

A Grand Trunk View
By Veena Gomes-Patwardhan

"Why do you want to go to India?"

"Ganhar pao." (To earn my bread)

"What do you have to declare?"

"One tin trunk."

As my grandfather, Antonio, and motley groups of young and middle-aged men filed past the Portuguese check post at Polem near the border of Portuguese Goa in the early Twenties, they were put through this routine questioning.

Once in Bombay, Antonio headed to St Anthony's Club, at the far end of D'Lima Street in - Mazagoan. In contrast to the commonplace facades of the other residential buildings on the street, the two-storey club building, named after the patron saint of our village, Chinchinim, was fitted with a series of pointed arch windows and a wide verandah, framed by ornate Romanesque columns and arches.