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MADRAS MUSINGS

METAL CUTTING TOOLS

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Building for the future: *Vision 2000*

(By A Staff Reporter)

The State's Public Works Department once again proclaimed with full-page advertising its excellence, the presentation implying that it was all due to the Chief Minister's blessings. Thus, "one of the oldest government departments in Tamil Nadu.... has been the prime mover of a variety of services to the people of Tamil Nadu... since 1865. Today, it's a gigantic department with myriad functions designed for the State's upliftment".

Unfortunately, these functions do not include any in the city, unless it is hired as a contractor. Those functions in the city are the prerogative of the Corporation or the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority. And

they have scheduled the following:

★ **Widening of Binny Bridge**, next to the Connemara, to accommodate four-lane traffic. The work on this 1825 bridge was scheduled to start 18 months ago, but has just got underway and will finish before the end of the year. There will be a 23 m carriageway instead of the present 8.3 m one. Cost, Rs. 1.5 crores.

★ **Subway at Harrington Road**, beneath the level crossing. Cost, Rs. 3cr

★ **Other subways**, on Bazaar Road, Saidapet, near Korukkupet railway station, and on Monegar Choultry Road in Royapuram.

★ **The Madley Road subway** in T'Nagar is to be completed by September this year.

★ **Bridge on Red Hills Road**, over the railway line, near the Villivakkam Railway Station.

In all, it is reported, the Corporation intends to spend Rs. 30 crores on road and traffic improvement projects this year. It could do with a bit of that blessed help from the PWD and its Tamil Nadu State Construction Corporation, if only that institution could spare time from monument construction. At present, it doesn't appear to have even the time to save the University's *Senate House* from the trees growing from its walls.

Be that as it may, these undoubtedly are tiny steps towards Madras Vision 2000. And any step towards that end in this little-cared-for city must be welcome.

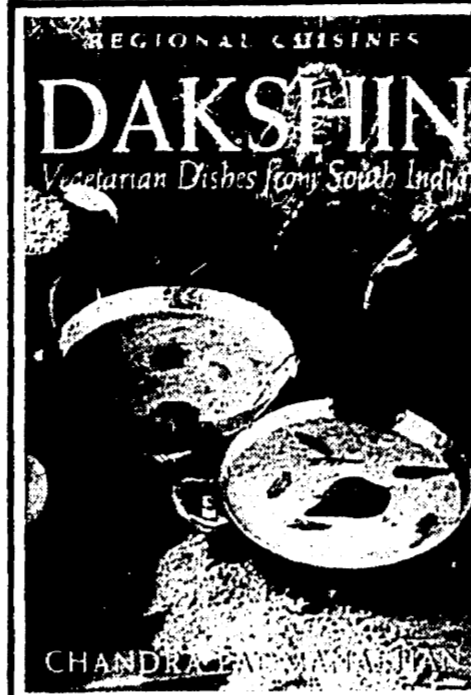
More lignite found in T.N.

(By A Staff Reporter)

There's good news for all those power plants being planned for Tamil Nadu with crores of investment from home and abroad. More lignite has been found in Tamil Nadu, making it almost as rich as Bihar in coal.

The finds have been near Lalpettai, in coastal South Arcot District, and the lignite layer has been assessed as being 5 metres thick. Geological Survey of India scientists also feel these deposits are a pointer to the possibility of there being lignite reserves all along the east coast, down to Rameswaram.

Are there happy days ahead for power-short Tamil Nadu?



The cover of the overseas edition of Dakshin by Chandra Padmanabhan (above) and (below) the new picture spreads that will feature in it. All the dishes for the photographs were made by two Indian chefs in Sydney, Australia, where the book is under editorial preparation.

Dakshin grabs attention abroad

(By A Staff Reporter)

Who says Vikram Seth is the only Indian to hog the international bookshelves? The word is out that a part-time housewife, part-time accountant and part-time magazine publisher from Madras is also going to grab some of that shelf space over the next few weeks. And Madras Musings couldn't be happier, for it was in its pages that Chandra Padmanabhan first began writing a regular cookery column.

That cookery column developed into *Dakshin*, a well-received cookbook on South Indian vegetarian cooking that Rupa and HarperCollins teamed together to produce in India a little over six months ago. The book, now into its third edition, was spotted on the Delhi bookshelves (a few weeks ago) by a HarperCollins executive from America holidaying in India and he thought there'd be an American market for this step-by-step approach to making South Indian cooking easy. HarperCollins Australia, which was planning to introduce a series on Regional Cuisines, pounced on his interest and grabbed *Dakshin* to launch its series.

Dakshin, now in an entirely new coffee-table format, will shortly hit the stands in the US, Canada, the UK and Australia with 15,000 copies priced at around US \$25 each. The new *Dakshin* is being launched after every one of its nearly 150 recipes were tested by two Indian chefs in Sydney and over 100 of them were simultaneously photographed to make this the most lavishly illustrated Indian cookbook ever. If Rupa's Rajan Mehra proves persuasive enough, a few of these copies may find their way to India. And who knows, K S and Gautam Padmanabhan of Affiliated East-West, Madras, Chandra Padmanabhan's husband and son respectively, and Rupa's southern distributors, may even get a chance to put the international success on Madras and other southern bookshelves.

The successful sale of the title to the international market also got notice in British Nandy's Zee TV programme 'Fiscal Fitness'. Discussing with Indian publishers the way Indian publishing would go in the next couple of years, Nandy found a beaming Mehra produce the international cover of *Dakshin* (see picture) and say this was the way it would go, with the sale of Indian titles to the international book market.

Terry Kitson, Chairman, HarperCollins, UK, who was recently in Madras with some of the lay-outs done in Australia (see pictures alongside), said that the new *Dakshin* was being printed in Hong Kong and its quality would "match the best in the world". It certainly will look prettier than *A Suitable Boy* won't it, Chandra Padmanabhan?

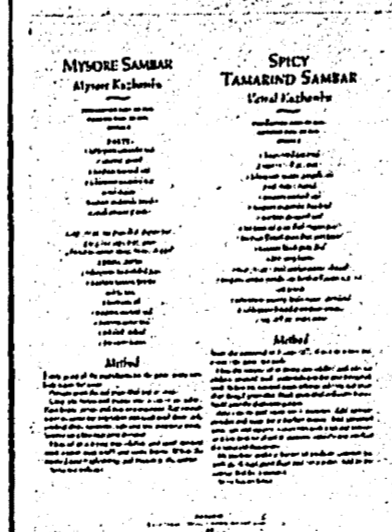
TAILPIECE: Chandra Padmanabhan, who monitors the AEW accounts, is the determined publisher of *Indian Review Of Books*, a unique review journal focussing on books available in Indian bookshops. In between all this, she's started work on *Dakshin II*, paying more attention to the non-Brahmin vegetarian cuisine of the South. Who'll now do *Dakshin*, non-vegetarian?



MASALA DOSAI



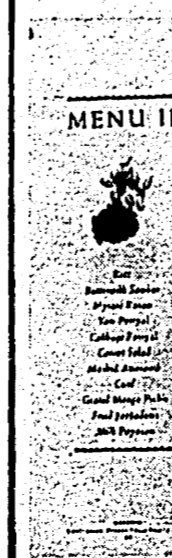
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MENU II



The champ who did not stagnate

(Continued from last fortnight)

Speaking of the Indian team's performance at the Manila Olympiad last year, World No. 3 Viswanathan Anand, on holiday in Madras recently, expressed his satisfaction with its 21st place! Though the team slumped from the 10th place it secured at the Novi Sad Olympiad, he pointed out that the single USSR team of that period was 12 teams in Manila — and India met one of the toughest of them, Ukraine, in the last round. If India had met any team but a 'Russian' one in that match, it might have again finished 10th. Did the absence of experienced players, like Raja Ravisekar and Murugan, hamper the chances of a higher finish? The Indian Captain felt it was all the luck of the tough draw. "Without one or two flip results, we might have finished higher, even in those circumstances," he thinks.

However, Anand wonders why so many Indian players are stagnating after showing excellent promise during their early years. Many of them got their International Master's title around the same time he did, but it's been slow progress since then. Are the increasing number of agreed draws in National A and B tournaments affecting their game, he wonders. "In the tournaments I play now, the players fight it out till the last move. In the Reggio Emilia tournament, more than

50 per cent of the games which ended in draws after 25 moves were due to perpetual checks or theoretical novelties."

Looking back on the Nationals between 1980 and 1984, Anand remembers, "They were really hard fought; we never agreed for short draws — at least, I never did". However, on the whole, Anand sees tremendous improvement in the Indian game, with one more Grandmaster in the country and a number of International Masters and rated players. "But it will be much better if all those IMs become GMs, don't you think?" he asked.

Sponsored by the Madras-based Ramco Industries, Viswanathan Anand is one of the few sportsmen in India whose earnings put him in the top individual income bracket in the country. "Besides increasing prize money, players also earn appearance money too these days," he explains. But his expenditure is also high, he points out.

It is sad that the Chess Federation of India did not utilise the services of the champion when he was in Madras on vacation for three months recently. They could have arranged some exhibition matches or lectures for the benefit of the upcoming players. "But no one asked... I would have been happy to oblige," says Anand.

Anand, who relaxes with a little yoga or a walk, reads a lot of maga-

zines on current affairs. "The basic idea is to take my mind off the chess and the tension," he says. And now he's into something new as well.

He has just completed editing the Marshall Attack of the Ruy Lopez for the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, published by Chess Informant. But since Chess Informant will publish each section individually, is Anand an author? "You can call me editor, contributor, author, proof-reader — it's just playing with words." But he has no plans to do any serious writing. "Writing a book takes a lot of time, and time spent on writing on my favourite opening is time taken away from other openings. And I will have to cover a whole gamut of games and openings and even topics which might not be useful to me. Hence, I don't have such plans in the near future."

Speaking of openings, Anand says that in 300 odd games he's played in the last three years, "I have played almost all the openings. Now I have added Caro Kann, French and Pirc defences to my favourite Sicilian defence".

And what about computers which play chess? "I don't play against computers," says Anand. "Computers which play chess are just developing and are not strong. My computer is just like an electronic library where the information is stored in discs, so that I have easy access to the information I need. It's an aid, not a trainer like Grandmaster Hellers," explains the young champion, who is looking forward to the next Candidate's round, getting it across Karpov along the way, and a possible tilt at the world title. If that happens, it couldn't happen to a nicer, more modest young man. India should be proud of this champion who literary stands tall. But, as usual, India has little time for champions.

(Concluded)

— V Jagannathan

Classics blank in a record season

Never before in the history of the centuries-old Indian turf has there been a season like the 1992-93 Madras one, which concluded on March 28th. Such was its domination by M A M Ramaswamy's mighty establishment, India's biggest to carry an individual owner's colours, that it was by far the most one-sided season the ancient centre of Guindy has ever had.

Complete statistics are not available as I write, but the fact that MAM, as Ramaswamy is known throughout the Indian racing world, Foley and the latter's first jockey, Robin Corner, headed their respective lists for the umpteenth time with better figures than ever before, tells its own tale of what had virtually been one-way traffic. Ever since his gold, brown belt jersey and brown cap entered the fray two decades ago, the top spot in the Guindy owners' list has become MAM's monopoly. But he smashed all his previous records during the season just ended.

In keeping with MAM's massive winnings was Foley's achievement. Three seasons ago, the youthful English professional, whose father, Jim Foley, looks after MAM's Bangalore establishment, set an Indian record by topping the century mark. He bettered it last season, and eclipsed his 1992 mark during the latest season with as many as six meetings left. The exceptionally wide gap between him and the second-placed professional was proof of the unchallenged run he had.

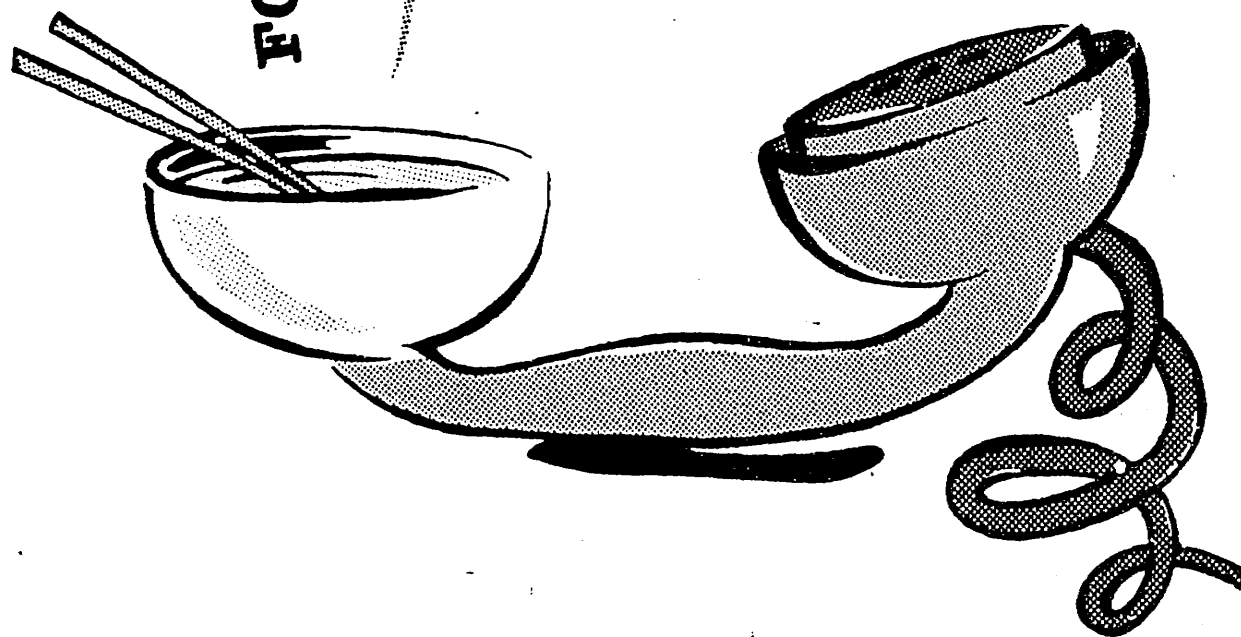
Record winnings apart, the country's leading owner-trainer combination had the rare distinction of making a clean sweep on more than one occasion. In the prestigious Queen Elizabeth Commemoration Cup for three-year-olds, four of the runners hailed from Foley's

stable, and they had little difficulty in bagging the first four places! The clean sweep, an Indian record, came a week after MAM's colours had made a family affair of the prestigious Guindy Grand Prix, also for three-year-olds, to emphasise, if emphasis were needed at all, the bloodline of his juveniles. Only three accepted, and with all three running in MAM's colours, their presence obviously scared away other entries for one of the richest prizes of the Madras turf.

Well as MAM and Foley scaled the heights as never before, they had their poorest run in the Classics this year. Only Robertino, winner of the St. Leger, helped them avert their first-ever blank as the other Classics were taken to Bangalore by challengers from Rashid Byramji's stable. Further proof of the Classics drought MAM's establishment passed through was provided by the ITC-sponsored Indian Turf Invitation Cup field at Hyderabad, in which MAM's colours were, perhaps for the first time in the history of the 30-year-old Classics, conspicuous by their absence.

The Invitation Cup result, incidentally, emphasised the emergence of the Bangalore liquor baron, Vijay Mallya, as a formidable challenger to MAM's status as India's most successful owner, whose world Classics tally now stands at a record 173. Adler helped Mallya and trainer Byramji complete the first-ever Invitation Cup hat-trick, after Delage and Bugs Bunny had won for them in the last two years. Mallya's emergence will certainly lead to a keen rivalry between his Kunigal Stud Farm and MAM's Chettinad Stud Farm, a rivalry that is certain to improve the quality of the Indian thoroughbred and also make Indian racing more competitive than ever before. AJAX

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