

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

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- What's in a road name?



Nurse, I asked you to record the temperature of the patient and not the FM stations you are listening to!

Tuning in

So you thought happy motorists in four-wheelers were, given today's driving conditions, an extinct species?

Well, there have been reports of such sightings lately – content faces buzzing around smiling, nodding and tapping out rhythms on steering wheels.

If accompanied by others, they excite little comment, the conclusion being an indulgent "What a nice friendly group in that car."

If they indulge in such behaviour when alone, of course, some amount of concern is felt by passers-by who then mutter among themselves, wondering if they have to give chase, capture this unnaturally feisty being and sit on his head while someone fetches the proper authorities.

There is, however, absolutely no cause for concern. The Chennai heat has not had its feared effect of frying its citizens' brains. All that has happened is that people now have something to keep their minds buoyant while driving, thanks to all these bubbly radio stations that have hit the air waves.

With sunny, spicy zest, zany characters and talented mimicry, they've succeeded in putting the smile back on at least some of the faces of the sorely-trying road-users.

This also means people have less time to stick their heads out of cars, generously tossing around those delightfully acerbic Chennai-isms which have so far been the citizens' only way of expressing emotion while driving – a welcome side-effect.

Ranjitha Ashok

Public debate urged on Police Bill

(By A Staff Reporter)

To develop a socially responsible and professionally competent police force was the objective of a roundtable conference on 'Police Reforms' held in the city recently. It sought to transform the Police 'from being a regime police to a democratic service'. The timing of the meeting was definitely not 'random', as the organisers, the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi, and the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, confided, for they'd come to know of a soon-to-be-enacted Police Bill in the State and strongly believed that any legislation that affects the public should NOT be drawn up in a closed room.

While retired police officials and bureaucrats and NGO representatives held forth on the system and what best could be done under the existing circumstances, senior police officials in service were conspicuously absent – except very briefly at the beginning and the end – during the day-long conference. With speakers stressing the need to truly understand the current nature of the Police Force as the "most visible, most effective on the ground implementing arm of the Government" that would "naturally strive to serve the ruling elite" and be forced into "illegitimate political interference", the basic reform emphasised was "that police need to restore their image as the regulatory arm of society" and not function as only "the coercive arm of the party in power". The forenoon session clarified many relevant issues, but there was not much opportunity for the promised dialogue. And the lone police official who stayed till the end looked far removed from the proceedings.

Given the unwillingness of

political parties to get into a reform mode in a meaningful manner, AND the casual dismissals by the powers-that-be of recommendations by the National Police Commission (NPC) that could lead to qualitative changes, one solution could be a Public Safety Committee – chaired by a retired Judge of the High Court and with balanced political representation and apolitical eminent citizens – as a standing body to carry out performance audits of the Police Force and act on contentious issues, said C.V. Narasimhan, former Director of the CBI and General Secretary, NPC. Even if the Government did not agree to such a suggestion, the Committee could be convened as an NGO and call for information

(Continued on Page 8)



Nothing as lovely as...

It was Joyce Kilmer who sang,
I think that I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a tree.
And went on to add,
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree!

What, it might be moot to wonder, would he say to the trees of Chennai shown in RAJIND N CHRISTY's pictures featured here today. The papaw is inclined to survive... but not long after this picture was taken, its leaves were sweeping the ground. As for the peephole, it's a bit too far from the ground to be put to any use... but even if it were usable, all that would be seen would be a cemetery untended, slowly being swallowed by the vegetation.

Schools sans sanitation

(By Shobha Menon)

At a Corporation school in South Madras, a greening programme is going on amidst a group of excited children. Drawing up plans for watering the trees, a little girl pipes up, "Let's use the water from the Sintex tank that is filled every day by the tanker. We don't use it otherwise". When I wonder aloud about that, a chorus responds, "We bring our own water to drink, and we don't need it for the toilets. They are so unusable in the school, we prefer to go outside!" And, of course, the teachers know that they do. Which means children in such schools are consciously encouraged (should we say groomed?) to use the great outdoors for any such activity by ALL concerned.

In some Corporation schools there are no toilets at all. Where they are available, either there

is no water source or the maintenance of the available facilities is so poor. And, generally, their location is announced by the overpowering stench that emanates. A teenager in an all-girls' Corporation school in the heart of the city confirms, "None of us uses the school toilets. If we get desperate, we just use the secluded space behind the row of toilets." Another said, "Sometimes we also use the 'Pay and Use' facility across the road. And standing beside the rows of charts lining the school's corridors on *sutham* (cleanliness) and *sugadharam* (hygiene) – the Headmistress of the school throws up her hands in despair, as she says, "Repeated reminders to the local Corporation office don't have any effect. Scavengers are not

appointed, and we have to engage someone through the PTA for this purpose. Most of these temporary hands are irregular and shoddy in their work".

Even schools which have every other amenity – including computers – seemed to pay scant respect to the basic issue of sanitation and hygiene. In some schools, the best toilets were 'reserved' exclusively for the teachers who said it was because "children don't know how to use them well". Other teachers felt they couldn't help it anyway; "If the Corporation doesn't do its bit, what can we do? After all, our job is to teach History or Geography or Science to the children, not look into toilet maintenance."

A senior Corporation spokesperson stated, "Appointing

(Continued on Page 6)

That new site for the new Secretariat...

Back from his travels, *The Man From Madras Musings* was happy to hear that the Government had decided on a new site for its new Secretariat and Legislature, and that plans for the Queen Mary's College had been dropped. That MMM was the first in the media to suggest the Anna University area as a better alternative to the QMC campus and that it's now being favoured by Government should flatter this column, but MMM is still far from enthusiastic about the choice on several counts.

First and foremost, there's that position that *Madras Musings* and MMM have held from the very first issue, namely, that the capital - and, ergo, the Secretariat and Legislature - should be moved from Chennai to a more central location in the State. From the MGR era, this has been talked about - but after he dropped the idea of a capital along the Thanjavur-Trichy axis, the idea was pigeonholed for good. To relieve the congestion in Chennai, primarily a city of trade, commerce and industry, and to ensure a capital accessible more easily to ALL the citizens of the State, a NEW capital and one located CENTRALLY in the State is essential. And a Build, Operate and Transfer proposition for such a massive project would certainly have a consortium of takers as well as a reasonable payback period to make it attractive for Government. Despite what is said in the paragraphs that follow, MMM will wholeheartedly welcome the development of a new, centrally located capital and a move to it, leaving Chennai to business - which is what it was founded for.

In this connection, the proposal to develop a satellite city on the Old Mahabalipuram Road for the Secretariat, Legislature and those who work in both was an idea MMM did not favour for several reasons. Certainly such a location would have been better than any within municipal bounds, but being too close to Chennai it would not really solve the urban congestion problem nor, and more importantly, would it meet the needs of the citizens from all parts of the State, its location being as skewed as Madras's. Transferring this thought to a more central location in the State, say on the Kaveri's banks in the Karur area, would be something MMM would welcome.

But if these thoughts are not to be addressed, and a new Secretariat and Legislature in the City are to be rigorously pursued, then there are several questions that worry MMM.

ONE, what is the need for Rs.200 crore expenditure - and that's a cost that's escalated since the QMC site was first mooted - on a new Secretariat and Legislature that will provide the common man NO benefits at all? Improvements to the present location - and even if it be Archaeological Survey of India-owned, the ASI is unlikely to stand in the way of sympathetic

and ASI-supervised improvement to Government buildings - and the shifting of a few departments to other, more citizen-friendly locations, would cost much less. And the citizens, stuck with an inconveniently located capital, will be no worse off than before, but with a substantial amount of their money saved by the exchequer.

TWO, if Government is not willing to consider even that alternative and must build in the city, shouldn't Environment Impact Assessments - more accurately, assessments of the impact on citizenry - be carried out at various possible sites, before zeroing in on one particular location? For instance, the unused MGR Film City, the Taramani campus area or the Guindy Racecourse could all well be sites that impact on the citizens less. Why build in a place sandwiched between a University campus and a well-developed residential area, displacing in the process the campuses of small but established institutions as well as university facilities? Compared to the Queen Mary's heritage precinct, the Anna University's garden space - not impacting on its heritage buildings - might be a better space, in MMM's view. But only an impact assessment will validate that position - or point to better sites. Why isn't that assessment being done before calling for designs etc?

THREE, surely such major projects that will affect the day-to-day life of citizens need to be the subject of public debate. And why hasn't that been encouraged? Are we to live with the thought that the elected representatives of the people always know best what is good for the people who were capable enough of electing them? When are Governments in India going to shed this top down approach and, instead, adopt a policy of greater interaction with the public on matters that affect the citizens' lives? An expert committee with substantial public representation might have answers for the Fort St. George Secretariat or suggestions for a new urban secretariat or offer fresh perspectives on a new capital. Whether those views are better or worse than the views from the top is not the issue; what is, is that the people would have had the opportunity to make their views clear and the decision-makers might benefit from some of the thoughts expressed.

MMM knows that these views are expressed rather late in the day, but a lack of transparency does not make the prompt expression of views possible. However, it is still not too late for Government to team with the public in an impact-on-citizens' assessment and evaluate the Anna University site and a few other suggested city sites if it is determined to go ahead with a Chennai location. But what would be best is for Government to postpone the thought for a while and seriously explore the possibility of moving the capital - going the BOT route.

Marina plans

Queen Mary's College may have been saved, but it would have been nice if a proper restoration of its heritage campus was offered by Government as some compensation for all the trauma the College has had to go through. Would it be too much to hope that restoration of not only the QMC campus but all the buildings on the Marina - which once gave Chennai its famed skyline - will be part of the Marina Beautification master plan that is being kept so secret by the CMDA and the high-powered, totally official committee appointed to implement it?

Why those plans are being kept secret or why the public - who should be the greatest beneficiaries of it - are not being involved in the planning, is something *The Man From Madras Musings* wonders about with concern. Here again is that top down approach - that Government knows best. But if it truly does, MMM only hopes that knowledge includes the following necessities:

ONE: Keeping the beach sands clean on a 24-hour basis, including churning it.

TWO: Providing a special area for the fishing boats and ensuring the cleanliness of that area and the landing site.

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

THREE: Providing special areas for vendors and ensuring the cleanliness of those locations.

FOUR: Increasing the number of dustbins multifold - and ensuring regular clearing of them.

FIVE: Increasing the number of toilets and ensuring their cleanliness. This should include toilets for the fisherfolk in their designated area.

SIX: Developing an international class aquarium at one end of the beach - and ensuring its maintenance.

SEVEN: Restoring the buildings along the Marina to their past handsomeness - and providing for their maintenance in that condition.

All this will not cost much - and income can be generated in a number of ways to offset maintenance costs. What will cost a pretty packet is if the concept of beautifying the Marina involves building what might be considered beautiful. MMM hopes such building is not a part of the secret plan; a CLEAN Marina by itself can be a beautiful Marina. The High Court has come out strongly against building on the Marina; MMM trusts its words will be paid heed to.

Eco-tourism spot

It's heartening to note that the State Tourism authorities are taking a look at developing Pulicat as a centre for eco-tourism. *The Man From Madras Musings* urges them to take a

look at a plan suggested to them TWO YEARS ago by INTACH-Tamil Nadu which looked at the potential of Pulicat in all its diversity.

Apart from the lake and its birdlife, there are the sand-dunes of Kaatupalli and the trekking trails here with its wealth of small flora and fauna. Then, there is the Dutch connection, whose vestiges need restoration. As do the ancient shrines. And there are the cottage industries of Pulicat in need of revival. Any master plan for Pulicat needs to incorporate all these aspects of the ancient Dutch capital on the Coromandel, from which went the textiles of the area to Southeast Asia for centuries.

But if Pulicat is to be developed as a tourist destination, God forbid the thought expressed by a reporter visiting the spot recently: "It could be made as popular as Mamallapuram"! What is needed is eco-friendly development, NOT what's happened to Mamallapuram. And that, to MMM, includes minimal building and keeping the crowds small. There are in Pulicat numerous old houses in traditional form which could, with the help of the residents, be developed as bed-and-breakfast guesthouses and supported by one or two leased out dining areas. As its popularity grows, hotels and other development could be raised - but far from coast and Pulicat township itself. But will tourism be allowed to develop with as little construction as possible and with the emphasis on basic comforts and cleanliness? If the tourism authorities just cross the Palk Strait and study how Sri Lanka has made a success of it - without going overboard on construction - they'll find many an answer.

ties a greater place in a State that has almost forgotten its great tradition in such subjects. MMM was delighted to hear a few days later members of the University of Madras faculty striking a similar chord.

★ Amazing is the way we go about things here. We have still not got our first Metro finished, leave alone working, and we already are beginning to listen to proposals for another Metro. Instead of finding ways and means to complete our Metro as quickly as possible and get it working smoothly by linking it with road transport, ensuring an integrated service, we have begun to spend time on looking at a rival Metro project. *The Man From Madras Musings* wonders whether the success of the Delhi Metro - if it is indeed successful - or the Rs.5500 crore outlay suggested for the Madras project had the Government's attention riveted to a presentation by Delhi Metro. Whatever the reason, surely Government should not be wasting time on listening to such proposals when it should be spending time on what it has got, trying to make it work. But then getting down to brass tacks and implementing a proposal successfully has never been our strong point, has it?

In brief

★ 'Roadmaps' for economic development, 'Roadmaps' for banking, 'Roadmaps' for healthcare - in fact, 'Roadmaps' has become one of the most popular words used by headline writers these days. Sadly, 'Roadmaps' for what they actually are meant, to help people travel from one place to another, are little used in the country. And making their usage popular is hardly a priority. It's not very different with atlases and other maps. *The Man From Madras Musings* was delighted to find at least one attempt being made to popularise maps, map-reading and the study of the humanities. And that was at the William Lambton Commemoration recently organised, with the Association of British Scholars and the Association of Geography Teachers in the lead roles. An exhibition of old maps, mapping quizzes for children and various lectures and discussions all helped to focus on what is commonplace in most parts of the developed world - the use of maps and atlases. But perhaps the most significant note struck at the Commemoration, MMM felt, was the call for Government to revise school and college programmes to give the Human-

A big 'Thank You' to 62 of you

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OUR READERS WRITE

RWH no answer - I

Reader Rajagopalan (MM, September 1st) has brought down the much flaunted RWH from its pedestal and put it in its proper place - the ground!

A 100 sq.ft. area, with a monthly average rain of four inches, can recover only about 1000 litres, without any losses, contrasted with a minimum monthly requirement of 3000 litres per person. In terms of open space on terrace area, this would mean 300 sq. ft. per person. How many houses or flats can provide this luxury! As pointed out by him, only attention to water bodies will pay dividends.

N. Dharmeswarar
Plot No. 21
Kumaran Nagar, Guduvancherry.

RWH no answer - II

Government's steps to introduce RWH to improve groundwater levels in Chennai are welcome, but large sections of the poor and low-income groups, who cannot afford borewells and are dependent on public water supply, will not benefit from RWH.

A package scheme is needed to enhance water availability to all sections of the people. Providing RWH can only be part of the package. The rest of the package must be a more planned and a rational approach to construction of multi-storied dwelling units and other big buildings and dispersal of large projects and industries so that already congested Chennai and suburbs will have a more equitable availability of scarce water.

J.W. Thomas
Vepery, Chennai 600 007

OUR READERS WRITE

RWH no answer - III

Rainwater harvesting *per se* is a good scheme. But instead of creating awareness among the people of its utility value and leaving it to the good sense of those who volunteer to make the necessary installations, Government has chosen to impose it on every household with threats.

The sufferers will be the middle and lower income groups who are forced to raise loans to finish work which may consume anything from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 7000. The efficacy and the success of the scheme can be ascertained only after the impending monsoon and the next summer.

In this connection, I refer to the letter of Reader N. Rajagopalan (MM, September 1st) in which he has suggested giving priority to harnessing river waters wastefully flowing into the sea by building bed dams and check dams, revitalising lakes and tanks and massive tree-planting.

The unseemly haste and the issue of mandatory orders in this regard smack of overdoing things and are an unnecessary show of power.

M.R. Pillai
H64/5, Central Avenue
Korattur, Chennai 600 080

Did he visit?

A recent AIR Madras broadcast dealt with St. Thomas' Mount and the saint's mission and martyrdom of St. Thomas were recounted. As St. Thomas was almost contemporary with Jesus Christ, the matter is of much importance to Christians as well as to historians.

But was St. Thomas a historical figure? I have read many advanced

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Numbers to remember

'Can we allow children to beg when they should be attending schools?'
'When you see child beggars, contact us immediately!'

This is the profound message in an earnest circular in auspicious yellow colour addressed to the public, circulated with warmth and solicitude by the Corporation and the Social Welfare Department.

The circular alone should positively give the lie to, and silence, critics who day in and day out complain of a callous, unresponsive bureaucracy sans vision, understanding and solicitude. Even the Prime Minister had to ask the Executive last month 'not to become a prisoner of procedures'. Presumably he had no occasion to see this circular on begging by children of school-going age. Had he seen it, he might well have lavished praise on the authors of the circular for their lustrous social outlook.

However, what passes comprehension is how the authors of the circular lack the vision to spot

histories (e.g. Vincent Smith's *Oxford History of India*) but there is no mention of St. Thomas in them. I have throughout studied in Christian schools and MCC, Tambaram, but was never told of St. Thomas. Will any reader enlighten us on the subject?

It is not my intention to prove anything right or wrong. All I wish

the hundreds of children on begging sprees or otherwise wandering here, there and everywhere and, instead, feel constrained to ask the public to report child-beggars.

The circular implies, 'If you come across a boy asking for a coin, seize and drag him to the nearest telephone booth, ring up the authorities and hold him firm till the authorities arrive! If this creates a scene on the road, ignore it as it is all for laudable social work, honourable to you and praiseworthy for the cause!!'. And lest you forget, keep the circular in your pocket at all times to know the phone number to report to. Better still, memorise them.

What a joke this circular is!

N. Rajagopalan I.A.S. (RETD.)
'Mayur Apartments'
No. 7, 24th Cross Street
Indira Nagar, Chennai 600 020

highest esteem. The name of St. Thomas is very closely associated with Madras. Hence my keenness to know more on the subject.

V.E. Arunachalam
16, Kamar Street
Kalakshetra Colony
Besant Nagar, Chennai 600 090

Heavenly days

How real incomes have fallen. As a lad in the late 50s, I lived in the first floor of No.3, Thirumalai Pillai Road, paying a monthly rent of Rs. 120. Even in the afternoons there used to be the stillness of the night, with only the sound of chirping of birds, occasionally interrupted by the deep throb of the Leyland Tiger and Leyland Ocean buses plying on route Nos.9 and 10. It seemed very heavenly to read Richmal Crompton's *William Exploits* on those languid Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Today, the same place has become a swanky new hotel called *Benz Park*. For Rs.120, I would be lucky to get a pot of coffee there I suppose.

C.G. Prasad
9, C.S. Mudali Street
Konditope, Chennai 600 079.

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- All business correspondence should be addressed to The Director, Chennai Heritage, 260-A, TTK Road, Chennai 600 018.
- Madras Musings does not accept letters by e-mail.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Vakil Varadachariar's reference to Prabhat Talkies (MM, September 1st) made me nostalgic, although it was before my time.

Prabhat Talkies was owned by my paternal grandfather, C.P. Sarathy (1887-1956). The theatre employed a colourful manager, Kannabiran, who though he stood only 5'3" or so, gave the impression of size because of his vast girth. Always dressed impeccably in white and white with tie, he had a spectacular snow-white moustache shaped like a bison horn with menacing tips.

Whenever there was jostling to buy tickets for the lower stalls and the proletariat broke ranks to crowd the ticket counter, manager Kannabiran would emerge from his cabin like a galleon in full sail and restore order in seconds with two powerful lathi blows to the miscreants with the cry, 'Pinnalla pada' (get back to the rear of the queue).

To big shots like Vakil Varadachariar, Government officials, police etc. Kannabiran was all melting sweetness and personally conducted them into the sofa seats. During the interval he would have brightly coloured iced drinks carried to the VIPs and would then fuss over them like a mother hen, much to their embarrassment, since the janata from the lower seats would be craning their necks and watching in respectful amazement.

Sivaji Ganesan was a close friend of Kannabiran's son, K. Mohan, and used to avail the manager's 'pass' to see movies at Prabhat much before the release of *Parasakthi* and in stardom. Years later, Sivaji repaid the debt by acting *gratis* in K. Mohan's all-time classic *Pasa Malar*.

C.G. Prasad
9, C.S. Mudali Street
Konditope, Chennai 600 079

— MMM

On the road to e-governance

National Informatics Centre, TN, shows the way

The e-governance initiatives of the National Informatics Centre's Tamil Nadu unit in recent years have resulted in designing, developing and hosting several important websites in the State, such as those of the Tamil Nadu Government (<http://www.tn.gov.in>), Regional Passport Office, Chennai (<http://passport.tn.nic.in>), Registration Department (<http://registration.tn.nic.in>), Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Chennai (<http://zjdgft.tn.nic.in>) and several others. High Court data gets uploaded on a daily basis (<http://causelists.nic.in> and <http://www.judis.nic.in>); in fact, accessing these two sites also gives you information about the cases coming up for hearing the following week, even details regarding judgements. Data from regulated farm produce markets are uploaded on a daily basis to <http://agmarket.nic.in>.

It was in 1987-88 that the NIC Net facility was set up in twenty Tamil Nadu Collectorate; today, the facility is available in all the 29 Collectorates. Ensuring that data is constantly fed, updated and disseminated are NIC-Tamil Nadu's technical staff, two in each district, and others in offices at various project sites (a lot of sites are developed and hosted by NIC-Tamil Nadu as turnkey projects).

The Tamil Nadu unit was established as a pilot centre for the implementation of several IT initiatives. One of its major successes was the web-based dissemination of examination results, first tried out in Chennai in 1997, for the School Education Department and Anna University. The site (<http://results.nic.in>), where examination results are hosted locally, has proved exceptionally popular with more than 10 lakh hits a year.

Another success has been the web-based system for online registration of provisional certificates for small-scale industry. The system enables entrepreneurs to apply online from any approved browsing centre in Tamil Nadu and receive the certificates immediately. More than 12,000 applications were received after the Chief Minister formally launched the service in September last year.

As part of the sub-registrar office computerisation, a simplified and transparent administration of registration (STAR) of property was implemented in

300 sub-registrar offices across Tamil Nadu. The system will be implemented in the remaining 280 sub-registrar offices this year. With the help of STAR, information on the guideline value for a building on any street in urban areas or for any plot of land (survey number) in rural areas, as well as stamp duty payable, is available.

For the first time, in 1989, election results of the Tamil Nadu Assembly were beamed to millions of television viewers across the country with the help of NIC Net. NIC Net's expertise in transmitting election results has only improved with every subsequent election. The methodology used is fairly simple — information from the counting centres is relayed to NIC Net centres at the Collectorates and then to the NIC's centralised database on the main server; NIC, Delhi, then transmits the information directly to Doordarshan.

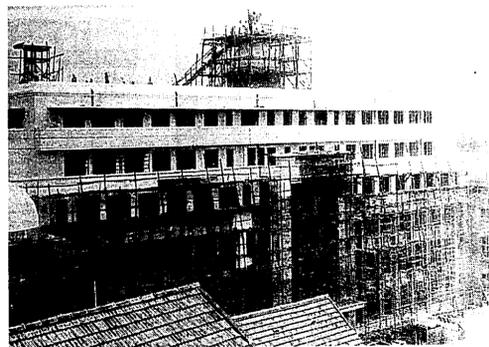
Systems at the Regional Passport Offices in Chennai and Tiruchy were computerised with NIC's efforts. Applications for passports can now be received, updated and disseminated online. In Chennai, travel agents can submit advance applications online.

The Tamil Nadu Maps website provides a wealth of information about districts, taluks and block headquarters — census, literacy rates etc. Lists of revenue and panchayat villages in taluks and blocks and those of municipalities and town panchayats in the districts, as well as names, addresses and contact numbers of the respective Collectors are given.

The Tamil Nadu NIC unit at the Secretariat provides IT support to the various departments there, including maintenance of the Tamil Nadu Government website. NIC-Tamil Nadu has an ISDN-based videoconferencing facility. Two conferences can be held simultaneously and 16 stations linked during each.

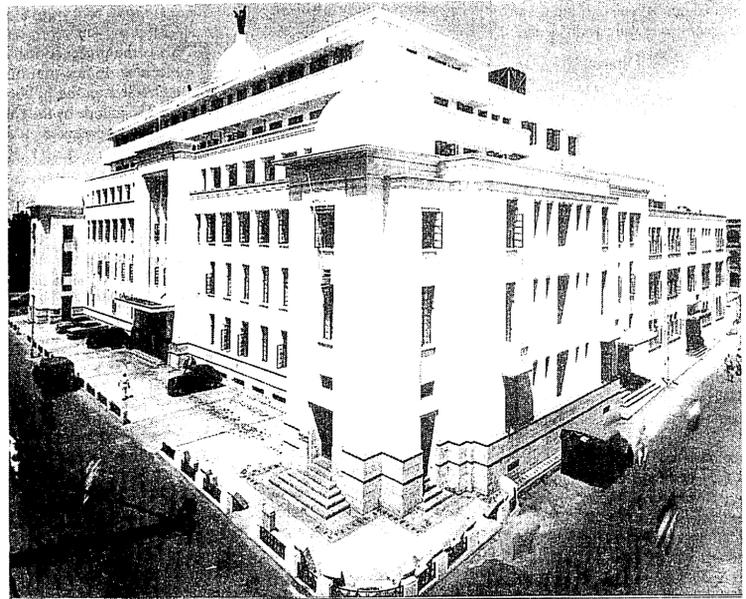
Central Government employees are regularly trained at NIC's training facility at *Rajaji Bhavan* while State Government employees train at NIC's Secretariat and Ezhilagam centres.

The National Informatics Centre (NIC), an institution that not many people know about, was established in 1976-77 with 'project sites' in the four major Indian metros. Today, NIC is a premier science and technology organisation, a



War II served with the Royal Engineers in India, decided to seek his future in this country and joined Pryme and Abbott, the leading architects in the Madras of the day. The firm had its roots in Jackson and Barker, a firm that went back to the 1920s. Pryme joined the firm and in time it became Pryme, Jackson and Barker. It was succeeded by Pryme and Abbott, whom Davis bought into in 1944 to form Pryme, Abbott and Davis. And for a decade thereafter it dominated the architectural scene in Madras — building numerous public and private buildings in the art-deco style. Davis, a Roman Catholic, did much designing and building work for the Church and received a papal knighthood for the time, talent and resources he put at the service of a church whose views he questioned all his life.

Pryme, Abbott and Davis was later headed by Kiffin-Petersen and, then, Pithavadaim, whose name it bears in its surviving avatar — still on College Road.



nodal agency of the Ministry of Communications and Technology, playing a catalytic role in promoting IT implementation within government at Central, State and District levels.

"NIC's Tamil Nadu State Unit has now become a certifying authority. Digital certificates that have legal validity will be issued in a month's time to any government agency requiring them. This is bound to

create an impact and may well propel us to the next level of computerisation, enabling an almost paperless office," says A. Mohan, Dy. Director General, NIC-Tamil Nadu, adding, "The digital file undergoes encryption based on an individual identity; it is specifically suffixed ensuring that the document cannot be tampered with, while maintaining confidentiality." Apart from saving time and reducing

THE OLD... ...& THE NEW

Our OLD are two pictures of the Catholic Centre on Armenian Street, one showing the last stages of work in progress and, the other, the building shortly after completion in the 1950s. Our NEW is of the Centre today, little changed but for more signage and the clutter of towers in the background.

The OLD are pictures from the collection of NICHOLA DAVIS, whose father John Richard Davis designed and supervised the building of the Centre. Davis, who during World

War II served with the Royal Engineers in India, decided to seek his future in this country and joined Pryme and Abbott, the leading architects in the Madras of the day. The firm had its roots in Jackson and Barker, a firm that went back to the 1920s. Pryme joined the firm and in time it became Pryme, Jackson and Barker. It was succeeded by Pryme and Abbott, whom Davis bought into in 1944 to form Pryme, Abbott and Davis. And for a decade thereafter it dominated the architectural scene in Madras — building numerous public and private buildings in the art-deco style. Davis, a Roman Catholic, did much designing and building work for the Church and received a papal knighthood for the time, talent and resources he put at the service of a church whose views he questioned all his life.

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Old maps mark a commemoration

One sunny day in April 1802, William Lambton, a British soldier, who was part engineer, part astronomer, part mathematician and whose passion was geodesy, the study of the earth's shape, climbed to the top of St. Thomas's Mount. There he began to study the terrain and calculate where and how to lay a baseline for "the measurement of the length of a degree of latitude along a longitude in the middle of Peninsular India." With that, Lambton took his first step into a personal mathematical odyssey which was to grow into the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India, also known as 'The Great Arc'.

This initial baseline was 12 km, between St Thomas' Mount and another hillock near Pallavaram, an area which, through one of those delightful twists of Fate, was chosen, years later, as the location for TTK Maps. The baseline became the Great Arc of the Meridian, a gigantic geometric web of triangulations roughly along the 78 degree longitude across the length of the subcontinent, covering a distance of 2400 km North-South.

Author John Keay, who in his book *The Great Arc* tells this story of the mapping of India, notably the roles played by the two leading players, William Lambton and George Everest, was in town recently to participate in the William Lambton Commemoration organised by

the Association of British Scholars, INTACH-Tamil Nadu, the Association of Geography Teachers of India, the Survey of India, the Lalit Kala Akademi and the British Council. One of the highlights of the week-long programme, to belatedly mark the 200th anniversary of the Great Trigonometrical Survey, was an exhibition of old maps. The maps were from the collections of Dwarakanath Reddy, Ashok Saran, R Vaidyanathan and P.T. Krishnan and were chosen to specifically

was then the foreshore of this tank.

According to P.T. Krishnan, each collector has his priorities. Nation-centric, city-centric, thematic and those who pick up anything they find appealing, fascinated by the sheer romance of historic antiquity. "I look for information from both a historic and a city-planning perspective," says Krishnan. As a planner and an architect, he studies events over time to understand their effect on the environment and the very growth of a city, with concerns of heritage and conservation playing significant roles. Some of the origins of the problems faced by the city today can in fact be traced and located through maps. For instance, you are struck by the number of waterways and water bodies Madras once had. The maps clearly show the planned sequencing of water-use: Tank-fields-temple tanks-to the sea.

Ashok Saran, who has been

● by
Ranjitha Ashok

emphasise the southern, particularly Madras's, connection with the Great Arc. So, the maps displayed were of the city and its environs over 300 years, the Coromandel Coastline of the early 18th Century, and original antique sea charts and copper engravings of the Indian Ocean.

The names of the areas in these maps were a source of endless fascination. A plan of Fort St George and the city of Madras showed 'Black Town', 'White Town', 'Herb Market', 'Moors Street', 'Comatee Street', 'Portugez burying place', 'English burying place', 'Moors burying place' and in an area on the top of the map 'the place where Indians burn their dead'. You came across 'Nongumbacum Tank' and learned that today's Valluvar Kottam area



Apart from numerous adult visitors, several schools brought groups to the recent old maps exhibition and, often, a teacher would take time off to explain the maps displayed.

collecting maps for more than 30 years, agrees. "When you first look at a map, you begin to trace your journey." There is an immediate tug of interest and involvement, he says.

The blending of various maps from different collections actually told the same stories. Like — the Thomas Pitt map of 1710, the oldest map of Fort St. George and its surroundings, when compared to the Conradi Map of 1753 shows the changes and the growth of the city. The 1910 maps show the growth of infrastructure. They also show the developments in surveying techniques. The 1710 map was a sketch, with many inaccura-

ties. People, back then, drew maps by hearsay and descriptions, since many had not even visited India. Between the 1750s and the early 1800s, there occurred great progress in cartography and mapping techniques. Maps after the 1940s show far more rapid changes in the contours of the terrain, especially in urban areas.

With this exhibition, interest in Geography has been taken to another level. The number of schoolchildren who visited the exhibition and participated in the competitions was a heartening sight, and the collectors hope that this effort will not prove a 'one-off' event, and will be a continuous process.

Children need to interact with maps in schools and must be taught how they can be applied to daily life. "I don't see too many children carrying atlases," says Saran. Maps are not just about geography or political boundaries, he adds. There are maps that show the spread of diseases; those that show ownership of property over the years. Others are created by business establishments to display their areas of operation. Railway maps are fascinating in their detailing.

The extreme emphasis on technology and science that has overtaken the general thinking process has pushed the Humanities into the background. Education has to empower, and teach a sense of individual responsibility towards environment and nature, which is why the Humanities must be taught as professional courses in technological universities, say all those connected with the Commemoration. With any city-planning, it is not science, technology or administrative convenience that presents the rights and wrongs; it is your knowledge of history, sociology, and geography that helps cities grow in the proper manner.

Ashok Saran makes the point that maps actually present the story of growth, a panoramic view of life and history. Some carry the romance of the past; others carry the gloss of modernity. But they are all testimony to the interest, sometimes in very minutely specific areas, dedication and sheer human effort of everyone who created them — and those who today study and collect them.

The mapping quizzes were winners

A series of mapping competitions for children was held during the William Lambton Commemoration and the team prize was won by Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School, Mylapore. Bhavan's Rajaji Vidyalayam, Kilpauk, and Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan Senior Secondary School, Nungambakkam, were the other winners among the 36 schools that participated. In the six categories of mapping competitions, on Chennai, Tamil Nadu and India, there were 19 individual prize winners from among the 250 who took part. That the prizes were won by children from schools distributed all over the city was a fact to be noted, say members of the Association of Geography Teachers in Chennai, who formulated and conducted the competitions which were divided into two sections, with classes 6 to 9 being placed in the Junior category, and classes 10, 11 and 12 designated Seniors.

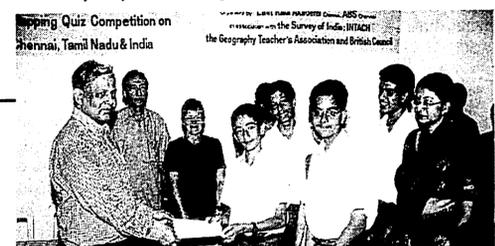
A great deal of imagination appears to have gone into the format of the quizzes. Some were in the form of stories. For example, the children were given a storyline about two people travelling together on a heritage tour, and were asked to plot their route. Another story ran as follows: A thief is on the loose in Chennai and is going from place to place using different modes of transport, finally being apprehended at Race Course. The children were asked to colour-code the various modes of transport and plot the thief's flight through the city.

In the section on Tamil Nadu, children were asked to identify places and districts with the clues and information given. Mapping skills, locating places with given directions and measuring distance in centimetres and converting them into actual distance in kilometres were some of the areas tested. Seniors were given topographic sheets from the Survey of India, with small areas presented in great detail, and they had to use their skills of interpretation.

The children were also given maps of a random city from another part of India, and were told to "manoeuvre" their way through the unfamiliar area using the map given.



One of the mapping quizzes in progress (above) and a winning team (below) receives its prizes from Dr. P. Nag, Director-General, Survey of India.



The teachers were particularly pleased with the enthusiasm and performance of the school children in a competition that was the first of its kind to be held in Chennai. The children themselves were very enthusiastic about the quizzes, finding them different from the usual quizzes so popular these days. This was the very first time children tackled 100-mark questions on mapping, being used to dealing only with 10 or 20-mark questions in class exams and tests.

Geography teachers from the schools that participated are of the opinion that children are certainly very interested in Geography. They however make the point that for the children to see a career in it, new avenues must be opened up.

The schools chose those children who have travelled, and who have parents who encourage them towards new and different life-and-learning experiences. The role parents play in opening up the minds of the children cannot be stressed enough, say the school-teachers.

Special mention was made of children from disciplines other than Geography, with no grounding in the subject except in a basic sense, who took the trouble to participate, driven by nothing but a love for mapping and related fields. Some of these children even won prizes. These children belong to that small, exclusive group of people who constantly search for food for the mind, who possess that never-ending quest for knowledge for its own sake, which is the mark of a true scholar, an attitude which has nothing to do with either future employment or profit, and should be encouraged.

The Association, noting the response and performance at the competitions, feels that Geography should be made an elective in P.U. Two classes.

R.A.

(Continued on Page 8)

Quizzin'
with
Ram'nan

(Current Affairs questions are from the period August 16th to 31st. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Tamil Nadu and Chennai.)

1. Name the mastermind behind the December 13, 2001 attack on Parliament who was killed by the BSF on August 30th.

2. Name the two film personalities nominated to the Rajya Sabha on August 28th.

3. What astronomical phenomenon took place at 1521 hrs [IST] on August 27th, the first in 60,000 years?

4. Who is to receive the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding this year?

5. Name the third person on the list: Eunice Barber, Tatyana Kotova, and

6. The Gateway of India was rocked by a bomb blast recently. What was the other place in Mumbai to simultaneously suffer similarly?

7. Which Indians won the gold and silver at the Asian women's chess championships recently?

8. The last of NASA's four Great Observatories was launched recently. What is its name?

9. Name the most holy bath ritual at the Maha Kumbh in Nasik on August 27th that saw a stampede which killed many.

10. The 40th anniversary of which famous speech was observed at Lincoln Memorial, Washington DC, on August 28th?

11. Which place in Chennai has the State Government chosen as the site for building a new Secretariat?

12. Where in Chennai would you find benchmarks set up during the British rule as part of surveying the country?

13. What two initiatives, pleasing to animal right activists, did the State Government announce in the last week of August?

14. Who is the State president of the BJP?

15. Where in the State is the country's first 'eco-friendly' power plant scheduled to come up in a year?

16. Fill in the blank: Munna, Krishna, Juju, Bob Galy and Kumar (along with Harini) are the, in which big-budget film released recently?

17. Which edifice in Chennai was once called *Cuddon Building*?

18. What distinction in local construction history does *Agurchand Mansion*, once called *Khaleeli Mansion*, on Mount Road hold?

19. Which Madras institution was described as 'The Ace of Clubs' during the Raj?

20. What did an ayurvedic doctor, Varadarajulu Naidu, the 'Tilak of South India', found in Madras in 1931/1932?

(Answers on Page 8)

• From the pages of a 1939-1945 diary

When the population dropped...

(Continued from last fortnight)

1942

Thursday January 8

It seems more or less clear now that the Indian Bank must collapse unless the indebted Directors clear out and some big financial interest is invoked to supply the means for getting over the crisis.

Wednesday January 14

(On A.F.S. Talayarkhan commenting on a festival match in Poona) He has grown stale and even absurd and prattling.

Friday January 23

(Walking along the Marina) Some few troops camping in the University Examination Hall and a few white flares going up the sky — this is the city's total defence against the threatened invasion by one of the best equipped and most resourceful offensive forces of the world! Anyhow, if there should be a Japanese attack on the city, which God forbid, it is as well that they should destroy the hideous looking University Hall building and I for one do not object to troops being placed there, directly inviting an attack!

Friday February 13

To the new 'Casino' theatre with Sita for 'Gone With The Wind', a bright Vivien Leigh picture (technicolor). What a sprightly creature!

Monday March 9

(Evening with friends) The curious thing about these discussions was that each of the participants wished to maintain his thesis *against* the others; in other words, we have not ceased to be wordy and controversial even in a matter like the approach of War.

The B.B.C. admitted the abandonment of Rangoon

Wednesday March 11

(Labour strikes in B&C Mills and Simpsons) Disaffected labourers, soldiers romping in the streets and the general air of uneasiness and fear of approaching raids, these have ruined the atmosphere in the deserted city.

Thursday March 26

To Ongole where K.V.R (Venkatraghavan) and Cox (Brunton Consulting Naval En-

gineers) are to meet the Buckingham Canal Engineers for building sailing craft for service in the canal to augment Rail transport.

Friday April 17

The excitement in the city has abated somewhat. Today's estimate of the city population is around 1.5 lakhs as against the normal 8.5 lakhs.

Saturday April 25

Club. (Corporation Commissioner) O.Pulla Reddy's view is that Japan has 'missed the bus' — she could have taken

• by N.D. Varadachariar

India had she started operations immediately after Colombo. They say that according to Cheiro (the astrologer), Britain as a first-rate power is finished. The future is with the U.S and Russia, and India too?

Friday May 8

Khasa Subba Rao (Free Press) comes in the morning

and writes an article to which I give the caption 'Samson without his locks' — Rajagopalachari bereft of Congress.

Thursday June 25 (Jaipur)

Reach Jaipur 5.30 p.m. Sir Mirza Ismail (Dewan) took me for a drive. He tells me about his own career and the utter lack of ambition and so on. These people manage to be without ambition on 5 thousand a month!

Friday September 18

Chakravarti (Delhi) calls. On Delhi Madras life. He says

exactly what everybody has been saying for years, that the Madras is highly respected for his ability, but can't make the best use of it for himself or for the community.

Tuesday October 6

It appears that H.C. Popworth of Presidency College was compelled to take leave and

Schools sans sanitation

(Continued from Page 1)

full-time cleaning staff on Government pay scale is not a feasible option, so we recommend making use of temporary hands through the PTA, provided there is adequate management of manpower and resources by the corresponding heads of the institutions." But the headmaster of a well-attended Corporation boys' school says, "I fail to understand why heads of schools are being blamed for any seeming lack of initiatives in this regard. Our essential focus — on academically related issues — is being increasingly diverted because we have to worry about such maintenance issues (because the local Corporation office that receives funds for this work cannot be bothered to act on call). Even finding a person to clean the toilets regularly is such a difficult task, especially when it is a large school. When teachers who are paid Rs.20,000 a month fail to do their work properly, how can we expect committed work from part-time staff at a paltry Rs.500 per month that is all that can be spared from the already stretched PTA funds? I wonder whether handing over the maintenance of the toilets in a

group of schools within an area to a private agency, would help? That would, of course, need some government financial support, but I'm sure more work will be done with half the funds currently supposed to be reaching the schools."

However, a senior Corporation official, who had earlier worked for many years at a local division office, says, "With local Corporation offices being overloaded with work — since the range of their work is not specified, and can be anything from roads, rainwater stagnation or slum fires, to ID cards to the organising of meetings/functions and so on — follow-up and maintenance of toilets in Corporation schools becomes low priority. Also, anti-social elements with vested interests prevent usage of toilets — that are generally in a corner, removed from the main buildings. Vandalism (with the closets and taps broken) is common, due to inadequate security. Many teachers, who can play more proactive roles, find it convenient to point fingers at the local Corporation office on this issue. A good solution would be to provide optimum security for each school and involve a pri-

• We publish more excerpts from that fascinating diary of the late N.D. Varadachariar. A man as much interested in music and dance and films as he was in Indian politics and the international scene, he made notes every day in his diary of the life that swirled around him.

— The Editor

retire as he did not deal firmly with student-strikes in his college.

Thursday December 24

The food situation in India baffles everybody. Adviser Rutherford says, 'Consume less rice', an extra-ordinary injunction to a people who consume rice not at all for several days in the year — because they just can't afford it!

Thursday December 31

A music performance by Madurai Mani Iyer in the evening at the Academy was very enjoyable. His 'Mohana' Raga alapana was full of imagination and beauty. The long forgotten music controversy has broken out once again — 'Tamil lovers' are objecting to the singing of Telugu and Sanskrit compositions and the classicists are equally opposed to dilution of standards by importing into the programs inferior compositions solely on their being Tamil.

(To be concluded)

The names the roads recall — 2

From law to politics — and disillusionment

A mjad Bagh, 30 Luz Church Road, Mylapore*. A landmark building where members of the Indian National Congress met for many a political discussion in the early 20th Century. Here too thronged rich zamindars, landlords and businessmen to meet their lawyer, who was described as the Crown Prince of *wakils* of the Madras High Court of that era. (The king was his father-in-law, Sir Vembakkam Bhashyam Ayyangar.) Lawyer, patriot, philanthropist, Sreeman S. Srinivasa Ayyangar is now remembered in a road in Alwarpet, not far from where his house was.

Born in Madurai District into a wealthy family of orthodox Ayyangars, he had his early collegiate education in Madurai, before moving to Madras and taking his degree at Presidency College, then going on to qualify as a lawyer. He joined his famed

father-in-law's office as apprentice and junior, but soon after enrolment he set up independent practice. His oratorical brilliance (that had stenographers hard put to it to keep up with his galloping delivery), rare legal acumen and scintillating advocacy soon made him a success.

The British Indian Government recognised his forensic brilliance and appointed him Advocate-General of the Madras High Court in 1916 when he was only 41. Such young men were never given such high office in those days. He showed his independence in the sensational Annie Besant Sedition Case. When she launched the Home Rule Movement and was charged with sedition, the case file came to him as Advocate-General for advice. After spending 24 sleepless hours working on the case, skipping his meals and feeding himself only with his favourite arecanut powder, he advised the government that there were no valid grounds to sustain the charges! This opinion shocked Fort St. George and earned him the approbation of patriotic Indians.

Responding to the call of the Indian Freedom Movement he

resigned office, gave up practice and plunged into politics. Soon, he became the leader of the Indian National Congress in South India. He was chosen to preside over the Congress Session at Guwahati in 1926. Here he made fervent appeals for total freedom from the British and stated that nothing less should be accepted by Indians. However he was deeply shocked by the manipulations of some of the leaders from North India, who, he found, had feet of clay. Dejected, he bade goodbye to politics and plunged once more into the legal profession where he was soon at the top again. When he quit politics he had prophetically stated that all kinds of undesirable elements were creeping into the Congress party and it would one day disintegrate.

He did not suffer fools gladly and was a difficult man to please. The kindest word he had for his juniors was 'stupid'! If somebody respectfully stood in his presence silently, he would call him 'idiot'! If that someone spoke, he told him not to speak like an idiot! His juniors who later rose to the top of the profession, like K. Raja Iyer, K. Bhashyam and K.V. Krishnaswamy Iyer, stoically bore those

outbursts! The great parliamentarian and Congress leader, S. Satyamurthi, was also one of his juniors, but he devoted himself to politics rather than to law. Kamaraj was one of his disciples and cut his teeth in politics under him.

Once Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba stayed with Ayyangar in the guesthouse in his compound. Kasturba asked Ayyangar's wife why she did not take part in her husband's political activities. "It is easier to win freedom from the British than to manage my husband," was the reply.

One landmark case that he appeared in was the Venkatagiri inheritance case. The illegitimate sons of the Raja claimed a share in the zamindari. This was denied by the legitimate son, who claimed 'tainted' children had no such right in Hindu Law. The trial began at Nellore and Ayyangar appeared for the illegitimate sons. Narasimha Ayyangar, the presiding legal officer, obtained special permission from the Madras High Court to have two stenographers to record verbatim Ayyangar's arguments. No subordinate judge enjoyed the privilege of even one stenographer then — and even today. Ayyangar's ar-

guments created a sensation during the appeal and his point of view was upheld by the Privy Council, creating a precedent.

Ayyangar edited the classic text *Hindu Law*, by John D. Mayne, a Barrister who practised with enormous success in Madras and later in London. Ayyangar virtually rewrote many parts of the book deleting several statements made by Mayne about certain aspects of Hindu Law, especially about the institution of adoption.

Ayyangar did not have a happy family life for many reasons and, strangely, he attributed it to his success at the Bar. His son, S. Parthasarathy, had a brief but bright innings as lawyer and then switched to insurance, establishing Prithvi Insurance Company. Later, he took to religion, calling himself Swami Ranganathananda, and lived as a recluse in Thirumullaivayal. Ayyangar's grandson-in-law was the celebrated photographer and journalist Harry Miller.

When Ayyangar passed away in 1941, a noted Madras Law College professor commented, "Here was a lawyer. When comes such another?"

Randor Guy

The music of road names

A recent news item stated that the women's wing of the local unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party had passed a resolution demanding that Kotturpuram be named after M.S. Subbulakshmi.

A rejoinder from the great singer herself, albeit through her secretary K.R. Atmanathan, stated that she was against such a proposal and her husband, the late Sadasivam, never approved of street names being changed as he had too much respect for history. The letter also stated that Subbulakshmi felt that a more deserving candidate would be the late M.A. Chidambaram or fellow artiste D.K. Pattammal who had lived longer than herself in that area. Presumably the matter will end with this.

But that set me on a mental census of roads in the city that have been named after musicians and patrons. There are two streets in George Town with intriguing names. One is Tyagier Street and the other Kuppayyar Street. Could they have been named after Tyagaraja and his disciple 'Veena' Kuppayyar respectively? After all, Kovvur Sundaresa Mudaliar was a bigwig of old Madras and

could have got a street named after his favoured *veena* artiste (Kuppayyar) and the latter's guru. Incidentally, Kuppayyar was a resident of Muthialpet, where the street exists. Or could Tyagier be Tiruvottiyur Tyagier, son of Veena Kuppayyar? All this is in the realm of conjecture, thanks to our tendency of keeping no records. Mylapore has for long had "Maddala" Narayanan Street, no doubt so named after a great manufacturer of *miridangams*.

Oliver Road in Mylapore was renamed as Musiri Subramanya Iyer Road after the artiste who lived there. This was largely due to the efforts of the Semmangudi R. Srinivasa Iyer, his close friend and fellow artiste. Today the road sign says Musiri Subrahmanyam Salai. And no doubt inspired by this, a commemorative souvenir on *veena* artiste K.P. Sivavandam refers to him as Musiri Subrahmanya Pillai! Close by is Karpagambal Nagar, which T.V. Sankaranarayanan has been lobbying for long to change to Madurai Mani Road. But success has not been his so far.

Not far from here is Palace Road in San Thomé, re-named Papanasam Sivan Salai some

years ago. MGR took personal interest in the matter, as his wife V.N. Janaki was Papanasam Sivan's niece. But the followers of Chembai and GNB were both upset that their respective idols had not been considered as they too had lived in the same road for many years. In the process Jayachamaraja Wodeyar, whose palace stood facing this road (it is now the Russian Consulate-General) lost out, no doubt owing to his not being a son of the soil. He was the last Maharajah of Mysore and later Governor of Madras. He was an accomplished composer too. Further south is a road in Kalakshetra, called Tiger Varadachariar Avenue. Hopefully, it will not become Tiger Varada Avenue. From there to Tiger Varadabhai Avenue is but a step. And while Varadachariar is a dim memory, everyone would have heard of Varadabhai (Varadarajan Mudaliar), the underworld don. So the road does run the risk of such a mutation if a little care is not taken.

The most recent case of a Carnatic musician receiving the 'honour' of a road being named after him/her is that of Maharajapuram Santhanam. Griffith

Road in Mambalam was re-named after his sudden death. Still to be similarly recognised are G.N. Balasubramaniam and Palghat Mani Iyer. But where? According to a friend, there is hardly a street in which either of them did not live. That may be an exaggeration, but I can safely say that there is hardly a pin code district in which GNB did not reside. At last count, my database shows 15 addresses in Chennai for him. Palghat Mani Iyer follows with 10. Musicians have been commemorated elsewhere too. In passing, it may be mentioned that in Kumbakonam there is a street popularly called 'Ariyakkudi Stores'. This runs alongside a series of one room tenements built and rented out by Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar. A similar unofficial honour he received in

Madras has long faded away. For many years, and long after his death, bus conductors would announce the Devanathan Street (Mylapore) bus stop as "Ariyakkudi". His house was nearby.

Several patrons of music too have had streets named after them. TTK Road, named after TT Krishnamachari, is one of them. Near TTK Road is C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyar Road, another patron of music and the arts. This road thankfully retains its name as it was, though after MGR's inspired decision to do away with caste names, nobody can really say if CPR was a Ramaswamy Mudali or Chetty or even an Iyengar. There are room tenements on the road that spell the name variously as Ramasami, Ramasamee and even (Continued on Page 8)

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PUBLIC DEBATE URGED

(Continued from Page 1)

under the Right to Information Act.

At the end of the presentations and discussions, a committed core group headed by C.V. Narasimhan drew up an Action Plan which, besides mobilising public opinion to bring about police reform, would address the State Government seeking:

- Circulation for public opinion of the proposed Police Bill;
- Internal introspection by the Police Department to set its own house in order on the lines recommended by the National Police Commission;
- A Police Performance Assessment Group (a Public Safety Committee composed

of a well-balanced political, social and citizens' representatives group) at the State level; and

- A mechanism to ensure impartial investigation in sensitive cases.

However, G.P. Joshi, Project Expert, said, "This has been the 15th such workshop held in the country and this is the fourth State-level conference. Yet we seem to remain where we are, with no very marked noticeable attitudinal changes in the powers that can make change happen. Except to a slight extent in Madhya Pradesh (where the Police Bill has been stalled) and in Kerala (with a verbal assurance from the CM on political non-interference)". Maja Daruwala, President, CHRI, concluded more positively, saying, "Obviously a one-day seminar can't bring about magic. But CHRI, as a catalytic group, can provide a platform and offer support for an informed public debate in order to generate social change. What a State wants to do in this sphere will be decided by what will happen thereafter as a follow-up. And in Tamil Nadu, the intent to follow up has been clearly expressed."

The music of road names

(Continued from Page 7)

Ramsami. But CP's fate is a lot better than Sir V.T. Krishnamachari's. This patron of music had inaugurated the Music Academy conference in 1961. The road named after him in Nungambakkam is now referred to as Krishnamma Road, making even his gender questionable. The two Raja Sirs, namely Annamalai and Muthiah Chettiers, have been commemorated in many places. Kalki Krishnamurthy and Su-

bramania Bharati who were also music critics, have had roads named after them too. The former is commemorated with a part of Lattice Bridge Road being named after him. Such a "half honour" would have amused him no end and even elicited a rib-tickling article from him had he been alive. Pycrofts Road was renamed Bharati Salai. S. Satyamurthy, the patriot and music lover, is remembered by the Satyamurthy Sagar and *Satyamurthy Bhavan*.

V. Sriram

Road to e-governance

(Continued from Page 4)

Guindy Engineering College was also the only one of its kind. Master of Computer Applications (MCA) and Postgraduate Diploma in Computer Applications (PGDCA) courses were popular in some of the colleges in Tamil Nadu in the 1970s and 80s. That the State had a headstart as far as IT was con-

cerned, therefore, there is little doubt. Unfortunately, quite a bit of that early momentum was lost in the 1990s when Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh surged ahead, backed by a lot of private initiative and enterprise. But with NIC-Tamil Nadu's recent inputs, the State is on its way to capturing the lead again.

Sashi Nair

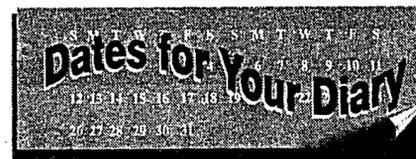
Answers to Quiz

1. Shah Nawaz Khan, alias Gazi Baba; 2. Hema Malini and Dara Singh; 3. Mars was at its nearest to Earth (55.7 million km); 4. Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong; 5. Anju Bobby George. The trio were medalists in the women's long jump at the World athletics championship in Paris; 6. Zaveri Bazaar; 7. Koneru Humpy and Dronavalli Harika; 8. Space Infrared Telescope Facility (SIRTF);

9. *Shahi Snan*; 10. Martin Luther King's 'I have a Dream' speech.

* * *

11. On land at Anna University; 12. In the High Court and at the bottom corner of Munro's statue; 13. A one-month holiday for temple elephants and the banning of animal sacrifice in temples throughout the State; 14. C.P. Radhakrishnan; 15. In the Koyambedu wholesale market complex; 16. *Boys* in Shankar's film of same name; 17. *Gove Building*; 18. It was the city's first 100 feet tall building; 19. The Madras Club; 20. *Indian Express*.



Till September 30: 'Rumour of the Truth', an exhibition of paintings by Sanjeev Khandekar. (At Apparao Galleries.)

September 19: Vyjayanthimala solo dance recital. (6.30 p.m. at Kalakshetra.)

September 19: Monthly 'Travelogue,' a moment of sharing, an opportunity to discover a person and interact with him, even be inspired by his journey, this month takes you on a scientific journey! (At Alliance Francaise, 7 p.m.)

September 20: Using Art in Education - a one-day workshop from 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. (At DakshinaChitra.)

September 20: Students of Alliance Francaise present 'Tenali Raman' in French. (6.30 p.m. at Alliance Francaise.)

Till September 21: Tanjore paintings (old and new), old Ravi Varma prints and glass paintings. (At Artworld.)

September 21: Exhibition of paintings by S. Elayaraja and P. Satish Kumar. (At Vinyasa.)

September 20-21: *Vikatakavi*, a play about how Tenali Raman, a poor Brahmin, rose to become one of the nine gems in the court of Krishnadevarayar (1509-29). This story about *Vikatakavi* (court jester) is directed by Jawahar, and features students of

AFM and actors from KPP. (At Alliance Francaise, 7 p.m. Entry by passes only.)

September 22-28: A seven-day workshop by M. Tapan Pattnaik, a renowned exponent of Seraikeella Chau, a folk dance of Eastern India, and the Director, troupe Rajakiya Chau Nrutya Kala Kendra, Seraikeella (a former princely state). The workshop includes a sound training in mask making, music and dance. For registration contact: National Folklore Support Center. Tel: 22448589, 22450553. (At Alliance Francaise, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

September 26: Ability Foundation presents Mahabanoo Mody-Kotwal in the acclaimed production of Wily Russell's *Shirley Valentine*. This play is a fundraiser for the organisation. (At 7 p.m. at Music Academy.)

September 26: Celebrating *Shakti* and *Shringar*, power and beauty. There will be an exhibition and sale of Hyderabad jewellery, temple jewellery, aromatic oils and special *kaajal*. Golu presentators will be on display. (At DakshinaChitra.)

September 29-30: 'French Science Today', a programme based on popular science, specially designed for non-specialists, students and scientists, but also of interest to specialists in the field.

On the 29th Herve Fleury on AIDS. Prof. Fleury is the head of the laboratory of Systematic and Molecular Virology in the Bordeaux Hospital. He is a specialist on the AIDS virus, working more specifically on the genetic variability of the virus.

On the 30th Antonio Guell on *Telemedecine*. Guell, Director of the Institute of Physiology in Toulouse, will talk on the latest developments in medicine that have transpired thanks to modern techniques of communication and the methods doctors use today to cure or operate from distance. (At Birla Planetarium, 3.00 p.m.)

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