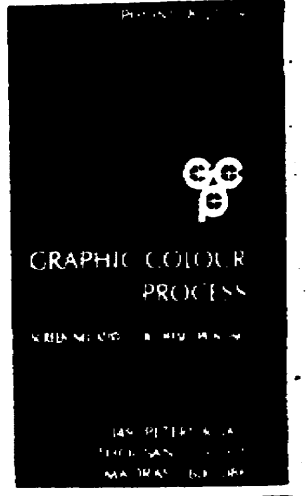


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Who wrote the article?

RAM, the stormy petrel of Madras journalism, whose battle to continue writing the Bofors scandal on the front page of The Hindu led to his moving to The Hindu to that much smaller publication Frontline, continues to live on. And in a story not much heard in Madras, Frontline has stirred up a hornets' nest by revealing that Prime Minister Narasimha Rao was the author of a controversial article on Rajiv Gandhi. No wonder Sonia Gandhi berated Rao at a recent function! A report on the controversy in The Telegraph, Calcutta, states:



N. RAM stirs up a hornets' nest

An anonymous anti-Rajiv Gandhi piece allegedly written by the Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, five years ago, has stirred a war of words between two high-profile editors, Ram of Frontline and Nikhil Chakravarty of Mainstream.

Originally published in the January 1990 issue of Mainstream, under the pen name 'Congressman', the 100-word article was reproduced in the latest issue of Frontline with one small change: Ram decided to reveal what Chakravarty had disguised well all these years. He put the Prime Minister's byline to the piece. Critical as it is of Rajiv Gandhi, the "masking" of the man behind the plume has come as an embarrassment to both Mr Rao and Chakravarty, who has been busy writing the Prime Minister. Ram has stuck to his position. "The piece was written by Mr Narasimha

Rao. Mr Chakravarty is only trying to conceal the identity of his old friend," he said.

The reproduction of the article under the Prime Minister's name comes at a time when a section in the ruling Congress(I) is already raising questions about Mr Rao's loyalty towards the Nehru-Gandhi family.

Mrs Sonia Gandhi has accused the government of going slow on the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case and critical comments by Mr Rao against Indira Gandhi have also appeared as part of the excerpts from his novel in the new weekly, Outlook. Given the background, it is understandable why the Frontline article has generated so much interest in political circles in New Delhi.

It is also understandable why Nikhil Chakravarty is so eager to deny any association between the article and the Prime Minister. Chakravarty is currently going through portions of the Prime Minister's yet-to-be-published novel.

The article, titled, "The Great Suicide", was written a few weeks after Rajiv Gandhi was thrown out in the general elections by the Janata Dal. It discussed in detail a number of controversial issues, including the Bofors deal, communalism, reservations, and the rich-poor chasm and passed an adverse judgment on Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister and leader of the Congress party.

Commenting on the scenario in the ruling party soon after Mr Pranab Mukherjee was thrown out of the Congress(I), the article said, "Thereafter Rajiv Gandhi was right — right all the way, whatever he said or did. So there were no limits any more to what he said or did... What he heard day in

(Continued on P5)



As Madras traffic becomes more and more chaotic, even Anna seems to be getting into the act, warning roadusers to pay heed to the 'Stop Before the Line' sign. But even those words from on high seem to have no effect on the thousands who every day break the road rules with impunity. (Photo: V S RAGHAVAN)

A stitch in time...

The textile industry in Tirupur, although a source of livelihood for thousands, is a major threat to the environment, warn two papers presented (by Gunnar Jacks and Anna Blomquist) at an inter-disciplinary seminar in Stockholm on the occasion of 25 years of collaboration between the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), Stockholm, and the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore. The focus of both papers was on water shortage, water contamination and the institutional aspects of water pollution control. The picture painted by the papers was bleak — not only was water in the town contaminated, but the water situation itself was precarious (quantitatively).

Although a large number of industrialists in Tirupur are aware of the harmful effects of water pollution, the issue has never been looked at with a sense of priority. A strong reason for this could be the lack of adequate environmental legislation and poor implementation of what there is by the State.

According to the Swedish study, various chemicals, like bleaching powder, sodium hydroxide, hydrochloric acid, sodium sulphide and benzene dyes, some of them carcinogenic, are used by the textile industry. Nearly 25gm/m² of sodium chloride

is brought as effluent every year into the Noyyal river, which flows close to Tirupur and on which the town's textile factories depend — and the textile industry is responsible for two-thirds of this.

Although efforts to set up common effluent treatment plants had started six years ago, nothing really has been achieved, due in a large measure to absence of support from the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. In fact,

• by A Special Correspondent

effluents from the Tirupur units are hardly treated, assert the papers.

Organic water pollution is not the only problem, note the papers. To ease the tremendous pressure on the town's groundwater, one paper has suggested the setting up of infrastructure to bring water from the Kaveri. At present, Tirupur industry meets its water requirement from wells situated in and around the town, water being brought in by tankers. However, with business booming, the 700-odd bleaching and dyeing units in Tirupur would need more and more water, creating a big problem not only for agriculture but residents in the town as well.

Why do importers of Tirupur hosiery and knitwear have to worry about water pollution control and water scarcity in the town? As long as their orders are met, they should be happy, or so it would seem. But the answer perhaps lies in a significant observation made in the concluding portion of Jacks' paper which reads "...even the customers, the buyers of products in countries like Sweden, have a responsibility... the responses to the wishes of foreign markets are rapid..."

As customers abroad are getting aware of, and more interested in, the effects of pollution (choosing to buy products with less damaging manufacturing methods), the onus is on the textile industry in Tirupur to produce environment-friendly garments by using less toxic dyes and other chemicals. Jacks cited the example of the paper industry in Sweden which, bowing to public pressure, had to switch to new bleaching methods (when the negative effects, of bleaching agents used by the paper and pulp industry, on the Baltic Sea fauna were made public).

The clamour for environment-friendly products, both in India and abroad, is likely to grow in the next few years and customers would happily reject products which do not adhere to international safety norms, he warns. We should heed the warning before it is too late.



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Where could Prabhakaran be?

As these lines are written, no one has yet claimed the massive, multimillion rupee reward offered by the Sri Lanka Government for information leading to the capture of the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Velupillai Prabhakaran. But the offer has certainly fuelled speculation on where this will-o'-the-wisp, this 20th Century Scarlet Pimpernel, could be?

The *Man From Madras Musings* is inclined to believe that he is in the Vanni jungles, which stretch from north of Vavuniya to just south of Kilinochchi, a 50 km by 50 km area that was once elephant country but which, after they were shot up, still remains pretty rugged and impenetrable jungle whose trails few know. Historically, it was this barrier, which once stretched to the east and west coasts, that prevented Tamil conquest of the Sinhala South and Sinhala conquest of the Tamil North. Opening up of the coastal areas in British times and roads through the jungle have made access between northern and southern Sri Lanka easier, but in the north-central part of the island, the Vanni, if you get off the roads you are in the jungle that Prabhakaran would have by now made his home.

It was from this hide-out that he and his Tigers waged the guerrilla war they became famous for against the 130,000-strong Indian Peace Keeping Force. As one Sri Lankan Tamil commentator says, "If the 130,000 -strong IPKF couldn't get Thambi and the boys, how can 20,000 or 30,000 Sri Lankan troops find him?" No, Sri Lanka is in for a long period of being mauled by a Tiger that'll hit and run at will, this commentator is inclined to think, feelings that *MMM* echoes.

Sri Lankan view

Visitors from Sri Lanka tell *The Man From Madras Musings* that the Sri Lankan Army too

doesn't think it can succeed in penetrating the Vanni jungle and capture Prabhakaran, leave alone flush him and his Tigers out. They don't think they have the manpower or the friends on the ground necessary for such an operation that would be bound to take a heavy toll of the attack force.

The IPKF, however, could have done it, *MMM* has heard from these visitors. Quoting friends in the Sri Lankan Army, they even say the IPKF had information from India's Research and Analysis Wing on the exact whereabouts of Prabhakaran in the Vanni jungle, but were prevented from acting on it by the Indian Government's reading of the local situation. India — on the analysis by RAW — thought President Premadasa would not give sufficient autonomy to the North and East of Sri Lanka if the Tigers were wiped out. This, *MMM* was told, was the feeling even after Premadasa made his peace with Prabhakaran and gave him arms to fight the IPKF. The President felt, according to these theories, that a well-armed Prabhakaran would take on the IPKF head-on (as he unwisely recently took on the Sri Lankan Army) and the Tigers would get decimated, as he hoped, in the process. RAW, concerned about these possibilities, it is alleged, did not want Prabhakaran captured and got India to back this view.

Whatever the truth of all these theories and rumours, *MMM* rather thinks that a defeated Prabhakaran might give Sinhala chauvinists the opportunity to put pressure on President Chandrika Kumaratunga and get her to water down, even withdraw, her very reasonable offer of a union of Sri Lankan provinces. This happened to her father, when a J R Jayawardene-led United National Party march got him to withdraw much less generous concessions. Later, the Sri Lankan Freedom Party her father had founded, did something similar when the UNP offered concessions. Realpolitik, religion and racial chauvinism could all bring tremendous pressure to bear on President Kumaratunga if the Sinhala-Buddhist diehards feel Prabhakaran and his Tigers are no longer a threat.

In these circumstances, Tigers on the prowl in the Vanni jungles until a settlement is beaten out could do much for the Tamils getting a fairer deal, *MMM* is inclined to think. For he also thinks that Chandrika Kumaratunga is not only the best hope of the Tamils but is also

their LAST hope. Which is why he would like to see parties in Tamil Nadu give her a fairer deal and a helping hand rather than stir the muddied waters further.

Geniuses in trouble

One of the first publications in India to take note of the Ambati genius was *Madras Musings*. Which is why *The Man From Madras Musings* is rather distressed over the trouble the family find themselves in. But whatever the truth of the matter — and the courts will decide in a few weeks on that — reports of the family's behaviour in court and of their attitude to the Indian legal process have not shown the family in a particularly good light. There seems to be a rather unfortunate tinge of arrogance in it all.

But could those reports also be biased, *The Man From Madras Musings* has been

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

wondering after reading two different versions of the proceedings on the day the Ambatis were granted conditional bail. In *The Hindu*, the story ends with the Additional Sessions Judge asking the Ambatis to surrender their passports to the court and their counsel seeking time. In the *Express*, the story continues.

The judge not only refused the one-week time they asked for to get their passports (the passports are on their way!), but told them that they would have to remain in judicial custody till the passports were surrendered. "You just can't do things the way you want..." he is reported as having said. Whereupon elder brother Jayakrishna Ambati IMMEDIATELY produced their passports — for which a fax had been sent, according to their counsel only a few minutes earlier!

Now *MMM* does not know which report is true, but if the *Express* version is correct, *The Hindu* should be ashamed that it left out the pertinent facts detailed above. These facts not only show the Ambatis in poor light, but raise questions about what they intended to do during the week they wanted for suspension of passports, a week during which they also wanted to be free on a mere \$6000 bail for the four of them! On the other hand, if the *Express* report was wrong, the paper would deserve the severest punishment. But now, days later, with no rebuttal of its report, it would seem the *Express* did complete the story of the proceedings in court and *The Hindu* did not. A sad day for both *The Hindu* and the Ambatis.

In brief

* The richest country in the world is broke! So broke that it not only had to shut down government for several days — and ask thousands of employees to take a holiday — but it has had to, even before this, take a decision to curb even paltry expenditures in a place like Madras. Take note of this letter *The Man From Madras Musings* received. It said in part: "For many years the U.S. Information Service (USIS) in Madras has been sending its important

patrons a monthly Calendar of Events, announcing American Center programs both in and outside Madras. Unfortunately, a reduced budget and mandated changes in resource allocation have forced us to discontinue this traditional publication. Similarly the American Center will also cease its weekly screenings of American movies..." *MMM* wonders whether it was "mandated changes in resource allocation" or some other reason which prevented the USIS from participating in the recent film festival on architecture, conservation and sundry building-oriented subjects. The British, French, Germans and Russians were there. We missed you, USA.

* Travelling by car is likely to become more pleasurable in Tamil Nadu from April 1996. Or, at least, that's what *The Man From Madras Musings* hopes

when Iggi Highway Motels opens ten international standard motels by then in the State and five more a year later. The locations for them are Sriperumbudur, Kaveripakkam, Kayattar, Kallidurg, Vinnamangalam, Dindigul, Namakkal, Sankargiri, Topur, Hosur, Tiruchirappalli, Ulundurpet, Tindivanam, Avinashi and Paramakudi. Others will follow. *MMM* does not know whether it is because of this anticipated competition or not, but Tamil Nadu Tourism's Ulundurpet motel has been getting a facelift!

* There seems to be a boom in amusement parks around Madras these days. *The Man From Madras Musings* has taken note of VGP Golden Beach, Little Folks and MGM Dizee World, all on the way to Mamallapuram, and Kishikinta and Mehta Water World in the southwest (the former near Tambaram, the latter near Sriperumbudur).

Except for the first-named, they all cost a pretty paisa if you take several children, but they're nevertheless drawing fair crowds. Obviously pleased with attendance, Little Folks is taking another major step, *MMM* hears. By April next year, it hopes to have in place, across the road from it, India's first dolphinarium, and this new amusement park — Folks Land — will have regular dolphin and sealion shows. There will be a viewing gallery for 700 persons. Who says TV is keeping people home! Obviously not the promoters of all these fun worlds, who think children from 6 to 60 want to get out and enjoy themselves.

* Despite a leprosy vaccine developed by the WHO having shown less than satisfactory results in Venezuela, it is reported that the Indian Council for Medical Research has been trying it out on patients in Chengalpattu. And this when there are cheaper indigenous products available, alleges Farah Baria in *The Sunday Observer*, Bombay, after an interview with Dr Arun Bal, Chairman of the Association for Consumers Action on Safety and Health. Isn't that par for the course, wonders *MMM*, seeing that there are no fixed codes or strict laws

governing the trial of medicine on patients in India.

Business briefs

* To the City's 900 five-star rooms, almost an equal number are likely to be added by 1997. *The Man From Madras Musings* understands. This includes 300 rooms from the Balaji Oberoi, 180 rooms from the Holiday Inn at Kathipara Junction, the 150 rooms from a Welcomgroup hotel to come up in the Gemini Parsn complex and about the same number of rooms from the scheduled Meridien (Mount Road, opposite SPIC) and the Empee Group's hotel near the airport. Also getting set for an upmarket hotel boom is Coimbatore — which *India Today* sees as one of India's boom cities of tomorrow. Scheduled to come up here in the next year are Gemini Spark, Poppy Spark, Coimbatore Cheran Towers and a Coimbatore clone of Madras's Residency.

* Just when *The Man From Madras Musings* had resigned himself to all building promoters wanting to build highrise, there came welcome news that there is at least one promoter getting ready to bring back 'garden houses'. They may not be as ample-spaced as the 'garden houses' Madras was famed for in the past, but with 1500 of them located on about 200 acres of land, there'll be a fair amount of elbow room in the gardens. *MMM* is sure. MAC Industries are teaming on the project with two Singapore firms and the new company, MAC Towns Ltd., is expected to start marketing from April 1996.

* Fruits, vegetables and flowers are becoming a growing export in India. But *The Man From Madras Musings* had not heard till recently that dried flowers, leaves and twigs also had great export potential. In fact, *MMM* understands there is a Rs. 500 crore world market for dried plant and tree produce and it's a growing market. One of the major Indian exporters helping to meet the international demand for these accessories for bouquets, wreaths and flower arrangements is Manju Singhvi and her husband Mahendra Raj whose Tuticorin-based business exported Rs. 13 crore of such material last year. Their Singhvi International is now investing Rs. 2 crore in setting up a factory in Tuticorin to add value to their exports. The factory will colour and bleach dry flora and make bouquets with the output. They are also planning to import exotic plants from abroad, grow them in the Nilgiris and dry them produce for the international market. Meanwhile, several big players, the Essar Group, whose roots are in Madras, and the SPIC-MAC Group among them, are getting into floriculture, *MMM* understands. Roses, carnations, anthuriums, orchids, ornamental plants are all being looked at for cultivation and export, as well as to meet the demands of the burgeoning home market. An indication of the flower demand in India is the Madras market itself, where there are today 140 florists compared to the SIX in 1985 — and all of them reporting sales going up by leaps and bounds every year. *MMM*

A Traveller's Tales

Getting 'the works', but not in slums

During the last monsoon, I made my first acquaintance with India courtesy of the Rajiv Gandhi foundation, and though many of my early views were partially obscured by the warm waterfall of monsoon rain, I think I saw India at its greenest and most luxuriant, though not, I hasten to add, through rose-tinted spectacles. I can hardly be described as an authority on the place after a few weeks, but some of my impressions of India, and Madras in particular, might still be of interest to you if you are at all curious about those absurd Westerners who are forever photographing commonplace scenes and seem so astonished by everyday life. "Why photograph that?" was asked from time to time. Well, Indian visitors to Britain behave differently: one Indian friend showed me his photographs of English motorway signs and terraced houses!

I was visiting India on one of the Rajiv Gandhi Travelling Scholarships. These enable students from the UK to visit India for research purposes. I was investigating the decline of the European commercial community after Independence and this enabled me to see more facets of India than many of the tourists trooping dutifully round the Taj or tugging in righteous indignation at the slums of Howrah popularised, if that is the word, by *City of Joy*. Regrettably, most Westerners expect two things of India: magnificent architecture and grinding poverty, side by side. They generally

find what they expect, and look no further. The stereotyping is mutual, and I should make it plain that white skin confers neither riches nor excessive wantonness, as a number of Indians I conversed with seemed to expect. Anyway, most travellers' perceptions of India remain limited: their primary contact is with other travellers, and the locals they meet tend to be rickshaw drivers, souvenir sellers and beggars. Naturally they become jaded.

I think Madras is relatively fortunate as far as all these groups are concerned.

TIM BRYARS

Firstly, the rickshaws seem clean and modern, their drivers are uniformed and name-tagged, and an above average proportion can be prevailed upon to use the meter — after patient negotiation. In New Delhi, scooters won't carry a foreigner for local rates (unless he happens to be accompanied by a government official) and in Calcutta you are hauled by hand, which is hardly faster than walking. And anyway it made me feel so uncomfortable that I only hired them in the floods to avoid falling down open manholes.

Secondly, Madras is mercifully free of people trying to drag you into shops and sell you things, unlike Mahabalipuram, where I met the most persistent and optimistic traders. Cycling out to Tiger Cave one day I

encountered a gentleman cycling in the opposite direction. Before he whizzed past he had time to pull out a garland of yellow flowers and call out 'Good price!' It seemed perfectly obvious to most hawkers that every foreigner needs a *papier mache* egg cup, a carved sea shell or a stone cow, and somehow these things found their way into my luggage, but I drew the line at tigers' teeth and claws, taking the first opportunity to give details of the offender to a conservation group.

As regards beggars, Madras was the one place where I saw cripples weaving in and out of traffic at the lights, on trolleys, tugging at the knees of rickshaw passengers. But in other parts of India, a simple process like walking down a street seems designed to wear you down. Children actually clung to my trousers, or folded their arms around an ankle so that they were dragged along with me, and if their initial screams for charity went unheeded they began to wail. Throughout, there was a chorus of other voices: 'You want taxi? You want rickshaw? You want meal? You want room? You want guide? You want woman? You want hash? You want stone cow? Battery operated sparking yoyo?' As a lone Western male I got the works.

An unlikely place to avoid all this, I found, was the slums. All a visitor had to do, I found, was step off the main thoroughfares and children were genuinely excited at seeing you. They

Fast train to the future

Our Readers Write

its survival and better viability. But taking the future into consideration, it not only needs to be extended upto Taramani but as below:

- Taramani to Manallapuram to Chengalpattu.
- Taramani to Chengalpattu via Velachery, Madipakkam and Selayur suburbs.
- The already planned and published Inner Corridor Railway linking Taramani to Velachery, Guindy, KK Nagar/Ashok Nagar, etc.

The feasibility of linking the MRTS line with the existing Tambaram-Beach line and the suburban line at Madras Central (at Park Station) through the canal way running through Central Station, Poonamallee High Road and Central Jail should also be seriously considered. If implemented, this would also prove to be a great boon to citizens.

This, in fact, should be the ideal Vision 2000. With elections round the corner, the to-be-elected representatives should collectively make this their one-point agenda and fight for its immediate approval by the Planning Commission with necessary financial sanctions. This single project alone would go a long way in de-congesting the city and making Madras a greater, grander and de-congested 'Nalla' Madras.

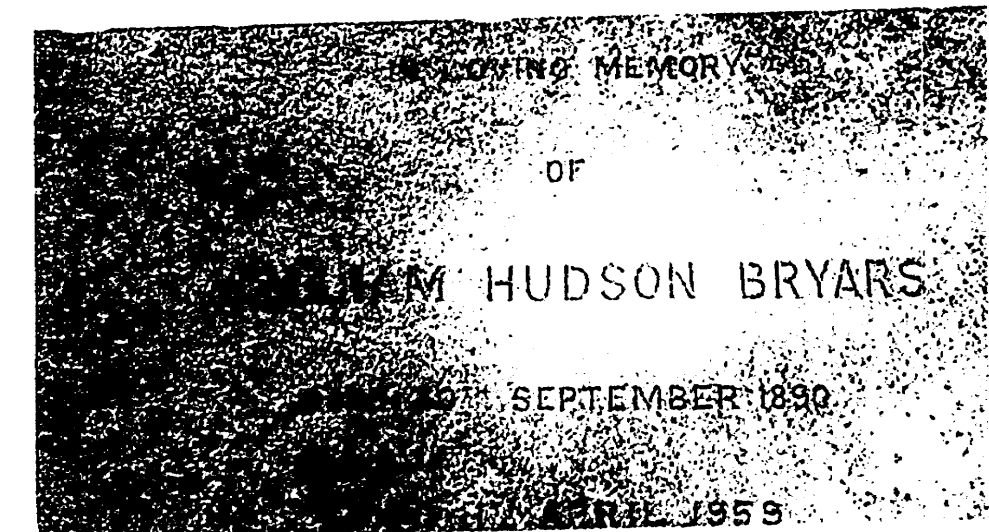
Here is the way. If there is a will, it will happen!

S. Maheish
Madras 600 086

The green look

We thank you for your report (*MM*, November 1) and the accolades for our beautiful ground. We also appreciate your constructive criticism contained therein regarding the hoardings.

I am a former Ranji Trophy cricketer, a Ranji umpire and a former State Selector. I resigned from the Tamil Nadu Ranji Selection Committee last year on a matter of principle. While a player, I, along with thousands of other cricketers, struggled for want of proper facilities and financial support. Things have changed quite a lot over the years and big companies have come forward to sponsor sport. With the advent of live coverage on television, the sports arena has become a world of advertisements which is luring even multinational companies to pour millions of dollars into sponsorship. It is also a *quid pro quo* situation the world over and, hence, no company spends money on sponsorship without getting back something out of the same for themselves. That is the reason for the numerous hoardings which are put up all round the stadia in any part of the world while a major sports event is in progress. Even the players themselves are now wearing logos on their



The tombstone of William Hudson Bryars (1890-1959) in the cemetery of St. George's Cathedral. (Photos: RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

wanted to pose for the camera, they wanted to show off their homemade cricket bats, they wanted to talk about Mike Artherton, captain of the England team. If they became too excited, adults chided them or shooed them away. No one begged!

Growth is as much a characteristic of modern India as poverty. Through my research work I visited clubs, offices and private homes, and I ought to be as aware of that as anybody. My threefold excuse for dwelling so long on the seedier side of life is that most travellers are not so fortunate as to be welcomed into such a diversity of places, that my space is limited, and that I risk causing embarrassment if I discuss Madras in any but the most general terms.

I was predisposed to like Madras. My great-uncle liked it so much that he never returned to the U.K., even on leave. He left London for India in 1914 because he missed out on a pay

rise, and for much of his life managed the pharmaceutical department of Spencer's in Madras. After Independence, things joggled on as they always had, and though he retired in the mid-1950s, he remained in Madras until his death in 1959. One of the first things I did in Madras was find his grave in the grounds of St George's Cathedral. Our names are almost identical: I am Timothy William Hudson Bryars, he was William Hudson Bryars. It was almost indescribably eerie watching the gardeners sweep away the vegetation from a simple stone slab on the other side of the world and rub brick dust into the inscription to reveal a name rather too similar to my own.

I didn't have the grave thoroughly cleaned. It seemed wrong somehow to give it preferential treatment just because I was there. If it had needed restoration I would have done something, but under a protective coating of decaying leaves it seemed well enough preserved. Better than many others. Most of the occupants of the cemetery were British, with very British names. It was peculiar how British the whole place was, apart from the odd palm, or woman shimmering past in vibrant red saree. The tombs themselves would not look exceptional in my parish churchyard, unlike those in South Park Street Cemetery in Calcutta where, at the end of the 18th Century, the British had themselves buried under colossal pyramids.

The cathedral itself was delightful; well-maintained with a fine neoclassical facade, and inside crammed with memorials to soldiers and churchmen. The fans were a novel touch, and the high doors swung open to allow a breeze through the nave in a way seldom necessary in Britain, where the main problem in stone churches is the cold, but I felt surprisingly at home. The minister greeted me most warmly; he came rushing to his door when he learned of my arrival, still hastily fastening the last buttons on his white cassock, and blessed me and my enterprise, which was most thoughtful of him. The following day I was blessed by a Hindu priest in Kapaleswarar temple. I was surprised and delighted at this display of tolerance, and hope that Indian communities extend it as readily to each other as they did to me.

Robini Krishnan
T 47A, Vilth Avenue
Besant Nagar
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(To be concluded next fortnight)

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WELLS, H G	The first man in the moon

Stored in images from the South

Beyond the Vindhyas, as the Eastern Ghats winds its erratic path along the coast, it spits up huge clumps of sun-baked, rainhoned rock. Not tractable material for sculpting. But around 600 AD, the expanding empire of the Pallavas chose this unyielding granite to engrave its story for posterity.

And this choice of Mahendra Varman (630 AD), adopted and passed down through generations of emperors in South India, has resulted in exquisitely sculpted images that are increasingly becoming the craze of collectors across the globe. Though their price on the international market is yet to reach the astounding heights of the delicately cast South Indian bronzes (the last Sotheby's auction in India has catalogued one metal statuette at an

eclipse at the hands of Muslim invaders, though some regions of the northern Deccan were occupied in the 13th century. In many parts of the far south, therefore, there are temples which have remained in worship down to the present day."

This book also explains that "unified temples" formed the core of South Indian villages, with the Brahmins living closer to the temples along the *sannathi* streets reserved for the temple's caretakers, while the rectangular streets, running parallel to these were occupied by the non-Brahmins. This religiously spatial arrangement in the South has continued the tradition of safeguarding the place of worship to present times. As a result of which temple thieves find it difficult even today to spirit away these priceless sculptures as easily as they do in North India.

Basham's book, tracing the evolution of the Pallava sculptures, notes that "Pallava sculpture, descended no doubt from that at Buddhist Amaravati, is notable for its restrained elegance. Its carvers produced a number of mythological relief carvings in caves and on rock-faces." The exquisitely sculpted *Arjuna's Penance* (though a misnomer) at Mamallapuram is among their most celebrated achievements, where the skeletal frame of a fasting sage, his ribs showing through his hunger-racked body, is surrounded by a horde of other figures, which include deer and elephants, on a huge cliff face.

It is amazing to think how these dedicated sculptors could create, from obdurate stone, human-like figures. And it is the fine details and workmanship of these sculptures that account for their skyhigh price.

(By SHAMEEM AKHTAR in *The Telegraph*, Calcutta)

amazing Rs. 50 lakh), their scarcity in the floating collectors' market makes their acquisition extremely attractive.

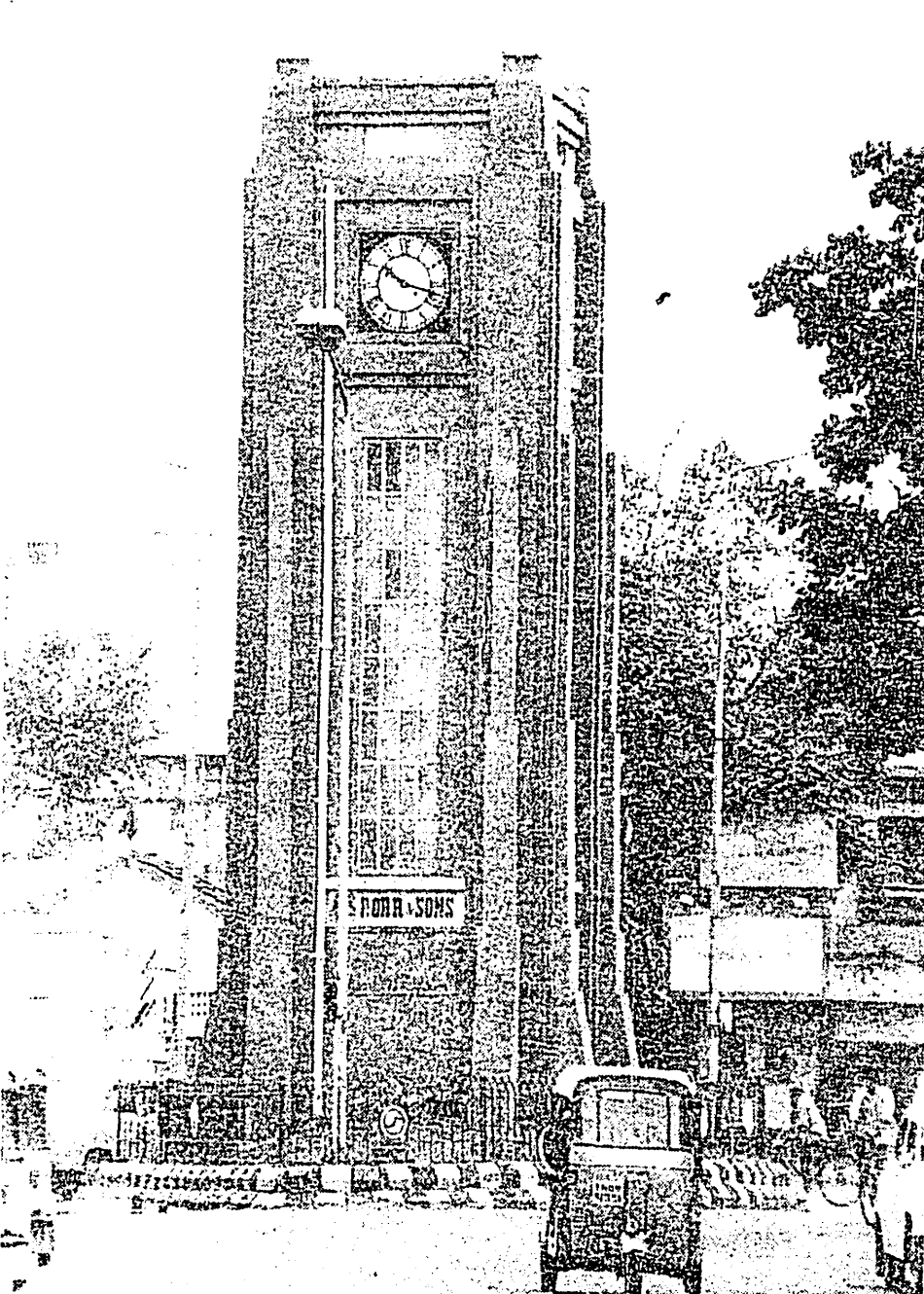
A few months ago, the Tamil Nadu police busted a racket which has enabled a group of people (some of them fairly prominent) to smuggle about 40 statues out of the country. Fifteen of those pieces were removed from temples in Pudukkottai. Statuary from Thanjavur and Nellore Kattabomman Districts have already been sold to eager collectors in America. The Archaeological Survey of India's office in Bombay, which helps the Customs with clearance on such precious consignments, denied any involvement.

Tamil Nadu government has started a 1000-strong police team (aided by 3,000 ex-servicemen) to combat art thefts since petty temple thieves were increasingly being hired by agents to steal precious relics from the shrines of Tamil Nadu. Should it be necessary, the government is also ready to fight the case in the US courts as none of the recently-stolen pieces has been recovered so far.

However, Haridas Swali, one of the best-known art collectors of Bombay, points out the futility of such international legal disputes. Swali worries that the determination to retrieve the stone sculptures from the US may cost the Tamil Nadu Government more than what the statues may actually be worth.

Well-known Bombay historian Foy Nissen feels that the craze for South Indian sculptures may be linked to their scarcity in the collectors' market. "South Indian temples are even today live," he says. "These ancient temples are visited by worshippers daily so that stealing the stone gods and goddesses from them becomes so much more difficult. This may make their acquisition so much more attractive today."

A book named *Early Art and Architecture: Cultural History of India*, edited by A. E. Basham, reiterates this: "In South India, as in Orissa, artistic traditions as a whole did not suffer total



THE OLD...

...& THE NEW

The famous P. Orr & Sons' clock tower in our OLD, was once connected to the Madras Observatory and signalled Indian Standard Time to the busy commercial quarter of Madras that is Mount Road. Today, not only is the clock NOT connected with the Observatory, but litigation that has been going for several years over possession has led to the restoration of the P.O. showroom, once a showpiece in Madras. NOT being carried out. Peter Orr, an engineer, founded the firm in 1849 and his Robert Chisholm design the showroom which opened for business in 1875. The 60 feet by 30 feet showroom was once "a veritable art gallery", being stocked with a glittering array of silver and jewellery, watches and clocks from all over the world to cater to the demands of British nobility and Indian royalty.

While the present owners of P. Orr's do not seem to be paying too much attention to what was once the Company's pride, they have got around, instead, to lavishing their care on another landmark with which they have long been associated. That is the clock tower at the White's Road junction, which they have maintained for long. Now, making it our NEW, they have refurbished the whole tower and it is the cynosure of all eyes passing through the junction. (Photos: THE OLD - SUSHHEELA NAIR; THE NEW: V S RAGHAVAN.)

Charisma in the Court

He was a glamorous figure in the unglamorous world of law and lawyers. A fabulously successful barrister, V. L. Elthiraj's track record as a practitioner of criminal law is almost unparalleled in Indian legal history.

But Elthiraj was no legal genius. He was not a fiery cross-examiner. Nor was he capable of brilliant peroration. Yet, his success was remarkable, baffling many. The secret of his phenomenal success was his capacity to study and understand the presiding judge, his attitudes, strong points and chinks in his armour. While busy lawyers of his calibre retired to their chambers as soon as their work was over, Elthiraj would remain in court, silently watching, observing, and sizing up the judge! He shaped his arguments and presentation to suit each presiding judge. He was a master at this. And, of course, he had charisma. Loads of it. Anyone in his presence was at once drawn to him.

Vellore Lakshmanaswami Elthiraj was born on July 18, 1890, in Vellore. His father was a headmason, a *maistry*, whose monthly income rarely exceeded Rs. 25. However, his fortunes began to soar after the birth of his son. Soon, Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar became a prosperous building contractor.

Elthiraj was, however, a disappointment in other ways. He was a poor student. Nevertheless, he came to Madras and joined Presidency College, but was unable to cope with his studies. He sought the services of a private tutor and agreed to pay him Rs. 10 a month. The tutor was to become a great philosopher, a knight and President of India. He was Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan!

In spite of all the tuition, Elthiraj could not graduate in Madras. So he sailed to England to study law and qualify himself as a Barrister. There he fell in love with a British woman, Katherine (Kitty, for short), and married her. However, when he returned home, he left his wife behind fearing problems at home. As expected there were! His sister filed suit for breach of promise in the Madras High Court, accusing Elthiraj of not marrying her daughter! Another legendary figure of the Madras High Court, Nugent Grant, appeared for Elthiraj and won the case. The promise of marriage was held illegal as it was against public policy.

Elthiraj's enrolment was quite dramatic. November 23, 1913... The new entrant to the Madras Bar paced the corridors anxiously outside the Chief Justice's Court. According to legal convention, a senior lawyer formally requests the Chief Justice to enrol the new entrant, after which the budding lawyer signs the Court Register. On this occasion, the noted British barrister, Chamier (after whom the road is named), under whom Elthiraj was an apprentice, could not reach the court from his home in Adyar because his car had broken down. Obviously aware of the moods of his automobile, Chamier always had a bicycle in his car to help him when in distress. However, on this morning, the cycle too struck work!

Meanwhile, in the Chief Justice's Court, another one of the leaders of the Madras Bar, also a Barrister, Dr. S. Swaminathan (father of the noted lawyer of today, S. Govind

Swaminathan) awaited the arrival of his apprentice whom he hoped to enrol that day. But there was no sign of him. The two corridor-pacers met, and Dr Swaminathan moved the enrolment of V. L. Elthiraj. Impressed by his personality, Swaminathan took him to dinner and asked the new lawyer to work as his junior.



V. L. ELTHIRAJ

Very lucky; but also very able
(Photo: RAGAMI)

Elthiraj found the going tough after his enrolment. He became the proverbial, briefless, beardless Barrister! That was a period when the legal profession in Madras was dominated by brilliant British barristers and Mylapore Brahmin lawyers. Elthiraj wondered whether he had chosen the wrong profession! Then he had a flash of inspiration. Mylapore lawyers did not much bother with criminal cases, for practising criminal law was considered *infra dig*. So Elthiraj made up his mind to become a criminal lawyer, where there was not much competition.

Destiny smiled on Elthiraj when, as a junior under J. C. Adam, he was blessed with the opportunity of conducting the prosecution case in the sensational and still talked about 'Coimbatore Photographer Murder Case' in which a playboy zamindar was

accused of murdering a young Christian woman because she did not yield to him.

When Adam suddenly took ill and had to be rushed to Madras and Osborne who was appointed in his place could not leave Madras immediately, Elthiraj, hardly seven years at the Bar, was requested to take on one of the giants of the Madras Criminal Bar, R. Satagopachariar, an intimate friend of the legendary Ardley Norton. Junior lawyers rarely get such opportunities in life and it was the good fortune of Elthiraj. 'V.L.', it would be said, stood for 'very lucky!'

Elthiraj, from here on in, made his way in the profession slowly but steadily. When he received a fee of Rs. 2500, a small fortune in those days, in a murder case, he invested it in his first automobile, a Saxon, the first of his many luxury cars. In time, Elthiraj, owned six expensive cars, including a *Rolls Royce*, *Cadillac* and *Bentley*. He would park five of them in the garage of his spacious bungalow in Victoria Crescent and the sixth under the portico. In later years he would drive at slow speed along the Marina, often accompanied by an attractive young woman. Many waited on the beach road to watch him pass by!

During the early 1920's Mr Justice Ayling was eager to appoint Elthiraj as the Crown Prosecutor of the High Court. (Before the mid-1950's, criminal cases arising within the limits of Madras city were tried by a High Court Judge under the Original Side Criminal Session Division with a jury of nine persons.) However, Ayling did not succeed and an utterly disappointed and heartbroken Elthiraj cried like a baby for several days and thought that he should quit the profession! Deeply religious and with immense faith in God, Elthiraj consoled himself with the thought that, perhaps, destiny had better plans for him.

They made OUR Madras
A walk down Memory Lane
with
RANDOR GUY

• Many men and women contributed to the unforgettable Madras that existed in the first half of this century. Statesmen ... lawyers ... judges ... doctors ... writers ... journalists ... musicians ... film personalities ... theatre-devotees ... performing artists ... social workers ... educationists ... Indians ... British ... All of them did their bit to make Madras the grand

city it was before the second half of the century began. In this series, you will meet many of them, the men and women who have earned their place in the history of Madras between 1900 and 1950. Come, take a walk down Madras memory lane with me and let us remember their contributions.

R.G.

As he built up a steady reputation not only as a successful criminal lawyer but also as a fair presenter of his cases, recognition of his merit came when he was appointed the Public Prosecutor of the Madras High Court in 1937, the first Indian to occupy this high office in the Presidency.

Normally, most prosecutors of the time were inclined to get a conviction by any means. Elthiraj was a happy exception. "I am only a prosecutor, and not a persecutor", he often remarked.

He was appointed Special Public Prosecutor to conduct the sensational Emmanuel Murder Case in Pudukkottai in which the charismatic leader Muthuramalinga Thevar was one of the accused. There was tension around the courthouse and critics of the Congress Government then in power felt the case was sheer political vendetta. As soon as Elthiraj appeared in court, he requested the presiding judge to permit Muthuramalinga Thevar to be seated in the dock, a gesture not extended to him earlier. Thevar's supporters cheered Elthiraj in open court! In stating his case, Elthiraj showed his spirit when he submitted that there was no case against Thevar. When the mass leader was acquitted, Elthiraj's stock zoomed sky-high!

One of Elthiraj's close friends was R. M. Statham, then the chief of the Madras provincial education

department. Over breakfast, one day, Statham asked Elthiraj why he did not found a college for women. His host responded at once, announcing a donation of a million rupees! That was how Elthiraj College was born! Later, in his will, he gave another five million rupees to the college!

Even though Elthiraj lived a Western lifestyle, he was deeply religious and performed pujas daily. He neither smoked nor drank and avoided sweets like poison. He never used toothpaste or a toothbrush; all his life he used a neem twig and neem-paste. He was fond of coffee which he loved to make himself.

Many are not aware that Elthiraj was a Carnatic music buff and an ardent fan of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, Musin Subramania Iyer and M. M. Dandapani Desikar. He loved to dress in *veshti*, *jibba* and *angavasthrum* and attend Carnatic music concerts.

He believed in *rahukalam* and never did anything during those hours! He would never travel on Prathamai, Ashtami and Navami days. And he hated travelling by air.

V. L. Elthiraj was a colourful person, an unforgettable lawyer, and a man of charm and charisma, the likes of whom one may not see again in the courts of Madras.

The puzzle that is the NSE

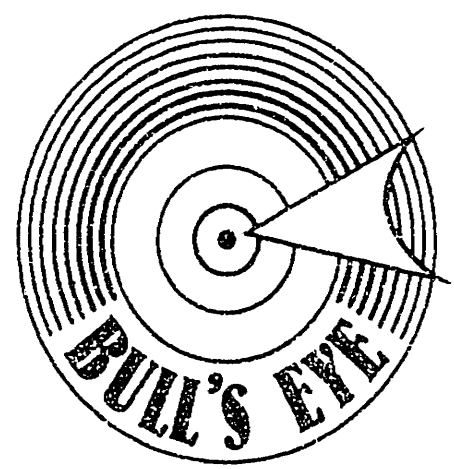
When the late Mr Pherwani first put forward the idea of a National Stock Exchange (NSE), he evoked only a mixed response. The brokers connected to the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and other major Regional Stock Exchanges vehemently opposed the idea, maintaining that an entity like the NSE would create unwanted problems and if the authorities would extend to BSE similar support the investors' cause would be greatly helped.

However, the idea had the full and enthusiastic backing of Dr Manmohan Singh and, thus, the concept of a National Stock Market System was born. The original charter restricted the NSE to deal only in Debt and Money Market instruments, though Pherwani had said that the Exchange could also take care of thinly traded equities and small and medium-sized companies. The last two were to be added at a later stage if found to be necessary.

The opposite has happened. With the debt market yet to catch fire, equities have been the major source of income at the NSE. In fact, the NSE has just caught up with the BSE in terms of turnover of trades and that too with just a part of the scrips traded. As of October 25, 1995, there were 340

listed securities at the NSE and 1450 traded scrips.

What about the debt segment which, admittedly, was the sole aim for starting NSE. Sad to say, the debt market has not really taken off. The Exchange is authorised to deal in Debt, short-term money market instruments,



equity, bills and bonds. Even when NSE was at the conceptual stages, critics had pointed out that there already existed an Exchange, the OTCEI, which also had debt and money markets in its purview. But, today, it is clear that the OTCEI has been a miserable failure. This could be due to the fact that while brokers/members have to pay out a hefty amount to set up the necessary infrastructure, the restriction on listed scrips' capital has effectively

marginalised it. Also, the OTCEI, with its spread out system, attracts the small investors, for whom it is designed, but who do not want to enter the debt or money segments.

The segments are largely mysterious to the lay investor who is yet to understand the profit-making (method and) opportunities that exist.

In the case of the NSE, apart from similar factors, it has been hit by what is known as the 'Telephone market'. The system has aimed for and does provide transparent operations. But public sector banks and financial institutions are still habituated to the old ways and as there are only a small number of players a seasoned dealer knows exactly whom to approach for what. To make things worse, the banking system is awash with Rs 29,000 cr of excess government paper, though trading is still quite low. Reports indicate that almost 40 per cent of the trades on the NSE have been negotiated deals. That is to say, two dealers strike a deal on the telephone, or off screen, and then register with the NSE, thus not only legalising the whole deal but making settlement easier.

Another major reason for the WDM's dismal performance has been the fact that, unlike in equity, in debt everybody tends to go in the same direction. As a result, either all are buying or all are selling, an impossible situation for any market. Further, the Stock Scam hovers around like an unrepentant ghost and has severely curbed the actions of banks. As a result, fewer brokers on the debt market - and even those present are unhappy.

But the light at the end of the tunnel for the NSE is that the country is rushing towards sophisticated systems in all sectors and, thus, needs huge capital. Such kind of money exists only in the Debt and Money Markets. The projects in infrastructure etc., it is hoped will soon trigger the NSE levels to rise. NSE hopes to spread its wings throughout India and, thus, attract more trade.

Its major advantages lie in the easy quick settlement and the transparency of operations. NSE authorities are hoping that these factors would help push the equity market up. For the Debt segments, they are banking on our system opening up as a result of which outdated policies are exiting and market forces are coming into play. In such an event, they are confident of becoming the Exchange that offers the

(Continued on Pg)

Who wrote the article?

(Continued from P 1)

and day out from his young coterie was nothing but fulsome praise. He became a praise addict. The elders either joined the chorus or just looked on, not knowing what to do."

It goes on to add further critical comments on the former Prime Minister's diatribe against "power-brokers" at the Congress centenary functions in Bombay in 1985. "No power brokers have since been either identified or dealt with as promised in the speech. Reason: No one could define a power-broker. The epithet could mean no one; it could mean almost everyone except perhaps the accusing Congress president while he is still the president."

The author also took a critical view of Rajiv Gandhi's over-projection on Doordarshan. "Rajiv's monopoly projection on the Doordarshan screen gave rise to an almost hostile distaste for him, despite his otherwise presentable personality and fair performance. Except, of course, the *hum dekhenge* kid-stuff."

On the controversial Bofors issue, it said, "Not many believed that Rajiv himself had taken the kickbacks money; the idea was rather too far-fetched. But what appeared more probable and was readily believed was that Rajiv was concealing something or someone - no one knows what or who. It may be fairly accurate to state that this general suspicion was what really the people harboured at the time of Lok Sabha elections - and do even now."

The author also chided Rajiv Gandhi on his handling of the Ayodhya issue and said the "naivete" of the government lay in "trying to thrash out an amicable settlement of the question, not realising (or despite realising) that an amicable solution was not wanted by the political parties (and therefore not possible) just then; the election stakes were too high."

In a letter to Ram, Chakravarty expressed surprise that a five-year-old article had been reproduced by *Frontline*. "As editor and publisher of *Mainstream* at that time, I have categorically repudiated your assumption that this was written by Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao," he said, and

went on, "This pen name ('Congressman') has been used by more than one person in the pages of *Mainstream*, and Mr Narasimha Rao is not the author of the article in question." He felt that it was "unfortunate" for such a prestigious journal to have "indulged in such a canard." He also requested that his letter be published in full, "at least for the sake of journalistic ethics." Ram, on his part, argued that, in the name of journalistic ethics, it was Chakravarty's "duty to reveal the real author."

Reacting strongly to Chakravarty's protestations, Ram said, "We stand strongly by our story" and Chakravarty's denial "carries no credibility with us."

He argued that in the past the identification of the "pseudonymous writer as P.V. Narasimha Rao" had been made several times in print, but there was no denial either from *Mainstream* or from the Prime Minister.

Ram pointed out that the article had been quoted generously in the past in articles published in *Frontline* and elsewhere. He referred to an article

published in June 1991 in his magazine, in which the author, Manoj Joshi, also quoted heavily from Mr Rao's piece in *Mainstream*.

He said that, before the piece was published, Chakravarty was informed that the Prime Minister would be identified as the author. At the time, there had been no denial from the *Mainstream* editor.

Ram described Chakravarty as a "veteran journalist" and a "good friend" but made it clear that the editor of *Mainstream* should not be allowed "to get away."

Refuting Chakravarty's assertion that the pen name, 'Congressman' had been used by more than one person in the past, he argued that, if that was the case, how did all these articles also have the footnote from the editor describing the author as "a leading figure in the Congress (I)?" Ram argued that Chakravarty was trying to protect the Prime Minister as he had been "instrumental" in leaking Mr Rao's novel to *Outlook*. "The Prime Minister was not pleased with him for this and that is why Nikhil Chakravarty is trying to cover up," he added.

Some scum are like manna!

The first thing you notice about Pudukattinam, a small fishing village 60 km from Madras, is the round cemented tanks scattered amidst the mud huts, filled with some murky green liquid.

Khajibai, 45, a fisherwoman, explains what they are: "These tanks are my very life. This is where I grow *Spirulina*." Khajibai, along with women from ten other villages across Tamil Nadu, is among the first smallscale manufacturers of *Spirulina fusiformis* in the world.

Spirulina is a slimy blue-green algae found floating in waterbodies in colonies of spiral-shaped cell-chains resembling scum. It has for centuries been a food in various parts of the world.

In India, the technique for cultivating this algae was developed by the A M M Murugappa Chettiar Research Centre (MCRC) in Madras, which in 1984 set up the country's first and, so far, only commercial plant with a capacity to grow and process 7.5 tonnes of *Spirulina fusiformis* annually.

A scientist at MCRC says, "*Spirulina* contains 60 per cent protein. Dhals have only 20-40 per cent. As land value increases, dhals will become more and more expensive. *Spirulina* is a cheap source of proteins. It can be cultivated even in backyards. All it needs is water."

Spirulina is also an excellent source of vitamin A, minerals and essential amino acids. In 1991, MCRC conducted the world's single largest feeding trials with *Spirulina*, feeding the algae's preparations to 5,000 pre-school children.

Subsequent medical surveys revealed that the children had shown remarkable improvement in combating vitamin A-related ailments. A daily intake of 2 gm (dry weight) of *Spirulina* is recommended as a nutritional supplement, especially for children and elderly people.

Chemencheri is a small fishing village 20 km from Madras. Food here is often in short supply during April and May — the lean fishing season. Says C J Vedavalli, a mother of three children, "We used to sleep in dark corners of the house to conserve what little energy we had."

In 1990, MCRC, along with the Guild of Service (GS), the Madras social service organisation, trained five women from Chemencheri to grow *Spirulina*, with the aim of providing

Meera Iyer

them the much-needed nutrition, as well as additional income.

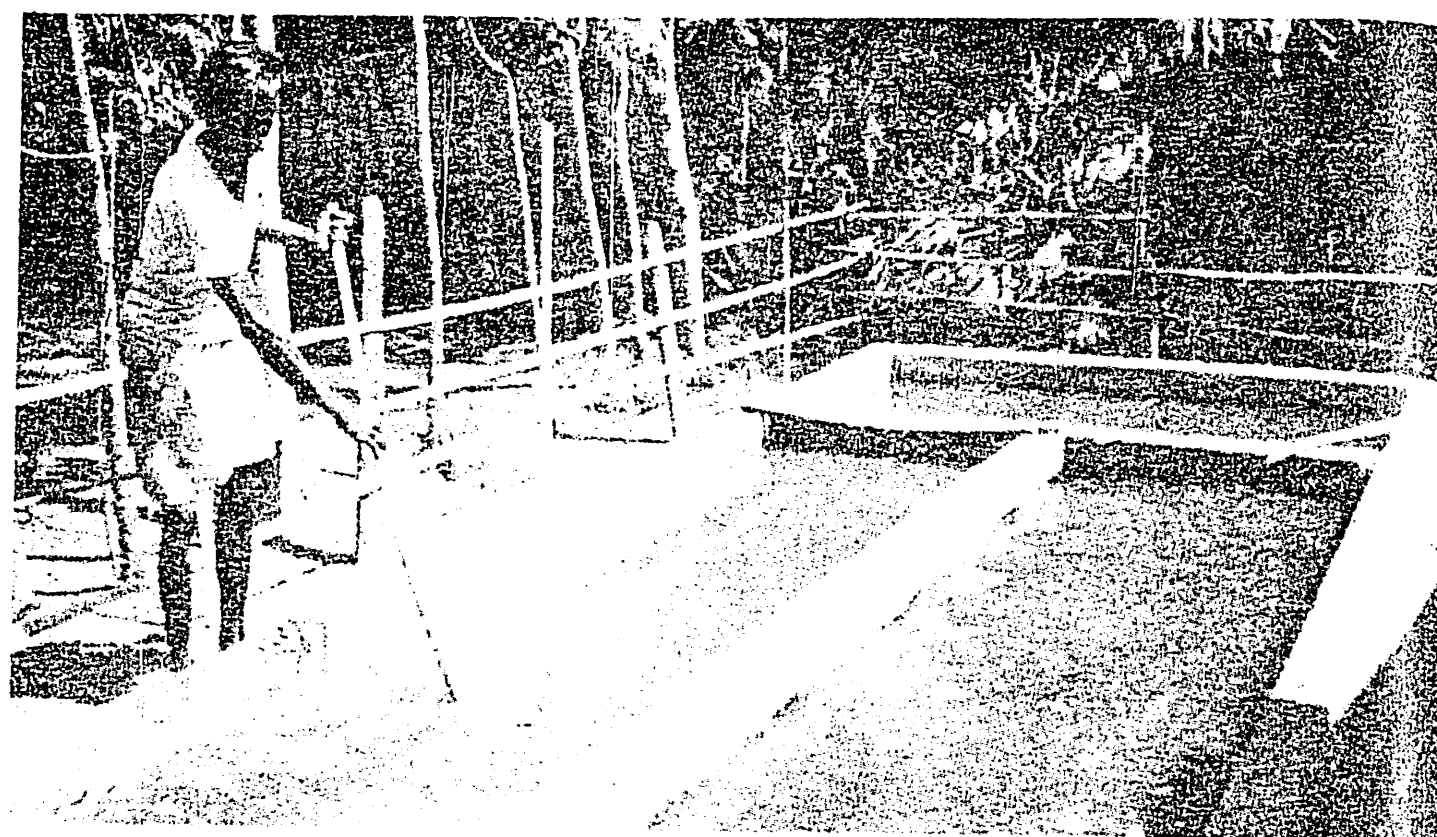
As interest in the project grew and spread, an additional 50 women were imparted training by GS. The surplus produce over their family consumption was bought by N. Rajan Sundaram of GS, an entrepreneur who markets the algae in tablet and capsule forms.

Spirulina came to Sadrangapattinam (Sadras) 45 km from Madras, towards the end of 1992. Thirteen women, who have formed a Sangam to cultivate the algae here, each looking after five tanks.

At Andaneri, 8 km from Madurai, the women have set up their own marketing mechanism. Dried and powdered *Spirulina* is sold in the village itself in packets of 10 gm, each costing Rs. 4.

MCRC's pilot commercial plant is situated at Saveriyapuram, 30 km from Pudukottai. Twelve backward class families here have been cultivating *Spirulina* since 1992, with MCRC's guidance. It is a project funded by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).

MCRC has provided each family with a large rectangular 3,000 litre capacity tank. MCRC's plant nearby



Cultivating *Spirulina fusiformis* and helping to provide much-needed nutrition as well as additional income in backward areas. (Photo by MELRA IYER, Courtesy: CSI-Down to Earth Features.)

buys the produce at Rs. 6 per kg of fresh algae, which is equivalent to Rs. 60 per kg of its dried weight. The chemicals are supplied free of cost by MCRC.

Some families have been given a second tank on request. Kadappan's is one of them. "I made 8 kg from each tank this week — that's Rs. 50," she says enthusiastically, adding, "It all depends on the effort you put in. Stir more and you get more."

Vedavalli, now a trainer with the GS, rattles off the chemicals required for growing *Spirulina*: sodium bicarbonate, sodium nitrate, sodium chloride, and potassium phosphate. "The algae is ready for harvesting after a week, provided you have been stirring regularly and the dilutions are correct," she says.

But an algologist at MCRC is a little worried. "I personally don't advocate this mass propagation by GS," she says. "It is essential to have an institution with technical expertise as a guiding consultancy. Sometimes, there may be contaminations by other algae, decreasing the *Spirulina* yield. If that happens, neither GS nor Vedavalli will be able to handle it."

MCRC has applied to National Research and Development Council for a patent for processing *Spirulina*. Does this mean that scores of women engaged in this occupation might soon have to stop their private cultivations?

"We hope that that situation won't arise," says an MCRC scientist. "The patent is for largescale processing." The organisation is now in the process of setting up the infrastructure for *Spirulina*

cultivation by women in earthquake-affected Latur, in a DBT-sponsored project. At Latur, it is envisaged that the women will be able to manage the affairs efficiently, with MCRC functioning only as consultants.

In the meantime, the Pudukattinam women have found a novel use for *Spirulina*. Says young and glowing Monica Raja, "I apply it on my face every day. It's very good for pimples!" (CSE/Down To Earth Features.)

Quizzin' with Ramanan

(Quizmaster V.V. RAMANAN's questions are from the period November 1-15)

- Name the West Asian country's premier who was assassinated by an extremist on November 4th.
- Who is this year's winner of the prestigious Booker Prize?
- Which popular comedienne will return to host next year's Oscars?
- Why did one Ken Saro-Wiwa attract international attention?
- Yet another transport corporation, the 21st in the State, is to come up with headquarters in Virudhunagar. After whom is to be named?
- What is the reward amount offered by the Sri Lankan government for information on the whereabouts of the LTTE supremo, V. Prabhakaran?
- Where was the 9th International Film Festival for Children and Young People held recently?
- A GO on auto fare hike was stayed following a petition. What is the proposed new fare structure?
- On whom was the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 1993 conferred by the President on November 14th?
- The actor who played Jim Hacker, the bumbling minister in the *Yes, Minister* series, died recently. Name him.
- In a landmark judgement by the Supreme Court, what 'care' or service has been brought under the Consumer Protection Act on November 13th?
- For what prestigious National awards have the children Prahalad Singh, Anita

Rawat and Sudhir Sardana been chosen?

- Which famous Indian's personal copy of the Gita was auctioned recently for £ 19,000 in London?
- The famous New York policeman, nicknamed 'Popeye', who inspired the Oscar-winning film classic *The French Connection*, in which Gene Hackman played him, passed away recently. Name the policeman.
- The Indian men's hockey team recently won a prestigious tourney after a long glory-less period. Where?
- Which Madras resident recently became the second Indian to receive the 'Scroll of Honour' from UNCHS (Habitat)?
- A controversial article written by a 'Congressman' in *Mainstream* magazine five years ago 'The deal with Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress (I) after its election loss. It was reproduced recently in a national magazine under the author's name, drawing criticism and flak. Name its original title.
- The monks of the holiest Buddhist shrine launched an agitation to get the power to run the temple themselves and not by the Hindus. Name the temple.
- Two former Prime Ministers of Italy were recently sentenced to terms of imprisonment on charges of corruption and murder. Name them.
- Which MP and legal luminary has floated a national party called 'Pavitra Hindustan Kazhagam'?

(Answers on p. 8)

A Sub-Collector's views

The British Library Newsletter, not so long ago, reported that the Library had not only made a find but that its Prints and Drawing Section had purchased an album of 58 watercolours of South Indian views. It came from the sale of the contents of *The Old Lodge*, Nutley, West Sussex, home of Eleanor, Countess Castle Stewart, widow of Arthur, the 7th Earl. The album was found to be from the hand of the latter's father, Andrew John Stuart, the 6th Earl, who served in the Madras Civil Service from 1864 to 1880. Stuart was grandson to the 2nd Earl Castle Stewart, and he inherited the title from his cousin the 5th Earl in 1914. The Newsletter reported:

"After an initial study of Tamil and Telugu in 1863, Stuart reached India in 1864, and served in a variety of posts and districts in the Madras Presidency. This collection of views was made in the two years after 1876, the year of his marriage to Emma Georgiana, a daughter of General Arthur Stevens of the Madras Staff Corps, and is entirely devoted to two districts, Tinnevely and Cuddappah. On furlough to Europe from August 1880, he overstayd and forfeited his appointment.

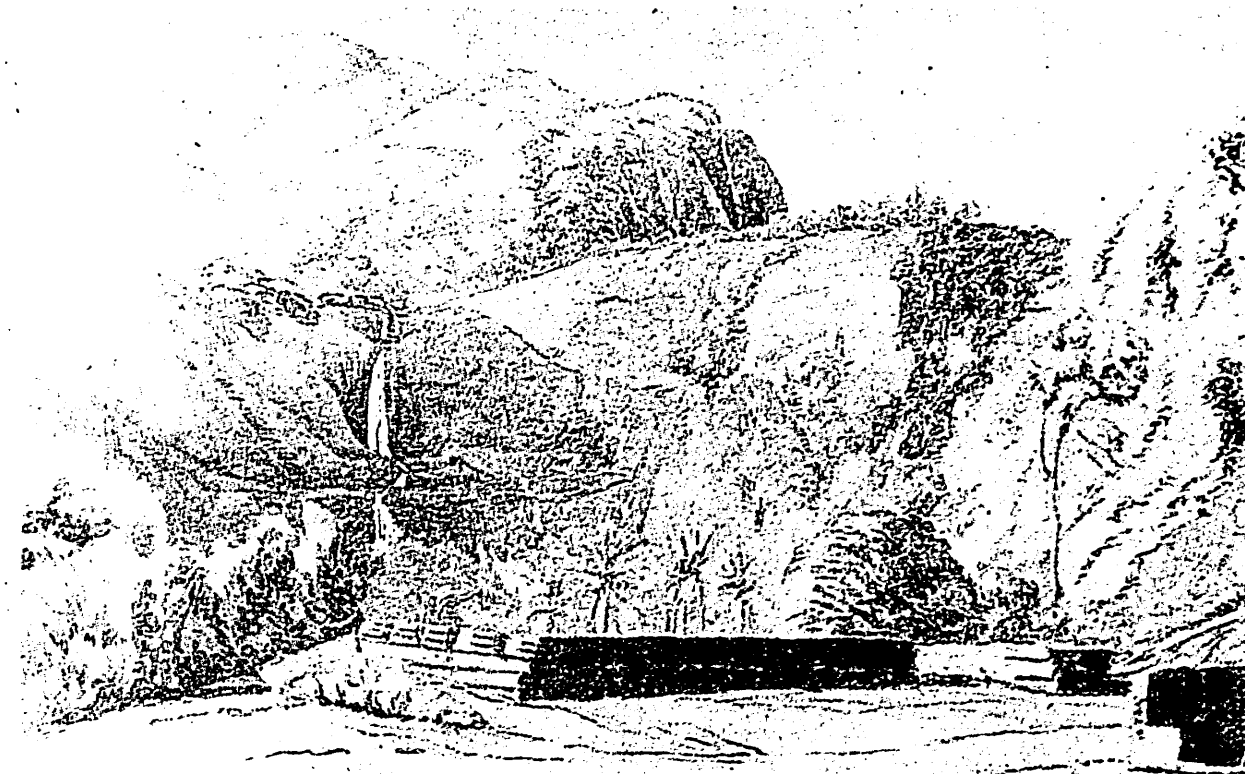
Stuart served first in Tinnevely in junior posts from 1869 to 1871. His career was one of frequent changes of post in different districts throughout the Madras Presidency, and he did not return to Tinnevely until October 1875, as Acting Collector and Magistrate, remaining there until May 1877. He was the author of the *Manual of the Tinnevely District* published in Madras in 1879. His love of this seemingly idyllically pastoral land comes over very strongly through the dry-as-dust compilations of statistics and information which form the staple of

such works, and it is instructive and rewarding to compare his descriptions of favoured places in the district with his watercolours of them.

green rice below it; the dry red lands largely waste, and when cultivated bearing poor crops of pulse, gram, or of inferior kinds of grain, but especially



Above: Cape Comorin (1877). On left: Chittar Falls, Kuttalam (1877)



The Tinnevely District, at the extreme south of India, is bordered each its western edge by the until recently thickly forested Western Ghats, dividing it from Kerala (the old state of Travancore), and on its south and east by the sea. It has the benefit of two monsoons. Stuart writes:

"On taking a bird's-eye view of the district from one of the highest peaks of the mountains, a good general idea of its features may be obtained. A narrow-green winding ribbon, with a silver thread in its centre, represents the Tamraparni with its irrigated land — the wealth of Tinnevely; north and south are wide areas of red sandy land undulating in broad and gentle slopes, studded with numerous tanks of all sizes and shapes, each with its little patch of

to the south well stocked with palmyra palms; to the north and north-east wide level plains, in the dry season black and bare, but when cultivated an unbroken stretch of cotton, cholam and cumbu, and dotted with numerous tanks here as elsewhere. A succession of large villages bristling with pagoda towers and substantial tiled houses lines the valley of the Tamraparni, and the plains elsewhere show a village for every tank of any size, and for every two to three miles of linear distance in any direction.

He describes the Tamraparni River: "The only important river in the Tinnevely District is the Tamraparni, which, with its affluents... all take their rise in the ghaut mountain chain... from time immemorial the Tamraparni river has been the principal feature of the district, its almost perennial streams supplying an area which now amounts to 64,671 acres from the beginning of May to the end of March, in the course of which time two rich crops of rice are obtained without fail in any ordinary season... Along the banks of these rivers lies the rich belt of alluvial irrigated land in a narrow strip not more than a mile in average width. The river itself... is crossed by eight anicuts of

substantial masonry, most of them the work of a former generation, leading each a canal for irrigation, some on one side only and some on both sides of the river... The bulk of the (water) supply beyond ten miles from the foot of the ghats, excepting only in the case of the Tamraparni, is derived from the surface drainage of the country during heavy rain, by which the rivers are suddenly swollen into rapid torrents, whose waters are diverted by dam below dam, and led by channel after channel to multitudes of tanks with so much effect that it is rare that any water reaches the sea."

The album contains some views of the houses which Stuart and his wife Emma occupied, including two views of the Sub-Collector's house at Sermadevi, and one of the Collector's house in Tinnevely. Sermadevi "with 6,064 inhabitants, has long been the headquarters of the Sub-Collector... favourably situated on the south bank of the Tamraparni, twelve miles west of Tinnevely. It possesses some of the most fertile lands in the district and is wholly agricultural."

The Sub-Collector based at Sermadevi was in charge of the three taluks running from Cape Comorin up the

western border of the district under the hills, and it is these lush and fertile taluks with their populous villages which are well represented in this album. Cape Comorin itself has two views: "... the Sailor's Cape Comorin, locally known as 'the Nose' or 'Lord Brougham's Nose', presents one of the most magnificent masses of solid gneiss rock to be seen in the whole range, with a precipitous face turned towards the Tinnevely District of many hundred feet clear fall, and is conspicuous on fine days as far away as Tinnevely, a distance of 35 miles".

There are various views of the Kalakad Hills, the southernmost range of the Western Ghats, as seen from inside their rich tree cover or else from the villages at their feet, but Stuart's finest work is reserved for Kuttalam, where the Chittar River, the principal tributary of the Tamraparni, emerges from the hills: "Courtallam, situated in the recess of the mountain-girt bay... about 450 feet above the sea, enjoys a delightful climate from the middle of June till September or October owing to the mists and light rains, which penetrate from the western to the eastern side of the range, and render the air ten degrees cooler here than it is ten miles further east. The officers and residents of the district resort to this delightful spot whenever able to do so at this season... The falls of the Chittar at Courtallam are famous among natives for their virtue in cleansing from sin, and to Europeans, for delightful bathing".

Here too resorted the Maharaja of Travancore from across the mountains, who kept up a house in Kuttalam, as did the British Resident at his court, a house which Stuart draws for us. Stuart's view over the plain, with the chief temple at Kuttalam below, is a highly successful attempt at an effect much sought after by amateur artists, but seldom rendered so skillfully.

There are numerous watercolours in the album of the "wealthy and populous villages" along the river valley and the foot of the Ghats, such as Sermadevi and Ambasamudram, while Kallidai kurichi "derives its importance from well watered rice lands, (and) has a large population also engaged in trade and the minor arts." "All these villages contain a large population of wealthy Brahmin landowners, to whose enterprise and intelligence the prosperity of the village is mainly due."

In June 1877 Stuart left Tinnevely for the Cuddappah District, north-west of Madras, as Sub-Collector and Joint Magistrate, and remained there until March 1878.

The puzzle that is the NSE

(Continued from P4)

best system and, thus, be able to be the No. 1 Exchange in India.

Meanwhile, here are a couple of choices to consider in the days ahead:

Oriental Bank of Commerce (CMP: Rs 53.00): OBC, established in 1943, was the first nationalised bank to go public. Its steady and attractive performance since then makes it a good buy. It has announced fairly good results for the first half of this year, with PAT being almost equal to the full year's projection of Rs 130 cr made at the time of public issue in 1994. The total income and net profits increased by 30% and 67% respectively over the corresponding period in the previous year. The interest expended/interest earned ratio improved to 60% from 62%.

The deposits rose from Rs 315 cr in 1980 to Rs 6673.46 cr in 1995. Advances grew from Rs 168 cr to Rs 3528.88 cr and the income increased from Rs 30 cr to Rs 872.04 cr. The bank has a network of 618 branches all over the country and 17 regional offices.

For 1995, the bank overshot its target of turnover and PAT of Rs 786 cr and

Rs 77 cr respectively by achieving Rs 872.04 cr and Rs 113.36 cr respectively. This resulted in the annualised EPS being Rs 7.71 instead of the projected Rs 5.17. It is into merchant banking and underwrote business worth Rs 59.22 cr in 1995. Its foreign exchange turnover touched Rs 3043.18 cr compared to Rs 2410.9 cr in the previous year.

Its business per employee increased from Rs 65 lakhs in 1993-94 to Rs 82 lakhs in 1995 and is expected to increase to about Rs 92 lakhs in 1996. For 1996, we expect the Bank to exceed its targets and achieve a turnover and PAT of Rs 1100 cr and Rs 165 cr respectively. The resultant EPS will be Rs 8.5. Technically, the prices have good support at current levels.

Tata Elxsi (CMP: Rs 22.00): This Tata group company had made a dramatic turnaround last year by reorienting its focus to hardware distribution and providing total business solutions through strategic tie-ups. It had first accessed the market in 1991 to manufacture Elxsi System 6400 and the Power series 3200 RISC computers. This project was, however, rendered unviable

because of lowered import duties on computer hardware. The 26% interest ERAS loan it had contracted proved to be a drain. It later became an exclusive distributor for SiliconGraphics' multiprocessor systems and entered into tie-ups with NEC, Japan, Comark of UK, and Analog Devices Inc of the US. It has also been appointed distributor by Amid Technology, US. A Rs. 15.58 cr rights issue was made in March 1995 to repay Inter-Corporate Deposits (ICDs), setting up an EOU under the Software Technology Park scheme, and repayment of the ERAS loan.

In 1995 the company's sales increased almost four times, from Rs. 12.81 cr to Rs. 50.36 cr. Net profits were Rs. 0.45 lakhs as against the Rs. 5.73 cr loss in the previous year. For 1995-96 we expect the company to achieve an EPS of Rs. 1.65 on a PAT and turnover of Rs. 5.05 cr and Rs. 75 cr, respectively. Technically, the prices have been moving sideways for the past five months. Buying recommended, with a stop loss at Rs. 24.

K. GOPALAKRISHNAN

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

December: 'Artist of the Month': S Murali, who teaches in the Department of English, University College, Trivandrum. Participated in group shows, including the National Exhibition of Art organised by the Kerala Lalit Kala Akademi, 1992. (Max Mueller Bhavan).

December 9: *Maria Magdalena* (adapted from Friedrich Hebbel). A play in German by the Max Mueller Bhavan Theatre Group, directed by Sulta Ali.

Set in the mid-19th Century in Germany, the play deals with a middle class family and its struggle with moral values. Klara, the daughter of the family, is confronted with a moral conflict over a pregnancy out of wedlock, a father who expects her to be a paragon of virtue and a brother who is accused of being a thief. Can she bear the brunt of it all? Will she be rescued or will she give in to social pressures?

This is the seventh production of the Max Mueller Bhavan Theatre Group, which consists of advanced German language students of the Max Mueller Bhavan. (7.00 p.m., MMB Lawns).



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From Blueprints to landmarks

As the SAF Games open,
JAICI wonders...

How will we fare?

Only a fortnight remains for the Jayalalitha Government's Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDATN) to organise, in cooperation with the Indian Olympic Association, the South Asian Federation Games in Madras from December 18th. This is the first time the SAF Games are being held in South India and, thanks to the hard work put in by SDATN officials, the IOA president, B. Sivanthi Adityan, the organising secretary, K. Murugan, and others, the historic ten-day meet promises to be a success.

Five new complexes, including the airconditioned indoor stadium behind the modern Nehru Stadium, a tennis stadium with nine courts at Nungambakkam, an aquatic stadium with a racing pool and a diving pool at Velacheri and, above all, a hostel beyond Aminjikarai with 560 apartments to accommodate the competitors and officials, have indeed transformed the image of the ancient city. There can be no doubt whatsoever that with all these modern facilities available the Games will have a smooth passage.

But what they have in store for the host country remains to be seen. With Leander Paes, Mahesh Bhupathi and Gaurav Natekar certain to represent their country, a tennis gold for the hosts looks a banker. With the exhaustive training it has had, the athletics squad, with Shiny Wilson as its most shining star, looks certain to head the host country's medals tally. But what the hosts have in store in the more popular disciplines, like football and hockey, it is not that easy to guess.

Much has been said and written about India's gold medal triumph in the recent Kuala Lumpur international hockey tournament. But the fact remains that India did not have much to beat there, with Germany, for instance, fielding their second string. The opposition at the Egmore stadium will be formidable, as it will include Pakistan.

Likewise, India will be up against strong opposition in the football competition, to be held at the Nehru Stadium. Indian football has, frankly

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Yitzhak Rabin of Israel; 2. Ms. Pat Barker for *The Ghost Road*. 3. Whoopi Goldberg; 4. He was the Nigerian human rights activist, whose hanging, by his country's military junta, led to worldwide condemnation and his country being suspended from the Commonwealth; 5. Veeran Sundaralingam; 6. Rs. 25 million; 7. Hyderabad; 8. Rs. 6 as minimum fare and Rs. 3 for every km; 9. Aung San Suu Kyi; 10. Paul Eddington; 11. Medicare; 12. The Bharat. Geeta Chopra and Sanjay Chopra Awards for bravery respectively; 13. Mahatma Gandhi; 14. Eddie Egan; 15. The Azlan Shah Gold Cup in Kuala Lumpur; 16. G.R. Dattatri; 17. 'The Great Suicide'; 18. Mahabodhi temple in Bodhi Gaya; 19. Giulio Andreotti and Bettino Craxi; 20. Ram Jethmalani.

speaking, nothing to boast of, and only a well-trained and cent per cent fit squad can get the better of countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Maldives.

India will indeed need a lot of luck and all the country's best wishes to emerge with a gold medals tally in keeping with the size of its contingent, the biggest in the field, and its home advantage. Here are OUR best wishes to the Indian squad.

Death of a champion

"Come on Fordyce", the Rajah of Ramnad used to shout from inside his owner's box at the Madras Race Club. Fordyce responded to his call all right and his trainer, Ali Asker, would stroll in and lead in yet another winner.

The all-too-familiar Guindy scene of the 50's came back to mind when I heard of the death of Ted Fordyce in Bangalore recently, after a long illness. Known as 'Ride 'em out' Fordyce in Ceylon, where he first rode after his Australian days, he was for long first jockey to Ali Asker, who was in charge of the Rajah of Ramnad's horses. His horsemanship helped his owner, trainer and himself emerge as Guindy's No. 1 trio for long.

A dashing Australian horseman, Fordyce had made his Guindy debut as first jockey to the Ceylonese trainer, Selvaratnam. Selvaratnam was, however, not as successful as his compatriots and predecessors,

G.N.G. Wallis and his son, Clement. Understandably, he raced his stable at Guindy for only one season, after which Fordyce joined Ali Asker's stable as its first jockey and emerged as the Guindy champion.

Fordyce was indeed the most successful foreign horseman to

used the whip, and the manner in which he brought the best out of his mount under pressure was a sheer joy to watch, even to those who had backed the wrong run. Fordyce was such a popular horseman that when, at the fag-end of a season, the Stewards suspended him for a couple of meetings for 'unsatisfactory riding', the sympathies of the entire Guindy fraternity went out to him. A fine sportsman, he took the suspension in his stride and completed his contract with Ali Asker. In the process, he retained the championship he had won for the previous two or three years. But he never returned to Guindy. He preferred Bangalore, where also he rode with distinction until he retired and settled there with his wife, the beautiful daughter of Selvaratnam.

Guindy old-timers are sure to remember him and say, "They don't make them like him any more!"

by
AJAX

ride at Guindy, more successful than even the eminent pair of Bill Stevens and Bren Duffy. He owed his success not because of the size and quality of the stable to which he was attached, a stable that housed the most fashionably-bred horses of the time, but mainly because of his dashing horsemanship. An experienced horseman with an easy crouch, Fordyce seldom

Vision 2000: Formula 1?

The Irungattukottai motor racing track recently had two of its most important visitors ever, M Max Mosley, President, Federation Internationale D'L Automobile (FIA) — the apex body controlling four-wheeler motor racing worldwide, including Grand Prix and rallies — and Flavio Briatore, Managing Director, Benetton Sports (manufacturers of Formula 1 race cars and the current world champions in racing and designing). The VVIPs were accompanied by the flamboyant industrialist, Vijay Mallya, Chairman, Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI).

The purpose of the visit was two-fold. One, to show Mosley the Irungattukottai track, built at a cost of Rs. 6 crores, and seek permission for

F-3 races in 1997 and, after upgrading of the track, for F-1 races by 2000 AD. The track is at present certified by the FIA as fit to hold F-3 races. While it

by
Venkatachari Jagannathan

is too early to speculate on the results of the visit, Vijay Mallya is confident that the FMSCI will host an F-3 race and a World Championship Rally in 1997 here.

The second purpose of the VVIP visit was to participate in the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the FMSCI.

Speaking to reporters on the occasion, Mosley said, "The motor racing scenario in the Asia-Pacific region is changing. Indonesia recently hosted a World Championship Rally. With the economy expanding in the region, top-level motor sports is also likely to expand". And Mallya asked, in continuation of this theme, "If Brazil and Argentina can host prestigious international motorsports events, why not India?" Citing the Australian

Government which subsidises this sport, Mallya hoped the Indian Government would follow suit.

Referring to motor sports as "a huge worldwide business", Mosley said it had a turnover of US \$ 20 billion and a revenue from F-1 races alone totalling \$2 billion a year. And he added, "According to one estimate, 4.5 million people watched motor racing on TV in 1994, and about 75 countries are involved in the sport".

Smallest ever jackpot!

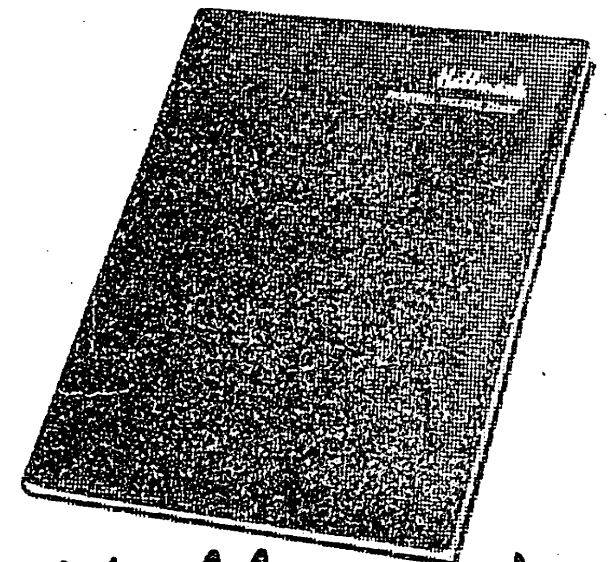
The Department of Racing (formerly Madras Race Club) earned the dubious distinction of paying out India's smallest-ever jackpot dividend at the fourth meeting of the current Madras season, and followed it up at the next fixture by declaring the country's smallest-ever carried-over jackpot pool! The villain of the piece on both occasions was champion Robert Foley's stable, in charge of the horses of the country's leading owner, M.A.M. Ramaswamy.

Such is the average Madras punter's faith in Foley's well-bred and well-prepared runners, especially those entrusted to his No. 1 horseman, C. Krishnan, that they are invariably his first choices for his jackpot combinations and start at odds-on. As many as four of them landed the goods at the fourth meeting on November 18th and led to the jackpot paying a beggarly Rs 78 on 344 tickets.

It was the other way about at the next fixture. Only one of Krishnan's jackpot mounts won, and a tiny pool of Rs 23,001 was carried over. But the November 19th eclipse of Foley's stable can only be a passing phase. The fact that he had the unique distinction of leading in five winners each at the first three meetings and as many as six at the next fixture, to set a world record of 21 winners from 28 races during the first four fixtures of a season, is a clear pointer to the status of his high-calibre stable and the shape of things to come. Studded as it is with a lot of the country's most fashionably-bred juveniles, it is certain to dominate the rest of the season and improve on the numerous records it has established during the last four seasons.

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