

LIFESTYLE FOOD
MUSIC PEOPLE

THE HINDU

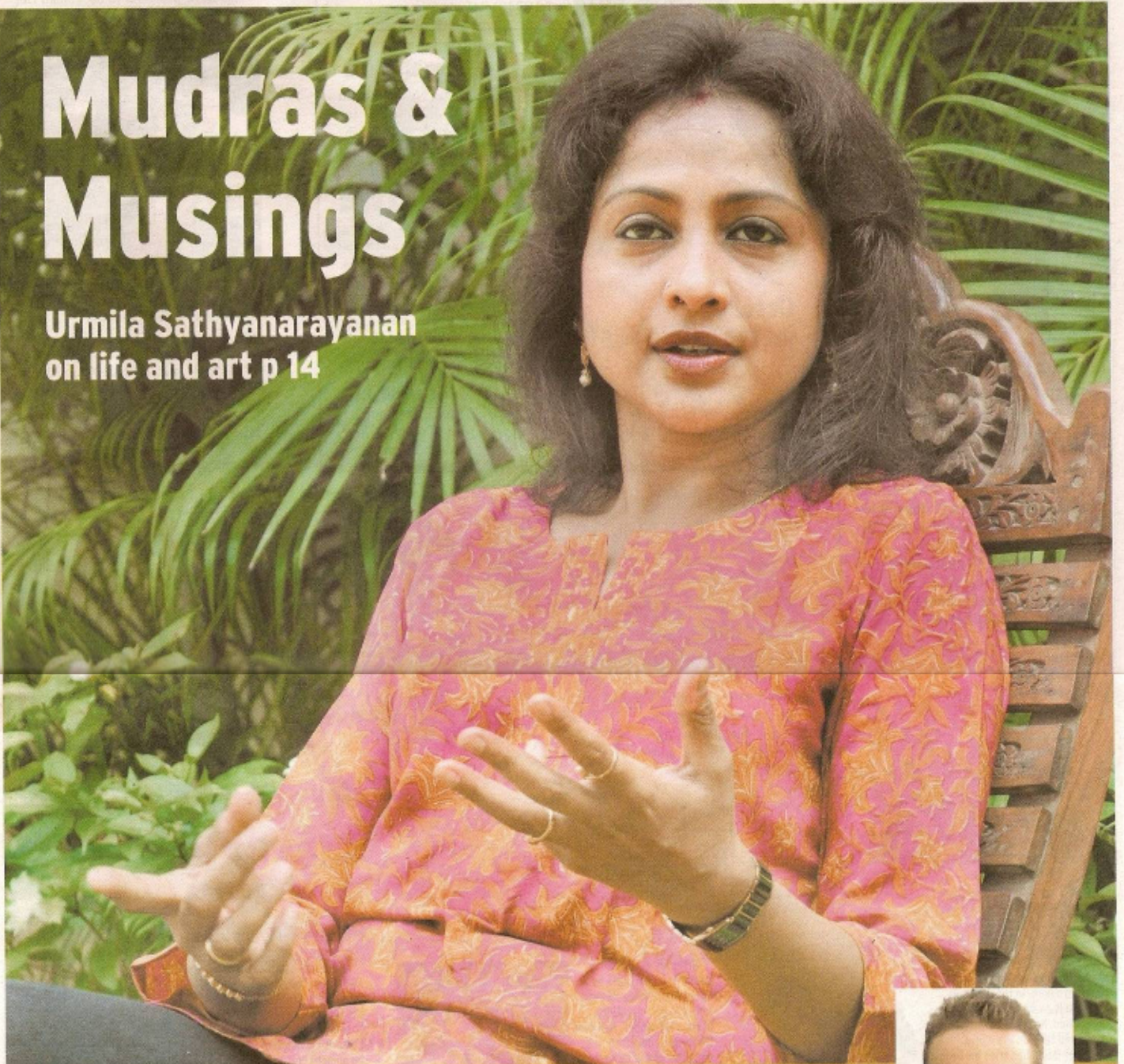
FITNESS LEISURE
EVENTS GADGETS

METROPLUS WEEKEND

CHENNAI • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2008

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ROAD TO ADVENTURE Sebastian Klein

PHOTO: K. V. SRINIVASAN

Motorcycle diaries

PASSING BY *Biker Sebastian Klein had interesting experiences to share when he stopped at Chennai, en route from Munich to Bangkok*

“Is there really a road from Munich to Chennai?” meet Sebastian Klein, a 27-year-old biking enthusiast from Munich and he will tell you without batting an eyelid. “Yes, for sure there is.” Stopping off in Chennai, en route his epic 25,000 km journey from Munich to Bangkok on a 800 cc BMW F800 GS automobile, Sebastian has crossed 15 countries, traversed over 20,000 km and has met and interacted with people from over 30 different communities and backgrounds.

How did it all start?

Sebastian tells us, “I bumped into the BMW folks at an auto fair in Munich and told them of this idea I had of riding their new BMW bike from Munich to Bangkok. Though it sounded a little bizarre, they liked the idea, and offered me an internship in the company for seven months during which I convinced them to sponsor my ride.” Much like one of his inspirations Che Guevara, Sebastian had only three years earlier embarked upon a journey from Guatemala to Panama in South America. This trip, however, was going to be even more arduous, beginning in Munich on May 24, Sebastian rode from Austria through to Turkey in Eastern Europe, then made his way through to Iran and Pakistan crossing over to India at the Wagah border and then visiting Kathmandu in Nepal before traversing the length of the country

to finally dock in Chennai.

With over 40kg of equipment, including camping gear, GPS equipment, maps, spare parts and food all assembled in side-boxes around him, it's little wonder that Sebastian was referred to as Neil Armstrong at most of the check-posts he passed. From riding in the Carpathian Mountains in Turkey to camping at Varna (Bulgaria) near the Black Sea to watch the European Football Championships to visiting Cappadocia, a unique mountain formation in Turkey; Sebastian has some unforgettable memories. What he most fondly remembers, however, is his trip to Iran, “The people of Iran turned out to be some of the friendliest I encountered during my entire journey, so were the people of Pakistan who insisted on sending a police convoy with me to ensure my safety.” During his travel within India, Sebastian also spent time with the Tibetan refugees at the Khardongla Pass in Leh before visiting Pokhara city and Kathmandu in Nepal.

After visiting over a 100 cities and towns over the last four months, we ask him what he finds special about Chennai. He takes a sip from the frothing mug in his hand and says, “The coffee in Chennai is among the best I've tasted in the world.” Sebastian's scheduled to reach Bangkok over the next two months and his complete journey can be tracked online on his blog: www.seppotage.de

SUDHIR SYAL