

RAJNEESH FOUNDATION

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NEWS FROM POONA

LAST MANGO IN POONA

The monsoon came, the sannyasins departed, the landlords wrung their hands and wept, and the water buffaloes viewed all things with their accustomed equanimity. It was holiday time at Shree Rajneesh Ashram, a fact which several thousand surprised mums and dads around the world must have greatly appreciated.

In beautiful downtown Poona, the entrepreneurs were getting out of the clothing business and into travel agencies, out of restaurants and into shops selling suitcases and all the latest styles in bags and baggage. The great orange invasion was turning into the great orange excursion, and the immutable laws of demand and supply were rapidly adjusting to meet the latest developments.

Inside the ashram itself, a mammoth load-shedding operation was in progress, as many departments willingly stripped themselves down to a skeleton maintenance staff while the rest hopped aboard the Deccan Queen and disappeared in the general direction of Bombay airport.

But one up-and-coming department became the ashram's latest growth industry--the Travel Information Bureau. Sporting a large world map on its wall and staffed by four helpful young women, it offered guidance on

discount fares heading West and East, as well as sound advice on how to get your exit papers in order, thereby avoiding unpleasant hassles at the last moment.

Holiday-makers were not the only ones going abroad. Swami Ananda Teertha left on a world tour of groups that will take him to the USA, Latin America, Bali, Australia and Germany. Many other group leaders also headed out into the world, taking with them Bhagwan's offering of life, love and laughter.

For those who remained behind, the smooth running of the now strangely spacious ashram posed no problems at all. Satsang was celebrated each morning as usual, and the offices continued to hum with exuberant chaos. There was more elbow room at Mariam Canteen, less of a crush at Music Group, but otherwise the distinctive flavour of sannyasins-at-play was undisturbed and no less infectious.

Scores of T-shirts proclaiming 'Last Mango In Poona' appeared from within the recesses of the ashram's silkscreen department, adding to the carnival atmosphere of humour, celebration and uncertainty. The future, as always, remained inscrutable....

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