

WE CARE FOR MADRAS

MADRAS

MUSINGS

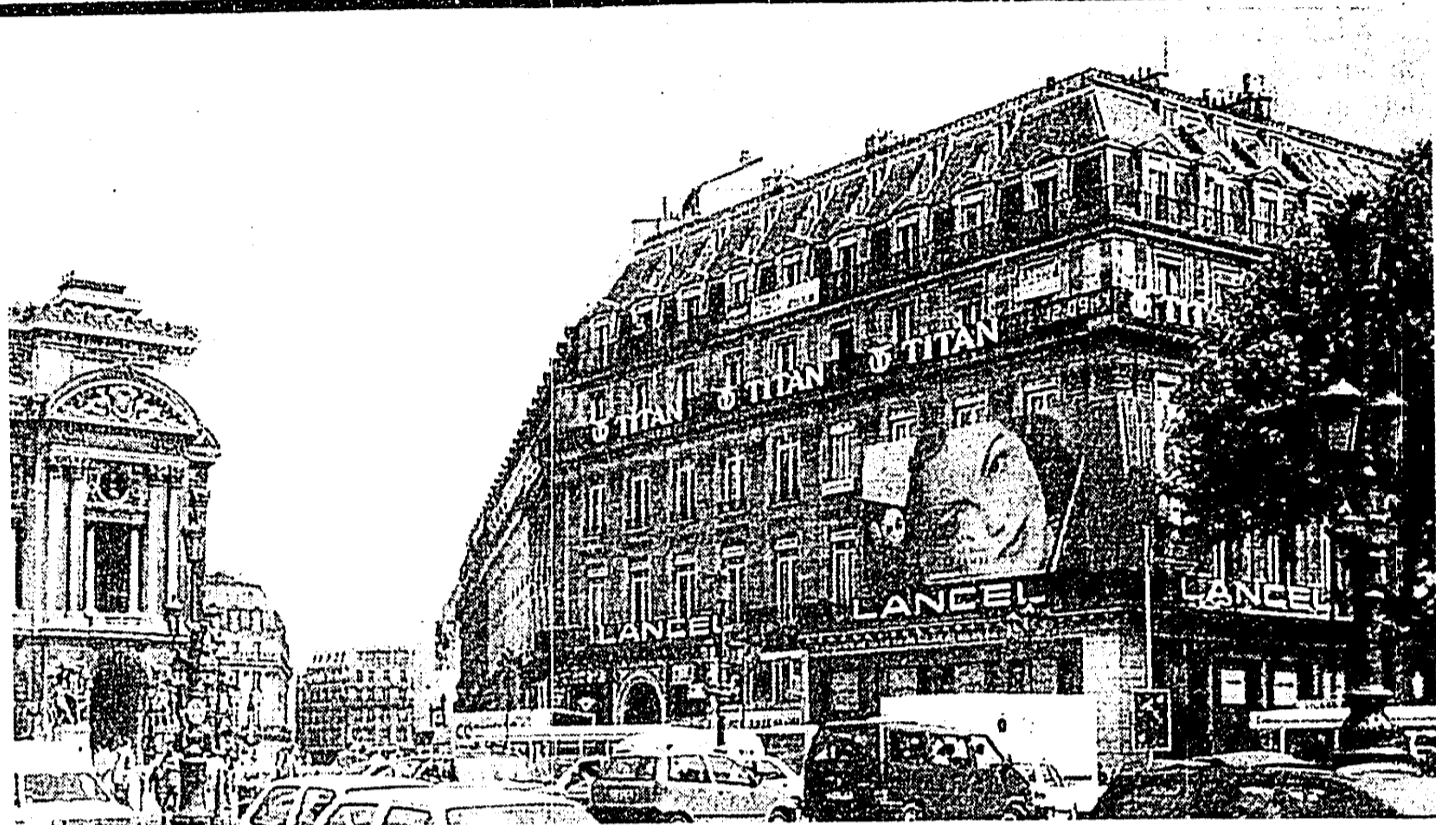
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FREE ISSUE

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# Groundwater unpotable

## Results of a City survey

(By a Staff Reporter)

There is something very wrong in our value system if we cannot and do not provide the basic necessity for existence — clean drinking water. Every new government promises clean water, but five years later the situation is bad or worse, says *Econews*, the environmental quarterly of the C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre. We have to fight for clean water for Madras, it cries. But wonders whether we will ever get it.

The Centre has analysed the groundwater of Madras in 1992-93, 1994-95 and in 1995-96 and the results are alarming. The water samples were collected from 20 different areas in Madras city, from Ennore to Chromepet. The water testing in 1995-96 included bacteriological analysis of all the water samples. The results show, from a comparative analysis, a gradually deteriorating water quality in more than 60 per cent of the groundwater samples collected in Madras. **The water is unfit for drinking**, says *Econews*. The conclusion is substantiated by both bacteriological tests and chemical analysis. The water requires proper treatment for iron, and fluoride and micro-organisms.

Of the samples analysed from 20 areas, only the samples

collected from Jewells in Royapuram and Saidapet were found to be potable with respect to the chemical and bacteriological parameters analysed. The samples collected from Ennore, Manali, Tiruvottriyur, Vyasarpadi, Mylapore, Vadapalani, Ekkattuthangal, and Chromepet had higher concentrations of total dissolved solids (TDS), total hardness, calcium, chloride and sulphate. In Ambattur and Chetput areas, all chemical parameters show a significant increase since 1992-93. The bacteriological analysis also reveals that these water samples are not potable.

However, the analysis of water samples collected from Anna Nagar, Teynampet, Egmore, Royapettah, T. Nagar, Mylapore, Vadapalani, Saidapet, Kotturpuram and Thiruvanniyur do not show significant change in chemical parameters when the results for the three years are compared. The three years' analysis shows a decreased level in the chemical parameters of the samples collected from Tiruvottriyur, Vyasarpadi and Royapuram.

There is a very high probability of groundwater in Madras getting contaminated due to seepage of sewage water

from the Cooum river. Groundwater is prone to contamination through sewage.

It is always advisable to boil Madras water before consumption, advises *Econews*. Other technologies which could be utilised are the use of ultra-violet rays or chlorination.

# New fund to fund civic projects

(By a Staff Reporter)

At a time when the municipal elections are around the corner in the State, a Rs.300 crore trust is being formed to fund municipal projects in Tamil Nadu. The trust would fund projects which have long gestation periods, say ten or more years, and will be managed by an asset management company (AMC).

While financial institutions like ICICI, HDFC and ILFS would have a 51 per cent stake in the asset management company, the State would hold the

balance by transferring the assets and liabilities of the World Bank-aided Tamil Nadu Urban Development Project. The Fund would be called the Municipal Urban Development Fund.

The net worth of the Project is put at Rs.120 crore and Rs.51 crore will be provided by the three institutions. The trust would also be extended loans by the financial institutions, and

the World Bank will provide a credit of US \$42 million.

According to the scheme, financing will be done to the city municipalities and private project promoters to the extent of 75 per cent of the project cost and the repayment schedule will be not less than ten years. The interest cost will not be lower than the interest on long tenure government securities, i.e. 13.5%.

**THIS ISSUE HAS TWO EXTRA PAGES OF SPORT AND THE ARTS**

# What do you do with crores?

It was just party chatter, but *The Man From Madras* Musings couldn't help but think there was something to what was being discussed after a couple of drinks.

Said one, I can understand a person with a daughter or two or three wanting to collect a little extra money, what with the demands for dowry increasing every day.

And, said another, I can understand those collecting something to keep quiet a wife who wants to keep up with the Chetties and the Shettys.

But, they both agreed, what does a man want to do with several crores in trunks at home? Or what does a woman want with scores of properties? Or what does a successful businessman want with a dozen companies he calls a 'group'?

The argument was over corruption. And the disputants agreed that it was understandable that there was a certain amount of extra money a person may genuinely NEED because of his circumstances, but if he had all he wanted to meet his most luxurious of needs, what was the need for more money, especially if it was to be stashed away in boxes or invested in scores of unutilised properties? In what way did such wealth benefit the person or any other?

And, pointed out another, the same questions could be asked of people who kept expanding their business interests and did little worthwhile with their earned wealth. In America, the Carnegies and the Rockefellers, the Guggenheims and the Vanderbilts founded universities and museums, gave away land and established trust foundations for the common good, getting little or nothing except name and fame from this munificence. There are and have been many like this in other countries and even in India. But in India it would seem there are many more who only want the growth of wealth and the sight of trunks full of crores when all their needs have been met, who are happy with that view and don't feel the need to give back anything for the greater good.

What do you call this, asked another, sheer greed or just another form of sickness, like addiction? Now, that's food for thought, mused MMM as he moved out of overhearing distance.

A more practical suggestion, however, it later struck him, is that they might consult the Indian Centre for Philanthropy, A 28 Chittaranjan Park, New Delhi 19! The Centre's mission, MMM is told, is "to strengthen and promote the growth of informed philanthropy ... to address important societal needs" in India! The Centre, one of whose founding members is S Guhan of the Madras Institute of Development Studies, will "advise donors on different ways of contributing to the public good, and help them make appropriate choices in their specific contexts". Perhaps the courts looking into all the vari-

ous cases of multi-crore scams should call in the ICP if the ill-gotten crores are ever found, MMM would like to think.

## Burn it not

How do you tell the Supreme Court they could be wrong, wondered *The Man From Madras* Musings listening to a group discussing incinerating waste.

The waste that was being talked about was hospital waste and it was going up in smoke after the Supreme Court had ruled that all hospitals must have incinerators and they must be used to burn the waste generated daily in hospitals. But the Court apparently did not consider closely the four types of waste generated in a hospital, namely, metal waste (needles etc.), biological waste (limbs, blood, body parts etc.), garbage waste (food, paper etc) and plastic waste (bloodbags etc).

In the case of one hospital cited, there are incinerators in place on the hospital's roof many storeys high and the garbage, once dumped in a local waterway, is now burnt here. That's fine, it was pointed out; the major problem of residents nearby was thought to be only the malodour generated by the burning of biological waste and garbage. Far more serious, however, MMM heard it pointed out, was the toxic smoke that polluted the air nearby when plastic refuse was burnt. The chlorides in plastics caused toxic fumes whose effect on humans was often a delayed one. Plastics, therefore, should NOT be burnt. But that's a point the Supreme Court did not take into consideration in its judgement! How do you tell them about it now, that both they and the consumer groups were wrong when burning was seen as the only solution to hospital wastes.

Perhaps this will catch someone's eye, MMM hopes.

## Frankly speaking

The Indian Army springs some pleasant surprises from time to time. And another of the happy ones was Lt. Gen. V R Raghavan of the Delhi Policy Group, a think-tank, who recently spoke at the Department of South and Southeast Affairs, University of Madras. The surprises was not only in the fluent, eloquent and logical manner he expressed his views but also his refreshing frankness. Another surprise was a nondescript member of the audience who took on the General with equal fluency and knowledge. The questioner proved to be a young Major not shy of asking for clarification from the General. The Army, *The Man From Madras* Musings mused, seemed to have a reservoir of well-read, scholarly talent that even the world outside would be pleased to possess.

Gen. Raghavan's talk ranged over a wide area of defence matters and among the

more significant points in his discussion were the following:

• India's nuclear deterrent has ensured the prevention of external conflict.

• But even as the danger of external conflict has diminished, internal conflict has increased in India and this threat to the nation is something the country needs to pay immediate and greater attention to.

• India, as the major power in South Asia, must take the lead in building up the confidence of the nations in the area, even if it means making concessions.

• Given the political situation in Asia, India's decision not to sign CTBT has merit. But India can generate greater confidence by unilaterally making a declaration that could lead to a South Asia Nuclear Arrangement. The declaration could state, among other things:

— India will not use nuclear force against any South Asian nation first or as an offensive weapon.

## SHORT 'N' SINAPPIY

— India will not use nuclear force against countries which do not have nuclear weapons.

— India will not use nuclear force against population centres.

• The Indian armed forces have fallen way behind in terms of equipment as the country has turned its attention more and more to becoming an economic rather than a political power. In this context, there is a dire need to modernise the services. The armed forces could be made a smaller wing of the government if it is modernised to give it greater firepower and is better paid to attract the talent necessary to handle the sophisticated equipment inducted.

Are people like General Raghavan listened to in the circles that matter in New Delhi, MMM wonders. Do the farmers' Prime Minister and the industrialists' and the businessmen's Finance Minister pay enough attention to the only force, obsolete as it has become, that India has to meet any challenges from the countries who rim it in a state of perpetual unease? Do they think India's size alone is enough of a deterrent? That certainly has not stopped countries around fomenting blood-sucking internal conflict nor is it likely to frighten China. A strong India, but a benevolent India, is necessary, General Raghavan appeared to advocate. But there was no one from Delhi to listen.

## The 1956 tree

Ralph Thorpe Jr., an English author just making his way up in the British literary scene, came into the life of an associate of *The Man From Madras* Musings seeking information about Madras. Thorpe, who has visited India

several times and who on this trip was looking for material for a travel book, had hitherto only passed through the city of his birth, which he left before he was ten. Drawn to the City by a couple of books on it, he decided to stay put and explore it this time.

It was as part of that exploration that he made contact with MMM's colleague. And a chance remark over lunch led to a serendipitous discovery for both. My father, who was with Gillander's, Arbuthnot, became the executive secretary of the Adyar Club and served it till his death in 1956, narrated Thorpe. Asked whether he had visited the Madras Club, that had merged with and taken over the Adyar Club, Thorpe said he hadn't, but he very much wanted to as the Adyar Club had written to the family years ago that a tree had been planted in its gardens in memory of his father and a memorial erected. And so, off the two went in search of a tree and a stone.

Believe it or not, the first tree Thorpe headed for in the

## SHORT 'N' SINAPPIY

rear garden of the Madras Club, a jacaranda, had a granite, milestone-like stone beneath it! And there, inscribed on it, were the words 'Ralph Thorpe - 1956! Only a couple of veterans in the Club knew anything about it! Certainly, that was a bit of Old Madras that was a bit of MMM's colleague, who insists he keeps learning something new about Madras every day.

Thorpe, who took the opportunity of the visit to have a good look around his father's old room and freeze it in memory will weave the myths, the epics, the past and the present in his next book which might well be entitled *From Avadh to Arcot*, two territories which still have titular heads drawing the pensions Victoria had granted them. It's a book that promises to be fascinating; the British have a way with travel books, making even the most mundane readable, MMM has found.

## In brief

• With the leading cricketers not available for a tie-up, Mahindra Ford's have picked one of India's few other major sports celebrities, Leander Paes, to promote the Ford Escort. *The Man From Madras* Musings understands that the one-year tie-up will start with a promotional film — and don't be surprised if Paes' bronze figures in it, for that was the clincher, MMM hears. But was chess player Anand in the running?

• The World Bank, *The Man From Madras* Musings hears, is preparing a detailed profile of Finance Minister P Chidambaram with the help of at least one retired senior Civilian from Madras. MMM is informed that this exercise is being gone through because the bank does not want to be

caught napping again, as it was when Deve Gowda became Prime Minister. The Bank had virtually nothing on him, so they had to scramble with the help of a retired Karnataka cadre IPS officer. Does this mean, MMM wonders, that the Bank sees Chidambaram as a possible Prime Minister before long? That's food for thought — especially in the leadership circles of the United Front, which might be wondering whether a banking name is a pawn in the game.

• Another Tamil Nadu political figure in Delhi who has caught the attention of pressmen is Minister for State for Petroleum and Natural Gas, T R Balu of the DMK. And he has done it by keeping mum, *The Man From Madras* Musings is told. Though he is qualified to talk on the subject, having both an engineering and a business background, he has preferred silence. MMM is told he has decided not to speak on his portfolio till he is more familiar with it. Now that's a change, isn't it?

• *The Man From Madras* Musings was told that at a recent Press Conference, in New Delhi, FICCI Chairman Deepak Banker was repeatedly addressed as 'Mr Bunker' by a senior journalist. When the amiable Madras industrialist finally decided to call halt to his name-change, he told the journalist, "I do occasionally do a bunk and play golf. I also go bonkers some time. But I remain Mr Banker!"

## Business briefs

• Next in the automotive field to take a look at the environs of Madras has been Renault of France. They want to set up a truck plant and Government has offered them sites in any of three industrial areas — Gummidipoondi, Sriperumbudur and Maraimalaiagar. *The Man From Madras* Musings understands. Farm-trac of the Escorts group has also been eyeing Tamil Nadu to expand its capacity with a 12,000-tractor, Rs.200 crore facility. Other companies in this field which have still not taken a decision on where they will finally settle, but who were impressed with Tamil Nadu's offerings, are Volvo of Sweden (trucks), BMW of Germany (luxury cars) and New Holland Tractors (India) Ltd. And now the Government has invited Maruti's new plant, too!

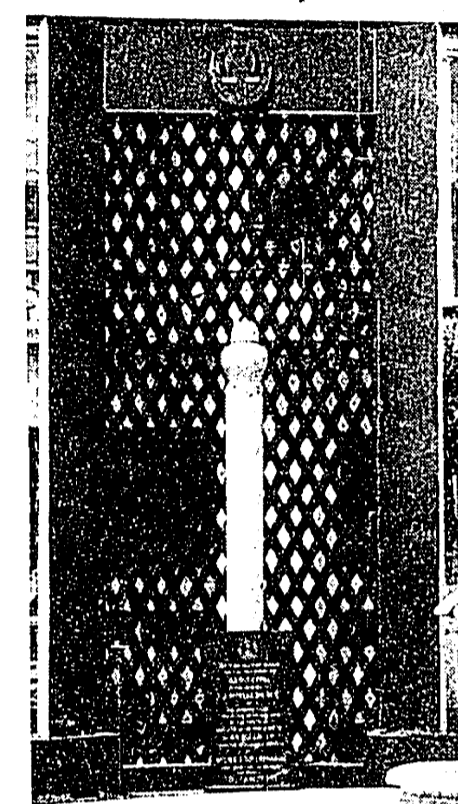
• *The Man From Madras* Musings recently heard that 20 per cent of Bill Gates' whiz kids were SOUTH Indians and that every one of his teams had a person from India's South on it. Gates, MMM was also told, was due to visit South India a couple of times in the next six months — and he would not only be looking for South Indian talent (educated in South Indian schools) but would also be thinking of setting up shop here.

MMM

OUR READERS WRITE

## Police Headquarters

The Madras Police was instituted statutorily in 1859 by the enactment of the Madras Police Act, providing for a regular police force with a graded hierarchy of officers headed by an Inspector-General. This pattern was copied



The Police Martyrs' Column F.V. Anul refers to. (Photograph by V.S. RAGHAVAN.)

almost word for word by the Centre in the enactment of the Indian Police Act in 1861! Thus, the Madras Police have pride of place in the history of the police in India.

The police headquarters in Madras, which was housed in temporary rented accommodation in 1859, was shifted in 1880 to a magnificent building situated in spacious grounds at the junction of South Beach Road and Edward Elliot's Road, exactly opposite where Queen Mary's College was founded in 1914. The building was originally a Masonic Lodge and even today you will find Masonic symbols encrusted in cement on the inner walls of the building.

In 1959, the Madras Police celebrated its centenary and to mark the historic occasion a Police Martyrs' Column was unveiled by the then Home Minister, Mr. Bhaktavatsalam. The column is inscribed with the following emotionally stirring words:

Our thoughts return to all those officers and men who have made the Madras Police what it is today. Once more we hear the laughter with which they greeted every hardship. Once more we see them in their sojournings, now shivering with wet and cold, now scorched by a pitiless and burning sun. Uncomplaining they endure stress and strain and at the last even wounds and death!

A couple of years ago, the State Government announced its decision to demolish this historic building and build a new headquarters. Fortunately, the present Government under Chief Minister Karunanidhi has decided not to demolish the building and to shift the Police Headquarters back as soon as renovation is completed.

While announcing this decision in the Assembly, the Chief Minister quoted a passage from a book written by me in 1976, *A Policeman's Diary*, in which I had referred

to the Police Headquarters building as a beautiful structure and the only one of its kind in the whole world situated on the seafont.

F.V. Arul  
347 Pantheon Road  
Egmore  
Madras 600 008.

## Chennai or Madras?

I see no valid reason for not changing over from Madras to Chennai. Why should the city not be named after a Tamilian of Telugu origin? Continued use of English language is good for the country, but not anglicisation.

This question of change is not so important as to trouble our minds.

I would suggest that you may also start a tabloid newspaper *Chennai Cheythigal* in Tamil targeted towards the lower income groups of Chennai. You will be doing a great service to the nation, at the same time continuing to interact with your readers in a spicy, easy and titillating manner. I am sure you will find the response from readers as pleasant as now, may be livelier, more rewarding.

M Ramachandran  
'Shangrila'  
52, 22nd Cross Street  
Madras 600 090.

## Think twice

It is a sad moment for the name 'Madras'. At this juncture, I appeal on behalf of all MM readers,

For the price of a car, any college in India can have this comprehensive information-retrieval system today, offering worldwide response within seven days. This was the system Dr. D. Balasubramaniam advocated for Indian colleges in a talk in Madras recently (see MM, July 16) and which he has mailed to Madras Musings. The example is for a Biology Department, but each college can make its own choice.

## A Can-Manage-With Facility for a University Department in Biology

1 PENTIUM SYSTEM (66-200 MHz) with CD-ROM drive with a multi-user attachment for say, five or six connections (PC-386s OK) and software packages as needed. Printers with E-Mail Facility

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Total cost ~ Rs. 4 lakh  
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UPS ~ Rs. 0.5-1 lakh  
GRAND TOTAL ~ Rs. 6 lakh

that come what may, you retain the title *Madras Musings*! Let it serve as mute testimony to the glory of what was once known as Madras; and, who knows, may be about 350 years hence, if the then rulers chance upon your magazine in the archives, and go through it, they may finally decide to revert back to the origi-

nal name, to bring back the pristine glory of the City of Madras.

Hemant M Nahar  
13/1 Habibullah Road  
Madras 600 017.

## An eyeopener

The photograph of a woman rag picker carrying a bundle wrapped in a precious cloth (MM,

September 1) is most shocking. To say the least, it highlights the sad message of our achievements during the 50 years of independence and democratic governance.

We thank you and Rajind N Christy for the timely publication of such a picture, which should be an eyeopener to all these erring people in this country.

P K Raghavan

President

Environmental Protection Society  
23/3 Manali New Town  
Madras 600 103.

## First Principal?

In Ramanujam's letters (MM, June 16) there is mention of Tenati Suryanarayanan. I think that he was the first Principal of Alagappa College of Karaikudi in 1947-49. Could anyone confirm?

A Kulandairaj

Prof. & Head of the Dept. of Economics

Alagappa Govt Arts College  
Karaikudi 630 003.

## Getting it right

In MM, September 1, RKK has given a neat report. But the printer's devil has marred it by calling the Transport Minister 'Ponniah'! (He is Mr Ponmudi alias Deivasigamani.)

N Elango

H-11/1 Double Tank Colony  
Dr Ramasami Road  
Madras 600 078.

# Of gay gorillas and aggressive frogs

HARRY MILLER, a Fellow of the Zoological Society, regularly reviews books for the *Times Higher Education Supplement*, London. In two recent reviews, he narrates several anecdotes that are Harry at his best.

... zoos should be staffed with those who have made *Wild Mammals in Captivity* their essential textbook rather than a mere handbook...

The book has contributions dealing not only with the animals themselves but also with handling those who come to see them and who are often the cause of the problems the book addresses.

Vandalism, for example, has always been a problem. At London Zoo I would cheerfully have thrown in the humorist along with the tennis ball he cast into the gaping jaws of the gentle bull hippo called Neville, who died in agony of gastroenteritis weeks later, the ball being discovered on autopsies. Then we had the 12-year-old Camden Town entrepreneurs, one of whom was discovered to have dug a hole under a fence on the zoo's perimeter and was charging his friends admittance at substantially reduced fees. The same community once surprised zoo authorities with its ability to produce common English grass-snakes, needed in winter to feed a king cobra, a species that lives exclusively on other snakes — until it was discovered that the urchins were

stealing the zoo's own stock of this hibernating species from an unguarded open-air enclosure and selling them back to us.

Many zoos have now banned the feeding of their animals by the public. Reindeer, for example, will readily eat bread but die of it, many primates will eat practically anything thrown at them by visitors, but in doing so acquire tuberculosis, a major killer in all zoos, and other diseases to which, unlike ourselves, these primates have no inherited resistance...

The appendix on interzoo breeding loans is perhaps the most important section, given the need to save rare species in captivity. An example of how successful this can be is that of the beautiful Arabian oryx, a few of which had been preserved in various zoos around the world and were eventually brought together in Arizona with so triumphant a breeding success that many were returned to their native Arabian deserts.

Sexual behaviour and reproduction are not, as is commonly supposed, entirely the result of pure instinct. I knew a young male chacma baboon that grew up alone in captivity, without the company of other baboons. When he had matured and was put in with a female of his own species in oestrus he became tremendously excited as she continually presented to him, but in-

stead of mounting her he sat beside her and masturbated furiously, not knowing what else there was to do. And I have known even a gay gorilla and a gay orangutan — the latter attacking and severely biting a female companion of my own species I brought to see him. Female primates commonly reject their young for the same reason: they have never had the opportunity of learning from others of their species what they are supposed to do with the little things. Hand-rearing is therefore the only approach...

Perhaps because I am fond of frogs — lived for 20 years in a house called 'The Frogs' in a south Indian village — and because all who live in tropical India are acutely aware of the cacophony of the frog chorus which accompanies the first heavy rains of the monsoon, I seized this volume (*A Natural History of Amphibians*) with more than usual eagerness and delight...

I knew that the giant frog of tropical West African rain forests goes up to seven pounds, but I had not known of the smallest species, no bigger than a fingernail. The book also offers us the obvious but perhaps not glaringly apparent lesson that the amphibians are a vital link in the food chain from, for example, the invertebrates to many birds and snakes. Herons, many egrets, snakes like the keel-backs of tropical rice-fields

would by themselves be unable to exploit the prodigious protein food source provided by insects such as mosquitoes and their larvae; frogs and other amphibians eat such invertebrates and are themselves a food source for the birds and reptiles.

It is both amusing and alarming to learn of a giant tropical frog aggressive enough to bite even lions and humans that trespass within its breeding grounds. In a lifetime working with animals of all kinds I have been bitten countless times by a wide variety of species — from the cat family (but not, happily, the larger ones) through to reptiles (but not, happily, the venomous ones) and even bats — but not so far by a frog.

Venomous animals are generally thought to be confined to snakes, though in fact only a comparatively few species are dangerously venomous to man, so the venoms of the amphibians, as well as marine animals, are overlooked.

Here again, the authors astonish us: we are well aware of the "poison arrow frogs" whose poison is used by Amazonian tribes, but not that there are 56 many species of them, nor that the poison of certain newts is biochemically almost identical to that of the puffer fish and other deadly marine animals.

This poison, known as tetrodotoxin or TTX, is the most lethal non-protein substance known.

# Charged for the future

The State's industrial front continues to shine bright. Enhancing brightness is the MoU the State has signed with a Japanese company for manufacture of telephone cables (outlay Rs 41.5 cr). Other projects being pursued by the State are: bulk drugs and intermediates (Rs 45 cr); blood bags and IV fluid (Rs 60 cr); benzyl chemicals (Rs 40 cr); and a Liquefied Natural Gas receiving

Company, Madras's 250 MW lignite-based thermal project at Neyveli.

As for the 500 MW Tuticorin thermal power project promoted by Tamil Nadu Petro Products Ltd., competitive bids for machinery are being issued. Engineering procurement and construction bids are also being called for North Madras II Stage and the 1320 MW

## Venkatchari Jagannathan looks at THE INDUSTRIAL SCENE

terminal (Rs 1200 cr). The Centre is also likely to clear the Rs 240 cr, 100% export-oriented refinery unit of the Pennar Group, Hyderabad.

But will there be sufficient power to run these projects when they go on stream a couple of years down the line? The 14th Power Survey Committee of the Central Electricity Authority has projected the States' requirement for '96-'97 as 30,528 million units (mu).

Despite the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board planning to generate about 30,991 mu (own generation 22,730mu, purchases 8261 mu), the net availability, after auxiliary consumption and line losses of 1656 mu and 4957 mu respectively, is likely to be 24,348 mu. Where is the difference coming from?

For the current year, the TNEB has made provisions for the following projects: a 5 MW additional unit at Narimanam, the Murkuthy Dam Hydroelectric Project, the Aliyar small hydroelectric project, the 86 MW Thambaraparani hydroelectric project, the 30 MW gas turbine projects at Perungulam and Kovilkalappal, and the 200 MW Sirumugai gas turbine project.

In order to accelerate bridging the demand-supply gap (the State has a yearly load growth of 10%), the TNEB signed 16 MoUs with several private parties in 1995, of which four have got techno-economic clearance from the CEA. The new State Government, after reviewing the MoUs, recently signed the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with GMR Vasavi Industries, Hyderabad, to build a 200 MW diesel engine power plant at Basin Bridge at an outlay of Rs 751 cr. Other private power projects likely to enter the PPA stage soon are: the Dyna Makowski Power Company, Madras's 300 MW combined cycle gas turbine power project at Pillaiperumalnallur and the ST-CMS Electric

Cuddalore Power Company Ltd, Madras.

Meanwhile, TIDCO has called for bids for 20 short-gestation liquid fuel-based power projects (between 40MW to 100MW). Speaking at the Energy Summit '96, Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi said about 200 MW of power are expected

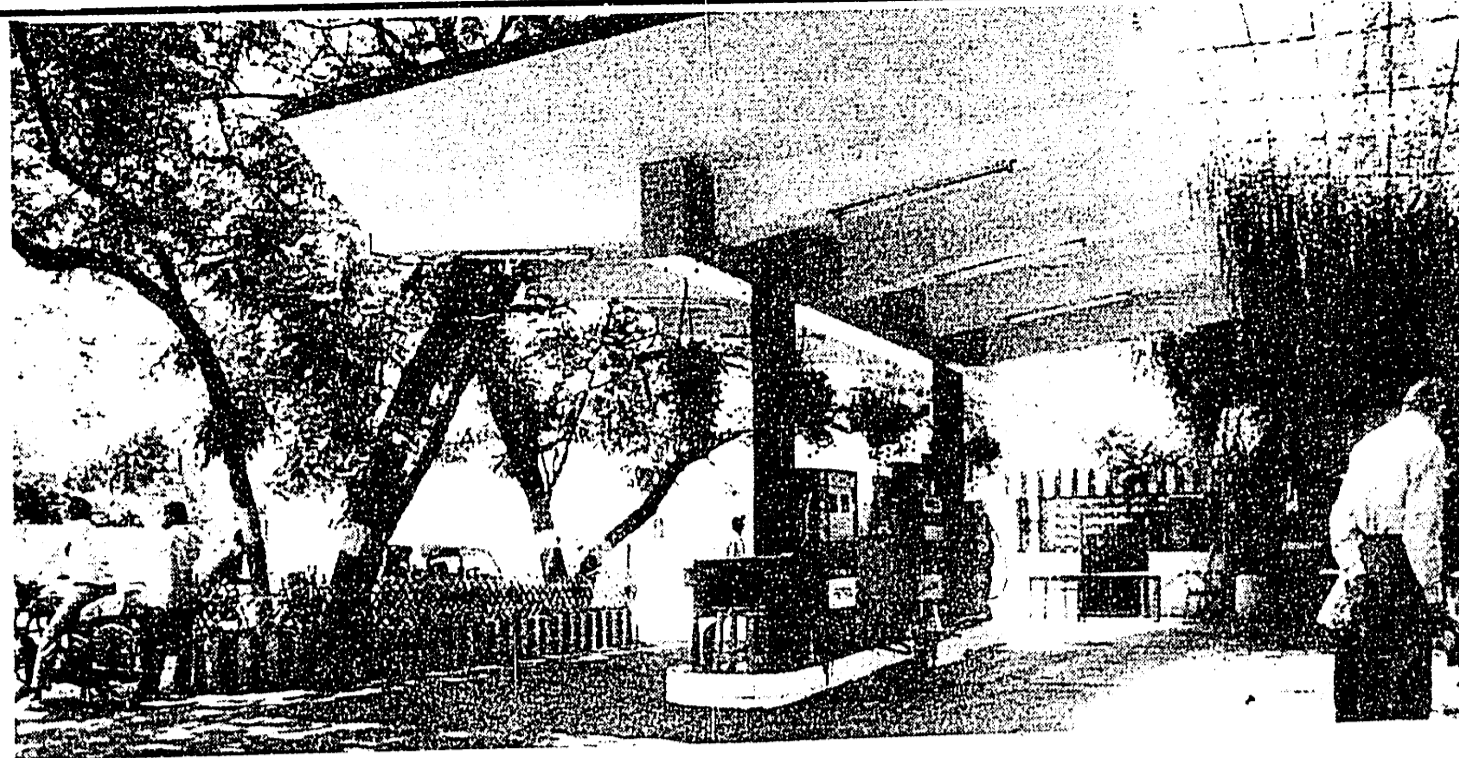
(Continued on Page 5)

# Tyres: A crowded way ahead

In 1960, the first tyre factory owned by an Indian was set up in Tiruvottriyur, near Madras — the Madras Rubber Factory (MRF) — and the hegemony of multinational firms like Goodyear, Firestone and Dunlop was broken! With the next wave of Indianisation — between 1974 and 1985, following the entry of the Modis, Singhania, TVS, and the Raunaq Group — the Indian tyre industry became truly Indian. But no more is it the impregnable Indian bastion it seemed to be. The MNCs are coming back... with a vengeance. Luring them in is the booming automobile industry and the excellent prospects for tyres.

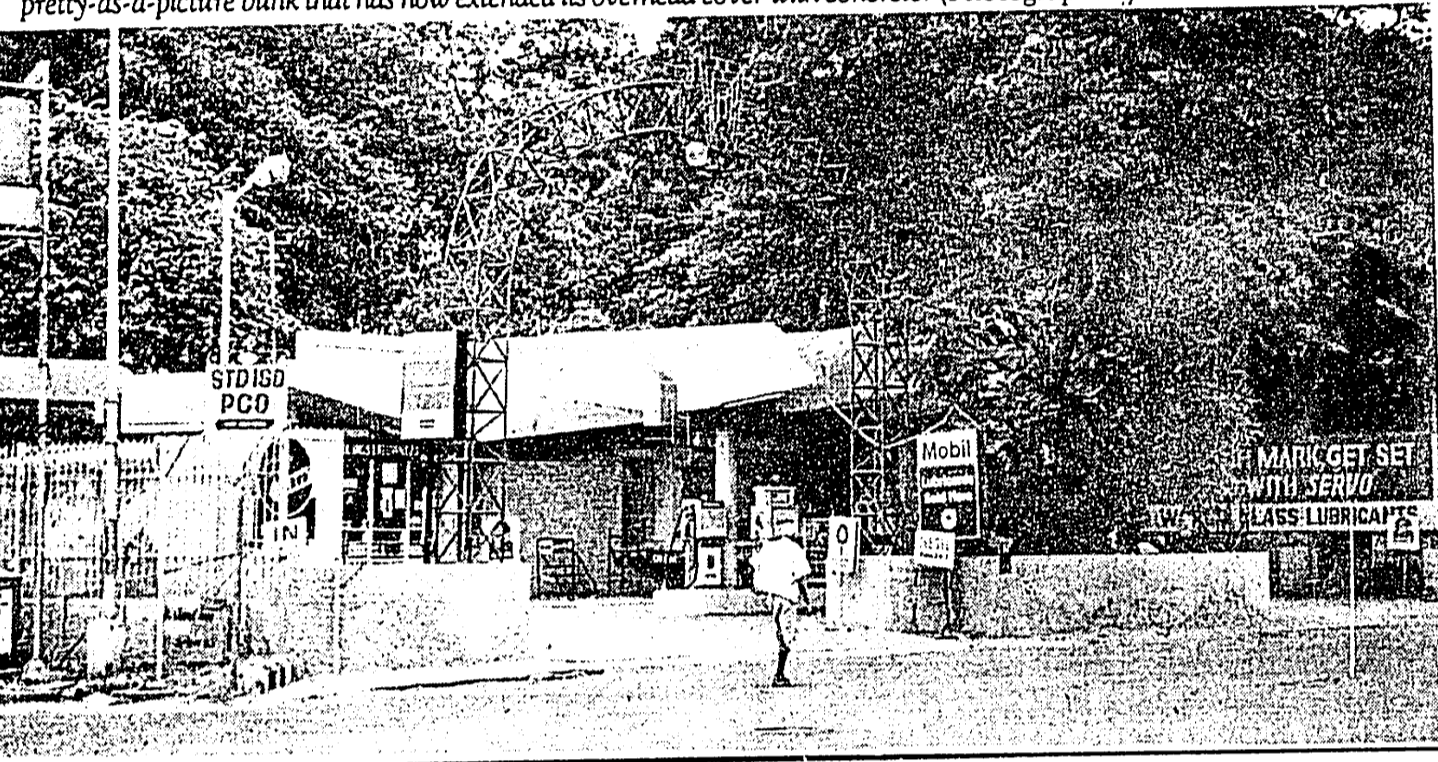
The Indian tyre industry took root in the 1920's when foreign companies like Firestone, Goodyear and Dunlop began imports into the country. By 1935, these multinationals had set up production bases in India and were in total command of the industry. Then came MRF, which is now the undisputed leader of the industry, owning six manufacturing units and having a 23% market share in India. Within the next 25 years, most of the present Indian majors ventured to secure a cut in what had become a Rs 7000 cr industry with investments exceeding Rs 2000 cr.

The most momentous happening (as far as associated industries were concerned) was the arrival of the Maruti. Her-



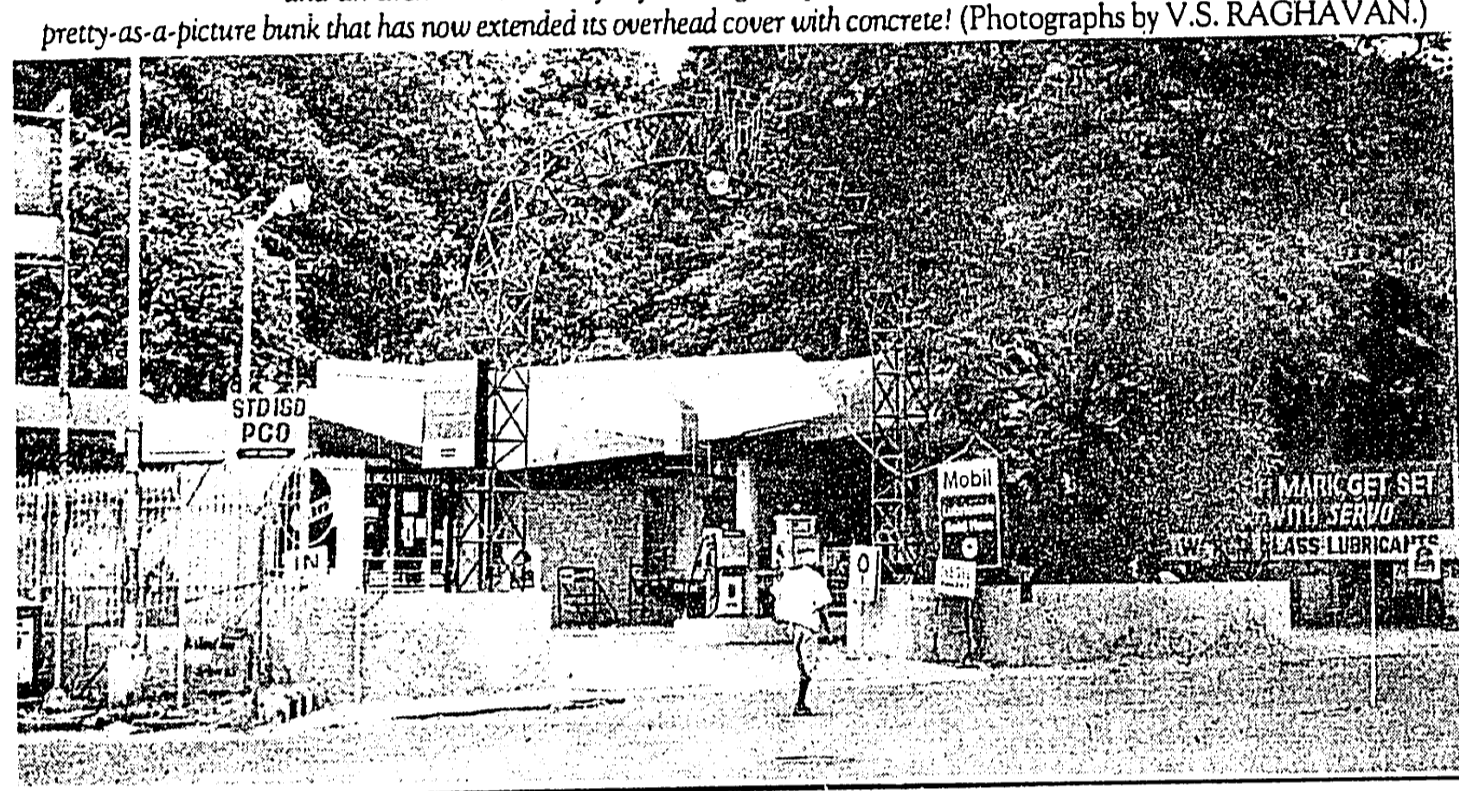
The Woodlands petrol and service station on Dr. Radhakrishnan Salai used to be a shady stop to fill up.

Not only did the trees offer plenty of shade, but creepers hanging from an overhead frame ensured cooling shade between the pumps and the office. This overhead green used to stretch to the Sullivan's Road end of the bunk, but that's the green that's vanished in our NEW. New walls and an arch — no doubt for flowering creepers — will do nothing for a pretty-as-a-picture bunk that has now extended its overhead cover with concrete! (Photographs by V.S. RAGHAVAN.)



THE OLD...

...& THE NEW



pretty-as-a-picture bunk that has now extended its overhead cover with concrete! (Photographs by V.S. RAGHAVAN.)

aiding a revolution, it spawned a new breed of high technology cars — the Ford Escort being the latest. It also sparked off a revival in the demand for tyres — not just for ordinary tyres at that, but for the radial tyres. And with the automobile industry growing at about 35% annually, it has pushed up tyre sales in the process (tyre sales are projected to expand by 20% in FY'97).

Smelling blood, the MNCs have started moving in, by way



of fully-owned subsidiaries and collaborations. Unlike Indian firms, which had a cross-ply/radial production ratio of 95/5, the MNC technology is totally radial-based. The MNCs who have come in recently, and others who are planning to, include Continental AG of Germany, Michelin of France, and Bridgestone and Goodyear of USA. Though this advent will undoubtedly result in better tyres, it could also result in a shake-up, for the threat of overcapacity is menacing the industry.

Following the delicensing of tyre manufacture in 1988, the industry capacity had jumped

from 17 million units to 36 million units in 1995, which is in excess of total demand. Added to this, most of the tyre corporates are in the process of expansion, mainly to tap the potential of the radial car tyre segment. Thus, the new foreign players are gatecrashing into what is already a crowded party. In the ensuing melée that is bound to follow, only the efficient and economic units will remain unscathed. I wonder how many Indian firms will be in that elite group.

While keeping an eye on the tyre market, here are three other bits of advice to consider:

**Tamilnadu Newsprint and Papers (CMP: Rs 71):** TNPL, the pioneer in the manufacture of bagasse-based newsprint as well as printing and writing paper (PWP), runs a 1,80,000 tpa paper plant. Though it has many distinctions, such as the highest operating margins in the industry, capacity utilisation of around 100% in the last four years, and a zero inventory position for the sixth consecutive year, its future prospects are bound to be affected by the poor outlook for the paper industry.

International prices of paper and, consequently, domestic prices have been on a downtrend. Further, with newsprint manufacturers shifting to the PWP segment, there is the threat of overcapacity. Technically, it is difficult to analyse the share since it has been poorly traded till now. With very little record to fall back upon, and since the share prices are creating new lows, it would be wise not to enter the scrip at current levels.

**Sterling Holiday Resorts (India) (CMP: Rs 43.50):** SHRIL,

the champion of the time-share industry, commenced operations as a private limited company in 1986. From a two-resort company in 1990, it has evolved into a well-diversified organisation, with 11 operational resorts and 30 more under construction. In addition to the primary business of selling time shares, it has also ventured into hotels, software exports, export of processed foods, and a host of other activities.

The working results of SHRIL for the FY 1995-96 were impressive, with the turnover improving by almost 128% over the previous year. Its PAT of Rs 24.40 cr translates into an EPS of Rs 13.40.

Based on its past performance and the prospects, we project sales of Rs 172 cr and PAT of about Rs 28.75 cr. This would mean an EPS of Rs 15.80. Buying can be considered at current levels, with a stop loss at Rs 39 for short- to medium-term gains.

**Srichakra Tyres (CMP: Rs 37.00):** Incorporated in 1982, this Madurai-based TVS Group company is engaged in the manufacture of tyres and tubes for two-wheelers and three-wheelers, with the major portion of its output picked up by the group concern, TVS Suzuki. The capacity of its plant has been expanded to 33 lakh tyres per annum, and will fully contribute to the earnings from this month.

For the year ending March 1996, Srichakra registered a turnover of Rs 103.66 cr and a PAT of Rs 3.67 cr, with an EPS of Rs 5.10. It is expected to post a sales of Rs 110 cr and a residual earning of Rs 4.73 cr registering an EPS of Rs 6.60 for the current fiscal. The scrip can be bought at the Rs 30 region, if a positive buy signal emerges. Wait for the buy signals.

**K. Gopalakrishnan**

# The farmers' scientist

(By A Special Correspondent)

Madras owes much to Dr M S Swaminathan for settling in the city after retirement and, more importantly, for deciding to establish the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) here, using his earnings, the very considerable award monies he has received, and resources which he has personally mobilised from interna-

tional and national institutions and the corporate sector.

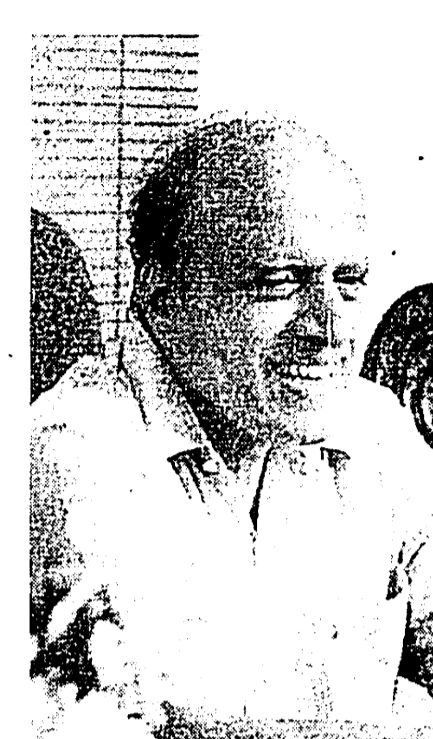
MSSRF focuses on issues of global wellbeing, ranging from ecology and environment, sustainable development, farmers' rights and intellectual property rights, global warming, ecotechnie (a new approach to decision-making that integrates economics, technology, and natural and social sciences to consider management alternatives and long-term consequences of development) and a multimedia information bank, networked with major global institutions. MSSRF is also becoming a meeting point for leading scientists, administrators, academicians as well as leaders and decision-makers from all over the world.

The efforts of this one scientist have catalysed investment of over Rs.20 crore for research on sustainable agricultural and rural development in Madras!

Mankombu Sambasivan Swaminathan (MSS), acknowledged by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as "the father of the economic ecology movement", was born in Kumbakonam in Thanjavur District, on August 7, 1925. He went to Travancore University, where he got his bachelor's degree in 1944.

MSS's father, Dr M S Sambasivan, was a leading medical practitioner in Kumbakonam and he and his wife Thangam had three sons and a daughter. Dr Sambasivan was from an agricultural family in Mankombu in Kuttanad, the rice bowl of Kerala. He moved to Kumbakonam in the early years of this century and established a good practice. He was a compassionate doctor and cared much for the poor. He was elected Chairman of the Kumbakonam Municipality.

MSS recalls that "Kumbakonam, in the early Thirties, was well-known for its mosquitoes. Two out of three of the town's population suffered from elephantiasis or filaria. It was manmade and not God-



Dr. M.S. Swaminathan

given. My father, Dr Sambasivan, stood for election to the Municipal Council with the sole purpose of eradicating mosquitoes. He organised extensive spraying of crude oil emulsion (DDT was not known then). He succeeded in eradicating mosquitoes, but mosquitoes took their revenge and killed him. He died young."

As a student, Swaminathan spent a lot of time in the lagoons and rice fields of Kuttanad and on the small rubber plantation the family owned in Wayanad. He was fascinated by nature and noted the prob-

lems posed by it. He observed, with every rain, the Kuttanad waterways turning red, due to soil erosion.

His passion for agriculture led him to the famous Madras Agricultural College in Coimbatore. After graduation from the College, he appeared for the IPS examination and was selected. Around the same time, he got an offer to work as an Associate of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi. He chose the latter. His specialisation was in cytogenetics and plant breeding.

After a successful stint at IARI, MSS went in 1949 to the Agricultural University at Wageningen, in The Netherlands, as a UNESCO Fellow in Genetics. He then went on to the School of Agriculture at the University of Cambridge in UK to do his Ph.D. After his doctoral degree, he joined the University of Wisconsin in the United States in 1952 as a Research Associate in Genetics.

It was during his stay at Cambridge that he met Mina Boothalingam, an outstanding economics student and a forceful speaker with nationalistic ideals and dreams. He married her in April 1955, after he returned to the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, as a scientist in its genetics department. "Mina has been a great strength to me. She took all the responsibility of raising our three children — Sowmya, Nithya and Madura — leaving me to concentrate on my academic and administrative work," says MSS.

**Dr. M.S. Swaminathan will receive the 1996 Blue Planet Prize of the Asahi Glass Foundation of Japan from the Emperor of Japan on October 28th. The prize is stated to be 'the Nobel Prize for environmental science and technology'. It is the latest international recognition of the work being done by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation. The Foundation will soon be home of the JRD Tata Ecotechnology Centre and the Asian Ecotechnology Network. On this occasion, Madras Musings pays tribute to Dr. Swaminathan with this two-part profile.**

MSS soon became the head of the genetics division and then the Director of IARI. It was during his term as the Director of IARI that he was involved in the Green Revolution. Working closely with Minister C Subramaniam, Agriculture Secretary B Sivaraman and Dr Norman Borlaug, he helped achieve quantum growth in wheat production, which led to the country's self-sufficiency in foodgrains production. MSS always passed on the credit to the farmers. "But for their relentless support and absolute trust in our new seeds and technology, this would not have been possible," he insists. (Courtesy: *Industrial Economist, Madras*).

(To be concluded next fortnight)

# The Industrial Scene

(Continued from Page 4)

from the private projects by the end of 1998 and this was expected to go upto 3000 MW by 2002 AD and 9000 MW by 2005 AD. He also referred to the potential to generate 2000 MW by windmills in the State. According to him, the State adds 100 MW capacity of wind energy every year. In respect of co-generation from the present levels of 55 MW generated by the sugar mills, the capacity is expected to go upto 88 MW during the current year. By 1999, the State would cogenerate 500 MW.

According to TNEB officials, the State would be self-sufficient in its power require-

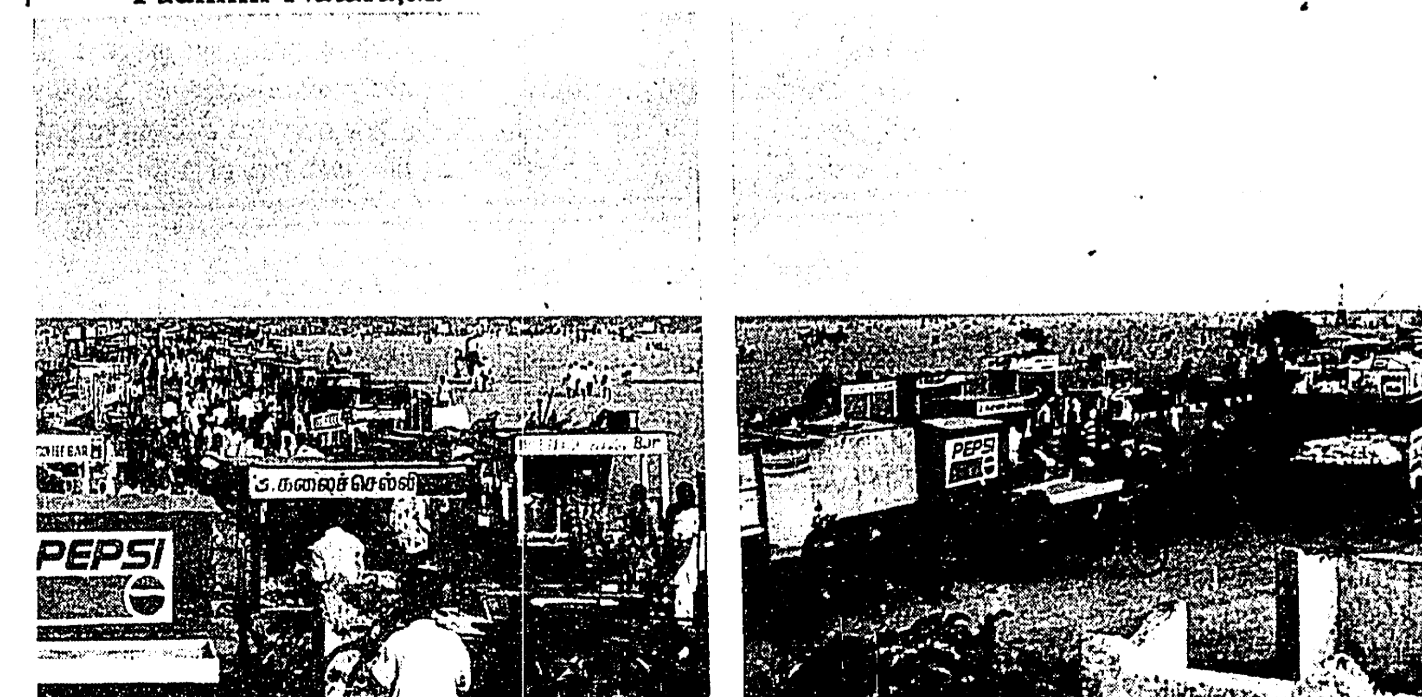
ments by the end of the Tenth Plan, i.e. 2007 A.D., with the anticipated additional capacity of 9000 MW.

Meanwhile, to augment present energy availability, the TNEB is concentrating on reducing the transmission and distribution (T&D) losses at an outlay of Rs 500 cr. The Board's loss in T&D is 17% — the lowest in the South — against the national average of 22%. Plans are being taken to bring it down to 15% in two years' time. The Board is also looking at the possibilities of retro-fitting its hydel plants, which, if done, would increase the generation by 15% and plant life by another 30 years.

## SPIC projects

SPIC has set up a Bio-Process Laboratory in a joint venture with Anna University for commercialisation of biotechnology. The company also has a collaborative programme with Madras University, whereby plant extracts are screened for treating three major diseases — hepatitis B and C, AIDS, Fungal Infections. The company has also signed an MOU with IISc, Bangalore, for developing anti-TB medicines.

The million pound question is with whom the new foreign entity will continue its relationship, as a three-way joint venture is ruled out. It is, however, being pointed out that India is at the bottom of the agenda of the merging insurance companies, as their priority is the formalisation of the merger in the 15 or so countries where they had been carrying on business prior to the new arrangement.



Marina Beach... with its buses and shops and stages... the sorry state the crowds leave it behind is little seen in this photograph by V.S. RAGHAVAN.



(Quizmaster V.V. RAMAN's questions are from the period September 1 to 15. Questions 16 to 20 pertain to Madras.)

1. What does the 81st Constitution Amendment Bill recently introduced in Parliament seek to do?
2. When the CTBT was passed on September 10th, three countries voted against 158 approvals. One was India. Name the other two.
3. Name the 30-year-old from Mamasapuram in Kamarajar District who claims to have discovered a 'herbal fuel'.
4. Which State has drawn up a pioneering scheme of privatising zoos?
5. After much controversy surrounding the appointment, who is to be the next Chief of Naval Staff?
6. Why did the U.S. launch a cruise missile attack on Iraq recently, only to draw disapproval even from major allies?
7. A memorial pillar has been planned at Uthukottai. For what?
8. Archaeologists recently claimed to have discovered the embalmed heart of a legendary Scottish king, the one who gained his country's independence from the English. Name him.
9. Computer scientists at Cray Research in Wisconsin recently unveiled a number with 378, 632-digits. It is the largest of which category of numbers?
10. Name the prominent industrialist and chairman of EID Parry who passed away on September 4th.
11. Which Indian was awarded the prestigious U Thant Award on September 10th?
12. A far-reaching invention by Delhi-based inventor Sandeep Jaidka has got a patent in the U.S. What is the invention?
13. Which prominent MP and a former PM's son, known for his party hopping, quit the Congress to form a new party in U.P. recently?
14. Which team won the prestigious Buchi Babu cricket tourney in Madras recently?
15. Who beat whom to claim the Credit Suisse Masters' rapid chess tournament, the unofficial top prize for the world's fastest player?
16. Who are the candidates of the DMK and JP (which has the support of the AIADMK) in the forthcoming Madras Mayoral elections?
17. What is the Corporation of Madras planning to build at Loane Square in Georgetown and in the Panagal Park area in TNagar?
18. Where in Madras do 'mountains move and rivers stay still'?
19. The Southern Railways' seventh computerised reservation centre in the city was opened on September 9th at...
20. Which telephone exchange in the city is exploring the possibility of providing cordless phone connections to eliminate cable faults?

(Answers on p.8)

# Home — on the last question!

What is the currency of Puerto Rico? It was the answer to that one question that broke the tie between Citibank and Maxworth Homes and sent the latter into the Brand Equity Quiz finals to be held in Delhi, on October 6th. Maxworth Homes getting it right, by saying 'US dollar', it was later narrated, was only because the father of one of the team members had recently visited Puerto Rico.

Only a few minutes before this tie-breaker, three teams had tied for first place; Maxworth Homes, Citibank and Sanmar Finance. On the first question to break this tie, Sanmar were eliminated. Maxworth Homes got home on the next question.

Over 50 teams took part in the Brand Equity Quiz '96, sponsored by *The Economic Times*. Open to only corporate teams, it unfortunately struck a discordant note when rival publishing houses, like *The Hindu* and *Business India*, were not permitted to participate in the quiz.

The teams that did take part found the quiz following the usual format — a preliminary round and a seven-round final. But what was unusual was a Rs.15000 entrance fee per team!

Quizmaster Derek O'Brien came up with some interesting rounds. One was called 'Editor's Choice', where the right answer had to be picked from among four options. Another round was called 'The Boss is Generous'. In this round, questions had to be framed for the answers which appeared on the

screen. Some sample questions, or rather answers, are:

- He was a truck driver with Crown Electric Company
  - A Malay kite.
- Most of the questions were, however, straight questions, with a couple of audio and visual ones thrown in. These questions included:—
- Workers of this profession went on a strike in the early 19th Century in Calcutta

for the first time. From which profession were they?

- Which book did Bernard Shaw describe as his most successful book?
- What is snail-mail?
- What is the Perfect 10 list in *Forbes* magazine?

The winners of the Madras round of the quiz, Maxworth Homes, walked away with CD Players. And now they have a

chance to compete with six other teams from other metros for return tickets to Rio de Janeiro (for the winners) and return tickets to Victoria Falls and Johannesburg (for the runners-up).

S.P.

## ANSWERS

1. What does the 81st Constitution Amendment Bill recently introduced in Parliament seek to do? (6) It is the first of the refer to every other form of mail as the palanquin bearers. (5) People using E-mail the logo of Malaysian Airlines? (4) His for he became a singer? (3) What is the name of the Elvis Presley do-be-earnings.

## Mouli helps L.A. Police

In Alta Lama, a delightful small town at the foot of a hill about fifty-plus miles from Los Angeles, lives Mouli, who runs a successful business of his own in computer software systems, like many Indians in the U.S. He is already a millionaire, and well on his way to becoming a billionaire!

The son of an executive in the Seshasayee Group, Mouli studied in India and, after short stints in a few companies in India and the U.S., went on to achieve great success on his own. His main business is providing the Los Angeles Police Department with software systems for the control of traffic, crime and fires. Couldn't we use him!

Steel baron Ron Barnett told me that for a city of 6.7 million people and 6.8 millions cars, the strength of the city police was only about eight thousand.

Angelenos do not wish to pay the increased taxes necessary to enlarge the LAPD. Instead, they choose to have private security forces, and that is the reason why there are so many security agencies at work in L.A.

I accompanied Mouli twice on his journeys from L.A. to Alta Lama at night and the long soothing drives under a canopy of clear blue skies with twinkling stars was sheer delight as we passed many small towns with lovely Spanish names like Pomona ... Covina ... West Covina ... Pasadena ...

West Covina has a celebrity Tamilian. The well-known Tamil writer and *veena* player Gita Bennet lives here. She is the talented daughter of Dr. S. Ramanathan, an authority on classical Carnatic music.

At Mouli's fabulous split-level house in a two-acre plot,

he grows a variety of vegetables for the kitchen, practically all the vegetables we eat in Madras. He grows potatoes, onions, tomatoes, brinjals (egg-plants in the US!) that are larger in size than what we have here. For example, an average Californian brinjal is as big as a child's head!

In spite of having decided to make the US home, the Moulis have not forgotten their roots in Tamil Nadu. All are strict vegetarians and the traditional Thanjavur-style *sappadu* is cooked every day and night. With lots of driving around to do during the day, Mouli's main meal is dinner. His wife, who is from Ashok Nagar, is an expert cook and I enjoyed a sample of her expertise at dinner one pleasant July night. It certainly seemed like home.

More later.

Randor Guy

sicum and fry till the tomatoes become mushy. Pour in the egg mixture. Stir over low heat till the egg is well cooked and is semi-dry. Remove from heat and serve on hot buttered pieces of toast.

### KHEEMA CHILLI FRY (Serves 6)

1/2 kg mutton mince  
4 ripe tomatoes  
2 onions  
10 flakes garlic  
6-8 green chillies (medium size)  
1 cm ginger  
4 tbs oil  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp cumin seeds  
1/2 bunch coriander leaves

### Method

Clean the mince and keep aside. Chop all vegetables. Grind green chillies, ginger, garlic, cumin seeds and coriander leaves into a fine paste.

Heat oil in a thick vessel, add the chopped onion and fry till the onion is light gold in colour. Add the ground *masala* and fry on a slow fire till the raw smell of garlic disappears.

Put in the mince, cover with a lid and fry well till all water evaporates and the mince is nearly cooked. Add tomatoes and cook till the tomatoes becomes mushy and the oil floats on top. Add one cup of water and salt

and cook on low heat till the mince is well cooked and the gravy is thick. Serve hot with rice or rotis.

### MASALA CHICKEN

3/4 kg chicken  
4 onions  
4 tomatoes  
3 green chillies  
10 flakes garlic  
1 cm ginger  
6 tbs oil  
1 tbs coriander leaves  
1 1/2 tsp salt  
1 1/2 tsp coriander powder (level)  
1 tsp cumin powder  
1 tsp chilli powder  
1/2 tsp garam masala powder  
1/4 tsp turmeric powder.

### Method

Cut chicken into medium-sized pieces, remove skin and wash well. Chop all vegetables.

Grind two onions, ginger, garlic, coriander powder, cumin powder, chilli powder, turmeric powder and *garam masala* powder into a fine paste.

Heat oil in a thick vessel, add the rest of the onions and fry till the onions turn light gold in colour. Add the *masala* and fry till the oil starts seeping out. Add chicken and fry well till the chicken is well roasted and all water dries up. Add tomatoes and salt and fry till the tomatoes become mushy—dissolve completely. Add 1 1/2 cups of hot water, and cook covered over low heat, till the chicken is cooked and the gravy thick. Add slit green chillies and coriander leaves. Simmer for a few minutes and serve piping hot with rice or rotis.

### Want to muse with MUSINGS?

If you would like to be put on *Madras Musings'* mailing list, just fill in the form below (use block letters/type) and post it to M/s. Lokavani Hall-Mark Press Pvt Ltd, 62/63 Greames Road, MADRAS-600 006.

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Note: Overseas postage extra. Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Gulf: Rs. 375 a year. US and Europe: Rs 425 a year. Cheques payable to M/s. Lokavani Hall-Mark Press.



M.S. Subbulakshmi has seen a thousand moons. And on her 60th birthday we wish her many more with these tributes. They may be twice-told tales to some, but they sound fresh every time they are told.

M.S. — the 'Queen of Songs'

## The 'Queen of Songs'

On an afternoon in April 1944, Rajaji told us that he had promised Babu five benefit music recitals by my wife for the Kasturba Memorial Fund. I said his word to Babu would be fulfilled. What Subbulakshmi treasures most is the blessings she received from Babu after the recitals (see re-production).

Gandhiji heard Subbulakshmi for the first time in 1941. Subbulakshmi and I were on our way to Calcutta from Bombay for the shooting of *Savithri*. We broke journey at Nagpur to have the *darshan* of Gandhiji at Sevagram. While sitting with the other Ashramites, to participate in the evening prayers, quite a few recognised Subbulakshmi. They must have appraised Gandhiji of her presence. I do not remember who actually asked Subbulakshmi to sing in the prayer, but she sang a few *bhajans*.

Manu Gandhi, who was present, wrote in her *Gujarati Diary* (which has been published as a book): "In the prayer Babuji commended Subbulakshmi Ben for the sweetness of her voice and said, 'Her voice is exceedingly sweet; she loses herself in *bhajan*. During prayer one must lose oneself in God. To sing a *bhajan* is one thing, to sing it by losing oneself in God is quite different.'"

Some time in September 1947 there was a message from New Delhi A.I.R. asking me if Subbulakshmi could go to New Delhi to sing a few *bhajans* for Babu on the occasion of his birthday. I had to with profound regret express our inability to do so, due to some do-

Little did we imagine that was going to be his last birthday, much less did we imagine that the favourite *bhajan* of Mahatmaji, which was sung for his birthday, was going to be played by A.I.R. stations all over the country less than four months later, on his death. On the evening of January 30, 1948, Subbulakshmi was casually listening to the radio at home. There was a sudden pause. Then came the sombre news of Babu's assassination, quickly followed by *Hari thuma haro* sung by Subbulakshmi. Subbulakshmi swooned. For nearly a year thereafter she would not even attempt to sing this *bhajan*.

\* \* \*

Prime Minister Jawarhalal Nehru, while presiding over a recital given by Subbulakshmi in aid of the Ramakrishna Mission in New Delhi in 1953, said, "Subbulakshmi's music has a moving quality and whenever she visits Delhi there is a thrill among the people whom she

carries away by her melody. Who am I, a mere Prime Minister, before a Queen of Songs?" This tribute had been paid by him to Subbulakshmi on an earlier occasion. He called her the "Queen of Songs" as early as 1949 when he presided over her recital in New Delhi for the benefit of the Madras School. He repeated the same tribute when he presided over Subbulakshmi's recital in Madras for the benefit of the Music Academy in 1956.

\* \* \*

Sarojini Devi paid us a visit in our home in January 1945. She came, she listened and she was conquered. She was first taken up by Subbulakshmi's music. Later she was taken up by Subbulakshmi herself and became as fond of her as of her music.

The fact that Sarojini Devi so readily agreed to appear on the screen in the picture *Meera* in order to introduce Subbulakshmi to the people of the North was ample proof of the depth of her love for Subbulakshmi. Coming out of the theatre after the press show of *Meera* in Delhi, a great friend of the poetess asked her, "Now do you surrender your title, the Nightingale of India?" "I have already done so," was her prompt and gracious reply.

\* \* \*

In 1944, when we were in Udaipur for location-shooting in connection with *Meera*, a recital was arranged in the Durbar Hall for the Maharana of Udaipur. A day after the recital, when I approached the Maharana to assist us with a few horses and elephants for

(Continued on Page 8)



M.S. Subbulakshmi



T. Sadasivam

## An uncommon couple

In 1940, she married T. Sadasivam who has ever since been, in addition to being her husband, her friend, philosopher, and guide. If ever a marriage was made in heaven, surely this was one. M.S.'s musical development and the development of her human personality began a new phase with their marriage.

This unique capacity for losing oneself, in *bhajan* and in God, as Gandhiji said, becoming *paravasam* herself and by so doing lifting her audience to *paravasam*, is the hallmark of M.S. This capacity for creating a sense of involvement was most recently demonstrated by her in the short concert she gave at the Music Academy on July 20, 1996, on the occasion of the celebration of Sri Annamacharya Jayanthi. Her *bhakti* came through in her impeccable rendering of the Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam and the *Suprabhatam* of Lord Venkatesa.

Many essays have been written, and will no doubt continue to be written, about her qualities as a musician, her perfection of *sruti*, her effortless command of *laya*, her mastery of the *swarupa* of a *raga*. The magic is always there — there is no further need to analyse it. Suffice it to say that when she sings *Bhooloka vaikunthamiti yani*, she transports us all to that *Vaikuntham*.

The contributions to worthy causes, to be counted in crores of rupees, which Sadasivam and M.S. have made, are without parallel, to my knowledge. All the fame and recognition, both national and international, have hardly touched the core of these two wonderful human beings.

C.V. Narasimhan

\* \* \*

The small has no place in Sadasivam's scheme of things. He aims at the star and lands on it. In the late Twenties, he was in charge of the *khadi* stall at the Mahamakam exhibition at Kumbakonam. On sale was a 500-rupee worth *pashmina* piece which scared away even the richest of Tanjore *mirasdars*. Sadasivam waited. Then came a *panorama-sannidhi* with all the paraphernalia of a royal renunciant. Sadasivam stopped his palanquin, showed him the Kashmir exquisite, expatiated on its excellence and made him buy it for a thousand rupees. And when he took over as the advertisement manager of *Ananda Vikatan* he bought a

Indeed, Sadasivam and Subbulakshmi constitute an uncommon pair. (Courtesy: MS, published by The Music Academy, Madras.)

Anon

## The Hindu leads again ...

(By A Staff Reporter)

The Hindu has always led in technology; others have only followed.

And The Hindu has done just that once again. The Hindu Online, a weekly edition, was launched on an experimental basis in the first week of June 1995 and, today, has about 50,000 to 60,000 people reading its pages in Cyberspace.

It is rated one of the top 5% of all Web Sites, based on its contents, presentation and experience. Over 60 countries spanning the five continents have easy access to The Hindu Online.

About 400 items of news stories, articles and features, with images classified under 30 categories, are posted on a server in the U.S.A.

The Hindu Online Business Directory is available as a link from the main Menu and also in the Business Directory Section of a weekly Edition Page. So also is the case with Employment Opportunity and Classifieds.

## The 'Queen of Songs'

(Continued from Page 7)

some scenes which we wanted to shoot for the film, he said, "The Kalyani Raga rendered by Subbulakshmi is still ringing in my ears. In return for that one raga I shall not only give you elephants and horses but whatever other assistance you need for your film."

\* \* \*

Savithri, in which Subbulakshmi played the role of Narada, was actually a case of "charity beginning at home", for Subbulakshmi was acting in the film solely for the purpose of earning the necessary finance to start Kalki. Subbulakshmi is, thus, one of the founders of Kalki along with me and R. Krishnamurthy. Savithri was shot in New Theatres, Calcutta, and I still remember how all the artistes and technicians in that big studio would gather to hear her whenever she had a recording programme. (Courtesy: M.S., published by The Music Academy.)

T. Sadasivam

# Encouragement to violence?

At the Filmfare, South, awards, which were woefully predictable and politically correct, the question put to best actor Kamal Hassan was "Do you think films influence life or vice versa?" He, of course, gave a politically correct answer... that it is life that films reflect. But Indian has encouraged impossible dreams and thinking in violent ways. There are many young students who have begun to talk about killing a la Indian anyone who does not do exactly what they order. I wonder whether Kamal Hassan has never given a bribe and whether he ponders over what makes people become corrupt, I have seen some of the most corrupt people received with great honours at temples and mutts, where they bribe the gods to make their endeavours more fruitful, whether these are harmful to others or not. All these are thoughts that arise out of the single-mindedness of Indian. (Ed. Note: Also see page 2.)

The awards function had all the glitz associated with Filmfare festivities. It also had its failures with the microphones etc. The audience in overcrowded Kamaraj Hall lapped up everything enthusiastically, except when it came to applause. We Madrasis are too lazy when it comes to clapping. The best of programmes invites only a ripple of applause. I wonder what makes us so lukewarm to everything.

### 'Turbans off'

In Toronto, our own Timeri Murari received several good reviews for his film *The Square Circle*. Richard Corliss of *Time* writes, "The first twenty minutes of this Marathi language panegyric packs sufficient incidents for a dozen Hollywood movies. On the eve of her wedding day, a young woman is mistakenly kidnapped by a brothel madam. Their car crashes into a tree, and the heroine escapes. She promptly meets a man dressed as a woman... After the heroine is raped by a gang, he convinces her that she will be safe only if she too becomes a cross-dresser. Some stolen khakis, a haircut and a fake moustache

and, *voila*, he's a woman, she's a man. *Tootsie* times two...!" Corliss goes on to say, "... the film's pulse and generosity are still evident ... Turbans off to screen writer Timeri Murari, who was educated in Canada."

Murari happens to be the only writer mentioned in the reviews of the Festival's films. But he was sitting in Madras while they were applauding his work in Toronto. I'm waiting for the film to be shown here, but what happens then?... We never applaud after a film, do we?

### Intimate space

Have you been to 'Parinam'? The *kalari* (workshop space) is so neat it's beautiful. 'Parinam' is just off Cholamandal artists' village in Injambakkam and is run by Yamuna and the Tejaswi Foundation. There are *kalari* massages available and also walkers' tracks etc.

'Parinam' provides an alternate venue for performances. I went to see the preview of

£5.00) has caught the media's attention. This is the tale of the last Mafia family, the Clericcio, and tells of Don Domenico's struggle to legitimise his family. Mario Puzo brilliantly portrays the underside of Hollywood and Las Vegas.

● Frederick Forsyth's *Icon* (Corgi — Rs.182.35) is a political thriller set in Russia in 1999. Jason Monk is sent out on a mission to counter the threat posed in the Black Manifesto, a secret document whose contents could have a devastating effect on the entire Western world.

● *The Runaway Jury* (Arrow — £2.50) by John Grisham is a procedural thriller about how the jury works. This is about a case filed against the tobacco industry and the far-reaching repercussions if damages are awarded.

● The U.S. President dies in an air crash and Jack Ryan is made President within minutes of being confirmed as the Vice-President. *Executive Order* (Harper Collins — £3.50), Tom Clancy's new novel, is about Jack Ryan's new responsibilities and the fresh crisis he faces each day.

● And to round off the lot, there's Ken Follet's new thriller, *The Third Twin*, (Macmillan — £6.95), which is about genetic technology and its effect on the life of an innocent woman. This is the compelling and terrifying story of the secrets that lurk behind a long-abandoned genetic research programme.

Savitha Padmanabhan

## On the Bookshelves

of inspirational stories, *The Chicken Soup for the Soul*. This proved such a hit that it still figures in the U.S. bestseller's list. Following two bestselling sequels, Jack Canfield, now with Jacqueline Miller, has put together inspirational stories for people at work. *Heart at Work* (McGraw Hill-\$14.95) is all about self-esteem and a person's successes and failures at his or her workplace. This delightful book has contributions from Nelson Mandela, Mother Theresa, Ken Blanchard and Art Buchwald, among others.

September is proving to be a month for popular fiction and all the big guns, ranging from Mario Puzo to Ken Follet, are vying for the best space on the shelves.

● Of the lot, Mario Puzo's *The Last Don* (Heinemann —

To commemorate 60 years in publishing, Penguin Books a couple of years ago launched a series of small books, priced at 60 pence each. Each book essentially contained extracts from Penguin's major works. Though the publishing world was initially sceptical, the concept proved a runaway success. Following this, Penguin decided to publish a series of classics was published, then a series on children's books. Now Penguin has brought out a series on travel and biographies. Some of the books in the series are: *Little Me* from the legendary Hollywood actress Katherine Hepburn's memoirs, *Me: Stories of My Life*; *Slow Train to Simla*, taken from *The Great Railway Bazaar*, Paul Theroux's travel odyssey from London to Tokyo; *Elephant Tales*, an extract from Mark Shand's *Travels on My Elephant*, which won him the Travel Writer of the Year Award; and Karen Blixen's *From the Ngong Hills*, which is a part of her chronicle of life on an African farm, *Out of Africa*.

\* \* \*

A couple of years ago, Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen compiled a collection

## A cry against child labour

CRY — Child Relief and You — dedicated to the cause of deprived Indian children, has a youth division that visits schools and colleges to sensitise students to social issues relating to the underprivileged child.

As part of this programme, CRY is taking to schools a streetplay (*therukkoothu*) on child labour. The performers are rehabilitated child labourers themselves, who are receiving non-formal education at a CRY centre called 'Arunodaya', in Royapuram.

Schools interested in seeing this streetplay staged in their institutions may contact The Youth Division, CRY, 46, Poes Road, Teynampet, Madras 600 018. Phones: 451448/450400/458576

'Singapore Surprise' there — and found the dancers coming alive in this intimate and indigenous space which encourages audience participation. It was fun.

'Parinam' should be used more often for performances. It's nicer than enclosed auditoriums.

### Sold out

D.K. Murthy called to say that the article in the last issue of *Madras Musings* had a great impact on the discount sale he was conducting before closing down. Many, armed with copies of *Musings*, came to the shop to buy the temple jewellery and now he is left only with a few pieces of gold antique jewellery. Many Tamil publications came to interview him on seeing the *Musings*' report.

He, however, points out that the jewellery business run by his daughter is called E.A. Swamy Jewellery and NOT Bhuvanewari Jewellers as stated by me. I regret the error.



Till October 8th: Exhibition of recent works in wood, stone, canvas and acrylic by Probr Gupta. Probr Gupta, one of India's more accomplished painters, was put through his paces by masters like Bikash Bhattacharya and Ganesh Haloi from the mid-Seventies to the early Eighties at the College of Art in Calcutta. He then spent five years in Paris, where he was inspired by the work of Bodiensky, Adami, Alschinsky, and, primarily, by Velickovic, who still pursues a Third World concern with the figurative despite his being resident in France.

Gupta's present work represents a return to a bedrock aesthetic experience. It was triggered by a visit to the South and the shrines to Munishwara. These shrines of local deities are composed of small stones and the like. Probr takes advantage of their presence for painterly ends. (At the Alliance Francaise.)

## Answers to Quiz

1. 33% quota for women in the Lok Sabha; 2. Libya and Bhutan; 3. Ramar Pillai; 4. Rajasthan; 5. Vice Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat; 6. As retaliation against Iraq's biggest offensive against Kurdish rebels; 7. To mark the entry point for the much talked about Krishna waters; 8. Robert, the Bruce (of spider fame); 9. Prime numbers; 10. M.V. Arunachalam; 11. C.V. Narasimhan, former Under Secretary-General of the U.N.; 12. An invention which detects poisonous gases, dilutes them and supplies fresh air, especially in vehicles; 13. Ajit Singh; 14. India Cements; 15. Viswanathan Anand beat A. Kasparov.

\* \* \*

16. M.K. Stalin and V. Chandralakha respectively; 17. Multi-storied parking lots; 18. At IIT. The hostels are named after rivers and the campus buses after mountains; 19. Anna Nagar; 20. Adyar.

# The poolside view

Madras is fast becoming a city of ace swimmers. Ever since Kuttraleeswaran swam the English Channel, there has been no looking back, and, despite the paucity of good pools, Madras has been in the forefront in State-level swimming recently held. State Swimming Championships saw Madras walk away with most of the Gold and Silvers. Mayura Kumar did a Carl Lewis by winning nine golds while Shravan, Advait, Priya, Ishita, Kuttraleeswaran (in his new avatar as a 'sprinter'), Harini, Kristin, Nisha, Rohan and others did the city proud by hauling in a great catch of golds, silvers and a couple of bronzes. And the blaze of swimming glory that these young ones have brought, is drawing swimming talent from all over the country to Madras; case in point — Chavi Madan, the little mermaid who has adopted Madras and has already crossed the Palk Strait.

But champions aside, a heartwarming development is that swimming seems to be catching on among Madras at large. More and more parents are sending their children for the annual summer coaching classes conducted by the Sports Development Authority, the YMCA, the various city clubs, hotels etc., and once the children have tasted the joys of swimming there is no going back. Many successfully per-

suade parents to take out a yearly membership and, in many cases, as in ours, children teach the parents to swim. It was hilarious as our ten- and twelve-year olds coached psychiatrist Daddy. "Don't panic! Relax," one would shout, while the other urged him on with, "Yes, that's it! You can do it. Don't worry ... I am here ..." etc. etc!

For many adults it is a visit to the doctor that sends them poolwards. It may be a back-

ache or the fact that the person tips the scales at ninety kilos. Either way, "Go swim" comes the doctor's order and that brings pot-bellied Maamas and sciatic-Maamis to the pool-side.

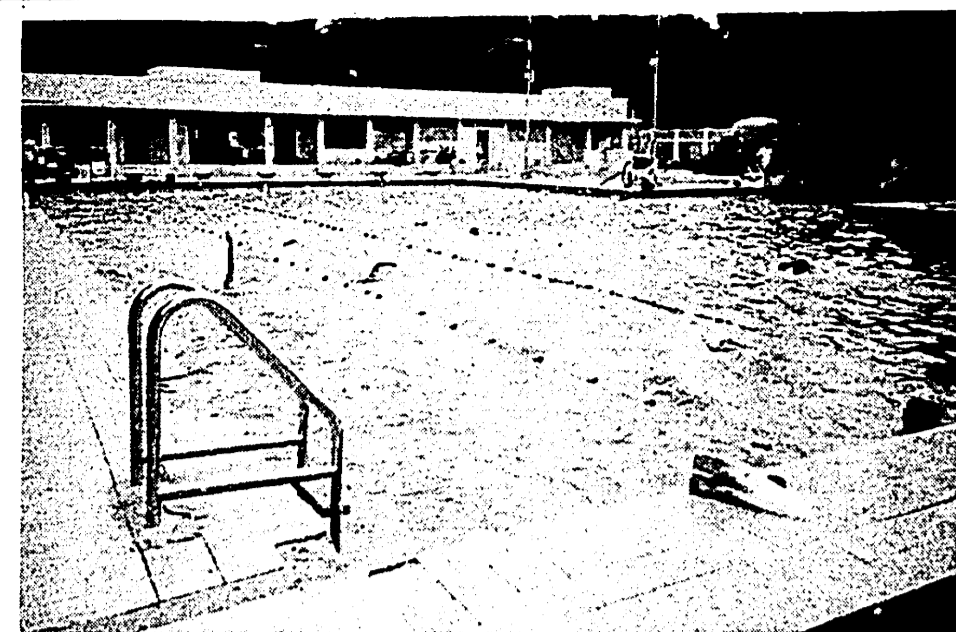
For a participant-cum-spectator, the pool is a great diversion and relaxation; it takes all kinds to make this world, you realise. The first and most charming group are the fishes — those sprightly four- to twelve-year-olds; they literally swim like fish in the water. Then you have the dolphins; the teenagers who dive, somersault, glide and do all the strokes in the world. Next come the sharks; the keep-fit yuppie

types with nary an ounce of extra fat who routinely do thirty laps. Then there are the whales; the 90 kg-plus types on doctor's orders, who displace all the swimming pool water when they jump in. The worst are the Orcas, i.e. the Killer-Whale types who have learnt swimming and go thundering lap after lap, hitting out at everything/one in their way. In contrast, you have the Hippos, fatsos who have been ordered to swim and lose weight, but simply paddle in the shallows! Finally, there are the deep-sea diver types who come to show off their arsenal of goggles, ear-plugs, fancy-caps, flippers,

paddles ... everything short of snorkels and oxygen cylinders — all the equipment, of course, from the US of A...

Talking of equipment, Madras seems to offer everything that basic swimmers need, from swimming trunks and caps to floating boards and so on. But Madras women are still very conservative. If it is possible, they would wear a swim-suit over the saree; but since that is impossible, they make do by donning one over T-shirts and long shorts or some such thing. Maamis don't let attire problems bother them; with nose-rings and *thirumangalyam* flashing, they notch 'up lap after lap.

The pride of place among swimming pools of course goes to the Velachery pool of SAF Games vintage. But who gets to use it regularly?! The Shenoy Nagar Pool sees regular use and could earn a star rating too, if only the authorities gave it that badly needed facelift, i.e. after the lights around working, did some proper concreting around and changed water biweekly — for that many users are there. Apparently the Shenoy Nagar Pool was built about twenty years ago when 150 city children drowned in floods simply because they did NOT know



The Shenoy Nagar swimming pool, the fenced-in area on the left meant for champions in training and the portion on right for those who swim for fun. (Photograph by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

swimming. The tragic event jolted the City Fathers into action and they decided that the city should have a pool where children could learn swimming; thus was the Shenoy Nagar Pool born. Today, this pool serves a vast segment of middle class families and a host of swimmer-athletes. It is really a full-house, or, rather, full-pool, every evening, with members and athletes filling it up. The youngsters are all extremely talented and the coaches dedicated, but they have to make do with just two or three lanes on one side of the pool.

The IIT pool and Sterling Club pool are the other pools frequently visited by our young would-be champs. In grooming ace-swimmers, private clubs such as the Dolphin Aquatic Club, have been doing excellent work. Many of our present crop of champs were trained by the Club, yet they don't have a pool of their own. Perhaps corporate bodies should come forward to sponsor such clubs.

Talking of the corporate sector, the BEST KEPT POOL AWARD would go to the MRF Pool on Harrington Road where the likes of Pace Foundation cricketers go for a dip. But it is rather exclusive and beyond the reach of common folk. The same holds good for the various club pools and five-star hotel pools.

Now that our youngsters, despite our scant pool resources, have done the city and state proud by winning so many swimming laurels, I hope the Government will reward them by opening more pools in the

city. This year of the Olympics is just the time for it; Mr. Sports Minister, I hope you are reading this. Oops! I forgot! It is forward-looking neighbouring Kerala that has a Minister for Sport. In Tamil Nadu, Sport is just an extra portfolio handled by one of the *amaichars*.

The silver lining in this cloud is that the Chief Minister himself now holds the portfolio and, going by his record these past few months, he seems to have his ears to the ground alright and, in deference to the wishes of fellow-citizens, has been making the right noises and the right moves — the historic DGP Office building on Marina is to stay (Thank heavens no skyscrapers will come up there!); that flying white elephant the State's Cessna plane is to go and, instead, five hundred ambulances are to be bought with the money that will come in; one crore has been earmarked to get *Valluvar Kottam* done up... Surely our C.M. will listen to this plea from the swimmers of Madras.

Dream scenario — a pool at K.K. Nagar, a pool at Gandhi Nagar, a pool at Anna Nagar, a pool at T. Nagar, a pool at *Valluvar Kottam*, all Corporation School children to be taught swimming, a pool each for all the Government Medical, Engineering, Law and Arts Colleges, a pool for the Government physiotherapy centre at K.K. Nagar (that would be a must), a pool at MLA's Hostel. Let us hope our sporting CM will make at least part of this dream come true in this year of the Olympics.

## Tamil Nadu women's hockey hits rock-bottom

Women's hockey in Tamil Nadu is in the doldrums, and is sorely in need of rejuvenation. Introduced by Anglo-Indian girls in the mid-Thirties, it has been on the decline, both in standards and popularity, ever since Independence when the minority Anglo-Indian community started migrating to other lands, like Australia and New Zealand. The composition of the pre-Independence Madras city and Presidency teams speaks for itself. They were all-Anglo-Indian contingents.

It was only after the Anglo-Indians bade goodbye to their motherland that Indian girls;

took to the game. But they have a long way to go to reach Anglo-Indian standards. Tamil Nadu girls in particular have miles to go to bring the game back to the halcyon days it had enjoyed in the hands of Anglo-Indians like Shelagh Rodricks, Olga Frohlich, Noreen Hughes and Marie Shepherd. This was well-emphasised by the 14-goal beating, nay eclipse, Tamil Nadu suffered in their opening, and only, match — against Bihar, eventual finalists — in the National championships held recently in New Delhi. Never before had Tamil Nadu been so outplayed and outclassed in any tournament,

leave alone the half-century-old championship!

This drubbing only underscored the dismal fall in the standards of the game in a State that had for decades been among the top four in National ratings. Tamil Nadu women's hockey has indeed hit rock-bottom, and cries for reforms to help it regain its former status and reputation. Those in charge of its organisation, the Tamil Nadu Women's Hockey Association, must accept this reality and work to give Tamil Nadu women's hockey a new look.

Jaici

## CAR LORE

To generate public interest in the Vintage car rally, Sky Cell organised a quiz which featured these questions:

- Vintage cars are those cars made:
  - Before 1940; b) During 1886-1900; c) After 1950.
- Classic cars were made:
  - Between 1941-1960; b) Before 1940; c) After 1961.
- While enormous changes have occurred in the design of motor cars, there is one constant component that has stood the test of time. The item still in production is the:
  - Carburettor; b) Spark plug; c) Gear box.
- Until 1904, the world's most prolific producer of motor vehicles was:
  - Britain; b) Germany; c) France; d) America.
- The company that boasts a proud fleet of distinctive cars, like Silver Ghost, Phantom I, Silver Dawn, and Silver Spirit is ... ?
- Proud of his moving production line in 1914, Henry Ford's famous dictum was: "Any customer can have a car painted any colour that he wants so long as it is ...". Which colour?
  - Blue; b) Black; c) White.
- Promoted as "the most famous car in the world", for James Bond in *Goldfinger*, it was specially designed with unusual extras. Some of the fittings included machine guns in the front wings, a smoke-screen generator and an ejector seat for unwanted passengers! The car was:
  - A Bentley; b) An AmilCar; c) An Aston Martin.
- Name the equivalent word:
 

English	American
a) Bonnet	.....
b) .....	Windshield
c) Silencer	.....
d) .....	Rumbleseat
- Pick from these six the oldest-surviving car companies in the world today (they were established in the late 1800s):
  - Mercedes-Benz; b) Ford; c) Tata; d) Peugeot; e) Ambassador; f) Renault.
- The acronym FIAT not only stands for "Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino", but in Latin also means:
  - Let it be; b) So it is; c) So it shall be.

## ANSWERS

1) Before 1940; 2) Between 1941-1960; 3) Spark plug; 4) France; 5) Rolls Royce; 6) Black; 7) An Aston Martin; 8) A Bentley; 9) Mercedes-Benz; 10) Let it be. (Also see Page 10)

# Madras gets its Vintage rally

Madras awoke to a pleasant Sunday morning surprise one recent weekend: the Sky Cell Vintage and Classic Car Rally. Vehicles of different ages, hues, sizes and shapes glided through the City, stopping people in their tracks, bringing smiles to many faces and a flood of questions to the participants.

Sensitively tuned to their vehicles, all the owners share a passionate commitment to their 'hobby', unmindful of the time or money consumed. "The charm, look and originality of these cars make them much more remarkable than a Rs 1 cr car of today!" declares Champak Shankar, Joint Secretary, Vintage and Classic Vehicles Foundation of India, whose 1929 Dodge Victory was voted the most popular car at the Rally.

A Vintage vehicle can cost between Rs 40,000 and Rs 50,000, sometimes even less, depending on its overall condition. The task of getting it back in shape and on the road, however, takes much more money and painstaking effort. V.S. Kylas, proud owner of a 1948 Morris 8 says, "It took me one-and-a half years to re-

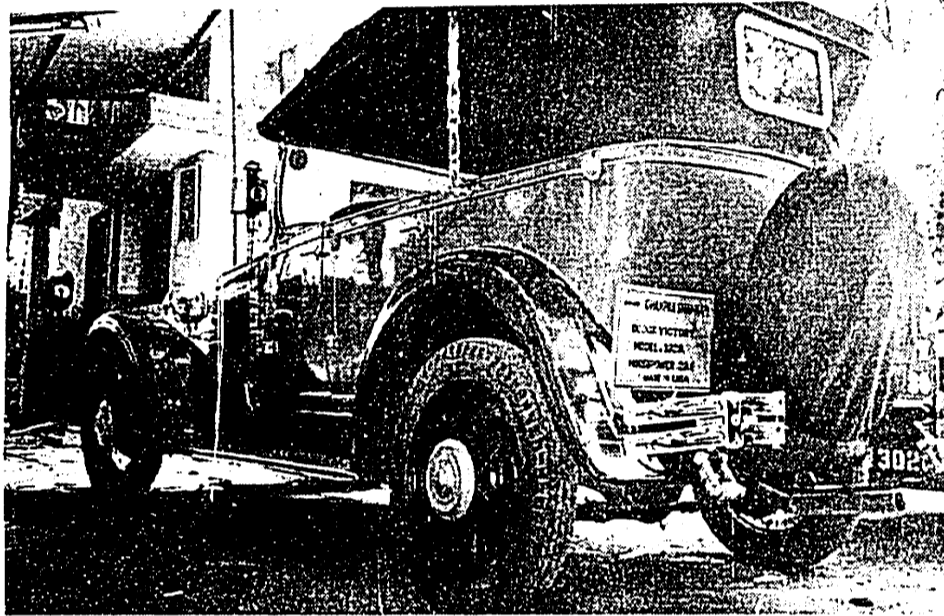
store my car. Using help as well as valuable guidance from a 1942 edition of a Workshop Manual, I now maintain the car. I tell you — its superb metal work will outlive a person's lifetime!"

Daily maintenance is not a must, but these cars should be started regularly and taken out for occasional spins. The engine oil, air and brass fittings require regular attention and the body a good wax polish from time to time.

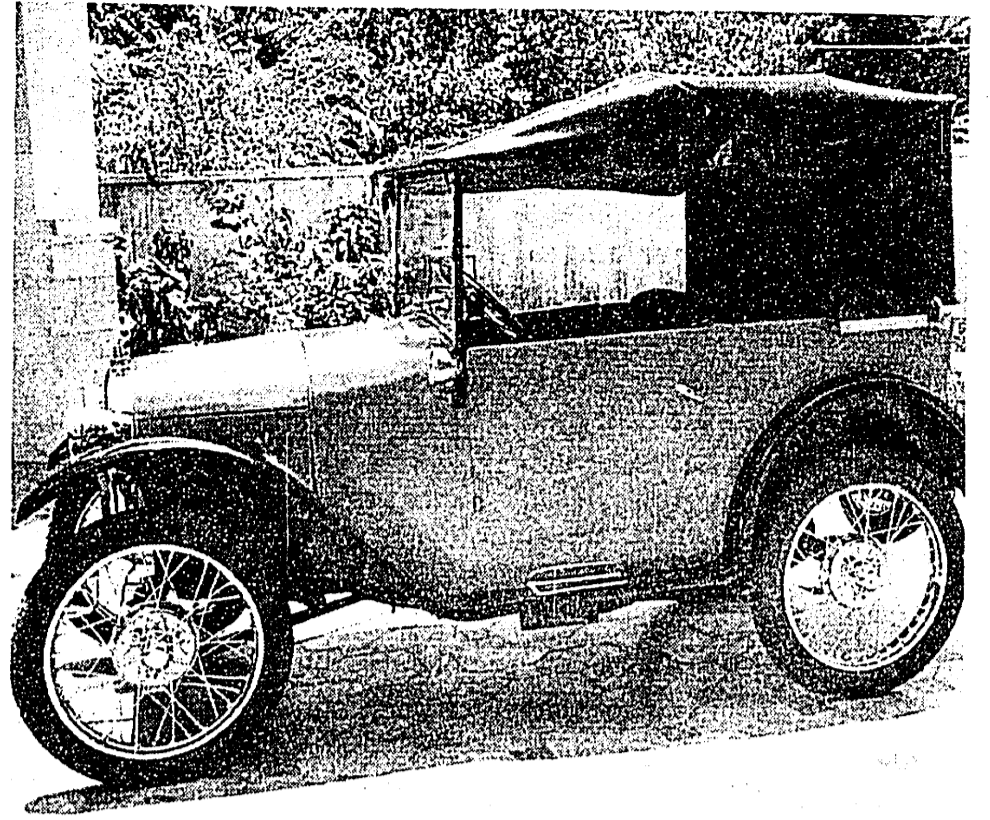
The cars can give anything from 5 to 10 km a litre and can go over 30 km an hour. "I don't care about the mileage or petrol costs — the pleasure of driving

in such a vehicle is all that's important," says VCVF Secretary Ram Vishwanathan, who participated with his wife in a 1929 Ford A and a 1937 Morris E.

"I do 80% of my cars' maintenance myself and you can usually find me under my car once I am back from office!" chuckles Vishwanathan. Getting replacements can be troublesome, so a wise owner stocks up on parts in advance. "Pudupet Market is an ideal place to pick up spares, as cars that have been sold for scrap are dismantled and sold in parts there!" add Champak and Shankar with a laugh.



A 1929 Dodge 'Victory' packing 29.6 h.p. Champak Shankar has kept it gleaming for several years now.



A 'Baby Austin' — an Austin 8 looking like new.

Tyres for these vehicles are not such a problem. "You get tyres for animal-driven vehicles or bullock carts — and they suit us just fine!" says Shankar.

Except for its tyres, a 1942 Ford Jeep, the only one in the Rally, still boasted its original fittings, including "a beauty of a foot starter". The owner, Mehmood Ali Sayed, even brought mechanics who specialise in Ford Jeeps from Indore to check it before the Rally. Mrs Chand Ali Sayed, who also participated with him, laughs, "Everything has been maintained in it — even its nuts and bolts! We really love the Jeep and enjoy trips to Mahabalipuram in it."

While replica cars or model kit cars in Europe, with the fibre glass bodies of Vintage Cars











and new engines, have swayed enthusiasts there and brought prices crashing down, the duplication movement has not affected India as yet. Indeed, the promise of tax exemption for these vehicles and with many more new members joining VCVF, the Vintage movement seems to be moving right ahead onto the highways of tomorrow.

"We've given Madras a similar standing to the other metros with this Rally. We're sure the interest in Vintage and Classic vehicles will grow now," predicts Divakar Singh, Managing Director, Sky Cell.

Indira Jayakrishnan

**MORE SPORT  
ON PAGE 9**

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