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MADRAS

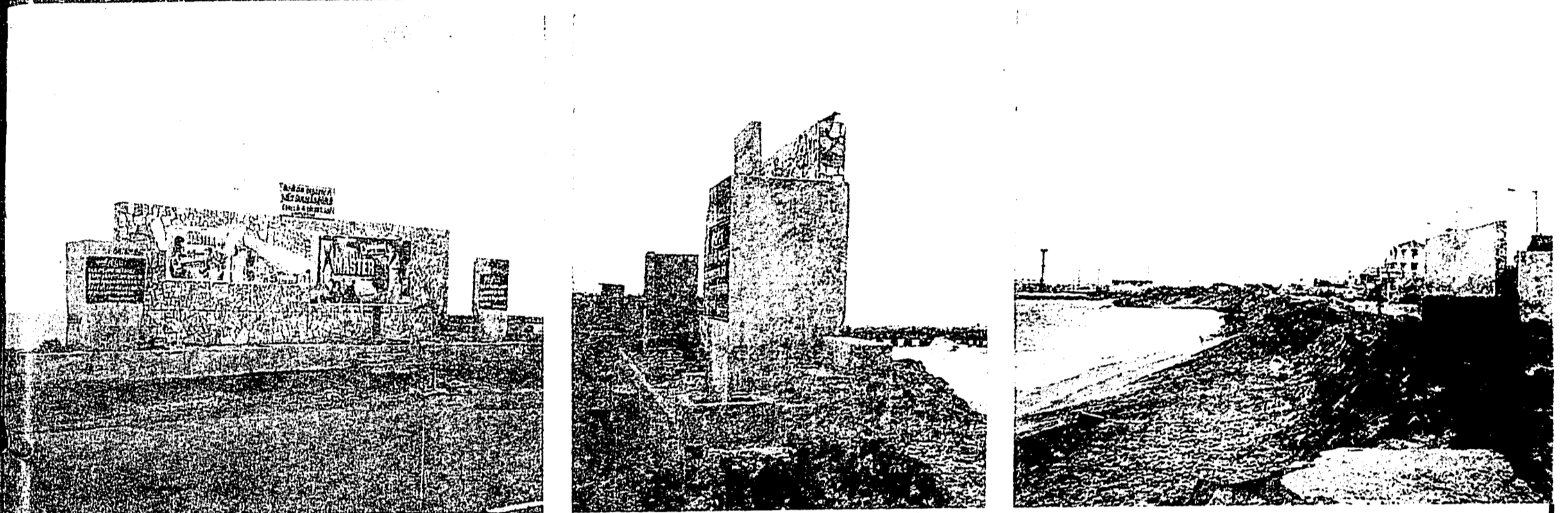
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Sept. 1 — 15, 1995

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These pictures were taken by RAJIND N CHRISTY on August 7, 1995.

A plan to make T.N. bloom

Export of flowers will get a fillip in Tamil Nadu in the near future — provided quality, regularity and reliability of local supplies can be assured the European market. This was the conclusion reached by a high level delegation of the State Government after a recent tour of The Netherlands and the UK.

To meet the needs of those markets, the delegation has recommended far-reaching measures in the State to give a new thrust to horticulture, especially floriculture, for export.

The institutionalisation of a flower auction, through a speedy trading system similar to that in The Nether-

lands, has been suggested for the cut flower trade. It has recommended that the flower auction centre be set up near Madras airport, which is well-connected to Southeast Asia, Europe and America. The State and the Central Governments

• by A Special Correspondent

may provide initial loans and support for the centre which is to be set up by a group or society or a cooperative of growers. Similar auction centres with cold storage facilities for jasmine and *kanakambaram* would be set up in Madurai and Coimbatore.

Apart from the auction centres, the seven-member delegation, led by State Agriculture Minister K P Krishnan, has recommended the following:

- Setting up of three greenhouses spread over two hectares each in Ooty, Kodaikanal and Hosur under the supervision of the Tamil Nadu Agriculture University (TNAU) and the state Horticulture Department for demonstration purposes.
- Requesting The Netherlands Council for International Education and Training in Agriculture (NETA) to train teams from the agriculture, agro-engineering and horticultural departments in intensive vegetable cultivation with maximum productivity.
- Setting up training centres in Madras to conduct courses on mushroom cultivation and horticulture.
- Procuring machinery for planting tissue culture plants, weeding operations and trenching which could then be developed by the TNAU, Tamil Nadu Agro Industries and the private sector.
- Horticulture research projects to be taken up by TNAU in collaboration with the Research Station of Wageningen University, The Netherlands, with sponsorship by floriculture trading houses in the country.

At present, 10 tonnes of flowers are exported through the Bombay and Bangalore airports and a small quantity to Southeast Asia from Madras.

The present worldwide market for floriculture products has been estimated at \$ 40 billion, with an annual increase of 15 per cent. Cut flowers contribute 60 per cent of the trade and the rest are for live and potted plants.

The fury of the North Madras sea

These photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY provide evidence of a startling sight on the Ennore Express Road that has been eroded by the sea.

The picture on extreme left shows what the Sulabh-Municipal Corporation public convenience at Poongavanam Nagar in Kasimedu might have looked like when seen from the front just six months ago. The difference now is the stark black-and-white notices painted on it asking the public to refrain from using the toilet as it has been damaged by sea erosion.

But this is no ordinary damage. If you look carefully at the first picture you will see that there are signs in it of what the other two pictures reveal — the toilet has literally vanished, gobbled up by the fury of the sea, leaving just one wall for the notice-writer. Several neighbouring huts have also vanished (their occupants moved to Korukupet) as the sea has taken a toll of about 20 feet of shore here in just six months. At this rate, the LONE wall will disappear in a couple of months — and then it will be the turn of the road. What are we doing about it?

— THE EDITOR

Industry NOT doing its best

— Exnora Innovators charge

(By A Special Correspondent)

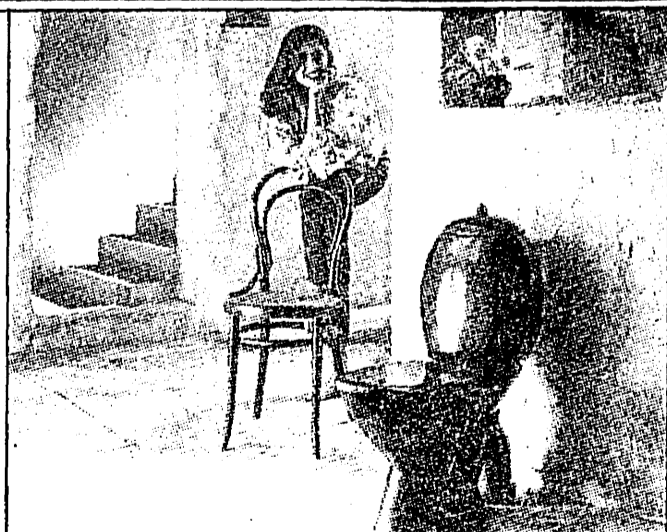
Madras business and industrial houses attracted flak from one speaker after another at a recent Exnora Innovators Club meeting. The business community pays scant regard to environment protection, the speakers charged.

Dr Paul Appaswamy, Madras Institute of Development Studies, who spoke on 'The role of business and industries in the sustainable development of Madras' said, "The business community generally does not show any interest in environmental aspects". According to him, the relationship between the business community and the city should be like a marriage alliance, with Industry looking at the long-term interests of the city rather

than the short-term ones. He also remarked that Government's attitude of treating Industry as a sacred cow should change and it should make public the environmental aspects of every project. Citing public sector units which were forced to provide all kinds of facilities, he called for the private sector to emulate them. "The private sector should contribute on its own for the betterment of the city rather than using the existing amenities," he said.

Mr Devasahayam, a former IAS officer, felt that "of all the three constituents in a city — the business community, NGOs, and the general public — it is the business community alone which has kept itself aloof in the

(Continued on P3)



PARRY'S

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Pied pipers of Tamil Nadu

When rats overran many villages in Beed District and spread pneumonic plague, health authorities promptly doused the area with DDT to kill the fleas that spread the disease and distributed zinc oxide to kill the rodents. But the indiscriminate use of DDT, a pesticide banned in most countries, alarmed environmentalists in Bombay. Latur District Collector, Pravin Singh Pardeshi, who is a member of the Bombay Natural History Society, persuaded the authorities to call in the Irlu tribals from Tamil Nadu, who are adept at catching rodents.

by LALITHA ANANTHARAMAN
writing in *The Afternoon*
Courier and Despatch, Bombay.

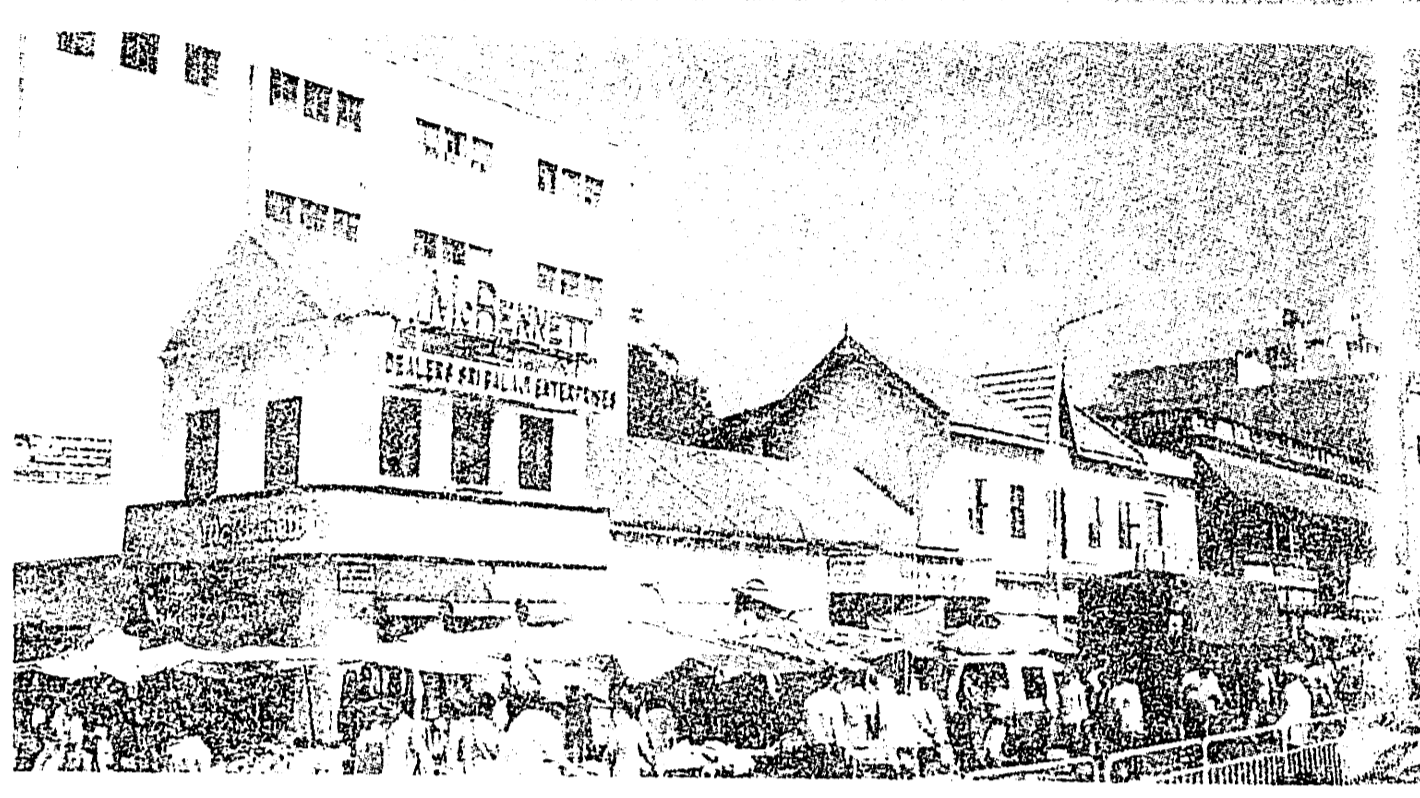
Whitaker had earlier used the Irlus to procure rats for his crocodiles and to 'milk' the snakes for venom in another cooperative that functions from his crocodile farm.

Members of RATS charge farmers one rupee for every rodent they catch. "During the harvest season, we make a lot of money," says M Kanniappan, a rat catcher living in Chengalpattu, a town south of Madras.

Kanniappan, like the other Irlus, uses only an iron crowbar to catch rats. He walks along the raised sides of the field, the places where rats usually burrow, looking for tell-tale signs of life in a burrow. Such signs include bits of green leaves and fresh soil. When he spots a burrow, Kanniappan first seals its mouth and then searches for the other entrance. He then swifly digs into the burrow, which turns out to be about 30 feet long and runs along the border of the field.

So fine is his hearing that Kanniappan says he can actually hear the commotion inside the burrow. The trapped rat, when it is alarmed, digs deeper into its burrow. But Kanniappan digs faster. When he sees the tail of the rat, he yanks the rodent out of the burrow and, in a flash, grabs its neck. "The rat will try to bite and get away," he says. But Kanniappan breaks its teeth and dangles it by the tail. "Today's meal problem is solved," he says. Kanniappan, like all Irlus, loves rats; it is a delicacy for these tribals. "It's just like chicken. Only more tender," beams Kanniappan.

For centuries, the Irlus lived in the forests of north Tamil Nadu, hunting small animals and living off fruits and nuts. But the urban spread has destroyed forests and left many of them hungry. The Irlus fiercely love their independence and try not to be tied down to a job. When hunger and poverty began to tell on the Irlus, Romulus Whitaker, who runs the Madras Crocodile Bank, organised the tribals into a cooperative called RATS — Rat and Termite Squad.



Our NEW is Maurya International, a new hotel in Kodambakkam, across from Vijaya Hospital. Its gleaming all-white and architectural good looks are striking and a pointer to the fast development going on in this area that once was so drab. Now film studios, hospitals, software businesses and printing houses are all striving to build bigger, better and more environmentally friendly on either side of a clogged road which does no justice to the modern establishments on either side. Mollywood, as it takes over from Bollywood, deserves better than this road.

The OLD this fortnight is another 'hotel'. The Neo Ranga Vilas, where tasty vegetarian food has been served for 60 years, is making an attempt... & THE NEW to get the old to look new amidst a stretch of old buildings on NSC Bose Road. The stretch is owned by the LIC and includes, from left to right, McRennett's (also attempting to give itself a new look), Kuppuswamy Opticians with tilted roof, Smith Stocking (chemists and druggists), Neo Ranga Vilas, General Swadeshis, Handlooms, The Bharathi Mart and Paris Cool Home, the last three shaded by a tin awning. Neo Ranga Vilas, once known as Sri Krishna Bhavan and Sri Ranga Vilas, is well-known for its Parathas and Chappathis, no doubt a contribution of one of the partners, a Muslim. Even older than the 'hotel' is Kuppuswamy's, in business here for 70 years. Smith Stocking's have also been in business here for nearly a century.

(THE NEW by V S RAGHAVAN, THE OLD by RAJIND N CHRISTY)

The art of building a portfolio

The arts of selecting a share and building up a portfolio nearly always rest on the evaluation done on the fundamentals of the target company. Fair enough. But we must also add to this the strength of the scrip as perceived by the market. Such perception is but a part of one of the major forces behind market movement — market sentiment. Now, how do we quantify an abstract such as perception? This is where indices and comparative studies prove useful.

When market conditions are depressed, we find that some counters stand out, as their prices have not declined in tandem with a falling index. We can therefore safely conclude that the market regards such scrips as being better than those that have dropped along with, or further than, the indices. But care must be taken to see that such comparisons are neither wild nor lack valid parameters. For one, it is futile to do cross-industrial matchings, as the conditions are often divergent.

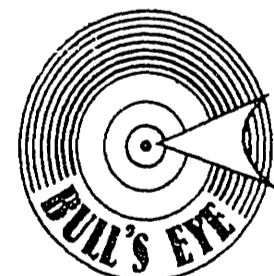
Take the sugar industry, which is seasonal in nature. To compare sugar scrips with those of, say, garment exports will give us results extraneous to our needs. We must therefore take an industry and select for our portfolio from candidates who have done better, or are seen to have done so, than others in their particular segment.

Other factors that have to be considered are the rates of growth displayed by our candidates after the market has bottomed out and whether the cycles of the industry on view coincide with those of the index. Apart from taking care to see that the share's drop from its 52-week high is lower, in percentage terms, than the decline in the index, we must also see where the share stands currently, as against its 52-week high/low.

Take the automobile industry, for example. Though the fortunes of this cyclical industry were on the decline until recently, they are currently

enjoying the fruits of a boom phase. Hopefully, the index is also on the uptrend.

Let us consider in this context the cases of a few auto-scrips, such as Telco, IP Rings, Ucal Fuel, Kinetic Engineering, Sundaram Clayton, Punjab Tractors, Gabriel India and Bajaj Auto. We notice that the declines of these, from their 52-week highs, did



not mimic the fall in the 50-scrip BSE Sensex which, after peaking at an all-time high at 4645, plunged to an abysmal 2996, a 75-week low. We further observe that the current prices of Telco, IP Rings and Bajaj Auto are almost at the levels of their 52-week highs. Those of Ucal Fuel, Punjab Tractors, Kinetic Engineering, Gabriel India and Sundaram Clayton, however, though not falling in tandem with the Sensex, are further away from their yearly highs. The debate on whether you should choose from the former group or the latter would depend entirely on the growth prospects of the shares concerned and in the context of the corporate's growth plans.

MM Forgings (CMP: Rs. 65.00). This company is one of the leading manufacturers of forgings in South India and has

a list of good clients that include: Asha Leyland, BHIL, Auro India, K. S. KSB Pumps in the domestic market and Velan Inc. of Canada, Rockwell Singapore and TRW Japan, in exports. The company's exports, at 30% to total sales, is the highest among the South-based forging companies. Having secured ISO 9002 in September 1994, it expects to increase its export component to 50% of sales in a couple of years.

The company had been in the news recently, for securing a \$2 million order from TRW Japan, in addition to orders worth Rs. 6 crore it already has in eyes. 1995-96 should see the company register export turnover of at least Rs. 10 crore. The expanded capacity of the company from 6000 tpa to 15,000 tpa went on to start in March 1995 and is expected to create at 60% of capacity this year. The P.S. for 1995-96 is expected to be over Rs. 8, which will support about Rs. 100 share.

The share is moving in the band of Rs. 55-70. The ROC graph indicates a possibility of an upward move. Buying can be considered with a stop loss at Rs. 60. Valecha Engineering (CMP: Rs. 56.75): This OTC share has been recommended by us at Rs. 66 in July 1995, but the prices have dropped since then. This was largely due to the selling pressure from Times Guaranty, the compulsory market maker. Currently the market has absorbed the stocks and dealers were seen picking up the share recently.

This company, promoted by the Valecha group, is engaged in infrastructure construction and has bagged contracts worth about Rs. 76 crore for the next two years.

(Continued on P6)

Dakshinachitra

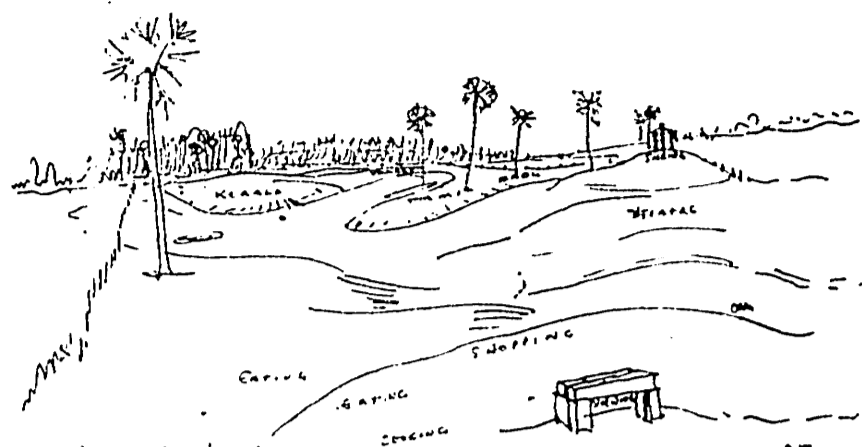
— where Southern homes will come alive

Dakshinachitra, a centre for the craft and folk performing arts of South India, now coming up on ten acres of land given to the Madras Craft Foundation on long lease by the Government of Tamil Nadu at Muttukadu, on the road to Mamallapuram, is expected to be inaugurated by the end of the month. It will portray the crafts of South India within their cultural context in a setting of traditional architecture.

Work on the construction of some of the artisans' quarters, the construction of the Tamil Nadu exhibition square and that of Kerala have been partially completed. Certainly enough work has been done to indicate what a splendid showpiece this will be. Exhibition areas for Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh will follow.

Famed architect Laurie Baker is responsible for the concept and architectural styles to be used in the first phase of construction, which is likely to be completed late this year.

Baker envisions the flow of people winding down beside the proposed open air restaurant onto the pathway leading into the Tamil Nadu square and on to the continuation of the path

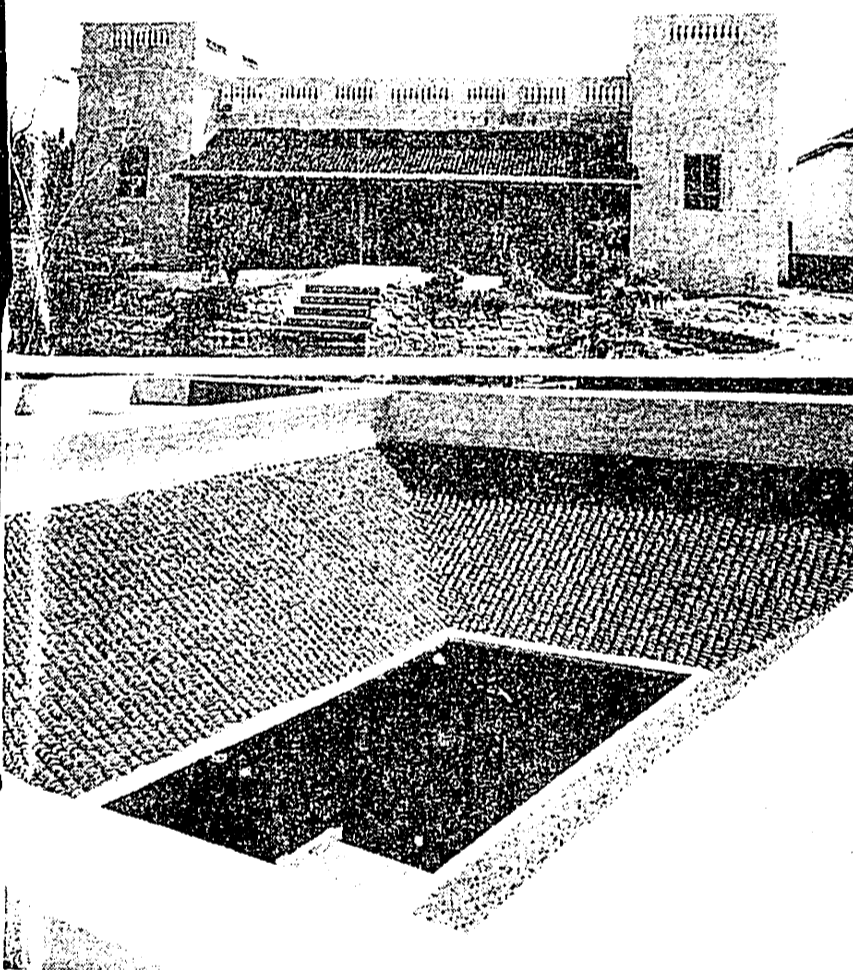


Laurie Baker's sketch of the Dakshinachitra site.

Baker's first consideration in design has always been to understand the life style and spatial and cultural needs of the people for whom he's designing. The units for the artisans are an example of his clear thought process. Built around a small circular path to accommodate the spatial and drainage requirements of the site, each house provides a quiet, protected flexible area for the family, away from the visitors. The courtyard in each house separates the place for working and storage near



Laurie Baker



The Chettinad house at Dakshinachitra.



A Kerala house at Dakshinachitra.

been conscious of traditional cultural styles which were usually tailored to suit both the climate and the nearby resources as well as the skills and life pattern of the people. He has spent most of his later years in Kerala, working with Kerala architecture, but in his earlier years, when he was in his 30's and 40's, he gained vast experience in architecture from the north as well as other southern states.

Dakshinachitra will link up with the Madras Craft Foundation's Building Centre to explore the technologies of lime and stucco, of adobe and mud block, terracotta and the use of stone in architecture. Additives to traditional materials, and combination mortars will be looked into. Experiments with roofing and training of masons in newer resource conservative techniques will also be undertaken. As Dakshinachitra is programmed to have rural craftsmen staying for temporary periods at the Centre, what better way to introduce them to new or adapted techniques and living spaces than to have them live in them?

At Dakshinachitra the visitor will be able to experience aspects of the traditional architecture of the four

southern states. While walking through the streets of each separate state area, the visitor will find himself in an architectural ambience particular to the domestic architectural heritage of that state.

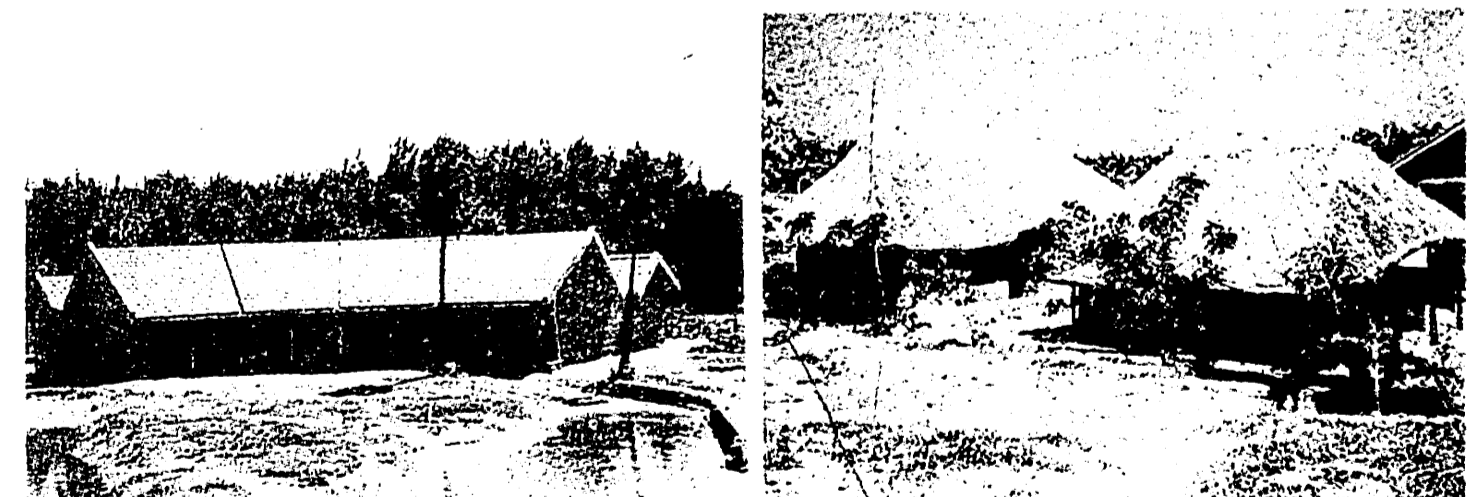
In Tamil Nadu, architectural forms and facades representing rural, merchant, religious and royal housing will be presented. The crafts, textiles and folk performing arts of Tamil Nadu

by A Special Correspondent

will be shown both contextually and as exhibitions in spaces which are appropriate for the patronage of these four groups.

Facades of traditional single and two storey rural and town homes with their gracious verandahs and traditional detailing lend themselves to being incorporated in the centre. A street projecting a well-to-do rural village ambience and a street reflecting merchant, palace, religious and agraharam town housing will be a part of the Tamil Nadu Centre. At the far

(Continued on P6)



Public areas in Dakshinachitra. (All photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

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NOTABLE BOOKS OF THE MONTH

- Abramson, Jeffrey. *We, The Jury: The Jury System and the Ideal of Democracy.* Basic Books, c1994. (347.73752 ABR)
- Eisenhart, Douglas M. *Publishing in the Information Age: A New Management Framework for the Digital Era.* Quorum Books, c1994. (070.5 EIS)
- Gardner, Gary T. *Nuclear Nonproliferation.* Lynne Rienner Publishers, c1994. (327.174 GAR)
- Feiler, Alan. *In Pursuit of Principle and Profit: Business Success Through Social Responsibility.* G.P. Putnam's Sons, c1994. (658.408 RED)

- Steinmetz, Sara. *Democratic Transition and Human Rights: Perspectives on U.S. Foreign Policy.* State University of New York Press, c1994. (323 STE)
- The Woman that I am: The Literature and Culture of Contemporary Women of Color.* Edited by D. Soyini Madson. St. Martin's Press, c1994. (810.99287 WOM)
- Women on the Verge: Seven Avant-Garde American Plays.* Edited by Rosette C. Lamont. Applause Theatre Books, Inc., c1993. (812.5408 WOM)
- A World Fit for People.* Edited by Uner Kirdar & Leonard Silk. New York University Press, c1994. (909.82 WOR)

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VENKAT

— cricket's most multi-faceted personality

(By R. Mohan)

One of the Rotary clubs in the city recently honoured Srinivasa-
raghavan Venkataraghavan. Such
recognition by an organisation with
social service objectives does not often
go to people who serve sport. But then
Venkat has served cricket in so many
different capacities for so many years
that his name had to come up for such
an honour.

Venkat was for years the State's
pre-eminent cricketer. He led the side
with the touch of a mandarin but such
authority was needed if anyone was
to draw some performance out of Tamil
Nadu's players. This is not to say
Venkat was universally popular as
skipper; he was an unforgiving task-
master.

His mental makeup was so tough
that he was, at least in that sense, a
unique Tamilian. While many other
cricketers were unable to translate their
promise and talent into performance
and secure a place in the national side,
Venkat had a pathbreaking career as
offspinner, utility bat and brilliant gully
fielder. His mental toughness carried
him far enough for him to earn 55 Test
caps and lead the nation in two World
Cups and in five Test matches, the last
four of them in one series in England.

His colleagues did not always under-
stand him. They could not relate to his
hard-as-steel temperament. It was his
tough qualities which actually carried
Venkat to an eminent position in the
state's and the nation's cricket. It is a
pity that few wished to emulate
Venkat's stern approach, which alone
might have given them some feeling of
permanence in the national team. It
was such a battle in those days to gain
national recognition.

Today, in his continuing association
with the game, he wears the white
coat. It is a role which suits him. He
was Secretary of the Tamil Nadu
Cricket Association and he could have
held that post longer if not for his
acceptance of his own failure with man-
agement and his inability, or
unwillingness, to cope with the increas-
ingly strange demands of the job. He
was somehow not cut out to follow the
trail which another eminent off spinner
before him, Ghulam Ahmed, blazed in
becoming Secretary of the Hyderabad
CA as well as that of the Board of
Control for Cricket in India.

He has this rage to do well in
whatever he attempts in the sporting
arenas. His golf handicap is down
considerably since he took to the game

and he could always play a decent
frame of snooker. And if he does not
do well, he vents his anger on himself,
just as he sometimes gnashed his teeth
if colleagues on his side did not do well.
Very few understood the depth of his
commitment to doing a fair job of
whatever he took on. Those who did
not, always had a grouse against him.

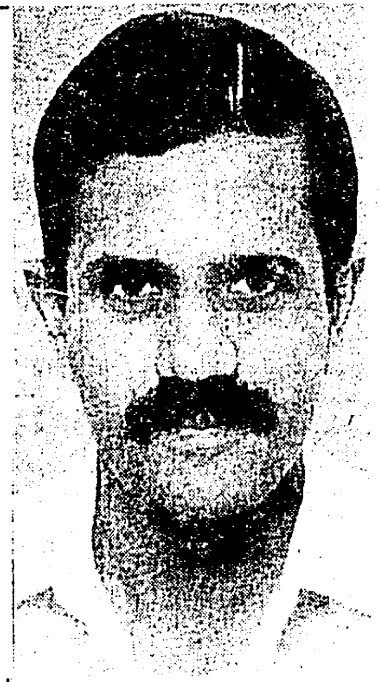
He has his critics. But I feel he has
achieved far more than what those who
misinterpret his approach to sport think.
There is one thing that none can take
away from him. His integrity. It is the
same quality which serves him so well
in his latest role as umpire on the
independent panel of the International
Cricket Council. He was a Match
Referee, too, before the ICC decided
that the functions of umpires and
referees are best carried out by different
people.

In days in which cricketers make
considerable fuss over umpiring, it is
nice to see many of them behave like
lambs when Venkat is standing over
the wicket. He passes his decisions with
a well-seated sense of authority and he
will be the last one to allow players any
liberties in the matter of cricketer-umpire
relations. The impression gained in the
year and more of compulsory postings
from the ICC's independent panel is that
Venkat's rating is very high, possibly
at the top itself. There are umpires with
the qualities of the showman, like
Dickie Bird and Steve Bucknor, who
have been built up by the media. Their
work has suffered as a consequence.
Venkat is the member of the panel who
has committed the least number of
errors and, hence, his rating by inter-
national captains is so high. His non-
sense approach to umpiring has
certainly earned him friends.

There will be a place for him in the
game's record books as the first Test
captain ever to stand as umpire in Tests.
There will also always be a place for
him in the hearts of his fellow members
at the Madras Cricket Club where they
have followed his fortunes and honours
over the years. There is not the least
doubt in his case that whatever he
achieved he achieved by the dint of his
own effort. — (Courtesy: *The
Clubman* of the Madras Cricket Club)



A great loss to motor racing



● S. Karivaradhan, 40, ace racing car driver and Formula car designer, died in an air crash five kilometres from Coimbatore, the city he put on the racing map of India with his sterling exploits at Sholavaram and Sriperumbudur. The training aircraft in which Karivaradhan was flying with Babu C. Mulk, an instructor from the Coimbatore Aviation Club, had crashed within twenty minutes of takeoff.

Racing cars had fascinated Karivaradhan — "Kari" to friends and followers of motor sport in India — from his childhood days. Born into affluent circumstances, Kari was able to

sources at his command to excel-
lent use in the designing of
Formula Maruti cars he made
and the Formula Renault he was
working on.

Karivaradhan was a role-
model for all those in love with
fast cars and daring deeds. His
followers in Coimbatore were
legion. A number of youngsters
were proud to call themselves his
disciples. In Madras, the
cricketer-turned international
race driver Akbar Ebrahim calls
him "my friend, my master".
Akbar's Armaan Racing Re-
search Foundation had been
involved in Kari's Formula
Renault project. Vicky Chandok,

• by A Special Correspondent

translate dream into reality. An
engineering graduate of the PSG
College of Technology, Coimbatore, he came into prominence as a motor racing driver in the Eighties. Scorching the Sholavaram tracks, Kari gave a tremendous fight to Bob Juggins in 1986. Earlier, Karivaradhan had made a heroic effort against the English competitors Crawford and Needel even though his machine was no match to the Britishers' cars. If this was a futile attempt on Kari's part, the Coimbatore man actually led Juggins before being edged out.

From driving racing cars to designing them was but a logical step for this gentle, unassuming industrialist with his training in mechanical engineering and fierce passion for the sport. Belonging to the famous family which owns the Lakshmi group of industries, Kari put the re-

for long Kari's associate in both racing and designing cars, is shattered. To him Kari was his best friend and a pioneer in his field. His quiet, self-effacing manner, his unceasing quest for excellence and designing skills were praised by all involved in motor rallying and racing.

Kari was the quintessential amateur sportsman, who competed with fierce determination and who was passionately devoted to his sport. His ambitions went beyond personal goals. Pride and a keen desire to provide inspiration to our youth were important driving forces behind his endeavours. Motor racing enthusiasts will readily acknowledge that Kari succeeded in his mission, judging by the number of young drivers who remember his guidance with gratitude. His death is indeed a tragic end to a brilliant career.

Naturalists' Corner



Portrait of a Lion-tailed Macaque by ROM WHITAKER (Courtesy: Madras Naturalists' Society.)

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ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. He was a Norwegian tourist, one of the five hostages held by the Al Faran militant outfit in Kashmir and killed by the his captors; 2. She was the Dalit girl, who suffered traumatic cataract, after her teacher 'allegedly' caned her for drinking from a water cup meant for 'upper caste' children. Her vision has since returned to normal and the teacher has been absolved of the charges; 3. Maninder Singh; 4. Maqbool Fida Hussain, the noted painter; 5. Jonathan Edwards, Inessa Kravets and Kim Batten respectively; 6. The dropping of the Atom Bomb; 7. G. Parthasarathy; 8. Sri Jayendra Saraswathi of Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt; 9. Dabhol; 10. Singapore; 11. Kamaraj; 12. Bhavani; 13. Karur Dheeran Chinnamalai Gounder District; 14. Bombay, Delhi ranks 8th; 15. N.T. Rama Rao; 16. Tolerance, Courtesy and National Integration; 17. He has been awarded the Ashok Chakra, the highest peace time gallantry award; 18. *Tippu Mahal*; 19. They were asked to eat chappatis laced with radioactive materials in an experiment to test radiation levels; 20. The practice of burying a child and taking it out to fulfill a vow.

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