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Esther Brimmer, US Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations, addressed the High Level Segment of the 22nd Session of the United Nations High Level Segment on February 26. “Council’s work remains unfinished so long as Sri Lanka continues to fall Short in implementing LLRC recommendations and addressing Sources of Ethnic Conflict”, assistant Secretary Brimmer said in her statement. She added that “United States will introduce another resolution at this session to ensure that the international community continues to monitor progress, and to again offer assistance on outstanding reconciliation and accountability issues”. [pic: US Mission, Geneva]

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Canadian Prime Minister firm on boycotting Commonwealth Summit in Sri Lanka - Further developments taking that country in worse direction, Stephen Harper tells Canadian Parliament

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has once again re-iterated his previous stand that Canada will boycott the Commonwealth summit in Sri Lanka and has told Parliament that further developments are taking that country in a worse direction.

"I have indicated that unless changes occur in Sri Lanka I will not be attending the Commonwealth summit there," Harper told Parliament.

"I am concerned with further developments, since I made that statement, which are taking that country in a worse direction," he further added.

Canada has also stepped up its pressure on Sri Lanka by reporting the country to the Commonwealth for alleged violations of democratic principles in the impeachment process and the removal of its Chief Justice Ms. Shirani Bandaranaike.

Harper has made it clear that he will not attend the Commonwealth's next summit unless Sri Lanka addresses allegations of atrocities during the last stages of the war that took place in the Vanni area in 2009.

Sri Lanka however continues to deny allegations of war crimes and human rights violations.



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A Promise is a Promise

By: Tashvir Narine B.Sc (Hons.)

Last month, the Monsoon Journal reported that the province of Ontario named the first female Premier, yet another step in the direction of gender equality.

As we march along with that time of marking a historic occasion, the world recognizes "International Women's Day" officially on March 8th. This year, the celebration focuses on ending violence against women. The theme "A promise is a promise" calls for the international community to act out against this downfall in today's society. Front and centre in this fight is the United Nations and the Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon. The UN's UNiTE campaign is actively working on influencing governments, media outlets and others in an attempt to take more of a charge in righting this wrong.

According to the UN statistics, up to 70% of women in the world report having experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime.



In addition, up to 50% of sexual assaults are committed against girls under the age of 16.

These two numbers alone are reason enough for change. The individuals that commit such crimes are men, who in turn have sisters and mothers the same way. The only way we can continue this fight is through education and awareness, such as the efforts of International Women's Day 2013.

Starting March 8th, singers and musicians around the world will launch a musical collabora-

tion entitled "One Woman" to launch the efforts of togetherness in this cause.

The public can partake on a smaller scale this year through outlets such as social media. One can follow the proceedings through Twitter @UN_Women and the hashtag #1woman. Donations can also be made via a tweet through the UN's Thunderclap, which will be released on March 8th as well.

The Monsoon Team is proud to recognize International Women's Day.

"Woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacity..."

If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior...

If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with women" - Mahatma Gandhi

Photographs in New Channel 4 documentary "No Firing Zone" reveal that LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran's 12 year old son Balachandran was captured and executed by Sri Lanka Army. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu J. Jayalalithaa has charged that the killing of Balachandran is "a grave war-crime which cannot be forgiven"



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“ **A treasure is to be valued for its own sake and not for what it will buy - Graham Greene (2 October 1904 – 3 April 1991) English writer** ”

Printing the Winds of Change around us All lands home, all men kin.

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The New Ontario Government will work with business to help young people succeed

The new Ontario government is getting to work to secure a better future for young people in the province.

In her first jobs roundtable discussion with members of Ontario's Jobs and Prosperity Council, business leaders and young entrepreneurs, Premier Wynne reiterated her commitment to create jobs and build a stronger economy and a fair society by ensuring our young people have the tools and confidence they need to succeed.

Premier Wynne also commended the Jobs and Prosperity Council for its recommendations and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce for its report "Emerging Stronger," which identify new ideas and economic opportunities aimed at improving Ontario's long-term productivity and competitiveness.

Providing the right climate to attract

investment, create jobs and grow the economy is part of the new Ontario government's plan to build a fair society and a strong economy.

Ontario employment has increased by 380,200 net new jobs since the economic low in June 2009.

The Summer Company program provides financing and mentoring to help students run their own businesses. Since the program began, students started up more than 4,000 businesses, everything from graphic design to computer repair and landscaping.

The Specialist High Skills Major program helps high school students find their career passion and prepare for jobs. This school year, approximately 38,000 Grade 11 and 12 students are participating in 19 majors, including aviation and aerospace, environment and agriculture.

Premier Kathleen Wynne's Statement on the Return of Extracurricular Activities in Schools



Premier Kathleen Wynne released the following statement:

"I'm happy to hear the results of the vote by OSSTF members, and I'm so glad that teachers, support staff and students across the province will once again enjoy the extracurricular activities and programs that mean so much to them.

For the past few weeks, my team and I have been meeting with our partners in the public sector and engaging in positive, frank and collaborative discussions about our shared priorities.

Our government has immense respect for the educators of this province and we recognize the important role they play in our children's lives and in communities

across Ontario.

This news is a great indication of the hard work all parties are putting into the repair of this valued relationship. It shows our willingness to work together, to listen to one another's concerns, and to find common ground on which we can rebuild a foundation of trust and create an effective process going forward.

I've been clear that this issue needs to be addressed within Ontario's existing fiscal framework. But I am confident that our government's commitment to fairness, consistency and respect in our conversations with OSSTF and all our partners will continue to result in real work being done for the people of Ontario."

Restoring Great Lakes to Protect Ontario's Future

The New Ontario Government Makes Great Lakes Protection a Priority

Ontario is re-introducing legislation, if passed, would ensure cleaner and healthier Great Lakes that are protected for future generations.

The proposed Great Lakes Protection Act would provide new tools to restore and protect the lakes and create a council to identify priorities and recommend actions to address them.

Protecting and restoring the Great Lakes is part of the new Ontario government's plan to enhance quality of life for Ontario families and ensure a strong, green economy for future generations.

More than 80 per cent of Ontarians get their drinking water from the Great



Lakes.

Ontario's Great Lakes basin is home to 40 per cent of Canada's economic activity.

More than 95 per cent of Ontario's agricultural land is in the Great Lakes basin.

Ontario Continuing to Increase Accountability at Ornge



The New Ontario Government Restoring Confidence in Ontario's Air Ambulance Services

Ontario is moving forward on its continued commitment to restore public confidence in Ontario's air ambulance service with new legislation and a regulation to improve accountability and oversight at Ornge. The new Ontario government is re-introducing the Ambulance Amendment Act (Air Ambulances), 2013. This legislation responds to the Auditor General's 2012 report and protects whistleblowers while allowing the government to take control of Ornge in extraordinary circumstances.

The legislation would also allow the government to change its performance agreement with Ornge at any time. The government is also bringing forward a regulation that would, if adopted, make Ornge subject to Ontario's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

These steps will build on recent actions by Ornge's new leadership to improve accountability, patient safety, response times, ambulance dispatch and air safety.

Delivering the best health care to the

people of Ontario, while ensuring value for taxpayer dollars, is part of The Way Forward in building a strong economy and a fair society for the benefit of all.

Ornge's air ambulance system is the largest and most active in Canada, transporting approximately 19,000 patients by land and air annually.

From October to December 2012, Ornge confirmed its ability to respond to a call for on scene service within 10 minutes of the start of a call, 90 per cent of the time.

In September 2012, Ornge scored 90 per cent on the Quality of Care metric, an indicator that reviews care against industry standards in eight key clinical care areas.

"My goal is to ensure that Ornge focuses on providing the highest quality air ambulance service possible and gets the best value for our precious health care dollars. That's why we're responding to the Auditor General's report with the legislation announced today, so we can secure a bright future for Ontario's air ambulance service."

— Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care



A round the World

Musharraf Plans Return to Pakistan in Weeks

Former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf says he will end his self-imposed exile and return to Pakistan within weeks to take part in parliamentary elections.

Musharraf has not followed through on previous pledges to return to Pakistan.

But he recently told reporters in Dubai that he would head back in mid-March, as soon as an interim government is in place.

A caretaker administration is scheduled in mid-March to replace President Asif Ali Zardari's government.

Musharraf said he will lead his party, the All Pakistan Muslim League, in elections later this spring.

Musharraf seized power in a 1999 coup and briefly imposed a state of emergency in Pakistan before resigning in



Pervez Musharraf

2008. He has since lived in London and Dubai.

He faces allegations that he was part of a conspiracy to assassinate former prime minister Benazir Bhutto in late 2007.

He denies any wrongdoing in connection with her killing. - [VOA News]

Burma Struggles to Crack Down on Wildlife Consumption

By Daniel Schearf

As international visitors flock to newly-opened Burma, authorities are struggling to crack down on restaurants at some tourist spots that have long featured endangered wildlife on their menus.

The pagoda on the Golden Rock of Kyaiktiyo attracts thousands of visitors who ascend the steep mountain to see what appears as a miraculous balance.

Restaurant hawkers compete for their tourist dollars and some are catering to demands for exotic food, including endangered wildlife.

Htet Ko says they have been serving wild animal meat for 13 years, but since this article was translated into Burmese, officials inspect his family's restaurant every week, so they have to hide the meat.

"The local forestry ministry banned all kinds of wild animal dishes including our popular dishes like barking deer and sambur meat," he said. "However, 99 percent of visitors want to eat those kinds of wildlife food."

The San Let Tin Resort in Kyaiktiyo township may raise some eyebrows having the area's only zoo next to its restaurant.

But manager, Tint Swe Oo, insists the resort owner is an animal lover and says, unlike some restaurants, those in cages here are not on the menu.

"They [restaurant owners who serve wild animals] should stop selling it [wild animal meat] now. There are many other types of meat that can replace it," he said. "Wild animals should not be on the menu. I would like to see wild animals living in the forests peacefully."

Serving endangered wildlife has long been illegal here; but enforcement, before the new government, was lacking

says temple official U Myint Swe.

Game for food enforced

Now, he says, they successfully stopped the trade in about 80 percent of restaurants.

"We cannot accept serving wildlife meat around the religious area. We can only allow selling normal meat that is approved by the government. Some restaurants have served wildlife food secretly before," U Myint Swe explained. "However, the numbers of those restaurants are decreasing because of the inspections by officials."

Meanwhile, vendors openly sell animal parts as traditional medicine.

U Myint Swe says protectionists have discussed better safeguards for endangered wildlife with United Nations organizations.

He says they would welcome more enforcement efforts. [VOA News]



Bangladesh War Crimes Protest Toll Climbs

Bangladesh deployed troops to the country's north in an effort to end clashes between police and demonstrators Sunday, Mar 3, 2013 - the fourth day of protests since a death sentence was handed down to a senior Islamist opposition leader.

Authorities say six people died Sunday in various locations.

Officials say at least 49 people have died since the beginning of the protests ignited by the death sentence given to Delwar Hossain Sayedee, a senior member of the Jamaat-e-Islami party. He was sentenced to death Thursday by a war crimes tribunal after being convicted for atrocities, including rape and mass killings.

Sayedee's lawyer has called the verdict unjust and has vowed to appeal.

Sayedee is the third Jamaat-e-Islami party member to be sentenced for war crimes since the tribunal was established

in 2010.

On January 21, the court sentenced Abul Kalam Azad to death in absentia, finding him guilty of torture, rape, and genocide. On February 5, it sentenced Abdul Quader Mollah to life in prison on similar charges. At least eight more Jamaat-e-Islami members are still on trial.

Human rights organizations have questioned the fairness of the trials, saying members of the defense have been unduly pressured.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called on those in Bangladesh to stop the violence and express their views peacefully.

Bangladesh fought a nine-month war against Pakistan in 1971 to obtain its independence. The government says three million people died in the violence, although other estimates put the death toll lower. - [VOA News]

Hyderabad bomb blasts kills 16 and leaves 117 injured

- Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets injured and says 'I share your pain and grief'



Two deadly bomb blasts in a crowded shopping district in the town of Hyderabad in India killed 16 persons and injured 117 civilians. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who visited the injured in the hospital sympathized with them and stated that he 'shares in their pain and grief'

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh arrived in Hyderabad from Delhi in a special aircraft to visit blast sites and the injured in the city.

Andhra Pradesh Governor ESL Narasimham, Chief Minister N Kiran Kumar Reddy and other dignitaries received him at the Begumpet airport.

Soon after landing, Dr Singh took a chopper to the Victoria Memorial Home and from there he inspected the tiffin centre area where the first bomb exploded in Dilsukhnagar. He spent around five minutes at the blast site where the Chief Minister and the police officials briefed

him about the ongoing probe.

Dr Singh then walked to the bus shelter, scene of the second blast which is a few metres away.

Two bombs had exploded in Dilsukhnagar within a span of minutes on Thursday killing 16 people and leaving 117 injured.

The Prime Minister also paid a visit to the two private hospitals where some of the blast victims are being treated.

He also lauded the people of the city for refusing to be provoked by the "nefarious" act. Making an appeal for peace, he said, "I call upon the people to maintain calm in this hour of grief."

After visiting hospitals, the Prime Minister left for Delhi from the Begumpet airport in the afternoon. Before his departure, Dr Singh was briefed by the Governor, the Chief Minister and other senior government officials on the details of the blasts.



GTF conference reaffirms calls for investigations in Sri Lanka

The Global Tamil Forum (GTF) hosted their 3rd anniversary conference at the British Houses of Parliament on Wednesday, 27th February was attended by senior representatives from all three of Britain's major political parties.

The conference, held in the esteemed Palace of Westminster, was addressed by the Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the ruling coalition's Liberal Democrats Party Nick Clegg and Chariman of the ruling Conservative Party Grant Shapps, as well as the leader of the opposition Labour Party Ed Miliband, who all reaffirmed calls for a credible investigation into allegations of human rights violations in Sri Lanka.

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) leader R Sampanthan also addressed the event, detailing a history of post-independence Sri Lanka and said the state thought it could "conceal itself behind a

cloak of sovereignty".

TNA parliamentarian MA Sumanthiran called upon Sri Lankan Government to cooperate with any UNHRC Resolution seeking implementation of LLRC recommendations and ascertainment of truth.

Sumanthiran emphasized that Sri Lanka "has no capacity to hold any credible investigation, particularly now, with the breakdown of the independence of the judiciary".

Hon. Cde Yasmin Sooka, one of the UN Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Sri Lanka and Executive Director of the Foundation for Human Rights in South Africa, Frances Harrison, Ex BBC Correspondent, and author of Still Counting the Dead - book on Tamils who survived Sri Lanka's 2009 war were among several distinguished panelists addressing the event.



Pictures from the 3rd Anniversary conference facebook.com/GTFOnline - by: Geoff Wilson

International delegates meet in Geneva for the "Conference on Tamil People's Rights"-ICET

International delegates, including Human Rights Experts, Human Rights Activists, and Members of Parliament from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, India, Italy, Mauritius, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and UK discussed pressing issues on Rights of Tamils at the Conference conveyed by International Council of Eelam Tamils (ICET) on March 2 in Geneva.

Representatives from Tamil organizations across the world participated at this conference.

The panel addressed three main subjects:

(1) International Investigation to War Crimes and Crimes against humanity in Sri Lanka,

(2) Many forms of Genocide in Sri Lanka, and

(3) UN Referendum: The way forward to a sustainable peace in Sri Lanka.

It was held at the Centre International de Conférences Genève.

The International Council of Eelam Tamils (ICET) strongly believes that this conference would help the international community and The United Nations in resolving the national question in the island.

IMF to Revise US Growth Forecast, Sequester Blamed

By Mil Arcega

Now that the deadline for a Congressional compromise has passed, the process of cutting \$85 billion from the federal budget begins. Economists say the impact will not be immediate, but the fallout already has begun.

With across the board budget cuts all but guaranteed, some government agencies already have placed a freeze on hiring. At the Federal Aviation Administration, up to 40 thousand workers expect to see their hours reduced.

"It means I will probably be late on a house payment, not buy enough groceries, and then you throw that in with gas prices going up, it is devastating," said Gary Perusse, FAA worker.

The same is true for customs and border security agents, for meat inspectors and educators. Low-income families and the long-term unemployed also will lose benefits. The net effect, said budget expert Scott Collender, is negative stimulus for an economy that's barely growing.

"Without businesses spending, without consumer spending, without trade helping, lower government spending is going to hurt and hurt substantially," said Collender.

Estimates say the cuts could shave

more than half a percent from gross domestic output. That's enough for the International Monetary Fund to revise earlier estimates for U.S. growth.

"A lot of it depends upon how aggressively or how fully sequestration is implemented. There will be an impact on global growth," said IMF spokesman William Murray.

Analysts say the spending cuts could cause delays in shipping and cut U.S. demand for imported goods.

Most frustrating, said economist Charles Konigsberg, is that the crisis could have been avoided. "I think it's a lose, lose situation. Everyone loses."

The cuts come as the economy was showing signs of progress. Despite the setback, President Barack Obama said negotiations with Congress would continue.

"...if Congress comes to its senses, a week from now, a month from now, three months from now - then there's a lot of open running room there for us to grow our economy much more quickly," said Obama. - [VOA News]



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Sri Lanka to continue relaxing exchange controls



Sri Lanka will continue to liberalise foreign exchange controls to encourage the investments needed to maintain high economic growth, the country's premier business portal Lankabusinessonline.com (LBO) said in a report quoting Central bank governor Nivard Cabraal.

The report states,

"The thinking now is to try to have faster growth for which we need more savings and investment which, if not available in our own country, we must get from outside," Central bank governor Nivard Cabraal says.

"What we are setting out is exchange liberalisation in a gradual manner - gradually giving confidence to outside and local investors," he told a forum on liberalizing foreign exchange controls organized by the Shippers' Academy Colombo.

"In the next few years we will need to bring in new reforms. We have not gone too fast, nor have we gone too slow. We have been not too hot or too cold, not too hard or too soft. We will apply those principles in foreign exchange regulations."

Cabraal said in 2008 there was a sudden exit of capital from Sri Lanka because of global conditions.

"People wanted to take money out and we allowed it. We did not impose any constraints. As a result they were very confident and when things turned normal they came back. Today we have three billion US dollars in Treasury Bills and Treasury bonds - a few years ago it was zero."

Cabraal said the central bank also allowed banks to enhance capital through foreign capital.

"In 2012 921 million US dollars came into banks by way of Tier II capital. These were not sources tapped in the past. Today we have opened up and the foreign exchange regime has attracted capital into the country."

Cabraal also said the central bank was considering lifting restrictions on repatriation of profits by foreigners investing in property in Sri Lanka.

"We are now taking a fresh look at that," he told the forum in response to a question.

"We should allow a person to take profit out in the same way as in other investments. This was brought to our notice a few weeks ago - that this is an area that seems to be unfair and is different from how we allowed other profits to be repatriated."

In the case of property investments, capital gains by foreigners selling property have to be credited into Non-Resident

Foreign Currency accounts and repatriation of profits limited to 20,000 US dollars a year whereas there was no such restriction on repatriation of capital gains by foreigners investing in shares.

Growth would be slow if the country relied only on domestic savings, Cabraal said.

"That's why we took 56 years to reach a per capita income of 1,000 dollars by 2004."

Sri Lanka needs an annual domestic savings rate of around 34 percent of gross domestic product on a consistent basis over the next few years to maintain economic growth at around eight percent, Cabraal said.

The savings rate now was 25 percent of GDP, leaving a gap of nine percent of which the central bank estimates two percent to come by way of improved productivity, leaving seven percent savings that need to come in from outside from foreign direct and portfolio investments and government and corporate borrowings.

"For that we need an exchange rate conducive for people to do business - for exchange to enter and exit easily," Cabraal said. "Nobody will come in unless you can exit easily."

Deputy governor Ananda Silva said remaining forex controls were mainly to limit demand in case there is a sudden shock, particularly an external shock, and prevent flight of capital and also to maintain economic stability.

An important recent change was the introduction of foreign exchange earners accounts that amalgamated different accounts previously required for different categories of domestic residents such as exporters.

Likewise, rules have been simplified for foreigners to bring in money with the creation of securities investment accounts, again amalgamating different accounts required previously for different investments.

"We also allowed flexibility within existing regulations," Silva said, giving as examples the removal of the 90-day limit on the tenor of forward contracts and higher foreign currency allowances for overseas travel.

Also, transfer of funds between different accounts is now allowed freely.

"We plan to further simplify existing regulations and give more flexibility to existing regulations and introduce new regulations covering various sectors of the economy," Silva said.

Water mismanagement in northern Sri Lanka

Farmer in Sri Lanka North
- Photo by Jesper Guhle,
Danish Refugee Council



Water resources in northern Sri Lanka, which are coming under increasing pressure as returning farmers use wasteful water pumps to irrigate their crops, need to be better managed, say experts.

"Never before have water resources in the Northern Province been under such stress," Thushyanthy Mikunthan, a senior lecturer at the Department of Agriculture at Jaffna University, told IRIN, citing increased farming and an upsurge in water pump usage.

According to the UN, more than 400,000 people have returned to their homes in the area since the 26-year war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam ended on 18 May 2009.

A new online mapping tool developed by the Washington-based World Resources Institute (WRI) indicates a "high risk" in overall water resources in the area, which over the past year has witnessed a 10-month drought and three bouts of flooding.

"Variability is especially problematic in places where there is not sufficient storage capacity to provide water during dry times," Robert Kimball, WRI outreach associate for the Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas mapping project, explained.

"It is a very unique area where water sources differ from one location to another," said Herath Manthrilake, head of the Sri Lanka Development Initiative at the International Water Management Institute (IWMI).

In the northwest, the primary water supply is through small lakes and ponds; in the northeast, through water tanks; while in northern Jaffna Peninsula - devoid of any rivers - residents depend on the limited groundwater resources.

"Each area requires a different approach. The lakes, the tanks and the irrigation networks that connect them need major rehabilitation and constant upkeep, while Jaffna would need very serious water management measures," Manthrilake said.

Research by Jaffna University's Mikunthan in Jaffna Peninsula in 2008 (published in 2012), showed usage levels almost 20 percent higher than recharge levels from rain.

If Jaffna is to avoid a water shortage in the coming years, water usage should ideally be 50 percent less than the recharge, she said.

According to the 2012 study there is a clear trend of unsustainable water withdrawal, with total annual withdrawal from the study area (0.66 million cubic metres - MCM), exceeding the total average annual recharge (0.57 MCM).

"From the preliminary work that I have done in the rest of the Northern Province, the signs are that the entire province is over-using water," Mikunthan said.

The proliferation of water pumps since the end of the war is contributing to this situation, say experts.

In 1983, when the conflict began, at least 50 percent of farmers in the province used deep wells and watered their crops manually, said Ravi Vinanithambi, an environment officer with the Emergency Northern Recovery Project under the Ministry of Economic Development.

"Now everyone uses pumps. Our studies show that in some instances as much 70 percent of the water drawn by pumps is wasted," Vinanithambi said.

Thousands of water pumps have been distributed across the north by the government and aid agencies since late 2009 with the aim of kick-starting livelihoods.

According to the Northern Provincial Council, agriculture accounts for over 25 percent of the provincial economy, while in 2012 the Central Bank reported that Northern Province recorded a growth rate of 27.1 percent and increased its contribution to the national economy from 3.4 percent in 2010 to 3.7 percent in 2012 due to increased agriculture activities.

Meanwhile, IWMI's Manthrilake is calling for available water resources to be better managed, noting the province received at least 75 percent of its traditional annual rainfall of 900mm every year.

"What we are lacking is a concerted effort to put water management at the top of the priorities," he said, adding that projects like tank rehabilitation, irrigation systems, and agricultural development need to go hand in hand with water conservation.

"Right now, there is no awareness building that rain patterns are changing and that we need to take note," Mikunthan said. We keep extracting water or using the irrigation systems as if water was in abundance. It's not."

- IRIN News



Ongoing Violations and Persecution of the Tamil Population need to be Investigated and Stopped - Sumanthiran

(Statement made on 1 March 2013 by TNA Parliamentarian M.A. Sumanthiran at the UNHRC Event in Geneva titled 'The No Fire Zone')

On behalf of the Tamil People I wish to thank you Callum for that film. Our thanks our due to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch for sponsoring this event.

A statement attributed to Schopenhauer says that every truth passes through three stages. In the first it is ridiculed, in the second it is opposed, in the third it is regarded as self-evident.

It is said that Truth is the first casualty of war. I'd like to say that Truth is also the first step in the path to reconciliation.

The UN Secretary General's Panel of Experts reported that there were credible allegations that both sides to the conflict committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. It recommended an independent mechanism to investigate these alleged crimes.

The TNA, as the elected representatives of the Tamil people, welcomed these recommendations and called for Independent International Investigations into the last phase of the war.



M.A. Sumanthiran MP

We think this and the ongoing violations and persecution of the Tamil population need to be investigated and stopped.

When the Channel 4 footage was first released, the Government of Sri Lanka vigorously opposed it. Yet the government-appointed Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) too recommended that it should be investigated to ascertain its authenticity.

We will co-operate with any investigation to uncover the Truth. It is the Truth that will lead to any kind of meaningful reconciliation and that is how the ongoing violations will stop.

India Growth Plan: Trim Fiscal Deficit, Woo Foreign Investors

By Anjana Pasricha

India's finance minister is pledging to revive economic growth by trimming the country's fiscal deficit. He also says India is in critical need of foreign investment to reverse the worst slowdown in a decade for Asia's third largest economy.

Speaking to parliament during the presentation of the country's annual budget on Feb 28, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram vowed to cut India's fiscal deficit to 4.8 per cent in the next fiscal year. He said the country needs to make tough spending decisions.

"I have no choice but to rationalize expenditure. We took a dose of bitter medicine. It seems to be working," he said.

India's fiscal and current deficits have raised concern of a downgrade by rating agencies.

However, government spending will rise by about 16 per cent in the next year. To meet those expenses, the Finance Minister announced a temporary tax on the super rich - those with an annual income of about \$200,000 - and on local companies with an income of over \$2 million.

Minister Chidambaram acknowledged that the Indian economy, which has slowed to a decade-low of about five percent, is in a trough. He says restoring

high growth is a challenge, but that he is optimistic about the future.

"There is no reason for gloom or pessimism," he said. "Even now, of the large countries of the world, only China and Indonesia are growing faster than India in 2012-13. And in 2013-14, if we grow at the rate projected by many forecasters, only China will grow faster than India."

The government estimates that India's economy will grow by over six percent in the next fiscal year, after slipping to five percent in the last year.

Chidambaram focused on winning back foreign investors assuring them that India will be business friendly.

He pointed out that India needs \$75 billion to finance its current account deficit, or trade imbalance, which has grown rapidly due to massive imports of oil, gold and coal.

"I have been at pains to state over and over again that India does not have the choice between welcoming and spurning foreign investment. Foreign investment is an imperative," he said.

Foreign investment fell last year as investors were alienated by a series of unexpected tax proposals, by corruption scandals and India's tough regulatory regime. Opposition parties have also opposed the government's decision to open

Sri Lanka Bans Land Sales to Foreigners

Sri Lanka has decided to ban land sales to foreigners after finding that some offshore investors did not use land and property purchases to benefit the nation's economy, the government spokesman said on Thursday, Feb 21st.

The decision comes as its \$59 billion economy struggles to boost foreign direct investment (FDI) despite gradually stabilizing macroeconomic conditions since the end of a three-decade war.

The Cabinet has decided to prohibit foreigners from purchasing absolute ownership of state and private lands in Sri Lanka, government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella told reporters.

"Wealthy foreigners buy lands and do not utilize them fully," he said. "They just keep it for their private consumption and don't contribute to the national economy such as by boosting tourism."

However, Rambukwella said, long-term leases of land will still be allowed, and the law will not apply to diplomatic

missions.

FDI last year totaled \$1 billion, only half of the government's target and the same figure as for 2011.

Government officials say the slowdown in advanced economies hit FDI in 2012, while economists say inconsistent economic policies in Sri Lanka have contributed to the below-target result.

On Feb 21, Sri Lanka's Central Bank Governor said in Mumbai that he expects \$1.8 billion FDI in 2013.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa last November proposed banning state land purchases by foreigners. The sale of a prime hotel construction site in Colombo to a Chinese firm had previously been cancelled after the opposition said the price was too low.

Sri Lanka's parliament passed legislation in November 2011 allowing the government to acquire enterprises or assets it deems underperforming or underutilized. [VOA News]

Persons seeking dual citizenship with Sri Lanka to be interviewed by panel headed by Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapakse

Sri Lanka is to resume the dual citizenship process soon but applicants will face a tougher screening procedure including a personal interview with a panel headed by the Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapakse.

The panel is to look into criteria such as the applicant's professional qualifications, investment capacity and the need to obtain dual citizenship. Many of the people who are seeking dual citizenship have left the country in their youth and therefore the interview Board will closely look at the reason for their decision to ob-

tain dual citizenship. According to Immigration sources in Sri Lanka some 2,000 applications for dual citizenship scheme are pending approval.

The dual citizenship scheme was introduced in 1987 and more than 4,000 people have been granted this facility. Persons applying for dual citizenship will first have to face an interview with a panel from the Immigration Department before facing the panel of the three ministry secretaries and applications from people with criminal records would not be entertained.



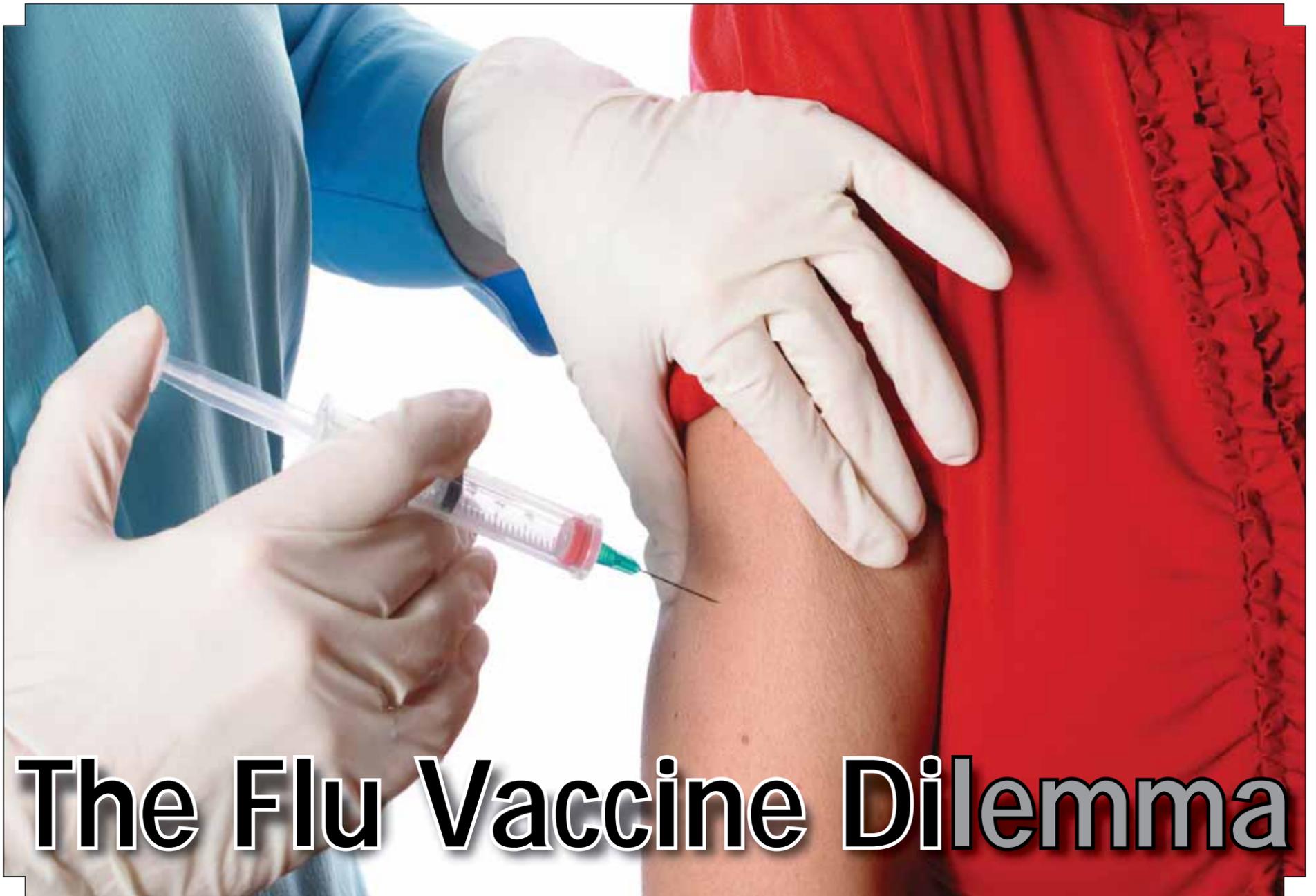
Chidambaram at Parliament House in New Delhi on Tuesday, February 28, 2013 during the budget session - PTI

the retail sector to foreign supermarkets.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed hope that the measures announced will revive the economy and that India will return to growth levels of about eight percent in two to three years.

Forecasters say returning India to those levels of growth will depend on the government's willingness to reduce spending, initiate reforms and control inflation.

[VOA News]



By Dr Amal Siva

It's that time of year again. It's the dreaded flu season. The flu season, established from November to April, brings all of us the panic and fear of being infected with the Influenza virus. Once succumbed to this respiratory infection, the virus quickly replicates and grows as our body's immune system attacks back with white blood cells. This ensuing war makes us bedridden with high fevers, cough, fatigue and a completely sore body.

How could have one avoided the flu and all its despair? Well, other than washing your hands regularly and avoiding others with the flu, getting the annual flu vaccine is a must. Yet, there is so much confusion and misconceptions around the flu vaccine. Some firmly believe and preach that it usually never works or that it may in fact increase your chances of becoming sick. And hence begins the flu vaccine dilemma.

What is the flu virus?

In order to understand the flu vaccine one should understand the virus itself. The "Flu", or scientifically termed the Influenza, is an acute respiratory illness caused by the influenza A or B viruses.

It can be distinguished from the common cold, which is also caused by viruses, because it generally results in a more severe illness, with a sudden onset of headache, chills and cough followed rapidly by a fever, appetite loss, muscle aches and tiredness. Cold symptoms, on the other hand, generally involve the upper respiratory tract with a runny nose, sneezing,

watery eyes and throat irritation, and disappear in a few days. However, the influenza can last up to 7-10 days for most.

Why does the flu virus keep returning?

The virus occurs in outbreaks nearly every year, mainly during the winter season in the Northern hemisphere. The reason this virus breaks out each year is because of its malicious ability to change the protein structure of its capsule and become a different strain. This in turn means that once you catch the flu, fight it off, and finally build resistance to it, the following year the virus changes its form and attacks your body in a new disguise.

How does the flu shot work to prevent the flu?

The researchers at the Center for Disease Control work almost as detectives to develop vaccines each year that predict this new "disguise" that the influenza virus will present with. Their aim is to form an influenza vaccine consisting of the different possible capsule protein structures from the trending influenza strains in each local area. Once you receive this vaccine your body has the early opportunity to form antibodies to the different influenza strains that may develop in the upcoming flu season. It's like having your defense system prepared and ready for any unexpected attack from the virus. But note that when forming antibodies you may experience fatigue and muscle

aches.

Remember that the flu vaccine cannot cause the flu and it takes usually two weeks before the vaccine has a chance to work. Sometimes people unluckily catch the flu within this period of time. Hence the best time to get the flu shot is before the impending flu season in September or October. You may still get the vaccine in later months but the earlier in the flu season you get it, the better your odds of staying flu free. And even though flu vaccines are not 100% effective – vaccinated people sometimes get flu infections – vaccinated people almost always have milder flu than people who weren't vaccinated. According to the CDC the influenza vaccine effectively prevents the flu 51-71% of the time.

Who should get the flu shot?

An annual flu vaccination is recommended for everyone age 6 months and older. It's particularly advised for high-risk individuals who are more prone to flu complications, such as pneumonia. The high-risk population include:

- All children 6 months to 18 years old
- People 65 years or older
- Women who will be pregnant during the flu season
- People who live in nursing homes
- Adults with chronic heart or lung conditions. Or conditions that weaken the immune system like diabetes
- Household contacts and caregivers of

any children younger than 5 years of age

Any person in close contact with someone in a high-risk group

Who should talk to their doctor before getting a flu shot?

According to the CDC, you may need to talk to your doctor before getting a flu shot or influenza vaccine in certain circumstances. If you have had an allergic reaction to the flu shot in the past please consult your physician. Also anyone with an allergy to eggs, as the influenza vaccine is grown in eggs, should speak to their doctor for alternate versions of the vaccinations. And finally, if you are ill and have a moderately to high fever then think about getting the shot later.

What are some flu shot side effects?

The most common complaint about the flu shot is experiencing soreness and possible swelling in your arm after getting the shot. Some people have cold-like symptoms such as runny nose, sore throat, headaches or even body aches for a day or two. Also as your body reacts to the vaccine you may experience a low-grade fever. Serious side effects from the flu vaccine are very rare and if they do occur it'll be within a few minutes to a few hours after getting the shot.

However, the benefits of getting a flu shot far outweigh the risk of flu shot side effects. Be prepared for the flu season and help prevent the spread of the influenza virus. Get your flu shot.



Eating disorders can have a large negative impact on an individual's quality of life, self-image, relationships with families and friends as well as performance in school or on the job can be damaged. They are most common in teen and young adult women but anyone can suffer from them. It is critical for anyone with symptoms of an eating disorder to seek professional help. People with eating disorders also can suffer from numerous physical health complications, such as heart conditions or kidney failure, which can lead to death. It is often the pain and discomfort related to dental complications that first causes patients to consult with a health professional. Dentists are often the first health professionals to observe



Dental Health and Eating Disorders

signs and symptoms of these disorders.

Types of Eating Disorders

Binge Eating or Compulsive Overeating may affect almost as many men as women. In the past, these individuals were sometimes described as "food addicts." This may involve rapid consumption of large amounts of food with a sense of loss of control. Feelings of guilt and shame may lead to repeated episodes of binge eating.

Anorexia typically involves an extreme fear of weight gain or a dread of becoming "fat" even though these individuals are markedly underweight. Individuals attempt to maintain a low body weight by restricting food intake. They may also exercise excessively and binge-eat followed by purging behaviors such as self-induced vomiting or misuse of laxatives, diuretics or enemas. Anorexia has the highest premature mortality rate of any psychiatric disorder. The majority of deaths are due to physiological complications.

Bulimia involves discrete periods of overeating (binge eating) which may occur several times a week or at its most severe, several times a day. During the binge, sufferers may feel completely out of control. They may gulp down thousands of calories often high in carbohydrates and fat. The amount of food consumed would be considered excessive in normal circumstances. After the binge comes purging designed to compensate for overeating and avoid weight gain. Those behaviors may include self-induced vomiting, misuse of laxatives, enemas, and diuretics. Studies have found that up to 89% of bulimic patients show signs of tooth erosion.

Symptoms

Each of these disorders can rob the body of adequate minerals, vitamins, proteins and other nutrients needed for good health. Individuals with eating disorders can display a number of symptoms including dramatic loss of weight, secretive eating patterns, hair loss, feeling cold, constipation and, for women, the loss of

Dr. Shanmugam Sivanesan,
President, Toronto East
Dental Society (TEDS)

their monthly menstrual period.

Eating disorders that may include frequent vomiting and may result in nutritional deficiencies can also affect oral health. Salivary glands may become enlarged and individuals may experience xerostomia (dry mouth). Lips are often red, dry and cracked. Lesions may appear on oral soft tissues which may also bleed easily. Repeated forced vomiting can also result in severe swelling of both the tonsils and the soft palate in the mouth. Another indication of the Bulimia may be a red and swollen tongue or a lacerated palate caused by vomiting induced with frantic fingernails.

There may be changes in the color (translucency), shape and length of teeth. (See photographs below.) Fillings in the teeth may appear elevated when erosion occurs on the surrounding enamel. Teeth may become sensitive to hot and cold. Over time, this loss of tooth enamel can be considerable. They can also become brittle, translucent and sensitive to temperature.

Prevention

Eating disorders arise from a variety of physical, emotional and social issues all of which need to be addressed to help prevent and treat these disorders. Family and friends can help by setting good examples about eating and offering positive comments about healthy eating practices. While eating disorders appear to focus on body image, food and weight, they are often related to many other issues. Referral to health professionals and encouragement to seek treatment is critical as early diagnosis and intervention greatly improve the opportunities for recovery.

Treatment Options

Eating disorders are definitely not a minor problem. Those that suffer in that way are in need of urgent professional medical assistance because they may die from their condition. They must also be scrupulous about the way that they care

for their teeth and gums. This must include brushing and flossing after every meal and rinsing out their mouth after sugary drinks. They should also visit their dentist as regularly as advised. The damage that eating disorders cause to teeth are very real, and include tooth enamel erosion, serious decay and gum disease caused by vomiting.

An ex-bulimic woman that I know well confided to me that in the 8 years that she had the condition, she underwent many root canal treatments, multiple extractions, more fillings than she cared to count, plus surgery to remove diseased gum tissue.

If you suspect that you might have an eating disorder (or are dealing with rampant teeth cavities), then a trip to the dentist should be high on your list of priorities. By all means, take your time to work through the root causes for your condition and do something about these issues immediately.

Top 10 Foods for better dental health:

There are several things you may have to add or remove from your diet to ensure good dental health. Certain foods, which are useful for developing muscles and bones, also keep your gums and teeth healthy. As a result, a balanced diet that consists of fresh fruits, leafy vegetables and other healthy nutrients is extremely important for your teeth.

1. Water is not only the gift of life. When you rinse with water, it cleans your mouth so that your saliva can nourish your teeth, hydrate your gums, and help wash away trapped food particles that can create plaque.

2. Dairy products such as milk and yogurt are low in acidity and sugar making them great choices to quench your thirst or have as a healthy snack. This is good news for both tooth erosion and tooth decay. Milk is rich in calcium, which means you are fortifying teeth and bones while refueling during the day.

3. Cheese is another dairy product with significant dental benefits. Being high in phosphate and calcium, cheese promotes healthy teeth. It also balances

the pH in your mouth, produces more saliva, rebuilds tooth enamel and kills the bacteria that cause tooth cavities and gum disease.

4. Fruit is great for your teeth especially when eaten in whole, raw form. It keeps down plaque and massages your gums. Choose the fruits rich in Vitamin C, which holds our body cells together. If you are short of Vitamin C, your gums may become tender and more susceptible to gum disease.

5. Vegetables are another good idea if you are trying to build a good foundation for your teeth. Broccoli, carrots, sweet potato and pumpkin are rich in Vitamin A from which tooth enamel forms. If you eat them raw you will get more Vitamin A, as well as clean your teeth and massage your gums.

6. Onions are rich in powerful antibacterial sulphur compounds, which kill the bacteria that harm your teeth and gums. If you can stand the stinky side effects, eat onions raw for best results.

7. Celery is another great friend of the dentist. Eat it raw and it will not only massage your gums, but clean your teeth. It will also induce the production of more saliva that will neutralize the bacteria that cause cavities.

8. Green Tea has a well-deserved reputation for providing many benefits. With teeth, green tea offers up natural antioxidant compounds prevent plaque from accumulating, therefore reducing the risk of cavities and bad breath. Some green teas also contain fluoride that can further prevent cavities – check the label before you buy.

9. Proteins like beef, chicken, eggs and turkey are rich in phosphorus. Calcium combines with phosphorus and Vitamin D to produce our teeth and bones. Make sure you get enough protein to keep your teeth healthy, and reduce decay.

10. Sesame Seeds, which are best combined with bread and rolls, dissolve plaque and help build tooth enamel. The tasty seeds are also rich in calcium, which will keep your teeth and jawbone healthy.



Regional cardiac care recognized on world stage for Lean projects

Rouge Valley cardiac team being published and presenting at international conference



Rouge Valley and its cardiac care partners have been recognized for leadership in patient care by an international business academy.

The hospital has recently been recognized for this leadership by the International Academy for Management and Business (IAMB), which has accepted two abstract submissions from the regional cardiac program, as led by Rouge Valley, for publication and presentation at the 15th Annual IAMB Conference in Lisbon, Portugal from April 17 to 19. IAMB is an academic association dedicated to advancing the research, teaching and practice of management and business worldwide through academic publications and by fostering a small conference setting with multi-national delegates.

The submissions, written by staff and doctors practising at the hospital, report on two recent projects implemented to enhance Rouge Valley Health System's regional cardiac services for patients. Both projects used a Lean approach as their framework:

1. Using Lean Thinking for Integration, Collaboration and Regionalization of Cardiac Rehabilitation Services (Authors - Glyn Boatswain, Lorraine Carrington, Rohan Gonsalves, Amber Heath, Dr. Amelia McCutcheon, Dr. Joe Ricci, Paul VanWiechen); and

2. Cardiac Arrhythmia Management Redesign Project: Using a Lean Approach to Deliver Quality Patient Care (Authors - Glyn Boatswain, Rohan Gonsalves, Dr. Amir Janmohamed, Dr. Bhavanesh Mankanjee, Dr. Amelia McCutcheon, Dr. Joe Ricci).

The first submission outlines how Rouge Valley was able to successfully

develop an integrated and standardized cardiovascular rehabilitation and prevention program across it and Lakeridge Health, and growth opportunities to expand services to additional cardiac rehabilitation facilities.

The second submission presents how Rouge Valley enhanced the quality of its regional arrhythmia services in five quality dimensions: patient satisfaction; clinical excellence; safety; effectiveness and efficiency.

Lean is Rouge Valley's hospital-wide philosophy and approach to constant improvement that puts patients first. The core concept is to maximize value for patients, while minimizing waste in the system.

Rouge Valley's regional cardiac care centre

Rouge Valley Health System has a leading cardiac care program, and is home to the regional cardiac care centre for the Scarborough-Durham area. The cardiac program consists of a highly-qualified and experienced team of more than 20 cardiologists and more than 100 health professionals, who serve the communities of east Toronto and Durham Region from both hospital campuses — Rouge Valley Centenary and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering. RVHS delivers a complete range of cardiac services, including cardiac diagnostics and consultations, as well as regional services such as life-saving intervention procedures, arrhythmia management and cardiac rehabilitation and education. Regional services are delivered in partnership with Lakeridge Health, The Scarborough Hospital, and the Central East Local Health Integration Network.

Surgical follow-up offered over Skype

New service allows patients to follow up with nurses online

A new program offered for surgical programs at Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) is allowing patients to get the follow-up care they need from the comfort of their own home.

Patients who have had surgery at either of the hospital's two hospital campuses — Rouge Valley Centenary (RVC) in east Toronto and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering (RVAP) in Durham Region — can choose to have their post-surgery follow-up appointment done via Skype, a popular software application that allows users to make voice and video calls over the Internet. The appointment is done with a nurse from the hospital's pre-operative assessment clinic in the ambulatory care unit (ACU) at RVAP.

The service, which has been offered at RVAP for Rouge Valley patients since last November, allows patients to stay at home and do their follow-up appointment over Skype with the nurse. The idea to use the service came about when RVAP ACU and surgical program staff were brainstorming ways in which to improve the patient experience for surgical patients.

How it works

The patient is given instructions on how to set up Skype during their pre-operative assessment clinic appointment at the hospital, before their surgery. A date is then set up to connect with the nurse over Skype. During the appointment, the nurse is able to speak to the patient and address any concerns that they may have. Since they are also able to see each other face-to-face, the nurse is able to see the patient's progress.

So far, Rouge Valley is the only hospital within the Central East Local Health



Integration Network (CE LHIN) and in the Greater Toronto Area to offer post-op follow-up via Skype.

"We're encouraging more of our patients to take advantage of the Skype option, as it allows the nurse to see how the patient is doing, offering a more comprehensive follow-up appointment. Although it's an Internet-based service, it still allows for a personalized touch with the patient's care," explains Amber Curry, manager of the ACU at RVAP.

After Gordon Regan's total hip replacement surgery in November, the Ajax resident and grandfather of two became one of the first patients at Rouge Valley to have their follow-up done over Skype. "I think having Skype available for patients is great, especially if the patient lives in a remote area or is unable to travel. It was easy to use, and certainly a great option," he says.

While Skype follow-up appointments don't replace patient visits, it's a helpful option for patients who are unable to travel to the hospital. Patients can still opt for traditional appointments in the ACU.

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) - The best at what we do.

Rouge Valley Health System is an excellent acute care community hospital with many programs, including 24/7/365 emergency, obstetrics, paediatrics, surgery, mental health and regional cardiac care. Rouge Valley consists of several health sites, including two community hospital campuses: Rouge Valley Centenary in east Toronto; and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering in west Durham. Together, a team of physicians, nurses and many other professionals care for a broad spectrum of health conditions. Working in consultation and partnership with community members, other hospitals, health care organizations, the Central East Local Health Integration Network and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Rouge Valley continues to improve its programs and cater to the needs of the growing communities of east Toronto, Pickering, Ajax and Whitby.



New program improves patient recovery

Prehab program allows hip and knee replacement patients to leave hospital sooner



A new program introduced in Rouge Valley Health System's (RVHS) surgical program is helping hip and knee replacement patients to return home sooner, and in better physical condition.

The prehabilitation — or prehab — program, based at Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering hospital campus, was introduced in November. By helping to bring patients to optimal physical condition before their surgeries, patients leave hospital sooner, and in better condition, after their surgeries. More patients are now able to return home in two to three days.

How it works

While other health care facilities offer prehab programs, Rouge Valley offers a much more comprehensive program in which patients guide their progress by first setting their own goals. Patients enrolled in the program participate in one education session and six weeks of self-conditioning sessions, three times a week for six weeks.

Classes are led by a registered practical nurse and an occupational/physiotherapy assistant, and cover a variety of topics, including, strength/endurance training, self-conditioning, functional goal setting and activities of daily living. The group format provides patients with the opportunity to share their goals with other patients, discuss their progress, and provide much-needed support to one another. With some patients coming as far as Peterborough, an online modified self-conditioning component is also being added for those unable to travel.

"Patients become partners in the program, determining their own functional

goals. They help to set up specific measurable goals and work to achieve them with the support of a health care professional. Combined, this helps to bring the patient into better physical shape before a scheduled surgery, helping the patient to better recover after the surgery," explains Amber Curry, manager, ambulatory care unit.

It's not just about getting into better physical shape before their surgery. Patients also learn new techniques that they will have to use, post-surgery, including safe transfers, ambulation and other activities of daily living. More than 40 patients have completed the prehab program, now being evaluated for expansion to Rouge Valley's Centenary hospital campus in east Toronto. A physician referral is required to enter the program.

Better outcomes for patients

For Ajax resident and prehab patient Frances Dunn, the benefits of the program are numerous. It helped to bring her into better physical shape, and prepare her for her hip replacement surgery in January.

"My quality of health going into this surgery is much better. The quality of my experience is also better. I have better access to the resources I need. The personalized care the staff has given me has also given me more knowledge," she explains. "Before my last surgery, I tried to do my own prehab. But I didn't have the knowledge that I needed to do it successfully. The staff for this program motivated me so that I could get the most out of the experience," she adds.

EVENTS

To Rouge with Love at the Hannas

This time of year is a truly heartfelt celebration for many supporters of Rouge Valley's Cardiac Care Program, as generous hosts and their guests in the GTA region gather to celebrate Valentine's Day and Heart Month.

The annual event, affectionately known as To Rouge with Love, is a series of cocktail parties and events intended to raise funds to help purchase essential cardiac equipment. For the third year, the event will support the Heart of it All campaign, to bring new echocardiogram machines to the Rouge Valley Health System hospitals. Held over the course of the month, each event hosts a special guest from Rouge Valley Health System's well-respected cardiac team, to explain why the equipment is so important and needed, as well as how it is used. An overview of the regional cardiac program is also presented.

Guests attending the events make a

donation upon arriving, and have an opportunity to meet and interact with the cardiologists and leaders of the Rouge Valley Cardiac Care program.

The Cardiac Program is doing incredible things. This group has embraced the concept of providing excellent cardiac care across both our Ajax and Pickering and Scarborough Centenary sites and as a regional centre of excellence provides outstanding care to patients from Lindsay to east Toronto.

On February 24, the Hannas, Chad and Susan, opened their home to friends who gave generously to the event. Chad is the President & CEO of the RVHS Foundation. Some photos taken at the event are shown below.

Events to support the cardiac care program continue throughout the year and if you wish to be involved, please contact Roselyn Sagar-Lal at rsagar-lal@rougevalley.ca.





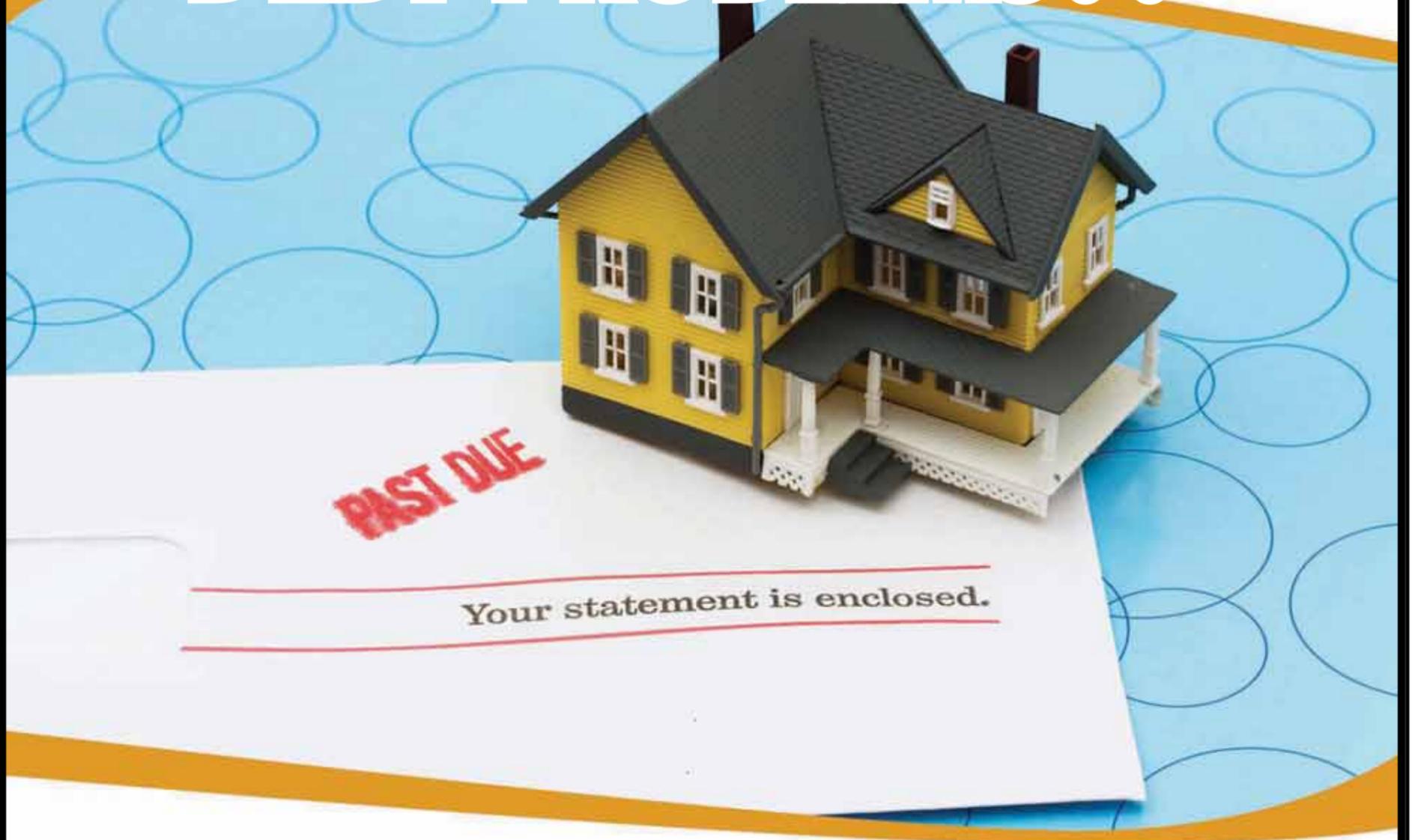
Amici Spa Celebrates 25th Anniversary Benefiting Markham Stouffville Hospital

Amici Spa of Markham celebrated their 25th Anniversary with a gala held on Saturday, February 23, 2013 in support of Markham Stouffville Hospital's Breast Health Centre and Cancer Clinic. This year's event was a huge success raising over \$10,000 to benefit Markham Stouffville Hospital. There were over 300 guests in attendance who enjoyed a 25th Anniversary Client Awards, delicious dinner, open bar, silent auction, raffle and live entertainment.

The next Amici Spa Gala is set to take place on Saturday, February 22, 2014 and will continue to benefit our community hospital. www.amicispa.ca



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Canadian Medical & Dental Development Association (CMDDA) renamed as Canadian Tamil Medical Association (CTMA)

The Canadian Medical & Dental Development Association (CMDDA) has been renamed as the Canadian Tamil Medical Association (CTMA). Dr. Rajes Logan, a medical practitioner was elected as the President of the new organization CTMA at the recently held Annual General meeting. The Medical Institute for Tamils (MIFT) will continue to remain as a part of the umbrella organization CTMA.

The CTMA (previously known as CMDDA) is a non-profit organization of Canadian Tamil Physicians and Dentists of Sri Lankan descent. The CMDDA is a volunteer organization which was founded in 1998. Teams of physicians and dentists from CMDDA have visited Sri Lanka to provide medical and dental assistance to communities affected by the civil war. These communities lack the most basic medical facilities. The doctors have all volunteered their time and resources to make this endeavor a success. The primary aim of the organization is to provide humanitarian and medical aid, whenever and wherever needed.

Among projects financed by the CMDDA are:

- * Donation to the South Asian Autism awareness Centre
- * Donation to primary care facility in partnership with the University of Jaffna

Medical Faculty

- * Assisting the Markham Stouffville Hospital Expansion project
- * Sanitation assistance in Jaffna
- * Donation of cardiac equipment to the Jaffna Teaching hospital

The mission of the newly named CTMA is to unite Physicians, Dentists and other Healthcare Professionals with similar interests to work together to provide humanitarian assistance to a population in need, with a focus on the Tamils in Canada and abroad.

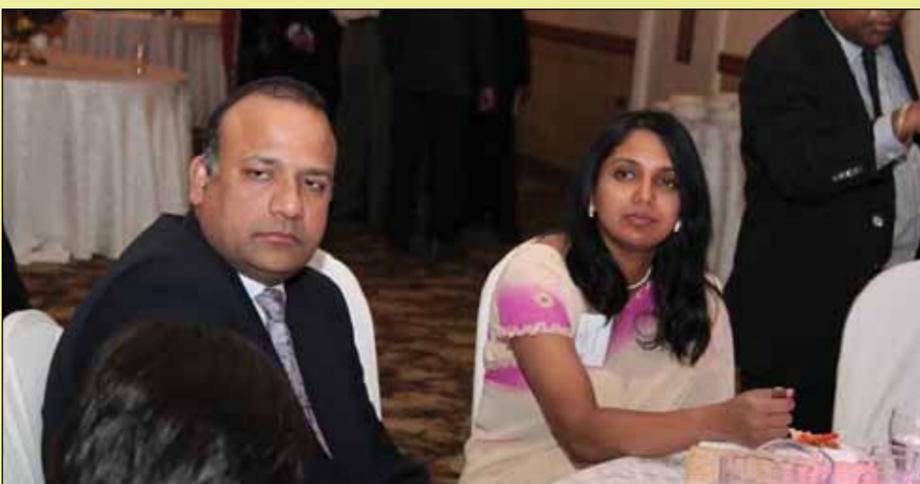
Photo Courtesy: TamilBiz Connection



Dr Rajes Logan - Re elected President for the 3rd year



Past Presidents & new President Dr. Rajes Logan holding the new banner of CTMA - Dr. V. Santhakumar, Dr.C.P. Giri, Dr. Rajes Logan (President), Dr. J. Rajendra, Dr. Figurado & Dr. A. Thangaroopan





Canadians Launch Medical School in St. Lucia

Registration Begins for Second Batch of Students for May 2013

Toronto, Feb. 20th, 2013 - The St. Helen University School of Medicine (SHU) launched by Canadians in St. Lucia last month is now recruiting for its second batch of students to begin classes on May 6, 2013.

Commenting on the University's mission, SHU President Oma Sewhdat said "SHU is geared to provide students with an innovative, high quality education, using the best current teaching models, tools and technology, created and delivered by our team of experienced and highly skilled international faculty members from the US, Canada, the Caribbean and Africa".

"We are thrilled that after a successful launch of St. Helen University School of Medicine as schedule on January 7, 2012," said Sewhdat. "It's a great beginning and we look forward to enrolling a larger batch of students for classes in May 2013. We offer students a high quality 21st Century education that will prepare them to become competent, caring physicians, who can lead and serve successfully wherever in the world they choose to live and work."

"SHU offers an innovative program in modern, technologically equipped classrooms and facilities in a warm atmosphere and a very safe environment the Caribbean can offer," said Vice President and Academic Dean Dr Richard Van West Charles. "Our MD (Doctor of Medicine) degrees are in ac-

cordance with the preferred credentials in North America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. SHU also offers Pre-Med courses to prepare students to enter the MD program."

Modeled after the World Health Organization's definition of the five star doctors, SHU's programs are geared to produce physicians with the wide range of competencies to fill the roles demanded of them today and into the future – clinical decision maker, communicator, community leader, manager, health advocate and scholar/researcher. As part of the program, the University plans to offer clinical clerkships at medical institutions in the US, Canada and the Caribbean.

The St. Helen University School of Medicine is accredited by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health of the Government of Saint Lucia, and International Medical Education Directory (IMED), maintained by the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER). SHU has also applied and pending recognition by the World Health Organization's AVENCINA for listing as an accredited medical university operating under charter by the Government of Saint Lucia, and is in the process for accreditation with the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Medicine and other Health

Professions (CAMMHP).

Quick Facts

- The 4 year Doctor of Medicine (MD) program comprises of 2 years of pre-clinical study and 2 years of clinical rotations

- The 5 year Doctor of Medicine (MD) program comprises of 1 year Pre-med, 2 years of pre-clinical study and 2 years of clinical rotations. Ontario Grade 12 Students are eligible to apply.

- Tuition includes:
- Transportation to and from the University,
- Preparation for the USMLE,
- All e-resources: e-library, Anatomy slides and materials, Histology slides, a full recorded library of all lectures and materials, etc.

About St. Helen University School of Medicine

St. Helen University (SHU) was estab-

lished in February 2012, offering MD (Doctor of Medicine) degrees that prepare students for careers in North America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. SHU is located in St. Lucia's southern town of Vieux Fort, minutes from the island's Hewanorra International Airport.

SHU offers innovative programs, taught by highly qualified international faculty members, in modern, technologically equipped classrooms and facilities in a warm atmosphere and a safe environment the Caribbean can offer, where students will be surrounded by a diverse community of local and international students and faculty.

SHU academic year consists of three trimesters and invites application to its May and September 2013 classes. For application and other information please visit: www.shu.com.lc

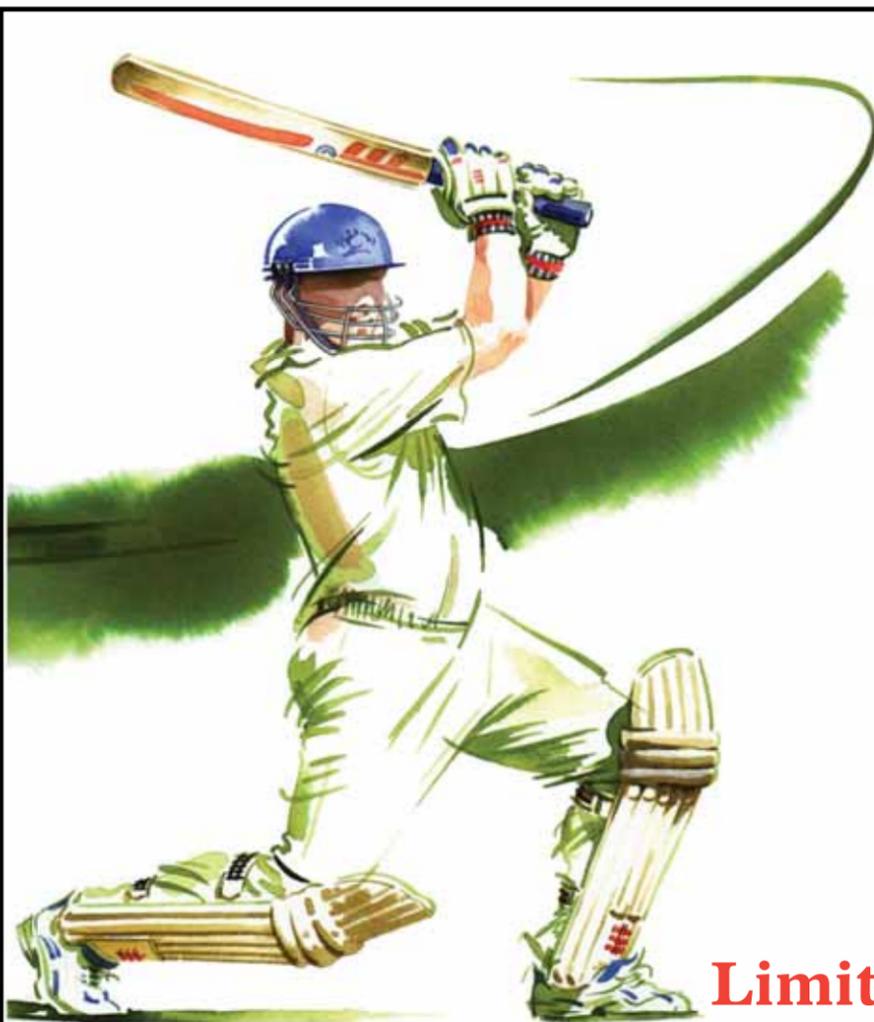
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A member of the Wayland Li Martial Arts Centre wows the crowd with her moves at the MRI campaign wrap-up event.

Celebration marks wrap-up of MRI campaign

There were smiles and jubilation as donors, staff and volunteers celebrated the success of the “Look Inside Yourself” MRI campaign with a Chinese New Year-themed event February 6.

Under decorative Chinese lanterns, invited guests mingled and sampled diverse delights as they took part in the special event marking the outstanding achievement of raising \$5 million to purchase a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine for The Scarborough Hospital’s Birchmount campus. The fundraising campaign launched in January

together,” said Dr. John Wright, TSH president and CEO.

The new MRI enhances the quality of care The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) provides to its patients and it gives medical staff the ability to zero in on what’s causing a patient’s problem. Since its installation in October 2011, wait times, on average, have been reduced by more than half.

“Prior to the opening of the MRI at Birchmount, our average wait time was more than 100 days. Today, it is about 40 days, which means our patients are getting

2012 and, thanks to the generosity of Scarborough residents, local businesses and community groups, The Scarborough Hospital Foundation was successful in reaching its goal.

“When we applied for the MRI they said we’d never be able to raise \$5 million in Scarborough, but here we stand today celebrating this amazing accomplishment that we were able to achieve

faster access to a vital diagnostic tool,” says Tom Jackson, Patient Care Director of Diagnostic Imaging.

In addition to improved wait times, the introduction of the new unit has allowed TSH to use its resources more efficiently. In previous years, more than 225 inpatients were being transferred from the Birchmount campus to the General campus for a scan, which required a nurse to accompany the patient.

Foundation Board member and Campaign Chair John Bankes thanked everyone for their support in making these improvements possible.

“Our campaign to bring an MRI to the Birchmount campus would not have been successful without the incredible support of our community, as well as hospital staff, physicians and volunteers,” he said. “Thank you to everyone who helped make today possible.”

Klaus Nienkämper, who owns Nienkämper Furniture and Accessories Inc. in Scarborough, was one of the supporters of the MRI campaign.

“Hospitals are an important part of any community and as a Scarborough business, we wanted to do what we could to help build a strong hospital for our employees, our customers and everyone in the community,” he said.

Guests were entertained by musician Holly Cheng who performed songs on both the violin and erhu; and members of the Wayland Li Martial Arts Centre wowed the crowd with their tricks and techniques.

RUSSELL MUSTACHI – PATIENT TESTIMONIAL

Russell Mustachi remembers the long wait times in the emergency department at The Scarborough Hospital. But during his last few visits the long-time Scarborough resident says he has seen a dramatic improvement in both wait times and overall quality of care.

“They were pretty quick in seeing us in the emerg,” says Russell, who arrived at the hospital’s Birchmount campus with his 86-year-old mother.

He knows the hospital has been working hard to make improvements, and in an email, he commended its exemplary service.

Russell was also impressed with the care from one particular emergency department nurse.

“We had the good fortune of having Joey as the attending person when my mother was brought to the emergency department twice within the last week,” writes Russell in his email. “As a norm, we will always complain when things go wrong, but seldom take the time to applaud and commend someone who goes above and beyond on a daily basis.”

Joey Doinog is a Registered Nurse in the emergency department at the hospital’s Birchmount campus.

Russell adds that Joey’s caring attitude and enthusiasm made a difficult situation “a breeze” and that Joey is an inspiration and that his example should be rewarded.

“He’s one of those guys who has a smile on his face at all times and handled the situation with great professionalism and understanding when he had a room full of patients.”

When Russell and his mother returned to the hospital’s emergency department the second time that week and received the same care, he knew excellent service wasn’t a fluke, but consistent quality care at The Scarborough Hospital.



Joey Doinog, RN, goes above and beyond everyday in The Scarborough Hospital’s Emergency Department to ensure patients receive top-quality care

New CEO Announced to Lead The Scarborough Hospital



Mr. Robert Biron

A well-known healthcare leader in Ontario will be The Scarborough Hospital’s new CEO beginning June 1. Robert Biron, currently President and Chief Executive Officer of Northumberland Hills Hospital, has been appointed as the new President and CEO by The Scarborough Hospital’s Board of Directors.

“Robert is exactly the leader The Scarborough Hospital needs to shepherd us through the changes we will need to make as a hospital in this era of healthcare transformation. He brings a very strong background in quality healthcare, innovation, fiscal restraint and community engagement,” said Stephen Smith, Chair of the Board of TSH.

“Under John Wright, we saw the quality and safety of healthcare provided by our hospital increase dramatically to become one the best

in Ontario. With John’s retirement, we know that Robert will continue that focus and at the same time position our hospital for the long term under the new reality,” says Smith.

“I am honoured to have the opportunity to join The Scarborough Hospital team – a team that’s clearly committed to quality care, innovative thinking and stakeholder engagement. The current work under way with the Strategic Plan Refresh demonstrates the team’s commitment to transform the hospital to ensure the long-term sustainability of health services for the Scarborough community. I look forward to working with the team and the community for continued success,” said Biron.

Biron joined Northumberland Hills Hospital as President and CEO in

November 2008. He has worked in the hospital sector for over 20 years in various capacities, primarily at the senior executive level.

His professional credentials include a Master’s of Health Science (MHS), Health Administration degree from the University of Toronto and a Canadian Health Executive (CHE) designation. He is a Chartered Accountant (CA) with a designated specialty in information technology (CA•IT).

Biron has served on a number of working groups and committees for the Ontario Hospital Association, and he has also served as a hospital peer reviewer for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. He currently serves as Chair of the Board of the Hospitals Diagnostic Imaging Repository Service (HDIRS).



TSH's family physicians show their support for hospital with creation of new education and research fund



Dr. Larry Erlick, Chief of Family Practice and Community Medicine at TSH

A new fund will support research into how to provide better patient care to Scarborough's diverse population.

The Scarborough Hospital's Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM) has established the TSH DFCM Community Academic Research and Education Support (TSH CARES) Fund with a \$400,000 donation to The Scarborough Hospital Foundation.

The TSH CARES Fund will support academic enrichment and scholarly activities, and community based research to study various populations and ethnic diversity.

"There is much potential to the health of our diverse population and this will give physicians a chance to do the research and in the end, provide better patient care," says Dr. Larry Erlick, Chief of Family Practice and Community Medicine at TSH.

The donation comes from the group of physicians who are part of the resident teaching program at TSH. Most teaching programs have a fund for research and scholarly activities. Dr. Erlick believes the creation of the TSH CARES Fund enhances the academic role of TSH's teaching program.

"The physicians wanted to help support the teaching program and the patient experience," he says. "The family physicians here are committed to teaching and education and scholarly endeavours and this allows us to provide support to make sure those activities are possible."

The Foundation is excited about the donation and the creation of the fund.

"The mission at The Scarborough Hospital is to meet the unique needs of each and every patient and our vision is to become recognized as providing the best healthcare for our global community. We are grateful to the physicians of the Department of Family and Community Medicine for their vision and generosity to establish the TSH Cares Fund," says Foundation president Michael Mazza. "It is a wonderful example of how the generosity of our community can help us to achieve great health care."

The Fund provides another opportunity for supporters to give to The Scarborough Hospital Foundation and to support research that will be used to help people in their own community.

Strategic Plan Refresh

After two separate phases of community engagement that resulted in face-to-face interaction with well over 1,000 external stakeholders in 45 public meetings, plus internal activities including town halls, unit/department meetings and online surveys, Strategic Plan Refresh has now come full circle. The final decisions on how and where healthcare services will be delivered now lie with The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) Board of Directors, which will meet on March 5th.

In Phase 1, representatives of TSH's Senior Team participated in 39 community meetings with the aim of educating and informing the general public about

changes to healthcare funding in Ontario, and the predicted impact those changes will have on service delivery at TSH.

"It was probably the most extensive consultation process ever undertaken by any healthcare facility in the GTA," says Dr. John Wright, President and CEO. "Our online survey told us that most — more than 72 per cent — know that changes to our healthcare system are coming."

Feedback from evaluation forms gathered at public meetings strongly indicate that a vast majority of attendees — 87 per cent — agreed or strongly agreed

that we had done a good job in sharing information about coming changes to healthcare.

We also learned that the general public understands there is a duplication of services, but has also asked for further consultation on specific service changes while maintaining our focus on patient care.

And that's when Phase 2 was launched through the month of February, with an ambitious schedule of internal and external consultations to explain the options that are now on the table.

For our internal stakeholders, there were Town Halls, an online survey and staff meetings in each department

and unit to solicit input on the options.

Externally, there were four community engagement events at the Scarborough Civic Centre and displays at two local shopping malls, plus an online survey and PowerPoint presentation accessible to anyone on our website at www.tsh.to. Presentations were made to community groups, and there were also focus groups and executive interviews with targeted members of the public, internal stakeholders and representatives from community partners.

The option to consolidate Women's and Children's Health at one campus is based on several factors, including demographic shifts: the number of babies being delivered at both campuses now account for less than 50 per cent of deliveries in Scarborough (Birchmount deliveries declined by 15 per cent over the past seven years, while deliveries at the General declined by 10 per cent over the same period).

Also, hospital beds specifically identified for use by women delivering babies are not being utilized to their full potential: 59 per cent of the time at Birchmount and 74.4 per cent at the General.

The option to combine the two programs to one campus will result in the development of a Centre of Excellence for Women's and Children's Health. Bringing together staff, physicians and resources to one area will result in the best care available for moms and babies.

Proposed Program Locations

Birchmount campus:

- 24/7 Emergency Department
- Day – Short-Stay Surgery:
 - Gallbladder/Cataract/Outpatient
 - Orthopaedics and Plastic Surgery
- Mental Health Inpatient Unit
- Intensive Care Unit
- General Medicine Inpatient Unit
- Diagnostic Imaging:
 - CT Scan
 - MRI
 - Ultrasound
 - Nuclear Medicine
 - General x-ray
- Outpatient Clinics:
 - Support programs/services at campus



General campus:

- 24/7 Emergency Department
- Complex – Longer-Stay Surgery:
 - Joint replacements/Instrumental Spine/Vascular/Breast reconstruction/ Bowel cancer
- Cancer Care Program
- General Medicine Inpatient Unit
- Intensive Care Unit
- Diagnostic Imaging:
 - CT Scan
 - MRI
 - Interventional
 - Ultrasound
 - Nuclear Medicine
 - General x-ray
- Comprehensive Breast Diagnostic Assessment Unit
- Outpatient Clinics:
 - Support programs/services at campus
 - Chronic Kidney Disease Clinics
 - Centre for Complex Diabetes Care
 - GAIN



The Scarborough Hospital

A look at the Options

Key aspects of the options include:

1. Keeping Emergency Departments at both the Birchmount and General campuses open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
2. Realignment of programs and services to support enhanced delivery of care.
3. Development of Centres of Excellence for:
 - Women's & Children's Health
 - Surgical Programs:
 - Inpatient Complex Surgery (eg. orthopaedics / vascular / breast reconstruction)
 - Short-Stay and Day Surgery (eg. gallbladder / cataracts / appendix)
4. Building on current partnerships with other agencies/ organizations, and developing new partnerships, to potentially create more options and better choices for access to care.
5. Women's and Children's Health (including birthing and paediatrics) located on one campus. The Emergency Department at the campus where the program is located will have enhanced supports in place to receive and treat these patients. The final location has not been decided.



OSLER RECOGNIZES EXCELLENCE IN ITS PHYSICIAN COMMUNITY



(L-R) Dr. Mohammad Bahasadri, Dr. Alvin Kelly, Dr. Ron Mandel, Dr. Asim Masood (awards presenter), Dr. Michael Miletin and Dr. David Richardson. Absent from the photo is Dr. Paul Joza.

Leadership and excellence in William Osler Health System's (Osler) physician community was lauded recently at Osler's "Awards of Excellence". The event – held annually as part of a corporate Professional Staff Association meeting – recognized six physicians from across Osler's two hospital sites and honoured them for their commitment to providing innovative, compassionate care to patients and their families.

"We are very proud of our award recipients and greatly appreciate the unique history and experiences that each have had with this organization," said Kay Blair, Osler's Board Chair. "From our humble beginnings at Peel Memorial, ground-breaking work at Etobicoke General, and ongoing innovation at Brampton Civic, our honourees are quite simply, brilliant physicians and shining examples of leaders in their field. It is this kind of leadership and dedication that champions programs and initiatives that benefit patients and families in our community."

The award winners are:

Career Achievement Award

Dr. Alvin Kelly, Brampton Civic Hospital, Department of Family Medicine

Dr. Ron Mandel, Etobicoke General Hospital, Department of Family Medicine

Clinical Excellence Award

Dr. Paul Joza, Brampton Civic Hospital, Department of Internal Medicine and Cardiology
Dr. Mohammad Bahasadri, Etobicoke General Hospital, Department of General Surgery

Leadership Award

Dr. Michael Miletin, Department of Medicine, Division of Internal Medicine and Respiriology

Education Award

Dr. David Richardson, Department of Medicine and Laboratory Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases and Medical Microbiology

"Apart from these awards, we continue to see amazing examples of physician leadership each and every day at Osler, though participation in our Foundation activities, volunteer work through provincial and Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) panels, as well as efforts by Etobicoke General physicians to organize the free Goldhart Ranney public lecture series year after year," said Dr. Naveed Mohammad, VP, Medical Affairs. "We are very

fortunate to have a team of committed, innovative and compassionate physicians serving our growing and diverse community."

ABOUT WILLIAM OSLER HEALTH SYSTEM AND THE FOUNDATION:

William Osler Health System (Osler) is a hospital system „Accredited with Exemplary Standing from Accreditation Canada serving 1.3 million residents of Brampton, Etobicoke, and surrounding communities of the Central West Local Health Integration Network. Osler delivers more babies than any other hospital in the province, and its emergency departments are among the busiest in Ontario. William Osler Health System Foundation fosters relationships in order to raise funds for Osler's capital, education and research priorities at Brampton Civic Hospital, Etobicoke General Hospital and Peel Memorial Centre for Integrated Health & Wellness (targeted for completion in 2015-16).

Physician Award Winners

Dr. Alvin Kelly, Brampton Civic Hospital, Department of Family Medicine Started at Peel Memorial Hospital in 1968. Dr. Kelly championed a ground-breaking Palliative Care program for the Brampton community.

Dr. Ron Mandel, Etobicoke General Hospital, Department of Family

Medicine Dr. Mandel held the position of Occupational Health physician at EGH for many years, as well as being an ED physician and dedicated family physician.

Dr. Paul Joza, Brampton Civic Hospital, Department of Internal Medicine and Cardiology Started at Peel Memorial in 1979 as an Intensivist and Cardiologist

Dr. Mohammad Bahasadri, Etobicoke General Hospital, Department of General Surgery Started at EGH in the fall of 2007. Dr. Bahasadri was the lead physician on the EGH tumour boards and was instrumental in getting the program off the ground.

Dr. Michael Miletin, Department of Medicine, Division of Internal Medicine and Respiriology Dr. Miletin started at EGH in 2003 and now works at both EGH and BCH's Critical Care Units. Dr. Miletin is the Critical Care lead for the Central West LHIN.

Dr. David Richardson, Department of Medicine and Laboratory Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases and Medical Microbiology

Dr. Richardson started at Peel Memorial Hospital in 2003. He holds a Fellowship in Infectious Diseases and Microbiology.



WILLIAM
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SKI DAY RAISES \$60,000 FOR WILLIAM OSLER HEALTH SYSTEM



Ski Day participants proudly display a cheque for \$60,000 for William Osler Health System Foundation. From left to right: Jim Kennedy, President, KLM Planning Partners Inc.; Ken Mayhew, President and CEO, Osler Foundation; Darren Steedman, Vice President, Metrus Development Inc.; and Steven Wimmer, Partner, MBTW/Watchorn

William Osler Health System Foundation's fifth annual Ski Day attracted more than 180 skiers, snowboarders and supporters who raised \$60,000, with net proceeds supporting Osler's redevelopment initiatives at Etobicoke General, Brampton Civic and Peel Memorial.

"This year's Ski Day set a new record, thanks to the generosity of our corporate sponsors, our loyal supporters, our hard-working volunteer committee, and the co-operative weather," said Ken Mayhew, President & CEO, William Osler Health System Foundation. "Everyone in the community benefits through great events like this. By funding events like Ski Day, more than 600,000 patients who turn to their hospital each year will receive the care they need and want, close to home."

Ski Day was made possible with the generous support of:

Metrus Development Inc., Sterling Dental, Davies Howe Partners LLP, Empire Communities, GHD, Great Gulf Homes, KLM Planning Partners Inc., MBTW/Watchorn, Melrose Investments, Savanta Inc., Schaeffer & Associates Ltd., Aird & Berlis LLP Barristers and Solicitors, Bratty and Partners, LLP Barristers and Solicitors, Cassidy & Co. Architectural Technologists, Feige Nawrocki LLP, Gray & Associates, Holding Jones Vanderveen Inc., SCS Consulting Group Ltd., TACC Development Inc., C.A.P.E.R., Neal

Brothers Foods, Druxy's, Spirit Tree Estate Cidery, SNAP Brampton and Caledon Ski Club.

To support William Osler Health System and the Foundation, or to see photos from the event, visit www.oslerfoundation.org.

ABOUT WILLIAM OSLER HEALTH SYSTEM AND THE FOUNDATION:



WILLIAM OSLER HEALTH SYSTEM

William Osler Health System is a fully accredited hospital system that serves 1.3 million residents of Brampton, Etobicoke, and surrounding communities of the Central West Local Health Integration Network. Osler's emergency departments are among the busiest in Ontario and its labour and delivery program is one of the largest in Canada. William Osler Health System Foundation fosters relationships in order to raise funds to support William Osler Health System's capital, education and research priorities at Brampton Civic Hospital, Etobicoke General Hospital and Peel Memorial Centre for Integrated Health & Wellness (opening in 2015).

Osler recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for 2013

National award speaks to organization's commitment to diversity and inclusivity

William Osler Health System (Osler) is among the best in the country when it comes to creating a workplace that is inclusive, respectful, welcoming and accessible. Osler has been honoured with a Canada's Best Diversity Employers award, which recognizes employers across the country for their exemplary workplace diversity and inclusiveness programs.

"This is an outstanding achievement for Osler and one that we must credit to the tremendous efforts of our staff, physicians and volunteers in creating an environment that allows us to better understand and appreciate the unique beliefs and values of one another, as well as those of our patients and their families," said Kay Blair, Osler Board Chair. "This recognition is a first for Osler and a testament to our innovation in workplace diversity and inclusion, as well as our commitment to full integration within our organization."

In addition to initiatives that focus on breaking down barriers around language and communications, Osler has implemented a corporate Diversity Strategy, struck a Diversity Executive Committee, and formed a Corporate Diversity Advisory Council – all with an aim to improve equity, access and inclusiveness across the organization, and to help support the provision of patient-centred care. Diversity e-learning modules have also been developed and implemented, along with a number of diversity tools and resources for staff, physicians and volunteers – including annual Multi-Faith and Diversity Day events, conferences, panel discussions and FAQ sessions.

"We are committed to providing an inclusive and equitable environment for everyone who comes through our doors – from our staff, physicians and volunteers to our patients and their families," said Matthew Anderson, Osler President and CEO. "Diversity is something that is in our DNA at Osler – it is embedded in our clinical services, our human resources policies, and our workplace culture. We are very proud of our diversity successes and our ability to come together each and every day as a strong and cohesive team, providing quality care to our community."

Osler's Canada's Best Diversity Employers award comes on the heels of its Exemplary Accreditation designation, which recognized Osler for its leading practice in 'Embracing Diverse Practices in Palliative Care'.

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2. Who controls the policy?
3. Can I guarantee I will always be covered?
4. Who is my beneficiary?
5. What kind of coverage do I have?
6. Can I be covered if I change mortgage holders?
7. How much insurance do I have?
8. What options do I have if I or my spouse dies?
9. Can I convert my insurance to a permanent plan at any time?
10. Am I penalized for casual deposits?
11. Who guarantees that I am covered if I die?
12. Who is more expensive?

Bank Mortgage Insurance

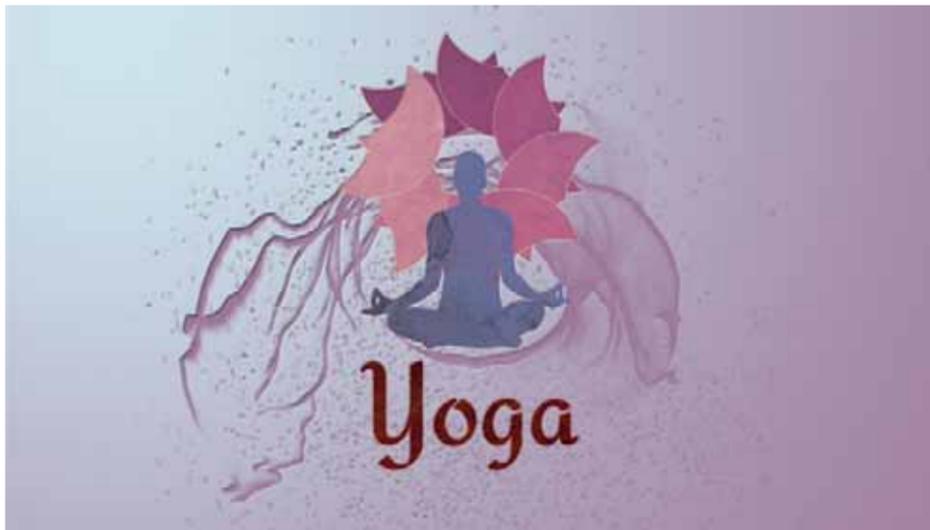
1. The bank owns the insurance policy.
2. The bank controls all the options.
3. Your policy will lapse if your mortgage goes into arrears.
4. Your Beneficiary is the Bank.
5. Your coverage is decreasing term with level cost.
6. Moving the mortgage means reapplying for insurance.
7. Face amount of the policy cannot exceed the value of the outstanding mortgage.
8. No option but to pay off the mortgage.
9. Not extendible.
10. Penalizes casual deposits.
11. Underwriting is done at time of death and research can date back to birth.
12. Can be very expensive.

London Life Insurance

1. Client owns their own Policy.
2. Insured has control of all the options.
3. Policy will not lapse if you miss a Mortgage payment.
4. You can name any Beneficiary you want.
5. Level term coverage with fixed premiums.
6. Your covered regardless of which institution you choose.
7. Your coverage is determined by your needs and wants.
8. Survivor can invest the money and use returns to pay the mortgage and still keep the capital.
9. Your policy is renewable and convertible.
10. Rewards casual deposits.
11. Underwriting is done at time of application and before a second premium is paid.
12. We are very competitive.



The Symbolism of the Lotus Flower



Sadhguru Vasudev is a realized master, yogi and mystic, who has founded Isha Foundation, an international public service organization that strives for ultimate human well-being. For world-wide program information, visit www.ishafoundation.org
Toronto local contact 1-866-424-ISHA (4742) or email Toronto@ishafoundation.org

Sadhguru looks at the symbolism of the lotus flower in yoga and spirituality, and explains how imbibing its quality can help us blossom in the world

Sadhguru: In the yogic terminology, the different dimensions of perception are always symbolized as different types of lotuses. The seven fundamental chakras within the body are symbolized by seven different types of lotuses.

Dealing with Filth

We have always used the lotus flower as a symbolism because a lotus flower grows best wherever the slush is thick. Wherever the water is dirty and filthy, that is where it grows best. This is the way life is. Wherever you go in the world, and even within your own mind, there is all kinds of filth, isn't it? Anybody who claims he doesn't have it has either not looked at himself or is not being straight because the mind is not yours. It has taken in everything that you are exposed to. You have a discretion about how you use it, but nobody has the discretion about what you have in your mind. You do not have any discretion about the content of the mind. You have discretion about what context you use the mind in, that's all. There is all kinds of filth in the world and all that filth naturally enters the mind.

Once people see filth, there are some people who will develop an allergy to-

wards it. They don't like filth so they will keep themselves away from everything. They just have two or three people around them who they think are perfect and try to make a life out of that. A lot of people are doing this because they have an allergy towards all the nonsense that is happening in the world. They are trying to live a closeted life. There is another kind of people who see, "The world is full of filth so let me also become filth." They join the filth.

Filth is Manure

But the other possibility is, you can use this filth like manure and throw out your wonderful blossom like a lotus flower. The lotus flower has made this filth into a beautiful and fragrant flower. You need to be like a lotus flower to be able to go through situations untouched. You need to be able to maintain your beauty and fragrance even if you are in the filthiest of situations. If one has this, he will float through life untouched. If one doesn't have it, life will eat him up in so many ways. Every human being has the possibility to be like a lotus flower. Yoga is just a method, a scientific approach towards it.

Everything that occurs in your life can enrich you, if only you handle it with a certain sense of awareness

A recent controversy has been making the news in the United States about banning yoga in schools because of its supposed religious and Hindu overtones. Sadhguru explains that yoga is a technology, and religion has nothing to do with it.

Sadhguru:

What religion you belong to has nothing to do with your ability to make use of the yogic systems, because yoga is a technology. Technology does not make any distinction as to what you believe in

and what you do not believe in. What you may believe in or not is purely a psychological process – it has got nothing to do with making use of a technology.

Yoga is Hindu just the way gravity is Christian. Just because the law of gravity was propounded by Isaac Newton, who lived in a Christian culture, does it make gravity Christian? Yoga is a technology. Anybody who is willing to make use of it can make use of it. It is ridiculous to even think that there could be a religious tinge to yoga.

The spiritual process and the technology of yoga predates all religion. Before human beings started thinking of forming religious groups to fracture humanity in a way that you can't fix them, the idea that a human being can evolve himself came from Shiva, the Adiyogi.

Hindu is not an "ism"

Why the yogic sciences have gotten labeled as Hindu is because this science and technology grew in this culture. And because this culture was dialectical in nature, naturally they delivered the science in a dialectical manner, involving the cultural strengths of the land, which is essentially the Hindu way of life. The word "Hindu" has come from the word "Sindhu," which is a river. Because this culture grew from the banks of the river Sindhu or Indus, this culture got labeled as Hindu. Anybody who is born in the land of Indus is a Hindu. It is a geographical identity, which slowly evolved into a cultural identity, and when some very aggressive religions came into the land and a big "competition" was set up, they tried organizing themselves as a religion – which has not happened yet. You still cannot put them together because they don't have one belief system.

We need to understand this – Hindu is not an "ism;" it is not a religion. Being a Hindu does not mean having a particular belief system. Whatever you did in this culture was Hindu. There is no particular god or ideology which you can call as the Hindu way of life. You can worship a man-god and be a Hindu; you can worship a woman-god and be a Hindu; you can worship a cow and be a Hindu; you can give up all worship and still be a Hindu. So you are a Hindu irrespective of what you believe or don't believe.

The God-makers

At the same time, there was a common line running through all these. In this culture, the only goal in human life is liberation or mukti. Liberation from the very process of life, from everything that you know as limitations and to go beyond that. God is not held as the ultimate thing in this culture, God is seen as one of the stepping stones. This is the only culture on the planet which is a godless culture in the sense that, there is no concretized idea of God. You can worship a rock, a cow, your mother – you can worship whatever you feel like – because this is a culture where we have always known that God is our making. Everywhere else,

people believe "God created us." Here, we know we created god so we take total freedom to create whatever kind of god we can relate to. It is a science of how to take a human being to his ultimate potential.

We evolved a whole technology of God-making – not just creating forms, but energizing them in such a way that it will assist you to touch that dimension of life which is the basis of creation. It is not because somebody believes in it that it reverberates. This is the science of consecration where we know how to turn a stone into the Divine.

Sadhguru J. Vasudev is a contemporary mystic rooted as strongly in worldly and pragmatic matters as he is in inner experience and wisdom. Named one of India's 50 most influential people, he has addressed prominent global forums on issues as diverse as socio-economic development, leadership and spirituality. He has served as delegate to the United Nations Millennium Peace Summit and the World Peace Congress and has been a special invitee to the World Economic Forum (2006-2009), the Australian Leadership Retreat (2006) and TED (2009).

His interviews are featured in The New York Times, BBC, Bloomberg, CNNI and CNBC. He is the author of several books, the subject of four books and co-author of the Amazon Bestseller "Midnights with the Mystic". His public talks frequently draw crowds of over 300,000 people.

Founded by Sadhguru, Isha Foundation is a non-religious, non-profit organization with over 200 centers worldwide and over one million volunteers. Isha Foundation offers Inner Engineering Online – a practical approach for inner transformation in a fast paced world. The course designed by Sadhguru presents simple, yet powerful tools for an individual to experience life on a deeper level with more awareness, energy, and productivity. This program is an ideal opportunity for those with time and travel constraints to experience the same profound effects of the traditional Inner Engineering program, which has impacted millions of people over the past 25 years. To learn more, view the free Introductory Talk, or to register visit www.InnerEngineering.com

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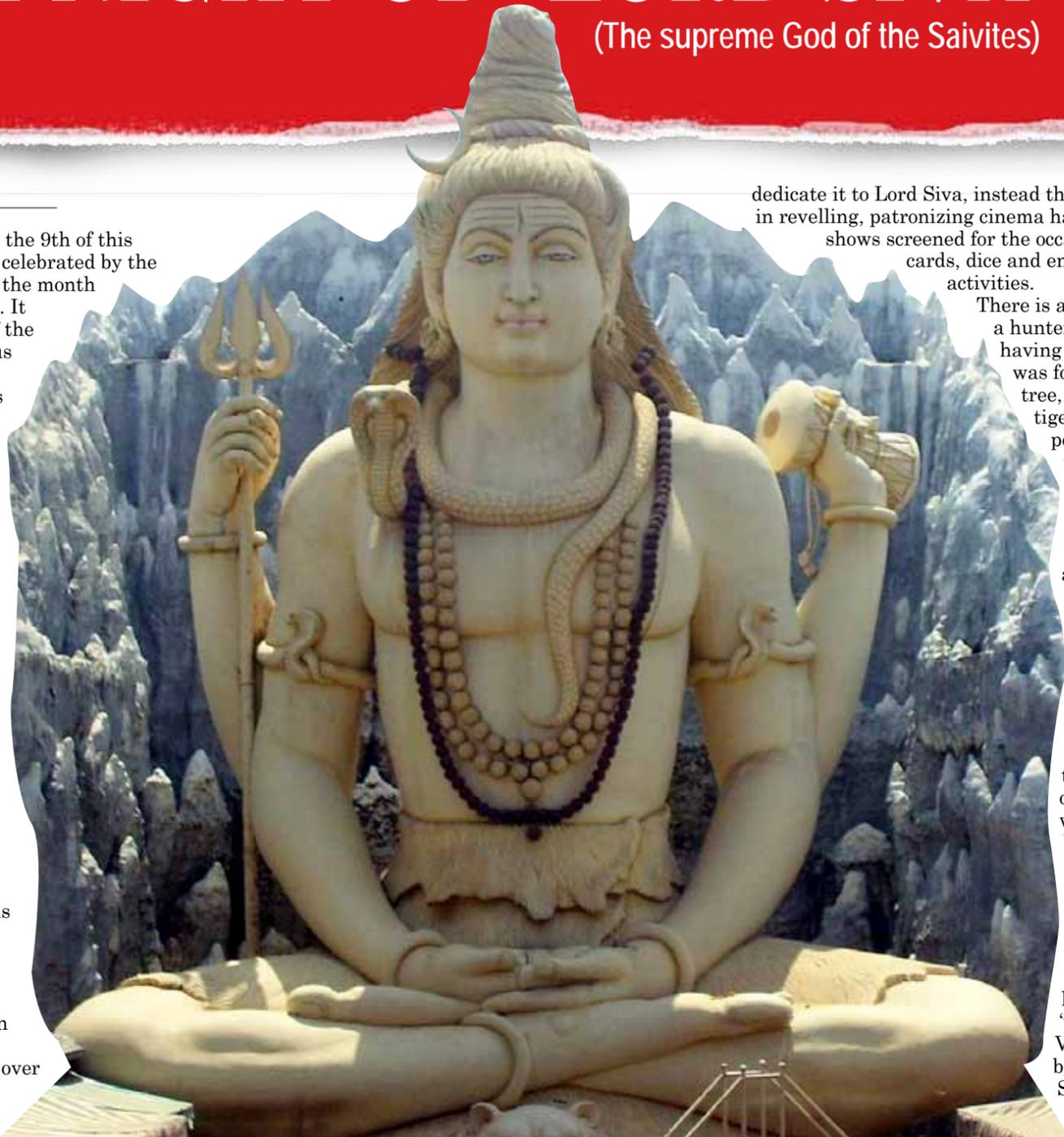
MAHA SIVARATHRI THE NIGHT OF LORD SIVA

(The supreme God of the Saivites)

C. Kamalaharan

Maha Sivarathri that falls on the 9th of this month, is an important festival celebrated by the Hindus, mainly the Saivites, in the month of 'Maasi', on 'Sathurthasi tithi'. It coincides with the 14th night of the waning moon, the night previous to the new moon. 'Sathurthasi tithi' that occurs every month is known as 'Maasa' Sivarathri and the one that occurs in the month of 'Maasi' is of special significance, as unverified legendary stories, handed down from pre-historic times, are linked to it. And so it is called Maha Sivarathri. The churning of the ocean by the Devas and Asuras to get the nectar of immortality, the 'Thandava' dance of Lord Siva symbolizing His five fold activities, the marriage of Lord Siva and Goddess Parvathi and Lord Siva manifesting Himself as Lingams are some of the legendary stories. Among them the manifesting of the Lingams by Lord Siva seems more acceptable. According to 'Lingapuranam' Lord Siva manifested Himself as twelve 'Jothilingams' on Maha Sivarathri day. These Lingams are known as 'Swayambu Lingams' as they are believed to have sprung up themselves in the primordial past and temples were built enshrining them, all over India.

Once Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu had a fight as to who was more powerful. As the fighting intensified Lord Siva intervened and manifested Himself in the form of a flaming Lingam, the beginning and end of which could not



dedicate it to Lord Siva, instead they spend the night in revelling, patronizing cinema halls to see special shows screened for the occasion, playing cards, dice and engaging in similar activities.

There is a legendary story of a hunter who at nightfall, having failed to hunt prey was forced to climb a tree, to avoid a prowling tiger and remained perched there. The tiger too remained under the tree hoping that he would climb down. The tired and tensed hunter in order to keep awake, plucked the leaves of the tree which happened to be a 'vilvam' tree and dropped them below, unaware that the leaves fell on the Lingam that was on the ground, below the tree. The whole night went on like this. His intention to keep awake was not to worship God but unwittingly he observed the 'viratham' (fasting). Very much pleased by this act Lord Siva granted him 'moksham'.

Shiva in the Padmasana posture

The tiger too was granted 'moksham'. Therefore controlling the mind and senses is the basic requirement in observing Maha Sivarathri 'viratham' (fasting). Controlling the mind and the senses is not that easy. It should be practised on sacred days like Maha Sivarathri, by completely

attempts. Lord Siva appeared in the flaming Lingam and revealed Himself in full glory. Both of them thunderstruck, realized their mistakes, bowed before Lord Siva and accepted His supremacy. As this happened on the 14th night of the month of 'Maasi', the day is celebrated as Maha Sivarathri.

Lord Siva is worshipped in the form of a Lingam, to give form to a formless God. On this Maha Sivarathri day devotees fast during the day, some totally refraining from consuming food while others partake only a single meal. But all of them keep vigil throughout the night. They go to the temple and participate in the 'Abishekam' and 'Pooja' during the four quarters of the night referred to as 'Saamam'. During 'Abishekam' curd, milk, honey, tender coconut, 'viputhi' (holy ash) and 'panchamirtham' - a mixture of five ingredients are showered on the Lingam. In some temples devotees circumambulate the Lingam and shower milk and water on the Lingam. After the showering, three stripes of 'viputhi' are coated on the Lingam and sandalwood paste and vermilion paste are applied as 'pottu' in the centre of the coated 'viputhi'. Pooja is performed with flowers, 'vilvam' leaves and other offerings. While the rituals are in progress the pealing of the bells and the chanting of the 'manthiram' continue. Night long vigil and taking part in the sacred 'Abishekam' and 'Pooja' of the Lingam in the temple is considered an important involvement of the devotees during the festival.

Mere fasting to control hunger is not enough. There should be fasting of the mind, which could control the vagaries of the mind and unite it with God. It is a fallacy that some consider Maha Sivarathri as only a night of vigil, merely to keep awake. They do not see the need to observe the night sacred and



Natarajar

be ascertained and challenged both to find them. Lord Vishnu assumed the form of a boar and went downwards while Lord Brahma assumed the form of a swan and flew upwards. Having travelled long, they returned failing in their



Lingam

engaging in thoughts of Lord Siva, repeating the Lord's name and meditating on Him, to keep the mind away from other distractions. It is a firm belief that a devotee who sincerely worships Lord Siva on this auspicious day is freed of sins and attains 'moksha'.



WORDS OF PEACE

Peace Is Obvious

It should be obvious that peace is something everybody needs, but often in life the obvious is overlooked, says Maharaji, who is frequently called an ambassador of peace as he travels from country to country with a message about the potential for each individual to experience a profound peace within themselves.

"What should be obvious is not," Maharaji says. "That's the way this life is. Here we are. Do you think you are sitting still?"

"It may seem fairly calm to you, but what's going on is quite outrageous. You may not realize it, but what if I were to tell you that we're all moving very, very fast? A bullet travels at about 900 miles an hour. We're moving faster than that. We're spinning at a rate of 1,040 miles an hour. We're orbiting the sun at a spectacular speed of about 67,000 miles an hour, day and night, nonstop. It doesn't feel like that, does it? There's nothing to give us a clue that this is what's happening. Everything feels quite tranquil.

"Just as these incredible forces leave us no clue, so it is with that beauty that

resides inside of us. There's no external clue. There's nothing to tell us. It's not as if when we look in a mirror we see it. We have no idea, but that doesn't mean that it's not happening. It is."

There is a deeper reality within each of us, he says, but it needs to be experienced to be understood.

"Have you heard the rhythm, the beat that plays inside of you?" Maharaji asks. "If you have not, you have not been entertained. What do I mean by entertained? When we listen to that beauty inside, that entertainment is called peace. When we are at peace, then we are really alive.

"We all know this. I say it, but you know it. You have always known it. The question is whether or not you are willing to do something about it."

To help people understand his message, Maharaji often offers analogies. In one, he compares a human being to a tree.

"We see trees," Maharaji says. "We like the way trees look. Its roots are what we don't see, but that is the essence of a tree. There are leaves, flowers and maybe fruit, but the essence of the tree is the

roots that we don't get to see.

"We, too, are like a tree. Are we familiar with our roots? This body is what we look at, and we think this is it. We look, and what we see is what we perceive to be real. Who are you? We look at ourselves in a mirror and say, 'Well, that's me.' Yet some argue that that's not real. Some argue that something else is real, that something else is true."

Finding that inner reality, Maharaji says, brings harmony, joy, understanding, peace.

"When a guitar string is out of tune," he says, "can it be played in that state? Yes. It will follow all the laws of physics, but it will sound better when it is in tune. When was the last time you tuned your guitar? If your song doesn't sound well, don't blame the song. Maybe it is your guitar that is out of tune. Without giving it a thought, people are playing and playing. No matter what they do, it doesn't sound good.

"I am here to encourage people to tune their guitars. It's not that difficult. All you have to know is what it should sound



like when it is in tune. Then let me show you how to turn the key and strum until it is in that harmony. That's all. That's the solution to your problems—all of them. In each of us reside the problems, and in each resides the solution."

To learn more about Maharaji, visit:
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BIG MAGIC INTERNATIONAL STRENGTHENS REACH IN CANADA, ENTERS STRATEGIC DISTRIBUTION TIE-UPS WITH TELUS, COGECO

REACH EXTENDS TO VIEWERS ACROSS CANADA



India, Mumbai, Feb 18, 2013: BIG MAGIC International (BMI), part of Reliance Broadcast Networks Ltd. (RBNL), announces a strategic distribution tie-up with cable distribution leaders - TELUS, COGECO, providing the largest coverage in Canadian markets, this additional distribution on Cogeco and TELUS sees BMI gain an unbeatable stronghold in Canada. Having launched in 2012, with Ethnic Channels Group (ECG) as its exclusive distribution partner, the Channel is now present in 5 of the 6 platforms, across GTA, East and the West Coast.

With this move, BMI reaches out to the South Asian diaspora living across the length and breadth of Canada, with the extremely popular shows like Rasoi ki Rani and Big Memsaab Season 6, already huge hits locally in India. Also planned in the pipeline are local shows targeting youth and a business show on the Success Stories of Indians in Canada.

The unity with TELUS, COGECO together comprises of the largest cable TV network across Canada, covering 5 of the 6 national platforms in Canada. This gives BMI unprecedented reach and viewers get a share of the popular and entertaining variety shows.

TELUS Optik TV covers Vancouver, British Columbia, Alberta, Edmonton and Calgary on the West Coast. It will beam on Channel 556 and free viewing at a \$5 add-on.

COGECO will serve the areas of Hamilton, Burlington, Oakville,

Milton, Stoney Creek, Burloak, Brockville, Niagara Falls, St. Catherine, Peterborough, and Windsor among others in the Ontario region on Channel 1084. This in effect will cover the East Coast of Canada. BIG Magic will be offered to viewers here as a package, with channels included being ATN, Zee Cinema, Big Magic, Aaj Tak and Headlines Today. This will be available to viewers for \$25 per month.

BMI is the first variety Entertainment Channel to connect with the Indian community in Canada.

Commenting on the development, Mr. Soumen G. Choudhury said, "We are happy to announce further penetration of the channel, through the launch on Telus and Cogeco. This will ensure that our shows that have seen popularity in India, grow global and entertain the viewers internationally too. Our partners, ECG have done a commendable job, giving us an increased penetration through their existing relationship with platforms across Canada."

"While our audiences grow, we need to meet the demands of every segment of our viewers. With BIG MAGIC International, we cover the most engrossed and interactive audience of South Asians, especially Indians", said Hari Srinivas, President ECG.

"We are delighted with the continuing growth of BIG MAGIC International in Canada" added Slava Levin the Co-founder and CEO of Ethnic Channels Group.

About Reliance Broadcast Network Ltd:

Reliance Broadcast Network Limited is a media entertainment conglomerate with play across radio, television, intellectual properties and television production. It is part of the Reliance Group and specializes in creating and executing integrated media solutions for brands. The company houses the following verticals: 92.7 BIG FM – India's largest FM Network with 45 stations, reaching over 4 crore Indians each week; BIG CBS Networks – A joint venture with CBS Studios International, offering 3 English Entertainment Channels - Prime, Love, Spark, as well as a regional General Entertainment Channel for the PCHP region called Spark Punjabi; BIG RTL THRILL – the first channel from the Company's joint venture with Europe's RTL Group, targeted at male audiences and is positioned as the ultimate action destination; BIG MAGIC – a regional General Entertainment Channel for the Hindi heartland, which has also expanded into the US, Canada and Australia under the brand name BIG MAGIC INTERNATIONAL; BIG PRODUCTIONS – the television content production division that caters to the creative needs of the diverse Indian television landscape. Reliance Broadcast Network also distributes Bloomberg TV India, the country's premier business news channel as part of its television bouquet. For more

information log on to www.reliancebroadcast.com

About Ethnic Channels Group Limited:

Ethnic Channels Group is the leading provider of non-English language digital TV channels to Canada's multicultural population. By selecting the best channels from around the world and delivering them directly to viewer's homes via a Licensed Canadian satellite and/or cable providers, Ethnic Channels Group provides essential entertainment and information services to non-English speakers throughout Canada.

From its state-of-the art broadcast facility in Toronto Ethnic Channels Group delivers the very best of programming available from the countries of origin spiced with locally produced foreign language shows. This combination creates a service that meets the diverse needs of today's immigrant population, which is underserved by mainstream media sources. Ethnic Channels Group specializes in providing Canadian émigrés with the highest rated and most respected TV channels from their native homeland, broadcasting news, current affairs, sports, drama series, movies and general entertainment in their native languages. Ethnic Channels Group provides these services at the most affordable price so majority of people can enjoy this link to their homeland and cultural heritage.

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Winners of the 85th Academy Awards 2013



Top 10 Oscar movies Time Line (1980-2011)

The Academy Awards given annually for excellence of cinematic achievements. The Oscar statuette is officially named the Academy Award of Merit and is one of nine types of Academy Awards. Organized and overseen by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) the awards are given each year at a formal ceremony.

The AMPAS was originally conceived by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio executive Louis B. Mayer as a professional honorary organization to help improve the film industry's image and help mediate labor disputes. The awards themselves were later initiated by the Academy as awards "of merit for distinctive achievement" in the industry.

2010
The King's speech

Budget: \$ 15,000,000
Revenue: \$ 311,662,669
Filmed in: United Kingdom
The author, David Seidler suffered from a stammer as a child. Having heard George VI's wartime speech as a child, he had written to the Queen Mother asking for permission to use the King's story to create a film. The Queen mother asked him not to during her lifetime, citing that the memories were too painful.

1984
Amadeus

Budget: \$ 18,000,000
Revenue: \$ 51,973,029
Filmed in: Czech Republic
Elizabeth Berridge, during the nipples of Venus scene, did not know she could spit out the candy between takes and ate about 15 whole species. She later describes how she taught that they were disgusting and that she eventually made herself sick.

1987
The Last Emperor

Budget: \$ 23,800,000
Revenue USA: \$ 43,984,230
Filmed in: China
Hairdresser Giancarlo De Leonardis imported 2,200 pounds of human hair to make the elaborate wigs needed for the Court. For the coronation scenes, his staff spent ten days training fifty Chinese to pin wigs and plaits onto two thousand extras in under two hours.

1986
Platoon

Budget: \$ 6,000,000
Revenue: 137,963,328
Filmed in: Philippines
The cast and crew arrived in the Philippines in early 1986, almost simultaneous to the beginning of the Edsa Revolution of 1986. Willem Dafoe said that a day or two after he arrived he awoke to see a column of tanks rolling down the streets.

2000
Gladiator

Budget: \$ 103,000,000
Revenue: \$ 457,640,427
Filmed in: Spain
Russell Crowe was continually unhappy with the screenplay, rewriting much of it himself. The famous line "In this life or the next, I will have my vengeance," he initially refused to say, telling writer "Your liens are garbage but I'm the greatest actor in the world and I can make even garbage sound good."

1994
Forest Gump

Budget: \$ 55,000,000
Revenue: \$ 329,691,193
Filmed in: California
The running scene was inspired by an actual event. In 1962, Louis Michael, aged 16, ran from New Jersey to San Francisco for the American Cancer Society.

1997
Titanic

Budget: \$ 200,000,000
Revenue: \$1,843,201,268
Filmed in: Mexico
The 17 million gallon seawater tank, built for the sinking scenes in Titanic, is the largest shooting tank in the world and the largest ever constructed for a movie.

1993
Schindler's List

Budget: \$22,000,000
Revenue: \$321,000,000
Filmed in: Israel
The most expensive black & white film ever made to date.

2009
Slum dog Millionaire

Budget: \$15,000,000
Revenue: \$377,910,544
Filmed in: India
Azharuddin Mohammed Ismail (who played Salim as a child) was paid £ 700 and Rubina Ali (who played Latika as a child) received £ 500 for a moth work on the film. At the end of the movie, both of the child actors continued to live in makeshift shacks in the illegal slums of Bandara, a suburb of Mumbai.

2003
The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King

Budget: \$94,000,000
Revenue: \$ 1,129,219,252
Filmed in: New Zealand
Peter Jackson cut his own hair throughout the project because he didn't have time to schedule a haircut appointment. 48,000 props were used in films.

Original Song: Skyfall from Skyfall
Adele Adkins and Paul Epworth

Costume Design: Anna Karenina

Live Action Short Film: Curfew

Sound Mixing and Makeup: Les Misérables

Sound Editing: Tie between Skyfall and Zero Dark Thirty

Animated Feature Film: Brave

Animated Short: Paperman

Documentary Feature: Searching for Sugar Man

Documentary Short: Innocente

Source: Graphic News/ oscars.org
Graphic: Suren

Award statuette

- 13.5 inches tall
- Weights 8.5 pounds

Fact File

Awarded for: Excellence in cinematic achievements
Presented by: Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences
Country: United States
First awarded: 1929
Official website: www.oscars.org

- Academy Awards ceremony is televised live in more than 100 countries annually
- The awards were first given in 1929 at a ceremony created for the awards, at the Hotel Roosevelt in Hollywood.

Ceremony	Best Picture winner	Ceremony	Best Picture winner	Ceremony	Best Picture winner	Ceremony	Best Picture winner	Ceremony	Best Picture winner	Ceremony	Best Picture winner	Ceremony	Best Picture winner	Ceremony	Best Picture winner
1st	Wings	16th	Casablanca	31st	Gigi	46th	The Sling	61st	Rain Man	76th	Chicago				
2nd	The Broadway Melody	17th	Going My Way	32nd	Ben-Hur	47th	The Godfather Part II	62nd	Driving Miss Daisy	77th	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King				
3rd	All Quiet on the Western Front	18th	The Lost Weekend	33rd	The Apartment	48th	One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest	63rd	Dances with Wolves	78th	Crash				
4th	Cimarron	19th	The Best Years of Our Lives	34th	West Side Story	49th	Rocky	64th	The Silence of the Lambs	79th	The Departed				
5th	Grand Hotel	20th	Gentleman's Agreement	35th	Lawrence of Arabia	50th	Annie Hall	65th	Unforgiven	80th	No Country for Old Men				
6th	Cavalcade	21st	Hamlet	36th	Tom Jones	51st	The Deer Hunter	66th	Schindler's List	81st	Slumdog Millionaire				
7th	It Happened One Night	22nd	All the King's Men	37th	My Fair Lady	52nd	Kramer vs. Kramer	67th	Forrest Gump	82nd	The Hurt Locker				
8th	Muliny on the Bounty	23rd	All About Eve	38th	The Sound of Music	53rd	Ordinary People	68th	Braveheart	83rd	The King's Speech				
9th	The Great Ziegfeld	24th	An American in Paris	39th	A Man for All Seasons	54th	Chariots of Fire	69th	The English Patient	84th	The Artist				
10th	The Life of Emile Zola	25th	The Greatest Show on Earth	40th	In the Heat of the Night	55th	Gandhi	70th	Titanic	85th	Argo				
11th	You Can't Take It With You	26th	From Here to Eternity	41st	Oliver!	56th	Terms of Endearment	71st	Shakespeare in Love						
12th	Gone with the Wind	27th	On the Waterfront	42nd	Midnight Cowboy	57th	Amadeus	72nd	American Beauty						
13th	Rebecca	28th	Marty	43rd	Patton	58th	Out of Africa	73rd	Gladiator						
14th	How Green Was My Valley	29th	Around the World in 80 Days	44th	The French Connection	59th	Platoon	74th	A Beautiful Mind						
15th	Mrs. Miniver	30th	The Bridge on the River Kwai	45th	The Godfather	60th	The Last Emperor	75th	Chicago						

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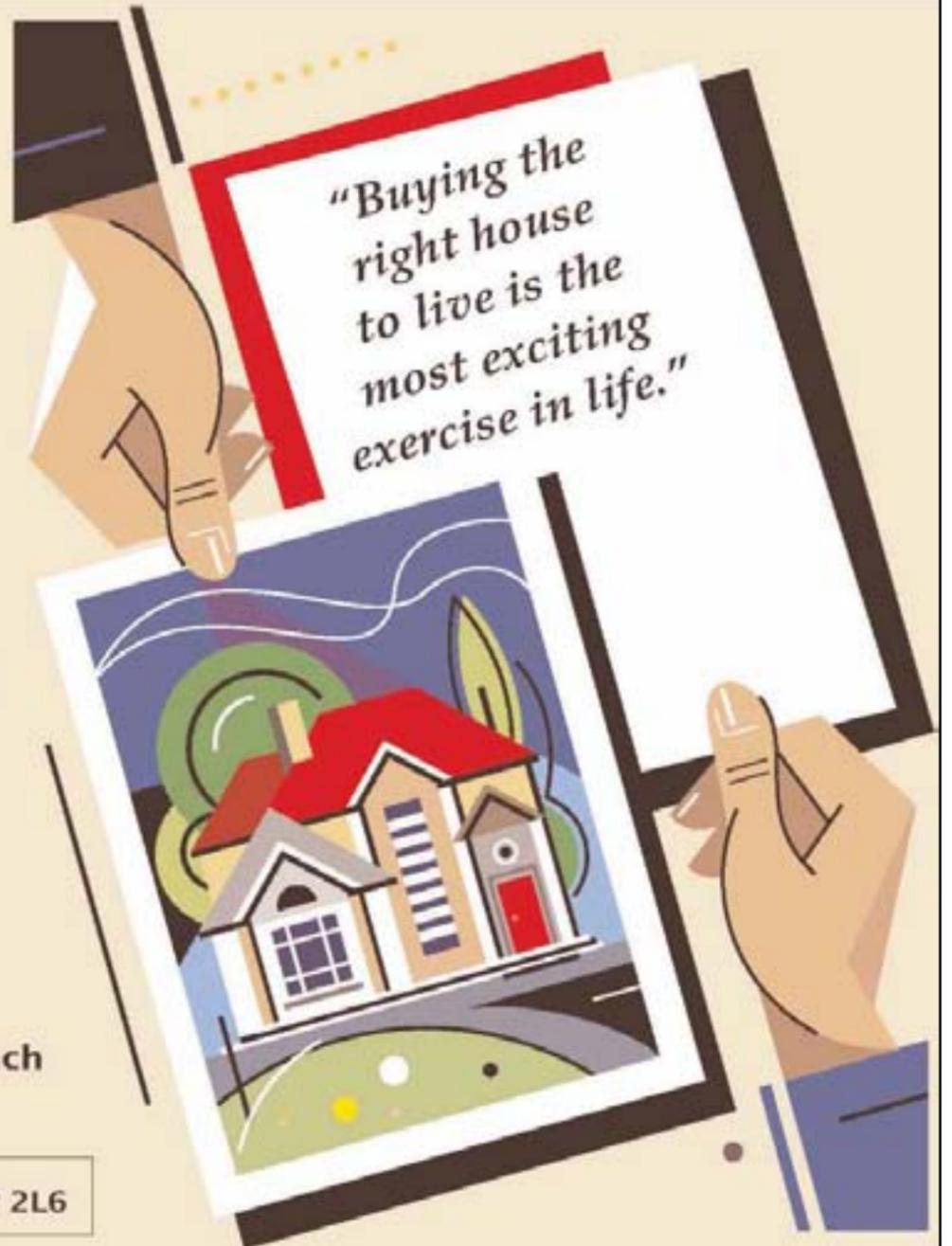
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Hyundai showcases six and seven-passenger 2013 Santa Fe XL at the 2013 Canadian International Auto Show

The new three-row, six/seven-passenger Santa Fe XL made its Toronto debut at the 2013 Canadian International Auto Show, joining the 215 millimetre shorter two-row, five-passenger Santa Fe which has been on sale since August last year. The all-new Santa Fe XL builds on Hyundai's reputation for value by combining bold design with a high-output Gasoline Direct Injection (GDI) V6 engine and a host of features providing exceptional functionality, versatility, and comfort.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2013 SANTA FE XL

- Bold "Fluidic Sculpture" styling
- Lambda II 3.3-litre GDI V6 engine
- 290 horsepower, 252 lb-ft of torque
- 7.8 L/100 km highway fuel consumption rating (FWD models)
- 2,268 kg (5,000 lb) maximum towing capacity
- The only mid-size CUV with standard Gasoline Direct Injection (GDI)
- 6-speed automatic transmission with SHIFTRONIC® manual mode
- 215 mm longer overall, 100 mm longer wheelbase than the 5-passenger Santa Fe
- Driver Selectable Steering Mode (DSSM) system
- Advanced All-Wheel Drive (AWD) system with Active Cornering Control (ACC)
- Seven airbags including driver's knee airbag
- Long list of available premium features
- Heated steering wheel, heated front and rear seats, ventilated front seats
- Power-adjustable front seats with Integrated Memory System (IMS)
- Panoramic sunroof
- Power liftgate
- Seven-passenger seating with 40:20:40 split-folding, sliding, and reclining second-row bench seat or six-passenger seating with second row captain's chairs
- 50:50 flat folding third row seats
- 145 kg lighter than the outgoing Veracruz, 108 kg lighter than the all-new Nissan Pathfinder

NO LINES STANDING STILL

Hyundai designers crafted the two-row Santa Fe and three-row Santa Fe XL together, with the signature differentiating element being the side window shape. The larger Santa Fe XL features a shape that highlights the increased passenger and cargo room behind the third-row seat. Santa Fe XL also features its own bodyside character lines from the B-pillar back, a unique grille design, new alloy wheels, dual chrome asymmetrical exhaust outlets integrated into the rear bumper, and a flush-mounted tow hitch

design.

LUXURY CAR FEATURES, THREE-ROW PRACTICALITY

With an exhaustive list of standard and optional premium features, the 2013 Santa Fe line-up represents an unprecedented value relative to competitors. Standard equipment includes heated front seats, power windows, driver's seat power lumbar support, a six-speaker audio system, Bluetooth®, a tilt and telescoping steering wheel with audio controls, cruise control, and much more. Also available are luxury features completely unexpected in the segment and unavailable in competing crossovers. Items such as a leather-wrapped heated steering wheel, heated rear seats, leather seating surfaces, and a panoramic sunroof, among others, ensure that all occupants ride in comfort.

HIGHLY ADVANCED POWERTRAIN

The Santa Fe XL is powered an advanced 3.3-litre GDI V6 engine. Producing 290 horsepower and 252 lb-ft of torque, the XL's new V6 engine provides an ideal combination of power, refinement, and fuel efficiency. All Santa Fe models come equipped with a six-speed automatic transmission with SHIFTRONIC® manual mode that can adapt quickly to deliver smooth shifts and fuel efficient operation throughout the rev range. While front-wheel drive is standard equipment, an advanced active All-Wheel Drive (AWD) system is available.

ADVANCED STANDARD SAFETY TECHNOLOGIES

Santa Fe models are equipped with an exceptional level of standard safety features for the segment. A Vehicle Stability Management (VSM) system incorporates a Rollover Protection System and optimally manages the ESC (Electronic Stability Control) and the Motor-Driven Power Steering (MDPS) to help the driver maintain control of the vehicle in slippery conditions or during fast cornering. All Santa Fe models feature seven airbags including driver's knee, dual front-impact, seat-mounted front-side impact, and side curtains. A four-wheel disc braking package provides confident stopping ability. The Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) features Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD) and Brake Assist (BA).

HYUNDAI AUTO CANADA CORP.

Hyundai Auto Canada, established in 1983 and headquartered in Markham, Ontario, is a subsidiary of Hyundai Motor Company of Korea. Hyundai vehicles are distributed throughout Canada by Hyundai Auto Canada and are sold and serviced through more than 205 dealerships nationwide.





REMEMBERING

GOOD FRIDAY

By Raymond Rajabalan

Good Friday, also called Holy Friday, is the Friday preceding Easter Sunday. This year it falls on March 29th. This day commemorates the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ and his death at Calvary.

The death of Christ on a Friday turned out to be day of victory over sins and that is why, we can consider it to be a Good Friday since it has brought so much good to the mankind.

“As the centuries pass, the evidence is accumulating that, measured by His effect on history, Jesus is the most influential life ever lived on this planet.”

-Historian Kenneth Scott Latourette

Jesus, the only begotten son of God was born in an obscure village, the Child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college.

He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. He had nothing to do with this world except the power of His Divine manhood. While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a Cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth while He was dying—and that was His coat. When He was dead He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Such was His human life—Yet, He rose from the dead.

Twenty centuries have come and gone since the occurrence of a historical event on the Palestinian region of Middle East. Today Jesus is the Centerpiece of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of men upon this earth as powerfully as that of the Life of Jesus.

The crucifixion of Jesus created a vast impact in the history of mankind and resulted in a variety of social changes. The birth of the only son of God almighty brought in a ray of hope to the humanity stained by sins.

What was considered as an ordinary event at that time later turned out to be of great historical significance. The fact that the time of birth of Jesus was the basis for world history to be divided into Before Christ (B.C) and after Christ (A.D) emphasizes the tremendous significance of this epoch.

Jesus, the only begotten son of God who had the power of being able to be born in a palace with all the comforts and glory, chose to be born in a manger, depicting the greatness of humility. After 33 years of his life in this world when he sacrificed by himself on the cross on Mount Calvary on a Friday, he once again humbled himself.

His selfless sacrifice, offering his life to redeem the sinful mankind was the starting point of salvation for the humanity.

If there was one whose birth as well as death and his life between the two ends of human life cycle was of great historical significance, it was only the life of Jesus Christ and no one else.

There are 52 Fridays in each calendar year. Yet, why only Good Friday has gained significance world wide?

■ It was the day when the Almighty Jesus, hung on the cross and gave his life for the salvation of the mankind

■ It was on that day, the sinless son of God, volunteered to carry the weight of our sins, bled profusely underwent untold agony and breathed his last on the cross.

■ Good Friday was the day on which God showed to the world the depth of His Love for the mankind.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a star was the guiding factor to the three wise men and helped them reach the place where



throughout the history but it is a general rule that at the end the truth will prevail.

The enemies of Jesus Christ scored a temporary victory by crucifying Him to death. However, what they

considered to be their victory finally proved to be a huge victory for Jesus over death. The death of Christ on a Friday turned out to be day of victory over sins and that is why, we can consider it to be a Good Friday since it has brought so much good to the mankind.

On the third day when Jesus rose to life, Jesus, the King of Kings He had victory over death. He rose to life, to the disappointing of the jubilant high priests, to the joy of the sorrowing poor, to the delight of the frightened disciples.

He rose to life, to be with us. He rose to us counsel us, lead us out of difficult situations, fulfill our needs and to wipe our tears. Of course one may have to undergo unbearable pain and great sacrifice before we can see a light at the end of the tunnel. The death of Jesus very clearly proves this to us.

infant Jesus was lying in the manger. Similarly cross, the identifying symbol of every Christian has become a permanent fixture in the history mankind as a symbol of salvation and redemption. It must be remembered that the death of Jesus, his supreme sacrifice for the entire world was not just for Christians alone but for each and every one.

How the Cross did become a symbol of Redemption?

With the crucifixion of Christ, the cross which was considered to be a symbol of disgrace and humiliation has come to be accepted as a symbol of redemption.

In those days, only the worst criminals were crucified under the Roman rule. Those who were offended by the teachings of Christ, those Jewish leaders whose hypocrisy was exposed constantly schemed to lay false charges on Him and some how or other get him crucified. When their self interests were affected those opposed to the teachings enticed Judas Iscariot one of the disciples of Jesus, paying him 30 pieces of silver to help Jesus arrested

Judas betrayed Jesus 2000 years ago but it is painful to note that incidences of betrayal continue to this very day. From time to time a few great men dare to be the guiding light for the oppressed people but their noble intentions continue to be blocked by traitors who want to safeguard their interests at any cost. There have been numerous such instances

MANY OF OUR SAVIOUR'S MOST PROFOUND TEACHINGS ARE COUNTERINTUITIVE. "LOVE YOUR ENEMIES" IS AN EXAMPLE. THE SOLUTIONS THAT OUR MINDS ARE PRONE TO DEVELOP ARE OFTEN DIFFERENT FROM THOSE THE LORD WOULD HAVE US PURSUE. "FOR MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS, NEITHER ARE YOUR WAYS MY WAYS, SAITH THE LORD" (ISAIAH55:8).

When we encounter roadblocks in our efforts it is usual to lose hope but if we accept the fact that the thought and plans of God are different from ours, it will give us strength to bear the present agonies with the hope of a bright future.

The struggle for Justice and freedom from oppression cannot be stopped by crosses, torture and horrific killings. This has been proved over and over again throughout the history. All the sacrifices and suffering of oppressed people in every part of this world have always ended as a great uprising resulting in great freedom. This is the lesson that the death of Jesus teaches us.

ELECTING A NEW POPE

By Raymond Rajabalan

Parting Words of Pope Benedict

Dear Brothers, I thank you most sincerely for all the love and work with which you have supported me in my ministry and I ask pardon for all my defects. And, now let us entrust the Holy church to the care of our Supreme Pastor. Our Lord Jesus Christ, and implore His holy mother Mary, so that he may assist the cardinal fathers with her maternal solicitude, in electing new Supreme Pontiff. With regard to myself, I wish to also devotedly serve the Holy Church of God in the future through a life dedicated to prayer.

Excerpts from Pope Benedict's Statement

"A Surprise ending", 'Astonishing Departure'" Benedict's Austere call" - These were a few of the screaming headlines in some of Canada's leading newspapers, when Pope Benedict XVI announced his resignation last month, which took effect on 28 February 2013, making him the first pope to resign since Gregory XII in 1415.

This historic move took a vast majority of Roman Catholics throughout the globe by surprise. Yet, the 85 year old pontiff was too old and he himself has openly admitted that he was too weak to continue. Many sympathetic observers feel that he deserves a well earned rest after many decades of faithfully serving Lord God. Moreover too many problems have surfaced within the Catholic Church in the recent times triggering off a chain of unpalatable consequences and it is obvious that the Pope Benedict had a tough time facing a multitude of difficult situations.

In his bombshell announcement on Feb 11th, Pope Benedict speaking in Latin made it clear the papacy is for men physically and mentally fit. In the past few months he said his strength has deteriorated "to the extent that I had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfill the ministry entrusted to me". For this reason, and well aware of the seriousness of this act, with full freedom I declare that I renounce the Ministry of Bishop of Rome successor of St. Peter", the Pope said adding that he was to step down on Feb 28th.

His principled decision to hand over the keys, the first Pope to step down in the last six centuries will certainly empower future popes to do the same in similar circumstances.

There is a saying that "For men may come and men may go but I go on forever". Within the past 20 centuries dozens of popes have come and gone but the Catholic Church continues to survive even amidst many serious

scandals and open revolt by many clergy.

During Pope Benedict's 8 year reign, he was unable to do anything constructive to rectify many of the problems that have surfaced within the past few years. It is true that many of the teachings of Catholic Church have helped the faithful to lead a religious life. Yet it has now become very obvious that certain old traditions have to be modified to suit the changing world. It may be very difficult to bend the century old laws and traditions but if the Catholic religion is to be strong force, the underlying problems have to be faced with and courage and solutions found sooner rather than later.

Because Pope Benedict promoted so many like minded brethren to the cardinal rank - who will be voting for the next Pope, it is highly inconceivable that any successor will undo what has been done. The great challenge facing Benedict's successor will be to embody some of Pope John Paul's infectious evangelizing dynamics, no easy task in a church largely by European prelates at a time when its growth is in the developing world. In this context the new Pope will definitely have to face many tough situations but yet with guidance of Holy Spirit one can hope that the new Pontiff might be able to handle them with courage and confidence.

Electing the new pope - The procedure

The process to elect a new pope is set to begin by middle of this month.

■ Cardinals eligible to vote — those under age 80 — are sequestered within Vatican City and take an oath of secrecy.

■ Any baptized Roman Catholic male is eligible for election as pope, but only cardinals have been selected since 1378.

■ Two ballots held each morning and two each afternoon in Vatican in the Sistine Chapel. A two-thirds majority is required. Pope Benedict in 2007 reverted back to this two-thirds majority rule, reversing a 1996 decision by Pope John Paul II, who had decreed that a simple majority could be invoked after about 12 days of inconclusive voting.

■ Ballots are burned after each round. Black smoke means no decision; white smoke signals that cardinals have chosen pope and he has accepted. Bells also signal the election of a pope to help avoid possible confusion over colour of smoke coming from chimney of the Sistine Chapel.

■ The new pope is introduced from the loggia overlooking St. Peter's Square with the words "Habemus Papam!" (Latin for "We have a pope!") and he imparts his first blessing.



List of popes who resigned



St Pontian PONTIANUS (Pontianus) 21 July 230 – 28 September 235 (5 years+)

Pope Pontian abdicated on 28 September 235 AD to prevent a power vacuum. This brought a schism of the Roman Church to an end. • First to abdicate office after exile to Sardinia by Emperor Maximinus Thrax. The Liberian Catalogue records his death on 28 September 235, the earliest exact date in papal history.



St Celestine, O.S.B Papa COELESTINUS Quintus (Pietro da Morrone) 5 July 1294 – 13 Dec 1294 (0 years, 161 days)

Overwhelmed by the demands of the office, this hermetic pontiff stepped down after five months as pope in 1294. Pope Benedict XVI prayed at his tomb in the central Italian city of L'Aquila in 2009. • One of the few popes who resigned. Member of the Order of Saint Benedict.



St Marcellinus MARCELLINUS (Marcellinus) 30 June 296 – 1 April 304 (7 years+)

Abdicated or was deposed in 304 after complying with the Roman emperor's order to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. • Feast day 26 April. Also revered as a saint in Eastern Christianity, with a feast day of 7 June.



Gregory XII Papa GREGORIUS Duodecimus (Angelo Correr) 30 Nov 1406 – 4 July 1415 (8 years, 216 days)

Resigned in order to end the Western Schism Abdicated during the Council of Constance, which had been called by his opponent, the anti-pope John XXIII.



Benedict IX Papa BENEDICTUS Nonus (Theophylactus III, Conti di Tusculum) 1045–1046

Sold the papacy to his godfather Gregory VI and resigned in 1045 • Earliest historically indisputable papal resignation. He was pope on three occasions between 1032 and 1048. One of the youngest popes, he was the only man to have been Pope on more than one occasion and the only man ever to have sold the papacy



Gregory VI Papa GREGORIUS Sextus, (Johannes Gratianus) April/May 1045 – 20 Dec 1046 (1 year+)

Considering the fact that the arrangement he had entered into with Benedict was simony • Abdicated or deposed at the Council of Sutri

Conditional resignations not put into effect

• Before setting out for Paris to crown Napoleon in 1804, Pope Pius VII (1800–1823) signed a document of resignation to take effect if he were imprisoned in France

• It has been claimed that during World War II, Pius XII drew up a document with instructions that, if he were kidnapped by the Nazis, he was to be considered to have resigned his office, and that the College of Cardinals were to evacuate to neutral Portugal and elect a successor.

• In February 1989, John Paul II wrote a letter of resignation to the Dean of the College of Cardinals, which said that he would resign from the papacy in one of two cases: if he had an incurable disease that would prevent him from exercising the apostolic ministry; or in case of a "severe and prolonged impairment" that would have kept him from being the pope.



Short Story

The place has been difficult to find and I am late.

'I'm sorry,' I say.

And then I hand her the bunch of flowers bought on impulse. It is an unremarkable day in February. The sun does not shine and the damp air threatens rain. I have travelled up to London for this interview but at the station I hesitated, then bought some hyacinths.

The girl I am about to talk to, Rani, is twenty-six, and because I too am Sri Lankan I am interested in her story. But still, I must admit, I have been dreading this meeting. For I am neither journalist nor councillor, lawyer or doctor and I have no experience of interviewing someone who has endured what she has. So, as an uncertain gift, a token of respect, I have brought her flowers, blue as a tropi-

One that is repeated again and again in Sri Lanka. To its shame the country has collectively mastered the art of camouflaging its horrendous crimes, bussing in western tourists to its golden beaches and fronting a campaign of faux-peace. So that the world with its limited attention span, its short supply of pity, turns a blind eye. In the glossy brochures and magazines of the west Sri Lanka is called the 'Number One Holiday In Paradise.'

Tamil harassment and persecution had been taking place as far back as 1958. Slowly, over time the Tamils were denied education and employment. Those who could, seeing the writing on the wall, like my own Tamil father (my mother was Sinhalese) left the country. As the intimidation worsened, abductions and disappearances became common and no

the eldest of four children, all of whom, throughout their young lives had seen local violence between the Sri Lankan army and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, an armed separatist movement). All of them had witnessed the frequent round-ups in which the Sri Lankan authorities made the villagers assemble for questioning. Rani clearly remembers as a young child seeing older children interrogated and arrested, never to be seen again. She had grown up with the palpable feeling of injustice metered out by the Sinhalese armed majority to the people in the villages in the North East. But in 2004 she was still a dreamer, an ordinary girl, who hoped for a better future. An ordinary girl for whom the time was out of joint.

And when on that fateful evening in



somewhat younger. How could she know then what she now knows? That her life and all the lives of her family would soon be changed forever?

Soon she was recruited into the Tamil resistance movement and used as some sort of spy but really she didn't understand the significance of what she was doing. The LTTE arranged for her to work for a non-governmental organiza-

Rani's Story

cal sky, scented like the air of her lost childhood. I hold them out and instantly see, even before she says a word, a desolation in her face. She is detached from her surroundings, muffled, in some way. The interview room is small. A low bed, an empty desk, a blank computer screen. No plants, no pictures on the walls, nothing personal. When I came in I noticed a row of grey socks drying on a radiator. A faint trace of incense hovers suggesting prayers. I am aware of listeners behind closed doors.

'Tell me,' I say, dismissing all thoughts of where I might be, 'start at the beginning.'

But she cannot. Like all memories hers arrives in fragments, in vivid shards, hesitant flashbacks relived again and again in the retelling.

'They killed them,' she says, and I wait.

Once they had been six. Now Rani is just one. Alone; the emblematic story of the destruction of Tamil families.

'On the ninth day of the seventh month last year,' she tells me, closing her eyes, arms wrapped around herself, 'my aunt rang me. She told me they had set my home on fire. She told me my mother and sister had been burnt alive. When I went back all that was left was their skeletons.'

The statement lies between us in a shock of silence. She has started with the thing upmost in her mind. Outside on the busy north London road a siren rises and falls, then fades into nothing.

Rani's story is medieval in its savage retribution. It is a story of innocence, idealism, and betrayal in a time of civil war.



Church in ruins in Kilinochchi, Sri Lanka, Jan 2013 - Photo by Jesper Guhle - Danish Refugee Council

Tamil was safe.

Rani's story began in 2004 when she was seventeen. She was an ordinary girl whose simple religious belief made her hope to become a school teacher to help Tamil children to a better future. Her father worked for a telecommunication company, her mother, a housewife taking in sewing and keeping chickens. Rani was

2004, a man, known simply to the family as 'Uncle' came to her house, walking up the steps to sit out on the verandah, requesting help for the LTTE cause, it was Rani, the passionately idealist who stepped from the shadows to offer that help. It was just another evening when the Nerium bloomed. Rani's younger sister was fourteen, her two small brothers

tion. Her work involved visiting war-ravaged areas to teach basic health and hygiene. She assisted doctors in medical 'camps' while at the same time, remarkably, completed her A Levels.

But in 2007 other, more sinister events began unfolding. The LTTE started a compulsory recruitment of child soldiers in the build up to the final phase



of the war. At least one child from every family was what they wanted.

'How long was it,' I ask, 'before you heard your brothers were recruited?'

At that Rani throws her head back and I wait for the storm to subside. The sound I am listening to cannot simply be called weeping. It is too wild, too primeval, too piercing. The sound goes on and on, defying words, the hopelessness a lament for lost love. When at last she speaks she describes how her brothers left at night, holding hands for mutual support. Neither of them, she says, has ever been seen again.

By 2008 hostilities between the Sri Lankan Army and the LTTE had moved to a part of Sri Lanka far from the north east of the island and Rani lost all contact



House in Ruins - Kilinochchi, Sri Lanka - Photo by Jesper Guhle - Danish Refugee Council

with the rebels. Determined however to be of use to her family she took up new activities, attending courses in tailoring and cake making. But the harassment of villagers in her neighborhood continued so that suddenly, fearful of her past connection with the LTTE, her parents urged her to stay with relatives in another town.

Time passed and the war was over, in name at least. Rani was missing her family badly and in April of 2011 she moved back into her parental home. But, shortly after her return, she was arrested by the Sri Lankan intelligence forces, the CID. They kept her in jail for 10 days.

'They tortured me so much', she whispers, the coffee that has been brought in for her, untouched, growing colder.

I am silent, unable to ask the questions forming on my lips so the interpreter asks for me, instead. Yes, she was beaten. Yes, she was raped, many times. As part of the torture they cut her big toe, she tells me and I shake my head in disbelief.

'They hurt my mind,' she cries, from deep within her curled up body.

With the help of a lawyer and an MP,

Rani's father secured her release. She was admitted to hospital for a month during which time her mother held her daughter in her arms and rocked her day and night. The only thing Rani remembers of that time is the feeling of her mother's arms, the tenderness of a woman comforting her child. As she recalls this Rani too begins to rock gently. I look away towards the dull February light coming in from the window. Words are failing me.

Finally, she left the hospital, a broken person. Those who have been tortured say that once their bodies have been violated they no longer belong to the world. It is this way for Rani. It was clear how very unwell she really was. She hardly ate, could not sleep and the searing flashbacks that began then have

never left her. The doctor she was seeing told her, 'forget the past.'

She could not. What had been done could not be undone.

After her release from the hospital Rani was obliged to 'sign on' at a police station each week but she found the sessions deeply distressing. The men there would pull her hair, sneer at her and run their hands abusively over her body. Any resistance would have made matters worse. At one point she tried persuading her father to allow her to stop the weekly humiliations. Helplessly he told her that this was impossible unless they moved away altogether. He tried but failed to arrange a student visa that would permit her to leave Sri Lanka and come to the UK. Then, on a bright November morning, on his way to work he was abducted. For some time now he had been watched because of his daughter's connection with the LTTE. Later, on that same day, they found his battered and bleeding body dumped very near the sea.

'Everything happened because of me,' Rani now cries. 'They killed him because of me.'

Her father had been the gentlest of men, she says.

'I wanted to die after that. I tried poison - but my mother stopped me.'

And then she adds, chillingly,

'If I had died my mother and sister would still be alive.'

After her father's death, Rani, accompanied now by an uncle, continued to sign on with the Sri Lankan authorities. But by May 2012 she was no longer able to stand the abuse. Her mother frightened for her sanity arranged once again for her to go into hiding in Trincomalee.

During those few weeks between May and early July Rani was too frightened to leave the safe house. Her mother rang as often as she dared but men from the CID had started making spot checks on their home in search of her daughter. Her mother continued to deny all knowledge of her daughter's whereabouts.

'My mother told me not to worry. She would somehow manage the situation,' Rani tells me.

Then on 8th July her mother rang one last time. The men told her that if she didn't disclose Rani's address they would kill her instead.

'Don't come home,' her mother said. 'Wait!'

She spent a sleepless night, worrying. The following morning her aunt telephoned the safe house. The family home had been set ablaze. Rani's mother and younger sister had been in bed.

'I went back, then,' she tells me, her voice indistinct.

Arriving at the house she saw the villagers gathered in front of it. The moment is fixed forever in her mind, the silence of the crowd, the charred walls, the overpowering heat of the day, the smell of petrol. Someone, she cannot remember who, led her inside where two skeletons remained on a bed of ash. Everything slowed down and blurred. She saw a fragment of fabric from the dress she had handed down to her younger sister. Gripped by despair she fainted.

Now there was no longer any reason to hide. What was lost could not be recovered. And although the police came back to harass her with questions, crazed with grief she no longer cared about her life. The villagers urged her to flee but she would not. Everyone, she tells me now, knew she would be arrested again and when they came for her in the white van she thought nothing could be worse than what had already happened. How wrong she was.

For 47 days and nights last November, Rani was tortured and gang-raped. She was burnt with cigarettes, her head was pushed into a barrel of water. She was made to kneel while faceless men in army boots kicked her. Her distress served merely an incitement to further abuse. In the end it hardly mattered as she drifted, like a boat without oars, into semi-consciousness. Stripped of all humanity she had arrived at a place beyond human help.

At last, on the forty-seventh day Rani's uncle having bribed a CID officer managed to have her released. He took her to the coastal town of Mannar.

Now, in this silent interview room,

with only the ticking of a clock, I am piecing together what happened next. I am piecing it through her tears for she can no longer speak in any coherent way.

She left Mannar that night hiding on the bottom of a boat. Leaving under a fistful of stars shining over a land that had betrayed her. Leaving, a word that sounded so like grieving, with the slow, slow, dip of oars into water. In this terrible way, in the torn and bloodied, semen-stained dress sewn long ago by a mother's loving hand, carrying her broken body, she went. Steering away from rocks that, so the legend goes, were placed there by the demon Ravana. Helplessly, sliding away from her home, shedding her past as though it were a skin. Leaving it as if it were a foreign country. Going from the place where she had been born. Sinking into the sea.

Betrayed, she tells me, on this dull February day, 'if they send me back from here, I will just kill myself.'

The scent of hyacinths is strong in the room.

I have heard stories of how, in the process of the destruction of Tamil families, one shell of a person is left as a warning to others, so the brutalities could be spoken of and thus cause fear. Elie Wiesel, when he accepted the Nobel Prize said,

'I have tried to keep memory alive... I have tried to fight those who would forget. Because if we forget, we are guilty, we are accomplices.'

This I think, is what I too must do.

'Don't forget your flowers,' I say, and I place them in her hands once more before raising them up to her face.

Behind the opening buds I see her eyes, as bright and as young as the blue-winged Leafbird from that place which we both once called home.

Since writing this article an anonymous benefactor hearing of her plight has offered to pay for any medical help that Rani might need. She is also soon to undergo counselling.

(Roma Tearne is a Sri Lankan born novelist and film maker living in the UK. She left Sri Lanka with her family, at the start of the civil unrest during the 1960s. She trained as a painter & filmmaker at the Ruskin School of Fine Art, Oxford and then was Leverhulme artist in residence at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Subsequently she was awarded an AHRC Fellowship and worked for three years in museums around Europe on a project accessing narrative within the collections. She has written four novels. Her fifth, The Road To Urbino will be published by Little Brown in June 2012 to coincide with the premier of her film of that name at the National Gallery in London. She has been short-listed for the Costa, the Kirimaya & LA Times book prize and long-listed for the Orange Prize in 2011. She lives & works in Oxford. <http://romatearne.blogspot.ca>)



Short Story

Continued from March issue ...

But the real horror he anticipated was the meeting with the LTTE representative in Madras, because he was of two minds about what to do when the time came to make the decision. He was thankful for the safe journey across Palk Strait that they were instrumental in providing, but at the same time, he couldn't imagine himself being part of their organization. He knew he had to give a good reason as to why he couldn't join them, but he wasn't sure if they would even accept one. In any case, he decided to keep something ready; he didn't want to regret later for not having tried. On the other hand if they let him go, where would he go? He didn't know anybody in Madras, the money he had may buy another meal or two at the most and then what? For a moment

the wad of rupee notes being counted as advance for the whole year of Vadivelu's service. He remembered Vadivelu crying when his father staggered away, sheepishly holding the money in a bundle, after bidding an awkward farewell. He felt sorry for the boy, but his altruism lasted only a few days. Soon he revealed his true-self, unleashing the streak of cruelty against this defenseless boy with impunity.

It all started with playful jostling in their makeshift playground at the backyard. Kumar, with the advantage of being big and well-nourished and having been familiar to the games he introduced, got easily the upper hand beating squarely in all games he played. But as time went by Vadivelu started picking up subtle techniques to compensate for his physical handicap. And then the whole dynamics

was beneath his station to give room for speculation, that any cordial relationship was even plausible between the two. On rare occasions when Vadivelu was forced into direct communication, Kumar made sure that his friends noticed how harsh he was on his dealings. He would always blame Vadivelu for crude interruptions although he knew very well that he was the mere messenger delivering the message from his parents. He would use, on those occasions, the epithets calling him "Pariah" or "Chuckilli" to the merriment of his playmates. Vadivelu would try to pretend that he didn't hear them or notice the mirth provoked among Kumar's friends, but his face would belie the true emotions of how painful those remarks were to him. At times the friends would also add their ad-lib remarks to embellish. Being a saintlike, Vadivelu was

that he revered more than God Ganesh--his mother. For a moment he looked like a wild animal boxed into a corner, ready to fight for its life. His desperate shriek had momentarily terrified the boys; it was like a cry from an injured animal in its death throes. Initially Kumar and his friends didn't know how to react and what to expect next. They looked at each other in complete bewilderment. Then they saw Vadivelu leaping at Kumar like a cheetah displaying its ferocity on an intrusion against its cubs. Notwithstanding the lack of physical prowess, Vadivelu managed to push Kumar down and soon both rolled in the dust, trying to overpower each other while the other boys gawked in horror. Although Kumar managed to come out of the initial shock and subdue Vadivelu, the damage was already done. Kumar's face was blood-

THE TRAIL OF TEARS FROM THE LAND OF PALMYRAH

he thought he could ask help from them but why would they help him especially if he was not going to join them. The more he thought about it, the more depressed he became, because the prospects of his getting away from them looked more and more remote. Time and again his deep reverie would be interrupted by the constant fear of snakes escaping from the snake charmers' baskets; he couldn't comfortably place his legs down without worrying about being bitten by one. As he was dozing off, he would suddenly get a feeling of something slithering under his legs or even on his body. He would be startled out of the reveries and catnaps to find nothing to substantiate his feelings. He knew it was a mere fear rather than anything based on reality, but however much he tried, he couldn't shake off the feeling. He also quickly realized that his Tamil was closer to the one spoken in India than to the one in Jaffna. Actually it was a hybrid between the two, thanks to his mother's roots from Jaffna and the influence from the Indian Tamil servants of tea estates that unwittingly got rubbed off on him during his formative years.

Thinking about the Indian servants, the one Kumar could never forget about against all efforts and wishes was Vadivelu. Vadivelu was ten years old like he was, when he came to his house as a servant. A skinny wretched creature, with hunched shoulders and bowed head, he held a dusty cement bag holding everything he owned in this world while hiding behind this despicable figure, claimed to be his father. Retrospectively Kumar recalled how drunk Vadivelu's father was during the negotiations with his father. He remembered the man reeking of foul odor and was grinning and swaying, refusing to take his eyes off, like a hawk,



changed. Kumar soon became sour over his inability to beat outright. Initially he used verbal abuse and when he noticed no resistance either from his parents or from Vadivelu himself, he slowly let it morph into physical violence. It was like an after school sport, inflicting pain to see how far he could go without encountering a reprimand. To his surprise he found sky was the limit. Unfortunately Vadivelu had developed a fondness for Kumar, for having been his temporary playmate and also nice to him at the outset. So he blamed himself for not being able to satisfy the whims of Kumar. He had earnestly tried everything in his power to meet the expectations without clearly knowing what those expectations were; because Kumar himself didn't know what they were, nonetheless he was constantly fault-finding with Vadivelu, for whatever he did and however much he strived to be in his good books.

When among company Kumar would completely ignore Vadivelu; he felt it

known for his patience and the ability to withstand any provocation. But eventually this would be tested by Kumar and his friends. Desperate to make him flip out, they called all kinds of names with no avail until Kumar came out with something that finally had an effect. Oh boy, it really did the trick; didn't it?

That day Kumar couldn't wait to taunt Vadivelu with his newly thought-out slur. He waited for his friends' arrival so he could experiment in their presence. He was pretty much sure that this would be the straw that would break the camels' back. He had practiced the delivery in private; and he wanted it to be a blow-out. He knew it was the lowest that one could go to attack another; and obviously Kumar, at that age, had picked up this from his elders. The sly remark calling someone's mother a filthiest whore always had its intended reaction, and Vadivelu was no exception; he tolerated everything thrown at him, but he couldn't tolerate this--profaning the one thing

By: Sivagami

ied by the savage scraping from the long unkempt finger nails that Vadivelu possessed. In the interim, one of the boys had brought Kumar's father to the scene and seeing his son's bloodied face, the father went berserk attacking Vadivelu with a cricket bat that he got hold of from one of the boys. And thank God, if not for the onlookers, he would have killed the puny little boy. By the time the people subdued the father, Vadivelu was severely beaten and was unconscious. He was later taken to the nearest hospital and was treated for several days before being released. The police had to be involved and when they found out that he was an Indian estate boy, the charges against Kumar's father were quickly dropped. Subsequently with the help of the doctors, Vadivelu was deemed psychiatrically unstable. And the violence delivered against him was determined appropriate in self defense, meaning protecting one's own child from major harm. Although he was a minor, Vadivelu was sent to a psychiatric facility and his father was bought off for a meager sum of money and soon the whole incident was hushed up.

Once Vadivelu was gone the household was in total disarray; the husband and wife with three sons found that managing without a servant was impossible even though they had a cook, a driver and a gardner. They needed someone at their beck and call and it dawned on them how indispensable Vadivelu was. So to fill the gap, this time they decided to take a young girl and alas, how things could go from bad to worse.

WILL CONTINUE...

Continued in April 2013 issue...



Increase your TFSA contribution in 2013

When the Government of Canada introduced Tax Free Savings Accounts effectively beginning in 2009, it set the contribution limit at \$5,000 per year. The plan was designed to allow for increases to the annual contribution limit to keep pace with inflation, but with a stipulation: the contribution limit would rise only in \$500 increments. So indexation from several prior years had to be added together to make up \$500 (when rounded) for the increase to take effect.

"This is first instance of indexation resulting in an increase in the TFSA contribution limit," says Richard C. Weber, CPA, CA, a tax and accounting specialist in Oakville. "Starting in 2013, Canadian residents 18 years or older can contribute up to \$5,500 to a TFSA. Plus, you can add in any unused contribution room from previous years, and any amounts withdrawn from a TFSA will be added to your contribution room for the following year.

"TFSA contributions are not tax-deductible. Nor is the interest expense incurred on any funds you borrow to put in one," says Weber. "But the benefit of a TFSA—and it's a big one—is that any income generated on the funds you contribute is tax-free. Also, since contributions made to a TFSA are not tax-deductible, amounts withdrawn aren't taxable."

The types of investments we can put

Here, Chartered Accountant Gary Katz of Logan Katz LLP Chartered Accountants in Ottawa shares a calendar of some of the more common must-know dates and deadlines for ordinary taxpayers. This year, a couple of them fall on weekends and holidays, so we get an extra day or two to meet those deadlines. Fire up your iCal or Outlook. Plug these in, and don't forget to set those reminders!

February 28 Filing deadline for T4s, T4As and T5s

March 1: Deadline for 2012 RRSP contributions

March 15: First personal income tax instalment for 2013

April 2: General trust return deadline, including T3 slips and summary

April 2: NR4 filing information for

June 17: Second personal income tax instalment for 2013

June 17: U.S. income tax return filing deadline for citizens and residents living and working outside the U.S.

Leaving Canada comes with a tax bill

If you're considering going to work or even retiring in another country, be sure to consider the tax implications of your decision before you pack your bags and boxes.

"In Canada, taxes are based on residency, which is determined by common-law principles, like where your house is located and where your children go to school," says Chartered Accountant Jason Safar, National Private Company Services Tax Leader of PwC in Toronto.

"As long as you're a Canadian resi-

Canada has tax treaties with many other countries that set out ground rules for who gets dibs on your money and under what circumstances. In places that are "tax havens", there are no such deals.

"Intention informs strategies," says Safar. "Your plans to return or not; whether you're selling your property; where your spouse and children reside—all can factor into the equation when determining whether you're severing your residential ties to Canada."

The Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit

This year, there's a new tax-relief program targeting Ontario's seniors. It's designed to help with the cost of making their homes safer and more accessible, so certain family members who have seniors living with them may also be eligible to claim it. The best part? This is a refundable tax credit that can provide you with a tax refund when you file your tax return. It doesn't just reduce taxes the way the more common non-refundable tax credits do.

"Similar to the home renovation tax credit offered in 2009, those who qualify can claim up to \$10,000 worth of eligible home improvements on their tax returns," advises Chartered Accountant Dan Dickinson of Wilkinson & Company LLP in Belleville, Ontario. "Calculated at 15 per cent, this makes the maximum refundable tax credit worth up to \$1,500 per household. To claim it, you must be 65 years of age at December 31, 2012, or live with a family member who is a senior."

Not all renovations qualify, however. It applies to work or upgrades completed between October 1, 2011 and December 31, 2012 that make a home more accessible or safer for a senior, like installing grab bars or walk-in bath tubs; widening doors; adding ramps, lifts or automatic garage door openers; and many, many more.

"Seniors, or people with seniors in their home, should review the types of expenses that qualify or consult their accountants if they are unsure," says Dickinson. "Individuals who are eligible for a Disability Tax Credit Certificate may also be able to treat some of the eligible expenditures as medical expenses. This is especially true if the upgrades aren't expected to increase the value of the home, and were incurred to enable a family member to gain access to the home, or to be mobile or more functional in it."

To claim the credit, complete Schedule ON (S12) of your tax return and enter the amount spent on eligible renovations next to box 6311 on form ON479. You don't have to submit your receipts with your tax return, but hold on to them in case Canada Revenue Agency asks to verify your claim.

For a more complete list of eligible expenses, Dickinson recommends you review the list the Ontario Ministry of Finance has posted at <http://www.ontario.ca/taxes-and-benefits/what-expenses-qualify-healthy-homes-renovation-tax-credit>.

Tax Tips

By: Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario



in our TFSAs are generally the same as those in RRSPs. Cash, mutual funds, bonds, guaranteed investment certificates and securities listed on a designated stock exchange. Now, with more contribution room than ever, our opportunities to save, earn, and keep more money in a TFSA are just that much better.

The 2013 tax calendar

The Canada Revenue Agency can be a stickler when it comes to doing things right and on time. Fees and penalties can be prohibitive, so it's worth making an effort to know exactly what's due, and when.

amounts paid or credited to non-residents of Canada

April 2: T5013 - Partnership information return due (where partners are individuals)

April 15: U.S. tax filing deadline for American citizens and others residing in the U.S.

April 30: Deadline for paying the balance of personal taxes and filing personal income tax returns, unless eligible to file by June 15

June 17: Filing deadline for self-employed individuals and their spouses or partners

dent—and are away for maybe just a few months—you have to pay Canadian income taxes on your worldwide income," he explains.

But if you're going to Australia and have no real plans to return, you may have effectively severed residence here. That can mean a hefty price tag when it comes to taxes.

"On the way out, the government says you're deemed to have disposed of all your assets at fair market value," says Safar. "If that translates into financial gains that you haven't yet paid taxes on, you'll have to pay those taxes when you leave."



MANAGING YOUR MONEY

BY David Joseph M.A.(Eco.),CFP

Do I really need life insurance? Most people do. Life insurance helps to create financial security for families. Protection needs will vary from person to person. There will be temporary needs, such as the need to provide for payment of a loan (e.g. a mortgage) or to provide coverage that would fund a child's education in the event of the premature death of a parent.

There are also permanent needs—those without a perceived end point—that will always be there and funds will be needed by the designated beneficiary when the insured dies. Some needs will be predictable. Others will be unforeseen. Some needs will be static while others will be changing and evolving. Some needs will tend to be more common early in life, while others will be more likely to occur in the later stages of life.

Different needs will need to be ad-

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dependent.

Term insurance, then, is ideal for addressing temporary protection needs. But, if the needs are of a permanent nature, then you will need permanent solutions.

Permanent insurance plans fall into two general categories.

First, there are permanent policies that provide permanent protection but have no accumulated cash value for the policy holder. This is the case with most Term to 100 policies.

a level premium, a number things must be noted about how a whole life insurance policy works. First, the premium payments at the outset will be relatively higher for the insurance protection provided. That is, an equivalent amount of term insurance, for example, would cost less.

Each whole life policy, then, will have an accumulated and guaranteed cash value as part of the policy holder reserve. This cash value, however, is owned and controlled by the insurance company as

*foresee the potential for significant change in their protection needs over time and, therefore, place a high value on flexibility,

*are knowledgeable about financial affairs (including investment),

*like to be in control of (take a hands on approach with), their financial affairs,

*are willing to accept the increased risk and responsibility associated with greater personal control and options and, as noted, so long as a client has attended appropriately to protection and investment needs, universal life can provide some tax sheltered advantages for higher income earners.

The premiums for a permanent life insurance policy are fixed at a level premium over the life of the policy. The accumulating cash values associated with permanent insurance policies, however, can enable the policy to eventually cov-

Do I Really Need Life Insurance?



ressed by different insurance solutions. Let's begin with a look at the general types of insurance products that exist. Then, later, we'll look at the more detailed characteristics and options that may determine which insurance solutions are best for the specific needs.

There are two main categories of insurance—term and permanent. Term insurance can provide protection for:

* An outstanding loan that will be paid off at a particular point in time.

* Income replacement for survivors during the income earning years.

* A mortgage which, while a kind of loan, is a particularly good example of a loan which is frequently quite large, would place quite a burden on survivors

*Children when they are younger and

As noted, Term to 100 insurance provides permanent protection, but usually no cash value, for the client. Its name can be somewhat confusing. Although "term" appears in the name, Term to 100 plans do, indeed, provide permanent coverage. Even if the client reaches the age of 100, by that point, the policy will be paid up and the payment will be made upon the death of the client.

Second, there are permanent policies that accumulate a cash value for the policy holder. This is the case with whole life and universal life policies.

As a permanent solution, whole life insurance provides protection for the client's whole life. To provide a permanent, consistent level of insurance protection at

long as the policy is in effect. One of the key differences between whole life and universal life is that, in the case of universal life, the client actually owns and controls the cash value.

Like Term to 100, universal life is also a "hybrid" except this time it is a cross between a term insurance plan and a savings account. As noted, it is more of a "program" than a "plan" since the policy holder is more directly involved and will make a variety of decisions that will affect such things as the policy face amount, premiums, type of investment vehicle, etc.

Universal life is the insurance solution likely to be of interest to people who:

*have permanent protection needs,

er all or part of the premium payments. Therefore, while the premium always remains in effect, at a set level for the life of the insured, the policy holder can reduce or eliminate the need to pay premiums directly out of his/her pocket. To summarize, permanent insurance involves permanent premiums for permanent protection for permanent needs. Permanent plans can provide a great deal of flexibility to the client in addressing insurance needs over time.

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TAX POINTS

Caution for House flippers: Principal Residence Tax Issues

By Jay Wigna

Investing in real estate is something that we understand. We also understand the tax break known as the principal residence exemption, which can allow each family unit to sell a principal residence free of tax. It seems natural to take advantage of this tax break by purchasing a home, fixing it up or otherwise increasing its value, then selling it for a profit. Then repeat the process.

Buying homes, fixing them up and living in them for a short time, then selling strategy is not foolproof. There are cases where the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has taxed these profits as business income.

Facts: On Sept. 6, 2012, in the case of Sylvie Giguère (tcc-cci.gc.ca), Ms. Giguère and her spouse lost a court battle on this issue. The couple had sold seven single-family residences within a six-year period, claiming the Principal residence exemption on each sale.

In this case, they had owned the properties for periods ranging from just over three months to just under two years. CRA successfully argued that the profits should be taxed as business income and that, in addition, gross negligence penalties should apply for failure to report the income.

In this case, the court concluded that the intention of the taxpayers was to buy the properties and sell them for a profit, not to live in each property as a principal residence. This intention, along with the frequency of their “flips” led the court to the conclusion that, for this taxpayer, the real estate sales were an “adventure in the nature of trade.”

Analysis: If the taxman considers your activity to be an “adventure in the

nature of trade” he’ll look to tax you on any profits as business income. In its publication IT-459,

Adventure or Concern in the Nature of Trade, CRA says that: “It is a general principle that when a person habitually does a thing that is capable of producing a profit, then he is carrying on a trade or business notwithstanding that these activities may be quite separate and apart from his ordinary occupation.”

The court case Happy Valley Farms Ltd. (1986) established certain criteria as the benchmark for taxpayers and the CRA to consider when assessing whether an activity is an adventure in the nature of trade.

That decision established the following criteria to look at: (1) the nature of the property sold, (2) the length of the period of ownership of the property, (3) the frequency or number of other similar transactions by the taxpayer, (4) the work expended to make the property more marketable or to attract purchasers, (5) the circumstances responsible for the sale of the property, and (6) the taxpayer’s motive or intention at the time he acquired the property.

It appears that, in the case of the sale of principal residences, the courts and CRA look most closely at the frequency or number of times you’ve completed similar transactions and intention at the time you purchased the properties.

Conclusion

If you’re going to buy and sell properties and you hope to use the Principal residence exemption to shelter the properties from tax, be sure to look at the six criteria established in the Happy Valley court decision and structure your transactions accordingly.

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Shivshankar Menon, Vijay Nambiar, MK Narayanan and Nirupama Menon Rao Played Crucial Role in Reversing India's Time-tested Sri Lanka Policy

By Sam Rajappa

When the chilling new photographs of LTTE supremo Velupillai Pirapaharan's 12-year-old son Balachandran captured and held in a sandbag bunker of the Sri Lankan Army and executed in cold blood and photographed again were published in the media recently, the international community was shocked but official India was unmoved.

Unlike his older brother Charles Antony and sister Dwarka, Balachandran never joined the LTTE, never bore arms against the Sri Lankan armed forces or anyone else. He was executed in cold blood because of his ethnicity and parentage. It was an extremely barbaric act.

The photographic evidence is part of the third documentary by Britain's Channel 4 titled 'No War Zone: The Killing Fields of Sri Lanka', which will be screened in Geneva in March ahead of a second resolution sponsored by the USA against the island nation at the UN Human Rights Council.

While most civilised world rallied behind a similar resolution last year to fix accountability of Sri Lanka's war crimes and to take reparative steps, India made sure the text of the resolution was watered down to make it virtually ineffective.

As the 22nd session of the UNHRC began in Geneva this week, it is important to keep in mind that Sri Lanka government has ignored last year's resolution and that it is not at all committed to implementing the recommendations prescribed in its own presidentially appointed Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission.

The Human Rights Watch has called for the UNHRC to authorise an independent, international investigation into war crimes committed during the final months of Sri Lanka's armed conflict.

It was of the opinion the Commonwealth community of nations may have some leverage because Sri Lanka is scheduled to host Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in November, a prestigious event for a small country.

A UN report compiled by its former spokesman in Colombo, Gordon Weiss, had said that about 40,000 people had been killed in the closing days of the civil war in May 2009. The Sri Lanka government, backed by a handful of nations with dubious human rights record, has been defiant even after the UNHRC resolution and has done precious little to implement it.

In fact, it has become more brazen in



MK Narayanan, Vijay Nambiar, and Nirupama Menon (With President Mahinda Rajapaksa) and Rao Shivshankar Menon

muzzling free speech and civil liberties, and stripping down its constitutional institutions, including the judiciary.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, said recently the Sri Lanka government was indulging in triumphalism in the Northern Province. She said that no mechanism had been established to trace people who went missing in the aftermath of the civil war and that investigations of disappearances had not led to any arrest or prosecution.

Civilians in the north have been prevented from commemorating victims of the war and more than 20,000 Tamil graves have been razed in the Vanni area where war museums and war memorials hailing Sinhala soldiers have been erected, Navanethem Pillay said.

She warned the triumphalist images will create a strong sense of alienation among the Tamil population. The Sri Lanka government has launched a systematic campaign to destroy Tamil culture and identity in the island nation.

Names of 89 Tamil villages and towns have been changed and given Sinhala names. Three hundred and sixty-seven Hindu temples have been demolished to make room for army camps. In the small district of Mullaitivu alone, there are 148 small and 13 large army camps.

Although the war has ended four years ago and the LTTE decapitated, the defence (offence?) budget for 2013 has been raised to Rs. 290 billion from Rs. 230 billion in 2012, representing 11.5 per cent of the budget.

The budget allocation for education is only 1.86 per cent of the GDP, which is the lowest in South Asia and one of the lowest in the world. The crisis in the education sector is compounded by closure of rural schools, particularly in Tamil areas, and militarisation of the education space.

When Mahinda Rajapaksa was elected President of Sri Lanka for the first time in 2005, he wanted to go down in history as the man who resolved the festering ethnic crisis which had already taken a heavy toll. He was also fully aware that

without the active support and co-operation of India he could not accomplish his mission.

From the early days of his presidency, he was sending emissaries holding the olive branch to New Delhi to build bridges only to be rebuffed contemptuously.

He was keen on India constructing the Hambantota all-weather port in southern Sri Lanka. Nirupama Menon Rao, who was then India's High Commissioner in Colombo, would not even forward the proposal to New Delhi.

Where India failed, China moved in with alacrity. Not willing to give up, Rajapaksa chose the back channel to find a solution. As it was beginning to show result, the Prime Minister's Office in New Delhi intervened and blocked the channel and promised all assistance "moral, material and physical" to annihilate the LTTE. Rajapaksa found the offer tempting.

The turnaround in India's Sri Lanka policy was brought about by four civilian officers whose primary objective was to promote the sphere of influence of China in the Indian Ocean rim States and keep the USA out. The PMO played along with this group.

The leader of this group is Shivshankar Menon who cut his teeth in the Indian Foreign Service as a junior officer in Beijing when he was bowled over by the Thoughts of Mao. He had two more postings in Beijing which helped the Chinese strengthen their ties with the Indian official.

Vijay Nambiar, a 1967 batch IFS officer, is fluent in Chinese language and has worked in India's diplomatic missions in Hong Kong and Beijing among other places and developed close affinity with China.

Nirupama Rao also had a stint as India's ambassador to China before becoming external affairs secretary.

The three, with former National Security Adviser MK Narayanan played a crucial role in reversing India's time-tested Sri Lanka policy enunciated by Nehru

and carried forward by Indira Gandhi.

The foundation of that policy was rested on the belief the Tamils in Sri Lanka are the natural ally of India while the Sinhalese are fair weather allies. This was proved time and again, most notably during the Bangladesh war.

Shortly before that, Sri Lanka faced its worst ever internal threat by the JVP insurrection. Unhesitatingly India pressed into service its Air Force and Navy to save the government of the day.

When the Bangladesh war broke out soon after, Pakistan found itself handicapped to rush troops and arms to its eastern wing as India refused right of its skies. Sri Lanka offered Pakistan use of its territory for transshipment of men and material and thereby delayed the liberation of Bangladesh by a few days.

The foreign office trio and Narayanan, in the name of fighting international terrorism helped train and equip Sri Lankan armed forces to wipe out the LTTE and along with it the Tamil movement for autonomy.

For the final push, Rajapaksa sought the help of Lt.-Gen. Satish Nambiar, a retired Indian Army officer.

Vijay Nambiar, as adviser to the UN Secretary-General, had ensured the closing stages of the war was conducted without witnesses. India has much to answer for the atrocities Sri Lanka had committed.

The Northern and the Eastern Provinces, traditional homeland of the Tamils, have come under the virtual suzerainty of China.

While Sri Lanka has not yet revoked the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987, which promises autonomy to the provinces, Rajapaksa declared on the occasion of the Sri Lanka Independence Day recently that it was not practical for his country to grant autonomy to any province or ethnic group.

Equal rights to all communities is his new mantra under which the Sinhala community is more equal than the rest.

(Sam Rajappa is Consulting Editor of *The Weekend Leader*)



Tamil Teledramas

- their merits and demerits

Tamil teledramas have become very popular among Tamils living in different parts of the world. The teledramas have day to day life's problems as their main theme and they appeal to the Tamils especially the women. Some of the older folk are seen glued to their television throughout their free time at the expense of attending to family chores or events. They are particularly useful for immigrants Tamils who use of Tamil teledramas to give the new generations an idea of their life style in their homelands. Many of them make use of teledramas as their favourite past-time.

Teledramas are mainly built around social problems and how the current Tamil folk respond to them. Some teledramas mainly concentrate on reforms that they wish to see in the Tamil community. Gender equality, progressive marriage relationship, need for family understanding and unity are some of the favourite themes found in contemporary Tamil Teledramas.

Some Tamils in foreign climes feel that Tamil teledramas give them ample exposure to language facility and cultural norms. It makes them feel at home in any part of the world as long as they have a TV and the necessary channels coming in. The facility is one of the advantages of globalization. Anything and everything is made readily available in any part of the world.

Almost all serials are women-domi-



nated. It is problems faced by the women that are high-lighted in the serials and that is why women compose the majority of the serial viewers. Modern Tamil serials are taking the bold step of advocating the cause of the progressive women. They try to help women to come out of the old shell and appreciate the changes necessary for her future prosperity, essentially economic.

The recently concluded Sun TV teledrama 'Thangam' portrays the role of three women who are being tormented by the caste system and the machinations of

their prejudiced uncle who takes every opportunity to sabotage their progress. In the end they all succeed in achieving their ambitions and also make their uncle to change his ways. In the currently shown teledrama entitled 'Karthigai Pookal', women are portrayed as independent, prudent, educated women who can face life's problems successfully in spite of the problems they have to face. The main character Sarulatha manages to carry on her life without the help of her qualified but foolish husband who tries to put her in trouble all the time. She runs a lodge for young women and treats them as her own daughters and also helps them to gain their foothold in life. This is an out of the way teledrama that focuses on the image of the new womanhood in South India. Therefore teledramas are an effective way to bring about social change. Progressive ideals can well be put into the minds of people through soaps of this nature.

Teledrams have come to stay in Tamil communities. They have more loyal patrons than films which depend on popularly accepted formulas which keep on changing all the time. Some Tamil films appear to have the same 'recipe', and their main focus is on violence and crime. Some the film viewers are getting fed up with the film sequences and they resort to teledramas as a consolation. Like the English films, the Tamil films should be able to present a novel themes in a global setting. In a Tamil Teledrama award ceremony, Kavignar Vairamuttu said that the Tamil teledramas are helping the rejected 'film stars' by providing them an alternate vocation. It is not so. Some active film stars are also working with teledramas. Teledramas and films are mutually helpful. Raadika is shining well in Tamil teledramas but she is also acting in recent Tamil films in the supporting character roles.

However there are also major problems with the teledramas. Some feel that they all have very identical stories. The same type of sequences are seen in most of them. Some of them have negative influence on the audience. In the name of

realism all kinds of evil incidents are introduced into the story. A mother-in-law plotting to get the daughter in law murdered is something very rare in the Tamil community. Several such incidents are introduced into the serial just to make it thrilling. It may have negative influence on the community at large. There are several sequences like these that may prove injurious for the betterment of the society. A father-in-law plotting to kill his daughter-in-law is something strange and scandalous but it is there in the Tamil teledramas. Though past-time is the main motive some of the humorous scenes are nothing but trash. The script writers should be careful to maintain some kind of norms so that the teledramas can be above board.

Some feel that teledramas are creating a generation of couch potatoes. Watching these programs must be for entertainment and not for addiction. Some people neglect their social obligations or daily family chores for the sake of viewing teledramas. Some others think of teledrama characters as real people and spend their time discussing about the happenings in the various teledramas. Some times real people become insignificant to them when compared to tele-characters. An observer remarked, 'None of these teledramas are of any educational value. All are oriented in portraying domestic violence, problems between in-laws, family disputes over money transactions, properties and family matters'. Though this may be an extreme view, it is left for the common viewers to use their power of judgement and values and decide what kind of use they would like to make of their leisure time.

There is no doubt in the premise that teledramas play an important role in the entertainment of the Tamil folk. However they could be made more useful by overcoming some draw backs. They should get rid of the habit of repeating the same type of stories. For instance in the three of the on-going serials, the 'other woman' is using a contrived fake incident to get the husband for herself. New plots and sequences have to be created and introduced. There should be novelty or innovations. More serious themes have to be introduced getting rid of acts of violence/ crime and cheap humour. Producers must realise that the teledramas cater to the need of the global viewers and not just the Tamil Nadu populace. Tamil speaking people in the nooks and corners of the world view them as their favourite past-time. Too much of advertisements destroy the tempo of the teledramas. It is true that the teledrama production is financed by the dough they get from advertisers but sometimes they concentrate too much on the advertisements. Repeated adverts within a space of thirty minutes is a bit too frustrating for the average viewer. All in all teledramas or sinna thirai/small screen is definitely becoming popular but they have to be made more purposeful and attractive.



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IT'S TIME TO RE-VISIT THIS 'ROMANTIC PALACE'

Yaanai Irunthalum Aayiram Ponn, Iranthalum Aayiram Ponn. This popular adage in Tamil means, an elephant is worth thousand sovereigns, whether it is alive or dead. This perhaps fits perfectly Thespian Sivaji Ganesan, whose films still rule the roost at the box-office and draw audience to cinema halls whenever re-released.

Much recently, young audience were entertained and enthralled by the stellar performance of Sivaji Ganesan in the epic movie Karnan, re-released digitally. It went on to witness a popular run for over 100 days, at a time when the life span of a film is barely a week.

Now comes Vasantha Maaligai, old wine in new bottle. Perhaps now brewed fine, thanks to producers and die-hard Sivaji fans Sreenivasulu and B V Murali of Sai Ganesh Films.

A romantic film, which inspired filmmakers to come up with many more on similar lines, Vasantha Maaligai will hit the screens in a new 'avatar'. Keeping in tune with the changing times, the movie has been digitalised, given colour correction and 'grading' and converted to cinemascope to release in over 100 screens across Tamilnadu on 8 March.

Vasantha Maaligai directed by K S



Prakash, had the Nadigar Thilagam playing a love-struck rich man with Vanisree as the heroine. It was a superhit when it was released in 1973 and celebrated its silver jubilee run not just in theatres in Tamilnadu but in Sri Lanka as well. Produced by Ramanaidu, the movie besides Sivaji Ganesan and Vanisree had Balaji, Nagesh, Pandaribai and Sukumari in prominent roles.

If Sivaji's performance was the USP, music by K V Mahadevan added a lot

of value with T M Soundararajan's voice that gave life to the character of a lovelorn youth, who was not averse to hitting the bottle. Songs including Oru Kinnathai, Kudimaganey, Kalaimagal, Mayakam Enna, Irandu Manam and Yaarukaga are evergreen hits.

Speaking to News Today, B V Murali, said, 'We grew up watching Sivaji sir's films. Vasantha Maaligai was one of my all-time favourites. I would have watched it at least over 200 times. I decided that

once I ventured to production, I will take efforts to re-release the same in a digital version.'

The reels were old and it was physically demanding for us to convert them into digital format. It took several months for us to restore the glory. The final output is amazing, he said.

'No two films of Sivaji Ganesan will be smiliar. They will have romance, family sentiment, patriotism and much more. Vasantha Maaligai loaded with love will please theatre-goers of today. Also it will bring back those who stayed away from making a visit to cinema halls.'

'In the 100th year of Indian cinema, we feel privileged and duty-bound to bring to theatres a movie that was most cherished and celebrated in our teens.'

If there is one word to describe Sivaji Ganesan, it would be the 'Almighty of Acting', he concluded.

After Karnan and Vasantha Maaligai, efforts are on to digitalise and re-release Paasamalar. Starring Sivaji Ganesan and Savitri and directed by A Bhimsingh, speaks about sibling love.

Also in the coming months, films like Thillana Mohanambal, Gauravam, Thiruvilayadal are set for re-release.

[newstodaynet.com]

Jacqueline Fernandez doing item number with Prabhu Deva



Jacqueline Fernandez

Prabhu Deva

Actress Jacqueline Fernandez is the latest actress in Bollywood to shake a leg with ace choreographer Prabhu Deva for an item song in his upcoming directorial venture.

Earlier, Sonakshi Sinha did an item number 'Go Go Govinda' with Prabhu Deva in 'Oh My God', Kareena Kapoor and Akshay Kumar did the 'Chinta Ta Chita Chita' song in 'Rowdy Rathore', Salman Khan and Govinda danced with him in 'Jalwa' from 'Wanted' and even Madhuri Dixit shook a leg with him in 'Que Sera Sera' song from 'Pukar'.

Now, for Prabhu Deva's next directorial venture 'Ramaiya Vasta Vaiya', Jacqueline will be doing a song titled - 'Jaadu Ki Jhappi De De Tu Abhi'.

"We have Prabhu Deva, Jacqueline and Girish (leading hero of the film) doing a special song 'Jaadu Ki Jhappi De De Tu Abhi'. It is a travel song but not like 'Chaiyyan Chaiyyan', it is very different," producer Kumar Taurani told PTI.

Taurani will be launching his son Girish as an actor with 'Ramaiya Vasta Vaiya'.

The song has been shot in Punjab. "The song is very much a part of the film. It has not been added for promotional reasons. The boy (Girish) goes from city to village in search of his love, this is where the song appears in the film," Taurani said.

The film, also starring Shruti Haasan, is likely to release on June 7 this year. - PTI

Oscars 2013:

Puducherry eying to cash in on 'Life of Pi' success

As Ang Lee's 'Life of Pi' bagged four Oscars, the Puducherry Government today announced plans to develop as tourist destinations all the 18 locations where the India-set drama was shot in this former French colony.

The Department of Tourism has drawn up plans to develop all the 18 locations associated with 'Life of Pi', which bagged Oscar awards in the categories of best direction, best original score, best cinematography and best visual effects at the 85th Academy Awards.

"The news of the Ang Lee's 'Life of Pi' bagging a big number of awards is most thrilling and exciting," Director of Puducherry Tourism Dr A S Sivakumar told PTI here.

He noted that a good chunk of the movie, 3D survival tale of an shipwrecked Indian boy lost in the ocean with a Bengal tiger, was shot in Puducherry and in Munnar in Kerala.

Sivakumar said the movie shot between 2009 and 2010 in Puducherry associated the venues like the more than century old government botanical garden, the beach road, a few places of worship of different hues and also the residential zones of the Tamil and French population in the union territory.

He said the government had drawn up plans to promote the locations where the movie's big chunk had been shot in Puducherry.



"Tourist potential of the locations had been brought to focus...We will make use of the Rs 120 crore grant the Centre had finalised for tourism promotion project to develop these locations in view of their rise to prominence," he said.

Sivakumar said that a team of Puducherry Government officials had held discussions with the top brass in the Union Ministry of Tourism some months ago and a road show had also been scheduled to be held in Hong Kong, Taiwan and a few other countries in the South Asian block.

"We will be able to showcase Puducherry abroad through this film and this would enable us to bring more tourists from China and other pockets to the southern parts of India and more specifically to Puducherry as the tourists normally visit the Buddhist circuits in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar," he said. - PTI

Tamil villages have changed: Bharathiraja

By M Bharat Kumar

At a time when Tamil films were being made in studios in Chennai, it was Bharathiraja who took them to villages. From 16 Vayathinilae till Tajmahal, he painted the lives of villages and the rustic innocence in a poignant manner on screen.

After a brief interval, he is back with another tale set around a Tamil village. Titled Annakodiyum Kodiveeranum (AKKV), it based on a real incident that happened in the lives of two individuals Annakodi and Kodiveeranum at a remote village in Madurai district.

In a chat with News Today, the ace filmmaker shares his experience shooting for AKKV and his journey so far.

Romance always reign supreme in Tamil cinema. I feel, it is only love helps break the barrier called caste in our society. Since Alaigal Oivathillai, I have stressed this loud in my films.'

'AKKV is no different. I feel as a creator, I have to ensure that I be a tool in creating a constructive revolution in the society. Love is eternal while caste, colour or creed or artificial or man-made'.

Known for open talk, according to Bharathiraja, 'all divides in the society are the result of vote bank politics, which will wade away very soon'.

AKKV features newcomer Laskshman and Karthika in the lead roles, while Manoj K Bharathi plays the baddie. Music is by G V Prakash Kumar and cinematography by Lakshmanan.

'Today doing a village-based movie is no easy task. Modernity has had its influence there too. They have changed a lot. I had to do intense research and search locations with utmost difficulty to shoot AKKV, he says.

Bharathiraja had been to the place where Annakodi and Kodi Veeranum lived and interacted with the villagers

and their family members and penned the story.

On Karthika, who plays Annakodi in the film, Bharathiraja says, 'she has done an exemplary job. She will certainly join the league of actresses like Padamini, Bhanumathy, Savithri, Radhika and Revathy'.

He introduces a young cricketer Lakshman as hero in the film. 'He involved himself with the character and his dedication helped him excel'.

The surprise element in the film would be Manoj K Bharathy. He plays a character called Sadayan, who oozes with venom on screen.

One of the very few to work with three generations of artistes, Bharathiraja says, 'I keep updating myself of technological advancements. One has to keep re-inventing himself to stay afloat. But the heart and soul of my film will remain always intact in the form of my stories, that I saw or heard growing up'.



Bharathiraja

Filmmaker Bharthiraja and maestro Ilayaraja always shared a good rapport and rendered many a musical hit until they chose to part ways in the late 1990s. Much recently Ilayaraja's alleged remarks against Bharthiraja created a storm.

When asked on his reaction, Bharathiraja chose to keep silent. He ended up the conversation saying 'No comments'. [newstodaynet.com]

Recent Events

Community Watch



Staff from TD



Shelly Smith from TD Waterhouse



Dilani Gunarajah, Vice President, Membership, CTCC



Ajith Sabaratnam, Vice President, Community Relations, CTCC



Chamber member, Ravi Sivayogasundaram



Yaso Sinnadurai, Advisory Council, CTCC



Tony Balasingam, Advisory Council, CTCC



Stan Muthulingam, Advisory Council, CTCC



Photo Courtesy: Digital Gnane

Chamber Board of Directors

CTCC holds Quarterly Meeting on Feb 13th

By Siva Sivapragasam

The Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce held its customary quarterly meeting at the J & J Swagat Banquet Hall on the 13th of last month. The meeting was well received and had a good turn-out with many recently recruited new members participating at the event. The highlight of the event was a presentation done by Shelly Smith, a Financial Planner from TD Waterhouse Financial Planning. Shelly carries with her 14 years of banking experience and her broad spectrum of knowledge spans from Retail Banking to Wealth management. Shelly has had many years of exceptional client relationships connecting with business partners, along with her product knowledge. She obtained her Degree from the University of Waterloo and is also a member of the TD Women of Wealth and the TD Women's Investor Strategy.

Ms. Shamala Kumar also from TD Canada Trust was present to assist Shelly Smith. Shamala is a small business Advisor at TD Canada's Branch at Parkway Mall, Toronto. She counts over 17 years of experience in Banking and assists her clients with enthusiasm and excellent customer service. Shamala

has achieved her Personal Financial Planning (PFP) designation and is also a member of the South Asian Committee at TD Bank.

Messrs. Moon Mahalingam & Mr. Ganeshananda also from TD were present at the function as a part of the TD Team.

All members present and the guests were able to interact freely and do some considerable networking too. The guests were entertained to a sumptuous dinner provided by J & J Swagat Banquet Hall.

President Sritharan Thuraiaraja welcomed the guests and Sivan Ilango briefed the guests present about the up-coming Chamber Annual Gala event which will be held this year on Saturday April 27th at the prestigious Westin Harbour Castle Hotel in downtown Toronto.

For tickets & further details about the upcoming Awards Gala event, please contact:

- Sri - 416 918 9771
- Ajith - 647 401 5800
- Santha - 416 200 5470
- Gajan - 416 838 7247
- Akila - 416 895 4321
- Siva - 416 545 7482

Seen here are some pictures of the Quarterly Meeting event.



Chamber member Uma Rajendram and Sivan Ilango, Vice President, Internal Affairs



Chamber members



Chamber members

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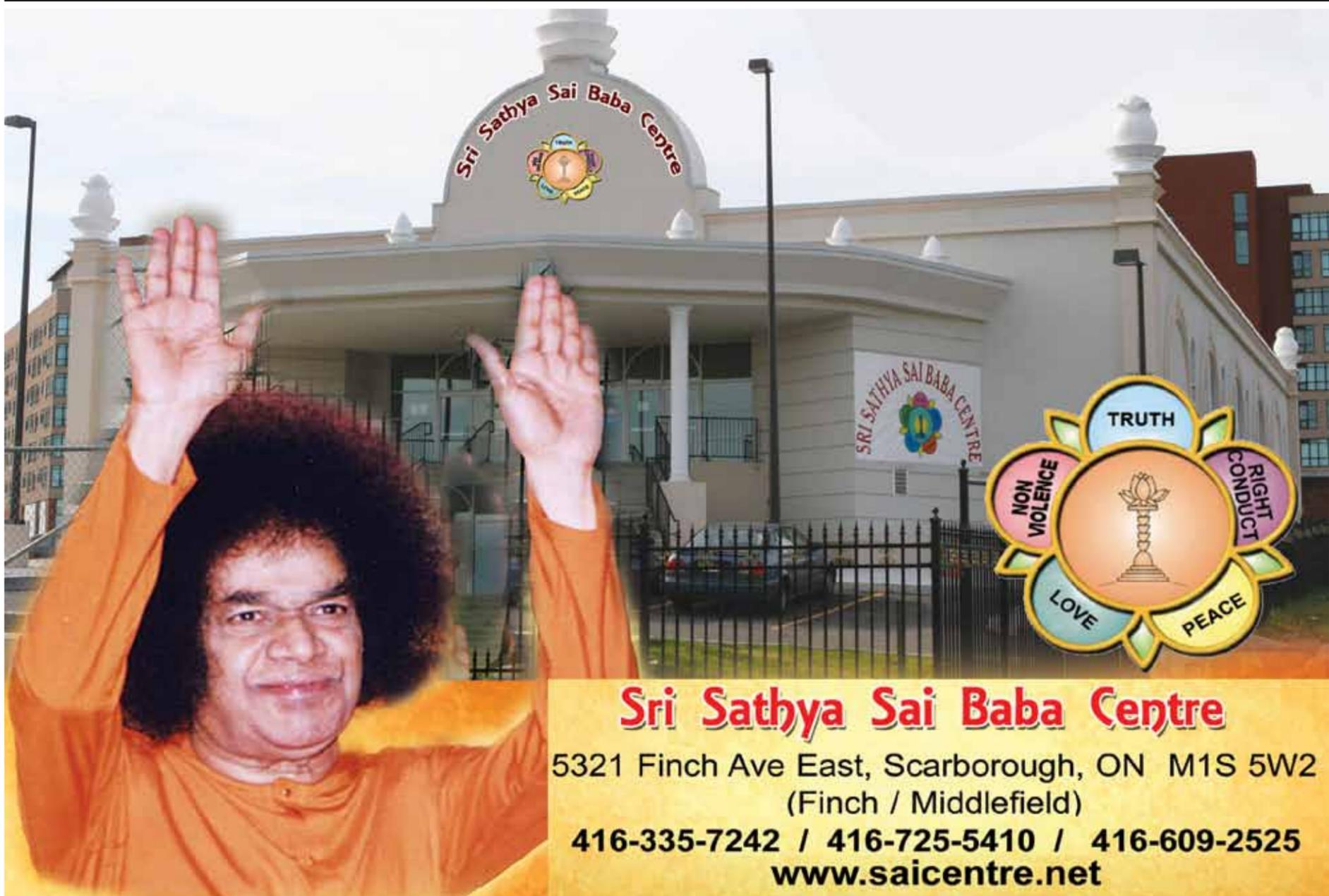
9th - 10th March 2013

Time: 9th Mar 2013 6:00 pm to 10th Mar 2013 6:00 am

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Jubilee Medal Award - Sivanesan Sinniah

Last month on Sunday, Feb 24th 2013, Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II, Diamond Jubilee medal presentation took place at the Royal Canadian Legion, 45 Lawson Road, Scarborough. This ceremony was arranged by Rouge River MP, Rathika Sitsabaiesan. The committee appointed by her selected 29 recipients for this medal award.

Mr. Sinniah, contributor of articles and short stories, well known social activist, President of Canada Tamil Writers Association, Secretary of Ontario Tamil Seniors' Centre, President of Hindu Cultural Council and Former School Community Advisor of Toronto District School Board, Broadcaster and Emeritus Principal of Kopay Christian college was one of the recipients. We congratulate him on this great achievement.



Dr V Santhakumar Queen's Jubilee Recipient



Dr. Santhakumar received the award at a ceremony held on Friday January 25, 2013 at Trinity St. Paul's United Church, 427 Bloor Street West, Toronto.

Dr. Vadivelu Santhakumar MBBS, CCFP - Profile:

Dr. Vadivelu Santhakumar is a Family Physician practicing in Canada for the past 25 years,

currently practicing in Mississauga.

He is one of the founders and the past Chairman of the Canadian Medical Dental Development Association (CMDDA) previously

known Medical Institute for Tamils- an organization representing the expatriate Tamil medical community in Canada (established in 1998). Also being the Founder and current director of the Jaffna University Medical faculty overseas Alumni (JMFOA), in aid of helping medical and other education.

Through his work as a committed partner of various community organizations, he led and participated in diverse initiatives. Raising funds for Medical rehabilitation for disaster and civil war victims, supporting events for local hospitals, organizing public community health education seminars, coordinating local culturally sensitive Tamil media health education, advocating for civil/democratic rights for the oppressed including Sri Lankan Tamils, Trustee/Advisor for Seniors organisations are just to name a few activities.

He is currently a Board of director in the Canadian Tamil Congress an advocacy organization serving Tamil Canadians. He is a medical graduate from the first graduating class of 1984 from the University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Maya Kandiah receives Jubilee Medal

Queen Elizabeth 11 Diamond Jubilee Medal was awarded to Mr. Maya Kandiah by Roxanne James, Member of Parliament for Scarborough Centre, at the ceremony held at Birkdale Community Centre on February 17, 2013.

Mr. Maya Kandiah is the President of Senior Tamils Centre of Ontario for the second time. He is the Vice President of the OSPA. He served as a Board of Director in Vasantham, SACEM, and Tamil Care Giver Project of Providence Healthcare Centre. He is also a Commissioner for taking affidavits, in the Province of Ontario.



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We would like to acknowledge with deep appreciation, the many expressions of love, kindness and support rendered to us during our hours of bereavement over our irreparable loss.

The countless floral tributes, caring condolences, prayers, comfort and kind words have touched us deeply and soothened our aching hearts. We will always remember the affection shown to us during your visits to our households, and attendance at the funeral ceremonies. Your thoughts, helps, contributions and donations to the non-profit organizations are greatly appreciated.

Our heartfelt thanks,
Beloved Wife, Sons, Daughter,
Son-in-Law, Daughters-in-Law, and Grandchildren

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THE QUEEN ELIZABETH II DIAMOND JUBILEE MEDAL AWARD

The presentation of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal ceremony was held on 24th February, 2013 from 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 258 Banquet Hall, 45 Lawson Road, Scarborough.

The President of the Scarborough Senior Tamils' Association, Mr. Muthiah Thevarajah receives the Diamond Jubilee Medal from Hon. Rathika Sitsabaiesan M.P. for Scarborough - Rouge River in recognition for his dedicated service to community this ceremony.



Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario Annual Christmas Celebrations

It's a tradition that Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario celebrates annually three events in a grand scale. They are Canada Day, Deepavali and Christmas. Recently, STC celebrated its Christmas function for year 2012; at Church of Nativity situated at 10 Swells Street in Scarborough, without exception in a very impressive manner. Professor Joseph Chandrakanthan was the Chief Guest for this event and Lady Pastor Mrs. Christobel Selvalingam was the Guest of Honour. The function started with Canadian national anthem, followed with Tamil national anthem and the STC theme song. Two minutes silence was observed as a mark of respect to all the STC members who had passed away.

Event started with a welcome address by the President of STC Mr. Maya Kandiah. After the welcome speech, there was a Key Board performance by Niraja Shankar. Next, Professor Joseph Chandrakanthan gave his key note address touching on the significance of the celebration and the true message of Jesus Christ. Later, few members of STC gave another Key Board performance namely "Theva Ragam".

As a special item, the President Maya Kandiah gave a brief note about the developments and future plans and activities of STC of Ontario for the well being of all members.

Then the Guest of Honour, the only Tamil lady pastor from Scarborough Christobel Selvalingam along with her choir group from Emmanuel Church of Nazarene participated in a carol singing. Then a drama was staged and the participants were not only STC members, but also many others including youngsters. One of our past presidents Mr. S.M.J. Emmanuel acted as Jesus Christ and the audience enjoyed his wonderful performance.

Final item was the appearance of "Santa Claus" from the North Pole. Santa entertained the crowd with his extraordinary movements and giving away sweets to children and seniors. Once again, Santa was not an outsider but our former treasurer Mr. K. Vigneswaran and a long time member of STC. Then the Secretary of STC Mr. Siva Sinniah gave the vote of thanks followed by a raffle draw. The Christmas festival of STC for the year 2012 ended with a scrumptious dinner.

Pioneer of Canadian Tamil TV Station Srini Srinivasan receives Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal

Srini Srinivasan is a pioneer in the Tamil TV industry in Canada when he launched "Kalappam" as a cultural & entertainment TV program for the Sri Lankan community in Canada several years back. He is the executive Producer & Technical Director for "Kalappam". His aim is to promote Southeast Asian culture through his TV program. He earlier worked as a Production Engineer with Rogers Cable Community Television. In Sri Lanka, he was attached to the Rupavahini TV station as a communications engineer. He can easily be described as a pioneer in the field of cultural television. He was also a past Director of the Canadian Tamils' Chamber Of Commerce.



Raphael Xavier, STC Cultural Committee-Chair of STC with Santa Claus



Community Watch

Save the Dates

Book Release by Koom Kankesan

- April 14, 2013

On April 14, 2013, satirist Koom Kankesan will be releasing his new collection, *The Rajapaksa Stories*, at Q Space on 382 College Street, Toronto ON M5T 1S8. The event is absolutely FREE and guests are encouraged to RSVP on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/events/502799303095000>.

The *Rajapaksa Stories* is a collection of stories featuring Mahinda Rajapaksa and his family. The stories are interlinked and introduced by the ghost of Rajapaksa's mother. To leaven the bitterness of the stories, she provides recipes for Mahinda's favourite foods between each story. The stories have bearing upon the real Rajapaksas but they also diverge from reality in playful and sometimes shocking ways.

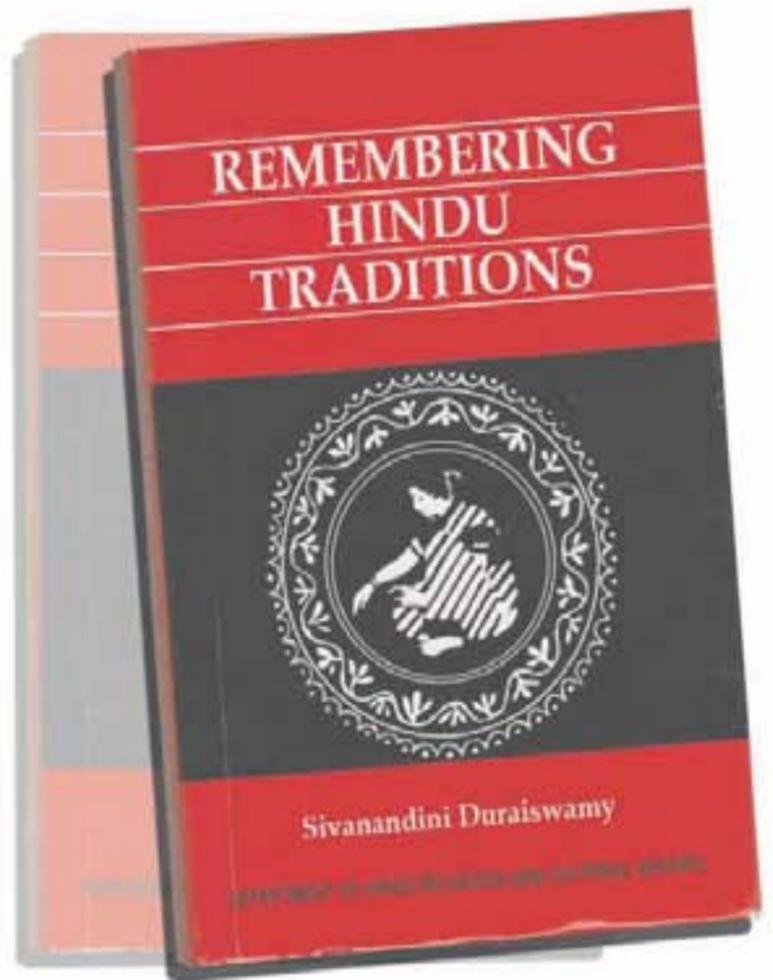
Koom Kankesan worked intently on these stories after his first book, *The Panic Button*, which was about a Tamil family living in Scarborough, adapting to the effects of being separated by the war and acclimatizing to their new lives in Canada. The *Rajapaksa Stories* came out of his anger at reading of the human rights issues, economic nepotism, and abuses of power plaguing the Rajapaksa administration over the last year. Being a creative writer, he challenged himself to produce alternate versions that comment on the real Rajapaksas. The stories were meant to be as untruthful as some of the lies spun by the current administration

but much more entertaining. In the interlinked collection of stories, Rajapaksa wears a variety of costumes and participates in larger than life adventures such as hunting a tiger that preys on villagers, visiting Toronto to see if he can invade Scarborough, and becoming the first Sri Lankan to travel into space. Rather than channelling his anger into vitriol, Kankesan uses satire and absurdity to propel his imagination.

The book is at once historical and political and yet, it is more unique than that. Kankesan has said that it ran away with him while writing it (he put down a novel about the 2009 protests that he was working on to complete it) and it will also run away with the people who read it. It is written in straightforward and engaging language but more importantly, it's fun. The *Rajapaksa Stories* will appeal to those frustrated about the current political and economic realities of Sri Lanka, and general people of all ages who enjoy totalitarianism and control handled with a humorous touch. There is a dark sense of humour such as that in the film *Dr. Strangelove* but it does not diminish the sense of anger or knowledge of the way things are.

Readers who have read excerpts especially like the book because its unique quirky sensibility is not like that of any other South Asian writer producing fiction today.

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- * Why break a coconut
- * Why ring the Temple Bell
- * Why the bridegroom places the feet of the Bride on the "Ammi" (grindstone)
- Why light a lamp in the home
- Significance of Fasting
- Deepavali
- Thaipongal
- Aadi Amaavaasai
- Kanthsashti etc.

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By Sivanandini Duraiswamy

(Vice-President of the Hindu Council of Sri Lanka & President of the Saiva Mangayar Kalagam)

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Pickering Heritage Day 2013

By: Abira Vaithilingam

On Saturday, February 23rd, 2013 Pickering Town Centre held the Annual Heritage Day event hosted by The City of Pickering Advisory on Diversity. Heritage Day is an event that brings the various cultures in our community together by showcasing our differences. The day is celebrated with Pickering's rich heritage and cultural diversity. All guests and visitors were entertained and informed by a variety of dance and musical performances as well as interactive cultural displays and booths.

The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham were proud to perform in front of the audience that gathered in the malls center court. Performances included a beautiful semi classical dance consisting four talented females singing "Kannodu Kanbathalam" at the same time, four young pianists played "Jai Ho", and lastly a cultural "Sembu Kolattam Kavadi Chindu" danced by 10 young children. TCASD also had a beautifully decorated information booth put together by the members. It consisted of certificates, newspaper articles from previous events, pamphlets, art and also some cultural items such as "Kuthu Villakus", a "Sembu" and a "Mirudangam" (drum). The event was a great success and was very entertaining!



TCASD Youth Jean Drive

Lately, the TCASD youths have been brainstorming ideas on how they could make a difference in the society. The main focus was to figure out a drive that will somehow benefit those in need. After completing quiet a bit of research, the youth members came up with the idea of doing a jeans drive. Within a week period of time, the youths collected thirty-two jeans in total. In such a short period of time they were able to manage, organize and collect jeans from various TCASD members and others within Dur-

ham. Once the jeans were all collected, the youth donated them to nearest located Aeropostale. Aeropostale has been running this jean drive annually every year, where the company then donates the jeans straight to those in need. The TCASD youth found this a great opportunity to get more involved and help out within the Durham community. They hope to continue their contributions towards the society.

Contributed by
Iswarya Thayaparan



Global Youth Leaders Timothy in Philippines

By Abira Vaithilingam

Timothy is a grade 11 student. He is one of the youth leader of Tamil Cultural and academic Society of Durham (TCASD) and current President of Tamil Global Youth Leaders (GYL). He has represented Tamil Cultural and academic Society of Durham (TCASD) at many community events. Timothy has successfully completed the Youth in Police program in 2010, where he has participated in basic police training and volunteer

activities with the local police. In 2011, he has volunteered his time to travel to the Philippines with GYL, where he has tirelessly assisted with relief efforts by building homes for poor Filipinos who have affected by typhoons. As part of the Canadian Youth team, he is enthusiastic and dedicated to help the people for ten days in very bad conditions. Now he proudly shares his volunteer experience with his follow students and friends.



As a member of GYL, Timothy worked with other members to build 25 homes for people affected by typhoons in the Philippines



Even though it was rainy season during the time the GYL group was there, they worked effortlessly to build these homes



Student Mentorship Symposium

By Abira Vaithilingam

On Saturday, February 16th, 2013 a few youth from the Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) gathered with other students across Durham at the Student Mentorship Symposium organized by Multi-Cultural organizations of Durham, called the Community Advisory Committee. The event took place at the Cambridge International Academy.

The event was held to help students from grade 7 – 12 with future education such as entering higher education, program choices, and course selections. A few University and College students

spoke about the challenges, obstacles and opportunities that will be faced while living the University life. MP for Ajax – Pickering Mr. Chris Alexander, Durham Regional Police, and Lorne Coe were guest speakers/mentors present at the event along with many others.

The youth were also part of a question and answer period with Mr. Chris Alexander who shared his decisions and choices he made during his adolescence years. All the youth experienced a great opportunity at the event by gaining an insight into some of the professional fields that may interest them in the future.



Mentors' provide a good example for the youth and their goals/plans



TCASD youth participate in the youth mentorship event



Chris Alexander mentors and gives a moving speech about future goals to youth

International Youth Forum Tanesha in Korea

By Abira Vaithilingam

Tanesha is a Grade 12 student. She is a member of Global Youth Leaders (GYL) and Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham (TCASD). She is actively involved in volunteer work here at home and outside of Canada. She has contributed over 1500 volunteer hours to the local community as well as overseas. Her diversity volunteer work has been recognized by City of Pickering and became a recipient of the Cultural & Diversity award in 2010. Tanesha has represented Canada at the 3rd ICCN international Youth Forum in Gangneung, Republic of Korea in August 2012. She was the very first Tamil Canadian youth who has represented Canada in an International

Youth Forum with The Inter-City Intangible Cultural Co-operation Network (ICCN). As part of the Canadian team, she has been building an awareness and importance of intangible cultural heritage among the younger generations.

She has participated in the international workshop about how to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage and to recreate it by communities, from generation to generation. The objective of the forum was for the youth to get in touch with their own cultural identity, inform youth and people about diversity, discover similarities and differences between cultures, and establish a friendly co-existence between different cultures around the world.



Tanesha and her friends who participated in the forum



Tanesha, along with Global Youth Leaders participated in the international youth ICCN conference in Gangneung, The Republic of Korea



Tanesha taught participants of the forum a traditional Indian dance, Bharathanatyam



Durham Tamil Association commemorate Heritage Day with City of Pickering

“Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit.” told by Jawaharlal Nehru was recently manifested when Durham Tamil Association partakes in the Heritage Day celebrations with other communities organized by the City of Pickering at the Pickering Town Center on February 23, 2013 encompassing 67 children and youth. Durham Tamil Association worked closely with various community groups to enhance community relations, to celebrate the richness of Tamil culture and to improve opportunities for youth. Hundreds of visitors who turned for the event were able to watch the colorful performances showcased by the valiant youth of DTA.

The Masters of Ceremony Neraja Thillairaja and Ashley Kugaraj dressed in the customary Tamil attire introduced the performers and their talents. The program flagged off by a popular Tamil song Minsaara Poove from the movie Padayappa sung by DTA’s proud icon Sari-

ka Navanathan along with the vibrant youth Myuran Thananjeyan. The show followed by the Bharathanatyam performed by the members and students of Kalainatyalaya, trained by Mrs. Kalaimathy Vageesan added rich cultural flavor. It was quiet unique with DTA’s talented young male performer Ughesh Vageesan. This was followed by a foot tapping dance performance of a group of DTA youth called Fusion Steps. This wonderful mixture of westernized semi-classical dance was choreographed by DTA’s another shining star Maenusha Raguvarnan.

We wanted to bring forth a traditional folk into this theme entitled “Karagattam” which involves balancing of clay or metal pots on the dancer’s head. This dance was truly a treat to the eyes as all the girls were dressed up in dazzling colorful attire and this dance was also maneuvered by Maenusha Raguvarnan. We also caught the attention of the huge crowd of people by embracing the Bolly-

wood dance presented by a group of 14 children of DTA for a hit number from the movie “Nanban” and this was put together by Mrs. Theepa Sivasangar. Everyone applauded the heart touched outstanding performance by an Autistic youth Krishan Thananjeyan, who rendered a Carnatic vocal accompanied by his brother Myuran Thananjeyan playing Mirudangam. Krishan was appreciated by all the dignitaries who attended this celebration.

Durham Tamil Association is extremely swollen with pride to encourage special children and youth and provide them the opportunity to express their musical talents. Last, but not the least was the final performance which stole the audience hearts was the fashion show titled “Unity in Diversity” by little kids aged 3 to 8 years. This was choreographed by Uma Suresh and a total of 33 kids participated in different outfits. Durham Tamil Association generated a

colorful booth set up in the mall with cultural articles depicting Tamil culture like Kuthu Vilakku, Kolam, Thoranam, Mavilai, Paavai Vilakku and also some agricultural symbols like clay pots, Manvetti, Ural, Sulagu, Yaer etc., Team DTA Youth put together this colorful display which attracted many to take pictures. All the dignitaries and guest highly praised our enthusiastic kids and thanked the President and team members for inculcating the cultural values into them. City of Pickering encouraged our performers by giving certificates, which was truly appreciated by all the parents.

Durham Tamil Association believe strongly in the saying “Children are the future of the nation and the leaders of tomorrow”. The platform created by the City of Pickering and DTA will help all the children and youth in building their confidence, to keep them intact with our culture and to give back to our community.



Students of Kalainatyalaya representing DTA @ the Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



DTA Youth with Devi Mandir, ICCAD, Friends Indeed & Canadian Afghan Council leaders, Josh Suresh, Councillor Peter Rodrigues & Uma Suresh on the Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



MP Corneliu Chisu & Minister Tracy Mac Charles with the children in DTA booth on the Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



DTA’s little kids performing the Unity In Diversity Fashion Show @ the Pickering Heritage day - 23 Feb 2013



DTA’s young Karagaattam Dancers @ the Pickering Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



Durham Little Superstars of DTA @ the Pickering Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



Durham Little Superstars of DTA performing @ the Pickering Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



Karagaattam was performed by DTA youth in Pickering Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



DTA’s Sarika Navanathan & Myuran Thananjeyan singing @ the Pickering Heritage Day-23 Feb 2013

More pictures next page...



Durham Tamil Association's Pongal displays and Programs

Durham Tamil Association placed various colorful displays in Durham Region to celebrate Thai Pongal to venerate the announcement of January as Tamil Heritage Month. Durham Tamil Association also furnished colorful performances in many events. Merriment inaugurated with the opening ceremony on January 7th at Toronto City Hall where many

dignitaries dropped in. Durham Tamil Association's young kids masqueraded as the ancient poets Avvaiyar, Bharadhiyar, Thiruvalluvar and Kambar. Various Pongal displays were put up at The Ajax Community Center, The Whitby Public Library, The Ajax Public Library - Main Branch and the momentous one being the Headquarters of Durham District School

Board in Whitby. 31 kids performed Tamils' traditional folk dances like Karagattam, Puliyaattam, Therukkothu and Kolaattam in a special program set by the Whitby Public Library to smear the Tamil Heritage Month.

The children also performed the similar dances at the closing ceremony of Tamil Heritage Month on January 27th

at the Ayyappan Temple in Scarborough. Durham Tamil Association articulated our sincere appreciation to both the City of Pickering and the Town of Ajax for the Thai Pongal displays which enable us to reinforce our cultural base and develop new and innovative projects to serve our diverse community.



Durham Tamil Association's Thai Pongal Display @ The Ajax Community Centre - Jan 2013



Thai Pongal Display by Durham Tamil Association @ The Ajax Public Library - Jan 2013



DTA's Pongal Display @ Town Of Ajax - 2013



Durham Tamil Association kids performed @ The Whitby Library for Thai Pongal-26 Jan 2013



Ancient Poet Team of DTA @ Tamil Heritage Month Opening Ceremony



Durham Tamil Association's Thai Pongal display in Whitby Public Library - Jan 2013

Durham Tamil Association commemorate Heritage Day with City of Pickering



Fusion Steps of DTA performing @ the Pickering Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



MPP Joe Dickson & Councillor Peter Rodrigues with DTA youth on the Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



TEAM DTA with young performers @ the Pickering Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



DTA's vibrant MCs Neraja Thillairaja & Ashley Kugaraj @ the Pickering Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



Pickering Mayor Dave Ryan, Councillor Doug Dickerson & Keith Falconer with DTA kids, youth & Uma Suresh on the Heritage Day - 23 Feb 2013



Author and activist speaks out against honour killings

by Robert Wilson/Record staff

KITCHENER — Aruna Papp's life in India was so coloured by emotional and physical abuse she believed herself to be worthless, just another unwanted girl being raised in a culture that only values males.

This idea of having no value to society or her own family was so ingrained that Papp titled her 2011 book *Unworthy Creature: A Punjabi Daughter's Memoir of Honour, Shame and Love* (Freedom Press) written with National Post columnist Barbara Kay.

Papp was the keynote speaker at Wednesday's International Women's Day gala, presented by the Zonta Club of Kitchener-Waterloo at the Walper Terrace Hotel and she delivered a strong message about societies where family honour is more valued than female family members.

"I was told I was stupid since I was little," said Papp in an interview before her talk.

During a few short stints when she was allowed to go to school, her self-esteem did not improve because she was much older than her classmates after a late start at age 10 and she struggled with an undiagnosed learning disability.

"I was also the tallest, the darkest, the ugliest and the stupidest," she remembered thinking about herself at the time.

Despite low self-esteem, Papp was desperate to learn. But for a girl growing up the eldest in a family of six unwanted girls and one beloved boy, she was more workhorse than cherished daughter.

Papp now holds two master's degrees,

specializes in cultural conflicts and plans on entering a PhD program in the fall. The Toronto-based activist, lecturer and workshop leader came to Canada in 1972 with her then husband and their two little daughters, equipped with only a Grade 3 education and no idea that life could hold more.

"I had said I wanted to finish school, but my mother wouldn't hear about it," she said. "I didn't know I had an option."

Papp spent the past three decades devoted to helping Southeast Asian women in Canada and serves as research associate with the Winnipeg-based Frontier Centre for Public Policy. She is also an outspoken advocate for women from cultures that devalue females and she is most appalled at the murders of females at the hands of their fathers and brothers.

In her book, Papp cites the 2009 case of Kingston's Shafia family. Father, son and wife were found guilty of killing three daughters and a first wife, apparently motivated by the desire to protect the family's honour.

She also recalls a horrific scene when she was young, living in India and awoke one night to the screams of a beautiful young neighbour who had been set on fire in the street by her brothers because she had her own ideas of who she would marry. Those images burned into her mind and made her fearful for her own safety.

Papp grew up the daughter of a Christian pastor who moved his family around the country for his job. She adored her father, though he was often cruel, as was her mother.

"When I was 17, my sister came and said, 'You're getting married next month,' " she recalled. There would be no discussion.

"The wedding tent was set up on the (apartment building) roof and I thought, if I refused to climb the stairs ... I told my mother I didn't want to get married and she told me to either climb the stairs or you get slapped. I know I didn't have a choice."

The arranged marriage to an older man would prove disastrous.

"All your life, girls growing up are told, 'Don't talk to boys, don't let them touch you.' Then in one night, they give you to a man and he does all that to you."

Papp's life didn't change until she, her husband, daughters and parents immigrated to Canada, settling in Kitchener for a couple of years. Her parents would eventually move to Toronto and Papp and her husband headed to the U.S. where he attended seminary.

For Papp, the U.S. first glimpsed a world where women had choices, where education was for everyone.

"I used to sit in on classes, just to see what they were saying," she said. "I met a woman ... she started to introduce me to American history and she said, 'Why don't you apply for a student loan?'"

It was an awakening of sorts.

"History fascinated me, people fascinated me," she said. "Now I read seven, eight, nine, 10 books a week."

When the couple returned to Canada, Papp landed a clerical job at York University where she had another fortuitous meeting with a supervisor.



Aruna Papp is an Indian-born consultant for Frontier Centre for Public Policy

"The woman wanted a liaison person," she said. "There were all these apartments around, full of Southeast Asian women and she said, 'We don't know how to help them. How about we hire you as an outreach worker?'"

As her confidence grew, Papp divorced her husband of 18 years, and then 27 years ago married a man of Hungarian and Scottish descent. Every day is like a honeymoon, she said dreamily. With a supportive husband behind her, Papp is free to devote her life to helping women and changing attitudes.

"A lot of people don't like my mission," she said. "They say that I'm perpetuating racism, perpetuating stereotypes."

She has been threatened, but it hasn't stopped her speaking out to protect those who lack a voice and who live in fear.

Papp wants to make it clear that honour killing is different than domestic abuse.

"The motivation for honour killing is different. It's pre-planned. It's always father and sons. This abuse of girls is rooted in culture."

vhill@therecord.com

Local Indian community celebrates Republic Day celebrations

Kitchener: India Canada Association of Waterloo Region organized India's Republic Day Celebration, on Saturday, 9th February at Forest Heights Community Centre in Kitchener. The Mayor of Waterloo Brenda Halloran was the Chief Guest. In her speech she narrated her own experience during her Business delegation tour to India.

Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region's youth member Lakshmi gave a speech on "The challenges faced by children born to Indian parents". It was followed by cultural programs and dinner.



More pictures next page...



Parents lost hope, but they wouldn't let apartment fire take kids

by Peter Lee/Record staff

WATERLOO — The parents who threw their two young children to safety from the fourth-floor window of their burning apartment building say they were prepared to die, but they were also determined that their children would live.

Jameer Basha Shaik and his wife, Jubeda, talked about the nightmare they endured as deadly smoke seeped under their apartment door on Jan. 26, making the living room window the only escape route from their apartment at 57 Bridgeport Rd.

Their 20-month-old daughter Arshia and her eight-year-old sister Alisha had been playing in the living room when the fire alarm started ringing.

Jameer opened the door to the hallway. He was forced back by “very huge, dark, thick smoke and some sparks.”

“I could not see anything,” he said Monday night from the family’s new apartment in Waterloo.

“The kids started fainting. We lost hope,” he said.

“I understand there is no way to escape. There is no other option left.”

“(Jubeda) asked me to save the kids at least — to lose something to save our kids’ lives. Both of us realize we won’t live. We had a lot of cough.”

He picked up a chair and smashed the living room window.

He shouted for neighbours and friends to call 911. The family waited to be rescued, but Jameer realized there was no more time.

He asked people below to get a blanket to catch his children. The couple had no time to make a rope from one of Jubeda’s saris.

All his neighbours, many of whom are co-workers at BlackBerry, could find in a hurry was a bedsheet.

“So I dropped my elder daughter carefully,” he said. “I just hold her and I drop.”

“She landed on the bedsheet. My colleagues were able to catch hold of her.”

But because of the force with which

As deadly smoke choked off family’s escape route, father dropped frightened daughters to safety

she landed, she hit the ground. Pieces of glass from the shattered window cut her arm and finger.

“After that I dropped my younger one,” Jameer said. “One of my colleagues, he missed his grip and lost his hold.”

The child barely skimmed the sheet before hitting the ground. She was bleeding profusely. It turned out she had three skull fractures and was rushed to a Toronto hospital in critical condition.

By then, police had arrived. Jameer credits an officer with saving the life of his 20-month-old daughter by performing first aid until paramedics arrived.

An officer told the parents not to jump. Firefighters arrived, put up a ladder and climbed up to rescue the couple.

Jubeda was “in a panic and not in a position to come down from that height” without help, Jameer said.

Arshia was flown by air to Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto where she spent nine days. The first few days were the worst. They were told it would be 72 hours before doctors knew if she would survive.

She had two blood clots “between the skull layer and the brain layer.” She was put on a ventilator.

Her father recalls the first time he saw her in hospital.

“It was like a nightmare for me and I never forget that in my lifetime, lying on the bed with the tubes,” he said. “She was an innocent playing girl.”

By noon the next day, she woke up and looked to her father.

“Drops of water were coming out of her eyes,” he said. “She could not speak. There was huge swelling on her head.”

“I told her I am here and nothing would happen.”

The couple left their older daughter with a friend so Jubeda could be in Toronto.



Jameer (left) and Jubeda Shaik and their children Arshia, 20 months, and Alisha, 8, survived an apartment fire last month. The girls were dropped, as gently as possible by their father, from a fourth-floor window. The family posed Monday in their new apartment.

Arshia improved and the ventilator was removed. Doctors warned she could lose her memory or her voice, or have a spinal injury. But none of that happened.

Her skull fractures turned out to be just cracks. There was “no displacement,” Jameer said.

Just when all looked good, she took a turn for the worse. She struggled to breathe because of the smoke inhalation. Specialists were called in and she was rushed back to critical care.

But the medications worked. Doctors said her wounds will heal on their own. She goes for follow-ups several times a month.

The older daughter doesn’t remember anything after seeing her father break the window.

“I thought the fire was going to come inside, but it didn’t,” Alisha said. “We can’t see anything in our house. They threw me and my sister down. When I looked down, I was really scared. I closed my eyes.”

A total of 83 tenants were evacuated when fire swept through the building. Just eight apartments in the 47-unit

complex were seriously damaged. Many tenants had returned almost two weeks later.

The fire started in the kitchen of a second-floor unit. Damage was estimated at \$1 million.

Jameer came to Waterloo from India in October 2010. He works for an Indian company that sent him to work for BlackBerry as a software engineer. He’s here on a work permit.

The couple wants to thank everyone whose help made them feel like they were at home in India. “We never felt like we were in a foreign country,” Jameer said.

They’re grateful to neighbours, Waterloo firefighters, police, doctors at Grand River and Sick Kids Hospital, YMCA immigrant services, Elizabeth Ziegler School and Generations Thrift Shop, which provided furniture. Sick Kids Hospital even paid half the cost of the family’s ride home the day their toddler was discharged.

“We decided we must do some service to this country to give something back,” Jameer said.

dwood@therecord.com

Local Indian community celebrates Republic Day celebrations





Whitby Council Approves 2013 Budget Focused on Core Services

At its special budget meeting on February 21, Whitby Council approved the 2013 Operating Budget of \$103 million and Capital Budget of \$24 million, resulting in a 2.98 percent property tax increase on the Town's portion of the tax bill. This translates into an increase of \$40 on an average home assessed at \$319,000.

"Budget 2013 assures that Whitby continues to focus on its vision to be the 'Community of Choice' by meeting community needs, providing competitive taxes and living within our means," says Councillor Elizabeth Roy, Budget Chair.

Council is aware of the challenging economic conditions, and the Town continues to take a responsible approach to budgeting. The Town of Whitby has no external debt. The 2013 budget results in a 2.17 percent tax increase on the total residential property taxes when all three levels of government are taken into account (Town, Region of Durham, and Provincial School Boards).

"This budget will allow the Town of Whitby to continue to maintain core

services, take care of our assets, provide for the cost of growth, as well as address provincially mandated requirements such as accessibility," says Mayor Pat Perkins.

Council is dedicated to ensuring accessible, efficient and affordable services that enhance the quality of life of Whitby's growing and diverse community. The delivery of core services to the community requires considerable infrastructure, assets and equipment.

In 2013, municipal taxes will maintain and deliver core services, including: Roads, Bridges and Sidewalks; Fire and Emergency Services; Facilities, Parks and Trails; Public Library services; Waste Management; Community Programs, including Recreation/Fitness, Youth and Seniors; Economic Development; Winter Control; Corporate Governance and Administration; Building, Planning and Development Services; By-Law and Animal Services; Downtown Development and Heritage; Special Events and Grants; and the Station Gallery. www.whitby.ca



Seniors Information and Active Living Fair

Come to a Seniors Information and Active Living Fair sponsored by the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat. Hosted by Whitby Seniors Services, Ajax Seniors, Pickering Seniors and the Oshawa Seniors Citizens Centres.

- Theme:** Active Living... It's Good For All Ages'
- Date:** Wednesday March 20, 2013, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- Location:** Centennial Building, 416 Centre Street South, Whitby
- Keynote speaker:** Canadian Motivational Speaker and Stand Up Comedian Judy Croon
- Details:** Speakers, demos, vendors, light refreshments, prizes and more!
www.whitby.ca/seniors

Free March Break Fun!

Free Intergenerational Skate

The Whitby Intergenerational Committee in association with the Town of Whitby's Seniors and Youth Services invite you to attend a free intergenerational skate. Refreshments are courtesy of Tim Hortons.

- Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2013 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- Location:** Iroquois Park Sports Centre, Scotiabank Arena 1, 500 Victoria Street West, Whitby

Free March Break Skate

Enjoy a Free March Break Skate sponsored by the Mayor Perkins Community Development Fund.

- Date:** Thursday, March 14, 2013 from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Location:** McKinney Centre, 222 McKinney Drive, Whitby. www.whitby.ca/events

Town of Whitby:

March Events and Meetings

<http://www.whitby.ca/en/Calendar>

Operations Committee
March 4 2013, 7:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting of Council
March 11 2013, 7:00 p.m.

Planning & Development Committee
March 18 2013, 7:00 p.m.

Management Committee
March 19 2013, 2:00 p.m.

Operations Committee
March 25 2013, 7:00 p.m.

Whitby In Bloom Garden Seminar - Frankie Flowers
March 27, 2013, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

"Authors in the Garden" Seminars



It's all free!

Frankie Flowers - March 27
Garden Crazy!

Sonia Day - April 24
The Untamed Garden

Marjorie Harris - May 22
Let's Stop Making Ugly Gardens!

7:30 p.m.
Brooklin United Church
18 Cassels Road East
Brooklin

Presented by the Town of Whitby, Whitby In Bloom Committee and Brooklin Horticultural Society

Join the second annual Whitby In Bloom Garden Tour. Your Garden Tour brochure will guide you on a driving tour of Whitby's unique and colourful garden properties.

Reserve your spot online at: www.whitby.ca/whitbyinbloom

"Beyond the Garden Gate 2013" Whitby In Bloom Garden Tour
Saturday, July 27, 2013 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Spring 2013 Activity Guide

The Town of Whitby's Spring 2013 Activity Guide is now available. Visit www.whitby.ca/activityguide or any municipal facility to pick up a copy.

TOWN OF WHITBY - ACTIVITY GUIDE
SPRING 2013

www.whitby.ca

March Break and Summer Camps
Book Now to Reserve Your Spot!

- Preschool & Children's Programs**
Arts and crafts, cooking, camps, dance, sports and more!
- Youth Programs**
Pool parties, youth rooms, fitness and more!
- Adult Programs**
including general interest and fitness programs!
- Senior Programs**
Classes, workshops, social and recreational programs!
- Swimming Lessons**
for children, youth, adults and seniors!

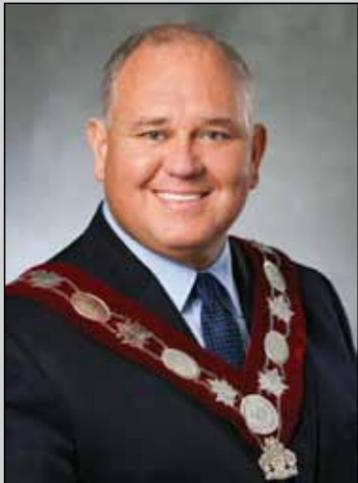
Non-Aquatics Registration starts at 9am Wednesday, February 27
Residents Aquatics Registration starts at 9am Wednesday, March 6
Non-Resident Aquatics Registration starts at 9am Wednesday, March 13

Produced by the Community and Marketing Services Department

MARKHAM

Regional News

MESSAGE FROM HON. MAYOR FRANK SCARPITTI



MARCH IN MARKHAM: CULTURE, SPORT, FAMILY FUN

On February 9, we celebrated the opening of the Cornell Community Centre & Library. This beautiful, state-of-the-art facility opened its doors to over 3,000 residents for a day of family fun, activities and entertainment.

Our latest showcase centre boasts a brand new library, multi-tank aquatic centre, year-round kids playroom, multi-sensory therapy room, performance hall, meeting rooms for community groups, and so much more. I encourage everyone to come out and spend some time at this unique facility.

I'm also pleased that Council approved our new Culture Plan this month. We already have a vibrant landscape of arts diversity in Markham, and this plan will help us continue to strengthen our local arts, culture and heritage.

Weather permitting, outdoor skating is still on at the Markham Civic Centre and our community centres, including during March Break when you may be looking for family activities. Our Markham Museum is also organizing indoor/outdoor activities for all ages at the Museum's Print Shop, Blacksmith Shop, Textile Studio and more. Visit www.markham.ca for more information.

On March 17, we're hosting the annual "Many Faces of Markham" event at the Flato Markham Theatre, where we'll enjoy local talent in dance and music. And speaking of talent, we'll also be launching our call for nominations for Markham's Seniors Hall of Fame this month.

By March 20-23, the nation's sporting eyes will be on Markham, when we're hosting the Canadian Women's Hockey League championship. Former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson will be here, in the games named after her – the Clarkson Cup. Full schedule and tickets are available at www.cwhl.ca.

I hope you'll be able to enjoy and celebrate all that we have going on, including International Women's Day on March 8, when communities and groups around the world will be celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future.

March is another great month to learn, entertain and celebrate all that Markham has to offer. Keep checking the community events calendar at www.markham.ca!



Over 3,000 Markham residents joined Mayor Frank Scarpitti (centre), Members of Council and senior staff on February 9 to celebrate the grand opening of Cornell Community Centre & Library, the City's newest state-of-the-art facility, located in Cornell at the corner of Bur Oak Avenue and Church Street.



Mayor Frank Scarpitti, joined by members of the Roman family and Members of Council, gathered for the 40th Annual Tony Roman Memorial Hockey Tournament official puck drop on January 26 at the Civic Centre.



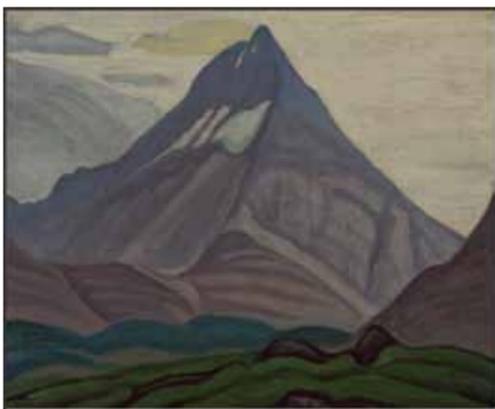
The City of Markham celebrated Thai Pongal/Tamil New Year on January 27 at the Flato Markham Theatre with displays of rich culture, entertainment by talented young artists and traditional homemade refreshments. Happy Thai Pongal!



Young Markham athletes admired the Canadian Women's Hockey League's Clarkson Cup trophy at the Kick-off celebration January 27 at the Markham Civic Centre's outdoor ice rink. The Clarkson Cup Tournament will be held March 20-23 at Centennial Arena. Visit www.cwhl.ca for details.



Mayor Frank Scarpitti checks-in on kids at the 2015 Pan Am and Para Pan Am Mascot Creation Challenge Workshop, held at the Cornell Community Centre & Library's opening ceremonies on February 9.



Inspirations: Lawrence S. Harris, Mountains Sketch 103 (detail), c. 1934. Oil on panel. On loan from the Winnipeg Art Gallery from a private collection. 15/16/014. Photo credit: Ernest Mayer, Winnipeg Art Gallery

Canada on Canvas
2 February to 5 May 2013
Canada on Canvas has been organized by the Winnipeg Art Gallery

Public Programs: Close Encounters of the Art Kind

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Thu., March 28, 2013 • 7 p.m.

Part II: Paint
Thu., April 11, 2013 • 7 p.m.

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March 2 and April 21, 2013 at 1 p.m.

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people place paint



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Varley Art Gallery of Markham | 216 Main Street Unionville | 905-477-7000 ext.3261
www.varleygallery.ca @VarleyGallery



Omega-3 Supplements Are Good for Your Heart



by Atle Skattebøl, MD, PhD

Heart Month 2013 will stand out in my memory as the year I was called upon to set the record straight about Omega-3s. After decades of promoting heart health through prevention, medical practitioners and cardiovascular researchers are spending this February responding to questions about an ill-informed meta-analysis late last year that disputed the benefits of fatty acids for heart health.

As an international specialist in Omega nutrition, I am confident saying that we should ignore the findings of this paper and that Canadians should stay the course with their Omega-3 regimes.

A Little Knowledge Is a Dangerous Thing

In September, the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) published a meta-analysis of Omega-3 studies. Its surprising conclusion — fatty acids provide no benefit to patients with cardiovascular disease — contradicted years of previously published articles that demonstrate a correlation between Omega-3 fatty acids and improved heart health.

The trail of misinformation leads back to the meta-analysis itself. While such studies can be a valid means for capturing highlights and trends in research, a meta-analysis is a second-generation statistical synthesis of existing data. Critics have long argued that the failure to correct flaws in the studies it reviews or, more importantly, to exclude flawed studies altogether are significant shortcomings of the meta-analysis methodology.

Known as “control bias,” this inherent problem renders the meta-analysis a sta-

tistical bouillabaisse — only as good as its ingredients and tainted if a rotten fish (or study) slips past quality control. An outstanding weakness of the meta-analysis in question is that it compared studies of differing designs and whose participants used Omegas from different sources and in different dosages.

What meaningful conclusion can we draw from that mixed bag?

To evaluate the safety and effectiveness of nutritional supplements, regulatory bodies recognize randomized, placebo-controlled and double-blind scientific studies as the gold standard. It's safe to

say that this single sensationalist study in no way approaches the rigour that regulators expect, nor does it erase decades of solid evidence supporting the benefits of Omega fatty acids for heart health.

The Omega-3 Tradition

The hypothesis about Omega fatty acids dates back to observations of Greenland Inuit in the 1970s. Though the regional diet was high in fat, cardiovascular disease was non-existent among Inuit community members. Another outstanding characteristic was the high level of Omega-3 fatty acids in the tissue of the population thanks to a fish-rich diet. Scientists soon found similarly low incidences of heart disease among other fish-eating cultures. The findings have been replicated in numerous studies since then prompting heart associations around the world to recommend fish, twice a week, as a heart-healthy food.

Fatty Acids for Heart Health

Each month, approximately 250 articles are published on the various health benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids. As the list of benefits grows, Omega supplements have replaced fish as an important, sus-

tainable and healthy source of fatty acids for obvious reasons. Supplements deliver a precise, therapeutic dose of Omega-3 fatty acids and, thanks to technological advances such as molecular distillation, they also provide purified oil that is free of the environmental toxins associated with eating high on the marine food chain.

The availability of concentrated fish oil capsules has also established a controlled population for research. The Gruppo Italiano per lo Studio della Sopravvivenza nell'Infarto Miocardico, a world-renowned group of cardiovascular researchers in Italy, followed more than 11,000 male heart attack survivors for three years. In addition to regular medical monitoring, half of the participants consumed a 1g capsule of concentrated fish oil, while the other half took nothing. At the conclusion of the study, there were 11% fewer deaths among the treated group. This data prompted most medical regulatory agencies in Europe to license concentrated Omega-3 fatty acids as a therapy following heart attack. The European Union also recognizes Omega-3s for their role in maintaining normal blood pressure and normal triglyceride levels, independent risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

As a scientist and a physician, I believe that prevention is vital to optimal wellness. Lifestyle choices that improve your overall quality of life — exercise, healthy eating, smoking cessation, and the regular use of premium Omega-3 nutrition — are also going to reward you with improved heart health.



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