

NOT JUST A GAME: RELIVING THE POLITICS OF HOCKEY

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Sports are localized in most societies and particularly in the Indian socio-cultural context. Sports, therefore, should be understood within the given social structures and cultural meanings. This paper is an attempt to recollect my memories as a hockey player. While doing so, it tries to understand the role of caste in hockey in South India, and how the game served as a medium of identity and social development for the individual as well as for marginalized communities in a particular social-cultural context.

The bushy public playground in Palayamkottai stands as a metaphor for caste differences. The untended open stretch in this twin town of Tirunelveli silently speaks of how things can change for the worse with a single fight. Unused for the last three years, it has deprived the local children of the space they need to play outdoors. A rusty board hangs forlornly, put up there by the police prevents entry to the premises. It's a stark reminder of what happened in 2006 during and after a cricket match in this downstate Tamil Nadu town. A 15-year-old boy hacked to death his rival team's leader with an *aruva*, the dreaded elongated sickle. The boy was not armed when rival team members, whom he had questioned during the game, took him there for 'talks'. When one of the rivals pulled out a hidden *aruva*, the boy managed to grab it and attack the rival leader. "It was in the ground that he killed a Nadar leader," says the boy, now a reformed person, while recalling the incident that sent him to jail and then to a juvenile home before he was freed. Belonging to the Thevar community, he was conscious of the caste differences even then.

Vannan, 2009

Politics can be seen everywhere. However, India being a caste-based society, the politics inherent in all social aspects is acute. The above excerpt from a leading newspaper reveals the caste politics inherent in sports as well. In this paper, I will relive my days as a hockey player, the national sport of India, and how it was spearheaded by caste politics, even then. In doing so, I will explore reflexivity in self narratives. Authors (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000; Ellis and Bochner, 2000) have stated that autoethnography as a reflexive methodology offers the researcher a means of critically exploring the social forces and discursive practices that have shaped their own involvement in leisure and sport. Besides issues of caste, I will also be exploring self identities inherent in the game of hockey.

The Land and the People

I was born and brought up in Tirunelveli district which is situated in the deep south of Tamil Nadu, South India. The hills which form the western boundary of the

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district are a continuation of the great chain of the Western Ghats. The glory of these massive mountains is the famous Pothikai hill, the place where the sage Agastya performed his atonement. It is known for its opulent flora and fauna. Several rivers of the district originate in the Western Ghats. Tamirabarani, the chief river of the region, never goes dry. This river is one of ancient fame, and is referred to in the epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. The important archeological site Adichanallur is also situated in this district. A unique feature of this district is that it has all five geographical traditions mentioned in Tamil literature — *Kurinji* (mountains), *Mullai* (forests), *Marudham* (paddy fields), *Neithal* (coastal areas) and *Palai* (desert).

The Tirunelveli *Sthalapurana* laid down a tradition for the origin of the name Tirunelveli. According to the Puranic version, one Vedasarma, a staunch devotee of lord Shiva while on his pilgrimage from the North to the South was invited by Lord Shiva in his dream to his abode on the banks of the sacred river Tamirabarani. The delighted devotee came to Sindupoondhurai on the banks of the river and stayed there with his family. Once there was a famine which compelled Vedasarma to collect paddy by way of begging and continuing his daily prayers. One day he spread out the paddy to dry under the sun before the lord and went for his ablution in Tamiraparani. He prayed to the lord for rain which he thought could be a remedy for the famine. His prayer was answered and when he was bathing, a thunder storm broke out and it rained heavily. Vedasarma rushed to the place where he had spread the paddy and to his utter surprise, he saw that despite rain around the area, the paddy that he had spread did not get even a single drop of rain and it did not get soaked. Since then, the place is called *tiru-nel-veli* i.e. sacred hedged paddy.

Tamil is the mother tongue of ninety percent of the population, and here it is spoken with greater purity than in the northern parts of the state. The main occupation of the district's population is agriculture. As a rule, villages conform to a more or less uniform type, consisting of blocks of houses, with each block inhabited by different castes and separated from one another by streets and lanes. The staple food throughout the district is rice. As for religion, the 2011 census revealed that Hindus form the majority of the population (79.76%), followed by Christians (10.89%), Muslims (9.26%), and others (0.09%). Apart from these institutionalized religions, hundreds of folk religious practices still exist, some of the more significant being the worship of Iyannar, Amman, and Sudalai. Several types of folk performing arts as well as crafts are very popular.

Tirunelveli is a multi-caste region and all the villages are mostly caste based settlements. Every caste maintains their own identity in terms of occupation, performances, rituals and religious practices. Folk gods and goddesses are worshipped by specific castes and temples also exclusively belong to that caste. Since I was born and brought up in an urban space, in a Christian family, I was not aware of all the folk gods and goddesses till I joined the Department of Folklore in

St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai for my Masters Degree. The knowledge I gained through my studies helped me to look at things around me. No visitor to the region can fail to notice the numberless truncated, often shapeless, obelisks of brick or plastered mud, which are to be seen almost everywhere on the roadside, on waste grounds, cremation grounds, on mounds standing dry above the paddy fields, in the village lanes and even in the backyards of inhabited houses. Often, these pyramids stand in groups or clusters of groups; they are placed as a rule on a pedestal cut into two or three steps. A ferocious human figure may be depicted in colors on one face of the pyramid. Sometimes all faces are perfectly plain. These are the symbols locally called *pudums*. They are called *pey kovil* or the temple of devils. Only an expert can discern what deity each *pudum* in a group represents. Generally folk deities are malevolent in nature. It is believed that the malevolent gods and goddesses become benevolent when people worship them. In Tamil Nadu, particularly in the southern region, the folk gods are known as *Madan* and the goddesses are known as *Amman*. The characteristics common to many folk deities are that they have "*pey*," i.e., "demon" or "spirit," as their general name, that they delight in the sacrifice of animals and human blood, and that they go around the world causing trouble. If not pleased, they inflict disease on men and cattle; they attack lonely women, especially if they are with child; night and midday are the worst times and the blackest days are Tuesday and Friday. Some of the general characteristics of folk religion in Tamil Nadu are as follows: The folk gods and goddesses are worshipped within a particular socio-cultural boundary; non-Brahmins serve as priests; fear of destruction dominates the faith; worship varies from place to place; several versions of origin myths of the deities are available; generally folk deities appear in clusters; rituals are traditionally transmitted and festivals are related to the vernacular calendar; several forms of temples are constructed and no common or written rules are followed for the construction of temples; several temples are erected at various places by taking "sacred soil" from another temple; mythological events are reflected in the religious practices; blood sacrifice, divination, spirit possession, healing, etc. are generally practiced; performing folk arts/music function as a medium to invoke the spirit of the gods and goddesses; and annual festivals are related to agriculture, healing, fertility and prosperity. In traditional societies, health, wealth, fertility and prosperity are generally related to supernatural powers. Rituals are performed to please the ferocious gods and goddesses in order to protect themselves from the anger of the ferocious deities and to receive their blessings in life.

Tirunelveli was the regime of the Pandya Kings for some time and it was an important city during the Chola Kingdom and Vijayanagar empire and after that it fell under the rule of the Nayaks and the Nawab of Arcot. From 1800 AD it was under the British rule till independence. The British named it as Tinnevely district though their headquarters was first located in Palayamkottai the adjacent

town, where they had their military headquarters during their operations against the Palayakars. Both Tirunelveli and Palayamkottai grew as the twin towns of the district. Tirunelveli consists of hundreds of villages and Palayamkottai is one of the important townships of the district where I was born and brought up. A number of schools, colleges and technical institutions are situated here and it is also locally known as Oxford of South India and also known for the sport of hockey. During 1970s, 1980s and 1990s there were a number of hockey clubs and hockey was part and parcel of their life, and played out in every street and ground.

Playing for Leisure and Identity

I was born in a family where my grandfather and three of my maternal uncles were eminent hockey players and got employment in different government sectors through the game – in Income Tax Department, Central Excise Department and Indian Overseas Bank. This is the case in many of the families in the region that I was born and brought up.

I started playing hockey with my peer group in my primary school days. Many of us were not able to afford a hockey stick and therefore we played hockey with the help of a long ‘L’ shaped wooden stick, while I had the opportunity to play with the broken hockey sticks of my uncles. It was the normal practice to collect all the broken hockey sticks from the senior players, repair it with gum made of *vajram* and *nada*. *Vajram* is the local term for ‘Gum Arabic’ which is available in local shops as flakes. These flakes of *vajram* is boiled in water till it becomes diluted in glue form and then it is used to paste the broken hockey sticks. *Nada* is a tape made of cloth which is used to tie around the broken part and kept in the sun for a day to get set.

Playing hockey was more of a pass time and not of formal training during my childhood. I played in the streets by placing two stones as goal posts in both the sides and drawing a ‘D’ near the goal post. We never wore shoes or chin pads while playing in the streets. The colony where I lived during my early school days is known as Rajendra Nagar which is surrounded by paddy fields, lakes and water channels. Apart from streets, hockey was played in paddy fields and also in the middle of lakes. We cleaned the paddy field after harvest and drew the outlines and markings in the field and posted two poles for the goal post and played there every morning and evening during school days, and the whole day during holidays. Similarly there was a lake near my house known as *Illanthai Kulam*, the central portion of which was higher than the boundary, and therefore in summer, the central dry portion was converted into a play ground with proper markings.

There were many teams in every colony based on age group like seniors, juniors and sub-juniors and these groups played separately, and therefore learning hockey was not through a formal class, but through imitation and observation alone. The sub-juniors learnt from the juniors and the juniors learnt from the seniors by watching their game. At times the seniors taught certain techniques to the juniors

in an informal way. Though there were prescribed rules and regulations for hockey, the hockey we played in the streets during my childhood was like a folk game.

Some of the important colonies known for hockey are Jyothipuram, Rajendra Nagar, Anna Nagar, Samadhana Puram, Konar Theru and AR Line. During holidays local tournaments or matches were conducted between these teams. Sometimes, matches were held for the prize money of Rs 50, Rs 100 or even for *kadalai mittai* (sweets made of peanuts). Each player contributed some money for the prize money and the captain of the winning team would keep the entire money for the next match, or spend it on sweets and ice candies after the match. Most of these matches were held in temporary grounds in the paddy field or in the lake. However, the spectator response was tremendous with men, women and children from the region coming out in large numbers to support their respective teams.

Besides locality clubs, even schools in this region had hockey teams in all levels i.e. Junior, Senior and Super Senior. The Junior team consisted of students studying in class VI to VIII and Senior team consisted of students in Class IX and X and Super Senior consisted of Class XI and XII students. These teams take part in inter-school tournaments at the District and State level. St. Xavier's School and St. John's Higher Secondary School were the best amongst them and they were traditional rivals. Interestingly, St. Xavier's School was managed by the Catholic missionaries while St. John's School was managed by Protestant missionaries.

I started playing formal hockey from Class VI onwards after I joined St. Xavier's School. Around the same time, all my friends and age-mates who played in their respective streets and paddy fields started playing for their school teams as well. The competition to become a part of the school team was intense, and once selected, there was great pride involved. After joining the school team there was regular practice in the school ground in the morning and evening under the coaching of a Physical Director. Normally the school provided hockey sticks and balls to the players and therefore most of the boys started their formal game with proper sticks, boots and chin pads only after joining the school teams. Since we used to practice morning and evening, the schools also gave privileges to the players so that the players did not have to attend the first and last hour classes. They were given additional marks in exams too.

All the players were very punctual in their practices so that they would be selected for the Senior and Super Senior teams when they go to higher classes. Teachers and parents would encourage by saying, "You are a hockey player and you will get a job". Thus it was matter of pride to wear shorts, T-shirts, boots, and hold the stick in hand and to be known as a hockey player. This was not only a question of feeling head and shoulders above others who were not selected as a part of the team, but also had a feeling of *dejavu* for it seemed as if we (those of us who were a part of the team) were already assured of a permanent job, and thus our "value" in the society had gone up manifold.

I represented St. Xavier's Junior Hockey team and in Class IX, I was made the captain of the school team. Under my captainship we won the Inter-School tournament in which I scored the winning goal. My school had won the cup after several long years. Thus, the feeling of being invincible and of being the "boy of the hour" made me at the top of the world. But this feeling lasted briefly, since unfortunately I was dismissed from the school immediately after the match, and just before the half yearly examination, due to my notorious action in the class room. I sprinkled ink on a teacher's shirt as a dare, and one class mate informed the school management that I was the culprit. Soon after that I got admission in Schafter Higher Secondary School which is located in Tirunelveli town, however, there was no hockey teams in the school at all. Nevertheless, I played hockey for the District team and Club teams. Though Tirunelveli Town is situated very near to Palayamkottai, no one plays hockey there. It is basically a business centre and surrounded by a number of cinema halls and markets. Palayamkottai owned hockey perhaps due to the efforts of the missionary schools and colleges established during colonial times.

Hockey players who passed out from schools preferred to join St. John's College and St. Xavier's College situated in Palayamkottai. However, some of those who scored well in their Higher Secondary Examinations got admission in engineering, medical and other professional colleges. My elder brother who played hockey very well during his school days got admission in a medical college. Of course, unlike me he studied well too. Generally those who studied in St. Xavier's School preferred to join St. Xavier's College and those who studied in St. John's School preferred to join St. John's College. The colleges also tried to attract good players and offer them free hostel, mess and fee concession and liberty in attendance. After I completed my Higher Secondary school I joined Economics Honours in St. Xavier's College, and later did Masters in Folklore in the same college. My taking up Masters in Folklore was spearheaded by my interest in sports, and I felt (of course wrongly) that I would get more time to practice and play hockey. Peculiarly though, the jobs that I landed up with, had nothing to do with hockey! I represented the college team from my first year onwards and represented the University team too.

Being identified as a hockey player, and thereby feeling cherished, popular, and loved became the central part of my life during my college and university days. I was always proud of being a hockey player and in fact hockey shaped my personality and gave an identity. I was a well-known student due to the game not only in my school and college, but also in other schools, and colleges in that region. For every player it is a dream to represent and play for the team that has value and significance to them. The teams may be clubs, schools, colleges and Universities or any other institutions. By wearing the team's color shorts, jersey, stockings, shoes and holding a stick gave me a social identity and it differentiated me from

the rest of the peer group. Hockey, thus was not only the game, but also a means of creation of identity, association and affiliation and which helped to develop self esteem, courage, confidence and the positive aspects into life.

The Politics of Hockey

For me, today and in the past, hockey was not just a game. It reflected the society of a particular space. It is important to understand the social structure of Tirunelveli region in order to understand this game. Tirunelveli is a multi-caste region in which agricultural communities predominantly live. Different communities like Maravar or Thevar, Nadar, Devendra Kula Vellalar or Pallar, Parayar, Konar, Reddiar, Vellalar, Arunthathier are domiciled in Tirunelveli. Among these communities, Maravar, Nadar and Devendra Kula Vellalar are numerically dominant in the region.

Maravar is a dominant agricultural caste belonging to Most Backward Class. Manikumar (1997) stated that Maravars are numerically far more important than the other agricultural castes of the region. Land reforms, like the zamindari abolition, Tenancy Acts of 1950s, helped the rich Maravar farmers to promote their interests. They have also been the main beneficiaries of government agricultural policies providing institutionalized credit and liberal and subsidized agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, water, electricity, etc. A sizeable number of others making use of their political clout have earned quick money through illicit brewery, contract works and money lending. However, it should be remembered that a vast number of Maravars also work as agricultural labourers and wage earners. Devendra Kula Vellalar is an agricultural labour class which is chronically oppressed caste belonging to Scheduled Caste. A small section of the Devendra Kula Vellalar, who had long remained landless agricultural labourers, have been recently empowered, to at least a small extent as a consequence of access to education and government jobs. Nadar is an agricultural caste and also a trader caste belonging to Backward Caste. In the early nineteenth century, the Nadars were a community mostly engaged in the Palmyra industry, including the production of toddy. However, there were a few sub-sects comprising wealthy landlords, money lenders and traders.

Maravars and Nadars are politically, socially and economically dominant in Tirunelveli region and Devendra Kula Vellalar is an oppressed community struggling hard to climb up in the social ladder. All these three communities are patriarchic and endogamous in nature. Caste conflict and honour killing is quite common in this region. Every caste has their own caste leaders and associations and the oppressed caste tries to fight for their right and the dominant caste tries to maintain their dominance and as a result caste conflicts and violence takes place very frequently and a chain of murders and violence took place in this region during 1980s and 1990s. Since it is a sensitive region, the emotion of caste is planted in each and every member of the society during his or her childhood itself.

The following newspaper clippings reflect the caste conflict in that region.

Violence frequents Tachchanallur like an uninvited guest. When the village is back to normal after a murder, raids and exodus, another murder throws it back into the heart of casteist violence. And it happened again on September 24 when a Thevar hacked a Dalit to death. What followed was an encore of the nightmare that haunts not just Thachchanallur but the southern Tamil Nadu districts of Tirunelveli and Tuticorin where the powerful Thevars and Dalits have been fighting for years. Thevars set afire four Dalit houses, chased out about 50 Dalit families from nearby Karayairrupu village. Seventy Thevars were arrested. Their fellow men blocked traffic and attacked district collector Niranjan Mardi demanding their release. Just a month before this latest bout of violence, it was the other way round Thevars were on the run and Dalits were chasing them. Dalits had set ablaze 20 Thevar houses in Urudayankudiyirippu and had chased around 100 Thevar families out of the village. Since 1995, as many as 66 persons have died in clashes between the two castes in these two districts. And in the last four months alone, 20 persons have been killed. Thevars dominate illicit arrack manufacturing and money-lending, and in both, Dalits are the major consumers. The economics of arrack, interest and exploitation don't allow Dalits to get out of an ancient social trap.

(Oct. 6, 1997, *Indian Express*)

The recent caste violence in Tirunelveli district, apparently triggered by trivial incidents, has to be seen against the changing power relations between the Dalit and the dominant agricultural castes as also among the Dalit castes. These emerging tensions cannot be addressed as law and order issues nor even as agrarian conflicts. The emergence of assertive Pallars has meant that they would not take discrimination lying down. South Tamil Nadu has its own share of discrimination against Dalits. Many village wells and temples are still out of bounds to Dalits, while separate places of worship and deities also exist. In effect, municipal schools tend to cater exclusively to Dalit children, while children of other caste Hindus, notably Maravars, generally abstain from such public schools. Though stainless steel tumblers have replaced coconut shells or aluminium cups, Dalits continue to be served separately in tea stalls. In Tirunelveli region, the district Arivoli Iyakkam, which is a part of the National Literary Mission, had to conduct separate classes for Maravars and Dalits. In many villages Dalits have no access to Maravar streets. They are not permitted to use the cement benches in bus stops. They have no approach road to their cremation ground. Numerous stories about upper caste deception especially regarding government subsidy loan for milch cows are rife in this region. More abominable is the case of Panchayat unions. Dalit members of these councils are made to sit on the floor as a matter of routine. A woman Dalit Panchayat union president complained to this writer that the members belonging to non-Dalit castes were not attending the regular meetings she convened because she was a Dalit.

Manikumar, 1997

How are caste and caste violence or caste identity related to hockey? As I described earlier, Palayamkottai is an urban space in Tirunelveli region and known for hockey, and hockey teams. It is important to understand the social structure of the colonies here. Most of the old colonies/streets in Palayamkottai are caste-based in nature which is applicable for the whole of Tirunelveli region. All the villages in the

region are caste-based settlement. The place where a person stays reflects his caste identity. Therefore most of the hockey teams in Palayamkottai represent their place and thus their caste identity. For instance, the Jyothi team originated from Jyothipuram which is predominated by Devendra Kula Vellalar community, the Honest team is predominated by Nadar community, the Yadav team mostly consists of Konar (Yadav), and the Samdan team mostly consists of Parayar boys. However Jyothi and Honest are the two main hockey teams in Palayamkottai. They are arch rivals, and consist of the dominant caste groups Devendra Kula Vellalar and Nadar. However some time, players belonging to other castes also joined the teams. Whenever local tournaments or matches are played between these teams, every player knew which caste they were playing against, and that formed the undercurrent of the game. However no violence took place within the game in the name of caste.

Since Palayamkottai is the hub of education, the youths in that region selected hockey as one of the medium for their social upliftment, particularly few oppressed and backward castes. As a result in 1970s, 80s and 90s a number of hockey players got jobs in Government and public sectors like Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, State Bank of India, Canara Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Port Trust, NLC, Indian Railways, Postal and Telecommunications, Income Tax, Central Excise etc.

During 1970s to 1990s several Government, public and private sectors were having a Hockey team of their own and took part in State and National level tournaments. It was a pride to have a hockey team representing their departments. Outstanding players were recruited from different regions of Tamil Nadu through sports quota. Generally the period of getting appointment through sports quota is between their higher secondary school education and graduation. The representatives from the departments would witness most of the inter-school, inter-college and inter-district tournaments held in different regions and identify the outstanding players and request them to play for their departments as a guest player in the beginning and later on they would get absorbed. Therefore every match held in Palayamkottai was given importance thinking that someone would be observing their performance in the ground. Players were also directly recruited through advertisements. The various departments gave different privileges to the sportsmen. The only duty for the players (who were employed in different offices) was to go for practice every morning and evening. They were given flexible office timings for regular job duties. Generally, such posts of sports quota were meant for group D or class IV level jobs in the departments and therefore players who got appointment through sports quota remained in the same position for a long time. This happened because they were appointed while they were still in school and much before their graduation.

The emotion of caste is always an undercurrent in the process of selection of players for the State, District, University, and Departmental teams. The identity of

the players can be known easily by knowing the place he belongs to and the hockey club he represented. Generally, if a player plays for the Yadav team, he belongs to the Konar community, and if a player plays for Jyothi team he belongs to the Devendra Kula Vellalar community. The influential senior members of the club teams also play key role in influencing the selection of the players belonging to their clubs. In the process some outstanding players are neglected in selection due to such caste politics. The discrimination of players in the name of caste and region is not only the character of Palayamkottai but also reflects the Pan Indian phenomenon.

Conclusion

In a newspaper article in 2002, Thyagarajan (2002) stated that “any evaluation of the fecundity of hockey in Chennai is incomplete without acknowledging the glorious role played by the European and the Anglo-Indian communities. From the days of Cullen, Tremenere, Hart and Summerheys, to the golden age of Eric Blankley, Gilbert, Richtor, down the era of Jimmy Carr, Cunningham, Joe D’Costa and the Pears brothers, competitive hockey in the 1930s and 1940s mirrored the craft in full bloom of pure skill and artistry. The success of the Anglo-Indian Sports Club, the Telegraphs, and the significant part played by the Young Men’s Indian Association (YMIA), the South Indian Athletics Association (SIAA), the Madras United Club (MUC) and, of course, the Madras Cricket Club (MCC), which is the only club still maintaining the 100 year old tradition, along with the Murugappa Group, in conducting the annual tournament here, kept alive the momentum of growth. Interestingly, hockey in that generation had an elitist touch too, what with the leading star cricketers switching to the stick sport in summer months to maintain physical fitness”.

This clearly reflects that the game hockey was once played mostly by the elite class of the society. However in the course of time the game was learnt, played and encouraged by the marginalized communities particularly the scheduled and backward castes in order to uplift their socio-economic status. This paper reflects that the meaning of hockey is not just a game, it is a medium of identity formation and social development. Further, it is related to social structures and reflects the social hierarchy of the studied area. Hockey also served as a medium to release the social repressions faced by the urban youths belonging to marginalized communities and the identity they achieved through hockey gives several positive aspects into socio-economic development.

Hockey, in the past three decades, has started to lose its glory in India. Many government and public sector departments, which once considered it a pride to have a hockey team of its own, have slowly stopped their recruitment of hockey players. The coverage given by mass media for cricket has played a greater negative impact on hockey. Since hockey is a physically challenging game needing physical

fitness and skills, the general youth slowly drifted towards cricket in the 1990s and everybody became a cricket player. During my college days, many hockey players, including myself, started playing cricket with hockey sticks during the day time. Since hockey players were good in batting, many cricket teams invited hockey players during matches to bat for their teams. It was thus the transitional period of attention from hockey to cricket. Once there was a great competition to take part in school and college hockey teams but since the late 1990s till now, the game of hockey almost became an “endangered” game in all schools and colleges. Hockey players cannot be rejuvenated, but the game of hockey can be rejuvenated if we properly place the game in the appropriate socio-economic platform.

Despite caste politics plaguing the game of hockey in Tirunelveli, it is still a fond memory how during my school days, thousands of people men, women, and children – dressed in festive clothes, bought tickets, and went to VOC ground in Palayamkottai accompanied with music and dance to witness the National level hockey tournaments. It was a “houseful” show, with thousands perched atop trees, compound walls, and the roof tops around the VOC ground.

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