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MADRAS MUSINGS

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WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

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A city that fears the rain

It is true that in 2015 Chennai was battered by unprecedented rains that left the city a devastated area. A year later came a cyclone of mega proportions. Both of these left the metropolis scarred for a long time to come. Since then we have seen a year of adequate rains, one of a total drought and most recently, a monsoon that has left the city with a deficit of 30 per cent. But the fear psychosis continues, and it is only aided and abetted by careless reporting, scaremongering and circulation of fake news. This does not become Chennai but it is unfortunately the truth.

This has been a feature ever since the 2015 floods. Then it became fashionable to circulate so called news releases from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of

the USA, that further rains were expected, which would completely swamp the city. It took quite a while for people to realise that the NASA is not into issuing weather bulletins. Then came dire predictions from almanacs, all of which have since proved to be base-

● by The Editor

less. But between them they did have the city panic-stricken, which is quite understandable given the deluge of that year.

But to carry that same stories over in 2019 each time a cloud is sighted speaks of a sick mind. Conventional media, especially the second-grade news sites and web channels in the vernacular, have not helped. Even a light

shower is made out to be a downpour and the movement of a cloud band is depicted as a cyclone. The consequence is that people immediately react with fear and much time is wasted in preparations for a flood that is not coming at all.

Prevailing conditions in the city do not help either. Let's face it, much of Chennai is built on erstwhile lakes – a fact over which everyone registered horror and shock in 2015 but have since gone on to gloss over. Encroachment of water bodies continues relentlessly as is evident from the recent instance of a police station being built on a lake at Thamaraikeni near Sholinganallur. This being the case, how can we not expect much of the city to be inundated

(Continued on page 7)

Crop insurance – and its dependence on risk mitigation

● by A Special Correspondent

Agriculture, by its nature, is exposed to the ravages of climatic change and produce-price volatility. Growers plant crops in the face of this twin uncertainty hoping that the money and effort they put into the soil would be recovered and rewarded. These

risks cannot be totally avoided but can be coped with. Crop insurance aims at compensating the risk arising out of nature's vagaries.

Under the Prime Minister Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) scheme, the cost of protection is shared predominantly by the

tax-payers – Centre and State governments – and in a small proportion by growers. In that respect and also for its national coverage, the scheme is unique and ambitious. After a full year of operation in 2017-18, it is time to understand how the scheme has fared apropos the status of implementation in Tamil Nadu, farmer acceptance, hurdles and solutions, sus-



The December Music Season is in full swing. Our OLD features The National Institute of Research in Tuberculosis, Chetpet, once the Government TB Hospital, which stands on the site of the first Music Conference, which was held here in 1927 (picture courtesy: V. Ganesan).

Our NEW is the Music Academy, the pioneer of the December Music Festival and now 91 years old.



tainability of the scheme and, finally, whether crop insurance is the solution to fueling growth in the agricultural sector.

In 2017-18, in Tamil Nadu, 14.9 lakh farmers covering 13.3 lakh hectares (ha) adopted the scheme. This is 20 per cent of the gross sown area and should be considered promising. Insurance was compulsory for those seeking loans. Therefore, the proportion of “non-loan” insured is indicative of voluntariness. For example, in 2017-18 Karnataka's coverage was about the same as Tamil Nadu's at 14 lakh farmers. Tamil Nadu, however, was able to enroll more of the non-loan

category accounting for 72 per cent of the total compared to 55 per cent in Karnataka.

In 2019-20, in Tamil Nadu, 23 lakh farmers had insured their crops covering 14 lakhs ha, crossing the previous years' enrolments with another season still left. A marginal area increase for a much larger number of farmers shows that more of smaller farmers have enrolled this year. If the campaign focuses on rainfed areas and on pulses and millets, the quality of the coverage can be enhanced in terms of risk protection.

(Continued on page 2)

Madras Musings wishes its readers a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Crop insurance and its dependence on risk mitigation

(Continued from page 1)

The PMFBY operates by Area-Based Insurance Units. This cannot but be the way to do it, as it is impractical to assess millions of farmers treating each as an insurance unit, as in medical or car insurance. Consequently, in the Unit every farmer pays the same premium and receives the same claim payment. To individual farmers in the Unit capable of coping better with an adverse climatic situation, the uniform claim amount received may be more than they have suffered and to some others with poor coping methods than the average in the Unit, the claim payment may be less than their individual loss. This explains some apparent inequity.

There is a section protesting that insurance must not be compulsory as a condition for loans. It is in the interests of farmers themselves that loss of crop does not adversely affect their loan repaying ability. There should be no relaxation on this count.

The value of the crop insured is based on cost of production. It must include imputed cost of family labour and soil upkeep costs and not go by cash costs alone. Also, in the Indian situation, it is not enough if the farmer is reimbursed only for cost, leaving nothing for his survival. This is particularly significant when there is total crop loss, especially in the case of smaller holdings and dryland farmers. For these weaker segments, the sum insured could be raised to cover "loss-of-profit" although it would increase the subsidy burden. Or, eventually, a subsidised scheme could be limited to the weaker segments that are agro-climatically identifiable.

There are positive indicators in 2017-18 compared to the earlier year. Premium collected was larger at Rs. 25,140 crores compared to Rs. 22,344 crores. Claims as a ratio of premium was as high as 72 per cent in 2016-17 and it came under control at 49 per cent in 2017-18. Claims as a ratio of sum insured likewise fell from 25 per cent in 2016-17 to as low as 7 per cent in 2017-18. The fall in ratio of claim to sum insured opens the way to reduction in premium rates which, in turn, would go to reduce the subsidy burden on the Centre and the States. Farmer rates have already been kept low at or near affordable levels. The total country coverage under PMFBY is about 20 per cent and when this increases, it might further strengthen

the case for reduction of gross premium rates.

An impression is being created that Insurance companies are raking in large profits and the scheme is becoming a "scam". This inference is based on the results of the very first year of introduction, 2016-17. The total premium in the country was Rs. 27,000 crores and claims were 62.5 per cent of the premium, leaving a "surplus" of 37.5 per cent which after administration cost left a net of 25 per cent. The "surplus" was even higher at 51 per cent in 2017-18. It is erroneous to conclude that all of this is the insuring company's profit. The account of insurance cannot be balanced yearly as the risk can be compensated only by spreading it over not only a vast number of the insured, as also over time, covering several seasons.

A suggestion by the IIMA, in this context, is worthy of adoption. It avoids 'surpluses' being held by insurance companies, removing the erroneous perception that they are profiteering at the cost of the farmer. The proposal is that insurance companies bear financial responsibility for claims ranging from 80 to 120 per cent of the premium. 'Surpluses' derived beyond the low end, net of service charge, would be given to the Government and deficits beyond the top end would be borne by the Government. This would need a balancing fund maintained by the Government.

Is the PMFBY sustainable and is it enough for the sector's growth? The 'surpluses' of 2016-17 and 2017-18 create an illusion of viability. The high gross premium rates and heavy subsidy conceal reality. Only when premium rates (without large subsidies) become low enough to be affordable to the farmer and viable to the insurer, can the scheme be declared to have become sustainable. We are far from that situation. We have not yet adequately insulated agriculture from the debilitating impact of climatic vagaries. Risk mitigation packages for marginal and dryland farmers, combined with major investment in macro level water conservation and management projects on the lines and scale of highway infrastructure projects should be of high priority. Artificially supported crop insurance is only a crutch, not an income stream. Crop insurance is no substitute for risk mitigation. Agriculture being a state subject, initiative rests with State Government for taking measures towards reducing risk in farming to spur growth.

You are cordially invited...

By the time you get this issue in your hands, the December Music Season with its vast following of 20,000 people and its fake statistics of 60 organisations putting up 2,000 music and dance performances will be in full swing. *The Man from Madras Musings* has long doubted the figures that are bandied about but then when everything from the GDP to the Consumer Spending Index are matters of doubt these days, what is a mere December Music Season?

One of the most annoying features of the Season is the tendency of artistes to flood your email, Whatsapp, Facebook messenger and SMS with posters announcing their programmes. All of these will have certain standard features – the artiste holding a tanpura and beaming at the camera and if it is an action shot, a face contorted in what seems to be agony (or ecstasy). There follows a long/short (as the case may be) list of the various venues where the artiste is performing, just the time schedules of which can be most confusing. MMM of course quite understands the need for publicity and the necessity to gather crowds but what he does not like is in-your-face

chief lamenters cite the poor turnout as a further instance of good taste having died out. It is MMM's guess that they would be most disappointed if they did have a full house.

In all of this, the one place that draws a steady crowd, no matter who is singing, is the Sabha canteen. And this is true of all Sabhas. Those that run the canteen never seem to advertise. They certainly don't send out messages to all and sundry asking them to come and try their wares. And if you don't go, they don't keep track of your movements and accuse you of going to someone else's kitchen. The reason for their success according to MMM, is that they focus on what they are good at – the preparation of food. The rest is left to word of mouth. Perhaps Carnatic musicians could take a leaf out of the canteen managers' books and see their way to success.

Otherwise we can always reposition the December Season as a food festival with some music thrown in.

A matter of security

They come in all shapes and sizes. The Man from Madras Musings alludes to airports. Chennai's is terrible

said, against the rules. MMM offered to get his guests to go out of the airport to drink the coffee (after all they were yet to clear security) but the security guard would not hear of that – it was against the rules too. MMM was at his wits' end. His usual go-to person in moments of crisis is his good lady, also known as She Who Must Be Obeyed but in this instance she was occupied in getting her ticket sorted out, there being some last minute confusion. MMM knew better than to disturb her in moments like these.

Matters would have remained this way, the coffee steaming at the airport doorway, had not a lady member of the group taken the matter into her hands. It is MMM's considered view that women are much better than men in such situations. So this lady goes up to the security man and the conversation proceeded as follows:

"Sir, we need that coffee."

"Yes madam, but as per rules I cannot allow you to go out."

"Sir can the hotel's delivery person then bring it in?"

"No madam as per rules he cannot."

"So sir, why don't you bring

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

marketing. All his life thus far, MMM has been very wary of sales pitches of any kind – he prefers scenarios where the product does the talking and shows the hard work that has gone into its making.

But Carnatic musicians evidently think otherwise. What happens thereafter are 'gentle reminders' sent via the same media – Whatsapp, email, FB messenger and SMS. Closer to the date come phone calls. And finally, if you do happen to drop in at a concert or two, you are bound to get thank you notes, with details of further concert schedules. The story has a sequel. If you don't go, then you get plaintive messages – how come you never attend any of my concerts? If that does not work, you get jealous missives – I know you only attend so-and-so's programmes but you know I am not so bad either. Do give me a try. Carnatic music must be a very desperate profession indeed. Or is it that the current crop has given it such an image?

And then there are the fringe elements – the ones that have not had any success in the field. These usually get together and begin lamenting about how the art has gone to the dogs. MMM believes that they even hold symposiums over this with the audience usually in single digits. At the end of the jeremiads the

and medium-sized. That of a mofussil town in our State, which MMM happened to visit, was bad too, but much smaller. And of course, the rules that govern security are all dependent on the whims of the local officer. Thus while in Chennai you needed to take off your belt and empty your bag of pretty much all its contents, the security check at the mofussil town was more relaxed – the emphasis was more on getting passengers through the process as soon as possible.

MMM had had a day of fairly hectic sightseeing and he, along with a large group arrived at the airport well in time for completing the formalities. MMM and friends were of the view that a cup of coffee was what was needed to rid everyone of their fatigue. Word went around that the airport coffee was terrible. Someone knew someone at a local up-market hotel and so a call was made. Coffee was arranged.

Knowing full well that no liquids are allowed beyond the security barrier, MMM advised all members of his group to complete check-in but not proceed to the security check area. The coffee duly arrived but there was now a hitch. The guard at the entrance of the airport refused to let the coffee in. It was, he

it in? That way we would not have to step out and the hotel man need not come in."

MMM shut his eyes awaiting an explosion from the official. It was the smell of coffee that made him open them. Apparently the officer had no objection to his going and getting the coffee and silently obeyed. Evidently there was nothing on this in the rule book. There was much happiness and congratulations all around. The officer, to give him credit, did not ask for a cup but went off to marshal some other passengers in.

Tailpiece

The Man from Madras Musings clicked this autorickshaw the other day. It appears to list most of the funny street names in the city. On that happy note, here is wishing you all a Happy New Year.

—MMM



Quizzin' with Ram'nan

(Quizmaster V.V. Ramanan's questions are from November 16th to 30th. Questions 11 to 20 relate to Chennai and Tamil Nadu.)

1. Why was Akkitham Achuthan Nambudri, a renowned Malayalam poet, in the news recently?
2. Which entity on November 28, 2019, became the first Indian company to cross Rs. 10 lakh crore market capitalisation?
3. Which organisation's newly adopted motto is 'Ma Gridhah Kasyasvidhanam' (Do not be greedy for anyone's wealth)?
4. Which phrase/word has been declared as the "Word of the year for 2019" by Oxford Dictionaries?
5. Which Indian has topped *Fortune* magazine's Businessperson of the Year 2019 list?
6. Which legendary British environmentalist has been conferred with the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development 2019, for his tireless work to preserve and protect biodiversity?
7. As per the India Corruption Survey 2019, which State fared the worst with 78% respondents admitting to paying bribes?
8. The 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution was observed in a European country on Nov. 17. What was the Velvet Revolution?
9. Name the scheme launched by Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web, to address issues of political manipulation, fake news, privacy violations, and other malign forces on the internet.
10. Which French company is buying famed jeweller Tiffany in a \$16.2 billion deal, the largest ever in the luxury sector?

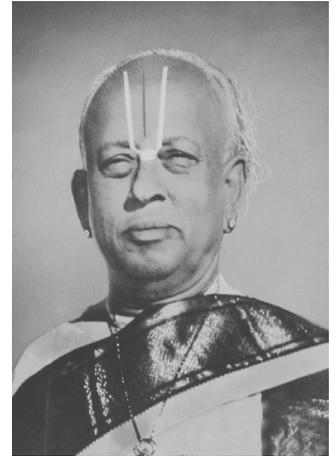
11. Which actor was given the Icon of Golden Jubilee award at the 50th International Film Festival of India?
12. Where in the State is ISRO planning to set up its second rocket launching centre?
13. About whom did Somerset Maugham eulogise thus: "He had the geniality of the politician who for years has gone out of his way to be cordial with everyone he meets. He talked very good English, fluently, with a copious choice of words..."
14. Name the two women, residents of Chennai, who have been honoured with the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service.
15. Why is September 10, 1746 an important day in the history of British Madras?
16. The locality with the pin code 600013 is named after an apostle of Christ. Who?
17. How did a Chennai techie Shanmuga Subramanian make news recently?
18. Give the full names of the two characters played by Rajinikanth in the evergreen comedy *Thillu Mullu*.
19. What edifices would one find now at Shenstone Park, Chennai 31?
20. Though Viceroy Lord Mayo is not remembered much in Madras, his brother has some places named after him. Name him.

(Answers on page 8)

Where buses stopped for music

Devanathan Street is a short thoroughfare that connects Venkatakrishna Iyer and St Mary's Roads. Right in the middle of it is a bus stop. I am told that for years the bus conductors would announce it as Ariyakkudi and not by the street's official name. During the 1980s I must have travelled numerous times by bus on that route, but I have never heard it being referred to as Ariyakkudi. It must have been a practice between the 1950s and 1970s.

nivasan of *The Hindu* and through the latter's good offices, a house on Mylapore's Nadu Street was found. Ramanuja Iyengar moved in with his disciples among whom was K.S. Dhanammal, his companion and confidante, the wedded wife Ponnammal continuing to reside in Chettinad. This proved problematic for the owners of the house. They were orthodox Vaishnavites who felt that the property, which had once been hallowed by the visit



Left: Madurai Mani Iyer and above: Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar.

LOST LANDMARKS OF CHENNAI

— SRIRAM V

For those who are not into Carnatic music, Ariyakkudi stands for Ariyakkudi T. Ramanuja Iyengar (1890-1967), who, between 1920 and 1963, reigned as the numero uno of the art form. He is often credited with creating the present concert format though he never claimed to be the originator himself.

Ramanuja Iyengar had his origins as the village name suggests, in the Chettinad region. Though he was a popular performer in Madras city even by the 1920s, he made it his place of residence quite late in life. After having lived in Ariyakkudi and Karaikkudi till the 1930s, he moved to Kumbhakonam, which became his place of residence for quite a while. There he built several one-room tenements which came to be known as Ariyakkudi Stores and these he rented out. A man of a witty and non-confrontational temperament, Ramanuja Iyengar had numerous friends and patrons such as the Zaminadar of Devakottai in Madras and they opened their homes to him to stay in each time he came to the city. This was despite his well-known and not so endearing habit of asking for anything that took his fancy at the homes of his hosts and getting them to gift the coveted item. These varied from wooden planks that formed the base of swings to large cupboards, diamond rings and chains, and even something as small as a rosary. Besides, he had numerous friends in the artiste fraternity and among these he enjoyed the very warm and sisterly affections of two famed singers of Madras — C. Saraswathi Bai and Madras Lalithangi. He would often stay with them too.

It was only in the late 1940s that Ramanuja Iyengar decided to shift to Madras. Among his admirers was Kasturi Sri-

of their pontiffs, the Jeers, was now sullied forever. It was time for Ramanuja Iyengar to move and when he did so, he shifted to a newly built house in the then new area of Mandaveli, at the intersection of Devanathan Street and Sambandan Colony. That is when he lent his name to the bus stop.

The house on Devanathan Street was a creative hub, for this was where Ramanuja Iyengar taught several students and fought his battles with Sabhas who were not too keen to provide performing opportunities to Dhanam, who was an indifferent disciple. He also most famously 'boycotted' the Music Academy for the importance it gave M.S. Subbulakshmi. It is also quite likely that this was where he completed the tuning of the Thiruppavai, the premiere of the tuned set of 30 verses happening at the Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha, Triplicane. It was from this house that Ariyakkudi must have set off to Delhi to receive the President's Award in 1952; he was the first Carnatic artiste to be so honoured. It was also from here that he drove to Rajaji Hall in 1963 to be felicitated for completing 50 years in the service of music. That was a grand event, with His Highness Jayachamaraja Wodeyar of Mysore presiding. Given that he had boycotted the All India Radio because it gave her the same fee as him, Ariyakkudi's reaction at being gifted a *navaratna* chain and ring by M.S. Subbulakshmi and T. Sadasivam on this occasion is not recorded but he gracefully accepted both items.

With so much happening at this one house on what was a quiet street, it is no wonder that bus conductors decided to call the stop Ariyakkudi. But his days were numbered. Shortly after the grand event at Rajaji Hall, Ramanuja Iyengar began complaining of pain in his knees

and this worsened over time, preventing him from sitting on the floor to perform. By 1966 he had taken to sitting on a bench at concerts and the AIR Trichy recorded his rendition of the *Thiruppavai* that way. Unknown to him and the doctors, he was suffering from cancer and by the time it was detected, it was too late. He died in January 1967, just 40 days after his beloved Dhanam passed away following a brief illness. It was said that his broken heart had killed him. Ramanuja Iyengar's funeral from the house on Devanathan Street was a grand spectacle with mourners arriving in large numbers. The residence was later sold and today not a trace of it survives. Ariyakkudi however remains a hallowed name in Carnatic memory.

Not far from here is Luz Church Road and the bus stop there was referred to as Madurai Mani after the eponymous musician who lived there for quite a while. Unlike Ramanuja Iyengar who moved to Madras long after he became famous, Madurai Mani Iyer (1912-1968) had made the shift while still young. His debut in the city was as Master Subramaniam, Madura, in 1927 when he sang songs as part of his father's lecture at the All India Music Conference that gave

birth to the Music Academy. He shifted base in 1929 to the city, living in Nattu Subbaraya Mudali Street, Mylapore. The evacuation of Madras in 1942 saw him moving to Dubash Agraharam, Mayuram, where he stayed till the early 1950s. He then moved back to Madras and lived on Luz Church Road where, as mentioned earlier, the bus stop took his name. In 1958, he moved to a house he built in Karpagambal Nagar and that today is the residence of his artiste nephew T.V. Sankaranarayanan. Luz Church Road bus stop went back to its routine name thereafter.

Mani Iyer's music was one that transcended all classes. It was said that rickshaw pullers would wave off patrons looking for a ride and prefer to hang around whichever *sabha* he was singing at so that they could savour his music. It is therefore quite likely that a bus conductor was a fan as well and came up with the name at an inspired moment. Mani Iyer's music was the result of great talent coupled with determination to overcome all kinds of health issues. It is a matter of record that his fan base has only increased in the decades after his passing.

Carnatic musicians are niche artistes. While some have had statues in their honour and streets named after them, it is perhaps only Ariyakkudi T. Ramanuja Iyengar and Madurai Mani Iyer who had bus stops informally commemorating them.

Thank you, Donors

We today, publish donations received with thanks for the period upto November 30th.

— The Editor

- Rs. 100:** Premilla Rajan, Eiji K. Umamahesh, Narayanan
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Medicare for women, in old Madras

(Continued from last fortnight)

The Royal Victoria Hospital for Caste and Goshia Women (RVH) serviced the women of Madras coming from varied social backgrounds. At one stage Mary Pailthorpe, an MBBS degree holder from the Newnham College, University of Cambridge, UK, who had trained at the Royal Free Hospital, Camden, England, joined Scharlieb at RVH as Resident Medical Officer in 1885. She was selected in Britain to supervise the Mission Hospital in Banares (Varanasi), but was assigned to work at RVH. For personal reasons, the Scharliebs returned to England permanently in 1887. Soon after Mary Scharlieb qualified for an MD and MS through London Medical School for Women (LMSW), and later became the personal physician to the Queen.

While in Madras, Scharlieb had a busy practice. She argued for a feminine line of communication: flowing from a woman medical professional to the mother and through her to her children. She lectured on midwifery, gynaecology, and children's illnesses at MMC until her return to London. Scharlieb's books, written after her return to England, reinforced the importance of personal hygiene for girls and reproductive health in women.

The RVH established under the superintendence of Scharlieb in Moore's Garden underwent major changes in the following years. Anna Webster, along with K. Bashyam Iyengar, R. Raghunatha Rao, Ananda Gajapati Raju (Raja of Vizianagaram), S. Muthuswamy Iyer, G.K. Yachendra (Raja of Venkatagiri) and Savalai Ramaswamy Mudaliar played a major role in developing the RVH. The Government of Madras donated a block of land and offered Rs 10,000 towards the establishment of this hospital. It relocated to Triplicane (a suburb of Madras along the coast) in 1890. The main building of this new precinct was constructed from a generous grant by Yachendra. The Government of Madras took over the management of this hospital in April 1921. It was renamed the Kasturba Gandhi Hospital for Women in 1948. The hospital gained reputation through the sustained efforts of many women medical practitioners, notably Mary Beadon, Hilda Mary Lazarus and E. Madhuram in later years. It presently

functions as the 'Institute for Social Obstetrics and Kasturba Gandhi Hospital for Women and Children'. The General Hospital in Madras (MGH), the oldest Western medical hospital in India, functioned as a military facility within Fort St. George from 1664, which moved to its present location in Périamét (Narimédu, Hog Hill) in 1763. Since the MGH was not accessible to Indians at that time, they received treatment at the Native Hospital (NH) in Purasawalkam both as out- and in-patients. This hospital included modest lying-in facilities to meet maternity needs, further to meeting other medical needs. The NH was managed by a committee of non-Indian residents of Madras. In 1903, the Kanji Thotti Hospital (1799)

'Maternity Hospital' (MH) in 1881 and relocated to Pantheon Road, close to Egmore train station in 1905-1908, where it presently exists. The new MH precinct was built through public donation. The Government of Madras paid staff salaries and met food expenses towards patients.

The MH during the superintendence of Gerald Giffard (Superintendent, 1905-1917) issued qualifying certificates to midwife trainees after six months of training. The certificate alongside clarifies that the qualified midwife (Jane Bullcock) had conducted 40 labours, assisted in 4 and observed 60, thus providing an idea of the level and quality of training provided. The Government of Madras managed to get a recip-



Frontage of the Madras Maternity Hospital (1940s?).

Queen of Burma, who was imprisoned by the British Government and stationed in Madras in 1886. Gerald Giffard constructed a separate teaching block, after whom the Giffard Block remains today.

This Pantheon Road building, when completed, was remarked to be resembling a female pelvis: the labour ward complex representing the sacrum, the lying-in wards representing the inlet, and the main-gate complex representing the inguinal ligaments reaching the pubic symphysis. Fourth-year students from medical colleges of far-off Lucknow, Lahore and Burma came to this hospital for a month-long training involving observation of obstetric proce-

dures and hands-on experience in handling labour.

Arcot Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, at the inauguration of the First All-India Obstetrics and Gynaecological Congress, presided over by Ida Scudder of Vellore, held in Madras in 1936, said:

'... But Madras is proud, and justly so, of the place it occupies in the obstetric world of today and it is in no spirit of narrow provincialism that I venture to maintain that no other city in Indian could have claimed this honour with greater confidence and dignity. ...'

(To be continued next fortnight)

● by
Ramya Raman and Anantanarayanan Raman

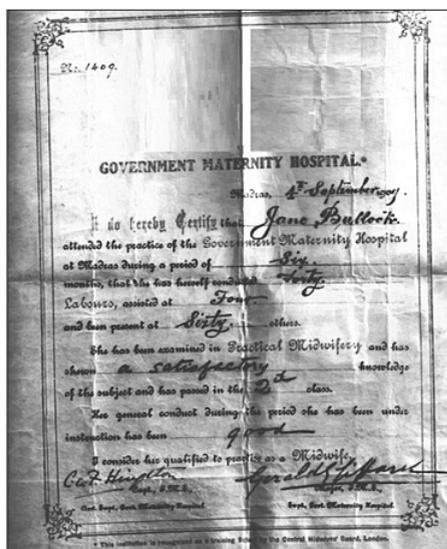
of Royapuram, morphed into the Auxiliary Medical School (AMS). The Lady Willingdon Medical School for Women was started in Royapuram in 1923 and was merged with the AMS. This complex grew into the Stanley Medical College & Hospital in 1938.

Midwives were trained in this precinct from 1844. A list of names of 80 mid-wives trained in the NH between 1844 and 1864 is available. By 1871, this less formal training gradually transformed into a formal training programme with the establishment of a midwife training school. The maternity ward at the NH was renamed

rocal registration in the training of nurses between the UK and Madras in 1928.

The frontage of the Pantheon Road MH includes a gable façade and an asymmetrical arcade topped by an ornate balustrade and a 'Travancore' style tower. From 1881, the MH became a Government-managed facility. In the next two decades, it expanded to accommodate 150 in patients. By 1882, MMC offered intense training to medical students at the MH precinct through a 9-month-long integrated course in midwifery and diseases of women and children, which was the predecessor of the Diploma in Gynaecology and Obstetrics, formally offered from 1930. By the 1900s, the MH further expanded with scope for 140 additional beds. William Thompson superintended this hospital between 1848 and 1851.

James Shaw, the first professor of midwifery at MMC, superintended the maternity ward of the NH between 1844 and 1864. Arthur Branfoot (Superintendent, 1879-1898) is indicated to have attended to the delivery of Supalayay (1859-1925),



A certificate issued to a qualified midwife by the Maternity Hospital, Egmore, Madras, signed by G. Giffard and C.G.F. Hingston, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent respectively, dated 4 September 1909.

FEARING RAIN

(Continued from page 1)

with even a mild spell of rain? But just try explaining this to many residents of Chennai. The standard expectation is that by some miracle there should be no flooding no matter what the location of the place of stay be.

The state of preparedness of our civic bodies too does not do anything to allay fears of flooding. This year too, despite the fact that there were 24 months (the last rains were in 2017) to prepare, most roads were dug up when the rains did come. The storage reservoirs have still not been desilted and so would not have been able to retain the waters in case we had had a monsoon with no deficit. As for the stormwater drains, they are never in a position to handle rain, chiefly because they are never cleaned.

In many ways Chennai is lucky. It does not get to face the kind of rains that Mumbai

gets, year after year. Also, with desalination being portrayed as the way of the future, no matter what the energy or environmental costs be, the city is seeing less dependence on rain water. After all, there is always Veeranam or the Telugu Ganga and if everything else fails, the train from Jolarpet. Given all these options, why should the average Chennai-ite look on rain as anything other than a nuisance?

This has led to a unique behavioural pattern – the city keeps looking to the sky for 355 days of the year and then when it does rain for the remaining ten, begins to set up a chorus of complaints. Ideally, Chennai would like it to rain elsewhere so that water is available in plenty to draw from, but not within the city itself. Such dependence on external borrowings will not work in the long run.

Recollections of a Ranji trophy veteran

The 2019-20 season of Ranji Trophy, the premier domestic first-class cricket tournament, is underway at the time of publication of this issue. With Tamil Nadu entering the tournament on the back of a strong showing in the limited overs leg of the cricket season, it is an appropriate time to profile one of the oldest surviving Ranji cricketers, Group Captain S. Ganesan, who had the distinction of representing two

domestic teams, Madras and the Services.

Born in Mettur on August 15, 1929, Ganesan had his early education in Vellore, where he studied at the Voorhees High School. His cricketering career took roots here, before blossoming at Madras where he moved to for higher education. He completed his Intermediate course at the Loyola College, before going on to graduate from the Presidency College with a BA Honours Degree in Economics and Political Science.

Ganesan established a reputation for being a crafty off-spinner and a handy batsman who would later go on to open the batting for the Services side. His exploits at the college level won him a place in the Madras University side, where he served as its Vice-Captain. In a brief profile in 1948, *The Hindu* wrote about him as a player whose 'class is discernible to those who have an eye for cricket' and described his bowling as one whose 'length can restrict even the hardest hitter in Madras'. Ganesan also represented the Egmore Recreation Club. With continued success at the University and league cricket levels, he caught the eye of G. Parthasarathy, the diplomat and cricket administrator and soon, a Ranji trophy call came. This meant that Ganesan got to hone his skills under the tutelage of several seniors such as A.G. Ram Singh and M.J.

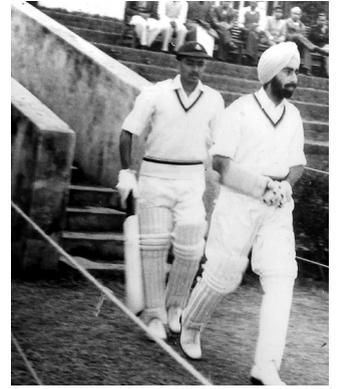
Gopalan, not to mention A.F. Wensley, the Sussex all-rounder who made several visits to Madras in the 1950s to coach upcoming cricketers.

Ganesan made his debut against Mysore in the 1949-50 season at Chepauk, a game which also saw the debut of C.D. Gopinath. While Gopinath's debut was marked by a pair, Ganesan recorded a five-wicket haul in the second

the fourth or fifth game, when Nathaniel, a left arm, quick bowled a bouncer. I missed the hook and collapsed from the impact of the ball, which hit me near the eye. The injury required multiple stitches. When news reached my mother, she prayed to Shirdi with an assurance to send me there once I recovered, which I later fulfilled', recalls Ganesan.

Ganesan's stint with the Services cricket team between 1952 and 1963 coincided with its strongest phase as a top Ranji side, when it regularly made the knockout stages. Ganesan featured in four semi-finals and two finals and credits its skipper Lt. Col. Hemu Adhikari for its creditable showing during this period. 'He was a shrewd and astute captain who could quickly grasp the ground conditions and change his tactics accordingly', says Ganesan. The title however proved to be elusive. Ganesan's exploits were also instrumental in the Air Force winning the Inter-Services tournament for the first time, a feat repeated for several consecutive years thereafter.

Ganesan's cricketering career came to a halt under rather unfortunate circumstances. His elder brother, Major S. Rajan of the Sikh Light Infantry was killed in action during the Indo China war, leaving behind a young widow to be cared for. The mantle of shouldering the family, which included their



Ganesan walking out to bat at the Kotla.

aged mother, fell on Ganesan, who signed off from cricketering assignments. His association with the game continued though, for he served on the selection committee of the Services and Air Force cricket teams for some time.

Ganesan had a distinguished career on the official front too, with several commendations from the likes of Air Vice Marshal Victor Srihari and Air Marshal R.K. Nehra. Attached to the Logistics Branch (LGS), his work included coordination with the technical personnel and aircrew to ensure that all spares, assemblies and special equipment required for aircraft was kept in operation readiness. He was appointed Wing Commander in 1975, before being made the Acting Group Captain in 1980 and Group Captain the following year.

Ganesan retired from active service in 1984. He follows the sport closely on television even today, wistfully reminiscing about the time when it was truly a gentleman's game.

Answers to quiz

1. He has been awarded Jnanpith Award, the nation's highest literary award, 2. Reliance Industries Ltd., 3. The apex anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal, 4. Climate Emergency, 5. Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, 6. Sir David Attenborough, 7. Rajasthan, 8. A non-violent transition of power in what was then Czechoslovakia, 9. Contract for the Web, 10. LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE.

11. Rajinikanth, 12. Kulasekarpattinam in Thoothukudi district, 13. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, 14. M.S. Subbulakshmi and Dr. V. Shanta, 15. The city went into French hands before coming back to the English in August 1749, 16. Royapuram/Rayapuram, after St. Peters' local name Rayappa, 17. He helped NASA find the crashed Vikram Lander, 18. Aiyampettai Arivudai Nambi Kaliyaperumal Indran and Chandran, 19. Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall and Madras Seva Sadan, 20. Robert Bourke, 1st Baron Connemara.

● by
Karthik A. Bhatt

innings of the game, which Madras won by 3 wickets. Though Madras stumbled in the semi-finals that season, Ganesan recalls a personal special moment, that of dismissing future India captain D.K. Gaekwad for a duck. Ganesan's stint with Madras was however a short-lived one, for he joined the Air Force in 1951 on his graduation from the Presidency College and moved to Delhi. This shift would bring him the best years of his cricketering career.

Early on in his tenure, he represented the Air Force in the All-India Services tour to Sri Lanka in 1952-53. Ganesan remembers the tour vividly for reasons not wholly pleasant, for though he starred at the top of the batting and bowling averages, it was also the scene of a major injury. 'I was batting on 47 with tea time approaching in

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