

Online edition of India's National Newspaper Saturday, May 31, 2008



# **Metro Plus Bangalore**

Features: Magazine | Literary Review | Life | Metro Plus | Open Page | Education Plus | Book Review | Business | SciTech | NXg | Friday Review | Cinema Plus | Young World | Property Plus | Quest | Folio |

Metro Plus Bangalore Chennai Coimbatore Hyderabad Mangalore Puducherry Tiruchirapalli Thiruvananthapuram

Visakhapatnam



## Not letting the river stagnate

SHAILAJA TRIPATHI TANEJA goes to a martial art class of TAI CHI and returns with a powerful fitness tool

PHOTO: MURALI KUMAR K.



## LET IT FLOW Tai chi's core philosophy is harmony between the two vital energies, masculine and feminine

Tai chi" oh what the heck...that dance in slow motion would just suit my delicate frame, I thought. Also I have a flair for dancing so learning tai-chi would be child's play.

But to achieve the uniform speed and grace is not all that simple, I realised. Don't opt for tai chi thinking it is simple. And that is the first thing I was told on entering the classes of The Tai Chi Academy.

"Just come with an open mind. Coming with pre-conceived notions complicates things," said Sifu George Thomas. The teacher is referred to as Sifu. Thomas learnt the Yang style of tai chi from grandmaster Fu Sheng Yuan.

Tai chi chuan is originally a Chinese martial art but over the years people across the world have taken to it as a means to keep fit. It literally means the "supreme ultimate fist" and its core philosophy is harmony between the two vital energies - Yin (feminine) and Yang (masculine). Tai chi has 85 forms which can be further divided into 600 movements but a beginner opens his/her account with the three basic forms like I did.

Published on Monday Wednesdays, Thursdays

#### Archives

**Datewise** 

## Classified

- Lead
- Life Style
- **Fashion**
- Music
- Personality
- Eating Out
- Madras Miscellan
- **Issues**
- Arts & Crafts
- Information Tech
- Shopping
- Heritage
- Miscellany

#### News

**News Update** Front Page National States:

- Tamil Nadu
- Andhra Prades
- Karnataka
- Kerala
- New Delhi
- Other States International Opinion **Business** Sport Miscellaneous Index

## Advts

Retail Plus Classifieds Jobs Obituary

At 7 p.m. sharp, people from various age groups had gathered for their weekly class. A few warm-up exercises and everybody got started. But not without doing "Li". Placing the right fist on the left palm, we bowed first to Sifu and then to each other. "The fist symbolises Yang (masculine) and the right palm stands for Yin (feminine). Since tai-chi chuan is all about harmony, this movement represents balance between the two," explained Thomas.

Following him, I started off with the "opening stance" – a fairly simple one. The second movement was "opening form". I lifted my arms, brought them up to the eye level. In a semi-circular motion, brought the arms to my waist and then relaxed. But it's not as easy as it sounds. The arms should just flow like a river without any effort. The hands should be in a particular position when you bring it down. At the same time you have to keep touching the palate with the tongue. I got it, but not quite. Repeating the calming structured movements for a while made me feel light. Soon, without worrying about how I was faring, what others would think of me, would I get an auto back home, I found myself concentrating on the movements.

"Without prana we can't be alive but it's not enough to be just alive. Tai chi harnesses the prana and takes it to all the blocked areas of our body and opens it. It makes you more aware of yourself," says Thomas.

Regular practise of tai chi yields better breathing, increases resistance, reduces stress and stimulates every part of the body. "We don't say that tai chi can treat your health problems, but it surely assists medical science. As I was doing the third movement of grasping the peacock's tail, Thomas told me, "Do it slowly but don't pause. The fluid movements of tai chi means that the river never stagnates."

Contact The Tai Chi Academy on 98441-18303/94496-33267

Printer friendly page Send this article to Friends by E-Mail

Metro Plus Bangalore Chennai Coimbatore Hyderabad Madurai Mangalore Puducherry Tiruchirapalli Thiruvananthapuram Visakhapatnam

Features: Magazine | Literary Review | Life | Metro Plus | Open Page | Education Plus | Book Review | Business | SciTech | NXg | Friday Review | Cinema Plus | Young World | Property Plus | Quest | Folio |

The Hindu Group: Home | About Us | Copyright | Archives | Contacts | Subscription Group Sites: The Hindu | Business Line | Sportstar | Frontline | Publications | eBooks | Images | Home |

Republication or redissemination of the contents of this screen are expressly prohibited without the written consent of The Hir