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## MUSINGS

Vol. II. No. 8

FREE ISSUE -- EVERY FORTNIGHT

August 1 — 15, 1992

An article from abroad offers...

# An example for Madras

(By The Editor)

Is there hope for Madras? As we watch that garbage dump we featured on this page two months ago become worse and worse, now occupying almost half the road and smelling up the whole neighbourhood, no one seems to care. NOT the citizens of the neighbourhood, NOT local Exnoras or

the letter-writing office-bearers of their parent body, NOT the Corporation which is not accountable to anyone, least of all to an elected Council, whose shape and size we all seem to have forgotten and whose absence we accept as stoically as that garbage dump's presence!

Is it that we simply don't care? Is it that we feel resigned to the belief that

nothing can be done for the city? Or is it that we say to ourselves, it is not our business but Government's? Whatever the answer to these questions, it is heartening to note that there are at least a few who DO care. At least enough to make suggestions.

One reader, Lawrence Surendra, recently sent us a clipping from the *International Herald Tribune* and suggested that Madras can learn much from the Brazilian city of Curitiba, which pulled itself out of the mire. And, he says, it achieved its present 'first world city' look by "keeping its means of turnaround simple". Curitiba has demonstrated that a lack of money need not be a stumbling block for solving municipal problems and effecting a new look. Creativity, ingenuity and dedication are what are needed.

Is there someone out there who will display these characteristics and make a gleaming new Madras out of the old? "Keep it simple, like Curitiba; that should be the philosophy followed in developing this new Madras," urges Surendra, who, after working with international organisations abroad, is now associated with a local 'think-tank'. (See excerpts from the article on Curitiba alongside).

## Lerner's lessons

The clipping sent in by Lawrence Surendra was of an article by James Brooke of The New York Times. Here are excerpts from the piece which was subsequently featured in the *International Herald Tribune*. All of what is said below CAN be adopted here to make a better Madras. All we need is a Jaime Lerner, male or female version. Is there someone out there?

On paper, Curitiba sounds like another nightmarish Third World city. The population increased 11-fold in the last 50 years. Most households survive on (meagre) family incomes.

In reality, Curitiba is a leafy, livable showcase for low-cost solutions that many urban planners believe can be applied in other growing cities of the Third World.

Poor families keep slums clean by exchanging bags of garbage for bags of food. Businesses "adopt" street children through apprentice programs. A vigorous tree planting and parks program provides 62 square yards (about 50 square meters) of green space per inhabitant, one of the highest ratios in the world.

"Simplicity is our system," said Jaime Lerner, an energetic architect who completes his third term as mayor of this southern Brazilian city of 1.6 million people this year.

Ninety tubular bus stops spaced along a 250-kilometer-long system of express bus lanes are part of Mr Lerner's "surface subway", an effort to provide fast mass transportation for one hundredth the cost of digging a subway.

In another alternative to cars, Curitiba is completing 150 kilometers of bicycle lanes. To promote use by rich and poor alike, the mayor has begun a program for factories to help workers finance bicycle purchases.

Today, Curitiba's human heartbeat is the *calçada*, or big sidewalk — 49 blocks of pedestrian arteries, clogged on any given day with shoppers and strollers. Last September, he unveiled the 24-hour street. Enclosed in glass, the block-long arcade contains 80 shops and services, open day and night.

The planting of 1.5 million trees in 20 years and a large expansion of parks and public gardens gives much of Curitiba a suburban air.

To maintain architectural diversity, Mr Lerner finds new uses for 19th century buildings. A municipal gunpowder depot is now a theatre. A glue factory is a children's art centre. A stove factory is a downtown shopping mall. An abandoned quarry is now a space for rock concerts.

To help rural migrants get city jobs, the major converted old buses into mobile vocational classrooms where adults study to become typists, seamstresses, electricians and auto mechanics. To help children who turn to the streets for economic survival, the city places youths in apprentice programs where they work half time for meals, a stipend and schooling.

After shantytowns formed in hilly areas inaccessible to garbage trucks, Mr Lerner started a system to encourage poor people to take garbage to trucks.

Drawing on food bought from the state's agricultural surplus, the city started exchanging eggs, butter, rice, and beans for 9-kilogram sacks of garbage delivered to garbage trucks.

"Lerner has shown that a lack of money is not a stumbling block for solving municipal problems," said Janice Perlman, president of Mega-Cities Project, a network devoted to sharing solutions to problems facing the world's largest cities.

Curitiba's biggest lesson is that, with creativity and ingenuity, a lot of problems can be turned around.

## campaign against Premada

by Rita Sebastian

COLOMBO — At the suspicious time of 7.09 on Thursday morning the Democratic United National Front (DUNF) launched, what one of its leaders, former Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, called the one mil-

building a hotel in Kandal first time, he alleged, the was being built within area of tank) and the of disappearance the military crack against Janath insurgents. The si-

A clipping that starts off deliciously.

## Suspicious auspiciousness

(By The Editor)

Too many Printer's Devils at work and too few proofreaders with a feel for the language have made English language publishing a nightmare in this part of the world. From time to time, we've had at *Madras Musings*: our quota of the shivers on this account. Which is perhaps why a finger shouldn't be pointed at contemporaries. But this error was so delicious we felt that we just had to share it with any who might have missed it in the Madras edition of the *Indian Express* of July 17th.

Poor Lalith Athulathmudali and his millions! With such a time, no wonder they were more in danger of being arrested than being blessed with success!

Be that as it may, it is not quite as bad as every Editor's perennial nightmare — 'A Public Notice' becoming 'A Pubic Notice'. And it did happen a couple of years ago in, if we remember right, *The Hindustan Times* of New Delhi. And who do you think should spot it? You've got it in one! Khushwant Singh, of course!

## Tiruppur's set to become India's 'hosiery capital'

(By A Staff Reporter)

Madras may yet become the 'medical capital' of India, but its dream of becoming the 'automotive capital' of the country appears to have vanished with the complacency (or is it a lack of enthusiasm?) that set in, in City industrial circles, in the last twenty years. Many years ago, the Simpson-Addison amalgamation gave up coaches and dreamt of making something of the Morrises and Fords they were putting together. Ashok Motors had to give up on Austins and got started on Leylands but couldn't keep up with TELCO. Standard's have had more downs than ups. Enfield's never really took off. TVS and SRVS found body-building becoming fashionable round the country. The tyre companies and the ancillary units began looking more to the north for their markets than to the Madras hinterland.

Indeed, there was a great deal of automotive manufacture in the city — but not enough for its dreams to come true.

Something similar happened to the Coimbatore vision. Industrial diversification created a boom city, but in the process the 'Manchester of South India' lost its vision of becoming the 'textile capital' of India. Sivakasi, on the other hand, has managed to develop and retain its ranking as the matches and fireworks capital of the country, though the claim of its printers that the town is also the printing capital of the nation would, today, no longer hold true.

On the other hand, and on the more positive side, Tamil Nadu will soon have, it is predicted, India's new 'hosiery capital'. The small town of Tiruppur, not far from and northeast of Coimbatore, is all set, according to the International Wool Secretariat (IWS), to take over that position from

Ludhiana. This is not because strife in the Punjab has affected Ludhiana's growth — strike or no strike, Ludhiana is booming — it is just that Tiruppur is growing faster.

Tiruppur has almost overtaken Ludhiana in cotton knitwear exports and it will do the same in the field of woollen knitwear before 1995, the IWS predicts. Exports of woollen knitwear and readymade garments from Tiruppur alone will be Rs. 400 crores by then, is the IWS forecast. At present, India exports from centres throughout the country Rs. 575 crores worth woollen goods, one-tenth of its cotton garment exports, importing about Rs. 200 crore of wool for this manufacture.

If Tiruppur could assure world buyers of better quality and more up-market designing, it can reach top place much faster, those in international wool circles feel.





# Beauty queen trains models

Anxious to disprove the platitude that most beautiful girls are dumb, I went to my interview with 23-year-old Christabelle Howie, Miss India 1991, armed with a ream of lofty questions. These were unobtrusively discarded 15 minutes into the interview, after realising that she didn't intend matching the proposed dialectic plane. Despite this, there were moments throughout the one-hour ramble in which I sensed that Ms Howie, now Mrs Robson, was far more articulate than her reticent persona indicated.

A Commerce graduate from Stella Maris College, Christabelle affirms that she is "the top model in this city, in fact, the only model in Madras who is professional". Her modelling talent was publicly endorsed during the Femina-sponsored national beauty contest held in Bombay in 1991, when she came first among 30 other aspiring beauty queens from all over India. With



A file picture of Christabelle Howie taken a couple of years ago by Photographer S. JAYARAJ.

the Miss India title under her belt, Christabelle participated in the 'Miss Universe 1991' contest held in Las Vegas, USA. "We were put on diets and made to strut about in bathing costumes. It was nerve wracking and very bitchy," she says. But the experience was "unforgettable, although the winner, Miss Mexico, was chosen for political reasons", Christabelle adds.

Since the Las Vegas contest, this newly-married young woman has been very busy. Advertising campaigns have been bringing in approximately Rs. 50,000 — 75,000 a campaign. Then there's an English language film directed by an NRI from the U.S., S Manoj Knight — a modern love story in which she's a virtuous Indian girl who has caught the eye of a visitor

from abroad. And she's established 'Primrose Academy', a school for models and actresses-to-be, that promises to be the ultimate one.

Since its inception in November 1991, Primrose has turned out 15 well-honed professional models and actresses from an enrolment of thirty. The rest just "didn't have the mettle and couldn't handle all the hard work involved in learning the tricks of the trade", she explains of her students' success rate at the Kilpauk-based academy, where the courses last up to six months.

But how exactly can a teaching establishment impart practical knowledge about how to "look pretty" and how to be "a winner"? According to Christabelle, there are several important lessons all aspiring models must learn before catching the limelight. "Poise, deportment, notions on diet, beauty, haircare, how to deal with advertising agencies and photographic sessions and, above all, how to be respected. All too often models are treated like trash just because they are in this line of business", Christabelle says angrily.

She, however, has never suffered the humiliation of a besmirched reputation. "I have always taken my parents along with me to all photographic sessions," she explains, "so that nobody gets any funny ideas about me. That way, my family also share in my success". Now that she has a husband, a champion athlete, she has him escort her for shooting, which — since Madras is rapidly expanding as an advertising centre — is on the increase.

With the boundless confidence of youth, Christabelle Howie Robson says, she wants "to start a family in three years, open a T-shirt export unit next year, make another film before that and get into screenprinting — because that's so cool".

— Lisa Durante

## Quizzin' with Navin

(Quizmaster NAVIN JAYAKUMAR'S questions are all from the fortnight of July 1 — 15)

1. Aayana '92 was an exhilarating dance event based on the *Ramayana* with about 900 school children participating. What does 'Aayana' mean?
2. PTC's successful 'unlimited travel on any route' scheme with a Rs. 200 monthly ticket is called...?
3. How are two Australian visitors to Madras embarrassing the local citizens?
4. Bharat Scouts and Guides known as the Rovers are involved in implementing the Government of India's Leprosy Awareness Programme in Tamil Nadu. Which district has been chosen because it has the highest incidence of this disease?
5. Which is India's first indigenous multipurpose satellite which was put into orbit by Ariane's Flight 51?
6. The TN Government will shortly introduce a chain of Schools of Excellence, an improved version of the Navodaya schools. In which district will the first of these schools start?
7. In which Olympics did South Africa participate for the last time before the ban?
8. Where did Russian First Secretary Alexander Ganitch vanish to before being traced and brought back to New Delhi?
9. To how many years imprisonment has ousted Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega been sentenced on drug and racketeering charges?
10. Name the flagship of the US Seventh Fleet which visited Madras recently.
11. Which Puccini opera was recently produced in a unique fashion, following the exact locations and times as specified by the composer? It was conducted by Zubin Mehta and telecast to millions of viewers in about 50 countries.
12. Which tennis star's autobiography is titled *Beyond Centre Court*? She was recently inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame.
13. What equipment acquired by the Cancer Institute, Adyar, is the first such facility in India for intraoperative use?
14. Name the Republican and Democrat nominees for President and Vice President in the forthcoming US elections?
15. Which Minister of State for Commerce resigned over the purchase of shares in Fairgrowth Financial Services Ltd., now under investigation by the CBI?
16. Who is the celebrated mathematician whose centenary is being marked by the Number Theory Conference in the United States? He is also noted for obtaining a crucial improvement in the famous Hardy-Ramanujan formula.
17. How many teams will the next World Cup Cricket Finals have?
18. Which new express connects Madras and Vijaywada?
19. Name the new Deputy Minister for Education and Culture who is also the youngest member of the Lok Sabha?
20. Who were the winners of the Men's and Women's singles titles at Wimbledon this year?

(Answers on Page 8)

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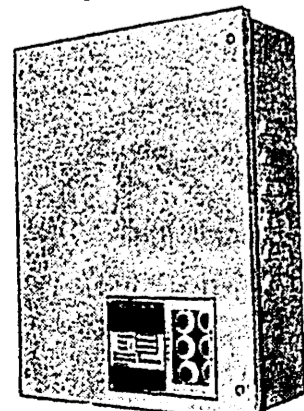
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An ingenious minced mutton recipe — *Fancy Apples* — savoury meat balls, just perfect to be served with the nutritious *Vegetable Khichidi*. Serve also *Kashmiri Dum Alu*, a mouthwatering potato dish cooked in curd slowly. The *Spinach Raita*, colourful and wholesome, completes this sumptuous meal.

### FANCY APPLES

½ kg minced mutton  
2 medium onions  
2 green chillies  
½ teaspoon chilli powder } *masala*  
1 teaspoon coriander powder }  
(*dhania*) powder  
¼ teaspoon turmeric powder  
1" piece ginger } crushed  
6 pods garlic }  
2 cardamoms }  
1" piece cinnamon } powdered

2 cloves  
1 egg  
3 large potatoes  
1 beetroot (boiled and sliced)  
2 tbs mint leaves  
1 tbs gram dal powder  
A few drops green colouring  
A few drops cochineal (red colouring)  
Any cooking medium for deep frying  
Salt to taste

### Method

Wash and clean the minced mutton. Add chopped onions, green chilli, *masala* powder, powdered spices, crushed ginger and garlic, a few mint leaves and salt to taste.

Add a little water and cook till done and dry. When cool, grind it soft.

Now add the egg and gram dal powder and mix it thoroughly.

Make it into small balls, deep fry till golden brown and keep aside.

Boil the potatoes till soft; peel the skin and mash well, so that there are no lumps. Add a pinch of salt. Add the green colouring to give the light shade of an apple.



Smear a little butter or ghee in the palm of your hand. Take a small portion of the potato mixture and flatten it on your palm. Put one minced meat ball on it and cover it on all sides with the potato. Roll it like a ball. It should look neat, like an apple.

Brush the 'apples' with a touch of cochineal on one side, just to give it a pink tinge. Press a clove and a mint leaf on top of each apple.

Arrange neatly on a bed of sliced or grated beetroot and serve.

### Mrs P Raghupathy

### VEGETABLE KHICHIDI

1 cup basmati rice  
½ cup moong dal  
1" piece ginger } ground  
3 or 4 green chillies } to a  
4 garlic pods } paste  
2 onions, chopped fine  
2 bay leaves  
1 teaspoon red chilli powder  
¼ teaspoon turmeric powder  
1" stick cinnamon  
2 cloves  
1 cup mixed vegetables (such as peas, chopped beans and carrot)  
3 tbs ghee

### Salt to taste

### Method

Heat ghee and fry the onions till transparent. Add the bay leaves, cinnamon, cloves and the ground paste and fry for another minute.

Add the turmeric powder and red chilli powder. Add the vegetables. Fry for another minute or two.

Add the rice and dal and salt. Add three cups of water and cook till rice and dal are cooked and the water completely absorbed.

### KASHMIRI DUM ALU

½ kg small potatoes, peeled and pricked all over with a fork  
½ cup fresh curd and } beaten  
½ cup water } well  
2 teaspoons coriander seeds powder, roasted dry and powdered  
¼ teaspoon red chilli powder  
½ teaspoon asafoetida powder  
1 teaspoon dried ginger, powdered  
1 teaspoon garam masala  
2-3 tbs oil  
Salt to taste  
Oil for frying  
Coriander leaves, chopped fine for garnishing

### Method

Heat oil for deep frying. Fry the potatoes till golden. Set aside.

Heat the oil. Add the asafoetida powder. Then the potatoes, salt, red chilli powder, coriander seeds powder, dry ginger powder and curd.

Cook uncovered on a low fire till the curd has been completely absorbed. Sprinkle the *garam masala* and garnish with coriander leaves. Serve with a *Pulao*.

### PALAK RAITA

1 bunch spinach, chopped fine  
1½ cups fresh, well-mixed curd  
2 green chillies, chopped fine  
½ teaspoon chilli powder  
Salt to taste

### Method

Boil the spinach in very little water, till done.

Mix salt, green chillies and the cooked spinach with curd.

Sprinkle the chilli powder. Serve cold.

Chandra Padmanabhan

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# Conflicting views on a happening

Whew! I can't believe it is over! Aayana '92, the mega-presentation of the Madras Craft Foundation featuring one thousand schoolchildren, seems to have raised plenty of debate in Madras. For the organisers it has been mind-boggling to, on the one hand, subsequently visit the participating schools and find the children almost running out of their classrooms to express their joy, while, on the other, hear comments from intellectuals, theatre persons and high society that Aayana was "lousy and horrible". At the ICCW School for Orthopaedically Handicapped, there is new laughter and a new confidence of having taken part and held their own with children with normal faculties. But in some quarters there is anger that these children were made objects of display! What is the truth? As in *Rashomon*, it has many faces — and is in the eyes of the beholder.

A disappointing feature of the presentation was that great thekukoolthu actor Sambandam's inability to get into the spirit of Aayana because his *midangam* accompaniment did not arrive. On the other hand, the apparent chaos was deliberate, as joy was the key word and the artists of different disciplines and different approaches to theatre and dance were allowed to work together on their own terms. Many of them volunteered to participate in spite of much opposition from their revolutionary peers who felt it was unethical to work with anyone other than themselves. Working with children can be a greatly humbling experience and every artist needs it! The artists who participated discovered this for themselves.

## Alternate theatre

I was sorry to have missed the theatre festival organised by Subhamangala. There were some extremely interesting presentations offered at the festival, I was told.

I could attend only the last day, when the *koothu*, *Narthevan Gudigadu*, was presented outside the Krishna Gana Sabha hall. This *koothu*, which generally depicts *Prahlada Charitham*, has a unique characteristic. Each role is played by two people simultaneously. There are two Ganeshas, two Prahladas, two Hiranyakashipus etc.

It was, however, curious to hear the narrator mention that the *koothu* was being staged at the Muppathamman temple, even though the temple was across the street and a wall separated and hid the Sabha premises from it.

*Narthevan Gudigadu* is now performed only in two villages in Tamil Nadu. The *koothu* has lilting songs and the artistes have a spring to their dancing steps.

Many groups from different parts of Tamil Nadu presented their plays at the festival. The street theatre groups among them performed in the open air outside. Mornings were devoted to discussions on the presentations among intellectuals.

Komal Swaminathan has been able to get Shriram Chit Funds as the sole promoter of alternate Tamil Theatre in

Madras City. And that's proved rewarding.

## Shadows that teach

A visitor to Madras who held my attention was Michael Richardson,



Michael Richardson

## THE VIEW FROM THE WINGS

a shadow puppeteer from the U.S. He is here on a Fulbright fellowship to explore shadow puppetry in India.

In Madras, he worked with Selvaraj and Seethalakshmi, the two Madras shadow puppeteers, and, in spite of language problems, had animated discussions with them.

While puppetry is generally considered a dying folk art in the West, it is increasingly being used by experimental and non-traditional theatre, as well as being an adjunct to education, Richardson told me. Michael had a brief encounter with some local school-teachers, gave them some exciting ideas of how shadow puppetry could be brought into the classroom in broad daylight and demonstrated Indonesian and American shadow puppetry.

He plans to come back to Madras in September and looks forward to doing a bigger workshop with school-teachers, puppeteers, crafts and theatre persons.

## The art of Rajasthan

Folk art seem to be alive and thriving in Madras city. There is a group of Rajasthan singers and dancers holding a month-long workshop of Rajasthan folk music and dance at 'Parampara' on Kasturiranga Iyengar Road. The famous Langa and Manganiyar singers are teaching Rajasthan music and *bhajans*, and dances are being taught by the well known Kachwaha sisters from Jodhpur. There are classes for boys interested in the 'Khartal', a wooden beat instrument.

Parampara is at present chockful of women and girls wanting to learn more of Rajasthan folk arts. Founder Manjulika Jhavar insists there is no more room and says she does not want publicity. She also insists there is no hierarchy at Parampara, which has classes in art, yoga, *pranayama*, Ayurveda and other traditional disciplines.

V R Devika

# STAR CRAZY

## Forever seeing stars — as leaders

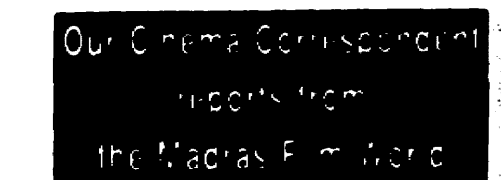
The average Tamizhan is crazy about movies, a fact of life accepted by all in Tamil Nadu. The astonishing fact that movie personalities have been able to capture political power and rule the state is a reflection of this strong link between cinema and politics in this part of the country.

During the past several weeks, posters have been appearing in several district towns of the state (posters are banned only in Madras city, as yet) heralding the megastar Rajinikanth as the future Chief Minister of the state. While he has denied time and again that he has any political ambitions, that has not stopped these posters. Perhaps only a ban will stop them. But will it stop disgruntled politicians from trying to get megastars into politics?

Another event, which took place in a prosperous town known for its banking community, really takes the cake for the movie madness of the Tamizhan. A young man of status and education was asked to distribute prizes and gifts at a function in this town. Contributing his mite, he came up with a gift of his

own to one of the winners, a cash gift of Rs. 101/-.

As he gave away his gift, he announced over the loudspeakers, his voice charged with emotion, "Ladies and gentlemen, I make this gift on this special occasion on behalf of THE FUTURE CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU, OUR DEARLY BELOVED DR. KUSHBU!" The



packed audience was stunned. Then, to the surprise of many, a section of the audience broke into loud cheers and cries of "Long Live Our Future Chief Minister, Dr. Kushbu!"

Kushbu is currently the leading Tamil female film star, and after the success of *China Thambi* she is the most sought after actress. A small fry Bombay starlet, she left Bollywood unwept and unsung and travelled southwards. After some minor roles in Telugu films, she has clawed her way to the top in Tamil cinema. And now...! How movie mad can the Tamizhan get!

# Bharatha Natyam in a Christian ambience

(By A Special Correspondent)

In an age when the cultural moorings of the Tamil Christian are perceived as being decidedly Western, with the movies reinforcing the idea by casting the occasional Anthony guzzling wine and dancing break, it is refreshing to come across a programme that effectively puts across the point that Christianity and Tamil cultural heritage are not necessarily divergent. Indeed, Jeyamani Divya's recent *arangetram* at Rani Seethai Hall went a step further by using Bharatha Natyam to present, through sequences drawn entirely from biblical narratives, the Christian message of salvation.

The *Navarasa Bhavam* (*Onban Suvagal/Nine Emotions*) and the *Bethlehem Kuravanji* were outstanding numbers in Divya's recital. A look at the rest of the programme reveals how the Christian theme was woven into her performance.

The *alarippu* was accompanied by a song in praise of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit that had been composed by Vedanayagam Sastriar. In the *shabdam*, the dancer described the miracles of Lord Jesus to a song composed by Anjala Richard. The *varnam* centred on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The *padams* were one of the high points of the recital. The amazing grace of God who became a man of lowly birth so that the faithful could be born again into the Kingdom of God was depicted by the dancer to accompaniment composed by Dayamani Manasseh. And the *bhavam* expressed emotion through Biblical incidents that portrayed the *Nava Rasas* — Love, Humour, Valour, Contempt, Fear, Anger, Compassion, Wonder and Peace.

The *tillana* used an innovation of Meenakshi Dhinakaran based on a song composed by Vedanayagam Sastriar. And the other highlight was *Bethlehem Kuravanji*, with ragas composed by S K Maniswamy and featuring Vedanayagam Sastriar's allegory.

The entire programme was choreographed by Meenakshi Dhinakaran but arranged by Dr Anjala Richard, Professor of Tamil at Women's Christian College. Author of several works dealing with the cultural aspects of religion, Dr Richard has been greatly inspired by Vedanayagam Sastriar of Tanjore. She had, in fact, made, as part of her doctoral dissertation, a comparative study of Vedanayagam's work and that of the 18th Century English hymn writer Charles Wesley.

Vedanayagam had the distinction of being a Christian poet

in the Hindu Court of Raja Serfoji who honoured him with the title 'Sastriar'. Though accorded recognition by the Church and State for his vast and varied contribution to Christian literature in Tamil, Sastriar (1774-1864) sadly failed to win a place in the pantheon of Tamil men of letters.

A few weeks earlier, Bharatha Natyam and Tamil folk dance, both in the same Christian ambience, were staged at the Women's Christian College Auditorium.

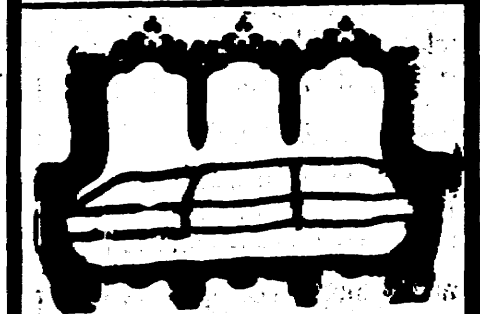
The 'Nartheithikkalai Koodam' of the College and the Institute for Development Education organised this "felicitously termed" *Good News Festival of Dance*, which, A Ranganathan writes, contributed to "a transcreation of the Christian aesthetic sensibility into the traditional idiom of Bharatha Natyam." He adds:

This programme was a confluence of three great traditions; the modern Tamil poetic form, the messages and imagery of the Holy Bible, and, finally, the aesthetics of Bharatha Natyam in the concert pattern, which included songs which had been shaped into a recital pattern by the famous brothers Ponniah, Chinniah, Sivanandam and Velluvel, known as the Thanjavur Quartet, a few centuries ago.

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# A cricketer & a patron — at 80

Two well-known Madras sporting personalities celebrated their 80th birthdays in July. *Madras Musings* wishes them very many more happy birthdays and recalls their achievements with pride in this piece.

G Parthasarathy, senior diplomat, the first Vice-Chancellor of the Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, key adviser to the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on foreign policy, had another area of achievement, one that may not be remembered by many now.

G.P., who celebrated his 80th birthday on July 7th, was a frontline sports personality of the Madras Presidency of the Forties. A forceful righthand batsman and a penetrative googly bowler, the tall, lanky G.P., always clad in khaddar, represented Madras in the Ranji Trophy championship for nearly a decade, was a member of the Indian team in the annual Presidency matches, and narrowly missed the opportunity of playing for the country.

Graduating from Presidency College, then a haven of sportsmen, he moved on to Oxford University to study law. On his return from Oxford, G.P. joined *The Hindu* as an assistant editor and worked there till 1949, when he left for work in diplomatic and other fields.

During his sojourn in Oxford, he played regularly for the Authentics, but missed his Cricket Blue narrowly. He also turned out for the Oxford Occasionals in hockey. G.P. was an excellent half-back who drew comparison with the outstanding pivot of the day, M J Gopalan.

In contrast to the attitude of his two distinguished contemporaries, Gopalan and A G Ram Singh, his approach to cricket was light-hearted, like that of the amateurs in English cricket of the day. Which was why he did not achieve the stature of the great pair. However, his enjoyment of the game was fulsome; he got the maximum relaxation and entertainment from a day out in the field and from the companionship the game offered afterwards. This spirit infected the members of the rival teams.

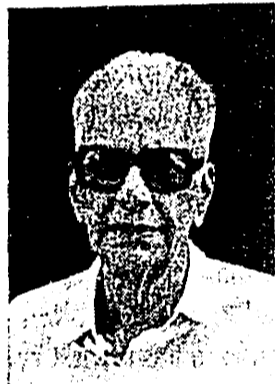
That he could be tough and purposeful if need be and raise his game, G.P. proved on quite a number of occasions. His match-winning bowling in a key match with Triplicane Cricket Club on the Pachaiyappa's High School ground after his side, Mylapore Recreation Club, had collapsed for a poor score was a memorable performance, illustrative of this. In a post-lunch spell

G.P. routed T.C.C., bagging eight wickets.

Joe Hardstaff's flowing double century for Tennyson's team against Madras in January 1938 was an outstanding feature of that match, but the Englishman could not master the leg-spin of G.P., who kept him on the

• by P N SUNDARESAN

defensive throughout and, finally, bagged his wicket through a return catch. Not only did he earn high praise from Hardstaff, but the effort won him a place in the Indian team for the Madras 'test' to be played the following week. However, an injury sustained during nets before the match deprived him of the chance to don the national colours. These two instances, and his clinching spell that won the Ranji Trophy match against United Provinces at Chepauk in 1940-41, illustrate the



V R Lakshmi Ratan

manner in which G.P. could tighten his game when the need arose.

G.P. was perhaps happiest when playing for M.R.C., enjoying the company of such seniors as the Buchi Babu brothers, Bhatt, Baliah and Ramaswami, and those with whom he had grown up in the game, like C.R. Pattabhiraman, T M Duraiswami and P S Ramachandran. Taking over the captaincy of the club from Pattabhiraman, he built it up to peak strength so that M.R.C. did not lose a tie in three years during the late Forties. To youngsters like me, it was a privilege and pleasure to play for the club in those years and develop our game under his benign eye.

In nearly twenty years of his association with the game in Madras Presidency, G.P. influenced it both as a player and selector, his judgement and independence marking him out in the latter role.

## TN at the Olympics

(Continued from P5)

they have shown in Asian and Commonwealth competitions.

A couple of even more distant connections are in the Table Tennis team. Chetan Baboor learned his game in Tamil Nadu but now plays it in Karnataka while Niyati Shah learnt her game in Maharashtra but now practises it in Tamil Nadu. Neither, however, are among the hopefuls.

Over the last half century, athletes Eric Prabhakar and Henry Rebello, hockey stalwarts Ernie Cullen, B Francis, Muner Sait, the brothers V J Phillip and Bhaskaran, G Krishnamurthi, R Bhaskar and several others have done Tamil Nadu proud (even if some of them represented institutional teams at various Olympics). All of them were not medal winners. But they helped keep Tamil Nadu sport in the spotlight at the major events in the games. This time, there is no one in any of these headline-hogging disciplines (unless someone says Dhanraj Pillay, who plays for Bombay, has roots in Tamil Nadu). What a fall there has been in Tamil Nadu sport since the time of the stalwarts named above. Will the Tamil Nadu Sports Authority promised by Chief Minister Jayalalitha make a difference by the next Olympic Games?

Whether it will or not, it needs to be recorded that the minimal Tamil Nadu presence — a blank really, if judged by those who've worn the State's colours — in the Olympics squad came in the wake of boastful newspaper advertisements by two government-aided sports development bodies listing

their "achievements". These included the SAI Sports Hostel team's success in the "coveted all-India Basheer Ahmed Khan hockey tournament" and the success of the Tamil Nadu girls in the All-India Rural Sports competitions.

The Sports Hostel team won in a depleted tournament that clashed with the Bombay Gold Cup competition, but flopped in the Scissors-MCC tournament a fortnight later (though it must be added that, by then, it was itself depleted, three or four of its best players vying for places in the Indian Junior team at a special selection camp). As for the Rural Games, are we to take it that such competition is all that Tamil Nadu can win in? It is time Tamil Nadu sports controlling bodies, particularly the government-aided ones, woke up to the reality, instead of taking credit for moderate hockey successes and rural victories.

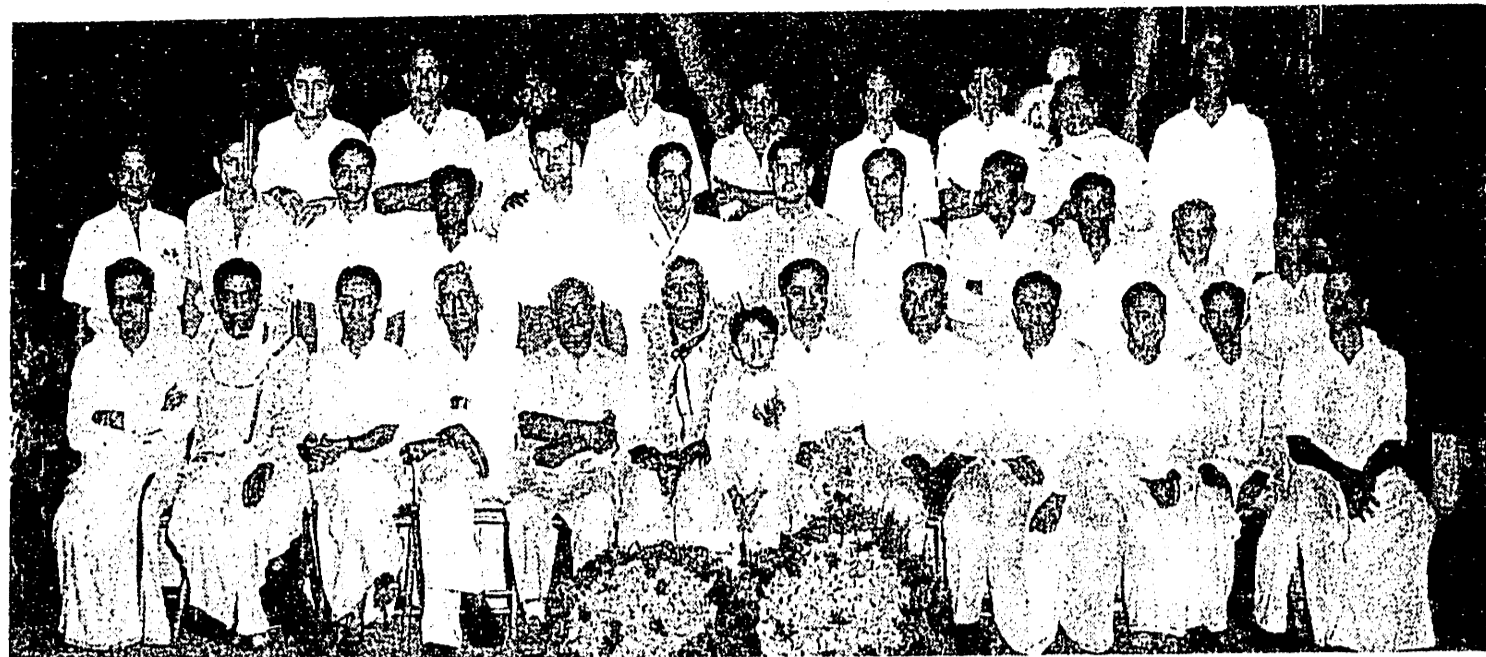
## BULL'S EYE

(Continued from P3)

By the time these lines appear, the end of the tunnel (at least we hope so) should be in sight, as the Special Court is expected to give its verdict on July 30th. The responsibility of determining a way of handling the accused shares, consistent with the goal of protecting the savings of the innocent, need not be stressed. Hopefully a solution is at hand.

Till then the market seems to be on a downward slide again and, therefore, fresh investments should be put 'on hold'.

K Gopalakrishnan



Cricket as it was then, in Madras. This rare picture shows the Mylapore Recreation Club team and other club members at the end of the 1948-49 season when the team won the First Division League title for the third successive time under G Parthasarathy's captaincy. Bespectacled GP is seen with his son, behind the flowers. Others in the front row include: T M Duraiswami (3rd from left), M V Ramanujalu (Bhatt) (4th from left), C Ramaswami (9th from left) and C R Pattabhiraman (10th from left). The author, P N Sundaresan, is second from left in the last row and on his right is G Kasturi, who went on to head The Hindu, for which GP and the author both worked.

The second popular sporting personality to celebrate 80 in July was V R Lakshmi Ratan, a contemporary of G.P. Lakshmi Ratan was a patron of cricket who spent generously from his purse to run the Minerva Cricket Club as well as the Eccentrics. He was Secretary of the Madras Cricket Association for a year and cherishes the memory that India recorded its first Test victory ever against England when he was at the helm; that was at Chepauk in 1952.

Lakshmi Ratan played an important role in bringing the Indians and Europeans closer in the Forties and Fifties. The Eccentrics, started by A.F.W. Dixon of the Indian Civil Service, was the vehicle that he used to bridge the gap between the Indians and Europeans, inviting some of the leading players from the two communities to play for the club. Lakshmi Ratan's main love, however, was Minerva, which he built up as a rival to M.R.C. and T.C.C. in the city league.

Through arranging tours for Minerva and Eccentrics outside Madras, he provoked interest in the game in the districts. The *Sports and Pastime* tournament, one of the earliest limited overs competitions in the country, owes its origin in good measure to him. He also led the Philip's team to victory in 1956.

As Regional Manager of Philips India, which he joined in 1954, Lakshmi Ratan established the first closed circuit TV. in front of his office in Mount Road. The inauguration was attended by State Ministers as well as M A Chidambaram, then Mayor of Madras.

It is the practice that friends and well-wishers call to felicitate a person on his birthday. But what Lakshmi Ratan did was different; a week before he was 80, he sent ripe mangoes to his very close friends in a 'basket' that was an ornamental flower pot!

How do you want to be remembered for the next 365 days?

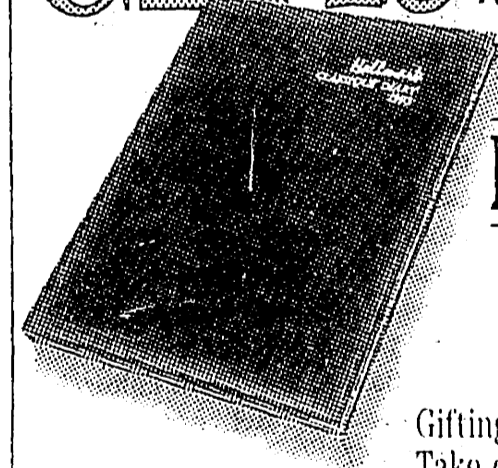
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Published by ANU VARGHESE for Lokavani-Hall Mark Press Pvt. Ltd., 62/63 Greaves Road, Madras 600 006 and printed by T J GEORGE at Lokavani-Hall Mark Press Pvt. Ltd., 62/63 Greaves Road, Madras-600 006 Edited by S MUTHIAH.

## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. The Coming — a derivative of *Ramayana*;
2. Travel As You Please;
3. Paul Henry and Craig Hendry, who earlier swept the roads, are now cleaning public toilets;
4. Chingleput-MGR District;
5. Insat-2A;
6. Dharmapuri;
7. Rome 1960;
8. Kulu-Valley; he claimed he was led by his 'inner voice';
9. 40 years;
10. USS Blue Ridge;
11. *Tosca*;
12. Tracy Austin;
13. 20 MEV Mitsubishi Linear Accelerator;
14. Bush-Quayle;
15. P. Chidambaram;
16. Prof. Rademacher;
17. 12;
18. Pinakini;
19. Ms Selja;
20. Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf.