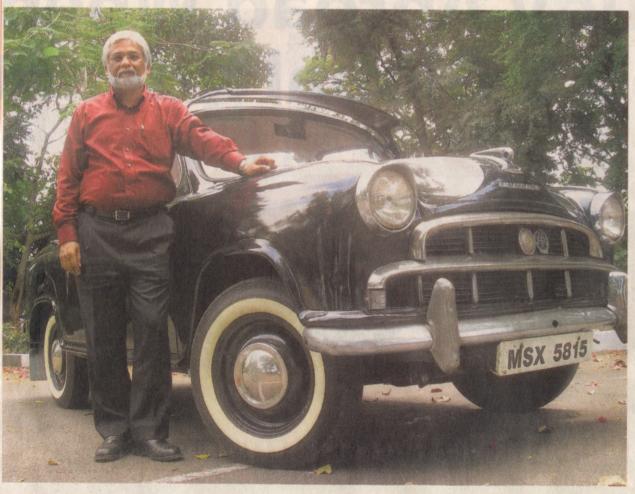
MAN AND MACHINE

PRINCE FREDERICK

Staying original

Be it his hair or car, Naresh Bangara steers clear of artificiality



aresh Bangara's mobile an old car. It has the number but stopped the practice as prices of special numbers became exorspecial significance to '5815'. It is special in his eyes because his 49year-old Ambassador wears it. And as a family heirloom, this car is valuable.

least, preserved whatever he inlargest in the country. And he zealously as his father used to.

all these years, provides most of do." these details. Even the car's sale slip was with Naresh for a long time, but got lost when his family moved house. A 1959 Amby promotional poster that came with the purchase announces that "Ambassadors are getting overhead valve engines for the first time".

Like its owners, the car holds number reflects his love for on to old things. The Smith's milometer, fuel, oil and battery cluster '5815', which, when gauges have never been reprefixed by 'MSX', is the number placed or modified. The of his 1959 Ambassador. Naresh straight-four petrol engine and used to get '5815' for his vehicles, SU Carburettor are in there since 1959. That can actually be said about most other parts too. bitant. He does not attach any When any part gets worn out, Naresh is either already prepared for the situation or tries to get the right replacement. Knowing taillights and parking lights can get damaged easily. Naresh has improved or, at the he had stocked 12 pairs of each. Now, four pairs of each are in herited from his father Raja Ban- the bag. But replacing the parts gara. He has turned a small of this Mark I Amby has seldom Philips showroom his father es- been so easy. For example, he tablished in 1945 into one of the had to bend over backwards to get a Bendix self-starter and takes care of the Ambassador as speedometer cables. "Most dealers don't have a clue. They Raja Bangara bought this Amby always bring Mark IV spare on August 13, 1959 for Rs. 14,440. parts. I don't give up until I get The guarantee certificate, which what is meant for my Amby. the Bangaras have kept with them Even something better won't

This is not surprising considering that he has not done anything to his hair. "My grey hair makes me look older than I am. Some think I am fifty, while I'm just on the wrong side of forty. But, no thank you. Hair dyes are not for me. I would rather stay original."