

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

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"Our train is delayed by 30 minutes and we would like to take a sight-seeing tour of the Station, please!"

Joy ride

Nothing quite compares with the feeling of hollow dread that passengers in for a long wait between trains suffer. Sitting around inhaling the collective fugue created by decades of travelling humanity is a nightmare – with all due respect to the concerned authorities, who have now come up with a scheme to brighten things up a bit.

The railway-powers (sensitive, caring creatures that they are, bless them) have decided to organise little tours, brief outings, for waiting passengers, whizzing them around city spots, plying them with meals and mineral water.

Isn't this nice?

A mini-holiday between travelling, at a reasonable price. Much better than slouching around, snarling at companions, and staring resentfully at large railway clocks.

Presumably, passengers will be identified from amongst the hordes that do meet-and-greet duty.

Otherwise you may have bored 'receivers' deciding to join the tours, the minute they hear their particular train is hours late.

Which leads to painful scenes. "Where were you? I've been waiting on the platform for hours."

"Sorry, they said your train was three hours late, so I opted for the Beach Tour."

"But you live here."

"True – but I've never met the Bay formally, you know."

Harsh words are exchanged, and the goeey, emotion-ridden image of a journey's end lies shattered.

And yet – will a 'Passengers only' ruling create one more schism?

Travellers vs Meet-and-Greeters?

The flip-side of good intentions – tricky business, isn't it?

Ranjitha Ashok

– for heritage buildings

(By A Special Correspondent)

There is good news for those concerned with the architectural heritage of Madras that is Chennai. The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority's second master plan has a section devoted to them which not only spells out how heritage buildings are to be classified but also gives details on what can be done with them in terms of law.

1. The buildings that will fall under the purview of these regulations will be those that are considered to be of heritage value AND yet fall outside the notifications of central and state archaeological departments.

2. Permissions for alterations, structural modifications, painting and demolitions in part or in full of such buildings need to be taken from the Member-Secretary, CMDA who will grant or withhold permission based on consultations with a Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) appointed by the Government.

3. A complete listing of such buildings will first be undertaken by the government and the draft list will be published in newspapers inviting additions and modifications from the public and also representations from owners of properties so listed.

4. The Member-Secretary, CMDA, will have the power to modify/alter these regulations for specific cases only AFTER taking into account the points of view of the HCC and also obtaining the approval of the Government.

5. All alterations/modifications and relaxations of rules for

(Continued on page 8)

GRADING HERITAGE STRUCTURES

Grade-I	Grade-II	Grade-III
<p>A. DEFINITION</p> <p>Heritage Grade-I comprises of buildings and precincts of national or historical importance, embodying excellence in architectural style, design, technology and material usage. They may be associated with a great historical event, personality, movement or institution. They have been and are the prime landmarks of the City.</p>	<p>Heritage Grade-II (A and B) comprises of buildings of regional or local importance, possessing special architectural or aesthetical merit, cultural or historical value, though of a lower scale than in Heritage Grade. They are local landmarks, contributing to the image and identity of the City. They may not be the work of master craftsmen or may be models or proportion and ornamentation, or designed to suit particular climate.</p>	<p>Heritage Grade-III comprises importance for town space; they evoke architectural, aesthetic or sociological interest though not as much as in Heritage Grade-II. These contribute to determine the character of the locality, and can be representative of lifestyle of a particular community or region and may also be distinguished by setting on a street line, or special character of the façade and uniformity of height, width and scale.</p>
<p>B. OBJECTIVE</p> <p>Heritage Grade-I richly deserves careful preservation.</p>	<p>Heritage Grade-II deserves intelligent conservation.</p>	<p>Heritage Grade-III deserves protection of unique features and attributes.</p>
<p>C. SCOPE FOR CHANGES</p> <p>No interventions would be permitted either on the exterior or interior unless it is necessary in the interest of strengthening and prolonging the life of the buildings or precincts or any part or features thereof. For this purpose, absolutely essential and minimal changes would be allowed and they must be in accordance with the original.</p>	<p>Grade - II (A)</p> <p>Internal changes and adaptive reuse will be generally allowed, but external changes will be subject to scrutiny. Care would be taken to ensure the conservation of all special aspects for which it is included in Heritage Grade-II.</p> <p>Grade-II (B)</p> <p>In addition to above, extension or additional buildings in the same plot or compound could in certain circumstances be allowed provided that the extension/additional building is in harmony with (and does not detract from) existing heritage building(s) or precincts especially in terms of height and facade.</p>	<p>External and internal changes and adaptive reuse would generally be allowed. Changes can include extensions, additional buildings in the same plot or compound provided that extension/additional building is in harmony with and does not detract from the existing heritage buildings/precincts especially in terms of height and/or facade. Reconstruction may be allowed when the building is structurally weak or unsafe or when it has been affected by accidental fire or any other calamity or if reconstruction is required to consume the permissible FSI and no option other than reconstruction is available. However, unless absolutely essential, nothing should spoil or destroy any special features or attributes for which it is placed in the Heritage List.</p>
<p>D. PROCEDURE</p> <p>Development permission for the changes would be given by the Planning Authority on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Committee to be appointed by State Government.</p>	<p>Development permission for the changes would be given by the Planning Authority in consultation with a sub-committee of the Heritage Conservation Committee.</p>	<p>Development permission would be given for changes by the Planning Authority itself but in consonance with guidelines, which are to be laid down by Government in consultation with the Heritage Conservation Committee.</p>
<p>E. VISTAS/SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>All development in areas surrounding Heritage Grade-I shall be regulated and controlled, ensuring that it does not mar the grandeur of or views from Heritage Grade-I.</p>		

Getting real on real estate

No matter where *The Man from Madras Musings* goes, he hears only one topic of conversation and that is real estate. The language of the city has changed and its vocabulary now comprises only words such as fsi, grounds, acres, cents, patta, chitta (yes, this too is needed if you buy agricultural land, apparently), village karnam, taluk office, registration, no encumbrance certificate, gated community, *vaastu shastra*, northeast corner, villa, farmhouse and, of course, real estate agent. Everyone is buying, everyone is building and everyone is eternally in a state of flux moving home. To MMM, for whom this topic holds but tepid interest, all this brings to mind the demonstration of Brownian motion as seen under a microscope when MMM was a cherubic child.

Talking of microscopes also brings to mind the word microscopic which is what most of the flats coming up today are. And yet they promise the luxuries of many bedrooms, as many attached baths, living room, family room, knives and boots room *et al.* And, so the brochures assure MMM, when he looks out of his window should he care to live in these flats, a pleasanter prospect could never otherwise meet his eye. Rolling parklands, lakes, birds and even hills. A block of flats coming up in Broadway has a sketch that shows trees, a road where many imported cars are whizzing by, a clean sidewalk and not a neighbouring building in sight! Now, if you are as familiar with Broadway as MMM, you too would be smiling.

And now for the latest attraction – the throwing in of a gymnasium and a swimming pool. Just going by the way these two features are being spoken of by those hunting for flats, it would appear that all Chennaiites are most physical fitness-conscious and would never go to bed without their workout for the day. And yet you only have to look around you in any food court or mall to see in which way the embonpoint is going. MMM has seen the gymnasium and the swimming pool in many of these buildings after they are completed. The former be-

comes a sort of room in which all refuse is stored and the latter a fertile ground for mosquitoes.

When these buildings are completed, we have the most western of names for them. The name that gets the cake for the most outlandish title is Regency. MMM thought that this was a period in history when a senior member of a royal family takes over the reins of government when the monarch is in some way incapacitated. But when you have buildings such as Sivaram's Regency and Alamelu's Regency it gets somewhat worrying. Surely, you worry, Sivaram and Alamelu should be treated for delusions of grandeur. And then there are Residencies, Heights (Swami's Heights being a delightful title), Towers, Chateaus, Manors and Castles.

All this only goes to indicate that these gated and otherwise communities are aping an alien

celebration for his partymen, while the celebrations are to be condemned, according to his rivals. Yet, the methodology of celebration/condemnation is identical. Both involve the blocking of sidewalks with huge scaffolds that support illuminated cutouts, digging of roads to erect makeshift stages, tapping electricity from junction boxes along the roads and then finally holding meetings that last long after court-stipulated timings. These meetings, going by the number of high decibel speakers used, are apparently meant to wake up the dead as well. The police stand by watching and turn a deaf ear (quite understandable, given the noise) to all pleas to intervene. A rather sad state of affairs. *The Man from Madras Musings* noticed that bang opposite one of these meeting places was a hoarding put up by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board asking the citizens to say no to

grandmother all perched on them? Do you make it mandatory for them all to wear helmets or do you turn a blind eye? If they are all to wear helmets then will there be enough space for them all on the two wheeler? Let us leave the police to sort out that conundrum.

Away with the dosai

That at least appears to be a motto of the railways. Rumour has it that some kind of a food committee in the railways has decided to ban most Indian snacks and have only noodles (ugh!) served on board the trains. Apparently that is the only food item which has passed certain tests, the taste buds of most consumers be damned. *The Man from Madras Musings*, who has a partiality to eating rather heavily on trains, is upset as indeed are most of the catering agents to the railways. The story goes that these

created at the entrance and these have REAL palm saplings planted in them which in course of time will grow into graceful trees. However, the illuminated artificial palms still remain much to MMM's regret and one of them in particular is hideous to the extreme, having lost many of its bulbs and therefore glowing only here and there.

Mega serial mania

Not being of the variety that watches the mega serials that pass for entertainment on our channels, *The Man from Madras Musings* committed the solecism of calling on people during prime time. Having been welcomed with baleful glares he was also asked to sit in during two or three of the episodes and was shocked to see the kind of value systems that are being propagated. In one, there is a man who has three wives with perhaps more coming along (a modern day Henry VIII, though he had only one at a time). All the women fight over him but in a country where this kind of marriage is illegal it is a wonder as to how such things are allowed. In yet another serial, a man batters a woman to death and in a third, a college principal refuses admission to a divorced woman citing her single status as the reason for the refusal. The principal, also a woman, implies in her harangue that divorced women are immoral! It is shocking that such episodes are sponsored by companies that manufacture products for women and in their own advertisements wax eloquent about the modern woman and as to how progressive she is. In all the homes that MMM made the mistake of calling on, children were also watching these programmes and it is quite clear as to what kind of ideas they are being inculcated with.

Tailpiece

A news item in one of city's dailies has this as the heading: "Chief Secretary to go into exploitation of women". Now what do we understand from this?

— MMM

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

culture which has nothing to do with ground realities in India. Most of these buildings are built in a fashion where there is hardly any natural ventilation or light. Residents use up electricity and contribute further to global warming. If a serious energy audit is done on most of these structures it is MMM's bet that not many would pass muster. And as for fire safety, the less said the better. What with cars clogging up pathways and staircases built with minimum width (who needs staircases when there are lifts you may ask, but then during fires lifts don't operate) and never maintained, it is unlikely that residents can make their way to safety in case of some disaster happening.

Noisy landmark event

We are living through a landmark year if the magazines and newspapers of the city are to be believed. A certain leader completes a certain number of years in politics and it is an occasion to cel-

noise pollution! What is even more amazing is that the police grant permission for holding meetings at just about any place including busy junctions that throw traffic out of gear. It is strange that the common man is given no choice to remain neutral. He has to celebrate one day and condemn the next, depending on who is holding a meeting in his neighbourhood. Is this democracy?

Helmets for all

The cut-off date for making helmets mandatory is fast approaching. But given our police force, it is quite likely that this rule too will be observed in the breach like the one that banned smoking in public places and the other that made the wearing of seat belts mandatory. *The Man from Madras Musings* who often worries about matters that are no business of his, has yet another question. How do you handle two-wheelers that have mom, pop, three children and elderly

people have already lodged a protest with those in charge and hopefully this threat to the humble *idli* and the *dosai* will vanish.

Granite platforms

Still on the subject of the railways, *The Man from Madras Musings* notices that work is proceeding apace on cladding most of the concourses with granite at the Central Station. Now polished granite is really not the best surface on which you get a grip while you walk and it is even worse for senior citizens. Given that there are many of the older age group who travel, thanks to concessions, it makes MMM wonder as to how friendly the new concourses are going to be. But the introduction of battery operated carts which transport those with disabilities and also the elderly to their respective compartments is an excellent idea and the railways deserve to be congratulated for it. MMM also notices several small patches of greenery have been

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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

A big 'Thank You' to 47 of you

We publish below the list of donors who have, between 16.4.07 and 15.5.07, 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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Who are they?

Reader D. Venugopal, a collector of old photographs, sent us this picture, saying he had found it in a wastepaper shop. The photograph is titled 'Theosophists' and would seem to date to 1886/87, judging by the date on another picture which came with it. That would be just four years after the Society moved into its Adyar headquarters, *Huddleston Gardens*. Both reader Venugopal and *Madras Musings* wonder whether anyone can identify some of those in the picture, who would have been the first Theosophists in India. Sixth from right (and partially hidden) is a bearded person who we think is Col. Olcott.

- The Editor

OUR READERS WRITE

ester consulted his survey. "Ah, no, not that one," he said, "you see, we refused that one the first time." — Bernard Levin, *The Daily Mail*, London.

Over the years, the city has been systematically denuded and I wonder how it is claimed that "Chennai has the second highest green cover, coming as it does after New Delhi with 17%" (Short 'N' Snappy, May 1st).

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'A few days ago, a correspondent pointed out in these columns that the two huge trees on the foot-path near the P.M.G.'s Office, Mount Road which adorned the building have been cut down as also two other trees that had been giving shelter against the scorching heat of the sun to the passengers at the bus stop opposite the P.M.G.'s Office. The authorities who are responsible for pulling down these trees have not given any reason for this so far. The Government have been campaigning for the preservation of trees and avenues and in this connection they are celebrating the Vanamahotsava every year to inculcate in the minds of the public a love of trees and tree planting. But it seems the authorities forget the purpose soon after the annual festival is over.'

M. KRISHNASWAMI, MADRAS
The Hindu, 29.3.1961
* * *

Felling trees

I refer to the letter captioned 'Murder of the trees' (MM, May 1st) and in this context send herewith cuttings from *The Hindu* dt. 29.3.1961, 3.4.1961 and 8.4.1961. It will be seen that the large-scale massacre of the giant avenue trees in the city had started in 1961 itself. In my *Reader's Digest* 1968 collection, I also find this:

'During repairs of Westminster Hall following the last war, the beams in the roof were found to be rotten after more than five centuries. To strike a more historical echo, the oaks to provide the replacement beams were cut from the estates of the Earl of Warwick, whose distant ancestor had provided the original beams in 1394. When a magnificent oak, huge, straight and unimaginably old, was being selected, the Earl's for-

WIDENING OF MOUNT ROAD

'Enquiries made in connection with the cutting of a number of avenue trees on Mount Road reveal that the traffic authorities have been forced to take this measure in an effort to widen Mount Road to 100 feet.

Though eventually Mount Road will have a carriage way of 100 feet in width, right up to Guindy, for the present the Traffic as well as the Corporation authorities who are in charge of the execution of the work, have embarked on a "pilot scheme" under which the road will be widened from near the P.M.G.'s Office to near the Thousand Lights.

A giant avenue tree near the office of the P.M.G. and another on the opposite side of the road, have been cut down already. Some more are being cut down on the stretch beyond Spencer's roundabout.

A spokesman of the Corporation of Madras today made it clear that the trees were cut down when for securing space for the 100 foot carriage-way, they had to shift back the pavements. Eventually, he said, the idea was to have eight feet of unobstructed pedestrian pavements on either side on Mount Road.

At present, the carriage-way on this section is being widened and cycle tracks and foot-paths are being

formed. The medial strips on Mount Road in this section have also disappeared. The traffic round-about near Spencer's will be removed in about two to three months' time.'

The Hindu, 3.4.1961

* * *

The Commissioner of Police, Mr. R.M. Mahadevan, to-day said that steps were being taken to persuade owners of compounds in Mount Road to plant fresh trees to replace some of the trees that have been cut down recently in the move for widening Mount Road. He hoped that in about 10 years' time, the new trees would grow and beautify the landscape...

The Hindu, 8.4.1961

The Australian-South Indian connection

I read with interest the letter from P. Ramanathan (MM, April 16th) regarding the Australia-Southern Indian connection. The information given is very valuable. There certainly is a close affinity between Australian Aboriginal languages and Dravidian languages. Similarly, even though the Papua New Guineans are classified as Melnesians, they too have a close affinity to the Australian Aboriginals. There are over 800 ethnic groups in PNG, all endemic, and a vast source of gene material. The names of a number of people have Tamil sounds, Sanskrit and Asian names. Chairman of one of the companies was Sivarai Domu. Siva-rai means Sivastone! I had to travel from Goroka through a hill gap called 'Ashaloka' gap to land at Ramu Valley and the Christian mission was called Brahman Mission. The Ramu river and Sogeram river drain most of Madang Province. Then there are towns called Wau (come, in Tamil), Marawaka (Don't forget, in Telugu), Karimui (Black face), Kainantu (my hand - corrupt form), Mukawa (Nose!), Keveri hills (Kaveri Hills!). Then there is a place called Linga Linga.

Irian Jaya has honoured Lord Vishnu, naming a Peak Mount Wishnumurt 4595m (now the name has been changed). This is located on Djagawidjaga Range.

The word 'go' in PNG is 'Po' like in Tamil. At Madang there is a Asiappa Trading Co (this is not an Indian company). Further, my company land document was titled Bumi No 11!

Surely there is a lot more of research needed in these places. The Indian Ocean was called Hindu Maha Sagar, Burma/Thailand - Indradvipa, Vietnam - Soumya, Javadvipa, Bali, Samudradvipa (Sumatra), Borneo (Varunadvipa), Philippines (Sri Vijaya Empire), and Irian Jaya (Indonesia's Guinea).

K.V.S. Krishna
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P.S: 18,000 years ago the sea level was a minus 300 feet. This was the time Southern Asia was continuous land. Human beings migrated from Africa (200,000 years ago) to Shanidar, 100,000 years ago to India, Indonesia, PNG, 40,000 years ago to Western Australia and Eastern Australia. Even though the population may not have directly moved from South India, it would be logical to say that the Dravidian population, which occupied the land between Harappa and South of the Vindhya, would have gone to Burma, PNG etc. as the first wave of people going to the region, before the sea levels came to the present, separating these countries.

From slums to model towns

(By A Special Correspondent)

The Government of Tamil Nadu has come up with an ambitious scheme to entirely remove slums from the city by 2013. An announcement to this effect was made in the State Assembly recently and spearheading the activity will be the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board.

The project, to be taken up under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), in which infrastructure projects at a cost of Rs. 44,780 crore covering areas such as water supply, solid waste management, sewerage, transport and satellite town development will be planned and executed within the next seven years. Under this scheme, the State Government has obtained approval from the Centre for the construction of around 15000 tenements in Chennai, Madurai and Coimbatore at a total cost of Rs. 394 crore.

A part of this amount would be utilised in constructing 2200 tenements at Perumbakkam at a cost of Rs. 44 crore. Families presently living along the banks of the city's waterways will be relocated here. In addition, a total of 14 neighbourhood schemes for developing 1356 acres of land at a cost of Rs. 198 crore will be taken up in and around Chennai and in Sholinganallur for the benefit of 4718 families this year. The reconstruction of the dilapidated tenements at Vyasarpadi and Kuppaimedu are also nearing completion. Reconstruction of the tenements in the *kuppams* along the beach is expected to begin soon.

The core of the plan is the construction of two model towns, one each near North and South Chennai with a total capacity of 18000 tenements, divided roughly equally across both locations. These will be used to resettle families living in slums in the city. The tenements will have a plinth area of 270 sq.ft each and will be provided piped water supply and electricity. The structures will be multistoried and will be provided with lifts.

All the above initiatives are welcome and will no doubt create a much better environment for the marginalised sections of our city dwellers. But even as these plans are on the drawing board, the Government will do well to consider certain ground realities and include them straightaway.

1. Distance from work place. Most of these slum dwellers live in their present surroundings not because they like them but because they are closest to their means of income. If they are to be settled at a distance far away from their workplace then it is but fair that they ought to be provided some means of cheap transport to travel to and fro so that their livelihood is not affected.
2. Maintenance. This is not the first time that tenements have been rebuilt. But all of them look terrible within a year of construction. This is mainly because of poor maintenance by those living in them. The general attitude is that the Government ought to take care of even cleaning the common areas and soon the entire place becomes unfit for occupation. A commitment on maintenance has to be extracted from the residents before they move in and periodic inspections have to be conducted that this is up to the mark. This is a regular feature in most developed countries.
3. No subletting or subleasing. It has often been the practice that those allotted space in tenements do not move in but rent them out to others and continue living in the slums. It is the opinion of some that the open air slum provides better ventilation than the constructed tenement. In addition, the rent from letting out the tenement provides a decent income. This has to be curbed upfront for it otherwise defeats the very purpose for which the new constructions are planned.
4. Protecting the freed space. With land prices shooting up in the city, the areas freed from slums will be in great demand. Mumbai has recently witnessed this even as mill lands and the slum area of Dharavi are coming up for "development". The river front in particular must be protected and not given over to commercial development, for it will only create a concrete slum in place of what existed earlier.

If these steps are taken there is no reason to doubt that the city will indeed sport a clean look by 2013. But then Government plans rarely work that way.

The Lady Bhagavatar

— C. Saraswati Bai

Lady Bhagavatar is how she was referred to. There were no Lord Bhagavatar-s, but she came into the Harikatha scene when men lorded over the profession. According to scholar B.M. Sundaram, the first woman to take to Harikatha was Elayanarvelur Saradambal, but it was Saraswati Bai who was popularly known as the "first Lady Bhagavatar".

The very idea of a woman, and that too a Brahmin, taking to storytelling in public was anathema to many. Be it theatre or be it Harikatha, women had no place in it except as members of the audience. Music and, of course, dance had women performers who hailed from the devadasi communities such as the Isai Vellalar-s. Naturally when Bai stepped in and staked a claim for a place in the sun, she was ostracised and reviled. But stay on she did and won her rightful status.

Of the three great Bais who dominated Harikatha, it is Banni Bai whom we all remember most vividly, for she lived till recently. She was the youngest among the three. There was also Padmasini Bai, of whom almost nothing is known. But in her time she was a great success. And then there was C. Saraswati Bai.

Saraswati Bai was born to Gooty Rama Rao and Rangammal, an orthodox Madhva couple, in February 1892. Rama Rao worked in a minor capacity for the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway (M&SM) and his last posting was as Station Master of Renigunta.

One morning, the Renigunta station witnessed greater commotion than was usual. The wealthy dubash of Parry and Company, head of the family of "Dare House Naidus", Modhavarappu Dera Venkatasami Naidu of Mylapore, who was aboard a train, was seriously ill. The illness was diagnosed as cholera. Rangammal boldly volunteered to take on the role of being nurse to a man who was ill with such an infectious disease. Within a few days Venkatasami Naidu was nursed back to health. While departing, he asked the Rama Rao couple to consider him to be ever in their debt and told them that if they needed anything, they should not hesitate to call on him.

The offer could not have come at a more opportune moment. Rama Rao was to retire



C. Saraswati Bai.

shortly and the future hung over the family like the sword of Damocles. On his retirement, Rama Rao called on Venkatasami Naidu at his Luz residence. Naidu immediately gifted him a house in Big Street. This was No. 156, later to become famed as the residence of Saraswati Bai.

Rama Rao was also given some part-time employment at the Naidu household in Luz. Venkatasami Naidu had, in the 1850s, constructed a mansion there, *Lakshmi Vilas*, set in the midst of 30 acres. Some time later he built *Luz House*, which became the family residence. The mansion now stands tucked away inside Baliah Avenue. At one time it dominated the entire neighbourhood and had as its neighbours other stately homes such as *Ashrama* of V. Krishnaswami Iyer (now mostly built over as Krishnaswami Avenue and occupied by many of his descendants), *Sri Baug* of P.R. Sundara Iyer (now a part of Amrutanjan property), *Lakshmi Baug* of V. Bhashyam Iyengar (now the Kamadhenu Theatre), *Madhav Baug* of Sir T. Madhav Rao (now an empty plot of land at the Kutchery Road junction) and *Amjad Baug* of Sriman Srinivasa Iyengar (on Luz Church Road). The Rao family being orthodox Madhva Brahmins, would not partake of the food cooked in the Naidu

kitchen and special arrangements were made to get their meals supplied from Madhav Baug in Luz Corner.

With Venkatasami's death, Buchi Babu, or Venkatomahipathi Naidu (to give him his real name), the father of Indian cricket in Madras, took over the estates from his grandfather (who had also adopted him) as also the patronage of the Rao family.

When Saraswati was around six, the Naidu family began looking out for someone who would teach Hindustani music to Buchi Babu's daughter Narasamma. Yakoob Ali Khan, a popular Ustad of the city, was selected. It was also decided the young Saraswati would be Narasamma's companion during the classes and learn along with her. By her own admission, Saraswati learnt "some songs, how to play the sitar and harmonium and sing in alignment with *sruti*, pleasing those who listened." The classes continued till she was nine. Besides this, she also became fluent in Telugu.

It was a time when girls were expected to be married before they attained puberty. The Raos found a suitable match for their daughter in a Madhva family from Salem.

C. Raghavendra Rao was a

Station House Officer (Sub Inspector) at a police station in Salem. Poor financial status was a factor common to the two families. Intriguingly, Bai took on the first letter of her father-in-law's name as her initial and became C. Saraswati Bai.

At a family event at the Big Street home, young Saraswati was asked to sing by her parents and was much appreciated by all. It was however on a Sanskrit scholar and pandit who happened to attend the event that the performance had the biggest impact. He stated that the girl was blessed with extraordinary talent and that she would in some way become famous. He also expressed his desire to assist in her development. This was Pandit Krishnachar, who was then working as a Sanskrit tutor at the Madras Christian College. True to his words, he turned up the next day and began teaching Sanskrit to Saraswati.

Krishnachar did not stop with teaching her Sanskrit. It would appear that he had already visualised a career in Harikatha for his young disciple. He began teaching her small songs to be sung with *bhava* and *tala*. He began inviting some of his musician friends to Big Street to teach the avid student several songs. The song was not considered complete till Saraswati had learnt the meaning and context of the song and also learnt to sing it with proper enunciation and emotion. Gradually, it would appear, moulding Saraswati became his single-minded obsession. Ac-

• by SRIRAM V.

ording to her, he even began neglecting his official duties to fulfil this mission.

By the time she was eleven, Bai's singing talent was getting noticed. There were suggestions from friends and well-wishers that she ought to take to the Carnatic platform and train to become a concert singer. But Bai and her family were not keen about this. Neither was the guru. The reasons were not far to seek. In those days, c. 1903, it was unheard of for women of the "upper" castes to take to a concert career. It was the sole prerogative of the devadasi-s.

It was around this time that Lady Sankaran Nair, the wife of

Overcoming the detractors

Once Saraswati was determined of a professional Harikatha career, the murmurs of discontent among the Bhagavatar-s of the Harikatha tradition began. Soon the matter snow-balled into a major controversy. The malcontents began spreading all kinds of rumours casting aspersions on Saraswati's way of life and moral character. A letter was sent to the Principal of the Madras Christian College, demanding that Krishnachar be immediately removed from his post. As a result, even the public became apprehensive of attending her performances and even before it began, it appeared that her career was truly blighted. The patronage that the Naidu family extended to the Raos also began to wane.

In the meanwhile, Muraiyur Shammukham Chetty, a patron of the arts who lived in Mundakakanni Amman Koil Street of Mylapore, decided to organise Saraswati Bai's performances. He invited many prominent personalities of the city to witness them and when it proved to be greatly successful, Bai became confident that she could hold her own as a Harikatha artiste of merit.

The detractors were however not idle. Chief among them, the male Harikatha bhagavatar-s, called for a meeting of sabha-s. It must be kept in mind that, at that time, most sabha-s of the city were involved in conducting Harikatha performances and very few organised music concerts. These were powerful bodies and counted many society leaders among their office bearers and any move by them would have far reaching consequences. At the meeting, it was resolved that "if any Sabha organised a performance of C. Saraswati Bai, no other Bhagavatar would ever consent to performing for that Sabha". Most sabha-s therefore decided to avoid taking any chances at antagonising such a galaxy of artistes.

If getting a sabha was difficult, drafting accompanists was an impossibility. Those who had accompanied her in her previous two performances had been ostracised by the *vidwans* till they had undergone a purification ritual for having accompanied a woman. However Bai and her guru were relentless and there finally came a day in February 1909 when notices were seen pasted on several walls of the city that on the 22nd, Sunday, at 4.00 pm, a Harikatha on the subject of Ramakrishna Pattabhishekam (*Garuda Garva Bhangam*) would be performed by Saraswati Bai, a Brahmin girl. It

Sir C. Sankaran Nair, a well-known judge of the Madras High Court, set up a recreation club for women at Egmore. The membership was fairly exclusive and, as Bai herself put it, "the activities were restricted to Thursdays between 4.00 and 6.00 pm, when women sat around tables in fours and discussed their domestic affairs. It included praising or damning the tastes in jewels and clothes of others, trading recipes,

discourse by way of a change and prepared her on topics such as "The Duties of Women", "Pati Bhakti" and "Women Scholars of Yore". Saraswati learnt them all and went and delivered them. They were greatly appreciated.

Encouraged by this, Krishnachar taught Saraswati Bai her first full-fledged Harikatha which was on *Garuda Garva Bhangam*. This was presented by her at the Egmore Ladies Club one Thursday evening in 1908. Perhaps realising that he had started something sensational, Krishnachar did the unprecedented by coming to the club. That evening there were also other men who turned up. Notable among them was Sir Sankaran Nair himself. The response from the audience was tremendous. As the applause died down, Lady Nair took the no doubt blushing and beaming Saraswati by the hand and introduced her to Sir Sankaran. The learned judge then stated that, given that the music and the discourse were of such high order, they ought not to be for an audience comprising women alone. He cited examples of women such as Sarojini Devi (Naidu) who had come out to be of service to society and asked Saraswati to take on a career in public discourse. However he also warned her that such a bold move would have its detractors and assured her that such char-

acters would soon give up their protests.

Returning home, the matter was discussed threadbare within the Rao family. Let alone social protests, it also remained to be seen if Saraswati's career could progress beyond the initial stages when the sheer novelty of a woman performing Harikatha would attract a large audience turnout. The end result of all the debate was a firm decision that Saraswati would become a Harikatha exponent.

What was the view of the husband? By all reports he was a supportive man and encouraged her in her choice of career. He however rarely interfered and spent his time in managing the household. In later years, he faded so much into the background that not many knew of his existence. In many ways, therefore, Saraswati was to stand convention on its head. Not only was she to become the first Brahmin woman to take to Harikatha, she was also perhaps fated to be one of the earliest women to have a 'househusband'. (Courtesy: *Sruti*).

Now began a busy concert career that was to remain overflowing with performances for at least the next three decades. — (Courtesy: *Sruti*)

S.V.

READABILITY PLEASE

Dear Readers,

As letters from readers increase, we are receiving more and more hand written 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

Quizzin'
with
Ram'nan

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

1. Which legendary Science Fiction writer has received a 2007 Pulitzer special citation?
2. Where was the first-ever joint military exercise among Japan, the United States and India held recently?
3. Which corporate is back on top of the Fortune 500 list with \$351.1 billion in revenue for 2006?
4. Which city beat New Delhi to host the 2014 Asian Games?
5. Which bank has agreed to buy ABN Amro Holding NV for \$91 billion in the world's biggest financial-services acquisition?
6. On April 23rd, of which famous star did NASA release the first 3-D images as acquired by the STEREO spacecraft?
7. Name the mineral of the same composition as Superman's Kryptonite that has been found in a Serbian mine.
8. Name Russia's first president who passed away on April 23rd.
9. Which auto-maker surpassed General Motors' first-quarter sales of cars and trucks, threatening GM's 76-year reign as the world's biggest automaker?
10. Why was 'Gliese 581 c' in the news?
* * *
11. Name the professor from Gobichettipalayam who was one of the 32 killed in the Virginia Tech University shoot-out on April 16th.
12. Where was a foundation stone for a memorial to K. Kamaraj laid recently by filmstar Sarathkumar?
13. Which National Award-winning actor's movie company is called 'Duet Movies'?
14. Name the only exclusive channel in Tamil for kids launched recently.
15. The Chief Minister recently released the Tamil translation of the concise version of which venerable global reference tome?
16. The State Government has signed an MoU for a Rs. 20,000-crore project with Government of Ras al Khaimah for world-class townships in which two places are in the State?
17. Who is playing the role that Rajinikanth donned in the remake of the 70s hit film *Billa*?
18. Which Satyaraj starrer was based on a Sujata novel 'JK'?
19. What is the basic difference between *Silambam* and *Muchaan*?
20. The micro-community of which religion in the State is also called 'Samanars'?

(Answers on page 8)

What is law?*

The Blind Men and the Elephant An Indian Fable

*It was six men of Indosian
To learning much inclined
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind)
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.*

*The First approached the Elephant
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"*

*The Second, feeling of the tusk
Cried, "Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"*

*The Third approached the animal
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see", quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"*

*The Fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee
"What most this wondrous beast is like,
Is mighty plain", quoth he;
" 'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"*

*The Fifth who chanced to touch the ear
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"*

*The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail,
That fell within his scope,
"I see", quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"*

*And so these men of Indosian
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion,
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!*

*The Moral:
So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter Ignorance,
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!*

John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887)
An English version in poetry,
of a primary school fable from India.

* This was the heading given in The Macquarie Easy Guide to Australian Law, which had featured it.

AN INADVERTENT JUMBLE

● The third part of the five-part series by M.S. Raghunathan, which appeared on page 6 of the April 1st issue of *Madras Musings*, was badly jumbled, quite inadvertently, while making up the page. The erroneous composition started with the 2nd paragraph of the second column. We regret the error and print here the correct version.

— THE EDITOR

Vijayaraghavan was a keen problem-solver and had no great fascination for building theories or acquisition of extensive scholarship. He was always on the lookout for interesting problems and was quite happy to get to know them from the knowledgeable. Weil, on the other hand, developed theories and for him problem-solving, while important, was secondary: with the right theory the solutions to problems will assuredly fall out.

Physically, too, the two were a study in contrast. Weil was slim and fit. He enjoyed walking a great deal and used to call it (in the Macarthy days) his 'un-American' activity. Vijayaraghavan's was a portly frame which reflected correctly his sedentary lifestyle.

Weil's initial cordial relationship with Syed Ross Masood did not survive for long. His independent spirit

came into conflict with the system in which the Vice-Chancellor was a demi-god; and Masood's perception of the University as a family legacy did not help. Towards the end of his second year in Aligarh, Weil went on a short vacation to Europe (where in fact he exerted himself to acquire books for the Aligarh library). He returned to find himself summarily dismissed. His friend Vijayaraghavan had quit and moved to Dacca in protest when Masood, in Weil's absence, offered him the professorship from which he planned to oust Weil. Weil returned to Paris after a brief stay with Vijayaraghavan in Dacca. During that stay, Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, the then Vice-Chancellor, invited him to take up a position in Andhra University. Weil was attracted by the offer but eventually declined when Radhakrishnan was unable to meet his demand for a free hand to run the department.

Vijayaraghavan later moved to Madras to head the then newly formed Ramanujan Institute. He died in 1955 at the relatively young age of 53. Chandrasekharan has this to say of Vijayaraghavan: "No one who knew him intimately – as a working mathematician, as a genial host or as an affectionate father – could fail to say here was an intellectual of whom his country could be proud.

"Vijayaraghavan loved lecturing, and was a lucid, effective and sometimes brilliant lecturer, especially on mathematical topics which were of immediate interest to him.

"It was a pet saying of his that one could not claim that one knew a theorem, unless one could give not less than three different proofs of it, of which at least one proof was one's own."

It is hardly surprising that he was on occasions hoist with his own petard!

Weil's influence on Indian mathematics during the Aligarh sojourn cannot be considered as greatly significant, although some individuals like Vijayaraghavan would have benefited from his presence. It is some thirty years later that his mathematics had a big impact in this country: after all, Aligarh happened at the very beginning of Weil's career as a mathematician, and the researches that were to wield influence came later...

Indian thought certainly had great influence on Weil. In his autobiography, he says that the only religious ideas that appealed to him were those to be found in Hindu philosophical thought. During the Second World War, Weil refused to do military service and ironically he cited the *Bhagavad Gita*



Till May 28: "Impression Soleil Levant" / Impressions of the Rising Sun. Photographic exhibition by Rannjan Joawn. Fascinated by photography since childhood, it seemed but a natural step for Joawn to make a vocation out of it after graduating in Visual Communications from Loyola College. (At Alliance Francaise.)

May 21-31: Children's Film Festival. The Alliance Francaise Library has a newly opened space for children between 8 and 14 years to help them discover and learn French through songs and nursery rhymes, picture books, comics, magazines for younger readers and movies subtitled in English with wireless headphones.

To mark the opening, 10 days of animation and children's films (with English subtitles) will be screened at the Alliance Francaise Auditorium. Tintin and Asterix dominate the Film Festival.



The Romans in South India

Most Indians are unaware that around the time of Christ, India, especially South India, had a brisk trade with Greece and Rome. Hundreds of Romans came to India. Many of them even settled here, adjusting themselves to the Indian climate and lifestyle.

The first batch of Roman traders arrived on the Malabar Coast (Kerala) a few centuries before Christ. Those days, circumnavigation of Cape Comorin was too hazardous due to the rough seas and ruthless pirates. Hence, these foreigners travelled on, through the jungles of the Western Ghats – tiger and elephant country – crossing the Palghat Pass, to reach Coimbatore. From there, they travelled on to the market towns and ports on the East Coast of India.

The Romans came to India in search of gemstones, silk, cotton, ivory, spices, sandalwood and peacocks. Indian gemstones, mainly beryl, and Indian spices, especially pepper and cardamom, were in great demand in the Roman markets. In return, India obtained coral, wine, olive oil and metals such as gold, silver and copper from Rome. The metals imported from Rome were mostly in the form of coins and medals.

Archaeology, as well as ancient literary works, both Graeco-Roman and Tamil, throws welcome light on the long and interesting story of this Indo-Roman trade.

The ancient Tamil works referring to the Roman trade are the epic Sangam poems, because many of them were composed at the Sangam or 'Assembly of Tamil Scholars' held in Madurai, the capital of the Tamil Pandya Kingdom.

The *Purananuru* and the *Ahananuru* are the most important Tamil poems that refer to the Roman trade. These poems

refer to all foreign traders – Greek, Roman and West Asian – as *Yavanas*. In the *Purananuru*, the poet lauds the Pandya King and goads him to taste the sweet-scented teral (wine), brought by the lovely ships of the Yavanas and served on trays of chiselled gold by beautiful girls with sparkling wrists. This pointed reference to the Yavanas bringing wine to South India undoubtedly indicates that the Yavanas were mostly Romans because we know that wine was one of the commodities of export from Rome to India.

The Yavanas were in great demand in ancient Tamil Nadu owing to their technical abilities as builders, carpenters and blacksmiths. It is said that artisans from distant North Indian kingdom such as Avanti and Magadha worked along with the Yavanas to build the splendid city of Kaveripattinam, or Puhar, on the Coromandel Coast. Some of the Tamil kings even employed the Yavanas to produce sophisticated war-weapons, especially 'siege engines'.

Being strong and well-built, equipped with 'murderous swords', but ignorant of the Tamil language and having no local sympathies, the Yavanas also seem to have been ideal gatekeepers or bodyguards in the palaces and forts of ancient Tamizhagam.

The Tamil poems also refer to the Yavana lamp that was known for its steady flame without a flicker. Such lamps were in great demand in India. These exotic lamps were indeed a novelty to Indians. Some of them were crafted as statues of women, holding in their folded palms a *tahali* or bowl, containing the oil fuelling the lamp. These lamps are very similar to the *pavai vilakku* – a female figure, in metal, with a lamp in its hands – used in some homes and temples of Tamil Nadu to this day. Unluckily, such Roman lamps have never been found in any place in South India; those discovered at Arikamedu (near Pondicherry) are all small terracotta lamps and can in no way be compared to the huge metallic lamps described in the Tamil poems.

Sea to the west coast of India in the last decades of the first century A.D. The book describes the routes from the Red Sea to the west coast of India, and the major harbours and emporia and the commodities of trade.

It is clear that the Romans wanted very many expensive things from India. But they did not produce many goods that they could offer to Indians. Hence, the Romans were compelled to part with huge quantities of their gold and silver coins, medals and jewels in return for the goods that they took from India. This explains the occurrence of large quantities of Roman coins in many archaeological sites in South India.

From the late 18th Century, archaeologists and treasure-diggers have unearthed thousands of ancient Roman coins, sometimes in association with Roman jewellery, at scores of sites throughout South India. As the Roman traders travelled to India by sea, finds of such coins are more numerous in sites close to the Malabar and Coromandel Coasts. Coimbatore, Madurai and Karur in Tamil Nadu; Eyyal and Kottayam in Kerala; Bangalore and Akki Allur in Karnataka; and Akkanpalle and Nasthullapur in Andhra are some of the famous villages and cities where Roman coins have been found. Within Chennai city, Roman coins have been discovered in Mambalam and Saidapet.

The majority of the Roman coins in India occur as hoards buried underground, mostly in an earthenware pot and, occa-

sionally, in a brass or bronze vessel. Some of the coins have also been discovered in megalithic graves. A few of the Roman coins have been recovered from ruined Buddhist stupas where these coins were placed as ritual offerings by devotees.

Besides Roman coins, Roman terracotta vessels and utensils have also been discovered in many places in India. Among such vessels are the *amphora* jars. These are long, conical jars with handles on both sides. These jars came to India filled with Roman wine and olive oil.

The precise reasons and the date of the end of the trade are, to the historian-archaeologist, as vague as the beginnings of the trade! The trade slowly and steadily tapered off by the 5th-6th Centuries A.D. By then, Europe had learnt the art of rearing silkworms on mulberry leaves, as a result of which the demand for eastern silks in Europe drastically reduced. In India, this period saw the rapid political decline of several Indian kingdoms, such as the Satavahanas, Pandyas, Cholas and Cheras, who had all fostered this trade. Due to lack of royal patronage, many Indian traditional arts and crafts declined. The artisans and merchants fled from their homes in the market towns. Thus, this trade petered out to a faint memory and then a forgotten piece of history, till modern archaeologists began to unearth various aspects of it.

The Indo-Roman contacts had a lasting impact on Indian society, economy, art and architecture.

One of the direct consequences of this trade was the growth of scores of urban centres throughout South India, mainly in the Tamil Nadu-Andhra region. These trade

(Continued on page 8)

● by
Dr. S. Suresh

The principal Graeco-Roman books dealing with the Indo-Roman trade are Pliny's *Natural History* (77 A.D.), the *Periplus Maris Eruthraei* by an anonymous author (80-89 A.D.), and Ptolemy's *Geography* (mid-second century A.D.). These Graeco-Roman works are more useful than the Tamil poems because they are not only precisely datable but also provide more detailed and accurate descriptions of the trade, ports and items of export and import.

The most noteworthy Graeco-Roman work is the *Periplus* written in Greek. It is believed to have served as a guidebook for ancient sailors travelling in the Indian Ocean. The author of the *Periplus* was probably a Greek sailor who sailed from the ports of the Red

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— The Editor

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A FLICKER OF HOPE

(Continued from page 1)
specific cases will be done only after hearing and taking into account points of view of the owners of such heritage buildings and the general public.

6. In case the owners of such properties are private parties and not government/quasi government agencies or religious entities or charitable trusts, the draft regulation recognises that such parties are likely to lose out on development of land which may be disallowed owing to heritage regulations. In such cases the CMDA will grant them Transferable Development Rights (TDR) at alternative locations, the size, locations and extent being determined by the Member-Secretary. In case the owner does not use them directly he can also trade the TDR so acquired to a builder who may therefore build an additional floor in some other location using this right. This is, however, likely to be contentious issue for the TDR may not

take into account differences in value between the location where the heritage building exists and where the alternative site is based. The shortage of land within the city can also pose a problem in identifying alternative sites, as residents/users of areas where these development rights can be used may object to additional load on their infrastructure. It must also be realised that the core unit of preservation here is a building or a precinct and not a piece of land and the document remains silent on what happens if an owner, after receiving and using the TDR, still refuses or expresses inability to maintain the heritage structure. Also what will be the basis of evaluation of the location? Will all heritage structures be measured by the same yardstick? Will the owners of Casino Theatre, for instance, get the same compensation as say the Trust that controls the Victoria Public Hall? Also, can a TDR acquired in a

residential area be utilised in a commercial location? These are all questions that remain unanswered.

7. A concept of a heritage precinct is proposed to be introduced whereby the emphasis will be on maintaining the skyline and surroundings of a heritage building and all development within the area will fall under the proposed regulation. This means that if such a rule does come into effect, the future constructions of monstrosities such as the new Secretariat inside Fort St George and the ugly structure next to Higginbothams may not happen.

8. The proposed regulations are, however, weak on the idea of a repair fund. This is most essential as most owners of heritage structures find it difficult to spend on upkeep. However, the draft merely states that owners of such properties will need to spend on repairs themselves and for cases where this is found impossible, a repair fund MAY be created. It also states that financial support can be given to "deserving cases". Now, what defines a deserving case? The document is silent on that. An Act without financial incentive is toothless and the CMDA may do well to mull over this issue before finalising its directives.

9. The regulations plan to have a graded listing of heritage buildings, the guidelines for which have been given on page 1.

As far as drafts go, this appears to be a fair beginning that the government has made. A lot, however, depends on what really translates into action. We have seen earlier drafts winding up in some babu's desk just a few hours before the Minister was to smile on it and ink it. We hope such will not be the case this time.

Another look at Elliot's Beach

City-based architect Tara Murali says that any plans to 'beautify' Elliot's Beach should spell out the aims of the project, list the processes that must be followed, and should be sustainable and inclusive.

She highlighted these issues in a presentation made to the Corporation Commissioner Rajesh Lakhoni during a recent visit to the beach by him and the interaction he held with people keen about this project.

Tara Murali says the project should not be one of beautification but of restoring the beach to its original nature.

She says that areas of this beach which have been leased out or built up (like the restaurant and the dilapidated bungalow on the south side) should be 'recovered' and the beach area clearly demarcated.

Also, entertainment spaces should be limited to the space around the present skating rink. "This means that you cannot have theatres and shops and other things spread across the sands," she says.

She says it is important to identify the key stakeholders of Elliot's Beach, their rights and responsibilities and include them in such a project.

"How can you plan for the

beach and ignore the sanitation, livelihood and access routes of kuppams which are part of Elliot's Beach?" asks the architect who is also involved in heritage and civic projects and is a member of INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage).

So, how do we address the issue of hawkers whose community has multiplied and includes outsiders too?

Tara suggests that the beach road be re-designed to include three sections – one service road for the beachfront residences, one two-way road and one section for parking and stalls.

"This is a wide road and the space can be well managed," she says

Hawkers can be restricted to one area alongside the pavement and stalls built in such a manner that the view of the sand and sea is not obstructed at any cost.

"You can have stalls at lower level or space them out well," suggests Tara Murali.

By doing this, dumping of packaging and food waste on the sands will be reduced, carts will be banned on the beach area and everyone can enjoy the sight. — (Courtesy: *Adyar Times*.)

The Romans in South India

(Continued from page 7)
centres were initially either capital cities such as Madurai, or port-towns such as Kaveripattinam or industrial centres such as Kodumanal.

Indians began to produce sculptures, jewels and other objects stylistically similar to the Roman ones. Occasionally, Indians even used the ancient Roman coins as 'currency'. These coins thus acquired the status of a 'multinational' currency comparable to the present-day U.S. dollar that is freely accepted worldwide.

The Roman coins greatly in-

fluenced ancient Indian coinage. The influences pertained to size, weight, art-motifs and minting techniques. The royal portraits on the coins of many ancient Indian dynasties, such as the Sangam Cheras, Sangam Pandyas, Satavahanas and western Kshatrapas, are believed to have been modelled on the portraits appearing on the Roman coins.

Many aspects of Roman polity, society and culture mingled with Indian traditions and beliefs and have survived to the present day – (Courtesy: *HRD Times*.)

Answers to Quiz

1. Ray Bradbury; 2. In the Pacific Ocean off central Japan's Boso Peninsula; 3. Wal-Mart; 4. Incheon, South Korea; 5. Barclays Plc, Britain's third largest bank; 6. Our Sun!; 7. Jadarite; 8. Boris Yeltsin; 9. Toyota Motor Corp.; 10. Astronomers have determined that it is the most Earth-like planet outside our Solar System to date.

* * *

11. G.V. Loganathan; 12. Mayittanpatti panchayat on Madurai-Virudhunagar highway; 13. Prakash Raj; 14. Chutti TV; 15. Concise Encyclopaedia Britannica; 16. Coimbatore and Kancheepuram; 17. Ajith; 18. Airport; 19. The former uses a long staff, the latter a small one; 20. Tamil Jains.

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