

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

# MADRAS

## MUSINGS

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### INSIDE

- Short 'N' Snappy
- SMP needs more
- Madras perspectives
- THE Ad Man of Madras
- Madras Week dates



"Oops...these are the new shiny tiles I was telling you about!"

### Whoops!

Appearance matters. An unavoidable fact, unfortunately.

And this applies to the inanimate world as well, which explains the abundance of manufactured beauty these days. Buildings are grander; clothes prettier; and even the smallest rooms in the house now compete with landscaped gardens for sheer beauty and opulence.

So, can floors be far behind? An Eastern palace? A rich senator's villa? Or something that cries out for a couple of Flamenco dancers?

You can re-create them all right here in Chennai.

At a cost, though.

Especially when beauty overshadows a practical consideration – the 'slip-factor'.

Everyone knows over-smooth tiles in bathrooms are a bad idea. But what about airports? That's a high-rush area – people whooshing about, dragging luggage, lugging kids, brandishing tickets (and passports). Negotiating slippery tiles is the last thing they need.

Supermarkets. Tired homemakers have neither the time nor energy to watch their feet. In most cases, they can't even find them, submerged as they are behind large plastic bags.

As for hospitals. Now, why would you put glossy tiles for the sick and infirm to negotiate? Is that like: "You already have one problem, so get some more free?"

Nasty.

Seriously, may we request those in the trade to please consider usage over appearance in certain places?

Keep the profile of the user in mind, people.

Ranjitha Ashok

## Is a new stadium really needed?

(By A Special Correspondent)

The Tamil Nadu Cricket Association has announced that a new stadium will be built in the vicinity of Chennai in time for World Cup 2011. The State Government, in response to the TNCA's request, has agreed to give 50 acres of land at Karunguzhipallam village on the Old Mahabalipuram Road on lease for 30 years.

The question that begs an answer is whether the city really needs a third stadium. The old Corporation Stadium, now the Nehru Stadium, hosted Test matches between 1956 and 1965. The Chepauk grounds on which the MA Chidambaram Stadium was built has a hoary history going back 150 years and more. If the new cricket stadium comes up, the fate of the MAC Stadium can only be bleaker than it is. Fortunately the Nehru Stadium now prefers football – and certainly gets bigger crowds than Ranji matches.

Chennai has not really been on the international cricket circuit in the past few years. And it is the international match that really brings in crowds. Gone are the days when Ranji matches brought in spectators in thousands. Today, such tournaments are largely played to empty stands. And how many international Tests or one-dayers have we hosted in the recent past?

Both the existing stadiums of the city sport a deserted look for the most part of a couple of years at a time and cost the earth in terms of maintenance. The new stadium, it is being claimed, will be state-of-the-art and ultra modern. Why can the same thing not be done for the MAC Stadium rather than incurring the cost of an entirely new construction? The second claim has been that the new stadium will be weatherproof and matches will, therefore, not be washed out. Considering that washed-out matches have rather been frequent in the last couple of years, this may appear a good idea. But if matches are planned, or misplanned, plumb in the middle of the rainy season, what

(Continued on page 5)



The restored DGP building on the Marina.

## Police buildings – between the old look and the new

It must be accepted that the Police in Chennai offers a wide spectrum when it comes to its buildings. Some are old and historic structures, others are relatively new. But developments of the past decade only go to show that there is no consistency in policy when it comes to retaining old buildings or going in for new ones.

The *cause célèbre* was, of course, the proposed demolition of the Director General of Police Building on the Marina to make way for a ten-storeyed structure. At the instance of INTACH-Tamil Nadu, this was prevented in 1996 by an order of the Court and Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi had it restored, to the great satisfaction of conservationists. The Police then gave an assurance to not only restore the edifice but also build all future structures in the campus in the same style as the main building. Subsequently, extensions were done in the same style and *Madras Musings* now welcomes the news that a new construction on the campus of one of the most beautiful landmarks of the city will be built to its west and duplicate it.

A direct beneficiary of the events during the threat to the DGP building and its restoration was *Government House* in Government Estate to which the Headquarters were moved when the restoration of the Marina building was taking

place. *Government House*, one of the oldest buildings in the city and the residence of all Governors of Madras Presidency till Independence, had served as an MLAs' hostel for some time – and they left it looking like a derelict. The building was cleaned up by the Police and then further restored when some of its departments decided to stay put in these handsome surroundings after the Headquarters returned to the Marina. The building, unfortunately, is now slated to be pulled down to make way for the new Assembly Buildings.

by The Editor

But we hope a Chief Minister who saved one police building will save this one too.

Besides all this, in 2005 came the demolition of old police stations at locations such as Vepery, Flower Bazaar, Anna Salai and other places, many of them over a century old. These were replaced with new buildings and this year five more police stations are expected to be "modernised".

The latest historic building threatened is the Police Commissioner's Office on the eponymous road. The new building will be ten storeys tall and will have a built up space of 1.72 lakh sq.ft. Tenders are to be shortly called for the demolition of the old building and it is

expected that the new one will be ready in three years. While this is a case of an old building making way for a new one, without any investigation into whether the older structure really needs to be done away with – and proper investigation would show that it could be integrated with any new structure – the DGP Campus on the Marina will get a new building in the old style! The additional 1.73 lakh sq.ft of space on the Marina will be built on the same lines as the older building, as had been promised.

The Deputy Commissioner of Traffic building is also slated to make way for the new – once again without integration being investigated.

The Police, we feel, need to re-think what they are doing. Rather than announcing ad hoc demolitions and constructions, what is needed is a comprehensive plan of how much land is needed for a reasonable span of time. Once this is done, a study of the existing structures and the space they have within them which can be freed for use needs to be identified. It is only after this that plans should be made for pulling down buildings, putting up new ones or integrating both. Unfortunately such detailed planning is unknown in Government circles and what we see today is the loss of historic structures with no thought on whether they can be put to good use.

• The third part of a series of articles on the pluses and minuses of the draft Second Master Plan for Chennai.

## Much still to be done in draft SMP

(Continued from last fortnight)

Last fortnight I began looking at what else needed further clarification and revision in the draft SMP if it was to live up to its stated vision. This fortnight, in this concluding article, I point out a few further requirements.

THE FOURTH AND FIFTH REQUIREMENTS are the dual needs the CMDA needs to address: the issues of Chennai's water and protection of the flood plains. Almost everyone living in and around Chennai is aware of the severe limitations in current efforts at water supply, sanitation, drainage, including stormwater drainage, and protection and restoration of water bodies, rivers, tanks, lakes, wetlands and low-lying areas. Yet, the CMDA does no thinking on this issue. Chennai should not close its eyes to what is happening in Mumbai and other urban centres. The identification and protection of wetlands, lakes, rivers and flood plains is an extremely important task. Mumbai has been paying year after year for failing to identify a "no development zone" around its flood plains. Chennai's repeated investments in infrastructure and other facilities without first identifying and protecting these zones will only provide opportunity for the words of the celebrated author Toni Morrison to come true: "All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was."

However, aside from faithfully reprinting Metrowater's self-congratulatory spiel on how 98 per cent of the city is connected to the sewerage system (irrespective of the fact that Metrowater needs to cater to the 1178 sq.km of CMA, not just the 170 sq.km of Chennai city), the CMDA appears to have overlooked the various other challenges. Curiously, it even overlooks the needs of various large industrial, IT and other projects proposed in the draft SMP, except the IT Corridor where a dedicated desalination plant will be built to provide water. What is most disturbing is that the CMDA fails to take into account the severe reprimanding of Metrowater, PWD and other agencies con-

cerned in failing to implement the Chennai City River Conservation Project by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG of India). The CAG's report of 2006 specifically finds that, on the proposed "restoration of storage capacity of tanks in the CMA", the project "did not contemplate restoration of the storage capacity of 525 irrigation tanks which, when full, flood the Cooum and Adyar rivers. Test check of records of 60 tanks indicated that the storage capacity of these tanks were reduced by 40 per cent due to encroachment of waterspread area of the tanks. Restoration of the capacity of these tanks would have reduced flooding of these two rivers. In November 2005, the rivers were flooded and 25.77 thousand million cubic feet of water was discharged into the sea."

Similarly, on the issue of stormwater drains, the CAG's report found that though the Project had "indicated that 1,748 km length of road network in Chennai city did not have stormwater drains", it had only constructed stormwater drains for 292 km. More importantly, the CAG of India observed that "the Project had not included the management of solid wastes which pollute the waterways", making a critical separation between sewage and stormwater.

The CAG of India report also pulls up the CMDA for "not taking up preventive measures like introduction of planning and regulatory control to prevent development of flood hazard zones and encroachment of these zones and waterways, formulation of strategic drainage plan, contour mapping to map flood hazard zones, and preparation of guidelines for a drainage system."

The CMDA would do well to go through this 2006 report and its conclusion: "The Project has a dual objective of flood alleviation and abatement of pollution in city waterways. Neither of these objectives was realised even after implementing the Project for seven years at a cost of Rs. 621.41 crore." Instead of an honest, forward-looking approach to the extremely difficult issue of water management, the CMDA has chosen to ignore the criticism and blindly propose further sev-

(Continued on page 8)

## Not-so-becoming passenger behaviour

The train that *The Man from Madras Musings* had to travel by was the Pallavan Express which, as any regular railway user will tell you, comes into Egmore as Vaigai Express. The same rake is used and at Egmore the toilets and the compartments need to be cleaned by the staff in record time before the entraining passengers get in. The poor supervisors have a tough time. They try their level best to explain to the passengers that they cannot get in till the compartments are cleaned, but try getting that into the heads of some of our travellers. Everyone wants to shove his or her way in, even as the cleaning is in progress and there are heated altercations with the cleaning staff.

Amidst all this chaos, much time is lost and the cleaning is, quite understandably, done rather half-heartedly before the train leaves. During the journey, MMM could not help noticing that many passengers kept complaining about the condition of the toilets and abused the railway staff for this! It is amazing that in our city, every man becomes a rule unto himself and never follows any discipline. All that had to be done was for passengers to form a queue outside the compartments till the cleaning was over. They could have then boarded in an orderly fashion, resulting in a pleasant journey with clean toilets.

### Dangerous dons

The University, to which our city lends its name, is in the news again. And for all the wrong reasons. Somewhere along the line such technical niceties have been dispensed with, and MMM has now veered round to the view that Samuel Johnson or whoever it was that coined the same term for those in education and those of the underworld was nothing short of a genius.

The *Man from Madras Musings* is rather vague about the whole thing, but there are two separate fights, both involving dons of the educational variety and not the fighting variety which supposedly has no education. The first involves one don verbally abusing the other and the abused then turning around and slapping the abuser. Whereupon the abuser lodged a complaint of assault and battering against the abused and now the abused is facing the music. Apparently the abuse was verbal and so does not count in a court of law as evidence while the assault was physical and so does.

The second tale involves the use of a room. The head of a department was leaving but did not hand over his room to his successor. Whereupon the successor was allotted the room of

another professor who had left the university under not particularly edifying circumstances, which led to his room being sealed. The seal was thereafter broken to allow the new professor, leading to all kinds of complications. In the meanwhile, bad blood continues between the professor who ought to have vacated but did not, and the one who was to get in, but could not.

Can we expect any better from a university where slippers are hurled at a retiring Vice Chancellor – with not a don or official raising a hand to prevent it?

In the midst of all this, education continues as usual, MMM supposes.

### Sloppy Senate House

The *Man from Madras Musings* was recently in Senate House for a programme and could not escape reflecting on the grandeur it lent to the event. But what distressed MMM most was how unimpor-



tant the cleaning of this historic building had become. There were cobwebs on the ceiling and as for the garden, the debris of the recent renovation and some huge steel pieces continue to litter it. Should not a building beautifully restored have a clean appearance worthy of it?

While at Senate House, *The Man from Madras Musings* happened to look up at the building and was intrigued to find that each of the towers had round circular designs on the four faces, each of them having three spokes in them rather like the Mercedes Benz symbol. Each of the circles has the spokes in differing alignments.

MMM clutched at a passing don and asked him the significance of these. Without blinking an eyelid, the don replied that the constructing firm, which had done the restoration, had put its logo on all the towers!

### Overly systematic

The IT revolution has come to stay and, with it, just about anything has become digitised and the number of forms that people fill in has multiplied. However, *The Man from Madras Musings* cannot help thinking that some companies go overboard. A friend applied for insurance for his children and the statutory

medical test was waived considering their age. However, within a week, the friend received a letter with a whole lot of forms explaining in detail the tests to be taken, covering everything from glandular bottles to telangiectasis and also offering a variety of clinics where the test could be taken.

The friend, all agitated, called up the company's help desk only to be told once again that tests were not needed. Why the forms, asked the friend. Oh, that, came the reply, is necessary because of the office systems. Apparently the process certification stipulates that forms must be sent out for each application. Nobody thought of adding exceptions.

### Caught betwixt

The buses with automatic closing doors were launched with great fanfare. But *The Man from Madras Musings* feels that everyone forgot that such things work only when there is no overcrowding.

Now overcrowding can be avoided only with more buses on each route. Buses can be increased only if there is more road space. Now there is no more road space, so we have fewer buses and more crowds. The result?

Last week, a woman boarded a crowded bus fitted with the automatic doors and they closed on her leg. The doors would not open and the bus was driven to the nearest service depot with the woman writhing in pain. The door was prised open and the woman was let out. She had, fortunately, not fractured her leg, which was badly bruised.

The incident received wide notice in the Press, but it made no difference to anyone. The next day, MMM noticed, the crowds were the same and the footboard hangers-on were the same. They really do not have a choice, do they?

### Autos here, there...

The *Man from Madras Musings* was recently in Pune and while there he had to use an autorickshaw on a particular occasion. Going by the experiences with this mode of conveyance in Chennai, MMM was most apprehensive as to what kind of treatment would be meted out to him. But MMM was in for a couple of pleasant surprises. First the auto man turned on the meter immediately on starting. At the end of the journey, he fished out a laminated rate chart and asked MMM to pay as per the conversion specified. MMM was speechless. Now, why is it that in Chennai alone it is an ordeal to handle autorickshaw drivers? Food for thought.

— MMM

OUR  
READERS  
WRITE



### Great icons

The article by Thara Mohan Rao, whose illustrious father must be Dr. Mohan Rao, the famous surgeon who, along with Dr. Sundaravadanam and Dr. Poovaiah, formed a powerful trinity dominating the medical scene on Poonamallee High Road (India's Harley Street) in the 1950s, kindled nostalgic memories.

Even as a middle class student I was lucky to interface with some of the places, things and persons mentioned by her.

Syed Bawker himself attended to all customers, irrespective of their position or title. His establishment was modest by today's standards, but I have seen VVIPs waiting in line to meet him. His sons are carrying on the tradition.

India Silk House was famous, and so was the Chellaram's.

GK Vale and Klein & Peyerl were famous and I think GK Vale is still very strong in Bangalore.

Bata's 'Ambassador' shoes were the choice of the elite. Even some students bought them, if at all they managed to save some money.

Pioneer Laundry managed to continue its tradition till the early 1980s. They had ample parking space which they shared with Murray's until the LIC building came up.

Spencer's was great for confectioneries and cakes, but Bosotto's probably had a niche position amongst the elite. Parry's almond peppermints were famous.

Perumal Chetty specialised in stationery and instruments for engineering students. Gems offered high class imported fountain pens.

Jaffar's soda fountain and Eliphinstone Theatre were a great duo.

In addition to Philips, the elite bought high-end Grundig and Nordmende German radios.

Odeon Theatre attracted film stars like the Travancore Sisters regularly.

There were other 'elite' things too. Binny's gaberdine cotton suitings and poplin shirting, for example. For the vegetarians there were several restaurants, like New & Old Woodlands, Dasprakash, Ambi's Café, Ramakrishna's Modern Café and Guptha's (Luz), offering excellent food. The only North Indian food place was PAL's in Mount Road. Buhari's was famous for its non-vegetarian food.

Madras of old had some great icons. But time passes...

**S. Ramaswamy**

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### Devotion to law

Sir Alladi (MM, July 16th) was so passionately attached to law that his table in *Ekambara Nivas*, Mylapore, was always over-flowing with law books lying open (partly read). When he was having his meals, a law book would be held in his left hand and his eyes would be glued to it.

Once, he was in such a hurry that he began getting into his car to go to court without his *dhoti* and his long coat falling upto his knees. He was so pre-occupied with his case! This was noticed by his clerk Krishniah who rushed into the house and brought a *dhoti* and helped Sir Alladi to be in his formal 'Panchakachcham' with it. The law-engrossed lawyer laughed and we all joined in it.

**R. Javanthinathan**

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### A role-model

Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer (MM, July 16th), a self-made man who rose from rags to riches, is beyond doubt a role-model for any aspirant in law to earn name and fame.

The habit of reading books while travelling and pursuing studies, whatever the hassles, was unique among certain great legal luminaries like Muthuswamy Iyer and Rt. Honourable Sreenivasa Sastri. Alladi was no exception.

**P.A. Ranganathan**

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### Not automatic choice

I am not so sure about the correctness of Randor Guy's observation (MM, July 16th), that "when the Indian Constitution was being formulated and written Sir Alladi (Krishnaswami Iyer) was an

# Lawyers on stage

In 1954, when I came to Madras from Bombay after graduating in law and joined the Madras Bar, I started an association by name 'Lawyers' Dramatic Society' under whose banner we staged several dramas. One of them was the drama 'Sub-Assistant Magistrate of Sultanpet', and not as mentioned by K.S. Krishnaswamy (MM, July 15th). I acted as a Muslim Court peon in it (see picture; V.C. Gopalaratnam is the Magistrate seen in it). The witty dialogue written by VCG elicited great laughter from the audience – especially when I innocently uttered "ஐயா நீங்கோ கோர்ட்டல் இருக்குறப்போ, அம்மா என்ன உள்ளே வர சொல்றாங்கோ" on which Gopalaratnam expressed alarm and said "என்னடா சொல்ற?"

Seshadri, son-in-law of Raja Iyer, a former Advocate-General of Madras, devoted more time in organising dramas than to his profession. We used to assemble in his house in Kutcheri Road or in the house of Gopalaratnam for rehearsals and they provided us sumptuous tiffins.

It was VCG who moved my enrolment before the First Bench of the Madras High Court, consisting of Justice Rajamannar, and introduced me as a "fine actor", the founder of the 'Lawyers' Dramatic Society', etc.

The drama *Manohara* staged in Raja Annamalai Mandram, with tall-statured. A.R. Ramanathan, advocate, acting as Manohara and myself in another role, was appreciated by many advocates.

As regards the article by Randor Guy on Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer (MM, July 16th), it brought back many memories. I served my apprenticeship under Alladi Kuppaswamy, son of Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer. It was a great surprise for me to find pencil marks in all the



law books in the office. I wondered who had the time to go through all of them. The pencil marks indicated that Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer and his son were thorough with the law and prepared extensively before presentation to the Court. Unfortunately, Alladi Kuppaswamy went to Andhra Pradesh, but we kept in constant touch.

I also recall arranging a music concert at Raja Annamalai Manram by another team of eminent advocates, including T.L. Venkatarama Iyer, a Supreme Court Judge providing the vocal, and V.P. Raman, the former Advocate General, on the violin, and Sreevatsamani, on Mridangam. Lawyers in those days excelled in various other fields also.

**C. Lakshmi Narain**

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automatic choice to draft it". It was not 'automatic'.

I have heard it said by a distinguished Kannada litterateur and an eminent publicist of Bangalore by name Dr. D.V. Gundappa (popularly called by his initials as DVG) that it was on C. Rajagopalachari's friendly advice to Mahatma Gandhi in 1947 that three Indians of very high public stature who were, however, out of the then Indian National Congress, were given important assignments by Pandit Nehru and one of the three was Sir Alladi. The other two were Sir R.K. Shanmukam Chetty, a financial wizard in his own right, who became Free India's first Finance Minister and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, India's first Law Minister, rightly hailed as the 'architect of the Indian Constitution'. Ambedkar is now called the leader and saviour of the 'Dalits' – a word which was not in vogue in his time. The 'Dalit' and the 'Brahmin' got on famously in their joint historic task of framing the Constitution of the Republic of India!

**K. Vedomurthy**

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### Keep it a beach

Elliot's Beach (MM, July 16th) is God's natural gift. It should not be converted into

a park or playground. Public conveniences should be beyond the sands of the beach and should be on the roadside.

People should be able to sit, relax, and enjoy the serene beauty of the sea and hear the sounds of the waves. At present what we need is cleanliness, litter-free, garbage-free and plastic covers-free sand.

The authority should not make the beach a children's park or add artificial structures in the name of beautification.

**P. Anasuya**

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### Autos at night

When you hail an auto at night, you are often embarrassed to see someone already inside it. In the day time you can clearly see whether the auto is occupied or not. This is not possible in the dark. Why don't autos carry a board 'For Hire' in red and 'Occupied' in blue – on its top, so that one is saved the embarrassment and can easily identify a vacant auto from an occupied one. The Traffic Police should insist on this.

**M. Fazal**

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### READABILITY PLEASE

Dear Readers,

As letters from readers increase, we are receiving more and more hand written letters, many of them in a hand so small and illegible or large and scrawled as to be unreadable. Often this leads to our discarding a letter, particularly if some part of it is unreadable.

If you wish us to consider your letter for publication, please type it with enough space between lines or write it using a medium hand, clearly dotting the 'i-s' and crossing the 't-s'.

Many readers also try to fill every square centimetre of a postcard space, making reading or editing impossible.

Please help us to consider your letters more favourably by making them more legible for us.

– THE EDITOR

## Our Addresses

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No personal visits or telephone calls, please. Letters received will be sent from these addresses every couple of days to the persons concerned and you will get an answer from them to your queries reasonably quickly. Strange as it may seem, if you adopt the 'snail mail' approach, we will be able to help you faster and disappoint you less.

THE EDITOR

• *As Madras that is Chennai prepares to celebrate Madras Day – August 22nd – and Madras Week – August 19th-26th – Madras Musings looks back on this page at some of the things said about the city last year, and also wonders how well acquainted you are with the First City of Modern India.*

## Know your City?

1. Where are the Tamil Nadu Legislature and Secretariat?
2. Which campus has the relics of two former Madras lighthouses?
3. What is the name of the building housing the Corporation of Chennai?
4. On what famous site is the Park Hotel?
5. Which stadium was built in the midst of what was once a Nawab's property?
6. Where is the GPO in Chennai?
7. This famous church near the Besant Nagar beach takes its popular name from a coastal township south of Chennai. What is the name of the township?
8. What is the name of the building, recently restored, where the University of Madras convocations were once held?
9. Where is St. Thomas Mount?
10. There are two rivers that flow through Chennai. What links them?
11. Which famous university in Britain has a publishing house with a branch in the city? Where is it?
12. Which famous institution teaching Bharata Natyam in Chennai was founded by Rukmani Devi Arundale? Where is it?
13. What are Chennai's two airport terminals called?
14. Where is the Government Museum in in this city?
15. Where does the Prince of Arcot live?
16. Munro's statue is situated in the middle of which grounds?
17. Where is the Indian Airlines booking office?
18. What institutions are now located on what was the Esplanade?
19. Where is the Tamil Nadu Director General of Police's office?
20. What is now on the site of Mount Road Round Tana?
21. What is the oldest women's college in the city?
22. Where is the Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore's residence in Chennai?
23. Which is the place that records rainfall and predicts weather? Where are its two sites in Chennai?
24. Where is Little Mount?
25. Which is the largest bicycle manufacturing unit in the South?
26. OTA. What and where is it?
27. Where are the offices of the Collector of Chennai?
28. What is the most famous tree in the Theosophical Society Gardens?
29. Where is the War Memorial in Chennai?
30. Where is the Southern Railways headquarters?
31. Madras's first truck manufacturer began with car assembly. What was the company and what car did it assemble?
32. Where is Bertram Hall?
33. Where are ITC's production facilities in Chennai?
34. Where was Robert Clive married?
35. What is Salt Cotaurs?
36. With what factory do you associate Perambur?
37. Where do the oil companies have their oil storage installations?
38. Where is the Kamaraj Memorial Museum and Hall?
39. Which vehicle of the armed forces is manufactured near Chennai? Where?
40. Which famous market was pulled down after a fire to make way for a highrise?
41. What is the best known landmark on Binny's Road?
42. Where was the city's first multi-theatre complex?
43. Where are the city's two biggest and oldest industrial estates?
44. Where is the Chennai Port Trust office?
45. Where is Kollywood?
46. Appropriately designated as COP, where is this officer's office?
47. There is a building on the Marina which was once called 'Widows' Home'. What is its present name?
48. Which are the three water reservoirs that supply drinking water to Chennai?
49. Name the three major items manufactured by the business organisation headquartered in *Dare House*?
50. Where is the TB Sanatorium in Chennai?

(Courtesy: *The Lakshmi Hayagreeva Cultural And Educational Trust.*)

(Discover Chennai on Page 6)

## Madras or Chennai – Some perspectives

The City of Madras or Chennai is a relatively new city. The villages of Mylapore, Triplicane, Ezhambur (Egmore) etc., all a part of Chennai today, have a recorded history centuries older than Fort St. George from which grew Madras that is Chennai. It was on August 22, 1639 that the site of Fort St. George was granted to the East India Company and the English who settled there called it Madraspatnam. Hence August 22nd has been celebrated as Madras Day these past few years, the celebrations catalysed by a small group of heritage buffs who have encouraged voluntary public participation in a Madras Week in which is sandwiched Madras Day. Chennai Heritage, which publishes *Madras Musings*, last year arranged a heritage talk every day

"Cinema too played an important role in the transition of dance, with famous actress-dancers and their gurus adapting the classical dance form to popular tunes, and styles. 'Sadir' was introduced through Kothamangalam Subbu's *Thillana Moganambal* and the oriental dance was popularised by Lalitha, Padmini and Ragini." The fascination for and acceptance of dance as an art form flourished thereafter in the urban setting.

\* \* \*

The obsession with cricket is a national phenomenon. Madras has contributed in a big way to the game, said Ramnarayan, a former cricketer and writer. Unfortunately, Chennai has won the Ranji Trophy only twice in 70 years, in 1954/55 and again in 1987/88. "Cricket in Chennai is a unique brand of cricket, with the empha-

still in existence and are in danger of being wiped out. If you see the maps of old Madras, there is a lot of greenery, with water in many tanks. The British filled up the Mambalam and Nungambakkam tanks. Today, people have woken up to the importance of the water bodies and are trying to preserve ponds and temple tanks."

Kalpna emphatically states, "It is very important to define development. Heritage conservation is only part of this development. We all love the city and heritage conservation should stem from our own experiences. Conservation is not against development and we are not against change. We are looking for value-added change and the past has its advantages and we must draw from it."

The Senate House was built in the late 1800s. It was the first building of the University of Madras. The roofing was of Mangalore tiles made in the 1870s. 80% of these tiles were in good condition and were re-used in the restoration. There was a galvanised iron roof under the tiles that sloped and drained the water. The sheet had rusted and let the water seep into the building. The building has a unique Chettinad or Madras plaster finish that is smooth and shiny.

The renovation work in the Senate Hall was done at a height of 50 feet and the safety measures taken to prevent accidents were vital. A beautiful pattern called Sgraffito was covered by lime wash. This Mediterranean design was uncovered and carefully restored to its original beauty. Similarly, Manikandan, a carpenter who was sent to UK to train, did the stained glass renovation. Dr. Subbaraman from Bangalore undertook the restoration of the stunning painted canvas ceiling. He worked on each panel, 15' x 15' in size, in a huge basketball court. Special care was taken to clean the exterior walls made of exposed brickwork. The work on the four domes was time-consuming due to the erection and dismantling of the scaffolding. But when it was all completed, Madras had a place of rare beauty again!

● by  
**PADMINI NATARAJAN**

during Madras Week. What follows today and next fortnight is what I recall of last year's talks.

\* \* \*

Lakshmi Viswanathan, danseuse, writer and documentary film-maker, who initiated the lecture series spoke with nostalgia about dance. She had her dance *arange* in the R.R. Sabha in 1952 and recalled that the character of dance had changed so much since its urbanisation that began 75 years ago. "The dubashes of George Town, the traders and businessmen brought the village atmosphere into Madras. This of course included music and dance. The dancers and musicians were glad to find new patrons and the 'Nautch parties' became popular with the Brown and White Sahibs. The devadasis adjusted quickly to the urban setting and the *javalis* were penned in English and Telugu to become boudoir music."

After the bitter debate about banning the dance, it was given the stamp of social acceptance by Krishna Iyer and it was taken up by girls from good families and presented formally as stage performances.

sis on style and aesthetics. Chennai cricket flourishes because of corporate support and the excellent salaries paid to cricketers who are employees in such organisations. The corporates, colleges and other sports institutions maintain good grounds. There is a very sporting crowd even to watch local and league matches. Thirty years ago there used to be a low wall near the Marina and people used to sit on it or sprawl under the trees to watch Buchi Babu matches. Today cricket has come into drawing rooms and the crowd has dwindled. But Tamil Nadu cricket is still doing very well."

\* \* \*

The Senate House renovation has been a great boost to the Heritage Brigade. K. Kalpana, a young conservation architect and co-author of a book on Madras, worked with INTACH in this renovation project. "Many buildings were witness to the evolution of the city. A city without old building is like a man without a memory," she began, and went on, "The city was born with the fort. A multitude of fishing villages merged to become the city. These fishing villages are

# THE Ad Man of Madras

Madras that is Chennai can never be called the ad capital of India. That honour will always belong to Bombay that is Mumbai though Calcutta that is Kolkata did harbour pretensions to that effect at one time. Yet, one man dared to start an advertising agency on a large scale in Madras and make it a name to contend with. That was R.K. Swamy and the agency was, of course, the eponymous one which has now tied up with BBDO (once Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn and now thankfully shortened), a very old international advertising agency with a formidable reputation.

Swamy was not from Madras and his antecedents were definitely not of the variety that you would associate with the world of advertising. He came from an orthodox but impoverished family from Manganallur near Kumbakonam and was one of six siblings. Born on December 11, 1922, Swamy, named Krishnaswamy at birth, spent his childhood in Bombay to where his father Rangaswamy Iyengar had migrated in 1928 to manage Murugan Stores, a shop set up to cater to South Indian needs in the Grant Road area. Life was difficult there as well, for South Indians began moving on to Dadar and Matunga, resulting in the shop losing its clientele. Swamy's education ended with school where, among other things, he became fluent in Gujarati.

It was an era when many boys from the South migrated to Bombay and Calcutta, learnt stenography and joined companies at junior levels. It was not, therefore, surprising that the elder sons of Rangaswamy Iyengar, Ramanujam and Kasturi, both followed suit. Kasturi had, however, set his sights on a job at the Bombay Flying Club, but his then employers, N. Powell & Co., Chemists, would not let him go. Swamy, then 17, was made to

learn stenography in a remarkably short time and asked to step into Kasturi's shoes so that the latter could fly. From Powell, Swamy moved in the same capacity to Ford Motors only to be jobless when the company wound up its India operations in 1940. White collar jobs were scarce during the War and Swamy wore his shoes out walking from office to office, one of which was J Walter Thompson (JWT), the famed ad agency. He was turned away there as well, but just as he was leaving someone came up with a requirement for a proofreader in Gujarati. Swamy's skills in that language proved handy and he was taken on. Whereupon he made himself useful in the media and billing departments as well and when, in 1942, the Calcutta offices of JWT needed someone for the media department, Edward J Fielden, the legendary boss of JWT in India, sent Swamy there on a salary of Rs. 120 p.m.

At Calcutta, then the Mecca of multinationals, Swamy came into contact with several South Indians who were big names in the private sector. He also indulged in his passion for Tamil hymns and Sanskrit verses to the fullest, thanks to the congregational activities of the strong South Indian community there. The vast repertoire he thus acquired would stand him in good stead in all the speeches and letters he had to write in his latter day career. In 1948, Swamy was married to Radha, a girl belonging to the famed MD Brothers' family of Madras, which had extensive interests in timber. The wedding took place at *Saundarya*, the palatial family residence on Eldam's Road. Back in Calcutta, Swamy was asked rather half-heartedly by his seniors, who did not expect him to produce anything worthwhile, for a market survey on tobacco and its usage in the sub-continent. Swamy plunged into the task, often consulting re-

ports at the National Library and came up with such a thorough document that it astonished everyone and earned him a promotion and a transfer to Bombay in 1951.

Research became his forte and he soon became indispensable for not only the background work to any campaign, but also during presentations of the advertising to clients to whom he explained the *raison d'etre* of the ads. While in Bombay, Swamy did the first of his many public sector/government agency campaigns, something for which he was to become well-known in later years. This was for the Western Railway, in order to explain to the public the mammoth logistics involved in managing the rail network in India. In the mid-1950s, JWT opened its Madras office and Swamy was posted as its head. It was a small beginning, with the office located in

• by SRIRAM V.

Speedway Building on Mount Road having minimum furniture and a staff of four. Binny's was the one big account in an otherwise conservative market, but by sheer hard work Swamy added Ashok Leyland, Parry's and TI Cycles to his portfolio. The TI account was won through a presentation made after two months of research involving travelling all around the country using every means of transport possible to study consumer behaviour. The slogan "Hercules-Your lifelong companion" emerged from this and the campaign ran for years, making Hercules of TI the leading cycle brand of an earlier era.

With more accounts coming in, JWT expanded and moved to *Mohan Mansion* in 1958 and from there to *Fagun Mansions*, next to the Connemara Hotel, in 1968. At *Fagun Mansions*, agency was cheek by jowl with another major client, Ponds,

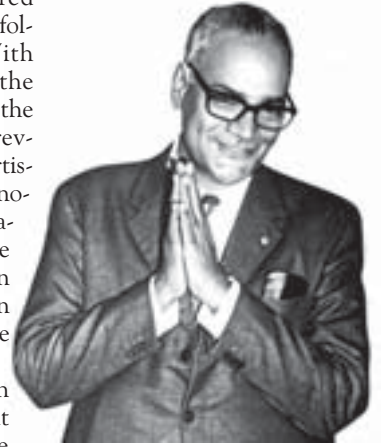
which Swamy had acquired while in Bombay and which followed him to Madras. With such rapid development, the Madras office was no longer the smallest branch in terms of revenue. The rest of the advertising world sat up and took notice when the ads of JWT Madras were displayed at the Commercial Artist Guild in Bombay, the only ad club in the country during those years.

The last major campaign that Swamy handled while at JWT was for BHEL. The public sector behemoth was coming under fire in Parliament and elsewhere and Swamy felt that a campaign to sensitise people about the impact it had on their daily lives was necessary. What followed was the "Power to the People" series of ads, which became so popular that Indira Gandhi even used it in her electioneering speeches in 1972!

With such a string of successes behind him, it was but natural that everyone, Swamy included, expected that he would become the head of JWT India. But that was not to be. His lack of a degree and a perceived lack of a Western lifestyle stood in the way. Swamy was disappointed and in 1973 decided to venture out on his own. He was 50, had a large family to support and a capital of Rs. 1 lakh. But far from daunted, R.K. Swamy Advertising Associates was set up. Some of his diehard loyal clients, such as BHEL and the TVS group, moved into his fold. Then came TT (Pvt) Limited, the makers of Prestige pressure cookers, and Hindustan Photo Films. The agency, which opened on April 2, 1973, released an ad for prestige cookers the very same day in *The Hindu*. However, the first ad from the agency was released even before it was incorporated! That was for BHEL on January 26, 1973, and was an indication of the confidence the client had in the new agency.

Swamy painstakingly put together a dedicated team, all of whose members swore allegiance to their leader to whom work was worship and who was in every way a role model. He spearheaded research, sifted and sieved through ideas, watched campaign development with a critical eye and, above all, assiduously cultivated clients. All this was done through a unique South Indian style which involved hard work, emphasis on ground data and making sound presentations with quotes often coming in from the *puranas* and scriptures! It was a far cry from the perceived ad world of high sounding words and endless partying. Yet it worked, because it was based on reality.

In the early days, the agency won the MICO account in competition against JWT. A big



R.K. Swamy

catch in 1974/75 was ONGC. Soon, R.K. Swamy's had branches all over the country and Swamy's backbreaking labour, a heart attack in 1979 notwithstanding, had paid off. By the early 1980s, the agency had clocked a turnover of Rs. 100 million, a big figure for those times and was within the top ten advertising agencies of India. Swamy created a clutch of subsidiary companies in various fields related to advertising to support the flagship organisation in the 1980s. In 1985, RK Swamy's signed an MOU with BBDO to work together and, in 1989, when the Government permitted equity transfers to overseas partners in the ad industry, RK Swamy's became the first agency to sell a minority stake to a foreign partner and became RK Swamy-BBDO.

Becoming a senior citizen did not mean retirement for Swamy. His stature in the ad world meant he was continuously involved with it, being an active member of the Advertising Agencies' Association of India, even after having served as its President. He represented the ad industry on several issues taken up with the Government and other bodies such as the IENS. But, over time, it was spirituality that claimed him, for he became increasingly involved with the Ahobila Mutt, the religious body to which he owed allegiance. He donated liberally to temples and spearheaded the renovation of temples in Kumbakonam and elsewhere. He was active in the affairs of the Lady Sivaswami School, Mylapore, and was instrumental in the setting up of the Sivaswami Kalalaya, a popular school in the same area.

When he passed away in June 2003, it marked the end of a life that had touched many people in various ways. It was no wonder that David Ogilvy, the advertising legend, once said of Swamy that advertising was too small a canvas for him.

The life and times of R.K. Swamy have now been put together as an eminently readable book by V.S. Chakrapani and V. Ramnarayan. Published by R.K. Swamy's family, the book *R.K. Swamy-His Life and Times* is priced at Rs. 1500 and is available at leading bookshops.

## IS A NEW STADIUM REQUIRED?

(Continued from page 1)

more can you be expect? It is expected that the proposed stadium will be an all-weather one, but is the city really conducive for playing the game all the year round? What about the heat and the humidity?

A third claim has been that the new stadium will have a range of infrastructures which will prove crucial to the development of cricket. Now, is this a unique requirement in our city

alone? None of the other locations such as Lords or The Oval has gone in for new construction for the development of cricket. You would rather think that the game was developed by being played consistently well and with good training and coaching being provided. Since when have new constructions become necessary for the development of the game? If this was the case, we would have never had any cricket players of re-

pute in the past, given the conditions in which they played and developed their skills.

Finally, do we really need a stadium – and that too miles out of the city – for just one or two World Cup matches and the occasional one-day international or Test match that nowadays draws fewer people because of TV? When are we going to stop building for the sake of building or with an eye not on the present but on posterity?

## Quizzin' with Ram'nan

(Current Affairs questions are from the period July 1st to 15th. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Tamil Nadu and Chennai.)

1. Which global sporting event Sochi in Russia is going to host in 2014?
2. Apart from the Taj Mahal and the Great Wall, which other Asian wonder is amongst the 'New Seven Wonders of the World'?
3. Whose Open era record did Roger Federer equal by winning the Wimbledon singles crown for the fifth straight time recently?
4. What was 'Operation Silence' that took place in Pakistan between July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>?
5. What historic decision did the Nepal government take on July 12th as regards the monarchy?
6. What document, that has sparked a theological debate among Christians, did the Pope approve on July 10<sup>th</sup>?
7. Which two Asian cities hosted the 'Live Earth' concerts on 07.07.07?
8. Which global automobile company broke ground for its second plant in India at Tapukara in Rajasthan recently?
9. Name the former Test cricketer, considered one of India's best batsmen against spin bowling, and a big success during the 1971 historic series in West Indies, who passed away recently.
10. How did Rajan Zed make history in the U.S. Senate recently?
11. Which US aircraft carrier came calling in Chennai recently amidst protests?
12. The State government recently cleared a Rs.10-lakh project to establish a 'Children's Science Park'. Where?
13. What change in the State's nutritious noon meal scheme for children was announced at a recent function to mark the birth anniversary of Kamaraj?
14. Who is the Deputy Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly?
15. Which former Vice-president of India was the State's Governor in the 1990s?
16. Which public figure has authored books like **An Autobiography of Democracy** and **Oru Suyasarithai** (a collection of Tamil poems)?
17. Who is the music director of the film **Periyar**?
18. Which famous son of the soil was the progeny of Ukirapandiya Thevar and Indirani Ammaiyaar?
19. Which royal wrote the important treatise on music, titled **Sangita Sudha**?
20. In which district are the Kangeyam and Gobichettipalayam Taluks?

(Answers on page 8)

# A forgotten album

An 1879 record by a Professor of the School of Design (now the College of Arts, Chennai), S. Kensington, notes, "The progress the advanced pupils have shown, clearly indicates that they are not anyway behind those of the average students in England..." He was referring to the botanical drawings of the Indian artists of that period. "Indeed, these artists could even be listed as being among the architects of the British Empire," says Dr. Job Thomas, Director, South Asian

Studies Program, Davidson College, North Carolina, USA. Prof. Thomas was speaking on 'Botanical Drawings of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century', at the Roja Muthiah Research Library.

Prof. Thomas' talk focussed on an 1862 album – identified as **Water Color Drawings: Various Plants and Flowers**, which he had discovered in 1988 in the library of the Madras College of Arts. Significantly, it had been produced at the height of the cotton famine of 1861-65 (when the American Civil War closed American ports and sharply reduced export of American cotton to Britain). The paintings of cotton plants from various continents of the world "were made no doubt with an idea of studying them for large scale commercial use".

The 24 water colour paintings, mostly of different varieties of the cotton plant – Religious Cotton, Egyptian Cotton, Brazilian Cotton, Sea Island Cotton etc. – are of varying sizes, the largest being 19" x 16" and the smallest 15½" x 12½". In its fidelity of colour and intensity of texture, it was a study "that was truly complete", including as it did its leaves, roots, flowers and buds of the different varieties of cotton plants in their various stages. Even the pests which attacked the cotton plants were sketched in minute detail!

The album was "one of the several facets of the attempts of Britain to define and mould the cultural and economic character of India". On this "cultural transition within a generation," Dr. Thomas says, "I appended that idea with Macaulay's Minute of English as the medium of instruction. Just as Indians educated in the English medium began to assume



A water colour of Religious Cotton.

British values, the artists too acquired Western standards. Some of the drawings made by the students of the School of Arts were actually good enough to be in the collection of the renowned Kew Gardens!"

The idea of painting as a rehabilitation process for prisoners was actually introduced by Dr. Alexander Hunter, a prison surgeon, back in 1847, when he started a School of Art for prisoners. Art teachers, to impart precise artistic skills, were brought from England. By 1850, he'd opened the school to the

● by  
**SHOBHA MENON**

public and even impressed the Court of Directors with the drawings presented. The choice of subjects for the botanical drawings was orchids, exotics, and those of plants of economic importance.

Dr. Thomas had many years ago come across references to botanical drawings made by Indian students while conducting research at the Tamil Nadu Government Archives on the history of the Madras College of Arts. "Later, when I visited

the library of the College of Arts, I chanced to find one such album and, fortunately, photographed it right away." A recent look revealed that its condition had deteriorated considerably within a decade and a half.

He feels, "When soldiers, administrators, missionaries and even the teak from the Western Ghats were said to be responsible for building the empire, why not the artists? After all, their drawings gave complete information to the East India Company about the commercial prospects of plants such as cotton, tea, rubber, sugarcane and cinchona. After these commercial plants became known, ships, civil servants and missionaries followed. It is time that the painters, now at the end of possible builders of the British Empire, have to be led to the front of the line."

And I remembered reading German poet and dramatist Goethe's comment on the difficulty of the role of the botanical artist as opposed to that of the still life flower painter: "The one had only to satisfy the lover of superficial beauty; the other has to give truth and through truth beauty." The Indian artists of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century had certainly risen to the challenge!

## Discovering our City

1. In Fort St. George; 2. The High Court campus; 3. **Ripon Building**; 4. S.S. Vasan's Gemini Studio; 5. M.A. Chidambaram Stadium, Chepauk; 6. Opposite Beach Station; 7. Velankanni; 8. **Senate House**, Chepauk; 9. Just north of the Airport; 10. The Buckingham Canal; 11. Oxford University Press, opposite the former Safire theatre; 12. Kalakshetra in Adyar; 13. Anna International Terminal and Kamaraj Domestic Terminal; 14. Pantheon Road, Egmore; 15. **Amir Mahal** in Triplicane; 16. The Island Grounds; 17. Egmore, opposite Rajaratnam Stadium; 18. The High Court and Law College; 19. At the southern end of Kamaraj Salai, across from the Marina; 20. The Anna statue;

21. Queen Mary's College; 22. In San Thomé, next to the Basilica; 23. The Observatory, in Nungambakkam. It has a recording station in Meenambakkam; 24. On the south bank of the Adyar River, near the Saidapet Court; 25. TI Cycles of India; 26. Officers' Training Academy, in the St. Thomas' Mount cantonment; 27. On Rajaji Salai, across from the Harbour; 28. The Great Banyan Tree; 29. Just north of Napier Bridge; 30. Next to Central Station; 31. Ashok Motors, now Ashok Leyland, in Ennore. Austin cars; 32. In the Loyola College campus; 33. In Tiruvottriyur; 34. In St. Mary's Church in the Fort; 35. It is where all Southern Railway goods wagons are loaded and unloaded.

It is at the end of Wall Tax Road, near Central Station; 36. Integral Coach Factory; 37. Tondiarpet; 38. Thirumalai Pillai Street, T.Nagar; 39. Tanks, in Avadi; 40. Moore Market; 41. Connemara Hotel; 42. Near the Gemini flyover – the Safire, Emerald and Blue Diamond; 43. Guindy and Ambattur; 44. Across from the Reserve Bank of India building; 45. Kodambakkam looked at as a film-making centre; 46. The office of the COP (Commissioner of Police) is in Egmore, near the Egmore Railway Station; 47. **Vivekananda Illam**; 48. Red Hills, Poondi, Chembarambakkam; 49. Sugar, Fertilisers, Ceramics; 50. Near Tambaram, on the GST Road.

SM

# Let's network – and celebrate Madras Day and Week

From a quiet corner of Elango Nagar in Virugambakkam on the fringe of this city, veteran philatelist D.H. Rao has been working hard at one goal.

Helping him in this endeavour has been an equally enthusiastic philatelist, Raja Seetharam of Chintadripet.

The duo have succeeded in convincing the Postal Department to bring out a special postal cover for a special occasion – the celebration of Madras Day.

Yes, 'Madras Day' will be with us soon.

August 22nd is now being celebrated as 'Madras Day', a day to remember the city's history and heritage, its people and communities, its contribution and the milestones it has set.

And, perhaps, a time to look forward!

A few years ago, some of us who love this city got together to float this idea and make it a reality.

We wanted the celebration to come from within the people who own this city, the people who live here and like the place.

So, the events are informal and self-driven. They are not State-sponsored.

With only a little over two weeks to go to launch what is called the 'Madras Week' (August 19th to 26th), a window which provides a time for communities, groups, clubs and institutions to host events focussed on the city, the first plans have just rolled out.

City schools are being invited to select a small team to work on a project on researching a heritage campus or neighbourhood landmark or local communities; once they are ready, they will make presentations at a common venue and the best will be given prizes.

Young film makers have a contest before them.

Titled 'Frames of Chennai', they are invited to produce a short film on a unique aspect of the city; films which will document a people, a life, an issue...

The best films will be screened at a festival and yes, there will be prizes for the bests.

A series of talks are to be held at venues across the city; the themes will focus on city-related subjects.

The MadBulls, a unique community of Bullet bike rides of the city, are drawing out a route across the city which will take them to a few landmarks which are not so popular but interesting, like the Hanging Gardens and a war-time bunker in north Madras!

This is an occasion for people to network and work out events which focus on the city. Bookstores can have reading sessions; cafes can invite poets to recite their city-centric verses; clubs could host speakers to their weekly meetings....

This is the way 'Madras Day' is celebrated.

To be in the loop, log on to a web site whose URL is [www.themadrasday.in](http://www.themadrasday.in)

Vincent D' Souza

Madras Week, between August 19th and 26th and centred on Madras Day, August 22nd, promises to get bigger and better this year. Madras Week, organised by a few well-wishers of the City, is purely a voluntary celebration of the City's heritage by individuals and organisations with little or no sponsorship and no State patronage. The following are the events already planned. The organisers look forward to many more individuals and organisations joining the commemoration in the next couple of weeks with their own celebrations. The next issue of *Madras Musings* and website <http://themadrasday.in> will carry the full programme – or, at least, almost the full one, as the organisers are certain many more will join in as the week gets underway.

## Heritage talks

Chennai Heritage, the publishers of *Madras Musings*, have teamed with the Max Mueller Bhavan, Taj Coromandel, Park Sheraton, The Park and The Chamiers (Anokhee) for the following talks:

- 19th August at Taj Coromandel: **Gowri Ramnarayan** on *Music in Madras*.
- 20th August at Park Sheraton: **Geetha Doctor** on *Eating out in Madras*.
- 21st August at Goethe Institute – Max Mueller Bhavan, 4/14, 5th Street, Rutland Gate, Chennai 600 006: **Dr. Joachim Bautze** on *The Emden, the bombing of Madras and after*.
- 22nd August at Chamiers (Anokhee), 85, Chamiers Road, Chennai 600 035: **K.R.A. Narasiah** on *S. Ramanujan, the mathematician*.
- 23rd August at Goethe Institute: **Dr. Joachim Bautze** on *Wiele and Klein, early photographers of Madras*.
- 24th August at Taj Coromandel: **Randor Guy** on *Famous murders in Madras*.

# A bigger and better commemoration

- 25th August at Chamiers (Anokhee), Chennai 600 035: **Sriram V.** on *The Devadasis of Madras*.
- 26th August at Park, 601, Anna Salai, Chennai 600 006: **Mohan Ram** on *Madras as a backdrop in Tamil films*. (All talks at 6.30 p.m.)

## Talks by invitation

Several organisations and associations of the city are having talks and programmes of their own during the week.

- August 7th at the Savera: **Geetha Doctor** on *The Changing Face of Madras* under the auspices of the Rotary Club of Madras South. For members and their guests only.
- August 19th, 9.00 a.m.: **S. Muthiah** on *Madras – its heritage* under the auspices of Ramu Endowments at the Tag Centre, Alwarpet. Entry by invitation only. A few passes for this will be available on a first come, first served basis. Those interested need to contact [chari@tagcorporation.net](mailto:chari@tagcorporation.net)
- August 20th, at the Taj Coromandel: **S. Muthiah** on *Madras, the American Connection* under the auspices of the Indo-American Association. For members of the Association. Guest fee applicable. (6.30 p.m.)
- August 21st, at the Savera: A talk on a Madras related subject under the auspices of the Rotary Club of Madras South and two other Rotary Clubs. For members and their guests only.
- August 24th at Accord Metropolitan: **G. Sundar**, Director, Roja Muthiah Research Library, on *Early Imprints of*

*Madras*. For members and their guests only.

- August 26th, at the Taj Connemara: **K.R.A. Narasiah** and **A.R. Venkatachelaopathy** on two books on Madras. (11.30 a.m.)

## Heritage walks

Two heritage tours will be conducted by Sriram V. and will involve travel by van and on foot.

- August 19th, 6.30 a.m. – **The buildings of Poonamallee High Road**: Tour begins from the Mayor Ramanathan Stadium, Egmore, and will cover My Lady's Garden, Victoria Public Hall, Ripon Building, Moore Market location, Central Station, Savalai Ramaswami Mudaliar Choultry, Siddique Serai, the Southern Railway Offices, the Mutiny Memorial Hall and the Madras Medical College buildings. Tour will last 2½ hours.
  - August 26th, 6.30 a.m. – **Tracing the Dancing Girls of George Town**: Tour begins from Marina Beach and will cover residences/streets of famed singers and dancers of the past, such as Veena Dhanam, Bangalore Nagarathnam, Salem Godavari, Tiruvarur Rajayee, Coimbatore Thayi, and Madras Lalithangi. Tour will last 2½ hours.
- Both tours need to be booked in advance. Each participant will receive a small booklet on the places covered. Participation fee is Rs 300 per person. For further details contact: 98400 24200

ter, contact 24661544 or 9444049175.

## Other walks

- August 25th and 26th, 7 a.m.: **Heritage Walk inside Fort St. George**. Open to all. No fee. Interested persons should call 98410 49155 and register for the walks. The participants should assemble at the car park, opp. Fort St. George.
- August 19th, between 7.30 and 8.30 a.m.: **A Tree-Walk in the Government Museum Grounds**.
- August 26th between 7 and 8.15 a.m.: **A Tree-Walk in the Guindy National Park**.

Those interested in the Tree-Walks organised by Nizhal should call and register with Divya at 9840413021 or 24620334. Each Walk is open to the first 25 registrants. Contribution of Rs. 25 per head per walk.

## Exhibitions

- **The Forum Art Gallery** (57, 5th Street, Padmanabha Nagar, Adyar) will be organising an exhibition showcasing the work of about 35 artists, both emerging and established, three photographers and two cartoonists, all living and practising in Chennai. The exhibition is open to the public from August 19th till September 1st. Forum is also planning a participatory event or two for children and young adults during this period.
- **The Roja Muthiah Library**, Taramani (near the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation), and *The Hindu*, will host from August 15th, 5.00 p.m. an exhibition of early publications, periodicals

and magazines of the city. N. Murali, Managing Director of *The Hindu* and A.R. Venkatachelaopathy of MIDS will speak.

- **Gallery Sri Parvati**, Eldams Road, will host Rod Hudson, a British-born numismatist and still photographer, who will exhibit his photographs of Madras from August 19th to 21st. Gita, a Chennai painter, will supplement this with her work that combines abstraction with culturally evocative suggestions of the female form, musical instruments, or both. Timings: 11 am to 7 pm.
- **The Larsen & Toubro Heritage Museum** in Manappakkam will be open to schoolchildren during Madras Week. Contact: 99401 98135.

## Contests

*The Mylapore* and *Adyar Times* are arranging the following contests:

- **Documentary film contest / fest**: A contest for young film-makers and students of media and visual communication. Docufilms can be on any aspect of the city – its people, communities, landmarks, life-trends, oddities, etc. Interested film makers to call Vincent D' Souza at 98410 49155 for guidance on the project. The films can be in English or Tamil. Duration: 15 minutes only. Films should be submitted in DVD formats to the Madras Day coordinators on or before August 22nd. Details on the website <http://themadrasday.in>
- **Design a T-shirt for the City contest**: The design should reflect the spirit and uniqueness of Madras that's Chennai. The design can be done using Adobe / CorelDraw design softwares. The design should be submitted as an attachment in jpeg file format (700x 700 pixels size of 150 dpi) through email to [madrasday@yahoo.com](mailto:madrasday@yahoo.com) Last date – August

(Continued on page 8)



**August 6-13:** Painting exhibition by Praveen D Zingade. (At DakshinaChitra)

**Till August 10:** Exhibition of paintings by Devandra Shukla and Mun J.H. Shukla. (At Forum Art Gallery.)

**August 11-14:** *Talking Tales*, a hands-on workshop on storytelling conducted by Jeeva Raghunath. (At Alliance Francaise, 7 p.m.-8.30 p.m. daily).

**August 11-19:** **Onam.** Visitors can enjoy the flavour of fascinating Kerala and the spectacular Kerala harvest festival Onam. Traditional folk performances, Kerala cuisine, Pookalam, special crafts and textiles and workshops. (At DakshinaChitra.)

**August 16-31:** Painting exhibition by Manjunath. (At DakshinaChitra)

**Till August 20:** **Children's Mela** on the theme 'Rain': *Mazhe Jaatre* is being organised to supplement the annual Adiperukku festival. Thematic exhibits and displays on interesting and less-known facts about

the monsoons, traditional games, bullock-cart rides, shadow-puppet shows, folk music and dance performances including *Karagihu* from Andhra Pradesh, folk-toy shops at the craft bazaar, live demos of artisans at work, foodstalls that serve traditional delicacies of the rainy season and the *Marundu Kadai*, a traditional medicine exhibition that recommends ways to tide over the rainy season in good health (at Dakshina Chitra).

#### DAKSHINACHITRA WORKSHOPS

**For children:**

**August 11 & 12:** Making a chess-board

**September 1:** Tie & Dye

**September 22 & 23:** Glove puppetry

**For Adults:**

**August 11 & 12:** Glass-jewellery making

**September 8:** Soft stone-jewellery making

**September 15 & 16:** Basket tray (For details Tel: 2747 2603 / 2747 2783)

(Continued from page 7)

20th. The BEST TWO designs will get awards and certificates. Details on the website - <http://themadrasday.in>

• **Multimedia Contest for Schools:** The contest is open to schoolchildren studying in Classes 8 to 12. A school can send only one team of three students. The team should identify a less known landmark in the city and get the organisers' approval that the landmark is an acceptable choice. (Call: 98405 44629). The project should then be put together with pictures and text about the salient points in a power point presentation, not exceeding 10 minutes' duration. The presentation should be submitted on a CD on or before August 18th, to The Madras Day Organisers, c/o. *The Mylapore Times*, 77, C. P. Ramaswamy Road, Alwarpet, Chennai 600 018. The contest

will take place on August 22nd. The best THREE presentations will be awarded prizes. Details on the website <http://themadrasday.in>

#### Other events

August 20th at Hotel Green Park, Vadapalani: An interactive storytelling session for children and adults organised by Spring Into Reading, K.K. Nagar. *Storytellers Jeeva Raghunath and Nandini Sridhar will trace the growth of Madras that is Chennai.* To register, contact 23716927 or 9940450495

August 22nd at C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation, Eldam's Road: The History of the Early Madras Region, a reprint of the book by K.V. Raman, will be launched.

Asan Memorial School will be organising a week-long celebration of Madras.

The Rotary Club of Madras South has sponsored three Rotaract clubs and four Interact clubs. It is getting them to organise painting contests, elocution competitions, quiz contests and exhibitions on Madras. The Club states it is celebrating Madras Month rather than Madras Week. For further details contact S.R. Madhu at 2446 8594, 4238 4229.

Many more events are being firmed up and details will appear in the Press closer to Madras Week.

## Answers to Quiz

1. The Winter Olympic Games; 2. Petra in Jordan; 3. Bjorn Borg; 4. A conflict centring on the LalMasjid mosque and madrasa complex in Islamabad; 5. It has scrapped payments to King Gyanendra and vowed to nationalise royal property; 6. The doctrine which says that only the Roman Catholic Church is the true Christian church, and no other Christian denomination has the "means of salvation"; 7. Shanghai and Tokyo; 8. Honda; 9. Dilip Sardesai; 10. He rendered a Hindu prayer to start the session, an unprecedented event in the Senate's 218-year-old history.

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11. USS *Nimitz*; 12. On the Madurai Kamaraj University campus, near the planetarium building; 13. Providing eggs three times a week; 14. V.P. Duraisamy; 15. Krishna Kant; 16. Andimuthu Raja, the Union IT Minister; 17. Vidyasagar; 18. Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar; 19. Raghunatha Nayak (1600-1630), the ruler of Thanjavur; 20. Erode.

## Much still to be done in draft SMP

(Continued from page 2)

eral years of mismanagement. Here again, the detail level of data does not provide too many options for neighbourhood-level options for greywater recycling or other water conservation efforts. **There is much that can be done in the draft SMP to address the multiple issue of water supply, micro and macro drainage, water bodies and environmental protection and the provision of sanitation.**

SIXTHLY, for a 2007 document, the draft SMP needs to

understand and evaluate the recent trends of large malls, multiplexes, gated communities, SEZs etc. as well as the new challenges posed by the retail explosion and its requirements for increased trucking and container facilities, terminals and warehousing. **Keeping silent about new social and lifestyle developments does not augur well for a city master plan.**

THE SEVENTH AND FINAL REQUIREMENT is for the draft SMP to develop guidelines for evaluating itself, at regular intervals, so as to allow mid-term corrections. A simple

project management exercise will confirm that the best way is to evaluate the draft SMP on the basis of its own Vision 2026 – on the issues of environmental sustainability, inter-generational equity, providing economic opportunities, and raising the quality of life for all. For a qualitative evaluation, the CMDA needs to build on the four aspects of Vision 2026 and review the current list of "strategies, actions and recommendations". Several of the recommendations are currently in direct conflict with the tenets of sustainability and equity and,

therefore, a thorough review is mandatory. Additionally, each chapter in the draft SMP needs to identify specific annual milestones which will prove the quantitative achievements or failures of the draft SMP. But, for all of this, we need the CMDA to display a rare sense of honesty that has been missing in many of its previous efforts. Let us not forget the words of Thomas Paine – "When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary."

(Part 3 Concluded)

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