from all over the world are eligible to apply for the voyage. Fifty days are spent at sea and regular classes held on board. Fifty days are also spent on land, in the ports of call, where the students get the experience of interacting with the local people. They gain a lifetime of memories as well as much experience of the world. Madras is familiar with the ship, which calls here at the end of every March, on its spring voyage, and at the end of every October on its autumn, or, as the Americans say, fall, voyage. Sometimes it calls at Bombay also.

Charming dancers

Some of the American students were seen at the Bharatha Natyam festival organised by the Fine Arts Foundation India at the Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan in Mylapore. Sunanda Vijayaraghavari was the dancer and she charmed them all.

Sunanda, who looks frail and dainty, is also a good Carnatic vocalist. She is an intelligent dancer and her movements are tidy. She should, however, work on her *Abhinaya* more.

At the same festival, Srilatha Rajamani from New Delhi sparkled with quicksilver movements and a lively expression. Her teacher seems to have taken a little bit from every style of Bharatha Natyam and Srilatha had imbibed it all.

Cartoon aids

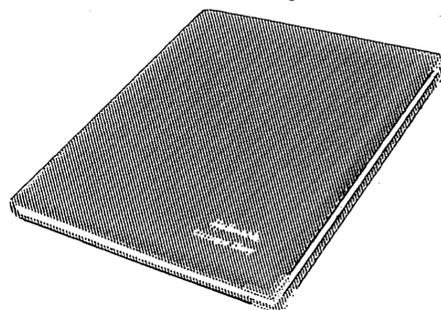
December one is World AIDS Day. Several programmes are planned in the city to mark the day. The South India AIDS Action Programme, Madras, which has been using traditional artforms to convey the sensitive information about AIDS, is planning a 'fun-and-safety' carnival to talk about AIDS prevention. The message being put across is that proper condom use during sexual intercourse is the only way to prevent infection. There are many interesting stalls being talked about, so let's wait and see what transpires on November 30.

The South India AIDS Action Programme has produced some interesting cartoons and calendars to disseminate the essential but important facts about the spread of the disease. The least risqué cartoons of the lot are presented here.

If you don't get to see the carnival, we will tell you all about it and AIDS in our next issue.

V R Devika

Nobody wants an ordinary diary these days



So we've created a classic for you

Hallmark

C•L•A•S•S•I•Q•U•E DIARIES

The ordinary is so mundane. So predictable. What catches the eye, is an extraordinary creation.

When rich burgundy or black leather protect the finest paper with exquisite printing, you will call it the creation of a masterpiece. The extraordinary, the choice of those with a distinguished taste. Yours?

Set aside the ordinary. Reach for the extraordinary. Reach for Hallmark Classique Diaries!

HALLMARK PRINTERS (P) LTD

27, Westcott Road, MADRAS 600 014 Tel: 831099
Admn. Office: 62/63 Greams Road, MADRAS 600 006
Tel: 478153/471332/477945

Not by guns alone

The country that gave us the endless twists and turns of the Bolors Saga is now approaching us with the spirit of art and humanity.

The Lalit Kala Akademi at Madras is the venue for an exhibition of art and sculpture from Sweden. The show, entitled "Invocation", displays the work of both artists and sculptors who are now in their prime.

The sculpture (seen at a preview) is sometimes austere and elegiac, as in the smooth white, tree-like forms of Eva Lange, who works in the minimalist idiom; or it is celebratory, like the iconic pieces of Carl Magnus that hang like an invocation to pure form. Jan Halstrom creates boxes from which you can glimpse the contorted, forms of trees.

The artists are more flamboyant. Lena Cronqvist's work is figurative, but ever so cool and precise in conveying her message, while Tamara Malmestrom, who has lived in Cholamandal

for some time, weaves a richly textured tapestry of relationships. Felix Gmelin, the youngest amongst them, seems to have produced the most classical looking work of all, a series of still lifes.

Dr. Elizabeth Liden, the curator for the show, explains that the works were chosen for their universal humanistic quality. "You don't need a key to understand any of these works. Anyone can look at the paintings and enter the spirit of worship and sensitivity that you may find in them."

Swedish sculptor Eva Lange is in Madras for the exhibition and for a look at the local art scene. Her visit reciprocates a visit by an artist from Madras, Murlidharan, who went to Sweden during the Festival of India in '87-'88.

The Exhibition has been organised by the Swedish Institute, the Department of Culture, Government of India, and the Lalit Kala Akademi.

Geeta Doctor

Some appreciation of a champion

(By The Corner Flag)

For the past few weeks *Madras Musings* had been recording that much talent in the city and state has gone unhonoured and unsung. It's therefore nice to record that Indian Airlines, for all its faults, continues to do much in the cause of lesser sport.

The latest to be appreciated by the airlines is 34-year-old carrom wizard Maria Irudayam. Even before the world championships, Indian Airlines had grabbed Irudayam, until then a lowly Customs clerk, as well as four other carrom players and offered them more lucrative employment than they were in. It is to be hoped that Irudayam's world championship would have earned him the Traffic Officer's post it is believed he was promised, if he won the world title.

Irudayam, Tamil Nadu champion from 1981 and with five national singles titles, began playing carrom when he was 14. It was not long after this that he was spotted by Raja Bather, the coach of the Indian team these past 20 years. Raja Bather, now 76 and described as the 'Grand Old Man of Indian Carrom', soon became Irudayam's personal coach. That coaching has now paid off with a world title; whatever else happens in the world of carrom, Maria Irudayam will always be remembered as the sport's first world champion.

That much is likely to change in that world in the future is something Bather is fairly certain about. He recently sounded a warning about European growth in the game. "Watch out for their advanced technology," he warned. "They will go to the computer and come up with better ideas. We may not be able to match them because we don't have the funds."

How long more, then, Indian domination of the growing world of carrom?

The return of Srikanth

The second phase of the Indian cricketers' most crowded, but richest-ever, assignment is now on in Australia. No Indian team has ever before been engaged in such a long and arduous tour as the one Mohammed Azharuddin and his side have just begun. They are virtually the same squad that had, less than a month ago, lost to Pakistan in the Sharjah final. They would not have sweated in vain. Thanks to sponsors and tour conditions, they will all be richer by about a lakh of rupees each by the time they return.

How the team will stand the strain of a four-month, five-Test Australian tour, a three-team one-day series and the World Cup soon afterwards, is anyone's guess. The two stock bowlers, veteran Kapil Dev and Manoj Prabhakar, for instance, face a herculean task. For, with the recall of Dilip Vengsarkar and Krishnamachari Srikanth, which was fully expected, the team is packed with batsmen, and

inadequately equipped in bowling. The line-up indeed throws a heavy burden on Kapil and Prabhakar. Well as Azharuddin, Vengsarkar and other established batsmen may play their role, the fitness and effectiveness of the two main speedsters will have a big bearing on the outcome of the tour.

It is perhaps churlish at this stage to pick holes in the deliberations of the selection committee, headed by Naren

by
JAICI

Tamhane. Opinions of course differ on the sacking of left-hand bat Vinod Kambli, who was not long ago hailed the find of the year, opener W.V. Raman and leg-spinner Anil Kumble. But Tamhane cut a sorry figure when trying to justify the recall of Vengsarkar and Srikanth. Indeed, he did a somersault by stating that the two "were never on trial and had proved themselves". Only a month earlier, commenting on the omission of Srikanth from the list of probables for Sharjah, he had surprised everybody by stating that Srikanth was not considered because of his "unimpressive form"! When, then, did he prove different?

The truth is skipper Azharuddin wanted both Vengsarkar and Srikanth

back, and Tamhane and company caved in. Vengsarkar would have come in, in spite of Tamhane, for the country has not a more dependable run-getter.

If there was any lingering doubt about Srikanth's return, it virtually went up in smoke when Azharuddin, questioned on the Tamil Nadu opener's comeback chances on the day of his return to Hyderabad from Sharjah, said the team (to Australia) had not yet been selected. The India skipper followed up his plea for Srikanth's recall by telling an interviewer two days before the selection committee meeting that for a long and arduous tour experienced cricketers like Srikanth and Vengsarkar were needed. Azharuddin went one step further by stating that, apart from being a dashing opener, Srikanth was a smart fielder and, as such, could be a real asset to the tourists. This was nothing short of a pointed request to the selectors.

Srikanth, who had fallen from grace after his India team's poor show in the 1989 tour of Pakistan, was understandably thrilled. "God has not let me down," said the devout Srikanth when informed (if he had not already known it) of his recall. But God will not forgive the opener-cum-off-break bowler if he does not make every effort to justify His blessings.

A clean sweep not far off

The day may not be far off when M.A.M. Ramaswamy, the country's leading owner, and the record-breaking trainer of Ramaswamy's record number of horses, Robert Foley, combine to add to the numerous records they have set at Guindy and Ooty by making a **clean sweep** of a six or seven-event card. The first meeting of the current Guindy season on November 2 gave a clear pointer to such a possibility, for Foley led in five of the six winners, all five having won in Ramaswamy's famed gold and brown belt colours.

The Foley-trained *Crozet*, an Ooty flop, returned to form with a bang, as it were, to emerge as Ramaswamy's lone winner at the second meeting. The mare helped Foley complete a treble and set a hot pace at the top of the trainers' table with no less than eight winners from 12 races, a tally that may help him improve upon his Indian record of a century of winners which he set at Guindy last season. It cannot be beyond him, considering the blood-

line of the vast majority of the horses under his care, especially of the two-year-olds awaiting their 'baptism' and, more importantly, the keen and lively interest Ramaswamy takes in the welfare of the high-power establishment he has entrusted to his youthful trainer.

A dedicated owner who goes to Guindy even on the coldest of mornings

by
AJAX

to watch and study his horses at work, Ramaswamy may now truly be called the country's lone owner-cum-trainer. Seated in the Stewards' sofa, Ramaswamy doubles up to the paddock the moment Foley has brought his runners in for the parade. As the parade goes on, the exceptionally knowledgeable owner, with Foley standing close by, instructs his establishment riders, at times as many as five in a race, in the manner of a seasoned professional. The riders listen to him with the utmost respect. After getting their instructions, they all bow to him before Foley helps them mount their runners.

Back in the Stewards' sofa after the parade, Ramaswamy deals tactfully with the touts seeking 'information' until he goes to the weighing-room to watch on TV the running of every one of his horses. Whether or not the touts are disillusioned, shrewd observers have not infrequently picked winners from the parade scene and the owner-cum-trainer's final instructions. This was evident from the monumental support *Crozet* got, though she had run unplaced in all her ten Ooty outings. She justified her red-hot favouritism by hacking her rivals and earning promotion.

The season had a good and promising start indeed. Favourites, all from

Foley's stable, won the vast majority of the races at the first two meetings, and outsiders like *Collector* and *Golden World* did well to underscore the uncertainties of the sport of kings and the fact that there could be no one-way traffic. Some of the finishes earned the Handicapper well-deserved praise, which also went out in ample measure to the commentator, always at his best when dealing with tight finishes, like the one *Collector*, *Turf Dancer* and *Conjurer* fought out in front of the stands. But his comment on the going for the second meeting made many raise their eyebrows. According to him, conditions were "good". But the 1,600 metres times of a Class III winner and a Class IV winner, 1 min. 50.6 secs. and 1 min. 51.4 secs, respectively, tell a different tale.

Inconsiderateness...

(Continued from P5)

dangerous, as possible. When juvenile delinquents use the road for firing their crackers — obviously wanting a wider area for fulfilment of their sense of aggrandisement — and, frequently, throwing them in front of passing vehicles, the only thought you get is that you'd like to thrash the little blighters so that they will remember it until the next Deepavali. Incidentally, to the best of my knowledge, India is one of the few countries where you can buy fireworks and crackers across the counter. Elsewhere, in most civilised countries, fireworks are a community activity, to celebrate an anniversary or

a similar occasion, when people get together in a common place and have a big blast. Madras has the Marina, the Island Ground, the Periyar Thidal, and a number of suitable places where everyone can have a good show and be done with it.

Now that I have so eloquently condemned the unconfined use of firecrackers in our country, people will of course stop using them from the next year. The evening and the morning will be full of the gentle rustle of silks, redolent of perfume, totally relieved of noise and the smell of sulphur. Fat chance.

S.K.

ANSWERS TO QUIZZIN'

- Knives, hacksaw blades, screwdrivers and many sizes of sharp-pointed chisels.
- Kalinga Prize.
- Cambodia.
- 750 to 1000!
- Over Rs. 800 crore! The scheme will be on till Nov.30.
- Because deforestation leads to soil erosion and contributes to the loss of arable land.
- Sarvagna 8. a) 4; b) 60.
- Mrs Khemlata and Dr O N Wakhloo 10. Dr Kenneth Kaunda.
- These eye drops were in short supply as people in hundreds bought them to combat the 'Madras Eye' epidemic in Madras and stocks had to be airlifted from Bombay.
- Marupakkam.
- Rajiv Gandhi posthumously 14. Mrs Aung San Suu Kyi 15. First ever bowler to take 200 wickets in one day Internationals.
- Adi Dravidars.
- a) Almora, b) 30.
- Albany, capital of New York State 19. Madrid.
- Because the Postal Department has ordered all multistorey buildings to provide letter boxes on the ground floor so that postmen do not have to climb stairs to deliver letters.

POSITIVELY BETTER!

When it comes to processing and proofing for advertising and printing requirements, more and more ad agencies and printers have discovered that we are positively better.



RAPID SCAN SYSTEMS

27, SRIPURAM FIRST STREET, (NEAR AJANTHA HOTEL),
ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS-600 014. PH: 860597/861235

RESOLUTIONS/168/91