

INSIDE

- Short 'N' Snappy
- A house of Music
- Water sustainable Chennai
- Memoirs of P. Sabanayagam
- Women Doctors of Chennai

MADRAS MUSINGS

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WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

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Creating Urban Transport Chaos

It was exactly a year ago that the Chennai Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (CUMTA) was launched with much fanfare. The media had at that time hailed it, claiming that it was the solution to all the ills that city's public transport systems faced – each of them striking out in different directions and with no connection to each other. What was then forgotten was that even then the concept was seven years old. It had been approved by the Legislature in 2011 but for reasons best known to the Government, the required notifications were never issued. The change in political regime in 2011 is generally believed to be the reason why CUMTA was never notified. If so, this

was yet another example, and in TN there are many, of how the public suffers at the whims of those in power. The CUMTA was an excellent scheme and its non-implementation has helped nobody. In January 2019 it was relaunched with much

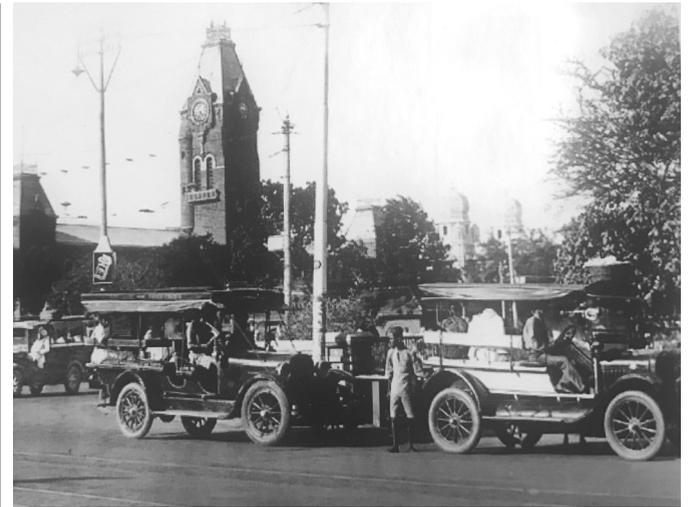
● by The Editor

fanfare and what's more notified as well, with no explanation for the intervening delays. But then 12 months later, CUMTA is as clueless as ever.

The CUMTA as originally planned was to chiefly have a planning function and oversee the work of several agencies

involved in the running of the transport systems. It was also to periodically revise and upgrade its plans. Headed by the Transport Minister, it was to have the Chief Urban Planner (Transport) of the CMDA as its Member-Secretary. Others on board were the Chief Secretary and the Vice-Chairman, CMDA (both ranking as Vice-Chairpersons), the Secretaries of the Departments of Finance, Transport, Home, Housing & Urban Development, and the General Manager of the Southern Railway. Under CUMTA it was envisaged that all transport systems – buses, the suburban railway, the MRTS and the Metro being the main players – would all function in a fully

(Continued on page 2)



As our leads concern public amenities, our OLD features private buses waiting outside Central Station in the 1920s. Our NEW is the famed 'green' bus launched recently.



A New Year wish

● by A Special Correspondent

As another Year dawns, several programmes in newspapers make us feel heady. Traffic rules will be enforced, Pallikaranai will be retrieved, Kodungaiyur and Perungudi waste dumps will be converted into energy by high-tech solution "to end the City's waste menace", the Marina will be beautified and upper reaches of Adyar will be dredged for free flow of sewage free water and the estuary will bloom.

Should we rejoice or resign ourselves to accepting that things will move painfully slowly and would remain the same? That is our soliloquy. Take, for example, an important public health related necessity that has been in the air for several years. It was

announced in mid-2017 that with an outlay of Rs. 1,442 crores for remediation of the vast dump yards in Kodungaiyur and Perungudi, which are serious health hazards, further dumping would be stopped. The conservancy process would be revamped. Two plants would convert waste to energy-absorbing incoming waste and converting the accumulated heap. It was then estimated that in a period of 15 months the waste heaps would be fully degraded, biologically and chemically. Not 15 but 30 months have passed. The present announcement says that the

Corporation has "finalised the proposal" at Rs. 1,250 crores. The Chief secretary is "likely to review the proposal soon". Once that is completed, officials "expect the work to start next year". About 36 months have passed from conception to just to start of work. That is not an exceptional case but seems to be the norm as other examples would show.

In early 2017, Chennai residents were told that the Adyar River would get a make-over with riverfront development, plugging of sewage outfalls, modular sewage plants, walkways and cycle tracks. The project report "has been read-

ied", it was said. Restoration was expected to take three years. Meanwhile, flow of polluted water into the estuary would negate efforts to revive and maintain the creek at considerable cost and effort. After three years the river work has started, and it may take up to 2022 or longer as there are difficult hurdles. That is six years or more from concept to completion.

Launched in 2016, the Smart City Project came alive by mid-2018. There is no clear indication of the target completion dates for different projects, but it is known that the Smart City Project has a five-year time

frame ending 2022. It may be extended.

Construction of the first stretch of Chennai Metro began in June 2009, spanning seven stations, Koyambedu to Alandur, covering 10 kilometres (6.2 miles) and began operation in June 2015, taking six years. Now in 2019, the operational network is 45 km. At full network length of 163 km, with all interconnections in place, the project may be completed only by 2025 and not by 2022 as originally envisaged. With congestion rising every day to unbearable limits, the capacity as estimated by CMRL would,

(Continued on page 2)

Urban transport chaos

(Continued from page 1)

integrated fashion. Commuters would be expected to switch seamlessly from one system to another without having to buy tickets at all the intervening stages.

But of course, such a paradise was not vouchsafed to Chennai and for this we must thank the usual bureaucratic hurdles. One of the main issues plaguing our mandarins is the choice of the person to head CUMTA. Initially it was proposed that the Chief Planner of the CMDA would be the Member Secretary or CEO of CUMTA. This was later changed, with a bureaucrat to head the body. This has been questioned by the Planners who point out that in other States it is one of their ilk who heads the body. The tussle continues as of now.

Hanging fire owing to such delays are several projects. The World Bank has made it clear that its funding of the Chennai City Partnership initiative is subject to CUMTA getting off

the ground. Also in a limbo is the Rs 500 crore Intelligent Transport System that aims to provide the city a smart way to commute using the latest communication and computing technologies, thereby making for safer and faster travel. This was in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency and that body too had made it a precondition that CUMTA should be implemented. In fact, that was the chief impetus for the State Government to dust the old scheme and relaunch it. But a year later, with little or no action, the city has to wait that much longer to get integrated transport systems in place.

In the meanwhile, the Metro is very keen to get going with its second phase. The very viability of the system depends on getting the extended operations going. But with CUMTA nowhere in sight, it looks as though we will get yet another standalone system, that will only add to the urban chaos.

A NEW YEAR WISH

(Continued from page 1)

by 2025, become inadequate to give any significant relief. Nineteen years is indeed a long time by which time the project could become irrelevant to its context.

Projects and services not conforming to timelines and cost discipline seriously erode credibility. Long gestations increase costs, undermine viability, suffer from congenital failure and become, when finished, irrelevant. GDP and growth have come into everyday conversation these days and are no longer technical. We speak of growth without corresponding employment. Project implementation phase, likewise, registers in statistics as "growth" because it generates incomes during construction. But when completion is unduly prolonged and the impact is not realised, what is reflected is growth without welfare. Upon completion, delayed projects fail to meet the desired objective and people are still chasing aspirations for a better life, running on the treadmill, as it were, going nowhere. It is time we need not only a statutorily mandated Citizen Charter of what we can expect from the Government in terms of public facilities and

services but also timelines and commitments to performance constituting a Performance Charter.

Timely execution and making the resulting infrastructure deliver expected outcomes is the responsibility of the bureaucracy. The *netas* make investment decisions and sanction necessary funds. Transforming that into specific facilities and sustained delivery of public services is the function of the officials at different levels. That is Governance; it is the alchemy to convert Input into Impact. For instance, while the State scores high on infrastructure in the fields of health and education, the score is not good in terms of outcomes and impact. More governance is necessary to extract the maximum value from investments already on the ground, in every field of government – traffic enforcement, defending public space from misuse, collection and disposal of solid wastes, women's safety, providing clean air and water, respecting pedestrian rights and safety, putting real value and meaning into free health and educational services and so on and on – and our New Year wish is for more Governance.

Several New Years ago

Yet another year has drawn to a close and a new one has begun. *The Man from Madras Musings* peers into the past and recalls at this moment several items closely traditionally associated with a new year calendar year and wonders as to where they have gone. Time has certainly moved on for these articles.

The first is the day calendar – the one where each day had a sheet and you ripped it off to reveal the next. MMM recalls that the last Viceroy of India had one such placed on the table to indicate a countdown to Independence for which he (the Viceroy and not MMM) took full credit (he, by which MMM means the Viceroy and not MMM, was noticeably silent on Partition and the horrors it generated). The world of cinema too made full use of such calendars and an abiding visual of the passing of time was a montage of several date sheets falling off. What has happened to such calendars? This species is not entirely dead though. What survives very well is the variety that has pictures of gods on a hard board with the daily calendar just below.

bend with the passage of time. Remember that variety? If you don't, just go back and take a look at a circular mark around any nail in old houses. Chances are that these were left behind by calendars long gone. As the year progressed, these calendars became thinner and thinner and so rotated freely around the nail from which they were hung, each time the wind blew or an electric fan was switched on. The circular mark was the net result.

In a similar category as calendars, and perhaps in even greater demand, were diaries. People made it a habit of calling and asking for them. And woe betide you if you said that you did not have any to give. For some reason, those in Government service and people in clerical jobs and lower grades asked for diaries in greater numbers. MMM wonders what they wrote in them. If all of them wrote on all the diaries they demanded and asked for, we would have many more accounts of life in old Madras than what we have. MMM suspects that these were essentially status symbols, shown around in the beginning of the year and then discarded.

Redialling will usually get you the response that the number you are trying does not exist. Trying again will be met with the message that the subscriber is busy, which is probably the truth, for the poor soul is clearly trying your number. Connection is established after a while, only to drop a few minutes later.

Matters have come to such a sorry pass that MMM is not even getting those massage parlour messages any longer. He trusts that the girls who were supposedly sending them are all well – you know how it is with pen pals- even if you have never met them a sort of bond develops when you keep receiving communications.

Anyway, that is beside the point. What is certainly a fact is that the massage ads have stopped and MMM wonders if there has been a moral cleanup of sorts, a kind of swacch message/massage. But he need not have worried. Just the other day he received two gems which he is happy to share-

Get a service and drop your name & number in the Magic Bowl & you can be the selected one to get a free service worth Rs 1,000 this 2020.

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

In this the divinity remains a permanent fixture even as the calendar below wanes, becoming thinner as the year gets going. The two nails on which the date sheets are held together become longer and longer, finally remaining as two protruding talons, ready to tear into anyone clothes, or flesh. In many households, and indeed office, these calendars become permanent fixtures, long after the year is over, chiefly on account of the God emblazoned on them.

MMM is aware that glossy monthly calendars are still being brought out by some organisations but these too are on their way out. Many of these featured places of tourist interest, or divinities (always a safe bet in our country) or scenic spots from across the world and were much in demand. In a separate category but with high demand within that sector were the glossies brought out by liquor companies. All of these have seen diminished interest as there are better visuals, including those that were supplied by liquor companies, on the internet. So why settle for something static, which over the passage of year is likely to tear and what's more, leave a permanent mark on the wall?

Leaving a mark on the wall reminds MMM of the calendar with two metal strips at both ends to make sure it did not

Nowadays, when it comes to checking out dates or taking down notes, people use their cellphones. The walls are a lot cleaner, except of course where the old calendars with God pics still hang.

May the smutty SMS continue

The Man from Madras Musings is aware that the telecom companies are in a bad way, what with the petrochemicals magnate muscling in on their territory and creating chaos. Several of the lesser players have shut shop and the two remaining biggies of the old guard are struggling to stay afloat. In such a situation it is but natural that service has slipped to the level of the old Government run telecom company, which by the way is no better and if anything on even more slippery ground. MMM, being acquainted with some of those in the senior echelons, is not surprised.

Anyway, dropped calls are the order of the day. One moment you are merrily chatting to someone and in the next there is dead silence.

This message by itself in MMM's view sets the new year on a different note. MMM wonders as to what service is being spoken of and the imagination boggles. But the next one is even better.

Hi, I'm Neha – Are you Feeling alone in your life? For Dattin, Chatting, Frienship. Please call.

The spellings are all as received and MMM would seriously like to know what is Dattin. In short, all is well with 2020 when there are people like Neha to help.

Tailpiece

Wandering about in Old Madras aka George Town, *The Man from Madras Musings* could not help noticing this plaque. He wonders if the person commemorated suffered from a severe deficiency of iron. And on that note, here is to a great 2020.



–MMM

Making Chennai water sustainable

Propos your report on *Making Chennai Water Positive* (MM, XXIX, Volume 16, December 1st issue), may I submit that the various seminars held periodically on the topic of Chennai's water problem do not talk about the basic factors that contribute to Chennai's citizens being starved of water which, if addressed, would dramatically transform Chennai's water scenario! Instead, many bureaucrats and experts in the field advocate the inefficient, costly and environmentally unfriendly desalination as the solution! Listed below are the basic factors to be considered seriously and also the ways of tackling them, derived from my own first-hand experience in the field.

At the Macro-Level

1. Totally inadequate reservoir capacity

Chennai gets abundant rainfall, amounting to 125 cm/year (averaged over 100 years). If fully harvested, it can give a whopping 135 litres per citizen per day! The official claims that failure of monsoon is the reason for citizens being water starved is totally false. The rainfall between 2011 and 2018 was over 100 cm (except in 2018) and exceeded 120 cm in several years.

Unfortunately, this falls over only 55-60 days in the year. We had four reservoirs in 1943 when the population was only 10 lakhs. Today, it is 47 lakhs and we still have only those four. A proposal in 1978 to build two more reservoirs in Ramancheri and Thirukandam dragged on for 20 years and was given up on grounds of 'opposition from the local population'. The Veeranam Lake, 200 km. from Chennai, which is supposed to feed the city, is itself fed by the Kaveri River whose water is a bone of contention between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and is itself often dry. Water from the Kandaleru Reservoir (also 200 km. away) comes only for a few days and half of that is taken away by the farmers en route!

And a new reservoir is yet to emerge!

2. Even the existing reservoirs are heavily silted

All the reservoirs are heavily silted. Even though they went bone-dry several times, no desilting has been done. So the volumes reported to be in them as per the heights quoted are inflated figures! Instead of desilting them on an emergency basis, water is brought in by trains from Jalarpet once or twice to show off the apparent concern of the water authorities for the plight of the citizens!

3. Augmenting the shallow water table

There are many large open spaces – school and college play

grounds, public open spaces like the island grounds, areas around the memorials on Gandhi Mandapam Road. If on the lowest point or other suitable places in them, irrigation wells are dug and covered with heavy duty covers with perforations, they will collect huge amounts of rain and enrich the shallow water table. Similarly, in the Public Parks rainwater can be easily channelised into irrigation wells. In fact, I had suggested to the Corporation Commissioner that with the soil level in the Jeeva Park in T.Nagar being below the adjoining road level, the water flowing through the storm water drain can be diverted to the well in this park. Instead, the well was closed down! Such initiatives by the Corporation and the P.W.D. can enrich the water table and enable the neighbourhood to get more groundwater.

At the Micro-Level

1. Efficient and Comprehensive RWH

Although Chennai can claim to be the pioneer in having enacted rules in 2003 making 'rainwater harvesting mandatory in every building, new or old', people experienced in the field were not consulted and simple, efficient and proven methods of harvesting were not given in the rules. And hardly three weeks were given to the citizens to install them. As a result, a good percentage of the harvesting structures installed are either defective in design or have gone defunct.

Besides, the rules mandated only harvesting the rainwater falling on the terrace. In many places, the area of the open spaces around the buildings is greater than the terrace area. Since most of them are paved and slope towards the gate(s), all the rainwater can be easily trapped at the gate and got for use by a trench connected to a pit.

Such comprehensive rainwater harvesting can easily yield 35% of their water needs in well-constructed complexes.

2. Implementation has been desultory

Metro Water personnel themselves have little experience in RWH at the micro-level and they are the enforcers of the rules! No wonder that most of the structures installed are of little value. The seriousness given to the implementation is exemplified by the fact that most Government Buildings themselves have not put up RWH structures. Two glaring examples are: (1) the 800 flat complex in the SAF Games Village where senior IAS officers (inclusive the Metro Water Director) and (2) the huge Rajaji Bhavan Complex in Besant Nagar where the Southern Headquarters of the Central

Ground Water Board itself is located!

3. Recycling of water used for bathing and washing of clothes

Few are aware that the 2003 RWH Rules also mandate that 'Every building, old or new, shall treat the water used for bathing and washing of clothes by mechanical or other means and use it for flushing and charging the water table'.

This water constitutes 60% of our total use and if recycled, can make a huge difference in meeting the water needs of the residents. While grandly including this rule, the Government has not given any treatment method. It has therefore remained a dead rule! I have established a simple method to do the job in the garden using no power or chemicals but only soil, sunlight and water-loving plants like Cannas, Banana, Hidechium, Cyperus etc. The CMWSSB has tested both the feed water and the treated water and found that the water is indeed cleaned and is re-usable. However CMWSSB has not shown any interest in promoting it. This water can be charged into the soil when it will get fully cleaned and reach the dug well (see next section) or can be physically collected in large flat complexes and safely used for flushing and gardening.

4. Revival of the traditional dug well

Chennai's sub-soil is favourable for storing and sourcing water at shallow depths. In fact, it was the dug well that was the main source of water for all citizens before piped water became available. It progressively became extinct because, with the introduction of sewerage, the sewage which went to the septic tank within the premises went into the town sewerage. After the flat complexes came, all the used water went into the town sewerage and wells became dry.

These must be revived because, (1) They can be very easily charged with all the rainwater falling over the premises; (2) The recycled water will also go to the well fully cleaned; (3) Pumping costs will be low; (4) They need to be cleaned only once every four or five years; (6) Borewells cannot be easily or efficiently charged with rainwater, and so cannot yield on a sustained basis and (7) Generally, water at shallow depths is of good quality whereas borewells often yield poor quality.

I have personally provided dug wells in more than 150 complexes built by the company where I was working. They are serving the residents well.

5. Installing a three-compartment O.H.T. instead of the two-compartment tank

If the ubiquitous two-compartment overhead tank

invariably provided by builders is replaced, within the same space, by a versatile three-compartment O.H.T. with a set of valves, it will be able to store one, two or three different qualities of water and supply them for appropriate use. Such a tank enables the safe storage of the recycled water and its exclusive usage for flushing and gardening in both sewered and unsewered areas.

6. Bad Management of Water in Large Complexes in Unsewered Areas

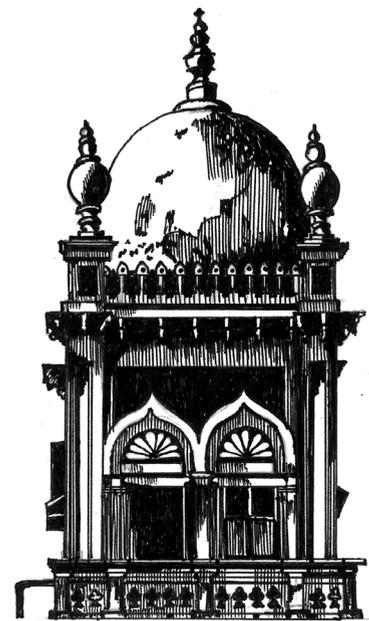
In most large complexes without sewerage, the sterile 60% of grey water is mixed with the 30% harmful sewage, thereby not only poisoning the 60% but unnecessarily trebling the volume to be treated in their S.T.Ps! The treated water is more than what is needed

for flushing and the excess is sent out in tankers to be let off in some waterway. Some even get the untreated sewage itself disposed in waterways!

If only the grey water is treated within the premises and re-used, the capacity of the costly STPs can be reduced sharply. In fact, they can even be done away with and replaced by Up-Flow Filters which clean sewage close to the standards of the T.N. Pollution Control Board for discharge of the effluent on un-irrigated soil. I had introduced it in an 80-flat complex in Tambaram fifteen years ago and it has been operating smoothly since then. Strangely, few sanitary engineers seem to be aware of them!

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● Pavithra's Perspective



Once I opened my eyes to the beauty and heritage of Chennai, things seemed to pop up literally before my eyes in unexpected places. And a site where I regularly stumbled upon surprises was, unsurprisingly, the area surrounding Chennai's Central station.

One in particular, caught by attention right away: as I rode towards the bend of Poonamallee High Road past Ripon Building, I saw a very graceful building spreading out over a vast space: yellow and white, and in unmistakably Mughal style. It stands now cheek and jowl with several other modern and heritage buildings and when I set out to find details, I discovered that it had been built by Nawab C. Abdul Hakim between 1919 and 1921 at the request of his father Siddique Hussein Sahib, who had been moved by the plight of Muslim travellers without a place to stay. I learnt that it housed mosques as well and crisscrossed it many times, admiring the graceful arches and columns, still mesmerising as it rose against the colourful Chennai skyline.

Instead of opting for a traditional approach of presenting the whole structure, I opted to draw just one aspect: perhaps the most beautiful, and which seemed to capture the essence of the sarai – something that takes you straight back to Arabian Nights. For that reason, this miniature is half the size of the ones I usually do.

Details about the miniature: Black and White; Pen and Ink. Dimensions: Approximately: 2.5" X 2"

● Pavithra Srinivasan is a writer, journalist, artist, translator, columnist, editor and is fascinated with History.

A home for the fine arts

For years it stood, its white pilaster façade hiding its rich musical history. The music had of course long fled and even memories had faded sometime in the first decade of the present century. The house had of late been used a godown and even that was not vouchsafed to it in recent months, when it fell victim to the wrecker's hammer. The home of Veena Dhanammal in Ramakrishna Chetty Street, George Town is no more.

Finding the house and the thoroughfare in which it stood was always quite tough. I still remember the thrill of getting lost one day in that area sometime in the early 2000s and having taken a wrong turn, finding myself in front of it. T. Mukta, the last surviving granddaughter of Veena Dhanam had described the house to me and seeing a photo of it in Enkay Visions' documentary on Dhanammal helped. I knew I was standing in front of the correct house. The then owner, a Telugu-speaking woman, lived next door and was happy to show me around the place. I walked in to the narrow entrance vestibule, wandered through the ground floor and then gingerly climbed up the rickety wooden steps to the first floor. There was a room there, fronted by a verandah. All was silence. And yet, it had always not been so.

Dhanammal, the famed veena artiste who traced her lineage in the arts through several generations of formidable women, had come down in life by the time she had moved in here. Her principal patron-in-chief Dharmapuri Subbarayar had passed away and her financial profligacy had ensured that the ancestral home on Nattu Pillaiyar Koil Street gifted to grandmother Kamakshi by her patron Rangoon Krishnaswami Mudaliar had been auctioned off to settle creditors. The Ramakrishna Chetty Street house was rented and this is where Dhanam moved in with her four

daughters and brood of several grandchildren. One of the chief advantages of the location was its proximity to the residence of 'Jalatarangam' Ramaniah Chetty, the local chit fund owner, whose generosity was boundless towards Dhanam and her family. In fact, she often stayed for days on end at his house, teaching music to his daughters.

It was in the house in Ramakrishna Chetty Street that

of Awadh was so blown away by her veena recital that he placed Rs 116 at her feet. Dhanam immediately asked Ramaniah Chetty to fetch Abdul Kareem Khan of the Kirana Gharana who was then visiting the city and was a great fan of her's. A performance by the Ustad followed and the money was given to him as his fee.

This was from where Dhanam watched with sardonic humour



Veena Dhanammal's house.

LOST LANDMARKS OF CHENNAI

— SRIRAM V

Dhanam's famed Friday evening concerts took place. A reclusive personality who spoke little, she received visitors on this day and they quietly made their way to the tiny room on the first floor. There Dhanam held court, veena in hand. Near-blind by then, she was kept informed as to who had come and she would throw each visitor a curt word of welcome. And then the veena performance would begin. Nobody could speak, keep time, clear their throat, sneeze or clap. Vendors shouting out their wares would be turned away at the entrance of the street and neighbouring households would reduce all activity to a minimum to ensure perfect silence was maintained. The performance lasted till 8.00 p.m. when the cannon in Fort St George sounded the hour. The numbers that attended these performances were small – the room could not accommodate more than 30 people at any time – but they were all great scholars and aficionados of the art. Discreet donations and contributions by these people kept the old lady financially afloat.

Not that Dhanam really cared. It was said that on one occasion that a visiting Taluqdar

the genesis of the December Music Season and wondered as to what this place called the Music Academy was where they 'spoke' about music. This was also the home to which several musicians came of an afternoon, to learn some songs. The names are legendary – Ariyakkudi Ramana Iyer, Parur Sundaram Iyer, Madras Lalithangi and Tiruvurur Rajaji. In some cases it was an exchange – Dhanam taught and learnt from Kanchipuram Naina Pillai. To some she gave freely – Calcutta Gauhar Jan and Abdul Kareem Khan learnt Carnatic songs from her and released discs of these. Some she adored and they reciprocated in full – Tiruvottiyur Tyagar and Tiger Varadachari were two such. A younger musician whose talents she admired was the nagaswaram maestro Tiruvavaduturai Rajarathinam Pillai. On some days there would be distinguished compatriots from the courtesan community – Kanchipuram Dhanakoti Ammal was a frequent visitor as was the gutsy and talented Bangalore Nagarathnamma. It was in this house that many of her grandchildren

took their first steps in music – T. Sankaran as a writer, scholar and historian, the sisters T. Brinda and Mukta became singers while sibling Abhiramasundari became a violinist, T. Balasaraswathi took to dance while her brothers Viswanathan and Ranganathan became flautist and mridangist respectively. Taken overall, the musical heritage of this humble home is the stuff of legend.

The home in Ramakrishna Chetty Street was given up and later its owners disposed it to the family of the lady who showed me around. A few years ago it changed hands once again, this time to a businessman who converted it into a godown. Now it has been demolished as well.

Early in the 2000s, I used to take people on heritage tours of the house and it was fun to wander around the place, peeking into the vestibule where Dhanam rested during the afternoons, seeing the room where she performed and wondering at the tiny ground floor space where T. Balasaraswathi took her first steps in dance. During one such visit, artiste Amrita Murali sang Veena Pustaka Dharinim. It filled the house with music, for the last time.

By 1937, Dhanam was sinking. A trio who regularly called on her and delighted in music at this time comprised T.T. Krishnamachari, then businessman and a leading light of the Congress (later to become Union Minister), S.Y. Krishnaswami, ICS and N.D. Varadachari,

lawyer. Another regular was R. Rangaramanuja Iyengar, the fiery and acerbic music critic and scholar, who learnt from her. It is essentially from the writings of these people that we get a clear picture of her personality. In the last year of her life, Dhanam took to moving between the residences of her daughters and it was at the home of T. Jayammal, her third child, that she passed away in October 1938. The pallbearers included T.T. Krishnamachari, violinist Papa K.S. Venkataramiah and Kasturi Srinivasan of *The Hindu*.

The home in Ramakrishna Chetty Street was given up and later its owners disposed it to the family of the lady who showed me around. A few years ago it changed hands once again, this time to a businessman who converted it into a godown. Now it has been demolished as well.

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Veena Dhanammal.



● It is quite amazing as to how this column on *Lost Landmarks* results in fresh discoveries. I had written about Dr. A. Lakshminpathy's Arogya Ashrama in Avadi in MM XXIX No. 8, August 1-15, 2019. Now Karthik Bhatt sends us a picture of the same, discovered in the *Pictorial History of Southern India*, 1928 issue. — Sriram V

Serving the nation well – with his administrative skills

P. Sabanayagam, the veteran administrator, decided to publish his memoirs only in 2018, thirty eight years after he retired from the IAS because he felt that Governance today does not believe in truly serving people. By sharing his life story, he hopes to inspire the younger generation of administrators to learn about how he handled various challenges in his life as an administrator.

After a brief career in the defence services during World War II, Sabanayagam was selected to the first batch of the Indian Administrative Service at the dawn of Indian Independence. He witnessed and participated in the change of the old guard from the British regime to the birth of the fledgling India. He believed that good governance was sine qua non with good administration, a requisite foundation for nation building. His memoir titled *Service to the Nation* published by Notion Press, documents his contribution in various walks of government, spanning 33 years and is a ringside view revealing the working styles, political acumen, and political compulsions of many historical figures with whom he had the privilege of working closely.

Though Sabanayagam was born on 7th June, 1922, in Chennai, his date of birth in official records is shown as 15th August, 1922, a change made when he was admitted to Ewart School in Vepey a few years later. He lost his mother when he was just 3 years old and was brought up by his father, S. Panchanada Mudaliar, a lawyer by profession who later decided to confine his practice to matters concerning the Hindu Religious Endowment Board. He was a great influence on the young Sabanayagam.

After completing his schooling from Ewart school, he did his B.A degree from Madras Christian College in 1942 scoring the highest mark and winning the Ross Prize. Though he enrolled for his Masters, towards the end of the first year he applied for a commission in the Defence Service. In 1942, World War II was still going on and Britain was not doing too well. After his initial training at the Officers Training School MHOW (near Indore) he was sent to Deolali Artillery School for a six month course. In June 1944 he became 2nd Lieutenant at the 10th field regiment at Chindwara, near Jabalpur.

Here he learnt the importance of looking after the physical welfare of the sepoy under him, which experience was to stand him in good stead in dealing with subordinate staff in later years. Within sixteen months after becoming a 2nd Lieutenant he was promoted as Captain, overlooking nearly eight seniors (six of them British) which was a record those days. There were protests. But his boss Col. Gurney's response in his defence was 'if anyone can fire a barrage within twenty minutes, having trained the crew and maintained the guns as efficiently as Sabanayagam did, I will accept the protest.'

Towards the end of his stay in the army, 'Sabu', as he was popularly known among his army colleagues, became one of the two officers selected to undergo the Long Gunnery Staff Course for one year in UK on condition that he should accept the Regular Commission. Since he was keen to get into the ICS, as was his father's wish, he declined the offer.

Sabanayagam was admitted to ICS in March, 1947. Patel who was then the Deputy PM in an interim government before Independence, felt that ICS was 'neither Indian nor Civil nor service oriented' and therefore renamed it as All India Administrative Service, AIAS which was later shortened to IAS. His training at Metcalfe House, where the ICS training was taking place, was cut short and he and other trainees were put in charge of handling refugees. It was a risky job in which a couple of his colleagues lost their lives. In December, 1947, he was sent to Madras to undergo a year's district training.

His first job was as the Assistant Collector of Coimbatore District. The collector was F.W.A. Morris ICS, a senior officer, from whom he learned how to dispose of petitioners who have grievances, how to preside over meetings and later how to hear criminal appeals as the District Magistrate. During this period he was also trained as a Revenue Inspector in charge of a firka (about 15 villages) supervising the work of the Karnams and village Munsifs.

After working as Revenue Inspector for two months, he appeared for a junior level departmental examination at Madras which he passed and was posted as Sub-Collector, Pollachi sub-division. It was the beginning of his career as an



Former West Bengal Governor Gopal Krishna Gandhi, second from left, and former Attorney General of India K. Parasaran at the release of the book *Service to the Nation* written by retired IAS officer P. Sabanayagam.

administrator. Those were days when administrators combined the functions of both judiciary and executive.

As a Magistrate, he developed the art of always seeing or visualising the pros and cons of every issue before coming to a decision. Sabanayagam believes that all ICS/IAS officers who had worked as magistrates in those early years had this experience which contributed to the sound decision-making process as they went up the ladder and manned the highest posts. Unfortunately, with the separation of judiciary and executive functions, the

relationship with Rajaji in whom he found a wise statesman who was willing to reason even if it came from a level down below or accept a forthright dissent from even a junior officer so long as such dissent was bonafide and in public interest. Though he worked with him for only 18 months, Rajaji developed a liking for Sabanayagam. It was during this period that Sabanayagam married Savithri. Rajaji attended the wedding and blessed the couple.

current officers do not have this opportunity and are poorer to that extent.

Out of the two important incidents when he was a sub-collector of Pollachi, the VKP paddy procurement case taught him the importance of taking a stand, vis-a-vis his superiors including ministers when he was convinced that he was administratively right and morally above reproach. In the stamp duty case he showed his firmness in upholding the duties of the court as a young Magistrate, when he refused to change the date of hearing to suit C. Subramanian, District Magistrate. During this period he was also trained as a Revenue Inspector in charge of a firka (about 15 villages) supervising the work of the Karnams and village Munsifs.

In 1952, the First General election was held in India – adult suffrage – every person, literate

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During his brief stay in Salem as its Collector he opened a bridge across the Cauvery river near Namakkal which had been completed but was waiting to be inaugurated for several months by a Minister. The people on both sides of the river became so happy that when he built a guest house for non-gazetted staff of Salem district, they insisted that it should be named after him, a recommendation which K. Kamaraj, the then Chief Minister readily agreed to. The 'Sabanayagam Building' exists even today next to the Collector's office.

After Salem, Sabanayagam was posted as Deputy Textile Commissioner, Handloom of India in mid 1955, his first posting in Central Government Service, with headquarters in Madras. His efforts to actively promote the Handloom sector resulted in his becoming the Chief Executive of Handloom Export Organisation (HEO) as a part of the State Trading Corporation. In trying to promote handloom products in USA, he was seen walking around the streets of New York, carrying bags containing samples and meeting the textile importers. This sight provoked V Balaraman, who was the correspondent of The Hindu newspaper in New York, to wonder, 'How come an IAS officer who had been a District collector was walking up and down like an ordinary salesman?' Sabanayagam's devotion to his job was once again noticed by people who mattered. His promotion in USA of 'Madras Checks' or 'Bleeding Madras', produced only in the East coast of India, and how he fought the local competition selling fake products by getting the brand patented became a well-known case study.

Back home in Madras, Kamaraj who was the chief minister of Tamil Nadu (1955-63) wanted him to revert to State government in 1961. He was appointed as Director of Industries in mid 1961 when R. Venkatraman was the Minister of Industries in the State. During the three years that he was the Director, the department grew. More ITIs, Industrial co-operatives, Industrial estates and many other facilities were added. He was instrumental in putting up Ezhilagam – a modern building where the offices of the Department of Industries was shifted.

Once again it was time to shift back to Delhi. When he was offered the very important and prestigious position of the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports (CCI & E) he was reluctant to go because he felt that his old father whom he was looking after would not be able to go with him. Kamaraj was very keen that he should take up the position, for his own good and for the good of the State. As CCIE though he came to know Secretaries in Government of India, top industrialists, film producers, businessmen, heads of public sector companies, he always maintained social contacts

(Continued on page 6)



(Quizmaster V.V. Ramanan's questions are from December 1st to 15th. Questions 11 to 20 relate to Chennai and Tamil Nadu.)

- Who took over as the CEO of Google's parent company Alphabet, Inc. on December 3?
 - Name the body that banned Russia from competing in all major international sporting events for the next four years.
 - In early December, which company raised \$25.6 billion, making it the world's largest IPO to date?
 - Who on December 10 became the world's youngest Prime Minister at 34?
 - Which teenager-activist has been chosen Time magazine's Person Of The Year?
 - An 18000-old perfectly preserved common animal, possibly the oldest of its kind and that has been named Dogor, was recently found in the permafrost in Yakutsk (eastern Siberia). What type of animal?
 - Which cricketer was voted BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2019?
 - In an unusual humanitarian request, New Zealand ordered about 1,292 square feet of what item to treat those injured in a volcanic eruption on White Island recently?
 - Which footballer recently won the coveted Ballon d'Or award for a record sixth time?
 - How did South African Zozibini Tunzi make news recently?
- ***
- What is special about the Nandi in the Masilamaniswara Temple at Thirumullaivoyal?
 - Which infamously famous entrepreneur's life story is titled *Vetri Meedhu Aasai Veithen* (I Set my Heart on Victory)?
 - Fill in the blank – among college students, the self-appointed gang leader for a particular bus or train route is dubbed ___?
 - Name the famous singing group from Chennai made up of eight mixed voices led by Augustine Paul.
 - The EIR 21 made news on December 14. What is it?
 - Which was the last pair to get the coveted Sangita Kalanidhi honour?
 - Which eminent Chennai school has the motto 'Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam, Brahma'?
 - By what common name is the Great House on Charles Street, where Robert Clive lived in the Fort, also known?
 - Which popular director's production house is called 'Neelam Productions'?
 - Who penned the *Tiruman-tiram*, the tenth of the twelve volumes of the *Tirumurai*?

(Answers on page 8)

SERVING THE NATION

(Continued from page 5)

only to the extent to know what people thought about government policies. When D.S. Patel a businessman from Bombay who was popular with bureaucrats in Bombay and Delhi shouted at his Controller using impolite words for not expediting an application pending in the department, he was firm with Patel that unless he apologised to the officer concerned, his application would not be processed. Sabanayagam believed that no one, however influential he may be, could browbeat or abuse his subordinates. When the whole office came to know of this episode, senior people were emboldened to take fair decisions without fear. When he found that Minister Manubhai Shah expressed lack of trust in him with reference to an issue concerning Rupee Trade Agreements, he preferred to resign from the position as CCIE. According to him, 'No matter what position you hold, whatever the prestige be, if the person above does not trust or accept your bona fides and does not trust you, there is no point in working with such a person. Also if a person whom you trust wholeheartedly betrays your trust, there is no point in keeping him; part ways.'

After spending seven years in Delhi, including a stint with the Steel ministry, Sabanayagam shifted back to Chennai, on a special request from the then Chief Minister Karunanidhi. He was appointed the Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board with additional responsibility as First Member, Board of Revenue.

As the Chairman of TNEB, while his handling of the agitating Workers' Union earned him the nickname 'Saval Sabanayagam', he was also in trouble with Minister Madhavan for taking a tough stand against Dharangadhara Chemicals, Tuticorin, challenging their claim for continuing of the concession of lower tariff for the electricity consumed by them on the ground it was a power intensive industry. In spite of the Minister's warning he decided to investigate the matter and recommended only a partial concession. He also advised the Minister to place the matter before the Cabinet and take a decision, so that no one could doubt the integrity of the government. According to Sabanayagam 'even in doing the right thing it is necessary to go through the procedures meticulously so that no one has a handle to criticise.' In due course both the Minister and CM appreciated his advice. His good work earned him

the next promotion in the service of the State government.

While on a visit to Delhi to follow up on some projects for the EB, he got the news that CM Karunanidhi, had passed orders removing Royappa and appointed him as the Chief Secretary, overlooking three other senior officers. The CM also made him the Vigilance Commissioner as well as Development Commissioner. With a team of dedicated subordinates to whom he delegated powers, Sabanayagam had no problem in managing not only the three prestigious positions in Government but also functioning as the Chairman of Southern Structural Ltd. and the Dairy Board.

'I continued my open door policy. Secretaries and Heads of departments could meet me easily. I would occasionally walk around the sections and see the clerks and peons in the Secretariat working as I used to early in my career as Under Secretary. Since I had been with Rajaji and close to Kamaraj and thought to be a relation of M.Bhaktavatsalalm, the DMK ministers could not but think that I was Congress aligned.'

Once at the airport when both Kamaraj and Karunanidhi were travelling to Delhi, he went up to Kamaraj, wished him and spoke to him. When his detractors tried to give a political colour to this incident 'Sabanayagam always remem-

bers and is courteous to old friends.' As Chief Secretary, he had an excellent rapport with former Chief Minister Karunanidhi and all ministers.

At Tamil Nadu Dairy Development Corporation when he wanted a brand name for the milk being sold by the Corporation, it was Karunanidhi who suggested the name 'Aavin'. As Vigilance Commissioner, he was responsible for ordering the arrest of Mayor Munuswamy of the DMK in the famous 'Muster Roll Scandal' in the Corporation of Madras when he found that the Mayor was responsible for creating fictitious muster rolls and bills and appropriating money. When Karunanidhi was upset with him for taking action against a party man without consulting him, he explained to the CM that he had taken the action only to save his name and reputation of the party and offered to resign if his decision was not acceptable to the CM. 'This was the second time I offered to resign rather than give up my principles and morals.'

After a five year term as Chief Secretary, in 1976, he was posted as Secretary, Rehabilitation in Government of India, in charge of refugees. When Morarji Desai became the Prime Minister, he was shifted to Department of Education and Culture which also comprised sports, archeology, museums and technical education. Morarji Desai had a reputation of being harsh, dictatorial and vindictive. Sabanayagam dif-

fers. 'Morarji Desai was sincere and honest in views. He had no time for inefficiency. If anyone had a reasonable argument and was prepared to put it forth strongly, he would listen.'

It was during his term in the Department of Education, that the Distance Education Programme was drawn up and Annamalai University in the South, became the first to implement it. When the Janata party was defeated in the General Election in January, 1980 and Indira Gandhi again became the Prime Minister, an opportunity to become the much coveted Cabinet Secretary came up. Unfortunately Indira Gandhi and her son Sanjay Gandhi considered him a DMK man. Besides he refused to curry favours with the likes of R.K.Dhawan, the Private Secretary to Indira Gandhi. He lost the post to Grewal. Though he was disappointed, he took the rejection philosophically. Sabanayagam retired from the IAS on 30th August 1980 ending his official career in the service of the Government of India.

His advice to young officers is 'As an officer you don't have to always submit to the Minister's orders, but can and should dissuade him in his own interest and in the public interest. If he still persists, then you have no alternative but record your objection and then carry out his orders. The danger that you will be transferred is one you should be prepared for, but not worry about. Never sell your conscience. Officers who have compromised have always been forced to face charges later in life.'

The tadpole's lament

Chief, thought it would be nice to check in with you every now and then, give you an update maybe, on all the goings-on here.

Have you heard the latest?

We're in a fine mess – linguistically speaking. The Apostrophe, the little tadpole of the grammar world, is increasingly feeling very left out...very out of place.

This tiny porriwiggle that hovers over words so bravely, directing comprehension with such precision, is now fighting a losing battle, and is broken in spirit.

Worse, a dedicated group like the Apostrophe Protection Society, deeply committed to the right way of...er...writing, has now quietly folded its tents and faded away, defeated, their founder John Richards says, by all the 'laziness' and 'ignorance' around them.

Sounds harsh?

Perhaps. But in this era of shortening attention spans, social media and the fastest-finger-first form of sending msgs...sorry, messages (this stuff is a bit infectious), the criticism is probably justified.

Apostrophes, bereft of their champions, are feeling threatened, pointing sadly to signboards and road names.

"Who is going to tell people where to place us, especially in names that end with a 's' or two?", they demand.

Is this anyway to treat a member of the punctuation family that has been around since 1496, they ask.

"You people have conquered Space, but still cannot figure out the difference between 'it's' and 'its'," snaps an Apostrophe, hurrying past.

"Its...I mean, it's a bit confusing," you mumble, but the little figure has gone, looking for a kinder, more civilised land, you assume.

Chief, I hate to bring you worse news, knowing how much punctuation mattered to you, but it looks like the Apostrophe's cousin, Comma, is feeling distinctly left out as well.

"Check newspaper reports especially." the Comma sighs, "We just don't figure any more. The words seem to gallop along at random. At this rate, they'll get rid of spacing too."

There's definitely some declining and falling going on, Chief, and civilisation is tottering a bit.

The SPCC – Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Colons – is threatening to go the same way as the APS, and rumour has it that the Hyper Hyphen-aters are tired of being interchanged with the Damned-if-we're-Dash-ed group.

You know what, Chief? Being particular about things like punctuation? Can't help thinking it's one more of life's 'niceties', of making that little bit more of an effort, that are considered a mere waste of time these days.

Oh well...

Will sign off now, Chief.

Until next time,

Ranjitha Ashok

Early women doctors and the various associations that worked towards better healthcare facilities in India

(Continued from last fortnight)

At the inauguration of the First All-India Obstetrics and Gynaecological Congress, presided over by Ida Scudder of Vellore, Guha remarks,

‘...The practice of female-oriented midwifery had deep roots in Bengali society which accounts for the fact that despite Bengal being the bastion of British imperial power in India, it lagged behind Madras in institutionalising midwifery in the nineteenth century.’

The Maternity Hospital (MH), while remaining as a teaching department of Madras Medical College (MMC), was the first institution in India to offer the postgraduate Diploma in Gynaecology and Obstetrics (DGO) in 1930. A children's ward was added to this hospital in 1949 with 28 beds, thanks to the efforts of Madras pediatrician Santanuri Thirumala Achar. Subsequently this ward grew, thus rendering the name ‘Egmore Women & Children Hospital’ to the MH. The concept of combining health care of women and children was so unique in India that this hospital came to be referred as the ‘Egmore model’ in medical circles.

Medical help to women by Christian missionaries

At least 400 years ago, different Christian missionary organisations saw helping the sick and destitute as an opportunity to evangelise. From the 1620s, several trade posts (‘factories’) established on the initiative of Frederick IV, the King of Denmark, existed in India with the sole purpose of spreading the Gospel. Among the various trade posts set up, the Evangelical Lutheran Mission post at Tranquebar (Tarangampadi, Tamil Nadu) was conspicuous. Samuel Benjamin Cnoll (1705–1767), a medical doctor trained in Halle, Germany, supervised the Royal Danish Mission Hospital in Tranquebar between 1740 and 1767, which included a laboratory chymicum, an early version of a modern pharmacy. A Western medicine-based ‘hospital’ managed by the Jesuits existed in Pondichéry in 1690. A military hospital – a formal, large establishment, adjacent to the French East India Company Garden, Pondichéry – came up opposite to the Church of Sacred Heart of Jesus (a Basilica presently) in 1738, managed

by the Ursuline Sisters of the Catholic Church from 1755. Sam Nesamony refers to the work of missionaries in colonial southern India as ‘medical philanthropy’. He says:

‘The close association between religion and medicine, and the fact that the process of evangelisation was not especially successful, forced the attention of the missionaries to divert their attention toward health care and form medical missions, which offered a ‘divine method’ of healing as another way to forward their goal of evangelization. Accordingly medical dispensaries, missionary movements against ... disease ... mobilized a powerfully challenging social order that was perceived by the disadvantaged masses as a response to their genuine needs, including those for the health of the body and the enlightenment of the mind.’

The London Missionary Society (LMS) realigned its objective of evangelisation through health care in the 19th Century India. John Coldstream (1806–1863), a Scottish physician, spoke on this topic at the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, in 1855, referring to LMS's medical efforts in helping Indian women. One sparkling example illustrating the role of medical missionaries in India comes from the life and work of Ida Sophia Scudder of Vellore, Tamil Nadu.

Ida Scudder's work in Vellore progressed from the inspiration she derived from her parents, John and Sophia Scudder. John was a medical doctor and a missionary belonging to the Arcot Mission, which reported to the Re-formed Church in America. When Ida Scudder (1870–1960) was spending time with her parents in Katpaadi, Tamil Nadu, as a secondary



Mary Taber Schell Memorial Hospital for women.

school student on vacation, a touching incident occurred. According to the Australian Friends of Vellore:

‘One eventful night in 1890, Ida, then a young girl visiting her missionary parents in South India was asked to help three women from different families struggling in difficult childbirth. Custom prevented them from accepting the help of a male doctor and being without training at the time Ida herself could do nothing.’

life's task on the philosophy that she needed to train women to help women, which included the first setting up of a formal nurse-training programme for women in Vellore in 1909. She opened the Missionary Medical School for Women offering L.M.P. (Licensed Medical Practitioner) diplomas in 1918.

While talking about Scudder and CMC&H, a brief reference to Paul Wilson Brand (1913–2003), an orthopaedic surgeon attached to CMC&H and his

and relief to Indian women, building women's hospitals, and encouraging women to study medicine. To some Indian men of high social status and influence, this initiative was hard to accept, whereas a few others supported it. Those who opposed this project argued that it was ‘yet another intrusion by the colonial government into their private lives’.

A group of women doctors from Bombay led by a Briton – Annette Benson, who supervised the Cama Hospital – formed the Association of Medical Women in India (AMWI) in 1907. It was critical of the racial approach prevalent in the operations of the LDA. According to AMWI, priorities to European women were greater than what was offered to their Indian equals; qualified Indian women doctors were posted in remote locations with either little or no basic amenities. A general criticism was that the LDA served as an evangelical organisation. Benson, the first President of AMWI, committedly worked towards raising its reputation in international forums. Complaints such as undue requirements of subordination to men, unlawful sudden dismissals, lack of incremental rates of pay and work-related and study-leave rules, provisions for retirement were frequently heard.

Women's Medical Service for India

The Government of India (GoI) considered addressing the legitimate grievances and improving the status of medical women serving under the LDA. One decision made by the GoI was not to create a separate service of medical women, similar to the Indian Medical Service.

(Continued on page 8)

● by
Ramya Raman and Anantanarayanan Raman

After medical training at Cornell, USA, Scudder returned to India and established a one-bed clinic for women in Vellore in 1900, which grew as the 40-bed Mary Taber Schell Memorial Hospital (for women) in 1902, and subsequently as Christian Medical College and Hospital (CMC&H). Scudder's mission was to provide quality care to women and children. She constructed her

immense contributions to the surgical management of deformations caused by leprosy is but necessary. Brand established, in the 1940s, that patients of leprosy hurt themselves because they lost sensation due to the disease. This finding was a major breakthrough in the understanding of the aetiology of leprosy and its management.

Institutionalised medical assistance for women

Lady Dufferin Association

Hariot Dufferin (Hariot Georgina Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1843–1936), wife of Frederic Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, campaigned to improve medical support for women in the country in 1884. Her efforts fructified with the establishment of the ‘National Association for Supplying Female Medical Aid to the Women of India’ (popularly, ‘Dufferin Fund’, ‘Dufferin Association’) in 1885. Dufferin passionately referred to this scheme as ‘my female-medical scheme’. The LDA aimed at providing medical support



Dr. Ida Scudder with the nurses at the CMC.

PIONEERING WOMEN DOCTORS

(Continued from page 7)

However, an annual grant of £10,000 towards establishing a new service of medical women under the Central Committee of LDA, named the Women's Medical Service for India (WMSI), was approved based on the proposal of Charles Pardey Lukis, made at a meeting held in Simla in 1912. The WMSI was a vague equivalent of the prestigious Indian Medical Service, but intended for women and run by women, although it did not formally exist. Women doctors who served under the aegis of WMSI used 'WMSI' in the list of academic titles after their names, similar to the Indian medical servants of that period using 'IMS' in their academic title list.

WMSI in the first instance was to include 25 first-class medical women, one-fifth of whom will form the leave reserve. Its members were to be under the direction of the Central Committee of the LDA. Lukis also spoke elaborately on pay conditions, required qualifications, leave rules and other requirements.

The newly established WMSI facilitated improvement of working conditions of women doctors in the whole of India. It played a key role, especially during World War II. Overall, the AMWI and WMSI contributed to better health management of Indian women and improved the status of Indian women doctors. AMWI and WMSI worked towards integrating every fragmented service committed to women's



Hilda Mary Lazarus.



Muthulakshmi Reddy.

health care throughout India. Margaret Balfour (1866–1945), another Briton in Bombay, was appointed as the first chief medical officer of WMSI in 1918. She played a pivotal role in developing education of women doctors in India and also developing obstetrics and gynaecology as a specialist training programme in the country. Along with Ruth Young, she wrote *The Work of Medical Women in India* in 1929, for which Mary Scharlieb wrote the foreword. This book describes how the Dufferin Fund Project panned out in India. In 1933, the Indian Medical Council standardised medical education in the country. Most significantly, many women came forth to study medicine, unlike earlier days. It distinguished licentiates (LMP, LMS) from degree holders (MBCM) in terms of quality control. Two early women pioneers of Madras at this time were Hilda Lazarus and Muthulakshmi Reddy.

Hilda Mary Lazarus (1890–1978) was the first Indian Christian to qualify as a doctor. Born in Visākapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, Lazarus, after earn-

ing a BA from the Madras Presidency College, completed her MBCM from MMC and qualified for memberships of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons (London and Dublin), joined as an obstetrician – gynaecologist in Lady Hardinge Medical College & Hospital, New Delhi, and later became its first Indian

Principal. She was the first woman medical officer in government service to receive her appointment to WMSI. She worked at the Dufferin Hospital, Calcutta, for several years and retired in 1947. On the request of Ida Scudder, Lazarus directed CMC&H between 1948 and 1954. The Lazarus Ward in Kasturba Gandhi Hospital for Women in Triplicane celebrates her contributions to women's health care in India.

Muthulakshmi Reddy (1886–1968), born in Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu, joined MMC in 1907 and graduated with an MBCM in 1912. She was influenced by Annie Besant and Mohandas Gandhi. She constantly worked for the welfare and development of women. In 1927, she was nominated to the Legislative Council of Madras and was the Vice-Chair of the Council, which she quit in 1930 protesting against Gandhi's arrest for defying the Salt Law. Muthulakshmi Reddy was solely instrumental in abolishing the abhorrent practice of dévadāsi system and in restricting child marriages, then ram-

panant in Madras Presidency, and in developing support facilities for destitute women (e.g. Avvai Home, Chennai). Touched by her sister's death due to cancer, she established a cancer hospital in Madras in 1952, which has blossomed today as the Adyar Cancer Institute (ACI), toweringly standing under the inspirational mentorship of V. Shanta. ACI celebrates the name and greatness of this extraordinary Madras woman, Muthulakshmi Reddy.

Conclusion

This note is an appreciation of those great women of Madras, who blazed new trails in the health care of women in 1850–1930. In terms of exclusive hospitals for women's health care and needs, Madras pioneered as early as 1844 with the establishment of the MH, which functions today – 175 years later – as the Institute of Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Government Hospital for Women & Children, with multiple specialties, offering varied advanced training programmes. The other large, multi-bed hospital in Madras is the Kasturba Gandhi Hospital, born out of the initiative of the British woman doctor Mary Scharlieb. The brilliant and dedicated contributions made by the America-born Ida Scudder and the India-born Muthulakshmi Reddy and Hilda Lazarus fill several pages of modern medicine for the women of Madras, immensely and inspirationally.

We fully recognize that we have not covered every lady doctor who strived for women's

health care in Madras. One notable omission, we recognize, is Soundaram Ramachandran (1904–1984), a devoted Gandhian, who set up a two-bed clinic honouring Kasturba Gandhi in Chinnalapatti, near Madurai, Tamil Nadu in 1947, which has grown today into a 220-bed hospital, fully committed to rural health and family welfare. We strongly hope that this note will stimulate others to chronicle the lives and works of those unsung heroines.

(Concluded)

Answers to quiz

1. Sundar Pichai, 2. World Anti-Doping Agency, 3. Saudi Aramco, 4. Sanna Marin of Finland, 5. Greta Thunberg, the Swedish schoolgirl who inspired a global movement to fight climate change, 6. Puppy dog, 7. Ben Stokes, 8. Skin for grafting, 9. Lionel Messi, 10. She won the Miss Universe title.

11. Unlike other temples, here he faces outwards, ready to leave for the battle on the orders of the Lord, 12. Saravana Bhavan Rajagopal, 13. Route Thala, 14. Octet Cantabile, 15. The world's oldest steam locomotive which made its annual heritage run between Chennai Egmore to Kodambakkam station on that day, 16. Bombay Sisters C. Saroja and Lalitha in 2010, 17. Hindu Higher Secondary School, 18. Admiralty House, 19. Pa. Ranjith, 20. Thirumular.

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