

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

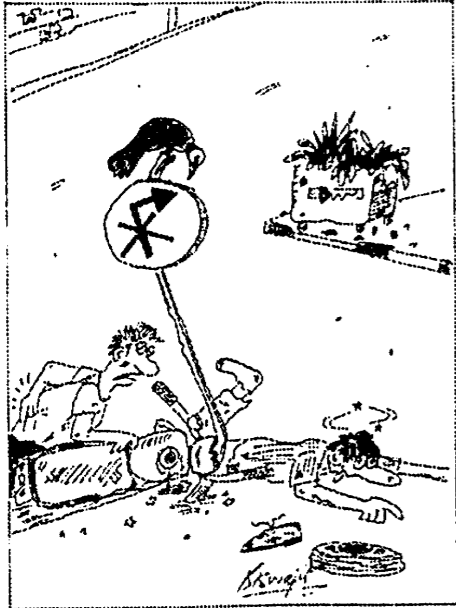
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Vol. XII No.21

FREE ISSUE

February 16-28, 2003



Not this right turn... What I meant was that left turn is the right turn!

That little shining light

This is for those good citizens of Chennai who zip around our wonderful roads using vehicles of various shapes and sizes – especially those who use the two-wheeled variety.

Do you know what an 'INDICATOR' is? (I'm sorry – I do apologise for that rather uncontrolled display of emotion.) But I'm sick and tired of drivers careening past my vehicle even as I am in the very act of turning left or right.

Indicators, Chennai-ites, indicators.

Pay attention now. Indicators are those clever little lights on the front and rear ends of vehicles. The right one flashes when the driver wants to turn right, and the left one... well, you get the idea.

And when said light blinks, what should you do?

Let the turn go through smoothly, and calmly continue driving. What you do NOT do is suddenly pick up speed, and desperately claw your way through that inch of space between the vehicle-in-the-act-of-turning and the road-corner or whatever the poor guy has to circumvent in order to make that turn.

We are probably the only country in the world where drivers put their indicators on, and then signal frantically with their hands, twisting this way and that, while fellow passengers lean out of windows yelling instructions... or expletives.

You have to wonder.... Who gives these people their driving licences?

Ranjitha Ashok

Is this how we beautify the Marina?

(By The Editor)

It was only last fortnight that a Special Correspondent had wondered in this same space what the whisperings about a possible new coastal survey implied and whether they indicated major development all along the city coastline. It was a concern arising out of the fact that pointers to permission being publicly sought for development in the Adyar coastal area were being noted. Now, in those 15 days, not only have our correspondent's fears been further kindled, but Government has amazingly decided to look at new development on the Marina while paying little attention to what it had so enthusiastically announced only a few days previously, namely beautifying the stretch and building an administrative city on the Old Mahabalipuram Road.

Government was now saying that it could not wait all those years it would take to build an administrative city, it was not saying whether it was pursuing its plans to build a new Secretariat within two years on the Marina. And this Secretariat would be more magnificent than Karnataka's *Vidhana Soudha*, which some might consider cocking a snook at Krishna, even if he had nothing to do with the building of the *Vidhana Soudha*, which could well have drawn inspiration from our own Southern Railway headquarters.

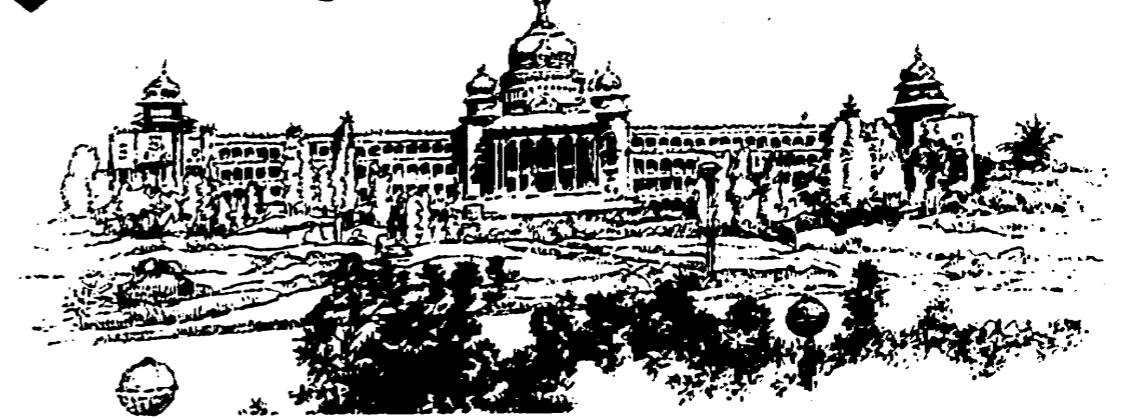
From all reports, what is being planned is a building 6-8,00,000 sq.ft. in extent replacing the buildings in the Lady Willingdon Teachers' Training College campus – college, schools and the secretariat for the Council of Higher Education – and to be built at a cost of Rs. 50-60 crore within two years. This new better-than-*Vidhana Soudha* building will come up, then, right next to, and dwarf that heritage landmark, *Ice House* – now *Vivekananda Illam*. Such a building is necessary, Government states, because the new block in Fort constructed only 20 years ago is in a deplorable state – reportedly due to very bad construction, according to Government – and repairs are not possible because of the Archaeological Survey of India's writ in the Fort. But then, surely, this building jutting out like a sore thumb in the Fort does not come under the purview of the ASI, so why not go ahead and repair it? What does come under the purview of the ASI is the main Secretariat and Legislature building – and that certainly needs restoration, which the ASI would not object to if Government worked with it.

(Continued on Page 7)



◆ **The proposed site...** It's the campus that stretches south of the Vivekananda statue (above) to as far as Queen Mary's College. And in this spaciousness are a teachers' training college, two schools – one of whose buildings has been considered a heritage building – and a couple of office blocks housing higher education commissions. Here it is intended to build a Secretariat handsomer than the *Vidhana Soudha* seen below by an artist for a greeting card.

◆ **for something better than this...**



... but why not here? ◆ What such construction and the crowds it will draw daily will do to the Marina and Kamarajar Salai is rather frightening to think of. At the least, it will make beautifying the Marina a waste of money. Why not then build the Secretariat elsewhere as, for instance, in the 'jungle' seen below in Kotturpuram, a substantial acreage behind Anna University Staff quarters? (Photographs by R. ESWARRAJ).



GENEROUS, BUT ANONYMOUS

The good news is that we have received the generous support of Rs. 1,00,001 from a leading firm of city professionals. Sadly, they wish to remain anonymous, but hope that their message in our regular space for acknowledgements will generate a greater attention to heri-

tage, particularly from fellow professionals.

It has also been heartening to hear from a few readers who have responded favourably to former Chief Urban Planner Dattatri's suggestion (MM, January 16th). L.J. Krishnamurthy writes, "Rs. 1200, I feel,

is nothing when compared to the commitment and the causes *Madras Musings* espouses". And reader R.V. Rajan says, "I will be happy to contribute every year as long as I am in the saddle in Anugrah Madison." Several contributors have also returned their hono-

rariums with the request they be passed on to Chennai Heritage.

Apart from this spontaneous support for *Madras Musings* and the causes the journal espouses, Chennai Heritage has received

(Continued on Page 4)

At last, a beginning at Senate House

A recent visit to Senate House provided a heart-warming site. Modern scaffolding was going up and helmeted construction workers were beginning to examine the roof. A few enquiries led *The Man From Madras Musings* discovering the scaffolding had been given to the University at a very special price by a leading building firm to ensure that, after restoration, there would remain infrastructure in place to ensure regular maintenance. This firm had been awarded the contract by the P.W.D. to repair and restore the roof on a priority basis. A leak-proof roof will thereafter enable further restoration of the heritage building unimpeded by damp.

While welcoming the gesture by the firm, MMM hopes that the work on the roof will be strictly according to the specifications of the technical advisory committee appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and that the P.W.D., which has been entrusted with the overall restoration, will monitor the work strictly according to the guidelines of the committee. MMM also hopes that the firm will interact regularly with the technical committee to ensure that its portion of the restoration will be a model of conservation and not merely an answer to a problem. MMM raises this point because, while acknowledging

whole new world opening up to them. MMM hopes that enthusiasm remains and that every one concerned will team together to make the restoration of Senate House that has just begun, after so many years of talking, a model of conservation that will be followed in similar cases of heritage building restoration in the city and State.

Yet another site?

Even as this edition of *Madras Musings* goes to press, *The Man From Madras Musings* hears a whisper that there is every possibility of yet another site on the Marina being looked at for the new Secretariat. The rumour mills have it that the Queen Mary's College campus could also be under consideration. And if that is so, it could mean the demolition of at least one major heritage building - *Capper House* - and several lesser heritage buildings. Apart from that, the threat to the Marina will in no way diminish.

But here's a wild thought from MMM. Why not spend a portion of the money being earmarked for a new Secretariat on restoring the P.W.D. building, *Chepauk Palace* and *Victoria Hostel*, building new sympathetically-styled blocks along the

stands. But will this sum solve the problem this time?

The fact is that money, a large amount of it, is spent every few years to stem the tide and save this stretch of coast. But no success has been achieved. Nature continues to defeat every effort of Man. So why should the latest expenditure be successful when others have failed?

MMM may be wrong, but he feels the same as many others do - namely that *ad hoc* work is being done every time, with no proper study of how the erosion could permanently be ended or whether it is at all possible to stem the tide of erosion. MMM has heard several experts say that so long as the port Francis Spring built remains the way he planned it, there is no prevention of erosion to the north or stopping the mouths of the Cooum and the Adyar being blocked despite the best efforts to regularly keep them open. If a proper study is done, perhaps some of those answers will emerge and a decision could be taken based on the study.

As it is, *ad hoc* measures only amount to good money being spent on a bad situation - and no better effort than any in the past is likely to emerge. In that context, MMM feels it might be wiser NOT to order the PWD and other official builders to strengthen groyne,

canal, thereby developing a magnificent campus of Indo-Saracenic style here and, by pulling down all new construction here - including *Ezhilagam*, and the Agriculture and Land Survey Department buildings - show it off to the world as a model heritage site in which a Secretariat operates? New functional buildings for all the departments thus ousted from here could be built in Kotturpuram.

That this complex too would be on the Marina and affect it could remain an argument against the thought. But with - as in the past - an entrance on Wallajah Road and space on the canal banks for crowds, there would be less chance of threatening the Marina's peace and beauty here.

Now that's a real wild thought. But what an impressive heritage campus it would make, one that would be welcomed by heritage lovers everywhere. MMM can dream, can't he?

Is money the answer?

Money is being earmarked to prevent erosion along the 11 km stretch of highway between Royapuram and Ennore, *The Man From Madras Musings* under-

stand commission a study that will suggest a more permanent solution to a long-lived problem.

Solid recording

The Man From Madras Musings does not know how good a job has been done on restoring the *Raj Bhavans* of Maharashtra, but that much work has been done MMM found, glancing through a book which was recently given a brief glimpse of. The book, *Raj Bhavans of Maharashtra*, edited by the former Governor of Maharashtra, Dr. P.C. Alexander, who once occupied Tamil Nadu's *Raj Bhavans* too, is a colourful production containing a substantial historical record. But it is a bit short on documentation of the buildings themselves, which would have left an architectural record for posterity.

MMM hopes that Governor Ramamohan Rao of Tamil Nadu will take a cue from this and not only encourage the publication of a book on the *Raj Bhavans* of Tamil Nadu but will also ensure that a complete architectural documentation of each is included in the publication.

— MMM

A big 'Thank You' to 228 of you

We publish below the list of donors who have, between 1.1.03 and 1.2.03, added to the support *Madras Musings* has already received. We thank all of them for their support for the causes *Madras Musings* espouses. — Chennai Heritage

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OUR READERS WRITE

Covered plaque

I had a few German friends staying with me recently. I mentioned to them that the German cruiser *Emden* had shelled Madras 90 years ago. I told them about the plaque on the High Court wall marking the event and they were most eager to see it. But when I took them all the way to Parry's Corner to show them the plaque, to my horror, I found handbills and posters pasted all over the plaque and it was only with great difficulty I was able to locate the plaque and show it to them.

It is unfortunate that handbills and posters are pasted indiscriminately on such historic landmarks.

P.S.K. Chari
43, Greaves Road
Chennai 600 006

Anthem, please

A few years ago I wrote a letter suggesting that the National Anthem be played in theatres, a practice that existed about 25-30 years ago. It is heartening to note that the Maharashtra Government has revived the practice.

In the past 25-30 years, we have seen much sectarian strife - Punjab, Kashmir, Northeast etc. It is hoped that listening to the National Anthem (of which we hardly get an opportunity these days) will make us all think that first and foremost we are Indians and only then have regional identities. Will the Tamil Nadu Government follow suit?

B. Gautham
137, Wallajah Road
Chennai 600 002.

Museum garbage

What reader N. Harinarayana said in *MM*, February 1st, rings true! With all due respect, the PWD is not equipped for such kind of work. Worse, in beautifying the FRONT, all the garbage is being dumped BEHIND the Museum and adjacent to the Connemara Library - under extensive-expensive renovation!! - possibly to lie and rot until eternity. To remove that garbage it will take years of monumental sanctions and approvals.

In an already polluted city, all the residents near where the garbage is being dumped are being treated with huge clouds of dust from the dumped matter creating problems for many of us suffering from bronchial problems. But again, who cares or thinks about such matters? Certainly not the PWD, who should have ensured that the contractor removed all this material to the many sites needing such fill material.

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Note: Overseas postage Rs. 450/year extra. Cheques payable to M/s. Lokavani Hall-Mark Press.

We do not know how long this will continue, but request early action.

Samuel J. Prabhakar
11, Manohar Avenue
Off Casa Major Road
Chennai 600 008.

Animal slaughter

The detailed description by the veteran Professor of Virology Dr. M.S. Jayaraman (*MM*, February 1st), of the medieval conditions prevailing in the slaughter houses and the quality of meat coming out of them should be enough to turn anyone into a vegetarian.

Although we in India are proud of 'The White Revolution', the country has not evolved a system to deliver clean and disease-free meat - be it beef, mutton, pork or chicken.

Cattle and buffalo, unlike in other developed and developing countries, are not found here as separate beef and milk breeds. Cattle and buffalo which have become unfit for either milk production or work are sold to the butchers.

Very few, if any, slaughter houses in India adopt scientific methods of slaughter - viz., ante- and post-mortem inspections of meat by qualified veterinary surgeons and meat inspectors, with the result many animals which are pregnant or are terminally ill are slaughtered. Such meat could transmit diseases like *Brucella*, *TB*, *Colibacillosis* and dangerous tapeworms.

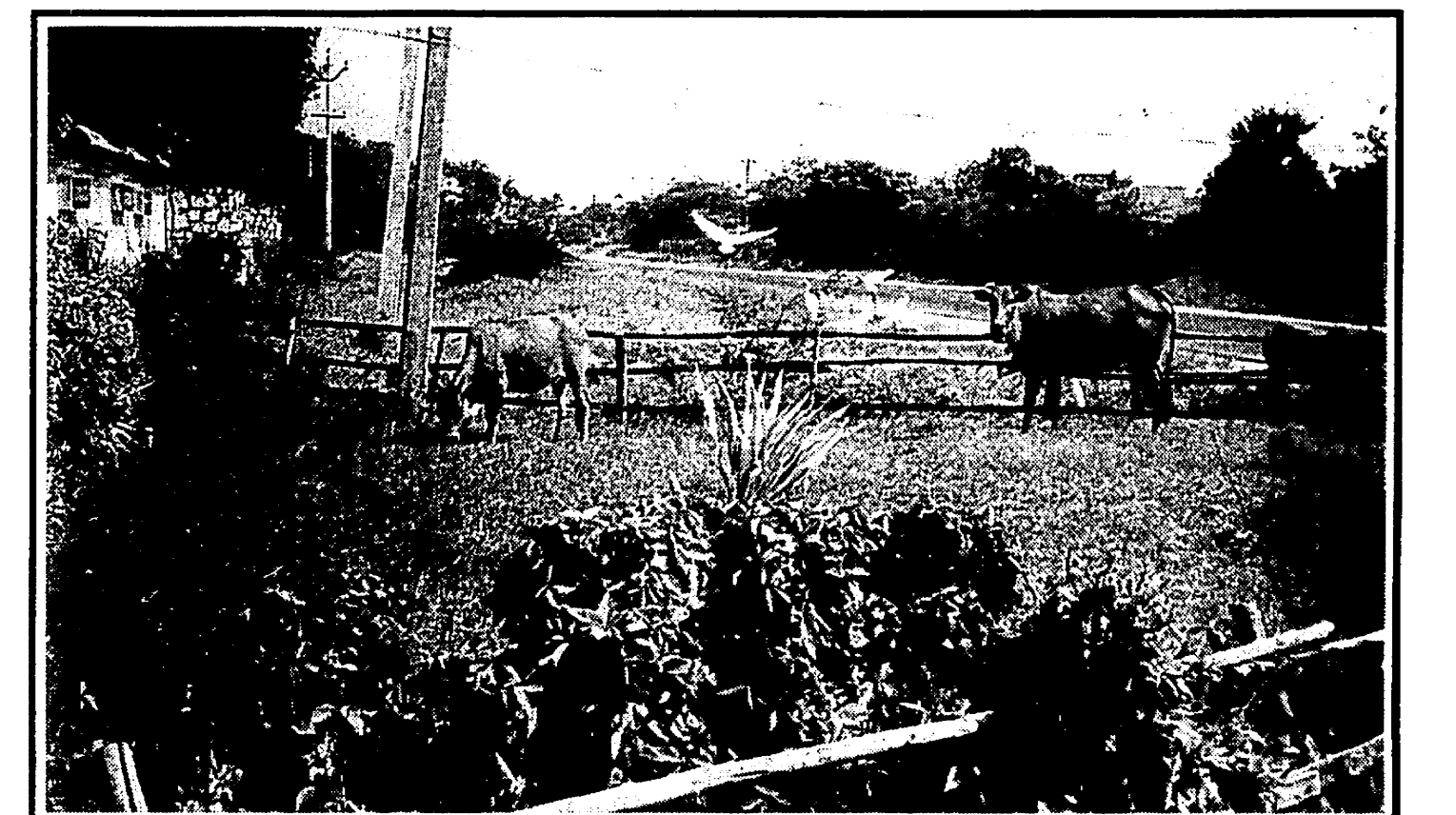
Although most Southeast Asian countries contain only one species of buffalo, the swamp buffalo, India has more than 10 breeds of buffalo, such as the Murrah, Nili Ravi, Toda and Sambalpur. Provided the animals are well looked after and slaughtered in well-managed slaughter houses under veterinary control and proper meat inspection, the country could be a good source for animal meat provided, of course, the infectious diseases like Foot and Mouth, *TB*, *Anthrax* etc. are controlled simultaneously.

Dr. C.V. Subramaniam
1017/1023, Gitanjali Layout
Bangalore 560 075.

Gas and water

In the story, 'AP gas could help ITN boom' (*MM*, December 16th), the accompanying map shows a part of gas from AP being delivered to Gujarat. Why does Gujarat need AP gas? It already gets more than its needs from Bombay High and, in fact, 'exports' gas to M.P., U.P. and Delhi, through the HBJ pipeline. This gas should be diverted to Tamil Nadu and other Southern States.

As regards the story, 'Concrete lining of Telugu-Ganga channel



A scene that will soon vanish

This photograph taken outside the main entrance of the Coromandel Country Club in Sriperumbudur, reminds one so much of the English countryside. Soon, it's never likely to be seen again, the 4-lane Bangalore Highway will spell its doom.

Regarding Reader M.R. Pillai's letter urging the revival of Tennikoit (*MM*, January 16th), the Coromandel Club has a tennis court, but there are few takers. If there is an existing organisation for the game, which would like to put it to good use to scout for local talent or to use it as a coaching camp, please get in touch with the Club's office on Tel No. 28207018/28207036.

Suhasini Fredrick
5/42, Maruthai Apartment, Harrington Road, 13th Avenue, Chetpet, Chennai 600 031.

begins', trials have shown that if a plastic sheet is laid beneath the concrete lining of a canal, over 95 per cent of seepage can be prevented. I do hope that the engineers involved are putting plastic sheets below the Telugu Ganga canal lining.

Rajeshwari Singh
3/1, Sarvapriya Vihar
New Delhi 110 016.

Rajaji and his readers

Here is more to 'The Rajaji way' (*MM* January 1st). Rajaji considered writing the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* his most useful work. It was always his desire to offer his works at a very low price so as to reach even the poor. This *Vyasara Virundhu* (*Mahabharata* in Tamil) was published in December 1956 and was priced at just one rupee! He agreed to let this book be published only after he had extracted a promise from the publisher that the book would be offered at such an unbelievably low price! Likewise, his English version of *Mahabharata* was the first book to be published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in 1951 and was priced at just Rs.1.75 (though no royalty element is involved, that it costs Rs. 90 now is another matter). The deluxe edition of the *Ramayana* was priced at Rs.4 in 1956.

Now that his works have been 'Nationalised' let us hope that these works are made available at much more affordable rates to the reading public. Rajaji's words, "Let no one look upon work as a burden. Good work is the secret that keep life going. While one should not hanker after results, life without work would be unbearable," reflect the true spirit of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

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T.M. Sundaraman
19, Nallappan Street
Mylapore, Chennai 600 004.

Music & Triplicane - I

As an old resident of Triplicane (*MM*, December 16th & January 1st) and of Muthukalathy Chetty Street, I recall that in a lane, at the end of M.K. Chetty Street, lived A. Parthasarathy, then the foremost *nadaswaram* player in Madras city, perhaps one of the rare

nadaswaram maestros outside the Tanjore corps. His daughter A.P. Komala also took to music, particularly light music, and became a playback singer in films and an All India Radio artiste.

In 102 Big Street lived R.N. Sharma, a kind of pioneer in the patronage of arts. He ran the South Indian Music Emporium in Broadway. He organised in his house *kathakalakshepams* and *bhajans*, one of them by Papanasam Sivan. His son R. Vaidyanathan, was an expert piano-player (in the 1930s) and has cut gramophone records with Varahur Muthuswami Aiyer.

Another son, R. Ramani, got his M. Litt. in music from the Madras University. He joined films and became Ranjan of *Chandralaksha* fame. In Sunkur Street, lived my friend and classmate R.S. Krishnamurthy Rao. He chose *ghatam* as his instrument and accompanied K.B. Sundarambal regularly. After a good deal of struggle he got into A.I.R. as a staff artiste. Little could he have imagined that this same "lovely *ghatam*" would launch artistes into orbit and make them talk of *jugalbandhi*, jazz and fusion.

G. Krishnamurthi
"Meenakshi", 320, I Cross
I Stage, II Phase, Gokul Extension
Bangalore 560 054.

Music & Triplicane - II

I refer to V. Sriram's 'They made music in Triplicane', (*MM*, December 16th). Dr. S. Ramanathan resided upto 1968 at Sydoji Street opposite Hindu High School. Later, he moved to T.P. Koil Street. I have also heard that GNB lived for some time at Sydoji Street.

Dr. R.K. Natarajan
23, Kalyanapuram Street
Choolaimedu, Chennai 600 094.

Music & Triplicane - III

May I, as a resident there till 1953, add to V. Sriram's *Triplicane Music Trail* (*MM*, January 1st).
The great *ghatam* *vidwan*, Vilvadi Iyer, and Palakkad K.V. Narayanawamy were co-tenants in Big Street, near C.N. Krishna-

swamy Road. I used to visit another co-tenant, M.S. Raghavan, my classmate in school who, after joining the Postal Department, became a member of the Board. Dr. S. Ramanathan, an eminent musicologist and musician, lived in Sydoji lane, opposite the Hindu High School. He taught *veena* and vocal music to my sisters for over a decade, commencing from 1946, then shifted to T.P. Koil Street near Parthasarathy Temple. Ramnad Krishnan and his brothers lived opposite our house in Swamipillai Street, Triplicane, and so had GNB's father Narayanawamy Iyer. The top floor of the Hindu High School was the venue for a long time of all the great concerts conducted by Parthasarathy Sabha.
My father, Dr. Vedantam, a prominent medical practitioner in Triplicane, was a family doctor for some of the eminent artistes of Triplicane.

V. Aravamudan
20, Judge Jambulinga
Mudaliar Road
Mylapore
Chennai 600 004.

Looking for birds

I have a small terrace with good greenery around the area. I have a keen interest in watching birds which frequent the trees nearby. I would like to have more birds to visit my terrace. Is there any way to attract birds so that I can feed them? I would be happy if any reader can help me in this matter.

C.S. Baskar
17, Ramarao Road
Mylapore
Chennai 600 004.

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, Greaves 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.

Is this how to use urban waste?

EDL India Pvt. Ltd. has been given the go-ahead by the State Government to run a Solid Waste and Energy Recycling Facility (SWERF), a 14.5 MW garbage-to-power project, that has been hanging fire since 1998. The proposed plant in Perungudi will produce power from city garbage, using gasification pyrolysis technology.

EDL's Rs. 180-crore project will be undertaken on a Build, Own and Operate (BOO) basis and commissioned in two years. Chennai generates about 3,000 tonnes of garbage every day, half of which is dumped at Kodungaiyur, while the other half finds its way to Perungudi. The EDL plant will not be able to handle that volume of garbage, but is expected to play a catalyst's role in creating wealth from waste.

Although the concept of solid waste management (SWM) has been receiving increased attention in recent times, it was thought of a while ago by the Chennai Corporation, under the then Commissioner Shanta Sheela Nair and

• by Sashi Nair

Senior Engineer R. Ramathan. Their thinking did not lead to anything concrete then but, today, municipal waste management is regaining focus. The reasons are mainly four — environmental concern, economic necessity, employment generation and legal requirement.

At a recent seminar on 'Technologies for resourcing waste', Chairman of the Citizens' Alliance for Sustainable Living (SUSTAIN), M.G. Devasahayam, outlined a 'seven-step value chain' in SWM. This chain, according to him, includes waste minimisation, reuse of products before collection, recycling of material prior to collection, collection of waste, recovery, recycling of material after collection, disposal of residue material and aftercare of disposal. The whole problem, Devasahayam emphasised, lay in the fact that "we are jumping from Stage 1 to Stage 4 and then to Stage 6 instead of following a step-by-step approach," which could be achieved if the citizens focussed on the 3 Rs - Reduce, Recycle and Reuse (waste).

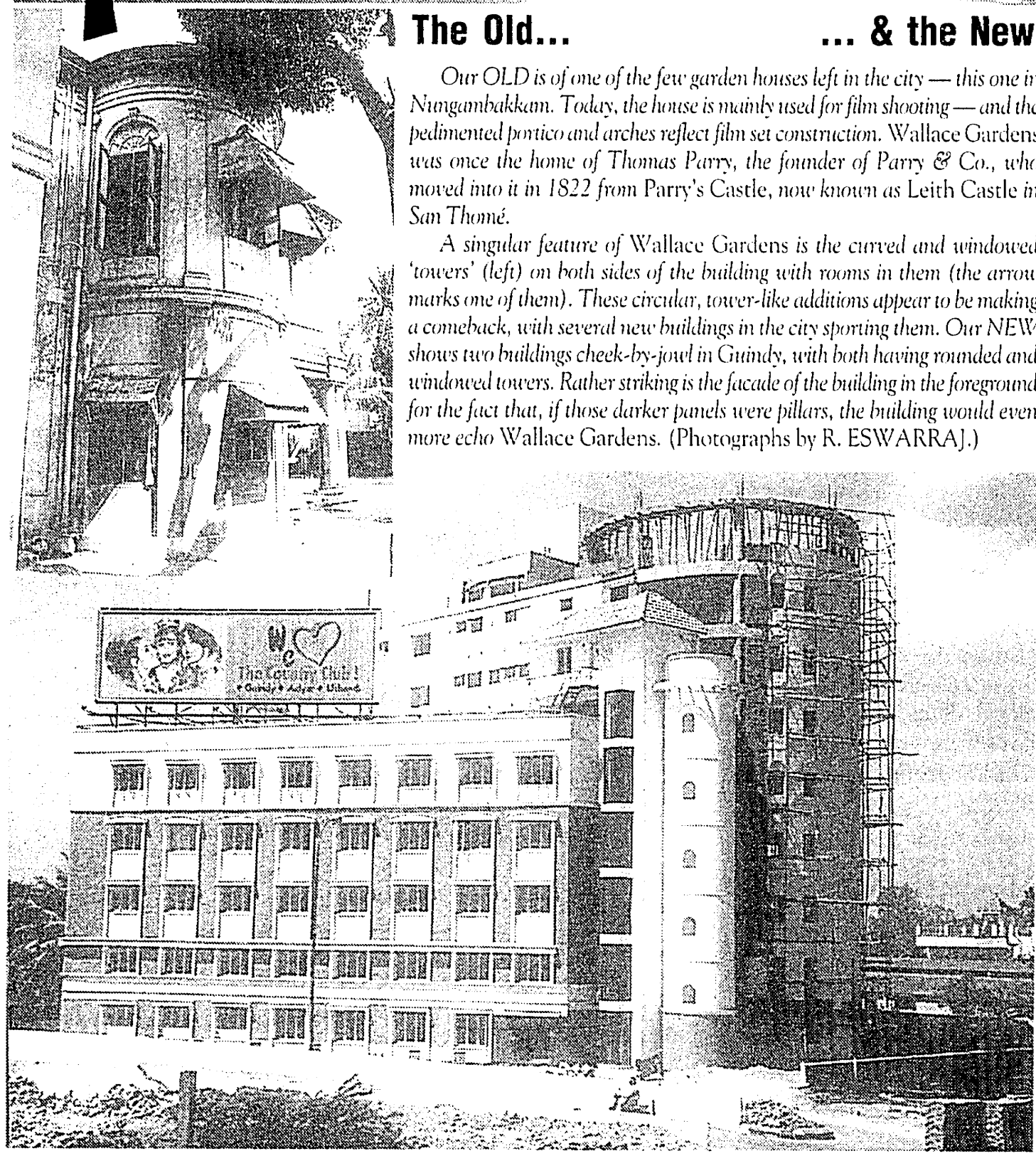
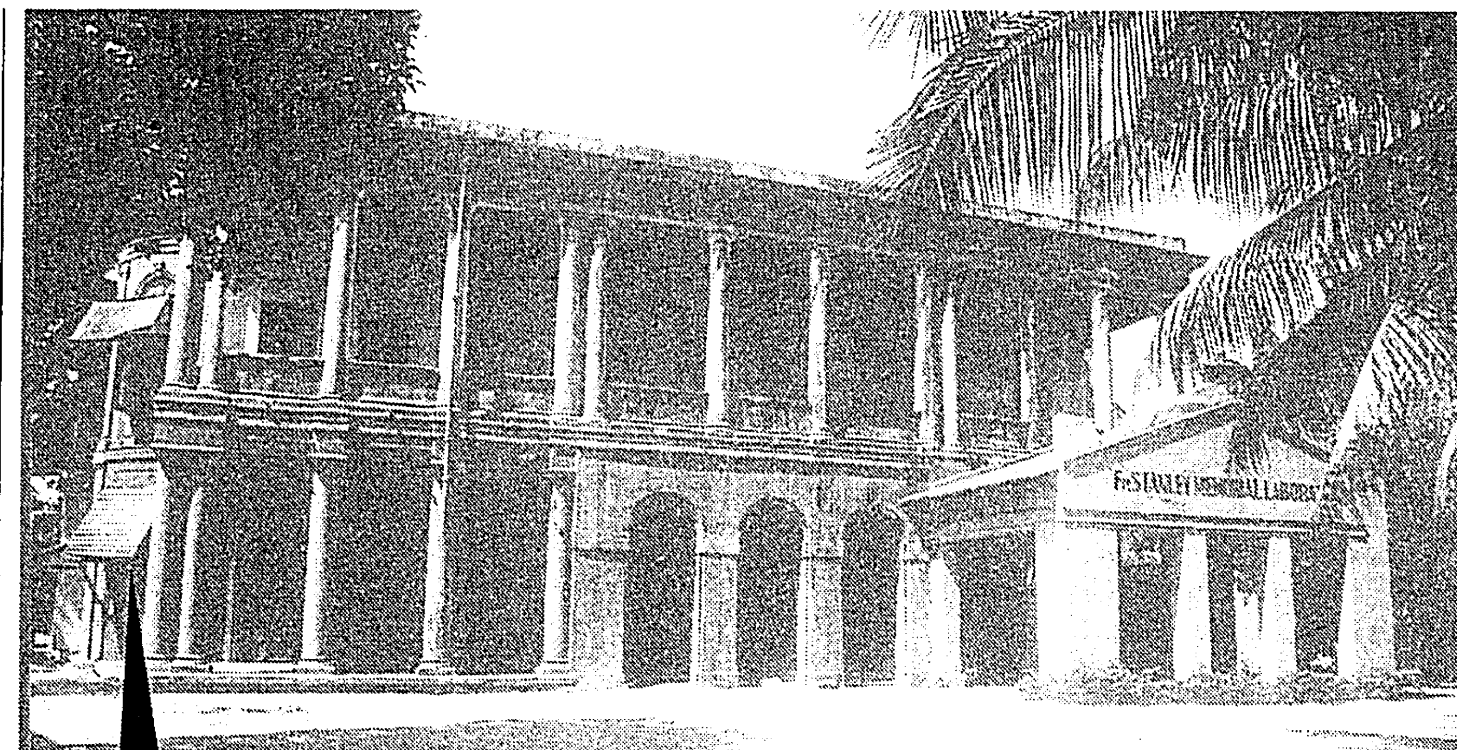
EDL's role in the seven-step value chain comes only in the

final two stages. But even to make its role meaningful, Chennai's citizens will have to follow the other five steps which, judging by the situation on the ground, seems Utopian. EDL's parent company in Australia uses similar technology for a 5 MW plant at Wollongong in New South Wales, but there, of course, citizens are aware of what they have to do to convert waste into wealth. They are even willing to pay for segregation of waste, according to EDL.

At the seminar, where EDL made a presentation, Sunand Sharma, Managing Director, EDL, faced several questions from representatives of NGOs, who felt the consequences of the technology could be environmentally disastrous. Sharma, weathering the storm, stated that the pyrolysis plant was a modular, factory-built and tested plant in which the process took place in an oxygen-free environment. "SWERF is a variable combination of existing and new technology. Household waste segregation has been our focus for long," he said, adding, "In any case, we will adapt our technology to local needs and will talk with anyone, including NGOs and environmentalists. Before building plants, we will conduct a thorough study. We are only a community-service provider and we believe we can provide a complete solution to handling waste."

However, ever since EDL received the State Government's nod, several environmentalists and representatives of NGOs such as Exnora, Toxic Links and Srishti, have expressed serious concerns about the safety aspects of the plant. According to them, environment-friendly treatment like composting and recycling are favoured the worldover, not incineration. The project, they feel, would not only violate the Municipal Waste Rules (MSW) 2000 but also discourage people from segregating, reducing, reusing and recycling waste.

The gasification technology (incineration process), environmentalists stress, is a resource-destroying and unsustainable toxic process that is harmful to the health. It emits dioxins, a poisonous cancer-causing toxin, and other toxins and heavy metals. Hazardous chemicals are released into the air and water and there is left-over ash as well. As a result of



The Old... & the New

Our OLD is of one of the few garden houses left in the city — this one in Nungambakkam. Today, the house is mainly used for film shooting — and the pedimented portico and arches reflect film set construction. Wallace Gardens was once the home of Thomas Parry, the founder of Parry & Co., who moved into it in 1822 from Parry's Castle, now known as Leith Castle in San Thomé.

A singular feature of Wallace Gardens is the curved and windowed 'towers' (left) on both sides of the building with rooms in them (the arrow marks one of them). These circular, tower-like additions appear to be making a comeback, with several new buildings in the city sporting them. Our NEW shows two buildings cheek-by-jowl in Guindy, with both having rounded and windowed towers. Rather striking is the facade of the building in the foreground for the fact that, if those darker panels were pillars, the building would even more echo Wallace Gardens. (Photographs by R. ESWARRAJ.)

the production of such toxins, the project could go against the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Stockholm Treaty on persistent organic pollutants. The project has reportedly never undergone any environment impact assessment and public hearing process. Some also state that at a meeting between EDL and the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB), EDL representatives were not able to satisfactorily answer questions on the safety and environmental aspects.

Nevertheless, at the seminar, Sharma stated that his company would operate within Indian rules and by June-July all environmental conditions would be met. Asked how EDL would help tackle the earlier five stages of the value chain, Sharma said, "EDL's study of the garbage end-use cycle in Chennai reveals that once the household garbage reaches the Onyx bin, the rag picker makes

(Continued on Page 8)

Generous, but anonymous

(Continued from Page 1)

several warm letters appreciating *Madras Musings* and its contribution towards helping make people aware of the city's heritage and the need to tend that heritage carefully as well as improve a city which deserves better.

Reader Sunitha Abraham speaks of how *Madras Musings* helps readers know the diverse aspects of Madras's heritage and reader Patwardhan of Mumbai speaks of the high esteem he has for the contents of the journal.

We have also received suggestions on how we can tide over the present difficulties. Reader S.V. Ramanathan suggests the following: Don't enroll new members on the Free Mailing List; slightly reduce the quality of paper; and seek two or three advertisements (highly selective ones) on the causes espoused by *Madras Musings*. We,

however, hope that despite the slow response at present, we will, by the end of March, receive enough support from our readers to make it unnecessary to resort to the first two suggestions. Regarding the third suggestion, with space at a premium as it is, we cannot spare any for advertisements; the most we can do is offer what little we do for acknowledgements.

Meanwhile, we have been going through with a fine tooth comb *Madras Musings*' 16,500-strong mailing list and hope by April 1st to eliminate all duplications. Only then do we plan to add to the list of requests received from December 1, 2002 and take note of changes of addresses. Readers, please bear with us. From May 1st we — a journal without a staff — should have been able to regularise everything.

— The Editor

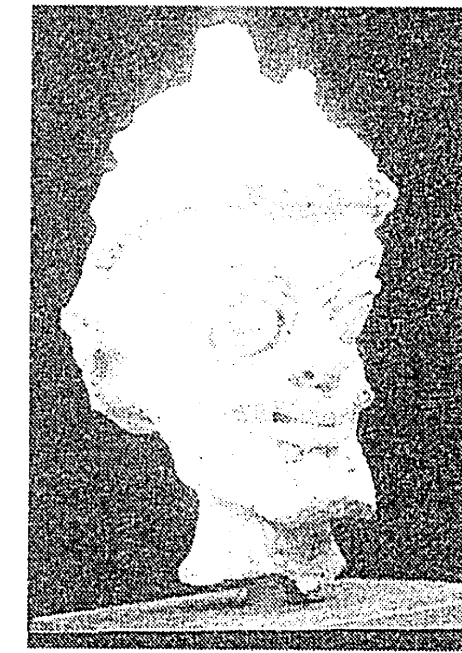
Following the Roman trail...

One day, during that unusually hot summer of 1987, I was finding the high-roofed and pillared Archaeological Survey Library in the Fort St. George a cool haunt. A postgraduate student of the University of Madras, I was going through some of the old issues of *Indian Archaeology* — A Review, the little-known annual publication of the Archaeological Survey of India, showcasing the archaeological discoveries and studies in different parts of the country. Suddenly, I was surprised to read about the discovery of a large hoard of gold coins of such Roman emperors as Augustus and Tiberius in an obscure village near Coimbatore. Further reading revealed that such discoveries of ancient Roman objects are not uncommon in South India.

The earliest recorded find of ancient Roman coins in South India is the discovery, in 1786, of about 40 aurei (Roman gold coins) at Nellore (now in Andhra Pradesh) by a farmer while tilling his fields. The discovery was briefly mentioned in a letter from Colonel Sydenham to Lord Macartney, published in the journal *Archaeologia* in 1789. Since then, Roman coins, medals, seals, jewels, ceramics, glass artefacts and other minor antiquities have been reported from scores of sites in South India, specially on the Coromandel Coast. These objects were brought here by ancient Roman traders and their African representatives. Discoveries of such objects are very few in North India because much of the trade between ancient India and Rome was by sea.

Curious to learn more about these enigmatic finds, I took up the study of all the Roman objects found in the Indian sub-continent as a full-time research project, with a scholarship from the Archaeological Survey of India.

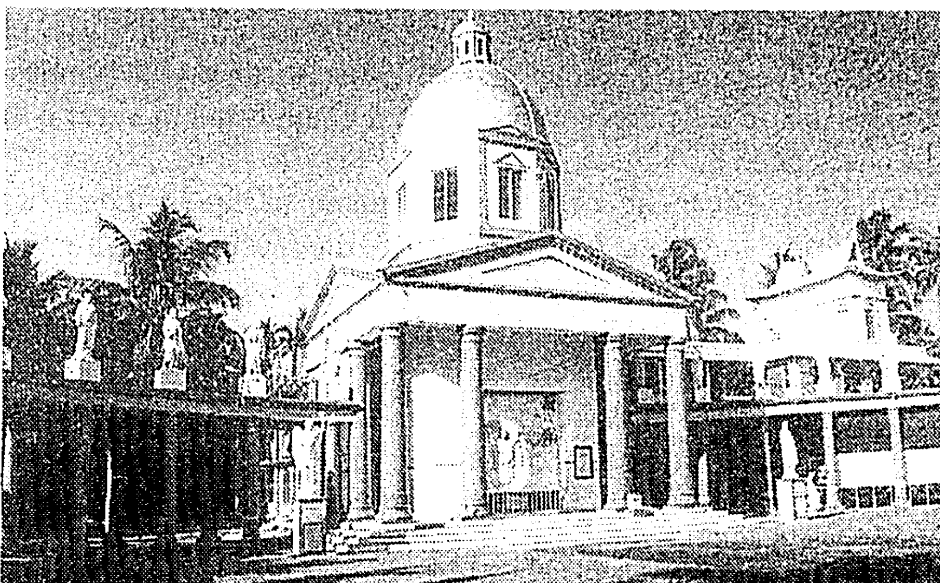
Most of the Roman objects found in India are currently in various museums and private collections in India and in a few



The head of Apollo — found at Kodumanal and now in the Kalaimagal Kalvi Nilayam, Erode.

museums in U.K. and France. The major part of my research was spent in physically examining these collections and carefully describing and photographing each object. I recorded over 20,000 Roman coins, besides a host of other objects found in different parts of the country.

By then, it had become clear that the earliest Roman traders arrived at the port of Muziris (near Cranganore) in Kerala sometime around the third century B.C., if not slightly earlier. From Muziris, they travelled to Coimbatore via the Palghat Pass (modern Palghat), circumnavigation of Cape Comorin being very hazardous those days. Vellalur, a tiny village almost behind the Pothanur railway station near Coimbatore, appears to have been a major Roman settlement. From here, they travelled to Chennimalai (not very far from Erode) to the iron ore deposits in the Chennimalai Hills. They brought the ore to the village of Kodumanal, on the banks of the river Noyyal, and processed it there. From Kodumanal, they went to Karur and thence to Kaveripattinam (or Poompuhar), a major harbour in those days. From Puhar, the Romans travelled north to Arikamedu near Pondicherry, Mylapore (then a major port known as Mylarpha or Manarpha in Graeco-Roman literature) and, finally, to Andhra. A few of the Roman traders sailed from Arikamedu to Lanka and Southeast Asia.



The St. Thomas Memorial, Muziris

The Romans imported spices, gemstones, cotton and silk fabrics, ivory, sandalwood, iron and steel, peacocks and dancing girls from India. In return, they exported wine, gold and silver to India. They exercised much influence on ancient Indian society, its economy and art. Indians kings began to produce coins, jewels and other objects stylistically similar to the Roman ones.

Recently, I led a group of eight other heritage lovers on the Roman trail, a tour organised by Chennai Chapter of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH). We set forth from Muziris and travelled to Mylapore via Palghat, Vellalur, Coimbatore, Chennimalai,

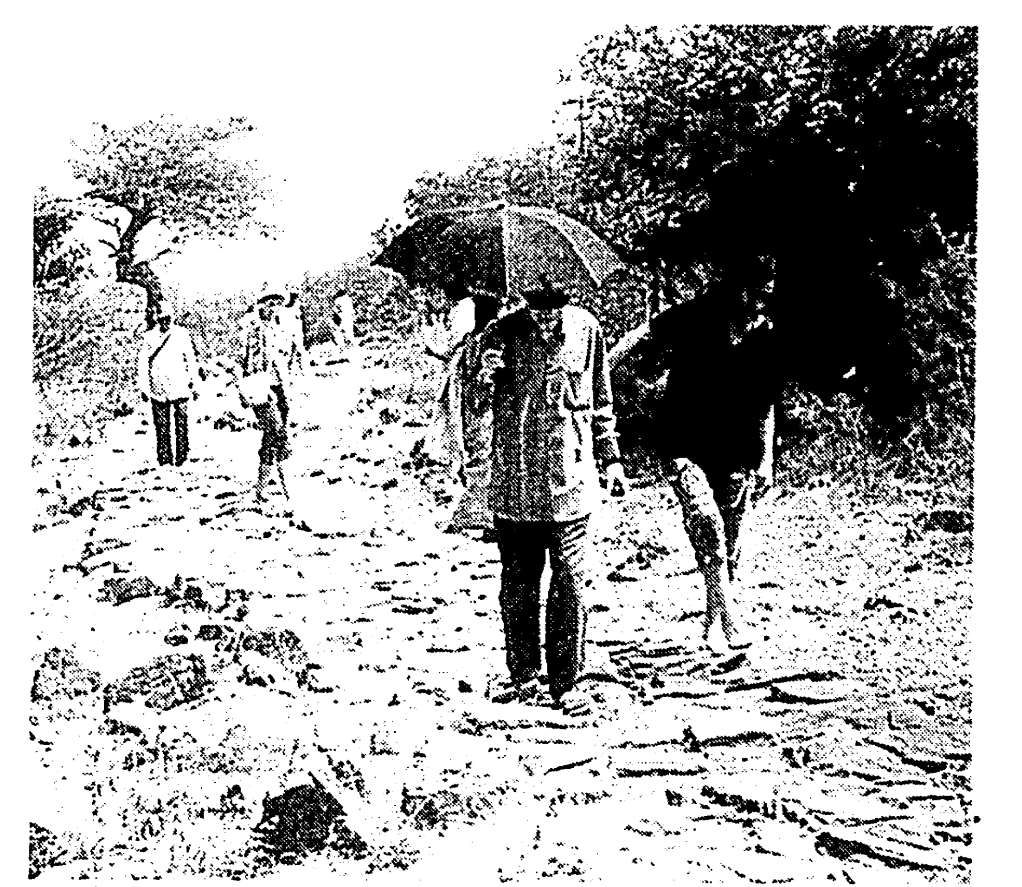
Chennai and its Roman connection

Discoveries of Roman coins and other Roman objects have been reported from several sites in Chennai and its neighbourhood. Many 19th Century archaeologists mention the recurrent discoveries of Roman coins all along the coast from Nellore to Mamallapuram. Alamporai, near Madurantakam, has revealed (date: pre-1828) at least three Roman coins, two gold and one copper. Around 1883, a Roman copper coin was recovered from within a Hindu temple in Saidapet. In 1929, a silver coin of Augustus, along with 770 ancient Indian silver coins, was found in a pot within a pit in Mambalam.

Archaeological digs undertaken during the 1960s at San Thomé (close to the Santhome Basilica) have revealed fragments of Roman and pseudo-Roman pottery.

Kodumanal, Erode, Karur, Kaveripattinam, Arikamedu and Mamallapuram. We were probably the first people after the Romans to consciously traverse this route.

The three-hour drive from Tiruchur, the nearest railroad for Muziris, via Alava is a pleasant one, through lush coconut plantation and pepper vines. Muziris is where the river Periyar joins the Arabian Sea. The importance of this port for the Indo-Roman trade is vividly described in the Tamil classic *Ahananuru*. Muziris is now known for its St. Thomas Memorial — a lovely building housing, like our San Thomé Basilica, a bone relic of St. Thomas. Long after the age of St. Thomas, the Portuguese came to Muziris, built a fort here and named it the St. Thomas Fort.



The rugged trail up the Chemimalai Hills, with tour leader Dr. S. Suresh (under umbrella) showing the way.

Next, we halted at the Eyyal caves, off the Tiruchur-Guruvayoor main road. It is said that the Romans lived in these caves. After the Romans had left the place, these caves remained unknown to the outside world till the 1940s when they were exposed by the spade of a farmer. In 1945, Roman gold and silver coins were discovered inside the caves.

From Eyyal, we went to Palghat, climbed up the fort there to have a glimpse of the majestic Western Ghats that breaks into two at this spot, thus creating the Palghat Gap or the Palghat Pass, now occupied by the modern town of Palghat. During Roman times, the Palghat Pass was the sole 'corridor' linking Muziris with the ports on the east coast of India.

Our next halt was Vellalur, now a sleepy village but for its temple dedicated to Yamadhararaja, the frightening God of Death. From Vellalur, we proceeded straight to the Coimbatore Archaeological Museum housing artefacts recovered from Vellalur and many other neighbouring sites.

While the red coloured Chennimalai Hills still reveals traces of iron deposits, Kodumanal has archaeological relics of all sorts — old pottery beads and elaborate stone beads.

At Erode, we visited the Coin Museum and the Archaeological Museum attached to the Kalaimagal Kalvi Nilayam School. This is probably the only school in Asia to have two full-fledged museums, both meticulously and spotlessly maintained. The col-



Ruins at Arikamedu (All photographs by USHA KRIS.)

lections here include rare Roman coins and a terracotta bust of Apollo, the Greek Sun God, all discovered in Kodumanal.

The chief attractions at Kaveripattinam are the ruins of a Buddhist monastery and the Kannagi Museum displaying the story of Kannagi, the heroine of the Tamil epic *Silappadikaram* that was written at Kaveripattinam at a time when it maintained brisk commercial ties with Rome.

Arikamedu has extensive ruins of the Roman trade including the brick foundation of an ancient harbour. The Roman wine jars (amphorae) and other Roman and pseudo-Roman ceramics discovered here are now neatly displayed in the Pondicherry Museum.

Our last halt was Mamallapuram, known to the Romans as Melange. Not many citizens of Chennai are aware that the history of this port-city dates back at least a thousand years before the Pallavas. It was a major port of the Romans, complete with a gigantic lighthouse and living quarters for the sailors. Recent archaeological digs at the site have revealed the walls of this ancient harbour. No wonder some of the Pallava sculptures of Mamallapuram display Roman features.

The tour offered but a small slice of the maritime traditions and art of the Romans. A longer, slower journey must be made one day.

S. Suresh

Note: INTACH's Chennai Chapter is organising a series of Heritage Tours including another on the 'Roman Trail' during February-March, 2003. For details, contact INTACH Office 28266878/28271759.



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

- Who is the recipient of the prestigious Gandhi Prize for 2002?
- Who is to succeed Bal Thackeray as the Shiv Sena supremo?
- Who is the new Union Communications & IT Minister, replacing Pramod Mahajan?
- Name the U.S.-based lifestyle magazine and TV channel coming under flak for lampooning Mahatma Gandhi.
- The BCCI ban on which high-profile cricketer was quashed recently?
- Who is to be the NHRC Chairman?
- With which legendary partner did Leander Paes win the mixed doubles crown at this year's Australian Open?
- What is common to Sonal Mansingh, B.R. Nanda, Bhirhaspati Dev Triguna and Khazi Lendup Dorji?
- Name the Australian cricketer pulled up and suspended for uttering a 'racial slur'?
- Name the eminent poet, author of the classic *Madhusala* who passed away on January 18th.
- Responding to requests, the Tamil Nadu Government has replaced the noon meal scheme for farmers with what?
- Where is the Tamil Nadu government planning to build a new Secretariat in Chennai?
- Both the men's and women's champions in the National 'A' chess championship are Chennai-based. Name them.
- Where in the Alwarpet area was the city's first post box set up, back in 1857?
- The M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation has developed four different artificial reefs to enhance marine biodiversity. Where has this been done?
- Where in the State was the first-ever All-Women Police Station's 'Mobile Conselling Unit' handed over?
- Where in the State is the country's first veterinary university situated?
- On January 23, the Governor declared the whole State except Chennai as...
- Cenotaph Road gets its name from a cupola, which stood at its junction with Mount Road there, housing a statue. Whose statue?
- Who in 1948 became the first Indian Chief Justice of the Madras High Court?

(Answers on page 8)

Fighting for the right to childhood

The main focus of a programme on Child Rights held recently in the city was the many loud messages of the children themselves, which adults do not hear because they are, according to Chief Resource Person N.S. Yamuna, "plain insensitive". The emphasis during the five days was on the responsibility and accountability to the child and on how adults deny him/her a childhood. A keen observer and a champion of child's rights, however, felt "issues like violence within the home against children — the 'I love you, so I beat you' kind — could have been given more importance and brought out in the posters as well as through better coordinated discussions; the truth is that we need less sanitised versions of actual reality." Despite such views and the murmurs of some participants about the "need for more organised management", not lost sight of was the fact that:

*Every child has a right to childhood,
To grow from innocence to knowledge and understanding.
A child must be protected in every way,
From danger, fear, exploitation, abuse, even neglect.
A child must be nurtured and educated
In order to be a wholesome individual.
Childhood is preparation for adulthood.*

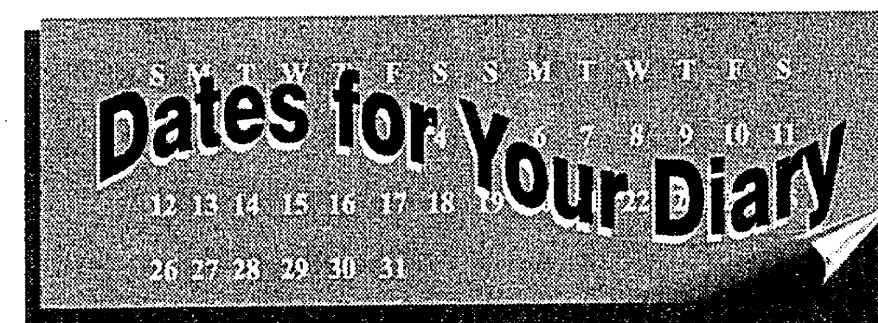
Expressing this was the programme organised by the British Council, the Association of British Scholars (ABS), Chennai, and the Tamil Nadu Science and Technology Centre, which included an exhibition, children's films, interaction with experts, discussions, poetry reading, and performances by schools in Chennai and from other ABS Chapters in the South, namely Thiruvananthapuram, Coimbatore, Mangalore, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

It was in September 2002 that the six Chapters of the ABS, South India, responded positively to the British Council's suggestion to conduct an event on Child Rights Issues as a networking exercise and to generate different perspectives. Each Chapter conducted an event or series of small events to reflect 'A Child's View of Child Rights' to obtain artistic 'products' that could be any or all of the following: a poster, poem, story, play, song, photograph, dialogue, debate, film episode or 'something else'. It was a selection of these responses that were on display during the five-day programme and they emphasised the child's right to education, to protection (against violence, neglect and exploitation) and even to leisure.

Apart from the children's contributions, there were several adult speakers whose statements led to many an animated discussion.

'Child labour' was portrayed by many as a gross violation of child rights. K. Hariharan, film-maker, whose film on children, *Koondu Paravaigal* (Caged Birds), looked at child labour, however, spoke of the pressing need to address 'very complex' child rights issues and the need for adults to grow beyond making 'facile statements' on such issues without being aware of the grassroots implications. On the other hand, he pointed out a grosser violation of child rights — the entire Indian education system, which is "designed to stop the flow of imagination" in the young. "The day he or she stops imagining, the child becomes an adult. And the entire education system in India seems designed in every way to stop this flow of imagination. The best times of our childhood were outside the classroom. Why can't classrooms be more like 'friends' circles? They will learn much better then. Children by themselves are so capable, so enormously imaginative. We've no right to talk down to them, unless we can think like them. What passes in the name of education these days is so absurd that when people ask for education as a right for children, I feel like saying, 'Why don't you please ask for something else?'" said Hariharan, passionately urging a relook at the present education system.

Andal Damodaran, President, Indian Council of Child Welfare, added her voice to this call for a relook at what schools are doing. "Children have such refreshingly different perceptions. The main rights emphasised by children themselves are the right to education, to protection (against violence, neglect and exploitation) and, in recent times, even the right to leisure. Sadly, I find even the best schools gradually sidelining important aspects like art, music and creative expression. More and more schools need to give children opportunities to play with art," he stated. The sad trend of upwardly mobile parents to deprive children of their basic



Till March 1: *Akhilesh*, an exhibition of paintings by Akhilesh Verma. His use of colour is particularly refreshing and each of his works reflects a vibrant zest for life. (At Apparao Galleries.)

Till February 22: An exhibition of paintings and drawings by H.A. Kanikai Raj (student of Kalakshetra). (At Old no. 9, Seethamma Road, Alwarpet.)

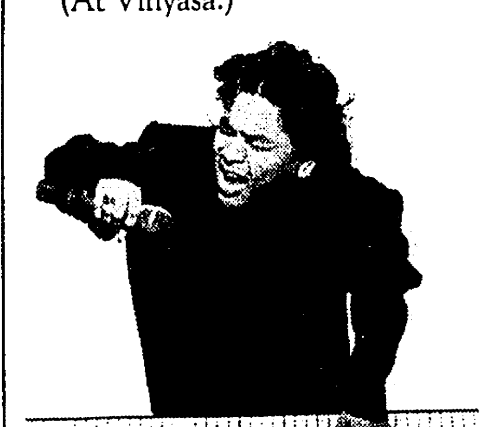
Till February 26: *Past Modern*, an exhibition of paintings by the Singh Twins — Amrit and Rabindra K.D. Kaur Singh. The London-born Amrit and Rabindra Kaur have widely exhibited in the UK and abroad. Essentially drawing on the Indian miniature tradition, their award-winning paintings combine elements from Western and Eastern aesthetics to create a unique genre in British Art practice, which they describe as Past-Modern (as opposed to Post Modern). In their paintings, they explore cultural, social and political issues of global significance within a highly decorative, often witty and symbolic style, which has universal appeal and transcends cultural barriers. (At the Lalit Kala Akademi.)

From February 20: An exhibition of Vimonisha's private collection. (At Vimonisha.)

From February 21: An exhibition of the works of K. Damodaran. (At Vinyasa.)

February 21: Internationally renowned music legend A.R. Rahman brings his fabulous *Unity of Light* concert to Chennai and will perform live for a Chennai audience for the very first time. Rahman, using the power of music for the benefit of cancer care, is performing in Chennai to give shape to a friend's last wish. His concert will raise funds for the Mahesh Memorial Fund whose cause is *Live - Beyond Cancer*.

Mahesh Mahadevan, a talented music director, died last year aged only 47 after a long battle against Cancer. It was also a day of rebirth of his indomitable spirit in each of his friends who



formed the Mahesh Memorial Trust, a non-profit organisation, pledged to fight Cancer as never before and to 'Live - Beyond Cancer'. (At The CPT-India Pistons Grounds, Taramani, near Film City.)

February 21: *Travelogue*, a monthly rendezvous with a person whose rigour, passion and know-how have led him/her to become what he/she is today. Here's an opportunity to discover the journey of S. Muthiah, journalist and heritage enthusiast. (At Alliance Francaise, 7 p.m.)

February 22: Performance by Kodaikanal International School students: Concert and jazz band. Watch out for advertisements.

February 22: See you later alligator. The British Council's Culture Café Poetry Circle presents an evening of irresistible poetry and song for young people, for those young at heart and for all those who simply refuse to grow old. You will be invited to sing along; keep pace in the deadly race as words juggle for space. You'll laugh and hold back a tear; smile and quickly shift gear... and all the while you will marvel at the splendour of words as they dance before your eyes; play music in your ears; tickle a rib; tease the brain; set your pulse racing and your imagination free... (At Goodbooks, 5.30 p.m.)

February 22: *Beyond the Natural*. Do want to delve into the mind of a demented murderer? Or listen to a bone-chilling story of a pregnancy, an unwanted baby... one of the many millions that are washed away in toilets, thrown into rivers, discarded in garbage bins... (parental guidance is advised during the reading of this story). (Reading at Amethyst, 8.15 p.m.)

From February 25: Exhibition of paintings by K. Muralidharan, S.G. Vasudev, R.M. Palaniappan and C. Douglas. (At Forum.)

From February 26: An exhibition of Aditya Basak's paintings. (At Artworld.)

February 28: *Conversation Symphonietta*, Jean Tardieu Students of French Language, AMM School. "18 students, a classical orchestra that speaks instead of playing. An original approach to French through a game of sounds." A short play by a great French poet presented by young students and directed by Vanessa. To be discovered... (At Alliance Francaise, 3 p.m.)

(Continued on Page 8)

Champions under development - I Athletes to watch

In the fortnights that follow, *Madras Musings* will publish brief profiles of all 35 sports persons who have been chosen for the Champions Development Scheme of the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu. We start with those chosen for Athletics training and feature today 5 of the 15 selected.

A. Amudha won the high jump and came third in heptathlon at the Inter-University Athletic Meet in Gulbarga in January this year. The same month, she won gold, at the National Junior Athletic Championship in Shimoga, in the high, long and triple jumps. At the National Games in Hyderabad, she secured a bronze in the high jump. An all-round athlete, Amudha notched a fine 11.88 seconds in the 100m at the National Junior Athletic Championship last year. She is a first-year student in B.A. Psychology at MOP Vaishnav College for Women.

Noosheen Rajendran won gold medals in the 100m, 200m, 4x100m relay and long jump, and was crowned the individual champion at the recent Inter-Engineering Colleges Meet. And at the 6th All India Inter-University Athletic Meet in Gulbarga, she won silver in the long jump and triple jump, her main events.

Avinash is a 110m hurdles specialist. He came into reckoning in 2001, winning the event at the Federation Cup Athletic Championship, the ITC Inter Zonal Meet, the 9th Under-22 National Athletic Championship and the Inter-State Junior Athletic Championship, where he clocked an impressive 15.79 seconds. A fourth-year engineering student at the Amrita Institute of Technology Sciences, Coimbatore, Avinash came second at the Inter-University Athletic Championship in Thiruvananthapuram this year, with a time of 14.74 seconds, and won at the 9th Under-22 National Athletic Championship in Thrissur.

T. Bindu achieved her personal best of 5.67m in the long jump at the Junior Federation Cup Meet in Mumbai last year. That performance was far better than her winning effort (5.54m) at the National Meet in Kanpur the previous year. This Class 12 Doveton Corrie student is also a 100m sprinter and a triple jumper. Her all-round athletic ability has enabled her to participate and do very well in the pentathlon as well. Bindu practises daily at the Madras Medical College grounds, coached by P. Nagarajan. "My focus is

on my sporting events. I don't find time for anything else, although I do play tennis sometimes," she states.

S. Lakshmi Narayanan was in the first batch chosen for the CDS. At the 10th National Athletic Championship in November last year, he came second in the triple jump, leaping 15.40m. His focus now is on crossing the 16m mark (the Indian record is 16.79m) and bettering his 7.45m long jump effort (Yohanans's 8.07m record still stands). "Although I participated at the Hyderabad National Games, I could not perform well because I was not well," he says regretfully. This Loyola College student trains at the Golden Eagle Sports Club, guided by coach Perumal Ramaswamy.

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(Continued from page 1)

It is an issue that has remained a vexed one for as long as I can remember. Anyone associated with cricket in the State has views to offer on the subject of outstation cricketers playing in the senior division league for the Rajah of Palayampatti Shield. And just recently, at the function to celebrate the release of V. Ramnarayan's book on Tamil Nadu cricket, former Test cricketer and current Chairman of the national Selection Committee Brijesh Patel and Indian vice-captain Rahul Dravid touched upon the subject even as they spoke in glowing terms of the enormous influence that playing in the league had on their careers.

There are pros and cons, plus and minus points, positive and negative aspects. But there is little doubt that the issue of outstation players playing in league cricket in the city has remained a contentious one. In the days when I used to cover the league for the *Indian Express*, from the late 1960s to the early 1980s, the issue was not as controversial as it became later. I remember Salim Durrani, then the leading all-rounder in the country, turning out for Jolly Rovers in 1962-63. But that remained an isolated case. The 'boom' really commenced in the 1980s. That's when corporate giants decided to promote the game in a big way by adding star names to their rosters. Since then, it has become a rather fierce competition to emerge top of the heap.

There is little doubt that the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association's senior division league is one of the best organised — and most lucrative — in the country. Little wonder then that it attracts players from other States, some of them India stars. The list of such players who have represented various club sides in the league over the years makes for impressive reading. It includes Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid, Dinesh Mongia, Jacob Martin, Harbhajan Singh, Vikram Rathour, Mohammad Kaif and Harvinder Singh Sodhi. All of them have been unanimous in admitting that

building. Or there is all that land in Kotturpuram, behind Anna University or its staff quarters. But there seems to be a determination to transform the skyline of the Marina.

And if that is intended, *Madras Musings* has no real objection to a building no taller than the tallest building on the Marina — around 50 feet — being constructed, particularly if it favours the traditional Indo-Saracenic style. But such construction cannot be for the Secretariat. If the Secretariat comes up where it is proposed, the concepts of beautifying the Marina and making

it available as badly needed CLEAN recreation space for the residents of the city, will be totally nullified by the hordes that will descend every day on the Secretariat and the area around and cause not only congestion of a gridlock nature on the Beach Road but also cause it to become one of the filthiest areas in the city.

The Marina, a public recreation space earmarked for improvement but threatened by any building that will congest it and dirty it, is one of the major recreation areas of the city and is used by thousands. Surely any

development plans for such a space deserve a public hearing before plans are executed. Surely any plans to change Development Control Rules not only along the Marina but also along the entire coastline deserve a public hearing. Or do we take it that the public have no voice in development plans of this nature, that the space to be used is not their space?

Surely space for a new capital or even a new Secretariat deserves an all-party discussion and an exchange of views with the public. Can we hope for that debate?

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Does Tamil Nadu need the 'pros'?

playing in the league has had a great deal to do with improvements in their game, thanks to the keen contests, the professional approach of the teams and the players, and the systematic manner in which the competition is organised. The stars have also underlined the fact that they have found it an enjoyable experience.

For that matter, the progress made by Kerala and Andhra in the Ranji Trophy over the last decade and a half is regarded as a direct result of some of cricketers from these States playing in the league. Players like K. Jayaram, K.N. Ananthapadmanabhan and Amit Pathak, to name but a few, have benefited immensely

from playing in the city and, in turn, their State teams, while being poor cousins to the big three in the South Zone — Tamil Nadu, Hyderabad and Karnataka for years — have turned in better performances through the late 1980s and the 90s including winning the South zone championship, which would have been unbelievable till the early 1980s.

But do playing standards improve with one or two star cricketers turning out for their respective clubs? Former Hyderabad Ranji Trophy player V. Ramnarayan, who has played a lot of club cricket in the city, is firmly of the opinion that it does, a view echoed by former State captain Bharath Reddy. According to Ramnarayan, "Dravid for one is a role model and not just as a batsman but even as a well-behaved person. So, in that way it is good for the game in the State." But with star cricketers taking part in the league, does the local talent get stifled? Again Ramnarayan and Bharath Reddy are firmly of the view that this is not the case and they were joined in

this opinion by former State opening batsman V. Krishnaswamy. According to the three, opportunities still exist for genuine local talent to come good. "Our players have to rise to the occasion and welcome stiffer competition" is their general refrain. After all, they argue, only some teams have these stars and each side has only one or two such players. But while supporting the presence of outstation players in the league, all three add that there should be some restriction on the number of such cricketers playing for their respective clubs and the ideal figure is probably one or two.

As for the reasons that draw outstation players and even some star Indian cricketers to the league, Ramnarayan, Krishnaswamy and Bharath Reddy are unanimous that money is the chief factor. They are convinced that nowhere else in the country can star players earn the kind of money they get in Chennai. Other reasons cited are: modern facilities, good ground conditions, and gentlemanly treatment from their sponsors. "They are really looked after very well," says the three former cricketers. And, by and large, the star cricketers are, in turn, loyal to the companies sponsoring them.

The detractors probably look upon the star players as no better than wandering mercenaries, for their obligation in the city is just to play the few matches in the season for their club, for which they are paid handsomely. Looked at from this angle, their contribution to the betterment of Tamil Nadu cricket is next to nil. But, then, as the three former cricketers agree, they help in raising the standard of league cricket and that in turn should inspire the local players to better performances. That this is not generally reflected in Tamil Nadu's showing in the Ranji Trophy is another matter.

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Is this how to use waste?

(Continued from page 4)

his pickings and sells these to the wholesaler. The latter's employees further segregate the material and only the remainder, the unusable portion, reaches the garbage dumps. In any case, people have to be informed about segregating waste and they have to play a meaningful part in the exercise. Our technology is viable. It will stand the test of good project economics. Yes, we can graduate in time with the same plant. And we will be happy to work with Exnora."

Several senior Chennai engineers, many of them retired from active service, sought technical clarifications after each presentation at the seminar and showed a wide knowledge of the subject. Unfortunately, there was not one young

engineer in the crowd. Except for one woman who was part of the EDL team, and another lost in the audience, there was not another woman present. A pity indeed! For, at the end of the day, if the seven-step value chain has to take some shape, it will certainly need housewives, more than engineers, to make it happen.

Two other important papers presented and discussed were 'Sustainable Landfills for Municipal Solid Waste Management' and 'Decentralised Wastewater Recycling.'

Dr. Kurian Joseph (Senior Lecturer on Environmental Engineering, Anna University Centre for Environmental Studies) pointed out that landfills are necessary simply because plants like the one EDL plans to set up cannot handle all the waste generated in cities like Chennai. Of the 3,000 tonnes garbage Chennai produces daily, the proposed plant was likely to be equipped to handle only 600 tonnes of garbage or so.

"Almost 95 per cent of waste is dumped in the open. The objective is to move from such dumps to engineered and sustainable landfills. At an open dump, the natural process of solid waste disposal does not protect the environment, is susceptible to open burning and is exposed to the elements, disease vectors and scavengers," he said, explaining that leachate treatment was necessary to remove the decomposed material which could be used as land cover or soil compost. According to Kurian, open dumps existed because of ignorance of environmental and

health risks, acceptance of the status quo, lack of technical and financial resources, lack of political will to protect and improve public health and the environment, and little fund allocation for waste treatment and disposal. Kurian said that the Centre for Environmental Studies was working on a laboratory-level landfill project.

The thrust of N.K. Kuttippappan (Executive President, LVK Enviro Consultants, Chennai) was on how to successfully manage the supply of water, a scarce resource, to meet ever-increasing demand. "A decentralised, ownership-basis model is essential if wastewater recycling is to be effective. Water and wastewater are two sides of the water management coin," he stressed at the outset.

Kuttiappan pointed out that recycling could conserve a minimum of 40 per cent of available water, recycling avenues were available at household and community levels, ponds, parks and reservoirs, he stated. He mentioned how a wastewater and sewage treatment plant could be used to segregate different components — water, organic and inorganic compounds and micro-organisms. Such a plant, with low energy consumption, with no smell or odour, using clean and green technology, and producing minimum sludge should form part of an integrated water recycling approach, he felt.

Using solid waste as an alternate fuel was also one of the subjects briefly presented during the morning deliberations. Specific mention was made of the use of agrowaste as fuel for the cement industry that normally uses coal as fuel. But with the cost of coal increasing substantially, the point was made that agrowaste, municipal waste and chemical waste could be effective substitutes for coal.

Recommended Trees - 1

For Residential Areas

PLANNED NEIGHBOURHOOD ROADS

Bauhinia variegata (Bauhinia)
Cassia fistula (Indian Laburnum)
Callistemon lanceolatus (Bottle brush)
Filicium decipiens (Fernleaf)
Kigelia pinnata (Sausage)
Mimusops elengii (Indian Nedlar)
Peltoforum Pteracarpum (Copper pod)
Pterospermum acerifolium (Venchampakam)
Sterculia Foetida (Hill coconut)
Swietenia Mahagoni (Mahagoni)
Tabubia Rosea (Tabubia)
Madhuca longi folia (Mahua)

STREETHOUSE ROADS

Cassia Siamea (Kassod)
Guazuma Tomentosa (Caterpillar)
Melia azadarich (Persian Lilac)
Muntingia calabura (Singapore chery)
Pongamia glabra (Pungam)
Tecoma stans (Yellow tecoma)

TREES FOR HUTTED AREAS

Aegle marmelos (Bengal Quince)
Azadirachta indica (Neem)
Hardwickia binata (Aathi)
Moringa Oleifera (Drumstick)
Sesbania grandiflora (Sesban)
Zizifus jujuba (Jujube)

TREES IN TUBS FOR STREETHOUSE ROADS AND HUTTED AREAS

Calophyllum inophyllum (Alexandrian Laurel)
Murraya exotica (Kamini)

G. Pattatri, K. Hariharan and Prof. S. Dayanandan

Answers to Quiz

1. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan; 2. Uddhav Thackeray; 3. Arun Shourie; 4. Maxim and MTV; 5. Ajay Jadeja; 6. Former Chief Justice of India A.S. Anand; 7. Martina Navratilova; 8. They have been awarded the country's second highest civilian award, the Padma Vibhushan; 9. Darren Lehmann; 10. Harivanshrai Bachchan.

* * *

11. A supply of 30 kg rice for each family; 12. Between Queen Mary's College and Vivekananda Illam; 13. K. Sasikiran and Aarthie Ramaswamy; 14. Moubray's Road; 15. 14 km northeast of the Tuticorin coast near Vaan Theevu; 16. Kancheepuram District; 17. Madhavaram; 18. Drought-hit; 19. Lord Cornwallis; 20. P.V. Rajamannar.

Sport on Page 7

FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT TO CHILDHOOD

(Continued from page 6)

The programme had been preceded by group discussion at the British Council in Chennai last December when issues like the right to quality education, and to freedom of choice in education and career, even the right to play and leisure, were discussed. The bad examples that adults set by teaching jealousy, greed, hatred, disharmony, religious differences and polluting the environment were highlighted at the discussion, and the collective responsibility of the whole adult world in ensuring children's rights was urged. This was re-emphasised by both children and adults during the five-day programme where voices were heard loud and clear on the need to re-look at education as part of empowering the child.

Shobha Menon

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