R.N. 53640/91

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

THE REPORT OF THE PROPERTY OF

INSIDE

- National treasure endangered
- Let's do it ourselves
- That gas leak
- Dance reformation
- Losing a quiz

September 1-15, 1997

Vol. VII No. 10

FREE ISSUE

The price we pay

— for free power to some

Tamil Nadu incurs an expenditure of around Rs. 1200 crore a year by supplying electricity free to agriculturists. Five years ago, this subsidy was in the region of Rs.600 crore. You can only expect the volume to increase.

For Rs.1200 crore, facilities for around 300 MW power-generation can be installed. In five years this would mean an addition of 1500 MW. Contrast this with the poor addition to fresh capacity made by the State over the last six years. There is a long wait for sanctioning new loads. Outside the Madras metro it is common practice to go without power for long hours. Agriculturists get power only for limited hours in a day. Due to capacity constraints there is frequent load shedding, damaging sensitive equipment in industry, farms and homes. Nothing much can be done to improving the quality and reliability of supplies. If only 300 MW could be added every year, the State as a whole, including agriculturists, would benefit from better quality and quantity of supplies!

The supply of power free has spread profligacy and irresponsibility among the beneficiaries. Since pumped water has no electricity cost, there is a tendency to go deeper and deeper to exploit scarce groundwater resources. It is a common practice to go for submersible pumps to pump water from depths of over 100 feet.

There are two immediate risks in continuing with this mindless exploitation of ground water: 1. Saline incursion: the entire water table can turn saline by seawater entering the artesian substrata. Large stretches of the Gujarat coast were ravaged in the recent past.

It will take years and massive resources to restore land devastated by saline incursion. 2. The whole of Bengal, both west and east, suffer extensive damage by arsenic poisoning that result directly from mindless exploitation of ground water. Protecting the present interests of a section of agriculturists should not make us blind to the future health of the state as a whole.

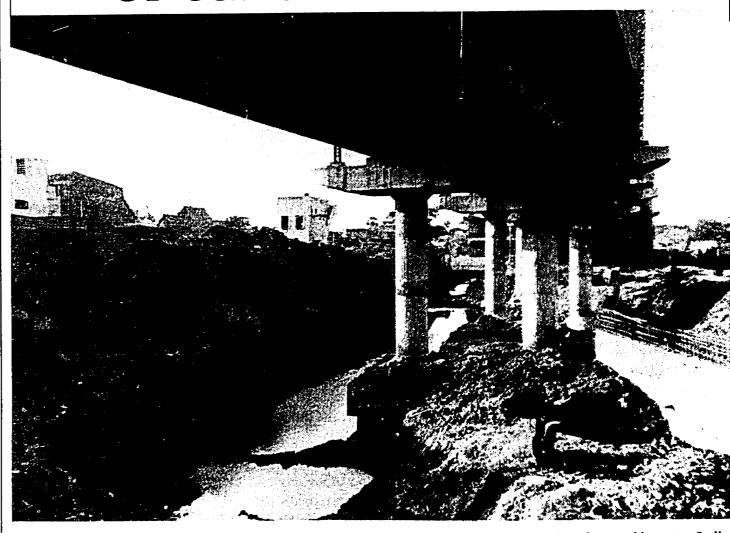
Sadly in Tamil Nadu the issue has a strong political flavour. After 12 years of unsuccessful attempts to defeat the AIADMK, the DMK promised in its election manifesto of 1989 to offer power free for agriculture. Karunanidhi promptly implemented this policy soon after assuming charge as Chief Minister. Surely a more equitable method to take care of the interests of the farmers is to provide a better price for his produce! When the average price of rice in the open market has increased over three times and that of sugar nearly doubled in less than a decade, there is little justification for the state paying such a subsidy on power.

The Rs.1200 crore saved can go to improve education, public health and dozens of other welfare schemes directed at the deprived sections of society. The Government should focus its energy more in improving the lot of these deprived children than on providing massive subsidies for farmers, large sections of whom can afford to pay for the power they consume.

Like the truck operators, the farmers are organised and any popular government is afraid of annoying this sacred cow.

Sadly nullifying the efforts of the Centre to persuade states like Tamil Nadu to levy mini-

Having made this stretch of canal unusable...



There are once again plans to reintroduce water transport by making the Buckingham Canal navigable again. Sadly, no thought was given to this possibility when the Metro was planned. The result is stretches like this in the heart of the City that prevent not only navigation but which also create problems during the rains by not providing adequate drainange. (Photograph by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

Southern canal to be made navigable?

(By A Special Correspondent)

Once again, plans are being talked about for resuscitating the Buckingham Canal for navigation. The Public Works Department (PWD) states the Central Government

mum tariff on power supplied to agriculture, the disease is spreading to other states. This is bound to have its impact on the long-term health and progress of the States. Tamil Nadu provides an outstanding example of this: the three decades of freebies has relegated the State to a position far behind others on several parameters of development.

— (Courtesy: Industrial Economist.).

is keen on making the Buckingham Canal navigable again.

The canal's lower reaches, from Adyar to Mamallapuram and further, would be taken up first to make them navigable. The northern part of the canal, between Basin Bridge and Sriharikota, is to be covered

Also see Page

later, Madras Musings understands.

The reclamation work is to be done with the intention of making the Canal usable by power boats upto 150 tonnes and ensure more efficient goods transportation in the respective areas. At present, the canal has an average depth of 2.5 metres, suitable for country boats. To make the canal us-

able for power boats, the depth will have to be increased to 4.5 metres.

Maintaining the water level round the year will not be a problem as there are sluice gates which can be opened when necessary, say officials.

The plans call for the re-

moval of silt to bring the canal waters back to their original level.

Navigation in the stretch of the canal that is within the city, linking Cooum and the Adyar Rivers, will however, not be practical because of the many encroachments, including the MRTS pillars that have come up right in the middle of the canal at Mylapore, it is stated.

told, to be improved and beau-

lets into each waterway, as re-

ported in the Press, is: Cooum

323; Buckingham Canal 122;

identified as inadequate man-

drains. Numerous slums, cattle-

buildings contribute water and

In the case of the Cooum, it

is proposed to pipe the waste

water to the various pumping

stations; additional pumps are

to be installed; the transmission

mains to the treatment works

are to be strengthened; treat-

ment facilities are to be ex-

panded; the bed of the river is

to be deepened. Energy both for

the pumping and the treatment

of the waste water will be high.

The steps to be taken to prevent

the pollution of the rivers and

canals by the slums, cattlesheds,

solid wastes are not clear. But

the most important factor ap-

pears to have been overlooked,

namely that the Cooum is a dry

river during the better part of

the year. The water flowing into

the river is only from the 323

waste water inlets. If clean wa-

livering the car to Dr. Rangachari

and, over a period of time, had

made several visits to Madras to

ensure that the car was performing

as it should. He had, in the course

of these visits, become a good friend

of the family. He said, "Sir, I have

met many people in my life to

whom I have had the pleasure of

delivering these beautiful cars, but

never in my life have I come across

a gentleman of the likes of this Doc-

tor. To be so rich, so brilliant in his

Dr. Rangachari, for, many years

ago, when I returned to India and

was living in St. Mary's Road, our

family doctor had a picture of this

noble personality framed in his re-

ception room. I had asked him if it

was the picture of his father and he

had told me that it was his uncle. It

was thus that I was able to place

I too remembered the face of

profession and so HUMANE!!"

solid wastes.

Advar 222; Otteri Nullah 59.

What can we do for a national treasure?

One of the most horrifying stories The Man From Madras Musings has heard in a long while is the Indian Express report on what is happening at the Connemara Library. Not merely is this national library housed in Madras in bad shape but, worse, much of its wealth seems to be so badly damaged that it is being condemned to the bonfires. Politicians several years ago were quick to condemn what Sri Lankan troops did to the Jaffna Library when they made a bonfire of its collection, but not one of them seems to be willing to rush to the rescue of an even bigger treasure house, our own Connemara Library to which every single book published in India has to be sent, mandatorily. Who will help this library with its magnificent Henry Irwin building, wonders MMM.

As MMM sees it, there are

several things to be done. One, the building, including the Museum Theatre out of the gaslight era, has to be completely restored to its once and former splendour. Then, a weeding out process of the treasure has to be gone through by a team of scholars. All the books that are left have to be properly bound, when necessary, but, more importantly, the valuable old books will have to be restored and preserved. The latest cataloguing method will have to be followed thereafter, and that would necessitate substantial computerisation. Apart from this, all valuable old material, including all Madras newspapers, need to be microfiched. And there would have to be training — and inspiration provided to the staff to maintain what can be made into a model library as a model library. MMM wonders whether the State and the Central Governments would be willing to get together on such an ambitious project as this. MMM is sure there'll be foreign funding available for such a purpose — not to mention local support as well as volunteer assistance — PROVI-DED there is a committee of eminence put in charge of the whole work.

But if Government is not willing to tackle such a major project — and if politicians are willing to turn a blind eye to wilful vandalism, seeing it all only when they don't have to commit themselves to a rescue effort on their doorstep — will Government let private initiative make a contribution to saving the library, leaving something for scholarship today and tomorrow? If Government would accept a private initiative — giving it a free hand to make the Connemara an institution of excellence — MMM feels sure that some kind of project can be worked out, given the present interest by the private sector in Chennai in public causes. Will Government act? Or will it even say, we are helpless, is there anyone out there who can help?

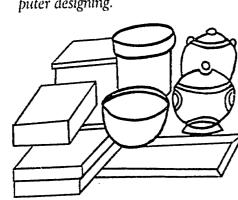
Silence — bespeaking indifference — will only doom the Connemara to the fate of the Jaffna Library before long.

Do they sell?

he more The Man From ▲ Madras Musings sees of the Indian cricketers, the more he is disillusioned with, NOT their talent, but their temperament and their commitment to the competitive aspects of the game. In the last year, this lacuna has been amply seen in South Africa, the West Indies and in Sri Lanka, a country much sneered at in the past by Indian cricketers. The methodical way the Sri Lankans go about making cricket a professional business on the field, with almost no such frills and furbelows of re-thrown up catches, high fives and jigs after wickets fall, the nonchalance of their ways, such as leaning on each other while discussing strategy and then moving in smartly when the action restarts, and their atheleticism, could all well serve as examples to our cricketers who think the busi-



DakshinaChitra announcing exhibitions of Kerala furniture (above) and new concepts of packaging, made of palmyrah, paper and wood, which are available at its Craft Shop, has been using some interesting combuter designing.



that happens, MMM wonders whether there might not soon be advertising fees linked with annual or series performances, or some such scheme.

The point MMM is making

Brhaddhavani music research centre and the ASEEMA resource centre's Wheel and Light project that will link the arts, education and the media. But it was in Finland that Devika hit the headlines, MMM finds. Attending the Dance and the Child International's conference were 400 delegates and 800 children from all over the world. Of the 200 presentations, Devika's 'Dance as a Cultural Bridge' was described by Helsingen Sanomat, one of Helsinki's major newspapers, as one of the two most important contributions to the conference. That the organisers thought so too is reflected in their invitation to her to address the conference a second time, during this year's sessions, and be one of the Principal Speakers at DACI's next conference, in

featured here today), the

Devika's presentation included a clipping from the 'art in education' work she has been doing with the Madras Craft Foundation and featured the work done in workshops on rural dance, such as Devarattam, Kolattam, Therukkoothu

Canada in the year 2000.

forcement begins. That will necessitate proper administrative machinery, manpower, vehicles, animal pounds and even police to help in difficult cases or on the roads. It will also necessitate NOT sparing the VIPs, many of whom tether their cattle on the pavements of some of the City's best roads. When all that happens, MMM will cheer the dawn of a new day. Hopefully sooner than later.

★ The Man From Madras Musings understands that the Government has once again taken the first steps to examine how best a Heritage Act can be framed for the State. The last time these steps were taken, the exercise came to a standstill after two meetings and the transfer of a Secretary. MMM hopes there's going to be faster and more meaningful progress this time, with a Chief Minister in office who takes every opportunity to reiterate that he is committed to the preservation of

Business briefs

★ The South is the largest consumer of mineral water, about 120 million litres a year. And these figures, fast growing, have been made possible because Tamil Nadu is the biggest consumer of mineral water in the country. Now, The Man From Madras Musings knows that NONE of the water supplied in India is truly MINERAL water; it is MEANT to be purified water. What is alarming, however, is that, to take advantage of this booming industry, more and more manufacturers are mushrooming, most of them with minimum standards, and to compete with them many an established manufacturer has been lowering his standards. MMM is told that at least half the manufacturers in Tamil Nadu do not follow adequate purification processes and the 'mineral water' they produce may not meet even Bureau of Indian Standards' recommendations leave alone international ones. Perhaps it's time to look at stricter monitoring measures for the in-

★ The Hosur area is the best floriculture belt in the country, The Man From Madras Musings is told. To increase floriculture in this area, the Government plans to develop a 200-acre facility here, with private sector participation, to provide flowergrowers grading, packing, precooling, cold storage, plant quarantine and customs facilities on campus, and serve the Hosur-Doddaballapur area. This Floriculture Infrastructure Park is to be developed simultaneously with a perishables storage project at Chennai Airport. MMM wonders whether a Chennai-Hosur air-link will be

OUR **READERS** WRITE

Elephant hurt

September 1-15, 1997

p egarding 'Elephant Walk' MM, July 16) which clearly focussed on the safety of road users. I hope all authorities concerned have taken note of it.

Regarding mahouts controlling the elephants with verbal commands, this appears to be a false notion. From the first floor flat balconv of my residence, I happened to witness a 'trunk thrust - coin collection - handover - bless act' by an elephant when it was jabbed with a knife concealed in its mahout's right hand. A particular part behind the forehead of the elephant was raw and bleeding with knife jabs sustained previously. This is nothing but cruelty to the animal. Horrified by what I saw, I raised an alarm, but the mahout quickly turned the animal and left the street before I could do anything.

Due to the height of the mahout's perch and the concealed use of the knife, the public are unaware of this cruel method used by the mahout to get the animal to obey him. The SPCA and other agencies concerned should take note of it and examine elephants doing the begging rounds on the

No doubt, elephants so illtreated and in pain will sometimes go berserk. The fault as usual lies with man and not the beast.

> K Raghavendran 18/F1/13th Street, T G Nagar Chennai 600 061.

National colours

In MM, September 1, there was a photograph of a rag picker using our national flag to bundle her collection of 'valuable' oddments in. Such unthinking actions are not

confined to the illiterate. Recently it was reported that a confectionery manufacturer was bringing out a toffee wrapped in the national colours to commemorate the Golden lubilee of our Independence. The company's gesture to donate one per cent of the sales proceeds of these toffees to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund is laudable. But I wonder whether they thought about the fact that, after the toffee is eaten the wrapper will NOT be preserved as a memento but will be thrown on the ground and trampled on. Sweepers and scavengers would later sweep them into the garbage. Should nacional symbols be subjected to this?

> K. S. Kandhaswamy 6/6 Rajagopalan Street Valmikinagar, Tiruvanmiyur Chennai 600 041

Editor Note: There is a difference between a FLAG and a wrapping paper. If Mr.Kandhaswamy's argument is followed we might have to ban any use of the colour combination saffron, white and green, wouldn't we?

Correct name

building for St.Mark's and NOT 'Kent' as you had printed it.

> Rajind N Christy Anna Nagar West, Chennai 600 040.

Editor's note: Sorry; the Printer's Devil was at work again.

When do WE start?

When I saw a photograph of **W** Senate House all lit up on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Madras Legislature, I was thrilled the 'dear old Senate House' had a face lift. But when I heard that the function was held in the adjoining Auditorium, it meant it was just 'lights' only!

To mark the 50th anniversary of Independence, Chennai should have had a heritage conservation drive, at least for some sections of the city, like Mumbai has had in the Kalaghoda area, beginning with the Army and Navy building. Restoration of it has already started, says a news item which adds that a committee was formed some time ago, comprising the House of Tatas and some other heritage activists. Why should Chennai lag behind?

> Anna Varki "Aalil", 9 Central Street, Kilpauk Garden Colony, Chennai 600 010.

Revered picture

have always wanted to relate Lan incident which happened to me when I was on a visit to the Rolls-Royce works in Shrewsbury, England, as part of my training programme. Your story in MM February 16th, helped me recall it.

I was being escorted down a very broad flight of stairs after the completion of my visit when, sudlenly, my friend, who had taken me around the works, stopped midway and told me that he would like me to meet a person whom he thought should. I readily agreed and walked back up the wide staircase and was led into a cabin and introduced to a very old gentleman who, was told, was a visitor from India and the city of Madras. The old gentleman — he was old and had been given a cabin in which he browsed and spent his life in, for having worked with the company in many parts of the world, where he had done yeoman service for Rolls-

This gentleman told me that he was delighted to meet me and, as he was talking to me, fished out from his hip pocket a wallet. He gently opened a compartment in which he had kept a plastic covered photograph and said to me, "Sir, do you know if this gentleman is still alive and rolling in his Rolls-Royce?" I was amazed to see the picture of the venerable Dr. Rangachari standing beside an exquisite car with the hood rolled back and, alongside him, the very same gentleman to whom I was speaking!! Apart from his wife's photograph, he had been carrying

this photograph all these years!! He had been responsible for de-

ourselves The city's waterways — the ter is to flow into the Cooum all and mercaptan. The collection the year round, the waste water Cooum and Adyar Rivers. has to be treated and let into the Buckingham Canal, Otteri

Let's do it

Nullah, Captain Cotton Canal the river. and the Mambalam and Taking waste water to pumping stations would be Vyasarpadi drains — are, we are costly. Instead, a number of tified at a cost of Rs 270-400 treatment plants can be estabcrore by a consortium of foreign lished on the padugai on both and Indian firms. This, I feel, the banks of the river. The cost of the collection system to these can be easily implemented with treatment plants would be only the technology, expertise and wherewithal available in the a fraction of the cost of transmitting water to distant treatment plants. The number of pollution in-

The 323 polluting inlets will each need to be considered separately. Some will need to be treated at the source itself for example, the waste water Other causes of pollution are flowing from the Kilpauk Water Works. The rest of the polagement of sewerage and poor lutants will have to be treated maintenance of stormwater on the river bank and then let sheds, industries and public into the river.

Questions likely to arise are: * Is there adequate space on the river bank?

Can the smell nuisance near the treatment plant on the river bank be avoided?

The answer to both questions is 'yes'.

Thanks to the improvements carried out during the earlier tenure in the Seventies of the present Chief Minister, plenty of space is available on the banks of the river. In fact the cost of improvements to the river has already been met by the land reclaimed. Part of the land reclaimed has since been encroached upon. But there is still a lot of land available.

The smell nuisance in sewage pumping stations and sewage treatment plants are caused by gases like hydrogen sulphide

him immediately I saw his picture alongside that Rolls-Royce.

> Samuel J Prabhakar 11, Manohar Avenue, Off Casa Major Road, Egmore, Chennai 600 008.

Signboard screen

Def. "Signboard Horrors" in MM of April 1st, look at the Egmore Wesley church which is to celebrate its centenary soon.

Huge hoardings have come up along the wall of the church facing Poonamallee High Road. It is tragic that this beautiful building, a part of our heritage, is hidden from public view because of signboards. Who s responsible for this vandalism?

> A.P.K. Roy 43, Kennedy Sawar Main St. Sembiam, Chennai 600 011.

and treatment of these gases to prevent the smell nuisance is feasible.

The treatment of waste water and letting it into the river is not sufficient to maintain a clean water way. The bed of the river contains large sludge deposits. Living organisms grow in this, float to the top, die and settle at the bottom. The cycle of oxygen demand continues indefinitely, resulting in a dirty waterway. Therefore, the sludge deposits must be cleared by periodical dredging.

Recent attempts to remove the silt from the Buckingham Canal were beset with difficulties, especially in locating suitable land fill areas. The possibility of dredging and transporting the silt deep into the sea must be explored as an alternative to land fill. Water transport is believed to be less costly than road transport. Also, water transport will not hinder the

Other problems like solid wastes dumping, sanitation for slum dwellers, wastes from cattle sheds must each be treated objectively and solutions found.

The scheduling of the project should be such that the construction of every stage will immediate benefit. The highest pollutant inlets need to be treated first. Further, work should progress from the higher reaches. We do not need to prepare a master plan for all the waterways at one time. We could take each waterway one by one.

The possibility of establishing remunerative enterprises needs to be carefully examined. One project could be parking space on the reclaimed land mentioned earlier. Transport of men and materials from Chetpet to Chepauk could relieve the load on the much-strained rail and road system.

What we need at simple and easy methods which will show results quickly. The savings in energy by adopting these suggestions and the revenue from the remunerative enterprises suggested could soon offset the cost of the project.

> M. Susikaran Consulting Engineer 8 First Street, Nandanam Extension, Chennai 600 035.

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

ness of cricket is off the field and not on it.

This was something that struck MMM the other day after reading a piece by a politician who happens to be one of MMM's favourite editorialists on cricket. Ashok Mitra not only has a way with words but he often hits the Indian cricketing nail on the head and drives it home hard. Fooling around in flannels, is what he thinks the Indian team is doing, just because they are being so well looked after by the advertising and marketing boys. Cricket is fast becoming redundant to their earning capacity, as their performing non-cricket stunts for TV not only makes them superheroes but also ensures their future comfort.

Argues Mitra, as long as the products the cricketers advertise keep selling well, no one connected with paying them the greater part of their earnings is going to worry about what their achievements are on foreign fields so long as they do well at home. But if even home performances start deteriorating, where are the cricketing wunderkinds going to be in the money market? In fact, with satellites now enabling all the cricketing warts of our superheroes on foreign fields to be seen in our drawing rooms, many an advertiser — especially in a recession situation — is likely to have already begun wondering whether what they are shelling out to superheroes for off-field

stunts isn't too much. And if

than in any other country paying what they do to cricketers with dubious international records. Sadly, some of that is hat competing industrial organisations are beginning to pay cricketers playing for teams they sponsor in home competitions. It won't be long before such sponsorships are linked with performance. Perhaps something like that happening will jolt our cricketers into a sense of responsibility to their fans and those who pay the

Cultural envoy

Tor long The Man From ▲ Madras Musings watched a contributor to this journal, V R Devika, make a significant mark abroad as a cultural ambassador for India. Many a group in India and several dance and music groups abroad have benefitted from her efforts to get Indian cultural activity to join hands with dance and music activities in other parts of the world. Many a local purist worries whether the fusion that results from such collaborative efforts will ruin Indian cultural activity. But Devika is convinced that both

can only benefit. She was recently in France to try and get UNESCO assistance for DakshinaChitra (whose notices are beginning to use the computer and design imaginatively, to judge by the sketches ever, say 'Hooray' only when en-

is that advertisers are tending to and Tappattam, apart from that go overboard - perhaps more annual giant presentation Aayana. One of the benefits of the visuals was that there's been a promise to try and raise the funds for a troupe of children beginning to happen also with from families of traditional dancers to accompany her to Canada where the delegates will be able to see live what's been hitherto shown only on the screen. Visits to Norway, Portugal and Israel, to present similar papers, are likely to follow for Devika, MMM hears.

Finnish music composer Eero Hammenniemi is someone Devika has long been in touch with. The result has been Eero's interest in Tamil as well as Carnatic music. He is now working with children on a festival project based on Carnatic music, MMM hears. And there'll be more of the Carnatic music influence in Finland after the visit in November of two Finnish music students to Brhaddhvani on an exchange programme; they will also stay

In brief

★ The Tamil Nadu Animal and Bird Control in Urban Areas Act has been passed by the State Assembly and has received Presidential assent. Theoretically, the way is clear for the impounding and removal from the City of ALL stray animals. Cattle-owners will have to keep their cattle in Corporationauthorised shelters. The Man From Madras Musings will, how-

on during the music season.

the next step, with refrigerator planes being pressed into MMM

D e. Old and New in MM, Au-I gust 16, it was the Rev. Richard Hall Kerr who was responsible for obtaining the land grant and

No answers | W/// to gas leak question

The Sterlite gas leak episode met with the Committee and **1** has some curious features to it. Chief Minister Karunanidhi remarked two weeks after the Government-appointed committee submitted its report der. on the leak that he was not happy with the report. He did not exactly say why nor was the report made public. He then

lust outside my window

Just outside my window The building rises Tall and high Making me sigh.

This concrete monster Forebodes only disaster Are the verdant trees That used to sway Gently in the breeze.

Oh, it isn't fair That my little patch Of bright blue sky Should, each day, Slowly become smaller As the building rises taller.

No longer will I see The stars Come and go, Nor watch The beauty of the moon Or the sun's glory At high noon.

Yet the criss-cross Of steel rods And silhouetted scaffolding Rising part by part Have the strange beauty Of modern art.

"You are a lone voice In the wilderness," They say "How else will the city

Is there no healthy

Whereby concrete jungles Need not Wipe out natural ones?

Mahema

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mahema Devadoss is a quadriplegic, who has to spend long hours in bed. "The bedroom window, therefore, becomes very important to me; it is virtually my window to the world," she says.

now it was stated categorically that Sterlite was not responsible for the gas leak. But this changing stance has made many won-

Though the State has permitted Sterlite Industries (India) Ltd's copper smelter plant at Tuticorin, closed on 5.7.97 the day of the gas leak - to reopen, several basic questions remain unanswered.

— WHAT was the gas that affected 146 people working in Ramesh Flowers Ltd's dry flower unit situated next to Sterlite? and

— WHO was responsible?

Soon after a 'vellowish' gas affected its works, Ramesh Flowers cried foul and pointed an accusing finger at Sterlite. The District Collector and Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board ordered the closure of Sterlite's copper smelter plant on the night of the leak. But, strangely, the administration did not seal either factory!

Henri Tiphagne, Director, People's Watch, and a lawyer by profession, points out that the failure to take blood samples from the workers, admitted by the hospital, mostly girls 17-22 vears of age, is a serious lapse on the part of the hospital authorities as blood tests would have revealed the nature of the gas.

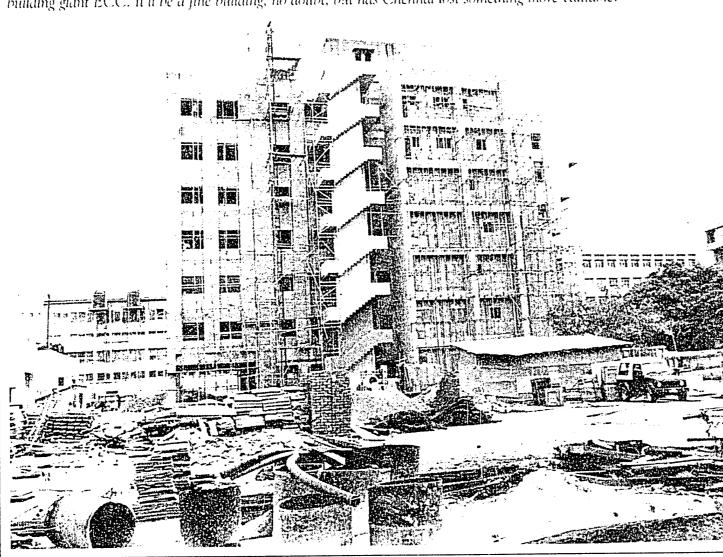


HARRY MILLER who contributes our OLD and the NEW this fortnight says, "The old garden house — I wonder chose it was? — was almost at the end of Club House Road, just before Express Estate. It was used by a transport service before it fell vacant. Look what's coming up in its place! Another one of those characterless, multistoreyed tower

THE OLD...

blocks for offices. And there are two more coming up across the way from it. With Club House Road such a narrow street, I wonder how anyone will ...& THE be able to make their way down the road, considering all the cars the three tower blocks are likely to bring to an already crowded street. When are we ever going to learn to build, keeping in mind the available infrastructure?

EDITOR'S NOTE: The block, we understand, is part of the property development plans of that Larsen & Toubro building giant ECC. It'll be a fine building, no doubt, but has Chennai lost something more valuable?



Venkatachari Jagannathan looks at THE INDUSTRIAL SCENE

He also blames the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) for not taking water/ leaves samples from both factories to determine the nature of the gas, despite being the first authority informed of the mishap by Ramesh Flower's officials.

A People's Watch team headed by Dr C E Sooriamoorthi, Professor and Head, Department of Solar Energy, School of Energy Sciences, Madurai Kamaraj University, has reported that, "the process of making dry flowers involves dyeing, bleaching, colouring, desinging and fumigation of wild flowers/leaves etc.". But, it

is stated, the dry flower uni does not use any harmful chemicals/gases in producing the six container loads of dry flowers it ships out daily. Oth ers say it uses chemicals and substances like sodium chlorite, methyl bromide (fumigant) acetic acid, methanol, turpentine, varnish, ethylene, glycol, sodium silicate, magnesium chloride and D.E.G., many of which could produce toxic ef-

If it wasn't fumes from Ramesh Flowers' chemical processes, was it a sulphur dioxide leak from Sterlite? Or was it a white/greyish smoke due to the unburnt/partly burnt fuel in

result in emission of large quantities of soot which, together with any leak of sulphur dioxide, could have adverse affects.

A Sterlite spokesman says the Sterlite plant automatically shuts off if it detects the presence of sulphur dioxide in excess of the prescribed limits. However, he agrees that a lot more can be done to improve the safety aspects of his plant. The official report too states that fumes or gas mixtures emanating from the dyeing and bleaching process carried out by Ramesh Flowers combined with background sulphur dioxide concentrations from Sterlite could have led to the reported symptoms.

There seems to be a lot of conflict in the various reports on the mishap and there appear to be no clear-cut answers as to what caused it. In these con-

Sterlite's furnace? This could fused circumstances, these questions remain:

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NEW

— Why was Ramesh Flowers not closed down when Sterlite's plant was closed for more than a month, resulting in a loss of Rs. 2 crore a day for the company? – Shouldn't the Government/

Pollution Control Board have some form of disaster management plans, which should include provision to take blood/water samples immediately after such an accident? Who is to pay compensation to the affected workers when blame is not pinned on one party?

— When does the public get a clear-cut report laying categorical blame on one or the other or both parties, and information on what action will follow this ascertainment of guilt?



Making dance respectable

Cadir (Dasiattam), the tradi- themselves to establish the Tamil country, had been brought to glory by its hereditary custodians, the devadasi community. In the late 1920's, a campaign to abolish the devadasi system of illrepute had reached feverpitch. The proposed legislation for abolishing the system and redeeming its victims threatened to snuff out sacred Sadir. At this stage, the newly established Music Academy of Madras and E. Krishna dance and assist in transforming

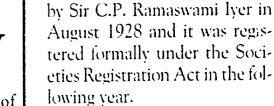
September 1-15, 1997

Itional classical dance of the beauty of the art in the public's the cause of music. At

The Indian National Congress decided to hold its 1927 resolved that "an Acadannual session in Madras during the last week of December. It was customary in the north to 5th, a provisional exhold an All India Music Conference along with the annual Congress session. Music enthusiasts in Madras, who had already met in 1926 and resolved to establish an institution to foster classical music, wanted to was constituted and lyer, its knight in shining avail themselves of the opporarmour, stepped in to save the tunity to hold an All India Music Conference, the first of its sullied Sadir into Bharata kind in the south. At the con-Natyam. Significantly, the clusion of the conference, a Academy staged dances by out- resolution was passed urging standing devadasi performers the formation of a permanent | Academy.

another meeting on Ianuary 28, 1928, it was emy of Music be started at Madras." On March ecutive, with Dr U.Rama Rao as President, E. Krishna Iver and S. Rajagopalachari as Secretaries and T.V. Subba Rao as Treasurer

The Kalyani Sisters who made history on March 15. 1931 by dancing at the first ever dance recital organised by the Madras Music



bide his time.

E. Krishna lyer, one of th Secretaries of the Academy and its driving force in its eventful life of the first decade, was himself a trained musician and dancer. He was most eager to introduce Sadir in the Academy's programme, but had to

When, in 1930, S. Muthu

lakshmi Reddy, a doctor and

social leader who belonged to a

devadasi family, brought a bill

in the Council seeking to pro-

hibit the performance of the

devadasi dedicatory ceremonies

in Hindu temples, the Acad-

emy, which was closely watch-

ing the developments, saw the

seriousness of the situation and

felt that something ought to be

done urgently to safeguard the

continuity of the classical tradi-

tions in dance before the here-

ditary custodians of Sadir —

who belonged to the devadasi

community — were forced to

give up the role. The Academy

took a bold step. On March 15,

1931, it presented on its own

platform two dancers known as

the Kalyani Daughters. The

performance drew only a small

crowd and a meagre gate collec-

tion, but it was a significant

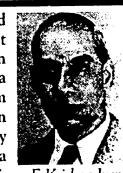
event. It was reported in the

Academy's Journal thus:

demned as prostitutes and the dance associated with them as evil. They held that the art would die if it was dissociated from their caste. The twin arts of singing and dancing had been

conference and it resulted in

The Madras Music Academy recently celebrated the birth centenary of E Krishna Iyer, who brought dasiattam from out of disrepute and helped give it, on the Academy's stage, honoured status as Bharata Natvam. Several of the City's best Bharata Natyam dancers paid homage to him by dancing for him on the Academy's stage as part of this celebration. They included, from left to right, front row, Kanchana Sarma, Meenakshi Chittaranjan, Malavika Sarukkai, E Krishna Iver Krishnaveni Lakshmanan, Nirmala Ramachandran,



An entirely new line was

struck this year by the Academy

commencing its season with a

Vyjayanthimala Bali, Kamala Lakshminarayan, Padma Subrahmanyam Lakshmi Viswanathan, Nandini Ramani, Jayanthi Subramaniam and Shantha Dhananjayan. In the rear row are, sixth from left, Dhananjayan, and second from right C V Chandrasekhar. Madras Musings pays its own tribute to Krishna Iyer by publishing a two-part feature, the focus in this issue being on the historic change; in the next issue it will be on the

entrusted with the task of organising the Academy and starting its work. The Music Academy of Madras was inaugurated

Bharata Natyam performance by Kalyani Daughters of Tanjore. It has almost become a fashion nowadays to condemn the Indian Nautch and look askance at it. In our view this condemnation is least deserved Such of those as have feasted their eyes on the performance of Krishna Bhagavatar of Tanjore of Harikatha fame, will testify to the grandeur of this art (of dance) and expose the utter unworthiness of the criticism that is levelled against it. We are glad that the performance served as an eye-opener to those who came to witness it. We hope that in the days to come. public opinion will veer round and give unto Abhinayam its proper place.

The Academy thereafter, continued to encourage the art of dance under its new name of Bharata Natyam. But a major controversy over the pros and cons of the art of dance ensued and there was much discussion about the preservation of the

The controversy over the nature of classical dance and the advisability of its revival were led by Anti-Nautch leader Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddy for the antagonists and by Krishna Iver for the pro-art protagonists. The English language press made space available for the controversy which helped to open the eyes of the public to the richness of the art of dance. This controversy started at the beginning of December 1932

and lasted many weeks. The decisive discussion on the fate and future of dance was held on the sixth day of the sixth annual conference of the Music Academy. The venue was a special pandal erected for the occasion to the north of the Ripon Buildings in the then People's Park. December 28th was entirely devoted to a discussion of the 'Nautch Question'. At the outset, Tiger Varadachariar, who was presiding, read out a letter he had received from G.A.Johnson, Assistant Editor of the Madras Mail, who had been invited to take part in the proceedings. The letter read, in part:

There is a point which has (Continued on Page 7)

The nautch controversy

Levents, in which nautch featured, gave rise to controversy.

Sri Sri Sri Raja Sir Swetachalapathi Ramakrishna Bahadur Varu Ranga Rao, Raja of Bobbili (a principality within the Madras Presi-dency), was elected Leader of the Legislative Council of the Presidency late in 1932. In that capacity, he became Premier of the Presidency's Government. When he assumed office, a public function was organised to felicitate him — and it included nautch dancing. The Raja took it in his stride. A temple dancer of Bobbili named Sitaramudu had been sent south to learn Karnatakam — the term used for Sadir by the devadasis of the Telugu districts — from Bangalore Nagarathnamma and she had danced at his 'coronation' in 1920. He was no stranger to

nautch But the Anti-Nautch movement people were enraged. Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddy, the staunch leader of the movement, shot off angry letters to The Hindu and The Mail criticising the Premier for associating himself with the nautch party. Her ire was laced with pain because on the committee of hosts for the celebration were some of her friends who had

given their unqualified support

to her goals. Even if they had not

In 1932, certain social known that nautch was to be ways saw the wrong side of presented, they had not protested or walked out. Dr. Reddy was upset too that

nautch was performed at another public function also, a garden party given in honour of M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, Kumararaja of Chettinad. The letters published in The

Hindu drew a response from E. Krishna Iyer and the issue blossomed into a full-fledged con-Krishna Iyer was not against

the right kind of reforms. He agreed that dance should not be used to lure clients for immoral purposes. But he wanted the art to be preserved. He noted that 50 years of the Anti-Nautch movement had nearly killed the art even while failing to eradicate immorality.

Swarajya, an English daily edited by T.Prakasam, the Andhra Congress leader, urged that the precious art be separated from its evil association, but added that this would be possible only if an increasing number of votaries of the art imparted to it something of the purity of their own lives. It was a call for girls from 'respectable' families to take up the dance.

The Mail conducted an opinion survey. It was generally felt that anything in this world was liable to be abused and misinterpreted, and the wicked mind al-

things, which was no reason to do away with Bharata Natyam an art full of the poetry of motion. Significantly, a cross-section of devadasis voiced their emphatic protest against the Anti-Nautch movement. They argued that, because some devadasis were living immoral lives, all of them should not be contheir inheritance and they knew how best to preserve their divin-

ity, they asserted. In the end, E. Krishna Iyer wrote an open letter to the President of the Music Academy saying, "In view of the recent controversy over the Anti-Nautch movement, and the pre carious existence of the art, as evidenced by the difficulty of the Academy itself to find proper exponents of art at the present day, I request you to bring the matter to the notice of the music conference for the necessary lead in the matter and action thereon."

The Academy brought th matter before its sixth annua historic resolution which among other things, renamed Sadir as Bharata Natyam.

Ouizmaster V.V. RAMA-NAN's questions are from the period August 1 to 15. Questions 16 to 20 pertain to Chennai.

1. Which three great National leaders' speeches were replayed in Parliament on the night of August 14-15th?

2. Name the music 'baron' shot dead in Mumbai on August 12th? 3. Which Indian director has been chosen for the prestigious Vittorio de Sica award?

4. Where was the 80th plenary of the Congress held recently?

5. Who is the next Army chief? 6. Which former captain is the new coach of the Indian men's hockey team?

7. Who won the blue riband 100m races in the recently concluded World Athletics Championships in Athens?

8. France's Jeanne Clement, officially the world's oldest person, died recently. How old was she? 9. The Supreme Court recently cancelled on 'technical' grounds the Bharat Ratna awarded posthumously to a freedom fighter.

10. Who were involved in a world record-breaking 576-run partnership in Test cricket recently?

11. In which British colony has a volcano started erupting, causing grave concern

12. What controversial bill was the Union Government forced to withdraw leading to much embarrassment?

13. Name the social activist whose 'death' in ULFA custody has become a national issue.

14. Where is the country's first digital library coming up?

15. Which Indian thespian has been chosen for Pakistan's highest civilian medal, Nishan-i-Imtiaz?

16. Which Chennai-based literary and public figure has decided to write the history of the contribution of leaders from Tamil

* * *

Nadu to the Freedom struggle? 17. Which group of people took out a massive rally in the metropolis, amidst tight security, on August 6th?

18. A commemorative stamp honouring a woman freedom fighter from the State was released in Chennai recently. Who? 19. Name the two places in the city rocked by explosions, leaving two injured, on August 10th?

20. The State Forest Department, in association with WWF-I and the OTA, has embarked on a sapling plantation programme

to beautify which city landmark? (Answers on Page 8)

nce again, Musings 'Quizmaster V V Ramanan won the 'Quizzer of the Year' title at the The Hindu-sponsored Landmark Quiz held recently. But once again, his team, Samsapthagas, were pipped at the post for the team title. And this time too it was a team led by Seshadri that won the Landmark title, only it called itself 'Yes, Boss' this year and not 'The Suitable

Last year, it was Seshadri keeping his cool in the last round, the Quickfire Round, that helped the Boys edge out Samsapthagas. This time, the Quickfire Round was moved up and it was the Eighth Round and the luck of the draw — that did Samsapthagas in. A different seating arrangement might not have given Yes Boss the three opportunities it got in that round to score with every one of them. That I suppose, is part of the game, but it might be worth considering alternatives to a system which gives one team EXTRA chances in a round, and other teams NONE.

Another aspect of the Quiz that left me quizzical was whether Hindi films and music are the total film scene in India. even in Tamil Nadu. More questions on these than on the films and music of any other language and a special round in which ALL 15 snatches of music were from Hindi films was a bit much, I thought. Especially with teams and an audience that are English- and Tamilspeaking. This is not a call for 'Down with Hindi', but why not

Pipped at the post again

give Hollywood and Kodambakkam a chance as well?

But a doubt creeps in while musing on this particular aspect. When teams can't answer what the name of Tim Murari's latest book is, what the name of Mahesh Dattani's play that was recently staged in Madras is, and what the name of Manjula Padmanabhan's prize-winning drama-script is, perhaps the South doesn't figure in the reading of quizzing whizzes. They certainly found it easier answering such questions as these:

What are red chip compa-

What did Kings, Queens and lacks become on cards in France after the Revolu-

What is the Life Detector? (And it was nice to know that the Tamil Nadu Fire Service has the first one in India).

Indian recipe is sold in 140 countries?

(A visual of an international ad for suiting). Where was it shot and whose fleet of luxury cars was used for it?

If Republicans are elephants, what are Democrats?

What sport is banned in Singapore schools and why?

These were some of the easier questions in the quiz; most of them, especially in the eight rounds, struck me as being rather too tough and not general enough. Quizmaster Naveen Jayakumar, mother Saranya who researched most of the questions and Gautam and Savita Padmanabhan who provided additional inputs might not agree. But the standard of questions in the quickfire round seemed more reasonable. Perhaps next year?

Top Dome, Corn Flakes and High Inquisitors were others who figured in the last eight this What flavouring made to an year, as they had done last year.

But among the newcomers coming through from the record number of 600 teams who contested the preliminary round were No Chance Whatsoever, Kabab Mein Haddi and NKOTOB, whatever that was meant to mean. The lastnamed, a Vidya Mandir team, not only took the prize for the Best School Team but it was also the first school team to enter the final of a Landmark Quiz. And in the final, it made quite an impression too. The best Corporate team was the computer crowd from CMC. And the prize for the best name went not to Maami, Maama and Maamanar or Scama Sutra but to the more prosaic Devil's Advocates from Onida.

September 1-15, 1997

S.M.

LANDMARK **ANSWERS**

cause it's a waste of time, of cars; Donkeys; and Cricket. Besauce; Moscow, with Yeltsin's landslide; Worcestershire buried deep under rubble or a vival even if the casualties are rects human and animal surnite; An instrument that de-Liberte, Equalite and Fraterstock exchanges in China; tional companies quoted on the other answers are: Multinaand Padmanabhan's works. The Harvest are Murari's, Dattani's dras), Dance Like a Man and Steps to Paradise (set in Ma-

Vou'd be surprised, the vari-1 ety of ways the humble sago can be used. From a crisp dosai to a golden vadai, from a with crunchy bonda to a wholesome uppuma. Sago looks so pretty too, like fresh dewdrops on a bright, clear morning.

SAGO DOSAI

1 cup sago 1 cup raw rice 2 tbs sour curd 2 onions, chopped fine A small bunch coriander leaves,

chopped fine Salt to taste Oil for shallow frying

Ground paste 4-6 green chillies 1/2 piece ginger

Soak sago for an hour in sufficient water. Soak rice separately in water for an hour. Drain well. Grind the rice fine, adding the drained sago. Add salt. Mix well. Set aside.

Grind the green chillies and ginger to a fine paste. Add the ground paste, chopped onions, sour curd and chopped coriander leaves to the batter. Mix well.

Heat a tawa. Pour a ladleful of batter to make a thick dosai. Do not spread the batter thin. Pour a for the sago to soften.

teaspoon of oil all round the edges. Turn the dosai carefully and fry till done.

Serve hot with a cocoanut

SAGO-POTATO BONDA

3/4 cup sago 2 potatoes 2 tsp roasted peanuts, broken 2 green chillies, chopped fine 1/2 tsp sesame seeds 1/2 tsp red chilli powder luice of a lemon A small bunch of coriander leaves, chopped fine 1/2 tsp asafoetida powder

Method

Salt to taste

Oil for deep frying

Pressure cook the potatoes in their jackets, peel and mash. Set aside. Wash the sago thoroughly. Drain well. Set aside for an hour

mashed potatoes, green chillies, asafoetida powder, salt, red chilli powder, chopped coriander leaves, lemon juice, sesame seeds and roasted peanuts. Mix well to form a thick dough.

SAGO UPPUMA

1 cup sago 2-3 tbs oil 1 tsp cumin seeds 4 or 5 green chillies, chopped fine 1/2 cup grated coconut 1/2 tsp asafoetida powder 1/4 cup roasted peanuts, broken into 1 small bunch coriander leaves,

Salt to taste

Mix the softened sago,

Make marble-sized balls and deep fry till golden brown. Serve

Method

chopped fine

A few curry leaves

Wash sago and soak in sufficient water for at least 2 hours. Drain and set aside

Heat oil and add cumin seeds. When they splutter, add the green chillies, asafoetida powder, soaked sago, salt and curry leaves.

Cook covered on low heat, till the sago is done, stirring occasionally. Take care the sago does not stick to the bottom.

Garnish with roasted peanuts. grated coconut and chopped coriander leaves. Serve hot.

SAGO VADAI

1/2 cup sago 1/2 cup buttermilk 1/2 cup bengal gram flour (besan) tsp red chilli powder 1/2 tsp asafoetida powder 2 green chillies, chopped powder 2 green chillies, chopped fine 2-3 ths coriander leaves, chopped 1 tsp ghee Salt to taste Oil for deep frying

Method

Soak the sago in the buttermilk for at least half on hour. Add the besan, salt, red chilli powder, ghee, green chillies and

asafoetida powder to make a stiff batter. Add water if necessary. Heat oil. Shape the batter into small vadais and deep fry till

> Chandra Padmanabhan

The South forgotten

— In another 'collection' of Indian Art

nce again the South is ased importance to art and art-Overlooked. Chennai's ists of all regions? What were College of Arts and Crafts is the the criteria of selection of the pioneering institution in the country. Surely its output over the last hundred years or so, rates greater representation in a history of a hundred years of contemporary Indian painting than the recognition of less than half a dozen from the College or influenced by it?

Which is why The Flamed Mosaic by Neville Tuli raises many questions. How comprehensive is it? Does it give unbi-

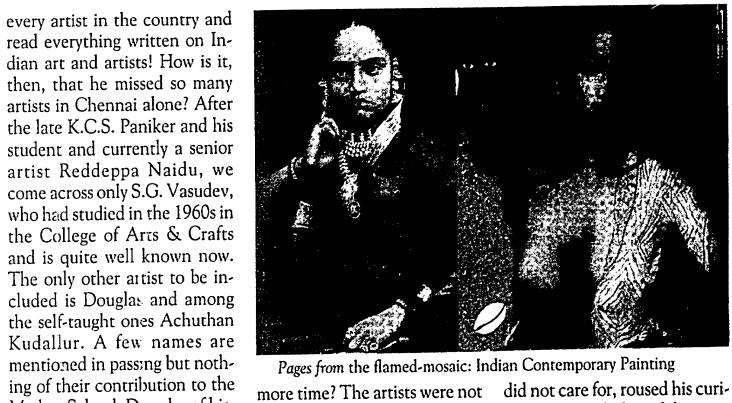
artists to be represented?

• by Lakshmi Venkatraman

In fact, these were a few of the questions raised on the occasion of the recent launch of the book at the British Council. While Tuli admitted that he knew nothing of art until 1993, he claimed that, from then till writing the book, he had met

and is quite well known now. The only other artist to be included is Douglas and among the self-taught ones Achuthan Kudallur. A few names are mentioned in passing but nothing of their contribution to the Madras School. Decades of history of Art in the south have been glossed over.

Tuli's explanations were rather simplistic. If time was the constraint, as Tuli mentioned, why not plan a book which could be done properly within the time available or if giving a proper historical perspective was the aim, why not allow



available when he went to meet them... good transparencies of their works were not at hand ... were some of the other reasons he offered.

Neville Tuli is an alumnus of the London School of Economics and Oxford University. His chance attendance at an art auction and the purchase of three paintings, which he later

osity and made him delve into Art and its history.

His original plan was to include, painting, sculpture, graphics and murals in one book but this had to be given up due to cost and size constraints. confessed Tuli. What has emerged is a well-printed book with over 300 illustrations, but an imbalance in representation.

TRANSFORMING A TRADITIONAL DANCE

(Continued from Page 5)

occurred to me in connection with these discussions which I submit might usefully be raised. This refers to the public performances of the 'Nautch' which I understand many reformers wish to discourage. It is reasonable to suppose: (I) That if it is intended to reform the 'devadasis', they must be given an alternative profession. Public performances of the dance should provide them with lucrative opportunities to display their talents. (II) If the dance is to be free from its less respectable associations, the encouragement of public display appears to be the best way to do it. Private parties tend to encourage the notion of lack of respectability. Public functions, on the other hand, show the dance for what

Lack of respectability might best be removed by attendance at these public functions of re-

spectable people. After the resolution was duly moved and seconded, some 16 eminent persons took part in the discussions.

The President, at the end of the epoch-making debate, put the resolution to vote and it was carried unanimously. The final text of the remarkable resolution read, in part:

1. Bharata Natyam as a great and an ancient art being unexceptionable, this conference views with concern its rapid decline and appeals to the public and art associations to give it the necessary encourage-

2. This conference requests the Music Academy, Madras, to take steps to disseminate cor-

rect ideas regarding the art and to help the public to a proper appreciation thereof.

3. This conference is of opinion that it is desirable that, to start with, women's organisations do take immediate steps to give proper training in the art, by instituting a course of nstruction for the same.

4. This conference is of opinon that, in order to make dancing respectable, it is necessary mances thereof before respectable gatherings.

Thus it was that the executive and academic work of the Music Academy laid the foundation for rescuing Bharata Natyam from the danger of extinction and reviving it. Another achievement of the Academy was the naming of Sadir, with the approval of this memorable conference as Bharata

Krishna lyer was later quoted as saying that the renaissance of Bharata Natyam may be said to have begun on January 1, 1933, the date of the second dance recital at the Academy of the Kalyani Daughters. On this occasion, there was a large audience, probably because of the attention focussed on the art form by the debates at the Academy's 1932 annual conference and elsewhere. The impact the recital made on the public was therefore much greater and the Academy organised several more recitals thereafter. In the first decade of dance, it laid emphasis on presenting artists whose performances conformed to its own

ideals, and on using a dulcet

veena and twin tamburas for

accompaniment instead of such instruments as the clarinet. Consequently the performances projected a soft and subdued atmosphere with rich emotional overtones.

The seventh conference of the Academy, held in 1933, was a conference of consolidation. Bharatam Naranaswamy Iyer and vidwan Syama Sastri moved and seconded a resolu tion which requested the Music to encourage public perfor- Academy "to open a school of dancing as early as possible" Participating in the discussion on the above resolution, Mrs. Stan Harding, who had been frequently visiting South India to record the surviving traditions of Bharata Natyam, said that when she came to India 20 years earlier, the devadasis used to dress differently, in extremely beautiful and charming style. But now, she said, they used much heavier material which impeded free movement. She therefore suggested that the old style of dress should be revived. She exhorted the Music Academy to take early steps to revive the art which had become stagnant by finding out where its tradition survived in its purest form and encourage its develop-

In the years that followed, the dance recitals rather than discussion on the art and its future held centre stage. An academy, to remain true to its ideals, should always be discriminating and present only the best artists. This outlook certainly permeated its programming of dance recitals in the first decade.

(Our next issue will feature a profile of E. Krishna Iyer, who gave life to Bharata Natyam.)



Till September 4: Ode to Independence, an exhibition of paintings on postcards by renowned artists at the Apparao Galleries, (formerly The Gallery).

Till September 5: Crafts Council of India's Vastrang, an exhibition of exclusive sarees and dupattas from the master weavers of India (at The Sindoori Hotel).

Fill September 8: Vande Mataram organised by Natyarangam, the dance wing of Narada Gana Sabha. This festival of poetry, music and dance celebrates the Golden lubilee of Indian Independence. The unique feature of this festival is that every one of the dancers will perform one or more songs by the poets of the Independence era and will present in dance one poem of a contemporary Tamil poet. This is the first time that modern Tamil poetry is being presented through Bharata Natyam.

r i	Date	Artists	Poets
c of	3.9.97	Lakshmanan Santha Dhananjayan V.P. Dhananjayan	Vaitheeswaran
n S.	4.9.97	Srilatha Vinod Meenakshi Chitharanjan	M. Mehta
n a	5.9.97	Suryanarayanan Murthy (Guru-Shanta-Dhananjayam) Krishnaveni Lakshmanan	Soundara Kailasam
d 0	6.9.97	Pavithra Prasad Radha	Kannadasan
d y e. d	7.9.97	Priya Govind (Guru-Swamimalai Kalanidhi Narayanam S.K. Rajarathnam) Leela Samson	Nirmala Suresh
h e	8.9.97	Jayanthi Subramaniam Malavika Sarukkai	Abdul Rahman

September 10-24: Exhibition of paintings by Elina Banik at the Apparao Galleries (formerly The Gallery).

September 11, 12, 13: Women's Christian College presents Jean Anouilh's classic Antigone, designed and directed by Mithran Devanesen (at the College Auditorium).

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& Europe: Rs 425/year. Cheques payable to M/s. Lokavani Hall-Mark Press.

Youth to the fore in TNCA league

wo selectorial decisions came in for much critical comment during Tamil Nadu's last essay in the Ranji Trophy national championship. Both related to the omission of senior players in pursuance, ostensibly, of a policy to promote young talent. The two players so omitted came back into the side before the season ended — with mixed results. D Vasu, the allrounder, failed in the only opportunity he received while Venkataramana took five wickets in the first Bengal innings during the super league fixture at Chepauk, following it with a millionaire-like second innings display.

Vasu and Venkataramana are already in the thick of action in the

TNCA league which has got off to a rather rapidfire start this year with each team completing 8 matches already out of a total of 11. Some of the games have been interrupted by rain but there have been some good performances overall. Vasu has been among the most consistent players in the league, thus staking a strong claim for his recall into the state team. Venkataramana, however, appears beset by the bowling horrors, his form as poor as to suggest he is more a candidate for the Indian team than one for Tamil Nadu!

In the recent Buchi Babu tournament, the off-spinner who made way for Venkataramana in the State side last year, Chandramouli, bowled well enough to play a role in District XI's success over Hyderabad. Subbiah of Indian Bank and young Ganesh Kumar

of Kohinoor XI are the other off-spinners to impress, but my vote for the best bowler of that type goes to J Ramdas of Jolly Rovers, who has struck an easy rhythm in the early part of the season, troubling batsmen with his consistency and nice loop.

In the left arm spin department, Sunil Subramaniam is yet to strike his best form after a promising start to the season. This game fighter must consider himself extremely unlucky that he has been overlooked by the Indian selectors in favour of the likes of Nilesh Kulkarni but poor recent form had ruled him

by V. Ramnarayan

out as a candidate in the last year or so. Subramaniam can still serve a reminder to the selectors by getting wickets by the bagful as he so often did in the past. The other left arm slow in the state team, Sriram, is now known more for his immaculate batting. 15-year-old Vidyut Sivaramakrishnan of Sridhar CC is enjoying an impressive first season in the senior league. We'll surely hear more about this confident teenager who gives the ball a genuine tweak. A glimmer of hope in the distant horizon has been provided by what seems to be a welcome return to form of former India leg spinner L Sivaramakrishnan.

The outstanding bowler of the season so far has been the state's opening bowler S Mahesh of Indian Bank who has proved more than a handful to most batsmen. Hé has been

working up a lively pace while his direction has been spot on, his awkward bounce making him a nasty customer even on good wickets.

Among the batsmen, Hemang Badani has been consistency personified as has been his lefthanded senior in the state side, S Sharath. The youngish veteran W V Raman has also been among the runs though he tends to give an impression of boredom, much in the manner of Barry Richards in the county circuit. For Raman finds hardly any challenge in domestic attacks and that in-

> cludes first class cricket. Other batsmen to show promise have been Vasanth Saravanan and Harish Nataraj of SPIC,

though both have to get many more big scores before they can trouble the State selectors who have an abundance of batting talent to pick from. S Ramesh, who came close to being picked for India, has made a double century this season, but is yet to fulfil his enormous potential, tending as he does to play somewhat away from the body. Here is another player to whom batting comes without effort.

The number of young cricketers — mostly in their teens — in the First Division league this year must be a record for Chennai. Two sides fielded by India Cements, UFCC T'Nagar and Sridhar, Kunal Engineering's Rising Star and HCL-HP's Kohinoor are all almost wholly composed of school and college boys. While this large dose of youth has meant that these teams are struggling to remain in the senior division, it has at

Some thoughts triggered in the Buchi Babu

s we go to press, the final As we go to press, the final of the annual Buchi Babu tournament is underway. Significantly, the two finalists to emerge from a strong field are both local teams, though MRF has a couple of guest players. Their batting strength has almost invariably come from local talent. Former State player, Senthilnathan, was in great form as was Aashish Kapoor, who also learnt his cricket here, in the role of opening batsman. The all-rounder Ramprakash too displayed consistency along with old reliable Gautam. In the bowling department, the most impressive performer was the Pace Foundation quickie Pandey.

Sanjay Manjrekar and V.V.S. Laxman were arguably the outstanding batsmen, their hundreds failing to win matches for their teams. Sharath and Hemang Badani, the TNCA left handers, too, were among the runs. S Mahesh and D Vasu were prominent among the bowlers, the former some one the Indian selectors might look at. A notable absentee from Buchi Babu was young leg spinner Balaji Rao, said to be concentrating on academics. An-

the same time been a most refreshing sight to see so many young players gaining exposure. This tendency to promote youth rather than bank on exother who ought to have been on view but was not selected was off spinner Ramdas.

All has not been well with the administration of the game in the State for some years now, with some officials - and players - assuming greater importance than the game. While corporate sponsorship has taken important steps in the development of the game, there has been no concerted effort to link incentives to performance, to promote the team spirit and encourage teampersons, to cut youngsters down to size for their own good when they get carried away by early recognition to the detriment of their game, and to be sympathetic to players in times of trouble. Such a culture exists in Mumbai, resulting in level-headedness and longevity of cricket careers.

New cricket manager K Srikkanth will have succeeded where others have failed in the recent past if he can mould Tamil Nadu's players into a fighting unit determined to win the Ranji Trophy. In its captain, Robin Singh, the State team has a stirring example.

V.R.

perience augurs well for Tamil Nadu cricket. For that we must thank the sponsors who have shown an enlightened approach.

Answers to Quiz

1. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subash Chandra Bose; 2. Gulshan Kumar of T-Series: 3. Goutam Ghose; 4. Calcutta; 5. Lt. Gen. V.P. Malik; 6. Pargat Singh; 7. Maurice Greene (men) and Marion Jones (women), both from the U.S; 8. 122 years; 9. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose; 10. Sanath Jayasuriya and Roshan Mahanama of Sri Lanka; 11. Montserrat in the Caribbean; 12. The Insurance

Regulatory Authority Bill; 13. Sanjay Ghosh; 14. Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore; 15. Dilip Kumar.

16. The State's Chief Minister, M. Karunanidhi; 17. Representatives of Dalit organisations; 18. Rukumani Lakshmipathi; 19. The State Election Commission Office in Vadapalani and the Russian Cultural Centre at Alwarpet; 20. St. Thomas Mount.

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