

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

INSIDE

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- Early days of Indian sail
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- Fifty years in Division I

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I will repeat your order, Sir... Miso Melagutani Soup, Sushi in Sambar, Tandoori Hibachi Chicken, and Kabocha Manju Masala Dosa!

If that's your address, you must be one of ... THEM!

For years now, the city, like any self-respecting flourishing metropolis, has shown a marked tendency to spread in various directions, rather like an out-of-control amoeba.

Many of these little sprouting cities within the city have developed their own character, ethos, leading to slightly catty classifications like "typical 'Nagar Type'" or "Too 'Puram' for words"!

How does this happen? Who decides that that patch nor'-nor'-west is going to be 'Little-Piece-of-the-North', while that tract of land sou'-sou'-east is designated 'IT-And-Such-Like-Flavour-Of-The-Month-Professionals-Only'? Yonder is 'True-Blue-Home-Grown-Thair-Saadham', while right across is Global-Cuisine-With-Shops-That-Sell-Outfits-to-Match, all of which leads to relevant hordes thronging there to pitch their tents. Sounds a little like a giant game of 'Match the Following'.

May be people instinctively seek out like-minded souls and throng accordingly.

Savvy entrepreneurs, having linked this possibility with the fact that the city today attracts a large number of 'long-term temporary' visitors, have started creating little homes-away-from-homes, ensuring nobody need feel homesick and lonesome.

Even Government has got into the act with 'Little This' and 'Little That'.

Of course, the uninformed local now stands in danger of
(Continued on Page 5)

A glimmer of hope

In the fight to save the Adyar ecosystem

(by Shobha Menon)

"The protection and the preservation of the area around the Adyar Estuary and the Elliot's Beach along the Urur Olcott Kuppam," was the intent of the writ petition filed in the public interest by T. Murugavel of the Trust for Ecology and Eco-restoration (TREE) against the Tamil Nadu Coastal Zone Management Authority. The appeal urged the Court to direct the respondents to take all measures, including preventive measures, to cease all illegal activities, including

- Clearing and levelling of land, extraction and removal of sand;
- Raising unauthorised structures on the Elliot's Beach, north of Urur Olcott Kuppam, and ensuring compliance of the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification dated 19.02.1991;
- Restoring the areas affected by sand extraction; and
- Passing further, or other, orders as may be necessary.

The High Court recently responded to the petition by directing Government to comply with the Court's recommendations. The High Court's response has been called a "very significant" ruling by environmentalists in the city.

According to the affidavit, "The Adyar River, of which the Creek is a part, had become highly polluted over the years. However, the estuary still has vegetation, which is capable of regeneration and is also a nesting ground for migratory birds. Despite the increasing urbanisation, almost 173 varieties of birds continue to flock to the area. In 1990, the Madras Naturalists' Society (MNS) reported sighting nearly 8860 birds in the vicinity". Pointing out that

"indiscriminate, uncontrolled and haphazard growth along the coast, more particularly in the areas prohibited for construction activity, in the last few years, has had a serious impact on the sensitive coastal ecosystem," the petition added, "Any construction activity on the beach to the south of the Adyar estuary would have a disastrous impact on the fragile ecosystem of the Adyar River and the coast."

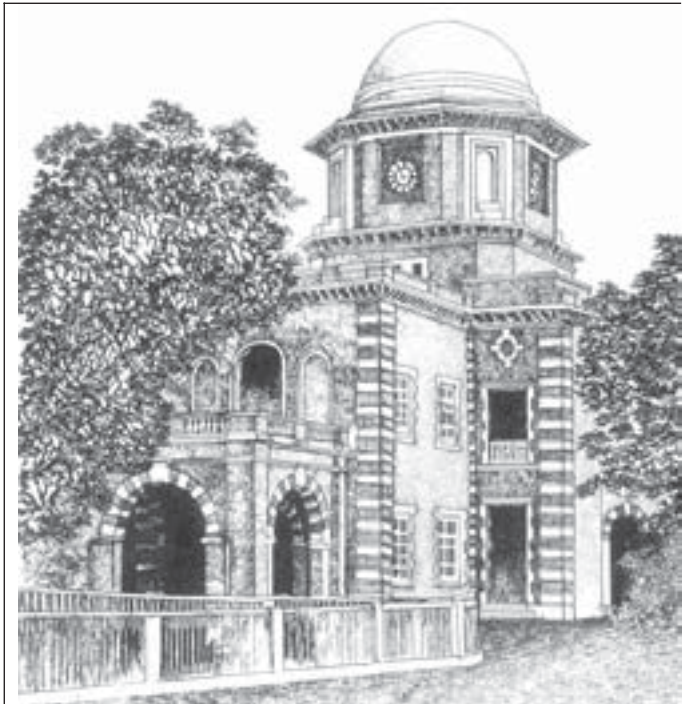
Says Murugavel, an ardent environmentalist and wildlife photographer who often talks of becoming an 'eco-terrorist', "Three years ago, the then General Manager of the Theosophical Society, Arjun, was lamenting about the illegal sand quarrying that was going on unabated and the gradual encroachment of the Adyar by slums.

Construction began in the northern side in 1997, intensifying in 2001, when sand was quarried across the estuary. An alleged official sanction for removal of '50 lorries a day' in reality had meant 'about 100 lorries round-the-clock', which is when I felt some action should be taken to stop this devastation of the ecosystem."

In his petition, Murugavel pointed out there has been a "move on the part of the private construction lobby to clear the land without any permission and put up structures on the Elliot's Beach, adjacent to the Theosophical Society and north of the Urur Olcott Kuppam within 50 m of the High Tide Line. The first step towards this is the removal of the sand from the beach along the Urur Olcott Kuppam in large quantities furtively during

(Continued on Page 6)

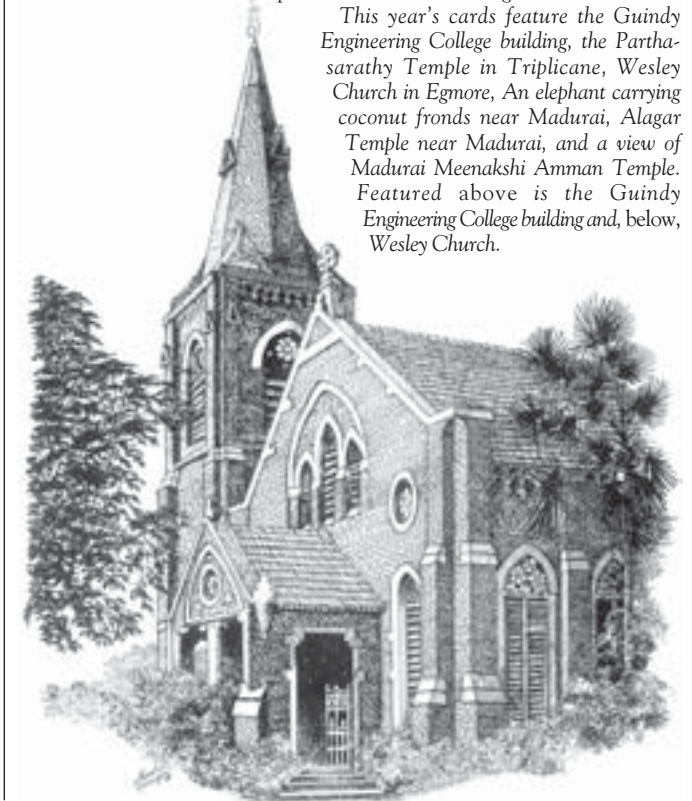
(Also see page 2)



Manohar Devadoss, that well-known artist of Madras, who creates detailed pen-and-ink drawings of historic monuments, despite battling with declining vision, presents six new greeting cards this year, each with a brief text on the history of the monument.

The sales proceeds go to service-minded institutions like Sankara Nethralaya, Aravind Eye Hospital, SPASTN and others. Apart from the money the cards generate, they also create a greater awareness of our heritage and the need to preserve our historic buildings.

This year's cards feature the Guindy Engineering College building, the Parthasarathy Temple in Triplicane, Wesley Church in Egmore, An elephant carrying coconut fronds near Madurai, Alagar Temple near Madurai, and a view of Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple. Featured above is the Guindy Engineering College building and, below, Wesley Church.



Chennai's wetlands

Will we ever capitalise on this wealth?

Wetlands play a very important role as natural ecosystems. Tragically, especially when they are located close to cities and growing urban agglomerations such as Chennai, where the demand for land in terms of housing and other needs increases, they are seen as areas with potential for land development. This is so especially when the demand for new land for development becomes urgent. This, coupled with the rising land prices, more often fuelled by speculators than real, is when both the State and private entities start looking for where new land can be found if not "created".

When there are no genuine workable land use plans on the part of Government and there is pressure to put new land on the market, wetlands, characterised as swamps or marshes, are seen as ideal new land for 'development'. If to this you add the fact that 'development' activity, whether it be in the form of new house construction or old houses having to be torn down to give way to new apartment complexes, needs space to dump 'wastes', then there is also pressure to look for land-fill sites. Here again, these 'useless' swamps and marshes become ideal sites with the logic, developing of these marshes becoming 'value', first, as land fill sites, then it becoming new urban space to meet the increasing demands for land. This kind of negative valuation of swamps or marshes does not take into consideration the value, even economically. These swamps and marshes have played as important natural systems in the past and their use in the future as water and flood regulators. Not to mention their immense potential to add other value, including many economic benefits to society, once they can be maintained and allowed to regenerate in their original state, as wetlands. For instance, the wetlands act as silt traps and in the process contribute to an amazingly rich and diverse aquatic ecosystem, which, in turn, contributes to and attracts avian diversity, both local and migratory, to the wetlands.

It may be useful to also consider the salience of the Chennai swamps, marshes or wetlands in the overall geological and ecological position of Tamil Nadu. The peninsular part of the Indian subcontinent

is geologically in a tilt sloping eastwards, causing many of the rivers of peninsular India to flow eastwards. It is against this geological and ecological historical background that we should understand the network of wetlands and man-made tanks, including temple tanks, which are part of an extensive natural and man-made system to store the flows and act like a vast catchment network for the water, especially closer to the coast. These wetlands and tanks not only store the surface water flows during the monsoons but also serve to charge the groundwater aquifers and serve as flood control mechanisms. Not to recognise the role played by these wetlands, along with the waterways, like the

transport project has dumped debris from the hillsides onto the wetlands." Doesn't this sound familiar, especially if you think of the Adyar-San Thomé Greenways Road wetlands or what is happening and has happened in the Velachery and Pallikaranai areas. CAG tried to stop through public interest litigations massive housing projects of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board in the low-lying areas and lakebeds of Velachery, Ambattur, Nolambur, Chitlapakkam and Kakkalur. These 'projects' had received financial approval from the World Bank and HUDCO. Despite all CAG's efforts, the Court refused to interfere in the matter.

Another PIL related to the plans to convert the wetlands adjacent to the Greenways Road into a memorial for Dr. Ambedkar, while actually creating real estate around the memorial for other uses. The Court judgment accepted (by and large) CAG's objections and the order itself, which allowed the Memorial but halted the other proposed activities, was unique in many ways. Following up on the Court order would

• by **LAWRENCE SURENDRA**

Coom, the Adyar and the Buckingham Canal, and the vast network of tanks, in terms of recharging groundwater and managing flood flows would be folly, resulting in many imponderable consequences, if heavy rains or flooding were to happen.

Wetlands and urban planning

After the recent heavy rains in Mumbai, *Tehelka* (October 1, 2005) looked at the consequences in terms of other metros and arrived at the view that such rains would be disastrous for cities like Bangalore and Chennai. *Tehelka* also pointed out, "The systematic destruction of about 1,000 acres of the city's mangrove cover deprived Mumbai of its natural flood barrier and silt trap. The horror stories in terms of urban planning don't end here. A World Bank-funded urban

also possibly show how wetlands, whose inherent natural value and wealth is not clearly perceived by the ordinary citizen, can also become locations that add value, including economic, to the city by becoming a place of natural heritage, attracting visitors and offering the urban dweller a peaceful refuge where he can enjoy nature and oxygenate his polluted and battered urban body.

Chennai has to recognise the extraordinary economic potential and wealth that it has in terms of its natural wetlands, both within the city and on what were once its peripheries. According to the same *Tehelka* report quoted earlier, "Chennai receives an annual rainfall of 120 cms. In November 1985, when the city recorded 66.5 cm rain in three days, many areas were inundated." The loss to public sector companies was estimated to be Rs.17 crore in



The Pallikaranai marsh.

1985. Surely, if such a scenario were to repeat itself, the loss now would be manifold, considering that the city is pushing itself heavily as an attractive destination for IT companies. This is not to create any sense of panic, but to realistically assess how a coastal city should use its natural design to manage potential natural disasters and not pay a higher cost by destroying the inherent values contained in its natural setting and design.

The road ahead

These natural assets can in fact be turned to Chennai's advantage. Seen from the point of view of the geological tilt of the peninsula, Madras is only four feet above mean sea level. This means that the role of the sea during high tide in flushing and cleaning its canals and river network as well as its wetlands is very important, as in the case of the San Thomé-Adyar wetlands connected to the sea near Foreshore Estate, which is now blocked by housing and other obstructions. Whoever enters Chennai especially from the west and north, first comments on the rotten smell that signals they have reached Chennai. This is because of the way the waterbodies and related spaces have been misused and systematically destroyed, making them open sewers rather than spaces of natural cleansing that they were originally meant to be.

Anybody crossing Foreshore Estate cannot escape this foul smell either, especially as the dry season approaches. There are boards indicating that these wetland areas are part of the Forest Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu. If the

Forest Department were to take the initiative and create productive, public-private partnerships, these wetlands can be restored. They can also take genuine pride in removing the stigma of Chennai being referred to as the 'Smelling City'.

Other than these gains, it is also useful to consider that once the beauty of wetlands is restored and they are on their way to ecological recovery, they can become areas of rich natural heritage. Our generation, which by standing silent and passive while this rich natural wealth of our city is being destroyed and which has allowed these valuable natural ecosystems to be completely obliterated, still has a chance to repay its debts in terms of its obligations to future generations, by joining hands to repair, rejuvenate and ecologically recover the remaining wetlands in the city.

Cities like Singapore, which once followed the kind of destructive urban development that we are now blindly engaged in, have now discovered not only the folly of such a path but the new wealth and treasures they have gained by working towards the recovery of their ecological assets. Singapore is now restoring its wetlands and river routes, literally making the river flow, and offering these as new tourist attractions. If we in Chennai were actually far-sighted and truly savvy about the future, we would learn our lessons from cities like Singapore. Will we? Or will we copy the mistakes of other cities in terms of a urban development, by failing to understand how to successfully build on a city's natural wealth and its natural assets? – (Courtsey: CAG Souvenir 2005)

• To ease traffic congestion

RESTRICTIONS ON MUMBAI ENTRY?

(By A Correspondent)

The Bombay High Court has been hearing a public interest litigation petition filed by the Bombay Environmental Action Group (BEAG) urging the court to order the state government to implement a traffic restraint scheme (TRS), restraining entry of private cars and two-wheelers into the city on particular days of the week.

The TRS system, first mooted by the transport committee headed by the then

Transport Commissioner V.M. Lal, is applicable to owners of two-wheelers and cars.

Under the proposed scheme, vehicles with number plates ending with numbers 1 and 2 would be barred entry into the city on Mondays during peak hours. Vehicles with number plates ending with numbers 3 and 4 will be restricted entry on Tuesdays, 5 and 6 on Wednesdays, 7 and 8 on Thursdays and 9 and 0 on Fridays. This ban

would not be applicable to government and police vehicles, ambulances and emergency vehicles.

Both the State Government and the Western India Automobile Association (WIAA) have strongly opposed the scheme.

"Such schemes have been implemented in London, Athens and Mexico City and have seen a remarkable reduction in traffic snarls," said Shiraz

Rustomjee, counsel for the petitioners. The Lal committee itself said that the scheme would decrease traffic congestion by 20% while increasing vehicle speed by 20%. "The Lal committee's recommendations to phase out old polluting vehicles or convert to compressed natural gas (CNG) has already been implemented," said Rustomjee. "It is now time for

(Continued on Page 5)

OUR READERS WRITE



Rains in October

The recent rains have been reminiscent of the heavy rains which persisted during the first week of October 1943. Water mains in Madras were cut off. The Saidapet rail bridge was washed away.

The quick restoration of the rail bridge, restoration of water supply and other quick remedial measures taken by the authorities are still green in my memory. The discipline and the unquestioning commitment which was spontaneous among all cannot easily be forgotten.

Do we witness such quick response and dedication in the present days? Of course, the Presidency was under Governor's rule.

D.V. Subramanian
6, Sriram Colony
Theosophical Society
Adyar, Chennai 600 020

P.S. It was during those rains that a lone Japanese bomber dropped a bomb on Madras. The bomb fell into the Coom behind General Hospital.

First things first

Madras Musings has in recent issues several times warned that there's "Gridlock

ahead..." in the city. This is indeed a nightmarish issue which needs to be tackled before total chaos sets in. That we have overlooked a priority, NOT learning from the developed world, is all too evident.

I remember interviewing the famous economist John Kenneth Galbraith, a former American ambassador to India, in the early 1950s. Galbraith who was involved in postwar reconstruction strategies in Europe was invited by the Soviet Union, then an ally of the West, to help them out in their industrial revival.

What do you think the famous economist told the Soviets when asked to outline a plan for them in regard to the revival of their motor car industry. He said: "Before you think of making cars, make sure you solve the parking problem."

A timely warning for all time and all places.

Jaiboy Joseph
'Priya'
2, Second Avenue
Harrington Road
Chennai 600 031

Another blocked junction?

The transport infrastructural travails of 'Singara Chennai' (MM, September 16th) are

to be found everywhere in the city – and we only keep adding to them.

On Taylor's Road (an important arterial road in Kilpauk), a huge, eye-catching, glitzy, state-of-the-art steel-and-concrete building to house software offices with a few thousand personnel working in them is due to be commissioned any day now. When it is done, a grave traffic hazard will be posed, with hundreds of vehicles belonging to these personnel, coming and going on Taylor's Road, particularly through the narrow neck leading to the Poonamalle High Road traffic signals. Crossing Taylor's Road will then be even more hazardous for citizens living on both sides of it than it is now.

K.P. Mahalingam
6-B, The Peninsula
778, Poonamallee High Road
Chennai 600 010

Editor's Note: No doubt, Traffic Control will find some remedies to mitigate the threat, but even they will very likely prove inadequate as the area becomes more populated once highrise is sanctioned.

Early Tamil novelists

Novel writing in Tamil had a beginning in the last decades of the 19th Century. It was Arni Kuppaswamy Mudaliar and Vaduvor K. Duraiswamy Iyengar who caught the imagination of readers by writing novels of gripping interest in the early decades of the 20th Century. The earliest novels were Rajam Iyer's *Kamalambal Charitram* and Mayuram Vedhanayagam Pillai's *Prathapa Mudaliar Charitram*.

Arni's novels were mostly translations of English authors' works. G.N.M. Reynold's voluminous novel *Mysteries of London Tower* was titled in the Tamil version as *Rathnapuri Rahasyam* in nine parts. Vaduvor mainly adapted his stories from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes series. He made the name of Digambara Samiar, the detective, a household one.

J.R. Rangaraju also wrote detective stories, while Va. Mu. Kothainayaki Ammal wrote social novels which were very popular. Alas! Few of the present generation would have heard about these authors. Could any reader please give details of old bookshops where we could get copies of the novels by these forgotten novelists?

M.R. Pillai
H 64/5, Central Avenue
Korattur, Chennai 600 008

It needs water

The method that reader D.V. Subramanian suggests (MM, October 1st) "to lessen the mosquito menace"

Miles to go

I got up early to post a few letters, thinking as usual of all the obstacles people living in T. Nagar face. Coming out of the gate, I notice the remains of what was once a beautiful tree which, thanks to the builders of new flats, has been paved with concrete upto its trunk. Going a bit further, I notice ONYX containers, now in a dilapidated state and with rubbish strewn all around, thanks to the rag-pickers and stray dogs.

A few minutes later, at the Ankur Plaza Junction, near G.N. Chetty Road, there's more ONYX junk and a TNEB junction box covered with posters. This appears to be a convenient corner for auto drivers etc. to urinate and causes a constant odour. The commercial activity in this corner adds more rubbish than what ONYX can clear!

Walking on the pavement, which fortunately is clean upto Vani Mahal, I almost fall into an open drain, its cover having vanished – months ago, I was told.

Another minute takes me to the Vani Mahal Junction, where there are four massive hoardings, so big you cannot but break your neck trying to see what they are all about. The newly renovated Vani Mahal looks insignificant hidden by those hoardings. Adding to the discomfort of pedestrians, billboards made of crude *thattis* are placed near the steps and entrance of Vani Mahal.

In a few minutes more, I am at my destination – the public mail box. While dropping my letters in it I notice with dismay that there are letters peeping out from below the mail box. A few months back I wrote to the Postmaster pointing out a similar incident and requested him to place a collection bag in the mail box. Obviously my plea has fallen on deaf ears!

While returning home, I notice that the Police have not removed the thick foliage of trees that covers the red and yellow signs at the crossing by Residency Hotel. Further, the zebra crossing leads to railings, blocking the pedestrian again. There are hundreds of streets in Chennai each with 10 such complaints. Will we ever see better streets in the City?

K.V.S. Krishnan
2A, Parkland Apartments
Kamala Bai Street
T. Nagar, Chennai 600 017

was tried by the Municipal Corporation when the wells in the individual houses had water. Every month, Corporation officials used to visit the houses with a bucketful of small fish and drop them inside the wells. But now, almost all the wells have dried up and the only places that breed mosquitoes are the Buckingham Canal and the River Coom. It is, therefore, a moot point whether such fish would thrive in waters so murky, as they were obviously freshwater fish.

As for the canal at Mandaveli, reader S. Madhavan writes about on the same issue, it is no longer in existence as it has been filled up with earth long ago. The site is earmarked for Metropolitan Transport services. Nowadays, even a little rain inundates the area.

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

Discovering Madras

Propos reader Karunanidhi's letter (which appeared in MM, some time ago) on 'Bicyclable Madras' (what reader C.G. Prasad feels about the correctness of usage; I think it is a sort of transferred epithet!) made me nostalgic. In the 1950s as a High School student, I was encouraged by my father to go round on a

bicycle with a foldable city road map which I kept on the middle of handle bar in a spring holder. I have covered much of South Madras this way. As I have reminisced earlier, one of the first halts was 'Ranade Hall' in Luz Church Road.

N. Dharmeshwaran
14, 10th Cross
Maruthi Extension
Bangalore 560 003

A big 'Thank You' to 17 of you

We publish below the list of donors who have, between 16.10.05 and 15.11.05, added to the support Chennai Heritage and its voice, *Madras Musings*, have already received. We thank all of them for their support for the causes Chennai Heritage espouses.

— Chennai Heritage

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No personal visits or telephone calls, please. Letters received will be sent from these addresses every couple of days to the persons concerned and you will get an answer from them to your queries reasonably quickly. Strange as it may seem, if you adopt the 'snail mail' approach, we will be able to help you faster and disappoint you less.

THE EDITOR

READABILITY PLEASE

Dear Readers,

As letters from readers increase, we are receiving more and more handwritten letters, many of them in a hand so small and illegible or large and scrawled as to be unreadable. Often this leads to our discarding a letter, particularly if some part of it is unreadable.

If you wish us to consider your letter for publication, please type it with enough space between lines or write it using a medium hand, clearly dotting the 'i-s' and crossing the 't-s'.

Many readers also try to fill every square centimetre of a postcard space, making reading or editing impossible.

Please help us to consider your letters more favourably by making them more legible for us.

THE EDITOR

● It's Chennai and Deming again Geared towards excellence

Chennai, the 'Detroit of India', could also be termed the country's 'Deming City'. This year, two Rane group companies from Chennai – Rane TRW Steering Systems Limited and Rane Engine Valves Limited – figure in the prestigious Deming Medal list awarded by the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE). The two are among the three companies from India in the 2005 Deming Medal list of just four in the world.

The Rs. 11.83 billion turnover auto component Rane group started the Deming process in December 1999. While Rane Brake Linings Limited literally made a dash to the medal – it won it in 2003 – for Rane TRW and Rane Engine Valves it has been slower but steady progress.

Says Rane TRW's president S Krishnakumar, "We started our total quality management (TQM) journey under the guidance of Prof. Y. Washio of JUSE. He is an individual Deming Prize winner and an acknowledged authority in Japan in Statistical Process Control and new product development (NPD). His first workshop was held in December 1999 and, subsequently, he has been visiting us once every three months to provide guidance."

A University of Madras graduate, Krishnakumar did his postgraduate engineering course at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, and postgraduate diploma in marketing management at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad. Prior to joining the Rane group, he worked with automobile and auto component manufacturers like Tata Motors Limited, Anand Group of Industries and Blow Plast Limited.

Established in 1987, the Rs. 8.7 crore equity based Rane TRW is a 50:50 joint venture between the Rane group and TRW. The Rs. 360 crore turnover company has three divisions – fully integral gear, hydraulic pump and power rack & pinion. Fully integral gears are fitted on multiutility vehicles and commercial vehicles, while the power rack & pinion is fitted on passenger cars. It is the gears division that has won the Deming medal.

Here Krishnakumar talks about the company's Deming journey. *Excerpts.*

So how did the Deming process start and how did it progress?

It was a workshop for the top management conducted by Prof. Washio in December 1999 that initiated the Deming process inside the company. The process was formally initiated in the company in April 2000. As the group comprises multiple companies with multiple plants, we set up a three-tiered promotion structure. At the group level – tier 1 – we had the TQM Apex Council comprising the group chairman, vice-chairman, presidents and the total quality (TQ) coordinators of group companies and group TQM coordinator. Tier 2, at the company level, is called TQM Promotion Committee. This consisted of president, senior management group of the company and plant/head office TQM coordinators. The third tier, at the plant level, is known as TQM Promotion Team. This team consisted of plant/head office functional heads, plant functional heads/head office department heads, and plants/head office TQ coordinator.

The company had a TQ coordinator to monitor implementation and provide necessary alerts to senior management. Each plant of the company had a plant TQ coordinator who was responsible for facilitating TQ practices in the plant. The company and plant TQ coordinators worked closely to ensure practices were spread uniformly across plants. TQ coordinators were also responsible for coordinating the visits of counsellors from JUSE and ensuring homework given by them was carried out to their satisfaction.

On the roadblocks you faced...?

We had to change the employee mind-set so that they appreciated the TQM philosophy. Training programmes were organised that emotionally charged the workers and enhanced their motivation to embrace TQM. Initially, there was a feeling that TQM was only for the shop floor and not for non-manufacturing functions. Slowly we realised that standard operating procedures (SOP) and Kaizen were as much applicable to processes in functions like finance, marketing, materials as they were for the manufacturing process. We realised the need for writing SOPs for these processes to insulate them from human error.

Did you make any additional investments?

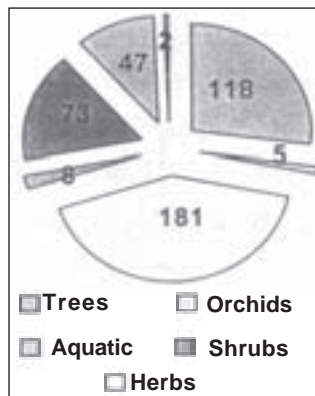
We did not make any additional investments save the cost of consultancy of Japanese Sensei. We recovered these costs many times over due to the suggestion schemes and quality control (QC) circles which gave us significant cost reduction due to the improvement activities.

JUSE awards its points on the following criteria: (1) Management policies and the deployment regarding quality management; (2) New product development and work process innovation; (3) Maintenance and improvement of product and operational qualities; (4) Establishment of systems for managing quality, quantity, costs, environment, safety etc; (5) Collection of information on

The Madras Christian College campus at Tambaram is about 350 acres in extent. The campus is 30 metres above the sea level. The highest part of the campus is a shallow central ridge running north to south.

The campus is an important part of the catchment area for the Selaiyur and Irumbuliyur Lakes. The soil type is red laterite except in a small area near the septic tank where there is clay and a white calcareous deposit. There are outcrops of rock at numerous places of the campus. The campus originally formed part of the Selaiyur Reserve Forest and the vegetation is true scrub jungle that is a part of Tropical Dry Evergreen For-

Plant species diversity of MCC Campus – at a glance



est. There is a tremendous species diversity of flora and fauna. About 500 plant species belonging to 95 families and 66 animal species, including spotted deer, black buck, rabbit and wild boar, have been reported. Cattle grazing is completely banned. As a result, the species richness is considerable when compared to the surrounding areas.

The campus is home to a lot of threatened plant species such as *Cycas beddomi*, *Palaquim ellipticum*, *Baliospermim montanum*, *Commiphora wightii* and *Trichopus zeylanicus* subspecies *Travancoricus*. You can find *Ophioglossum nudicaule* (found during rainy season in the playground) and *Marsilea prostrate*, two ferns that occur

quality and utilisation of IT; and (6) HR development. Could you give the marks secured for the above?

The points awarded by the examiners are confidential and are not shared with the companies. The qualifying mark for Deming would be 70 out of 100 on the criteria indicated.

Your path to Deming Award must have included implementing concepts like TQM, total productivity maintenance (TPM), lean manufacturing etc. When were these started in your plant(s)?

The Deming Award is only a milestone in our TQM journey. We were extremely careful not to bring in new initiatives, as we believed it would confuse our employees. TPM was introduced on a need-basis selectively under the umbrella of TQM. Similarly, lean manufacturing was taken up in companies only after achieving Deming.

What does the new tag, 'A Deming Company', mean to your domestic as well as overseas markets?

Deming is essentially a Japanese award and it does not have great recognition either in the US or in Europe. We pursued Deming not for increasing sales but for improving our operational efficiencies which would stand us in good stead in bagging new and challenging business. In fact, the Deming tag would increase customers' expectations from us and we would strive to meet these customers' expectations. (Courtesy: www.domainb.com)

An eco-sensitive site deserving mini-biosphere reserve status

(by M. Amirthalingam)

in the wild state. A few orchids, such as *Habinararia platiphylla*, *Vanda tessellate*, *Vanda spathulata*, *Spathoglottis plicata* and *Eulophia epidendreae* are found in the campus. A few gymnosperms like *Araucaria*, *Cycas*, *Ephedra* and *Zamia* are grown in the department nursery.

The forest here is an ideal example of the coexistence of various types of mini-ecosystems, including open grasslands, wetlands, thick forest patches and patches of scrub jungles. There are 118 different species of trees, 73 species of shrubs, 181 species of herbs, 47 species of climbers, five species of orchids and two species of pteridophytes found here.

Fauna found in the campus includes nine different species of mammals, 25 species of birds, 13 species of butterflies, 11 species of reptiles, one species of mites, four species of beetles and three species of spiders.

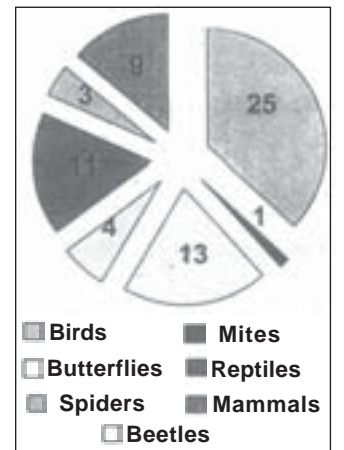
The mammals include antelope (*Antelope cervicapra*), black-naped hare (*Lepus nigricollis*), jungle cat (*Felis chaus*), domestic grey cat (*Felis edwardsi*), mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsi*), common squirrel (*Fuambulus palmarum*), pole cat (*Mustela putorius*), porcupine (*Hystrix indica*) and jackal (*Canis aureus*).

There are four kinds of poisonous snakes in the campus: the highly venomous Indian Cobra (*Naja naja*), the Common Krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*), the Russell's Viper (*Daboia russelii*) and the Saw Scaled Viper (*Echis carinatus*). These poi-

sonous snakes are rarely seen, but non-poisonous snakes like the Bronze-back Tree Snake (*Dendrelaphis tristis*), Wolf Snake (*Lycodon aulicus*) and Green Snake (*Ahaetulla nasuta*) are commonly found in the campus. Pythons (*Python reticulatus*) have been seen behind the Selaiyur Hall. Monitor lizards (*Varanus benghalensis*) are commonly seen in the campus.

Migratory birds seen in the campus every year include the Plaintive Cuckoo which sometimes remains here for a few months as a winter visitor and sometimes only briefly in April when it passes through the campus as a winter migrant. Of the

Animal species diversity of MCC Campus – at a glance



recorded butterfly species, the Common Tiger (*Danaus plexippus*) is named as the Monarch butterfly of North America. These Monarch butterflies are known to migrate every year from the northern part of the United States to Mexico in the south, over more than a thousand miles, and also across the Atlantic from America to Europe. The Forest Wagtail is a small bird which would have flown thousands of miles, possibly touching the Andamans on its way and flying over the Bay of Bengal against the wind, which steadily blows from the south-west direction. The campus is on the annual migratory path of these birds.

The Madras Christian College campus is home to diverse and fragile living organisms. It helps breed birds and animals and also helps in propagating plants and increasing the green cover. It has been identified as one of Tamil Nadu's Ecologically Sensitive Sites, but should be considered as a mini biosphere reserve. — (Courtesy: C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre's magazine Eco News.)

Venkatachari Jagannathan

The early days of sail & navigation

Navigability in olden days meant movement with simple floats to carry loads to different places, across rivers and lakes. A manuscript recently found in Orissa reveals that in the 13th Century, while constructing the Konark Temple, stones were moved from far off places and distant quarries by means of rafts through the various connecting streams and tributaries of the Mahanadhi. According to the manuscript the distances travelled were over 400 km.

The different regions of India's great maritime facades, linked with rich hinterlands, provided favourable conditions for India's sea trade. Villiers in *Indian Ocean* states that the Indian coasting trade itself and the trade across the Bay of Bengal "kept by far the largest proportion of the Indian sailing ships effectively employed and the deep water trade was in some degree left to others".

S.R. Rao has shown through marine archaeological evidences that port construction has been in existence for centuries. The recent Mamallapuram findings and excavations also indicate the same. *Sangam* literature states that the trade between India and the East and West flourished.

All this information led me to examine the capacity of the early sailors both in the art of shipbuilding and navigation in the open sea. How did they build their ships to stand the vagaries of the sea and how did they find their way to distant lands?

The Arabs are generally acknowledged as the earliest sailors, as the greatest sea route from Biblical times, from the Red Sea to the coast of Malabar and Coromandel, was used by Roman, Jewish and Arab merchants all sailing in Indian ships. But people in South India too had known the art of navigation from early times, as seen from the fact that the Cholas established settlements in Southeast Asia after sailing across the Bay of Bengal.

Yukti Kalpa Taru, a treatise credited to Boja Raja in the 11th Century, details the art of shipbuilding, right from the selection of timber. From Tamil literature and legend, we learn that the coastal people had several varieties of ships, taking their names from their usage. The ships were known as *Kalam*, *Naavai*, *Vangam* and

Kappal. *Kalam* was a timber vessel used locally between coastal ports. *Naavai* was an ocean-going vessel, while *Vangam* was fitted with mast and flew a flag. *Kappal* was a later term, probably from Telugu. The ships had different figureheads like *parimukam*, *arimukam* and *gajamukam*. Crooks were used for bends and teak roots for pulleys for their inherent strength.

The planks of the boats were usually sewn with coconut fibre ropes, which not only held the planks together (and became tighter when wet) but also, with locally made paste, provided the required water tightness. The mast was called *koombu* and *yardarm parumal* (corruption of *firman* of Persian). Rigs were *alattu* and sails *pai*. Rows of side planks were *vanku-vari* (counted from keel upwards), the prow was *aniya-*

pirai and the stern was *aniyathukattai*. The stone anchor was *kal-nanguram* (*langar* in Persian), the Mariner's Compass, called *machcha yantiram*, was actually a thin magnetised iron plate shaped like a fish and kept floating in a bowl of oil. The tail end was the North.

Timber was measured in *muzham* and *viral* (one *muzham* = 25 *virals*). The timber was from *Iluppai*, *Punnai*, *Siru Tekku*, *Aini*, *Karimarudu*, etc. *Punnai* grew straight and in good length and had the property of flexibility. *Adiramapatnam*, *Muthuppettai* and *Kodikkarai* were the ideal places to build ships. There were adjoining islands and villages within a mangrove belt. Marshy lands were available and a variety of timber too. There were traditional boat builders. An east-west coastal stretch from *Kodikkarai* to *Tondi* was the main place of construction. The largest size boats were built in *Kodikkarai*. *Kalla Dhoni* (thief boat or stealth boat) was a fast boat. This ship had a transom vertical to the base like later vessels. There was a short, heavy balance board outrigger laid athwart the gunwales.

While boat-building technology was shore-based, the navigational techniques required deeper knowledge of sea behaviour, water currents and wind movements. We now know that Hippalus discovered the monsoon winds; but the

early Indian sailors did have sufficient knowledge of the seasonal winds and currents.

Coastal navigation was based on shore markers and general topography of the land; in addition, from *Sangam* literature, we learn that big light-houses were built which burnt oil lamps and showed the way to the sailors. The target ports were suffixed with *kuri* or target. These target ports were the places to alter course. Thus, we have on the east coast ports like *Ambalakuri*, where the ships normally changed course from south to south east, and reached the Sri Lankan coast. They hugged the coast and reached *Akkaraippatti* on the east coast of Sri Lanka and set sail east across the seas from there. This must have been the way chosen by the Chola fleet to reach *Sri Vijaya* (Sumatra). Since they sailed below the 10 deg parallel, it was not possible for them to sight the Pole Star, which disappeared into the haze of the horizon. The 'suns or the stars' azimuth was calculated by practical knowledge, and *viral kanakku* was used to determine the location. They also used tamed birds to identify the shore areas. The navigational stars assisted the sailors.

The rise of Ardra in early

• by K.R.A. NARASIAH

January indicated the commencement of the sailing season to the east with *Arudra darsanam*. (Was this the reason for the popular Tamil saying "Thai pirandhal vazhi pirakkum"?) Ardra, Margaseeram, Araankottai (Kiruttika), Arundati and Tiruvonam were the sailors' stars. Ardra and Margaseeram were noted as pathfinders (the Orion group; they rise in the east at dusk in July - August, and at dawn in December - January). In case these two guiding stars were not seen, the bright *Rohini* (Alpha Tauri) and *Kartik* (Pleidas) on the port bow side and *Makam* on the starboard provided the guides. The alternative is *Sravan* as it rises when Ardra sets, these being near the equator.

Steering was always by the steering oar. Sometimes, dag-



Some think this was an early Indian ship that sailed in eastern waters.

ger boards were used. *Sukkan* or rudder was not introduced till late. The reason could be the low speed of the vessel (rudder is not effective at lower speeds) or easier methods by oars for smaller vessels. The outrigger was a float or a secondary hull projecting from the boat. Heavy outriggers in the *dhonis* were fixed permanently and the ships, made thin and long, turned according to the wind. Foresails were square or rectangular and had trouble in turning. So steering was difficult. Lateen sails were not used till the late 14th Century (lateen sails were triangular in shape and at 45° to the mast to control the direction). This was not known to Indian sailors of early days.

According to Dr. Arunachalam*, the distances were measured by the stars. From the literary records, *Uthara* or *Vada Meen* was *Arundati* (Al Cor). *Kau Nila* (the Pole Star) and *Kau Kanakku* (Star Measure) were used by old seafarers. This measurement is also called *viral kanakku*. It is a reference to the altitude of the specific star during the transit of the meridian.

Viral kanakku in Tamil is *Anguli* in Sanskrit (3/4 of an inch). Gujaratis used *Dhru* for the same measure. Arabs called

it *Isaba* and the Chinese *Chih*.

January and February were the months for outward sailing from the south Kaveri delta. The ships sailed southwards using *Vadakkan*, later they may have used *Memari* for the eastward trip. The ports were noted as being in *yamam* distances.

The early sailors of South India certainly knew their navigation, but their knowledge was never recorded. Similarly, unlike the Arabs who made charts, the Tamil sailors did not leave behind any charts. But their geographical knowledge was excellent, as they knew the places they were going to. This is borne out by the fact that huge fleets sailed to trade and establish settlements in the southeast Asian countries.

We can understand this fact better when we compare the voyage of Columbus who, as late as 1492, under the patronage of Spain's King Ferdinand, and Queen Isabella made the biggest blunder ever in navigational history by locating a place which it was not! Was it East for him when it was actually West?

* (Dr. Arunachalam in his book *Chola Navigation Package* has dealt with navigation in depth. I am indebted to him for most of the information in this article.)

MUMBAI ENTRY RESTRICTION

(Continued from Page 2)

private vehicle owners to help in reducing the pollution levels in the city."

"The State Government should first ensure adequate public transport before implementing such schemes. The trains and buses are so crowded that a car owner would find it difficult," said counsel for the WIAA.

The State also opposed the scheme saying it did not have enough traffic police to imple-

ment the scheme. The Division Bench of the Court dismissed the State's explanation and urged it not to give excuses.

According to the petitioners, there are over 9 lakh two-wheelers and around 5 lakh cars on Mumbai's roads, ninety percent of the population uses public transport, whereas 10% who own private vehicles occupy 90% of the city roads. (Courtesy: *Environment Ambassador*)

If that's your address...

(Continued from Page 1)

wandering into certain areas, streets or restaurants and reeling out with a 'Huh? Where am I?' feeling.

Or needing signboards explained to him by other locals who have learnt 'foreign' in order to help unprepared locals.

Very confusing.

But, hey, making our guests feel at home is one of our oldest traditions.

Viva Athithis!

(See, there's that mixed language thing again.)

Ranjitha Ashok

Quizzin' with Ram'nan

(Current affairs questions are from the period October 16th to 30th. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Tamil Nadu and Chennai.)

1. The much-publicised trial of which former Asian leader began on October 19th?
2. John Chambers is the CEO of which computer major that has announced it will invest more than \$1 billion in India?
3. Name the late Prime Minister after whom the Varanasi airport is to be named.
4. Who won the national tennis crowns in New Delhi recently?
5. *Out of My Comfort Zone* is the autobiography of which legendary Australian cricketer? It was officially launched on October 23rd.
6. Who has been appointed the observer for the BCCI polls?
7. Name the woman, considered the leading icon of the Black civil rights movement in the U.S., who passed away recently.
8. The Supreme Court on October 2nd shifted the Kanchi Acharya case to which place?
9. Who is the new Chief Information Commissioner for the country?
10. What is common to Govindpuri, Sarojini Nagar and Paharganj in Delhi?

* * *

11. Who was the pioneer of Tamil theatre who founded the Suguna Vilas Sabha in 1891?
12. Name the well-known play-back singer and Carnatic musician of yesteryears who passed away on October 31st.
13. With which Irish-American film-maker would you associate such MS's films as *Meera* and *Sakunthalai*?
14. Who was the 'First Citizen of India' whose review of *Avvaiyar* in 1953 ran something like this: "Seen Gemini Vasan's *Avvaiyar*. T.K. Shanmugam's play is a hundred times superior to this picture...."?
15. Which was the first Indian language type to be developed after printing arrived in India in 1556?
16. Where in Chennai can one see *Swayambu* Vinayagars sprouting out of a *peepul* tree?
17. Name the second oldest sports club in Madras, founded in 1901, by the Commissioner of the Corporation, Lt. Col. Sir George Moore.
18. The Auxiliary Royapuram Medical School, established in 1877, has now grown into which fine centre of medicine?
19. Who were the comic greats given the N.S. Krishnan and T.A. Mathuram Awards recently?
20. Which Beatle is said to have recorded portions of his album *Chances* in Madras in the mid-1980s?

(Answers on page 7)

C-H-E-H stands for Cuisine, Hospitality, Education, Food and, today, much more. Once regarded as 'essentials' relegated to the kitchen, today's chef has added status, coming out of his domain frequently to meet the guests and widen his perspective. One chef who caused ripples of excitement and anticipation at the 2nd National Culinary Conference recently held in Chennai was Sanjeev Kapoor whose larger than life presence dominated the panel discussion led by Geeta Doctor on "Who Needs Celebrity Chefs?"

When he spoke on 'Chef as a Brand' Kapoor reiterated his message very clearly to the younger and the aspiring chefs: Faith in yourself if you decide to break the mould. He recalled how he was asked to play consultant on a cookery programme and, later, asked to conduct the first TV show which was to be a part of a series. It was that one show which made him. It was so well received and probably conducted with such a flourish that the sponsors wanted more, today his *Khana Khazana* on Zee TV has become a household word having had a run of 12 years as a weekly half hour programme. Apart from being a good chef and having an appealing stage presence, Kapoor has had the skill to write several cookbooks which have each gone into X number of reprints helping him gain celebrity status. "Chefs are poor at documentation, and do

Indian chefs get celebrity status

not realise the importance of this," says Kapoor. Documentation has been the basis of his cookbooks.

"The media has certainly created the concept of celebrity chefs and improved our standing," acknowledges Gieve Desai, Executive Chef of the ITC Hotels in Mumbai. But O.P. Khantwal of the ITC

male colleagues not only for having stormed a hitherto male bastion, but for exhibiting staying power, reflected in her long innings with the ITC group of hotels. There is this consistency about women professionals, where they do not change jobs as often as their male counterparts. For a woman, however successful she may be as a pro-

she got them published as a book, and that was the beginning. Before long, she was invited to host cookery shows on TV and there was no looking back after that. Today, Badrinath runs her own publishing house and has the distinction of publishing 12 recipe books in English, 10 in Tamil and 3 each in Kannada and Telugu, selling over 3,50,000 in all. Mallika Badrinath, like Tarla Dalal, has also used the leverage her books have provided to sell her home products, like *sambar* powder, *podis* and other food products.

While the electronic media helps create a celebrity image, the chef-presenter is unlikely to be a success without possessing the intrinsic quality of being able to deliver and excel in the field of cuisine. Not everyone can make it to the top just by being projected on television. You need to be an accomplished cook.

Having enjoyed only a backroom status in the past, it is heartening to see chefs today getting the admiration they deserve. The more chefs meet with diners, the more they are likely to be taking the first steps to celebrity chef status.

● The second of the two articles in which SABITA RADHAKRISHNAN takes a look at the highlights of the 2nd National Culinary Conference.

Grand Kakatiya, Hyderabad feels that television-boosted chefs are NOT the only ones to acquire a celebrity brand. Chef Satish Arora of the Taj Group and Chef, Manjit Gill of ITC, for instance, are celebrity chefs for having placed Indian food on the international map and for the way they had trained young chefs, Khantwal felt.

What happens when the chef is a woman? Manisha Bhasin is the sole woman to win the Best Chef Award from Marriot Worldwide. Executive Chef of the Marriot Welcom Hotel in New Delhi, Manisha commands the respect of her

professional, the demands of multitasking and juggling roles do put pressure and hats off to women like Bhasin who have managed all that and more successfully.

Apart from chefs, the media has also boosted the image of cookbook writers, a classic example being Mallika Badrinath. A simple housewife, she had this penchant for collecting recipes like most women interested in cooking. When the collection overflowed, she selected some of them, tried them out, tested and fine tuned them and sent them to her friends. When they found them good,

A GLIMMER OF HOPE IN ADYAR

(Continued from Page 1)

the night." In protest against the "indiscriminate growth of illegal constructions in prohibited areas of the CRZ and the respondents who have been turning a blind eye to and not responding to any of the representations made by concerned citizens and groups," the Court was invoked in the petition to direct the respondents "to immediately take all measures to stop all illegal activities on the Elliot's Beach on the northern side of the Urur Olcott Kupam, including extraction of sand, levelling of land, putting up structures..."

Though activists have been fighting for the last decade on several fronts against assault on the delicate estuarine ecosystem by construction and business establishments, "nothing much" has happened by way of protecting a fragile estuarine ecosystem that few cities have the benefit of. In 1984, the WWF made a strong representation to the State Government, seeking protection of the area as a sanctuary, but to no avail. However, the High Court, in response to a PIL filed by CAG in 1993, directed preservation

of the entire low-lying area in the Adyar Creek and its maintenance as a wetland when the State Government attempted to construct *kalyana mandapams* and other buildings in the name of Dr. Ambedkar. Despite the Court order, less than 40% of the original 100 acres of the estuary remains. "The rest of this rich, biodiverse ecosystem has been suffering a deliberate, slow death, and the authorities vested with the duty of protecting the area have been turning a blind eye to what's been happening," says Bharath Jairaj of CAG.

Adds Jairaj, "The recent order is a very, very critical ruling in that it points towards the long-term issues in terms of development of ideas. The earlier ruling by Justice Kanagaraj was important with respect to wetlands as an important ecosystem. This ruling supports the fact that development must not happen at the expense of the ecosystem, that the beach itself is critical to the city's health. It is one that understands the long-term impact of environmental problems, as opposed to the current system which focusses on the short term."

Environmentalists feel that "the latest ruling will provide necessary guidance to implementers, and probably help CZMA rein in the CMDA's current policies that are in utter disregard of vital issues of environment or water." The CMDA, which has "not paid much heed to environmental ecological safeguards", will have to wake up if the ruling of the Court is faithfully implemented by the CZMA, the activists point out.

However, more important than legal battles is the need for a concerted plan of restoration – unless we want the ecosystem itself to disappear, closely followed by related disasters like water inundation, soil salination, and groundwater depletion in the immediate future. Which is why this judgment is significant; it reiterates the need to protect the estuary.

Pointing out that "unscrupulous businessmen, collusive regulators and an apathetic public" have been responsible for the present sad state of the Estuary, environmental activist and lawyer T. Mohan, who argued this case, says, "The short-term impact could be an in-

creased focus on the Adyar Estuary-Creek complex and framing schemes for their restoration. In the long-term, it means a greater focus on the city's coast. The Court Order recording the statement of the CZMA, that plans are underway for restoration of the Creek, means that it has GOT to be done."

M. Raghuram, a founder-member of the MNS, remembers, "Till around 1995, when construction on the banks of the river began in right earnest, the estuary used to be our members' regular meeting place. We'd watch the birds till dusk and then sit around swapping stories. When the area was fenced in and about a thousand workmen housed in one corner of the estuary, we began to withdraw. Today, construction debris dumped in the river deters even the smaller life forms."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Much damage has already been wreaked on the original estuarine ecosystem. The recent ruling could well be a turning point in its fortunes and also the city's. We can only hope that better wisdom will prevail even at this late stage.

A monograph to recall KS

A centenary tribute to a great film-maker in Prof. M.R. Rangarajan's *Director K. Subrahmanyam, A Biography*. The book, however, is a laudatory monograph rather than a biography. Most of the facts about the pioneer filmmaker's life are there, but the book makes little effort to study the man or his work.

K. Subrahmanyam (KS), 'Appa' as he was known to most members of the film industry, was born on April 20, 1904 in Papanasam near Kumbakonam to C.S. Krishnaswami Iyer, a well-known lawyer, and Venkalakshmi Ammal. His father was a great lover of music and counted the composer Papanasam Sivan and the Harikatha exponent Soola-



K. Subrahmanyam.

company was, however, short-lived and by 1929 KS was back to the law. Four years later, he decided to stage a re-entry into the film world, this time with talkies that had arrived in 1931. Working with Al. Rm. Alagappa Chettiar of Kottaiyur, KS adapted the successful play *Pavalakodi* for cinema and di-

films dealt with mythological or medieval themes.

In 1937, he built his own studio, Madras Picture Producers Combine, in *Spring Gardens*, Mount Road, Madras. Prosperity in films saw him purchasing an enormous bungalow in San Thomé where he led a princely life. In 1939, he founded the Film Chamber of Commerce, Madras, which is today known as the South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce. He was also to warmly espouse the cause of the *devadasis* during the Anti-Nautch years of 1929-1932 and in 1934 he was a great help to Rukmini Devi in founding Kalakshetra.

In 1940, the MPPC was burnt to the ground and with that bit of ill-fortune, the fortunes of KS began to decline. Though he made several more films, none achieved the success of his earlier films. This was partly due to changing audience tastes as to the funding of the film industry by the parallel economy which burgeoned during the War years.

KS is remembered for the breaks he gave many aspiring stars, including M.G. Ramachandran, T.R. Rajakumari, M.S. Subbulakshmi and B. Saroja Devi. He also made his own niece, Baby Saroja, the leading child artiste of her time. By 1950, KS had become a respected father figure in the industry, aptly referred to as 'Appa'. In 1951 he led the first Indian cultural delegation to Moscow. Having made one of the first children's films in India, *Bala Yogini* in 1938, KS was also instrumental in founding the Children's Film Society of India in the mid 1950s. KS died in April 1971.

There being very few books on Indian film-makers and films, this book is to be welcomed. It can be completed in one reading. The author has, however, filled the book with quotations from various classics in almost every page and this continuously distracts from the theme. Yet another avoidable aspect is that almost one-third of the book is devoted to detailed life sketches of KS's children. The author also does not make an objective study of his subject; he eulogises KS, glossing over his negatives, and describes even some of KS's flops as "moderate successes".

A great film-maker like KS deserves an in-depth biography; I hope this monograph will be just the first step towards that.

*The author errs in stating that this was the only Indian film to be banned by the British.



A scene from K. Subrahmanyam's classic, Thyaga Bhoomi.

mangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar among his close friends. Growing up in a rich musical atmosphere, it was no wonder that KS became an aficionado of the arts. He, however, trained to be a lawyer and marriage to Meenakshi, the granddaughter of Rao Bahadur K.S. Venkatarama Iyer of Nagapattinam, a celebrated criminal lawyer, made it appear that the groundwork had been laid for KS to rise at the Bar.

However, it was the world of cinema that held him in thrall. In 1928, Raja Sandow, the famed actor and director, had settled in Madras, making movies for Associated Films which was financed in part by Venkatarama Iyer, KS's grandfather-in-law. KS joined Sandow as Assistant Director. He also helped with the scriptwriting, editing and legal aspects. The

rected the film, retaining the stage couple M.K. Tyagaraja Bhagavatar and S.D. Subbulakshmi as its stars. The film, shot at Meenakshi Cinetone (now the site of the MGR Janaki College) in Adyar proved a success when released in 1934.

Along with S.D. Subbulakshmi (SDS), KS formed his own production company, Madras United Artistes Corporation, in 1934. She also became his second wife. The years 1934 to 1940 were really his best when all the films he directed, either for MUAC or for other banners, became hits. Three of them, *Seva Sadanam* (1938), which introduced M.S. Subbulakshmi as an actress, *Thyaga Bhoomi** (1939) and *Bhakta Cheta* (1940) had social themes. This was a path-breaking effort in an era when most

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If in the coming year Chennai Heritage receives repeated support from those of you who have already made contributions, and if many more supporters join the bandwagon, we will not only be able to keep *Madras Musings* going, but also be able to continue awareness-building exercises on on-going projects as well as undertake one or two more such exercises.

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We look forward to all readers of *Madras Musings*, and those newcomers who want to receive copies, sending in their subscriptions. We are indeed sorry we can no longer remain a free mailer.

— The Editor

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Senate House Conservation Fund

• The Senate House Restoration and Management Trust appeals to all alumni of the University of Madras and heritage lovers everywhere to contribute to the Senate House Conservation Fund which the Trust is managing for the purpose of restoring *Senate House* to its old glory by December 2005 and maintaining it thereafter in the same condition. Cheques should be made out to the Senate House Conservation Account and sent to the Registrar, University of Madras, Chennai 600 005. Contributions are eligible for benefits under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act.

Dear Registrar,

I am pleased to enclose a cheque for Rs. as my contribution to the restoration and maintenance of *Senate House*. Kindly acknowledge receipt.

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Date: Signature:

Answers to Quiz

1. Saddam Hussein; 2. Cisco; 3. Lal Bahadur Shastri; 4. Sunil Kumar and Isha Lakhani; 5. Steve Waugh; 6. Former CEC, T.S. Krishnamurthy; 7. Rosa Parks; 8. Pondicherry; 9. Wajahat Habibullah; 10. These three areas saw near-simultaneous serial bomb blasts that left more than 70 persons dead.

* * *

11. Pammal Sambandam Mudaliar; 12. P. Leela; 13. Ellis R. Dungan; 14. Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari; 15. Tamil ('Malabar'); 16. Sri Balavinayagar Temple in Bharani Colony, Saligramam; 17. The South Indian Athletic Association; 18. Stanley Medical College; 19. Nagesh and Manorama; 20. George Harrison.

Sriram V



V.A. Parthasarathy.

Fifty years in Division I

Alwarpet Cricket Club is synonymous with V.A. Parthasarathy, VAP to everyone, who, along with a bunch of enthusiastic cricketers from that quiet suburb – or so it was in the 1940s – decided to form a team which would later enter the Madras Cricket Association's league tournament. Last fortnight, the Sanmar Group, the Club's current sponsor, felicitated Parthasarathy, the Club's veteran secretary to whom the Club is probably dearer than anything else in life, on his steering it during the fifty continuous years it has been in the First Division of the Chennai cricket league.

My own first memory of VAP is that of a dapper little man in the typical TVS uniform of white shirt and trousers, driving a tiny Bug Fiat to pick up players for the weekly league or friendly match. (Sometimes, you had to cut short your exam preparations to do VAP's bidding.) He picked me to play for Jai Hind CC, a team then in the B zone of the I Division. That was in 1964. Following a successful season under the inspiring captaincy of S. Raman, I was selected to tour Bombay with the MCA Colts. I wondered then if my selection was ensured by some timely prodding of the selectors by VAP, our secretary. VAP was also in the background when I made my debut for Alwarpet in the 1968-69 season. Once again, it was perhaps no coincidence that my good performances were rewarded with a place in the Madras Juniors team.

VAP's bluster and bravado while engaging our opponents in verbal duels throughout that season peaked when our star batsman A.G. Satvinder Singh made an unforgettable 147 against Jolly Rovers, another club of which he has been secretary for decades, and which is the pride of the Sanmar Group.

After a long stint in Hyderabad, I came back to Chennai in 1981 and played for Alwarpet CC and TVS, my

how he had delayed joining the club because VAP said he could not offer him an opener's slot, then occupied by P. Ramesh and V. Sivaramakrishnan. He also poked fun at VAP's habit of enticing players he wanted for the club with the promise that playing for Alwarpet would get them a berth in the Indian side, citing the examples of Srikanth, L. Sivaramakrishnan, W.V. Raman and M. Venkataramana. When Srikanth struck

● by V. RAMNARAYAN

new employers, for the next eight seasons, coming into close contact with VAP. It was very enjoyable most of the time, though it was also sometimes a rough ride, as we did not see eye to eye on a few issues. VAP made life difficult for some of us, but he is a loyal friend to people he cares for and he will do anything for them. When my brother-in-law S. Nataraj, the Karnataka and Tamil Nadu batsman, died at the age of 48, a benefit match was arranged and VAP did a magnificent job of collecting funds for the match.

You could disagree with VAP and disapprove of his methods, but you could never overlook his dedication to club and cricket or his capacity for hard work even in the evening of his life. K. Srikanth spoke of his 19-year stint for Alwarpet CC in his breezy style, recalling

a bad patch, VAP promised him he would cement his place in the Indian team if he accompanied him on the Sabarimala pilgrimage.

Srinath Rajam, former patron of Alwarpet CC and the son of the late R. Ratnam of the TVS group, recalls how he had been annoyed by VAP's refusal to change the club's name from Alwarpet CC to TVS CC. But he admired VAP's steadfastness even in the face of the threat of withdrawal of sponsorship of the club.

In conversation that evening, former Alwarpet CC players in the audience relived several moments from the past. V. Sivaramakrishnan remembered how VAP told a player who was getting married on the day of a league match: "I know it's an early *muhurtam*. You should be free by 8.30 a.m. As soon as you are done tying the



November 19: Exhibition/sale of products made by disabled persons, organised by Nandini Voice of the Deprived (at Freemasons Hall, 10.00 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.).

November 19: *Le Temps du Repli*, a dance performance by Josef Nadj and Cecile Thieblemont. Josef Nadj's work is a unique distillation of dance, theatre and mime. *Le Temps du Repli* is an intimate *pas de deux*, which focusses on affairs of the heart. (At Kalakshetra Auditorium, 7.00 p.m.)

November 19: The British Council invites members of the Young Learners' Centre for a Children's Day poetry competition and the chance to win attractive prizes.

Age 5-9 years (10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.) and age 10-14 years (2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.). (At the British Council)

November 20: Discussion on 'Dress Code for Women College Students' (P.S. High School auditorium, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.).

Till November 20: Exhibition of the works of T.G. Shanmugam (at Vinyasa Art Gallery.)

November 21-30: *Urban Space*, an exhibition of paintings by Joydip Sengupta. (At ArtWorld.)

November 23: *Contemporary Dance* featuring Astaad Deboo. (At Kalakshetra Auditorium, 6.30 p.m.)

November 25 and 26: Workshop on Jaipur Lac Craft. Zeenat Jahan will demonstrate and teach the beauty and the workmanship of lacquered wood work. Learn the art of turning wood into earrings, bangles or boxes and then lacquer them in bands of pure bright colours. (At DakshinaChitra. Details: 24462435, 24918943).

November 25-27: Madras Players presents *Hayavadana*, written by Girish Karnad, directed by N.S. Yamuna. (At Museum Theatre, 7.00 p.m.)

November 27: Piano concert by Worms (Netherlands), in a curtain raiser to *The Other Festival*. (At Amethyst, 7.00 p.m.)

Till November 26: Exhibition of woodcuts and sculptures by Murali Das. (At AFM Gallery.)

Till November 27: Exhibition by Viren Tanwar. (At Apparao Galleries.)

November 30: *Beats 'N' Bars & Air Guitars*, a celebration of contemporary British music through film. The programme offers a chance to look again at the diverse experiences music can offer, and explores some of the many possibilities revealed by combining music and visual images. (At the British Council, 7.00 p.m.)

December 4: Pedro Soler, a guitarist embodying Flamenco music, will perform solo pieces and creations with Carnatic musicians. The origin of Flamenco is from the ancient Andalusian chants, folk songs, and lullabies. This unique music is played on the guitar, which accompanies its songs and dances. Flamenco is a music of oral tradition and is continually evolving. (At the Museum Theatre, 7 p.m.)

Madras Musings is supported as a public service by the following organisations:

