

WE CARE FOR MADRAS THAT IS CHENNAI

MADRAS

MUSINGS

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INSIDE

- Short N Snappy
- The Madras Teachers Guild
- Physician to the Bronze Gods
- The Madras General Hospital
- Business Houses of the South

Before we scoff at Bengaluru...

... Let us recall 2015, 2016, 2021, etc.

Last fortnight saw unprecedented rains in the city of Bengaluru. There was widespread flooding, and a crisis of severe proportions unfolded, exposing the woefully inadequate and faultily developed infrastructure of the city. There followed the usual barrage of angry posts and articles by social media warriors from the city. And then came posts from other cities, scoffing at the way Bengaluru claimed to be a world-class metro when in reality it was not. Speculations followed on which city of India could replace Bengaluru as the IT capital – what was surprising was the number of posts that felt Chennai was one of the contenders. There could be nothing more delusional than that.

We are all for positive thinking and being ambitious. In fact, when it comes to championing Chennai there can be none more enthusiastic than us. But we do feel that this was rather going over the top. Have these people forgotten what happened in 2015? Let us refresh their memories – in De-

● by The Editor

cember 2015 came the famed Chennai floods when the city witnessed torrential rains. The administration, especially the Chennai Metrowater and Sewerage Board and the PWD, was clearly caught unawares. The decision to release surplus waters in the Chembarambakkam Reservoir was delayed until

too late, some say because the chief minister was incommunicado, and her ministers were unwilling to take a call. The floodwaters entered the city and caused untold misery and havoc, though with surprisingly very little loss of life. Chennai which over the years had been consistently building over its lakes, wetlands, and reservoirs was paying the price, but it could have been avoided under a more vigilant administration. The same angry posts flooded social media – there was a hue and cry from armchair warriors – those who had built on reservoirs were named (whether they were shamed is another matter). There were cries of never again.

(Continued on page 2)

Marina Loop Road: Civic body begins to clear encroachments, leaves fisherfolk dismayed

Extending from the Marina Lighthouse up until Fore-shore Estate, the Marina Loop Road is a concrete stretch that skirts the shores of the Marina beach, encompassing several fishing hamlets such as Nochi-kuppam, Duming Kuppam and Rajiv Gandhi Nagar, to name a few. Take a drive down Marina Loop Road and you will see a row of fish stalls manned by the fisherfolk; you will spy too, the long boats that dot the beach sands next to the undulating waves of the sea ahead, accompanied by rolled-up fishing

nets. The cars, bikes and other vehicles that ply the Marina Loop Road must contend with the animated hustle and bustle

● by A Special Correspondent

of the fish market, with sellers hawking fresh catch of all sorts to eager buyers.

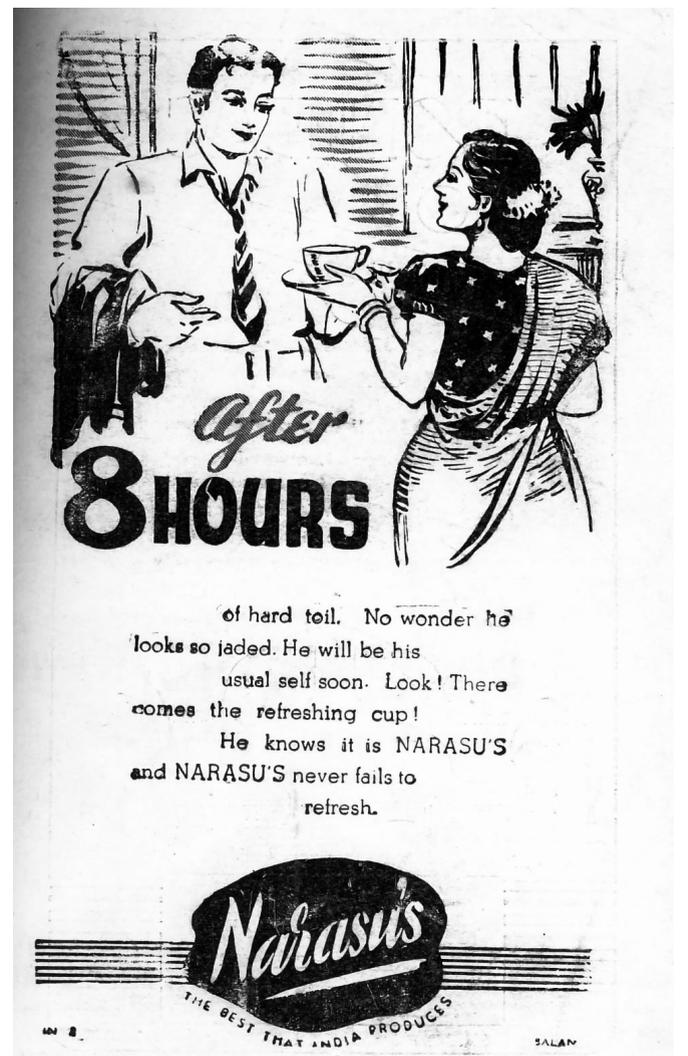
It is this very Marina Loop Road that the authorities now seek to clear of encroaching vendors so that the public can

use the space to walk, cycle or jog along the beach. 70 fish stalls have already been cleared in the past month. The affected vendors will reportedly be granted stalls at the new Rs. 9.9 crore Nochikuppam fish market under construction. The new fish market, which will reportedly house 336 stalls in total, is expected to be an upgraded facility with toilets, fresh water supply, sewage connections, parking facilities and waste collection. The shift,

(Continued on page 2)

HERITAGE WATCH

Coffee anyone?



Last fortnight social media was awash about the international coffee major Starbucks appointing an Indian CEO. That the man was of coffee-loving Tamil origin was made much out of. There was plenty of good-natured banter about his name – Lakshmi Narasimhan and it was speculated that Starbucks had been inspired by that good old Chennai brand – Narasu's.

Our picture today is of a Narasu's advertisement released circa 1951. That the brand has survived for so many years is testimony to its quality and the appeal it has. The man who lent it his name was a colourful personality who also dabbled in cinema and was once a studio owner. His association with the brand ceased years ago but the name has remained.

Starbucks has thus far had only a limited impact on the coffee-loving public of Chennai. Their outlets may be good places to hang around in but their coffee, despite all the mindboggling varieties of it, has not caught the local imagination, used as we are to our milky variety with loads of chicory in our decoction. But that there is a Narasu in charge of Starbucks does tickle the tastebuds.

Before we scoff at Bengaluru...

(Continued from page 1)

And then life went back to its old course. Came 2016 and we had Cyclone Vardah. And then after a couple of years respite, floods were back – in all the new areas. Before the older parts of the city could smugly reflect on their good fortune there came the floods of 2021, when they became the victims, including a part that is now a VIP locality. And on December 30, 2021, there occurred a freak cloudburst that not one weather system could predict – the older parts of the city were lashed and within a few hours, Chennai had had more rain in 2021 than what it had experienced in 2015. Call it a consequence of global warming on whatever but the fact remains that the city reeled under the onslaught. And our infrastructure collapsed.

The fact is, there is no Indian city that can claim to be su-

perior to others when it comes to systemic failures. For that matter, no international city is capable of fighting weather phenomenon when they happen in excess. Indian cities, as in any third world country (and let us face it, we are one), are even more prone to collapses of this kind because of the endemic compromises, corruption and callousness that goes by the name of town planning and development. Chennai is no exception to this.

Before we begin rejoicing over what happened to Bengaluru, we need to reflect on the fact that there is a monsoon just around the corner and the roads are in an advanced state of excavation. The next two months will show what has been the result of the drain-laying exercise. And we would like to extend a word of caution – it is best not to expect some superlative solution.

MARINA LOOP ROAD

(Continued from page 1)

authorities hope, will not only make the Marina Loop Road more accessible to the public but will also alleviate the increasingly troublesome traffic congestion on Santhome High Road, which houses a handful of city schools.

The move to clear encroaching vendors has been welcomed by residents and activists alike, while it has left the fishing community dismayed at the imminent disruption of their livelihoods. The effort to clear the Marina Loop Road stretch of encroachments is nothing new to them – it was attempted as far back as 1985 as part of a beautification project, drawing violent protests from the fisherfolk that forced the authorities to back away. A similar plan was pushed in 2014 as well, with a view to easing traffic flow. The case was put forth to the National Green Tribunal which greenlit the plan in 2016 under the condition that there would be no change in land use. That has not been adhered to, according to the fishing community. They say that the road has in fact grown wider over time – they fear that they will soon be forced to bring their boats and fishing nets from the beach up to the street in the rainy monsoon months which see the sealine drawing closer to the land. The constant traffic also complicates matters – not only does it disturb the lively fish market, but it also reportedly poses a hazard to the people

who live in the area. Most are loathe to leave what they see as their land, one in which they and their ancestors have plied their trade for decades before the Marina Loop Road came into existence as we know it today. According to media reports, they want the authorities to build them a new facility in which to sell fish along the loop road without the need to relocate; this, they feel, can help ease traffic woes without causing them disruption.

With the Madras High Court directing the Corporation to achieve eviction of fish vendors, the authorities have been doing their best to persuade the community to move. However, given that a significant sum of Rs. 100 crores is reported to have been allocated to beautify the beaches of the city, it is hard to imagine that the budget cannot provide for well-planned shops along the Marina Loop Road as demanded by the fishing community – in their defence, the area was their domain well before the road was laid. As for entertaining the public, surely the Marina Beach – famously said to be the second-longest urban beach in the world – has other stretches to convert into walking and jogging tracks; it need not be the Marina Loop Road that services this pleasure. To paraphrase the words of an activist who tweeted about the issue, must we seek beauty and leisure at the expense of a fellow citizen's livelihood? The answer, we hope, is no.

The Drones Club

It happened in August, with a alarming regularity. *The Woman from Madras Musings* would be tottering about on the tennis court when the heavens would suddenly manifest an unearthly din. The buzz of what sounded like a swarm of mosquitoes would tear through the silence of play, bringing the game to a screeching halt. The first time it happened, (Wo)MMM was quite taken aback to discover that the ungodly noise was a drone circling the courts overhead. She was left quite nonplussed, to be frank. The thing looked like a four-legged helicopter; it hovered above each of the three tennis courts like a giant eye in the sky studying us mortals on the ground. The levitating drone even managed to give off a distinct whiff of criticism whilst ogling the rest of us – it made a habit of watching entire rallies before drifting to the next court. (Wo)MMM is certain that it was this uninvited scrutiny that threw her off her

my drone ahead to make sure that I had a court to play in – but it was taken by the time I came!' he bewailed. (Wo)MMM was thunderstruck at the implication. It transpired that said member had been deploying his drone to see whether the courts were free before he left home. Some claim that he had promptly sent the videos to the tennis markers, who were said to be entirely shaken by the message that accompanied the clips – 'I saw you.'

(Wo)MMM was absolutely delighted by the story. Imagine sending ahead a drone to see if the tennis courts are free! In good old Chennai to boot! She found the whole thing clever and eccentric and practical all at once and she loved it. Sending the videos to the markers with a cryptic big-brotherish note was the cherry on the cake. Nothing, she thought, could top such a delicious anecdote which was sure to pass into urban legend. Until she came across the member on the streets outside

councillor reportedly answered the phone and promptly handed it to her husband who then proceeded to speak at length on civic issues with nary an introduction; two others did not even get to do that, for the calls were answered by their respective husbands who urged the reporter to take their inputs and publish it under the councillors' names. One gentleman reportedly went a step further and introduced himself as the 'councillor-in-charge.' So much for empowering women in the political arena!

(Wo)MMM finds it rather strange that this would be the case in our city, which has a rich history of giving the country some of its sharpest women politicians; in fact, we've arguably helped shape gender dynamics on the stage of national politics. It is rather sad that the glass ceiling has managed to make such a dubious comeback. (Wo)MMM hopes that the news report will make a difference – voters

SHORT 'N' SNAPPY

game all of last month. If she remembers her physics classes, there is a concept called the Observer Effect, no? Apparently, any 'observed system is disturbed by the very act of observation.' In (Wo)MMM's case, she is sure that it was the blasted drone that made her send the ball flying into the midst of a cricket match in the neighbouring ground.

The drone made its ominous appearance every day for almost two weeks in August. The signs became quite familiar to us – its advent would be heralded by a buzz that set everyone's teeth on edge and the contraption would fly into sight in that clear, blue Chennai sky as if it owned the very firmaments it flew so insouciantly in. (Wo)MMM wondered why someone would take the trouble to dispatch a drone to watch her play tennis. Surely there are better uses for drones, she thought. The better half suggested that it was perhaps not her that it was observing but the admittedly stellar game the other members were playing. (Wo)MMM was unsure on that point – to her eye, the darn thing seemed to linger far longer over her own court than others. Then, it came to her in a flash. It was Madras month, after all – perhaps some aspiring artist was capturing clips to include in some spectacular video they were making of the city? It was the most plausible explanation she could come up with, though she still found the whole thing rather strange.

It was the better half who stumbled upon the drone's secret. He was playing a doubles match, he said, when he overheard one of the regular players – an older gentleman – rue the lack of courts. 'I sent

the club one fine evening, regally weaving through the traffic upon a hoverboard. And they say Chennai isn't as cool a tech scene as Bangalore!

Of glass ceilings and curve balls

When *The Woman from Madras Musings* was in school, there was an unsaid law amongst the student body – it was considered treason of the highest order to snitch on another to an angry teacher on the hunt for a culprit. It just wasn't done. But there was one fellow who liked to live life on the edge. He would stand up and address the vexed teacher thus with a grave countenance. 'I cannot tell you who it was,' he would say before pausing dramatically, his face shining with the glow of virtue. 'I can only tell you that his name rhymes with... Biddharth.' At which point, of course, the teacher's waspish gaze would turn to a squirming Siddharth who would try – and fail – to give a convincing impression of innocence even as he received the works, so to speak.

That was a story about how things can be true to the word of law while being entirely contrarian to its spirit. It was what (Wo)MMM was reminded of when she read a recent story in the press about elected women councillors in our city many of whom, according to the piece, may be more reliant on their husbands than the voters would like.

The report was based on a sting operation in which the journalist called several women councillors in the city to ask about the progress of the storm-water drain works in the localities under their purview. One

deserve to be served by the people they elected to power, not a shadow regime.

Love under cover of darkness

Earlier this week, *The Woman from Madras Musings* stumbled across the jolliest piece of news that was trending on social media. Alright, perhaps not trending per se – but it was fabulously strange just the same. According to a joyful news report, an electrician somewhere in Bihar has apparently been cutting the entire village's power supply on a regular basis so as to meet his girlfriend in the dark. Now (Wo)MMM is hardly a romantic – she tends to be rather stoic in these matters, or so the better half complains – but she couldn't help but be thrilled by this piece. It is the stuff of fantasy, isn't it, to have an intrepid lover boldly defy society at large to rush to your side. Movies tend to spin such fancies into high-octane adventures, but our electrician boyfriend has proved himself cleverer by far with his elegant solution to stick it to those sour on the headiness of love.

It is unclear why our hero had to come clean on the monkey business but confess he eventually did, to what must (Wo)MMM imagines must have been a speechless audience. The village, it is reported, has decided that the wisest course of action lies in getting the young ones wedded to each other. Prudent, in (Wo)MMM's opinion – with the lovebirds bound in troth, electricity cuts will no doubt see a drastic reduction in frequency.

– (Wo)MMM

OUR READERS WRITE



More storm water woes

Many thanks for carrying an article on the woes of Chennai residents brought on by storm water drains. Perhaps the point that was missed out relates to unplanned excavation work very close to roots of trees and in many cases under the roots too. Many trees have been cut when the GCC realises that it was no longer safe, but who is really responsible for making them unsafe. Its the poor planning and lackadaisical execution by contractors who are not sensitised about

the potential pitfalls of unsafe excavation.

With such shoddy work, the CM exhorting people to grow more trees has just turned to be lip service.

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Nostalgia

I stumbled on the internet edition and read your feature on trams in old Madras. My brother and I attended typing classes in Luz Corner by trams when we were 11 and 12.

Even more nostalgic was the feature on Dr. Kesari. I attended Kesari high school (class topper, 1953). We walked to school from Sripuram Street, carrying our book bags and tiffin boxes.

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's grandson was a classmate. Many prominent Madarasi Telugus sent their kids to Kesari High School. By the way, Dr. Kesari's adopted daughter Vasanta was our senior by 3 years at Kesari High School on Royapettah High Road, Mylapore.

Later on, I went on to QMC, and then to Harvard. Even ended up teaching at Harvard.

Thanks for evoking great memories, about Trams in Madras and much more.

Nirmala Devi
Ph.D (Harvard)
Washington DC
USA

Thank you, Donors

We today, publish donations received with thanks for the period upto August.

– The Editor

Rs. 100: Thiruvengada

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TNPCB needs to step up

This refers to the report 'Environmental scares signal urgent need for TNPCB to step up action' (MM, Aug 1st). Following the LPG-like odour felt by the nearby residents, causing nausea, breathlessness, the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board had directed Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd [CPCL], Manali, to scale down its production to 75 per cent. In Manali itself, there are other down-stream industries which are dependent on CPCL for their major raw materials. They too manufacture petro products. Considering the nature of the products these units put together produce, Manali can be easily described as a 'chemical zone'. While each of these units have their own systems to ensure that they operate within the parameters and do not cause environmental pollution by adopting measures to contain the same, instances such as the one being witnessed now cannot be ruled out in the long run.

It is in this context that the role of the State Pollution Board assumes importance. The report states that the TNPCB does not have enough teeth to deal with the situation. Even if it does not have enough powers to take on these industries head on, TNPCB can still make its presence felt by undertaking periodic inspections to check all levels of pollution. The fault with the State agencies is that they wake up only when there is a hue and cry. On their own, they do not undertake impromptu inspections, as mandated by the law. If only the TNPCB had initiated steps to check the pollution, more so in industrial zones, the complaints such as the above could have been averted. This is not to blame the industries, as they too have the systems in place. And that they definitely have a role to play to check and contain the pollution. It must be mentioned that these industries have been permitted to operate only after due verification of various systems they have in place. It may be worth recalling that quite recently, the Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal [NGT] had asked three units located close-by CPCL in Manali, to pay an interim environmental compensation of Rs. 2 crore, Rs.1 crore and Rs.10 lakh respectively for causing marine pollution. When these units had made a submission that zero liquid discharge

[ZLD] was not possible, the Bench stated that nothing is impossible in view of the improvement in the technology. The Bench further directed the units to engage with the National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai, and National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) to conduct a study regarding the feasibility of introducing ZLD for discharge of effluents generated within their units to avoid marine discharge in a phased manner.

While setting up industries, particularly the Units making petro-products like CPCL, the companies must have submitted the detailed list of products they manufacture, its impact on the environment, and the measures which they will put in place to nullify the adverse effect, et al. The authorities may have also sought an independent report from its own pool of experts. In case of any leak or any other such happenings which is quite possible in the day today functioning of the plant despite checks and balances, the company must have drawn up measures to prevent these happenings. Thus, only after knowing the impact, could the authorities have given the nod to set up the industries. The fact that the area is kind of chemical zone, in view of the concentration of units manufacturing petroleum-based products, and, the potential danger to the environment and other habitats, including human – notwithstanding the sustained efforts to mitigate the same by the units themselves – how did the authorities allow the residential colonies to come up in the proximity to the industrial area? The government of the day can boast of bringing in investments amounting to crores of rupees for the State but in doing so, long term aspects need to be weighed down so as to avert any possible fall out. The recent cases in point are the thermo-meter plant of Hindustan Unilver in Kodaikanal and Sterlite Industries in Tuticorin, These are the direct fall out of the Government's 'act first-think later' policy. At least in future, the government would do well to consider all long term aspects prior to allowing the industries to set up business.

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Edward Elliotts Beach – Chennai's Pride or Shame?

Elliott's Beach aka Besant Nagar Beach or simply Bessie is named for Edward Elliott, who once served as the Chief Magistrate, Superintendent of Madras and Governor of Chennai during colonial times. The beach also houses the Kaj Schmidt Monument in memory of the Danish sailor who drowned while trying to save an English girl. Located at the southern end of Marina Beach, Elliott's Beach is a happening place and a favourite hangout spot, especially amongst families and youngsters.

Over the years, the beach has witnessed several disturbing developments thanks to crass commercialisation and a lack of civic awareness. The changes have eaten away at

the tranquility of the place, resulting in many early morning walkers choosing to stay away. The sand on the beach is shrinking daily, thanks to the unregulated mushrooming of so-called eateries and amusement kiosks. What was once a single row of a couple of shops a few years ago has now expanded to 6 rows with more than 300 shops. I understand that there are plans to accord permission for an additional 300 shops, too – at this rate, there will be no beach sand left anymore for future generations. Who is to be blamed for this mess? I suppose the locals, shop keepers, civic authorities and the visiting public all have equal share in this. There is an urgent need to regulate shops

to remain in earmarked areas so that the remainder of the beach can be free of litter.

Another problem is on account of the stench emanating from open defecation, despite toilets being made available.

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Even the Governor's bungalow that stands right in the middle of the beach has not been spared – it is filled with stench and has excreta smeared on its walls.

The Broken Bridge connecting Besant Nagar with Foreshore Estate is in a state

of neglect, too. The approach road from Besant Nagar beach is wreathed in darkness and sports a proliferation of wild greenery and dense bushes. It has become a convenient environment for all kinds of nefarious activities in the night.

The need of the hour is a concerted effort to build public awareness about the issues plaguing Elliotts Beach. There should also be a provision to levy stiff fines on defaulters who inflict damage. Here, the role of NGOs and Corporates is very important – after all, almost every weekend sees marathons and beach runs in which the youngsters of our city participate with gusto. Without their support, no amount of 'beach cleaning

campaigns' will serve a purpose. It is high time that the cause is taken up in earnest, lest it becomes too late – or is it already too late, I wonder? Given that Marina Beach has improved considerably, why is Bessie being ignored?

This was highlighted to the local Corporator, along with other issues relating to the beach. The Corporator gave an assurance that the matter would be taken up with the authorities. Let us hope and pray that the Government's push towards shoreline improvement and Blue Flag Beach certification will help transform our beaches for the better, making them the pride of Singara Chennai.

Physician to The Bronze Gods

‘Archaeological Chemist, temporary ... at cost of Rs. 1,500 for the year 1929-30 ... required for work connected with the treatment of bronze images in the Museum,’ the advertisement read. The superintendent of the Madras Government Museum, F.H. Gravely, had written to the government, saying that hundreds of archaeological bronzes in his collection were ‘affected with a “disease” which went on spreading by degrees, destroying all the surface, and converting the interior of the bronze into amorphous whitish green powder.’ The museum, established in 1851, was an official showplace of Madras city by the turn of the century. Its bronze collection was highly prized – so this was no small matter.

The bronze images in question were religious deities. Many of them had originally been commissioned by the rulers of South India, notably the Cholas, from the 9th to the late-13th centuries. These idols, the *utsavamurthis*, were portable versions of the stone deities. A Shiva temple could feature its chief deity in various forms: The Bull Rider, The Destroyer of Three Cities, or The Mendicant, for instance. Bedecked in flowers and finery, the idols are taken outside the temple premises in ceremonial processions, to this day. There are also the bronze deities of egalitarian saints who wanted devotees of all castes to have access to temple deities. When the powerful kingdoms of the south disintegrated, many of the bronzes, were buried for safekeeping. Under the Indian Treasure Trove Act of 1878, the unearthed bronzes, found their way into museums.

Dr. S. Paramasivan (1903-1987) was the archaeological chemist who would go on to save many of the corroded idols from the ravages of time. Even though he had no experience in conservation science, Paramasivan, a young scientist who had trained under Nobel laureate C.V. Raman, was the man for the job because he had studied electrochemistry. “It is well known that corrosion is an electrochemical process, and a reversal of this process will restore the corroded object, back to its original state,” Paramasivan would write in a research paper. He would build and develop the Chemical Conservation Laboratory – one of the first attached to a museum in India. Fulbright scholar Sanchita Balachandran, who is now the conservator at the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum in the United States,

has documented the work of this pioneer in a scholarly, but accessible paper, available online for free.

Before placing the ad for an archaeological chemist, Balachandran writes that the authorities had tried to hire a traditional Indian craftsman specializing in bronze casting to take care of the “diseased” idols. Traditional methods of care serve temple idols well in the normal course of affairs, but the interred bronzes were a different story altogether. Bronze idols, made largely of copper and tin, were corroded because of chemical reactions underground. They had developed crusts or an entire layer of patina. When the product of corrosion was copper carbonate, there was little cause for worry. But salts like copper chloride and copper sulphate ate into the idols, causing damage and disfigurement. “Some of the bronzes have malignant patina on them,” Paramasivan wrote. “A patch of it, not larger than a pin’s head, may remain passive for years and then, for no apparent reason, suddenly become active.” Bronze disease, caused by corrosion, suddenly sounds a lot like cancer of bronze icons.

Caring for Bronze Deities

So how could malignant patina be turned into something benign? To teach himself the museum practices of the day, Paramasivan sent for relevant books and journals from abroad. He favored a procedure known as electrolytic reduction. Its boast was that “it could restore the metallic element of an object to its original condition, decomposing the corrosive salts that caused ‘bronze disease,’ even when they were hidden within the pores of a corroded specimen.” The technique was in use in leading museums abroad, but there were significant challenges for its use in South India – the size of the bronzes for one. “The former is analogous to a laboratory scale of work and the latter to the industrial scale, which demands a technique of its own,” Paramasivan wrote.

The technique, ingeniously adapted to local conditions, worked wonders. Bronzes that appeared shapeless and unrecognizable, were restored to their original form, and many interesting details have been laid bare, Paramasivan wrote. The treatment was so effective that the museum decided to run it – ‘six hours a day, six days a week,’ on various bronze objects in their collection. As a result, the museum quickly exceeded

its annual electricity allotment. The superintendent had to put in a request to double the funds for electricity.

Eager to embrace modern technology, Paramasivan would collaborate with the director Captain T.W. Barnard at the Barnard Institute of Radiology of the Madras Medical College to develop radiographs, or X-ray images, of idols, particularly the valuable and heavily corroded bronzes. The images indicated the extent of the damage and what results to expect at the end of the treatment.

Expert on Call

Paramasivan did not restrict himself to bronzes. He began treating stone sculpture and iron implements in the museum which were “in imminent danger of total decay.” Thanks to his quest for an optimal, insect-proof material to print exhibit labels, he became a resource person even for the botany and zoology departments. Research, exhibition, preservation, analysis, and study of the artifacts – all

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this seemed to go together for Paramasivan.

Recognition for his work arrived swiftly. In 1935, a survey of 105 Indian museums and art galleries, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, assessed museum practices in India and compared it with museums elsewhere in the British territories. The Madras Museum won special mention for well-presented exhibits and was singled out as one of the few institutions where they carried out research related to the treatment and preservation of museum exhibits. As an upshot, the museum’s laboratory, which was housed in a temporary three-roomed structure, was allotted new space. In 1937, Paramasivan outfitted and developed the Chemical Conservation Laboratory. A host of artifacts – made of stone, marble, textiles, leather, and metals – came up to this lab for treatment, preservation, and systematic research.

The archaeological chemist’s post, however, remained temporary. Gravely’s letters to the Government of Madras emphasized Paramasivan’s scientific knowledge and reminded the authorities of the chemist’s crucial role in maintaining the financial and cultural value of the museum collection, Balachandran

writes. In response, one officer had commented: “Since 1930 he [Paramasivan] has not been able to get a better paid job and he is not likely to get one hereafter. Even if he leaves it should be quite easy to get an equally competent man.” Due to a technicality, which limits the length of time a government position could remain temporary, Paramasivan became permanent staff nearly eight years after his arrival in Madras.

Meanwhile, to get the bigger story behind the bronzes, and other metal artifacts, in the museum, Paramasivan started external collaborations. “There are many metallic antiquities, whose exact methods of fabrication have to be worked out experimentally to reconstruct the technical skill and technical achievements of the ancients in the field of metallurgy,” he wrote. To do some of these experiments, he collaborated with modern-day metallurgists from the railway company. (One such metallurgist was Balachandran’s grandfather. She writes about

this unexpected personal connection to the subject of her research in a long lyrical essay – *Malignant Patina: A Love Story.*)

Working with religious leaders, who were unhappy about the transfer of bronze deities into museums, become part of Paramasivan’s job. For instance, the trustees of the Srirangam Temple Devasthanam wrote to the Government Museum saying that photographing bronze images is not permitted by the religious texts and the museum could depute a caste Hindu to personally see the images and write a report. So, pausing his work at the lab, Paramasivan attended to these matters.

In 1936, the Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) requested Gravely to send the museum chemist to report on the condition of the wall paintings in the Brihadisvara temple at Tanjore. The senior-most chemist at the time at ASI was a Muslim and did not have access to Hindu sacred spaces. So, Paramasivan went to the site. This, he writes, was the starting point for a general scientific survey of ancient wall paintings, which were disintegrating in many parts of India. In 1946, Paramasivan left the museum’s services to join the ASI, where he had a distin-

guished career. He got the chance to travel abroad and interact with his peers. He also visited archaeological sites, such as Egypt, and prominent European museums. His reputation had preceded him, thanks, in part, to his publication record in international journals such as *Nature*.

After he retired, the indefatigable Paramasivan would still advocate for a “mobile laboratory” to document and conserve the approximately 32,000 bronzes in religious use in the Hindu temples of Tamil Nadu. If this idea had come to fruition, it would have made state-of-the-art conservation accessible to remote temples. Antique idols even in remote places would, in turn, be part of a digital database. This would have made authentication easy in case of idol thefts, which we read about in the papers to this day.

A Portrait emerges

In the centenary souvenir of the Government Museum, there is but a blurry photograph of a turbaned Paramasivan, but thanks to Balachandran’s work we have a clear sketch of the pioneer’s tenure at the museum. She also tried to track down his family, but to no avail. It would have been interesting to know more about this individual who worked so hard to preserve our cultural patrimony. He must have been armored in self-confidence or imbued with a sense of greater purpose to do the kind of work he did. Early in his tenure at the museum, he corresponded with the American Rutherford John Gettens, a conservation scientist of renown, who was based at Harvard University’s Fogg Art Museum. The two scientists exchanged information on technical aspects of their work, but they also spoke as kindred spirits of the “peculiar problems” of preservation.

Paramasivan was a man of science, but like his priestly ancestors, he cared for religious idols. He saw the bronzes at their most vulnerable. It was his job to try and restore afflicted deities to some semblance of their former glory. Did he seek the deities’ blessings before he set out to cure them? Did he thank them for helping him return them to a wholesome form? How did he feel about the petitions from the people of Madras Presidency entreating the museum authorities to return their gods to them? We can only imagine what went through this scientist’s mind as he went about his work in the place where he got his start as a conservationist.

Madras Teachers Guild and the South Indian Teachers Union

While Madras’s distinction as having been home to the first labour union country is well-documented, a fact that is lesser-known is that it was a pioneer for welfare organisations for the teaching community as well. This article is a brief profile of two of the earliest teacher organisations, the Madras Teachers Guild and the South Indian Teachers Union.

The first teachers union in the country was the Madras Association of Women Teachers, founded in November 1889. It was formed thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Isabel Brander, the Inspector of Girls Schools, Northern and Central Circles, Madras. Its objectives were to stimulate an interest in and to promote knowledge of the art of teaching and to encourage a social spirit and co-operation amongst the members of the profession. Its activities included paper discussions, imparting of model lessons and operation of a lending library of educational books and magazines. Its members comprised lady managers and school-mistresses of the city. By the end of the first year, it had 72 members on its rolls. A vernacular branch was also added.

The functioning of the association with a good degree of success soon spawned the formation of an organisation whose membership included teachers of both sexes, the Madras Teachers Guild. It had its genesis in a meeting of prominent educationists in the city held on November 2, 1895 at the Senate House, where the need for an organisation of teachers was emphasised by the Rev. E.T. Davies, the Principal of the Doveton College. Amongst those present at the meeting were the likes of Sir J.H. Stone and H.S. Duncan of the Presidency College, K.B. Ramanatha Iyer, S. Vasudevachariar of the Wesley College and the legendary V.S. Srinivasa Sastri. The first President was J.H. Stone, while F.W. Kellett (after whom the Kellett High School

in Triplicane is named) served as the first secretary. The founding of the institution came at a time when small unions for teachers had started coming up across the Presidency. By 1897, the number of teachers association were nearly 70 in number, having a collective membership of more than 1800 members. The Madras Teachers Guild alone accounted for nearly 250 members. The Madras Association of Women Teachers was amalgamated into the Guild in 1899.

The Madras Teachers Guild served as a provincial organisation until 1908, though most of its members happened to be residents of Madras city. The Educational Conference held in December 1907 discussed the proposal for a larger union of teachers and thus, was formed the South Indian Teachers Union (SITU) in March 1908, under the leadership of Sir J.H. Stone and comprising teachers from all over the Presidency. With the SITU now taking on the role of an apex organisation for teachers in the region, the Madras Teachers Guild underwent a change in fortune. Its membership waned over a period of time; its Reading Rooms closed and the annual conferences saw thin attendance. It underwent a revival with the entry of Prof. M.S. Sabhesan of the Botany Department of the Madras Christian College in 1920. He was soon appointed its secretary, in which capacity he served for more than 15 years.

One of the most important developments during Sabhesan’s stint was the founding of the Madras Teachers Guild Co-operative Society. It was a successor of sorts to The Elementary Teachers Co-operative Society, a body that had been founded in 1914 and had become dormant by 1922. The revival came about thanks to the initiative of Prof

S.K. Yegnanarayana Iyer, (an ardent co-operator who would be later associated with the TUCS for a long time) who had come from Salem and settled in Triplicane. At a meeting held in January 1923, the Elementary Teachers Co-operative Society was renamed the Madras Teachers Guild Co-operative Society and its assets and liabilities transferred to the successor organisation. Membership of the Guild was mandatory for a person to be eligible for enrolment in the Co-operative Society. Along with Yegnanarayana Iyer and P.A. Subramania Iyer, noted Professor of English, Sabhesan worked tirelessly to ensure that the Guild performed its role as an organisation that helped secure the financial status of teachers admirably. Not surprisingly, the Co-operative Society was rated an ‘A’ class Society for a very long time. Sabhesan

by Karthik Bhatt

served as the President of the Madras Teachers Guild in 1937 and 1938.

Following Sabhesan’s tenure, the Guild’s Presidents included the likes of Kuruvilla Jacob, G.V. Narayanaswamy Iyer (father of the legendary G.N. Balasubramaniam) and T.P. Srinivasavaradhan of the Hindu High School, K.V. Rangaswami Iyengar of the Hindu Theological High School and noted educationist S. Natarajan, Director of Field Advisory Services of the All-India Council of Secondary Education who was later awarded the Padmashri for his services to the cause of education.

The Guild, which over a period of time had become an organisation exclusively devoted to teachers from the city of Madras, celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1945. The Diamond Jubilee Celebrations held in January 1955 was a grand three-day affair, held at the Hindu High School. C. Subramaniam, Minister of Finance and Education presided over the celebrations, while Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar delivered the inaugural address. The programmes included variety entertainment



The Teachers Guild Co-operative Society building. Picture courtesy: Sampathkumar Srinivasan.

by about hundred students from various city schools and demonstration of citizenship activities by NCCs, ACCs and Scouts and Guides.

Founded almost on the same lines as the Teachers Guild, some of the aims of the SITU were to improve the status, pay and prospects of teachers and to focus the opinion of the public

existence on January 1, 1928. Within a short span of four years, it had nearly 1,000 members on its rolls and had assets totalling to nearly Rs. 32,000. With the demand for memberships (which had been restricted to 1,000 in the initial rules) increasing, the Fund was reorganised in 1933 on actuarial basis following the report of noted actuary Prof. K.B. Madhava. It was the year the SITU celebrated its Silver Jubilee as well, with the grand celebrations being held at St Joseph’s College in Trichy. In 1940, the Fund was again reorganised as a Mutual Insurance Company, with its offices in RA Puram. By 1955, the number of policy holders stood at over 6,000. As in the case of the Teachers Guild, the growth of the Fund was thanks to the dedicated efforts of Prof. M.S. Sabhesan, who was appointed the President of the SITU in 1940. The company continued to function until the nationalisation of the insurance business, when it was taken over by the Life Insurance Corporation. Sabhesan was also instrumental in starting The South Indian Teacher and Balar Kalvi, the official organs of the institution. Commemorating his services to the cause of the teaching profession, the SITU organised a grand celebration on his sixtieth birthday in 1948 and also released a souvenir to mark the occasion.

Today, the Madras Teachers Guild Co-operative Society (renamed the Chennai Teachers Guild Co-operative Society) that continues to function from Bandi Venkatesa Naicken Street in Triplicane and the S.I.T.U. Colony at Thiruvankadam Street in RA Puram are the twin markers of these pioneering organisations that worked tirelessly to serve the teaching community.



Prof. M.S. Sabhesan.

On the quarter-millennial anniversary of the Madras General Hospital

The English-East India Company (EEIC) established the Bengal Medical Service in Calcutta (presently Kolkata) in 1763. Similar services were established by the EEIC in Bombay (presently Mumbai) and Madras (presently Chennai) shortly after. By 1775, a Medical Board in Calcutta and Hospital Boards in Madras and Bombay started administering hospitals. Surgeons holding British medical licences, either a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians (LRCP) or a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons (LRCS), were recruited by the EEIC. Those recruited personnel were to obligatorily serve the military for the first two years of recruitment before being permitted to enter civil-medical service. The Indian Medical Service (IMS), and the Subordinate Medical Service (SMS) were established in 1760–1780. Most of the SMS personnel were Indians, who worked as either ‘Dressers’ or ‘Apothecaries’. Until 1679, ‘barber’ surgeons were employed by the EEIC, who ‘treated’ the sick practising external medicine such as phlebotomy, dressing of wounds and ulcers, treating skin diseases, hernias and contusions. Better medical knowledge established in the mid and late-19th century Europe influenced the administration of the Madras Presidency to consider western science-based medical care in public health management. Training of professionals in treating diseases by applying principles and practice of western medical science grew rapidly. However, with the rise of nationalism, potential merits of alternative medical practices – Ayurveda and Unani – were also gaining relevance in Madras.

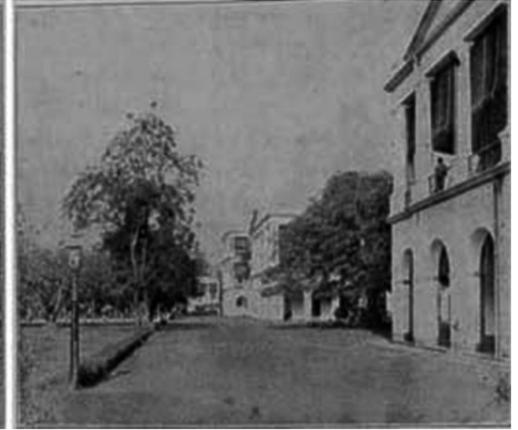
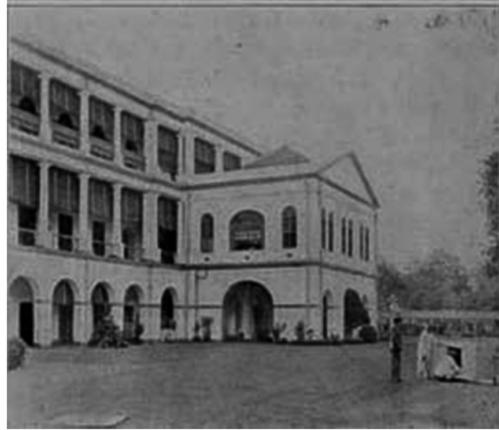
Charles Grant’s (1792–1797) public document written to the Court of Directors of EEIC in London stimulated the British administrators of India to allocate £100,000 to strengthen science in India, which, fortuitously, included provision of ‘better medical facilities’. The result of this stimulus package was that an Indian doctor in the rank of havildar (≈Sergeant) was appointed in every military station, including Madras.

What is popularly known as the General Hospital of Madras – renamed as the Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital in 2011 – is the first formally established western science-based hospital facility

in India. However, it began as a military hospital (MH) in 1664. In 1772-1773, on relocating to where it presently exists, it was named the ‘General Hospital’ (GH). We chronicle key details of the Military Hospital (1664-1772) and its transformation into the GH (1772-date). In 2022, the GH is completing 250 years of service to the people.

Edward Winter, the 8th Political Agent in Madras, established the western science-based MH, to treat the sick and wounded British soldiers in a building used by Andrew Cogan in 1664. John Clarke was appointed as the first surgeon. In the next two decades this facility moved around within Fort St George. Because this last-used building became inadequate to accommodate lying-in-patients, a double-storied structure close to St. Mary’s Church within the Fort was identified in 1689, and the MH moved into this building. Several new British personnel referred as ‘Factors’ or ‘Servants’ arrived from Britain in Madras. Factors meant traders, business people who were interested in procuring cotton fabrics; their trade establishment was collectively referred as the Factory. Eventually this building was changed as the quarters (the ‘College’) for them. The sick were moved to a hired house in James Street (James Street, which then existed in the Fort, does not exist presently) to build a new hospital. In 1684, Elihu Yale (1649–1721) took over as the President (≈Governor) at the Fort. His Council of Directors acquired the James Street facility and rebuilt it as a larger facility, which existed close to the northern end of the barracks within the Fort. Located in James Street, this hospital was constructed in Tuscan style at a cost of 2500 pagodas. The EEIC at that time minted ‘Three Swamy’ pagoda gold coins. The Government Museum of Chennai’s website provides details of the Three Swamy pagoda coins.

Funds towards this building were generated mostly as public subscription from among the British families living within the Fort. Nathaniel Higginson (1652–1698), President (1692–1698), William Fraser, a member of the Council, and the Corporation of Madras, Captain James Bett, initially Second Commander of the Garrison, later Captain of the Guard, have signed a notice: *tis agreed*



Views of the Madras General Hospital, early 1900s. (source: Nicholas Senn, 23 pp. 198 and 199)

and order’d that it be bought of the Parish for their account, and that a new hospital be built with the money at a more convenient place near the river side. And Mr. Higginson, Mr. Fraser, Capt. Bett and the Church wardens do make a due survey and value of the said hospitall building; and that it be paid for accordingly; and that the Church wardens &c. do begin with all expedition the new hospitall by the river.

order changed the complexion of health management in Madras town and the Presidency, and it prevailed so, for the next 200-odd years. Between 1651 and 1809, 29 Principal Medical Officers (PMOs) led Madras’s Medical Department, including Edward Bulkley in the 18th Century. Bulkley arrived in 1692. Bulkley’s appointment strikes as a major event in the pages of medical history

scribed’ for Wheeler, without cleaning the mortar, which was used previously for grinding arsenic. This resulted in the death of Wheeler. Nathaniel Higginson asked Edward Bulkley to conduct an autopsy of the dead Wheeler. Bulkley did the autopsy later on the same day.

The post-mortem examination report was:

According to your (sic. the Worshipful Council) orders. I did on Monday, the 28th instant in the afternoon open the dead body of Mr. James Wheeler about five hours after his death, and upon viewing the viscera and bowels, found them not much affected from their natural temper and colour. The parts that seemed to suffer most were the stomach and intestines, which were a little inflamed, and almost wholly bared and stripped of the mucous and slimy covering which those parts are commonly invested. The lungs were a little inflamed. The blood that I gathered out of several vessels all appeared blacker than usual. But the suddenness of his death, and the severe symptom he laboured under before he died, were greater arguments of poison received than anything I could trace out by dissection.

– Edward Bulkley

Bulkley’s conclusion was that little could be gleaned from what he saw during the examination, although the symptoms presented towards poisoning. No chemical verifications were carried out. Samuel Browne was later acquitted by the Grand Jury, who brought in the bill ignoramus (no details are available as to how Browne’s servant was treated in this criminal case).

(To be concluded next fortnight)

● by

Ramya Raman, Anantanarayanan Raman

This hospital facility was run by the Anglican Clergy, which maintained St. Mary’s Church within the Fort precinct. The Clergy received a sum of 50 pagodas annually towards maintenance from the Government at Fort St George. John Heathfield, recalled from civil service, was installed as the Head Surgeon in 1687. He died the following year. Samuel Browne, a locally available ship surgeon, was summoned to fill the vacancy created by Heathfield’s death, since the chosen surgeon Edward Bulkley (also spelt as ‘Bulkeley’) from London could not arrive in Madras in time. Further to his role as a surgeon, Browne was avidly searching for local plants for their medicinal value. He collected plants and made notes on their medical relevance further to other traditional uses. In 1698, the Church administration challenged the Government that the hospital serviced only EEIC soldiers and sailors. Thomas Pitt (President at the Fort, 1698–1709), successor of Nathaniel Higginson, responded to the challenge. Pitt ordered that this facility was to open its doors to civilians. This

of Madras. The EEIC, highly impressed by his all-round skills in being a clever surgeon and a smart physician, directed him to superintend the Military Hospital.

A medical forensic examination

Samuel Browne continued as a second surgeon (precise designation not traceable) after Edward Bulkley’s arrival. James Wheeler, a member of the Council at the Fort and the Chief Justice, was sick on 28 August 1693. He died at 11 a.m. the same day. Samuel Browne on Wheeler’s death sent a signed note (reproduced below) to Nathaniel Higginson, the Chief Agent:

Honourable Sir

I have murdered Mr Wheeler, by giving him arsenic. Please to execute Justice on me the malefactor I deserve. Your Honour’s unfortunate obedient Servant

– Samuel Browne.

The circumstances leading to Wheeler’s death were that Browne’s servant ground the medication that Browne ‘pre-

The fragrance fades from Chennai

An entire generation is not likely to know that Pond's Dreamflower Talc was manufactured in a factory in Pallavaram in Madras once upon a time. At one point it was the largest selling talcum powder in the world. Really. Just think of the Indian population and the numbers make sense. It changed the face of the sleepy suburb and provided employment for many men and women. Pallavaram began buzzing – shops and little eateries to cater to the factory workers opened up, roads improved and many good things happened. When you approached the factory, fragrance filled the air, and when you entered the factory, it overwhelmed you.

Cheseborough Ponds was an American company which was selling the talc and other cosmetics in small numbers in India. Cosmetics was a very low priority for the newly independent country. The government decided that all foreign companies had to manufacture in India if they wanted to sell their products here. Surprisingly the American company did not close shop. It contracted out the talcum powder manufacturing to the TTK Group.

This was not as easy as it sounds. How TTKs got its license to manufacture talcum powder is now part of corporate folklore and I have dined out on it many times. TTK's applied for a license to manufacture Pond's products in Madras. Rajaji, the then Chief Minister of Madras turned it down saying, "Sita never applied cosmetics. I do not understand why Indian women need such products now." T.T. Krishnamachari, the founder of the group had handed over the business to his sons to enter politics, was the Industries minister and would not get involved. He sent the file to prime minister Nehru saying as he was an interested party, he cannot take decisions. Finally Nehru approved the project. He said that Sita was a naturally beautiful woman and not many women are blessed like her, so they must have the help they need.

When the company was Indianised in 1977, it ended its contract with the TTKs and took over the manufacturing itself. The parting was not friendly. Pond's chairman and managing director was the legendary V. Narayanan who joined the Company in 1969, transformed Pond's into a most admired



The site where Pond's had its factory. Picture courtesy: The Hindu.

company. He kept it compact and attracted the best talent. He started hiring people from management institutions and was one of the first to do so. Narayanan strengthened the

Well into the 90's, till Pond's finally moved out of Madras (which had not yet become Chennai), the company's products kept the city's advertising industry highly active.

Madhavan's first appearance on the screen was in a Pond's talc commercial.

The Leverisation of Ponds actually began in 1994 and it moved full throttle immediately. Says another industry veteran from O&M, Suguna Swamy, who was fully involved in the launch of 15 ponds skin care products and 5 vaseline based products manufactured mostly from Pallavaram, "there was high octane activity." By 1999, Pond's had morphed from a sleepy, talc, cold cream and vanishing cream company for decades into a high volume skin care colossus. Along the way it grew collateral businesses such as advertising agencies, film production houses, cinematography, photography and printing and many others.

Eventually Pond's identity got totally absorbed into HLL and it is no longer a Madras/Chennai company. However, Pond's Dream Flower talc continues to be a best seller.

Business Houses of the South by Sushila Ravindranath

company's marketing, selling and distribution networks. Sales of both Ponds Dream Flower talc and Ponds cold cream jumped up. They remain market leaders inspite many future changes.

Narayanan led Ponds into various related diversifications, like soaps, shampoo and skin care products. Ponds also started manufacturing unrelated products such as thermometers and even mushrooms. These were not random decisions but measures taken to reduce the tax burden. Till liberalisation, there was a lot of irrational taxation.

The company kept growing. By 1990, Narayanan was sure Pond's would become a Rs. 100 crore company. That was not to be. Pond's soaps were a spectacular success which drew a lot of attention from Hindustan Levers. This was in 1985.

By 1987, completely out of the blue, Levers bought out Cheseborough Ponds and the process of Chennai's most admired multinational merging and disappearing into Levers began. The process was made smooth by Narayanan's successor V. Balaraman.

Dream Flower talc's marketing strategies kept changing. Says senior industry professional, Indu Balachandran who worked for Hindustan Thompson, "we took it from largely facial usage to a happy family talc to a smart strategy for all body usage." My generation is not likely to forget India's leading model, Pooh Sayani, in a sexy bath towel carrying on a conversation, fixing a date ahead, even as she liberally talcs herself on shoulders, arms and legs. A young R.

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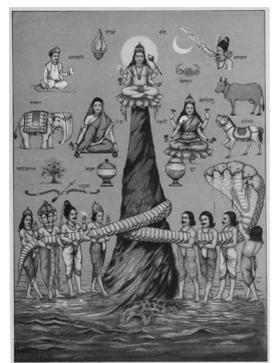
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– THE EDITOR



Exhibition: **URUVAKKAM: from Prints to Golu** from September 3-25 at Kadambari Gallery, Dakshina Chitra Museum. Inauguration on September 3, 4 p.m. by Dr. Chithra Madhavan.

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come alive in 3D, alongside their 2D inspirations. For more information, call Indumathi Mohan at 9841421149.

That eventful India-Sri Lanka Test at Chepauk

India and Sri Lanka these days meet so often across formats that the reaction is generally one of 'oh, no, not again' or 'so what's new'. But there was considerable interest when the two teams met for the first time in a Test match at Chepauk in September 1982. It did seem fitting that the inaugural game was to be played in Madras (as Chennai was then known) for there was a long historic association between the city and Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was formerly known). In 1952, the Gopalan Trophy was instituted to honour the famous double international from the city and was the prize for the annual contest between Madras and Ceylon held in alternate years here and in Colombo. Thirty years later, Sri Lanka – who had played her first Test earlier that year – came to Chepauk for an only Test and the game was followed with great interest given the historical background.

There was also a lot of interest centered around the visiting team for they generally believed in playing attacking cricket. India and Ceylon had played several unofficial Test matches over the years, but this, however, was the real test for both teams with Sri Lanka's elevation to Test status

in 1981. In keeping with their reputation, Sri Lanka took little time in attacking the Indian bowling. Their approach was simple and straightforward – the ball is there to be hit whatever the situation. Despite losing their openers with only eleven runs on the board, Sri Lanka maintained a rate of about four runs an over throughout their innings. First their two best batsmen Roy Dias and Duleep Mendis figured in a third wicket partnership of 153 runs. Dias was out for 60 but Mendis went on to get 105 off just 123 balls. In a stay of three hours, he hit 17 fours and a six. Taking the cue, the batsmen to follow came up with valuable contributions before Sri Lanka were all out on the second morning for 346.

However it soon became obvious that this was not going to be a competitive total when placed against the batting might of the Indians. Openers Sunil Gavaskar and Arun Lal, making his debut put on 156 runs before the latter was out for 63. Dilip Vengsarkar joined his captain and the two experienced campaigners piled on the agony for the bowlers and fielders by adding 173 runs for the second wicket. Vengsarkar was run out for 90 and Gundappa

Viswanath much to the disappointment of the crowd did not last long. Shortly afterwards Gavaskar was out for 155. But Sandip Patil straightaway went after the bowling and his valuable partnerships with Kapil Dev and Madan Lal saw India reach 556 for six before Gavaskar applied closure with Patil unbeaten on 114.

Play had been curtailed for a while on the third day due to rain and by the time Sri Lanka commenced their second innings, it was midway through

victory when play resumed on the final morning.

Even at this stage there was no change in the Sri Lankan batting approach. They continued to play their strokes and their attacking style was best summed up by Mendis. In the first innings he had reached his hundred with a six – a rare sight in a Test match 40 years ago. In the second innings, he darted yards out of his crease when on 99 and lifted the ball to the extra cover boundary to get his second hundred of the



Roy Dias. Picture courtesy: The Hindu.

Kapil Dev kept them in the hunt but the fall of both in quick succession ended their victory hopes. In the end, India were hard pressed to save the match with Gavaskar coming down the order because of a strained neck and Yashpal Sharma playing defensively against some accurate bowling and aggressive field placing. The hunter had indeed become the hunted as India were happy to end with a score of 135 for seven. The Sri Lankans won a lot of praise for their brand of cricket which endeared them to the crowd. The match was drawn but the visiting team playing just their fifth Test since their elevation took the honours. Thanks to the breezy batting by both sides the aggregate of 1441 runs was a record for any Test in India.

● by Partab Ramchand

the fourth day. A deficit of 220 runs loomed ominously but there was no question of Sri Lanka adopting dour and defensive tactics to save the game. Again both openers fell early and again Dias and Mendis performed the rescue act with a third wicket partnership of 110 runs. Dias dominated with a series of thrilling strokes before he was out for 97 off 108 balls. At stumps on the fourth day, Sri Lanka were 179 for three and so it was going to be either a draw or an Indian

match. Mendis went on to get 105 till today the only batsman to get identical three figure scores in a Test. After he was out there was some resistance from the late order particularly Aruna Ranasinghe (77) and Somachandra de Silva (46 not out) and it was a weary Indian side that left the field after Sri Lanka had scored 394.

India had now to get 175 runs for victory in 53 minutes and 20 mandatory overs. A brisk third wicket partnership of 62 runs between Patil and

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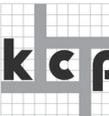
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