

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

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Mentally and physically I'm still in Goa!

June Blues

The first week of June. Chennai goes through a strange Pied-Piper-strikes-again metamorphosis as more and more children disappear through the better part of the day. And young faces sport a distinct impending-doom expression.

You can't blame the kids for feeling depressed.

It's tough going back to school after a gap of nearly eight weeks, with doubts and fears a mere adult will never understand.

Will your class contain the same faces? Will you sit next to the same people? Will your best friend still be the same?

Or will you find a horrid change-ling who thoroughly lets you down by growing taller, suddenly sporting straight teeth or hair, and talking about bungee-jumping, while all you have to show for your holidays is one sweaty, boring picnic, and a couple of movies?

What happens if groups change, leaving you alone at lunch time?

Will your class draw a young, cheerful class teacher, or get stuck with Old Nightmare-in-Chalk, the Scourge of the Staff Room, instead?

Is your new school-bag just a little too obviously new?

What if you are the only one in class who still hasn't seen "Attack of the Clones"?

And all the clueless adults in your life can do is babble, "Oh, come on, think what fun you'll have in your new class!"

Yeah, right.

Oh, well, there's always end of them.

Ranjitha Ashok

The case against plastics

It is without doubt a tough decision to say 'No to Plastics', but definitely several of today's applications of plastics (barring a few, which can be replaced with lesser toxic varieties) are replaceable.

One basic fact must be understood: that the boon of plastic becomes a bane when it gets thrown onto the environment. Bio-degradability of plastics may take thousands of years but this does not mean they are necessarily stable. The chemicals that go into the plastics, such as additives and colouring agents (heavy metals), leach out and cause toxic pollution problems. Current research worldwide has confirmed the worst fears. (Refer to table below on health impacts.) Chemical migration, from plastic packaging into contents, has been reported. Examples of plastics contaminating food have been reported with most plastic types, including Styrene from Polystyrene, plasticizers from PVC, antioxidants from Polyethylene, Bisphenol A from Polycarbonate, and Acetaldehyde from PET.

HEALTH IMPACTS OF DIFFERENT PLASTICS

Raw materials / Additives	Toxicity
Polyethylene (PE)	Burning of polyolefins can generate volatile compounds like formaldehyde and acetaldehyde which are suspected carcinogens. ¹
Polypropylene (PP)	Burning of polyolefins can generate volatile compounds like formaldehyde and acetaldehyde which are suspected carcinogens. ¹
PET	During manufacturing, it can cause irritation to respiratory tract and eyes, and also some incidence of cancer. ¹
Polystyrene (PS)	Breathing styrene may cause leukemia. Weakly carcinogenic on animals when breathed or swallowed. ²
Phenol (PF)	Found to cause cancer in mice when phenol is put on the skin. ²
ABS (Acrylonitrile-butadiene styrene)	Humans repeatedly exposed to Acrylonitrile at the workplace may develop lung cancer. ²
Polyurethane (PUR)	It has been associated with occupational health problems that include isocyanate asthma. ¹
Formaldehyde	Formaldehyde is a probable cancer-causing substance. ³
Polyvinyl acetate	Vinyl acetate can cause blisters and irritation in workers. Animal studies show that breathing of this chemical by rats can cause increased tumours of nose. ²
Bisphenol A	Bisphenol is a hormone disruptor, and is known to cause damage to the reproductive systems of humans and mice. ³
DOP (plasticizer)	Diethyl phthalate may be harmful by inhalation, ingestion or skin absorption, can have toxic effects on embryo or foetus, is a possible carcinogen. ⁵
DOA (plasticizer)	Diethyl adipate exposure may cause irritation in respiratory tract and skin,

(Continued on page 7)



The height of summer is over — and it was a summer during which both man and animal suffered. Our pictures today show how a dog in suburban Chennai beat the heat, and how two carters helped a bull tackle the situation in the heart of Chennai.



MVVC launched in the City

(By A Correspondent)

A Motor Vehicle Verification Counter was recently inaugurated in Chennai at the office of the Commissioner of Police.

K. Vijaya Kumar, Commissioner of Police, stated that Tamil Nadu had taken the lead in setting up this centre, the only centre outside New Delhi. He pointed out that this was one more area where technology played an important role in helping the consumer.

Kamal Kumar, Director, NCRB, New Delhi, in his key-

note address pointed out that while population growth was pegged at 2%, the rate of growth of vehicles was 15%. The total number of vehicles in Delhi was believed to be equal to the total number of vehicles in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. He stated that until 1989, when NCRB launched the system of matching information made available from various sources with the details available in their data base, there was no

(Continued on page 4)

Is this way to a sustainable Chennai?

It's nice to see UN-HABITAT not losing faith in Chennai after its experience with the Sustainable Chennai Project that went through 1995-1998 without making an impact. It is now sponsoring the Citizens' Alliance for Sustainable Living that calls itself SUSTAIN, which is no acronym but an expression of hope that something can still be done to ensure an "environmentally sustainable Chennai". The *Man From Madras Musings* wishes them luck, but wonders what answers SUSTAIN has to prevent the present effort from going the way of the first, organising which SUSTAIN's leadership had played a major role.

When the Sustainable Chennai Project got underway, it did so with three panels looking at what were thought to be the three major issues of the city: cleaning the waterways, decongesting the roads and improving sanitation. The panels comprised eminent persons, representatives of major business, spokesmen of various NGOs ranging from the high-profile to the little-known and a whole slew of Government servants. Each panel was expected to draw up an agenda for what its focus needed to make living in the city with sustained comfort possible, have this discussed in a public forum or two - which was again organised by the conveners, who included UN-HABITAT and the CMDA - and then try out a small pilot project or two that might show the way. Unfortunately, the panel meetings themselves became less representative with fast decreasing attendance or attendance in time by representatives rather than decision-makers. This resulted in virtually an organisers-related agenda rather than one based on the views of a wider spectrum.

When the agenda was discussed, there was a preponderance of middle level Government representation and quite a few small NGOs who each had its own agenda. And, finally, by the time these poorly-attended meetings, few and far between, had got around to identifying a pilot project or two, it was time to wind up the show, because UN-HABITAT was no longer interested in funding the programme (which had sought to involve the public in the planning for a Sustainable Chennai) unless the Metropolitan Development Authority was prepared to contribute its own financial share and run the programme.

Right through the project's three years, a couple of things became clear. In a State where all commitment flows only from the Chief Minister and, at best, from a Minister or two close to the power centre, their lack of interest in the project was obvious. This was to be seen in not only their absence from the deliberations but also in their not even ensuring that they were represented by Minister and Principal Secretaries at all meetings who would at least get to

hear what a segment of the public had to say. This attitude of the State's leadership resulted in several of the more eminent people, particularly from the private sector, losing interest in proceedings in which, it was obvious, the final decision-makers had no interest. And as they and senior officialdom began to send their representatives merely to sit in and contribute nothing, the programme began to be centred on the organisers and a few other government officials. That nothing would come out of three years of perfunctory deliberations soon became obvious. Curiously, the three areas tackled did in later years get some attention paid to them, but none of what happened was due to the Sustainable Chennai Project's deliberations.

Later attention

Take waterways, for instance. This had had several programmes prepared by international consultants over the years. A couple of years ago, when it received a large sum of money from a Centre favourable to it, the Government got around to cleaning up the waterways, most perfunctorily and in small stretches, by desilting them, but not considering any long-term plans. Even in the small effort made by Government, the SCP's deliberations did not figure - and the SCP for its part never looked at many of the issues involved in cleaning the waterways that it could have contributed to, such as resettlement

of river- and canal-bank populations. When it came to road congestion, the Minister himself attended one meeting and announced that Government was going to spend a few crores on resolving this problem, adopting the plan given by a consultant. The part of the plan that got implemented was the building of flyovers and widening a road or two, but issues like traffic discipline, that the SCP could have looked at, have had eyes closed to them.

As for improved sanitation, Onyx arrived on the scene - no thanks to SCP - and there has been some effort to clean up non-Onyx areas of the city, but how much of this was contributed to by the SCP?

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

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The sequel

SUSTAIN seems to *The Man From Madras Musings* a sequel to the Sustainable Chennai Project, with several of those involved with the latter now leading the new effort. Its agenda, as enunciated at its first meeting - a City Networking Exposition - is as follows:

Due to the absence of a widely accepted development plan addressing the main envi-

ronmental concerns of the metropolis, the quality of life for citizens has been sharply deteriorating and there is a constant complaint from all sections of society. The Second Master Plan, which has become somewhat outdated, has to be reconfigured to meet the future needs of the metropolis. Keeping in mind the dictum that 'it is better to light a candle than curse the darkness', several NGOs and Citizens Groups of Chennai have come together to address this issue and assist in the process of working out a Sustainable Metropolitan Plan for Chennai.

It has now been recognised internationally and nationally that the only way to manage the emerging urban crisis is to formulate and implement urban development plans with wide stakeholder participation. In order to progress further and put in place a widely accepted Sustainable Metropolitan Plan for Chennai, it is proposed to form a Civil Society mechanism... (that will draft and implement Action Plans to meet this objective).

Now that strikes MMM as almost taking over the role of the Metropolitan Development Authority, but will it be any more effective than that much-maligned body that political and vested interests make virtually ineffective? A rather more realistic view, however, prevailed during the deliberations at the exposition.

MMM understands that it was pointed out during the discussions that there was a "steady

degeneration of the quality of life in Chennai and its surroundings," that it was hopeless looking "only for macro solutions" and "grandiose schemes that involve substantial cost in time and money". Micro level solutions were needed to initiate action, "wherein each stakeholder could participate with the least cost in time and money". It was recommended that the guiding principle for this must be to focus on "local initiatives to solve local problems". And the problems that need to be looked at are:

Water, Energy, Environmental Education, Eco-building, Waste Management, Urban Planning and Governance, Women, and Enterprise in Green Industries.

That, MMM feels, is a more realistic view than the formal statement on evolving a Sustainable Metropolitan Plan. What is needed is a "little drops of water, a little grains of sand, make a mighty ocean" approach. And for that SUSTAIN needs to focus more closely on the smaller picture than the bigger one. For example, MMM hopes it can succeed, as it hopes to do, in networking all NGOs concerned with civic issues in Chennai. SUSTAIN hopes to establish an "umbrella arrangement" that will

enable NGOs concerned about the city to act as "a trigger cum persuasion group", enabling these NGOs to pool their expertise and core competencies to bring about "enhanced environmental efficiency". As MMM sees it, even if the maximising of effort through networking does not really come about, there will at least be an exchange of information - if organisations are being transparent, which they often are not - that could well lead to a slowdown of these organisations reinventing the wheel over and over again and, instead, replicating the successful experiences of others elsewhere.

Present initiatives

MMM also welcomes SUSTAIN's Eco-Campus programme that addresses educational institutions from schools to universities and hopes to inculcate in students such necessary habits as energy conservation, renewable energy, water harvesting and conservation, wastewater management, zero waste management, eco-building and landscaping. The only thing is that such NGO programmes outside the curriculum have little effect on most students of today. MMM would be happier if SUSTAIN and the NGOs it is networking with launch a sustained campaign to get the Government to change the present school syllabi and introduce in them a greater focus on history, geography, civics and environment, as it

pointed out during the discussions that there was a "steady degeneration of the quality of life in Chennai and its surroundings," that it was hopeless looking "only for macro solutions" and "grandiose schemes that involve substantial cost in time and money". Micro level solutions were needed to initiate action, "wherein each stakeholder could participate with the least cost in time and money". It was recommended that the guiding principle for this must be to focus on "local initiatives to solve local problems". And the problems that need to be looked at are:

particularly applies to the district in which the school is located, the State and the country. Making these subjects part of the syllabus will ensure a compulsory involvement that volunteer programmes can never match.

SUSTAIN's intention to implement an Eco-business programme, getting small and medium industries and clusters to get together and initiate environmental action voluntarily and comply with environmental laws is also welcome. But MMM wonders how successful it will be, even with the involvement of the Small Industries Service Institute. Perhaps SUSTAIN would like to look at two challenges Small Industry has already thrown up. The environs of both the Guindy Industrial Estate and the Ambattur Estate are in a shambles. Could SUSTAIN get the small industrialists here to help themselves and create a better environment for all, without the industrialists asking for it all to be done for them by the authorities? And if it succeeds, could it ensure the sustainability of the environmentally friendly industrial estates it has created? Success here will provide a model to be replicated elsewhere.

Finally, a look at the third

point on its agenda. This states: The network will function as a bridge between the CMDA and the citizens in reconfiguring and reformulating the Second Master Plan to make it in line with the spatial, social, economic and environmental imperatives of Chennai. MMM has no idea what that means except that it sounds very ambitious for a group of NGOs to tackle. But if it is considered not particularly ambitious, MMM wonders why those connected with SUSTAIN did not make the suggestions they now think they can make when the Plan was made available for public scrutiny a few years ago? Were they waiting for a *raison d'être* for SUSTAIN?

Be that as it may, MMM wishes SUSTAIN success with its networking effort, its campus involvements and in getting small industry to help themselves. Sustainable success achieved would indeed be a feather in the cap of SUSTAIN.

Street users' views

The Man From Madras Musings lives down a lane that has just been taken over by two-wheelers and minivans doing business with a new commercial unit. Residents of the lane have to struggle to get in and out of their road which the commercial organisation thinks is its private property because no authority thinks it should take any action over such takeover of public property.

It was in this context that MMM was glad to hear of a recent meeting in the TNagar zone, where street users and residents made it clear that

— they wanted the street hawkers evicted from pavements and kerbsides (incidentally, giving the lie to the oft-repeated claim that the public want the street hawkers because they are a convenience);

— Usman Road, now a major shopping centre, should be made a NO TRAFFIC area and left free for pedestrians;

— the building of multistorey buildings in commercial areas should not be encouraged, because they only encourage more traffic than the streets can bear; and

— action should be taken to prevent the parking of vehicles of shoppers and officeworkers in sidestreets off commercial areas, because they hinder the movement of the residents whose space it is in the first instance.

Indeed, these demands from TNagar residents could be echoed in many parts of the city in areas around major commercial zones. But how do those asking for comfort get the authorities to ensure they get it? Perhaps SUSTAIN would like to tackle this problem on a priority basis, considering that the Sustainable Chennai Project failed to get anywhere with it.

— MMM

OUR READERS WRITE

Degraded Madras

My native village is Madras, now styled Chennai. I was born and educated in this once lovely city. During my working life it was my desire to return to Madras upon retirement. I've now abandoned that hope.

Why? Over the years, while teaching in Bangalore and then in Tirupati, I visited the city regularly to see my aging parents. After retirement, I became an even more regular visitor because my husband, who has long held happy memories of the city, enjoyed seeing friends.

Over these years, I have witnessed a steady decline. Among many other things, most avenue trees have been felled, streets are opened and improperly closed, hoardings proliferate, numerous handsome structures have been razed, housing colonies multiply with little regard to plot requirements. The list, as I begin, seems endless.

Two locations now epitomise the degradation of Madras. First, as a child, Pondy Bazaar was an exciting place to go shopping with my parents or elder sister. Now it is choked with pavement hawkers and other pedlars selling shoddy goods. It is today not much better than nearby Ranganathan Street.

Both daunt me. But, then, so does all of TNagar, a long-lost haven of cleanliness and serenity.

The second great loss is the Marina. During my days at Presidency College, my classmates and I would cross the beach to feel the water on our feet, cooling our spirits. Now who would dare walk barefoot across those sands?

I treasure my memories and make each visit to Madras with sinking heart. Whatever its shortcomings, my present home - Secunderabad - is far cleaner and more orderly.

Kamala Menon Cochrane
72, Parkview Enclave
Secunderabad 500 009.

Consumer at a loss

I am a victim and a sufferer. Let me share my bitter experiences with readers.

While I was staying in Bangalore in my son's house I lodged a complaint in the Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum, Banga-

lore Urban District, for recovery of Rs. 3000 from an Opposite Party who promised water supply to the house. Neither was my money refunded nor the supply effected.

The Forum ordered the party on 17.02.1999 to refund the amount along with interest at 15% from 25.02.1997 till repayment, together with costs of Rs. 500.

I migrated to Chennai around then to undergo two cataract operations and then got housebound.

Since the refund was not forthcoming, I went on reminding the Forum repeatedly. At one hearing, I pleaded with them to take police action against the delinquent who displayed utter contempt towards the Forum.

I recently came to know that he had died. I reported the matter to the Forum, appealing to them to advise me on the future course of action. I am still completely in the dark.

To attend hearings in Bangalore, I have had to spend much more than the amount claimed and due from the party as per the order. The conclusions drawn by your Special Correspondent in *Madras Musings* of June 1st find a ready application in my case. Is it worth pursuing?

K.N. Narayana Pillai
Shrinidhi, No. 3, Fourth Street
Dr. Radhakrishnan Salai
Chennai 600 004.

The last word

This refers to the correspondence on the prospects of the newly launched Transparency International India - TN Chapter.

I am very grateful to MMM and B.S. Raghavan I.A.S. (RTD) for their kind advice and guidance. I also wish them all the best in their own efforts to combat corruption in the country.

L.M. Menezes
4G, Prof. Subramaniam Street
Off. Vasu Street, Kilpauk
Chennai 600 010.

Forgotten dangers

Malini V. Shankar's article on *Mher* perambulations in Mylapore (MM, June 1st) would appear to indicate she is really courageous or determined considering how filthy all these streets have

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Chennai's stink

Dr. Shanmughavelayutham's impassioned plea to provide reasonably clean toilet facilities (MM, March 1st) deserves public rallies to make the dreamers of *Singara Chennai* awaken to the fact that without reasonable cleanliness and sanitation, the vision will for ever remain distant.

The *Week* recently reported how a neighbouring state capital is tackling the problem:

There is a stiff penalty for men in Bangalore who make water in public: Rs 100 or 10 days' imprisonment. They also run the risk of being videographed in action. The police recently booked 251 such cases, and Police Commissioner H.T. Sangliana was heard asking the eternal question: "Why can't men be as disciplined as women?" Can they?

Madras enforced something like this measure some fifty years ago. I recollect that Corporation Commissioner J.P.L. Shenoy, I.C.S. (who is still remembered by an extension of the City which has been given his name) was nicknamed "Public Convenience Commis-

sioner" because it was during his tenure that the Corporation established decent public conveniences, with water and flushing facilities, at several places in the city. And, I believe, there was no charge.

Blue-black police vans used to prowling different parts of the city from around 4 a.m. to 6 a.m. and round up the transgressors under a provision of the City Police Act. An Honorary Presidency Magistrate would be present in the police van and levy fines. Those who could not pay the fines on the spot would be taken outside the city limits and dumped there. They had to trudge their way back as the transport system had not developed. For many such people, it would mean also the loss of a day's wages.

The City Police Act had a number of measures meant to inculcate civic consciousness in the people. Some of them were:

- Cyclists had to have good brakes and observe the same road discipline followed by the motorised vehicles.
- Cycles which did not have the Corporation licence discs would be seized and could be

recovered only after paying the fine at the Corporation Office.

- Straying cattle would be impounded and would be released only after its owner paid the stabling and feeding charges plus a fine.
- Jaywalkers would be rounded up and fined on the spot (Rajaji's son was one such person caught on Mount Road and he paid the penalty without disclosing his identity).

Early mornings, early evenings, and early nights, these prowling vans would carry out their allotted tasks. The Honorary Presidency Magistrates who travelled with the van dispensed justice which, more than the fine revenue it earned, served to discipline the people. Sadly, the CPA was considered to be a harsh British imposition and was abolished. It was also misused to settle personal scores.

It would be a good idea to dust the old CPA, temper its harsh provisions and enforce some of its salubrious provisions.

Raghu Tagat
294, Lloyds Road, Chennai 14.

become and how narrow they are, with numerous vendors on both sides and virtually no pavements left. The walking-tour could also be dangerous because one of the numerous two-wheelers may run over you or some one may spit on you (a chronic habit that remains despite the legislation banning it). The author seems to have forgotten to mention all this.

Regarding her query, if I am right, Kennedy Street was named after JFK. When JFK was assassinated in 1963, there was an upsurge of anguish all over India, perhaps all over the world, and many streets, roads and towns were named after him.

G. Sundaram I.A.S. (RTD)
"Burma House"
33/18, 9th Street
Dr. Radhakrishnan Road
Chennai 600 004.

Winds of change

It occurs to me that places, like human beings, have horoscopes too, with good times and bad times. Only, their lifespans are for centuries.

Originally, Chennai was a fishing hamlet, while Kingdoms flourished in places like Kancheepuram, Chandragiri, Senji, Madurai, Thanjavur, etc. It was only with the advent of the British and the construction of Fort St. George that Madras grew in eminence as the seat of administration, learning and the fine arts. Today, however, Chennai is synonymous with topsy-turvy values, police excesses and film madness and boasts the highest concentration of slums in the world. On the other hand, Bangalore and Hyderabad, which were sleepy hollows and our poor cousins some fifty years ago, are far better places to live in now.

Take Mahabalipuram, I mean Mamallapuram. During 1991-96 it

was well on its way to becoming S.E. Asia's premier pleasure city. Now there is talk of an administrative city and Secretariat coming up there juxtaposing them with the entertainment industry on the East Coast Road so that business and pleasure can be easily mixed.

If the Legislature and Executive move, can the Judiciary be far behind? Hence, the High Court too should be moved to those salubrious surroundings so that the winds of change visit the court rooms too in the form of the fresh Mahabes breezes. And, of course, a delicate debate can commence on whether the High Court premises at Parry's should be converted into a huge law library or be developed into a lovers park like My Ladies Garden of yore.

C.G. Prasad
9, C.S. Mudali Street
Kondithope
Chennai 600 079.

The recipe sought

I beg readers' pardon for not giving the recipe for *Amtee Bhaji* (MM, May 16th). This is made with *palak* in Maharashtra. Here we can use any of our spinach varieties. Cut greens are boiled with cut green chillies, cut onions, salt and tamarind to a thick consistency. It is seasoned with mustard, *urad dhal* and asafoetida.

I appreciate Reader R. Soudarajan's analysis of 'tiffin'. Perhaps he is right, but tea + bun = tiffin was given to me by an Anglo-Indian friend and also by a doctor friend from Rhodesia many years ago.

Reader V.E. Arunachalam is right in his observation on food items used for *Sradh*. A list of items indigenous to India can be drawn up in this way. Many items, like cabbage, tomatoes and bottlegourd are taboo for *Sradh*. Can we go

deeper into this research? I would be happy to join and learn.

Janaki Krishnan
63, M.G.R. Road
Kalakshetra Colony
Besant Nagar, Chennai 600 090.

TNagar's heyday

The Fifties and Sixties were the glorious days of TNagar itself and not only of the TNagar Football Club (MM, June 1st).

Those were the days of Geeta Canteen in the Social Club where hot idlis were served with four or five side dishes, Geeta Hotel where they served 21-item meals on Sundays for Rs. 1.25, the early days of the Krishna Gana Sabha, which held concerts in the Hindi Prachar Sabha, Ramakrishna Mission High School and a place opposite the Panagal Park, and when Rajakumari theatre showed English pictures in the mornings. The roads were less crowded and Panagal Park was preferred to Dr Natesan Park by walkers. The ground in Venkatanarayana Road was unfenced and relatively unknown, unlike the Somasundaram ground.

A comparison with present-day TNagar will be uncharitable in the extreme.

K. Padmanabhan

15 (27), Seventh Avenue

Ashok Nagar, Chennai 600 083.

PLEASE NOTE

• All letters for The Editor's attention should be addressed to The Editor, c/o Lokavani Hall-Mark Press Pvt. Ltd., 62/63, Greames Road, Chennai 600 006.

• All business correspondence should be addressed to The Director, Chennai Heritage, 260-A, TTK Road, Chennai 600 018.

• Madras Musings does not accept letters by e-mail.

The Nennmeli experience

Nennmeli, between Chengalpattu and Thirukazhukkunram in Kanchipuram District, about 70 km from Chennai and 40 km from Kanchipuram, is a village that's been helped to develop since 1995 by the C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre (CPREEC). It is an example of how education and awareness can reverse environmental degradation. The CPREEC has, involving local people, greened a wasteland, created a sacred grove and developed a watershed from barren space.

At the centre of the village are two ponds — the lotus pond used for drinking water and another for washing and bathing. A small hillock overlooks the ponds, and at its foot is the Sri Muthu Mariamman Temple, owning ten acres of land between the hillock and the temple. This land is the catchment for the rainwater coming from the hillock and is essential for recharging the underground aquifer. It was once used for grazing cattle. It was also once a fertile land.

In 1995, the villagers approached the CPREEC saying

Groves Project has been a highly successful one; creating little forests in every village, which are taken care of by the local people out of faith and reverence. The Nennmeli site, being adjacent to a temple, was ideal for this purpose. It is now attached to the temple and the local villagers tend it.

Later, 5.5 adjoining acres were turned into a herbal garden, with 76 species of herbs, including shrubs, climbers and trees. The local women were involved in the project. They were also taught to make simple home remedies that would help them look after the health and nutritional needs of their families.

The women were later trained to plant and manage their own kitchen gardens, vermicompost their biodegradable waste and construct smokeless *chulhas*.

More land was taken for planting till a total of 25 acres, consisting of the sacred grove and herbal garden, were planted by the CPREEC and the villagers.

Today, the CPREEC's watershed development efforts have paid rich dividends. The

• by A Correspondent

that there was little or no water, except during the rains, and even rainwater was being washed away. A survey revealed that over the years, deforestation and removal of fertile topsoil for construction purposes resulted in the agricultural land becoming barren, a wasteland. With the onset of the rains, soil would be washed off the hillock standing in the middle of this land and into the adjoining tank. Thus the tank also got silted up.

This was a textbook case of environmental degradation and the CPREEC decided to provide a textbook response. First, baseline data on soil and water quality was collected. Then, the hillock was contoured and banded with locally available stones. The site was fenced with bio-fencing, and pits were mulched to retain moisture. The contour mapping, bunding and gully plugging were an elaborate exercise, and low stone check-walls prevented water runoff.

Thereafter, trees were planted along the contour line, on the slopes of the hillock. The initial planting was of 26 species on 4.5 acres. One year later, in 1996, an avifauna survey revealed that 39 species of birds now visited the site.

The CPREEC's Conservation and Restoration of Sacred

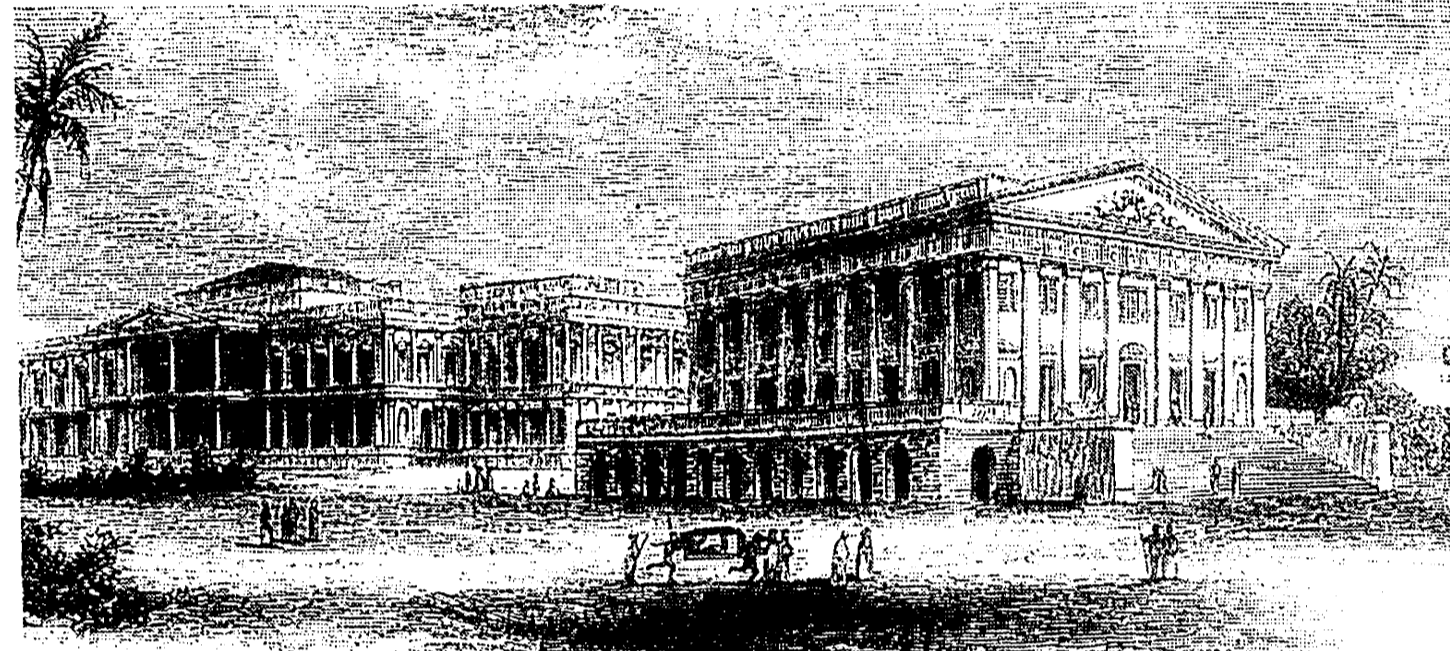
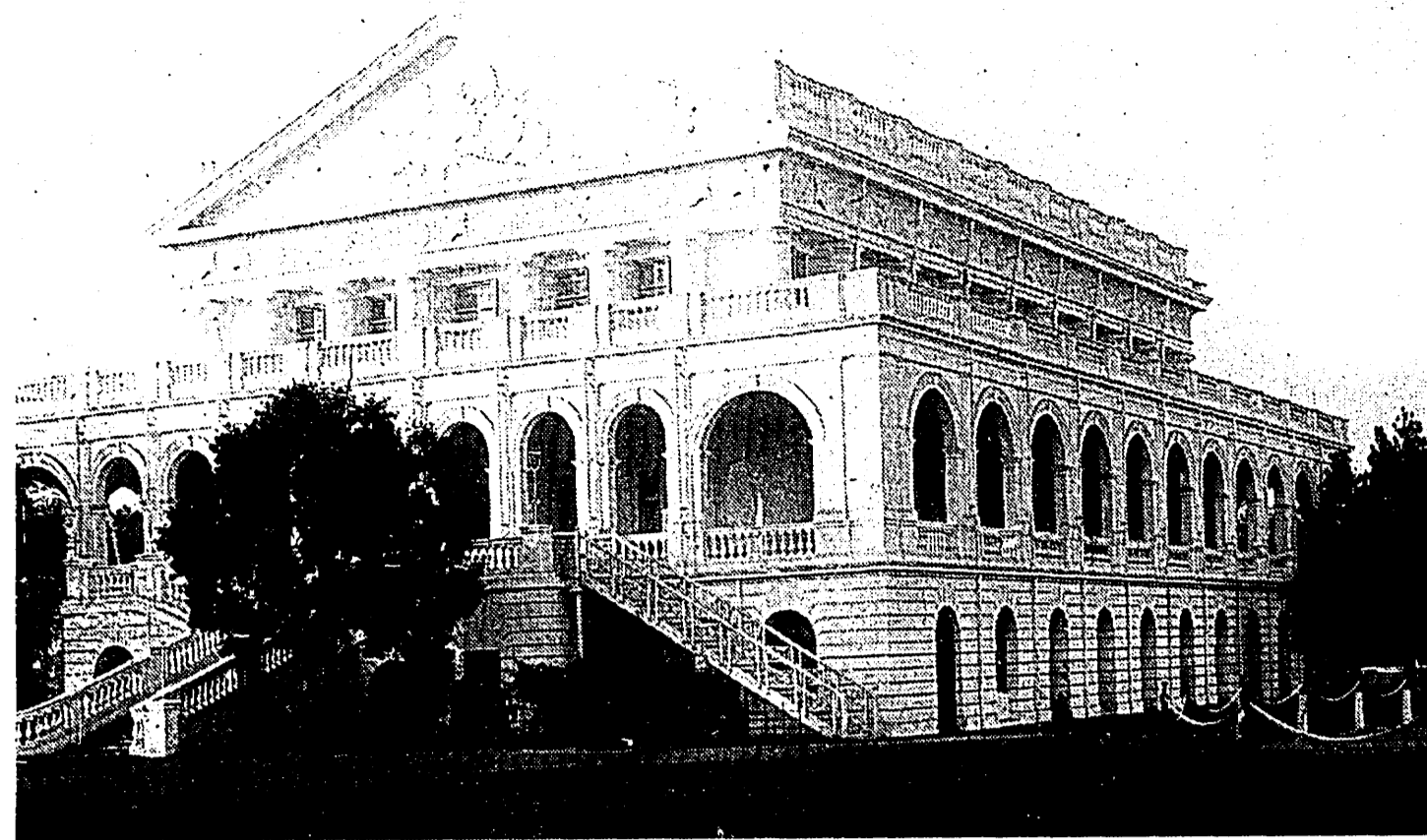
groundwater level has come up and the once dry wells are now full, with at least 10 feet of water through the hottest summers. A wasteland has become green. The average canopy height of the trees is 12 feet. The rainwater runoff and subsequent soil erosion have ceased.

Throughout the programme, education and awareness played a major role. M. Ramadoss, Headmaster of CGVBS Govt. Middle School, Nennmeli, played an active role in motivating the students and, through them, their families to participate in the environmental conservation efforts. For this, he was recently presented with the CPREEC Award for Environmental Education 2002.

The CPREEC established a community smokeless *chulha* in the school and offered training programmes for the local women who, later, installed smaller *chulhas* in their homes.

Headmaster Ramadoss motivated the students to

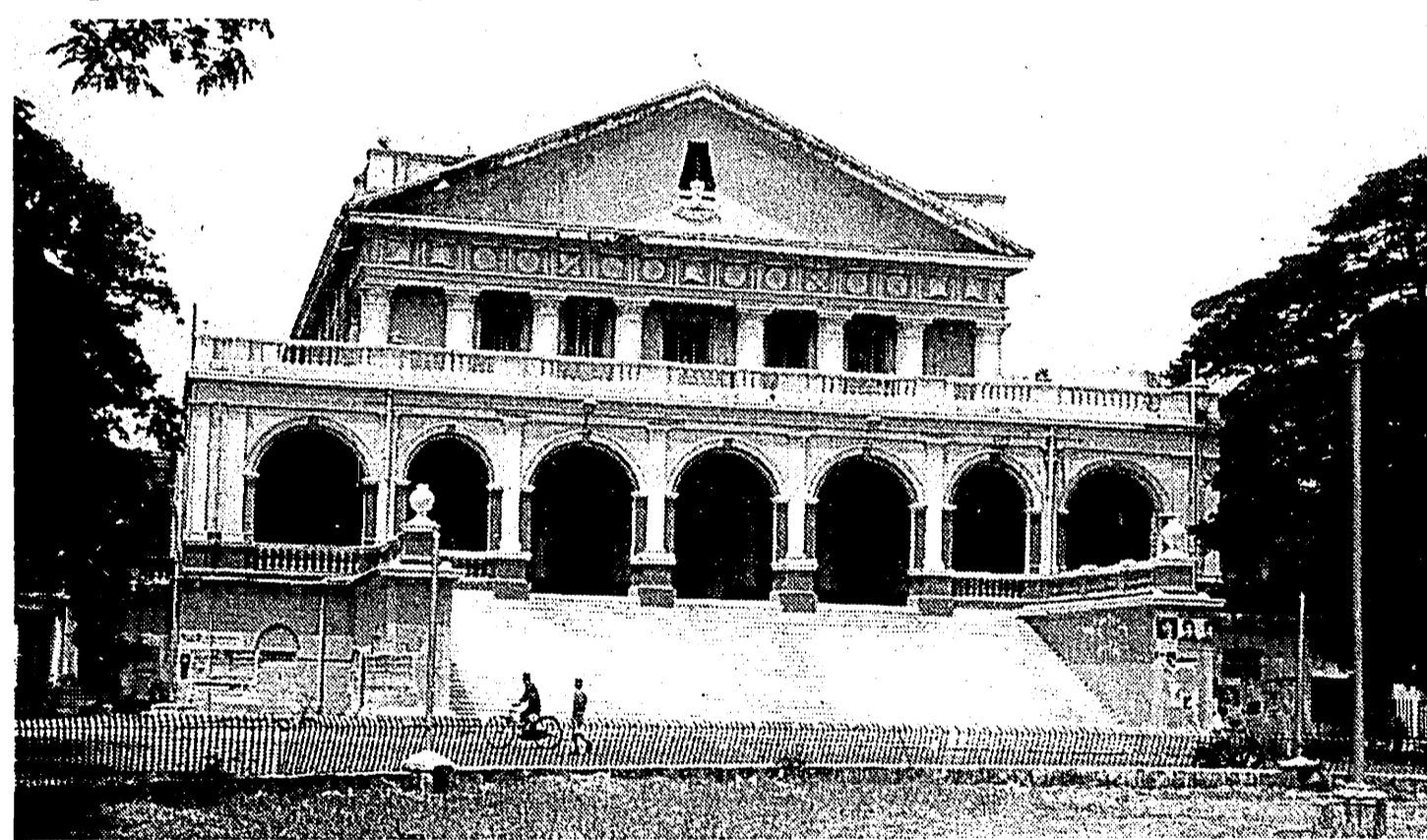
- Plant and maintain trees in the school;
- Maintain a kitchen garden that would provide vegetables to meet their noon meal requirements;
- Use the wastewater recycled by the water recycling unit (established by CPREEC) to water the kitchen garden;



Our OLD today features two views of Banqueting Hall (now Rajaji Hall) in Government Estate and these views out of the past throw up a couple of interesting questions. The sketch out of that old collection recently found shows the hall before its terrace was enclosed, but the steps of today are in place. The photograph of the OLD above it shows the terrace covered and enclosed with the arched walls of today. But instead of the steps of today there seems to be an earlier set of much less impressive dimensions, which

THE OLD... ...& **THE NEW** makes us wonder about the sequence of the pictures.

Our NEW shows Banqueting Hall as it is today with enclosed terrace and its wide expanse of steps. In its heyday, the Hall was where the Governors of Madras formally entertained guests at dinners, levees and balls and the chandeliered hall was one of the most impressive places in Madras. Sadly, its impressive interior is no longer tended as well as in the past and much of its splendour has faded.



MVVC LAUNCHED IN THE CITY

(Continued from page 1)

system available to record thefts. Now on-line information is available and this information was used by insurance companies, inter-state authorities, inter-state police etc. NCRB launched this service by charging Rs. 10 per case. In the first year, 12,087 cases were received and out of these, 587 cases were involved in some crime, i.e. 5%. Customers going in for purchase of these vehicles were glad this information was available to them.

When NCRB announced the availability of this software

to various centres, Tamil Nadu was the first to respond and Chennai will serve as a hub for the entire State providing information within 24 hours.

Consumers in Chennai who wish to avail of this facility can make their requests on forms available at the Information Verification Counter at the Traffic Office by paying Rs. 20/- per query. The information will be made available almost immediately. The report given by the Information Verification Counter will be accepted by the RTO authorities and the Insurance Companies. — (Courtesy: Consumer's Digest.)

Nostalgia

A shell of its former self

Tucked away in Armenian Street, alongside the Armenian Church, St Mary's Co-Cathedral and the headquarters of Binny's, stands the stately building which houses the Young Men's Indian Association. The Association owes its existence to Annie Besant, the Theosophist, social reformer and Indian nationalist. Notable among her contributions were the creation of the Central Hindu College at Benares, later to grow as the Benares Hindu University, her involvement in the Scout Movement and her sponsorship of the Indian Women's Association. She had also become the President of the Theosophical Society in Adyar in 1907 and since then Madras had more or less become her home.

In 1912, Anni Besant had become involved in the celebrated Besant-Narayanaiah case concerning the custody of J. Krishnamurthy, later to become a great spiritual leader. She defended herself, while Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar appeared for Narayanaiah. The case, bitterly fought and receiving wide publicity in the Press, found Annie Besant on the losing side, but she gained a great friend in Sir CP. Together they were to be involved in a number of new schemes, one of which was the YMIA.

Founded in February 1914, the Young Men's Indian Association was created to provide "a political gymnasium, as it were, to equip the youth with a strong body, an informed mind and a noble character to inherit and imbibe the country's glorious tradition and to take their rightful place as leaders of the future. Annie Besant planned to create a home for the Association, which would have hostel facilities for students who came from outside Madras to study, a library, a gymnasium, a canteen and a lecture hall.

Writing of the hall, A Ranganatha Mudaliar wrote in the Besant Centenary Book that she felt the necessity for the hall in "the times ahead, when there would be difficulties for free expression of opinion for want of a hall whose authorities were prepared to resist official pressure and let it be used freely even if it was to severely criticise the policy and methods of the Government". This hall was named after Gopal Krishna

• Gokhale Hall, in the YMIA in George Town, was once a famed venue of fiery speeches, learned debates and classical concerts. In recent years, none of these has been a part of the activities here. But recently, the Hall, a shell of its former self, came alive again with a splendid concert of classical Carnatic music. This could well be the beginning of a welcome revival. Meanwhile, the author looks back on the Hall's past glory.

Gokhale, founder of the Servants of India Society, patriot, social reformer and a pioneer in education. It is not clear whether Mrs. Besant intended to name the hall after Gokhale in 1914. But his death in 1915, may have been a cause.

The Association had among its founding fathers such luminaries as Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar, Sir Pitty Tyagaraya Chetty, Sir V.P. Madhava Row (former Dewan of Mysore), G.A. Natesan, Dewan Bahadur T. Sadasiva Iyer and the Hon. F.B. Tyabji (both Judges of the High Court, Madras) and K.S. Chandrashekhara Iyer, Judge, Chief Court of Mysore. Dewan Bahadur Sir S. Subramanya Iyer was its first president.

Not everyone looked on the creation of the Association with favour. *The Hindu*, in an editorial wrote, "The objects of the association are undoubtedly worthy of the attention of all who are interested in the well-being of the rising generation of Indians... It seems to us however that the present is a peculiarly inappropriate time for allowing her (Besant) to start any large movement... (in view of) the manner in which she has lately figured in the civil and criminal courts at Madras." It also went on to question the manner in which Judges of the High Court were "giving countenance" to Mrs. Besant's public activities in view of the litigation.

The Hindu and Annie Besant were old adversaries, the paper

favouring Narayanaiah in the then just-concluded case over J Krishnamurthy's custody. The editorial did have some effect. The day after it appeared, Sir C. Sankaran Nair withdrew from the Association. But the others appear to have carried on regardless.

Annie Besant funded the buildings in her personal capacity and C. Jinarajadasa, the noted Theosophist and writer, laid the foundation stone in May 1914. Rao Saheb G. Subbiah Chettiar, Hon. Magistrate and Auditor, Madras Customs, supervised the construction. By the end of 1915, the buildings were ready and the Association moved into its home at 66, Armenian Street.

From the very beginning the canteen proved to be a major attraction. Its toast fried in ghee was a runaway success and lawyers from the High Court would flock to the canteen to savour

this strange delicacy. Indeed, in a period free of cholesterol or, at least, its awareness, most of the bill of fare in the canteen appears to have been made in ghee. The YMIA coffee was another noteworthy feature. Annie Besant, who ran her *New India* newspaper from a building in Second Line Beach, would make it a point to come down to the YMIA to have her coffee, a habit that was soon to become a ritual that all her friends and admirers looked forward to. The secret behind the coffee was the pure milk. Old-timers recall milk vendors arriving with their cows early in the morning. A Ranganatha Mudaliar would inspect the cans for any traces of water and once satisfied would give the go ahead for milking. His insistence on this procedure made the coffee renowned in Madras. However, in terms of financial viability, the canteen was a disaster and bled money from the first year onwards. Annie Besant subsidised it for a long time. In later years, the canteen was closed and the facility was awarded to contractors.

Gokhale Hall, with its magnificent dome, its large balcony and its wonderful acoustics soon became a centre of cultural, literary and artistic



The YMIA building in Armenian Street where Gokhale Hall is located. Carnatic music recently returned to this hall which Annie Besant had created and which at one time hosted some of the finest concerts in the city.

endeavours. It was originally intended as a lecture hall and many were the fiery speeches to which its walls echoed. Annie Besant delivered her famous "Wake Up, India" lectures from this platform. In 1916, the hall witnessed the birth of the Home Rule League, set up by Annie Besant on 21st September, in response to Tilak's Home Rule Movement in 1915. During this period, she also organised the famed mock parliaments in this Hall, to train youth in public speaking. Many a powerful orator cut his teeth here under her guidance.

In 1919, Annie Besant set up the 1919 Club to study the proposals made under the Montague Chelmsford reforms. Her speeches attacking the Act

• by V. SRIRAM

were heard by audiences in rapt attention in the hall. So strident were her criticisms about the Act, that she incurred the wrath of everyone in the Establishment, including the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford. When she later visited Delhi, in connection with a request for permission to go abroad for reasons of health, she had occasion to meet him. During her conversation, she mentioned her hopes for a quick return. To which he replied, "Mrs Besant, now that I have got you safely out of the country, do you think I would be in a hurry to allow you to enter it again?"

Almost all the political leaders of the time spoke at the Gokhale Hall. Mahatma Gandhi addressed the public here. So did Jawaharlal Nehru. On the days of his address, the hall and the street beyond would be inaccessible, with the youth of Madras long having taken up all the vantage points. Despite such crowds, the hall rarely became unbearably hot, its high dome and large windows contributing to ample ventilation. However, the sole entrance and exit were a problem. On the occasion of a speech by Moraji Desai, there was a rush to the exit at the conclusion of the programme.

In addition to its political and social impact, the Hall was the venue of many programmes associated with the fine arts. We will look at them in the next issue.

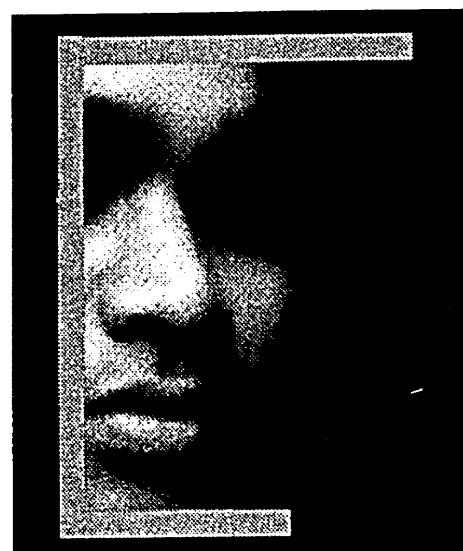
(To be continued next fortnight)

Quizzin' with Ram'nan

Current Affairs questions are from the period May 16th to 31st. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Chennai and Tamil Nadu.

- Which famous Hollywood director finally got his college degree after 33 years?
- Who bought the controversial peer-to-peer music site, Napster, recently?
- Which football club won a record ninth European Champions Cup on May 16th?
- What 'high' did 63-year old Tamae Watanabe of Japan achieve recently?
- Name the Pakistani High Commissioner who was asked to leave the country recently.
- Who bought a 26 per cent stake in the country's second largest petrochemical company, Indian Petrochemicals Corporation for Rs. 1440 crore?
- On May 19th, the world's latest and 192nd independent country was born. Name it.
- Who are the Thomas and Uber Cup badminton champions?
- Name the senior Hurriyat leader, gunned down in Srinagar on May 21st.
- Simple one. Who won the Man of the Series Award in the recently concluded West Indies-India Test series?
- Chennai's K.S. Karthik and S. Viswanathan recently were among an elite six with a tremendous achievement. What?
- Which Asian country has shown an interest in leasing Chennai airport?
- Which waterway running through the State was conceived by Basil Cochrane in 1806?
- From where in Chennai did the 'Great Arc' survey begin 200 years ago?
- What has been rechristened as 'Chennai Water Supply Augmentation Project-1'?
- Name the latest 'herbal fuel' concocted by Ramar Pillai.
- Name the constituencies for which by-polls were held in the State on May 31st.
- Name the new 5-year course launched by Anna University for +2 students.
- Why has the Tiruchi REC not been upgraded as National Institute of Technology?
- Where in Chennai is Quibble Island?

(Answers on page 7)



A.R. Rahman

Will A.R. Rahman fulfill Webber's dreams?



Shekhar Kapur with Rahman and Andrew Lloyd Webber.

About five years ago I was pottering about the kitchen on a Saturday morning when I had my first brush with Bollywood, courtesy of the TV in the next room.

Channel 4 was showing an Indian movie and what particularly intrigued me was a song. I recall three lines of gorgeous girls performing for a few seated blokes with turbans, whilst one girl danced demurely and sang in an abnormally high chest voice. Very good this song was too. Unfortunately I forgot to write down the name of the movie.

A couple of years later, I was introduced to film director Shekhar Kapur, best known in the UK for *Bandit Queen* and the award-winning drama *Elizabeth*.

Partly out of small talk, partly out of genuine curiosity, I asked him about Bollywood. He told me that dozens of movie musicals are made in India in any one year.

I was fascinated. How could I not be when he told me that on any one night in Britain more Asians will see a musical on the screen than a Western audience will see on the stage.

So I mentioned the unknown song. Shekhar volunteered to find it. He sent me a couple of videos that he compiled of dozens of Bollywood's greatest hits. I took the videos on holiday and chucked them on in the background whilst the kids were playing in the garden.

I never found that song but I discovered something else. Every five songs, a melody of pure gorgeousness or a rhythm

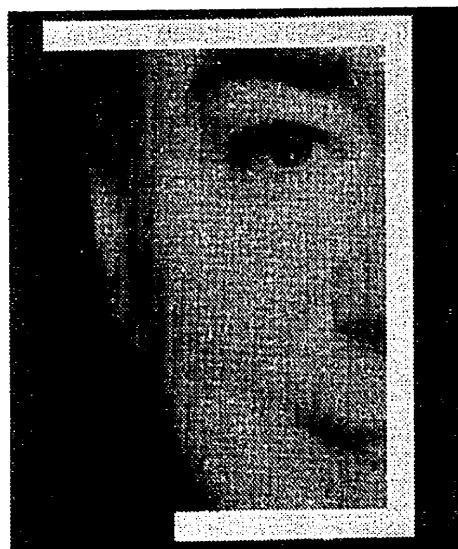
so complex or a level of musical invention on a single 'drone' note emerged that had me realise that I could be listening to something that I had always hoped would happen, the re-invention of popular music by another culture.

• Andrew Lloyd Webber writes on what has provided the spirit and inspiration for his latest musical, the composer this time being Chennai's own A.R. Rahman.

There had to be a common denominator. It was the composer A.R. Rahman. One look on the net revealed that he is a phenomenon in the Indian sub-continent.

I called Shekhar Kapur and asked if he could arrange a meeting. Thus, two years ago, I found myself in Mumbai and mobbed in the midst of a vast press conference organised by Shekhar to proclaim my interest in Rahman's music.

It was my first visit to Mumbai and my wife, Madeline, and I were simply overwhelmed by the experience — the sights, sounds, smells of the



Andrew Lloyd Webber

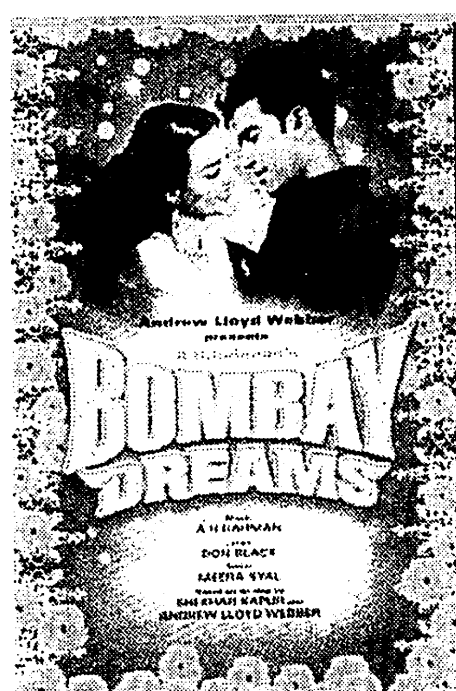
If *Bombay Dreams* succeeds, it will be of the utmost importance for musical theatre, for since I had my first big hit in 1970 with *Jesus Christ Superstar*, there have, staggeringly and worryingly, been no new writers who have lasted in musical theatre whatsoever. I, as a composer, have increasingly felt that I write in a vacuum.

In the 50s Rodgers & Hammerstein would have had Cole Porter, Frank Loesser, Leonard Bernstein, Lerner & Lowe to name but a few to bounce off and challenge their work.

But the 2001 London music theatre scene was a competition between three old shows — *Kiss Me Kate*, *South Pacific* and *My Fair Lady*. The 2002 season is all about compilation shows, *Queen — We Will Rock You*, *Madness — Our House* plus revivals like *Gershwin's My One and Only* or adaptations of old gear like *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. Successful as I hope these productions will be, they aren't exactly the work of an exciting new mind.

Bombay Dreams is the only new musical of London's 2002 season.

This is the reason I hope it will succeed in a very difficult climate for an original musical. The genre that I love with total passion needs an infusion of new blood urgently I believe. Meera Syal, famous in the UK as an actress and writer and another drop of new blood for musical theatre, has done a brilliant job in writing a script that



Bombay Dreams opens at London's Apollo Victoria Theatre on June 19th.

(Continued on page 7)

Rahman, Enfield and Dosa Diner

For me the most encouraging sight this year at Selfridges was in the section marked "Bollywood Fiction", a clever generic label used to market everything from books on Indian cinema to novels by Vikram Chandra, Rohinton Mistry and V. S. Naipaul. In the background, so as to create the right atmosphere, the music of A. R. Rahman was being played throughout the famous Oxford Street department store.

What was heart-warming was seeing an Indian mother, slowly turning the pages of a book and showing glamorous pictures of the Mumbai stars to her young daughter. If this is one way in which parents can

pass on Indian culture to their children, then the Selfridges experiment in bringing "23½ days of Bollywood" to Britain will have served a purpose beyond selling the fashion, music, films, fabrics, furnishings and furniture of India, colourful though these are.

The surprise is not that Selfridges has invested over £1 million in discovering Bollywood but that it has taken it so long to do so.

Passersby in Oxford Street unfamiliar with Indian cinema were puzzled at being confronted by huge window displays devoted to such blockbusters as *Lagaan* and *Sholay*. For me the puzzle revolved around Dimple

Kapadia, whose Mumbai home, complete with her ornate silver four-poster, has been lovingly recreated in the basement of Selfridges by the designers Sandeep Khosla and Abu Jani. How does she manage each night to fit into her bed underneath a mountain of embroidered cream cushions (retailing, incidentally, for between £150 and £300)?

All Bollywood life is on sale inside Selfridges: from the pink, orange, red and other brightly-coloured clothes of 20 fashion designers, cocktails at the Bollywood bar, and Bollywood chocolate in the shape of Indian rupees. There are £3000 Enfield motorbikes, £5 tiffin boxes,

Alphonso mangoes at £1.50 each and south Indian food at the "Dosa Dinner". There is also a reasonable selection of CDs and DVDs. Also offered for sale are 'Hindu God' stickers and others reflecting Indian life ("Horn Please"), though personally I would not have risked retailing the £22 statue of Kali with nodding tongue.

Life will seem dull when this madness is over. However, I have the word of Vittorio Radice, the Italian-born Chief Executive of Selfridges; that a corner of his store will remain forever Bollywood. — (Courtesy: *Connecting*, the British Council Journal)

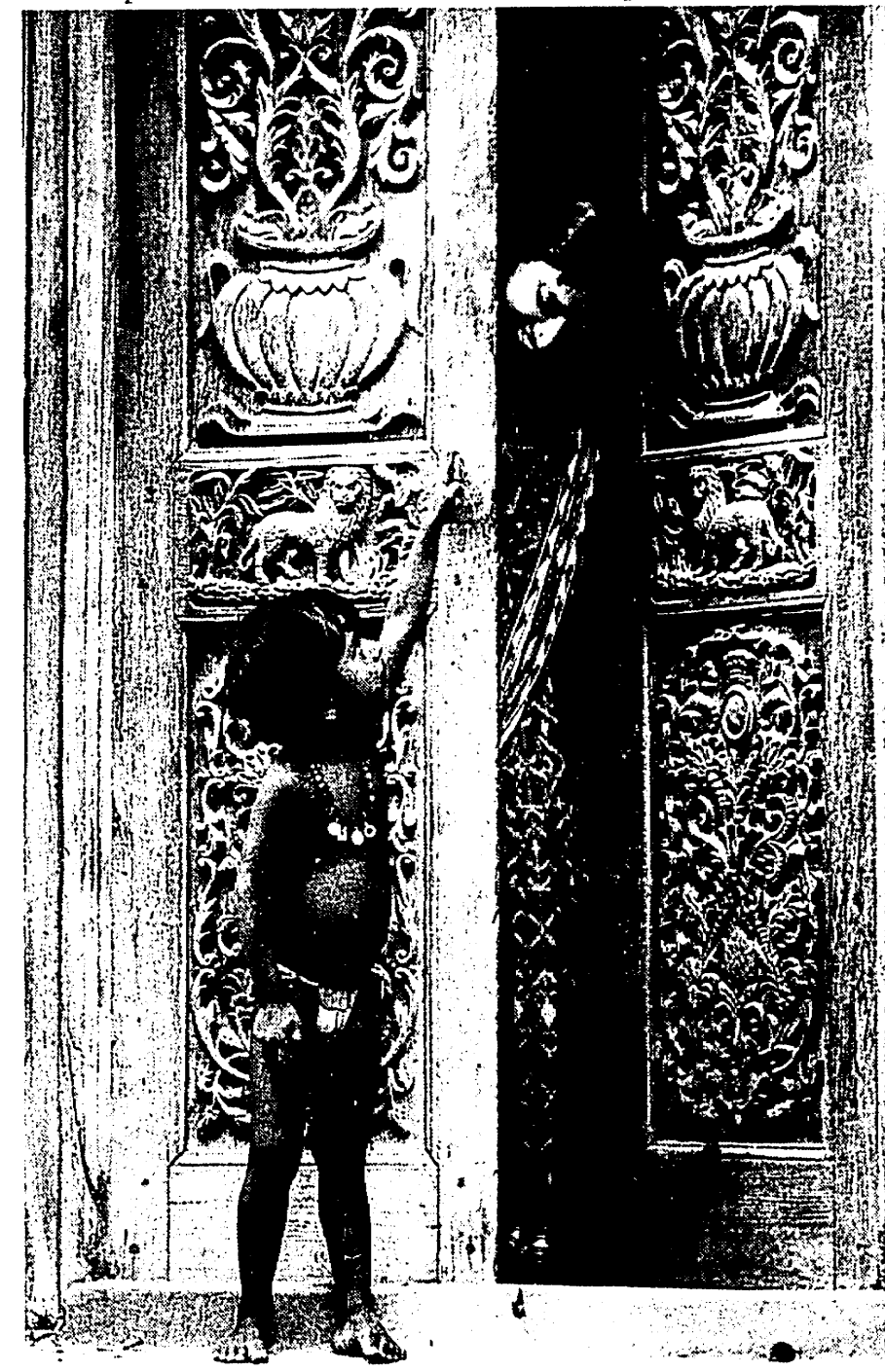
Amit Roy

Doors as symbols

I had hardly imagined that a mere door could evoke a spark of creativity within me, until I happened to see, through the eye of my camera, my three-year-old daughter silhouetted against the door of an ancient house in Pondicherry. Somehow it made meaning to me. Rich or poor, an Indian home is more than a mere house; it is the nucleus of a tradition. The door is its symbol. In its conception lies embedded a

simple philosophy. The door is a gentle reminder that while there is an inside and an outside to life, it is the inside that has the qualities of a sanctum, it is a sentiment generated by a contemplative culture. The carvings and paintings merely seek to make this culture vocal.

In this sanctum, life vibrates to the rhythm of a cherished tradition. The old and the young alike are partakers of it. The



Over a century and a half old, this exquisitely carved door is from a home in Varamasi. A spontaneous smile of welcome pours out of it as a young stranger knocks it in play.

Doors that tell a thousand tales

As a young undergraduate in Kumbakonam, I used to pass an *agaharam* every day to go to college, where there were many old houses. Each house had a unique door.

On many a day I have wondered at the beautiful designs cast by the morning and evening light on the doorways, *vilakku madams* with oil stains, the carvings in the *nilai*, the *manjal*, *kumkumam* markings, and the *tulasi madam* with an *agal vilakku*. Since 1995, I started to paint and study doors in greater detail. Then I started collecting doors from nearby villages.

I got the opportunity to see more doors throughout India. I was attracted towards the doors of North India, especially Rajasthan. In Kolkata also the doors are very old and charming.

The doors in Chintadripet and Mannadi are also very old,

but they were very different from what I had seen earlier. The textures on the walls, worn off paint, patches due to mud — they changed my perspective. My doors from then onwards also showed the attached walls with textures.

Once again I visited Rajasthan. The doors in Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer are more colourful. Indian mural paintings play a major part in their walls. In Jaisalmer, a mixture of mud is applied on the walls by hand and then folk drawings are done. In Maharashtra, Warti drawings are seen on the walls. I brought these aspects in my paintings.

Doors play a vital role in our lives. Even to see this world, we need to open those small doors (eyelids). I am happy to bring light to everyone through my doors.

K.R.Santhanakrishnan



All that remains of this proud and ancient home is its impressive door and the frail, impoverished woman who adds pathos to the untold story of a once prosperous family by keeping the door locked securely and using the gap in the broken wall as entry and exit!

security it offers in times of need is taken for granted. The house might disintegrate with the weight of forgotten years, but the ancient door is carefully preserved. It gets reinstated in the new structure to recall fond memories. They are the cherished milestones in the family's history. The bride crosses the threshold to the sound of drums and pipe music. She is welcomed as the harbinger of fortune. The newborn infant is gently carried in, to the tune of welcoming songs and the chant of priests. In the South, the housewife cleans and decorates the threshold the first thing in the morning with floral designs. At dusk, the first lamp to be lit is the one that brightens the entrance. Invitations from relatives for weddings and auspicious gatherings are confirmed with turmeric and rice grains placed outside the doorway. Fortunately, modernity has not erased the traditional values of the belief that an open door is a sign of generosity. My camera comes alive when it encounters one.

T.S. Nagarajan

Case against Plastics

(Continued from page 1)

DBP (plasticizer)

is a possible cancer hazard based on tests on lab animals⁵

Dibutyl phthalate is a hormone disruptor known to act as anti-androgens⁶

Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC)

Vinyl chloride is a known human carcinogen, and its exposure may result in liver cancer in humans²

Vinylidene chloride resin (PVDC)

DCE may cause cancer in humans²

BHA (antioxidant)

Carcinogenic, endocrine disruptor⁴

BHT (antioxidant)

Carcinogenic⁴

Nonylphenol (antioxidant)

Can cause brain cancer in children who are exposed to certain garden and home pesticides, and also when either of or both parents are susceptible to occupational exposure²

Flame retardants

Carcinogenic, toxicity in nervous system⁴

Recycling of plastics is an argument that works only partly. Recycling of plastic is only 'downcycling' — into inferior products — and this merely delays the plastic from entering the waste stream. Also plastics are not 100% recyclable as the industry would have us believe. The ultimate goal of recycling would be to reduce production and consumption. However, this is not the case, as virgin plastic production will not decrease. Curbside recycling programmes even in the USA have not achieved major success (Berkeley Plastic Task Force, www.ecologycenter.org).

Finally, Tamil Nadu has never had a history of being proactive on environmental issues. And it has always been a non-governmental group or a group of citizens that has raised environmental concerns. For, perhaps, the first time, a statutory authority vested with powers to carry out common duty, to protect and safeguard the natural environment, is taking the lead on certain vital environmental issues. As concerned citizens, we should cooperate with the TNPCB in helping define the role of plastics and eliminating unnecessary applications. If not for the Board's "Say No to Plastics" campaign, we would not even be discussing the issue in such depth.

Rajesh Rangarajan
Regional Coordinator, Toxics Link, Chennai

Sources:

- Edwards, Robert and Kellert, Rachel: *Life in Plastic, The Other India* Press, 2000
- ATSDR
- FOE
- Taken from the poster "Cut off the source of Dioxin" by Japan Offspring Fund.
- <http://physchem.ox.ac.uk>
- <http://hazard.com/msds2/f/89/23499.html>



Till June 29: An exhibition on *Doors of India*. The exhibition will have a series of oil paintings by K.R. Santhanakrishnan on traditional Indian doors. It will also feature black and white photographs of T.S. Nagarajan on the same theme and a collection of digital photographs on Old French doors from Pondicherry by Arpitha Mohapatra. (At Manasthala.)

June 21: Attractive murals done on terracotta tiles, taught by a master potter. (at Dakshina Chitra.)

Answers to Quiz

- Steven Spielberg;
- Bertelsmann;
- Real Madrid;
- Oldest woman to climb Mt. Everest;
- Ashraf Jehangir Qazi;
- Reliance Industries;
- East Timor;
- Indonesia and China;
- Abdul Gani Lone;
- Shivnarine Chandernaul.

11. They are the only two Chennai students officially de-

clared State 1st in the plus two exams; 12. Malaysia; 13. Buckingham Canal; 14. Base of St. Thomas Mount; 15. The Veeranam water supply project; 16. Jerosene; 17. Saidapet, Vaniyambadi and Achapurakkam; 18. M. Sc. in electronic media; 19. As the State Govt. did not agree to a non-political person being the Chairman of Board of Governors of the institute; 20. In the Adyar Estuary.

Will A.R. Rahman fulfill Webber's dreams?

(Continued from page 6)

smiles at Bollywood but, through it, embraces it and celebrates it. Top Bollywood choreographer Farah Khan, working alongside UK dance ace Anthony Van Laast, has magnificently recreated the high-energy dance routines of celluloid. But most importantly, we have the magic of Rahman's music.

Put it this way. I would be quietly amused if some young turk wrote in fifty years' time, "Andrew Lloyd Webber wrote a few long running musicals from about 1970 to 2010 but his real achievement was to bring A R Rahman into musical theatre which ignited a new era of life and competition in the genre." — (Courtesy: *Connecting*, the journal of the British Council.)

When T.N. football had stars

Tamil Nadu has never won the Santosh Trophy, awarded to the winners of the national football championship. It entered the final only once, in 1972-73, when it lost 1-4 to Bengal in Goa.

However, the state has produced several outstanding footballers. At the top of the list are Simon Sunderraj and Kittu, who both played in the Olympics. Sunderraj was a winger par excellence. His tearaway raids with raking strides on the left were a treat to watch.

The late Kittu was an artist. Playing as inside forward, his twinkling feet created openings for others with a dextrous touch here and a delectable slice there. When occasion demanded, he could be aggressive too and scored goals, most of them with intelligent placings.

There was a player from Tamil Nadu in the Indian football team for the first Asiad in 1951. He was Southern Railway's Loganathan. Thangaswami of Tiruchi was a member of the Indian team which toured Kabul in the 50s. M. Thangaraj, Gunapandi, Orlando P. Rayan, K.S. Raju, A.U. Celestine, Abraham Koshi, Dhanapathi, M. Vishwanathan, Elumalai, Mohamad Amjad, Hamilton Bobby all donned India shirts at one time or another. In more recent years, only Sabir Pasha has made a mark at the international level.

Tamil Nadu also provided some talented juniors for the country. They included Theagarajan from Salem, S.P. Kumar, Robinson, Senthama-raikannan, S. Ravi and Loga-

nath Balaji. Amal Raj and Francis played for India sub-juniors and Mohamad Ashraff assisted the Indian schools team in international competitions.

There were quite a few stalwarts, who were capable of matching their skills with any India international player, in the older generation. Notable among them were Vishwashra Rao, Jagannathan, Gurunathan, D. Alexander, Nelson Isaac, R.J. Arnold, Yeshu, Henry Appadorai, Kali Nayudu, Sadasivan, S.E. Rajagopal and Loganathan. Mani and Ghulam Gafoor of Madurai T.V.S. Greens Club, Tiruchi Joseph, Arni Kandaswami, Velayuthan, Nadan, all came from the districts to play for the State.

The next generation saw football change drastically in technique, style and system, and the standouts for the state were: Alagirisami, Anjaneyulu, Balagopal, Janardhanan, Lakshmanan, Rajavelu, and Moorthi of the famous Wimco Club, who dominated State football in the 50s and 60s, Munuswami, Joseph Dorairaj, Lamer, Arumainathan, Padmanabhan and Orlando of Southern Railways, Janakiraman, Jothivelu, Ganapathi, Siva, Rajamani, Viswanathan, Ramamurthi, Dhanapathi, Thomas, Vincent, Shanmugham and Sriramulu of Integral Coach Factory, S. Padmanabhan, K. Balasubramanian and C.V. Reddy of T.Nagar FC, Gunapandi, Celestine, Raju,



I. Arumainayagam

Victor, Koshi, Padmanabhan of Reserve Bank, Ranjit and Anandakumar of State Bank. R.K.R. Balasubramanian of T.Nagar FC represented the Services.

Among them Balagopal of Wimco, who was a tower of strength in the defence, served the state as none before. He assisted the state in the national championship for a record thirteen times, from 1952 to 1964. For seven years he was the captain of the State. He was a player, who excelled in both barefoot and booted play. He narrowly missed the chance to play for the country.

One of the finest wingers in India in his time, was I. Arumainayagam who had the unique distinction of representing four teams in the national championship. Short and compact but speedy and skilful, this Tamil Nadu player was as exclusive as an eel on the left wing and dominated Indian football to such an extent in the Sixties that he was an indispensable member of the Indian team in international competition during that time.

Arumainayagam first made an impact while assisting Binny Mills (Bangalore) in 1958. The same year he was chosen to represent Mysore in the national championship. From then on there was no looking back.

Arumai blossomed into a complete footballer after he joined Mohun Bagan in 1960. He became the darling of the Calcutta crowd. Defences found him unable to contain as he had not only the skill to rip them apart with his electrifying

Saying it in song

'The Music of Cricket' by V. Ramnarayan (MM, May 16th) was very interesting. It is good to know that while Unnikrishnan and Sanjay Subramaniam have had their innings as cricketers cut short, as musicians, they will have a long innings.

Reading the article, my mind flashed back to 1948 when I had the experience of listening to the music of cricket and watching the Bharata Natyam of cricket in St. Thomas Hall in Madras Christian College. A resident of the hall, S. Radhakrishnan, Economics Honours, composed a song for cricket dance in Raga Todi a la mode *Thaye Yasoda*. The song was exquisitely composed and the dance by L.V. Ramanathan was excellent. The song of cricket dance composed fifty years ago was rendered in the later years in many places.

For the benefit of your readers — lovers of cricket and music — I give below the song partly in English and partly in Tamil.

Ragam: Todi. Tune: Thaye Yasoda. Mettu: Talam Adi

Ladies and Gentlemen, thousands of spectators
Watching Don Bradman batting, Vinoo Mankad bowling (Ladies)
Kaalinil pads kondu, Kaithanil gloves maatti
Thalayile cappudan enter paminnaan Don Bradman
World ellam mahizha Indians pugala
Vinoo Mankad bowling i Don Bradman face seithan
Anda Bradman ivanthaan
Square cuttum cover drive um
Forward blocking, backward blocking
Hookkum pullum mid-on drive um
Shoekkaana glide m glance m (Ladies)
Leg break endru aada ponaan — Don Bradman
Fast one it was, hitting his pads
Was out for L.B.W.
"Not an ordinary bowler," says Fingleton
His fast ball ai face seyya
Naanam miha aahuthadi (Ladies)

I cannot think of a greater tribute to the late Don Bradman and Vinoo Mankad, by an unknown student of M.C.C. 54 years ago!

Your readers can reach composer S. Radhakrishnan, now Professor of Economics at APEX, at 4937046 and listen to the song from the composer himself. He composed many other songs as well.

N. Srivatsa Mani

7, Kamala Pandalai Road, Rathna Nagar, Chennai 600 018.

runs, but also the ability to score goals as evidenced by a record he shares with Kannan of Bengal, each scoring five in a match. It was no surprise when he was chosen 'The Footballer of the Year' in 1963.

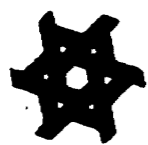
Arumainayagam made his debut for India, and a title-winning debut it was, when he was selected for India for the Jakarta Asian Games in 1962. India daimed its only major gold medal in that tournament under the captaincy of Chuni Goswami. He represented the country

thereafter in every international match until the end of the 60s.

In 1967 and 1968 he assisted the Indian Railways in the Santosh Trophy. By now, competition and hard training had started taking its toll, but he was still skilful enough in 1971 to represent Tamil Nadu in the Nationals. In 1980 he took over the Southern Railway team as coach and also coached the Indian Railways. (Courtesy: TFC Souvenir)

V.P. Vijayakumar

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