

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

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No, Sir, it's not SARS from Shanghai that we're worried about in Chennai, it's SADS — Severe Acute Demolition Syndrome! — inspired by Shanghai's highrise!

Knock 'em dead!

It is hard to be an old building in Chennai these days.

Let your walls peel paint; let a little brickwork show; a crack here, a broken window there... and, whoosh... you are history! Not with a venerable capital 'H', unfortunately.

You cry in vain; you tell people that you've lived in their city from the time when what they now call the past was still a bright clean present.

Many seasons have trailed their fingers along your walls. You have watched Life come, linger, move on, return. You have heard the voice of the city change. You ask people to look at you and see themselves, awoken to a sense of a continuing thread linking lives.

You tell them to look up words like 'heritage' in the dictionary.

Nothing works.

They chase you with bulldozers and other sharp instruments, intent on tearing you down and having you replaced. The fact that it isn't always commerce that dictates such measures makes it even worse.

Old buildings today are a scared lot, reduced to trembling fear, looking over their shoulders, trying to find shadowy places where they can hide.

(A little like when you were a school kid, and hadn't done your homework. With nothing to offer, you hoped that the teacher's baleful eye would pass you by, choosing the classmate next to you.)

Ranjitha Ashok

A Shanghai seafront ahead?

With heritage regulations returned, heritage may take a back seat.

(By The Editor)

At last, it's official. The Government, which had in February pulled down historic Capper House with, sadly, no one protesting, on April 4th announced it intended to pull down all the buildings on the Queen Mary's College campus and build a new Secretariat there. The new Secretariat, it was stated in a *suo motu* statement that brooked no response on the floor of the House, would also house the Tamil Nadu Assembly and the chambers of

the Chief Minister and the Cabinet.

From February 2003, *Madras Musings* has been running lead stories on the threat to the city's seafront that was looming. Little attention was paid to these storm warnings till the courageous girls of Queen Mary's decided to defend their campus. By the time these lines appear in print, the whole immediate issue may have been resolved, for better or for worse. Nevertheless, the Chennai seafront — and heritage in the city in general — remain threatened and we take this opportunity to point out the danger ahead to the city's environment and ambience.

1. For several years, IN-TACH-Tamil Nadu has been meeting various government bodies to get a Heritage Act in place. More focussed deliberations began in 1997. In 1999, it was suggested that, as a first step, given the more cumbersome procedure in getting an Act enacted, it might be better

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What's the big secret?

(By The Editor)

TRANSPIRENCY has been the buzzword for some time now. Government departments, especially, have been publishing booklets, citizens' charters, they are called, about the services they offer and pledge not only transparency but prompt service. Does any department, however, mean what it says in its published commitment? Can any citizen get a meaningful answer from a Government of Tamil Nadu department? We raise these questions in the context of what's been recently happening to those who want to know what Government has in store for the city's seafront.

The Citizens Consumer and Civic Action Group addressed the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority recently, wanting to know the details of the MoU signed by the CMDA and the Construction Industry Development Board of Malaysia "for developmental work in and around Chennai City". That

(Continued on Page 9)



The girls of Queen Mary's fighting to save their campus.

Well done, Queen Marians

Well done, Queen Marians! You've fought a good fight to protect a heritage precinct, more importantly a heritage institution and still more importantly the place which made you — and generations before you — what you are. *Madras Musings* can't think of any other educational institution anywhere which was pulled down to make way for a Government office or even a legislature. No one can fault you for trying to save the spirit of the campus where the spirit of Miss de la Hey walks or for opposing such sad trendsetting.

By the time these lines appear, you may have won your fight — or all of you would have lost the battle. But while it lasted, you did both yourselves, as well as all Queen Mary's stands for, proud. K.V. Srinivasan's picture above, from *The Hindu* of April 5th, marks the good fight you waged. If you lost, all of us, all Chennai, is the poorer for it, for this marks the beginning of the end of that entire seafront, from Napier Bridge to the Adyar Estuary, a *carte blanche* given to Government and private investors.

— The Editor

Sorry! But we DO have to trim our mailing list

(By The Editor)

When *Madras Musings* on December 1, 2002 asked for nominal support from its readers for the causes it espouses, it expected a substantial response and thought it would reach its target of Rs. 5 lakh a year within four months. Sadly, of the 16,000 on our mailing list, only around a thousand have responded upto April 7, 2003. Though monetarily their response has been handsome — and that's been the most heartening part of this period in the

history of *Madras Musings* — we are still a considerable way from the target we set for reader response. Meanwhile, one more corporate, the UCAL Group, joins the loyal band of corporate supporters of *Madras Musings'* causes and, while thanking them for their generous gesture, we look forward to still more corporates offering *Madras Musings* support over the next few months. Meanwhile, our coupon seeking reader support

will continue to appear and we look forward to the response of readers building up during the year.

Readers' inability to respond to the degree of support we had sought, however, has forced us to take another look at our mailing list. And, effective May 1st, we will implement the following:

1. This is the last issue of *Madras Musings* that will be received by ALL readers, more
(Continued on Page 4)

What's this thing called a heritage landmark?

A definition of Heritage, in respect of landmarks, is something even the experts have difficulty in framing to the satisfaction of everyone. And *The Man From Madras Musings* is no expert; he's just an enthusiast whose enthusiasm has led to a whole heap of reading from which this definition may evolve. A heritage landmark is a symbol of the heritage of a people, a symbol of their historical past that is handed down from generation to generation. In this context, the symbols of heritage can be many.

The local rules

It was a group of half a dozen heritage enthusiasts, including *The Man From Madras Musings*, who, long before the heritage movement took off in India, founded EPOCH — the Society for the Environment and Protection of Cultural Heritage. The founders included two of the top officials of the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority and the Head of the School of Architecture. Its pleas for rules to protect the environment and heritage were heard by none and it, sadly, vanished from a scene where neither subject had as yet received attention in India. The Rajiv Gandhi-blessed Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, which has spearheaded the conservation movement in this country, arrived on the scene long after EPOCH and, then, its Tamil Nadu Chapter, based in Madras, revived the call, echoing what had been happening in Bombay, Hyderabad and Delhi, for a Heritage Act.

It was in 1997 that the Government got the Department of

**SHORT
'N'
SNAPPY**

Town and Country Planning to convene a committee to draft such an Act. Despite initial reluctance on the part of the Government members, they all became as enthusiastic as INTACH's and other non-government representatives as they all began to see what the Act could do for Tamil Nadu. And what they drafted was a splendid document by any standards. Unfortunately, at the Ministry level, it was felt that it would take too long to get the draft of 1999 enacted and it was suggested that the CMDA adapt the Act as Heritage Regulations and incorporate them in its Development Control Rules, with other local bodies in time to follow the Chennai example.

The CMDA early in 1999 formed a Heritage Committee to not only fine tune the regulations but also strengthen them by making a preliminary listing of the most important heritage buildings, precincts and natural bodies in Chennai and making that listing an annexure to the recommended regulations. This work was completed early in 2002 and when it cleared every step of the bureaucratic climb in the CMDA, *The Man from Madras Musings* was the first to congratulate all concerned at the CMDA who had got regulations generally acceptable to all concerned ready for Government's approval.

MMM then heard that those regulations had been sent to Government early this year and a favourable response was likely in a couple of months. To MMM's shock, it was reported, shortly after the threat to Queen Mary's College campus had

been confirmed, that the regulations had been returned to the CMDA a few weeks earlier. It was alleged in that report that Government expected all those listed to confirm that they should be on the list. MMM has not heard of a similar procedure anywhere else in all his reading, especially in the case of public and institutional buildings, which constitute virtually the entire list; in fact, the timing of the return makes it almost seem that such an inconvenient document is best put out of the way at the present time. However, MMM is aware the document was cited in a case pending before the High Court in which the demolition of the old Madras Club, another property on the list, was stayed, and it was presented by the CMDA itself.

For a State which prides itself on its progressiveness and modernity, may MMM point out that Heritage Acts, and restoration and conservation of heritage landmarks, are very much part of the agenda of the modern world, particularly in countries that pride themselves on being progressive? These countries are making a fortune out of heritage by including it as an intrinsic part of their tourism packages. Do we in Chennai, nay, Tamil Nadu, want to be left behind in tourism development, which we say we are committed to, by not getting heritage regulations into place as quickly as possible?

QMC & the Fort

There are several aspects of the 'QMC for Secretariat' affair that intrigue *The Man From Madras Musings*. MMM would be delighted to have answers to the following questions from anyone in the know:

- When non-government conservationists felt *Capper House* could be restored for reuse, why was it pulled down at a time old students of QMC were trying to raise funds for such a restoration, for which free advice and expertise were available?
- Even as plans were firmed up to pull down *Capper House*, Rs.41 lakh was granted by Government to repair other buildings on the campus and a fair job was done of that work. Were two different departments involved, each going its own way or not talking to each other, or were all concerned working together but without any long-term thinking? In any case, why want to pull down buildings on which Rs.41 lakh have been spent to make them better?
- How is it that a 25-year-old building that in its tastelessness sticks out like a sore thumb — and which was renovated only a couple of years ago — is considered to have deteriorated so fast, if indeed it has, and if it has, surely those concerned could demolish it as quickly as they did *Capper House* and build a new, better-built building on a site that Government already has the Archaeological Survey of India's permission for?

A big 'Thank You' to 159 of you

We publish below the list of donors who have, between 1.3.03 and 7.4.03, 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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Heritage thoughts

In case you missed these heritage stories, *The Man From Madras Musings* offers them to you here as a reminder of how the world looks at heritage — and how we don't.

- A Singapore court has ordered a building developer to pay \$76,035 for cutting down a century-old tree, which had been "a silent witness" to the birth of the nation and is believed to be the last of its (Continued on page 6)

CHENNAI HERITAGE

260-A T.T.K. ROAD, ALWARPET, CHENNAI 600 018.

I am already on your mailing list (Mailing List No.....) / I have just seen *Madras Musings* and would like to receive it hereafter.

If we enclose cheque/demand draft/money order for Rs.100/Rs..... (Rupees.....) payable to CHENNAI HERITAGE, MADRAS, as token of my support of *Madras Musings* and the causes of heritage, environment and a better city that it espouses. Please put me on your mailing list.

Name :

Address:

Those exciting days at Q.M.C.

Today it is known as "Rani Mary Kalloori", a literal translation of "Queen Mary's College", as it was known once upon a time. Those of us in our late sixties and early seventies remember vividly the exciting times during World War II and the "Quit India" movement when we were residents of the College hostel. The College was situated on the seafront. The first impact of the War was felt when orders came for us to observe complete blackout. Black

future to them and to press our demands. The 'V' sign irked us so much! So, one night, some of us sneaked out and broke it up! Next morning, Miss Myers was furious. We were prepared for punishment. She could have easily found the culprits, for there were Quislings amongst us. She tactfully ignored our action and never made an attempt to re-do the 'V' sign. Looking back, we were rather naive then for we viewed every Allied defeat with a sense

This article by ANNA VARKI was first published in the QMC magazine on the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee Celebration of the College. We publish it in this issue to mark the end of a QMC era and as a tribute to the girls and staff who, in the best QMC tradition noted in a vignette in this memoir, tried their best to stop that era coming to an end.

paper was pasted on all the glass panes. Bulbs were removed from the front verandahs and landing bulbs were covered with dark blue paper so that after sunset, when darkness set in, the college building was hardly visible. Lights were allowed in the rooms only till 10 p.m. This became more strict after the bombing of Pearl Harbour and Japan's entry into the War.

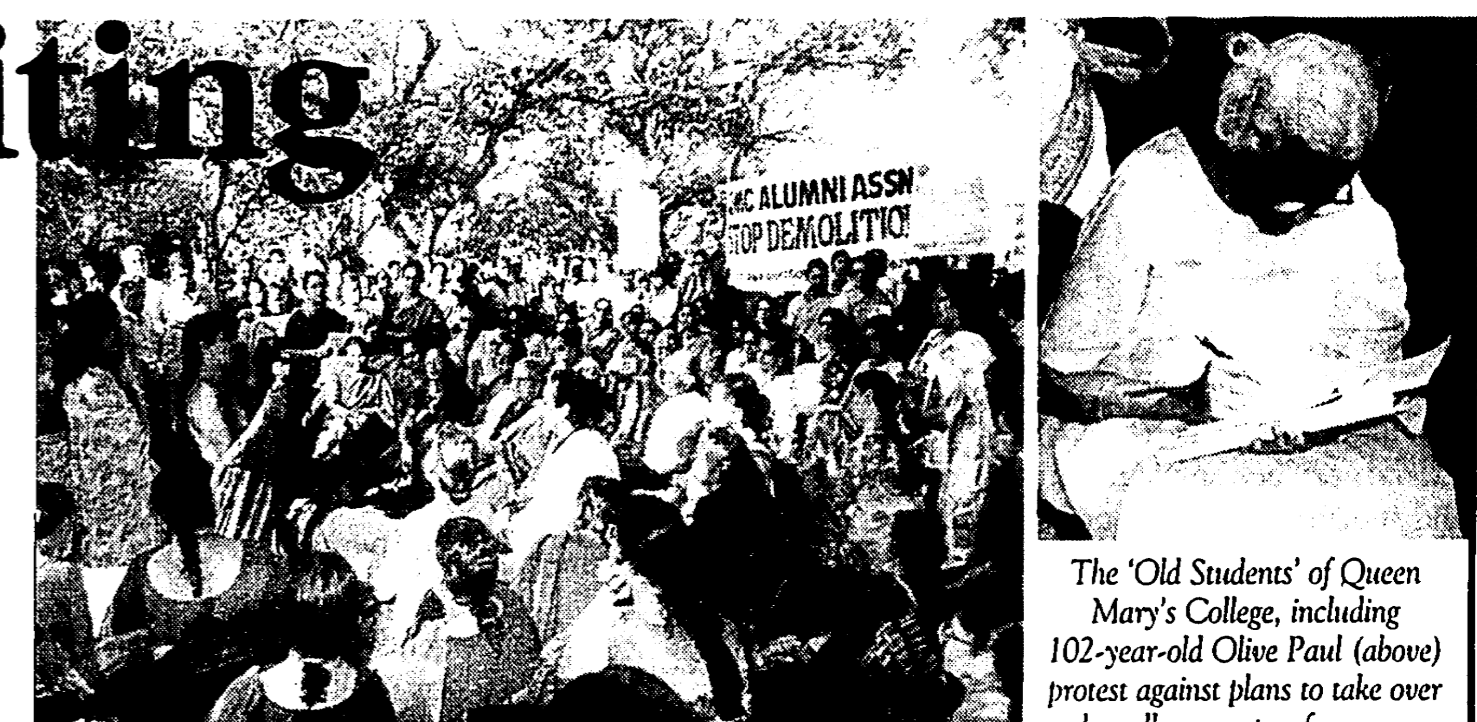
When exams drew near, the only way to study was to make use of the landing lights which were not visible from outside. Armed with flasks of coffee, we settled down to study there. This was strictly against the rules. Our Principal, Miss Myers, an English woman, was a remarkable person, a disciplinarian, but one who had an effective way of exacting discipline which never caused us to rebel openly or treat her as an enemy. She would come stomping down the steps, giving us enough time to escape into our rooms.

When Winston Churchill announced his 'V' for Victory sign, Miss Myers, with the help of some students, made a huge 'V' for Victory sign of sea shells embedded in cement. During those days many of us yearned for a free India. We wanted the British to go out of the country and the War seemed an opportune moment to cause discom-

of triumph, not realising the consequences of war. Specially when Singapore fell, we were so elated and danced round the newspaper stand shouting the news to everybody. You might wonder why? Subhas Bose had left the country to enlist the support of other countries to fight the British and win freedom. We had news of the formation of the Indian National Army and at that time we dreamt of him marching in and achieving Swaraj. The call was "Delhi Wallah". Gandhiji strongly believed that the struggle and fight for freedom should be from within the country. Swaraj was our birthright and we wanted it at any cost.

With the failure of the Cripps Mission, our leaders felt that something should be done. Then came the clarion call from Mahatma Gandhi in August 1942 when he launched the 'Quit India' campaign and the slogan was 'Do or Die'. We held meetings in the College premises, taking an "Independence pledge" and quoting lines from Sarojini Naidu, C.R. Das, Pandit Nehru and others.

When Gandhiji began his 21-day fast, the tempo increased. Students began leaving the classrooms. Some courted arrest, while others marched in the streets shouting slogans. Some of us who had a strong



The 'Old Students' of Queen Mary's College, including 102-year-old Olive Paul (above) protest against plans to take over the college campus for a new Secretariat. (Pictures by R. ESWARRAJ.)

Is a college falling?

Is a college falling, is a star setting? Alas! Alas! for all the girls of QMC. Their laughter may never mingle with the sound of the sea Nor will our memories and their dreams.

(Adaptation of a Moorish Ballad)

If Queen Mary's College is pulled down and out of the rubble rises a Secretariat, larger, grander with more storeys than the Vidhana Soudha in Bangalore can boast of, many who drive past it would admire the size, shape and the power it represents and be overwhelmed by the crores that went into the construction. But students who graduated from QMC from 1941 onwards will be overcome by a feeling of nostalgia for the classrooms in which Kalyani Kutty Amma revealed to us with passionate ardour the splendours of Greek History, or the stern and silent Miss Seethamma who spoke impeccable English and filled us with an invincible love of its literature, or dear unforgettable Lakshmiammal, as soft and gentle as the prose and poetry she taught or Miss Myers, the Principal of the College, whose pronouncement of our names sent us into silent hysterical laughter.

Outside the classroom there was always Miss Kausalya, tall, slim and fair, carefully tending the plants and shrubs in bloom. Not one bud or flower did we dare to pluck out of respect and interest she showed for the gardens that decorated the front of the building.

Will the bureaucracy of the Secretariat spare a moment of

their precious time to admire the flowers that may be grown in the garden or spend a minute to watch the sea melting into sapphire, the sky now blue, now dark and growing darker as the waves rose higher and storm clouds churned the waves? Will they have the time to watch with amazement the miracle of rain falling into the sea, then reaching the beach, then blown to one side of the classroom leaving the other side as dry as a desert? No! The Secretariat staff will have more urgent and important things to do. The sea will only be a diversion to be blotted out of their view by scores of scooters, cars, vans, food vendors and officialdom.

The QMC students who came from different parts of the Presidency were lodged in the College Hostel. The hostel was a wonderful place to live in and the hostel community carry affectionate memories of it. One memory is still with me. The play I witnessed as a guest, written, produced and directed by the hostel students themselves, was called 'A Celestial Meeting'. It was a meeting of the Rivers Ganga, Iravathy, Yamuna, Godavari, Krishna, etc. Each river was represented by a girl, beautifully dressed and tastefully bejewelled. Each river, against a background of soft music, spoke

desire to court arrest, sadly lacked the courage. We were vociferous on the streets and in the compound of the Chief Presidency Magistrate's court in Egmore, shouting slogans supporting those brave enough to be arrested.

To get the latest war news and news of Gandhiji's condition during his fast, we used to jump into a tram at *Ice House*, alight at Mount Road and make a beeline to *The Hindu* office to see G.P. who was the News Editor. G. Parthasarathy, who has held so many important posts after Independence, was known to us fondly as G.P. then. An uncle of ours who spotted Maya, my cousin, and I on one of these trips went home and reported that the way we were dashing about, hair all unkempt, looked as though we had already won Swaraj! My cousin Maya was arrested, so were some of my friends. There was a lot of pressure from elders wanting them to recant, saying their parents were dying. 'Inquilab Zindabad', 'Quit India', 'Mahatma Gandhi ki jai', 'Do or Die' were the slogans.

Those arrested were first taken to Central Jail before they were sent to various jails. We visited my cousin and friends. Special permission was required for this. We were allowed five minutes. Two grilles and a gap separated us. It was a strange emotionally charged experience at the time.

of the civilisation, temple or town that had sprung on her banks. When the last one had spoken, the harmony breaks. A girl intrudes in a bedraggled saree worn high over her ankles, skin deliberately darkened, hair uncombed, basket and broom tucked under her arm. The Rivers hold their noses and shout, "Chi, chi, Who let you in! Who are you? This meeting is only for us, the Rivers of Hind". And the creature yells back, "And who do you think I am? I have as much a right to be here as any one of you...I am the River Cooum!"

"Many of us who studied in QMC during the last years of World War II completed our B.A. Hons or M.A. at Presidency College and Christian College, Tambaram, or took the M.B.B.S. at Madras Medical College or Stanley Medical. A great many of us, imbued with the sense of adventure, set out on long train journeys to distant Bikaner, Ajmer, Delhi, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Bombay and many other cities to teach in colleges and schools and work in hospitals. The memories of all these women who spread education and learning throughout the many cities of India will lie buried in the rubble of what will soon be all that is left of Queen Mary's College 1914-2003. I am 83 years old and I never thought I would live to see this happen.

Hemalatha Prabhu
(Studied History at QMC between 1938 and 1940 and retired as Principal, Kanoria College, Jaipur.)

Queen Mary's College Hostel was also the hostel for women students of Presidency College, which too was on the Marina, not far away. Breakfast over, those bitten by the freedom bug were out on the streets. The Principal realised she couldn't hold us back even if she locked the gates; we would jump over the wall. She judiciously announced that those who wished to leave should sign the register and be back in the hostel by 6 p.m., after which she would not be responsible for us, we could ask our local guardians to take care of us. Students just streamed into her office, signed and left.

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India's third largest economy

Tamil Nadu is the third largest economy in India and its current State Domestic Product is well over US \$ 23 billion. The State Domestic Product growth of the State is currently 7.2%.

The General Index of Industrial Production for Tamil Nadu has registered a positive growth of 5.4% as against 2.5% in the previous year. Tamil Nadu ranks second in India in terms of FDI inflow and third in terms of statewise FDI approvals (Rs.232,360.16 million).

The GSDP at constant (1993-94) prices has increased to Rs. 91,841 crore in 2001-02, registering an annual growth of 5.46%. The sectoral contribution to GSDP in 2001-02 through the primary sector, secondary sector and tertiary sector shows a growth of 16.65%, 34.04% and 49.31% respectively. The per capita income of Tamil Nadu for 2001-02 at constant prices (1993-94) is Rs.13,055 which is well above the all-India average of Rs.10,746.

A strong engineering base exists in the State, involving products ranging from automobiles and auto components, bicycles, castings and forgings, to textile machinery, electrical and non-electrical machinery, pumps and transportation equipment. The State's engineering and manufacturing sector has a global reputation for their undiluted focus on human resources. Tamil Nadu's leading position in the manufacture of cotton textiles is well known the world over. The State contributes more than 22% of the country's exports of cotton yarn and fabrics.

The State has taken a lead in the services sector, becoming a hub for ITES & BPO units. The software exports from the State exceeded Rs 5,223 crore during 2001-02. This growth in manufacturing and services sector has been facilitated by the State's vast manpower talent record. The State can boast of more than 65,000 engineering graduates passing out from more than 250 colleges every year.

Tamil Nadu is one of the few states which is fairly comfortably placed in the power availability front. The gap between energy demand-supply is lower than all-India averages (All-India deficit : 11.5%; Tamil Nadu deficit : 10.9%). It has made impressive strides in power generation and is comfortably placed in this sector. The total power generation in the State is around 7905 MW.

Tamil Nadu continues to be

buoyant, with the sales tax revenue showing a 13.5 per cent increase in the last two quarters, when compared to the same period last year.

Foreign investment

India has seen an upward swing in FDI inflows, at a time when the world economy was facing a downward trend, FDI into the country in the first quarter of 2002-03 growing by more than 60%, while the FDI in rest of the world grew by 55%. The country's inflow of foreign direct investment in the first half of the calendar year, January-June 2002, set a new record in recent years at \$2.51 billion.

The total foreign investment approved for Tamil Nadu is Rs. 235474.43 crore, the State ranking third in terms of FDI flows. A number of major industrial projects are to come up shortly in the State.

Industry profile

Tamil Nadu continues to be one of the best developed States in terms of industrial develop-

ment, attracting a large number of investment proposals particularly in recent times. Tamil Nadu ranks 3rd in industrial output among all states, 2nd in value addition, 2nd in number of factories, second in total workers employed in factories and 3rd in foreign direct investment flow.

From a CII-TN Review

Tamil Nadu has a well diversified industrial base. The following is indicative of its traditional strengths, looked at from the point of view of its share in India's output:

Heavy commercial vehicles 27%; Auto components 35%; Railway coaches 49%; Motor cycles & mopeds 46%; Newsprint 17%; Cotton yarn 32%; Power driven pumps 50%; Leather products 70%; Cars 21% and Software 13%.

With the setting up of major automobile projects, namely Ford Motors, Hyundai Motors, Hindustan Motors, Mitsubishi and with expansion plans of Ashok Leyland and the TAFE, Chennai emerges as Detroit of Southeast Asia.

At present the State accounts for 11-12% of India's industrial output. Tamil Nadu's strength lies not only in its traditional industries but also in several new emerging industries. Some important features of these indus-

tries in Tamil Nadu are summarised below:

Software

Software development is currently a US \$ 670 million industry in Tamil Nadu. Chennai is fast emerging as the second Silicon Valley. Chennai has the largest number of software professionals in India, currently about 32,000 employed in 700 IT companies. Software exports from Tamil Nadu have grown from a mere Rs.20 million in 1993-94 to Rs.52,230 million for 2001-02. 1993-94 to 2001-02 software exports from Tamil Nadu:

Year	Exports (in Rs. Million)
1993-94	20
1994-95	120
1995-96	370
1996-97	1610
1997-98	3930
1998-99	12460
1999-00	19140
2000-01	31160
2001-02	52230

The State Government has recognised IT as a thrust area. In

1997, it became the first Indian State to announce a comprehensive IT policy, and it later set up a Special Task Force, with representatives from Government, industry and academia, to oversee its implementation. It has also established an IT Department — another first in India — to speed up the adoption of IT within the entire administration.

Chennai has 676 IT companies, followed by Coimbatore with 66. But it is spreading to other cities as well, the first testimony being seen in Madurai, Trichy, Tirupur, Vellore, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Erode and Thanjavur.

Engineering

The exports of engineering products from Tamil Nadu are around Rs.14.50 billion (US \$ 320 million), of which automobile ancillaries alone contribute around US \$ 150 million. The automobile industry in the State accounts for nearly 50% of the all-India export market. The strong engineering base consists of a network of nearly 3,000 units, employing a skilled workforce of more than 2.5 lakh.

The mineral base

Minerals, like limestone, lignite, granite, clay, gypsum, feld-

A two-page look at Tamil Nadu



INVEST IN
A HIGHER
STATE
OF
MIND
TAMIL NADU

The logo and message that Hindustan Thompson's has proposed to project Tamil Nadu as the destination to investors.

spar, graphite and iron are found in abundance in Tamil Nadu. There are small quantities of gold, copper, magnesite, kaolin, bauxite and asbestos. Substantial reserves have been estimated for Lignite, Magnetite quartzite, Garnet (abrasive), Graphite, Ilmenite, Rutile and Silimanite.

The availability of different varieties of granite in different parts of the State has resulted in a booming granite industry, contributing to more than 35% of the country's exports. The current annual production of cement is over 5 million tonnes. Lignite is being used to generate power. Graphite is yet another mineral offering opportunities for down-stream industries.

Marine resources

Tamil Nadu has 362 fish landing centres and an annual fish catch is around 0.5 million mt. The State has over 200 registered exporters of marine products, 29 freezing plants and 36 cold storages. Investment opportunities are plentiful.

Textile & apparel

Tamil Nadu contributes to more than 22% of the country's exports of cotton yarn and fabrics. Approximately 22% of India's exports of ready-made garments also originates from Tamil Nadu. In actual terms, it translates to around US \$ 1.5-2.0 billion worth of garments being exported from the state, the two main centres being Chennai and Tirupur.

Leather-based industries

The tanning industry in India has a total installed capacity of 225 million pieces of hide and

Government plans

The Government of Tamil Nadu is offering land in the following industrial parks:

SIPCOT Industrial Parks, TIDCO Industrial Parks and the upcoming SIPCOT Information Technology Park, Siruseri (spread over 1000 acres, planned as a self-contained city). The private sector offers space in the Mahindra Industrial Township, just beyond Maraimalainagar.

Projects under implementation by the State Government include the following:

— TICEL Bio Park — with technical collaboration from Cornell University, USA, and a capital outlay of Rs.630 million.

— Hi-Tech Industrial Park — a joint venture of TIDCO and the Infac group, USA, with a capital outlay of Rs.7000 million, at Nanguneri, Tirunelveli District Tanflora Infrastructure Park — a floriculture infrastructure park with export thrust with a capital outlay of Rs.250 million being developed on the lines of Agrexco of Israel, in Dharmapuri District, and Nagarjuna Oil Corporation — a petroleum refinery (6 million tonnes per year crude oil capacity, with a capital outlay of Rs.34,800 million and promoted by TIDCO and the Nagarjuna group.

The CII-Tamil Nadu annual chapter is teaming with the Government of Tamil Nadu to emphasise these aspects of the State and showcase a "Winning Tamil Nadu".

skins of which Tamil Nadu alone contributes 70%. Tamil Nadu enjoys a leadership position in the leather industry, with a 40% share in India's export. It currently employs about 2.5 million persons.

Agro-based industries

Ideal climatic conditions for the growth of fruits and vegetables has given rise to a vibrant agro-based food industry in the state. The Madurai-Dindigul belt in Tamil Nadu is endowed with favourable climatic conditions ideal for cultivation of a variety of fruits and vegetables. The floriculture industry is also poised for a quantum leap in the next few years with the area around Coimbatore, Dharmapuri and the Nilgiris being earmarked as places ideally suited for the cultivation of flowers. Of these Coimbatore has been identified as an intensive floriculture zone.

Sorry! We DO have to trim our list

(Continued from page 1)

Madras Musings' fight for heritage.

4. Those Madras Musings has dropped from its mailing list and any newcomer wanting to receive Madras Musings could send in duly filled the NEW coupon which will hereafter appear in Madras Musings and can get back on the mailing list or on it for the first time.

5. Madras Musings' new mailing list has now been divided into three parts. Those with 'A' or 'B' serial numbers are in our core list which comprises those who have sent Chennai Heritage a contribution as support, those nominated by our corporate supporters, and various decision-makers, NGOs with similar interests, as well as libraries, mainly in the city. This is a list around 3000 in number. Those with 'C' serial numbers are all from Chennai who had requested for copies of

than 16,500 in number, on the existing mailing list. From May 1st, there will be a NEW mailing list.

2. Many readers have been receiving two or even more copies. To the best of our ability, we have now eliminated the extra copies. But if there are readers still receiving extra copies, mainly at office and at home, we'd appreciate hearing from them whether they would be happy with one copy or whether they would like us to continue with the extra copy/copies because they were passing them on to others interested in the causes Madras Musings espouses.

3. We have eliminated from our mailing list all those living in the mofussil or in other parts of India, except those who have sent in contributions supporting

Madras Musings in the past. Together, the three lists enable us to bring down our circulation to around 13,000 copies.

6. Planning to keep our circulation at around this figure (13,000) for the present, we will, as and when we receive the new coupons duly filled in, include the new names committing themselves to the causes Madras Musings espouses, BUT will DROP from 'C' list a name for every name added to the 'A' or 'B' lists. Thus, in time, we hope to have only one list of around 10,000 committed supporters of Madras Musings and its causes.

We look forward to readers helping us swell that list as quickly as possible, demonstrating a commitment to heritage and a better Madras that is Chennai, and showing the powers-that-be that there are those who CARE.

An economy that could do better

Although Tamil Nadu is considered to be in the forefront of economic development and one of the most industrialised states in India, economic indicators show that there are several negative factors slowing the growth of the State's economy.

According to a paper presented by Dr. S.K. Shanthi of the Institute for Financial Management and Research, Chennai, at a recent seminar organised by the IFMR on the trends and prospects of the Tamil Nadu economy, the State is fifth in the per capita income criteria, after Delhi, Maharashtra, Punjab and Haryana, a ranking that has remained almost constant during the past 20 years. More than 20 per cent of the State's population still falls below the poverty line, against an all-India average of 26 per cent, but it is the highest among the Southern States.

Though the picture she painted was based on 2000-01 statistics, the situation has not materially changed today, it was pointed out.

With an unemployment rate of 15 per cent, the number of job seekers in Tamil Nadu stands at nearly 44 lakh, growing at over 6 per cent a year. Although the structure of the economy has undergone a radical change (the share of agriculture is only 18.9 per cent compared to 43.5 per cent in 1960-61, while the secondary and tertiary sectors' share has gone up to 31.05 per cent and 50.05 per cent, respectively), the employment pattern does not reflect these changes and agriculture continues to be the biggest employer. Social sector spending in per capita terms, as a percentage of the total spending, had declined in the 1990s from 45 per cent to 37.7 per cent. Housing seems to have received the least allocation per capita, falling to Rs. 6.4 in 1999-00, from Rs. 18.5 in the mid-1990s.

The State's fiscal position, too, has shown a dramatic deterioration since 1995-96, with the revenue deficit increasing 20 times in the last seven years. This indicates a severe compression of capital expenditure and tremendous growth of revenue expenditure, Dr. Shanthi stated.

Agriculture provides the key to food security and the base for raw material supply to many industries. Tamil Nadu ranks fifth in agriculture production and 50 per cent of its working population is engaged in this sector. Dr. Shanthi and Lakshmi Kumar, also of the IFMR, in a joint pre-

sentation, referring to declining agricultural income and scanty rainfall as two of the main problems confronting Indian agriculture, pointed out that production growth had been erratic, with Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh accounting for the highest variations. More than 50 per cent of the farm area in Tamil Nadu continued to be cultivated by small and marginal farmers, a worrying fact considering that there is a high correlation between the presence of small and marginal farmers and rural poverty. The average area and size of occupational holdings in Tamil Nadu is a mere 0.95 hectare against the all-India average of 1.95 hectare. There is, however, considerable land available in the State for development and cultivation, particularly by improving the condition of the soil.

As against Punjab's 90 per cent, Tamil Nadu has only 50 per cent of its agricultural land irrigated. The unreliability of monsoon rain has made the farmer dependent on underground water (well water). With the per

• by SASHI NAIR based on recent presentations at the Institute for Financial Management and Research, Chennai.

capita availability of water being four times less than the Indian average, irrigating fields poses a serious challenge. All this has led to the value of the produce of principal crops falling by one-third.

Again, erratic monsoons, resulting in production and price volatility, adversely affect the farmer because price changes do not offset the impact of lower production. For example, agricultural produce prices do not rise sufficiently during a bad harvest. Focus on micro-irrigation methods, rainwater harvesting, involving farmers in water management and forming a legal framework for groundwater are some of the ways this challenge could be met, they suggested.

The speakers went on to point out from studies on financial institutions in Tamil Nadu that it is clear, farmers are neither getting adequate funds nor receiving money on time to buy fertilisers. Not only is the repayment time insufficient, interest rates are too high. In recent years, contribution to capital formation has come from the private sector, while the public sector's contribution has dwindled. The growth in priority sector lending has been reported to be the least in the State.

Several strategies for developing agriculture in a State, where spending on agriculture is minuscule, were outlined by the duo. These included:

- coordinated effort by agencies to sink wells and water lifts;
- wasteland development;
- development of contract farming;
- education of farmers in the use of technology;
- suitable lending policies by financial institutions;
- development of cooperatives;
- provision of post-harvest cold storage and transportation facilities;
- promotion of organic farming;
- removal of artificial price controls;
- removal of border restrictions;
- development of horticulture; and
- identification of risk models for various farmer groups for crop insurance.

Dr. K. Rajeevan, CEO, Tamil Nadu Urban Development Programme, looking at the development of urban infrastructure in Tamil Nadu, pointed out that

the pattern of urbanisation, although fairly evenly spread among the State's various cities and towns, nevertheless, seems to be related to large-scale industrialisation along the thin belt in the northern and western parts of the State — Chennai, Vellore, Salem and Coimbatore. Urbanisation has not spread to the dry, backward and unstable agricultural regions of the State, he stressed.

A sector-wise break-up of investment required indicated that 64 per cent of the investment needed was for water and sanitation, followed by 31 per cent for roads, drains and lighting. Water supply varies from 34 lpcd in town panchayats to 74 lpcd in Corporations, significantly below the State norm of 90 lpcd. Only 57 per cent of the population in Corporation areas, 32 per cent in Municipalities and 16 per cent in Panchayats have access to sanitation. Although 70 per cent of solid waste generated is collected, most local bodies do not have organised disposal facilities. Less than 50 per cent of the roads are provided with storm-water drains. Rajeevan, however, highlighted the fact that urban infrastructure, especially water and sanitation, needed debt financing and an institutionalised

mechanism to raise low-cost funds. M.J. Xavier, Dean, IFMR, surveying the industrial sector in Tamil Nadu, urged the State to introduce suitable reforms in the tax structure, power tariff, import duty and labour laws, to improve industrial growth and increase productivity.

It is important to align industrial growth, employment generation and increase in exports with overall economic objectives, he pointed out. And for that, thrust areas needed to be identified, keeping in mind the State's strengths as well as global opportunities. Software, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, food processing, telecommunications and education should receive greater focus, Xavier emphasised. And Tamil Nadu's rich heritage, long coastline and good transport services, should be exploited to develop tourism in the State, which he felt could contribute substantially to its economy.

Despite the number of negatives that came through in the presentations, it was apparent the Tamil Nadu economy has seen quite a few positives as well. The per capita gross fixed capital formation, for example, has increased from Rs. 1,338 to Rs. 2,790, registering an annual average growth rate of 10.85 per cent. In the social sector, education has received increased importance. Health spending has also risen.

Tamil Nadu has the highest yield of rice and sugarcane. Fertiliser use is among the highest in India, next only to Punjab and Andhra Pradesh.

An excellent example of reducing cost while financing an urban infrastructure project has been the Madurai bypass — a 27.2 km two-lane inner ring road between Melur Road and Kanniyakumari — which the city's Corporation funded by issue of debentures, servicing of which is being met from toll collections.

On the industrial front, Tamil Nadu recorded the largest investment flow between 1991 and 99, more than Rs. 140,000 crore. Industrial production registered a healthy 13.1 per cent growth in 1999-2000. The State's SARI (Sustainable Access in Rural India) Project proved to be a step in the right direction, empowering rural women and providing access to emergency services like healthcare. And population growth has been stabilised. But how are we building on this foundation, was the question most asked at the seminar.

Quizzin' with Ram'n'an

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

- Name the new virus that has been wreaking havoc in Asia in recent weeks.
- Who gave away the 'Man of the Tournament Award' to Sachin Tendulkar at the recent World Cup Finals?
- Name the chief of Sun Microsystems and a Microsoft 'basher' who came to India recently.
- Which film won six Oscars, including one for Best Picture and Best Supporting Actress, on March 23rd?
- Where in Jammu & Kashmir were 24 Pandits gunned down, leading to nation-wide condemnation of the atrocity?
- Which international sportsman is to play himself in a Telugu movie, *Anaganaga O'Kurrado*?
- Which word coined by J.K. Rowling in her Harry Potter series is to enter the Oxford English Dictionary?
- Name the visionary technologist, the producer of the world's portable computer, who passed away in Kodaikanal on March 18th.
- Where in Bangalore was India's first wireless cyber hotspot opened recently?
- Who won the Royal Challenge Indian Open, the country's premier international golf tournament?

- What is K. Balachander's serial, a sequel to his acclaimed *Smdhu Bhairavi*, called?
- Where in Chennai is the Tamil Nadu Government planning an exhibition centre, originally mooted in 1995, at a cost of Rs. 38.5 lakh?
- What is the slogan the CIITN chapter plans to suggest to the Tamil Nadu Government to attract investment and expand tourism and other sectors?
- Which Hindu pontiff's year-long Golden Jubilee celebration of his ascension to the *peetam* began on March 21st?
- If K. Bhagyaraj's *Kaidhiyin Diary* was remade as *Aakhri Raasta* (starring Amitabh Bachchan), what was *Veetla Visheshanga* remade as?
- What imposing edifice of Chennai, burnt down in 1985, was first opened at 'Guzli Bazaar' in 1900?
- What is the actual name of the 'Town Hall' in Chennai?
- Which popular Chennai store was the first retail store in the country to get the coveted ISO 9001 certification?
- Who is the DGP of Tamil Nadu?
- Which was the first collegiate institution for women in the city, set up in 1914?

(Answers on page 9)

Stifling the trees

It is heartrending to see the way trees on the city pavement are choked with tight cement packing, leaving no gap for the trees to breathe. This is particularly so on Flagstaff Road (connecting Beach Road, near War Memorial, and Mount Road), where the laying work which was in progress was recently completed. The concrete tiles are placed very close to the bottom trunk of the trees and tightly plastered with cement.

They have in the same way plastered around the root of the street

OUR READERS WRITE

lamp-posts on the same pavement, but fortunately lamp-posts do not need to breathe.

P.G. Rangarajan
24 & 25, Janakiram Colony
Extension, Arumbakkam
Chennai 600 106.

Elephantine problems

In the last couple of months, several elephants which have been used for begging in the Chennai streets have been rescued by animal welfare enthusiasts and sent to Vandalur zoo or other animal care

facilities. The question that arises is why are these majestic animals purchased by their owners, especially in and around cities? The reason that immediately comes to mind is that they are used for film shooting or for begging during temple festivals. How many individuals can afford to maintain these animals at huge costs? What is the policy of the State Government regarding keeping these animals in temples? How many temples can afford to properly maintain these animals? The whole problem requires serious investigation and concerted action.

Dr. S. Shankar Dev
'Kylas'
6, Giri Road, T. Nagar
Chennai 600 017.

Why the name?

The Stanley Hospital was called in the good old days in Tamil as "Kanji Thotti Aspathiri". I think, *Kanji Thotti* refers to a big vat of gruel. Did Stanley Hospital get its name because gruel was given to patients as a substitute for bread and butter? Can anybody enlighten me?

P.A. Ranganathan
16, Vedachala Garden
Mandaveli Street, Chennai 28.

Not right

The answer to Question No. 5 (MM, March 16th) should have read 'Anoushka Shankar' and not Norah Jones, as given, I think.

D. Venkatesan
31-A Ramaswami Garden Street
Royapettah, Chennai 600 014.

Editor's Note: Not right, we're afraid; Norah Jones it is.

Sounds of Old Madras

In the early 1930s, my grandfather lived in *Chintamani* (I seem to remember that the house belonged to N. Gopalaswami Aiyangar's family) ideally located at the corner of the intersection of Royapettah High Road and Edward Elliot's Road. Ideal, at least for me, it boasted a balcony on the first floor with iron railings, and when I was perched precariously there I could see - wonder of wonders - right into the tram depot opposite and glory in the music of the trams.

Some nights I would creep out there long past my bed-time and gaze my fill of the trams, now resting also. I would whisper 'Good night, Ovaltine' as to an old friend and slip back into my bed. It was exciting too at dawn to hear their 'ting-ling-ling' as they emerged one by one at the start of their busy day,

snaking their way out on the lines.

The after-lunch siesta brought an illusion of quiet to our busy corner, broken at last by that long-awaited call 'ICE PROOT' from the 'Stop-me-and-buy-one' man from Spencer's. Could there be anything better than to peer excitedly into the cool cavern of his bicycle-van as we hotly debated whether Orange or Strawberry was to be 'today's choice' - all for one anna a piece.

I share with Reader Raghavan (MM, March 1st) the memory of the buttermilk vendor. His pot was a BIG earthen *paanai* set firmly on a heap of wet sand. But his cry (at least to us) sounded like 'Maarooo' and we looked round for my small cousin Malati. Now Malati had been warned by my uncle that the man was specially sent to

round up all naughty little girls called 'Maaloo', and naturally Malati would immediately seek refuge at my grandfather's feet!

Much has been said in the last few weeks of the Mylapore temple *utsavam* to prove that the past is not wiped out, for lurking somewhere within our innermost self is a tiny reminder of eternal values. There is beauty in the festival, the noise and the bustle, for those who wish to see it; and beauty also in the stillness of Mada Street during the music of the *Vidaiyatri Utsavam* that follows. The very centre of our busy city gifts us a moment of quiet reflection when we can say with Wordsworth 'Dear God! The very houses seem asleep, and all that might hear is lying still!'

Saraswathi Gowrishankar
C/o R. Adm. Mohan Raman
Chennai 600 028.

A SHANGHAI SEAFRONT AHEAD?

(Continued from page 1)

to get Heritage Regulations drafted and included in the CMDA's development control rules. This was agreed to by INTACH-TN, a Heritage Committee with a major representation from Government was formed, the Regulations drafted, and nearly 200 sites of heritage importance - either on grounds of antiquity, architectural uniqueness, historical significance or on natural importance - were agreed on, listed and appended to the Regulations. Both Regulations and annexure, approved in toto by the CMDA, went to the Government Department for approval. Now it has been conveniently returned to the CMDA, allegedly seeking the concurrence of all those whose heritage wealth has been listed. This is an unprecedented action not only in India, but wherever heritage rules have come into force; experts determine heritage value, not owners. But even if we wanted to be unique, then, given that there were Heritage Regulations being discussed and the entire Queen Mary's campus was a constituent part of the annexure to the proposed regulations, couldn't Government have awaited the views of all those connected with Queen Mary's on its heritage status be-

fore taking a unilateral decision to evict the College and pull down its buildings for the greater glory of Government? Government's attitude would appear to be a lack of interest, for whatever reason, in proceeding with a Heritage Act or even Heritage Regulations. And that is not only a major step back for the Heritage movement, but virtual licence for any developer, Government or otherwise, to run riot. That is what all of us should be worrying about, even as Government gives us the first glimpse of its hand.

2. That hand could well be holding plans for development of a large part of the seafront. With the 'secret' MoU signed with the Malaysians, referred to elsewhere in this issue, suspected of being a major development, of the Foreshore (San Thomé) Beach up to the Adyar Estuary, both privately and with Government participation, there is every possibility of raising a Shanghai or Singapore or Manhattan skyline without once worrying about the necessary infrastructure or the historical ambience of Madras. With the Heritage Regulations shoved out of the way, all that needs to get construction underway here, apart from the wherewithal, is a quick change

of the development control rules. The new coastal survey reported by this journal is expected to take care of any possible restrictions posed by the Coastal Zone Regulations.

3. With the building of the Secretariat and the new Foreshore development underway, the citizens of Chennai will not only have to forget the Marina as the city's only major lung and recreation space but can expect the entire stretch from Napier Bridge to Adyar Estuary to be

developed with a highrise skyline like Shanghai's or Manhattan's with neither the infrastructure of service nor efficiency to go with it. The collapse of the city into urban gridlock will inevitably follow. And the city that gave birth to modern India will fall victim to its own grandiose intention of modernising. Forget Heritage, we might not have a city worth its name, if something is not done to stop what's taken the first step at QMC.

What's this thing called a heritage landmark?

(Continued from page 2)

kind in the country. The judge described the felling of the tree as 'the senseless act of man'.

- A North Carolina (U.S.) logging company paid a \$95,000 fine after cutting down a tree where bald eagles nested. The bald eagle, the national symbol of the U.S., is protected and so are its nesting places. The company's owner, who said "I made a dumb mistake" in admitting the violation of the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, got off "fairly" lightly. He could have spent a year in prison, a year of supervised release thereafter and \$100,000 fine!

— MMM

Two special features for our times in a two-page pull-out

Patrick Geddes — and Indian town planning

The conventional wisdom identifies the origins of the Indian environmental movement with the Chipko Andolan, which broke out in April 1973. Over the next 25 years, there was a lively, nationwide debate on the state of the environments, on the sustainability of different technologies, ideologies and social systems. However, there is a fascinating if unacknowledged prehistory to this debate, that extends back a hundred years or more. Well before Chipko and Chernobyl made environmentalists of us all, there were men and women

groundswell of popular support has created the conditions for a sophisticated but contentious public discourse on the conditions and prospects for sustainable development.

Amongst the contributions of Europeans to Indian environmental thought, a significant one was by the Scotsman, Patrick Geddes. Born in 1854, Geddes was a disciple of William Morris and John Ruskin who is recognised in his homeland as a pioneer of ecological town planning. As a professor of botany and activist city planner, he inspired his students in Dundee and Edinburgh primarily through the spoken word and force of example and, less evidently, through his writings. But Geddes was also a restless internationalist, seeking friends, converts, and associates in all parts of the globe. His interest in India was first sparked by a chance encounter in Paris with the Irish-Hindu spiritualist, Sister Nivedita. She and Geddes struck a close friendship and although she died suddenly in October 1906, her memory and the prospect of finding disciples in India attracted him to the land. Immediately after finishing his opus, *Cities in Evolution*, Geddes made plans for a visit to the subcontinent. He had hoped to take his carefully put-together exhibition on urban history around the cities of British India.

Geddes arrived in Madras in the autumn of 1914. The boxes of his 'Cities and Town-Planning Exhibition' were carried by another ship which, as luck would have it, was struck by a German destroyer (World War I had just broken out). The vessel went down in the Indian Ocean and, with it, the work of half-a-lifetime. Geddes was stranded in India with no exhibition to show. Characteristically, he turned his mind instead on gathering new material, on studying the rise, decline and transformation of the cities and towns of India. He was to stay for nearly ten years in India, first as a freelance town planner and then as the first Professor of Sociology and Civic Reports of the University of Bombay. During this period, Geddes travelled widely in the subcontinent and interacted closely with the high and the low. He met Mahatma Gandhi twice,



THE OLD...

...& THE NEW

The OLD and the NEW are seen together in R. ESWARRAJ's picture above, taken of the north bank of the Adyar River near the Maraimalai Adigalar Bridge in Saidapet. Close-ups show the thatched huts (left) that are giving way to the brick and mortar constructions (below). Over the years, buildings on the banks of a river have been considered encroachments - and also a danger to the encroachers, particularly if they lived in huts built of thatch like those seen here. Now, their new 'pucca' homes might be safer - but who regularised such construction in this eco-fragile area? Is this how town planning is practised in Chennai in this day and age? Or would Geddes have seen an Indian-ness to it?



knew Annie Besant, and befriended the great Bengali thinkers Rabinranath Tagore and Jagadish Chandra Bose. In his years in India he wrote nearly fifty town plans, some commissioned by the maharajahs, some written at the behest of colonial administrators. The towns he wrote about range from Dhaka in the east to Ahmadabad in the west, from Lahore in the north to Thanjavur in the south. Published in limited editions by obscure presses and now available only in libraries in Scotland, Geddes' Indian town plans deserve to be resurrected. For they are far from being dry-as-dust technical reports. Wonderfully idiosyncratic, they are shot through with throwaway lines and *bon mots*, while his philosophy emerges in the most unexpected places.

In his Indian town plans, Geddes' practical-ecological approach is manifest in the concrete recommendations for the setting aside of open space for recreation, tree planting and protection (especially, but not exclusively, around sacred sites), and for the provision of sustainable and safe water supply. He commended the Indian tradition of narrow public thoroughfares with ample (and leafy) courtyards within houses, criticising the modern tendency in favour of wide, dusty streets, which he saw as an aid only to the automobile, an artefact he detested. He strongly recommended the preservation and maintenance of tanks and reservoirs; simultaneously a protection against flooding after heavy rain, a beneficial influence on climate and, of course, the source of an assured supply

of water. Geddes scoffed at the fear of sanitary engineers that these waterbodies would constitute a malarial hazard, pointing out that they could easily be stocked 'with sufficient fish and duck to keep down the Anopheles'. After a visit to the town of Thana, thirty miles north of Bombay, he recommended the protection of wells as a reserve to existing water supplies, remarking presciently that 'any and every water system occasionally goes out of order, and is open to accidents and injuries of very many kinds; and in these old wells we inherit an ancient policy of life insurance, of a very real kind, and one far too valuable to be abandoned' - words that should be pasted above the office desks of planners working today in Chennai, Hyderabad

(Continued on page 8)

The Guru of Good Governance

Never has 'good governance' been more urgently required in our country than at the present moment. Whatever the theories touted by Management pundits, usually honed in the business schools of the West, about what constitutes good governance, we saw it in practice in 1954-63. Kamaraj, as Chief Minister, gave the State the best administration it has ever had. His tenure is still reckoned as the "golden era".

Kamaraj was a self-made man, initiated into politics by his mentor Satyamurti. Born into a modestly affluent family, he lost his father at an early age and was brought up by his uncle. His mother and sister were his only direct blood relatives. He remained a bachelor. Not being able to pay fees, he went to a free school run by a charitable organisation and got an exposure to formal education.

What are the main ingredients of 'good governance'? You'll find them in what Kamaraj practised every day.

If enhancing shareholder value is an important responsibility for corporates, Kamaraj excelled in this respect by providing free education upto S.S.L.C. and followed this up with the introduction of the free "mid-day-meal" scheme for schoolchildren. The vulnerable sections of the State, who are its biggest shareholders, could not have got a better deal.

Selection of a good team, providing support and giving operational freedom are also hallmarks of sound corporate behaviour. There can be no better example than Kamaraj's cabinet. On replacing Rajaji as Chief Minister, Kamaraj retained all the members of Rajaji's cabinet, including C. Subramaniam, who was regarded as Rajaji's right hand, and gave them full freedom to function.

The quality of persons who adorned Kamaraj's cabinet can be judged by the fact that one became the President of India, another was honoured with Bharat Ratna, the third succeeded him as Chief Minister and was acknowledged as an outstanding administrator in his own right, and the fourth died leaving his family in straitened circumstances despite being a Minister for several years. (A rare phenomenon these days!!)

An episode worth recollecting concerned the Minister handling the important portfolio of Industry. While negotiating a contract for supplying tex-

tile equipment, the suppliers offered the Minister a discount which would have been paid to him personally. Not only did the Minister reject the proposition, but insisted that an extra piece of equipment be supplied equivalent to the discount offered. (Sounds stranger than fiction in the light of goings-on today!!)

Accessibility, transparency in decision-making, and monitoring the progress of schemes are recognised as good corporate strategies. It is amazing that

• by P.M. Belliappa
IAS (RETI)

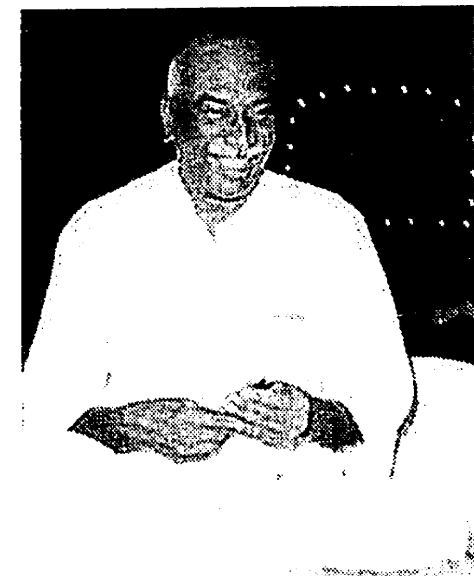
Kamaraj practised all these like a person who had graduated from business school. He travelled the length and breadth of the State constantly to understand local problems first hand, and kept his finger on the pulse all the time.

There was the case of a young officer not belonging to the State who handled with aplomb a particularly nasty law

and order situation involving two communities, thus averting a clash and blood-letting. On hearing about this, Kamaraj, who was visiting some remote corner of the State, asked the officer to meet him at a railway station en route to Madras and, in full public view, complimented him. The message was loud and clear.

He met people freely and treated everyone with dignity. Little remembered is the fact that one of the persons who had easy access to him was not a relative nor from his community nor a party hack, but Aziz, a student of Loyola College, who articulated the concerns of the youth. In Aziz's untimely death in a road accident, Kamaraj lost a friend and Tamil Nadu a promising leader.

Kamaraj understood that administration is teamwork, in which the bureaucracy is a vital player. He never compromised the bureaucracy's position in public, kept party cadres in check and maintained the distinction between 'party' and



K. Kamaraj

'government'. Officers were left free to carry on with their legitimate duties. Honest dissent was neither stifled, misunderstood nor penalised. Coercion, of any kind, of officers was unheard of.

It was during Kamaraj's period that Panchayat Raj was ushered in in the State. Furious discussions took place about the structure of these institutions in the districts and the role of the Collector vis-a-vis elected Panchayat leaders. A leading political figure ostensibly close to Kamaraj had been inducted into government to oversee the introduction of these changes. Despite hectic canvassing by this worthy, the official line, that Collectors should have a significant role in the administration of Panchayat Raj institutions in the districts, prevailed and no offence was taken by Kamaraj at the strong dissent voiced by officials. It is hearten-

ing to note that, even today, the decision taken then is operative!!

The politics of the period was marked by dignified conduct between parties, without a war of words or witch-hunting, involving wasted energies and resources. In true democratic spirit, there was immense tolerance of criticism. Minorities felt secure and were never under any sort of pressure. In fact, they saw Kamaraj as one of them.

As a person he led a very simple and unostentatious life. A 'cult' was neither desired nor encouraged. To quote his own words, which sum up his philosophy: "I have become the Chief Minister only to give relief to the poor people and to solve their problems to the extent possible. If I am not able to be of help to the poor, I have no use for this office." True to himself, he resigned in 1963.

That Kamaraj, after leading a Gandhian life, died in 1975 on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday October 2nd, is perhaps Providence's way of telling the world that they were kindred souls, separated by time.

Those of us who had the privilege of working in the Kamaraj era can do no better than quote Wordsworth: Bliss was it to be alive in that dawn

But to be young was very heaven.

GEDDES — and Indian town planning

(Continued from page 7)

and a dozen other cities of India.

His inclusive, holistic and deeply ecological approach is nicely expressed in the following quote:

For us (i.e. the Town Planner) the problem is not simply, as for municipalities and their engineers today the removal of sewage, or tomorrow the supply of water, at one time, the removal of congestion, or supply of communications; and at some other the problems of housing, or again of suburban extension. Our problem is to make the best of all these specialisms and their advocates Our attitude differs from that of the specialist intent upon perfection in his own department, whatever be the outlays, whatever the delays to others accordingly; it is rather that of the housewife, the agriculturist or the steward, who has to make the best of a limited budget, and not sacrifice resources enough for general wellbeing to the elaboration of a single improvement.

Patrick Geddes was indeed the most participatory of planners. As he points out in the

most painstaking of all his Indian reports, his two-volume work on Indore,

As the physician must make a diagnosis of the patient's case before prescribing treatment, so with the planner for the city. He looks closely into the city as it is, and enquires into how it has grown, and suffered. And as the physician associates the patient with his own cure, so must the planner appeal to the citizen. Hence the Indore reader should go round and look at the City for himself; and with its Plan for partial guide, he may check, and amplify, the diagnosis; and perhaps accelerate the treatment.

Acutely aware of the resource-extractive characteristics of the modern city, Geddes sought to harmonise urban living with the countryside. Through tree-planting and water-conservation, people could work towards that "return to nature" which every adequate plan involves, with pure air and water, and cleanliness in surroundings again rural; so that, in Ruskin's phrase, "the field gains upon the street, no longer merely the street upon the field". He called often for a 'return to the health of village life,

with its beauty of surroundings and its contact with nature', but 'upon a new spiral turning beyond the old one which, at the same time, frankly and fully incorporates the best advantages of town-life'. In the words of his best-known disciple, 'to the town-planner's art, Geddes brought the rural virtues; not merely respect for the land and for agricultural processes, but for the patience of the peasant, and the sense that orderly growth is more important than order at the expense of growth' (and, one should add, growth at the expense of order).

A hallmark of Geddes' approach was his 'esteem for every genuine material or spiritual value in the local heritage, his almost miserly reluctance to part with the least scrap of it'. He found much to admire and retain in the Indian tradition of town-planning. After a visit to 'that wonderful city of religion', Benares, he wrote feelingly of the respect he found there for nature and life. In other letters to his family, he marvelled at the traditional architecture and planning of the South Indian temple towns. These towns for him embodied the 'spirit of hope, of impulsion, of growth, the temple of the élan vital, the

spirit of evolution, of whom these Hindu gods, whom fools call idols, are as yet in many ways (I do not say in all ways) the most vital and vivid expressions yet reached by man'.

Patrick Geddes waits to be discovered and reinterpreted by our own generation. In their angry denunciations of the urban-industrial way of life, Indian environmentalists, by and large, have yet to come to terms with the fact that by 2020 or thereabouts this country shall have the largest urban population in the world. The consequences of such rapid, and unregulated, urbanisation are already with us: massive pollution, overcrowding and the diseases associated with it, water shortages, inadequate housing and sanitation, and a system of transportation that is highly inefficient from an energy conservation and environmental point of view. In engaging with these problems, and in trying to make our cities and towns habitable, Indian environmentalists can take much help from the work of Patrick Geddes. — (Excerpted from *The European Contribution to Indian Environmentalism* by the author in *Indian Horizons*, Vol. 47, No. 2, 2000.)

Remembering Clive Avenue

I must admit that it's a good feeling to contemplate and write about my good friend T.S. Tirumurti and his maiden novel, *Clive Avenue*, launched recently. (Or T.S. Tirumurti's, as he prefers Civil Servants to be addressed, as in his book.)

Reading the book was a profoundly personal experience for me, strumming as it did, many many personal chords. Tiru, as he is popularly known, and I grew up together, learnt of life and love and all those things. Our neighbourhood was idyllic; I recognise that denizens of contemporary urban madness may be a bit out of depth at the usage of an alien word such as 'idyllic', but idyllic it was. We lived in a wee lane with six bungalows on either side and virtually no traffic. The peace and silence would only be disturbed by the occasional fruit vendor calling out his wares or the "joad-repair" man exercising his vocal chords. We could hear the sounds of birds socialising in the evenings in the trees at Stella Maris College. Early in the mornings we could even hear the sound of electric trains as they went past the TNagar-Nungambakkam stretch!! It was almost like our own private sanctuary.

Growing up was a great experience. On our side of the

road, five of the bungalows were inter-connected. This vast stretch was the location for many an adventure still etched in our collective memories. Many of the residents of our road and their unforgettable traits have been delightfully "expressed" in *Clive Avenue*. Of course, Tiru has given a free run to his imagination. The car starting protocol was omnipresent in the *pettai*. The gulmohur is still there. The twin palms must be well into their next birth by now. *Paati* was a permanent fixture on the verandah in her brown cane chair which had a footrest. She was always exhorting us not to play as "it was too hot" or "it was dark" or "the girls would get hurt" or "the flowerpots would get damaged." The last mentioned was a big issue even for *Maama*, Tiru's father, an avid gardener himself. Despite such insurmountable odds we still managed to stage our marathon matches every evening (the neighbourhood girl did play with us and even got hurt once, which she of course handled with aplomb, gender bashers please note!!). We played a few all-day matches as well on Sundays after the customary oil bath. No prizes for guessing *Paati's* reaction to that!

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WHAT'S THE BIG SECRET?

(Continued from page 1)

MoU, as reported in the Press, pertained to the San Thomé — or Foreshore — Beach. The CMDA in its reply regretted that it could not give a copy of the MoU as it is "not a public document". Our understanding of the rules of governance and any commitment to transparency is that every Government document IS a public document UNLESS it deals with the security of the state. With no security issues involved here, what is the big secret the CMDA, or its superiors, are bent on hiding?

CAG had addressed the CMDA with a similar letter, seeking information on whether it planned anything for the Queen Mary's College campus. No reply had been received till April 7th, but by then the Chief Minister had announced the Government's plans for the campus. That answer did not have replies to several questions that lay behind CAG's letter to the CMDA. Those questions CAG — and the public — would like to hear answers to are:

1. Why was Queen Mary's College chosen as the site for a new secretariat?
2. Has any alternative to

Queen Mary's College been considered as a site?

3. Has an Environmental (or Citizens') Impact Assessment been done?
4. What will be the impact on all the educational institutions in the area?
5. What will be the impact on the Marina?
6. What will be the impact on all the other heritage buildings in the area?
7. As this will become a hub of Government, intense public use will be there. What steps are provided for ancillary and unintended developments?
8. Where is the source of water to service this development?
9. Security being an important commitment these days, how will this development impact the users of the Beach — almost the one large public space of the city?
10. Does not such a shift require discussion with the public under the spirit of the 74th Amendment? Can it be so arbitrarily decided?
11. What is the cost of the project? How is it to be funded? Has it been included in the State's budget?

12. What is the nature of the ownership of land by the QMC today? Can it be changed for other purposes without proper evaluation of the needs of the institution?

13. What is the proper process under the Private College Education Act for taking over land from an educational institution? Has this been followed?

14. There is a Corporation GO which says owners of heritage buildings must be persuaded to preserve them. Has the Corporation initiated any such steps?

15. The CMDA is duty bound to protect heritage buildings — as it states under Rule 22 of the DCR. Also, in the Express Estates case, it has given a list of heritage buildings identified by it to the High Court, which includes QMC. Can a heritage precinct be destroyed without public debate?

Or are the answers to all these questions also SECRET? If they are, such a view makes nonsense of the Tamil Nadu Right to Information Act, 1997, and the Government's commitment to transparency and openness.

scant regard for hygienic disposal of their waste. This was a lot more dangerous to the sanitation than the open drains, a repository of a lot of tennis and cricket balls in our time. The hospitals paved the way for the hospitality business in the form of the roadside caterers. The "drive-in" business model of these caterers on carts throttles the road space, as all types of vehicles jostle with one another, their occupants clamouring for a sip of the hot tasteless beverage majestically handed out in the rarely-cleaned glasses. Now, leading corporates in the vicinity use our road as a parking lot.

Exnora is really Ex-nora! Mildly put, the neighbourhood has been ravaged of all of its pristine qualities... so much for the word "idyllic".

Much as Tiru claims that it's just a little story, the canvas behind *Clive Avenue* is quite obvious! Remember, he is a diplomat after all!

Tiru's analysis of the populace broadly clusters society in three distinct layers:



April 19: Professor Lyane Guillaume, from Paris, who lived in India for four years, has written two novels with India as their theme: *Jahanara*, a historical narration that retraces the life of the daughter of the most famous Moghul emperor, Shah Jahan, who constructed the Taj Mahal for his wife, and *Fiére et intouchable*, dealing with the destiny of women born in an impure caste. Lyane Guillaume will talk about her experiences in India, the art of writing and help bring the literary circle of the Alliance Francaise back to life. (At the Alliance Francaise, 6 p.m.)

From April 21: Manas Ranjan Parida of Orissa exhibits a temple series and landscapes (at Vinyasa).

From April 22: Mukti, a charitable

THOSE EXCITING QMC DAYS

(Continued from page 3)

It must be said to her credit that she never sought outside help and handled things in such a manner that I don't remember any untoward incident.

* * *

We had air raid practices at odd hours. Sometimes in the middle of the night we had to scramble down the steps and jump into the open trenches dug behind the College and re-

— the increasingly dominant numbers of corrupt and lawless lawmakers;

— the helpless "educated middle-aged uppercrust" unable to reconcile to the disappearance of their sensibilities; and

— the younger generation which finds meaning in emigrating and starting a new life, largely on their own terms.

If anything, *Clive Avenue* doesn't get into the madness of the religious fundamentalists, something that we guys were protected from during our growing up years... mercifully! After all, we went to convent-run primary schools and said *Ada Raama* and *Insha Allah* in the same breath. All said and done, *Clive Avenue* mirrors the thoughts, aspirations, repression and frustrations of many of us... and our ability to smile through as well!

Tiru confirms this in one of the introductory paragraphs, "Clive Avenue Does Exist..."

K. Venkatesan

organisation, holds an exhibition by two physically challenged artists, T Sakthi Rani of Chennai and Shiela of Lucknow. Art workshops will be conducted during the exhibition (at Lalit Kala Academy).

April 22: A production of Shakespeare's famous comedy by Andhra Mahila Sabha from Hyderabad. This is a professional production by deaf children and a fundraiser for the AMS in Chennai (at Rani Seethai Hall).

April 25: An encounter with the world of jazz. Madhav Chari performs (at Max Mueller Bhavan, 7.00 p.m.).

April 28: Lalitha-Nandini, outstanding South Indian Classical Carnatic violinists, popularly known as the Violin Duo, have enthralled audiences with their spellbinding music. And they will do so again as part of the Alliance Francaise celebratory music festival (at Alliance Francaise, 7.00 p.m.).

main there till the "All Clear" signal. Dummy anti-aircraft guns were placed equidistant along the entire stretch of the Marina. By dummy, I mean guns assembled with split trunks of palm trees, one placed vertically and the other slanting, painted black and giving the appearance of a gun pointing towards the sky. This may sound antediluvian now, but that was all there was at that point of time to protect Madras.

Answers to Quiz

1. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus; 2. Sir Gary Sobers; 3. Scott McNealy; 4. Chicago; 5. Nadimarg; 6. Mohd. Azharuddin; 7. Muggle; 8. Adam Osborne; 9. The Cafe Coffee Day outlet on Lavelle Road; 10. Mike Cuning.

* * *

11. *Sahanaa*; 12. Near the MGR samadhi; 13. 'Invest in A Higher State of Mind'; 14. Sri Jayendra Saraswati of the Kanchi Peetam; 15. Mr. Bechara; 16. Moore Market; 17. Victoria Public Hall; 18. Landmark; 19. I.K. Govind; 20. Queen Mary's College.

Five promising swimmers

We today present the five other swimmers to benefit from support given under the Champions Development Scheme of the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu. Last fortnight we had featured three out of the eight swimmers chosen:

Sruthi Arun Kumar who has been representing India in international swimming events since 1997, when she was hardly ten years old. She has participated in the Asia Pacific Age Group Swimming and Diving Championships for four consecutive years, as well as competitions in Chinese Taipei (twice), Malaysia and New Delhi. However, it was at the Tamil Nadu Senior Open Swimming Meet in 2000 that she literally made a splash, winning five gold, three silver and four bronze medals. In 2002, she won two gold, four silver and one bronze at the South Zone Aquatic Championship in Visakhapatnam. And at the National Games in Hyderabad, she bettered the meet record in the 50m butterfly.

"You need to give your child enough rest to recoup, to be able to train properly and be in absolute form for the next race. Often, that is not possible," says Lathika, her mother, adding, "Training under a good coach is vital. For example, there was an excellent Hungarian coach who was to have trained the juniors and seniors at several camps spread over a six-month period in Delhi. Unfortunately, after just one camp, he left suddenly, leaving those selected for the next camp, including my daughter, in the lurch."

Kumar, a Good Shepherd Convent student, is a very creative child who likes to draw and paint.

Vinod Kumar showed that he was a champion material at the 29th Junior National Aquatic Championship last year when he won the 50m and 100m breaststroke and the 50m butterfly, the latter setting a new record. At the recently concluded South Zone Selection Meet, he set national records in the under-17 category in all the three events, with timings of 33.13 seconds (50m breaststroke), 1.14 minutes (100m breaststroke) and 28.05 seconds (50m butterfly).

"My school is very cooperative. They permit me to miss classes, giving me sufficient time to practise every day. Psychologically, therefore, I can relax and concentrate upon participating in as many events as I can," he states.

Sushanth Krishna is the youngest of the champions under the CDS. Last year, at the 19th Sub-Junior National Aquatic Championship in Bangalore, Krishna came first in the 50m and 100m backstroke events, setting a new record in the former. He carried his good form to the National School Games in Pune where he broke two records — in the 50m and 200m backstroke — and won the individual champion title as well.

"We now have somebody we can turn to in case we need help, especially to enter competitions; the CDS certainly makes a lot of difference to the child's performance," feels Sujatha Sundar, his mother.

Krishna is an avid quizzer who has represented his school, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, in the Discovery Channel Quiz Contest. He is also a voracious reader who loves to read "just about any printed material".

S.L. Joshua Joseph was the individual champion in the Junior State Championships in 2001 and 2002. He also won gold in the 100m butterfly event at the All India Inter-University Swimming Meet in both those years. In 2002, at the Tamil Nadu State Senior Meeting, he stood first in the butterfly event, with a timing of 28.25 seconds. He also won gold in the 100m butterfly event, with a timing of 1.02.20 minutes. Joseph showed his skills at the All India Inter University Meet in Kolkata later that year when he won silver in the 100m and 200m freestyle event and the bronze in the 100m butterfly event.

Joseph resides at the Nehru Stadium quarters.

Amina Sait, Saba's elder sister, was the 2002 Tamil Nadu State swimming champion in the under-18 category. She usually takes part in several events — 50m backstroke, 50m butterfly, 100m freestyle and backstroke, 200m backstroke,

Recommended Trees - 5

TREES FOR PUBLIC ACCESS & RECREATION AREAS

Beach & Coastlines

(Ornamental / Salinity tolerant and wind resistant)

Small Trees

Acacia Auriculliformis (Australian Phyllode Acacia)
Tamarix gallica (Tamarisk)
Calophyllum enophyllum (Alexandrian Laurel)
Pithecolobium dulce (Madras Thorn)
Acacia holocerseae (Manvelvel)

Medium & Large Trees

Phoenix sylvestris (Toddy Palm)
Ficus Krishnae (Krishna's Butter cup)
Anacardium occidentale (Cashewnut)
Casuarina equisetifolia (She-Oak)
Lansea Coromandelica (Jhingan)
Cithereylum Suberratum (Fiddle Wood Tree)

Fresh Waterways, River & Lake Margins

(Tolerant to waterlogging, rising and falling water levels, and colourful)

Medium sized trees

Cycas circinalis, *Cycas revolute* (Cycads)
Pandanus Odoratissimus (Screwpine)
Caryota Urens (Fish Tail Palm)
Terminalia Paniculata (Neer Marudhu)
Spondias Pinnata (Hog's Plum)
Delonix regia (Gulmohar)
Salmalia Malabarica (Red silk cotton)
Acacia arabica (Babool)

Large Trees

Eucalyptus robusta (Swamp Mahagony)
Anthocephalus cadamba (Seaside India Oak)
Spathodia Campanulata (Indian Tulip)
Hardwickia binata (Aathi or Aacha)
Barringtonia asiatica (Mudilla)
Ficus religiosa (Peepal)
Syzigium cuminii (Jumbolanum)

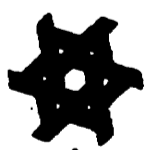
G. Dattatri, K. Hariharan and Prof. S. Dayanandan

200m individual medley and the relays. But it is now the 50m butterfly that is her favourite event, an event she decided to take part in during one of the South Zone championships last year, and one in which she found herself doing very well. Sait won five medals in the National Juniors last year, two of them gold, in the 50m butterfly and 100m backstroke.

"I have my Board exams now and I guess I will have to concentrate on my studies for a while," says the Sishya student. She adds, "I like to take up Arts as a subject and everything will depend on which college I get into. If it is a college outside Chennai, it may be a problem as I would prefer to continue with my present coach as long as I can".

Sashi Nair

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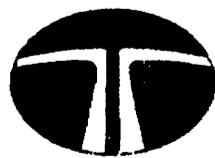
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