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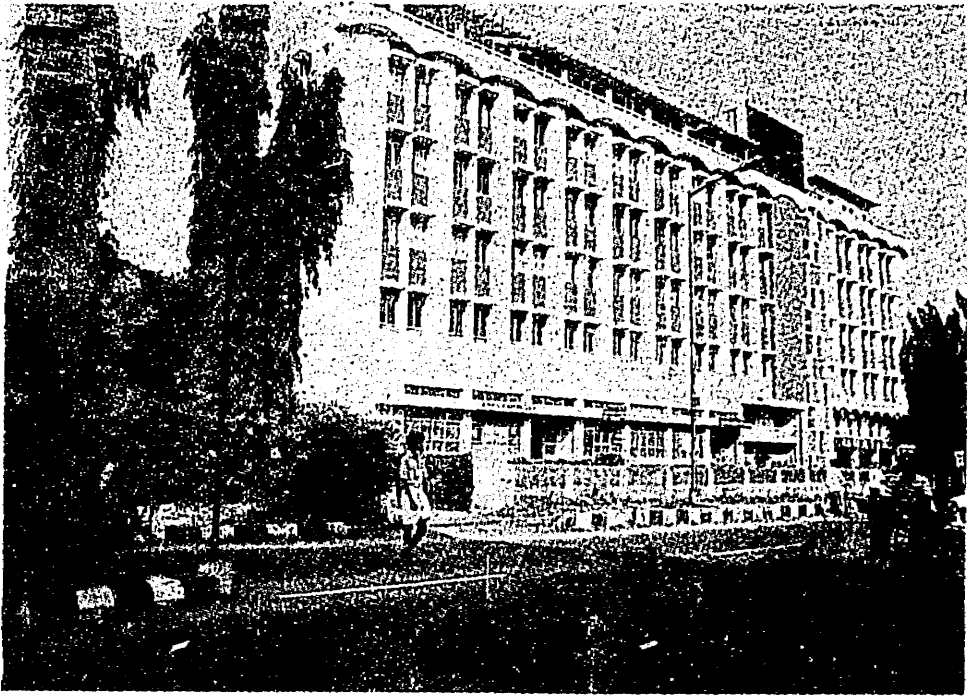
ADDISON METAL CUTTING TOOLS

MUSINGS

Vol. I. No. 19

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

January 15 — 31, 1992



The multi-storey World University Service Centre building on Spur Tank Road, looking rather better in the photographer's eye than in real life. The rather ill-kept cafeteria is entered through the open door of the building seen on its left. (Photograph: SUSHEELA NAIR)

University Centre

A cause for concern

(By A Staff Reporter)

The multi-storey World University Service Centre on Spur Tank Road in Egmore, home to many students from out of town and abroad, is causing concern to several persons concerned with student welfare. A memorandum has, consequently, been submitted by these persons to the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University to appoint an Enquiry Committee to go into the functioning of the WUSC, which is at present run by an Executive Committee.

Whatever the background to this dissatisfaction and the present demand, there is no getting away from the fact that there are many areas in which the Centre is found wanting. A visit to it would convince any visitor that its

rooms are ill-maintained, its toilets are filthy, its auditorium, conference hall and library are all in need of much greater care and that its cafeteria is nowhere near what it should be. In fact, those responsible for the running of the Centre should be most ashamed of the state in which it is; really, they should be shouting the loudest to get the help needed to improve things.

But then, it is not surprising that they are not doing so. After all, from the leadership down, few in Madras, or Tamil Nadu for that matter, are concerned with defacement and defilement of public property or with matters hygienic. Will that ever change?

And the next....

Free issue, footwear

(By A Special Correspondent)

Free footwear for schoolchildren is likely to be the Tamil Nadu Government's next do-gooding activity. This was announced recently in Dindigul by Rural Industries Minister Asif Mohammed.

The Minister said that the state government would distribute Rs. 5.15 crores worth of footwear to students in classes up to Standard 8.

The Noon-Meal Scheme, despite all the controversy it generated, was understandable. It may have been a populist measure, but it has got more children going to school.

The Footwear Scheme could hardly qualify for approval on the same grounds. Can it, then, be approved on any other grounds than the fact that it gives the have-nots something they don't have? With footwear, how much better off will these children be? Is health, even foot-health, likely to be improved?

Whatever the answers to such questions, it is to be hoped that in the enthusiasm to give away something to the poorer sections of society, these children are not burdened with shoes. For children who've all their lives run free while unshod, slippers will be bad enough. Shoes will be sheer restriction; pedicurists might even see in them harm to the feet.



PER ARDUA, AD ASTRA....

The number of greeting cards The Editor, Madras Musings received was not only a welcome surprise, but it appeared an indicator that this fortnightly has several well-wishers out there among the millions in the City. The Editor's only hope is that all that goodwill will get translated into advertising in 1992 to keep this 'free mailer' afloat. For the life of him he still hasn't been able to figure out why, if it is viable in other parts of the world, it can't be made so in a reasonably forward-looking and prosperous city like ours.

But to get back to less mercenary subjects. Thank you all for your good wishes and The Editor reciprocates them with this reproduction of the most moving card he received. Below what seemed like a scraper-board drawing were the words:

Little girls are just like little boys. The laugh, they cry, they grow up And reach out to touch the stars...

THE EDITOR

MANALI RAMAN...

IN MAD, MAD MADRAS

Standard Motors opens to news of fuel price rise

(By A Staff Reporter)

Standard Motors will open its doors on January 24th after nearly three years of closure — and has to plan for the future against the background of news announced just a few weeks earlier that petrol prices had been increased the highest in the country in Tamil Nadu and diesel prices the second highest.

With the automobile industry already in a slump, what these new prices are going to do for Standard Motors' plans is a matter for intense speculation in industrial circles. However, the plans for a slow start, of six Light Commercial Vehicles a day

in the first year, are unlikely to be affected much. The question will be what will happen in the second year when 6000 vehicles are targeted to be produced. Will the State keep its promise of buying 1000 vehicles a year?

Meanwhile, as the factory gets cleaned up and gears itself for production, a clearer picture has emerged of the financial inputs from which the company is likely to benefit. Chairman A.C. Muthia is to pump in Rs. 6.03 crore, while the Tamil Nadu Government has promised to loan Rs. 3.02 crore to help make the Rs. 5.5 crore 'golden handshake' easier

as the firm begins cutting down its 3000-strong work force over the next couple of years. The institutions, it is reported, plan to put in Rs. 15.69 crores and the banks Rs. 5.54 crores to rehabilitate the company. Term loans from new banks are expected to bridge the deficit in the Rs. 34.26 crore rehabilitation package that has been drawn up.

There are about 50,000 Standard-20 LCVs plying in the South today and sticking with the model is to stick with one of the most successful Standard models. However, the company plans to invest Rs. 5 crore in

(Continued on P7)



Dustagiri Sahib's Durgah, Madras.

Whose durgah?

Lieutenant General SK Pillai, PVSM, Director General Infantry, General Staff Branch Army Headquarters, DHQ PO, New Delhi-110 001 writes:

This is a photocopy of a durgah (seen in picture above) in Madras about which very little is known. One of the legends is that Dustagiri Sahib was an Englishman converted to Islam. Could you ferret out the history of this monument and confirm if the 'English-connection' has validity?

There's bound to be someone who is keen on this sort of thing and who could help.

EDITOR'S NOTE: No one at Madras Musings has seen, leave alone heard of, this durgah. But is there a reader (or readers) who could help?

Plea for help

I refer to Madras Musings' write-up about the Madras Literary Society in your issue December 15-31. Though there is cause for deep concern, it may be unfair to say that the Madras Literary Society "has none to care for it".

Vigorous efforts are being made to save the collection — it is a gigantic task, needing time, money, effort and, above all, technical help to repair the books. The "gloomy"

MADRAS MUSINGS

SMALLS

ASVAMETHA presents Tom Coles' adaptation of Nikolai Gogol's "DEAD SOULS". Feb 2 — 4th-Museum Theatre. Feb 7th-Music Academy.

Tickets: Rs. 75, 40/-, 20/-, from Jan 20th at Side Effects, Mrs. Belgamvallas, Nungambakkam High Road; Maharajas, Besant Nagar; Witco, Anna Nagar.

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Back to Turkey

Forty tonnes of dried grapes, lying in Madras Harbour from December 1990, will have to be shipped back to Turkey by the State Trading Corporation, and the money received by it for them returned to the Thirumala Thirupathi Devasthanam, according to a recent Madras High Court order. The STC will also have to answer the Port Trust's claims for demurrage as well as the proceedings instituted by Customs.

The raisins not only were not the 'Standard nine natural sultana' ordered by the TTD, through the STC, the canalising agent, on the basis of samples, but they were also found to be unfit for human consumption by the Central Food and Technological Research Institute, Mysore.

The STC claimed that the responsibility for the goods was the TTD's because it had endorsed the bill of lading. The Court viewed matters otherwise; the STC was responsible for the goods matching the specifications and if they were rejected on the grounds of being faulty, the responsibility for the goods was the STC's.

The Court's ruling is a landmark one and canalising agents will now have to be more wary, it would appear to the *Man from Mac*'s Musings.

What's with Kamal?

The Amritraj brothers, perhaps the most glamorous, high profile Indian successes abroad, are, it is reported, teaming with a businessman, Rajan Lal, and film star Kamal Hasan to set up a new Rs. 25 crore company whose aim will be to provide home entertainment to South Asian ethnic audiences in the West. With the Amritrajs' experience in the entertainment business abroad, Lal's self-acclaimed business acumen and Kamal's talent — besides a two million-plus potential audience starved of entertainment from 'home' — here's a venture whose cash registers should ring sweet.

Almost simultaneously, it's been reported that Kamal, an avid reader with a preference for history, is working on a film with a historical background. The *Man from Madras Musings* has heard it reliably said that the star's so well read on this historic figure, he's even got the historians stretching out to keep pace.

What then's he doing with a film like *Guna*? The *Man from Madras Musings* missed the first few minutes of it, so he lost out on finding out who did what. But it was obvious throughout the three hours thereafter that this was Kamal Hasan's film all the way, no one else's; a vehicle to display that acting range he's displayed so many times in playing the disabled, the disaffected and the disillusioned. What he turns in, in such cases, is a *tour de force* of acting — even if it is now beginning to have a bit of a sameness.

But must such splendid talent be wasted on drama made melodrama and stretched to three hours-plus with interminable songs (that blasted the audience's ears, thanks to the theatre's concept of sound and music), dances and fights and more fights, which only serve to show the star's versatility? That's what audiences want, did someone

say? The *Man from Madras Musings* agrees that such classical fare like *Marupakkam* need NOT be the alternative. But Douglas Fairbanks, Errol Flynn, Tyrone Power and company used to fill Asian theatres with 'vernacular' audiences, and their films generally ranged only from 100 minutes to about 125 minutes and had no song and dance and less noisy fights.

So, why, in talent's name, must films like *Guna* be stretched out? Surely Kamal is big and bright enough in the film firmament to set new standards for audiences?

Judge as author

When Justice S Mohan, former Chief Justice of Tamil Nadu and later Karnataka,

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

was recently felicitated in the City on his elevation to the Supreme Court, a former student of his, state Law Minister K A Krishnaswamy, referred to the heights reached by this son of a poor agriculturist who had once tilled the soil of Kongunadu.

Others paid tribute to the judge as author. Both his poetry and prose have been published and he's written in English and Tamil equally felicitously. His Tamil titles listed were *Neethiyin Therottam*, *Unnai Uranguthu* and *Sindanai Malargal*; in English he's written *Justice Triumphs*, *Wild Blossoms*, *Genesis* and *Random Reflections*. His ways with words are reflected in his oratory, they all agreed.

Still others referred to his prowess in sport. He still enjoys his tennis every morning, it was revealed. Obviously His Honour believes in a sound mind also enjoying a sound body.

Passionate protest

That's what *The Hindustan Times* labelled this story that

**Times smiles
PEACE NEXT YEAR**

— News item



Madras Musings publishes, WITHOUT COMMENT, this delightful cartoon which appeared in the Sunday Times of Colombo, on December 29, 1991, as comment on President Premadasa's New Year Message.

found little or no space in OUR national dailies.

Apparently Dravida Kazhagam volunteer Isai Anban was one of those waving black flags in protest at the airport when President Venkatarajan arrived for a visit to the city a few weeks ago. Across the way from him, also waving a black flag as vigorously, was, apparently, a dusky beauty, Senthil Kumari. As the flags fluttered, love blossomed. And as they huddled next to each other in the police van carting them away for being a nuisance, the two protesters pledged their troth and requested they be taken straight to the Muthu Kalyana Mandapam. The DK chief Veeramani there joined the couple in rational matrimony and the police bore witness to the proceedings.

Pity the President was not invited to bless the couple in holy wedlock as well. It would have been most appropriate, seeing what he started by his mere arrival in Madras.

The pacific look

Another story by way of Delhi recently drew attention to two stormy petrels in Parliament who've become upholders of pacifism. One of them is from Madras, the other preached his new philosophy to some MPs from Tamil Nadu.

Jayanthi Natarajan has been appointed a Congress whip and when she recently went to the well of the House to persuade an irate colleague to return to his seat, she was reported in the Press as having "rushed to the well of the House to protest". That's my rotten reputation, Natarajan is said to have commented on seeing the report.

S S Ahluwalia was another Congress MP who used to make his presence felt in the well of the House. But now he's also another Congress whip, and was recently seen persuading colleagues from Tamil Nadu to break the exchanges they were having with DMK members in the well of the House and return to their seats.

Commented *The Hindustan Times*: "We are reminded of the school teacher... who would pick the most mischievous boy in the class and make him monitor!"

Hospital cleaning

A few months ago, Royapettah Hospital underwent a facelift for a short while, mainly through the help of some "do-it-yourself" Australian "do-gooders" working with missionary zeal. What's left of all that effort is a little green corner for children to play in. The rest is back to where it was.

Now it's the turn of General Hospital. The Indian Bank is going to light it up — at a cost of Rs. 12 lakhs — and several other private sector and voluntary organisations are planning to respond to government's call to do their bit, not only for this hospital but for others in the state as well.

If the response materialises in equal measure to the promises, there's going to be a lot of brighter hospitals around. But who's then going to ensure that they KEEP ON looking spick and span?

MMM

A dispute that harms business

The Kaveri issue continues to cause havoc between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. There have been state sponsored bandhs in both the states. Karnataka has seen much unprecedented violence unleashed on the Tamils living there. Tamils in large numbers have fled from Karnataka. And, although it has not been quantified yet, the atmosphere of violence and uncertainty has taken its toll of business too.

There is a lot of movement of goods and services between both states. At least 1000 trucks cross the borders both ways every day. This has come down to about 100 trucks a day. And these carry only essential commodities. It has become such an adventurous proposition to carry industrial goods (with

No Marxist answer

The Communist Party of India, Marxist, CPI (M), had its once-in-four years' conclave in Madras recently. While Lenin's statues are being pulled down in the rest of the world and Stalin has been discredited many years ago, the Marxists merely put up banners and posters of these two all over town.

After many deliberations and a reluctant conclusion that the world is changing, the CPI (M) did not come up with its economic policy to counter the Congress government's reforms. The Party has been berating the government's alleged anti-people and IMF-inspired activities. However, the Party has not been able to work out its own ideology to pull the country out of the mess it has fallen into. It would be interesting to see what the CPI (M)'s prescription would turn out to be.

In the meanwhile, the Party has decided that the country is ready for mid-term elections and it no longer has an obligation to support the government in the Centre.

Stagnant growth

The economy, in general, gives all the signals of slipping into a recession. Unless the tight money policy gets loosened and the savage credit curbs go, the upturn is not going to be forthcoming. Unfortunately, in spite of devaluation and all the push towards exports in the last six months, the growth has been stagnant. The world is still reeling under recession, especially the UK, and that is having its impact here.

All these setbacks notwithstanding, most economists and industrialists are convinced that the government should push ahead with the reforms and not abandon them half way through. Will the Narasimha Rao government have the grit to do this?

Waiting for answers

In Tamil Nadu, the Chief Minister has recently announced welfare schemes

for Rs. 100 crores and has distributed dhotis and sarees for landless labourers. Electoral compulsions make it necessary for her to do these things. But how is the state going to fund these schemes and gifts? It has already lost about 200-300 crores in abolishing low priced liquor. How is it going to make this up? The answers are yet to come.

For women only

Helping to make a go of part-time business

Trying to keep a studiously open mind as I close the front gate behind me and walk towards the front door, I am hit by a tantalising aroma of something cooking close by — but then, what could you expect in a 'women's only' polytechnic? "Knitting needles and saucers," I think to myself ungraciously as I go up the steps towards the Principal's office.

Soon, however, discover there's more to the Madras Polytechnic for Women in Anna Nagar East. Women aspiring to be entrepreneurs, married or non, appear to be in luck. The MPW can give them the technical know-how and confidence to go it alone successfully. Its yearly, or half-yearly, courses range from tailoring, textile dyeing and beauty therapy to computing and nursery teaching. All of them are designed to enable the would-be woman entrepreneur set up a "cottage industry" — and go from there to, well, the sky's the limit.

Having spent the greater part of her married life as an Air Force wife and teacher in North India, Vani Samuel, the Principal, claims that the "Madras woman is still conservative in comparison to her more forward-looking

sisters in the North". She says that for many women here it is not yet the "done thing" to be seen in a workplace. There is no reason, however, to stop the work-place from coming to her — or, in this case, to the 495 women who have completed MPW courses since its inception in 1988. This is the rationale behind the polytechnic. It's a question of understanding and, "above



all, respecting the needs and the realistic opportunities open to women in Madras today," Samuel says.

For a reasonable fee of Rs. 1600 a year, a woman can now set herself up in a tidy little business: Crafts, tailoring, textile dyeing, hair dressing, indoor gardening, catering and crèche management. These seven subjects are taught by "strictly profession-orientated" lecturers.

Less successful has the polytechnic been with bureaucracy. Its spate of wrangles with that institution give a colourful backdrop to an organisation which would, otherwise, be embarrassingly successful. This private endeavour, started modestly by the Nesavani Charitable Trust with the help of an Indian Bank loan, is not officially recognised by the Tamil Nadu technical education board. "Why on earth not?" I ask. A typical Catch 22 situation, says Samuel. "First you need land and then an endowment fund of 10 lakhs, but you cannot get land unless you are registered by the Board", she laughs at my horror-stricken face.

Nobody, however, is unduly worried at MPW about not having the official seal. "We have a banker's trust — they confidently approve loans to students, both during and after the course — and that of Jayshree Balachander, the Collector of Madras, who recently visited one of our four major sales and guarantees that we are worth our mettle," Samuel claims. "And that's what counts," she adds, as she takes me around the premises.

The most popular course seems to be dress designing and fashion technology. I watch twenty women busy themselves with sketching, pattern making and clothing construction. Many girls manage to juggle this vocational training with a university degree course. And, I am told, they wouldn't miss the practical business management lectures for anything.

In another wing, eight or so women cluster round a relaxed looking volunteer who is having a head massage. This treatment features in the beauty culture and herbal cosmetology course — a five-day-a-week training for both freelance and beauty parlour beauticians. If either student, Nazeem Vellore or Lenora Clarke, is anything to go by, I'd say they know their stuff; both women are exquisitely turned out.

I just peep into the other classes. Mid-term exams are underway and I don't want to interrupt tests just to ask students' names and congratulate them on their good work. By now it is lunch time as I walk out of the front porch. That food aroma is headier than ever. I pinch myself. "Why, oh, why didn't I ask to be given a thorough sampling of the cookery class?"



Vani Samuel, Principal of the Madras Polytechnic for Women, greets the Collector of Madras (right), Jayshree Balachander, at the MPW's sale of work and exhibition held recently at the Guild of Service Hall.

An English film from Tamil Nadu

While Tamil film producers are groaning and moaning about the slump in their business, because of crushing competition from cable television, the dish antenna, the video boom and all that, there's news of a more encouraging kind. Movies and television films in English are being planned for production in Madras, or, more accurately, Tamil Nadu. One film now ready to start shooting is by the living legend of Tamil cinema, Sivaji Ganesan, and his American-based nephew, Dharan.

Called *My Friend Ele*, this feature film is all about a retired British planter of yesteryear, who, seated in his home in far away England, recalls his life on an estate in India. The part of the retired British planter is played by genial George, that American diplomat who fell in love with Madras and retired here. George who? George Deligianis, whose introduction to films at the United States Information Service's shows were always better than the films themselves.

George D. is an ardent film buff, a *FOOF* (if you don't know what that means, it stands for 'Friend of Old Films'). He has watched Michael Curtiz's superhit and cult film classic *Casablanca* nearly eighty times! And he never misses an opportunity of watching it if it is screened anywhere within eyeshot. He knows every line

which sky-rocketed British actor Peter O'Toole to superstardom. However, it is difficult to spot him in the movie. Indeed, George D. himself has not been able to do so — not even after watching the film more times than he can count. Ever a trier, he has not given up hope.

Lately, George D. made his entry into the world of green rooms, velvet

KINEMAYANA • BY MOVIE MAN

and word of that movie starring those all-time greats, Humphrey Bogart, Peter Lorre, Sydney Greenstreet and Ingrid Bergman. (This is the movie which contributed that immortal line 'Play it again, Sam!', even though no such dialogue was ever spoken in it! Ask George D and he will confirm that with glee.)

George D. is no stranger to films. Besides having watched several thousand movies in many countries around the world, he made his debut as a 'macho' Arab horseman in David Lean's masterpiece, *Lawrence of Arabia*,

curtains, footlights and proscenium arches by playing a role in a frothy English play in Madras. He seems to have attracted attention and now he has plans to take his acting more seriously.

Tamil film star Prabhu, currently the only marketable movie actor apart from superstars Rajanikanth and Kamal Hasan, plays an important role in this film. It should be interesting to watch how he will perform in an English film in which the acting style is, oh, so different from Tamil cinema. No

WISHING FOR A DISH

"Why is the cook woman throwing saucers into the air like that?" I asked as the Mulligalawny family sat down to dinner. "Is she planning to audition as an assistant to P.C. Sorcar, get into a nightclub, or try for the Festival of India in Germany?"

There was grim silence around the table.

"Oh, Daddy, you're so unreasonable," wailed Manimekalai as she left the table, followed by her Mother, muttering about people who wouldn't take a hint.

"You mean the cook is trying to tell me that we need a dish?" I cried, suddenly getting the point. "Forget it. The Mulligalawny family has to maintain its status as the only family in Karuvepillay colony without a TV. So

months, I bet we can get a connection for fifty rupees."

"The Minister himself says it's a fact of life," came the answer in the twinkle of a Star. "Every flat in Bombay has it," replied the wife.

"Is that why there's a black cable running across our compound?" I asked. "It's a breach of the Mulligalawny airspace. I'm going to have a word with More Kolumbu about it. He can't run his illegal activities across my terrace." The family groaned. The dish was disappearing faster than the grin of the proverbial Cheshire cat.

"Vango, Vango, come in," said More Kolumbu. "You've just missed the most wonderful programme. The



obviously we can't have a dish antenna either. It's just another epidemic, like measles or herpes; instead of getting rashes on your face, you grow these gigantic baskets on top of your house, like a metallic garbage bin into which some fellow sitting in Hong Kong, or goodness knows where, can beam whatever he likes into our homes. Only yuppies would fall for such a racket."

"Look, Dad, it only costs an extra one thou," said Vengayam our son, who knows how to present an argument. "We didn't get a VCR, so now we can say we've jumped a whole generation if we get a TV and a cable connection in one go."

"What about the rent?" I asked in spite of myself.

"Well, that's just a hundred a month," said Vengayam.

"Besides," said the wife, coming up from behind. "The More Kolumbus have got it and they paid only Rs. 500," she said. Our neighbours are always the first to try out the latest fad.

"Hah," said Vengayam. "Within a week their image started fading away as more people were connected to the cable and they had to change their dish."

"It's illegal," I said, stonewalling as fast as I could. "If we wait another six

female anatomy! In glorious colour! Fantastic close-ups!" The man was talking like a film poster ad. "What was the title of the film?" I enquired out of politeness.

"Breast cancer!" he replied. "If you wait for two hours, you can see the feature film also. The programme is printed in the newspaper every week. After many years the family has started looking at the paper anxiously every week." He rattled off all the special interviews they had watched.

I tried to simulate an expression between a weak grin and an angry glare. The man was getting impossible. He was prattling about Gorby and Boris as though they were his first cousins. "It's so fantastic, I felt I was sitting next to Gorby while he made his resignation speech," said More Kolumbu, while his wife sagely shook her head and added, "The poor man's *dasha* must be very bad."

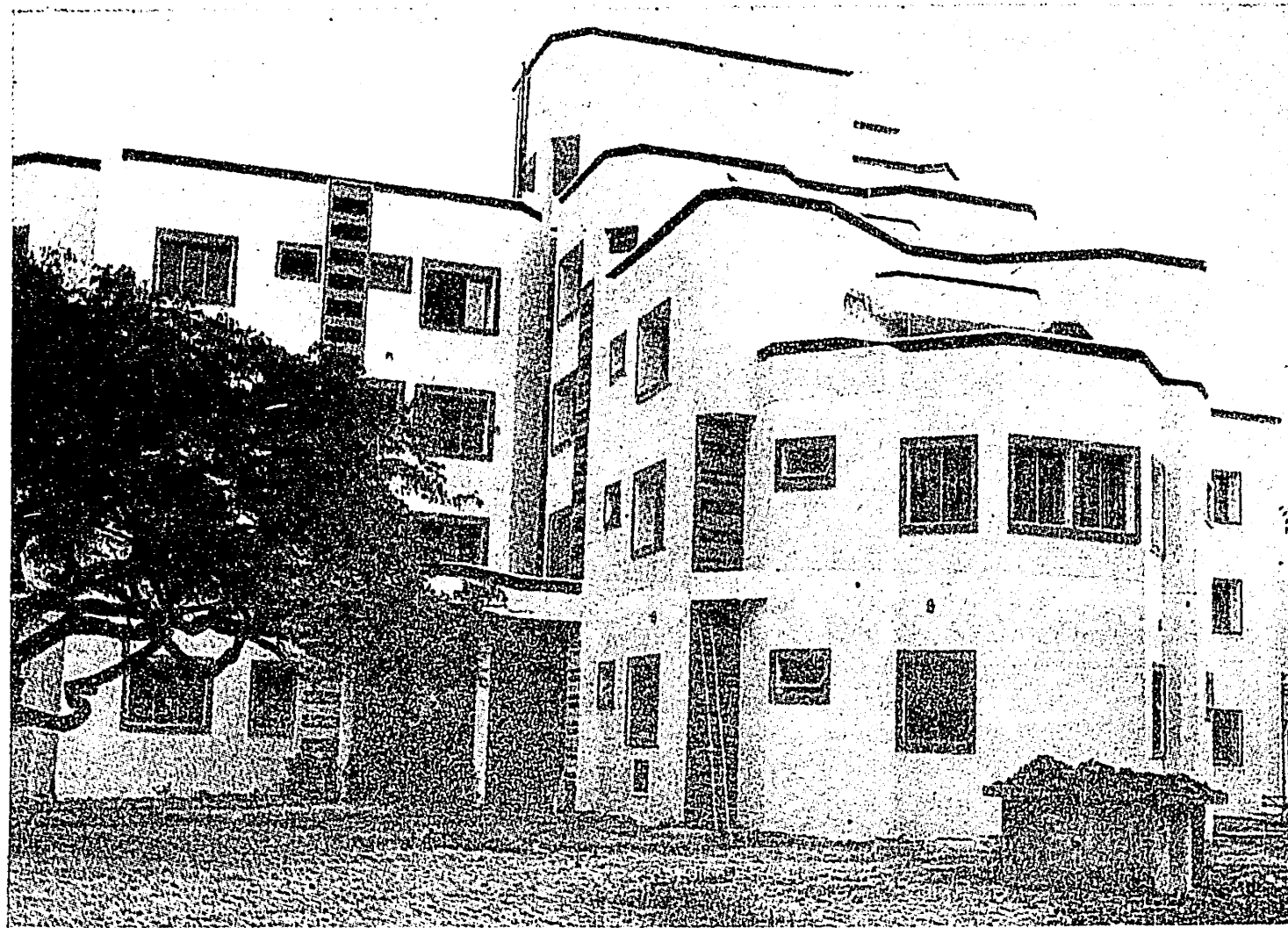
"You can get BBC, CNN, whatever you want, direct into your living room. And my daughter who could never get up in the morning, is up at 5.30 every day," he said.

"To listen to the *Suprabadam*?" I enquired in my most friendly neighbour manner.

"Nah," said More Kolumbu, with barely concealed contempt. "Garfield, the cartoon cat with the divine grin. We all watch Garfield because she tapes it for us. Do you know what Garfield said the other day, 'Make Dinner not War,' and More Kolumbu roared with laughter, switching on the Garfield tapes before I could add another word. By the time I left the house I had grown a fat tail and orange and white stripes and was purring silently to myself as I walked over to my house.

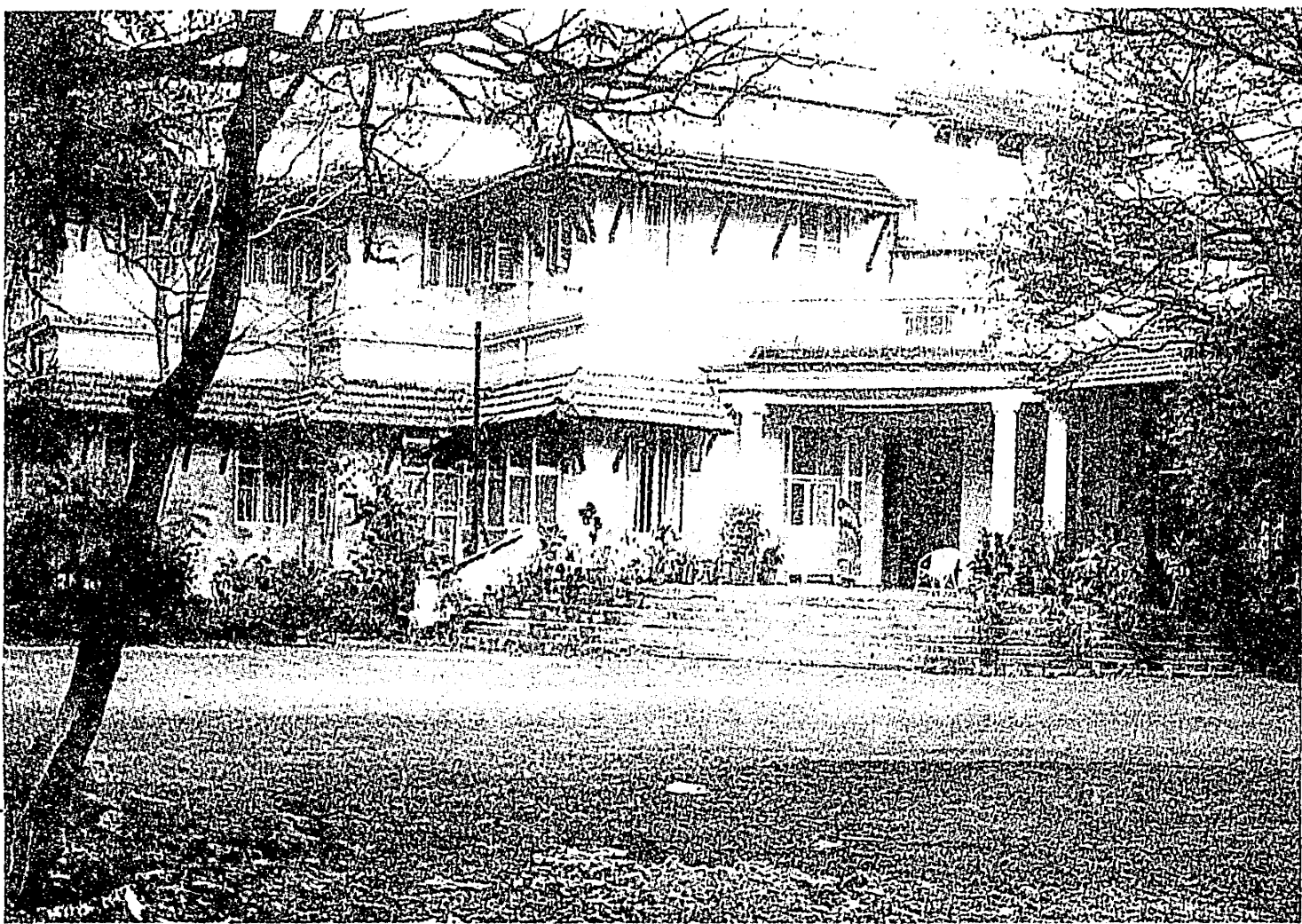
"Mother, come quickly, something strange has happened to Daddy, he looks just like Garfield the cartoon cat," cried Manimekalai as she saw me sitting on all fours.

"Fat cats of the world unite," I said. "The dish has taken over your lives."



The YWCA of Madras, headquartered in the spacious grounds of 46 Poonamallee High Road, this year celebrates its centenary. Part of that celebration is the new Centenary Building, tasteful by modern standards, built in those grounds and which has had a "soft opening" already. The building, which will serve as an international guest house, besides offering some hostel accommodation, is, appropriately, sited in the old caravan park of the 'Y', perhaps the only place in the city which permitted international travellers to park their homes-on-wheels and stay for a while. The Centenary Building will offer 63 double rooms for international guests and for visitors from other parts of India. It also offers, rather uniquely for Madras and indicating the way to conservation, solar heated hot water on tap.

Across the way from the new building, and in the same tree-shaded campus, is a historic building that houses the old international guest house and the 'Y's' administrative offices. Parts of this building, with its strikingly curved frontage, date to at least 1779, in which year it was leased to the East India Company to serve as a mess — possibly for the officers of the Egmore Redoubt, which used to be where the Railway buildings now are on this road. It was later, probably in 1803, bought by the Company and developed further, continuing to serve as a mess but having 'country home' accommodation as well. This purchase was made by Lord Edward Clive, Governor of Madras and son of Robert Clive. Which is perhaps why the campus was called Clive Gardens. As Commander-in-Chief, Edward Clive must have been a frequent visitor to these gardens and he might well have used the building as a country retreat. The YWCA acquired the property in 1906 from a leading Indian family of the time, the Goverdhan Doss's, a merchant family who owned much of Madras in the pre-World War I days. (Photographs by SUSHEELA NAIR)



New light on an old murder?

Death came to a handsome young man, Suryanarayana, a city bank branch manager, on a drizzly wet morning some years ago. It happened in a not-so-well-maintained car as it sped past the Reserve Bank of India building which was then fast rising.

The bank manager had come to the city office in George Town to get Rs. 15,500 in cash (big money at that time) and found three of his friends waiting beside a car outside. Hailing their friend, the three, who hung around the fringes of the Madras movie world, said they were just leaving and offered him a lift.

As one of them drove the car fast in the light forenoon drizzle, the other two soon got busy in the back-seat, knifing and killing the friend with whom they often played cards. The back-seat grappling was noticed by some engineers at the Reserve Bank

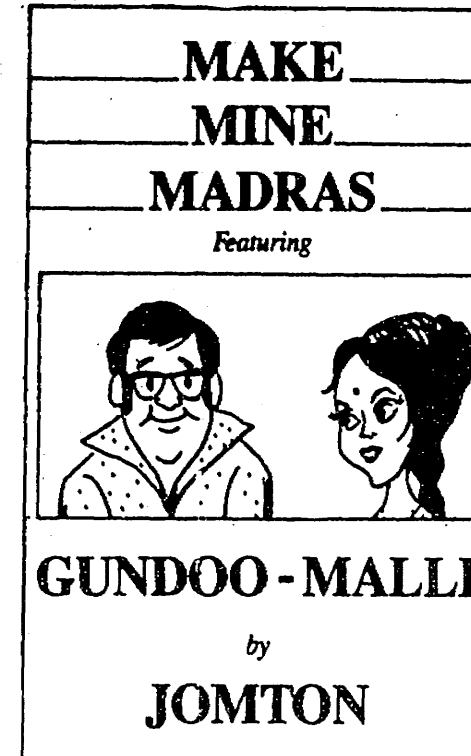
building site and, wondering what was going on, they chased the car on their scooters, but they had to give up because of the wet, slippery condition

CRIME NOTEBOOK
by
Randor Guy

of South Beach Road. But spotting a motorcycle policeman on duty, they informed him of their suspicions and off he went looking for a "speeding black car". But he could find no trace.

Ironically, the car had broken down on South Beach Road, but the three-

... & THE OLD



In a Madras garden...

My favourite time of day in Madras is earliest morning with the sacred *aruvampillu* grass dew-wet under the feet and the first call of the koel hanging seductively in an air still heady with last night's *raai ki rani*. As I totter into my wilderness of a garden, clutching my tumbler of coffee, the wondrous early morning orchestra of birdsong is slowly coming to life — the loud cawing of crows in interspersed choruses followed by the sudden solo 'did you do it' of the wattled lapwing, the occasional symphonic sweet notes of bulbuls rising above the twittering of sparrows and the sharp jarring call of some unknown bird, then, a sudden interlude of the hushed, still music of dawn!

I prop myself against my old friend, the raintree, spread a few desultory grains of wheat around, adjust my binoculars and settle down to welcome my feathered friends, my earliest callers. And always the first to call are a pair of snowy-white cattle egrets jauntily taking a ride on the neighbour's buffalo's back, perched on its ears or tickling the benighted beast's tail! The egrets invariably turn towards me as they blithely sail past on the buffalo's back, and, as a soldier's wife, I like to think of my birdwatching day beginning with this loveliest of salutes!

Very soon dozens of crows and ravens and chattering, squawking mynahs swoop on my scattered offerings. Yellow eyes and beaks flashing, the mynahs hop and pirouette and pick amidst the grain, switching and snatching and quarrelling mightily with the equally competitive seven sisters whose caterwauling has to be heard to be believed. The sparrows twitter and

chirup and peck at the grain with great agility, retreating into far corners to enjoy their *al fresco* breakfast. Sometimes the odd mynah makes bold to perch on the arms of my chair to

BY
PUSHPA CHARI

munch, while the swallows from the mansion across go about their business of picking and choosing with careful, sedate, dignity. Sometimes pairs of pink-necked doves join in the melée and, very occasionally, the blue-vented bulbul, which nests in the *champak* tree at the far end of the garden, serenades us, after its cereal breakfast, with bouts of the sweetest whistling...

On my very lucky mornings, the Indian blue jay comes a-calling in a flash of turquoise and blue wings and,

once, a lovely little green bird with an orange crown hopped in — I've always wondered what it was. During early monsoon mornings, my raintree literally bristles with the comings and goings of parakeets and parrots, but it is in springtime that my most exotic feathered friends fly in to visit, filling my decrepit garden with — how did Yeats put it? — *intranslatable delicacies of colour*. And sweet, lilting music. The 'did you do it' of the wattled lapwing cuts into the brainfever bird's obsessive cry and the kingfisher's *rai-a-lai* is a perfect foil for the koel's rising notes. And hoopoe and robin and golden oriole fly in to visit in a flurry of exotic feathers while, against the canopy of a February sky, orderly formations of Siberian cranes fly back to their Arctic homes.

Around seven, as a compelling Madras sun rises over the horizon, the



birds seem to scatter, except for the ubiquitous crow and odd raven and my friends the late laif sparrows. The party's nearly over and, as I begin my folding-up operation, my walking and jogging friends wave and call out bits and pieces of *taaza khabar* from across the fence. Did I know that so-and-so's

house had been raided, that Mrs. X's maid had decamped with all her sarees etc., etc.? And very often I am asked why I don't join them for a brisk walk instead of languishing in the garden, surely that's for the birds?

I open my beak and tell them that, yes, it definitely is: For the birds.

So, confined to books...

In case any fond admirer of this column wonders why I sort of restrict myself to fairly innocuous subjects, I must remind him (her) that I have been severely admonished by my editor to stay away from politics. (Don't believe all that hogwash you hear about this being a free country — just watch my editor cracking the whip!) If I had some intellectual freedom, I would have gone to town on such subjects as confrontation, hypocrisy and sycophancy. But let it pass, and let us go on to more pleasant subjects. I am going to talk about books and, fortunately, I am a bookman myself.

In the last few weeks, two very major events took place in Madras. One was the annual All India Librarians' Conference; and the other was the annual Madras Book Fair. The librarians' conference need not hold us up for too long. It was a meeting of professionals who were trying to figure out how to come to terms with the incredible technological growth of library science. It is all too technical for you and me, but they are steered in the right direction, and if this country has to amount to anything in the comity of nations, it certainly has to modernise itself in the information programme.

Concerned as they were with the technical aspects of information gathering and disseminating, the librarians did not have much time to consider the conventional subject of book libraries, though they know,

looking aSkance

accept and are happy that book libraries will last as long as man does. It is in this context that the annual book fair, bigger and better than before, had so much to offer the booklover.

People who live in urban congregations like Madras, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli and Tiruvandrum — just to mention a few — take it for granted that they can walk into a bookshop and get what they want. This is true much of the time, and the shop will, of course, order what it does not have. But it was not always so. I now go back about five decades.

Purely by the fortuitous accident of having an uncle as a school teacher, I started reading all the books that were sent to him for prescribing to his classes, and I became, in a manner of speaking, a fairly expert reader of English books by the time I was ten. The problem was, of course, that I lived in a different

town from my uncle's and I had to go back to my own home after the summer vacation. There was no library in that town — later, to my tremendous happiness, I was proved to be wrong. Anyhow, the only resource available to me was the school library, which, of course, operated in a most eccentric fashion. The man in charge of it was also the cashier, or some damn thing like that, in the school office. He was supposed to open the library for two hours on certain days of the week. He would, he might, he did. Extraordinarily enough, it was an excellent library for young people. Eventually I worked out a system by which ten or twelve of us would storm into the library, and those who were not particularly interested in reading would pass on their quota to me.

Things have come a long way since then. There are bookshops — however vestigial — in even small towns today. What is more important is that people actually buy books today. There is a publication explosion today, and if the quality of the books published is variable, the situation will eventually balance itself.

Shakespeare's Duke in *As You Like It* said: *Sermans in stones/Books in everything*. P.G. Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster countered it nicely with: *Sermans in books, stones in the running brooks, eh what, Jeeves?* The last word has always been that of John Milton: *A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit.* **S.K.**

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The grand book bazaar

Once again, we've had the MADRAS BOOK FAIR (January 4 - 16) and, as usual, there's been much excitement among book-sellers and book-lovers alike. However, there are a few lessons to be gleaned from such events.

To begin with, the MADRAS BOOK FAIR, like all fairs, is primarily a bazaar, which provides all kinds of books to all kinds of people at a discount. It would be foolishly idealistic to expect booksellers to cater exclusively to intellectual and highbrow tastes. Over the years, it has become quite clear that the 'hottest' selling items during such *melas* are alphabet and basic books for children, best-sellers and cook-books. Furthermore, contrary to expectations, the largest number of visitors are from the lower middle income group, who save and scrimp in order to buy basic books. These are the sort of people who are determined at all costs to provide an English education for their children. Some will even spend the busfare and entrance fee in

order to get a discount on books costing under Rs. 5/-

Situated in a college grounds opposite Connemara Hotel and comprising 170 stalls, the Madras Book Fair provides an excellent opportunity for everyone to pick up bargains, even at fantastically low prices. Of

FOODS & FADS

course, the special attraction is the signing sessions by authors of both English language and Tamil books. But the question that crops up each year during the Book Fair is: Why can't these booksellers, who brave the heat and dust for nearly a fortnight, get a permanent venue — like the covered exhibition ground of Pragati Maidan in New Delhi, for instance?

Wide gift range

Ten or fifteen years ago, newly married couples experienced little excitement about opening their wedding gifts — which

cherry, apart from scented candles, terracotta lamps, marble-inlaid boxes and stationery from Auroville. You will find splendid *ikkat* bedspreads, mirror-work cushion covers and beautifully block-printed linen, besides a host of brassware and other bric-a-brac, mainly ash-trays, candle-holders and wall-hangings made of copper embossed with ceramic glaze.

One shop to visit when you have run out of ideas for gifts is the CONTEMPORARY ARTS AND CRAFTS (franchise of a Bombay-based boutique). This outlet is housed in an elegant, and gracious old structure in Kasturi Estate, off Radhakrishnan Salai. The first floor of this building is occupied by the CRAFTS COUNCIL OF INDIA, which periodically holds exhibitions.

THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS AND CRAFTS boutique presents items from all over India. There is a lot of exquisite ceramic pottery from Pondi-

There are also some interesting hammocks, chairs and stools, made of wood and coir.

The display, on the whole, is appealing. Although the prices are on the higher side, the CAC shop has certainly got some of the best linen, brassware and pottery in town. I would add, though, that it would be a good idea to instil a bit more enthusiasm in the shop assistants, who could do a little more to inspire the clientele, instead of just hovering around with bored expressions on their faces.

V.K.

This is the season for green vegetables. Try the Green Coriander Pulao made from bunches of garden-fresh coriander leaves. Serve with *Mattar Paneer* on the side. If you like chicken, make this unbelievably simple *Chicken Fry*. Finish the meal with *Shahi Tukre* — a scrumptious dessert made with just milk, bread and sugar.



Add the ginger-garlic paste, powdered *masala* and fry for a few minutes.

Add the chopped tomatoes and chicken pieces. Cover and simmer till well done.

Garnish with chopped coriander leaves and serve hot with rice.

Neela Prabhakar

GREEN CORIANDER PULAO

- 1 cup basmati rice, soaked in water for 1/2 hour, drained and set aside.
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 2 onions chopped fine
- 1 carrot, chopped fine
- 10 beans, chopped fine
- 1/2 cup peas, shelled
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 small cardamoms
- 2 big cardamoms
- 4 cloves
- 1" cinnamon stick
- 1 teaspoon cummin seeds

3 lbs ghee
Salt to taste

Ground paste

- 1 big bunch coriander leaves
- 1/2 inch piece ginger
- 5-6 green chillies

Method

Heat ghee. Add the cummin seeds and bay leaf. When they splutter add the cardamoms, cloves, cinnamon and the chopped onions. Fry till transparent. Add the chopped vegetables and the ground paste. Fry for a minute or two.

Add the rice, salt and the vegetable stock. Cover and bring to the boil. When the liquid is almost absorbed, keep a *tawa* below the pan and simmer on a low fire till the rice is completely done.

MATTAR PANEER

- 1 kg peas, shelled
- 3 onions
- 1" piece ginger
- 1 tbs poppy seeds
- 2 teaspoons *garam masala*
- 1 teaspoon red chilli powder
- 2 teaspoons *dhaniya* powder
- 3-4 tbs well mixed curd
- 1 teaspoon cummin seeds
- 3 tbs ghee or oil
- Bunch of coriander leaves, chopped fine.
- Fresh paneer made out of 1 litre milk, cut

Heat ghee and fry the bread slices till golden. Plunge the fried bread slices in the sugar syrup. Lift out and arrange the slices on a shallow platter.

Apply the thick milk spread on the slices. Garnish with chopped nuts and saffron, and sprinkle powdered cardamom.

SHAHI TUKRE

- 2 litres of milk thickened to a spreadable consistency, adding sufficient sugar. Set aside.
- 8 slices of bread, crust removed and cut into halves
- 16 cardamoms powdered
- 8 almonds
- 10 pistachios
- 12 tbs sugar
- 1/2 cups water
- 1/4 teaspoon saffron
- Oil or ghee to fry

Prepare syrup by boiling the 1/4 cups water and sugar. Strain and keep aside.

Heat ghee and fry the bread slices till golden. Plunge the fried bread slices in the sugar syrup. Lift out and arrange the slices on a shallow platter.

Apply the thick milk spread on the slices. Garnish with chopped nuts and saffron, and sprinkle powdered cardamom.

Can be served warm or chilled.

A HINT IN TIME...

★ The best way to remove corn kernels from the cob is to place the boiled cob upright on a plate and slice the kernels with a sharp knife. They will come off easily.

★ To ripen a raw tomato, place it with a ripe apple in a plastic bag. The bag should not be airtight. The ripe apple gives off a gas that helps the unripe fruit to ripen faster.

QUIZZIN' WITH NAVIN

(Quizmaster NAVIN JAYAKUMAR's questions are all from the fortnight of December 15 - 31)

1. What is the Yadorny Chemodan in Russia?
2. Russia's flag now flies at the UN Headquarters instead of the erstwhile hammer and sickle of the USSR. Which two countries' flags flank it?
3. Which Chairman and Managing Director of Sundaram Fasteners is the new Sheriff of Madras?
4. Where did V Anand stun Garry Kasparov in the second round of a Category 18 International Chess Tournament?
5. Where will the next SAF Games be held?
6. Which major regional party did not attend the all-party meeting that decided the January 2 bandh in Tamil Nadu?
7. Who is Ninibeth Beatriz Leal Jimenez?
8. Where was the news-making Indian History Congress supposed to have been held before politics led to its postponement to February 21-23 with New Delhi as its new venue?
9. Dr Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin, the head of which community, arrived on December 30 in Madras?
10. Which old logo of Air India is making a comeback after being substituted by the rising sun symbol?
 - a) Which Indian film legend was recently awarded the Oscar for lifetime achievement?
 - b) Which Sai Paranjpe film won two awards at the French film festival Recontres Cinematographiques de Cannes?
12. Which passenger train became a train of death following the brutal massacre of 60 people by militants on December 26, 1991?
13. Approximately how many buses constitute PTC's fleet, to which 500 buses will be added by March 1992?
14. What was the theme of the Rotary Youth Leadership Award multi-district camp at the Sholinganallur camp centre?
15. When will the new Public Distribution System start in nearly 1700, newly identified Most Backward Blocks in the country?
16. Who control the copyright of all Tagore works which the government recently extended to 2001 A.D.?
17. Which two musicians collaborated for the first time in a concert of classical music on December 29 at the Gnanananda Hall of the Narada Gana Sabha?
18. Who was arrested and released for an article in *The Sunday Observer* for defaming Dilshad Sheikh, whom it alleged had had an affair with the Pakistani Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif?
19. Why was the Tiruchi-bound Rockfort Express of December 30 held up for more than 30 minutes at the Tambaram railway station?
20. What new year gift is the City Police Commissioner, R Rajagopalan, all set to give the citizens of Madras?

(Answers on Page 8)

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

A new art of dance emerges



Chandralekha's troupe... in Sri (Photograph by DASARATH PATEL)

Upper crust

(By A Special Correspondent)

When empires crack, their remains are found in shards of pottery. Traces of Roman pottery and fragments of Chinese porcelainware found in South India speak of a time when argosies of wealth arrived at South Indian ports just as during the height of the Roman Empire the geographer Strabo boasted of the ships, 120 of them a year, that called on the Indian subcontinent to collect the luxuries that the Roman elite craved.

It was fascinating, therefore, to look at the exhibition of British pottery in the 20th century, organised by the British Council at the Lalit Kala Akademi. Entitled 'Colours of the Earth', the exhibition displayed a warm and vivid collection of objects and artefacts that dazzled with their variety.

Since the industrial revolution mechanised and perfected the production of both decorative and utilitarian chinaware in the last century, there has been an extraordinary revival of hand-made pottery in England. The return to 'Roots' elegantly displayed in some of the pieces made by the greats, is most often associated with the name of Bernard Leach. The meeting of Leach and the Japanese master, Hamada, is now the stuff of legend, a wonderful flowering of East and West. The *haiku* flavour remains in the severely classical forms, the restrained brushwork, the moonbeam-like glazes that characterise the work of those who have followed in the footsteps of the Leach legacy.

And then there are the rebels. The spirit of the swinging Sixties, rebellion, defiance, the creative anarchism, are all to be seen in the artist potters who took to the medium and made it uniquely their own. There are also some beautiful pieces of dinnerware with finishes as warm and golden fresh as a well-baked meringue crust and white tea sets of bone china that are a tribute to both art and technology.

Hand-made pottery is now so exclusive, it's now an upper class luxury. So perhaps it was fitting that in the parallel show of Indian ceramics, the ordinary Indian potter making his terracotta pots should have been completely ignored. His roots are in the earth still, not in a museum.

Wonder why no local organisation has presented Chandralekha's latest production... She has been honoured with the award of the Sangeetha Natak Akademi this year, but, as usual, she has had to be presented by an organisation with a foreign connection. Her Sri was presented by the Association of British Council Scholars at her Skills Theatre and was pure poetry. It was a wonderful breakthrough by contemporary Bharatha Natyam into an ungrammatical way of thinking and was a tribute to a transcending culture.

She was talking about women... using the spine as a metaphor... to show the cult of Shakthi worship, to show woman power which can conquer... going back in time for confirmation, to the idea of the human body being beautiful, a worthy and loved and equal partner with the 'soul mind' where the human body, male or female, is not distorted by excessive costumery, conduct and pinched, puritanical and partial concepts of the human body-soul. The body has been re-recognised and freed by her — and a new art of dance has emerged.

But Chandralekha's productions always lack musical genius. I wonder why? V V Subramaniam's music for Sri was very good, but it was not creative enough. The music did not flow with the movement.

I also wonder why Chandralekha does not present Sri commercially herself, at Skills, over a period of time. But entry into Skills is always exclusive and only an inner circle gets to know of performances there. In fact, sometimes, they may not have even been invited.

In Avignon, in the south of France, where a theatre festival takes place every summer, some five hundred performances were staged in three weeks in a place less than the size of Mylapore. There is the 'in' festival sponsored by the state and the big organisations. But there is also the 'off' festival where anyone who has a show can rent a small theatre and ticket his show. Can't Madras have small, ticketed shows in small intimate places to provide a parallel aesthetic experience? Skills should set an example.

Frightening experiment

A frightening experiment that made unprecedented demands on the capacity of the human ear was made bang in the middle of the time-honoured Musical Season. Maharajapuram Santhanam and sons broke through the sound barrier and took part with the orchestra of M S Viswanathan in a project to produce musical sounds totally unharmonic. What a contrast, especially after the sanctified *bhajana* singing of Haridoss Giri at the Narada Gana Sabha, which had made people

believe God was in his heaven and all was well with this world. Yet the silk saree-clad, diamond-studded Mylapore mamis jostled each other fiercely to find a seat for the Maharajapuram fiasco. At Rs. 100 a piece at that!

All that took place in this great experiment was a cacophony of sound succeeding and preceding a rendition of a *krithi* by the musicians. Is this the music of the future? I am afraid the prospect is a little frightening!

Quite in contrast was the musical expression developed in depth and variety, in grace and charm at the concert of the Hyderabad brothers, Sheshachari and Raghavachari. I heard them at the Indian Fine Arts Society, where they received a thunderous ovation, quite unusual for Madras. But the scene that haunts me is of the two of them walking the lonely road in search of an autorickshaw to reach home after the concert. That's the way we treat our artists!

The organising Gods

Artists make organisers feel like the Gods in this city. In every one of the performances I went to, and even at lecture demonstrations, artists went on stage to humbly thank the organisers who had been gracious enough to have presented them on their platforms. The artist is the one who has no say, like the Indian poor voter who is counted but does not count.



Revathi Ramachandran

One example of this artist in search of organisers has been Revathi Ramachandran, a young dancer, very serious in her pursuit of art and who has matured into sublime artist. She has everything that it takes for an artist to be invited on stage, but she has to be eternally grateful every time to be presented. Yet her recent demonstration of *Bhagavatha Mela Nataka Pravesha Danus* was an intellectual and emotional treat.

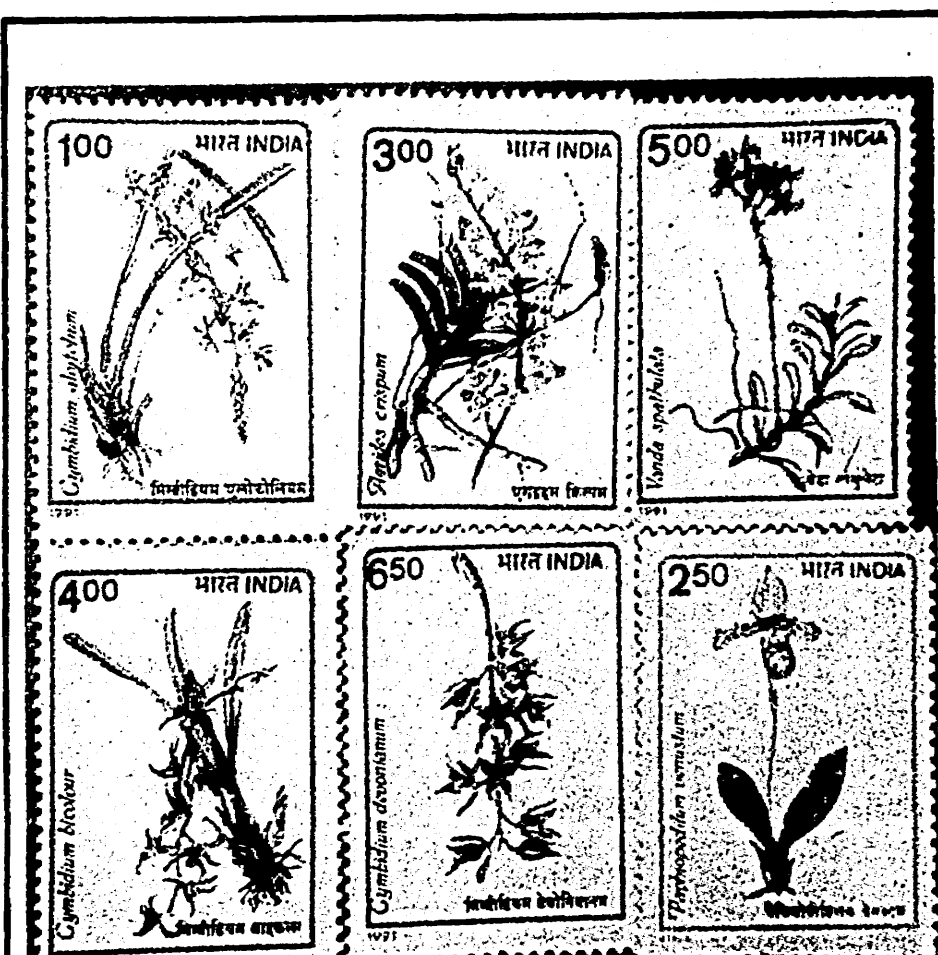
Folk festival

After the deluge of classical music and dance, if you feel like breathing the vibrant air of folk theatre, go to SMP opens

(Continued from P1)

improving the vehicle, especially its fuel efficiency. The company also sees its ability to make most of the LCV's parts and body in-house as an inbuilt advantage it has.

All this has had executives of the company, most of them retired from the giants in the industry, in an up-beat mood as they planned for the re-opening. But spirits on the occasion are likely to be rather dampened: the fuel price hike, particularly high in Tamil Nadu, will be more than what many could bear. Will Standard Motors, despite this rather gloomy beginning, see sunshine again?



BEAUTIES FROM MADRAS

India's newest set of stamps, ranging from Rs. 1 to Rs. 6.50, is one of the prettiest issues by the country in a long time. The man responsible for such attractiveness is Madras's O T Ravindran, botanist, horticulturist, environmentalist — and artist. Ravindran's water-colours of Indian flowers, particularly of orchids, have, in the past, been exhibited at the Royal Horticultural Gardens in Kew, London, the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, and in several other places in Britain and the U.S. For this six stamp set, he has specially produced delicate watercolours of a variety of Indian orchids, his favourite subject.

One orchid which doesn't feature among them, however, is the extinct *Paphiopedilum druryi*, an erstwhile native of the Nilgiris. 'O.T.' who is constantly on the move in search of rare and exotic plants, is now on his way to Britain to see whether P. druryi still survives in Kew's huge orchidarium and, if so, whether it could be returned to the Nilgiris.

(Photograph by SUSHEELA NAIR)

MADRAS MUSINGS

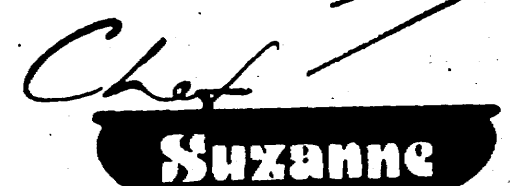
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Tamil Nadu may be the venue of....

The redemption of Indian sport

(By The Corner Flag)

India's image in the world of sport continues to diminish. The latest events to tarnish it have been the South Asian Federation Games held in Colombo. In a disgraceful performance, India was an also-ran in Football, lost its supremacy in Athletics and Tennis, almost lost it in Swimming, fared moderately in Shooting, maintained its low level in Boxing, eked out championships in Volleyball and Basketball and won convincingly only in Table Tennis and Weightlifting, though even in those events it received some rude surprises similar to the one in women's Volleyball.

The reasons for this dismal showing are many, but the most telling one is the arrogant attitude the country as a whole adopted to these Games — helping the image of the Ugly Indian to grow further. Arrogance led to taking things easy and sending second rate competitors in many sports. Arrogance on the part of many competitors led to complacency, overconfidence and taking things easy. And arrogance led to Indian sports authorities being blind to what advances were being made in neighbouring countries while at home eyes remained shut to the continued lack of improvement in our sports standards.

Never has Indian sport sunk to such low levels — and anyone highlighting the fact that the country still managed to head the medals tables is doing Indian Sport a disservice. The only good to come out of the performance in Colombo would be if it opened the eyes of both sports leadership and sportspersons to the fact that we are a third rate nation in sport and that it is time we began to take sport more seriously and prepare well for every event, even the SAF Games.

A chance to redeem our reputation, particularly in the region, will come our

way just two years from now, when the next SAF Games are scheduled to be held. Nepal has been chosen as the venue for next year's year-end Games. But in the likelihood of Nepal being unable to host the 1993 Games, the championships will be held in India. And that's where this writer's particular interest in these Games comes in: The Indian Olympics Association President has stated that if India is asked to pinch-hit for Nepal, TAMIL NADU will be the alternate venue for the Games.

Home grounds will give the Indian team several advantages and if the

lessons of Colombo have sunk in, the team should be in a position to redeem its reputation. To give the Indian squad that chance is Sivanthi Adityan's aim and he is confident that Tamil Nadu can rise to the occasion.

In the Nehru Stadium that is shortly to undergo renovation he sees a modern arena for Football and Athletics (a new synthetic track at this stadium is part of the renovation plans). There are plans on the anvil for a modern indoor stadium in the city — an MGR promise — and if a decision is taken by the SAF governing committee in

June, as scheduled, there'll be time enough to get that stadium ready, as well as refurbish the Egmore tennis stadium and Anna Swimming Pool (which is of Olympic specifications) to international standards. The University Indoor Stadium will also need improvements and so will a couple of the city's other major football venues.

Tamil Nadu will certainly be able to rise to the occasion. But will Indian sportspersons thereafter rise to match that effort? That might yet be the 64,000 Rupee question!

A golden year for Madras sport

The year just ended was a golden one for Madras sport. Never before had Madras contributed so much to enhance India's international status as the southern metropolis did in 1991. It was made golden, and memorable as well, not by a pampered cricketer or tennis star, but by champions of two comparatively ignored indoor games.

It can truly be said that S Viswanathan Anand, Maria Irudayam, and Anu Raju combined to write, in the old year, the most shining chapter in the history of Madras sport. Grandmaster Anand brought India greater honours than any other Indian sportsperson. Decades ago, Ramanathan Krishnan no doubt did Madras proud by emerging

as India's first Wimbledon semi-finalist. But even that unique achievement was virtually been eclipsed, by Anand's phenomenal rise to world stardom.

No Indian has ever conquered, or tamed, world champions, present as well as past, the way Anand did in the

by
JAICI

recent Interpolis tournament at Tilburg (the Netherlands) and the subsequent tournament in Reggio Emilia, Italy. The 21-year-old, quiet, unassuming Besant Nagar lad, a former World junior champion, was none the worse for having been edged out by former World champion Anatoly Karpov in their World Candidates quarter-final in Brussels last August. Anand really stunned the world with his dazzling Interpolis and Reggio performances in fields that included not only the reigning World champion, Gary Kasparov, but also Karpov, the ever-green 60-year-old

ANSWERS TO QUIZZIN'

1. The nuclear briefcase containing launching codes of USSR's nuclear arsenal recently handed over to Boris Yeltsin.
2. Romania and Rwanda.
3. Suresh Krishna
4. Reggio Emilia, Italy.
5. Kathmandu, 1993.
6. P.M.K.
7. Miss World, 1991.
8. Ujjain.
9. Dawoodi Bohra.
10. Centaur.
11. a) Satyajit Ray, b) Disha
12. 5-LF Ludhiana-Ferozapore train.
13. 2,300.
14. Look Beyond Yourself.
15. January 1, 1992.
16. Vishwabharati University.
17. Maharajapuram Santhanam and M S Viswanathan.
18. Pritish Nandy.
19. The train sped past Mambalam station without stopping. About 50 irate passengers waiting to board it there made the Station Master telephone Tambaram Station to detain the express until the passengers, who caught a Suburban to Tambaram, made it to the express. The driver of the express was asked to get off and sent to Railway Hospital, Perambur, for a medical examination! 20. A procession-free Anna Salai!

Viktor Korchnoi and several other Grandmasters.

Critics are unanimous in crediting him with the best chance of emerging as a world title challenger in the near future. He is out of the 1993 championship, but is showing the form necessary to make the grade for the next one. But, for this, Anand, rated the quickest Grandmaster, may have to say good-bye to his "quickies", which continue to cost him more than one game.

Whatever is in store for Anand in the world's most competitive discipline, Madras sport has already given the nation two World champions in Maria Irudayam and Anu Raju, who last October won the inaugural World carrom titles in Delhi.

The first-ever World championship in an indoor game mostly confined to the neglected corners of clubs in many parts of the world did not, understandably, attract a truly representative international field. Even so, nothing can detract from the merits of Irudayam's and Anu Raju's historic triumphs, made possible, let it be said to his ever-lasting credit, by the dedicated, monumental work put in over the years by Bangaru Babu, secretary of both the International and Tamil Nadu Carrom Federations, to help carrom gain international status. Bangaru Babu can truly be hailed the father of modern carrom and the World carrom championship as well.

The 1 in 16 champion

(By The Corner Flag)

Madras's Viswanathan Anand gave himself his best New Year gift yet by becoming the first person in the world to win a Rating 18 tournament, the highest rated competition ever in chess history. In the process, he became only one of two players to have a plus score over world champion Gari Kasparov.

Anand now leads Kasparov in their personal encounters 2½-1½. Curiously, they drew in Linares, Spain, in 29 moves last February, and won a match each, also in 29 moves each time, in Tilburg, The Netherlands, last October. This time, however, the match in Reggio Emilia, Italy, went to 52 moves, but Anand looked a winner from move 29.

The record books say that Anand is only the fifth player to defeat Kasparov with black pieces and only one of 16 to have beaten him at all. To put that number in perspective, one commentator points out that Fortune magazine lists 80 billionaires, while 90 people have climbed Everest. To be one of 16 must then be something very special.

Kasparov, who lost only three games in 1991, was at the losing end to Anand in two of these games. The other player who still maintains a plus score against the world champion is the Harvard don, Boris Gulko. He too leads 2-1, after winning twice against Kasparov in the early Eighties, before Kasparov became world champion.

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