

WE CARE FOR MADRAS

MADRAS



MUSINGS

Vol. III. No. 8

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

August 1 — 15, 1993

Save this building

Build the new to integrate with the old

(By The Editor)

These were the headlines in the local dailies recently, after Chief Minister Jayalalitha had visited the Director-General of Police's Offices — Police Headquarters!

'DGP office to be modernised'

'DGP office to be re-modelled'

The stories that went with these headlines read: (1) 'The office premises ... are to be replaced (all emphases mine) by a new multi-storeyed and elegant office complex.' (2) 'The office ... is to be remodelled ... Chief Minister...

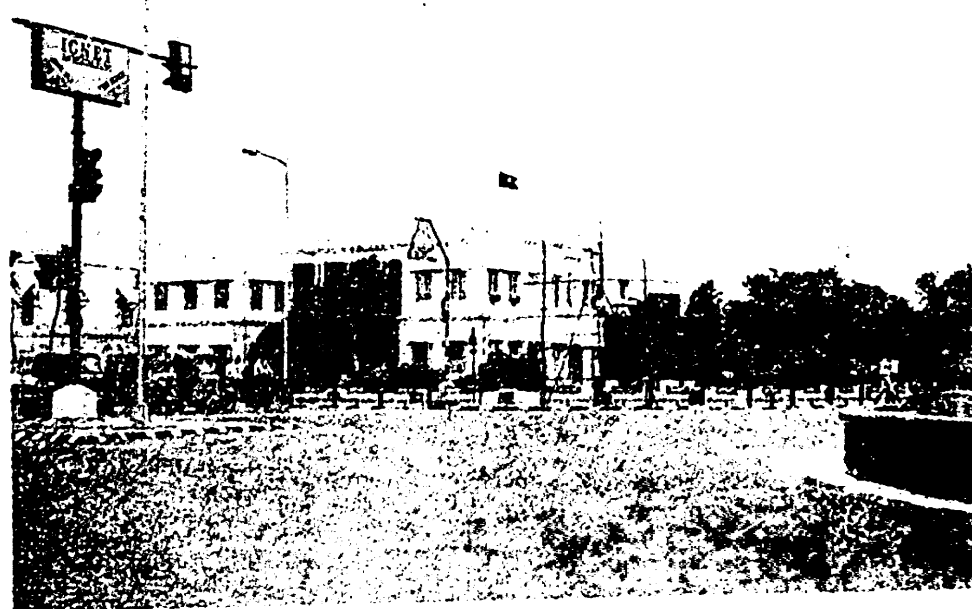
conferred ... on **restructuring** the building ...' (3) 'The office ... is to be remodelled to make it an important landmark in the City. Chief Minister ... passed orders ... to call for **plans for the proposed complex** from leading architects.

Three different stories, three different perspectives, and we certainly do not know which one is true. But one thing we are certain of, and that is that **this century-and-more-old building must be saved**. Not as a com-

memoration of thriving Masonry as whose Lodge the building had originally been built. Not as commemoration of the grandest age of the Raj. But as yet another example of splendid 19th Century public architecture and as part of a grand conservation effort that not only aims to retain the best of the 18th and 19th Century in the City as part of Madras's heritage but will also **put them to use after suitable re-furbishing**.

From time to time, the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority keeps announcing that it plans to compile a list of great buildings of the past in the city — like Bombay's list of 300 — that need to be **preserved and restored**. INTACH had that list prepared a few years back. But even if the MMDA plans to prepare a new list, what does it propose doing about preserving them when it is bypassed and plans made, as in this case, to possibly **"replace"** a hundred-year-old bit of Classical architecture?

The silver lining is that a widely read Chief Minister might have a different perspective on architectural conservation. That would appear to be



The front and the side view of Police Headquarters, once a Masonic Lodge and now threatened with replacement. This hundred-year-and-more-old building must be saved by imaginative architectural planning.

(Photos: V S RAGHAVAN)

MMDA plans historical conservation again

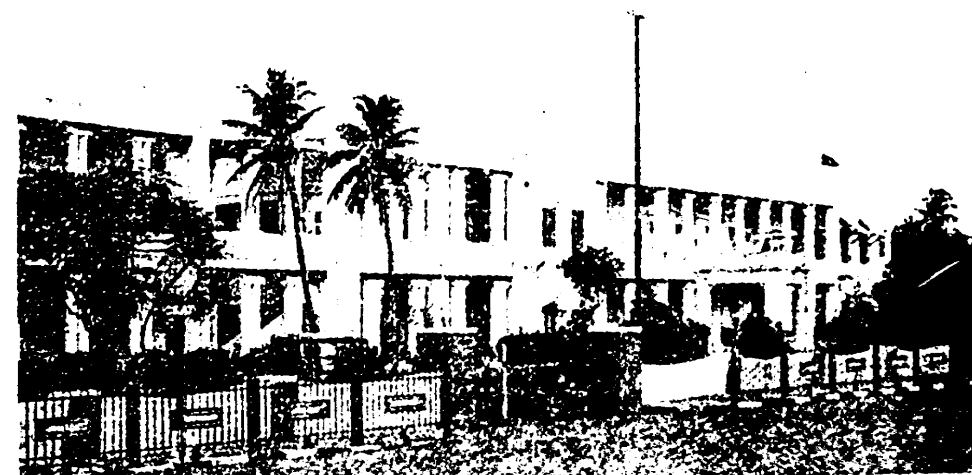
The Madras Metropolitan Development Authority (MMDA) plans to draw up a list of buildings of historical importance in Madras and ensure their preservation. Demolition by their owners will be banned. This was announced by Anantha Ranjana Doss, Chief Urban Planner, MMDA, at a recent seminar organised by the M K India Company in the city.

Said Doss, "A scheme will be drawn up to compensate the owners of the old buildings by

allotting them land in a different locality and permitting them to develop it." He also stated that a Committee would soon be formed for such conservation on the lines of the Urban Arts Commission in Delhi and Bombay.

Speaking to this reporter later, Doss said, a separate chapter had been allotted to this subject in the Master Plan for the development of Madras.

— V.J.



indicated in the report that the views of various architects are to be called for. And it is to be hoped that those views will include the restoration of the

present building to its ancient splendour and integration of it with a Neo-Classical building that will harmonise with it. (See accompanying story).

(Continued on P3)

Attempts to preserve and integrate that failed

(By S Muthiah)

Long before environmental groups and organisations like INTACH became fashionable, a small group used to meet regularly in Madras and discuss what it could do to preserve the historical, architectural and environmental heritage of Madras. It called itself EPOCH and it was so long ago I have now even forgotten what that acronym stood for. But that's not important.

What is important is that it tried to stall the plan to pull down Moore Market. The Minister-in-charge it approached, a DMK labour stalwart, wanted to know, in between taking time off to watch a Test match on the tube, which was more important, a railway station to serve tens of thousands of people a day or a market for the elite and the middle class. In

response to a suggestion that the market could be integrated with the proposed railway station as its shopping and facilities centre, he went back to his Test match, then called play closed for the day. The fortuitous fire made any further action on Moore Market unnecessary.

Then there came the MGR proposal to pull down *Bentinck's Building*, built for the Supreme (High) Court of Madras. He wouldn't listen to EPOCH, but did hark to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's view that it was a heritage building. However, by emptying it of occupancy and ensuring that it got not even the minimal care that it was getting, its fate was sealed — and for over a year then, it almost sapped the energy of the wreckers.

It was some time after the wrecking began that I was shown some plans by a young faculty member of the School of Architecture. She and her

students had produced much earlier two or three splendid plans to preserve and restore *Bentinck's Building* and integrate it harmoniously with the ten-storey tower block MGR had set his heart on. I wonder why the School of Architecture had not pushed those proposals with the powers-that-be. Whatever the reason, the School lost a glorious opportunity to demonstrate how conservation could and should be done.

Bentinck's Building is now gone — and its plans too, it would seem. But will the School of Architecture or the architects of Madras now rise to the occasion and ensure that the Police Headquarters is saved by integrating it with any new construction to be taken up? That will then indeed be a memorable landmark and model of how architectural and historical conservation should go in Madras.

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Steps to becoming Chennai Reddy

His Excellency Dr Channa Reddy, Governor of Tamil Nadu for eight weeks now, gave a Tea the other day to cultural, educational, literary and social work leaders in the City as a first step towards becoming, what one speaker suggested, Chennai Reddy. The Governor, equipped with a ready smile and a silver-tipped baton to flourish, indicated some such thoughts in the words with which he opened this first Governor's *durbars* in the City in many a year.

He had missed the opportunity of being a citizen of "this great land" when two-thirds of present Andhra Pradesh had been part of it in the days it was called the Madras Presidency, he said. He had been a part of the remaining third, Telengana, when it was part of the Nizam's dominions. But now he was glad that he had been given the opportunity to become "the first citizen of this great land." He was happier still, he concluded, to be given this opportunity to bring "this great state" closer to the mainstream of Indian government, from which it had in recent years appeared to have withdrawn a bit after those glorious years when it had a say in almost every Ministry in the Centre.

Responding to the Governor's chaste English in his delightful Tamil, Ma Po Si stated that no one should make the mistake of judging local squabbles as unbridgeable differences; there was a basic unity of thought underlying the views of even those who squabbled loudest in Tamil Nadu. And whether you agreed with that view or not, no one else added anything to those faintest of political undertones during the rest of the evening.

Most of those 2½ hours and more were taken up with the lead given by veteran Congressman Chengalvarayan who announced that everyone present was willing to help make Tamil Nadu a still better state; His Excellency had only to command and everyone would be willing to serve. The 85-year-old Chengalvarayan's oratory was undoubtedly the highlight of the evening; it brought back to mind the great orators of the past who had held meetings in Madras spellbound with their command of the English language and their vocal expression of it. As *The Man From Madras Musings* was leaving while sumptuous Tea was being served on the immaculate lawns of Raj Bhavan, he heard an old-timer remark, "Chengalvarayan used to be the understudy of Sathyamurti; today, he truly echoed that great orator".

Other speakers took up time ranging from the long to the short of it. One of the shortest was a Chordia from Rajasthan who had not only made Madras his home but had also become a *Thirukkural* expert whom even Karunanidhi would have been proud of on this evening. One of the longer ones was by he who gave the vote of thanks in accents ranging from American to Oxbridge to Redbrick to Brahminical Sanskrit to varying degrees of Chola, Pandya and Chera Nadu English. That more

than anything else indicated the cosmopolitanism of Madras — and of the occasion.

Crores for water

The Man From Madras Musings learns that a revival of the Veeranam water-to-Madras Project is under serious discussion. But the pipes ordered for it in those 'bad old days' are not being given a second thought. Which is, no doubt, why they are being used to save the Ennore Expressway from becoming a cart-track — an engineering activity that is being featured elsewhere in this same

SHORT
'N'
SNAPPY

issue, the Editor tells me. Some new kind of pipes with some of the more sophisticated materials of today for lining are being thought of. And the cost? Rs. 300 crores!

That is the rub. Where is the Government to find Rs. 300 crores in a hurry. *The Man From Madras Musings* hears that if the money is available and if a truly professional organisation undertakes the work, the scheme can become operational in 12-18 months. That being the case, isn't it time Government thought of involving the private sector in the project and launching a massive fund-raising drive?

Wouldn't such a scheme, coupled with the Telugu-Ganga scheme becoming a reality, eliminate the present expenditure of Rs. 10 lakhs every day just on transport to get water by motor-tankers from Neyveli?

Cost of Loss

After a major fire had razed the Madras Booksellers' and Publishers' Association's Book Fair earlier this year, the Association had gone in appeal for succour to the Chief Minister. Some relief has at last been sanctioned.

Apparently an outright grant of Rs. 12,500 and a loan of Rs. 12,500 is to be made to all those booksellers and publishers who lost their stocks in the fire. Those dozen or so firms which lost nothing, or little, are not to get anything. But what is curious is that a few organisations, described as 'big firms', and who lost everything in the fire, are also not to get anything. *The Man From Madras Musings* has heard of at least four organisations in this category — Oxford, T.T.MAPS, The British Council and Aavin — and there may even be a couple of more. *MMM* has made that sound speculative, because, at the time of writing, at least a couple, if not all, these organisations had NOT been officially informed that they would not be receiving any gestures from Government.

As for Government, surely there was no reason to have been discriminatory — if indeed this was Government's decision. Surely the decent thing would have been to make the gesture to everyone who suffered loss

— MMM

A search for continuity

The magpie habits of 'Roja' (not Raja) Muthiah Chettiar of Kottaiyur, in Chettinad, have been referred to in these columns before. What he had put together over the fifty years or so before his death a little over a year ago was a minor 'Salar Jung' collection of Chettiar heritage.

In brief

* *MMM* knows not the reason why, but a reader who would prefer to remain anonymous, points out that the number 7 (SEVEN) played a significant role in the life of MGR. Since the letter was written in early July and MGR became Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 4-7-77 (totalling 7), that might have been the immediate provocation. But whatever reader KR's reasons for writing in, he points out that MGR "was born on 17-1-1917, died on 24-12-1987, 70 years old, had car numbers 4777, 2005, 2248 etc and telephone numbers 433222 and 442222, all totalling to 7. His house in 7 acres had as its address 25 Arcot Mudali Street. He married V N Janaki in 1960, helped the DMK to victory in 1971. There was always something to do with 7, either in total or as a participatory number, in most of the important events in his life." *MMM* does not vouch for the facts, but publishes the quote as a bit of curious miscellany that numerologists might like to sink their teeth into.

* What's P Chidambaram up to these days, apart from writing for the newspapers, lecturing to audiences with business interests and occasionally speaking on behalf of the Government's liberalisation policies at seminars abroad? The word is that he would still like a Cabinet Ministership, but *MMM*'s Delhi source whispers that it is most likely that he will get the post of official spokesperson for Congress in the place of V N Gadgil. The latter might thereafter find himself in the Cabinet. Who's going up and who's coming down?

OUR READERS WRITE

Pure intuition

I won't agree to the word 'miracle'. The boy may be mentally retarded, but I think it is pure intuition literally on his part to go back to the place where he lives. (How many times have we left a stray cat far away from our houses; you will somehow find it coming back home.) He is used to travelling from institution — doctor — back to institution. The route up and down is stamped on his mind. Don't ask me how in the case of a retarded boy, but he would have just found his way back to the institution.

What do we learn from this incident? Don't take these children for granted. They are in their own way, somewhere deep within, normal. Again don't ask me how. I don't have an answer.

Why's he here?

If according to B V Jagannathan it is because of the quality of life and disgusting politics that he does not want his sons to come back to India, isn't it in the same place that they qualified, grew up and left for the States? And why is BVJ in India, if he has such a low opinion about his country?

Meena Reddy
"Su-Darsana"
41, 7th Avenue, Ashok Nagar
Madras 600 083.

Where's clean politics?

I's heartening our favourite *Madras Musings* recognised the talent of Aniruddh Ravi. But it was sad to see the talpaize (*MM* July 1). B V Jagannathan spoke about the quality of life in the US, compared to the disgusting politics in every walk of life at home. My attempt in writing this is not to hold aloft our politicians. But where in the world is there clean, dirt-free politics? Are US politicians immune from mischief? Clinton having a hair-cut at an airport

being the shrewd businessmen they are kept trying to get an "authentic" valuation for the Collection. But how do you put a value to such miscellany? The only value is what seller and buyer can mutually agree on.

Now there at last appears to be some agreement on the Collection's fiscal as well as cultural and academic value, but, sadly, Roja Muthiah did not live to even see the beginnings of the

• by A Special Correspondent

planning for the future of his Collection. Those who are drawing up the plans are the University of Chicago's famed South Asia Studies Department and a Madras Trust called Mozhi. The Trustees include path-breaking Tamil publisher 'Cre-A' Ramakrishnan, postal official Theodore Bhaskaran and Dr E Annamalai of the Central Institute of Indian Languages, among others. The Mozhi team were those responsible for the latest, most modern and most comprehensive Tamil Dictionary published a couple of years ago. This is their next project — and is intended to breathe new life into at least one bit of Tamil Nadu's cultural and historical heritage.

is a world-spread secret. Why is it that the other side of the fence always seems greener?
RM Subramaniam
10 Vidyodaya I Cross
T Nagar, Madras 600 017.

Not a shame

Your comments on Ravi's talent and Indian newspapers were great. Even greater was your admission on *Musings* mistake on Hastings' impeachment. There is no need at all to hang your head in shame.

R K K Menon
12 Balaji Avenue
Madras 600 026.

Recognition here

I am happy that at least *Madras Musings* has recognised Aniruddh Ravi, by making his story Page 1 here.
S Antony Marianathan
19 Dhanalakshmi Avenue
Kasturba Nagar
Madras 600 020.

Much later

Aswar Chetty, the second son-in-law of Rao Bahadur Namburumal Chetty (*MM*, July 1) was NOT one of the founding partners of Hoe & Co., which was started in 1886. He joined as a partner many years later.

V. Emberumanar Chetty
Hoe & Co.
15 Stringer's Street
Madras 600 108.

Two Iyers?

M (July 1) clean bowled me. Not because it had two of my pieces but because of Randor Guy's piece on Coimbatore Krishna Iyer's homely eating place in Pycrofts Road. Its closure was as informal as the manner Ganapathy ran the show: Randor Guy identifies Ganapathy with 'C.K.' Iyer. This is not correct — 'C.K.' Iyer belongs to an earlier generation. I have heard my grandmother (Mrs P R Sundara Iyer) tell me Krishna Iyer used to prepare delicious *Badam Halwa* which he had to supply to influential people. From that he was able to build his business.

There were two eating places — besides Ganapathy's, there was Pitchu Iyer's Hotel, a smaller version of a hotel. Invariably, whenever, Mylapore Recreation Club played in Manna or on the old Engineering College ground, at the back of Chepauck (now a transport stand), we went to 'C.K.' Iyer's — G.P., our skipper, would call 'Enna, Ganapathy' and as we took our seats, two 'plates' (leaf) of *Badam Halwa* would be served. At two annas apiece! *Badam Halwa* was the peach of Ganapathy's sweets. All of which were excellent — one special sweet on Wednesday's was only a little behind it.

If you went in the late evenings, the only counter opening on the road was manned by a dark, stocky gentleman who would be distributing *bajjis*, *bondas* and other delights. By the time the shop closed, there was no question of any leftovers for the next day.

Yes, the talk was that the Iyer spent all his earnings on races, but I fear he was duped by many customers too. I remember the photo of a mustachioed man with coat, turban *et al*, above Ganapathy's desk. He told me it was the photo of the late Palghat Anantharama Baghavathar, guru of Palghat Rama Baghavathar.

P N Sundaresan
14 First Street
Kasturi Ranga Road
Madras 600 018.

Khanna's ships

Your *Musings* dated June 16 has just reached me and I am intrigued to see

The Chicago-Mozhi plans call for Chicago to fund the initial stages of the project, which, it is estimated, will take 5-7 years for seven librarians in Madras and one in Chicago. During this stage, all the material in Kottaiyur is to be shifted to Madras — to a suitable location still to be found, though to the question why a suitable place can't be found in Chettinad no one seems to have an answer — and then catalogued and computerised. Chicago will also microfilm it, with copies of the films being available to the local centre as well as in the South Asia Studies Department Library in Chicago.

Up to that point everything seems fine, once the i's are dotted and the t's crossed. But what happens after that? How is the Collection to be preserved thereafter for continuous viewing and display? For posterity, if you will? There's the rub. And that's where some of the wealthy Chettiar trusts can help. They could do something even at this late stage to redeem a lost opportunity.

In fact, that need right now might be even greater than a few weeks ago. A K Ramanujan had been the driving force in getting the University of Chicago interested and putting them in touch with Mozhi. But with his tragic death — anaesthetic misadventure before a minor surgery — will there be anyone else to keep the pressure on the University? It's a question worrying many connected with the project.

tore Krishna Iyer's homely eating place in Pycrofts Road. Its closure was as informal as the manner Ganapathy ran the show: Randor Guy identifies Ganapathy with 'C.K.' Iyer. This is not correct — 'C.K.' Iyer belongs to an earlier generation. I have heard my grandmother (Mrs P R Sundara Iyer) tell me Krishna Iyer used to prepare delicious *Badam Halwa* which he had to supply to influential people. From that he was able to build his business.

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P N Sundaresan
14 First Street
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Khanna's ships

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Waiting for the 90-day bridge

Last January, Madras Musings welcomed the fanfare which greeted the laying of the foundation stone for a bridge to link Taramani and Indira Nagar across the Cooum River. Participants at that function promised that the bridge would be ready "in 90 days", by the end of APRIL. At that time, The Man From Madras Musings promised a situation report at exactly that time in the future. Unfortunately, it slipped his mind till he was reminded of his promise by a reader at the end of May.

This then was the scene at the bridge-building site in early JUNE, taken from the Indira Nagar side, because none of the bridge-builders on the Taramani side would allow photographer V S RAGHAVAN to take this picture of PUBLIC PROPERTY.

As these words are written, it is nearly the end of JULY. And the bridge is nowhere near opening for traffic. All those grand promises made at that January function have been forgotten. But, then, that's par for the course.

A building to be saved

(Continued from P 1)

The building being discussed was originally built as a Masonic Temple by one of the oldest English orders. It was constructed in 1839, replete with Masonic symbols, at a cost of Rs. 25,000. Subsequently, much was added to the Lodge of Perfect Unanimity. It was leased by the Police as its headquarters from 24.7.1865 on a rent of Rs. 90 a month. Its first occupant as IGP was W Robinson of the Madras Civil Service; Robinson was

the Presidency's first IGP, appointed in 1858 when the Force was formalised and serving in this position till 1867.

The building was acquired by the Government on 11.6.1874 for Rs. 20,000 and a further Rs. 10,000 was spent on it, adding to it repairing the original building. Further extensions and alterations were made in 1909 to house the CID which had been formed in 1906. No doubt an old policeman could add much to this.

a reference to my mural at the Chola on page 2.

So, *MMM* wants me to divulge my trade secret as to how I constructed the ships which carried so many people to Greater India. It's not such a great secret really. There are some magnificent *bas reliefs* of ships in the great monument at Borobudur. I photographed these in 1962. The mural was done many years later. My memory of these sculptures, aided by the photographs, plus a bit of imagination, resulted in my drawings. It's not too far fetched to believe that they sailed in these craft.

I hope *MMM* is satisfied and Simeon Mascarenhas' doubts have been cleared. These ships are not entirely figments of my imagination.

Krishnan Khanna
E-57 Panchshila Park
New Delhi 110 017.

EDITOR'S NOTE: What a coincidence! Krishnan Khanna's letter about Borobudur arrived on the same day our July 16th issue came out with K. Srinivas' identical explanation. Unfortunately both refer not to Chola ships but very likely to Kalinga ones.

MCC & Sponsorship

Re 'Sponsorship All The Way' by Iaci in *MM* July 1. We would like to clarify a few points:

1) In the context of the sponsorship amount of Rs. 4,00,000 from M/s. Hindustan Lever Ltd., we would like to emphasise that in addition to the prize money, substantial expenses are incurred by way of travelling daily allowances for the players and officials who participated, as per Indian Hockey Federation's norms and guidelines, in addition to gallery erection charges and expenses under various other heads. Moreover, we had a record number of 12 outstation teams participating in the tournament this year which resulted in expenses going

up considerably. We are very proud of the fact that all the players were given the best.

2) Regarding Iaci's statement, "Instead of saying 'thank you' to ITC, the Committee, in its Press Release, seemed to boast it was changing sponsors from M/s. ITC to M/s. Hindustan Lever Ltd., as though it did not want ITC any longer", we would like to clarify that there was no intention to boast of change of sponsorship. We are extremely grateful to M/s. ITC, who have sponsored the hockey tournament for several years and have played a great role in making our tournament a top class fixture. Indeed, we have great respect for ITC and maintain a very close rapport with ITC through their Branch Managers.

T T Ashok
Hony. Secretary
Madras Cricket Club
Chepauk, Madras 600 005.

Not personal transport

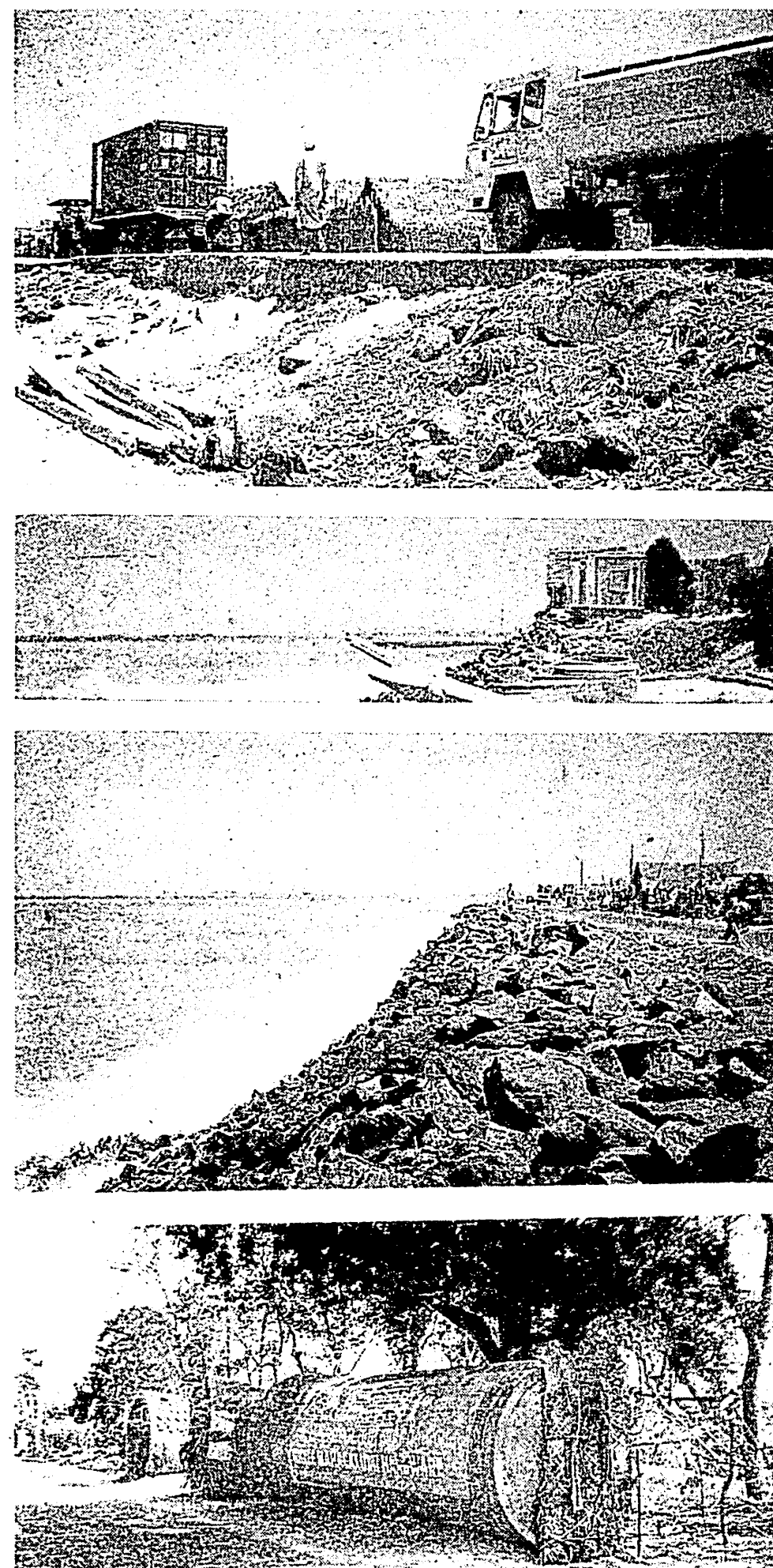
The article on new cars (*MM* June 16) is informative. But I fail to understand why everyone is proposing to build new cars — even cheap or fuel-efficient ones. Why can't we think of making cost-effective, fuel-efficient buses/public transport for mass transportation?

Personal cars, however, small and efficient will only create more traffic and parking problems and add to the pollution problem.

Therefore the Tamil Nadu auto industry should take the lead in making large, cost-effective buses which are comfortable and can solve every transport problem of the general public. Let us all give a thought in this direction. Not in personal transport.

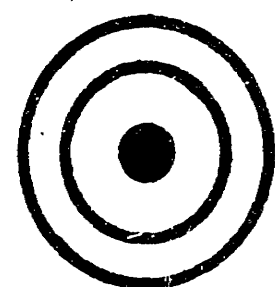
Anoop Kumar
Suplt. Engr. (Elec)
Oil & Natural Gas Commission
18-A, 4th Cross Street
Indira Nagar, Madras 600 020.

The Old...



From top down: ● The badly eroded Ennore Express Highway is now, in parts, a narrow strip ● Erosion by the highway and a temple badly damaged as a consequence ● Boulders have been tried in stretches to halt the erosion, but with none too much success ● Abandoned Veeranam pipes like these provide a solution, if only those who've made them homes and advertising hoardings can be persuaded to allow their removal from the Old Mahabalipuram Road.

Sound fundamentals



BULL'S EYE

MANAALI RAMAN...



In MAD, MAD MADRAS

Two years of the minority Congress Government has seen the economy take sizeable strides. From the precariously perched foreign exchange reserves of Rs. 2600 cr two years ago, when P V Narasimha Rao took charge, the position now, thanks to World Bank aid and other factors, is comfortable at \$ 6.7 billion. Inflation has

been contained in the region of 6 per cent and exports have increased substantially. Obviously the effort behind these achievements is the good economic management, involving liberalisation and globalisation of India. However, if the Prime Minister has successfully steered the nation in economic reforms, his weaker direction on the political front is disturbing and, if left to drift, could well engulf other achievements.

Meanwhile the creditors of India too seem to have sanguine expectations. This is visible from the Aid India Consortium's pledge of US \$ 7.4 billion aid during 1993-94, which is an increase of \$ 200 million over last year's aid commitment. This ought to reaffirm our faith that the chaos at the Centre is not likely to influence the course of our progress. The data available also goes far in reinforcing this sentiment.

The far-reaching changes made on the fiscal and monetary front are beginning to pay off. The lending rates of

Pipes to rescue of Ennore road

Erosion is nothing new to the residents of the North Madras coast. Many huts have been washed away and temples have been damaged over the years. The Ennore Express Highway is the latest victim; it has been extensively damaged and its width considerably reduced.

To tackle this menace of sea and sand, a Rs. 4 crore, 18-months Anti-Sea-Erosion Project was launched in June 1992, by the Tamil Nadu State Construction Corporation. Seventy per cent of the work has now been completed over a 1.2 km stretch. Work at Nallathani Kupam is partially completed; elsewhere, at Palaghatholi Kupam, M.R.F. and Ramakrishna Nagar work has been completed. Work is under progress in Appar Nagar, Pattinathar Koil and Thirichinam Kupam. On four stretches, rocks have been heaped to prevent the sea from encroaching. But the level of the rock heaps has decreased over the years by the ceaseless sea waves causing further erosion.

Now pipes manufactured for the Veeranam Water Project are being used and supplied by the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board for the Anti Sea Erosion work. Each pipe, about 6.2 m long and 1.7 m in diameter, weighs 16 tons, being of Reinforced Cement Concrete. About 500 pipes have been sunk and a further 500 pipes will be required before the work ends.

The pipes are vertically sunk after the sea sand is excavated to a depth of 3-4 m. Eight persons are needed to install each pipe manually, and it takes about 15 days to complete the installation. There is a crane with a grab bucket which could install a pipe a day, but it is hardly used for reasons best known to the authorities.

When the pipe reaches the required depth, bottom plugging of the pipe takes place. The thickness of the plugging is about 75 cm. The middle portion is filled with sea sand to the required level, and the top plugging takes place to about 25 cm. thickness. At this point, the pipe weighs about 40 tons! Fourteen bags of cement are used to plug and plaster a single pipe. The life of each pipe is predicted to be 100 years.

The distance between the rows is two meters, and between pipes one meter. Between the cylindrical pipes, a wave energy dissipator, known as a Tetra Pad, is buried at a certain level. The cylindrical pipes help to distribute the force of the sea waves, while the Tetra Pads minimise the force of the waves.

The height of the cylindrical pipes above sea level after the operation is complete is 3 meters. This is considered a safe level by the engineers, who feel the pipes will withstand several monsoons. However, the success of the project will be seen only when the pipes withstand "the worst of the worst wave conditions"!

The Veeranam pipes have a unique history. The pipes were sold to government for a water supply scheme at a

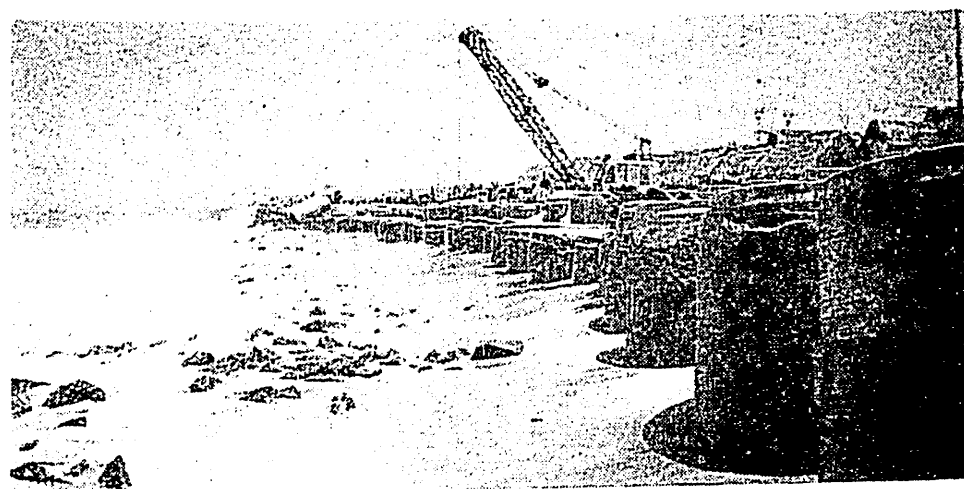
rate of Rs. 4250/- a pipe. In today's market, each pipe would cost about Rs. 30,000 — 35,000. Hundreds of pipes lying by the Old Mahabalipuram road are used as 'residences' by the homeless. For residential purposes, the pipe is plastered with mud at one end, while the other end serves as a door. Most of the 'residents' are quarry workers at nearby sites. These colonies of pipe dwellers can be seen in the Thorapakkam area. The Tamil Nadu Water and Drainage Board is now trying to retrieve the pipes from the dwellers. Whenever successful, the TNSCC transports the pipes from here to the coastal work spot at a cost of Rs. 4000/- a pipe.

Ennore fisherfolk have objected to the Anti Sea Erosion Project, as it compels them to use the fishing harbour. This causes inconvenience to their traditional practices. The project, however, continues against all these odds.

If this project proves successful, it will be implemented elsewhere along the coast of Tamil Nadu. Poompuhar is the area worst hit by erosion and needs immediate action if its monuments are to be saved.

— Rajind N Christy

...and The New



From top down: ● A Veeranam pipe is 'planted' in the sea sand by the side of the Ennore Highway, plugged with concrete at the bottom and then filled with sea sand ● It is then sealed with more concrete on the top ● There's a long stretch of sealed pipes now in place on several stretches, none of them placed by the crane in the picture ● And, finally, the waves can do their worst... but the pipes seem to be able to take the battering. (All pictures by RAJIND CHRISTY)



On left, the west wall and gate, through which you enter the old Dutch fort in Sadras. The wall is sadly disfigured — by what else



but Party symbols?! — despite the 'Protected Monument' proclamation (on the left) of the Archaeological Survey of India. Centre, the



inside view of the main entrance. And on right, Pieter Hemsinck Jongman's unusual (and unlikely) raised tombstone in the small cemetery in the fort.

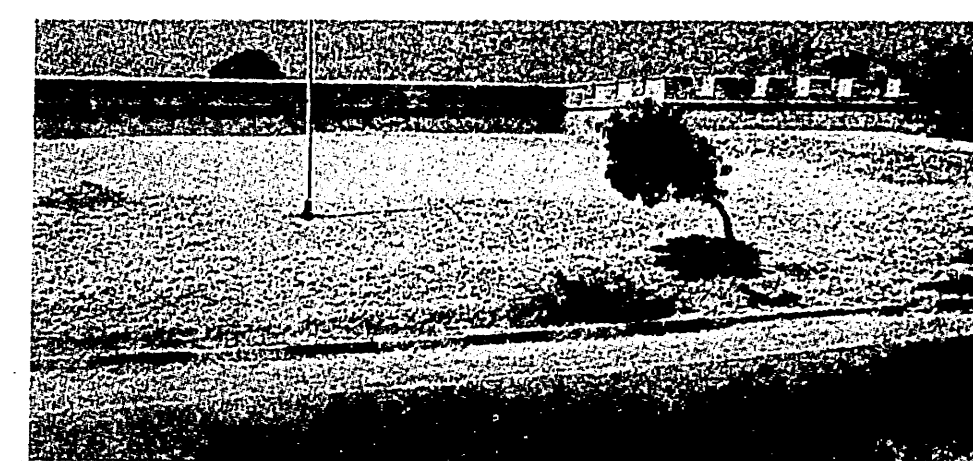
The fort that still stands

Nowhere along the coast for fifty miles north or south of Madras does the sea appear bluer or fresher. Nowhere is the air cleaner. Nowhere is the sun brighter, yet not merciless. And nowhere could it be quieter.

A few hundred metres from the sea bulks large the massive walls of a small fort, most of it in remarkably good condition, despite having been abandoned just under two hundred years ago. The cupola over the cannon-flanked gateway in the west wall stands bereft of its bell, which was probably taken away by the last governor with the dissolution of the Dutch East India Company in 1799. This is Sadras, near Kalpakkam.

Somnolent, almost comatose, Sadras is a town with a name that's another ingenious and convenient abbreviation by the British — of Sadrangapatnam, or Chadrangapatnam. However, it was not the British but the Dutch who founded and built the small settlement and fort near the village in the second half of the 17th Century. With Pulicat well-established, perhaps the Dutch thought that their presence north and south of both San Thome and Fort St. George would give them both military and economic advantage over the Portuguese and the British in the fierce competition for Eastern trade.

Zadrangapatnam, as it is spelt on some of the graves in the small cemetery within the fort, now has at its southern end a housing colony for employees of the Kalpakkam power station. A few narrow streets constitute



The east wall with the recently restored bastion. The restored portion will weather to a darker colour in a monsoon or two.

the town, and the only real sign of any former importance are the remains of the fort, kept very clean by the Archaeological Survey of India. Unfortunately, no information of any kind is available either with the caretaker or by way of a notice board.

You enter from the west, walking between two forlorn light cannon and through a modern iron gate under a brick barrel-vaulted roof, to emerge in a large, almost square, enclosure. On the left is a well, in the shade of a huge old tamarind tree, and on the right a small barred gate set in a high wall. The caretaker obligingly unlocks the gate and you pass into one of those innumerable, often pathetic, memorials to European presence in India — a cemetery, with 14 graves. The earliest date (of burial) here is 1679. Of great interest are the graves, in much the same style as those at Pulicat, of Jacobus Leonardus Topander, born in 1715 at Pulicat, died in 1767 at Sadras; of Anna Cornelia Bonk, wife of Johann Dumon, born at Nagapattinam (another Dutch settlement) on

November 18, 1745, died at Sadras on January 28, 1773.

There is also the "Burial place of Abraham Wilmont, Chief of this Vicinity. His family consisted of his second wife, through whom he had two Sons and a Daughter, and also her Sister's daughter. 1695".

But the most interesting grave of all is an ornately carved black slab, resting on eight two-foot-high pillars of black granite carved in the heavy Zeeland style of South Holland. But was the grave originally so? It is possible that the slab was raised to allow future burials, but there is no additional inscription on the stone. People who visited the site 25 or 30 years ago can't recall this unusual structure. And in a dark, dungeon-like corner of the wall lie two or three more pillars exactly like the ones supporting the tombstone. Did these pillars then form part of an ornate balustrade, perhaps on the governor's house?

The (Dutch) inscription on this grave reads: "DO YOU TAKE CARE? (=Are you aware/Do you know?) WHAT IS A HUMAN BEING? Here lies buried Pieter Hemsinck Jongman, born in the vicinity of Zadrangapatnam on the 3rd of August, 1665. Died on the 24th of February, 1682. He was 16 years, 6 months and 21 days old."

There is one complete building still standing in the fort, near what is left of the north wall. It seems to have been a store of some kind. Opposite it is an identical building, half-ruined, and near it the meagre remains of what was obviously a fine house, in warm red brick. Even the imprint of a row of tiles of a lean-to is clearly seen.

Part of the eastern outer wall, the one facing the sea, has been restored by the A.S.I., using the traditional flat bricks used in the rest of the structure, but cement rather than chunam. This part has battlements and, from the shore, presents a pretty impressive appearance.

Considering that Pulicat seems to have been of greater importance than

Sadras, it is quite amazing that not a brick remains of *Castel Geldria*, and so much of Sadras still stands. Did the British, as the Portuguese had done in 1612, destroy the Pulicat settlement and fort of the dreaded Dutch as they later did other forts on the Coromandel?

However, Jacob Eilbracht, governor of Pulicat, was buried there in 1795, and it is unlikely that he presided over a ruin. In all probability, *Castel Geldria* suffered the vicissitudes of time, and was dismantled by the British and/or local people for building material.

with the owners several thousand miles away, some sort of house must have existed. But where?

The inscription on Pieter Hemsinck's grave says he was "born in the vicinity of Zadrangapatnam". Obviously, much has disappeared, probably taken for use as building material by the local people. Whatever is left, however, is quaint and fascinating. Sadras is still 'undiscovered', to use a trite word from most tourist brochures, and very pretty. Few outings can give the serenity and relative solitude that the little fort does.

A Quiz to Remember

(By A Staff Reporter)

Perhaps the biggest Quiz in Madras since the 'Madras 350' Quiz back in 1989 will be held on August 28th in the Narada Gana Sabha Hall on TTK Road. The Quiz, being conducted in connection with the British Book Fair, will focus on Britain, with special reference to the Indo-British relationship. And what better place for such a quiz to be held than in Madras where it all began!

The Quiz, sponsored by the Association of British Council Scholars, South India, will offer handsome prizes to the first three teams and the audience. Conducting it will be the recent winners of the 'National' title in the North Star Quiz, the Jayakumar family and Gautam Padmanabhan. The Quizmaster will be that well-known Madras quizzing personality and a key member of that winning team, Dr Naveen Jayakumar. This team, together with Dr Praveen, had conducted the 'Madras 350' Quiz and echoes of that memorable event are sure to be heard on this occasion.

Also available will be information on study opportunities in UK universities and a special edition of 'Awards for Study in Britain', which provides information on higher education institutions in Britain and the scholarships available to them.

The preliminary rounds, open to all, will be staged in the afternoon and the finalists will battle it out on the stage after R Venkataraman, the former President of India, inaugurates the Book Fair at 4.15 p.m.

The British Book Fair, from August 28th to September 5th, will be held at the Sri Sankara Hall on the TTK Road. The Fair is being organised by the British Council and British publishers' representatives in India. Biotechnology, Medicine, Environment, Computer Science and Food Processing will be paid special attention to in both the stalls as well as in the Quiz. But that is not to say that children's books, reprints and special priced Indian editions of British titles will not be there.

Also available will be information on study opportunities in UK universities and a special edition of 'Awards for Study in Britain', which provides information on higher education institutions in Britain and the scholarships available to them.

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From studio to school

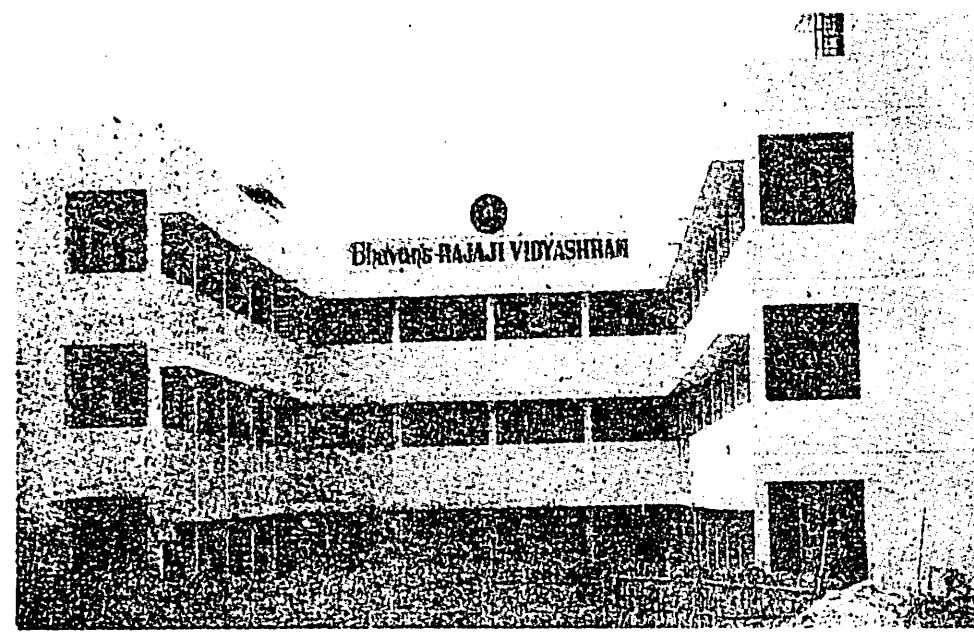
What a hive of activity it was in the 1930s and early 40s. Newtowne Studio, in what was then lovely, tree-lined Kilpauk!

It used to be on Garden Road in a palatial garden house called *Claybrooke*. In 1938, *Claybrooke* was converted into a motion picture studio by three enterprising men, excellent technicians all, Jiten Bannerjee, an expert cameraman, Dinshaw Tehrani, innovative audiographer, and Fakhrudin Nagoor, talented painter, art director and, later, film-maker.

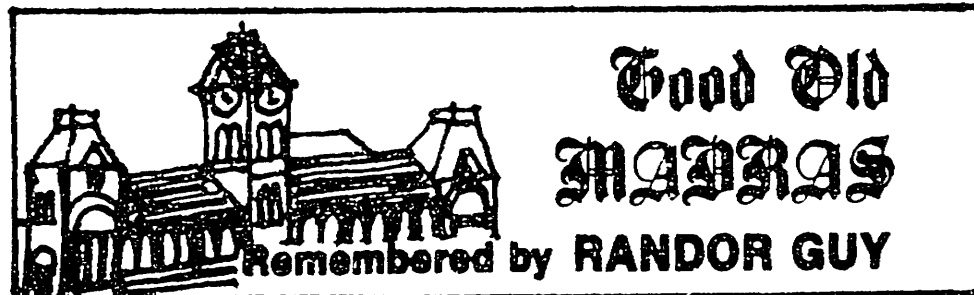
These three had been working in another motion picture studio then situated on Poonamallee High Road, National Movietone, also in a palatial garden house called *Kingsdon*, next to famed *Kushadess Gardens* (where, for many years, the Income Tax Department functioned) and almost opposite Pachaiyappa's College. An argument with National's owner Chidambaram Chettiar found the three out of work one morning. And, at once, they got down to planning their own studio. Their spirits were willing, the flesh not weak, they even had a name for their dream: Cosmopolitan Studio (inspired by the famous Cosmopolitan Club!).

but what Nagoor and Company did not have was what it took to make most things, including studios, come alive: Money!

The burden of raising funds for the project fell on the strong shoulders of Nagoor. He was chosen because he was on very friendly terms with that living legend of the day, M K Thyagaraja Bhagavathar. The talented art



That's irony for you: The Rajaji School, where the Newtowne Studio once was!



director had known Bhagavathar during his early days when he lived in Karaikkudi designing jewellery for the wealthy Nattukkottai Chettians. Later, he had come to Madras and worked his way up to become a noted art director, over the years becoming closer to the malleable idol too.

Nagoor approached Bhagavathar for funds and the response was instant: Bhagavathar wrote to some of his rich

friends in Chettinad and, soon, a joint stock company was promoted with R. Ramanathan Chettiar as the managing director. Several other affluent Nagarathar also put in money. And Bhagavathar and the three technicians became directors of the company.

Somehow, the name 'Cosmopolitan', Jiten's suggestion, did not find favour. But Jiten, a well-read intellectual, who had arrived in Madras

from Bengal in the 1920s, was ready with another one, Newtowne Studio. And that they liked.

They took over on long lease *Claybrooke*, which belonged to a Venkataraman, one of the first Indians to rise high in British Indian government service. (His son was the well-known cricket personality, the tall, bespectacled V. Pattabhiraman.) A modest black-and-white film laboratory, Ajantha Studio, was functioning here at the time and Jiten and Dinsha ran it as the Super Cine Laboratory till the new studio was built.

Newtowne Studio was inaugurated by V V Giri, Minister for Labour in the Rajaji Cabinet, on March 11, 1938. And a new chapter in the history of South Indian cinema began.

The first film to be produced at Newtowne Studio was *Bhaktha Meera*, made by the famed film-maker Y V Rao. During the studio's heyday, almost every third film produced in a South Indian language was shot there, wholly or in part. That was the time producers openly offered cash inducements to the studio bosses!

After the long lease came to a close and legal battles were fought, Pattabhiraman gifted the property to the Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan. Today, the Bhavan runs a prestigious educational institution, the Rajaji School, on the old studio site. It is indeed ironical that a site where movies were made should today bear the name of a person, Rajaji, who hated movies! Nevertheless, it still remains a hive of activity — but of a different sort.

Method

Heat ghee. Add the cummin seeds. When they splutter, add the bay leaf, cardamoms and cloves.

Fry for a minute or two. Add the chopped onions, ginger, green chillies and fry till onions turn golden. Add the red chilli powder, *dhaniya* powder, turmeric powder and fry for another minute. Add the chopped vegetables and salt.

Fry for a minute or two. Add the rice, whole *mung*. Add 4½ cups of water and bring to a boil. Cook till done and well mixed. Garnish with coriander leaves. Serve hot.

RIPE BANANA SALAD
Ingredients
6 ripe plantains, chopped fine
½ coconut, grated
2 lbs raisins
2 lbs honey

Method
Sprinkle the grated coconut over the chopped plantain. Blend in the honey and raisins. Mix well. Serve immediately.

Chandra Padmanabhan
(Answers p. 8)

BEETROOT CHUTNEY

Ingredients

6-8 lbs grated coconut
4 lbs fried, gram *dhal*
6 green chillies
1 small bunch coriander leaves
½ inch piece ginger, peeled and chopped fine
1 cup grated beetroot
Marble-sized tamarind
Salt to taste

For tempering

2 tsp oil
1 tsp mustard seeds
1 tsp black gram *dhal*
1 red chilli, halved
½ tsp asafoetida powder
A few curry leaves

Method

Grind to a fine paste, the coconut, fried gram *dhal*, green chillies, coriander leaves, ginger, beetroot, tamarind and salt, adding water. Heat oil and add the ingredients for tempering. When the mustard seeds splutter add to the chutney. Mix well.

Chandra Padmanabhan
(Answers p. 8)

Quizzin' with Ramanan

(Quizmaster's V.V. RAMANAN's questions are from the fortnight July 1-15th)

- Who is the new Cabinet Secretary?
- Environmentalists around the world celebrated July 10th as...?
- Who will represent India in the inter-zonal to be held in Jakarta to select candidates for the Women's World Chess Championship cycle?
- What is the revised fee for new ordinary passports effective July 10th?
- Name the two mangrove areas in Tamil Nadu which are to be protected by the National Mangrove Committee, Ministry of Forests, along with 13 other areas?
- Who is the first Asian commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London, to compose a symphony?
- Which eight-nation cup tourney did the Indian hockey team win recently?
- What is the quantum of assistance earmarked by the Aid India Consortium for 1993-94?
- Of what prestigious award for 1992 are Dr. C.S. Raman and Dr. A.N. Chandrasekharan of Madras the recipients?
- Which zoo recently called upon Saachi & Saachi to design a campaign to invite humans to be one of its 'rare species' exhibits?
- Which major Indian literary figure passed away on July 14th?
- Name the first villages in Gujarat and Maharashtra to be submerged by the backwaters of the Narmada Dam project.
- Name the Russian space agency which has frozen the rocket deal with ISRO because of US pressure?
- Who is the new Air Chief Marshal of India?
- Apart from Sunil Gavaskar, which other Indian cricketer has recently been given honorary life membership of the MCC?
- What visual and caption does the newly-released two rupee coin feature?
- The National Informatics Centre, Delhi, launched on July 5th a system called CAPES to eliminate malpractices in conduct of examinations. Expand CAPES.
- Name the only woman head of state who attended the recently concluded G-7 meet in Japan.
- The Govt. of Madhya Pradesh's 'Kalidas Samman' for 1992 has been bestowed upon...?
- Name the four 'halls' the new Rajdhani Express makes between Madras and Hazrat Nizamuddin.

(Answers p. 8)

No poetry in Madras?

(By Our Education Correspondent)

Madras, where once some of the best English was spoken and taught... Is there no poetry left in it? Is there no poet composing in English in Madras — or Tamil Nadu — who is fit to be included in a selection of INDIAN poetry? That is the impression you get glancing through that prestigious British poetry magazine, *Poetry Review*, now in its 83rd volume.

Poetry Review's Spring 1993 edition is devoted mainly to Indian

poetry in English. To put it together, Editor Peter Forbes, in his own right a well-known British poet, spent six weeks last year in India. While reporting on that journey of search and lecture, he has a few nice things to say about Madras and its literary output, but there's only one poem in the whole volume by a poet with Tamil Nadu connections. And it is the lone poet who is more Kannada, despite his Tamil writings and translations, and

one other alone who finds mention in this volume. The poet is A K Ramanujan, who tragically died just a few weeks ago, and the poem quoted — almost a 'filler' — is published alongside. The other name mentioned is R Parthasarathy, formerly of Oxford University Press, Madras.

Both names figure — together with Macmillan's the publishers with a strong Madras base — in a review by Alastair Niven of three anthologies of Indian poetry. Writes Niven:

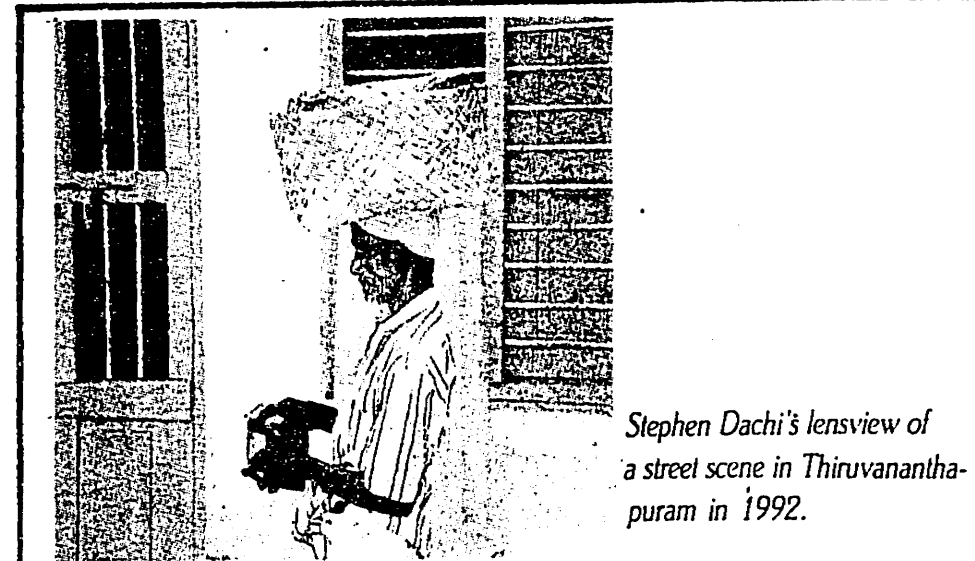
"For many years, whilst teaching a university course on Indian literature, I used as a basic text R Parthasarathy's *Ten Twentieth Century Indian Poets* (OUP, 1976) and it is instructive to see, in the context of the names chosen for these new anthologies, how many of the same writers were the obvious candidates seventeen years ago. Parthasarathy's ten were himself, Daruwalla, Das, Ezekiel, Kolakkar, Kumar, Mahapatra, Mehrotra, Patel and Ramanujan. *Plus ça change...*"

Niven then goes on to recommend the *Macmillan Anthology of Indian Poetry in English* for the buyer who has to choose only one of the three. He says, "The merit of the Macmillan anthology is that it has historical range. This is not extensive, but you can at least acquire from it a flavour of the precocious talent of Toru Dutt, who died in 1877 at the age of twenty-one but who was spoken of for a short while as a kind of Indian Keats. Here are some poems by the unfashionable Sri Aurobindo, whom thesis writers in India often couple with Shelley, and two great names, Sarojini Naidu and Rabindranath Tagore. An attempt is made to rescue neglected reputations — Sri Ananda Acharya's and Pura Singh's, for example. There is an evident discrimination and at least a whiff of pleasing idiosyncrasy in the Macmillan anthology which are not so marked in the other two."

And that's all there's to it of the Madras-Tamil connection in the body of the book. Forbes, however, has a little more to say of it in his introductory traveltogue. He discovers *Indian Review of Books*, brought out by Acme Publications, who are associated with Affiliated East-West Press, the only Madras publishing house with a sense of adventure when it comes to English language publishing. Of IRB Forbes says:

"In a short time this has become a great pillar of Indian literary life. We arranged a swap subscription and its regular monthly arrival in Britain since has been a great incentive to persevere with this issue, as well as mine of information. Any one in Britain with an interest in Indian Literature would find it indispensable. In character it is more like the *Literary Review* minus Auberon Waugh — than the *LRB*, and it proudly claims to be middlebrow. Don't be fooled — Indian literary life has not yet experienced the slide downmarket that has devastated the British weeklies and monthlies, and their middlebrow looks distinctly bracing to English eyes."

Indian Review of Books would appear to reflect the state of English in the South, if you go by Forbes' words. How the publishers would like these



Stephen Dachi's lensview of a street scene in Thiruvananthapuram in 1992.

The view thru' Dachi's lenses

Stephen F Dachi, dentist-turned foreign service officer, is the head of USIS, India. But he is fast getting better known for his passion for photography and his yearnings for little-known places off the beaten track.

On his most recent trip to Madras, in connection with his photographic exhibition — 'A Mosaic of Cultures' — that is now doing the rounds nationwide, he found time in a day to look for a *stupa* and a Jewish cemetery in Madras. The first he found down Kennel Lane, Egmore, where the Mahabodhi Society has a shrine as well as a monk in residence, the latter he didn't have time to dig for under the playground of a Corporation School not far from Mint.

On the way to both and back, Dachi must have clicked away not-stop. That's the Dachi way, I had discovered on a couple of previous expeditions in Madras. If ever you wanted a living definition of 'shutterbug', Dachi is it, I would confidently say to Webster's or Random House after those experiences.

Which is why I was sad that his exhibition of 61 photographs in Madras had nothing of the city and only two pictures of Tamil Nadu. The much-travelled Dachi, an authority on the Amazon and identifier by his teeth of the Nazi war criminal Dr Menge hiding out in South America, had pictures of the Amazon and from the countries of Latin America, from Pakistan, China and many cities of India. But this self-styled "voyager in search of insights, of a little beauty", had none on Madras.

Yet it's unimaginable the amount he's 'shot' on Madras during visits in the last one year! In fact, he could have a whole

exhibition in Madras just on those bulbous air-horns on 'autos'; I never knew so many exotic shapes and sizes existed till, on one expedition with Dachi, I found him 'shooting' every single one he saw! But while waiting for THAT exhibition, there's this one to talk about.

And this one reflects Dachi's pre-occupation with the whimsical and his affection for people from all walks of life everywhere. The two pictures from Tamil Nadu were classic reflections of this: One was of a tailor who'd put up his moveable booth by the side of NH 45 in Tindivanam and called it, in type bigger than the little bit of him seen, 'EXPORT Tailors'. Did he mean what he says, or did he consider himself an 'expert'? The other was of an aging, potbellied, bare-bodied Brahmin priest taking time off to catch up on his reading in a many-pillared *mandapam* in Kanchipuram. If only Dachi had managed to get the cover of the book into the picture and it had been lurid, what a wonderful picture, typical of Dachi, we would have had. But either the cover had not been lurid enough for Dachi or he was in one of his 'shoot from the hip, fast' moods. So that left me looking only at the vibrantly live and colourful dancers at Carnival-time in Rio.

Such sacrilegious thoughts would undoubtedly disappoint Dachi a bit, for he'd rather I'd found "understanding, enlightenment and purpose" in his pictures. But what I did find was freeze frames of the joy of life by a photographer who's not a great photographer but who is, more importantly, a photographer who loves life.

— S.M.



A K Ramanujan, a voice for Tamil abroad

words to translate into sales and advertising: "The English language is very important in the South: Tamil speakers generally don't speak or understand Hindi — which was once proposed as the national language — so English is the language in which South speaks to North!" That English, Forbes adds, has "a strong affinity with the Caribbean (the coasts look like the Caribbean), the lilt in the voice is similar and the Caribbean poetry I brought to read went down exceptionally well"

And last but not least, Forbes has a moment or two to spare on the 'poetry' of tourism. He recalls a meal at 'Raintree' and that mandatory trip to Mahabalipuram:

"The Connemara hotel in Madras is pure, tropicana, with its palm-fringed pool and white colonial architecture, slightly distressed by Madras's humid marine climate. But past the pool lies a remarkable one-stop initiation into South Indian culture. The Raintree restaurant specializes in Chetinaad cuisine, the best food we experienced in India (South Indian food softens the impact of the spices — which it uses liberally, especially ginger and coriander — with coconut). The lights in the trees are blue fireflies, frogs swim languidly in the pool beside your table, live music waxes and wanes, then the *bharata-*

natyam dancing starts. This is the classical dance of southern India, the gestures familiar from carvings and sculpture, especially the leg cocked at the knee and the head to one side. The dancer that night was very petite and so fast that her form transmogrified into a kaleidoscope of darts and dazzles. *Bharatanatyam* is very sexy, the whole performance a series of very stylized erotic gestures...

"...I saw little of Madras but on my day off we took a long coach to the coast and the temples of Kanchipuram and Mahabalipuram, with its huge, animated rock carvings, subject for MacNeice's eponymous poem: 'A still world whose every harmony is audible'..."

And then it was off to Kerala, which gets far more space in the pages that follow, but nowhere near as much as those poets from Bombay and points further North. Obviously the South, and certainly not Madras, is not speaking to the North and other parts of the world in the proper language of poetry.

The Black Hen

It must come as leaves to a tree or not at all

yet it comes sometimes as the black hen with the red round eye

on the embroidery stitch by stitch dropped and found again

and when it's all there the black hen stares with its round red eye

and you're afraid.

A.K. Ramanujan

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WHOLE MUNG KICHADI

Ingredients
1 cup basmati rice
½ cup whole mung, soaked overnight and drained
1 cup mixed vegetables (beans, carrot, potatoes and peas)
2 onions, chopped fine
4-6 green chillies, chopped fine
2 or 3 tsp *dhaniya* powder
½ tsp red chilli powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 bay leaf
2 or 3 cardamoms
2 or 3 cloves
1 small bunch green coriander leaves, chopped fine
3 or 4 lbs ghee
1 tsp cummin seeds
Salt to taste

Sound fundamentals

(Continued from P4)

prospects of Rs. 75 cr and Rs. 2.71 cr respectively for the year ended March 1993. The shortfall was due to unexpected delay in commissioning of the edible oil project and to the non-availability of working capital at the time of commercial production. However, the company recovered from these drawbacks and the future looks optimistic. Its edible oil products — 'Anurag' and 'Daily' — marketed through oil vending machines have received good response. Technically prices are reacting, but have good support between Rs. 20-23. Buying can be considered after reaction for a target of Rs. 50-60 pa.

Kothari Sugars (CMP Rs. 42.50): Now diversified from its longstanding sugar business, Kothari Sugars has turned in an

excellent performance in 1992-93. The expansion and diversification programmes in its petrochemical complexes and the industrial alcohol project should fetch a higher income of Rs. 85 cr in 1993-94. A PAT of Rs. 7 cr is possible on this figure that would yield an EPS of Rs. 4.70 on the equity of Rs. 14.93 cr enhanced by the recent rights issue. This EPS supports a price of Rs. 60 by March 1994 results. The scrip is a good medium/long term buy.

Sol Pharma (CMP Rs. 122.50): Partial benefits of expansion/modernisation and the fact that more than 50 per cent of SOL's turnover is accounted for by drugs outside the purview of DPCO has enabled the company to declare excellent results for 1992-93. An increase of around 50 per cent in turnover and net profits, a dividend of 25 per cent and 1:4 bonus issue are a few

salient features of the year under review. The shares allotted on conversion of PCO are also eligible for this bonus issue. A decision on merger of Standard Organics with SOL w.e.f. April 1, 1993 has also been taken and the shareholder of the former company will get one share of SOL for every two shares held by them. The capital of the amalgamated company will thus rise to Rs. 6.50 cr. An expansion scheme at a cost of Rs. 45 cr, after the merger, is also planned. The turnover for the current year (1993-94) is expected to cross the Rs. 200 cr mark (of the amalgamated company) and the PAT should be around Rs. 10 cr yielding an EPS of Rs. 15. The price of the scrip should be over Rs. 225 at that time.

K. Gopalakrishnan

The crowd that lost...

On a visit to Guindy on the Kingfisher Bangalore Derby Day, July 11th, I found the enclosures packed. There was, in fact, hardly any moving room in the ring. As a result, the signalling of bets with three or five raised right-hand fingers (obviously for Rs. 3,000 or Rs. 5,000) by the big investors to their regular bookmakers was not an uncommon sight.

The main crowd-puller was, of course, M A M Ramaswamy's Derby hope, Generous Patron. Only a fortnight earlier, Generous Patron had cantered away with the Black Label Bangalore Colts Trial Stakes after having disappointed in all his four previous starts. He was then ridden by S Marshall. With the stable's No. 1 jockey, R Corner, preferring him to his Colts Trial flop, Frontier Boy, the monumental Derby support Generous Patron enjoyed was understandable. According to the Bangalore commentator, Generous Patron was at evens. But at Guindy, Ramaswamy's colt was virtually backed to the exclusion of the other runners at quarter-money. Only Littleover, owned by the Bangalore liquor baron, Vijay Mallya, came in for some support at 3-1. The rest were all at liberal odds, with Queen's Consul topping them all at a fantastic 25-1.

But it was a black Derby for the enthusiastic backers of the Madras-owned Generous Patron, and a bonanza classic for the Guindy bookmakers. A full-throated roar went up when the Bangalore commentator announced that Generous Patron had gone to the front coming into the homestretch. But, in a matter of seconds, pindrop silence descended on the packed Guindy enclosures as Littleover raced past the favourite and drew away. The silence was in a split-second broken by the layers of odds, whose joy knew no bounds as Generous Patron flopped. "Come on, Littleover," they shouted for all they were worth, as the lakhs of rupees that had gone into their satchels remained secure — at any rate till the next race was run.

The stunned, silenced backers of Generous Patron could only hope they would get a chance to cheer Generous Patron home at Guindy during the 1993-94 Madras season.

That is not their only hope. They all sincerely hope that the Department of Racing, Government of Tamil Nadu, will take every step during the new season to rejuvenate the ancient Madras turf, which has lost a great deal of its status and popularity ever since the State government took it over about two decades ago. It is a long story. Suffice it to say that, racing at Guindy, India's oldest centre, has lost much of its popularity. Attendance figures tell their own tale. No Guindy meeting, not even a classic fixture, draws anything like the crowd that turned out for the off-course betting on the Bangalore Derby day.

— Ajax

To make champions his aim

Venugopal Chandrasekhar, former national table tennis champion, who went in for a simple knee operation and lost his vision, speech and mobility, was recently awarded Rs. 17.37 lakhs plus interest, as damages, by the Madras High Court. It ruled that he had been a victim of medical negligence.

Despite the verdict — which is being appealed — Chandrasekhar cannot exactly be termed a happy man today. "My bright years have gone. I have lost everything a man can dream of — name, fame and stature, none of which can be quantified or compensated," he rues.

The three times National champion, winner of the Pentangular tournament in Karachi, a semi-finalist in the Commonwealth Games and the main architect of Indian reaching Category I in the World Championships, is unable to play table tennis at even club level today. Both his vision and reflexes are impaired. But these have not deterred him from producing table tennis champions.

It was a dream come true for Chandra when S Raman, his trainee, won the national title this year. Other players coached by him are Chetan



V S Chandrasekhar, a champion determined to make champions. (Photo: V S RAGHAVAN)

Baboor, Niyati Shah, Bhuvaneshwari and Premkumar, all in the front rank of Indian Table Tennis today. Standing close to the playing table at the YMCA Royapettah, Chandra watches every movement of his wards and corrects their mistakes. Though his lower field

vision is affected and he cannot demonstrate what he says, he makes up for these omissions by having his assistant execute his ideas on the table. Today, Chandra does not confine himself to Madras, he travels to Calcutta and Pune to coach players there.

Speaking forthrightly on the Indian table tennis scenario, he feels that "in the present set-up, India cannot produce even an Asian Champion in the next twenty years". And urging encouragement of the young, he adds, "Younger players must get more chances to go abroad. They should be sent to Europe at least for four months before a major tournament".

Of his future plans, Chandra says, "I would like to do something for the game which gave me everything. I am thinking of starting a full-fledged table tennis academy." And adds, "I am even ready to resign my bank job to do something for Tamil Nadu sport." He feels strongly that only retired sportsmen should be allowed to administer the games. "It is only they who can understand the problems of the players," he explains.

Will the State Government utilise this expert coach, who is also a law graduate, in the same manner the Karnataka Government has Prakash Padukone? He has been appointed Chairman of the Karnataka Sports Council.

— Venkatachari Jagannathan

'Twas tennis at Chepauk

Chepauk is not the home of Madras cricket alone, though it is best known throughout the country, and even abroad, as one of the game's ancient and historic venues. Thanks to the sustained and dedicated work of the Madras Cricket Club, lessees for nearly a century of the famed cricket ground before the Tamil Nadu Cricket Asso-

by
JAICI

ciation took it over, Chepauk has also been virtually the home of Madras hockey, tennis and squash as well.

The MCC's 70-year-old annual hockey tournament has gained such status that its latest edition, sponsored by Hindustan Lever Ltd and held recently, handed out the country's biggest-ever prize money. Organisers of the 1993 National squash championships, the MCC have come to be rated South India's No. 1 squash centre, and by staging the 1993 National junior tennis championships, just ended, they enhanced their status as the city's main tennis centre, where all-India tournaments have been held over the years.

Though the National tournament attracted a record entry of over 300, it had a smooth passage, to underscore the MCC's organisation skills. All the major centres were strongly represented, with Karnataka heading the list with 17 entries. The boy's line-up included such promising lads as Saurav Panja of Calcutta, Junoor Anand of Delhi, Vikram Venkataraghavan of Madras and Rajesh Balu of Coimbatore. The girls were headed by Arti Ponnappa of Karnataka. They all combined to provide the highlights of the championships.

The championships were not confined to the singles and doubles. There was an inter-State tournament too, to provide the first-ever junior Nationals held in Madras an additional colour. It was gone through on July 26th and 27th after the qualifying rounds had been completed. The tournament proper got into full swing on July 28th and completed its programme on schedule despite the occasional threat of rain.

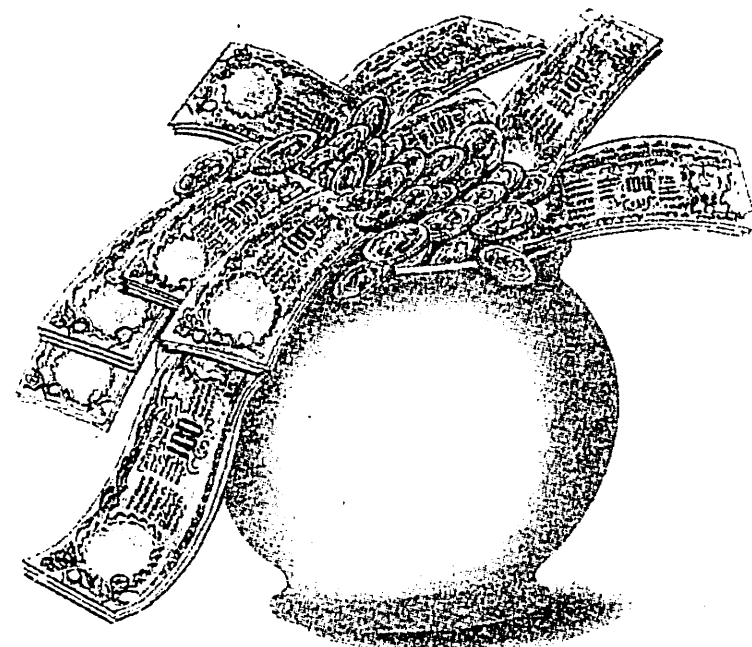
Though it came only a few months after the Indian Bank's Indian classic, the tournament was well patronised and, to the fans' delight, it provided more competitive tennis than the stuff the Classic dished out. Yet, there was no prize money, but the tennis scholarships totalling Rs. 30,000 were welcomed by all as better for the age group.

The tournament is also co-sponsored by ITC Limited, The Hindu, TI Cycles, Sanmar Group, Rane, The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corpn., Castrol and Total Business Solutions India Pvt Ltd.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Zafar Saifullah; 2. 'Rainbow Warrior Day', in memory of the fabled Greenpeace ship; 3. Bhagyashree Thipsay; 4. Rs. 300/-; 5. Pichavaram & Point Calimere; 6. Ilayaraja; 7. The Alps Cup at Vienna; 8. \$ 7.4 billion; 9. The B.C. Roy Award for Excellence in Medical Sciences; 10. The Belgrade Zoo; 11. A.K. Ramanujan; 12. Vadgam & Manibeli respectively; 13. Glavkosmos; 14. Air Marshal S.K. Kaul; 15. Dilip Vengsarkar; 16. A couple with two girls and the message 'Small Family, Happy Family' in English and Hindi; 17. Computer Aided Paperless Examination System; 18. Kim Campbell of Canada; 19. Pandit Ram Narain, the Sarangi maestro; 20. Vijayawada, Nagpur, Bhopal and Jhansi.

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