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MUSINGS

Vol. II. No. 13

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

October 16 — 31, 1992

The books are now being closed on...

The libraries scam

(By A Special Correspondent)

The story can now be told of Madras's own scam. With the books in the process of being closed on it, as books supplied by them are being recalled by Madras textbook publishers (and a few from further afield), most of the publishers are only too glad that their losses have been contained. But they still wonder what it was all about.

It all began over a year ago, when a small but well-known local publisher with a reputation for scholarship, integrity and loyalty to the Dravidian movement placed orders amounting to nearly Rs. 3 crores on a couple of dozen publishers for a wide variety of textbooks and scholastic reference books. They were for distribution to the libraries of less privileged schools, was all he would say. Payments would be within thirty days of delivery, he promised.

Knowing the man, the orders were accepted gladly, for they spelt bonanza in a lean season. And then, with titles being in the two or three thousands in some cases, some publishers reprinted them, others made arrangements to import them and whatever was available in stock was supplied. Some orders were in the region of Rs. 20 and 30 lakhs, but in one case there was a Rs. 10 lakh order that, it was promised, would be enhanced to Rs. 1 crore!

When the money was not paid on the due dates, the first signs of concern began to appear. That however did not stop the reprinting from going on or further supplies being made. But still the money did not come in. As the suppliers began to press the publisher who had placed the orders, he pointed the finger at a swashbuckling man-about-town and political fellow-traveller and said that this gentleman would ensure all payments.

And he did, indeed, begin to make payments. A few of the cheques — for smaller amounts — were honoured, but all the bigger cheques bounced. Now there was deep concern in the marketplace — especially among those who had reprinted and supplied titles that had no market anywhere else. So the publishers now moved from their colleague to the mysterious man behind the scenes. Patience, patience, is what he repeatedly counselled. But with more bouncing cheques and no signs of firm payments, their patience began to wear thin.

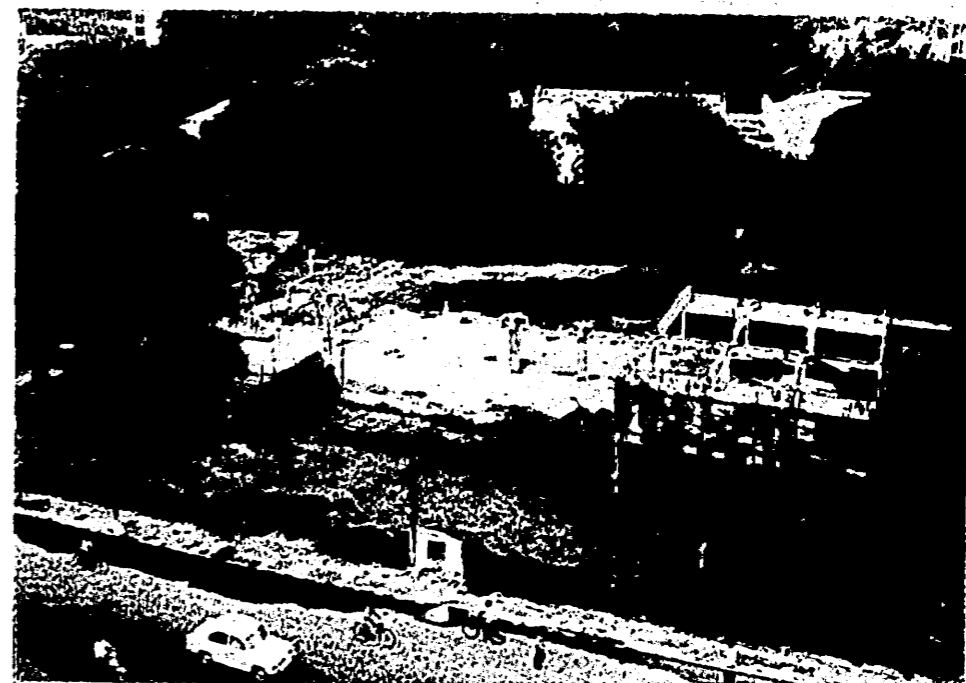


There were meetings, there were delegations, there were threats. But in the end, the publishers were led to a warehouse and invited to take back their books, if they wanted; they, however, had the option of waiting for the 'Great Sale' to materialise: "There'll be payment any day now for the whole stock," the publishers were promised. But few were taken in and the 'Grand Clearance' began.

When the stock was taken back a few weeks ago, a few publishers found that some of their more popular titles were short. Apparently the man-about-politicians had sold some of these titles in the neighbouring states and it was with these realisations that he had met the smaller cheques he had issued. But he couldn't find buyers prepared to take bulk stocks that would have enabled him to meet the bigger cheques and gain more time.

But what else did he intend to gain? No one is sure what his game was, least

of all the publisher he used. Was there a scam in the offing (and, if so, how) or could this scam have spelt bonanza to the publishers if someone's game plan had worked out right? It's as much of a mystery as all those other curious business deals being talked about from the hills to the plains, from Lake Pulicat to Kanniyakumari. One day, the answers might emerge in someone's memoirs.



What next in the forecourt of Abbotsbury? Will an Oberoi-managed hotel come up here on this Mount Road site in Teynampet? (Photograph: V S Raghavan)

Planning big to build better

(By A Staff Reporter)

There's a whole lot of plans to build bigger and better public buildings in and around the city. Work has started on some of them, others are still dreams and still others appear to be faced with problems.

VS Raghavan's picture above is one of a half-finished building half-pulled down. A part of the Abbotsbury campus, it looked like it would wind up as a row of shops along Mount Road when work on it first started. At that time, Abbotsbury, then the premier kalyana mandapam in the City, had been acquired by the Sai Baba Trust. Construction work stopped when the whole campus was taken over by the Balaji Group of the Subbarama Reddy family.

From then onwards, there's been talk of a hotel being built on this site. But nothing seemed to happen till earlier this year, when work on demolishing the unfinished row began, behind a cadjan curtain. Then, in August, the Balaji Group announced that it planned to build, at a cost of Rs. 100 crores, a deluxe five-star hotel in association with the Oberoi Group. But shortly afterwards the work stopped

again and the picture above is today's picture of a structure waiting to be pulled down and a cadjan curtain in need of repair. What is the secret of this on again, off again operation at Abbotsbury?

Meanwhile, the Tamil Nadu State Construction Corporation Ltd (Public Works Department) in a full-page advertisement dominated, naturally, by Madam Chief Minister, announce its plans under the subtitle "Mapping the future attractions". These include the new MGR Samadhi on the Marina Beach (the architect's sketch of which is shown below).

This "engineering feat with aesthetically designed arches and petals... with four Mandapams and an eternal light... will be completed before December 1992 at a cost of nearly Rs. 155 lakhs".

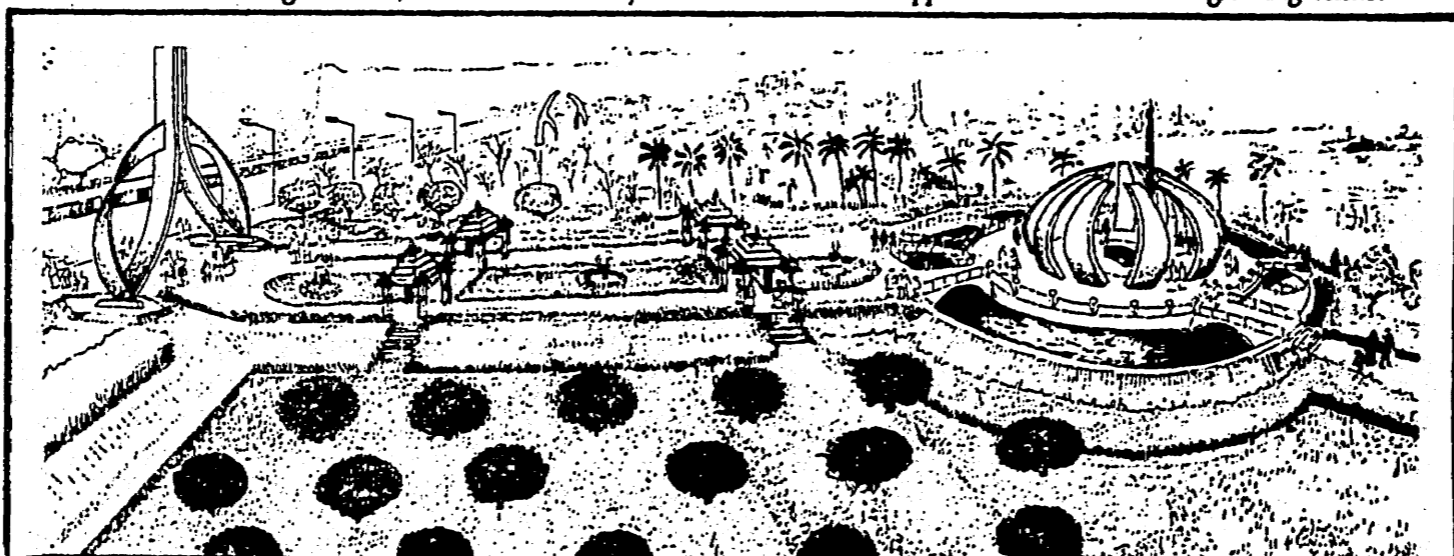
The advertisement also enthusiastically speaks, without the least bashfulness, of all the bounty it is receiving from the Chief Minister: "TNSCC is... protecting the State's heritage... in a giant endeavour to ensure that pages of history in the future will speak of these efforts in glowing terms."

These efforts will include "a major tourist attraction... the 133 feet high statue (statue 95 ft, pedestal 38 feet) of Thiruvalluvar on the sea at Kanniyakumari being built at a cost of Rs. 360.15 lakhs... comparable to the Statue of Liberty in America" and "A Film City spread over an area of nearly 90 acres at Taramani ... an exciting tourist destination ... (with) gardens reminiscent of Japan and Italy ... and a country club".

With Thiruvalluvar having the renowned Ganapathi Sthapathi as guiding spirit, why the need for inspiration from the much younger Lady Liberty, Japan and Italy? Surely the Cholas and the Pandyas and Pallavas would have been more appropriate. Perhaps the answers to these posers will be forthcoming in the next ad, but, meanwhile, this ad did not speak of the next major building project in the City. Surely Madam Chief Minister will see to it that that too falls in the lap of the TNSCC-PWD, even if it gives low priority to historic Senate House.

The new project is the Dr MGR Medical University's buildings, which Vice Chancellor Dr B P Rajan announced, together with Chief Minister Jayalalitha's Doctorate. These would include administrative buildings and library on a 7-acre site owned by the King Institute in Guindy, a Rs. 100 crore research facility and university hospital on a 22-acre site in Tambaram and "a full-fledged campus" on a 230 acre site at Erumavettilpalayam (is that 'buffaloes to the slaughter village?') near Ponneri.

All this and all the other building going on in and around the city! There's going to be no containing Madras!



An architect's sketch of the MGR Memorial that Chief Minister Jayalitha has approved. The memorial on the Marina is expected to be completed by the end of the year by the Tamil Nadu State Construction Corporation, the PWD's construction wing.

All pointing the way to remembrance

Before that accomplished dancer Kalasagaram Rajagopal became a noted sculptor as well, he had once approached Rajaji to sit for a portrait bust because the head of that great man fascinated him. The request was firmly declined. Rajaji asked: "Am I dead or do you wish me dead? It is only the dead who are to be remembered in stone." If only people who go heavenward in cut-outs would see the wisdom of this!

Our Prime Minister is also reported to have declined a statue of himself. Whatever his reason, with prices of

that here, more than in any other country, leaders are generous with advice on how we, the people, may go on to a good life and this is usually conveyed sternly by a raised hand and pointing finger as if to say: "You bloody well beware."

In classical tradition, the bugbear of drama directors and sculptors is the aesthetic disposition of hands, whether of actors or sculptured models. Rajagopal and I often discussed how limbs are a nuisance (in the male), being protuberances from the main bulk of the torso. Legs are more manageable.

• by K. VARUGIS

bronze and sculptors going up fast, there is wisdom in postponing the erection of an image of oneself until one need not be concerned that a future generation might take a short-cut by changing the name on the pedestal. For that is exactly what happened in Rome.

Except for Nero, whose dissipation is reflected in his bust, it is doubtful whether there is a single true image of a Caesar. Caesars ate, drank and loved in a recumbent position, leading to an uncontrolled accumulation of adipose tissue all over.

What we see in Rome are probably legendary wily Trojan Heroes, or the imagined forms of gods atop Olympus with their original titles chipped away and replaced with those of the Caesars. We may well have done likewise in the euphoria of independence when our cities bristled with Queen Victorias, her knights in armour and her bewigged bureaucrats. But the sharp distinction in ethnic features would have rendered any name-changing ridiculous. Fortunately we settled for changing the names of roads dedicated to others a long time ago.

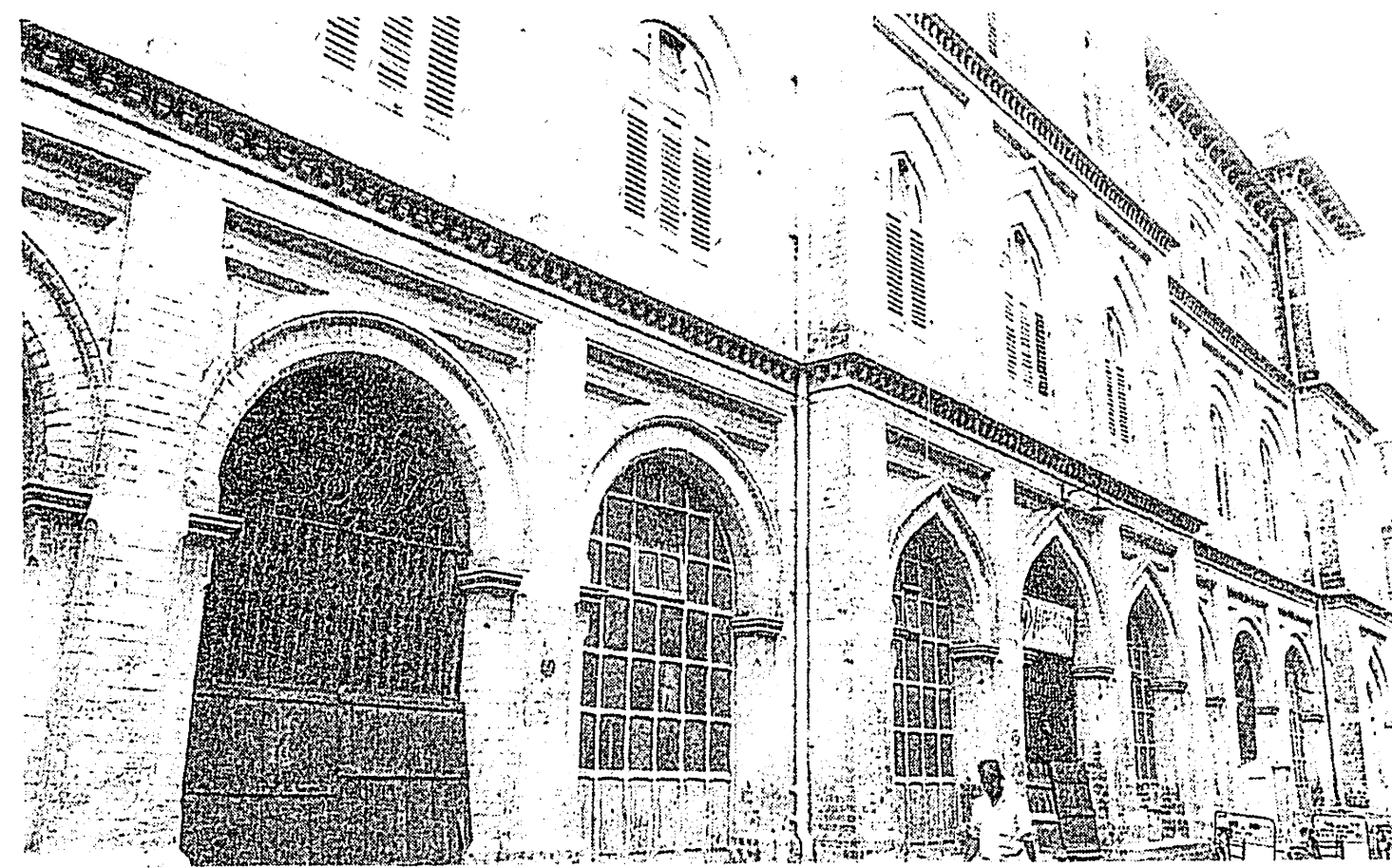
We had another problem too. We want our late revered personalities pointing the way to St. Thomas' Mount or Colaba or Okhla, stood up on a high pedestal in the middle of the road like policemen directing traffic. And so high that the frequent obligatory garlanding by the faithful forms a true test of the mettle of those who aspire to such eminence in their time.

The provocation for the pose adopted can be reasoned. It so happens

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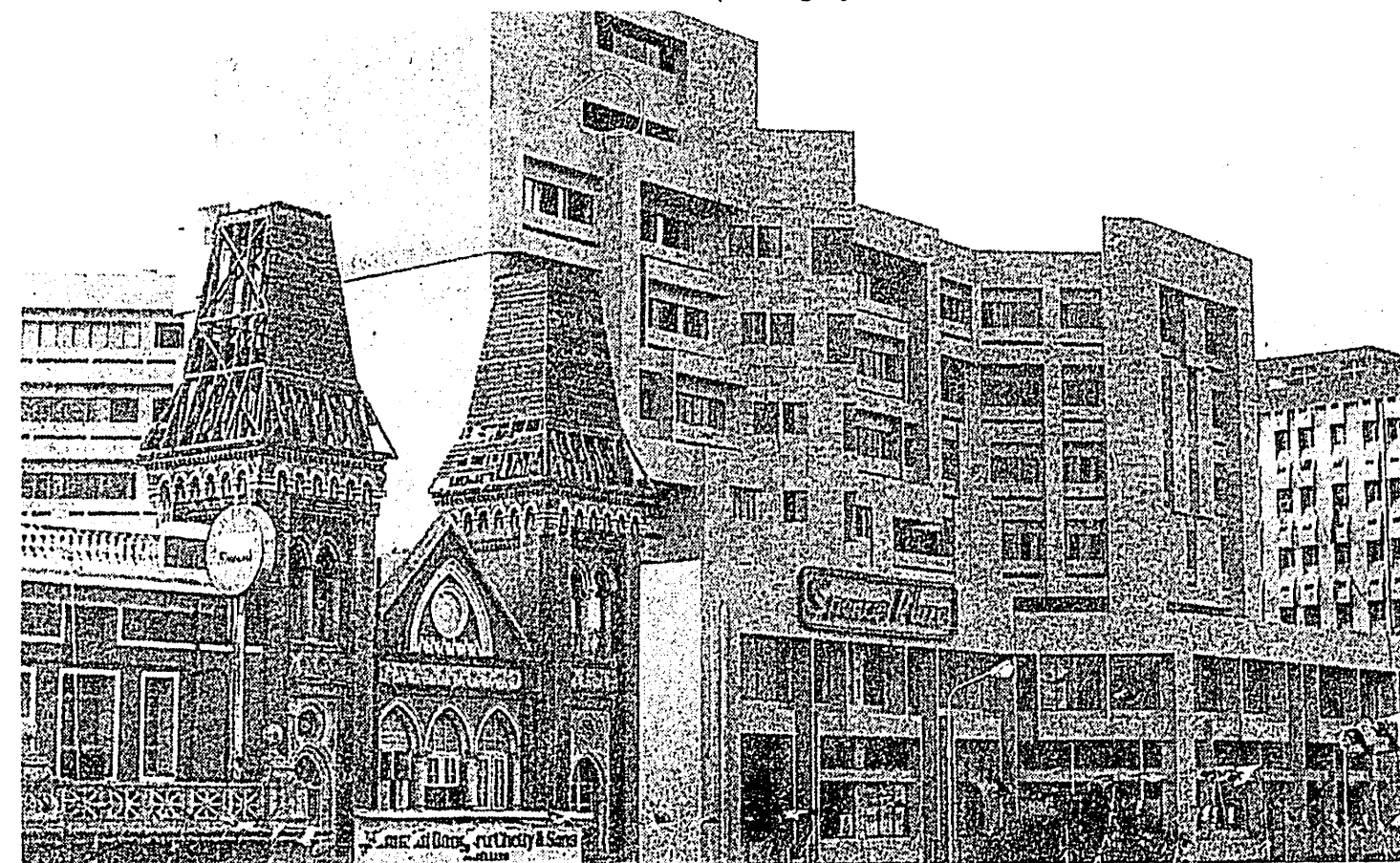
We reach 10,000 homes



One of the oldest printing presses in Madras, Hoe & Co, founded in 1886 was closed down in 1986 after it had lagged behind in keeping up with the times. Since then, the massive premises of this Perumal Chetty company have been lying idle, while plans were discussed for its future. Now, after much debate, the magnificent old building with its ornate Gothic and Saracenic arches, louvered windows and wide corridors has, it is learnt, been sold — and there's every chance that this prime property will become the site of new development after a large bit of the history of printing in Madras is pulled down. It is only to be hoped that with the Perumal Chetty family severing links with what was once known as the 'Premier Press,' they do not also bring to an end another integral part of Madras life, their Hoe & Co Diary. Despite the press being closed, the Diary has been coming out these past few years and it is to be hoped that it will continue issuing from Perumal Chetty & Sons, premier stationers.

Another bit of old Madras that is threatened is to be found in a corner of our 'New' this fortnight. That is the towers of the old Spencer's building which survive precariously in a totally neglected condition. Between two sets of twin towers, on the site of the legendary department store's main block whose core was gutted, there has come up Spencer's Plaza, a handsome modern shopping mall that tries to echo the past faintly in its use of Jaipur pink in its stone facing. Its intriguing composition of square, rectangular and triangular blocks may give it the rather striking appearance of a bit of modern sculpture, but for all that, the dignity of the surviving bits and pieces of its more splendid past still capture greater attention from passers-by. Will someone now decide to preserve these towers as monuments to the age of gracious living?

(Photographs: Old: SUSHEELA NAIR; New: GOPI)



A FALL OR A PUSH?

Kerala-base IAS officer, C T Sukumaran, recently met his death in Madras. He had checked into the MPEDA guesthouse in Royapettah and, next morning, his body was found in a pool of blood on the ground. The doors of his room upstairs were wide open and, according to the city police, nothing in the room was disturbed nor was anything missing.

In the compound of the guesthouse was a motor car with its top dented. Later, scientific deduction suggested that the officer had fallen on the roof of the car and bounced off it, presumably dead before hitting the ground.

Due to official as well as family worries, Sukumaran had been in a state of mental depression, the police learnt. If so, did he commit suicide? However, there was no clinching evidence.

Another theory was that he might have sleep-walked and stepped off the parapet wall. Again there was no concrete evidence. But his wife in Kerala suspected foul play and demanded a second post-mortem, which was done. Did he fall, or was he pushed? A classic question in crime detection.

This writer discussed this interesting issue with several professional experts, like former police chief, C V Narasimhan, retired State Chemical Examiner and handwriting expert N Pitchandi, famed forensic medicine specialist Dr C B Gopalakrishna and leading criminal lawyer S Pichai. Obviously without all the facts before them, these learned friends could not express a decisive opinion. Nevertheless the discussions were revealing.

How do you go about finding out whether a person fell or was pushed? C V Narasimhan related a case he had investigated in Delhi when he was with the CBI. During a strike in the CPWD, the Delhi police had to be called in. In the course of a lathi charge, a policeman chased a Class IV employee up the stairs and into a room with french windows. The employee ran hither and thither, evading the stick-wielding policeman before leaping through the windows. His body was found on the ground and there was a hue and cry in Delhi that it was murder. The police version, on the other hand, insisted that the man had jumped out on his own

— perhaps due to fear of being brutally beaten.

Questions were raised in the Lok Sabha, and Home Minister Y B Chavan asked CVN to investigate the matter personally and submit a report. The brilliant college lecturer-turned-policeman conducted several experiments. Models of the dead man,

CRIME NOTE BOOK
by
Randor Guy

based on his height, weight, build etc, were made and dropped from the french windows. Some were pushed. The pattern of the fall on the ground, the position of the limbs, the distance of the body from the wall of the building etc were carefully studied and Narasimhan came to the conclusion, based on his experiments, talents and skill, that the employee was NOT

pushed but had fallen on his own by jumping. Narasimhan's report was accepted in toto by the Lok Sabha and the matter was closed.

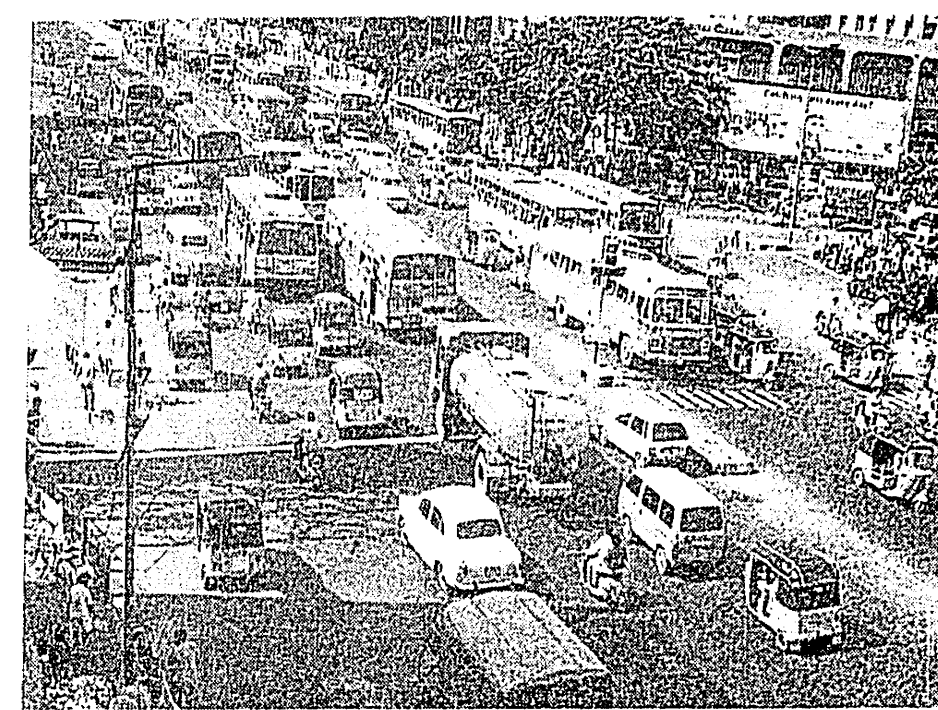
According to N Pitchandi there is a scientific formula to find the answer. It is based on the height of the fall, distance between the position of the body and the wall, the gravitational force known as 'g' in Science, and other factors. The formula is not 100 per cent failure-proof, but it works in most cases.

Dr C B Gopalakrishna, who has done more than 20,000 post-mortems in his illustrious career, was emphatic that if a person fell from a height accidentally, head injury would be very rare. Of course, he had not seen the body nor the location in this case, so he would not comment any further.

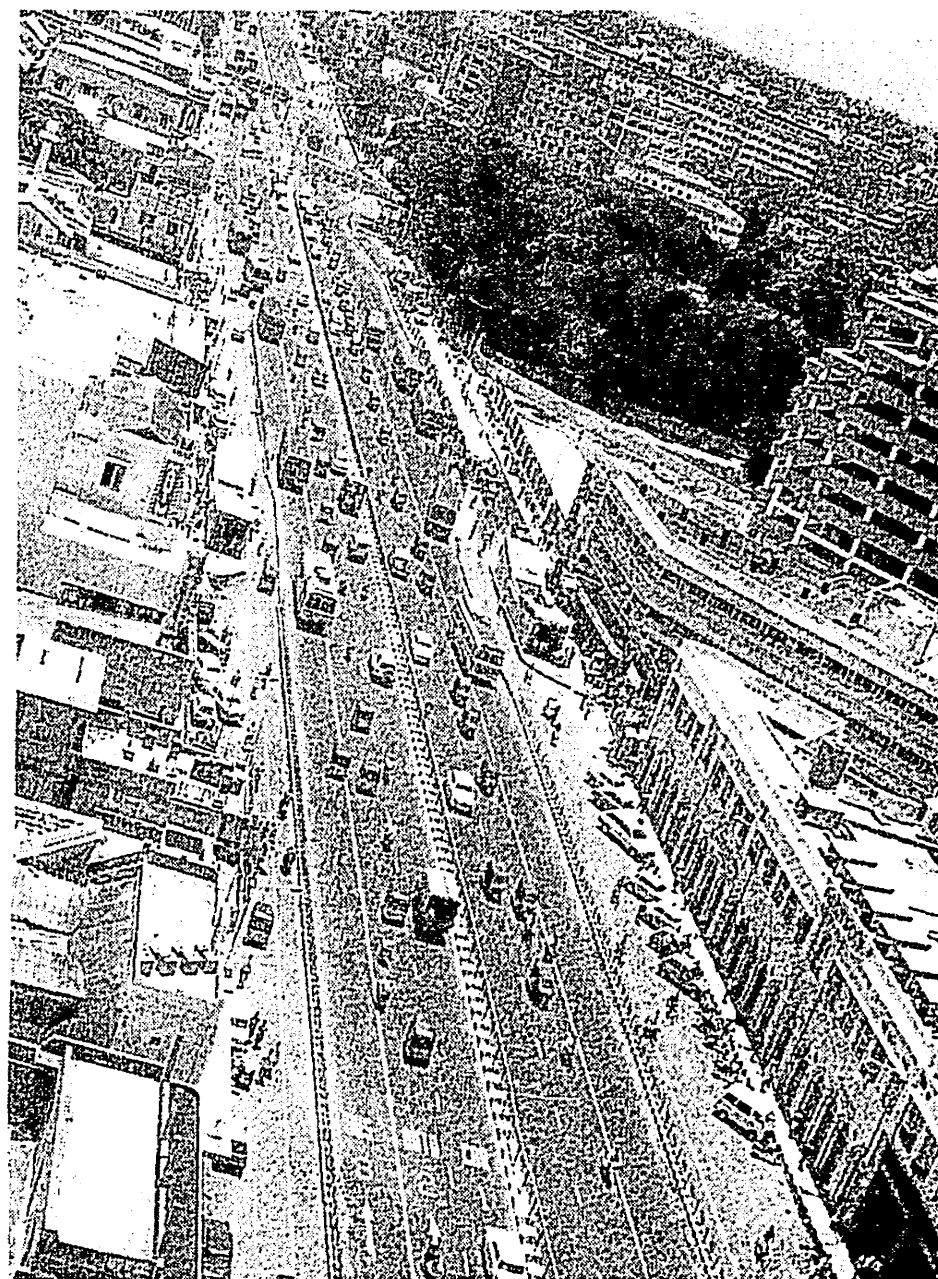
S Pichai, being a lawyer, would not give a categorical opinion until he had studied the records of the case. But he felt sure that with the advance of forensic science today, the truth could be found.

What was the truth in the case of this ill-fated IAS officer? If only the walls of the guesthouse could speak!

..&THE NEW



Prof. N.S. Srinivasan, chief adviser on the four-lane traffic system on Mount Road, sent us these two photographs with his comments published alongside. The picture above shows "haphazard movements of vehicles before improvement". Below is the "orderly movement of vehicles after improvement". Editor's Note: Veteran photographer Harry Miller will not, we are sure, approve of the photograph below. Those tiled buildings will send him up the wall, but the picture does make the point about orderly traffic rather clearly. Only, the traffic seems very light for Mount Road.



A landmark

(Continued from P3)

few minutes later. The Speaker asked the Marshall to remove him. G Palanisamy and Parithi Ilangvazhuthi (DMK) made abortive bids to speak. The latter then walked out.

Another eviction during the session was that of Parithi Ilangvazhuthi who obstructed proceedings during discussion of a Bill to amend the Contingency Fund. The member questioned the Government's action in giving the reconstruction of the Nehru Stadium to L & T without calling for tenders. Even after the Chief Minister's assurance that there was no irregularity, the member made a specific charge which was expunged by the Speaker. Many members protested against the charge. When the member persisted, he was warned and then named.

Opposition leader Balasubramaniam questioned the propriety of issuing the ordinance to raise the Contingency Fund and said it should have come to the House as a Money Bill.

The growing uneasiness in the relationship between Congress(I) and the ruling party, who are alliance partners, was reflected in the Assembly for the first time in a wrangle that lasted for more than half an hour. The Chief Minister at one stage intervened and

4-lane scheme to save Rs 37 1/2!

(By A Staff Reporter)

Not only is the Anna Salai four-lane traffic experiment an unqualified success, with traffic moving faster and greater lane discipline, but it will also result in fuel and accident cost savings of Rs. 22.41 lakhs in the first year. This is the view of Prof N S Srinivasan, formerly Delhi's road traffic expert and now Chairman of the Transport Advisory Forum, Madras.

Considering a time value of Rs. 3.86 per hour, time cost saving has been found to be Rs. 15.25 lakhs a year, at a conservative estimate. Thus, the direct benefit will work out to Rs. 37.66 lakh a year, against an estimated project cost of Rs. 93.50 lakhs. According to a detailed expenditure analysis of the costs and benefits of the scheme, the project will yield an Internal Rate of Return of 49.5 per cent for a study period of eight years, says Dr. Srinivasan.

Extensive 'before and after' studies, conducted to determine the effectiveness of the new scheme, show other

heartening statistics, according to Dr Srinivasan. He states that, on an average, the journey speed, on this stretch, has increased by about 15 per cent, which will be responsible for saving operating costs and time. In the case of buses, journey speed has increased by about 80 per cent, thereby benefiting a large percentage of passengers travelling on this road, he adds.

Dr Srinivasan says that with the introduction of the lane system of traffic movement, there is more orderly movement of traffic and traffic violations on this stretch have decreased by 24 per cent. The number of traffic violations made by buses has decreased by 50 per cent. Provision of bus bays has resulted in 71 per cent reduction in the number of violations by buses at bus stops.

Traffic violations at intersections, he says, have come down by 42 per cent, and there is more

orderly movement of traffic across the intersections.

There is, he announces, a reduction by 89 per cent in the accident risk value of the study stretch.

Prof Srinivasan states that all bus drivers have expressed that appreciation of the introduction of bus lanes and provision of bus bays.

All suggestions made by drivers, shopkeepers and others have been carefully considered while formulating recommendations for further improvement, states Dr Srinivasan.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Congratulations, Prof. Srinivasan. But just two questions:

1) How much has traffic fallen off on Mount Road due to users wishing to avoid 'disciplining'? And 2) How much has business fallen off on Mount Road, because clients can neither find parking space nor cope with the system?

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HOSTEL FOR CHAMPIONS

It is fast becoming Home to young boys in Tamil Nadu wishing to achieve excellence in sport and is well on its way to achieving its aim to provide "training to meritorious State-level players to enable them to take their berths in the national team".

The Sports Hostel (Madras) of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) has made tremendous progress within the first year of its inauguration. It won the prestigious All India Basheer Ahmed Khan trophy at the very first time of asking. Two of its hockey players, Padmanabhan and S Kumar, were selected for the Junior National Hockey Camp. T Sivabalan, a gold medallist in the 110 meter hurdles at the State Junior Athletic Championships, was selected for two Indian camps. And in the recently concluded Senior State Boxing Championships, the Hostel's pugilists, D Suresh, Maria Sebastian and S Ponnivalavan bagged gold medals in

the fly, paper and pin weights respectively.

The Madras Sports Hostel was started by the SAI teaming with the Tamil Nadu Government. A Rabindranath, Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu State Sports Development Corporation (TNSSDC) and Ms Beulah Moses, General Manager of the Corporation, a champion athlete in her day, not only agreed to the SAI's proposals, but they also allotted the second floor of the TNSSDC building for the Hostel's hostel.

Inaugurated on June 20, 1991, the Hostel is headed by Charles Cornelius, former Olympian and the best goal-

keeper of the 1972 hockey World Cup. The trainees at the Hostel, who are all in the age group 16-20, were selected on the basis of physical fitness. Twentyfive of the 35 residents are from

BY
**SESHAGIRI
RAO**

rural areas. The majority of them are from southern Tamil Nadu.

The coaching as well as boarding and lodging facilities here are far superior to what is available in the State Government-sponsored sports hostels.

About Rs. 2000 is allotted each trainee just for kit and clothing. In the case of goalkeepers, the amount is about Rs. 10,000. The amount spent on the diet of each trainee is Rs. 40 a day; some of the sports hostels run by the State Government spend a mere Rs. 12 a day on the diet of each trainee. "Every trainee should consume 40,000 calories of food each day," says Cornelius. The Hostel's menu substantiates the statement; it includes 800 ml of milk, 3 eggs, 2 bananas per student besides breakfast, lunch and dinner. Chapattis are served along with rice at dinner. After every practice session, each trainee is provided with a banana and fruit juice. And each trainee is given five rupees a day to meet his pocket expenses.

Training facilities at the hostel are of a high standard. Top calibre coaches are employed to train the hostelites. From time to time, the trainees are shown video clippings of their practice sessions to correct their mistakes and improve their techniques. SAI has also insured them, so that they can concentrate on training and playing without fear of injury.

Regular training begins at 6.30 in the morning, after light refreshments. They practice till 8.30 and then it's breakfast. The trainees then leave for their respective colleges and schools.

The second practice session is from 4.30 to 6.30 every evening.

This strict training schedule is the secret behind the success of the Sports Hostel teams. The trainees in all four disciplines at the hostel — hockey, football, athletics and boxing — have performed well in every tournament they have participated in. Besides Sivabalan, M Ramesh won a gold medal in Long Jump, in the State Junior Athletics Championships. Then, teaming with K Neethidevan and Subramani, they bagged a silver medal in 4 x 100 metres relay.

However, it is the Hockey team that has brought wide acclaim for the Hostel within six months of its formation. First it won the Basheer Ahmed Khan tournament at which left winger Divakaran was adjudged the best player. Then it turned in an excellent performance at the All India MCC Hockey Tournament, in which Razik Ahmed was declared the best goalkeeper of the tournament. Divakaran, Razik Ahmed and Selvakumar, who has been selected to undergo training at the Hockey Academy (Delhi), are knocking at the doors of the junior national team. The other members of the team also show much promise.

If the present trend is maintained and Charles Cornelius' request for 'astroturf' and an 'indoor stadium' is met, the SAI Sports Hostel in Madras will produce not only players of international standard in various disciplines, but it will also, says Cornelius, help to "bring back the golden days of Indian Hockey", which, incidentally, is the slogan of the Hostel's hockey team.

Missing finalists

The final scene was like *Hamlet* without the Prince, when the rain-hit American Express Bank-sponsored Augustine Joseph Gold Cup all-India tennis championships concluded on September 30th at the Egmore Stadium. The men's singles finalists were not there! Asif Ismail and K G Ramesh, who had easily justified their No. 1 and No. 2 seedings, disappointed everybody by skipping their title clash.

Rains having lashed the city over the September 26-27 week-end, the organisers were compelled to make a three-day postponement of the finals. But Ismail and Ramesh could not stay that long. "They will play at a later date," was all that the frustrated organisers could tell the media. What a hope! From all accounts, the top seeds, who apparently had other engagements on the Indian circuit, collected their prize money on a 50-50 basis and departed.

Fortunately for the small crowd that turned up on an exceptionally sultry September afternoon, G Venkatesh and V Hemananth fought out an exciting under-16 boy's singles final, which a gutsy Venkatesh, overcoming attacks of cramps in both his right hand and right leg, won via the tie-breaker. But not to mince words, the thrills provided were mere crumbs of consolation to the fans, who braved a scorching sun. Even so, they stayed on till the shadows lengthened, for the Yesudasses had arrived for the prize distribution function of the tournament which the famed play-back singer had launched last year in memory of his father.

Speaking with wit and humour, on the occasion, Yesudass thanked American Express and its top Indian executive, Govind Krishnakumar, for its sponsorship, which boosted the prize money to Rs. 60,000/-. He also reiterated his decision to start a tennis academy, not "to earn a name or fame". Indian sport, tennis included, was at a low ebb, and cried out for financial and technical aid, Yesudass said, urging others to emulate him and help needy boys and girls develop their talents and better the country's standards. He spoke with warmth and understanding but the famed singer's claim that he

was not a millionaire ("*naan oru kodeeswaran alla*") made many raise their eyebrows.

Back again

WV (Woorkeri Venkat) Raman, as anticipated in these columns, has again made the grade.

The Tamil Nadu Association must, indeed be happy that he helped it avert a blank, especially after it had had the humiliation of having its candidate for the National selection committee (and its Chairmanship), former Indian skipper S Venkatraghavan, surprisingly replaced by Karnataka's G R Viswanath,

by
AJAX

through the "general consensus" of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, at its recent annual meeting in Pune.

Raman, though a discard since 1990, must have been an automatic choice. It could not have been otherwise considering the way he mauled all the attacks he faced in recent representative matches, including the Irani Trophy tie in which he hit 184 against Delhi two days before his selection. It underscored the fact that the Triplicane youth was the most dazzling left-hander in the game in India today. With teammate and opener Srikanth out, Raman will in all probability be called upon to open with either Shastri or Jadeja, though his real place belongs to the middle.

If a discreet veil can be drawn over former India skipper Srikanth's omission, Viswanath and his colleagues have done a good job. And now the time has come for Indian fans to see visions and dream dreams. Azharuddin and his team begin their historic tour with a dismal catalogue of catastrophes behind them. Now all India will hope that they will have better luck on their maiden visit to South Africa.

The 'Madras Double'

Call it the rich man's sport or the high society game, the fact remains that golf has gained tremendous popularity in Madras. The daily Guindy scene

underscores the growth of perhaps the costliest of all games, with a set alone costing about Rs. 30,000/-. There is hardly a morning when the ancient golfing centre, once the exclusive rendezvous of the British, is not patronised by a sizeable contingent of men, women, boys and girls, and their caddies, going their rounds on the greens of the Madras Gymkhana Club's well-maintained course inside the racecourse. The scene is no different on the Cosmopolitan Club's lush green course at Nandanam every morning.

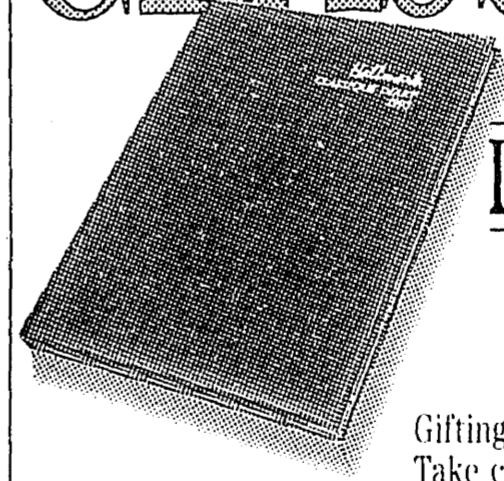
Such indeed is the average city golfer's passionate love for the game that a lad following in his father's footsteps is no strange sight, like D Nagaraj taking over from his father, V S Dhanasekhar, the *lungi* king. The main reason for the spurt in the game's popularity has been the sponsorship of the tournaments.

Dilip Thomas, the Gymkhana Club golf captain, is not only a talented amateur but also a hard-working organiser. He and V J Bharath, the Gymkhana Club golf sub-secretary, gave ITC a great helping hand in seeing the four-round Rs. 1,50,000/- prize money tournament through to a triumphant end. In keeping with its smooth running was its prize distribution function in the Madras Race Club Bi-centenary Stand's fifth floor hall, which ITC had decorated imaginatively. A packed hall gave B Vijayakumar, the 26-year-old Lucknow professional, a big hand as he received the first prize of Rs. 24,990/- from K Dasaratharaman, Branch Manager, ITC, Madras. It was the second successive year that the well-built Lucknow pro had collected the first prize.

What Thomas and Bharath were to the Wills Open, K J Ramaswamy, the Cosmopolitan Club captain, and his deputy, R Abraham, were to the Cosmo Open. They saw to it that the concluding function was as colourful as ITC's. The organisers came in for special praise for the manner in which they entertained the big gathering. But the loudest cheers were for Vijayakumar again — he had pulled off the "Madras Double", a great achievement indeed, with a spectacular last hole victory that earned him another Rs. 24,990/-.

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