

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

INSIDE

- Tracking Neil Armstrong
- Managing solid waste
- Canal as a waterway
- Flip side of preservation
- Awaiting stadium decision

Vol. VII No. 4

FREE ISSUE

June 1-15, 1997

Sex education from Class 1?

Karnataka considering it; will we?

(By A Special Correspondent)

Urging sex education from Class I is Dr Latha Jagannathan, a member of the TTK family who moved to Bangalore in the late Seventies. She also advocates educating juniors on HIV, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases (STD), condoms and dealing with sexual abuse.

She is at present working on a syllabus for schools in Karnataka based on her premise that "sex education should start in Class I itself along with biology,

In addition, adolescence education, as it is officially called, will involve teaching the child how to handle unwanted attention, peer pressure, sibling rivalry, gender bias, drugs, alcohol, puberty and all the problems growing up entails. "We will teach a child to say 'No'," Dr Jagannathan states. "No to sexual abuse, peer pressure and, later in life, to unsafe sex."

Dr Jagannathan, a trustee of the TTK-supported Bangalore Medical Services Trust, has been working on this UNESCO

out appearing awkward or preaching, urges Dr Jagannathan. And she points the way:

"What is needed most urgently is to teach the teachers." That is where her Teachers' Training Manuals come in. "The books will tell a teacher how to teach the subject in class, counsel students and even detail exercises and projects for them to do."

But all this is a long way off. "The whole project is being done with the cooperation of several government agencies, and we have to carry out trials in some schools, before it forms part of the syllabus," she explains. And she will have to carry both politicians and officials with her.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We look forward to the Tamil Nadu Government following this education pattern. It should note that one of the country's highest rates of AIDS and HIV infection is in Tamil Nadu. Education will surely help bring that down.



moral science and mathematics".

In Class I, children will be taught about the parts of the body, including the hitherto "unmentionables". "They will be taught to take pride in their bodies," Dr Jagannathan explains. "Slowly they will graduate to good and bad touch. By Class VI, they will learn about changes in the body and puberty. In addition, the effects of tobacco and alcohol will be brought home with assignments like an interview with a chain smoker, alcoholic or addict. In Class VII, they will learn about the reproductive and circulatory system in detail.

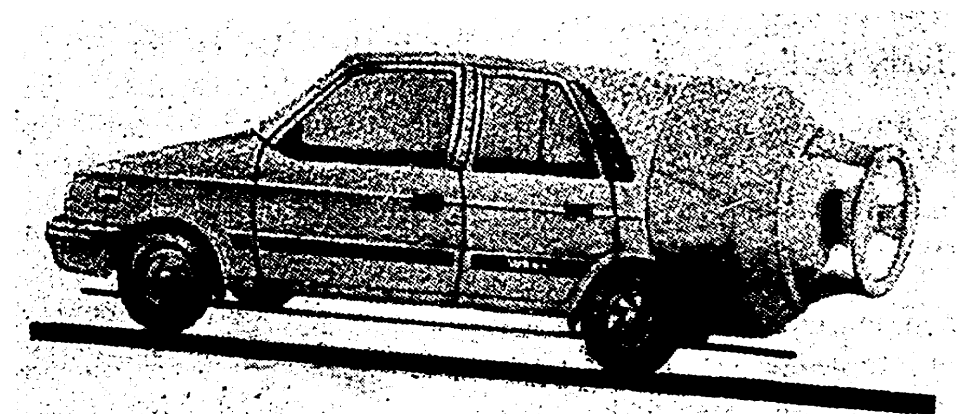
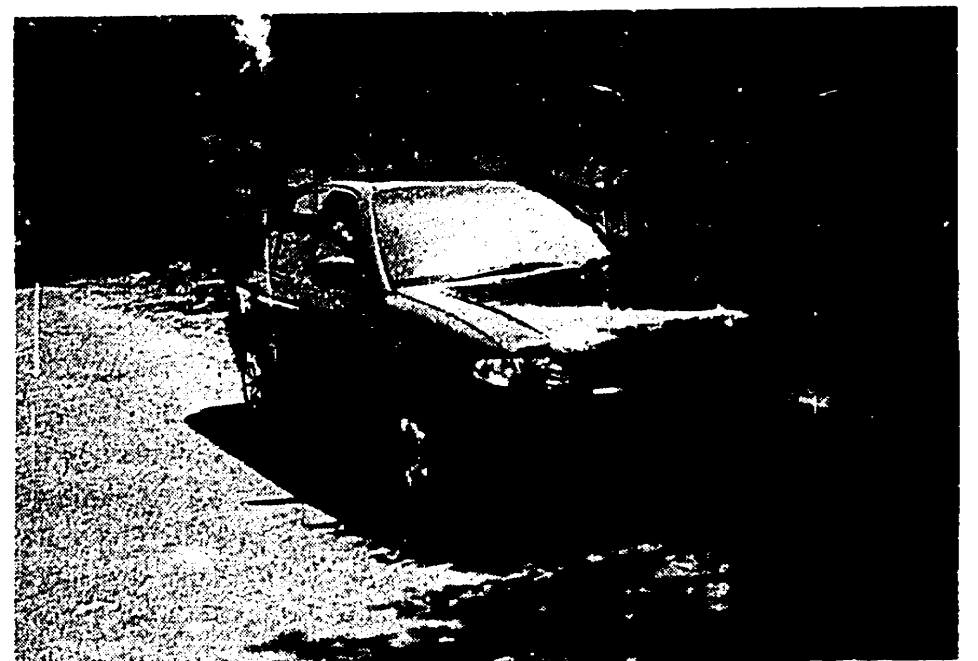
"Population education detailing reproductive rights and responsibilities, STDs, HIV, AIDS, contraception, drug abuse will follow in Classes VIII and IX.

"Class X students will be left alone as they are already loaded enough. Classes XI and XII will focus on the legal, social and economic issues involved in the spread of AIDS. 'Don't shun them' will be the message."

project for the last six months. Several meetings with teachers, educationists, drug specialists, child psychologists and government agencies, including the Education Department, have culminated in a detailed syllabus for primary and secondary school students.

The present level of sex education is totally inadequate, points out Dr Jagannathan. With conservatives in the field, the information in books is very little. What is needed is "a change in the mindset" to help students tackle the threatening world. But, she says, fears that such information will colour the minds of their children inhibit parents, especially in the Indian context. So, most parents feel awkward and are quite happy to let the schools handle it. "But when, as at present, teachers find it difficult to teach about the reproductive system, how will they teach children about contraception?" Dr Jagannathan asks.

The teachers therefore need to sensitise themselves to communicate the information with-



Of horse- and bullock-power

The Hyundai Accents are on the roads of Chennai even before the factory has been built. MMM had, in his April 1st column, mentioned that he

had heard that 66 Hyundais in three models had been unloaded in Chennai for testing purposes. The vehicles seen here did not seem to be under any test;

instead they seemed to be part of the relaxation and recreation scene in Chennai according to photographer RAJIND N. CHRISTY. Which makes us wonder how freely are car imports being allowed in India.

Adding to the confusion on Chennai's roads in the not too distant future will not only be these Hyundais, Fords and Lancers but also 'gas cars', it would seem from a folder distributed freely at road junctions recently. The not-too-good reproduction from the picture on the first page of the folder shows the 'car of tomorrow', with a rather ugly contraption at its rear. This 'imported kit' from Italy—where gas cars are stated to be popular—will ensure the equivalent running distance of 20 litres of petrol, it is claimed. Such economy may well put more vehicles on the road.

When all is said and done, however, bullock power would appear to be still needed by cars in Chennai!



An agenda for Singara Chennai - 2

Contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own Waste.
CHIEF SEATTLE

Chennai, on the threshold of growth and change, has come a long way from 1639. As the Chennai Metropolitan Area today, it covers about 1177 sq. km and comprises of, among other areas, the Corporation of Chennai, five Municipal towns, four townships, 27 town panchayats, 211 villages in 10 panchayat unions, and the Defence Cantonment Areas of St. Thomas' Mount-Pallavaram. I wonder whether we should be elated or concerned over such development.

The population in the metropolitan area is estimated to increase from 5.9 to 9.5 million between now and 2011! Of this 3.6 million increase, about two million will be added to the City and an equal number to the area outside. Such a burgeoning population, and the fact that its per capita income of about Rs.425 is the lowest among the four largest cities in the country, will certainly pose problems for the City administration.

Among these problems, a major one in the city is the management of solid waste. The problem arises because the volume of waste generated is beyond the capability of the existing systems and structures to manage effectively.

The sources of waste generation are, broadly, domestic, industrial, and others. The waste can either be bio-degradable or not. It terms of quality, it can either be non-toxic, or toxic and hazardous. All waste should, however, be collected, treated and disposed of, and it is in this process that problems arise, resulting in the situation where piles of garbage or other types of waste are dumped on the street, roads, and vacant spaces, creating conditions for ill-health and bad hygiene, exposing the entire community to the consequent risks.

The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority commissioned an international consultancy firm to study the problems of solid waste management in the Metropolitan Area and submit suitable recommendations. The findings are revealing, but the recommendations are open to discussion. On the basis of 1995-96 estimates, the solid waste in the Corporation area is around 2,400 tonnes a day. It is about 1,200 tonnes a day in the other parts of the Metropolitan Area. Of the 3,600 tonnes of waste a day needing management, 63 tonnes a day are hazardous wastes generated by industries in the Metropolitan Area.

It is relevant to mention that there are over 600 hospitals and

clinics in the Metropolitan Area. Only two of them have incinerators! Of the 25 to 50 tonnes a day of bio-medical waste generated, about 6 tonnes could be considered infectious. Unfortunately, there is no segregation of this in the hospitals and all the hospital waste is taken to the communal dustbins to be handled in the same manner as other municipal wastes.

* * *

Under the existing arrangements, the Corporation area is divided into ten zones, and the

We must manage solid waste better

responsibility for conservancy, which means street cleaning and waste collection, rests with the zonal officers, who work under the overall supervision and guidance of the Commissioner. The waste that is generated is usually dumped in the municipal dustbins or heaped on the roadside. This is collected by a 'primary collection service', using light vehicles, like bullock carts and tricycles, and taken to Transfer Stations, where the waste is dumped and kept till taken by heavier vehicles to the landfill sites for final disposal. Waste is also collected from the roadside or municipal dustbins by the heavy vehicles and taken directly to the landfill sites. This is called the 'secondary collection service'. There are seven Transfer Stations serving the ten zones, but for the entire Corporation area there are only two landfill sites.

In respect of the 'extended' areas, there are neither transfer stations nor landfill sites. No access is permitted to the landfill sites earmarked for the City. It is estimated that only about 50% of the waste that is generated in these areas is collected. The scenario is quite dismal.

In the City Area, "the dilapidated state of the transfer stations makes them extremely difficult to manage." As for the landfill sites, it is a matter of serious concern that "no site engineering, specifically designed to control the environmental impacts, or developed sanitary landfilling management practices are being employed". Also, the working conditions of the conservancy workers are pathetic. They handle all kinds of waste with their bare hands and without any protective gear. Many of them suffer from chronic and serious illnesses. It is clear that any improve-



Garbage by any other name — such as solid waste — remains an ugly, nose-wrinkling sight. And it's garbage, garbage everywhere in Chennai. How do we get rid of it in a manner better than what is practised in the City today? (Photograph by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

scientific methodology, also available easily from various countries.

Privatisation does not mean the parcelling out of small areas; that would be unviable and unattractive for the prospective entrepreneur. Given that about 3600 tonnes of waste has to be managed daily, this quantity could be divided among four entrepreneurs, so that each has a viable size of operation. The Government/Corporation should, however, evolve appropriate guidelines for their operation, which, among other things, should guarantee employment opportunity for conservancy staff who wish to work under the new management, while the rest could be redeployed by the Corporation. The staff will have to be retrained, better equipped, and presented with an attractive productivity-linked wage structure to secure the desired objectives.

In parallel, suitable legislation, which will require generators of waste to discharge their waste in a regulated manner and pay a price fixed on a cost-plus basis for the service availed of, should be put in place. For the areas inhabited by the weaker sections, the Government/Corporation can reimburse the operator the difference between the cost of service and the amount collected, so that there is no additional burden on them, while, at the same time, the area continues to be served.

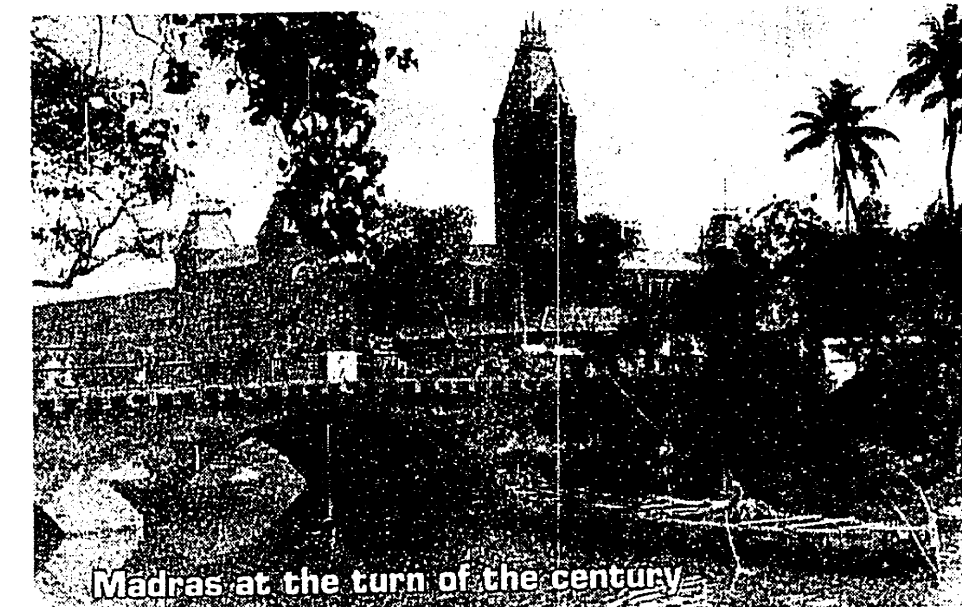
Obviously many details need to be worked out. But there should first be a willingness to get off the beaten track, look dispassionately at alternate workable models, and, finally, the courage to combat vested interests and the sceptics. The problems of solid waste management are too serious to be left only to inadequately equipped NGOs or overburdened systems. Neither can these problems be wished away. Answers have to be found if we are to have a better city.

* * *

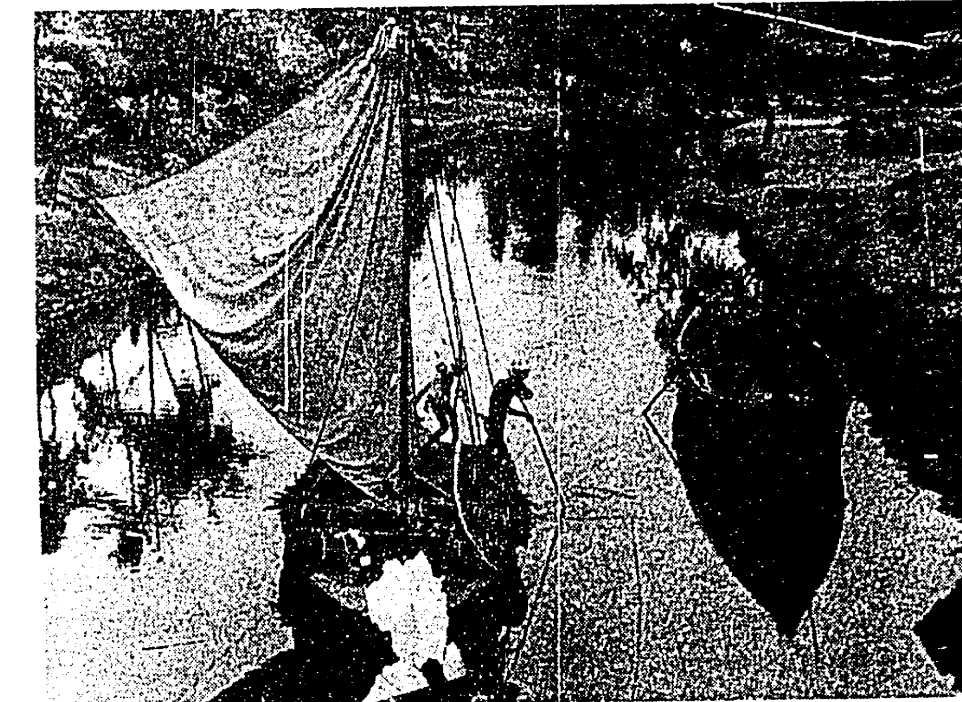
Management of landfill sites, on the other hand, is the most critical component in the entire sequence. Its proper and scientific management is of utmost importance to the entire Metropolitan Area. It is also not easy to convert this activity into a commercial enterprise overnight. Therefore, there would be advantage in the Corporation continuing to operate and manage it as a 'service', deploying its readily available technical manpower, and inducting

P.M. Belliappa
Retired Civil Servant and currently
an Environment Consultant

THE OLD ...



Madras at the turn of the century



A lifeline of the City was the Buckingham Canal as these two pictures show. The Vintage Vignettes greeting card on top, featuring a picture from their photographic collection of old Madras, shows the Canal in use in the 1920s by Central Station, while the other picture, from The Hindu archives, shows the canal still in use in the 1960s.

(Continued from last fortnight)

The Buckingham Canal enables the produce of the two great delta systems, Krishna and Godavari, to be brought to Madras from as far north as Kakinada. It has placed Madras in cheap and easy communication with no less than five districts and with the important towns of Kakinada, Vijayawada, Masulipatnam, Ongole and Nellore, besides numerous small trade centres. It has entirely superseded the uncertain and precarious coastal traffic which formerly existed at numerous minor ports along the coast.

The traffic in the Canal is mainly of country-boats of capacity ranging from 5 to 30 tons. The weight of an empty boat is from 3 to 5 tons. These boats are built locally with the help of men trained in the profession, but there is no well-equipped boat building yard. All boats sail day and night when the wind is suitable; otherwise they are towed or poled. The crew consists of 3 to 5 men. Passenger boats are now on the decline. The total number of boats that ply exceed 1200, of which about 300 ply in the South Canal. The North Canal transacts more business than the South Canal. The low water level prevents the plying of mechanical and heavier boats.

Cargo carried southwards in earlier days consisted principally of grains, condiments, salt, fish, firewood, chunam shells and charcoal, while those taken northwards were chiefly coconuts, coir, palmyrah rafters,

The problems existed even then

Slums have sprung up in large numbers on the Canal and River banks. Highly insanitary conditions prevail on River and Canal margins near these slums. Since the schemes of improvements to the Cooum and the Buckingham Canal cannot achieve the desired results without the removal of insanitation caused by the slums, it is of utmost importance that all the slums that have sprung up on the banks of the River and the Canal will have to be cleared as early as possible and the slum dwellers rehabilitated elsewhere.

* * *

A coastal road from Madras to Thanjavur and even further down to Tuticorin and Kanyakumari would perhaps have a great future.

...& THE NEW



...& RIGHT NOW



These pictures by RAJIND N CHRISTY show the Canal of today. They show the Canal on either side of Dr. Radhakrishnan Salai. On one side, the Canal is a morass and awaits attention. On the other side, attention has been paid to it in recent weeks and it has begun to look somewhat like what it used to be in the past. Will such 'good works' continue?

When the Canal was a waterway

fish, salt, jaggery and banana shoots. The bulk of the cargo at present consists of firewood, shell, salt and coconut leaves. A major portion of the cargo is conveyed to the city. The boats on most occasions go practically empty on their return trips, excepting for a limited quantity of provisions.

Madras mostly depends on the supply of firewood brought in by the boats. Large belts of salt pans and shell deposit are situated in the vicinity of the Canal. Hence, the cost of conveyance of these commodities by boats is cheaper than by road or rail, although the time taken for transport by boats is much more. According to the owner of a boat, which plies in the South Canal, the freight rates of boats are more or less half of lorry rates and it will take about 10 to 12 days to complete a trip from Marakanam to Madras, a distance of 62 miles.

The Canal had to face serious competition from road and rail transport in the years before the outbreak of the Second World War and Canal traffic was in the doldrums. Receipts dwindled, while the charges of maintenance became more and more, resulting in loss to the Government. With the Second World War, the Canal's traffic position took a favourable turn as the railways and motor lor-

ries were diverted mostly to the transport of War supplies. And now after the conclusion of the War, the position has not materially changed. If the Canal could be developed and power-driven vessels put into commission, it would definitely attract better traffic and to some extent relieve the congestion in the goods traffic of the railways.

The value of the goods conveyed through the Buckingham Canal at different periods will give you an idea of its traffic:
1892-93 — Rs.128.12 lakh;
1938-39 — 134; 1951-52 (before separation of Andhra State) — 415.55; 1956-57 (Madras State limits) — 284.07; and 1960-61 — 184.21.

Benefits

The Canal passes generally through what was, before its construction, a dreary waste of sand, but much of this barren and arid country has been greatly developed and improved owing to this cheap means of communication. Cultivation has been introduced or extended owing to the facilities given by the Canal for the drainage of lowlying lands, numerous casuarina and other plantations have been raised along its entire length and along the shores of adjacent backwaters.

Revenue

Revenue is realised by selling licences and by collecting other fees, such as wharfage and demurrage.

The capacity of the boats is determined by volumetric measurements and the fees are levied based on the tonnages so arrived. Cargo boats are charged Rs. 4.50 a ton a year and passenger boats Rs. 6 a ton a year. The average revenue realised in a year from both South and North Canals is about one lakh. The annual expenditure in maintaining the Canal, i.e., periodical clearance of silt, cutting open of sand bars at the mouths of rivers and cost of the necessary establishment for operating the locks etc., is about Rs. 2 lakh.

Various proposals have been considered from time to time to improve the Canal but the schemes have not materialised.

Plans for North Canal

Schemes for improving the North Buckingham Canal upto the limit of Madras State include widening and deepening of the Canal. It was proposed to widen the Canal upto 40 feet and deepen it upto 6 feet so that boats upto 100 tons capacity (including power boats) could ply. The width of the Canal was decided to be kept at 33 feet.

Plans for South Canal

It was proposed to deepen the Canal to (+)14.00 with a bed width of 33 feet. It was also proposed to excavate a link canal connecting Madras Harbour with the Cooum River so as to establish a continuous navigation line between the Harbour and the Buckingham Canal. The object was that exportable cargo such as iron and manganese ore and importable cargo such as timber from the Andamans could be transported economically through the Buckingham Canal. It was expected that such a proposal would also enable the drawing of tidal water of the sea during the high tide and eliminate the stench nuisance in the Cooum and the Buckingham Canal within the city limits.

The National Council of Applied Economic Research in its Report on the Techno-Economic Survey of Madras, 1960, discussing the improvements that may be made to the Buckingham Canal, stated:

"If the Buckingham Canal could be rendered navigable for larger power driven boats, it could take some of the strain off the railways. Further, if it could be joined with the Vedaranyam Canal, it could provide a cheap means of transport from Madras to Thanjavur through Cuddalore. There is also the possibility of linking the Canal to Madras Harbour to make transshipment easier. According to the findings of the Traffic Survey Report on the Buckingham and Vedaranyam Canals, the large expenditure necessary for

(Continued on Page 6)

State tennis awaits stadium decision

The magnificent ATP tournament held at the Nungambakkam Tennis Stadium, while an unqualified success, raises the question: After ATP what?

During the last monsoon, several leaks were reported in the roof of the stadium, more recently, during the tour event, the high standard of tennis on view was occasionally marred by the uneven bounce on the synthetic courts, especially the centre court. Apart from last

might have had an effect on the way the playing surface behaved. The stadium itself had been constructed in record time during the regime of the previous state government. Though it was a remarkable achievement, minor faults were, perhaps, unavoidable in the circumstances.

The TNTA submitted a proposal some six months ago to the State Government requesting that the stadium be handed over to them by the Sports De-

velopment Authority (SDA) of Tamil Nadu. Under the scheme proposed by the TNTA, camps would be conducted for trainees at the various tennis clinics in the city and the state, prior to important national events. There would also be regular coaching clinics for serious tennis players under the supervision of Hiten Joshi, the chief coach of the Association. Some of the courts would be made open for the public to be used on a 'Pay and Play' basis at a cost of Rs.50-100 an hour, the players bringing their own tennis balls. State players could play regularly at the stadium and hone their skills on the synthetic hardcourts which are the order of the day the world over,

except for clay in Europe and grass at a handful of centres like Wimbledon and Birmingham.

The TNTA would have to resort to fund-raising, through corporate sponsorship and collections from the public at tournament time, to build a corpus to maintain the courts. International tournaments would be an important feature, while at least three of the eight courts would be earmarked for the coaching schemes of the TNTA for juniors. The TNTA charges the least for such programmes, according to Premkumar — from Rs.175 to Rs. 375 a month. For the last 15 years these have been conducted at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium in Egmore by Hiten Joshi.

With the Tamil Nadu set up of 50 coaches training some 2500 players, including 100 seniors, at 150 centres, we can expect solid results once the stadium becomes part of TNTA's infrastructure.

Why is the Tamil Nadu Government taking its time over a decision regarding the handing over of the stadium to the TNTA? Is the government postponing a decision until a comprehensive decision can be taken covering all the stadia? And is Government delaying that decision because it does not have confidence in the ability of some of the sports bodies concerned to maintain the facilities once they are handed over to them?

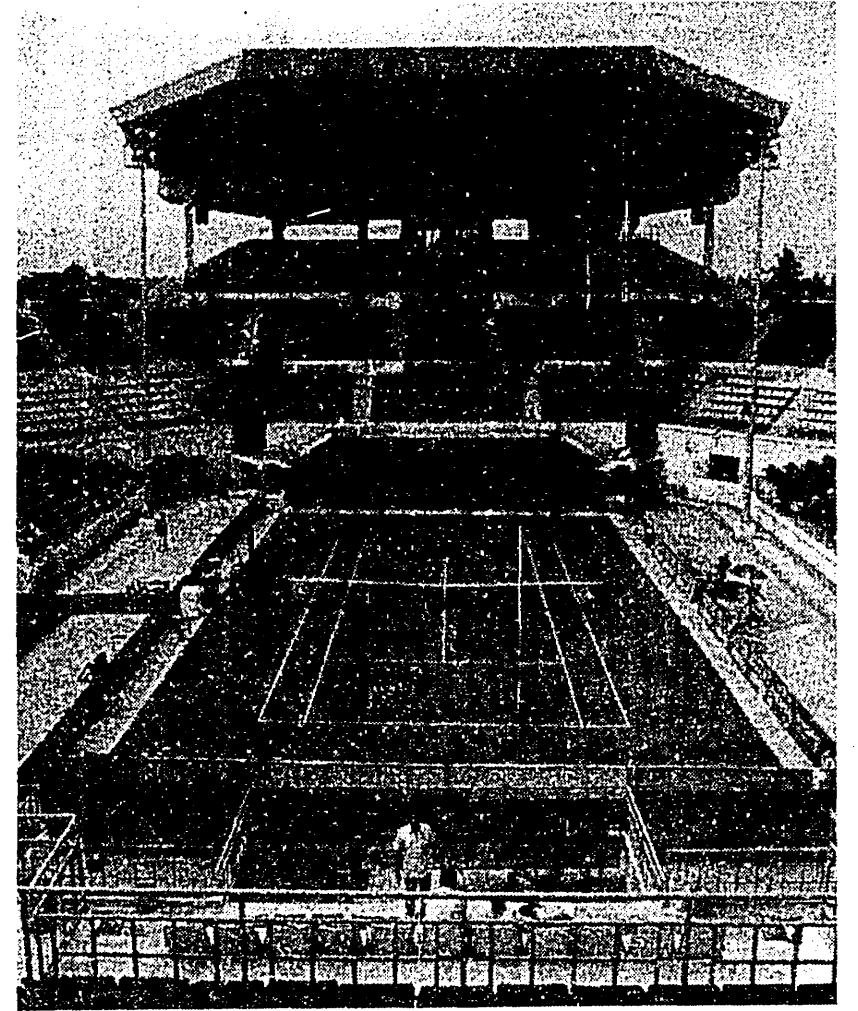
Premkumar believes that it is only a matter of time before the TNTA is entrusted with the task of maintaining the Nungambakkam Stadium. It has a leadership that can ensure the maintenance necessary. The Association has had some distinguished men at the helm of affairs in the past and it is now headed by N Kumar of the Sanmar Group. The Vice-Presidents, M A Alagappan, L Lakshmanan, Dr. S Srinivasan and V Narayanan, are all keen sportsmen who have headed corporate houses and bring rich administrative experience to the task of giving Tamil Nadu tennis a filip. Prof. Narasimhan, the Chief Referee, P B Santanakrishnan, the Treasurer, and Hiten Joshi, the Chief Coach, complete a capable team of tennis administrators. A concerted effort by all of them can make the Nungambakkam Tennis Stadium a beehive of activity and tennis capital of India.

• by V. Ramnarayan

year's ATP challenger event and this year's tournament, hardly any tennis has been played at this world class facility. Arising out of these shortfalls are these questions: Who is to maintain the stadium and the courts on an ongoing basis? Who will ensure their regular usage?

K Premakumar, Honorary Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association (TNTA), attempted to answer both questions when *Madras Musings* spoke to him. According to him, the construction faults had been rectified and the uneven bounce of the courts could be corrected without too much ado. The fact that the courts had been laid on 'lake area' land

velopment Authority (SDA) of Tamil Nadu. Under the scheme proposed by the TNTA, camps would be conducted for trainees at the various tennis clinics in the city and the state, prior to important national events. There would also be regular coaching clinics for serious tennis players under the supervision of Hiten Joshi, the chief coach of the Association. Some of the courts would be made open for the public to be used on a 'Pay and Play' basis at a cost of Rs.50-100 an hour, the players bringing their own tennis balls. State players could play regularly at the stadium and hone their skills on the synthetic hardcourts which are the order of the day the world over,



The Nungambakkam Tennis Stadium looks superb in this picture, taken soon after it was readied for the ATP competition. But what happens to the stadium after such once-in-a-blue-moon tournaments? What does Government want to do with such a splendid stadium?

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Tony Blair; 2. He has been beatified by the Roman Catholic Church; 3. Cuddalore; 4. Arun Nanda of Rediffusion; 5. Sweden's Jan-ove Waldner; 6. AVM's Minsara Kanavu; 7. The 'Core Cell'; 8. Prof. Bhabani Sengupta; 9. Veera Sundaralingam Transport Corpn; 10. Sonia Gandhi; 11. That Rajiv Gandhi was 'aware' of the commissions payed in the Bofors deal; 12. Malé in Maldives; 13. Khorasan province; 14. \$ 100 billion; 15. Deep Blue.
- * * *
16. Inmarsat Mini-M; 17. MGM Dizee World; 18. Kothawal Chavadi. 19. Moolakothalam in Washermanpet; 20. It has proposed to allow covered car parks areas in special buildings and exclude it from floor space calculations.

Nostalgia

When Madras beat the Olympians

I was delighted to read K.N. Prabhu's reminiscences of the vintage hockey which he witnessed in 1941 (MM, May 1). I would like to narrate what happened a decade later.

An outstanding victory was registered at the M.C.C. ground in 1952 when the Madras State Hockey Team, which I had the honour to captain, defeated by one goal to nil the Indian Olympic Team on its way to Helsinki, where it won the Gold Medal.

I had captained the Madras City Police Hockey Team from 1950 to 1953, when we won the annual League Tournament, conducted by the Madras Hockey Association, three years in succession (1950, 1951 and 1952). It was on the strength of my performance in the League Tournaments that I was selected by the Madras Hockey Associa-

tion to captain the State Team to meet the star Indian Olympic team captained by the famous K.D. Singh (Babu).

In my view, the defeat of the Indian Olympic Team was due to the spectators shouting out to the individuals in that star-studded team who, thereupon, tried to exhibit their individual brilliance instead of contributing to teamwork, which is the essence of success. This resulted in Madras registering the only victory in Indian history against an Olympic Team!

F.V. Arul

EDITOR'S NOTE: What's happened to Police hockey these days? Indeed, what's happened to Police sport? The Police should be a major contributor to Tamil Nadu sport; instead, it has virtually forgotten sport.

Madras Musings is supported as a public service by the following organisations:



**Amalgamations
Group**



Ashok Leyland



Bank of Madura Ltd.



The KCP Group



Pond's

SANMAR

The Sanmar Group

APCOM

Apcom Computers Ltd.

AVT

**A V Thomas
& Co. Ltd.**

**INDIA CEMENTS
LTD.**



**Murugappa
Group**

Rane

Rane Group



**Sundram Fasteners
Limited**