

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

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Challenge to Chennai medical tourism?

(By A Special Correspondent)

India is one of the medical tourism destinations of the world, with numbers expected to reach 3.25 million patients from abroad by 2015. Chennai, attracting around 40 per cent of these visitors, is considered the medicare capital of the country. With its estimated 18,000 hospital beds and hosts of multi-speciality services, it has set a pace that is hard to match by other Indian cities. While all this is to the good, what is not is that competition is soon catching up internationally, with Dubai poised to become a new medical tourism hub in this region.

The current statistics are heavily loaded in Dubai's favour. The tiny nation, having burnt its fingers in trying to fashion itself into a financial hub, has now decided to put its excellent infrastructure to better use by catering to medical requirements. The medical tourism strategy for

the country was unveiled last month. During its two phases, respectively ending in 2016 and 2020, 22 hospitals (18 private and four public) are to be built. Thousands of visas are expected to be issued by the emirate to attract qualified staff from all over the world. Significantly, the report, though it does not mention Chennai by name, identifies cities in India as sources for personnel. A drain of qualified medicos can soon be expected to begin. The plan also pointedly states that Dubai needs to attract patients who are currently going to India for treatment.

The master plan, which envisages the emirate offering multi-speciality services, is targeted at the same user groups that Chennai caters to – Arab nationals, people from the Commonwealth of

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Transport unification ahead

(By A Special Correspondent)

It is almost three years since the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly approved the setting up of the Chennai Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (CUMTA). But the State Government is yet to notify it. The CMDA, which is handling the activities of the CUMTA in the interim, has commissioned a study on integrating the multiple modes of transport in the city. Four international consultants are at work on this, which

will include all modes – train, bus and the metro. It will also look into the setting up of a common ticket and fare structure to facilitate seamless commuting, something that is in existence in most world-class cities today. The State Government wants Chennai to follow the London model, which is easier said than done.

Like the CMDA, the CUMTA was to chiefly have a planning function and oversee

the work of several agencies involved in the running of the transport systems. It was also to periodically revise and upgrade its plans. Headed by the Transport Minister, it was to have the Chief Urban Planner (Transport) of the CMDA as its Member-Secretary. Others on board were the Chief Secretary and the Vice-Chairman, CMDA (both ranking as Vice-Chairpersons), the Secretaries of the Departments of Finance, Transport, Home, Housing & Urban Development, and the General Manager of the Southern Railway. As to why this commendable idea is not being given form is open to question. A change of regime can probably be a reason.

On the face of it, CUMTA or, in its absence, the CMDA, has an unenviable task on its hands, given the current state of transport infrastructure. Let us begin with pavements. These have shrunk over the years and where they exist they are only 1.5 metres at their widest, in gross violation of the Indian

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Madras Landmarks – 50 years ago



• This is an instance of a building being far better known than its occupants. For, Airlines Hotel marks merely the third, and least known, phase of a structure that was famous in the hospitality business for several decades. A historic site, for this is where Spencer's began life in 1863 as Durrant's, it was acquired by the Italian confectioner D'Angeli, caterer of choice for successive Governors of Madras, when Spencer's moved in the late 1890s.

D'Angeli's eponymous hotel opened for business here in 1908. Its outer appearance then was modelled on Watson's of Bombay – wrought iron railings on the ground and first floor, and a courtyard within that boasted of a Parisian garden, with rooms around it. Cuisine was chiefly Italian and French. It changed hands in 1927, being acquired by yet another Italian confectioner – Attilio Bosotto, who also ran the Palace Hotel, Ootacamund. Under his control, Hotel Bosotto as it became known, acquired its art deco frontage, the railings making way for fashionable concrete.

In 1950, Attilio and his wife Emily, who was English, opted to settle in England. The confectionery business was sold to Muslapa Chowdhry of Champion Dairy, Wallajah Road, for Rs 15,000. He had been the principal supplier of dairy produce to the hotel. Chowdhry and his sons continued the business under the name of Bosotto's and it is now with the third generation in the family. The property, with the hotel, however, appears to have been sold to others. The new purchaser, it appears, changed the name to Airlines Hotel.

Who ran it is not clear, but by the mid-1960s, the company, Airlines Hotel & Caterers (Madras) Pvt. Ltd., along with the building it owned, had been purchased by Ramnath Goenka's Express Group of newspapers. Thanks to the intricate cross-holdings of the Group, Airlines Hotel at one stage was even part-shareholder and owner of The Indian Express! In 1980, the property, by then known as Bosotto Building, its days as a hotel long gone, except for Bosotto's which continued as a restaurant in rented space, was sold for Rs 36 lakh to M.G. Gnanasoundari, a lawyer of the High Court of Madras. The property, it was felt, would be ideal for her husband M.J. Durairaj's steel scrap business, an indication of how much fashionable Mount Road has changed in the course of a century!

The couple converted the building into a shopping complex, named after the husband. He had briefly shot to fame in 1967 when he had bid for and then, unsuccessfully, tried to salvage the steel in the wreckage of the ship Stamatis, grounded on the beach following a cyclone.

The M.J. Durairaj Nadar Shopping Complex (best known occupant – Bata) became mired in legal disputes. A fire in 1986 destroyed much of the interior, though the structure still remains strong. Rapidly going to seed, it was acquired by a construction company, which filed eviction notices on the tenants in 2007 or so, following permission granted for demolition by the Corporation on the grounds that the structure was weak. This was challenged but the Courts have since upheld the eviction. The MetroRail in its inspection has also certified that the building cannot withstand underground work as and when it happens in the neighbourhood. What is holding up demolition is the listing of this structure as a heritage precinct in the Justice E. Padmanabhan Committee report. Can the old glamour of D'Angelis be revived?

Madras Eye



"That's the voting booth... it's so hot, we are in line here to buy cool drinks and ice cream!"

Is it possible?

From dump to park?

(by B. Parvathi)

Perungudi on Old Mahabalipuram Road, now known as Rajiv Gandhi Road, was more like a village. As the population increased, more areas came to be urbanised and small manufacturing units were started. Subsequently, residential colonies were developed.

In course of time with vast open land, it became a garbage dumping yard. The dumping of garbage for more than ten years has polluted the entire colony.

Residents say children are often falling sick with cold and malaria due to the pollution, and the dump is a breeding ground for mosquitoes and, besides all this, we face a dog menace too, says B. Radhika, a resident of Perungudi for the last four years.

I have been born and brought up in Perungudi. Earlier it was like a clean village. We are waiting for the dumping yard to be shifted from here to have clean surrounding, says 30-year-old Y. Mary who has two school-going children.

Recently there was a fire at the garbage dumping yard at Perungudi. Even though the fire was put out by the Corporation, the dump yard still continues to smoulder, emanating toxic gases from the burning garbage. This is a health hazard.

This goes on throughout the night, affecting the residents living in colonies which are in proximity to the dump yard.

The vast area comprising the dump yard and the adjoining lake has potential for development as a huge park with facilities like walkers' paths in the midst of green fields and trees and boating in the lake. The lake is also visited by birds. Eventually, the park is sure to attract a lot of visitors from all over the city, particularly during weekends.

Places such as these have been converted into parks in other countries. Hopefully, environmentalists will welcome the suggestion and the authorities will shift the dump yard and convert this as an open recreational space, says Siddharth Kumar. – (Courtesy: *Adyar Times*).

Following the Waterfowls

- The Asian Waterfowl Census 2014 was conducted in Tamil Nadu in the wetlands around Chennai, Madurai, Tuticorin, and Theni. Thirtyeight wetlands were covered. Four wetlands were dry. Two were over-flooded, and 27 had normal levels of water. 136 species were sighted and the data revealed:
- Top 5 species present in most wetlands [*Species – Number of Wetlands (1%)*]

Indian Pond Heron	–	24	(72%)
Little Cormorant	–	24	(72%)
Little Egret	–	23	(69%)
Little Grebe	–	21	(63%)
Great Egret	–	20	(60%)
- Top 3 near-threatened species present in most wetlands [*Species – Number of Wetlands (1%)*]

Back-headed Ibis	–	13	(39%)
Oriental Darter	–	11	(33%)
Spot-billed Pelican	–	11	(33%)
- Top 3 wintering ducks present in most wetlands [*Species – Number of Wetlands (1%)*]

Garganey	–	12	(36%)
Northern Pintail	–	12	(36%)
Northern Shoveler	–	9	(27%)
- Top 1 wintering tern present in most wetlands [*Species – Number of Wetlands (1%)*]

Whiskered Tern	–	19	(57%)
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- Fulvous Whistling Duck was recorded in at least 5 wetlands in Chennai.
- Among diving ducks, 'Common Pochard / Tufted Duck' were sighted only at Manimangalam Lake, Chennai.
- Wintering Storks.
A pair of white storks were sighted at Kaveripakkam Lake near Kanchipuram. – (Courtesy: *Madras Naturalists' Society*).

MADRAS MUSINGS ON THE WEB

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 – especially 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 EDITOR

Interpreting the marriage vows

The *Man from Madras Musings*, as his regular readers know by now, is a reluctant guest at marriages. But there are weddings of close ones that MMM sits back and enjoys and he has just returned from one such. Everything went like clockwork, the hospitality was princely, and as for the browsing and sluicing, it was as mother made it. Above all, the priest was not given a mike to intone chants into and advise the audience on how to behave. That itself made this an event to remember. More memorable was a booklet on Hindu weddings that the caterer circulated. Hardly anyone bothered to read it, but not so MMM. He made a careful perusal of the work during the ceremony and those around him were not a little astonished at the periodic guffaws of laughter that he let out.

The slim volume, titled *South Indian Wedding, The Rituals and The Rationale*, assumed that Tambahm weddings were the only ones in South India (the rest of them presumably live in sin?), for it

– The bride then is given an auspicious ablution (Ye Gods!)

– The bride and the groom are lifted to the shoulders of their respective uncles and in that position the two – bride and groom – garland each other.

– Then the marrying couple is seated on a swing where they rock forth and back (Rather erotic that, but nothing compared to what comes next)

– I shall be the Upper World, you the Earth, together we shall beget children (Frank and forthright as you can see. No birds, bees, etc).

– The Mantra says – “Let thy mind be rock firm.”

MMM was very thankful for the book. It helped him pass the time between wedding breakfast and lunch. And, it also helped him avoid countless relatives whose names he did not remember.

Who art thou?

It was still early morning and *The Man from Madras*

doing it and that too on one leg each. At long last, the trio arrived at the page in question and then the man in the middle (should MMM refer to him as MIM?), beamed at MMM and asked MMM if he (MMM) was Soundarapandi Nadar.

MMM had to say ‘no’. Whereupon MIM was deeply offended. It almost appeared as though he was going to accuse MMM of masquerading under a false name. How, he asked, could MMM not be Soundarapandi Nadar when the register declared him to be so? MMM was nonplussed. But that was not all. MIM now demanded that MMM produce Gangu Bai and Dhanashekar, none of whom MMM had any clue about. When MMM said so, a deep discussion in hushed whispers went on among the three. It appeared that MIM was of the view that MMM was some kind of a serial killer who, having done away with Soundarapandi Nadar, Gangu Bai and Dhanashekar, had usurped their place of stay.

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

focussed solely on that variety. Halfway through, the author must have realised that he had left the others out and so he included a justification that “mostly this is applicable to any other Hindu section.”

The book claiming to unravel the Vedic significance of weddings, started out by saying that the bridegroom needs to be brought to the marriage venue in a decorated car. Of course, our sages being such farsighted men would have no doubt stipulated a car, though MMM wonders at their not specifying a brand and model as well.

MMM realises that the Chief has rather strong views on how a book review has to be written. The critic ought not to impose his views, is the Chief's motto and what is good for the Chief is good for MMM. And so MMM will now restrict himself to direct quotes from this learned text. But where he cannot resist himself, MMM has included a few comments in parentheses.

– What a “Ritual” is?

– This ritual invokes the blessings of the eight-direction-quartered guardian angels (Rather spread out aren't they? Must be Yoga)

– Holding the bride's left foot toe (She must be a strange creature to have toes elsewhere)

Musings was not yet his bright self, all set for another day with the Chief. The doorbell rang and having rung, kept on ringing, rather as though the moving finger from Belshazzar's feast had called on MMM. On opening the door MMM saw three men who, it transpired, were not Magi but who were laden, not with rich gifts, but with an open register. They beamed on MMM. The two men on either side were evidently juniors in official stature to the man in the middle, for they held the two ends of the register and shuffled the pages while the man in the centre merely looked on. It being quite a tricky business to hold on to the book and simultaneously shuffle the pages, the duo at the extreme ends proceeded to lift one leg each and balance the book on the same even as they busily perused the pages. Offers of chairs by MMM were curtly refused.

The man in the middle broke the ice by declaring that the team was from the local office of the Corporation and were there to verify if MMM and family were registered voters. MMM offered to fetch the voter identity cards, but that suggestion was airily waved away. All details, declared the official, were in the good book he was carrying. It struck MMM as somewhat unfair that the man thought he was lugging the register around when in reality his assistants were

MMM, thinking quickly on his feet, wondered if he should wake up his good lady (also known as She Who Must Be Obeyed) and get her to pretend she was Gangu Bai, but as for the absent Dhanashekar there was little he could do. Then a thought struck him. He made bold to ask if the electoral register was as per the new or old house numbers. It transpired that the touring election commission at MMM's doorstep had mixed up the two. A hurried shuffling of pages ensued and sure enough there was MMM's name like that of Abou Ben Adam, followed by that of Good Lady (aka SWMBO). All was well. MIM's assistants put down their bent legs and were then advised by MIM to be more careful in future about new and old numbers. The trio departed, presumably in search of Soundarapandi Nadar, after giving MMM voter slips and a stern warning to go and vote on D-Day.

Tailpiece

Apropos last fortnight's *Madras Musings* that his car had not been searched by the police for cash, MMM is glad to report that amends were made, while MMM was in the Perambur area. He can now hold his head high.

– MMM



Opportunity lost

You have been leading a crusade to protect Chennai heritage. You should crusade against how new development is now taking place. I recently made a trip on the O.M.R. area. The road goes through newly developed areas. What I saw was extremely saddening: Haphazard, unplanned, mostly dirty-looking constructions. An opportunity lost to develop great suburbs. I feel that you should go for a drive from Mahabalipuram to Thiruvannamiyur or to Pulicat etc. and write about your visual experience. It may stop what is going on.

S. Sundar

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Are they the answer?

To the list of disadvantages of concrete road you have given in MM, January 16th, it must be added that these roads are difficult to repair. As a remedy, the Corporation has added layer upon layers of concrete on many roads during the last decade. Roadside homes have almost become basement accommodations.

I have lived in Taramani for over a decade. Until about 2002, Taramani village, as it was called then, had no tar or concrete road. Then, almost hesitantly, a tar road was attempted at. But a rain or two later, and aided by Metro Water and BSNL, it was soon in a state of disrepair. Then it was changed to concrete. Since then, damage to the road has only been answered with another layer of concrete. In the last ten years, the road has risen three times. Consequently, residents of homes that used to overlook the road now have to tiptoe to look up to the road and to get out of homes.

It has triggered a sort of race between citizens and the Corporation. A number of old houses otherwise in good condition had to be demolished to escape being flooded in the rains. The new houses in the area are built with unnecessarily high elevation of their plinth to avoid becoming subterranean. But no one is sure how high will be an insurance against possible burial. Many have accepted this with a sense of resignation, enduring the misery every monsoon. Others have sold ancestral property and moved out. Taramani no longer has many natives. Neither does it have a word of concern from those who matter.

Shreesh Chaudhary

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'Save this slowly vanishing plaque'

● Madras Musings has in the past brought to the attention of the public the danger faced by the Coja Petrus Uscan plaque on the Maraimalai Adigal Bridge (Saidapet), with the Metro Rail work going on alongside it.

Recently, after the visit to Madras of a couple of members of the Society for Armenian Studies, when they were shocked to find the state the plaque was in, the International Union of Land and Culture Organisations, Society for Armenian Studies, Paris, wrote to His Excellency Mr. Ara Hakobyan, Ambassador of Armenia in India, New Delhi, stating:

'Your mission in India as an Ambassador has undoubtedly made you, more than anybody else, sensitive to the significance of the Armenian patrimony in this country. Besides, being associations founded around people in Armenian diaspora, it can only be natural for us to consider you our legitimate representative. That is the reason why we are turning to you today hoping that your position could make possible an effective intervention from your part into the direction of appropriate authorities regarding the critical point related hereunder.'

Last February, some historians belonging to our associations went to Chennai on a study trip on the path of the ancient and so brilliant Armenian colony of Madras, with a view to issuing a publication. This document is to be centred for some part on the inscriptions alluding to the very famous merchant Coja Petrus Uscan, a highly generous benefactor to Madras in the XVIII Century.

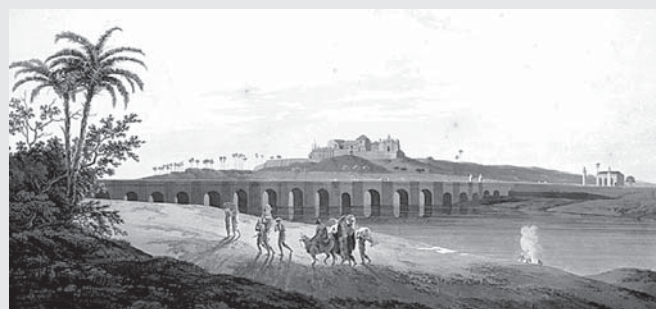
The most known building of public interest among those funded by Petrus Uscan is Marmalong Bridge, also named Armenian Bridge (today Saidapet Bridge). A plaque recalls this historical milestone in three languages (Armenian, Persian, Latin).

The point is we have felt indignant when we discovered through watching the photographs brought by these historians that this plaque is now partly covered with concrete because of the construction work for Metro Rail. As a result, the Armenian section of the writing is completely covered up.



The plaque before the construction of the elevated railway (on left) when the Armenian lettering was partially covered and the plaque as it was in February 2014 (on right) with the Armenian lettering fully covered.

In his time, Coja Petrus Uscan himself funded several works of public interest among which was Marmalong Bridge. That work of art, sometimes named "the Armenian Bridge" has often been depicted by artists such as William Daniell.



"The Armenian Bridge, near St Thomas's Mount in 1820", by William Daniell.

On a very elegant and well-known plaque set on this bridge, the merchant indicated, within an inscription in three languages (Armenian, Persian, Latin): "This bridge was built for public interest by Coja Petrus Uscan, belonging to the Armenian nation, A.D. 1726."

In 1966, Petrus Uscan's bridge was destroyed and replaced by today's Saidapet Bridge. But in those days the plaque had been preserved and moved to the end of the new bridge where it was hardly put into light and where the writing in Armenian was beginning to be covered up.

Its patrimonial value has been even more significant since the destruction of the old bridge. It has repeatedly been studied by researchers, be it in Armenia, India and many other countries. Moreover, it is well-known far away beyond the expert's area as it is referred to by many press articles in several countries as well as on the Internet where its photograph is displayed on the Wikipedia pages dedicated to Petrus Uscan.

But the patrimonial value of this plaque is utterly obvious. We hope that the damage is not irreversible; that is why we are mobilising, so this plaque could be carefully extricated and placed in a more appropriate location where it could be more honorably put in light.

Already before the construction work started, some active members of the association, INTACH of Chennai and the bi-monthly review *Madras Musings*, two institutions working at the preservation and enhancement of the patrimony, had alerted the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Company in charge with the building of the Metro Rail, but their alarm had unfortunately remained unnoticed.

We are delighted that the installing of a new Armenian monument should be currently considered today in Chennai to tighten the links between India and Armenia. But, along with this project, it would be suitable to preserve the existing patrimony which is a testimony of the Armenians' historic presence in this town.

Thus, we are hoping that, as the Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia in India, you will have an easy access to the right persons, so that regrettable error could be corrected.

We ensure Your Excellency of our support in case you would need to resort to us at any time in this mission.

We strongly wish that our combined efforts will be successful.

We are vividly hoping that our request will attract your Excellency's attention. ♡

'Singara Chennai' – some observations

Life in the metro offers many vignettes. Some of them are pleasant, others are otherwise – and not cared for.

- The other day, I noticed a man being served at a medical shop. He had been prescribed six tablets of a specific drug – one each to be consumed twice a day for three days. But the pharmacist said that the item comes in packs of fifteen and cannot be sold loose – the reason being that the rest could not be sold for want of takers. On enquiring what to do with them, the pharmacist had no answer but a scowl. For the customer, the extra money paid was a total loss.
- Many are the dog lovers in the city who take their pets for a routine stroll and incidental defecation. Many of these pets show a keen interest in iron gates to lift a leg or squat in the middle. The owner or the handler is not at all concerned about the inconvenience being caused to others who walk that way.

In our locality, however, a man, while taking his pet out for such a routine stroll, always takes with him a sheet of old newspaper, removes the poo and deposits it in the garbage bin located in the street corner. I was thrilled to see this one day and stopped near him to salute him for his civic consciousness. May his tribe increase.

- Over the last decade, the Corporation has been engaging contractors to remove the garbage. While Onyx started the assignment with gusto and did quite a good job, its successors have not paid that kind of attention. The sweepers do a half-hearted job and remove only large size garbage and leaves from the streets, leaving aside small and tiny leaves, twigs and rubbish of other kinds. While the handymen in compactors dump the waste into the vehicle's belly, a lot of it is returned to the road to be trampled upon or blown away by the wind. There is no proper supervision or even occasional inspection to verify the quality of the work done. Besides where have the sanitary inspectors gone? Or is it beyond their calling? The selection of the garbage contractor, it has been reported, was based on tenders and comparative quotations. But experience over the years indicates that good quality work cannot be obtained cheaply.
- A similar case in point is the difference you can notice in the quality of building in government quarters and hire purchase flats. The former, built three decades ago, are in good shape,

(Continued on page 4)

The man from Madras who initiated May Day

Malayapuram Singaravelu Chettiar (1860-1946), also known as M. Singaravelu and Singaravelar, was a pioneer in more than one field in India. He was associated with the first trade unions in India, which were formally established in Madras. On May 1, 1923, he organised the first ever celebration of May Day in the country. Singaravelar was a leader in the Indian Independence movement, initially under the leadership of Gandhi but, later, joining the budding Communist movement. In 1925, he became one of the founding fathers of the Communist Party of India, and chaired its inaugural convention in Kanpur.

Though the British Government arrested him along with other leaders on charges of conspiring to wage war against the Crown, he was set free soon after, on account of his failing health. Singaravelar was also a path-breaking social reformer who in his early life took to Buddhism, seeing it as a weapon against the evil of untouchability, which was particularly severe in 19th Century India.

He was also in the forefront of the Self Respect movement in the Madras Presidency that fought for equal rights for backward castes. In his later years, he withdrew from active politics, but remained a staunch advo-

cate of the causes he had pioneered, till his death at the age of 85.

Singaravelu Chettiar was born in a wealthy family, the third son of Venkatachalam Chetty and Valliammal in Madras. He matriculated in 1881 and then did his F.A. at Madras Christian College. He thereafter took his bachelor's degree from Presidency College. He next joined Madras Law College and got his B.L. Degree in 1907. He then practised law at the Madras High Court.

In 1889, Singaravelar married Angammal, who did not belong to his caste. Their only daughter

pathy Chetty and Thiru Vi Ka (V. Kalyanasundaram), with the blessings of Singaravelar and others of his ilk. Then followed unions such as the M.S.M. Workers' Union, and the Electricity Workers' Union, the Tramway Workers' Union, the Petroleum Employees' Union, the Printing Workers' Union, the Aluminium Workers' Union, the Railway Employees' Union, the Coimbatore Weavers' Union and the Madurai Weavers' Union.

From their inception, trade unions in Madras were drawn into long, and often bloody, confrontations with the manage-

29, 1921, police firing near the Mills' premises in Perambur killed seven people. When their funeral procession was taken out, some miscreants threw stones, leading to another round of caste violence. Two more firings – on September 19 and October 21 – followed. After six months, the strike came to an end, failing to meet any of its objectives.

Singaravelar became convinced that political backing was necessary for any working class movement to sustain itself in India. Speaking at the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee meeting in September 1922, he said that the Indian National Congress should take up the cause of labour.

When Gandhi launched his non-cooperation movement in September 1920, Singaravelar accepted his leadership and became one of the influential leaders of the Congress party in the Madras Presidency. He set fire to his lawyer's gown at a public meeting in May 1921 as a symbol of boycotting the British courts. He wrote a letter to Mahatma Gandhi explaining his action. "I have given up my profession as a lawyer today. I shall follow you as you strive for the people of this country."

An important event of the period was the visit of Prince of Wales and his consort to India. When they came to Madras, Singaravelar organised a boycott of the visit through an unprec-edented *hartal*, which closed down the town. The shutdown was complete, but there were instances of compulsion.



M. Singaravelar.

Gandhi in an article in *Young India* dated February 9, 1922 criticised the *hartal* and Singaravelar for not imbibing the true spirit of the non-cooperation movement.

When the Indian National Congress met in Gaya in 1922, Singaravelar participated, seeing himself as a representative of workers. He spoke in favour of labour legislation and felt that the labour movement in India must be a part of the Congress movement.

Following his speech, the Gaya meeting adopted the Labour Resolution that said, "It is the opinion of this conference that all Indian labourers should be united, to safeguard their rights and prevent their exploitation and for equal distribution of wealth among all, the various labour and kisan unions should be united and for this purpose, a committee of six has been constituted."

Singaravelar, however, broke with Congress and on May 1, 1923, founded the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan (a party of workers and peasants) in Madras. The inauguration was purposely kept for May Day, and for the first time in India, under the auspices of the newly formed party, the day was observed as International Workers' Day. On that occasion, again for the first time, the red flag was used in India.

Singaravelar made arrangements to celebrate May Day in two places. One meeting was held on the beach opposite the Madras High Court; the other was held at Triplicane beach.

The *Hindu* reported, "The Labour Kisan Party has introduced May Day celebrations in Madras. Comrade Singaravelar presided over the meeting. A resolution was passed stating that the government should declare May Day as a holiday. The president of the party explained the non-violent principles of the party. There was a request for financial aid. It was emphasised that workers of the world must unite to achieve independence." (Courtesy: TCC Digest)

The rise of Perambur as a premier Anglo-Indian centre was mainly because of the Carriage Works and Loco Works and the huge Perambur Railway Colony popularly known as the Panathope Railway Colony.

Perambur – an Anglo-Indian bastion

Situated about 7 km from Chennai Central is Perambur with its massive Carriage Works and Loco Works Factory and the internationally known Integral Coach Factory, one of the largest coach factories in Asia, Perambur, still with a large number of Anglo-Indians owning property and living in fairly well-to-do conditions, is the centre of a huge crescent of the Anglo-Indian community in Chennai. It has, to its north, Madhavaram where a large number of Anglo-Indians live, owning their houses and property. To the west of Perambur is another Anglo-Indian area, Ayanavaram, which leads into Vepery and Purasawalkam, which were once highly populated Anglo-Indian centres. Leading further north from Perambur is Jawahar Nagar, Thiru-Vi-Ka Nagar, and Periyar Nagar, where there are quite a lot of Anglo-Indians. This Anglo-Indian crescent comprises Vepery, Purasawalkam, Ayanavaram, Perambur and Madhavaram. The other Anglo-Indian concentration is in south-west Chennai, in St. Thomas' Mount and Pallavaram near the Airport.

By any yardstick, Perambur is the very heart and soul of the Anglo-Indian community. No other place in the world, or in India, has so many Anglo-Indian families in one cluster. Having been all over the country meeting groups of Anglo-Indians in their homes and residential colonies, I have never found any other place in India that can match Perambur for the Anglo-Indian mix it has. In Perambur you have the upper-middle class, the middle class, the low-income groups as well as the poorest of poor who live in huts and one-room tenements, all living together. The Anglo-Indian stamp can be gauged from the fact that as you enter Perambur, you will find many Anglo-Indian homes on the Main Road and women still wearing frocks, which cannot be found anywhere else in India.

The growth of the community in Perambur can also be attributed to the Railway School that was once packed with Anglo-Indians, and which was the largest Railway School in the country, as well as the well-known Anglo-Indian school run by the Presentation Convent, St. Joseph's Anglo-Indian High School. It has more Anglo-Indians than any other Anglo-Indian school in Chennai. The presence of Lourdes Shrine and the Holy Cross Church has also been responsible for the growth of the

community. Full credit has to be given to the Anglo-Indian community who, through their patronage, have made the bakery one of the best in the city. It also caters to 70-80 per cent of Anglo-Indian weddings.

Another factor that can be considered important for the growth of the Anglo-Indian community in Perambur is that land cost as well as the price of flats is relatively cheap when compared to other parts of the city.

The key areas in Perambur where there is a concentration of Anglo-Indians are Main Road, also known as Siruvallur Road, Foxen Street, Paper Mills Road, Ballard Street, and Jaganathan Street. You will find about 2000 Anglo-Indian families in these areas. A noteworthy feature is that Foxen Street has a large number of flats known as Palm Grove Apartments where 90 per cent of the families are Anglo-Indians. This is a typical Anglo-Indian colony where you find pets and plants and children running in and out of homes, some of them on little cycles or in little cars. Every flat is kept spic and span with traditional curtains, sofa sets, dining tables, music system, flowers, vases and centre table. This is a common sight in Perambur where Anglo-Indians maintain their traditional culture.

Sadly, in Perambur, there are also a large number of Anglo-Indians at the lower end of the economic scale who stay in huts and small rooms. They eke out a living, barely making ends meet. This state of affairs is mainly due to lack of employment because of lack of education.

St. Joseph's Anglo-Indian High School, in the very heart of Perambur, and the Railway Mixed Higher Secondary Schools next door are two great institutions that have played a very big role in the growth and development of Perambur. St. Joseph's Anglo-Indian High School's student strength is predominantly Anglo-Indian. It also employs a large number of Anglo-Indian teachers. It is run by the Presentation Convent nuns. St. Joseph's has been giving excellent education for over a century and the large number

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The Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes – (Courtesy: The Hindu).

A Perambur landmark

One of the landmarks of Perambur is the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, a church replicating in form the famous church in Lourdes, France, situated there.

While the plans for building the Shrine date to the 1940s, the Perambur Church's history goes back a long way before that. It was in 1879 that Fr. H.E. Hennessey from Vepery built a chapel in Perambur near where the Presentation Convent was later established. The next year he dedicated the chapel to 'Our Lady of Lourdes.' It was to be 1935 when the sixth parish priest, Fr. Michael Murray, began to think of developing the chapel into something like the Basilica at Lourdes. He launched a collection drive whose activities and fundraising visits – including collecting the cost of a brick or that of a bag of cement – got a tremendous response that continued through the early 1940s. That's when the Archbishop of Madras, the Most Rev. Dr. Louis Mathias, invited J.R. Davis of the then leading firm of Madras architects, Prynne, Abbott and Davis, to design the shrine to resemble the one in France.

It was to be in January 1951, however, before Dr. Mathias laid the foundation stone and February 22, 1953 when he consecrated the lower church of the Shrine. In March 1958, the foundation stone was laid for the upper church and, after another fundraising drive, the work was completed in 1960 and Archbishop Mathias, who had seen the work from conception to completion, was there to consecrate the upper church on February 11, 1960. Today, services are held in Tamil in one church and in English in the other. But in the early years, the congregation was mainly Anglo-Indian, drawn from two institutions which helped the chapel to grow: The B&C Mills, which were established between 1877 and 1882 and the Railway Workshops established in 1895.

Like several parts of Chennai, Perambur is now growing into a bustling economic and commercial centre. For the Anglo-Indian community, Perambur is a bustling centre of integration for the whole community.

It is the last bastion where you will find so many of the community doing extremely well and showing to the community all over the country that together we can achieve a lot and by working together we can achieve and succeed in a country that is becoming competitive, growth-oriented and making its mark in the world.

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CHENNAI HERITAGE

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‘Singara Chennai’ – some observations

(Continued from page 3)

while the latter have breathed their last in half the number of years and have been demolished. I wonder if the two arms of government, the PWD and Housing Board, have different standards for building.

- All over Chennai, we find shops dealing in FMGs, clothing and electronics announcing price reduction sales. They announce 'Season Sales'; 'End of Season Sales' and 'Off Season Sales'; in addition to "Closing down" and "Seconds Sales". Can anyone explain when a Season begins or ends, as this process goes on round the year?
- And speaking of the Corporation and 'Seasons', once mosquitoes were considered 'seasonal'; now they bite throughout the year. Much money is spent on various methods to ward off the insects, but nothing works. When and how will the Corporation come to our rescue is at the top of everyone's mind.

S. Krishna
81/2, Fourth Main Road
Gandhinagar, Adyar
Chennai 600 020



(Current Affairs questions are from the period April 1st to 15th. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Chennai and Tamil Nadu.)

1. Scientists from NASA and the European Space Agency recently estimated that Enceladus has an ocean of liquid water under its surface. Of which planet – is it a moon?

2. Lafarge and Holcim, the two largest manufacturers of which product have agreed to a merger to create a behemoth in that industry?

3. Who was chosen the man of the series in the ICC World Cup Twenty 20 that was won by Sri Lanka beating India in the final?

4. On April 9th, Microsoft officially concluded which popular product of its after 12 years of support?

5. On April 12th, which movie-dom legend was named to receive the Dadasaheb Phalke Award?

6. Name the India-born poet who has been awarded the 2014 Pulitzer Prize in poetry.

7. Which swashbuckling Indian batsman has been chosen as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year?

8. The book *Accidental Prime Minister: The making and unmaking of Manmohan Singh* has created headlines for some critical observations made by the author. Name him?

9. The World Meteorological Organisation announced on April 4th which place in India as having regained the world record with the highest 2493 m.m. rainfall?

10. A company called IB Commercial Pvt. Ltd. recently purchased which iconic Indian Naval property for Rs. 60 crore?

* * *

11. Name the hotel that stood where the 'Oberoi Trident' is now located.

12. Why did S.S. Vasan pay Rs. 200 for taking over *Ananda Vikatan*?

13. Which reputed Chennai-headquartered company was started by T.R. Ganapathy Iyer in 1936?

14. Which waterway that flows through Chennai is considered the shortest classified river draining into the Bay of Bengal?

15. What came up on 'Manthope', a 56-acre property near Ambattur, in the early 1950s?

16. Which prestigious award in the world of music was presented for the first time on January 1, 1943 at the RR Sabha?

17. Which educational institution in Chennai is located on the site of Old Jail, Madras' first civil jail?

18. Where in Chennai is the church replicating the famous basilica in Lourdes, France?

19. Which legend in the textiles industry started a Tamil daily, *Tamil Nadu*, and is considered the first Nagarathar to become a full-time journalist with an English language daily?

20. Which locality near the Chennai airport was created for World War II veterans?

(Answers on page 8)

Two pages of sport

A look back at the future of Indian tennis

• **Matrix**, the quarterly house journal of the Sanmar Group, recently brought out to celebrate its 25th year a special issue featuring one article from every issue.

In June 1989 it featured an article in which tennis champion Ramanathan Krishnan, Tamil Nadu Tennis Association President N. Sankar, and sports writer Partab Ramchand discussed the changing tennis scene in India. This is how the discussion went. Much of it holds good 25 years later.



From left to right: Ramanathan Krishnan, N. Sankar and Partab Ramchand.

If Bombay is the headquarters of Indian cricket and Calcutta of Indian football, Madras has always been the nerve-centre of Indian tennis. There are many reasons for this, but the predominant one is obviously the fact that Madras has been the home of the two greatest families in Indian tennis, the Krishnans and the Amritrajs. In addition, Madras has always had a great tennis tradition, excellent facilities for playing the game and coaching the young, and a smooth-running tennis administration. This three-way conversation examines various aspects of the game in the State, country and abroad.

Partab Ramchand (PR): Krish, Madras has always been considered the tennis capital of the country. Would you say that this is just because it is the home of the Krishnans and the Amritrajs, or has it evolved through any system?

Ramanathan Krishnan (RK): I would trace the growth back to 1953 when I became the first player from the South to win the national title. People in the South who did not know how to play the game on grass realised that one had to do well on grass to become a good player. I remember when I first played on grass at Calcutta in 1950 I fared very badly. I realised that grass was a fast surface and you had to move quickly. So, I learnt to play on grass because in those days all the important tournaments were played on grass. I won the nationals, I broke the barrier, and then others from the South said that if Krishnan can win the title we can do so too. So they started doing well too. Then I extended the trail-blazing by playing in the Davis Cup, by playing in the USA and by playing at Wimbledon. No one cares if you win a tournament at Beckenham, Bristol or Brussels. You have to do well at

Wimbledon to become well known, and you have to do well in the Davis Cup. These are the two big tournaments.

PR: Sankar, I have a question for you. Whenever I talk of Madras being the nerve-centre of the game in India, people cynically ask me, "But where is the system? The Krishnans and the Amritrajs have come up only because of parental encouragement. Who else has Madras produced?" As TNTA President, how do you reply to these people?

N. Sankar (NS): Let me add that in the case of the two families the development has been more talent-oriented rather than through any system. In the Krishnan case, I have known the family for long. It was talent, the parental encouragement and his own efforts that made Krishnan a great player. In the Amritraj's case, yes, it was again talent and parental encouragement, but by then a system was available and so in their case as well as that of Ramesh Krishnan, in addition to the other questions, there was a bit of system too that played its part in their coming up. Since then the system has come up a lot more, and a lot more families have taken to the game. Today you have a lot of camps, kids of 5 and 6 playing the game, but somehow there are no world-beaters; and here I feel that even if any system is to succeed, a lot of talent is called for if the player is to make a mark in the international arena.

PR: I have been covering tennis for some time and I feel that the infrastructure is there in Madras. You have the camps, the coaches, the courts, the tennis centres. You have a lot of kids playing the game, as you have mentioned. Now it is said that out of quantity comes quality. But don't you think the quality is lacking.

RK: If you name three top

players from here in the last 30-odd years, it is myself, Vijay and Ramesh. Now all of us had a tremendous family background. Without this, we could not have made it to the top. I know my father gave me all support even in those difficult days. I gave the same support to Ramesh, and I am sure Vijay got the same kind of encouragement from his parents. Now maybe you will say not all parents give the same encouragement.

PR: Yes, I was coming to that point. I was talking with H.K. Joshi, the Chief Coach at the TTT (Triangle Tennis Trust), the other day and he told me that parental encouragement is sadly lacking. He said that if there was an exceptionally talented youngster and he pointed out to the parents that the boy or girl could go places if sent abroad or more money is spent on training, the parents always seemed to tell him that tennis is not the only thing, studies are more important and that stifles the talent of the young players.

RK: That used to be the case. They may be saying that on the outside; but I am sure they really want the boy or girl to play tennis seriously.

NS: Today things have changed. In the days of Krishnan and his father, they would never have given any thought that they could make a living from tennis. Today's attitude is different. Anyone feels, "If I am putting in so much, how much can I get out of it?" The problem is that the initial cost is very high: one, in terms of family commitments, and secondly, the money involved. For example, I saw a few days ago a nine-year-old girl, the daughter of a friend of mine, playing at the MCC courts and was very impressed. She hit the ball harder than older people. Now her father's problem is that for her to come up, he has to take

her to a completely different environment and ...

PR: What do you mean by "different environment?" You mean a different country?

NS: Yes, he would like to take her to the USA or Australia and play on different surfaces and get advanced training.

PR: Yes, but that again costs money.

NS: Yes, so the investment called for is very much higher because the game has changed so much, just to mention one point. Krishnan used to play three or four months a year and then come back to India. Today you have to play almost throughout the year.

PR: Things have changed since your days, Krish. I mean things are more professional these days, right?

RK: Those days it was an amateur sport. When someone asked you what you do, you did not answer, "I play tennis." It was always tennis and something else, because you had a job. These days it is only tennis, and parents these days want their children to play tennis for two reasons. One, it has become a glamour sport, secondly, it can be a lucrative career.

NS: Back in 1959, Krishnan received an offer from Jack Kramer to turn pro and I remember there was a lot of discussion about what Krishnan should do. Finally, he turned it down. Even though the offer was a large sum of money, he did it because he decided that tennis was a game he was playing for the fame, not to make money out of it. Today the situation is different because no one is strictly an amateur any more. The hard work is probably more, but the dedication is less, because even an average player can make a living out of the game.

PR: Thirty years later, Krish, in a hypothetical situation, if the same offer was made to you,

(Continued on page 7)

Fixing cricket matches

(By R.K. Raghavan)

The year 2000 undeniably marked a watershed in the nearly three-centuries-long history of cricket. It was perhaps for the first time that dishonesty came to be associated with the game in a prominent and credible manner. As a former CBI Director who oversaw the 2000 match-fixing enquiry, to this day, I am quizzed – not unreasonably – by friends and acquaintances as to whether I believed that the outcome of a match could be dishonestly altered by any player(s).

My response usually is that while the natural course of a game could be tinkered with slightly by a dishonest player acting on his own or in concert with a few of his mates, it is illogical to assert that a whole match could be transformed by a rogue wearing flannels. A few may not agree with me. Nevertheless, I am emboldened to take this firm stand drawing from my more than four decades of experience with cricket in different capacities, including those of a radio commentator and an umpire.

You must remember that the most hardened and avaricious bookie does not also desire this outcome. He wants to make money by merely exploiting isolated

incidents of a minor nature which are distinct for their uncertainty and yield themselves to wild and indiscriminate betting. This is a simple exercise in mischief that does not call for any great skill. This is why I will not lose sleep over the recent episodes which have been blown out of proportion by both the media and law enforcement. But we must remember that the current political and business ambience in the country promotes dishonesty in every sphere of life, and cricket cannot remain unaffected by the attendant venality.

I am pained that all those who administer the game have been lambasted for either indifference or collusion with dishonest players and bookies. The charges levelled in this context cannot be disbelieved or ignored totally. But they contain only a grain of truth. To brand all officials as either dishonest or negligent would be unfair. This is particularly so after 2000 when corrective action was initiated in a major way. Severe disciplinary action – including a life ban against three delinquents – was taken. This was meant to act as a deterrent. What more could an administration do? This is why I take the stand that if a player is deter-

mined to be dishonest or has a congenitally flawed mental make-up, the harshest of measures will not stop him.

This explains what we witnessed recently with regard to a few IPL players. Just as we see that in the real world conventional crime is not deterred even by draconian laws, we should be prepared for shocks and surprises in the cricket arena. The regulation of severely curtailed access to players, both physical and in communication, has brought about some discipline. But to expect that this would totally eliminate misconduct is unrealistic and is asking for the moon. The nearest parallel is public servant corruption. Institutions like the CBI and the Lokpal may at best have a marginal impact on corruption. It is not very different in the case of those who play a game or administer it. Let us not go overboard seeking a special legislation or demanding more restrictions on players.

Eternal vigilance and less complacency could bring about a somewhat cleaner game which would delight

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 6)

I am sure you would not turn it down?

RK: I turned it down for two reasons. One, I wanted to do well in the Davis Cup and Wimbledon. When Kramer had made me the offer in 1959 I had not done either. I entered the Wimbledon semi-finals in 1960 and 1961, and helped India enter the Davis Cup final in 1966.

PR: But don't forget that had you not turned down pro you could not have played Davis Cup.

RK: Yes, the rules did not permit this; but if the rules had permitted, I would have taken the money and played Davis Cup too.

PR: We are talking of changing trends, and this is a related topic; sponsorship and the role that companies can play in the promotion of sports and sportsmen, I think it is about time that business houses in India took a more realistic view of the situation and upped the prize money and made job offers more attractive to budding young players, right?

RK: This is a very interesting topic. In those days, how was one to run a tennis tournament? By getting government grants and some donations. In those days we used to get a small amount for our expenses. The big change took place in 1968 with the advent of Open tennis, and one can call Jack Kramer the father of Open tennis. Today, so many youngsters, like Agassi, may not even know about Kramer; but they are reaping the benefits for which Kramer had to struggle. It was Kramer who opened the gates for professional tennis. All the youngsters making money now should thank Kramer for that. Kramer, while sacrificing a lot, made enemies. In those days it

The future of Indian tennis

was the International Tennis Federation and Tennis Associations which were running the game, and they made the rules and regulations. I think Open tennis came about because some of the tennis federations went too far with the rules. The federations were a bit too tough on the players. In America, for example, I remember the Association used to tell top players like Barry Mackay and others that unless they played in the American circuit they would not be allowed to play at Wimbledon. Kramer fought against this and gave greater freedom to the players. Greater support for the game came about via the public and media. These two are always No.1 for the game, and next come the sponsors. Sponsors have taken the place of the tennis federations. Without sponsors, you can forget professional sports.

PR: But the sponsorship scene has not really caught on in India, has it?

RK: It has in the last few years. I think we have wasted the whole of the 1970s in India in this regard. We did not keep abreast of the far-reaching changes that were taking place the world over since the advent of Open tennis. I feel this is because the AITA has always liked to have some control over the players.

PR: Sankar, you being an administrator, how would you reply to this?

NS: Tennis calls for a different sponsorship. It is not a team game like cricket. What you pay a good tennis player is a pitance compared to what he can

earn by himself. You need to nurture him during the early years and give him the opportunities to play more tournaments. Players need the sponsorship when they are still young and not when they are established.

RK: Sankar is involved in two things: he is President of the TNTA; he is also a sponsor of sports. As President of the Association, he cannot do as much for the game as he can do as a sponsor. He has a free hand as a sponsor, because he brings in the money. Sponsors should be given a free hand. If there is interference from the associations, they will withdraw and take up some other game. We have been making this mistake in India. I know instances when sponsors have come forward, but then the associations have put too many rules and regulations, with the result that the sponsors have backed out.

NS: In sponsorship, there are people who are still committed to the game and not so much for what they get out of it. A company does it to get advertisement or publicity. But we can support the game in many ways. For example, I have suggested to the TNTA that our company would sponsor the two artificial surfaces to be laid in the city. I doubt whether Chemplast will get anything out of this, but it is more out of interest in the game. There is another aspect to the sponsorship. One has to get the top stars to participate in the tournaments. Those who play in tournaments here are people like Vasudevan and Mark Ferreira who are good players, but then the public

have seen the top players in the world on TV or video and so they are really not keen on other players, and if you do not get the top players the sponsors will not come.

PR: Then do you think it will help if Ramesh Krishnan or Vijay Amritraj come and play in these tournaments?

NS: Absolutely. But then we have to make it worth their while.

RK: The importance of sponsors is so much now that even in the US championship, which is one of the Grand Slam events, the sponsors have their say. For instance, this is a two-week tournament and there are plenty of courts. But do you know what they do? They wait for the second Saturday and play the semi-finals at 6 o'clock in the evening, and McEnroe in one year beat Jimmy Connors and the match finished at 11.30 in the night after five-and-a-half hours, and the next day he was scheduled to be on the court against Borg at 3 o'clock. He had hardly 12 to 13 hours' rest. McEnroe objected to this and said, "This is nonsense; it is a two-week tournament; why can't you make me play on Friday and give me one day off?" The organisers insisted that he had to play since the sponsors were putting up a few million dollars and they wanted prime time on TV. So you can see how important sponsors are.

PR: Turning to administration, Sankar, to touch upon the national hard court championship, which was held here in February. One criticism was that the tournament was too unwieldy with a lot of entries

and a lot of the events held on so many courts. I felt it was difficult to conduct such a tournament. Do you think it would help if the entries for such tournaments are limited?

NS: The main objective of holding the national championship was to bring big tennis back to Madras after more than 11 years. I was particularly happy that despite live coverage of the men's final on Saturday morning, one-half of the Egmore Stadium was full. I did not expect such a crowd.

RK: I think Sankar did the right thing in having a lot of events and a lot of players. Eventually, you will get good players only if you have ranking tournaments.

NS: In fact, the players came and told me that it was nice to play a national tournament in Madras at the Egmore Stadium after a long time. We are trying to get the Egmore Stadium for our own, and then I believe we could develop the game further.

RK: We have to create more competitions at a junior level, now that sponsorship is coming in.

NS: Krish, you have been watching tennis closely for over 40 years. Who would you say is the greatest player of the era?

RK: As I already said, it is difficult to make a comparison of players of different eras. But I feel Rod Laver is the best. I have my reasons for saying this. It is not because he was my contemporary, but I state it because Laver could win on any surface. The definition of a true champion is to play and win anywhere and on any surface. That is why Laver won two Grand Slams. Secondly, I give very great importance to temperament. Laver could keep his emotions under control, but inside he was a demon who had the killer instinct.

Challenge to Chennai

(Continued from page 1)

Independent States, Africans and those from Southeast Asia. On the anvil are packages that cover visa, travel options, places of stay, sightseeing and, of course, treatment. Most significantly, Dubai believes that apart from the medical facilities, its infrastructure, safety record and friendly atmosphere will make all the difference. Dubai aims to cater to 500,000 international patients by 2020.

It is time that Chennai

wakes up to this threat. After all, its doctors, nurses and other para-medical staff are probably the most likely to be enticed. Secondly, when it comes to infrastructure, there is no denying that Chennai, no matter how international it claims to be, cannot hold a candle to Dubai. There are, of course, enough and more reasons for this, all of which are regularly touted, but the truth is that our city is struggling for basic amenities and is still a destination only because there are no better options as yet available. You only need to

contrast Chennai's current ratio of 2.1 beds to 1000 population to the WHO's norms of 3 per 1000 to get a picture.

What is noteworthy is that the Government of Dubai is taking an active interest in promoting the new strategy. This needs to be contrasted to what has happened in Chennai, where medical tourism came about largely because of various private initiatives and not because of any State-inspired drive. It cannot be denied that some of the Government hospitals in the city are centres of

excellence, but it is highly doubtful if any of them is in a position to cater to even upper class local residents, leave alone international visitors. Even in Dubai it can be seen that the plan is to bank more on private initiative than State sponsorship, but the State is keen to play a role as a facilitator by creating a framework for such an industry to develop. This is akin to the way industrial estates were set up in our city in the 1950s and IT Parks came up in the early years of this century. Can we now expect a similar master plan for improving infrastructure and promoting the medicare industry in Chennai/Tamil Nadu?



Till May 30: An exhibition of paintings by J. Antony Raj and M. Ramu (at DakshinaChitra).

Till May 31: Art works by Veera Santhanam – 'Museum collections make connections' (at DakshinaChitra).

June 4-30: Art exhibition by Brijesh Devareddy (at DakshinaChitra).

June 5-30: Photographs by Kushboo Bharti – art in public spaces of Jaipur. (at DakshinaChitra).

* * *

Children's Summer Art Utsav 2014 at DakshinaChitra:

May 7: Balloon sculpting. 10 years to 14 years.

May 8-9: Jewellery making – paper jewellery, bead jewellery and thread jewellery – 10 years to 14 years.

May 8-9: Strokes and Shades – water colour painting. 10 years to 15 years.

May 8-9: Paper Mache – moulding and mask making, collage art. 9 years to 14 years.

May 10-11: Theatre and folk – theatre games. 9 years to 15 years.

May 10-11: Palm leaf craft – palm leaf engraving, decorations and *thoranams*. 9 years to 14 years.

May 12: Nature walk at DakshinaChitra – flora & fauna, nature art and nature games. 8 years to 14 years.

For details contact Lakshmi Thyagarajan 98417 77779.

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DakshinaChitra Workshops

Workshop for adults

May 7-11: Tanjore painting

May 10, 11 & 17: Terracotta jewellery making

May 17 & 18: Kerala Mural on duppatta

May 31: Paper quilting jewellery

For Children (8-14 years)

May 10: Activity Camp One

May 17: Miniature heritage house models

May 24: Activity Camp Two

(Continued from page 1)

Road Congress recommendations of 1.8 metres. There is only one cycle track in the entire city – and that too only for a short stretch on Old Mahabalipuram Road (Rajiv Gandhi Expressway). The three rail corridors – Chennai Beach to Tambaram, Chennai Central to Tiruninravur, and Chennai Central to Minjur – are completely independent and in no way connected to road transport, a throwback to the 1930s when roadways were considered

a competition to the state-controlled railways. If that is a tragedy of history, what is sad is that the Mass Rapid Transport System, developed in the 1980s, was planned the same way with no interconnectivity of any kind with bus transport systems. The poor patronage for the MRTS, about 80,000 passengers a day, is chiefly due to this.

In the midst of all this is the Metropolitan Transport Corporation whose fleets of about

3700 buses run along something close to 800 routes. With an ageing fleet that is notorious for poor maintenance and a bad road safety record, this service operates on a stand-alone basis, subject to severe overcrowding. It is no surprise to see tightly packed passengers in a bus going along a busy thoroughfare, with an MRTS train running in parallel, largely empty!

These are the issues that the present study hopes to look

into. From here to action is but the next step but, given our track record that can be a lifetime, much depends on how serious the State Government is about tackling one of the biggest challenges the city faces. But given that the concept of a unified transport authority is still on paper despite being passed by the Legislature, the study too may remain on paper with no immediate solution in sight.

Is transport unification ahead?

Answers to Quiz

1. Saturn; 2. Cement; 3. Virat Kohli; 4. Windows XP; 5. Gulzar; 6. Vijay Seshadri; 7. Shikhar Dhawan; 8. Sanjaya Baru; 9. Cherrapunji; 10. INS Vikrant.

* * *

11. Pleasant; 12. He priced each (Tamil) letter of the name at Rs. 25; 13. Rane; 14. Coom; 15. TI Cycles; 16. Sangita Kalanidhi; 17. Bharati Women's College; 18. Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Perambur; 19. Karumuttu Thiagaraja Chettiar; 20. Veteran Lines in Pallavaram.

Fixing cricket matches

(Continued from page 7)

a majority of us looking for skill and entertainment. The IPL is more vulnerable than other formats. But that is no reason to look down upon it as a devalued form of a glorious game.

Let us not be blind to the enormous entertainment it has brought to the average housewife who wants relief from her daily cares of managing the household against spiralling prices and the agonising non-availability of domestic help. In sum, unless the moral fibre of the entire nation and the polity shows improvement, we cannot expect sports to remain insular and clean. (Courtesy: *Straight Bat*).

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