

Talk a Tone

No. 4

"IX

June, 1945



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Talk-a-Jone

JUNE 1945

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STANDARD PICTURES

Monumental Movie 622

BAIRAM KHAN

Starring:

G. JAGIRDAR-MEHTAB
(Courtesy Minerva)

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BENJAMIN · W. M. KHAN · MASTER
CHHOTU-YUSUF EFFENDI-SUNALINI
DEVI · HANSA · LALITA PAWAR
KUMAR & SHAH NAWAZ

Story:

**KHAN BAHADUR HAKIM
AHMED SHUJA**

Dialogue:

**KAMAL AMROHI
& K.B.H.A. SHUJA**

Music:

**GULAM
HYDER**

Director:

G. JAGIRDAR · M. HAVEWA

Producer:

Music:

GULAM HAIDER

Dialogues:

KAMAL AMROHI



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CE-BOX

JUNE, 1945

TALK-A-TONE

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Screenplay :
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Dialogues :
ZIA SARHADI & M. R. NAWAB

Songs :
ZIA SARHADI & ANJUM PILIBHITI

Starring :—
NOORJEHAN ★ ISHWARLAL
MEENAXI ★ YAKUB
BABY ALKA ★ SALVI, JOG
BABY LATA ★ GIRISH
LEELA MISRA ★ DAMUANNA
MALVANKER
and SITARA

★
Music :
K. DUTTA

★
Cinematography :
MADHAV BUL-BULE

★
Audiography :
DINSHAW BILLIMORIA
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289, ESPLANADE, G. T., MADRAS.

Managing Editor: Editor: Associate Editor:  
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Vol. IX June, 1945 No. 4

## Black Market with a Bang!

Black Market! It is here, it is there and it is everywhere.

As a matter of fact, the entire nation is being bled white by a few enterprising swindlers who, by a clever ruse, are keeping alive this unique fraud.

No industry, no business—be it big or small—has escaped this canker which is positively eating into its vitals.

It should surprise none if we acquaint our readers with the truth that the film industry has provided these racketeers a highly resourceful and fertile field for playing this hideous fraud.

Unfortunately, the Film Industry, to all intents and purposes, and so far as Black Marketing is concerned, has the potentialities of a microbe-culture. There is not any section, department or branch of it which is not indulging in this latest of grafts, to the fullest extent and making money on it.

There is a variety of ways in which this virus is developed.

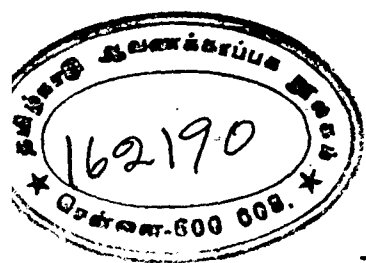
This hydra gathers its momentum from the very start of a film's life in the Production department and increases in volume at every stage of its growth and ends up in a colossal infliction of disintegration upon the head and purse of the poor, helpless and unfortunate picture-goer. Because, it is he who has to bear ultimately the full brunt of the malfeasance of the entire industry from its beginning to the end.

We shall amplify this.

The corruption has its birth when the Producer gets into a contract with a studio-owner who will hire out his studio, only on a certain consideration being made over to him, on the sly, totally independent of the stipulated amount entered into the signed agreement.

Then, with this at the back of him, the Producer books the artistes and secures contracts in reverse basis; making them sign for amounts quite beyond those actually paid to them. This arrangement adjusts the excess money he had to shell out to the Studio-owner in 'Black'.

Five



Noted, not  
Noted, not



*are now arriving...*

RCA Victory Sound Projection systems perfected after extensive research are now arriving.

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JUNE, 1945

TALK-A-TONE



Swarnalata plays a lively role in "MAHARATHI KARNA"

Next, in this Holy Order, is the illegal intimacy between Producer and Distributor which subsists for the purpose of secret payment to the Producer. As usual, the contract is innocent of the extra money and that is 'Black'.

The Distributor's double-dealing does not end here. He makes as much extra amount as he can possibly squeeze out of the sub-distributor who buys the picture from him for territories.

The final exploitation of the Black Market Zoolium is, when the exhibitor acknowledges only a certain portion of the collections in the 'reports' and shares the residue with the distributor, aside. 'Black' again!

To aid them in this, there are dubious means to which they resort, which include resale of tickets, admitting some without tickets and selling tickets outside the theatre at a premium through their own hirelings. There are many more of such unconscionable indulgences which deprive the film-fan from having his relaxation at the legitimate or justifiable cost.

In cases where the theatres are hired, the actual hire is fired and dust is thrown on the margin taken in lieu thereof.

These, in brief, are the sacred methods of our distinguished men in the industry to help its progress!

Now comes retribution. Bengal lost many of our brethren to the vile 'Black' poison. It is Nature's Law that every aspect has its balancing re-action. Yes. Dear Black-Marketeers, you are thriving on this sin!

There is bound to be compensation on the reverse, to make up for your delinquency. You may have to pay dearly for this. At least, you must realise, providing your conscience is still an entity in you, that God's punishing hand will descend upon you with a severity and at a moment you least anticipated it.

It is possible that the Government authorities are not in a position to uncover your Black deals. You are Social-Debtors. It rests with you, at least in so far as you wish to be free from the doom, to do such acts of expiation in time which will form partial ablation.

It consists in the various leaders of these malafide transactions paying back a portion of their 'Black' earnings to the public.

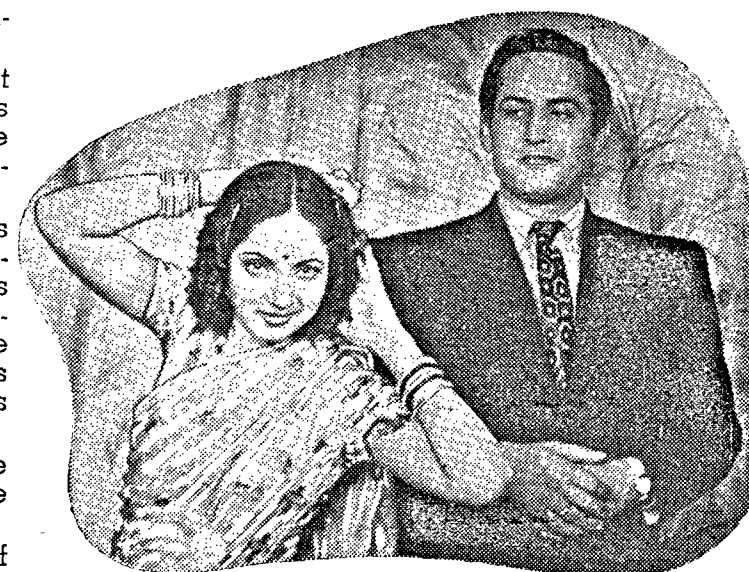
The Studio-owner can equip his plant with efficient machinery and materials and make them available to the Producer.

The Producer can turn out some honest-to-goodness films, in the place of the present set of contraband.

The Distributor can make up his mind to buy only the right stuff and not encourage the 'vulgar' money-maker.

The Exhibitor, or theatre-owner, can fit the theatre with decent acoustics and comfortable accommodation, bearing in mind that his clientele is not a pack of midgets nor imbeciles.

ELSE, YOU WILL HAVE TO FACE THE RETRIBUTION WAITING ROUND THE CORNER!



Ullhas & Mumtaz Shanti are co-starred again in LADY DOCTOR

Seven

Greatness of purpose, tenderness of feeling, and  
a real love of humanity find their fulfilment  
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# SAMRAT Ashok



with a formidable band of artistes  
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TALK-A-TONE

JUNE 1945

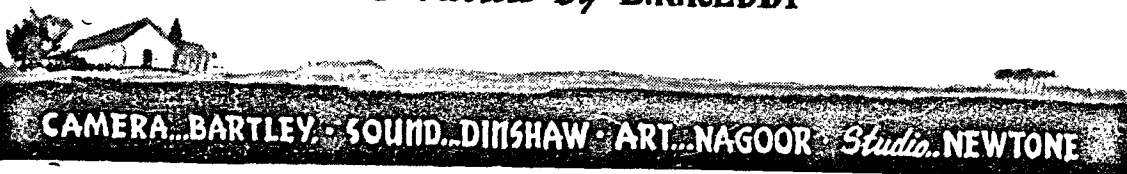


*Await!*  
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NARAYANARAO...LINGAMURTHY...SIVARAO

*Directed by* B.N.REDDI



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## THE FILMFANS CLUB

Our article in May TALK-A-TONE was general and discursive and not precise and particular, regarding the functions and objects of the FILMFANS CLUB.

We had stated that the Aims and Objects of the FILMFANS CLUB will be described in a more business-like manner, and the general outline fitted in. Here we are.

The need for such a CLUB is obvious. The first flush of enthusiasm for films, when the novelty of it would confer immunity from criticism, is dead.

The Industry has passed out of its infancy.

If it is to survive and take its rightful place in the scheme of things, it is time it cuts its wisdom teeth.

Unfortunately, unless it is guided into the proper channel, the tide is running amuck.

Films have been made and shown only from the motive of profit-making, with an emphasis on cheap sensualism for ensuring popularity.

Indications are not wanting to prove that, while the common man has become satiated with a surfeit of 'Box-office successes', the educated public opinion has begun to realise that it owes a two-fold obligation to the country; one that the films of the day are no compliment to India astride her frontiers; secondly, resurgent national-consciousness decrees that representative Indian films be made. Both these mean that a clean sweep has to be made and the jig-saw puzzle pieced out properly.

How is this reform to come about?

Nothing is going to shake these professional producers into action unless they are compelled to do so by pressure of public opinion; and public opinion, to be effective, should be mobilised and trained for action. Such mobilisation involves internal co-ordination, a fundamental appreciation of its function and the technique of operation.

Herein comes the need for liaison between the Public and the Producer—the best agency that could effectively undertake this task are film journals.

Film journals have generally, till now, content themselves with satisfying the idle curiosity of their readers, to whom star-worship had become a fetish. These years, however, have not been in vain.

Angels have themselves shown that they have feet of clay and even purblindness can no more invest them with a halo of glamour.

Film-journals have also contributed to this state of things—as their existence has been precarious but for interested patronage.

Good films imply informed public opinion asserting itself through the Press, and this would presuppose an independent Press, which is not influenced by smiles of stars or producers' advertisements.

Filmfan—public must strengthen the hands of the Press in this endeavour of theirs. In extending this support, FILMFANS have a right to ask a journal for adequate service.

Now that TALK-A-TONE has taken the initiative in this direction, we would set out in brief what we propose to do.

1. Release in the mofussil, of pictures necessitates delay in critical reviews. When the time for review comes, opinions of Filmfans from the mofussil will be solicited and borne in mind.
2. Reviews, when made, will try to answer criticisms wherever possible and give the correct lead.
3. Opportunities will be created for closer contact between Filmfans and Producers and Stars. This, in course of time, will include visits to studios, informal assemblies to meet stars, excursion to location shooting, etc.
4. Encouragement of talents to act, sing, write stories, crank cameras, record sound, etc.
5. The ultimate establishment of a School of Censorship for Films.
6. Exposure of 'unconscionable' acts in the film industry.
7. Setting right, exhibition of films and exhibitor's grievances.
8. Provision for a Library and Read-



ANSARI in United Films "Bhaijan"

ing Room of filmic literature and film journals from everywhere.

9. To start film circles, in various mofussil centres and affiliate them to the Filmfans Club, Madras, which will function as the Central Unit.

10. The re-actions of the Filmfans in the Central Unit and in the various affiliations in the mofussil will be conveyed from time to time to the Trade through Talk-a-Tone.

11. Undertaking such other work as may be conducive to the fulfilment of the objects and aims of the Filmfans Club.

These are a few of the objects to be achieved and we invite suggestions for more, from readers.

The FILMFANS CLUB, as a full-fledged institution will be introduced to the readers in the July issue of Talk-A-Tone, after the inauguration of the Club.

It is the duty of everyone reader of TALK-A-TONE to do his or her best to make this a success and we have the confidence to say, you will make it a success.

TALK-A-TONE,

SPONSORS.

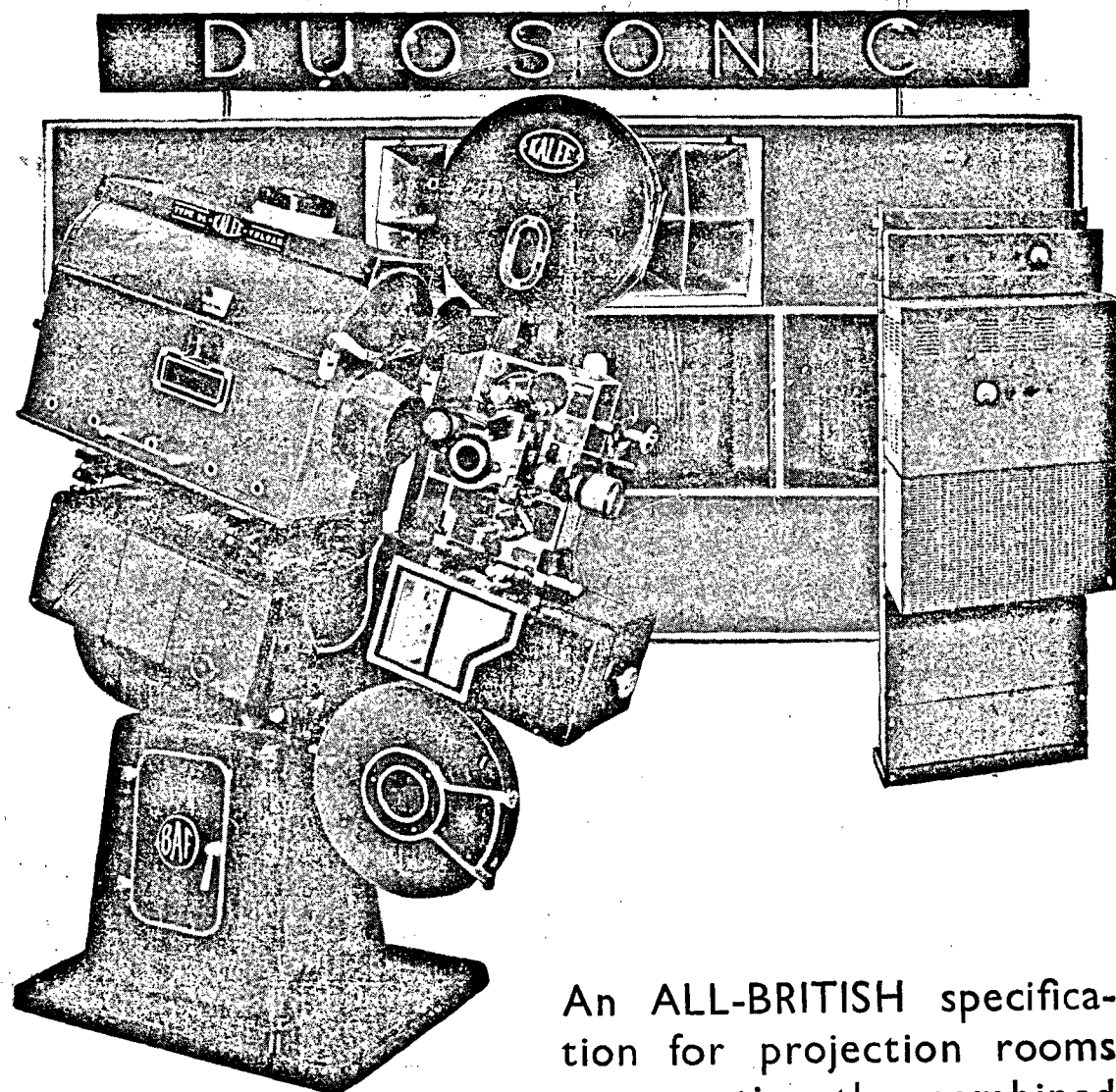
THE FILMFANS CLUB,

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## Film Fans' Forum

(TALK-A-TONE'S film fans' forum is intended to answer reasonable queries from readers interested in knowing things in and around the film firmament. Serious questions are treated seriously and flippant ones in like manner, but the Editor replies none in spite and sets down naught in malice. If this section helps to relieve the tedium of these hard days, the purpose of this FORUM is served.

Address all your queries to The Forum, Talk-A-Tone, Madras. Only letters bearing full signature and address will be considered. Queries received up to 20th of last month only are answered here.—Ed.)

**Majeed M. Rauf, Colombo.**

All these days I was buying your journal at 85 cents from Weston News Agencies, but now they are selling it to me at Re. 1 and 20 c. How is it?

The price was raised from Annas Twelve to Re. 1 in India from the March issue, owing to increase in the bulk of the journal and consequent enhanced cost of production. Accordingly its price in Ceylon is one Rupee and Ten Cents. Any infringement of this price may be kindly brought to the notice of Messrs. Weston News Agency, 170, Wolfendal Street, Colombo who are our accredited agents.

I am seriously in love with the lovely U. R. Jeevaratnam, and wish to correspond with her. Why should she not get wedded to someone who is not in the film-line? How old is she?

Yours is a strong pattern of 'serious' love for Miss Jeevaratnam, which will be requited by writing to her. So be it, and address the lady c/o Modern Theatres, Ltd., Salem. Your star is just turning twenty and has not yet decided on whom to lavish her matrimonial net, and wiving, for the man, they say, goes by Destiny.

HARIDAS is a horrible picture which portrays sin in its meanest form and all Ceylon hated this picture because no decent family could view this film without flinching and shame. Why did the Director make it so base?

HARIDAS is the work of a good Director gone wrong and, at the time, his Producers were torn between their devotion to Art and Mammon and the latter won. Ceylonese fans, it is highly gratifying to note, have reacted rightly by shunning such vulgar display of sex and sin in a Devotional film. This shows the critical faculty of the Ceylon filmfans. Congratulations!

How is Mathuram getting on, now that her spouse is in the celler? I learn that she is praying for his early redemption from his present plight. What is likely to come out of it?

With Krishnan doing penance as well, condemned to live in penal servitude, by the decision of the High Court Sessions, Mathuram, as his other half

with a month-old baby in arms, is sending in her wifely supplication to the Almighty by herself and to judicial tribunal through the Counsel. Whether answer to both the prayers will synchronise is, at the moment, unpredictable.

**V. K. C. Ahameed, Colombo.**

I understand that M. S. Subbulakshmi can sing Hindi songs. Why does she not appear in Hindi films?

Thank you. M. S. S. will shortly grace Hindi films?

**L. M. John, Bogawantaiawa.**

Please tell me which is the best picture for the year 1944 in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi and the name of the artistes who gave the best performance in films during the period?

For the year 1944, the best Tamil film was POOMPAVALI, Telugu film TAHSHILDAR and Hindi Film RAMSHASTRI. In Tamil, there was no quality performance by male or female artiste. In Telegu, Nagiah was the best male star and Kannamba the female. In Hindi, finest work was G. Jagirdar's among male stars, and Sobhana Samarth's in girls.

**Miss Jayakumari, Bangalore.**

Can you tell me why our stars disintegrate in their work between the first picture and the next?

It is the law of gravitation working the stars in the descending order.

Why don't you correct Tamil pictures? Nowadays, they are awful.

Editors are chaps with slashing tendencies on account of their being used to blue-penciling. If their services are requisitioned for correcting Tamil pictures, there might be hardly anything for you to see. However, your suggestion can be carried out if you, for your part, co-operate. That is why we have started a FILMFANS CLUB. Why not join in? First come, first served.

What is the meaning of your saying of a star, born to a A, brought up by B, married to C and now with D?



Veena in "Pehli-Nazar"

That the star as well as ourselves believe in the transmigration of the soul for its diverse functions into appropriate bodies.

#### D. Aloysius Perera, Colombo.

Who among the male and female stars, entered the S. I. films early in youth and still continue to be working in the lead?

Baby Rukmani entered the cinema years back and now is Kumari Rukmani and has Sri VALLI to her credit which was preceded by the heroine's portion in NARADAR. She has two more pictures assigned to her. Likewise, Master Mahalingam, among the males. He leads in Sri VALLI.

#### A. P. Abdul Karder, Negombo.

What is your opinion about the case in which Bhagavathar and N. S. Krishnan are involved?

None. They have taken their sentences. The other details are in our Editorial of May TALK-A-TONE.

What is the best picture in Hindi? I am asking about DROUPADI.

Rama Shastri is the best Hindi picture. Droupadi also ran.

Can you publish the autograph of Sushila Rani?

Fourteen

Well, why not? Will a duck swim?

#### R. G. Swami, Mysore.

Is it not advisable for Kannamba to make her reputation in Telugu Socials and rest content with it?

Kannamba might rest content with it but the Tamil fans are clamouring for her talented work in Tamil as well. Her presence in the Tamil cinema is a means of cementing the Tamil fans with their Andhra brethren, a consummation devoutly to be desired for the survival of real good-neighbourly feelings amongst ourselves. So, Kannamba is well advised to continue to do both Tamil and Telugu pictures. Socials are coming in. Don't worry.

Has Kanchanamala no demand for her talents? She does not seem to be in the filmworld at all? Why?

This point has been clearly discussed in the controversy on the matter. We have nothing to add. It is for you to register your protest with the concerned producer and try to get the star released from his Octopus grip.

Who is the best Director of Art, Music and Technique?

There is none in Tamilnad who is all-in-one. Otherwise, A. K. Sekar for Art, Nagiah for Music and K. Subramaniam for the direction technique.

#### D. S. Jayasuriya, Colombo.

How can a Sinhalese, ignorant of Tamil and Hindustani, be a film star, in one of the two languages?

There is no process of achieving this miracle, short of magic.

#### M. Kathirithamby, Kekirama.

Name all the pictures in which T. R. Rajakumari is acting?

Gemin's CHANDRALEKA, Bhaskar Pictures' NATYA RANI, Jupiter's SRI MURUGAN & Tamil Nad Talkies' PANKAJAVALLI.

#### S. Vridhachalam, Cuddalore.

I fear that the sinister influence of the Cinema has infused an air of utter defiance in grown-up boys and girls, particularly girls, who refuse to be persuaded into matrimonial arrangements to save them the consequent pi fall. Now, what with the new Bill of inheritance for women and other unwelcome tirades on the right of the males, the women is not only coming into 'her' own, but into the 'Man's' own, as well. This is a highly disquieting state of affairs in a country whose future lies in the lap of the Gods. How is it?

I concede to your fairness in correctly assessing our predicament. You mean the fair sex has been unfairly intruded into a realm which, since the days

of Adam, have remained sacrosanct for the male. There is a similarity in the process to that of the film's progress. A quarter century back, women were not seen, nor heard. With the incursion of silent films, they were only seen, but not heard. Just now they are seen and heard. RESULT, the male is losing himself into the 'female.'

#### R. Yegneswaran, Tripunittura.

In answer to a question, a member of the Viceroy's Council gave the assurance that, provided there was co-ordinated efficiency in the film industry, it will be possible to keep the wolf from the door. What did he mean by this?

The method espoused is infallible from more angles than one. To keep the wolf from the door, the Member has only to set it on ours.

#### S. R. Gopal, Pettawattalai.

I have conceived an insatiable adoration for Vasundara. This began when I saw her ministering to 'RISHYASRINGAR' and culminated into a serious of paroxysm of jerks. I am now in a state of psychological malady which leaves no alternative but laying my heart at the feet of my lady at least through epistolary salutations, as I learn, her earlier commitment precludes another matrimonial sequence. Your advice to write letters and keep them wouldn't answer the problem. What shall I do? I am described to be of handsome form and figure by my friends.

This is a new one on your 'heart' specialist who should also be a psychic specialist and a resourceful chap who has developed highly 'technical' devices to meet all kinds of demands.

You will post the letter, my handsome hero, would you? So be it. You may begin right now and work fast. Talk-A-Tone has a specialised patented formula for this enterprise of yours, in the form of a love-letter-ink. The speciality of this ink consists in its brilliance until it reaches your cooing dove, and then the paper retains only the scratches of your pen. So write light and round and you have your satisfaction. This would spare the Editor of any possibility of criminal proceedings for incitement, and you for breach of trust. This is an invaluable prophylactic.

I don't mind what your enemies have to say about your form and figure.

#### 'Unknown Actor' Alleppey.

I am quite upset by your frequent disparaging references to artistes who are not renowned. Your reviews are needless castigations upon a really talented and useful adjunct to the Cinema. Last week I played HANUMAN in 'LANKA DAHANAM.' It took half-an-hour to get the audience out of the theatre. What do you say?

Congrats! Dear Unknown. By the way, can you tell me, was the poor guy (I mean the audience) lame or tied down by sciatica?

#### C. L. Rose Mary, Colepetty.

What was Shanta Apte doing before she came to the screen? When can I meet her in the star page of Talk-A-Tone? Give her address.

Shanta Apte entered the films in her early teens and as such had not much scope to do anything of importance or note otherwise.

Shanta Apte will be featured in the Star page of Talk-A-Tone before the year runs out.

#### O. J. Abdeen, Colombo.

When will Prakash's BAGWAN BUDDHA be released? Don't you think we have been waiting too long?

I appreciate your view-point and rightly assess your impatience to see the film BAGWAN BUDDHA. But the fuss made by your representatives—the Hon'ble members of the Ceylon Council—on this issue gave a rude shock to the producers, that it had for a while set back a little the clock of progress. However, I am glad to tell you that research work on this picture is almost in the final stages and actual production may start not lately.



NASEEM in Taj Mahal Pictures! "Begum"

SADHONA BOSE

Gives Beautiful &amp; Excellent Dance &amp; Musical Hits

IN  
JAYANT FILMS

## URVASHI



Directed by: BABUBAI JANI

STARRING:

SHOBHANA SAMARTH, PREM ADIB, MISRA, KUSUM DESHPANDE, SHANTA PATEL Etc.

Story & Dialogues  
Pt. SHIVAKUMARMusic  
SHYAM SUNDARPhotography  
JAYANT JANI

CONTACT

(FOR ANDHRA &amp; CEDED)



DEVI FILM CORPORATION ★ POPULAR PICTURES

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T'NAGAR, MADRAS

## MEN &amp; MATTERS

BY

P. N. GHOSH, B.A.,  
(Chief Rep. Bombay)

## Deceptive Countenances :

If it is accepted that the only way to avoid the pain of life is to be a genius or an artist, the growing strength of our directors can possibly be accounted for, but the pity of it is that their conception of 'genius' is something different from what is generally attributed to it; and why? Because they have yet to learn that genius is the power of leaving one's own interests, wishes, and aims entirely out of sight, and of entirely renouncing one's own personality for a time, and that these are to be found out by others from an artless expression of predominance of knowledge over will on their countenances. Unfortunately, we know too well that we are daily gazing on deceptive countenances. Our directors must realise their enormous responsibilities: they must also know that these can only be satisfactorily discharged if their work is successful in proportion as it suggests the Platonic idea or the universal. Their complacency may help them to forget their own troubles, but casts a deep gloom of frustration and despondency on all those who have the misfortune to bear with them. This can only be removed by their aiming at some essential or universal blessedness, which will not speak of shadows, but of the thing itself.

## Blessings of a liberal education :

When I think over the so many ills pervading our almost nascent Film Industry, I can hardly resist the conclusion that a pitiable lack of, and disregard for a liberal education has been the cause of most of our troubles. By a man of liberal education, I do not mean a stunted ascetic, far less, a coxcomb holding high degrees. What I do mean and stress is that a man possessed of liberal education who has been so trained in his youth that his mind is disciplined, and his body an obedient tool in his hands. His intellect has grown powerful and well balanced, and he can reason out things clearly and dispassionately, and can grapple with problems masterfully. It is

both subtle and strong. His mind is stored with the most vital truths of nature and a knowledge of the laws that govern them. His natural instincts and susceptibilities are not deadened. He is not austere or cold-blooded; but one who is full of energy and enthusiasm, and is always open to correction with the humility of a student. He possesses a strong will and is a master of his passions, and is guided by the dictates of his conscience. He has an abiding love for all beauty, whether of the objects of Nature, or of the works of Art, hates all evil things, and has the same consideration for others as he has for himself.

The above sounds like a counsel of perfection, but how many of the custodians of the Industry have the cheek to say that they combine in themselves all that has been said. It is not understood how an Industry which particularly claims to stand for Art and Education, can thrive at the hands of those who themselves require to be taught, and taught well.

## Momentous Changes in Bombay Talkies:

My readers may be knowing that all has not been well with the Bombay Talkies ever since Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall and the Mukherji group severed their connections with the concern. Things, of late, have come to such a pass that directors of the company have decided to introduce radical changes in their system of administration. The first step to implement these will be to get rid of Amiya Chakravarty just after the termination of his term of contract. The next will be to ask Mrs. Devika Rani to disassociate herself from the management of the studio. It is reliably learnt that she too, thinks that she is incapable of bearing the tiresome burden any longer. That she has offered her shares for sale is a sufficient indication of her desire to take leave of Bombay Talkies, and perhaps, for good. Personally I think that she cannot have made a wiser decision.

## Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall With Bombay Talkies Again :

My readers will perhaps be surprised to know that the directors of the Bombay Talkies are seriously thinking of approaching Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall, the ex-managing-director of the concern, and requesting him to occupy his old chair again. Here, I am tempted to say that for the good of the institution itself

Durga Khote in  
Kishore Sahu's  
"Veer Kunal"

the directors of the company cannot think of any better and more effective way of averting the impending crisis. They must be knowing that Rai Bahadur spent the best period of his life in the service of the company, and that his organising ability cannot be even disputed by his worst enemy. The only point which Rai Bahadur would like to impress upon the directors before he finally makes up his mind to accept the offer is probably that he should not unnecessarily be handicapped by opposition from any quarters from bringing about the much needed changes. Let it not be presumed however, that Rai Bahadur's connection with Filmistan Ltd. will in any way be affected by his proposed reinstatement in the Bombay Talkies. Further developments will be watched with interest.

## Ambitious Post-War Planning In Filmistan :

With his usual flair for taking the initiative in doing things, Rai Bahadur Chuni Lall has been planning ahead in consultation with the producer S. Mukherji, the artiste Ashok Kumar, and others to do something which may prove helpful to face competition and withstand the slump in the trade that is likely to set up with a vengeance, as it were after the termination of war. Although details are yet a close secret, I have a knowledge of the fact that the producer S. Mukherji will shortly be proceeding to America to study things at first hand. It is quite likely that Mukherji may start even before the completion of Filmistan's



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third production which is exclusively his. My readers will also be glad to know that Mukherji has promised to complete this picture within sixty calendar days. Is it not unlike Mukherji?

### 'Padosi' Exhibited At Coventry:

The Indian film 'Padosi', produced by the Prabhat Film Company, had the unique distinction of being shown at Coventry under the auspices of the Workers Association to about 300 local Indians. After the exhibition of the film 100 workers were enrolled as members of the Association.

### Central Studios' Sale May Not Materialise:

The prospective purchaser of the Central Studios, who has already paid a couple of lakhs to Mr. K. K. Mody by way of earnest, is now in a fix. Firstly, the abrupt cessation of hostilities in Europe with the consequent apprehension of the setting in of a general slump in trade and commerce has made it difficult for him to procure the balance of eighteen lakhs within the stipulated period; and secondly, he too, is feeling a little shy of investing twenty lakhs on a property which was purchased for eight lakhs only a couple of years back. Anyway, Mr. Mody stands to gain much. It now remains to be seen whether he makes a refund of the earnest to the unfortunate speculator, on the deal falling through, or claims the forfeiture of the earnest in strict adherence to the formalities of the law.



A Scene from "ADHAR"

### Irresponsible Statement:

Our Delhi contemporary "Rupbani" reports, of course, by insinuation, that Rai Bahadur Chunilal may again take over charge of the management of the Bombay Talkies Ltd. leaving Filmistan in the hands of Chunibhai Desai and Nitin Bose. Without taking pains to try to trace this seemingly interesting piece of news to its source, I can authoritatively say that there is not even a semblance of truth in Rai Bahadur's reported severance of connection with the Filmistan Ltd. which to all intents and purposes is his handiwork. Then again S. Mukherji's alleged love for and interest in Tajmahal Pictures, to the neglect of Filmistan, is equally false. The very fact that Mukherji is making preparations for his tour to America, and that he has also started his next production in right earnest, will give the lie to all mischievous reports and suggestions. I have nothing more to add. My readers may judge things for themselves.

### Chhaya Devi In Badami's "Uttara Abimanyu"

The artiste Chhaya Devi of Calcutta, who came here on a pleasure trip and is still staying on, has made her stay profitable by accepting Sarvottam Badami's offer. She has just signed a contract with him, who is sure to cast her in an important role befitting her talents and experience. Incidentally, it may be said that Badami's "Uttara Abimanyu" with such artistes as Ashok Kumar, Shanta Apte, and Chhaya Devi in important roles, can really boast of a powerful cast.

### Swarnalata Again:

I reported sometime back that the film-star Swarnalata had been feeling of late worn out both in body and mind. I never knew then that her malady, which was said to be more physical than mental, would take a serious turn necessitating her removal to a nursing home. I have just come to know that she is at present lying there with an impaired vitality, rudely shaken by a major operation. Her indisposition has caused a great headache to my friend Mr. Phani Majumdar, whose latest production "Justice" cannot do justice to itself only on her account. Another gentleman involved in this Swarnalata business, and deserving pity



Beauty and the Beast  
 Kannamba in "MAYA MACHINDRA"

more than anyone else is her husband Pessi Bilimoria who has taken upon himself the thankless task of ministering to her sick-bed wants and comforts. It is quite likely that the husband of a film-star has his own consolation.

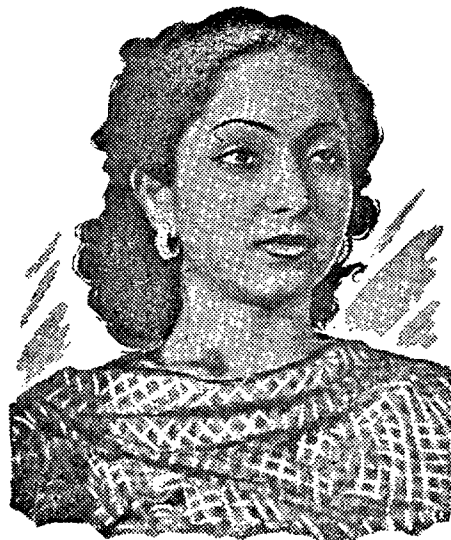
### Meena Leaves Bombay For Good:

After her mysterious disappearance from Bombay for sometime, the film-star Meena, who had been so much in the news on account of her conflict with Sohrab Mody, and her matrimonial misadventures, as I would call them, was found one fine morning driving in a big limousine with the pomp and poise of a queen, so to say. A friend of mine told me then that her change in fortune was being envied by her sisters in the trade. The same friend now comes again and reports that Meena's happiness was short-lived. On a closer enquiry, it was revealed to me that Meena with her family ramifications proved too much of a burden to the third aspirant of her hand, who also has since staged a graceful walk-out. Disappointed Meena is in no mood to think kindly of Bombay, and in sheer disgust she has left Bombay for good, retracing her steps to her native place Lahore. I wish she would get more peace of mind there.

### Mystery Behind Navin Pictures' 'Bhartruhari'

Truly speaking this is out and out a Ranjit Production under a licence held by P. B. Zaveri of Navin Pictures whose business is to float new film-producing companies at opportune moments. May I ask him as to what has become of his Kirti Pictures and other concerns? Now to the point in question. I feel

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tempted to ask our hoary-headed champion producer Sardar Chandulal Shah whether his interest in "Bharthruari" was confined only to one of the stages of his studio together with the services of the director Chaturbhuj Dossi and the music director Khemchand Prakash being loaned out to Zaveri on rent, or was there a private arrangement with the licences which without much effort can be called...a camouflaged purchase of a licence. One naturally becomes suspicious of even Chandulal Shah's bonafides when he freely associates himself with a man like Zaveri for sharing spoils. Unfortunately our Delhi bureaucrats plead ignorance of all that is happening around them, if not under their very nose. I am sorry for being compelled to speak out an unpleasant truth, but when I find that a mock-producer like Zaveri is in possession of more than one licence, I can hardly keep myself in check.

#### Self-advertisement is no Publicity :

The release publicity of Mehboob's long-awaited "Humayun," which has just seen the light of the day, has not been what it should have been. I do not know under whose advice my friend has started boosting his own self. He should know that publicity from a wrong angle is always harmful. Has Mehboob so quickly forgotten the calamity that overtook his "Roti" "Taqdeer" and "Alibaba", to mention only a few? It is quite likely that being absolutely innocent of the King's English, which is nothing less than a crime in one claiming to be a front-rank director, he cannot make out how crudely his vanity is being humoured. What really counts is not the name, but the work that bears the name. Let Mehboob remember that light cannot be hid under a bushel, and he will be all the more happy.

#### Producer S. Mukherji in Quest of a Mascot :

I have just come to know from a very reliable source that the failure of his much-vaunted "Chal Chal-Re Naujwan" has made S. Mukherji so very diffident that he has been found of late to display a superstitious bent of mind. The fact that he is anxious to bring back Mumtaz Shanti, the heroine of his "Kismet", particularly for the

production he has just started, lends point to the report that Mukherji appreciates the value of Mumtaz Shanti as a mascot. What makes the whole business still more interesting is that Mumtaz Shanti, too, in her turn, has been equally anxious to re-possess the mascot of producer S. Mukherji. Let us wait and see how these mascot-seeking parties fare with the possession of their respective mascots.

#### New Releases :

The period under review has seen a good number of releases : they are Sanjivan Art Productions' "Sawan", Famous Films' "Phool", Dalsukh Pancholi's "Shirin Farhad", Hind Pictures' "Laila Majnu", Mehboob Productions' "Humayun", Central Studios' "Yateem" and Krishna Movitone's "Preet". Being pressed for time I was not able to attend the premieres of the last three pictures, and I, therefore, propose to keep my comments on them in reserve for my next feature.

#### "SAWAN"

Will Director Dwarka Khosla pay more serious attention to picture-making ?

It is a picture, in the form of a social, which not only tells nothing new, but fails to make any impression on the audience. It is based on an inconsequential story which has been half-heartedly treated. The result is that a painful attempt of the director, who is also the author of the story, to push in the heroine Shanta Apte and the hero Motilal without preparing the proper background for their appearance, is detected. The less said about the grip, tempo, and other ingredients of a motion picture, the better. I have nothing to say against the artistes Shanta Apte, Chandraprabha, Mothi Lall and others, save and except that they have been mishandled. The songs and the music of the picture have nothing much to recommend them, while its technical qualities border on the average. I do not mind asking my friend Dwarka Khosla, the director of the picture, to do things a little more seriously, and sensibly if possible, in future. Pictures of this type are getting on one's nerves. Let this be a warning.

Twenty one

#### PHOOL :

Director Asif mismanages the whole show !

Close on the heels of Filmistan's "Chal-Chal-Re - Naujwan" comes "Phool", by a strange coincidence at ROXY, to remind the public that its producers took an age, so to say, to complete the picture, which has cost them almost a fortune. The picture proper : it is based on a story by Kamal Amrohi, one Asif directing it. The story itself is defective in that it has hardly any central idea or theme as we call it. On the contrary there are so many items or things in it—as for instance, patriotism, Hindu-Muslim unity, duty first and self last, and a lover's fidelity to his beloved—on each of which a powerful motion picture can be made—that it was really difficult for a comparatively new director like Asif to weld them into a composite whole by intelligent treatment. The various sequences bearing very little relation to one another, look spurious, and give one the impression that both the director and the story-writer have been knocking their heads against a wall all the time with a view to doing something sensible and logical. That they have failed is obvious.

I now take up the artistes. To start with, I must say that none of them, with the solitary exception of Suraiya, who unfortunately, had not much to do, has given a remarkable performance. It is not understood what help the picture has received from artistes like Durga Khote, and Prithviraj, who could easily be done away with. Another artiste, who has apparently been made much of, is the heroine Veena. In the first half of the picture she gives a laboured performance with too much of affectation. It is a pity that our directors have not the eyes to see that Veena is no good at roles which demand coquetry, flirtation and flippancy. Her appearance in conjunction with her temperament gives her some grace in tragic and doleful roles ; outside these, she is definitely a misfit. The much-ballyhooed Gulam Haider has again failed to deliver the goods. Only one song sung by Suraiya has found favour with the audience, and even that on account of Suraiya's sweet voice, and not for Gulam Haider's tune. The technical quali-

(Contd. on page 24)

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UMAKANT  
USHA  
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LAHORE

## B. N. REDDI

### Of the 'BIG' Business

Dear Editor,

So you want to know what I have been doing in the film-world this month past, having turned me loose on a make-believe world of money-mad men and madcap queens! It is none of your business, dear Editor, but in my milder moments, my weakness, goaded by material considerations, is to satisfy your curiosity.

You may say that making Telugu talkies in Tamilnad, and capturing Tamilian hearts in the bargain, is diabolical business. But I must ask you to dust your brain-pan a little and think of the guys who are cashing in on Tamil films in Andhra-adesa. And, why not? For one thing, we begin to understand each other, at least the language we speak. Then, there is the Commandment: "Love thy neighbour as thyself" and take his cash along. It is a mutual compliment, this good neighbourly policy, and, as you know, good wishes beget good returns.

My reverence for Vauhini is not only for those who make up Vauhini now, but for those who made it up as well and are now trying their fortunes elsewhere. Albeit, Vauhini is a spiritual force and everyone who started with it is with it. There is charm in the names and in their picture-titles. Nagiah is one. They all preserve the unities of purpose.

If you want to get ahead in this business, you have got to have iron nerve. Something like B.N. Reddy's for instance, and his give and take policy. Which goes to prove that the Cinema's spirit of swashbuckling adventure isn't all on the screen.

On his first noteworthy rise toward film-fame, Mr. B. N. Reddy lost part of his shirt. I am referring to *Grihalakshmi* and *Rohini* Pictures. But he came determined to stake his last shirt—he had a legion—and won. The rise was involuntary but symbolic. Like most of his successes—and some of the financial flops—it came from hard work, patient study of the detail and abundant nerve.

His virtues walked their narrow round  
Nor made a pause nor left a void  
And, sure, the eternal Master found  
The single talent well employed.

I met Mr. Reddy first on the sets at Newtown Studios. A studio-set, as you know, is an informal sort of place, where people call each other by their pet names. This has a notable exception. B. N. Reddy is always 'Mr. Reddy'. Does he stand on dignity? No. But it just isn't done. There is something about him that inspires an innate respect for him.

As I said, he was busy with a scene in which a young, college student, was to make love to the sweet young thing, a ravishingly made-up widow. The set itself was nice and splendid. "Under a shady tree in a forest deep, there lies a maiden fast asleep" and all that.

Dear Editor, need I say that my heart and hands ighed!

Sekar and Ramnoth were 'ready' and waiting. But the young man wouldn't commence operations. He suddenly got stung to shyness and every time he got near the girl, he simply went down on temperament. After several attempts, Mr. Reddy adjourned it, saying: "Well, a young man, probably, can't make love on the stroke of the claspstick!"

Mr. Reddy gets a laugh out of people, enjoys a joke against himself, sees the good even in his unthinking detractors and seldom, if ever, hurts. He takes his picture work, as he does his life, with a lot of thought.

When my mission was made known to him, he came straight for me, a moustached Laughton in Dhoti, and started on my first question.

"So you think film-production is Art. No, sir, it is a hybrid, composed of the arts and industries. If genius and talent were to be exploited: Woe unto the Director! You know why? Every profession has a basic qualification. A journalist has needs to be qualified to write correct, or at any rate, good English, be a jack-of-all-trades and master of one and have ideas. Similarly with other walks of life.

Twenty-three



But, to be a director, you don't need any qualification, only money. Patrons of films as art consider it fashionable to be 'Arty', a form of intellectual snobbery, deeply rooted in its devotees who are not numerically strong enough to make the artistic film the commercial success essential to their continuance', went on Mr. Reddy, non-stop. To my next, his answer came as from the slot machine.

"Quality, indeed! Wherefrom, and how? If the artistes arrive on the set adequately made-up, then, we thank our stars for the day's auspicious opening and dote on all the good omens we had noticed when starting for the set. If the Camera doesn't choke and registers the still life on the set, we are lucky, and if the Sound also goes well, it is a windfall. Finally, if a picture comes out of the Printing Room and Laboratory without fog and flicker, it is a miracle and the *Nattu Pillayar* earns his promised 108 coconuts. That's our working conditions. The only answer, in my humble opinion, apart from constructive criticism, is to make better pictures and that rests on how you and the public help us make it."

That, dear Editor, is the gist of our conversation and I must here and now tell you that modest Mr. Reddy has up his sleeve, big schemes—he always had ideas for 'BIG' business. Passing his Inter in 1929, he had an itinerary which included Santiniketan and Burma, as far deep as Lashio, and started on his return voyage on the day of Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March; joined the National movement as a volunteer, working for nine months, picketting and doing propaganda. He graduated in Dandekar's Commercial College, and apprenticed for three years under Sastri and Shah, Incorporated Accountants, ending 1936. Was connected with Andhra Maha Sabha, came under the influence of Bellary T. Raghavacharya and played occasionally in amateur theatricals. Took active part in Natya Kala Parishat and began B. N. K. Press in which G. Ramabrahmam published his Praja Mitra. There, he was introduced to H. M. Reddy, by the late P. V. Seshaiiah of Saraswathi Talkies, Bezwada. Mr. H. M. Reddy was in need of somebody to help him to start a film concern on his own. Just to help him and incidentally to initiate himself in a new business, B. N. R. started Rohini Pictures, in which he and his friends held the largest interest. Sometime thereafter, for certain reasons, Mr. B. N. Reddy did not agree with Mr. H. M. Reddy and they parted friends, H. M. Reddy getting the Picture (Grihalakshmi) as well as the concern. But those who had been partners in Rohini Pictures and got back their money with profits moved B. N. R. to start film production.

Now began the historic relationship between Mr. Reddy and Ramnath-Sekar, who were then partners in Kartikeya Studios. This friendship developed by leaps and bounds and B. N. R. decided to produce his next picture at Kartikey's. But it closed down and Sekar and Ramnath joined B. N. Reddy. Vauhini was born. A prolific past has begotten B. N. Reddy's pleasant and genial present.

The rest is film history. His future plans include a studio. On the production side, Vipranarayana has captured his imagination and, after

Yogi Vemanna, he may get into it. So, that's B. N. Reddy, just doing 36-and Vauhini, in a nutshell—modest, businesslike and honest in outlook. We need more of them, if we are to earn our place in the industry.

Now that I have properly put you in your place anent B. N. Reddy, I'll tell you something that should soften your calloused soul. Until the incident I am about to relate, I had considered Mr. B. N. Reddy hard-boiled.

"Do you know the nicest thing about You?" he said, after his build-up had thrown me completely off my guard. I waited, pining for his next utterance like the proverbial importunate lover.

"It's that delightful, handsome and gentlemanly Editor of yours."

Your Stoooge.



A. SEENU is the talented artist whose handiwork has turned out many an attractive and colourful banner for Gemini's *Mangamma* and *Dasi Aparanji*.

At present, he is the chief artist for International Advertising Company, wherein his recent work for SRI VALLI is being flashed throughout the City.

Twenty-four

(Continued from page 21)

ties of the picture are not up to the mark. Before concluding, I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating the sweet little Suraiya on her making an otherwise dull and boring picture a little lively by her brilliant performance. I only wish she placed herself in capable hands to rise still higher.

"Shirin Farhad":

It is a picture the story of which is too well-known to need recapitulation. The picture, as presented on the screen, appeals more to sight than to understanding. Decorative sets and scenic grandeur may please but not satisfy. Even admitting that the subject-matter lacks in incidents, so essential to the making of a motion picture, it must be said that the director, who is also the scenarist, could have made things more sensible, lively and interesting by a more intelligent and business-like treatment of the story. The huge and magnificent sets can offer but little consolation when the artistes appearing therein fail to reach that commensurate emotional height on account of ill-developed and inappropriate situations and tame performances. Ragini looks sweet indeed, and also acts fairly well, but does not combine in herself enough glamour for being identified with Shirin. Jayant as Farhad is definitely a misfit. Songs and music do not catch the ears much. Technical qualities, however, are a distinct improvement on Pancholi Standard.

Laila Majnu:

It is yet another picture the story of which is not to be recounted at length for obvious reasons. Steadfastness of the lovers and their exemplary love for and devotion to each other against heavy odds constitute the keynote of the picture. This has been illustrated fairly well through a commonplace story intelligently treated. Although occasional incongruities mar the picture a little, they cannot detract much from the general appreciation it evokes. In spite of all the sincerity of the artistes, Swarnalata and Nazir playing Laila and Majnu respectively, I have not been much impressed by their performance, far less by their looks. The songs and the music of the picture border on the ordinary, but they are not wholly bad. The technical qualities, however, are not very satisfactory.

## THIS, THAT & THE OTHER

By WANDERER

### Pragathi Prodigals.

A lot of hot air is being generated on a point of next-to-nothing importance, incidentally enriching the credit of unpaid publicity to the party involved. The omission relates to Pragathi's prodigious evasion to produce the propaganda subject. Well, is it not time that they hid themselves to this matter without the slightest possible delay? They had three licences and have done SRI VALLI, while RAJA YOGI is hanging fire owing to circumstances beyond anybody's control. That third subject, in accordance with the principle of granting licences to the Studio-owner-producer, has to be one of propaganda. And, so far, the prodigals of Pragathi seem to have successfully side-tracked this obligation. Now, they ought to: else, they will get into trouble. Ironically enough, our contemporaries do not seem to appreciate this aspect of the whole question. Pragathi boys started in the industry checking up their raw stock by measuring them in open tins and probably they are thinking that the industry is still continuing in the same conditions. This is 1945 and the public has its eyes open. So, it would be better for them to realise this in time.

### Licence to the right, Licence to the Left!

More licences have been granted and the producers intimated accordingly. The recipients are: RAYAL TALKIES, KRISHNA PICTURES, PRATIBHA PICTURES, JAGANNATH PRODUCTIONS of 'Taru Maru' fame, KANDAN & Co., PRAGATI, PAKSHIRAJA FILMS, but VIJAYA FILMS, M. V. Rajamma's. The first seven earn their licences whereas the last-mentioned one is bound to sell the licence to the highest-bidder, black money not excluded. In the wake of the Coimbatore producer, who has overnight become the supervising-director for the subject of the licence, he had sold to another, this gift is thoroughly unjustifiable. M. V. Rajamma has not been able to meet her creditors even on her

RADHA RAMANA debts.—Talk-A-Tone has an undischarged bill for Rs. 600/-. Rajamma can utilise the licence only by selling it and there are four or five guys waiting to lap it up. In these circumstances, it is hoped that the sanctioning authorities had looked into the matter of the party's financial capacity and other credentials before such a grant. In this instance, the sympathy seems to have been sadly misplaced and considerations, which have nothing to do with the applicants' qualifications, seem to have weighed with the authorities. This is a gross insult to the male applicants who have not so far been able to secure theirs! On top of this, the celebrity has not even an office to boast of!

### Actors' Application for Leave of Appeal.

The vacation Bench of the Madras High Court, Judges Clark and Wadsworth, rejected a bail application moved on behalf of N. S. Krishnan and M. K. Thiagaraja Bhagavathar and posted their application for leave of appeal for hearing after the summer vacation and ordered notice to issue to the Crown in respect thereof.

### Gemini.

Talk-A-Tone has no clannish bias nor is it given to anything but clean journalism without jaundice. In keeping with this policy, it goes against its grain to nurse a grouse against individuals, neither can it tolerate personal invectives while engaged in a discussion. It has decided, therefore, to draw the curtain over the "Gemini-Pazhi-Colombug" controversy, primarily to save the precious space for worthier causes and also as it is felt that no more remains to be said to irrefutably establish our contentions. Material points have been squarely met and we leave it to the readers to judge the credentials of one who utters the name of Kothamangalam Subbu in the same breath as Sekar and Ramnath. Further, it is an axiomatic truth that, in any controversy, the moment one feels anger, one has already ceased striving for Truth and has begun striving

Twenty-five



Ashok Kumar in "Begum"

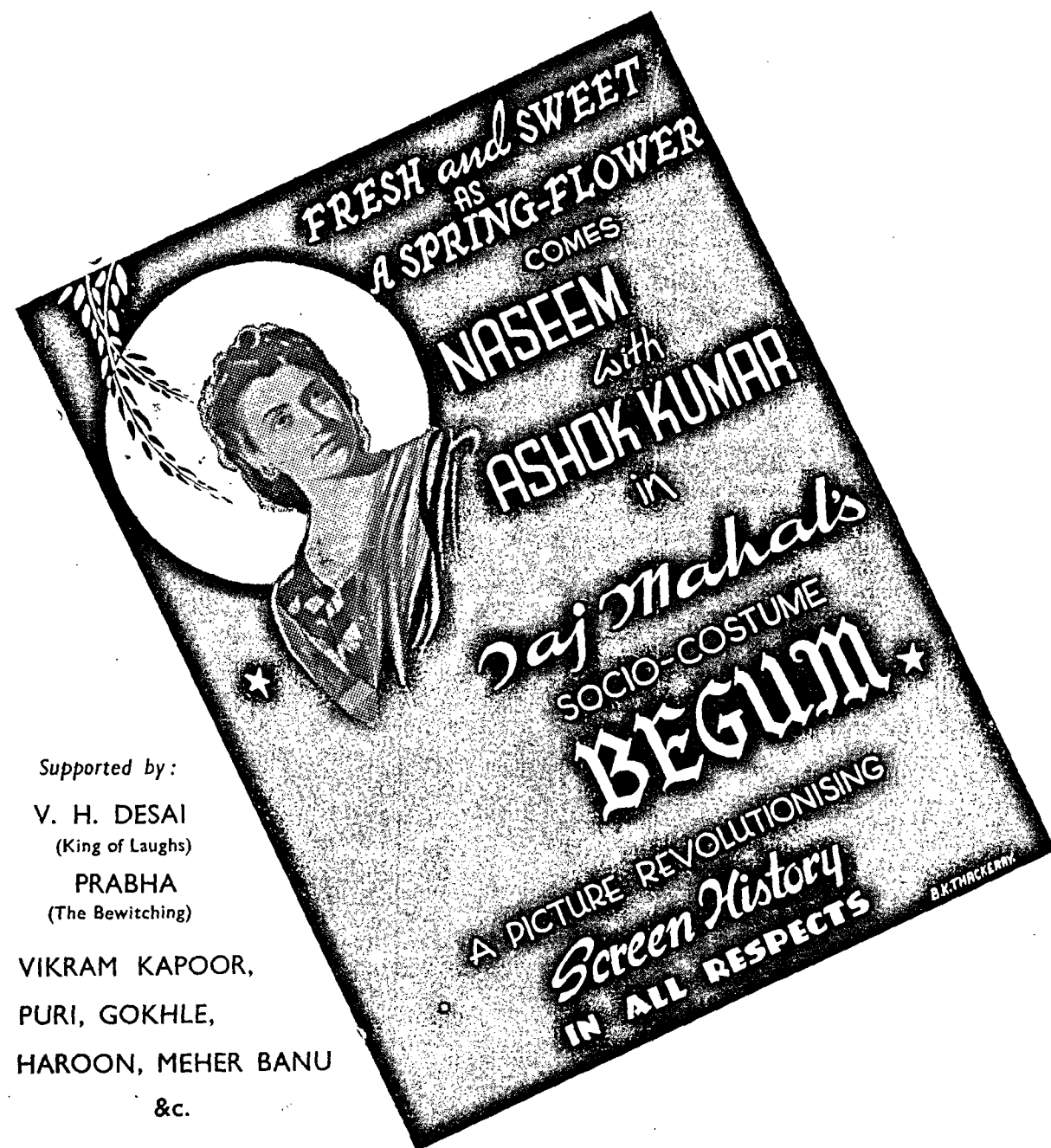
for one's self. Apart from this, it is our fear that Gemini, an institution with promise, suffers in the bargain—all because some irresponsible element in the Gemini Publicity staff had maliciously initiated this needless impropaganda. Gemini can ill afford to tolerate such braggadocio emanating from his institution. We call a halt the while, to the non-combatant belligerents.

### Mercy! Mercy!

Contrary to usual practice, we pray to the Government of India for the ratifying, as a permanent ruling, of an Order made under the Defence of India Rules. We refer to the Order on the footage control of a full-length Feature film, restricting it to 11,000 feet. Alone, of all the film-producers in the world, Tamil film-makers have been committing pictures averaging 20,000 feet. The war brought a stop to this monstrous infliction under which poor Tamil audience had been groaning. Now, this order came as a blessing in disguise and most of the people have been getting themselves used to it. It is a great relief and opens the possibilities for encouragement to short pictures of News and instructional. If the Order were to be rescinded, it would mean the perpetuation of a grave injustice to an industry whose progress has remained at a standstill. There will be variety in the entertainment within the three-hour shows and many a youthful talent secures scope for its utility. Therefore, Talk-A-Tone adds its voice to the chorus of

JUNE, 1945

TALK-A-TONE



Supported by:

V. H. DESAI  
(King of Laughs)

PRABHA  
(The Bewitching)

VIKRAM KAPOOR,

PURI, GOKHLE,

HAROON, MEHER BANU

&c.

**TAJMAHAL PICTURES, LTD.**  
MALAD : : BOMBAY

JUNE, 1945

TALK-A-TONE



Yakob the polished villain out-does his previous performances in ADHAR

appeals which has gone forth, for the retention of this just ruling in the name of Mercy to the Tamilian Filmfans.

#### TNT Soundaram to Hollywood.

A delegation of representatives of the Indian Film Industry is expected to leave shortly for the United Kingdom and U.S.A. The Government of India have agreed to give air priority and other requisite facilities for travel.

The delegation, it is learnt, is going in an unofficial capacity and the members will bear all the expenses themselves. The delegation comprises Messrs. P. N. Roy, S. Mukherjee, Harishchandra Rao, K. S. Hirlekar, Kidar Sharma, Roop K. Shorey and S. Soundararajan of Tamilnadu Talkies. Talk-A-Tone is very happy at the choice of Soundaram to represent the South Indian film firmament. As one connected with the industry for over a decade and intimately conversant with all its departments, we are sure he will avail of the opportunity to study the working conditions abroad and bring back to us the much needed wealth of information to put our country in the forefront of the world's film-makers. We learn that their object, primarily, is to study the latest developments, organisational and technical, in the production of motion pictures abroad and collect statistical information to help in the establishment of a central film academy and research laboratory.

#### Punch Brothers, Punch with Care!

Wanderer went to view a Tamil film for review in a moffussil station, a fairly big one. At the counter were engaged something like three hundred people, in rigger. He had to buy a seat and was loafing for a scapegoat to buy him one. Just then, someone squealed and he saw one man emerge from the scuffle, high up over the heads of the crowd, sans every apparel but the pants, which too showed signs of mauling. But he seemed to be a man of business and was clutching a ticket-scroll in the only serviceable hand, lifted high up in the air. Sliding through the heads on which he had been thrown, he wildly reached for him like a drowning man and he gave him help. He explained that he was relieved of his coat and purse when he reached the booking counter and that the shirt was forcibly removed from him while he was being tossed up. Would Wanderer lend him towel? He would, and did.

Something must be done to the poor picturegoer. This reminded one of the 'queue' cure. In the city, the boys do it better and with a sense of humour. In a Mount Road Theatre where, too, Wanderer had gone for seeing an M.G.M. Picture, the 'queue' was a circle, probably better than the ziz-zag, and a few late arrivals loitering between the foyer and the drive, were goose-stepping round and round the 'queue' to squeeze themselves in. That, at least, had a comical side. From all these operations, Wanderer returned home safe, without clicking into the theatre. While on this, one ought not to forget the commendable vivacity of the S.I.R. boys. They have a genial mode of dealing with the passengers reaching for their passage. For sheer delicacy, it is a peach. The guys nicely tap the knuckles of the unworthy passenger with the punching head of the ticket clipper and, hey presto, the arm vanishes, ticket or no ticket!

#### Usha Dance Ballet:

The most praiseworthy endeavour in the renaissance of our ancient Nritya was put on boards by Saraswathi Gana Nilayam, Triplicane, the theme of the ballet being the familiar Usha. The Nilayam girls turned out a happy cruet of dance repertoire. Ranganayaki, a slip of a girl, put over a bright, if slightly

overpaced Usha, and N. Sarojini as Chitrakha, the maid, blended happily into the scheme of silent goings-on between Anuradha and Usha. V. S. Thulasi was very effective and the rest of the tiny tots gang was no less impressive in their spontaneity. Ranganayaki, if persevered, ought to go far. Only, in this particular theme, apart from her elegance, ease and grace, her agility looked a bit mismatched in the general tempo. Another suggestion: mechanical aid, cleverly brought into play, is bound to lend greater charm and colour to an already exquisite performance. We wish Miss Lalitha and Mr. Venkataraman greater glory in their remarkable venture.

#### Gems of the Trade:

In the Tamil film field, we have some prolific figures. But none like Sriman K. S. Narayana Iyengar of Messrs. Narayanan & Co., and Pakshiraja Films. He began his overtures to the cinema from obscure angles, sailed on gaily on others' pictures and wound up the preceding year as a producer big-gun, when Jagadapratapan trotted out on something like 24,000 feet. An anachronism in every department, the picture has done precious little service to the filmic art. Nevertheless, it paid well and, so long as the lucre was all right, nothing else mattered. Besides this, he had been angling for a fresh licence for 1945 and baited 'Meera'. As it happens, as film distributor,



Malathi as Princess Roopa gives a convincing performance in Star Combines' MAYA MACHINDRA.

his treatment of exhibitors is anything but fair. A totalitarian in outlook, developed by a fastidious scorn of the small man's requirements, he has frequently been the cause of many a heartache to the exhibitor who forms the business-end of the film trade.

In our recent visits to the Moffussil, the consensus of opinion has led us to the amazing discovery of a series of unconscionable acts of his outfit. Highly autocratic in attitude to the exhibitors, he has displayed a callous disregard to the obligations of the business and, in cases where the theatre-owners had openly disagreed with him, he has resorted to requisitioning the aid of the brother distributors to ostracise them. His statements to the various exhibitors lead one to conclude that something has to be done to trim the tail-end of this exponent of Churchillian philosophy. Such a thoroughly un-sympathetic and self-fish graft, one ought not to tolerate in Tamilnad. TALK-A-TONE will not hesitate to expose the despotic acts of such a graft which would put down the good men of the trade.

#### Congrats, T. R. S.!

As a shining contrast comes T. R. Sundaram, respected throughout by the exhibitors for his understanding and accommodating spirit.

#### 'Raya' is Royal:

The 'Raya' is a house of aristocrats and, as to the manner born, their bearing is dignified. Their reciprocal tendencies invest them with a special prestige.

#### Gemini the Glum:

Gemini commands respect which is conditioned by the degree of personal touch which the sphinx vouches one. The exhibitors feel that if Gemini would make himself more accessible to them, it would be easier. After all, the human contact has yet to ruin one's culture.

#### Funny Face.

On the piquant side of distribution, comes in the firm whose continued existence is inexplicable but for finance and fluke. Their manager, when asked for a good print of a certain Picture, answered he would send them a "ODO-RABLE" copy, meaning a runnable print! These same boys have handed a contract to a Kumbakonam exhibitor which starts with 65%, for

the distributor's share in the first week, and scales down with a reduction of 5% per week thereafter. The subject of this non-stop agreement was the best picture of the distributor. The exhibitor, tickled by the anomaly of the agreement, ran the picture for eighteen weeks for the fun of it and began asking for a graded share of 5% per week of the gross collection after the 14th week!

#### Sree Valli—Valli

Pragathi's Sree Valli has remained in voluntary exile from a number of first class stations and one is chagrined to find this super-colossal musical-magic sneaking into Tindivanam and Mambalam, after all these days. The truth of the matter is that the Pragathi boys have realised the paucity of its pulling power and are therefore anxious more to sell it to the highest bidder for the districts, piece-meal, rather than risk its exploitation themselves, and then, there is the black money to be considered! For Salem District, they wanted just Rs. 75,000/-. The bid was for Rs. 30,000/-. That is why this celluloid Cleopatra is coyly making her overtures to the metropolitan Paragon! And, what Cleopatra didn't have she didn't need!

#### Pragathi Changing Hands:

Pragathi Studios we learn from a reliable source, has been sold for a consideration of 4½ lakhs of rupees to a certain Kandaswami Chetty of Negapatam.

It sounds funny that money should be played ducks and drakes

with in this fashion at a time when consignments are arriving for fresh installation of upto-date equipments.

#### Chitrakala Studios, Madura.

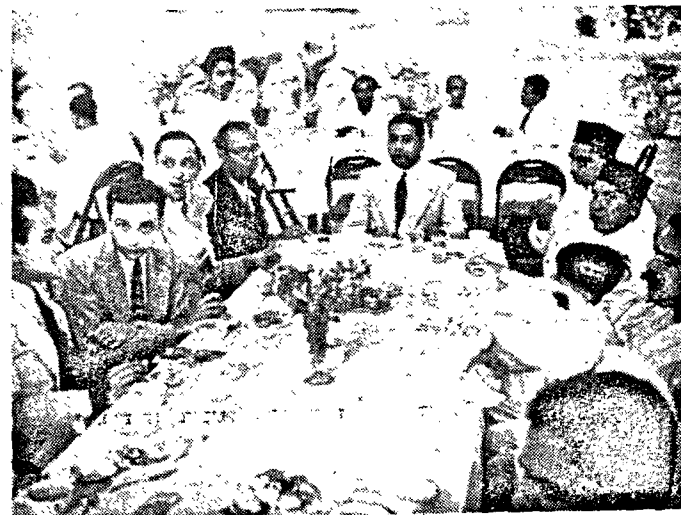
At a time when the Independents are weltering under the heavy boot of the few studio owners, the inaugural function on the 23rd May, at Woodlands, announcing the starting of a studio with two floors and a small one, at Madura under the auspices of Messrs S.W. Nayagam and M.Y.M. Zacky, is a propitious move.

Nothing gives us greater pleasure than to welcome to our midst these Ceylonese friends of ours who have evinced unbounded enthusiasm and have planned ambitiously. It is our hope, that these enterprising entrants will carry out their plans with unabated vigour and bring the Studio to a fruition soon.

We understand that their first assignment will be a Sinhalese subject. We also hope that Zakiart Productions' long awaited "Premavathi" the first Sinhalese six-reeler social, at which Mr. Zacky has been working in the small studio at Colombo, will receive its finishing touches here.

Before winding up, we wish to tell our friends that time is the essence of their efficiency and we would warn them, as well wishers, not to fall a prey to the guileful gabs who might hold out promises, pocket the incidental largesse and vamoose from the scene instantly.

We wish the enterprise every success.



Twenty-eight

Photo taken on the occasion of the tea-party given by Mr. Nayagam & Zacky to local journalists at Woodlands, Madras. In the centre is seated Mr. Nayagam and on his left is Mr. Zacky.

## Sriramulu Naidu Speaks!

And RAMBLER Relays it.....

Every celluloid essay, blazing Sriramulu Naidu's name as its creator, has minted money like nobody's business and the fans who had thus enriched his work deserve, we commend in all humility, the better from the Director in view, particularly, of the hydra-headed virus of competition the industry has to face, both from the different Provinces in our country as well as from the well-entrenched foreign filmrenters from without. In this unequal combat, it would appear superfluous for us to stress, everyone of us has got to pool our resources, material and psychological. Sriramulu Naidu is no mean worshipper of the Filmic Muse nor is he handicapped by insufficient educational back-ground. We beg to ask, with all the sincerity at our command, what it would benefit him, if he collected all the money in the world and yet continued to be a slave! For, the citizen of a country in chains is no better, however high-placed he may be otherwise. We offer this interview more in sorrow than in anger and seek enlightenment. Has not everyone a share in the responsibility to steer our industry clear of the turmoil which engulfs it? Every little helps, and we are hopeful that Mr. Naidu is not seriously making the suggestion that anyone is smaller or greater than his calling, and that he will rise above the petty illusions created by faulty environment. We are always amenable to reason and subject to correction and shall deem it a privilege to give adequate publicity to any fair comment Mr. Naidu offers in response. In fact, as a token of his ideological rectitude and generous attitude to his fans, whom he may not treat with contempt, we invite him to take part in our programme for better films from our land. Films, we believe, can be a source of inspiration to the younger generation and be ennobling entertainment.—Editor.

My interview with Director Sriramulu Naidu has given me a bad taste for it. I have to confess that my mission to him has been a failure. Mr. Naidu is an extraordinary figure. Mr. Naidu has some flops to his credit and his popularity seems to be confined to the small circle of his friends and associates. So, it was not with high hopes that I embarked on this venture and the results amply justified my apprehensions. Initiated as Film Producers, the Central Studios have gradually degenerated into Hirers. So, how come a Licence to them, I mean to Mr. Naidu, for Valmiki? And, in the face of such stringent, Government orders, too! I casually asked Mr. Naidu how many pictures the Central Studios had produced to entitle them to a licence.

Something happened to the features of Mr. Naidu and he grew wild. I could clearly see that the irate 'Director' had gone emotional and that my question was not much to his liking. Here, obviously, was an unpleasant situation and Mr. Naidu had to clear it up. However, he did not, even till the end.

I, therefore, reproduce exactly what transpired in the interview and leave the readers to come to the worthy conclusion.

Mr. Naidu: That is probing into trade secrets! If YOU do not know how many pictures we have produced, then I should say that you are unfit to be a correspondent. If you go through the *Film Diary*, you can find out the number.

Highly obliging of him! With a triumphant look presaging his victory over me, hands down, Mr. Naidu took the *Film Diary* from his shelf

and began to pore over its pages. He could get no help from it. So, the book flew into his drawer, accompanied by his comment: "It is tricky business, going through this *Diary*!"

I: I do not dispute your having produced pictures before 1936 or 1939. But, have you done one in 1940 or thereafter? Or censored a picture before July 1943 in Central Studios' name?

Mr. Naidu: You ask your Editor or any other Film journalist who will tell you. The *Film Diary* is also there for reference. We HAVE produced pictures in 1936 and earlier.

I: Sir, but what about the new Government order? My idea is to ascertain how far the Government of India adhere to their own orders and issue Licences in accordance with the regulations. I shall admit my own ignorance about your recent activities but you ought to enlighten me.

This produced no reply. Mr. Naidu was obviously in a fix. He somehow wished to avoid the situation and immediately began writing a letter—and me waiting for him to talk to me! I could not help wondering why this director refused to speak up.

Mr. Naidu: How did Gemini and the Madras United Artistes Corporation satisfy the Government Orders? They got their licences all right! They got three each. Why not take it that we too got three licences the same way?

I. Sir, Gemini and M.U.A.C. fully satisfy the G.O.

Again, there was silence on his side. It was now his turn to stare at me. I began to realise the utter futility of questioning him any further, and my failure.

Even assuming that the Central Studios have produced pictures in recent years and that I am quite ignorant of their recent activities, I cannot, for the life of me understand why a Director should not oblige a journalist by giving out the number of pictures produced under their banner. His reluctance to be frank about it, led me to conclude that he had managed the licences by some means which needed to be kept confidential. If that were so, Mr. Naidu might have told me so. I would surely have respected his confidence and left the matter at that. Mr. Naidu's distaste for the Press was obvious when he refused to discuss with me the present standard of our films, especially in regard to Socials. My persistence, however, worked him up to say something, unfortunately on the wrong side.

I: Don't you have a feeling that the intellectuals among the Directors ought to, at least once in a way and by way of change, divert themselves on the Socials instead of following the beaten-track—Mythologicals?

Naidu: If I understand my business aright, we have to cater to the taste of our clients, who are composed, for the most part, of the masses. After a hard day's toil, they come to the theatre for relaxation and enter-

## New Romantic Roles



Bama Films **VALMIKI** TELUGU

By

THAYAMANI DEVI & KASTURI

Supported by

KUMARI, DASARI KOTIRATNAM, BALA TRIPURASUNDARI, C. S. R.  
BELLAMKONDA, RAMAKRISHNA SASTRI, PARUPALLI  
and many others

CONTACT

**BAMA FILMS**  
MOUNT ROAD P. O., MADRAS

OUR NEXT

**KANYAKUMARI**  
(TAMIL)

tainment. It would be a sin to harass them further by boring them with knotty social problems. This would make their lot pitiable.

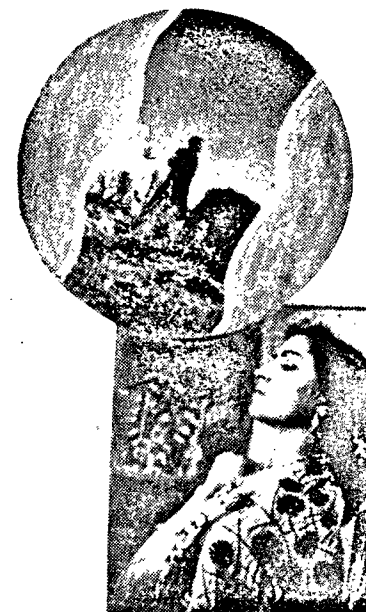
I: Intellectuals also form the audience, don't they?

Naidu: They do, but their proportion and number are negligible. In fact, they do not much count. It is the masses who pay us well, and consistently, and we have to please them. Socials, evidently, cannot do us well.

I: Are your stakes on the cinema then, only placed on cash? And the degree of entertainment cash-value? I am afraid you have hung your hat on the wrong peg.

Naidu: It is a matter of opinion and everyone is entitled to his. It is my idea that we are in the profession to make money while the making is good and ideologies are there for the idealists who have not, as yet, done much to themselves or to the line.

I: For every Mythological with which you make the cash, you can risk one Social picture.



Ragini in Pradhan Pictures' DASSI



M. S. Saroja and M. V. Rajamma...the bounteous eyefulls in Kalaivani's ARDHANARI

That, at least, would be doing justice to the industry and its progress; else, your contribution comes next to nothing?

Naidu: Why should we? We are not in the films for health and do not care what you or any other person thinks so long as our money comes back to us in tact. And, Mythologicals will be our medium irrespective of your sacred wishes in the matter.

I: I am really sorry for your very narrow vision and scope of work. Forming as you do, the motive power of a first-rate industry, it would be a travesty of truth to suggest that you don't owe it a duty to be progressive. Just selfishly exploiting its money-making possibilities is a sin and a sacrilege. You would do the country and the fans down, if you can make your purse heavy with their hard-earned money. It is very injudicious of a forward minded man like you to suggest such an attitude to the industry.

Naidu: We are not living in a country like Russia where the film industry is a State concern. We have to put up a struggle

for our very existence. So, it is but meet that we make the best out of the available opportunities. If I wanted to serve the country, the films will not be my platform; it will be POLITICS. It is the right medium. I shall consider becoming a politician when I have retired from films. Till then, I shall do films in my own way.

I: I had discovered Naidu in his true colours, thoroughly intransigent and only intent upon pacifying his lust for mammon. I could not help remarking: Really, Mr. Naidu, I am ashamed of having failed in my mission. Your statement only renders it more devastating. But I cannot leave you before I have made myself quite clear on the point of our country's emancipation. This will be achieved, all the Naidu's notwithstanding.

Naidu: Congratulations on your hopes! I wish you every success. But you may take it from me that India is not getting swaraj for generations to come! This was Mr. Naidu's parting shot and my fade-out

# The Documentary Approach to Cinema

BY SHEIKH IFTEKHAR RASOOL

The need for providing entertainment on a large scale for the millions is a feature peculiar to our modern urban and industrial civilisation. It is one of the penalties of our having adopted life in towns and having turned work into machine minding and office routine, that we have to employ our leisure in forms of entertainment which are really compensatory for our troubles and worries in business life.

We are ruled by convention and fashion in our conduct, even during leisure. And modern social life is highly disciplined. Our freedom is restricted on every side—by laws, customs, and morality, as well as by economic considerations. Society allows us certain forms of pleasure which offer satisfaction by the release of repressed instincts and emotions.

Of these, the cinema has certain material or physical attractions which give it a pull over certain other comparable forms of entertainment. These are (a) comfort, (b) cheapness, (c) continuity of performance. These qualities in themselves are sufficient to attract people away from many other social evils, and other more primitive places of amusement, such as gambling, drinking, etc.—all harmful forms of leisure-indulgence.

## 'Seeing is Believing'

The majority of young people have reached the same stage as the



M. V. Rajamma in "Mayalokam"  
(A Narasu Release)

person who has learned to read fluently and must now learn to read with judgment. They 'see' fluently and some few are learning to 'see' with judgment. Now to anyone trained to see, there is a good deal to be learned from the ordinary entertainment film, be it documentary or story-film. Experiments with such films have shown that the outstanding thing about moving pictures is that they give a sense of experience. It is as if one were actually in the scene, not merely a looker-on.

Therefore those who go to plenty of films gain much better experience than those who see less. No environment in which they may find themselves is really strange to them, because they have 'seen them in pictures' and, believing it, accept it as a matter of course when they meet it in real life. They have learned from films something they could have learned in no other way.

Yet, of course, there is another side to the question of whether the entertainment film has educational value or not. Frequently these films are inaccurate; but these inaccuracies are not important so long as the general impression given by the picture is correct. Often there are other inaccuracies more serious than this—inaccuracies of customs, manners, and above all behaviour—which leave a definitely wrong impression on the minds of those who see the films.

And, if we took our ideas only from films, we should have some very odd ideas of how the nations live. We should, one feels, be inclined to regard America as a country given over to gangsters and—what is hardly less dangerous—to uncontrolled flappers. We cannot believe everything we see in entertainment pictures. We must see, use our judgment and draw our own conclusions; and this applies equally to other forms of art.

## The Documentary Film

The cinema remains a place of recreation, and most people go there not to exercise their brains, but to rest, and be entertained. If you take the cinema seriously, you will be dissatisfied with the entertain-



Swarnalata in "Justice"  
(She is the girl on page 36)

ment film as it is at present, for very few films have a definite message and most of them are 'escapist'—a means by which people can temporarily forget the world they live in and their anxieties and project themselves into another world of imagination.

The cinema helps the people to hypnotise themselves in this way, for they sit gazing fixedly at a light concentrated in one place in a dark hall. If you are a realist you will disapprove of this undirected entertainment, and feel that films should be modelled more on the lines of Russian films or modern experiments in documentary films by the work of such men as John Grierson, Paul Rotha, Basil Wright, Arthur Elton and Alberto Cavalcanti. You will, no doubt, say that there is no reason why, in time, every film should not be a definite contribution to knowledge and have a clearly defined message.

The fact is that under the limits defined by the present economic system, entertainment cinema cannot possibly hope to deal either accurately or impartially from a sociological point of view with any of the really important subjects of modern existence. Moreover, whilst developed under the demands of financial speculation alone, cinema is unable to reach a point where its service to public interest amounts to anything more valuable than an emotional catharsis.

Therefore, if it is to fulfil our expectations as a power in the contemporary struggle for social advance, if it is to be instrumental

JUNE, 1945

TALK-A-TONE

## THE PICTURE—

which will mark

The Mile-Stone of 1945 on the path of Progress

OF

THE CINE-WORLD

Director

RAJA NENE

STARRING:

★ NALINI (JAYAWANT)

★ JAGDISH SHETHI

★ VASANT THENGDI

★ PARESH BANERJI

★ KARAN DEWAN

★ SAROJ BORKAR

★ SUNALINI DEVI

AND

BABY SHAKUNTALA

IN

VENUS PICTURES'

*Musical Marvel*

A VENUS PICTURE!

**PHIR BHI APNA HAI**

World Rights

**CHAROLIA BHADSAVLE**

Jyoti Studio, Kennedy Bridge, Bombay 7

in bringing about a greater public awareness for the urgent need of an economic and moral regeneration of the world, cinema must be permitted to go outside the field at present exploited and be put to greater and more far-reaching uses than mere amusement. To achieve this, there is no better potent way than to realise the importance of the 'documentary' film in its new use for social analysis.

#### The News-Reel.

In the ordinary programme of a cinema theatre, the most instructive item is undoubtedly the news-reel. Its value is the same as that of the best feature films—it enables us to 'experience' what otherwise would be quite beyond our powers to conceive. To most people these figures mean nothing, unless it is brought home to them what the Bombay Fire did to thousands of men or the Punjab Mail accident in which so many men, women and children were lost.

In the same way we can realise what industrial strife, revolutions, explosions, fires and flood mean to the people who are actually experiencing them; and there is no doubt that the newsreel is a magnificent means of teaching contemporary

history; only its value has not yet been fully realised. The material of news-reel, however, shot on the spot, has at various times given rise to pointed 'reportage' and montage films that fall within the broad interpretation of the documentary.

The ordinary twice-a-week news-reel has little in common with the characteristics of the documentary film except that they both go to actuality for their raw material. The news-reel's job is to present in simple descriptive terms and within the minimum of time the events of the day, in itemised form without bias or special view-point.

Documentary's task, on the contrary, is the dramatisation and bending to special purpose of actuality, a method that demands time for thought and time for selection. These films deal chiefly with travel, industry, science and nature study, and to watch a good documentary is perhaps one of the most pleasant ways of getting instruction. It is with such films as these that the educational value of the film is most apparent.

#### Information Films of India.

Although short films in India were definitely 'in the air' some time before the War, the first intelligently

directed effort towards the production of a whole series of documentary films undoubtedly have to be credited to the Government of India for establishing a film producing unit at Bombay, staffed with Directors, Cameramen and Technicians recruited from the film trade.

There are films on India's Armed forces, War Production, Civil Defence and India's own Industries. What is more, Information Films convey useful and informative data about art, culture, industries, public health, medical service, etc. An interesting new departure in short film production in 1944 has been the release of a series of two-minute films on problems of every-day life.

Side by side with the short films, the Indian newsreels have gained some amount of success and popularity and the greatly extended coverage obtained by Indian News-Parade is a healthy sign of its tremendous appeal, especially since overseas new sequences have been brought to the screen in collaboration with foreign newsreels, also shown in Indian cinemas. It is to be hoped that this rapid and effective multi-lingual service will help to make the short films as well as newsreels an outstanding feature of cinema programmes in post-war India.

*A Fast Running Thriller packed with stunts*

ROMILA

in

## BANDUKWALI

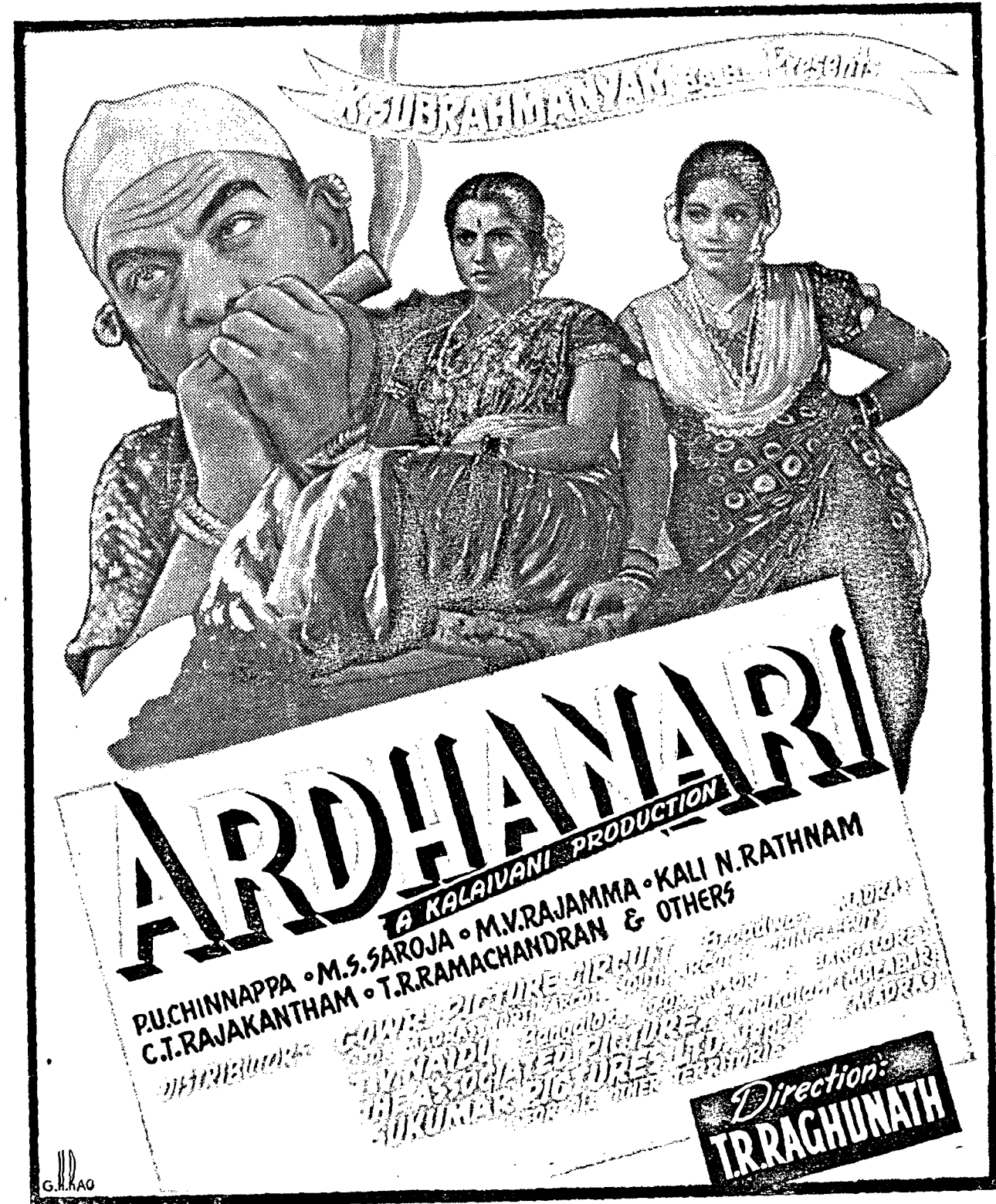
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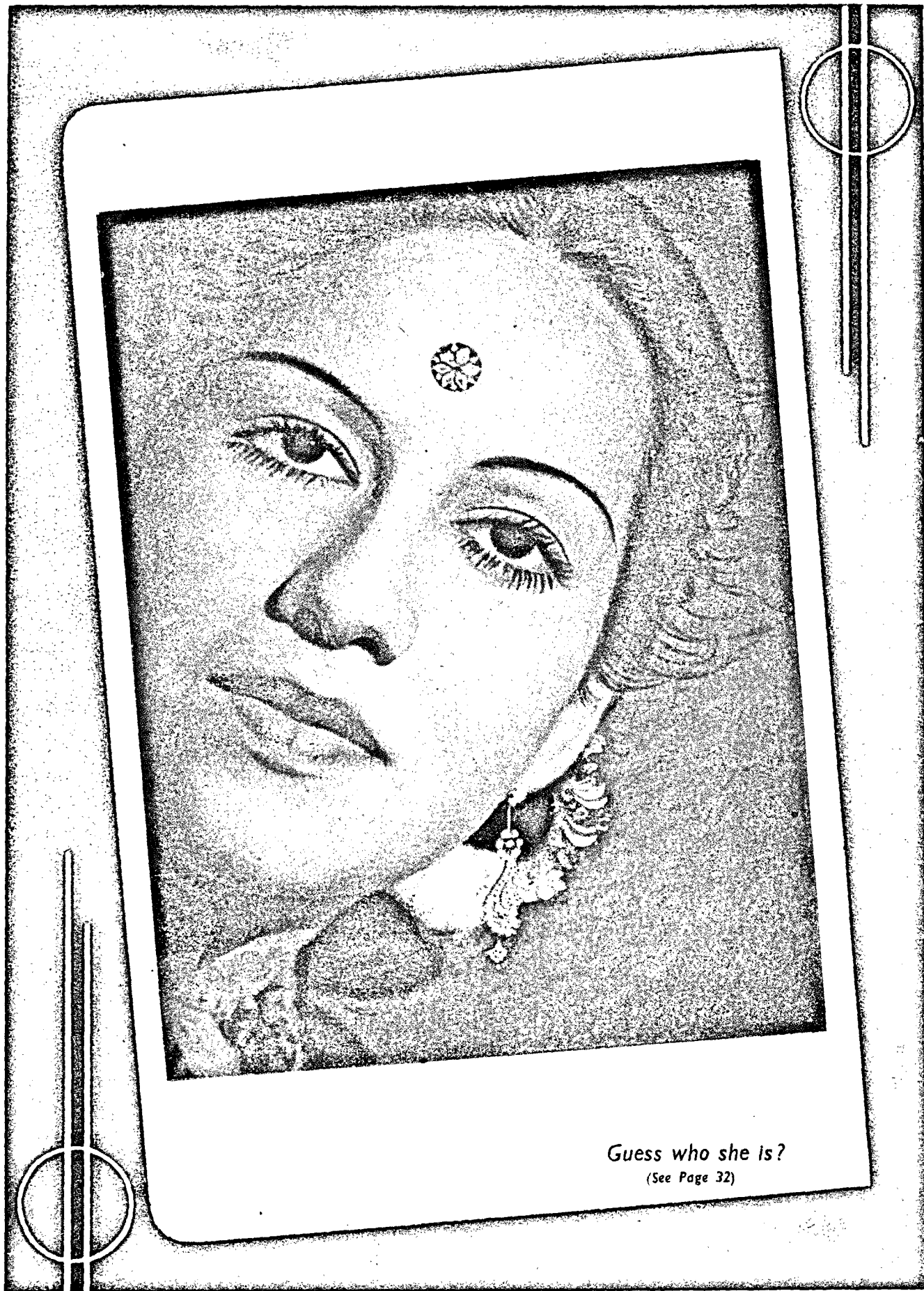
ANIL KUMAR, SADIQ  
AND OTHERS

For particulars

**T. P. SUNDARAM**  
'WOODLANDS'  
MADRAS

Thirty-four





Guess who she is?

(See Page 32)

## Pragathi's SRI VALLI

A Stage Farce and Circus Slapstick in  
Celluloid!

Periyanayaki gloriously Plays Back Valli's Songs and  
Jumbo turns Actor!

(By K A P)

The saving grace of Sri Valli is borne out by Periyanayaki's captivating singing and deputising for Kumari Rukmani. *Heard melodies are sweet. But those unheard are sweeter!*

Otherwise, this is a savage slaughter of precious celluloid, designed to bait the unwary filmfan's hard-earned cash, in a city where the population is inflated to overflowing and at a time when there is no opposition and the pleasure-starved filmgoer will see anything thrown on the stage or screen.

If I were to assess the value of this product from the standpoint of film-technique, that commodity is conspicuous by its absence in this spurious stooge, parading under the false name of the Cinema. Anyone who talks of Sri Valli as a film in the year 1945, must have an elastic India-rober cinematic conscience and a tongue in his cheek. In which case, one has to overlook the vast strides made in the art of film-making and then that we have had from the same source a bi-lingual Harischandra, Voyadi, My Wife, Sabapathy and Bhoo Kailas. One has to forget also the distinctive innovations effected from time to time, to mark the varying phases of film-making process to distinguish the stage from the screen: a nicely visualised scenario based on a strongly treated theme, story value, tempo, montage, back-projection etc. As it is, Sri Valli takes us back to 1932 when the film began to articulate. This is, therefore, a monstrous fraud on the gullible film-fan whose religious faith is exploited to trade purposes.

It is a plausible explanation that the big boys of Pragathi have developed chicken hearts in the process of film-making and, to balance the psychological vacuum created in their innocence, have requisitioned the services of big brother Jumbo to fill the gaps and to conceal the jumps without rhyme or reason and

for long intervals. Most of the 'takes' are lengthy and the 'Kayatha Kanaka' sequence in particular is an endurance test.

Excepting Jumbo who gets some of the biggest close-ups of his charmed cinematic career--was this originally planned for a jungle-thriller? and they are no use to him,--the whole thing is a stage farce in celluloid, replete with (Nataraja Asari--K.K. Thangavelu) 'Tappan', circus slapstick (T.A. Mathuram and T. R. Ramachandran) and all.

T. R. Mahalingam, set to Kittappa pattern, fails to connect and palls. As Muruga, he needlessly agitates himself to simulate a dance ballet with Valli, in Gopinath-Thangamani fashion.

N. S. Krishnan has very little to do in this swansong of his and what little he does is easily eclipsed by T. R. Ramachandran, doing him down under in mimicry.

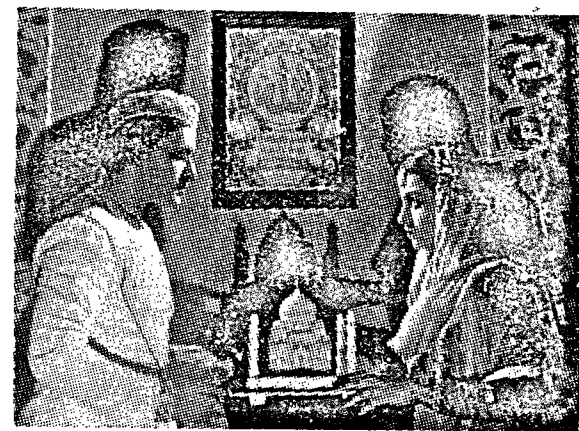
Kumari Rukmani looks deliberately tight and comfortable and is largely translucent in a misfit costume. Nevertheless, her Tillana dance is worthy of her past. She ought to go back to efficient exploiters like Soundaram and Subramanyam, if she is anxious to profit by her experiences. In fact, one would suggest Pragathi profitably utilising TNT Chenchulakshmi for treatment and technique and calling in Sri V. Nagiah for Nambiraja's portion. Both are sports and would willingly have obliged!

T. A. Mathuram looks cylindrical and swarthy and must have recourse immediately to her favorite slimming exercises and rigorous dieting to recapture her verve and spice.

Nagercoil Mahadevan is so-so, mouthing incipient dialogues.

**Dialogues:** snappy in some sequences and sketchy otherwise.

**Direction:** One wonders where this comes in except perhaps in connection with the oliphantine acrobatics. If the directors have



Prithviraj and Veena in a tense situation in Famous Film's "PHOOL"

jointly cultivated efficiency peculiar to elephant trainers, the Zoo is the right place to exploit their talents.

**Photography:** shows no intelligence but what flat work they have done is clear-cut and well-lighted.

**Sound:** the best part of the show, the blending of A. N. Periyanayaki's golden voice being praiseworthy. In fact, the best job in this bad product is turned out by those getting the least credit titles: A. N. Periyanayaki's wondrous melody and Jumbo's joyous work.

**Story:** Valli is born. Nambiraja adopts her. By a mysterious inspiration, Valli vows to wed Muruga and Muruga only, at an age when most girls, especially hunter girls, stay at their play. She grows up (time-lapses lapse by default), goes out for grooming, meets Naradha and courts his curse for yoking Muruga. Muruga comes down in his stock-still peacock throne, then dons the roles of Vedan, Velan and Viruthan and dolefully pours out his passionate love-lyrics in endless songs. Ultimately, Muruga jilts Valli in jail. There is none of the devotional in it, nor yet the mythological. Then, what is it? It is neither fish, nor foul nor a good red herring.

In a show lasting a little over two hours, the dances and the slapstick cover up nearly half the time and Lord Muruga divides the other half between his musical stage repertoire and truncated talks. The story, therefore, forms a fourth of the film and omits some of the salient features in the original. To bear this out, it is only necessary to screen in opposition a clean print of our good old Valli starring T.P. Rajalakshmi and V. A. Chellappa.

Pragathi's Sri Valli is a reason why Filmfans should form into a Club and tell them what they feel about it all.

# CEYLON CALLING

By Karolam

That V. V. Satagopan, B.A., was recently on the "Road to Ceylon" and notwithstanding the fact that he had quit films long ago he was billed as the famous South Indian Film Star giving vocal recitals.

That the most redeeming feature about Satagopan's trip was that he was out in Ceylon singing for some Building Fund and singing as many times and at as many places, the Building Board wanted him.

That Satagopan's informality was seen when he popped up at the Indian Congress to which distinguished men like Dr. Syed Mahmud were invited.

That the organisers of the Congress are still wondering why the presence of the film star failed to "draw": politicians probably do not know the difference between a Pandal and the Box Office.

That another oldtimer K. T. Rukmani, stunt queen of "Minnal Kodi" fame, was presented with a second class ticket for use on the Indo-Ceylon Express, even though she had expressed the idea that she had reached that stage in her life now, when it is physically impossible for her to travel, much less for "stunts", as she was wont to, in her pictures.

That she very nearly stunned the guys at the Mandapam barricade and the Doctor, on finding that she had stood the journey very well 'certified' and "passed" her as fit' down into Ceylon.

That P. G. Venkatesan who was scheduled to have appeared with K. T. Rukmani, we are reliably informed, missed the 'bus (or is it the train) and that if priorities could be arranged, he may fly to the rescue of Rukmani on the stage.

That Ranjana, the Ceylon Society lady exponent of the Bharatha Natyam, who according to a weekly "came, learnt and conquered", had to arrange for a complete change of programme for her second recital at Colombo as the patrons had seen already many original versions of the Bharatha Natya.

That (Swadeshi) K. Nayagam, the Soap King is getting interested in film business as was evinced by the press notification linking his name with a Chitrakala Film Studios of Madura.

That though Nayagam is the Managing Director of the Swadeshi Industrial Works, Ltd., this new move on his part should not be construed as a post-war plan of his concern.

That the only thing in common between the Soap and *pilim* business is the slippery nature. As Nayagam has gained a foothold in the soap affair, the big business bugs who are backing him in his new venture are sure that he would click there also. Heaven help him.

That the Annual Board of Directors meeting of M/s. Ceylon Theatres Ltd., was a grand affair this year as all the directors present at the meeting praised the Managing Director and vice versa.

That the Managing Director announced their post-war plans, which of course was to ration the distribution of pictures in their theatres and that up-to-date his company had donated to the War fund and various war charities over 800,000 rupees.

That, now that they have boldly announced the actual amount thus donated, they expect that it is high time the authorities took notice of their doings and before the eastern war is over, confer on some of the directors the much coveted "insignias".

That A. Gardiner submitted a medical certificate when he was called upon to give evidence in the injunction and one million rupees damage suit against Karuppiiah.

That G. C. Roche stopped screening Tamil Pictures at his Kingsley and started exhibiting English films, which is no indication that he is going in for pastures anew or that it is part of his post-war designs.

That in keeping with his policy was his V day announcement in the papers. He promised a better supply of butter, grapes and pictures. At the tail end of the ad. was "Also controlling the following theatres..."



Photo taken on the occasion of the wedding of Sow. S. Lalitha (daughter of Sri K. Subrahmanyam, B.A., B.L., Film Director and Proprietor, The Madras United Artistes Corporation) with Chi. M. S. Krishnamoorthy (son of Sri M. K. Srinivasan) was celebrated on May 25th at 'Ranganatha Vilas', Mylapore

Thirty-eight

JUNE, 1945

TALK-A-TONE

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**BOMBAY.**



Gari Cooper

**G**ARI COOPER, lanky, romantic, familiar to the world audience as the strong, silent man of the screen, returns in his latest film to the characterization which first brought him fame, that of the American Cowboy. The film is titled "ALONG CAME JONES".

The six-foot-four star was born in Helena, Montana, son of a well-to-do cattleman. Business took the family to England when he was nine years old and he attended Grammar School at Dunstable, Bedfordshire, where his tales of life in the American Far West, duly embellished, made him a hero to his school-mates.

Though he had never studied drawing, he had a natural talent for satiric sketches and wanted to become a cartoonist. He worked on a Helena newspaper for five years from whence he moved to Los Angeles, where he sold newspaper advertising, but could not sell his sketches. It was only when a friend painted a glowing picture of opportunities in the film business, he enrolled as an extra player. For more than a year, he figured obscurely in crowd scenes, often earning less than enough to eat. Recognition came with a featured role in "THE WINNING OF BARBARA WORTH."

**FAREWELL TO ARMS** brought him a new kind of role, which was followed by **MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN**. Today, with more than 50 films to his credit, he ranks among the ten most popular American stars.

**PAUL MUNI**, famed for his screen biographies of "ZOLA" "PASTEUR" and "JUAREZ" plans to do the film story of Alfred Nobel, inventor of dynamite and creator of the annual Nobel awards for outstanding contributions to art, science and international relations.

Muni is a man of passionate convictions and blunt honesty of speech. Prominent in all liberal movements, he is generous with time and talent in any unselfish cause.

Born in an Austrian border town Muni went to America as a small child. Both his parents were actors and he played bits with them from the time he could walk. His talent for make-up—he experimented endlessly for each characterisation—showed itself when he was 13. He successfully played the part of an old man. For several years, he was touring with a theatrical unit.

His first Broadway hit was "We Americans" followed by "Four Walls" which won him a Holly-



Paul Muni

**LENA HORNE**, American Negro actress—entertainer and one of the most beautiful women in Hollywood, has taken her place among the nation's half dozen ranking feminine stars.

A stage and cafe celebrity, Miss Horne was unknown to motion-

wood contract. His Hollywood career started with "THE VALIANT".



Lena Horne

picture audiences three years ago when she signed a contract with the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios. She has since made nine films, the latest being **TWO GIRLS AND A SAILOR** and **ZIEGFELD FOLLIES**, 1944.

The bulk of her fan mail, comes from overseas radio broadcast, with the expression of understanding and respect for the Negro people which runs through these letters.

Once in the studio commissary, she said "I'm not a crusader. My personal life has been very fortunate. But I have a natural satisfaction in so many obviously sincere words of commendation for my people. And if there is in this the slightest indication of a growing world tolerance between all people, as I like to think, so much the better".

These letters come from all parts of the globe, and quote Lincoln's words "Until all men are equal and all men are free, there can be no peace".



## MADRAS

My studio saunterings, this month, landed me into a vortex of eventful meetings, parties and functions.

The film industry in the South, which was virtually donning the appearance of the 'Lotus Island' wherein everyone seemed to be languishing in a lethargic stupor, was roused to frantic energies suddenly.

Believe me, dear readers, in my meanderings, I dashed against one or another of the enterprising men of the Industry who had interesting revelations to make as regards their future production programmes.

## JAGDISH FILMS (Madras)

My first impact was with Y. V. Rao who had great many things up his sleeve about his new venture *Jagannath* or *Lavangi* an historical costume-picture in Tamil.

The subject matter of this historic-production is that of the poet-philosopher *Jagannath* from Godavari who by virtue of his own worth and integrity established himself as the court poet of Shahjehan, one of the great Moghul kings. Further observations of Rao on the subject led me to look forward to a picture more pretentious than what it actually would be as it develops, but there can be no denying the fact that the picture will carry appeal on every possible count.

What is more, Rao proved to be the only producer who had taken courage in both hands and followed the tip given by *Talk-A-Tone* in enlisting a fresh talent. While the other boastful brags, are content with featuring the old-timers, cronies and mugged movie-queens, Rao has come out with his characteristic boldness in choosing a fresher—a graduate and an accomplished singer—to play the lead in *Jagannath*.

He is a keen business-man as well. He has in the cast artistes who have made some noise such as Jayamma, Kumari Rukmani and a few others. Y. V. Rao himself dons the role of Shahjehan and directs the picture as well.

## VAUHINI PICTURES (Madras)

My most interesting chat this month was with B. N. Reddi who, at the time of my meeting him, was enjoying a well deserved rest after completing his social-hit *Swarga Seema*. It is ready, awaiting dates in various centres, for simultaneous release.

B. N. Reddi, the director of this picture, made me believe that *Swarga Seema* was an innovation in social subjects, carrying with it human-problems that confront you, me and him at every turn, in daily life. The screen version of this poignant drama has received the deft touches of this veteran, whose work in everyone of his previous pictures has endeared him to the intelligentsia as well as the rest. I shall be holding out no false-hopes to you, if I tell that it is worth the while to wait for *Swarga Seema* if you want really to see a *Good Motion Picture*.

He was proud of V. Nagiah, the most polished actor of the film firmament, who plays the lead as against Bhanumathi—the chic girl. The cast, I could gather, is embellished by other noteworthy names.

B. N. Reddi has plans for producing a social subject in Tamil soon. But don't laugh if I predict the tentative title of the

picture as "*The Human Menagerie*". The picture now on the floor of Newtown is *Yogi Vemanna* with Nagiah, Rajamma and Jayamma. K. V. Reddy will do the megaphone.

## STAGE AND SCREEN (Madras)

One has to see in person Uday Shankar at work to assess correctly his tenacity of purpose and persuasive and amiable spirit in coaching up the raw hands who are to participate in the dance sequences in *Kalpana*. The other day, when I paid a casual visit to his Production office, it was a sight to see a multitude of heads, limbs and bodies swaying in unison with the rhythm of the *Tabalas*. I understood later, that it was workers' dance expounding with immaculate artistry without uttering by mouth, the labourers' routine life.

More than a hundred artistes participated in this dance ensemble, and I gather there are many more such dance items which make-up *Kalpana*.

Shankar has entered the studio floor, and has also recorded one song.

## BAMA FILMS (Madras)

*Valmiki* will not prove to be the drab stuff, which mythologicals are, but will present a glamourised motion picture. The screen version itself has been written in a novel fashion and the treatment has received quite a new slant so that *Valmiki* will mark a departure in picturization of mythologicals. Thavamani Devi in a new type of role and costume is out to titillate you in this picture. Other artistes such as Kumari, C. S. R., Dasari Kotirathnam are in the cast to lend able support.

*Valmiki* is awaiting release dates.

## STAR COMBINES (Madras)

*Maya Machindra* is now in the cutting room, and frantic efforts are made by its producers to have the film censored before the month runs out. It is learnt that this picture has been produced with great care and after long deliberations. Each sequence is a climax by itself, and the film as a whole I understand, will be a treat to the cine-fans.

Kannamba seems to have, by her successful delineation of the role assigned her, convincingly brought out the poignancy of the character of the Rani Kilothala, Malathi as the charming princess Roopa will captivate many a heart. Other reputed talents are also featured in the picture who lend very good support.

## KALAIVANI FILMS LTD., (Madras)

*Ardhanari* is the current production on which they are working hard. It deals with the time-honoured story that lays emphasis on the importance of the 'Kedara Gowri Vratam'. The popular M. S. Saroja as the wilful but lovable queen of Ghandara, M. V. Rajamma as the pious and loving sister-Princess Punyavathi, and the leading male actor P. U. Chinnappa as the hero are cast in the picture.

The comic portions with Kali N. Rathnam, C. T. Rajakantham, T. R. Ramachandran and Joker Ramudu have already been completed.

*Narthana Murali*: Rehearsals for M.U.A.C's latest film are in full swing. It is an all-dance

film without dialogues but containing vocal and orchestral accompaniment and narration in the style of Bharata Natya.

## JUPITER PICTURES (Madras)

Reports are to hand that the first propaganda picture produced in the South which has all the chances and the ingredients to make a successful box-office hit is the one now under production at Central Studios, Coimbatore—*My Son*. Let us wait and see how far this prediction comes true.

## NARASU PICTURES CIRCUIT (Madras)

The noteworthy news about this concern is their acquisition of the local theatre *Paragon* for exhibition purposes. Pragathi's *Valli* whose distribution rights are controlled by Valli Pictures has been released in the theatre since 1st June.

## UNITED FILMS (Madras)

The enterprising proprietors of this concern have netted in a number of Hindi and Tamil pictures for distribution purposes. *Ramnik Production's REKHA* whose Madras, Tamil Nad and Ceylon rights are controlled by them is scheduled for release at Wellington shortly.

## DEVI FILMS (Bangalore)

They are the proud distributors of *Jayant Films'* colossal production *Urvashi*. Produced at a lavish cost and employing the most reputed artistes, the picture has every chance of proving to be the *Grand Road Show* of the Year.

It includes in its cast such top liners as Sadhona Bose, Sobhana Samarth, Prem Adib, Kusum Deshpande, Nayampalli, Nand Kishore and many others.

In between the spectacular settings and the grandiloquent draperies and costumes and the scintillating dances of Sadhona Bose, the melodies supplied by Shyam Sunder are a treat.

## BOMBAY

## STANDARD PICTURES (Bombay)

The whole troupe of artistes and technicians of Standard Pictures who had gone to Kolhapur to shoot the outdoors of *Bairam Khan* have returned after completing their business over there.

More than five hundred extras were engaged to stage a realistic battle scene. Elephants and horses by the hundred took part to lend a realistic appearance to the scene.

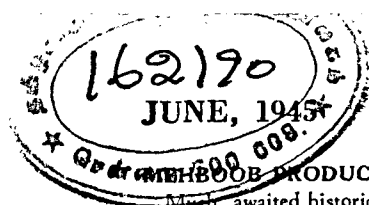
## PRAKASH PICTURES (Bombay)

Dalsukh Pancholi's "*Shirin Farhad*", it is learnt, is doing record business both at the *Regal* and *Capital* of Bombay.

The manner in which the Prakash People handled its publicity and presented it to the public has so caught the imagination of the Bombay-public that they have begun to storm the box-office of both the theatres. Thousands, it is learnt, had to return disappointed not being able to secure seats. An eye witness reports, that if the same enthusiasm were to continue in the public, the picture will easily run to capacity houses for at least two months to come.

## EVEREST PICTURES

They control the world rights of the mighty social picture *Adhar* which features a brilliant array of stars of repute such as Umakant, Yakub, Kokila, Shazadi, Usha and several others.



## TALK-A-TONE

JUNE, 1945

### MAZHAR ART PRODUCTIONS (Bombay)

Much awaited historical *Humayun* had a double premiere at Bombay at *Eros* and *Imperial* and shows every indication of settling down for a prolonged run.

### MAZHAR ART PRODUCTIONS (Bombay)

Producer Mazhar Khan is making headway with his stupendous costume-picture *Pehli Nazar* at the Central Studios, Bombay.

Mazhar Khan is the guy whom you can depend upon for something sane, sensible and good, and more so whenever he takes up to picture making. It is so in the case of *Pehli Nazar*. So that, he may concentrate on the production side alone, he has kept aside from playing any part in the picture.

He has harnessed every available talent to make *Pehli Nazar* the grand-road-show of the year. Besides the top-notchers like Veena, Motilal, Baburao Pendharkar and Bibboo in the cast, he has also secured the services of Nemo of N. T. fame, and a new lady in the name of Munavar Sultane.

More than a third of the picture and four songs have been completed.

### VENUS PICTURES

Progressive-minded, and yet tender of age, director Raja Nane has well nigh completed half of their Socio-mythological subject *Bhi Apana Hai*. The out door work on the picture has also been finished.

The picture stars such talents as Nalini Jayawant, Karan Diwan, Paresh Banerji, Vasant Thengadi, Sulani Devi and *Baby Shakuntala*.

The music side of the subject is handled by Ramachandra Pal.

### TAJ MAHAL PICTURES

It will be a piece of good news to my readers, to learn that, the beauty queen of the screen-Miss Naseem-will be presented to the cine-fans in a most colourful role bedecked with varied costumes and hiar-dos in their super socio-costume picture *Begum*.

Their publicity department assures me that none of the Costume pictures so far attempted have ever lavished so much on the Costume as has been displayed in the picture.

What is more, Ashok Kumar and Naseem who lady the title role, I understand, have given the best exposition of their histrionics through the roles assigned them in *Begum*.

### BOMBAY CINETONE LTD., (Bombay)

Would it surprise you to learn that the mighty picture *Samrat Ashok* has made tremendous progress at the Prabhat Studios, Poona. But knowing, as I do, the hard-working, sincere and suave K. B. Lall the producer, it is a matter of gratification to me to learn of this news. I learn that shooting on three huge settings, the biggest ever erected in Prabhat Studios so far, has been completed. Side by side with the grandeur of its settings, *Samrat Ashok* is embellished by the polished performance of Suriya Chandra Mohan, Veena, Ullhas and Jagirdar.

K. B. Lall directs the picture.

### KALPANA—GEMINI:

Mr. Udaya Shankar is the heroic exponent of our dance-art, who has earned international approbation. He has selected for his *Kalpna*, the plant sported by Gemini, not because other

studios in the various provinces were averse to welcome him or his programme but because he hoped that the most well equipped studio in Tamilnad will not fail to respond to the call of a servitor of the dance-art.

Further, at the time Mr. Shankar signed the contract—it might interest our readers to learn that it was signed at Delhi—Gemini was doing nothing much. We are grieved that this background should be injured by the lack of appreciation of his duties by the Chief-executive of the Gemini institution.

Actuated by the noblest of intentions, we reproduce below the facts of a certain misdemeanour in the sincere hope that Mr. Vasani will not let us down but will take up the matter on hand straight away and right the wrong. It will not do to remain content by just trimming the top. Mr. Vasani must go for the root of the matter.

800 ft. of music was recorded and projected for check up. Mr. Shankar desired to try the projection along with the artistes trying the timing. This is quite usual and necessary, but no stretch of imagination can say that this process comes under 'SHOOTING'. But when a formal requisition was made out to the Chief Executive of Gemini Studios for the above-said projection, Mr. T. R. Ramier refused to oblige unless a "Call-Sheet" was taken out for the purpose.

To say the least, it is mean, unfair and illegitimate.

Mr. Shankar might not grudge the five hundred rupees but human nature is such, it might be provoked to retaliate and to demand its pound of flesh.

Await Release!

## IRADA

STARRING:

PUSHPARANI, PATIENCE COOPER, POORNIMA, UTTAN, DHAIRAJ, BATTACHARJEE & others.



Releasing Shortly at Wellington, Madras

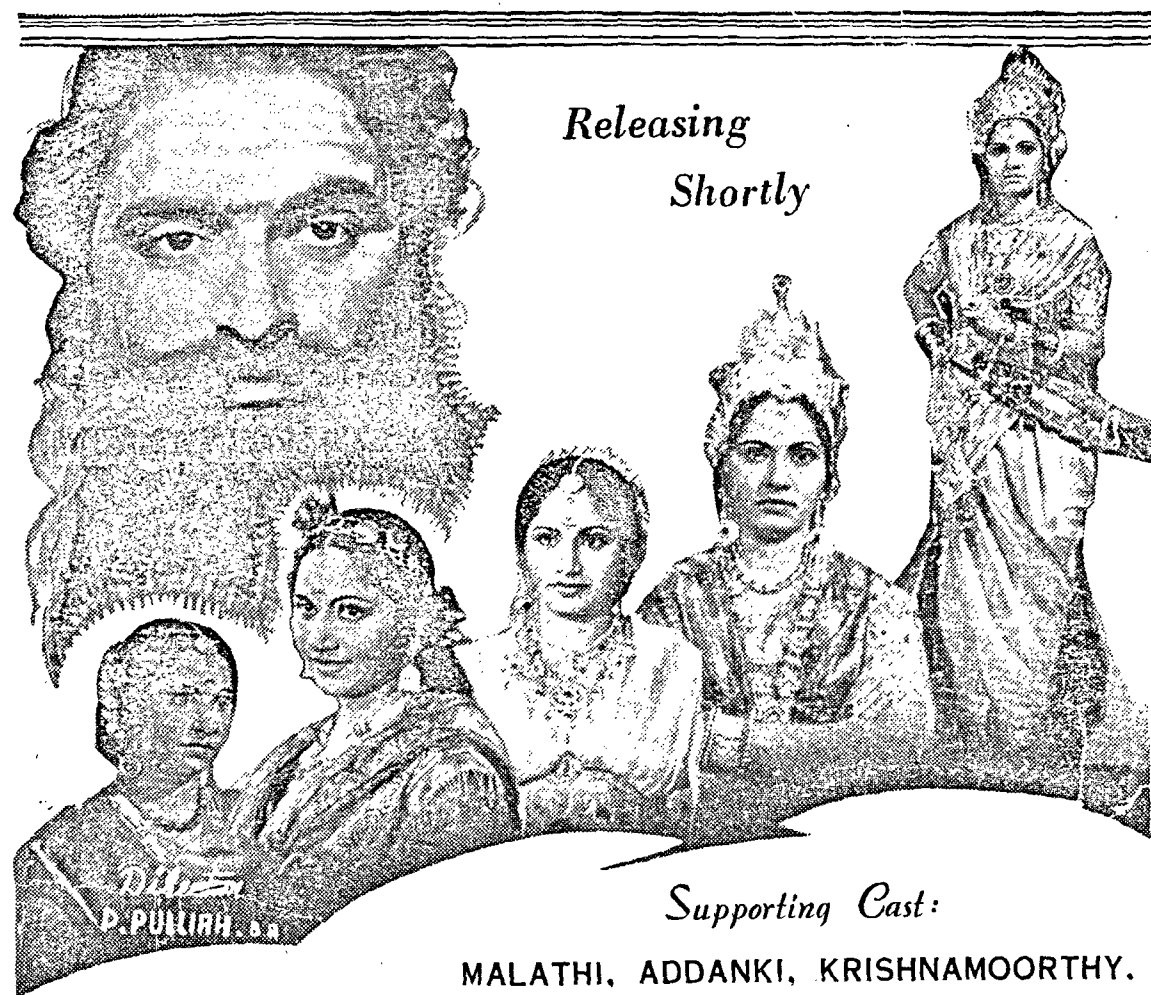
## REKHA

Featuring: LEELA CHITNIS, HARISH, MAYA BANERJI & OTHERS

Contact: UNITED FILMS 87, T. P. Koil Street, Triplicane, Madras.

Printed by P. Arunachalam at the Commercial Printing & Publishing House, 46 Muthumari Chetty Street, G. T., Madras.  
Edited and Published by P. D. Thambi, 289, China Bazaar Road, Madras.

Releasing  
Shortly



Supporting Cast:

MALATHI, ADDANKI, KRISHNAMOORTHY, SIVARAM, GOURIPATHI SASTRY, SUNDARAMMA, KALYANI, RAMA DEVI, YOGAM & MANGALAM.



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