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## MUSINGS

Vol. II. No. 18

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

January 1 — 15, 1993

## Green signal for industry

(By A Staff Reporter)

The year ended in Tamil Nadu on a more hopeful note, with the industrial scene in the State showing signs of brightening up. Thirtyseven projects, with investment of over Rs. 10,000 crores, were cleared in the last few months of the year, the greater part of them in ONE WEEK in December. These clearances, taken together with the near-total peace that reigned in the State during the Ayodhya eruption, would appear to indicate that the State is on the right path to economic and social revival. The only sad note as the year ended was the statewide textile strike — which could have been avoided if a little more attention had been paid to the issues involved by the powers-that-be, but, in the event, ended with a back-to-work decision *pro tempore*.

In the first stage, some months back, the Tamil Nadu Government cleared Ashok Leyland's Rs. 675 crore expansion in Hosur, the LMW Group's Rs. 200 crore pig iron project in Salem District, a Rs. 800 crore lignite-based power project in Neyveli and four export-oriented projects totalling Rs. 100 crores. Chief Minister Jayalalitha, in two-day sittings early in December with home, out-of-State, NRI and foreign industrialists, cleared 27 projects involving Rs. 8486 crores investment, direct employment for 8000 persons and indirect employment for 12,000.

The industrial projects cleared in the face-to-face sessions were:

Industrialists	Project	Investment (in Rs. crores)
Jayavarthanavelu	Coke oven project	140
Dinesh Dalmia	Extra-neutral alcohol	37
Thiagaraja Chettiar	Membrane key switches	12
F J Harrison (U.S.)	Automobile tyres	400
Punnoose (Appachan)	Theme park	15
G S Keshavamurthy	1. Vanillin	30
	2. Photocopying chemicals.	25
P Maruthai Pillai	Shoe uppers	13
Ram V. Thiagarajan	N. Butanol	20
M V Subbiah	1. Ammonia storage terminal	25
	2. Vinyl acetate monomer	125
S S Poddar	Polyester filament yarn	110
A C Muthiah	Caustic soda & salt products	135
N Shankar	Synthetic rutile	235
Mrs Mallika Srinivasan	Intra-ocular lenses	15
John Hormis	Power project	3,000
(New York) + Tatas		
Vijayakumar Reddy (+ Boston)	Power project	1,600
G M Swamy (+ Italy)	Power project	800
H Brenneiser (Bayer India)	1. Citric acid	100
	2. Polymer chemicals	1,000
K Anji Reddy	Bulk drugs	70
N V Choudry	Bulk drug intermediates	20
Ravi N Ruia	Oil exploration-cum-fertilisers	1,000
Pavan Poddar	Plastic components	32
Kamal Oswal	Chemicals	100
Peter J L Prabhu	Shoe project	11
K Jagadeesh Reddy	Weaving mill	16
	Total	8,486

Shortly after the Chief Minister's marathon meeting with industrialists, three more projects, calling for an investment of Rs. 70 crores, were cleared. These were an ITC, 100 per cent export-oriented agro-products venture in Dharmapuri District, mango and guava pulp being targeted for the initial exports. ITC has been exporting fruit and fruit products for many years now, sourcing them from others; this is its first venture as a primary source and it is aiming at a 6-700t capacity. A similar EOU is the RPG's Harrison Malayalam project that has been cleared. This Rs. 5 crore project is for floriculture aimed at the growing international market for flowers.

The third project cleared is a Rs. 37 crore venture by the PGP group, which plans to set up a sponge iron plant with a capacity of 30,000t/yr in Gummidipoondi to meet the needs of the group's own electric furnaces as well as of public demand.

*Lack of enforcement,  
the most frightening part of...*

## The fall-out of Ayodhya

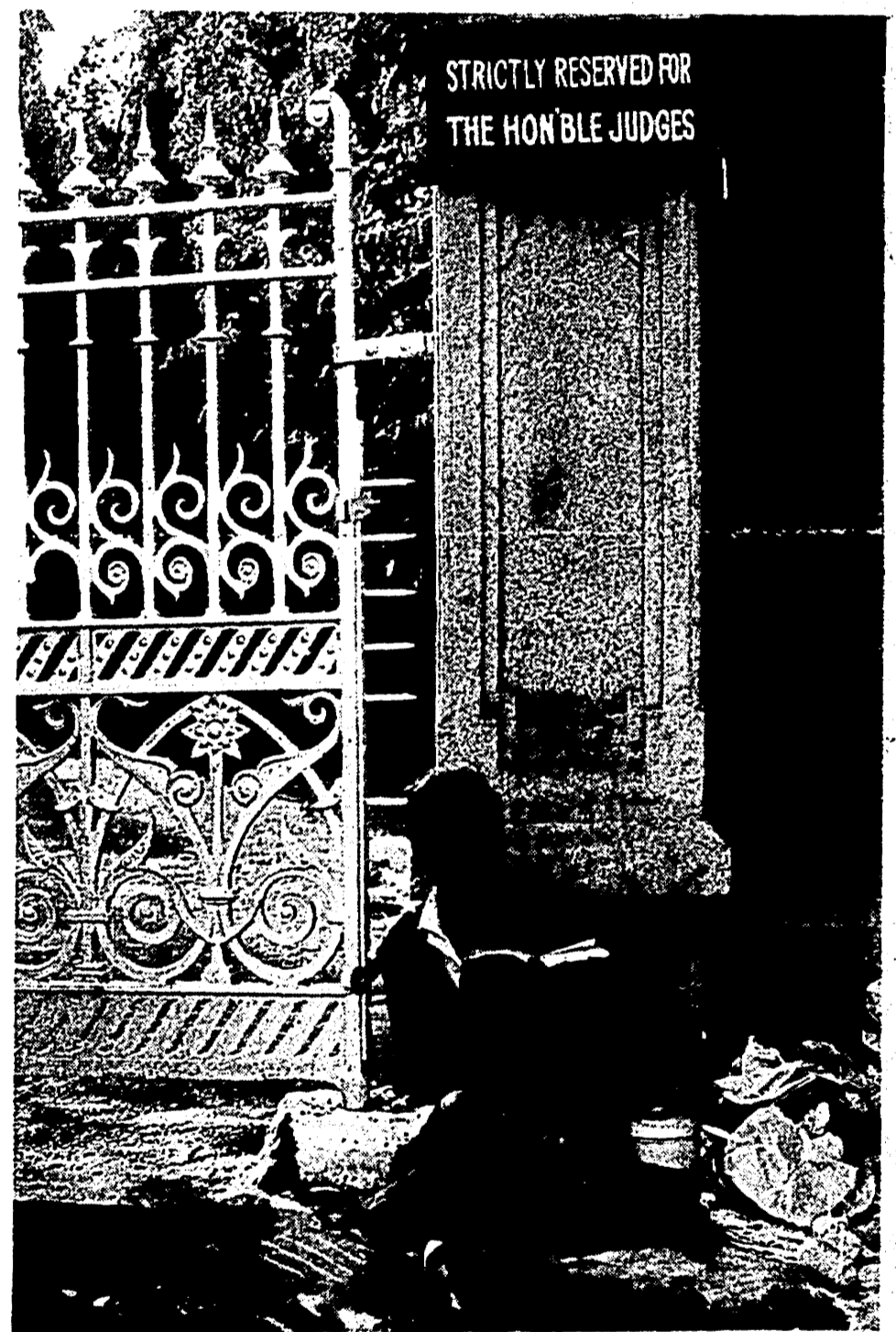
(By The Editor)

As the New Year dawns — and let me wish all of you a very happy 1993; may it bring each of you a heap of joy and move all of us in India a lot closer to the light at the end of the tunnel — the signs are anything but propitious. A nation shaken by the frenzy in Ayodhya and the demons it let loose elsewhere wonders fearfully about what lies ahead. Islands of sanity like Tamil Nadu, in an ocean of madness, were few and far between in those last dark days of 1992. But are they strong enough to show the rest of the nation the way?

The religious, historical and minority issues involved in the Ayodhya explosion are one thing. And they are important issues the majority needs to discuss with understanding and tolerance. But far more of concern in many ways was the manner in which the Supreme Court's views were pointedly ignored by all concerned. What is alarming is that this is not the first time this has happened. *Madras Musings* has had occasion to write about the same issue in the past when Karnataka paid scant heed to the Supreme Court's orders on the Kaveri waters, while the Centre dithered. Now another State, and a still lethargic Centre, have failed to protect the Court's decision.

Whatever the shortcomings of India, its political leaders and its administrators — and the faults are legion — the way the judiciary at the highest levels in this country has behaved over the years and the respect with which its decisions have been accepted were the few saving graces and rare signs of hope in a nation in constant travail. A large number of overworked judges at the lower levels, the High Courts of most of the States and the Supreme Court, above all, have been the bulwarks on whose strength and solidity the faith of millions in this country has rested.

But what use are there for laws, their fair interpretation and implementation, for judicial wisdom and equity, if the decisions of the Bench on high are not enforced? What use is there for the sagacity of jurisprudence if the civil authority, from the highest in the land to the local administrator, ignores it or fights shy of enforcing it? That fall-out of Ayodhya, something which is beginning to be seen more frequently in India in recent times, is



See story alongside and write your own caption. (Photo: SUSHEELA NAIR)

the most frightening part of the bloody events of December '92.

SUSHEELA NAIR, a photographer with an eye for the unusual, took the photograph above recently. It seems an apt comment on what the judiciary might be reduced to by the actions of citizens wildly resorting to the law of the jungle and the Legislative and Executive branches of government failing to respond to that manic challenge.

**A very happy  
NEW YEAR  
and PONGAL  
to all readers**

**MADRAS  
MUSINGS**

## Case dismissed

(By A Staff Reporter)

Former President R Venkatesh's frequent visits to Kanchipuram had burdened the national exchequer, so claimed Palani Baba, petitioning the Madras High Court. NO, ruled Justice M Srinivasan recently and dismissed the writ petition.

The President was the Head of State every minute of his term of office, even when attending to personal matters, stated the judge, and added that there was nothing in the secular nature of the Constitution to prevent the President from calling on any religious head or charging the exchequer for it.

# A look at Indians in the U.S.

There were several raised eyebrows, shaven and unshaven ones, and not a few embarrassed smiles as Dr Joan Jensen the other day looked at the state of Indians — and, by implication to many, other minorities — in the United States through rose-tinted spectacles and found almost all was well with their world/s.

The professor from New Mexico State University was speaking to a small group of invitees in Madras interested in the Indian diaspora. Rather unfortunately, she was asked to speak of the entire Indian experience in the U.S., instead of her major interest in the subject, the first Punjabi settlers in Yuba Valley, California. If she had spoken only of the fruit-growers of Stockton and Yuba City, the consequences of their Mexican inter-marriages and the recent fall-out of militancy rearing its head there — as well as in Vancouver — as young Sikhs from India joined these well-rooted settlers, there might have been a more down-to-earth look at the issues of Indian migration. Sadly, she did not get the chance.

It was therefore left to a few in the audience to make many of the points Professor Jensen had left unsaid, either through politeness or because the Indians in the U.S. since the 1970s are a world apart from her North California, farm-belt experience which she chronicled in *A Passage from India*. One of those participants, who had done his homework well on the four stages of Indian immigration to the U.S., where now a little less than a million of the 13 million Indians settled overseas have established homes, produced several startling statistics.

Indian women are migrating to the US in larger numbers, up from a low 10% before the 1960 to 39% ten years ago to 49% today. Men and women over 60 too now have a larger slice of the immigrant pie, from 5% to 15% in the last ten years. And, in that same decade or so, emigration of the professionals has decreased from 65% of the total emigration to 30%! The last was a particularly comforting statistic, given that another participant pointed out that the skill drain from India was costing the country \$ 180 million over every ten-year period.

Other issues raised during the discussion were the deculturalisation and under-employ-

ment of Indians, Indian clannishness that is just short of creating their own community ghettos, gender relations in Indian families, Indian potential for resentment — a two-way problem — and the increasing migration of medium- and little-qualified Indians, winding up as nurses, newspaper vendors, motel staff, petty shop owners and store help.

There were no answers to many of these questions, but one thing seemed certain, Indian migration would continue.

## Widowed sisters

Last September, C T Sukumar, the IAS officer who was Chairman of the Marine Products Export Development Authority, Kochi, was found dead on the driveway of the MPEDA guesthouse in Royapettah where he was spending the night. It was felt that he had fallen or jumped from the fourth floor where he was staying, had landed on the roof of a car in the driveway and had bounced off it to hit the ground. Death, it was stated, was instantaneous. To this day it has not been decided whether it was accident, suicide or murder. For none of which anyone had any reasons. And with no real answers, the case has quietly been forgotten.

But not by Sukumar's wife Gita who heard of her husband's death even as she was helping her sister Prita in Bangalore to get over a similar tragedy. Prita's husband was Superintendent of Police Harekrishna, the IPS officer in charge of the Special Task Force raised to capture the notorious Veerappan. But in the case of Harekrishna's death there are no doubts. He was hanged into the Karnataka jungle by double agents and died on August 14th in a hail of bullets from the ambush that had been prepared for him and his party.

Now the two sisters console each other and pick up the threads of life again in Bangalore. And Veerappan continues to roam the jungles of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, Harekrishna's mission still unaccomplished, while the Madras Police have no answer that will satisfactorily convince the sisters of how really Sukumar died. Both men had several friends and colleagues in Madras and elsewhere in Tamil Nadu who wonder whether there's more to come in the case of these two tragedies.

## What's happening?

Indeed, what's happening to the Madras Literary Society? One of the oldest and best-run libraries in the city — described as the oldest subscription library east of Suez — it was first organised in 1812 and reconstituted as the Madras Literary Society in 1829. Its greatest service was its home delivery service, when every month the new book list was brought home and marked and, in time, these books were delivered two at a time every week. Never mind that few have in recent times been able to get any of the

programme in the state. With the State prepared to look after unwanted offspring, why worry about planned and wanted families. Chief Minister Jayalalitha is not exactly being applauded by these social workers for her latest attention-capturing move.

★ *The Man From Madras Musings* thought he was the only one, but he's glad to find that many others too think that what that team from an 'ashram' in Australia was doing in an open drain could well be counter-productive. If you stand for hours in filth and eat off a five-star table service in it, the only message that seems to come across is that 'It's all right, Jack' to wallow in dirt and eat while doing so. *MMM* can't think of a single other message that comes across. So, perhaps, Kevin Mackay and his colleagues should stick to painting the public toilets and keeping clean every day those they've painted and decorated. A daily cleansing of the toilets — AND their roadsides which continue to get used — might be a little more productive, especially if they can get local teams of residents, not to mention Emora, to work with them.

★ What is the most expensive whisky now made in India? It's McDowell's 'Single Malt' at Rs. 995 for the 750 ml bottle and Rs. 495 for the 1 litre

marked books and have had to be content weekly with ANY two books — at the whim and fancy of the 'librarian' (!) But even that has now dried up and there haven't been any deliveries since August. What's happening?

Trying to find out what's happening is to come up against a blank wall. No one seems willing to discuss the Library's present or to offer an opinion on its future. But rumours abound, including talk of legal proceedings.

Meanwhile, the library's 150,000-odd books, including over a thousand rare old ones, moulder, who is to care for them while decisions, even on things like new management plans, are allowed to drift? Could someone please tell *The Man From Madras Musings* what is happening?

## In brief

★ A joint industries delegation from India that went to the recent Sri Lanka Expo and Investors Forum returned overwhelmed by the hospitality and the display of world class at the exhibition. More importantly, they came back convinced that Sri Lanka — as President Premadasa now wants his country known — is a safe place to invest. If we don't get in now, say the leaders of the delegation, we will miss a bus on to which Taiwan, Thailand, Japan, US and UK have already got on. A quality control expert from India was amazed at the quality-consciousness in Sri Lanka's factories: "No wonder that, from supplying Marks and Spencer's third grade shirts, they have now become suppliers of virtually all M & S's first class finished garments." *The Man From Madras Musings* can vouch that there is much else India can learn from our island neighbour — but such learning, especially in fields like Tourism — calls for humility. And that's something most Indians going to neighbouring countries have in short supply.

★ Care promised for the 'cradle babies' and pledges made for their future will get more and more poor couples to dump their infants — not only girl babies — in the cradles, feel several service organisations. And, says one women's group leader, you might find a negative impact on the successful family planning

bottle. Not a blend, but made from a single source of malt barley, 'Single Malt' is in the class of 'Glenfiddich' and 'Glenlivet' and superior to 'Black Label', 'Chivas Regal' or such run-of-the-mill blends as 'Vat 69' and 'Red Label', say the experts. *The Man From Madras Musings*, who enjoys his whisky but can't tell one brand from another, is interested in this McDowell brand only because it has been launched in Bombay, Calcutta and Goa — and NOT in Madras, home of McDowell's for over 150 years! That's some loyalty to roots, Mr Mallyal

MMM

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And if you are not on our mailing list, but want to get on it, our offer to you is a rate of Rs. 150/- for the three SMALLS between January and March 1993.

We look to you, readers, to build up a lively page of classified SmallS that will enable *Madras Musings* readers to help each other and *Madras Musings* as well.

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# The maths wizard from Madras

Eighty years ago this month, Cambridge don Godfrey Harold Hardy received a letter from an unknown Indian that was to change the horizons of Mathematics. The letter read,

Dear Sir,

I beg to introduce myself to you as a clerk in the Accounts Department of the Port Trust Office at Madras on a salary of only £ 20 per annum. I am now about 23 years of age. I have had no University education... After leaving school I have been employing the spare time at my disposal to work at Mathematics... I am striking out a new path for myself...

I would request you to go through the enclosed papers. Being poor, if you are convinced that there is anything of value I would like to have my theorems published... Being inexperienced I would very highly value any advice you give me. Requesting to be excused for the trouble I give you.

I remain, Dear Sir, Yours truly,  
S. RAMANUJAN.

Hardy, a pure mathematician and Fellow of Trinity College, was a handsome unmarried man; his life was devoted to research, cricket, college society — and waging a personal vendetta against God. The letter writer, Srinivasa Ramanujan Iyengar, was born into a poor but religious family, had smallpox at the age of two, failed college twice, and had married a girl of ten. He was short and stout. The two men who were to become friends were completely unlike each other, yet their lives became so strongly entwined

that it was difficult to mention one without referring to the other.

Hardy became convinced that the letter-writer was no crank, but a self-taught mathematician of the highest order. He decided that Ramanujan should be brought to England. Thus began their curious friendship.

Robert Kanigel wrote a biography of Srinivasa Ramanujan that "is a sensitive and intimate portrait of... (a) human being, who lived for mathematics". Published in 1991, *The Man Who Knew Infinity: A Life of the Genius Ramanujan* (Scribner's) is really a biography of both Hardy and Ramanujan. The facts that follow are from that biography of a man whose name should be a household word in Madras — but is not.

Ramanujan grew up in Kumbakonam. His father was a clerk in a shop that sold silk sarees, his mother ensured that he would grow up a good Brahmin

## Eighty years ago, he journeyed to England and fame

because if they were not true, no one would have the imagination to invent them".

Hardy tried to get Ramanujan to Cambridge, but Ramanujan did not want to travel. Hardy then persuaded the University of Madras to give Ramanujan a scholarship, and the two mathematicians corresponded regularly. When Eric Neville, a Trinity fellow, visited Madras to lecture, Hardy asked him to persuade Ramanujan to come to England. This time Ramanujan said 'yes', his mother making the decision. On March 17, 1915, he sailed for England.

Hardy and Ramanujan began to go over Ramanujan's notebooks and make them suitable for publication. Between 1914 and 1920, either with Hardy or on his own, Ramanujan wrote some three dozen research papers. Several are classics. By then Hardy understood why Ramanujan had been unwilling to provide proofs; he didn't have any, not in the rigorous sense that would satisfy a professional mathematician. What he had was a mixture of intuition and calculation, enough to satisfy him that he was right. But Hardy held that "all mathematicians think, at bottom, in the same kind of way, and Ramanujan was no exception... He combined a power of generalisation, a feeling for form, and a capacity for rapid modification of his hypotheses, that were often really startling".

Ramanujan did not find life easy in Cambridge. He always slept with his overcoat on, wrapped in a shawl. As a Brahmin and a vegetarian, Ramanujan did not frequent the college dining hall. He cooked for himself. In wartime England, the ingredients he needed were not easily obtained. He was often miserable. On Sundays he would have Indian friends over for rice-and-rasam, but when his guests once refused third helpings, Ramanujan was so offended that he left in the middle of dinner and vanished for four days.

Hardy and his colleague John Edensor Littlewood pored over Ramanujan's list of formulas. Some were very familiar, others "scarcely



possible to believe", as Hardy later wrote. They tried to prove some of the simpler-looking results, and soon decided that Ramanujan was keeping a great deal up his sleeve. Just one of Ramanujan's formulas would subsequently keep three mathematicians busy for a decade. In an uncharacteristic burst of romanticism, Hardy declared that the results "must be true,

was a gastric ulcer, then cancer was suspected, then blood poisoning. At one sanatorium he was treated for tuberculosis, and that remains the most likely suspect. The treatment required plenty of "fresh air" and Ramanujan froze. Back home, there was trouble between Janaki and Ramanujan's mother. His morale hit rock bottom.

But while in a second sanatorium, he learned from Hardy that he had been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS), the first Indian to be so honoured. Subsequently he was made a Fellow of Trinity. In *A Mathematician's Miscellany*, Littlewood describes how Ramanujan's election was opposed by several Fellows at Trinity. One "went about openly saying that he wasn't going to have a black man as a Fellow".

Out of the sanatorium, Ramanujan moved to London. Visiting him one day, Hardy happened to remark that the taxi he had just taken was number 1729. "Rather a dull number," Hardy ventured. "No, Hardy," Ramanujan protested, "It is a very interesting number. It is the smallest number expressed as the sum of two cubes in two different ways." His morale improved, and suddenly he was doing mathematics again.

In April 1919 Ramanujan returned to India, but by the time he arrived in Madras his health had once more deteriorated. Janaki came to meet him in Madras. For three months they stayed at a small bungalow on Luz Church Road, finally beginning to get to know each other. Janaki had been 13 when she came to live with him; now she was 18. Finally he was master in his own house.

In January 1920 Ramanujan wrote to Hardy about a new discovery — his "mock theta functions". There was nothing wrong with Ramanujan's mind, only with his body. Although in great pain, he still was consumed by mathematics, calculating on a slate, copying results on to paper. "It was always maths... Four days before he died he was scribbling." He died in April 1920 and was cremated near Chetput.

Ramanujan has been called a magician, a sorcerer, a gift from heaven, an enigma. "It is uncanny," Kanigel remarks, "how often otherwise dogged rationalists have, over the years, turned to the language of the shaman and the priest to convey something of Ramanujan's gifts." Richard Askey, at the University of Wisconsin, is quoted as saying, "We have no idea how he did the marvellous things he did, what led him to do them, or anything else."

Every year, his work grows in status. Bruce Berndt, at the University of Illinois, Urbana, writes:

With a more conventional education, Ramanujan might not have depended on the original formal methods of which he was proud and rather protective... If he had thought like a well-trained mathematician, he would not have recorded many of the formulas which he thought he had proved but which, in fact, he had not proved. Mathematics would be poorer today if history had followed such a course.

(Adapted from an article by Ian Stewart in SPAN magazine December 1992.)

## OUR READERS WRITE

### 'American Building'

I read with interest your report on 'The New and The Old' pediments (MM Nov. 16). While I appreciate the keen eye of your correspondent, I would like to point out that aesthetics in buildings have undergone a sea change in recent years. The Victoria Public Hall was built at a time when space was available abundantly and the architect had very little constraints on his imagination. The flexibility is no longer available to him with limited land areas and soaring real estate prices.

In spite of these handicaps, the love for pediments, as rightly pointed out by your reporter, continues in Madras. The result is what you see in the new buildings. The fact that the incongruous building attracted your reporter is in itself a credit to the architect of the building. As a matter of fact, it is this attraction which made me buy an apartment in it. Those who live here call it the 'American Building', presumably because it resembles a mini-White House.

S Subramanian  
D-2, Ceebros Garden  
76 Kamaraj Salai, R A Puram,  
Madras-600 028.

### Magical Anna Nagar

*Madras Musings* is doing a great job by giving a complete and whole picture of Madras to its citizens as never before.

The article 'Silver Chimes for Anna Nagar' by Hiramanji Sehadri (MM Dec. 1) was absolutely perfect. Being a resident of Anna Nagar myself, I've been fascinated by the rapid changes that have taken place there. One almost imagines a magic wand has been waved over Anna Nagar to transform it into a modern upbeat area.

Kamalnani Achua  
Anna Nagar.

### Find your way

In MM Dec. 1, you have written an article about Anna Nagar, 'Silver Chimes for Anna Nagar' and described it as the most difficult place to find an address. You had also stated that the following address is difficult to find: Plot 2318/AD-36; 10 MR off AVE II.

Let me tell you, Sir, that to find this address is so simple. Alternately, if you had given me an address in Ambattur or Ashok Nagar it would have been challenging. Especially if there is an incentive like a prize.

May I suggest a competition once in 2 or 3 months to begin with and it can go like this. You are given an address. You have to locate this address within 30 minutes. You should not be a resident of the area and none of your friends should live in the area, to ensure that nobody gets an undue advantage over the other.

Try it out! It may be a big hit! Nobody knows what Madras is like.

F Ravi Mohan  
45 Fourth Main Road  
Kottur Gardens  
Madras 600 065.

Editor's Note: Thanks for the suggestion, but it strikes us as being too difficult to implement.

### Rectifying rectification

A propos "What's right" in 'Our Readers Write' (MM Dec. 16), please rectify the rectification.

Before the decimal system, the rupee had 16 annas, the anna had 4 pice and the pice 3 pies.

I S GILL  
31 South Bank Road  
Madras 600 028.

Editor's Note: That's how I remember it too: 12 pices to the anna, 16 annas to the rupee and three pies to the pice (and, therefore, four pice (NOT pies) to the Rupee).

# Re-creating the days of Kalinga and Chola power

History sometimes writes with a magic pen, its forces creating happenings for imagination to conjure. The Pallava-Chola-Sri Vijaya connection in the 9th, 10th and 11th Centuries was one such inspired moment in the sea of time, beginning as a silk-spice-gem sea route and finally evolving into a Hindu cultural "conquest" of, and confluence with, the indigenous cultures of Sri Vijaya (Sumatera, Java, Bali, Malaya and Borneo).

The wonder of greater India, a peaceful cultural co-mingling effected

• by Pushpa Chari

by Hindu *pandits*, scholars and tradesmen, which reached its apogee under the mighty Cholas, can be seen till today in the wonderful magnificence of the Borubudur Temple in Java, in the dance, music, rituals, mythology and place-names of Sumatera, Java, Thailand and Borneo, as well as in the vibrant Hindu-influenced culture of Bali. How did it all begin... in the beginning? Did it begin as early as the 4th Century AD from the Kalinga ports of Tamralipti, Palina and Chellitala, when the first Kalinga merchant boats set out to 'Suvamadwipa' (like Sri Vijaya) laden with gems, spices, silks, perfumes — and the even more compelling fragrance of Hindu culture? Or was it otherwise?

Some years ago, when I was in Orissa on Kartik Purnima Day, I was bemused to find that the ancient 'Kalinga-Suvamadwipa Yatra' of Kalinga merchantmen of 1600 years

ago is celebrated annually to this day.

Toy boats with brightly lit lamps are floated at waterfronts by womenfolk, reliving the past glory of Kalinga merchant ships which set sail for the distant Southeast Asian islands (and further afield to China) with their precious cargo. I was transfixed by the magic of this moment taken out of time ... Did the fingers of history never stop reaching out and touching the present? More was to come! On December 7, 1992, I was invited to the send-off for INSV *Samudra* from Madras harbour on its onward 'Kalinga Bali Yatra' to Sumatera, Java, Bali and Borneo! Earlier, on November 10th, the sleek, computerised *Samudra* had begun its first leg of the history repeating 'Kalinga Bali Yatra' from Paradip in Orissa, retracing the ancient trade route of Kalinga merchantmen to Suvamadwipa via Madras and the Andamans. The 'Kalinga Bali Yatra', a joint venture of the Indian Navy and Orissa Tourism, is as much a tribute to ancient India's maritime and cultural glory as a venture by Orissa Tourism to explore and develop the beach tourism potential of Orissa on the lines of beach tourism in Sumatera, Java and Bali.

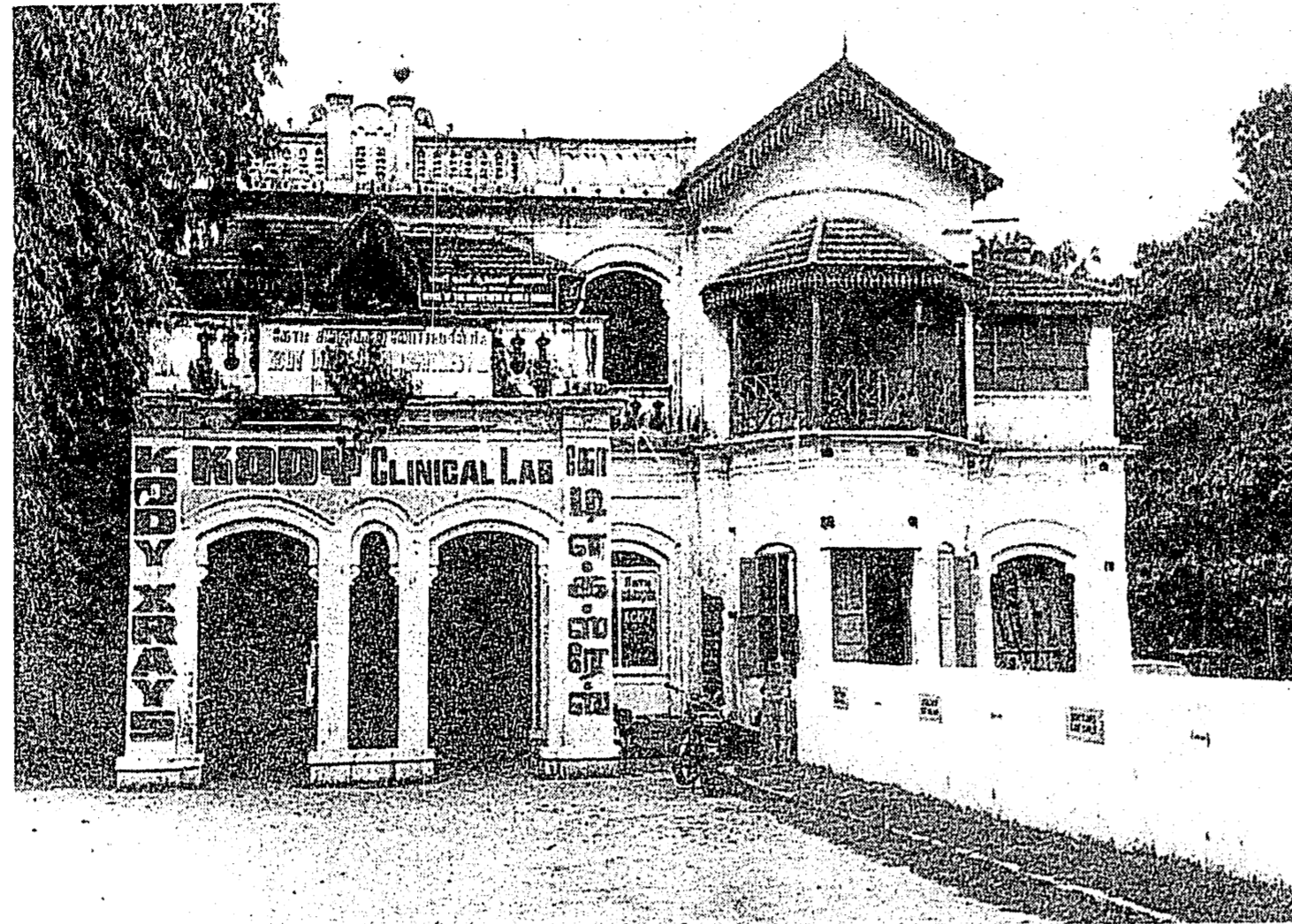
It was a moment drenched in history, mystique and high adventure as Governor Bhisma Narain Singh flagged off INSV *Samudra* amidst a shower of *kumkum* and the blowing of conch shells and witnessed by a distinguished gathering which included Singh Deo, Minister of Tourism, Orissa, and Cmdre Hemendra Sahney of the Navy. And INSV *Samudra* glided away majestically, much as the Kalinga, Pallava and Chola ships must have done centuries ago... On board the ship were Cmdre K S Gill, Mrs D Gill and a crew of four Naval officers as well as M M Mishra and Nibedita Acharya from Orissa. The eight-member team is professionally trained in ocean yachting, navigation, amateur 'ham' radio operations and cooking.

And so another Indian ship begins its journey of adventure and discovery. May fair seas attend her. But I also wonder why the mandarins of Tamil Nadu Tourism have done so little to celebrate the great Pallava and even greater Chola maritime heritages which not only brought great riches to their empires but left the indelible stamp of Hindu culture on the face of much of Southeast Asia.

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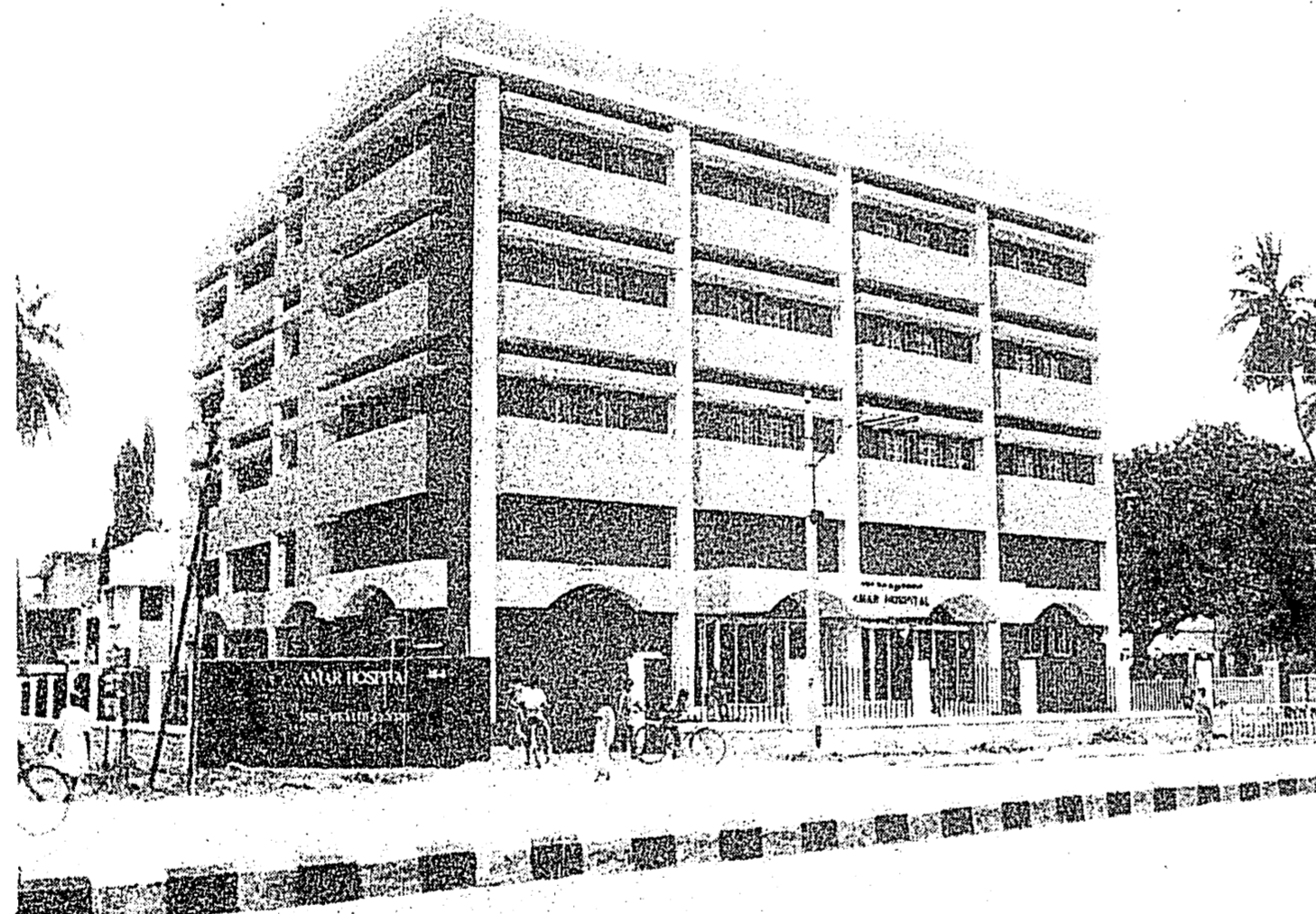
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Once, Poonamallee High Road was the 'Harley Street' of Madras. Now several of the hospitals and the specialists who make Madras the 'Medicare Capital of India' have located themselves in other parts of the city, with several of the city's most modern hospitals coming up on its periphery. But Poonamallee High Road remains a stretch of doctors' homes, clinics, nursing homes and hospitals — not to mention several three-star hotels which have come up to cater to the families of those being treated in the medical establishments here.

And on Poonamallee High Road, from about the Dhina Thanthi office to Pachaiyappa's, the medical facilities, no matter how modern, are housed on either side of the road in buildings that range from those built in the days of Madras's famed 'garden houses' to the ultra-modern high-rise. Our OLD today is a medical facility housed in a bungalow of a more spacious age — and to make up for its being set well back from the road it proclaims itself loudly not only on its walls but also on a whole heap of big signboards by its wall with the road. It also houses the 'Office of the Inspector of Girls' School's'. The NEW is the newest hospital on this stretch, whose most striking feature is not the utilitarian high-rise but the striking 'name-board' of gleaming Charnockite. Many more such high-rise hospitals and hotels are in the building on this stretch — and before long the old multi-purpose bungalows of the past, like the one featured today, will be but faint memories. (Photographs: V S RAGHAVAN)



## The 'tec's a lady

Attractive and sensuous. Tall and lissom. Jani is no figment of fiction. Nor is she a character like Mavis Siedlitz from a Carter Brown crime novel. No, she is alive and kicking (yes, she is a Karate expert!) and a woman detective, very much part of the Madras scene.

At first glance she looks a bit like a Telugu movie star, which she could have been if only she had nodded her head. "I was approached by many film producers, but I said 'No'. ... You know how the film industry here is, and I had no inclination to get into it," she told me. She would have made a fine air-hostess too. She exudes enough charm and charisma to please even the most irritated air passenger. She was selected by Indian Airlines for air-hostess training, but did not accept the offer. Obviously she prefers to have her shapely feet planted on firm earth! And so, she chose a career with a difference.

Jani (Janaki, for short) is perhaps the first woman private detective in Madras. The youngest daughter of an army officer, her motto is 'Never be afraid!' Her calling card describes her as a 'Lady Executive — Intelligence'. She works for Madras-based 'Detective International' (DIL), a unit owned by a

• by Randor Guy

person with an incredible name, Kulothunga Chozhan (obviously a pseudonym of a Tanjorean).

Jani saw an ad in a newspaper calling for detectives and, for a lark, responded. One look at her and Chozhan hired her on the spot! She did not tell her family about it until she received her appointment order. But her parents did not raise any objections.

Jani has had many interesting experiences during her work. Once, she posed as a research assistant doing a project to assess the use of cosmetics in rural areas, carrying neatly printed questionnaires and all! She called on many a rural household and interviewed rural belles, but the real purpose was to meet one particular girl and give her a love letter from her city boyfriend! He could not reach her because the angry father had taken the girl from the city and hidden her in the village.

Warm and friendly, Jani is a M.Com graduate and has a diploma in Cost Accountancy. Those qualifications come in handy for other types of investigation. Next time you wish to have a letter delivered to your inamorata, or have your spouse followed, or catch a fiddle in your books, call Jani. You can relax happily thereafter... Until you get the bill from Chozhan!

## The First Family of Madras and The forgotten Kilpauk park

(Continued from last fortnight)

Reminiscing about Appah & Co, dispensing chemists and druggists, Kelly Alavandar Naidu, the eldest surviving descendant of Beri Thimmappa, one of the founders of Madras, remembers when "our firm Appah & Co (founded 1928), was the leading chemists in Madras. The public had immense faith in us and they were

sure of getting whatever medicine was prescribed by the doctor's." He recalls, "We took great care in reading the

• by Venkatachari Jagannathan

prescription presented by the patients and never dispensed a substitute drug if the prescribed one was not available



Appah Gardens and Appah Gardens Road, off Taylor's Road in Kilpauk, where the descendants of Beri Thimmappa used to live — and where some of them still live.

with us". And, he goes on, "Ours was the only company in the country which imported medicines from David and Lawrence in the USA".

On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Appah & Co, in 1954, T T Krishnamachari, then Central Minister for Commerce and Industry, stated, in his message to the firm, "You should extend the area of your service so as to cover the entire city of Madras by branching out into various divisions of the city".

But it was not to be. "Though Appah & Co was a family concern, increasing number of family members began to tell on the management of this Hindu Undivided Family business. Moreover, the competition from small traders increased and it was not possible to carry on the business only as dispensing chemists. So the firm was sold off," says K Rajamannar, the eldest son of Alavandar Naidu. But, he remembers, "an attempt to keep going was made by manufacturing tablets at one of the premises at Appah Gardens, Kilpauk. But it did not succeed". Later, Jagannathan Naidu established a pharmacy at Nungambakkam High Road, near the Ganpat Hotel, but even though the name still continues there,

## Faith endures

It is but natural to ruminate on the year that was, as we brace ourselves for the year ahead. A kaleidoscope of events crowd in. No doubt the announcements of the year far outstrip performance. But that is only to be expected, as achievements need time along with the development of core sectors. Yet the contrast in the notes on which the year began and ended are striking. The winds of change that threw open our doors to the world and gloomy 'Black Sunday' on December 6th are the two poles that promised a beginning and may foretell the end.

It was only at the beginning of the year that a semblance of order was established at the Centre. Now, the Ayodhya affair has seemingly brought us again to where we began — political uncertainty and the consequent slow-down in reforms. The cheery budget in March had flagged off the era of liberalisation by dethroning the licence raj. The subsequent saga is captured in three nodal events.

The first development relates to the legal status acquired by SEBI in early February, heralding the dawn of post-CCI reforms. This brought in its wake the guidelines for disclosure and investor protection, it decreed broker registration and regulation on Insider Trading. Of course, the historic boom followed by the unravelling of the horrific Rs. 4000 cr scam and the disruptions that followed still stun the mind. These will certainly dominate the narration of the history of the period.

The second pivotal event was the announcement of the Exim policy for 1992-97 that lifted the severe restrictions imposed on imports earlier. This was done by reducing the number of canalised items and retaining only

two short negative lists for exports and imports. This, in effect, greased the wheels of the economy by facilitating import of machinery and technology. This was followed by steel and fertiliser decontrols.

The third happening was the tragic episode at Ayodhya, that might turn the clock back.

After what has transpired, how does India rate in the world market? Will the FTLs be deterred from entering our markets, will the GDRs floated abroad

• BULL'S EYE

suffer a setback? These, along with a plethora of other issues, pose new dilemmas. Hence, it is high time all those concerned take stock of the situation. For successful enterprise is linked to political stability.

Unlike the international rating agencies, the IMF and World Bank have continued to express confidence in our ability to endure with the ongoing task of reforms. But not forever will they be sympathetic to our state of affairs. Consequently, it is time we assess our potential. With the tremendously vast store of resources at our disposal that yet remain unharmed, it would be rather hasty for anyone to dismiss India's potential as naught. Our country has weathered worse and should find it possible to endure these pangs of growth. So let us on this positive note, welcome the new year.

Meanwhile here are some recommendations for striking a good bargain in the market:

**Sundaram Finance Ltd** (CMP: Rs. 155.00): This leading finance company of the South, engaged in hire purchase and equipment leasing has reported excellent results for the half year ended Sept. '92 in

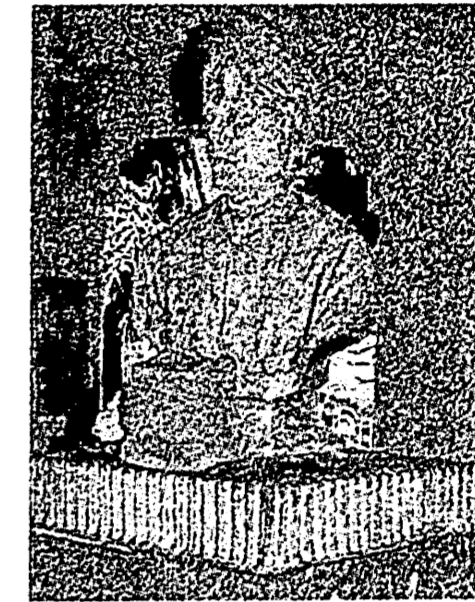
spite of the sluggish offtake in recent times of medium and heavy commercial vehicles on which its business has centred. The increased volume of business is reflected in the result, which shows an all-round improvement in the gross and net profit margins. With better availability of credit from banks and financial institutions during the current year, and increase in industrial activity, the company hopes to write a larger volume of hire-purchase and leasing business. It is anticipated that the liberalisation measures initiated by the government would also improve business in the years to come. A turnover projection of Rs. 140 cr and a PAT of Rs. 20 cr is anticipated for March '93. These projections would support an EPS of Rs. 16-17 that would warrant a price of Rs. 250.

**Overseas Sanmar Private Ltd.** (CMP: Rs. 24.50) The company belongs to the well-diversified Sanmar group and associates, which has an annual turnover of Rs. 1000 cr. This amalgamated company (Overseas Leasing and Sanmar Financials) has announced creditable results for the first half-year ended September 1992. The company, which is engaged in hire purchase, leasing and bill discounting, has plans for diversification into merchant banking, portfolio management, advisory service etc. and for sponsoring a mutual fund and setting up an asset management company. The strategy for the next three years is to fix attention on the transportation sector for hire purchase activities. For this the company has come out with a rights issue which has just opened. The company anticipates total payout for the next three years at Rs. 60 cr, Rs. 84 cr and Rs. 100 cr respectively by way of corporate lease and hire purchase, noncorporate HP and bills discounting. The EPS for 1992-93 is estimated at Rs. 4.28 (after counting for the present issue) based on a total income of Rs. 25.60 cr and a PAT of Rs. 1.88 cr. This supports a price of Rs. 43 at a P/E of 10.

**Investment Trust of India Ltd.** (CMP: Rs. 61.50) The performance of (Continued on P7)



Bashyam Naidu Park in Kilpauk, where Beri Thimmappa's descendant is remembered. Bashyam Naidu (bust below) was a great-great-grandson of one of the founders of Madras.



Narayanappa & Co., the business now belongs to someone else.

After Independence, increasing property taxes made Alavandar and his cousins sell off Appah Gardens and its mansions and move to comparatively smaller homes in other parts of Madras. But Appah Gardens Road still exists — now a lane of highrise — near Taylor's Road, Kilpauk. And near it is the ill-tended Bashyam Naidu Park, with a bust of Alavandar's father and the great-great-grandson of Beri Thimmappa, Bashyam Naidu, adorning it. The family still owns the lands granted by the British at Tondiarpet, but squatters have virtually dispossessed them of much of it.

Most members of the present generation are professionals. The first professional in the whole Ketty family was Dr K V Ranganadham, Venkataramanujulu Naidu's son.

Vinod, Rajamannar's son, is an engineer with General Motors in the USA. Another grandson of Alavandar Naidu is Dr G S Praveen Kumar, now

in the UK. He co-authored a quiz book on Madras City. G D Umila Satyanarayanan, a granddaughter of Alavandar Naidu, is a well-known Bharatha Nattam dancer.

The family now shuns politics. K Rajamannar says, "Linguistic states is one reason which has deterred younger members of the family from politics. Moreover, politics cost the family dear; it was one of the reasons for outside partners pulling out of Appah & Co."

Rajamannar nostalgically remembers his childhood. "In those days we used to go to school in a chaise. Later we owned several cars... Austins, Chevrolets... and the city car dealers used to bring new cars to our home to persuade us to buy them." Sashikala, a granddaughter of Alavandar Naidu, who works in the Andhra Bank, says, "It was like a fairy tale, the stories mother hold us about her going to school in a chaise and the big houses with lots of servants she lived in".

Today, the Appah family is just another Madras family, their roots forgotten by the city. No member of it expects any preferential treatment from the Government, but every one of them appeals to the Corporation to maintain the Bashyam Naidu Park. In years to come, the bust there may be the closest link Madras will have with the City's founder.

"It is we who clean the bust of our great-grandfather installed there, during his Devashom", says Sashikala. Will the City now rise to the occasion?

(Concluded)

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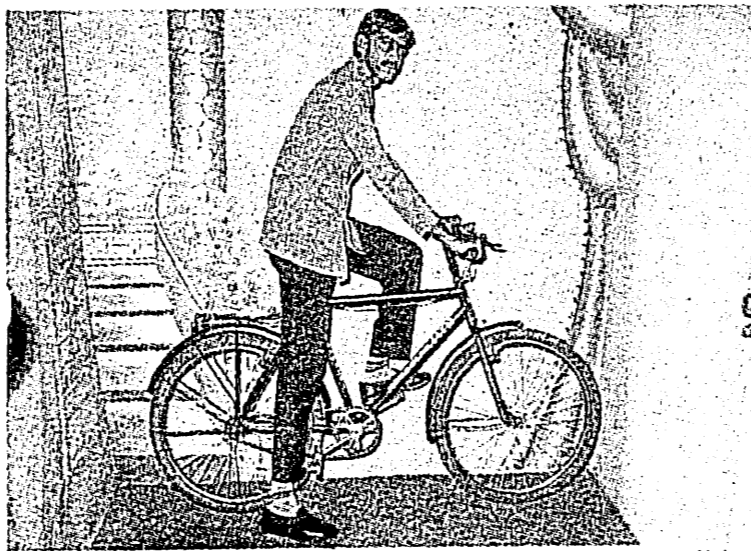
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# Long-distance cycling in search of a dream



*"I have a dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, will live out the true meaning of its creed; this is my dream."*

Ravi quotes Martin Luther King mesmerically. He savours the words and claims that they are also his dream. To experience what it means to be Indian, is the first step towards understanding the true meaning of this nation's "creed". To travel the length and breadth of this "gigantic country, and get to feel and understand the lives of all the people", he explains, is the way to go about it.

How can this voyage of discovery ever begin if he cannot afford such methods of transport as air, rail or car? "I was not to be daunted", he smiles. "What about a bike? I thought," and the smile becomes a grin.

A motorbike would have also been expensive and "I wouldn't really have been able to experience the contact with others that I was looking for". So, he explains, "I decided to literally sweat it out, like most of the people in India still do today; that was the only way to be true to my aspirations".

Twentyfour year old Ravi enlisted the help of P B Shyam, Product Manager, TI Cycles of India, and got him to sponsor him with one of their top bikes. The Hercules MTB is,

according to connoisseurs such as himself, "an absolute dream". On this kind of machine, in fact, "I wouldn't be sweating it out too much, I'd be gliding," Ravi laughs, swinging his arms wide in circular movements above his head.

On September 22nd, after an intensive two-week hypemourishment diet consisting of raw egg yolks, spinach, honey, peanuts and curd —

• by LISA DURANTE

a strict regimen which apparently drove his mother to distraction — Ravi set off on his 4620 km 'spin' to Delhi. He was ceremoniously flagged off by Additional DGP Waller Dawaram, who reportedly told journalists present at the start, "I am immensely proud of this young man. Despite not having a steady job, he is full of enthusiasm. Luck will come his way."

Across plains, hills and valleys, via Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Nagpur, Bhopal, Gwalior and Agra, all the way to the capital, it was a fortnight of gruelling physical and psychological challenges that Ravi surmounted. It was magical. Or so it seems now, "in retrospect", says Ravi. At the time, however, especially at night, it was

"scary — but I couldn't give up," he recounts. Especially not after the Madras Rotary Club had extended a generous donation for his out-of-town stay. "There are so many people I felt indebted to," the young cyclist says. Firstly his parents for "loving and standing by me in this crazy pursuit, then supporters for cheering me off on Triplicane High Road, my sponsors of course, as well as all those nameless people who grinned and waved at me along the way".

On October 7th, Ravi reached New Delhi, a metropolis he had never visited before. And that was a new experience altogether. The began the journey back.

Neither this 25-day round trip nor the previous long-distance cycling hauls to Bangalore and Madurai have given him the answers to the metaphysical questions this intense young man keeps posing. But what Ravi now understands is that the "true meaning of India's creed" can be found much closer to home. Although he yearns to visit new places, would also enjoy travelling abroad and will certainly continue with his long-distance cycling, the Madras experience is what he loves. And Madras, despite its increasing chaotic pace of urban living — with all its ensuing complications — is what best exemplifies the lifestyle and ethos of an Indian, "at heart". Ravi is convinced.

# The cost of victory & defeat

In case you were wondering what the cost was of the defeat and victory at the 'Calcutta Olympics', where the winner became the head of the Indian Olympics Association, here are some figures that are being bruited about.

One group put up its supporters at the Oberoi Grand, the Park and the Great Eastern, the other at the Taj Bengal. Together, it is estimated, they spent Rs. 1.25 crores or over US \$ 400,000. We mention the dollar amount because the allowance for our sportsmen and women at the Barcelona Olympics was a scant \$ 20 a day per head!

It is also reported that contender Suresh Kalmadi had booked the Crystal Hall of the Taj Bengal for a champagne celebration. When Sivanthi Adityan upset the best-laid plans of mice and men, the cancellation charge Kalmadi had to pay was over Rs. 30,000!

Now the winners are beginning to talk of American,

Chinese, German, former Soviet Union and East European coaches and trainers. No one is talking about how much is going to be spent on the living comforts, necessary nourishment and the vital competition abroad for our sportspersons.

## Stadium thoughts

FOOTNOTE: Everyone's overjoyed that the Nehru Stadium has been completed — in record time — and is fit to host an international football tournament and even an Asian Track and Field meet. But has anyone thought of what's to be done with it in between. The Chepauk Stadium languishes in between tests and one-day internationals, with hardly a crowd to fill even part of ONE block! Is that what's going to happen to Nehru Stadium too? Or has anyone thought up plans to keep it busy year-round?

The Corner Flag

## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Ayodhya; 2. La-Coruna; 3. 'Butch' Reynolds; 4. Senator Lloyd Bentsen, the 1988 Democratic Vice-Presidential candidate; 5. Monisha; 6. 'The Borlaug Award' for contribution to agriculture; 7. Switzerland, at Fort Worth (Texas); 8. Toutatis; 9. World AIDS Day; 10. They are the 'Cradle babies' who were named by the

Chief Minister; 11. 'MGR Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam'; 12. Dr. Avvai Natarajan; 13. Delhi; 14. Timothy Laurence; 15. Flag Day; 16. 'Lalgudi' G.J.R. Krishnan; 17. Jasu Patel; 18. 'International Year for World's Indigenous People'; 19. Nigel Mansell; 20. *Ulavum Thendral*.

# Astronomic fall for TN racing

The Tamil Nadu turf flag is almost flying at half-mast at Guindy. The first three Classics of the current season have been won by Bangalore-based horses, which have dealt the status of the ancient Guindy turf an unprecedented blow. The latest of the Bangalore winners, Astronomic in the South India 2000 Guineas on December 20th, incidentally helped Bangalore's champion trainer, Rashid Byramji, and his son, Darius, make Indian turf history. They scored the first-ever Guindy-Mahaluxmi, father-son 2000 Guineas double on the same day. While Rashid led in Adler, the Indian 2000 Guineas winner in Bombay, Astronomic was led in by Darius.

Astronomic helped Byramji and Aslam Khader, India's most dashing horseman, complete a rich and popular S.I. Guineas double, the famed trainer-jockey combination having on December 6th bagged the first of the Guindy classics, the S.I. 1000 Guineas, with Classic Study. In between, on December 11th, the other Bangalore combination of Sydney Moses and Satish Narredu had snatched the Guindy Gold Cup, a Grade III Classic, with Striker.

Never before have challengers from Bangalore dominated the Guindy Classics as they have done this season. And such is the stock of the Classic entries stabled at Guindy that there seems little likelihood of the one-way traffic to Bangalore being halted. Indeed, considering the virtual distance beating Classic Study and Astronomic handed out to their respective opposition, a clean sweep of the Guindy

by AJAX

Classics by invaders from Bangalore seems a certainty.

The nosedive the Madras turf has taken is solely due to the poor Classic patch Guindy champion trainer, Robert Foley, solely in charge of M.A.M. Ramaswamy's high-power establishment, has struck. It is unbelievable, but there it is. MAM, whose world record Classics tally stands at 171, has, for the first time, drawn blank in the first three Classics of his home turf. Indeed, his Classic

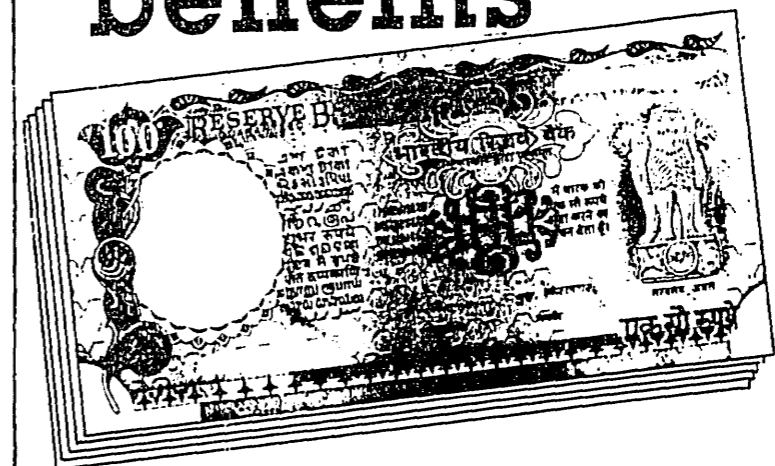
contenders have never before been eclipsed at any Indian centre in the manner in which his Luminous Heights and Alpine Orchid were in the 1000 Guineas and Summer Breeze and Robertino in the 2000.

Entrusted to the stable's first jockey, Robin Corner, Robertino, winner of the Nilgiris Derby, was not without friends at the tell-tale odds of 5-1. But the Riyahi colt and Summer Breeze, as well as the other Bangalore runner in the small field of four, Vijay Mallya's Little Governor, proved no match for Astronomic. The Ilheus colt needed only a mild reminder by Aslam Khader to outclass his rivals in a blistering gallop for the easiest-ever S.I. 2000 Guineas victory.

Robertino, who tries to win all the way, blew up and finished last. Perhaps none knew what was in store for him better than his knowledgeable owner. On the eve of the Classic, when asked what he thought of Robertino's chances, MAM shook his head and told this writer that the colt had "only an outside chance". On Guineas Day even that chance disappeared.

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