

FEB 84

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EDITORIAL ..

Mardi Gras 84 wheezed, spluttered, coughed and then stopped on the 29th of last month. And for the first time in the memory of all present, the bone-weary student volunteers, the exhausted coordinators and the crowds, still in festive colours, were dragged back to class on the very next day. Almost all had ready curses for the men who had done them in, and even the Gajendras were heard stamping their feet in displeasure. But this apart, the most curious event of an extravagant MG 84 was 'The Mystery of the Vanishing Secretaries'. After two weeks of frenzied searching, the hunting hounds awaiting the post-mortem and the details of MG expenditure were left tongues lolling, disappointed.

Even as MG dimmed, the 40 W and 60 W devices in all hostels could be seen working well past midnight: one can safely assume that the residents were not unaware of the approaching quiz cycle. Overheard whispered in many intimate conversations, denounced by all the orators in the mess, complained about during week-ends and ridiculed by the final years, of late, are the magic words - 'NCC' and 'NSS' whose harebrained idea was it to send 'greeting telegrams' during the winter to all those who thought they had left NCC & NSS at a safe distance of one to two years behind them? Why should students be penalized by an organisation that chose not to utilize student man-power when it was available? The staff involved would do well to reconsider their unreasonable stand.

"I don't see why a hostel like.....should give up", says one enterprising Hostel Sports Secretary, in a rabble-rousing message to his sporting audience. Notices announcing inter-hostel sports fixtures appear regularly, in a striking VIBGYOR colour. The sweat and toil for the Schroeter is certainly on. Irrespective of who wins the cup, it will definitely be fun to participate, and even to cheer and boo, in the coming matches.

Not very far away, through the mists of mundane involvements, one can see two huge doors that will swing silently open in the middle of March. After an intervening year of peaceful slumber, the Open House greets once again, all those curious outsiders who may care to step into our threshold. Also visible, but farther away, are the many hostel days amidst the video shows and the Saturday night rituals at OAT. As things stand, the 2nd of May is our Independence Day.

* * * * *

Causerie

My window overlooks the lawn in front of Quark about whose status a silent battle is being grimly waged. The attacking faction quite clearly feels that the lawn is meant for its cycling and walking pleasure and has indeed cut an admirably straight diameter across the circular grass plot.

The defenders, whom I fear are a minority, differ in their opinion of the matter. As if to say, "Ha! Let us see you cycle across this lawn!". They replace the cement blocks lining the plot. But all to no avail. The invaders merely ride over or around them, with the effect that what was once a straggling thin line is now a well established broad pathway.

Sometimes the defenders go to the extent of placing veritable rocks around the circumference, in what they fondly imagine is an impregnable barrier. I can only shake my head sagely at them, for it is not long before even this is overcome. A truly losing battle if ever there was one!

* * * * *

I wonder how many of us have visited the deer park next door. I refer not to the 'children's zoo' or the 'snake park', but the jolly old national park inside, of course.

4 After semester of waiting for the right time, I made it there a month back. After paying the regulation two rupees, one enters a steamy jungle on a mud track, on which must also ply the very occasional car or two. The place is a nature lover's paradise. It shot up to astral heights in my esteem when almost immediately on entering, I virtually tripped over a large brown snake who wriggled away peevishly.

Walking up the path, one can see branches breaking off the main path, to form an elaborate network no doubt. I stuck to the one which plunged deeper and deeper into the wild stopping every time some fascinating thing turned up.

There were the ant-lion traps: the conical holes of slippery sand a lacewing larva builds to trap unwary ants. This grub waits at the bottom, watching for the sand triggered off by a gauche ant. As the ant slides, it is further helped in its descent by a shower of sand from the hungry little terror below and only the very lucky ones escape the lion's jaws.

There were the drongos, babblers, pittas, partridges and numerous other birds I could not identify, everywhere. Large crabs on the rims of ponds and axis deer and black-buck peeping at you. What with the undisturbed surroundings, a naturalist couldn't ask for more! And to think it is all so close to us!

I had to leave long before I had had my fill of it, as if it was getting dark. I had time, however, to notice that the vegetation turns from the initial dense bush to scrub, with prominent palms, just as in our campus. I also saw that the 'lake' one can see from the Velachery Gate is a part of the deer park.

A visit to this wonderland is imperative for all those interested in the outdoors or wildlife, or for that matter, those who have not given much thought to these aspects.

Jameson Sathasivam

MARDI GRAS PRIVATE LTD.

A crow cawing raucously. An empty kiosk. A huge tree bearing faded proclamations of the magazines' worth. Shantikunj it is and just a fortnight after MG. You can clearly make out every person not standing there, every guitar not being plucked, every gaggle not giggling. Yes, the spirit of MG is still feebly around, though being mercilessly crushed by the quizzes. Before it lets out its final gawk, let us appraise the IITian image of this festival.

From as near as Guindy to a place as far away as Delhi, they had come. And swarmed the place. By place, we mean the area covering HSB, OAT and Shantikunj - less than the ten percent of the campus.

Much smaller than the percentage of land used, is the percentage of IITian involvement. It is not only Sarayu which has buried itself deep down to send the rabbits sniggering about encroachment, but a great majority of us, coming to this place in as grand a fashion as the JEE, and then fading, merging unrecognizably into the background, unidentifiable from the trees and the plants, is a sad thing to happen. But it does. And has, for these people.

Why have so many gone home during MG?"I'd rather relax than watch those sickening programmes" is often the reply. But is it really sickening? Or is it that they are not able to face the fact that they haven't been able to shine in any field, or even put up a 'freaking out' show? Do they really detest the programmes, or are they exhibiting withdrawal, a prominent defense mechanism?

The others, who haven't easily accessible homes, resort to other ways. An equal number, if not much greater than those who attended popular events like JAM and Quiz, has missed it. Quite a few of those who do turn up, uneasily stick around in groups, trying to overcome the dominant feeling of incompetence by criticising, gesturing or laughing at even good participants.

The initiated, have smoked more cigarettes than ever before - this being their face-saving image of 'the cool observer' (or face-saving they think it is). Donned in their best clothes and looking their smartest, they try their best to look important, and a sort of 'man about the place'. But no, they cannot shrug it off - it is written dark and clear all over them - they are the faceless commoners.

Some others have stayed back in the hostels, trying to focus a wavering attention to studies, or have tried to relax in the common room. As for the events, well, they have gone on without these people, so why shouldn't these people go on without seeing them?

Is there any way of helping so many of us? Can we all be around at MG without feeling lost or frustrated? Mardi Gras is OUR festival and we must see to it that it belongs to EVERY one of us, and is not the private property of a small segmented portion of the IITian populace.

* * *

SRIRAM, R.

"IS THE LADY MAD?"

"Good morning, darling!". The voice floated up from behind the newspaper, as I stepped softly out on to the sit-out. I caught my breath. Prahlad had this uncanny ability to sense the smallest change. And if he looked you in the eye, he could read your thoughts. Even in the days when I had loved him madly, he had inspired fear in me. Now when everything was so completely changed, I lived in a state of constant dread. Some day, when he grew tired of me and thought me a nuisance, I knew, that I would be very dead. He always thought himself very clever; but as things turned out that day, I proved to be cleverer.

I pulled the night-gown tightly around me and clutching it to my breast, I softly sat down in the only other chair outside, and turned to watch him. The newspaper came down slowly and he eyed me speculatively. His eyes probed through the semi-transparent gown. I felt my whole body tensing involuntarily.

"Where were you last night?", I asked in a strained voice. The melting look in his eyes froze. "The conference ended only at 2 AM", he said and abruptly returned to the newspaper. "It must have been a very private conference - just yourself... and Sheila." I saw the look of suppressed irritation. "Sheila Nair is my colleague. That is all I know about her". He dropped the newspaper and got up.

Oh! I knew this devil all right. Let a man out of your sight, and you have lost him. I had watched Prahlad closely in the five years of our marriage: his flirtations with the servant maid and the clumsy passes he made at his secretary, in my own house. I put up with it, for he always pleaded and apologized so charmingly. But last night, when I tiptoed into Sheila's flat, I saw his naked guilt at play on the living room carpet: the same love-words, kisses and endearments that I had heard in my own bedroom. I returned quietly, undiscovered. But my whole body was afire. So was my mind. This time, Prahlad would not trick me. Why not? What could I do? You may ask...and shortly receive an answer from me.

The sitout was now empty, but for me. I rocked back and forth in the chair, trying to

clear my thoughts. "My breakfast Meena", he shouted from within. I got up and slowly walked inside. "Today is my birthday (I paused) I've made some sweet rice for you". The stainless steel bowl was in the kitchen. I brought it out. He sat at the table, hungry, impatiently drumming on the table. How handsome he looked! I smiled at him. He would be mine alone. I was prepared to sacrifice my very life for him. He must certainly be prepared to do the same for me. I would never allow anyone else to have any part of his life.

"It's all for you", I said, as he offered me some of the sweet rice. "What are you staring at me for?", he demanded irritably between mouthfuls. I turned quietly away. But suddenly, he didn't seem to like the sweet very much. He squirmed uneasily, choking as he tried to say something. Soon, his head slumped on the table. Pulling up a chair, I sat down beside him, and gently, took his head in my lap. I looked lovingly at the *hero*, who had so bravely laid down his life for me. His dark unruly hair was twisted and tightly clenched in his fists: "How sweetly you sleep. Forget Sheila. I shall always look after you...". I crooned to him as he rested peacefully. Prahlad had come back to me

* * *

Meenakshi Prahlad may be termed *insane*, not because she murdered her husband, but because she loved such a man, as deeply as she did.

* * *

R. SRIVATSAN

INTERVIEW



⁸ The small shaded lamp cast a dim glow on a carpeted floor, a living room tastefully decorated with carvings of wood and sober hangings on the wall, and two of your editors, sitting in hushed anticipation. One of us held some written questions in his hand, and the other, a loaded taperecorder. Ready. Set. Go!

"An artist of exceptional quality", said the Daily Telegraph (London). "... spontaneous rhythm.... graceful postures and tender movements....subdued eloquence of communication",

"Ever since I remember, I have been dancing. I started as a kid of four"

said the Times of India. The sharp click of high-heeled slippers on the stairs sounded the arrival of 'Nrithyachoodamani' (the Crown Jewel of Dance) Kalaimamani Chitra Visweswaran - a 33-year old world-famous Bharathana tyam dancer - a dancer who has performed at the International Dance Festival in Paris, has been to Fiji, Malaysia and Singapore, and who has, as she puts it, "seen more of Australia than the Kangaroo itself has".

Chitra makes it a point to be very courteous to the Press. So despite a dinner engagement, which was held in abeyance for almost an hour, we were allowed to prattle on about music, dance and the modern times.

In the many centuries of Bharatanatyam, how is it that the theme has invariably been a romantic Krishna, a doubtful Arjuna or Rama Vs Ravana? Isn't it an innovative dance form, capable of depicting modern life?

"If I have to depict *milk*, I milk the cow (gestures the milking of a cow)...gracefully pick up the vessel full of milk (hands swing to her sides)...and walk away (remains sitting). Whereas if I have to do it as it is now, I must mime my Palani (man-servant) going by cycle to the Aavin milk depot and getting 'button-paal!'. She continued, "Our classical dance



"In my dance, the visual concept is totally different from that of Temple-dancing"

has right from the beginning been very closely associated with our religion and our philosophy. This dance is a vehicle of worship. So why not keep classical dance for classical themes?

"But I am not one of those narrow-minded people who won't look at anything non-classical. Even if disco is done well, I enjoy it... I also enjoy contemporary jazz very much". In fact Chitra began her dancing with classes in classical western ballet in London, continued with Manipuri and Kathak in Calcutta and ended up with Bharatanatyam at the age of nine. Her *arangetram* (first solo stage performance) was at eleven and after extensive training under the *dasi* (court dancer) T.A. Rajalakshmi and Vazhuvoor Ramiah Pillai, at the age of twenty five, she was let loose on the world. The world was no doubt stunned, not merely by her good looks, but by her perfect grace of movement and variety of facial expressions on the stage.



10 In my dance, the visual concept is totally different (from the traditional). When I choreograph a piece, I conceive it as a piece to be performed on the stage. I visualize it with the background...a stage... and I visualize some one dancing. Then I consider the patterns of movement... one movement evolves into the other.

"In my group dances, I use diagonals, I go in circles, I use parallels, I use triangles. These were not there when I learnt from my teacher....Once, after seeing my performance, my *dasi* teacher told me, "This is so different from what I taught you. But I approve of it, because you've evolved something which is

"Music and Dance are like twins - so (Visweswaran and I) work together"

visually beautiful". That was my greatest certificate".

What would you consider an ideal audience? How much does the audience's reaction affect you? "An audience which enjoys itself is the ideal audience. There are some who know everything about dance and are still not able to enjoy it - that's their funeral. Ha, ha! ... I do watch the audience over the stage-lights and I like to see their reactions. I am basically a dancer who likes to communicate, but if the audience is unresponsive, I can become quite cold"

What is Visweswaran's role in your dancing career? "My appreciation of music - Western and Indian -has increased ten-fold after marrying him. Just as he has learnt a lot about dance, I have learnt a lot about music from him.... People tell me that he also makes friends very easily - which is very necessary in my field."

The impatient sounding of a fiat horn had regularly interrupted the quick passage of time. When we heard a particularly long blast, we knew finally that the interview was over, and Chitra's magic spell was broken. Curtseying low, buckling our sandals and murmuring apologies to the beautiful dancer who was waiting on the threshold of her house, we made a hurried exit.

11
THE SILENT VALLEY

Huge thunder clouds rumbled over the valley. The howling wind stopped, life stood still for an instant, then great torrents of rain roared down from the skies. The heavens split open in a blinding flash of light, a thundering crash shook the jungle and the fall of the forceful rain on the hard jungle floor sounded like the boom of a thousand drums.

The Child huddled in a cave with the animals. Then the sun broke through the clouds and splashed, soothing warm rays on the cowering jungle. A Mynah sailed out pirouetting in the jungle breeze, whistling softly. A herd of Chital flashed past in the undergrowth, their dappled coats glistening and weaving a fascinating tapestry in the sunlight. The breeze coaxed the leaves and flowers away and the butterflies pranced with gay abandon.

The Child stood drinking in the heady scent of moist earth, his bright eyes dancing. He chased the Robin and danced with the butterflies. He stroked the leaves and hugged the grass. A Fawn gambolled over and nuzzled his hand. The Mynah grew tired and swooping, perched on the boy's head. A group of parakeets zoomed past, calling harshly, flashing green against a blue-gold sky.

The child wandered through the valley, laughing with the animals, chattering with the birds, whispering with the leaves. He listened spell-bound to the bear narrating his great adventures and regretted that he hadn't the powerful limbs to take him on such rambles; he listened to the mynah and wished he had wings, so he could soar high, high and embrace the beaming sun; he watched the excited monkeys and wished he could do elegant swings from tree to tree.

He played with the sun beams and tried to catch them in his tiny hands, and the Sun winked and darted behind the cloud, the child darted behind the tree and both peeped out stealthily at each other and the Sun grinned and the child danced up and down with excitement.

The jungle loved its child. The trees bent over with delight as he gambolled playfully at their feet. Even the stern old-fashioned banyan tree couldn't resist this gurgling bundle of energy and flapped its arms with pleasure.

One day, a great army of men descended on the valley and began cutting the trees down. "I heard them say", chirped the Mynah, "that they were going to cut down the entire forest and build a great city here". "And they are your kind", he added sorrowfully. The Child was eager to see his kind. He set out forthwith and came within sight of the woodcutter's camp in two days. He hid himself and gazed at them fearfully.

The men picked up their axes, advanced to the line of trees and began attacking them with gusto. They looked up in astonishment as a wild-eyed, long-haired, naked boy raced towards them from the jungle edge, gesticulating madly and mouthing a strange tongue. Some men grabbed the Child and he was taken, kicking and struggling and placed in an enclosure. The men sat around it and gazed at the boy in wonder. The Child prowled about like a beast in a cage. They placed some food for him and resumed their work. The axes swung relentlessly and soon, a sizable clearing was made. The Child huddled in a corner, tearless eyes staring.

For two days and nights, the men hacked a clearing through the tangled vegetation. The next morning, the

cook came over, but the curled-up form in the corner do not stir. He poked it gently with his foot. The body felt cold.

A terrible silence descended on the valley. The sun disappeared behind a low cloud. The trees stood gaunt and sorrowful. The leaves cast down their faces. The wind cried mournfully in the undergrowth. The deer crouched in terror; the birds huddled fearfully in the branches. The forest brooded over its dead Child.

That morning two men were killed, when the trees they were cutting fell on them. A great fear filled the hearts of the men. The silence, ^{was} unnerving. The sound of axes against wood was like pistol shots in the air. Another tree cracked and injured a man. The men were terrified. The Gods were furious. The place was cursed. They fled from the valley.

The jungle grew anew over its ugly sore. But it could not mend the gash in its heart. The Child of Nature was dead. And the Valley remained silent for ever

MANI SUNDARAM

(This article was awarded the 2nd Prize in the Creative Writing Competition during MG 84)

* * *

THE MONK

That night he slept badly. He tossed and turned in bed, a million thoughts rushing through his brain like a tornado. He thought of his blossoming life, conjured up a view of his parents, whom he had never seen, and wondered about his new life, the life that had been gifted to him by powers his adolescence could not accept, or rather, would refuse to accept.

He tried to discard all thoughts of his life at the monastery, but did not succeed in taking away his spirit to that 'Shangrila' which he thought, existed outside the domain of the crude, archaic stone building. The thought of his present life were steadfast, indelible, and his forced mental ablutions could not give him that exhilarating feeling of youth and freedom he so badly wanted.

He respected the head Brahmin, but was disgusted with this life - a life he thought to be so languid and inconspicuous, a life he thought to be so much like the high walls of a prison, a life that prevented him from partaking of his emotional enfranchisement, a life he did not want to live!

Life, it is known, is in *living*, not in *existing* - in this region of purity and sanctity, his idea of life was existence. He loved to abhor it.

* * *

When the morning bell chimed, he could not rise. When he woke, all around him was silent, and his companions had left for the sanctum sanctorum to give to the Almighty their daily vocal offerings. The young fellow hated this too, for he thought that he could not sing. He asked out in his saffron robe, as guilty, and stood to the side of the temple, listening to the hymn - the rise, the fall, the divine ecstasy - All these feelings left on him

a dull sensation of numbness, as he looked out through the temple gates to see the young schoolgirls walking past the temple. How he craved to run out and live a life for himself, a life that would let him be master.

That afternoon he was not present for lunch! That evening, he was caned! He felt humiliated in front of all his "docile coward" friends. The head priest told him of how he had been found a derelict scavenging among streets, amidst the garbage, and how he had been provided this God-given home to live a comfortable life in - and how he was misusing it now. The young truant thought of telling him to let him live the life that God had originally proposed for him, but he restrained himself, as he knew the anger and insult these words would ignite.

That night, the young fellow stole all he could from his simple companions, stole some money from the priest's room, and left in the earlier hours of dawn. The buds were in as much a stupor of sleep as the inmates of the monastery, but one little sparrow cocked open one eye, stirred, shifted and felt asleep again.

* * * * *

Two days of acute hunger brought him to earth with a painful thump. Two days of begging for a job taught him all about the cruel world, two days of worldly lift taught him the hardships of trying to enjoy adolescent pleasures, two days of insult made him realise how melodious the entire atmosphere of the temple had been, two days of sickness taught him all about the cherubic health that was God, two days of blind wandering caused him to realise that the priest was not only master, but also God himself in human attire - his only path to salvation. He decided, ashamedly, to return!

* * * * *

The sky was dark and it rained lightly. The young boy was feverish and delirious. All his youthful and sprightly resistance had buckled up. He reached the gates, and his fear, guilt and sorrow converged upon him as a searing pain. His chest drummed, and his wet sticky hair told only too well of the wetting he had received all night. His stomach was grumbling desires. He looked all around - even the early rises were in bed (or the floor) - his mind touched the warmth of his rough blanket. He cursed himself at not having brought that out too, and he cursed himself for all he had done. His head spun as he recognised the gates. He climbed over, his heart thumping in anticipation, and ran straight towards the temple door, which he could only discern by the shrouded moonlight. On the way he stumbled and his head hit the ground. A stab of agony was all he felt, for it was almost indiscernible amidst all his pain.

The water fell in dewy drops upon his matted hair from the tips of the fresh green leaves, now as dark as the ominous and yet virgin morning. He rose uncertainly, and made for the temple door. He slept.

For some time, he dreamt of beautiful women and of an independent life, of money and wealth, of power! Then he dreamt that he was standing all alone in the temple hall, a lone lamp burning in front of him near the diety, flickering into the regal facial expressions. He smelt the clouds of incense that were rising upwards in spirals, sometimes streamlined, sometimes distorted. The clouds suddenly formed themselves into a head - the head of the head-priest, his fiery eyes like burning embers in his face, blood oozing out through the corners of his lips, his cane dancing in the air. He saw his companions laugh out loudly at him, and saw himself being punished by the priests. He saw whom he thought to be his mother & his father, holding hands with the priest. He noticed the huge dome fall towards him, while the diety was laughing hoarsely. The laugh became more sharp, more chilling, and reached the hyena-like crescendo.

The young monks were all singing a melancholy and sinister hymn; staccato voices throbbed and drummed,... The spires collapsed, the dome fell... His hallucinations became more foul, more sinister and spiritually lacerating.

The priest suddenly awoke. He had a peculiar nightmare - of sinister laughs and hymns, of domes and temples crashing on him, of dietics laughing mockingly. The morning was yet untouched and even the soft pitter-patter of the rain drops against the pane could not rupture its silent purity. He thought he heard a low moan. He rose, looked out through the small window and saw a small figure at the temple door through sleepy, watering eyes. The figure thrashed out in restlessness. He put a plastic cover over his head, took his stick and braved the rain. He found the boy.

Two days later, the young monk was dead - as close to God as he never had wished to be. After his cremation, all his companions went to the temple hall, and sang low, soft, soothing songs, amidst the rising, fragrant wisps of incense smoke.

* * * *

RAJAT MUKHERJEE

NSS & NCC

IT IS TIME FOR A CHANGE

It seems ironical that in a campus where there is an enormous scope for extracurricular activities, the students have to compulsorily take up the NSS or the NCC (if not the NSO). These organisations seemingly cannot exist without compulsion. If they are to develop certain qualities in students, the students must have a liking for them. If they are to extract work from students, the work must be useful to some one. This article is not an analysis of these organisations but of why students don't show enough interest in them.

In the last few years, the need to fulfil a certain amount of work as required by the Government has led NSS to undertaking work for works sake. In 1980, a survey was conducted in Taramani village asking the villagers what plants they wanted - the NSS had no funds to supply these plants. Since NCC required a day of social service, about 90 volunteers went to Narayanapuram and started digging a pond, only

to leave it in a condition much worse than what it had been in. The villagers who were being served were not to be seen anywhere near. Many excuses may be given, but the fact this disillusioned the students, cannot be denied.

Most of the NSS executive meetings were centred on the problem of creating work and extracting attendance from the volunteers. When the taxpayers in a village go completely neglected by the Government, is distributing old clothes to them a satisfactory solution? Are collecting old clothes and making brown-paper covers the right kind of service an IIT student can render to the country? Some NSS organisers feel so. They may be justified, but do they have the right to impose such works on the hapless volunteers? Can't refrain from work till we have decided upon right course of action?

As regards NCC, most of the students attend the parades and lectures with no real

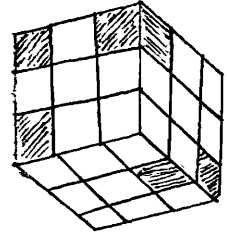
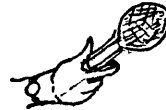
QUIZTIMES

V.PHANIRAJ

1. Pope John Paul II visited ^{Costa Rica} last year, a feat that could not have been performed by any of the popes for the last 30 years. Why is this a feat?
2. What is common to: Guillermo Vilas, King Mahendra of Nepal, General H.M. Ershad & President Leopold Senghor of Senegal?
3. This writer scored a half-century at Lords, partnering Arther Conan Doyle, and spent world war II in German custody. Identify him.
4. What is common to King, Earl, Duke and Count?
5. This common word was coined by Jan Helmont as a contraction of 'CHAOS'. What word?
6. What was unusual about logarithms as originally invented by John Napier?
7. How did a biscuit get its name?
8. Four of the five I.I.Ts were set up from scratch. Which is the exception?
9. This famous musician died in such obscurity that at his funeral only the grave digger was present. Name him.
10. A winner of both an Oscar and a Nobel prize, this writer founded the world's first film society. Name him.
11. Star Wars won only 1 Oscar, that for best editor. Who is the editor?
12. Which famous film star was a direct descendent of Thomas Hardy, Nelson's advisor at Trafalgar?
13. In Britain, the half penny is not used as legal tender, but it is still used in Big Ben. For what?
14. Born Krishna Bhanji, this person has become famous under another name. What name?
15. One event was shortened at one of the modern Olympics for a rather strange reason. Which event and why?

Erno Rubik talks to Campastimes

When we met Rubik, he had just returned from a hot question-hour (the a/c was not on) at CLT, which had been packed to full capacity, and more. He had answered diverse questions - "Why among all other proposed structures for the Cube, is yours still preferred?". "Probably because it is the best" - till some one came up with: "What sort of buildings do you build - flat or tall?" Thence, questions were obviously being asked to get a chance to talk to a celebrity. Fortunately, the session ended shortly.



We decided to talk to Rubik the Man. To give you the story of his life in two and half breaths: born in 1944 in Budapest, he was educated there in a grammar school, where he did a course in sculpture. After an engineering course in college, it was back to arts for him at the Academy of Crafts and Design. He took up teaching in 1970 and became the head of the Institute of Design, Budapest. He is now the chief editor of its magazine and the president of the Rubik Studio, which designs everything from furniture to buildings. When we asked him when he felt about his sudden rise to fame, Mr. Rubik said that he actually relished it. He has been on tours of virtually every country in the world being invited by their governments, just as he was invited by the Indian Government: Austria, Bulgaria, USSR, Yugoslavia, the Germanies, Poland, Italy, the Middle East, Switzerland... the list is exhaustive. He travels alone, as his two children are too young to accompany him. However, he claims that publicity and constant travel have not affected his family life. His hobbies: skiing, sailing, swimming, reading & music. "My policy is to enjoy life", he smiled. And what does he feel about the Cube? He is very happy that it is joining the exalted ranks of Monopoly and Chess. The toy varies in price all over the world: US-10\$; UK - 6£; Germany - 20 DM; France - 55 Francs; Singapore - 3 S\$. Only in Africa has it had no impact whatsoever.

Finally, had Rubik any message for us, we wondered, "When you leave, do so in a questioning way". he twinkled at us.

interest. Most other activities listed in the NCC programme are not usually undertaken due to lack of interest in both students and organisers. The punitive action that NCC authorities wish to take against the students who were irregular would have been justified if it were preceded by an analysis of the situation and some measures to improve it.

What surprises one about all this is the resigned attitude of the students. They seem to feel that trying to change things is more difficult than patient suffering. They are immensely relieved at the end of their term. But aren't we too young to accept things as unchangeable? As students of technology, we must be capable of bringing about and accepting changes. Accepting the inevitable is a mark of wisdom. But to consider as inevitable everything difficult to change is making life more rigid than it has to be.

SURESH BABU

ANSWERS
TO
QUIZTIMES

(SEE PAGE #16)

1. Costa Rica is still at war with Italy, having forgotten to sign a peace treaty after World War II. Italians are therefore not allowed in Costa Rica.
2. They have all had a book of their poems published.
3. P.G. Wodehouse
4. They are nicknames of famous Jazz Musicians - 'KING' OLIVER, 'DUKE' ELLINGTON, 'COUNT' BASIE 'EARL' HINES.
5. Gas
6. As X increased Log(X) decreased,
 $\text{Log}(10000) = 0$, $\text{Log}(00001) = 100$
7. A Biscuit is cooked twice. From the French "BIS CUIT" - twice cooked.
8. IIT Delhi - Previously the Commonwealth College of Engineering.
9. Wolfgang A. Mozart
10. George Bernard Shaw
11. Maricia Lucas, wife of George Lucas
12. Oliver Hardy of 'Laurel & Hardy' fame (the comedian)
13. Adjusting time - a tray is attached to each minute hand. A half penny added to it changes the time by 0.4 seconds.
14. Ben Kingsley
15. The Marathon at the 1908 Olympics - shortened by about 100 yards so that it would finish in front of the Royal Box.

