

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

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Heritage plan seeks Govt. nod

(By A Special Correspondent)

Like Tranquebar (Tarangambadi), another historic town, Pulicat, once the chief town of Dutch settlements in Asia, deserves to be preserved and tended as a Heritage Town, says P.T. Krishnan, Convenor, Tamil Nadu Chapter, Indian Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage. INTACH (TN) has, to this end, prepared a preliminary study of this 17th Century Dutch settlement that predates Madras (see page 5 for excerpts from the study).

INTACH (TN) has been in touch with several Dutch organisations seeking assistance to further study and prepare a comprehensive action plan for the conservation of Pulicat. But to commit any assistance to INTACH (TN) for the preparation of the plan they want to be sure that the Indian or Tamil Nadu Governments would be interested in having such a comprehensive plan prepared. If organisations in Holland and the State or Central Government in India feel the plan could then be implemented, there are distinct possibilities of assistance from

Holland, say Dutch organisations with whom INTACH (TN) has been in touch.

Unfortunately, it is learnt, the State Government does not seem to be particularly interested in expressing a need for such a plan, even though it needs make no further commitment to the plan except to express its interest in receiving such a document for evaluation. INTACH (TN) is, therefore, unable to proceed further with developing its preliminary study into an action plan for the conservation of this historic town.

INTACH (TN) feels that this is an appropriate time to draw up a heritage conservation plan which will cover not only man-made heritage, but also the natural heritage of Pulicat. It considers the study it has undertaken, covering the historical, ecological and architectural background of the Pulicat Lake region, to be only a starting point. It should also broadly outline the opportuni-

(Continued on page 6)



An elephantine threat

• This picture of a 'heavyweight' occupying almost the entire width of narrow Ritchie Street, off Anna Salai, appeared in The Hindu recently with a rather matter-of-fact caption. But look at the blow-up of a portion of the picture we publish alongside today. The scooterist cowers in fear — and that only emphasises the dangers 'mendicant' elephants pose.

In the last few weeks your Editor has seen such elephants in situations where they could pose a real threat to life, limb and property. One evening, on Boat Club Road, now reduced to a single track with all the digging going on, an elephant was being ordered in front of every car and when each car stopped, it put its trunk through an open window or rubbed it against a closed one, frightening several drivers. A few days later, an elephant turned up in a residential cul-de-sac where cars parked on one side of the private lane left just enough room for the animal to negotiate. Here it tapped on every gate with its trunk and hoped it would get someone to come out to be blessed for a consideration.

The three elephants may be different animals or they could be one and the same. They could also be the gentlest of creatures. But gentle creatures, particularly elephants, do get irritated and angry — and elephants becoming uncontrollable when in such a state are not unheard of! Life on the City's roads is difficult enough. Must it be threatened further by an animal that should either roam the forest free or remain tethered in an appropriate spot where it could offer its blessings to those who really want them and not to all and sundry who are likely to feel more threatened and intimidated than blessed? When are the Police going to act in this abuse of roadspace?



Landmark Buildings List for CMDA, Corporation

(By A Staff Reporter)

At its second meeting the CMDA Heritage Advisory Committee decided to compile a preliminary master list of landmark buildings from the CMDA Master Plan list and recommendations by INTACH, Tamil Nadu chapter, and Madras Musings for circulation among members of the Committee. The Committee would then agree on a final list, grade the buildings and recommend them for fur-

ther action to the CMDA and the Corporation of Chennai.

The Committee hoped both authorities would thereafter pay heed to the G.O. mentioned in these columns last fortnight and begin to look at what needed to be done to ensure the listed buildings became the pride of the City.

Chief Town Planner Ananda Ranjana Doss, now a Member, CMDA, suggested that the Com-

mittee support a few projects that INTACH (TN) is examining and help make them models for the other landmark buildings. INTACH (TN) has studied or is to study the following heritage projects for further action:

- Removing the hoardings at both ends, beautifying the Elphinstone Bridge in Adyar and making it a promenade and a bird-watcher's base.

- Cleaning up the environs of the Tiruvanmiyur Tank, bringing back water to it and making the whole area an attractive leisure space.

- Restoring the Town Hall (Victoria Public Hall) and making it once again a hall for regular use by the public.

The Committee hoped the Landmark Buildings List would

be agreed on by the end of the year and hoped the CMDA and the Corporation would announce their acceptance of the List as the Millennium dawned. The Committee also hoped the three projects INTACH (TN) planned to suggest action for would be implemented in 2000 and show the way for other projects.

What do tourists expect from us?

Why did an 80-strong group of affluent tourists cut short its three-day visit to Chennai and its tourist triangle and go back in less than a day to the Concorde to continue their 21-day round-the-world tour? *The Man From Madras Musings* has heard various theories about this fiasco.

One is that the tourists were looking for a 'leisure holiday' and Chennai did not offer them that. Another is that the tour scheduling was not the most tourist-friendly; an introduction to the hustle and bustle of Chennai, especially to the environs of the Kapaleeswarar Temple at Deepavali time, is not the most inviting of programmes for 'delicate' American tourists. A third view was that by sandwiching Agra between the two parts of the Chennai-and-environs tour, the tourists lost interest in whatever else the South had to offer; to most affluent Americans, wish-fulfilment is "see the Taj and die!"

Whatever be the truth in this instance, it is time our tour operators and facilitators began to face up to certain realities. India's comparatively low tourist arrivals is because the country has focussed on the affluent tourist who has been brought up in luxury and heard only of India's palatial riches. This means, not only do they seek only such tourist attractions, but they also want the luxury and comfort which goes with their life styles — no matter what the price. One consequence of this, MMM finds, is that we in India tend to price ourselves out of the market of the great majority of travellers who seek budget holidays but with five-star levels of cleanliness and service.

The Indian view of tourism also tends to centre on the world of culture and religion. The greater part of the world's tourists prefer leisure holidays (sport; game-watching; sun, sand and sea), adventure holidays (trekking etc.) or relaxed holidays (one destination where they can comfortably take in a variety of sights at their own pace over a period of time). India has still a long way to go to offer tourists enough facilities for such holidays. The result is we get five-star tourists and they expect everything to be seven-star. And Chennai has a long way to go — except for rates — to reach even five-star standards.

Protect that head

Dr. B. Ramamurthy, the eminent neurosurgeon, has fired the first salvo to get helmets back on the heads of riders of motorised two-wheelers in Tamil Nadu. Others have followed — and have endorsed his plea that helmets be made mandatory for two-wheeler riders using the roads of the State. While endorsing the plea, *The Man From Madras Musings* wonders why Government is fighting shy of re-introducing helmets on our roads. Surely, pleas by riders on grounds of discomfort and stor-

age are not as fundamental as saving lives, particularly in a State where road discomfort and lack of storage space is a way of life?!

A plea by Dr. K. Ganapathy, another neurosurgeon, for the use of road helmets presented several facts that need to be noted by all users of motorised two-wheelers. In the US, motorcycle accidents claimed nearly 50 per cent MORE lives AFTER regulations making the wearing of helmets mandatory had been struck down by the courts — from 3312 in the last year helmets were compulsory to 4893 in a year, a couple of years later. When California reintroduced laws to make the wearing of helmets mandatory, it found that it saved \$35 million in hospital costs by reduced hospitalisation of motor cycle accident victims!

Dr. Ganapathy stated that in the 6000 or so cases of head injuries he has treated in the last 24 years, "I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of deaths among the group of two-wheeler riders wearing helmets... This is in stark contradiction to the very large number of deaths among two-wheeler riders with unprotected skulls."

Helmets alone will not prevent or even reduce accidents, Dr. Ganapathy agrees, but goes on, "What a proper helmet does effectively is to bear the brunt of the impact and thus reduce the actual mechanical shearing forces reaching the brain. The severity of brain damage is reversible."

Indeed, the advantages of making a thick skull thicker with a helmet are unquestionable. Why doesn't the Government consider the advantages — which are life and death matters — rather than the disadvantages — which are matters of life style — wonders MMM. Can someone explain the mystery about Government's strange reluctance in this matter?

The man of letters

The greater part of the audience seemed to *The Man From Madras Musings* to be one not exactly associated with Tamil writing and reading. And those are the friends on whom C.V. Karthik Narayanan sprang a surprise when they discovered that not only was he fluent in Tamil but that it was a fluency that enabled him to undertake the translation of Kalki's best-known book, *Ponniyin Selvan*, a saga of the 10th Century Chola court. At the release of the first volume of the five-part book, all those who graced the dais and spoke of the book were unanimous that the translation had done full justice to Kalki's greatest work.

One of those who appreciated the translation enormously was that man of letters and lover of books Chief Minister Mu Karunanidhi. I don't attend book releases unless I have carefully read the book to be released, he once again stressed as he has so often in the past. And having read this book, he made it a point to attend the function though he had still not been medically re-

leased from the bedrest he had been advised to take for his indisposition, MMM learnt. That undoubtedly silently states something important about the book he had read in English and had compared with the original during the five days preceding that he had been in bed. He now looked forward to the next four parts being issued in the year ahead.

The Chief Minister also made sure Kalki Rajendran paid the full price to the publishers for the book he released and presented to the editor of *Kalki*. Rajendran had to search for the additional Rs.150 after he had obliged the Chief Minister's 'pay me for it' with a token Rs.100 and found the Chief Guest insisting, to loud laughter from the audience, that he pay the rest if he wanted the book!

A gracious gesture on the occasion was the sponsors, the MR. AR. Educational Society, the publishers, Macmillan's India, and the author, all remembering on the occasion "the backroom girl" who made not only this publication possible but also the entire Macmillan 'Indian Literature in Translation' series. This was the 25th book released in a series which, apart from finding a place in Indian colleges, is also finding a niche in American, British and Australian colleges and universities. Mini Krishnan, the Editor of the series, is looking forward to the day when the entire series — and it is a grow-

ing one — becomes a recognisable name in Indian publishing, here and abroad.

End of an era

A regular visitor to Madras for decades was S. Thondaman, the Sri Lankan trade union leader, political figure and Minister in the Sri Lanka Government who passed away recently. Thondaman had as many friends in Chennai as he had in Colombo and he kept as much in touch with his roots in Ramanaapuram District as he did with the new roots his family had sunk in the 19th Century in the Nuwara Eliya District in the Central highlands of Ceylon where tea carpets the slopes as far as the eye can see.

Thondaman will long be remembered as the leader of the 'Indian Tamils' who have lived and worked on the tea plantations of Sri Lanka for the last 150 years. The leader of the trade union wing of the Ceylon Indian Congress that was founded in 1939, Thondaman took over the Congress in 1945 and transformed it into the Ceylon Workers Congress with a focus on the Indian Tamils in the hill country even as those in the urban areas of the Low-Country began to return to India.

In the early years of Sri Lankan independence Thondaman lost several opportunities to empower his constituency by his refusal to team with the leaders of the island, but from the '70s he did an about-turn on this philosophy, accepted ministerial posts, ensured empowerment of the Indian Tamils and made them a vital vote bank in a dozen districts in the Up-Country. This brought him enormous power and almost king-maker status. But whether he made the most of the opportunities he had is something *The Man From Madras Musings* has always wondered about.

Thondaman, born Mathavan may have got the Indian Tamils of Sri Lanka voting rights, but their empowerment has not enabled them to move out of what is virtually a ghetto, the 'lines' on the estates. Isolated from the mainstream, they may be protected and safe, but the Indian Tamil on the estates has certainly not had the economic and other benefits that have given others in the island a comfortable and freer life style even if be a less safer one. In fact, the estate labour does not still have anything like the residential, medical and educational facilities and the opportunities to step into a world beyond the estate that is to be found in the plantations of South India. By also commanding a monopolistic trade union, he has held in thrall over the years the Sri Lankan tea industry, where, to keep the workers happy and ensure employment, productivity is low and modernisation is still a dream away; fortunately the traditional picking of two leaves and a bud, ensures Sri Lanka a premium based on the quality this method assures.

What is going to happen to this isolated but powerful community in the future, MMM wonders. There is need to be concerned, according to many, because Thondaman did not groom a successor who might prove as charismatic. Like virtually all politicians in this part of the world, he saw succession in dynasty and when his son saw his future in India, Thondaman began to groom his grandson Arumugam. But whether Arumugam will be acceptable to the rest of the 'politiburo' even if he is to the government and perhaps even to the rank and file, is a matter of some doubt. A greater concern expressed by many is that, even if the succession issue is solved in Arumugam's favour, can Thondaman's less charismatic successor steer the Indian Tamil community away from involvement in the ethnic struggle in the island? Certainly the militant Sri Lankan Tamils would be eager to fish in these troubled waters to try and lure the Indian Tamils into supporting them in their quest for 'liberation'. Will the Indian Tamils after Thondaman be able to follow the middle path he had created and shown them as the way they should follow?

Intriguing questions which many in Chennai, like MMM, would be keenly following.

In brief

★ A recent visitor to Chennai who was fascinated with *Madras Musings* has published in recent issues I wish to add the following: — The LM Fabricius school building on Purasawalkam High Road (near the tank). — A mausoleum-like structure on Peter's Road, a little behind the Royapettah hospital morgue. — Several crumbling temples on the New Mahabalipuram Road between Mahabalipuram and Marakkanam.

★ Arihant Foundations, now that they've sold to an IT giant their 'Balaji-based' property on Mount Road, which received permission for many more storeys (14) than is normally allowed in Chennai, have decided to move on to another major project. This one is an up-market club — The Millennia Club — the developers plan on building at a cost of Rs. 15 crore in the heart of Chennai, off General Patters' Road in an area the Lodd Govindoss family lorded it over in the early 20th Century. Sketches of the Club *The Man From Madras Musings* has seen show a very British styling: Art deco with an overlay of the Classical, rather like an expanded Hongkong Bank building. It looks like we still have a long way to go to develop any indigenous architectural style. But then, the club being a very British institution, MMM presumes such styling as is planned for the Millennia Club would be justified.

★ When a comparatively new publisher, BPI Educational, recently launched a 'Millennium Series' of primary school textbooks for English, Grammar and Maths — and very colourful they are too — the launch function was supported by "a programme of teacher enrichment" they had called 'Edutainment'. *The Man From Madras Musings* did not stay for the entire three-hour programme but the glimpse he got opened up a whole new world to him. Apparently there is a tribe of 'Human Resource Trainers' these days who combine fun with training the trainees to be more people-friendly. The trainer MMM watched, a pint-sized Sivakumar with a larger-than-life personality honed at IIT Madras and in Florida, soon had all the teachers present literally hocky-kooching to his tune. Whether the dancing ensures better teacher-student relations MMM did not stay to find out.

MMM

OUR READERS WRITE

More landmarks

To the long list of heritage buildings which *Madras Musings* has published in recent issues I wish to add the following: — The LM Fabricius school building on Purasawalkam High Road (near the tank). — A mausoleum-like structure on Peter's Road, a little behind the Royapettah hospital morgue. — Several crumbling temples on the New Mahabalipuram Road between Mahabalipuram and Marakkanam.

K. Ramakrishna
21/165 CPWD Quarters
Indira Nagar
Chennai 600 020.

Hinglish ads

There have of late been a number of advertisements with Hindi headlines written in English. The ads are aimed at an all-India audience, including readers in Tamil Nadu. These ads are created by leading ad agencies for well-known companies. At first I found them amusing. I assumed they were one-off ads by some young copywriter trying to show off. Later, when more such ads started appearing, I no longer felt amused. I found them irritating.

Irritating because, for two reasons. To a Tamilian, who is not very good at Hindi, these headlines (and sometimes the entire ad thanks to the headline) made no sense. I wondered whether it was the advertising agency's way of Hindi imposition.

As an MBA, a marketing professional who has spent 23 years marketing various products, I have always felt that the cardinal rule of any communication should be 'Audience first, message next.' The advertiser and the agency seem to have forgotten that with a substantial percentage of Tamil Nadu readers having only a superficial knowledge of Hindi, the headlines did not make much sense. And when an ad does not communicate, the residual feeling is one of irritation.

As a marketing professional, I feel writing Hindi in English is good money down the drain.

V. Chandrashekhara
B-12/4, 25th Cross Street
Besant Nagar
Chennai 600 090.

MCC&S heritage

The front page picture by Rajind N Christy (MM, October 16th) shows part of Fenn Hostel in Linghi Chetty Street, where many students of Christian College stayed while pursuing their studies. Opposite it, across the street, was the main Madras Christian College and High School complex. The buildings stretched from Moor Street to Thambu Chetty Street and all faced Esplanade. The buildings were in Indo-Saracenic architecture with Gothic openings. They

were painted a distinctive yellow and red. The main tower in that complex was seven storeys high, the tallest in the area, perhaps equal to, if not taller than the tower of Mallikswar temple near Mannadi Street.

The college had three hostels. Apart from Fenn Hostel there was one at the corner of Armenian Street and Errabalu Chetty Street, now occupied by the Oriental Insurance Company. It was known as Caithness Hall, named after the northernmost place in Scotland. It formed the northern boundary of the campus. This and other main buildings along the Esplanade were architecturally satisfying, but were sold when the College moved to Tambaram in 1937. The new owners pulled them down to erect new buildings, thanks to non-awareness of heritage in those days.

Abutting Fenn Hostel and facing Esplanade was the Anderson Hall, which could seat nearly a thousand persons. It had all the grace and grandeur of Memorial Hall in Evening Bazar Road and was a lot bigger too.

M. Sethuraman
'Sankrithi', 8, IInd Cross St.
Mahalakshmi Nagar
Adambakkam, Chennai 600 088.

On competence

After commenting on non-issues like 'Appropriate Authorities' in MM, September 16th, I recently came across the following signboard on G N Chetty Road: "Ministry of Finance... (etc)... Office of the Competent Authority", which clarifies a certain aspect of bureaucracy.

It is now evident that all other offices are by definition incompetent, and whining about it is obviously an exercise in futility. So should we all head for G N Chetty Road to sort out problems with officialdom?

Thomas Tharu
4-A-7 Kasyap
Nehrunagar Fourth Street
Adyar, Chennai 600 020.

Bombing footnote

A footnote to the discussion on the bombing of Madras. Hiramalini Seshadri mentions her Thatha's recollection of the city's pounding by the *Emden*, the German battleship (MM, October 1st). That was in 1915, not 1917. En route to Madras the *Emden* also sank a number of British merchant ships and one of these carried the 'Cities in History' exhibition of the famous Scottish town planner Patrick Geddes.

Professor Geddes, who had arrived safely in Madras by an earlier vessel, had hoped to take his exhibition (which focussed on the history of European cities) around India. When his materials were sunk by the *Emden*, Geddes decided instead to study and write about the cities of this country. He was to write a long appreciation of the temple cities of South India, and to prepare detailed plans for the eco-

A harvest of names

People's Organisation (PO)! That seems to be your staff reporter's choice (MM, October 16th) as a replacement for 'NGO' non-governmental organisation. An earlier letter of mine contained many alternatives from which you could have chosen although I had not stated so explicitly. I had said (MM, August 16th) 'Is it very difficult to come up with a name to describe service organisations, welfare organisations, social welfare bodies, community organisations, voluntary bodies, etc?' Any of these terms may be used. Why not choose the first one — service organisation (not to be abbreviated as SO!) since these organisations do some kind of service or other. Agreed, it does not sound very attractive, but like the term 'support staff' (the non-teaching employees of educational institutions), unless someone comes up with a better alternative, we may have to rest content with it. (I will be simply delighted if any reader of MM can come up with a better choice. Creativity is no-one's monopoly.) But all this is beside the point. Let me explain.

Why must the term 'NGO' (or whatever) be used to refer to or describe these organisations in the first place? As though by not doing so, the reader would mistake the organisation to be a government body. It seems to be the journalistic norm, trend, a must to attach this label to service organisations. Instead of saying 'The newest people's organisation in town calls itself the Chennai Think Tank', your staff reporter could have simply stated 'A new organisation called Chennai Think Tank has been formed by a group of young people'. Similarly, MMM writes (MM, September 16th) 'EPOCH' (Society for Environmental Protection and Conservation of the Historical)... perhaps the first non-governmental organisation in the country to stress the need to conserve heritage build-

ings! EPOCH could simply have been referred to as 'the first organisation in the country... The context makes it clear that government organisations are not being discussed. Consider yet another example. A news item in the city's leading newspaper says 'A number of famous meteor showers are lighting up the skies, says Innovative Learning Technologies', a voluntary organisation specialising in astronomy. First, kudos to the reporter for not using the term 'NGO'! But why refer to the organisation as a 'voluntary' one. If this were not mentioned, would readers get confused? By no stretch of imagination are readers going to think of Chennai Think Tank, EPOCH, Innovative Learning Technologies and others of their ilk as government organisations. (A very cynical argument can also be given to substantiate this premise — these organisations are engaged in doing good to and for the people.)

Service organisations have names like Bala Mandir, Guild of Service, Helpage India, CRY, MOHAN, EXNORA, INTACH, etc. Large names are generally 'acronymed'. Government organisations tend to have names like Exservicemen's Welfare Board, State Handicrafts Corporation, Department of Tribal Welfare, Sports Development Council, etc. Almost always, the name itself, the context in which the organisation is mentioned and the text or writing will identify whether the concerned organisation is a government body or not. Where then is the need to explicitly identify service organisations as NGOs? (I only wish I had realised this earlier.)

Hence the simplest way to handle the contentious issue of 'NGO' is as follows:

— Simply stop using the label-NGO or whatever. As explained above, this is really not necessary.

logical management of towns as far flung as Indore, Dhaka, Lahore, Ahmedabad and Patiala. His work is a rich empirical archive on the urban history of the subcontinent; indeed, so well did he come to know this land that the Madras colossus, Annie Besant, told him that 'you are only the second European man to understand India' (MM readers can guess who was the first — probably a fellow Theosophist of Besant's, Leadbeater or Olcott).

Anyway, Geddes' contributions to Indian scholarship must be counted as an unintended consequence of the bombing of Madras by the *Emden*.

Ramachandra Guha
Bangalore

That rail connection
So there are persons like C.A. Reddi who still fondly remember the railway line from Mayavaram and back to Tranquebar (MM, October 16th). There were three services from Mayavaram and back. The wayside stations were Mayavaram Town, Mannampandal, Sembanarkoil, Akkur, Porayar, etc. and the surrounding villages had to be reached only by these railway services. Bullock carts would be ready at the stations to take us to the villages nearby.

Due to the advent of extensive bus services, the railway service became unviable and had to be discontinued. The same fate is suffered by other routes like Mannargudi, Needamangalam, Tiruvur etc. Due to the increased frequency and convenience of

— Where there is scope for confusion, the term 'service organisation' may be used.

B. Gautham
122, Wallajah Road
Chennai 600 002.

P.S. While on the subject of jargon, will somebody be kind enough to suggest an alternative to 'harvest' when used with reference to organ donation and transplant. Let us confine 'harvest' to wheat and paddy.

P.S.S. There I go again!

NGO alternatives

An alternative term for the type of organisation known as "non-governmental organisation" might be "people's organisation" NOT "peoples' organisation" as suggested by your Staff Reporter (MM, October 16th).

"People's organisation" would mean organisation of people (men, women and children), whereas "peoples' organisation" will be an organisation of peoples (men, women and children of different nations or races).

"Citizens' organisation" or "voluntary organisation" too might be appropriate. Try "folks' front", "masses' movement", "commoners' cadre" or, if you wish to be way-out, "selves' society".

Since NGOs step in where the Government has failed or is deficient (how many writers of letters to the Editor say "will the government look into the matter?"), I cannot understand all this brouhaha about the universally accepted term "non-governmental organisations". So there!

C. Kesi
A5 Madhurima
20-21 Conran Smith Road,
Gopalapuram
Chennai 600 086.

travel, the bus services to these areas have become more popular, thus rendering the service of the Railways in these routes most unremunerative and unviable.

The same logic might also be applicable to the present MRTS in the city.

T.M. Sundararaman
No.19, Nallappan Street
Mylapore, Chennai 600 004.

Engineering landmark

We often travel by road to Bangalore and cross a beautiful bridge built in the '40s over the Palar river. This is the Tiruvallam Bridge close to Ranipet.

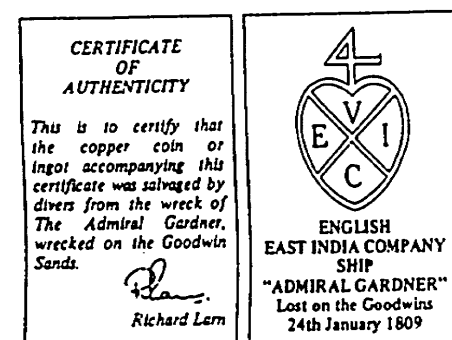
A board by it says that the bridge is unsafe. There is no sign of the bridge being maintained and it looks to us as if this warning is a justification to pull it down some time in the future for its metal value. Can anything be done to save this bridge? We cannot construct such a bridge today. It should be considered an engineering landmark.

Usha Kris
5, Beach Rd, Kalakshetra Colony
Chennai 600 090.

Looking back A little bit of treasure

(By The Editor)

The little bit of treasure seen here landed on your Editor's desk last fortnight with a note from Michael Herridge, British Deputy High Commissioner in South India, that read: "I thought you might like to have the enclosed old East India Company coin. With Elizabeth (Mrs Herridge) bringing it to Madras from the UK it has finally completed the journey it started one hundred and ninety years ago!" Indeed it has — and we are delighted to receive it.



As fascinating as the gleaming treasure in mint condition is the little folder accompanying it. The outside of the folder is reproduced above and the inside is quoted:

"The Admiral Gardner and Britannia, both East Indiamen, were wrecked in the same night on the South Goodwin Sands. A brief storm caused both ships to drag ashore. On board the Admiral Gardner (Captain John Eastfield) of 816 tons, in attempting to cut the sheet hawse with an axe, the pilot, John Palmer, lost 2 fingers and became delirious. The vessel carried 48 tons of HEIC copper coins for Madras, as well as a quantity of ingots from the Rose Copper Co. of Redruth, Cornwall, 100 tons of iron goods and general merchandise for Bengal. A total of 10 lives were lost, both vessels being underwater in 24 hours, with no salvage possible.

Copper ingots and coins from the Admiral Gardner represent unique artifacts of what was once the richest, most powerful trading company the world has ever seen. The coins are in 2 denominations, x(10) and xx(20) Cash dated 1808, uncirculated, mostly in mint condition, being packed in wax in small casks. With the HEIC crest (motto — Under Patron-

age of King and Parliament of England) on the obverse, the reverse carries a Persian inscription 'x Cash are 2 fulus', or 'xx Cash are 4 fulus'.

The wreck is being investigated by the EIC Diving Group.

Wrecks like these are being investigated all over the world and fortunes of varying degrees earned. How is it the search is not on to the same degree off India's coasts? The records list several East Indiamen as having been sunk in Madras Roads during the numerous cyclones that battered it. Did none of them carry treasure or is there no one adventurous enough who wants to find any treasure if there was?

The First No-Confidence Motion

A no-confidence motion moved on November 27, 1923 and subsequent Whip Motion of February 5, 1924 were the first of their kind in India under the Dyarchy system and were debated in the Madras Legislative Council.

C. Ramalinga Reddy on November 27, 1923 in the Madras Legislative Council, moved the resolution as under:

"That a humble and dutiful address be presented to His Excellency the Governor submitting that the Ministry, as now constituted by him, is against the weight of the verdict given by the country in the general election and does not possess the confidence of this House".

Muhammad Moosa Sait seconded the Motion.

Lord Willingdon was then the Governor of Madras Presidency. C P Ramaswami Ayyar was nominated the Law Member and the Raja of Panagal was Minister for Local Self-Government.

The Council consisted of 128 members, elected and nominated. P.T. Rajan, A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Dr John Mathai, S. Sathyamurthi, Dr. P. Subbarayan, A.P. Patro, B. Muniswami Nayudu, A.M.M. Murugappa Chettiar, C.R.

Reddy among many others were Members of the Council. S. Sathyamurthi, as representative of the Madras University, made his maiden speech.

The No-Confidence Motion was put to vote on November 28, 1923, and declared lost. Ayes: 43; Noes: 65; Neutral: 10. The entire debate was in English, except for those by three Members, namely M. Seethayya, M. Gangaraju and B. Venkata-ratnam, who spoke in Telugu.

The adjournment motion, that is, the Whip Motion of February 1924, was in English.

Both the debates were of a very high order and they deserve to be republished, to enable the present day Legislators/Parliament Members, to know how the then Members conducted themselves with great dignity.

The 'strictly confidential' fortnightly report for the second half of November 1923, from M.E. Couchman Esq., I.C.S., Acting Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, read:

"The vote of want of confidence in the new Ministry re-

ferred to in my last report was moved by Mr. C.R. Reddy on 27th November and was eventually lost by 43 votes to 65. The minority consisted entirely of elected members. Of the majority, 44 were elected members, 13 were nominated non-official members and 8 were ex-officio and nominated official members. Ten members remained neutral, of whom one was a nominated official, three were nominated non-officials and six were elected non-officials. Excluding the official votes and those of nominated members the Ministerial party had thus a bare majority of one. The debate itself evoked unprecedented public interest; the house and galleries were crowded and large numbers of the public had to be refused admission and waited outside to hear the result. The discussion occupied two full days and though distinguished by some eloquent speeches, was marred by the fact that those who spoke in support of the motion had little or no constructive criticism of the Minister's policy to offer and no alternative Ministry to suggest. Moreover the recalcitrant members of the Non-Brahmin party who instigated the mo-

tion were in the somewhat illogical position of having, in the old Council, supported those very measures which they now made the basis of their charge against the Ministers. This inevitably created in the minds of many people an impression that the reason for the attack was not so much lack of confidence in the Ministry, as the feelings of pique and jealousy which the supporters of the motion entertained towards it. As a piece of political tactics the motion at this stage of the Ministry's career was therefore probably unsound; but it has certainly shown that the position of the Ministry is by no means as secure as it was in the last Council, and has also directed attention to the importance of the vote of the officials and nominated members. Further developments will be watched with interest. The motion had the support of the Muhammadan and Swarajist members and one of the most eloquent speeches was made by a member of the latter party, S. Sathyamurthi, in the character of *tertius gaudens*."

C. A. Reddi

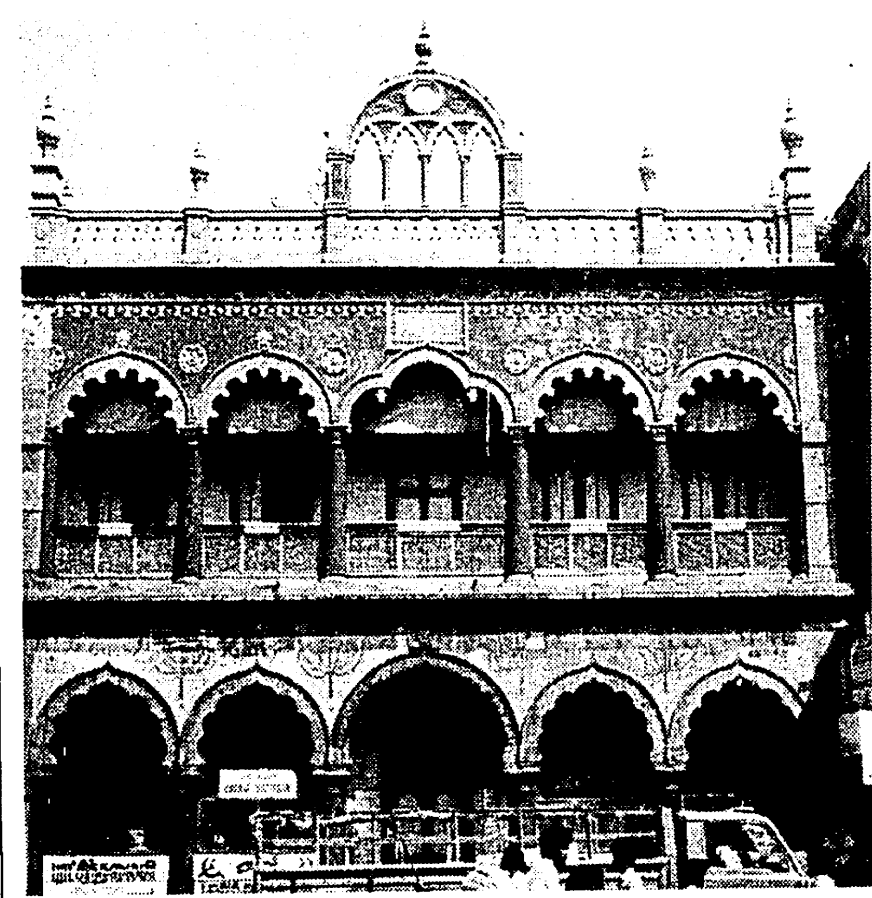


THE OLD... ...& THE NEW

Our OLD (left), is a building with distinct features of Mughal architecture and is believed to have been a late 19th Century mosque. A plaque in the building states "M K a periamtham Bymaricarsh Adulia, Jewellers. Today, this building on Popham's Broadway (Prakasam Road) is home of Appar Achagum, one of the City's older printing presses.

The NEW (above), with a superimposed facade rather resembling the OLD, is the State Election Commission Office on 100' Road in Vadapalani. The pillared, balustraded and arched facade is a later addition to a rather characterless Government-style building. The arches here are not unlike the central arch on the first floor of our OLD.

(Pictures and Text by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)



PULICAT — A heritage to be preserved

Pulicat, about 60 km north of Chennai, the northernmost town in Tamil Nadu, is a place of immense heritage value. The natural heritage of the area is made up of a complex web of wetlands and lagoons and its colourful history has given a unique character to its man-made heritage. Unfortunately, both are in a serious state of deterioration due to natural causes as well as economic reasons.

The gradual silting-up of the Pulicat Lake and the sand bar formation at the mouth of the lagoon threaten the whole ecological balance of the area and will lead to a severe economic fall-out affecting the livelihood of the local population.

Heritage conservation to be successful should be a self-sustaining process and economic well-being is a pre-requisite for such a programme. Where the livelihood of the community is threatened, conservation projects will not derive any meaningful support at the grassroots level unless they can provide an alternative means to the well-being of the local populace. While the larger ecological and development issues need to be addressed to satisfy the long-term objectives, it is necessary to explore whether heritage-based development could provide an alternative means of developing the local economy and serve to rehabilitate those whose traditional occupations such as fishing and handloom weaving can no longer support them due to its reduced potential. Needless to say that such a conservation plan should also address the issue of heritage awareness among the members of the local community to ensure that developmental activity does not contradict the priorities of heritage conservation.

INTACH, Tamil Nadu Chapter, recently undertook a preliminary study of the area as a starting point to develop a conservation plan. Here are excerpts from the study:

Historical development

The first historical reference to Pulicat is from the imperial Chola period (10th Century). There is a temple at Thiruppalaiyanam, near Pulicat, which was built during the Chola period. Inscriptions inside the temple refer to Pulicat as Payyar Kottam, Puliur Kottam and Pular Kottam. There are 73 inscriptions which give information about

the social order, land grants and temple grants such as Devadana.

In 1572, Thirumalai Nayak divided his kingdom into three parts, one of which was given to Venkatapathi who ruled it from Chandragiri, his capital. Pulicat was a part of his rule and was referred to as Pralaya Kaveri.

The quest for the spices of the east and the lucrative textile trade in silk and cotton inspired the Europeans to find an alternative route to India. The Portuguese halted at Pulicat on the way from Malacca and built a church dedicated to "Nossa Senhora Dus Prazeres" (Our Lady of Joys) in 1515 A.D.

But during the reign of Venkata II (1586-1614) the *farman* for trading in Pulicat was given to the Dutch. Later, the Dutch sought permission for a fortified trading post. Permission to build a fort at Pulicat was given by Queen Eraivi in 1607 and Fort Geldria came into existence in 1610 A.D.

In 1781, the English attacked and captured Pulicat. It changed hands between the



The brackishwater lagoons of Pulicat.

ban centre. The traditional industries of Pulicat are:

- Pulicat handloom lungi industry. (Palayakat is a brand name associated with the industry)
- Boat-building industry at Thoniravu (now Jamilabad)
- Palm leaf industry
- Fishing industry

Pulicat was one of the major cotton textile centres on the Coromandel coast. Even before the arrival of the Portuguese and Dutch, there were strong trade connections between Pulicat and eastern countries like China, Malaysia, Sumatra etc. The Pulicat lungi was in particular demand in places like Ceylon, Pondicherry and in eastern countries. Before 1816, there were more than 1000 weaving looms. This came down to 100 during the 1980's. Mukundamman Koil Street used to be busy with handloom activity until a few decades ago, but after the ar-

and with a breadth ranging between 0.2 km and 17.5 km. The lagoon is spread over the states of Andhra Pradesh (84%) and Tamil Nadu (16%). The eastern extent of the lagoon is defined by the Buckingham Canal and the spindle-shaped Sriharikota island, is adversely affecting this sanctuary. Limestone quarrying also seriously affects the habitat of wetland avifauna and exposes the coastal area, stripped of its mangrove forests, to cyclones.

Pulicat is a major wetland and attracts migrant and breeding waterbirds and serves as a nursery for prawns, crabs and various species of fish. The lake has been silting up so steadily that the depth has decreased by three metres from the time the Dutch arrived in 1610. Its current depth is about 0.8m. The silt settlement results in a greater spread of the floodwaters into the villages along the periphery of the lake. According to projections based on various studies, it is estimated that the lake will turn into a salt marsh within the next 50 to 60 years.

Lake mouth closure: The very weak outflow or discharge of fresh water during the whole year, excepting during the few monsoon days, aids the closing up of the Pulicat lake mouth.

Limestone quarry: Limestone quarrying, particularly in Venadu, Pernadu and Irkam islands, is adversely affecting this sanctuary. Limestone quarrying also seriously affects the habitat of wetland avifauna and exposes the coastal area, stripped of its mangrove forests, to cyclones.

Vanishing fisheries: The rate of exploitation and depletion of prawn in the Pulicat Lake has been more rapid than the rate of their natural replenishment. Fishermen evicted from the 13 villages on the Sriharikota island and shifted to the already congested mainland are also competing for fishing rights and territories.

Recent developments

North Chennai Thermal Power Plant: Although coolant water for the North Chennai Thermal Power Plant is drawn from the Ennore creek, because of the proximity of the intake pipes laid at the opening of the Buckingham Canal into the Ennore creek, water from the Pulicat Lake is also indirectly drawn out. Therefore prawn and fish seeds from the lake are being dragged towards the Ennore creek.

In spite of effluent treatment plants, the adjacent waterways of the Buckingham Canal and of the Bay of Bengal would certainly be polluted to some extent by such large industrial development as the petrochemical complex. The high water table of Ennore may be degraded through the seepage of polluted effluent water from the petrochemical complex.

The Ennore Port: The port construction has hardly started projecting into the sea, but already beach erosion is accelerating, at about 10 km, north of the port. There are about 15 villages, with 10,000 to 15,000 fishermen, some of whom have already been displaced once, from the Sriharikota Island, in the 1970s who may have to be displaced again, due to this erosion.

(To be concluded next fortnight with 'The Art and Architecture of Pulicat').

● by P.T. Krishnan, M.C. Ramesh Kumar, Abdul Azeez and M.R. Rajkumar

English and the Dutch several times later. It came under the E.E.I.C. (English East India Company) in 1825 by treaty and it remained with the British until Independence.

Pulicat is no more an international trade centre as it used to be during the Dutch times. After occupying Pulicat, the British did not show any interest in developing trade and commerce there as they wanted to centralise all trade in Madras. The valuable contributions of the British to Pulicat are the lighthouse (1859) and the Buckingham Canal which helped trade and fishing.

Economic conditions

Pulicat was a thriving market in international trade during the colonial times. And it was during the Dutch period that Pulicat was at its peak, exporting a wide variety of textiles — cotton, silk, muslin and coloured velvets. Calicoes, salted fish and spices were some of the other commodities, which contributed to a prosperous trade. Today though agricultural products do not contribute much to the economic activity of Pulicat, other occupations like fishing and trading have made it an emerging ur-

rival of powerloom lungies, which were cheaper, the handloom lungi production slowly dwindled and nothing of it exists now.

The term *Thoniravu* literally means the place where boat (*thoni*) building is done. It is an island covered on three sides by the river and one side by the canal. This island village had a population of more than 1000 people. In 1985, the people of the island shifted to Jamilabad, northwest of the Dutch cemetery, because of the development of the rocket launching pad at Sriharikota. Boats are at present built in Jamilabad.

Muslim women are engaged in doing beautiful handicrafts out of palm leaves which they export to various places through their cooperative. Pulicat artisans have been working on this trade for more than a hundred years.

Fishing is the backbone of the economy in Pulicat and its hinterland, which lack cultivable land. Pulicat has the largest prawn fish catch in India.

Ecological profile

Pulicat Lake is the second largest salt water lagoon in India (after Chilika lake), measuring about 60 km in length

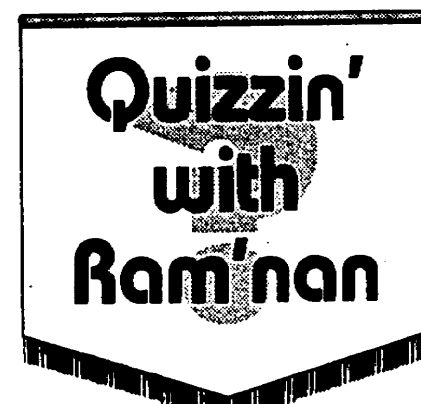
The lake has been a major fishing centre with about 50,000 artisanal fisherfolk and another 50,000 dalits depending on it for their livelihood and sustenance. These ecologically sensitive and interconnected water bodies, their biodiversity, prawn and crab fisheries, waterbirds, navigation channels and casuarina groves have all been the basis of a stable rural economy for many generations. It now supplies nearly a million fish eaters. With extensive aquaculture, it should be able to produce an enormous amount of seafood.

Biodiversity value

This brackish water lagoon is an important wetland on India's east coast for migrating birds. About 60,000 migrant waterbirds, belonging to nearly 50 species, feed and breed in the northern regions of this lake every winter.

Threats

Siltation: Rapid siltation of the lake decreases the flow of water from the lake mouth and accelerates sandbar formation across it, thus cutting the vital link between the lake and the sea. Consequently, the biodiversity brought in from the sea is obstructed.



(Questions 1 to 9 are from the period October 16th to 31st. Questions 10 to 12 pertain to Chennai and Questions 13 to 20 are general questions pertaining to Tamil Nadu.)

1. Name the eminent American golfer killed in a plane crash on October 25th.
2. The 1999 Dadasaheb Phalke Award has been given to...?
3. What distinction has the City Award Montessori School in Lucknow achieved?
4. Which Indian sporting legend has been invited to join the World Sports Academy?
5. Which company became the second Indian company, after Infosys, to list on the NASDAQ?
6. J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* has won this year's...?
7. Who is the new Chief Minister of Maharashtra?
8. What feat has 13 years, 10 months, 13 days old Xiangzhi Bu of China achieved?
9. Which Indian scientist received the coveted Volvo Environment Prize in New York on October 26th?

* * *

10. Which style of architecture describes the *Ripon Building*?
11. Name the cultural institution founded by Rukmini Devi Arundale in 1936?
12. Where in Chennai is the Garden of Remembrance?

* * *

13. Which place is named after Arthur Wellesley?
14. Where, about 76 km from Tirunelveli, would you see one of the oldest Jain temples in the country?
15. Which place literally means 'Varanasi of the South'?
16. The eight-storey victory tower at Manora (72 km from Pudukottai) commemorates...?
17. Where would one find the Varaha Mandapam and the Mahisasuramardini Cave?
18. In which *sabha* in the Chidambaram temple complex is the *Akasa Lingam* housed?
19. Which character actor of yesteryears was called *Nadigavel*?
20. Where would you enjoy the festival of *Saaral Vizha*?

(Answers on Page 8)

A rural play comes to town

When Kuttu-pattarai, that well established Tamil repertory group in Chennai, holds its annual festival, it also unites other Tamil repertory groups to the festival, thus giving urban audiences a chance to see different kinds of theatre existing in various parts of Tamil Nadu. Muthuswamy, the founder-director-steward of Pattarai, believes his group has to be in touch with other groups in order to understand what is happening in Tamil theatre. He also believes that audiences should be aware of different kinds of theatre in order to assess the cultural politics of the State.

The two outside groups who were represented this year were the well-known S.V. Sekhar group and a group from Sethupattu, a village in Chengalpattu District, the Sree Ayyappa Nataka Manram. Murmurs were heard about the wisdom of bringing in such groups whose theatre efforts have been generally clubbed under the heading "mass (commercial) theatre efforts" and dismissed by the elite theatre activists, but Muthuswamy considers these efforts "social, political and cultural phenomena" and thought his own group as well as his audiences would be the better for seeing their contributions.

Sree Ayyappa Nataka Manram staged *Thankattamarai* (Golden Lotus), scripted by Adikesavan, who also took a major role in the play. He can also be called, in a sense, the director of the play, though it is a collective effort by all the actors. The producer is Shanmugam.

SANM has been in existence for about four years and has enacted this play 500 times in this period, charging Rs. 5,000 for each show. The script is usually written according to the availability of actors, depending on the roles they enact. Adikesavan himself is very much in demand, because of his ability to imitate Rajnikant to perfection. Every village group had been trying to get Adikesavan to act for them, but SANM paid him Rs. 30,000 and got his services for one year. If we think that the star system is prevalent only in the films or that it is on its way out with all the enlightenment that we have culturally had, it

would seem we are in for a surprise!

The play derives inspiration from a medley of cultural antecedents. The first are, of course, the epics, the Ramayana in particular. The second is the Tamil film with its heroes. In fact, viewers like me tend to see this drama as a spoof of what is happening in Tamil cinema. A third influence is the loud singing and the gaudy costumes of Terukoothu, that most popular Tamil folk drama.

Whether this is indeed a spoof on Tamil cinema, whether they could even be cashing in on the adoration of cinema heroes and heroines and imitating them in order to



A scene from a village play with cinematic elements, by the Sree Ayyappa Nataka Manram. (Picture by MOHAN DAS V BADAGARA.)

the men do not want their women to have even the freedom to act in roles which they themselves have imagined and created. Probably these visions of women are only for theatre performances and not real life.

The narrative is brought out not only through dialogue in prose, but dialogue in singing. The formulaic elements found in the commercial cinema are all there — the music, the singing, the running around trees, the fights, the syrupy love scenes with overt sexual remarks, and finally the tears, anger and the villainy, all ex-

out getting restless or making any noisy disturbances. This film, apart from being silent, is full of close-ups. There are no long shots indicating locale or scenery which would have provided some distraction to this village crowd. Later, when the discussions began, they had their own points to make. After this experience, I am unwilling to say that villagers lack artistic or aesthetic sensitivity.

Odessa, a film appreciation group, showed the villagers all over Kerala serious and artistic films, such as *Ammu Ariyan* by John Abraham, and the villagers watched with great interest. I admit that a villager of Tamil Nadu is culturally and socially slightly different from one of Kerala. However, even Kerala audiences watch commercial films and theatre performances, yet they appreciate serious theatre performances.

With exposure to commercial theatre now available to villagers, perhaps urban theatre groups, should take their performances to villages too with the aim of sensitising the villagers to good theatre. If the urban theatre groups start such a movement without restricting their performances to cities, and more people do research on these commercial drama groups and the motivations behind these shows, probably we will be in a position to have a serious debate on the subject. Muthuswamy is perhaps giving a lead in this matter by introducing city audiences to commercial theatre from the villages.

Heritage Plan

(Continued from page 1)

ties and threats to conservation. Resource persons or organisations who can provide relevant expertise or be part of the team to work on the Heritage Conservation Plan in the next stage have also been identified.

INTACH (TN) is keen that this Heritage Conservation Plan be drawn up on the lines suggested in the Draft Heritage Act for Tamil Nadu. This will

not only make it easier for government to legally adopt the proposal, but the methodology established could serve as a model for District Heritage Conservation Plans for other parts of the State as envisaged in the Heritage Act.

Editor's Note: *Madras Musings* wonders why government is reluctant to offer INTACH (TN) the minimal support it seeks, namely a welcoming of the INTACH (TN) initiative with no commitments.



Till November 21: Karthikai celebration with an exhibition of traditional lamps (At Dakshina Chitra)

November 19: *The Spirit of Chempak*: An illustrated talk by S. Muthiah. (At 6.30 p.m. at the British Council.)

November 20, 21, & 22: 'The Making of a Documentary', a workshop conducted by Christian Weisenborn, a well known documentary filmmaker from Germany. The three-day workshop is for advanced level film and mass communication students. (At Max Mueller Bhavan, by invitation.)

November 23-24: *Poetry 2000*. A poster exhibition to celebrate the magnificent range and sweep of contemporary poetry in English.

In the foreground, taking off from the context provided by history and time, will be a rendition by the British Council Poetry Circle of poems that concentrate

on the multiculturalism of contemporary poetic voices that will usher in the new millennium. (At the British Council Lecture Hall, 10.30 a.m. — 7.00 p.m.)

November 26: The Spastics Society of Tamil Nadu presents Ustad Zakir Hussain, Kadri Gopalnath and Haridwar-mangalam Palanivel in 'A Grand Millennium Concert'. (At the Music Academy at 6.00 p.m.)

Tickets: The Music Academy from November 19th and Ms. Nalini Radhakrishnan/Ms. Kiran Ramnane. Tel: 491 0261/491 7941.

November 26: The Institute of Reproductive Medicine and Women's Health, a unit of the Madras Medical Mission, will conduct an information session for women to discuss in person gynaecological problems or concerns about their health or that of their daughters or daughters-in-law. Spouses are welcome. The question and answer sessions will be held without mentioning the names of couples or wives who wish to remain anonymous. They can simply write the questions they want to ask and pass it on to the Director. (At the Madras Medical Mission, Mogappair, from 4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.)

December 1-10: Anita Ratnam, Arangham Trust, and Ranvir Shah, Prakriti Foundation, host *The Other Festival*, which will showcase talented artists from India and abroad who seek to turn the tide, who have crossed the boundaries of traditional art forms and found a new expression to life and its changing meanings. The programme is as follows:

December 1-10: Cylla von Tiedemann, one of Canada's leading performing arts photographers, presents *Dancing Gestures* — a remarkable exhibition of dances, dancers and dance formations. (At the Centenary Hall adjacent to the Museum Theatre.)

December 1: Funky Bodhi, a talented group from Chennai, whose music energises folk and classical styles with the vitality of varied streams of music ranging from jazz to the blues. The group comprises: K.V. Balu, a *tabla*, *mridangam* and percussion player of repute, who has been experimenting with fusion music; Donnan Murray with a history of hard-core jazz, rock and pop, a jinglesman, lead guitar and singer; Martin Visser, a trained jazz musician from Holland, who is in Chennai to study Carnatic music on Saxophone and Carnatic vocals with Nadaswaram; Neil Mukherjee from Calcutta an exponent of the classical nylon guitar; Puspha Sriram, who sings with Funky Bodhi, a disciple of M.L. Vasanthakumari and who has given classical concerts in various *sabhas*; Paul Jacob, a bass guitarist; and K.L. Sriram, a multi-faceted musician with a talent for composing, singing, playing the flute and keyboards in the Carnatic style.

December 2: Padmini Chettur and Krishna Devanandan, talented Bharata Natyam dancers who

have performed with the Chandralekha Group, will present *A segment of a Solo*, choreographed by Padmini Chettur. The first and third parts are solo performances, the second a duet.

December 3: Rajat Kapoor, who has spent sixteen years with the theatre group *Chingari* as actor and director and has also directed plays for Prithvi Players, Mumbai, directs *C for Clown*, a show created completely out of improvisation on the rehearsal floor. Six clowns trace a day in the life of a circus/theatre performance. The act includes mime, patonime, acrobatics, dance and a little bit of spoken word.



December 4: Delhi's Maya K Rao, dancer, choreographer, director, TV and film actress, presents a performance of dance theatre.

December 5: Atul Kumar, actor and director for the last 16 years who has performed all over the world, specialising in visual theatre and body movements, directs Eugene Ionesco's *The Chairs*, the saga of a lonely couple lost on an island.

December 6: New York-based Ann Moradian, a "whirlwind of modern dance excellence", is the artistic director and Principal Choreographer of *Perspectives In Motion*, a contemporary dance performance. Her choreography is

A quest for cricketing heroes

E.W.D. Jeffares in the 1950s.

Yet another intriguing inquiry *Madras Musings* has received (see MM, October 1st for the earlier one) is from an English researcher. He wants to know if he can get the names — and biographical details — of British or Indian Servicemen who

- 1) had Madras connections,
- 2) served during World War II,
- 3) were awarded medals for Gallantry, AND
- 4) played 1st class Cricket (presumably at competition level for, at least, a major club).

An example he gives is Edward William Derek Jeffares who played for the Madras Cricket Club and in Presidency

matches, served with the S/S Royal Mahrattas in the 8th Indian Division and was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry in action in Italy in 1944. Jeffares was for many years with Binny's and rose to be its Managing Director. He was President of the Madras Cricket Club in 1960 and returned to the UK a couple of years later. (Any further biographical details would be welcome.)

The recommendation for the gallantry award made by his Colonel read as follows:

Major E.W.D. Jeffares commanded a Coy of 4.2 inch mortars in the crossing of the R.Gari by the 8 Ind Div. and the subsequent advance to the Tiber valley East of Perugia. At the Gari, Major Jeffares crossed the river soon after the Infantry in order to give accurate and timely support to the Infantry. With a complete disregard for his safety he visited the most fiercely contested features and gave valuable fire support. When the Div. later advanced rapidly Major Jeffares' Coy. remained with the leading Bns throughout giving the different Bns mortar fire support. At Veroli Major Jeffares establishing his 4.25 under heavy fire in well advanced positions helped break up German counter-attacks. On one occasion, when an Infantry Coy Comd. and some of his men were wounded by enemy artillery fire, Major Jeffares at great personal risks attended to them and had them removed to a B.A.P. Throughout the time his Coy has been in action, Major Jeffares has displayed the utmost gallantry and has not only given of his best but has inspired his men with a similar fervour and drawn them together as a magnificent fighting Coy.

issue of it; he treads lightly and tells a story for listeners to enjoy. (At 6.30 pm at Max Mueller Bhavan.)

Till December 3: Private Limited — an exhibition of paintings by Jitish Kallat. (At the Apparao Galleries.)

December 3 & 4: Electrical Power Generation from Municipal Garbage — Status and Prospects, a workshop will review the status of technology availability and research status, both in India and abroad, and identify the grey areas so that efforts can be made to have a good direction for research and to catalyse the process of implementation of technology and experiences already available in western countries to set up power generation units in India. (At IC & SR, IIT Madras by invitation.)

December 5: Carols and solo performances by Young Artists with the Polyphonics (+Juniors) Subjuniors — conducted by Gita Menon (At 6.00 pm at the Max Mueller Bhavan Library.)

December 5: Global Adjustments' annual Christmas exhibition of festive decorations and gift items (At the Taj Connemara.)

December 8: Ileana Citaristi's *Echo and Narcissus* is an innovative bit of choreography using the *Mayurbhanji Chhau* technique.

December 9: *Present and Continuous*, installations art/theatre by Sumant Jayakrishnan (from Delhi).

December 10: Ananya Chatterjee, Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota Dance Program, Minneapolis, presents *Women in Motion*, which includes two striking pieces: *Kali for Women* and *Unable to Remember Roop Kanwar*, that are inspired by the tradition of street theatre. (At 7.15 p.m. every evening at the Music Theatre).

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SQUASH FOR ALL

New facility comes up

The Tamil Nadu Squash Racquets Association has in the Nineties been active in the promotion of the game not only in the State but in the country as well. The efforts of the Association to popularise the game recently received a fillip when India Cements Limited, a prominent patron of sport, announced the launching of the India Cements Squash Academy with the support of the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDAT).

The academy, with three glass-backed courts, TV camera pits at floor level, dormitories, dressing rooms and training halls, is coming up on land leased to the TNSRA by the SDAT. The infrastructure will be created on a Build-Operate-Transfer basis and be handed over to SDAT at the end of the 20-year lease period. The facility is expected to be ready by year end.

According to SDAT, officials, the Tamil Nadu Government is very keen on taking sport to the less privileged sections of society and the success of the attempts of the TNSRA to spread squash among these sections of the public will be closely watched.

An encouraging aspect of India Cements' plans for the squash academy is that the Company's Executive Director, N Ramachandran, is also the president of the TNSRA. There is therefore no fear that the Company and the association may not see eye to eye on giving the project a real push forward.

Madras Musings' correspondent V Ramnarayan spoke to Ramachandran and Srivats Subramaniam, international referee and secretary, TNSRA, on their prospects of succeeding in their mission of bringing the underprivileged into the fold of squash. Both were optimistic and averred with considerable conviction that their objective was an eminently attainable one.

N. Ramachandran said:

The very idea of starting the squash academy is to popularise the game. It won't be a situation where you and your child become members of a club in which squash is an incidental sport. The academy will have only squash courts, there will be no recreational facilities at all. We're not going to offer membership to any and everyone; we'll only encourage children or adults who want to play

squash to come to the academy. These children will be coached. Anyone who takes a liking to squash can come and get coached. The intention of the TNSRA is to coach people



in the game and thereby broaden it.

We've given a commitment to the Government that we will offer our facilities to people from the underprivileged sections of society. As a first step to this end, we have decided to introduce squash to the swimmers and triathletes from the fishing and other deprived communities, with whom I have been associated. Triathlon is a harsh and rigorous sport demanding great physical endurance and stamina, attributes vital to squash as well. We have already had some success with such efforts. Balamurugan is one such person TNSRA selected and coached. Today, he'll walk into any senior side in India.

Of course, we have to guard against the tendency common among Indian sportsmen, and one to which the children we have trained in triathlon have not been immune, that is, of being easily satisfied at the first sign of success. Examples of this syndrome were Kuppan and his son Sathya, both mark-

Balamurugan (on right) and the legendary Kuppam on left.



ers of the Madras Cricket Club. Kuppam was a marvellous coach who initiated me and members before me into squash. He was a wonderful player. When Sathya took over from him, he too showed a great deal of promise as a player. But our sportsmen do not strive for excellence beyond a point.

When you put up three squash courts, you need money for routine maintenance and overheads. We'll try to meet some of these by offering a few memberships, the basic, underlying criterion for membership being that they must be squash players.

We will conduct tournaments, but we also have a commitment from the Asian Squash Federation to conduct clinics for referees and coaches twice a year. There is no point in getting somebody from outside to come here and coach for a month. There has to be routine coaching right through the year. We want to have a number of coaches capable and competent enough.

And Srivats Subramaniam added:

I have no doubt that we will reach out to the underprivileged. The choice of triathletes who didn't make it big as our target group was an inspired move. They are already in our fold and they have the hunger

for success. Look at Bala who is there practising right before our eyes. He comes to the court early morning and hits all day long. This is what we propose to do with our trainees. They will practise from morning to evening. Bala, now the number one professional in India, intends to turn amateur soon.

The coaching clinics will be crucial to our efforts. Right now we have two Asian Squash Federation Level Two coaches, Rajiv Reddy and I, and we will train the children.

In world squash, the focus has shifted to Asia — Singapore, Malaysia, India. The future champions will, hopefully, come from the region and we want to be there to make it happen. The Indian Squash Federation and the Government have identified land in all the four metros to locate public courts, the sure route to broadbasing the game.

There is not much money in squash yet, not enough for players to pursue lucrative professional careers. So the TNSRA will try to find reasonably well-paid jobs for the squash trainees of the academy when they come of age.

V. Ramnarayan

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Payne Stewart; 2. B.R. Chopra; 3. Biggest school in the world with 22, 612 students on its rolls; 4. Kapil Dev; 5. Satyam Infoway; 6. Booker Prize; 7. Vilasrao Deshmukh; 8. Youngest to qualify for the Grandmaster title in chess; 9. Dr. M.S. Swaminathan.

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10. Indo-Saracenic style; 11. Theosophical Society; 12. Kalakshetra.

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13. Wellington; 14. Kazhugumalai; 15. Tenkasi; 16. The victory of the British over Napoleon; 17. At Mahabalipuram; 18. In the Chit Sabha; 19. M.R. Raadha; 20. Courtallam.

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