

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

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Taking short-cuts comes so naturally to us... whether it is writing software or crossing the road!

The road much travelled

The road, symbol of a nation claiming its spot in the global sun, is coming along rather well.

So gratifying, to live in a city that can provide a drive-by art display experience with such ease and panache.

There you are, showing off this particular pride-of-the city to a visitor, pointing out various spots of brilliant creativity, when the said visitor (probably a bit irritated by your complacency) points to a certain restlessness at the median, and draws: "And I suppose those people breaking the law are also part of the exhibits?"

You spin around and see a group of young professionals clambering over the road dividers, obviously too preoccupied with the very work to which this Road is dedicated, to take the trouble of going all the way around and using allotted pedestrian crossings.

You can, of course, follow their reasoning. This is a profession that's getting younger by the day, and youth has always abhorred following dull rules. Besides, why take the long route when you have the energy and stamina to leap over medians?

Totally understandable, but, guys, could we opt for a touch of old-fashioned discipline here? This is a prime spot, and prime spots must be treated with respect.

Otherwise, where are you?

Declining and falling all over, that's where.

So, kids, let's take the boring, but lawful route... and, oh, yes, remember...

Do not touch the exhibits.

Ranjitha Ashok

A good beginning

— This festival for the masses

(by Sriram V.)

At long last it has happened. Chennai Sangamam, a festival highlighting the State's folk culture, was inaugurated on the 22nd of February at the IIT's open air auditorium. The festival was put together, thanks to Tamizh Maiyam, an NGO, along with Government and private sponsorships. As this issue of *Madras Musings* goes to press, the curtain would have just been rung down on the festival.

There have been a lot of RIGHTS and some WRONGS in the festival and *Madras Musings* would first like to highlight the 'rights'. These have been

• **Attempting to build a mass base for the festival.** By highlighting folk culture in a greater measure as compared to the high classical arts, mass participation has been brought in a big way. This has ensured the festival's popularity. At the same time, the classical arts have not been forgotten.

• **Not focussing on cinema.** Of late, thanks to the burgeoning number of private TV channels, any entertainment in Madras that is Chennai appears to have something to do with films. The festival, though it used film stars and music directors, has steered clear of cinematic content to a great extent, thereby building awareness of a cultural heritage that is fast being forgotten.

• **Using open air venues.** The usage of parks has brought these vital lungs into focus. Thanks to their having been renovated recently, these parks have been just the right places to hold these events. The weather, a serendipitous plus, was pleasant throughout the festival week making these venues very comfortable. Open air venues have also ensured participation of the common man who, intimidated by stately auditoriums, generally stays away from such events.

• **Pedestrian-friendly.** The events being mostly in the open air and spread over many parts of the city, from Mylapore to Royapuram, have encouraged neighbourhood participation. This

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(Also see page 4)



Two paintings from *The Colours of the Street Song*, an exhibition by K. George on street life in Mylapore. It was inaugurated in the Kapaleeswarar Temple mandapam before moving on to the Apparao Gallery. The exhibition was part of the FICCI Ladies' Organisation's contribution to Chennai Sangamam. The Chennai Sangamam, however, sadly paid little attention to FLO's efforts, despite the fact that it was FLO that had first tried to promote the festival concept, had invited to Chennai to share the experience of those who had organised the Bangalore fest, and held a meeting attended by many who later went on to play lead roles in Chennai Sangamam, including the Secretary for Tamil Nadu Tourism.



Are Heritage Regulations in sight?

•by A Staff Reporter

The battle for saving Chennai's heritage, a subject for which this publication has been fighting relentlessly for 15 years, received a shot in the arm with the *New Indian Express* running a five-part series on the subject. In addition, a major news channel and a major internet agency also carried news and views on the issue. All of them had one common motivator, namely the impending threat to the Young Men's Indian Association-owned Gokhale Hall. The stories all highlighted the complete ab-

sence of Heritage laws in the city which is threatening every historic building and, hence, the fabric of the city.

Madras Musings is glad to learn from one of the articles that there have been assurances from the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) that the wait for regulations could end soon. Apparently, the draft regulations which had been put together by the now-defunct

Heritage Committee will be included in the Second Master Plan due to be released in six months. There had been uncertainty owing to some official quibbling over whether the rules ought to be included in the Development Control Rules, the local body rules or the Master Plan.

Readers of *Madras Musings* need hardly be reminded that the draft was completed in 2002 and, had they been adopted

then, we would not be a city minus buildings such as *Gandhi Illam*, *Capper's House* and the erstwhile Madras Club building on *Express Estates*. And Bharat Insurance Building would not be facing an uncertain future. However, with Queen Mary's College being threatened in 2003, the draft regulations were quietly shelved. Now they are being revived and looked at. The regulations govern repairs, renovations and, more importantly, commercial develop-

(Continued on page 5)

GOOD BEGINNING

(Continued from page 1)

has meant less reliance on vehicles, thereby easing the pressure on roads and on parking spaces. Most people, needless to add, have walked to these events.

● **Private participation.** Though this has not been in a large measure, the event has drawn the interest of malls and hotels through the FICCI Ladies' Organisation's initiative, and book readings, food festivals and art exhibitions were organised. This is a beginning and needs to be encouraged.

● **Attention to details.** There has been very positive feedback on audio arrangements, stage set-ups, and entry and exit management in most locations. All this will encourage the public to come back year after year.

Now for the WRONGS:

● **The timing.** The ideal time for such a festival would be Pongal. Hopefully this will happen next year.

● **Advanced planning and publicity.** Such an event, if planned for January, needs a build up from September or October. It is simply not enough to release advertisements on the morning of the events, as has been the case this year.

● **Bringing in George Town.** No festival of the city can be complete without bringing in the oldest district. It is like celebrating a body leaving out its heart. There are parks in Town, such as Loane's Square, the Madi Poonga and the My Ladye's Garden, which are crying out to be used and they must be included.

● **Increased private participation.** The trade – particularly shops and food facilities – has to chip in, not by way of sponsorships, but by way of discounts to consumers so that they are enticed to join the festival.

● **Exploiting tourism potential.** There has to be a showcasing of the festival at least six months ahead of the event in media all over India and abroad. Comprehensive festival guides, booklets and posters need to be invested in if the event is to get the publicity – and the audience – it deserves. This year's last-minute organisation certainly did not help tourism in any way – yet was promoted by the Tourism Department.

● **Reducing Government participation.** Such a festival has to be a people's movement. And Governments are subject to political forces. Can we therefore hope for a self-sustaining event, aided by people and private participation? We have the example of the December Music Season before us, and surely this can be emulated.

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Sd. S. MUTHIAH
(Publisher)

A befuddling poster

The *Man from Madras Musings* has long been aware of the fact that the city of Madras that is Chennai is a city of posters. There are posters by every political party decorating the walls. In addition, magazines, which ironically often wax eloquent on the need for keeping walls and other areas clean, advertise their latest issues by pasting huge posters. The less reputable ones have titillating headlines, which in MMM's view contribute most to accidents in the city as every driver cranes his or her neck to see what is the latest, and often erroneous, release.

But what never fails to amaze *The Man from Madras Musings* is the poster mourning the passing of a near and dear one. This poster, obviously in black, has two eyes shedding copious tears, with a photograph of the dear departed in between. What purpose this poster serves beyond disfiguring a compound wall or the rear of a public transport bus is something that MMM has not been able to comprehend.

Yes, there are several people whom MMM knows who first check the obituary column of *The Hindu* every morning before going on to other news items. Do such posters serve the same purpose? Do they take the news, as it were, from Aix to Ghent? And so, does it mean that people in Mylapore seeing the rear of a 19M bus ought to react to, say, the passing of someone in the High Court vicinity? All very puzzling and MMM would not be far wrong to state that he is fogged. Yet people are actually spending money on printing and pasting these posters!

Loudspeaker culture

Ah, yes! Chennai is also the city of high decibel speakers. True, the cone speaker is banned by law, but its cousin, the large black speaker, is still very popular. This is brought with unflinching regularity for every blessed event, such as a political meeting or a public felicitation. Often these two events are one and the same. However, what is worse and which shows scant regard for the neighbourhood, is the use of such speakers in wedding halls, often outside the premises, thereby disturbing the peace of those who happen to live around the wedding hall.

Film songs are usually the choice during such events, which begin early in the morning and carry on far into the night. Repeated complaints by those living around such places are to no avail and, often, the police plead helplessness by stating that the owner of the hall is a local bigwig, whose lightest word becomes law. Here again, *The Man from Madras Musings* is always surprised when the police refuse to take action stating that they have not received a complaint from anyone in the area. Since

when have the police stopped being proactive and become a reactive force? Does it need a complaint from someone to stop violation of sound pollution norms?

MMM is also amused to note that ours must be the only metro where the coming of age of a girl is a public event in this time and age. Here again, a wedding hall is hired, invitation cards (yes, they broadcast what is purely a biological phenomenon) are issued and everyone is called into sing and dance before the poor bewildered girl. Here again, loudspeakers play their role, belting out songs that are most inappropriate for a girl stepping out into life. What an introduction to the facts of life!

Valentine's Day

Should it be celebrated or not was the question. And the media went to town on it. *The Man from Madras Musings* could, however, see that the city had decided to celebrate it

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

with gusto and even managed to Indianise it with some young couples who were going steady visiting temples to pray for longevity in their romance.

It will not be long before St. Valentine (if there is such a person) has shrines erected to him/her in the city and temporary pandals are put up for worship year after year. But what was equally amazing, according to a friend of MMM who works in a software company, was that men wished each other "Happy Valentine's Day," no doubt ending it with the obligatory "Da"! Chennai according to a friend of MMM who is in advertising, was always the city where Murugan and Muthu go hand-in-hand to the beach, while their wives follow demurely behind, but this definitely took the cake.

MMM now looks forward to Ground Hog Day, Guy Fawkes Day and others of the same variety – also sponsored by the consumer goods lobby.

Disturbing policy

It is now more than ten years since the Government took a decision to privatise conservancy and cleaning in some wards of the city and handed it over to an overseas organisation specialising in the field. The benefits have been there for everyone to see. These areas are cleaner than those under the Corporation's staff and the regularity of the workers has been amazing, no matter what the weather. *The Man from Madras Musings* is, however, disturbed to see that each time there is a change in the Chennai Corporation, there is a doubt whether the contract ought to be renewed.

The latest MMM learns is that the present contract, which expired at the end of February,

has only been renewed by six months. What happens after that? Do we go back to the vagaries of the Corporation's own staff who always behaved as though they were doing everyone a favour by clearing the garbage? In a city which is burgeoning, as is its garbage, there ought to be a policy of increasing privatisation in such areas and not doubts.

Anna Salai laning

The Chennai police have decided to extend the lane system on Anna Salai all the way to Nandanam. What surprises *The Man from Madras Musings* is that the police have also claimed that they are doing so, "encouraged by its success in the parts of Mount Road where it is implemented". You only have to drive on that stretch during peak hours to see the kind of violation that goes on all the time!

There was a time when buses were expected to ply in the extreme left lane, with two wheelers in the middle and cars on the extreme right. Then, it was felt that two wheelers were at risk from the buses and so they were moved to the extreme right. Unfortunately nobody appears to have told the bus drivers about the lane concept and so they are all over the place forcing everyone else to the right lane. As for autos, they would not recognise a lane if it was handed to them on a plate.

Police cars

Our police force acquired swank new cars thanks to the munificence of a leading city-based manufacturer. Now what does *The Man from Madras Musings* see but the police sitting comfortably inside these cars at various junctions?

MMM does not grudge the police their comfort, for their's is a tough life, but surely these cars are meant to see some action, such as the tailing of speed and signal violators and bringing them to book? Alas, MMM has seen none of this and, being an optimist, has concluded that Chennai is a law-abiding city as far as traffic is concerned.

What the eye does not see...

...That at least was the Chennai Corporation's viewpoint when it bricked up the parapet walls banking the Buckingham Canal. The canal was blocked from view and therefore ceased to be a problem. But, as witnessed by *The Man from Madras Musings*, this did not prevent a couple of burly foreigners from climbing onto the wall and clicking away with their cameras last week. Soon, MMM is sure, these photos will make their way abroad and enhance our reputation as an international city where every prospect pleases.

—MMM

**OUR
READERS
WRITE**



Government & Art

It is 'encouraging' news to art-circles that the Chennai Music Festival will be promoted by Government through (a) marketing, (b) publicity, (c) infrastructure support, and (d) much more to follow. There shall be 'ambitious partnership' between the State and the *sabhas*, 'active partnership', 'joint partnerships', 'close collaboration with *sabhas*, hotels, tourist agents', 'accommodation promoters', 'ticket sales through TTDC counters' and **much more** juicy, attractive formulations as part of a 'Policy Decision'.

The Policy Decision shall be projected, sought to be sold, as *Oraayiram aandu oindu kidadapin vaaraadupol vanda Maamani*, as timely rains to parched crops. We may be tempted to jump to express gratitude to the 'Government of the Day' with *Nandri, Vanakkam*, etc., but what holds in practice and in the future may, would, present many a pitfall. Even inanimate objects knew the changing values and attitudes of the 'governments of the day'.

Indian music and dances are *manodharmic*, self-promoting, non-commercial and individualistic in conception, practice, presentation and popularity. The support extended by Cholas, Pallavas, Vijayanagar kings was *nishkama*, non-commercial. *Quid pro quo* was absent. They provided opportunities for flowers to blossom and did not intrude into the content, privacy, integrity, chastity and presentation – in short, the soul and body of arts. They rarely sought to touch the flowers and did not believe in the song *Thottaal poo malarum!* For about a millennium, arts flowered in the bosoms of homes,

huts and temples, far from the madding crowds of even virulent governments, many of which have been anti-arts, oppressive or antagonistic.

Once the door is opened, what happens later to the partnership is not in the small partner's control. There is inherent, lurking and positive danger to the arts and there is bound to be overlordship, suggestive, mandatory or suppressive, since the hand that gives knows not the limits of its powers. Capabilities could be seductive, bullish and directive.

The arts of Bharat have flowered on their own, in humble homes, huts, temples, etc. The tender plant will lose its fragrant charm if exposed to regimentation. That the enlightened 'Government of the day' may have genuine, healthy, rosy schemes today is not relevant, for what happens tomorrow is not in its hands. It is, therefore, desirable that Government helps arts from outside the gates of art forums and institutions, avoiding peeps into their *sanctum sanctorum* with partnership, etc.

'Garland' N. Rajagopalan
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Concern over Sethu

Time and again, several environmentalists, economists, engineers and technical experts have taken up the matter about the non-viability of the Sethu Project.

Whales have died in the Palk Bay (MM, December 15th). The Blue Whale, a 160-tonne mammal, survived the Dinosaur age, as they live in water. These whales consume krill at 90 tonnes/day. The food chain of the planktons and zoo planktons has now been broken and they (whales) starve to death. I once saw the skeleton of a Blue Whale arranged beautifully in the Perth Museum with a board to say "It can accommodate 300 cars. Its (whale's) heart is as big as a car!"

An infant whale when born weighs 2½ tonnes, and increases in weight at 90 kg/day. When weaned after 8 months, it would have doubled its length to 46 feet or more and would weigh 24 tonnes.

If the whales die and equipment get broken at Hanuman's Bridge (Adam's Bridge), has the Government of India not reached the Lakshman rekha?

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Physics & the helmet debate*

Dr. Ragade's letter (MM, February 1st) has certainly broadened the canvas of the discussion regarding helmet use on our roads. It is now clear that different medical specialities, like neurology and orthopaedics, can have entirely different perspectives on the subject. Maybe others, say, psychiatry or rehabilitation, may provide other fresh insights.

It is gratifying that such issues of public interest are aired in the pages of *Madras Musings*, even though a more professional forum might be appropriate for such technical issues. But, then, I've heard a quotation somewhere about science being too serious a matter to be left to the scientists (or was that originally about politics?).

If I may be permitted to add my two bits to the discussion, I would look at the topic of head injuries due to road accidents from the viewpoint of ordinary high school physics. Newton's three laws of motion, which form the basis of elementary mechanics, can be expressed in simple language as: (1) A body continues to remain at rest or moving at uniform speed, unless some outside force acts on it; (2) A heavier body (*more weight*) requires a greater force to create the same change in speed (*acceleration*); and (3) Whenever a force acts on a body, an equal but opposite 'reaction' force will be felt by the agent or body which causes the action. (The statements are not semantically accurate as they are only meant for the layman.)

These concepts can help us to picture what happens to a rider on a two-wheeler. The proper analysis should really be done by an expert in bio-mechanics, which is unfortunately a fledgling discipline in our country. Even in Western nations medical bio-mechanics seems to be a poor cousin of richly-funded sports bio-mechanics. Be that as it may, let us look at the elements of the problem.

Whenever any vehicle accelerates, brakes, traverses a bump, or is involved in a collision, there is a change in speed (upwards in case of a bump) and, hence, a force acting on all the bodies concerned. The vehicle transmits the force to the human torso through the contact surfaces at the seat and through the arms. Since the rider's head is forced to follow all body movements, the torso must, in turn, transmit the force successively through all the cervical vertebrae to the skull. When a helmet is worn, a correspondingly larger force goes through the neck to account for the added weight. In the case of a collision, the sudden change (*high acceleration*) means that all the forces involved are proportionately greater.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The debate is now settled, at least in Tamil Nadu. Helmets will soon be in – whether available on the shelves or not. They are being made compulsory.

The preceding account suggests that a helmet always causes greater stress on the neck in any situation other than when riding at steady speed on a smooth straight road. But what happens in an accident when a rider is thrown? If it is the head which first hits the ground or other obstruction, a helmet will certainly prevent skull damage, whereas the forces transmitted to the torso through the neck will be about the same, with or without a helmet. But if it is the torso which comes to a sudden stop, the helmet puts added strain on the neck when the head jerks to a stop.

The problem of acoustics inside the helmet is also important, but that is a not-so-elementary chapter in physics. Helmets having ear-openings at the sides can probably improve the hearing capabilities of the rider.

Obviously physics and mechanics can play only a partial role in the debate. As explained in Dr. Ragade's letter, only reliable and more detailed statistical data on the incidence of skull and neck injuries, followed by informed debate involving all the concerned professionals and the concerned public, can lead to any meaningful conclusion.

Admittedly, my credentials for commenting on the subject can be questioned since I don't use any kind of vehicle if I can help it. I have used a helmet as a pillion rider on a few occasions when it was compulsory, and found it rather oppressive. Regarding neck injuries, I have a personal angle. Nearly twenty years ago, I was in a highway car accident and suffered a 'whiplash' injury. The doctor who examined the X-ray of my dislocated neck was surprised not so much at my being alive, but that I had not become a quadriplegic – a fate worse than death. However, within a few months all the physical and neurological symptoms disappeared. That was before the days of headrests and seat-belts, which would have reduced the damage.

To end on a more cynical note, I would say that on the streets of Madras at present, it is we pedestrians who need to be protected, not just by helmets but by a full suit of armour, and also armed with cudgels to smash the headlights and windshields of all the dragons we encounter along the way. But I take hope from the thought that if the vehicle population burgeons at the present rate, all the streets will get grid-locked and there will no longer be any danger of traffic accidents.

Thomas Tharu
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Adyar, Chennai 600 020.

A recent newspaper report adds:

'Why should ships carrying crude and other bulk materials from the West Asian ports to the Far East opt for this canal?' asks Captain K. Bhaskar, who works for the United Ocean Ship Management, one of the leading fleet owners in the world.

Capt. Bhaskar says that the claims by the proponents of the Sethusamudram Ship Canal Project (SSCP) that ships would save 12-16 hours if they choose the SSCP is 'bunkum'. "In international shipping business, a saving of 12-16 hours of navigation time is nothing. It is the financial viability and safety of the route that count."

Captain Hariharan Balakrishnan, a navigator with more than two decades' experience in Indian Navy, points out that no sailor worth his salt would opt for the Sethu Canal. "This project is more politics than economics," said Capt.

Balakrishnan. "The big business is in the international route, which touches Dondra Head, Sri Lanka's southernmost point," he said.

The Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCC) in the 1,55,000-1,80,000 Dead Weight Tonnage (DWT) capacities will prefer the West Asia-Galle (SL)-Dondra Head-Indira Point (Nicobar Island)-Malacca Strait-Singapore route, according to Capt. Balakrishnan, "That is where the money is," he pointed out. Both Bhaskar and Balakrishnan are of the opinion that only 32,000 DWT ships carrying coal to Haldia, Paradip, Tuticorin and Chennai will use the SSCP. "The project cannot survive just by focusing on coal carriers. It requires maintenance and how the SSCP management will take care of maintenance is anybody's guess," Bhaskar says. – (*Deccan Chronicle*, 13-2-2007)

Palm for research

Regarding the two palms (MM, January 16th), the *Dictionary of Economic Plants of India*, published by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, states:

Corypha umbraculifera (L)
English – Talipot Palm.
Hindi – Bhajarbattu (palmae)

A tall palm grown in Bengal and the Andamans. Leaves are made into fans, mats and umbrellas, and seeds are used for making buttons and small carved ornaments and as beads by Hindu devotees.

The dictionary does not list CARYOTAURENS. I am trying to find out what this palm is. As reader Rajagopalan says, "There is a point in that for research."

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READABILITY PLEASE

Dear Readers,

As letters from readers increase, we are receiving more and more **hand written** letters, many of them in a hand so small and illegible or large and scrawled as to be unreadable. Often this leads to our discarding a letter, particularly if some part of it is unreadable.

If you wish us to consider your letter for publication, please type it with enough space between lines or write it using a medium hand, clearly dotting the 'i-s' and crossing the 't-s'.

Many readers also try to fill every square centimetre of a postcard space, making reading or editing impossible.

Please help us to consider your letters more favourably by making them more legible for us.

THE EDITOR

• ARTLESS INNOCENTS AND IVORY-TOWER SOPHISTICATES – The first article in a five-part series.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, science was still an esoteric pursuit of reclusive intellectuals. Physicists dominated this celebrity parade, but there were chemists and biologists in fair number. In this context of hype about science and adulation for the scientist, I think the mathematician is described best by a Tamil proverb: he is the hapless fellow who brought home a copper vessel after taking part in a raid on Kubera's Alakapuri! Many great names in mathematics are entirely unfamiliar to people outside the scientific community. This article is about some mathematicians who have contributed significantly to mathematics in the 20th Century and, more importantly, have had considerable influence on mathematics in India...

I begin – inevitably – with Srinivasa Ramanujan, the best known Indian mathematician, who is reckoned among the greatest mathematical intellects of the twentieth century. The romantic story of the passage of the poor clerk in the Madras Port Trust to the portals of the ivory towers of Cambridge and the subsequent tragedy of genius cut-off in its prime by illness is well-known, and so I will not dwell on it.

To many mathematicians, Ramanujan's thought processes have an element of mystery

*Excerpts from a public lecture delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Indian Academy of Sciences, held at Chandigarh in 2002.

Hardy played Jambavan to Ramanujan's Hanuman



S. Ramanujan. G.H. Hardy.

about them. Hardy (who was responsible for Ramanujan becoming known internationally) would have none of that, but Littlewood, Hardy's close friend and collaborator, certainly thought so. Mark Kac, another famous name, describes him as "a magician rather than a genius". Bruce Berndt, a mathematician who has now spent two decades unravelling Ramanujan's notebooks, says, "I still don't understand it all. I may be able to prove it, but I do not know where it comes from and where it fits into mathematics." Some of Ramanujan's Indian contemporaries were sure that he was deeply religious and were ready to believe even in divine intervention.

We may not have a clear idea about the nature of Ramanujan's thought processes. There is however one trait of his which emerges clearly from contemporary writings about him: he was entirely artless and was modest to a fault; his near total lack of feelings of self-importance is indeed striking. He does not seem to have had a true measure of his

M.S. Raghunathan* looks at some personalities, chiefly Madras ones, on the Indian Mathematical scene.

own extraordinary talents, despite Hardy playing 'Jambavan to his Hanuman'.

There is in fact the episode of his attempted suicide in England that suggests periods of somewhat fragile self-esteem. It happened when the depression caused by his illness was compounded by family problems and Trinity's racist rejection of his nomination to its Fellowship

(Trinity did appoint him a Fellow later). Ramanujan threw himself before a train, but luckily a guard brought the train to a halt in time. To prevent his arrest for attempted suicide, Hardy attempted some white lies: he told the Police that Ramanujan was a Fellow of the Royal Society (at that point of time Ramanujan was only a candidate; he was elected a month later) and that Fellows of the Royal Society could not be arrested (which was, of course, nonsense)! The Police were not taken in, but nevertheless did not press the charge.

Ramanujan's insights continue to influence mathematical developments to this day. His collected works have been a source of inspiration to many outstanding mathematicians of the 20th Century.

Hardy is much less of an enigma even to us in India, than Ramanujan himself. He was, of course, one of the major mathematical figures of the twentieth century and, as the Ramanujan story shows, he was a wonderful human being. He was also exceptionally articulate and a gifted writer of English prose. His little book *A Mathematician's Apology* giving his view of his profession makes delightful reading.

Hardy was an ardent cricket fan; so ardent indeed that he calibrated excellence in any field by cricketing greats: the highest accolade was to be in the 'Bradman class'! Interesting people were people who had 'spin' in them. — (Courtesy: The author who is with the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, and *Current Science*, 2003.)

(To be continued next fortnight)

Name-dropping – in Latin

Name-dropping – in Latin is the name of a fascinating booklet written by B. Vijayaraghavan, Chairman of the Chennai Snake Park Trust. It is, as he says, "an enquiry into the scientific names of Indian snakes." Nevertheless, it struck us as being of sufficient general interest, entertaining as it is, to publish the following excerpts.

— The Editor

Welcome home husband however drunk you be – that's the English name of a plant. If you don't believe me, look up *The Names of Plants* by D. Gledhill P.1. It is also called 'houseleek' (*Sempervivum*). There is nothing to rival plants for some of the most fascinating English and Latin names – often fanciful, sometimes bizarre. In the animal kingdom, birds, compared to other classes, have somewhat picturesque names. Snakes come a close second. The rest of the animal taxa generally bear drab and dull names.

A most beautiful Latin name for an Indian snake is or, rather, was, *Naia tripudians*. That was the former name of the speckled cobra, the generic name now spelt as *Naja* and with different specific names *naja*, *oxiana*, *kaouthia*, etc. for the different species into which the genus has been divided. *Naja* was earlier spelt *Naia* because the consonant 'j' in Latin originally used to be written the same way as the vowel 'i', yet recognised as a different letter. *Naja* is from the Sanskrit *Naaga* which is from the Old High Germanic base *snachan* meaning 'to creep'. *Tripudians* is from the Latin *tripudium* which, according to Cassell's Latin Dictionary, is the name given to various forms of religious and war dances. F.Wall carries this farther and furnishes the original Latin word to mean, 'I dance on the toe'...

Another snake with a beautiful name is the common trinket snake whose specific name in Latin is *helena* (*Coelognathus helena*). Both the English name and the specific name in Latin are a tribute to its looks. Helen, the classic example of female beauty, was the wife of Menelaus, the king of Sparta. The besotted Trojan prince, Paris, abducted her, precipitating the Trojan war which ended in the siege and destruction of Troy. In *Doctor Faustus* (1604), Christopher Marlowe says of 'sweet Helen': "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships and burnt the topless towers of Ilium?"

Ascertain the meaning or significance of scientific names of flora and fauna can prove to be a daunting task. Names which are toponyms or eponyms or distribution-related or habitat-related or descriptive of appearance or behaviour can prove easy to decipher. Even here difficulties crop up when some Latin-sounding word is not genuine Latin but a latinized form of a word from another language, almost always Greek. The oddities of the latinization process can leave one perplexed. In a number of

A snake whose face is very unlikely to remind us of Helen is the dog-faced water snake. Its Latin name is equally slanderous: *Cerberus rynchops*. Cerberus is the three-headed dog which keeps guard in hell. It is its narrow snout and prominent lower jaw that have given the snake its somewhat unfortunate appearance...

Some of the scientific names of animals are eponyms, i.e. based on a personal name and this is the name of the person who provided the type specimen or the scientist who first described the animal or plant, or the name given by him in honour of someone else for whatever reason. Snakes named after persons are disproportionately large in number compared to other animals. Out of the 277 Indian snakes so far described, as many as 62, i.e. 22%, have been named after persons. Among those so honoured are well-known persons such as Patrick Russell (*Daboia russelii*: Russell's viper)... Romulus Whitaker (*Eryx whitakeri*: Whitaker's boa)... and

The youngest person who has had the honour of having a snake named after him must be Nikhil, son of Romulus Whitaker. As a four-year-old child he was accompanying his herpetologist-father, on a field trip in the Palni Hills. Left awhile on the roadside, he innocently picked up a creepy-crawly which, much to the amazement of his father, proved to be a hitherto-unknown species of kukri snake. It came to be named *Oligodon nikhili* (Nikhil's kukri snake). No other specimen of this snake has been found so far.

Eryx Johnii: red sandboa (named after the Rev. John of the Tranquebar Halle Mission). The Rev. Christopher Samuel John was born in 1746 and came to Tranquebar in 1771. John's interest extended not only to snakes but also to fishes and to the education system...

ascertaining the meaning or significance of scientific names of flora and fauna can prove to be a daunting task. Names which are toponyms or eponyms or distribution-related or habitat-related or descriptive of appearance or behaviour can prove easy to decipher. Even here difficulties crop up when some Latin-sounding word is not genuine Latin but a latinized form of a word from another language, almost always Greek. The oddities of the latinization process can leave one perplexed. In a number of

cases, the meaning or significance of the scientific name will not be apparent at all. Authors have often coined artificial words in simulated Latin. Sometimes an intelligent guess may be possible, sometimes not even that. Accessing the original account given by the author of the name, often in the distant past, is not always easy and may well be beyond the reach of the average researcher. Nor is the original account always revealing. The author might have been inspired by some far-fetched association which he alone was aware of. In fact, the International Union of Biological Sciences, whose job it is to establish and periodically revise the code of nomenclature

• Becoming aware of the etymology and significance of the Latin name transforms the gobbledygook into an interesting tit-bit that imprints the name in our memory. And, suddenly, the animal also looks more interesting, says B. VIJAYARAGHAVAN.

for universal acceptance, urged at the 14th International Zoological Congress held in 1953 at Copenhagen that, when proposing generic names, the author should explain its etymology (See Macleod R.D.). But, then, the majority of extant names are of an earlier vintage. Also, for some reason, this discipline does not appear to have been extended to specific names.

Many snake names are enigmatic. One instance is *Dendrelaphis tristis*, common bronzeback tree snake. '*Dendrelaphis*' from L. 'dendron' = tree + L. 'elaphis' = snake. Therefore, tree snake. But, '*tristis*'? L. '*tristis*' means sad. This snake does not appear to be any sadder than most other snakes. On the contrary, it is an active and energetic snake. The specific name of the common myna also

Are Heritage Regulations in sight?

(Continued from page 1)

ment of heritage buildings in case owners are unable to maintain them. A corpus for funding repairs has also been suggested. Apparently, the Government has decided to act because of "growing public awareness" on the issue.

The CMDA, according to sources, will then begin an exercise of listing all heritage buildings which fall within its jurisdiction. It is to be hoped that this will not involve further delay as such a list of buildings already exists with the CMDA, courtesy its Heritage Committee, espe-

cially a list of those that could be considered of the grade A variety. Time is of the essence here and, given the vagaries of government policy on heritage, the sooner such lists are approved the better. For starters, the book *Madras, the Architectural Heritage* could be a useful additional resource. It is obvious that such regulations also ought to have teeth to punish private owners who demolish such buildings. A mere fine is not sufficient when a historic construction is wiped off the face of the earth.

Meanwhile, there is good

yellowish stripes on its back from neck to the tip of the tail. Das attributes the Assamese name to the stripes "that are reminiscent of the sacred thread of Brahmins". 'Braminy' could generally be perceived as an allusion to holiness. The braminy fig tree is another name for the peepal or Bodhi tree (*Ficus religiosa*). This tree is held as sacred by Hindus and Buddhists. Similar is the case with the braminy bull. It is the grey or black cattle of the species *Bos indicus*, also known as Zebu, that originated in India, characterised by a prominent hump over the shoulder and neck, with a large dewlap and horns that usually curve up and backwards and drooping ears. It is associated with Lord Shiva whose vehicle it is, *Nandikeswara* or *Nandi*. The braminy like (*Haliastur indus*) is similarly

widely held in India as sacred and a bird of good omen. Under the name Garuda, it is the vehicle of Lord Vishnu. It is called 'bramani cheel' in Hindi. But neither the braminy myna, nor called braminy starling, *Sturnus pagodarum* (it is called braminy myna/bamani myna in Hindi/Bengali), nor the braminy duck, *Tadorna ferruginea*, nor the braminy skink (or common skink, *Mabuya carinata*, its Hindi name is bamani) can have any claim to holiness.

That brings us to Wall (1921) who explains *braminus* as "Latinised form of bramin, in allusion to its brown colouration". How bramin can be colour-related is not clear at all. But one thing is clear: there is a certain vague similarity in colouration among some of these species. Nigel Hankin says that "about the only quality that the braminy kite, braminy duck and braminy myna... share in common is a certain reddishness in colour". A little far-fetched, perhaps, but

still worthy of consideration. This is, to some extent, true of the braminy skink also whose dorsal colour is shiny brown or bronze. Similarly, the colour of *Ramphotyphlops braminus* is reddish brown (or blackish brown). So, *braminus*, perhaps, does have something to do with colours as Wall presumed. But how? Is it because some Hindu holy men are dressed in fawn-coloured clothes? As Sherlock Holmes would say, "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth".

While globally accepted scientific names have brought about some order in nomenclature if not total stability, the oddities, aberrations and absurdities in the Latin terminology have infuriated some scientists. So much so, demands are heard

at times that the present system of dog-Latin appellations be thrown overboard and a simple and sensible system of symbols and numbers be adopted as in chemistry. But this kind of a cleansing operation will surely rob our life-forms quite something of their indefinable charm. No one will seriously contend that just because personal names of the human race can often be confusing, sometimes bewilderingly so, there is a case for changing over to a system where everyone is identified only by a number. Such is the stuff as Orwellian nightmares are made on.

Notwithstanding all the roadblocks in our search for meaning, it is a journey well worth our effort and time. Becoming aware of the etymology and significance of the Latin name transforms the gobbledygook into an interesting tit-bit that imprints the name in our memory. And, suddenly, the animal also looks more interesting. We see it in a new light as it were. It is almost as if henceforth we can deal with it on first-name terms.

Tailpiece: Mark O'Shea, an expert on snakes who is a familiar figure in the visual media, narrates how he was once bitten by a highly poisonous canebrake rattle snake. While being rushed to the hospital in an ambulance, he realised that he was becoming unconscious and, if that happened, he might never wake up. In a desperate attempt to keep himself awake during the twenty minutes drive, he tried to remember the Latin names of all the 32 rattlesnake species. One by one, he could recollect 29 names and then had to think hard. This mental exercise kept him conscious till he reached the hospital. He lived to tell the tale in his book, *Venomous Snakes of the World*. You see, Latin names have their uses after all – even if you are not inclined to explore their meaning and significance. — (Courtesy: The Chennai Snake Park Trust.)

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— THE EDITOR

Madras a la Edinburgh

December is the season in Madras. Culture vultures even from distant lands descend on us and everybody so inclined can satisfy their appetites with an overdose of Carnatic music. Enough proof that it is not a dying art is evident all round.

Is it possible to visualise a festival in Madras comparable to the Edinburgh Festival? Currently, at least five different organisations are conducting concerts simultaneously – with 60 per cent of the artistes featured in all. Why the repetition? And why put artistes – popular, old or young and aspiring – through the humiliating experience of performing to rows and rows of empty seats?

Can we not find a way of organising a festival as it is done in Edinburgh – different things happening at different venues under one festival direction? A

• The Man from Madras Musings in the February 16th issue of Madras Musings welcomed Chennai Sangamam as a prelude to an annual Chennai Festival developed around the Music Season and Pongal. This is a festival, offering additionally dining and shopping experiences, this journal has long campaigned for – with little success, till some political will was shown this year. LAKSHMI VISWANATHAN, the well-known dancer, had, even before Madras Musings suggested such a festival, advocated it in this piece written for a 1979 issue of Aside magazine – the fore-runner of Madras Musings.

couple of theatres devoted to dance and drama. Fringe events where lesser known artistes can display their talents. More artistes from the North; at least a variety for those in the City interested in North Indian music or dance – perhaps this will bring a North Indian audience travelling to the Madras Festival just for that! Start at the All India level; then perhaps make it even international. If Hong Kong can have its festival, can't Madras? In

Edinburgh they plan one year, sometimes even more, ahead. Brochures of events are prepared at least six months in advance. People start booking hotel accommodation months ahead. Conveniently, a film festival is also held, for the film buffs. In the museums and galleries at the same time are art exhibitions. For three weeks the town is in the grip of festival fever.

The mere thought of a Madras Festival run on these lines

makes the heart beat faster with excitement. Perhaps such ideas are too futuristic – but then, why not? If the plans are made in earnest, we can find the resources. And once the ball rolls, the festival will pay for itself. Imagine the culture-charged atmosphere such a festival would bring about – a trickling of foreign musicologists of tourists with stickers on their baggage – MADRAS FESTIVAL! Contemporary Indian Art – and international art – (can't Cholamandal be the setting for an International Triennale?) for those interested in painting and sculpture. Chola bronzes at the Museum! Maybe, we can even import Indian exhibits from abroad! Each year would be different – and this provincial festival season could turn out to be an international happening. A Mecca for the Fine Arts!

Quizzin' with Ram'nan

(Current Affairs questions are from the period February 1st to 15th. Questions 11 to 20 pertain to Tamil Nadu and Chennai.)

1. Who is the new Ranji Trophy champion?
2. Which group dominated the 2007 Grammy Awards by winning five statuettes, including 'Record' and 'Song' of the Year?
3. Which telecom giant bought Hutchison Essar and for how much in a much-publicised deal?
4. The World Bank-appointed neutral expert, Raymond Lafitte, recently 'resolved' which contentious construction issue affecting both India and Pakistan?
5. On February 11th, which Canadian company was acquired by Birla's Hindalco for \$6 billion?
6. Which famous European train set a new record for the world's fastest conventional train with a speed of 553 km/h on February 13th?
7. Name the glamorous former Playboy model and actress found dead in Florida, aged 39.
8. Who was named Man of the Finals in the Commonwealth Bank series won by England at Australia's expense?
9. Which Indian on February 5th was officially elected Chairwoman of PepsiCo?
10. Where were the 33rd National Games held recently?

* * *

11. How is Tamil film personality T.S. Rangarajan, who was honoured with a Padma Shree recently, better known?
12. Where near Chennai is a footwear park coming up?
13. On the banks of which river is the 16th Century Eraniel Palace located?
14. Which national park in the State is to be designated as the country's newest Project Tiger area?
15. Where in Chennai has the Corporation taken up an urban afforestation project with the assistance of Joss Brooks, an ecologist from Auroville?
16. What is the route that the first railway corridor of the proposed Chennai Metro project will cover?
17. Which popular temple town, associated with the legend of Markandeya, is located about 40 km northeast of Kumbakonam, between Mayuram and Tranquebar?
18. Quaid-e-Milleth Salai in Chennai is the present name of which famous road?
19. Which famous Indo-Saracenic-style edifice, destroyed in a fire some decades ago, was built in 1895 on Mount Road by W. N. Pogson?
20. Which famous prolific composer, born in Polaham, is called the 'Tamil Tyagaraja'?

(Answers on page 8)

Our cities, living cultural resources

The UNESCO Office in Delhi organised a Conference on Indian Cities of Living Heritage in Jaipur recently. Its objective was to address critical issues of safeguarding the development of historic cities, through a proposed 'Network' supported by the Union Ministries of Urban Development and Tourism. The State of Rajasthan, the French Association

des Villes d'Art et d'Histoire et a Secteurs Sauvegardees, and the Jaipur Virasat Foundation were partners for this particular event.

The Network will serve as a platform linking Indian cities that want to make heritage conservation a positive element in their own development plans. This is indeed a unique opportunity for Indian cities to avail

of decentralised cooperation schemes between Indian and international partner cities of Europe. Latin America and other Asian countries that will be 'brokered' by UNESCO.

The diversity of Indian cultural heritage is best seen in the morphology, building typologies, activity patterns, social structure, religious beliefs and traditions that exist in our an-

cient human settlements. The very core of these intricate urban webs is being rent by rapid urbanisation. More recently it is being swamped by globalisation. The proposed Network aims to highlight the Indian city as a 'Living Cultural Resource', and may come to our rescue as a driving force for both urban development and employment generation while retaining the socio-economic balance that once existed in our cities.

Interested Mayors/city authorities should write to UNESCO for more details regarding membership. — (Courtesy: INTACH Virasat.)

The breeze gently plays with your hair. Its soothing touch on you is a balm after a day's work.

Ahead the sea glistens in the moonlight. Welcome to Bessie Beach, the haunt of hundreds, the weekend destination of many more. Here, there are little delights to behold. Stuff you may have enjoyed while in school.

Lingering in the air is the smell of *bajjis* being tossed in hot oil.

Kalaiselvi and Senthil Kumar run a *bajji* counter. They say they have been on the sands for the past ten years. The jazzy coffee shops off the main road and the food court next door have not made a dent on the *bajji* sales. College students relish them. Families carry home packs.

Once, impressed with the delicacy, a manager from Nestle's placed an order for an office get together.

In the opposite row of stalls, Sarguna Steven is serving *bajjis* to Anand Gautam and Vasundhara, a couple from Delhi on a holiday.

It is their second visit in two days. Kalaiselvi says, "We don't use baking soda in the dough. I use *channa dhal* and raw rice for preparing the *maav*. The *dhal* is of Bombay variety, more expensive than the ordinary *dhal*."

The *bajjis* are served on plates lined with plantain leaves. Water packets are available. Seated on stools, you can savour the snack under the stars. Seventeen *bajji* stalls dot the sands.

Lil' delights on Bessie Beach

(by Mythily Ramachandran)



In between, are stalls which offer cooked fish. Bala Sea Food is owned by Jayanthi and Kamalan. They say they were the first to serve non-vegetarian snacks on the beach. Bread and omelette. They added fried fish to the menu.

Prawns, pomfret, squid, finger fish and tuna smeared with salt and turmeric and deep fried.

All served with a sprinkling of masala, a slice of lemon and onion.

Says Jayanthi, "Earlier, people did hesitate to eat here but we told them, 'Eat first, then pay if you like it'." People stopped, ate and paid. Because the fish is always fresh.

Besides college students and families, her loyal customers in-

cludes the engineer from Bangalore who visits them whenever he is in town.

"After the tsunami he came to see us," says Jayanthi. "Just wanted to know if we were fine!"

Down by the shore, mobile carts offer corn cooked over burning coals and touched with lemon, boiled groundnuts mixed with onion and tomato

slices, and raw mango slices dipped in chilli-salt powder. Makes your mouth water.

Coffee shops may offer cosy comforts, but nothing matches the sheer joy of eating out on the beach.

By the way, Bessie Beach is Elliot's Beach, officially. — (Courtesy: *Adyar Times*.)



Now on: *The Art of Investment*, a selection of Contemporary Indian Art with work by 25 artists and more. (At Ashvita Art Objects & Artifacts.)

Till March 8: *Beyond Metal*, an exhibition of contemporary

Australian metalwork, jewellery and Holloware curated by the RMIT Gallery, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia (at the Lalit Kala Akademi).

Till March 10: Exhibition of drawings of Mahabalipuram by



P. Chandrasekaran. All the 24 exhibits are black and white stipple drawings (at Vinnyasa Premier Art Gallery).

Till March 10: *Art Festival*, with 23



contemporary artists from Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra presenting their work (at the Lalit Kala Akademi).

Eat the tea leaf — as in Saharan Africa

(by K.V.S. Krishna, S. Ramaswamy and N.K. Jain)

In the countries of Saharan Africa and those adjoining it, the local people have the habit of eating infused tea leaf after drinking the brew. These nations have a severe shortage of fresh vegetables. Although tea leaves have not replaced vegetable greens and leafy vegetables like spinach, they do serve as dried vegetable foods. In India, most planters enjoy chewing green tea leaves. Cases are known where tea-shoots fried with flour are served as snacks or are cooked in curries. But the practice is more of a novelty rather than a wide practice.

Historically, tea leaves were chewed by the founder of Zen Buddhism, Bodhirama, to ward off sleep in the fifth year of his meditation. Minority communities in China are known to cook brick tea as soup to eat with yak butter. This is the only known case where spent tea leaf is not discarded but is used as an item of food.

Tea suitable for eating the infused leaf by consumers in the Sahara region of Chad, Niger, Central African Republic, and Sudan has been standardised in Ndu Tea Estate, Cameroon.

In conventional black tea processing, the big bulk of tea is reduced to below 20% so that broken grades, like BOP, BOPF, and FBOF, are produced in large amount according to the buyers' requirement. But to make teas suitable for eating, the plantations extend the plucking rounds from 7 to 10 days and increase the big bulk component to 70-80%.

The broken grades of big bulk (being large in size) yield big-sized broken leaf material for chewing and eating, after the tea has been infused. So the consumer gets the benefit of both, tea for drinking and also infused leaf for eating, the latter even by incorporating it in snacks, biscuits, cakes, dosais and other ethnic foods. Of the

world's production of 3500 million kg of tea leaves, spent leaves, @ 70%, come to 2450 million kg, 10 to 15% of proteins, a quantity of 350 to 525 million kg is going unutilised, apart from other valuable nutrients, antioxidants, fibres, etc. While domestically a housewife can find ways and means to use spent tea leaf, the biscuit industry, food-based industries as well as the instant tea industry could find a use for the spent tea leaf. This would help in augmenting total consumption of tea.

In conventional orthodox black tea manufacture, the harvested shoots normally comprise 15-20% fine leaf (two leaves and a bud) and the balance three leaves and a bud shoots. But for manufacturing teas meant for infused tea-leaf consumption, the harvest must contain larger leaves so that during processing the big bulk content will go up to 80% on resorting to lighter rolling and minimum extraction of fines (*dhools*). After optimum fermentation, the big-sized leaf mass is dried, cooled, graded and packed. It is obvious that CTC processing is not at all suitable for making such teas due to complete disintegration of leaf lamina.

The Tole Estate in the Buea region, at 1200-1300 m close to the sea, and managed by Cameroon Development Corporation, had their processing tuned to the London Auction: they produced traditionally processed black teas of Sri Lankan standards, making Pekoe, OP, BOP, BOPF, and dust grades, which were packed in conventional full, half and quarter chests as required by London Auction. On the other hand, the Ndu Tea Estate of Estates & Agency*, London, located 500 km north of Doula in the North West Province of Cameroon at 2000-2300 m, preferred to concentrate its effort to sell its teas for the local markets of the Sahara region. Total tea production of Ndu tea estate and sale of grades during 1975-76 are given in Table 2. Out of a production of 1,167,067 kg, only 2500 kg were exported to U.K and the rest was sold to the Sahara area countries, which also re-exported to other countries of North Africa.

(Continued on page 8)

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 SOUTHERN PRINTERS PVT. LTD., 62/63, GREAMS 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 2006-07 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

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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:

Table 1. Chemical analyses of black tea

S. Constituents No.	g/100g dry weight		% availability	
	Fresh Flush	Black Tea	Brew	Infused Leaf*
1 Protein	10-15	10-15	Trace	99
2 Fibre	15-26	15-26	0	100
3 Polyphenols				
Unoxidized	20-30	2-5	5-15	85-95
Oxidized	0	12-25	50-60	40-50
4 Caffeine	2-5	2-5	75-80	20-25
5 Chlorophylls/ Carotenes	1.5-2	1.5-2	Trace	95-99
6 Lipids	2-8	2-8	Trace	90-99
7 Amino acids	3-5	2.7-4.5	80-85	15-20
8 Carbohydrates	6-8	5.5-7.5	50-60	40-50
9 Minerals	3-5	3-5	80-90	10-20

* Calculated value

Make *dosai* fortified with antioxidants

The spent tea leaves, after extracting tea, could be blended with *dosai* batter at the rate of one tea bag content (2 grams) for making 3 or 4 *dosais*. Similarly, leaf grades of spent tea leaves secured from 4 cups of tea could be made. Several trials have given acceptable quality of *dosai*.

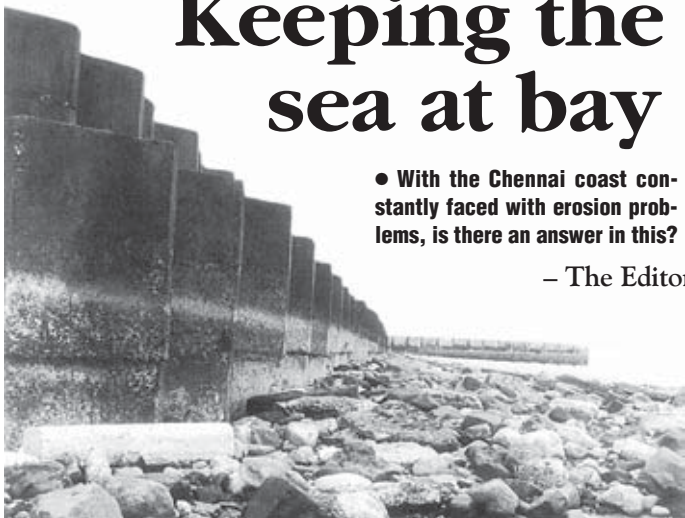
Making curd with antioxidants, proteins etc: Take half litre of milk and bring it to a boil. Dip a two gram tea bag in it for 4 to 5 minutes, stir the milk and cool it, before adding starter. It will be found to get well, with a high degree of firmness and good quality.

• The sea – benefits & problems

Keeping the sea at bay

• With the Chennai coast constantly faced with erosion problems, is there an answer in this?

– The Editor



TBlock is a unique modular block system developed in the UK that offers a cost-effective range of solutions for sea defence, coast protection, landslide and flood defence problems. TBlocks interlock in two planes by a cut-out down opposite vertical corners, but allow for variations in ground settlement. The stepped saw tooth internal wall absorbs wave-wash energy.

They can be used for vertical, stepped and sloping revetments or retaining walls to suit a wide range of applications.

No steel or other reinforcement is necessary for the manufacture of TBlocks, which requires only a simple two-part re-usable mould and can be manufactured on or off-site. Engineers can select the size and weight of the TBlock to suit the

tidal wave height and on site lifting conditions.

TBlocks can be profiled to offer an attractive sculptured appearance when assembled and can be coloured. They can follow contours and they do not have to be laid in straight lines.

The system is cost-effective, using less volume of material than other methods, reducing transport costs, and can be less than half the cost of rock armour.

Applications include the fishing refuge in Aiya Napa, Cyprus, which was lined internally with TBlocks to provide a vertical wall and to dissipate wave energy from the wake of vessels. In Hartlepool, in the UK, a 110m long TBlock wall built in 1990 is still effective and unimpaired. It shows that, whereas flat vertical surfaces create scouring at the base, the vertical saw tooth profile of the TBlock structure dissipates wave energy and attracts beach material at the base. — (Courtesy: TPI NEWS, UK.)

For more information: tblockathompson@easynet.co.uk, www.tblocks.co.uk

EAT THE TEA LEAF

(Continued from page 7)

Table 2. Sales of grades, price and profitability for 1975-76 of Ndu Tea Estate, Cameroon

Grade of Tea	Quantity, Kg	Price, CFA*	%
1 Chad Bulk (Big Bulk)	569,579	294.0	48.8
2 Yellow packets for Chad (Pekoe)	565,120	340.0	48.4
3 Red packets for Cameroon (BOP)	5,006	494.0	0.4
4 Blue packet	1,031	525.0	0.1
5 Lipton exports to UK	2,500	455.0	0.2
6 Door sale	23,829	373.0	2.1
Total	1,167,065	320.5	100.0
Cost of Production		282.0	
Profit before tax per Kg		38.5	

* CFA = 0.02 French Franc

It was more profitable for Ndu Estate to sell in the local market and nearby countries, rather than to sell through London Auction. Very few estates there had encashed on and supported the local habit of eating infused tea-leaf.

The eating habit of infused tea-leaf and marketing of teas in Saharan Africa indicated that a new vista for the tea industry would open up if the tea industry and research institutes could substantiate the food value of the infused leaf and prove the point. The present world production of tea would not be enough to cater to the consuming countries, if fresh tea-leaf could be sold in the vegetable market, like spinach. Increase in consumption of infused tea-leaf would alleviate the problem of over-supply of tea and improve the price to take the tea industry out of depression.

* Where K.V.S. Krishna was General Manager.

New way to extract energy from waves

A new design for wave generator has been developed for use on decommissioned oil rigs.

Its vulnerable mechanical and electrical components are housed in a protected environment well above sea level, which also makes for ease of accessibility, and only the passive floats come into contact with the water. The device will also respond to waves from any direction without requiring adjustment.

The design comes from the University of Manchester and utilises the rise and fall, or bobbing, of the water surface. This movement transmits energy, which is then extracted by the

mechanics to drive a generator and produce electricity.

Professor Peter Stansby, co-inventor of the Manchester Bobber and Professor of Hydrodynamics at the University of Manchester, says: "Offshore wave energy represents a substantial concentrated green energy source. Harnessing the energy from the bobbing motion of the sea is not a new idea but it is the hydrodynamics of the float employed by the Manchester Bobber that provides the vital connection to generating electricity."

The floating mass of the Bobber rises and falls under the action of waves in the water and

this causes a pulley and its shaft to oscillate.

A freewheel clutch engages during descent of the float when the pulley speed attempts to exceed the output speed; this causes the entire shaft system to accelerate.

At maximum speed the freewheel disengages, allowing the output shaft to continue its forwards rotation whilst the pulley decelerates and reverses during ascent of the float. During this freewheel period the output shaft speed decreases to an extent determined by the system inertia and the rate of power output. The gearbox increases output shaft speed to reduce the size of flywheel and generator

required for a given output power.

A major innovative feature of the system is utilisation of the phenomenon of resonance to increase output speeds and so make energy extraction easier. The float will have a natural resonant bobbing.

The design for the Manchester Bobber was conceived in January 2004. It was planned to be located in about 40m of water with an array of 25-50 floats each independently generating electricity.

The development company is the University of Manchester Intellectual Property Limited (UMIP) — (Courtesy : TPI NEWS.)

Answers to Quiz

1. Mumbai; 2. Dixie Chicks; 3. Vodafone, for \$18.8 billion; 4. The 450 MW Baglihar project on the Chenab; 5. Novelis Inc.; 6. The TGV (train à grande vitesse); 7. Anna Nicole Smith; 8. Paul Collingwood; 9. Indira Nooyi; 10. Guwahati, Assam.

* * *

11. The poet 'Vaalee'; 12. Sriperumbudur; 13. Valliyar; 14. Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park; 15. On a former landfill, all of 10.5 acres, behind the Otteri Burial Ground and Corporation garbage transfer station; 16. Toll Gate to Kamaraj Airport (27.3 km); 17. Tirukkadaiyur; 18. Triplicane High Road; 19. Spencer's; 20. Papanasam Sivan.

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