What is happening at the Adyar Poonga?

The Adyar Poonga was a project that remained in the limelight from almost start to finish. Begun as a response to public interest litigations demanding the protection of the Adyar Creek, the park was created at a cost of Rs. 19 crore, spent over three years. It was to have a high profile inauguration which police stations would put on one for political reasons. Since then, despite an encouraging response with footfalls exceeding 4000 in two months, it would appear that the Government, especially with a change in regime, has lost interest in the project. Which would indeed be a pity, if true.

The uncontrolled exploitation of the area had been challenged by the Citizen, consumer and civil Action Group (CAG) in the court during the building of the Ambadkar Memorial and, in 2000, the High Court had directed the State Government to preserve the wetlands. On December 22, 2003 the State Government handed over 58 acres of the area to the city’s Corporation to develop it into an eco park modelled on Tezozomac of Mexico. The budget for creating the park, Rs.60 crore, was passed in 2005 and a special purpose vehicle (SPV), Adyar Creek Eco Park Limited, was set up to handle and channel the funds for development. An Adyar Creek Trust was set up with the Chief Secretary as the Chairman and Secretaries of Highways, Forests, Fisheries, Municipal Administration & Water Supply, and Finance as members.

Yes, it was never made part of the body. Environmentalists subsequently suggested the handing over of the entire 350 acres of the Creek for protection and also questioned as to how only 58 acres of it could be preserved without access to the waters of the estuary which was the life-line of the area and which would be cut off with the proposed development.

(Continued on page 2)
The Madam – Mutt muddle

The Man from Madras Musings

The Man from Madras Musings is a columnist for Madras Musings, a publication in Chennai. The columnist, known only as MMM, writes about various issues in the city, often focusing on the local culture and politics.

In this particular article, MMM addresses the issue of street names and the controversy surrounding the use of the term 'Mutt' in street names. MMM critiques the practice of using the term 'Mutt' in street names, arguing that it is pejorative and not appropriate.

MMM also discusses the impact of street names on the daily lives of residents, noting that street names can influence perceptions and behaviors. The columnist suggests that alternative terms could be used to avoid negative connotations and promote a more positive image of the city.

Overall, the article highlights the importance of language and its role in shaping public opinion and community identity. MMM encourages readers to consider the implications of their language choices and to strive for more inclusive and respectful communication.

The Beat Constables

(Continued from page 1)

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Taking recourse to modern technology may on the other hand prove more effective. The police has already experimented with the installation of cameras at traffic junctions to monitor violations. It may help if a similar plan, in terms of street cameras, is implemented.

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THE BEAT CONSTABLES

(Continued from page 1)

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What’s on at the Adyar Poonga?

(Continued from page 1)

The State Government filed a writ petition before the Court requesting permission to proceed with the work. It stated that the objective of the Poonga Thirukkuvaalai is to ensure the continuity of the wetland in the Adyar Estuary area, comprising 58 acres, and to create an ecologically sensitive zone nurturing the flora and fauna peculiar to the locality with human interface. It also claimed that objections and suggestions received from several stakeholders including NGOs like Earth International, and the CAG were considered. Interestingly, the Government stuck to its plan of restoring only 58 acres and not the entire area, something which environmentalists claim will be unsustainable.

When almost completed, the park, which till then had been referred to as the Adyar Poonga, was renamed Tholkkapia Poonga. The inauguration was to be attended by the Prime Minister, who chose to stay away at the last minute. The project was rather grandly declared to be a wetland restoration exercise when it began. It is worth pointing out that the park is in no way connected to the wetland and, therefore, the river to qualify as wetland restoration. But as a piece of open space put aside for public use, it is exemplary and it will be tragic if it is neglected to be considered for political or otherwise.

THE BEAT CONSTABLES

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Kelly’s death

Since jotting down a note about the demise of Col. Robert Kelly (MM, June 16th) for MM, I have come across the following additional information. Col. Kelly was actually killed in a duel (not in battle) in a field near Arni by Lt.Cols. Vigors, Col. Kelly’s deputy. Tradition has it that on Col. Kelly’s appointment to Command, Lt.Cols.Vigors spoke of him as an “old woman” to his wife, who repeated the remark to Mrs. Kelly, who insisted upon Col. Kelly obtaining “satisfaction” result with death. According to LeFanu, a noted chronicler of those days (who also authored the extremely well regarded Sir Charles Eustace) “the story has been so handed down, making reading or editing impossible. Often this leads to our discarding a letter, making it with enough space between letters, many of which are received more and more harm to injure our ears and brain – reverse drives developing English language skills through the learners’ mother tongues and that is where the decline starts.

The abysmal state of English

Recently I had an e-mail from an official with the Central Government, seeking something in English. What dismayed me was the prose used in communicating his request.

I have noticed increasing number of similar bad English in official circles in the recent past. Seeing this trend – which I believe is worsening day by day – I began to worry about the status of English communication in a country which is trying her best to present herself using graceful English. Is this the land that produced K. Swaminathan, V.S. Srinivasa Sastris, R.K. Narayans and A.K. Ramanujans, who were so well written?”

Elegant English? What has gone wrong? None seems to be worried about this woeful decline. Should a language die naturally, it can be accepted; but if a language is killed by sheer abuse, it cannot be tolerated.

My gut feeling is that the quality of teaching English – as a language – at different learning levels has declined. Many of the language teachers do not encourage their students to think in English before they either speak or write in English; they follow a practice that drives developing English language skills through the learners’ mother tongues and that is where the decline starts.

Still Madras

The name Madras which was in use for more than 400 years all over the world was suddenly dropped, saying that it had some foreign connection. When I write to my foreign friends they ask me where is this Chennai! Apart from the many Madrasis I met during my tour in Coonoor, Lakshman Rao, my former office is still known as Madras Research Centre of CMFRI. It is better the well-known name Madras is restored at an early date.

Dr. D.B. James
37, Sadashiva Metha Nagar
Chennai 600 029

Madrass that’s Chennai

Shakespeare said a rose by any other name would smell equally sweet. So, whether it is Chennai or Madras, the city will always remain charming and intellectual.

Siddhu
12, Lakshmi Colony, T.Nagar
Chennai 600 017

To reach out to as many readers as possible who share our keen interest in Madras that is Chennai, and in response to requests from many well-wishers to remain in touch from outside Chennai and abroad who receive their postal copies very late – for an online edition. Madras Musings is now on the web at www.madrasmusings.com.
The de Havilland family was one that could trace its ancestry to the times of William the Conqueror, a Sieur de Havilland, living according to legend, who was fighting beside him in his conquest of England. Since then, de Havillands had distinguished themselves in the service of the Crown and made their home on the island of Guernsey, off the English coast. From this family came Thomas Fiott de Havilland who, joined the Madras Engineers and became a Lieutenant-Colonel in 1824. In 1808 he married Elizabeth de Sauvarez in Madras.

A Biographical Dictionary of Civil Engineers in Great Britain and Ireland by Sir Alec W. Skempton (ICE and Thomas Telford Limited, London, 2002) gives further details of his life. Born on April 10, 1775 to Sir Peter and Lady Cartarette de Havilland, he joined the Madras Engineers in 1792. In 1793 he was involved in the siege of Pondicherry and between 1795 and 1796 served in Colombo. Having seen active service at the siege of Seringapatam in 1799, de Havilland sufficiently impressed Arthur Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington) to be invited to become the Field Engineer during the Egyptian campaign of 1801/02. Survey had always been a passion for him, he having been an under-study to Colin Mackenzie between 1798 and 1800 with the latter regarding him as “an active enterprising man.” Under Mackenzie, de Havilland ’amused himself’ (according to Skelton) by preparing maps of Coinbatore, Dindigul and the surrounding areas. In Egypt he undertook survey work too, identifying sources of water in the Cairo-Suez area.

After his return from Egypt, on which journey he was captured by the French and later released, he was assigned to the Nizam’s Subsidary Force to survey the Deccan. He appears to have been called increasingly for civilian work from then on. Involved as he was in the engineering side of the army, de Havilland made a name for himself in scientific observations and constructions, the latter being both military and civil in nature. This was, according to Shanti Jayawarde Pillai (Imperial Conversations: Indo - Britons and the Architecture of South India, Yoda Press, 2007), probably due to the patronage extended by Sir John Malcolm, the Resident of Mysoe, who in 1807 gave him his first architectural contract – the task of building a magnificent banqueting hall in the Mysore Residency, a unique structure that would have a roof entirely free of column support. When this was done, de Havilland submitted a proposal to build a bridge across the Cauvery in Mysoe with just five arches. To demonstrate his skill in building it, de Havilland erected a great arch in his garden, with a hundred-foot span. The structure became a local landmark and stood till 1937 when it collapsed. The remains of the de Havilland arch are a tourist attraction in Seringapatam even now. The brick bridge over the Cauvery was completed in 1810 in which year de Havilland was promoted to the rank of officer who mutinied, protesting against the appalling conditions of the army in Mysore. He was dismissed and returned to Guernsey where he was commissioned to construct a barracks. Reinstated in 1812, he returned to Madras and became a civil engineer and architect of the Presidency in 1814.

It would be no exaggeration to say that he is one of the earliest engineers of the city whose works can be identified with any certainty. According to Skelton, he “built Mount Road”, which probably means he gave the northern half of the road its present contours. Among his earliest commissions in the city was the construction of a protecting breakwater all along the sea front to prevent the notorious Madras surf from causing any damage to the Town and Port. This he did after a detailed study of the tides by means of installing a tide gauge at the northeastern angle of the Fort’s glacis. In 1821 he published a memorandum on Madras tides, perhaps the first serious study on the subject, and this was later reproduced in the Madras Journal of Literature and Science in 1834. A stone, later named de Havilland’s benchmark, was set into the bulwark of the Fort and all tide levels were subsequently measured against it, till the construction of the harbour in the 1890s caused the sea to recede. The Madras Bulwark, when completed in 1820, extended for two and a half miles from the Fort to Black Town and was completed “well within its estimate and to the complete satisfaction of the local government and the Court of Directors at home and having answered its stated purpose these thirty years past, without addition or repair” (A. V. W. Cotton. Madras, thought highly of de Havilland and wrote as follows: “I have a high opinion of his talents and of his public services, and have expressed my sense of them on several occasions. In the case of the bulwark in particular, I recommended his claims to the Honourable Court, because I was convinced that he had shown great skill in the plan of tile work, and that he had by his extraordinary exertions completed it at a much smaller expense than it could, perhaps, have been done by any other person.” (The Military History of Madras Engineers and Pioneers from 1745 up to the present time, by Major H.M. Vibart, W.H. Allen and Company, London, 1883). In 1823, an iron railing was put up on top of the bulwark (A Popular History of British India, W.C. Taylor, 1851), overseen by de Havilland.

The Madras Bulwark was clearly something of a wonder for it was taken up as a subject of study when the Great North Holland Canal was being contemplated in Europe in 1849 to prevent the sea from entering the Low Countries. It was noted that prior to the bulwark, inroads “of up to 100 yards in extent had been made in the beach” by the sea. “A protecting bulwark was constructed of about a mile and three quarters in length along the ordinary line of the beach, just beyond the point where the surf waves broke and in hurricanes it was subject to the full action of the waves. It was composed simply of rough earth resting against a retaining wall of brick and chunam. The stones have been allowed to take their natural slope... and although the bulwark was not carried above the ordinary level of the coast, which was 18 feet above high water, it might be said that scarcely a stone had been displaced from its first erection in 1821.” (Description of the Great North Holland Canal and of the works at Nieuwediep by George Brant Wheeler Jackson, Institution of Civil Engineers, W Clowes & Sons, Lon., 1849).

And yet, when it was first taken up, the bulwark was scoffed at. We have details of this from the writings of another formidable engineer of the Madras Presidency – Sir Arthur Cotton. “So much doubt existed as to the success of any work on the protection of the beach and so strongly was every proposition on the subject opposed that probably nothing less than the immediate certain destruction of Black Town, if nothing was done, would have proved a sufficiently powerful incentive, to the execution of such a work, on any plan. Nothing could exceed the confidence with which certainly the majority of persons at Madras preëempted the plan, that every surf would disappear into the sands or be thrown into the middle of Black Town by the surf and the hurricanes.” But it is evident from Cotton’s writings that a few stones did get displaced. These were evidently the lighter ones. “So perfectly insignificant have been the effect of hurricanes upon it, that not a stone above two or three cwt have been thrown upon the bank by them.” (Letter from Capt. Cotton to the Secretary of the Breakwater Committee, Madras, 11th Nov. 1837 taken from Reports, Correspondence and Original Papers on various professional subjects connected with the activities of the Corps of Engineers, Madras, 1884, Smith, Vepery Mission Press, Madras, 1839). Cotton was writing all this to drum up support for building a breakwater off Madras. He took many more years of planning and construction before a project that culminated with the construction of the Madras Bulwark in 1890s. In this he was to find a warm supporter in de Havilland, who had retired by then to England. Cotton’s ideas were however not implemented.

Where was the Madras Bulwark? It clearly extended from the Fort and ran parallel to the Esplanade, ending somewhere on First Line Beach. What happened to it later? According to the Madras Tencentenary Volume, the structure, known all de Havilland’s Bulwark, formed the foundation on which the Beach Road, fronting the Fort runs. So, obviously, with the building of the harbour, the sea receded and the road was built on the bulwark. In 1967, when a subway was built to connect North Beach and South Beach Roads, excavations revealed the Madras Bulwark. More of it surfaced in 1978 when the area near the Beach Station was dug up. No doubt, the ongoing Metro Rail work will throw up some more bits of the bulwark.
The subjugation of Kaliya and an object lesson in peaceful co-existence

The story of how the divine child, Krishna, battled and subdued the monstrous serpent Kaliya is one of the best-known myths in India and is celebrated in art and literature. The story is told in the Bhagavata Purana, the Vishnu Purana, Harivamsa and elsewhere.

Kaliya originally dwelt in Ramanaka, the home of the serpents. The serpents had to propitiate Garuda (or Suparna) for their inveterate enemy, by leaving a tribute at the foot of a tree every month at the Full Moon. But Kaliya, arrogant of knowledge of the power of his venom, ignored Garuda. Incensed by this rebellious Garuda swooped down on Kaliya and beat him up with his powerful wings. Kaliya was no match for the ferocious Garuda, and he had to jump into the river Yamuna, or Kaliya, to escape further attack. It was clever of him to seek refuge in Kalindi for he knew it was out of bounds for Garuda.

Once, Garuda had caught a fish from Kalindi and, in doing so, had incurred the wrath of a rishi, Sāntaka, who was meditating there. The rishi cursed Garuda that if he ever again visited the river, he would pay with his life. Kaliya, therefore, with his many wives, was quite secure in the river Kalindi. But his venom was so noxious that it rendered the waters unfit for use by men and cattle and burnt up the surrounding landscape. Even the birds flying over the river got scorched by the poisonous vapour.

Krishna’s kinsmen and friends were all cowherds, who lived on the banks of Kalindi and they were in despair. And so were their cattle. One day, Krishna was wandering through the forest alone, when he thought of taking a plunge in the river. This infuriated the serpent and he attacked Krishna. Both were formidable and there ensued a mighty battle. Krishna had his superior strength drawn from his divinity, but the serpent was a worthy foe. Krishna was victorious in the battle and he hammered down the five hoods of Kaliya with his feet and danced upon them. (That explains the indelible mark on the cobra’s hood.) Kaliya was now totally vanquished, his body broken and he was vomiting blood. Kaliya’s many wives, thereupon, swam to the bank of the river and treated the Lord to spare their husband’s life. Kaliya too prayed for his life to be spared. Krishna relented and released the serpent on condition that he abandoned his residence in the river, since it was the fount of life for men and cattle, and go to the remote ocean. As an added token of grace, he consented to protect him from the wrath of Garuda so that even away from the safe haven of Kalindi, he had no reason to fear Garuda.

In the vanquished Kaliya’s prayer to the Lord, there is a plaintive admission of the helplessness of the serpent to desist from evil. According to the Bhagavata, Kaliya says: “We are themes, valuable for their range and perception. Some of these are contained and discussed by Joseph Campbell, famous mythologist. In one such note, Zimmer had dealt with the theme of Kaliya’s subjugation by Krishna.

Zimmer sees in the tale of Kaliya and Krishna many layers of meaning. At one level, it was the story of suppression of a primitive serpent cult by the worship of an anthropomorphic divine saviour. “Through the intermediary, Krishna, the special cult of a local demon became merged into the widespread, general cult of Vishnu, the Supreme Being, and thus was linked into a context of superior symbolic import, representing concepts and intuitions of a general validity.” He sees a parallel in the account in Greek mythology of Apollo’s conquest of the earthbound serpent lord at Delphi and establishing himself in the serpent’s place as the fount of the Delphic prophecies.

But a better parallel is found in Indian scripture itself. If Krishna had freed the waters of Kalindi from the venom of Kaliya, thus restoring to the waters their life-giving property once again and giving succour to men and cattle, that was similar to what the supreme god, Indra, had done, according to the Rig Veda. The serpent-demon Vritra had imprisoned the rain-bearing clouds in a mountain and scorched the earth below. After a mighty battle, Indra slayed Vritra and liberated the waters.

Coming back to Zimmer, he points out that in the tale of Kaliya’s defeat, “Krishna played the role rather of moderator than of annihilator. He liberated mankind from a threat and a peril, favouring life against the slaying breath of the serpent, and yet recognised the rights of the destructive power; for, the venomous serpent was as much a manifestation of the Supreme Being as were the pious cowherds. It was a manifestation of one of the darker aspects of the destructive power. In the West, the hero-saviours descending from heaven to inaugurate a new age on earth are regarded as embodiments of a spiritual and moral principle superior to the blind, animal life-force of the serpent power. In India, on the other hand, the serpent and the saviour are two basic manifestations of the one, all-containing divine substance. And this substance cannot be at variance with either of its polarised, mutually antagonistic aspects. Within it, the two are reconciled and subsumed.”

Even leaving aside the higher philosophical interpretations of the story of Kaliya and Krishna, the obvious message is God’s essence, and had appeared out of the all-producing, primary, divine substance. There could be no elimination, once and for all, of this presence which to Man seemed wholly negative. Krishna effected only a kind of boundary settlement, a balanced judgement as between demons and men. For the good of the human kingdom, Kaliya was assigned to a remoter sphere, but he was allowed to remain unchanged both in nature and in power. Had he been transformed, redeemed, or altogether eliminated, the counter-play between human and demonic, productive and destructive energies would have been disrupted – and such an eventuality was far from the intent of the Highest Being.”

We may recall here the story in Genesis in the Bible. When the serpent in the Garden of Eden betrayed God and tempted Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which God had forbidden Adam and Eve from eating, God punished the serpent along with Adam and Eve. They were also banished from Paradise. Later, when God, concerned with the growth of evil on earth, decided to release the Great Deluge to destroy all his creations but wanted Noah to preserve in the Ark seed-stock of all creations for future procreation on a cleaned-up earth, he did not forget or ignore the snake and specifically included “every creeping thing of the earth” to be included into the Ark (Genesis). After the Deluge, God also wanted the ‘creeping things’, just as his other creations, to “abound on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth” (Genesis). God, therefore, not only let off the serpent lightly when it committed a major transgression in the Garden of Eden but also, notwithstanding that a convenient opportunity had arisen later to see the last of the serpent when the Deluge overtook the Earth, did not want the serpent and its kin to be wiped out for ever.

Apart from the Bible, the analogous theme of serpent versus divine or semi-divine power is found in Western mythology in the story of Heracles, son of Zeus, the Supreme Lord of the Gods, and hence a semi-divine power himself who, as an infant, strangles the two serpents sent by a jealous Hera, the mistress of Zeus, into the infant’s cradle. Here again, it is worthwhile recalling what Zimmer says: “In the West, the hero-saviours descending from heaven to inaugurate a new age on earth are regarded as embodiments of a spiritual and moral principle superior to the blind, animal life-force of the serpent power. In India, on the other hand, the serpent and the saviour are two basic manifestations of the one, all-containing divine substance. And this substance cannot be at variance with either of its polarised, mutually antagonistic aspects. Within it, the two are reconciled and subsumed.”

(Continued on page 8)
1. South African Olympic swimmer Diethilde Witter married which high-profile royal on July 2nd?

2. Name the new Wimbledon champion?

3. Thanks to hackers, which U.S. broadcaster got into trouble for falsely tweeting “@Barack Obama has just passed. The President has died.”

4. Which South American country celebrated the bi-centenary of its independence from Spain on July 9th?

5. Name the 168-year-old British tabloid that shut down on July 5th?

6. If Vishnu Kanchi was the area connected with the dance Bharatanatyam, where did Bharatanatyam originate?

7. Which is the latest sovereign state in the world?

8. Name the noted film-maker of Tamil cinema?

9. Which South American country is the latest to become independent?

10. Name the new Wimbledon champion?

11. What film studio did Spring Gardens in Teeyamparammuthu morph into?

12. Who was defeated in the Battle of Chengam in 1767 after having conquered almost all of Malabar?

13. If Srivilliputhur enshrines Kattazhagar, which place enshrines Kodaladhatag?

14. Which is the latest sovereign state in the world?

15. Which area in Chennai is celebrating a silver jubilee?

16. Name the apprentice to Ibrahim Peer Mohammed & Co., dealers in fine glassware and china, who joined the business and gave it his name?

17. The Sacred Heart Matriculation Higher Secondary School is run by the Presentation Convent (PBVM). What does PBVM stand for?

18. Which Tamil Nadu player won the ‘Man of the Match’ award in the 1st Test against Zimbabwe?

19. Who was the Governor of Madras when India won Independence?

20. If Vishnu Kanchi was the area also known as ‘Little Conjeevaram’ and Siva Kanchi was ‘Big Conjeevaram’, what was known as ‘Juna Kanchi’?

(Answers on page 8)
Chennai Heritage Week Scores of events already planned

Chennai Heritage as usual offers several walks and talks during Madras Week this year. The walks include:

Saturday, August 20th (6.45 a.m.) – The Wallallah Trail, a tour by van and foot for two hours in Triplicane and surrounding areas, to look at vestiges of the glory of the Nawabs of Arcot. The tour will conclude with breakfast.

Sunday, August 21st (6.30 a.m.) – The Studios of Kollywood, a tour by van and foot for two hours in Kodambakkam and Vadapalani, looking at some of the great studios of South Indian film. To be conducted by Mohan V, Ramey, veteran film and TV actor and a researcher into the history of Tamil films. The tour will conclude with breakfast.

Saturday, August 27th (6.00 a.m.) – The Magnates of Mount Road, a tour by van and foot for two-and-a-half hours on how Mount Road developed as a business centre. To be conducted by S. Pradeep V, Associate Editor, Madras Musings. The tour will conclude with breakfast.

Sunday, August 28th (6.00 a.m.) – Meandering through the Marina’s longest streets in the whole world according to some. This is one of the oldest thoroughfares of Madras and a melting pot of several communities. The tour will be conducted by Sriiram V, Associate Editor, Madras Musings, and will conclude with breakfast.

NOTE: All four tours require booking and payment in advance. Please make your bookings through phone (9840 72433 or email dasunsha@gmail.com) or through Madras Musings (4457th or email nathanlatha@yahoo.com).

* * *

Vincent D’Souza, Editor, Mylapore Times, will lead walks on August 21st (in Fort St. George) and August 28th (on Mount Road). The August 21st walk starts at 8 am, lasts 90 minutes. Assemble in parking lot opposite main gate of Fort at 7.45 am. Carry ID cards, water, light snacks. Ends at Fort Museum (those who wish to visit the Museum may do so on their own - it opens at 10 am). This walk is free. Register at themadrasday@gmail.com.

The August 28th walk starts at 8 am at The Hindu’s gate, ends at Murray & Co. (Auction starts at 10.30 am here). Walk is free.

* * *

Nizhal, the ‘Tree NGO’, commemorates Madras Week with two Tree Walks on August 21st and August 28th. The walk on the August 21st (4.30 to 5.30 p.m.) will be at the C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyer Foundation in Egmore from 6:15 pm to 7:30 pm.

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The Anglo-Indians of Chennai, Tuesday, August 27th (6-8 pm) – An evening with two Tree Walks on Kodambakkam and Vadapalani, looking at trees and cycles.

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Shreekumar Varma on New Madras Musings: 6.15 pm: Chandrachoodan Gopalakrishnan on Ancient Light: Madras through the eyes of a Photographer, and 7 pm: Pradeep Chakravorty on Kodambakkam is the centre of Madras, a look at how Madras was organised geographically in the 9th-12th centuries.

* * *

Nizhal offers you a chance to exhibit photos of different Trees of Chennai. The photos will be exhibited on August 27th. For further details and registration call 9030-113722/98402-21241 between 10 am-5 pm or write to nizhal.shade@gmail.com.

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Asan Memorial School, Chennai, is also taking Madras Week with an exhibition from August 17th to 19th on Our Heritage in Brick and Mortar, featuring models and charts on heritage spots from the Madras District, with a special focus on the Kudil area.

* * *

The Public Relations Society of India, Chennai Chapter, organises Madras: Its past and its present, a presentation by S. Muthiah and D. Krishnan at the American Maris College at 6:00 p.m.

Namma Arcot Road presents three speakers at Hotel Green Park, Vadapalani, on August 27th:

8.00 am: S. Muthiah and M. Pradeep K, Rotarians and their guests. The Public Relations Society of India, Chennai Chapter, organises Madras: Its past and its present, a presentation by S. Muthiah and D. Krishnan at the American Maris College at 6:00 p.m.

* * *

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THE SUBJUGATION OF KALIYA

The first of the City’s Clubs to plan a Madras Week programme is the Bata Club which has V.V. Ramana, that well-known quizmaster, conducting an inter-club quiz at MBC on August 26th.

Mylapore Times is organising a contest for students of city schools in which teams of three will choose a heritage spot/trend/milestone, research, record and jot down all that helps to create a great Power Point production. The teams will then meet on August 23rd at Srinivasa Sastri Hall, Luz, Mylapore, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Prize distribution at 3 p.m. (approx.) Last year, 21 schools took part and the top three took home trophies, gifts and certificates. Entry has to be made at the school level. Information at www.themadrasday.in or 98405 44629.

Mylapore Times also invites participants for a project to produce documentary films in English/Tamil on Madras that is Chennai. About its people and places, its landmarks and its communities. The best will be screened at a festival in September. (Details at www.themadrasday.in).

Prof M.S. Swaminathan will inaugurate Madras Week at C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation on August 20th at an exhibition of paintings by A. Ananda Kumar and photographs by the late M.K. Rangaswamy Aiyar of Madras and its environs. On August 24th, the Foundation will release at 11 a.m. at the C. P. R. Environmental Education Centre’s Survey of Air, Water and Noise Levels in Chennai city.

We, in India, often hear of stories of elephants and leopards from the forest areas intruding into human-occupied nearby lands thus causing much damage to crops and property and posing a threat to human life itself. A few decades of sensitisation has taught us that the solution to this problem is not to blindly kill the animals. We, therefore, explore the possibilities of avoiding excessive 

habitats' conversion, fence in occupied lands, restore elephant corridors in the forest areas and, finally, translocate wild animals on the periphery of human-occupied lands to safe areas. In fact, in extreme situations, as in the case of conservation of precious tiger populations in protected areas such as sanctuaries and national parks, we do even consider translocation of the human population in and adjacent to such areas so as to enable the tigers to live in peace and multiply. The effort is to ensure that, on the one hand, damages to the eco-system are kept down to the minimum or avoided altogether and, on the other, effective ways explored to enable men and animals to co-exist peacefully. This, indeed, is also the message of the story of Krishna’s translocation of Kaliya from the river Kalindi to the recesses of the ocean. (Courtesy: Cobra, journal of the Chennai Snake Park Trust)

Answers to Quiz:
1. Albert II, Prince of Monaco; 2. Petra Kvitovà (women) and Novak Djokovic (men); 3. Fox News; 4. Venezuela; 5. News of the World; 6. Neptune; 7. Mani Kaul; 8. He became the first human to reach the highest summits on each of the continents and also to trek to both poles in the same calendar year; 9. South Sudan; 10. Zaveri Bazaar, Dadar and Opera House.

(Continued from page 7)

Eldam’s Road, Alwarpet, hosts an exhibition of paintings by Maniam Selvan (MaSe) on Madras: My Impressions from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., August 18th to 31st. On August 22nd at 6:30 p.m., Chandrachoodan Gopalakrishnan will present Ancient Light: Madras through the eyes of a Photowalker and on August 23rd at 6:30 p.m. Chitra Madhavan will speak on Lesser known temples of Chennai – some more.

DakshinaChitra will feature an exhibition of Photographs of Chennai City by Abbasheek Dadheech from August 21st to 28th. It will also organise a drawing competition for children in the 7-13 age group on the theme Monuments of Chennai and a photography competition for children in the 11-15 age group with the theme Bazaars of Chennai.

Padma Seshadri School, KK Nagar, will host Through the artist’s eye, an exhibition organised by D.H. Rao, of coins, paintings, pen-and-ink drawings by Manohar Devadoss, and memorabilia relating to Madras. Speakers at the inauguration (2 p.m. on August 22nd) will be S. Muthiah, Nalli Kuppuswamy and Mrs. Y.G. Parthasarathy. (Open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on August 23rd and 24th). Also, a competition for children, ‘Why I like it’, based on essays, paintings and photographs of Madras.

Hotel Green Park, Vadapalani, hosts several programmes on August 27th from 3:30 p.m.: Spring and Zoom, KK Nagar, an activity centre for children, welcomes children to experiment and create exquisite products using the potter’s wheel and palm leaves, in Madras – experience your cultural heritage from 3:30 – 5 p.m. Supported by resource persons from DakshinaChitra; Open to children five years and above; contact 9940540945/9940286740.

Also, Mestes College will organise a poster presentation by students. * * *

The World Storytelling Institute is facilitating Storytelling by the Sea, an evening of Rajah-Rani stories, especially about the sea, told by members of Chennai’s sea-fishing communities, and others on August 25th (6.30 p.m. to 8 p.m.) at Nocchikuppam 2nd Street.

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YOCEE is organising on August 15th an Oratorical contest ( Prelims) for students of classes 9 to 12 in English and Tamil. Topic: Specky: famous personalities in Chennai, Costumes Galore - Traditional bridal costumes of different communities of Chennai, on Art Contest - Collage on theme Chennai - Netra, Indhu, Naadai for children of age group 8-12 and a Pulli Kolam contest; open to all age group 15-25 years. August 21st, will be the finals of the Oratorical contest, and there will be Villuppattu - A musical travelogue on Chennai, and Kootu - Lecture demonstration on Influence of folk elements in today’s art and culture, in the capital of Tamil Nadu.

Kala Manjari, 6/12, First Street, Venus Colony, Alwarpet, is organising on August 21st an art contest for children from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Themes: Age: 5-10 years – Clauin Chennai, Ages: 11-16 years Places of Interest in Chennai. Contact: 24312676.

The Madras Week events

(Continued from page 5)

Madras Musings is supported as a public service by the following organisations

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1. Albert II, Prince of Monaco; 2. Petra Kvitovà (women) and Novak Djokovic (men); 3. Fox News; 4. Venezuela; 5. News of the World; 6. Neptune; 7. Mani Kaul; 8. He became the first human to reach the highest summits on each of the continents and also to trek to both poles in the same calendar year; 9. South Sudan; 10. Zaveri Bazaar, Dadar and Opera House.

(Continued from page 5)

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