

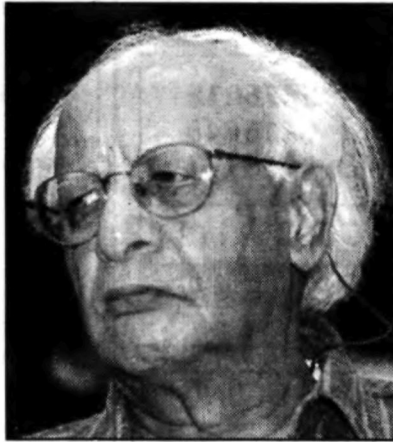
LOCAL HERO

Urban ills pain this sociologist

Once a Mysorean, having studied at the Maharaja College of Mysore, eminent social anthropologist M.N. Srinivas is a late entrant to the Garden City, having moved here only in 1972. Persuaded by Prof V.K.R.V. Rao, (the founder of the Delhi School of Economics at which Srinivas was teaching sociology), Srinivas moved to Bangalore that year to help set up the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC).

This enterprise received the active encouragement of Dharam Veera, the then governor of Karnataka and Indira Gandhi, who was then the prime minister. With a Rs 50 lakh grant from the government, the institute was put together in a period of six months. ISEC, at which Srinivas is presently Emeritus Professor, is one of the foremost and select think-tanks of the city which has global recognition.

While he moved to Bangalore in



M. N. Srinivas

1972, it was only in 1976 that he moved to Nandidurga Extension to settle at his present abode. That he is an immensely home-proud person is evidenced by his stating that "My house is like a jungle as my wife and both my daughters are very fond of gardening. We have squirrels, mynas and koels on our lawns and plenty of fish in our ponds."

But at the same time, this idyllic world does not shade him entirely from the urban malaise of congestion and pollution. Srinivas is especially upset over the razing down of three granite bungalows, one of them being a century-old, on Benson Cross Road.

While he couldn't do much to prevent this 'catastrophe', Srinivas managed to do his bit for his locality by ensuring that the police (who were 'extremely helpful') set up stone pillars on Benson Cross Road to prevent the HTV traffic menace.

According to him, "There used to be at least 150 lorries travelling at one time as this road is also a shortcut to Whitefield."

It was a pain, causing great inconvenience not just to elderly people but also to school students crossing the road. The BCC tin signboard prohibiting such movement used to get periodically knocked down."

Till Srinivas applied his persuasion on the police officials and succeeded in getting the stone pillars erected. And saved Nandidurga residents of some noise and dust.