

*National Award for
Madhuras Narayanan Centre*

Chemplast Sanmar Ltd

Cabot Sanmar Ltd

Sanmar Speciality Chemicals Ltd

Bangalore Genei Ltd

Intec Polymers Ltd

Sanmar Shipping Ltd

Sanmar Holdings Ltd

AMP Sanmar Life Insurance Company Ltd

Sanmar Engineering Corporation Ltd

Asco (India) Ltd

BS&B Safety Systems (India) Ltd

Fisher Sanmar Ltd

Flowserve Sanmar Ltd

FMC Technologies Sanmar

Sanmar Engineering Services Ltd

Sanmar Foundries Ltd

Sanmar Weighing Systems Ltd

Sensortronics Sanmar Ltd

Tyco Sanmar Ltd

Xomox Sanmar Ltd



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Cover photograph: President of India A P J Abdul Kalam honours Madhuram Narayanan Centre Director Air Vice Marshal V Krishnaswamy (Retd.), with the National Award of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 3rd December 2004. Looking on is Mrs Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment.

Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

MNC wins National Award

The Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children (MNC) was presented the National Award of the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment by the President of India on 3rd December 2004, at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. The award was presented in public recognition of its outstanding performance in the field of

welfare of persons with disabilities. Air Vice Marshal V Krishnaswamy (Retd.) received the award on behalf of the Centre.

Regional Seminar, Dhaka

Jaya Krishnaswamy, Programme Co-ordinator, Madhuram Narayanan Centre and Prof P Jeyachandran, Director, Vijay Human Services and Advisor to the Centre, attended the Second Regional Seminar on Childhood Disability in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 3-6 December 2004. They presented papers on early intervention and related topics and chaired concurrent sessions.

International Conference

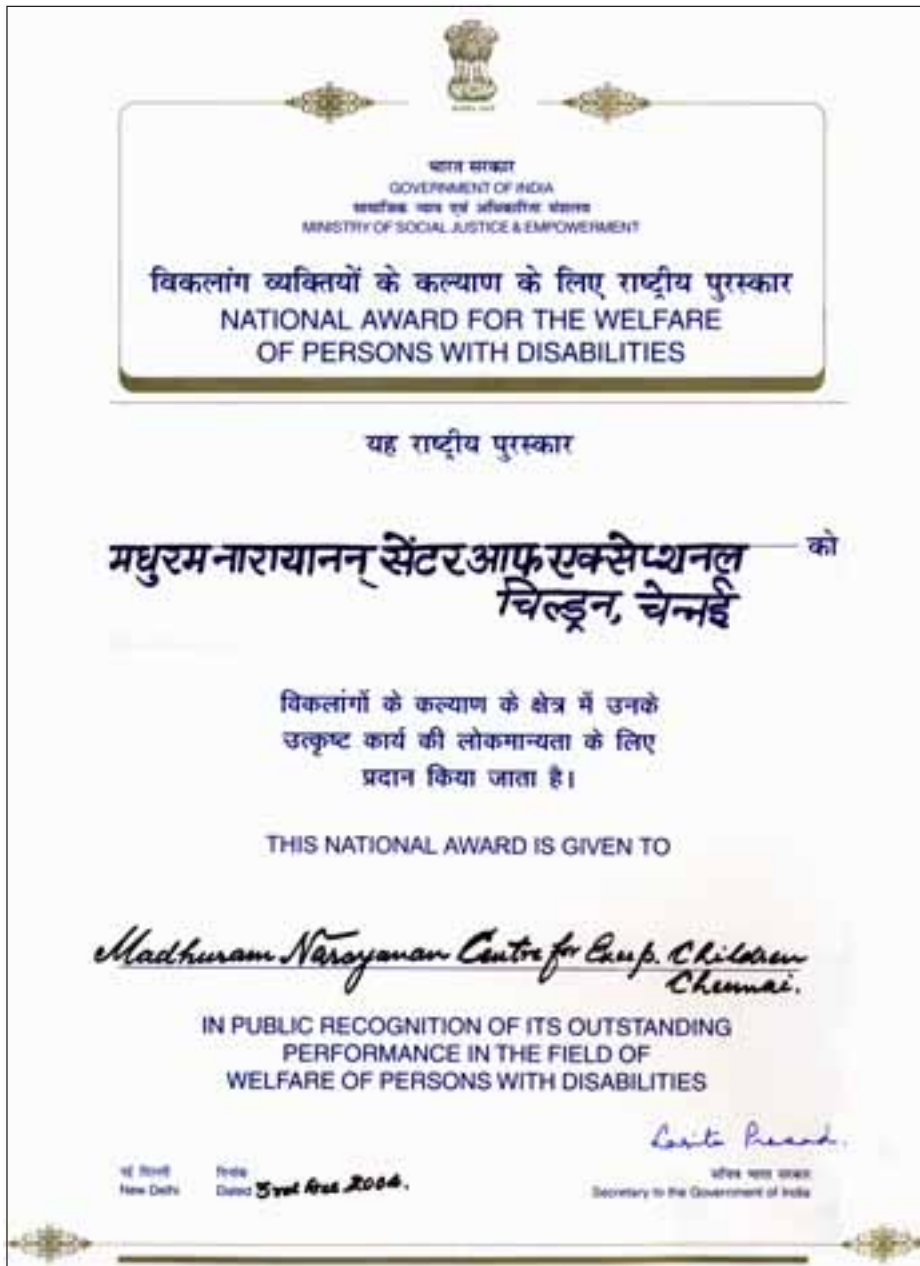
The Madhuram Narayanan Centre held a two day International Conference on Early Intervention in Mental Retardation on December 10 and 11, 2004, at Chennai.

The conference was preceded by two days of four half-day workshops conducted for professionals and the parents. Over 200 delegates and 90 professionals participated.

15th Anniversary

“A Day in Our Lives”, a theatre workshop designed by Koothu-p-Pattarai Trust and performed by 120 parents, children and teachers was the highlight of the 15th Anniversary of the Madhuram Narayanan Centre celebrated at Bala Mandir German Hall on 12 December 2004. Dr George S Baroff, former Professor of Psychology, University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, USA, an internationally renowned authority on Mental Retardation, was the Chief Guest. K S Narayanan, Chairman Emeritus, the Sanmar Group, presided over the function.

(Pictures on page 6)



"Sanmar's contribution is unique"

Excerpts from an interview with Air Vice Marshal V Krishnaswamy (Retd.) and Jaya Krishnaswamy (both seen in picture below) of the Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children



Matrix: *It must have given you great satisfaction to receive the National Award from the President.*

Air Vice Marshal V Krishnaswamy (Retd.) (VK): Yes, indeed. It was recognition of work done quietly, with no expectation of reward. We never did canvas for any award.

How long have you been associated with the Madhuram Narayanan Centre (MNC) and how did it all begin?

Jaya Krishnaswamy (JK): From the beginning. In fact, my husband, who specialized in electronics engineering, joined Indchem R & D Labs of the Sanmar Group, after his retirement from the Air Force, and a five-year stint in the private sector. Indchem, led by N Kumar, was keen on developing computer software in the field of education. As a teacher of many years' experience, I felt that we should do something in the field of disability. The result was *Upanayan*, the software program that trains parents and teachers in early intervention education of children with mental retardation of varying degrees. And the Madhuram Narayanan Centre was

founded in 1989 as a model training centre to test out the programme developed to train children with mental retardation in the age group 0 to 6. It was Prof. Jeyachandran of Vijay Human

Services who mooted the idea of Sanmar starting MNC, and the group readily agreed.

VK: It was the Sanmar culture that drew me to Indchem, leading to the establishment of MNC. Kumar had been ever so gentle in suggesting that I give Sanmar the option of first refusal before I took on any other post-retirement assignment.

How have you managed to raise the funds necessary to finance the centre which has grown from small beginnings to its present strength?

The funding has rarely been a major problem. There are enough benefactors available for a good cause, once we demonstrate our commitment and effectiveness. In the early years, Sanmar used to foot the entire bill, and the group continues to bridge any gap in resources on a sustained basis, contributing a few lakhs of rupees every year. But more than financial assistance, it is the group's genuine interest in our work that has fuelled our growth and progress. If Kumar has been a constant source of support, young Sukanya Sankar of the Sanmar family has taken a deep interest in our work. She gets personally involved

in many of our activities, especially in projecting our achievements and the scope of our services to the larger public. Sanmar has made a unique contribution to the training of mentally retarded children.

How is the Sanmar contribution unique, when so many corporates are involved in charities of various kinds?

VK: Before Sanmar decided to support MNC, nothing much had been done in India by way of early intervention initiatives in mental retardation. Even now, MNC remains the only serious effort to extend early intervention services, despite whatever claims may be made to the contrary.

Where does MNC stand today after completing 15 years of service and where do you intend to go?

JK: What started as a testing centre has grown into a force to reckon with in these 15 years. I had no experience in the field, when we started, though I had a B.Ed qualification. Over the years, I have equipped myself by attending as many workshops, seminars and conferences as possible. We have a committed workforce led by our dedicated Principal Vimala Kannan.

Today, we have succeeded in empowering parents of our special children in the training, care and management of their children. We have succeeded in disseminating the Early Intervention Programme in various parts of the country with training programmes for special educators, volunteers and parents. We are proud that our parents, even those who are illiterate, have become expert trainers. We have trained 100 master trainers in special education through our workshops and 340 special educators at MNC. Well over 2000 children have been provided services at the Centre, and over 10,000 children through



Chief Guest Dr George S Baroff, former Professor of Psychology, University of North Carolina, USA, handing over a prize at the 15th Anniversary Celebrations.



Parents of MNC children.



The children put up a spell binding show at the 15th Anniversary of MNC.

home-based programmes and consultancy services.

VK: We now function in rented premises owned by the Bala Mandir Primary School, who have been extremely kind to us. Our dream is to have our own campus with a well ventilated three-storeyed building with each floor dedicated to a particular activity, and designed for optimum performance. We dream of setting up a chain of intervention centres in the country, connected by a computer network. As a first step, we have established such centres in Tamil Nadu.

JK: Prevention of disabilities is now the area towards which MNC is gearing its movement. Nearly 70% of disabilities are preventable. If prevention becomes a reality, then the resources available for rehabilitation can be utilised more optimally for the other 30%, especially those born with disabilities.

Training programme for young chemists

The month of November saw the launch of a training program for young chemists at ProCitius. The course titled “A Practical Course in Synthetic Organic Chemistry”, is designed and delivered by inhouse PhD faculty keeping in mind relevance to the practical challenges chemists at ProCitius face in the laboratory during their day to day work. The overarching principle is to deliver training that reinforces and extends the academic MSc curriculum to an industrial laboratory context. Twelve students were chosen from among the most recent recruits to attend the course of 19 one hour lectures over an 8 week period. The course is designed to promote classroom discussion and interaction, as well as study outside the classroom. Both students and faculty will be evaluated for their learning and performance in the course.

Commenting on the experience, Dr Swaminathan Subramaniam, Chief Executive, who has also donned the

mantle of course director said: “This is the first time we are attempting this and it is a gratifying experience, so far. We have a pool of internationally trained PhD scientists on our staff and their experience and knowledge is being leveraged by imparting training to these young and eager chemists. Everyone, including the faculty, benefit from this interaction and a culture of learning and innovation is promoted, as a result.” Dr Hemant Joshi, the Faculty Coordinator, spoke on behalf of the other faculty members when he said, “The youngsters are very bright and are not afraid to challenge the faculty. This keeps everyone on their toes.” The students were also uniformly appreciative of the opportunity to learn and grow, even while they worked full-time.

Kankana Barua, Hemant Joshi and Swaminathan Subramaniam with the trainees.



Sanmar opts for Group Corporate Board

By K. T. Jagannathan

CHENNAI, JULY 29. In one more giant step towards corporate governance, the family members of the Chennai based Sanmar Group have disengaged from the day-to-day management of all operating companies.

N. Sankar, his brother N. Kumar and Sankar's son Vijay Sanmar have all quit the boards of all operating outfits, clearing the financial hurdle, if any, for professionals to manage the group entities. Even as they have entrusted the operational tasks to professional directors, they have constituted a Sanmar Group Corporate Board, akin to the one floated by the Murugappa Group. The Sanmar Group Corporate Board will comprise internal members as well as outsiders. Besides family people, managing directors of some group outfits will form internal members of the Corporate Board. Mr. Sankar will be the Chairman of the Corporate Board and Mr. Kumar Vice-

Chairman. It will also have Mr. Vijay Sankar, M. N. Radhakrishnan, Managing Director, Sanmar Engineering Corporation, and P. S. Jayaraman, Managing Director, Chemplast Sanmar have also been inducted into the Corporate Board.

V. Narayanan, former Chairman and Managing Director of erstwhile Pond's (India), Adit Jain, Managing Director, IMA India, Preety Kumar, Managing Director, Amrop International India, Pradip Kapadia, Advocate, Gagrat & Co., and Ashok Wadhwa, Managing Director, Ambit Corporate Finance, will be external directors on the Corporate Board. A couple of industry specialists will also be inducted soon to beef up the board. Mr. Narayanan will chair the audit committee of the Corporate Board.

Policy-making body

The Corporate Board is expected to function as a sort of macro policy-making body. It will be empowered to oversee ac-

tivities of all constituents of the group. It is expected to convene every quarter for stocktaking of varied activities of the group. Mr. Sankar asserted that the members of the family would operate only at the Sanmar Group Corporate Board level.

An Internal Corporate Management Board (ICMB) of an informal kind had been functioning within the Sanmar group for quite sometime now, facilitating interface between the promoters and the operational heads to paper over issues relating to HR (human resources) and the like. The newly set up Group Corporate Board, however, will function as an overall policy-making body. In the case of the Murugappa Group, family members still hold Chairman or Vice-Chairman positions in operating units even while letting professional managing directors to run the daily show. While establishing Group Corporate Board sometime in late 1999, the Murugappas had gone in for a 'men-

toring model' where each family members will guide individual units towards achieving the goals set by the Corporate Board. In Sanmar model, however, the individual entities are left at the hands of professional promoters.

Following the decision of the promoter family to keep an arms' length relationship with the group businesses, the board of the group's flagship Chemplast Sanmar is recast. Mr. Sankar, Mr. Narayanan, Mr. Kumar, Mr. Adit Jain, Mr. Vijay Sankar and Mr. Kapadia have all stepped down from the board. All of them figure in the newly constituted Corporate Board. Further, N. Srinivasan has also quit the Chemplast Sanmar board.

Delinking ownership

The reconstituted board of Chemplast Sanmar will comprise Managing Director Mr. Jayaraman, M.K. Kumar, C. H. Mahadevan, V. K. Parthasarathy, and V.V. Subramanian.

Chemplast Sanmar is the only

listed company in the group. Mr. Sankar said as the Group Corporate Board comprised people from diverse fields, their experience and knowledge could be utilised to drive other unlisted outfits of the group. Asked on the role of his son in the new arrangement, Mr. Sankar said working with experienced experts in the Corporate Board would keep him in good stead to view things from a larger perspective.

In August 2000, the Sanmar group took the first step towards delinking ownership from management by letting non-family members to take over the managing directorship of four core businesses of the group. The move was then viewed as a serious attempt by promoters to bring about greater transparency in the functioning of the group with attendant responsibility. Both Mr. Kumar and Mr. Sankar then felt that it was the best way to institutionalise management practices.

Sanmar Group goes in for 'professional management'

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU

Chennai, July 29: The Chennai-based Rs 12,000 crore Sanmar Group has said that three family members have decided to move out from boards of all operating companies. "N Sankar, N Kumar and Vijay Sankar have stepped off the boards of all the operating companies," the group said in a release.



N Sankar

The move is aimed at imparting professionalism at all levels. It may be recalled that the Group had earlier appointed professional managing directors for its different businesses a few years ago. These MDs will now

be fully responsible for the various businesses and will be assisted by a team of competent professionals.

The Group has also formed a corporate board to oversee the entire management of the group. The internal members of the board are N Sankar, chairman, N Kumar, vice-chairman, Vijay Sankar and some of the group's managing directors. The outside directors are V Narayanan, Adit Jain, Preety Kumar, Pradip Kapadia and Ashok Wadhwa. The company intends to strengthen the board by inducting a few industry specialists later.

The Sanmar corporate board has been empowered to oversee the performance, policies, plans, future strategies and also ensure strict adherence to highest standards of corporate governance and ethical conduct of all the constituents of the group.

The Sanmar Group Corporate Board



Towards total professionalism

Corporate governance was a matter of vital significance at Sanmar long before it entered contemporary business English as a buzzword. The highest levels of good governance, objectivity and transparency in the management process have always marked the group's management philosophy. It has a published code of ethics and insists on strict adherence to it by all its people.

In its constant quest for ways of ensuring the separation of ownership from the operational management of the group's businesses, Sanmar has struck several successful initiatives over the years. One of the latest has been the constitution of the Sanmar Group Corporate Board, which includes eminent people of varied backgrounds. All members of the group's owner family—N Sankar, N Kumar and Vijay Sankar—have stepped off the boards of all the operating companies. Their management now vests fully with the professional managing directors the

group appointed a few years ago, assisted by competent professional senior management teams. The members of the family will operate only at the Sanmar Group level.

The Sanmar Group Corporate Board, which is being empowered to oversee the activities of all the constituents of the group in terms of their performance policies, plans and future strategies, and ensure adherence to the highest standards of corporate governance and ethical conduct, will meet at least four times a year. V Narayanan will head the audit committee of the Board.

The considerable knowledge and experience of the outside directors are expected to be of great value to the group, in its current operations and future growth.

The first meeting of the Group Corporate Board was held on 1st December 2004.



Group Corporate Board members on a visit to ProCitius Research, Perungudi, the chemistry research division of Sanmar Speciality Chemicals (SSCL). From L to R: Dr Sankara Subramanian of SSCL, P N Kapadia (with back to camera), V Narayanan, N Sankar, Vijay Sankar, Preety Kumar and P S Jayaraman.

The Sanmar Group Corporate Board

N Sankar, *Chairman*

N Kumar, *Vice Chairman*

Vijay Sankar, *Director*

M N Radhakrishnan (*Chairman, Sanmar Engineering Corporation*)

P S Jayaraman (*Managing Director, Chemplast Sanmar*)

V Narayanan (*former Chairman, Pond's India*)

Adit Jain (*Managing Director, IMA India*)

Preety Kumar (*Managing Director, Amrop International India*)

Pradip Kapadia (*Advocate, Gagrat & Co.*)

Ashok Wadhwa (*Managing Director, Ambit Corporate Finance*)

World Shipping Forum a grand success

Sanmar Shipping plays its part



K Shankar looks on as Tamil Nadu Governor Surjit Singh Barnala declares the conference open.

The Sanmar Group played a considerable role in the proceedings of the World Shipping Forum conducted by the Chennai branch of the Institute of Marine Engineers (India) at Hotel Le Royal Meridien, Chennai, during 18-20 November 2004. While the group's Vice Chairman N Kumar delivered one of the keynote addresses, three senior executives of Sanmar Shipping were important resources in the conduct of

the forum. K Shankar was a member of the Core Strategy Board, C V Subba Rao, the convenor of the forum, and B Jayakumar, a member of the souvenir committee.

The marine symposium is a quadrennial event conducted by the Chennai branch of the Institute, and this year, the event titled the *World Shipping Forum*, bore the theme of *The Changing Business Model in the New Economy*.

The Governor of Tamil Nadu, Surjit Singh Barnala, was the chief guest at the inaugural function. M Raman, IAS, Chairman and Managing Director, Ennore Port, presided over the function.

The eminent writer and management consultant Gurcharan Das made a thoughtful and incisive presentation which focused on the macro picture of globalisation to show how the growth rate in India has been far ahead of world figures.

The roles of the Indian marine engineer and the Institute were brought out in speeches by K A Simon, President,



Gurcharan Das and N Kumar flank the Governor.

Institute of Marine Engineers (India) and Thomas Varghese, Chairman, Chennai branch.

Delegates from Singapore, Japan, Malaysia, UAE, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Norway, United Kingdom, USA and Canada exchanged their views on the various topics under discussion.

The entire show was managed by a very young team of marine engineers led by Thomas Varghese and C V Subba Rao, Convenor. Over 30 sponsoring and co-sponsoring organisations, 15 exhibitors and over 200 delegates ensured the success of the event.

Some observations by Tamil Nadu Governor Surjit Singh Barnala

“Ships dominate international trade. They are ideally suited for transportation of goods. Ships enjoy enormous economies of scale and advantages. They can potentially achieve satisfactory financial results. It only takes 28 crew members to operate a vessel of 300,000 tonnes.”

“It is ironic that though India is the largest supplier of trained officer manpower to the world maritime industry, the big manning companies are headquartered in countries like Hong Kong and Singapore. A larger Indian fleet could change this and motivate manning companies to relocate in India.”



M Raman, IAS, Chairman & MD, Ennore Port, delivering the presidential address.



A section of the distinguished audience.

Highlights of N Kumar's keynote address

Nine changes that shipping needs

i. Estimating earnings based on demand for products and supply of vessels is going straight out of the window. Agility and adaptability will win the battle more than long term and medium term planning.



ii. Long-term perspective plans are on the sunset mode. Ability to win everyday is crucial. Businesses need to be nimble, fast acting and agile.

iii. The balance of economic power is changing. In simple English, read “China”: a country of over 1.2 billion people with a GDP growth rate of over 13%! Understand China and India if you want to strike it big.

iv. With high oil prices alternative energy sources such as gas will be exploited and transported. Whatever the fuel, it will be an opportunity for the transportation sector.

v. BIG will become beautiful in the days to come. The shipping industry needs to be proactive and consolidate through mergers or through other trade arrangements such as pooling.

vi. Opportunities will bring threats like the high probability of terrorism affecting the transportation sector. Nations will tighten their security measures and implement regulations which all of you will need to comply with, leading to additional costs, enhanced training.

vii. Environmental awareness will grow. Issues of pollution, clean seas, green demolition, worker safety in shipyards will grow louder. Ability to adapt to them should be a significant factor in your business model of tomorrow.

viii. Manpower is scarce, particularly in the developed countries. Shipping needs to build learning organizations. Knowledge sharing through IT could play a critical part.

ix. Your customers are going to look at how you do business before associating with you. Majority are large sized. Do you have systems for logistics, talent retention, security, corporate governance and ethics in place?

Employees' Corner

To Sabarimala and back

Notes of a Sanmar pilgrim

*The legend of Ayyappan is one of the most enduring and fascinating in India's infinite variety of mythology and spiritual lore. Lord Ayyappan, whose steed was a tiger, resides atop Sabarimala, a range of hills in Kerala. Thousands of pilgrims annually take a vow of abstinence and rigorously clean personal habits for a period of 40 days before they undertake the arduous climb to worship at his altar. A Sanmar team of employees led by P U Aravind has been doing the Sabarimala pilgrimage for the past several years. Here, we present a personal account of this year's trip by **Ramkumar Shankar**.*

One Thursday evening in September, went home around 3 pm, packed and went to the pre-trip puja. At 6, our group left for the railway station by van, stopping at a Ganesh temple on the way. The train left at 7.30 pm. There were 21 of us, almost all from Sanmar (or ex Sanmar).

Reached Ernakulam at 6.30 on Friday morning. After a bath, went straight to three Sivan temples – Vaikom, Kaduthuruthy and Ettumanoor; said to be a great thing to see all three on the same day.

Our drive to Pamba took around five hours on ghat roads, with amazing scenery all around. Reached Pamba around 4 pm. It was pouring – we took a dip in the freezing cold Pamba river. Packing bare necessities off we went on the climb.

First, we broke a coconut at a Ganesh temple before starting the

climb. First stretch of around one hour is a steep climb on rough rocky steps, with sharp stones; after that, it is a 20 to 30 minute walk on sharp stones again! Reached the hill top around 6. Went to our rooms for a quick wash and rushed to the temple for darshan. Dinner around 9 pm and we reassembled at the rooms. The *prasada* was neatly packed in separate covers and given to everyone. Around 10 pm, went back to the temple for the *Harivarasanam seva*. This is the time when the temple is closed and the deity is put to sleep, to the accompaniment of Yesudas' divine *Harivarasanam* song. A lovely sight. Crashed out around 11 pm.

Vinayaka Chaturthi

Woken up at 4.00 am, bathed and went to the temple again on Saturday, Vinayaka (Ganesh) Chaturthi day, the elephant god's birthday. Huge crowd of devotees and the queue was long and winding. Somehow managed a couple of darshans and started on our walk down around 6.30.

The walk down is tougher than the climb up for two reasons. One, we were already tired because of the climb up. Secondly, when you walk down, the entire pressure is on the sole of the foot. The stones in the path make it tougher. Reached Pamba around 8; again broke a coconut each at the Ganesh temple.

The Sabarimala Ayyappan temple.



Our first stop that day was to be Mannarsala temple, near Harippad, devoted to Nagaraja, the snake god. Since all temples close by noon, we had to go straight there. So no breakfast this day too. Built in a grove, the temple reputedly has 30,000 images of snake-gods.

Lunch at Alleppey, and off we went to three temples on the way to Guruvayur. First we reached Kodungallur at 3 pm, an hour before the Devi Bhagavati temple there opened. Had darshan and went next to the Sivan temple at Tiruvanchikulam in Thrissur district, and finally to a wonderful Rama temple in typical Kerala style at Triprayar.

Guruvayur darshan

Reaching Guruvayur around 7.30 pm, checked in at a hotel and immediately left for the temple. Joined long queue there, and had darshan. Stayed back for the nightly Seeveli ritual, when the *utsavamurti* (deity in procession) is taken around the temple on elephants, a grand sight, with all lamps lit, and elephants bedecked. Hit bed around 11 pm.

Next morning, got up around 5 and assembled downstairs by 6. Long, serpentine queues outside the temple waiting for darshan. After breakfast left for the Mammiyur Mahadevan temple.

Torrential downpour as we got in to the bus and proceeded to the Trichur Vadakanathar temple. Situated in a beautiful ground, it looks like a fort. Next, we went to Kaladi, the birth place of Adi Sankara, a serene, lovely place, and around 11.30, reached the Chotanikara Bhagavati temple, famous for driving out evil spirits etc.

With the pilgrimage over, went to Ernakulam where we had a traditional meal around 1 pm. We chilled out with some ice creams while waiting for the train. We boarded the train at 4.10 pm. Some of us merrily sang away a medley



A pre-trip puja.

of old film songs from 6 to 7 pm. Dinner followed and we crashed by 9. Reached Chennai around 7.30 the next day.

‘Captain Aravind’

This is a trip that we all look forward to. We visit around 12 to 15 temples in Kerala in three days, impossible individually. The credit for all this goes to PU Aravind and his team – Sankar, Murali, Suresh et al. Thanks to their great efforts, everything happens with clockwork precision. Food is packed and served, the bus is waiting for us at the station, train tickets are booked well in advance, the schedule drawn up is meticulously followed. Aravind is a tough disciplinarian—we call him Captain. He doesn’t allow us the luxury of leisure during these three days—we are constantly on the move, from train to bus to room to temple. At the temple, we are told exactly how much time we have for darshan before we get back to the bus. Tough as this is to follow, especially for laggards like me, the discipline helps us stick to our schedule and visit all the temples in our itinerary.

The pilgrims this year

P U Aravind
 A R Balaji
 R Chandramouli
 R Durairaj
 R Ganesh
 S Hanumanth Rao
 V G K Moorthy
 D Muralidharan
 N Muralidharan
 R Muralidharan
 M Raman
 S Sankaran
 Ramkumar Shankar
 V Shankar
 Raja Srinivasan
 Abhishek Subramaniam
 V V Subramanian
 V Sundar
 R Suresh
 R V Trivedi
 P Vasudevan

Jolly Rovers triumph again

Fifth title in a row



Kulamani Parida and S Badrinath, heroes of the last league match of the season.

Sanmar's pride, Jolly Rovers Cricket Club, the team the group has supported for the last 25 years, staged a brilliant last minute coup in the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association's senior division league after trailing Globe Trotters in the points table for most of the season. In a thrilling finish, the Sanmar

team pipped the opposition at the post to run away with the title for a record five times in a row. The achievement assumes greater significance, when

viewed in the background of Jolly Rovers' tally of 14 league titles in the last 25 years.



The championship was decisively won only in the last league encounter of the season, a convincing victory over SICAL (South India Corporation Ltd) in October 2004, at the Vivekananda College grounds. It was a superb team effort, though off spinner Kulamani Parida and batsman S Badrinath played stellar roles in the last match of the season. Several outstanding performances through the season were responsible for the record success of the team. Captain and leading left arm spinner R Ramkumar, India players



The triumphant Jolly Rovers team. From L to R: (standing) Arun (Scorer), Ram Mohan Rao (Asst Manager), Tamil Kumaran, K Parida, A Kudua, S Badrinath, Bharat Reddy (Manager), Tinu Yohannan, Vikram Kumar, Vasanth Saravanan, Abdul Jabbar (Coach), Padmanabhan (Physical Trainer). (Seated): H Badani, S Somasundar, L Balaji, N Sankar, N Kumar, Vijay Sankar, R Ramkumar (Captain), D Mongia. (Squatting): Vetrivel, R Venkatesh, Saravanan, Sriram, Syed Mohammed, Senthil Kumar, Deepak Varma.

Sujith Somasundar, Tinu Yohannan, Lakshmi pathi Balaji, Dinesh Mongia and Hemang Badani, Vasanth Saravanan, Badrinath, Vikram Kumar, Ajay Kudua, Parida and Tamil Kumaran were some of the consistent performers who brought Jolly Rovers glory.

For N Sankar, N Kumar, Vijay Sankar and the team management consisting of Bharat Reddy, Abdul Jabbar and Ram Mohan Rao, it was one of the proudest moments of their association with the group's flagship team.



Parida and Badrinath being chaired by their team-mates.



"I can never forget this match for Chemplast. Anil bhai was competing as if it was a Test match. His intensity and commitment has remained as fierce as it was then. At 34, he can embarrass a 20-year-old with his involvement in the game."



that has been my role model and I never thought that one day I would get to bowl alongside him. I consider myself very fortunate.
 Harbhajan, during those days, was more lethal because he used the seam most effectively. He was short and would use the ball high. "The ball would hang," said Harbhajan, who was known as a master penetrator at coaching camps and whose cheerful nature has motivated the team in times of distress. Kumble considers that this quality is an important part of Harbhajan's cricket.
 The driver has been Harbhajan's deadly weapon. "I've worked on it from the time Sachin asked me to at Mohali," said Harbhajan, who developed the delivery by watching Pakistan all-rounder Saqlain Mushtaq. "It shows his desire to learn," said Kumble.
 Kumble and Harbhajan have perfected the art of complementing each other and winning matches consistently. One eases the pressure and the other reaps rewards.
 "It helps to have one of us creating pressure," said Kumble. "We get very nervous. We have done

From the time the two figured in a tournament for Chemplast at Bangalore in 1997, Harbhajan and Kumble have grown together as 'soft killers' of the best batting line-ups.

Harbhajan Singh and Anil Kumble are both past members of the Chemplast team.

Pictures and text courtesy: *The Sportstar*

Legends from the South

M S Subbulakshmi

Princes and heads of state bowed to her music. The late Jawaharlal Nehru said, 'Who am I, a mere prime minister, before the queen of song?' Mahatma Gandhi once said: "I should prefer to hear the bhajan *Hari, tum haro* spoken by Subbulakshmi rather than sung by others." Few musicians among the many great stalwarts India has produced have achieved the exalted eminence of Madurai Shanmukhavadiyu Subbulakshmi (1916-2004), known to millions as 'MS', whom generations worshipped as goddess incarnate.

Born in the temple town of Madurai on 16 September 1916, to *veena* player Shanmukhavadiyu, little Kunjamma as Subbulakshmi was known, brother Saktivel and sister Vadivambal grew up surrounded and filled by music. Grandmother Akkammal had been a violinist. Their tiny home in the narrow Hanumantharayan Lane was close to the Minakshi temple. Whenever the deity was taken in procession through the main streets, the *nagaswaram* players would stop where this lane branched off and play their best for Shanmukhavadiyu's approval. Much later, experts would often wonder at the way in which MS vocally rendered the rare modulations of both the *veena* and the *nagaswaram*.

For mother and children, and the numerous uncles and aunts who crowded their home, it was a frugal existence. Vadivambal died young, before she could fulfil her promise as a *veena* player. Subbulakshmi was recognised early for her rich voice. Guru Madurai Srinivasa Iyengar died soon after she started lessons with him. She listened to a lot of good music, including Hindustani music, on

the neighbours' radio seated on the window-sill above the staircase. She loved to hear Abdul Karim Khan and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan in the silence of the night. Her formal schooling came to a halt in class 5 when a teacher's beating was identified as the cause of an attack of whooping cough. MS practised music for long hours, lost in the vibrations of the *tambura* which she would tune reverently. This natural ability, consciously developed through a kind of yoga, led to the electrifying effect her opening syllables had on the audience all her life, and a fantastic voice range.

Lawyer-father Subramania Iyer lived a few streets away. She was his pet daughter and he was wont to saying that he would arrange her marriage with a 'good boy' who would love and cherish her music. He was a music lover and devotee of the lord. In the yearly Ramanavami festivals he organised, there would be *puja*, music and processions.

Gramophone records

MS accompanied her mother to Madras and cut her first disc at the age of ten, and the Columbia Gramophone Company records brought her recognition before she turned 15.

Subbulakshmi soon graduated to solo performances, and made her debut at the Madras Music Academy when she was 17. A connoisseur wrote: 'When she... ascended the dais in 1934 and burst into classical songs, experienced musicians of the top rank vied with one another in expressing their delight in this new find.'

Tyagarajan Sadasivam, an advertising professional and freedom fighter who entered her life as a dashing suitor, became her husband in 1940.

This was the major turning point in Subbulakshmi's life, beginning her ascent from being a South Indian celebrity to a national, even world, figure; and from a brilliant young virtuoso to the consummate artist she became in time. Her image, the course of her career, the direction of her music, were all carefully fashioned by Sadasivam.

Sadasivam introduced MS to the great Congress leaders – Rajaji, Nehru and Gandhiji. He not only planned her concerts, but charted her whole career. Another prominent catalyst was 'Kalki' Krishnamurthy, novelist, freedom fighter, and Sadasivam's partner in journalism.

National integration

To Sadasivam and MS, who lived together for nearly 60 years as husband and wife, until his death in 1997, the means were always as important as the end. He persuaded her to act in a few movies with specific financial objectives in mind, (including the launching of the magazine 'Kalki'), but they were on idealistic themes, with the accent on music.

MS became a symbol of national integration, including in her repertoire compositions in languages from many parts of India. Recognising *sahitya* or words as an integral part of Carnatic music, MS cultivated impeccable diction in the different languages of the lyrics she sang. She was known for her attention to breath control, pauses in the right places, voice modulation, changes in emphasis and breaking phrases into their proper components.

The couple saw music as a vehicle for spreading spirituality among the populace, and channelled the proceeds of concerts into charitable endowments. Starting in 1944 with five concerts for the Kasturba Memorial Fund, their benevolence grew into a public service contribution of major proportions.

Many worthy causes and institutions benefited from MS raising crores of rupees through singing.

Many awards came to MS without her ever having to seek patronage of any kind. The nation's highest honour of Bharat Ratna was conferred on her as it was to the present President of India, A P J Abdul Kalam, who remained an admirer to the end.

When Subbulakshmi breathed her last on 11 December 2004 after a period of illness, the President flew down from Delhi to her Kotturpuram, Chennai, residence to pay his last respects to her. Thousands of mourners from all walks of life and different social strata gathered to offer their homage to the uncrowned queen of Indian music.



Awards and honours

1940	Isai Vani.	1981	Desikottama, Doctoral Degree, Viswa Bharati University, Shantiniketan.
1954	Padma Bhushan.	1986	Spirit of Freedom Award, VST Industries, Delhi.
1956	The President's Award (Now Sangeet Natak <i>Akademi</i> award).	1987	Doctor of Literature, University of Madras.
1968	Sangita Kalanidhi, Music Academy, Madras .	1988	Trustee for Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts.
1970	Isai Perarignar, Tamil Isai Sangam, Madras.	1988	Kalidas Samman.
1971	Doctor of Letters, Sri Venkateswara University.	1988	Ustad Hafeez Ali Khan Award.
1973	Doctor of Letters, Delhi University.	1990	Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration.
1974	The Ramon Magsaysay Award.	1991	Konarak Samman.
1975	Padma Vibhushan.	1996	The Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar Birthday Award on her 80th birthday.
1975	Saptagiri Sangita Vidwanmani, Sri Venkateswara Tyagarajaswami Festival, Tirupati.	1996	Kala Ratna, conferred by the Rasika Ranjani Sabha conferred the title of 'Kala Ratna'.
1975	Svar Vilas, Sur-singar Samsad.	1996	Gupta Award.
1979	Doctor of Literature, Indira Kala Sangeet, Viswavidyalaya, Madhya Pradesh.	1997	Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Award.
1979-80	Producer Emeritus, All India Radio and Doordarshan.	1997	Swaralaya Puraskar.
1980	Thanipperum Kalaignar, Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Naataka Manram.	1998	Bharat Ratna.
1980	Doctor of Letters, Benares Hindu University.	1999	Sangita Sagara Award - CMANA, USA.
1981	Member D'Honneur, the International Music Council.	2000	S V N Rao Award.

The Chennai music season

V Ramnarayan

The Chennai 'season' is a unique festival of classical music of ever-growing proportions, in which every known musician of repute and every young aspirant in this highly evolved and sophisticated system, take part. Audiences congregate from all over the world, especially the Indian Diaspora, and the excitement continues for more than a month. Here's an irreverent, tongue-in-cheek view:

Some years ago, the Indian cricket selectors had the unenviable task of announcing two teams for simultaneous participation in tournaments in two different parts of the world. Both the Sahara Cup at Toronto and the Commonwealth Games at Kuala Lumpur demanded India's best team, a knotty problem that the selectors tried to untangle by fielding what they called two equally formidable sides—in the event, both came a-cropper.

The cricket selectors would have done well to consult that uniquely South Indian body of men, the ubiquitous sabha secretaries. These miracle makers manage year after year to conduct hundreds of Carnatic music concerts packed into a fortnight of frenzied programming, featuring equally formidable teams, at not two venues but dozens of far flung theatres of war. In a marvel of logistics, time and resource management, they detonate an explosion of rhythm and *raga razzmatazz* that leaves whole suburban populations stunned. Their weaponry? Antiquated amplification systems whose noise levels create world records on the Richter scale.

The early morning lec-dems investigate in minute detail such compellingly seminal topics as “The Influence of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche on the Development of the Mela Karta Scheme” or “Rap, *Raga* and Rachmaninov: Were They Y2K Compliant?” That is where demure

damsels, fiery feminists, voluble vocalists, and intimidatory instrumentalists vie for top honours with obstreperous octogenarians and superannuated scholars.

These are followed by the virgin volleys of child prodigies and teenage tyros, unleashed at an unsuspecting public straying idly in after a hearty repast at the cafeteria. In fact, in some circles it has been suggested that the Chennai December season should be renamed the Food 'n Frolic Fest.

Some of these postprandial somnambulists settle down into deep slumber even as the next batch of curious onlookers fights its way towards the rare empty seat. By now they are hampered by the growing crowd, and overzealous ushers who learnt their job by correspondence and never got beyond lesson two, to borrow a simile from “English literature's performing flea”, P.G. Wodehouse. This is the high point of the unfolding drama—the last chance before the next season comes round, to pass judgment on the stars of tomorrow without paying for admission.

Suitably stirred by the vigour of the vocal gymnastics on display during the next two hours, these devout worshippers of the divine music of our ancestors, spring into action even as the last strains of the *mangalam* begin to fill the auditorium. To make a quick dash for the door, and head straight for the canteen is for them as effortless as drowning the vocalist's



feeble attempts at being heard is for violinists and percussionists. After reviving themselves with a stiff coffee or two, they then cleverly take a detour around the ticket window towards the exit, to rest and recuperate before they hit the roads on the morrow. For this is the hour that produces the man—the supreme optimist at the ticket counter who hopes against hope that this season’s share of the uninitiated will pay to listen to the senior *vidwan* featured here, and not gravitate towards a free *cutcheri* elsewhere.

What infinite variety this indefatigable band of music lovers present! An endangered species is the doughty old warriors whose first season coincided with the debut of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, the trailblazer whom critics have charged with inventing the modern

concert format. These are the most admirable segment of the audience, for they have braved the rigours of classical music in the severe Chennai winter for over half a century, sweater-and muffler-clad, and remaining stolidly critical of succeeding generations of *vidwans*. Anno Domini is catching up and alas, this species will soon be extinct, replaced entirely by more thick skinned listeners whom the December cold leaves untouched.

To earn the applause of a Chennai audience is not easy unless you happen to be a Hindustani instrumentalist with long hair, purple kurta and an American accent with which you announce that you will treat them to the exotic delight of raag Hamsadhwani. The Carnatic musician may occasionally mesmerise audiences abroad. But his *manodharma*

is scarcely equal to the irresistible lure of the 8.35 bus home. Every percussionist from Palghat Mani Iyer down to Vikku Vinayakram has lost out to the fatal attraction of the aroma of coffee wafting in from the canteen at *tani avartanam* time.

Increasingly, devotees from the wicked West descend on staid old Chennai during the December season. Some of them look more Indian than Indians, *veshti-jibba*, sari-pigtails, *jolna* bags and all, but what really distinguishes these seekers of nirvana through *raga* and *gamaka* is their glazed expression. And they, like their Indian counterparts, keep coming back for more, such is the addictive power of the season for all seasons.

Musician's fatigue syndrome



A way to ensure quality amidst quantity?



Cartoons by Sarathy, courtesy Sruti magazine.

