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MADRAS MUSINGS

ADDISON
METAL CUTTING TOOLS

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MANAALI RAMAN...

What're you complaining about, Sir! You've still got a bargain; it's only shrunk by 30 per cent!

IN MAD, MAD MADRAS

Some thoughts – and an answer – to the ills of Madras...

Why not move the capital?

(By A Special Correspondent)

The conservation of the historical was one of the subjects down for discussion at the recent 'Madras 2011' seminar organised by the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority and *The Times* (Bombay) Research Foundation, but with so much else of concern to planners, it received scant attention. The passing mention that "Madras was founded for trade", however, provided the opportunity for one speaker to suggest, "Why doesn't it, then, concentrate on that?"

The burden of his intervention was that all this effort being put into planning the revival of Madras could be put to better use in planning a new capital and leaving Madras to its future in the hands of those responsible for the past. In other words, MOVE THE CAPITAL and let Madras survive only as the commercial capital of the state.

Chief Minister M G Ramachandran had once made this proposal and an area between Thanjavur and Tiruchchirappalli was briefly looked at. But then the whole problem seemed to get more bogged down in whether the new capital should be in Chola Nadu or Pandya Nadu than in the modalities of the transfer. The proposal was, thereafter, shelved. It would seem time now to pull it out of its pigeon-hole and take a second look at it.

When Madras became capital of this region, the rays of the Presidency radiated out to Land's End in the south, Malabar in the west and Ganjam in Orissa in the north. It was a central location that made sense, when a trading post was converted into an administrative capital. It was also an accident of history. British sentimentality wishing its power to be rooted in Fort St George where it all began.

Those reasons don't hold good any longer. Government might do well to leave Madras and its development, or rather, **its rescue,** to commercial interests, and think of moving to a more central location, closer to the people. By moving the largest employer in it, from the overcrowded city, half Madras's problems would be solved.

If there is reluctance to moving the capital — and that includes the Legislature — from Madras, an alternative could be considered. Why not move Forests & Wild Life to Coimbatore,

(Continued on P3)

The CO fever

Do you have a slight temperature every day? Do you have a perennial, dull headache?

If you have, you're like thousands of others in the City, according to a speaker at a recent discussion on the state of the City. According to him, these are not due to a viral fever, as is commonly being diagnosed by local doctors, but because of the pollution in the city.

The Carbon Monoxide and Dioxide being generated by the extraordinary traffic in the city cause the body to beat up and the fumes to cause the headaches, explained the speaker, who was convinced that this just another symptom of a city that is dying.

Will Madras protect its heritage?

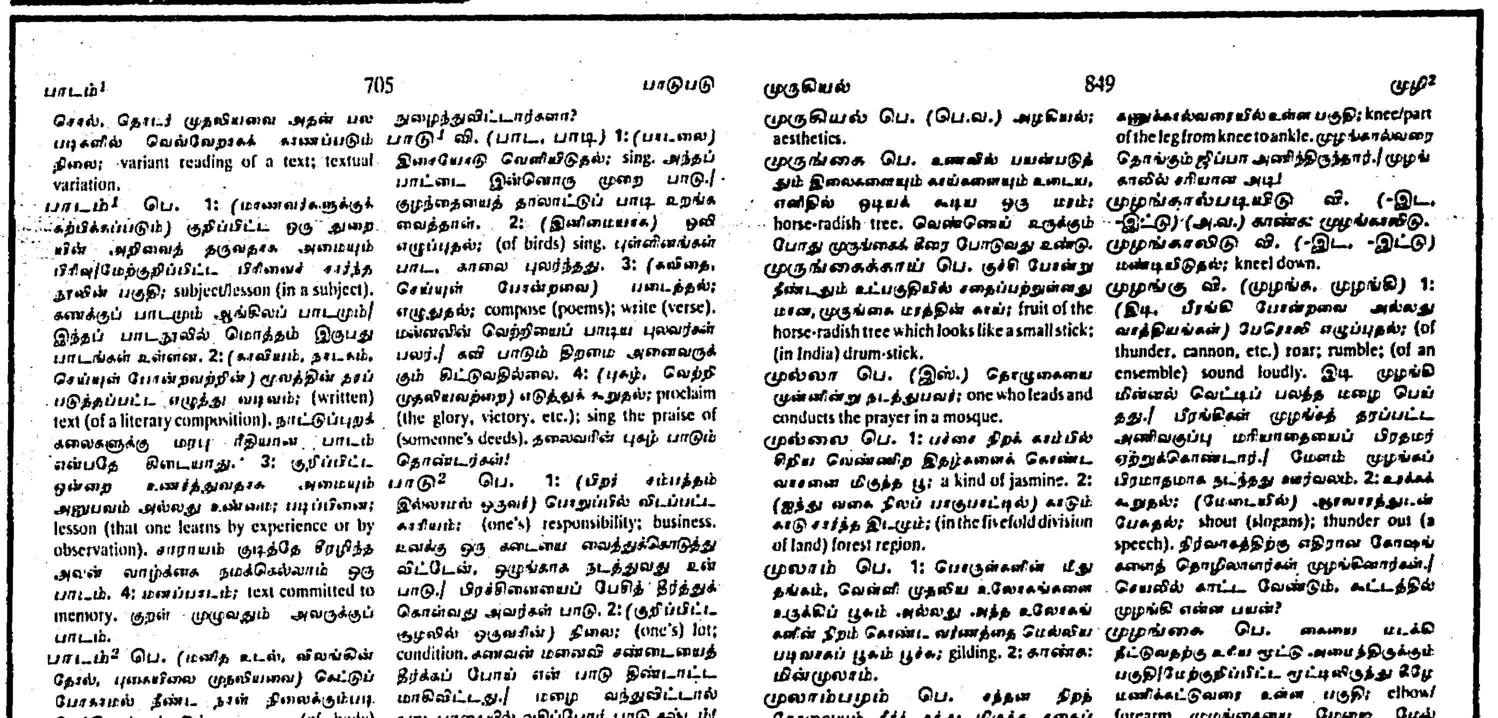
(By S. Muthiah)

Calcutta demonstrated its sense of history when it celebrated its 300th birthday for a whole year. Even crassly commercial Bombay has begun to demonstrate its commitment to this heritage. Only Madras, with its total lack of a sense of history, not only virtually ignored its 350th birthday, but also continues to pay only lip service to the conservation of the historical.

Those planners and development authorities who pay such lip service in Madras would do well to note the Bombay example. Over 300 buildings in lower Bombay, mainly belonging to the 19th and early 20th centuries, have been identified for protection. Giving these buildings a facelift and lighting them up to grab the attention of the passers-by has been encouraged. And the Indian Heritage Society, Bombay, has instituted annual Urban Heritage Awards "to promote the care and conservation of heritage buildings in the city". The awards were first instituted in 1989 and, ever since, the number of buildings entering the lists has increased. For 1991, there were 190 entries and the winners were:

- **The Maharashtra Police Headquarters, an 1876 building built by a Gaekwad of Baroda and which had later served as Council Hall and Sailors' Home,**
- **The Regal Cinema, built in the 1930s,**
- **The 1906 building housing the Standard Chartered Bank's offices, and**
- **The Municipal Commissioner's bungalow, built in the 1920s.**

These winners are listed in this journal whose prime concern is Madras only to show the variety possible in such heritage listing. Perhaps, too, this list may encourage the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority to foster and support a similar venture in Madras, a city much older and of greater historical significance than Bombay.



பாடம்¹ 705 பாடுபடு

சொல், தொடர் முதலியவை அதன் பல படிகளில் வெவ்வேறாகக் காணப்படும் நிலை; variant reading of a text; textual variation.

பாடம்¹ பெ. 1: (மாணவர்களுக்குக் கற்பிக்கப்படும்) குறிப்பிட்ட ஒரு துறையின் அறிவைத் தருவதாக அமையும் பிரிவு/மேற்குறிப்பிட்ட பிரிவைச் சார்ந்த நூலின் பகுதி; subject/lesson (in a subject). கணக்குப் பாடமும் ஆங்கிலப் பாடமும்/ இந்தப் பாடநூலில் மொத்தம் இருபது பாடங்கள் உள்ளன. 2: (காவியம், நாடகம், செய்யுள் போன்றவற்றின்) மூலத்தில் தரப்படுத்தப்பட்ட எழுத்து வடிவம்; (written) text (of a literary composition). நாட்டுப்புறக் கலைகளுக்கு மரபு ரீதியான பாடம் என்பதே கிடையாது. 3: குறிப்பிட்ட ஒன்றை உணர்த்துவதாக அமையும் அனுபவம் அல்லது உண்மை; படிப்பினை; lesson (that one learns by experience or by observation). சாராயம் குடித்தே சீரழிந்த அவன் வாழ்க்கை நமக்கெல்லாம் ஒரு பாடம். 4: மனப்பாடம்; text committed to memory. குறள் முழுவதும் அவருக்குப் பாடம்.

பாடம்² பெ. (மனித உடல், விலங்கின் தோல், புகையிலை முதலியவை) கெட்டுப் போகாமல் நீண்ட நாள் நிலைக்கும்படி மேற்கொள்ளப்படும் முறை; (of body) embalming; (of leather, tobacco, etc.) tanning, curing, etc. பல வகை விலங்குகள் பாடம் செய்யப்பட்டு அருங்காட்சியகத்தில் வைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன.

பாடல் பெ. பாட்டு (என்பதன் முதல் இரு பொருள்களிலும்); (in the first two senses of) பாட்டு.

பாடல் பெற்ற பெ.அ. (சைவ, வைணவத் தலங்களைக் குறிப்பிடும்போது) பாடல் இயற்றப்பட்ட பெருமை உடைய; having the distinction of being sung by (saint-poets, etc.). நாயன்மார்களால் பாடல் பெற்ற தலங்களில் இதுவும் ஒன்று.

பாடவிதானம் பெ. (இலங்.) பாடத்திட்டம்; curriculum.

பாடாவதி பெ. (-ஆக், -ஆன) தரக் குறைவானது; மட்டரகமானது; useless; lousy; lacking in quality. இந்தப் பாடாவதிப் படத்திற்கு வந்திருக்கவே வேண்டாம்./ பாடாவதியான வீடு.

பாடிவீடு பெ. (அ.வ.) போர்க்களத்தில் படைகள் கூடாரம் அமைத்துத் தங்கியிருக்கிற இடம்; the place where the king's army is camping. பாடிவீட்டிலும் ஒற்றர்கள் நுழைந்துவிட்டார்களா?

பாடு¹ வி. (பாட, பாடி) 1: (பாடலை) இசையோடு வெளியிடுதல்; sing. அந்தப் பாட்டை இன்னொரு முறை பாடு./ குழந்தையைத் தாலாட்டுப் பாடி உறங்க வைத்தாள். 2: (இனிமையாக) ஒலி எழுப்புதல்; (of birds) sing. புள்ளினங்கள் பாட, காலை புலர்ந்தது. 3: (கவிதை, செய்யுள் போன்றவை) படைத்தல்; எழுதுதல்; compose (poems); write (verse). மன்னனின் வெற்றியைப் பாடிய புலவர்கள் பலர்./ கவி பாடும் திறமை அனைவருக்கும் கிட்டுவதில்லை. 4: (புகழ், வெற்றி முதலியவற்றை) எடுத்துக் கூறுதல்; proclaim (the glory, victory, etc.); sing the praise of (someone's deeds). தலைவரின் புகழ் பாடும் தொண்டர்கள்!

பாடு² பெ. 1: (பிறர் சம்பந்தம் இல்லாமல் ஒருவர்) பொறுப்பில் விடப்பட்ட காரியம்; (one's) responsibility; business. உனக்கு ஒரு கடையை வைத்துக்கொடுத்து விட்டேன், ஒழுங்காக நடத்துவது உன் பாடு./ பிரச்சினையைப் பேசித் தீர்த்துக் கொள்வது அவர்கள் பாடு. 2: (குறிப்பிட்ட சூழலில் ஒருவரின்) நிலை; (one's) lot; condition. கணவன் மனைவி சண்டையைத் தீர்க்கப் போய் என் பாடு திண்டாட்டமாகிவிட்டது./ மழை வந்துவிட்டால் நடைபாதையில் வசிப்போர் பாடு கஷ்டம்! 3: (அனுபவிக்கும்) சிரமம்; கஷ்டம்; effort (which puts one under strain). தண்ணீர் பிடிப்பதற்குள் நாங்கள் படும் பாடு!/ பெரும் பாடு பட்டுச் சேர்த்த சொத்து. 4: (பொதுவாக) வாழ்க்கை; one's lot in life. அவரவர் பாட்டைக் கவனித்துக்கொள்வதற்கே திண்டாட வேண்டியிருக்கிறது. 5: (பெயரெச்சத்தின் பின் எதிர்மறைச் சொல்லோடு வரும்போது) விரும்பத்தகாத நிலை தொடர்ந்து நீடிப்பதைத் தெரிவிப்பது; used for expressing the continuance of an undesirable state. மழை விட்ட பாடில்லை./ இவ்வளவு நேரமாகியும் வேலை ஆரம்பித்த பாட்டைக் காணோம்/ என் கஷ்டம் தீர்கிற பாடாக இல்லை.

பாடுபடு வி. (பாடுபட, பாடுபட்டு) (உடலை வருத்தி) உழைத்தல்; கஷ்டப்பட்டுச் செய்தல்; toil; work hard; take pains. மக்கள் தொகைக் கணக்கின்படி பதினெட்டு சதவீதத்திற்கு மேற்பட்டவர்கள் நிலத்தில் பாடுபடுகின்றனர்./ பாடுபட்டுப் படித்தும் தேர்வில் வெற்றி பெறவில்லை/ பாடுபட்டுத் தேடிய பணத்தை நீங்கள் இவ்வாறு வீணாக்கலாமா?

முருகியல் 849 முழி²

முருகியல் பெ. (பெ.வ.) அழகியல்; aesthetics.

முருங்கை பெ. உணவில் பயன்படுத்தும் இலைகளையும் காய்களையும் உடைய, எளிதில் ஒடியக் கூடிய ஒரு மரம்; horse-radish tree. வெண்ணெய் உருக்கும் போது முருங்கைக் கீரை போடுவது உண்டு.

முருங்கைக்காய் பெ. குச்சி போன்று நீண்டதும் உட்பகுதியில் சதைப்பற்றுள்ளதுமான, முருங்கை மரத்தின் காய்; fruit of the horse-radish tree which looks like a small stick; (in India) drum-stick.

முல்லா பெ. (இஸ்.) தொழுகையை முன்னின்று நடத்துபவர்; one who leads and conducts the prayer in a mosque.

முல்லை பெ. 1: பச்சை நிறக் காம்பில் சிறிய வெண்ணிற இதழ்களைக் கொண்ட வாசனை மிகுந்த பூ; a kind of jasmine. 2: (ஐந்து வகை நிலப் பாகுபாட்டில்) காடும் காடு சார்ந்த இடமும்; (in the fivefold division of land) forest region.

முலாம் பெ. 1: பொருள்களின் மீது தங்கம், வெள்ளி முதலிய உலோகங்களை உருக்கிப் பூசும் அல்லது அந்த உலோகங்களின் நிறம் கொண்ட வர்ணத்தை மெல்லிய படிவாகப் பூசும் பூச்சு; gilding. 2: காண்க: மின்முலாம்.

முலாம்பழம் பெ. சந்தன நிறத் தோலையும் நீர்ச் சத்து மிகுந்த சதைப் பகுதியையும் உடைய, அளவில் சிறிய பூசணி போன்ற பழம்; musk-melon.

முலை பெ. (பெண்ணின்) மார்பகம்; (woman's) breast.

முழக்கம் பெ. 1: (இடி முதலியவை எழுப்பும் அல்லது பல ஒலிகள் ஒருசேர ஒலிப்பதால் எழும்) பேரொலி; rumble; roar; shout. இடி முழக்கம்/ மேள முழக்கத்தோடு நிகழ்ச்சி களைகட்டியது./ போர் முழக்கம் கேட்டவர்களை நடுங்கவைத்தது. 2: கோஷம்; ஆவேசப் பேச்சு; slogan shouting; thunderous speech. நிர்வாகத்தை எதிர்த்து முழக்கமிட்டவாறு தொழிலாளர்கள் ஊர்வலமாக வந்தனர்./ அவருடைய மேடை முழக்கத்திற்கு வழக்கமான கைதட்டல்.

முழக்கு வி. (முழக்க, முழக்கி) 1: பேரொலி எழுப்புதல்; roar. இடி முழக்கியது. 2: கோஷமிடுதல்; shout (slogans); thunder. தொழிலாளர்கள் தங்கள் கோரிக்கைகளை முழக்கினார்கள்.

முழங்கால் பெ. தொடைக்குக் கீழே காலை மடக்கி நீட்டக் கூடிய மூட்டு அமைந்திருக்கும் பகுதி/ (சில வட்டாரங்களில்) மேற்குறிப்பிட்ட மூட்டிலிருந்து கணுக்கால்வரையில் உள்ள பகுதி; knee/part of the leg from knee to ankle. முழங்கால்வரை தொங்கும் ஜிப்பா அணிந்திருந்தார்./ முழங்காலில் சரியான அடி!

முழங்கால்படியிடு வி. (-இட, -இட்டு) (அ.வ.) காண்க: முழங்காலிடு.

முழங்காலிடு வி. (-இட, -இட்டு) மண்டியிடுதல்; kneel down.

முழங்கு வி. (முழங்க, முழங்கி) 1: (இடி, பீரங்கி போன்றவை அல்லது வாத்தியங்கள்) பேரொலி எழுப்புதல்; (of thunder, cannon, etc.) roar; rumble; (of an ensemble) sound loudly. இடி முழங்கி மின்னல் வெட்டிப் பலத்த மழை பெய்தது./ பீரங்கிகள் முழங்கத் தரப்பட்ட அணிவகுப்பு மரியாதையைப் பிரதமர் ஏற்றுக்கொண்டார்./ மேளம் முழங்கப் பிரமாதமாக நடந்தது ஊர்வலம். 2: உரக்கக் கூறுதல்; (மேடையில்) ஆரவாரத்துடன் பேசுதல்; shout (slogans); thunder out (a speech). நிர்வாகத்திற்கு எதிரான கோஷங்களைத் தொழிலாளர்கள் முழங்கினார்கள்./ செயலில் காட்ட வேண்டும், கூட்டத்தில் முழங்கி என்ன பயன்?

முழங்கை பெ. கையை மடக்கி நீட்டுவதற்கு உரிய மூட்டு அமைந்திருக்கும் பகுதி/மேற்குறிப்பிட்ட மூட்டிலிருந்து கீழே மணிக்கட்டுவரை உள்ள பகுதி; elbow/forearm. முழங்கையை மேஜை மேல் ஊன்றிக்கொண்டு உட்கார்ந்திருந்தான்./ முழங்கையால் தடுத்ததால் அரிவாள் வெட்டு தலையில் விழவில்லை.

முழந்தாள் பெ. காண்க: முழங்கால்.

முழம் பெ. நீட்டிய நிலையில் நடுவிரலின் நுனியிலிருந்து முழங்கைவரையிலான அளவு; the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. இரண்டு முழம் மல்லிகை கொடு.

முழம்

முழம்போடு வி. (-போட, -போட்டு) முழத்தில் அளத்தல்; measure (sth.) with முழம்.

முழவு பெ. (உ.வ.) முரசு; drum.

முழி¹ வி. (முழிக்க, முழித்து) (பே.வ.) 1: காண்க: விழி¹.

முழி² பெ. (பே.வ.) 1: காண்க: விழி².

A best-seller that makes Tamil simple

(By A Staff Reporter)

A best seller at the recent Madras Book Fair was a marvellous dictionary called Cre-A's Contemporary Tamil Dictionary. Meant for the general reader, it records the words of ***generally*** *spoken and written Tamil, including its loan words from other languages, and explains them in simple Tamil and English.*

Its near-16,000 words can be substantially increased if you use the suffixes defined to make other words (aalar and cheyal are defined, not cheyalaalar or other words using the aalar suffix), but even then it is a far cry from the 110,000-word Tamil Lexicon which dates to 1926 and 1936. But what is significant is that with this vocabulary you can read and be up-to-date with everything that is being published today for the general educated reader and can use this knowledge to communicate well. This is a dictionary whose aim is better communication, not decipherment of Tamil punditry.

Taking a courageous stand, the dictionary includes Tamil words that use Sanskrit letters. It also includes several Sri Lankan Tamil words. The pages shown here exemplify: besides the Tamil-Tamil-English definitions, the following: (on left): homonyms, grammatical information for nouns and verbs, stylistic labels; Sri Lankan Tamil and, in paatu 2, a word from spoken Tamil that is now finding a place in written Tamil: (on right): subject labels, cross-referred entries and an illustration.

The entire text was computer-set and is now stored in a form that can be retrieved for use by any Indian language. Cre-A's Ramakrishnan, a Tamil publisher who is different and sees a future for Tamil publishing that's not merely 'pop', and Chief Editor Dr P R Subramaniam have teamed on what is undoubtedly an outstanding literary as well as technical effort (Imagine a Tamil publication that is even well printed!). With their dictionary they've given new hope for Tamil publishing.

Well spoken, but what next?

Attending for a brief while the seminar on Madras 2011 (see page 1), *The Man from Madras Musings* was truly astounded by the felicitous use of the spoken word.

One legislator, a lawyer, who insisted he only spoke in the name of his Revolutionary Leader, made a lot of sense on the state of the law and building and development practices in Madras. Even more impressive were some of the administrators, whose fluency, presentation and sense of humour reflected why Madras, rather, Tamil Nadu, has long had the reputation of possessing the cream of the IAS crop.

What was still more remarkable was that these officials minced no words and, in public, made their views known to the few legislators present. One message clearly spelt out was that the Land Ceiling Act was an absolute farce and should be rescinded forthwith.

While all this sounded very well in the comfort of the Park Sheraton and was well appreciated by those ensconced in those surroundings, the question that nagged *The Man from Madras Musings* was what would happen, next, to these deliberations and the heavy tomes *The Times* Research Foundation had got prepared for the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority.

A second question was what was the reason for *The Times* of Bombay's year-long interest in Madras? Or, rather, why had *The Hindu* and the *Indian Express* (founded in this City) NOT come up with such a project? They didn't even keep up with the proceedings! Perhaps a true reflection of their interest in this the city that had nurtured them.

Singing son

Who's that singer named Rajeshwara Rao who's soon to be heard on national television? *The Man from Madras Musings* is willing to bet that even Quizmaster Naveen Jayakumar would not know the answer to that one — unless he had caught up with a recent but obscure newspaper photograph and caption.

Apparently the Telugu singer is the son of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and is an industrialist in his own right. He was in Madras recently to have his songs recorded at the Prasad Recording Theatre. The music for them was scored by Ilayaraja.

Recording over, Rajeswara Rao had a preview of *Chinna Gounder,* another slice of the GV Films pie.

The addicts' message

In a daring experiment that has attracted India-wide attention through being presented at the Indian Psychiatry Society's annual conference in New Delhi, five ex-drug addicts are being used to counter the menace of AIDS in Madras.

Operating in a central Madras area known for its large number of drug users, these "field workers" will communicate, in the language they once shared with the addicts, the dangers of sharing needles, the possibility of getting AIDS through such needles and the way to clean syringes.

Total abstinence is not the primary message, says Dr Vimala Rao of Madras Medical College. That's for later; for now it's to get the users who take drugs intravenously to inject them more safely and without the additional risk of AIDS.

Giant Anjaneyar

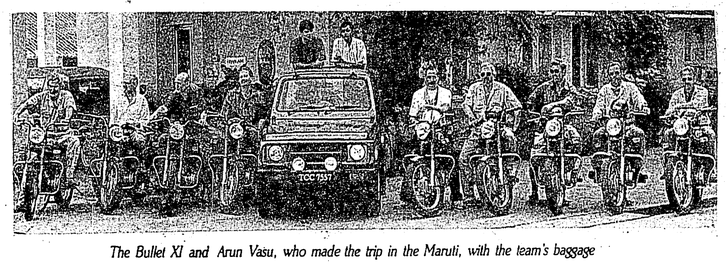
The tallest Anjaneyar statue in India will be installed at Ramnagar, Nanganallur, on the southern outskirts of Madras, on the 16th of this month. The 32-foot tall statue weighs 90 tonnes and it took renowned sculptor Muthiah *Sthapathi* three years to complete the work.

The *Sthapathi* used a single stone obtained from Peramanallur, North Arcot, for the work. It took two months to transport the 35′ x 90′ x 15′ block to this site where it was sculpted *in situ*.

The massive granite icon, which stands on a four-foot high pedestal, is twice the height of the famed Anjaneyar statues in Namakkal and Suchindram and is 1.25 times the height of the one in Bangalore's Mahalakshmi Layout. Its formal consecration will take a few months hence. Meanwhile, a temple is also being planned, to rise by the side of the Sri Anjaneyar, who, as the benign Aadhi Vyaadhi Hara, will offer succor to the ill.

M M M

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY



The Bullet XI and Arun Vasu, who made the trip in the Maruti, with the team's baggage

Seeing Tamil Nadu the rugged way

• by Anuradha Bhattacharjee

You are friends and neighbours, comfortably off even in recession-hit Sweden. You are in your forties and life has been kind to you. So you want to take a couple of weeks off and have fun. What would you do if your ten-man crowd comprises of advertising executives (Saatchi and Saatchi-linked, mind you), a physician, a pilot, a film director, and a police superintendent among others.

Well, visiting faraway places with strange sounding names seems like just the thing to do. But if you garage the car(s) on weekends and motorcycle around the countryside, then you decide to do South India the hard way! And if motorbikes is what you decide to use, what better way to do it than pick up your bikes in India, bikes made for Indian roads — and at Rs. 40,000 apiece, a bargain say, compared to Swedish prices.

Team-leader Ola Ronngard Larsson, with the Saatchi and Saatchi connection, had always liked British bikes. And he had an Indian neighbour who often spoke of Indian-made Enfield Bullets, the 500 cc model favoured by the police and the Services in India. When Arun Vasu of TT. Travels, Madras, turned up on the Swedish scene and put it all together, Larsson's team decided to do South India the Bullet way. And with a local mechanic, Larsson's team became the Bullet XI!

The team had originally planned to include Karnataka (Bangalore and Mysore) in its itinerary, but with the gleaming new Bullets all bearing Tamil Nadu registration numbers, it was thought wise not to ride them in Karnataka. And so it became a 1,150 km odyssey through Tamil Nadu in 11 days.

The few close brushes with unmindful pedestrians and uncaring drivers on the road rather shook the law-abiding Swedes. And the abandon with which local motorcyclists ride without helmets shocked them. The use of helmets for riders and a stringent restriction on the number of people riding pillion must be introduced in India, the team urged when it met the Press at journey's end.

By then, the team had also made a contribution in other ways. It addressed the Madras business community, the advertising community and the International Women's Association — exchanging thoughts on a variety of subjects more pertinent to their backgrounds, like international trade, advertising and women's rights.

Pressed on why he and his team chose the Bullet, Larsson said that the Enfield Bullet, unlike the high-powered Japanese models which are the craze in Sweden, is a relatively simple, straightforward bike, perfectly suited to Indian roads and easy to repair should things go wrong. The Japanese bikes would have been difficult to handle in India and would have posed maintenance problems.

With the Enfields and Arun Vasu making their stay in India thoroughly enjoyable, most of the members of the team are determined to return with their families for more Indians holidays. The quality of the Bullets, which they are taking back with them to demonstrate that "Made in India" is good, also makes many of them feel that the stage is set for further tie-ups with Sweden. Are we ready for the ride?

Budget will signal 'Green'

Some of the Public Sector entities have already implemented the decision of the government to disinvest a part of their equity. The rest of them will follow this example, for there is no other way left for the government to bridge its fiscal deficit and, yet, avoid harsh levies.

But did the government gather the best prices for these shares? Did they sell out at low prices? There are already allegations about their having parted with these equities in favour of government-sponsored mutual funds at rock-bottom prices. It is rumoured that a killing will be made when these equities are unloaded into the secondary market.

Thanks to this point of view, the government is waiting and watching from the first listings before it disinvests more. Also, like any other owner of an enterprise, it is hoping that the sales of the shares will yield big cash and, if that happens, its next disinvestment programme will fill its coffers; and what else does a government strapped for cash want?

There is one other reason for the government's keen interest in bolstering the mood of the Stock Market. Many other profitable PSU will now need additional capital to augment capacity or implement other capital expenditure plans. They can easily collect this from the capital market if their bottom line is good. For instance, companies in the oil sector can easily issue additional capital at a premium.

But all this cannot happen if the buoyancy in the market is not sustained. The budget is the only event that is currently threatening the 'Blues', but

BULL'S EYE

it has to enthuse confidence and not threaten it, if enterprises are to mobilise the required resources. The central budget will therefore have no option but to devise novel incentives and contrive schemes aimed towards attracting more funds into the capital market.

And all this is not such a bad thing. If well regulated, the opportunity will be used by private enterprise to collect capital for its growth and modernisation plans. These plans, when well implemented, will generate production and employment. Since increased production is the basis of inflation management, prices will gain strength and become tolerable. Also, since exports cannot grow without goods to sell, these aspirations will also, hopefully, be advanced. The investor will, in the bargain, make profits, and this is the good part for us as investors.

This will improve our confidence in the market and more savings will move into the market. The profits of the investors in the stock market is the basis of the edifice on which rests the future of production, commerce and trade in this country. These profits have to be built if the confidence is to be sustained. The budget will do this and nothing else.

We will therefore be very surprised if February 29th brings in tidings that damages the sentiments of this market. It can only improve, even if there are harsh measures aimed towards tax payers. We therefore ardently counsel investment in good scrips. Here are three recommendations:

TAMILNADU TELECOMMUNICATION LIMITED (Current Market Price: Rs. 32.50): This company is engaged in the manufacture of PIJF telecommunication cables. Promoted by TIDCO and Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL), this company supplies its production partly to TCIL. The promoters together hold about 50 per cent stake in this company. For the year 1992-93, it expects to record a profit of Rs. 1 crore at the net level on a conservative basis. The share price movement indicates a possible price of Rs. 50/- in the medium term and further rise in the long-term. Buy.

TUBE INVESTMENTS OF INDIA LIMITED (Current Market Price: Rs. 115.00): This leading bicycle manufacurer of the Murugappa group is enhancing its production capacity to cater to the increasing needs of the domestic market and export demand. A rights PCD issue in the ratio of one debenture for every two shares has also been announced. The rights would entitle the holder to equity shares at a premium of Rs. 35/-. The share, which is now quoting cum-rights, is a good medium-term investment at current levels.

ANDHRA PRADESH RAYONS LIMITED (Current Market Price: Rs. 70.00): This company, managed by Thapars, is primarily engaged in the manufacture of viscose staple fibre. The company has now achieved a turnaround situation — accumulated losses have reduced to Rs. 17.39 crores in March 1991 from Rs. 40.54 crores. The first half working of the current year was affected due to large imports of pulp, but the prospects of the second half is viewed with optimism. The share price movement indicates a hopeful trend. Buy at current prices for a target of Rs. 100/- plus.

K. Gopalakrishnan

Quizzin' champs from Madras

IN PROFILE by Lisa Durante

H S Rahul (left) and Sumant Srivatsan, two of the three quizzin' champs.

At last Calcutta quizzers got their comeuppance. A Madras team are the national champs, winning that popular radio contest, the Bournvita Quiz.

Both Sumant Srivatsan and H S Rahul, 16 years old apiece, know what they are about. Despite uncomfortably pitched voices and the smatterings of teenage acne, the two of them exude a benevolent self-assuredness astonishing at such a young age. Sheetal Kaul is the third member of the team from Madras's DAV Higher Secondary School which was specially honed for quizzing — and he was the one I couldn't meet.

Together, they are the outright winners of the Cadbury's Bournvita Quiz contest, the annual inter-school general knowledge competition that brings together teams from the four corners of India — North, South, East and West — to fence such questions as "What is the name of Richie Rich's butler?" or "Who is a psephologist?".

If, like me, you have to 'pass' on both these questions, you might like to know that "Cadbury" is the name of Rich's butler and a "psephologist" is a person who studies the trends of elections. If that is difficult, then some of the trickier statistical questions are even further beyond the league of many ordinary mortals. "Even we couldn't manage some of those toughies," Sumant and Rahul chime in unison.

It is not, apparently, the actual complexity of a question that makes or breaks a potential winning team. It is, rather, the force of a series of psychological conditions — the capacity to maintain high stress threshold levels, unflagging team confidence and, above all, "to always bear in mind that you are functioning as a group", says Sumant. There is no room, in this type of competition, for soloists trying to "steal the show"; whoever knows the answer to a problem should be "first to push the button without going into an ego-trip, though", warns Rahul. And, "luck is vital too", Sumant adds.

The contest works on a straightforward elimination process. "We started as a massive group of 180 teams of three", Sumant explains, and then, round after round, grilling after grilling, "we came up trumps", he smiles.

There were no girls competing in any of the southern teams, or making the grade to the finals. Sumant shrugs this off, claiming that girls have "other preoccupations", and Rahul dismisses the matter by saying that "he hadn't yet analysed the reasons why". There are evidently more important things at hand for these boys than worrying about the female's competitive drive, or females themselves, for that matter. DAV is, after all, not a fully co-educational school.

Sumant and Rahul, both aspiring bio-technologists, are classmates as well as friends. Sumant seems to be the shyer of the two, with an endearing smile and a trusting expression. Rahul is more authoritative with a grave-eyed countenance which will, no doubt, be considered impressive when he grows older. His father studied at "M.I.T., U.S.A" whispered stress on the "A" — and his mother, a chemistry B.Sc., — "doesn't work", he says.

Sumant's parents, however, both work; Mum at ICICI and Dad as a marketing director in a large firm. His younger sister is also showing signs of academic promise. "This" says Sumant, is a "godsend since my own term performance has been plummetting," he claims.

Sheetal Kaul, the third member of the champion team, is said to be the "socially inclined" one of the trio. He wants to be a doctor when he grows up.

Speaking of social inclinations, did any of the chaps have any time for the "mundane pursuits that teenagers are given to?" I ask. Blank response. Sumant's smile twitches and Rahul's eyes grow owl-like. Persisting, I change tack, "What do you do on Sunday mornings?" "Ah," they exclaim — the penny seems to drop — "We have a special maths tuition class....." That says it all.

The View from Fort St George... ...by R.K.K.

'Prevention package' takes processionists head-on

The first session of the Tamil Nadu Assembly for 1992, which began with the Governor's Address on January 29th, will long be remembered as the starting point of a 'prevention package' to end bus-burning and property-damage by processionists and rally participants. The 'package' announced in the wake of February 2nd's violence in Saidapet, after a DMK procession, would, by implication, apply to all parties.

During British days, collective fines used to be the preventive to public property-damage. It had been effective. But a similar attempt in the late Seventies was still-born, and had failed even as a threat. But Chief Minister Jayalalitha has once again decided to meet head-on any situation that is likely to disrupt the smooth running of civic life.

"The DMK," she said without mincing words, "will be allowed to organise processions hereafter only if the leadership gives it in writing that its men will not turn violent. In case there are damages, compensation will have to be paid." Justifying her remarks, she recalled earlier violent incidents involving DMK men. She was calm but firm even after DMK Member Selvaraj, with a bandaged right eye, removed his shawl to display his bloodstained shirt and towel, and demanded that those responsible for the attack on him should be punished. Protest walk-outs by the PMK, DMK, CPI(M), CPI and the Janata Dal members followed. The walk-outs were after question hour on February 4th.

Walk-outs in the Assembly have ceased to shock anyone. But some Opposition parties strayed from the norms for the third year in succession, by making speeches and then walking out, even before the Governor began his address. Rules says that no member can make a speech or raise a point of order either before or after the Governor's Address.

Governor Bhisma Narain Singh, a seasoned politician himself, patiently watched as the DMK's Selvaraj, Janata Dal's Kumara Das, CPI(M)'s Thambuswamy and CPI's Palaniswamy spoke into inactive mikes (the power having been switched off). The speeches referred to the high prices of essential commodities, rise in the issue price of rice in the PDS, and the alleged misuse of the TADA Act. PMK member and former Minister S Ramachandran wore a black shirt to express displeasure at the Centre's indifference to the Tamils' plight in Karnataka following notification of the interim award of the Cauvery Water Tribunal. The House also saw the suspension of the DMK's Parithi Illamvazhuthi for the rest of the session as he had insisted on raising an issue against the Speaker's ruling. The suspension, said Speaker Muthiah, was according to rules since the member had been named and removed twice "for disrupting the proceedings of the House".

There was also a mild flutter in the House as a visitor, becoming emotional on seeing the Chief Minister, raised slogans extolling Ms Jayalalitha and Muthuramalinga Thevar. But he was pardoned and let off.

Two cheerful bits of news to come out of the Session were the raising of the State's Plan outlay to Rs. 1,751 crores from Rs. 1,486 crores, following the Chief Minister's request to the Planning Commission, and the announcement of opening of the B & C Mills shortly. The Chief Minister also hoped that the Centre would extend adequate assistance for flood relief measures in the State. The sanctioned amount now was just Rs. 40 lakhs against the required Rs. 400 Crores! She admitted that the State was in dire financial straits. While the revenue from capital and public accounts was only Rs. 7,147.34 crores, the expenditure on salaries, subsidies, maintenance, debt repayment and welfare schemes alone came to Rs. 7,504.85 crores!

While the Congress(I) members were throughout at pains to point out that the Centre was also in acute financial crisis, the non-Congress (I) Opposition took every opportunity to attack the TADA Act. But Minister K.A. Krishnaswamy pointed out that the Act was being used only to control violence and not to settle old scores.

The last day of last month saw the installation of a life-size portrait of MGR in the chamber of the Assembly, next to the portrait of his mentor, the late C.N. Annadurai.

CAPITAL MOVE

(Continued from P.1)

nearer the forests of Tamil Nadu. Agriculture to Thanjavur, in the heart of the rice bowl, Fisheries to Tuticorin on the Fisheries Coast, Education to centrally located Tiruchi and so on and so forth.

If Madras is to be saved, these ideas too must be debated as alternatives.

An area of extreme focus

BUSINESS REVIEW by THE SHROFF

The Annual Leather Fair in Madras attracted a lot more attention than usual this year. Last year was a bit of a washout because of the Gulf war. The representation from the foreign countries was rather limited. This year there was renewed interest because of many reasons. The leather industry has been identified as a thrust area for exports by a foreign exchange-starved government. Within this, leather footwear has been chosen as an area for extreme focus.

There were 332 companies participating in the Fair. Of these, 100 were foreign companies. They represented 20 countries. There were several new entrants, like Brazil, Korea, Hong Kong and Nepal. This year, the government took several pragamatic steps to allow foreign participants to bring in their products. For the first time, temporary exhibits could be imported. They were also allowed to be sold here within a certain time limit. M M Hashim, Chairman, Council of Leather Exports, says that the leather industry will in all probability reach the export target of Rs. 3500 crore this year. This will be an increase of 6 per cent in dollar terms and thirty per cent in rupee terms compared to last year.

As usual, there were many foreign buyers visiting the fair. Most of them felt that the Indian Leather Industry had successfully penetrated the middle market segment of the West and has moved away from the 'cheap products' image. With a little more upgradation in technology, India can easily reach the highest segment of the market.

More with less

The last fortnight was full of business seminars and visitors. Another much looked forward to event is the annual convention of the Madras Management Association (MMA). The topics chosen are always of current interest and those who present papers are experienced professionals, entrepreneurs and bureaucrats.

This year the theme of the convention was making more with less. The reason for choosing this theme was to draw attention to the fact that the time has come for India to make a sincere attempt to integrate itself with the global economy. One of the things which has to be urgently attended to is increasing productivity in the diverse sectors of the economy. The keynote address was delivered by HK Singhania, Chairman, JK Group.

Passenger gripes

The Air Passengers Association of India, a consumer group, had organised an open forum to discuss air passengers problems with the Director General of Civil Aviation, Commercial Director of Indian Airlines and the Commercial Pilots Association (represented by a pilot).

The discussion brought out the travelling public's total disenchantment with the national airline. As industrialist Suresh Krishna pointed out, the customers, in this case the passengers, are not interested in excuses or explanations, what they want is service. Arun Shourie, the eminent journalist, wanted the air services to be brought under the Essential Services Maintenance Act. He insisted that the airline has to be accountable to the travelling public.

It was brought out very forcefully that if there was competition, and if the airlines was being run as a commercial enterprise, it would not adopt this cavalier attitude.

Little awareness

Among the many visitors to the city was a British Business Mission which focussed its attention on the Southern Region for a change. The mission was pleasantly surprised at the high degree of awareness of the managements of issues involved in their businesses at the global level. The workers on the shopfloor display an extraordinary capacity for absorbing skills, they also found. The delegates agreed that there was very little awareness in the UK of all that has been achieved by the Indian industry.

Star worship

Madras, Pongal Day 1992. A new Tamil film starring that South Indian superstar Shivaji Rao Gaekwad, immortalised as Rajinikanth, was being released at a city cinema. Before it, a larger-than-life cut-out of his had been erected and was the scene of hectic activity.

Rajini *rasigars* had gathered around the plywood figure and were performing what is known as *pal-abhishekham* (anointing the deity with milk, performed in Hindu temples to invoke the blessings of the deities). The milk,

KINEMAYANA BY MOVIEMAN

which dribbled down the painted wood, was collected in vessels, distributed to passers-by and drunk with fervour by Rajini fans. Incredible? Yet, true! An act of devotion reserved for the gods is now being extended to celluloid gods, like Rajinikanth and Prabhu.

After the unexpected and unprecedented success of *Chinna Thambi*, Prabhu's stock and saleability curve have shown a spectacular rise, placing him next only to Rajini and Kamal Hasan. So another *pal-abhishekam! Chinna Thambi's* success, incidentally, has prompted Tamil filmmakers to name every other film 'Chinna'. A recent release, *Chinna Gounder*, is already a big hit, and you can safely bet there are more 'Chinna movies' in the offing.

M G Ramachandran was perhaps the only Indian film superstar until now to receive such incredible adoration from his fans. (The word 'fan', coined in America, is an abbreviation of fanatic.) MGR fans worshipped him as nothing short of an *avatar* of God.

Some years ago, this writer's soul-mate was working on a 'down memory lane' piece on 'Puratchi Thalaivar'. MGR and this writer's soul-mate had been neighbours when the latter was a kid in half-pants (sometimes without them too!) and MGR was still a struggling actor, but getting known. The house where MGR had then lived was crumbling and had been long boarded up, but had to be photographed for the 'd-m-l' article. As the lensman tried to get the right angle of the historic house, my soul-mate had to hang around, staring at the walls and reliving memories of forty-odd years ago. He was interrupted by the driver of the auto in which they had travelled wondering aloud what on earth was going on. He wanted to know if it was a haunted house.

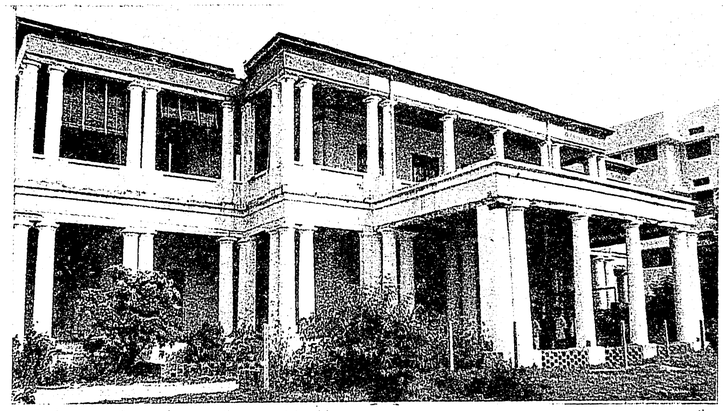
On being told the truth, he fell prostrate on the broken steps, reverence personified. He kissed the steps and spent long minutes touching and caressing the crumbling walls (like the legendary actress Greta Garbo did in a famous scene in one of her memorable movies). And as he drove my soul-mate back home, he talked rapturously about his good fortune. At journey's end, he even refused to accept the fare, expressing a sense of insult that he was being offered money for what he described as "a pilgrimage of a lifetime".

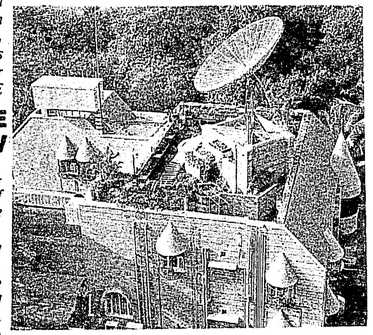
Such star crazes in Tamil Nadu began with the first superstar, M K Thigaraja Bhagavathar. His fans called him the male *avatar* of Goddess Saraswathi herself. He had fans in high and low places; the unique feature of his incredible popularity was that intellectuals too were his fans.

An affluent fan once had an ivory comb specially made and brought to Bhagavathar with a request that the star should inaugurate its use by combing his famous crown of hair. (Bhagavathar had flowing shoulder-length locks; 'the Bhagavathar crop' was a fashion of the day!) This fan used only that ivory comb to comb his hair till its 'teeth' broke. He then ordered another ivory comb and went after Bhagavathar for its ceremonial inauguration. This, believe it or not, happened several times.

Many may not be aware that one of the earliest film fan clubs in Madras to be run in an organised manner was the brainchild of none other than T T Vasu, later to become eminent in industry and the world of music. His idol was the macho Hollywood star Errol Flynn. Yes, there was a Flynn Fans Club in Madras run by Vasu. A film buff, TTV also ran a movie magazine for a short while named *U and the Movies*, copies of which he still preserves with love and care. In those days he was crazy about stars (mostly American), until he shifted his passion to Carnatic music!

Star craze is indeed an integral part of life in this part of the country.



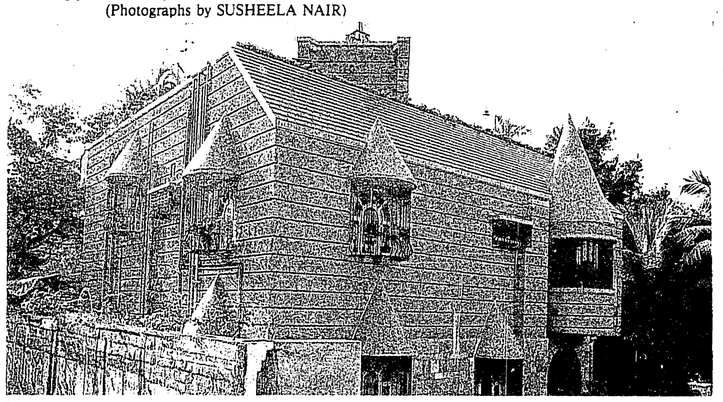


THE OLD... ...& THE NEW

Living in gracious style generations apart. Lushington Gardens *in Saidapet is no longer visible from Mount Road; its once spacious gardens are covered with scores of houses of all description. And if you can find your way through the maze they've created, there you'll find this splendid mansion, one of the finest examples of 19th Century Madras garden-house construction. The house, built in the 1830s with splendid surrounding verandahs and handsome pillars, may be a bit the worse for wear these days, but, thankfully, it still remains a HOME where memories are still long. The house, built by one of the Lushingtons who were all well-known names in the Madras Administration, later became the residence of the Collector of Chengalpattu before it once more passed into private hands.*

The new building this fortnight is straight out of a book of fairy tales, a gingerbread castle, in truth. Located just off Pantheon Road, its green walls, white grills, vivid blue cones topping tower-windows and balconies, it must be the most colourful and out-of-this-world house in Madras. In fact, it's so fabulous that it deserves another view to show the high-tech gadgetry it abounds with, the roof garden and the covered swimming pool, lower left corner.

(Photographs by SUSHEELA NAIR)



With chimps, off the beaten track

VIDEOSCOPE by FILM FAN

Ben Kingsley has a penchant for challenging roles. When not playing such real life personalities as Gandhi, Lenin or Shoshtakovich, he can be found in several offbeat productions.

Eric Rochat's **The Fifth Monkey** finds Kingsley in one of the most offbeat films of his career. Set in South America, Kingsley plays an animal catcher who befriends a bunch of chimpanzees in the hope of selling them in the city. As they journey from the rain forest to the urban jungle, the adventures they encounter serve to remind us of man's inhumanity to his fellow beings. Shades of surreality colour this fable that is one of the most original films you are likely to see this year.

In **Cape Fear,** a convict (Robert De Niro) paroled after 15 years, returns to exact revenge from his defence lawyer (Nick Nolte) for his negligence while pleading his case. What appears to be a 'B' movie thriller becomes something else in the hands of director Martin Scorcese. This psychological drama provides Scorcese the opportunity to explore his favourite themes of paranoia, guilt and punishment. At the same time, there's no let-up in the tension and the finale is virtually a blood-bath, prompting critics to suggest that Scorcese has gone too far.

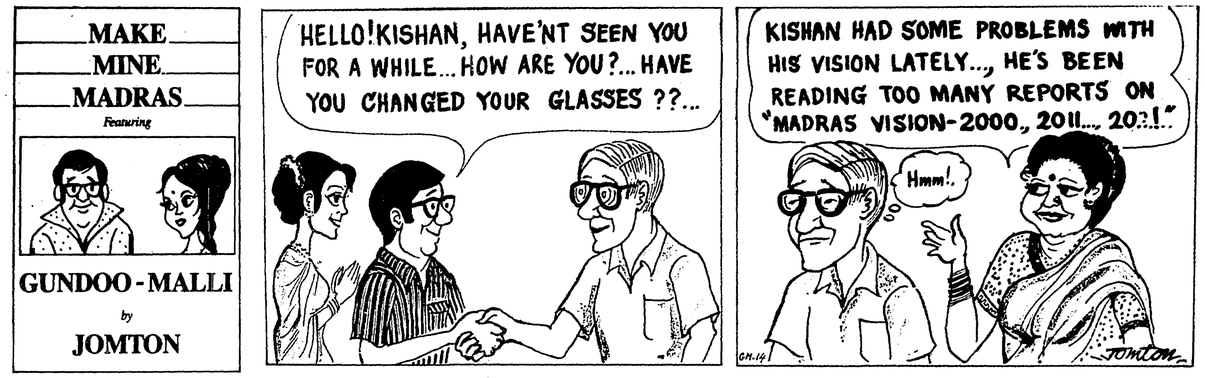
For director Spike Lee the subject of race is his magnificent obsession. **Jungle Fever** finds Lee exploring the complex issues involved in an interracial love affair. The simmering tensions between the races and the attitudes towards colour within racial groups are brought into sharp focus. Lee also manages to weave into the story current problems, such as the homeless and the crack addicts. Stevie Wonder's music provides an effective soundtrack for this probing foray into the melting pot. But tighter control at the editing table would have made **Jungle Fever** a more effective statement.

To entertain is all that the makers of **The Pope Must Die** are concerned with. Starring Robbie Coltrane, the film takes off on all the recent conspiracy theories that have surrounded the Papacy. The Mafia have succeeded in electing their candidate as Pope. But as a result of a clerical error, a lowly priest (Coltrane) is installed instead. Chaos follows, as the Mafia try to displace Coltrane, who is less of a pushover than what he was thought to be. The film veers between slapstick and black comedy as it hurtles swiftly towards its denouement.

To appreciate **A Matter of Life and Death** you have to first understand the background against which it was made. The year was 1946, the world was suffering from battle fatigue and the tide had turned against colonialism. While the film was made at the instigation of British authorities wanting to promote goodwill between their country and the United States, the film reflects the post war mood.

A R.A.F. pilot (David Niven), having survived an air crash, believes he's living on borrowed time as a result of a heavenly mistake. To further complicate matters, he's fallen in love with an American girl. While doctors battle for his life, there's another battle taking place in his mind. For, in his imagination, he has to face a trial in heaven to decide his fate on Earth!

This outrageous fantasy works brilliantly in fusing the real and the imaginary, thus completely engrossing the viewer in its double drama. **A Matter of Life and Death** was one of the high points of that film-making partnership, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger.



Oh! To be in New Delhi, Now that Winter's there!

looking aSKance

New Delhi is not a place I would like to live in for only one reason. I just would not be able to afford it. The city is not planned for middle-class living, though, of course, tens of thousands of them live there, survive durably, and even seem to enjoy it reasonably well. But those of us with immortal longings and eyes much bigger than our pocket-books are doomed to be frustrated. Just to mention one thing, it is a city of enormous distances and you can use up all your spending money just going by taxi from one place to another.

You must think me crazy for talking as if I were the first person from Madras to visit New Delhi. Sorry about that, but I am full of the city after having spent a few days there recently after an interval of about two years. (In my working career, I imagine, I must have been to New Delhi around a hundred times, but it grips me and holds me in its thrall every time I am there.) So I can't stop talking about it, at least until I finish this column.

It is a city to enjoy which fully you must put yourself in a state of willing suspension of disbelief. If you did that, you would see it is one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and certainly amongst the most magnificent half-a-dozen or so capital cities. In fact, let me go all out and say no other city has so many breathtaking avenues, and a wonderful miles-long running park of natural trees and plants that have not been tampered with, thanks apparently to Nehru's injunction.

The city is spreading in all directions like a self-replicating amoeba, but despite the disadvantages of this process, it is probably not a bad thing on the whole, since large stretches of beautiful areas within the city on which the promoters have cast their bilious, covetous eyes are simply not available for development. If we are going to give three cheers for New Delhi, that will be the first cheer. (Oh yes, slums and such. Indeed, yes, which is why I made that plea for disbelief, but think about London with its East End, New York with its Harlem, and Washington in its Southeast section, cities with decades, in fact, centuries of development and wealth behind them.)

Forget the taxis I mentioned a moment ago. At this time of the year, the city is meant for walking. A popular belief is that New Delhi is very cold in the winter. It is not really, except when it rains in the Himalaya and a chill wind blows from the Terai. Much of the time a pullover should do. If you can brave it for the first few minutes, a morning walk in New Delhi is perhaps one of the most exhilarating experiences you can hope for. All of New Delhi is available for walking on, but those who already know, or those who are being given good advice, will invariably and inevitably gravitate to the Lodi Gardens. Of course, New Delhi has been built over an enormous graveyard, but the original planners left many of the tombs untouched. The Lodi Tombs, situated as they are in a magnificent park, never fail to give you a thrill. Even in benevolent weather, when tourists flock the park, there is a certain serenity about the place that is overwhelming. On a winter morning, the tombs covered by a light haze, the birds trying to make up their minds whether to start chirping or not — the sun usually comes out quite late and sometimes not at all — the enormous expanse of the greenery of the Lodi Gardens really makes you think you are in another world.

But enough of this tourist stuff which everybody knows anyway. New Delhi is full of unexpected wonders. An eminent lady-journalist in a recent article found New Delhi quite uninteresting compared with her Bombay. *Chacun a son gout*, to each his own. An American friend once described Bombay to me as a pallid little imitation of New York, with none of New York's pleasures and all its woes. I will stay with that. New Delhi is the place where you walk from an aristocratic area into a medieval village — Nizamuddin, for instance — which is not visible at all until you walk into it. New Delhi is also a city full of five-star hotels, in the shops of which a grave-faced salesman tells an American tourist who has fallen in love with a piece of kitsch — probably a decorated elephant figure — without moving a single muscle on his face: Rs. 12,400/-, and the lady merely says, how much is that in U.S. dollars, and proceeds to take out a credit card.

As is my wont, I contradict myself, like Walt Whitman. You don't really need a lot of money to have a good time in New Delhi, if you do not view with greed the five-star hotels, the shops and so forth. You can have a wonderful time in the dabhas and in the coffee-shops, where you can make friends easily, for the price of a cup of coffee. But what you must really do is to find a journalist friend who is a member of the Press Club of India. This is the seediest-looking joint in town and has apparently not been touched up since Rajiv Gandhi visisted it seven or eight years ago. But it is also the most convivial and friendly place in New Delhi. All sorts of odd-looking people make their entries and exits. There are wizened old men, wrapped up from head to foot, who probably were journalists in a previous incarnation. This is a place where if you walk in and have to wait for your host, someone else — a total stranger of course — will ask you to sit down and have a drink while waiting. And, to get on the record another important point, this is also the most inexpensive place for food and drink. So much so that you can offer your host a couple of drinks yourself.

The other "people's place" in Delhi is the India International Centre which is set magnificently against the Lodi Gardens. If it is your thing, you can stay outside in the cold and watch Pupul Jayakar, Natwar Singh, I.J. Gujral, Mani Shankar Iyer *et al* drive in and make policy among other things.

But remember one thing about New Delhi — they speak only Hindi there.

S.K.

DOWN WITH THE COLD!

• by M. SETHURAM

I have just recovered from a bout of cold. There is nothing special about it except that this virus had visited me after an interval of seven years. I did not take any special precautions against it, but, somehow, the bug had not found me in these seven years. Early this month, I attended a music *sabha*. As it was stuffy inside, I took a chilled soft drink. That started it. Within about fifteen minutes I felt uneasy in my throat. By the time I reached home it had developed into an irritation and the insides of my throat felt as though they were being rubbed with rough sand paper. By bed time, the cold had fully established itself and water began streaming from my burning nose and eyes.

I remembered the treatments advertised in television. There's that thorny bug, which moves inside the throat pricking the walls, being annihilated by the saliva steeped in the vapours of a cough lozenge as it passes along. Then there's the doting mother who applies half a bottle of a balm on the neck and back of a snivelling boy and puts him to bed for the night; and, presto!, next morning, he is a bouncing bundle of mischief minus any trace of cold!

I chased my son to get these two items and, when they arrived, applied them as shown on TV and went to sleep. The next morning, my condition worsened. With such advice on it, that's probably why it's called the 'idiot box'!.

My wife now took charge of the situation. She urged me to see a doctor. "To see a doctor for a mere cold! Preposterous!" I thundered. But she would not listen. She threatened to leave me if I did not visit the doctor. I pondered over the matter. At the advanced age of 65, you cannot afford to be without a wife. (But at what age can you manage without a wife?) So I gave in reluctantly.

At the clinic the doctor prescribed a certain tablet to be taken three times a day for three days. I took the prescription to a medical shop where the boy at the counter said that it would cost me 54 rupees for the nine tablets! To spend 54 rupees for a simple cold in addition to the doctor's fee! Nothing doing! If he could give me something that would cost around 10 or 15 rupees.... The boy began to laugh. I ignored it and said that I would settle for a bottle of C.A.Q.

"What is C.A.Q.? I have never heard of it," the boy queried.

"It is a famous preparation for colds. You don't know about it?"

"We don't have such a thing, sir! Maybe it is a foreign preparation. Why don't you try Burma Bazaar?"

"Burma Bazaar be damned! It is prepared in Madras itself. Spencer's in Mount Road makes it!"

At this juncture, an elderly gentleman emerged from the back of the shop. He took over from the boy. He said, "Sir, Spencer's have discontinued this medicine even years before their building went up in flames. You cannot get it! But what's your trouble?"

I explained about my cold. After hearing me out, he said, "Sir, all you need is half a dozen analgesic tablets and a small bottle of cough syrup." He gave me the medicine and a bill well within 15 rupees. "You take these tablets three times a day for two days. You can also gulp a teaspoon of the syrup with the tablet. I assure you, sir, you will be back to normal health in about a week!" he said.

"Will it take longer if I don't take any medicine at all?" I asked him. You see, I'm one of those people who likes to avoid any kind of medicine as far as possible.

"Not at all!" he said and added, "If you take the medicine for the cold, you may get cured in a week, but if you don't, you may have to suffer for seven days! You choose between the two!" He smiled as I murmured, "Hobson's Choice!"

"Yes, sort of. Medical science is yet to devise a sure method to kill a cold. This cold virus is as ingenious as the cockroach! It is always a step ahead of the scientists. So, there's no cure, only palliatives!"

I took the medicines which the old chemist gave me. I had to! If I'd gone back empty-handed, my wife would have left me. Better to get cured in a week rather than suffer for seven long days — without a wife!

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BOUTIQUE CORNER

Where do you find the highest concentration of women's high-fashion boutiques this side of Rodeo Drive? Not in trendy Nungambakkam or in up-market Anna Nagar but in middle-class Alwarpet Circle. On a small stretch of T T K Road, one block away from the Alwarpet Circle, I counted no less than six boutiques! There are a few more round the corner, on C P Ramaswami Road, at the two shopping complexes. The grand-daddy of them all, *Shilpi*, has moved its main boutique to Gee-Gee Minar on Haddows Road, but has come back with another outlet on C P Ramaswami Road, Obviously, this is *the* area to shop for trendy outfits.

My own favourite is URVASHI, with its mix of beautiful Kancheepuram sarees, Kanchi cottons and something the boutique specialises in — silk-and-cotton mix sarees with exquisite woven borders and *pallus*. URVASHI also has the largest collection of Kanchi *Khadi* material and ethnic blouse pieces — apart from a varied collection of off-the-rack ready-made *Kurta-and-salwar* sets, ranging between Rs. 250 and Rs. 800/-.

A little further down the street is RITU'S, which brings us fashions from Bombay and Delhi — very chic, plenty of designs and large floor space. The outfits are set in muted colours and discreetly embroidered — there is not a harsh or gaudy note struck in any of the ensembles. (The price tags, too, which are likely to give you an occasional tremor, are discreetly tucked away!)

Another pleasant, but smaller, boutique is RIVAZ, from Delhi, with its pretty embroidered, spun and organza-chiffon *salwar-kamaeez* sets in the latest *haveli* cut, with yards and yards of fabric. Then there is CLASSIQUE, with more of the same. And on C P Ramaswami Road, there are STUDIO-5 and EXQUISITE apart from SHILPI. So fill up your purse and take your pick.

West Coast food

THE COCONUT GROVE on Harrington Road has already been presented in the photo feature, *The Old and the New*, in this journal. In terms of appearance, this is quite a special restaurant, with its Kerala-style cottages decorated with hurricane lanterns and bamboo-slatted blinds to create a stippled lighting effect. (You can even sit outside if you can brave the mosquitoes.) The kitchen area is open for inspection and the outside area is prettily decorated with Kerala lamps and terracotta figurines of Kathakali dancers and elephants. And to complete the picture, visitors are treated to the melodious strains of Jesudas's incredible voice.

The cuisine ranges from Malabar and Syrian Christian food to Goan and Mangalorean dishes, apart from the obligatory Chettinad fare. So you have a wide choice — their *elaneer, Malabar moru* or *rasam* for starters; various kinds of seafood (including a delicious crab curry, called *Kurlianchi kadi*, and shrimp, or *yera varuwal*); amongst the meat dishes is *Malabar kozhi porichattu (chicken)*, apart from excellent *lamb shtew* and Goan *sorpotel;* and there are a few vegetarian dishes, like *poritcha kozhambu*, and mushroom, or *kummu, kari*. These can be eaten with rice, idlies, Malabar or Ceylon *parathas* and different kinds of *appams*. The desserts, too, are delicious — I would particularly recommend their pineapple or *kaidachakka halwa*, and *ada pradhaman*.

As the name of the restaurant suggests, all the dishes are liberally laced with coconut — so weight (and cholesterol) watchers, beware!

V.K.

FOODS & FADS

IN THE STEWPOT

Make colourful *Methi Parathas* from fresh fenugreek leaves. Serve it with *Pork Vindaloo*, a traditional favourite from Goa. Wet the *parathas* in *Mughlai Dal*, a rich, spicy *dhal* from the North-West Frontier. Serve on the side, *Mattar Paneer Bhujia*, a dry, delectable accompaniment.

METHI PARATHAS

3 cups wheat flour
3 bunches fenugreek leaves, chopped fine.
4 spring onions, chopped fine
½ tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp *amchur*
Salt to taste.

Method

Sift the flour. Mix everything in a mixing bowl. Add sufficient water and knead to a soft dough.

Divide into 12 round balls. Roll out into six-inch discs on a floured board.

Shallow fry on a hot *tawa* until both sides are crisp and golden.

MUGHLAI DAL

⅔ cup whole black gram *dhal* (*urad dhal* with skin)
⅓ cup dried kidney beans (*rajmah*)
One inch finely shredded ginger
1 onion chopped fine
2 bay leaves
¼ cup well mixed curd
¼ cup fresh cream
2 or 3 green chillies, slit sideways
½ tsp chilli powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
3 tbs ghee
Salt to taste
1 tbs lemon juice

Method

Soak black gram *dhal* and kidney beans overnight. Wash well. Add salt, turmeric powder, green chillies, ginger, bay leaves and pressure cook for 30-45 minutes.

Add the chopped tomatoes. Add a little water if necessary and simmer till well blended.

Add well mixed curd and simmer for another couple of minutes.

Heat ghee and fry the onions till golden. Add to the *dhal*.

Finally add the lemon juice after removing from fire. Serve hot.

MATTAR PANEER BHUJIA

1 cup shelled peas
125 grams fresh *paneer*
2 medium sized onions, chopped fine
1" ginger, scraped and chopped fine
2 or 3 green chillies, chopped fine
¼ tsp chilli powder
4 spring onions, chopped fine
1 tsp *garam masala*
1 small bunch of coriander leaves, chopped fine
4 tbs ghee
Salt to taste

Method

Cut the *paneer* into very small pieces, not larger than peas.

Heat ghee. Fry the *paneer* till golden and set aside.

In the same ghee fry the onions till golden and set aside.

In the same pan add the peas, chopped ginger and chilli powder and salt. Cover and simmer till peas are tender. Add the fried onions, fried *paneer, garam masala* and green chillies. Stir fry for 2-3 minutes till everything blends and becomes dry.

Garnish with chopped coriander leaves and serve hot.

Chandra Padmanabhan
PORK VINDALOO

½ kg pork
4 large onions — ground to a paste
3 large ripe tomatoes — ground to a paste
1 tbs ginger-garlic paste
1 tbs vinegar
1 tsp mustard seeds } powdered
1 tsp cummin seeds } fine
2 tsp chilli powder } powdered
½ tsp turmeric powder
A few curry leaves
Small bunch of coriander leaves chopped fine
3-4 tbs oil
Salt to taste

Method

Pressure cook the pork with salt and turmeric powder.

Heat oil. Fry the curry leaves. Add the ground onion and fry till brown. Add ginger-garlic paste and powdered *masala* and fry well.

Add the ground tomatoes and fry for a minute or two.

Add the cooked pork. Cover and cook on medium heat till well blended.

Add vinegar and chopped coriander leaves.

Serve hot with *parathas*.

Neela Prabhakar

The siren in the railway yard

CRIME NOTEBOOK BY RANDOR GUY

Trains and murder have some strange links, especially in Madras and its surrounding country. Murders have been committed on running trains, bodies, either whole or in parts, have been got rid of on them, in and around Madras.

One of the earliest sensations in Madras involving the railway tracks and murder was the famed Karunguzhi Parcel Murder Case. Though it happened almost sixty years ago, in 1934, it is still fresh in the minds of old-timers, Madras lawyers and aficionados of true crime.

It had all the classic elements of a crime thriller. A lovely young woman, buxomly beautiful, was married to an elderly temple cook. She was suspected of having several lovers, orthodox Brahmins, people in high places, top Madras lawyers, fun-loving executives of prosperous private sector oil companies, British executives, the lot. Who deposited her body in a train bound south from Egmore railway station?

Sita was her name. She was a Brahmin whose stunning looks and sensuous curves lit lustful fires even in saintly men. One day, she ran away with a married man, also a Brahmin. They lived in one of those dingy houses in crowded George Town until the day she was reported missing. She was later found, a rotting mess, all bundled up in a cheap mat, in the dimly-lit goods-yard of a sleepy rural railway station, Karunguzhi, some distance away from the railway town of Chengalpattu.

Who killed Sita and why? The Madras police arrested her paramour and charged him with the murder of his mistress. For her pieces of silver, those vessels which were pledged by the accused soon after the murder, according to the police.

The trial at the Madras High Court Sessions, before the Chief Justice of Madras, Sir Owen Beaseley, rocked the Presidency. The accused was found guilty and given the extreme penalty.

After long and hard-fought appeals had been filed and argued by eminent lawyers, like T R Venkatarama Sastry, the accused was sent to prison for life, but he came out of prison a free man, being pardoned by the Viceroy of India thanks to the unceasing efforts of several powerful personalities of the day.

Many did not believe that the woman's lover was responsible for the murder. In fact, was it murder, at all? Many were emphatic that it was death by misadventure. According to them, Sita was the magnet of all eyes, seeking hands and pawing fingers of the bigwigs of Madras at a roaring after-sundown party held at a cosy, far-from-the-madding crowd, government-owned Travellers' Bunglow near Chengalpattu. During the no-holds-barred, fun-filled free-for-all, Sita fell off a wall and died of a broken neck. As the VIP's were terrified of getting involved, the paramour, so it is claimed, agreed to take the rap and went to prison, after creating the evidence to implicate himself!

But is that story the truth? Or was she killed in Madras, by person or persons unknown, and her body bundled on to a train?

FOOTNOTE: The bungalow where seductive Sita met her end was shown to this writer in the 1980's when he visited it to make a film based on this famed trial. His lawyer father, who had seen Sita — at a distance — described the ill-fated woman, as a "voluptuous vixen who oozed sex"!

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A CLASSICAL JUGALBANDI

THE VIEW FROM THE WINGS

Musical notes resounded in memory long after the concert of Shakuntala Narasimhan was over. It was a pity that the solo *jugalbandi* between Hindustani and Carnatic classical vocal by this enormously gifted woman did not get the publicity it deserved. Pradakshina, the organisation that presented her concert, did it in the mini-hall on the first floor of the Narada Gana Sabha, which they had done up quite aesthetically (but for those plastic flowers!).

Shakuntala Narasimhan is a renowned singer in the Carnatic and Hindustani styles, a musicologist, journalist, author and influential consumer affairs activist. After resigning as Assistant Editor of *Femina*, the women's magazine of the Times of India group, she has been writing a regular fortnightly column on women's issues and consumer affairs for the *Deccan Herald* and has quite a following. She was in Madras on a personal visit and Pradakshina saw a good opportunity to present an impressive concert.

Shakuntala's range is extraordinary. Complete control, seriousness of tone and warmth of expression were the keynote of the concert in which she performed as if she were two people singing, one in Hindustani, the other in Carnatic, and never once mixing the two. One moment she was closing her eyes and completely enjoying the purity of each note in Hindustani, the next she was snapping out of it to the square-cut rhythm and structure of Carnatic music, conducting her own concert like a Western conductor.

She had very able accompanists in K Dattatry, on the tabla, Subba Rao on the harmonium, V L Kumar on the violin and B P Achut on the mridangam. It was a concert based on formidable training and scholarship and rendered with absolute sincerity.

Cameraman as artist

Madras's distinguished photo-journalist K N Raghavendra Rao exhibited his photos and bromides in an exhibition called 'Joy' — A Personal Perspective' at the ANZ Grindlay's Bank Gallery at El Dorado building on Nungambakkam High Road. The works displayed had a clarity that made them real, a complexity that evoked interest and enough emotional associations to make them meaningful. Rao had used the elementary behaviour of pigments and light to produce astonishing results. It was a sort of new environmental art, something that was not just photography, yet was too stimulating and intense to be just decoration. Trees, the breeze, leaves, the colours of nature all gave joy to the artist's works. Here, in the hands of an inspired artist-cum-technologist, they found a truly imaginative treatment.

Shakuntala Narasimhan

Young masters

The Crafts Council of India held its annual camp for child craftsmen at the Besant Scouts Camping Grounds. Young craftsmen from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu came together for an educational exposure.

These were poor young people who were learning to become traditional master craftsmen. The crafts turned out by them was truly amazing. They visited galleries, the museum, retail outlets and Mamallapuram. There were sessions for meditation, discussions on the state of their art and their being.

Sashikala Ananth, the inimitable architect researching into ancient temple architecture and yoga, *pranayama*, held self-discovery sessions with the craftsmen. Joshua, a young actor, trained them in *Kolattam*, silent drama and *Tappattam*. Members of the music organisation Brihaddhawani gave them a session of Carnatic music. Satyajit Dhananjayan offered Bharatha Natyam.

These intimate experiences of aesthetics will certainly have a lasting impression on these young people who will become the master craftsmen of the future.

Focus on craft

The Madras Craft Foundation is conducting its Vasantha Vizha' 92 at the Government Museum grounds on Pantheon Road in Egmore from the 20th to the 29th February. The focus this year is on children. Some crafts never before brought to Madras will be seen at the fair.

Papier mache from Madhubani, carved painted figures from Varanasi, innovative terracotta works of Mrichakatika, Bangalore, bamboo and clay trellis work and dolls from Madhya Pradesh, and many other crafts, many with demonstrations, as well as performing arts like giant puppet doll dancers from Thanjavur, *padayani* mask dancers from Kerala and children's Therukoothu etc., will be presented.

Champagne cricket

(The tie India and the West Indies played in Australia and the Test series against Australia reminded a reader of the last day in that historic Test India and Australia played in Madras in September 1986 — only the second tied Test in the history of the game.)

The evening before, as they had dined,
In homes and hotels, they'd all opined,
The experts and the fans, they only foresaw
The Madras Test would end in a draw.

The Aussies made, on the penultimate day,
170 for 5 on the slow wicket clay.
Of the thrills to come there were no signs
But the Lord had his mischievous designs!

The first thing that last morning,
Border declared, with aplomb and daring,
Setting India a mighty target —
348 runs, in 87 overs to get!

The Kangaroo had the gauntlet thrown,
Smugly with a scheme of his own!
Provoke the Tiger; if he does claw and bite,
Fight it out, with all your might!

The Tiger had only a simple plan —
Keep on fighting, to the last man;
Had not India, twice in the past,
Scored 400 or more in innings last?

To make a good and reasonable start,
Then tear the Aussie bowlers apart,
Not many wickets to fall in the process —
That was the Tiger's strategy for success!

The openers began to brightly bat,
Rarely did they parry or dourly pat
The balls that bumped, swung or spun;
Their's was a job to be well done.

A hurricane 39 did Srikkanth make!
Can the others stroke in his wake?
Their rivals' score they have to catch
Or soon must see the end of the match.

With Gavaskar going strong and steady,
The launching pad for victory was ready.
So well did the middle order toil
Their mighty opponents' plan to foil.

Gavaskar, the anchor, and war-horse Mohinder
Played with their minds on the goal a-yonder,
To lay a foundation, solid and strong,
Yet not failing to push the score along.

At tea, India were 193 for two,
Only a bit behind the clock too.
With Azhar, Kapil, Shastri, the big guns,
India could, God willing, make the runs!

Out Gavaskar for 90, three for 204;
Gallant Azhar then went, 251 for four;
In came Kapil, got out for a single,
And this made many a nerve tingle!!

Like men possessed, the Aussies fielded,
Yet Shastri's bat fours and sixes yielded.
Went Pandit at 291, wickets gone six,
Aussies on the up, our lads in a fix.

57 to make and four wickets to go —
What's going to happen, nobody did know!
The Knowing One was all smiles and smiles,
The One, Decider of who wins or who fails.

Enter Chetan, quickly down he settled
And had the Aussies very much rattled.
Of appeals the chorus now promptly began,
Led by Mathews, the bowl-and-howl man.

Slowed down the game, skipper Border,
Changing the field oft to his order.
This had the settled Chetan nettled,
He swung wildly and was gobbled.

More was then out L..... B..... W.....,
That was the white-coat's considered view!
334 for 8 — yes, an even chance,
For both teams later to sing and dance.

Yadav, trundler of over after over,
Now with the bat, proved no push-over.
His wicket then took a little tumble;
A minute ago, was he really humble?

Now Maninder, number 11, amidst the din
With eight balls to go and four to win!
Who the winner and who the loser,
The end result was still a poser!

The Sardar settled and took his guard
Hoping for the blessings of the Lord;
Together his bat, pad, body and soul,
He played out the over with admirable cool.
Only a boundary in six more balls!
Looks so easy, but Shastri recalls
Many a match had been won or lost
By the actions of the man left last!

Six balls are there, so no need to hurry;
Get the four safely and without any worry.
Mathews tosses and Shastri just blocks.
Five balls remain, then opportunity knocks!

The next one is short and Shastri gets a brace;
Now two for a win, one to save face!
Balls four more and the crowd roars,
From the glands of fans adrenalin out pours!

With a hit to the deep, Shastri tries to score
The direly needed two runs more . . . . . ? ! ?
But Border, the veteran, rushes coolly in,
Restricts it to one . . . and no win.

Their hearts in their mouths, the audience pray
For that one more run that should end the day,
With India winning an exciting Test match
Which they've had the privilege to watch!

The fourth of the over, Maninder can only pat,
No chance of a run, shot too soft for that!
Contact and run, Maninder tries this to do,
The fifth ball only his pad would woo!

Again the scream of "How .... izz.... at?"
And the umpire decides "That is that!"
To the pundits' views, the Lora gives the lie
And makes the Chepauk Test a historic tie!!

Neither side wins, there are no more runs,
Yet crackers go with the sound of guns!
To pavilion run the players so gallant,
Men of guts and full of talent!

Inside the stands does linger the crowd,
Calling for the players in voices loud!
The visiting team and the heroes local,
Can they resist the people so vocal?

Troop in the players, their faces beaming
At the cheers of the crowd so teeming!
The knights wave their hands in the air
To the fans so sporting and truly fair!

Little by little, the human sea dries;
In the pavilion, many a player cries,
Thinking of the game and its many ways
And thanking the Lord for tying it with grace!!

P.S. Raghavan

OUR READERS WRITE

Is it in Mylapore?

With reference to the Dustagir Sahib Dargah (*Madras Musings*, January 15-31), as far as I know, it is situated in Dr Natesan Road, Mylapore, next to a Muslim burial ground.

After reading about the shrine in your magazine, I am also interested in knowing more about the Dargah.

R. Tajudeen
Hotel Mars,
768 Pammal Main Road-600 043.

Delicious suggestion

Each and every preparation done in 'In the Stewpot' is delicious.

I request you to give us new seasonal recipes also. For example, recipes on cauliflower for this season, for preparation of icing for cakes during the Christmas season etc.

J Sukanya
8 MDLB Colony
Chitlapakkam-600 064.

A new 'nuance'

Madras Musings gives me a new 'nuance' when compared to other magazines.

R Vijay
Chintadripet-600 002.

A free surprise

It is interesting to read each and every article in every issue of *Madras Musings*. The printing is excellent. Keep it up.

It is surprising to find an interesting fortnightly like *Madras Musings* being given free of cost. It speaks high of your dedication.

B. Ramakrishna
1st Floor
421 Kilpauk Garden Road-600 010.

Prayer for success

I pray for all progress and success to your endowment and dedication to journalism.

P S Raghavan
Sriram Nagar South Street
Alwarpet-600 018.

The 'keeper & the centurion

(By The Corner Flag)

The clarification I had anticipated last fortnight came sooner than I expected — and in the most plesant way possible. *The Corner Flag* bumped into Ram at a local seminar and they talked more of cricket than of what was the agenda for the day.

Ram, it transpired, had indeed been in the Madras Ranji Trophy squad in the mid-Sixties, when P K Belliappa was first wicket-keeper. It was in 1966 that Ram got his chance in the Karnataka match, when 'Belli' was indisposed. "I had a good game, too," remembers Ram.

Also remembering his cousin Balaji's contribution, Ram pointed out that the slimmer Balaji had been a fine left-hand bat, who got a Ranji Trophy century and several other useful scores in the Seventies. In fact, if India had at that time conducted a hockey-style training camp to pick a team, Balaji would have been in it, was the impression *The Corner Flag* got. A shoulder injury, apparently, put paid to Balaji's chances of progressing further in the game.

Guha, it would seem, had it right — at least on the cricketing count.

Change the rules, not the umpires

• by THE CORNER FLAG

"Umpires cheats" is a refrain decades old, heard from Trent Bridge to Triplicane, Melbourne to Mylapore, Cape Town to Chepauk, Georgetown to George Town, Auckland to Alwarpet, Peshawar to Perambur and Colombo to Chetput. It is only that with the pressures and prizes much greater nowadays, and with the Press playing to new rules, it's captured the headlines and is demanding greater action.

The action popularly suggested is "neutral umpires". That **may** remove doubts in journalists' and spectators' minds about bias — though *The Corner Flag* can foresee the day when Indian papers might accuse Sri Lankan umpires of 'cheating' in favour of Pakistan — but how do you get rid of umpiring errors? And if all critics, including armchair ones, are honest with themselves, they'd agree that honest-to-goodness mistakes are much more frequent than "cheating".

In those circumstances, "netural umpires" are unlikely to change anything. What **might,** on the other hand, change things more effectively is changing the rules to eliminate such areas as where decisions are based on judgement of sight and sound. The following suggestions, merely indicative of a trend of thought, are based on the assumption that the role of the bat in cricket is to play the ball and that, therefore, playing it with anything else should be penalised.

1. Let's get rid of that most vexatious of all decisions, the l.b.w. Taking a page out of the baseball book, let's rule that if the batsman is merely struck THREE times by bowled balls, be it on the legs, arms, body or even head, he is out.

2. Then there is that oft-disputed catch behind the wickets or in the slips or in close-in positions, the tip or flicked catch. Let's make sure of that by ruling that any bowled ball that goes off the bat OR any part of the batsman and is caught before it touches the ground is to be deemed a fair catch.

3. And to make run-out decisions a little more certain, the batsman must touch the stumps with his bat before the thrown-in ball touches them.

These three changes alone will undoubtedly reduce the number of disputes substantially, though they may not eliminate them 100 per cent. On the other hand, the first two rules will certainly speed up the game and reduce the scoring. And that may be welcomed by many.

Other 'opinionated' disputes, over no-balls, handling the ball etc., will remain. But I'm sure further changes in the rules, similar to these, could be devised to minimise the uncertainties and make life easier for umpires. Such rule changes will reduce to a considerable extent human fallibility in umpiring decisions — which even 'neutral umpires' can be culpable of. Do readers agree?

Incidentally, several letters to the Editor want to know what the expertise of someone with a pseudonym like *The Corner Flag* is, in games like cricket and chess. For the record, the author wrote, in other times, other climes, a weekly 2000-word sports column for 14 years, not missing a single Sunday. And his beat ranged from baseball and basketball to rugby and soccer, from cricket and athletics to the local equivalents of gulli danda and kabbadi, every event watched not from the sports box but from a paid seat in some corner of the arena. It did much for independent, if cranky, thinking, and created a column known as "By The Corner Flag".

WILL THE STADIUM BE READY?

by JAICI

Will the new Nehru Stadium, of international standard, come up in place of the 40-year-old structure of the same name in People's Park by the time the TFA is ready to stage the next Nehru Gold Cup international tournament in the first fortnight of January 1993? C R Visswanathan, a distinguished member of a Coimbatore family of industrialists and the convenor of the Tamil Nadu Football Association Nehru Cup Organising Committee, is confident it will be ready.

But the fans' query is understandable. Only 11 months remain for the historic kick-off. Yet, at the time of writing, not even a brick has been brought down in a bid to demolish the sprawling old structure. How long the demolition will take, and whether there will be sufficient time after that for the construction in its place of a stadium in line with the International Football Federatiton and Asian Football Confederation specifications, experts alone can tell.

Over two months have elapsed since the momentous meeting convened by Chief Minister Jayalalitha at which several bankers and industrialists promised much towards the Rs. 10 crore stadium. Visswanathan has waited in vain since then. He has gone to the Secretariat on a number of occasions only to learn that getting the final orders was not that easy in spite of the fact that the Chief Minister was likely to be the chairperson of the organising committee and the Minister for Local Administration, Alagu Thirunavakkarasu, its deputy chairman. But the formal order should be with him any day this month, Visswanathan is confident. Time alone will tell whether it has come a day too late.

Bookies show horse-sense!

by AJAX

Guindy was on the McDowell Indian Derby day a miniature Mahaluxmi. Not even a blade of grass could be seen, so exclaimed a Bombay commentator, describing the size of the crowd that packed the lawns and stands of the Royal Western Indian Turf Club. The first enclosure of the Tamil Nadu Government's Department of Racing at Guindy was equally populated. The No. I ring was packed as never before even during the current Madras season. What a crowd-puller the premier Indian classic turned out to be!

The main interest to Madras investors was, of course, the return clash between the Pune-owned Astonish and the Madras-owned Flirting Vision, winner and runner-up, respectively, of the Indian 2,000 Guineas last month. By carrying everything before him during the Bangalore summer season, including the Bangalore Derby, Flirting Vision became M A M Ramaswamy's hope for the lone Indian classic he has not won. But the got-abroad Vision-Flirting Feathers colt made a poor Mahaluxmi debut by finishing a tame second to Astonish, the Pune Derby Stakes winner, in the Guineas. Even so, punters of his owner's home city credited him with a chance to avenge his lone defeat in five starts. This was clear from the steady support he got in the Guindy ring.

In a field of 13, only three, Astonish, Flirting Vision and Dangerous Liaison, winner of the Indian 1,000 Guineas, came in for support. The rest, including Desert Mirage and La Bonne Vie, mounts, respectively, of the English celebrities, Lester Piggott and Wllie Carson, specially engaged by McDowell, were all at fantastic odds. Desert Mirage was virtually unwanted at 10-1, and so was La Bonne Vie at 12-1, which price was an insult to the status of Carson, who nearly stunned the Mahaluxmi multitude by riding the Riyahi filly to a short-head second.

Such was the average Guindy punter's faith in Flirting Vision that the Derby turned out to be a bonanza for the bookmakers. Flirting Vision had to be content with third place, and M A M's Indian Derby blank stays. The beating of Flirting Vision swelled the satchelsof the Guindy bookmakers, whose horse sense is to be admired. But for it, they would not have offered the tempting 7-4 odds they did on Flirting Vision to make it a memorable Derby day for them!

The eleventh man

The Ranipet Jawahar 'B' team is one of 40 teams that entered the Ambedkar and Sambuvarayar Districts League tournament recently. But when it turned up for its match, it was, to its surprise, faced with a protest. Its opponents were not willing to accept one of its players. Because he was a SHE.

The Ranipet team had arrived for the match with Sandhya, a student from the Walajapet Women's College. Her team-mates insisted she was better than most of them. But their opponents would have none of it. No match with a girl, they chauvinistically insisted.

The North Arcot Cricket Association, organiser of the tournament, did not want to stick its neck out on the protest, so it has passed the buck to the Tamilnadu Cricket Association. The ruling by Balu Alaganan and his team is awaited with bated breath by several girls in colleges in Tamil Nadu.

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