

DH

9-5-03

### Pali forgotten

Sir, It is always interesting to read Leela Ramanathan's writings on Indian dance ("Complementary coexistence", DH, May 4). However, there is a point of contention in the comment that 'It is only after the 10th century that ...Sanskrit, which was the main language so far, began to develop into regional languages'. This reflects a widespread misconception that Sanskrit was widely used in an-

cient India; in fact it was always an elite language mainly used by the priestly class and it was Pali and Prakrit, the colloquial versions of Sanskrit, which were widely in use and many sub-continental and north Indian languages are in fact derived from Pali and Prakrit.

It is a pity that Pali and Prakrit, which are also part of our heritage, have practically vanished, not only in terms of

scholarship but even in terms of cultural memory or discourse.

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### Metro route

Sir, While the metro rail will alleviate the transport problems of Bangaloreans, the proposed routes for phase 1 were disappointing and surprising. Large areas of north and north-east