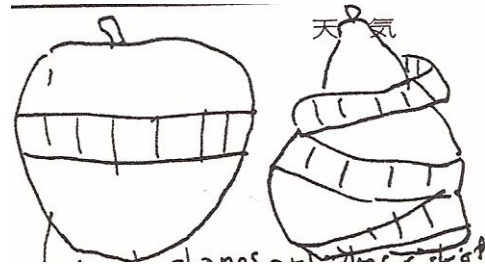


April 7, 2006 (Friday)

Putting Body and Soul Together in  
Chennai. The Spirit of Krishnamurti  
Touched at Last.

チェンナイで身も心も一つ。  
やっとクリシュナムルチの心(霊)に出会う。



Apple shapes at higher risk of heart diseases than pear shapes.

Obesity has caught on in India.

It has caught on in China. Overweight is ugly but obesity is a disease. I'm a little overweight but not obese. So, I need exercise to diminish the chances of gout re-attack. 3.5million diabetics in India, obesity is a major cause of diabetes. It's no longer an American phenomenon; it's a global disease. It's a growing threat for future economic giants like China and India.

INDIA TODAY put Girth of a Nation on cover, alarmed over the obesity becoming a fat Tsunami. It says 45% at males and 55% of females in Delhi are obese. And here's another scary truth: nearly 40 percent adults or urban children are obese and chances are almost 80 percent will grow up to be obese.

My driver guide, Selvam, is a nice, slender Tamil male. Good heart, poor English. To make matters worse, he talks too much. I followed the map to catch up on his spoken messages with heavy Indian or Tamil accents. Hopping on and off his car, I sweated a lot. A good healthy sweat for a man in need of exercise. Of all the tourist spots in central Chennai, Kapaleeswara Temple was the most impressive and culturally shocking - insect-skinny hands of beggars, the lowest people of the caste system. Hinduism and caste die hard.

Selvam, proud Tamil nationalist, says India is a Hindu country. BJP, the ruling party is Hindu. The militarily strong Tamil speakers are staunch anti-communists. Chauvinism and blood-line are deeply in bedded in Chennai (formerly Madras) Indians. That's why Sonia Gandhi, leader of Congress Party, is out of favor with many xenophobic Indians, just because of her Italian blood.

A though occurred. None of the beggars, including skinny mothers carrying babies in their hands, was overweight or obese. My chauffer says, "Rich and fat people go to hospital, and poor and skinny people never go to hospital. For they are immune to disease and need no doctor." In other words, I thought they can afford to be hungry enough to try harder to survive.

Typed by Kunio Takahashi (Kodokan)

Chennai, despite its clean image of growing economy, IT in particular, remains over-populated, over-vehicled and over-congested. Christians, Jews or any other religious cults are eager to take center stage. Islam is a distant second. Very few Buddhists. Many Buddhists are in turbulent Colombo run by the militant Tamil Tigers.

King Ashoka patronized Gautama Buddha and Buddhism flourished in India. There used to be bloody feuds between Hindus and Buddhists prior to that. The Hindu religion as an old religion fought back. Back to the old stillness. A haiku occurred.

An old pond.  
Gautama jumps.  
Splash! ... stillness.

I felt empty all along without having a chance to visit the Krishnamurti Foundation and see Ms. Ahalya Chari on the recommendation of Mr. Aftab Seth, because nobody in the hotel or outside knew anything about him having once lived in Madras, much less his own school. Happiness came when Selvam took me to the biggest bookstore in town Landmark. Because a clerk gave me all sorts of information on his birth place and Foundation from the flap of the books I bought. "J. Krishnamurti, a life" and "Exploration into Insight." Light came on.

These books would make a bed-side read for tonight. Following the written directions, we went to the Foundation, Vasanta Vihar, 64 Greenways Road.

Wow! What a beautiful garden. I entered the temple carpeted by straw mats all over. Came an elderly-looking woman, Ahalya Chari (85) to greet me. Being one of J. Krishnamurti's disciples, her eyes glared as she talked about her old mentor. We chatted for about an hour about the great philosopher and his whereabouts. She suggested strongly and with her impeccable English that I stay with her and her colleagues as long as possible while I'm in Chennai. Why not! Putting body and soul together, I put mind and spirit together.