

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

INSIDE

- Telephones for CRORES!
- A monumental legacy
- Two pages of letters
- The scholar as journalist
- Ramesh for India?

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FREE ISSUE

January 16-31, 1999

• *A plea to the CM*

Save City skyline

Dear Mr. Chief Minister,

We have heard with alarm and concern a proposal to build a road in the sky along a route which traverses Kamaraj Salai (South Beach Road, the Marina), Sardar Patel Road (past the Adyar Estuary, Guindy National Park

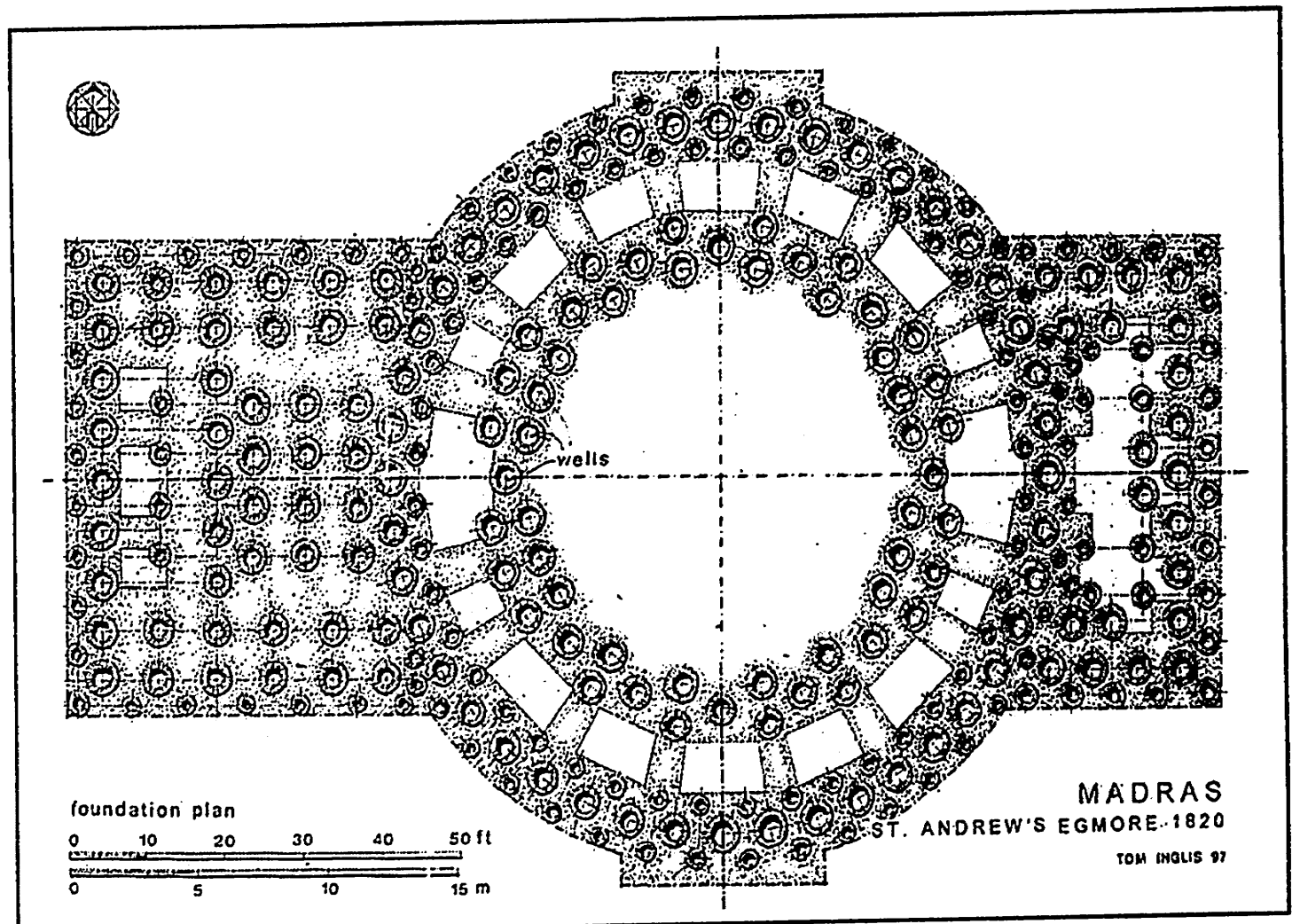
ment does not need any discussion at all; it can be categorically stated that any such construction should NEVER be permitted for it can only desecrate the City.

You had shown great sensitivity, Mr. Chief Minister, in not only saving Police Headquarters but in going further and having it restored. Your commitment to this Project has ensured that the City has got a notable landmark.

Are we now going to hide this landmark behind a soulless, defacing road in the sky? Worse, are we going to allow this elevated highway to mar the famous Marina skyline, the very symbol of this city? Please tell us it is not going to be so, Mr Chief Minister.

When the elevated highway was first mooted with an Anna Salai-Mount Road alignment, *Madras Musings* published the news with the only comment that we wondered whether such huge capital expenditure was necessary when ensuring road discipline throughout the Anna Salai-Mount Road stretch, as along the present 4-lane stretch from the Local Library to Anna Statue, would prove much cheaper. But if that had been debated in a public forum and the decision had still been to build THAT road in the sky, we would have accepted it. The present proposal, to hide and mar the Madras skyline on one stretch and disturb the flora and fauna along two other stretches (Adyar Estuary and Guindy Park), is however, **totally unacceptable** on heritage, conservation and environmental

(Continued on Page 5)



BUILDING ON WELLS

Tom Inglis from Scotland, retired architect and town planner who in his time worked in England, Turkey, Sweden, Australia and Sweden, has for the last few years been working on a book on 19th Century Protestant church architecture in South India, mainly Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. His quest has centred on tracing the building histories of the churches and telling their stories in photographs, sketches and detailed plans. He recently spoke to the architects of Madras and they were quite taken up with the meticulous recording he had done. On January 23rd, 6.00 p.m., he speaks to the Madras Book Club and the Madras Library Association at the Conemara Hotel to narrate what an adventure the search has been and how difficult it has been to get answers sometimes.

During the course of his search, Inglis came across the plan featured here. The plan shows the 300-well foundation (140 small and 160 big wells appx.) of St. Andrew's Kirk, Egmore. The wells, here sunk 26 feet and holding the Church up as though on underground pillars, was apparently a traditional Tamil Nadu building style of laying a foundation in areas of marshy soil and the builder, Major T. de Havilland, adopted this construction method to build what some have called the "noblest edifice in Hindoostan."

Engineering niceties apart, Inglis' drawing shows a mosaic that the layman is likely to find striking.

More roads firmly on ground

(By A Staff Reporter)

The master plan for the Chennai metropolitan area has suggested a system of ring roads and improvements to radial roads and the existing roads to combat the ever-growing demands of traffic. There is no talk of a "road in the sky", which has come like a bolt from the blue.

According to the plans, an 11.7 km inner ring road will connect three radial roads, at a cost of Rs.243 lakh. The outer ring road, 62.3 km in length will consist of four major segments. The first 19.7 km will be from the Grand Southern

Trunk Road to Poonamallee High Road, the second, 9.5 km will be from Poonamallee High Road to Chennai-Tiruvallur High Road, the third, 19.1 km will be from Chennai-Tiruvallur High Road to the Grand Northern Trunk Road, and the fourth 14.0 km will be from the Grand Northern Trunk Road to Tiruvottriyur-Ponneri-Panjeti Road, 62.3 km cutting through three national highways and two major corridors. Three lanes for through traffic with service roads on each side of the corridor is envisaged. The corridor will also

provide for a rail system to be taken up at a later date. The approximate cost of the project was estimated in 1995 at being about Rs.320 crore.

Improvements to eight radial roads for an extent of 250 km at an estimated cost of Rs.210 crore will be taken up during the next two years. The work will be executed by the Highways Department in two phases. The first phase will include three radial roads (about 116 km) and the second five radial roads (about 134 km).

(Continued on Page 8)

Do we know where we're going?

Of course, we do! From Harbour to Airport by skyway. Only, we don't seem to know the route!

When we first heard of the highway in the sky, it was above Anna Salai-Mount Road. Just before the Chief Minister went to Malaysia, it was reported that the route would be Marina-Guindy National Park-Mount Road. And that's when our appeal was written. Then came a report that it was announced at a press conference in Malaysia attended by the Chief Minister that the elevated express highway would be via Koyambedu.

May we know where we're going? How much planning has gone into that decision? And whether any Environment Impact Assessment has been done?

— The Editor

and Raj Bhavan Park), and Mount Road up to Kathipara junction in a first stage and up to Koyambedu (above Ring Road) from there. While the merits and demerits of an elevated highway can be discussed — and need to be discussed in a larger forum than one attended only by officialdom — we feel the question of building such a road along the Marina-Guindy Park align-

Telephones & Internet for CRORES of us!

The good news is that a 'Knowledge Society' is EMERGING! All past knowledge is apparently NOT knowledge; presumably because that was information, NOT INFORMATION! The still better news is that this will be made possible in India by, among other things, 100 million telephones and 25 million Internet connections if what Prof. Ashok Jhunjhunwala of IIT, Chennai, and his team are working on materialises into something more than his dream.

What's held us back, he told a symposium organised by the Ranganathan Centre for Information Studies, Chennai, has been the cost of delivery, which forms the bulk of the Rs.30-35,000 it costs per telephone line. If we could bring this down to Rs.10,000 (and he's already got schemes of around Rs.12,500 to Rs.15,000), 100 million telephones and 25 million Internets would no longer remain a dream and we'd really become a Knowledge Society, he was convinced.

The Man From Madras Musings, cynical as ever, was tempted to ask how do we handle the linesman! Or does Prof. Jhunjhunwala have a different delivery system? MMM is still waiting — six months later — for a linesman who said the dial system could not be repaired on MMM's telephone and that he'd be back with a new instrument in "two days!"

Where's the info?

Even more passionate than Prof. Jhunjhunwala about the new technology was Dr. M Vidyasagar of the Centre of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics, Bangalore, who saw the future of India in leadership provided by men like Chandrababu Naidu. Not for him the spoilsports like Prof. S. Ambraman, a retired Professor of Humanities, IIT(C) and Prof. S. Swaminathan and Dr. C Ram Manohar Reddy, both of The Hindu. Not for the technologists the problems of burgeoning population, the still growing 650 million who are less privileged and have been marginalised, the everyday struggle for life, the pitfalls of society and institutions, or politicians running wild. India can develop all the technology the country needs at affordable prices, particularly if it is made profitable for the developers, was the SOLE boffin's theme.

Unfortunately, the debate was not joined and will have to await another day. But The Man From Madras Musings was delighted to hear one of MMM's favourite questions being posed, by one from the world of science itself. You might have all the technology in the world, but what happens when information is not provided by authorities who are paranoically protective about the information they possess, he asked. Even common-or-garden statistics are 'top secret' in this country, he pointed out. There were no answers forthcoming on

that either. But MMM enjoyed the irony of the Colonel turned Doctor (of Science) asking the question; the Colonel had once belonged to what is still one of the most secretive departments of Central Government!

Brief bytes

Also heard at the seminar by The Man From Madras Musings:

● If socioeconomic disparities in India continue, won't increased awareness and knowledge sow the seeds for militancy and revolution, wondered C Subramaniam.

● Each information-provider in an Indian language uses different codes when providing the Internet information, making access difficult. He is chairing a commission that will ensure uniformity in Tamil, not only throughout India but also in all countries where Tamil is one of the major local languages, such as Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore, announced Dr. M. Anandakrishnan. A quick resolution to this problem was being insisted by the Chief Minister, he added.

● The Informatics Revolution is being overloaded, particularly as politicians have joined the bandwagon, pointed out Prof. F. Balaram, Editor, Current Science, brought out from the Indian Institute of Science campus, Bangalore, with varying degrees of

Christian College boy who went on to be honoured by the Queen with honorary appointment as her Chaplain, the first Asian to be so designated. But once he began the ninth Chandran Devanesen Memorial Lecture it was as though he were to the pulpit born. And as his rich voice and plummy articulation soared and hushed and then went through all the facets of his concluding poem, The Man From Madras Musings couldn't help but wonder whether Dr. Devanesen's son Mithran, listening to it all backstage, wasn't regretting the fact that the Canon was no longer permanently resident in Chennai; the Madras Theatre Club and Mithran would have had a winner in him for their plays and readings!

Between concluding poem and the view that there could be "no peace among nations without peace among religions and no peace among religions without dialogue", the Canon was sure that there were two things Dr. Devanesen of MCC and the Northeast University, Shillong, would have dedicated himself to were he alive today.

One was an alternate educational system of education with the focus on Vocational Education. Not the vocational education seen as a second-rate education for the second-rate, but a system taught by a

commend to any others with similar ideas that totally forget the past when suits or formal wear and starched collars were de rigeur for attendance at such places.

By not seeking such advice, that classical theatre out of the gaslight era now has airconditioners and 'fans' sticking out incongruously all around, all painted a dissonant white. Worse, the ornamented ledges on which the airconditioners rest have begun to give way at the 'seams'. And the damp has affected all the walls... the blue on high looking particularly bilious. And now there's talk of wanting to remove the granite — or is it Cudappah stone — flooring on the verandah and replacing it with polished granite or mosaic! Those trying to get the Heritage Act into place, please save us from authorities bent on such 'improvements'.

Those authorities might, however, take a closer look at the rats that make the theatre their home. They don't always have to wait for lady IAS officers, who've had their heels nipped, to make a complaint.

In brief

★ Believe it or not, there's an American University that runs a semester-long course on Madras that is Chennai. The Man From

Fortunately, he seemed much more down-to-earth over a drink.

★ Mumbai's famed Shanmukhananda Hall, destroyed by fire in February 1990, has been rebuilt at a cost of Rs. 12 crore. The grahapravesham of the new 2800-seat hall was recently held. The hall will in time have a convention centre, a school and an art gallery in time. The Man From Madras Musings hears South Indian art and culture will enjoy a new lease of life in Mumbai what the Music Academy is to in Chennai.

Business briefs

★ Sterling Resorts, The Man From Madras Musings is glad to see, is making a comeback. A more functional house journal shorn of the gloss is wooing holiday-makers back to Sterling Resorts and talks of other services being offered under the holiday company's umbrella. These include tours organised by Sterling Holiday Travels, who also offer a 1999 Special — a trip to the World Cup in England led by former Indian cricket captain Srikanth — and corporate and family events, ranging from training workshops and corporate annual day celebrations to picnics and birthday parties, organised by Sterling Events. But what MMM found most interesting in Sterling's revived Holiday Express was this reflection of the company's changed culture: "Due to the current adverse economic conditions.... and we too have experienced it.... you would understand that it would cost us immensely to post a copy of 'Holiday Express' to you. We earnestly request you to pass on the word to your friends and relatives who are Sterling members to pick up a copy from the nearest Sterling office or Resort."

★ The Welcom group is moving into the motel business. The Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation wants to privatise not only its 'hotels' but also its motels. The Man From Madras Musings wonders whether they can't both get together. Ulundurpet, Ranipet, Krishnagiri and others could certainly do with a Welcom touch. Meanwhile, Welcomgroup's tie-up in Chennai for a 3, or is it 4, star property has not really taken off with the property at the Gemini Circle still to be completed. But if it can't get its Fortune Park Hotel link going in Chennai, it has already one functioning in Trichi and MMM hears it's looking for similar arrangements in Coimbatore and Tuticorin. It is also scouting for land in Chennai to build yet another five-star property and top-of-the-heap four-star property, MMM is told.

★ The book is called Yet Another Book on Vedanta and written as it is by a management consultant and released as it was in the pop atmosphere of Landmark, it must undoubtedly be meant, as was stated, to make Vedanta simple and understanding it easy for persons like The Man From Madras Musings who've spent their lives at ground level and not soared like Richard Bach. One thing MMM did understand on the occasion, however, was when former police chief Ravindran, now a Vedanta scholar, stated that most philosophers and learned men did tend to convey ideas obliquely for the reason that the more incomprehensible they were the higher became their status as the wise among those at ground level. A quick glance through the latest offering on Vedanta had MMM fully in awe of the author.

— MMM

Monumental legacy

— Of a magnificent builder

"Before I say anything, let me make one point clear. I am not the donor. The donation of Rs.60 lakh has come from my late husband T. Rajamannar's Charity Trust," said Rutty Rajamannar in a clear tone as she rose to accept the felicitations at the inauguration of the Dewan Bahadur T Namberumal Chetty Day Hospital that had been donated to the Red Cross Society of India (Tamil Nadu Branch) recently.

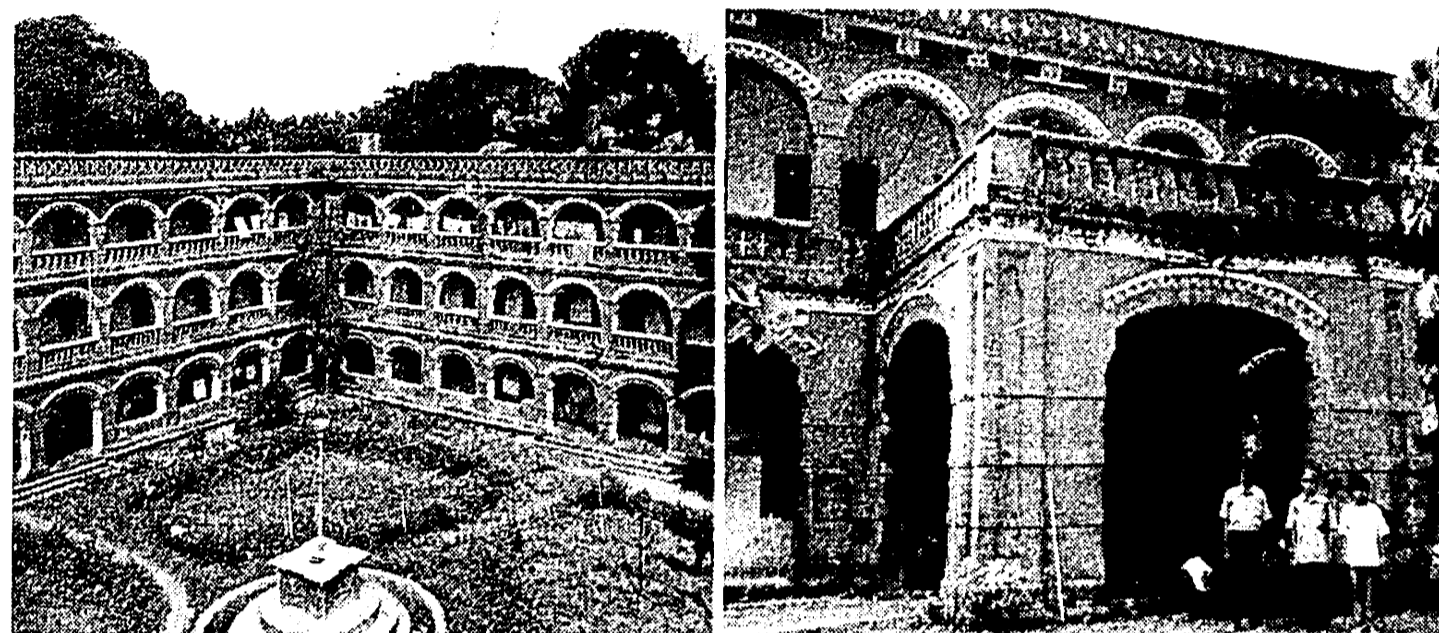
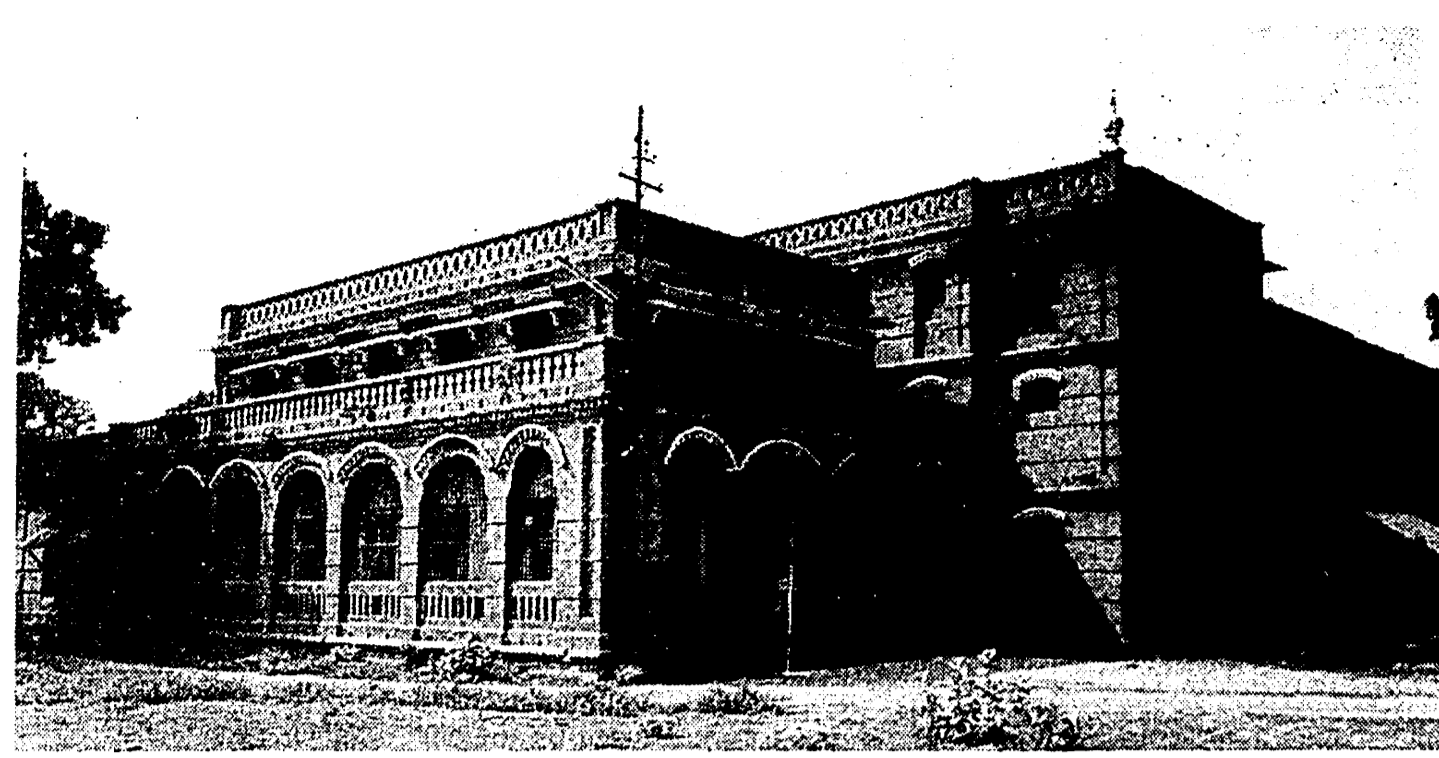


Dewan Bahadur Thatikonda Namberumal Chetty in the portrait that hangs in the Indian Red Cross Society hospital named after him.

Rutty Rajamannar, elegantly dressed in a white chif-fon saree, with a richly embroidered border in the Parsi style and a string of pearls around her neck, reminded the audience on the occasion of the contributions made to Madras by her father-in-law. "It is a very happy day for us to be able to dedicate this hospital to a great man, a great builder and a charitable soul, Dewan Bahadur T. Namberumal Chetty," she said.

When I meet Rutty Rajamannar a few days later she added to the story by saying that the area was still a jungle when he bought the large tract of land across the Coom River. "When most people built and lived in street houses, he started building beautiful bungalows, Western style," she recalls. These were spacious, gracious houses surrounded by acres of land, the garden houses of Madras. They were built raised on a high plinth, with a wide porch and open verandahs with pillars on the ground floor, and more private areas on the first floor. Inside, a large central hall, with a smaller one at the back, and two or three rooms on either side, made up the plan. These garden houses were often lavishly plastered, so that they looked like grand wedding cakes in shades of white, with pastel decorations.

The Chetput Post Office used to be housed in one of



Our NEW (below) is the memorial to Thatikonda Namberumal Chetty, the greatest builder in Madras history. It is the new Dewan Bahadur Namberumal Chetty hospital built in memory of the great builder in the campus of the Indian Red Cross on Montieth Road. The 15,000 sq.ft. Rs.60 lakh hospital will provide diagnostic services to the weaker sections of society and, in time, an out-patient department.

Namberumal Chetty, who moved from Anand Bhavan in George Town (where the Mysore Cafe now is) to Crynant, in Jarryd Gardens off Harrington Road, was, it is claimed by some, the cause for the coinage 'Chetput', from the local 'Chettiar Pettai'. Such eminence was a result of the many landmarks he built in Madras... among them the Bank of Madras headquarters (now the SBI Main Branch), the National Bank building (on whose site the Grindlays Bank main office has come up), the YMCA building, the Law College buildings, the High Court, the National Art Gallery, the Commemorative Public Library, the GPO, the Madras Museum & Theatre, a part of General Hospital and the Victoria Students' Hostel of the Madras Engineering College (later Guindy Engineering and now across from the TNCA parking lot), apart from all the houses he owned here.

When Governor Sir Arthur Havelock opened the Hostel (our OLD, above) in January 1900, he said, "Mr. Namberumal Chetty will have his name recorded in Madras in connection with many large and beautiful buildings in stone, brick and mortar. It should be a proud remembrance for him and his descendants that he has had so much to do with the beautifying of the city". The Raj recognised his contribution by honouring him three times, though the coveted knighthood did not provide the ultimate recognition. Tamil Nadu, however, did not even remember him by naming a road after him. It was left to his family to leave him remembered in building and portrait. It is, however, not too late for a Namberumal Chetty Road; after all, no one builds like him any more.



The new Dewan Bahadur Thatikonda Namberumal Chetty Day Hospital at the IRCS campus... and, right, the facility that existed in an old house here. (Text and photographs by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)

patient on dialysis, brought to life only on special occasions.

One of the finest of Namberumal Chetty's buildings has just been promised a new lease of life. The old Con-nemara Library's main reading hall is an architectural gem designed by Henry Irwin. Spendid craftsmanship has been lavished inside the hall. The coffered ceiling has carved woodwork that sets off an Islamic pattern, along which arched panels on each side are inset with stained glass of gem-like lustre. Below these, there are bands of plaster relief work that frame and decorate the area above the arched alcoves, which lead into secluded bays for scholarly research. The original flooring and their

woodwork are also of a high order. What is tragic today is that no one is allowed to go in to see this splendour. Another famous landmark, the Bank of Madras's headquarters (now the State Bank of India Main Branch), reflected this architectural beauty in its Main Banking Hall. Alas, only vestiges of it are visible today; much is hidden by functionalism. Mrs. Rajamannar mentioned in her speech that Namberumal Chetty was "invited by the Maharaja of Cochin to build some prominent buildings there and (the Maharaja) was so pleased with the results that he presented him with a sword and a pair of karas for his wrists."

As Rutty Rajamannar de-

scribes her recollections of her father-in-law, who had died in 1924, long before she came into the picture, she talks of portraits that used to hang on the walls of the family house. These were sepia-coloured pictures of all the Governors, Viceroy and Maharajas and VIPs who had been photographed with Namberumal Chetty. "There was no space left on the wall, so one day I asked my husband if we could have them removed. Not only did he oblige, but, I later learnt, he had the whole lot burnt!" She also recalls that the house was full of heavy carved furniture in the Dutch style, but since few people had any idea

(Continued on Page 7)

OUR READERS WRITE



Clean up language

Articles that come in *Madras Musings* are undoubtedly of high order. But the caption 'No prostitution of the art' given to N Pattabhiraman's article (MM, December 1) is not in tune with the classical art and Indian heritage. Perhaps modern journalism coins such unethical language. But pray, for noble activities, please upkeep the Indian culture, let us think good, act good and use good words.

Swami Bhakti Chaitanya
11/2, Tilak Street, T Nagar,
Chennai - 600 017.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Point taken.

What a pity!

The story "A Dronacharya but no award" (MM, November 16) depicted P.S. Subramaniam, "Subbu", Dronacharya as being left in the lurch, whereas the cricketers he had trained won awards, prizes and money. It is time we honour dedicated coaches like "Subbu".

C.K. Subramaniam
A101, Syndicate Bank Qtrs,
Plot 28, 29, Sector 17,
Vashi - 400 703.

Protection necessary

Congratulations to the former PMG for giving 'a new life' to the historical building (MM, December 16th). I recently happened to see an exhibition there, but in the process also saw the other side of the building's frontage. As is the case with many such heritage buildings, and some new structures like the Anna flyover, the weeds happily grow, with nature's support, and cracks develop slowly, ultimately affecting the entire building. Before it becomes too late, could someone please act quickly and protect these buildings?

K. Viswanathan
5/3, Musiri Subramaniam Road,
Mylapore, Chennai 600 004.

Reservoirs the need

It was recently reported that 406 tmc ft of excess water, equivalent to six months' supply for Chennai, went waste in November 1998 for want of additional reservoirs. In the past four years, the release of surplus water from Poondi or Red Hills has become a routine feature. Phew! Just imagine six months' water supply going literally down the drain. The news item did not mention that invariably there is a water shortage six months later.

A few weeks of heavy rain a year is all the city needs provided we have the capacity to catch and store it. Rather than spend Rs.2,000 crore to bring Krishna water to Madras (perhaps the biggest waste of public money), the Government could have spent just one-tenth that amount and created a few large reservoirs to meet the city's needs. Then the normal monsoonic rain (both South-West and North-East) would be more than sufficient. There would be no need to depend on Krishna water.

Even now, it is not too late. The earlier a few reservoirs are constructed, the better for a water-starved Madras. The good news is the awareness of the issue by the Government as expressed by a Cabinet Minister. There are indeed plans to create a reservoir or two, but these are mostly in the preliminary stage. Government should speed up the process, allocate the requisite funds and make the plans a reality.

B. Gautham
122, Wallajah Road,
Chennai - 600 002.

A handful of mud

Recent letters and discussions on rain-water harvesting in *Madras Musings* remind me of what the Paramacharya of Kanchi had to say on this topic some 50 years ago. People from far off villages used to go to Kancheepuram and complain to the savant about water shortage in their rain-fed villages, causing them to face drought and starvation.

Murders galore

Anil Agarwal's 'Slow Murder' (MM, November 1) on how automobile pollution has been killing thousands of people and making lakhs sick with all kinds of sicknesses was enlightening. Ironically, most studies on automobile pollution in India never cover Chennai. Other studies and guesstimates indicate that Chennai has more pollution per capita vehicle than any other city in India. While all other cities in the country have already implemented pollution control checks and started deriving some benefits, Chennai's so-called PUC check is

The *mahan* immediately offered one of the greatest desilting solutions relevant to every water-starved village even today. He enquired if there was any pond/lake/reservoir in and around the village. Before taking a bath, each person has only to take one handful of mud from the pond or lake and put it on the banks. With the process continuous, this no cost, voluntary desilting process involving the people of the area should enhance the storage capacity over the years and there would never be any water problem, he stated.

Every citizen should take this message to every village in the country.

Dr. Shanker Dev
'Kylas' 6, Giri Road,
T Nagar, Chennai - 600 017.

Water starvation

Re the letters on water harvesting (MM, December 16th), do not expect the Water Board to give you water.

On what basis do the Water Board make the claim that they supply 40 million gallons per day? Do they have a meter? Have they displayed a prominent marble slab at the main water works to indicate the important features of the entire water supply system of the city? Do

they issue a press note every week that they have supplied a certain quantity of water? Do they do anything to take the public into confidence about water supply? About quality of water? Do they involve citizens' groups in water schemes, saving, conservation, and in trying to find an answer to this dreadful situation?

We will sink without water!

D. K. Oza
1, First Cross Street,
Indira Nagar, Chennai - 600 020.

Successful method

I have adopted — successfully — a rainwater harvesting system in my house since 1991 and use pure, unpolluted natural rainwater for drinking and cooking purposes since the well water in Korattur area is unporable/brackish with iron content. For this project, I was awarded a certificate by Metrowater last month.

At present I am working on further improving the system.

R. Ramani
1050, 41st Street,
TNHB Colony,
Korattur, Chennai - 600 080.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Presumably the writer would be glad to advise others about his method.

A tale of Banaras

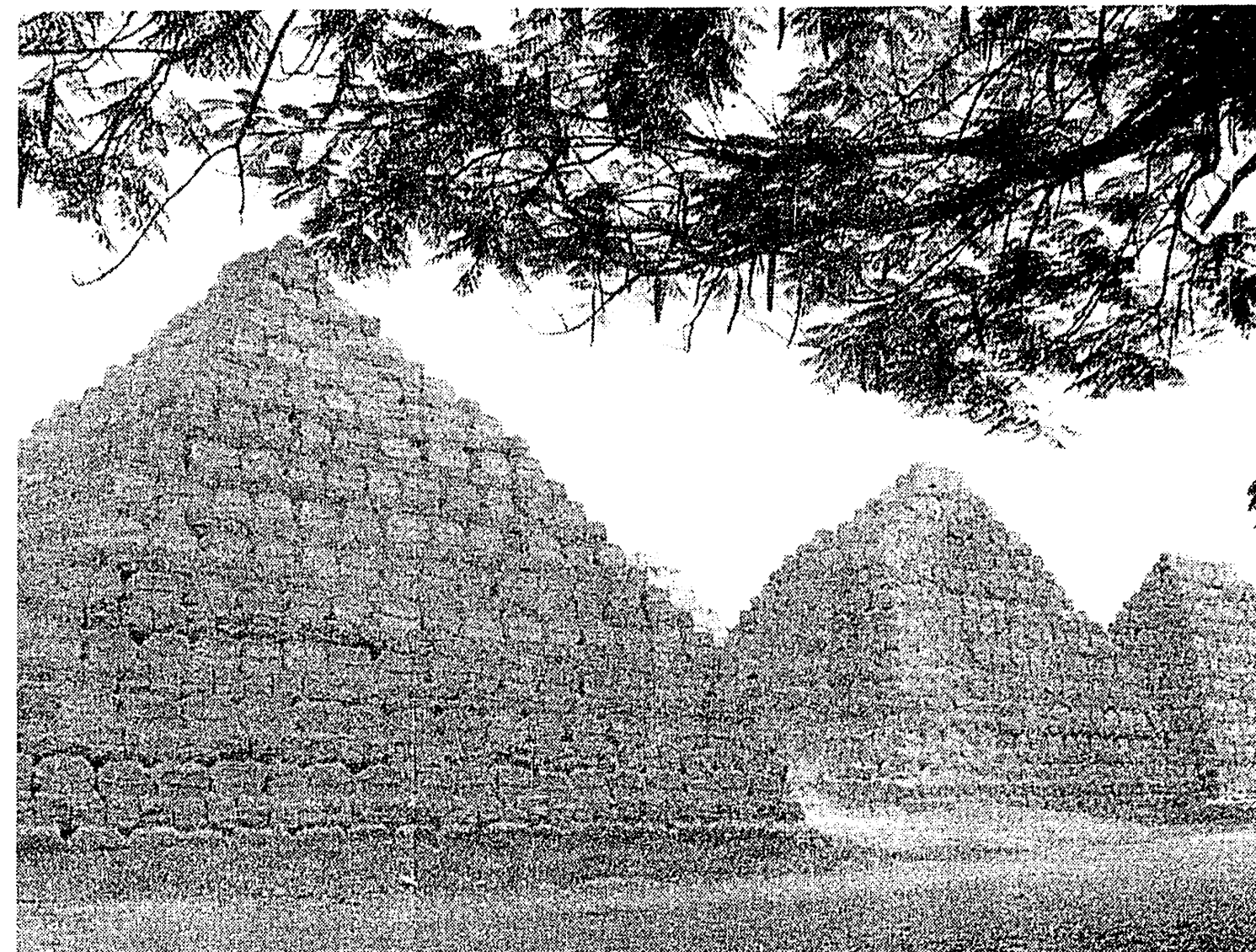
T.S. Nagarajan's photograph included in the article on his exhibition (MM, December 16th) has been left without much detail. An account of this photograph appears elsewhere, stating it is the picture of Palahari Baba, one of the colourful persons living in Banaras in the Sixties. The Baba had a temple of his own on one of the ghats. He also owned a boat to ply in the river. He subsisted on fruits and fruits alone and these were donated by shopkeepers in the bazaar. His hair measured more than six feet and he washed and dried this during his baths three times a day in the Ganga.

To achieve the pictorial effect, Nagarajan took the Baba to the opposite bank for his daily bath. The picture was taken while the Baba bathed holding his tresses aloft in his hands. The ghats at the distant bank form the backdrop.

M. Sethuraman
8, Second Cross Street,
Mahalakshmi Nagar,
Adambakkam,
Chennai - 600 088.

Turbanned intellectuals

While concluding the article "Turbanned Intellectuals of Madras" (MM, December 1st), has



Our favourite greeting card this year was this one with its striking photograph of the pyramids of India. On occasions like this, we at *Madras Musings* wish we could afford printing in colour; in the soft colours of the original, this scene of the 'Pyramids of Bagasse' at Lakshimpuram is a thing of beauty. Are card and pyramids some of the imaginative touches Kiran Velagapudi has brought to KCP Sugars? — THE EDITOR

US when he readjusted his programmes so as to be at his relatives' houses for food wherever he went.

There may be many other such turbanned intellectuals in the South.

G. Rangachari
2/58, Kamaraj Avenue 1st,
Adyar, Chennai - 600 020.

Round Tana?

During the British administration there was on Mount Road, opposite the New Elphinstone Theatre, a huge round traffic island where Anna Statue has now been erected. Inside it was a car park as well as a clean underground toilet and a police outpost. It served to regulate traffic coming from Wallajah Road, Dams Road, (Casino Theatre road) and Mount Road, going past old Victory House (now VGP), and the road leading to Parry's Corner.

Its circular nature and the police outpost ('Tana') would have resulted in 'Round Tana' (MM, November 16th).

Bharat Hiteshi
3/4-A, Gandhi Nagar,
Pariyer Street,
Palavakkam, Chennai 600 041.

Changing Chennai

Re: Reader Murthy's 'Chennai Stands For' (MM, Nov 1):

C Civics to citizens I practice and teach

H Honorary I help all within reach

E Everybody enjoys Planet Earth's special game

N Nobody pointed at to carry the blame

N Nothing to be left for others to do

A All held responsible to make Chennai new

I Individual, me, myself and I I change myself first for a changed Chennai.

Mrs. Shirley Dyall
26, Naidu Street,
Kottur,
Chennai 600 085.

For example, news of the Pantomime (*Puss-in-Boots*) which was staged by the Little Theatre group on December 19-21, was announced only in the MM issue dated December 16th. This is very short notice especially for outstation readers like me who received the issue only on December 19th. Moreover, this being a holiday season, plans are often made in advance. It would have been nice to have had news of such special events at least at the beginning of December.

Dr. M. Jacob
Department of Biochemistry,
CMC, Bagayam, Vellore - 632 002.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We hope those organising programmes note this and send us information well ahead.

Learn new, build fast

It is surprising to note that the Overbridge construction at Guindy which was started a few years ago is not yet completed, though in many countries, flyovers and bridges are completed within a year. It is also disheartening to note that a ramp is to be constructed by filling earth for about half a kilometre; this will block

produced bonus clauses for contractors who finished the work before time. Due to this, all these twenty and more flyovers having sleek piers will be completed much before the scheduled time.

Dr. N. Subramanian
Past Vice-President
Association of Consulting Civil
Engineers,
191, North Usman Road,
T Nagar, Chennai - 600 017.

Steps for project

If the following suggestions are accepted and implemented in all earnest, with political will and without any fear or favour by the Chennai Corporation, perhaps, there will be no need for the periodical revision of the Property Tax:

- All civil works, including road-laying, pavements-laying etc. should be effectively supervised at every stage to ensure strict quality control so that frequent repairs to them is avoided;
- As in the past, the street name boards should be in enamel plates, which require no maintenance;
- Hefty fines should be imposed on

Not Ghulam

The article on P.S. Subramaniam, 'Pitch-making' is in his blood' (MM, November 1) brought back memories of a sprite-like individual who spoke "two to the dozen" whenever I visited Madras to report a Test match. I also remember him for the powers he wielded in picking Presidency College teams during the time (1942-44) I studied there.

However, I think memory has played him false when he recalls Lala Amarnath advising "captain Ghulam Ahmed to use a heavy roller to break the pitch to make life difficult for the opponents." For Ghulam Ahmed never captained India in a Test match either at Chepauk or the Corporation Stadium. In those years when Amarnath was the 'king-maker', the captains were: G.S. Ramchand (Australians at the Corporation Stadium, 1959-60), Nari

Contractor (vs. Pakistan, 1960-61) and Nari Contractor again (vs. Dexter? England 1960-61). After that it was Pataudi Jr. when Amarnath was voted out of office.

Ghulam Ahmed captained India against the West Indies in the Test matches of the 58-59 series at Bombay, Kanpur and Calcutta and retired from the scene thereafter.

I must however add that Amarnath was a great believer in the theory of using the heavy roller to break up a wicket — since disproved by other experts, though this could have been possible in the case of uncovered wickets which were 'damaged' by rain. It is possible that he explained this theory to 'Subbu'.

K.N. Prabhu
63, Ocean View,
Dumayne Road,
Colaba, Mumbai 400 005.

the traffic on this important road for several days. It is high time our engineers adopted latest techniques and technology, in order to reduce the time required for construction and save money.

It may not be improper to mention the case of Mumbai, where more than twenty flyovers (out of the planned 50) are being constructed. Before the construction of these flyovers, the PWD Minister and a team of engineers went abroad to study the latest methods developed in other countries. After their return, they constituted a committee, which drafted a new set of recommendations which included the use of high strength and high performance concrete (which will result in slender piers and deck of the flyovers) and, precast shuttering slabs (which will be a part of the deck after completion of the flyover and will reduce the construction time). It also struck down the age-old clauses (drafted a number of years ago, as per the conditions prevailing at that time) found in Indian codes and in-

encroachers, those who litter and commit nuisance in the streets, those whose cattle stray and those who stack construction materials on the roads;

— The supervisory staff should be made accountable for any civic lapses;

— Political parties should be made to pay for damage caused to public property, including roads, by agitations, processions, etc.; and

— Public conveniences should be entrusted to the care of Sulabh International for proper upkeep and maintenance.

These are only a few avenues for augmenting the resources of the Corporation. There will surely be others. The middle class house owners in the city should not be targeted for augmenting the revenue, which would be tantamount to killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

T.M. Sundaraman
No.19, Nallappan Street
Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004.

Anjaneyulu remembered

The death of D. Anjaneyulu, veteran journalist, is an irreparable loss to the journalist community and to the public. His close association with Khasa Subba Rao of *Swatantra* and other leaders groomed him as a fearless writer. He received several awards during his lifetime. His column, 'Between You and Me' in *The Hindu* was unbiased, informative and always thought-provoking. His letters published in both *The Hindu* and *Indian Express* were fearless expositions of the double standards adopted by pseudo-secularists and communists.

As Vice President of the Madras Auto Passengers' Association (MAPA), he took an active interest in curbing the auto menace which has assumed alarming proportions due to the apathy of the Government.

Lakshmi Narain
11, Kandappa Achari Street,
Purasawalkam,
Chennai - 600 007.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Anjaneyulu was an occasional contributor and a well-wisher of *Madras Musings*. We mourn his death too. As a tribute to him we serialise from this issue, excerpts from what was his last book. "Use whatever you wish from it," he had said when we last met. "More people need to know the contribution these writers made to India".

Lab kit available

In connection with your reference to 'Lab for consumers' (MM, December 16), Dr. Geetha, of the Department of Chemistry, Stella Maris College, has developed a small kit for testing adulteration of common food articles available in our markets. She has given training to a number of students in our educational institutions. The cost of the equipment is nominal. Please contact her, she is the Hon. Secretary of the Enviro Club of Madras.

Prof. S.G. Mahmood
No.19, Ganapathy Street,
Royapettah,
Chennai - 600 014.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Madras Musings* was, perhaps, the first journal to feature her kit many years ago. But though many use it, its popularity has not become widespread.

A way to stop it?

We have been suffering from regular loudspeaker nuisance affecting our ashram for some years now. The police appear to be unwilling to tackle the problem in a decisive way. We would be very grateful for any advice readers of *Madras Musings* can offer us.

Swami Devananda
Sanmarga Sangam Campus,
Tirumullaivaikal,
RCC (Avadi) P.O.
Chennai 601 109.

The printer's devil

Ludwig Pesch, featured in MM January 1st, may indeed be the 'glamorous' flautist the Printer's Devil had made him, but all we had meant was "the German flautist".

— The Editor

MONUMENTAL BUILDINGS

(Continued from Page 3)

grooms. Please, Mr. Chief Minister, tell us this will not happen.

Yours sincerely

The Editor

Note: The proposal as at present envisages a 28-km elevated highway in the first phase and an 18-km elevated stretch in the next phase. The Project is, apparently, being worked out with the Malaysians on a Government-to-Government basis. It would appear that public interest groups have no role to play in the decision-making and that no Environmental Impact Assessment was done before the Project was even locally considered.

Quizzin' with Ramnan

(Quizmaster V.V.RAMA-NAN'S questions are from the fortnight December 16 to 31. Questions 16 to 20 pertain to Chennai.)

- Who has been unanimously elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha?
- Who has recently been chosen for the Best Parliamentarian award for 1998?
- Who has been awarded the Bharat Ratna posthumously?
- After how many years did the Indian Men's Hockey team win the Asian Games gold medal?
- Bill Clinton was the second U.S. President to face impeachment by the House of Representatives. Who was the first?
- Which astrologer of repute and editor of *The Astrological Magazine* died in Bangalore recently?
- Name the new Naval and Air Force chiefs.
- What is the name of the new nuclear missile recently put on active duty by Russia?
- The 3.8m statue of which Buddhist goddess unveiled recently is claimed as the world's largest idol?
- Who has been elected the European Footballer of 1998?
- What cricketing history will be made this year when a South African under-19 embarks on a tour of Pakistan?
- For what best scientific invention was Prof. Isaac conferred the National Award recently?
- Which city is to host the 2002 Asian Games?
- What was the name of the latest operation launched by the US and Britain in the Gulf?
- Name the indigenous car developed by TELCO.
- Which Nobel Laureate was awarded the Vainu Bappu Memorial Award for 1996 in Chennai recently?
- Which city-based institute has been given the Technology Award for 1998 by the Third World Network of Scientific Organisations, Italy?
- Name the city-based Police Officer appointed as the new CBI Director?
- Who has been elected president of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) for 1998-99?
- Who has been awarded the Rajarathiram Pillai Centenary Award, presented by Nadalaya Trust for contribution to Tamil literature and drama?

(Answers on Page 8)

A CLARITY OF STYLE

One of my early heroes in Indian journalism was Dr. Anjaneyulu. He was my senior by a few years in the daily in which both of us worked in the early Fifties. He was, characteristically, very kind and considerate to me as became a senior. But what evoked my admiration were his articles which appeared week after week in *Swatantra*.

Our working conditions in terms of security, emoluments and even the bare facilities for study were hardly conducive to the cultivation of intellectual interests. The pace of daily activity, be it day or night, under the shift system, was physically and mentally enervating. The flair for self-expression through the written word, if we had any, as Dr. Anjaneyulu puts it, dried up in the desert sand of dead routine. But Dr. Anjaneyulu was not the one to give up. He would read or write during the day while on night duty — something which his colleagues would not or could not do. Such was his persistence, his will power. His labour was Miltonic and it is not without reason that he is acknowledged as the good writer that he is today.

Dr. Anjaneyulu could have chosen the legal profession, for

which he qualified himself. He could have entered Government service, as his loving mother wanted him to do. But he would not be deterred from the course he had set for himself. If he were to have a career, it should be journalism, nothing else. Before long, however, he realised that the kind of journalistic work that fell to his lot would not suit his taste and talent. He was lucky to have had a break. He got into Government and, outside the office, he found the freedom and leisure he required to pursue his intellectual inclinations. He had for his intellectual companionship his life-partner, the late Prof. Audilakshmi. The couple had a glimpse of the world which helped to widen their mental horizon and enrich the experiences of life.

● With the passing away of D Anjaneyulu, Madras journalism has lost one of its old-time stalwarts and Madras Musings an occasional contributor and well-wisher. When we met at the release of his last book, Author as Artist: Essays in Appreciation (Emerald Publishers), Anjaneyulu said, "Use what you will from it; few will remember many mentioned in it." And so, as a tribute to Anjaneyulu the writer, we publish this fortnight and next excerpts from two chapters of the book, profiles of two forgotten Madras literary personalities. As a preface to these excerpts, we also publish today excerpts from the Introduction to the book as well as from the author's note to it. — THE EDITOR

The scholar as journalist

A typical journalist of popular imagination is a man of half-knowledge, always in a hurry, with an unlimited amount of cocksureness and bumptiousness to make up for all the other deficiencies of intellect and education. One can't think of a more untypical journalist than the late N. Raghunathan* (Raghunatha Aiyer, as he was known out of respect among his professional colleagues and acquaintances). From his books, nobody would have taken him for a journalist. He was more of a scholar, a profound scholar at that, with a wide range of knowledge, in at least three languages — English, Tamil and Sanskrit.

Born in Tanjavur District (whose picturesque lingo he could use to devastating effect, when he lost his temper), he did his English Honours from Presidency College, passing out with a First Class in 1915 or so. He belonged to one of the earlier, if not the earliest, batches of Honours students. He followed it up with a degree from the Law College, Madras, after which he entered Government service in the Secretariat, where he spent a few uneasy years. It didn't take him long to realise that he had made a false start, and left it in 1921 to enter journalism, as joint editor of the *Daily Express* (founded or edited by one Karunakara Menon).

S. Rangaswami, one of the most brilliant and coruscating of leader-writers, a master of

* N. Raghunathan was born in 1893 and died in 1982.

Literature has been Dr. Anjaneyulu's first love, his passion. He studied English Literature as an academic discipline and followed it up with independent studies of Telugu and Sanskrit.

Dr. Anjaneyulu has a style of his own, clarity being its chief merit. He is careful with facts and avoids rhetoric and the cliché. He can be pithy and sum up the essence of a character or the quality of an author's writing in a few words. He has a sense of form and coherence. Occasionally, he can permit himself an ironic thrust or a cynical comment. Macaulay broods over his brow and Lytton Strachey prods him from the side. Shaw winks at him, and occasionally gives the nod.

V. Sivaramakrishnan, Assoc. Ed., Bhavan's Journal.

● With the passing away of D Anjaneyulu, Madras journalism has lost one of its old-time stalwarts and Madras Musings an occasional contributor and well-wisher. When we met at the release of his last book, Author as Artist: Essays in Appreciation (Emerald Publishers), Anjaneyulu said, "Use what you will from it; few will remember many mentioned in it." And so, as a tribute to Anjaneyulu the writer, we publish this fortnight and next excerpts from two chapters of the book, profiles of two forgotten Madras literary personalities. As a preface to these excerpts, we also publish today excerpts from the Introduction to the book as well as from the author's note to it. — THE EDITOR

The scholar as journalist

sparkling wit, scathing irony and biting sarcasm, who was editor of *The Hindu* at that time, died in October 1926, after a protracted illness. His mantle fell on Raghunathan who had joined the office a few months earlier...

Raghunathan never became a declared Editor for reasons beyond his control, but he was an able replacement for Rangaswami. If the former scintillated with his wit, irony and sarcasm and flair for satire, the latter shone with deep scholarship and literary style as well as hard-hitting arguments against the powers that were.

● by D. Anjaneyulu

One of his earliest editorials on the debate in the House of Lords in April 1927 read:

"The annual farce is over, Lord Olivier has asked his questions on India. Lord Birkenhead has spread his pinions and soared far and wide, surveying all things in heaven, on earth and in the nether regions, now rejoicing at the sunlit summits of peace and prosperity, now 'flapping from out his condor wings invisible' woe on all political malcontents... If one thing stands out more clearly than anything else from these turgid orations it is the comfortable assurance that Indian nationalism is a back number, that India's demand

may be treated with contempt because she is no longer in a position to enforce it."

During his thirty years with the paper, Raghunathan (or N.R.), as he was popularly known in the office) must have written thousands of main editorials, apart from hundreds of light leaders in the manner of the "Fourth Leaders of *The Times*". Every one of them was a worthy exercise in political education. But some of them remain notable for their ruthless analysis and sustained invective. On the composition of the Simon Commission in 1927, for instance:

A casual glance at the list of names will suffice to show that the most malignant ingenuity could not have thought of a worse set of persons. But for the Chairman, the Commission is composed entirely of third-rate men... Shall it be said of us that we sold our birthright for a mess of pottage and merited the curse of unborn generations?...

Quite a few memorable pieces (he wrote) raised daily journalism to the level of literature... The assassination of Mahatma Gandhi on January 30, 1948 moved him to his depths. In an editorial, titled 'The Universal Man', he wrote:

In Mahatma's many writ-

They (the 12 in this book) are all writers in English — Indian, British or American by birth... The main factor that attracted me to them is their sense of style. To use the modern media jargon, they are all great communicators.

Vast learning and versatility are the hallmarks of K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar's writing. He is extremely informative. His style has an even flow that sustains reader interest.

Academic heavyweights make a watertight separation between the writers so called and journalists, forgetting, all the while, that Samuel Johnson, Addison, Hazlitt, and others started their careers as journalists. N. Raghunathan, the leader-writer, is known for his classical quality with his lordly Latinities and measured cadences; and his 'Sotto Voce' is reminiscent of Lamb in its whimsicality...

It is the salt of style that provides the flavour to the work of these different writers, which has held me captive. That is also why I have described the whole group with the title "Author as Artist".

D. Anjaneyulu
January 1996

ings, in the memory of his heroic deeds, in the powerful picture he has impressed on the sensitive minds of his generation, there is for us a perennial stream of inspiration. He is a reminder to us that an exalted ethic can go hand in hand with practical good sense, that ruthlessness in action is compatible with a boundless love. Men like him are a perpetual rebuke to the fainthearted of every generation; they are the ideal made flesh...

He was invited in 1946 to contribute a weekly column to the weekly periodical *Swatantra*, started by his friend Khasa Subba Rau. Raghunathan chose for it the title 'Sotto Voce' and 'Vighneswara' for the author's pseudonym. Expatriating on the aptness of the latter, he wrote in the opening contribution 'A votive cocoon':

I invoke the liberty of opinion which is the only God that adventurous youth today acknowledges for leave to pay my devoirs in my old-fashioned way to the crusty conqueror of obstacles. May Vinayaka save you — and me — from boredom!... Vinayaka is not only the patron saint of the tribe of scribblers. He is the friend of all who have a hunch. Not for Him the winding, dusty road of reason... He takes it all in good part. He is imperturbable. He pricks the bubble of convention with that sharp projecting tooth. His probos-

(Continued on Page 7)



January & February: 'Artist of the month': K Ravishankaran. This well-known photographer exhibits his photos of dancers and musicians; these photos form a part of a major exhibition on the same theme he is planning. (Max Mueller Bhavan.)

Till January 25: The Dakshina-Chitra craftshop will host a special exhibition and sale of Lambani embroidery from Sandur, Karnataka. Two Lambani women will also demonstrate the art.

● A craft mela, an opportunity to see the crafts from the Southern regions demonstrated and exhibited at DakshinaChitra. On view: textiles from an Andhra Pradesh NGO called SEDS; a wooden comb-maker, scroll painting from Cheriyaal, A.P.; ganjifa cards from Karnataka; pillow lace from Kerala.

Till January 30: Exhibition of South Indian bronzes in the gallery for religious art at DakshinaChitra.

January 20: 'Infinitum', led by Nikki Yeoh. The second in the series of Indo-British Young Musicians concerts.

Nikki Yeoh, voted Best Jazz Musician in 1996 by *The Independent*, at 24, looks like one of the Spice Girls, but is almost unique in that she is a young female jazz pianist leading her own trio, 'Infinitum', with Michael Mondesir (bass) and Jose Joyette Haddaway (drums). Their repertoire includes everything from sentimental ballads to dynamic funk grooves.

Nikki Yeoh laughs a lot. There's a vibrancy to her personality that bursts through her music, which is playful, exploratory and hits the unexpected. (In collaboration with and at The Music Academy at 7.00 pm.)

January 20-25: 'Kumbam', an exhibition of terracotta by a group of traditional potters in Aruvacode, near Nilambur, a

tiny village in Kerala's Malappuram District, helped by designer K.B. Jinan. The exhibits include householdware, decorative tiles and landscaping decorations. (At Manasthala.)

January 22: Children's Workshop on Lambani Embroidery at DakshinaChitra.

January 25-30: 'Leben? Oder Theater?' (Life? or Theatre?): Paintings and texts of Charlotte Salomon.

Charlotte Salomon (1917-1943), who died in Auschwitz, owes her fame to several hundred gouaches which she painted between the age of 23 and 25 and which form a unity, a sort of book. They comprise, in their totality, a dramatised autobiography. They were painted and written by her at the beginning of World War II in the south of France.

In connection with the exhibition, the Max Mueller Bhavan has planned daily discussions on the impact of her work.

Following the inauguration of the exhibition on the 25th, the Madras Players Theatre Club will stage *The Jewish Wife*, an episode from the play *The Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* (MMB, 10 am to 6 pm; Play 6.30 pm Jan. 25.)

January 27: The Madras English

THE SCHOLAR AS JOURNALIST

(Continued from Page 6)

is a perpetual question mark...

What he intended initially only for six months went on, with almost no break for 13 years, from *Swatantra* into *Swarajya*... "Satire was Raghunathan's forte as a columnist but one found much else in his writing — irony, humour, righteous indignation, literary evaluations, pen-portraits and delightful cameos of historical events, literary masterpieces and artistic achievements in performing arts. He was at his best as an essayist with seeming casualness but never once missing the essentials or losing the principal focus of thought,

or the thrust of a certain point of view."

'Vighneswara' is in the classical tradition of English personal essayists, wearing his vast learning lightly and playing hide-and-seek with his knowledgeable readers. Casting his net wide, there is no fish that he lets go — big, small or middling. He is oblique, whimsical and allusive, like Lamb, not aphoristic or epigrammatic like Bacon. Like Lamb again, he dances round the subject but never loses his grip over it; he does not grapple with it like Hazlitt. Frankly, he cannot claim the elegance and spontaneity of 'Alpha' (AGG) or the feather touch of 'YY' (Lynd).

As an essayist, he is fond of quoting, not in chunks, like academic heavyweights, but in bits and snatches, like a man of letters, to the manner born. In fact, he is a veritable authority on the art of quotation...

There is an unlaboured felicity about the perfect quotation, an unbought grace. It elevates the familiar, takes the swelling emotion at the flood-tide, clinches the argument, gives you a sense of completion, no less satisfying than original and authentic creation... Just as the master-artist of the Harikatha suggestively sings a snatch and leaves it to his expert seconds to manage the matter to a rounded perfection, so the man who knows when to quote and when to stop can draw on the entire range of the world's lit-

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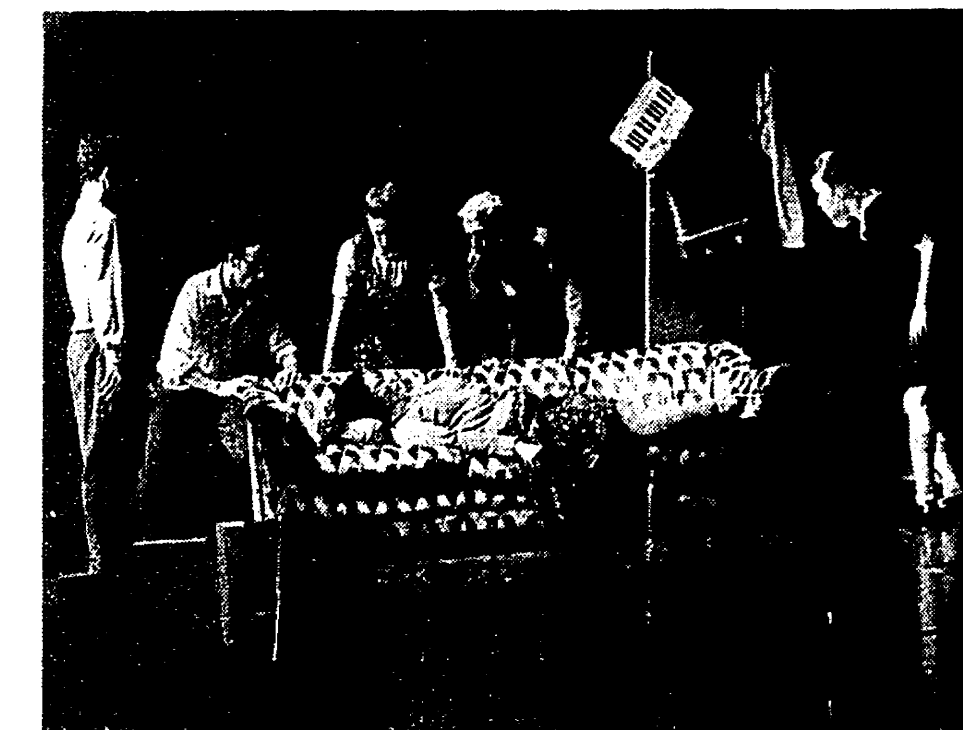
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A scene from *The Jewish Wife*... to be staged at the Max Mueller Bhavan.

Association meets to discuss Lyrical Ballads on the occasion of their bicentenary. (At British Council 3-5 pm.)

January 29: 'Traditional Boats of Tamil Nadu'. An illustrated talk by Professor Sean McGrail.

Professor McGrail is a maritime archaeologist and ethnographer who is researching traditional boats in India and Bangladesh. His current fieldwork takes him to Tuticorin, Thanjavur and Chennai. (At the British Council, 6.30 pm.)

January 30: 'Let's Paint the Wall' by children from Anbu Illam,

conducted by M Natesh. A regular feature for some time now, 'Let's Paint the Wall' is a programme to which Max Mueller Bhavan invites children to adorn its walls with their creative expressions in colour. This time the artists will be from Anbu Illam, an organisation which cares for destitute and street children. (9.00 am - 12 noon, MMB.)

February 1-15: 'Variations: Everything and Nothing' by Gerd Rohling. Inauguration by Gerd Rohling.

Gerd Rohling, an artist from Berlin, worked in Bombay for

many weeks in 1997. He improvises his exhibits from refuse and presents a totally original exhibition. This year he plans to continue his work drawing inspiration from findings in Chennai. (MMB, 10 am - 6 pm.)

February 7: Dominic Harlan and Matthew Sharp on the piano and the cello — the third concert in the ongoing Indo-British Young Musicians Series.

Dominic Harlan graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in 1997 with the Academy's highest award and is emerging as one of the most exciting accompanists and chamber musicians of his generation.

Matthew Sharp studied cello privately. He is a founder member of the highly acclaimed string-playing music theatre group *The Gogmagogs*.

(At the Music Academy, 7.00 pm. Invitations on a first-cum-first-served basis, available at the British Council, from Thursday 28th January, Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 4.30 pm.)

SAVE CITY SKYLINE

(Continued from Page 3)

of their value they were all sold away. Namberumal Chetty also made lavish gifts. We hear of "seven cupolas, together with a bust of H.M. King George was presented by Mr. Namberumal Chetty to the Collector of Chingleput on the occasion of the Coronation in 1911 and a life statue of His Majesty was erected by him in Saidapet, near the Government House grounds."

Besides being a noted building contractor, Namberumal Chetty owned a very modern saw mill in Trichur, Kerala, the Trichur Timber and Saw Mills, that exported quality timber to London, Liverpool, Germany, New York and South Africa. Ever the perfect example of the Westernised Indian gentleman, he imported the first French car to Madras. His son, T. Rajamannar, was educated at the London School of Economics and when he came back he met the young Ruttu, who had come to Madras in 1939 to learn the Montessori system of teaching under Madame Montessori at Kalakshetra. It was a long courtship that went on for nine years since it was unheard of for a Parsi girl to marry outside the community. "It was very romantic, I can tell you," confesses Ruttu Rajamannar with a smile that lights up her amazingly youthful personality. But that, clearly is a story for another day. At 92, Ruttu Rajamannar remembers it all.

Geeta Doctor

Will he get the nod?

With India's opening batsmen failing in New Zealand, will Tamil Nadu's 23-year-old opening batsman Sadagopan Ramesh get the selectors' nod?

Ramesh scored runs consistently in the recent home series against the West Indies 'A'. He top-scored in three of the four 'Test' innings, opening for India 'A' — 41 & 138 in Bangalore and 22 & 39 in Chennai — the first innings in Chennai being the odd one out. He also made a match-winning 52 in the one-day game at Ahmadabad, the lone win against the visitors. Though West Indies 'A' won both series, Ramesh emerged the batsman of the series. Since then, he has been scoring heavily in Ranji Trophy and one-day matches.

Ramesh has been discussed by the national selection committee several times before picking the Indian teams for recent series, but he would always find himself left out. His immense self-confidence and single-minded hard work have kept him going.

Since scoring 59 and 132 in his first Ranji Trophy game, against Hyderabad in the 1995-96 season, Ramesh has become

a consistent scorer. In his second first class season, he was selected to play for the Board President's XI against South Africa at Baroda, but that turned out to be his biggest disappointment. "I was very confident of opening the innings, going by the talk in the camp. At 9.00 a.m. just before the match, our captain, Saba Karim, said I would be playing. After 15 minutes, when I saw the team list, I was not in it! Vikram Rathor was included in my place at the last minute," Ramesh recounts disappoint-

138 against West Indies 'A' at Bangalore. Timing his strokes, and picking the gaps, he executed each stroke stylishly on either side. In his first innings score of 41, he looked well set for a big score before being deceived by a slower one. He had scored 46 for India Youth to gain selection for the 'Tests'. He had, by then, tasted the Caribbean pace attack headed by Ian Bishop, the Test quickie who broke K. Srikanth's forearm on the 1989 Indian tour of the West Indies.

Srikanth, now the India 'A'

• BY G. KRISHNAN

edly. He ended up performing Twelfth Man duties, while Rathor failed in both innings (14 and 0) as Board President's XI tasted a 10-wicket defeat. Things were different a year-and-a-half later. He opened for Board President's XI against Australia at Visakhapatnam and in the drawn game compiled a well-made 58. "Playing Warne was not difficult. As a left hander, the ball came in to me. The difficulty was in picking the singles, as their field placings were very attacking," he recalls.

I saw Ramesh's magnificent

coach, remarked at the end of the first Test that Ramesh's knock was one of the best he had seen in recent times. "India has found a Test opener after a long time," enthused the former India skipper.

Tennis ball cricket in his younger days helped Ramesh play the harder ball game more easily. He never missed an opportunity to play tennis ball cricket with friends and brothers and he often played all night in flood-lit tennis ball cricket tournaments across the city during summer vacations. "The experiment helped me to eye the ball earlier and judge the length of it," he says.

Within a fortnight of the unhappy Baroda episode, Ramesh made his Duleep Trophy debut for South Zone against North at Faridabad. He fell for nought in the first innings going in at No.3 and was at the butt end of a few sarcastic comments. But in the



Sadagopan Ramesh

second innings he made a match-winning, undefeated 143 to take his team to the final, adding 255 for the 5th wicket with state-mate Sharath (140). Recalling that game, he says, "We needed 391 to win and were in a hopeless situation on the penultimate day (83 for 4). On returning to the hotel, our manager was booking our return tickets while the North Zone team were booking theirs for Mohali, venue of the final. But the next evening the situation was the reverse, we were heading for Mohali!" With centuries on debut in the Ranji and Duleep tournaments, if he could score a ton in his maiden Irani Cup match, if selected, he will equal Sachin Tendulkar's feat of scoring hundreds on debut in all the three premier national championships.

Ramesh, the youngest of four brothers, played cricket for fun in his early days. Satish, the eldest of them, now 29 and representing India Pistons in the First Division, got him to take the game seriously. Ramesh started as a right-arm medium pacer and earned selection in the Tamil Nadu under-16 team as an off-spinner at the start of the decade. He played in the Fourth and Third Divisions of the TNCA league as a slow bowler.

The transformation into a batsman came after scores of 50-plus against the Hyderabad

and Karnataka Under-16 sides while going lower in the batting order. "In the knock-out against Gujarat, I went in seven down. We needed about 60 to win in eight overs. I made 30 in 16 balls. The next match, I went in at No.4 and scored 55," remembers Ramesh of his moving up the order.

The B.A. (Economics) graduate from Guru Nanak College currently works as an executive in Chemplast and he plays for its team Jolly Rovers. Another elder brother, 25-year-old Mahesh, who opens the bowling for the State and bats usefully lower in the lineup, says "We all expected Satish to play for the State, for all his talent. But he concentrated on developing Ramesh and me into good cricketers and lost his chances." As inspirational in his career as Satish and Mahesh has been his mother, without whose encouragement none of the brothers would have played cricket at a competitive level. She now looks forward to his making a mark in the international scene.

MORE ROADS

(Continued from Page 1)

Loan assistance will be provided by HUDCO.

The Chennai Corporation, the Highways Department and the City Police, will implement various traffic improvement plans involving street lighting, signals, pedestrian subways and grade separators at a cost of Rs.365 crore over the next three years. Twelve more locations for signals in the city have been identified.

Among projects that have started and are nearing completion are the Gandhi-Irwin flyover and the widening of Napier Bridge. Work is underway on the Guindy flyover and work will start shortly on several mini-flyovers and ten kilometres of the Mount-Poonamallee Road.










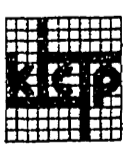











ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. P.M. Sayeed; 2. Jaipal Reddy; 3. Jai Prakash Narayan; 4. 32 years; 5. Richard Nixon; 6. Dr. B.V. Raman; 7. Admiral Sushil Kumar and Air Marshal A.V. Tipnis; 8. TOPOL M; 9. Guan Shi Yin, Goddess of Mercy; 10. Zinedine Zidane; 11. The first time a non-white will be leading a South African Team; 12. For developing I-Learn, an edu-

cational system for the disabled, who cannot use the keyboard; 13. Pusan, South Korea; 14. Operation Desert Fox; 15. Indica.

16. Prof. Anthony Hewish; 17. The Central Leather Research Institute; 18. R.K. Raghavan, IPS; 19. C.N. Gangadharan; 20. Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi.

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