

Vol. I. No. I

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

April 15, 1991

The Queen's English at the Bar

MORE THAN HIS FAIR SHARE OF COINCIDENCES

(By a Special Correspondent)



Life is full of coincidences, but former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Muthuvel Karunanidhi must be thinking that he has been at the receiving end of more than his fair share of them. Back in 1976, he was ousted from office on January 30th. This January 30th was again to prove his idea.

A couple of days before January 30, 1976, Governor K K Shah had described the Karunanidhi government as truly 'Gandhian'. Fifteen years later, another Governor with repetitive initials, S S Barnala, had on the eve of January 30th given the Karunanidhi government a good chit.

Then again, last time round, Information Minister V C Shukla was in Madras late in January. A few days later Karunanidhi was out of office. This time, Shukla, now External Affairs Minister, was again in Madras and he even met the Chief Minister on the 29th. The next day, Karunanidhi was out of office again.

But more than what Shukla portended, Karunanidhi must be wondering where he was going wrong with his patron saint, Thiruvalluvar. Back in 1976, he had got *Valluvar Kottam* built and then embellished it with a dominating stone temple chariot built on the lines of the temple chariot of Thiruvarur, his home town. But before he could inaugurate the giant hall, he no longer enjoyed the President's pleasure. This time, he announced a Rs. 25 lakh scheme to refurbish his favourite auditorium; a few days later, some admirers erected a traffic police box modelled on the Thiruvarur and Valluvar Kottam chariots. Within days of these events, Karunanidhi was out of power again.

What, the former Chief Minister must be wondering, had he done wrong to be haunted by January 30th, the kind words of Governors, Shukla and temple chariots!

(By a Staff Reporter)

A few months ago, that brilliant lawyer and witty speaker Govind Swaminadhan kept a large audience in stitches narrating the problems he was having in court with his English. No one these days seems to understand what I say, Swaminadhan ruefully remarked.

The problem with English in court is not confined to Tamil Nadu. Swaminadhan would undoubtedly be the first to appreciate this anecdote that was recently narrated in the *Hindustan Times*:

Apparently Solicitor-General Anand Deo Giri stunned a five-judge Supreme Court bench during the case involving the former Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, K Veeraswami, when he said "Judges are in the clutches of the Prevention of Corruption Act". Recovering quickly, one of the justices remarked, "Probably what you mean is that judges are in the ambit of the Act".

The Solicitor General responded, "I've never been to a public school. I have been only to a municipal *lat-phatti* school. So your Lordships will tolerate my English". When the justice who had tried to be helpful poured oil on troubled waters remarking, "Many of us have gone to municipal schools", Giri replied, "In Allahabad High Court we have to argue in Hindi because



Saar! Not understanding what Vakil Saar is telling to you. Asking him to pesufy in Thamilish little, Saar.

several judges refuse to hear arguments in English". Justice M N Venkatachaliah intervened, "I guess Hindi can be spoken like English".

On another occasion in the same case, Justice Venkatachaliah had to take notice of another problem officers of the court face nowadays. When he advised Additional Solicitor General K T S Tulsi to refer to Smith and Hogan's *Criminal Law*, Tulsi, who is from Chandigarh and still has to get a home in Delhi, his quarters not being vacated by the previous incumbent, retorted, "We lawyers are supposed to sleep with our books. But in Delhi one has neither books to sleep with nor one's wife"!

This time the justices were truly speechless.

Tailpiece

SIMPLY SPEAKING

At a "How to Speak to Lay People" bi-annual meet in the City, the course organiser — a scientist — explained:

"For professionals of the rational, the relational is a frightening unknown. The problem is essentially psychological."

MANAALI RAMAN...



IN MAD, MAD MADRAS

Safe on the other side of the river

(By a Staff Reporter)

One of the few Harvard alumni in Madras is Congressman P Chidambaram. Another Harvard alumnus with southern roots (and an eye on the Karur Constituency as an Independent) is Subramaniam Swamy. When some Congress-I politicians recently wondered loudly whether they were the best examples for Rahul Gandhi to follow, his father Rajiv replied, "He is on the other side of the river".

The Cambridge River separates two campuses of America's most famous university. On one side of the river are the faculties of Law and Economics, where the two slick-talking politicians respectively studied. On the other side is the Arts faculty where Rahul Gandhi is now a student.

Whether liberal arts and the river will save Rahul from following Chidambaram and Swamy into politics is not very clear, but what that little exchange revealed is that he is not winding up in the USSR as many thought he would. In the U.S., he probably got a scholarship for his shooting.

Snakes Alive!

(By a Staff Reporter)



She switched on the light in the toilet. And she screamed. There, seated on the throne, and rearing himself up in all his majesty to meet the threat of light and scream, was a splendid specimen of a cobra!

Occupants of this ground floor office and from the other flats in the upmarket high-rise in Besant Nagar soon began crowding the bathroom. But the consensus was that the cobra should not be killed. And so the watchman gently jabbed it into the potty and slammed the lid on it.

The next day they came from the Snake Park to 'capture' the cobra and added it to their collection. That's when the picture above was taken. The picture that was NOT taken was when, a couple of days later, the same secretary looked out of her window. And there, slithering along the window ledge, raising its head occasionally to tap and test whether there was an entrance through the glass-pane, was an even bigger cobra.

Residents of these flats say cobras — and other snakes — are common-place in the garden. "It's because we're just next to the Theosophical Society gardens", they explain. An environmentalist says that ever since the gardens and forests of the Society as well as the neighbouring Adyar Estuary were declared a Wild Life Sanctuary the number of birds and reptiles in both have increased considerably.

This, however, is not the only sanctuary in the city with such wealth. The Amalgamations Group's campus at Sembiam, Huzur Gardens, is a truly beautiful private sanctuary with much of its flora of the forest variety. Here too, snakes are commonplace and have been found in the factories as well as in the homes of the executives who live on campus. Which is why the factories have on their rolls snake-catchers!

We welcome letters to the Editor, Human Interest and offbeat news stories

*
Address them to The Editor

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ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to Johnny and Mary on their 25th wedding anniversary — The Wilsons
Congratulations to Pappa and Mummy on their 15th wedding anniversary! With lots of love from Rani, Raja and Prinsie.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Downtown Gallery, Tina Daran's exhibition of abstract oil-paintings opens on March 21 at 6 p.m.

Village Fair at the Sunday Club on Sunday, April 21, '91, from 8.30 p.m.

Announcing three-day course on 'Sweets', beginning on April 22, 2 to 4 p.m., Mrs. Merewal, 8/1 Principal Street, Phone: 32654

BIRTH

On March 29, 1991, in Bangalore, to Rita and Sanjay, God's gift of bonny daughter. A granddaughter for Sheila and Khanna and a great-granddaughter for Aruna and Aravind.

BIRTHDAYS

Grandfather sends birthday greetings to Santosh Subramanian on 25.4.91.

Happy Birthday, Latha dear, on 21.4.91. Wish I were there — Hemu, Trichy.

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GREETINGS

Wonderful, all the best for your exams! May you come out with flying colours! 'Joy'.

MESSAGES

Honey, you're virtually the head of the family, and should be respected. I can't tolerate 'his stopping' to call you — 'ji'. Tell 'm strongly, otherwise I'd intervene. Love — A Friend.

My life, you can, but I can never stop myself! from loving you — Yours, and yours only.

Shanthi, why was the note so small (only 3,696 words, including quotes)? Have patience and talk in detail. 'Tonnes' of love! 'Billions' of H and K !! — Saravanan.

POSITIONS VACANT

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PROPERTY — RENTALS

At Mylapore, fully furnished house available with 3 bedrooms, bath attached. Contact: 136473.

At Egmore, running guest house, fully airconditioned, 6 double rooms fully furnished, at Ram's Circle, Jones Road. Contact: 172121.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: These ads are merely samples to give you an idea of what you can advertise in MADRAS MUSINGS!)

Some pregnant thoughts on export

The annual convention of the Madras Management Association (MMA) has become an event which everyone looks forward to. This year, the topic chosen was "Indian Exports in the Changing International Scenario". Considering the abysmal state of the balance of payments situation, the subject was particularly topical. Even the absence of Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, Union Minister for Commerce and Law — who rushed away to Delhi on the morning of the inauguration instead of inaugurating the function — could not dampen the proceedings.

There were performers this year such as J. N. Sapru, Chairman ITC, S. M. Datta, Chairman Hindustan Lever, and N. Vital, Secretary, Department of Electronics, Government of India. The two Madras-based speakers, N. Sankar of the Sanmar group (alternate president Assocham) and V. Srinivasan of W.S. Industries (President, Confederation of Engineering Industries) also contributed excellent speeches.

Sapru was hard-hitting and spared no punches. "Our problems are all man-made and self-inflicted. The government assumes that the entire world is waiting for Indian exports and

either are or you are not" Incidentally, ITC, which was under no obligation to export, ended up last year with an export of Rs. 160 crores.

If ITC chose to export on its own, the multinational giant Hindustan Lever Limited (HLL) had no choice in the matter. As it is a FERA company (a company with major foreign shareholding), the government held a

BUSINESS REVIEW... by THE SHROFF

Indian brand image is essential for exports. A classic case of short-sightedness on the part of government was cited by Sapru. ITC's cigarettes, Indi Kings and Classic, which have tremendous export potential, need to build their brand images. Which means that ITC has to spend a lot on advertising which would produce results only after several years. But government policies don't permit this. The necessary funds are not released. This provided an opportunity for a Sapru nugget — "Liberalisation is like pregnancy. You

environment. If Sapru's presentation was broadcasted and conceptual, Data's was full of nitty-gritty details.

The Secretary for Department of Electronics, N. Vital, revealed that at least his department was quite aware of the problems facing the industry. His speech was home-spun and witty. "We are a micro-pigmy in electronics and we have to become a global player," he declared. But how? Vital went on to explain and spelled out the government's thinking on the subject. He ended on an optimistic note. "We would rather light candles than curse darkness."

The convener of the convention, N. Kumar of Indchem (Sanmar group), and the MMA president, Mallika Srinivasan (vice president, TAFE), must be congratulated for a thought-provoking two days in an otherwise dull fortnight.

★ ★ ★

With so much political uncertainty this is not decision-taking time for business, especially for the cautious, conservative Madras business-man. One bit of good news, however, was that the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (Tidco) will pay a 4.3 per cent dividend for the first time in 25 years. A lot of its loss-making units have been turned around and it has finalised its plans for privatisation.

★ ★ ★

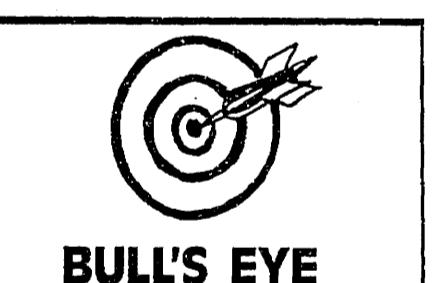
Not so good was the news from Binny — the oldest textile mill in the state. The stalemate between the workers and management continues, with no signs of resolution. At the time of writing the management has decided to close down the mill. More on this later.

K. Gopalakrishnan

It's a good time to buy under-priced shares

A V Thomas Industrial Limited (Current Market Price — Rs. 47.50)

The company has announced good results for the half year ended September '90. The year-end results for March '91 are expected to be encouraging. The company is engaged in the business of solvent extraction of



BULL'S EYE

rice bran, soya bean and other major oilseeds/oil cakes. The easier availability of soya bean with a bumper crop in Madhya Pradesh, where the factory is located, would increase the turnover and profits substantially. The demand for edible oils is tremendous and is now partly met by imports. The company has implemented an expansion plan which increased the capacity to 220 tonnes per day from 200 tonnes. A price of Rs. 55 to 60 can be expected for this scrip in the next two months. The technicals are hopeful for a price rise.

Ashok Leyland Finance Limited (Current Market Price — Rs. 72.50)

Promoted by an excellent name, A.L. Finance Limited has made spectacular progress, with tremendous increase in the volume of hire purchase and leasing business. The performance for the second half year ended June '90 is more impressive, with the PAT for the same period yielding an annualised EPS of Rs. 25. The price is expected to touch Rs. 100/- as soon as the full year's results are announced. The technicals also promise a rise and the trend is still up. The price has just broken out of the congestion band formed around the prices of Rs. 62-68.

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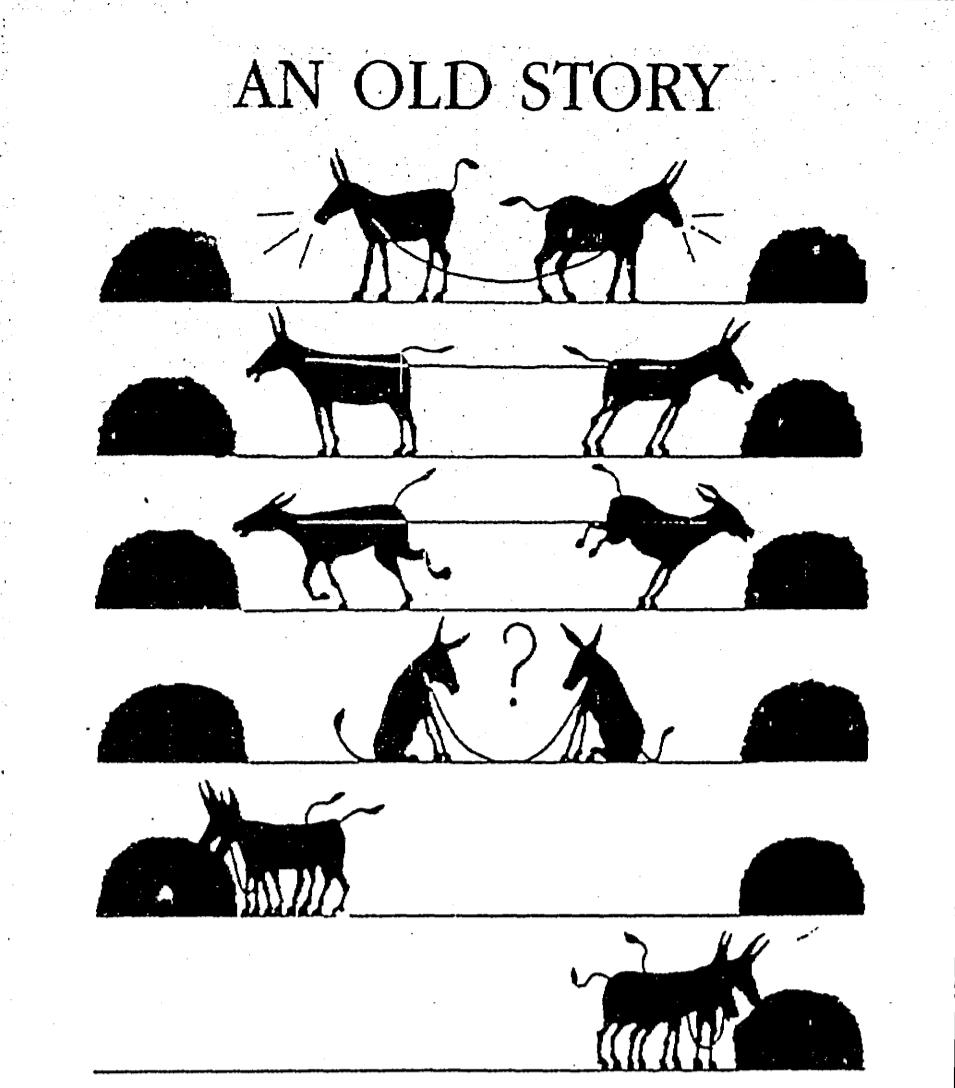
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AN OLD STORY



A dead man's body tells a tale

2

The well by the lonely highway near the farm in Athukadu, some miles from Coimbatore, is deep and dark. One morning, a few months ago, a clutch of curious bare-chested men were peering into it — and it wasn't long before they identified what they had noticed floating in the well. It was a human body, immensely bloated. A thin but distinct trail of blood was etched on the sandy earth around the well. And by it were footprints — all of them bloodstained. The tell-tale signs pointed to savage murder.

Soon the police came. Photographs of the well, the floating corpse and the surrounding earth were taken. Then the body was removed and sent for post-mortem. That there had been murder there was now no doubt; the head and chest bore thirteen deep wounds, some of them fatal.

The body was soon identified. The dead man was Athappa Gounder, a man of some means, who had owned a fertile farm near the well. He was also involved in liquor-vending.

★ ★ ★

A Tempo-driver volunteered a story to the police. Seven men had engaged his van a few nights ago and ordered him to drive to a farm. While he waited outside, the men, armed with iron rods and knives, walked into the farm house. Minutes later he was shocked to hear shouts, screams and cries. "Kill the old man!" a voice shouted and then there were pathetic cries, "Help...they are killing me!" There were sounds of blows, screams and then — silence. A few minutes later he heard the heavy noise of something falling into water. The seven men returned to the van in blood-stained clothes and weapons. He drove them for some distance, then they got off and paid the hire they had agreed on.

Athappa was the father-in-law of Ponnusami, one of the seven men identified by the driver. Son-in-law and father-in-law were on intimate terms as a consequence of a long-drawn-out family dispute over maintenance. Athappa had to pay his (Athappa's) estranged second wife.

★ ★ ★

The police arrested the seven and charged them with murder and other connected but lesser, offenses. These included causing injury to three of four persons who had been sleeping in the same room as Athappa. The only person who escaped injury in the raid was Athappa's young grandson.

In due course, the accused appeared before the Coimbatore Sessions Judge. Eye-witnesses, including the injured, deposited on oath about the violent attack and murder. According to them, it took place at 2 a.m.; as rural folk, they fixed the time by the stars. And to the clinch the time factor, the grandson had worn a watch that night! There was also the evidence of the van driver.

The men who noticed the body floating in the well told the Court on oath that they had spotted the body at seven the following morning.

The Sessions Court found the accused guilty as charged. Ponnusami and another received life sentences, the others lesser jail terms. All filed appeals.

★ ★ ★

The appeal recently came up for hearing before a Division Bench of the Madras High Court comprising of

place around 2 the same morning. According to established theories of forensic medicine, a body thrown into water will not float at once. It is putrefaction of the body which causes gases to accumulate inside the stomach and makes the body float. The time this takes depends on such factors as climate, temperature, humidity and

CRIME NOTEBOOK

BY

RANDOR GUY



Others. In India, the minimum time is 24 hours! And it is more in cold climates. So, Pichai argued, the murder could not have taken place around 2 a.m., a mere five hours before the body was found floating!

Giving the accused the benefit of doubt, their Lordships acquitted them all. Here was a case of a dead man's body telling tales.

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Two marginal words that work wonders

I was parked, illegally, on Kodambakkam High Road. Nearby, a roadside mechanic was disembowelling a scooter. He thought it wise to warn me: 'The police will ticket you. They're very strict nowadays, because of Presidents Rule.'

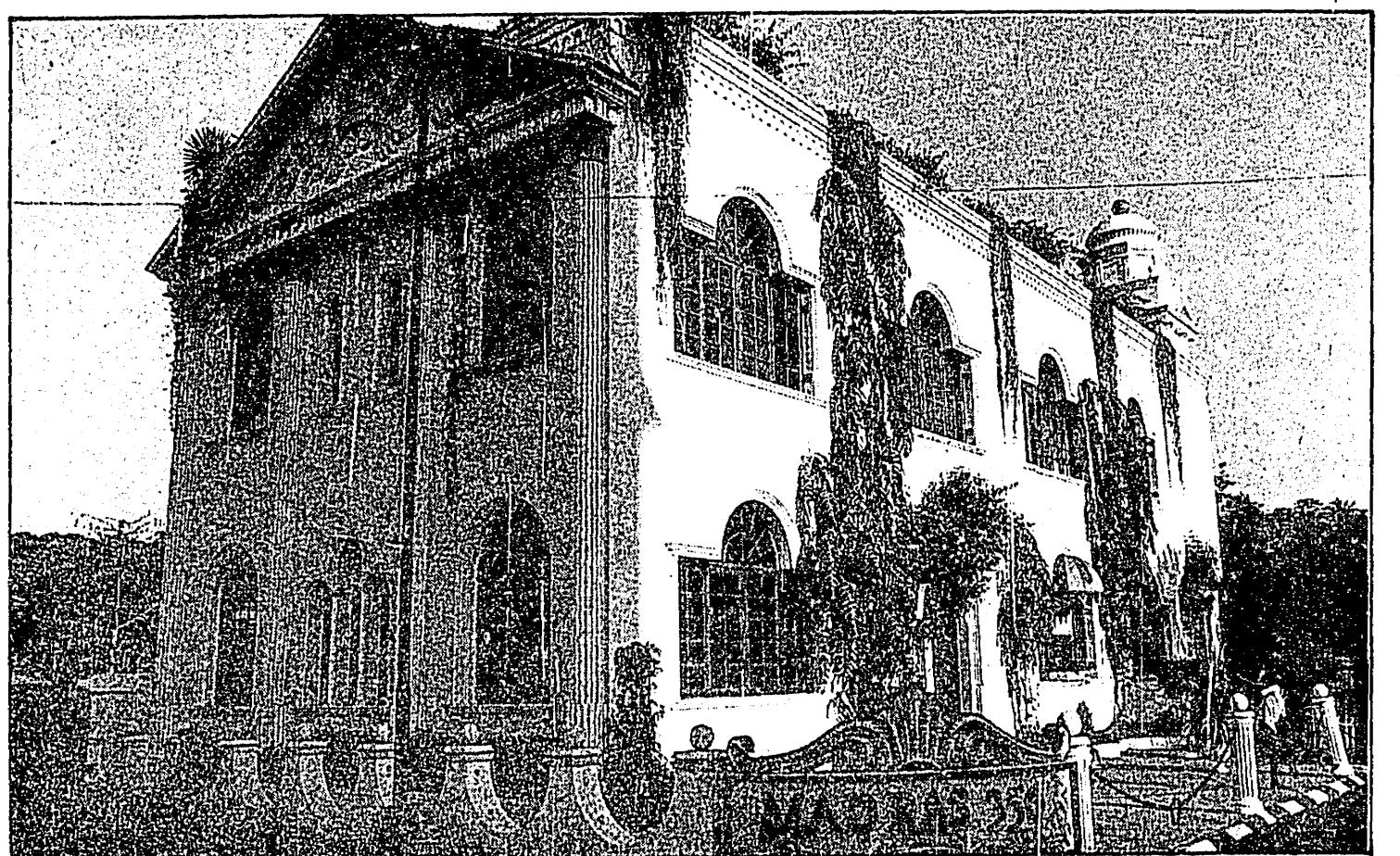
The last two are familiar and magical words which seem to work small wonders in people. They now take the law a bit more seriously, while newspaper reports take on a sporting language when writing about the efforts of the Governor and his advisors. The reports use words like 'toning up the administration' (500 push ups with 50 files on your back), 'files will start

MUSING WITH MURARI

moving faster' (2 cms per week), 'the bureaucrats have been ordered to respond quicker' (three rounds in a ring with files being hurled at them).

It's as if a tough head coach has taken over a team and is now faced with trying to get some flabby, over-weight creatures to start exercising their limbs. I can imagine the Governor and his special advisors jogging into the secretariat, and there they see these thousands who, it seems, have been behaving sloth-like for aeons of time. (Or, at least, since the last time we had President's Rule. Every time we have it, our bureaucrats get 'toned up') I imagine our sloths look up, see the Governor and Advisors jogging briskly in place and collectively groan 'Oh no, not another President's Rule.'

TIMERI MURARI



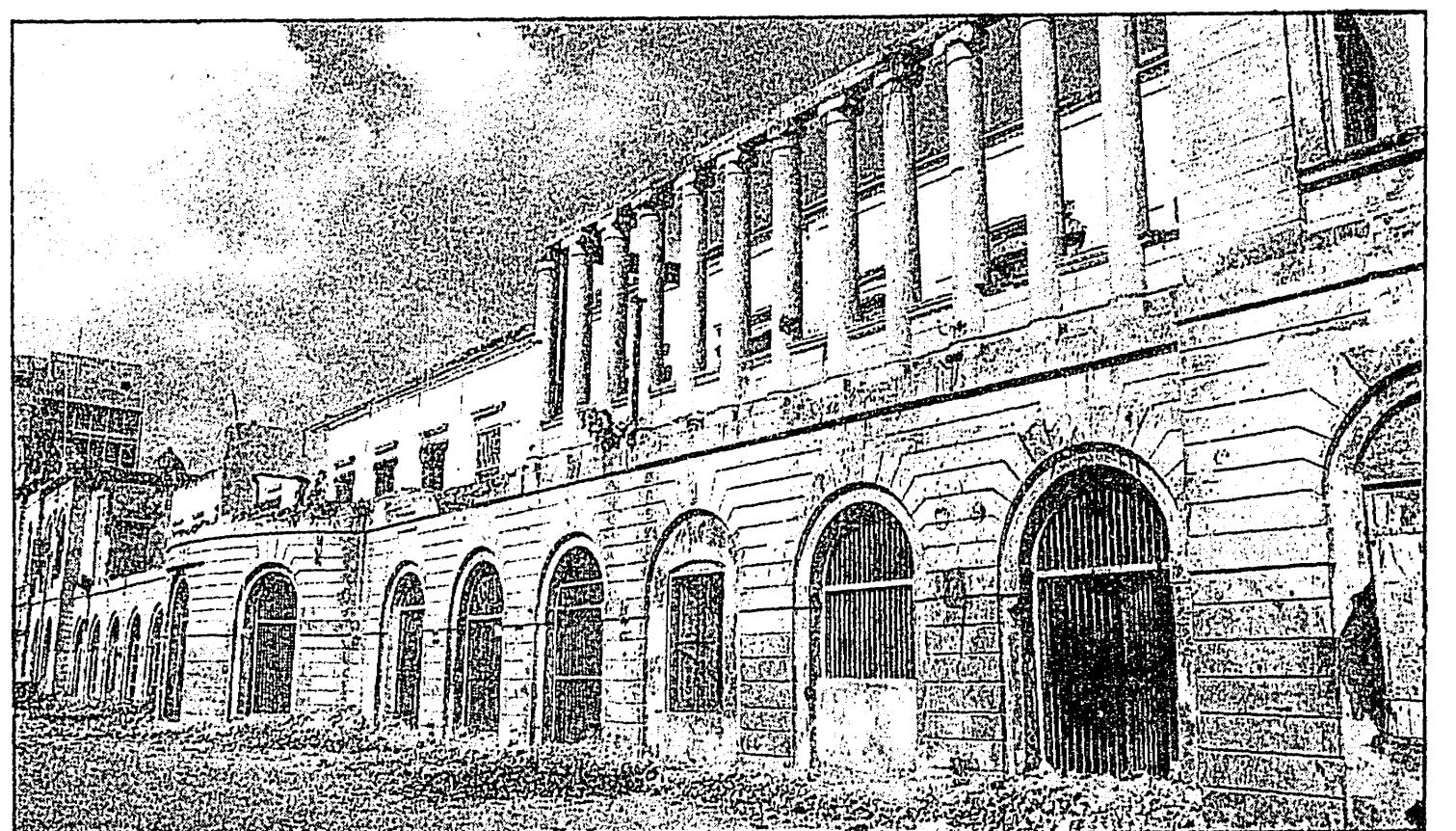
Believe it or not, someone did get around to commemorating Madras's 350 years in stone. Frank Fernandes is a builder — and what better way to say 'Happy Birthday' to Madras than a Georgian style building that's part residence, part office and part restaurant. Fernandes's striking building in gleaming white is opposite Pachchayappa's College, at the junction of Poornamalai High Road and the New Avadi Road. And to make everyone aware of why he built such a landmark in Madras he christened it Madras 350 Years.

But even as Fernandes's commemorative piece was going up, plans were underway to pull down one of the city's historic buildings that had been saved from the wreckers' hammers during Indira Gandhi's heyday.

THE NEW... Bentinck's Building was built for the first Superne Court of the Madras ... & THE OLD

... decision to pull it down was taken. In many an 18th and 19th century painting of the old skyline of Madras this was the building that dominated. Conservationists seeking to save it were told that it had been condemned as 'unsafe' by the engineers. But as the wreckers hammer away at it, it takes them ten days and more to pull down a single pillar. As we go to Press, we've been told that wrecking is at a standstill. Is someone with a sense of history at last saying 'Better late than never'?

— Susheela Nair



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What next in G.T.?

The new Sattangadu steel market has been inaugurated and the Koyambedu wholesale market is nearing completion. The relocation of wholesale marketing away from the city centres will, no doubt, cause major changes in the growth pattern of Madras city. But while these new nodes are established on the outskirts of the city, encouraging new development, what is the future of the areas vacated by the markets and their supporting activities?

Already in a blighted state, with obsolete infrastructure and traffic facilities, but occupying prime land in the city centres, the shifting of the markets addresses itself to only half the problem — that concerning wholesale activity alone. The real problem however — that concerning the neighbourhood — remains, with no serious solution in mind.

One possible scenario is that the dress of wholesaling and some form of low-key retailing would continue, putting the neighbourhood on a downward slide financially and ultimately leading to further environmental degradation. The other possibility is that, without proper direction and control, we will witness the kind of fragmented reconstruction of existing structures, disguised as renovation, mainly to beat the development control rules. This has already been seen in centres like Mylapore and Triplicane. What is necessary is for

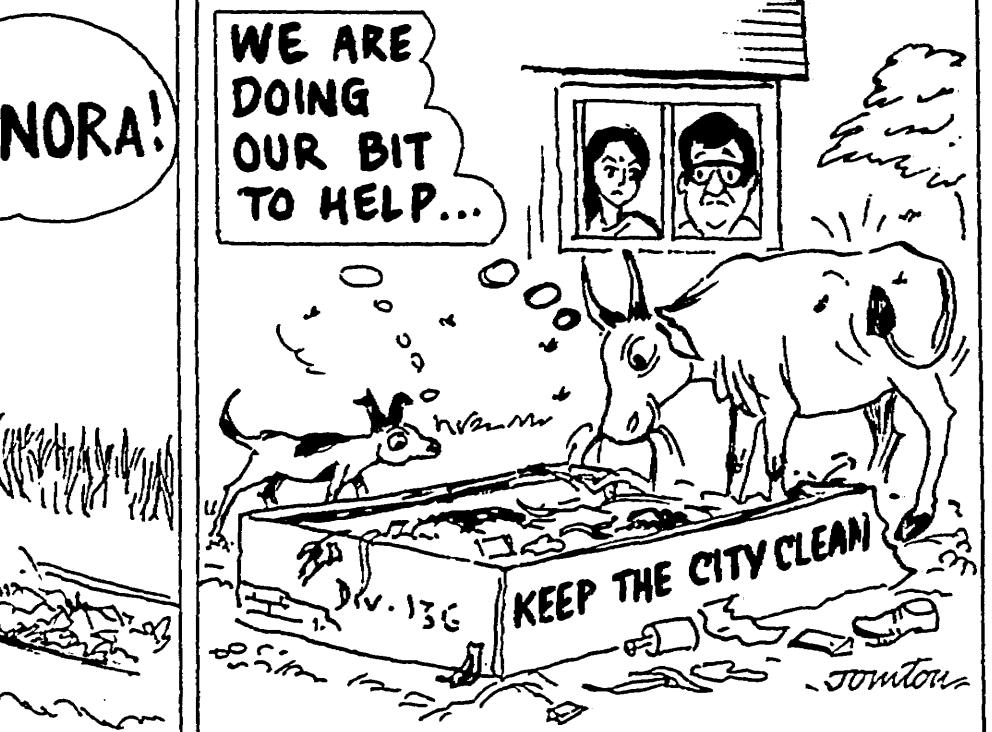
planners to look at the specific problems of inner cities and develop special guidelines and detailed area plans to direct the growth of these vital centres. These plans should address issues relating to fragmented property holdings, roles of planning and developing agencies and the historical context, apart from the usual socio-economic issues, to enable re-development of the areas.

It is obvious that a uniform code of development control rules for the city cannot cope with issues of its older centres. The experience in other major cities has been that the inner centres require a 'hands on' approach in planning and design which reaches into the realm of ownership rights, design freedom, the powers of the local government and community participation. This approach has brought about major beneficial structural changes in the physical environment of several blighted areas in major cities in the West. Needless to say that the process should be made user-oriented and not be allowed to degenerate into the 'start-from-scratch' renewal of the Fifties.

Planners would be well advised to arm themselves with the necessary legal authority, through appropriate legislation, as the first step, if we are to see places like George Town bloom again in our lifetime.

MAKE MINE MADRAS
Featuring
GUNDOO - MALLI
by JOMTON

GUNDOO, TAKE THE GARBAGE OUT PLEASE...



QUIZZIN' WITH NAVIN — 1 (The Fortnight of March 24 to April 6)

This is not merely a quiz to test your memory, but it is also a refresher on what happened in Madras, Tamil Nadu and the rest of India and the world during the fortnight that was. Your daily newspapers and the popular Indian news journals Quizmaster Navin Jayakumar's sources. If you have read them carefully, you could well be in the running for a prize.

MADRAS MUSINGS offers three prizes — Rs. 150, Rs. 100 and Rs. 50 — for the first three all-correct or nearest all-correct entries opened. The decision of the Quizmaster and the Editor will be final in this connection, as in all quizzes.

To enter all you have to do is write your answers on a sheet of paper, fill in the coupon below (use capitals only), attach filled-in coupon to answer-sheet and mail them to reach us BEFORE 5 p.m. on Apr 23. Address your envelope to MADRAS MUSINGS QUIZ, C/o Lokavani-Hall Mark Press, 62/63 Greames Road, Madras 600 006.

1. The renovation of the biggest and most sacred tank in Kanchipuram was inaugurated on March 31 by Sri Jayadeva Saraswati. What is its name?
2. On what occasion is the National Front releasing its election manifesto?
3. For what drug did Maradona test positive?
4. Where, appropriately, will the Music Trinity Jayanthi be held this year?
5. What is the name of India's second landing ship, the hull of which was launched on April 1?
6. Where is the Al Hussein Mosque and what does it contain?
7. What extraordinary feat did Chartered Engineer J R Lamech achieve recently in Madras?
8. Who is to be conferred the 1989 Dr Yelavarthi Nayudamma Memorial Award?
9. What legend of modern dance died in Manhattan on April 1?
10. How many districts of Tamil Nadu have women Collectors?
11. Why did L K Advani say that if the BJP came to power, it would order a probe into the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri?
12. What is the 'Out of Africa' theory?
13. Who is the first Indian professional to win the Indian Open Golf Tournament?
14. At which park did the Corporation of Madras present the 66th Annual Flower Show?
15. What was unusual about Yuanxiao, an eight-line poem written by a Chinese student in the U.S.A. and published in the overseas edition of the People's Daily, the mouthpiece of China's Communist Party?
16. Who received the first bottle of Lehar Mirinda in Madras?
17. At which Air Force station did an I.A.F. Avro recently crash, killing all 28 on board?
18. President General Moussa Traore was ousted following a coup in which country?
19. Which barrage, the first constructed across the Kaveri, was visited recently by the Kaveri Tribunal?
20. Who is the Chief Election Commissioner?
21. How many Oscars did Dance with Wolves win?
22. According to the 1991 Census provisional figures just released, which is (a) the most populous district, and (b) the least populous district in Tamil Nadu?
23. Which well known Indian has written several books on China and is known for his joint work with Nobel Laureate Dr Paul D. Samuelson on the theory of index numbers?
24. Which country would you have visited recently if you saw graffiti like 'Enner — Hitler' scribbled on the walls?
25. "Hot Favourites" — What are Arka Manik and Sugar Baby varieties of?
26. Which Indian satellite experiment is specifically designed to combat illiteracy in Indian villages?
27. Law 27.5 in cricket was recently in the news. What does it state?
28. Who opened the P. Ramamurthy Memorial at T. Nagar recently?
29. Who was awarded the Madhya Pradesh Govt.'s Kalidas Samman award for classical music for 1990-91?
30. Which eminent novelist played an important part in introducing the works of R.K. Narayan to the West?

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Of good neighbours, teachers & 'rogues'

Hic et ubique, here and everywhere,

as Hamlet says to his father's ghost, could well be the title of this column, if left to the columnist, but ye cantankerous editor insists that I keep my meanderings strictly regional. He also feels that I should look out for the unusual and the absurd to comment on.

At the same time, he says I must stay away from politics, which is quixotic and paradoxical. Where can you find the absurd in this country except in the realm of politics? It is one vast theatre of the absurd in which every character is a loyal soldier of the party and a disciplined democrat with the god-given right to change his party and his definition of democracy as often as his personal garments. Well, the next few weeks give promise of all sorts of fun and games, and willy-nilly I will be getting into politics at the risk of provoking editorial ire. For now, let us look at a few recent unusual happenings.

Good neighbourliness: A distinguished senior journalist, enjoying as one might say the winter of his content, was startled one morning to hear noises of construction activity from the next compound. At first he paid no much attention to it, but as movement and activity increased next door, he noticed that one building was being demolished and another was coming up in its place. Which would have been all right except that the new building was practically nestling against his compound wall, and abutted his garage.

Now, there is among the State building regulations one that stipulates that at least a five-foot vacant space should be left between one compound and its adjacent building. The journalist, rightly indignant at the regulation being flouted to his detriment, took it up with his neighbour only to be told with disdain that they had diplomatic immunity, were not subject to any local laws and regulations, and could do what they wished within their compound.

The journalist's neighbour is the Soviet Cultural Centre, and to add insult to injury, the proposed new building in their compound was to serve as their canteen. The claim of diplomatic immunity for unauthorised construction is a palpable absurdity, and there is also a question whether the diplomatic immunity a Chancery enjoys really applies in full measure to its satellite buildings.

Anyway, the indignant journalist went public on the subject. With quite astonishing promptness, the MMDA wrote to the Soviet Cultural Centre for details about the construction activity. Which alone should make it clear that the Centre had not obtained the approval of the MMDA.

100 King a SKance

to differentiate this from other such intra-mural problems is that both sides seem to have the nobles of intentions.

The Principal is all set to obtain for the College deemed autonomy status — a distinction that the College well deserves and which nobody would want denied to it. The staff association also wants the same, but as far as an outsider can understand it, the association says that the necessary

planning and preparatory work have not been done to take the College to the exalted status of a deemed university.

Arguements and counter-arguments fly back and forth like guided missiles. Some teachers have gone on fast. The Principal sends minatory notices to various members of the staff demanding explanations. While teachers' agitations have more or less become routine these days, the fact that the staff of a Christian college, which has just celebrated 150 years of existence, do not seem to be able to sit down and reason together

S.K.

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CBSE secessions open a whole new world

The recent delinking of certain schools from the C B S E wheel of study — in Madras they are D A V and Padma Seshadri — has caused much nail-biting. This correspondent, however, believes that it has finally called the emperor's clothes-bluff — a charade which the Central Board and the N C E R T had perpetrated successfully for over a quarter of a century. Both parents and children of these schools, however, are worried whether their final year students will make the grade alongside their one-time C B S E counterparts.

All these years, the fear-psychosis associated with the possibility of the other educational streams not providing adequate inputs, to enable their students to achieve sufficient grades in the entrance exams for higher professional education, had been a powerful spur to the swelling of C B S E affiliations. This was supported by a wholly unsubstantiated whispering campaign about the superiority of the C B S E syllabus (indeed, it was never ahead in physics, biology and English studies). The texts prepared for these C B S E schools have long been the bread and butter of a huge team of overpaid editors and artists comprising a section of the N C E R T who have blatantly had a vested interest in keeping the C B S E schools in a sort of thrall ("You

SHALL buy only NCERT texts") even if they are badly illustrated, carelessly prepared and, what's worst, unavailable from time to time.

In 1988, when Chairman Prof Singh announced that C B S E schools were free to choose whatever texts they wanted upto Class VIII, innumerable schools did not even receive this circular. Soon after, when the C B S E syllabus was revised, there was the shameful spectacle of the Class X books

by
OUR EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

being unavailable. Why? Because N C E R T was loathe to print books for a dated syllabus.

This bold partial separation of a few schools from the stranglehold of an undistinguished syllabus means that some people have taken a good look at the course structure of the subjects taught and decided that they can do it far better with better books and other teaching aids.

There appears to be a guess that, next year this time, as many as a hundred more schools will swing away from the fashion of these first few path-breakers. For the country as a whole, what does this mean? It could be the

beginning of a revitalising of schools because competition thrives where there is diversity. Against that, is the national tendency to complacency in fragmentation — instead of pockets of excellence, we may have mediocrity flourishing because there is no standard against which to measure it. Will these schools then set a trend upwards or sideways, like some schools in Kerala which have banded together to form their own syllabus with books written by their teachers and no other etc?

The public should be more vigilant than they have been in the past. When the doors to America's higher education are wide open to our students, what does it mean? That the innate ability of the Indian student is considerable. A dynamic, workable syllabus will enhance our students' skills further. A language grasp coupled with a firm grounding in the sciences is required if we are to build what Nehru called "the temples of the future" — factories, industries, world level science.

Though initially there may be some soreness, till the system starts moving, this correspondent believes that a whole new world of education lies ahead for Indian students, with the employment of teachers who (so far) have had to suppress their creativity and initiative on account of the cast-iron course and book requirements.



Summertime's watermelon time

The onset of Summer is a middle age time of the year. The cool mornings linger on the cheeks and foreheads of early morning walkers, while the air is heavy with the scent of mango blossoms.

By ten o'clock the atmosphere gets steamed up. The sun glows increasingly white and a drowsy numbness steals over the senses. Mind you, it's still not the full blast of the Summer heat when the policeman seems to be melting through the glass windshield.

It's a good time though for watermelons. They are just starting to come into the City by lorry loads at night. In the mornings, whole pavements are stacked with them. It's no longer common to see the dark

attention by the watermelon woman.

Pay a little too much care and she will be irritated that her integrity is being questioned; don't bother and you will be taken for a sucker. Finally the negotiations begin.

"Twenty-five," she says.

"Ten."

"Twenty-two," she concedes.

"Fifteen."

"It's the biggest one of the season.

It will feed a family of ten," she says.

"Twenty!"

"Eighteen."

"Twenty," she is quite firm.

"Alright, twenty," you say and then you pull out the card that has been up your sleeve. "Now cut it. I won't buy until you cut it."

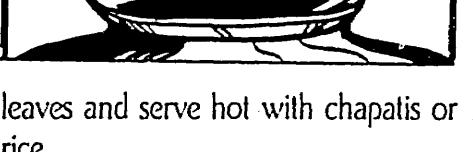
Method

Mix all the vegetables and the curd in a bowl. Add salt.

Sprinkle roasted, ground cummin seeds and chilli powder.

Garnish with chopped coriander leaves.

Chill before serving.



leaves and serve hot with chapatis or rice.

COLOCAZIA SALAD

Cooking Time: 20 min. Serves Four

1/2 kg colocasia (yam).

1/2 tsp black pepper

1/2 tsp red chilli powder

1/2 tsp toasted ajwain (powdered)

2-3 tablespoons lemon juice

1 green chilli chopped fine

1 small bunch of coriander leaves chopped

salt to taste

Method

Pressure cook the colocasia. Skin and cut into cubes, cool. Add all the ingredients and mix well. Garnish with coriander leaves and serve.

CAULIFLOWER STUFFED PARATHA

Makes 12 Parathas

Cooking Time: 30 min.

3 cups wheat flour

1 onion chopped fine

2 small green chillies chopped fine

1 cup grated cauliflower

1 small bunch of coriander leaves

chopped fine

salt to taste

some water for kneading

ghee or oil for shallow frying

Method

Sift wheat flour with salt, add onions, green chillies, grated cauliflower and coriander leaves. Add sufficient water and make a stiff dough.

Divide the dough equally. Roll out each into a 5" disc, on a floured board.

Smear with ghee or oil and shallow fry on a tawa until both sides are golden brown in colour.

Serve hot.

VEGETABLE RAITA

Serves Four

1 small onion chopped fine

1 small tomato chopped fine

1 small cucumber pared and chopped fine

1 tsp cummin seeds (roasted & powdered)

1/2 red chilli powder

salt to taste

2 cups well mixed fresh curd

Garnish with chopped coriander

CHANDRA PADMANABHAN

green ones. The favourites these days are of the Bangalore variety, striped green and white, like designer watermelons. There are also the tiny ones, pale green skinned with even paler, pink flesh inside.

The watermelon sellers are as flesh and eager as the fruit itself to find customers. The season is just starting. Much later, they are content to slice the fruit in segments and spear them onto spikes that decorate their carts, providing a lurid touch as the red juice drips into the dust. Right now they have to work at it.

"Here, sir, take a good juicy one home," says the watermelon woman. She picks up one and shakes it with an authoritative air. If it's too heavy it's full of juice, but not so sweet. If it's too light, it could be spongy. Ideally a melon should be cut open, so that you can check whether it's really red and juicy inside, but she's not prepared to take the risk as yet.

You have to pick it up and inspect it yourself. If there are patches of clay along the base, the woman will assure you that it's a gift from Mother Earth herself, but unless you run a finger along the surface and prod it, you'll never know whether the clay has been used to seal a damaged fruit. These manoeuvres are watched with keen

interest by the watermelon woman, who makes your way back to your car. She tucks the two ten rupee notes in a fold of her saree at the waist. The first trophies of the Summer have been won.

Mix well and serve hot.

Chandra Padmanabhan

All the stage's a temple

After the big commercial splash made by the tourist dance festival at Mamallapuram, making gentle waves was the holy festival of *Ramayana*, a spiritual, cultural and moral event organized by dancer Dr Padma Subramaniam. Narada Ganap Sabha wore the look of a temple with a papier mache grey stone shrine and real idols of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana inside, before which worship was performed.

The mornings were devoted to seminars and lectures on such varied topics as Geography in the *Ramayana*, Rama's journey from Ayodhya to Lanka, the universal philosophy of the *Ramayana* etc. These were held before the shrine, a brilliant idea. The evening programmes, on the proscenium stage, had a judicious mix of various theatre

The variety of Rajiv

Rajiv Menon, a young cinematographer (better looking than many heroes), met the press at Hotel Savera recently to show them his different levels of documentation. His advertising films have won quite a few industry awards (Moods condoms, Solidaire TV, T.V.S., Suzuki etc.). His camera work for Shyam Benegal's *Nature's Symphony* is brilliant. And his public service film on Schizophrenia is touching. He gave his services free to make this film, which got very good performances from the actors.

Incidentally, Sakshi has spread to Bangalore as well. Its gallery there was inaugurated with *Touchstone*, an exhibition of the works of carefully chosen artists from Madras who have had the distinction of carving new paths for themselves.

Sakshi in Madras has been showing Abu Abraham's cartoons from the first week of April. With the exhibition on till the third week of April, you still have the opportunity of owning an original Abu cartoon or sketch.

Abu at Sakshi

Sakshi Gallery recently displayed the paintings of Badri Narayanan. He's not difficult, his paintings sell very well and he is quite well known. But few know of another talent he has... Story-

Championing a team of champions

Long before the senior division cricket league saw its last match, the Madras championship was decided this year. In fact, even before the champions played their last game, they were already through (barring the protests and protestations that have become so much a part of the game today at every level). Only once before, between 1971-'72 and '82-'83, has Jolly Rovers had to wait longer than the four seasons till this one to regain the Raja of Palayampatti Shield, symbol of supremacy in the league.

In the last 24 years — from the time India Cements took over the club and then Chemplast 'inherited' it (the respective directors being father and son) — no team has won the title more than Jolly Rovers' nine. It won it in its very first season, when the then state captain, P K Belliappa, Najam Hussain, K R Rajagopal, K S Kannan and young Venkatraghavan (already a Test star) turned out for the side. And that is one of traditions that it has continued to maintain; Jolly Rovers continues, as always, to ensure that it has some of the best players in the state.

The Rovers' recruitment policy was probably formalised by former India keeper Bharat Reddy who brought with him into the team, in the early Eighties, the kind of thinking that today is recognised as 'modern'. In simple terms, as one of the management books has put it: "If you pay peanuts, then be prepared to employ monkeys". The best demand and get the best, and if Jolly Rovers has been able to attract in recent years such stars as L Sivaramakrishnan, B Arun, V B Chandrasekhar, Mujibur Rehman, D Vasu, Sunil Subramaniam,

by
THE OUTSIDER

Ranji players all, it is because its sponsors are willing to pay.

Chandrasekhar, who led the team this season, finished with 1035 runs at an average of 94.09. His aggregate included an unbeaten 252 (against IOB), the highest in the league. (Interestingly enough, he had to share



The Jolly Rovers, the champions championed by the Sanmar Group.

the limelight on that day with off spinner Venkatramana of Indian Bank who had a haul of ten wickets in an innings — naturally, the best bowling performance of the season). The other Jolly Rovers batsman to impress was Mujibur Rehman, who made his bow in the Ranji Trophy with a century in the last match of last season; he scored 662 runs this season.

Left-arm spinner Sunil Subramaniam, with 42 wickets at 19.71, was the team's leading bowler while D Vasu (606 runs and 25 wickets) was easily its most effective all-rounder. Other bowlers with good performances were off spinner Kubendran (33 wickets) and medium pacer Jaikumar (27), the Rovers' 'import' from Kerala.

At the 'promising youngster' level, there was left hander Sharath and Shyamsunder, a junior player. Wicket keeper Ruben Paul too had his moments, especially when quick runs were needed.

One of the team's strengths was that at any time during the league, it could call upon the experience of the likes of Bharat Reddy (who scored a hundred in the only match he played), P S Moses, V Prasad, P Vijayakumar, all Chemplast employees and all of whom have played in the national championship.

If the past tense has been used when speaking of the team's present crop of players, it is because, with the money now available in senior division cricket in Madras, there is no guarantee that players will stick to a club. Of course, there is nothing wrong in a sportsman converting his skill into money. It is only when the spiral goes out of reach that (to mix a couple of

metaphors) the bottom falls out of the market. With the start of the next season at least two months away, negotiations have already begun. Who will play for whom?

There is a move by Bharat Reddy, the force behind Chemplast cricket, to start a fund for promising young cricketers who may be economically backward. "We will pay for the education and nutrition of a couple of these boys. And if they progress as they should, we will take them on and pay according to our regular scales."

This has been a good season for Chemplast. It even won a tournament outside the state, the Arlem Trophy in Goa. Chemplast was the organisation which really introduced 'professionalism' (in the restricted sense of the word) into the city's cricket. Now it has the opportunity of being a pioneer again when it introduces this scheme for youth. That could have a greater impact on Madras cricket in the long run.

The leading breeders gift themselves President's limo

(By a Sports Correspondent)

On March 3rd, the country's leading breeders of racing stock added one more record to the many they've set in the last five years. The first three in the race were all bred at their stud farms. The next day, they celebrated by spending Rs. 31 lakhs on acquiring the President of India's one of a kind limousine!



Dr. Cyrus Poonawalla

Kasparov man to second Anand against Karpov

(By a Sports Correspondent)

India's and Asia's finest chess-player ever had a rather disappointing outing in the highest rated tournament in history. Starting brilliantly, he finished poorly, joint seventh with two others and with eight others finishing ahead of him in a field of 14 of the world's top-rated Grandmasters.

The Linnaires Class 17 tournament played in southern Spain included six of the quarter-finalists who will meet in August to determine who will challenge Armenian Garry Kasparov for the world title in 1992.

Anand, known as "The Lightning Kid" for his speed, used that asset well to draw with the World No. 1, Kasparov, and beat Anatoly Karpov, who has been World Champion for ten years and the Challenger for the last five years. But when it came to lesser players, Anand inexplicably stumbled.

Possibly his worst defeat was at the hands of the eventual champion, Vassily Ivanchuk. Anand had never before lost to this Russian 21-year-old, the only undefeated player at Linnaires. In fact, he had beaten him three times, including in the World Junior Championship which Anand won, and

drawn once. Ivanchuk, now rated World No. 3, must, on this form, be considered favourite to win the Challengers' Tournament.

Anand's second for the quarter-finals, it is understood, will be Grandmaster Mikhail Gurevich, a Russian who is planning to settle in Belgium. Anand had struck a fine rapport with Ferdinand Hellers of Sweden in the previous round, but felt he now needed a second who knew Anatoly Karpov's game better.

Gurevich happens to have been one of Garry Kasparov's seconds during the last title round. Like Kasparov he is anti-Establishment and there is no love lost between him and the Soviet Establishment's darling, Karpov. Anand hopes to begin his training for the quarter-final against the previous Challenger earlier than was first thought; while playing in Europe this month and next he is likely to start working out with Gurevich. Anand's new second tied with him at joint seventh in Linnaires. He was also one of those who beat Anand in that tournament. Which should only make their training sessions that much more competitive!

The victory of Delage in the Turf Invitation Cup at Guindy gave Zavary Poonawalla not only a half-share in the winner, but it enabled the Poonawalla studs to add this win to the five they claimed credit for amongst the year's six major Derbies.

With this win, the Poonawalla brothers also kept extending their record of Classics winners sired at their Poona Stud Farm or at its two subsidiaries. That record now stands at 106 Classics victories. Delage itself has contributed four of them in this past year. The small-made gelding also made it three-in-a-row for the Poonawalla clan in their role as owners of Invitation Cup winners.

While Delage raced in the name of Vijay Mallya and the brother who tends the studs with rare patience and understanding, the six-door Mercedes-Benz Sedan P-600 (Pullman) was undoubtedly the sole choice of elder brother Dr Cyrus Poonawalla, the business brains of the Poonawalla vaccine, engineering, export and horse-breeding empire. The Rolls Royce-owning Cyrus loves fancy cars and has a magnificent collection of them in his home in Pune.

The white Benz, with hardly 25,000 kilometres on it, will undoubtedly now be the cynosure of that collection. The *Rashtrapathi Bhavan* limousine, which had carried many Heads of State on the short drives of formal occasions, has been maintained so well that it is almost in mint condition, but it went under the auctioneer's hammer in Delhi as part of President Venkataraman's fuel-saving austerity drive. Dr. Cyrus, riding on a high, was not one to let that opportunity pass.

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