

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

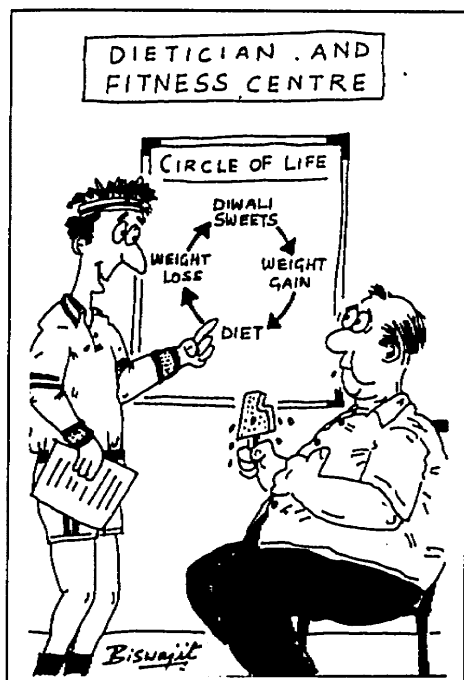
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Your weight gain is normal, Sir... you've only succumbed to what we call 'The Sweet Circle of Life'!

Sweet season

Well, Deepavali has come – and gone, and the city sits back, exhausted after the frantic shopping, the clogged roads outside equally clogged shops, the buying and bursting of crackers (almost inevitably accompanied by anti-burn ointments, band-aids, and adult admonitions), topped off by the restless behaviour of umpteen boxes of sweets and dry fruits whizzing around the city, flying in and out of homes and offices. Watching them, I wonder if it makes sense to set up committees a few weeks before the festival to decide who sends what, to avoid danger of repetition. There's something a little farcial about two homes exchanging the exact same *burfi*, contained in gift boxes that look alarmingly alike.

A question arises — given today's obsessive emphasis on fitness and the eternal-slim-look — are Deepavali sweets looked at with critical severity, making them feel forlorn and neglected, longing for the days when Grand-Aunt X, clueless about cholesterol, didn't care that every diamond-cut cashew *kathali* was going straight to her hips and waist? Do the *badam burfis*, *badhushas* and *pista* rolls now wish they were less rich, so customers would choose them, instead of merely gazing at them longingly from a distance?

No,' indicate the crowds at the sweet-shops, proving that some attitudinal changes can be reversed on demand.

It is good to know people can take holidays from themselves.

Ranjitha Ashok

Senate House restoration underway

But help needed for completion and maintenance thereafter

(By The Editor)

Work on the first step needed to protect *Senate House* from further deterioration and also a beginning to its ultimate restoration has now been completed after about eight months of work. The re-roofing and waterproofing have been done at a cost of about Rs. 58 lakh. But about Rs. 500 lakh work has still to be done to restore the city's finest example of Indo-Saracenic architecture to its century-old glory. And where that money is to come from, as well as a corpus to ensure maintenance, after renewal, is the greatest concern of the Heritage Committee advising the University of Madras and the PWD Research Wing, which is doing the restoration.

It was to try to help with some answers that the NGO, Chennai Heritage, the corporate supporters of *Madras Musings* which has for over a dozen years been calling for the restoration, met the Vice-Chancellor recently and discussed how best it could help the University with the restoration project. A University-private sector partnership to raise the funds and then manage this invaluable heritage resource of the University was suggested.

While it was agreed by all that such an arrangement would in no way seek any kind of ownership of the property, which would remain the University's, whatever the contributions raised by the partnership, the arrangement would help in raising the necessary funds and in ensuring professional day-to-day management as well as regular use.

This journal, however, feels that for such a partnership to evolve, the restoration of *Senate House* must also be seen as part of the plans to beautify the Marina and some of the immediate funding necessary could come from that much-bigger project until the partnership arrangement could be worked out and fund-raising and professional management put in place. The target of all this should be to get *Senate House* looking like what it once was by 2005, when the 150th anniversary celebrations of the University will begin. The partnership would also, it was envisaged, help with the restoration of the other buildings on the campus in time for the 150th anniversary celebrations and, in the process, make the

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Save that marsh!

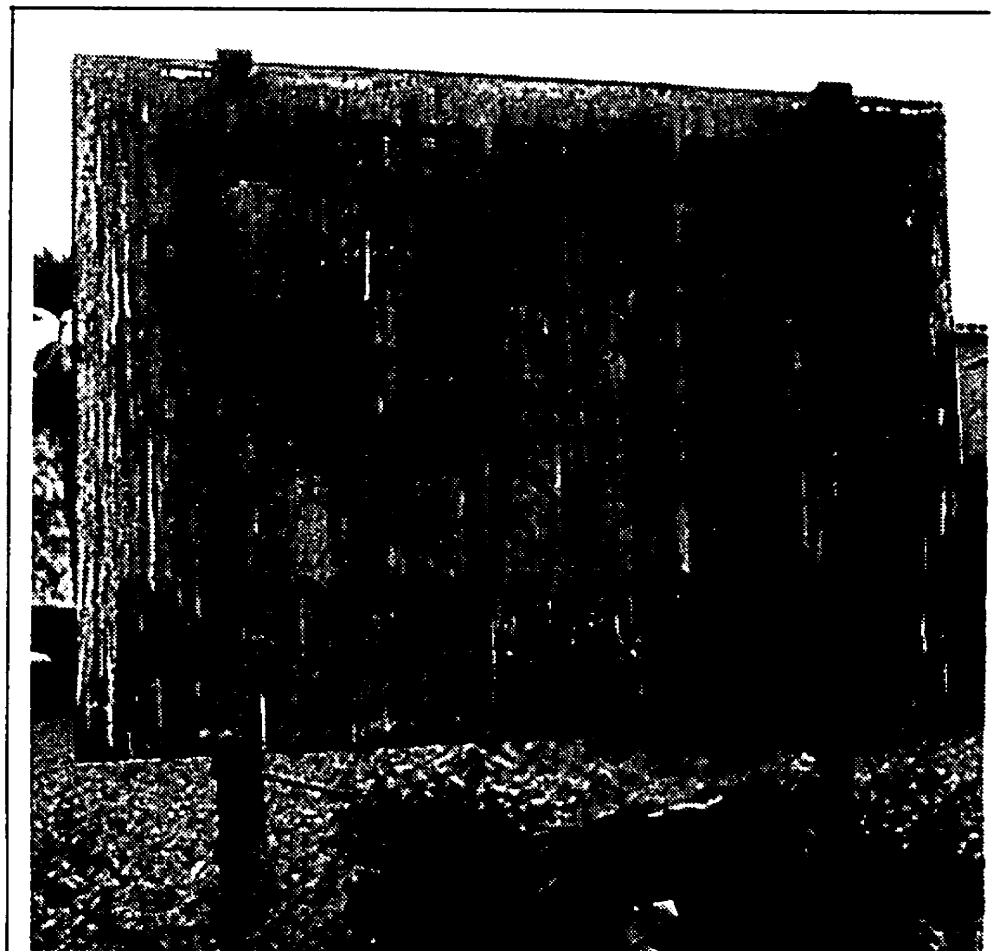
(By A Special Correspondent)

Not only is a groundswell building up among the citizens of the city to save the Pallikaranai Marsh, but an expert 6-member team sent out by the Union Ministry of Environment has recommended that the area be declared a sanctuary. All that is now available for that purpose from what was once a 5000 hectare marsh is about 750 acres, about a third

of which is in the custody of the Corporation of Chennai and which will have to be surrendered to the proper authority if the recommendation is implemented.

Even as the expert committee was surveying the state of a wetland whose inclusion in the National Wetlands Conserva-

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• Reader C.G. Prasad of 9, C.S. Mudali Street, Kondithope, Chennai 600 009, writes: After all the encroachments have been cleared, the patch of squalor laughingly known as the Loane Square 'Park' stands destitute and denuded in Broadway to pitying eyes as a sad epitaph to the Madras that was. To rub it in, a rusted notice stands on it and the faded letters proclaim, "A step to a beautiful Madras"! It is more tragic than Ozymandias' tomb.

Our pictures by REFLECTIONS today show the promise (above), the sad state of the Loane Square/Sriramulu Park, below, and the road beside it (at the bottom) where the lorries used to park. Clearing lorries and encroachments in the park has only provided road for new encroachments — a host of mini-canteens.



A.P. guidelines for a Heritage Committee

(Continued from last fortnight)

On August 12, 1996, the Government of Andhra Pradesh laid down the qualification for membership of the Heritage Conservation Committee as follows.

1. Retired Chief Secretary to Government of Andhra Pradesh — Chairman
2. Structural Engineer having experience of 10 years in the field and membership of the Institute of Engineers.
3. Architects having 10 years' experience and membership of the Council of Architecture:
 - i) Specialised in urban design project etc.
 - ii) Heritage conservation architect.
4. Director of State Archaeology.
5. An Environmentalist having in-depth knowledge and experience of 10 years of subject matter.
6. A City Historian having 10 years' experience in the field.
7. A representative of an organisation working for protection of natural heritage like rocks.
8. A Senior Technical Officer of HUDA with expertise — Member in the matter Secretary.

The committee was authorised to co-opt upto five additional members who may have lesser experience, but who have special knowledge of the subject matter. The tenure of the members of category 1,2,3,5,6 and 7 above shall be for a period of 3

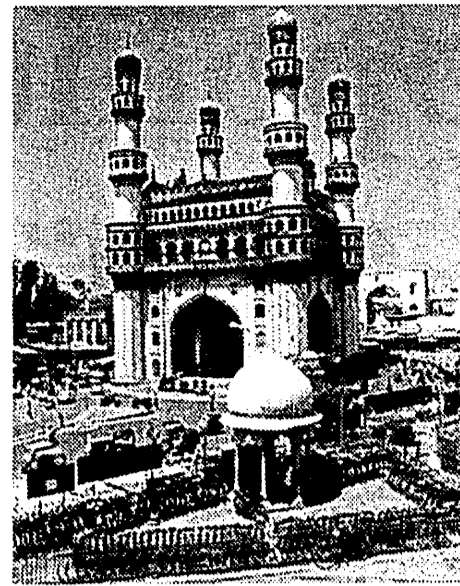
years, but would be eligible for reappointment.

The terms of reference of the Heritage Conservation Committee were listed as follows.

1. To recommend to the Vice-Chairman, HUDA, whether development permission should be granted under Regulation No.13 and the conditions thereof.
2. To prepare supplementary lists of buildings, precincts, areas, artefacts, structures of historical, aesthetical architectural or cultural value to which this Regulation No. 13 would apply.
3. To advise whether any relaxation, modification, alteration or variance of any of the zoning regulations is called for under Regulation 13 (4).
4. To advise the Vice-Chairman, HUDA, in the operation of these regulations to regulate or eliminate/erection of outside advertisement/billboard on the façade and to recommend to the Vice-Chairman, HUDA, guidelines to be adopted by private parties who sponsor beautification schemes at public intersections.
5. To advise whether development right certificate may be allowed to be consumed in a Heritage Precinct.
6. To advise the Vice-Chairman, HUDA, to evaluate the cost of repairs to be given to the owners to bring the existing building to the original shape. For this purpose

the committee may also try to help the Vice-Chairman, HUDA, to raise funds through private resources.

7. To prepare special designs and guidelines for listed buildings and control of height and essential facade characteristics such as maintenance of special type of balconies and other heritage items of the buildings and suggest suitable designs and adopting new materials for replacements keeping the old form intact to the extent possible.
 8. To prepare guidelines to be adhered to and to prepare other guidelines for the purposes of Regulation No.13.
 9. To frame special regulations for Heritage Precincts and to advise the Vice-Chairman, HUDA, regarding the same.
 10. To advise Vice-Chairman, HUDA, on any other issues as may be required from time to time during course of scrutiny and in overall interest of heritage conservation.
 11. To appear before Government, either independently or through or on behalf of the Vice-Chairman, HUDA, in cases of appeals in cases of listed buildings/heritage buildings and listed precincts/heritage precincts
- On March 23, 1998, the Government of Andhra Pradesh announced that it had constituted an expert committee, that it had prepared a list of Heritage Buildings, Precincts,



Areas, Artefacts, Structures of Historical, Aesthetical, Architectural or Cultural value for their conservation etc., the list was notified in four daily newspapers, 60 days' time was given for public objections and suggestions, and the Heritage Conservation Committee, having examined the objections/suggestions received, agreed to recommend deletion of certain buildings, retention of certain buildings, and changes in gradation of still others.

The Government thereafter notified Heritage Buildings as follows: Grade-I — 24, Grade-II(A) — 10, Grade II(B) — 46 and Grade-III — 57 and published the list. It also notified a Heritage Precincts (Rock formations).

On December 2, 1999, the Heritage Conservation Committee was appointed and its term was extended for further three years in 2002.

In January 2003, the Government accepted, the suggestion of the Heritage Conservation Committee on six additional Heritage Precincts, namely Heritage Precinct No. 10 — Charminar area, Heritage Precinct No. 11 — Golconda Fort Area, Heritage Precinct No. 12 — Falaknuma Palace and surrounding area, Heritage Precinct No. 13 — Kasu Brahmananda Reddy Park and Valley, upto Hotel Banjara Residency, Heritage Precinct No. 14 — Park

on Road No. 1 — Banjara Hills and Valley, Heritage Precinct No. 15 — Additional areas around Durgam Cheruvu Lake.

106 objections and suggestions were received in this matter after the Precincts had been announced in the Press. After perusing the objections and suggestions, the Heritage Conservation Committee resolved that none of the objections and suggestions called for any change in the notification of the six Heritage Precincts. It however clarified that only major development activities beyond specified size and height need to be referred to HUDA and the Heritage Conservation Committee.

(Concluded)

Opportunities in cotton

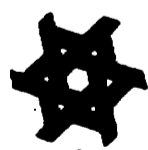
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self-sufficient in cotton and ensure a better quality crop. Value addition is a significant aspect that has to be considered. For example, export of one lakh bales of cotton yields Rs.60 crore; if it is spun into yarn, it fetches Rs.120 crore, and if the cotton is spun into high-quality textiles, it can earn Rs.200 crore", he pointed out. Rangaswami also urged exploiting the cotton plant for other uses, such as to make edible oil and cottonseed.

Speaking of other crops with potential, Rangaswami said, "Tamil Nadu should also concentrate on maize production; maize is a hardy crop and can survive in any part of the State. As for wasteland development, this should be done with *jathropa* (for diesel oil), the Paradise tree (for edible oil), *Prosopis* and *casuarina* (for biomass) and *amla* (for herbal oil)".

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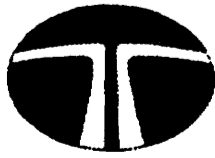
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