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MUSINGS

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Strawberries Tamil Nadu?

If it learns from Maharashtra

(By V Ramnarayanan)

W imbledon's favourite fruit is today quite freely available in India, in or out of season. In fact, strawberries are even being grown in īamil Nadu!

The Tamil Nadu Department of forticulture recently announced its mention of spreading strawberry cultivalion in the State, taking it even to round fen acres in the Nilgiris. The mmediate plan of the Department is imply to increase this acreage to round fifty in the coming season. And hat includes growing the crop in Vagercoil too, where Godrej Plant otech Ltd have introduced the Suiatha' and 'Labella' strains they have leveloped in Hyderabad.

For an initial investment of less than ks. 4 lakhs and subsequent annual expenditure of Rs. 50,000 (mainly on imported seedlings at Rs. 5 a plant), strawberry cultivation is expected to yield upwards of Rs. 5 lakh per hectare on an average selling price of Rs. 70–80 per kg.

What recent biotechnology efforts have done is to make it possible to grow the fruit even in hot climates, unlike the traditional variety which flourishes in the relative cool of temperate zones. It is these advances that enabled the explosion in strawberry cultivation that took place in Maharashtra in 1993-1995. Cultivation spread to the plains, after traditional gani recorded high gains in the 1993-94 season. The following year saw Maharashtra's acreage grow to an additional 1000 acres from the 250 acres under cultivation in the hills. Maharashtra's target for this year is 2000 acres.

The Maharashtra experience was not without a few glitches. Prices crashed from an initial high of Rs. 250/kg in November 1994 to Rs. 50/kg in February 1995 due to an unprecedented glut in the market. The Pune-based Strawberry Growers' Association sees infrastructure development as the main solution to the problem along with facilities to market the

produce close to the areas under cultivation. Because strawberries perish quickly, it is essential to establish adequate storage facilities so that the growers can control the times at which to release the fruit to the market Transportation cost can reduce profitability to an extent the farmers cannot afford, therefore it makes sense to make arrangements to lift the fruit from close

These are lessons that the Tamil Nadu Horticulture Department should waste no time in teaching those who rush into this apparently lucrative venture. According to leading cultivators in Maharashtra, strawberry cultivation with its high capital costs is not meant for small farmers — it takes over Rs. 1 lakh per acre to import the plants not to mention varied other expenses like drip irrigation, packing and transportation, fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides, and labour costs. As it is also highly labour-intensive cultivation, besides involving modern science, it is clearly a game for the big players. On the credit side, there is sufficient demand in the Indian market - about 6,000 tonnes were produced last year, including 60 tonnes that were processed — while the export market can open up once central cooling plants, chilling vans etc. come into

The varieties grown in the Nilgiris are 'Phenomenal' and 'Chandler', whose average yield is about 5 tonnes per acre. The American 'Chandler' produces bigger fruit. With improved cultivation methods, yield could be increased to as high as ten tonnes per acre. Planting is in July-September and the season is 6-9 months long. Thirty thousand plants are needed for every acre under cultivation. And harvesting can be done 20 days after planting.

With companies like Maxworth and Godrej entering the field, and the early warnings from Maharashtra, the prospects seem bright for strawberries becoming easily available in Tamil Nadu. But the State must take advantage of the reduced learning curve and, through the right application of modern technology, avoid the pitfalls of supply exceeding demand.

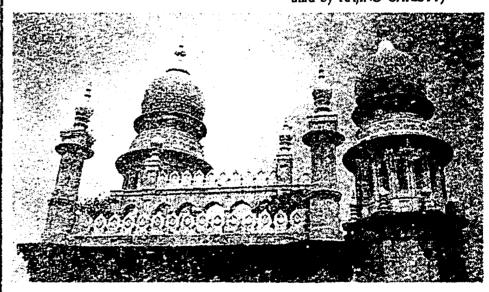




Madras!

he'd never see a poem "as lovely as a tree", but trees do have a way of causing varying reactions. For instance, at Woodlands petrol station, on Dr Radhakrishnan Salai, the trees are truly things of beauty. In fact, their shade and the other 'green' decorations used in this 'bunk' make it the city's most beautiful one and a true oasis in Madras. On the other hand, the branch of a giant tree crushing the roof of a magnificent but uncared for old building on the same road is a sad commentary on the Madras Electricity Supply, who occupy this former train depot and seem to care The trees of those trees sprouting from niches on high in the many from the series on building, threatening one of the city's Indo-Saracenic masterpieces. The loveliness of trees is rather open to question in the latter cases.

(Photographs: First two by V S RAGHAVAN, third by RAJIND CHRISTY)



Sethusamudram could pose grave eco-threat (By A Staff Reporter)

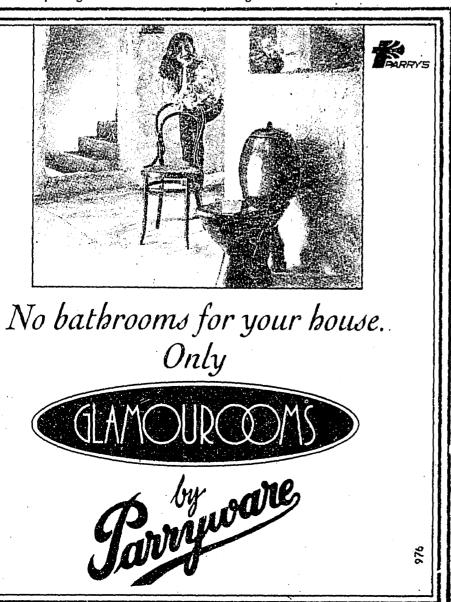
The proposed Sethusamudram canal project in the Gulf of Mannar, though it will be a great engineering feat, will pose a grave threat to the

extremely fragile marine ecosystem and rich fishery wealth of the Gulf, says the Aquaculture Foundation of India.

Widespread coral reefs and live coral found in this region harbour many high-value, cultivable natural resources such as finfish, shellfish and seaweeds, which have a great demand in the world market. Items like spiny lobster, shrimp, crab, oyster, abalone, grouper, seabream, seabass etc. fetch fancy prices ranging from US \$5 to 50 per kilo.

When these fishery resources are developed through farming, it will be possible to set up a giant aquaculture and seafood industry in the country for export and also produce substantial quantities of fish for domestic consumption.

Therefore, at this hour, when fishery resources are dwindling in the sea due to overexploitation, pollution etc., any further damage due to the Sethusamudram canal (if constructed) will lead to the destruction of is entire "hidden treasure" which awaits major development in the country, says the Foundation.



An evening with NTR at the Bhavan Trying to save

e was only half an hour late. Then he walked in, broad and erect with a slow measured tread. He climbed the steps and walked to the centre of the stage in the same manner patented by the South Indian cinematic vision of monarchs of long ago. Then he walked back and caught up with those who had the while been trying to lead him to his seat. But neither he nor former President R Venkataraman nor the man and place being honcured on the occasion were the cynosure of all eyes; they were reserved for Lakshmi Parvathi. his consort, and loud were the 'Oohs' and 'Ahs', the 'There. Theres' and the 'Andha, Andha's as a packed hall strained to look at the slight woman walking by his side.

On stage, seated next to him. it seemed to The Man From Madras Musings that she was nervous or uncomfortable with the occasion, constantly twisting, turning and shifting position in her chair, turning back to talk to a battery of aides, whispering. giggling and even patting hands with the 'monarch' who later referred to her as "my missus". for ever adjusting her pallav of Royal Purple, trimmed with. was it silver or gold?, round her shoulders, over her head. All of it certainly helped keep attention focussed on her, it later occurred to MMM.

That was attention that grew as she got up to speak and photogenic face dimpled even more with the broad smiles she punctuated her Telugu exposition. I don't speak English, she mumbled, though the former Professor didn't do at all badly with all the English quotations she laced her speech with. It was a speech delivered at breakneck speed, with only one long silent pause for breath. And it was a speech that went on interminably and saw the first signs of an exodus that was to increase as the evening wore on. Lakshmi Parvathi obviously still has many lessons to learn, but

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Author

AUDREY, L (ed.)

BRADLEY, A

GREED, CH

McKENZIE, C

MIKE, H (ed.)

PICTON, P

PRATTEN, C

REYNOLDS, C

WATKINSON, J

NIGEL, W (ed.)

PAMELA, S (ed.)

LITTLE, J A

obviously the veterans of the Bhavan do too, The Man From Madras Musings feels: asking people to sit through nearly three hours of speeches of mixed quality is certainly asking too

loint function

What, in any case, was the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and his consort doing at a Bharatha Vidya Bhavan function in Madras, wondered The Man From Madras Musings at the occasion referred to above. It transpired that the former resident of Madras was a devotee of the Kanchi Mahaswami after whom the new Bhavan building being inaugurated had been named. He had also helped Bhavans in Andhra Pradesh get land for their buildings in the past. All of which may be good enough reasons for inviting him as Chief Guest. But what was the necessity to get his wife to speak. especially when it had earlier not been considered necessary, to judge by the lack of her name in the programme, MMM wondered. No one, however, seemed to have a better answer than a muttered, "Courtesy"!

As for NTR, allowing theatricality to overpower voice, he rather lost his audience as he meandered through a speech which covered many topics but those of the day. He mentioned the Mahaswami, announced water for "my Madras" by the end of the year, noted the 365 characters he had played in films, said he had not read the second part of C Eulemaniani autobiography which he was releasing, Hand of Destiny -The Green Revolution, and went on to talk about, Green Revolution or not, the poor remaining poor and the concern he had for them that no one else seemed to have in this Age of Liberali-

After NTR had ground his teeth over the plight of the poor and had finished enunciating the Telugu Desam credo to make their morrows prosperous, MMM was left wondering, not only what this whole drama was about, but also why the venerable heads of the Bhavan had decided to team a grihapravesam together with a book release function and had got so many speakers, announced and unannounced, to speak on the latter and none — unless it was meant to be NTR — to speak on the former.

CS the achiever

British Council Library, Madras

(Telephone: 8525002)

Select List of Recent Additions

Going inter-professional

The protext companion

Company to Company. 2nd ed.

The Faber book of espionage

Introduction to neural networks

Beyond total quality management

Mortgaging women's lives

The art of data rewriting

Word for windows 6

Forked tongue

Debrett's guide to speaking in public

Women and planning

Who owns English

The stock market

Whatever NTR's views on the benefits of the Green and White Revolutions not passing down to his beloved vote banks, the poor, there is no gainsaying that C Subramaniam deserved every bit of the lavish praise that was bestowed on him on the occasion of the release of the second part of his autobiography.

Dr M S Swaminathan could not be present but his message made it clear that CS was indeed responsible for making the Green Revolution come about. A former Civilian emphasised the story that Norman Borlaug had indicated that his Nobel Prize had its roots in the four plane-

loads of seed for the 'miracle'

shortgrain Mexican wheat that

CS had ordered for India when

no other country was willing to

try it. And 'Amul' Kurien, in a

brilliantly delivered felicitation.

remembered his association with

CS when he was asked to re-

organise the Delhi Milk Scheme.

CS gave him carte blanche on

behalf of the Agriculture

Ministry AND the Finance

Ministry. But how could he do

so on behalf of Finance, Kurien

had asked. Because it was TTK

who recommended you to me

and so he must also bear the

responsibility for whatever you

on the ear but it also was com-

mendation of one of that rare

breed, a politician of integrity

and a Minister committed to the

nation's welfare and not politics.

But did all this have to be said

at the cost of the main purpose of that evening at the Bhavan,

the grihapravesam, still wonders

The Man From Madras Musings.

CS may be the President of the

Bhavan, but that was no reason

to mix both functions. There was

so much said about the book and

the author that a separate

function would have generated

greater publicity for both. As it

was, NTR stole the show, the

book and CS were focussed on

only in the Bhavan auditorium

and not in the Press and the Sri

Kanchi Mahaswami Sathabdi

Sadan was ignored. A pity,

thought MMM, joining the

chorus of many long associated

The Madras English-language

Press continues to amaze

The Man From Madras Musings.

A large advertisement recently

appeared in the Indian Express

announcing a Rs. 50,000 re-

ward from the Enforcement

Directorate for information

leading to the arrest of a

'Mr Ameer' who is associated

with three well-known city

firms, two in the building

business. And none of the

Madras English language papers

bothered to follow up on what

'Mr Ameer' has been up to. The

Man From Madras Musings had

to wait for Calcutta's The

Telegraph to discover what

chant and "one of the biggest

hawala dealers in Bombay and

Madras'', it is alleged that he has

been "responsible for procuring

the lion's share of hawala money

for the industrialist, Mr S K Jain,

for pay-offs made to politicians

Jain and several of his kin are

alleged to have made hawala

payments to as many as 116

and bureaucrats"!

Described as a diamond mer-

'Ameer Bhai' is wanted for.

with the Bhavan, Mylapore.

Not recognised

All this was not only pleasant

do, CS had told him.

recipients, including nine serving ministers, between April 1988 and March 1990. Investigations have been going on since April 1991, but the chase for 'Ameer' began only in April 1995, after statements by two of the Jains.

The Telegraph reports that 'Ameer's' house and offices as well as two jewellery shops in Madras had been raided without luck. A person arrested in the Madras Airport departure lounge proved to be 'Ameer's' brother

'Basheer'. And so the chase con-

tinues for the man described as

"the kingpin who controlled the

vast network of hawala

operators in the country who

were implicated in the infamous

are waiting for the next adver-

tisement for this thriller.

* Back in the city, unheralded.

is an old friend of Madras. It was

nearly 20 years ago that Gau-

tamadasa served as Sri Lanka's

Deputy High Commissioner in

South India and a most popular

DHC he was, the affable Gau-

tamadasa whose children all

studied in Madras schools. From

Madras, Gautamadasa went on

up the ladder and when he retir-

ed he was Sri Lanka's Ambassa-

dor to Reijing To come out of retirement and return to the

sensitive Madras post, even

though it is a lesser post than

Beiling, not only reflects the

importance Sri Lanka attaches to

Madras but also Gautamadasa's

willingness to serve wherever

his country feels he is needed —

even in retirement. Gautama-

dasa, a regular Foreign Service

Officer, is one of a few thousand

Sinhalese who are Jaffna-edu-

cated and Tamil-speaking. That

might help in Tamil Nadu. The

Man From Madras Musings

welcomes him back to Madras

where he served many years and

which he considers a second

* The Man From Madras

Musings has not come across

Mani Osai, but Mani Shankar

Aiyar, the voluble M.P. from

Mayiladuthurai (MMM notes his

volubility featured elsewhere in

this issue of MM), claims he

distributes 10,000 copies

quarterly of his "constituency in-

house pull-out" (presumably his

house journal). Help for its publi-

cation comes from local indus-

trialists, all of whom are

acknowledged, and it reaches

out to voters and VIPs alike with

news about what Mani Shankar

Aiyar is doing for the develop-

ment of Mayiladuthurai and

what the PM and other VIPs

have to say about his efforts. So

far, MMM learns, much has been

* The Man From Madras

Musings has heard it said that

FIFTY varieties of mangoes are

grown in the Salem-Dharmapuri

area, which is said to produce

about 10,000 tonnes of

mangoes during its 100-day

season that starts in April. MMM

hears that about 9000 families

make a living out of the 7000

acres in which mangoes are

grown — 1500 growers, 5000

workers and 2500 small

said about little.

MMM is inclined to feel.

No doubt Madras newspapers

hawala scam''.

In brief

SHORT IN SNAPPY

Business briefs

vendors. Himam Pasand.

Malgova, Thotathatri, Alphonso,

Badaam, Neelam, Sendhura and

Bangalore are some of the area's

best varieties, but local growers

feel that Nadu Saalai is THE best

variety in an area that has more

varieties than any other mango-

growing part of the country. But

for all this hype from the Salem-

based Mango and Fruit Asso-

ciation, the Madras market has

still to receive its bounty this

year. MMM wonders why it's so

* Further to this journal's story

that a developer is being sought for Binny's Armenian Street property - the main building of which should be declared a Heritage Building - The Man From Madras Musings hears that the response Binny's got for this 40-ground property was not quite what they expected and they might, now, develop it themselves. Meanwhile, a Delhibased builder has won the development rights for the Binny House property on Boat Club Road, paying Rs. 25 crore for the 50-ground property. Upmarket residential apartments are what Som Datt Builders plan, if residents of the area don't object to highrise, as they have in the past. ITC, Parry's etc. have developed or are developing two- and three-storey apartment buildings in this prestigious residential area for their senior staff. What are Som Datt going to do, wonders MMM.

* It almost passed unnoticed in committing itself to developing a permanent international trade fair complex in a suburb of Madras. The complex, to be developed at a cost of Rs. 70 crore, is to be promoted by Madras International Expositions Ltd, whose partners will be the Tamil Nadu Corporation for Industrial Infrastructure Development Ltd, the Federation of Indian Export Organisations and an international collaborator. The Man From Madras Musings was intrigued to find no location, schedule or international collaborator's name mentioned. No doubt we'll know in time to come. Like in a few years? MMM recalls this talk of a trade fair complex has been going on from the first issue or so of Madras Musings, say four years or so!

* Planning for the consumer durables boom, Vivek & Co, who claim to be the largest consumer durables retailer in the country, are planning to go public, The Man From Madras Musings hears. Vivek's three outlets in Madras, with 30,000 sq ft. space, have a total turnover of Rs. 30 cr - Rs. 4 cr. of it on January 1, 1995, alone, when its no-profit New Year Sale, a concept it pioneered in 1977 drew crowds in the thousands Aiming to reach a turnover of Rs. 120 cr in two years, Vivek's is confident it'll do it pointing to the fact that Tamil Nadu is, perhaps, the country's best consumer durables market. Of the country's Rs. 12,000 cr consumer durables market, the south zone's is estimated at Rs. 3500 cr. Of this, Tamil Nadu's share is Rs. 1000 cr. almost half of it from Madras sales. And Madras is Vivek's home.

Pune Cantt.

(From The Sunday Times of India)

series on how

Indian cities

to look at

are beginning

their heritage

from builders makes their choice easier

However, what most of these builders

are bidding for is not the bungalow —

unique though it may be - but the

usual half acre to an acre that these

History Department, Nowrojee Wadia

College, who has been responsible for

an INTACH listing of buildings in the

Cantonment area for preservation.

admits that the most conservationists

can hope for at this point is a stay order.

is deemed worthy of protection. This

is a grey area because classification that

would define a building that merits

protection under the INTACH or the

Dr Samita Gupta, head of the

bungalows traditionally stand on.

s cantonments go (and, sadly, most Today, only a very small number of them have), Poona Cantonment of those bungalows survive. Most of them have been demolished and reone of India's oldest, maintaining its placed with apartment blocks. A few ontinuous rating as a significant of them have been allowed to decay hilitary base from... November 1817. with no visible effort to repair them Frozen in time, safeguarded by a because they can then be replaced by luaint piece of archaic, but far-seeing. new construction without battling British defence legislation. Pune Canconservationists. But the worse hit are bonnent still hangs in there, gamely the owners of bungalows who would lefying encroaching Civil Lines. like to preserve them, but do not have builders with an eye on its prime real the means to do so; lucrative offers state, and unsympathetic civil legisation which will step in once much of Another in our

lease runs out in 1999. Frenetic efforts by a handful of onservationists, environmental activists nd architects with more 'heritage' nstincts than others, have only nanaged to stall but not entirely remove the threat of demolition to such historically interesting buildings as Connaught House or the Ohiel David Synagogue. But it is already too late for, say, the Bund Garden Bandstand and E. Muratore's and several dozen ungalows down Prince of Wales Prive and Climo Road.

The synagogue will survive because trust fund takes care of it, but only is long as its dwindling congregation will allow it to

Connaught House, built originally as the residence of Prince Arthur, son of the Duke of Connaught, second son of Queen Victoria, has been acquired by a builder. In a remarkable state of or concrete and steel higherse, awaiting

The Bandstand at the Bund Garden gently declined to a battered pavilion n the 1950s. Today it is a dusty collection of benches. E Muratore's, once a Tommy hotspot famous for its tea dances, is a telephone exchange today. Queen Victoria's very unmused profile on finely crafted ronwork fences can be found, sold by veight, at some obscure iron-monger's crapheap..

The bungalow will remain forever builders' manuals best described as curious but charming hybrid, neither wholly European nor Indian in conception. About on par with Indian blazers and mulligatawny soup.

By the middle of the 19th Century British architecture in the 'Raj' had acquired immense symbolic significance. Every facet of European style ever used was imported and represented, sometimes all together and usually with alarming results. It was not rare to come across a bungalow that borrowed impartially from different classical styles - Gothic, Palladian Neo-classical Greek, Roman, Imperial and what one must suppose, Anglo-Indian. Adamesque fans over arches. Doric columns, Gothic gables, Venetian windows, Regency quatreloils... sat cheek by jowl with monkey ops, comices, Indo-Saracenic examples that still survive.

Contemporary design aesthetes may blanch at the overpowering quantity of detail, yet, this riotously eclectic produc had its own merit; its adapatability Decried by critics for being "neither" Hinglish nor Hindoo'', the bungalow must be viewed today as a hardy example of an architectural style that was perfectly suited to the tropics yet retained the best features of an English country home.

· Urban Conservation Committee's guideline is still open to various interpretations. Currently, they fall into three categories; buildings so historically significant that no change may be made during restoration: buildings with historicity that demands at least their facade remain unchanged; and build ings that are not restrained from change

According to Dr Gupta, what the Urban Conservation Committee, Pune. is trying to achieve is a stalling of the process of demolition of buildings listed for conservation. Since legislation has not been clearly formulated yet, success is usually uncertain. "Unlike Britain. we do not have a Heritage Law that could make it worthwhile for owners of such buildings to preserve them," she says. "Waiving Corporation Tax as an incentive is hardly enough."

Some possible measures suggested are allotment of property elsewhere to compensate FSI, financial loans, and even restoration by conservation agencies, currently handicapped by lack of finance...

The Urban Conservation Committee is looking for a simpler solution: to create an interest in the community in its own architectural heritage. They never tire of citing the example of committed conservationist Debashish Navak's very successful experiment in Calcutta (MM. Ian. 16, 1995).

Since the focus of restoration in Pune has usually been its wadas and other buildings from the Maratha period, its sizeable colonial architecture has largely been relegated to second

(Continued on P8)

put Pappu to sleep... A pril 25: It was Mr Pappu Yadav's second day in Parliament. And, he spent it dozing. As Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar, the unputdownable MP from the

When Mani

unpronounceable Mayiladutthurai, wound his way through a 100-minute speech, the newest member of the Lok Sabha showed a distinct disinterest in the proceedings. The man, who was elected to represent Purnea last month,

sauntered in while Mr Aiyar was stoutly defending the government's come hither signals to multinationals. "Why should we deny to our

farmers the premium Kellogs pays on wheat? Why should we deny those who wear chappals the chance to wear Reeboks?," Mr Aiyar was saying when Mr Yadav walked in.

The newly-anointed MP slid into a seat close by the door and listened attentively for precisely 30 seconds.

Mr Aiyar was holding forth about "swabhimaan" being a state of mind and Mr Yadav, twirled his moustache in a Pavlovian gesture of selfaggrandisement.

As Mr Aiyar moved on to "swadeshi" and "swavlamban", he wriggled to a more comfortable position, spread his arms along the bench-backs and began drumming a silent beat with his

Mr Yadav shifted position too.

He dangled his arms loosely over the bench in front and gazed around at the other 53 members who barely made up quorum

Mr Kamal Nath and Mr Malikarjun were passing each other notes; Mr Rajnath Sonkar Shastri, the man who was to follow Mr Aiyar, was making frantic last-minute additions to his speech; and Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee was in a trance.

Mr Aiyar had taken up Punjab and was strewing his paean to the PM with pithy oneliners: "The maximum problem he faces in Punjab is from Jagmeet Singh Brar." The Congress benches chuckled and the Opposition sniggered and Mr Aiyar's wife in the visitors' gallery beamed with pride. But Mr Yadav remained cold to the snide dig.

He turned his gaze upwards to study, in painstaking turn, the heraldic emblems of the princely kingdoms that acceded to India in 1947 and which are today etched in gold around the rim of the House. His tryst with history over, Mr Yadav slowly slipped lower down in his seat.

And, as Mr Aiyar was rattling off a string of statistics about TADA, Mr Yadav gave up the tussle. He rested his arms on his desk, pillowed his weary head on them and fell asleep:

Mr Aiyar leapt from matters (From The Telegraph, Calcutta's, economic to matters political and Parliamentary Correspondent)

In two legislatures

a session it

The month-long session of the Tamil Nadu Assembly ended May first week. But the vicious, verbal fusillades unleashed by the legislators, the angry faces and fists, the broken microphones and Chief Minister Jayalalitha's allegations against Governor Channa Reddy and her caustic comments on the Prime Minister will linger long in the minds of many. Depending on the reader's attitude, the events will be viewed with glee or sorrow.

The worst scenes were on the day when the Chief Minister, denying an allegation that the Prime Minister's effigy had been burnt, went on to say that the people never spared any thought to a Prime Minister who slept over happenings in the State. The orchestrated Congress(I) response was to vociferously repeat their point that the Chief Minister and her Ministers had ceased to have the right to govern. An-AIADMK member and a Congress(I) member exchanged blows in one corner of the House. Two Congress(1) members were evicted on the charge of damaging microphones.

Looking back and comparing notes, Speaker Muthiah could easily be considered the 'busiest Speaker' in the past four decades, with his rule book wellthumbed. He later said, after the events. that the Congress(I)'s main purpose

seemed to be to create unruly scenes, as was evident from the fact that the members came only for the zero hour and stayed away during the budget demands.

Speaker Muthiah himself was the target of the Opposition, with a no-

Minister lavalalitha's allegation that Governor Reddy had behaved in an indecent manner, when she had called on him in August 1993. She said she had not called on the Governor since. Her remarks came in answer to a query from Congress(I)'s Daniel Raj who

has been made in the Eighth Plan. The Government has decided to make it compulsory for all students in the State to learn Tamil. It would not be possible to get a degree without learning Tamil.

> Fair Price Shops to be started in remote areas will be run by the Women's Development Corporation with women in charge.

- Housing Minister S Raghupathy anno-

unced that six satellite townships were to

be developed to decongest six urban

centres. Allocation of Rs. 25,000 crore

- Private engineering college fees are to be revised, based on the recommendations of the Expert Committee, Steps also would be taken to see that only those from the State got nominated to Syndi-

cates and Senates of Universities. The Government will shortly announce an Export Policy to broaden the export base of the State and to raise exports to

Rs. 25,000 crore a year by 2000 A.D. from the present Rs. 9000 crore. A group insurance scheme for fishermen.

under which a life would be insured for Rs. One lakh, is to be introduced. - People's Committees, with women on them, are to be formed to protect temple

properties. - The House heard a suggestion from AIADMK's Mohammad Asif that market value should guide the rent to be fixed by the Accommodation Controller. Rent should be relixed every five years. Multi-

The View from Fort St George...

confidence motion against him moved by a Congress(I) member two days before the session ended. But with the Congress(I) away on a protest-absence. the motion fell through, with no one to move the resolution.

On another day, the Congress(i) trooped in wearing black shawls and tried to raise the issue of the High Court judgement dismissing the Chiel Minister's petition against the Governor's sanction for prosecuting her. A mild flutter was created by AIADMK's Mrs Kavinilavu Dharmaraj who rushed towards the Opposition and asked for the removal of Congress(1)'s Mrs Ponnammal for the latter's criticism of the Chief Minister. But on the Speaker's

orders, she returned to her seat. There was also a day when the House heard in stunned silence Chief

wanted to know why she had not visited Rai Bhavan for the past two For the first time in the Assembly's nearly half a century history, the House

suspended rules and passed a resolution that a Governor (Reddy) be recalled as he was biased against the Chief Minister Though politics inside the Assembly turned it unside down on occasion, the House did do serious business during

its long session. For instance: It was announced by the Backward Classes Minister K Lawrence that a power laundry that could wash 6000 clothes a day would be introduced shortly, at

a cost of Rs. 50 lakhs. A Rs. 7 crore scheme to promote tourism in the State has been forwarded to the Centre for assistance.

storeyed building construction should be liberalised throughout the State. . R.K.K.

WESTON, L FICTION HERBERT, W N THOMAS,

A language murdered!

(By A. BALU in The Times of India)

My latest hobby is to monitor the English language dailies, and I am indeed gratified that it has proved to be extremely rewarding. I have a rich collection of samples of slovenly writing drawn from several newspapers that I hope to display at an exhibition which may not make it to Pragati Maidan, but, more suitably, to the Press Club to India...

A journalist friend had tried to dissuade me from this fault-finding exercise, saying that sloppy editing is very much part of journalism. I refuse to agree with him because you cannot simply explain away the kind of daily menu of howlers, bloomers, spelling lapses and violence to grammar.

For lack of space, I would only cite a few of the careless mistakes that virtually every newspaper perpetrates day after day. You could come across such gems as 22 'carrot' gold, 'a drought of fresh air, 'lack of little interest', Prophet Hazrat Mohammad's 'heir', 'loose' in the place of 'lose', 'banian' tree, and 'gets himself ablaze'. A leading daily once reported that one of the two constables allegedly involved in the raping of a minor girl succumbed to his injuries. No, he was not 'bobbitised' by the victim, but beaten up by an angry mob. That became clear only in the third paragraph of the story. The editor of another newspaper wrote that during his interview with Ms Jayalalitha, the latter 'moaned' over

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her relations with the Centre. Imagine the powerful supremo of Tamil Nadu doing that!

Is there a remedy, you may ask, for stopping this "murder English" that is being witnessed daily by the hapless newspaper readers? I could do no better than commend what a magazine publisher in New York did a few years ago. Fed up with lazy writing by senior editors. Scott Degarmo of Success magazine started imposing fines on editors for approving articles containing glaring grammatical and other errors. Whether it was a garbled phrase, an extraneous comma or a maimed name, the minimum penalty was 25 dollars. He had tried in vain "all the nice, positive things" like gently citing mistakes and praising neat copy.

Fortunately or unfortunately, we don't have these days Raghunatha Iyers (of The Hindu fame), Frank Moraeses and S. Mulgaokars to emulate Degarmo's fury. The present-day editors are made of softer stuff, and probably inclined to let things as they are in the belief that, in the ultimate analysis, who cares how writers write.

n the past few weeks investors have

run for the hills in search of cover as

the markets, both primary and

secondary, have come to resemble a

china-shop after a pitched battle

between the bulls and the bears. While

the Sensex dropped past the psycho-

logical 3,000-point level, devolvement

and undersubscription are debilitating

the primary market. Two big issues,

Malvika Steel for Rs. 228 crore and

Bhushan Steel for Rs. 165 crore, led

the way for Leema Appliances, Range

Apparels, Brindavan Gardens, Sea

Gold Aqua etc in the matter of poor

response and the contentious subscript-

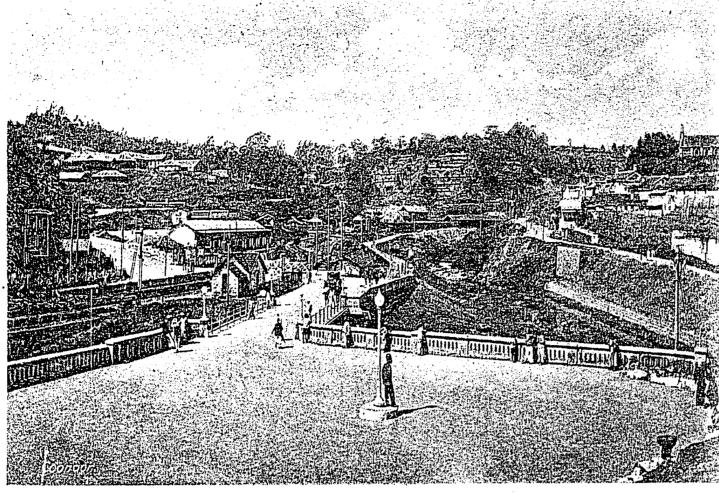
ions of Padmini Polymers, not_to

mention M S Shoes, have raised cries,

of alarm and chaos in the primary

market. Of those lucky enough to get

subscribed and listed, the listing prices



ath encaud Eric-Prabhakar

THE OLD...

Our OLD and NEW this fortnight are truly 'way out', as the expression these days goes. They feature here because of errors committed last fortnight not only in this feature but elsewhere in this journal when signals got crossed. Our apologies to our readers.

The Coonoor crossroads picture, with station and toy train in the background, should have appeared in place of Ooty Lake in the 1920s, which is what appeared last fortnight. Well, the Lake was interesting enough for something OLD, but Coonoor may well have been more interesting, in the context. As for the NEW, the whole front cover of Eric Prabhakar's book on training for athletic excellence should have appeared on the sports page last fortnight, but what did appear was only a part of it. Prabhakar winning the 100m sprint in 1949 at the annual Oxford-Cambridge athletic meet. We hasten to correct the error this fortnight and add the news that the National Book Trust have requested Prabhakar permission to translate his book into 12 Indian languages — which must be some sort of publishing record. Congratulations, Eric Prabhakar.

Remembering a centenary

The Father of Madras chess'

iswanathan Anand, Konguvel and Vijailakshmi, perhaps even Aaron these are the names Madras Chess ns recognise today. Few remember he 'Father of Madras Chess', whose irth centenary this year was recently nmemorated with a chess tournament for schoolchildren by a trust med by his family members Kameswaran, Karpaga Ganesh, Director, Pixel Graphics, R Raghu-

way 10-31, 1995 hay 10-31, 1993

THE NEW mathan and S Krishnamurthy. He was not an International Master or did he play in tournaments. "Yet had it not been for K S Subramanya lyer, it is doubtful whether players like me would have come up," feels A Sundaram, a former chess international. indeed, if you want to trace the growth chess in Madras, the starting point as to be the late Dharmakesari Solar KS Subramanya Iyer's Ramani Printng Press and his residence. Solar

"Those were the days when chess lubs were nonexistent. It was lyer who Baught chess to many of us and allowed is to play in his press and in his esidence." remembers R Raghuaathan, former National B player. As matter of fact, lyer built a separate foom for chess, spending Rs. 55,000 A silver lining in the clouds



The late Subramanyalyer, 'Father of

Others might call him 'The Father of Mylapore Chess', but it should be remembered that except from IM Manuel Aaron all the other leading chess players of the State in the Sixties and Seventies, like Sundaram, Rajaram, D V Venkataraman, R Vijayaraghavan, V Kameswaran, R Raghunathan, Karpaga Ganesh etc., were from Mylapore and learnt their chess at Iver's Ramani Press/Solar House.

Subramanya Iyer was an amalgam of shrewd businessman, philanthropist, footballer and enthusiastic chess player. An entirely self-made man, he had been born into a poor family in Madurai in 1895. At six, his business acumen was seen; he began selling peppermints on the streets of Madurai after school. He later added plantain leaves and pencils to his range and earned six rupees a

lyer came to Madras as a sturdy youth, with just one rupee given by his grandfather. To his surprise, lyer found himself becoming an Inspector of Police all of a sudden! A good footballer, Iyer had given a sterling display in an exhibition match against the Police Commissioner's XI and was recruited by the Police. But the very next year,

player and made his moves fast. His game and, soon, chess became a defence was solid and he was nick-24-hour activity in his home. When named 'Armada' by Krishnamachari. lyer set up his press at calling distance lyer was dreaded for his knight from his home, chess shifted there. manoeuvres"

Seeing Iyer and his friends playing chess by the window of the printing "He was a positional player who never read any chess theory. Even in press, people going to the Kapalee-'his seventies, he would not sulk at being defeated by a boy. Instead, he would analyse the game in detail or would ask for a rematch," recalls

> Sundaram. When Iyer sold the Press, chess reverted back to his home. Didn't lyer's obsession with the game affect his family life and the business? "Certainly not. Further, no one dared to question him." savs Chandra Ramani, İyer's granddaughter.

Iver used to say. "Chess cleans the mind, purifies the intellect. The three essential virtues for a man to be successful can be found in a true chess player - patience, honesty and

Iyer, who moulded several State chess champions, saw two of them emerge from his family, his grandsons. Ramesh was a national junior champion and Suresh a national player.

A philanthropist, Iver helped several poor families to marry their daughters. "It was the late Paramachariar who gave Iyer the title Dharmakesari," recollects Krishnamurthy.

After witnessing four generations of chess players, Iyer breathed his last on 25.1.85. "We cannot quantify in money terms the way he cajoled, motivated and mocked us to perform better. That had to be experienced and can't be expressed in words," says

Lating out in Madras with the Anands

ending March '95. The company is likely whenever it comes to eating out, leisurely pace and quiet, unassuming most of us take the same way, a PAT of Rs. 0.30 cr against its estimates talking to friends to discover what the of Rs. 7.27 cr and Rs. 0.80 cr. But the less restaurant around is or to locals performance for 1995-96 is likely to exceed of you are new to the town. An alternative now is The Penguin Food over's Guide to India and Nepal, by Karen and Gul Anand, which takes

Born in Bombay, Karen was edufated in London and Paris, studying nong other things. Back in India, she mbay. A reporter and freelance Balad Bar — a first-of-its-kind restaurant Bombay, specialising in European bod. She then started Bombay's first uropean-style cheese shop with her sband, Gul Anand, the well-known n producer of Khatta Meetha fame.

The restaurant guide, which took authors "two years to write, inmerable doses of Digene and many xtended deadlines", is, according to he Introduction, "a guide to the best laces to eat good, wholesome, value r money food". These places have en classified into three categories: nexpensive', if a meal for one person cluding dessert and soft drinks costs nder Rs. 100, 'Moderate', if it costs etween Rs. 100 and Rs. 250, and expensive, if it costs over Rs. 250. The Anands, who are apparently, partial to South India with its warm.

people," think its food follows a similar these are the highlights of their pagepattern. They think non-vegetarian long comments on each: 'Chettivar' cuisine, with its "subtle flavours", is "extraordinary in taste" Residency, is described as having an "extraordinary buffet" with a "mindand reflects "a wealthy community who can afford to indulge their taste boggling variety of soups". But it is the

A Staff Reporter

noticed was that, unlike in the North it was "just like the dishes you eat at home". People in the North always want something different when they so

out: not in the South. help of someone who knows what the city has to offer by way of restaurant

"creative cuisine" of Chef S Babu, who turns out "over a hundred tasty varieties of rice", that impressed them. Diners are advised by the Anands not to skip the desserts, especially the Pineapple Rava Kesari.

The moderate Ahaar, at the Hotel

At the Amma Chettinadu Restaurant, housed in an old bungalow on G N Chetty Road, the Anands found unusual "specialities" like rabbit. partridge, dove and turkey on the menu - "Quite esoteric for a restaurant of this kind, or for any restaurant in India for that matter". But on the day they visited, none of these were available, so they settled for giving good marks to the Nalli Special Roast (marrow bone meat) and even better marks to the boneless Crab and Chicken Pepper Roast. Food, they found, was served on banana leaves with unlimited servings of heavily flavoured rasam. sambhar, curd and rice. Amma, however, needs to improve on hygiene, they felt, and recommend carrying your

The AVM Dasa Restaurant (Moderate) offers, according to the authors, the most delicious dosais in town. The kadubu, a Mangalorean speciality, is another AVM special they recommend. The Salad Bar here, "perhaps the only one of its kind in

(Continued from P6)

own water.



swarar Temple dropped into watch the play and, later, joined in. As time

by Venkatachari Jagannathan

he gave up his job, refusing to shave his tuft which he sported till his death. After his brief stint with the city

police. Iver started in partnership a waste paper business, then diversified into the stationery and printing business.

lyer was initiated into chess by a lawyer friend, Kuppuswamy lyengar, in 1930. He became obsessed with the

passed, word spread about the chess activity at Ramani Press. Soon, young boys flocked to the press, wanting to learn chess or to improve their game. With just two boards, the fight for a chance to play was as intense as the game itself. Many a time, games continued throughout the night and lyer used to sit with the players teaching them. "Sometimes we even drew the squares on the floor and played," reminisces V Kameswaran, General Secretary, Tamil Nadu Chess Association.

Recalls R Jayaram (90), Iyer's longtime friend, "Ramani Press was more or less a chess club sans subscription or fixed playing hours".

With several good players emerging om the press, the invincibility of the country's first International Master, Manuel Aaron, was shaken. "The reputation of the Ramani Press plavers: grew and even Aaron used to play very carefully against them," says S Krishnamurthy, another former State player. "In fact, it used to be called the Aaronbeating club," laughs Sundaram.

Speaking about lyer's style of play. avaram recalls. "He was an attacking

Sundaram remembering his guru.

Tough Times.

Tougher Diesels...

for fine food". As for vegetarian food, increased orders from them. It is also hopeful of getting orders from Coca Cola for the ou to several major restaurants in they found it "always, excellent manufacture of plastic crates for its bottling even cities in India — including quality". One aspect of food in South unit in South India which it is now meeting Madras — and also to a few in Indian restaurants they particularly by transporting crates from Western India.

(Continued on P6) International Affairs and Fine Arts, writer for many years, she also ran the

Fourteen restaurants the Anands visited in Madras find a place in the book and all of them find general favour with the authors. But the omissions are serious. For instance, among Chinese restaurants, Cascade and its franchisees find no place. The Residency at the Park Sheraton, where you get what is probably the best buffet lunch in the country - and certainly the biggest spread — gets only passing mention. The Patio at the Taj, with its nouvelle cuisine, is ignored. And the Buhari-type 'Ceylon' restaurants and the Ponnusamy and Velu 'military' hotels have been given the go-by. It would seem the Anands went restaurant-crawling in Madras without the

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tractive, investors switch to the other). has also petered out. The markets, which in days past would have reacted

have mostly been far below the offer

the markets (when one becomes unat-

The normal flow of funds between

with fervour to the good results posted by Reliance, have this year moved into entirely uncharted and unexpected waters. The fall of Reliance was a foretaste of things to come and the 30-scrip Sensex slid to touch a new 52-week low below 3,000. "Fear and greed rule the markets," said a wise man and the scenario today reflects this only too well. Panic seemingly gripped the investors as counter after counter recorded lows from a continuous

stream of sell orders. BSE, in a bid to stop the slide, has raised daily margins by 5% to 20% on sales and reduced it to 10% on purchases. News of institutional buying has also started to trickle down. UTI has reportedly re-started buying and has a massive portfolio of about Rs. 5,000 cr, which will definitely affect the market and should push up all indices.

More importantly, realisation will dawn upon most investors of the increasing opportunities presented to them whereby fundamentally sound scrips with low P/E ratios can be picked up at unbelievably low prices. Whether

you follow the mantra of successful players or just plump for cheap priced investment, buying such sound shares makes eminently good sense today. Cash in on this opportunity.

In this scenario, we think these scrips make good buys:

Alsa Construction (CMP: Rs. 28.00): Engaged in building residential and commercial complexes, the company has reported a total income of Rs. 10.30 cr and a PAT of Rs. 1.20 cr for the first half of 1994-95. The second half results are expected to be equally good and the EPS is expected to be near Rs. 5 on its equity of around Rs. 5 cr. The company's orders on hand at sales value are estimated at Rs. 100 cr to be completed in the next three years and its long-term plans include venturing into the holiday timeshare and resorts business. At current prices, the P/E works

five months delay in the arrival of the machinery for the expansion of its plastic moulding capacity seems to have affected the performance of the company for the year

to post a turnover of around Rs. 4 cr and the target. It has finalised an export order for about Rs. 1 cr for the supply of plastic commodes to Burma. It expects to get repeat/ An MOU has also been entered into with an Australian company for the manufacture

out to 5.6 only on the expected EPS.

Abco Plastics (CMP: Rs. 15.50); The

for a target of Rs. 40.

Naturalists' Corne and a Health and Nutrition diploma in



A short-nosed fruit-bat zeroes in on its dinner. (Photograph by N S MOHANA-KRISHNAN, courtesy Madras Naturalists' Society.)

This series is on Madras schools that are part of the City's heritage. These are not necessarily the better-known or more successful schools of today. These are the schools that helped the city to grow. Each of the schools featured is over 100 years old.

Furthering women's education

The Presidency High School for Girls in Egmore started in 1870, with a European faculty, as a training school for upper class women in Madras. There were 13 students on its rolls when it opened its doors. Four years later, the school decided to enroll women from all sections of society and the student numbers increased. For want of space, the Training School shifted from Presidency College to its present site in Egmore in 1883 on a rental basis. In 1886, Government acquired the Egmore property.

The Training School offered a variety of courses. There were special courses for Anglo-Indian women and special classes for "Married Ladies". This had provided opportunities for Mother and Daughter to study in the same institution at the same time!

In 1911, the Telugu Training Section was shifted to Raja Mahendrapuram. The next year, the Tamil Training School was shifted to Lady Willingdon Training College in Triplicane. And in 1923 the European Training School was shifted to Ooty.

The school, now situated in a fiveacre campus, has 3700 students studying in various classes. It functions on a shift basis! There are 135 teachers, of whom nine are old students. The Headmistress, Mrs Leelavathy, has played a vital role in the development of the school, which now instructs students in Malayalam, Telugu, Tamil and English

to bring you a better Madras.

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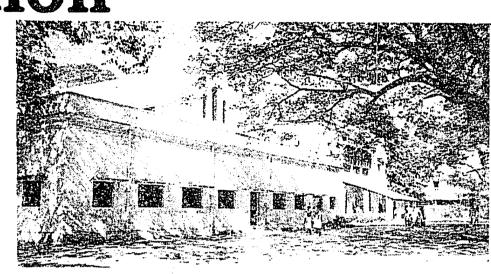
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COUPON



They're old classrooms but they're still well-maintained at the Presidency Girls' School.

The school celebrated its centenary in 1970 with a new block being opened for the occasion. A new science laboratory is under construction. Nevertheless, it is cramped for space, but still provides space for a few government offices in the campus.

The school, growing from a training school to a Presidency school for women, has produced many students holding important positions in a wide sphere of activities and has done veoman service in the cause o Women's Education in the city.

> Photograph and Text by RAIIND N CHRISTY

Eating out in Madras

(Continued from P5)

Madras", offers salads "freshly made twice a day by Chef Sachin Gomes with vegetables from Ooty" and there is a variety of fresh fruit juices and ice creams, the Anands record.

The only Chinese restaurant listed hy the Anands in Madras is the Chin Chin, also at Hotel Residency. It is "miles ahead of the other grotty old Chinese restaurants in Madras", say the Anands. The moderate price range, with 'real' soups like Sharkfin and Crab being offered at unbelievably low prices, is noted. A "delicious, deep fried cauliflower in chilli and fresh tomato sauce" and the "sensational" Chicken Herbs Honey are recommended and Chef Sanu Rai, who had worked for China Garden, Bombay, is commended for his knack of adapting "to an individual customer's tastes"

Coconut Grove, run by actress Sowkar Janaki (Editor's Note: No longer now), who even did the cooking herself, the Anands record, specialises

in Malabar, Konkan, Godavari, Coorg and Chettinad cuisines. Commenting on the spicy food (in which "even fresh toddy is used"), the Anands thought it all a bit too spicy, but "delicious nevertheless". Which is no doubt why they insist "you must include this rectaurant on your culinary itinorary

making idiappams, dosais, velappams or, for that matter, pouring 'South Indian coffee' from one tumbler to the other before offering it to them.

next fortnight)

Quizzin'

with

Ramanan

(Quizmaster V V RAMANAN's

questions are from the fortnight

1. Who are the new DGP of Tamil Nadu

2. In an historic judgement, a court in Rio

de laneiro, Brazil, using DNA tests,

ruled that Sandra Machado, a 30-year-

old unemployed shop assistant, was the

daughter of a sporting legend, and had

been born out of wedlock. Who is the

and the Commissioner of Police,

April 16th - 30th)

sporting idol?

Dakshin, at the Park Sheraton Hotel and Towers, offers a variety of South Indian food, courtesy of Chef Prayeen Anand. And it "lives up to the terrific ambience", say the Anands. "Though expensive, eating out at Dakshin is a total visual and gustatory 'experience," feel the Anands, who were quite taken up with Chef A M Sundaram's "culinary theatricals" in

(To be concluded

3. Name the famous and glamorous dancing partner of Fred Astaire, who passed away on April 25th.

- .4. Who won the World youth football championship at Doha, Qatar, April 28th, beating Brazil, the senio world champion?
- 5. Name the infamous and much celebrated criminal from Madras, who was hanged recently after many lega-
- 6. South Boag Road in T'Nagar, Madras, has been renamed after its most famous resident, a recently decorated file thespian. Who?
- 7. Who retained the World professiona snooker championship at Sheffield recently for the third succesive time after completing a maximum break of 147 en route to the title?
- 8. Name the two former AIADN ministers disqualified from the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly by under the Anti-Defection Act.
- 9. Where in India is the world's higher 290 metres above ground level!?
- 10. Who won the Asian Zonals in Ches for both men and women in Madras
- 11. Who is the recipient of the prestigious 'G.K. Reddy Memorial Award' for excellence in journalism this year?
- 12. In which U.S. city was a Federal building ripped apart by a car bomb. killing over 100 people?
- 13. 'The Black Stallion', a 37-year-old workhorse and the last of its breed, was retired to Golden Rock, Tiruchi, on April 20th, What is the 'Black
- 14. Who recently became India's youngest and puppet shows. If holiday-makers International Women's Master in chess let rid of their TV and film song at Madras?
- 15. Which nation's ruling party had articles and artefacts of the country's President auctioned off, to generate funds to meet its expenses?
- Name the internationally acclaimed violinist elected to the Fellowship of the Sangret Natak Akademi, along with and Dr. Maheswar Neog (scholar).
- 17. The LTTE launched missile attacks of Sri Lankan aircraft on successive days Europe. C P Satyajit, who is making n 🛅 name for himself as not only a killing nearly 100 persons. Near which airbase did these attacks occur?
- 18. Where are six new satellite urban townships to come up in Tamil Nadu with HUDCO and TNHB investment?
- A new archaeology wing was established by the Archaeology Survey o India (ASI) in Madras recently. It has been specifically set up to explore what hidden treasures?
- 20. Which company created corporate history by achieving a total income o Rs. 7166 crore and a net profit of Rs. 1065 crore?

(Answers on P. 8)

Melas in the hills & dancing abroad

All to beat the heat!

there is an exodus of artists from mnolent Madras to cooler climes and otter action. You'll find many of them Ooty and Kodaikanal where Sterling loliday Resorts are organising an arts Speaker and their seats declared vacant and crafts fair called Sterling Resorts rafts Mela. Teaming with the Madras trafts Foundation, they are offering a rail bridge going to be constructed suge sale and demonstration of folk rafts as well as folk performances like Devarattam, Therukoothu, Tappattam

Some young dancers are also out

Dhananjayans' Bharatha Kalanjali, two

young dancers have headed for

If you have very little to say but

feel an irresistible desire to

talk about yourself, you have the

essential prerequisites to abudding

literary career as an autobio-

aches to writing a successful

autobiography. You can choose

a noble character, by crying out

aloud vour own virtues (if you

do not have any, you can always

invent a few; after all, in an

autobiography, you are the sole

authority on yourself). But you

should take care to treat the

subject with apparent modesty.

down as a common lowdown

person. Mix in a little pettiness,

egoism and some risqué anec-

dotes to add spice to the reading

matter. Saint or sinner? Lion or

But whichever approach you

choose, do not change horses

midstream. Take the same line

right through to the end, to lend

atmosphere and verisimilitude.

becoming increasingly popular

in India. In the preface, you

should take care to mention that

you never thought of writing

your autobiography in the first

Approach Number One is

rat? It is entirely up to you.

The other is to put yourself

There are two main appro-

One is to present yourself as

grapher.

either of them.

May 16-31, 1995

like his parents (the Dhananiayans. who have just been awarded the Sangeeth Natak Akademi award this year), but also as a photographer and choreographer, is in Spain. He is working with a classical ballet and Flamenco dancer and they plan a joint programme there.

Also from Bharatha Kalaniali is Mahalakshmi who is in France now.

THE VIEW FROM THE WINGS

She will be replacing dancer Shanthala in a theatre spectacle on gypsies. Mahalakshmi will dance Bharatha bsessions and the Mela proves a Natyam in water, ride a horse and uccess. Sterling plans to organise more. uch festivals in Madras and other dance with it. She will also look after South Indian cities and holiday destiit during their month-long tour of Europe, during which they will have 25 performances in a month.

In Germany, Madras is represented lekha's troupe and Alarmel Valli. Chandralekha's group will be the star attraction at the prestigious Hammoniele festival. Valli will also be

place. What, a whole book on

vourself! After all, who are you?

You are only a retired bureaucrat.

or a businessman turned

minister or vice versa who has

only been recently decorated.

You would not have dreamt of

writing your book but for the

demand of thousands of your-

admirers. Then you sit down

by ANAMIKA

and write your book and call it

The Autobiography of a Nobody!

(It usually runs into five or more

volumes and will sport at least

fifty photographs of the author

and his immediate family.) Then

you get another celebrity turned

autobiographer to write a Fore-

word to your effort. The rest is

you make yourself more interest-

ing to the public. You give the

simple acts of your life hidden

meaning by revealing your

hidden thoughts, like how you

narrowly escaped pinching

money from a blind beggar's

In Approach Number Two,

plain sailing.

theatre festival in France. Presspersons Sadanand Menon and Prasanna Ramaswamy will be there in Germany too.

MADRAS MUSINGS

lust back from a tour of the U.S. is the chitraveena exponent Ravikiran. He returned just in time to play along with cousin Ganesh at the Hamsadhwani Festival at the Indira Nagar Youth

Ravikiran had been invited by Texas to participate in their 'Music of the World' series. He also cut some compact discs there and played some private concerts too. He was lighting jet lag as he played at the Hamsadhwani Festival, but his mastery over the instrument and his Raga alapana were quite magical. Ganesh gave him good support and showed his brilliance here and there in spite of being overshadowed by Ravikiran and having problems with his amplifier.

Ganesh is now 18. When he was nine years old, cousin Ravi brought him to Madras to work with him, recognising potential in the child. Young Ganesh lived on music and has now lived up to expectations. Even as a ten-year-old. Ganesh would suddenly decide to take a silence vow and would communicate only in gestures. The duration of the vow would sometimes be nine days, sometimes 48 days. The for his music class. It was an amazing show of mental strength. With such determination, it wen't be long before he comes up to his cousin's chitra-V.R. Devika veena standard. Tips to a successful autobiography

alms bowl - though sorely

tempted by the penury suffered

by you during your college days

due to the meagre pocket money

received by you - only because

of the hulking presence of a

policeman known to your father

in the immediate vicinity of the

beggarl. You must know where

to stop, as your book will never

see the light of day, what with

the puritanical attitude of the

censoring committees these

dual taste whether you pick on

Approach Number One or Two

as your medium. If you have a

flair for laying it on thick, you

can end up with a bestseller. Be

as personal as you like and air

your likes and dislikes openly. If

you feel diffident about doing it

by yourself and have enough

money to throw about, you can

always hire one of those talented

and impecunious ghost writers

ed, it does not sell, try to gain

publicity as an erratic and unpre-

dictable genius. Get into the

news by hook or by crook. And

if even this does not do the trick,

you can just pull it off by doing

what is required to get your

work posthumous recognition

If after your book is publish-

to do it for you.

It is really a matter of indivi-



Tappattam dancers who will announce the Sterling traditional arts and crafts mela, being organised for Sterling Resorts by the Madras Craft Foundation. Sterling's first such mela will be held in Ooty and Kodai this year.

Album to make Sanskrit learning easy

(By G V Krishnan of The Times of India)

R Sundaracharlu of Mylapore, a retired IDPL executive, brought out an album of ten cassettes, Sanskrit for Children, early this year. In the first three months, he has sold no more than 80 albums, but Sundaracharlu is pleased with the response.

He is encouraged by the enlightened interest the album has evoked among the educated seeking a better understanding and appreciation of Sanskrit classics. But was not this the class of people Sundaracharlu had in mind when he started work on the teach-yourself audio kit? He put together the album with the help of his wife Kalyani, to benefit students who take up Sanskrit as an optional subject in school. Those who opt for Sanskrit at the Plus Two level do so because they consider it a scoring subject. Mrs Sundaracharlu has been running Sanskrit coaching classes for small student groups at her residence for the last 12 years.

That Sanskrit for Children has had a wider appeal is evident from the response to the album. "I have had enquiries from some Muslim and Christian academicians," said Sundaracharlu, who stresses the need for liberating Sanskrit from, what he terms the inhibiting influence of religious dogmas and a sectarian value system.

The study of Sanskrit has been, for generations, associated with Brahmins and Brahminism known for its aberrations such as a caste-based structure of society and the supremacy of the male over the female.

Sundaracharlu referred in this context to the pathetic plight of traditional Sanskrit institutions in Tamil Nadu. The best known among them is Raja Veda Patasala in Thiruvaiyaru, the birthplace of saint Thyagaraja. It has no more than four students. Gone are the days when this 500-year-old insti-

tution used to attract over 100 pupils, who were given free board and lodging. Today, it does not have enough money to pay a staff of three vedic scholars. Sundaracharlu is no vedic scholar.

Nor has he had much formal schooling in the study of Sanskrit. "I took to learning the language as my spare-time interest," said the former IDPL general manager. His job entailed much travelling. "During my frequent trips to Delhi I used to spend travel time reading Sanskrit grammar, instead of pulp fiction." said Sundaracharlu, who is convinced that Sanskrit can be made more appealing with appropriate teaching methods.

Sanskrit, he said, appears difficult to learn because it is about the only language that provides innumerable exceptions to every rule of grammar. Scholars may revel in such a grammatical maze, but it does not do any good for creating interest among beginners in Sanskrit as a medium of communication.

What Sundaracharlu has done is enunciate the basics, cutting through the cobweb of auxiliary rules, and present the language for easier comprehension.

The album is designed to initiate learners into the sounds of Sanskrit, step by step, leading them to develop reading skills and appreciation of Sanskrit prose and poetry. Excerpts from classics such as Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa and Sundara Kandam of Valmiki Ramayan figure in the cassettes. In the choice of excerpts, he has sought to de-emphasise religious overtones and the esoteric content of the classics.

Describing Sanskrit as a 'hentage language'. Sundaracharlu points to a growing awareness among the educated classes that a working knowledge of Sanskrit is essential for deeper understanding of the Indian ethos.

BULL'S EYE

(Continued from P4)

of folding plastic chairs for the first time in the country. We estimate the share price to 1 double in a year's time from the current levels. Buy for long-term.

Indbank Merchant Banking Services (CMP: Rs. 33.00): Indbank Merchant Banking was, in March '94, the first public sector, merchant banking subsidiary in the country to go public, with an equity issue at Rs. 15 premium aggregating Rs. 36.02 cr. This increased the equity to Rs. 29.41 cr. Further, it issued shares to Indian Bank which increased the equity to Rs. 34.34 cr. The results for the year ended March '95 are excellent and have exceeded the estimations made at the time of public issue. The EPS on the enhanced equity amounts to Rs. 5.15. Indbank estimates the 1995-96 PAT at Rs. 44 cr. due to its increased emphasis on bought out deals and the full utilisation of its placement (made to Indian Bank) proceeds. This yields an EPS of over Rs. 12 for 1995-96. The share is expected to yield considerable gains in the long-term.

K. Gopalakrishnan.





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SAF Games sites named

But what's the progress?

It was just a couple of days after Reader Fazal's letter about the Santhomé School's stadium being earmarked for table tennis and gymnastics (ΜΜ, May 1) that the Indian Olympic Association announced the venues for the SAΓ Games to be held in the City in December. The venues will be:

Athletics and football: Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

Basketball and wrestling: Jayalalitha Indoor Stadium.

Weightlifiting: Student Activities Centre, IIT.

Table Tennis: Santhomé Higher Secondary School Indoor Stadium.

Kabaddi: Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu Sports Complex, Nehru Park.

Boxing and Volleyball: Multipurpose indoor stadium, Old 200 area. Hockey: Hockey Stadium, Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium, Egmore.

Tennis: Tennis Stadium, Nungambakkam Recreation Centre.

Swimming: Aquatic Complex, Velachery Road.

• THE CORNER FLAG

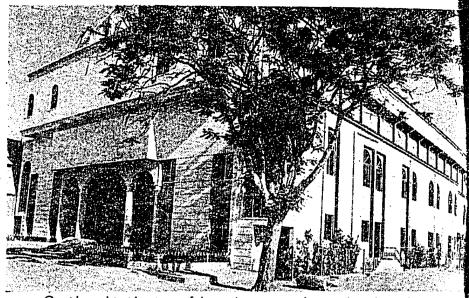
Shooting: B. Sivanthi Adityan Shooting Sports Complex and Sivanthi Shooting Range, Alamadi.

Of these, the tennis and swimming stadia and the indoor stadium for boxing and volleyball will be new facilities built by the Government, but the hockey stadium will be an old hockey venue improved by Government to keep up with the times. Another new stadium will be the

Santhomé Higher Secondary School's, which the School is putting up with the help of corporate and public donations.

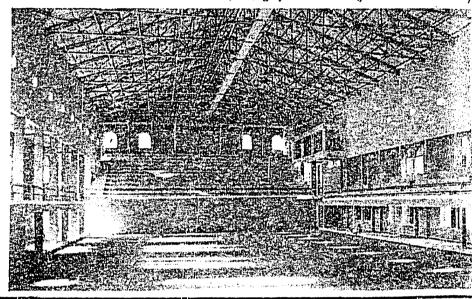
Government is spending Rs. 70 crore on the Games Village, which it hopes to recover, and perhaps even make a profit on, through sale of the apartments after the Games. It will spend Rs. 21 crore on new stadia and improving the existing infrastructure and Rs. 29 crore has been earmarked for organisational expenditure, according to an IOA spokesman.

The one thing the spokesman made no mention of was the progress at each venue in developing or improving the infrastructure. For instance, work has **just** commenced in the old zoo area on the multipurpose indoor stadium for boxing and volleyball. Could someone tell *The Corner Flag* what the state of play is everywhere?



Outside and inside views of the multipurpose indoor stadium being built by the Santhome Higher Secondary School. The stadium, big enough to conduct any tournament in any indoor sport, will be venue of the table tennis competition at the SAF Games in December. The school, which has a fine sports record, particularly in cricket and table tennis, is still waiting for Central and State Government support for this magnificent Rs. 1.5 crore stadium which will, when complete, seat 2500 in the hall and 2000 in the gallery. The $72 \times 31 \,\mathrm{m}$ auditorium has a ceiling which soars $31 \,\mathrm{metres}$ and a wooden playing area $40 \times 25 \,\mathrm{m}$. In its basement will be a well-equipped gymnasium.

(Photographs and text by V.S. RAGHAVAN)



Triple century next?

M. A.M. Ramaswamy's double century of classic winners, which the Madras industrialist-cum-turfite completed by leading in the winner of The Hindu Nilgiris Derby Stakes winner at Udhagamandalam on April 7th, is by no means the end of the road for the world's leading racehorse owner. For one thing, he has been blessed with an indefatigable spirit to make history and rewrite it, and, for another, he can boast of owning the country's biggest contingent of highly-pedigreed thoroughbreds. This is crystal-clear from the pace at which he achieved his second century.

Since Queen of the Hills won for him the 1983 Mysore Derby and helped him complete his century, which earned him a place in the Guinness Book of World Records, MAM took just over a decade to set a new world record of 200 classic winners. Considering the record number of horses he races throughout the year at nearly all the Indian centres, and the blue-blooded stallions on duty at his Chettinad stud farm, it is a safe bet that in an almost identical number of years, if not sooner, he will boost his tally to an unapproachable triple century.

The road to success is not strewn with roses. MAM has had his setbacks, as in the 1994-95 season at his home centre of Guindy when his runners finished among the also-rans in all its

five classics, won by challengers from Bangalore. But the sporting owner took them all in his stride. His insatiable appetite to boost his tally was by no means affected.

India indeed has never had an owner like MAM. Even before he completed his century, he nad eclipsed all the records the Princely owners had established before Independence. Oddly enough, unlike the Princes, MAM had no racing in his blood.

JAICI

Neither his grandfather, Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar, nor his father, Raja Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, had owned a racehorse. He had indeed begun his turf career as a backer in the Guindy ring, where he came to know some of the leading owners of the time. He did not take long to join the owners' list along with his late elder brother, Kumararajah M.A.M. Muthiah.

Silver Jet, a grey colt, was the brothers' first winner, and Fair Court their first classic winner. Most unfortunately, the partnership did not last long, as the elder brother died a premature death. After the mourning, MAM signalled his return to the scene with Star Haven, a great filly, who made a clean sweep of the 1971-72 Madras classics.

From Star Haven to Great Spectacle, MAM has had a galaxy

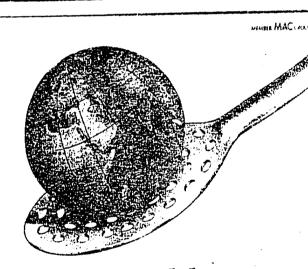
of classic winners, the like of which the Indian turf had never before known, even if it did not include a Commanche, a Squanderer or a Royal Tern. Amberdue, Air Hostess, Cupid, Half a Crown, Aristocrat, Attaturk, Red Satin, the great Opinion; to mention his betterknown classic winners, all combined to establish him as India's greatest-ever owner long before he led in his 200th classic winner. Nicolette won for him no less than nine classics, an alltime record by a filly. But pride of place among his classic winners must go to Own Opinion, who perhaps gave MAM his proudest moment before of course he led in Great Spectacle on August 7th — by conquering the great Royal Tern to the Invitation Cup in Bombay in 1979.

MAM owes his rise to eminence not only to his horse sense — "I pay a lot of attention to bloodlines", to quote him but also to his faith in his trainers and jockeys. His long and successful associations with trainers Ali Asker, Aris David and Robert Foley have made other owner-trainer combinations look mediocre. But MAM's greatest quality is that despite all his eminence he remains a commoner, accessible to all. The great reception he got at Udhagamanalam speaks for

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. V. Vaikunth and K.K. Rajasekaran Nair respectively; 2. Edson Arantes de Nascimento alias Pele; 3. Ginger Rogers; 4. Argentina; 5. 'Auto' Shankar; 6. 'Sivaji' Ganesan; 7. Stephen Hendry; 8. G. Viswanathan and Alagu Thirunavakkarusu; 9. On the Jammu-Srinagar line, over the Chenab at Salat; 10. Dibyendu Barua and Bhagyathe editor of *India Today*; 12. Oklahoma

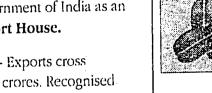
City, Oklahoma; 13. The last metre gauge steam engine; 14. Nisha Mohota of West Bengal; 15. South Africa. The ANC auction ed Dr. Nelson Mandela's personal effects: 16. Yehudi Menuhin; 17. Palaly: 18. Chengalpattu, Coimbatore, Dindigul. Erode, Sriperumbudur and Tiruchi; 19. It's a marine wing to explore the east coast of

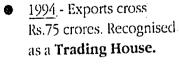


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BATTLE FOR PUNE CANTT.

(Continued from P3)

place. The more visible examples are also the best maintained; the University of Pune, built originally as Government House for Sir Bartle Frere by James Trubshawe, inspired by Prince Albert's ambitious Osborne House on the Isle of Wight; Command House, built in 1886 and currently residence of the GOC-in-C Southern Command, or the Pune Law Courts built in the Gothic style.

But for every Government House that sparkless with spit and polish and zealous care, there are other forgotten corners of Pune that will be forever England...

Pune throws up large quantities of antiquarian whimsy, but in equal measure with outstanding examples of colonial architecture that deserve to be preserved as part of India's priceless building heritage and not become the truth of Philip Davies's perfect epitaph for the splendours of the Raj: "They were always pale imitations of life at home, and never more than wistful reflections of the real thing, which is why today they seem so forlom and rather sad. Conceived in nostalgia, they seem destined to decline into melancholy, for old empires don't really die, they just fade away."

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