

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

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A glimmer of an Act?

Heritage Act discussed at Secretariat

(By A Special Correspondent)

Is there a gleam of a Heritage Act at the end of a tunnel that's already been three years in the building and over 15 years in the conception? If the fact that discussion of the proposed Act has moved from the chambers of Secretaries of various Ministries to the chambers of the Chief Secretary is considered a sign of greater importance being attached to the subject, then there appears to be more hope than at any time before.

The latest discussions took place recently, when former

Civilian Bhaskar Ghosh, now a media personality and the new head of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, and his Secretary-General Ashish Bannerjee visited Chennai and arranged a meeting with the Chief Secretary. At the two-hour meeting, the representatives of Chennai INTACH's Heritage Wing were as well represented as the Secretaries from the various Ministries concerned. In free and frank discussions, the evolution of a Heritage Act, first for Chennai, and, later, for the

rest of the State was thrashed out. And at the end of the meeting, Chief Secretary Nambiar requested his Secretaries to come up with some answers by the end of February.

INTACH, of course, hopes that one answer will be the basic outline of a Heritage Act which, after discussion, can move on to the drafting stage. Getting an Act in place by June is our target, says Bhaskar Ghosh who adds that his mandate from the INTACH national body is to ensure Heri-

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When culture opts for convenience

The Music Academy is a venerable institution that has served well the cause of culture, heritage and tradition in Madras that is Chennai. Many of its members are closely linked with the causes of culture, aesthetics and heritage. We find it unbelievable that they have allowed the facade of a landmark building in Chennai to be disfigured by raising an elevator shaft that bisects the curves of the architect's original aestheticism. We have nothing against a few elders wanting the comfort of a lift — even though other elders have managed the stairs during the past several decades without a lift or a murmur. But if a lift was really necessary, surely it could have been built inside the building, not outside where it would disfigure the facade. The same kind of rush for comfort has marred the Museum Theatre — and affected the building — when unseemly airconditioning ducts were ramrodded into it. We have heard of similar thoughts on airconditioning in other heritage buildings in the city — and the results will be the same. Surely where people have sweltered suited and booted for well over a hundred years in places like the Museum Theatre, there is no real need for airconditioning. Or for lifts in the Music Academy. Which is why Madras Musings has for long been calling for a Heritage Act. A few heads concerned about heritage would have found answers to both the Music Academy's and the Museum Theatre's felt needs if their advice had been sought. But that it wasn't is a pity. (Picture RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

— The Editor

Creating heritage awareness in B'lore

(By A Correspondent)

The Indian National Trust for Architecture and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and An Association for Reviving Awareness about Monuments of Bangalore's Heritage (AARAMBH) celebrated the 460th birthday of Bangalore starting December 20th. The three-day celebrations of Bangalore 460, packed with audio and visual information about the City and presented by various experts, aimed at creating awareness about the City's heritage. AARAMBH's Suresh Mona, explaining the celebrations, said, "Not many people are aware that Bangalore is nearly 500 years old. We just want to remind them that this city goes back a long time and has a rich heritage attached to it."

The celebrations included a seminar on the history and geog-

raphy of Bangalore chaired by the Bangalore City Corporation (BCC) Commissioner, with the Bangalore Urban Arts Commission Chairman as the guest of honour, and a slide show on the monuments of the City — some existing, some long-forgotten. This was a nostalgia trip down memory lane and rekindled memories of landmarks that have disappeared. There was also an exhibition of photographs of the city on all three days.

But mere nostalgia was not the intention of the whole exercise. Said Mona: "Our main aim is to create awareness. We want people to understand the cultural heritage of the city and the pace at which it is disappearing. Our only intention is to make people realise that we should preserve as much as possible since it gives identity."

The Ahmadabad example

(By A Correspondent)

In a first for India, indeed, South Asia, Ahmadabad is floating a municipal bond to help finance its sewer and water projects, to sustain the city's economic growth and improve the lives of its more than three million residents. Thanks to Earl Kessler, Director of the Regional Urban Development office of the US Agency for International Development (US AID) who chose Ahmadabad to try his 'experiment', the onus will now rest on the city's administrators to demonstrate how private capital can help in successfully managing a City's infrastructure.

Ahmadabad offers, perhaps, the perfect stage for the municipal bond market city management experiment. The past

Are muni-bonds the way to go for a better city?

ten years have seen slum population double. Streets offer less space for vehicles and more for garbage, urchins, beggars, peddlers (of all sorts), animals and what have you! Sanitary conditions are abysmal, non-existent in parts; and only one million residents have access to drinking water.

Yet, Ahmadabad was, once upon a time, one of India's finest cities. The city has a tradition of fine architecture, including some magnificent 500-year old mosques and a Le-Corbusier-designed museum. The Indian Institute of Man-

agement is the country's prestigious business school, Ahmadabad's pride. Today, a visitor to the city is greeted with pot-holes, fume-belching buses and rubbish heaps. Indeed, it seems there has been no civic planning worth the name at all.

How did US AID help? Kessler and his team not only provided funds for a study of the city's environmental risks, they also advised the administrators on how to go about organising tax and revenue incomes (the majority of Ahmadabad's residents never believed in paying tax, while the clout of the underworld ensured that taxes were not levied on goods entering the city). Kessler's advice worked. And the results are there for all

(Continued on Page 4)

Madras Musings wishes all its readers a very Happy New Year and a Happy Pongal, 1998

Do our ambassadors represent us?

At a recent meeting in the City, where the Chief Guest was Aftab Seth, Indian Ambassador in Viet Nam, the audience heard the Ambassador sing the praises of Viet Nam and explain how friendly the Viet Nam Government was to the Government of India. Tracing that *bhai-bhai* relationship to the rapport established between Ho Chi Minh and Jawaharlal Nehru, the Ambassador urged Indian investors to take full advantage of that friendship forged nearly fifty years ago. There is plenty of opportunity to invest in Viet Nam, the Ambassador indicated, and he hoped to see, in Viet Nam, all those present, helping that country develop.

To all intents and purposes, Seth might as well have been Viet Nam's Ambassador to India. *The Man From Madras Musings* thought, after hearing all these paeans. In that role, he may have been a little franker than a Vietnamese Ambassador when he stated that there is no recourse to the courts if contracts are cancelled, that justice is a little different from ours, that the government doesn't recognise ownership of property, that the employees are harder-working than Indians but will walk off the job any time they feel like it, and that the few Indian projects in place are not the greatest of successes, but he soft-pedalled it all. These things exist, but they shouldn't prevent you from investing, was his theme.

Maybe we'd all think a little more positively about investing in Viet Nam if the Viet Nam Government was a little kinder about Indian investments a century and more old in that country, pointed out the Chairman of the session. It was a theme MMM heard several others in the audience take up. The reference was to land and property, mainly in and around Ho Chi Minh City, once Saigon, owned by Nattukkottai Chettiers, and by Muslims and others from French Karaikal and Pondicherry and other neighbouring coastal areas. As moneylenders, traders and small businessmen they had done much to finance and develop the Saigon and Delta regions, but their terms of business did not make them the most popular of investors which is why they had to flee the country where they had lived in substantial numbers. A lack of popularity, however, is no reason not even to recognise their claims for what they'd lost and make recompense. But if they looked for succour from Ambassador Seth, it didn't look as though much would be forthcoming, it seemed to MMM. The Ambassador, it appeared that morning, was more interested in getting Indians to invest in Viet Nam than in getting ancient Indian assets out of that country, assets, which he candidly admitted he knew little about. But then, all Indian Ambassadors to countries where old Indian investments or settlements existed

were, with one or two exceptions, friendlier to the governments they were accredited to than to historic Indian interests, MMM has long noticed; after all, Ambassadors are not meant to represent *banias* and coolies, are they, when there are things like the Nehru doctrine to philosophise over?

Unique partnership

The Murugappa Group has a long record of joint ventures, but the latest memorandum of understanding that it has associated itself with must be unique. *The Man From Madras Musings* is inclined to think. This time it is for education and it links a college run by the Group and a University in Canada.

Amongst the many charitable ventures the Group runs is the Omayal Achi College of Nursing in Avadi and in a hands-across-the-seas venture the College has forged links with the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada. And making it possible has been an IIT, Madras graduate, Dr Arun Chockalingam, who, in a move with a difference, went on to studies linked with medicine and is now Medical Advisor to the Ministry of Health, Canada. It was he who saw the possibilities offered by the several medical institutions set by the Murugappa Group's charitable

wondered why the Mediterranean was blue. He was reminded of that quest when he saw the students of the Omayal Achi College of Nursing all clad in pale blue waiting to greet him. Their quest for knowledge would undoubtedly be benefitted by this unique partnership, he told them. It was a partnership that he hoped would change the grim picture that nursing in India has been painted in various reports. It was a partnership that would help elevate nursing in India, he was convinced.

The partnership has got off to a good start, MMM found, with the first student from Saskatoon, Dominique Eustace, already doing the rounds of the Murugappa facilities and attending relevant lectures at the Ambattur college as part of her 2nd year studies.

Celebrating 100

Spencer & Co Ltd, a landmark institution in Madras that is Chennai, recently celebrated its 100 years as a public limited company with a quiet 'family' dinner, an exhibition of Old Madras and Old Spencer photographs, and the launch of a bulky tome that narrates the story of *The Spencer Legend*. The celebrations, *The Man From Madras Musings* was delighted to find, were held in what was Spencer's flagship hotel, the Connemara.

Arriving at the hotel on the same day were an English couple

In brief

★ The Apeejay Surendra group, which runs the Park Hotels from its flagship property in Calcutta, has moved into Chennai. *The Man From Madras Musings* finds — but not with another Park. Priti Paul, who directs the Group's hospitality business, has taken a step in a different direction in Chennai, MMM notes, opening a luxury business centre on Haddow's Road in Nungambakkam. The Apeejay Business Centre, to be soon followed by others in Delhi, Calcutta and Mumbai, offers 25,000 sq.ft of space at rental of Rs. 125 per square foot a month. With 12 cabins on each of its three floors, each entered only with a swipe card (now that's going really up-market for you), the Centre also offers a five-star restaurant and gym facilities. The latest in communication facilities is also being offered, MMM understands, keeping in mind the needs of multinational firms at whom the property appears to be targeted. Ford's has booked 7000 sq ft of space already, Priti Paul has announced, and others are bound to follow, MMM would think — even at these prices.

★ This wouldn't be a Chennai story, strictly speaking, if it wasn't for the fact that the spokesman for a new beer in England has said "This is our Madras in a glass". He was refer-

the Halda factory used to be. What Leyland's present plans for it are are not known; earlier plans for hotel and apartment-block development were shelved. But when development eventually takes place, MMM can see this area becoming one of the most traffic-congested areas in the city.

★ The Nadar community leadership gathered in full-strength in Chennai recently to discuss how they could get back the once-Nadar-owned Tamilnadu Mercantile Bank, headquartered in Tuticorin and now owned by the Essar Group headed by the once-Madras-based Ruia family. Led by Ramachandra Adityan and film actor Sarath Kumar, the Nadar Mahajan Bank Share Investors Forum plans to raise Rs.100 crore to take over Essar shares under a pact said to have been brokered by the Chief Minister. *The Man From Madras Musings* hears that Rs.60 crore has already been pledged to this end, on the basis of a Rs.10 TMB share being valued at Rs.5500. But MMM hears that Essar's arrangements with C Sivasankaran of Sterling Computers and Cellular could make the going sticky, unless the Chief Minister mediates again.

★ *The Man From Madras Musings* hears that some major investments are going to be made in the food processing sector in Tamil Nadu. A 100 per cent, export-oriented egg processing unit is being set up near Erode and will help in the development of around one thousand poultry farms in the surrounding villages. Other units to be set up shortly in the State include a Rs.125 crore fruit and vegetable processing unit and a Rs.40 crore coconut processing plant, for both of which several locations are under study, a Rs.32 crore chicken processing factory near Pungalur and a Rs.38 crore potato fries plant and a Rs.25 crore mushroom processing unit near Udhamandalam. The State, MMM learns, sees a great future in food processing and is determined to develop an agro-industry base in the State.

★ Reliance Industries, *The Man From Madras Musings* hears, would like to invest Rs.10,000 crore in Tamil Nadu in the next ten years. Projects it is looking at are an LNG import terminal and a 2000MW power project at Ennore as part of the new satellite harbour being developed there. It is also looking at the 500MW Jayamkondam lignite-based power project. Expansion plans for all these power projects in time are also being built into the initial proposals, MMM is told. Excess LNG may well be piped into Chennai homes as part of the grand Reliance design, it is mooted. MMM, for his part, still awaits the take-off in Tamil Nadu of ventures already invested in; he's prepared to wait even more patiently for these mega-plans of Reliance.

MMM

Business briefs

★ One of the biggest property deals in Chennai in recent times is Tata's purchase of the Glaxo property adjoining *Raj Bhavan* in Velacherry. The price paid for the 2 1/2 acre property and buildings is around Rs. 23 crore, *The Man From Madras Musings* learns. Tata's plans to develop a full-fledged Telco service centre here. Realtors feel Tata's has got the better of the deal; if Glaxo had waited a year, they might have got something exceeding Rs. 30 crore, these property experts say. Meanwhile, MMM notes the proximity of this new Tata site to Ashok Leyland property further up the road, where

OUR
READERS
WRITE



Nothing to it!

The photograph showing the Duke of Edinburgh inspecting the Guard of Honour at INS Angre, which you had reproduced (MM, November 16) was quite intriguing. So much so, I took the liberty of sending that copy of *Musings* to the FO CinC Western Naval Command requesting him to let us into the secret of what transpired between the trio of the Duke, Sailor and Guard Commander. I send you his reply in original.

It would appear that there is nothing to it. Evidently the photographer caught the Guard Commander on the wrong foot and that is about all.

Rear Admiral K.R. Nair
"Rajcot" 227 Defence Colony
Nandambakkam
Chennai 600 097

The reply from Vice Admiral Avnish R Tandon, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, Mumbai reads:

"The fact is that the Duke showed keen interest in the Indian Navy's badges of ranks (with which he was not familiar) and the medals of personnel forming the guard and kept asking questions on the same. The questions, at times, were targeted at the individual sailors and, at times, at the Guard Officer. In this case, the question was addressed at the Guard Officer who naturally reacted with alacrity to

the question posed by the naval veteran. I know, because, I was only three steps away and just beyond the Guard Officer in the photograph.

Editor's Note: There is a bit of difference between "reacted with alacrity" and "caught on the wrong foot". The latter comment describes what we thought had rather unusually happened, unless the Guard Commander was getting ready to go down on bended knees to answer the question.

Missed park

This refers to saving that park (MM, December 1).

While South Chennai is replete with good parks like Nageswara Rao Park and Panagal Park, North Chennai is almost bereft of them. There are only small green patches which go by the name of parks, like Ebrahim Park in Royapuram, just off the Railway Ticket Printing Press. It is absolutely necessary to have one or two well laid parks in North Chennai. The question is whether it should be the Potti Sriramulu Park in Loane Square.

The Sriramulu Park ceased to be a blooming park long ago. Now it is only a vacant lot. Even in its bloom period, the Sriramulu Park was misused for immoral purposes. This was but natural. The Kothaval Market and the Central Mofussil Bus Stand were there and the area bustled with human activity even after midnight and woke up at 4.00 a.m. The persons engaged in such activities are mostly lorry drivers, headload carriers and the like. They made use of Loane Square Park in the late hours as an open air



Garbage takes over a road

● The publishers of Madras Musings, M/s Lokavani Hall Mark Press Pvt. Ltd. write: Apropos MMM's picture-story of garbage near the CMDA (MM, December 16th) we enclose a picture of what our lane looks like. This municipal lane is off Greames Road and is mainly occupied by Government offices, but neither they nor we can get the road made a pucca road with regular civic services. The corner of the L-shaped lane, near a fly-by-night food stall, serves as a garbage dump. And with the garbage clearance fitful, a two-lane road has become a one-lane one and there are times when even that one lane vanishes under the garbage. When the rains come, the situation only gets worse. Can't taxpayers like us expect a regular garbage removal service from the municipality?

brothel. This will continue despite any amount of vigilance. In these days of AIDS, should this be a breeding place for such a deadly disease? It should not be. So, in my opinion, the Chennai Corporation is not wrong in raising a commercial complex here.

But it cannot be gained that the area badly needs a decent park. The place where the Kothaval Market functioned is now out of

use. It would appear that this expanse belongs to a temple there. Why can't this space be acquired by the Government to develop a park like that in Shenoy Nagar? To satisfy the sentiments of the Andhras it may be named after Potti Sriramulu. It may not be possible for the City Corporation or Government to maintain the new park free from misuse. It may go the way of Loane Square Park. So the land

may be entrusted to some industrial establishment on lease for ten or fifteen years to develop a park there and maintain it.

The industrial establishment could be asked to pay a rent, as may be fixed by the Government, to the temple to which the land belongs since the temple has already lost the revenue from the Kothaval Market.

P. Vajravelu
SPQ 19 Lloyds Estate
Chennai 600 014.

Mylapore memories

Shopping in the Forties in the Mylapore Bazaar (MM, December 1-15) recreates vividly a period I well remember.

We lived in Kutchery Road near the Police Station from the late 1940s. The perfume shop next to the mosque was owned by one Kareem. It was not only famous for perfumes but also for scented *agarbattis* and sweet *seval*. He later moved his shop opposite the Mylapore police station. After his death the shop was closed. But his younger brother used to visit the houses of patrons with a leather brief-case and used to supply perfumes and *agarbattis* till the mid-1980s.

Next to the mosque was The Madras Lion Stores. This was directly opposite the raintree. Like Shanthi Stores, Lion Stores stocked notebooks, pencils, biscuits, sweets, rubber balls, etc. This shop too was Muslim owned. The Ceylon Bakery was the "Hot Breads" of those days. Whenever tiffin was not made at home, I used to go and buy bread from the shop. Fresh bread used to arrive at the sales counter by 1.30 p.m. A loaf of bread cost only 4 annas.

Along Kutchery Road from Luz to San Thomé small trams used to run like meter gauge trains. Though the fare was only half an anna, people felt it was high and used to walk the distance. Most of the day trams used to run almost empty. Those were the days!

K Rangarajan
23, Murrays Gate Road
Chennai 600 018

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

trusts; these institutions, he felt, would help Canadian medical students get a better idea of suburban and rural medicare not only in the tropics but also in difficult and different working conditions. The Murugappa Group medical facilities include the Ivan Stedeford Hospital in Ambattur, hospitals in the Murugappa family's ancestral village, Pallathur, and near Kaniyakumari, estate hospitals in the Western Ghats, and several rural dispensaries and health centres apart from the college. Medical students from Saskatchewan will spend a few months every year as a learning exercise in these facilities. In turn, students of the Omayal Achi College of Nursing will benefit from visits by staff from Saskatchewan who will hold workshops, seminars and training sessions not only for them but for other medical institutions in Chennai as well. Much of this training will be in areas of hightech medicare, MMM is told. Exceptional students and faculty from the Ambattur college will also be able to look forward to short visits to Saskatoon for special training.

Dr V Ramalingaswamy, National Professor and Director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion, recalled that C V Raman's studies in spectroscopy began when he

settled in Australia, the Longleys. And Mr Longley's father had been General Manager of the Connemara in the Thirties and Forties. The visiting Longley had been born in Bangalore when his father was at the West End, then as now Spencer-owned. Making the coincidence a happier occasion were the photographs and folders of the Old Connemara the Longleys brought with them; several went promptly into the exhibition, MMM was told.

Also present on the occasion were the John Davieses who visit Madras almost every year, Pamela Davies having long links with the City. John Davies who had started his career with P Orr's and gone on to become a Director of the Company and then a Director of Garrard's, the famous London jewellers and silversmiths, recalled shopping at Spencer's over three generations of ownership — when Edwards was the last European Chairman, when Irani became the first Indian chairman and the company became Indianised, Homi Bhabha eventually taking over, and now when the company is part of the R P Goenka group. Both he and his wife have been in and out of Spencer's for nearly 50 years now, a long association for a couple who spend much of their year in England — with Spencer furniture, MMM is glad to hear.

ring to Firkin brewers' new spin-off from their Dogbolter Ale, which they're calling 'Dogbalti'. With the English traditionally enjoying a beer with their curry, Firkins decided to offer the British public a curry-flavoured beer. So, into Dogbolter Ale went ginger, cummin, coriander and chillies — and, hey presto, there was your Madras in a glass! Ugh! is all *The Man From Madras Musings* can say. The manufacturers, however, say that hops-based beer become popular in England only in the 19th Century; coriander and ginger were used in beer quite commonly before that.

A rare scholar remembered

It is difficult to write with any objectivity about a close friend whom you had known for almost forty years. Nor can you let yourself become sentimental in recalling the memory of a person who looked down upon anything that tended to be maudlin, even when the occasion might have allowed it by common practice.

Airavatham Ranganathan (who used to write for this journal from time to time) died (on 8.12.97), as he lived, without much publicity, unsurrounded by a crowd of members of the family and wailing relatives, near but how dear we do not know. He was a bachelor; and after the death of his mother about a year ago, there were no direct members of the family that friends like me were aware of. As for the relatives that he used to speak of, it would be slippery ground for me to tread upon the subject.

It was sometime in 1959 that I first met A. Ranganathan. The occasion was the All-India Writers Conference, organised by Ka Naa Subramanyam, S. Sivapathasundaram and their friends. The venue was SIET College in Teynampet. It was presided over by Tarashankar Bannerjee. Other leading participants included S.H. Vatsyayan, Masti Venkatesha Iyengar and Chinnappa Chinnappa from Mysore, Nissim Ezekiel, Shih Narayan Ray and P. Lal among others.

Ranganathan, youthful (in his twenties) and energetic at the time, enjoyed himself thor-

oughly, meeting people, making new acquaintances. He used only taxis in those days and his regular haunts were Hotel Dasaprakash and the New Woodlands Hotel. He was a compulsive diner out. He used to enjoy company, and was uniformly generous about it.

Among his other haunts were the Connemara Public Library and the University Library. He was a voracious reader and also a prolific writer, though he didn't publish much in book

form except for *Glimpses of Nehru*, a booklet, sponsored by the Institute for Development Studies (founded by Dr. Chandran Devanesan) and published by CIS. He was deeply involved with the IFD till the end.

His intellectual interests were impressively wide; covering Newton and Nuclear Physics as well as the Poetry of Shelley and Eliot. Among the prose writers, his favourites were Bertrand Russell and Ananda K Coomaraswamy, and Nehru and Nirad Chaudhuri in India. He was devoted to the English classics: Burke and Gibbon; Macaulay and G.M. Trevelyan, among historians with a style; Matthew Arnold as a social and literary critic and so on.

Strangely enough, he didn't major in English Language and Literature at College. After

Chemistry Honours at Loyola, he did a Master's Degree at the Delhi School of Economics. He acquired a serious interest in almost all subjects — the Humanities as well as the Sciences; rather more in the former than in the latter. He would have proved quite useful as a leader-writer or a special contributor to the English Press. Somehow, he settled for the second.

As for myself, after burning my boats, or abandoning them in more profitable waters, I chose

to be a 'sub' in one English daily after another. It took me well over a decade to realise that the vexatious routine did not lead to elation of the spirit or a satisfaction of the purse. I was obliged to do something else which left me enough time as a free-lancer. In the result, we often used to meet in the columns of the same newspapers and periodicals in Madras, Delhi, and elsewhere. This only helped us to come closer together.

We soon discovered that we had quite a few common interests — academic and impersonal. This led to our meetings, which became more and more frequent, our conversations on the phone even more so, almost everyday, on some topic of current interest — political, literary or otherwise. Whenever any letter, review or article of mine ap-

peared in a local daily, his would be the first call in the morning — of congratulation or comment. We had written some letters and comments together too, complementing each other's quantum of knowledge.

He had certain strong points. Though he had never been abroad (except to neighbouring Sri Lanka) he could claim incredible familiarity with the personalities and practices of Oxford and Cambridge. Also of the records of ICS men over so many decades.

It may be recalled here that his father, Airavatham, won his place in the ICS, though not as an Oxbridge man. As luck would have it, his career was short. While in the Bengal cadre, he was drowned during the crossing of a river. He was then aged 26, Ranganathan probably two or three. It is said that the son inherited his intelligence and articulation, bordering on volubility.

Ranganathan could be frank, at times too frank for the vanity of some friends known for their self-importance. On such occasions, because of my long association with him, I had to suffer, along with him. But I have no regrets on that score, because if people are vindictive it is natural, like a cobra being venomous. We avoid them.

My regret is that I miss the morning phone calls I have lost a rare friend, the like of whom, I cannot acquire at my age of 74.

Road rage!

And road-laying's the cause

'Road Rage' is the name given to a comparatively new phenomenon which first made its appearance, or at least its acknowledged, officially-recognised appearance, in the United States. It's the term given to the fury of motorists against one another for real or fancied transgressions of traffic rules or courtesies. In that country it has been reported that in some cases such fury has gone to the extent of provoking murder (perhaps under the influence of alcohol or drugs?).

**One Man's
Madras —
HARRY
MILLER'S**

It has now become recognised in European countries too, and I'm sure it won't be long before we in India find ourselves indulging in it, if we haven't done so already, without recognising the syndrome, or giving it a trendy name, as the Americans are so fond of doing.

But the 'Road Rage' I have in mind is for an altogether different reason, one that does not involve other road users directly. It was the rage I experienced when recently, after the heavy rain, I was compelled to make a fairly long trip out of Madras city. The roads — if you can call them by that entirely fanciful appellation — are now in such bad condition that in all the many years I have lived here I do not recall ever being so severely battered,

banged and knocked about in my vehicle as we passed over road surfaces that had been sheared and ripped apart by heavy rainwater flowing across them, and up through and down through them, in every imaginable way. At my age and in my somewhat poor state of health the experience was damaging both to my anatomy and, I'm sorry (but not ashamed) to admit, my temper. If during those long harsh miles I could somehow have met and recognised those responsible for the condition of those roads I am fairly sure I would have succumbed to a malevolent and possibly lethal onslaught of the 'Road Rage' syndrome.

But in the centre of the city, on Mount Road itself, only very minor damage to the uppermost black-topped surface occurred, despite the thirty years of increasingly heavy traffic that has been using it, almost 24 hours a day. Unfortunately, the negative wallet from which the picture accompanying this article was taken bears no date, an unforgivable and foolish lack of professional care for any photographer to be guilty of. However, I am pretty sure I know at least the year it was taken, for it was at a time before I had joined the *Indian Express*, which was in 1961, and when I was living mainly by photographic advertising commissions from agents in Bombay, and this was one of a series of pictures I made showing the wide uses to which some manufacturer's excellent cement was put.

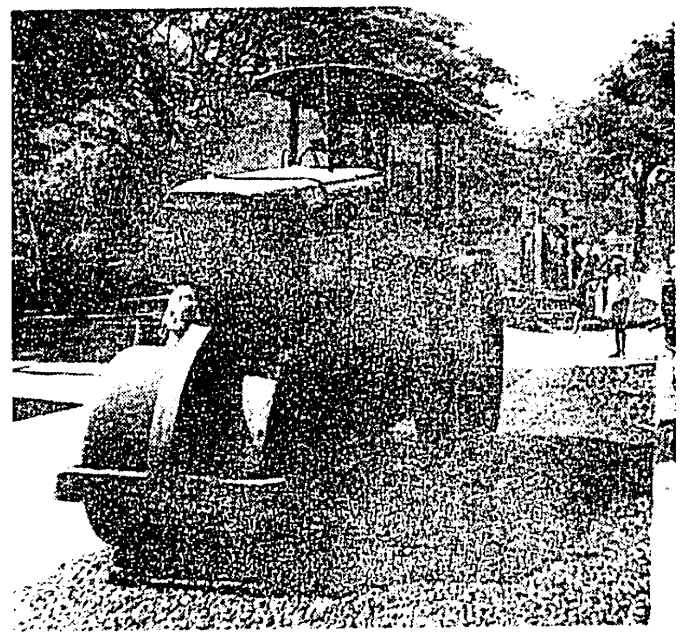
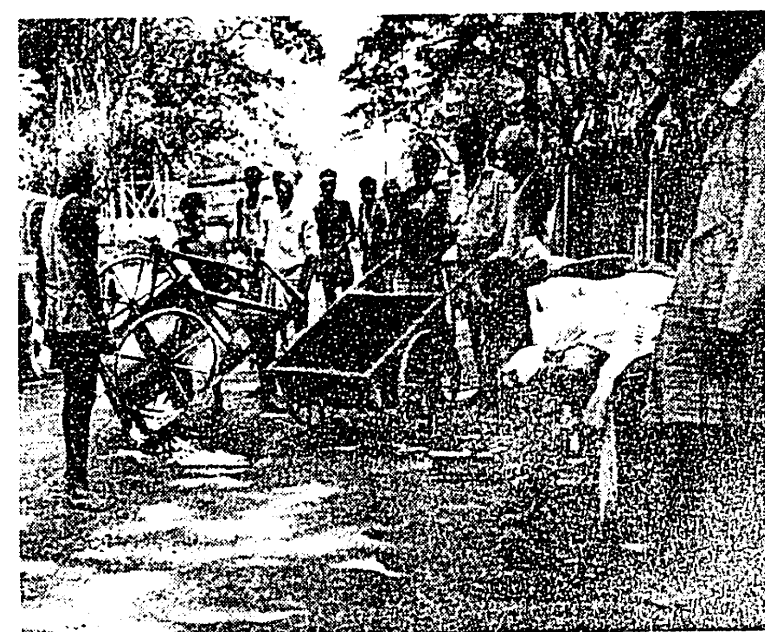
And that the cement used



Road-laying in the Sixties, as seen by HARRY MILLER ...

Our OLD, a picture by Harry Miller, shows the laying of Mount Road outside the old Spencer's premises, thirty years ago. The workmen are putting down a thick bed of reinforced concrete, which remains intact there to this day. RAJIND N CHRISTY'S NEW shows the slipshod way roads are being patchworked in the city today. No wonder every rain destroys our roads and causes not only impassable roads and also important road rage.

THE OLD...



...& THE NEW

...and road-laying in 1997, as seen by RAJIND N CHRISTY.

for that concrete was of the highest quality, and that it was not, like that used in so many public works these days, adulterated by ash or sea-water sand, is evident from the fact that it lies there absolutely intact and unchanged after all these years.

Why, then, cannot other main roads in and around this and other cities be laid in the same permanent manner? At the time I took this and a series of similar photographs for the same company, I was told that Mount Road was laid and maintained by the Central Government as a National Highway, while other city roads

were the responsibility of the Corporation or the PWD or both. The road that brought me close to lethal Road Rage the other day is that which leads from Mount Road past St. Thomas' Mount, through the Porur junction and on to the main Bangalore road near Poonamallee. This is a road as much used by buses, heavily-laden lorries and other motorised transport as the national highways going south to Madurai or west to Bangalore.

Now that the rain seems to have stopped, the authorities responsible for its upkeep will no doubt be bringing in contractors to attend to its fractured surface. But what will they do? Why, they'll simply lay another layer of black-topping, or tar-macadam or whatever they call it these days, on top of the old surface, and that meagre layer will fall apart again the moment we have a rainstorm, or when next the Northeast monsoon has been kind to us again, as it has for the last three or four years. As I have frequently pointed out in this and other journals, no attempt is ever made in road repairs or new roadmaking to ensure that the surface is straight and does not sag in the middle or at odd points, to make deep pools when it rains. No attempt is ever made to camber the road, or to let it curve towards the

edges for water to run off, or to provide drainage for such water that does run off.

The roads thus made survive for a short time, but quickly succumb to the next rains, particularly after having been dug up with holes or trenches by the various civic services that supply us, or pretend to, with telephone, electricity, water and other metropolitan services, which are taken for granted in other countries, and in other parts of India too, Bombay for example. I have spent many months in Bombay but never experienced an electricity breakdown, nor had any of the friends I stayed with there had to buy drinking water at high prices from tankers. Bombay may be more favoured than we in Chennai as for natural resources (a good reason for the moving of the State political and administrative capital, which I have been plugging for thirty years), but there is no reason, only a lack of will, why these deficiencies cannot be overcome. That is proved by my picture of how Mount Road was carefully and properly laid so long ago.

The traffic on Mount Road, or on any other of our city roads, is enough to give the meekest of us what the Americans have dubbed Road Rage, but certainly not the road itself.

NOSTALGIA

• There was the station Madras Musings featured on December 1st... and that's inspired these...

Royapuram ramblings

Mention Royapuram today and people think of garrulous fisherfolk or containers bound to and from the harbour. To me, Royapuram in more senses than one is 'first love' or 'loves'. The erstwhile Royapuram was home to a beach, a seaside promenade, a view of the breakers thundering ashore and whispering their desire to come again as they recede. The seagulls 'cawed' and bobbed on the waves and fishermen mended their nets beside halfwet catamarans.

Royapuram takes its name from Rayappan, the Tamil



name for St. Peter whose church is still the well-known, grey-walled landmark. Parents told us that the tanks behind this church, beside Tank Street, were the target of that wily German man-of-war *Emden*, during World War II, a fragment of whose shrapnel may still be gazed on in the Fort St. George Museum.

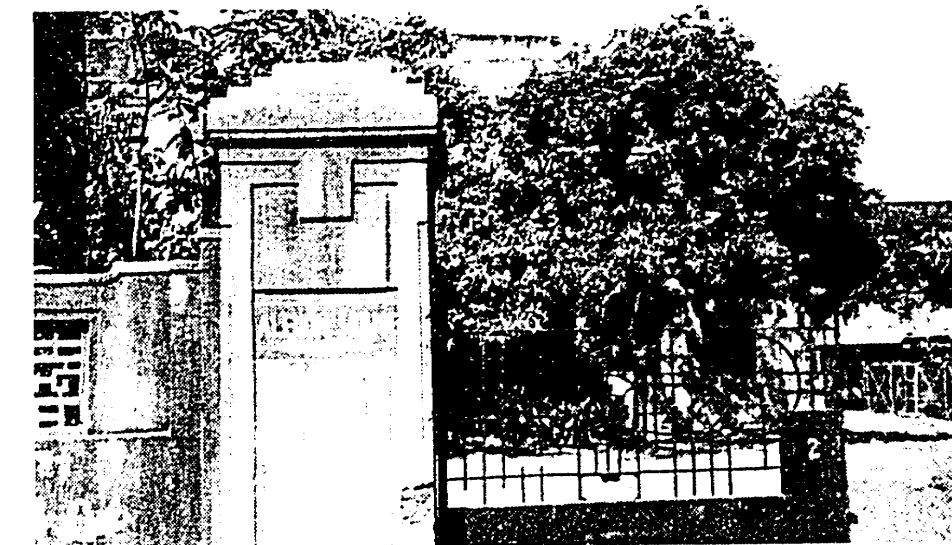
Today, names like *Albion House*, *Nursing Home*, *Dulci Dominom* seem far-fetched. But those buildings still stand — mute witnesses to many an Englishman or sailor who called Royapuram his home for a few years or was there convalescing despite the torrid heat of Madras. The well-known 4B bus route was almost franchised by Royapuramites — running from the front of St. Peter's to Egmore. There was even a 'Sawyer's' bus stop near the Railway quarters opposite Kunhiraman's — famous for its ice-creams — in honour of a much-respected Customs officer. Many parents walked from nearby offices in Parry's Corner to take the evening air and, maybe, save a few annas on the bus fare. Now, a flyover being built near the Royapuram

many lasting friendships carefully nurtured still survive?!

At the northern end of Royapuram is Paramandar Church and farther down another *alma mater*, Northwick Girls' High School. Dr. Miller and his sister, Elizabeth Miller, missionaries of yore from Scotland were the pioneers for this school and the Madras Christian College located initially at Parry's Corner (the location being by the present Anderson Church), now shifted to Tambaram.

Half buried off the shore of Royapuram was the long skeleton of a ship run aground, a proud ship that may have seen many voyages, doomed to show off only crusty barnacles. The swell of the waves used to send spouts in plumes from the rusty iron sides, like broadsides from cannons till the waves swelled, curled and crashed ashore. No doubt this relic was pulled out

It may never have been fashionable to say you lived in Royapuram. Many might have preferred other residential references. But my heart is still there, amidst her buildings that have witnessed the passing of generations. Royapuram had a



Albion House, mute witness to an era gone by

as no more than an obstruction when the present wharf and jetty were made.

Among names of the past it is not only the buildings but also people and their families that strike a particular chord. The Sawyers, Turnbills, Hoopers, Chattertons, Kings of the little-understood Anglo-Indian community lent a style and flavour of their own to Royapuram. This community in particular gave an inimitable facet to the lifestyle of Royapuram, especially around the

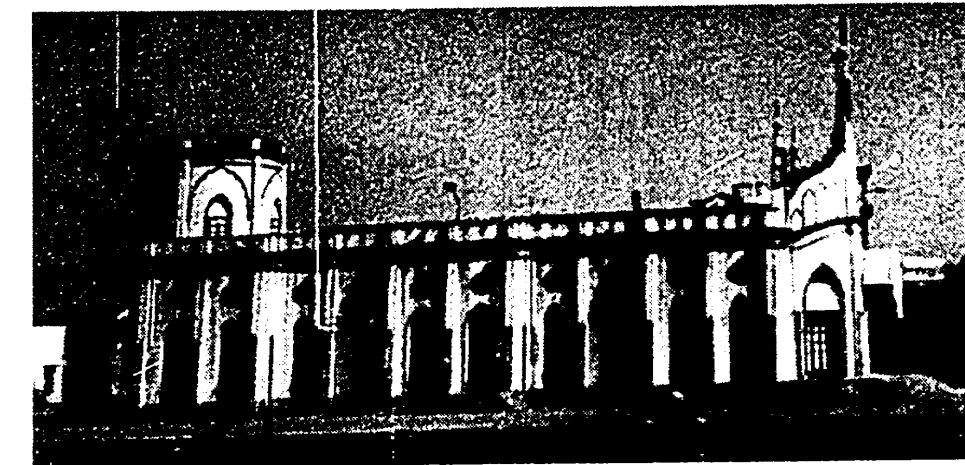
half-a-dozen streets surrounding St. Peter's Church, still referred to as Mada Church Streets (North, South, etc.) The Anglo-Indians were a lesson in grooming, in genteel mannerisms, and their *jolie de vivre* touched almost by pathos. They personified a true sense of 'sportsmanship' in the way they met life and lived it to the full.

The genteel Parsis, with their invaluable landed property — such as the Parsee Anjumanam and the Fire Temple dating 1910 — added still another facet to the town. With their acumen for business, they flourished and were associated with their well-kept houses, cars and culture.

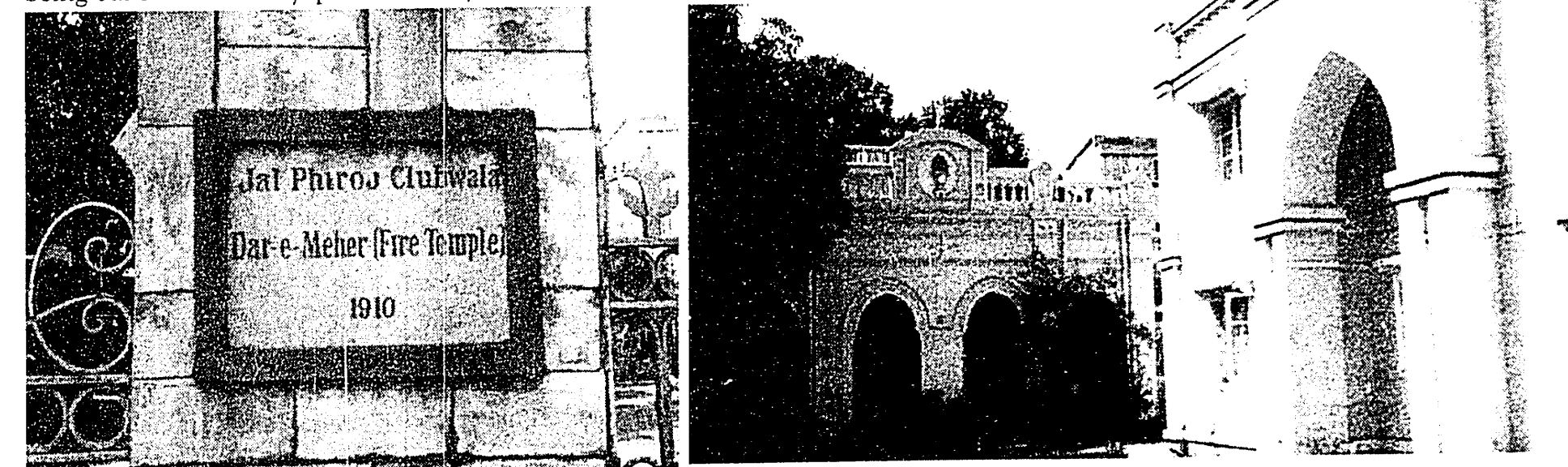
As children we shivered even in the so-called Madras winter, carolling or serenading from house to house during Christmas. Our voices gave their own mischievous twist to many a revered carol, e.g. "Oh come all ye faithful; Come and eat a plateful". But those were the days when you never passed an older person without a cheery "Good morning/evening Uncle/Auntie". Today, with most people (upwardly?) mobile there is no time or space for such greetings, except rarely.

Today, old scenes have vanished, old friends departed to other shores, old values have been discarded yielding place to the demands of time and space. Somehow the streets seem smaller; the people strangely in a rush to nowhere. Is this the way every town changes? The church bells still ring at morn, noon and at vesper. The temple prayers and cymbals still sound. Are they echoing the past? Or ushering in a bright new tomorrow? I hope it is both for the sake of those who have lived and gone before us; for the sake of its present denizens and future hopefuls. How moving it is to visit *Mater Dolours* church with my beloved and just as we kneel in prayer, to hear the church bells ring! Could we ask for a more empathetic response to our feelings?

All this reminiscence is not to suggest that Royapuram is either more or less than any other place in Chennai. But today, when you look for quaint old reminders in vain, when iron ore dust from the present pier carpets the town and has stolen the beach, when grey stone walls have cut off the



St Peter's Church, a Royapuram landmark



The Jal Phiroo Clubwala Dar-e-Meher (Fire Temple) built in 1910 by Royapuram's Parsi community. The temple and its surrounds are where Parsi families still live and where the other Parsis of Chennai regularly congregate. (All pictures by the author.)

(Continued on Page 6)

Quizzin' with Ram'nan

Quizmaster V.V. RAMANAN'S questions are from the period December 1 to 15th. Questions 16 to 20 pertain to Chennai.

1. Name the village in Bihar where 61 people were gunned down by a private army, maintained by feudal landlords.
2. The President of which country in the subcontinent quit his office, on a point of principle, on December 2nd?
3. What new decision has been taken as regards typhoons in Asia?
4. What new facility was introduced by the Railways of December 3?
5. Which legendary regiment of the British Army was honoured by the Queen with a bronze memorial on December 3rd?
6. Name the \$ 3 million free-floating robotic camera released by Columbia to take pictures.
7. Name the three new sites in the subcontinent recently included in UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites.
8. Name the three trains on which bombs went off on December 6, killing nine persons.
9. The centenary of the world's first permanent wireless station, set up by Marconi, was observed on December 6th. Where?
10. Who is the Sportstar's Sports Person of 1997?
11. What is the estimated monsoon damage in the ten worst affected districts of Tamil Nadu?
12. Name the doyen of Kannada literature and Jnanapith Award winner who passed away on December 9th?
13. The De La Terre (earth cover), all of 200 meters, will come up in which European capital as a tribute to the Millennium?
14. What celestial phenomenon can be seen in the night skies during December in India?
15. The trial of Ilych Ramirez Sanchez, the world's most dreaded terrorist began in Paris on December 12th. How is he better known?

* * *

16. Who has been conferred the prestigious 'Nriuthya Choodamani' title of the Krishna Gana Sabha?
17. Name the big nylon plant inaugurated at Gummidipoondi on December 10th?
18. Who is the new DGP?
19. Name the city surgeon conferred with the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Gold and Silver Rays of the Japanese Government?
20. Where in the city has the Corporation set up a modern Delhouse to dump refuse?

(Answers on p.7)

Ever since seeing *Madras Musings'* key words, "We Care", several instances have come to mind where lack of care has caused so many tragedies in many a family. A little care has also gladdened the hearts of many. I offer two contrasting cases.

Lakshmi cared...

Mount Road carries one of the heaviest flows of traffic of a heterogeneous nature. In May 1965, a motorcyclist knocked down a pedestrian near Eldams Road junction and toppled over. Lakshmi, a poor slum dweller on her way to work, who had witnessed this, rushed to the spot, imploring those passing by to come to her help to take the two injured to hospital. No one responded and people just sped past the scene, averting their eyes — and their conscience.

Lakshmi, unable to stand this callousness, physically stopped a taxi and begged the driver to take the two injured to hospital, promising to pay the fare by pledging the only gold she had on her person — her nose screw. This touched the heart of the taxi driver, who refused payment and with the help of another good samaritan put the two injured into the taxi and rushed them to hospital.

The motor-cyclist succumbed to his injuries half an hour after admission. Taking charge of the body Lakshmi

CARING — and not caring

kept vigil over it till the relatives arrived, consoled them and remained with them till the funeral was over. The lucky pedestrian survived only because of the quick medical help received and owed his life entirely to the prompt action of Lakshmi the compassionate, one WHO CARED. She put to shame the uncaring citizens of this metropolis and became a

proved themselves hard-hearted, inhuman and callous, caring two hoots about a seriously injured accident victim.

I was returning from the Chennai Airport when at the Guindy railway overbridge near the race course junction, a PTC bus knocked down a scooterist. Being immediately behind, I stopped my car and rushed to the scooterist, who

was lying unconscious, with blood trickling from his nose. Just then a

heroine overnight, receiving numerous awards from the Government and the public. The whole incident was brought out in a short film eulogising the noble deed of a poor and penniless working class woman whose most precious gift would be the memory of an act of love and compassion. But did it awaken the sleeping conscience of many a citizen of this robot city?

...the police didn't!

In sharp contrast to the case of Lakshmi who cared, I had a bitter experience in the mid-Nineties when some policemen

police lorry with some men inside it came up. Stopping the lorry, I requested them to help take the injured person to the hospital as a head injury was suspected. The police driver and the men flatly refused, saying they had some urgent work. They showed no signs of any concern or anxiety for the unconscious scooterist. I then disclosed my identity and told them that I had also been the D.C. Traffic of this city once, hoping that this would change their mind. This only changed their excuse to one of utmost urgency — the errand being for a VIP, and they sped away.

ghee appears on top. Add tomatoes, curd, coriander powder, cumin powder, chilli powder, garam masala powder and salt. Cook till nearly dry. Add coconut milk and continue cooking till the gravy becomes thick. Remove from fire.

Cut the eggs into halves, lengthwise. Soak saffron in two tablespoons of hot milk for five minutes, and crush to a paste.

Place the eggs in a serving dish and pour the curry over them. Sprinkle the soaked saffron over the curry and garnish with almond slices and silver foil. Serve hot.

VERMICELLI OMELETTE

4 eggs
2 big onions (chopped)
1 big tomato (peeled and chopped)
6 tsp Dalda or refined oil
1 tsp maida
100 gm vermicelli
4 green chillies (chopped)
2 tsp coriander leaves (chopped)
Salt to taste.

Method

Cook vermicelli with salt and drain the water. Pour cold water and strain in a colander. Beat eggs with salt. Heat oil, add onion and green chillies and saute. When the onion turns transparent, remove and add too the egg mixture. Add maida, tomato, coriander leaves and cooked vermicelli. Mix well. Heat one tablespoon oil mix-

With the help of my driver and a passerby, we put the injured person in my car and took him to the General Hospital where he was admitted and received immediate attention which saved his life. He was an employee of Indian Airlines.

In the hurry, I forgot (a grave mistake) to note the number of the Police lorry. Reflecting on this most inhuman act, I wondered whether anyone in that lorry would have acted in this heartless manner had the injured been one of his own kith and kin!

ROYAPURAM RAMBLINGS

(Continued from Page 5)

harbour and the sea-view from the people, something hurts. Something is lost when children of today cannot bury themselves waist deep in wet sea sand or clamber dangerously on slippery rocks right up to the (now restricted) harbour entrance. Many times have we taken permission from friendly policemen to walk right up to a ship and gaze at it with wonder. Such things are not to be nowadays in the interest of 'security'.

Many times have we planned to 'stow away' on board ships, only to feel heartstrings pull us back when we thought of tearful mothers who would miss us. Many times have we swum surreptitiously and run up and down the beach to dry our trousers before daring to go home. Something is lost to today's children when they do not adventure this way. Can the TV and video ever compare with the joy of feeling the spray sting your face or the breeze kiss your cheeks?

Will today's youth prefer to cycle all the way to Ennore for a picnic rather than pollute the air with petrol fumes? Will they challenge a classmate to a fight and then at the end of it all, with bleeding nose, shake hands and say "Forget it, man"? Will they prefer hockey-sticks to show off their might and main or the latest car stereo? Everything is relative, there cannot be absolute right or wrong. And so life goes on. There are fewer or no parties at Royapuram's Railway Institute; no strollers, for there is no beach. Yet I want to believe as surely as dawn greets another day, that Royapuram can take it all and more in its stride. My hope is that there are people who are sensitive to the environment of a small town; that there are people who love the sea, the air, the streets, the houses, be they different from what they were; that people should realise they are custodians in their time to a town that never dies. For where the people keep alive this awareness, a town can never die. Royapuram, never say die!

— Ummi Abdulla

Artistes from over the seas

There have always been visitors from abroad arriving for the city's Music season. But with Carnatic music and Bharata Natyam and other classical dance forms establishing riches abroad it is artists who are swelling the numbers of those visiting, Chennai at this time of the year. Several of them come every year to pick up the finer points of Carnatic music or classical dance and to perform here.

Among those I've met this Season and last are Ravi Sundaram Momy from Canada, and Shobha Sekhar and M. Ravi from Australia. Their voices may sound western to the ear, but their dedication to the South Indian classical art forms is almost palpable.

Momy, a Business Administration graduate works for Air Transat in Canada. His passion is Kuchipudi and speaking of it he relates, "Born and brought up in Toronto, I wanted to retain some of my Indian heritage and culture. I chose dance because it is a visual form, Kuchipudi in particular because it is fast, vibrant and full of life. Initially, dancing on a plate attracted me to Kuchipudi." Ravi has been visiting India every year from 1990 on a month's holiday. During these holidays he spends four to five hours every day "practising and learning the nuances of Kuchipudi from my guru Dr. Vempati Chinna Satyam at the Kuchipudi Art Academy here".

Momy is the only male student of Dr Chinna Satyam in North America. "I practise at home during my leisure time with the help of songs and *nattuvangam* recorded on audio cassettes. I also seek my guru's

guidance and perform with his troupe when he visits the U.S.A. or Canada".

Though Momy is essentially a soloist, he has participated in several of Dr Chinna Satyam's ballets and portrayed Manmatha in *Hara Vilasam*, Dhanwantri in *Ksheera Sagara Madanam*, Sadananda in *Siva Dhanur Bhanga*, Ananda in *Chandalika* and *Rukmini Kalyanam*. "My first stage appearance was as a rishi in the ballet *Srinivasa Kalyanam*, performed in the Music Academy

in Banking and Finance in Melbourne, she is also a teacher. Both Indian students, and Australians learn vocal music and veena from her. "I concentrate more on vocal music, because veena has its limitations," she says of her classes.

Initiated into music by her grandmother, her first formal guru was S Ramachandran of Shanmukhananda Hall, Mumbai, where she grew up. She was also a disciple of D K Jayaraman for three years. Now,

• by Hema Sundaram

in October 1990. I have danced in 55 cities in North America. I am now doing research on *Bhama Kalapam*," says Ravi.

"Momy's portrayal of Dhanwantri at the Konarak dance festival last December received a good response from the Oriya audience," recalls Dr Chinna Satyam. The Master adds, "He has a good rhythm sense and the capacity to be a good teacher too." In a field dominated by women, Ravi encouraged by his mother has fought against many odds to reach where he is now. He would like to fulfil his great ambition: "I want to start my own Kuchipudi institute in Toronto to teach and choreograph new items."

Shobha Sekhar, a Carnatic music vocalist and veena player, comes to Chennai every December from Melbourne to learn, to listen ("There is a large variety in presentation") and to perform. She left India 15 years ago. A post-graduate in Business Administration and at present studying for a Mas-

every year, she comes and spends five days a week, three hours a day practising with D K Pattammal, who has been "a great source of inspiration". The Australian Government has given Shobha a scholarship to learn Carnatic music, so she is also learning creative music and new compositions from K R Kedaranathan.

In her younger days, Shobha had performed for the Swami Hariodoss Sammelan in Mumbai, the Maharajapuram Trust in Chennai and given concerts in Muscat, Singapore and Australia. "It was Sudha Ragunathan, impressed with my singing when I interviewed her as a correspondent for *The Straits Times* in Singapore who motivated me to give stage performances. So, I have been here every winter from 1993", relates Shobha. During the past four years she has performed in the Music Academy, Narada Gana Sabha, Sruthilaya, Mylapore Fine Arts etc., during the December season.

"I practise with audio cas-



M Ravi Chandira, a mridangist from Australia



Shobha Sekhar, a Carnatic music vocalist from Australia



Ravi Sundaram Momy, a Kuchipudi dancer from Canada

Karakudi Mani Sir, he was very warm and cordial. From then, December 1986, I have been visiting Chennai every year and developing my art under his guidance and inspiration of Mani Sir. He has imparted much knowledge to me which needs polishing from my side."

During his Chennai visits, Ravichandran not only "learns from Mani Sir," but plays for different musicians "to get concert experience" and listens to musicians from other schools "to enrich my repertoire". He has established the Academy of Indian Music and Cultural Studies in Melbourne where students of all nationalities learn vocal Carnatic music, instruments and the percussion art. He also enables them to pursue their research and helps to organise concerts of the great maestros in Australia. His wish is that the percussion art should be encouraged as a "Tani Avartana Cutcheri" in the future.

These artistes are only three from across the oceans who come to Chennai every year. But there are scores of others and annually their numbers are increasing.

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Answers to Quiz

1. Laxmanpur Bathe; 2. Farooq Laghari of Pakistan; 3. They will have eastern names from now on; 4. 60 days advance booking; 5. The Gorkha Regiment; 6. AerCam (Autonomous Extravehicular Activity Robotic Camera) Sprint; 7. Lumbini in Nepal, Sundarbans in Bangladesh, and Rohtas in Pakistan; 8. Pandian Express, Cheran Express and Alapuzha Express; 9. At the Needles Hotel in the Isle of Wight; 10. Saurav Ganguly; 11. Rs. 176 crore; 12. Dr. Shiva Rama Karanth; 13. Paris; 14. All the planets would be in alignment and can be seen with the naked eye; 15. Carlos or "The Jackal".

* * *

16. Leela Samson; 17. Dupont Nylon; 18. F.C. Sharma; 19. Dr. Sripathy Rao; 20. Panagal Park.

A GLIMMER OF AN ACT?

(Continued from Page 1)

tage Acts for Chennai and Calcutta by the end of 1998.

The Act, as envisaged by INTACH, envisages listing of heritage buildings by a committee which will include governmental, municipal and nongovernmental EXPERTS and a similar committee to examine, rule on and supervise all development work or improvements to listed heritage buildings, heritage precincts and heritage natural resources. INTACH, however, needs to do much more to make the citizens of Chennai, nay, even of Tamil Nadu, aware of their heritage wealth and the need to preserve it.

INTACH and a 'save Bangalore's heritage' organisation, alphabetized as AARMBH, recently held a three-day seminar, with considerable visual inputs, to create an awareness about heritage in Bangalore. A report of those proceedings is published in this issue. Perhaps it's time INTACH, Chennai, and other NGOs with similar interests got together and started such a similar awareness-building campaign to make the Secretariat aware that larger and larger numbers in the City are showing an interest in Heritage and seek an Act to protect it.

Banking on youth

"I want to be the best coach in this country as long as I'm with you and in return I want you to be the best players in the country," urged coach Albert Fernando during a pep talk to his wards of the Chennai-based Indian Bank football team, shortly before it embarked on its campaign to win top honours in the second Philips National League that started on December 13th. By the time these lines are read, the bankmen would have kicked off against FC Kochi — the country's first professional club — in their endeavour to improve on 1996-1997's fifth place finish.

This year, ten teams are competing — as against last year's eight — in the nation's premier football tournament and the All-India Football Federation's first attempt at giving India a truly national professional tournament.

A former Sri Lankan footballer and the Brazilian-trained coach of the island-country's national team, Albert Fernando has been working his team hard this year to eliminate the careless mistakes it has tended to make in the past. Analysing his team's defeats in major tournaments last year (1997), he has found that "childish mistakes" have cost it dearly. He is confident that the team will do better than in 1997 by eliminating such errors and come within the top three. Talking of the team, he was emphatic that no player could take his place for granted: "If you do not perform, you are out," he sternly stated.

The team Fernando has to work with is a combination of experience and youth, several of the latter having made their mark in the Junior India team.



Coach Albert Fernando with his keys to success. From left, goalie Felix Edward, considered by the knowledgeable the most promising young goalkeeper in India; Sabir Pasha, who has never been given his due by the Indian selectors; Bobby Hamilton; and skipper V.P. Sathyan, capped several times for the country. (Photograph by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

The members registered before the first match are :

Defence: V P Sathyan, Captain of the team. Has represented India for over a decade and led the country on several occasions. First played for Kerala Police, then Mohun Bagan. Leads the defence which comprises of veteran A S Mahendran, Junior India player Rajesh Kumar Pande — who was with Mahindra & Mahindra till recently — Nagercoil-based Marilyn Kamalas and C Mukundan.

Midfield: India international Bobby Hamilton, Maharashtra State player D C Nathaniel, Bangalorean India international Karunakara Raj, Manipuri Akham Mahesh Singh who was with Dempo SC earlier, Maldivian Ismail Mahfooz, and Tamil Nadu players J Kumaresan, David Maria Gerald and Anandarajan.

Strikers: A lot will depend on India international Syed Sabir Pasha, who scored the

golden goal for India in the final of the SAF Games '95 against Bangladesh. Supporting him will be former India Junior international Amal Raj, Junior internationals Selvakumar and G Loganatha Balaji, and State Junior Francis Xavier.

Goalkeepers: Kerala goalie and former Kerala Police player Sebastian Netto and India under-23 custodian Felix Edward.

The Bank is keen to utilise the services of two or three foreign players to improve the overall performance of the team. Maldivian Ismail Mahfooz has agreed to play for the second year in succession, while another Maldivian who played last year, Abdul Latheef, is yet to confirm his availability. Kenyan Freddie Zedkiah Odiyo, who trained with the team last year, finds a place in the team.

Unfortunately, the recent rains have hampered the team's training schedules. It has had to practise on the slushy grounds of the University Union and Pachaiappa's College and even work out on basketball courts. But coach Fernando is satisfied that the team has done enough training in the "available conditions". He, however, has a legitimate complaint when he says that Madras's only team in the National League did not get a chance to train at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium ground, where it plays all its home matches. The Tamil Nadu Football Association has hardly been helpful in this context.

The Indian Bank team performed quite creditably in the

First National League in 1996-97 when it finished joint fifth with Mumbai-based Air India and ahead of Goan giant Salgaocar SC and Mahindra & Mahindra, Mumbai. It won three matches, lost five and drew the remaining six. It finished the League on a high note when it thwarted Churchill Brothers' desperate attempt to win its last league encounter, which it needed to do to emerge as champions. The match ended in a 1-1 draw. Syed Sabir Pasha and Abdul Latheef were the highest scorers for the Bank during the League, each netting three goals, while Ismail Mahfooz and Bobby Hamilton scored two each.

The Bank has been a force in Madras Football from the time the team was first formed in 1987-88 as a Fifth Division side. It finished on top of each league it played in, and ensured it got promoted to the next higher division.

In 1990, as a Second Division team, it lifted the All-India Vittal Trophy and has clinched the super league title every year since entering the First Division. Now it aims for the Big One and the handsome rewards that go with it.

The National League offers prize money ranging from Rs.40 lakh for the winner to Rs. 7.50 lakh for the sixth-placed team. There is a Man of the Match award for every match, Rs. 25,000 for every victory, Rs. 1 lakh for the Man of the Tournament and Rs. 2.50 lakh for the Fairplay award, all totalling up to Rs. 1.07 crore.

Each team in the National League can register a maximum of 27 players, 18 of them before the team's first match, and the rest as the League progresses. A team can register a maximum of five foreign players, with not more than four playing in any one match.

— G. Krishnan

First-half fixtures

The fixtures of the Indian Bank team for the first half of the National League are as follows:

HOME MATCHES	AWAY MATCHES
Dec. 28 —	vs. Fc Kochin, Kochin
Jan. 3 —	vs. Mohun Bagan, Calcutta
Jan. 7 — vs. JCT Mills, Phagwara	
Jan. 10 —	vs. Air India, Mumbai
Jan. 16 —	vs. Salgaocar, Goa
Jan. 19 —	vs. Churchill Brothers, Goa
Jan. 24 —	vs. Mahindra & Mahindra, Mumbai
Jan. 31 — vs. East Bengal, Calcutta	



Amalgamations Group

apcom

Apcom Computers Ltd.

HongkongBank
The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited
Member HSBC Group



Sundaram Finance
Limited



Spencer &
Co. Ltd



Sundram Fasteners
Limited



The Taj Group
of Hotels



Thiru Arooran
Sugars Ltd

TVS-SUZUKI

TVS Suzuki
Ltd.



WELCOMGROUP
Park Sheraton
Hotel & Towers

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Rane Group

SANMAR

The Sanmar Group