

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

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GARBAGE

Who cares what happens to it!

(By A Special Correspondent)

Chennai generates 3,000 tonnes of waste a day. Collecting, clearing and disposing off this quantity every day can be the most daunting task for even the toughest administrator.

Some time ago, the Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Sheela Ravi Chunkath, had suggested that, as a first step, every household and industrial establishment should segregate waste into organic, inorganic, solid and plastic components. This, she said, would make the job of the collection agencies easier.

How many people in Chennai would even have heard of this suggestion? How many of us actually segregate household waste in collectible bins? But even if this is done, by getting householders to cooperate through either education or the use of the big stick, what is to be done with the garbage collected?

Most of the garbage collected in Chennai at present ends up in waste dumps in Perungudi and Kodungaiyur. Shockingly, the large waste

(Continued on page 5)



Mama Sparrow makes sure the coast is clear.



The coast clear, Mama Sparrow dives through the horse's ear to reach her nest and will exit from the mouth after tending her young.



And while Mama Sparrow is busy in their home, Papa Sparrow keeps watch.

THE CITY AS AN ECOSYSTEM

A city attracts scores of new immigrants every day, consumes millions of litres of water a day, requires tens of thousands of tonnes of food materials, fuel etc. to keep its gigantic wheel turning. Having consumed all this it vomits out each day millions of litres of untreated sewage, thousands of tonnes of solid waste and an alarming amount of dangerous gas and suspended particles. A city like Madras with a population of around 5 million

Consumes in one day...

- 20,000 tonnes of oxygen
- 1.2 million tonnes of fresh water
- 15,000 tonnes of petroleum products
- 700 tonnes of firewood
- 10,000 tonnes of food
- 10,000 tonnes of materials (excluding food and fuel)

...and spews out every day

- 19,000 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide
- 180 tonnes of Carbon Monoxide
- 144 tonnes of Nitrous Oxides
- 80 tonnes of Hydrocarbons
- 65 tonnes of particulate matter, or dust
- 670,000 tonnes of dirty water through sewers
- 1400 tonnes of organic solids in sewage
- 500 tonnes of animal and livestock manure
- 1000 tonnes of foodwaste
- 15,000 tonnes of produced commodities through materials.

How do we tackle the waste of such an ecosystem?

(Courtesy: Montfort Community Development Service News)

A couple of sparrows still with us

We live in the middle of a row of three town houses. There are two courtyards, open to the sky. In between is the dining room. When we moved into the new house, 14 years ago, we were gifted a life-sized, hollow, terracotta horse's head. The obvious home for it was the wall of the courtyard... and it is now surrounded by climbing greenery. On the ground is a small terracotta pond, home to small fish and water plants, snails, occasional dragon-flies... and a source of delight to any child who sees it.

The horse had not been up too long before we saw the birds! A pair of house sparrows seemed to be quite intrigued with it... and I particularly welcomed the attention of these wee creatures, so much like the ones in my childhood home in England. Clever birds! They soon found the way into the head through the ears, and it was not too long before we saw they were building a nest. A few weeks later and we could hear the faint chirping of fledglings. What now, we wondered. But they knew exactly what they were doing...

They flew out to catch whatever it is their babies wanted, flew back, and Mother would go in through the right ear, out through the left, while Father sat on the nose guarding the brood... It did not take them long to realise that there was no danger to guard against... and the babies were perfectly safe in the

courtyard... no peril from squirrels or predatory crows! However... lurking in the background was a possible foe! Our beloved Siamese cat, Pushkin, but he once again proved my theory, that he thought he was human! The only thing we ever knew him to catch something, was a very dead squirrel, stiff with rigor mortis! He looked on all small creatures with friendly curiosity and the birds found no enemy in him.

When the babies were old enough to come out of the nest, they were taught to fly from the courtyard floor. In all these years, I think we have only seen one die. The parent birds keep the nest very clean by carrying the droppings in their beak. We might be sitting at the dining table and find a bird streaking inches above our heads from 'their' courtyard to the one opposite, oddly similar to some neighbours who put their garbage outside someone else's garden wall!! We can't say that their present 'parents' are the same, but for the past 14 years sparrows have occupied our home, they eat raw grains of rice and puffed rice, drink water from the fish-pond, enchant our grandchildren and ensure that we do not sleep much beyond sunrise. We are blessed by their presence.

Radha Gopalakrishnan
26/2, Arundale Beach Road
Kalakshetra Colony, Chennai 600 090.

First steps to restoring the Adyar

A plan to conserve and restore the Adyar as a free-flowing river envisages achieving this by diverting the sewage from it.

The Chennai Metrowater

Supply and Sewage Removal Board, which in March began laying new sewage lines in Adyar to prevent sewage from flowing into the Adyar river, intends to complete the work by

April 2003. After that, the desilting of the Adyar River will begin.

The new sewage lines will cover 8.15 km in Mylapore and (Continued on page 5)

Community grain banks, for food security

Community grain banks could well be the answer to India's 208 million undernourished and 250 million poor, almost 1/4th of the world's hungry population, said Dr. M.S. Swaminathan of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) recently. Addressing the Press on "grain mountains and hungry millions", he pointed out that the Green Revolution of the mid-1960s had helped to increase foodgrain production four times over the last 35 years. Consequently, despite the doubling of its population between 1960-2000, and the increase in the per capita food consumption by 18%, the country has an all-time high foodgrains stock of over 60 million tonnes! Yet it is NOT sufficient for providing food security to ALL! Social chaos would result if an answer to this paradox was not found.

India. By modifying the system and by adapting it to local needs, grain banks can serve a variety of causes in an integrated manner. Here the government and NGOs can play the role of facilitators and providers of food-based safety nets, to help both low-income producers as well as consumers. Also, grain banks can provide long-term food security in the region through ecological restoration and economic value addition. With decentralised storage, transportation and transaction costs of procurement and distribution are minimised. Most important, these will be managed by self-help groups with participation in them by the community, so there will be no conflict of interests."

According to Prof. Swaminathan, "The time is now opportune to launch a scheme

● by
Shobha Menon

A decentralised Community Grain Bank system had been mooted as part of the Chennai Declaration adopted at the end of the June "Consultation on Science for Sustainable Food Security, Nutrition Adequacy and Poverty Alleviation in the Asia Pacific Region" held at the MSSRF with the FAO participation. It was a precursor to the World Food Summit to be held in Rome later this year. Sustained by locally procured foodgrains (wherever feasible), the grain banks, linked to the rural godown scheme, could function under the overall umbrella of the Gram Sabha and be operated by local self-help groups of men and women. This would ensure their relevance to the local conditions as well as to low transaction costs. They would offer, for the first time, a unique opportunity of freedom from endemic hunger, it was stressed at the Press meet again by Dr. Swaminathan.

Dr. Swarna Vepa, Project Leader of Food and Security Projects at the MSSRF, says, "The concept of community grain banks is not new, since stocking of grains for the use of the village community is an age-old tradition in many parts of

like the Community Grain Bank Movement. On an average, one tonne of wheat or rice meets the annual food needs of five individuals in our country. Community grain banks, each with 200 tonnes of wheat or rice or other locally acceptable staples like ragi, jowar, bajra and maize could be established, to begin with, in 'hunger hot spot' villages. Remote areas with poor communications can be given priority. About 25,000 grain banks can be established during the next few months, if the Government of India will approve the release of 5 million tonnes of grains for this purpose immediately. Let the first year of the new millennium be a year of decisive action in our resolve to provide every individual in our country an opportunity for a productive and healthy life."

Dr. Swaminathan is convinced that India cannot be easily administered unless you have decentralised systems like this. But the need of the hour is to move from "Analysis to Action". "A synergy between public policy and a democratic public is necessary," he states, and adds, "Win-win situations are possible in every area, with adequate forethought, planning

What the figures reveal

The recently released M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation's *Food Insecurity Atlas of Rural India* finds that in rural India the most food-insecure States are Bihar, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh. The severely insecure States are Orissa, Chattisgarh, UP and Rajasthan. The moderately insecure States are Andhra Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Haryana, West Bengal, Assam and Gujarat. The moderately secure States are Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Maharashtra, while Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala are the only food-secure States.

The Report, however, does not go into the differences in food security within the boundaries of the States and states that it is important that each State produces, on the Swaminathan Foundation Report model, a "Food Insecurity Atlas" marshalling data FROM EACH DISTRICT. If that is done the food-insecurity picture in each State could well be different.

The Swaminathan Foundation Report covers all food items — cereals, tubers, pulses, sugar, edible oil, fruits and vegetables, as well as egg, fish and milk. In terms of environmental sustainability, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal rank top-most from the bottom. The reasonably sustainable States are Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh. Rajasthan and Haryana

have the most degraded land as a proportion of total geographical area.

In terms of population of States affected by floods, cyclones and heavy rains plus landslides, the most vulnerable States are Bihar and Jharkhand. Next come Uttaranchal and UP. Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan are not affected.

In terms of percentage of lives lost to total lives lost in two years, Orissa dominates with 62.3 per cent. In terms of percentage of drought affected areas, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka and, to a lesser extent, Maharashtra dominate. The Foundation has constructed a disaster-prone index, and here, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Maharashtra have top rankings.

In terms of food availability, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka and, strangely, Haryana and Maharashtra, are at the top. Taking into account the calorie intake of the lowest decile, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Kerala figure at the lower end. In terms of number of persons per thousand with zero meals per day, in the lower expenditure groups, the national average is 20 per cent. And Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Karnataka, Haryana, Bihar and Assam appear to suffer the most inadequacy.

Orissa, Punjab, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have the lowest percentage of households using the public distribution system. In Orissa the percentage is 5.2, in Bihar 5, Uttar Pradesh 5.2 and Gujarat 9.

The offtake of rice for TPDS groups is the highest in Tamil Nadu, followed by Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and UP. It seems in Orissa, 98 per cent of households do not purchase from the PDS.

The Report also points out that micro-nutrient deficiency, in terms of Calcium, is the highest in Orissa and Assam. Orissa also has the highest proportion of population with Vitamin A deficiency. In terms of adult health index, it is also at the bottom.

The PDS is well-developed, from a receiving angle, in States such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. It has hardly percolated to the issue end in such States as UP, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. For issuance of grains, it is not needed in Punjab and in Haryana.

It is to be hoped that the Swaminathan Foundation will issue a Report each year on the state of the minimum food security in the land. — (From an article by P.R. Brahmananda, in *Businessline*.)

and implementation. And once the movement begins, it will sustain itself, because it is people-controlled. It has already started in a big way in the Anna Koshas of Madhya Pradesh, while Rajasthan is willing to start under the Gandhigram Yojana scheme. We need to learn from the negative experiences, and not give up hope. We have an obligation to remove endemic hunger for it is our ethical responsibility. So, why don't we, instead of acting by reflex to problem situations, or compartmentalising, look at them holistically?"

Discussing the Tamil Nadu situation, it was pointed out, "Tamil Nadu is actually a deficit state, as its status on the Food Access Map is very low." The problem is of availability because per capita production is low, but per capita consumption is also low — the lowest 10% of the population consumes only 64% of the prescribed ICMR norm of cereal consumption (420 gm/capita/day). The State has the largest percentage of people who are dependent on incomes from labour, and also the highest percentage of landless labourers (26.6% of rural households). Yet, on the Food Security Map, considering all the 19 indicators that affect

Food Security as a whole, Tamil Nadu is moderately secure (along with Kerala), "a strange case of rural prosperity without the comparable resource availability of a state like Punjab". The reason for this is that, for the major part, the deficit in production and availability is taken care of by the better PDS infrastructure (which is definitely better in the four southern states) and this helps the State's rural population eat better. So, the nutritional status of the State is better on the whole because of the existing infrastructure. "Fortunately or unfortunately the political spectrum that depends very heavily on the aspect of freebies for the population ensures that at least

50% of the available produce reaches the lower levels!" Dr. Vepa stated. What is more people-oriented and a more people-friendly solution is the establishment of decentralised Community Grain Banks, according to the MSSRF. Prime Minister Vajpayee, while releasing the Food Insecurity Atlas of Rural India prepared by the MSSRF and the U.N World Food Programme earlier this year has projected August 15th 2007 (which marks the 60th year of Independence), as the nation's deadline for achieving substantial freedom from hunger. The Community Grain Bank could well be the solution, and an idea whose time has come.

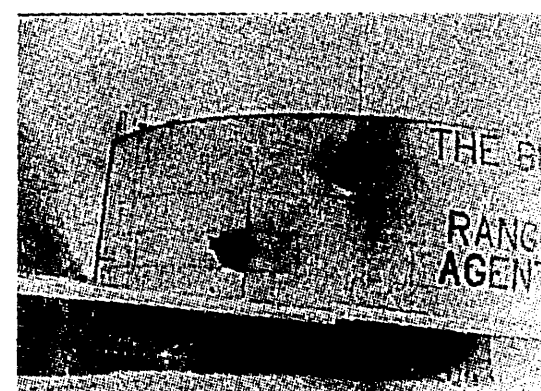
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Kerosene Oil Tank No. 1 — twice struck, but fortunately empty.



Kerosene Oil Tanks Nos. 2 and 3 belched fire and smoke through the night.



What was left of the oil tanks after the flames subsided, at 9 the next morning.



The damaged General Post Office stables.

● One September

When Madras was shelled

(By A Staff Reporter)

The first time Madras was targeted during the course of two World Wars was 87 years ago this fortnight. A little noticed historic plaque on the east compound wall of the High Court commemorates the shelling of the city by the German cruiser *Emden* on September 22, 1914. It caused much damage to British prestige and disrupted shipping in the Indian Ocean in just ten minutes.

The *Emden* fired about 125 shells at the Port of Madras and its environs, hitting the pre-

mises of the Burmah Oil Company and causing damage to the tune of £30,000, which included the loss of 350,000 gallons of kerosene stored in two tanks. South Indian Railway wagons, the walls of the outer rooms of the Disinfecting Shed, the boiler room, the new staff quarters in the Port Trust Ward (*Springhaven*), the northeast corner of the Madras Sailing Club and the General Post Office stables were also damaged. Shells also fell on the main road to *Springhaven*, by the light-house, by the General Hospital,

Maddox Street in Vepery, Haddow's Road and Poona-mallee High Road.

Fragments of shells fell on the gun battery in Royapuram, the High Court, Binny's Company house in Casa Major Road, on various parts of George Town, and 1st and 2nd Line Beach.

Shells also damaged the British India steamship *Chupra* and the Japanese cruiser *Chikkama*, anchored in the harbour. A steel lighter belonging to M/s. Binny & Co., and M/s. Gordon Woodroffe's launch *Scotia* were also damaged.

The gunners of the 68th Heavy Battery, RGA, retaliated, firing three shells at the *Emden* and with the third put out her searchlights, whereupon she vanished into the dark. The *Emden*, a light cruiser stationed at Tsingtao (China), as part of Admiral Graf Von Spee's Far East Squadron, put to sea on July 31, 1914 under Captain Helmut von Muller, to raid shipping in the Indian Ocean. Her first interception was a Russian mail steamer. She went on to capture 24 Allied ships and caused damage to the tune of £10,000,00.

HMAS *Sydney*, an Australian light cruiser, her 6" main guns outgunning the 4.1" ones of the *Emden*, finally caught up with the raider near the Cocos Islands. When the *Sydney's* firepower proved too much, the *Emden* hauled down her flag and raised a white flag ending the battle on November 9, 1914. Aboard was Champakaraman Pillai, the cruiser's surgeon, a Malayalee who had studied in Madras and gone on to Germany for higher studies.

A fragment of one of the shells fired by the *Emden* and the case of a shell fired in defence of Madras are displayed at the Fort St. George Museum.

GARBAGE

(Continued from page 1)

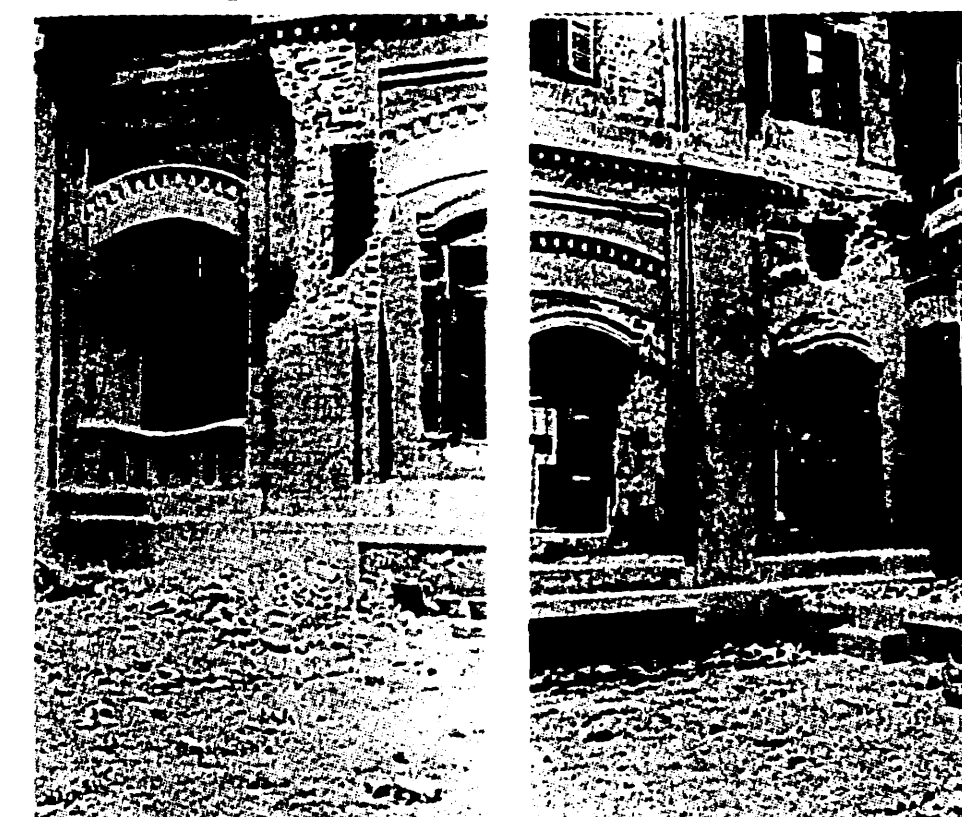
dump in Perungudi, which receives 1,400 tonnes of solid waste a day, is situated in the city itself; Kodungaiyur is on the outskirts. And what do these waste dumps produce? Poisonous gases. To add to that, there is the heat from the burning fires that neighbours and passers-by can palpably feel! For all that, efforts were indeed made, not so very long ago, to treat solid waste.

Four years after TIDCO had initiated a project to process solid waste into energy, the project has not got underway. After international competitive bids were invited in September 1998, an Australian company, one of Australia's top 50 companies, was found to be the lowest bidder, and received the award letter in January 1999 for a 600 tonne per day waste processing plant, to generate 14.85 mw of power. Thereafter, there has hardly been any progress. Even draft agreements, like the Water Supply Agreement, have not been

finalised, although KPMG, the consultants, had given their recommendations.

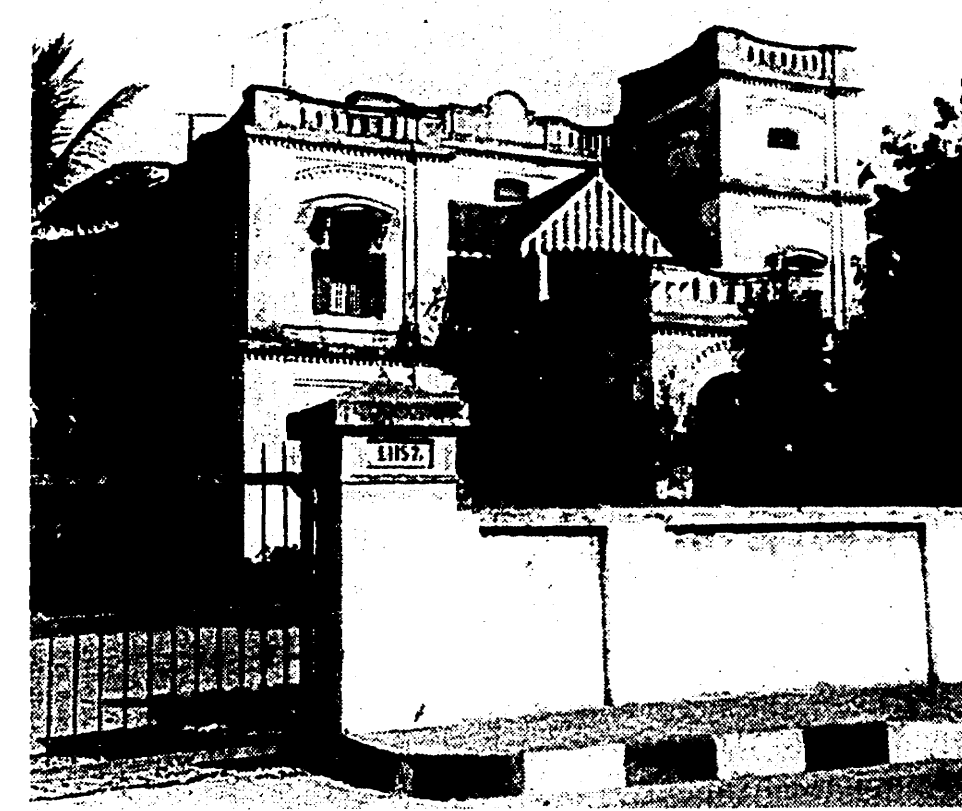
The contentious issue seems to be the tariff rate, with the TNEB steadfast on its rate of Rs. 2.70 per kwh of power produced, a rupee lower than what was bid and agreed to by the Tamil Nadu Government and TIDCO in the contract with the Australian company. The TIDCO suggestion that the difference be treated as a subsidy for 15 years, to be equally divided among the Chennai Corporation, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board and the Tamil Nadu Government, has been agreed to only by the Corporation. And with Tamil Nadu politics being as it is, what will happen to the project is another question altogether.

Meanwhile, deadly dioxins, furans and leachates are being spewed out at Perungudi, and will continue to do so until the administrators meet, review and approve at a leisurely pace a project that will remove these dangers to our environment.



Yesterday and Today

We once again switch from the OLD and the NEW to YESTERDAY and TODAY this fortnight. YESTERDAY's pictures are of 4b Spring Gardens, which was struck by three shells during the *Emden's* raid on Madras on September 22, 1914. The homes in Spring Gardens for the Port Trust's officers had been built only a short while earlier and, as the pictures show, their garden had still to be developed. Our TODAY is one of the homes in Spring Gardens today. Note the identical embellishments beneath the balustrades and above the windows. This is the only building in the row with these embellishments. Could LHS 7 as it is numbered today have been 4b in 1914, or was 4b a building that no longer exists?



RESTORING THE ADYAR

(Continued from page 1)

11 km in Adyar. The new lines laid under the Chennai City River Conservation Project (CCRCP) will upgrade the existing drainage system in the city.

Under the project, initially, the sewage draining into the various waterways (like the Adyar, Buckingham Canal and Cooum) will be intercepted, diverted and treated. The treated water will then be used to grow forests in the suburbs by the Forest Department.

Once the new lines become operational, the sewage over-

flow will come down. "The capacity of these lines will support the population increase in this area till 2030," say, state Metrowater officials.

Apart from the new sewage lines, the project also includes the upgradation of the pumping station serving South Beach, Adyar Bridge, Gandhi Nagar 4th Main, Kasturba Nagar 1st Main, and Canal Bank Road as well as pumping station at Nandanam, Adyar and Guindy. The sewage flowing into the pumping stations will be diverted directly to Perungudi for treatment. — (Courtesy: *Adyar Times*)

Quizzin' with Ram'nan

(Questions 1 to 12 are from the period August 16th to 31st. Questions 10 to 12 pertain to Chennai. Questions 13 to 20 relate to Tamil Nadu.)

1. Which legendary athlete rejected the Arjuna Award for "lifetime contribution" citing poor selection procedures?
2. According to a four-year detailed research, what could have been the reason for the Oracles of Pythia at Delphi?
3. Why was the star 47 Ursae Majoris in the news?
4. Which Indian international weightlifter was banned for six months for doping?
5. Irene Zubaida Khan, a 44-year old Bangladeshi, is the first woman head of which international body?
6. What new levy did the Railways announce recently?
7. Name the U.S. company given a patent for the much talked about Basmati rice?
8. Which revolutionary computer OS celebrated its tenth birthday on August 26th?
9. Who recently became India's youngest chess Grandmaster?
10. Where is the State government planning to construct three new reservoirs to augment the city's water resources?
11. Where in the city did Southern Railway build a subway in a record ten hours on August 19th?
12. What is the 'Yellow Brigade' in Chennai?
13. Which 150-year old educational institution was founded in 1850 at Popham's Broadway in Chennai?
14. Where is the State-owned TN Industrial Explosives Ltd., factory, where there was an explosion leading to 23 deaths?
15. Which existing district is to be bifurcated, with the HQ for the new one being at Krishnagiri?
16. The only freehold property of Her Majesty's Government in India is in the State. Where?
17. How many districts make up the State now?
18. If Chennai tops the slum populace list with 10,79,414 persons, which comes last?
19. Name the brand of tea launched by the Government on August 28th?
20. Where was G.K. Moopanar, the TMC president, who passed away on August 30th, born?

(Answers on Page 8)

When the tram came to Madras

The 'tramcar', they say, is a thing of the past: like the Dinosaur, it is on the way out wherever it is still extant. I do not fully share this view. I believe that it is a hardy strain and will put up a fight before going down. But in South India, it is extinct. In Calcutta, I am told, it is still going strong. Outside India, the colourful "streetcar" (tram) service in San Francisco, a city with many ups and downs, is still a well-cherished adornment-cum-utility proposition. Melbourne too has its trams. And there must be several other cities still nurturing trams. The humble tramcar, many will be surprised to learn, is the father of our much vaunted railway systems. Not only that. The tram service running on rail tracks gave place also to the trolley car, a hybrid having the good points of both the tramcar and the motor bus. Trolley buses used to run in Delhi in the late 1940s, and continue to serve many big cities in other countries.

● Going through our old clipping files, we came across a series of five articles R.A. PADMANABHAN, a veteran journalist, wrote for the now sadly defunct Indian Review. Today, the subjects of these articles have become commonplace or have vanished, but we publish the series as a reminder of their beginnings. This is the second article in the series.

— The Editor

The electric tramcar came to Madras in 1895, ten years after it was introduced for the first time in the United States, and some 35 years after the world's first electric tramway in England. Its advent, operation, and closure in Madras were all British achievements deriving from transport used in the mines. In the 19th century, collieries and stone quarries used horse-drawn trucks on wooden tracks for the conveyance of their output. The wooden tracks gave way to iron plateways, which ultimately developed into iron rail-roads and the railway track. The box cars used by the earliest collieries and quarries were called trams. You could see these 'trams' on the Pallavaram hill sides until not so long ago, serving the stone quarries there. In Great Britain, horse-trams were first used for carrying passengers in the 1860s. While this

tram service was used in the streets, separate rail-roads also came into use. While the railways were still developing, steam locomotives were introduced in the tramways by about 1882 and remained in the use in some sections in Britain till 1905. In Paris, steam haulage of trams on the streets continued until 1913. In the United States, Van Dapoe and Sprague developed the electric trolley car between 1884 and 1887. America's first electric 'street railway' was opened on August 10, 1885 in Baltimore. A tramcar consists of a body and a chassis or truck. There are two motors, one at each end, each of which drives one pair of wheels through reduction gear. Tramcars are usually arranged to run either way and controlling apparatus is provided on both end-platforms. In Madras, sanction to construct the first tram lines was issued by Government in their order dated April 6, 1892 to

Messrs. Hutchinson & Co. Ltd. of London. Hutchinson's promoted the first tramway company in Madras with a nominal capital of £100,000. It was not until 1895 that the first tramway section was completed and opened for the use of the public. I quote the history of the Madras Tramways from the excellent *Official Handbook of the Corporation of Madras (1950)*, which is a mine of information on many aspects of history and civic life in the City. The *Handbook* says: "The original tramways were constructed on the Conduct System, i.e. the live conductor was situated underground, but it was found that owing to the flooding of the streets during heavy rains, the electric current for the tramways could not be maintained and eventually this system was abandoned and the Overhead System was installed. In 1900, the original com-



When the trams ran in Madras... the Round Tana junction on Mount Road. (Photograph courtesy VINTAGE VIGNETTES.)

pany were obliged to sell the undertaking as their capital proved inadequate. The purchasers, the Electric Construction Co. Ltd., England, who were the suppliers of the material for the original tramway company, then operated the tramways in Madras for a period of four years under the name of the Madras Electric Tramways Trust. In 1904, the present Company, known as the Madras Electric Tramways (1904) Ltd. was formed and has been carrying on business from that date. In 1905, 1911 and 1919, extensions were made to the tramway system in Madras with the sanction of the Local Government and the Company has now about 11 miles of double track and about 5½ miles of single track over which its tramcars operate. Since many Madras roads were not broad enough for two tramcars to run abreast, the single track (two rails embedded in the road) had to be used in many places. Here a system of flag signals during the day and red and green lights at night was operated, to allow trams to pass one way. Here and there, in broader areas of the road, were 'islands' of double track, where up and down tramcars passed one another, as in railway stations. Broadway, the narrow street, was one such bottleneck, another was in Chintadripet, while other such spots existed in Triplicane, Mylapore and Purasawalkam. The Chintadripet street corner near the market where the tramcar from Ripon Buildings side turned towards Sami Naicken Street became, in popular parlance, *Jenda Maram*, the Flag Post corner! The tramway company also became the pioneer bus operator in the city. The *Handbook* of the Corporation says: "In 1925-27, the Tramway Company operated a fleet of fifty motor buses and was the first to open up the suburban bus routes around the city on which buses now regularly run. This service was abandoned in 1928 as, owing to the low fares charged at this period, the scheme was not a financial success." Fares on the Madras

tramcars were also unbelievably cheap. The minimum fare was half anna (equivalent to present 3 paise), and you could go all the way from Parry's Corner to Purasawalkam for a paltry one anna and three pice (equivalent to 8 paise). Monthly passes were also issued at considerably reduced concessional charge. For office-goers and students, womenfolk, vegetable and fruit vendors and petty shopkeepers, the tramcars were a real boon. Till the late Thirties, most tramcars were of the old open bench type. A series of benches, each accommodating five or six persons, were built row behind row, with a closed end on one side and entrance on the other. Two-foot-wide planks fixed along the length of the tramcar provided the steps to get up to and down from the benches. Since passengers got down from the side of tramcars, they were prone to be hit by vehicles coming from behind, and accidents did occur. This led to the introduction of closed tramcars, which were similar to railway bogies, with long corridor seats or rows of short seats inside, and entrances at either end. These improvements to rolling stock came about around 1939, when improvements were also made to the tramway lines. Many single track lines were doubled and all open type tramcars were taken off the road. In 1950, the mileage and rolling stock position was: Rolling stock: 110 tramcars (all single deck; Madras had no double-deckers), the majority equipped not only with electric brakes and hand brakes but also with compressed air brakes. Mileage: The tramlines covered about 16½ miles of roads in the city. The daily car mileage totalled approximately 7,383 miles. The number of passengers carried daily was around 1,72,000. Routes: The service-routes in 1950 were: 1. Between Mylapore and Parry's Corner and Royapuram 2. Between Triplicane and Washermanpet, via China Bazar 3. Between Purasawalkam and Parry's Corner, via Elephant Gate Junction 4. Between Purasawalkam and

(Continued on page 7)

The Jaipur way

Why can't it be the way in Tamil Nadu?

The Jaipur Chapter of INTACH has been awarded a Rs.50 crore contract by the Asian Development Bank for conservation of the heritage of Jaipur. This is the biggest ever grant given in India to a non-profit organisation for this sort of activity. The project involves 6 months of preparing detailed drawings of the work to be done and 3 years for execution, which will be done on a contract basis, with Jaipur Heritage, a Citizens' Initiative (INTACH, Jaipur), employed to supervise it all. John Singh, Convener, Jaipur Heritage, writes: "The response from the Government has been phenomenal, to say the least. They want to listen, they want expert opinions, they want to do the right things and they are matching them with actual decisions and speedy action. This was the opportunity we were looking for (probably happens once in a lifetime) and we have had to mobilise all our resources to match the need and expectancy of the Government. We have been interacting almost on a daily basis with the Minister, Mayor, Urban

Development, Municipal Corporation etc. Outside the ADB project, we have been asked by the Minister personally to undertake four projects at a time, high profile but not necessarily too big — like Hawa Mahal, the Gates of Jaipur etc. His and most of his team's thinking and ours matches. We were very pleasantly surprised. The Mayor would like us to organise the Jaipur Haat, which has already been sanctioned — and we have just the right person in our new Citizens' Forum. We have been appointed by the Government to be involved in virtually every decision-making in the development of Jaipur. We are organising workshops to expose the Government to many fronts — legal, conservation, water management etc. Our plans (while the iron is hot) are very large indeed and of course very ambitious but then that's the way we have always operated, the way that keeps us busy and in which we have been successful in the past, fully

What happened to good old Madras?

As we clip-clop in the tonga — my favourite mode of transport — from Madras Central to our home, I turn my face up at the fresh cool drops of rain and breathe in deeply the wonderful fragrance of wet earth. The trees on either side glide gracefully past, swaying gently in the breeze. Like droplets of water flying out of the wet black tresses of a maiden, shaking her head from side to side, the trees send a shower of raindrops every time the playful Wind God nudged them to do a jig. Dear, old Madras! The tree-lined avenues, the beautiful stretch of Marina Beach, peaceful and clean, where Grandma would be taken to breathe in the fresh ozone-filled air, while drinking in the beauty of the vast, blue ocean, the silence broken occasionally by little boys selling mouth-watering *sundal* and *verkadalai*. I walk down verdant fields, dotted with tall coconut and *nungu-laden* trees, some ramrod straight and some gracefully

curved — and wave playfully to a yellow glider, circling low overhead. The weather in Madras was always blessed with a regular balancing act by the kind Gods. When the city would just begin to wilt in the heat, Lord Varuna, admonishing the powerful Surya for crossing the 'Laxman Rekha', would send down wonderful showers, drenching everything and everyone, filtering deep down into many layers of the earth. When we ate off banana leaves, sitting down cross-legged, when we slept on the cold, mat-covered floor, when comfortable cottons were the sensible garbs. Those were the days of simple wants and minimum needs, when Madras was a fairly clean city in almost every sense of the world — environmentally, socially and administratively. As I look around the rampant consumerism so thoughtlessly and needlessly pursued by us all these years, a miserable picture is conjured up — a man

sadly hunched up, with his head in his hands, surrounded by every luxury he covets but without the two most precious necessities — water and air — both ravaged by his fellowmen. Corrosion, erosion, pollution and population explosion everywhere. What have we created for ourselves — with total lack of foresight and utter selfishness? What kind of a world are we leaving behind for our children and the innocent generations to follow? The Kasargode children, the 1-year old with chemotherapy tubes sticking out from all over its tiny body, the 2-year old girl with the prettiest head of curly hair now totally bald with cancer treatment and more and more. Let us all wake up and bring those days back OR at least stop further havoc and salvage what is left of it. NOW! Let us not forget that we are but birds of passage. Let us leave behind a beautiful world.

Shobha Manickam

understanding our limitations and knowing that most achievements have something to do with fate. We are going ahead with plans for an interactive website, which will not only have all the archbishops dealing with all the subjects that are precious to us but, since we are in the Task Force and have access to government

plans, also be able to have transparency in Government borrowing, spending and other intentions and give the citizens an opportunity to respond. We cannot, simply cannot, be in a position where the Government asks the private sector to respond and we do the job in a lethargic, non-professional manner. We may never get this

chance again. We could, through this opportunity and working at so many different levels, really put ourselves on the map and in a position where the Government just has to take us seriously. Editor's Note: Why can't there be a Government-Private sector initiative in Chennai in the Jaipur manner to save and restore Chennai's heritage?

When the tram came to Madras

(Continued from page 6)

Central Station, via Elephant Gate and through Wall Tax Road 5. Between Egmore and Parry's Corner and Royapuram 6. Between Parry's Corner and Mount Road, via Chintadripet. The Mylapore tramline turned into Cutchery Road and terminated at San Thome Cathedral corner. The Royapuram terminus was located before the Church, the tramline going round it for the return journey. Parry's Corner and Customs House were busy terminals, tramcars rounding up near the High Court wall in Parry's Corner. In Washermanpet, the terminus was a little beyond the railway level crossing. In Triplicane, the tramline went along Triplicane High Road up to Barber's Bridge. The Purasawalkam terminus was opposite Tana Street on the High Road. At Central, the terminus was outside the eastern gate, on Wall Tax Road. The tramline to

Egmore went along Poonamallee High Road and, turning towards Egmore station at Rundall's Road junction, came to a stop east of the station near the northern booking office of the suburban electric railway. The Chintadripet line went along Poonamallee Road upto Ripon Buildings and turned into Chintadripet at the railway level crossing opposite. Passing through Chintadripet, the line terminated opposite Gaiety Talkies. Overhead electric supply wires hung over tram lines and grooved iron rails embedded on the road surface marked all the streets and roads through which the trams rattled. In many narrow streets, traffic jams occurred because of tram traffic upsetting or hindering other traffics. Even on broad thoroughfares, as trams moved on fixed rails, other traffics had to adjust themselves to available space. All these were minus points against the tram service.

All along the tram routes, red and blue boards fixed to the tramline posts proclaimed "All Cars Stop Here" or "Cars Stop Here on Request". Human nature being what it is, some drivers of late hour trams would speed past compulsory stopping places or ignore frenzied stop requests by passengers standing on the road. However, most drivers and conductors were generally an obliging lot: even the inspectors were courteous rather than curt. As will always happen, there were some 'characters' among tramline staff. In an age when beards were not common, there were some bearded patriarchs with broad smiles to boot. One tram driver, with a wide forehead and a *naaman* covering his entire forehead, was a well-known personality. Some of the inspectors got on to running trams in style and got off in the same fashion, setting examples for young men to emulate. The tramway in Madras city

came to an abrupt end sometime in the mid-Fifties. I do not have the papers concerning the debacle readily, but I recall that labour trouble was the prime cause. The tramway union, led by Communists, up in arms against the British management, started the row and the tram service was suddenly closed. The union charge was that a sizeable part of the profits was being remitted to shareholders in Britain without giving the staff more pay. The tramway company pleaded loss in running the service. Appeals were made to the Government to take over the service, but the Kamaraj Ministry, then in power, after considering all aspects of the case, allowed the tram service to terminate for all time. With the tram service coming to an unexpected end, its main shed on Poonamallee High Road changed hands, to become the Periyar Thidal of today. The shed on Royapettah

High Road was taken over by the Electricity Board. The overhead wires along tram routes were removed, but it was said that it was unprofitable to remove the tramline rails embedded in the roads. I don't know if these were ultimately removed at all or still remain underground. The closure of the tram service, a cheap mass transportation medium, gave a fillip to bus transport in the city. Hope expressed by some that the overhead tramlines could be used to run a trolley bus service in the city, electrically run buses with rubber tyres, buses that would not be tied to fixed rails on the road surface, did not materialise. The tramline in Madras is a thing of the past. While it existed, it served people fairly well, despite inherent drawbacks. Now, it remains a nostalgic memory. R.A. Padmanabhan

A cricketing home away from home

(By A Staff Reporter)

Many players born outside the State are playing in the TNCA First Division league. Many of them do not actually live in Tamil Nadu, even though the rules specifically provide for residential qualification. Many of them take part in matches in their respective States as well. Why do our club secretaries close their eyes to this gross violation?

The following 42 players are honourable guests of Tamil Nadu Cricket's First Division teams. More will join on the return of the Indian team from Sri Lanka. (Editor's Note: This was written shortly after the Sri Lanka tour began.)

The TNCA appears to be promoting national integration through cricket. Rules or no rules, the First Division teams appear to be able to take any number of State players from other States and groom them for the national team. It is indeed a great fortune for these cricketers from outside the State who are paid salaries for doing nothing in any office and who also get allowances for their travel to represent corporate-sponsored teams for a mere league trophy.

Tamil Nadu cricketers can now safely book their berths to places like Goa, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand etc. to get the competition practices they need to make it to the State's Ranji team. In spite of the efforts of Tamil Nadu to help the nation's cricketers, the performance of the Indian team continues to be deplorable.

Players from outside the State playing in Tamil Nadu are:

Jolly Rovers	: Jacob Martin (Baroda and India) Dinesh Mongia (Punjab and India) Ajay N. Kudua (Kerala) Somasundar (Karnataka) G. Jayakumar (Kerala) Vikram Kumar (Karnataka)
SPIC	: Ishan Malhotra (Jammu & Kashmir) Harish Puri (Punjab) L.N. Prasad Reddy (Andhra) Shorab Edapally (Kerala)
Vijay	: Sunil Oasis (Kerala) Murali Karthik (Railways) Syed Ismail (Hyderabad) M.A. Satheesa (Kerala)
Globe trotters	: Abhishek Chowdry (Baroda) Mohd. Kaif (U.P. and India) Irfan Parhan (Baroda)

	: Melvin D'Souza (Karnataka) Rajat Bhatia (Gujarat)
SIRC	: Sayed Shahabuddin Paras L. Mhambrey (Bombay) Badri Attavar (Karnataka) Mohamed Faiq (Andhra) Hassan (Karnataka) Satyajit Medappa
India Pistons	: Nilesh M. Kulkarni (Bombay and India) Tinu Yohanan (Kerala) Vikram Rathore (Punjab and India)
Mosquitoes	: Prasanth Chandran (Kerala) Sujoy Parui (Bengal) Vishal Kudawala (Haryana) Nalin Mani Rai (Gujarat) B. Anand (Maharashtra)
I.O.B.	: Amit Pathak (Andhra) K.N. Ananthapadmanabhan (Kerala)
Kohinoor	: Venkatapathy Raju (Hyderabad and India) Rajesh Khanna H. Warekar (Gujarat) C. Atrai (Bengal) Varun Gulad (Kerala)
Alwarpet	: Sandeepkumar Sawal (Punjab) Matcheswara Rao

— (Courtesy: *Straight Bat*)

NOTE BY THE CORNER FLAG: While Chennai's corporates have done a splendid job supporting through sponsorship cricket in the State, it is time they took stock of the issues that the correspondent in *Straight Bat* has raised. Isn't it time we had no more than TWO 'professionals' from outside the State in any team? And shouldn't there be some standards for these players, such as each should have played for a State team in the Final Rounds of Ranji competition? This would not only ensure the best from out of State — offering Tamil Nadu players greater competition — but would also offer Tamil Nadu players more places in the top teams in the State. It might even make the out-of-State players offer greater competition as well as help to players in their own States.

Dates for Your Diary

Till September 20: 'Animals of the Earth'. An exhibition of paintings and sculptures by R.B. Bhaskaran, P.G. Desai, Nupur Chatterjee, Laxma Goud, Muralidharan, Rajasekharan Nair, G. Reghu, Sanker Patel and Devilal Patidar (at Apparao Galleries).

September 21 and 22: Block batik. A workshop (at Dakshina-Chitra).

Till September 23: 'Form and Colour', an exhibition of recent sculptures and prints by Dimpji Menon. (At Vinyasa Art Gallery, Music Academy.)



An exhibit by Dimpji Menon.

October 6-17: 'The Embryo' — a solo exhibition of paintings by Puneer Kaushik. (Apparao Galleries.)

Answers to Quiz

1. Milkha Singh; 2. A gaseous emission from two faults running below the Temple; 3. Astronomers have reportedly discovered a planetary system, with two planets, similar to ours; 4. Kunjarani Devi; 5. Amnesty International; 6. 'Safety Fund' levy; 7. Rice Tec; 8. Linux; 9. P. Harikrishna.

* * *

10. Tirukkandalam, Zamin Korattur; Tiruneermalai and Pallikaranai; 11. Tiruvottiyur (linking Ambedkar Nagar and Manickam Nagar); 12. A full-fledged crime prevention squad on motorcycles.

* * *

13. Government College of Arts and Crafts; 14. Christianpet, near Katpadi in Vellore District; 15. Dharmapuri Dist.; 16. Cottingley, the home of the Deputy British High Commissioner in Chennai; 17. 22; 18. Pattukkottai; 19. Ooty Tea; 20. Kapistalam in Thanjavur District.

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