

WE CARE FOR MADRAS

MADRAS

MUSINGS

METAL CUTTING TOOLS

U-RENT

REAL ESTATE DIVISION  
helps you buy and sell your property in a profitable manner  
Call: 414222 / 411838  
36, 11 Main Road,  
Gandhi Nagar, Adyar,  
Madras - 600 020.  
also manage the properties of absentee landlords.

IV. No. 15

Nov. 16 — 30, 1994

Rs. 3 only

Sulabh to go to schools

And also generate biogas in the City

(By Lakshmi Nagappan)

Sulabh International, the volunteer organisation whose work on providing public toilet complexes and low cost sanitation alternatives featured in MM February 1, 1993,

is now working on improving school sanitation in Madras and on producing biogas from human waste.

T S Kannan, a former Chief Engineer with the TWAD Board and now adviser to Sulabh, explains that it is futile tutoring children in health education when basic amenities such as toilets are not available in some schools. Sulabh intends to put in place toilets that are tailor-made to conform with the demands of each school. The concept is in the blueprint stage, but Sulabh hopes to get started on this shortly in Madras.

Meanwhile, the Corporation is now thinking of handing over 125 more of its toilets to Sulabh in a 'phased programme', according to Surendhra Jha, Vice-Chairman, Sulabh International. Sulabh already maintains 49 pay-and-use public toilets it has built in Madras and looks after 63 public toilets entrusted to it by the Corporation.

The proposed biogas plants are to be located near many of the Sulabh-maintained toilets which are in more spacious surroundings and where the number of users of the toilet is guaranteed to be over 1500 a day (as in railway stations, markets etc.). The

two products to be obtained from the plants will be biogas and digested slurry. The latter makes good quality manure. The biogas can be used in many ways.

Assuming that a thousand persons use a toilet complex every day, the gas produced from the waste can be utilised for one of the following options:-

- To fuel an 8 cft. biogas burner that will enable a regular warm water supply at the toilet complex for bathing.
- To generate gas to be supplied through pipes to the kitchens of neighbourhood residents.
- To run the water pump at the toilet complex. One water pump of 5 BHP can function for 12 hours on the fuel produced daily.
- To help operate a dual fuel genset of 3.5 KVA capacity combined with a 6.5 BHP engine. In 11 hours of operation it will generate 31 units of power, which means 70 tube lights can be used with the power within half a kilometre of the plant.

Sixtyone biogas plants have already been set up by Sulabh elsewhere in the country, but the idea is still in the formulation stage in Madras. The cost of the biogas plants in Madras will be met by the Corporation, with a sizeable subsidy from the Central Government.

Sulabh has built over 12,000 low-cost household latrines in Tamil Nadu since 1989. This work has been carried out in association with the Directorate of Town Panchayats, the Directorate of Municipal Administration, the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation and Associated Cement Companies Ltd. Other government and non-government organisations have also assembled such latrines.

Since 1990, 28 low-cost household latrines in the city are being closely monitored to evaluate their effectiveness. It has been found that the pour flush water seal latrine with twin leach pits is most suited to Madras. These units are to be found in the highly congested slum areas of North Madras, like Vyasarpadi, as well as in Thirumangalam and Ezhil Nagar.

These latrines require just 10x15 feet space and are, therefore, a workable proposition in congested areas. A minimal amount of care is needed. The waste collected in the

(Continued on P6)

ANAALI RAMAN...



Looks like the city's man-holes are clogged... What to do you think?

MAD, MAD MADRAS



No bathrooms for your house.  
Only

GLAMOURROOMS

by Parryware

976

URBAN DESIGN OPEN COMPETITION

CONSERVATION AND RE-DEVELOPMENT OF MAHATMA JYOTIBA PHULE MARKET (SIR ARTHUR CRAWFORD MARKET) BOMBAY

ORGANISERS:

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER BOMBAY

JURY:

AR. CHARLES CORREA, AR. BALKRISHNA DOSHI, AR. ANANT RAJE, SHRI SHARAD KALE, Municipal Commissioner, MCGB, SHRI JAMSHEED KANGA, Chairman Urban Heritage Committee

PRIZES

Sponsored by Tata Housing Dev. Co. Limited, Bombay

First Prize Rs. 2,00,000/-, Second Prize Rs. 1,00,000/-, Third Prize Rs. 50,000/-, Honorable Mentions Rs. 25,000/-

Architects, urban designers and planners registered with the Council of Architecture are invited to participate in the Competition.

Registration fee Rs. 1000/- (non-refundable) Last date of registration October 20th, 1994.

Registration please send a written application along with copy of the plan and a Demand Draft for Rs. 1000/- in favour of the Corporation.

The way to preserve heritage

This is the key portion of an advertisement that appeared in a Madras daily recently. The Urban Design Open Competition is for the Conservation and Re-development (emphasis ours) of the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Market, Bombay's famed Sir Arthur Crawford Market. Note that the competition is NOT to replace the market but, as we see it, to conserve its building and redevelop both building and market. Bombay is tackling several Heritage Buildings in this way. This is what should have been done in Madras, too, in the case of the Director General of Police's office. It is still not too late to do so. Must we continue to lag behind Bombay and Calcutta in conservation and re-development (about which we propose to have several features in the coming issues) when we could so easily have shown the way, having founded Aside and EPOCH in the 70s with a conservation and heritage orientation long before other publications and movements in other cities in India?

— THE EDITOR

This American Center Library

It has got the largest circulation anywhere

(By A Staff Reporter)

Now open again, after refurbishing that's given it a more spacious but also a more businesslike look, is the American Center Library on Anna Salai, the USIS library with the largest 'circulation' of books in the world. It is also the USIS library that answers the largest number of reference queries from the public every year.

Stocked with over 20,000 books and nearly 200 journals, it has a book withdrawal turnover of 120,000 a year and offers answers to over 26,000 reference queries annually — both records for United States Information Service libraries/information centres worldwide. Over 250,000 visits are paid to it in a year by its 10,000 members and others. This too is a USIS

world record, says Mrs Miriam E Guichard, the Director of USIS in South India.

As part of the refurbishing exercise, the library now offers CD-ROM, OPAC (which links the five American libraries in India on-line and which is expected to spread its links further) and computerised facilities speeding up issue, according to Mrs. Indira Soman, the Director of the Library. It also offers microfilm facilities for members, and four major US dailies.

The Library has certainly come a long way from the small USIS library that opened in 1947 in rented premises on Mount Road, not far from where the British Council Library now is.



• A Nov. 17th anniversary feature

# The day Anna was arrested

(By A Staff Writer)

The anti-Hindi agitation that Chief Election Commissioner Seshan recently described, rather unfortunately, as being CIA-inspired, was scheduled to begin on November 17, 1963. The man whom Seshan implies was the unwitting tool of American manipulation aimed at destabilising India, the founder of the Dravidian political movement, C N Annadurai, was, on that day, to go to the Marina with four others and burn in public Part XVII of the Constitution (Articles 343-351, relating to the official language). The agitation was to continue thereafter till year-end, with DMK cadres burning Part XVII and picketing Central Government offices and institutions in towns throughout the States.

This DMK response was to a Bill introduced in Parliament on April 13, 1965, that went against Pandit Nehru's assurance that English would be the official language in India as long as the non-Hindi speaking people wanted it. This was an assurance given despite the Constitution stating that Hindi would become the official language of India from January 26, 1965. It was as a prelude to this Constitutional resolve that the Bill introduced by Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Home Minister, provided for the use of English along with Hindi.

Describing the Bill as intending to "impose Hindi" on the Tamil-speaking people, Annadurai contended that the Bill made the use of English only obligatory, NOT mandatory. He told a public meeting that the Tamils "would be reduced to third-rate citizens" and would become "slaves" of the North. He felt that Hindi alone could not be the official language, but that all 14 languages listed as India's major languages should be considered official languages.

The DMK general council and executive committee met shortly after this speech in June and decided on agitational measures. It was decided that Annadurai would start the agitation movement on November 17th. But, on the night before, he and other DMK leaders were arrested. When the matter was raised in the legislature a few days later, Chief Minister Bhaktavatsalam stated it was a routine Police matter and did not warrant discussion in the House. The Speaker then refused permission for the issue to be discussed.

In the months that followed, Annadurai and the other DMK leaders arrested were sentenced to six months' R.L., even as their followers continued to picket Central Government offices in the state and burn Part XVII of the Constitution. The agitation continued throughout 1964 and as Republic Day 1965, the day when Hindi was to become the official language, approached, tension began to build up despite Annadurai making it clear the struggle was against Hindi imposition and NOT against the Centre: "Long live the Republic, down with Hindi," was the slogan he offered the protesters.

But over 18 months of build-up had fired the masses. It was inevitable that the 'Black Day' the DMK had declared would reach an emotional high — even though, on the night of January 25th, Annadurai and other DMK leaders had been arrested. What followed was tragedy. There were several self-immolations, setting a trend that has continued to this day. Then

the students and the teachers came out in protest. The Chief Minister refused to meet their leaders and, when they refused to disperse, the police swung into action. Violence followed — despite all Annadurai's appeals. The movement had passed out of the DMK's hands. In the end, the official death toll, after several days of violence and police action, was 79. Unofficial figures put it as much higher.

Tamil Nadu Ministers C Subramaniam and O V Alagesan resigned from the Congress Government in protest. Rajaji appealed for peace and stated that the action of the two Ministers would have adequately conveyed the feelings of the State to the Centre. Annadurai issued another appeal asking the students to leave the issue to the political leadership. And, slowly, the fires burned down. But the constitutional guarantee on the non-imposition of Hindi did not materialise. The agitation, however, had served as a strong warning: What remains on the statute books cannot always be implemented without the people's acquiescence.

The anti-Hindi movement also consolidated the position of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam as a formidable political force. A people disillusioned with the Bhaktavatsalam Government for the food shortages they had to face only wanted an option when the 1967 elections came along. And the DMK, with its sterling role in the anti-Hindi agitation, provided it. The Dravidian movement, with its Tamil identity, has not looked back since, just as Congress in Tamil Nadu has found it impossible to wear the mantle of that identity.



The OLD and the NEW are a bit different this fortnight. A few weeks ago, V S RAGHAVAN noted the OLD on Anna Salai, in the Thousand Lights area. Wondering what Sri Ramalinga Vilas could possibly do with CHINESE take-away, or even with those Calcutta specialties, Katti Rolls and Katti Kababs, photographed our OLD for his collection of curiosities. He then went off to trek in Himachal Himalaya and returned only last week. Imagine his surprise to find that in less than a month of the Ramalinga Vilas sign going up, there had been a decision to change the image of the restaurant! Now it was the Comat (whatever that is!) Restaurant and only an annexe of Sri Ramlingm (sic). But the fare offered continued to provide the same surprises as before — only more so with Indian Tandoor added. Where, wondered Raghavan, did the restaurant's chefs, who all seem to be from the deepest South, catch up with Chinese, Calcutta and Northern cuisines?



# Telephone faults?

In Madras, telephones becoming dead, due to cables failing at the monsoon shower, is a yearly occurrence. The weather pundits have predicted a bumper monsoon for Madras this year. That means more dead telephones and, consequently,

more frayed nerves. And angry telephone-users will blame telephone engineers for their slackness in carrying out maintenance.

Few realise that these failures are not the fault of the engineers, on whom the blame inevitably falls.

## Don't blame the Monsoon — or the Department

The underground cable (UGC) is an ingenious product of modern engineering technology. It is rugged and can stand up to every vagary of the soil. It can be soaked in boggy slush for months during monsoons or roasted in hot earth during the scorching summer without any ill-effect. It is impervious to the onslaughts of rodents and white ants. When once laid, it can be forgotten, as it can give years and years of good service, showing signs of old age only after about 50 or 60 years. A cable is replaced not because it has become old, but because the demand has outstripped its capacity and a higher capacity cable is called for.

In fact, a cable will do its duty as long as an earth-digger's crowbar or pickaxe does not puncture it. And even if that happens and the cable is damaged, it will give good service — until the first rain of the season seeps through to interfere with the normal flow of current in it. Hence the usual spate of cable failures with the first onset of monsoon rain.

It is generally assumed that cables are damaged by road-diggers from other departments. This is not so. Such 'professionals' know the importance of cables and treat them with respect. Before commencing digging operations, the cable department is informed and it sends one of its men to see that the cable is not affected. If any damage is made in spite of it, it is purely inadvertent. But, then, who are the culprits?

The culprits are the political party workers who dig the roads haphazardly to erect cutouts, lights, loudspeakers and the like. When they come across a cable while digging, they treat it as a nuisance and push it aside or smash it out of their way. A long stretch along a highway may, thus, get damaged overnight. Isolated damage can be quickly repaired, but gashes at close intervals on a long stretch entail the replacement of a considerable length of cable which, necessarily, delays the repair work.

While laying a cable, due precautions are taken to prevent diggers piercing the cable. Flat cement slabs, about 50 x 25 cm size, are placed over the cable through its length. This will deflect the digger's tool, cautioning him that he is approaching a cable. But in many stretches these slabs are found missing. Where do they go? The answer is not far to seek. As soon as the department unloads and stacks a consignment of these slabs by the roadside, groups of slum-dwellers descend at night and take away most of them for use as floor slabs, washing stones etc in their homes. Even if the slabs have been placed in position and the trench closed, the earth is dug out, the slabs removed and the trench covered again by these vandals at night, without anyone being any the wiser about what has happened. But even if department personnel know what has

happened, no one dare ask the slum-dwellers.

Since such losses could not be contained effectively, the department switched to the use of bricks, even though bricks do not perform the job as efficiently as cement slabs. But it was felt that some action was better than no action. It was, however, soon found that even bricks were not left alone. A cable supervisor recently told me this story:

A cable was laid and a workman was deputed to close the trench with bricks. As he was doing so, he noticed two toughs behind him, collecting the newly laid bricks in a gunny bag. Not wishing to confront them alone, he ran

and informed the supervisor who was not far away. When the supervisor came up and asked the brick-lifters what they were upto, one of them replied that they were collecting the bricks not for themselves but to build a pavement shrine for Lord Ganesha. The supervisor pointed out that, however laudable their purpose, they should buy the materials and not pilfer them. To which one of the ruffians responded, "Nee ulunga oodu poi seranumana ithellam kandukkadhay, vadhyaire!" (If you want to reach home safely, do not take notice of these things, Master!) The supervisor thought discretion was the better part of valour and ordered the trench to be closed without the benefit of the bricks!

Do you wonder at the state of our telephone system!

— M SETHURAMAN

## THE (TAMIL NADU) HIT PARADE



EDITOR'S NOTE: This and the next two profiles in this series are of persons who have roots in Madras/Tamil Nadu and have continued to maintain close connections with the City/State.

## Banking Guru

What's a shuddh Brahmin with spiritual leanings doing as the chief of India's foremost development bank? Not just managing well but being path-breaking too. Under Narayanan Vaghul's stewardship these last nine years, the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India has undergone a significant transformation. It has expanded its own definition from a development institution to a financial conglomerate, thanks largely to Vaghul's visionary thinking. Institutions like the Shipping Credit and Investment Company of India, the credit rating agency CRISIL, and the Over-The-Counter Exchange of India owe their existence to ICICI and, therefore, to Vaghul since they are all creations of his time.

Vaghul is not your typical career banker, though his professional life began on a conventional note in the public sector State Bank of India in Madras. He was a star performer from the start and distinctions began to come his way. At forty-four, he became the Bank of India's youngest chairman ever. But the power that goes with position has never quite swayed him. He was literally bulldozed into his present job; twice he left banking to pursue his interest in teaching.

Through it all, Vaghul's personal integrity has never been questioned. He is approachable, disarming and a man of conservative habits; he is an early sleeper and begins his day at 4.30 a.m. May be that's what has always given him a head start.

(Sketch by DHIR, text by NAAZHEEN KARMALI — From: THE HIT PARADE — Symbols of Indian Industry, Published by Banyan Books, New Delhi.)

K. Gopalakrishna



# Car Finance

— Driven by profits

In a city characterised by tame and, if I might say so, pachydermatous organisations, it is rather refreshing to see at least one segment emerging on a consumer-powered turf. From the days when a buyer waited endlessly in queues for a car to those wherein deliveries occur in 24 hours, from paying arbitrary interest rates to cash-rich individuals to witnessing organised, professionally-managed companies, from daunting documentation procedures to personalised and quick service, car finance has undergone a sea change. So much so that the business has seen a 30-35 per cent growth during the current year and nearly 65 per cent of the cars produced in the country are handled by car finance companies.

Auto finance was initiated by foreign banks and it has caught on among the NBFCs and public banks. While banks have the maximum advantage in offering hire purchase finance, the cumbersome process has left them lagging far behind the private sector.

The large number of companies and their extensive operation in this field throw up mind-boggling disbursement figures. The financier, who has snatched the limelight from the dealer, usually offers two schemes: 25 per cent down payment and the balance in 12 to 18 Equated Monthly Instalments

(EMI), or financing the entire price, with the borrowed depositing with the company 25 per cent of the car's cost (refundable after the expiry of the loan, with 14.5 per cent interest). Most pleasantly, the EMI, which was earlier calculated on the original loan amount (no matter the extent of principal repaid) is calculated on decreasing balances. The interest, normally at around 25 per cent, takes into account the cost of money, administrative expenses and a profit margin.

Currently, Citibank, Kotak Mahindra, Apple Credit Corporation and 20th Century have taken the top slots, in Madras. Thanks to a shift in focus from a few large corporate clients to many small individuals, the industry can boast a low delinquency ratio. The attractive recovery rate has drawn in companies like Alpico Finance (a sister concern of Cipla and, initially, engaged in bills discounting) and Apple (initially into computers), which were hitherto in totally unrelated terrains. A spread of 4-7 per cent compared to 2-3 per cent in other avenues, like bills discounting, render the business even more lucrative, often forcing dealers to don the mantle of financiers.

Dealers also have tie-ups with finance companies. Maruti, which has virtually divided the market into the Maruti and the non-Maruti segment, is planning to float a financing subsidiary,

following the Tatas, Hindujas and Bajajs.

The auto industry has come out of recession. Given the frenetic pace and the expansion and modernisation plans chalked out by our automobile majors, car finance is in for intense competition and price wars. To gear up to the challenge, some have taken to branching out and still others (like SRF Finance and Citibank) to financing second-hand cars. With each company in the business chalking up Rs. 20-30 cr turnovers and anticipating an increase in disbursements by 50 per cent, with more cars like Daewoo, Volkswagen and Peugeot being wheeled into India and with the RBI freeing-lending rates, the car finance business is on the high road to a boom. In the light of this, SRF, 20th Century Finance, Apple Credit and Sundaram Finance are all good buys. So are these:

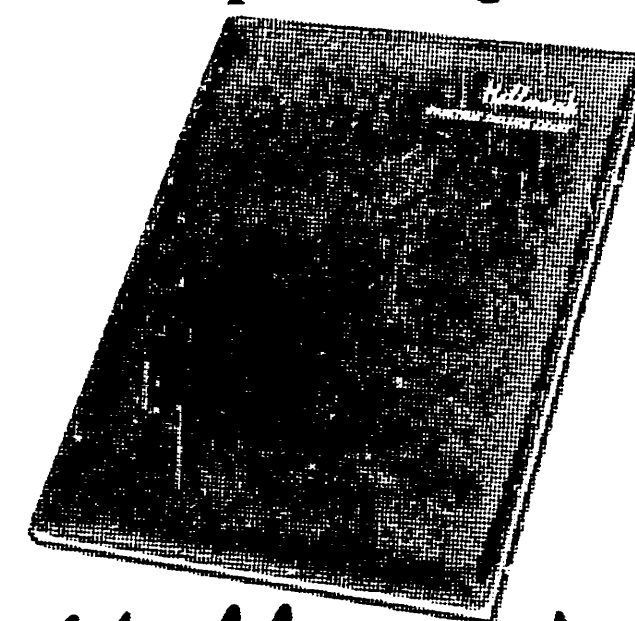
**SRF Finance** (CMR: Rs. 104.00): Backed by the SRF Group, SRF's operations include lease and hire purchase, trade financing, investment banking, money market operations and equity research and trading. SRF Finance is a sponsor member of the OTCEI and a major player in the wholesale debt market. SRF Invest Care, promoted by it, is in stockbroking and a member of the NSE. Plans are on to launch a Mutual Fund this year. We estimate an income of Rs. 65 cr and PAT of Rs. 15 cr for 1994-95, yielding an EPS of Rs. 10.75 and supporting Rs. 160. Share prices, after

moving sideways, have broken out upward. Buy with a stop loss at Rs. 90.

**Shree Cements** (CMP: Rs. 90.00): This flagship company of the Bangor group has shown excellent results for the first half of the current financial year. Sales and profit spurred by 13.4% and 183% against the previous year's figures. The growing demand for cement has emboldened the company to chalk out a Rs. 700 cr expansion plan, the first phase of which, to increase the capacity by a million tonnes is already underway. For 1994-95, the projected turnover and PAT are Rs. 200 and Rs. 18 cr respectively. The EPS is Rs. 7.80 on the present equity which supports a price of Rs. 120 for March 1995.

**I G Petrochemicals** (CMP: Rs. 95.00): Promoted by Mysore Petrochemicals, this 100% EOU, and the largest producer of phthalic anhydride, announced excellent results for September 1994. Turnover rose by 35% on an annualised basis to Rs. 75.80 cr and PAT by 933% to Rs. 18.49 cr. The EPS is attractive at Rs. 7.04 on the equity enhanced to Rs. 26.28 cr by the placement of equity shares. The company exports to Korea, China, Taiwan and other Far East countries. The prices of phthalic anhydride have gone up in the international market and it plans to double its capacity. We estimate a turnover of Rs. 115 cr and PAT of Rs. 28.25 cr which yields an EPS of Rs. 10.75 and supports Rs. 160 for September 1995. A good buy at current levels.

## The Hallmark of an Uncompromising Identity



# Hallmark

DIARIES

Experience the pride of possessing a Hallmark Diary. Or gift one and be remembered day after day, for your thoughtful selection. Hallmark Diaries have been meticulously designed with fine quality papers, soft leather covering, rich and elegant colours, sturdy binding and a compelling identity that speaks volumes about its owner.

Set aside the ordinary. And reach over for a Hallmark.

HALLMARK PRINTERS PVT. LTD.

4, Nehru Nagar, Perungudi, Madras 600 096 Ph: 4926235 / 4926698

Admn. Office:

62/63, Greams Road, Madras 600 006 Ph: 8278153 / 8277945 Fax: 044-8271332

Anugrah 17/01/84



# The little mermaid is country's best



Nisha Millet

As the swimmers in their colourful costumes walk to their respective positions at the head of the pool for the next race, the nervousness and tension are palpable. But one girl calmly looks away from the blue waters and gazes intently at her father. Their eyes meet and the girl gets the message. Her eyes close for a moment and she seems to meditate on a particular thought. Then, with renewed vigour, she plunges headlong into the pool and, within 30 seconds, Nisha Millet has created yet another wave in aquatic history!

"I am going to beat everybody and nobody is going to beat me!" she exclaims in a quiet, modest tone. These are her last thoughts before every race and they are what instil in her the confidence and determination to set records in the swimming pool.

"She's had this spirit of determination ever since she was a kid,"

relates Aubrey Millet, Nisha's father. "She learnt to cycle on her own and would fall several times, but she never cried once in spite of the bruising she got." It is this spirit of undaunted fight to the finish that made Nisha 'India's Fastest Swimmer' at the age of 12, three years after she made her maiden dip. But Tamil Nadu's youngest aquatic champion confesses, "I used to hate swimming as a beginner. In fact, I even stopped my classes". But today, Nisha reigns supreme, with more than 15 records to her name, a collection of 132 medals and 16 trophies at home and, now, recognition as India's Champion Woman Swimmer.

Nisha attributes her success to her father, who has been her source of motivation. Before a race begins, father and daughter can be seen in a corner, the former boosting the morale of the latter, apart from giving her technical guidance. "He teaches me how to swim a race and points out my strengths and weaknesses," says Nisha. While mother Sheila's encouraging words echo down the pool, father Aubrey has the stopwatch in his hand. "I would rather forget to leave my wife behind than leave the stopwatch!" laughs Aubrey, who, unlike other parents, does not bother with carrying video cameras for championships. What the stopwatch reveals about every lap goes into his notebook and new targets are set for every lap next time out.

But for all her parents' support and advice, it is Nisha's intelligent approach to the sport and her ability to plan her race that makes her score over her rivals. Apart from her sense of strategy, she also has excellent judgement of 'pacing' and an inbuilt stopwatch. "She understands perfectly what is meant by the term 'pacing'," explains Aubrey Millet. "Suppose a coach tells her that she must do three laps in 29 seconds, she will take only 29 seconds — not a fraction more, not a fraction less."

Nisha's course of victory did not begin smoothly. In her debut at the South Zone meet, in Bangalore in January 1992, she emerged from the pool with tears in her eyes, after being declared silver medallist. The foul start by the winner had gone unnoticed. "I cried, but I decided that I'd beat her next time!" Nisha remembers. And there she was at the National Championship in July 1992, the individual champion. The reign of the girl from Madras had begun!

In 1993, Nisha earned the unique distinction of being the only Indian girl to be selected for three events at the Asia-Pacific meet held in Hong Kong — 50 metres free-style, 50 metres

by N. LAKSHMI

backstroke and 100 metres freestyle. And she returned home with a silver and a bronze, the first and youngest swimmer from Tamil Nadu to bag medals abroad. And earned despite a sprained ankle which had not yet fully healed when she flew into Hong Kong.

At the National Open Championships held in Goa in August this year, Nisha made a clean sweep of all the freestyle events - 50, 100, 200, 400 and 800 metres. With five golds, a silver in the 400 metres individual medley, a bronze in the 200 metres individual medley, and a silver in the 400 metres relay event, it was no wonder that she was the National Champion, the youngest ever. "What was really special about this meet was that Nisha could not actually participate, as she is below 15," says Nisha's mother. But that is the stuff that champions are made of!

However, this success story is also a saga of sacrifices. No time to skip

around with neighbourhood kids or attend birthday parties. But that is not all. "No ice creams and chocolates," grumbles Nisha with a wistful smile. Except for those triumphant moments, when she enjoys a delicious top of ice cream, Nisha has to abstain from them. But there are dry fruits and nuts and drier diets like porridges, pulses and pasta to make up for those delicacies. Sheila, who is in charge of the diet department, feels that it is Nisha's diet that goes a long way in keeping her fit. And the girl whose target is to participate in the Olympic Games in 1996, willingly makes all these sacrifices to that end.

Nisha's favourite pastimes are to watch basketball on TV, listen to music — and study. "I do not know from whom she inherited that particular interest — she simply loves to study, especially Geography," laughs Aubrey. And the 12-year-old takes all her books along during her tours and studies amidst championships!

Back at school, she is completely at home in her VIII Standard classroom at Church Park, signing autographs and being a 'model' friend of all. "I like the fuss. It's fun," she grins sheepishly, enjoying the headlines she creates in the papers.

Meanwhile, there's competition slowly developing around the corner. From a nine-year-old girl called Reshma Millet. As you watch the sisters gracefully cleaving the waters at the Shenoy Nagar Pool with their powerful strokes, it ceases to be a wonder when Sheila Millet murmurs, "This water is their natural home!" Meanwhile, for the little mermaid, her song of triumph continues ...

## Test in search of a sponsor

While the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association is raking in lakhs, it doesn't, at the time of writing, appear to have spared a thought to the plea of the Tamil Nadu Women's Cricket Association (TNWCA). With hardly two weeks to go for the first Test between the touring Australian team and India at Chepauk, the TNWCA has been receiving funds only in trickles. Till date (8/11), the major donors have been the Indian Bank and India Cements who have donated Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 20,000 respectively.

Banking heavily on the corporate sector to sponsor the match, which, all probability, will be covered by Doordharshan, the Association has priced the tickets very low to attract a large crowd and do the Australian and Indian cricketers proud. Says Mrs S. Ranganathan, President, TNWCA, "The budgeted expenditure is Rs. 10 lakhs and whatever funds we have mobilised till now is solely due to our personal equations with donors. Wonders a cricketer, Sumathi Iyer. "While local companies compete with each other to sponsor boys' under-12, -14 and -19 matches, why don't they sponsor a women's cricket match?"

The TNWCA hopes to get the sports-loving Chief Minister to grace the first day's play at Chepauk. They also look forward to Government declaring a holiday for the city schools and women's colleges on that day. But apart from the unwillingness of sponsors to come forward, what baffles the TNWCA is the silence of the State Government on the question of providing a grant, which it had provided all these years.

### Cola battle?

With the five one-day matches to be played by the Australian women cricketers being sponsored by Pepsi Cola, the TNWCA has written in hope to the Coke bottlers in Madras to sponsor the Test match. And if that comes through, there'll be not only a royal battle of bat and ball at Chepauk but also one of bottles — as Pepsi are providing 35 crates of soft drinks to the teams at every Test match.

V. Jagannathan

## A touch of failure

Nisha has had her share of failure too. Her age and inexperience has let her down on several occasions. While the Indian star from Madras won a bronze at her first ever international meet in Hong Kong in 1993, this year's Asia-Pacific meet held in Delhi proved a disaster, Nisha earning not even a single medal.

"Nisha was in the lower end of her age group — 12-13 years — this year, and while this did not prove to be a handicap for her in beating Indian swimmers she could not get the better of her international opponents," says Sheila Millet. "Although the press rated her chances very high, we did not think much of them because the Chinese girls are very talented. In fact, the Chinese of her age group are among the top ranked swimmers in their country and close to world standard," adds Aubrey Millet. Nevertheless, Nisha is not disappointed with her performance — "there's always next year", she adds optimistically, her eyes gleaming towards that distant goal, the Olympics!

N.L.

## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

- Professor P.K. Ponnuswamy;
- Gamini Dissanayake;
- Sardar Swaran Singh;
- Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute;
- Cedric D'Souza;
- Pasumpoti Muthuramalinga Thevar;
- Dilip Vengsarkar;
- The SEA-ME-WE-2 connecting Singapore and Marseilles;
- Rs. 4,50,000 (Parliamentary constituency) and Rs. 1,50,000 (Assembly constituency);
- At Bangda on the 'Roof of the World', Tibet;
- Handel Manuel;
- Manoj Prabhakar and Nayan Mongia;
- It was 'grounded' by the shore at Tiruvotriyur during the cyclone of October 30th;
- Justice Aziz M. Ahmad;
- The reason 'account closed' given by a bank while dishonouring a cheque can be used for launching a criminal prosecution against the drawer of the cheque;
- Bedtime Stories;
- The Guindy National Park;
- Tamil Nadu (about 1.62 million people may be affected);
- Kalyan Singh, BJP leader and former CM of Uttar Pradesh;
- The eminent parliamentarian and scholar, 90-year-old Bishamber Pande.

## Prize ousts tradition

Rains which recently lashed Madras delayed the October 30th start of the 1994-95 Guindy racing season by forcing the postponement of the first two meetings.

Postponement of the opening fixtures because of rain is nothing new. All the November meetings of the 1960-61 season, for instance, were washed out by rain, and the season started as late as December 4th. But this year was the first time an opening fixture was TWICE postponed.

The postponement came in the wake of the welcome return of the pre-season Press briefing, which had been buried fathoms deep for the last few seasons. It was revived by Dharma Ebenezer, Secretary, Department of Racing (DOR), Government of Tamil Nadu. He thus earned the gratitude of turf writers, who had for long been kept in the dark about what the season had in store for the racing fraternity.

The briefing left hardly any doubt that the new season would go more or less on the same lines as those of the last two decades, with Robert Foley's stable, in charge of M.A.M.

Ramaswamy's ever-growing establishment, dominating it and even bettering its last-season world record of a century of winners. It may even better its winnings record as well, for sponsorship has enriched Guindy racing as never before.

Because of the world of uncertainty in which the Tamil Nadu Turf has for long lived, lack of sponsorship had left Guindy way behind the other centres. The ITC-sponsored S.I. Derby was the lone sponsored race until last season, when *The Hindu*, whose proprietors have for long been associated with the Madras turf, stepped in to sponsor one of the other Classics. The popular daily proved to be a veritable trendsetter, for all the Classics of the new season, barring the Oaks, have been sponsored. According to Dharma Ebenezer, the Oaks to be run on January 7th, could also find sponsor by then.

The sponsors are *The Hindu* (1000 Guineas), Sans Craines (2000 Guineas), ITC (Derby Stakes) and Chettinad Cement (St Leger). But pride of place among the sponsors goes to the U.B. Group of Bangalore, who

have sponsored a new race called the McDowell Million, a terms event for three-year-olds, to be run over 1,400 metres on Saturday, January 14th. It has an added money of Rs. 9,50,000 as against the Rs. 5,00,000 of the Derby, hitherto the Madras turf's richest prize.

The premier classic of the Southern India turf, the S.I. Derby, launched on Pongal Day, January 14, 1959, has thus lost some of its status. This is not the lone setback it has had. Hitherto run on Pongal Day, it is this season being run a day after the festival day, which has, oddly enough, been allotted to the McDowell Million, obviously because it is the season's richest prize. The DOR obviously does not believe in maintaining a tradition.

AJAX

## MORE SPORT ON PAGE 7

## NEW ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Display Advertising (Column Width - 4.25 cms)  
Corporate - Rs. 80/col. cm.  
Retail outlets - Rs. 60/col. cm.

Classified (Smalls) Rs. 40 for every four lines or part thereof for one issue OR Rs. 100 for every four lines or part thereof for three issues.

Display Smalls 4 cms x 1 column.  
Text only, Rs. 200 for one issue OR Rs. 500 for three issues.

All cheques to be made out to:  
M/s. Lokavani-Hall Mark Press Pvt. Ltd.