

MATRIX

October 2010

A PUBLICATION OF THE SANMAR GROUP

The Madras Day
CELEBRATING THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY, 1639

Chennai: A city of character

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Chennai - A city of character

22 August 1639 was the day the city of Madras was formed through a transaction between Day & Cogan and Beri Thimmappa. The Madras Week in August is a popular annual event today. Here's a tribute to the city by V Ramnarayan.

A magnificent stretch of sand and bright blue sea is the most visible physical feature of Chennai. Among the longest beaches in the world, the Marina has for hundreds of years been the local residents' refuge from the sweltering heat and humidity.

Many of the buildings on the promenade are impressive examples

of architecture that blends western and Indian traditions, a legacy of the British empire, with the Madras University, Presidency College and Queen Mary's College, prominent among them.

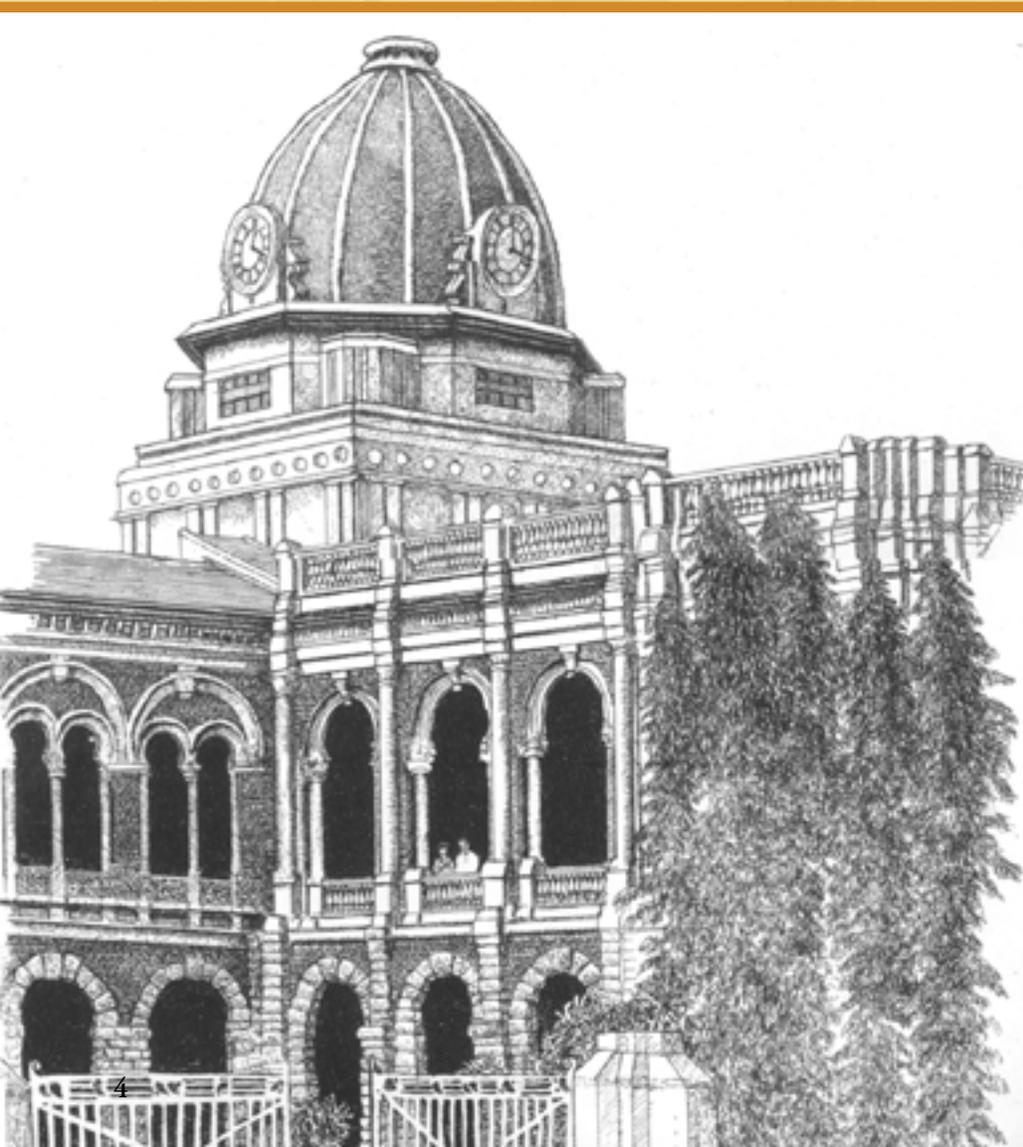
Within walking distance of the Marina is the Parthasarathi Swami temple, and just a long run away

Presidency College

is the Kapaleeswara temple of Mylapore—but two of the city's many temples, churches, mosques and other places of worship. Somewhere in between is the Santhome Church, while a sizable Muslim minority offer their prayers in the Triplicane mosque, again within easy reach of the beach—each of these a splendid tribute to the city's multi-cultural ethos.

Triplicane was home to at least two great sons of pre-independence Madras: Subrahmanya Bharati, the fiery poet and Srinivasa Ramanujan, the mathematical genius of world fame. In Mylapore was born a couple of centuries earlier, Tiruvalluvar, the saint-poet famous for his Tirukkural, a compendium of 1330 couplets.

While Tanjavur was once the cultural capital of the state of Tamil Nadu, today the centre of gravity has shifted to Chennai, whose December music and dance "season" is probably unparalleled for size and diversity of programming. The city is also a bustling film producer, with the second largest movie industry in India. The Tamil film industry has also been a continuous supply line of politicians at the state level, including a few chief ministers down to the present one.

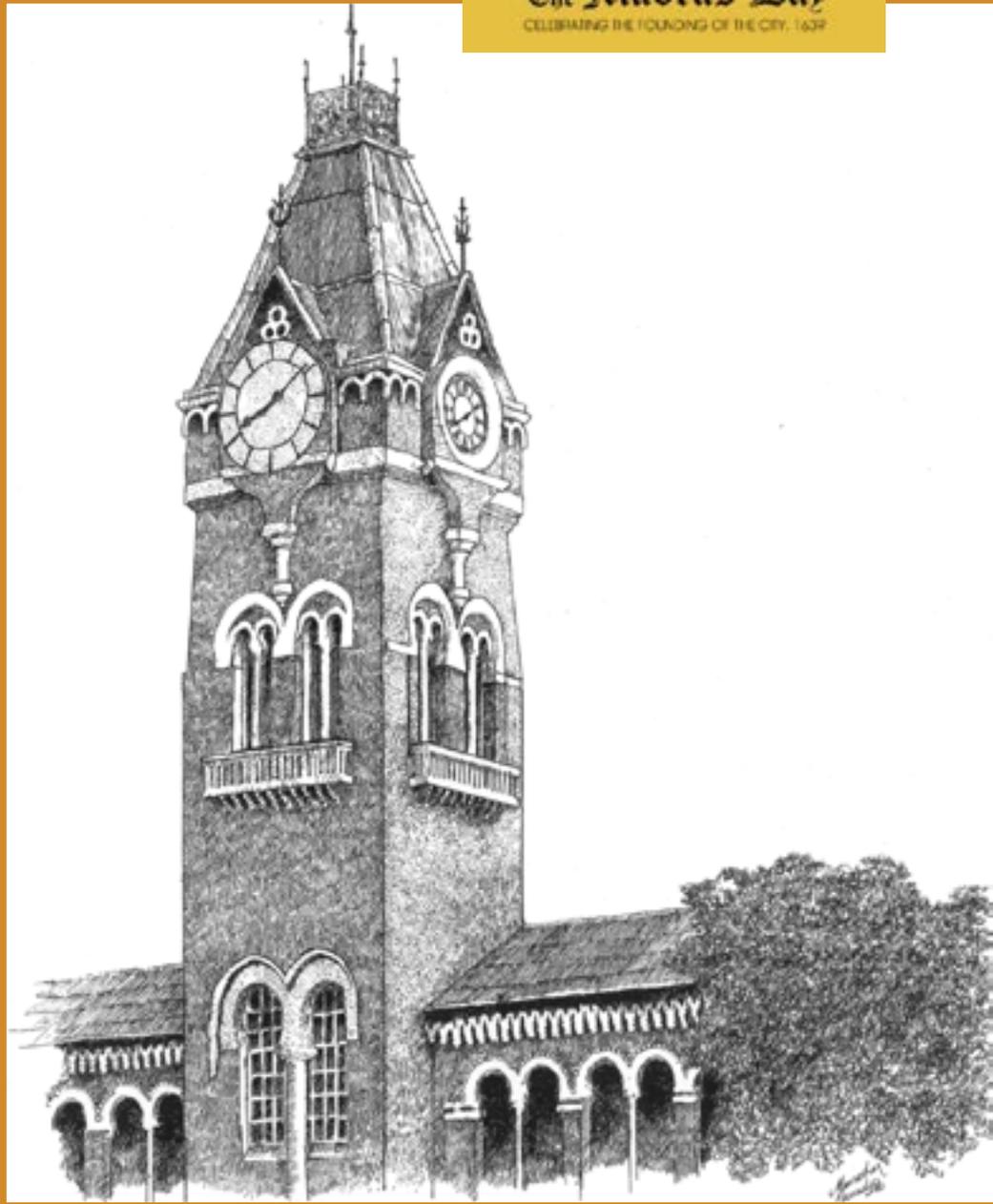


Fast emerging as India's Detroit, with Ford and Hyundai setting up manufacturing bases here, Chennai is also an important centre of computer software, IT and IT enabled services, second only to Bangalore, and second for reasons not of talent, but of locational advantage, in which the Karnataka capital scores better, thanks mainly to its pleasant climate.

Chennai is a sports-conscious city, with a large number of passionate enthusiasts of cricket, followed closely by a burgeoning chess community, led by Viswanathan Anand, one of the world's best players.

The city has a great tradition in tennis as well, with the Krishnans – Ramanathan and Ramesh – the pride of India and the Davis Cup. Just the other day, the Indians led by the ageless pair Paes and Bhupathi put it past Brazil.

The city has some of the best cricket grounds in India, most of them developed and maintained by corporate patrons of the game on college campuses, a unique brand of industry-institution cooperation. Chennai also has excellent, world standard facilities for other ball games, track and field and aquatic events, golf courses and even a top class motor racing track not far from the city. Tennis, squash, badminton, table tennis, field hockey, soccer, athletics, beach volleyball, swimming and sailing are some of the popular sporting activities. Tamil Nadu has a talented cricket team, which figures prominently in the national championship and the



The Chennai Central Railway Station.

M A Chidambaram Stadium, the headquarters of cricket in the state, has been the venue, since the 1930s, of several international matches and the cricket World Cup.

Chennai is an important centre of school and higher education. The State government sponsored mid-day meal scheme has for decades been a model for third world countries to emulate in their attempts to spread literacy and ensure nutrition for the children of their poor. In

addition to conventional, state approved streams of schooling, the city has had the benefit of the pioneering initiatives of some of the finest educationists of modern times. The great Italian, Maria Montessori, introduced her world-renowned method of education designed to exploit the potential of a child to the fullest extent, to students and teachers she trained here, thus laying the foundation for the Montessori movement in India.

Eminent thinker J Krishnamurti, who founded the Rishi Valley in nearby Andhra Pradesh, spent many productive years at Chennai; the school run by the Krishnamurti Foundation is another important landmark of Adyar. Not far from there is the Kalakshetra Foundation, an international institution founded in the 1930s by Rukmini Devi Arundale, dancer, dance teacher, choreographer and institution builder extraordinaire.

The Guindy Engineering College, now part of Anna University, the colleges of Madras University, the Indian Institute of Technology, and autonomous institutions like Madras Christian College, Loyola College and Women's Christian College are among the oldest and finest centres of graduate and post graduate education in India. Amazingly,

some of these are among the oldest modern institutions of learning in the world!

There are ever so many other things that Chennai is famous for—from its ubiquitous Udipi restaurants specialising in idli-dosa-vada and south Indian “degree” coffee, its many silk sari shops and jewellers, a great variety of entertainment options covering dance, drama, music and cinema, religious discourses, Gita lectures, yoga, pranayama, reiki and pranic healing, a bewildering array of martial arts, alternative medicine and healing systems, both indigenous and exotic. The British Council, Alliance Francaise, Max Mueller Bhavan and the American Consulate, all of them in the forefront of cultural interchange between India and these countries, have over the decades succeeded in bringing some of the leading artists, poets, authors and

other men and women of eminence to perform for and interact with the residents of Chennai.

The Chennai climate is healthy, by and large, and its standards of hygiene are of an acceptable standard. The Madras Medical College and the General Hospital are institutions with a rich history, and the city is today the home of some of the best medical talent in the country, and of a number of excellent diagnostic centres and hospitals. A whole new hospitality industry has grown in the last couple of decades around the thousands of patients (and their families) coming to Chennai from all parts of India for specialised treatment.

The illustrations here are by Manohar Devadoss, Chennai's celebrity artist who suffers from severe visual impairment.

The Kapaleeswara temple, Mylapore.



Remembering Madras...

A Photo Feature



The Museum Theatre is a delightful Olde English creation with a 'pit' in its semi-circular auditorium meant for the higher-priced seats and seating for the rest in tiered rows arranged all round. This 19th Century creation vies with the oldest building in the Museum for antiquarian attention; especially now that the Theatre has been tastefully restored.

In the 18th Century, Chepauk Palace was the lone building between the Fort St George and San Thome. But in the latter half of the 19th Century there began building for education which gave Madras a recognisable skyline a hundred years later. Further south, a new examination hall was built as part of the expanding University's construction in the 1930s, adding grandeur to the Madras skyline. Facing it today is the statue of the scholar-saint Tiruvalluvar.





The San Thome Basilica of today was consecrated on this site in 1896, a handsome Gothic church with a towering steeple over the entrance and a smaller steeple over the crypt in which a few relics of, and an abiding faith in, Thomas Dydimus remain. In the cathedral is one of the most perfect pieces of stained glass in Madras.



The Big (or Wallajah) Mosque in Triplicane, built in 1975 by the Nawab's family for the large congregation in the area, is one of the most beautiful in the city. It is also the biggest.



Triplicane owes its name to Tiruvallikeni, the sacred lily tank that once existed here. The tank no longer exists and the lilies are few in the magnificent man-made tank built on the sacred site of the legendary pond. By the temple tank is the Sri Parthasarathy Temple, dedicated to Sri Krishna in his role as charioteer to Arjuna. One of the city's oldest landmarks, the temple dates back to the middle of the 8th Century, Pallava times.



The 55,000 sq. feet General Post Office was opened for business in 1884, almost 175 years after postal services had been established in Madras. Damage during an early 20th Century storm resulted in the 'caps' on the 125-foot tall main towers of the Post Office being removed. A fire in the building in 2003 gutted the building's interior.



In the early 1930s, Bharatanatyam was not for well brought up girls. Rukmini Devi decided to change that – and succeeded in bringing the classical Indian temple art form out from behind closed doors. The school she established on the Theosophical Society's campus soon flowered and grew into Kalakshetra (The Temple of Art), one of the world's most renowned institutions of South Indian classical music and dance. The institution's auditorium, built in traditional Kerala style and with Rukmini Devi Arundale remembered in front of it.



Until 1946, the River Adyar was the southern boundary of Madras. In the days when the river flowed fast and Man had not taken over its banks, the huge sand banks the river formed were islands in its estuary. And on these islands, Man later built some of the most magnificent mansions of Madras. One of them is Chettinad Palace, a handsome pile on Quibble Island when seen from the river and a stately presence when seen from its driveway. Built in the first half of the 20th Century, it is the home of the heirs of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad, founder of Annamalai University.

Photographs courtesy: Madras that is Chennai: Gateway to the South by S Muthiah. Published by Ranpar Publishers, Chennai.

Laughing at Chennai

The author, Sriram V, is one of Chennai's leading public speakers – especially on the city's heritage – and eminent author on music and musicians.



Let's face it. This is a city that takes itself very seriously. You can see it in the way people

d r i v e around, clutching a cell-phone, talking into it all the time, taking time off only to abuse others on the road. You can also see it in the way parents push their children into ten thousand different activities - keyboard, classical music, dance, drums, mental arithmetic using the abacus, tennis, swimming - all in the absolute certainty that they have given birth to a David Brian, an MS Subbulakshmi, a Kumari Kamala, a Sivamani, a Srinivasa Ramanujan, a Federer and a Spitz, all rolled into one of course. And you can see them walking up and down the length of the swimming pool forgetting that they cannot swim themselves, giving instructions to the poor child to now breathe, to now lift its arms, to kick its legs and now not to breathe, not to lift its arms and not to kick. As for academics, what is a child for if not to score that acme of Chennai perfection, the dreaded centum?

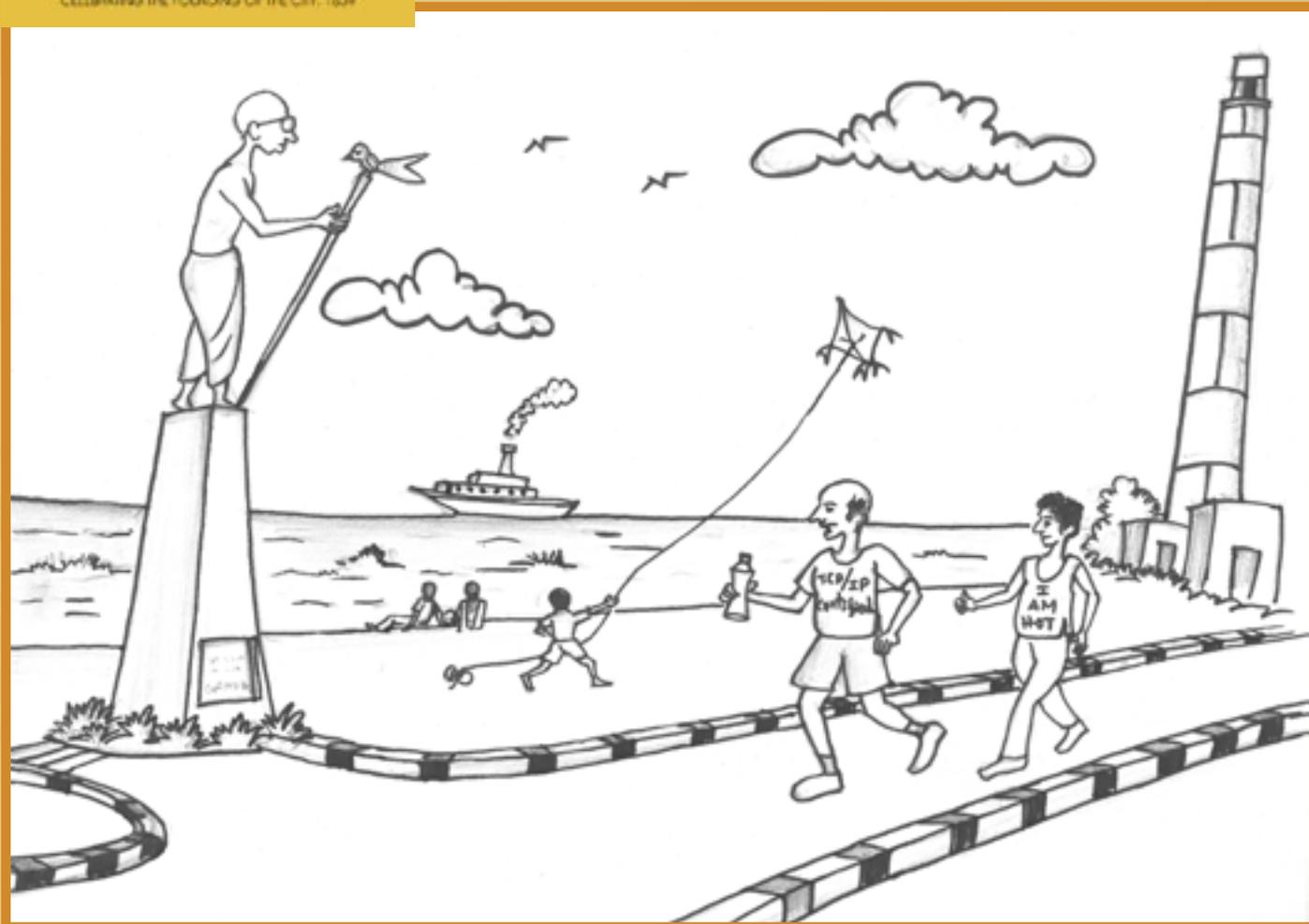
Centum is a word that is hardly heard outside our city. But then so are so many other words used

here. Have you ever reflected on how most words in *Madras bhashai* are actually not from Tamil? Thus you have naina, dubbu, duddu and dindu which are from Telugu, Peter, Mary, assault, regent (actually decent) and feed (speed) which are from the Queen's own language and bejaar and galeej which are from Urdu. And what about kasmaalam which is actually from Sanskrit? We also have phrases from Hindi but they are crudely anatomical and no in-house journal of a corporate house can publish such things.

But to get back to the centum and its awful consequences. Somewhere along the line, most parents realise that their child will have to drop all its extra-curricular activities and focus on the centum. And having

achieved that the child is shipped out to foreign lands. It becomes an NRI. And the parent becomes an IAS or an IA&AS. The former stands for Indian Ayah Service and the latter for Indian Ayah & Aduppumadai (kitchen) Service, for which the parent is invited each summer to overseas lands to take care of the grandchildren during summer vacation, cook meals and also fill the deep freeze before leaving. While there the parents acquire sneakers and ten dollar T Shirts with slogans like "I am hot" or "TCP/IP certified" and come back home to don them each morning for walks. And the conversation during these walks invariably centres on "my son who is in Abu Dubai (wherever that is) or my daughter in Sunnyvale."





The children come back once in a while too and you can spot them a mile off. Not just by their sneakers and ubiquitous water-bottle but also because of the time warp in which they are when it comes to India. To them Chennai is still Madras, with Safire theatre, Jaffer's Ice cream and Moore Market. Their idea of cost of living has also rather unfortunately remained the same and so when they go shopping, what with their tendency to multiply/divide every price tag into their home currencies, they buy very little.

The brain-drain that sent these people away has also caused problems for Chennai's bungalows. These vast houses, with huge gardens, plenty of rooms (but hardly any bedrooms) and one toilet, were meant for families of twenty and

more and a domestic staff of like strength. Most residences like these also had the unmarried/ slightly dim-witted poor cousin (ammanji/ atthan) who was general dogsbody. He worked the water-pump, did the shopping, tended to the sick and looked after grandmother when she had her spells. But over the years everyone migrated and as for dim-witted cousin, his children too have moved on and he now lives in a swank gated-community with an outlandish name like Abhirami Beverly or Alamelu Regency. And he looks down on you for still clinging on to your crumbling bungalow. And you are forced to clean your own water tank though you have vertigo. And when you go out, you have to make sure that you have locked all the windows and doors and switched off the water

pump, or have you? Doubts begin assailing you halfway through the movie or the concert and so it is time to go home and check.

And so one day, the old bungalow is flattened and a multi-storeyed block of flats comes up in its place. No more closing of multiple windows or worrying about the leak from the back verandah. But then one day, a fly-over comes up just next to the third floor window. Through it, commuters can look in to see what is cooking for the day, who is using a size 36 brief and how often the interior of your flat is dusted. But then, very few are bothered. They are speaking seriously into their phones, even as they drive on, pausing only to abuse the others. But that is where we started isn't it?

Azim Premji visits Sanmar

Azim Premji, Chairman of Wipro Technologies, called on Vijay Sankar along with the Wipro team on 21 September 2010 at The Sanmar Group headquarters in Chennai.

Sanmar has fully outsourced its IT operations in all of its facilities across locations.



Vijay Sankar hosts

Senior teams from Cabot Corporation

A team consisting of senior leaders from Cabot Corporation USA including Patrick Prevost – President and Chief Executive Officer, Sean Keohane – Vice President and General Manager, Performance Segment and Nirmalya Maity – Executive Director Business Operations, Performance

Segment, visited Sanmar head office on 24 June 2010. Wide ranging discussions were held on various topics of importance to the JV during the meet.

Vijay Sankar hosted a dinner for the Cabot team. Sanmar's JV with Cabot is well over a decade old and during

the dinner a memento was presented to Vijay Sankar by Patrick Prevost to commemorate the milestone.



S Gopal in conversation with Patrick Prevost.

Vijay Sankar was presented a memento by Patrick Prevost to mark a decade of the JV between Sanmar and Cabot.

R Venkatramani, SB Prabhakar Rao and V Ramesh with Sean Keohane.



Vijay Sankar in conversation with Nirmalya Maity.



overseas visitors

and Flowserve Corporation



(From l to r): Tom Ferguson, Richard Heppenstall and Vijay Sankar.



B Venkataramani and Colin Chua, R Venkatramani and Chrissy Warner.

A team of senior management personnel including Tom Ferguson - Sr Vice President Flowserve Corporation and President Flow Solutions Group, Richard Heppenstall - Vice President FSG, Chrissy Warner - Vice President, Colin Chua - Vice President and General Manager FSG Asia Pacific, S Gopinath - Consultant, visited

The Sanmar Group's corporate offices on 27 May 2010.

Vijay Sankar made a brief presentation on The Sanmar Group. The performance of the Flowserve seals division and the budget for the financial year 2011 were reviewed. In order to improve the market share it was decided that Flowserve

Sanmar and the other overseas offices of Flowserve would now work more closely.

A dinner was hosted in honour of the visitors by Vijay Sankar on the roof top of the corporate headquarters.



Senior executives of Sanmar with visitors from Flowserve.

Supplier Award for Eisenwerk Erla

Eisenwerk Erla, Germany, has obtained the Supplier Award from MTU Friedrichshafen for the year 2009. The award was distributed by Tognum, specialists in propulsion and power solutions to its outstanding suppliers in the categories of 'raw parts', 'finished parts' and 'most promising supplier'.

The award is given to suppliers who have set standards for Tognum in terms of cost and quality optimisation.

Dietmar Hahn (third from left) and Kerstin Hesse (third from right) received the award on behalf of Erla. Dietmar Hahn thanked MTU for the recognition while appreciating the entire team at Erla for making this possible.



Recognition for long service

Head office day celebrated in Chennai

Long service awards were presented to the employees of The Sanmar Group during the Head Office Day celebrations on 1 July 2010. The awards recognise employees serving the Group for 10, 20, 30, 35 and 40 years.

Vijay Sankar, P Natarajan and S Sankaran felicitated the employees with Certificates of Commendation and presents. Gold medals were awarded to R Durairaj and K Jayaraman with 35 and 30 years of service respectively; gold plated Titan watch were presented to R Ganesh, V Shankar and S Rajagopalan with 20 years of service and Titan Quartz watch with leather straps to T Santhosh Kumar with 10 years of service.

A quiz programme was conducted by HR and prizes were distributed among the first three winning teams.



(From l to r): V Shankar, R Durairaj, K Jayaraman, T Santhosh Kumar, Vijay Sankar, S Sankaran, R Ganesh, P Natarajan, S Gopal and S Rajagopalan.



Chemplast conducts special medical camp at Mettur

A free medical camp was conducted by Chemplast Sanmar at Mettur on 1 August 2010 at the Vaideeswara Vidya Mandir Matriculation and Higher Secondary School.

The camp was inaugurated by P Velu, Revenue Divisional Officer, Mettur. Thirteen medical professionals who are specialists in various disciplines such as General Medicine, Neurology, Cardiology, Diabetes, Gynaecology and Paediatrics and thirty paramedical staff from Chettinad Hospital attended on the patients.

About 1250 people from nearby villages like Thangamapuripattinam, Ramamurthy Nagar, Thengalvarai and Kavipuram were screened at the medical camp which benefitted women and elderly people unable to afford specialised medical attention.



People from nearby villages waiting for their turn at the free medical camp.



Diagnostic tests such as blood sugar, ECG, ultrasound and scans were conducted free of cost. Medicines were also supplied free of cost to those who attended the medical camp.

Chemplast runs five rural health centres at strategic locations providing free medical care and medicines to the rural populace around Mettur.



Trubore trains dealers' salesmen



A first of its kind initiative in the PVC pipe industry was taken up by Trubore for training dealers' salesmen.

The dealer salesmen play an influential role in tilting the end sale in favour of a particular brand. Hence the Trubore team thought of an idea to engage them meaningfully in the form of a sensitisation programme.

During July-August 2010, three programmes were conducted for the dealer salesmen from Tamil Nadu and North Karnataka.

The participants were shown the Ponneri and Shinoli factory facilities. The manufacturing and testing processes were explained. A session on their soft skills improvement was also held with the help of an external trainer.

Chemplast's major tree planting drive

100,000 saplings to protect environment

The Government of Tamil Nadu's Cuddalore District Administration has initiated a major tree planting drive beginning 30 July 2010. The drive aims to plant a hundred thousand saplings in and around SIPCOT area and neighbouring villages to conserve the environment and prevent global warming.

A massive tree planting programme was launched at Chemplast Sanmar at Cuddalore in which Cuddalore District Collector Seetharaman

participated and planted saplings in Sanmar's factory premises.

About 10,000 saplings were distributed to 27 companies situated in the industrial area. This would help face the vagaries of monsoon and protect the environment. While trees would be planted alongside the roads, coconut tree saplings would be given one each to individual houses in the area.

Cuddalore District Collector Seetharaman, IAS, planting a sapling.

Cuddalore District Collector Seetharaman, IAS, planting a tree at Chemplast PVC division. NS Mohan looks on.



The Sruti Foundation presents awards

The Sruti Foundation celebrated its Awards Function 2010 on Saturday, 21 August 2010 on the eve of Chennai city's 371st birthday. Sruti, a premier magazine on the performing arts was launched in 1983.

Sangeet Natak Akademi Secretary Jayant Kastaur, the chief guest on the occasion, lauded Sruti's contribution to the classical arts and urged the foundation to hold all India seminars on music and dance, for which he promised support from the Akademi.

Sriram V highlighted the achievements of the awardees in his speech.

Vyjayantimala Bali was awarded the E Krishna Iyer medal in recognition of "her outstanding contributions to Bharatanatyam in a distinguished career spread over seven decades".

Veena exponent and teacher Padmavathy Ananthagopalan received the Vellore Gopalachariar Memorial award and R Krishnaswamy, Secretary of Narada Gana Sabha the M Venkatakrishnan Memorial Award.

V Ramnarayan, editor-in-chief of Sruti, welcomed the gathering while Sukanya Sankar, trustee, Sruti Foundation, proposed a vote of thanks.



Sukanya Sankar

(From l to r): R Krishnaswamy, Vyjayantimala Bali, Jayant Kastaur, Padmavathy Ananthagopalan on the dais.





Narthaki Natraj presented a Bharatanatyam recital in the rare Tanjavur bani.



(From l to r): S Janaki, Sujatha Vijayaraghavan, Malini Srinivasan, Vyjayantimala Bali, Leela Sekhar, Revathy Ramachandran and Kala Ramesh Rao at the function.

Vyjayantimala Bali

Pride of Chennai

Vyjayantimala Bali, this year's awardee of the Sruti Foundation's E Krishna Iyer medal for lifetime achievement in the field of Indian classical dance is a sprightly septuagenarian whose superb footwork and emoting on stage can even today put young dancers to shame. One of the most versatile artistes in the history of the south Indian performing arts, Ms Bali was the heartthrob of millions as a film star of great beauty and acting ability for a couple of decades until her early retirement from movies in 1968.

Vyjayantimala Bali turned 76 on Friday, 13 August, just a week before the Sruti awards function. Her passion for her art is undimmed.

Vyjayantimala's life can be divided into three phases. In the first, she was a child prodigy—shaped into a fine dancing talent by her grandmother Yadugiri. The second phase was her sensational film career during which she was paired with some of the biggest heroes of Tamil and Hindi cinema. Marriage to Dr Chaman Lal Bali brought her a fulfilling second innings as a bharatanatyam artist away from the world of celluloid. This was also the period when she took to golf and won amateur titles at the national level, and took up causes she believed in as a parliamentarian.

Today, she is the perfect picture of a consummate artist who has aged gracefully, a role model for young aspirants in every aspect of her art. She is an outspoken champion of tradition at a time when it is under siege from powerful forces.



N Kumar's address to 'tomorrow's India'

P S Senior Secondary School Annual Day Celebrations



The Annual Day Celebrations of P S Senior Secondary School were held on 14 August 2010, on the eve of Independence Day, at Sathguru Gnanananda Hall, Chennai. N Kumar was the chief guest on the occasion.

Excerpts from his message to 'tomorrow's India' on the occasion: "...on the eve of Independence, I thought it was important to remind ourselves of the sacrifice that our previous generations made to obtain independence. I am sure they had in their dreams a free India that would lead the world and Indians who lived with discipline and moral values!

Just like Nelson Mandela now in South Africa, we had Mahatma Gandhi. But behind the Gandhis and Mandelas were thousands of simple, committed patriots who

laid down their lives for the country many of them without even a word written about them. It is the same in the corporate world, where I have spent most of my life, where there are unsung heroes behind the Mittals and Ambanis. It is true in every walk of life. In sports, we read about the Messis in football and Dhonis in cricket, but there is always a team behind them.

Therefore, my first message to you is that, while recognition is important, maybe a small percentage of this country will gain that. The more important virtue is the commitment

Hony. Secretary and Correspondent AN Radhakrishnan greeting N Kumar with a bouquet. Also seen is CV Narasimhan, Chairman.



to one's task. Please commit yourself to your tasks, whatever, your task, whichever field that you may in – engineer, musician, builder, sports person.

The second thought for the evening is what our Prime Minister calls “inclusiveness”. You are all aware that while India has brilliance and richness in abundance, it has poverty in equal measure. Our Prime Minister has of course taken on this rightful task of inclusive growth on a national level. I think each one of us in tomorrow's world must keep this in mind. Some of us who are fortunate must conserve and share what God has given us with our community. I am not talking of huge donations or monies but small things like donating a book to a poor student, spending time

with someone who is in need are all steps in the right direction. I must mention here that when I was in school (MCC) we had a Tamil Medium, a Malayalam Medium along with the English Mediums. The entire education was done in those languages. This is what I call as inclusiveness. These practices can well be borne in mind by our political leaders.

The third and last thought I want to leave with you is that you must think that we are Indians first. There are many examples today where we divide ourselves by religion, language and many, many other differences that sometimes we forget that we are Indians first.

India is fast growing from being a land of snake charmers and Taj Mahal to being recognised

as an industrial leader. We are moving from being one of the laggards of growth to a leadership position. They say going by the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) report, India will be the 3rd or 4th largest economy in the world by 2020. It is the ‘Indianness’ of tomorrow's leaders that will propel the country to achieve its position of leadership.

In conclusion, as leaders of tomorrow, I appeal to you all -

- To think as Indians first
- Stick to principles
- Do it well AND
- Work as a team and work with people who are not fortunate.

N Kumar being received by student leaders. Principal Lakshmi Srinivasan looks on.



Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children

MNC news in pictures

Priya Rajkumar, Principal of MNC, is seen pinning the National Flag on a child on the occasion of the Independence Day celebrations at MNC.



At MNC guest specialists are invited to share their knowledge with staff and parents thereby enhancing the quality of training imparted to the child. Nirmala Venkatesan, Senior Occupational Therapist, is seen with parents and staff of MNC during one such training session.

At MNC, the social skills of the children are developed by taking them on outings. This helps them in their interactions with the community. In this visit to the Marina beach, parents and children of MNC are seen enjoying themselves.



Chemplast contributes to temple renovation



Ramkumar Shankar handing over Chemplast Sanmar's contribution towards the renovation of Thiruchopuram temple, Cuddalore, to the Trust Chairman. NS Mohan looks on.

12 ஆண்டுக்கு பிறகு
திருச்சோபுரநாதர் கோவில்
மகாகும்பாபிஷேகம் நடந்தது



K Soundararajan handing over Chemplast Sanmar's contribution to NV Panneerselvam, Trustee, Sri Baktharkulam Mariamman Temple. The kumbhabhishekam of the temple was held on 22 August 2010.

Global issues at Model United Nations platform

Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School, Adyar

Sri Sankara Model United Nations conference (SANMUN) was held between 21–23 August 2010 with resounding success.

Delegates from twelve schools, including from Bangalore and Sharjah, UAE participated. Heated debates and peaceful negotiations, so much like the real United Nations conferences, resulted in resolutions being passed in several committees including security council, human rights commission, environmental commission, economic and social council and disarmament council.



(From l to r): Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School Vice Principal S Meenakshi, Deputy Head Teacher Jan Hatherall, Hardenhuish School, Principal Subala Ananthanarayanan.

As a part of Global School Partnership programme, the Principal Subala Ananthanarayanan and the Vice Principal, S Meenakshi from Sri Sankara Senior Secondary School, Adyar, went to UK on a Reciprocal visit supported by British Council. They visited Hardenhuish School, Chippenham, Wiltshire, UK, during the last week of June 2010.

Schools

Madras Day celebrations

Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Matriculation
Higher Secondary School, Tiruvanmiyur



S Illakkiya Raghavi, Vijaya Lalitha and S Priyanka receiving the second prize from S Ve Shekher, leading film and theatre personality and politician, in the Multi Media Presentation contest organised by Mylapore Times during Madras day celebrations on 17 August 2010. Their remarkable presentation on the 1000 year old 'Thenupureeshwarar temple' was well appreciated by the judges.

Sri Sankara Vidyashramam conducted Inter school fest for the Chennai schools as part of Madras day celebrations. The fest drew enthusiastic participation from 140 students of four Government and seven private schools. Several competitions were held and winners awarded. Sri Sankara Vidyashramam received the shield for organising innovative programmes from INTACH during the valedictory function on 28 August 2010.



Blood donation camp

It was indeed a proud moment for the students of Sri Sankara Vidyashramam Matriculation Higher Secondary School at Tiruvanmiyur who were lauded by the Madras Voluntary Blood Bureau and the Association of Voluntary Blood Donors Tamil Nadu and awarded the Bank of Baroda rolling shield.

This was in recognition of the school's achievement of having organised blood donation camps and mobilised 561 donors in 2009.

Aurobindo

Aurobindo Ghose (15 August 1872–5 December 1950) was an Indian nationalist and freedom fighter, poet, philosopher, and yogi, who joined the movement for India's freedom from British rule and became one of its leaders (1905–10), before developing his own vision and philosophy of human progress and spiritual evolution. Moving from his native Bengal to Pondicherry to escape the British and take shelter under French rule, he became a true southern legend when he established the Aurobindo Ashram there.

Aurobindo was born in Calcutta on 15 August 1872. At the age of seven he was taken to England for education. There he studied at St. Paul's School, London, and at King's College, Cambridge. Returning to India in 1893, he worked for the next thirteen years in the princely state of Baroda in the service of the Maharaja and as a professor in Baroda College. During this period he also joined a revolutionary society and took a leading role in secret preparations for an uprising against the British Government in India.

In 1906, Aurobindo quit his post in Baroda and went to Calcutta, where he soon became one of the leaders of the nationalist movement. He was the first political leader in

India to openly put forward, in his newspaper *Bande Mataram*, the idea of complete independence for the country. Prosecuted twice for sedition and once for conspiracy, he was released each time for lack of evidence.

Aurobindo started practising yoga while in Baroda. In 1908 he had the first of several fundamental spiritual realisations. In 1910 he withdrew from politics and went to Pondicherry to devote himself entirely to his inner spiritual life and work. During his forty years in Pondicherry he evolved a new method of spiritual practice, which he called the Integral Yoga. In 1926, with the help of his spiritual collaborator, the Mother, he founded the Aurobindo Ashram. Among his many writings are *The Life Divine*, *The Synthesis of Yoga* and *Savitri*.

He began the publication of a philosophical monthly, the *Arya* in 1914. Most of his important works appeared serially in the *Arya*. Others were concerned with the spirit and significance of Indian civilisation and culture (*The Foundations of Indian Culture*), the true meaning of the Vedas (*The Secret of the Veda*), the progress of human society (*The Human Cycle*), the nature and evolution of poetry (*The Future Poetry*), the possibility of the unification of the human race (*The Ideal of Human Unity*). At this

time also he began to publish his poems. The *Arya* ceased publication in 1921.

Aurobindo lived at first in retirement at Pondicherry with four or five disciples. Afterwards more and more began to come to him to follow his spiritual path and the number became so large that a community of sadhakas had to be formed. This was the foundation of the Aurobindo Ashram.

The Mother

The Mother was born Mirra Alfassa in Paris on 21 February 1878. A pupil at the Academie Julian, she became an accomplished artist, and also excelled as a pianist and writer. Deeply interested in spiritual development, she founded a group of spiritual seekers in Paris and gave talks.

In 1914 the Mother voyaged to Pondicherry to meet Aurobindo, whom she recognised as the one who for many years had inwardly guided her spiritual development. After travelling for a while, she rejoined Aurobindo in Pondicherry in April 1920. When the Ashram was formed, Aurobindo entrusted its full material and spiritual charge to the Mother. Under her guidance, which continued for nearly fifty years, the Ashram grew into a large, many-faceted spiritual community. In 1952 she established the Aurobindo International Centre

of Education, and in 1968 an international township, Auroville.

Aurobindo passed away on 5 December 1950, and the Mother on 17 November 1973.

The Aurobindo Ashram

The Aurobindo Ashram has grown, under the Mother's guidance, from a small group of two dozen disciples into a large diversified community with almost 1200 members. Counting the 400 students of the Centre of Education and the hundreds of devotees who live nearby, the larger ashram community consists of more than 2000 people.

Situated in a busy city of over 700,000 people, the Ashram is a vibrant centre of life in a modern urban setting. Work as an offering to the Divine is an essential aspect of the yoga of Aurobindo, and all Ashramites do a certain amount of productive work each day at the Ashram's departments.

In the sadhana or spiritual discipline at the Ashram, there are no obligatory practices, no rituals, no compulsory meditation or systematic instructions in yoga. The sadhakas are left free to determine the course and pace of their sadhana in accordance with their own natures. But there must be a surrender to the Divine and an opening to the Divine Force so that it may work to transform your being.

The focus of community life is the Ashram main building, usually called simply "the Ashram", which consists of an interconnected block

of houses, including those in which Aurobindo and the Mother lived for most of their lives. At its centre, in a tree-shaded courtyard, lies the samadhi, a white-marble shrine where the bodies of Aurobindo and the Mother are laid to rest.

The Ashram provides its members with all they need for a decent and healthy life. Various departments have been organised to look after

the basic requirements of food, clothing and shelter, as well as medical care. There are also libraries for study and facilities for a variety of cultural pursuits. The Ashram is administered by the Aurobindo Ashram Trust.

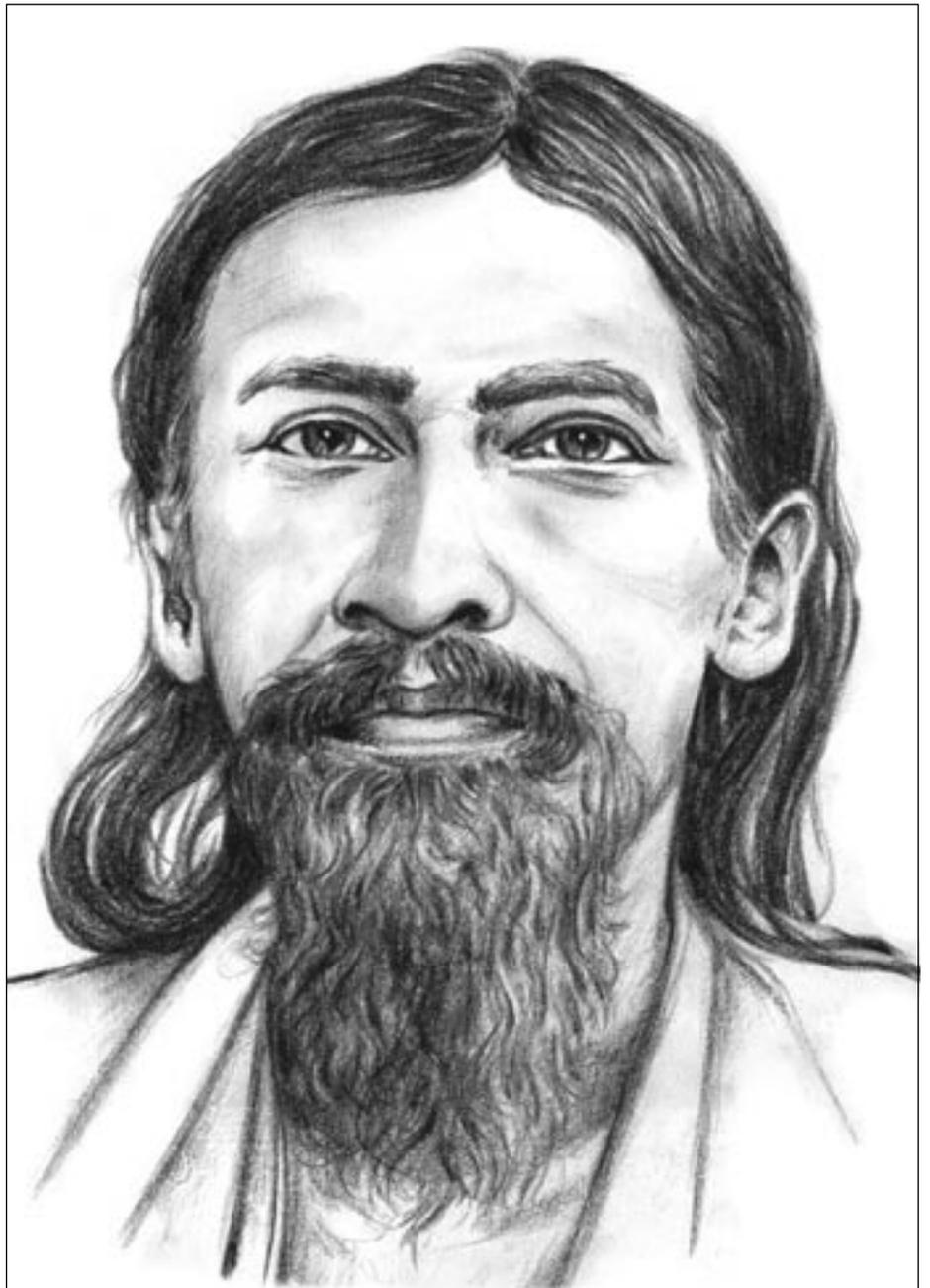


Illustration by V Vijayakumar

