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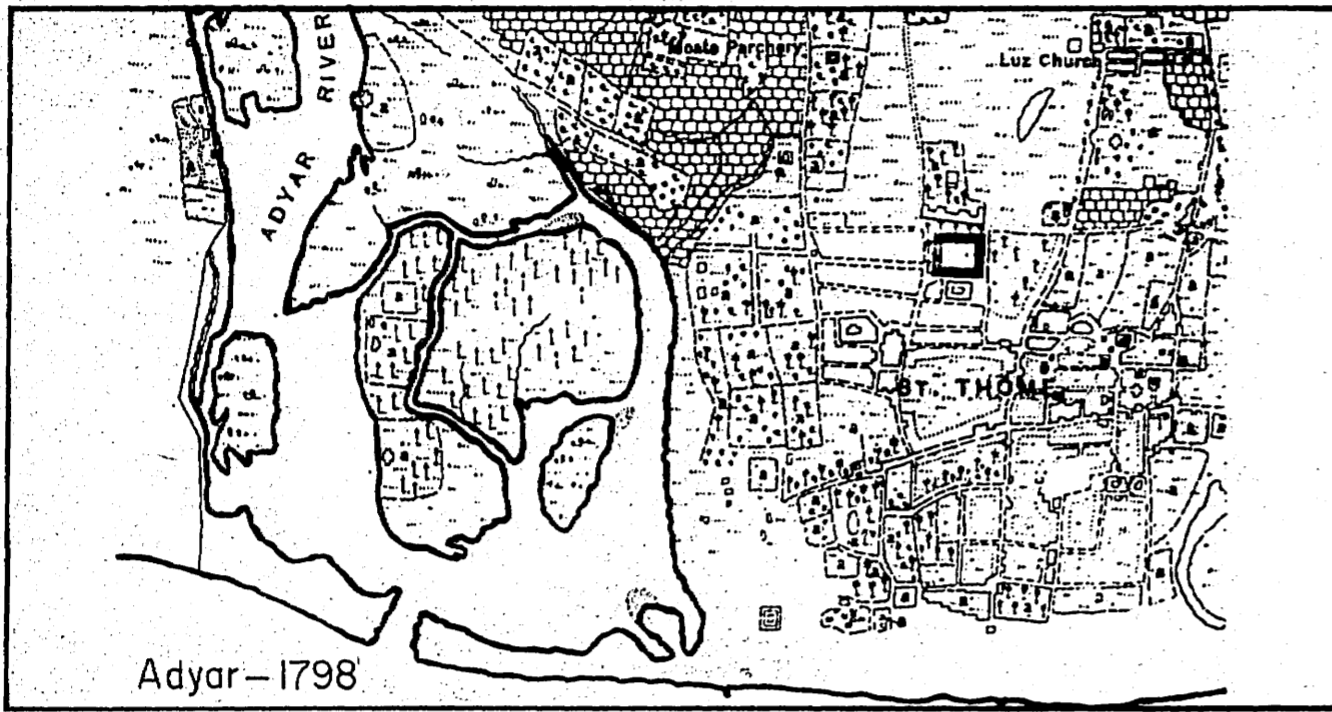
ADDISON METAL CUTTING TOOLS

MUSINGS

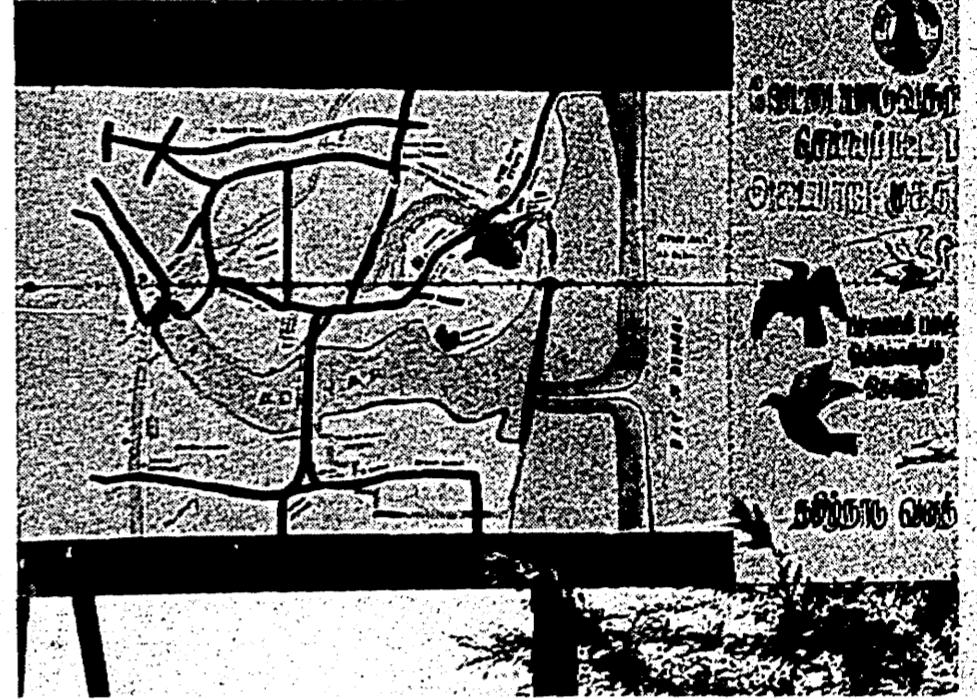
Vol. II. No. 15

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

November 16 — 30, 1992



Adyar—1798



Sanctuary or building site?

(By The Editor)

On September 16th we carried on this very page a photograph of a Tamil Nadu Forest Department notice-board which featured a map of the Adyar Estuary and Creek and which proclaimed the whole area "A Protected Area". We, today, reproduce once again the map in that notice.

We also reproduce a 1798 map of the same area, showing when Quibble Island was really an island and when all the islands in the Adyar Estuary were 'palmyrah/coconut topes'. The two maps make it clear that the whole area was a large estuary with several islands in it and that, over the years, several of the islands were connected by fill to make today's map of a large area of built-up land separating Creek from Estuary.

Regardless of our story, regardless of history and regardless of its fellow government department, the Forest Department, the MMDA issued an advertisement on October 18th — and *The Hindu* accepted it, its pre-occupation with national affairs undoubtedly blinding it to the fact that on the local scene one government department was ignoring the writ of another. Apparently the MMDA felt that only members of the public could be prosecuted, not the Authority, if a decision was taken not to accept the ENTIRE Adyar Estuary as a

sanctuary. And by accepting that advertisement, we would say *The Hindu* went along with that view.

What the MMDA advertised — and we reproduce the advertisement below — was for suggestions on how to spend Rs. 40 crores on developing the Adyar Creek, AN AREA THAT IS PATENTLY PART OF THE ESTUARY SANCTUARY. Such a large sum must undoubtedly involve large building construction — and such building will undoubtedly affect the neighbouring ecosystem. Not only will Madras lose the Creek portion of the sanctuary, but the Estuary portion will also be affected. We can then forget the Adyar Estuary Sanctuary which many environmentalists are interested in developing as a major waterbird haven. And we can look forward to more multi-storeyed commercial complexes and multi-cuisine restaurants.

How crass can you get! And to think that the MMDA is the body which aims to create a sustainable environment-friendly Madras!

(Also see page 4)

Sholinganallur corridor site

Progress gets underway on Indo-Singapore trade link

(By Our Business Correspondent)

Sholinganallur, on the outskirts of Madras, is to be the Indian end of the Indo-Singapore trade corridor. Seven hundred hectares of land have been identified here for the proposed industrial estate from which manufactured goods are expected to go directly to Singapore or its customers. Next door is likely to be an electronic estate as well.

A team of Tamil Nadu Government officials, from Fort St George, the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) and the newly-formed Tamil Nadu Corporation for Infrastructure Development (TACID), are due to leave for Singapore shortly for discussions with the Singapore Trade Development Board. If the talks

go well, a few dozen companies from among Singapore's 3000 multinational and 40,000 international trading companies are expected to set up shop in Sholinganallur — some, perhaps, even with Indian partners.

Rising wages, increasing production costs and a shortage of land has had Singapore looking for new locations to invest in. Madras's modern airport and harbour, its other infrastructural facilities and its large pool of technically qualified but inexpensive labour as well as the willingness of its women to work in factories have made the island look favourably on Madras.

Electronics, software, textiles and food processing are some of the fields

Singapore would like to establish industries in, in the corridor. Besides factories, the site will need warehouses for raw materials from Singapore, financial institutions, tax trading houses and a whole lot of other support facilities. There is expected to be employment for a few thousand people here.

The proposal for the corridor was first mooted three years ago, but Singapore did not warm to it till the new liberalisation policy in India. Now it is felt there is every possibility of Singapore agreeing to 'full speed ahead' and there is even strong speculation that the corridor will become a reality by next April.

'Dream the CREEK competition'

MMDA MADRAS METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

ADYAR CREEK AREA DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTUAL PLAN/DESIGN/IDEA COMPETITION

The Tamil Nadu Government in G.O.Ms.No.2186, Revenue Dept., dt. 16.10.90 has entrusted to MMDA, the work of reclamation and development of about 45.45 acres of land in Adyar Creek Area near the Foreshore Estate, Madras. The cost of the project would be in the order of Rs.40 crores. It is proposed to hold an 'Idea Competition' for a conceptual plan for the development of the area.

Interested Architects/Planners (individuals and firms) who have registered with the Council of Architects/Institute of Town Planners (India) may get the application form and terms of competition by remitting Rs.150/- through a Demand Draft on any nationalised bank drawn in favour of the Member-Secretary, Madras Metropolitan Development Authority and payable at Madras, in person. Those who want to obtain the application form & terms of competition by post, should furnish a self-addressed, stamped envelope (Rs.10/-).

MADRAS METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
 Thelamuthu Nagaraj Building,
 No.8, Gandhi Iyengar Road,
 Egmore, Madras 600 008.

Vice-Chairman, MMDA.

Look out for receiving packages for applications from October 1992

Ideas without ideals

In an advertisement that appeared in *The Hindu* on October 18th, 1992, the MMDA had called for 'ideas' from architects for developing an area of 45.45 acres at the mouth of the Adyar River. What is intriguing is that it was also stated that an amount of Rs. 40 crores had been set aside for this project.

How, may I ask, can there be a project estimate when the type of

fact that South Beach Road crosses it at one point does not in any way alter this relationship.

If at all any "development" is suggested, it should be oriented towards reinforcing the area's natural attributes. Converting the area into a major green belt which will act as a buffer for the rest of the estuary, and, at the same time, provide a haven to us Madrasis who are starved of parks and open

spaces, would be a step in the right direction.

While the city has been growing, our parks and gardens have been systematically destroyed. The Zoological Garden and Peoples Park have given way to the suburban terminal at Central in the Eighties. The Horticultural Society lost a good chunk of its land to the flyover at Gemini in the Seventies, the rest it chose to convert into a drive-in-restaurant. Nehru Park now boasts a large new building to house the sports authority. King Richard's Park in Saidapet now accommodates a public toilet and the Corporation Unit Office. The 'green belt' separating the main road and the access road running parallel to it in Gandhi Nagar, Adyar, has been slowly eroding — a bus terminus has been built on it and the area left over is being gradually taken over by squatters who ply their trades with much profit.

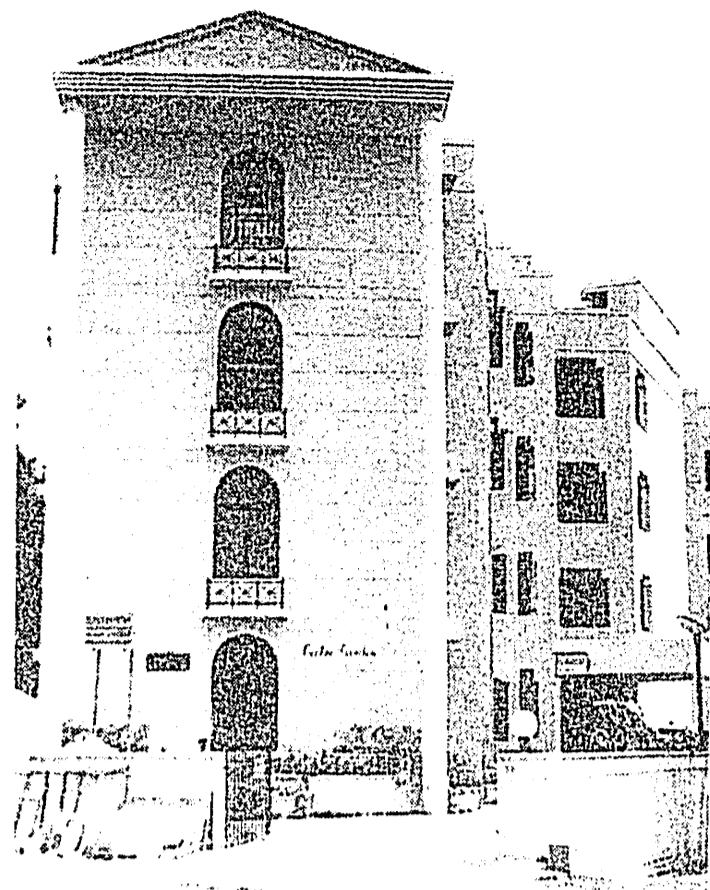
The most distressing aspect of all this is that the Government and the City Corporation have been directly responsible by their own acts for this degradation. And where they are not involved directly, they have conveniently looked the other way.

Does it not seem odd that a city of five million people does not have a single park worth its name, while Bangalore, a much smaller city, can boast of two major parks right in the heart of the city. Those who claim that the Marina is a substitute, should first try to answer the question: Why does it wear a deserted look for most of the day? The reason is the Marina is just a sandy desert and can be enjoyed only for a couple of hours after the sun goes down and before the muggers take over.

A park has many dimensions and can be many things to many people. Its value as a part of the urban fabric cannot be questioned. I am sure that the well-meaning planners at the MMDA are quite aware of all this, but for some reason are falling prey to the same forces that literally destroy the Corporation of Madras.

We look to them as the guardians of our city and expect them to stand up and be counted when it comes to fighting for ideas and ideals concerning the environmental quality of it.

Madras just loves pediments, those triangles on tops of buildings whether they suit the building or not. And if they can add a couple of pillars to a pediment, so much the better, whether the proportions are right or not. In this new block of flats, one side of the building, the side which faces C P Ramaswami Iyer Road closer



to the Adyar end, has a tiny pediment seemingly supported by two thin, as-tall-as-they-come pillars, providing a most incongruous sight to passers-by. Neither pediment nor pillars appear to serve any purpose, so why? Certainly they are not aesthetic.

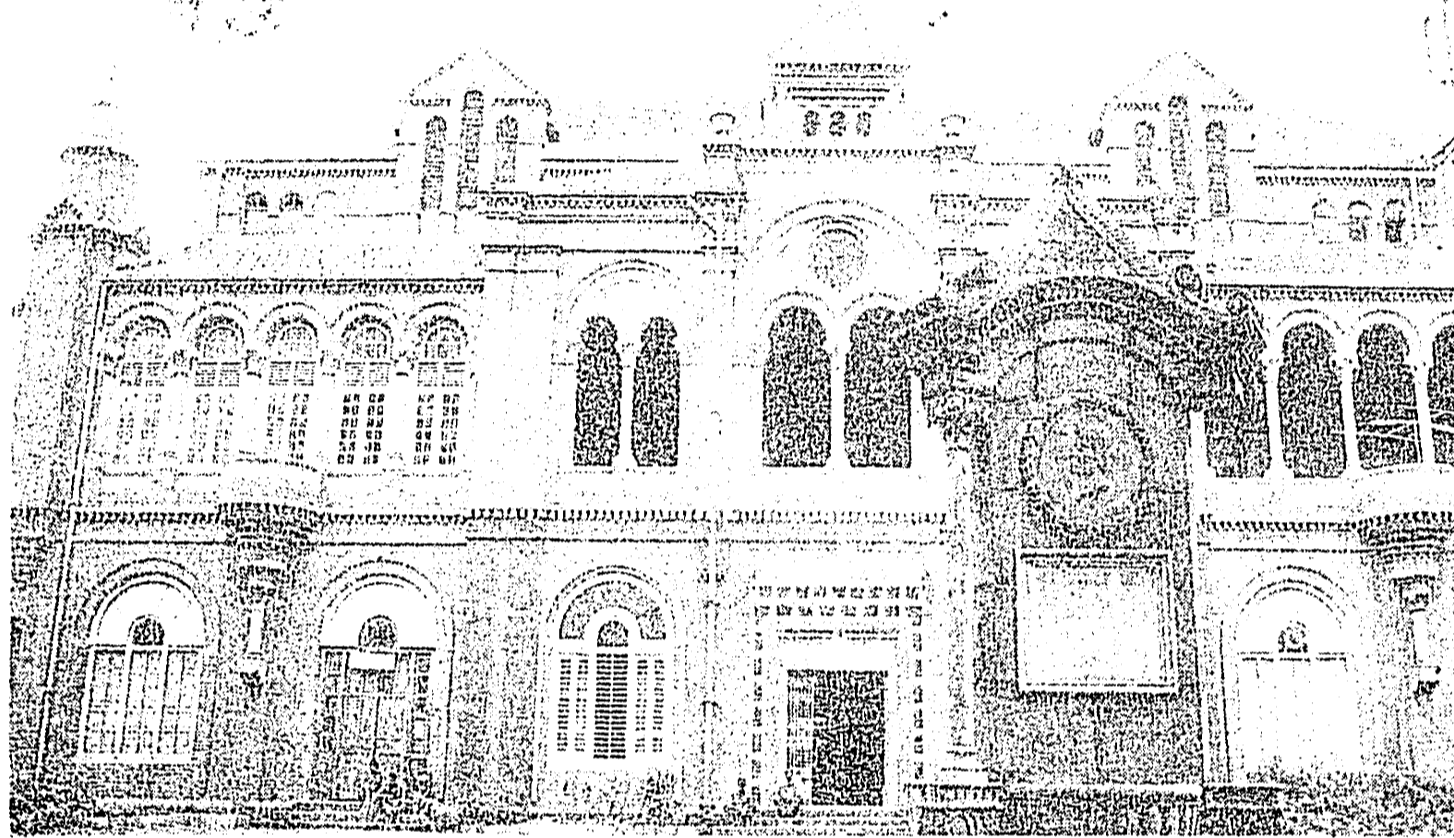
Pedimentation, arches and domes seem much more appropriate, even in their neglected state, in Victoria Public Hall, next to where the Railways took over what was left of Moore Market. The hall, meant for meetings, theatre performances etc, was opened in 1887

by Governor Lord Connemara as...&THE OLD

Madras's commemoration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Originally suggested by Sir A T Arundel, President of the Corporation, it was made possible by public subscription, but largely through the generosity of the Maharajah of Vizianagaram. A hall out of the gaslight era, it cries for preservation and improvement — and if both are provided it could become a landmark venue for public occasions, including theatre performances in the city.

By its side, and as neglected and forgotten, is the Trevelyan Fountain, sole memorial in the city to Governor Sir Charles Trevelyan, who lost his job because he protested against the introduction of income tax, but who went on to make a major contribution to the founding of the Indian Civil Service. People's Park, where fountain, hall and so much else have come up subsequently, was another Trevelyan creation.

(PHOTOS: The New — V.S. RAGHAVAN and The Old — SUSHEELA NAIR)



The battle of the book

"Daddy, what's Bulimia?" asked my darling daughter, Manimekalai, chewing on her pencil.

"Is it one of your Harshad Mehta jokes?" I asked. "No one laughs at Harshad Mehta any more. He's being groomed to get the Nobel Prize in Economics next year."

"Of course not. Mummy has to go to the Ladies Club meeting and they

wanted to discuss something that had a high moral tone, like *Lady Chatterley's Lover* or something so brilliant that no one knew what it meant.

The main speaker, the disorganised editor of a popular tabloid, had mysteriously abdicated his responsibility to the chair at the eleventh hour. This had led to a constitutional crisis. Should

sufferings into a Saint. Saint Diana." At this point, according to my wife, all the Christian ladies in the audience left.

"She said that when Princess Diana went to Pakistan she showed so much of her leg that all the Mullahs got worked up." At this point all the Muslim ladies in the audience left leaving the speaker wondering why. The British women had already boycotted the function to show they were all for Queen and Country.

"Was there anyone left?" I asked, aghast to hear this account of the Battle of the Book.

"Oh yes, one lady told us how she had spent five weeks in the USA for her sister-in-law's daughter's marriage and both ways she stopped in London. Some people have all the luck, don't they?"

"But what does that have to do with Diana?" I asked.

"Well, she read in London that the royal family could be divided into those whose roles were functional and those who were entertaining.

"We decided that Diana stopped being functional the minute she produced the heirs to the throne and Charles was no longer entertaining. One of the ladies asked where the sponge cake had been bought and we all sat down and had a second helping of cake and coffee. The discussion was a grand success."

"That's bulimia for you," I said, "mass bulimia" and gave Manimekalai another pencil to chew.



are discussing Princess Diana's life story. She suffers from Bulimia."

"That bad is it?" I asked. The wife looked up briefly from her book and said, "It means an eating disorder when apparently healthy people keep on gorging food. It's the opposite of anorexia."

"What's anorexia?" I enquired, only to be met with a frown.

The Ladies Club meeting was a very important event in the Karuvepillay Colony. It was the one occasion where foreign ladies mixed with Indian ones and discovered how much there was to keep them apart. Half the ladies, the brown churidar set, wanted to discuss the private life of Princes Diana, as written by that literary genius, Andrew Morton. The other half, the blue churidars, were outraged. They

they send a telegram to the PM and ask him to intervene in the matter? Fortunately, an alternate speaker was found, a literary hack who wrote a culinary column. The lady immediately proceeded to deliver a lecture on how many pounds of flour, sugar, butter and dozens of eggs and packets of icing sugar went into making the Royal Wedding Cake.

"She didn't talk about the book at all," complained the wife. "She held up the book and asked us, 'Why is this woman smiling?' and pointed to the picture of the Princess wearing a black jacket and her hair short, with a saintly smile on her face, despite the fact that she had no sex life at all now, and spent many days without food, according to Morton. She felt that Princess Diana had been transformed because of her

The tiger's way to better English

Is there really so much to English, I thought as I listened to Prof. S K Ram expound eruditely on a how a simple, trite thriller could be made use of to teach better English. But there were several in that virtually segregated audience at the British Council the other day, especially in the half packed with women, who seemed to know that there was indeed a whole lot more to the language than I knew. That half of the hall was most responsive to Ms Ram's exposition, which in its earnestness reflected her NCERT days and in its charm reflected the laid-back Oxford style which she's now part of at Oxford University Press, Delhi.

Once encouraged to read Leslie Charteris, Berkley Grey, Sapper, Doyle and others of that ilk, as one way of getting me to KNOW the English Language, I appear to have missed out on all the other things Ms Ram wised up on. But it was heartening to find the thriller back as a way of getting the young interested in English. Only now they've got to do a lot with those quiz questions at the end of each chapter — which could be fun, if it didn't mean exams on a whole lot of useless knowledge at the end of it all — and that's something I

never had to tackle at good old St Thomas' Prep which was headed by an Oxonian.

But if I might sound a little cantankerous over 'English, the way she is taught' by all those quick-on-the-draw answerers at the British Council, I certainly don't feel the same way about the Beeb's effort to get the language spoken better in South Asia.

element of Indian English as spoken by the latter, its manner of presentation enables the listener to acquire a 'feel' for the language similar to Duff's for India. Each ten-minute episode becomes a half hour bilingual programme as the language of the episode is explained and taught both in English and a chosen language of the sub-continent. Starting with Hindi



The BBC, which claims to be the world's largest English language classroom, has been going strong for the past year or so with a 36-part presentation of a thriller called *Tiger's Eye*, specifically targeted for South Asia. The thriller — with a wild life conservation angle to it — has been written by Alan McConnell Duff who, over four or five years, has seen much of the everyday India. Presented as a radio play in standard English — as spoken by the BEST in Britain and India — and with an

and then Bengali, the programme is now being beamed in Urdu as well, with the English-Tamil programme scheduled to be on the air at 9.15 p.m. every Saturday, from November 28th, on the BBC's Tamil programme.

Associated with the programme are two old friends of Madras, Shankar Shankaramurthi and Alan Maley. 'Anna' Shankar was 'Mr BBC Tamil' for 24 years. His first assignment after retirement was to help with the Tamil version of *Tiger's Eye* and be its 'voice' as well. Alan



Shankar Shankaramurthi, Gareth Armstrong and Geetha Subramaniam who can be heard in the English-Tamil teaching programme, *Tiger's Eye*, on the BBC's Tamil Service.

Maley, for his part, was consultant to the series and he brought to it his knowledge of, and affection for, English as she spoke round the world and his four years' experience heading the British Council in Madras, when his greatest love was the Council's English language programme.

Teaming together with producer Sue Cockyll and digital recording — which gives the highest possible sound quality — they've produced an English teaching radio series which they all hope will reach the millions who listen to the BBC's South Asian language programmes from West Asia to Southeast Asia. Of the BBC's counted 120 million listeners worldwide, nearly 50 million are in this area, 24 million of them listening in Hindi and over a million in Tamil. It is to them that the BBC is beaming this series which aims to teach spoken English by getting its audience to LISTEN carefully.

Oxford University Press in India have taken it from there and have produced material with which they hope to reach the classrooms as well. *Tiger's Eye* is available as a book in English only or in English with teaching commentary in Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, Telugu or Tamil. There are also three cassettes in the same language pattern. This will enable not only English reading and learning in classrooms, but English listening and learning as well, at the same venue or at home. To enable the widest possible reach, pricing has been kept very reasonable. But what interested me most is that the whole story — and it is quite a complex, though enjoyable, one — has been told in a vocabulary of 1200 words plus the usual conjunctions, pronouns and prepositions. When language can be as simple as that, must English language teaching be made a grammatical labyrinth?

S. Muthiah

DOON WOOS THE SOUTH

Less than a dozen parents turned up at Sishya School, Adyar, recently when the Doon School came South looking for students. Headmaster Shomi Das's exercise, of familiarising the parents with the merits of the school, did leave a lot of unanswered questions. To be very honest, I am still not very clear as to why the principal of such a well-known school should have taken so much trouble to come down to Madras to woo students from the South, especially considering Doon's loudly proclaimed long waiting-list and the fact that we do have good residential schools like Lovedale, Rishi Valley etc which are within reachable distance.

Could one thing be possible? That the South is, after all, a repository of talented 11 and 12-year old-boys who require just a few inputs to develop into the new leaders of the country? But then, the Doscos from the North have done quite well for themselves in Delhi in recent years, thank you. So why this 'pilgrimage'?

No real answers were forthcoming. So I settled down to listen to Das. Das, present head of India's first Public School, run by the Indian Public School Society, said he was here to introduce — or was it sell? I asked myself — Doon, because the school fails to attract bright students from the South, even though ten times more boys from the rest of India register for the entrance tests every year than there are seats.

The School's wish is to provide an opportunity for bright young Indians from EVERY part of the country to obtain a good education, in an all-embracing sense, through its residential system. But why are there so few from the South at Doon?

The Doon School, Das narrated, owed its existence to the foresight of Satish Ranjan Das, one of pre-Independence

India's most eminent barristers and a member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy. Founded in 1929, the school aimed from the first to admit, on a wholly residential basis, children of all castes, religions and colour, without any distinction, and to inculcate in them a spirit of secularism. It aimed at taking the best from Indian culture and India's rich heritage and to team it with the best from the school education systems in other countries adapted to the needs of India, thereby evolving a unique pattern of all-round education which would develop students who would be Indians first.

Besides the secondary and higher secondary public exams, all boys are internally assessed and must pass in Socially Useful Productive Work (SUPW). As part of SUPW, boys are expected to give two hours a week to service activities, such as village development, adult education, child education, working in homes for the handicapped and the mentally retarded, and community service on the campus by way of tree-planting, gardening, road maintenance etc. Computer literacy is compulsory. Spare time activities (STA) include such diverse crafts and hobbies as carpentry, wood turning, metal craft, motor mechanism, photography, aeromodelling, chess, first aid, electronics, practical chemistry, meteorology, dramatics, typing and philately. Besides all this, artistic skills, such as painting, wood sculpture, stone sculpture, pottery, batik, screen printing and hand block-printing are encour-

aged. The music school offers instruction in both vocal and instrumental music. And there is a variety of sport, besides mountaineering.

• by Dhanya Gopinath

The question which bothered the small audience most was the money involved and Headmaster Shomi Das

said that school fees are currently around Rs. 22,700/- a year, payable in two equal instalments before June 30 and December 31. This is an all-inclusive boarding, tuition, books and games fee. Financial Aid is also available in deserving cases through bursaries (part-scholarships). Travel grants are also given. But 'luck' from home, i.e. food, expensive watches, cameras and the like are discouraged and pocket money should be kept within limits. Headmaster Das advised,

as the school's aim was a sense of equality at all times.

An entrance test is usually conducted in November every year and, to be admitted, a boy must be over 10 years old in September of that year in order to enable him to sit for entry into Standard VI. To sit for the test for entry into Standard VII, he must be over 11 years of age but under 12 years in September of that year. The entrance test consists of four one-hour papers in English, Hindi, Mathematics and General Knowledge and is administered over a four-and-a-half hour stretch on one day with a half-hour break after two papers.

It's obviously tough getting in and it's expensive staying in. But who knows, you may have a Rajiv in the family!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

November: MMB's Artist of the Month, Kishore Randine

November 16-25: A workshop on painting by Paola Di Prima from Paris. Information, registration and workshop at A.F.

November 18: I. Bertoli Brecht by the Good Company at the Music Academy, 6.30 p.m. (passes MMB)

November 18-27: Exhibition of 'Paintings and Works Installation' by Jyotee Kalle (A.F. Art Gallery)

November 19: Workshop on Brecht's *Narrative Theatre* by Sue Pomeroy, Director, Good Company. The workshop will include practical work and discussion of Brechtian concepts. At the Br. C. 5.30 p.m. (By invitation, Br. C. and MMB)

November 25: *Living Wood: Sculptural Traditions of Southern India*. Illustrated talk by Dr. George Michell, architectural historian, who has specialised in the

Vijayanagara period of Southern Indian art. At Br. C., 7.00 p.m.

November 26-29: Film seminar with Werner Koble, Freiburg, K Hantharan, Madras and Father Gaston Roberge, Calcutta, on *Problems of a Multicultural Society — Foreigners in Germany, Minorities in India*. At MMB (10.00 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.)

November 29: Ensemble Gradiva (Alain Zaepffel, Brigitte Vinson and Sulochana Brahaspathi) presents *Voices Across Continents (Lessons of Darkness and Midnight Raga)*. At the Music Academy, 6.30 p.m. A concert of vocal music featuring Sulochana Brahaspathi accompanied by musicians on the sarangi, tabura and tabla. On the same stage will be the two singers accompanied by a 'positive organ', a 'viol de gambe' and a 'theorbe', ancient and mediaeval musical instruments.

December: MMB's Artist of the Month, Balan Nambiar

December 4: Demonstration of jewellery design techniques by Jane Adam. At the Br. C. 10.00 a.m. (By invitation, Br. C.)

Illustrated lecture on *One Jeweller's Work* by Jane Adam. At Br. C., 7.00 p.m.

December 4-6: Seminar with Dr Bernhard Glaeser, Berlin, and Dr Bernd Neugebauer, Hamburg, on *Forest for Economic Development and Recreation*. At MMB (9.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.) (By invitation, MMB)

December 6: Christmas Carols by the Polyphonic and Juniors. At MMB Library 6.30 p.m.

December 7: Performance of ancient music by Robert Reszkau. At Museum Theatre, 6.30 p.m.

Note: (A.F. = Alliance Francaise; Br. C. = British Council; MMB = Max Muller Bhavan.)



All said and done, the city is losing another landmark

A bow-wow with a judge

"A Bull Terrier!" people shriek in horror when they ask Don Mascarenhas what breed of dog he has. No matter that they've been playing with the dog for the last five minutes, and were prompted to ask its breed only because of its very individualistic appearance. Don then goes into a long story about the origins of the breed, its great appeal and strength, and how it should be handled.

As a matter of fact, Mascarenhas can do that for just about any breed, whether in the official list or not of the

Kennel Club, London, the international authority on pure bred dogs. His position as an international canine judge, backed by, quite literally, a lifetime association with animals, particularly dogs, more than qualifies him to dispense the information, as well as tips on dog care, to anyone who expresses the merest interest.

Having qualified as an All Breeds Judge of the Kennel Club of India, which is affiliated to the Kennel Club, London, Don embarked vigorously upon an extensive judging schedule. As

a breeder and exhibitor, he did not wish to be a judge; and since he became a judge, he has neither bred nor shown dogs. One way of avoiding the inevitable politicking that dogs the dog game!

Don has been invited to judge at almost every show of repute in India, and his name is a household word in doggy circles. Nothing extraordinary about that, some may say, until they



'Judge' Don Mascarenhas

Wishing to give his four sons as much as possible of the kind of childhood he had enjoyed so much, it was inevitable that they would grow up with chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys and budgerigars... and dogs. But no snakes or pigs.

(erroneously called Alsations) for example, or Pomeranians."

In India, the standards followed are those laid down by the Kennel Club, London, which recognises 155 breeds, divided into six groups, of which the largest is the Working Dog Group.

"We have so many pure breeds today," Don explains, "because people in different parts of the world bred animals to suit a particular purpose. Dogs had to earn their keep, and with judicious breeding certain breeds developed and became noted for certain qualities: coursing, retrieving, shepherding, guarding and life saving. For instance, the Dachshund (literally 'badger dog' in German) was bred low and strong to go into a badger's sett, kill the badger, which is a vicious fighter, and drag it out. Badgers were pests on Europe's farms, you see, killing chickens and stealing eggs. Not all breeds were 'functional', though; some, like the Papillon and Pomeranian, were purely ornamental, if I may use such a word."

And how about Indian breeds?

"Of course. We have four very fine breeds in India — the Rampur Hound, the Rajapalayam Hound, the Kombai and the Chippeparai. They do crop up at shows I judge. Unfortunately, too much in-breeding or too much inter-breeding results in much deviation from the standards laid down by the Kennel Club of India. If we want to attract more international attention to these breeds, we must have careful, rigidly controlled breeding programmes, such as the Thais have used for the Thai Hound, a very elegant dog. The result is that the international dog community is looking very closely at that dog."

(To be concluded next fortnight)

Tax shock at Guindy

No Tamil Nadu Government department is perhaps more media-shy than the Department of Racing. For reasons unknown, the DOR has done away with the annual pre-season Press briefing, which had for decades helped turf writers tell their readers all that the new season had in store for the betting public. The media have for long tried to have this blackout lifted — but have had no success.

Until the T.N. Government took over the ancient Madras Race Club and its subsidiary, the Ootacamund R.C., nearly two decades ago, no season was ever launched at either centre without the Turf Club's top official — men like the late D R Dogra and the late R C Chaube — calling in the Pressmen and giving them valuable information on the betting tax, riding engagements, dope testing pattern, measures to eliminate private bookmaking and what not. The Government maintained the practice on its debut in the world of the race-horse, but for only a couple of seasons.

The abolition of the Press briefing has put punters at a disadvantage. They are kept in the dark about the DOR's latest decisions on, for instance, betting tax, club's commission, and unit of Tote betting. It was no wonder that at the start of the current season, on October 31st, punters were shocked as never before by the loudspeaker announcement that the betting tax had been raised from 25 per cent to 30.25 per cent. Tiny, hand-written posters indicating the hike had been stuck on the pillars in the main ring. But these were hardly noticed by the eager first-day punters, and it was the loudspeaker announcement that stunned them.

The first State Government to take over a race club, the Tamil Nadu Government has now gained the dubious distinction of levying the country's highest betting tax. Understandably, the announcement of the hike was greeted both in the ring and the members' enclosure with jeers and shouts of "day-light robbery". There was clear

indication that Guindy punters would invest more on off-course betting on the Bangalore, Bombay, Hyderabad and Calcutta races than on the DOR's show. Suggestions were heard of bringing public reaction to the unprecedented hike to the DOR's notice. But Guindy is Guindy. As so often in the past, the mercury will return to normal in a matter of days, and the show will go on.

The show has, incidentally, begun and progressed on

by
AJAX

expected lines. Champion trainer Robert Foley, solely in charge of the high-power establishment of the country's leading and world record-breaking owner, M A M Kamaswamy, began with a hat-trick in a five-win tally in a six-event card, and has maintained the pace since. Considering the bloodline of the large number of two-year-olds under his care, all bred at the Chettinad stud farm, it will indeed be a surprise if Foley does not improve on the world record, of a century in a single season, he set at Guindy last season.

With off-course betting on the Pune races also on, an unusually big crowd turned out for the first Madras meeting. The members' enclosure in particular was packed. But it was the same story as in the recent past. It was not packed with members. According to official notifications, the members' enclosure is strictly restricted to members, nay, only to those wearing the concerned badges. Sentries are posted at both entry gates to see that no non-member enters. But nearly everyone has a free ride, as it were. Hardly anyone wears a badge. Indeed, the members' enclosure has, of late, become a market enclosure. It is no wonder that several old members have, for obvious reasons, virtually quit the scene, which they visit only on the big days, like Derby Day. Guindy is no longer the Guindy of yesteryears.

• by A Special Correspondent

learn that Don is equally well known, if not better known, in Australia, Singapore and Thailand as an impartial and almost aggressively independent judge.

He judged his first Australian show in Sydney in 1987. That first contract was for seven shows, spread over several weeks, in different cities. Since then he has judged at fourteen shows in Australia, including such prestigious ones as the Melbourne Royal Kennel Club Championship Show (over 4,000 entries) and the Thelma Gray Memorial Show at Adelaide. The latter features a prize donated by the Queen Mother of England for the best Corgi on show. Corgis are the "official"/traditional breed of the British Royal family.

Don was one of only two Indians asked to judge at the Melbourne Royal Kennel Club Championship Show. In 1994, two Indians will be among the six judges at a show in Canberra, Australia's showpiece. One will be Don Mascarenhas, the other the highly regarded judge and breeder, Nawab Nazeer Yar Jung of Hyderabad. So prestigious is this three-day show that the judges are forbidden by the terms of their contract to judge anywhere in Australia for a year before the contracted show.

When did his interest in dogs begin? "Haven't thought about that, actually," Don laughs. Then recalls, "It was just there, I suppose. I grew up in a big family that included aunts, uncles and cousins, all of whom liked animals. Consequently, the garden was home to dogs, chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, pigeons, a couple of snakes, and even pigs! Of course, it was rather a large compound!"

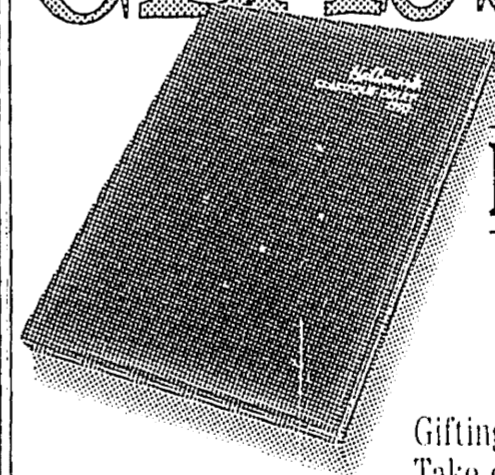
The vagaries of life, however, took him to far off places, before he could settle down to family life and dogs. After a stint in the Royal Indian Navy during World War II, when he saw action in North Africa and the Mediterranean, Don got down to manufacturing printing ink in Madras.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Paramdham Ashram, Wardha;
2. Ling Ling;
3. The LTTE massacred about 150 people in these villages;
4. 61st Cavalry;
5. 'World Thrift Day';
6. *The English Patient*;
7. Jim Garrison;
8. It's the canine mascot for the 1994 FIFA World Cup;
9. Power Grid Corporation of India Limited;
10. *Chinna Thambi*;
11. Gennifer Flowers;
12. Ronen Sen;
13. 'Kulaideivam' Rajagopal;
14. 'Sadhane Samavesha';
15. John Traicos (Zimbabwe);
16. *Tiger's Eye*;
17. An army operation launched together with the BSF, CRPF and J & K Police to nab pro-plebiscite Kashmiri insurgents;
18. Jawaharlal Nehru;
19. 11th Tashkent Film Festival;
20. Petra Kelly.

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