

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

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The Landmarks of the City?

● The CMDA has listed the following as heritage buildings, precincts and natural features:

1. Anna Samadhi
2. Arcot Nawab Palace campus
3. Armenian Church
4. Cave Temple, Pallavaram
5. Central Station
6. Egmore Station
7. Guindy Engineering College/ Anna University campus
8. Fort St. George Museum and St. Mary's Church campus
9. G.P.O. Building
10. Gandhi Mandapam
11. Government (Bharati) Arts College for Women
12. Government House campus (Old Jail)
13. High Court campus
14. Kalaivaniamman Koil Rd.
15. Kamarajar Memorial
16. Kandaswamy Koil
17. Kapaleeswarar Koil
18. Library and Theosophical Society campus
19. M.G.R. Samadhi
20. Madras Club campus

21. Marundeeswarar Temple
22. Mundakanniamman Koil
23. Museum and Art Gallery campus
24. Pandeswarar Temple
25. Parthasarathy Temple
26. Presidency College building
27. PWD & Revenue Board campus (Chepauk Palace)
28. Rajaji Hall
29. Rajaji Memorial
30. Ripon Building
31. San Thomé Cathedral

32. Senate House and Madras University campus
33. Siva Vishnu Temple
34. Southern Railway Head quarters
35. St. Andrew's Church
36. St. George's Cathedral
37. State Bank of India, Rajaji Salai
38. Thousand Lights Mosque
39. Vadapalani Andavar Koil
40. Valluvar Kottam
41. Wallajah Big Mosque
42. War Memorial

Apart from the CMDA's Landmarks List, INTACH has suggested the following additional buildings, precincts and monuments to be included among the protected landmarks in the City:

1. Anderson Church
2. Amir Mahal
3. Anderson Gardens
4. Bharat Insurance Building
5. Brodie Castle (College of Carnatic Music)

(Continued on Page 8)

First step to save City's heritage

(By A Special Correspondent)

The heritage committee convened by the Member-Secretary of the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority and chaired by Chief Town Planner Ananda Ranjana Doss held its first meeting recently and not only learnt what its role was but also gave its first bit of advice towards saving the City's heritage. And that was to reach agreement at its next meeting on a list of LANDMARK buildings that it hoped the CMDA and Corporation of Chennai would PROTECT IMMEDIATELY and urge that their restoration and maintenance be carried out.

The CMDA has already listed 42 buildings, precincts and monuments in its Master Plan. Representatives of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, Tamil Nadu chapter, stated that they had listed over 650 buildings etc. during a survey of about two-thirds of the City within Corporation limits and would be completing the list shortly. Meanwhile, it was submitting to the Committee a list of 36 LANDMARK structures and 49 temples. The committee agreed that it would go through both lists and agree on a final

list of LANDMARK buildings, precincts and monuments at the next meeting and looked forward to the CMDA and the Corporation designating these buildings and their surrounds as being PROTECTED. (Editor's Note: Both lists are published on this page in addition to a list from Madras Musings. We welcome from readers additional names or suggestions for deletion from the lists by October 18th.) Additions to the Landmark list may be made from time to time.

The recommendatory nature of the proposal of the CMDA's Heritage Committee (CHC) is a consequence of the very nature of the Committee. It was stated at the outset that the CMDA looked on the CHC as a high-level advisory committee and that it would do its best to ensure that the Committee's recommendations are acted on by the CMDA or any other institution the recommendation might concern. As an earnest of its intention, the CMDA hoped the CHC would meet once a month and make suggestions and review actions taken. As an indicator of the CMDA's interest in the City's heritage and as a first step towards saving it for posterity, the members of the

Committee welcomed the CMDA's initiative.

A Heritage Plan for Greater Chennai prepared by the CMDA was also circulated among all the members who expressed their appreciation of it, but who also stated they looked forward to discussing it at future meetings, particularly the Development Control Rules and the Transferable Development Rights suggested.

Means of creating greater heritage awareness were also briefly discussed at the first meeting and are to be discussed in greater detail in the future.

Editor's Note: Madras Musings not only welcomes this initiative of the CMDA but also looks forward to the Authority implementing the recommendations with all the authority at its disposal. This journal hopes that the CHC will meet regularly, discuss at length the several suggestions made in the CMDA's Heritage Plan, do all it can to ensure the consensus is implemented and monitor the state of play thereafter. May heritage preservation at last see the light of day in Chennai. (See page 7 for excerpts from the CMDA's Heritage Plan.)



Our OLD may not be the prettiest buildings in town, but they are certainly a part of the heritage of the city. V.S. RAGHAVAN'S picture of them was taken a couple of years ago when they were visible to all from Mount Road and were a Saidapet landmark. The twin blocks, very likely done by the same engineer who 'embellished' the old Ice House (Vivekananda Illam today) with 'bustles,' or one who drew inspiration from him, belong to the training school attached to the

Teachers' Training College in Saidapet, the oldest modern teacher training institution in this part of the world. Thousands of teachers who taught millions in the State would have learnt and honed their teaching skills in the classrooms in these buildings. Alas, today, we seem to be almost ashamed of them — to judge by the alacrity with which we have been willing to hide them from view with our NEW. The rather spartanly built bus 'shelter' in Saidapet not only hides the twin blocks completely from view, but they also proclaim loudly the contributors to the present. It is to be hoped that the CMDA's present enthusiasm for heritage will lead to prevention of such construction that either hides heritage areas or is not in consonance with them. (The NEW by RAJIND N CHRISTY.)



A welcome initiative to save heritage

The formation of a Heritage Committee by the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority is a welcome first step to saving Greater Chennai's heritage — even if the new committee's role is only advisory. The *Man From Madras Musings* hopes that with goodwill on both sides — and greater official and public awareness — the advice given will be accepted and translated into meaningful action.

MMM is informed that at the first meeting it was decided to prepare a list of LANDMARK buildings, precincts and monuments and urge the CMDA and the Corporation to ensure their protection and maintenance. How serious the CMDA is about the advice of the Committee will be seen only if the Landmark List is readied and protection orders issued before 2000 dawn. It was hoped by the few outside the bureaucracy who were present that the CMDA would do its best to make the deliberations of the Committee meaningful.

It strikes MMM that the Committee is a bit overloaded with Government representation and could do with a FEW more non-governmental faces. Consumer Action Group and Exnora representation might certainly be useful. On the other hand, it was sad to hear that at least one key non-governmental representative, an expert on conservation, gave the meeting a miss. Conservation techniques are not just subjects to be taught; in a country like India, creating the need to conserve heritage is perhaps even more important than providing technical instruction. After all, what use is there for conservation techniques if there is nothing to conserve?

A much more positive feature that was mentioned to MMM was the interest the PWD took in the proceedings, particularly in seeking information on the whole subject of preservation. The School of Architecture, now showing a welcome interest in heritage, so MMM was told, apparently promptly offered to run workshops or seminars for PWD engineers. And INTACH too offered similar assistance. MMM hopes the PWD will seek such a training session sooner than later.

MMM understands that the non-governmental representatives felt the Development Control Rules and Transferable Development Rights needed fine tuning, but were confident that this could be achieved without too much difficulty. More worrisome to them, however, appeared to be the role of the CMDA. Apparently, the CMDA has set itself up as the appeal authority on decisions made by the Heritage Conservation Committee that the CMDA itself plans to set up and on whose advice it agrees to act in implementation. A more ombudsman-like appeal authority was needed, it was felt.

No doubt in the days to come there will be many more issues to sort out, but a beginning that's been delayed for years has at last

been made — and MMM wishes the CMDA well in its plans for a better, more heritage-conscious Chennai.

Dominant technology

IT (truly a soul-less 'it'!) will dominate the next millennium, IT will define our lives, thundered Prof. M.G.K. Menon the other day while delivering the 6th Annual Lecture of the Ranganathan Centre for Information Studies. Sounding like an American hot gospeller in full flow, he all but swamped the words of poor C. Subramaniam, the Founder Patron of the Centre.

CS — surely he's a name big enough not to need being honoured with a descriptive Bharat Rathna every time he is addressed! — felt the scientific community's priority should be removing the backwardness of the country if it seriously planned to look at national development. Rid the country of poverty, illiteracy and indifferent healthcare, CS urged in his usual soft-spoken style. Don't equate progress with the five-star culture of the West, which is what we've been getting, he advised.

The *Man From Madras Musings* looked forward to the Co-Chairman (with Chandrababu Reddy) on the National Task Force on Information Technology and Software Development to tell us how this could be done when he spoke of 'The Role of Information Technology for National Development'. Instead, MMM heard Prof. Menon proclaim repeatedly the number of reports the Task Force had prepared in record time on what IT could do for India in the 21st Century. By 2008, IT exports would go up from \$2.5 billion to \$50 billion, from 4½% of India's exports to over 25%. From NO mobile phones in 1986 there will be millions by 2002 (MMM heard it as 550 million, but he probably heard it wrong). IT was the fastest growing industry in the country and its share prices reflected that growth. Information technology will earn billions from Indian skills in the world bank market. IT could only grow faster in an era of dynamism. The Internet, born of it, is like the air we breathe, all-pervasive, he passionately announced. Food, clothing, shelter, infrastructure are "all narrow areas"; IT will encompass everything.

It was a delightfully rosy picture Prof. Menon painted for an audience of "knowledge workers" (that was a new term MMM heard) already enamoured — and expert, undoubtedly — with the instruments with which they create magic. But he did sound rather disappointing when he confessed that "it won't solve all problems". It will help in the solution of many of the problems the Patron had pointed out, but there needed to be other factors that had to be attended to if solutions for them were to be achieved, he added. Like moral values, perhaps? Like commitment to rural India and the urban

poor? Like bureaucrats who do not see themselves as demi-gods? Like politicians who'll talk of policies and not the frailties of personalities? MMM doesn't know how IT will help create such standards, but he had hoped that Prof. Menon would have some answers on how the magic of IT would help establish them.

Info freedom

Apart from all this business of vital growth, there was another aspect of the IT mission, Prof. Menon was proud of. The magic of the world wide web had made the Task Force recommend the imperative of 'Freedom of Information', except when 'privacy' and 'national security' are endangered, Prof. Menon proudly announced. To *The Man From Madras Musings*, however, these give unlimited freedom to the 'endangered' to ban, block, obscure anything. And MMM is not talking of Pakistan TV programmes. Perhaps Prof. Menon would be interested in one of the latest examples of knowledge transfer.

If MMM is not wrong, Prof. Menon was once a rather important figure in the Department of Science and Technology which tended the Survey of India which, in turn, monitors all the

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

maps produced in India, especially those by private publishers. The Survey has since the Seventies been slowly relaxing its rules — and despite all the hassles with it, the publishers have been able to offer the public a modicum of cartographic information.

One of the Government's rules, however, has been that any map on a scale more detailed than one to one million, that is one centimetre is equal to ten kilometres, has to be also passed by the Ministry of Defence. The Army scrutineers have often been rather fanciful in what constitutes a matter of national security (like the ICF factory or the MICO factory) but they have recently excelled themselves by making Geography unteachable. Apparently lakes, tanks, reservoirs and similar waterbodies cannot be shown on maps of this scale. So we now have Indian maps without all these. And the Department of Science and Technology has meekly accepted this ruling. Yet maps made abroad not to mention the web provide all this information. But neither are accessible to our children. So they'll have to live in a country without waterbodies. So much for transparency, freedom of information and knowledge, Prof. Menon!

And speaking of information and knowledge, would it be too much to ask all those in these fields to stop addressing people as Bharat Rathnas and Padma Bushans and Padma Shrees;

surely they know these are honours and not titles. Imagine addressing one of the contributors to *Madras Musings* as OBE Jaspar Utley when he gets it!

Another appeal

Lost in a welter of advertisements in a recent special supplement on higher education was one hardly striking advertisement from the university that had parented all the other universities whose vice-chancellors were meeting in conclave. It was "An Appeal for Funds for Renovation of Senate House." Obviously Vice-Chancellor Dr Pon. Kothandaraman (PORTKO) still hopes to get the conservation and restoration project going, "to restore (Senate House) back to its old glory" — provided the University can collect Rs. 4 crore towards the restoration and "another Rs. 50 lakhs for corpus towards maintenance".

The *Man From Madras Musings* hopes he's successful, but somehow doesn't think it'll happen with the impersonal advertisement 'lost' in a supplement few would have even glanced at. An appeal in person by the Vice-Chancellor to those with the ability to help would do the University much more good. In fact, he had a glorious opportunity to tell the Vice-Chancellors he would have addressed at the South Zone conference, "This is the university that begat your universities. Many of you and your faculties would have received your degrees in this hall. Now is the time to give back something to your mother institution." Maybe he did say it, but if he didn't, he missed a glorious opportunity to remind institutions of their obligations and to call in the University of Madras's chips.

Meanwhile, MMM can only wish the University of Madras luck with its appeal.

The civic scene

The *Man From Madras Musings*, during his wanderings through the city in the last fortnight, noted, or heard of, these items affecting Chennai's citizenship:

ITEM: In a city where pavements are vanishing and the pedestrian is ignored, one of the few stretches with sidewalks is to lose them. Stretches of Anna Salai are under threat. Promised are footpaths conforming to "the norm of providing space of 1.2 metres laid down by the Indian Roads Congress". That's about 4.5 feet. Imagine two people passing each other at the same time in that street Or imagine one person trying to negotiate what the tree-planting drive is putting on pavements! Wider pavements, MMM is told, are out because of the threat of encroachments. Did someone say something about throwing out the baby with the bathwater?!

ITEM: Valmiki Nagar, one of the newer and better ad-

resses in the City, reports its groundwater growing hard and salty. The more apartment complexes you add, the worse the problem is bound to become. But will anyone start slowing down on building, especially now that Chennai is a favoured destination for Prof Menon's favourite people, the Information Technologists. MMM hopes they'll find answers to their water problems on the web.

ITEM: With the Monsoon not too distant, there's talk once again of areas being flooded because the waterways, particularly the Buckingham Canal, have not been desilted. With the work on the flyovers and much else digging causing roads to become marshland, the situation can only be worse this year. So let's all just grin and bear it till that day Singara Chennai dawns. Will that be when the Metro runs to full capacity, wonders MMM. As it is, it's passenger flow is dropping at an alarming rate, from 30,000 a day to 6000!

ITEM: Don't cement storm-water drain floors; let the water percolate into the sandy soil and recharge the ground-water. The Corporation wouldn't at first listen to this basic advice from residents of Besant Nagar. But the persistence of the residents has got the Corporation to now create nine-foot deep, pebble-filled percolation pits at intervals in the drains. Groundwater will be better recharged now, they are confident, MMM hears.

In brief

★ Another male bastion has fallen... and *The Man from Madras Musings* looks forward to the other major clubs in the City following the lead set by the club that was once described as 'The Ace of Clubs'. The Madras Club, at its recent AGM, voted to admit 'ladies' as Full Members, ending an all-male tradition that had lasted from the Club's founding in 1832. In fact, it was the Club's strict rules about the presence of ladies in the Club — there was even an exclusive 'hen coop' for them in what has now become the *Express Estate* — that resulted in the more liberal Adyar Club being formed in *Moubray's Gardens*. In the 1960s, the two clubs merged as the Madras Club in *Moubray's Gardens* but, though the presence of the ladies became more acceptable, full membership was denied them — as in many other clubs in the City — till the pathbreaking step was taken in mid-September. The only discussion before the proposal was passed MMM hears, was whether there shouldn't be Gentleman Associate Members if the present system of Lady Associate Members continues — as is proposed — side by side with Ladies being accepted as Full Members. MMM understands that this would be examined as the year progressed, but meanwhile many no doubt will be speculating on who will be the first lady to be made a Full Member of the first male social bastion to fall in the City.

(Continued on Page 4)

OUR READERS WRITE

An appreciation

Tucked away in the obituary column of *The Hindu* of August 22nd was the news of the sad demise of K. Sreekumar Menon, DIG (Retd.)

He was a frequent contributor to *Madras Musings*, his articles replete with enjoyable anecdotes making entertaining and amusing reading. He always had something worthwhile to contribute, be it on the traffic chaos, the police force, civic problems, his brushes with the establishment, environment, pollution, or any of the problems besetting the daily life of 'The Man From Madras Musings'. The wanton destruction and reckless felling of trees was to him the most grievous of all sins, a sacrilege indeed. He was, perhaps, one of the few 'Madrasis' — or Chennaites (as they are, presumably, now called) — who took immense pleasure in regaling the modern generation with tales of "Those were the days, my friend..."

Smartly attired, invariably in a safari suit, his jovial personality and active demeanour belying the seventy-and-odd summers weighing on him, he was a familiar figure on the streets of Kilpauk. None who approached him for help of any kind went disappointed. Full of *joie de vivre*, his was the most welcome addition to any social group. Winner of several national awards for meritorious service, including the President's Police Medal, he was modesty to the core.

"Behind every successful woman is a man", as the (slightly twisted) worn-out cliché goes, and he was no exception. Married to Dr. M. Sarada Menon, Padma Bhushan the renowned psychiatrist of national and international fame, they had a perfect division of responsibilities — he would attend to every nit-picky detail, viz., finances, servants, car, social events, etc. of their household, leaving his spouse to concentrate on her first love, viz. alleviation of mental illness. No function at SCARF — Schizophrenia Research Foundation (India), Dr. Sarada Menon's creation — was complete without his encouraging presence. Theirs was the true embodiment of the "Made for Each Other" syndrome.

To those of us who were privileged to be friends of this wonderful couple, 2, 2nd Street, Ormes Road, Kilpauk will never be the same. Barely a year has passed since they moved into their spanking new home, on the construction of which Mr. Sreekumar Menon devoted many sleepless nights, for he wanted perfection in every detail, be it the light fittings, disposition of telephones, furniture, flooring, elevator design, kitchen details, etc., all of which bear his meticulous imprint.

There must be many of his contemporaries from the force and outside who can, perhaps, add to the reminiscences of this friend, philosopher and guide to many.

K.P. Mahalingam
6-B, The Peninsula
778, Poonamallee High Road
Chennai 600 010

Chennai's IN at the Pizza Parlour

Who wants Madras? Chennai's in! 'Hip', 'yuppier', 'cosmopolitan'. So says an article in *The Economic Times* (and reproduced in *MM*, August 16th) Notwithstanding this article, notwithstanding another article written in the same vein on the same topic in the same newspaper, notwithstanding the appearance of American-style mega department stores (how many of them will survive is a moot issue) and notwithstanding the many changes we cannot help but notice all around us, I was of the firm opinion that Madras that is Chennai is as it always was, old-fashioned and conservative until...

I recently paid a visit to the theatre (an occasional indulgence). Since the newspaper advertisements did not mention the show timings, I called the theatre and was told that the evening show was at 5.30 pm. But when I reached the theatre, I found that the movie started only at 6.30 pm. And so I decided to 'entertain' my stomach before the movie (hopefully) entertained me. [The movie, by the way, featured a college. The college students (boys) looked old enough to be father's and their behaviour (antics is perhaps a better word) suggested that they would be guaranteed jobs as clowns in any circus. In case you are wondering why I decided to see such a stupid film, it is because this movie won the National Award (instituted by the Government of India) for best 'wholesome' entertainment, whatever that means. But all this is besides the point].

Bang opposite (is this a trendy phrase?) the theatre was a pizza restaurant. Since I had all

the time in the world and this being a new area to me (although a Madras native, it is safe to say that I have 'seen' only fifty per cent of the city) I decided to explore the neighbourhood in the hope of locating a decent restaurant to have a *masala dosa* and some good south Indian filter coffee. But as it turned out, the only eating place (it would not qualify as a 'hotel') in the vicinity was one whose appearance (employees not wearing uniforms etc.) suggested that its servers firmly believed that a glass of water could be held firmly only with one finger inside the tumbler. So, perforce, I had to make my first visit to a pizza restaurant, the only alternative in the area. And for that I have to thank the bloke who misguided me.

A sticker on the entrance door said, 'Smile, you are Entering a Non-smoking Area'. That's good, I thought. The restaurant of course was quite nice with pleasing decor, tables placed reasonably apart, three TVs and loud music. (The restaurant staff should seriously worry about permanent damage to their ears). All the employees (about 10 to 15) were in their twenties. Wearing uniforms of T-shirts and pants (both boys and girls), they went about their work American style, i.e., one employee performing the full range of duties ranging from accepting the order, handling the billing, arranging the tables, serving the food, removing the plates, cleaning the tables and mopping the floor..

The cheapest pizza cost a mere Rs. 75. A cool drink cost only Rs. 20 (perhaps also making this my last visit to a pizza restaurant).

Identity card

To identifying the voters during polling, Government had taken steps for videograph voters and distribute cards at their doorsteps through the Corporation Tax Assessor. However, the distribution has not been done in a proper way.

Persons not found at the time of distribution, including those who had shifted residence face difficulties when they follow instructions and try to collect the card at the Zonal Office concerned. There the Assessors simply harass them, citing various irrelevant reasons for not attending to this work. As such, the voter is forced to pay visits to this office several times to get this valuable card. The irony is, one such Assessor asked the voter to come after the election, defeating the very purpose of the card.

It is requested that suitable instructions be issued to those concerned with distribution to oblige voters promptly.

Abdul Jameel
19, First Floor,
R.O.B. 6th Street,
Royapettah,
Chennai 600 014.

A C.P. blot

While so much has been made of C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, how is it that no mention has been

made of the fact that when India became independent he wanted to let Travancore be outside India and even wanted to take the issue to the League of Nations. For me, this blots out anything else he did.

V. Ravindran
5/2, 4th Trust Cross Street
Enapuram, Chennai 600 028.

Over the moon

Where and what were you doing during the solar eclipse? you ask in *MM*, September 1st.

Well, I was on the earth, staring into space, striving for a place in the sun. Then that call I was expecting came and at once I was over the Moon. All my worries were eclipsed.

C. Kesi
A5, Madhurima
20-21 Conran Smith Road
Gopalapuram, Chennai 600 086

Bad roads

There is no need to enclose photographs to show the poor state of the roads in Madras. The change in name to 'Chennai' has not changed anything. The roads remain with huge 'potholes' large enough to bury a child in, full of slush and muddy sand to ensure two-wheelers and cycles lose their balance and fall into the pits. The

only persons who enjoy these roads are the MTC bus drivers, lorry drivers and autorickshaw drivers who have no regard for other road-users and enjoy splashing them.

Two-wheeler riders and car drivers who want to avoid these potholes end up in an accident. The driver can either concentrate on the road to avoid these potholes and pools or hit other vehicles. The mind can only concentrate on one item at a time.

The Government may appoint any number of committees of retired High Court judges to study the causes of accidents, BUT COMMON SENSE AND THE EXPERIENCE IN MADRAS REVEAL BAD ROADS ARE THE MAIN CAUSE OF ACCIDENTS.

Let politicians not waste time in giving false promises at the time of elections. Let them drive from Tiruvannamur signal to Taramani to VHS Hospital to Kotturpuram to Village Road via Gemini Flyover and Nungambakkam in an auto and experience for themselves the state of roads of Singara Chennai. Bad, bumpy and dirty roads are all they will if they remain awake.

Bharat Hiteshi
4-A, Gandhi Nagar
II Cross St.
Periyar Street
Palavakkam
Chennai 600 041.

my objective (entertaining my stomach, if you remember). The quality of the pizza can be described as average or perhaps good. (The reader might have a doubt 'You say this is your first visit to a pizza restaurant, then how come you are able to judge the quality of a pizza? For this my answer is (forget about eating pizzas at home; I don't) I like to think I have some expertise in the area. How? Don't ask.)

After some time, the music (that particular record) came to an end and another record was played and — I'm not mistaken, the loud volume was made even louder. Now comes the best part. (All that has been said thus far may be considered an 'introduction' or 'preface'. And behold, before my very eyes, five employees of the restaurant started dancing! Yes, that's right! Dancing! Even though there were only five diners in the restaurant.

Four boys and a girl, standing in a line, much like the Radio city Rockettes of New York, danced to the accompaniment of the music (may be not as synchronously as the Rockettes, but you get the idea). Swinging their arms and legs, gyrating sideways to the right and left and making a variety of movements, the five danced with gay abandon. This lasted a good five minutes. After which they promptly resumed their duties.

Yeah! Who said Madras is old fashioned and conservative? Show the way, Chennai! Madras is out!! Chennai is in!!!

B. Gautham
122, Wallajah Road
Chennai 600 002.

For the record

Sir John Collins Squire was a contemporary of C.R. Reddy, at St. John's College, Cambridge, U.K., during 1902-06. Squire was NOT a Civilian, but a poet, writer an editor of *The Mercury* and *The Atheneum* magazines of London. His autobiography was published by T. Werner Laurie Ltd.

C.A. Reddi
57 Rundalls Road
Vepery, Chennai 600 007.

Editor's Note: We nodded... and regret the consequent error.

Follow the note

The Member Secretary, Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority, has constituted a Heritage Committee to identify heritage buildings and areas. That's happy news. But I wish the work of the Committee were not limited to Chennai alone. The Committee may turn its attention to other parts of Tamil Nadu as and when occasion arises.

Madras Musings (September 1st) has given a useful note regarding the steps to be taken to preserve heritage. These should be followed strictly.

P.S. Krishnamoorthy
Tahsildar (Retd.).
28, Ramanatha Iyer Street
Gobichettipalayam
Erode 638 452.

Looking back

In search of roots

Having an Indian grandfather and hearing from my mother stories of the first 16 years of her life spent in India, I have, for as long as I can remember, wanted to visit this country of my roots. My husband Andy also has an Indian connection — he was born in Madras, while his parents were serving in the British Foreign Service there. So, for him too, it was more than just another tourist destination.

When circumstances finally permitted, we got ready to fulfil a dream. My mother, now 86 and in failing memory, tried hard to remember the details which would help us identify the possible houses she lived in and was thrilled at the possibility we might visit her father's grave.

Coonoor was where my grandparents spent most of their time and where my grand-

father died at the age of 47. And that's where we headed.

From old documents we have we knew that my grandfather's funeral was at All Saints Church and that he was interred in the Tiger Hill Cemetery. I am so glad that these old documents were kept by my aunt (no longer alive). It certainly made our search very easy.

As luck would have it the hotel booked for us was imme-

● by Linda Simpson

diately next to Church, so almost as soon as we unpacked we visited the Church. We looked around the churchyard first, unsure as to whether this could be 'Tiger Hill Cemetery'. As far as we could see, all the graves predated 1928, the year my grandfather died. As we were

The cemetery itself looked so very English (it was originally, pre-independence, an English graveyard) and was very organised, with graves more or less in date order. Since we had a photograph of the grave it was a matter of minutes only to find the grave we were looking for. I was thrilled and moved — the writing as clear almost as on the day it had been erected.

I stood and tried to imagine how difficult it must have been for my grandmother when she stood at this spot (almost exactly 71 years ago). As an Englishwoman married to an Indian, himself disowned by his family; she must have felt very vulnerable at this point in her life. I can only begin to imagine the devotion the couple must have felt to fly in the face of society's conventions in the early part of this century (they were married in Colombo in 1908). My grandmother had left everything she knew to come to India, a country completely unknown to her. My grandfather thereafter struggled to follow his profession as a barrister — his own father, also in the legal profession, seemingly making it as difficult for him as possible.

My mother tells me that they were eventually accepted into both the English and Indian communities with reluctance and that only because of my grandfather's professional status. There must have been some acceptance, though, because my grandfather's grave bears the only Indian name in the older part of the cemetery. How did my grandmother achieve that? Was it hard I wonder?

We tore ourselves away with great reluctance. From this very beautiful spot in Coonoor and I will have forevermore in my mind's eye a picture of the

looking, the sexton, enquired if he could help. We explained our quest and he offered to take us there the next morning.

The next morning we found the very peaceful cemetery tucked away on a hillside surrounded by tea plantations.

grave with the jacaranda flowering in the background.

We had a few days in Coonoor and busied ourselves looking for some houses that might exist no longer. There were two my mother had described, the first near the courthouse and the police parade ground. We didn't find anything that might fit the description.

The second my mother had remembered was on the other side of the centre of Coonoor, near 'the emporium'. They moved here when my grandfather changed his work — quite how or why this came about is not clear. The house she remembered was relatively modest. We had an old photograph and with the directions she gave us we think we may have identified it — uninhabited and derelict now.

We were not so lucky trying to find a house Andy's parents had spent time in on holidays in Coonoor (Isn't it an amazing coincidence that we have these origins in common!) We had a photograph and a name but no idea of where to start looking — it was like a needle in a haystack.

As we left the Nilgiris, I thought again of my mother. As a girl of 16 still grieving for her father, what on earth must she have felt on leaving such a beautiful spot to come to England a country she knew nothing of? It must have been so hard.

Our visit to Bangalore was less exciting. Although we had been able to establish that my grandparents had lived near what was then the courthouse in Residency Road, the old buildings along this road have now all given way to high rise blocks. Still it was pleasant to visit the Lalbagh park, which my mother remembers having visited as a small child.

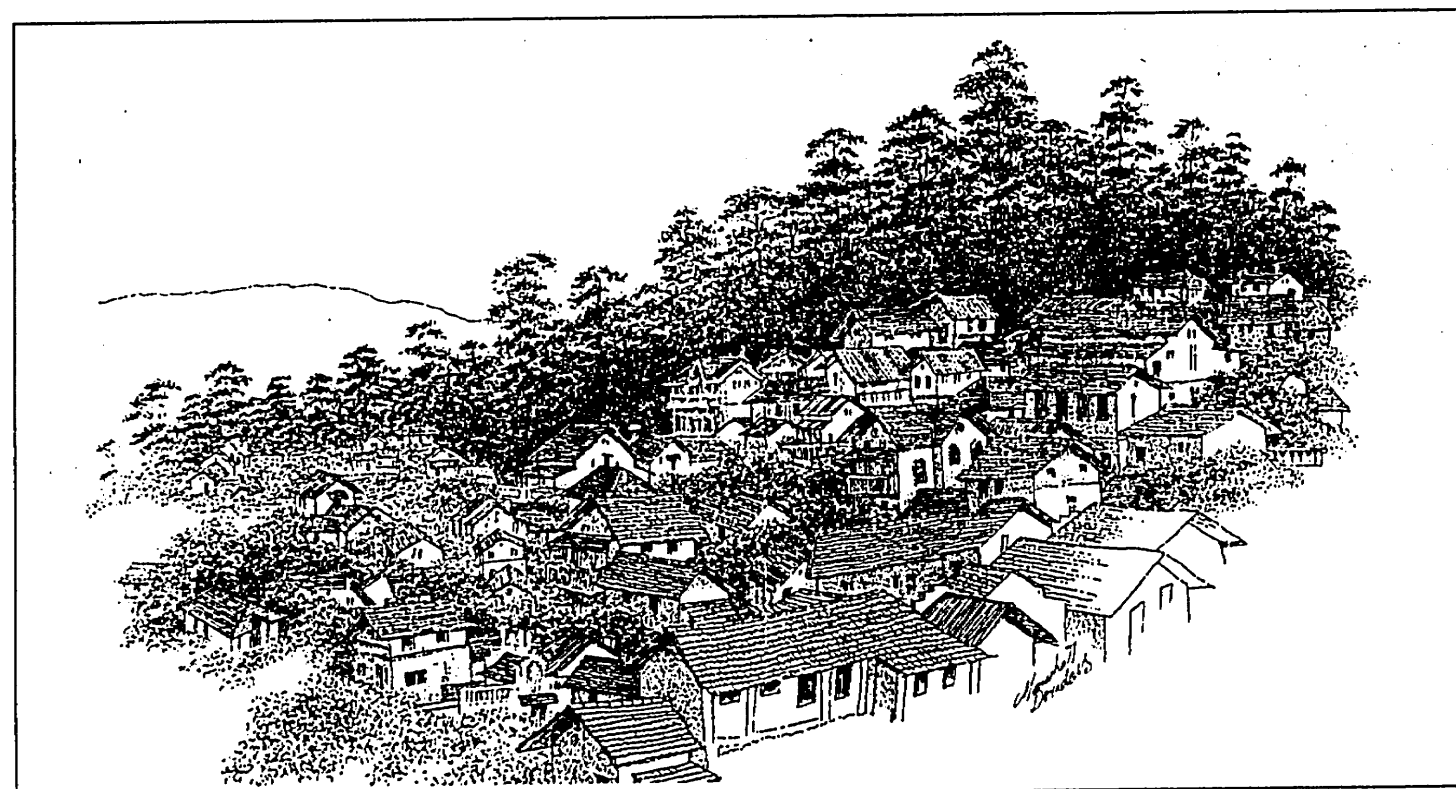
Madras was our final point of call in India. I had for some time been in correspondence with my cousin Manohar Devadoss and his wife Mahema — well known to your readers, no doubt — and was looking forward to meeting them again (we had first met in Britain many years ago). Andy was also

eagerly anticipating visiting the hospital he was born in and the house where he spent the first new months of his life — he had checked with the High Commission who had confirmed its address and existence.

We had established that the nursing home where Andy was born — the Lady Willington Hospital — still existed, although it was now an eye hospital. We found it after some negotiation by our driver around the one-way system. Although it has probably changed somewhat in the last 50 years, Andy was excited to have found it. We went on from there to the house in College Road where his parents had lived. When we got there we were amused at the coincidence of finding a cocker spaniel on duty as a guard dog — amused because Andy's parents had always had this sort of dog. The current owner of the house was not in residence, but once we had explained our mission the caretaker allowed us to look around the outside. Changed somewhat from the original photographs, we were still able to identify some of the aspects.

It was a family gathering at Mano and Mahema's that evening. We talked of family — I learned much about my great grandfather about whom I knew nothing. I realised that an unidentified photograph I had was of him — easily identified once you knew of the turban he always wore. I also learnt something of my grandfather's brothers and sisters and the family reaction to my grandfather's marriage. My family also attempted to explain to me the complicated relationships amongst those present — my head spun! I have yet to sit down and think through these relationships. A family tree currently being drawn up will help considerably.

Sitting now at home all these many miles away I reflect on how two sections of the same family could have such different backgrounds and upbringing, yet feel so at home together.



Coonoor... as remembered by MANOHAR DEVADOSS.

An Anniversary Feature

The day Madras was bombed...

Appa please tell us again about the bombing!" We would plead with him. Depending on his mood he would either send us packing or tell us how he and his family lived through the bombing of Madras during World War II.

He apparently had followed the war with great enthusiasm, and had made scrapbooks of the War with the zeal with which today's kids collect posters and stickers. An ocean and a continent away, Madras who read all this felt they were in 'safe' India. But when Japan joined the fray in 1942*, it brought the show-home to Madras with lightning speed. Madras tasted, albeit second hand, the flavour of war as refugees disembarked at the Madras harbour from every ship that came from Singapore or Rangoon.

* Editors Note: 1941

Memories of a war of yester year were revived. 'Thatha' began to hold forth about 1917, when the *Emden*, the cruising German battleship (sic) fired a salvo at Madras. How George Town had burnt merrily for days, those petrol tanks feeding the all greedy fire!" Those days are back! Madras is next!" The word went around. And the Great Evacuation began.

● by
Hiramalini Seshadri

My father and his family retreated to the safety of Kallidai-kurichi, a small village down south near the Cape. January 1942 found Madras a ghost city. Government offices had shifted out. Most families had sent at least their women and children to the country. Houses went abegging. Hotels did poorly. And real-estate

men made a killing. 1942 passed by; and not a bomb, not even a rifle-shot was fired at Madras!

Initially it was a trickle. But by mid-1943 the people were back, feeling slightly foolish and indignant at having been cheated of their fair share of bombs! Life soon returned to normality. The air-raid sirens still screamed. But people refused to bother. The sirens merely became part of the normal routine!

It was night; around eight thirty, to quote Father. The air-raid sirens sounded; and soon they heard the drone of planes overhead.

Father would relate how he and his family stood atop their terrace at Thambu Chetty Street along with all their other neighbours in George Town, all gaping open-mouthed at what they believed was a command performance arranged by the authorities. Little did they realise that it was Japan who was obliging.

As search-lights criss-crossed the sky and went the anti-aircraft guns ack-acked, frantic air-raid wardens shouted from the streets below to the population above that it was a REAL raid and, so, "please come down!" But they only met with derisive laughter from the rooftops above. After two years of hearing about the

... And no one knew about it

Letter I

During the 1944 (or is it 1945?) heavy floods, there was a breach in the Red Hills embankment — and the Adyar burst its banks. Water poured through the manholes and even the small power station diagonally opposite Wellington Talkies and many parts of Mount Road were under knee-deep water. There was a regular crowd to see dead carcasses, charpays and vessels being carried off by the river which flowed into the sea over the sandbank and at high tide, and with the sea also running high, the river in its last reaches lapped against our back garden. Since all power in the city had failed, two light bombers from the Japanese base in the Andamans

Letter II

Your letter set me thinking. The Japanese air raid could only have been round about June-July 1943 or 44, for I was then studying for my junior B.Sc and my sister Radha was studying in the Madanapalle College. The air raid took place when the floods were beginning to recede, but Madras was still without electricity, hence the Japanese light bombers had a free run of the place, for the sirens were not sounded. The place bombed was the high ground past the road which leads from the Cenotaph to the Harbour branch line near Medical College.

My father, who was a very light sleeper, heard the bombs go off — slight thuds, he said, and we put it down to hallucination. But when I went to see Radha off at Central Station, it was full of American GIs and there was a sort of buzz and tension in the air. Only after I had returned home did I find the story confirmed by *The Hindu*. I'm sure it must be in the files of the paper.

Since 1944 I stayed as a boarder in IOA (Suguna Vilas Sabha) on Lloyd's Road. I salivate whenever I think of the IOA meals. They had an Iyengar cook who, I am told, went to serve at the Indian High Commission in the UK. I moved back to Bhavani Vihar at the end of 42, and Radha had then joined Madanapalle College. There is a chance that it might have been in June 1942, but I'd bank on 1944.

K.N. Prabhu

A virtually unknown anniversary

The 56th anniversary of a virtually unknown event in this City falls on October 12th. Your Editor — who had followed the events of World War II quite closely — came upon this anniversary quite serendipitously. Contributor HIRAMALINI SESHADRI had several months ago sent in the piece we publish today, but your Editor had at the time returned it to her, convinced that she was mistaking the events of the narration for the events of 1942 when Colombo, Cocanada (Kakinada) and Vizag (Visakhapatnam) were bombed and Madras was believed to have been 'buzzed' leading to an exodus from the City.

Then, a few weeks later, K N PRABHU had in a personal letter to your Editor quite coincidentally mentioned this event again. We publish the relevant portion here too, as well as his 'clarification' in response to your Editor's queries. Several questions to oldtimers in Madras by *Madras Musings* thereafter, about the event both writers were certain about, only brought the response, "Never heard of it!"

When Prabhu mentioned *The Hindu*, several friends there tried to trace the story — but without luck. "It did not happen," they were all convinced. Till one determined, eagle-eyed girl spotted the story. It was just a couple of paragraphs, tucked away on an inside page (today's Page 1 was an inside page in those days!), and was lost amidst the stories of the Adyar in flood, in the October 13th issue. But it was also probably played down to prevent any repetition of the panic of 1942.

Whether the other papers carried the story we do not know, but certainly many in Madras would not have heard about it from *The Hindu* — the paper's circulation was only a few thousands in those days. The consequence was no one we asked remembering the story in *The Hindu* — *The Day Madras was Bombed*.

But Hiramalini Seshadri and K N Prabhu did.

Note: The stories from Hiramalini Seshadri and K N Prabhu are published with the dates as mentioned in their originals.

— THE EDITOR

bombs that never came, the people were in no mood to believe them.

It was a dark night, father used to reminisce. They would actually see the bombs like little blocks of light against the dark background, he would tell us. Soon the planes turned back and went. Everyone came down and discussed the live show excitedly. And then went to bed.

It was not until the papers announced the next day that the people realised that it was a

REAL LIVE raid. The headlines read that Madras had been bombed by Japanese planes the previous night and that around half a dozen bombs had been dropped. Fortunately, most had failed to explode and the one or two that had, hardly made a whimper and did no damage. The Bomb Defusal Squad, it announced, displaced considerable bravery and at risk to their lives had defused the offending bombs.

It was news that actually hit Madras like a bombshell!

Business briefs

★ Were you one of those who tried those Australian apples that were available in many a supermarket recently? At that time, the shops were talking of arranging for Australian oranges, pears, plums and grapes to supplement the three or four varieties of apples being offered. *Madras Musings* finds that not only has that talk died out but that the Australian apples are off the shelves. Does it have anything to do with the latest crop of Golden Delicious that's been available in the city the past few weeks? This Indian variety has the Australian range beaten by a mile for taste and crunchiness.

★ A home-grown pizza success story that is different is Pizzadeli. Started in 1995, it still remains a home delivery service — Pizzadeli being from 'Pizza' and 'Deli' very. Starting with a delivery of 40 pizzas a day by bicycle, it now delivers 300 a day — still by bicycle, for "bicycles have proved to be the most economical — and efficient — way to get around the city traffic,"

says V.G. Krishnaswamy, proprietor of Chennai's first pizza home delivery service.

★ It's perhaps the ideal name for an Indian music distribution company. Can you think of a better name than Saregama? Unless it is Padanisa? The Company, a subsidiary of the Gramophone Company of India, taking a cue from that other RPG venture, MusicWorld, that got off to a fabulous start in Chennai, will distribute Indian music, by GCI or by rivals, wherever NRI concentrations are. If the distribution idea works, Saregama clones of MusicWorld are likely to be established in major NRI towns; *Madras Musings* learns. A UK-incorporated company, Saregama plc was the first business with a majority Indian shareholding to launch a public issue overseas, *Madras Musings* was told.

★ Westside, Life Style, now Globus, and Shopper's Stop to follow... Chennai is really becoming a major player in the up-

market retailing game. And *Madras Musings* hears that a few more major retail stores are likely to follow in the next year or so, most of them franchisees of thriving city chains or a new store for all-India majors. All this is good news for a depressed property market, with over 1,25,000 square feet being the estimated demand from these stores for the rest of 1999. However, builders are not the happiest of people, *Madras Musings* hears, for most of this offtake will be on rent and not on sale. Further, with three or four major building projects reaching completion in the next 12 months, supply is again likely to outstrip demand — and then you're likely to get deals like a major bank recently got: Almost double the space at the rear for the same price as which it had booked storefront space. Being for offices and not customer service, that was a bargain. And there'll be more such bargains in the days ahead, *Madras Musings* is sure.

Short 'N' Snappy

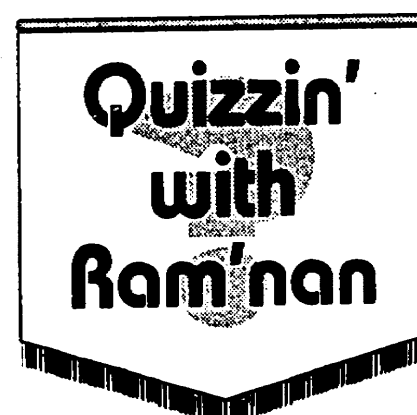
(Continued from Page 2)

★ An occasional cricket victory — be it even in a festival tournament — and how we go to town! A win in Toronto against a West Indies team as experimental as ours had a local newspaper screaming virtually across the page: "Glorious Indian triumph". The win "that clinched the series" we were told, "must rank as a signal triumph" and the team "must get an exalted position alongside the Indian teams that won the World Cup in 1983..." In fact, "the team swathed itself in glory". *The Man From Madras Musings* wonders with what heights of achievement this writer will be able to compare our next win in a festival tournament — say, by beating Zimbabwe and Kenya.

Up in the stratosphere one day and down in Hades the next is how our cricket writers treat Indian teams. Can it do the team any good, wonders MMM.

★ Speaking of cricket, *The Man From Madras Musings* heard a truly believe-it-or-not story the other day. Now that Sharjah has been followed by Toronto, Singapore and Los Angeles, the next destination is expected to be Casablanca or is it Rabat? In Morocco! Apparently that cricket-loving Sheikh from the UAE and that promoter of Tendulkar see a small stadium there — just big

— MMM



(Questions 1 to 12 are from the period September 1 to 15 with questions 10 to 12 pertaining to Greater Chennai. Questions 13 to 20 are general questions relating to Tamil Nadu.)

1. Name the Christian missionary murdered allegedly by the notorious Dara Singh in Orissa on September 1st?
2. He was the pioneer of rocketry in India. He was also Director of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre. And he passed away on September 1st. Who?
3. Who is the new President of the U.N. General Assembly?
4. Where was the 6th World Hindi Conference held recently?
5. Who was Mahesh Bhupathi's partner in his triumph in the Mixed Doubles event at the U.S. Open?
6. Who was named the Mahindra 'Golf of the Year' for the second year in succession?
7. Name the Chennai-based bicycle giant that celebrated its Golden Jubilee recently.
8. Name the latest personal computer, capable of 1 billion operations a second, launched by Apple recently.
9. Which global phenomenon observed the 30th anniversary of its genesis on September 2nd?

* * *

10. Who is the new Chief Justice of the Madras High Court?
11. After whom has the stretch of Lattice Bridge Road between the Bridge and the Adyar Bus Depot been named?
12. Which institution has taken over the Child Trust Hospital?

* * *

13. What is an anglicised version of Kaniyakumari?
14. Where is the temple dedicated to a deity who is the representation of the combined forces of the Trinity?
15. Where is the HQ of the Madras Regimental Centre, the oldest regiment of the Indian Army?
16. In which hills does the resort of Yercaud lie?
17. The British, because of its salubrious climate, referred to a place near Hosur as "Little England" what is the name of the place?
18. Where in the Meenakshi Temple did the ancient Sangam meet to discuss the merit of literary works?
19. With which aspect of filmmaking is the award-winning combine of Lenin-Vijayan associated?
20. How is the freedom fighter V.O. Chidambaram popularly referred to?

(Answers on Page 10)

Sir Arthur Cotton remembered

Beloved of the ryots

(Continued from last fortnight)

Reporting to the Board of Revenue at Madras in April 1852 on the virtual completion of the great Godavari Anicut, Sir Arthur Cotton advised careful watch and employment of one establishment for the conservation of the completed work. The following paragraph quoted from that reports brings out the ardent nature of the man who undertook the task against all odds to help the people live better:

"Can we see this large and important work calculated so substantially to promote the real comfort of a million of people, thus brought to completion through so many difficulties and contingencies, without heartily acknowledging the goodness of God in thus prospering us and bringing the projects so far to a successful issue, notwithstanding the opposition it has experienced from quarters from which I had every right and every reason to hope for, and from which I did confidently expect, most cordial and energetic support in carrying out a work of such unequalled magnitude in India (excepting that now on hand in the North West), a work approved and ordered by the Home authorities and calculated to be in every way so vast a public benefit? May we not hope that its accomplishment, with the abundant effects which have already resulted from it to the district, will lead to the adoption of such extensive works for the improvement of the country, and the promotion of the welfare of the people entrusted to our care, as will lead to an increasing appreciation of a Christian Government? There is nothing that the people more thoroughly appreciate, after peace, than public works, and especially those that furnish them with water. And I cannot but trust that this is only the beginning of a series of works worthy of our nation, our knowledge, our religion, and the extraordinary power God has been pleased to put into our hands. I say our religion, because I am sure it ought to lead us to do our utmost in every way to care for those who are thus committed to us."

The benefits that flowed from this great work are difficult to enumerate or evaluate. But the water carried by the river to the sea year after year has now turned out to be liquid gold in the hands of the farmers. No wonder several known and unknown beneficiaries

from the scheme virtually worship him and remember him with great reverence to this day.

Soon after the completion of the Dowleshwaram Anicut, Arthur Cotton became Chief Engineer of the Presidency in 1852, and moved to his new residence in Pallavaram Cantonment. But very shortly thereafter he had to leave for England on medical advice for prolonged rest. On return from England he was appointed Commandant of Engineers, a military post without any special function, acting more as an advisor to the Government on engineering subjects. But even while in that post he was considered the chief authority on all matters concerning irrigation not only in his own Presidency but generally throughout India, for on irrigation he was without a peer.

In 1860 he left India and was knighted on arrival in England. He also filed at a public banquet in London.

● by A. Mohanakrishnan
Chief Engineer - Irrigation (Retd.), Tamil Nadu

Though retired, he was always considering what more might be done for India. Reports he received that his schemes had proved far more beneficial than even what he had estimated and so, he incessantly strived to convince the authorities to implement several other schemes he had planned while in India. He had left a large map of India showing the number of storage centres he had contemplated, with a number of irrigation and navigation canals running out and interconnecting them.

However, protagonists of the railways saw matters differently, right from the days he had built irrigation systems. Because the administrators in England were more familiar with the railways and knew very little of the irrigation and navigation, the former was pushed more and more to the front. Cotton's efforts to swing public opinion in his favour proved futile in spite of his writing several articles in *The Times* detailing with facts and figures how irrigation works alone would ensure prosperity in India, avert famines and save millions of pounds now being spent on relief.

The great famine of 1876-77 in South India could not go unnoticed in the British Parlia-



Sir Arthur Cotton amongst his experimental crops.

ment and there was a long debate in the House of Commons on measures most proper to diminish the dangers of such calamities in future. There were references to the extension of irrigation and the part played so admirably by Sir Arthur Cotton in the Cauvery and Godavari deltas. But the debates on spending on irrigation in preference to railways was also heated. The subject being complicated, it was decided to

refer it to a Select Committee with Lord George Hamilton, the Parliament Under Secretary, as its Chairman.

Sir Arthur read in *The Times* an astounding speech by Lord George Hamilton in the House of Commons on January 22, 1878. He prepared a fitting reply and sent it to the Secretary of State for India, appealing for justice at his hands and due publicity of his defence. The appeal was in vain, but his letter was forceful, stating:

I need hardly repeat my assurance that, after being spoken of in the opprobrious terms that the Under Secretary thought necessary to use, where he knew that I was not present to give my side of the question, the Secretary of State will give me the fullest publicity to my defence which the case now admits

Whether it was quite becoming, or for the furtherance of the public service, for a young man, who had never been in India, had never seen a tank, an irrigated area, or a mile of steamboat canal, or spoken to a ryot in the irrigated districts, and was consequently, of necessity, very ignorant of the whole subject, to speak before the House and the world in such contemptuous terms of an officer old enough to be his grandfather, who had more

than fifty years of the most thorough practical experience in the matter, who had done good service and shown himself to be a practical man, though he says it himself (for it had pleased God that he should project and execute works that have put millions into the treasury, and scores of millions into the pockets of the ryots, or rather into their cummerbands) and who had urgently pointed out, 25 years ago, what is now declared by a Viceroy, an Indian Lieutenant-Governor and his Council, and several railway engineers, viz., that "the railways cannot carry either the quantities, or at the price, what is essential in India", whether it was becoming or useful for a young man so to speak, is a point which I beg, respectfully, to offer for the consideration of the Right Hon. The Secretary of State and his Council.... For nothing can be more certain than that in the present case the future of India's millions depends greatly upon whether money is still expended upon Railways, to cost £9,000 a mile and carry thirty thousand at one penny, or upon canals to cost from £2,000 to £8,000 and carry two or three million tons at one twentieth of a penny, and whether districts are to be put into the state of Tanjore, Kistna and Godavari, or left in the state of the rest of the Carnatic last year and of Orissa, Behar and Central India a few years ago.

Sir Arthur had to appear before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on India Affairs, Company eighteen Members, not one of them an engineer, in 1878 to justify and vindicate his stand that irrigation expansion deserves a better investment any day than railways. More than nine hundred questions were asked of him over three days. He was not embarrassed even by hostile questions. On the contrary, he was calm and brought out his mastery of the subject of irrigation in a striking manner in his replies. He defended his plans of making all rivers and canals in India navigable and of use for the transit of men and goods.

The following questions and answers may be useful to judge the proceedings:

Chairman: In your opinion would canal navigation meet the whole transit wants of India, of its commerce and its people?

(Continued on Page 9)

Excerpts from...

The CMDA's Heritage Plan for the metropolis

Nature has bestowed upon Man things of immense value which he is required to preserve for his growth and sustenance. The gift of nature (called natural heritage) is crucial for striking a balance between Man and Nature. Man has also over the years created an enormous wealth of built environment. Some of these creations are highly valuable and need to be preserved in order to establish a link between the past and the present. This valuable repository in the shape of buildings, complexes, settlements etc. is called man-made heritage. It is the duty of every civilized society to preserve both natural and man-made heritage for the present and future generations. Heritage serves as a valuable source for people to know about the way of life, culture, level of development, building techniques etc. of the society of a particular period. Thus, heritage is of immense value and its preservation and conservation becomes crucial for the sustenance, growth and future development of any civilised society.

No society or country can claim exclusive right over man-made heritage. In fact, it belongs to mankind and its preservation needs to be viewed accordingly. India over its long history has inherited an enormous wealth of man-made heritage. The Indian Constitution provides for the preservation of the Man-made heritage in the Constitution itself. Under the fundamental duties enshrined in the Constitution, it has been provided, that:

"It shall be the duty of every Citizen of India to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture."

The Constitution does not stop here. It also lays upon the State the onus of preserving and conserving man-made heritage by making positive efforts in this direction. Under Directive Principles of State Policy, the Constitution enjoins upon the state this obligation:

"To protect every monument or place of places of objects of artistic or historic interest declared by or under law made by Parliament to be of national importance from spoliation, disfigurement, destruction, renewal, disposal or export as the case may be."

Thus, the States have been entrusted with the responsibility of not only preserving the man-made heritage but also to take due precautions to avoid its destruction etc. by enacting suitable legislation.

The uniqueness of Chennai, its rich heritage and culture, may be lost over a period of years, due to the rapid urbanisation taking place at present, if steps are not taken to preserve the city's heritage. Hence, it is important that heritage plan for this city be prepared to safeguard whatever is available for the present and future generations to cherish this uniqueness, richness and grandeur.

It would be desirable for the Centre and the State governments to set up heritage commissions comprising experts from the area of history, art, architecture, planning, archaeology and other related areas. The commissions should be entrusted with the task of carrying out detailed surveys of the areas and buildings and then recommend to the government to bring those buildings under the purview of the central/state laws.

The Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act, 1970, provides that the regional plan prepared under section 15 of the Act may provide for the following matters:

1. Demarcation, conservation and development of areas of natural scenic beauty,

forest, wild life, natural resources and landscaping.

- II. Demarcation of objects and buildings of archaeological or historical interest or of natural beauty or actually used for religious purposes or regarded by the public with veneration.

- III. Prevention of erosion, provision for afforestation, or reforestation, improvement and redevelopment of water front areas, rivers and lakes.

Similarly, the detailed development plan prepared under section 20 of the Act may also provide for "the demarcation of places or objects and buildings of archaeological or historical interest or natural scenic beauty or actually used for religious purposes or regarded by the public with veneration; or the protection of canal, tank or river sides, coastal areas and other places of natural or landscape beauty".

The Development Control Rules prepared under the Master Plan provide for the following under Rule 22:

Preservation of buildings of historical or architectural interest

If a building or premises not covered under the Archaeological Monuments Act, in the

opinion of the authority is of historical or architectural interest and is in danger of demolition or alteration likely to affect its character by a development, the authority may impose such conditions as it may be deemed fit for the preservation of such building while granting planning permission.

Man made heritage in the Indian context has largely been confined with emphasis on buildings alone. City spaces and groups of buildings have been by and large ignored...

In this context, it would be desirable to evolve the concept of heritage cities or heritage zones for ensuring preservation and protection of man-made wealth. Such an approach would help in not only ensuring orderly growth and development of the area and buildings but would help in minimising misuse and distortions which are fast taking place in such areas.

In India, buildings are classified as buildings of national or state importance. However no effort is made to include man-made heritage which is of local importance. Absence of such a provision in the Act leads to the exclusion of a large number of important buildings which have local bearing. This

leaves gaps in the man-made heritage and accordingly, which needs to be plugged by including buildings which reflect the spirit of a particular city or area. Once the concept of local heritage is evolved, this would help in preserving those buildings by involving local people and local level authorities.

The issue of involving local bodies in the national task of preserving the heritage assumes importance because of the enactment of 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts which *inter alia* call for strengthening local bodies, empowering them to emerge and function as institutions of self-governance at the settlement level. In this context, the laws need to be amended and the subject matter of man-made heritage should be included within the ambit of the 11th and 12th Schedule attached to the constitution, enabling local bodies to take care of local heritage.

It is suggested that State Town Planning Laws should be amended to include the concept of listed buildings so as to protect buildings of exceptional architectural, historical and for aesthetic value. Special rules need to be made to regulate the changes to be made in such buildings and strict control

(Continued on Page 8)

Looking beyond the SCP

The Sustainable Chennai Project, started with much fanfare, shuttered along for a few years and slowly faded out by 1998. M.G. Devasahayam, a former Civilian and one of the staunchest supporters of the SCP, looks back in this review on what went wrong and what can still be done.

The Sustainable Chennai Project (SCP) was conceived in 1991 and got started in 1996. At the time of conception, the project had aroused positive expectations of facilitating a participative urban governance in Chennai. This was because one of the three basic objectives of the SCP, as initially conceived was, "Strengthening the capacity of the local institutions to plan, coordinate and manage sustainable urban development and growth with emphasis on environmental consideration, multi-sectoral co-ordination and co-operative participation of the Public, Private and Popular Sectors".

To carry forward this SCP objective, a "Sustainable Cities Forum" was convened in 1992 by M.G. Devasahayam and G. Dattatri to enable and em-

power citizens to give themselves and for the generations to come a better quality of life."

Throughout the initial period, UNCHS officials and consultants were time again advised by the Forum not to make SCP 'another Government project' but, instead, structure it as a 'participative programme' from the very beginning in line with the main objective. There was virtually no

positive response to these initiatives and suggestions from the quarters administering the SCP (the CMDA).

The SCP took the routine Government route and went through elaborate and time-consuming 'Consultative Group' processes to identify issues. The Monitoring Committee, that had no background of the public consultative process or any public representation, summarily disposed of the issues thus identified. Even the Chairmen/Conveners of the Consultative Groups — eminent industrialists, academi-

cians and professionals — were not invited or heard before the Monitoring Committee summarily decided on the issues. These 'issues', known to everyone in the City for a long time, were endorsed in an even more elaborate 'City Consultation Workshop' and passed on to Action Committees, again totally dominated by Government functionaries. These Action Committees were sup-

posed to generate, process and approve 'pilot projects' which would pave the way for "developing the key environmental planning and management strategies and action plans within the framework and incorporating into the overall strategic development plan for Madras, including systems to operationalise these strategies", it is not known as to whether this was even attempted!

Nevertheless there have been some positive aspects of SCP and the imperatives for future action are:

- Chennai now has a good foundation on which any new initiative could be built and sustained on a long-term basis.
- Public representatives, Government officials and agencies have been exposed to, and are aware of, the concept of sustainable urban development.
- NGOs, CBOs and Citizens' Groups have actively participated in the SCP process and most of them are geared to accept and take

(Continued on Page 8)

● by M.G. Devasahayam

The Landmarks of the City

Looking beyond SCP

any mechanism for involvement of people in the entire process of preservation and conservation of man-made heritage. In fact, heritage is created by society and the onus of preservation must also be appropriately vested with them. In India one of the basic causes why damage has been caused to the heritage is the lack of awareness on the part of the public at large and their non-involvement in the process. Efforts must be made to make preservation and conservation of man-made heritage a mass movement by educating people. All laws must be amended to provide for an appropriate mechanism of participation of people, interest groups and non-governmental organisations in the preservation of manmade heritage. Central, state and local governments must publish a list of all monuments and areas covered under various Acts as heritage buildings and areas so as to enable people to know about them. Local agencies must distribute pamphlets and organise exhibitions about heritage so as to effectively involve the people and make people realise that preservation is the people's programme and not a government show. This will help in giving recognition to the fact that conservation cannot and should not be the sole concern of a Government Department. It has to be completed by the work of local authorities, countless private organisations and millions of individuals. In short it must be the concern of everyone of us, that heritage is a marvellous possession to be enjoyed but must be lovingly conserved, with care and imagination, for future generations.

tion. Instead, SCP should encourage an umbrella organisation in the form of an alliance/coalition of NGOs and Stakeholders and give them the task of implementing the programme, of course with the active support and assistance from Government departments and agencies. Such an alliance/coalition should have the administrative and managerial experience and expertise to take up and successfully implement the SCP with the active participation/support of the State's and the City's political and administrative leadership.

(Continued from Page 1)

6. Cosmopolitan Club
7. Curzon & Co
8. Church of Christ, Nungambakkam
9. Doveton House, Women's Christian College
10. DGP's Office
11. Govt. College of Arts & Crafts
12. Higginbotham's
13. Hongkong Bank
14. Lady Willingdon Govt. Higher Sec. School
15. Loyola College
16. Memorial Hall
17. Madarasa-I-Azam
18. Madras Medical College campus
19. DPI campus
20. Old Madras Club campus (Express Estate)
21. Ophthalmic Hospital
22. Pachaiyappa's College
23. P.Orr & Sons
24. Queen Mary's College
25. Ramaswamy Mudaliar Choultry
26. Royapuram Railway Station
27. Schmidt Memorial
28. Siddique Choultry
29. State Bank Building, Anna Salai
30. Sterling Gardens
31. The Agri-Horticultural Society campus
32. Tamil Nadu Archives
33. Vivekananda Ilam (JCC House)
34. Wesley Church
35. YMCA (Esplanade)
36. YWCA campus

Besides the above landmarks in the city, *Madras Musings* suggests the addition of the following:

1. Adyar Estuary
2. Armenian Cemetery
3. Bharati Ilam
4. Buckingham & Carnatic Mills and Quarters
5. Buckingham Canal
6. Chennakesava & Chennamalikesava Temples
7. Descanco Church
8. Egmore Benefit Fund Society buildings
9. Elphinstone Bridge
10. Esplanade Pillar
11. Gandhi Memorial (Chola Sheraton)
12. Gandhi Memorial statue
13. Jewish Cemetery
14. Kalakshetra Campus
15. Kilpauk Waterworks
16. Little Mount Church complex
17. Luz Church
18. Madras Boat Club
19. Madras Christian College campus (Tambaram)
20. Madras Cricket Club campus
21. Madras United Club
22. Magistrate's Court (Rajaji Salai)
23. Marina Beach and promenade
24. MCC buildings (George Town)
25. Monegar Choultry
26. My Ladye's Park
27. Napier Bridge
28. Old Town Wall
29. Philatelic Bureau
30. Poompuhar building
31. Railway bungalows in Nungambakkam & Perambur
32. St George's School campus
33. St Matthias' Church
34. St. Thomas' Mount Church complex
35. Teachers' Training College campus
36. The Grange (Kanchi)
37. The Island
38. The Mail building
39. Tiruvalluvar Temple
40. Triumph of Labour
41. Vasanth Vihar
42. Veterinary College (Dobbin Hall)
43. Victoria Hostel
44. Victoria School for the Blind campus, Poonamallee
45. Yale Monument (Law College cemetery)
46. Zion Church

In the event readers wish to add to this list, they may send in their suggestions to *Madras Musings* before October 18, 1999.

NOTE: This list does not include many private homes and several private school buildings of heritage value (like *Lushington Gardens*, *Luz House*, *Leith Castle*, *Crynant*, *Gokhale Hall*, *Lady Bentinck's School* etc.) It, however, includes several areas protected partly by the Archaeological Survey of India, but in need of further protection (like Fort St George as a whole and the entire Old Town Wall).

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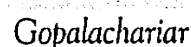
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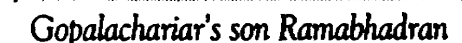
Nurtured by him was his son Vellore G. Ramabhadran, the *mridanga* vidwan. Popularly known merely as Vellore, he

A father and son with the right values

Vellore has accompanied every main artist of importance in each generation in a six-decade span. A staunch believer in the principle of musical percus-

Ramabhadran as well imbibed the right values with the artistic skills from his father. The seeds of the 'sarvalaghu philosophy' were sown in his mind. The basic realisation that percussion was meant to accompany has remained a cardinal principle with him. Those closely associated with him also know of his flair for singing and familiarity with the kriti-s.

the West for high profile concert engagements, but he does not shun small town requests — in many cases the fees offered are 'peanuts'. Respect for old associations and responsibility to serve the cause are important considerations for this prominent resident of Chittrakulam area in Chennai. Once when Yella Venkateswara Rao, then a young



'Harhi' to his close friends, he has no airs nor hang-ups and is devoid of ego and cynicism. A lively conversationalist and a cheerful mixer, he has a wide circle of friends, many with quite a high social acceptability rating. He does not own a car but has a taxi at his command and he could be seen offering a lift, instead of asking for it as is common with many musicians — (Courtesy: Sruti).

— Manna Srinivasan

Editor's Note: The introductory paragraphs on V. Gopalachariar are by Ramabhadran, his son.

BELOVED OF THE RYOTS

(Continued from Page 6)

Chairman: Do you consider that there is enough water in India to feed all the canals of which you spoke?

Witness: There is water enough in India for every conceivable purpose ten times over. There is no want of water.

The reports of the Select Committee admitted the success of all the irrigation works in the Madras delta with which Sir Arthur Cotton's name is so honourably associated, namely the Cauvery, Kistna and Godavari, and indicated that if there was any financial failure in other cases in the past, the main cause appears to be the want of ability or energy on the part of the officers of the Public Works Department and their reliance on hasty generalisation.

Even in retirement in Eng-

land, Sir Arthur Cotton's mind and thoughts were always on India, Indian people and the several ways help could be brought to them if only the British administration would heed the few pieces of advice he was giving through frequent writing in the Press and in addresses to the Indian Associations in England. On several occasions Sir Arthur found the East India Association a convenient and useful medium for the expression of his views. He took special pains to prepare for those addresses stuffed with a lot of statistics of Indian finances and Indian administration.

Sir Arthur was also consulted by many of his friends working in Egypt, North-west Africa and elsewhere for his advice on projects for development. He cultivated varied interests, like boat-designing, patenting a tricycle and a reliable brake. He had a genius for inventions and was always trying to do something new in spite of some failures and personal injuries in his trials.

In his later year he also interested himself in agriculture.

Raising wheat, maize, oats and corn, he adopted methods of deep ploughing, manuring and irrigating that he had devised and showed that the production could be much increased.

During the last thirty years of his life, Sir Arthur warmly supported the Temperance cause. It all happened one day when he sat for his luncheon. Someone narrated a tragic story of the results of drink that had occurred in his immediate neighbourhood. Turning to the butler he said, "Take this decanter away. I will not have it before me again." From that hour to the day of his death he never tasted alcohol in any shape or form. On his death bed he refused to touch brandy or any other stimulant.

He had a high admiration for women's work and supported their cause strongly. He believed that women had special gifts granted to them by God, like gentle hands and skilful instincts, and had a great role to play in the world's arena.

He kept himself busy all the time until his death doing

something or other. He used to tell his daughter, "Do something, my girl, do something. Never be idle for a single moment. Remember Time is short, Eternity is near."

He was 96 and had not suffered from any major illness. His eye was not dim nor was his natural force abated. But he began complaining that he felt very weak. On Sunday July 9, 1899, as he read his Bible while lying down on his sofa he began talking incoherently of seeing strange sights of revelation and the manifestation of God. He gradually began to lose the power of speech. On the night of July 14th, he became feverish and restless and began slowly sinking. The end when it came was 'perfect peace'.

"His life, judged by any test was one of true greatness, such as is only given to a very few to attain in the world. He has left behind him a fame and a name which must endure to all times". Sir Richard Sankey, R.E., K.C.B., wrote in a letter to Lady Arthur on hearing of her husband's death.

(Concluded)

Opportunity beckons — to become able

The Opportunity School, whose students were medal-winners at the Special Olympics World Summer Games, has lived upto its motto, Lift and Lead, for the past 30 years, lifting and leading hundreds of differently abled children. The school at present has 165 children, their ages ranging from 3 to 25, twelve teachers, twelve helpers and four instructors help these children become an integral part of society.

Sport has always found a major place among the student activities at Opportunity School. The children attend various sports competitions conducted by the Social Welfare Department, Leo Club and Mylapore Academy. In addition, Opportunity School never misses an opportunity to send its children to Special Olympics meets, whether at State level or National level! At the National level Special Olympics held in Chandigarh in September 1998, Opportunity School sent six boys and six girls and they won 17 gold medals! Where there is a Special Olympics Meet, Opportunity School is sure to be there, well prepared to win golds and silvers!

The school provides educational opportunities for the literate and trains the intractable children. For the intractable category, the school offers vocational training in Screen Printing, Weaving, Carpentry and Canteen work.

L.V.

If you would label me...

Label me ABLE

All it takes is just one more chromosome in a gene! That is the divide between mental retardation and normalcy. It is a division seen as wide by society generally. But the fact is the special person is able, maybe differently able, but definitely able.

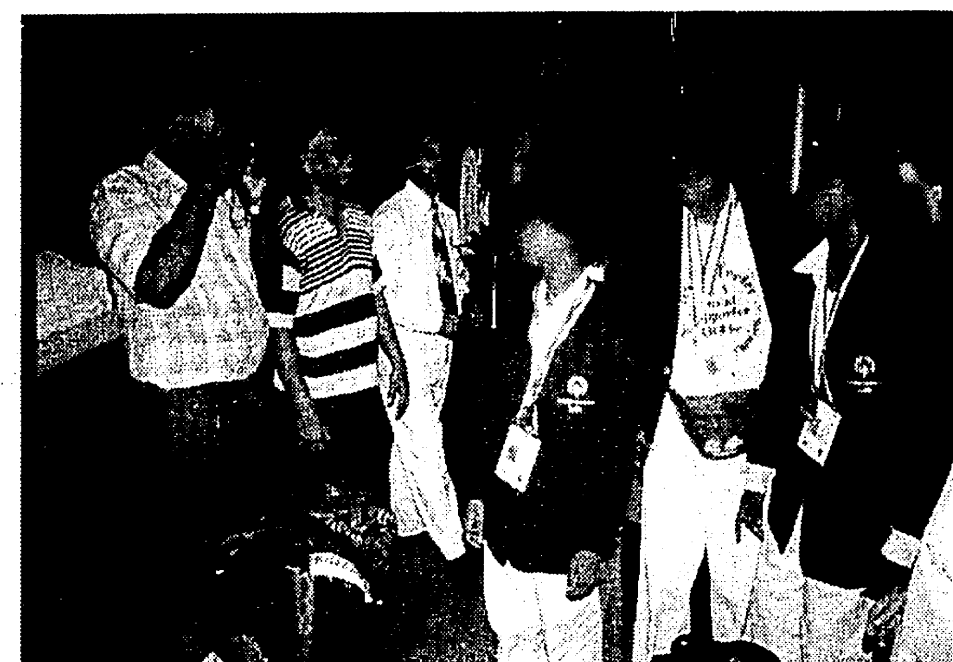
At the 1999 Special Olympics World Summer Games held in North Carolina as part of the 30th anniversary of the Special Olympics movement, the Indian delegation did India really proud. It returned to India, with 25 gold, 45 silver and 37 bronze medals. There were six representatives from Tamil Nadu in the delegation and all won medals. Sundarambal, a 17-year-old student of Vedicvelli, a school for the differently able in, Tiruchchirapalli, won a gold medal in the 500 metres cycling and a bronze medal in the 1000 metres cycling. Famidah Khadri (17) and Vinod Samuel (18) from Opportunity School, Chennai,

won silver medals in Fast Walking and Team Handball respectively. The Indian Handball team lost to Brazil. Shoba (17), Judith (23) and Uma (17) (also from Opportunity School) won bronze medals with the basketball team.

Dhandapani from Pondichery was a member of the Indian Football team, which finished fifth.

The Indian team won eight gold, 11 silver and three bronze medals in Athletics, the best performance coming from Shankar Rao from Andhra Pradesh who won a gold in the 100m walk and 200m sprint, plus a silver in high jump. In the women's section, Shalini Shetty of Karnataka won a silver in shot put and a bronze in the 200m dash.

The Indian team won medals in walking, high jump, long jump, shot put, 200m dash, roller skating, speed skating, 2x100m relay, speed race, cy-



Medal-winners from Tamil Nadu on arrival at Central Station after the Special Olympics.

cling, swimming, badminton, table tennis, team handball and basketball.

Over 7000 mentally challenged athletes from 150 countries took part in Aquatics, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Cycling, Football, Golf, Gymnastics, Roller Skating, Sailing, Team Handball and Volleyball, to name just a few!

At the closing day ceremony, watched by over 30,000 spectators, Dr. Timothy Shriver, President of Special Olympics, Inc., posed the question, "How do you capture this exhilarating week?" then offered an answer: "If you think back to a word, then remember that word and let it stay with you for the rest of your life. If you think back to a gesture then remember that and let it stay with you for the rest of your life. If you think back to a moment, then remember that moment and let it stay with you for the rest of your life." Shriver then shouted, "Thank you!" to the athletes in at least 30 different languages. He revived them up even more at the conclusion, quoting an Australian athlete who had said: "If you want to label me, label me able." Shriver repeated the phrase over and over, louder and louder each time, and the enthused athletes joined in!

Lily Venkatarangam



October 6-15: A multi-media exhibition on the works of The Blue Rider group of artists as seen in the garden of the Lenbachhaus Villa in Munich. Franz Marc, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Alexej Jawlensky and others are featured.

October 8 and 9: The Crafts Council of India's Annual Fund Raising event. It is an exhibition and sale of a never-before-seen range of designer sarees, jewellery and accessories in addition to a new line of household items, a collection reflecting the rich craft and textile heritage of our country. There will be rare sarees and yardage — vegetable dyed, printed, embroidered and woven in intricate patterns... (at the Park Sheraton Hotels & Towers.)

October 13: In the 'French Science Today' series, M. Gilles Dawidowicz will give an audio visual lecture on *The latest findings on Planet Mars* (at 6.15 p.m. at the Periyar Centre for Science and Technology Environment Pavilion, Kotturpuram.)

Answers to Quiz

1. Father Arul Doss; 2. Dr. S. Srinivasan; 3. Theo Ben-Gurirab, the Foreign Minister of Namibia; 4. London; 5. Ai Sugiyama of Japan; 6. Lucknow's Vijay Kumar; 7. TI Cycles; 8. Power Mac G4; 9. The concept of Internet

10. Justice K.G. Balakrishnan;

11. Kalki Krishnamurthy; 12. The Kanchi Sankara Math;

* * *

13. Cape Comorin; 14. Suchindram; 15. Wellington; 6. Shevaroy Hills; 17. Thalli; 18. By the Portramaraikulam (golden lotus tank); 19. Editing; 20. Kappal Ottiya Tamizhan.



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