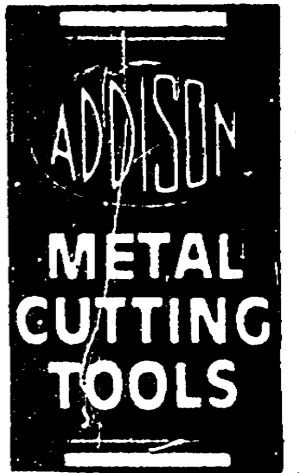


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Vol. IV. No. 22

Mar. 1 — 15, 1995

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# Madras is now fifth-rate!

(By A special correspondent)

What's the best city in India to work in? Certainly not Madras, according to a recent survey of executives and their families. It's Bangalore a mile, with Madras a poor fifth and Coimbatore tenth.

Bombay, Delhi and Pune rank between Bangalore and Madras in the Business Today-sponsored survey by Marketing and Business Associates (MBA), the Indian affiliate of the Gallup Organisation of the US. The survey queried 820 respondents in 26 cities across four categories — CEOs, managers, spouses and business school students. The parameters examined included cost of living, housing, law and order, healthcare, cleanliness and career growth opportunities.

Law and order still remains a major point for Madras. But comparative costs — of living, housing, healthcare, real estate, education and manpower — were just not enough to push the city into the top-three bracket. That being in that bracket has to do with industrial climate, there is no doubt. And Madras, with its traditionally low-profile, conservative business houses, just does not provide sufficient attraction. Another perceived drawback is that Madras is considered the least cosmopolitan of the cities surveyed.

The CEOs rank Madras as the third city to work in, after Bangalore and Bombay (Delhi is seventh). They consider the city the second best in

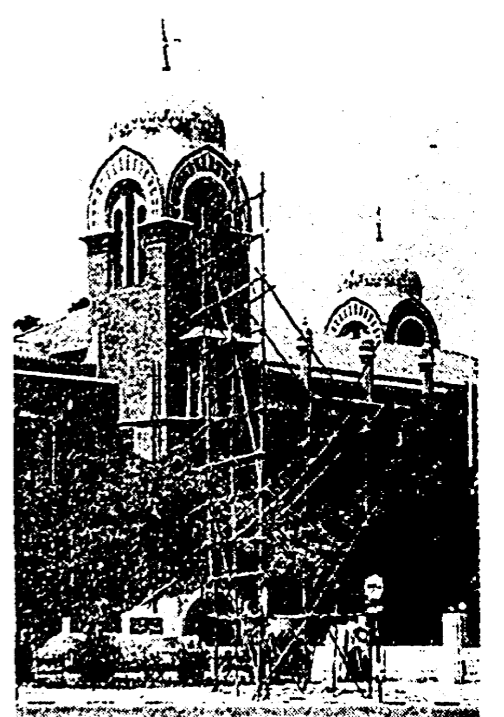
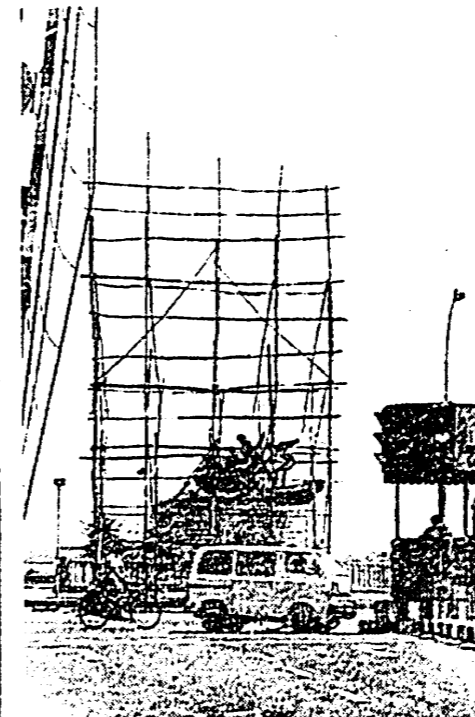
terms of cost of living (Calcutta comes first) and rank it third for educational facilities (after Bombay and Delhi), housing (after Bangalore and Pune), and less congestion and relative ease in commuting (after Bombay and Bangalore). In terms of cleanliness and low pollution levels, healthcare (a big surprise!), law and order and efficient public utilities, the CEOs place Madras behind Bombay, Bangalore and Delhi.

Madras is a poor sixth in the Managers' estimate of the best places to work in — Delhi is third (after Bangalore and Bombay) and is followed by Pune and Chandigarh. Madras, however, is favoured as the city having the lowest cost of living. Managers consider the city ideal for housing (second after Bangalore, of course) and third in law and order, efficient utilities and healthcare (Bombay and Bangalore share the honours here). For educational facilities and career growth opportunities, Bombay, Delhi, Bangalore and even Pune offer much better prospects than Madras, according to the Managers. But they rate Madras third behind Bombay and Delhi for efficient public utilities and healthcare. For cleanliness and greenery, Madras is not the Managers' choice (Bangalore, the garden city, heads the list, followed by smaller cities like Chandigarh, Mysore, Pune, Coimbatore and Bhubaneswar).

The wives seem to feel about the same way as their husbands do. They

place Madras fifth, way behind (in terms of points) Bangalore, Bombay and Delhi, with Pune edging into fourth spot. In their assessment, Madras is the best city as far as accommodation and cost and availability of real estate are concerned, pipping Bangalore to the post on both counts. Housewives consider it the second most peace-loving city, after Bangalore, and, again, rank it second for the quality and cost of its manpower (Coimbatore is sixth here). The Bangalore-Bombay-Delhi combine edges out Madras on infrastructural support, State Government assistance and education facilities. As for cosmopolitanism, Madras takes a drubbing and is at the bottom here, as in all lists.

The southern metropolis does not figure too well in the evaluation of B-school students, who don't place Madras in their top five and rate even Pune and Hyderabad higher. It's Bangalore and Bombay all the way, except on the cost of living criterion, where Madras comes a close second to Calcutta. They rate Madras third for housing and fourth for law and order, Bangalore and Pune the first two on both counts. (Continued on P5)



## The eyesore of scaffolding

There was a Court stay on road arches some time ago and many at the time felt that cut-outs too came under the purview of the ruling. Whether the stay has been vacated or not, arches and cut-outs continue to be a part of Madras life. But while accepting that we will have to live with these temporary phenomena, does it also mean that we will hereafter have to live with permanent scaffolding hiding some of the city's most beautiful buildings and statues? This is an unhappy recent trend. Hitherto, scaffolding came down with the cut-outs after the occasion passed, but now it would seem that those who put up cut-outs have decided to take permanent possession of certain vantage points — here they are in front of the Statue of Labour, Senate House and Chepauk Palace. Would someone be good enough to do something about these eyesores?

(Photographs by V S RAGHAVAN)

## Seminar has no answers to the car dream

(By A Special Correspondent)

The Industrial Entrepreneur Memoranda (August 1991 to October 1994) draws a grim industrial development scenario for Tamil Nadu, despite the opening up of the economy. According to it, the industrial investment proposed in the State is Rs. 17,792 crore, whereas it is Rs. 64,766 and Rs. 65,201 crore for Maharashtra and Gujarat respectively.

Alarmed by this disparity, the Tamil Nadu Government is scouting around for greater private investment in the State. The one sector which it considers its strength and expects fresh investment in is the automobile sector.

It is learnt that the State Industrial Guidance Bureau has recently had talks with executives of the Ford Motor Company. The Government has also invited automobile majors like Maruti Udyog, Tata and Volkswagen to locate their proposed plants in the State. What can Tamil Nadu offer new investment in the auto industry? Not much of an attempt was made to answer the question at the seminar on 'Prospects

Nadu' held at the recent Autovision '95 exhibition. But there were some noteworthy points made.

In his inaugural address, Suresh Krishna, Chairman and Managing Director, Sundaram Fasteners, recalled how the State had pioneered the auto industry as far back as 1920. "Of the Rs. 5200 crore turnover achieved by the auto industry in the country, the share of the units in the State is Rs. 1705 crore, with exports worth Rs. 112 crore," he pointed out. Stressing the fact that 14 automobile units in the State had attained the ISO 9000 standards, he said "the focus should be on core competencies that exist in the State"

Disagreeing with the school of thought that ancillary units should be located near OEM plants, Krishna stressed the need to develop an efficient warehousing network to deliver on time and at competitive rates. He cited his own company as an example. He also said the future is for suppliers of auto aggregates — assembly and sub-

components and asked local manufacturers to shift their focus towards that, as is being done the world over. Further, he said, the emphasis should be on the export market and added that capacity should chase orders and not vice-versa. According to him, the cheap labour available here would be advantageous initially, but, in the long run, it would only be productivity and innovation that would succeed in meeting competition.

M Raman, Director, Tamil Nadu Industrial Guidance and Export Promotion Bureau, spoke of the infrastructure the State offered and said, "Even the remotest parts of the State are linked to Madras by good roads and plans are being implemented to build more bypasses to decongest the highways." More money was being invested in road improvement, he said, and added that the State Government intended to allow private sector investment in developing infrastructural facilities. The power capacity of the

(Continued on P5)



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# Life at 80 +

It is immaterial what the 'plus' signifies or how far it goes. One changes radically at 80. Until you reach the 364th day past 79 you are Mr So-and-So, but on the 365th day you enter a new *janma*. Old age sets in with the precision of a planet in orbit and the insidious moving belt takes you down a gentle slope, unnoticed, until you see others at home proceeding towards the telephone while you are blissfully unaware of the ringing.

Let a fellow octogenarian correct me if I generalise that the left ear drum is the first to be switched off. You don't notice it until you find that others around mumble a great deal and utter unclear sentences. Faculties are switched off one by one, beginning at the top.

Absent-mindedness is the first symptom. Your hands act independently, just misplacing and hiding papers, documents and keys so that

Now I give due respect to Nature's authority by mending my conduct: I never rise abruptly from my seat or the bed, never venture to walk without a four-pronged walker in hand and also a human support to clutch — a precaution for survival.

Past 80, one becomes dependent on so many helping hands. Travel becomes impossible, unthinkable. Every little moment assumes the dimensions of a manoeuvre — to be deeply thought out and managed.

But old age is not all a suffering. There are certain benefits too. For one thing, you find everyone considerate in a hundred ways. Age brings on certain unasked privileges. People avoid hurting your feelings and are ever cautious and considerate and treat you as if old age were an achievement.

Your own interests change. First and foremost, women look worshipful

rather than sensual. Next you realise the unimportance of possessions, acquisitions, and enjoy the pleasure of dispossessing yourself of everything and watching others enjoy life.

Fewer imitations in life are felt because of your defective hearing. You don't fret any more at the idiocies presented on TV. You can always operate the God-given shutters, one's eyelids, which — properly used — can shut off any spectacle.

So, also, if you don't wish to hear, the simplest method is to plug your ears with the little fingers in your hand, which seem to be made to measure.

Thus, you have natural facilities to see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil, if you resist the temptation to discuss the newspaper headlines with others.

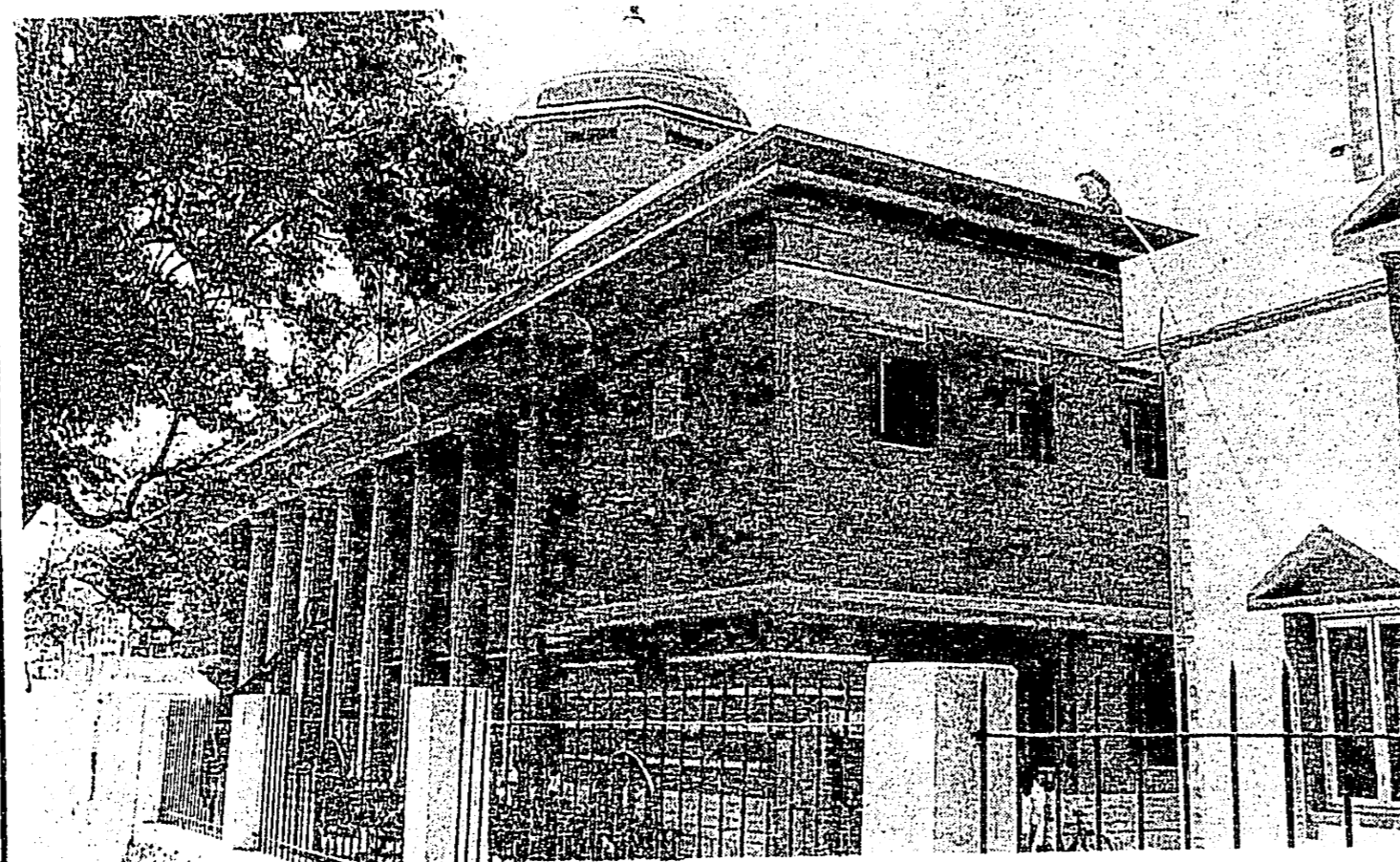
At Eighty Plus, you learn to attain peace of mind by these measures. It takes time and practice to understand your potentialities and exert your inner strength. You must reach a minimum of 80 years to mellow and realise your potentialities.

Memory is one factor that must be curbed rigorously. Memory and hope are two elements that are inborn. Hope is potent in earlier life, its area diminishes unnoticed in later life, and more mental space is usurped by memory, which is pleasant and sustaining up to a stage. I say "up to a stage", which is to be determined by the nature of one's experience.

Music when soft voices die, Vibrates in the memory — So said Shelley. It may not always be 'music' — if you go on to consider another aspect of memory.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought, I summon up remembrance of things past, I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought, And with old woes new wail my dear times' waste.

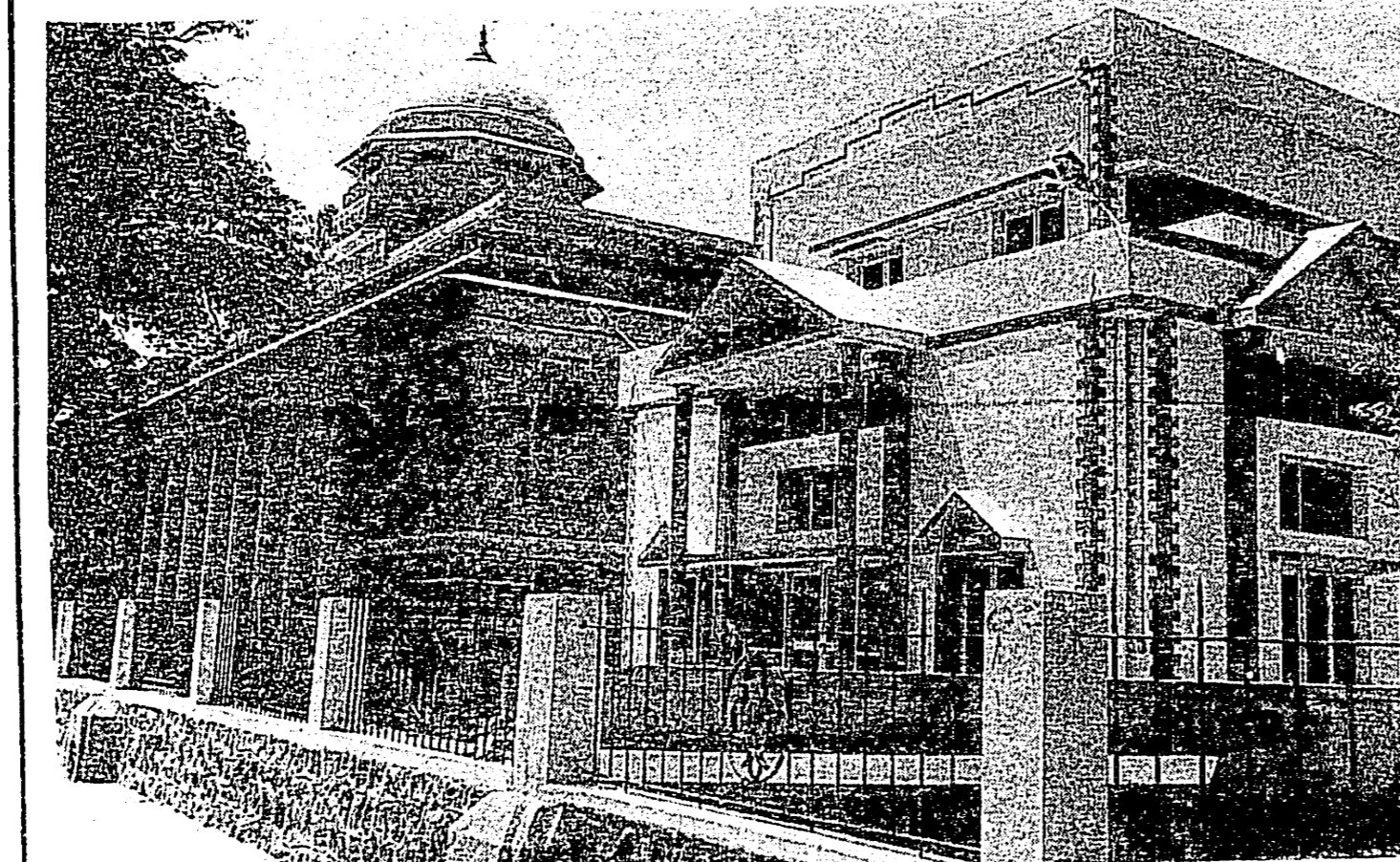
This has to be avoided, unless you



In modern Indian architectural history dating to the days of the British, Indo-Saracenic replaced the Classical in public buildings when the Raj felt that Indians would be happier with public architecture closer to the Asian idiom than the 'foreign' Classical with its overtones of Western imperialism. And see what we've got here, our NEW and OLD this fortnight!

The OLD, the University Annexe building and Examination Hall, was part of University building activities in the 1930s (work on this building started in 1935) when the new buildings were built to harmonise with the Indo-Saracenic of Chepauk Palace, the PWD Building, Presidency College and Senate House. When the University added its centenary building in the 1960s, it still remained faithful to the Indo-Saracenic style. How did it then permit the latest monstrosity to be constructed right next to the beautiful 1930s annexe? Not only have we got a hybrid Classical, but its raucous colour scheme, so in contrast to another building on the Marina, is a blot on the cityscape. Here is one more bit of tastelessness that should hasten the process of declaring the Marina a heritage zone.

(Photographs by V S RAGHAVAN)



## Ups & downs of the market

In stock market analysis, the study of technicals is slowly gaining prominence. However, it is still restricted to academicians and professional analysts. Which is a pity, for the common investor can gain deep insights by understanding and following Technical Analysis.

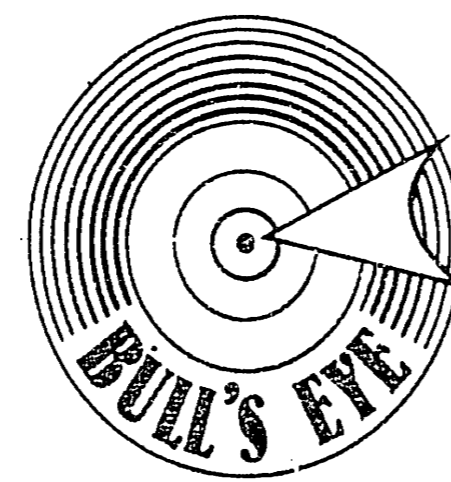
What is Technical Analysis? It is the study of the movement of the index. The various levels the index reaches can be linked to form patterns that are rendered graphically for easy interpretation. A person can also study

Shakespeare seems to achieve as he concludes his sonnet:

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend, All losses are restor'd and sorrows end.

But it is not given to all to enjoy this revival. For most of us, recollection is painful — a past moment or a face brings on an overwhelming mood of sadness.

To forget the past and live in the present, relishing the quality of every moment as it comes and letting it also pass without regret, realising the inevitability of External Flux, is the practical way to exist in peace.



the indices of various exchanges and markets, such as commodities, currency and so on.

Technical Analysis has been dominated by a few stalwarts like Elliott and Gann. They have proved themselves in the markets, thus emphasizing the fact that the subject is not restricted to academe only. The former's contribution especially is momentous. His Elliott Wave theory has done a lot in helping us understand previous patterns and, thus, forecast.

Forecasting is what the investor is most concerned with. While the subject may have diverse interests for the analyst, it is only by predicting accurately that he can help people make profits on the markets, this being the final aim of any investor.

be used with devastating precision judge what is going to happen in coming days.

A close study of the pattern formed now reveals a startling fact, which is 6158 MW, will be formed in 2003 AD, he pointed out. This was echoed by N Narayanan, Finance Secretary, who said that which happened two years ago. What is of practical use is the fact that the index of both years has followed the rules mentioned by Elliott. The first half of the theory has been proved right, the second half is also sure to come true. According to the theory, index should start climbing again, touching a low of 3512 by a minimum of 500 points to a maximum of 4012. In the long run, the index will again decline to touch 2950. The current pattern will most likely repeat around October, i.e. eight months now.

So, knowing this, how can an investor profit? The trading strategy suggested is that s/he can buy actively now, anticipating the 500-800-point rise. For long-term purchases, September/October is the ideal time.

A beginner or novice can best

# From P.Orr's to Garrard's

was back in the 1940s that John Davies, who retired as Deputy Managing Director of Garrard's the Jewellers, decided to make India launching pad for his career. And P.Orr & Sons is where that career began, he recalled during a recent day in Madras.

A draughtsman by training, Davies joined the Navy during World War II and helped in designing motor torpedo boats. His inclination towards design, in a way, a family first. His father associated with the coal mines in

native Wales and his mother's family were the makers of the famous 'Prima' brand of soft drinks. With boat designing not offering much scope after World War II, Davies came to explore new avenues. Responding to an advertisement calling for people to join a "Company based in India", he heard from the company that one of its directors, a Mr Wood, would be coming to Madras and would interview him. Interview over, Davies was asked to join after getting a release from the Navy. This was not much of a problem, but getting a 'passage to India' was. It meant making many trips to the port, which issued 'passages' to those immediate post-War days who were wanting to go to India. Passage information would be given only two days in advance, which meant that he was hardly any time to get ready.

Davies' case, his departure got postponed three times. He finally left in July 1946. The trip to India by boat took him seven days (incidentally that was one of the fastest trips of the time), with a stop only at Suez. As troops were still being carried to different locations, passengers had to huddle on the upper decks of the vessel, that was divided

into two sections, for men and women. They also had to wear their life jackets throughout the journey. Davies arrived in Bombay when the monsoon was at its peak and had his first taste of Indian life and Indian

food. Looking back, he recalls how he was stunned at the rich spread that was available, a contrast to the rations he was used to in England, where, for instance, a person got just two ounces of butter a week.

When he arrived in Madras, he was met by Wood and lodged at

Bossotto's Hotel (now occupied by Bala and Godrej near the Anna statue on Mount Road). Bossotto's was where most expatriates arriving for employment were lodged, as it was not only in an important business locality but also because it was from there that they could get a feel of the city. In his case, there was also the fact that P.Orr & Sons was just round the corner.

P.Orr & Sons at the time dealt mainly with jewellery and clocks. Jewellery and precious stones purchased from P.Orr's were taken to be the best available and the firm was patronised by the civilian elite of Madras as well as by the Rajahs and Nawabs of the time. P.Orr's had a branch in Rangoon from where it got the best of jades and rubies which were set in jewellery by the craftsmen in the Madras head office. P.Orr's also had a branch in Ooty to cater to local royally holidaying in the hill station. Davies remembers the tea parties there hosted by families like those of Pithapuram, Baroda, Pudukottai etc. The huge silver plates, candelabra etc. used on such occasions were all made by P.Orr & Sons.

P.Orr's also had a presence in the North. Two of its representatives were always on tour throughout the country, canvassing orders, bringing jewellery for repair and so on. It was through such a network that P.Orr's became established as a major name in the Indian jewellery business. Apart from serving the cream of society, P.Orr's also supplied clocks to the P.W.D. "Even today you will find P.Orr clocks in many offices in India," Davies proudly points out.

An important landmark in the history of P.Orr's was its appointment as agents in India for the Rolex brand of watches. P.Orr's had been assembling watches earlier in their Madras

workshop, but with licence restrictions proving a hurdle, they couldn't continue as they had done before. They had come up with their own brand too — the Orr Lion. But being appointed agents for Rolex was a matter of greater prestige.

By 1949, P.Orr's had been in the business for a hundred years and the centenary was celebrated in a grand

manner. A lunch was given to the employees and each one of them was presented a towel, considered a great honour at the time.

The salary at P.Orr's was good by the standards of the time. But on five hundred rupees a month, Davies could not afford a luxurious life. He lived at Chesney Hall in Egmore, where every expatriate staying had to have a bearer to look after him. Food, rent and the bearer's salary took away a major portion of the money and Davies went to office by bicycle. He recalls how he used to take an extra set of clothes to change into once he got into office, as he would be sweating profusely by the time he reached there. It was an unwritten uniform code at P.Orr's that all employees wear starched white clothes and a tie.

(To be continued next fortnight)



John M Davies

workshop, but with licence restrictions proving a hurdle, they couldn't continue as they had done before. They had come up with their own brand too — the Orr Lion. But being appointed agents for Rolex was a matter of greater prestige.

By 1949, P.Orr's had been in the business for a hundred years and the centenary was celebrated in a grand

## Fifth-rate Madras

(Continued from P 1)

From the MBA study it is clear that for Madras to attract the best managerial talent, it will have to necessarily shed its conservative image and move with the changing times. For a start, the city's infrastructure has to improve — roads, transport, communication, water supply, power etc — providing the right incentives to industry, NRIs and foreign companies to come in and invest in the State. The business houses here, which have for far too long not felt the need to take on the country's northern and western industrial giants, will now have to shed all inhibitions and look at specifics — more sales, faster growth

and higher profits. Madras Vision-2000 has to be made a reality.

A lesson can be learnt from Calcutta, a city that, not many years ago, was the country's conimerical capital. It has slid to a shocking 19th on the MBA list, and in spite of adequate power supply now and the Vidyasagar Sethu, it still remains a businessman's *bele noire*. So much so that there are few takers for the West Bengal Government's gallant efforts to bring the State back into the reckoning. Madras has to wake from its slumber and look more sharply at the future if it does not want to follow Calcutta's example.

## The ups & downs

(Continued from P4)

Analysis through the book, *A Primer on Technical Analysis*, which is widely available in Madras.

Our recommendations for this fortnight are:

**Seshasayee Paper** (CMP: Rs 90.00): This South-based integrated pulp and paper manufacturing company has announced excellent results for the first half of the current year, thanks to the completion of the first phase of the modernisation plan by March 1994 as scheduled. The net profit is up by 71% due to improved productivity, better realisation and reduced manufacturing costs. The second half is expected to be even better as paper prices have witnessed a steep rise. It is now implementing a Rs 5 cr plan to conserve energy which will improve its bottomline. Also, it plans to enhance its capacity. We estimate a turnover of about Rs 125 cr and a PAT of around Rs 10 cr. An EPS of Rs 9 would support over Rs 130. Currently, prices, after reacting to Rs 87.50, are showing signs of resuming their uptrend. Buy with a stop loss at Rs 85.

**Dharani Sugars** (CMP: Rs 50.00): This 'Dharani' group company with one of the most modern sugar mills in the country has announced good results for the first half of the current year. Sales amounted to Rs 14.74 cr as against Rs 11.05 cr in the previous year's corresponding period while

PAT rose to Rs 3.40 cr from a mere Rs 0.17 cr. The company expects to crush around 7.25 lakh tonnes of cane during the 1994-95 season. We estimate an EPS of Rs 9, which supports Rs 75 by the 1994-95 results. The company might come out with a rights/public issue to part-finance its expansion plan, which includes setting up two sugar plants at a cost of Rs 130 cr. Buy with a stop loss at Rs 45.

**Pan Clothing** (CMP: Rs 27.00): Pan Clothing and Consolidated (PCCL), marketing the 'Cassidy's' brand, has declared impressive results for the half-year ended December 1994. It has notched up a sales of Rs 12.22 cr and PAT of Rs 1.05 cr. This Madras-based company, already manufacturing ready-made garments, entered the capital market in August 1994 only to get oversubscribed around 35 times. The garments are marketed through its own local retail outlets as well as exported. Sales to such countries as the USA, Canada, Belgium and Germany account for almost 37% of total turnover. It has also entered into a buy-back arrangement with Kingtex, Dubai, for marketing 50 per cent of its production. PCCL has declared an interim dividend of 6 per cent. Its performance is in line with its projections for 1994-95. Prices are moving sideways between a narrow band of Rs 25-31. Buy with a stop loss at Rs 25.

K. Gopalakrishnan

## No answers to car dream

(Continued from P 1)

At least one new vehicle manufacturing plant. Are the points made sufficient to attract Volkswagen — which is studying eight centres in the country to locate its new plant to manufacture the Volkswagen and Audi range of cars — Maruti or Ford to Tamil Nadu?

**TAILPIECE:** Curiously, nothing was stated at the seminar about the fate of the one car plant in the State — Standard Motors Ltd. Wouldn't reviving a plant in hand be worth two in the world of pipedreams?

Termining Madras as the 'Detroit of India', Viji Santhanam, Joint Managing Director, Brakes (India) Ltd, pointed out that Tamil Nadu accounts for one-third of the production of auto components in the country. He said the focus should be on an improved distribution network and greater exports. R Seshasayee, Dy. Managing Director, Ashok Leyland, said that component suppliers he viewed as an extended arm of manufacturers nowadays, as advanced communication networks made physical proximity unnecessary.

**MANAALI RAMAN...**

"Film scholarship ahead?"

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**NOTABLE BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>American Feminist Thought at Century's End: A Reader Edited by Linda S. Kauffman. Blackwell, c1993. (305.42 ABE)</p> <p>Hartmann, Frederick H. America's Foreign Policy in a Changing World Harper Collins College Publishers, c1994. (327.73 HAR)</p> <p>LaQuey, Tracy. The Internet Companion: A Beginner's Guide to Global Networking Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, c1994. (384.33 LAQ)</p> <p>Leslie, Larry L.</p> | <p>Mitroff, Ian I. Framebreak: The Radical Redesign of American Business Jossey-Bass Publishers, c1994 (658 MIT)</p> <p>O'Hara-Devereaux, Mary. Globalwork: Bridging Distance, Culture &amp; Time Jossey-Bass Publishers, c1994 (658.049 OHA)</p> <p>Rhodes, Carolyn. Reciprocity, U.S. Trade Policy, and the GATT Regime Cornell University Press, c1993 (382.30973 RHO)</p> <p>Teaching Global Development: A Curriculum Guide Edited by William Savitt</p> |
|--|---|

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.

## Overcoming all deterrents to girls' education

At a point in the 19th Century, when formal education for girls was not thought of, Sri Sri Maharaja Pasapathi Vijayaraja Gajapathi Maharaj III, the Maharaja of Vizianagaram, not only founded schools for them in Vizianagaram, but also in Madras. In 1869, he opened a school for girls in Myslapore.

The Vizianagaram Maharaja's Hindu Girls' School started in a rented building in Myslapore, where the Indian Bank now is. It had just three classes and remained a primary school till 1919. The stigma attached to girls going to school, as well as the custom of child marriage, were deterrents to girls' education and the school was little patronised. Its problems increased when the Maharaja died in 1879. His son, Sri Ananda Gajapathi Maharaja, was unable to personally supervise the functioning of the school and he handed over its management to the National Indian Association in 1890, but continued to give financial assistance. When Ananda Gajapathi Maharaja died in 1897, he left behind a minor son. The Court of Wards appointed to manage the affairs of the young prince withdrew the royal support to the school and the manage-



The Lady Sivaswami Ayyar Girls' School's new building and the jayastambam erected in front of it to commemorate the school's centenary in 1968. Vijayaraja Gajapathi Raj, the great grandson of the founder, inaugurated the pillar.

ment fell squarely on the shoulders of the NIA. In 1904, faced with financial crisis, the NIA planned to close the school and the girls of Myslapore were faced with the prospect of having no school in the area.

At this juncture, V Krishnaswami Ayyar and V Bashyam Aiyangar, who were liberal-minded enough to understand the need for girls' education, came forward to run the school. Their

committee, formed in 1904, continued till 1918. In 1904 it renamed the school the Myslapore Girls' School. In 1906, the school moved to a building at the junction of North and East Mada Streets. And in February 1908, Lady Lawley laid the foundation for a new school building in a plot on East Mada Street. The new building, known for long as the 'Red Building', was declared open in 1910 and the school was renamed the Vizianagaram Rani's Girls' School, commemorating the help the daughter of the founder gave this venture.

When Krishnaswami Ayyar and Bashyam Aiyangar passed away, Annie Besant took the school under her wing in 1918 and transferred the management to the Theosophical Education Trust. Sarojini Naidu was invited to deliver the address at a meeting held to mark the takeover and the school was renamed the National Girls' High School.

The school was upgraded to a middle school in 1919 and, in 1924, became a high school. A batch of four students were sent up for the S.S.L.C. examination in March 1926. In 1930, when Annie Besant became more and more involved in the Home Rule



Sir Sivaswami Kalaya... in Sudharma, once Sir Sivaswami's home.

movement, she handed over the school to a committee headed by Sir, C P Ramaswami Aiyar. One of the committee was Sir P S Sivaswami Ayyar.

So committed was Sivaswami Ayyar to the school that when its coffers were empty, he sold his palatial residence Sudharma and donated the proceeds to the school. When Helen Veale, the headmistress, retired in 1940, she recommended Sir P S Sivaswami Ayyar be appointed the headmaster of the school. He was the first Indian to head the school and S Chellemmal, who joined the school in 1935, became the assistant head. Nearly sixty years later, 'Mahaji' Chellemmal has still not severed her connections with the school!

In 1944, Mahakulapathi K Rangaswami Aiyangar, retired headmaster of Hindu Theological School, was invited by Sivaswami Ayyar to join the Managing Committee. He stepped up the academic proficiency of the school and also introduced a legion of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. When Sivaswami Ayyar died in 1946, the school was renamed Lady Sivaswami Aiyar Girls' High School, commemorating the sacrifices he and his wife made for it.

Today, the school, one of the leading schools in Madras, has 1800 students and 60 teachers. It is situated on about 12 grounds. A new C.B.S.E.

school, the Sir Sivaswami Kalaya... was started in 1989 and is named Sudharma after Sir Sivaswami's palatial home. Sudharma is a co-education school.

A special feature of the Lady Sivaswami School is its many extra-curricular activities. The school's Deepa Bandhu Sangam gives nourishing food to orphans and poor children. The school also runs a 'Stick Room', Seethalakshmi Ammal Free Dispensary to promote the health of the physically weak. Many students have benefited and the school has even borne the expenses of Open Heart Surgery conducted on a few of its students. The school has Earn-While-You-Learn Needlework and Tailoring projects for the economically backward students. Project work and Handicrafts are compulsory for all classes. The school has a Mothers' Union which meets three times a year. The Kalaya Sivaswami Ayyar Best Teacher award is given on February 7th every year on the birth anniversary of Sivaswami Ayyar. This award carries a purse of Rs. 10,000 and a citation. A panel set up by the school to select the best teacher.

The school is managed by the National Boys' and Girls' Education Society.

Text and photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTIAN

## Quizzin' with Ramanan

(Quizmaster V V RAMANAN's questions are from the fortnight Feb. 1-16).

1. What is the new name of the popular 'Palace on Wheels'?
2. The Tamil Nadu Government Order Ri 29 dated 13.1.95 for the acquisition of nearly 50 acres of land has snowballed into a controversy. How?
3. The 'father' of the modern digital computer passed away recently. Who?
4. The last British player to win the Wimbledon men's singles crown, a former world TT champion, passed away recently. Who?
5. What sanitary first has the Tiruchi Corporation (the first local body to do so) introduced recently?
6. Who is the recipient of the 1994 'Woman of the Year' award given by the International Women's Association Madras?
7. What rare global sporting honour will the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, J. Jayalalitha, receive some time later this year?
8. The only civilian Prime Minister Burma

9. In what unique shape would the water tanks be provided for the animals of Tamil Nadu on the occasion of the Chief Ministers' birthday?
10. Name the Archbishop of Canterbury who visited the city recently.
11. What is the State's new agricultural policy called?
12. What popular board game celebrated its diamond jubilee recently?
13. Name the former Chief Secretary Tamil Nadu and a votary of family planning nominated as a member of the UN Population Commission.
14. Which Tamil Nadu minister censured by the Chief Minister hinting at an alliance with the Congress without her permission?
15. A new sort of vending machine, first of its kind in the city, is being installed at the AVM Rajesh Theatre. What does it vend?
16. Name the premier Telugu satellite launched from the city on February 9th.
17. Apart from Madras, where else was the Santosh Trophy football match played this year?
18. The week of February 4-11 marks the golden jubilee of what famous tripartite conference?
19. Name the players who set a world record Test partnership between brothers, 269 runs, against Pakistan recently.
20. Which city school was given grounds in Myslapore, belonging to Kapaleeswarar Temple, for use as a playground by the Chief Minister?

# An award for commitment

When Gita Ram was featured on the cover of the local woman's magazine *Eves Touch*, there was a letter to the editor. It was from a person who did not like the little attention she got for her untiring work as a craftivist. The letter surprised me a great deal, as Gita is one person I know who totally without ego problems, avariciousness about credits etc. She is completely committed and works with no expectation of rewards. That there was even one person jealous of her was a surprising fact.

But Gita was vindicated when she was given the 'Woman of the Year'



Gita Ram (Photo by S Anwar)

When Jagannathan, a young stone sculptor from Mamallapuram, got married recently, he printed the name of Gita Ram on the invitation. He said he could not think of anyone else he venerated, anyone who never failed to help others without ever expecting gratitude. That is a true description of Gita's role in the world of handicrafts and a tribute to the person that she is.

## The view from the wings by V.R. Devika

Organised by the International Women's Association, IWA has been presenting this prestigious award every year to women who are outstanding in their special fields of service to humanity. Others who have been honoured in the past are Dr Sharada Menon, Subbulakshmi, Qudisia Gandhi, Rani Chunkath and Sarojini Adappan.

Gita, characteristically, talked about craftsmen and not herself when accepting the award. She made the most of speeches and appealed to people to think of the persons behind the craft object, that their's are the fingers that have made the object, that it takes a very long time before the skills to make the object can be learned and that each of them has a family to support through those skills. A craft object is the by-product of an entire family's effort, she pointed out. She then showed a series of slides of craftsmen working and this was her tribute to the craftsmen for whom she has devoted so much time, energy, money and affection over so many years.

Gita Ram never makes people feel she comes from an affluent family (she married to S Ram of the TVS group). It is her compassion and class that stand out always. She has been secretary of the Crafts Council of India, Deputy Vice-President of the Madras Crafts Council and is a Director of Poompuhar and Secretary of Madras Craft Foundation.



Kelucharan Mahapatra, the Odissi maestro (Photo by S Anwar)

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January every year. This year, there were, as usual, good, bad and indifferent performances. But there were some surprises too. Most performances reflected good training and little else.

One performance that came through as entirely sincere and with no frills was the Odissi performance of Shankar Behera. He danced with untiring energy and deep commitment in a charming mixture of Odissi styles — the earthy, tankrik style of Debi-prasad Das and the sophisticated style of Kelucharan Mahapatra were blended into an explosion of energy. This was more evident when seen at closer quarters at a chamber performance at the Dhananjayans' Bharatha Kalanjali.

A bonus was the refined exposition of Odissi with poetical lyricism by his guru, Kelucharan Mahapatra, who performed spontaneously. *Dheera Sameera ... the Ashlapadi*, acquired new meaning in his performance.

## Charming Odissi

A major dance event was recently organised in Madras by the International Dance Alliance, Madras. IDA, Madras, is associated with IDA, New York, which was founded to help travelling artists.

IDA, Madras, gets artists of different schools together to celebrate International Dance Week, which falls in

# GLOBAL FUSION

## Music with an identity of its own

AMIT ROY, writing from London for The Telegraph, Calcutta, recently wrote of Madras's own L Subramaniam as follows:

A historic 'East West fusion concert' (was) held at the Royal Albert Hall in London (recently) in which L Subramaniam, the brilliant South Indian classical violinist, performed with Stephane Grappelli, the Western world's best known jazz violinist. The event ... a landmark in fusion music, which is achieved by mixing sounds from different cultural traditions ... revealed how far fusion music has come since the 1960s when the Beatles teamed with Ravi Shankar on the sitar ...

Subramaniam says, "With East-West fusion, people think of Eastern and Western musicians playing together. But global fusion, a concept I have been developing, goes beyond that".

Subramaniam, 46, was born in Madras and now lives in Los Angeles. About 10 years ago he met Grappelli, 40 years older. But they hit it off. They have played a little together. "I took Grappelli to India," Subramaniam says. "Musically there are only seven notes. But because of the ornamentation and the style of playing, a Beethoven concert on the violin is totally different from an Indian raga on the violin," he explains.

When attempting global fusion, Subramaniam writes a piece for the accompanying orchestra but deliberately makes the solo part variable. "It can be played on different instruments by soloists from different countries. This has never been done before," he emphasises. Grappelli, who has been called "one of the monuments of music," says: "Music is one world. I am excited at the prospect of doing something new." He enjoyed his tour of India with Subramaniam, saying,

and Trilok Gurtu, an Indian percussionist. A good example of contemporary groups is Shiva Nova, whose members play violins in Western and South Indian styles, the cello and sitar, the santoor and African Koras. Priti Paintal, a 35-year-old Indian woman, who founded Shiva Nova in 1988, prefers the term 'crossover' to 'fusion'. "It's like two people getting married and having a baby. The baby is not fusion — it has an identity of its own."

## Naturalists' Corner



A splendid gaur (or Indian bison) poses for E. R. C. Davidar's camera. (Photo courtesy Madras Naturalists' Society)

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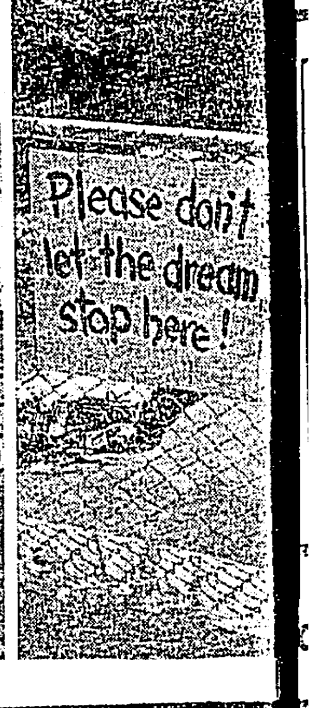
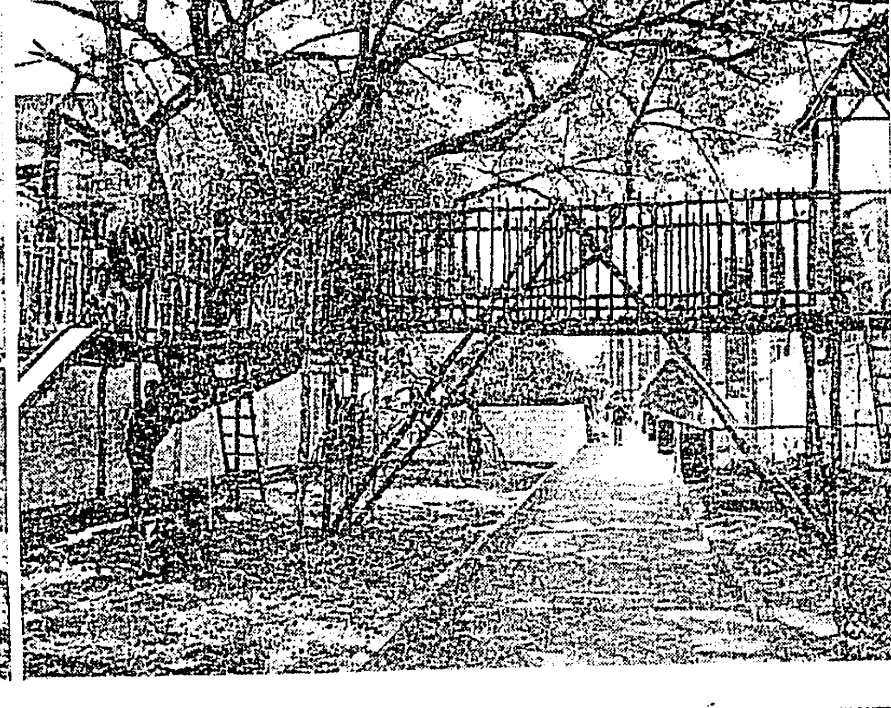
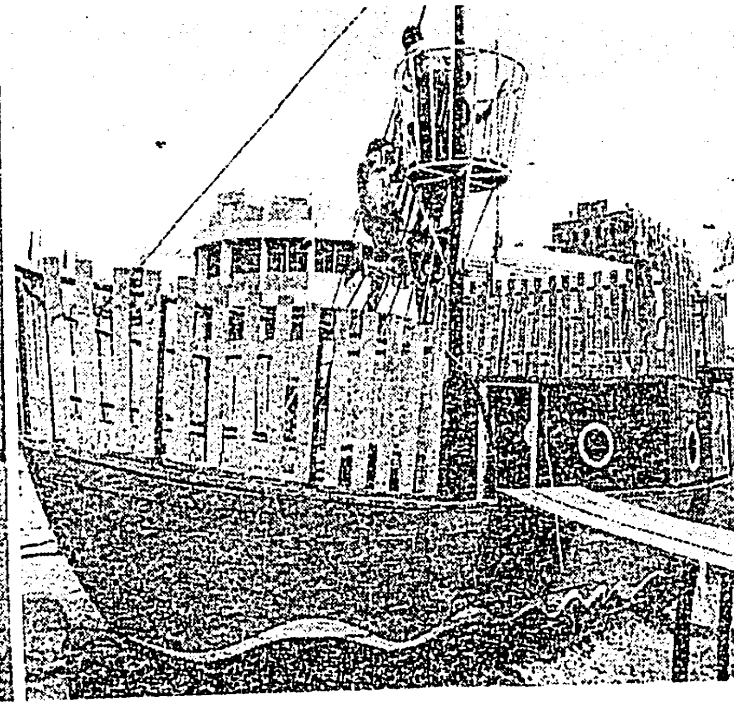
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## A bit of sunshine in drab lives

As the great swarms of traffic spill into Teynampet junction from Thyagaraya Road, you will find, if you can pause to stop and stare, a sign saying 'Vision 2000 Park'. On the other side of the road is what looks like a children's playground. One day, not so long ago, when the Chief Minister went down Thyagaraya Road in massive procession it sported a sign, 'Chief Minister Jayalalitha playground'. That sign is now round the corner, at the entrance to the playground.

Both park and playground are the handiwork of Craig Hendry and his 'Vision 2000' team of volunteers from Australia. They first successfully established a total hygiene system on the northern side of the Thyagaraya Road bridge, covering the Mambalam drainage canal and developing on it a dispensary, clean toilet facilities, a volleyball court, a lawn and their own living quarters (MM, Aug. 16, '94). Work then began on the southern side of the bridge. Months of hard work followed — from dredging the sewer to laying the concrete slabs in place to support the structures. And then a fully furnished play centre was developed, the like of which no child in these slums had ever seen before.

The play centre houses a tree hut, a play mine shaft, a wooden ship complete with a crow's nest, and a winch called the 'flying fox'. During the day, the deprived children learn the 3Rs in an audio-visual room equipped with educational video tapes and all the picture story books they need.

The Australian volunteer project ran into serious problems during the construction of the play centre. First, the Corporation delayed the necessary permits for the project. Then local politicians got into the act, and the Australian team was threatened. Hendry alleges the delays were engineered by vested interests who wanted the slum to remain a slum; they did not want 'operation clean-up' simply because parents in the area, conscious of improved hygiene in their day-to-day lives and aware of the benefits of the entertainment and education offered their

The rough weather seems to have passed somewhat now, mainly because the children in the area have grown to like both aspects of the 'Vision 2000' project. And the parents of the children have been very supportive, especially as the dispensary treats around 4000 people every month. The fact that the southern side of the park has been named after the Chief Minister has also undoubtedly helped.

Hendry and his team plan to press on with their good work, regardless. But they are, without doubt, disillusioned after the setbacks. When complete, they hope to hand over the project to a social service organisation to maintain. To find another organisation that can manage the 'Vision 2000' project with equal dedication, and sustain it forever, is likely to prove a major poser in the future.

Pictures and text  
V S RAGHAVAN



## A golden girl in the making

P T Usha, Asia's golden girl, ran the 400 metres in under 54 seconds for the first time when she was 19. Kannan Solaimathi, from Karuthapulianpatti village 30 km from Madurai, has done just that as a 17-year-old. Not only did she clock 53.99 secs in the inter-state meet, but she was also the golden girl of the meet — winning three other golds and a silver (in a relay).

Solaimathi has all the signs of becoming another 'golden girl' for India. At 17, she has clocked 11.9 sec, 24.2 sec and 53.99 secs in the 100 m, 200 m and 400 m respectively. P T Usha's records at her peak were 11.3 sec, 23.4 secs and 51.6 secs for the same distances.

A tenth standard student at Kakai-padiyiar school, Madurai, Solaimathi is the shy daughter of a mill worker. She started her athletic career when she was 15, winning at local inter-school meets. It was then that she caught the eye of Alagumalai, the District Coach, who thought she would shine if she joined the OCPM Sports School in Madurai.

She didn't belie expectations. Training under the watchful eye of T V Patrick, a Tamil Nadu Sports Development Authority coach, Solaimathi has grown from strength to strength since the Rural Nationals held in Haryana in 1992. She first looked a champion at the 1994 Senior Open State Amateur Athletic Meet, where she outpaced International Alphonsa Rayan to win the 400 m gold, clocking 57.4 secs. She beat another international, P V Leena, in the 200 m, to take the gold in 25.4 secs. In the 100 m she had to be content with a bronze.

Representing India at the Asian Junior Track and Field Meet, Jakarta, she finished seventh and fifth in the 100 m and 200 m. Speaking about the performance, where she achieved her best timings till then, Solaimathi says, "I would have clocked better times had it not been for a heel injury owing to suddenly shifting to a synthetic track after practising only on natural ground." But this is not a run-of-the-mill excuse; the fact is Solaimathi had run her races till then barefoot and on hard ground and the change to an unfamiliar track had its effect on her legs.

A look at the timings clocked by Solaimathi in the last two years shows that she is improving well. Says Patrick, "In 1993, she timed 12.6 secs, 26 secs. and 61 secs in the 100 m, 200 m and 400 m. Look at her timings



Solaimathi

training her. As a matter of fact, it is he who foots some of her bills. The new bicycle which she pedals from the YWCA hostel to the Armed Police Grounds in Madurai for training daily was presented by him. And when Solaimathi went to Ludhiana and Patiala for the Asian Games trials, Patrick also went with her, spending

by Venkatachari Jagannathan

from his pocket in order to provide the psychological support she needed. "That enabled me to qualify for the Asian Junior Track and Field Meet," Solaimathi acknowledges.

Solaimathi's training schedule of four hours daily includes hurdling, running, jumping, rope climbing and physical exercises. Speaking about her running Patrick says, "She has the necessary speed, agility and explosiveness to make it to the top by the time she is 21. Her mental make-up is strong and she does not get nervous even at crucial moments". Solaimathi initially used to run the first 300 m at full pace and faced problems in the closing stages. But now, with experience, she evenly paces her speed in the 400 m event, Patrick says.

Though Solaimathi has been competing in three events, her concentration will be on the 400 m in the future. "For her style of running and mental strength, the 400 m is ideal. Further, at the international level, Indians have a good chance only in that event," Patrick feels.

Solaimathi's most unforgettable memory is not any of her medal-winning performances but her cash-starved Jakarta trip. Borrowing Rs. 8000, she made the trip and while other team members were stuffing their

money just sufficient for her daily expenses. She returned to Delhi with just Rs. 200 and Patrick, who had stayed there till her arrival, had just Rs. 100. "He borrowed money from some of his friends in Delhi for our return tickets to Madras," she recalls. And when they landed at Madras Central, both had only Rs. 60 between them, not enough for even one person's fare to Madurai. "Fortunately, the Sports Development Authority sanctioned Solaimathi a Rs. 5000 scholarship, which she got as advance, enabling us to return to Madurai," Patrick remembers.

Apart from running, Solaimathi's hobbies include reading and watching other sports. Though the Southern Railway has sent her an appointment order, she wants to finish her school final before joining anyone. She now gets a scholarship from Valli Stee Nagercoil. But Solaimathi's immediate requirement is a pair of good foreign 'spikes', which will cost a fortune. They are only a dream at the moment, but she has at least managed to get an Indian-made pair.

Whom does she want to emulate, P T Usha or Shiny Wilson? "I do not have any athletic idols. I just want to do my best," she smiles. If precise indications are anything to go by, the best will take her far — provided she gets the sponsorship she so obviously needs for equipment and to train on better tracks.

## ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. The Royal Orient Express; 2. land belonging to Anna University has been acquired for the J. Jayalalitha Film City; this has sparked off a debate among academicians; 3. George Stibitz; 4. J. Perry; 5. It has put up a small and compact incinerator for scientific disposal of hospital waste; 6. Mrs. Gita Ram; 7. The honor membership of FIFA, world football governing body; 8. U Nu; 9. In the shape of her initials, JJ; 10. The most Rev. Rt. Hon. George Carey; 11. 'Mahatma Agri Vision 2000'; 12. Monopoly; 13. T.V. Antony; 14. The Industries Minister, M. Chinnaswamy; 15. Condo; 16. Gemini TV; 17. Udhagamandalam; 18. The Yalta Conference; 19. Andy Grant Flower of Zimbabwe; 20. Lady Swarni Girls' HSS.

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