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MUSINGS

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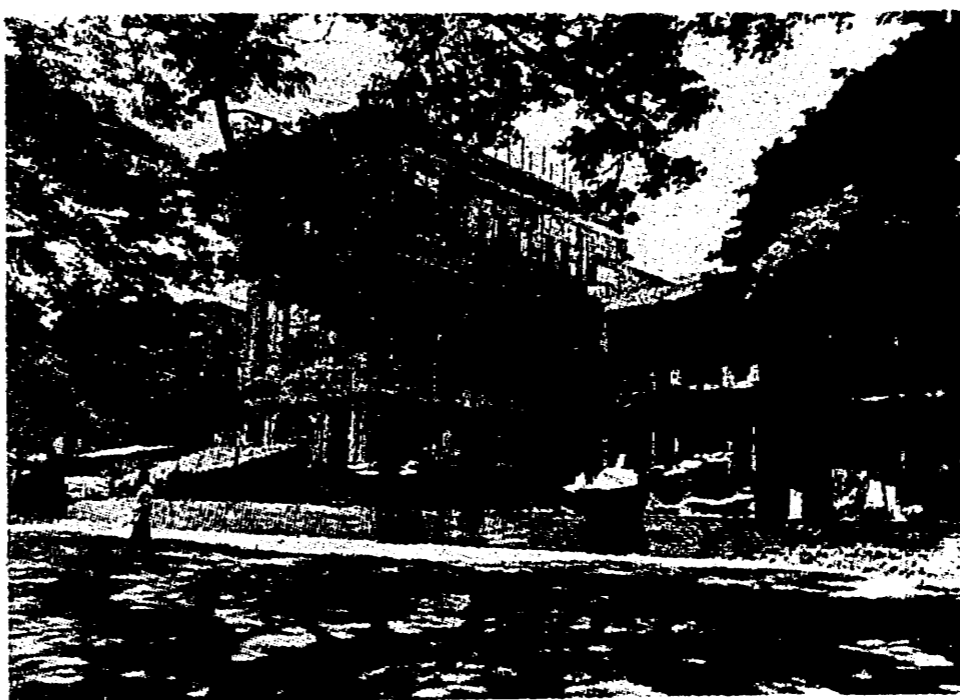
One last appeal

(By The Editor)

Isn't too many days after we had lamented the Chief Minister for her interest she was taking in the heritage, by having a Heritage Building Act and the destruction of the DGP's building put on hold, that we heard the news that there had been a decision to pull it down and build ten-storied yet again on Police Headquarters. The Director General of Police, we were told, would temporarily move into newly refurbished Government House, while the historic building on the Marina was being pulled down and a ten-storey structure built against all building norms for the building — built to the design of the prize-winning Delhi architect. That building, we are promised, will be a landmark fit to replace a landmark. Perhaps we have got it all wrong; we had always thought landmarks were meant to be preserved, not replaced — even by new landmarks. It was in this connection that V. Narayanan said that "old buildings, old people, should be looked after". It was such views, supported by hundreds of signatures from the most eminent persons in the city, that have been ignored in this re-think.

We would be the first to agree that Government has the powers and the right to take whatever decisions it wishes. But when so many eminent people have expressed their views and called for the preservation of Police Headquarters, it would have been nice if only they were told why the decision, to pull it down and build ten-storied in an area where such building is not normally permitted, was being persisted with. An explanation to the public is a part of democracy that hurts no one.

Those musings apart, Madras Musings makes one last appeal. Your Editor has these past couple of years been addressing various groups in the City on the forgotten heritage of Madras and the need to commemorate all that the City has contributed to the development of Modern India. It may be a heretic's viewpoint, but it seems to have evoked some appreciation in some circles. Would ALL those concerned with the decision to pull down the DGP's building offer your Editor an opportunity to make this presentation to them before the first blow of the wreckers' hammers is struck? It's a presentation that just might trigger some rethinking on what is considered a final decision.



A renovated and refurbished Government House (NOT Admiralty House) is getting ready to receive the Director General of Police of Tamil Nadu for a temporary stay. No word is, however, heard what its fate will be once the DGP moves into his new headquarters or, may we hope, the refurbished old one. Meanwhile, the last remaining vestiges of another landmark — Spencer's — were being knocked down during that same week Government House was being refurbished. And so vanish the last bits of what was an INSTITUTION in Madras for over a hundred years. The Spencer's name may remain, but in its new avatar it offers none of the ambience of the past, when shopping was an adventure and a pleasure to be savoured at leisure, not rushed through functionally.

(Photographs: V S RAGHAVAN)



The wait for ACME

(By Venkatachari Jagannathan)

The start of the Academy for Management Excellence (ACME), Madras' answer to the Indian Institutes of Management, has been delayed because the 17 acres the Tamil Nadu Government had promised it on lease in Taramani have not materialised. "As the proposed MRTS terminal was to come up very near the land originally allotted to us, we had requested Government for an alternate site," explains V Narayanan, Chairman ACME Project Committee. Sanction for the new site is still awaited.

"We don't want to start our programmes in rented premises," says N Vaghul, Chairman of ICICI and the Governing Council of ACME. "But ACME hopes to start a one-year accelerated MBA course from late in '95, while awaiting its own premises," he told Madras Musings.

The accelerated MBA programme will be of ten months' duration and will be exclusively for Chief Executives. Short-term courses for senior and middle-level managers are also planned. Vaghul hopes the two-year MBA programme can start from 1996.

Meanwhile, the Academy is conducting executive education programmes as part of a series on 'Globalisation' and has held ten such seminars since 1993. It has also formulated its MBA syllabus and recruited a few faculty members. Its External Advisory Board has 19 professors belonging to different management schools abroad.

A branch of the Institute for Financial Management and Research (IFMR), Madras, ACME was founded in 1991. The Academy has now tied up with the William Davidson Institute, University of Michigan, USA, to conduct joint research programmes.

Speaking about how ACME will be different from the IIMs, Narayanan says, "The IIMs train managers to operate in a closed/command economic environment. We will focus on the global element of management and make the students think and act global". As a part of its global viewpoint, students will be taught one foreign language. And 15 per cent of its seats will be reserved for students from abroad.

Another distinctive feature of ACME will be its funding, which will be by industry, unlike the other management institutes. ACME has obtained firm financial commitments from industry donors in Madras to the tune of Rs. 15 crore.

'Power'ful waste

(By A Staff Reporter)

The 2500-3000 tonnes of garbage collected every day in Madras is soon to find better use than landfill or being converted into crude compost for small farmers. Three projects based on this garbage will get underway shortly and they will not only create a cleaner city but also generate income for the Corporation of Madras.

A power generation project proposed by New Era Urban Amenities based on Bangalore-developed technology will take care of 600 tonnes of garbage a day. The 'filtered' garbage will be dried and made into pellets for use in place of coal in a conventional, Rs. 19 crore, 5 MW power plant to be set up by the project promoters in Perungudi, the southern suburb. Even the water to be used as coolant in the pellet plant will be recycled sewage water.

The plant is expected to be operational by 1995 and its full output will be bought by the TNEB.

The second use of Madras garbage will be in a Rs. 10 crore fertiliser plant EID Parry is putting up at Kodunkayur,

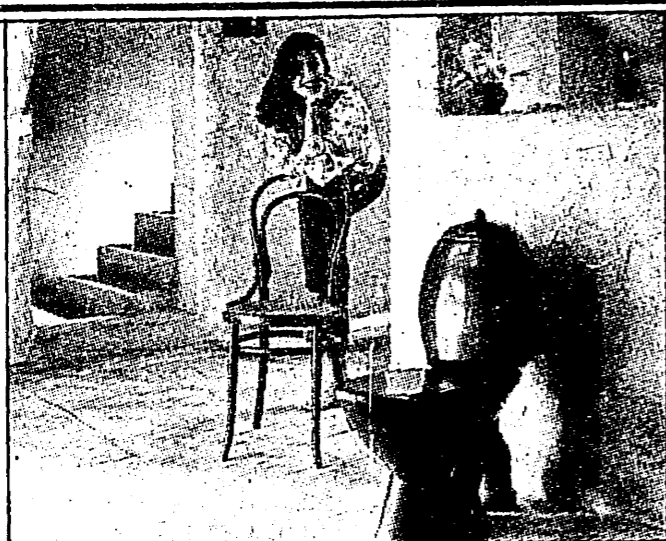
in North Madras. 600 tonnes of garbage will be turned into organic fertilisers here, by a project developed by Parry's R&D team. The process calls for decomposing the garbage systematically, using in-house developed microbes. The manure produced will be enriched with micro-organisms and neem to fix atmospheric nitrogen and repel pests.

The third project is Civic Exnora's, who have set up 65 vermicomposting units, each catering for 150 households. After non-biodegradable waste is segregated, earthworms will tackle the rest in pits, producing vermicompost.

Kitchen gardens in South Madras are, at present, the main buyers of this organic manure, but Parry's have shown interest in it too, if volumes get bigger with Civic Exnora expanding the project.

The Corporation plans to charge buyers Rs. 10 a tonne of waste.

What's left after all this will be used for landfill. But will all this suffice to make Madras a cleaner city?



No bathrooms for your house. Only



by Parryware

A neglected subject: History

When the first annual session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress got underway, after that usual bickering that's now become commonplace in almost every association not only in Tamil Nadu but also in the country, it was historical, at least as far as *The Man From Madras Musings* was concerned. It was the first time he had had an honour guard — two long rows of NCC cadets of both genders, who lined both sides of the main aisle from entrance to stage in the University Centenary Auditorium. To bring him down to earth was the fact that he was not alone; every invitee and delegate also received the same royal treatment and many of the most donnish ones among them seemed to march past the guard as though to the manner born.

The three-hour inaugural session that followed appeared to be as long and interminable as that slow march down that long aisle. But there was, at the end of it all, a couple of things *MMM* was glad to have heard stressed. There were the usual platitudes and superlatives as is becoming commonplace in every public function in Tamil Nadu, but shining true through all the tinsel were the observations of Prof. S V Chitti Babu, the President of the Congress, and Prof. K R Hanumanthar of Presidency College, the Secretary of the Congress.

Hanumanthar, after talking about plans for the Congress to

prepare histories of Tamil Nadu, the Independence Movement, Indian History and a Bibliography, made the point *MMM* appreciated most: a detailed study of History and Geography at the school level must be made **COMPULSORY**. Thereafter, students should be encouraged to take them as majors in college. Tamil Nadu's poor record in the IAS exams in recent years has been entirely due to the neglect of History and Geography in the State, he asserted. And added that, if History and Geography were to get a place in the sun again in the State, there would have to be major programmes launched to train History and Geography teachers.

Chitti Babu, endorsing Hanumanthar's suggestion, also pointed out that the two subjects were interlinked and there should, therefore, be greater interaction between History and Geography classes. Adding to Hanumanthar's list, he suggested that other areas of detailed study should be the Origin of the Tamils, the Dravidians and Lemuria, the Indus Valley Scripts, the *Tolkappiam* grammar, Kaveripomattinam (Poampuhar), the Pallavas, the Nayaks, the Nawab of Arcot, the British period in the Carnatic and the first 40 years after Independence. He stressed that, hitherto, the emphasis in India had been on North Indian history; it was time South Indian history was brought to the fore, he urged, calling on the historians present to make a more meaningful contribution towards this than hitherto.

The former History Professor, who became Vice-Chancellor of two universities before being asked to look into Higher Education in the State, then made two important points forcefully. It is time, he said, that we stopped looking at History as the chronicling of dynastic rule; it's time we began to focus on the socioeconomic influences during the different periods of History, down to the present day. And as a corollary to this Chitti Babu urged that greater attention should be paid to Subaltern Studies that look at the important contributions made to history by lesser personalities. Indeed, Subaltern Studies is a virtually neglected field in India, though a few of the papers *MMM* later listened to indicated a slowly growing interest in personalities not normally considered part of Tamil Nadu History, leave alone Indian History. Chitti Babu concluded with a passionate recital of 'Man

does not live by bread alone'. But Deuteronomy or St Matthew it wasn't. Whose then was it?

One aspect of the conference that disappointed *The Man From Madras Musings* was that an enthusiasm displayed at one of the sessions for the introduction of the History of Madras in the State's college syllabus was not translated into a resolution. Autonomous colleges like Madras Christian and Stella

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

Maris have introduced the subject, but when is there going to be greater attention to the subject in the State? Ironically, at least two post-graduate students at Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, are working on Madras-centred subjects, *MMM* learns. It's sad there's greater consciousness of Madras's contribution to India in Tirupati than in the city itself.

The OTA stays?

Is the Officers' Training Academy staying on at St. Thomas' Mount or moving to the cooler climes of Dehra Dun? The latest word is that the intake for the next course for short service commission officers has been authorised. That means that the OTA will remain where it is till at least August 1995, when the October 1994 batch will graduate.

Now that should make the Chief Minister quite happy, because she had made a specific request to the Prime Minister (who is also Defence Minister) NOT to shift the Academy. But she would have been happier still, *The Man From Madras Musings* is sure, if she had received a more positive response than hearing of just a one-year extension to the Academy's southern sojourn.

MMM can't blame her for wondering why the Centre cannot give her a simple reassurance. In these circumstances, she can't also be blamed for paying some heed to rumour-mongers intent on stirring the cauldron of somewhat heated State-Centre relations. The story that is now being spread is that the 600 acres to be vacated once the Academy moves will soon be occupied by 3000 troops — three battalions — adding muscle to the lone battalion that always is in Madras on a rest and relaxation tour. Now why does the Centre want 4000 troops in Madras, ask those story-tellers

Mass support

When Prof Bertram Bastiampillai, Head of Colombo University's Political Science Department and one of the 'shadow intellectual group' behind the new Government in Sri Lanka, spoke on Sri Lanka after the Elections at the Madras University's rather active Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies recently, *The Man From Madras Musings* had not bargained for the crowd that turned up or the lively interaction that ensued. There certainly appears to be a great interest among many associated with the Centre in what is going on across the Palk Straits.

One point that Prof Bastiampillai made that struck *The Man*

From *Madras Musings* as rather significant was Chandrika Kumaratunga's majority. It is a point that has not at all been emphasised in India. According to the Professor, if the Election results had been judged on the first-part-the-post system, instead of proportional representation (a mystery to all in the audience), Kumaratunga's victory in 1994 would have been as much of a landslide as her father's famous victory in 1956, when the analysts' hot favourites, the United National Party, got only NINE seats to his Sri Lanka Freedom Party's 51 seats in a house of 90-odd. Bastiampillai estimated that the UNP would have got only around a dozen seats in a much larger House. It is a pity an analysis of the voting was not attempted by any correspondent of an Indian paper posted in Sri Lanka. Such an analysis would have underlined Kumaratunga's popularity much more clearly than the reports that appeared of her wafert-majority.

Certainly such a nebulous majority despite such popular backing would indicate that something's not quite right with Sri Lanka's Jayewardene Constitution. But Bastiampillai was not sanguine about a change until one of the Bandaranaikes, mother or daughter, was elected President next month. But thereafter, even the UNP would support the change, he felt.

The President's book

The Man From Madras Musings invitation for the formal launch in New Delhi of *My Presidential Years — Memoirs of R Venkataraman, President of India (1987-1992)* on July 25, 1994, reached him on September 14. It had been posted on July 14 by Harper Collins India and had been properly addressed, except for lacking a pin code (though the area was mentioned) and the word 'road' (though the road's name had been mentioned correctly). Perhaps Indian Posts does not take too much interest or trouble with 'Book-Post' or perhaps a postman was just plain lazy. All this is, however, just in passing. Of more interest to *MMM* right now is what has happened to the book since then.

The word is that the former President's memoirs has gone into a sixth reprint, crossing the 15,000 mark. When sold out, this could well be an Indian hardcover record, because Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* is said to have sold only 14,000 hardcover copies in India. While Seth's book has been selling in hardcover overseas, Venkataraman's memoirs are still to be published abroad, though Harper Collins have agreed to undertake an abridged version. Meanwhile, Venkataraman's memoirs are scheduled to appear in Hindi, Tamil, Marathi and Gujarati, during the period. Alliance Publishers of Mysore hope to launch the Tamil version — translated by Cho — before end of the year.

Rupa Harper Collins, who published *My Presidential Years* are likely to do a repeat performance with J R Jayewardene's recollection of HIS Presidential Years within the next year, *The Man From Madras Musings* understands.

— MMM

In brief

★ To the 23 towns already listed as Heritage Towns in Tamil Nadu, with protection of their heritage by the Tourism Department, 15 more are now added. They are Sriperumbudur, Tirunelveli, Tiruchengode, Karaikkudi, Perur, Bhavani, Pichchavaram, Marudutur, Kurinjipadi, Tirumayam, Sittannavasal, Avudaiyarkoil, Padmanabhapuram, Colachel and Marakkanam. *The Man From Madras Musings* feels that if we continue in this vein we will soon list every town in Tamil Nadu as a heritage town. What, he wonders, is there in Karaikkudi, Tirumayam, Colachel and Pichchavaram, for instance, for them to be declared Heritage Towns? Surely ensuring the protection of the Tirumayam and Colachel forts and the mangroves and backwaters of Pichchavaram would be more than enough, instead of 'protecting' whole towns where, like Karaikkudi, there is little else of significance.

★ *The Man From Madras Musings* is happy to find that P Sainath, grandson of former President V V Giri, has got some of the same social commitment his grandfather had during his Madras days, when he was a committed labour leader and a caring minister. Sainath, a journalist, as part of his *Times of India* fellowship project, "The Forgotten Poor: Putting poverty back on the national agenda", has been bringing to light the misery of the poor in remote areas of the country by putting them on the front pages of *The Times of India* and other newspapers. Tribal areas in states like Orissa, Bihar etc have been covered by his project, as well as backward districts, like Pudukkottai and Ramanathapuram, in Tamil Nadu. He recently received the Raja Lakshmi Award for 1993 for his work from the Raja Lakshmi Foundation in Madras.

Business briefs

★ *The Man From Madras Musings* hears that there are other Madras bidders for the 'Palaces on Wheels'-to-be apart from Goodwill Travels. They include Sterling Resorts, who've bid for the Delhi-Agra-Khajuraho-Delhi and Bangalore-Madras-Cochin-Bangalore circuits, and MetroNax Cars and Bikes who've bid for the latter as well as the Goa-Mysore-Bangalore-Goa circuit. Sterling, meanwhile, are expected to run the Tamil Nadu 'Temple on Wheels' local circuit, the Taj Group dropping out.

★ Global Trust Bank (GTB), the fourth private sector bank to be established after liberalisation, is to open a branch in Madras some time next year, *The Man From Madras Musings* learns. Headed by former Vysya Bank Chairman, Ramesh Gelli, former ADB official Jayantha Madhab and Sridhar Subasri, the bank has an understanding with TA Enterprise, Malaysia, and Hambrecht-Quist, of the U.S. The Bank has identified software, textiles, garments, jewellery and leather products as areas for commercial lending operations. Madras is, thus, expected to become a major thrust centre of Secunderabad-based GTB.



Veeraraghavachari, who many years ago developed a model village, describes his village to Chou En-lai, the Chinese Prime Minister, while M Bhaktavatsalam, Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu, listens in. A picture dating to 1956.

A model village now forgotten

The Tamil Nadu Government recently announced a proposal to designate 18 villages in the State as model villages. But Kulpanthandalam, a small village near Maramallapuram, a 'model' village as far back as the 1950s. It even won the Nehru Prize for Model Villages in 1954. But who remembers all that?

A visit to this village 10 km from Maramallapuram used to be a compulsory part of any VIP tour itinerary in those days. Distinguished visitors to it included the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai, Martin Luther King (Jr.), Howard D'Evigle, Parliamentary Secretary, Commonweath International Association.

Kulpanthandalam built its enviable reputation on its pioneering projects. From the Community Development Project (CDP) was introduced under the First Five-Year Plan, the village was the first to build low-cost houses in the country using country tiles

in place of thatched roofs. It was also the first village to adopt the Japanese method of row planting for increased yields. Another pioneering effort was the establishment of a cattle-breeding and insemination centre. It had a maternity hospital, a community

Recalls G Srinivasan, the eldest son of Veeraraghavachari, "Whenever the Government announced new projects, my father readily implemented them by pledging his lands to the Government. The officials, however, claimed the projects as their achievements! In time the Government confiscated the pledged lands for non-payment of dues. Father did not try to explain the true position". At the time of his death in 1965, all his 40 acres were either sold or pledged and the family was reduced to penury.

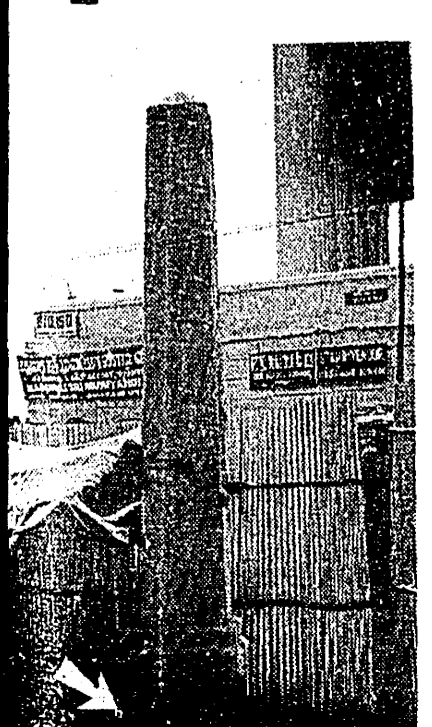
After his death, Kulpanthandalam slowly declined, to become a non-descript, unheard of village. Today, the remains of its maternity block, inaugurated by the Chinese Premier, stand as only visible proof of the village's past glory. Are they destined to become a memorial or is there new hope for the first model village in the state?



On left, the state today of the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre Chou En-lai declared open in 1956. And on right, the state the 'model village' today.

(Village Photographs by V S RAGHAVAN)

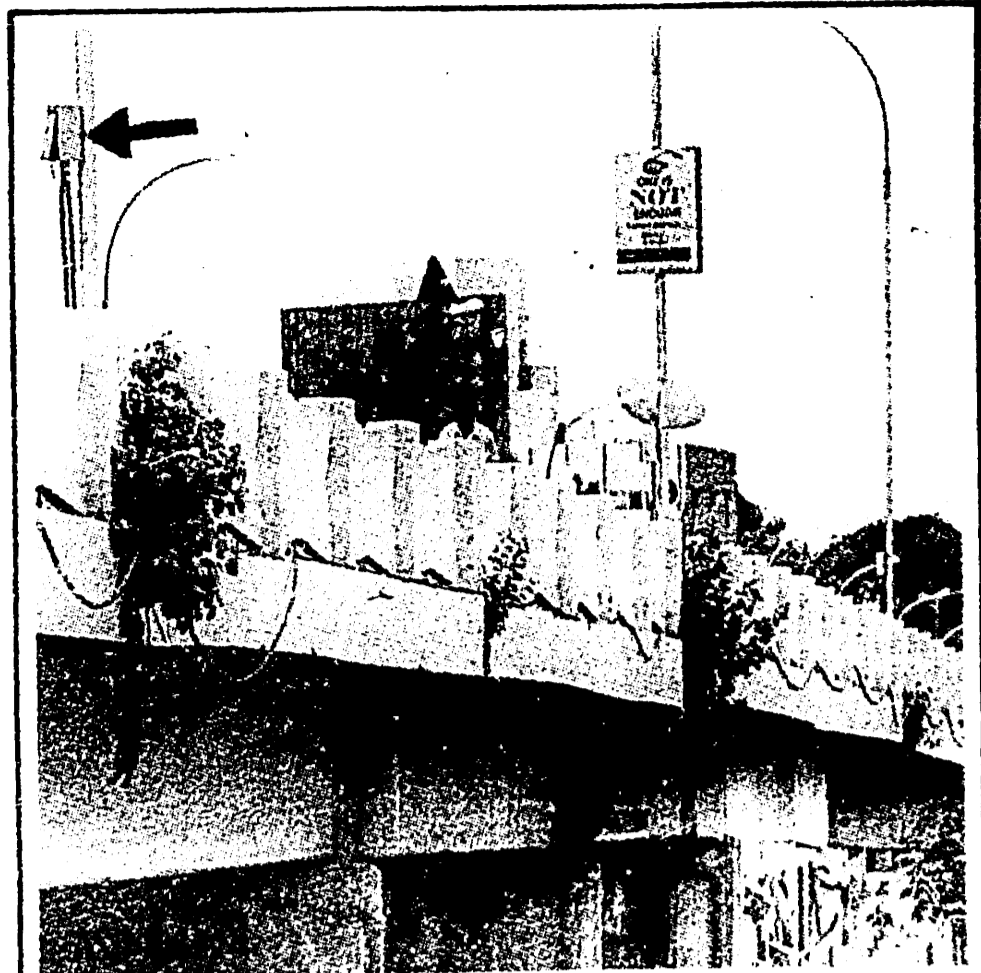
A pillar still in search of a saviour



RAJIND N CHRISTY, following up the *Madras Musings* exclusive (Sept. 1) on the finding of yet another of the Esplanade's boundary pillars, decided to do a bit of clean-up — and the result is the legend which clearly dates the pillar to 1775. The plaque is on the side of the pillar facing left (see arrow). Christy says the pillar still stands in reasonably good condition, though the clearing up work around it — which brought it to light — had damaged portions of it. But he could find no one in the area willing to take care of it — not could he get the Corporation or the Archaeological Survey interested in it. Isn't 1773 old enough to give it 'historical monument' status? (Photographs: RAJIND N CHRISTY)

The rise of this village's fortunes can be attributed to the zeal of G Veeraraghavachari, once chairman of the Panchayat, who sacrificed all his property to make Kulpanthandalam a model village and brought it to international attention.

Under the CDP, 50 per cent of the expenditure would be by the Government and the balance had to be borne by the villagers. Finding it difficult to raise the required funds from the villagers, Veeraraghavachari paid the labourers out of his personal funds. Similarly, the expenditure to build the maternity block and community centre and for the noon-meal scheme was borne by him.



Danger to bridge, Danger to life

Few, if any, of the many thousands of motorists and pedestrians who swarm across the Kodambakkam fly-over ever pause — indeed, how could they, with all that traffic pressure? — to look over the parapet at the condition of the bridge they are using, and probably use every day. Photographer P. JUSTINE found it possible to pause though (it was easy; he was on the road beneath anyway) and this is what his agile camera recorded.

Bushes growing out of the cracks of old buildings often rend them apart, especially if they are young peepuls or banyans from seeds excreted by crows and other birds, and if allowed to mature they are almost impossible to eradicate. As they strengthen and thicken, they can wrench apart the strongest walls. It's a surprise, though, to see flourishing plant life protruding from reinforced concrete barely a decade or so old. It's even more surprising to see how Corporation electrical workers have shrewdly eased their strenuous, grinding labours in providing nighttime illumination simply by looping electrical cables from lamp-post to lamp-post on the outside of the fly-over, where it can't easily be seen. Saves all that bother and hard work providing proper conduits, doesn't it?

The other day a little blind boy was killed by electrocution — known now to be amongst the most hideously painful of deaths — when he brushed against a live wire protruding from a Corporation lamp-post. Little wonder when you see the gross carelessness with which these facilities are installed and maintained. Look at that junction box, arrowed in Justine's picture!

HARRY MILLER

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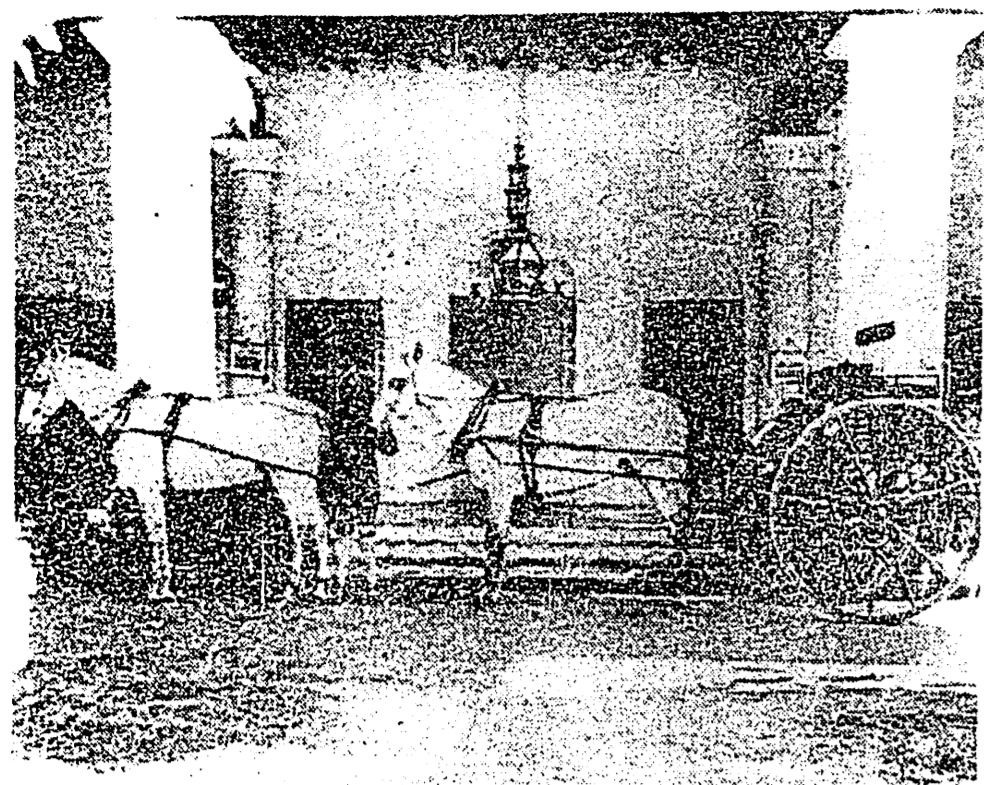
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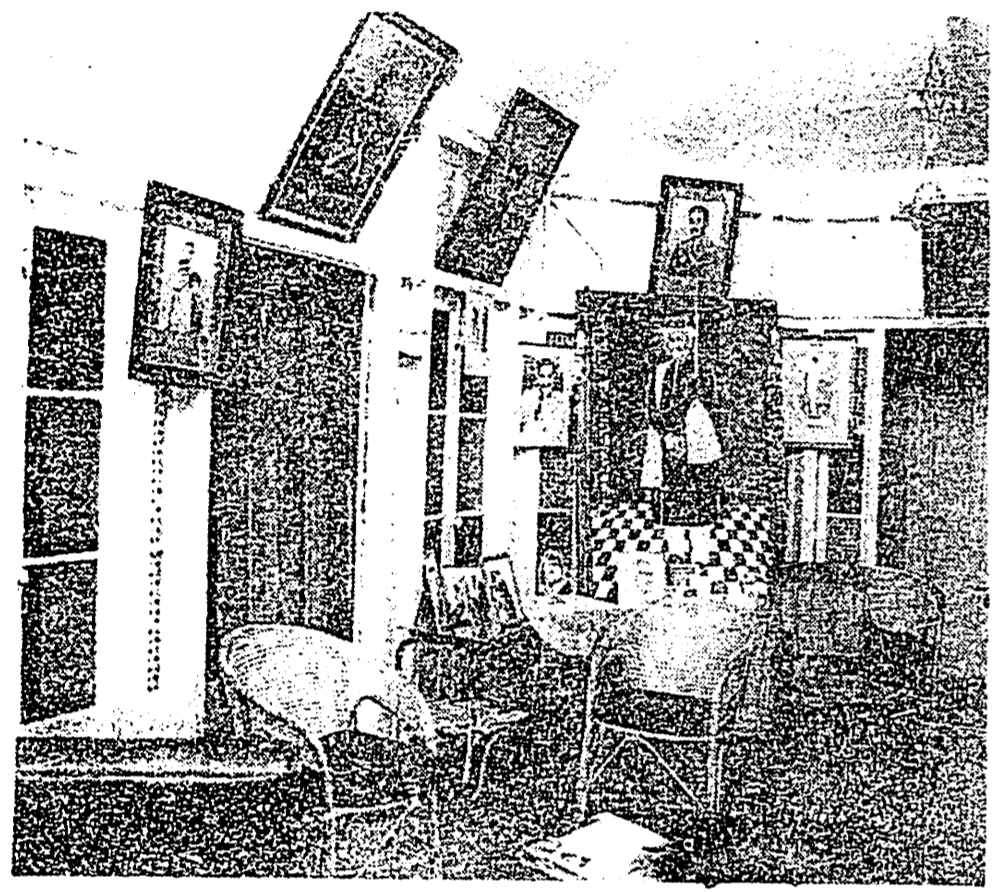
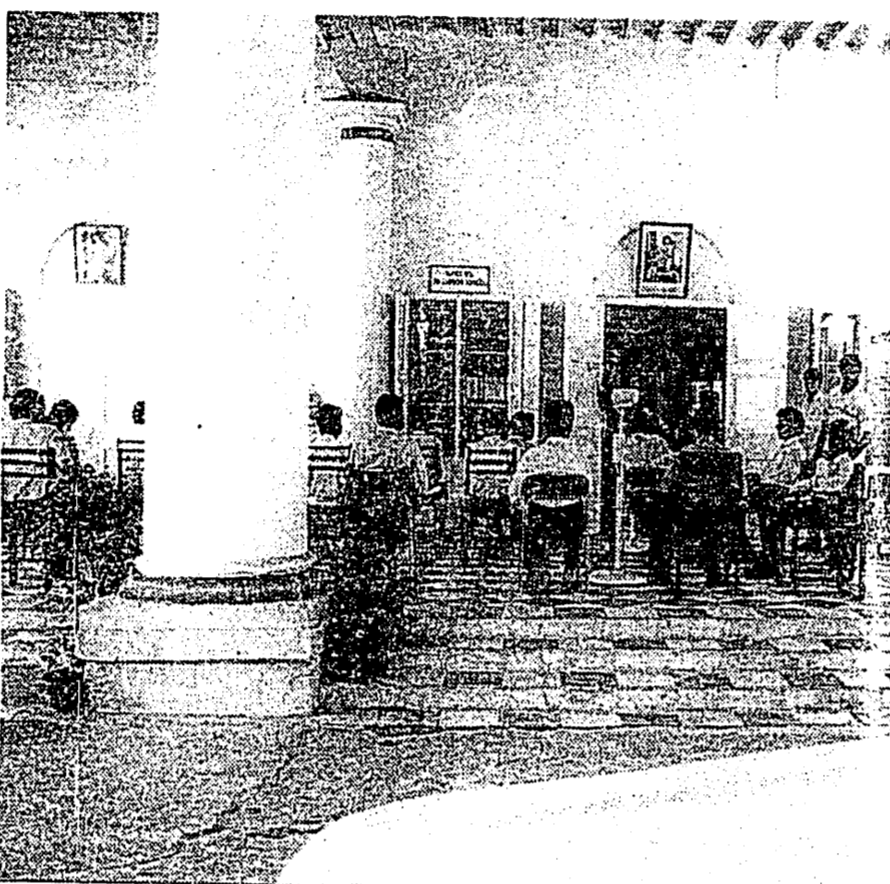
As the last stages of the Buchi Babu tournament are gone through, there's no better OLD to be featured than Luz House, the Buchi Babu mansion in Luz with its large portico in which carriages once stood, massive pillars and long verandah on which the 'Father of Indian Cricket' in Madras and his kin honed their skills. At a time when cricket in Madras was virtually a 'Europeans Only' game, Buchi Babu not only breathed life into the game as

played by a few Indians but also got them the opportunity to play the 'Europeans' in social conditions as equal as possible in the days of the Raj.

But more than his contribution to cricket was the sporting tradition he left behind. Down to today, his heirs and his kin — the Buchi Babu family — have given much to not only Madras sport but also Indian sport. Unfortunately, a scattered family have had little time for Buchi Babu's home where many of them learnt their various sporting skills in its huge grounds that boasted 'nets', tennis courts and stables.

Much of those grounds have now been disposed of. Luz House itself stands almost hidden from public view by new construction. But on the first floor is Buchi Babu's room, much as he left it, a veritable picture-gallery of early Indian cricket in Madras. Downstairs, however, the NEW has taken over. A computer organisation has moved in — and the classes it conducts rather narrow that verandah 'pitch' of yore.

(Photographs: V S RAGHAVAN)



There is a Tamil saying, "Kalyanam panni paar, veeltai kalli paar". Today, Indian marriages continue to squeeze the breath out of you. But constructing a house is no longer building castles in the air, thanks to Housing Finance Companies where wholesale resources are raised and lending made on retail, primarily to individual households at rates ranging from 12 per cent to 17 per cent. In turn, HFCs get their refinancing from their apex institutions for housing finance, National Housing Bank (NHB), commercial banks which have to compulsorily lend 1.5 per cent of their incremental deposits on housing and short term deposits. HFCs allocate 50 per cent of funds for direct lending to the rural and semi-urban areas, 30 per cent for indirect lending and the remaining 40 per cent for government guaranteed bonds and debentures of the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) and NHB.

Though most of the HFCs, including HDFC, LIC Housing Finance, Ind Bank Housing Finance, SBI Home Finance

In the process of refurbishing

and Canfin Homes, are showing increasing bottomlines, many are in need of funds. The NHB, on which the HFCs depend for more than 65% of their loan requirement, is, by itself, not so well off. Raising the current low interest rates (charged keeping in mind the economically weaker sections and lower income groups) has not found approval with the Government. Moreover, the loans advanced are long term, while deposits raised are short term. Apart from HDFC, which raised Rs. 1400 cr in three years at 13 per cent, no other HFC has been able to raise sizeable deposits at competitive rates. There are restrictions on intercorporate loans and HFCs have to

deduct tax at source on interest amounts of more than Rs. 2500 in a financial year. The latter puts them at a disadvantage against UTI and Mutual Funds, which do not come under this



rather tough state of affairs. HFCs have realised that reputation for quality and innovative service, providing more funds at the cheapest rates, deployment of funds into good quality assets and a minimum default ratio can alone win them an edge against their competitors.

That is how the securitisation of the mortgage loans has taken shape. Home mortgages will be bought and sold in the secondary market similar to a debenture. HFCs will sell their outstanding mortgages to an agency which converts them into loan receivables to be sold to the investors. The development of an active secondary mortgage market will increase the funds flow and spread the risk of HFCs. HDFC has come out with a fixed deposit scheme linked to its loans while LIC Housing Finance has policy-linked loans. Debt tribunals are to be set up for expeditious recovery of bad loans.

Given the above pace of cleaning the Augean Stables, given the fact that

an additional 60 million dwellings are needed for the next 10 years to close the present demand-supply gap for housing and that the average age of a loan applicant is steadily falling (now at 37 years), the industry leaves room for great optimism. Companies like Gujarat Ambuja, Tata, Dim and Weizmann Industries are making a foray into the Housing Finance Sector, which just goes to show that the industry is currently on the threshold of a boom.

Following are our most attractive trio now:

Hindustan Fibres (CMP Rs. 16.25): The company manufactures coarse cotton yarn and its shares, which recently opened at the OTC Counter, are actively traded. Commercial production of the first phase commenced during Dec 1993. Though no firm tie-up for exports has been clinched, coarse cotton yarn continues to form 87 per cent of Indian exports, particularly the counts to be manufactured by HFL. The per unit realisation in rupee terms has gone up considerably. HFL can see a turnover of Rs. 849.63 lakh against the projected Rs. 1063.81 lakh for 1994-95. The EPS of Rs. 1.78 is achievable and would support Rs. 25. Buy.

Kanishk Steel Industries (CMP Rs. 70.00): This Madras-based company of the Rs. 160 cr O P Gupta group has spread its wings from manufacturing steel rolled products to windmill power generation. It announced creditable results for March 1994 with the turnover touching Rs. 26.37 cr - an increase of 90 per cent over the previous year. Kanishk has signed a MoU with Chong Qing Iron and Steel Co, China for setting up a Rs. 120 cr integrated steel plant at Goa for making billets. One more steel rolling mill is to be set up near Kochi. With the

production expected to double to 50,000 tonnes, a turnover and PAT of Rs. 200 cr and Rs. 2.90 cr respectively are expected for March 1994-95. Buy for a target price of Rs. 100 in the short term.

NEPC Agro (CMP Rs. 85): Manufacturer of 'Trophil' brand mineral water and salt, this Madras group company has announced excellent results for the half year ending April 1994. It reported a turnover of Rs. 40.3 cr and a PAT of Rs. 5.07 cr for this period. Projections for 1993-94 are a turnover of Rs. 90 cr and PAT Rs. 10 cr. The EPS of Rs. 11.50 will support a price of at least Rs. 115 for this share. The company has recently introduced Trophil Mineral Water in Western and Northern India. It already occupies the second place in national sales scenario.

K. Gopalakrishnan

(Sketch by DHIR, text by NAAZHEEN KARMALI - From: THE HIT PARADE Symbols of Indian Industry, published by Banyan Books, New Delhi.)

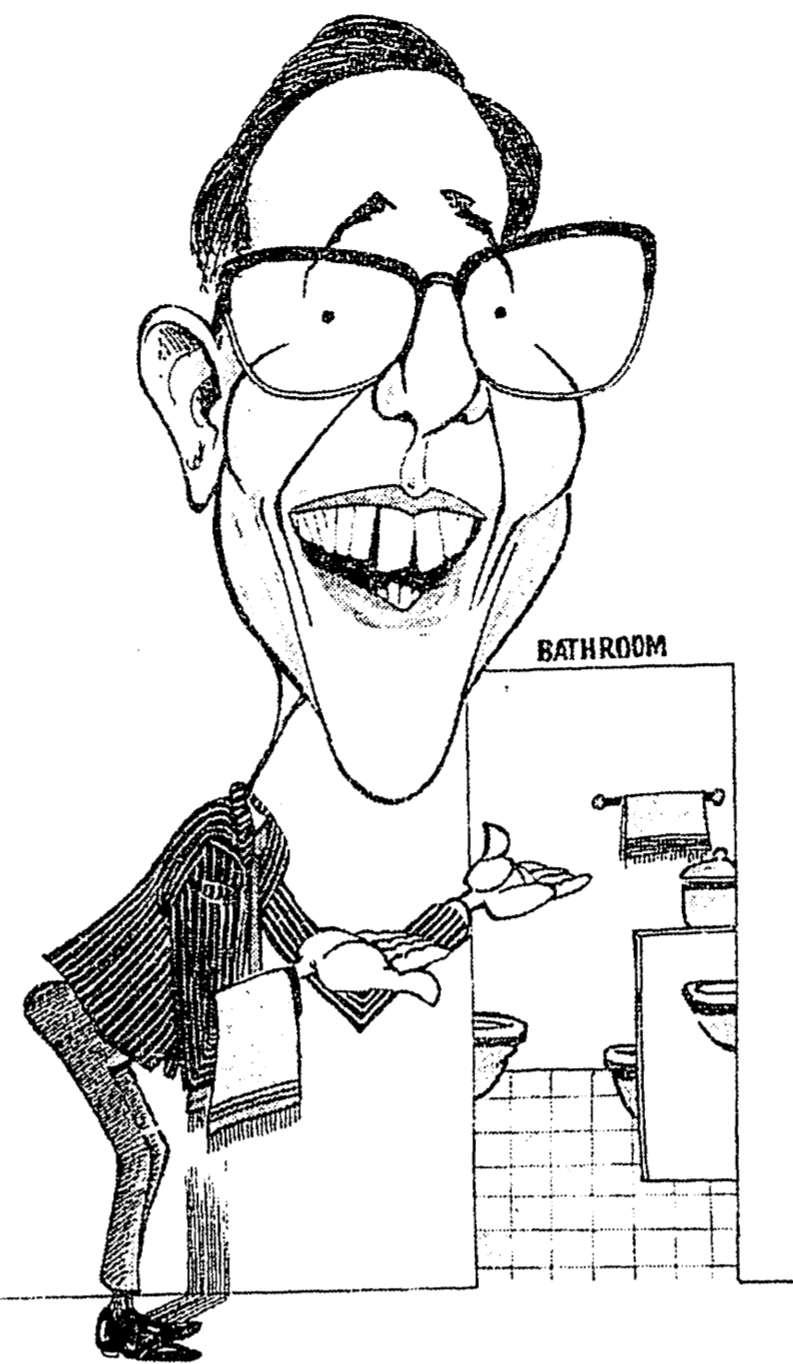
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"Let's once again spread his message by installing another statue and having yet another telecast of Attenborough's GANDHI"

IN MAD, MAD MADRA

THE (TAMIL NADU) HIT PARADE



Elder statesman

As one of the earliest proponents of liberalisation, Murugappa Vellayyan Arunachalam has the satisfaction of seeing his stand vindicated. Somebody up there in Delhi was obviously listening when he spoke at, time after time, at various public fora, against excessive government controls. So, when the policy changes were declared, Arunachalam's Murugappa group was one of the first to latch on to new opportunities in the conservative South. Suddenly, the once sleepy group is showing signs of an alert wakefulness.

Not only are the group's companies committed to growth, but they have also chalked out definite global plans. Parry Agro's tea managed to get the highest price in its category at the London auction; TI Cycles is putting up a factory solely for exports; and Cholamandalam Finance is tying up with GE Capital.

In Madras, 66-year-old Arunachalam is a highly-respected elder statesman. Through the years, he's been the president of various chambers of commerce and associations, and has been appointed to various government committees. Arunachalam is a stickler for principles and finicky about ensuring that the Murugappa group abides by a code of ethics. This value system seems to have gone down well with the rest of his family members. Which is why, in this bickering age, this is one family that has no splitting headaches.

(Sketch by DHIR, text by NAAZHEEN KARMALI - From: THE HIT PARADE Symbols of Indian Industry, published by Banyan Books, New Delhi.)

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From Blueprints to landmarks

Elephants in the backyard

Every year, marauding elephants invade 60-year-old Raghavan Chettiar's paddy fields in Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary and destroy up to 50 per cent of his crop. Chettiar can do nothing about it — except make a noise — and he sinks deeper and deeper into debt.

Chettiar's land is within a protected area, and although the Forest Department has yet to compensate him for the crop loss, it has denied him the right to sell a part of it or any of the trees to repay his heavy debts. Even banks are wary of extending loans to him because they don't consider his elephant-prone land adequate collateral.

Chettiar lives in one of the eight small settlements within Mudumalai Sanctuary. He and 1,107 Mundam Chetties — farmers by tradition — occupy 260 ha of land in these settlements. They have no choice but to depend on firecrackers and vocal chords to drive away the rampaging elephants.

The farmers are more than willing to move out of the sanctuary, provided they are compensated adequately. For 30 years now, the Forest Department

ly. The result: the elephants are hemmed into small areas that do not sustain them and conflicts inevitably arise.

Government measures to control this elephantine problem are flawed. Funds have been found to be squandered either on trying to improve areas that hold no future for elephants or on

• by Anju Sharma

measures that have already proved futile. For instance, money has been spent on barbed and chain-link fences to keep cattle out of elephant territory. But this is basically money wasted, because the fences are not elephant proof and are broken easily. Similarly, trenches, which cost a pile to dig in the first place, don't work either — they fill up too soon.

Also, the budget proposals drawn up for the parks are often as unrealistic as they are arbitrary. Mudumalai Sanctuary, for example, was allotted Rs. 2.8 lakh from the Project Elephant funds for 1992-95. According to

problem elephants. Resources now being used to control fragmented populations should then be pumped into habitats large enough to maintain a viable population of elephants. If there are too many elephants for Forest Departments to maintain in captivity, culling has to be considered. In and around protected forest areas, when the elephant population exceeds the carrying capacity, carefully regulated capture and culling, based on reliable area-specific research, may also have to be considered, says Desai.

However, the option of culling as a solution is hotly disputed and some experts feel it could lead to a depletion of elephant genes. But Desai points out that the genetic diversity of isolated herds is lost to other elephants anyway, because genetic exchange cannot take place.

Some scientists believe that elephant populations regulate themselves and when their numbers get too high, a population crash will bring them down again. In Tsavo National Park in Kenya, for example, when the elephant population began building up, a study suggested that they would have to be



The elephant the BNHS team had named 'Admiral' after they had radio-collared it, tragically became one more victim of the human-elephant conflict in Mudumalai. This picture by Anju Sharma shows 'Admiral' after it had been shot by a farmer whose field it had entered. — (CSE/DIT)

has repeatedly promised them land outside the sanctuary. Since the 60s, four proposals were drawn up by Forest officials — the latest in 1993 — but nothing has come out of them.

According to an 11-year study by Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) on the behavioural ecology of the Asian elephant in Mudumalai, many strategies adopted by the Forest Department to deal with the human-elephant problem have done more harm than good. "One of the basic flaws," says wildlife scientist Ajay Desai, who headed the BNHS Study, "has been a total disregard for the elephants' behaviour and requirements".

The study dealt with, among other things, a vital question: why do elephants raid crops? It first addressed the effect of habitat loss and degradation — caused by human activity — on elephant behaviour.

It showed that clans that had lost a large part of their range and did not have sufficient resources were indeed driven to crop-raiding. It found that the greater the forest loss, the higher the instances of raiding. Research shows that vital corridors used by the elephants during their annual movement have narrowed down dangerous-

P Jagdish, Mudumalai's wildlife warden, of this, Rs 2 lakh was budgeted for wireless sets, Rs. 50,000 for weed eradication, Rs 25,000 for publicity and Rs 5,000 for compensation for human deaths and crop loss.

However, compensation for each death is fixed at Rs 5,000 and at least three men were killed by elephants that year. So while Chettiar and the other farmers in the Mudumalai villages languish without reparation, Rs 25,000 is spent on putting up deep in the forest concrete sign boards that proclaim 'Crucial Elephant Habitat Zone'.

In some cases, Forest Departments 'translocate' problem herds to healthier habitats. This is an extremely expensive operation that involves tranquilising the animals and transporting them in trucks to the new area. But as V Krishnamurthy, a veterinary doctor specialising in captive elephants who worked with the BNHS team, points out, this operation is a waste of money: translocated elephants will try to head back to their original home range — even though they can't — and cause enough trouble trying.

The best way to deal with fragmented populations, says Desai, would be to first capture and domesticate the

But the culling was delayed because others questioned this line of thinking. Before anything could be done, a drought struck Tsavo and more than 10,000 elephants died. The drought also affected the vegetation and other herbivores, including endangered rhinos. However, the ivory from the dead elephants was lost or pilfered. The death of these elephants benefitted nobody. Perhaps it would have been better to have culled the elephants than let nature take its course.

Desai also points out that such natural cycles work only in extremely large ecosystems where the effects of overpopulation and overutilisation of resources are localised. But the biggest reserve of India would be only a fraction of the size of Tsavo. Besides, while Tsavo has adjoining forests, the periphery area of Indian reserves consists of human habitats and farms.

Managing what remains of India's elephant population today is a tightrope act, requiring a sage combination of science and forceful implementation of management techniques. But, unfortunately, the concept of using science as a management tool is yet to take root in India. — (CSE/Down To Earth Features)

We welcome the first steps to THE HERITAGE ACT

We look forward to its enactment and implementation

Space donated by TAMARAI MILLS

● This series is on Madras schools that are part of the City's heritage. These are not necessarily the better-known or more successful schools of today. These are the schools that helped the city to grow. Each of the schools featured is over 100 years old.

Its beginnings were in Sanskrit

Started in 1847 by some notable philanthropists of Muthialpet, like V Vijayaragavalu Chetti Garu, P Somasundaram Chettiar and Subbarayulu Chettiar, the School was founded to impart instruction in Sanskrit, Telugu and Tamil to the children of the locality. It was called the Samaskrita Andhra Dravida Patasala. Ten years later, English was introduced and the school's name was changed to the Muthialpet Anglo-Vernacular School. The institution was raised to a middle school in 1891 and to a high school in 1896. The school has been functioning as the Muthialpet High School ever since.



The Muthialpet Higher Secondary School, a Thambu Chetty Street landmark.

The school occupied a rented building till 1895. The present school site in Thambu Chetty Street was bought that year with help from

philanthropists in the locality. The school became increasingly popular and, as more pupils joined, accommodation became insufficient. A new building was constructed in Linghi Chetty Street in 1913, a few yards from the main building, and the Primary and Lower Secondary Departments were shifted there. A new three-storeyed structure was later built.

In 1961, the school, with the help of well-wishers, started the Dr Rathnavelu Subramaniam Muthialpet Girls' High School. The main school was upgraded to the higher secondary level in 1978 and offers vocational subjects.

There are about 3000 students and 80 teachers now. The Headmistress is Mrs Prema Srinivasa Gandhi.

The school has done remarkably well in sport. Students have represented the State in Boxing and Carrom. The national Junior number one seed in Carrom, L Premkumar, is from the school. The school has a Friends' Association, which provides opportunities to the public of the locality to help in developing the school. The Parent-Teachers' Association is a strong body here.

The school has planned to celebrate its 150th year by reconstructing and renovating its main buildings — landmarks in Thambujand Linghi Chetty Streets.

Text and Photographs by
RAJIND N CHRISTY.

Quizzing with Ramanam

(Quizmaster V.V. RAMANAM questions are from the Fort Sept. 1-15)

1. The leader who served as inspiration for Domènec Lappiere's "Fifth Horse" completed 25 years in power Sept. 1. Who is he?
2. Where was the much talked about International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held?
3. According to a State G.O., will the communities other than SC, ST, BC or MBC, be represented in all government correspondence?
4. Which famous Jesuit college in the state had its sesquicentennial inaugurated on Sept. 15?
5. What new facility was introduced at the Stanley Medical College on Sept. 11?
6. Name the indigenously built ground-based multi-barrel rocket system successfully tested by DRDO recently?
7. Who won the singles crown at the recently held US Open?
8. The German newspaper "Bild" published this month a nude photograph stating it was comparable to the one of Michelangelo. His name was not amused. Who is he?
9. The best selling author of books "Tai-Pan", "Shogun" and "The Great Escape" and "To Die with Love" died on Sept. 7. Who is he?
10. Of what newly constituted body is R Arumugam, (Retd.), the chairman?
11. A Russian 'mystery' for nearly 20 years was ended recently by a new official report. What mystery was it?
12. Which city based saint reportedly attained 'Jal Samadhi' on Sept. 10?
13. How did 22 year old Ft. Cavendish Harita Kaur Deol make Indian aviation history on Sept. 22?
14. Which organisation began a ceasefire on Sept. 1 after 25 years armed struggle to end British rule?
15. What startling discovery has been made over the ethics of the whole world's highest paid entertainers and DGP offices? (not Marina!)
16. According to 'Forbes', who is the world's highest paid entertainer recently?
17. Which is the new premier of the SPIC South India ladies' championship held in Madras recently?
18. Name the 'grand old man' of Indian journalism who passed away recently.
19. In what is considered the largest deal in Indian corporate history, the Williamson Magor group paid Rs. 290.23 crore for a controlling stake in a company which gained infamy in Dec. 8. Name the company?

(Answers on P. 8)

Special dance for special children

A cheerful young dancer who is full of plenty of good work for children through her RASA (RASA Sunnriya Aalaya Trust) is a Kameswar. Started five years ago, RASA has been working with children, bringing them the joy of dance through adaptation of the theatre movements. Children with cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, slow learners, blind, deaf, physically disabled and spastic children are presented by Ambika in

small dance dramas. "These children may not be able to express the normal joys of childhood. But they have both the need and right to express them. But their attempts to explore the world around or even understand their own body's capabilities are often incomplete. The only way to bring joy to them is to make them feel as normal as possible," says Ambika. Ambika goes on "Dance and movement therapy help in bringing about the dormant capabilities in a disabled child. Through movement expressions, they slowly

overcome fear and inhibition and begin to identify themselves as individuals with talent and creativity."

Ambika who has shown the relationship between dance and special children has begun an eight-month diploma course in creative movement



V.R. Devika

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THE VIEW FROM THE WINGS



education which has eight students now. The course conducted by experts in various fields provides inputs in areas of movement, therapy, study and application of movement therapy to persons with various disabilities, normal child development and other related topics. This course will help get movement education into schools in a big way.

Another Special

Pralayan and Ramu of Chennai Kalai Kuzhu did a great job working with

school dropouts and employed children from Venkatapuram area in Saidapet for a mini Aayana that was presented to the delegates of the Worldforum '94 — of organisations working with the disadvantaged child. Pralayan and Ramu worked with incredible patience, selflessness, affection and creative imagination. Since some leading theatre people of Madras had talked about how under-rehearsed the children were in the Aayana presented in July at I.I.T., I appealed to the delegates to look at the programme with their heart and not their mind. And several of the delegates

Soapy evenings in a world without illusions

What a relief that the two family weddings are finally over. We can get back to the routine and tribulations of one's soapy life. All that "will they, won't they" "will she, won't he" behind us and my nails at last growing back and being bitten to the quick in the tracking pre-nuptial suspense! I'm relieved "Pronounce them man, be quick, you dithering doll" at the priests and leapt about like a zionus finally kissed the brides.

Frankly, one had expected a bit of blood-curdling excitement, at least a shoot-out, a scandalous exposé, one forever held one's peace, at the very least, the bride's legs being under her. A trifle tame, but ended well, and just as I was

nothing of the fantastic goes on in SB and B & B, the dream sequences and mushy dialogues which would put a Hindi movie to shame, the mind-boggling coincidences which pepper the story-line, and the regularity with which the face, form and persona of a Keith or a Thome change is like the costume change of a Hindi film actress in the course of one song!

Apparently the done thing these days is to ask the US-returned not for 'phoren' goodies but the latest update on B & B and SB. Tsk, tsk, so poor Caroline dies of cancer; thank God, it wasn't AIDS, otherwise what would happen to poor Thome, Ridge, Brooke etc. Has the old hag Sophia come to her senses and dropped T(oyboy)? What! Is it true that Brooke and Eric tie the knot? And what of Mick the Teeth and Sally the Spectre? Magazines

● by Pushpa Chari

According to unwind, my 80-year-old neighbour rang up. She was indignant and wished to comment upon one of the mothers-in-law at the wedding who had actually and shamelessly with her own hand while carrying on La Dolce Vita with someone behind his back. I comment on that? I was asked over the ethics of the whole world when the phone rang again. Maami again and this time even urgent. Hadn't one of the brides yesterday and what the hell was going at her wedding alive and kicking? Did the soap-makers think we were idiots?

like India Today, Week, Sunday etc occasionally throw out tantalising tidbits about the soaps, adding to the merry confusion, leading to endless discussions on the permutations and combinations of events...

If AMUL includes you in its adverts, you've made it and how! To date, B & B has made it with the Amul Doll and I have it on reliable information that a few Delhi hairdressing salons offer a Ridge Hairstyle. Madras has a boutique called 'Bold and Beautiful', and a friend who gets around quite a bit tells me that the Capwells and Forresters are the prime conversation pieces at kitty parties in Delhi, Bombay, Bangalore, Madras and Calcutta. How's that for national integration?

What will it be next — a thesis on 'Bold and The Beautiful and Santa Barbara'? Or a scholarly tome on the whys of this national obsession? Meanwhile, I have just one request for the media. Please don't let out that Ridge is 40-plus in real life or that Caroline and Brooke without make-up are like you and me. Please, we want to hang on to our soap-world illusions, even if we have none left in the real world.

Dates for Your Diary

October: 'Artist of the Month' Arputharani Sengupta, a painter in mixed media, who combines painting and textile construction and who has exhibited in India and abroad. She is currently a lecturer in Fine Arts at Stella Maris College, Madras.

Till October 6th: For the first time, Alliance Francaise, British Council, Max Mueller Bhavan, Russian Centre and the USIS present an International Film Festival in collaborative effort. Russian films: Oct. 4, 5, & 6 at Russian Cultural Centre. (By invitation).

October 7: The Dufay Collective in a programme of medieval songs and dances. At Museum Theatre 7 P.M. (Invitations from the British Council.) The Dufay Collective is a group of six musicians exploring the rich and varied musical repertoire of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Their programme features a broad range of musical styles, representing the diversity and richness of medieval music, together with its strong traditions - many of which have their roots in the music of West Asia and the Far East. A wide variety of musical instruments are employed, including shawms, bagpipes, vielles, rebecs, flute, harp and percussion.

Leading the vegetarians

(By A Staff Reporter)

S Surendra Mehta (71) has been unanimously elected President of the International Vegetarian Union for a third consecutive term, a unique distinction. His election by acclamation took place at the 31st International Vegetarian Conference held in The Hague (Holland), in August.

In 1993, we remember, he presided over the 30th International Vegetarian Conference which was held in Madras. This conference coincided with the centenary celebrations of the Vegetarian Union.



'O Jerusalem' by Mario de Miranda

October 8 to 13: 'O Jerusalem' — an exhibition of drawings of Jerusalem by Mario de Miranda. At C.P. Art Centre, 10 a.m. — 7 p.m. Sponsored by the Consulate of Israel (Bombay), Shalom India-Israel Centre (Bombay) and the C.P. Art Centre.

Mario Miranda began freelancing as a cartoonist and illustrator even while he was an undergraduate. He went to Europe in 1959 and worked in London for a couple of years. Coming back to India in the early 60s, he joined the Times of India group. He has travelled extensively and held many exhibitions. This exhibition, he says, is the outcome of his second visit to Israel. "A country that has always fascinated me for its rich and varied cultural heritage".

OUR READERS WRITE

Indian Fellows

S Ramanujan (1887-1920), mathematician, mentioned in MM Sept. 16, was the second Indian Fellow of the Royal Society. He was elected on 2.5.1918. The first Indian to be elected was Ardaseer Cursetjee, a shipbuilder and engineer. He was elected on 27.5.1841.

Sir C V Raman, Physicist, was elected a FRS on 13.5.1920. He gave up his Fellowship and it was withdrawn on April 4, 1968. I wonder, why?

Roddam Narasimha (1933), fluid mechanician/aeronautician, was elected a Fellow in 1992, the latest and the 34th Indian Fellow.

CA Reddi,
57, Rundall's Road
Vepery, Madras 600 007.

The one-way way

I've yet to see any detailed explanation as to the meaning of that catchphrase: Madras-2000. If it's only better lighting, then let's re-name the city MUD-RAS. The lights do illuminate the huge piles of mud for our pedestrians to negotiate, left for months courtesy of our Corporation. Does the Corporation just clean forget they've dug up footpaths and roads and left the mud, to eventually turn to slush in the rains?

In Madras 2000, traffic will be at a total standstill. You'd suggested widening and flyovers, but for that we'll have to wait for Madras-3000.

A more simple but imaginative way to deal with traffic congestion is to make, and ENFORCE, one-way systems. For example: Nungambakkam High Road/Greaves Road — College Road must become one-way systems. However, as in London, a special lane behind a barrier could allow buses to run in the opposite direction. If Nungambakkam, from the Sterling Road junction to Gemini, becomes one-way, west-east traffic, then a special bus lane allows buses (and cyclists) to run east-west. By making Greaves Road — College Road one way east-west, from Mount Road, to Sterling Road junction for traffic (with the same bus system), this will ensure that traffic flows in a clockwise direction. Village Road should also be made one-way, north-south. As there are many side roads joining these roads, you don't have to drive the whole circle. And for the traffic not to jam up at the Whites

Road turn-off after Gemini, that should be closed and traffic permitted to turn right from Mount Road further on.

I'm sure there are other one-way systems the city can set up. For the public's convenience, there should be special bus lanes — always running in the opposite direction. But there's no point unless all these one-ways are strictly enforced.

Timeri N Murari
32, Landon's Road
Kilpauk, Madras 600 010.

Stick to trains

Government appear to have become prime movers in reaping the benefits of properties that have acquired market premiums due to their locations. This locational advantage is a direct result of faulty policies being pursued, resulting in massive urbanisation.

Southern Railway has advertised for pre-qualification for property development of PRIME RAILWAY LAND at the Moore Market Complex.

A Railway Station is meant for passengers using railway services for the purposes of travelling. All efforts should be made by the Railways to provide basic amenities to passengers that contribute towards their comfortable travel. All railway land is meant for creating such facilities at present and in future. Throwing away such precious land for hotels, offices, shopping and other commercial complexes is an act born out of considerations other than those Railways are meant for.

Railways are in the business of running trains punctually, profitably, conveniently and comfortably for passengers. Many of these areas need the serious attention of a management developed and trained to run trains not hotels, offices or shopping complexes.

Provision of such facilities on railway land would further congest the choked neighbourhoods of railway stations, as all kinds of support services are required to run the intended facilities. Most of our large railway stations and their neighbourhoods already stink and present an uncivilised scenario. Let us not make it worse.

Mrs. Sadhna Adarsh
5, First Link Street,
Karpagam Gardens,
Madras 600 020.

A word from the Editor

We welcome letters. But unsigned letters and letters without complete addresses, like Mr Subramaniam's, will NOT be published. Also, please keep your letters short; make a long letter short by using a point form.

City girls make it to Everest Base Camp

'The gods who made this land must have been beauty drunk... Here one is face to face with the universal mystery itself

It was an unforgettable experience and a proud moment for the eight girls from Madras who scaled the 18,192 ft Kalapathar Peak. They were first the Tamil Nadu girls expedition to make it to the Everest base camp and scale the nearby peak. Their achievement was made possible by the Madras Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports (MIMAS), the only one of its kind in the State.

Some of the girls, specially those from Stella Maris College, had not had any trekking experience before, but their fitness and spirit of adventure saw them through. However, for Chitkala, the deputy leader in the team, the expedition provided her another opportunity to visit the mountains. She had been to Kauli Pass (12,500 ft) in the Kulu Valley twice, in the 1980s.

Sujatha, the team's paramedic assistant, was another who had done a bit of trekking earlier, whilst involved with Guiding in college. For the rest, the acclimatization camp held in the Mudumalai hills for a few days, six months before their trip, gave them the only real feel of things to come.

The girls were not alone, though. Supporting them on their trip was the MIMAS team comprising Kumara-

• by Sashi Nair

swamy, the team leader, and seven other male members. Kumaraswamy, a banker by profession, and a founder member of MIMAS, had organised a few mountaineering expeditions to the Himalaya before as well as one to the Anaimudi peak (8841 ft) in South India.

Organising the trek was the most difficult part of the venture, according

to Kumaraswamy. Sponsorship was a big problem and getting the logistics right needed considerable coordination at different ends. The Kalapathar expedition took more than 18 months to organise, and the original plan of setting off during Sept-Oct '93 had to be shelved because of several loose ends.

Sponsorship, which long seemed a stumbling block, was essential as the cost for a person on the expedition worked out to Rs. 15,000. This was clearly beyond the capacity of any individual in the team to bear. As Sujatha remarked, "A cup of tea in the higher reaches costs Rs. 20-25, a shade over five-star hotel rates!" In the end, Chief Minister Jayalalitha sponsored five girls from Stella Maris, cine artist Vijayakanth helped and so did a few business organisations.

Overcoming all odds, it was an enthusiastic MIMAS team which set off from Madras. Arriving in Patna, the team took a bus to Kathmandu via



The MIMAS team in Himalayan snows on their trek beyond Everest base

Raxaul. Another bus journey took them to Jiri, a beautiful little village in the Himalayan foothills and the starting point for the arduous trek. And from there, the mountaineers took over.

Accompanied by Sherpa guides and porters, the trekkers worked their way up the trail leading to Shivalaya (a Sherpa settlement) then to Lamjura (a mountain forest), on to the mist-covered Lamjura Pass, then to Khari-kola and the Sagarmatha National Park. Past the Kosi River they trekked

and then it was a steep climb to Namche Bazaar, Everest base camp. This village milling with Sherpa team had a magnificent view of Everest. And then they moved their target, Kalapathar peak.

Climbing it was victory of sorts for the eight Tamil Nadu girls. Mountaineering as a sport is yet to become popular in Tamil Nadu, Kumaraswamy adds. And one of the reasons, he adds, is the woeful lack of clubs and institutes which promote it. Bangalore has 40 such clubs, Maharashtra 400, while Tamil Nadu has only MIMAS. A sad state of affairs indeed! If the efforts of the team kindle the spirit of adventure among other youth in the state, it would be an even bigger achievement.

Indian women put up poor show

The Tamil Nadu Football Association, with the indefatigable C.R. Viswanathan as its organising secretary, deserves to be congratulated on the sizeable entry it got for its recent inaugural Gold Cup international women's tournament named after Chief Minister Jayalalitha and for the efficient manner in which it conducted the league-cum-knock-out competition at the Nehru Stadium as part of its golden

jubilee celebrations. It was India's first-ever international women's tournament.

The Jayalalitha Gold Cup meet attracted as many as seven foreign teams, and the TFA did a fine job by procuring the required sponsorship for the costliest-ever tournament held in India. The All-India Football Federation, under whose auspices it was held, is stated to have decided to have

it conducted in alternate years at different centres.

It is difficult to guess the future of the exceptionally costly tournament. If anything is predictable at all, it is that women's football in India has to undergo a complete transformation to come within striking distance of the standards attained by other nations. Otherwise India will have to continue cutting a sorry figure.

As the Indian girls walked out after their third match, there was the inevitable criticism of the national selectors. It was unjustifiable in as much as the selectors themselves could not have seen a worthwhile foreign women's team in action. The same could be said of the coach, who was put in charge of the Indian girls' short conditioning camp.

India indeed fielded a team of teenagers in a tournament studded with experienced, muscular women, whose size, stamina and power made the home players look like pygmies. Unlike cricket, tennis, golf and other games, football is a physical game, and even from the Nehru Stadium stands so many of the Jayalalitha Cup players looked like men in action, with little femininity apparent.

Further proof of India's soccer bankruptcy in the men's section as well, was provided recently on September 2,

when Oman thrashed India 4-1 in a semi-final of the Qatar Independence Cup tournament in Doha. It was the most humiliating blow to India's soccer status, and must have silenced all critics of the IOA. Participation in the Hiroshima tournament can only add to the humiliation Indian football has suffered.

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A sports chief who knows sport

Indian Olympic Association president B. Sivanthi Adityan is obviously no mere figurehead. The Madras newspaper magnate and the least loquacious of Indian sports officials, Adityan keeps himself in touch with world sport. This became clear from the Indian Olympic Association's (IOA) and his stand vis-a-vis the All-India Football Federation's (AIFF) claim that Indian standards were good enough for India's participation in the forthcoming Hiroshima Asian Games tournament.

Indian soccer standards have hit rockbottom. India's failure to qualify for the recent World Cup quarter-finals in the USA, for which even such tiny nations like South Korea made the grade, tells its own tale of the stagnation Indian soccer has undergone over the last few decades. Participation in the Hiroshima tournament can only add to the humiliation it has suffered.

The IOA did not favour India's entry and Adityan hit the bull's eye, when he said in a recent statement that "The Asian Games or the Olympic Games could not be treated as a venue for exposure for a National squad". He could have gone one step further by stating that the Games could not be an exposure not only for teams but also for officials too eager to see the world.

The IOA stand was understandably a bitter blow to the AIFF officials, one of whom

publicly claimed that there was "indifference in the functioning of the IOA". Adityan promptly hit back by quoting facts and figures, which vindicated the IOA stand and exposed the hollowness of the AIFF official's charge, which, incidentally, he made without the knowledge of his boss, the AIFF president, Priyaranjan Das Munshi. To his everlasting credit, Munshi lost no time in apologising to the IOA Chief for his official's irresponsible statement.

This was the first time the head of national sports organisation publicly apologised to the Chief of another National body. Though unfortunately, it did not receive the media notice it deserved, it has enhanced Adityan's status as a knowledgeable chief and not a mere presiding deity.

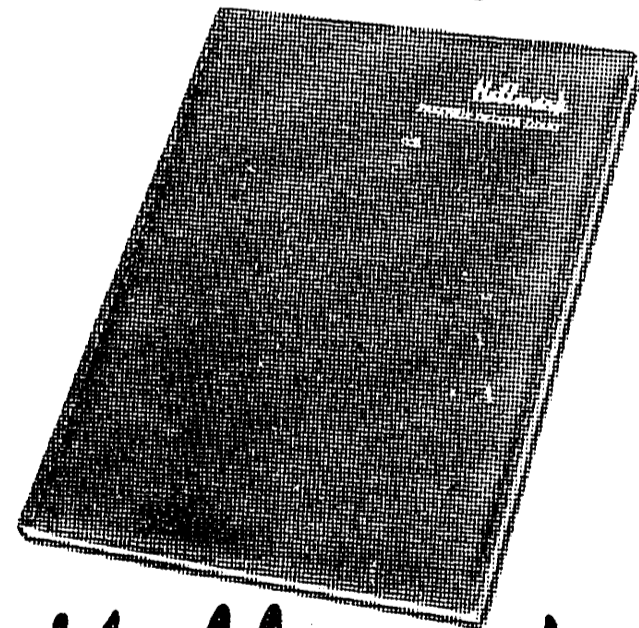
Every knowledgeable soccer fan will endorse Adityan's stand that Indian soccer has miles and miles to go to make the international grade. It cries out for a rejuvenation by taking it, for instance, to schools and colleges, where it is as good as dead. It is also sorely in need of sponsorship, which can help players secure jobs and enhance their financial and social status. As it is, in India footballers are at the bottom of the ladder. But who cares? What officials want is to stay in power and be in the public eye.

JAICI

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Muammar Gadhafi of Libya;
2. Cairo;
3. 'Other Castes' or 'Other Groups';
4. St. Joseph's College, Tiruchir;
5. Payment rooms for general public;
6. PINAKA;
7. Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Andre Agassi;
8. Prince Charles;
9. James Clavell;
10. The State Finance Commission for local bodies;
11. The 'fact' that Anastasia, daughter of Tsar Nicholas II was murdered along with her family by the Bolsheviks and did not disappear as believed;
12. Swami Haridoss Giri;
13. She became the country's first woman pilot in the IAF to do a solo flight;
14. IRA;
15. They have found the first example in the Milky Way of a matter that moves faster than light;
16. Steven Spielberg;
17. Government House;
18. Vandana Agarwal;
19. Tushar Kanti Ghosh;
20. Union Carbide India Ltd.

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