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MADRAS

MUSINGS

Vol. V. No. 23

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• A word from The Editor

Has Musings run its race?

It's been a good run. For five years, *Madras Musings* has run a good race on a track not very familiar to Madras readers. But now it looks as though it is just one issue away from considering its race has been run. UNLESS there is a godfather somewhere out there as concerned as *Madras Musings* has been with all those issues that have been part of its staple.

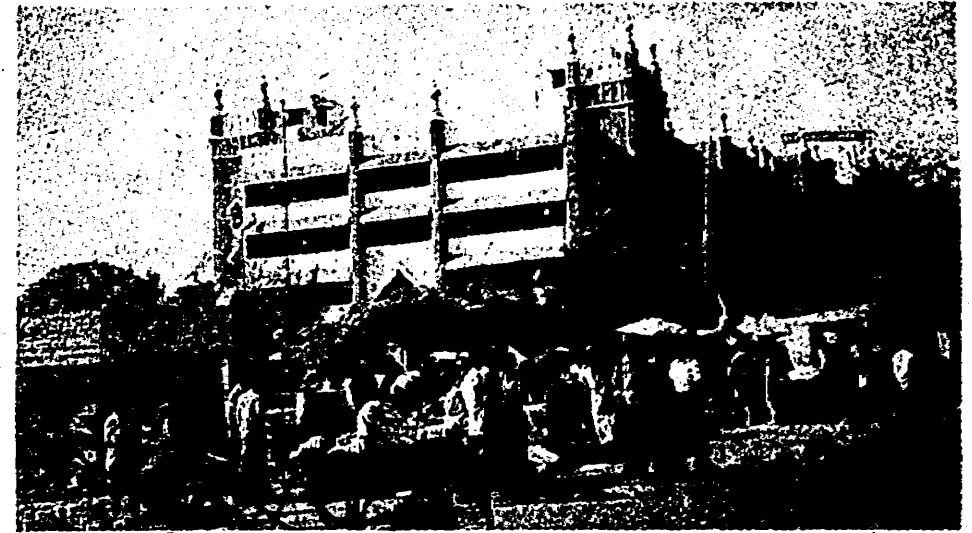
Over the last five years, we have brought back some consciousness of this city's heritage and history. We have addressed ourselves to the civic and environmental concerns of the city. We have focussed on the lesser-known achievements in industry and the arts and sport. We have demonstrated that we cared for Madras and its citizens more than most other publications which call the city Home. Now, is there someone out there as interested in this City as we have been, who would like to godfather *Madras Musings* and give it a new lease of life?

Curiously, when *Madras Musings* calls it a day with its April 1st issue,

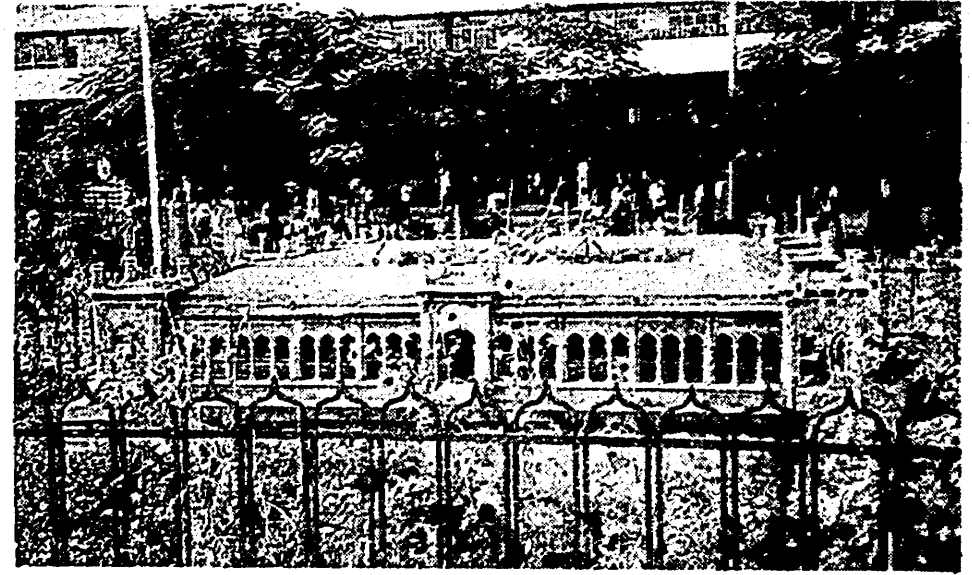
the reasons for winding up will be as much due to the policy of liberalisation as the lack of support it has received from all but the few who felt the journal was serving a necessary purpose in the City. In the days of a restrictive import policy, the publishers of *Madras Musings*, M/s. Lokavani Hall-Mark Press, found some benefit in publishing a fortnightly journal. But as the country liberalised, the benefits decreased year by year till they have become non-existent in the last two years. When subscription and advertising support were seen as the only way to keep going two years ago, only a few responded to our requests. We will be ever grateful, to those subscribers and the half a dozen or so business groups who care for this City, for the support they gave us. It may not have enabled us to break even, but it gave us hope that others would follow the splendid example they had set. Unfortunately, that was not to be, and the publishers have felt they can no longer continue to take losses.

And so, sadly, we announce that April 1, Vol. V, No. 24, will be the last issue of *Madras Musings*. Unless a godfather comes to its rescue in the next few weeks. If that happens, subscriptions will be transferred to the new publishers. Otherwise, subscribers will receive back any remaining part of their subscriptions.

Meanwhile, thank you all, all of you who stood by us.



The Lily Pond Complex — still awaiting tenants. Many of the traders who once occupied Moore Market are now hawkers outside the new complex while they await rehabilitation in the new complex.



Moore Market is remembered in this model in the parking lot of the Railway Booking Office Complex, which arose on the ashes of the market that was a part of the ethos of the City for well over 75 years. Note the use the central courtyard of the model is now put to. (Photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY).

Moore Market replacement, still not occupied

The new Moore Market complex (see picture above), unofficially called the Lily Pond Shopping Complex, is still empty, despite the allocation of 527 of its 859 shops. The allottees await electricity — and till that is given they refuse to move in. They also await a decision on rent.

When Moore Market was gutted on the midnight of May 29, 1985, its 857 stall holders were awarded an *ex gratia* amount of Rs. 2000 each from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund and the Chief Minister ordered construction of a new market complex for them on 64 grounds by the Lily Pond next to the Central Railway Station.

The new complex was constructed at a cost of Rs. 6.25 crore and was inaugurated by the Chief Minister on November 28, 1991. Government assisted with a 50 per cent loan for the project and the Corporation managed the balance by obtaining advances from some traders. It was decided to dispose of the stalls on outright sale and a notification was made requesting the vendors to express their willingness to this scheme. Later, Government changed its mind and the Corporation was instructed not to sell the shops outright but to accept only a rental advance to be negotiated with the traders.

The merchants were allotted shops after a writ petition directed the Corporation to make allotment by lots. Allotment of 527 shops was made on March 15 and 16, 1994. Twelve shops were reserved for allotment to erstwhile Moore Market tenants if they staked a claim later.

The Lily Pond shopping complex has 78 'A' type shops, each of area about 7' x 6', on the ground floor and 84 shops on each of the first, second and third floors. 'B' type shops, of area 7' x 10', number 111 on the ground floor and 119 on each of the second and third floors. 'C' type shops, about 10' x 15.5' area, comprise of eight shops on the ground floor and 16 shops on each of the first, second and third floors. And 'D' type shops, about 15.5' x 19.5', only five in number, all on the ground floor. There is no lift facility in the complex.

The rents are about Rs. 19 sq ft for the ground floor, Rs. 17 sq ft for the first floor, Rs. 16 sq ft for the second floor and Rs. 14 sq ft for the third floor. Every prospective shopkeeper will have to deposit six months' advance on his rent. Trading in liquor, fish, mutton, beef, pork etc is prohibited on the premises.

The traders feel that the rent demanded is too high and that this is not rehabilitation of the victims of the

Moore Market blaze. Many traders, who lost their shops in the fire are close to poverty and were looking forward to shops in the new complex to rehabilitate themselves. Several traders have abandoned business and sought employment. The traders have moved the High Court for reduction in rental charges and the case is pending.

Before the fire accident, a section of the Moore Market traders were accommodated at the Nehru New Market in the Kannappan Thidal Complex, close to the Periamet Mosque. They were required to pay a rent of only one rupee per square foot. They were also provided with free electricity for two years.

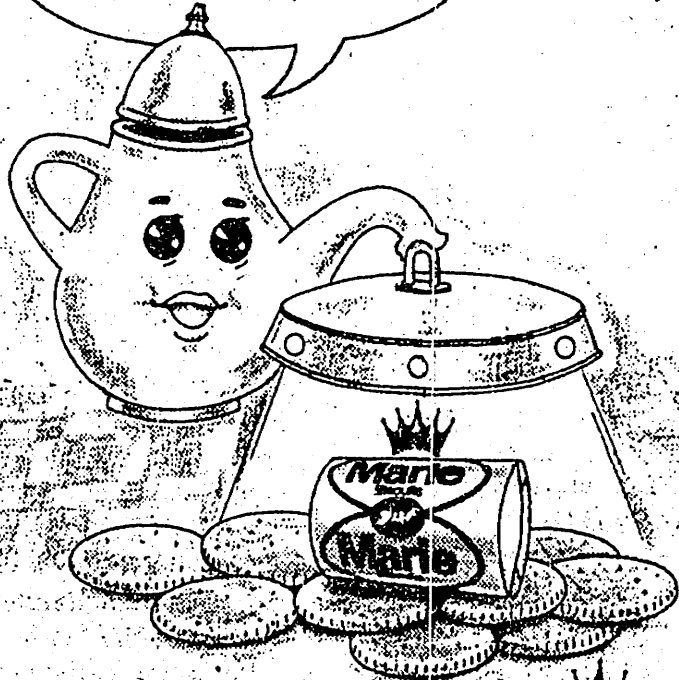
Traders who are to occupy shops in the new complex feel that the present encroachments will not allow smooth flow of traffic. They want access from Sydenham's Road, as the shopping complex is far from the original place where the market stood.

All that is left of Moore Market today is a replica in the Railway Booking Office's parking lot. It is maintained by the Indian Bank, but its courtyard seems to be used as a refuse dump (see picture above).

— RAJIND N CHRISTY

Guess who's come to tea?

Queen Marie!



Marie
Biscuits

The Queen among Maries

FARRYS

ART/10/975

The last session

The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly's last session is over, and no privilege issue can arise if the truth be told that there are large numbers of people, reflected in the long queues waiting for a time-curtained glimpse of the 'shouting matches' inside, who view its workings as part of the medley of Madras City. Some are surprised, too, to hear that these members doing public service get sumptuous pay and allowances — Rs. 4,450 per month, Rs. 10,000 a year as travelling allowance, a constituency allowance and also a postage allowance, besides Rs. 150 a day when the House is in session — facts revealed by Speaker Muthiah on the closing day.

Finance Minister Nedunchezhiyan presented the interim budget which has an overall deficit of Rs. 680.82 crore. The interim budget for the first six months of next year was in deference to democratic norms.

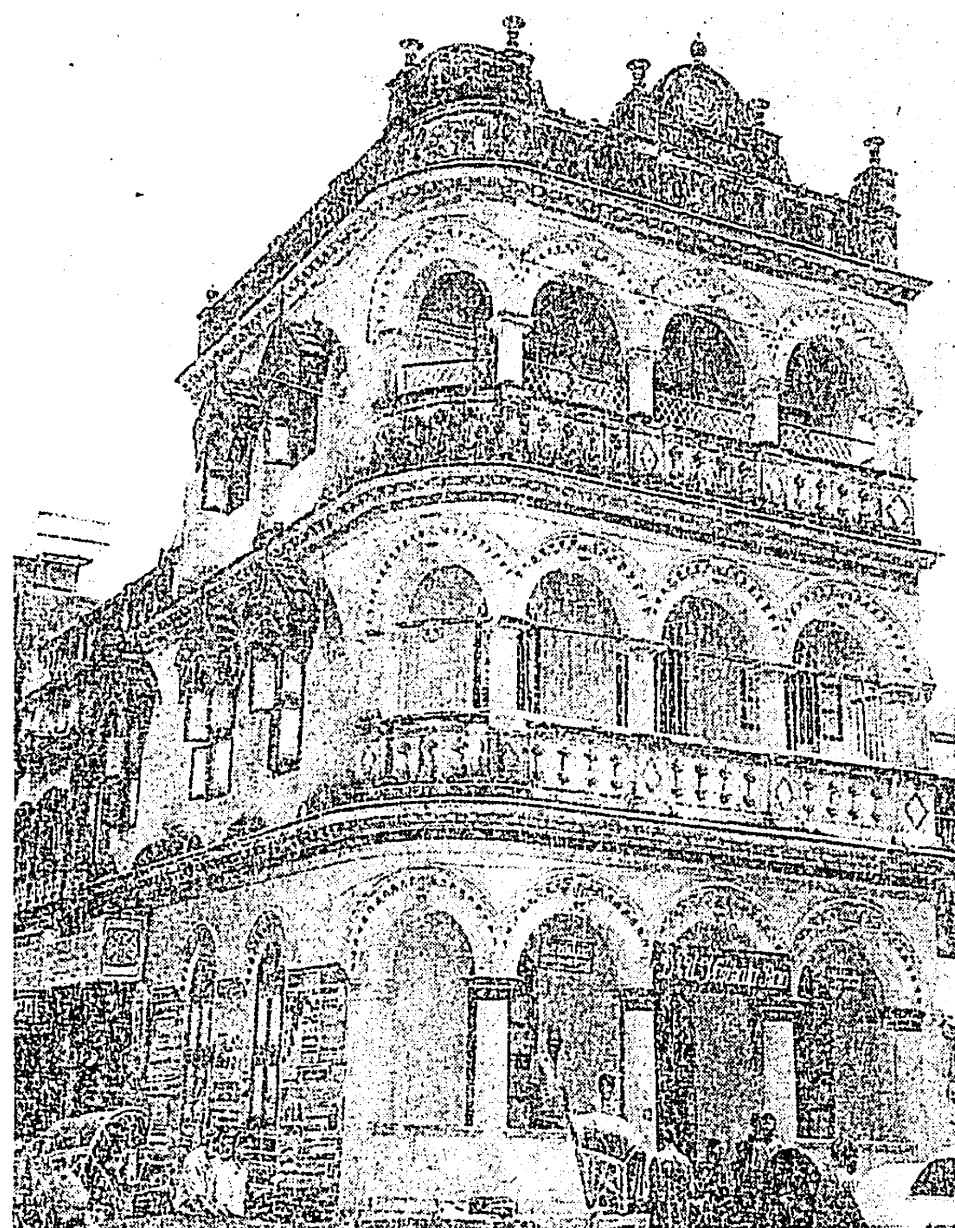
The House passed the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill to give discretionary powers to magistrates in deciding the quantum for maintenance, the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill to streamline acquisition procedures, the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (Amendment) Bill making Government permission mandatory for establishing a college to be affiliated to the University, the Specified Commodities Markets

(Regulation of Location) Bill, and also three other amending bills to the Agricultural Income Tax Act.

The Government was closely questioned by the Opposition about allegations of irregularities in the saree-doff free distribution scheme, leading to Rs. 50 crore being unaccounted in the State-owned Tamil Nadu Textiles Corporation. Textiles Minister Indira Kumar heatedly replied that the TNTC had effected payments only through cheques and that too after getting the yarn supply.

Yet another issue that raised a furor was the cremation shed scandal, following the High Court's directive to the CBI to investigate irregularities in awarding contracts for construction of sheds in the cremation grounds under a special programme. The Speaker ruled that the matter was *sub judice* and discussions would not be permitted. Since the Opposition insisted on speaking on it, he named and evicted them one after another.

In spite of the fact that the Ruling Party members far outnumber the Opposition, the Opposition proved again and again throughout the tenth assembly that their smaller numbers was not a disadvantage to them in questioning the Government on its acts of omission and commission.



THE OLD ... & THE NEW

Both the OLD and the NEW are striking buildings in their respective localities. Noticeable for its spruceness in a shabby part of George Town is our OLD, an art-deco building that's for decades housed the Dr U Venkata Rao Clinic. Our NEW towers over its neighbours at one end of Anna Nagar, but at night Bharat Petroleum's Southern Regional Headquarters is sheer beauty as imaginative lighting picks it out from the surrounding darkness.

Built 70 years ago in Thambu Chetty Street was the U Venkata Rao Clinic and three generations of doctors have served the neighbourhood from here. Dr Venkata Rao's son Srinivasa Rao succeeded his father and among those who consulted him were former Chief Minister M Karunanidhi and the late Poet Laureate Kannadasan in the years before they hit the limelight. The clinic is today run by Dr Srinivasa Rao's son Dr Raina Rao. The well-maintained building still has a few stained glass windows left.

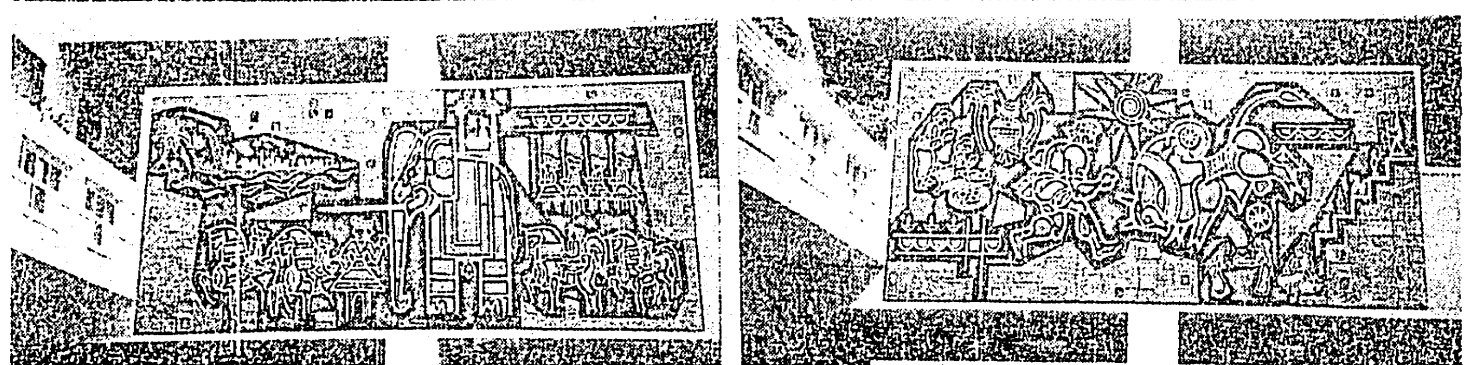
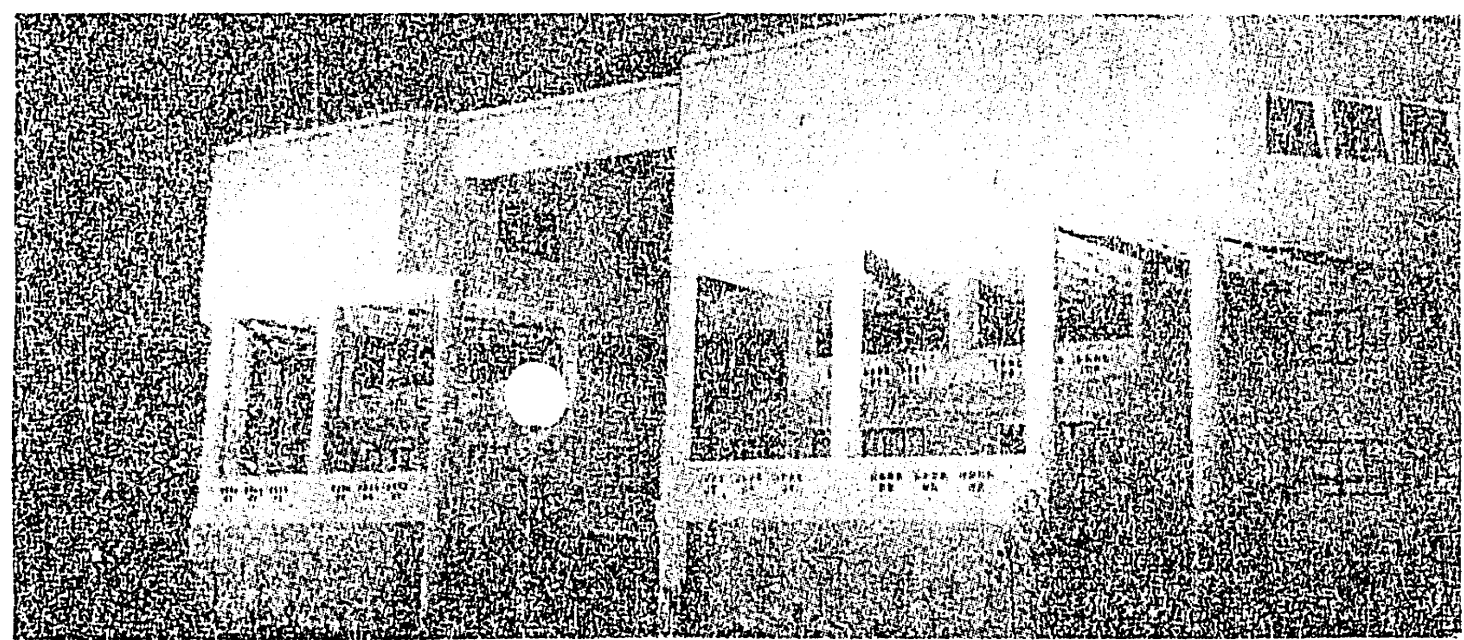
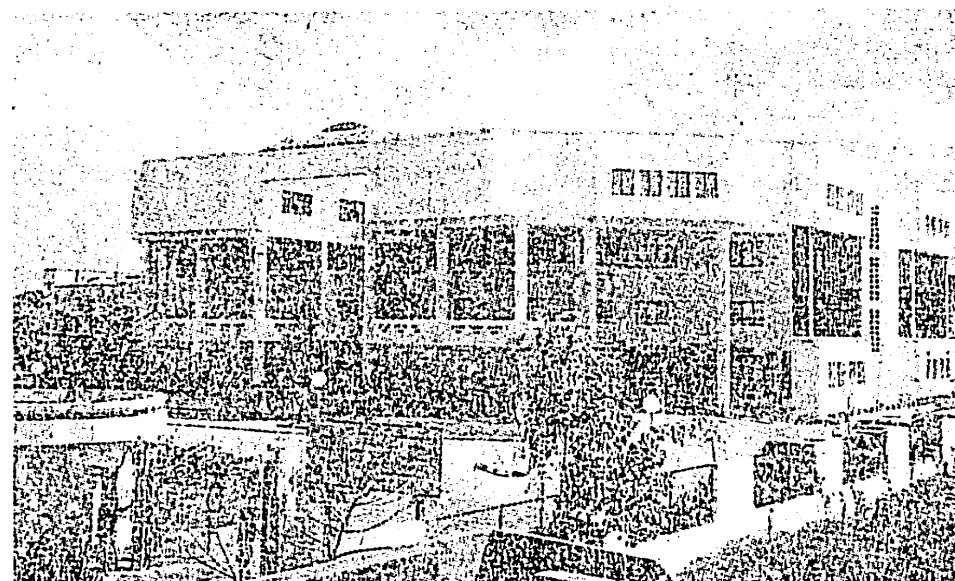
Built on marshy land at Ranganathan Gardens in Anna Nagar is our NEW, the massive Bharat Petroleum Southern Regional Office. With basement and four floors, this Rs. 13.5 crore building has a built-up area of 120,000 square feet with parking entirely in the basement, hidden from public view. It's the building and its beautiful terraced landscaping that attract attention.

In the spacious entrance hall are two metal paintings by Natanam Natarajan which depict the southern festivals.

The building has a multipurpose hall which can accommodate 250 persons, and it has such amenities as a library, reading room, and recreation centre.

The building, which stands on a four-acre plot adjoining the officers' quarters, was formally inaugurated on November 18, 1995 by the oldest employee and the oldest dealer of Bharat Petroleum.

Text and Photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY



What is a biovillage?

Contemporary development is associated with four distressing features:

- A widening rich-poor divide in per capita income.
- Damage to the basic life support systems of land, water, the atmosphere, forests and biodiversity.
- Jobless economic growth.
- Growing feminisation of poverty.

Such pathways of development are both environmentally destructive and socially disruptive. There is, hence, a search today for an alternative developmental

paradigm which will foster job-led economic growth rooted in the principles of ecology, equity, economic energy efficiency and employment generation.

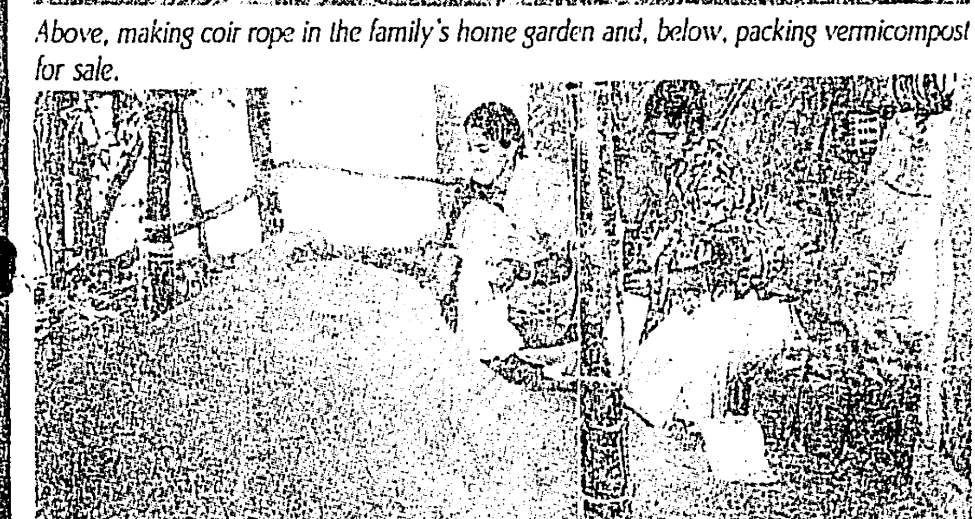
The Biovillage model of rural development provides one such alternative, as it pays concurrent and integrated attention to natural resource conservation, productivity improvement and poverty eradication. The model is based on the identification and promotion of market-driven small-scale enterprises, which lend themselves to decentralised production

supported by a few key centralised services. Economic viability is essential for replicability, while environmental soundness and gender equity are essential for ecological and social sustainability. It requires a process of learning by doing, and a close partnership with stakeholders. Thus, the Biovillage Project is cast on a participatory action mode with resource-poor farm families, scientists and financial institutions working and learning together.

M.S. Swaminathan

The Green Revolution's Swaminathan is now Propagating biovillages

The M S Swaminathan Research Foundation's (MSSRF) Centre for Research on Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (CRSARD)



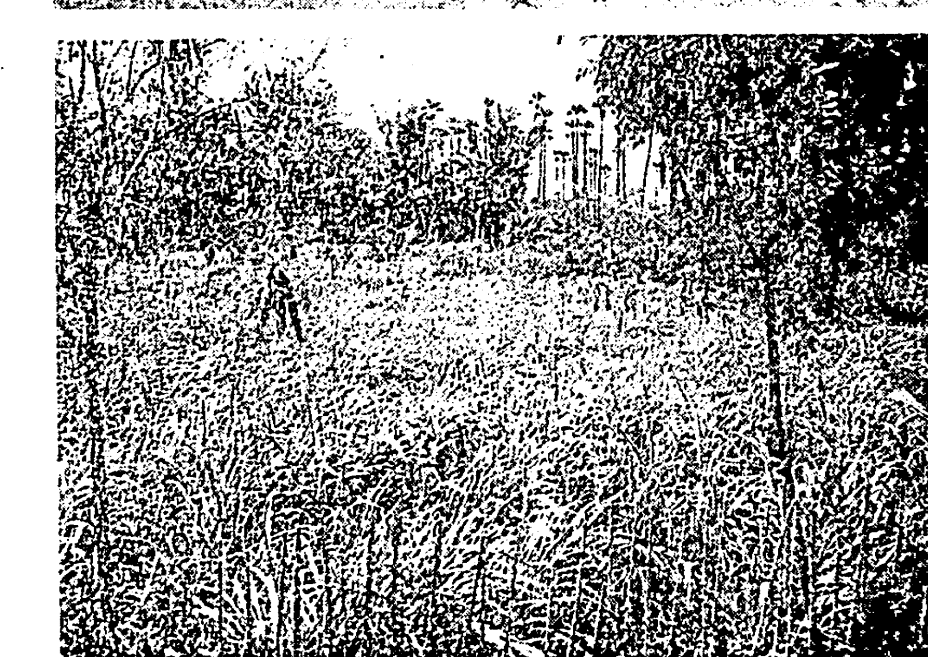
Seen in the biovillages... (from left to right): An azolla nursery; Earthworms for the vermicompost heap; Bags packed with straw sprouting mushrooms; and a model toilet

initiated a trial biovillage programme in 1991 in the villages of Pillayarkuppam, Kizhur and Sivanthakam in the Union Territory of Pondicherry. The

aim of the experiment was to use Biotechnology to improve productivity, profitability, stability and sustainability in small-scale agricultural and aquaculture operations and, thus, empower resource-poor rural families. The biovillage programme has now spread to 19 villages in Pondicherry, representing three biophysical environments — uplands, lowlands, and low wetlands — and socio-economic situations ranging from landlessness to a significant presence of small and medium farmers. The 19 villages extend over 3680 hectares and have a population of over 24,000 persons in nearly 5000 households.

The project receives support from UNDP, from the participants themselves (who offer their labour), commercial banks offering working capital, the Government of the Union Territory of Pondicherry providing infrastructure and support, and channelised government assistance rendered under the poverty-alleviation and employment-generation programmes.

Income and employment-generation enterprises identified for the



From top: A locally designed mist chamber for the plant nursery; An aquaculture pond that does not prevent the washing of clothes in it; and a fodder plot that feeds a family's cattle. (All photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY)

resource-poor have been mushroom production, group sericulture, community fodder plantation, hybrid vegetable production, group aquaculture, nutrition gardening and, for landless women, sericulture, commercial vegetable production, integrated aquaculture in brick kiln land, broiler production based on local feed resources, azolla production as a bio-fertiliser, environmental sanitation, and biogas production. The small farmers involve themselves in jasmine and crossandra (*kanakambaram*) flower production. There are flower nurseries for marginal farmers.

In Pillayarkuppam, Rani Nagappan, a landless woman who works as an agricultural labourer, had

a milk cow which was an additional source of income. She was made aware of composite fodder usage, which has increased milk production and reduced feeding costs by 50 per cent. The project then helped her to procure two crossbred milch animals with financial assistance from the State Bank of India. She has established a homestead fodder plot on 0.1 ha, with *agathi*, and *subabul* seedlings along the border.

She feeds the cows the composite fodder and earns about Rs. 1200-1500 per month from the milk production. She pays back Rs. 400 a month towards the loan. She uses the dung and urine of the livestock as organic manure for the fodder plot.

There was no common threshing floor in the village. A 689 sq m community threshing floor was made possible by the District Rural Development Agency in 1994, and a 13-member committee now maintains it.

Ramaswamy, an innovative farmer, who owns a hectare of land, cultivates paddy and sugarcane. He uses *azolla*, a water fern, which is a weed suppresser and soil conditioner, as an environment-friendly technology to reduce the use of chemical fertilisers. Application of this technology has helped him in yield and profit. Many other farmers have also adopted this technology to improve their agricultural performance.

A vermicompost centre serves as training-cum-demonstration centre for the resource-poor and is run by an unemployed youth. The waste from different sources is decomposed with the help of earthworms as vermicompost. The vermicompost is sold to the village farmers and urban gardeners. The centre also trains landless women to take up

(Continued on P6)

The View from Fort St George

All said and done, the Assembly records show that the ruling AIADMK has been successful in setting certain records, and in meeting the mindless muting from an ever-watchful Opposition, led by Congress (M) S R Balasubramanian, the Opposition leader. Credit should go to Chief Minister Jayalalitha for "making legislative history by completing the full five year-term, especially after the Dravidian movement captured power from the Congress."

After Finance Minister Nedunchezhiyan suggested, presumably to the entire House, "let the past be the past", the Speaker thanked the House and said many resolutions were passed unanimously because of the ruling party's tolerance and the deep sense of responsibility displayed by the Opposition. Chief Minister Jayalalitha, he said, had created a record among all Tamil Nadu Chief Ministers by speaking for 65 hours and 45 minutes. Figures for the earlier Chief Ministers were: Rajan (52 h 29 m), K Kamaraj (3 m during 1954 and 1957, and 16 m in 1962-63), M Bhakthavatsalam (44 h 52 m), C N Annadurai (21 h 4 m), M Karunanidhi (13 h 25 m in 1969-71; 62 h 53 m in 1971-76, and 22 h 29 m in 1989-91), and M G Ramachandran (56 h 21 m in 1977-80 and 23 h 54 m in 1980-84).

\$ 40 m profit without investment

(By G Srinivasan)

A Madras-based company set the ball rolling by initiating a joint-venture and three years later its American partner walked away with a \$ 40 m killing, raising a hornet's nest in the world of cellular telephones! Cellular Communication International (CCI), a little known US-based cellular operator, made this giant killing without investing a single dollar, a company Vice-President told a leading daily in New York towards the end of last year.

He said a unit of CCI waived its claim to participate in a cellular telephone service venture in New Delhi in exchange for \$ 40 million and most of the payments would be recorded as a gain in the fourth

quarter results. He, however, declined to say who made the payment. That's still unanswered, but this is the background:

Originally, Sterling Cellular, a joint venture between Madras-based Sterling Computers and CCI, was awarded the licence for two years in the Delhi High Court.

In another step, telecom giant Swiss Telcom, which had been courted by Sterling and Essar, is buying a 30 per cent stake in the Delhi cellular licence.

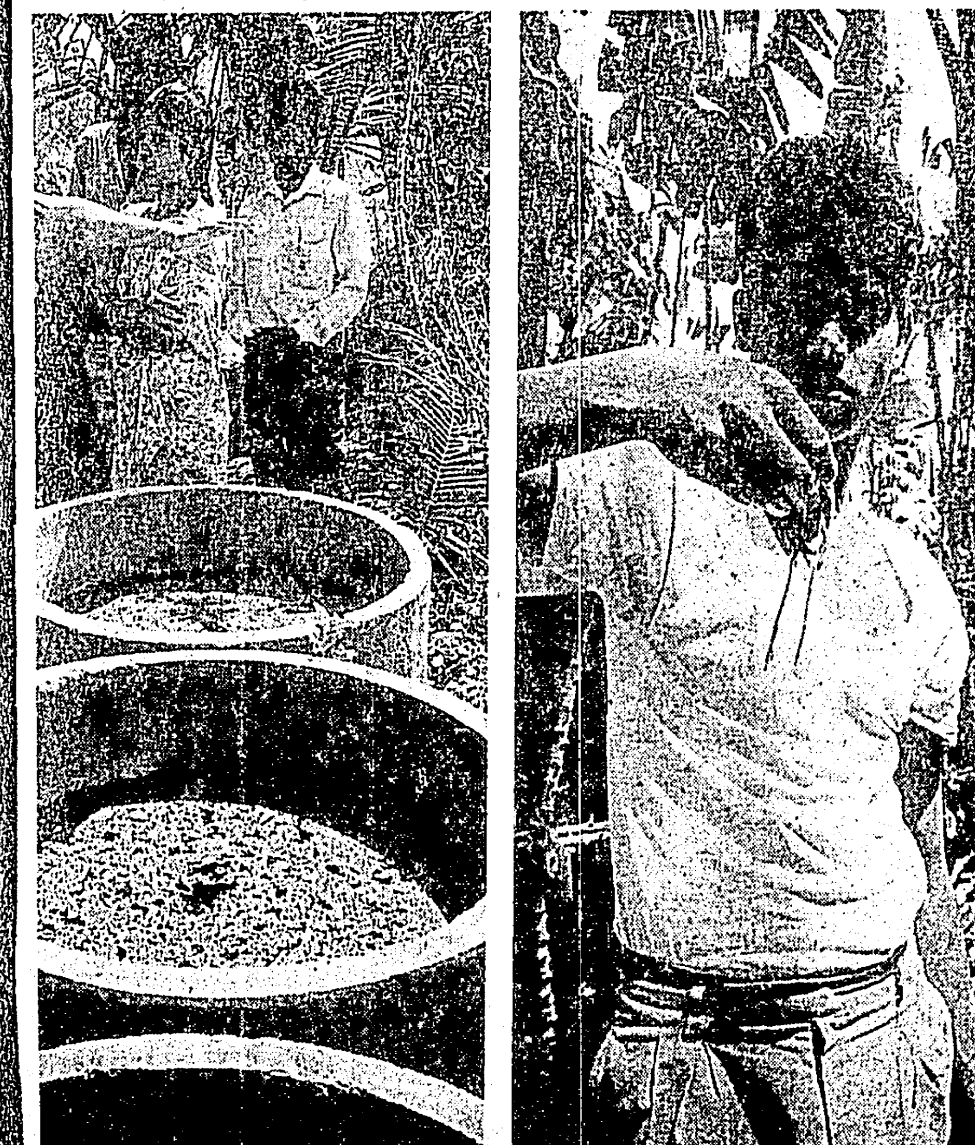
Interestingly, Sterling Cellular is now controlled by the Ruiaas of Essar and is being

marketed under the brandname of Essar Cellphone.

CCI's windfall gain of \$ 40 million came about by relinquishing its claim on the Delhi licence to enable Swiss Telecom to step in. CCI made its huge profit without investing a single dollar.

The proviso that a foreign partner is mandatory for companies bidding for a cellular telephone service is what led to this unintended gain to CCI. A little noticed but obvious fact, however, is that both the original partners have changed, a clear violation of the Supreme Court decision in this regard.

What's going to happen next? (Courtesy: The Telegraph, Calcutta)



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Trends and refinements

• World Cup Special
— by V Ramnarayan

At the start of the Wills World Cup, I had expressed the hope that it might be dominated by bowlers rather more than its predecessors. My hope has not exactly been fulfilled. The bat has so far maintained its sway over the ball and there have been some devastating innings of power and productivity.

The one encouraging aspect of the tournament from a bowling point of view has been the influence the spinners have exerted on the matches. Of the leg spinners, the ever-smiling Paul Strang of Zimbabwe has emerged as an exciting prospect with ability to turn the ball and bowl a very impressive googly. What is more, Strang has shown a refreshing willingness to toss the ball up, unafraid of being hit for a few, as happened at Kandy when the Sri Lankans went on a rampage. He came back from that mauling well enough to trouble opposing batsmen in the remaining matches.

Leg spin, in fact, has been prominent throughout this tournament. India, Pakistan and Australia have used it as their trump card. Anil Kumble has come a close second to Strang at the end of the league stage in the number of wickets taken, while Mushtaq has won at least two matches for Pakistan off the back of his hand. Even after South Africa and the English openers had shattered his bowling analysis, the Pakistani managed to bounce back with match-winning spells.

Kumble has been accurate on the whole except when Mark Taylor and Mark Waugh gave him stick. He has learnt to mix them up a bit, more than he used to in days past, and that has made him a harder nut to crack.

Increasingly, the leggies are coming on fairly early in the innings, sometimes in the first 15 overs. Shane Warne, though not exactly among the wickets, has commanded the greatest respect from every batsman, with his control and variety.

The increased use of spin for strategic advantage has not stopped with leg spin in this World Cup. Venkatapathy Raju has led the left arm spin brigade, in spite of being in and out of the team. He has succeeded in arresting the run rate as well as obtaining breakthroughs almost at will, as he did against the marauding Australians. Both Richard Illingworth and Aamir Sohail have proved economical (till the quarter-finals) and both have picked up a few wickets for England and Pakistan respectively. Asif Karim of Kenya returned some splendid figures and generally bowled in a beautiful arc that did him and Kenya proud. Among the off spinners, Aashish Kapoor did not disgrace himself on the solitary occasion he was tried, while Mark Waugh twice provided vital openings to win matches for his side.

With Manoj Prabhakar resorting to off spin, Sachin Tendulkar doing a more than useful job in that style and now Phil Defreitas switching to off

breaks in the quarter final against Sri Lanka, there is a sudden explosion in readymade off spinners. The great Jim Laker must indeed be turning in his grave at this slight to his art, but this is a trend brought on by the flat nature of pitches in the subcontinent and the massacre of the quickies on them. In addition, almost every fast bowler of any merit has now added to his repertoire an off break as a slower ball.

Of course, another popular ploy in the tournament is now almost standard practice with many teams. Sri Lanka leads the way with two pinch hitters opening the innings. Sanath Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwitharana have blazed a trail of attacking batsmanship in this tournament which, for sheer audacity and entertainment, value can have few parallels in recent cricket history. Sachin Tendulkar has played so many electrifying innings at the top of the order that a more conventional approach by the Indians has now become virtually unthinkable.

The South Africans have been the most flexible in terms of strategy, and they have not hesitated to replace their 'agriculturist' opener Palfaman with the more orthodox Andrew Hudson, who too has scored rapidly but in a more refined manner. They have studied their opponents very closely and adapted their game plan to suit each individual opposition team. Against Pakistan, for instance, they swept their way systematically to success, but adopted more orthodox tactics in other

encounters. They have kept Paul Adams largely a secret, perhaps the best kept one of this contest. By the time you read this, the value or otherwise of this particular tactic would have been there for all to see. If memory serves me right, no bowler of 'chinamen' and

left arm googlies has figured in a World Cup match before Paul Adams, proof in itself that the mega event has come a long way from its exciting but relatively unsophisticated beginnings in 1975.

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I, Anu Verghese, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated: 16-03-1996

ANU VERGHESE
Publisher

The Thamizh Thyagaiah

(Continued from P7)

musical genius, learning music by sheer mental osmosis. He made a mark in later years as a successful film-maker, actor and, above all, as an internationally known veena maestro. His name? S Balachandrar.

One fine morning in 1933, a letter from Kolhapur arrived at the office of a struggling fine arts magazine in Madras, *Sound and Shadow*. It was from a famed Marathi and Hindi film production company, Prabhath, and sought help in making a Tamil film, later to be titled *Sita Kalyanam*. The magazine (today a collector's item) was being run by a creative trio, Muthuswami Iyer, K Ramnath and A K Sekhar, under the patronage of a Mylapore art lover, G K Seshagiri. Seshagiri approached Sunjaram Iyer with the letter and, soon, a creative team, mostly of amateur actors, the lawyer's family, and the *Sound and Shadow* crew took train to Miraj en route to Kolhapur. Also travelling with them was Papanasam Sivan as the music composer. He was a total stranger to the world of cinema and it was a journey into the 'unknown'.

Sita Kalyanam, with Rajam as Rama, Jayalakshmi as Sita. Seshagiri as Ravana and with music composed by Papanasam Sivan, turned out to be a runaway success. (Interestingly, many took objection to Rajam and his sister playing husband and wife on screen! Such was the prudish state of society at the time!)

The songs composed by Papanasam Sivan proved popular. A

stranger to the new medium of cinema (movies began to talk and sing in Tamil in 1931 in H.M. Reddi's *Kalidas*), he had no idea about film music. But with his native genius he took the well-known compositions of Thyagaraja and Purandaradasa and used them, substituting the original Telugu and Kannada words with Tamil. The flavour of classical Carnatic music in its pristine form entered film music, thanks to Papanasam Sivan, and it found widespread acceptance with the moviegoers of the era.

Back in Papanasam, Sivan had known another creative person, a lawyer by profession. He too joined the movie world to develop his talents and skills. He was Krishnaswami Subramaniam. One of the pioneers of Indian cinema, he gave up the legal profession and began working in silent films, learning the craft under one of the masters of the medium, Raja Sandow. When K Subramaniam got his break as a film-maker with *Pavalakodi* (1934), his automatic choice to compose music was his old friend Papanasam Sivan.

Pavalakodi, a box-office hit, had as many as fifty songs, a fact proudly advertised. Many of the songs were rendered by M K Thyagaraja Bhagavathar and S D Subbulakshmi, both making their debut in movies.

Papanasam Sivan found a kindred soul in Thyagaraja Bhagavathar, whose honey-dew voice made Papanasam Sivan's compositions an ethereal ecstasy. The Papanasam Sivan-Thyagaraja Bhagavathar duo became

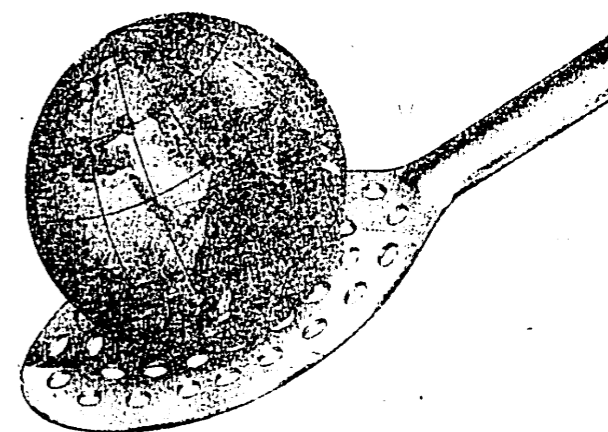
a permanent attraction in Tamil Cinema.

Bhagavathar went on to become a living legend, with super hits like *Chinthamani* (1937) and *Ambikapathi* (1937). One of the major reasons for the incredible success of the two films in a single year was Papanasam Sivan's soul-stirring music. Bhagavathar revered Papanasam Sivan and addressed him reverentially as 'Ayyah'. He would insist that his producers engage Papanasam Sivan first, with the first advance payment, and only then come to him to sign on the dotted line.

Despite entering the film world, Papanasam Sivan continued to compose *kirthanas* in classical Carnatic music, employing a wide variety of *ragas*. All of them were sung by volaries of Carnatic music, big and small, all over the land and even beyond. As a tribute to his musical genius and his contribution to classical music, especially to *Thamizh Isai*, he was hailed as 'Thamizh Thyagaiah'.

Ascetically lean, with an ever-hungry look, Papanasam Sivan seemed an ideal choice for Kuchela, the poor childhood companion of Lord Krishna. No wonder he was the automatic choice to play Kuchela on screen and he played the role in two fine Tamil films, *Bhaktha Kuchela* and *Kubera Kuchela*.

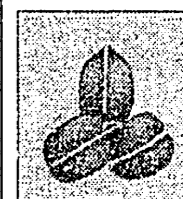
In memory of his greatness, a street has been named after him — Papanasam Sivan Street — in San Thomé, near which lived many a film star of his day.



It's a small world...
and we at MAC Industries,
realise it too often.



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 - 1994 - Exports cross Rs.75 crores. Recognised as a **Trading House**.
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- Now, isn't that once too often?



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