

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

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Two meets for a better city

(BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

Chennai First another day

But gets unanimous support

Everything that could go wrong with the first Chennai First get-together, an all-day consultation, went wrong. The Air Traffic Controllers' flash strike put paid to the Chief Guest's travel plans and Gerson da Cunha, who was to lead the workshop with inputs on the London First and Bombay First experiences, did not make it from Mumbai. A major power failure left the venue of the workshop not only in darkness but also sweltering. It might have also had something to do with da Cunha's text not arriving by Fax. A sudden, heavy shower of rain kept several away. And the Madras Management Association's spe-

cial invitees appear to have found the notice too short.

So, V Balaraman of Pond's and Jasper Utley of the British Council, the convenors together with the Association of British Council of Scholars, found themselves rather outnumbered by former and present Civilians, and officialdom, all for Chennai First, but who saw it as, when formed,

- working with the Chennai Corporation,
- working with the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority,
- working with the CMDA'S Sustainable Cities Project,
- setting up a secretariat,
- identifying the problem areas, and
- not taking on more than it could chew.

Working on what, was not specified. The problem areas had already been identified, it emerged. And Government Departments had enough funds if you could only point them in the right direction, Industries Secretary Cyriac informed the gathering.

Whereupon Jasper Utley promised to get da Cunha down on another day, Balaraman promised to get his invitees on that occasion and organise a better venue, and the ABCS promised to work with both on arranging a date in July. Balaraman also promised the full support of the MMA membership. As for Gandhigram University Vice-Chancellor D K Oza, who had taken over the concept of Madras Musings' Citizens' Group and converted it into a Madras First initiative, he later wanted to know "Why July? Why not immediately?"

Well, there's the holiday season... and, so, Chennai First awaits another day

Problems posed, answers awaited

Unaware of each other, two meetings were held recently to find answers to how Chennai could be made a better city.

Problems were posed, suggestions were made, but the answers await another day.

The Madras Management Association, the British Council and the Association of British Council Scholars arranged a consultation (see story on left) to explore how a Chennai First initiative could be launched and agreed to meet again in July, to discuss the suggestions made, work out modalities on the formation of Chennai First, and lay down its objectives. A few days later the Chennai Traffic Police and the Transport Advisory Forum organised a whole-day workshop to discover what might be the first step taken to bring order out of what a senior Police officer described as "chaos" (see story on right).

There was active interaction between those on the dais and the invitees at both meetings, where Civilians and ex-Civilians were present in large numbers at one and the Police were out in strength at the other together with, at both, representatives from officialdom, NGOs and educational institutions. But absent at both were the representatives of industrial management support both meets had expected.

At the Chennai First meet, when, in informal discussion, it was pointed out that the Sustainable Cities Project had not got past the talking stage after four years, the counter from a former Civilian was: How much non-official commitment do you see present today? S Viswanathan of Industrial Economist made the point more bluntly as a panelist at the traffic meet.

Madras Musings, which strongly believes that only committed support from Industry will help ease the problems of Chennai, including traffic gridlock, is confident industrial commitment will make itself felt in the next few months.

Priority areas selected

For smoother traffic flow

The workshop on an 'Action Plan for Chennai Traffic' got off to a lively start recently with the Police brass waxing eloquent, even poetic. Workshop coordinator DCP P Bhasker said all was not lost; the stage was set, the players were ready, only "a script was awaited" — and he hoped to get it here. ACP Ravi Arumugam, an orator in both Tamil and English, sought "order out of chaos", by effecting a change in the "the maverick mindset" of the city's vehicle-users. And His Worship the Mayor promised to implement, under the Corporation's aegis, a roadworks co-ordination committee, and to revive the Transport Advisory Forum, comprising of the Police, road-users and representatives of the road transport unions.

Dr N S Srinivasan, traffic expert, Workshop Director and the father of the 4-lane Anna Salai scheme whose extension is being unnecessarily delayed for no good reason, and others reeled off statistics which presented a city traffic profile that looked alarming. Every citizen in the city makes 1.5 trips per day and the average distance travelled is 12 km at an average peak hour speed of 13 km/hr. Slowing traffic down are encroachments which occupy 25% of the road space and pedestrians pushed off the pavements by an even greater percentage of encroachments. Using the City's roads are 9 lakh City-based vehicles and 3 lakh vehicles coming in every day, in all more than one-third Tamil Nadu's vehicle strength. Apart from this, there were the 15 lakh cyclists and an equal number of pedestrians. The 24 varieties of road-users, including the pedestrian, however, truly fought for space on only

Building roads in the sky

(By A Staff Reporter)

Heard at the Traffic Workshop, these, well, not castles in the air, but roads in the sky!

- An elevated road from Parry's to Tambaram.
- The Cooum and Buckingham Canal to have roads on their banks and a tube railway in their beds.
- A Seaway from Ennore to Neelangarai.
- A cement road from the Airport to the Port.
- A levy of 25 paise on each litre of fuel for road development, a Metropolitan Road Development Fund being created with the collections.
- Multistoreyed parking lots in Government Estate and similar private builders' lots elsewhere in the City.
- Create a hierarchy of buses and wean car-users to bus-use.
- Ban all hoardings... urged by the Police.
- Make subways shopping malls to get people to use them.
- A common urban transport authority.

450 km of the City's 1800 km of roads. Judging by the comments that went with these statistics, it certainly seemed that while the traffic situation was bad, it was NOT irretrievable and the real emphasis on traffic management should be aimed at two or three years down the line when the Fords and the Hyundais and the Lancers join the other vehicles on the roads.

(Continued on page 3)

Example to follow

(By A Special Correspondent)

The 217-year-old Writers' Building, the seat of governance in Calcutta, is to be given special status. Its maintenance cost (estimated: Rs.1.5 crore a year) will no longer be part of the PWD's budget and will come from a special allocation. This will also enable necessary restoration work to be taken up.

It is time the Tamil Nadu Government thought on these lines to ensure that its buildings in the Fort are well maintained. It should also look at other important heritage buildings in the same way.

Work on Writers' Building began in 1690, long after Fort St George. Work on the building in its present form commenced even later, in 1780, and went on till 1948.

To tell the truth...!

According to some, disputed by others, there's a bridge in Madras called Barber's Bridge due to an amusing confusion of mis-translation. The bridge is supposed to be named after Lord Hamilton, a former Governor of Madras, but there is no 'H' in Tamil and the bridge quickly became known as 'ampton' Bridge. The word 'ampton' sounds close enough to the Tamil word for 'barber', so in the second stage of mis-translation the bridge has become known as Barber's Bridge. Learned historians, I'm told, dispute the story, but I don't. I never dispute stories I like, and I like that one.

**One Man's
Madras —
HARRY
MILLER'S**

left the water and had dried and dressed themselves. One young lady, however, continued to splash about in the water, but after a while she went out too far, was swept away by currents and started screaming for help.

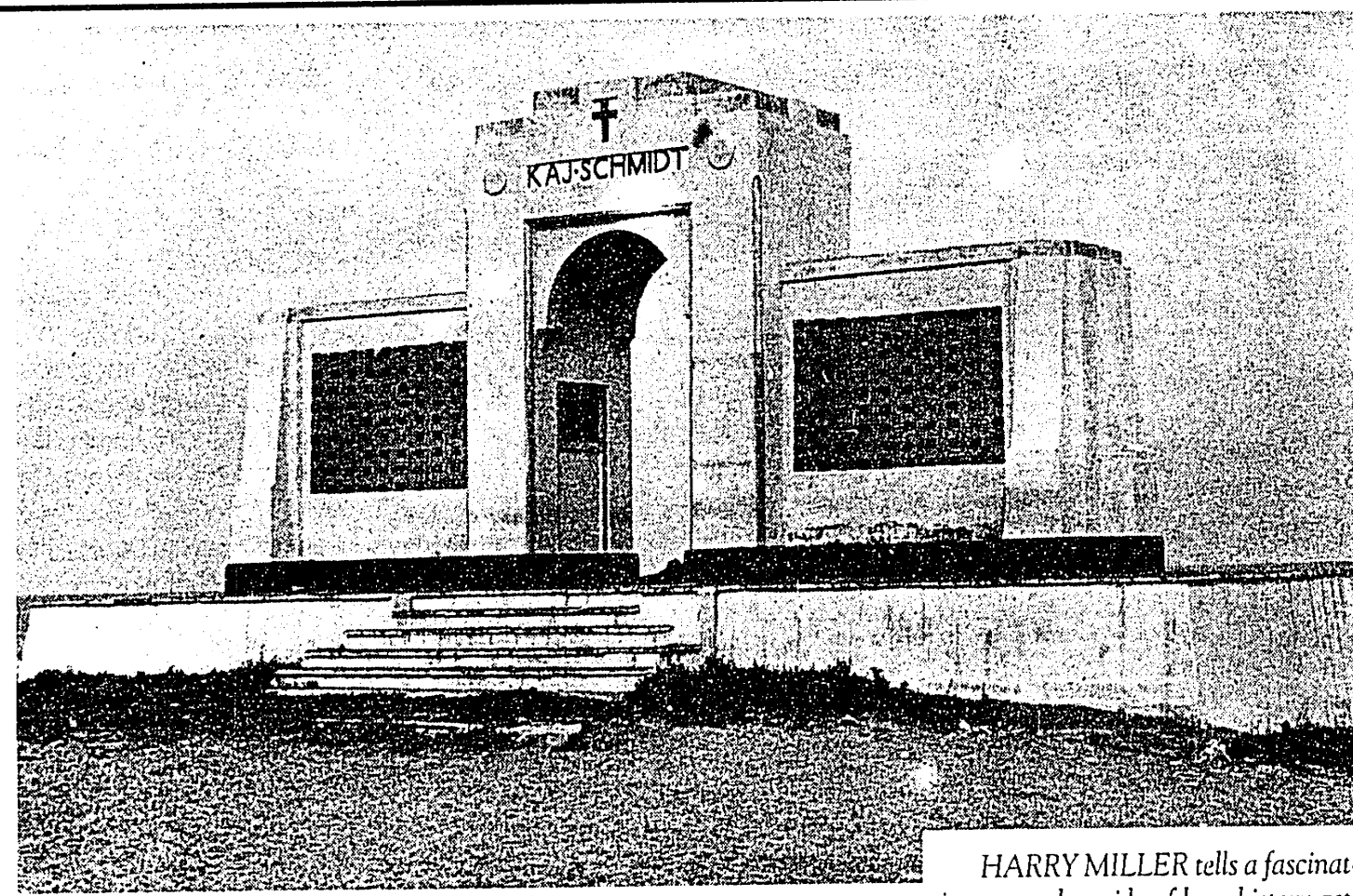
Anyone skilled in life-saving will tell you that those attempting to save a person from drowning should strip before entering the water. Though this may take precious minutes, it is essential, since swimming fully-clothed is disastrous. Some of the young men present did just that, but the young Dane Schmidt foolishly leapt into the water with his clothes on. Presumably those clothes dragged him down and, in the end, he was drowned. Meanwhile, those who had stripped, had rescued the young lady.

That evening there was a grand ball at the Madras Club, and the foolish young lady who was the cause of the brave but misguided Danish youth's death could not resist the temptation of attending, since it was, presumably, the 'Event of the Season', or whatever the British fashions of the day decreed. The Governor himself was present, and he had already been informed of the story. It is said that when the young lady presented herself to him, he was so scandalised that she should have been there attending a bit of gaiety, only hours after a fine young man had sacrificed his life for her, that he 'cut' her, as they would say: he turned his back on her when she was presented to him. To be 'cut' publicly by no less a person than His Excellency the Governor himself was a disgrace never to be outlived, but history does not tell us what happened to the girl afterwards.

Probably that story was as good as we will ever get to the truth, but it was not truth enough for our friend Mr Anthony during the days of the Elliot's Beach Committee. He showed me a brochure advertising the charms of Elliot's Beach, in which he had incorporated his own version of the Schmidt story. In the true tradition of the Tamil cinema we now had the foolish British girl replaced by a glamorous Tamil fisher-maiden with whom, of course, the young Dane was in love.

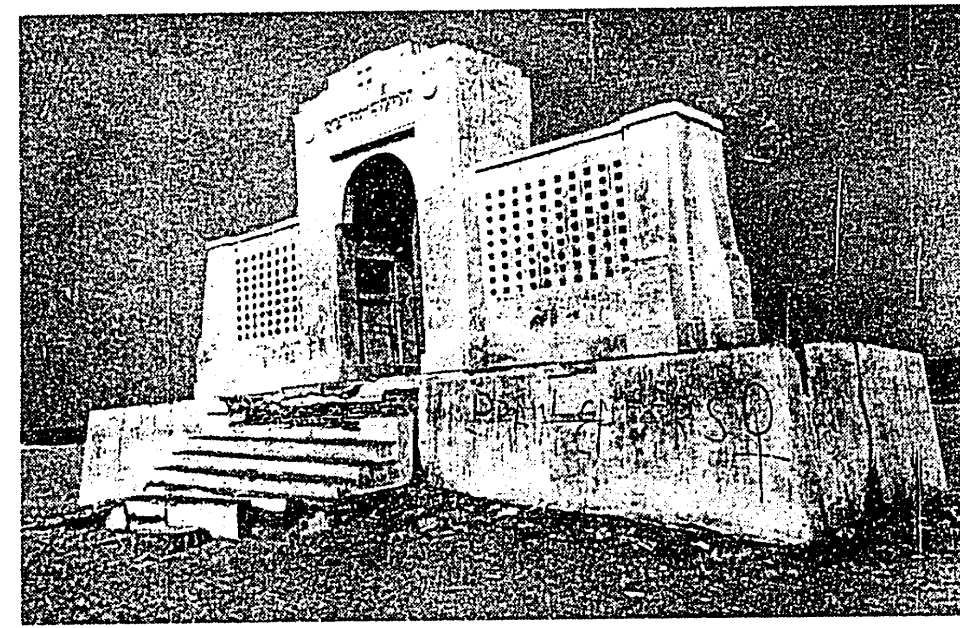
I don't recall all the details of the T.V. Anthony edition of the Schmidt story but that's near enough for anyone who knows the standard theme of Tamil movies. I protested, of course, and told T.V. that his version wasn't the true one at all.

Mr. Anthony grinned. "It is now!" he said.



THE OLD...

...& THE NEW



HARRY MILLER tells a fascinating story alongside of how history gets re-written, in this case the story of the KAJ Schmidt Memorial at Elliot's Beach near Besant Nagar. Our OLD shows the care with which the memorial was tended in 1966, when it was kept as spick and span as possible, respecting its history. Our NEW shows the state the memorial is in, in 1997, tended by no one, vandalised, and showing little respect for the gallant Danish sailor who gave his life in trying to save another's. As Larsen & Toubro once did, could someone with Danish connections ensure the restoration and sustained maintenance of this bit of not very important but certainly romantic history? (Photographs by HARRY MILLER.)

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

(Contd from page 2)

with Arundhati's God. Her mother, activist Mary Roy, MMM was happy to hear in passing, is an old girl of QMC.

Stories & histories

Harry Miller's tale last fortnight about history getting rewritten so easily had an echo at the recent Chennai Traffic Workshop. A couple of officers prefaced their remarks by re-writing history, in the process making it politically correct, of course. One had the East India Company arriving at Chennai in 1609, and building themselves a fort and warehouse there and another had a new version of how Kodambakkam got its name — and it had nothing to do with all the Nawab's horses in his stables. The Man From Madras Musings makes his contribution to their efforts by recording them; maybe, some day, a researcher in the Archives will take this record as gospel.

While all these speeches were going on, what struck MMM was the various pronunciations of our city's name, Chennai. His worship the Mayor repeatedly pronounced it as Sennai, making it sound as though a Bengali Sen was the founder. Do we take that as the official pronunciation?

Mayor Stalin also had a story to tell about how his attempts to remove some encroachments were stalled. He called a meeting of all political parties and requested them to agree on removing their flagpoles that are found on the pavements and road

edges in different parts of the City. The DMK would set the lead, he told the meeting. All agreed, except one political party which wanted the poles to remain — but on the inside edge of the pavement or by the wall of a building. With other political parties following this lead as the debate continued, the Mayor had no alternative but to promise another meeting on another day when, he hoped, better civic sense would prevail.

And City Police Commissioner Rajagopal rounded off the story-telling by narrating how, on the way to the valedictory function, he had chattered two motorists for traffic violations. They did not even seem to have noticed that the vehicle they were overtaking across yellow lines had a red lamp atop it, he said. Whether he was making a point about their daring to ignore the red lamp or whether he was echoing another officer's view that most of the traffic ills of today are due to a consumer society where a vehicle is seen as a status symbol, MMM was not very sure. But he was impressed with all this police interest in history, sociology and psychology.

Perhaps the most meaningful story narrated at the Traffic Workshop was by S. Viswanathan of the Industrial Economist, who recalled an occasion when former Governor P C Alexander was attending a public function. The governor got a telephone call during the func-

The Law's course

tion to tell him that his daughter had been ticketed for a traffic violation while riding her two-wheeler. Informing his audience of the reason for the call, Governor Alexander said he had told his daughter that she had to pay the penalty for breaking the law. The law must be obeyed, he made clear.

A bit of a contrast to Finance Minister Chidambaram's attitude after his car had been towed away from a no parking zone at Chennai airport, pointed out Viswanathan. Indeed, MMM notes, this has been a talking point in Chennai wherever people met, for few expected a person with Chidambaram's background to make an issue of a vehicle that was breaking the law being towed away, no matter that it was a Minister's. Mercifully, he decided to consider the matter closed the next day, rather than take it further and dim his image a bit more.

Also providing a bit of a surprise has been Thamizh Maanila Congress leader Moopanar, who had never sought office EVER. MMM hopes that he withdrew support from the United Front not because he had changed his attitude to office but because he wanted to make it clear he was no one's man and his party had no need to hang on to anyone's shirt-tails. That said, MMM also hopes that by the time these lines appear, the TMC is back in Government and continuing to make the significant contributions it has been making these past few months.

Today, only 625,000 minor surface irrigation works are in use in the country, according to the first census of these works conducted in 1986-87. If their future continues to remain uncertain, due to government indifference, one thing is clear: there will be desperation for water.

What has happened, instead, is the collapse of the community self-management, as bureaucratic intervention in village affairs has been steadily

MMM

Water, water... but where today?

Traditional water harvesting systems exist all over India, but after serving the nation for several millennia, they are dying a slow death because of the shift in emphasis, in the last fifty years, from these minor irrigation works to the construction of big dams and canals.

This switch in water management systems has proved to be disastrous, resulting in scarcity of water, low productivity of crops, drought, poverty, the downfall of community management of water resources and, sadly, the death of the common person's ingenuity and engineering skills to conserve as much as possible of the erratic four-month rainfall in the country for use through the year.

Attempts are now being made by some spirited individuals (and NGOs) to revive the dying wisdom of our traditional water harvesting systems. But the Indian Government has failed to show resolve even though the much-favoured mega hydel projects have all turned out to be capital-intensive, with long gestation periods, and low returns in terms of increased crop productivity (largely because the water supplied by these systems is determined more by bureaucracies controlling these systems rather than the farmers).

Today, only 625,000 minor surface irrigation works are in use in the country, according to the first census of these works conducted in 1986-87. If their future continues to remain uncertain, due to government indifference, one thing is clear: there will be desperation for water.

The *kuthals* in Jammu, *kuls* in Himachal Pradesh, *guls* in Uttarakhand, *pats* in Maharashtra, *zings* in Ladakh, *zabo* in Nagaland, *eris* in Tamil Nadu, *keres* in Karnataka and *tankas*, *kundis*, *bawdis* and *jhalaras* in Rajasthan, all traditional water harvesting systems, have been able to successfully see these States through debilitating droughts over the centuries.

In Tamil Nadu, a big stream is often diverted to feed a chain of 25-30 tanks in sequence. As

Little drops of water...

this chain of tanks — called 'system tanks' — is served by a stream collecting water over a large catchment, it is traditionally considered much more desirable than a tank with a single, small catchment.

The Palar anicut (dam) system, for example, supplies water to 317 tanks, irrigating an irrigation command of about 32,000 ha in North Arcot and Chengalpattu Districts. Some tanks are supplied directly by channels coming from the Palar River, but several others depend mainly on the surplus flows of upstream tanks. The profusion of tanks in the Ramanaapuram Districts of Tamil Nadu can even be seen from a space satellite.

Traditional water harvesting systems are, however, fragile creations. They have to be continuously monitored, maintained and repaired — which has not happened.

What has happened, instead, is the collapse of the community self-management, as bureaucratic intervention in village affairs has been steadily

encouraged by India's political leaders.

Technological changes like the introduction of tubewells has meant that richer farmers in the command area of a tank, who can install these tubewells, no longer have an interest in cooperating with the rest of the community in managing the tanks. And, the rapid increase

store water at an average depth of five metres, India would be able to get 37.5-75 mha of water annually.

The potential of rainwater harvesting to supply clean drinking water is even more amazing. There is, theoretically speaking, no village in India which cannot meet its drinking and cooking water needs

● by ANIL AGARWAL

in tubewells in dry areas, without the supplemental groundwater recharge that used to be ensured by traditional water harvesting systems, is leading to depletion of groundwater aquifers and will become a severe problem in the years to come.

Our only hope lies in reverting to our traditional water management systems, particularly the rainwater harvesting system. In terms of its potential to store and supply clean drinking water, it is stupendous. If five per cent of India's land area — about 15 mha — is used to

through rainwater harvesting. If an average individual needs 2.5 litres per day of water for cooking and drinking, a billion people, India's expected population by the turn of the century, will need about 2.5 billion litres per day or 912.5 billion litres per year. If rain was harvested over a mere 83,000 ha or 830 sq km every year, clean drinking and cooking water could be obtained for the country's entire population! And if the nationwide supply of water was stipulated at 100 litres per person per day, the norm used in many urban areas,

then too all that we would need is one per cent of India's land area to be set aside for rainwater harvesting.

In case the rainwater collection efficiency was only 50 per cent, the total land requirement would not be more than two per cent of India's land area. Given the already horrendous and still growing pollution of India's rivers with industrial contaminants and fertiliser and pesticide runoffs from farmlands, Indians may soon have no other option but to capture raindrops as a clean water source. The technological options to clean the raw river water from the contaminants will probably be impossible for India to afford.

Thus, with about 5-10 per cent of India's land area set aside for rainwater collection, most of India's irrigation and household water needs can be met. But a decentralised system of water management will demand a community-based system of natural resource management.

Unfortunately, the Indian Government has the unique honour of trying to deal with 21st Century problems of environmental management with archaic 19th Century laws and bureaucracies of a colonial ruler. The key question today is will Indian governments continue to manage the environment through their gilded bureaucracies, or will they democratise its control and leave its management to rural communities? (CSE/Down To Earth Features)

Slow murder by river pollution

Given the speed with which India's rivers are getting polluted, her urban environmentalists will soon have to adopt a new thought process: 'Think upstream'. Because all poisons dumped upstream — whether the source is industry or agriculture — ultimately reach somebody's drinking water.

A poor nation like ours finds the removal of chemical contamination extremely expensive; therefore, human beings will be exposed to these poisons on a regular basis. And the chronic

exposure will slowly translate itself into frightening diseases. Another case of 'slow murder'.

There cannot be an argument *per se* against industrialisation. As our politicians keep telling us, India needs to create wealth and jobs. Rightly so. But then what happens to the water we drink? While catering to its own greed, each upstream community uncaringly pushes all communities downstream towards a premature death.

The answer obviously lies in developing an ecofriendly pattern of industrialisation and agricultural development. But who will ensure that such a thing actually takes place? Farmers and industrialists will do their best to cut costs by polluting the river. Politicians and bureaucrats will be happy to look the other way if it is advantageous for them to do so. The cost of these misdeeds will have to be paid by individuals who will suffer from diseases like cancer.

The poor, naturally, will suffer more. The rich can protect themselves by drinking bottled water. Even if they contract a serious disease, they will have access to resources and treat-

ments. Water pollution, unlike air pollution, is not a great leveler. The trouble is that neither individuals nor the poor are politically organised, as compared to vested interests like farmers' and industrialists' lobbies. Given the highly unequal nature of Indian society, it would be most unfortunate to leave the large majority with no alternative but to drink poisoned water.

India is still struggling with the basics of clean water (that is, germ-free drinking water) supply. If she has to deal with chemical contamination as well, the cost of drinking water supply would probably become prohibitive for the government and the people. If 300 million urban Indians were to purchase bottled water on a regular basis at 2.5 litre per person per day — at bulk rates ranging from Rs.2.5 per litre — daily sales would come to Rs.150-375 crore and annual sales would reach a staggering Rs.52,750-136,875 crore, more than enough to finance India's defence forces and three-eighths times the size of India's current automobile industry. (Somebody should actually keep a close watch on the bottled water industry as a proxy

for the costs that the rich are prepared to pay for clean water.)

It can be argued that it would be great for the economy. More sales, more wealth, more jobs, more sickness, more hospitals, more services. But, clearly, all that is ludicrous! The answer lies simply in preventing pollution of rivers, rather than polluting them first and then treating the raw river water.

In such a situation, nothing can be worse than monopolistic capitalism. Stopping pollution of rivers is the government's job. So is supplying drinking water. But it fails to do either.

Ultimately, the question of property rights becomes critical. Who does the river belong to? I am convinced that in the years to come, India's States will be fighting over river pollution just as they fight today over the sharing of river waters. From quantity and bacteria, the battle will steadily move to quality and chemical toxins. After all, what right does any State have to degrade the water quality for people living downstream? (CSE/Down To Earth Features)

Anil Agarwal

Quizzin' with Ram'nan

(Quizmaster V.V. RAMANAN's questions are from the period April 1 to 15. Question numbers 16 to 20 pertain to Chennai.)

1. Where near Mecca did a fire recently kill over 300 Haj pilgrims, including more than 200 Indians?
2. Who became the youngest ever winner of the prestigious U.S. Masters golf championship in Augusta, Georgia, with an all-time record score?
3. Which famous railway station is to be renamed after the famous economist C.D. Deshmukh?
4. Name the nationwide water quality monitoring programme launched by WWF-I recently.
5. Which famous Christian relic miraculously survived a major fire on April 12th at the cathedral housing it?
6. Name the revolutionary ballad singer who survived an assassination attempt in Andhra Pradesh recently.
7. How did an action taken on one S.S. Singh create a nationwide crisis?
8. Name the two high-profile politicians acquitted in the Jain hawala case.
9. Who won the prestigious Gold Flake Indian Open tennis tournament in Chennai on April 13th?
10. When a proposed joint venture sought its permission, the Union Government decided, on April 1st to restrain foreign participation in Indian airline companies. Name the proposed joint venture partners.
11. What distinction has 35-year-old stockbroker Deena Mehta achieved?
12. Name the site in Gujarat, recently excavated, which is now considered a major settlement of the Harappans, dating to around 2500 B.C.
13. According to a *Sunday Times*, London, listing, who is the richest Indian in Britain, a person even richer than the Queen?
14. Which orchestra did the famous conductor Zubin Mehta lead during his recent visit to the country to celebrate the golden jubilee year of Indian Independence?
15. Anupam-4 opened in New Delhi recently. Why is it special?

16. The Tamil Nadu Government has decided to implement the Outer Ring Road project on a Build-Operate-Transfer basis. Which two points does the proposed 62 km road connect?
17. For which city-based service organisation was an auction of famous tennis stars' memorabilia conducted recently?
18. The PTC has shifted the starting point of its night service from Anna Salai HPO to ...?
19. Name the Tamil Nadu Government's weekly 'wall' newspaper launched in the city by the Chief Minister on April 15th.
20. On which arterial road of the city was a new bus terminus inaugurated by the State Transport Minister on April 14th?

Answers on page 7

The corporate milk vendors

Gone are the days when a housewife had to wait for the arrival of Avin's rickety milk lorry or for the friendly neighbourhood milkman for his watery milk to have her afternoon's cup of coffee.

Thanks to the entry of several corporates into the dairy industry in Tamil Nadu, she has the option today to choose from more than ten brands of sachet milk available from morning to

themselves for a share in niche markets.

According to estimates, the total demand for milk in the State is 37 lakh lpd, of which Chennai alone consumes 12 lakh lpd. While Avin supplies 7.5 lakh lpd to the metro market, the rest of the demand is catered for by unorganised vendors and the private dairies.

According to Ganapathy Subramanian, Group Vice

Venkatachari Jagannathan looks at THE INDUSTRIAL SCENE

night at the nearby provision store.

Though the centre decontrolled the dairy industry in 1991, it is only now — after some players had burnt their fingers initially — the private operators are flocking towards this segment. The sector has attracted corporates with diverse interests, like ABT Industries Ltd (part of the Coimbatore-based Sakthi Group), Lakshmi Trade Credits (an NBFC promoted by P G Saranyan, chairman, Karur Vysya Bank Ltd.), Nilgiri Department Stores, ice cream-makers Hatsun Group and Kwality Fun Foods and Restaurants Private Limited. With the industry growing at an annual rate of 5 per cent, several large private dairies are expanding their capacities. Hatsun Milk Products Ltd (HMP) is hiking its milk-handling capability to 1.2 lakh litres per day (lpd) from 80,000 lpd, while ABT Industries is planning to scale up its operations to 85,000 lpd from 35,000 lpd. The installed capacities of other major players in the state are: Ajit Dairy's 60,000 lpd, Doda Dairy's 60,000 lpd, and Kwality's 20,000 lpd.

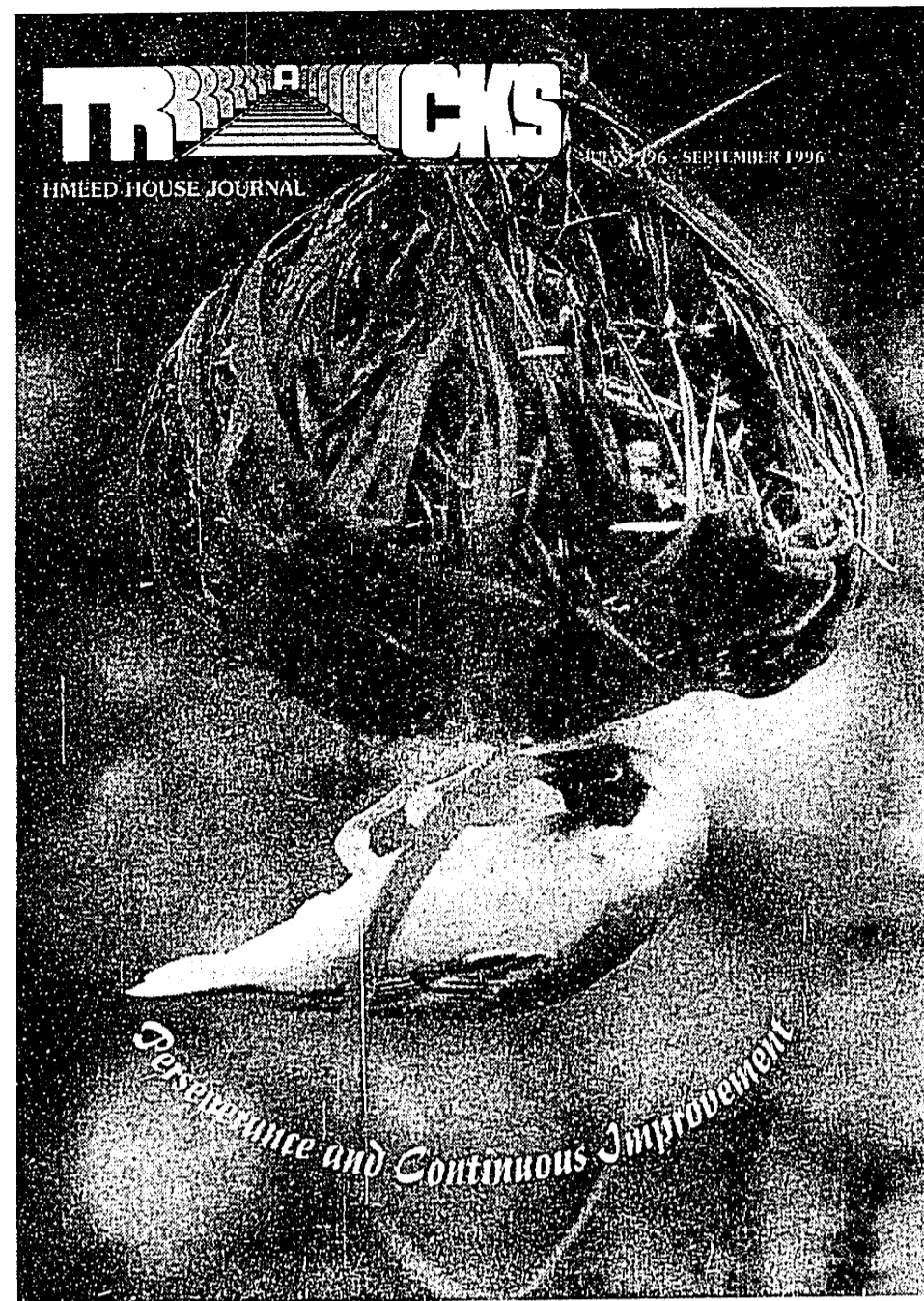
Bright as the prospects for these dairies are, it is clear that they cannot take on Avin which has a massive procurement and distribution network throughout the state. So they will have to fight it out amongst

President, Lakshmi Trade Credits, all the private dairies put together sell only about 1 lakh lpd in Chennai, with the market leader, the Chittoor-based Heritage Dairy, supplying 50,000 lpd. Apart from Chennai, the other markets which the private operators serve are Salem (HMP), Coimbatore and Tiruchchirappalli (ABT Industries).

Industry sources state that Heritage captured the Chennai market by filling the void created by the failures of early entrants. Having a capacity to handle 1 lakh lpd, Heritage had a ready-made market in Chennai. The other brand which is active in the city is Gopika — which also has its base in Chittoor.

Learning from the failures of a couple of operators who had entered the industry in the early Nineties, all the new entrants have been careful in firming up procurement of milk from the farmers/villagers—the most vital aspect of the industry.

In a situation where too many hands are seeking a limited number of udders, each private dairy is trying its best to woo the farmers with special offers to ensure regular milk supplies. For instance, HMP provides cattlefeed to the animal owners after sourcing in bulk from the feed manufacturers, the whole transaction being on



The Weaver and the Lancer

With the introduction of world-class cars by global manufacturers in India, the Indian roads are never going to look the same again. Gone are the days when only three cars ruled the roost. Market research has revealed that Indian cars, especially the sub-compact category (engine capacity 1300-1600 cc), would compete in a market of 230,000 cars by the year 2000. Introduction of the right model at the right time at the right price therefore would be the key competitive advantage in this fiercely competitive market.

With this in view, Hindustan Motors has embarked on a Technical Collaboration with Mitsubishi Motors Corporation of Japan to produce the all-new 1996 Lancer in India. The Lancer, one of the best-selling models of Mitsubishi, is to be produced in Tiruvallur near Chennai. It will be a 1.5 litre machine with a 5-speed synchromesh transmission.

The Lancer, which personifies man and machine in perfect harmony, will hit the Indian roads in the near future.

Tracks, the house journal of the Hindustan Motors Earthmoving Equipment Division, Tiruvallur, stated all this recently in an issue which featured this beautiful picture, of a Weaver Bird at work, on its cover. The message, 'Perseverance and Continuous Improvement' would seem to apply to all the efforts being made to get the NEW Lancer on Indian roads.

a cost to cost basis. The twelve vets employed by the company monitor the health of the animals at regular intervals and HMP settles the supplier's bills promptly, come-what-may. Given the fact that it cannot refuse the excess milk produced during the flush season (Oct-mid Feb.), HMP has put up a 1.5 tonne/day powder plant to convert the surplus liquid and sell it to another Group company manufacturing ice creams.

On the other hand, Ajit Dairies and Kwality have plans to sell value-added products like cheese, ghee and butter. However, the hitch here is to ensure supplies of these products even during the lean season (Mar.-July).

Similarly, to maintain supply levels at the retail end without affecting quality, HMP has picked sales targets based on the availability of milk during the lean period, unlike its competitors. "Many suppliers flood

the market with their brands during flush seasons and have no supplies in the lean season, thus risking losing the goodwill of the customers," says K. S. Thananjan, Joint Managing Director, HMP. To ensure Arogya brand milk supplies even as demand for it grows, HMP is pursuing the idea of promoting mini-dairy farms in and around Salem to ensure it gets regular milk supplies. Such farms will have about 24 milch animals and at least 4 acres for fodder cultivation. Each farm will be partly automated.

This Rs. 2 crore equity company is the only dairy to offer supplies twice a day, like Avin. Moreover, with the pressure mounting on municipal authorities to shift the cattle population to the city outskirts, and the loose milk market shrinks as a result, to be replaced by sachets, the prospects for the private dairies in the State will brighten.

A visitor presents...

A sacred view of dance

(Continued from last fortnight)

Saturday/Sunday

A Bharata Natyam performance as part of the ENT seminar programme (to which my wife had come). The dancer was Dr Padma Subrahmanyam, a fair, mature woman with a beautiful body, dressed in a tightly-draped green saree with a red border, a silver belt and anklets. She had luxuriant black hair tied tightly back. The compere was a youngish ENT surgeon, Mohan Kameshwaran, himself a dancer and a musician, who explained that the syllable BHA stands for *bhavana* or expression, RA for *raga* or melody, and TA for *talam* or rhythm in the word *Bharata*. In the Indian mode there is an extra component, expression, which is lacking in Western ballet which has only melody and rhythm.

What he meant by expression was made very clear when Padma began dancing. She had the most expressive eyes and lips and gestures, using hands and fingers and the body in all its parts.

The first episode was introduced with a verse in English translation. It said that the first dance would be a prayer to celebrate creation and the unity of existence. It was a celebration of the existence of created life through bodily movements of the most exquisite kind. Humanity is its own creator and its own creation. Sexuality, embodied in the beautiful woman displaying her femininity on the stage, is holiness, a holiness which creates and displays life. So the dancer is the creator, embodying the dancing god Nataraja and conceptualising the act, uniting both thought and act in the dance.

O body swayed to music, O brightening glance!
How can you know the dancer from the dance?

W.B. YEATS
(Among School Children)

(This is interpretation and cannot be a substitute for the actual performance which conveys meaning through act and not by word alone, though word, through the accompanying recital, also conceptualises the act. But the dance is visual, aural and sensual and, therefore, more direct in its impact than word.)

The holistic or sacred view of the dance was again emphasised by Dr Mohan Kameshwaran, who said, "I have often wondered, in practising my profession, why the vestibule,

which is the seat of balance, is located in the inner ear, next to the cochlea, which is the seat of hearing. As a dancer I realised that music and movement in the dance, being so completely one, the proximity of those two organs of hearing and balance is no accident." He thereby gave a sacred rationale to what is often considered a profane act — the act of dancing.

As if to make the abstract practical and mundane, Padma then innovatively presented three different episodes celebrating the senses of hearing, smell and taste, which are the loci of the ENT speciality. She did this by miming the use of these senses among humans, fishes, birds and animals of various kinds. These movements were easier to appreciate and comprehend as, with her hands, she depicted the swimming movements of fishes, with her body imitated the heavy movements of the elephant, and with a hopping motion mimed the birds. These were wonderful adaptations of art to the comprehensible world of the audience's perceptions and I enjoyed them more than I can say. She dignified the 'noble profession' by demonstrating it through Art, just as the painters of the Renaissance gave meaning to their efforts by painting the human and the divine in Christ.

The last episode retrieved the religious or holistic level at which the dance operates. After the reading of a verse which stated that different life-forms have different specialities in the use of the senses, the elephant excelling in touch through his proboscis, the deer excelling in hearing and so on, the verse, and its enactment through dance, pointed out that the particular sense was its strength as well as its weakness. How could man, who was possessed of all five senses, the *pancha*, or five, being denoted by the five fingers of an exquisite right hand, withstand their danger in usage while being compelled to use them for life. Only discrimination and moderation would enable man to live the good life. Thus, through the dance, the limitations of the physical were taught and enacted. Here too, therefore, there is a convergence between Christianity and Hinduism in its view of the physical and sensual world.

The adaptation of the mode to the theme of the day, that is,

The backstage experience

I had a delightful two weeks working with the Royal Shakespeare Company who breezed into town with *The Comedy of Errors*. Having worked with almost every professional company that has played Madras and Bangalore, I was a bit apprehensive about the RSC, whose reputation of being 'precious' (read 'really fussy') had preceded them. I was pleasantly surprised to find the 12-strong backstage crew, led by Jasper Gilbert (Production Manager) and Martyn Sergent (Company Manager), totally relaxed, laid back and a far cry from the stuffed shirts I was expecting to work with.

This was a truly professional touring company, that had done its homework well. It was totally self-contained, down to every nail and screw. It even toured its own ladders (which I couldn't convince them to leave behind).

For those of you who saw the show, the set looked deceptively simple. Designed by Robert Innes Hopkins, this simple-looking house and raked courtyard (believe it or not, those were actual bricks laid out to form the courtyard!) has just won the Drama Critics Choice award for best set design. But under and behind the facade was an elaborate framework of steel that nutted and bolted together to give a solid foundation.

the use of the organs of the ear, nose and throat, did not have to search for a new mythology, say of medicine, to dramatise them. The Hindu myths of Krishna and Radha served excellently for the enactment of the pleasures of hearing as Radha squirms with pleasure on hearing the notes of love on Krishna's flute, while the effect of the throat was dramatised in the story of Lord Siva crying out to his son Murugan. These mimetic gestures, emphasising the targeted organ or act, such as hearing, without using the voice or the word to convey meaning, gives a distorted effect when they are not used in the

The bell hanging in the house was cast to order by the same firm that cast Big Ben and was hand tuned to 'G Sharp'. The cost? \$ 4000! (Well, actually this bell was from another production.)

I'm not sure if audiences recognised the name of Adrian Lee who composed the music. It was Adrian who did the music for Mallika Sarabhai's *Shakti*, directed by John Martin, which played Madras some years ago.

The crew took to Indian food with gusto, loved the spice and, while we were screaming for air-conditioning, they would, at the drop of a hat, take their shirts off and soak up the sun and heat! In fact, the actor who played Antipholus got so sunburnt that they had to dab white makeup on him to make him match his twin. I wondered whether they were living upto the saying that only 'Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the noonday sun'!

At the end of the get out we were all presented with RSC T-shirts, genuine thanks, praise and fond goodbyes. The critics can have their say, but those of us who worked backstage will carry the memory of a warm, friendly, unforgettable experience.

Mithran Devanesen

natya form but in the audio-visual form, like the film. The mime then seems excessive, as the required effect is also being conveyed by voice, for example when Radha responds to Krishna's overtures by singing a verse. It is quite unnecessary then for her to screw her face and body around to convey, as in mime, the feelings of love. It is the misapplication of the *natya* conventions to the audio-visual form that creates the comicality apparent to Westernised eyes in the South Indian film.

Wilfred Jayasuriya

(Concluded)

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. At Mina; 2. Tiger Woods; 3. The Churchgate Station in Mumbai; 4. 'River Watch'; 5. The Shroud of Turin; 6. Gummadi Vittal Rao aka Gadda; 7. His suspension led to fellow Air Traffic Controllers going on a wildcat strike, leading to complete disruption of air services in the country; 8. L.K. Advani and V.C. Shukla; 9. Mikael Tillstrom of Sweden; 10. Tata's and Singapore Airlines; 11. The first

woman on the Board of Directors of the country's oldest stock exchange, the Bombay Stock Exchange; 12. Dhola Veera; 13. Laxmi Mittal of Ispat International, with a net worth of \$ 1.5 billion; 14. The Munich Philharmonic Orchestra; 15. It is India's first multiplex cinema.

16. Vandalur and Minjur; 17. The Banyan; 18. Parry's Corner; 19. *Arasu Seithigal*; 20. Saidapat.

NOSTALGIA

When crowd bought losers a trophy!

Chepauk is usually associated with cricket. But there are times when images of hockey come to mind. As when I remember a final of the MCC Gold Cup tournament, one of the most thrilling I have ever witnessed.

This was some time in 1941, the match being between Khalsa College of Amritsar and Madras United Club. I had seen the visitors play a practice game against Loyola College and even on the rough field, adjacent to the tennis courts, I had been fascinated by the speed and stickwork of the Khalsa forwards. Hence, I was keen to watch them again. The match was spread over two days, for it was replayed; I took my brother and cousin for company; and we also had to pay for parking two cycles. I had to scrape the very bottom of the barrel to come up with ten rupees for all that.

We came all the way from Brodie's Road, near the *sinna varavadhai* (small bridge, or culvert, which is no more), cycling past the Adyar Palace and Hotel Oceanic and taking a 'bypass' through Ice House Road to avoid the stiff Marina breeze and also the cops (for my brother rode 'double' on my bike), past Pycroft's Road and across the canal to the four-anna stand, which was in front of the present giant scoreboard.

It was worth the trouble. For the quality of hockey was out of this world. The first day it was Sivaraman, goalkeeper of MUC, versus the Khalsa forwards. Sivaraman was like a jack-in-the-box, diving here, there and everywhere, now sliding on the ground to block the shots with his pads, then airborne to palm a rising drive, saving penalty bullies (before the penalty-stroke was introduced) to keep the score goalless.

Only once after this have I seen such a peerless display. And interestingly enough, it was also by another Madras goalkeeper, the Olympian Francis, who frustrated Punjab in the National hockey final at Delhi in 1948.

In a similar manner did Sivaraman serve MUC, despite all the efforts of the stocky Khalsa centre-half Manna Singh who sprayed his passes left, right and centre to bring the best out of the spring-heeled, twinkle-toed Gurbachan Singh on the flank.

For the replay we were just in time to secure a place right in front, squatting on the grass, with our chests almost breasting the barbed wire enclosure when we stood up to get a better view. It was worth the ordeal, for we saw hockey as it was meant to be played, body swerve, feint, speed and stickwork. And the result was bitter-sweet, for MUC won by a solitary goal. Bitter, because on the run of play, Khalsa should have won. Sweet, because the Gold Cup was taken by a local team. And perhaps sweeter still because the goal was scored by Ramrattan of Loyola College, off a through pass by M.J. Gopalan, playing at centre-half.

Memory can play tricks, but I think Gopalan sported a brown trilby and even as I type

• by
K.N. PRABHU

this I can see him in my mind's eye, glancing ahead for a gap to push the ball through to Ramrattan who slipped past burly defender Santok Singh to score.

There were then only a few minutes left and I remember Manna Singh frantically signalling to all his players to move up. But the whistle beat them.

The sporting Chepauk crowd in the four-anna stand wouldn't, however, let it go at that. Even while the players were changing, it sent the cap around, collected every pice available and sent someone across the road to Ram Singh's sports shop to buy a cup — a special presentation to Gurbachan Singh who had captured our hearts with his superb display.

These were the champions of yesteryear. Some time in the Fifties, I saw Gurbachan Singh play for the Railways and we talked of the good old days. Manna Singh passed away some time in the Sixties. But where indeed are Sivaraman and Ramrattan? I met Gopalan as national selector often on the cricket circuit. Whenever he gripped my hand I had to wring my fingers and massage them. No wonder we used to race to a seat, right behind the wicket, in the Federation Gallery, opposite the MCC pavilion, to watch Gopalan lunge forward into the straight drive. These were the heroes who made Chepauk so special.



Vijay CC, which has lived upto its name, and won Chennai cricket's 'triple crown' this year.

Champions again

Few teams in TNCA league history have shown the consistency and professionalism exhibited by the current champion, Vijay C.C., which in its third year in the First Division, has won the Palayampatti shield this year for the second time. Led by the dynamic opening batsman V B Chandrasekhar, the talented Indian Cements-sponsored side has made a clean sweep, winning the Buchi Babu Trophy and *The Hindu* Trophy in addition to the league title.

It is an indication of the commitment to cricket and concern for players displayed by the cement major that it has seldom lost a player to any of its rivals, while it continues to attract some of the best talent in the country. Its prize recruit, Rahul Dravid, has been too busy making waves on foreign shores to be able to assist his club in local competition with any regularity since his Test debut. This was, however, not the case before his international baptism, when he was its most prolific performer. The skipper himself continues to amass runs in the league and finished the season with a tally of over 450. The stylish left-hander Hemang Badani showed enough class in his Ranji debut season to be selected for India 'A' in the SAARC competition. He too scored more than 450 runs for Vijay CC, but the most successful batsman was Rajesh Puri of Haryana whose 383 runs were made at over 80 an innings. The dashing opener Karunamurthy was the other Vijay CC batsman to top the 450 mark. The Kerala all-rounder Sunil Oasis continued his excellent showing of the previous seasons.

Left-arm medium-pacer Dev Anand, who had a most impressive seven-wicket haul in the Ranji Trophy super league game against Railways, was the most successful bowler of the season, with 32 wickets to show for his perseverance and beautiful line. Syed Miraj, formerly of Hyderabad, proved once again that he was a left arm spinner to watch, claiming more than 20 wickets in the league. While Dev Anand promises to be a fixture in fu-

ture Tamil Nadu sides, Miraj could push the senior spinners now playing for the State for a place in the near future. Wicketkeeper M S K Prasad had an outstanding season behind the stumps for Vijay CC and in front of them as well for his State, Andhra, South Zone and India 'A'. Another quiet performer of the club was S Suresh, an impressive young all-rounder who made it into the State squad; his knocks of 70 and 100 in the Buchi Babu revealed his potential. P Rajesh, also, impressed the selectors in the Buchi Babu.

Among the local cricketers now turning out for other States, two from Vijay CC enjoyed tremendous success in the national championship. Skipper Chandrasekhar led Goa with flair, inspiring them to turn the tables on fancied Karnataka in a Ranji league encounter. His clubmate Gokulakrishnan, like Chandrasekhar a Tamil Nadu discard earlier, had a career-best of 11 wickets in a match, including 7 in one innings.

Vijay CC's continued success in Chennai cricket is as much a tribute to the dedication and hard work of its players as the superb facilities and constant encouragement provided by the sponsors. Managing Director N Srinivasan and General Manager T V Swaminathan are both ardent cricket lovers who take an active interest in the team. Manager K S Viswanathan, coach S V S Mani and the ever-present Dr G Natarajan take care of every need of all the players of the three teams maintained by India Cements. While Vijay CC and Sridhar CC are already in the First Division, UFCC has a good chance of being promoted, with one match to go for the season in the Second Division.

— V Ramnarayan

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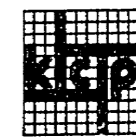
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