

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

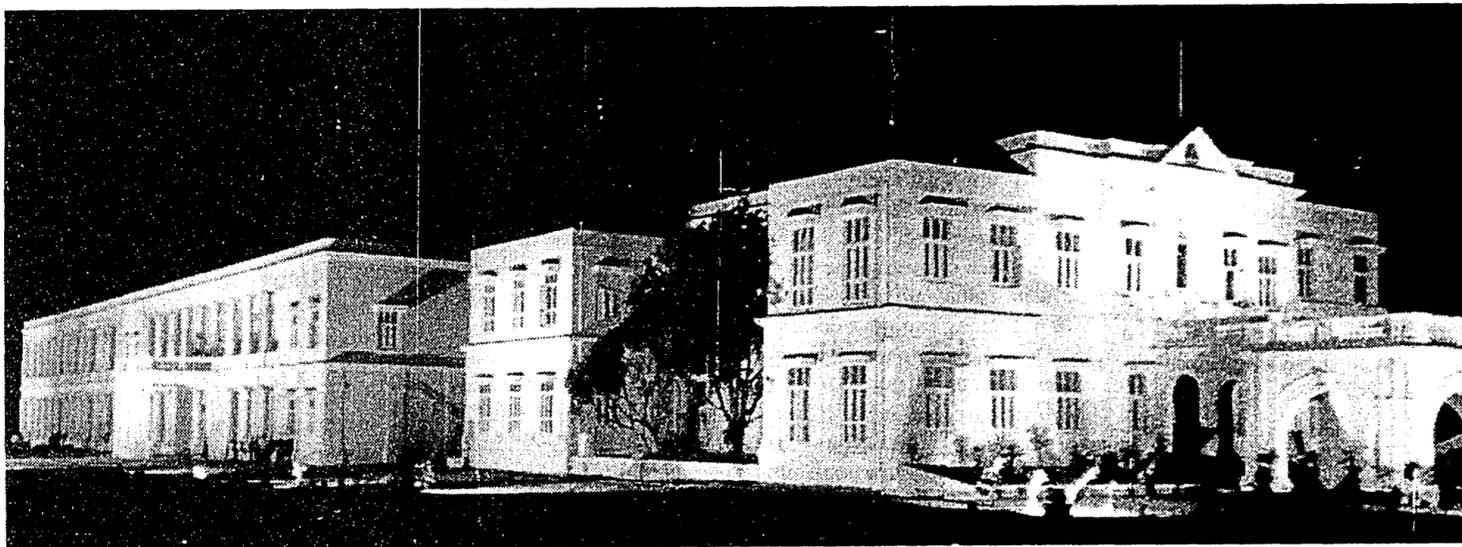
INSIDE

- Waiting for ACME
- An environment of books
- Restored heritage
- Of people and spaces
- Swimming instead of tennis

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FREE ISSUE

September 16-30, 1998



Police Headquarters, the DGP's Office, restored — and now glorying in a blaze of light at night. (Picture by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

Just the first step...

(By the Editor)

Thank you, Mr Chief Minister. Congratulations to the Police. Not only has Police Headquarters, the Director General of Police's office, been saved but it has been restored with much sensitivity to once again stand a handsome presence on Chennai's sea-front. And on the occasion of the low-key inauguration, so pleased were all with what had been effected that the Chief Minister came back to look at the floodlit building by night and the Police brass decided to move in as quickly as possible. Indeed, there was hardly anyone present on the occasion who was not proud of what had been achieved or who did not regret even thinking about pulling down the building a few years ago.

Now that everyone has seen what can be achieved with old buildings built to last, we hope this first step will lead to the restoration of more public buildings in Chennai. We hope the Government looks at the Marina buildings — Ice House, Presidency College, the PWD buildings, Chepauk Palace, Senate House and other University buildings — the buildings in the Fort and buildings elsewhere like Ripon Building, Town Hall, Government House and Rajaji (Banqueting) Hall, the old Town walls and several others. Restoration of them will go a long way towards making Chennai a handsome city and

Chepauk Palace, Government House, Senate House, Town Hall and many others must follow

set an example to others like the Railways, the Military, the Posts and the Banks.

All of them can take a cue from the restoration of the DGP building. Inevitably, there have been some false steps taken in restoring the building. The use of cement instead of lime and mortar may have been a quick way of completing restoration, but it was not the wisest of things to do. Plain

'Athangudi' tiles might have been a better way of flooring the interior rather than using ceramic tiles. The most unseemly features of the work are the use of red-and-black polished granite now a permanent feature in government construction for the entrance facing and the foyer flooring, the shoving in of three pieces of painted glass with irrelevant illustrations to fill three slim

arched 'windows', and the creation of a terracotta -type 'stopping space' in the portico. We didn't get to see what had been done on the first floor but to judge from the work on the ground floor, restoration has been fairly faithful except for these few warts.

Given the goodwill that has ensured what must overall be seen as reasonably good restoration, we hope such goodwill engenders further restoration of historic buildings throughout the city. And the Heritage Acts!

Traditional crafts still in waiting

The Metalcraft and Woodwork Departments of the Government College of Arts and Crafts have been closed down. Why are the younger generation being denied the richness of our traditions?

Another poser. If the departments are closed, how is it that the College's advertisement calling for applications for admission also mentions diploma courses in metalcraft and woodwork, two of the oldest subjects taught by the Institution? In fact, the history of these courses goes back to the beginning of the Institution.

The School of Arts and Crafts was established in Madras

in 1850, one of the first such institutions to be founded in India. In 1852, it called itself the Government School of Industrial Arts. Training was imparted in pottery, making bricks, ventilating and draining materials, ornamental balustrades and tiles, woodwork, furniture, metal engraving, jewellery, enamelling and so on. Even photography was added. Its wood and metalcrafts section employed several traditional craftsmen. Several students later found employment in various parts of the country as well as abroad. Even today, bricks with the distinctive stamp indicating that they were made at the School, as well as metal

decorative elements like grilles, are to be found in some of the buildings of that period.

In the late 1890s, the institution became the School of Arts and Crafts and in 1929 D.P. Roy Chowdhury became its first Indian principal. In 1957, his student, K C S Panniker, took over as principal and it was then that the school was upgraded as a college. But throughout these years there was a three-year diploma course in woodcarving and metalcrafts. Students of other disciplines, like painting and sculpture, were also allowed to attend these classes and learn the

(Continued on Page 7)

Let's bring back the glitter

(By The Editor)

The inauguration of the restored DGP Building was an occasion for the Police to put their best foot forward, and they certainly did it in style.

All the brass — and it seemed as though the entire Police brass in the City had turned out for the occasion — were in their starched, polished, shining best... but could not outshine the building they had at one time not believed in.

The scarlet-clad, beturbaned police lining the driveway with lances straight and pennants fluttering — even the one who seemed to be wearing headgear out of Kamal Hassan's *Marudhanayagam!* — the green uniformed band, and the welcoming Guard of Honour, all demonstrated how smart the Tamil Nadu Police can be when they want to. Gone was the image of the slovenly policeman on traffic duty, slouching around, waving his arms as though shooping cattle.

Here then is something for the Police to capitalise on and improve its public image. Can't the Mounted Police be put on permanent guard duty at the Headquarters Building as they once used to be at *Government House*? Can't the public be offered once again what we remember as a daily ceremony in front of the Police memorial... the Police band playing for an hour or so in the evenings till it was time to 'Beat the Retreat' and lower the flag to the strains of the buglers blowing 'The Last Post'? It was a haunting ceremony, following a melody-filled evening, that hundreds who used to come to the Marina once watched.

Once the lawns and gardens of the new building are laid, once a small parade square is developed before the Police Memorial, can we look forward to the band and the solemn ceremony every evening, Mr Director General of Police? It will create an immense amount of goodwill with the public and do much for the Police image, we are convinced.

And still, we're... Waiting for ACME!

It has been nearly seven years since Madras businessmen, spurred by the Madras Management Association, and the ICICI discussed the possibility of setting up an Academy of Management Excellence to compensate for the Indian Institute of Management that went to Lucknow instead of being awarded to Madras. One of the first issues of *Madras Musings* welcomed the dreams Madras industrial houses and ICICI had committed themselves to in order to develop an institution of excellence. Since then, *The Man From Madras Musings* has been waiting for ACME to become a reality, but what has materialised, an institution offering short-term courses and seminars, is a far cry from the dreams the planners had. What has gone wrong?

A lack of Government support is certainly one reason. Not only has official enthusiasm been lacking, but it has taken years for Government to allot 12 acres — now considered inadequate and in an inappropriate location by many. This struggle for land and a quest for a more positive Government attitude to such an institution appears to have sapped the staying power of the dreamers and even they, *MMM* finds, no longer talk about ACME with the same enthusiasm they used to.

What strikes *MMM* as rather curious is that when the 'big boys' of Mumbai began talking of a super management institute with tie-ups with the Kellogg and Wharton Schools of Management from the U.S.A., the Tamil Nadu Government immediately offered the promoters of the Rs.300 crore project 100 acres, with some of the infrastructure developed, in the Irungattukottai area at Rs. 6 lakh an acre, a song. Apparently the Ambanis and the Mahindras and the Godrejs of the world were not quite happy with the offer. Either it was because they wanted the land for free or they thought 40 kilometres was too far from the city for whiz kids, or because they were wooed more effectively; whatever the reason, they've accepted Hyderabad's offer for their Rs. 300 crore Indian School of Business.

With that the ground reality, might it not be time for the Tamil Nadu Government to show a little more enthusiasm about ACME and take on what is being given Hyderabad? Of course, such enthusiasm will only be generated if the sponsors are prepared to push as hard as the Mumbai crowd, it would seem to *MMM*.

Explosive debate

The Man From Madras Musings is a pacifist. He thinks even fists are bad. The members of the civic and social organisations he is associated with are convinced he thinks that even marching in protest is an act of violence. He believes in negotiation and the rule of law.

In this context, he thinks all nuclear weapons — and similar ultramodern weapons of mass destruction or death — are terrible. Whether American, Russian or Chinese, Indian or Pakistani, he feels that not only should they be banned but they should all be destroyed, every last one of them.

It is against this background that *MMM* reluctantly attended two meetings in the City recently, bowing to the insistence of several friends who felt *MMM's* knowledge of The Bomb was incomplete. Each of the two groups thought if *MMM* listened carefully to some of the best-known personalities in the country, every one of them superbly articulate, he'd be convinced to take sides. Unfortunately, the only side *MMM* seems to see is the one which says 'Ban the Bomb, All the Bombs — And a pox on all those who think otherwise'.

Unfortunately the two presentations did not seem to think along those lines. One seemed to think only the Indian Bomb should be buried and was not too concerned about The Bombs others had; the other insisted that India must hold tight to its Bomb so long as others considered those they had to be legitimate possessions. Stating all this at meetings separated by a couple of weeks were speakers who seemed more intent on scoring points with their cleverness — a la school debate — rather than with substance. To *MMM* it all sounded more amusing than explosive!

The presentations

In the first presentation by a group that grandiosely called itself 'Convention against Nuclear Arms', the 'Hindu Bomb' and the dangers it posed the world were eloquently presented by N Ram, Admiral Ramdas and Arundhati Roy. Whether Ram spoke about the Chinese Bomb in the same tenor when he was in China recently, *MMM* is not aware, but it was a little hard to take the Admiral's change of heart. At his level in the service he must have known what India was up to and *MMM* can't help but wonder why he didn't quit in those days if he was a non-believer or, if he had been a believer, what made him suddenly see the light now. As for the Booker Prize winner, she demonstrated that, if you were willing to put up with the length of her essay, she was a talented writer but she also made you wonder what she was talking about when she threw in *bon mots* like "becoming a mobile republic" if India stayed with The Bomb. Did she mean that she was going to throw her passport away and become a stateless person or that she would keep travelling from country to country so long as they were countries without Bombs? Or was it some abstruse metaphor beyond *MMM's* ken?

'Vigil', some days later, offered A P Venkateswaran, a former Foreign Secretary, the "real Arundhati" — Arundhati Ghose, another former IFS member who had long been involved with international discussions on controlling proliferation of The Bomb, and Arun Shourie, an 'eminent journalist' and presumably therefore a journalist who did not need to "scribble on pads". Cho Ramaswamy, who headed the list of speakers in the invitation, wisely ducked out — and the organisers didn't have a word to say about depriving people like *MMM* of their entertainment.

'Nuclear India — Asserting Identity' was Vigil's "enlightened response to the hogwash uttered by the Convention", *MMM* and an audience of average age over 50 were told. And if 'hogwash' was not strong enough a description, Arun Shourie used "vomit" enough times to make at least *MMM* nauseated at the lack of respect one journalist paid another's views. And we call ourselves a democracy!

Having fun with the quotes of somersaulting politicians and re-

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

sponding to Roy's views that The Bomb is alien by pointing out, "Speaking in English here, isn't that alien? Writing novels in an alien language, isn't that alien?", Shourie went on to state, as authoritatively as a Prime Minister from 1980 to 1995 would, that there was a definite "threat to India in 1981, 1983, 1988, 1990 and 1995". There apparently came a point where India had to say "enough is enough". And that was stated, as Venkateswaran would have it, by demonstrating our "only protection, a nuclear deterrent".

Venkateswaran also pointed to "a foreign lady heading the country's oldest party" — Annie Besant and others forgotten — announced that we "cannot surrender an inch of Indian territory" (and that included the Maharaja of Kashmir's), and spoke of "the greater glory of India" as demonstrated by the Green Revolution (Norman Borlaug had nothing to do with that!). The "real Arundhati" was more balanced — or was it babush? — talking all about the CTBT intricacies — leaving most of the audience, including *MMM*, in the dark. But she concluded by stating frankly that "nuclear weapons are for coercion, they are deterrents against rogue states, the jokers in the pack, so why should we adopt the present attitude of apology, particularly as India has no option but to go it alone?" At least that was stating a viewpoint clearly, without trying to be cute and clever.

Testing the waters

Tim Murari, Chennai-based author and columnist, who wrote and co-produced *Daarya* (The Square Circle), that film which received rave reviews overseas but never got publicly screened in India, has long felt that he would have been happier with the film (which *The Man From Madras Musings* had always thought a good production) if he had directed it. Directing a feature film appears to be Murari's ambition now, as he moves away from the novel. And as a first, learning step in this direction, he's had a shot at *The Only Thing*, a half-hour film he's written, scripted, and, to all intents and purposes, also produced besides directing it. Aimed at festivals overseas where short films are bought for a variety of different outlets, *The Only Thing* deals with columnist and writer Murari's favourite subject, almost obsession, CORRUPTION. Murari sees all India's ills rooted in this bit of tradition and his 'short' gives him another chance to sound off on the root of all evil. The story, which owes something to Dorian Gray and something to O Henry too, is played out by an amateur cast, family, friends, neighbours and several from the Madras Players. Stiltedly acted, repetitious at times — making it perhaps five minutes too long — and with rather incongruous background music, the well-shot film does show two things: Tim still tells a story well and now he also shows an eye for the visual. *MMM* might quibble with Tim treading a track he's beaten so much that it's become predictable, but he can't fault the way the film looks: Good.

In brief

★ Discussing at the Madras Book Club A Psychological Strategy for Alternative Human Development — *India's Performance Since Independence*, by Prayag Mehta, Prof S Swaminathan, Business Editor of *The Hindu*, said there is much that can be debated as possibly erroneous in the book, but it was a book that left him profoundly disturbed and concerned about the future of India. Recommending it as a book to awake concern in all of us, he nevertheless had few answers to the dismal scenario the book presented for the future. But the book's views on a total lack of concern for the have-nots by an administration (both political and bureaucratic) concerned only with itself, reminded *The Man From Madras Musings* of something a fellow economist and academician of Swaminathan's, Prof Ambrarajan, formerly of IIT, Chennai, had to say recently in another forum: What India needs to get out of the mire is "good administration, honest administration, effective administration, disciplined administration and determined administration". But both Mehta and

Swaminathan don't feel too sanguine about the prospects of that.

★ Chennai's newest discussion group, the Centre for Contemporary Studies, was recently inaugurated by N Ram, Editor of *Frontline*, who hoped it would move on to discussing truly contemporary issues like Pokhran II and the Kaveri dispute. On the eve of his departure for China, Ram was just recovering from his strenuous efforts to 'ban the Indian Bomb'. *The Man From Madras Musings* hoped he would advocate with equal vigour in Beijing the banning of the Chinese Bomb. But that's an aside; the CCS was Ram's concern for the evening. And he wished it well and hoped the dream of its founder Prof Gopalakrishnan, once of MCC, Presidency and S.V. University, Tirupati, would come true eventually. That dream is to make the Centre the Indian International Centre of Chennai. Prof Gopalakrishnan's main speaker on the occasion of the inauguration was film historian Randor Guy, who spoke of the 'Tamil Film and Politics'. In a long song, dialogue and anecdote-filled talk, he made the point that decades before the Dravidian Movement and the DMK made use of the film as the medium to carry its message, those fighting for Swatantra and Swadeshi had dared the British authorities and carried the messages of both in their films. No, it was not the DMK that was the pioneer in this imaginative practice; it was directors like Haridas, A Narayanan and K Subrahmanyam. What the DMK did was to put the message into the language of the man-in-the-street and, thereby, achieve a greater impact.

Business briefs

★ Hindustan Lever's well-known Corporate Communications head Irfan Khan recently told a Chennai audience that a "disaster" awaits India owing to the Y2K problem. India has been taking the danger coolly, almost as though it did not understand the consequences, Khan pointed out. All goods, including consumer durables, which have date chips will "simply stop working", he warned. *The Man From Madras Musings* wonders why the country has not woken up to the threat if the situation is likely to be as dire as Khan predicts it will be. ★ Enron must have its way or it is not interested in undertaking even projects it has bid for in India. That, to *The Man From Madras Musings*, seems the message from Enron dropping its plans to put up a liquid-fuel-based power project in Ranipet. On the other hand, an Ashok Leyland Power-Fiat consortium has agreed to go ahead with four 200-300 MW projects in Gummidipoondi, Chengalpattu, Cuddalore and Pallipalayam on the same terms as were offered for the 242-MW short gestation Enron project. — *MMM*

OUR READERS WRITE



Almost boring

We have been reading your paper since it started. Earlier we used to like it. But, since last 2 years or so, you have become uninteresting to the point of boring. Some of your articles are absolutely rotten. We feel, having lived in 8 major cities of India, that there are too many problems in Chennai than in any other city though everywhere the quality of life has drastically gone down in India. Instead of being a pro-active journal in cleaning up the mess of this city and being after the authorities, you have started writing too much on philosophical and other dry abstract subjects.

This city has some unique nonsenses like being the noisiest city of the world (authenticated in some publication) with petrifying noises of autos, lorries, corporation vehicles, dumpers, fish carts without silencers or tampered ones. Then it is the most polluted city on a per capita vehicle basis. Rest of India is doing something since '92. Here, it is only a 'business' of PVC stickers started recently. The road sense in Madras just does not exist with all kinds of vehicles and many people like animals. Instead of writing more on these civic nuisances, you are doing something else!

Many of our friends even say that the only thing left good about your tabloid is the white paper it is printed on.

R. Lakshmi
Chennai 600 039

Dear Lakshmi,

We don't usually publish anonymous letters or letters without the writer's address, but we make an exception this time because it gives us the opportunity to record a couple of points about *Madras Musings*.

In the first instance, *Madras Musings* is sent only to those who have requested copies and to a few distributing points where copies can be voluntarily picked up. We don't know which category you belong to, but if you are on the mailing list and don't like the copies you receive, all you have to do is tell us and we will stop sending them to you (provided you mention your full address). On

the other hand, if you pick up a copy at any one of the 15 outlets *Madras Musings* is placed in, you are under no compulsion to pick up a copy if you don't like its contents.

As for the contents, we do not intend to be a drain inspector's report, only publishing pictures and information about garbage, air and other pollution, traffic chaos, noise etc. We do so from time to time when there is something NEW to be added, but realise that there is more to caring for Madras than is Chennai than just inspecting drains, so to speak. We therefore look at people, places, events and a wide variety of failures and successes in Chennai and the State it is capital of. Anyone not interested in any of this is welcome to write in to us and request removal from the mailing list; your copy will find its way to one of the fifty or so new enthusiasts writing in each fortnight requesting copies.

Madras Musings is not being published to find fault with any and everything. It aims to help develop a better Chennai and that, we believe, is not done by only fault-finding.

— The Editor

'India House' it was

The building on TTK Road photographed by Rajind Christy (MM July 16th) was, if I remember right, called "India House" in the Thirties and early Forties.

I have been there, as it belonged to parents of a QMC classmate of mine called P. Saraswathi. I have lost touch with her. I do not remember her father's name. I also never found out why it was called 'India House'. Was special permission needed to call it so?

The house within was very tastefully decorated and had a beautiful garden. One would call it palatial. The design is more or less the same as the Railway bungalows on Sterling Road with additional trellis work which lent an artistic touch.

Anna Varkki
9, Central Street,
Kilpauk Garden Colony,
Chennai 600 010.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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NOSTALGIA

The turf that Tarrant laid

And desolation saddened all the green". I was certainly saddened by a picture in *The Hindu* of the desolation evident at the Presidency College cricket ground. It was sent to me by my brother-in-law M.S. Padmanabhan who had also played on it when he turned out for Pachaiaappa's in the Duncan Memorial Cup. As it belonged to my alma mater, he thought it would interest me.

I was shocked to notice how the ground had been ravaged. The cement stands, grassy terraces in my time, were chipped and broken and the overhead roof had disappeared. The outfield had now been turned into an encampment by some tribals. It was all so depressing.

I had witnessed my first Ranji Trophy match here in the Forties. It was between Madras and their traditional foes, Mysore. It had rained the previous night, providing Ram Singh just the pitch he needed for his sharp spin. I think only Frank was able to stand up to him.

Intruders on trains

Irrespective of your holding a confirmed reservation for a berth for travel from Chennai to Mettupalayam or Coimbatore in the Nilgiri Express or Cheran Express, you cannot lie down between Chennai and Arakkonam. Every night, more so on week days, several regular commuters between Arakkonam and Chennai board the reserved compartments and occupy any seat that is handy. Some of them are railway employees returning home after a day's work, while others hold season tickets for travel in suburban trains. But all of them are intruders in the reserved compartment.

These commuters do everything possible to irritate the long-distance travellers, though quite unintentionally. Some get on to the upper berth, push the luggage to one corner and lie down; others play cards; most spend the time talking as loud as possible. They do not care for any complaints from the long-distance passengers, replying that they would get down at Arakkonam. And, the Ticket Examiner/Guard neither checks their tickets, nor asks them to leave the compartment.

The situation is a common happening in the S-1 and S-2 compartments of the Nilgiris Express, as these are the ones that are within an easy walk to the commuters, yet these are the compartments that take passengers up to Mettupalayam. What an unpleasant beginning to long-distance travel! Will the authorities put a stop to it?

P.S. Sundar
'Skandam',
Reilly Compound,
Coonoor 643 101.

common foe, Shanmugam, Alva and Alaganan.

I remember this ground, for on it I came near to recording a hat-trick; all good batsmen, Ramdas Mardi, T. Vasudevan and Venkappa Rai, off four balls. And I also benefitted from the sporting gesture of the captain Mardi who recalled me when I was given out after I had chipped a half volley on the ground before being caught in the slips. Needless to say, his gesture cost him the match.

That turf indeed was hallowed, for it was laid by Frank Tarrant — from the Bulli Creek in Melbourne — the first Aussie import, long before Lillee and Simpson came on the scene!

And at lunch time, there was always Coimbatore Krishna Iyer's to go to — for the succulent potato bondas and piping hot coffee it served. All this has vanished today. No longer part of the Madras of my youth.

— K.N. Prabhu
Mumbai.

What use stadia?

Stadia are built at enormous cost collected through donations and through public money. To maintain these stadia for future use is the work of the State Government. We do not have sportsmen in the Government ranks and we care little about the stadia after an important tournament.

Unless the Govt. recognise sport and sporting talent in the state, the writing is on the wall.

C.K. Subramaniam
Plot 1595, J Block,
Anukul Apts I Floor,
Anna Nagar (W),
Chennai 600 040.

Renovation incomplete

Tourist resorts and pilgrim centres are distinct entities and there is absolutely no reason to interfere with the religious fervour at Rameswaram in the name of 'Tourism development' by converting it into a beach resort (MM, August 16th). It has been an all-India pilgrim centre from time immemorial. Varanasi and Rameswaram are two important pilgrim centres which have been helping national integration for centuries. If at all, let the Government take up and complete the ongoing renovation of the temple at Rameswaram, which is at present moving at a snail's pace perhaps due to paucity of funds.

T.M. Sundararaman
No.19, Nallappan Street,
Mylapour, Chennai 600 004.

Must benefit all

The great Dr. Srinivasan's work (MM), is a boon to thousands with lightless eyes. We must be proud that a scientist from Chennai has done remarkable work in the U.S. and made this landmark dis-

covery. This mode of treatment should be extended to every nook and corner of the country, particularly to the poor village folk.

P.S. Krishnamurthy
28, Ramanatha Iyer Street,
Gobichettipalayam
Pariyari District - 638 452.

More of the same

We have to be proud of our Indian scientists, especially from Chennai. Dr Srinivasan has showed a new way to Light. May we have more such nice articles.

A Mahalingam
5 MGR Street, Charles Nagar,
Pattabiram,
Chennai 600 072.

Pedestrian perils

Around 1.30 p.m. on July 10th, I was crossing Nungambakkam High Road near Sterling Road junction when a speeding young cyclist from the wrong side, ignoring the 'no-entry' sign, knocked me down. God's Will saved me from making the obituary column; however, view the situation:

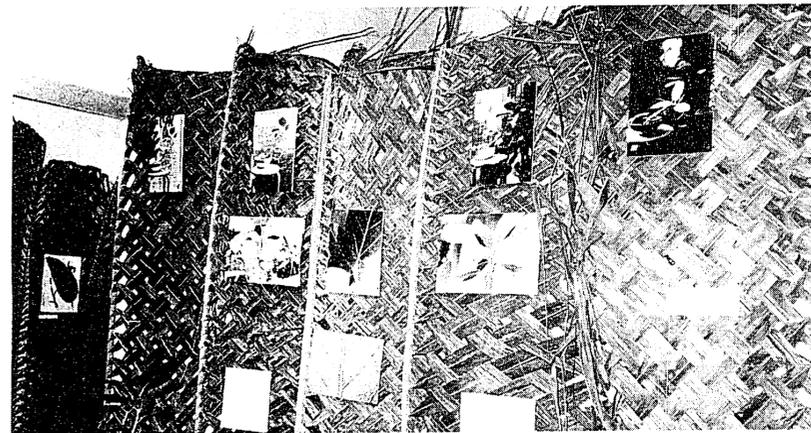
- No constable to regulate traffic between Haddow's Road Jn., and the end of N.H. Road, which is a 'one-way' zone with continuous traffic.
- All vehicles tend to press the accelerator as they approach pedestrian crossings.
- Cyclists exhibit least concern for others or road rules. This danger has been indicated on many occasions but unfortunately persists. Won't someone do something about it?

P.S. Sundaram
75, South Mada Street,
Tiruvanniyur,
Chennai 600 041.

In the world of leaf life

When *Leaf Life** was recently released in Chennai, the city discovered Sirish Rao, its talented author and illustrator.

It was the Chennai publishing link that brought 22-year-old Sirish to the city. He felt comfortable here and decided to make it a home of sorts. He doesn't dream any more of Ladakh or Laos for a hearth. "Now that I have come to Madras, I like this city. Somewhere I feel it retains a character. After meeting Gita and Helmut Wolf of Tara, the Besant Nagar publishers, and some illustrators in the Tenkasi School and working with them, I realised I had to come out of the forests every now and then. I had begun to get rusty. People who do alternative things should never give up what cities have to offer. I realise there are a lot of people here who are doing interesting things, a lot of people who are very strong in their areas of study. I like shows,



The photo exhibition of leaves caught on film and mounted on a leaf stand.

schools. He did his A Levels in English Literature from the Valley School (of the Krishnamurti Foundation, India) and spent the next two years at the Centre for Learning (another Krishnamurti-inspired organisation) which has a post-school programme which allows students a little time and space to pause and reflect, gives them a couple of years to be independent, to experiment with work and jobs, meet people, travel, experience life as it were, without the pressure of having to make a long-term decision or commitment. CFL offered Sirish opportunities, saying, "If you do not want to go into the mainstream, but you are

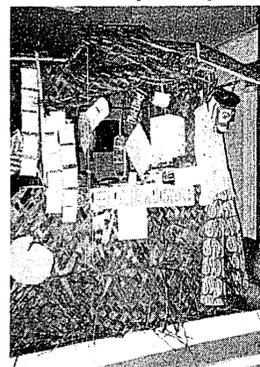


Sirish Rao, the leaf collector.

giant earthworms. "In the mornings I would go searching for them. I would swim across the swollen river and start turning up the leaves on the forest floor. And suddenly, I would find one darting across, a metre long and electric blue in colour". He began to get a feel for Nature's pace and its rhythms and he turned more animal in his responses and alertness. And his focus moved to the leaf.

It has been five years and he continues to collect leaves, study them and understand their role in the larger context. He continues to take copious notes and make elaborate sketches.

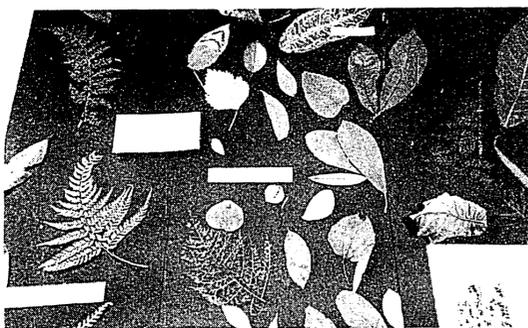
Climbing mountains is another compelling passion whether it is in the Himalaya or in the Caucasus. And it was in the Himalaya he met Gita Wolf. When he showed her his leaf collection and field notes, she urged him not to "keep it as a private



Leaf products in a leaf stall. (Photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

not sure, we'll help you through the first couple of years by giving you contacts and mentoring, to make sure that you do not get confused and go wandering off. It is difficult to step out on your own, when you want to do things differently and when there is nothing opening up."

"My interest was mainly the outdoors. I was fairly sure that if I got into conventional academics I would be pretty unhappy and the kind of things I wanted to learn would not be offered at all, recalls Sirish. So he approached the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary in Kerala and went into the rain forests. But the overabundance of natural life and the avalanche of detail overwhelmed him. He knew he had to narrow down his focus to something more basic. So he took up a small project, studying



Leaves in all their variety.

films, and theatre. I like intellectual stimulation; I like academics and studies...When I am not travelling or back in the mountains, this is perhaps where I will be."

Sirish Rao however is primarily an 'outdoors' young man. Born and brought up in Bangalore, he and his parents and his three brothers would every year go out to do something together, usually cycling trips, sometimes in the Western Ghats. Most weekends were spent together on climbing expeditions outside Bangalore. With a mother who is a swimming instructor, "we all swam from the time we were babies". Sirish was equally fortunate with his

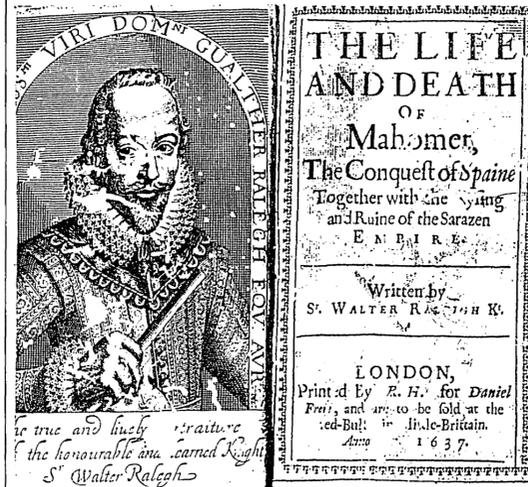
The first in Tara Publishing's 'Relating to Nature' series targeted at children.

An environment of books

Wedded to books

When *The Life and Death of Mahomet* by Sir Walter Raleigh was published for the first time in 1637, Madras that is Chennai was yet to be born. But the book did catch up in time with the sleepy little village that became a metropolis.

This book and other such invaluable antiquarian books published in the last three hundred years are part of a private collection in the city, built up lovingly over the years by book crazy V. Sundaram, formerly of the IAS. Entering Sundaram's library is



The frontispiece and title page of a book older than Madras that is Chennai. Sir Walter Raleigh's book is the oldest in V. Sundaram's collection.

The one major war Sirish did not have to wage was with parents. "My parents were extremely supportive so I didn't have to fight uphill on that. As far as financial support is concerned, I sort of earned my way through all this. When I was 18, I decided to be financially independent, though my parents were more than willing to support me... It is definitely possible to plunge into doing what you want to do. But you will have to have the courage to say, look, I'll take what comes. There are part-time jobs for almost anything."

He worked for a while as a swimming instructor. "You can make some money fairly quickly when you take on business executives. It is not a very pleasant job, but then, as I say, it gives me enough satisfaction to swim any time." He found several takers for gardeners who know about plants, whom they could talk with and trust. He did landscaping. He offered himself as an instructor in games, football. "As far as mountaineering went, there would be some sports council or agency or something who would cover my expenses... I did not need all that much money."

Good work, like Sirish's, even though it may not be mainstream stuff, even though it may not be

(Continued on Page 7)



The Sundarams... wedded to books.

like boarding a time machine to the past. Here, an aura of learning pervades the atmosphere as Newton, Gandhi, Shakespeare, Keats, Darwin and scores of others who've left their impress on history exist side by side in a single room, in books, many of which are first editions.

Sundaram has a collection of over 20,000 books in what he has named the 'Sir William Jones Institute of Indological Studies' in memory of the pioneer of Oriental studies who also established The Asiatic Society in Calcutta. He quotes Sir William Jones: 'If it now be asked what are the intended objects of our inquiries, we answer: Man and Nature'. "That is what my books are about. Man and Nature down the ages, I would add."

Has he read all his books or have they been collected just for the pleasure of collecting? "To put it in the words of Churchill,"

replies Sundaram, "Some of these books are my close friends, some of them my casual acquaintances and some my passionate mistresses." This fact becomes evident when Sundaram speaks about book after book, pointing out interesting details about each of them.

"This is a really interesting book," Sundaram says and brings out another ancient treasure printed on parchment paper and bound artistically. But he has said this about a fifty times by now and I am almost buried in the books he has put around me.

Some of these books are really priceless. They have autographs and notes scribbled on them by their famous authors or users. The handwriting of Sir William Jones, Winston Churchill, Subramania Bharati, Nobel Laureate Chandrasekhar, Nehru and many other great men figure in his beloved collection.

by K. HEMA

possession and was gifted after his death by his wife to the Oxford Public Library. It was then auctioned in England and is now in India. If you remember that *Canterbury Tales* was auctioned off recently for \$ 40,000, there must be a small fortune in Sundaram's collection. But Sundaram is averse to auctioning off his books. Apart from a few books he has put on sale at 'The Book Shop' in Spencer Plaza, Sundaram hopes to have his entire collection bought by one major institution. He's still looking for that buyer.

Sundaram has been collecting

books since he was fifteen. Down the years, he has been spending about one-fifth of his salary on acquiring these books. Now at 56, Sundaram is still collecting.

"It was my father who introduced the world of books to me," he fondly remembers. "From then on, it was a passion that grew from one book to another. But I never thought it would become a book collection."

His wife Padma, an artist and art lover, assists him in his endeavours. "It is lucky that we share the same tastes. I couldn't have managed to do this alone", says Sundaram. "This" is not just books. Sundaram also has a collection of coins, stamps, antique postcards from around the world, and audio records of famous speeches, such as Nehru's 'Trust with destiny'.

Sundaram sought voluntary retirement from the Civil Service a few years ago. "The civil service are no longer a place for people with independent minds," he says. And so he has moved on. The effect of being in the company of great books has rubbed off on him. He has already published an anthology of essays and is currently working on a comprehensive history of South India, right from the pre-Sangam era upto 1947.

V. Sundaram has had a memorable career as a Civilian. But it is as a collector of books — and an avid quoter from them (he has a prodigious memory) that he is best known.

Fun with old newspapers — and a book

Books seem to be the focus these days in Chennai. That too children's books. If Tara Publishing's *Leaf Life* by Sirish Rao created a stir, with an exhibition on leaves accompanying its release at the Alliance Francaise, Tulika's release of *Priya's Day* at Manasthala had children from Bala Mandir listening to the rendering of the story by Jeeva of Good Books (distributors of Tara and Tulika books) and then receiving a few copies.

Jeeva did the story-telling dramatically, accompanied by music, and as she told the story, she used a newspaper to tear and make the objects described in the story.

The book is bilingual (English and Tamil on facing pages) and also interactive, activities being suggested for children such as cutting and pasting bits of newspaper on the pictures in the book.

Cathy Spagnoli who has written the book, has been coming to Chennai for a couple of de-

ces now. The American professional storyteller married Cholamandal sculptor Paramasivam and has settled in an island in Seattle, U.S. In the US, she has been telling stories in hospitals, schools, prisons and other community institutions. In some communities, she even received baby things for her newborn in return for stories. The baby Manu is now a strapping young man. Cathy was here recently and presented some workshops for teachers and also at DakshinaChitra.

Priya's Day was created to be told, says the author. The use of

old newspaper to show the many objects in the story is explained at the back of the book. The story itself is just a skeleton to get the objects together.

It was author's day at the AMM Afterschool. Little green chairs with the word 'Author' pasted on them stood on the makeshift dais and little lapel microphones lay on the ground. The authors were all busy running around. But when all the guests had arrived, the children were there to read their own books with a quiet dignity.

"The author lives in Kotturpuram with her parents..." went one little one with a lisp. Little Subbu dedicated his book to "Veeru because he has a cow..." Subbu's story was about a cow who learns to be kind to other animals. There were other stories all written and illustrated by the



'Author's Day' at the AMM Afterschool... the little authors get ready to read aloud the 'books' they've written.

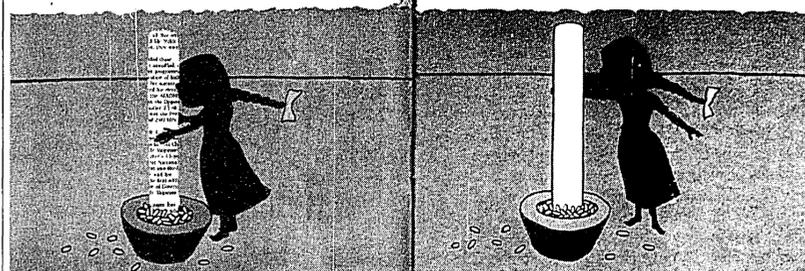
authors themselves. Each author read his or her story and the dedication aloud and answered questions from the audience.

The whole process took more than a week, says Valli Subbiah who runs the AMM Afterschool. The children had read books together, had encounters with authors and publishers, each then told his story, wrote it, illustrated it and then bound the book too.

The children in the age group of 8-12 were completely unaware of the attention they were getting when parents and other guests came to listen to them, ask questions and have tea with them.

The Afterschool is to help children to spend their time after school indulging in creative activities. Valli Subbiah has equipped a house at Kotturpuram to make it a fun-filled school.

— V.R. Devika



Two pages from Cathy Spagnoli's *Priya's Day*, a Tulika read-and-do book for children.

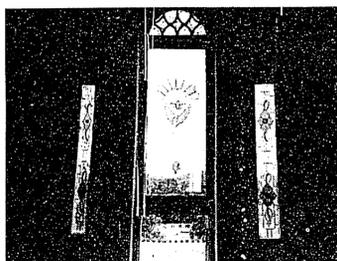
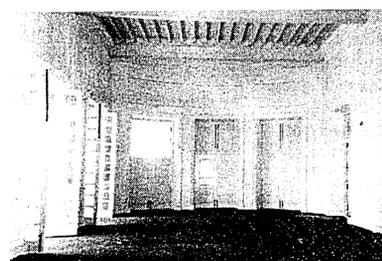
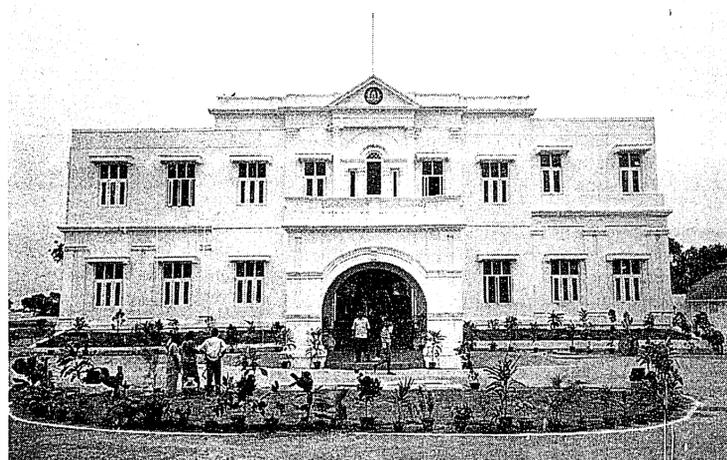
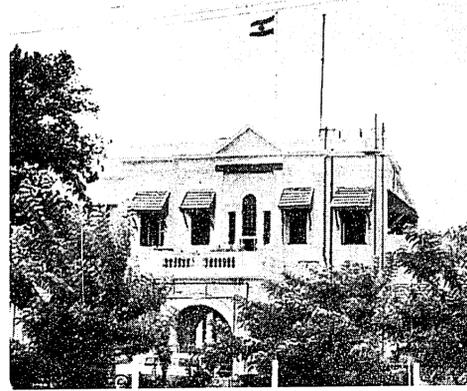
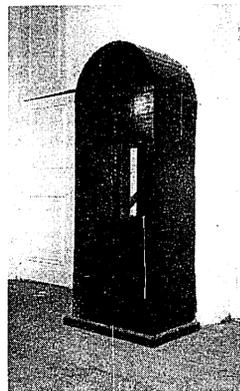
Quizzin' with Ram'nan

Quizmaster V.V. RAMANAN'S question are from the period August 16th to 31st. Questions 16 to 20 pertain to Chennai.

1. Where was Tamil Nadu's first 'Samathuvapuram' inaugurated on August 17th?
2. Which golfer of Indian descent recently won the prestigious U.S. PGA Championship, one of the four Grand Slam events in golf?
3. Name the village which was wiped off the face of the map by a huge landslide in the Garwhal Himalaya?
4. What item of baggage has been banned from the Mt. Everest area to prevent eco-dangerous littering?
5. Who is the new Vice Chancellor of the Mother Teresa Women's University?
6. What first was achieved by a multiple bypass heart surgery at the St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Houston on August 19th?
7. Name the Saudi billionaire accused of masterminding the attacks on the U.S. embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam recently.
8. Which place in the State saw a spurious liquor tragedy claim more than 40 people on August 22nd?
9. How much funds have been garnered by the SBI's Resurgent India Bonds?
10. Why were stockbroker Hiten Dalal and ex-Canara Bank official S. Mohan in the news recently?
11. According to the revised postal tariff effective August 31st, the cost of a letter postcard is...?
12. Apart from Sachin Tendulkar, which other contemporary cricketer great was granted a private audience by Sir Donald Bradman on his 90th birthday?
13. What would be the 'Supreme Law' in Pakistan?
14. Name the new chemically-activated seed killer, after 'Terminator', to be patented, leading to ripples in the agrarian community.
15. Which tribal freedom fighter's statue was unveiled by the President at Parliament House recently?

- * * *
16. Who was honoured as the Chennai-based Sportstar's 'Legend of Indian Sport' on August 23rd?
 17. After whom is Government Estate to be renamed?
 18. Which famous nadaswara vidwan's birth centenary celebrations were inaugurated in the city by the Chief Minister on August 27th?
 19. Which premier education institute's golden jubilee celebrations were inaugurated on August 28th?
 20. Which Chennai-based young tennis star captured the coveted Stanley Cup in the Bertram tournaments organised by Loyola College?

(Answers on Page 8)



FOOD WITH FIFE

FRIED CHICKEN

Ingredients
6 chicken breasts
1 tbs ginger-garlic paste
1/2 tsp clove powder
1/2 tsp cardamom powder
1/2 tsp cinnamon powder
1/2 tsp cumin seeds powder
1 tbs lemon juice
A few drops of yellow food colour

4 tbs butter
Salt to taste
1 cup fried potato wafers

Method

Wash and slightly flatten the chicken breasts. Apply the lemon juice, pepper powder and salt on them and set aside for 10 to 15 minutes.

Heat the butter in a kadai and fry the ginger-garlic paste for a few minutes. Add the marinated chicken breasts along with the clove, cardamom, cinnamon and cumin seed powders. Add just about a cup of water and a few drops of the yellow food colour. Add salt to taste. Simmer till done.



Till October 3 : An exhibition of the works of Sunil Gawde (at the Apparao Galleries).

September : Artist of the month — Mohandas V Badagara, the well-known photographer (At the Max Mueller Bhavan).

September 21-28: Commemorating the 100th anniversary of

Bertolt Brecht with film (at the Max Mueller Bhavan).

September 19 : Metalcraft Workshop: Conducted by Saroja Ramamrutham, 10 to 4 (at DakshinaChitra. Rs.300 per head, including materials and lunch. Contact Vishalam; Tel: 4918943.)

September 24 - 27 : Navaratri celebrations. Elaborately arranged tableaux of dolls and toys from private collections presented in an authentic setting (at DakshinaChitra).

September 25 : Piano recital by Neecia Majolly. Neecia completed her B.Mus from the Western Australian Conservatorium

Serve hot with the crushed wafers sprinkled on top.

CHICKEN IN TOMATO GRAVY

Ingredients
1/2 kg boneless chicken bits
1 cup tomato purée
1/2 cup tomato sauce
1 tbs ginger-garlic paste
1 tbs garam masala powder
1 tbs finely chopped green coriander
2 tbs onion paste
2 tbs cashewnut paste
2 tbs butter
Salt to taste

Method

Heat the butter in a kadai and

of Music with honours (1992). While in Australia, she accompanied several famous artists. She has several solo performances to her credit in Malaysia, Western Australia, Singapore and India. Since her return to India in May 1993, Neecia directs a madrigal choir. (7.00 p.m., Max Mueller Bhavan).

September 27 : Madras Philharmonic & Choral Society presents a concert of Western classical music (7 p.m., Museum Theatre).

September 29 : Madras English Association discusses 'Modern British Drama'. (At the British Council 3-5 p.m.)

THE OLD... ...& THE NEW

Our OLD is from The History of the Madras Police 1859-1959 and was probably taken in the late 1950s. Certainly it was before the two 'wings' of the IGP's (now DGP's) Office, the State Police Headquarters, were developed to their present shape. It shows the 'Lodge of Perfect Equanimity' as it must have been when it was first leased from the Masonic Order for Rs. 90 a month in 1865. The building, constructed in 1839, was subsequently, in 1874, purchased by the Madras Presidency Police for Rs. 20,000. Rs. 10,000 was then spent on repairs and additions and in 1909 the building was extended southwards to house the CID. A third extension, still maintaining the colonnaded style of 1909, was later carried out. And then the wings were added to the main block. The entire building in its 6 acre plot was described by former IGP F V Arul as "a very fine structure and the only one of its kind (police headquarters) in the whole world situated on the seafloor".

The tree-framing is no longer possible in the NEW but we hope that it will become possible before long. Meanwhile, the NEW reveals the successful restoration of the building that was not so long ago threatened by the wreckers' hammers. The OLD is not the clearest or sharpest of pictures, but the closest possible look at it does seem to indicate some changes made in the NEW.

The biggest change is in respect of the checkered narrow windows in the centre. The OLD seemed to have favoured simple stained glass, while the NEW has rather elaborate and irrelevant painted glass which, it is to be hoped, is only temporary till some more meaningful stained glass replaces it. Despite these and other changes, the restoration is something conservationists have reason to be grateful for, particularly if it leads to such work elsewhere in the City. The pictures of the NEW include, a 'pillar box' up and down which files move from one floor to another; the DGP's office-to-be, its once and former Masonic symbols and other decorations all restored; and the rather incongruous painted glass windows. — (Photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

fry the onion paste to a golden brown. Add the ginger-garlic paste, tomato puree, tomato sauce, garam masala powder and cashewnut paste. Fry till a nice aroma arises. Mix in the chicken pieces and salt to taste. Add just about half a cup of water. Simmer on a slow fire till the chicken is cooked.

Just before serving, sprinkle the finely chopped green coriander on the top.

JEERA CHICKEN

Ingredients
8 chicken drumsticks
1 tbs jeera powder
1 tsp garlic juice
1 tsp garlic juice
3 medium-sized onions
1 tbs lemon juice
4 tbs butter and salt to taste

Method

Heat the butter in a kadai and fry the finely minced onion to a golden brown. Add the jeera powder, the ginger-garlic and lemon juices. Put in the chicken drumsticks and salt to taste. Add a cup of water and simmer on a slow fire till the chicken is cooked.

Serve hot with rotis or bread.

— Fife Mendonca

Antrim's eye view...



... of people and spaces

Young Antrim said farewell to Chennai with an exhibition at the Alliance Francaise that demonstrated once again the magic of black and white. Antrim's mother, who was at the US Consulate-General, returns to the US for a posting at the United Nations and Antrim goes with her to work with a professional photographer and hone her skills further.

Those skills are considerable — the chief among them being an eye for the off-beat on the street and, more important, an eye that makes viewers see something different in the commonplace. Antrim's eye view of Chennai in particular, and a couple of other Indian destinations on the beaten track, shows what a talented amateur and good quality imported paper for prints can do. Certainly, this viewer hopes that it will encourage more young people in the City to work with black and white in photography.

Much of Antrim's work has had to do with capturing people off-guard. There was less of her work with spaces. I,

however, preferred the latter — and they are the examples that accompany this review and was also seen on page 3 last fortnight. These four fine pictures were, I think, the winners at the exhibition. Maybe Antrim's work with the professional she's picked to work with at home will help her develop her 'People' pictures into more vibrant pictorialisations than life starkly frozen.

Of her work in the exhibition she titled 'People & Spaces' Antrim Caskey says:

"The title is a literal translation of what you see in these black and white photographs. I seek to make a connection with my subject and to then record part of that interaction.

Interesting images can be made of the simplest of objects, in the most unlikely places and in the crudest spaces.

I shoot everything that I see and feel. Then I edit.

And then she poetically adds:

light falls, reflects,
throws long shadows
on space previously
not noticed.

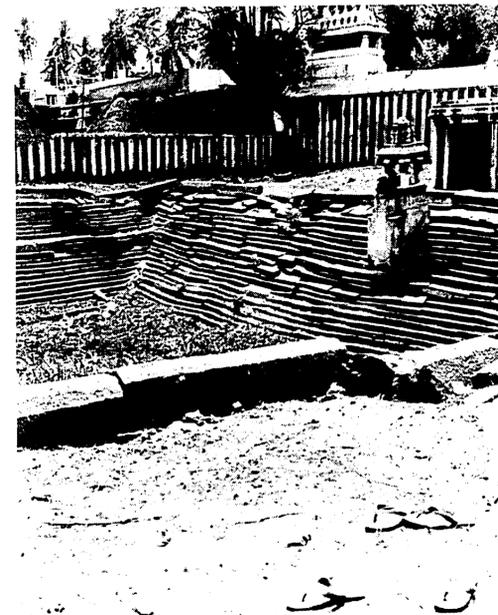
the banal turns beautiful.

in the simplest form
we can find a beauty
without payment.

no one but ourselves
knows this beauty.
no one tells us what it is
and what it is not.

this is the beauty.

S.M.



RAISING THE HACKLES OF THE PURIST

Her strong, individualistic appearance prepares you for the unconventional. A shock of cascading silver mane offset with piercing kohlr- rimmed eyes, and you know that you are in the presence of a diva. To call her beautiful would be to discredit that arresting visage. Chandralekha could never be called beautiful. She is not. But she is magnificent. In her, you see the vagaries of nature reflected — its strength, beauty and free, untamed spirit which man, that ultimate control-freak, has not yet succeeded in stilling.



Chandralekha

vultures decided it was fashionable to squeeze into her shows.

Leave your inhibitions in the foyer. Chandralekha's dance is not for the prudish. If you are looking to be entertained, don't bother to sit in her audience. Her dance is iconoclastic, forceful, almost ugly with its strong definitions. She wants you to turn your conventions inside out, almost antagonising you into accepting her view of life and dance.

There is that initial fascination as the dance unfolds because you sense you are experiencing something different, pathbreaking, from the world

of Indian dance. But awe turns to irritation and then impatience at the choreographer's temerity to take her audience's suppliance for granted. This surely could never be called dance. Yoga maybe, callisthenics yes, but dance?! But you stay till the end because deep down you have to acknowledge that Chandralekha's dance is unique — here is a vision apart from traditional Indian dance yet born of it.

The publicity blurb tells you that "Raga is about the subterranean, invisible, subconscious areas of male-femaleness in the body. It is an exploration of the transformational area of femininity in the bodies of men and women, it searches the uncharted realm of dreams and desires where the surge of the body defies the restraints of the mind...."

The dance movements are strong, controlled, with stark lines, bordering on callis-

thenics. Yoga is the predominant inspiration here with touches of Odissi and Chau, and is vintage Chandralekha. For this choreographer, her dance represents the pure spirit of Indian dance derived from yoga before it was, in her opinion, corrupted by the Devadasi and other influences with their attendant frills and flounces.

Chandralekha's work may raise the hackles of the so-called purists of Indian dance but it nevertheless excites the imagination, for you sense that what you are seeing is the first truthful synthesis of traditional Indian dance movements and a contemporary vision. It is not necessarily likeable. The audience is aware that this is not a beautiful or aesthetic experience that they are involved in. It is strong, distinctive, at times grating, but very definitive and challenging.

— (From The Sunday Observer, Mumbai)
Shalini Sharma

LEAF LIFE

(Contd. from Page 4)

formal, seems to emerge only from hard work, perseverance, discipline and a total lack of hang-ups, qualities Sirish displays in abundance. Sirish's experience and success at 'making a living' with odd jobs and doing his own thing are something important in the present context, when almost everyone is under pressure to become a white-collar *babu*, with little desire to know or encounter the larger world out there, never mind the mindless race to become engineers and doctors. Diversity is important for survival and sustainability, not just in the environment but also in society.

— Elizabeth Roy

The swimmer in a tennis family

Chennai's 18-year-old Mayura Kumar surprised everyone, including herself, when she won two silver medals and a bronze for the country in the Asia Pacific age-group aquatics meet held near Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. Competing in the above-18 category, she claimed the silver in the 100m backstroke (1' 13.11) and 400m freestyle (5'11.36") and a bronze in the 200m backstroke in 2'40.38", even though her timings were below her best.

Mayura, one of two sisters, is the lone member of her family who chose to swim rather than play tennis, the family game. Grandfather K.S. Narayanan, uncle N. Sankar and father N. Kumar all play tennis, occasionally even competitively. Her father is also the President of the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association.

"My parents asked me to choose whatever sport I wanted but wanted me to excel in it. I selected swimming," recalls Mayura. Her mother chipped in, 'She was a very good rider as



Mayura Kumar with her first international medals.

a child but we did not want her to continue with it as it was too modern, so we asked her to select something else".

Mayura first made a mark when she won the 100m backstroke in the National School Aquatics Championship in 1992. Since then, she has been regularly among the medals in the 100m, 200m backstroke and 50m freestyle and occasionally in 400m freestyle at State, Zonal and National

levels. She regularly set new meet records and even today a couple of her national school records stand.

First coached by T.G. Senthil, she joined national coach K.K. Mukundan four years ago and began making progress to the top. She concentrates on her pet events, the 100m and 200m backstroke and 50m freestyle. Mukundan says of his ward, "She is an aggressive swimmer and very hard working, characteristics rarely found in the present generation. She keeps herself fit and has the determination to succeed. That's very important in a sportsperson." She keeps fit by working out at her gymnasium at home.

Mayura trains at the Conne-mara swimming pool and not at the Velachery swimming complex that was developed for the 1995 SAF Games. Says Mukundan, "They encourage only Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu (SDATN) coaches and not outsiders. They charge heavy fees for outside coaches. However, the facilities are very good there." Mayura also feels the same.

There is little competition for Mayura in the State, but she keeps improving through rigorous training and motivating herself. A national champion in the 100 and 200m backstroke, her best timings are 1' 11" and 2' 33", respectively.

She has represented the country in the Asia Pacific meets in Delhi (1994),

Padded totals

(By The Corner Flag)

Watching the England second innings with which Muralitharan wrought havoc, *The Corner Flag*—and no doubt millions of others—heard one of the English experts advise that the best way to play the Sri Lankan off-spinner would be with the pads. Whereupon, England skipper Alec Stewart who had just then come in stretched his front foot long forward and padded away six balls.

The Corner Flag is no cricket expert, but he'd be glad to hear from any cricket expert whether such padding is cricket. And if it isn't, what the cricket world is going to do about giving incompetent batsmen an extra bat in the shape of their front foot and leg.

This growing malaise in world cricket was mentioned in these pages on August 16th and

The Corner Flag then recommended a remedy he has been writing about for over forty years. Then as now, the suggestion that "you're out if you play the ball with any part of the leg below the knee" elicited chuckles from readers, on the latest occasion from a successful Madras Ranji Trophy captain. But no sooner the chuckles had died down than we had this horrible exhibition by the English batsmen, almost every one of them demonstrating that he could survive at the wicket—and help swell the total—only by padding. In fact, the English commentators thought Gough and Ram prakash were most heroic for playing in this fashion.

What a mockery is being made of the game with such padded totals being considered by experts the right way to victory or prevention of defeat!

Colombo (1995) and Pusan in Korea (1996) before the most recent one in which 19 countries competed.

"I never expected to win a medal at all in Malaysia, honestly. It has come as a big surprise. But I'm very happy to know that I came second to a Commonwealth Games bronze medallist. That gives me great satisfaction," Mayura confided after winning her first international medals for the country.

What surprised others was her silver in the 400m freestyle, an event she rarely participates in. "My coach said that had I practised more at it, I'd have won a gold. I was placed fourth till about the last 100 m and finally managed to finished second," says Mayura.

Mayura looks forward to

improving her times in the Bangalore nationals this month, after which it will be serious training in the three-month camp for the Indian probables for the year-end Bangkok Asiad. "My immediate aim is to perform well in the nationals* and the camp and get selected for the Asian Games," she says.

A second year B.A. (History) student of Ethiraj College, she acknowledges the support of the Ethiraj faculty and the principal in helping her develop as a sports person. That Ethiraj is sports-oriented has helped a lot, Mayura feels.

— G. Krishnan

* This feature was written before the recent Nationals, at which Mayura won one gold and two silvers.

Answers to Quiz

1. Melakottai Village in Madurai; 2. Fiji's Vijay Singh; 3. Malpa; 4. Bottles; 5. Dr. Yashodha Shanmugasundaram; 6. First one broadcast live over the Internet; 7. Osama Bin Laden; 8. Hosur; 9. \$4.16 billion; 10. They have been the first to be convicted in the multi-crore securities scam of 1992; 11. Rs. 1.50; 12. Shane Warne; 13.

The Quran and the Sunnah; 14. Verminator; 15. Birsa Munda.

* * *

16. Milkha Singh; 17. The former CM of Madras Presidency, O. Ramasami Reddy; 18. Thiruvaduthurai Rajarathinam Pillai; 19. Madras Institute of Technology, Chrompet; 20. Vijay Kannan of Loyola College.

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