Fitness through Sinharobics

Exercise is no longer a mania, it is accepted as an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. There have been explosions of aerobics, callisthenics, jazz ballet and an entire gamut of exercise forms flown in from western countries. In an attempt to "culturise" exercise and its inherent benefits, Pulse Beat has introduced *Sinharobics* to the exercising public.

"Sinharobics was introduced in July '96, and has been an instant hit because it is so different, and because it is also a very effective means of working out", said Mohani Ahangama, owner and manager of Pulse Beat. A form of exercise choreographed by the popular dancer Mohan Sudasinghe, Sinharobics is an exercise program with smooth, flowing motions constructed to give an effective, moderate impact. Sinharobics comes from a lot of moves found in Kandyan dance movements, but has been adapted to ensure the maximum benefit of toning muscles and not merely to be a dance form.

Sinharobics has come in to fill a longfelt need for an exercise form which comes from within our own culture, and is not merely a copy of trends in the west. "Some time ago, at a sinhala concert of contemporary sinhala songs and dances, I was struck by the ideal that the blending of these two contemporary elements would result in a fantastic new form of exercise, and that is exactly what it turned out to be", said Ahangama.

This totally new concept caused more than just a stir, its introduction brought in a wave of enthusiastic support for Sinharobics. The exercise is accompanied by carefully synchronised contemporary sinhala music, with a few additions of other eastern songs included when necessary. "Most clients thought they would find it difficult to catch on to the movements, but in an instant they have understood the rhythm of the exercise and are eagerly following the instructor. This is mainly because these smooth movements are in grained in us, even though we may never have studied Sri Lankan dancing. It is so much a part of our culture, and thus so much a part of ourselves, that as soon as we begin the movements we feel very comfortable and relaxed. There is no initial awkwardness in understanding the movements as found with other exercise forms", explained Ahangama.

"Sinharobics is fun, it is a very enjoyable form of exercise. Although built on the

lines of the Kandyan dance movements, it has none of the strict discipline of dance. You can learn at your pace, and you don’t need to worry about how you look as you make the movements!”

Currently, Mohan Sudusinghe teaches Sinharobics at the Pulse Beat Gyms in Colombo and Kandy. They have also introduced it into several schools in Kandy, receiving an enthusiastic response by both staff and students of these schools. “Pulse Beat is committed to the enhancing and improving health of the people in Sri Lanka. We need to accept exercise as essential for a healthy life, and it is to this end that Sinharobics was designed and introduced to those interested in maintaining a high level of fitness”, said Ahangama.

Certainly, Sinharobics has fulfilled a need for a local contemporary dance form. And the bottom line is “You won’t believe it until you try it”!