

Deccan Chronicle 11.09.2009

Architect plans biggest gopuram

September 11th, 2009 By Our Correspondent

Thanjavur Sept. 10: If the dream of a 63-year-old teacher turned architect materialises, Mad-urai will have the biggest single stone gopuram of the world, four times larger than the Thanjavur Big Temple.

Mr A. Arasu, founder chairman of Consortium of Tamil Architects and an advocate, has identified a four-km long giant rock which is 1,200 metres broad and 300 metres high near the Yoganarasimha Perumal temple in Othakadai of Madurai for this.

“Geological study reveals that it is an old granite rock,” he says. “We can compare it with the length and breadth of Ajantha, Ellora cave and Bamiyan hills.”

Mr Arasu says that a grand architectural city can be built inside this mega rock. “We can create buildings bigger than the Parliament, sculpt places of worship for all religions and engrave 1,330 Tirukkural verses as base sculpture,” he adds.

The proposed granite gopuram would be 400 feet broad and 864 feet tall. The dream project can be completed in two years at a cost of Rs 400 crore.

According to Mr Arasu, this expense can be offset since authorities can get minerals, sand, gravel and granite slabs worth Rs 500 crore from the rock.

Mr Arasu has sent a copy of the project report to the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, who in turn forwarded it to Tamil Nadu. A seven-member team has now been constituted to study the feasibility of the project.