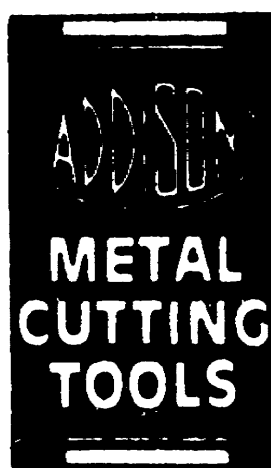


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Vol. III. No. 14

FREE ISSUE — EVERY FORTNIGHT

November 1 — 15, 1993

CPWD jumps gun in Adyar

Work on Besant Nagar office complex recommences

Even as the Supreme Court's final verdict is awaited, the Central PWD has resumed construction work on its proposed office complex in Besant Nagar. And the Besant Nagar Residents' Forum is none too happy with this precipitate and presumptuous action.

K Padmanabhan, President, BRF, orders, "How can the CPWD carry on with the construction of this office complex when the building's fate itself is dependent on the apex court's final verdict? What will the Department's position be if the court orders that the building should not be used as an office complex?" The BRF, however, has reconciled itself to the existence of some kind of building on what was a welcome 'lung' in Besant Nagar and which had been originally meant for park. "We don't want to waste the taxpayer's money, unlike the CPWD", Padmanabhan told this correspondent and, so, the Forum, with the help of a qualified architect, has drawn up alternate plans to which the present structure, with slight modifications, could be put to use. It has plans for an amphitheatre, library, indoor

stadium, museum etc. "But these plans come into the picture only when the Department comes to talk to us", said M S Balakrishnan, Secretary of the BRF.

Ever since 1985, when the CPWD started building this four-storeyed 7200 sq.m. office complex, opposite

• by A Staff Reporter

the Olcott Memorial School, the BRF has been against the proposal for these reasons:

- If a complex of such a size, housing several offices, is constructed, it will result in overexploitation of ground-water in the area and result in infiltration of seawater.
- The complex will create ecological imbalances and there will be a rise in ambient temperature.
- The peace of this primarily residential locality will be disturbed by the influx of a floating population of office staff, hawkers and unauthorised pavement dwellers.

And as if to prove the last-listed fears of the BRF correct, a few unauthorised bunks recently sprang up

around the construction site. They were later removed by the police at the request of the BRF. As a sequel to this, four thugs threatened Balakrishnan with dire consequences and damaged a scooter belonging to a relative of his.

It was in 1968 that the TNHB sold the seven acres involved to the CPWD. In 1984 the Government of India sanctioned Rs. 736.67 lakhs for the construction of an office complex and the CPWD started building work without even obtaining the sanction of the MMDA. The MMDA stopped the work on a complaint from the BRF and, later, it rejected the CPWD's application for reclassifying the land from an 'institution zone' to a 'primary and residential zone'. However, in 1986, the MMDA classified the land again and the department resumed its construction work.

The BRF took the matter to the Madras High Court, which stayed the construction and asked the MMDA to examine the objections of the Forum with the assistance of the Technical Expert Committee. In 1990, the Division Bench upheld the judgement of the single judge. However, during the litigation period, the CPWD carried on with its building work and brought the complex to an advanced stage. The Department filed a Special Leave Petition against the Division Bench's order in the Supreme Court which allowed the completion of the third floor subject to the following conditions: (a) Non-use of groundwater for construction work, (b) No right of occupancy, (c) No filing of completion report or the right for completion certificate, and (d) No equity. The apex court in its interim order further ordered the MMDA to hear the BRF and lay down the guidelines for reclassification of the land.

Though the Supreme Court gave its interim order in 1992, the legal battle and the uncertainty over the fate of the building deterred several contractors from accepting the contract from the CPWD. Now an influential builder has accepted the contract and is keen to finish the job.

One of the present issues is whether groundwater is being used for construction. The BRF states that the quality of the groundwater in Besant

(Continued on P9)



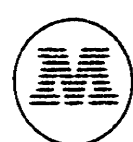
Two views of the Central Government office complex the CPWD are building in Besant Nagar. (Photographs by V S RAGHAVAN)

Tied in stitches

Did someone out there hear about the Avadi ordnance factory making shirts for export? We're certain the news didn't appear in any Madras paper. Or, at least, if it did, it appeared in such a way as to attract no notice.

The Times of India, however, was quick to latch on to the story and the editorial that follows, under the heading above, has been the result. That editorial is too much fun for us to ignore and so it is reproduced here. No further comment is necessary.

• The history of the world is largely the story of its dress, they say. Attire often provides the most illuminating of records and tells its tale with a candour and completeness which no chronicle can surpass. And yet, we were surprised when reports said the ordnance clothing factory at Avadi, near Madras, which manufactures the proud olive-green uniforms and battle fatigues for our jawans, was now into making sophisticated 'designer' shirts for export to the U.S. Some other ordnance production units have also been exporting leather garments for the fashion conscious in Russia and the U.S. According to the director-general of ordnance factories, it was the survival instinct which prompted these production facilities to adopt "a stitch in time" policy and switch seamlessly from its usual regimental outfits to "civvy street" against global competition. As the old proverb goes, "try what you will, there is nothing like leather", and ordnance factories deserve our kudos for "not losing their shirt" in the face of harsh economic ill-winds and actually bagging the \$2.5 million contract for Van Heusen shirts, blending livery with delivery, without spoiling their crease. Clearly, this is a quantum jump from early days when Tamil Nadu's world-beater in textiles was "bleeding Madras". The welcome shift from guns to butter, as it were, or from swords and spears to ploughshares and pruning hooks will be welcomed by peace-lovers and those who are conscientious objectors. But in this Avadi shift, the wags see some deeper implications. For it was also at Avadi, in 1955, that the ruling Congress pledged to take the nation to the goal of a socialistic pattern of society, redeemed in 1977 by amending the statute itself. But like the change of habiliments policy in Avadi, wags say the ruling party has opportunistically transvested its raiment to western-style market economy, without a qualm of conscience. They say that the socialist fabric might be in shreds elsewhere, but clothed in words, it worked in India and should not have been allowed to "wither away". Left-wingers feel no matter how much you fumigate and flue-cure capitalism, it remains daunting. The coming polls may show which way the wind blows as the battle of flags is joined — saffron, tri-colour, green, red and 'swadeshi' or khadi. •



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The cost of begatting rain

The plane took off just before the pre-monsoonal clouds. And then there was rain. Not only had cloud-seeding worked, but the six-day *varuna japam* just before it, held in ministerial presence and with eight priests — in the chest-deep water of a specially constructed tank — praying to the rain gods to the accompaniment of a 51-piece orchestra, also contributed its mite. But whether you agree all this contributed to the recent rain or not, there is one thing *The Man from Madras Musings* knows for sure and that is that despite the promises of Metro-water that there will be some water supply every other day and despite the rain in the catchment areas, *MMM*'s residential locality, besides several other localities in the city, have had NO Metrowater supply for MONTHS. Is Metro-water's promise of some supply every other day and the additional rain it has been blessed with, by Science and the Gods, only for a privileged few living in some parts of the city? When is Metrowater going to speak up and tell us what exactly is the supply position of water in the city and what it is going to do for

homes not supplied with the promised water?

Meanwhile, cloud-seeding, at a cost believed to be Rs. 15 million, is probably continuing even as the Monsoon breaks over Tamil Nadu. And, no doubt, the money, it will be claimed, has been well spent. Elsewhere in this issue, Harry Miller wonders whether it indeed has been well spent, but *MMM* supposes we will never know.

The same source which published the cost mentioned above, reported that the first attempt at cloud-seeding in 1985, during the MGR regime, cost \$ 3.5 million and that Hindustan Aeronautics estimated that it should cost no more than \$ 2.5 million. *The Man from Madras Musings* tends to think that both figures are wrong by the last zero, but, whatever the price, it was a tidy packet to pay for negligible rain. On the other hand, the figure might just be right, after all, for Government purchased the California-based Atmospheric Inc's Piper Aztec aircraft after the exercise, saying it would do the job itself in the future, having acquired the knowhow. In the event, the aircraft was used to provide

joyrides to the privileged — and later scrapped. So the call to Atmospheric Inc went out again this year. *MMM* wonders why the 1985 suggestion made in ruling party circles, to tow ice-floes from the South Pole to Madras, has not cropped up again. More intriguing is why there is official silence on the Telugu-Ganga Scheme's progress and on the plans for the Alternate Veeranam project. Have they been shelved?

Helping Shri Lanka

A few weeks ago, *Madras Musings* reported how several companies from the tea-

ment practices. And those are unlikely to be accepted by the labour on Shri Lankan estates easily, for they have developed a work culture all their own.

From the shadows

Administrators, especially of the IAS breed, generally shun the limelight. But, of late, a few of them in and around Madras have been seen outside the shadows, of their own volition or not.

When Krishnaswamy Rajivan was recently transferred from the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation to take charge of the Collectorate in Madurai, who should take his place but his wife, Anuradha, who had till then been the Collector of Pudukkottai!

Meanwhile, Sheila Rani Chundkath who, as Collector of Pudukkottai, had made it the first district in Tamil Nadu to attain 100 per cent literacy, had won the prestigious Hubert Humphrey Fellowship for a year at the ex-Presidential candidate's alma mater, the University of Minnesota. She will be spending a sabbatical year at the University's Leadership and Innovation School — where her contribution could well be on adult literacy programmes in developing countries and how they could be made applicable to many a developed country as well!

Closer home V Sundaram, an admirer of the British literature on India, not to mention English literature, has, between and betwixt being Secretary of the Public Works Department, found time to remember his favourite Indologist. Sir William Jones is now part of the name of a trust Sundaram has founded to undertake, among other things, a publishing programme. The first titles of the Sir William Jones Trust were released a couple of days ago at a grand function in which several members of the Administrative Service played notable roles.

And in the Pollution Board, they're playing musical chairs. The first chairman of the Board spent almost five years at the helm of the newly-founded department whose importance increases daily. In the last four months since his transfer, there have been three chairmen. Do you wonder that the drive the Board had has now begun to slacken?

Ever since the Shri Lankan tea estates were nationalised, South Indian estates made rapid advances on all the stated objectives of the Shri Lankan Government. Which is why South Indian expertise was called in to help Shri Lankan companies take over the estates. But as *The Man from Madras Musings* always thought, the labour ethos prevalent on South Indian estates would not suit Shri Lankan estates. There was bound to be trouble before long. And that trouble appears to have come sooner than later. This is not to say that the trouble has been on estates managed by the South Indian companies, but to reach South Indian standards on the three above-stated objectives — standards which are about the highest in the world — ANYONE managing an estate would have to follow South Indian manage-

remains *in situ* it could well help make the Cooum a still more polluted and stinking river, preventing as it might free flow of the river's dirty waters to the sea.

★ *The Indian Council of Medical Research Bulletin* recently reported that of India's 644,000 cancer cases, 315,000 were men, among whom 48 per cent of the cases were tobacco-related; among women, 20 per cent were tobacco-related cancer cases. Among the male tobacco-related cancer cases, about a third had their pharynx and larynx affected and about a quarter had their mouth affected. In the case of women, about 40 per cent had their mouth affected. What brings this message home to us in Madras is the accompanying report that states that one of the first reports in the world on the adverse effects of tobacco use was from MADRAS. As far back as 1902, the *Indian Medical Gazette* reported that about a third of all cancer patients admitted in the Madras General Hospital suffered from cancer of the cheek caused by tobacco chewing!

★ One of the consequences of the neo-literate drive in Pudukkottai District, which made it one of the first two districts in Tamil Nadu to be declared totally literate, is the enthusiasm for cycling it has created among the women of the district. Over 100,000 women in the lower middle class and weaker sections of society in the district have learnt cycling and three-fourths of them have taken part in 'exhibition-cum-contests' organised by Arivoli Iyakkam (the Light of Knowledge Movement), to display their skills. When the bicycle shops ran out of 'ladies' models', the women still looking for a buy agreed to take 'gents' models'. Impressed with what Arivoli volunteers have achieved, UNICEF has sanctioned 50 mopeds for the Arivoli women 'activists'!

★ The Taj Group, all set to expand in the South, with Tranquebar (Tarangambadi) as a beach resort among its many plans, is considering setting up a major flight kitchen in Madras. Partners in the venture are likely to be, according to whispers *MMM* hears, Singapore Airlines, Malaysian Airlines and Air Lanka. — *MMM*

In brief

★ The dangerous games six disgruntled employees played when they snatched radioactive material from the American company they were employed with and dumped it in the Cooum have come to an end with the recovery of the material. Officials of the Atomic Energy Commission, the Madras City Police and Larsen & Toubro all played major roles in the recovery of the dangerous material. What helped in the recovery most were probably the civil engineering contributions made by L & T, who built a coffer dam around the spot where the material had been dumped and then pumped the water out. But now that the operation is over, the Rs. 4.5 million question could well be: What's to be done with the dam that was built? If the dam

OUR READERS WRITE

Wo(manning) the bunk

I read with interest the article on the first petrol bunk to be manned by women in the country (*MM*, October 1). I commend you for bringing it to the notice of readers and I commend Mr. Parasuram for his decision to employ women, which I am sure he will never regret.

But what I found painful is that while women could enter any field if they can obtain the expertise and opportunities and prove to be good in their job, many times we still hurt the feelings of women by using sexist language which is always biased. It is high time we avoid using such archaic words like 'manning', which either gives a feeling that women are doing men's jobs, which is a deviation from the norm, or that only men are capable of such jobs.

I request that a paper like yours, which is highly enjoyed by the young and the old, should make people appreciate this.

Priscilla Singh
Secretary
Women's Desk/UELCI
Madras 600 010.

Twins at play

I read with interest the most informative article on 'The Scholarly Twins' by Subramaniam in *MM*, October 16, thought you would be interested in knowing about a practical joke Sir A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar was reported to have played when he went for a shave in a salon. I read it in some magazine or other, was back, and copied it in my jokes collection. But I can't vouchsafe for its veracity. Perhaps C.S. or some member of the Aravali family would be able to recollect it.

★ Sir A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar, a financial wizard, loved practical jokes. When a young man, with a very slight growth on his face, he walked into a salon and demanded a shave. "A shave?" the barber sneered. "Does your mother know about it?" This enraged

the young man who was proud of his growth. "Why?" he boasted. "I shave every two hours." "Well, sit down," said the barber and if your beard grows in two hours, I'll shave you free". "Done," said Ramaswami and the barber gave him the closest shave possible.

Two hours later the barber's jaw dropped when the customer walked in with a fairly heavy growth. He tugged to make sure it was real, then carried out his part of the bargain.

Ramaswami's response to the challenge had been to send in his twin brother Lakshmanaswami.

M R Radhavan
24 Srijananagar North Street
Alwarpet, Madras 600 018.

Spacing MM out

I enjoy every moment of reading *Madras Musings*. So much so, I count the number of articles and divide them into 14 days so that I have read the magazine in a fortnight and am ready for the next issue. If I read the magazine in a day, I'm bored waiting for the next 13 days.

Annu Srinivasan
13 Police Manickam Street
Ayanavaram
Madras 600 023

Two sides to Madras

I am not from Madras: I have come here to do my B. Tech in Chemical Engineering at Anna University. But I am a regular reader of *Madras Musings*. Congratulations for such a wonderful newspaper. The best part of it is the variety. Try to maintain this always and don't switch to the usual stuff on politics. I appreciate your language too, which is unlike the highly difficult language found in many other publications.

I think a serial on the origin of the city, its development and its influence on the outside world could be brought out rather than the bit-bits of history distributed over various issues.

But there's another side to Madras too. I was stopped with my scooter at Adyar junction recently by a policeman and asked to produce all my documents, which I promptly did. I had stopped at the traffic light well before the stop line. The policeman said that he would charge me for "over-speeding" if I didn't pay him. To avoid an unnecessary case, as I had no time to spare between my studies, I paid him Rs. 50. Is this Madras?

Hari Kumar N.
A-45, A C Tech Hostels
Madras 600 025.

Do you have an answer?

Madras has many serious problems. Acute scarcity of drinking water, very low levels of sanitation and serious pollution of waterways, shortages of power and telecommunication facilities, snail-paced traffic, transport inadequacy and increasing slum formation are some of the more serious problems.

These and other problems are bound to become more serious as the population soars from about 5 million to 10 million in the next twenty years, with the proliferation of activities in the low-wage, informal sector.

The public agencies in charge of these problems, such as the MMDA, Metrowater, TNHB, TNSCB, PTC, TNEB, Railways and Telecommunication Department are planning and executing development work to the best of their ability within the available resources. The local bodies — the city Corporation and the municipalities outside it — starved as they are of funds — are striving to maintain the basic infrastructure at workable levels.

It has now been recognised that the stupendous task of maintaining and developing cities at sustainable levels requires the efforts and genuinity of not only public agencies but also the entire private sector, which includes, among others, industrialists and the business community, NGO's, professionals and the media.

Madras has no dearth of talented people in these and other categories. WHAT IS IT THEY CAN DO FOR MADRAS?

What do you think — in association with your community — YOU can do to halt the declining infrastructure and worsening environmental realities in our city and help it to become a more prosperous and environmentally sound place to live, work and bring up children in? The public agencies today are more receptive to acting in tandem with the non-profit sector. What administrative framework would you suggest to interact with public agencies and increase your involvement in the process of planning and developing a better city? *Madras Musings* will be glad to receive your views.

— ONE WHO CARES

Free mailers and community papers

Free newspapers in the millions

Your Editor continues to be asked almost every day how we are able to bring out *Madras Musings* as a free issue. And his answer has always been that the publishers live in hope that it will pay for itself one day through advertising.

The free newspaper was something your Editor discovered in rural England. And there, Eddie Shah, part Indian, part Iranian, had made a fortune with scores of free weeklies. Many of them even ran to 64 tabloid-sized pages of which about 56 pages were advertising and the rest not even newsworthy of a village newspaper.

When your Editor and Lokavani-Hall Mark Press teamed together, their views were a little different from Eddie Shah's. The publishers did not want to make a fortune, but at the same time they wanted to break even through advertising from a couple of years on. As for your Editor, he wanted no apology for a village voice; he wanted a journal to express the concerns of the citizens of Madras for a neglected city. And with all those concerned agreeing on these principles, *Madras Musings* came out — quite content to be a free newspaper and hoping the readership,

if satisfied, would respond with the advertising necessary to keep it going. The last few weeks have shown us some light at the end of the tunnel — but much more is needed.

And one day, a couple of weeks ago, as the publishers and your Editor discussed the future of *Madras Musings*, the mail brought in a magazine which gave us hope. The free newspaper is doing well in France. Why shouldn't we be able to go even part of that way in India? Readers might be interested in what that article had to say. Excerpts from *World-Wide Printer*:

Free newspapers, combining personal sales and wants advertising with shop and store pages and a small amount of editorial matter, have become big business in France. One of the biggest publishers is Comareg, established as a small private enterprise by Paul Dini in Grenoble in 1968 and now part of the giant Havas group, with Dini as president of the regional press division Avenir Havas Media.

Comareg has 120 weekly publications (at the latest count) and controls its own local distribution and highly

motivated sales forces... 2.1 million copies are distributed in the eastern provinces of France. And there are plans to increase weekly production to 2.5 million copies.

The group takes a pride in its commercial function, as Comareg president Andre Schirrer explained in a house publication:

"What is the use of a free newspaper if not to generate a maximum traffic of potential customers at the point of sale: hypermarkets, supermarkets, local business, car dealers, estate agencies?"

To keep its power of attraction, the free newspaper, as the shop window of local commerce, must fulfil two requirements: (1) to publish useful advertising, i.e. that of clients whose products and services perfectly meet the needs of the consumers for goods necessary for daily life; (2) to show these sales messages to advantage...

Will local business in Madras adopt the same attitude to *Madras Musings*? That is what we at *Madras Musings* wonder as a two-month festive season approaches.

Welcome to the club, Adayar Times

Madras Musings welcomes a new weekly on the Madras scene, *Adayar Times*, a tabloid-sized journal like *MM*, and expressing the same concern for Madras, or at least for a part of it, South Madras.

In stating its "mission", however, *Adayar Times* is not quite correct in claiming to be "a new concept in Indian journalism", serving as it does "a limited neighbourhood". If anyone has to make that claim, it is *South Madras News*, whose continuing existence we are not very certain of. However, in its day, R Desikan, who still continues to valiantly tilt at windmills, struggled hard to bring it out every week. Unfortunately, he did not have the journalistic support to make it even an acceptably professional journal.

Adayar Times has that strength in Vincent de Souza, who has found his way here by way of *Aside and The Week*, not to mention that defunct free-mailer, *The Sidewalker*. The result is an enjoyable "neighbourhood newspaper", but even a neighbourhood newspaper needs to have more meaningful lead stories than new police officers being posted in the Adayar area. Coincidentally, our lead story this fortnight is about South Madras; we look forward to *Adayar Times* taking it from there and bringing some relief to Besant Nagar.

Taking on such issues is part of the priced *Adayar Times*' stated mission, excerpts from which we publish below

as we see it as being not too different from what we only HOPE for the whole of Madras. Welcome to the club, *Adayar Times*, the club of those who live in hope, optimism unblunted; join us in tilting at non-responsive authority.

— THE EDITOR

Here are a few excerpts from the *Adayar Times* mission statement:

What you have in hand is a new concept in Indian journalism — a newspaper serving a limited neighbourhood within a metropolitan area.

What is the rationale behind such a neighbourhood newspaper?

Modern technology has made it easier for mainstream newspapers to purvey state, national and international news with greater efficiency than ever before...

But, in respect of events characterised by immediacy and proximity to us, events which are happening within the community living just around us, of events which impinge on our lives day after day, we are often blissfully unaware.

Equally ignorant are we about people living in our own neighbourhood, their travails, their endeavours and their triumphs.

Adayar Times will strive to fill this gap, and to help you

know your neighbours and your neighbourhood better. And, in the process, to knit all of us living in this area into a community that cares for one another.

The general area of coverage of *Adayar Times* will be Adayar, Sastri Nagar, Indira Nagar, Besant Nagar, Thiruvannamipur and Valmiki Nagar.

In particular, *Adayar Times* will endeavour to — disseminate news about events of general interest happening in this neighbourhood

— highlight achievements of individuals living in our area, our own silent heroes and heroines, and their success stories.

— act as a medium of communication between the residents of the area and the civic/government officials at the cutting edge level and, in the process, help civic problems to be anticipated and forestalled

— give publicity to the activities of educational institutions, religious centres, voluntary social service bodies and sports clubs

— strive for a better quality of life in the neighbourhood by highlighting ecological concerns...

Come let us together knit South Madras into an informed, caring and enlightened neighbourhood!

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Readers NOT on our mailing list: Rs. 150/- as above, and advertiser will be put on our mailing list.

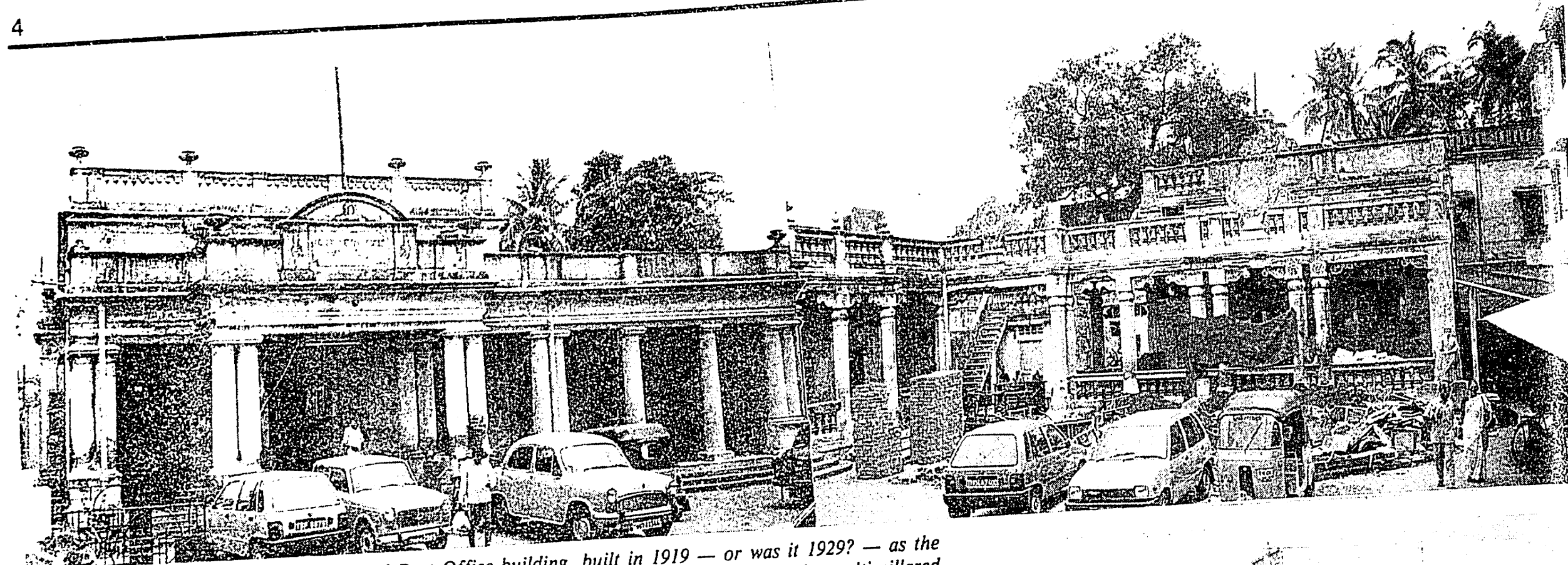
For Smalls Display: Four (4) centimetres by one column, type only, in the same manner as above: Rs. 500/- (Mailing List) and Rs. 750/- (Non-mailing list)

NOTE: All cheques to Lokavani-Hall Mark Press Pvt. Ltd., 62/63 Greames Road, Madras-600 006

British Council Library

Recent Additions

Author	Title
APPLEYARD, B	Understanding the present.
BLACK, M	Oxford: the first 50 years.
BLOCK, D J H	Molecular genetics for the clinician.
BYATT, A S	Angels and insects.
COSGRAVE, P	The strange death of socialist Britain.
COURSE, J	The Guardian 1992.
CRITTEN, P	Investing in people.
CROMIN, B (ed.)	Information management from strategies to action.
FERRAS, E	The cup and the lip.
HOBSLEY, M (ed.)	Physiology in surgical practice.
HOPKINS, A	Clinical neurology: a modern approach.
HOPPLE, B (ed.)	Discrimination: the limits of law.
HUCZYNSKI, A A	Management gurus.
INGLIS, A F	Video engineering.
KETTENMANN, H (ed.)	Practical electrophysiological methods.
KING, M	Nutrition for developing countries. 2nd ed.
MCDONALD, M	Strategic marketing planning.
MAZDA, F	Power electronics handbook.
O'CALLAGHAN, P W	Energy management.
OTTAWAY, P B (ed.)	Technology of vitamins.
SPARK, M	Curriculum Vitae.
STORR, A	Music and the mind.
WILSON, R M S	Strategic marketing management.
WOODFORD, C	Solving linear and nonlinear equations.
YAKS, D J (ed.)	Manufacturing cells.



Our OLD is the present Flower Road Post Office building, built in 1919 — or was it 1929? — as the headquarters of the Egmore Benefit Society. The E.B.S. functioned there till 1970, adding the multi-pillared mandapam (on right in picture) to form an 'L' as business expanded. In 1971, the E.B.S. moved into its Centenary building, constructed at a cost of Rs. 8 lakhs, our NEW.

The Post Office rents the old E.B.S. offices — and they are buildings that have not changed much. The side — or rather roadside — view, reveals French stained glass, a bust of someone called 'Our Lady' in the area, a balustraded terrace, and a pillared and pedimented entrance of old... & THE NEW THE OLD... giving it a church-like aura. A Buddha statue, raised in the middle of the courtyard to mark the Society's Diamond Jubilee, now cuts a sorry figure in a corner of a crowded parking lot.

This Egmore landmark is now a threatened building and an eight-storeyed highrise is envisaged. Where will the Post Office have to go, worry the staff meanwhile.

The Egmore Benefit Society was started on January 1, 1870, as the Egmore Benefit Fund. In 1872, in keeping with a ruling by the High Court on the registration of mutual benefit funds, it was re-named the Egmore Benefit Society. C Backthavetulu was the First Secretary and Treasurer of this pioneer in the field of co-operative banking. The Society was started with a nominal capital of Rs. 300,000 comprising of 1200 shares.

The new, for the record, is very conventional highrise in a rather sickly green edged with white. (Photographs and text by RAJIND CRISTY)



The changing face of AGMs

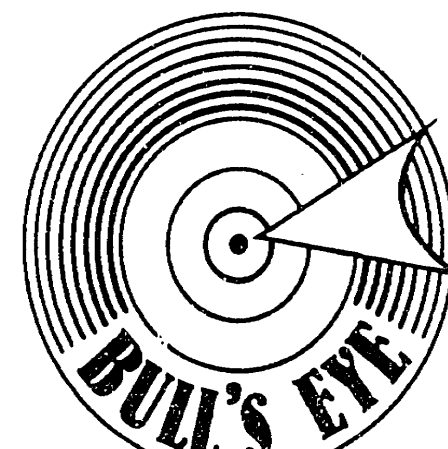
It seems as if a change has come over the spirit of AGMs. Ask anyone who has regularly attended AGMs for years and he'll put you wise — on how the cliché-ridden and inane AGMs of the 80s (and the years before) have transformed into peppy and buoyant affairs.

Shareholders were, in the 80s, more 'figures of straw' to the management and the 'decisions to be' of the AGM were, thus, predetermined and predestined. However, the Company Law requiring that a quorum be present for AGMs, invitations were sent to shareholders, whose dilemma of 'to go' or 'not to go' was often solved by the prospects of attractive gifts from the company for those attending. At the venue, an introductory speech would be followed by routine talks by the chairman and the auditor on the performance of the company and its future prospects. The interaction session would be the enaction of a rehearsal tried many times over, with the employee shareholders putting forth the much-drilled questions to the Board. At the termination of the meeting, any resentment by the shareholders on being constantly ignored, would have been assuaged, thanks to the gifts in hand. And so continued the story every year.

However, came the 90s and events have taken a pirouette. With increasing globalisation and expansions demanding mammoth funds, companies were forced to approach the public for the same. This resulted in the creation of an equity cult fully aware of its indispensability and prerogatives. Now AGMs are no more low-key affairs with thousands attending them. Unsatisfactory and wishy-washy verbalisations by the management are no more acceptable. This was most recently manifest in the AGM of Samtel Color Ltd, wherein a proposed hike in the remuneration of the Managing Director, Satish Kaura, was rejected by the shareholders and subsequently vetoed, on the grounds of the dismal perfor-

mance of the company in recent years and the consequent non-payment of dividends.

It is time managements came to terms with the growing potency of the shareholders and shed their 'standoffish' shell, paving the way for the latter's legitimate participation in the business of the company. On the other hand, the shareholders should realise that the glow of their increasing strength, as a positive parameter in the capital market, is being clouded by their causing a ruckus in AGMs through vociferous demands for snacks and gifts. Here, while the claim by the management



that it can ill-afford gifts and unabridged versions of the balance-sheets to its shareholders sounds hollow (considering the whopping amounts it spends on business trips and the like), the question which pointedly arises is 'Whether the focus of the shareholders? On dividends and profitability or on gifts?

Thus, all said and done, while the new facet of the shareholder is laudable, the fact still remains that AGMs in India are a far cry from being perfect. It will take a thorough comprehension, by shareholders and managements alike, of where their true interests lie, to set a paradigm in the primary market.

While you think that over, here are three scrips for your investment:

Premier Housing (CMP Rs. 25.00): Premier Housing was incorporated in 1988. In October 1991, it took over PL Finance,

a Madras-based company. Its large residential complex at Bangalore, covering 12 grounds and costing Rs. 16 cr., is scheduled to be completed by December 1993 and is expected to fetch a profit of about Rs. 20 cr. The company, along with PL Finance Ltd, is jointly floating Premier Overseas India Service Enterprise (POISE) to tap NRI investments in real estate. The company's performance for 1992-93 has been good. Sales touched Rs. 10.12 cr and PAT was Rs. 2.11 cr. It recorded a good EPS of Rs. 3.06 on the enlarged equity after the 1st rights issue. It has proposed a 20 per cent dividend for this year too. A good buy.

Rajshree Sugars (CMP Rs. 30.00): The company, which went public in 1988, recorded significant improvement in its performance in 1993. With the maintained expansion, the PAT margin was at 15 per cent to 16 per cent, giving an EPS of Rs. 2.78. The location advantage of Rajshree Sugars, supported by a comprehensive cane development programme, allows it to run its sugar mill 210 days p.a. compared to an all-India average of 122 days. The future augurs well as the distillery project is likely to contribute substantially from 1994. Our projections indicate a turnover and PAT of Rs. 3.35 and Rs. 7 cr for 1994. The resultant EPS of Rs. 3.35 would support a price of Rs. 50. Buy.

Dharani Sugars (CMP Rs. 46.00): Dharani Sugars closed its accounts for 1992-93 with a cheerful note, announcing its maiden dividend of 18 per cent. The turnover increased by 13 per cent, PAT declined by 16 per cent due to additional interest burden of Rs. 75 lakhs. The EPS works out to Rs. 3.46. The prospects for 1993-94 appear good. As Orissa sugar mill taken on lease will be benefited by the molasses decontrol, resulting in better price realisation. In addition, the 1993-94 will derive the benefits of balancing of equipment at Nayagarh, Orissa, which has been completed recently. The company is presently setting up a 30,000 tonnes capacity distillery plant at Dharani Nagar in Tamil Nadu and implementing a new sugar unit in Balasore District, Orissa. For 1994, we estimate an EPS of Rs. 4.40, which would justify a price of Rs. 60 by the end of 1993-94 results. Technically, the stock has formed an inverted H&S pattern indicating a bullish trend. Buy.

K. Gopalakrishnan

● A thought for a rainy day

Seeding the clouds and fiddling for rain

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky.

(THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS)

As everyone knows, this is not the first time seeding clouds has been resorted to in the hope that it will bring us rain. Someone may as well stand in what little water is left in Red Hills and play the violin again, as has been done before! Commonsense measures, like enforcing a total moratorium on all building activities in the metropolis until such time as water supplies can be found, if ever they can, or desalinating water from the Bay of Bengal, are conveniently ignored. Instead, we play pointless games up there in the sky.

The first time cloud-seeding was attempted, I got to know the American

team rather well. There was a pilot, a co-pilot and a meteorologist, and it was from the meteorologist that I learned most. Actually, they didn't have much to do, except to take up their little plane two or three times a week to keep it in good shape; but as for cloud-seeding, as the meteorologist repeatedly pointed out to me, you can only seed clouds if there are clouds to seed and if there are not, as in the Walrus and the Carpenter poem in *Alice*, the whole thing becomes an exercise in futility, which is precisely what happened during the first cloud-seeding attempt.

They also taught me that it's no use seeding any old clouds; they must be the right kind of clouds, and the right kind of clouds are those already ripe and heavy with rain that need a mere nudge to make them precipitate. Nor do the problems end there. Who is there to say, who is there to guarantee.

**One Man's
Madras —
HARRY
MILLER'S**

that if and when the right kind of clouds are located and seeded, where the precipitation will occur, if indeed it occurs at all? Our officials will look pretty silly if it pours down over the Bay of Bengal or the Andamans, to say nothing of neighbouring Andhra whose farmers would be eternally grateful to the tax-payers of Tamil Nadu. Come to think of it, they may even allow some of that precious Krishna water to

reach us through those expensive canals they are probably already planning to breach.

The last time the idea of cloud-seeding was suggested I wrote to the Australian High Commission in Delhi asking for their advice. Australia is one of the world's driest continents and they have even more experience of droughts and methods to combat them than the Americans. The Australians were only too pleased to enlighten me, but the advice and experience they had to offer will not please officials in Madras, I'm afraid. The Australian experience, I was told, was so disappointing that various State Governments of Australia had officially warned their farmers not to waste money on the practice, for either it failed altogether or, when it did rain, the precipitation could not with any certainty be attributed to seeding, and, in any case, the rain fell on other farmers' lands more often than the farmers who had paid for the seeding

operation. A dead loss, as the Aussies would laconically put it.

Anyway, it's too late to stop that American team in their tracks, as it were. We can only hope that the rain we have been having is indeed due to them. But the meteorologists will, in all likelihood, have nothing of that!

A PRAYER FOR MADRAS

The other day, as we were driving from Ashok Nagar to Kodambakkam, we got caught behind a Pallavan bus. Thanks to the road divider, there was no way we could get past her and so we alternately braked and accelerated behind her. Her centre of gravity was clearly left of centre and the base of the base was at fortyfive degrees to the road. The left

The thought had barely crossed my mind when — thud — one youngster fell off the bus on to the road. A cyclist to our left ran into him; both fell; the bus screeched to a halt; we braked; I hit my head against the windshield. Presently, pandemonium broke loose. The irate driver and conductor materialised from nowhere and, in fury, struck out at every youngster near the

view mirrors, sans brakes...these monsters provide instant passage to the next world. The driver sits in the narrow buggy in front and cruises along at take-off speed, blissfully unaware of traffic behind or at the sides and cuts left or right without warning, just as he would have handled the tractor in the open fields back home; he forgets that he is in peak-hour traffic at Purasawalkam. Cyclists, scooterists and pedestrians are the usual victims. *Fatwa* number two — limit speed of water lorries to 20 k.p.h. and forthwith fix indicator lights on all water-lorries/tractors.

As I write this I am waiting for the American-silver-iodide rain to start. Why on earth did they have to do that test-run over Pulicat Lake? Why not right here in Madras so that we could have all witnessed the art of rain-making? Out of sight, out of mind, I guess; at least out of the auditor's mind! In the meantime, we are merrily spending diesel like water to get water to the populace. Borewell-sinkers, well-deepeners, sump-wideners... they've never had it so good. I can't wait for that local optimistic *Muni's* prediction to come true — come November and Madras will have floods...

The only silver lining in our cloud seems to be the fact that the two religious processions of September passed off without incident. That is indeed a feather in the cap of the administration and the people of Madras. I am reminded of Shirdi where annually two processions occur at the same time; the Muslims take out the Chandan procession and the Hindus the Ram Navami procession; and both end at Shirdi Baba's mosque which is aptly named *Dwarakamayee*. Let us hope Madras will do a Shirdi year after year.

Buses with doors, water-lorries that do not kill, clouds that rain, processions that do not maim...! Lord: Bless our Madras with all this and more!

● BY HIRAMALINI SESHADRI

tyres seemed near squashed and, at last count, there were at least nine youngsters hanging on to the entrance and window bars.

As we lurched along, one slipper fell off a footboard traveller and on to the road. There was much laughter and shouting amid the footboard crowd. The banger on nearest to our car grinned at me as if saying "What fun this is, isn't it?" Made of less sterner stuff, I was getting nervous and nervous so to say and fierous and fierous too; as brother of a son I felt like blasting the living daylight out of each of those mothers who dared to risk their children's hearts by playing such dangerous games. What if it was one of them who had fallen instead of a slipper?

entrance, dishum-dishum! I wished they had all got a double dose of it. The youngsters then made themselves scarce. Motorists piled up behind hooted. The driver and conductor then got in and we all moved on. If I were the Transport Minister, Balakrishna Pillai style, I'd issue a state *Fatwa* — all Pallavan buses to be fixed with doors right away and fifty lashes in public to anyone caught riding the footboard. Do I see you nod in assent? I wish instead of dyeing our green Pallavans red, the money had been used to fix doors for each bus!

Now to tackle that new *avatar* of Yama — the water-lorry. Our entire Vinayaka Chaturthi was spent resuscitating one hapless victim of a water lorry. *Sans* indicator lights, *sans* rear-

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MUSINGS

Reaching out to special children

In a cheerful room bright with posters I glance at a 10-year-old boy's essay: "I wake up and drashleb my teet and had my bracefast and my dath wile I watted for my mom". Ten months of special education later, the same child writes: "My birthday is special because I was born that day. I get a lot of gifts. My Mom gives me the most love that day." A case of atrocious grammar and spelling being rectified by strict, disciplined schooling? No, this child is a dyslexic, suffering from a particular kind of neurological disorder which presents itself in learning difficulties, sometimes severe, with words, in reading, writing, spelling and sometimes maths.

strong, with a busy Centre where dedicated and trained volunteers identify the dyslexic child and set about on a highly sequential, individualised and multisensory regimen of 'remediation'.

Says Nirmala Pandit, trained in the US in special education for dyslexic children and Special Educationist of the MDA, "It is a condition that can be helped through a scientifically sound and practically effective teaching model. Remediation varies according to age and is highly individual and structured."

• by
PUSHPA CHARI

The 'Dys' in Latin means difficulty. 'Lexis' means words; very often, they forget words and what words look like, they have mix-ups with their sense of time and direction, and sometimes need more help than 'normal' people in collecting, sifting and even expressing their thoughts and experiences. Yet in other areas they can often be brilliant over-achievers — Albert Einstein, Leonardo Da Vinci and Woodrow Wilson were dyslexic! But, incredibly, because of their particular areas of incomprehension, dyslexics remained, till the first two decades of this century, even in the West, forgotten children, lumped with the laggard and the idiot, condemned to being nearly-illiterate and away from the mainstream of life. It was in the 40's that a special system of education and instruction was codified and devised for dyslexic children and a mere decade or so back that Indian parents and teachers woke up to the fact that dyslexics exist — and need urgent specialised help.

Once again, Madras has led in its progressive, eclectic attitude — it has the only officially recognised association for dyslexics in India, viz. The Madras Dyslexics Association, or MDA. Talking to C Ramanujan, President of MDA, is an education in itself. Having been trained at the Hornsby Centre for Dyslexics in England, it was he who first mooted the idea of a public association for dyslexics, 'pushed', as he says, by Mrs Helen Mackay, a lecturer from the Hornsby Centre whom he had invited to give special lectures at a privately run centre for dyslexic children. Begun 6 years ago, the MDA is today a registered non-profit making body, 50-members

The MDA Centre in T' Nagar is humming with group learning for pupils when I visit on a Saturday. One of the volunteer teacher says: "It's such a wonderful feeling when a child responds positively to the Individualised Education Programme and joins a mainstream school as many do. It's just a different pattern of learning to use a dyslexic's child's strengths and overcome his weaknesses with sympathy and caring."

What are the MDA's aims?
★ To spread awareness of this condition, as also the awareness that streaks of genius could exist side by side with dyslexia.
★ To train special educationists to work towards establishment of remedial centres in regular schools.

★ To arouse interest in educationists, professionals and teachers by holding training programmes, workshops etc.
★ To help in preparing dyslexics not only for examinations but to meet all challenges of life.

In the wealth of India's school-children, 10-12 per cent are dyslexic. They need the helping hand of society — emotionally, educationally and financially — to put them on the road to specialised learning, achievement and even glory. Little Ramu down the road tells me that 6 x 5 is 30, because 5 is half 10, and since 10 x 6 equals 60, then half that is the answer! Ramu is a diagnosed dyslexic and he — and hundreds like him — need our caring and support to tap their great potential. So that they, in their turn, can truly 'grow' in, and contribute to, a society to which they belong as much as their more 'normal' brethren.

NOTE: The MDA is having a fund-raising dinner, at the Taj Coromandel, on November 19th. One of the star attractions of the gala evening would be the staging by Noshir Rutnagar of the popular play "The Review".

Scrumptious Crab Puttu. Try a different dish with colocasia — fresh-green crisp, golden patties. Palak is in season. Make the **Palak Paneer**. Custard apple milk shake? Oh, yes, milk shakes will never taste the same again.

CRAB PUTTU

2 cups crab meat,
2 onions, chopped fine
6-8 green chillies, chopped fine
8-10 garlic flakes, chopped fine
1" piece ginger, chopped fine
¼ cup coriander leaves
1 spring curry leaves
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp turmeric powder
3-4 tbs oil
Salt to taste

Method

To get two cups crab meat, clean, the crabs required in fresh running water, steam them with their shells for about 10 minutes till the shells turn red, drain well and remove meat from the shells.

Mix meat with turmeric and chilli powder. Add salt and keep aside.

Heat oil in a heavy bottomed vessel. Add the curry leaves, chopped onions, green chillies, ginger and garlic. Fry till the onions turn transparent.

Add the crab meat. Reduce the heat and cook till done. Keep turning the puttu.

Add the coriander leaves and serve hot with rice.

Mrs P Raghupathy

PALAK PANEER

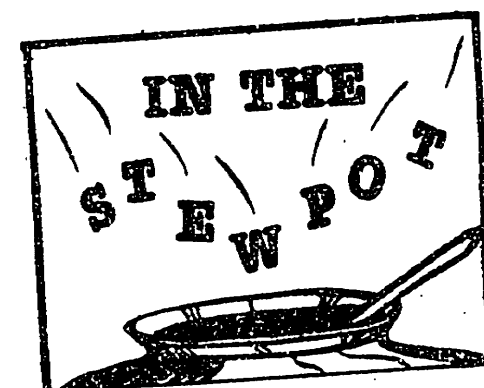
200 g fresh paneer, cut into cubes
3 bunches fresh spinach, cleaned and chopped fine
1 small bunch fenugreek leaves, chopped fine
1 tsp red chilli powder

Quizzin' with Ramanan

(Quiz master V.V. RAMANAN'S questions are from the fortnight October 1st — 15th.)

- Who are the recipients of this year's Nobel Prizes for Literature and Peace?
- Which former Chief of Naval Staff passed away on October 14th?
- Which Tamil film is among the 18 films selected for the Indian panorama section of the International Film Festival 1994?
- What message does the reverse side of the new Two Rupee coin, issued on October 15th, 'World Food Day', show?
- Name the three radioactive sources that were stolen from a private company and dumped in the Cooum River, causing much anxiety recently?
- Why was one S.M. Imam in the news recently?
- King Gustaf XVI, who made a week long state visit to India, is the King of
- The week ending October 15th was celebrated as

(Answer p. 12)



FRIED ARVI

1 kg colocasia, boiled, peeled and mashed roughly
1½ tsp red chilli powder
2 tsp roasted dhanaya powder
1 tsp roasted cumin powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp amchoor
2-3 tbs besan
Salt to taste
Oil for shallow frying

Method

Add chilli powder, dhanaya powder, cumin powder, turmeric powder, besan, amchoor and salt to the mashed colocasia. Mix well.

Divide the mixture equally. Shape into small patties. Shallow fry on griddle till golden on both sides. Serve hot.

CUSTARD APPLE MILK SHAKE

2 fresh custard apples, deseeded
2 cups milk
Sugar to taste

Method

Liquidise custard apples with milk and sugar in a mixer. Chill and serve in a tall glass.

Chandra Padmanabhan

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Eating out in G.T., once upon a time

In yesterdecades Coimbatore Krishna Iyer catered his choice morsels to a select circle of customers in Triplicane, (MM, 1-15 July), the same was done on a larger scale by contemporary restaurants in George Town. During that era, the stretch between Parry's Corner to Kandawamy Temple was the super bazaar of Madras. Every citizen went there to buy every household item imaginable. Thus, the area always had a floating population jostling about throughout the day. The need to satisfy their hunger and thirst was taken care of by these restaurants.

The one that comes foremost to mind is the **Ramakrishna Lunch Home**. It was situated in the right wing of the Y.M.C.A. building. It occupied the same space where its new avatar now sits adorned with plenty of tinsel and neon lamps. In those days it was a quiet place. It had only a long black nameboard with golden lettering in Tamil and English to announce itself. It was one of the cleanest eating places in Madras in spite of its large turnover. A trophy won from Madras Corporation for overall cleanliness used to be exhibited prominently in the restaurant.

The users were mostly lawyers and their clients who poured in, in droves, during lunch-time from the High Court on the opposite side. The high ceiling creating a cool atmosphere made it a

• by **M. SETHURAMAN**

welcome place for the patrons who had been walking in the hot sun. The servers were courteous and spoke Tamil with a Malayalam drawl.

This restaurant was running supreme until it was challenged by the

Mysore hotelier Seetharama Rao who started his **Modern Cafe** in a new building adjacent to it. He lured customers with his famous **masala dosa**. Although other restaurateurs tried to

imitate this item, they could not get the right texture of the **dosa** or the consistency of the filling within.

A hotelier from Vellore started **Ambi's Cafe** at the Broadway corner

An unforgettable taste,

There is a grand old shop of yesteryear (nearly 50-years-old) which is still going strong and deserves recognition. It is a small establishment called **GOPAL DAIRY** and is at 2 Philips Street, George Town. It serves as a refreshment place, offering delicious, mouth-watering, traditional Bun-Butter-Jams and a unique Iced Butter-Milk, the two blending together perfectly. I should know,

because I used to frequent it in my childhood, when I was in Class III. Now, when I am 26-years-old, I still steal some time off work and visit this place.

Any readers of *Madras Musings* who are in the George Town are should visit Gopal Dairy and try my recommendation.

— Hemant Nahar

Tamil Thatha's favourite hotel

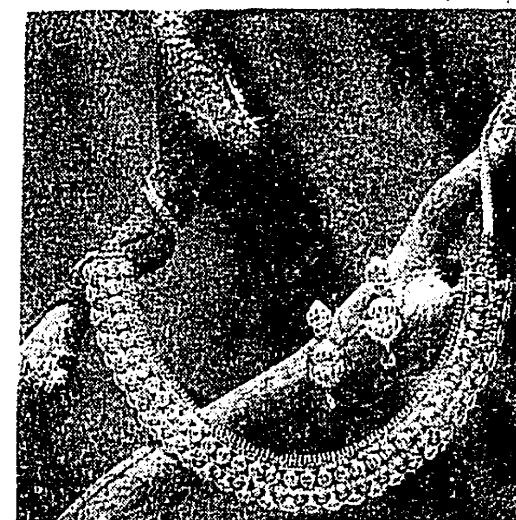
One of the oldest 'capes' in Madras, which created history in its own way was Kasipatti Hotel. Who Kasipatti was nobody seems to know, but many seem to think she was the pilgrim's pious old grandmother who had made the pilgrimage to Kasi or Benares, as it was then known in English.



Kasipatti Hotel was on Mint Street and strictly 'For Brahmins Only'.

by
Randor Guy

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close to the China Bazaar turning. His speciality was the fine coffee whose splendid aroma invited you in even from a distance.

About half a kilometre away in Govindappa Naicken Street was **Arya Bhavan**. It was in the overcrowded realms of jewellers and wholesale merchants. Its speciality was the sweets prepared out of the purest ingredients. Naturally the price was a bit high. Here, even the lowly **Mysore Pak** was butter-soft to touch, smelt of pure ghee and melted in your mouth leaving a lingering sweet taste.

Away from the bustle of shops stood **Rama Bhavan**. It was in the middle of Thambu Chetty Street, a quiet residential locality at the time. It could be equated to Coimbatore Krishna Iyer's of Triplicane. The middle-class householder with limited means usually took his brood to this restaurant to have a festive 'eat out'.

As years passed, with prices and wages soaring and customers not caring much for hygiene or the quality of what they ate, cheaper places appeared on the scene. The old restaurants which boasted of a pristine quality had to bow out. Some changed hands. **Modern Cafe** struggled valiantly for some years and then folded up. Even the premises it occupied have been demolished.

Rama Bhavan survived in spite of its modest business as the owners had branched into the 'instant' food trade. Their famous Triple Seven pickles and powders are popular not only throughout India, but the world over, wherever South Indians live.

families in rural Tamil Nadu, **murungakai** juice is still served to the bridegroom on his wedding night!.

Kasipatti Hotel's clientele represented the cream of Madras Brahmin society and the most famous of them all was the legendary Tamil scholar and savant U.Ve. Swaminatha Iyer. He was so impressed by the food served there that he made mention of Kasipatti Hotel in his famed memoirs.

The most popular dishes of Kasipatti Hotel were **Kasi Halwa** (a delightful sweet made of pumpkin pulp), **rice idli** (served with red chilli powder, ghee and coconut chutney and, on certain days, **mochaikotta kootu**), and crisply fried **dosas** (no masala inside).

Whether coffee was served here or not seems to be a matter of some dispute. Some oldtimers have told this writer that coffee was taboo at KH, being a 'foreign' addictive and not to be taken by Brahmins, but others have spoken of the first rate quality of coffee served.

Today, Kasipatti Hotel is no more, but many an old-timer or those who've read *Tamil Thatha*, as Swaminatha Iyer was known, remember it only too well.

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Celebrating 10 with *nadaswaram*

A tenth anniversary for an exclusive classical music and dance magazine is really quite an achievement. Naturally, Editor-in-Chief Pattabhiraman of *sruti* had arranged the occasion on October 17th. Luminaries of the music world invited to speak made their appearance, but, sad to say, not only did the slide projector fail, but there was only a very small audience to listen to some absolutely wonderful delineations of ragas on *nadaswaram* during the day.

The *nadaswaram* concerts were organised by a few cultural organisations as a 'Salute to *sruti*' on its being a magazine of excellence. The concerts by Adyar K Jayaraman and party and then by a couple from Srirangam, Sheik Mahboob Subhani and Smt. Kalbeshabi Mahboob, were a delight. The couple from Srirangam are perhaps the best *nadaswaram* players we have today. Their raga elaborations were quite enthralling and they provided one of the best music concerts I have heard in recent years.

Sruti was started by Dr. N. Pattabhiraman when he returned to India

in 1980, after 25 years in the U.S. He resigned from UNDP to return home, but continues to assist it as a senior consultant. An ardent music enthusiast, with a deep interest in Carnatic, Hindustani and Western Classical music and jazz, Pattabhiraman felt the need for a magazine exclusively devoted to classical music and dance when he

The View From The Wings by V.R. Devika

noticed the several problems in the Indian music scene that did not seem to bother anyone.

Originally *Sruti* focused on South Indian music, but it later expanded to include pan-Indian music and dance forms. *Sruti* also has a yellow page where you can get information about services for music and dance and a yellow page for gossip in the whispering gallery. Opinions are divided on the

contents of the latter page; some loathe it, some welcome it. Quite a few secrets are revealed in this page to the embarrassment of many who recognise themselves despite the clever camouflage.

For me it has been a welcome association with *Sruti* since its inaugural issue, as it has proved to be a single mine of information on events and developments pertaining to Indian music and dance taking place in different parts of India as well as in other countries.

The Sardarji dances

Navej Singh Johar, born in Jalandhar and brought up in Chandigarh, decided to become a dancer while experimenting in the Community Theatre Workshop at the Punjab University. He came to Madras to study Bharatha Natyam at Kalakshetra and then moved to the U.S., where he danced with several prominent modern dance companies and choreographers. He has also worked with Chandralekha and danced in the performance she choreographed at the Tokyo Summer Festival.

Navej Singh has strong views on dance. He is also a compelling performer. He gives demonstrations as well as talks on issues that revolve around the performance of traditional arts in secular, exhibition settings. He would very much like to perform in Madras in December. But without a godfather, I wonder if he can get a platform during the Season. It would be good if he could, for Navej wants to be seen for



Navej Singh Johar

his dancing and not for being a freak Sardarji into a Southie dance form.

Puppetry at Navarathri

In Madras recently was also Nathan Kumar Scott, a story-teller and puppeteer from the U.S. The Kumar in his name is for having been born in India. His parents love India and live in Bangalore.

Nathan brought his masks and told lively tales from the Indonesian rain

forest to children in several schools in Madras. He also conducted a workshop in shadow puppetry for children at the Narada Gana Sabha.

Scott, Selvaraj, a traditional shadow puppeteer, and a group of children gave performances for the public recently that delighted the small gatherings. Their performances added gaiety to the Navarathri *Golus* in several Madras homes.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Till November 8:** —An exhibition by the artists of Madras who have donated their works to help the victims of the Maharashtra earthquake. The entire sale proceeds will be donated to the Governor of Tamil Nadu's Earthquake Relief Fund. (At Sarala's Art Centre, 9 a.m. — 1 p.m., 3 p.m. — 7 p.m.)
- Till November 9:** —An exhibition of the work of Ramlal Dhar and Sohini Dhar sponsored by Sarala's Art Centre and Alliance Francaise (at the Alliance Francaise Gallery).
- November 19:** —Fund-raising dinner and play — *The Review* — organised by the Madras Dyslexics Association. At the Taj Coromandel.

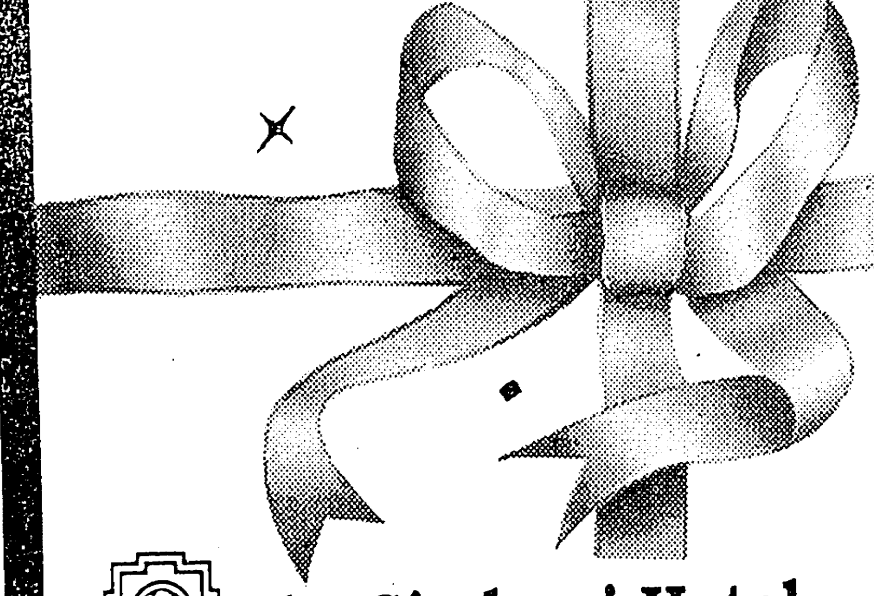
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Remembering

The man who got two Bradmans

C.R. Rangachari, who passed away recently, long cherished his meetings on the field with Don Bradman and George Headley. Rangachari was a member of the first Indian team to Australia (1947-48) and was selected for one of the Tests there on the basis of a brilliant performance against Tasmania, at Hobart, that included a hat-trick.

When talking to me some years ago, Rangachari recalled his encounter with Bradman in these words:

As a youngster, I had heard a lot about the great Bradman and looked forward to meeting him and seeing him in action. You can imagine the thrill I felt when I got the opportunity to bowl to him my very first ball in Test cricket, after he had taken a couple of runs. As the ball flashed from the pitch and beat Bradman, I threw up my hands expecting it to bowl him, but it hit the edge of his bat and went to Amarnath at second slip and he dropped a simple catch. When Bradman was 51, I again beat him, the

ball again took the inner edge and went to the wicket-keeper. He too could not hold the catch and the ball ran to fine leg. As Bradman crossed over for a run and reached my end he remarked, "Bad luck, my boy".

This happened at Adelaide where the wicket was dead as a dodo. It was a very hot day and I had to bowl eight balls an over operating against the wind. I beat Bradman once again, and

seen many bowlers of your type, but I have never seen one who was such a Trojan, and that too against the wind on a dead wicket. You must be made of iron". Tears welled in my eyes as I replied, "Thank you, Don. I am the happiest man today as this compliment comes from the greatest cricketer the world has produced".

Rangachari's figures were 41-5-141-4. He caused quite a sen-

by P N SUNDARESAN

Jack Fingleton wrote that "the ball took the varnish off the stump" but the balls did not fall. Bradman went on to score over 200 runs, we missed quite a few chances, and the Australians piled up 674 runs before declaring the innings at tea on the second day. Before leading his team on to the field, Bradman came into our dressing room with some players and said to me, "Congratulations. I have been playing cricket for nearly 25 years and I have

sation when he bowled Miller, had Neil Harvey lbw and uprooted the stumps of Ian Johnson and Ray Lindwall. It was one of the outstanding performances of the tour. Later, Rangachari had a photograph taken with Bradman, on which the latter inscribed, "Best wishes to the lion-hearted Ranga".

Another tribute that Rangachari valued was from Victor Richardson, the former Australian captain. After seeing Rangachari's hat-trick against

a.k.a. The Triplicane Thunderbolt

Comandur Rajagopalachari 'Rangachari, Ranga to his friends, was a never-say-die trier, who helped Tamil Nadu scale the heights at both national and international levels.

Born on April 14, 1916, in Triplicane, which also produced not only M J Gopalan but also other cricketing celebrities like the late K S Ranga Rao and the late S. Sriraman, both top Board of Control for Cricket in India officials, Rangachari made his mark in Madras cricket as a teenaged member of Triplicane CC. But it was not until he had passed thirty that he earned his India cap. By picking him for India's 1947-48 tour of Australia under the captaincy of Lala Amarnath, even if he was taken to fill a last-minute vacancy, the National selectors made amends for having ignored his claims for a place in the team that toured England in 1946.

Though a medium-pacer, whose pace was admittedly not

in keeping with his long run-up, exceptionally long stride and high-action delivery, Rangachari nevertheless would produce in the early overs a thunderbolt or two that surprised even a batsman of the class of Dennis Compton, the England star of the 40's. He was bowled neck and

match. He was not only a hostile medium-pacer and a devil-may-care fielder but also a keen student and follower of the game, who had world and India stars' exploits and Chepauk's historic events all at his finger-tips.

He was also a jolly good clubman, at his best at the Madras United Club card table. The Madras cricketing fraternity, the Madras City Police Force and the Madras United Club have all been saddened by his sudden demise. He was 77, and is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters.

by JAICI

crop in a Ranji Trophy match in which he assisted C K Nayudu's Holkar team at Chepauk.

A Madras City police officer, Rangachari was a dare-devil fielder as well. Never scared to post himself even within hand-shaking distance of a batsman, if the situation demanded such a suicidal step, he brought off one-handed, diving catches to make a world of difference to a

CPWD jumps the gun

(Continued from P 1)

Nagar has deteriorated drastically and implies that groundwater is being used. According to a study made by V Gopal, retired Director of Geology & Mines, the salt content of the groundwater in certain localities has increased to 5100 parts per million from 1030 ppm in 1986 while the ISI's permissible limit is just 500 ppm.

The MMDA, on its part, is yet to convene a meeting to hear the BRF's suggestions and objections on formulating guidelines for reclassifying the land. Only one meeting has been held and that was presided over by the Chief Urban Planner. The BRF and the Consumer Action Group objected to the meeting being presided over by a person other than the Member Secretary, who is the deciding authority on these matters, and no meeting has been held since.

Meanwhile, work goes on.

Unlucky women jockeys

Women jockeys seem to be having an unlucky time of it.

First it was Madras's Hema Bindu who broke her collar bone at the Ooty races. Now it is the turn of Mrs Silva Storai, the other woman jockey on the southern circuit. She has been hospitalised in Bangalore after a fall at the Mysore racecourse during recent gallops. Mrs. Silva's participation in the Madras races this season is, therefore, doubtful.

— SPORTSWATCH

captaincy of Prof. Deodhar. Rangachari was to recall years later:

Against a formidable West Zone team, including nine Test players, I took five wickets and also assisted Deodhar in a last wicket stand to reach his century from 64. Ram Singh scored a century in South's first innings. We beat West on the first innings scores. In the final, against North Zone, I got six wickets in the first innings. The match was abandoned after the Royal Indian Navy mutinied and curfew was clamped in Bombay. The selectors, however, preferred Ranga Sohoni to the other Ranga.

Rangachari first won a place in the Madras Ranji team after taking nine wickets in an innings in the annual junior match against Mysore in 1938. He held his place in the side for about 15 years, sharing the new ball attack with M J Gopalan for many of them. He collected 104 wickets at an average of 20.79. He was a new ball bowler out of the ordinary. When will we see another like him from Madras?

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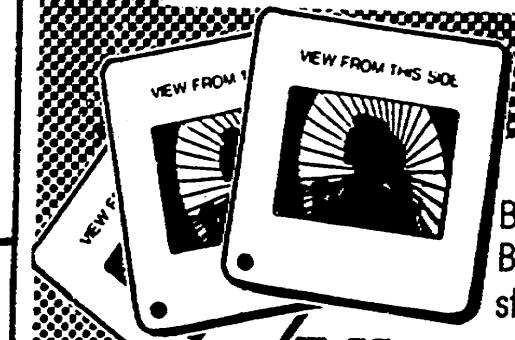
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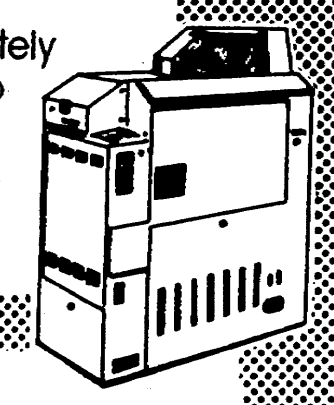
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K. Srikanth

K. Srikanth

A joy to watch in a hitting mood

(By AJAX)

Chepauk oldtimers still remember the thrills they had enjoyed watching the big hitting of such stalwarts as Mushtaq Ali, C K Nayudu and C Ramaswami. Pride of place among the trio must go the tall, lanky Mushtaq

Ali. But, not to mince words, even the unforgettable Holkar and India opener's fireworks were often made to look ordinary by the elegant and fluent manner in which 'Krish' Srikanth hit his sixes over all parts of the field.

While it was easy to anticipate Mushtaq Ali mauling a bowler, from the batsman's very look and stance as the bowler swung into action, Srikanth invariably hit his sixes without the slightest warning or show of aggression. Every six that soared from his bat was a well-timed stroke of rare excellence. The Alwarpet CC and former Tamil Nadu and India skipper and opener was a joy to watch while in a hitting mood, and Indian cricket is the poorer for his decision to bid adieu to international and first-class cricket.

The 33-year-old glamour boy of Madras cricket told Pressmen the other day he was quitting because of business commitments. He is, of course, closely associated with his father's textile and leather goods export business. But it was significant that he was calling it a

day shortly after the National selectors could not find him a place in the South Zone team for the current Pepsi Duleep Trophy championship. Having already been blacked out of last season's South African and Sri Lanka tours as well as the home series against England and Zimbabwe, he obviously realised he had little chance of donning the India cap again.

Whatever the reason, Srikanth could have quit without involving the Players' Association. He himself had given it a shot in the arm by solving

the payments issue between the players and the Board of Control for Cricket in India on the eve of his India team's departure for the 1989 Pakistan tour. Was the Players' Association in existence at all, he asked, as though he was not aware of the Association's stand against the Board's recent move for the registration of players. Obviously, he wanted the Association to wake up and fight for the players' rights. They should not be made tools in the National selectors' hands, he said. It was tell-tale parting advice.

Keeping a stadium alive

About the time the new, modern Nehru Stadium was inaugurated in January last, *Madras Musings* doubted the wisdom of raising the multicore structure, considering the infrequent use it would be put to for major international or national football or athletic events. The crowds that have attended major football matches so far have only partially filled the Stadium. Such sparse use would not help generate the money needed for maintaining a stadium, with all modern amenities in-built, in proper shape, and might gradually lead to the deterioration of the structure.

Things are not very much better at the MAC Stadium, where another cricket season is just getting underway.

The M A Chidambaram Cricket Stadium at Chepauk, built in the Sixties at the then huge cost of Rs. 50-odd lakhs, replaced the massive casuarina-wood temporary structures raised every time a test match or other major event was held. It was considered essential at the time, as test matches were frequent and were attended every time by fifty thousand and more fans. Besides, there were sizable turnouts for important matches in the domestic circuit. The organisation of such matches would be more efficient in a permanent stadium, it was felt.

Everything went smoothly as the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association not only cleared the liabilities incurred on building the stadium but even raised a reserve fund of fifty-odd lakhs. But during the last decade, there has been a sea change in public response to these matches for such reasons as television bringing the game into the drawing

rooms and one-day matches providing absorbing interest.

In this crisis, the TNCA Executive Committee succeeded in persuading sponsors to help maintain the Stadium by initiating a scheme by which each sponsoring organisation would have a sector of the stadium named after it in return for monetary assistance. The sponsors — Indian Cements, Chemicals and Plastics, India Pistons, Indian Overseas Bank, T I Cycles, Lucas T V S and Sportstar — readily responded with a donation of Rs. 2.50 lakhs each, while the family of Ashok Kumbhat, the treasurer of the TNCA, came forward with a ten lakhs contribution, the arrangement to last for two years, till the end of March 1995.

* The benefit for the sponsors was the publicity they got, especially through T V relays of the match. Besides, each sponsor had its name or logo printed on the reverse of the tickets issued for its sector of stadium. For the TNCA, the sponsorship amount provided a corpus which would enable it to maintain the stadium in good shape — it spent Rs. 20 lakhs during the current year. A fall-out of the scheme was that the TNCA could sell tickets for two of its stands, G and H, at a concessional rate to the public, which in turn would attract better crowds.

The fruitful TNCA initiative was appreciated, but the sense of satisfaction could have been many times more if the names of some of the respected cricketers of Tamil Nadu had been tacked on to the names of the sponsors of the various sectors of the stadium. The Kumbhat-Buchi Babu stand, Buchi Babu being almost the father of Tamil Nadu Cricket. Similarly, a Sportstar-Murugesan stand would have been a fitting recognition of the first sportswriter of *The Hindu*, who rode his cycle tirelessly round the city scouting for talent and providing it the opportunity and encouragement to come up — M J Gopalan could be cited as an outstanding find of this talent search. Other names that came readily to mind are C R Ganapathy Pillai, a great bowler measured by any standard, A G Ram Singh, the best all-rounder the State had produced, Ren Nailer, whose batting was brilliant entertainment, and N N Swarna, the stalwart from Mangalore, an attacking batsman with a grand passion for the game. These names are merely suggestive. An international tournament's Madras match later this year might be an apt occasion to honour the past together with the present.

— P.N.S

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Toni Morrison (USA), and Nelson Mandela and F.W. De Klerk (South Africa);
2. Admiral R.L. Pereira; 3. A googly — No film!; 4. A bilingual slogan: "Bio-diversity";
5. Two American Beryllium neutron sources and one Caesium-137 Gamma source;
6. He is the first President of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce based at Karachi;
7. Sweden; 8. National Postal Week;
9. The ceremonial Military Guard ceased to function outside the Lenin Mausoleum, Moscow; 10. C.R. Rangachari; 11. Central African republic of Rwanda; 12. Geet Sethi beat Mike Russell; 13. R.K. Narayan;
14. T.P. Koil St., Triplicane; 15. GVG Krishnamurthy and Manohar Singh Gill;
16. The Brihadeeswarar Temple, Thanjavur; 17. Dilip Sardesai; 18. Cauvery Pushkaram; 19. Uncertain Liaisons;
20. Nasreen.

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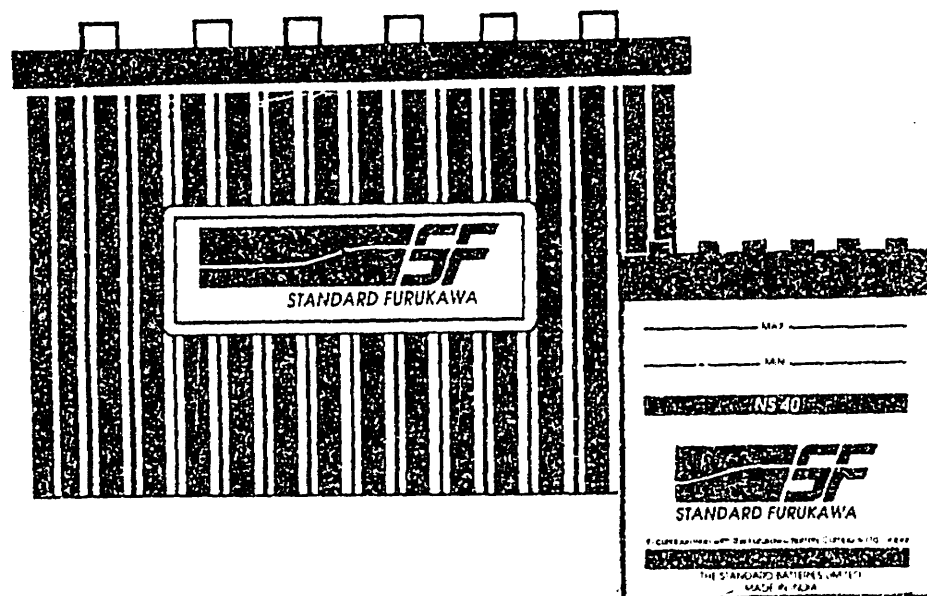
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