

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS MUSINGS

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• Heritage Conservation Committee

Some talk of new life for it

(By the Editor)

At long last, the grapevine has it, the Heritage Conservation Committee, as stipulated in the Tamil Nadu Heritage Commission Bill 2012, will finally see the light of day. If this is true, it is a welcome development indeed, for the State has not seen any worthwhile steps being taken towards heritage conservation despite six years having passed since the High Court of Madras stipulated the formation of a Heritage Conservation Committee. Still, it is never too late for action and we hope that the present initiative will be effective and result-oriented.

Madras Musings has it from impeccable sources that the Government is very keen on setting the ball rolling on heritage conservation. It has reportedly seen the resultant goodwill from what little it has taken up on this front – the restoration of the National Gallery, Chepauk Palace and Ripon Buildings. There is an eagerness in Government circles, say these sources, that the heritage of Tamil Nadu be protected. There is another side to this too. The High Court has repeatedly come down heavily on the lack of protection afforded to heritage structures in the State. The latest judgement, stipulating that all temple restoration taken up by the HR&CE can only be done in consultation with UNESCO, has only added to the pressure.

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Colours of Glory

Over 100 children from classes V-X (some of them seen above) took part recently in a painting contest organised by the Colours of Glory Foundation and 18 prizes were won. They also took a 'Military History Tour', viewing the exhibition organised by the Foundation at the venue (on left).

Colours of Glory Foundation (www.coloursofglory.org) is a first ever initiative in India to promote public awareness of the country's rich military heritage and seeks to do this by popularising literature and art forms with a military theme, opening vistas of military tourism, and memorialising battles and war heroes. It hopes to rekindle the country's collective consciousness about its rich military heritage. The contest was the first event of the Foundation. (Pictures: Capt. D.P. Ramachandran)



Time for careers in heritage management

Among cities in India, Ahmadabad has always been different. It has often led the rest of the country in terms of political thought, commerce, science and the preservation and conservation of heritage. True, it does have its negatives, including strong inter-caste tensions and ghetto-isation on religious basis, but some of its positives are worth emulating. The Centre for Heritage Management (CHM) is one such initiative.

The Centre was established by the Ahmadabad Education Society which was founded in 1935. In 2009, the Society founded the Ahmadabad University which is self-financed and non-affiliated and CHM is now directly administered by the latter. The students of CHM are awarded degrees by

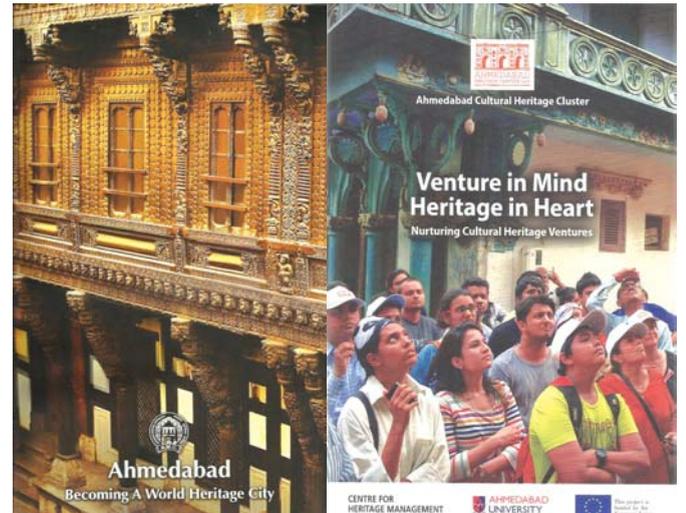
• by A Special Correspondent

Ahmadabad University at the end of their two-year programme.

Open to holders of a Bachelor's Degree who have a demonstrated interest in heritage, the course, divided over four semesters, is an interesting mix of theory and practice. The first two semesters involve courses dealing with heritage, management (marketing, finance and human resources are some of the subjects dealt with here) and skills development. The third semester has flexible options for specialisation, including an exchange programme for study at a foreign university. The fourth semester is primarily project-based.

What is the kind of career that students who graduate from here can hope for? There are plenty of options. You could run a tourism bureau, apply for a job at a private museum in India (options are few) or, better still particularly abroad, take up the management of heritage collections belonging to private trusts, manage heritage properties with an eye on how to make them income-bearing, look at ways and means of conducting programmes for tourists and those interested in heritage experiences. For what it promises, the fee structure – Rs 2.3 lakh for the entire course – appears extremely reasonable.

As part of its various initiatives, CHM, in 2013 and 2016 collaborated with the European Union in hosting what it terms as the Cultural Heritage Man-



agement and Venture Lab in Ahmadabad. The initiative aimed to promote entrepreneurship in the heritage sector by bringing in multi-disciplinary

stakeholders on to a single platform where they could debate and arrive at avenues of collaboration so that the city's (Continued on page 7)

A place for Mrs Yamaraj in Oxford

It was the first four letter word that was strictly forbidden at home.

Amma always said never to utter it all by itself. Strangely enough, you always found adults uttering it all the time.

Aiyo ... he left me ... cried grandmother in anguish over Grandfather's dead body.

Aiyo ... you cried in pain when you cut your finger while cutting a mango.

Aiyo ... your reflexes uttered when you lost your balance and slammed your bicycle against the bushes before you learnt to ride it.

Aiyo ... you said when you heard about that hit-and-run case...

Well... Aiyo was supposed to be Yamaraj's wife. And calling her name out loud, it was believed was as good as summoning the God of Death himself. (Really ... when Yama was on duty why would he be anywhere around his wife. If anything, calling her name out loud could be a sure shot way of keeping him away. Logic beats us... anyway.)

Nevertheless that was the standard rule set for all four to fourteen-year olds who were prone to swearing and found themselves short of vocabulary to adequately express, shock, grief, anguish, surprise, disgust and pain.

However exceptions were allowed.

You could say *Aiyo Rama* – thereby summoning Rama the auspicious God along with Mrs. God of death.

You could say *Aiyo devame*, *Aiyo Swamiye* or *Aiyo anything* as long as there was a reference to an auspicious god in the prefix.

Aiyo by herself was inauspicious, for it was believed that it could lead to a visit by her husband to your household.

Somewhere it looks like we have broken the rules and summoned *Aiyo* way too often in our everyday usage.

The Oxford English dictionary seems to have taken note of this.

OED now allows all English-speaking people to legitimately use AIYOH (the five letter word ending with H) as long as it is used to express amazement, shock and/or despair.

So now you can say *AiyoH* without being branded a *Madrasi*...

AiyoH ... Boss has called me for a meeting

AiyoH ... I screwed it all up once again ...

AiyoH ... how desperate she is to post a silly blog every other weekend.

As long as you add an 'H' to *Aiyo* the Queen hereby approves it to be Proper English.

Mr. Yamaraj, your wife is trending on Twitter and making newspaper headlines.

– Jayanthi Gopal

CHENNAI HERITAGE

No. 5, Bhattad Tower, 30, Westcott Road
Royapettah, Chennai 600 014

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

• 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 2015-16.

• As token of my support for the causes of heritage, environment and a better city that *Madras Musings* espouses, I send Chennai Heritage an additional Rs.....
(Rupees)
Please keep/put me on your mailing list.

Name :

Address:

Maddened at bad ads

There was a time when the *Man from Madras Musings* eagerly looked forward to the sound of the newspaper being dropped on the doormat by the delivery boy. But now no longer. MMM, as age advances, finds that he is quite unequal to the task of dealing with the modern newspaper.

He does not have any issue with the language or the quality of reporting, though he must admit that in these departments too, he finds the standard to be no longer what it was. But he is willing to give that the go by. What he is unable to handle or, as they say in Chennai, could not be able to handle, is the format of the newspaper. This has become increasingly complicated and for someone like MMM, who found it challenging to make even the simplest of paper boats in handwork class in school, it is well nigh impossible.

Those in charge of such matters as format ought to make up their minds on whether they are producing a jigsaw puzzle or a newspaper. There was a time when the paper, all 32 pages or whatever it was, would arrive neatly folded. You could prop it up

The two sides of the window have, needless to say, some advertisement or the other. You then proceed to page 2, only to find that this is not page 2 at all. There is another full-page ad here and sometimes there is yet another ad on page 3. Finally, having waded through all this, you reach page 4 and get on with the news.

There are days, however, when even page 4 does not cough up the news. That is because what you are holding in your hand is a supplement, cleverly got up to look like the original newspaper, just so that you will be able to see the advertisements. The actual paper, also with advertisements festooned on the first, second and just about every other page, is the one you assumed was a supplement and put away for reading later.

If all this was not bad enough, you have what can only be described as an excrescence – the slightly longer sheet that juts out of the folded newspaper just so that you can read the advertisement on the side. This means the newspaper no longer folds up neatly and if you suffer from obsessive-compulsive disorder concerning cleanliness, chances are you have a full morning try-

media his irritation with the formatting of the newspapers and found several people echoing his views. Some, however, differed and wanted to know if what MMM was suggesting was that newspapers ought to eschew all ads. Can any paper survive that way, asked these people. One person went to the extent of saying that MMM ought not to cast stones for, after all, is *Madras Musings* itself not dependent on 'dole' (his words, not MMM's)? Others began to go in to mathematics, wanting to explain to MMM that a paper sans advertising would be so exorbitant in cost that nobody would be able to afford it. As it happens, all of these people got the wrong end of MMM's argument.

None understands better than MMM the importance of advertisements for a newspaper. After all, he began life selling space in the advertising industry. And, no, he does not want our dailies to sacrifice their income. He also realises that this being festival time, this is when dailies can maximise their ad income. All that he asks for is better formatting. Can readability not be kept in mind while planning

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

against the coffee pot or toast rack while having breakfast. If it was a joint family, and everyone needed to read at the same time, you had the option of each member taking out the sheet that he/she wanted, though, mind you, that is one practice that MMM detests. He is all for the newspaper remaining intact, being read that way, and, when done, folded neatly once again, as if it had just been delivered from the press.

These days, the order and the method, to quote Hercule Poirot, are just impossible when it comes to the dailies. Firstly, as soon as you pick up the paper, chances are that rather in the manner of the pie from which four-and-twenty blackbirds flew out, several 'flyers' will flutter and fall all around you. These can be advertising anything – from massage parlours to clothes sales. All of them brightly coloured, they have you doing your bending and stretching, in order to retrieve and deposit them where they belong – the wastepaper basket.

You then turn to the newspaper. There was a time when you could read the headlines at the top and then proceed onwards. Nowadays things are not so easy. There is first the tough puzzle of identifying how the newspaper opens. There are days when there is a cut in the middle and you need to open the two sides out, rather like pulling open a window and seeing what is within.

ing to fit the elongated sheet in. And then you have the half-sheet, one that is only the half the width of a normal paper, which is yet another infliction on the reader. You need to lift it to read the news that is below. This also means the various sheets of the paper need to be pasted together and so cannot be taken apart in case two people need to share a paper. MMM sometimes thinks there must be a diabolical crew in every newspaper office that comes up with ideas on how to confuse the average reader.

Mind you, even news is no longer what it used to be. There was a time when the headlines were headlines and the sports page dealt with sports news, barring the small section at the bottom where the dear departed claimed space. Several residents of Madras that is Chennai would first turn to the sports page not out of any love for the game but more to see the bottom space concerning the dear departed and plan out bathing schedules accordingly. Nowadays, most of the sports news, filled with scandals as it is, makes it to the headlines. As for the dear departed, they too have become commercial, needing photo space and so have moved to another page. The masthead is just about the only constant and reassuring factor.

The pot & the kettle

The *Man from Madras Musings* posted on social

the ads? Would that be too much to ask? After all, it is the readership that brings advertisements to a newspaper and not the other way round.

They ought to also consider the afterlife of a newspaper. There is, of course, the waste paper market which screams with joy every festive season as the dailies bloat in weight. So does the newspaper subscriber, for he/she gets much more in disposing the sheets by weight than what he/she paid for by way of subscription. But what of the other market – that of lining cupboards with newspaper? Where will these users go if the papers came in varying widths and lengths and sizes? Surely there ought to be some consideration for such users as well?

Tailpiece

Talking about advertisements, MMM, wonders if you have noticed. The Spear-Wielding-Six-Faced-God's Stores in T Nagar nowadays releases full-page ads with what he presumes is the son of the proprietor as its model. It is time someone advised them to find an alternative. MMM is all understanding about parental love and all that, but in business a certain amount of objectivity is essential. The famed Stores would do well to invest in a mirror for the heir, and daddy dearest, to look into.

– MMM



Musings on the Madras Museum

Grin & bear it

Charukesi's agony about the ugly walls of Madras is honest but nothing can be done about it. The Tamils of Chennai and Tami Nadu have lost their aesthetic sense and allow the walls be ugly by the politicians, film-wallahs, magazines and even by the annual December music men. Not an inch is left free.

Politicians disfigure the walls with their birthday announcements months in advance. I have not seen this kind of brazen nonsense anywhere in India. By and large, the city presents a dirty facade, yet no one is concerned about it. The Government and the corporation are indifferent even to the order of the courts.

Autos charge as they like. No one wears helmets. Traffic rules are left to the whims of the police. Well. We just have to bear it all with a grin.

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A sickened reader

Sriram's column MMM is sickening to the core. It is full of sarcasm, the cheapest form of humour. It reveals his sick mind. I suggest he consult a psychiatrist. Till then please do not carry his sick column. Or please delete my name from your mailing list.

Ashok Kumar
goodashokkumar@gmail.com

Editor's Note: You have the choice to read MMM or not. Our advice is don't read him, but continue reading the rest of MM, if you feel that way. Or don't read that too and read only MMM, in which case he should be flattered! Assuming you do read the rest of the paper, we will continue sending the paper to you till you write a formal letter asking us to stop sending it to you.

Such indifference

I was surprised to see my name (albeit in its translated format a very old joke as long as I can remember from my 1st Standard in school) "mentioned in despatches" in MMM's column. More surprised because I do not recall referring the problem of noise invasion from Royapettah YMCA to *Madras Musings*, at least over the last one year. I have long since given up on it after a rather acerbic (from my side) exchange of letters with the then Chennai City Police Commissioner, (the present DGP/TN) about a year ago. Of course, the replies from the police were from the level of the Inspector, the Commissioner

I visited the Zoology section of Madras Government Museum in 2014 and found it to be an interesting place. As a wildlife biologist, I found the Natural History Section very interesting as well as important for educational and scientific reasons. I also noticed that there were several aspects of this sections that needed drastic improvement. I have for three years mused on writing about these things. The recent article "Will the Museum see better days?" in *Madras Musing*, September 16th, finally prompted me to send in my musings in the Museum.

Mammals and birds sections can be improved by using correct names on signage. For instance, Nilgiri Tahr, which is the Tamil Nadu State animal is mentioned as *Neelagiri Kaattu Velladugal* (நீலகிரிக் காட்டு வெள்ளாடுகள்), while in fact it has a well established and nice Tamil name *Varaiyadu* (வரையாடு). Leopard Cat is mentioned as *Puthar Kattu Poonai* (புதர் காட்டு பூனை) instead of *Siruthai Poonai* (சிறுத்தைப் பூனை). The Tamil name of the Rusty Spotted Cat has been literally translated into *Irumbu thuru nira Pulli Poonai* (இரும்பு துரு நிற பூனை) instead of *Sempulli Poonai* (செம்புள்ளி பூனை). The names given for certain species need to be updated and the nameboards with correct and recent common and scientific names should be placed.

There are various websites, such as Wikipedia and IUCN, that give, the recent common and scientific names of the mammals and birds, and should be referred to. Displaying linguistically and scientifically correct names in the exhibits is a basic and important component in educating visitors.

Bird specimens stuffed and displayed are of great historical and scientific importance. It should be noted that several bird specimens displayed there are collected from Tamil Nadu, especially from in and around that Madras planned region. Recently, while compiling a checklist of 'Birds of Tamil Nadu', ornithologists referred to nearly 30-odd birds from this collection as they were considered an authentic historical record of this region.

The way some of these specimens we exhibited was, however not aesthetically pleasing. For instance, wings, head, tail of the Pin-tailed Snipe had been chopped into pieces and mounted on a plank for display. To show the different types of beaks, the heads of the bird specimens were put for display. The authorities should remove such displays and think of better and novel ways of presenting a theme. Consulting with experts to restore and conserve

being too exalted a person to waste his time on such mundane trivia as noise pollution.

What however, surprised me the most is the statement .."as to what MM can do about it, is beyond MMM's comprehension." Being a niche publication with a limited though influential readership, I thought the least that *Madras Musings* can do is to run an article on the blatant violations of noise pollution norms (such as they are) in this city to awaken the conscience of those in authority. After all, if an attitude of resignation is adopted, why bother to publish articles like "Whom are we voting for"? Perhaps a letter from the Editor Pearl Sir to the Commissioner of Police and the Corporation Commissioner may elicit a more cogent and informed response than the rank bureaucratic nonsense and obfuscations that I have received so far from the lowest functionary in the police hierarchy authorised to sign letters, in response to my RTIA queries.

There is however one matter in which I feel *Madras Musings* should take some interest. The stink and filth in front of the Bhattad Tower where *Madras Musing's* office is located show no signs of abating. The political party that spearheads the Swachh Bharat campaign, whose local office is located in the building, to which I addressed a letter

recently has not even acknowledged it. Probably it seems to wallow in the scent. Other occupants of the building, unfortunately, do not seem to care.

Probably I should approach our proactive MLA of neighbouring Mylapore and ex-City Police Chief Dance King for a solution.

K. Balakesari
a.k.a Young Lion
3/1, Kesari Kuteeram
22, Westcott Road
Royapettah
Chennai 600014

Jesuits in Madras

Further, the features on the Jesuits in Madras (*Madras Musings*, September 16), Jesuit chronicler Louis Frois (November 16, 1559) has stated that Fr. Cypriano (Cyprian) was "the first Jesuit to reside and die in Mylapore". He spent ten years in Madras (1549-59). His funeral was conducted by the Franciscans who seemed to have already had an oratory in Mylapore. Fr. Cypriano was succeeded by Fr. Francis Pisa in 1563 and he started pastoring several Indian Christians who had been attending the Church of St. John the Baptist since 1566. There was also an asylum for orphan girls, and a small hospital at Mylapore under the care of Jesuits.

At the time of the consecration of the Church of the

the specimens which are in good shape and the other artifacts would help in preserving the historic collections from further deterioration.

One of the historically important exhibits in the mammals section is the skeleton of a male Asiatic Elephant which was captured near Chengam, North Arcot District (now Tiruvannamalai District) in 1887. There is also a miniature model explaining how the elephants were caught through the pitfall method in the olden days. In this age where the Asiatic elephant is in decline, due to various anthropogenic activities, it is more important to educate the visitors on how they are becoming endangered and on what we can do to conserve them.

There are several positive aspects about the museum as well. Some of the specimens are very rare and are of historical importance, yet are exhibited for the public. For example, to view the skin of the Malabar Civet and Pink Headed Duck in other museums, you have to get prior permission.

The website of this museum is another important and useful resource. One of the best things is that the museum authorities have digitised hundreds of its old publications (starting from the year 1882) and made them available for public through their website. Whoever initiated and executed this commendable work should be appreciated.

Besides its noble action of sharing its publications with the public, the museum authorities should also consider taking part in GLAM-Wiki initiative (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums" with Wikipedia). There are several institutions already a part of this initiative. One such example is the Naturalis Biodiversity Center, a national museum of natural history and a research centre on biodiversity in Leiden, Netherlands. This museum had uploaded thousands of images from its natural history collection on Wikimedia Commons.

Like other museums in India and outside, the Government Museum in Chennai should improve interpretations using audio-visuals, implement outreach programmes for visitors and expand digitisation. This will help in preserving one of our valuable cultural and natural heritage collections in India.

P. Jeganathan
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Mother of God, "meant only for Indian Christians", by A. de Valignano, the Jesuit General's Visitor in 1575, there was a priest who did not know Tamil but was being assisted by a Catechist from Mannar (Tuticorin Coast).

There were about 2000 converts. Fr. Valignano's future support, including the sending of three Jesuit priests, enabled them to start a school for more than 200 children, with a class of Latin too. It is on record that in the 1500s the Jesuits baptised about 3000 more adherents.

In the following years emerged more Catholic churches. There were altogether seven of them which were destroyed during Golconda attacks (1646 & 1662), first abetted by the English and later by the Dutch, "thus aiding the Moors".

Venkata II, the vassal of Vijayanagar initially at Chandragiri and later at Vellore, welcomed the Jesuits to his court in 1599. He granted them an annual revenue of 1000 gold pieces for their expenses. There were four Jesuits, including Fr. Rubino (*Madras Musings*, October 1.). Fr. Rubino along with Roberto de Nobili worked (1609) that the missionaries should adapt themselves to Indian customs. By the end of 1611, the Jesuits withdrew from Vellore and Chandragiri following the

preemptory order of Philip III of Spain (and Portugal) who it was said, had received a very slanderous report about the activities of the Jesuits.

As noted (*Madras Musings*, October 1st) Beschi was certainly the most distinguished of the Jesuit missionaries to the Tamils. Chanda Sahib, the Nawab of Carnatic, bestowed on Beschi many privileges including the award of a tax exempt *inam* and also granted him "the pomp and pageantry of a potentate". Beschi was constantly a sharp and pungent critic of the Protestants but he sought to excel them through Tamil literary pursuits in the elucidation of Christian faith. An internationally renowned Protestant historian, Bishop Stephen Neill (also well versed in Tamil), had this to say (1985) on Beschi's contribution: Europe in India has never produced works more distinguished by scholarship and elegance than these.

P.S. To add a personal touch, I can still recall, the vivid and delightful manner in which Fr. Lawrence Sundaram (mentioned in connection with Dhyana Ashram) used to handle Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at St. Joseph's College, Tiruchi in the mid 1960s.

Rev.Philip K. Mulley
Anaihatti Road,
Kotagiri 643217

BANNED – but a continuing practice

My mother used to head out with a basket full of ash every day. She would visit dry latrines in the area one by one, sprinkle the ash on the night soil, scoop it up and carry the excreta-filled basket on her head to dump the contents into a small tanker. This was almost 40 years back in our Singara Chennai,” recounts Ravanaiah, who accompanied his mother, occasionally.

The Madhigas, a sub-caste of the Adi Andhras, are a Telugu-speaking community employed as scavengers by the administration for over a century now. Ravanaiah, who is a Madhiga, says, “but scavenging was not our traditional occupation. Our an-

cestors were leather craftsmen. Considered as untouchables even among Dalits, we did not have an option but to comply with what was thrust upon us.”

As in most other States, the occupation of scavenging is almost always reserved for Dalits. In Tamil Nadu, the most disadvantaged among Dalits – the Madharis, Chakkiliyans, Thoti, Madhiga and Adi Andhras, collectively known as Arunthathiyars – were charged with such tasks. Ravanaiah, however, broke out of the degrading tradition and now works for the uplift of his people through the Tamil Nadu Adi Andhra Arunthathiya Maha Sabha. Despite Tamil Nadu's impressive toilet coverage statistics, the practice of manually disposing of human excreta persists, covertly endorsed by corporations and

panchayats. Open defecation (OD) and manual scavenging are everyday realities even in the large cities, regardless of how vehemently the administration denies it to save face. The ever increasing migrant population and the resultant mushrooming

of slums have left the city sanitation in shambles.

Census 2011 mentions more than 54,000 ‘service latrines’ – toilets where night soil is removed manually by scavengers or left to be ‘serviced’ by animals such as pigs – in Tamil Nadu. There were 463 houses in Chennai where night soil is removed manually by scavengers. This is the official household count and does not account for the ‘servicing’ that is required in crowded public places, slums and prominent OD haunts.

The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act 2013, while defining ‘manual scavenger’ as someone who manually cleans, carries or disposes human excreta, fails to include those who work with ‘protective gear’ within its ambit. The Corpora-

tion swears by the measures it has taken to ensure safety. The reality, however, is different.

“Take a look around and see if you can find any sanitary worker cleaning toilets wearing gloves or entering septic tanks with gumboots. Gumboots and gloves are almost ceremonial; workers are made to wear them when inspectors and officials come visiting,” states Ravanaiah.

More often than not, boots, gloves and reflective jackets are purchased in bulk, regardless of the users’ frames. “Officials say that we are supposed to work only with rubber gloves and not with bare hands. But it is impossible to grip anything with these over-sized gloves; we toss them out,” says sanitary staff L. Sundaram. As the inconvenience of using such protection overrides visible benefits, workers feel it is better to get done with their tasks quickly sans



This picture tells it all, makes for a very sad story.

management rules, in no uncertain terms, has instructed the administration to ensure the use of sulphur-resistant cement to prevent physical damage to the structures owing to corrosion. “Hydrogen sulphide can corrode concrete. And still our men enter sewers with absolutely no protection,” rues director, Change India, A. Narayanan, who has been

for over 15 years. Until four years ago, he would enter sewers to unclog blocks and desilt them for a daily salary of Rs 140. “I still unclog sewers, but no longer enter them. I work from the outside now, using only long rods and sticks. Too many instances of people being hit by toxic fumes; you don’t want to get killed by toxic fumes now, do you?” he smiles.

The threat of contagious infections is something scavengers have learned to live with. In the absence of appropriate protective gear, a simple scrape or a needle poke could put workers at risk of acquiring bacterial and viral infections like leptospirosis and hepatitis. Skin diseases are commonplace. Sanitary worker Saravanan’s biggest complaint was relentless skin inflammation and itchiness during his sewer cleaning days. Yovaan from Tiruvottriyur, too, suffered from skin infections. Both claim to have left entering sewers and work only with iron rods and ropes to unclog drains.

Alcoholism and the use of tobacco are deeply rooted in the profession. No person, in his

senses, would get into a closed, smelly pit filled to the brim with filth. Many claim that alcohol is almost a necessity, to dull their senses before entering muggy sewage-filled pits. Such behaviour only increases the risk of unconsciousness in gas-filled chambers. “Most men spend close to a third of their earnings on alcohol, certainly wasteful, considering the fact that most families live in penury. And alcoholism can never be considered in isolation; it is almost always accompanied by domestic violence, fostering dysfunctional family dynamics,” says Narayanan.

For many, tuberculosis and asthma are lifelong companions. Muscle-aches, headaches and fever are so customary that they fail to raise alarm, Perumal, who worked in the sewers for almost 16 years until a few years ago, recounts his frequent visits to the doctor. The only motivation for sticking with the job, he says, is the belief that one day he’d become a permanent employee of the Corporation. That day is yet to dawn; might just never in his lifetime.

Perumal is not alone. Since manual scavenging is prohibited by law, the Corporation no longer recruits scavengers on a permanent basis. Instead, the work of unclogging sewers and drains is contracted out. A contract employee receives a fixed sum of Rs. 6000 month where a permanent employee would be paid around Rs. 14,000. In most cases, the tradition of sanitary work is passed from parent to child. In the absence of alternate employment options, due to educational and social deficiencies, many continue to be stuck with what they have been bequeathed.

No wonder then that not a single arrest was made under the Employment of Manual Scavenging and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act 1993, the precursor of the 2013 legisla-



Sewer workers use iron rods and ropes to clear blockages.

A rural India is still awaiting to go beyond shame & stigma



Toilet coverage in every household is still a long way off. (Photos: SG.)

India has come a long way since the days of its rigid top-down Central Rural Sanitation Programme, which had minimal community participation. First it was the Total Sanitation Campaign, which then became the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan and, most recently, the Swachh Bharat Mission. While the language, signature and branding has differed over time, the basic idea remains the same – improving sanitation and ridding the country of open defecation. India needs to answer the important question of whether rural India can and will embrace toilet culture, and that must drive its colossal plan to rid the country of open defecation.

Two words: Swachh Bharat. They rarely takes listeners by surprise any more. While there is no denying that the concept of a swachh Bharat (clean India) has been drummed into the country’s collective psyche over the last year or so, how to go about achieving it eludes many practitioners and policy-makers alike. With the intent to iron out confusion relating to its implementation in India’s rural pockets, SM Sehgal Foundation’s Sushasan Abhi team zeroed in on preparing communities and panchayats towards achieving a swachh gaon (clean village), and this became the theme of their annual Good Rural Governance Conference.

Achieving an open-defecation-free India is easier said than done. Challenging hardened notions and trying to change a person’s most private behaviour requires thoughtful planning and devoted action. Constructing toilets for those who can’t afford it

might make sense but of what use is a room with a hole to a society which shuns latrines or keeps them unused, thanks to a host of social and cultural impediments? Can the stigma ever be broken? Census 2011 indicates that nearly 70 per cent of all Indians live away from cities. While the

Government has chalked out several development strategies for rural India such as the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana and the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, the Foundation’s CEO Jane Schukoske believes that it is very difficult to achieve other development targets if sanitation is left lacking. She seems quite certain that there can be no *adarsh* (ideal) without *swachh*. Government and non-government organisations have adopted a number of strategies from cajolery to coercion, and from rewarding to shaming to get people to construct and use toilets. But, they have not always yielded the desired results. States like Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Bihar still struggle with low toilet density – almost one in 14 households does not have an individual latrine.

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The way forward

With shrinking open spaces both in rural and urban centres and the safety of women-folk precariously poised, getting people to adopt sanitary toilets should not be too difficult. However, the system is far from perfect. Concerns of design, function and the associated pollution still remain.

The first step in increasing the probability of a toilet being used is to ensure that its design is socially relevant and the construction is faultless. The programme could certainly gain more from an increased focus on gender and social sensitivity at the design and construction stage. Small, but extremely crucial details regarding pan angle and placement should be followed to a tee. And, with the preference for pour-flush toilets on the increase, concerns of water access and storage should not be taken lightly. Financial viability and need assessments should be made obligatory before the commencement of any community toilet complex construction.

Transforming India into an open defecation free nation by 2019 may just become a teeny bit uncomplicated if these principles are applied; one task at a time, one behaviour at a time.

Rohtak district, says that though personal hygiene may have improved over the years, community hygiene as a whole has considerably deteriorated. The most recent edition of the Swachhta Status Report brought out by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) backs the claim. Though the construction of individual household latrines has shown a sharp increase of close to 70 per cent compared to 2014-15 figures, only 13 per cent of villages have community toilets.

The major hitch in keeping these latrines clean calls for modifying apathetic attitudes when it comes to caring for community assets. People must constantly be reminded that they need to maintain their sanitary assets for their health and hygiene’s sake, and not because the Government asks them to.

Decades’ worth of work in creating awareness on the importance of good personal and communal hygiene, however, is not completely in vain. The presence of toilets has been found to influence social status apart from economic development, both at the micro and macro levels.

Behaviour-change strategies should make sure that they put everything in perspective and address them both. Speaking from experience, Chandra Shekar Gowda from Swades Foundation asserts that when evidence on implication of communities’ situation is presented, it evokes action.

Take for example the sanitation-health-economics connect; it is easier for people to get their heads around using latrines when they are made to understand the

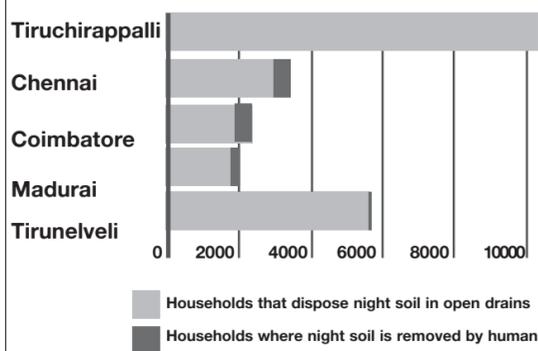
inverse proportionality between improved sanitation and decreased instances of diarrhoea. And the fact that informal leaders hold more sway than the elected ones, Swades Foundation has been successful in getting the message across through select individuals that the larger community holds in high regard.

While the organisation’s support is available to the community initially, external support cannot and should not be around all the time. For any programme to succeed, it is imperative that the communities take over the responsibility. Swades has been successful in getting the community together and establishing ‘Empowered Village Development Committees’, made responsible for planning, executing and monitoring projects implemented within their jurisdictions.

Trained community members ensure that operation and maintenance is taken care of with little or no external assistance. Newspaper reports are replete with instances of villagers turning vigilante; of groups of whistle-blowing women shoeing away villagers squatting to relieve themselves at the break of dawn. But is it right to just focus singularly on the idea of shame, or is there something bigger which could act as a more potent driver of behaviour change? “It is important that we look beyond just shame and probe the phenomenon of human dignity as a whole”, suggests Professor Avinash Kumar from the Management Development Institute, Gurugram. “Stunted notions on sanitation is not a peculiar feature of rural India, it is more universal than we think it is. Take any house; the toilet is the smallest and also the dirtiest. There is an urgent need to attach positive symbolism and de-stigmatise the toilet”, he adds.

Kumar feels that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is on the right track. An excellent exercise in social engineering, the Abhiyan started off by de-stigmatising the ‘lowly’ broom and all the negativity associated with it. Not satisfied with just being an awareness-creation exercise, the programme metamorphosed into one that encouraged citizen engagement and promoted collective action. Citizens’ duties and responsibilities were no longer veiled from the public eye and toilets were widely advertised as agents of good sanitation – (Courtney: www.india waterportal.org)

Methods of night soil disposal



Source: Census 2011

(Continued on page 6)



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

1. In which Indian State was the 8th BRICS Summit held recently?
2. The Union Government has decided to utilise the vast network of post offices across the country to sell which essential food item at subsidised rates for the festival season?
3. At the recent 28th meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol at Kigali in Rwanda, India decided to eliminate by 2030 which greenhouse gas that harms the ozone layer?
4. In a decision that raised eyebrows, which American singer-songwriter, artist and writer has won the 2016 Nobel Prize in Literature?
5. The United Nations General Assembly formally elected which Portuguese take over on January 17 as the new Secretary-General?
6. In which north Indian State will the country's 20th Indian Institute of Management come up?
7. In a major administrative reform, how many districts has been newly created in Telengana to add to the existing 10 districts?
8. The Supreme Court in a landmark judgement has widened the scope of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 by deleting what two words in Section 2(q) of the Act to make it gender-neutral?
9. Which eminent space scientist has become the first Indian to be inducted the Hall of Fame of the International Astronautical Federation?
10. With which Indian business group has Dassault Aviation signed a deal to set up a joint venture to execute offsets for the recently concluded India-France deal for 36 Rafale fighter jets?
* * *
11. Where in the State will India's first medical devices manufacturing park (Medipark) be set up with HLL Lifecare, a miniratna PSU, sub-leasing 330 acres of land for the purpose?
12. Which varsity in the State awards the annual Ramanujan Prize worth \$10000, to mathematician under 32 years of age, for outstanding contributions to areas influenced by the genius?
13. In which Chennai school are the houses called Charter, Eton, Harrow and Rugby as a tribute to famous schools in the UK?
14. Veeraraghava Mudali Street in Triplicane is commonly called...?
15. Which restaurant, named after a Nobel Laureate, was started by Gomathy Subramaniam and Patrick Davenport?
16. As per the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, which place did the French get back for returning Madras to the English?
17. After whom is the Poondi reservoir officially named?
18. If it was Super Kings in the IPL, what was it in the Indian Volleyball League?
19. The first of its kind in the country was started thanks to a meeting called by G. Selvapathi Chettiar and G. Ramanujulu Naidu in March 1918. What?
20. Why was Platform 2A, from where the Shatabdi starts, originally built?

(Answers on page 8)

● Another point of view

A decade ago, in his address at the CII National Conference at Delhi, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh propounded the concept of inclusiveness. He urged business leaders to work towards an inclusive society providing wider opportunities for those sections that have been kept out of social and economic development. In subsequent years this has become a *mantra*.

This concept has spread from the corridors of power to the social spheres. Several prominent personalities have been involved in this mission.

In the South, Carnatic vocalist T.M. Krishna has been passionate about broadening the reach of classical music by blending with its vast varieties of folk music, practised by those sections of society not having access to music *sabhas*.

For a few years now, Krishna has been endeavouring to take classical music to a wider audience in the lower rungs of the social order. His annual concerts at the Olcott Kuppam, Elliot's Beach, in Chennai, his efforts in teaching music to children in the city's Corporation and government schools, his recent presentation in Karnataka along with transgenders highlighting their music, and efforts in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and elsewhere have evoked a lot of interest. Sections that have not been exposed to such interactions have been enthusiastically participating in these efforts.

An articulate communicator, Krishna has been effectively using the media and through his prolific writings, he has been propagating this concept – inclusiveness. Recently, he was selected for the Ramon Magsaysay Award, which he described as a "celebration of music and art as part of the human dialogue." Congratulations, TMK!

Recently, the Chennai International Centre presented Krishna in conversation with the former Governor of West Bengal, Gopalakrishna Gandhi. The theme was 'inclusive music'.

Krishna expressed strong views critical of the hold – Carnatic music by brahmins and *sabhas*. His critique extended to the US, where, according to Krishna, Carnatic music was controlled by the upper strata of NRIs from the South and he made particular mention of his discomfort in performing in the Bay Area (San Francisco).

While I appreciate Krishna's passion for inclusivity, I have concerns about his unfair criticism of musicologists, musicians

Reacting to Krishna



and *sabhas* who have nurtured and maintained the quality of music through tough times after it lost the patronage of kings and zamindars. I cite a few instances to highlight the nature of this unfairness.

• Not all music maestros have confined their performances to high-end *sabha*-s. For instance, several artistes over a few generations, such as Madurai Mani Iyer, T.R. Mahalingam, Kunnakkudi Vaidyanathan and Veena S. Balachandar graciously provided numerous *kutcheries* free at temples, schools and other public places that attracted

ers can rake in the moolah teaching global students over the Internet. The Music Academy or Krishna Gana Sabha can get overwhelming support from corporates. But such opportunities were not available until a couple of decades ago. I remember the struggle of T.T. Vasu in his earlier years as President – Music Academy where he found it difficult to afford a decent coat of paint for the Academy building.

• Krishna has been critical of the dominance of the brahmins. For over three decades, Nalli Kuppasami Chetty and Obul Reddy have been so

● by S. Viswanathan

thousands from all strata of society. I have heard dozens of such *thengai mudi kutcheri* (literally translated to mean the fee the artists got was one half of a broken coconut). In my generation, many including me were lured into Carnatic music thanks to the 'inclusive' spirit and dedication of these maestros.

• A decade ago Krishna, along with Bombay Jayashri and Mythili Chandrasekar, produced a coffee table book, *Voices within Carnatic music*, providing graphic description of the lives and contributions of seven maestros – Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, G.N. Balasubramaniam, M.S. Subbulakshmi, T.N. Rajarathnam Pillai, T.R. Mahalingam and Palakkad Mani Iyer. The present *kutcheri* format introduced by Ariyakudi was described in detail. For close to hundred years, this pattern has been followed.

• However, recent years, Krishna has been critical – this format and has been breaking loose from this pattern that he has described as rigid. In a recent brilliant concert at Vani Mahal, he ended the concert with a soulful rendering of Thyagaraja's *Pancharathna Kriti Jagadanandakaraka* traditionally sung at the beginning. No issue. The audience enjoyed this rendition. Krishna has the freedom to experiment, to differ, to evolve his own pattern. But should he be critical of the traditionalists and purists?

• Krishna should also remember the vastly expanded opportunities available for Carnatic musicians today. A leading artist can get paid a lakh of rupees for a concert. Teach-

actively involved in supporting *sabha*-s. Cultural organisations, Tamil Isai Sangam, run by the Annamalai Chettiar clan and the Indian Fine Arts Society, headed by V. Perumal Chetty's progeny, have been rendering yeomen service. These are not brahmin preserves.

• Krishna has been equally unfair to the South Indian diaspora in the Bay Area and elsewhere in the US. In short, Krishna may not have the time to look at the passion and the involvement of hundreds of NRIs in learning, appreciating and committing their time and efforts to Carnatic music. I cite a couple of instances: the work of Kanniks Kannikeswaran to bring together disparate individuals, across different urban hubs in the US, blending Carnatic music with Western

notes and instruments and rich music history and literature deserves mention. A decade ago, I had an occasion to attend his performance at Allen Town in Pennsylvania. Over several months, he worked with nearly a hundred men and women to teach and train them for the event. These dedicated singers and instrumentalists travelled over hundreds of miles from different parts in and around New Jersey, spent out of their pockets and presented a great concert. Kanniks has since extended this to several cities across the US.

• More recently, under the tutelage of a dedicated teacher from Andhra, dozens of women, men and children rendered soulful music at the Bridgewater Temple. Young professionals – specialist doctors, a senior journalist working for the *Wall Street Journal*, bankers, communication specialists, engineers and computer scientists met regularly to learn and practise for the event for weeks, driving long distances after a long day's work.

• In another instance, I met Sravya, a 13-year gifted singer and daughter of top-ranking globally-renowned scientist, Anand Tanikella, who headed the Saint Gobain Research in India till recently. Sravya has been practising Carnatic music vigorously in Boston and recently was adjudged the best singer at the Cleveland annual music competition. Sravya also heads the choir in the state – Massachusetts.

• The Indian diaspora in the U.S., whether from the South or North India, takes great pains to learn Carnatic *krithis*, with scripts often written in English, taking great care with diction and pronunciation. Should Krishna paint all these dedicated singers with the same harsh brush that he uses to critique non-inclusion in Chennai? – (Courtesy: *Industrial Economist*.)

BANNED – but a continuing practice

(Continued from page 5)

Narayanan has been pushing for a National Institute for Sanitation Research and Technology to be set up to address the issue of sanitation in its entirety. "Research still revolves around civil engineering, whereas the subject is much more than that. Basic sciences, social sciences and technology are integral aspects which often get overlooked. The need for manual scavenging can be greatly eliminated by employing appropriate technological solutions depending on sewage volume, constituents and geology," he adds.

It would make more sense to bring all septic tank waste-handlers into a single fold, holding the Corporations or the authority designated for the purpose responsible for any mishap. Manhole dimensions and design need major reworking, according to Narayanan who points out that the opening is so small, that when a person dies in a sewer, it takes the fire services staff hours to bring the body out as it bloats quickly having been exposed to the concentrated filth and gases. – Courtesy: www.indiawaterportal.org.

NOSTALGIA

How we coped with WW II

The World War II is just a piece of history to the present generation. How Madras coped with this upheaval is no longer common knowledge. Books tell the larger story of the War from a historical standpoint, but how families reacted to the difficult demands of those times and how they managed to remain afloat is an altogether different story.

As a boy of eight when I could somewhat understand what was happening around me, I was rudely introduced to the outbreak of war. While living at Sripuram then, I noticed at a newspaper kiosk at the junction of Royapettah High Road (today's Thiru Vi Kaa Salai) and Edward Elliot's Road (today's Radhakrishnan Salai), a poster screaming out in large black letters, nine inches big, 'War Declared'!

Stirring events were reported in the newspapers and on the radio every day – of battles won, battles lost, the capture of critical posts and bridges, the fall of enemy cities, and stories of heroic deeds of individuals. The atmosphere was surcharged. Children could not help but being overwhelmed by the sensational news of defeats and victories in battle overall and of strikes and satyagrahas nearer home. War on the one side and agitation for freedom from British rule on the other side!

To the younger generation, the great heroes were Jawaharlal Nehru who had a captivating personality, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who fled India disguised as a sadhu and believed that the British rulers should be fought and defeated if India was to gain freedom from their rule – and, strangely, also Adolf Hitler. Hitler's exploits of annexing Poland, overrunning Czechoslovakia and humbling France to submission in the very early part of the War, his fiery speeches, his smart turnout and the massive units of Nazi troops in perfect formation made a deep impression on young minds that could not see the war as a battle between good and evil. It was to them just a big game in which the more ferocious was the hero

in the combat. Boys, in their innocent games, kept poster pictures of Hitler and decorated them, while they shot arrows at pictures of Churchill! Elders were above such immature passions. When they discovered Hitler being idolised, they would admonish the youngsters and have the offending posters destroyed.

Everything was in short supply and the immediate con-

manding presence in Burma. 'Black-out' was enforced in Madras to make it difficult for the enemy to identify the targets. 'Black-out' required that public lighting had to be covered by cylindrical black coloured hoods to ensure that light was confined to just the spot below the lamp post. Houses had to use only a limited number of light points and window panes had to be either opaque or made so by black paper covering.

A massive programme of civil defence was designed and enforced. It consisted of a siren warning to citizens of imminent bombing, air raid shelters in streets, and underground trenches in house compounds. The air raid shelters were semi-circular-shaped concrete shelters in every street where people could take refuge at the sound of the siren. Those in homes were required to stay their trenches till the all-clear was given by the siren with a different tune. I remember the trench in our Sripuram house com-

● by N.S. Parthasarathy

sequence of the War was acute living conditions with high inflation and shortages. Mother had everything recycled for reuse. Every essential was rationed. War demanded huge supplies of food, medicines and other essentials. Due to shortage of rice, it was imported from Brazil. Brazilian rice was gooey and inedible. There was no option but to put up with it. It was said that in many cases its consumption led to scabies on fingers and toes which had to be treated with a sulphurous powder called Cibazol. For clothing, the only available material was what was called 'standard cloth', unbleached, thick and rough, made and supplied by Binny, whose capacity was almost entirely dedicated to the making of khaki. All of us boys and girls were dressed in the very same standard cloth and we all looked like the Von Trapp family of singers without knowing how to sing.

The breadwinners of households had to work very hard to bring up families the sizes of which were growing regardless of the outside crisis. They would work late and quite often take up more than one job to bring home enough to feed and educate the children.

Air-raids over Madras became, imminent especially when the eastern theatre of war was opened after Japan entered the War on the side of the Axis powers (Germany and Italy) and began overwhelming east Asian countries in menacing rapidity. Japan established a com-

pound with enough space to accommodate 10-12 persons which our landlord, Pattabhi Raju, was kind enough to provide. There was a voluntary cadre called A R P Wardens who were uniformed and trained to guide and enforce the air raid precautions.

There was no TV in those days. Radio gave news of the progress of War. The 9 O'clock news was eagerly awaited not only for the latest news but also for the baritone voice opening the broadcast majestically: "This... is... All India Radio. The News read by Melville deMello." Keeping a radio at home needed a licence. A strict watch was kept by the authorities to prevent traitorous use of the device to establish enemy contact.

In 1942 Madras was evacuated. Households moved to towns and villages some safe distance away from the city. Only citizens required for maintaining essential services and for support services to the large army camp in Avadi had to stay on in the city. Avadi was a vast camp of tents and temporary and semi-permanent structures. In most families the women and children had to move out while the men stayed on in the city.

It is shuddering today to think of how Madras became a ghost city. But then the citizens accepted the difficulties and survived this crisis to fight yet another day if it occurred again. And, I think, such a time did occur during the floods last year. Three cheers for Madras!

New life for the HCC?

(Continued from page 1)

It is now four years since the Government passed a Heritage Act, one of the provisions of which was the formation of a Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) under the auspices of the CMDA. But this was not the first initiative. Two years prior to this Act, the High Court had struck down the demolition of landmarks such as *Gokhale Hall* on Armenian Street and the *Bharat Insurance (Kardyll) Building* and had ordered the formation of a HCC. This was done but its composition was hopelessly lopsided. With just one member, the INTACH representative, being outside the purview of the Government, while others were employees of statutory bodies, the HCC did very little work. It did nothing to prevent the demolition of the *Bible Society Building* for instance, though it did salvage some of its reputation by insisting that the new building that came up had some vague resemblance to the earlier structure. As for bigger tasks, such as listing of heritage buildings, there was no progress. With the INTACH member being removed following the High Court judgement in the P Orr & Sons building case, the HCC became wholly filled with Government representatives and hardly ever met thereafter.

The Government's legislation of 2012, for some reason, ignored the existence of the HCC and formulated a fresh one, with an identical composition! But this was never formed. As for the existing HCC, it was never disbanded. But the latter, being quite unsure of its mandate, has continued only in name.

This time around, however, it appears that the Government is keen to expand the membership of the proposed HCC and have members representing the private institutions and also scholars in general. It is believed that a more varied membership will bring dynamism to the HCC. We cannot agree more with that assessment.

The new HCC, when formed, will have plenty on its hands. It will need to take up listing and notification of heritage structures across the State. To save time, it could use the listing done for Madras by the Justice Padmanabhan Committee on behalf of the High Court in 2010. It will then need to get sufficient safeguards for the structures and, more importantly, make sure owners are rewarded by way of compensation for preservation. Can we expect such dynamism from the proposed body?

Careers in Heritage Management

(Continued from page 1)

heritage could be preserved. The results have begun coming in and they are encouraging. All over the old walled city, heritage houses are being preserved, traditional arts and crafts are being revived, and an entire cultural fabric is being restored. It is, of course, still a long way to go before the benefits achieve critical mass, but what there is, is commendable.

Chennai could do well by learning from this initiative. For a city that can boast of many firsts and being a cultural capital, it is, strangely, hugely backward when it comes to preservation of visible reminders of heritage. Too often, such precincts, whether built or natural, are viewed simply in terms of real estate. There is simply no awareness of the potential that is waiting to be harnessed in heritage itself. Even the Government could use qualified

professionals in heritage management.

Tamil Nadu has plenty of heritage locations that are crying out for basic amenities and some degree of marketing to make them popular. The State-controlled agencies have time and again proved failures in this, chiefly because they are hidebound and operate within their own knowledge levels. If they were to hire professional consultants to help make our heritage sites tourist friendly, there would be a marked rise in footfalls in these places. The economic benefit that would spill over would make the local community aware of the necessity to preserve its heritage. That by itself means the battle for conservation is won. If the Government cannot take up the initiative of setting up such a centre, would one of our industrial houses or major universities provide, like VIT or SRM or SASTRA consider it?

The Madras best from 82 years

November 4th marks the 82nd anniversary of the first-ever Ranji Trophy match to be played. It was at Chepauk that the historic game was played between Madras and Mysore and the action-packed game played on a rain-affected pitch ended in a single day – November 4, 1934 – with Madras winning by an innings and 23 runs. Recalling the occasion, it might be apt to come up with the best ever Madras team. At least two of the players who figured in that inaugural game would be a shoo-in for an all-time State team but I don't mind admitting that I had a tough time arriving at the final eleven as there were many contenders for the several places and it was with a very heavy heart I had to omit a few.

The innings would be opened by Kris Srikkanth and Dinesh Kartik. There can be few doubts about the former's choice, while the latter who has opened with some success for

the country also straightaway solves the problem of the wicketkeeper. Both have also done more than their bit for the State in the Ranji Trophy. I sadly had to omit Murali Vijay.

The middle order will be manned by A.G. Milkha Singh, C.D. Gopinath and A.G. Kripal

● by
Partab Ramchand

Singh, three stalwarts who provided style and substance through the 1950s and 60s. All three played with moderate results for India, though Kripal remains the only batsman from the State to score a century on Test debut. But their deeds for the State are outstanding, particularly considering the fact that batting was a difficult art on the kind of pitches prevalent in those days and the duration of matches was largely confined to three days.

As many as four all rounders follow next in the batting order, underlining the fact that Tamil Nadu has been fortunate in this respect over the years. Robin Singh, A.G. Ram Singh, Ravi Ashwin and M.J. Gopalan will take over the utility roles bringing substance and versatility to the side. Robin's utility value cannot be questioned and though he was considered a limited overs expert for the country, his first class record is commendable. Ram Singh and Gopalan are legends from that memorable first Ranji match and nothing more need be said, while Ashwin has already done enough to warrant a place.

The last two places were of course the easiest. The bowling feats of both S. Venkatraghavan and V.V. Kumar are too well known to need any elaboration. A bowling line-up of two off spinners, a leg spinner and a left arm spinner in Ram Singh constitutes an embarrassment of riches for any captain and Venkat who will lead the side will undoubtedly welcome it. The opening bowlers would be Gopalan and Robin Singh.

It was only after deciding on the playing eleven that I realised the abundant talent and ability that was available and which could form a formidable second team that would give the first team a run for its money. For openers take your pick from C.P. Johnstone, Sadagoppan Ramesh, Vijay, W.V. Raman and V. Sivaramakrishnan. The claimants for the middle order would constitute

Workshops

For Children

November 19: Bookmark making. 8-14 years (at DakshinaChitra).

December 24: Activity Camp. All fun and learning in a workshop which will include activities like button craft, shell craft, paper craft, learning of folk dances, pot-breaking, tug of war and making thread lampshades. 8-14 years (at DakshinaChitra).

For Adults

November 12-13 & 19: Terracotta jewellery (at DakshinaChitra, 10.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m.).

November 26-27: Lac jewellery (at DakshinaChitra, 10.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m.).

December 3-4 & 11: Handmade utility ware. Participants will get to make four different items in this workshop including a fruit basket, soup bowls, dinner plates, a cup and saucer (at DakshinaChitra, 10.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m.).

December 10-11: Crochet jewellery (at DakshinaChitra, 10.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m.).

S. Sharath, Sridharan Sriram, C. Ramaswami, S. Badrinath and T.E. Srinivasan. For wicket-keeper take your pick from Bharath Reddy and P.K. Belliappa. There are ready pace bowlers in C.R. Rangachari and L. Balaji. And as for spinners, it would be the toughest choice for the candidates would include Sunil Subramaniam, L. Sivaramakrishnan, S. Vasudevan and M. Venkatramana.

Just makes you wonder that will all these players around how come Tamil Nadu has won the Ranji Trophy only twice in 82 years!

December 24-25: Wire-wrapped jewellery (at DakshinaChitra, 10.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m.).

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Till November 27: SOS-Song of the Sea, an exhibition displaying aesthetically crafted jellyfish lampshades and fishes as well as beautifully crafted jewellery and other gift items, made of discarded plastic and CD's by auroville-based Korean artist Ok Jeong Lee (at InKo Centre)

Till November 30: Traditions of Tamil Nadu – an exhibition of portraits by Antony Raj and Ramu (at Kadambari Gallery, DakshinaChitra).

Till November 30: I see what I paint – an exhibition of artworks by Anamika V. (at Varija Gallery, DakshinaChitra).

November 19: S. Muthiah speaks on Three 19th Century Pioneers of Knowledge from Madras'. Free to members. Rs. 50 fee for non-members (11.30 a.m. at Madras Literary Society).

December 3-25: An exhibition of paintings and installations by Auroville-based painter, Nele Martens (at Varija Gallery, DakshinaChitra).

December 9-30: An exhibition of paintings capturing the town of Thiruvannamalai by Ananda Kumar (at Kadambari Gallery, DakshinaChitra).

December 17-25: Festival of Uttarakhand. Revel in the vibrance of enthralling folk performances as artists from Almora, Uttarakhand, grove to the beats of local music and stage dances like Choliya, Chhapeli, Ghasyari and Chancheri. Be sure to fill your shopping bags as you witness craftsmen demonstrate and sell their crafts (at DakshinaChitra).

Answers to Quiz

1. Goa, 2. Pulses, 3. HFC-23, a by-product of HCFC-22 (Hydrochlorofluorocarbon-22), which is used in industrial refrigeration, 4. Bob Dylan, 5. Antonio Guterres, 6. Jammu & Kashmir, 7. 21, 8. "adult male" before the word 'person' to make it gender-neutral. The remaining part of the legislation would remain operative and was kept untouched, 9. Former ISRO Chairman Prof. Udupi Ramachandra Rao, 10. Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group.

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11. Chengalpattu, 12. SASTRA University, 13. Christ Church Anglo-Indian higher Secondary School, 14. Big Street, 15. Kipling Café, 16. Fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, 17. Satyamurthy, 18. Chennai Spikers, 19. The Madras Labour Union, the first organised labour union in India, 20. To deliver water and goods to the station staff.

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