

Artiste of the month

Asthana Vidwan Palakkad T S Anantharaman

Thondikulam Subramaniam Anantharaman hails from a family of musicians in Palakkad. His father is late T A Subramaniam and mother late Seethalakshmi. He started his training in Carnatic music from the tender age of five under his aunt Mangalam. Later, he studied from Sri Appukuttan Marar, a disciple of Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar.

Anantharaman came to Mumbai in 1960 and is living in Chembur since 1963. He was working with Premier Tyres. He resigned from there in 1985 and has been devoting himself to Carnatic Music since then. After coming to Mumbai he continued his practice in vocal music under the guidance of Trichy Swaminatha Iyer and gave his first musical concert in the city in 1962 at a Thyagaraja Aradhana festival. He also established a music class in Mumbai.

This veteran Carnatic singer has given many Carnatic vocal concerts in Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Calcutta, Trivandrum, Palakkad, Coimbatore, and Kozhikode. He is a graded artiste of AIR and has given performances on TV also.

Anantharaman has several achievements to his credit. He started the first music class in Mumbai to train students for Government Technical Examinations in music. He has given lectures on Carnatic music in many seminars. He has submitted a paper on 'The institutionalization of Music'. He gave a lecture at the World Music Conference held in Mumbai. Anantharaman was a visiting faculty member of the Mumbai University, for teaching Carnatic music, for some time.

Honours and Awards

In 1992, His Holiness Bharati Thirtha Swamy, the Sankaracharya of Sringeri Sharada Peetham, bestowed upon Anantharaman his blessings and the title *Asthana Vidwan of Sringeri Sharada Peetham*. In 2002, he was conferred the title *Sangeetha Choodamaniby Padam* an institution promoting Classical Music in Mumbai and the title *Naadha Vibhooshanam* by *Naadapasana* a prominent Music Sabha in Dombivili. In September 2009 Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai honoured him with the Bharat Ratna M S Subbalakshmi 'Best Teacher' Award.

The Sharada Peetham of Sringeri Shankaracharya released an audio cassette of rare Swati Thirunal kritis sung by Anantharaman. He has composed many songs on

Sharadambal, the presiding Goddess at Sringeri who, Anantharaman believes, has inspired him to complete these compositions. These compositions were compiled in a book 'Sharada Sangeetha Maala' and recently audio cassettes and CDs of 'Sharada Sangeetha Maala' were released. Anantharaman has also set to music some compositions of the Sringeri Bharati Thirtha Shankaracharya.

Musical Innovations

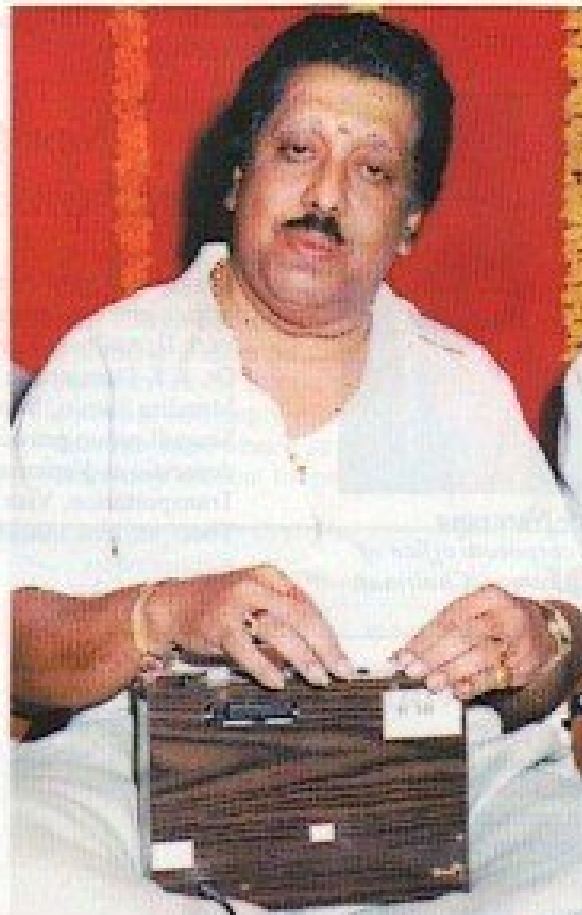
Anantharaman wants to carry forward the great musical

traditions he has learnt from his family and gurus. At the same time he introduces relevant innovations to kindle interest in Carnatic music among the public especially the youth. For instance, *Navagraha Gananjali* - an audio visual presentation of Muthuswamy Dikshitar's *Navagraha kritis* was presented by Anantharaman's students at the Sky theatre of the Nehru planetarium in Mumbai and later at several other places within Mumbai and in Chennai, Coimbatore, Pune, Palakkad and other cities. This is a three hour programme where the nine planets and their significance in astronomy, gemmology, mythology, astrology are presented through audio and visual means, slide shows and musical accompaniments, and the nine navagraha kritis are rendered by his students. Other innovative efforts by this great master are *Tamizhisai* a musical medley of 21 different composers presented by his students. They also presented compositions of selected pre

trinity composers at the NCPA Mumbai. (pre-trinity composers : music composers before the time of the Trinity of Carnatic Music - Thyagraja, Shama Sastri and Muthuswamy Dikshithar).

Anantharaman laments the fact that these days both the students of Carnatic music and their parents want immediate results and prefer semi-classical numbers to the pure form. Carnatic Music is like a sea, and even to sing a light music number, a knowledge of the classical form of music helps, he feels.

His wife's name is Radha. He has one son Shiv Kumar who is a CA and works for a bank and also plays the violin and has given performances. His daughter's name is Gayatri. She is married and staying in Pune. ■



V K KRISHNA MENON ORATORICAL CONTEST

Vidya Balasubramaniam of the North Mumbai Welfare Society's High School, Ghatkopar (West) won the first prize in the 27th V K Krishna Menon Inter-school Oratorical Contest, along with the rolling trophy for her school, the NMWS High School.

Chekar Emma Jane Augustine of CES's Michael High School Kurla (West) won the second prize. Sakshi Sharma won the special prize. She is a student of Hindi High School (English Medium) of Ghatkopar West.

The prizes were distributed by the three judges A Ganesh Kumar, K R Sriram and P K Ravindranath. The President of the Governing body of the North Mumbai Welfare Society, G H Ananthanarayanan presided.



Vidya Balasubramaniam receives the first prize in the V K Krishna Menon Oratorical Contest from the three judges. Vidya's mother is on the left and Shri C.R. Narayanan Hon. Secretary of the Governing Board is on the right.



Mr. K.K. Damodaran, President, Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti is inaugurating the corporate office of Seagull Group of Companies. Sureshkumar, Chairman and Managing Director also seen

New Office for Seagull Group of Companies

Seagull group of companies shifted their corporate office to a new premise at Wellington Business Park II, Andheri-Kurla Road recently.

Dr. K K Damodaran, President Sree Narayana Mandira Samiti, Mumbai inaugurated the office.

Seagull group provide all services related to domestic and international travel like Air ticketing, Transportation, Visa assistance, Hotel bookings etc. There are also into Holiday packages and Recruitments.

Sreelatha Nair: Devoted To Her Veena

-Ragesh Revi

The Bhakti of *Kamboji*, the joy of *Aananda Bhairavi*, the *veera rasam* of *Hamsadhwani* or the sadness of *Mukhari*, all blossom at her fingertips. When Sreelatha Nair's fingers caress the Veena, the strings spring to life, and transport the audience to Saraswathi's Court.

Sreelatha started her quest for music in 1984, as a student of Veena at Shanmukhananda Hall. Subsequently, she started receiving vocal training in Carnatic Music. After eight years at Shanmukhananda, she qualified from the Akhil Bharatheeya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal. From the year 1996, she began teaching the Veena.

Besides giving live performances both as an accompanist and solo musician, Sreelatha Nair is also interested in the lighter forms of music. At the Nair Service Society, Andheri, where she imparts musical knowledge to children, she is associated with the Bhajan group, participating in the periodical Bhajans of the society. She is not averse to healthy experimenting, having done fusion concerts along with western musicians at the NSS. For the past four years, she is under the guidance of Dr Girija Sheshamamba.

Sreelatha has her supportive husband, Jyothikumar Nair and their only son, Prathivesh. They stay at Bandra west.

