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MADRAS

METAL CUTTING TOOLS

MUSINGS

Vol. I. No. 5

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

June 16 — 30, 1992

Will the Law keep its word and ensure that we will soon find...

Our walls free of posters?

(By The Editor)

It was nice to think even for one brief moment that *Madras Musings'* plea for a cleaner, better Madras was being heard somewhere up there in those rarified heights. There was City Police Commissioner R Rajagopalan announcing that persons found putting up posters would be arrested on the spot under Section 4(1) of the Tamil Nadu Open Places Prevention of Disfigurement Act. There was also his announcement that wall writers would be similarly treated. There was EXNORA offering "cooperation and support" to the authorities in cleaning up surfaces defaced by posters. And there was the absence of all this printed hype when the Chief Minister went to inaugurate 'Film City' at the Government Film Institute's campus at Taramani recently.

Posters about the function had been removed the night before, Corporation employees expending a lot of sweat on the scraping operations at the midnight hour. At the venue itself, there were no banners, buntings or posters. And there was even talk of removing the lone cut-out at the entrance. To top it all, the no-nonsense, business-like function ended in less than 15 minutes!

The signs were indeed propitious. Better times were around the corner. But then came the clarifications and the protests.

The police themselves began referring only to posters on statues, electricity junction boxes, bus shelters and flyovers. There was no reference to the walls of the city, which bear the brunt of the poster menace. In fact, the police, or 'the high-level government committee' with which they met before taking this decision, appeared to be concerned only over the "indiscriminate" pasting of posters. "Discriminate" pasting, as on walls, it would appear, would be permitted.

Next, the D.M.K. protested against the proposed police action, charging that only its posters were being targeted by the police. And sundry citizens got into the act stating that the police were talking only of bill-stickers. How about the political organisations, film-makers and others using poster publicity? Aren't they the people responsible for the posters and shouldn't it be they who

should be prosecuted? What action do the police intend to take against those ordering the posters?

In the end, the city appeared to have as many posters as before the announcement. And life continued as before. But it was nice to dream about what may have been, even for a few hours. Or could the dream last a little longer? What was last heard was the Police Commissioner quoting Madam Chief Minister on the subject: She, too, apparently, was for "strict action against indiscriminate poster-stickers".

The march to Delhi

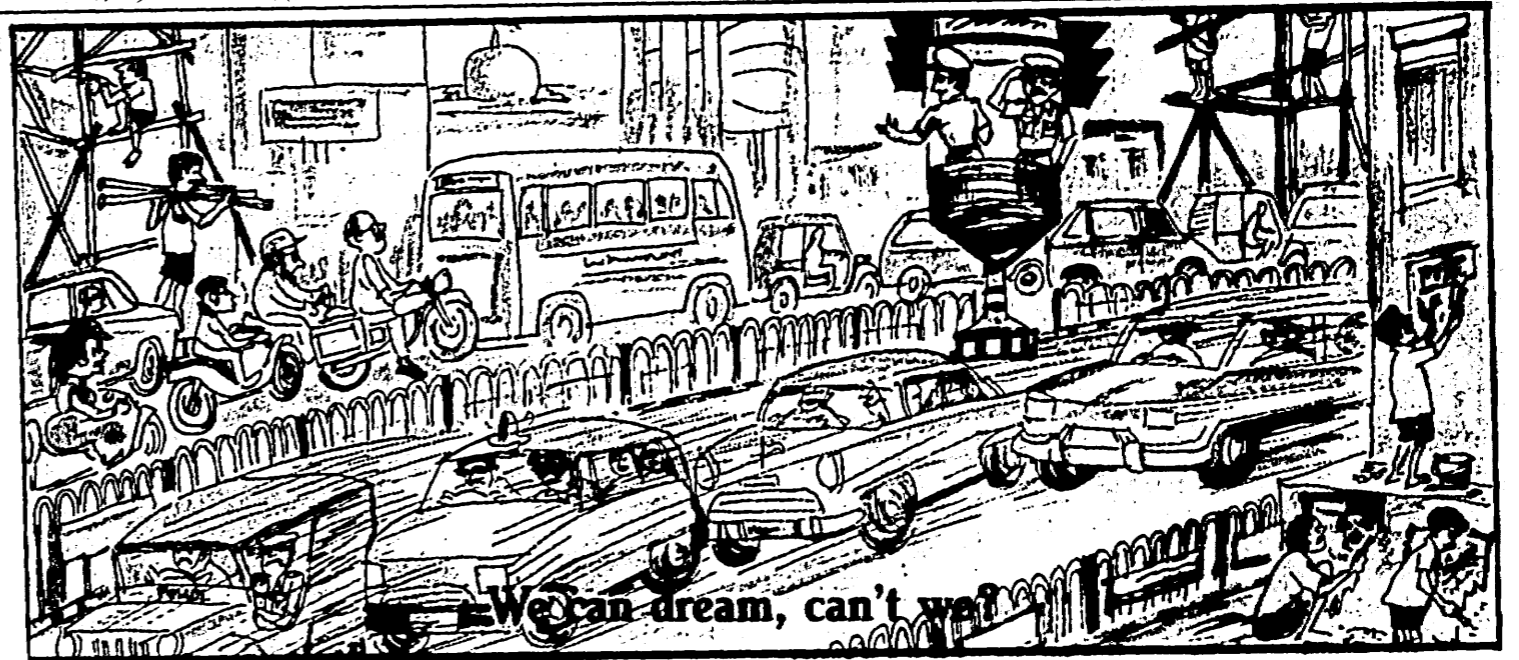
(By A Staff Reporter)

A statue of Mahatma Gandhi determinedly heading for Dandi beach is to be unveiled on the lawns of Parliament House, New Delhi, on August 15th. But that statue will not be an original — it'll be a replica of the one that graces the Madras Marina, one of the most striking Gandhi statues in all India.

The Marina statue was sculpted by Debi Prasad Roy Choudhury, painter, sculptor and the first Indian Principal of the College of Arts and Crafts, Egmore. Choudhury, considered the foremost contemporary artist in the India of his time, also sculpted the magnificent 'Statue of Labour' on Marina, a statue that reminds not a few of the famous American photograph of the raising of the flag on Iwojima during the last days of World War II.

The Marina Gandhi statue was unveiled by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on April 14, 1959, in the presence of Chief Minister K Kamaraj.

In the first week of June, the Madras statue was hidden from public gaze by thatch. Behind the screen, a mould was being taken of it to be cast in Delhi.



The Madras connection's now with the V.P.-to-be

(By A Staff Reporter)

So President Venkataraman will not enjoy a second term. And when he returns to Kotturpuram (or will it be Greenways Road?) on July 24th evening, that will be the end of yet another Madras link with *Rashtrapati Bhavan* that goes back to Dr Radhakrishnan, V V Giri and Sanjeeva Reddy.

But while Madras has no links with the Oxbridge educated don, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, who is now likely to step into the Presidential shoes, it does have tenuous connections with the man in the running for the Vice-Presidency, another erudite Doctor.

K R Narayanan, the scholar-diplomat from Kerala who had been Vice-Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Ambassador to China and the U.S.A., and External Affairs Minister, began life as a journalist before becoming a career diplomat and then a Congress(I) M.P. And who should have employed him as a cub reporter but *The Hindu!* From there he moved

on to *The Times of India* and then to the Foreign Service. But *The Hindu* connection should have, hopefully, left him with a soft spot for Madras. There's still the occasional piece from him which appears in it.

Winner of a Tata scholarship to the London School of Economics,

Narayanan came under the influence of Harold Laski, who recommended him to Jawaharlal Nehru. And from then on, it was up all the way. If he one day becomes President, there'll be no objections at all in the country — except from a fellow Keralite or two. And a Laski prophesy would have been fulfilled.

Who's getting the reward?

(By A Staff Reporter)

They're being as hush-hush about it as they are about the alleged gangrape of Dhanu Rajarathnam by troops of the IPKF. While SIT investigators deny that the alleged belt-bomb killer of Rajiv Gandhi was raped by Indian troops, an allegation quite widely bruited to justify motivation, they are now prepared to admit that a recom-

mendation has at last been made about the Rs. 15 lakhs reward. But they are being as reticent about the 21 persons in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka recommended, to share in the reward put on the heads of Sivarasan and accomplice Subha, as they are in what motivated Dhanu's suicidal role.

It is, however, reported that one of those to be rewarded is Mridula, who, with her husband Ranganath, sheltered Sivarasan and Subha for 12 days and who is in custody for it. She is, it is also reported, likely to be an important witness for the prosecution. Also on the reward list is said to be Muniyamma, who supplied milk to the house where the wanted pair last hid. Will these and other names ever be officially announced? It would appear NOT.

The reason for the secrecy is stated by the police to be that those rewarded might become LTTE targets if they're named.

Originally, 75 names were considered for recommendation. But most of those were Police, CBI and CRPF officers and men; and NSG Commandos, who were only doing their duty. These names were therefore weeded out and are being given separately to government to consider for awards for meritorious service.

Giving the scam a Southern look

'The Diary', a popular column in that lively paper, *The Telegraph*, which is threatening the traditional *Statesman's* hold on Calcutta, had the following to say the other day. It is curious the way the newspapers outside the South constantly look at the South and the 'Madras' from there. Even curiously, the piece, quoted verbatim below, could well have been written by a 'Madras'! Most 'Madras' away from the South tend to write like this!

— THE EDITOR

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

It is a strange coincidence, but four South Indians, that too Tamil Brahmins,

are involved in the multi-crore securities scam in some way or the other.

Mr Seetharaman, the State Bank of India official, was an acquaintance of big bull Harshad Mehta. Then we have Janakiraman, the deputy governor of the Reserve Bank, who is part of the probe team looking into the scandal.

Next is the RBI governor himself, S Venkataraman. He is overseeing the functioning of the probe team and calling for files from banks.

And, finally, the person thoroughly investigating the entire affair is the CBI joint director, K Madhavan.

We cannot help but note that these are all names of Lord Vishnu.

Short of movie money

It is no secret that finance for making motion pictures in this part of the country is obtained at incredibly high rates of interest. To cite an example, a prominent actor-turned-producer raised money for his film on the security of his city bungalow and an interest of 42 per cent a year.

Higher rates are quite common in the Tamil movie business. A struggling film editor, spending sleepless nights

Our Cinema Correspondent reports from the Madras Film World.

trying to complete his film, borrowed a paltry sum of Rs. 10,000 and returned it on the 30th day as Rs.20,000! The rate of interest? Figure it out for yourself. Better still, figure this one out: The editor-producer was so elated with the financier's 'good deed' that he fell at his feet repeatedly in the lounge of the preview theatre!

During the past few months, however, finance for Tamil films has not been so easy to get, irrespective of the rate of interest. An important contributory reason for this has been the recent stock-market boom which reached crazy heights, courtesy the Big Bull. With share values zooming, many stockmarket operators got rich by the hour and, not surprisingly, many film financiers put a sizable part of their funds into the stock market to rake in the profits.

Talking to this writer's soulmate recently, a brilliant auditor-turned-finance management specialist and big-time financier remarked, "I give 50 lakhs and more to a film-maker who has only talent but not even fifty rupees in his pocket when he starts a movie. Often there is hardly any security and, when there is, it often turns out to be illusory, leaving people like me in the lurch. If I invest that money in the stock market during a boom, my capital appreciates. There are bright chances of getting dividends and, of course, I get the share certificates in my hands, which too have some value. If a film flops, or is left incomplete, what do I have?"

According to many film financiers, the Big Bull is an angel compared to some movieland-wallahs! Even after the recent crash, quite a few with such beliefs have faith in the market and are not inclined to abandon it.

MADRAS MUSINGS

SMALLS

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Correspondence invited from Parents of bachelors in India or abroad for a Bharadwaja Vadam post graduate girl-33 - systems consultant and trained in vocal carnatic music, CAs, MBAs and in Tech preferred. Reply to Box No. 1, C/o Madras Musings, 62/63 Greaves Road, Madras 600 006.

Travellers' travails

The evening flight from Bangalore to Madras was only a bit off schedule one day in May. As the coach carrying passengers from the terminal neared the aircraft, the smartly-dressed, executive-looking lady unzipped the side of her suitcase — and let out a loud yelp. "Where's my file?" she cried. And so, after unloading its complement of passengers, back went the bus with milady to scour the terminal for her file.

As the rest of the passengers, *The Man From Madras Musings* included, sweltered in the plane as the minutes dragged by, there were loud thumps from the hold. Could they be unloading any checked-in baggage of hers to check for the file? We never did find out, but she did turn up eventually, triumphant but with nary an apology. In the circumstances, perhaps it was not necessary; after all, it was all in the cause of chivalry and, also, we only took off about an hour late, which, by Indian Airlines standards, was not bad at all.

● Certainly it could have been a lot worse. Like on the recent occasion when a passenger to Bombay took seriously the signs at the entrance to departure halls at Meenambakkam Airport which read "Cash and jewellery may be carried in hand baggage" — or something to that effect. He, he later claimed, decided to carry Rs. 1.5 lakhs in his briefcase. And that, he alleged, vanished in the time it took him to get checked-in; the money was there, he alleged, when he opened the bag at the counter to take his ticket out and it was not there when he opened his bag to put his ticket in after being checked-in. The hue and cry that followed delayed that flight by more than an hour. But what, *The Man From Madras Musings* wonders, was the man doing with so much money "all in Rs. 500 notes"?

● Neither lost file, money nor Chief Minister Jayalalitha delayed the flight from Delhi to Madras after the NDC meet. Then what was it that had an 8 p.m. flight constantly changing departure times till well past midnight, arriving in Madras at 3 a.m.-plus the next day? We'll never know, but how Indian Airlines catches up with schedules intrigues *The Man From Madras Musings*. This is the Airbus that would have had to take off for Delhi that morning at 6. Would a two-hour-plus halt be enough to check it out? If not, would the delay keep getting extended over the subsequent days? In which case, when would IA get back on schedule? That sounds almost like a problem for a Ramanujam.

● Incidentally, travelling with Madam Jayalalitha caused fellow-passengers no problems at all. On the way out, all it meant was having ALL X-rayed luggage given another going-over, a rigorously manual one, by a team of policemen and women. And on the way in, it didn't involve even that extra precaution. So well had her boarding and alighting been organised, that only J Class passengers got a glimpse of her, her guards and retinue, 15 in all; others had to be satisfied with guessing who the lesser civil servants were who'd been relegated to mortal class.

● But if you think all such excitement happens only on

airlines, you're in for another think. When the bi-weekly Varanasi Express turned up 36 hours late a few weeks ago, the Madras Central authorities didn't appear to even know that it hadn't left Varanasi or that it left Varanasi 24 hours late! Or, if they knew, they were not telling. That would seem to be the logical conclusion, considering they started with official announcements of a six-hour delay.

When one anxious parent tried to use a bit of influence to

Mangeshkar of all people. And not in the music business, either. The record-breaking playback singer and her long-time friend Rajsingh Durgapur (of cricket administration fame) have floated Madhav Granites and Marbles Limited to undertake Rs. 19 crores worth of projects in Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. It will be green marble tiles from the Udaipur area and over 125,000 granite tiles a year from the Dharmapuri area, at least a third of the production for

moving into new territories. Three million square feet of property development is already under way, but what's really new is the Group's plan to hop onto the tourism gravy train and get into hoteliering. A 250-room five-star hotel at a cost of Rs. 40 crore is to be built near the Racecourse. And that's good news for big money racing fans from the mofussil and out-of-state. It's also one step towards the 2500 rooms to be added to the existing 4000 in Tamil Nadu in the next three years.

★ Two NRI's, both with Madras business connections, are among the 100 richest persons in Britain. The Hinduja's of Ashok Leyland (and treated as a single unit) are the seventh richest. More significantly, in recession-hit Britain, they are one of the few rich people increasing their wealth — from £ 1,100 million last year to £ 1,300 million this year. The other Madras-connected NRI is Vijay Mallya, who, standing steady on £ 100 million, is in 84th position. Who'll be the next Madras connected NRI in this list? Any guesses?

★ Working determinedly at 'Arivoli' — the Light of Knowledge — for the past year has been Pudukkottai Collector Sheela Rani Chankath. And she's determined that her district will be the first in Tamil Nadu to be declared 100 per cent literate. Chankath's strategy to get everyone in Pudukkottai District learn the three Rs has been to reject petitions, appeals, forms etc if they have been signed with a thumb-print. "Go back, learn the three Rs and come back and sign the form in my presence," she urges. And her stratagem appears to be working.

★ With the leadership wanting itself high profile in posters and cutouts all over the city, it is no wonder lesser mortals also feel they should be seen on the walls of Madras. When a bank officer was recently promoted General Manager, posters in colour came up in several parts of Madras showing the Chairman of the nationalised bank greeting his newly promoted GM. Wonder who's been responsible for this generosity. Could it be a constituent well-wisher? Wonder, too, what would have happened if he had got a doctorate.

★ *The Man from Madras Musings* has seen several neem trees in Madras in various stages of distress. Or, at least, their drying leaves seemed to indicate some rather serious malaise. Harry Miller, however, assures all concerned that the neem are NOT dying. They've been infected by the tea mosquito, he says, but "within a month or two those ugly browned leaves will fall away and the neem will renew itself". But it is curious, he adds, how the neem, celebrated in India for thousands of years as an insecticide, is so vulnerable to the tea mosquito. What could be the spray, he wonders, that would keep these destructive insects away from the City's neems? **MMM**

★ Two hundred metres of encroaching huts near its Vadapalani junction held up for years the smooth flow of traffic on Inner Ring Road. This encroachment has, at last, been cleared — though no one is saying at what cost, even if alternate housing sites are being mentioned among other things. Now the entire stretch of Inner Ring Road is expected to be made a smooth thruway in the next six months at a cost of about Rs. 4½ crores.

★ The Rs. 450 crores Shriram Group is spreading its wings and

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

get a little more accurate information from a senior Southern Railway Officer, he was told an accurate estimated arrival time could only be given after the train had passed Gudurl! But where was the train now? The parent asked, only to be told, "We can only tell when the train passes into our sector"! With railway sectors not talking to each other, no wonder there are as many lost trains as there are lost planes in India, each in search of accurate Estimated Times of Arrival!

The Russians here

Remember K Varugis's reference to the Russian tea buyers in the May 1 issue of *Madras Musings*? It would now appear that the Russian traders were in Tamil Nadu long before they turned up at the Cochin and Coonoor tea auctions.

A Russian coin, dating to 1781 and the reign of Catherine the Great, has apparently been unearthed near Tranquebar (Tarangambadi) by the Tamil Nadu Archaeological Department. The coin bears the Russian emblem of the day — the double-headed eagle, sceptre and cross.

Discovery of the coin should be no surprise, however. If *The Man From Madras Musings* remembers right, Tranquebar was Danish from the late 17th Century into the 19th century and the Danes had close trading links with the Russians in Europe. That same period was also a time when a good deal of the trade of Madras was in Armenian hands. And the Armenians in Western Asia certainly traded with Russia across its southern borders. But it'll be fun to discover if there's a story apart from these prosaic reasons and whether a Russian in person did turn up with the coin.

In brief

★ Guess who's getting into business in Tamil Nadu? Lata

★ The Rs. 450 crores Shriram Group is spreading its wings and

A selection of responses

Sujatha Shankar, (Architect), *Mds-34*: An excellent opportunity for the city. The paper can be used as a people's voice for the betterment of the city and to preserve its heritage, besides being a news disseminator.

Ram Viswanathan, (Publicity Officer, SPIC), *Mds-31*: I enjoy and look forward to each issue. Am a person with old world values and pride in my city. *MM* fills the void. Other journals devote more space to North India.

K.P. Srinivasan, (Asst. Commissioner, Income-tax), *Mds-34*: "In the Slepnot" has a lot of Hindi terms (you can't expect

everyone in Madras to know Hindi) which should be avoided. More attention to sports other than cricket and horse racing is needed.

R.O. Gram (Retd.), *Mds-39*: *MM* must cover areas in North Madras to bring to the notice of authorities and others that Madras is not Mount Road and South Madras only.

T.K. Sangameswaran, (PA to Mktg. Manager), *Mds-92*: Please make it an evening daily, giving new news.

E.R. Desikan, (Retd. Business Executive), *Mds-4*: I would like SK to write on politics. He is one of the few writers who projects humour while dealing with politicians.

K. Viswanathan, (Consultant, K.V. Associates), *Mds-28*: It has been a great effort in rekindling and reviving our interest in this great city of Madras which people like us love and like, in spite of being what it is now.

Dr. A.R. Baji, (Retd. P.O. Govt. of India), *Mds-20*: Excellent reading material, light, well-written, unique style of publication and pleasing.

P. Devarajan, (Sr. Vice-President, Hydraulics Ltd.), *Mds-18*: This is an excellent endeavour. Please continue this. Levy a small cost, so that only genuine readers will subscribe.

The magic number, Rs. 1000 cr.

It always seemed as though it was a magical figure for Madras companies to cross. Even in these inflationary times, Rs. 1000 crore turnover is a considerable achievement. Now a few Madras groups and companies (in spite of their slow and steady approach) have gone beyond Rs. 1000 crores.

The TVS group, with its multi-faceted activities became a Rs. 1000 crore conglomerate some time ago. The Amalgamations group has also finished this year with more than Rs. 1000 crore. Ashok Leyland, the Madras-based

also nostalgia time. Chemplast's Vice-Chairman and Managing Director N Sankar (also President of Assocham) recalled the early struggles of Chemplast when an important machine broke down. The company approached BHEL Trichy, who had no previous experience, but rose to the occasion splendidly. The DGM who accepted the challenge was the man who rose to great heights in the public sector, V. Krishnamurthy.

It was not all nostalgia, however. The President used the occasion to gently chide the Tamil Nadu government. He said that it is not enough just announcing industrial policies and concessions, but the Industries Minister should also take a personal interest, keep in touch with the industrialists and help in setting up new industries. The Chief Minister has the Industries portfolio. Will she find the time to do this?

End of an era

Madras recently lost the eminent industrialist D C Kothari. Although he was a Gujarati, he was very much a Tamil Nadu based entrepreneur. Kothari Industrial Corporation Ltd (KICL) is the group he built up. KICL has interests in textiles, fertilisers and plantations. Some of his diversification efforts in the Eighties (forays into chemicals and petrochemicals, and a tie up with General Foods of USA) did not take off and the group went through a tough patch. But it has come out of bad times. And the last two years have been good times.

DC as he was affectionately known was also a good spokesman for Industry. Always affable and accessible, he was on the board of many companies (including TISCO) and had headed many industry and trade bodies.

His younger brother, H C Kothari, had passed away a few weeks ago. He had, from the early eighties, headed his own group of successful companies in sugar, financial services and petrochemicals.

The passing away of the Kothari brothers really marks an end of an era in the Madras business scene.

MANAALI RAMAN...

Now, what's the existing record for a cut-out's height?

IN MAD. MAD MADRAS

BUSINESS REVIEW by THE SHROFF

truck manufacturer, in spite of depressed conditions, is, today, a Rs. 1000 crore company. The companies in the M A Chidambaram group have also surpassed this figure. The Murugappa group is also in the Rs. 1000 crore league.

Ashok Leyland's total sales of vehicles, including exports, during 1991-92 was 23,422, which was 5 per cent lower than last year. There has been a visible slow down in the offtake of trucks in the past year. In April 1991, the company sold 1500 vehicles. For the same month in 1992, the figure has come down to 1000 vehicles.

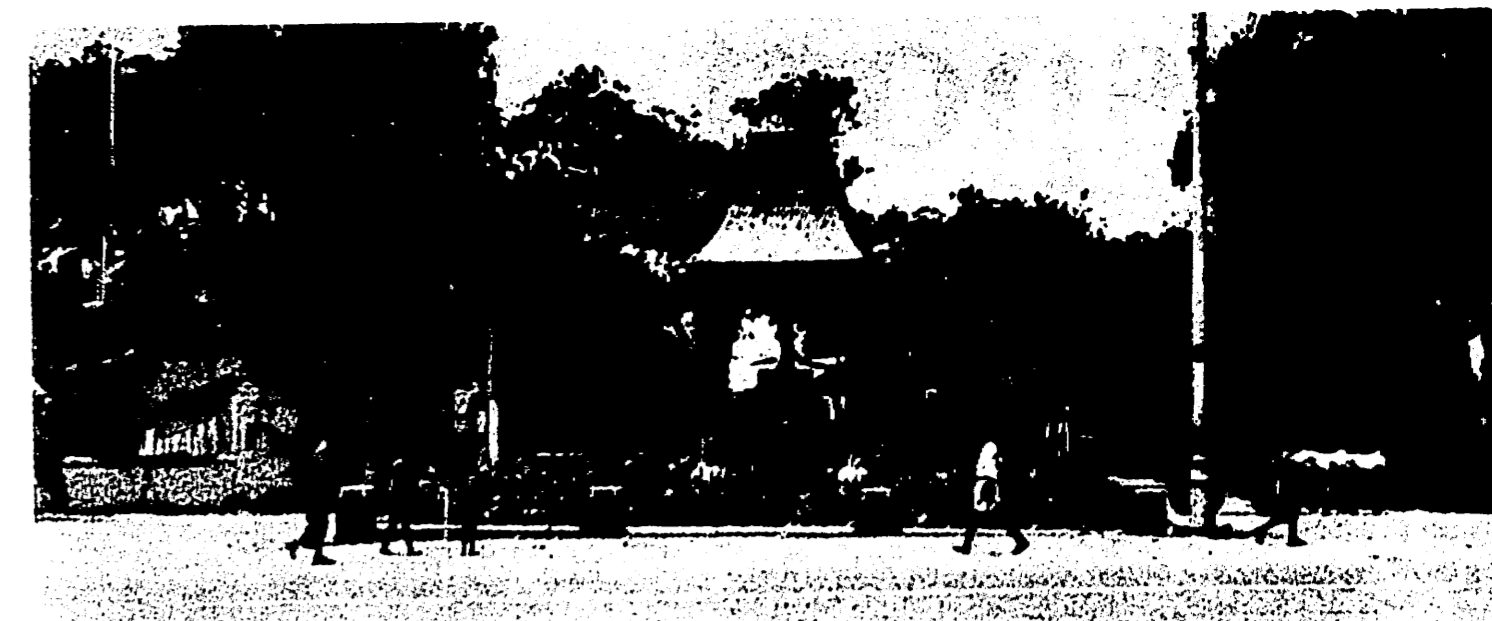
Despite these figures and the recession in the truck industry, AL has decided to go ahead with its expansion and diversification plans. The Tamil Nadu government has cleared the proposal for 250 acres in Hosur, which AL has been wanting for its expansion plans, and, now, the company will invest Rs. 550 crore in its two units in Hosur. Another Rs. 150 crore will be spent in Ennore, Madras, to upgrade the plant there.

A pioneer is 25

A few weeks ago the city based Chemplast celebrated its 25th year. The occasion was graced by the presence of President R Venkatraman, who had laid the foundation stone for what was to be the first company in the world to go in for the manufacture of PVC based on alcohol. That was one of those units which came up during what is described as the golden age of Tamil Nadu's industrialisation, when Venkatraman was the Industries Minister and took a personal interest in promoting new projects in the state.

Today, Chemplast has grown into a multiproduct, Rs. 250 crore conglomerate. Its divisions include PVC, caustic chlor, solvents, meltron, fine chemicals and thermoplastic polyurethane. It has three subsidiaries, Peroxides India, Metkem Silicon and Drachem Speciality Chemicals.

The silver jubilee function was a joyous occasion with FICCI president V L Dutt, Parry's chairman M V Arunachalam and Member, Planning Commission, V Krishnamurthy paying rich tributes to the company and the management. It was



OUR READERS WRITE

Information wanted

I visited Madras for a few days in February and tried to find the drinking water memorial which was erected in the 1870's to commemorate my great-grandfather, Col John Cumming Anderson, Royal Engineers, C.S.I., who died in Simla in October 1870.

The family knows very little about him, but he held Madras posts of Executive Engineer, Superintending Engineer and Consulting Engineer for Railways, then Chief Engineer for Irrigation Works and Joint Secretary to the Government. At the time of his death he was Officiating Inspector-General of Irrigation Works and Officiating Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Irrigation Branch, PWD. According to family memory he instigated the laying-out of Madras piped water and the dam which supplies it, hence the choice of memorial.

The famous Dr James Anderson of Madras was a relation, and, I am sure, responsible for his interest in attaching to the

A picture in search of a background

Madras Engineers in the old East India Company days.

Where was the memorial and what has happened to it? When did the monument come down and why?

As you can see from the photograph it was a very solid structure, and it stood near the Queen Victoria statue. It seems to have been standing until the 1950's. The photo shows tramway supports.

The family is very anxious to get some idea of Col Anderson's personal qualities, which is impossible to do from his various official reports, some of which I have traced down in U.K. libraries. I would appreciate any information about Col. Anderson, the memorial and the ceremony which probably accompanied its opening.

Virginia van der Lande
Nottingham NG7 1GP
U.K.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Are there readers who remember the memorial and who can shed light on the Colonel? Please send your information to *Madras Musings*.

Clearing the air

Ref: 'A horrific AIDS story' in *Musings* May 1-15, it was not made clear whether the senior doctor in the blood bank actually found incorrect the finding of his junior colleague about the presence of HIV in the blood of the donor, or if the scare

was unjustified and was the consequence of lack of knowledge about the infective nature of HIV.

Prof. R C Narayanan
T-59-B 32nd Cross Street
Madras-600 090

MMM writes: The issues would seem to be: Do doctors rush to managements with their findings without assessing the consequences? And do managements act without a full knowledge of the subject?

Mutual interest

I read the article "Where collecting's semi-devotion" in *Madras Musings* (May 1-15) with great interest. It is very heartening to hear of students like V P Shyam who collect stamps with such great zeal when many students nowadays seem to have lost interest in this delightful hobby. Would Shyam please contact me? I am a stamp collector myself.

Chithra Madhavan
35 Bishop's Garden
R A Puram, Madras-600 028

Something worthwhile

In these days of trash which fills the market in God's plenty, I am glad to find there is something which is carefully printed and published for intelligent and discriminating readers.

V Subramanian,
Deputy Director of Collegiate Education
Madurai-625 020

No looking back

Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's observations at the National Development Council on the limitations of the market mechanism reveal the disenchantment of the government. If its disillusionment stems from misgivings about the system, certainly the statement that "growth and development of the country cannot be left entirely to the market mechanism" is a little premature, to say the least. However, in all fairness to Mr Rao, his intention may not have been the denunciation of his own government's free market philosophy; it was mainly to reiterate and to stall the volley of politically motivated criticism. This calls for a serious debate on free enterprise.

The failure of the licence raj and the tough facts about its absolute incompetence are too recent in memory to be ignored. The sheer force of this change lies in the checkmate that regimented economies all over the world have received. This alone should restrain us from beating a hasty retreat to our old system that lies vanquished. However, the fears of rulers being what they are, in a country peopled by a vast majority below the poverty line, it is certainly in order to give notice to the market forces to play the game fairly.

The sagacity of the government will be demonstrated in its ability to differentiate. Reacting blindly to what a handful of manipulators do is far from being realistic and not a strong premise to clamp rigid control universally. Free enterprise will find it hard to reconcile itself to the thwarting state presence. If, on the one side, it is the manipulators who distort the operations of market forces, it is excessive statism on the other that smother them.

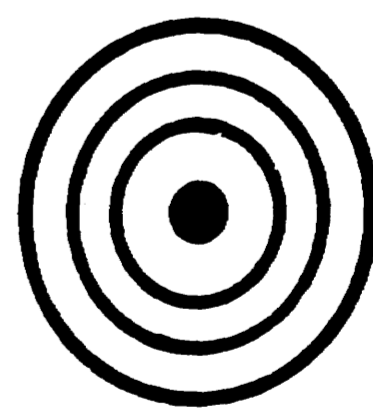
Meanwhile, here are some recommendations for the coming fortnight:

Chettinad Corporation Ltd. (Current Market Price: Rs. 245.00): The company has announced excellent results for the year ending March 1992. The net profit stands at Rs. 12.37 cr — an increase of 90 per cent over the previous year. The EPS works out to Rs. 30. The margins too have improved substantially. Moreover, the outlook for the cement industry is undoubtedly good. Devaluation and partial convertibility have also helped in adding to its fortunes. Buy for medium term gains.

Ponds India Ltd. (Current Market Price: Rs. 510.00): The outlook for Ponds India Ltd, a Unilever group company, is highly promising. It has made satisfactory progress, seen by the results of the twelve months ended December '91. The company has made efforts to raise the output of leather garments and there may be a rise in exports under this head. The newly commissioned electronic products division may get into stride in the coming months and the production of mushrooms may increase significantly with buy-back arrangements for absorbing the entire output. The value of exports can, thus, be much higher in 1992 than in 1991. The EPS for the year ended December '92 is likely to be Rs. 15 on the equity capital of Rs. 10.01 cr. It is a good 'buy' now.

Sterling Holiday Resorts Ltd. (Current Market Price: Rs. 56.00): Sterling Holiday Resorts Ltd, the only successful Indian company in the time-share industry, has announced excellent results for the period ended March 31, 1992. The company is poised for rapid expansion. Its tie-up with RCI International of USA has opened new vistas for the company. It also plans to concentrate on foreign exchange earnings in the future. The EPS for the year ended March 1992 works out to Rs. 4.50, which is likely to move up to Rs. 7 in the current year. The current market price of Rs. 56 is discounting the EPS only 12 times and the share has the potential to go up further.

Meanwhile, here are some recommendations for the coming fortnight:



BULL'S EYE

easy. Market forces are still weighed down by outmoded rules, vexatious regulations, even archaic enactments, apart from crooked and corrupt attitudes of persons in authority. The elimination of such hindrances to fair play ought to be the prime concern.

The recent exposures relating to the stock market and the banking system highlight weaknesses and call for preventive measures, which must be distinguished from unthinking resort to state control which has entirely failed in its purpose. Regulations, insofar as they are different from stifling controls, as such, are welcome in order that the field may be cleared to afford full scope to market forces.

K. Gopalakrishnan

Passport problems

"There's a policeman waiting to see Manimekalai," said our servant woman Kothu-Mary (Mary for short) in a breathless whisper that carried to every corner of Karuvepillay colony. "He's in disguise," she added.

Like all members of the lower orders, Mary has a fascination for the police force based on equal parts of fear and admiration. Before she could run off to the kitchen and ward off any impending evil by performing a *drishhi* on our one and only daughter, who has reached the age when she wants to fly the nest, I went to the front door.

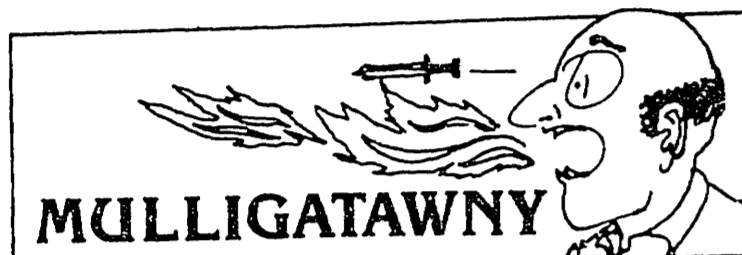
looking her up and down and sideways. "Care to inspect her teeth?" I asked.

Finally he asked, "Do you have proof of her living here?"

"I'm the proof," I replied. "I'm her father and we've been living here since she was born."

"That's not enough," said the policeman, shaking his head sadly. The neighbours were now certain that I was being arrested as a close associate of a certain share broker.

"Will a driving licence do?" asked Manimekalai producing her licence.



The policeman was of the Inspector Maigret variety, very tight lipped. He held a paper in front of his nose, which had a colour photograph on it, and looked at me quizzically. At once I could feel the hair on the back of my spine rising as he announced himself. "Po-lis." My reaction was one of irritation based on equal parts of anger and frustration that I could not kick the man out. How dare he come into the house at that time of the evening, unannounced. But the neighbours were watching.

"Is there a person called Manimekalai residing here?" he asked.

I said "Yes."

"Can I see her?"

"What for?" I roared. The policeman went down the steps backwards, waving a coloured photograph in front of him for me to see.

"Oh, the passport bureau," I said, calming down a bit. One month ago I had gone to a travel agent to get a passport renewal for Manimekalai. He collected money for the passport application, his own fees and then a small extra.

"There are more than 75000 applications for passports. It will take you more than six months to get a new one issued," he said in that cheerful manner that certain individuals adopt when giving you the bad news. In certain professions the breaking of bad news has become a minor art form. The women who announce a further delay of ten hours on the scheduled Indian Airlines flight practically sing out the bad news. If you go to a bank today, your banker will smile at you in the most unctuous manner and whisper, "Sorry for the scam, we're only bankers. Why don't you try your neighbourhood grocer for a loan?"

So I made a face and asked the travel agent if he could not speed things up.

"Of course, Sir," he said, "just give me an advance and I'll see to it that you get your daughter's passport in five months."

I recalled this conversation as I stood before the policeman. He smiled at me in a greasy manner. At last we're getting somewhere, his manner indicated. I called for Manimekalai.

She came in her nightdress, having spent the day at a friend's house, looking decidedly monochromatic as compared to the colour photograph that the policeman held in his hand. He studied the print and then the original.

He studied it for a few seconds and announced that it would never do, it was only one year old.

"You'll have to go to the Police Commissioner's Office," he said.

"Last time I tried to get a passport I could never get to see the man. Hardly surprising if there are 75000 people waiting for a passport." I was beginning to dance up and down, doing what people call the Mulligatawny shake.

The policeman was also shuffling from one foot to the other, like a man chewing gum at the other end. It's called the Nungambakkam cha-cha and it's usually accompanied by a request for "Chai-money."

"I'll give you her birth certificate, her ration card and her dentist record, but it's going to take time for me to get all this," I shouted.

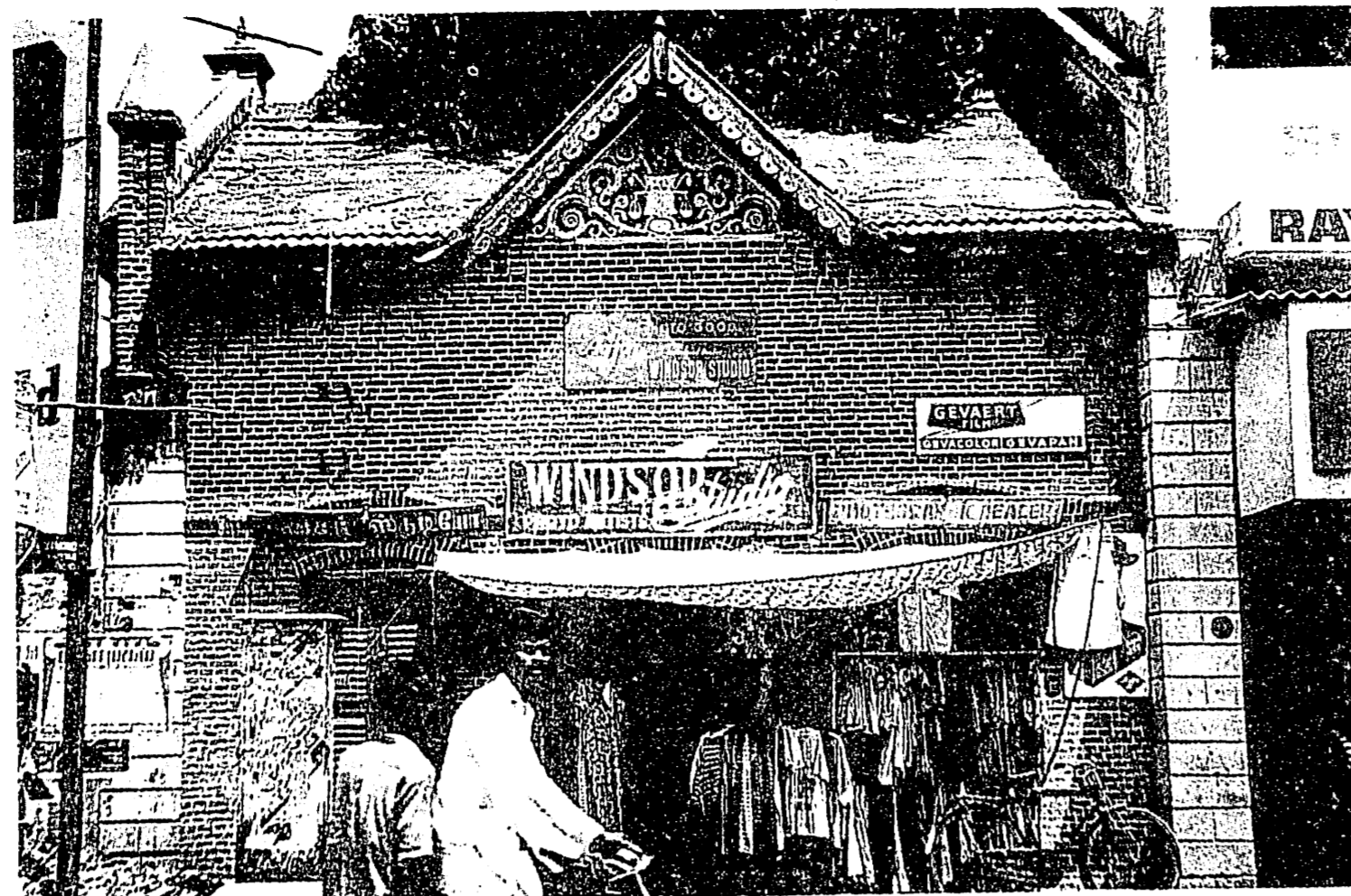
The policeman faded into the night, leaving his smile behind, like an oily smudge in the darkness. "I've got the time, you have the problem," he seemed to be saying.

Putting his Aiyar on the book

You couldn't have missed him, of course, even if he was dressed in the regulation ethnic outfit of crisp dhoti and snow-white shirt (This is Tamil Nadu, remember. And then he is politician first and author only second.) jog your memory a bit to the sunny days of the Rajiv era. How often have you seen him in the video clips — an earnest figure dogging his master's footsteps, notebook in hand, studiously taking down the woes of the flood-hit victim or the complaints of the urban slumdweller.

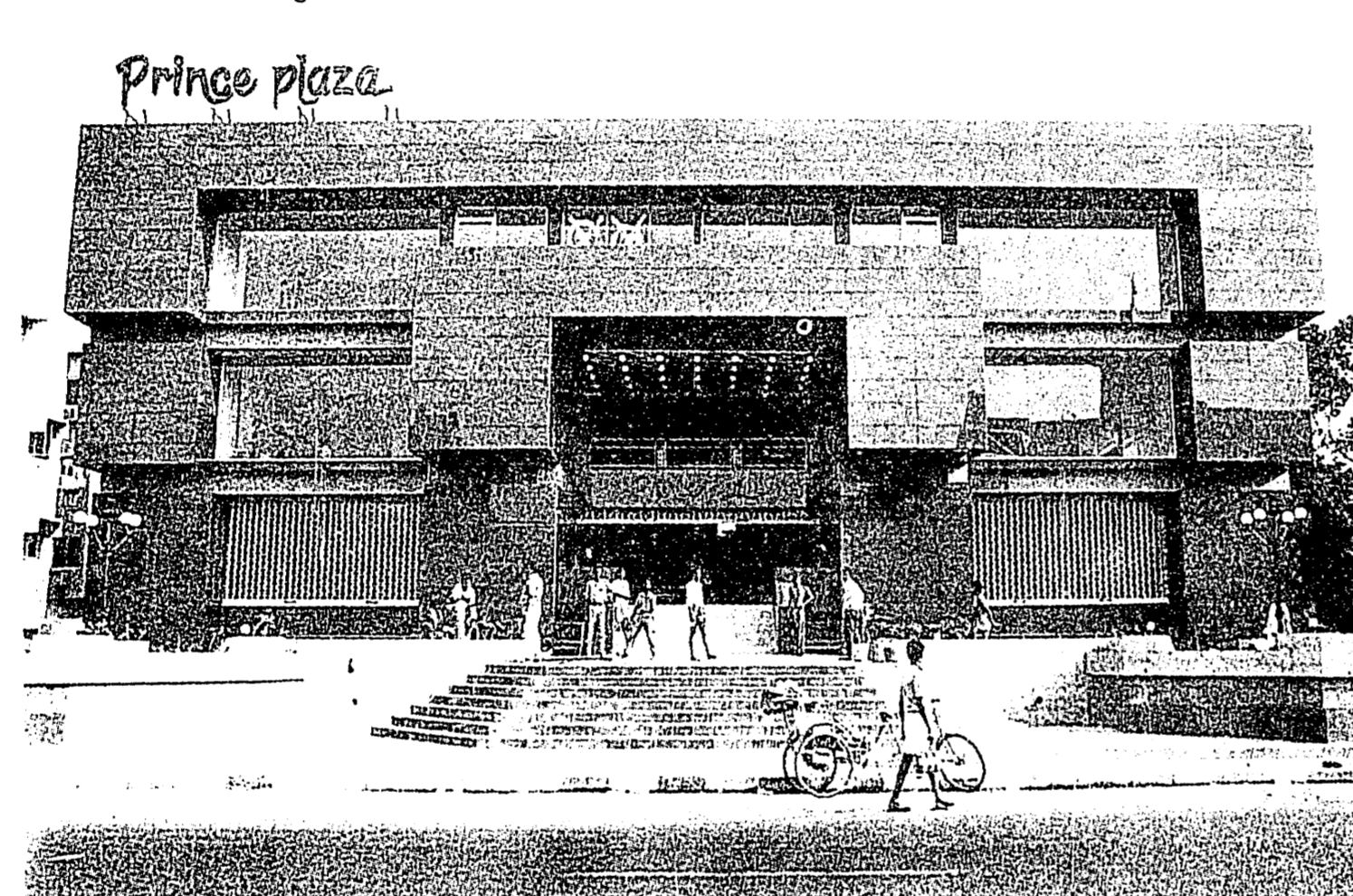
By now you'd have guessed I'm talking about that diplomat-turned-politician, the Cong-J MP from Mayiladuthurai, Mani Shankar Aiyar. He was at LANDMARK recently, and that for the autograph session of his book, *Remembering Rajiv*, a collection of articles written between November 1989 and August 1991. That Aiyar — the undisputed hagiographer — should come out with such a book is hardly surprising. Fitting too that the first signed copy was presented to the Crown Prince of Arcot. For there is a story to that.

It was at the Nawab of Arcot's Eid-Milan dinner on April 18th, 1991, that Aiyar last saw Rajiv. Over mounds of



At the Vepery edge of Purasawalkam High Road is this quaint building from a gentler age that houses the Windsor Studio, 'Photo Artists'. Lost amidst all the high-rise coming up on all sides of it, this tiny building seems like something transported out of rural England, a left-over no doubt from the time when this part of Madras was a stronghold of genteel Anglo-India. But in its bid to catch up with the India of today, Windsor Studio — or perhaps it's only the building — has begun to expand its activities and is acquiring the appearance of a streetside shopping mall.

Quite a contrast is one of the city's newest and most handsome shopping malls, Prince Plaza on Pantheon Road. A solid block, it might be, but its oxblood red polished granite facade is as eye-catching as it is elegant. The shops on all four elevator-reached floors surround a central mall that is roofed by a unique skylight, giving the whole busy interior a welcome airiness and plenty of daylight. When night falls, the building lights up in a blaze of a different kind of light that makes it even brighter.



The trouble with books

biryani. Rajiv ribbed the tubby Aiyar, who had met the Crown Prince for lunch. "So you've been at this since lunch time, have you?" (Read out in a solemn nostalgic tone by the author himself, in his impeccable Doon accent.)

You may hate his shrill, pretentious columns and disparagingly dismiss him as His Master's Voice (though he himself prefers the word amanuensis), but despite everything, you enjoy yourself

involved with the decision-making at all. I dealt with only light-weight stuff — Jawahar Yojna, touring arrangements and the like."

And on Bolors: "So much rubbish has been written. Somebody has to clarify. All we have are the various reports from the Swedes. N Ram's convoluted prose and Chitra Subramaniam's French translated into English."

What Aiyar would like to do — if he has the time — is to write a political biography of Rajiv. Wars and all, please. "That is if my party members can take criticism with maturity and agree to speak out openly," says he. Is there a message in it for Congress-

his humour. Never mind if he uses it to take shots at his opponents or to demonstrate his political savvy or against himself. Commenting on his speech-writing days, he says "I felt like a cuckolded husband". Before you wonder what the members of the erstwhile coterie will make of this not-so-subtle pronouncement, he continues, distancing himself from them even further: "It was a silly job. I was not

wallahs? And then he also thinks that he might not be the best person to write it, as he was "never part of the coterie". But he soon realises that perhaps it is only he who has such a "holistic view!"

That's not all. Not for a person who "cannot decide whether he wants to be the Art Buchwald or Walter Lippman of India". An eight-volume "funny" is, on the cards. Tentatively titled *Silly Billies*, the first volume will be dedicated to V P Singh — no marks for guessing it right — whom he has much to thank for.

To sidetrack a bit for the benefit of his aficionados, Aiyar enjoys his weekly column and spends the better part of a day every week writing it.

He left as he came. Quietly slipping out, without any fanfare. There were those who sniggeringly attributed it to the thin crowd. Let them. To me, he seemed like you and me. So perfectly ordinary that a solemn young boy chose him out of the fifty-odd crowd at LANDMARK to ask earnestly, "Excuse me. Where is the toilet?" P.S.: There's a Tamil translation scheduled to hit the stands soon, Aiyar mentioned in an aside as he got on with the signing. No doubt he hopes for a bigger audience on that occasion.

CROSSING THE BAR!

I don't mean any disrespect to the memory of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, but his lines seem really appropriate to our present situation.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.

Modern literary interpretation, especially of the school called deconstructionism, says you can read any meaning into any text, and the author's intent is irrelevant. While not going that far, I must say that dear old Lord Tennyson, who was always being lachrymose about any number of situations, usually about husbands and lovers who seemed to disappear into the wild blue yonder (*Home they brought her warrior dead/She nor swooned nor uttered cry*), and sobbed along with the Lady of Shallot and Mariana of the moated grange, somehow hit the nail on the head in the above lines. It is perfect description of the fellow who wants a quick one before he is ready to depart, and the kindly farewell he makes to his fellow-toppers as he sets out for home.

Nostalgia time. The wheel has come full circle in a half century, more or less. In 1942, let us not be nitpicky about actual dates, we had bars in the old Madras Presidency. Thanks to the Tommies around, they flourished mightily also. Young though I was at that time, even I can remember the Spencer's bars, Bosotto's, and little ones like the Casino Bar and Noah's Bar, but there must have been dozens of others all over town. You probably never saw them in Mylapore and Triplicane (and I am quite willing to be corrected if I am wrong), where the drinking was done by the high-class Hindu aristocracy in the privacy of their homes, using silver, not crystal, for the process. The arrack and toddy shops were all over in the so-called lower-middle-class

areas, and you just took them for granted.

When I was young (here I go again) and living in Madurai, the son of a prominent Brahmin lawyer used to stand outside our house and implore my mother for green mangoes and salt to go with his arrack or toddy or whatever. My mother would bring down the curses of every known and unknown god on him, but would always provide the mango and salt with the statement, "Ozhinju poi!" (meaning, go destroy yourself!).

The point I am trying to make is very simple — drinking in those days was just accepted as a fact of life. Those



who didn't like it left it, and drinkers, severely alone. The rich people, who could import what was known as the choicest liquors and wines from abroad, paraded their cellars and gave the kind of parties that you read about in novels about actual dates, we had bars in the old Madras Presidency. Thanks to the Tommies around, they flourished mightily also. Young though I was at that time, even I can remember the Spencer's bars, Bosotto's, and little ones like the Casino Bar and Noah's Bar, but there must have been dozens of others all over town. You probably never saw them in Mylapore and Triplicane (and I am quite willing to be corrected if I am wrong), where the drinking was done by the high-class Hindu aristocracy in the privacy of their homes, using silver, not crystal, for the process. The arrack and toddy shops were all over in the so-called lower-middle-class

Spencer's, I think it was, had refreshment rooms along with bars in the main railway stations. These were frequently the watering holes of the elite of the town who could use the cover of the station for their discreet excursions into the bar. While I cannot vouch for this, these visitors were also reputed to have their own marked silverware and a curtained enclosure in which they could maintain their privacy.

So what is happening now? The government is permitting liquor shops to open bars according to certain regulations. Fine with me, I am not a Prohibitionist. But successive govern-

ments' policies regarding what is picturesquely known as the drink evil bewilder me. At least the Congress, as long as it was in power, had a clear approach to the subject, with rules that could be enforced with reasonable success. Now, there's been one government which has played around with prohibition in many different fashions. Its last gimmick was to provide cheap liquor. Its successor government has done away with cheap liquor, but is authorising bars in liquor shops that have the specified space. It remains to be seen how these will function. As everyone knows, many liquor shops have always provided a space for drinking on the premises, and the proposal to authorise bars is merely legitimising the situation.

The only point I wish to make is an obvious one — how does either the previous government's cheap liquor or the present one's IMFL shops-with-bars advance Prohibition — the declared policy of every government? (IMFL is a wonderful phrase — for those unfamiliar with it, it stands for indigenously manufactured foreign liquor, if you can imagine such a paradox.) There is so much money in alcohol that no government is going to deny itself, and, as everyone knows, whatever the system, the person who wants to drink will find a way around it anyway. The humbug and hypocrisy that accompany the passionate rhetoric about Prohibition, "weaning people away from drinking", is really ludicrous. It would be more honest to agree with the most famous toper of them all:

Ah, my beloved, fill the Cup that clears
Today of past Regrets and future
Fears.

Tomorrow — Why, tomorrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Seven
thousand years.

S.K.

Madras in June

The smell of mangoes in the air... the buzz of flies landing and taking off... the midday sun's direct hotline to Madras... dogs resting in the shade, tongue out, hoping one of those showers that drench Kerala will make it past the Ghats (this year, as I write, we are still waiting!) — That's the taste of Madras in June.

You know June has hit Madras when Usman Road gets packed with parents, jostling to buy textbooks, notebooks, schoolbags, pencils; pausing to have a swig of something before resuming shopping. It's brisk business at all the fruit stalls. Sugarcane-crushing machines spit out cane, and juice laced with sawdusty ice goes down parched gullets.

The tailors are uniformly uniform-busy. In the 100 degrees plus heat, private schools hark back to Macaulay for uniform designs; blouses and pinafores; skirts with buttoned up shirts and ties (to sizzle in the Madras heat, I suppose) The height has been reached this year with one school not only changing uniform colour but insisting on terywool in a genuine case of midsummer madness. Hapless, helpless parents can but throw up their hands in despair; theirs not to question why; their's not to reason why; their's but to do and die.

School admission queues are longer than the ones at Devi Paradise and the seat market is bullish. Every seat is over-subscribed. Harshad, man, you were at the wrong place; there's more money in the Madras educational exchange than the BSEI Plus Two graduates in the top third — all instantly recognisable by their weary expressions, thick lenses and hunches, after all the poring over Brilliant and Universal papers for two years — walk around in a daze. 'Aims', Eye-Eye-Tea, Velor, P'iani, Jipma... these are the magic words of which dreams are made for these leaders in the race from entrance exam to entrance exam.

What shall I do? a harassed parent tears his hair; my son has got only 97 per cent! But that's excellent, you exclaim. Everyone else has got 101 per cent he weeps. You commiserate and thank God that you passed out in those good old days when 80 per cent meant an All-India rank. Short of the mentally retarded, everyone now gets 99 per cent. The whizkid who just makes a silly mistake and the dud who vomits out all that he has mugged up — both get 99 per cent. So you really need an entrance exam to tell the two apart.

To get a breather from this madness, Madrasis flock to the Marina. Cool fragrant evenings... the smell of jasmynes... the sea breeze... couples strolling... children building sand castles... grandpas munching peanuts... Marina is the balm that soothes; eternal, ethereal Marina; time stands still as waves lap at the city's shores. From time immemorial, "Beechukku Polam" has been the Madras way of unwinding.

By the third week of June, some pattern to life emerges. Children have been de-holiday-ised and strapped back into the strait-jacket of school days. Houses fall silent in the day. Evenings are a tussle between homework and you-know-what. Twinkle twinkle little star how I wonder what you are — little do parents realise what they have let into their drawing rooms. This star in the sky books kids like a Pied Piper. June 1992 is perhaps too early to tell, but this is one Star that is, going to be a major force against homework and exam preparation this academic year.

There is one great plus about June. The mosquito population drops dramatically (you must have noticed it too!) You see they all go to Bangalore. Mosquitoes getting away from it all in every Brindavan leaving Madras Central... I guess my imagination is getting a touch of the June madness.

What's that I hear? "Banganapalli... Naalu, pathu roopakku Anju, pathu roopakku!" Now that's something I can't resist; see you later!

That's Madras in June for you.

Hiramalini Seshadri

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Popular indifference

In the last decade or so, the mania for fruit juice in cartons has infected supermarkets and department stores in the City. Of late, stores are flooded with newer and newer packaged juices — the most popular being Frooti, 'Appy, Pingo (manufactured by Parle Agro Pvt Ltd) and Jumpin' mango/lemon/guava and what-have-you (manufactured by Godrej Foods). From the ads, at least, it is clear that these products are aimed at the with-it, younger generation.

Since I detest all bottled and packaged drinks equally, I asked a few teenagers of my acquaintance which of these they preferred and why. Some wanted to try the newer products, they said, for the sake of novelty; others did so because they like the ads, while the majority agreed that they really did not care one way or the other and picked whichever product was available.

Since all this leaves us well entrenched on the indifference curve, we may feel heartened to learn that crass consumerism is here to stay!

Pint pops

Where do teenagers in Adyar go when they are stuck for a gift to give to someone? The surprising answer is PINTU's —

FOODS & FADS

a small cassette shop on Lattice Bridge Road, which boasts a ready and available selection of popular western music.

PINTU's also caters to other tastes in music, like devotional songs, Tamil film songs, classical music and so on. However, the school children who haunt this

little shop invariably head for the 'top of the pops' section.

Success story

While on the subject of Adyar, an important shopping landmark in this neighbourhood is ADYAR BAKERY, situated on the main road, opposite the Adyar bus terminus. I remember, nearly 20 years ago, this bakery was housed in a modest little

shop, close to its present location. Slowly, over the years, the bakery acquired several outlets in the city and ADYAR BAKERY brown bread and the more substantial wheat bread became popular household brands. Looking at the huge granite and sandstone building today, it is obvious that ADYAR BAKERY

heads the list of success stories in this neighbourhood.

House delivery

Finally, there is some good news for South Madras dwellers. With the opening of ANSA SUPERMARKET on Gandhinagar First Main Road (opposite Hotel Coronet) Adyar dwellers can save themselves a trip to all-purpose shops like Nilgiris in Mylapore.

In addition to the usual paraphernalia of food items, household and toilet articles, this shop stocks miscellaneous products like stationery, cloth bags, cosmetics, pots and pans, and even "Barbie" dolls! The special service here is home delivery — so all you have to do is select your goods (with the help of the over-anxious shop attendants, if need be) and pay up. The stuff will reach you at the specified time. V.K.

Disappearing Cockroaches

Our villagers never go to sleep: they die every night and are reincarnated every morning! What other explanation can there be for women to find cockroaches deep inside their ears and not be disturbed until the hideous insects bite the very sensitive parts deep within.

I had two cases of this during my paramedical days at Thirumullaivayal, a village between Avadi and Ambattur. The first was a middle-aged woman who had suffered the pokings and proddings with match-sticks and needles by well-meaning friends but without relief, until someone thought of me and woke me to attend to her in the middle of the night. This was easily done by flushing the ear with a syringe of warm water and instilling an anaesthetic afterwards to relieve the pain. The insect came out in revolting parts of squashed thorax and many legs.

Curiously, the second case came just a few months later, and again a woman of the same age. But this time they brought her straight to me without poking about and making matters worse. Looking into the ear it was easy to see the backside of the whole insect, a full-grown cockroach, but how it could have pushed and squeezed its way deep inside the ear without awaking the woman is an enigma only to be solved by the hypothesis stated above. This time the remedy was even easier: I removed the animal intact with a long, slender pair of surgical forceps, and again instilled an anaesthetic to stop the pain.

Rats as well as cockroaches have often been found to be responsible for gnawing the thick dead skin from children's toes. The child awakes with a scream of pain when the skin's been nibbled down to raw flesh.

I too have been bitten by cockroaches. I live in a tiny cottage in South Madras that must be a good two hundred years old. There are still fittings for *punkahs* in the ceilings. At first, the little old place swarmed with the beastly creatures and I was twice bitten — it felt like being poked with a red-hot needle on my bare tummy while asleep. For years now, though, I haven't seen a single cockroach in the house, and no thanks to all these pest control people, electronic devices and patented

formulas either. I have to thank an anonymous planter in the hills who, years ago, sent me a cheap, simple, non-poisonous formula which I have

LIVING WITH FAUNA

used with total success, and so have many of my friends and readers of my newspaper columns.

I use rather a smart, customised envelope for my letters with my logo printed on the flap and was naturally

Angered when the last consignment from the printers turned out to have large crescent tears in the gummed flaps. But that was only until I realised that it was the work not of the blameless printer but of cockroaches eating the glue. I smeared some of my cockroach formula on the corners of the drawer containing the envelopes and have not found a single defective one since.



1 teaspoon red chilli powder
3-4 teaspoons paoon bhaji masala
4-6 tbs butter
A bunch of coriander leaves chopped fine
Paoon or bread slices
Salt to taste.

Method
Melt three tablespoons butter in a frying pan. Fry the onions till golden. Add the tomatoes, turmeric powder, red chilli powder and paoon bhaji masala. Fry for 3-4 minutes. Add the vegetables and cook for 3-4 minutes till well blended. Set aside. Heat the remaining butter. Fry the paoon till golden. Garnish the vegetables with coriander leaves and serve hot with buttered paoon or bread slices.

Chandra Padmanabhan
PINWHEEL SANDWICHES

1 loaf bread cut horizontally
1 cup cooked chicken pieces (without bones), cut fine and seasoned with salt and pepper
½ cup tomato cut fine and seasoned with salt and pepper
Mayonnaise

Method
Roll out each slice lightly with a rolling pin and spread the mayonnaise. Then spread chicken for about ¼ of the slice and spread the tomato for the rest of the slice. Roll tightly and wrap in brown paper and keep aside (turn in the ends).
Remove the paper and cut into about ¼" slices just before serving.

Variation
Instead of chicken, you can use mint chutney or cheese.

Neela Prabhakar
BREAD DOSAI
1 loaf ordinary bread, broken into pieces
2-3 tbs gram flour (besan)
2-5 tbs rice powder
½ teaspoon asafoetida powder
2 or 3 green chillies, chopped fine
A small bunch coriander leaves, chopped fine
Salt to taste

Method
Mix all the ingredients. Add sufficient water and make a batter of thick, dropping consistency. Heat oil and add all ingredients for tempering. When the mustard seeds splutter, add to the dosai batter. Heat a *tawa*. Pour a ladleful of batter and make a thick *dosai* like an *oathappam*. Pour a teaspoon of oil all around the edges.
Turn the *dosai* carefully and fry both sides till golden.
Serve hot, with a coconut chutney.

BREAD BONDA
1 loaf ordinary sliced bread
1 medium onion, chopped fine
4 potatoes, boiled, peeled and chopped fine
½ cup peas (boiled)
2 or 3 green chillies, chopped fine
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
¼ teaspoon asafoetida powder
½ teaspoon red chilli powder

I've published the formula before, but it cannot be published too often. It doesn't result in finding dead cockroaches everywhere; they simply disappear. Apparently the formula gums up their innards so they die in the gutters or sewers where they breed. The only failures reported to me have been from people who have admitted they left the preparation and application of the stuff to servants. **Moral:** Do it yourself to make sure.

(Continued on P7)

QUIZZIN' WITH NAVIN

(Quizmaster NAVIN JAYAKUMAR's questions are all from May 15 — 31)

- Name the sister city of Madras in the Rocky Mountains, in the U.S., where a recreational park, to promote knowledge of our city, is coming up.
- A four-lane traffic system is to be introduced in the city. Between which two points on Anna Salai?
- The first phase of the wholesale perishable goods market in the city has been completed. In which suburban area is it located?
- What dangerous illness transmitted by the *Culex tritaeniorhynchus* mosquito continues to be a major problem in S Arcot, Tiruchi and Tirunelveli districts?
- The city police plan to come down heavily on those pasting posters indiscriminately. Under what act can the stickers be booked?
- Where did the CN lay the foundation for Madras' Film City?
- What novel scheme to increase the availability of accommodation for foreign tourists has been introduced by the TN Government?
- Where is India's Intermediate Missile Testing Range from where Agni was recently launched?
- With the success of ASLV, many space-related acronyms were in the news. Can you expand (a) SROSS, (b) PSIV, (c) GSLV?
- Which bull's company is named 'Growmore Financial Services'?
- Name the senior Indian diplomat who was 'forcibly abducted' from outside his house in Islamabad, beaten up and released some seven hours after Pakistan declared him *persona non grata*.
- Name the international group of public service broadcasters who are producing a range of environment programmes to coincide with the Earth Summit.
- Who was the station engineer of AIR who was brutally killed by terrorists in Patiala?
- Which prize awarded to the Bengali poet Subhash Mukhopadhyay carries with it a citation, a plaque, a bronze statue of Vagdevi besides a cheque for Rs. 2 lakhs?
- Who is the leader of the 'People's Revolution Two' in the Philippines elections?
- Physicists are still searching for a particle which they believe to be one of the building blocks of all matter. What is this elusive particle which lasts for just a fraction of a millionth of a second?
- Which undeclared independent billionaire candidate is posing a serious threat to the campaigns of both President Bush and Bill Clinton?
- Which cinema legend wrote the story *Best Intentions* directed by Denmark's Bille August which won the Palm d'Or for best picture at the Cannes film festival?
- The President of the International Table Tennis Federation announced a revolutionary format to be experimentally introduced in June to make the game more exciting?
- Which Spanish football club won the European Cup for the first time with a 1-0 victory over Italy's Sampdoria?

(Answers on Page 8)

Museum Theatre, cold but alive

The latest on the Bharatha Natyam scene is the action at the Museum Theatre. There are programmes every Wednesday and Saturday. Sadly, the crowd is quite thin, despite the quality of the shows.

Air conditioning is one indicator of the revival at the Museum Theatre. But with the air conditioning being very new, it is too cold in the theatre. Despite the chill, watching programmes here is extremely pleasant. I fervently hope it will not go the way of Kalaiavan Arangan, where the seats are torn and the surroundings dirty. Here is a theatre that should be treated differently.

In any event, it is the theatre that ought to be marketed, not so much the programmes. Madras has a profusion of music and dance in any case. What the Museum Theatre ought to do is make its programmes special, by giving them an educational slant. The programmes should be made attractive to people not already in the dance circuit and to visitors to the city.

Meanwhile, this month's programmes are of good quality. On June 17th there is the programme of folk songs by Pushpavanam Kuppuswamy and party. Kuppuswamy is a young man doing his Ph.D at Madras University, on the folk element in classical music. He has become immensely popular with his TV, stint and his appearances in a few Tamil films. He does a good job of both folk and classical music and has a good repertoire of folk songs of the Tamil region.

On the 20th, Hema Sripal, a disciple of K J Sarasa, will dance. Hema had exposure very early in her Bharatha Natyam career and has several programmes to her credit already. She is now blossoming as a dancer who knows what she is doing.

On June 24th there will be a Bharathanriyam performance by Y G Madhuvanti. Madhuvanti has imbibed all that her *guru*, Dr Padma Subramaniam, has established as Bharathanriyam, a Margi style of dance she says she is reviving. Margi, says Dr Padma, is a style that was common to all regions of India in the Natyashastra days. Madhuvanti dances with grace and charm and is worth watching.

Disappearing cockroaches

(Continued from P6)

Do what yourself? Well, take about two tablespoonsful of boric powder (easily obtainable from any chemist), add four or five parts of wheat flour (call it *maida*, if you like) and one of sugar. Mix it all with a little milk, until it becomes the consistency of dough. Then roll the dough into tiny balls and drop them behind cupboards and shelves or anywhere you think the insects may like to hide. If you find cracks in the woodwork or walls, especially of your kitchen, smear some in the cracks too. The paste will quickly

The film review, 'Taming the Women', in last night's Musings was by NALINI RAJAN

And on the 27th, Meenakshi Chittaranjan offers Bharatha Natyam. This column has already talked about Meenakshi's dancing. There is an old world charm about her dancing that makes it worth setting other things aside to watch. The Museum Theatre atmosphere should only make her flair more interesting.

In search of Marquez

A charming young man visited Madras recently to show a film he had directed. After the screening of this extraordinary film at the Alliance

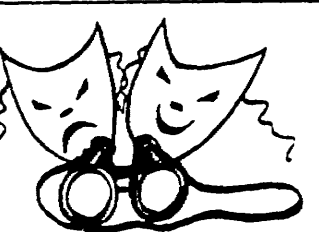
THE VIEW FROM THE WINGS

Francise, Dan Weldon shared his experiences in making it with the film enthusiasts of the city. Weldon spoke of the film as well as of his adventures in Latin America, where he was chased by drug lords, the mafia and the local intellectuals.

The film is called *My Macondo* and it is about the search for Macondo, the

magical, fantastic, monstrous place created by Gabriel Garcia Marquez for his epic novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. In the film, Julio Roca, a journalist, sets off across the banana zone of Santa Marta in search of Macondo. His clue is a massacre that took place in the book and in history. The trail of uncertainties and beliefs leads eventually to Marquez himself, who says he exaggerated the massacre into the epic proportions required by the book.

The film, brilliant in concept and execution, demonstrates Dan Weldon's



masterly control over camera and editing. Will it be used to make a film in India?

Weldon is in India at the invitation of Odessa Films of Kerala. He has shown his film throughout Kerala, in little villages and big cities. He is now considering making a film in Kerala.

A get-together that should lead to other get-togethers

by P N SUNDARESAN

It was a happy coincidence that on the morning of the day, May 20th, when the Tamil Nadu Sports Journalists Association (TNSJA) was to present the Kumararajah M.A.M Muliath Memorial Gold Cup to junior tennis star Leander Paes, for being the Best Sportsman of 1990-91, the dailies announced the news that he had been awarded the Arjuna Award.

Paes was congratulated by every speaker at the evening function, including M.A.M. Ramaswamy, the donor of the cup, Governor Bhisma Narain Singh, who gave away the cup, and S. Thyagarajan, President of TNSJA.

However, I must point out a lapse in the citation, which stated, "World class tennis players are as rare in Indian tennis as snowstorms in Madras. One every decade is as frequent as they come... Vijay Amritraj made the world sit up and take note of his gifts in the early 1970s, and the 1980s were almost upon us when Ramesh Krishnan made the jump from the junior ranks following his triumph in

I had mentioned in an earlier article, on the Nehru Stadium, how the late S.K. Gunanathan took advantage of the offer by Corporation Commissioner Balasubramaniam of space in the Stadium to help sports writers, and formed the Sports Writers Club in 1963. S.K.G.'s main concern then was to equip the room offered with work tables and other amenities for those engaged in covering major events staged at the Stadium. Even after cricket shifted back to Chepauk, the facilities remained for other events.

Though the Sports Writers Club initially was open only to sports writers, the scope for membership was later enlarged and the name too changed — to TNSJA. The Association has, overcoming internal problems from time to time, grown in strength and expanded its activities. The Association twice hosted the J.K. Bose cricket tourna-



Dan Weldon (Photograph by A S Panneerselvan)

Bargains at Sakshi

Sakshi Gallery is offering a bargain to the casual as well as the serious collector of art. In an exhibition entitled 'Studio Cleanings' (15th to 30th June), experimental and vintage works gathered from the studios of artists are being made easily available.

You can rummage through the collection and pick up water colours, drawings, metal work, sketches, sculpture, prints, posters, terracotta or jewellery — from Rs. 100 upwards.

Homage to Thyagaraja

The Kalamandir Trust has scheduled a festival of music and dance called Thyagaraja Vaibhavam. It will be on at the Music Academy auditorium from the 20th to the 24th.

On the 20th, veteran vocalist D K Pallammal sings, accompanied by her talented grand-daughter Nithyashree, who has been making waves with some very good presentations. On the 21st, the Dhananjayans pay tribute to Thyagaraja with what they call a group chorecreation, presenting the saint's songs in dance. On the 22nd, Vidyabhoshana Theetha Swamy will render some *knitis* of Thyagaraja and on the 24th the Youth Association for Classical Music will present a special programme on Thyagaraja.

All the programmes appear exciting and, given the meticulous organisation and the taste for decor and presentation of S Viswanathan and his wife, should not be missed.

V R Devika

acquaintance was nil. It was only my contact with sportspersons like Ramanathan Krishnan (tennis), C.A. Abraham, Professor of Physical Education of the Madras Christian College, TV. Srinivasan (Jain College) and M.S. Venkataraman that enabled me to pick up many points on other sports and games, and kept me from making serious errors while reporting. Apart from the benefit of knowledge, such contact programmes would help mutual understanding. For example, wouldn't cricket writers be benefitted and be in a better position to write about umpiring decisions after contact programmes with leading and proven umpires?

This suggestion may shock my colleagues in sports journalism, but I base my suggestion on my own experience. While recruiting candidates for sports reporting, more importance is given to their educational qualifications, mainly whether they are graduates, than to their knowledge and playing experience, say at college or at club level. Even such experience, in the nature of things, would be confined to one or two games.

As a club cricketer, hockey and ball badminton player, I had some basic experience and knowledge of these games, when I took up journalism as a profession, but of other games my

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No building supervisor this!

Strictly speaking, this is not a sports story. But the governments of the day have made the chief character in it participate in a game of musical chairs. And that, *The Corner Flag* supposes, makes it a sports story — especially as the last chair was located in a stadium.

M M Rajendran, former Chief Secretary of Tamil Nadu, lost that prestigious position of his when Madam Jayalalitha's government came into power. One of the seniormost civil servants in the country, Rajendran thereafter did not get the position he deserved in Delhi, as both Centre and State were on the same wave length on the role he had allegedly played during the DMK period. But as Secretary of Sports and Youth Welfare he played his role well. Whether the performances

of Limba Ram, the Indian hockey team, the Indian Youth football team, the Indian Junior Women's hockey team, the wrestlers, weightlifters and boxers had anything to do with his presence in the Centre is arguable. But there is no gainsaying that Indian sport hit a purple patch during his tenure in the Sports Ministry.

Be that as it may, Rajendran's seniority — he's from the 1957 IAS batch — should have made him one of those up for consideration for the Cabinet Secretary's post. But just as the race for the post was hotting up, he was transferred to Madras. And here he was put out to pasture a few weeks ago, given charge of getting the new Nehru Stadium built on time.

For the Chief Secretary of a State to be made a building supervisor is as

insulting as Rajiv Gandhi's rudeness to former Foreign Secretary A P Venkateswaran. That Rajendran would go on leave and wait out the ten months before he was due for retirement was inevitable. But from a purely selfish point of view *The Corner Flag* is sorry that Rajendran has decided to 'holiday' in Delhi. If there is anyone who could

• by THE CORNER FLAG

get the new Nehru Stadium ready in time for the 1993 Nehru Football Cup tournament and, at the same time, ensure its international standard, it's Rajendran. Who's now going to accept the unenviable task of getting the stadium ready in a race against time?

They nurtured Madras hockey

It is now the Madras Cricket Club's turn. The All-India Basheer Ahmed Khan Tournament Society has played its part. Though cold-shouldered by the Indian Hockey Federation, understandably more interested in the national team's foreign tour performances than in the fate of a home tournament, the Society conducted its annual all-India competition in May with characteristic efficiency. The spotlight will now be on the annual MCC Gold Cup tournament, scheduled to start on Chepauk's grass-cum-gravel ground from June 24th.

Arrangements for the MCC tournament, India's third oldest hockey tournament after Calcutta's Beighton Cup and Bombay's Aga Khan Cup competitions, are now being given the finishing touches by an organising committee fortunate to have as its secretary none other than former Olympic goal-keeper Muneer Sait, the State Bank of India's Chief Public Relations Officer. The number of star-studded outstation teams expected for the fray is in keeping with the contacts he has established in Indian hockey circles, and the public relations work he has done for Madras hockey over the years.

If hockey in the city has indeed retained a modicum of the vast popularity it had enjoyed in the heyday of such internationals as M J Gopalan, Ernie Cullen, R Francis and Muneer Sait and other top-notch players like Eric Blankley, C K Nainakannu, Jimmy Carr and P Rajagopal, it is mainly due to the annual tournaments of the MCC and the Society. Both have earned the admiration and gratitude of city fans by

by
AJAX

keeping competitive hockey alive in a metropolis where the game was, not long ago, the most popular sport.

When Madras United Club, with Gopalan at centre-half and the "over-my-body" Bashyam at left-half, clashed with Telegraphs R.C., with Blankley, the most elusive inside-left Madras has produced, and centre-forward Ossie Gilbert, a marksman par excellence, as their stalwarts, even in an early round of the MCC tournament, all roads would lead to Chepauk.

Thanks to the dedicated work of its officials, headed by secretary Mohammed Ismail, the Society has earned the distinction of being the country's only private body to conduct an all-India tournament without a gate. Posters, placards and hoardings all around the Madras-e-Azam ground, the tournament venue, do help; and so do advertisements in the tournament souvenir. But profit is not the motive. The Society runs the tournament solely to perpetuate the memory of a most dedicated coach, who died with his boots on, as it were, on the very pitch where he had coached for years. (To

think these grounds are being eyed for a parking lot! — EDITOR.)

Because of the IHF's indifference, a clash of dates led to some of the outstation teams cancelling their Basheer Ahmed Khan tournament entry and preferring the Bombay Gold Cup tournament. But this made no difference to the tournament's popularity. Big crowds turned out on all days, and the final, in which the Sports Authority of India Hostel (Madras) beat South-Central Railway, Hyderabad, for a record-breaking winning debut in first-class hockey, was played before packed stands. Here was a team that had not even played a league match in Madras!

SAI Hostel's maiden success apart, the final day was made memorable by the Society's gesture to Gopalan and former Olympian V J Peter, who were felicitated and presented with mementoes for the honour they had brought Tamil Nadu hockey. A few others were also honoured for their services to hockey in the State. The pattern was set last year, when the Society honoured three retired journalists for their "services to hockey". The gesture came in for humorous comments, as one of the journalists had never reported even a single hockey match, nor even witnessed one. The Society has obviously learned from experience.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Denver. 2. Anna Road Head Post Office towards the Gemini Flyover. 3. Koyambedu. 4. Japanese encephalitis (brain fever). 5. Tamil Nadu Open Places Prevention of Disfigurement Act. 6. At the TN Film Institute at Taramani. 7. The Paying Guest Accommodation Scheme. 8. Chandipur-on-Sea, Orissa. 9. a) Stretched Rohini Satellite Series, (b) & (c) Polar/Geostationary Satellite Launch Vehicle. 10. Harshad Mehta. 11. Rajesh Mittal. 12. One World. 13. M L Manchanda. 14. Jnanpith Award. 15. Mrs Miriam Santiago. 16. Top Quark. 17. Ross Perot. 18. Ingmar Bergman. 19. Counting 11 points per game instead of 21. 20. Barcelona.



The stars of the SAI Hostel team: from left to right, Kumar, Divakaran, Padmanabhan and A. Kumar. Photograph by V.S. Raghavan

A winger to watch

Mohammed Riaz of the SAI Hostel at the YMCA College of Physical Education has already begun knocking on the doors of the Indian Hockey team. But whether he makes it to Barcelona or not, he's bound to win his Indian colours before long. Another to watch, particularly with India's weakness during its recent European tour being exposed as its left wing, is the SAI Hostel's mercurial left-winger Divakaran, a player in the Mukesh Kumar mould.

Divakaran was undoubtedly the player of the Basheer Ahmed Tournament, which was won by the Hostel team the very first time it entered a national competition. And the Hostel team achieved this honour

without even playing a league match in Madras — a second division league match at that, which is the only league the Madras Hockey Association was willing to bend the rules to let it join!

Curiously, Divakaran, the player who most caught the eye during the tournament, was not chosen for the Tamil Nadu selection to participate in the Kuppaswami Naidu All India Tournament in Kovilpatti. That honour went to team-mates Padmanabhan, a full-back, right-half Kumar and centre-forward Selvakumar. They might dazzle in the future too, but watch out for Divakaran in the days to come. He could well wear an India cap — if he doesn't decide to give it up for the track.

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