

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

# MADRAS

## MUSINGS

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Vol. XVI No. 13

October 16-31, 2006

Rs. 5 per copy  
(Annual Subscription: Rs. 100/-)

Isn't my Grandpa really cute?

### New Age anyone?

Newspapers recently carried reports about a certain former "Ruler of the Free World" (Who comes up with these titles, anyway?!) celebrating his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Very nice – except that, apparently, in these unsettled times, '60' is the new '40'.

This is a definite shock.

There you were, all set to greet the now-definite signs of ageing with a welcoming whoop, looking forward to flab, endless TV, and the sheer fun of offering unwanted opinions and then taking refuge behind the age factor (you can still get away with that in these parts). And now you're being told it ain't over yet.

There is too much pressure on metro-zens to earn the "You don't look it at all" accolade, when their age is revealed.

You can no longer sink gently into distinct non-achievement, refuse to 'dress' for an occasion, or let midriffs create their own identities.

Incidentally, with answers becoming so layered, all those nosy official documents need to be informed that more space is required next to the column marked 'Age'.

The next time you inadvertently wander into a restaurant clearly inappropriate for your age and natural hair-colour, just stare right back at the beardless youngster giving you the censorious eye, and snap: "Don't you give me attitude. According to Those Who Know, I'm just a few years older than you. Which places you somewhere between the crib and a high chair".

Ranjitha Ashok

## THE ADYAR CREEK – OVER THE YEARS

1985 – WWF-India's Tamil Nadu State Office asks the State Government of Tamil Nadu to declare the Adyar Creek and Estuary a "Protected Area". The State Government feels a "ban on hunting" would suffice.

1993 – The Government of Tamil Nadu decides to construct an auditorium and memorial for Dr. Ambedkar on five acres in the Adyar Creek. Environmental groups in Madras challenge the decision in Court. In a landmark judgement, Justice Kanakaraj allows construction of the memorial to an extent of only 1.5 acres at one end of the identified site. Even though restrained from "constructing an auditorium or any other type of building" in the area, the State Government appeals to the Division Bench and goes ahead with the construction of the Dr. Ambedkar Memorial on 0.75 acre, utilising the remaining 0.75 acre for provision of lawns and landscaping.

1994 – The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) comes up with a proposal to develop the Creek into a "Wooded Area". It budgets Rs.7.50 crore for 'developmental works' consisting of various concrete constructions and artificial ponds for boating, etc. On the Consumer and civic Action Group's (CAG's) suggestion, the CMDA withdraws the "Wooded Area" proposal in April 1997 and confirms that it is taking steps to hand over the land to the Forest Department.

1997 – Noticing further construction activity, over 3000 Chennai residents from various environmental groups embark on a signature campaign against the repeated destruction of the

Adyar Creek and Estuary. Directed by the High Court, on 2.4.1998, the State Department of Environment issues specific directions to different agencies to expedite the declaration of the area as "protected" under the Wildlife Protection Act.

2001 – The High Court dismisses the appeal filed by the State Government, and the Division Bench upholds the directions to the State Government to "remove the sands spread on the western side of the said five acre plot and restore the said area to its original position... The entire lowlying wetland ...shall be maintained and preserved as low-lying wetlands."

2004 – The Commissioner, Corporation of Chennai, confirms to CAG, on request, that an 'eco-park' was being developed in the area in conformity with the Madras High Court order. On September 13th, representatives of some NGOs and public-spirited individuals met the Commissioner and sought more details. The group, after a detailed analysis, presented a proposal to the Corporation on how the sensitive Adyar Creek and wetland area could be restored to its original position. The Commissioner sought a proposal from an Auroville environmentalist, a foreigner, who held discussions with the local group and has now prepared a proposal.

2006 – The Commissioner tells the Press "ecological restoration of the Adyar Creek" is being taken up with an enhanced outlay provided.

– S.M.

## The Adyar Creek: What's its future?

(by Shobha Menon)

The Chennai Corporation recently announced that it is "taking up the ecological restoration of the Adyar Creek with inputs from conservationists based in Auroville near Pondicherry." Stating that the original outlay of Rs.50 crore for the project has been increased to Rs.100 crore, the Corporation spoke of developing a world-class aquarium, a park and a host of additional facilities, including boating.

All this is at variance with what the Corporation discussed with a group of eco-citizens in 2004. The subsequent proposal submitted to the Corporation by the citizens' group for eco-restoration of the entire Creek area was significant for two reasons – it attempted to implement the orders of the Madras High Court in letter and in spirit, and to present a localised plan developed by citizens that would breathe life into the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment that focusses on decentralised and participatory urban plan-

ning. Thereafter, there was silence on all sides except for an Auroville environmentalist drawing up plans for the by-then 'protected' (with a wall) Creek, after discussions with the citizens' group.

The Corporation is now talking of developing the 'wall-protected' Creek area into a recreational space. Various ecologists and citizens of Chennai who had earlier been consulted by the Corporation have, since

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Business as usual inside the market.

## Another Luz landmark endangered

(by A Staff Reporter)

Another Mylapore landmark is likely to be soon wiped out. Thaneerthurai Market in Luz, a neighbour of the Sri Anjaneyar Temple on Royapettah High Road, is living its last days. The bulldozers are just waiting for the signal to raze what has been the most favoured market for three generations of Mylaporeans.

A person claiming to have purchased this property some

time ago is trying to get the hawkers at the market to vacate. Though half of them have vacated their business space after being paid some compensation, about 40 others have taken the issue to court. A lawyer for the hawkers says that he got a court injunction that the hawkers should not be disturbed. He says that it is still not clear who the rightful owner of

this property is and what proof he has. It may, however, safely be assumed that the hawkers staying on will also move out if they can negotiate a 'decent' compensation. Which is possible as the buzz is that a huge commercial complex is to come up here.

Thaneerthurai Market grew out of the 'landing' trade that took place in this area some 150

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# Campaigns that care not for the citizen

They have emerged suddenly and are now visible all over the State. Reports of their presence are coming in from such far off locations as Tirumalarayasamudram and Narthamalai. They lurk in street corners in groups and rise together as soon as they sight an unwary passerby. During the day they collect in gangs and target specific neighbourhoods where they go from house to house. No district in the State is free of them. Come 10.00 p.m. and they retire only to emerge at 6.00 a.m. the next day.

No, *The Man from Madras Musings* is not talking about the Chikungunya mosquitoes. He is referring to the campaigners for the just-concluded local body elections who left no stone unturned to ensure that their candidates beat the others to the winning post. Considering that those in the fray would, if elected, be responsible for the well-being of our roads, the control of various forms of pollution, the collection of taxes and protection of our properties, and the passage of various rules for the public weal, MMM was intrigued at their campaigning methods. Some of which were:

1. *Defacing all public and private property:* The first act in any campaign is the pasting of posters all over private and public compound walls. MMM has written extensively on this during the last assembly elections and would like to reiterate here that any rule that expects a house-owner to complain about violations before taking action is not practically useful. There has to be a blanket ban on posters on private and public property. Specific billboards can be allotted for the purpose.

2. *Making the maximum noise:* All the campaigners use vehicles that are fitted with speakers that are in clear violation of permissible noise limits. Through these you hear songs extolling the virtues of the candidates and the parties backing them. The vehicles used for the campaigns are mostly autorickshaws which boast of a music of their own. The combination, especially when the autos career through the thoroughfares of the city in groups, makes for deafening noise. As for the evenings when public meetings are held at various street corners, the less said the better. If the sound levels are low, crackers are burst at regular intervals as though to provide the necessary sound. The paper from the crackers adds to the rubbish on the streets.

3. *Disregarding all traffic rules:* Every once in a while during the day, the candidate and his aides go "ride about" in their respective constituencies.

This involves convoys of autorickshaws blaring out music, with party flags stuck at all odd angles and giant cutouts of the candidates and their symbols. This motley collection takes to the streets and blocks all other traffic. The rest of the road users are forced to follow the convoys which take their own time in moving. Public meetings are held at street corners where, to the complete detriment of smooth traffic, platforms are erected which involve digging holes in the road and drawing electricity from the local junction box. All of it with police turning a blind eye to the happenings, of course.

4. *Create the maximum nuisance:* MMM does not wish to elaborate. But a candidate's supporters use any available corner or compound wall to



relieve themselves. Their refreshments are taken care of in plastic boxes and sachets which, when empty, are thrown all around the neighbourhood. And like the villain in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, they are 'particularly good at expectorating'. What a combination!

It was also amusing to note not one candidate addressed local issues. Each one talked of his party's achievements at the Central and State levels. Perhaps all of them view the local body elections as mere stepping stones to higher things.

## Friendly reception

A friend, recently returned from the United States, informs *The Man from Madras Musings* that the immigration authorities in Madras that is Chennai are the most courteous and friendly and take care of the arrivals in a matter of minutes. This, he states, contrasts completely with the behaviour in the US where most arrivals are looked at with visible hostility and it is deemed a favour to be allowed to pass the entry point into the country.

There are, apparently, separate counters for the physically challenged, the foreign passport-holders and Indians at the Chennai airport, which, according to MMM's friend, makes for smooth passage for all those waiting in the queues. The friend also noted that the queue of foreigners was far longer than that of others and indicates that Chennai is well on its way to becoming an international destination.

MMM is delighted to hear this and only hopes that the rest of the city too would gear up to become truly international by way of civic amenities.

## Mosquito menace

Chikungunya, which has been taking a heavy toll in the city and the rest of the State, appears to be a hot election issue. There are charges and countercharges and, short of accusing each other of actually breeding the mosquitoes, parties have accused each other of everything else. Except for ways and means to combat the illness.

Recently, however, there has been a half-hearted attempt to tackle the problem. *The Man from Madras Musings* was alarmed one morning when a huge column of smoke emanated from his garden. On rushing out, MMM was informed that a man from the Corporation had visited his home and had fumigated the garden to put an end to the mosquito menace. MMM went back inside only to discover that the mosquitoes had taken refuge inside the house in order to avoid the fumes. Later, they returned to their natural habitat, but not before expressing their gratitude to MMM by biting him in every conceivable spot.

A friend from Delhi was recently here and was most condescending about the epidemic in Chennai and extolled the government in Delhi for the steps it had taken in combating the mosquito menace there. But his happiness was short-lived. For Dengue appears to have taken over the city. 'Dengue for Delhi' appears to be the slogan just as it's been 'Chikungunya for Chennai'. A wag also commented that Dengue is afflicting people irrespective of sex, class or creed and is a great leveler. Apparently in view of its socialistic principles, there is a move to rename it "Comrade Dengue," according to him.

It is an ill-wind that blows none any good and MMM was intrigued to know that Chikungunya had resulted in attendance going up in offices. Apparently the mosquito causing it is of the daytime variety, but offices, thanks to airconditioning, appear to be immune to it; it is those who stay at home who are most affected.

Sadly, this will make no difference to government establishments. Most of these offices are ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes, what with their dripping taps and mountains of files.

— MMM

# ADYAR CREEK'S FUTURE?

(Continued from Page 1)

the announcement, been expressing their concern.

T. Murugavel, Co-ordinator – Projects, Environment Monitoring and Action Initiating (EMAI), says, "It's good to learn that the Government has plans to develop a 'Nature Park' at the Adyar Creek. However, it is not clear what they mean. Adyar Creek and Estuary are unique ecosystems. The Government should treat them as fragile ecosystems and not as wastelands that need to be 'developed'."

"As a first step, Government should stop all industrial effluent or sewage being let into the river at any point. This action, complemented with the tidal dynamics, will clean the river in due course. It is this dynamics at the river mouth that reduces the pollution, makes it habitable, and inspires hundreds of migratory birds to visit the estuary. A five-year study we carried out shows that the numbers of bird species have come down drastically. Even the once-common Brahminy Kite, *Haliastur Indus*, is rarely seen. The open pasture on the northern bank is now a place for highrises and, as a result, the resident birds are not to be seen. Government needs to have a several-pronged approach and seek experts' and naturalists' advice, respect Coastal Zone Regulations and ensure that the original ecosystem, consisting of grasslands, swamps, mangroves and sandbars, is part of the Park. It should then declare it a bird sanctuary, as envisaged by the great Salim Ali. This would not only guarantee a vibrant ecosystem, but also encourage visitors, who can view the fauna and flora from a distance, without disturbing the system."

Dr. P.J. Sanjeeva Raj, consultant-ecologist, says, "The benchmark directory on the Adyar Creek, by Panickar and Aiyar in 1938, records 146 species of fauna, including 54 species of fish. 175-200 species of birds used to visit during the winter season. The estuary is now dominated by tilapia, an indicator of the foulest water. The rare Adyar gecko is now a myth, and the original mangroves have been taken over by exotic *proscopis*. This natural habitat should be preserved as an education-oriented space rather than as an amusement/recreation-oriented area. We should preserve and cherish the original ecosystem for aquatic birds and Government should promote it as a Bird Sanctuary. Also, it is precarious to plan for a Park near the lower reaches (estuary) of a river because it will be inundated by monsoon

floods and tidal waves (storm surges). Suffice it to say that the area is a highly sensitive ecosystem justifying classification under CRZ-I and warranting urgent protection, as an endangered metropolitan wetland."

Naturalist S. Theodore Basakaran urges "the entire ecosystem to be left alone." "Natural geographical features should not be meddled with. Estuaries and waterfalls have evolved over millions of years. Deepening for boating facilities will definitely drive away the waders who feed on shallow water species. And even if the area is deepened, it will be filled again because of the natural course of the river. The estuary at Adyar provides a precious open space for Chennai. Restoration efforts in the Mahim Creek in Mumbai and Panaji Bird Sanctuary are good examples to follow."

Ornithologist V. Santharam says, "The loss of natural ecosystems is a great loss for the city. The restoration of the Adyar Creek is a unique opportunity to preserve a natural habitat which could serve as a green lung, an open area that could help recharge groundwater for this part of the city, an area of recreation for nearby people, an open-air laboratory for school and college students to learn more about our biodiversity and natural heritage, an eco-tourist spot and so on. The estuary serves several other purposes as well – such as flood control, buffer against cyclonic storms, livelihood opportunities for fisherfolk, and stop-over point for thousands of migrant birds during October-November and March-April. If Authority feels that 'development' is more essential than ecology, let them learn their own lessons." Unfortunately, it is the environment and the citizens of Chennai who will pay the price!

Bharath Jairaj, Director, CAG, points out, "Legally, the Adyar Creek area is protected by an order of the Madras High Court and some of the activities proposed (going by the newspaper reports) may not be allowed in the area in terms of the order. It is unfortunate that Government has dragged its feet on implementing the Court order since 2001. All they have to do is remove the sand dumped in the area and restore the Creek to its original wetland state."

Whatever plans that are being drawn up for Adyar Creek, they will be truly beneficial to Madras that is Chennai, only if the eco-system of the area is restored to ensure a natural haven for the forgotten flora and fauna of Adyar. This calls for interaction with the citizenry and local ecologists.



Arumugam and Manikandan at Tara's Bookcraft stall at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

## A small Chennai team captures Frankfurt's attention

(by A Special Correspondent)

Chennai's Tara Publishing, particularly its master- printers who demonstrated bookmaking entirely by hand, was the highlight of India's year as Guest of Honour at the 5-day annual Frankfurt Book Fair, the biggest book fair in the world.

In an increasingly mechanised world, Tara Publishing's unique initiative of making books by hand, returning the feel, smell and beauty of ink on paper, demonstrated how traditional skills combined with fine contemporary bookmaking to create prize-winning books.

Master-printers C. Arumugam and T.S. Manikandan daily demonstrated to visitors the skill and precision that goes into making every page of a Tara book. Using images from Tara's *One, Two, Tree!*, the German translation of which was launched at the Fair, they screenprinted and bound flipbooks by hand. Demonstrations took place every two hours, and visitors got to take away souvenirs of handprinted, handbound books.

They showed how each page of every book created in Tara's print shop – by a commune of artisans from local villages – is screenprinted on handmade paper and bound by hand, making every page an original print. These are not esoteric artists' volumes: Tara works hard to make these books accessible to the average reader. Though individually made, they match the price and consistency of mass-produced, machine-made books, but surpass them in quality. Tara has created 120,000 such books in its 10-year history, many of them going on to win international awards.

Tara also launched its new *One and Only* stationery line at the Fair. Its notebooks and gift cards are individually handcrafted and feature beautiful and eclectic designs, making each a unique art object for everyday use.

Apart from this, original artwork from Avinash Veeraghavan's book *I Love My India* was shown as part of the Guest of Honour Programme. The exhibition, titled 'Watching Me Watching India', featured several contemporary Indian photographers and its scheduled to run until the end of November. Artist and designer Avinash's unusual fusion of photography and other media made an impression on Celina Lunsford, co-curator of the exhibition, at Tara's stand in Frankfurt last year.

A young graphic designer from Bangalore, Avinash Veeraghavan runs the design studio BEETROOT. *I Love My India* is his first book and his fresh take on the Indian street. His work reflects a sharp interest in popular culture while exploring an edgy mix of visual media. Images from *I Love My India* were exhibited in Ireland and Denmark on large billboards and in other public sites in an effort to begin breaking stereotypes about Asian visual cultures. *I Love My India* was also part of the exhibition 'Indian Summer' at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 2005, which featured several of India's young rising stars.

Anushka Ravishankar, Sirish Rao and Durga Bai (a good artist), the authors and illustrator of Tara picture-rhyme book *One, Two, Tree!* were also at the Fair. Hanser Verlag, a leading German publisher who has just released the German translation *Eins, zwei, drei*, has invited them to talk about the

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# Winning awards with handcrafted books

In a climate of declining independent publishing, Chennai's Tara Publishing has been making an international name for itself by using locally available skills and resources to make books entirely by hand. And it has all largely been possible due to the nothing-is-impossible motto of Tara's Production Manager C. Arumugam, popularly known as Mr. A.

From his small village near Ulundurpettai in South Arcot District, this son of a subsistence farmer came to Chennai after he finished school. He joined the Music College in the early 1990s, but soon decided it wasn't his thing. An assortment of odd jobs later, he joined an artist as an apprentice, and was drawn into the world of street theatre, travelling, staging plays and telling stories.

Arumugam picked up silkscreen printing skills along the way and began to print business cards in the tiny one-room apartment he shared with six others. All his equipment was in one tin trunk, stored under his bed.

In 1994, he met Gita Wolf who was looking for a way to bring out the energy of the Warli art Indrapramit Roy had used to illustrate Tara's first book, *The Very Hungry Lion*. She was impressed by the quality of Arumugam's work, and he agreed to what was clearly an experimental effort – silkscreening an entire children's book by hand.

With a few pages of the book – in three vivid colours screened onto handmade paper – Gita went to the Frankfurt Book Fair for the first time in 1996. She managed to sell the rights to the book to Annick Press, a Canadian publisher, who wanted 8,000 copies, made entirely by hand.

Realising he would need a few more square feet and some elbow room for such a large print run, Arumugam set off to find a place for a print shop. A small house in the then distant suburb of Perungudi seemed just right and AMM Screens, which would grow into Tara's bustling Bookcraft unit, was born.

More people were obviously needed, and AMM Screens soon became a place of employment for young men from the drought-prone South Arcot District. They are trained in the art of printing and binding, and live and work together as a family, sharing all household tasks. Apart from their work as printers, they are also active in street theatre groups and some continue their studies through correspondence courses.

T.S. Manikandan joined AMM Screens 11 years ago as an apprentice and has grown in skill and stature to become its master-printer. An expert at blending colours and inks to suit the texture of handmade paper, Manikandan was instrumental in perfecting the printing and texture of the award-winning *Sophocles' Antigone*. He is in charge of the print shop and constantly innovates to perfect Tara's handmade bookmaking process.

*The Very Hungry Lion* went on to become an international success, and an award-winner. This was followed by *HenSparrow Turns Purple*, a book designed on the model of storytelling scrolls from rural India. Its accordion construction unfolds into a wall picture, standing over five feet tall when it is completely opened.

Further innovation followed with *In the Dark*, a Sufi fable turned into a handmade book that combines screenprinting with letterpress technology. It was printed on an old Heidelberg machine, thereby reviving another printing technology originally from Germany that had been pronounced dead and commercially unviable.

Mr. A. has been learning new technologies, adapting old ones, teaching himself the use of every conceivable software that the business requires and working with the rest of Tara team to find solutions to the many issues that confront a small independent publisher in India.

With *Sophocles' Antigone* (published by Tara for the J. Paul Getty Museum), "We found our-

selves working on a book for the international museum market." The challenge for Mr. A's team was mixing colours by hand to replicate the tones of Greek pottery. The second book in this series, *Sophocles' Oedipus the King*, was like its predecessor an award-winning book. In terms of sheer labour and delicacy of skill, Tara's book on Indian folk and tribal art, *Beasts of India* proved the most demanding. It featured over 30 beasts, each depicted in a different art form, with sometimes as many as seven colours on a page.

Innovation and creativity are never in short supply at AMM Screens. Initially, Mr. A. farmed out portions of jobs, like the binding, but as quality often was a casualty, he taught his team every aspect of bookmaking from creating screens to binding. For a particularly large print run, the team mixed ink in a massive vat with a cricket bat to get the shades just right. For *The Tree Girl*, they stained paper by hand with tea leaves to give it that special bark-like tone. They often experiment to develop processes for future use, and these provide each individual the opportunity to explore and express his creative skills.

"So far, we've produced over 120,000 handmade books. Each page of every book is screenprinted by hand, making each sheet an original print. Each colour has to be pulled onto the paper individually -- an average 32-page three-colour page book requires about 100 pulls. That's half a million pulls for a print run of 5000 books. Some books involve tipping-in (hand sticking) of pictures, tying beaded strings, and making special boxes or cases. The greatest challenge is to maintain accuracy and high production quality despite the number of times the book is handled at various stages: printing each of the colours, drying, stacking, folding, stitching, and pasting the cover, endsheet and slip case... The latest effort is our new stationery line, *One and Only*, notebooks and cards made entirely by hand."

Over the last decade, Mr. A. and his team have created books by hand for the J. Paul Getty Museum, USA; Seuil of France; Thule Ediciones of Spain; Corraini, Italy; and Mets & Schilt of Holland. Mr. A. also oversees the production of books for which Tara has sold rights internationally – for UK's Dewi Lewis, Adelphi, Gallimard, Japan's Artone and Daekyo Publishing and Sigongsa of Korea.

Shalini Umachandran

Tara's handmade books have won the following awards:

- 1996 The Alcuin Citation for Excellence in Book Design, Canada, First in the Children's Book Category – *The Very Hungry Lion*
- 1997 Star from the French Union of Culture and Libraries for Excellence in the Genre – *Tiger On a Tree*
- 1999 The Biennale of Illustrations Bratislava – *Tiger on a Tree*
- 1999 The Biennale of Illustrations Bratislava – *HenSparrow Turns Purple*
- 2002 Independent Publishers Award, USA: Outstanding Book of the Year (Best Bookcraftsmanship) – *Sophocles' Antigone*
- 2002 Museum Publication Design Competition: Honourable Mention – *Sophocles' Antigone*
- 2002 Western Book Exhibition Award – *Sophocles' Antigone*
- 2002 Special mention, White Raven's Catalogue of world's best children's books – *In the Dark*
- 2005 New York Book Show Award – *Tiger on a Tree*
- 2005 Notable Book Award, American Library Association – *Tiger on a Tree*
- 2005 Winner: Association of American University Presses Competition – *Sophocles' Oedipus*
- 2006 Honourable Mention: Independent Publishers Awards – *The Legend of the Fish*



## GHOSTS OF EMPIRE

A series of occasional articles by JASPAR UTLEY, former head of British Council in South India.

# From Madras Cavalry to Scotland Yard

It was a life that could have come straight out of a copy of *The Boy's Own Paper* at the beginning of the last century. Here was a man with a distinguished military and political career in India and encounters along the way with a tiger, a shipwreck, the Metropolitan Police, and the British Royal Family. He would, in his day, have been held as the very model of a Man of Empire, yet today he is all but forgotten.

I first came upon him when visiting the small church of Saint Nicholas in the village of Chawton, in Hampshire. His name is on a plaque on a wall inside the church and his link with India immediately caught my eye. It is surprising how much history can be gleaned from such memorials. I resolved to follow up my visit by doing some more research on Bradford and discovered what an eventful life he led and, to my surprise, one extra connection with the reason that had led me to the church in the first place.

Edward Ridley Colborn Bradford was born in 1836, the second son of a clergyman in Hambleton, also in Hampshire, the birthplace of cricket. After very moderate academic results at Marlborough, which had originally been established for the sons of clergymen, he followed the traditional path of second sons and joined the army of the East India Company. He was seventeen years old.

In 1854 he joined the Madras Light Cavalry and, the following year, was transferred to the 6th Madras Light Cavalry.

Until the momentous events of 1857, Bradford was involved in those messy little wars that seemed to have been constantly on the go in the 19th Century.

In 1856, as a 19-year-old lieutenant, Bradford took part in what is known as 'The Persian War' but which seems to have been a bloody skirmish in the Persian Gulf and which was part of the wider struggle between Britain and Russia for dominance in Asia. Between 1858 and 1867, Bradford saw action in the Afghan Wars and on the North-West Frontier during which he accumulated honours and promotions.

In 1857, however, he was on active service in Central India, in Malwa, right in the heart of the uprising, during which he was transferred to Mayne's Horse from the Madras Cavalry.

He was heavily involved in the battle of Betwa against Tantia Topi and was mentioned in despatches.

Then life began to get really interesting.

In 1863, Bradford was returning to his headquarters after a tiger shoot when a village headman asked for help in killing a tigress that was menacing his people.

Bradford and his companions had climbed trees. The huge tigress approached Bradford, who fired and presumably missed. His second gun misfired and the tigress, unusually for her species,



Sir Edward Bradford.

climbed the tree after Bradford. He dropped into a river below, the tigress followed, grabbed his arm in her jaws and crunched them shut like a vice. Bradford constantly wriggled to ensure she couldn't bite his neck. Eventually, a companion hit her with three more shells and, wounded, she left Bradford. She was finished off by a gun bearer. A doctor was called and met the stretcher party (the 'stretcher' being a charpoy) on the road. Surgery was performed on the spot, without anaesthetic and, amazingly, Bradford recovered without any infection. For the next forty years, Bradford performed his duties with one arm and, rather like the Rani of Jhansi, rode with the reins in his teeth, including the times when hunting boar.

He returned to his regiment, was promoted to Captain, mentioned in despatches and was married in England to his first wife, Elizabeth Adela Knight of Chawton. On returning to India, they lived in Jaipur and then Goona. Bradford was now a Political Agent. Two sons were born here and a third after they moved to Ajmer.

One of Bradford's functions was to assist with the planning of Royal visits and he was in the

party of the then Duke of Edinburgh when it toured the North-West in 1870 and again during the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1875-76. By this time Bradford had been knighted and at one stage was a special equestrian to the Prince of Wales. He was also made Colonel of Mayne's Horse and then, in 1878, Agent Governor General in Rajputana, Secretary of the Secret Police and Commissioner for Dacoity and Thuggee, all of which no doubt served him well when he finally retired from active service in India and became Metropolitan Commissioner of Police in London and a baronet. There was, however, one more adventure before settling down in England.

On the way home, Bradford and the remnants of his family were off the coast of Corsica when their P & O ship, *Tasmania*, hit a sandbank. Thirty-six people died and all the baggage was lost. Chawton, when they finally settled there, must have seemed a haven of peace.

Originally, Bradford was to come home to an important post in the India Office as clerk to the Viceroy. He was soon offered other posts, including that of High Commissioner in South Africa. However, the post he finally accepted was as Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

Here he proved to be an able administrator and innovator and an excellent leader of men, bringing in many reforms, including the introduction of fingerprinting which, of course, had been in practice in India for some time. He stayed in the post for thirteen years during which period the crime figures fell to their lowest ever in 1899. It was, however, on his watch that Jack the Ripper operated and was never caught.

His wife, Elizabeth, died in 1896 but in 1898 he married again.

When Bradford retired from Scotland Yard he became ADC to the new King Edward VII until 1910. Just a year later he died suddenly, just after returning from a walk. He was 74 and was buried in Chawton next to his first wife.

There is a notable postscript to all this.

The original reason for visiting the church of Saint Nicholas was to see two other graves: those of Cassandra Austen and her daughter Cassandra Elizabeth Austen, the mother and sister, respectively, of Jane Austen. For Chawton is the home of Jane Austen and her house, where she wrote *Mansfield Park*, *Persuasion* and *Emma*, can still be seen and visited. The link between Bradford and the Austen family is even stronger, for his first wife, Elizabeth, was a great-niece of the immortal Jane.

## Nizhal celebrates its first year

# Greening of Kaattupalli

Nizhal, an NGO promoting tree planting in urban areas, specifically Chennai, was recently granted Rs.2.5 lakh for the 'Bio-shield Development and Greening of the Coastal Village of Kaattupalli Kuppam on Kaattupalli Island (North of Ennore)'. The project, to be completed by March 2006, is being funded as part of the ongoing 'Green Coast Project in India'.

The Green Coast Project in India works for nature and people of the tsunami-affected areas by ensuring that livelihood development of the affected communities is not at the expense of the environment. It is implemented by three project partners: WWF-India, Wetlands International South Asia and Both ENDS, and the Green Coast.

Wetlands International, an independent, not-for-profit, global organisation, currently manages the Green Coast project and works through 16 offices in all five continents with its head office in Wageningen, the Netherlands.

The Kaattupalli Project will address (1) degradation of the environment, and (2) limited livelihood opportunities. The 60+ families of the Kaattupalli Kuppam will be involved in community greening and the women in these families constituted into Self Help Groups (SHGs). Rows of coconut palms will be raised on the coast to give a bioshield effect. Each household is to be helped to raise at least two coconut palms per family. It will also be given fruit and moringa saplings. Men and women of the village would all be given practical



A coconut sapling for the family.

training in vermicomposting. Kitchen gardens for vegetables and greens will be developed. A community nursery is proposed so that saplings of economic and indigenous trees can be offered for planting in neighbouring villages.

Says a Nizhal spokesperson, "Deprivation of their traditional livelihoods dependent on casuarina and cashew has marginalised the Dalits and tribals in this area. Naturally, they have become hostile to their own environment by resorting, for sheer survival, to cutting of trees, killing wildlife and quarrying sand from the protective sand dunes. The tsunami has also affected the psyche of the fishermen. Nizhal had, in



The nursery to be developed at Kaattupalli.

2004, distributed vegetable seeds to families and women of some local communities and helped green the local primary school. These initiatives generated much interest and enthusiasm and encouraged our further positive intervention." Nizhal is also collaborating with local NGOs working in the area, like the Ennore-Pulicat Environmental Protection Forum (EPEPF) and the Tamil Nadu Women's Collective, to sustain this effort.

The project has been possible due to the Small Grants Facility, a very important part of the Green Coast Project, that finances micro-projects, gives small grants and funds larger projects to facilitate participation of local communities in restoration of coastal ecosystems and ecologically sustainable reconstruction efforts.

— Shobha Menon *The author explains how the pilot tree survey in Valmiki Nagar should be carried out.*

# Tree survey reveals more tree-care needed

by G. Dattatri  
(and Ford Business Services)

The quality of living in urban areas is enhanced through the development of trees and greenery, and Chennai's considerable green cover is of older trees, planted over the last many years. These have been providing a good environment for its citizens. However, it is necessary to plant new trees to continue to sustain tree cover in Chennai.

No doubt there has been a lot of interest in planting of tree saplings by the Corporation, the Forest Department as well as NGOs and citizens. Unfortunately, due to lack of continued care, many of these saplings do not survive and translate into useful trees. Unless the situation is improved,

promote systematic tree planting, Nizhal was set up in 2005.

An important step that has to be taken to organise systematic and sustained planting and caring of trees is a survey of the existing situation, taking into account the species available, their current condition, and stretches/

areas where new planting can be done. Since this is the basic information needed to plan for good tree cover in the future, Nizhal initiated the concept of Tree Surveys to be conducted in

and is well covered by trees. The survey also covered three other nearby streets (Rajagopalan Streets - I, II, and III). Residents themselves had planted many of the trees here, since, till about ten years ago, the area was outside Corporation limits and there was no strong local body.

The survey covered about ½ sq. km. comprising nine streets, with a total length of approximately 5 km.

The maximum number of trees are on Balakrishnan Road (121) and IV Seaward Street (119), followed by Second Seaward Road (83), III Seaward Road (65), I Seaward Road (36), K.K. Road (29) and Rajagopalan Streets - I, II, III (50).

In order to work out a suitable methodology, pilot projects were undertaken in Valmiki Nagar, Tiruvanniyur and Gandhi Nagar. Ford Business Services, a corporate group in Chennai, volunteered to assist Nizhal in this work. The first survey was initiated at the end of June 2006. The Ford Business Services volunteers, besides conducting the survey, also provided the data in a suitable form for further processing.

The Satyam Foundation, another corporate organisation, took part in a survey of another area in the city. A number of young students too have shown keen interest in participating in these surveys.

The preliminary report on the Pilot Tree Survey conducted in Valmiki Nagar with the assistance of Ford Business Services brought out the following facts:

Valmiki Nagar is a comparatively new residential suburb of Chennai that has six main roads

There are as many as 30 species of trees, the largest number being Gulmohar (30). This is followed by Neem (22), Rain Tree (19) and Copper Pod (13). The other species include Pungam, Silk Cotton, Indian Cork Tree (Maramalli). There are also a few other species, such as Persian Lilac, Powder Puff, Tennis Ball, Tree Jasmine, Yanai Gundumani, and Cassia Siamia, indicating the diversity of trees that can be planted on roadsides of Chennai.

It was also noted that more than half the trees (292) are young (less than 10 years old). It is evident that tree planting has been active on these roads only in recent times. Due to lack of continued care, as many as 40 trees are sick and 113 are only in fair condition. This means that approximately 40 per cent of the trees in Valmiki Nagar require special care.

It was also found that

- 112 trees were virtually strangled by pavement construction
- 104 trees exhibited severe signs of stress
- 125 trees had been abused by nailing commercial advertisement boards
- 99 trees were affected by road digging and had external injuries
- 79 trees suffered from construction debris dumped around them
- 147 trees needed extra care.

It is clear from the above Tree Surgery that the need for instituting proper planning in the planting and care along roadsides has never been more imperative than now. Otherwise all efforts taken in planting will go to waste, and the quality of the neighbourhood will deteriorate and affect the health of the residents.

Nizhal plans to extend this tree survey to other areas of the city, based on the experience of this pilot study.



The author explains how the pilot tree survey in Valmiki Nagar should be carried out.

## Tree walks to discover trees

Nizhal is now organising regular tree walks for people who want to become familiar with trees, their names and their role in the environment in an enjoyable manner.

The walks being conducted at present are at

- Besant Nagar (see picture alongside),
- Theosophical Society,

and

- Guindy National Park.
- Pushpa Gardens, Maduravoyal, is to be included soon.

There are plans to include the IIT Campus and other green college campuses (such as MCC, Tambaram, and YMCA, Nandanam). Areas in other parts of the city are to be identified shortly.

Young volunteers wishing to be trained to lead such walks are also being sought.

For more information contact:  
Ph: 42045137, 42300034. Email: shobhamenon@airtelbroadband.in / hariharan72@yahoo.com



# Recalling the Sisters as neighbours

Padmini, the second of the three famous Travancore Sisters, is no more. When the end came it was sudden, taking all her fans and admirers by shock and surprise. To me the news was very upsetting as I had known her for years as we all lived in the same colony off Edward Elliot's Road, now renamed Dr. Radhakrishnan Salai.

When my family moved from Trivandrum to settle in Madras, my father built *Burma House*, our home, in this colony. Lalitha, Padmini and Ragini's house was at the entrance to this colony. Opposite their house was the famous Carnatic musician M.L. Vasanthakumari's residence. When we came to live in the colony, Lalitha and Padmini were already established actresses in cinema and Vasanthakumari had become a renowned Carnatic musician who also sang for films. Her duet *Ellam Inba Mayam* sung with P. Leela for the movie *Manamagal* and picturised with Lalitha and Padmini, caught the attention of the cinegoers. Needless to say, the Sisters and MLV were very good friends and MLV's young daughter Srividya spent a lot of time in their neighbours' house. Exposure to them inspired Srividya to learn Bharata Natyam and, later, enter the film industry.

Lalitha-Padmini-Ragini lived in Trivandrum in their early years. Their mother, Saraswathi Amma, had great ambitions for her good-looking daughters and she shifted to Madras as she felt that the city, culturally more alive, offered her daughters the opportunity to learn dancing. The three girls trained under many gurus, but the guru who taught them most was Master Gopinath. Kumari Kamala, the then young renowned Bharata Natyam dancer, was their inspiration.

Diligently, the young girls learnt the intricacies of classical dance, and before long they were in Tamil movies particularly in roles that required them to dance. They soon became as the Travancore Sisters.

Along with their acting career, the Travancore Sisters mesmerised audiences with their dance performances on stage. Known as "Oriental Dances", they charmed with their Peacock, fisherman, snake and gypsy numbers. Equally popular were their dance ballets. In the dance ballet *Dasavatharam*, Padmini appeared in the first scene as Maha Vishnu. Her magnificent presence left the audience spellbound.

Our colony witnessed the dancing and film careers of the



Lalitha



Padmini



Ragini

would be crowds of star crazy onlookers waiting to have a glimpse of these beauties.

The Sisters' family had a few houses in the colony and each was named after one member or the other. Their own bungalow was called *Parvathi* after their mother's sister and then there was *Saraswathi Vilas*, *Lalitha Bhavan*, *Padmini House* and *Ragini Nivas*. In *Padmini Nivas*, opposite our house, lived their cousin Ambika. I had known Ambika in Trivandrum, as we went to the same school. Then in Madras, we continued our friendship. On Ambika's birth-

held a grand reception in Madras which we attended. A rare appearance by Rajaji at Padmini's wedding reception was the highlight of the event. He blessed the couple and made a brief reference to Padmini essaying the role of Sita in the film *Sampoorna Ramayanam*, perhaps one of the few films seen by Rajaji.

The colony lost some of its celebrity status when Lalitha, Padmini and Ragini left after their marriages. But Saraswathi Amma continued to live there. When Padmini's husband Ramachandran left for higher studies abroad, Padmini decided to stay on in Madras. She had her little son Anand. She also did a few films after marriage, the most notable being *Thillanna Mohanambal*, which gave her ample scope for dancing and acting.

When I got married, Vasanthakumari's concert was arranged for the evening reception. Padmini and her husband attended the reception and, needless to say, my friend Ambika and her parents were there throughout all the functions.

A few years later, Padmini left to settle in the US. Ambika also settled in the US after her marriage. I too left after my marriage - for Gujarat. But whenever I came down to Madras and if Lalitha, Padmini or Ragini were there in the main bungalow on a visit, I would drop in. By then, several of their houses in the colony had been sold. Only a couple of houses remained with them. Saraswathi Amma lived in one house and her son Chandrakumar lived in another house with his daughter Shobana - an amal-

gam in beauty of her famous aunts.

When I was in Pondicherry, where my husband was posted as Collector and District Magistrate, Padmini came there to stage her dance ballet *Dasavatharam*. She came home with Srividya (MLV's daughter) before the programme.

In 1996, on our visit to the US, my husband and I went to New Jersey to visit Ambika. The next day, Padmini and Ambika's family came to the Waldorf Hotel in New York to see us and we all had lunch together. Padmini invited us to her house in New Jersey and we all drove there. Over an early dinner and coffee we talked of the past, especially the good times we had in our colony. I realised what an impact this colony had made on our young minds that years later, and thousands of miles from India, it still remained green in our memory.

Padmini kept coming to India periodically. She converted her bungalow into a 4-storey commercial building, retaining an apartment for herself on the top floor. This is the only home of the family in the colony and was probably kept for sentimental reasons. We met her a few times. This time when she came it was for good. She wanted to spend her remaining years in India. She was quite fond of her nieces, Lalitha's daughters Lakshmi, Saraswathi, Parvathi and Ragini's daughters Mahalakshmi and Priya and, of course, very proud of the achievement of actress Shobana (her brother Chandrakumar's daughter). She filled the void of a mother in the lives of Lalitha and Ragini's daughters, as their mothers had died early.

But barely a month after her arrival, Padmini's end came suddenly. She had not even opened her boxes. Crowds collected at the gate of her residence on 9th Street, Dr. Radhakrishnan Salai, to have a last glimpse of her, but were told that the body would be taken straight from the hospital to her niece Shobana's house in Velacherry. When I saw Padmini's body I could not control my emotions. Her apartment looks desolate and the few old residents who are still there feel a personal loss.

## ● by LAKSHMI SUNDARAM

Sisters at their peak and, needless to say, we were proud of them. Yet the girls had no airs. As good neighbours, they participated in functions in other people's houses when invited and they never failed to turn up for Navarathri Kolu at our residence. When asked to sing by my mother, Ragini would render the song *Sundari*, *Soundari* from the Tamil film *Thooku Thooki*, much to our amusement. Ragini was lively, jovial and impish. Lalitha was also friendly. Padmini, a little reserved and reticent, took time to become familiar, but always had a lovely smile for all of us.

The colony acquired celebrity status with the presence of the Travancore Sisters and MLV. We could often hear the jingling of dance bells and singing as the Sisters practised their dance and MLV her music. We had no problems of entry or exit because of living so close to such celebrities. But at the gate of the Sisters' house, there

day every year we all had lunch together. Lalitha, Padmini, Ragini and other relatives also joined us at Ambika's place. Ambika's mother and Saraswathi Amma were sisters and Ambika's father Rama Varma was the uncle (maama) of the Travancore Maharaja Chithra Thirunal.

Saraswathi Amma was a friendly person who would drop in *Burma House* to chat with my mother. Vasanthakumari was another friendly person. She too would attend Navarathri Kolu in our house if she was in town. Lalitha's marriage was settled when she was at the peak of her career. She married a lawyer, a nephew of Sardar K.M.Panikkar. Saraswathi Amma personally came home to invite us and we attended a very grand wedding at Abbotsbury. A few years later, Padmini's marriage to a doctor, K.T.Ramachandran, took place in Guruvayoor. Saraswathi Amma came home to invite us for this also. She

## CHENNAI TEAM CAPTURES FRANKFURT'S ATTENTION

(Continued from page 3)

book's creation, and meet the public and international media.

Anushaka remained in Germany for two weeks after the Fair as part of a team of Indian authors conducting a reading tour across the country. She was promoting three of her Tara titles, *One, Two, Tree!*, *Tiger on*

a Tree, and *Excuse Me, Is This India?* She has authored 15 books for Tara, changing the perception of the children's book in India with her brilliantly simple, nonsense verse.

Sirish, whose repertoire includes children's books, fiction, and commentaries on pop and street art, met leading European publishers to promote his forthcoming book, *That's How I See Things*. A humorous and profound tale about the power of art and the imagination, it is il-

lustrated by renowned Gond tribal artist Bhajju Shyam, and has already caught the interest of Britain's Tate Modern.

After the Frankfurt Book Fair, the Tara team headed to London for the launch of its latest book, *The Night Life of Trees*, which reproduces art from the magnificent Gond tribal tradition of Madhya Pradesh. The book, specially created on black handmade paper, features art by Bhajju Shyam, Durga Bai and Ram Singh Urveti. Relating sto-

ries from Gond mythology, *The Night Life of Trees* is a tribute to the majesty of trees and to alternative ways of relating the natural world.

Tara Publishing has been called India's most innovative publisher - apart from handmade books, its list ranges from children's books to visual arts, fiction and non-fiction. Tara's books have been published in 17 countries, with rights to over 75% of its titles sold in the international market.

● Quiz master V.V. Ramanan is on vacation. His column will resume after his return.

OUR READERS WRITE



**Gracious apology**

**R**e. my letter published in RMM, September 16th, I learn from reader Gulam Mohammed that D.K. Oza is a true Gandhian, living up to Gandhiji's ideals and principles in his life. I am sorry for not verifying the facts. I sincerely apologise for my error.

I am also sorry if the other individuals mentioned in my letter are also offended, as I do not know them except through their letters to the Editor.

**K. Balasubrahmanyam**  
308, Gharonda Seshasai Flats  
Vijayapuri  
Secunderabad 500 017.

**Correct attribution**

**T**he quotation attributed to John Kennedy by *The Man*

from *Madras Musings* in Short 'N' Snappy on September 1<sup>st</sup> is actually the words of Kallil Gibran. JFK had only quoted him.

**Dr. S.S. Rajagopalan**  
17, Kamarajar Street  
Gandhi Nagar, Chennai 600 093.

**The hoarding users**

**H**oarding owners and the Municipal Corporation may well have helped to give our city 'the dubious distinction of being The City of Hoardings', as you have pointed out in MM, September 16th. It is curious, though, that in this whole affair no finger has ever been pointed at those who are surely the real culprits – the companies who use these hoardings to advertise their wares and their advertising agencies. Surely they cannot be unaware that many of these hoardings are illegal, or at least

unsightly. And yet many of these companies hold themselves up as paragons of civic virtue, social responsibility and environmental consciousness!

A wicked thought – it would be interesting to examine whether any of the companies that support *Madras Musings* as 'a public service' are conscious doing a public disservice with their hoardings.

**Dhritiman Chaterji**  
'VelpamPoo'  
2/123A Cholamandal  
Artists' Village  
Injambakkam, Chennai 600 041

**Editor's Note:** As long as hoardings are legal, and properly licensed hoardings are used, no one can find fault with the users. But on the grounds of unsightliness, *Madras Musings* is all for a TOTAL BAN on hoardings, just as it favours a total ban on posters and wall graffiti.

**October 25-30: Globalisation(s) :**

Documentary films that reflect the state of current public debate on such issues as the economy, health, social concerns, culture, development and international law. (At Alliance Francaise, daily 6.30 p.m.)

**Wednesday 25th:** *Island of Flowers*, J. Furtado : The film follows the journey of a tomato till it ends up in a garbage dump. *Globalisation, violence or dialogue*, P. Barrat: The war between cultures and the clash of religions. *For a Fair Trade*, M. Bouquin, J. Lefaux: A people-friendly direction for the global economy.

**Thursday, 26th:** *Women workers from the World*, M.F. Collard: Women in Belgian and French factories work their last months while others in Turkey, Philippines and Indonesia deal them a fatal competitive blow without gaining anything from it. *A decency factory*, T. Balmes: Can



companies make profit and still be principled? A critical question when Nokia outsources its production to China and cheap labour. *Doctors from North and South*, G. Capelle: The brain drain from South to North is depriving poor countries of doctors and nurses.

**Friday 27th:** *Our Friends from the Bank*, P. Chappell: Is the debt of the Southern countries in the hands of a few Washington decision-makers in the World Bank? *The banker of humble people*, A.Arham: A portrait of remarkable Muhammed Yunus, creator of Bangladesh's Grameen Bank, that's changed millions of lives.

**Saturday, 28th:** *Judges Fight*, Y. Billy: International Criminal Court has succeeded in convinc-

ing several states to give international law more legitimacy. *Chronicle of an imminent catastrophe*, P. Brooks: Why, when faced with this planetary disaster, AIDS, are governments, institutions and key individuals not taking action?

**Sunday, 29th:** *Darwin's Nightmare*, H. Sauper: Fishermen, politicians, pilots, prostitutes and manufacturers all caught up in globalisation's worst nightmare on the shores of the world's largest tropical lake.

**Monday, 30th:** *Mondovino*, J. Nossiter: Wine, a symbol of Western civilisation, is now a pawn in a fight for its soul, a fight for power, money and glory.

**October 21-30:** *Private Collections:* An exhibition of paintings and sculptures by various Indian artists (at Vinnyasa).

**October 27-November 5:** *Paintings of Bhavna Sonawane* (at Apparao Galleries).

**Another Luz landmark endangered**

(Continued from page 1)

years ago when boats used to transport goods on the Buckingham Canal (which originates in Andhra Pradesh and ends in the Marakkanam Lake, which you sight off the ECR on your way to Puducherry). Perishable goods were off-loaded in the Luz area and old-timers recall times when these goods were then transported in carts to neighbourhoods like Mylapore.

Senior hawkers at the market say that the well-known lawyer Bashyam Iyengar, who owned properties in these parts, oversaw the construction of the market as the number of shoppers began to grow.

Till the other day, the sale of greens on the fringe and inside this market went on at a feverish pace early in the mornings. Many Mylaporeans would combine their visit to the local temples here with shopping at this market and hence business flourished even after dusk. Lawyers for the hawkers who are holding out say that a Mylapo-

rean residing in Mandaveli used to receive the rent from the hawkers, but some months ago stopped doing so. It then became clear that the property had changed hands.

The market may not boast of unique architecture for it to be conserved, but it has been an integral part of the Mylapore life for over a century. Heritage activists would argue that even places like markets and parks and bus stations which have been an integral part of a neighbourhood need to be given a second look before they are pulled down or wiped out.

Meanwhile, many other

landmarks in the Luz Corner area have disappeared or may be razed soon. For an earlier generation, the Shanti Vihar restaurant complex was the place to refresh themselves or visit for evening 'tiffin'. This property has been razed to the ground and a towering complex is planned. There is always some buzz going about the fate of Kamadhenu Theatre. Its managers, though, get agitated when they are asked if the property has been sold. Movies are still screened here. Murudi's Cafe, another destination for snacks and traditional food, got subsumed some years ago.

**A big 'Thank You' to 22 of you**

We publish below the list of donors who have, between 1.9.06 and 15.10.06, added to the support Chennai Heritage and its voice, *Madras Musings*, have already received. We thank all of them for their support for the causes Chennai Heritage espouses.

— Chennai Heritage

- Rs. 50: M. Sri Ramachandran; S.John Gnanasundaram
- Rs. 110: R.K.Ramakrishnan. Rs. 100: C.Rajan; M.P. Ponnuswamy; N.N. Neelakantan; Mrs.R.Vilasini; Mrs.Madhu Sankhyayan; N.Ramamoorthy; Bharath Natarajan; A.Doraikkannu
- Rs. 116: R.Sheshadri
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- Rs. 411: C.K.Ramachandran

**Subscriptions and contributions**

● Since Volume XIV, No.1 (April 16, 2003), *Madras Musings* has been priced at Rs.5 a copy, ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: Rs.100/-. Please make out your cheque only to CHENNAI HERITAGE and send it, together with the COUPON BELOW, to CHENNAI HERITAGE, 260-A, TTK ROAD, CHENNAI 600 018 or C/O LOKAVANI-HALL MARK PRESS PVT. LTD., 122, GREAMES ROAD, CHENNAI 600 006.

An ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION of just Rs.100 covers only a part of our costs. Corporate support and YOUR support will continue to be essential for Chennai Heritage and *Madras Musings* to play a greater role in creating awareness about the city, its heritage and its environment. We therefore look forward to your sending us your contributions IN ADDITION TO your subscriptions.

If in the coming year Chennai Heritage receives repeated support from those of you who have already made contributions, and if many more supporters join the bandwagon, we will not only be able to keep *Madras Musings* going, but also be able to continue awareness-building exercises on on-going projects as well as undertake one or two more such exercises.

Therefore, please keep your contributions coming IN ADDITION TO YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS. If, say, you send in a cheque for Rs.500, we will treat Rs.100 of it towards subscription to *Madras Musings* for 2005-06 and the remaining Rs.400 as contribution towards the causes Chennai Heritage espouses.

We look forward to all readers of *Madras Musings*, and those newcomers who want to receive copies, sending in their subscriptions. We are indeed sorry we can no longer remain a free mailer.

— The Editor

**CHENNAI HERITAGE**

260-A T.T.K. ROAD, ALWARPET, CHENNAI 600 018.

I am already on your mailing list (Mailing List No.....) / I have just seen *Madras Musings* and would like to receive it here- after.

● I/We enclose cheque/demand draft/money order for Rs. 100 (Rupees One hundred) payable to CHENNAI HERITAGE, MADRAS, as subscription to *Madras Musings* for the year 2005-06.

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**Senate House Conservation Fund**

● The Senate House Restoration and Management Trust appeals to all alumni of the University of Madras and heritage lovers everywhere to contribute to the Senate House Conservation Fund which the Trust is managing for the purpose of restoring *Senate House* to its old glory and maintaining it thereafter in the same condition. Cheques should be made out to the Senate House Conservation Account and sent to the Registrar, University of Madras, Chennai 600 005. Contributions are eligible for benefits under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act.

Dear Registrar,

I am pleased to enclose a cheque for Rs. .... as my contribution to the restoration and maintenance of *Senate House*. Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

I am an alumnus/alumna/heritage lover and wish the project all success. My college was .....

Date: ..... Signature: .....

# Chennai Cheetahs national champs

Chennai Cheetahs recently won the Hutch All India & South Asia Rugby Union Tournament which was played in monsoon conditions in Kolkata at the CC&FC grounds. This is the second time in three years that Chennai has won the cup. They lost to the visiting British BARA team in 2005.

Twelve teams pre-qualified for the tournament this year, by their performance either in last year's tournament or in the pre-qualifying Callaghan Cup Tournament. This year's teams were: Chennai Cheetahs, Bombay Gymkhana, Calcutta Cricket & Football Club (CC&FC), Future Hope, Bangalore, Maharashtra State Police, Tamil Nadu Police, Indian Army, Delhi Lions, Delhi Hurricanes, La Martinere Old Boys' Club (Kolkata) and Kolkata Police. The muddy ground took a toll on the lighter or less fit teams. The two fittest teams were Chennai Cheetahs and Indian Army, and it was no surprise that they contested the finals.

The final kicked off after another day of heavy rains which saw the cancellation of the Loser's Plate competition between Bangalore and CC&FC. Army scored first with a penalty kick to lead 3-0. Chennai quickly went into the lead, 6-3, with two penalties. In the 39th minute, the Army scored a brilliant try led by their strong pack to end the half, leading 10-6. The second half opened with two quick penalties, allowing Chennai's Emil Vartazarian the chance to bring the Cheetahs back into the lead, 12-10. After 10 minutes of hard play, Chennai's Henrik

Terchoonian broke through the line to score a try in the corner. Emil converted a difficult kick to bring the score to 19-10. The game continued with possession going back and forth in the muddy conditions until in the last minute of regulation time when the Army broke through for a try under the posts which was converted. The final score at the whistle was 19-17 in favour of the Chennai Cheetahs, who owed much to Emil Vartazarian's kicking (14 points).

In the preliminary rounds, the Cheetahs trounced the Kolkata Police 52-9 and beat Future Hope 36-0. The Army beat promising Bangalore 17-12

were the first ones in 43 years that a First Division Sri Lankan team has played in Chennai that was Madras.

Meantime, as India looks ahead in rugby, the meteoric development of the sport in the Indian Army bodes well for the game's development in India overall. The Indian Army has been playing rugby only for the last three years and to reach the finals in the manner that they did this year is outstanding. The Army



The Champions with the All-India trophy.

Bombay Gymkhana, the Calcutta Cricket and Football Club, and the Madras Gymkhana Club. Madras, in fact, has played rugby continuously from 1884 to 1963 when the sport died out with the departure of many expatriates. Rugby in Chennai was revived

sponsored World Cup Qualifying tournaments in both the 15-a-side and 7-a-side formats of the game. India is currently ranked 88th in the world out of the 95 ranked countries.

The pre-eminent rugby tournament held in India is the All India & South Asia Rugby Tournament which is the oldest running rugby tournament outside Europe, having been played since 1924. The sterling silver All-India Cup was a gift from the English Home Union to reciprocate the gift of the Calcutta Cup played to this day between the English and Scottish national sides and which was created out of the Club's melted down silver when the Calcutta Football Club, founded in 1872, was disbanded in 1876.

If there is one complaint about the direction rugby is moving in the country it is the lack of a national focus on youth development. The governing body seems to focus most of its energies on adult rugby. The demands of international participation and running the All-India are great, but it is common sense that without a cohesive focussed national youth development programme, India's true potential in the sport will not be reached.

## by PATRICK DAVENPORT

and brushed aside the Tamil Nadu Police 50-0 before getting the better of Bombay Gymkhana 17-5. The Tamil Nadu Police beat the Delhi Lions 28-5 before running into the Anny XV.

Chennai's win was helped by sponsors Puma and Microsoft whose support allowed it to prepare for the All-India by playing two tough matches against a First Division Sri Lankan side, Havelocks Sports Club. The Havelocks won the first match easily, 31-3, against a depleted Chennai team, but in the second match the Cheetahs led 13-11 till the last five minutes of the game when the fitter visitors added 14 points. It is hoped that such Colombo-Chennai matches will become an annual feature. The games against the Havelocks

now has 2000 players pursuing the sport and it plans to take the game to each of its major centres. If that happens and Chennai and other teams make further progress, India could well have a promising team by 2010.

Few people realise that the physical game of rugby has been played in India continuously since 1872. The first game was played when the visiting ship H.M.S. Galatea called at Madras and Calcutta. In Madras, a match was arranged by the founder of the M.C.C., Alexander Arbuthnot, a product of famed Rugby School.

The sport was mainly patronised by the British till the early 1960s, especially amongst the planting community. Post-independence, the sport survived in select clubs, such as the

in 1997 with the founding of the Chennai Cheetahs Rugby Club by a few expatriate and Indian IT executives.

Rugby has been enjoying a revival recently with many new States picking up the game as well as the development of the sport in the Indian Army and in many State police forces. The game is now played in Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Manipur, Pune, Pondicherry, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, and Orissa. There is even a tiny club that has started in the Sunderbans. The focus of development has been adult rugby to date, but youth programmes are in various stages of development, with notable success in Tamil Nadu and Bengal.

India actively participates in the International Rugby Board-

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